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Militant Bodies:
Policing Race, Religion, and Violence in the U.S. Sikh Diaspora

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Abstract

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My dissertation explores the long history of the Sikh as a racialized and religionized figure that violently troubled imperial, postcolonial, and national fantasies of security. From the British colonial period, to the Indian nationalist movements of the early twentieth century, to the era of decolonization and India/Pakistan Partition, to the genocidal pogroms of 1984, and finally to the global war on terror: the Sikh was simultaneously a nebulous and disruptive force to U.S. racial, religious, and gendered normative orders. Through close readings of English and Punjabi language texts and artifacts drawn from North American, British, and South Asian archives I illuminate how Sikhs were related to other "Asiatic" migrant figures by anxious authorities and publics. By combining historical, literary, and cultural studies methods, I illuminate how anti-Asian discourses continue to haunt contemporary liberal efforts to paint the Sikh diasporic body as a docile "model minority" and patriotic American citizen. More broadly, my study argues that late nineteenth century techniques of inter-imperial security developed by British, Canadian, and

American authorities have mutated into new interlocking forms of policing and surveillance: multicultural "tolerance" and global counterterrorism. At the same time, I show how Sikhs have creatively and militantly struggled against policing to represent themselves and their collective political and ethical desires. In this I demonstrate that Sikhs have, at various historical moments, radically allied themselves with others in anti-colonial, anti-racist, anti-capitalist, and interfaith movements.

In loving memory of my friend,

Christen J. Grorud

1979-2016

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Amrita, Nirmal, and Meher: y'all are the best. I am so happy and lucky to have three sisters, two to show me the way and another to have as a best friend; I always miss watching Felicity with you guys on the parent's bed. To Meher, in particular: for your lifelong friendship, for your sensitivity, wisdom, and deep care for the world, I am in awe.

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Introduction: Insurgent Knowledge:

Becoming-Minor in an Age of Terror

This project examines the U.S. Sikh diaspora through genealogical study. It tracks this collective body in order to unpack several conceptions and frameworks in which the diaspora have been historically and culturally rendered, including, but not limited to: 1. the ways in which the Sikh body is shaped by minoritarian politics in India, specifically by colonial race-making projects as well as majoritarian religious civil society; 2. the ways in which Sikh body work within and outside of model minority conservatism; and 3. the ways in which the attacks on the U.S. on September 11, 2001 (heretofore referred to "9/11" for shorthand) have shaped racializing practices and Sikh racialization alongside the Muslim, Arab, South Asian, and other brown bodies.[1] In composing this genealogy, the contemporary period, specifically the post-9/11 age and its attendant Global Wars on Terror, are particularly significant insofar as it informs the project's larger goals in triangulating the U.S. Sikh diaspora's relationship to race, violence, and minoritarian politics. By studying various practices common now in the U.S. towards Sikhs and other brown bodies, including acts of policing through surveillance and security measures; acts of harassment and modes of religious discrimination; and acts of violence and incidents of death, I develop new theories for reading the Sikh body in the U.S. context.

In focusing on the collective Sikh body and the U.S. Sikh diaspora specifically, there remains what might be understood as a legacy of violence and policing that animates and conditions the Sikh body to this day. In turn, this study undertakes genealogical exploration of the colonial afterlife of the Sikh body. However it is vital to signal that such a relationship can

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[1] The events of September 11, 2001 in the U.S. have generated a great deal of effects, including the increased securitization of the U.S. in terms of national or homeland security. Policing and surveillance of particular brown bodies in the wake of these events has been a major domestic and global effect of these events and the ensuing Global War on Terror. For more on these effects, see J. Rana, N. Naber, J. Puar, E. Alsultany, et al.

and never will be defined wholly by the legacy of British colonialism. Rather, what emerges is an overwhelming confluence of factors, flows, assemblages, and forces that converge around the Sikh body: this happens through class, labor, migration; this happens historically, religiously, nationally, linguistically; and most significantly, I would argue, this happens racially and globally. In other words, the Sikh body is a site onto which multiple dynamic and nomadic forces and powers take shape and enact themselves.

"Militant Bodies" is not only a history of violence, but rather relies on the reciprocal processes of violence, processes that mirror Fanon's outlining of the colonial project.[2] It is this reciprocity and this active resistance that aid in marking this inquiry as postcolonial, or more accurately, anti-colonial. It is the willful assertion of *Sikhi* and the Sikh body as one that forcefully responds and engages colonial and imperial force. It is the minor or minority body confronting and unafraid of the majoritarian body and its attendant production of the general antagonism.[3] While inevitably there exists prevailing urges and tendencies toward liberal forms of recognition, inclusion, and rights—especially in the context of the U.S.—there exists militant constituents both rendered and realized. It is the *Sikh as militant body* with whom I reckon and engage. In my reading, this militant body is haunted by legacies of colonial racialization, British

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[2] Frantz Fanon, noted anticolonial theorist, authored two major works now heavily cited within postcolonial studies, theories of nationalism, and theories of revolutionary violence. See *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952) and *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961).

[3] The concepts of "minor", "majoritarian", and "general antagonism" appear in conjunction within the critical theoretical writings of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari. Minor is specifically from their 1972 *Toward a Minor Literature* which theorizes literature through the "minor" or minority figure, language, or politics; Deleuze define minor literature as "deterritorializing" (35), revolutionary, collective, and political. Majoritarian, while popularly used in the sense of conventional politics, is deployed by Deleuze and Guattari to mean that which is not minor, and thus wholly hegemonic and antithetical to the project of minor politics. The "general antagonism," animated by Deleuze and Guattari's thinking, constitutes the everyday political antagonisms between minoritarian and majoritarian agents, specifically insofar as collectives and individuals relate to statist tactics of repression and oppression.

and American imperial confluence, population racism and genocide, and current forms of global terror.

Theoretical Concepts and Keywords

"Militant Bodies" is anchored in theoretical grammar that aids in reconstituting and reimagining specific fields of study, while providing new modes of knowing and framing the Sikh diaspora in its American context. This grammar depends heavily on nomadic forces that shape and define concepts that are at once familiar, but nevertheless require specific parsing and definition, as it pertains to the particularities of the project. As the focus is on the Sikh diaspora as a minority, constituted by a shared system of belief and by their historical racialization, the grammar centers the collective grouping of bodies as identified and nameable as Sikhs. Part of the project's grammar emerges through an engagement with theorists of the body and embodiment in mind, especially insofar as such theories intersect with politics, specifically around race and migration. Thusly, the term body and bodies is deployed as a concept that carries much weight despite its dynamic and multifarious meaning and usage.

Through the term body, there is the primary understanding of it referring to the constitution of the human body in its interaction with space in the material and social worlds. Still, the body must additionally be configured as a collective body, one however messy and differentiated it may be. The Sikh body is at once identified and identifiable by its tethering of religion to race, and as argued throughout the project's chapters, how the Sikh body is not simply a religious body, but a heavily and historically racialized body.[4] Still, while the Sikh body's

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[4] This relationship of religion to race is of course nothing particularly new, though in terms of scholarship, there is a distinct absence of material in this field, especially in a U.S. diasporic context. In the field of religious studies, there has been an increasing focus on this relationship, specifically in the last decade. Works by Gil Anidjar have specifically addressed race and religion, though specific to the figures of the Jew and the Arab (see: *The Jew, The*

racialization is a major component to this study's argument, the Sikh status as a heavily gendered body, is just as crucial in the constitution of the Sikh body as a collective and in its varied locations.[5] It is through the assemblage of the Sikh body in its material form that it becomes vital to imagine and theorize the diasporic body. Such a formation can and never will be a coherent whole, and I trouble the category of diaspora and its technologies of visibility and invisibility later in this introduction. Nevertheless, this collective Sikh body becomes indexed as a way in which to expand and trouble definitions of the Sikh as not simply tethered to religion, but to its various relationships to the social and material world; what this denotes is the relationship of Sikhs to race, class, gender, sexuality, primarily. The affective registers in which such relationships are developed is particularly significant to the analyses insofar as the study employs feminist methods and theories of body and affect to read various artifacts and historical scenes. By approaching the Sikh body as a site onto which the body is centered in relation to not only its identitarian categorization, but by the ways in which it interacts with the world in multiple modalities, the emphasis shifts from the realm of the spiritual and religio-philosophical, to the material and social worlds. It is through such analysis that still centers religion, but so long as race, class, gender, and sexuality are additionally considered, and assembled simultaneously.

Arab: A History of the Enemy, Stanford UP, 2003; *Semites: Race, Religion, Literature*, Stanford UP, 2007). More recently, J. Kameron Carter's *Race: A Theological Account* (Oxford UP, 2008) centers Christianity through race, and vice versa, specifically attending to how Christianity in the Western context consciously created the figure of the white Christian as a means of initially differentiating from Jewish peoples, and subsequently differentiating such a figure from other racialized groups. In regards to the more specific targeting of brown bodies after 9/11, Jasbir Puar's *Terrorist* Assemblages (Duke UP, 2007), Junaid Rana's *Terrifying Muslims* (Duke UP, 2009), Moustafa Bayoumi's *How Does It Feel to Be a Problem?* (Penguin, 2008), Anour Majid's *We Are All* Moors (U Minnesota Press, 2009), Sunaina Maira's *Missing* (Duke UP, 2009), and Zareena Grewal's *Islam is a Foreign Country* (NYU Press, 2013), among various others, have taken up the question and phenomenon of Islam's racialization globally and in the U.S. Examining the ways in which a specifically Muslim body, collapsed with others, has come to be rendered through race, through the multitudinous processes of racialization, has become an emergent concern in the landscape of not only U.S. cultural studies, but in regards to forms of imperial racialization and global concepts of race.

[5] The gendering of the Sikh body heavily relies on the turban's significance; the turban has an unwavering hold on the definition in the visual calculus of a Sikh body. See Doris Jakobsh, "Seeking the 'Unmarked' Sikh Women: Text, Sacred Stitches, Turban." *Religion and Gender*, 5 (1). 2015. Pp. 305-332; Veena Das, *Life and Words*. Berkeley: UC Press, 2007.

Further, a crucial concept in this study is that of minor, minority, and minoritarian. The term is deployed in relation to bodies, literature, politics, and diaspora. “Minor” is utilized most apparently through the theorization of prominent French thinkers Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, and specifically in relation to their concept of “becoming-minor,” which is explained at length in a later section as part of the project’s theoretical apparatus. However, “minor” takes on many forms and has many purposes, especially as it operates relationally, outside of the major, majority and majoritarianism. Most apparently, it describes the Sikh as minor or minority religion in the context of religion on a global scale. But it is also used to connote the sense of the Sikh as a minor or minority religion in the context of India, and the complexities that that historically encompasses. Minor contests the notion of Sikhs as simply outside of a majority-minority relationship, especially by exclusion, which no doubt persists; rather, minor activates a relationship to the major or majority that is potentially and forever willingly outside—that is, never forced, nor coerced. This willful minor, as such, operates in ways that are resistant and insurgent.[6] Minor, in this sense, is a subject heavily tied to the concept of the collective body, which translates into its affective response as willful, and therefore resistant and insurgent. This politicization of minor is tethered to Deleuze and Guattari’s conception of minor and minor literature as “collective” and “revolutionary.” It must be then conceived that minor and minority enable and activate political potential that by its very definition not only must lie outside of the major and majority, but by thinking, creating, acting, and working in new and unforeseen ways.[7] Simply put, the notion that the minority is and must be revolutionary, conceives of this subjectivity as always already deeply politicized, just by the very nature of its existence. [8]

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[6] Deleuze and Guattari. *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*. Minneapolis: U Minnesota Press, 1986. p. 42.
[7] *Ibid.*
[8] *ibid*, 47.

Along these lines, violence is another keyword for this study, and relatedly, the concepts of militant and militancy. In this context, violence carries varied meanings, but acts primarily as a form of rupture. There exists a great deal of scholarship around notions of violence as not just physical, but as symbolic—which includes social, political, psychological, affective, racial, gendered, sexual, and so forth—though that cannot and must not preclude the physical aspects of violence.[9] Pointedly, "Militant Bodies" takes great heed in thinking of violence as rupture specifically in the colonial scene, following especially in the tradition of Martinician anticolonial revolutionary theorist Frantz Fanon.[10] In conceiving of violence and militancy through Fanonian analytics, these terms take on a great and particular weight, specifically insofar as it denotes violence as freighted by the colonial relation, even after the decolonization process. In these terms, violence is never fully embedded in the wholly negative fashion that it is now, through its freighted association and false equivalence with state violence. Rather, violence in this context is configured as a way of delineating and understanding anew power relations within systems of oppression. Violence then becomes a register in which to frame the use of force—physically and symbolically—outside of systems of traditional forms of authority and domination.

This description ultimately connects the category of violence to resistance and militancy as to underscore the complex relationship that forms of authority and domination—such as enslavement, colonialism, imperialism, and capitalist exploitation, to name a few—have to resistance, militancy, and related struggles. In this way, resistance and militancy are minor,

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[9] Benjamin, Walter. "Critique of Violence." *Reflections*. New York: Schocken Books, 1986.
[10] Fanon, Frantz. *The Wretched of the Earth*. New York: Grove Press, 1963; *A Dying Colonialism*. New York: Grove Press, 1967; *Toward the African Revolution: Political Essays*. New York: Grove Press, 1967. *Black Skin, White Masks*. London: Pluto Press, 1986.

minority, and minoritarian forms of violence. These forms fall within Fanon's description of decolonization's imperative for revolutionary violence that might be argued then, in terms of militancy, becomes less a question of immediate and apparent forms of violent direct control, and rather is conscious of, and affected by, the hauntings, legacies and afterlives of colonial and imperial control that remain, extend, and manifest anew. Therefore, in this scheme, minoritarian resistance—often in the form of militancy and violence—in the face of historical legacies of systemic, majoritarian, state, and totalizing violence, is seen as politically and ethically imperative. The imperatives of sovereignty and collective dignity in this scheme become tantamount, and compose new, non-negative conceptions of violence. In this way, the will of those minor bodies, be it toward violence and militancy, becomes a legitimate form of subjectivity not necessarily concerned with majoritarian or statist recognition.

The three concepts compose the primary grammar of this project, and make a point to complicate the terms given on behalf of master discourses and vocabularies. "Militant Bodies" commits to these keywords as a way of marking the political and ethical specificities of Sikh diasporic subjectivities, while also thinking quite broadly in regards to the theorizing and materiality of bodies, minorities and minor politics, as well as violence and militancy. While other key terminology is flagged, including racialization and diaspora, this study is deeply entrenched in bringing to the fore the centrality of the multimodal existences of minor bodies for whom militant resistance operates as not necessarily legible or coherent. As such, this project offers new and significant insights and theorizing bodies with violence, historically and in the contemporary.

Sikhism: Foundations, Ethics, Politics

A brief sketch of the Sikh religion is necessary for the purposes of this study. While I will not dwell on early Sikh history or religious teachings, it is vital to note certain aspects of the foundations of the religion. Sikhism is the fifth largest religion in the world, as well as among the youngest of the world's religions. Sikhism is a monotheistic religion founded in the fifteenth century by Guru Nanak in the Northern region of India known as Punjab. Guru Nanak was born a Hindu in 1469, but based on issues with both Hinduism and Islam, he began devising a new religious path. He found the two majority religions of India to be too stringent and divisive. Toward the end of the century, he declared in various places across the Northern parts of India and South Asia more broadly: "There is no Hindu, nor any Mussalman (Muslim), so whose path shall I follow? I shall follow God's path." In this statement, Guru Nanak embedded a crucial sentiment that animates Sikhism, or *Sikhi*, to this day: that is, there existed the sense that religious domination by Hinduism and Islam had already defined the geographical space of India and much of South Asia. Such forces of domination made alternative ideas and the development of a new belief system all the more necessary for Guru Nanak. His investment in the path toward a single God, and a preternatural feeling of kinship with the oneness of God, made him a compelling and known teacher of divine lessons. Sikhi, as it came to be known, literally translates to "disciple," connoting the sense of the Sikh as a student of God.[11]

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[11] Auerbach, Melina. "The Sikh Community in New England: A Profile." World Religions in New England Research, 1990; Cole, W. Owen and Piara Singh Sambhi. *A Popular Dictionary of Sikhism* (New York: Routledge), 1997 (1990, Rupa); Dillion, G.S. *Researches in Sikh Religion and History* (Chandigarh: Sumeet Prakashan), 1989; Hallberg, Gerald N. "Bellingham, Washington's Anti-Hindu Riots," *Journal of the West*. 12 (January 1973), 163-75; Hawley, John Stratton and Gurinder Singh Mann. *Studying the Sikhs: Issues for North America* (Albany: State University of New York Press), 1993; Jensen, Joan M. "Apartheid: Pacific Coast Style," *Pacific Historical Review*. 38 (August 1969), 335-40; Jensen, Joan M. "East Indians" in *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups*. Stephan Thernstrom (ed.) (Cambridge: Harvard University Press), 1980; Jensen, Joan M. *Passage From India: Asian Immigrants in North America* (New Haven: Yale University Press), 1988. Joshi, Khyati Y. *New Roots in America's Sacred Ground: Religion, Race, and Ethnicity in Indian America* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press), 2006 (1988); Johnson, Annette Thackwell. "'The Rag Heads'—A Picture of America's East Indians," *The Independent* (New York). 109 (October 28, 1922), 234-5.

Sikhism's basic beliefs were defined and given language by ten gurus, from Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh, who passed in 1708. He subsequently forwarded the spiritual leadership to the *Khalsa*, which refers to the collective body of baptized Sikhs, as well as to the eleventh guru, in the manifestation of the *Adi Granth*, which is the Sikh holy book and contains teachings of the ten Gurus and celebrated Sikh poets. The *Adi Granth*, also known as the *Guru Granth Sahib*, is locatable in every *gurdwara*, Sikh house of worship, as well as in some homes with rooms or spaces for prayer; it is the centerpiece and fixture of all *gurdwaras*, and contains all essential Sikh teachings in Punjabi and in the *Gurmukhi* script.

Early Sikh history is rife with the persecution of Sikhs, especially by Mughal rulers including Jahangir and Aurungzeb. Out of this persistent crisis of oppression by authoritarian rulers, emerged the targeting of Sikh gurus for their presence as supposed challenges to government rule and statist authority. Especially affected by the widespread abuse of Sikhs was tenth guru, Guru Gobind Singh, whose father—ninth guru, Guru Tegh Bahadur—was executed by Aurungzeb; partially out of this personal heritage, Guru Gobind Singh came to be understood as a force of Sikh militarism. Figures such as Banda Singh Bahadur, Jassa Singh Ahluwalia, and Maharaja Ranjit Singh defined the post-Guru Gobind Singh Sikh military apparatus. Bahadur, Ahluwalia, and Singh each led Sikh life and operations through the creation of the twelve Sikh Misls or sovereign states, spanning across the Punjab region; these misls, on the whole, operated primarily as military contingents of this Sikh confederacy. Based on the logic that Sikhs were continually targeted by Mughal rulers and Hindu hill chiefs, Sikh misls worked as small guerilla forces with which to combat the consistent onslaught of violence. As such, a precedence of violence as a means of combating violence was set in such a way as to define much of early Sikh history.

In many ways, Sikh history and tradition cannot be simply tied to conventional religious histories and narratives. The ideological shift away from the dyadic Hindu/Muslim relation inflected the way that Sikhism and Sikhs were understood not relationally, but as strikingly outside of a national and religious dyad. The distinct relationship that Sikhs had to these civil-social others within the parameters of an early modern South Asia might be understood better through special considerations of the ethical and the political within the Sikh religious domain. Such considerations are inevitably tied to the Sikh relationship to violence, as both embedded scripturally and tethered to the external or worldly compulsions and necessities for it. This examination does not attempt to fetishize violence, but rather seeks to consider and render a larger and more nuanced study of violence and the minor body that is not overwhelmingly or reductively situating violence as a structure or relation that is primarily and indefinitely negative.

This is to say that characteristic of Sikh tradition are the histories of militarism in the name of justice and the histories of Sikh martyrs, who died for the sake of Sikhi. This militarism has been notably defined in recent Sikh history, as there have been calls for an independent Sikh state known as Khalistan, especially since the volatile period of partition in 1947. This movement for a separate nation-state did not only have its roots in the birthing of Pakistan, but had earlier precedents in the early eighteenth century. Moreover, the Khalistan movement became increasingly militant through the 1970s, leading up to the tumult and genocide of 1984 in Amritsar and Delhi in particular. In turn, these events have served to further mobilize both social and militant nationalist movements in Punjab and in the diaspora.

There exists as a consequence a body of work that takes up Sikh nationalism, existing, permeating, and affecting all sides of the Khalistan argument. The work is quite disparate and emerges not only from Punjab, but from Sikh diasporic pockets in the UK and Canada as well.

This body of work is of course not only concerned with the project of Khalistan, but in the varied historical, theological, and scriptural debates that comprise Sikh studies as both a religious and public domain, as well as an intellectual field formation. Much of this oeuvre has been hastily relegated as propagandistic by Indian nationalist and statist forces; yet, these works prove generative insofar as they access and activate the Sikh body not only in its diasporic formation, but through a singular diasporic imagination as well.[12]

Specifically, the legacy and history of violence and genocide could easily define the foundations of Sikhism, along with its recent past. Much writing has been devoted to accounting for early Sikh history, as well as for Sikh militancy prior to and following the events of 1984. These accounts have proved vital as accounts and testaments to the study of Sikhism, Sikh history, and Sikhs. In the contemporary Sikh diaspora, works like *Soft Target* and *Report to the Nation*, as well as the 2013 film *Sadda Haq*, have been banned in India for the ways in which they sympathize with Sikhs; though disparate as materials, these texts have come to represent the Indian state's repression of Sikh histories.[13] This impulse to repress has come to define India's relationship to the Sikh minority population within and outside of the nation-state's borders. In many ways, such a relationship symbolizes the majoritarian desire toward state repression,

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[12] Juergensmeyer, Mark. and N. Gerald Barrier (eds.). *Sikh Studies: Comparative Perspectives on a Changing Tradition* (Berkeley: Berkeley Religious Studies Series), 1979; Kharak Singh, G.S. Mansukhani, and Jasbir Singh Mann (eds.). *Fundamental Issues in Sikh Studies* (Chandigarh: Institute of Sikh Studies), 1992; Leonard, Karen Isaksen. *Making Ethnic Choices: California's Punjabi Mexican Americans* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press), 1992; Oberoi, Harjot. *The Construction of Religious Boundaries: Culture, Identity, and Diversity in the Sikh Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), 1994; Richardson, Allen. *East Comes West* (New York: Pilgrim Press), 1985; Singh, Iqbal. *Punjab Under Siege: A Critical Analysis* (New York: Allen McMillan and Enderson), 1986; Singh, Iqbal. *The Essence of Truth: Japji Sahib and Other Sikh Scriptures* (New York: Allen, McMillan and Enderson), 1986; Singh, Khushwant. *A History of the Sikhs,* 2 Vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 1966; Tatla, Darshan Singh. *Sikhs in America: An Annotated Bibliography* (New York: Greenwood Press), 1991; "United States vs. Bhagat Singh Thind, Decided February 19, 1923," *Supreme Court Reporter*. 43:10 April 1, 1923; Williams, Raymond. *Religions of Immigrants from India and Pakistan: New Threads in the American Tapestry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 1988.

[13] Singh, Gurpreet. **"Why an Indian Ban on a Movie Glorifying Sikh Militants is Unacceptable."** ***The Sikh Foundation International.*** **June 10, 2014.** Kashmeri, Zuhair, and Brian McAndrew. *Soft Target: How the Indian Intelligence Service Penetrated Canada*. Toronto: J. Lorimer, 1989.

particularly toward its unruly minority contingents. As such, Sikh history is almost exclusively defined through the frameworks of the alternative, the unruly, the disruptive, and the minor. The constant battle is never metaphorical for the case of the Sikhs in and out of India, as the constant antagonism faced by the Sikh body has been defined not as an origins story, but as having emerged as not one, or another—not Hindu, nor Muslim—as something wholly other.

Still, the Sikh minority has not only been defined through its relationship to the Indian nation-state but to its colonial and imperial relation to the British as well. However, essential to this relation is its contingency within the Hindu majoritarian and Sikh minoritarian framework that arrives fixed from the outset of the British-colonial and Indian-colonized period. This majority-minority framing proves foundational for the space of colonial modernity insofar as it defines the historical antagonism between religious groups, as well as participates and creates the colonial and decolonial futures of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The textured relationships that Sikhs had to the Indian nation-state and civil society, along with British empire, haunts and animates this project. Furthermore, as a study of the Sikh diaspora in the U.S. primarily, there is always already a relationship set up to the homeland and its politics; what this study attaches itself to are the myriad modes in which empire, British and American, define and shape the Sikh body at various historical junctures. Part of this project then relies on the analysis of this body through not only historical events, but through primarily and especially cultural production and multi-modal texts and media.

It is with these considerations in mind that my project is situated primarily within the compendium of work within Sikh studies. My attachment to the field could perhaps be rendered as wayward, heavily defined by a background in postcolonial theory and U.S. ethnic studies. Nevertheless, I converse with folks who have contributed to the proliferation of accounts of

Sikhs in scholarly, cultural, and political circles, having been borne primarily out of the Sikh diaspora. Especially prominent have been accounts of Sikh history by British Sikh academics, as well as some Canadian Sikh academics, with many non-practitioners specializing in Sikh studies as well. Still, in the U.S., studies of Sikhism have been rather limited, conditioned and defined by a pre- or post-9/11 focus. This space is precisely where my project intervenes.

Defiant Life: The Sikh Body's Affective Strategies

The Sikh diasporic body as such contends with the past through various crucial histories of martyrdom as a primary focus. These histories are always already undergirded by a refusal to convert, and as such, resist the majoritarian pull toward an eradication of the Sikh populace in its nascent stage. This project functions partially as an account of Sikh histories of violence, and the originary scenes of martyrdom inform the necropolitical landscape of the early modern period.[14] I read martyrdom as inflecting the social and political life of Sikhs, but defer to the large compendium of literature on the Sikh faith's foundations.[15] Rather, my focus remains on the *defiant life* of the Sikh diasporic body. By defiant life, I suggest the persistence of the Sikh body as a figure that, broadly speaking, remains unconverted and unassimilable. In the most literal of senses, defiant life denotes not solely the resistance of the collective Sikh body to annihilation and genocide, but the desire to survive and live within social and political schemes that continue to exclude, resent, harm, confine, expel, or destroy them.

Still, this defiance does not rest wholly on Sikh bodies living and not dying, but on the persistence of *Sikhi*, or the ethical, political, and identitarian way of life. Undergirded by tradition and the records of the Sikh gurus teachings, *Sikhi* relies heavily on the tenets of a visible

[14] Mann, Jasbir Singh and Harbans Singh Saraon (eds.). *Advanced Studies in Sikhism* (Irvine, CA: Sikh Community of North America), 1989
[15] *ibid.*

Sikh identity. While visible markers of religion are fairly common, the turban has most especially become politicized since the inception of the global wars on terror, and its connotations and stereotyping of terrorists. However, many turbaned Sikhs, male and female, don the turban not as a political gesture or form of confrontation, but as an expression of spiritual and ethical kinship with God and other members of the Sikh faith. The turban, especially, marks the Sikh, with no one way of tying or wearing it; of course, there are various other forms of turbans, worn by peoples across South and West Asia, as well as globally. Nevertheless, the marked Sikh body, rendered through uncut hair, turbans, *kirpans*, and so forth, remains a figure of defiant life within the parameters of majoritarian and global civil society.

Such an understanding of the collective Sikh body speaks to the interdependent threads of my project. In one scheme, I read the Sikh body through the contemporary period's neoliberal colorblind contradiction of *hyperbolic racialization*; in another scheme, I read the Sikh body as a militant body through Deleuze and Guattari's theorizing of *becoming-minor*, and my own thread on *minor diaspora*. Both these schemes reflect theorizing the Sikh body within state regimes and technologies that heavily monitor and police such bodies as minor, foreign, and illegible. Through such policing, the minoritarian presence of Sikhs presents itself over and over again, since its foundations, produces, what I am naming, defiant life. Defiant life captures the desire of the minority body for survival, despite collective precarity and the ceaseless possibility of death and extinction. A major aspect of this form of desire and will to survive and, ultimately, reproduce, lies not simply in religious self-perpetuation, but in what I argue, is a heavily racialized and often nationalist sense of collectivity and community. While this by no means intends to reduce the impact and vitality of religious practice for the Sikh body, I emphasize the sense and affective strategies of Sikhs as a religious *and* racial minority. That is to say that the

Sikh bodies presence affectively maneuvers in ways that mark it as not simply in religious terms, while also acknowledging the greater context and historical trajectory of race and religion's mutual constitution and inextricability.

In this way, the diasporic Sikh body's defiant life further negotiates how this figure, as migrant and migrating, refuses assimilation. This refusal helps constitute the modes in which Sikhs defy and work against hegemonic and majoritarian forces for whom assimilation to dominant national and imperial logics is not only imperative, but for whom assimilation and ideological adherence can often be forcible, and refusal punishable. In an important essay by David Eng and Shinhee Han's 2000 essay "A Dialogue on Racial Melancholia," the refusal to assimilate constitutes an important dimension of racial melancholia as a phenomenon of Asian American racialization.[16] Eng and Han envision racial melancholia as an ethical and political project, and what might be deemed "militant refusal" to assimilate is a vital aspect to how they define this particular form of melancholia. I extend their claim that militant refusal toward assimilation constitutes racial melancholia's ethical and political agenda, while adding to this the unique circumstances of Sikhs in the U.S.: that is, the process of assimilation stands in as a mode of conversion, which given the tethering of race and religion and the historical relationship of Sikhs to the more major religions of India, makes assimilation not only undesirable but unacceptable. Still, it is important to note that this affective reading of U.S. Sikh existence as defiant life does not necessarily constitute the whole of Sikh diasporic experience more broadly. Rather, what is to be underscored are the ways in which these affective strategies of racial melancholia and militant refusal to conform or convert to any particular forms or domination

[16] Eng, David L., and Shinhee Han. "A Dialogue on Racial Melancholia." *Psychoanalytic Dialogues* 10, no. 4 (2000): 667-700.

including, national ideologies, religion, citizenship, or empire, emphasize the Sikh diasporic body's distinct place not only in the U.S., but between American and British empires.

Sikh Studies as a postcolonial project

Thinking through the place of Sikhs as wedged between imperial powers, legacies of colonialism necessarily require interrogation. To place Sikhs and Sikh studies within the purview of postcolonial studies is to highlight the colonial relationship as a defining aspect of the study of Sikhs. Still, there are several caveats to such an understanding of the field as emerging out of a larger scholarly genealogy. For my purposes, such assertions have more to do with the presumption of Sikh studies to be a field that emerges exclusively out of investment and interest in Sikhism as a religion and, therefore, as a domain in which to examine and debate scripture or contested conceptions of the divine. Rather, this study engages with the Sikh diaspora through the sustained lens of postcolonial studies as a means to study Sikhs in relation to forms and cultures of domination and power. In this way, postcolonial studies is at once field or critique for which the material relations between colonizer and colonized are integral, as well as theoretical space in which the colonial relation exists as a point of departure. What this means for Sikh studies is quite complicated. The colonial relation might be better rendered as something that is forever animated by a distinct power dynamic, but one that need not be limited exclusively to the colonizer/colonized relation. That is to say that such a relationship is clearly post-colonial in its most literal sense, but that it is also one that is activated more by the colonial machinations of race, empire, and the state, than the hold or haunting of an exclusively colonial relation.

Further, such a tethering is a way of underscoring the multitude of forces that define the collective Sikh body, as well as the ways that such a body affects and has effects on other forms

of power, particularly the state. In this way, there is a responsibility to account for the ways in which power can never be simply defined in terms of dual directions or flows in the postcolonial project. This conception therefore is contingent on the intersections, innumerable assemblages, and affected forms that reflect the ways in which material relations happen. Still, these matters are at once actual and attached to worldly concerns, as well as producing new theoretical terrains in which to rethink and re-conceptualize race, empire, violence, and the state. In this modality, Sikh studies as a postcolonial project must connote a sense of the collective Sikh body, in and outside of its diasporic formation, as a study of the social, cultural, and political mechanics of a singular population.

Through these modalities, Sikh studies as a postcolonial project invests in foundational work in anti-colonial, and postcolonial theorizing by Frantz Fanon and Edward Said, respectively. Additionally, the South Asian centered subaltern studies project, plays a pivotal role in the shaping of my study as a minor history. Fanon's work in particular is crucial for my study insofar as his theorization of violence aligns with a conception of militancy so crucial to the linking of race and violence with minor body and politics. Works such as *Black Skin, White Masks* and *The Wretched of the Earth*, while tethered to the colonial situation in Algeria and of Africans more broadly, has had immense impact on the shaping of this project, most notably for Fanon's theorizing of the colonial psyche and anti-colonial militancy. These contributions have clearly affected varieties of movements and counter the heavily valorized push toward non-violence as the primary means in which to conduct social movements. While I by no means wish to fetishize violence, I find Fanon's call to violence and arms a radical revolutionary form that recognizes the monstrous violence of colonialism, as brutal force in its most alienated form, and seeks to counter such violence with the will and body of colonized subjects. In other words,

Fanon situates the colonial project in such a way that his readers are forced to confront the once barely legible forms of domination—due to its assumption as commonplace, widespread, and thus acceptable—for what they are and what they do to people. Through Fanon's thought, violence becomes a way of knowing and relating in the world, particularly for those born out of the conditions of colonialism or other forms of oppressive force. In this mode, Fanon's affective and psychologically inflected analysis of colonial violence is crucial not only as mode of postcolonial analysis, but as a theory of violence as well.

Moreover, while such frameworks insist on contending with the nation-state in and through its messiness, perhaps even more crucial is the analytical investment in and around empire and the state. These lenses exhibit more fruitful ways of understanding forces of policing—colonial and postcolonial—of the Sikh body. Through such processes, migrating populations must contend with global security apparatuses that are never solely defined by the nation-state; still, that is not to dismiss contending with citizenship, but rather to highlight how policing works as a mechanism of control by a global state security apparatus. Such an apparatus depends on the persistence—past, present, and future—of empire, and its modes of governing and policing bodies. Of course, such governing and policing is framed within the rhetoric of security, a discourse that has particular valence following the attacks of 9/11, but is heavily grounded in colonial and imperial projects. While colonialism and imperialism's supposed primary function was as a means of extracting and appropriating the natural resources and goods from the global South, it did so exclusively through the occupation, manipulation, and control of whole populations. As such, policing was a vital mechanism through which colonial occupation was carried out: whether through colonial military, intelligence gathering, or everyday security

apparatuses such as checkpoints and police presence in and out of cities, policing existed as a means of control.

This constellation of the colonial with violence and policing places the Sikh body at a peculiar site. This constellation is defined not purely by one or another colonial or imperial actor, but instead by multiple agents. For example, since 9/11, Sikhs, along with Muslims, have been repeated targets for violence. Many of these cases involve targeting, profiling, harassment, intimidation, violence, and death; and much of it arises from a prevailing atmosphere of paranoia and fear, heavily conditioned by the machinations of empire and state security, commonly known as the Global War on Terror. In the first instance of such violence following 9/11, Balbir Singh Sodhi was shot and killed at his Mesa, Arizona gas station on September 15 by Frank Roque, who desired to follow through with his promise of "going out to shoot some towelheads," after watching coverage of the 9/11 attacks.[17] Such a case mark the ways in which Sikh bodies are targets for death, by and through primarily agents of vigilantism in an age of terror. Yet, it can be argued that such processes of targeting and enactments of racial violence and death on the Sikh body have much earlier precedents, as far back as the colonial period.

Defining Diaspora

Vital for this study is a definition of diaspora and its place within a larger collective Sikh body. The Sikh diaspora has its largest populations in the United Kingdom, the U.S., and Canada, along with large pockets in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Japan, Italy, and France. Much

[17] " Oral Statement of Assistant Attorney General Thomas E. Perez Before the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights and Human Rights", March 29, 2011, http://www.justice.gov/crt/opa/pr/testimony/2011/crt-testimony-110329.html; Tamar Lewin , "Sikh Owner Of Gas Station Is Fatally Shot In Rampage", New York Times, http://www.nytimes.com/2001/09/17/us/sikh-owner-of-gas-station-is-fatally-shot-in-rampage.html; CNN, "Hate crime reports up in wake of terrorist attacks", Sept. 17, 2001. http://archives.cnn.com/2001/US/09/16/gen.hate.crimes/index.html 4 http://www.saldef.org/news/sikh-americans-condemn-hate-crimes-and-urge-nation-to-unite-demand-protectionfrom-police-and-public-officials/#more-329

literature on the Sikh diaspora comes out of the UK, where Sikhs comprise about 0.5% of the whole population (nearly 300,000). The relationship to homeland for the diaspora is defined less by a relationship to India as it is to the Punjab region.[18] Punjab is in many ways a location where Sikhs locate themselves, not necessarily as a place of origin, but as the promise of return, the promise of sovereign future. In this way, diaspora for a collective Sikh body is a way in which to read migration as a mode of escape from perilous pasts and presents.

I take heed from the contributions of Brian Keith Axel, whose work in the fields of anthropology, Sikh studies, and postcolonial theory has been invaluable. In his 2001 monograph *The Nation's Tortured Body: Violence, Representation, and the Formation of a Sikh "Diaspora,"* Axel's definition of diaspora is informed not by location or geopolitics exclusively, but more so by temporality and corporeality.[19] Such conceptions are useful for the analytic of the militant body insofar as the Sikh body is in a perpetual state of urgent motion within and outside of individual and collective bodies. For Axel, the tortured Sikh body and its digital reproduction in the late 1990s is the site unto which he builds his analysis, and thus the visceral and visual components of the Sikh body become crucial in the formation of Sikh diasporic imaginary. This term, diasporic imaginary, is developed and deployed by Axel to signal the ways in which diaspora functions outside of constructions of space and place; rather, in Axel's construction, the Lacanian concept of imaginary manifests a more productive model in which to think through time and body via subjectification. Axel's diasporic imaginary, as a result, renegotiate how history and collectivities are narrated and considered.[20]

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[18] Singh, Pashaura, and Louis E. Fenech. *The Oxford Handbook of Sikh Studies*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2014.
[19] Axel, Brian Keith. *The Nation's Tortured Body: Violence, Representation, and the Formation of a Sikh "diaspora"* Durham: Duke University Press, 2001.
[20] Axel, 48.

More recently, Jasbir Puar and Nayan Shah have each presented generative models for rethinking diaspora and immigration through queer theory and history. Puar and Shah's respective texts contribute to the fields of ethnic studies and U.S. cultural studies in ways that are always already underscored and highlighted by their global processes and dimensions of race, labor, sexuality, empire, and migration. Puar's 2007 monograph *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times* speaks to the Sikh body in terms of queer diaspora and racial profiling, placing such a body squarely in a post-9/11 scheme.[21][22] By examining the turban as a crucial site to read closely through signification, Puar's feminist and queer analysis scrutinized the heavily masculinized turban as appendage and through its affects, capacities, contingencies, and manifold effects—most remarkably, of course, following 9/11 and the myriad security apparatuses that preyed upon the marked brown body. On the other hand, Shah's 2011 monograph *Stranger Intimacy: Contesting Race, Sexuality, and the Law in the North American West* takes up South Asian migrants along the West Coasts of Canada and the U.S. through frameworks of transience and sexual transgression.[23] As an assembled history of South Asian diasporic racialization and queer encounter and intimacy, Shah's study invests in the figures of migrant labor (or laboring diaspora) as both conditioning and being conditioned by the law. Though their approaches are historically distinctive and wholly unique, along with Axel's, I place my study in direct conversation with these texts and their fields of postcolonial and diaspora studies and critical ethnic studies, with deep investments in feminist methods and queer theory.

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[21] For more on queer diaspora, in one of its earliest iterations, see Eng, David L., and Alice Y. Hom. *Q & A: Queer in Asian America*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998.

[22] Puar, Jasbir K. *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer times*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2007. Pp. 171-2.

[23] Shah, Nayan. *Stranger Intimacy: Contesting Race, Sexuality, and the Law in the North American West*. Berkeley: UC Press, 2013.

However, "Militant Bodies" intervenes in the study of diaspora by taking the aforementioned texts as points of departure. While especially indebted to Shah for his deployment and deep theorizing of transience over settlement, I define diaspora in terms of the framing of minor. By wholly subsuming the Sikh diaspora as a minor diaspora is to not make insignificant the concerns of the diaspora, far from it. Rather, the minor diaspora situates Sikhs as not wholly outside of the body politic or the global state apparatus, but within and as participants in worlds rife with antagonism and threat. As such, the Sikh diaspora forms a minor politics that primarily opposes—or is rendered oppositional to—majoritarian politics as a mode of engagement. Further, the minor diaspora serves to underscore the rationale for migration and the making of mobile or transient populations as never only forced or voluntary, falling somewhere between, and usually ambivalently. The Sikh diaspora acutely captures such ambivalence by existing in a space defined by the desire for future sovereignty, as in the calls for Khalistan, and whose national loyalties have been rendered mobile and malleable. While Axel's diasporic imaginary indeed captures these conceptions of the collective Sikh body, his argument fails to extend to the U.S., where racial politics have forcibly reckoned with their Asian immigrant populations since the early twentieth century.

As such, a major contention of this project is to not simply build off such work within the fields of critical ethnic and Asian American studies, but to expand the study of diaspora as a unique formation, and site for, minor politics. By minor politics I mean to invoke studies of minor literature and minority philosophy that have regained some popularity due to further considerations of Deleuze and Guattari's formative theoretical texts. Still, minor politics in the context of the U.S. Sikh diaspora serves to function specifically as a way of denoting race and racialization. Of course, the collective Sikh body within and outside of the U.S. must rely

heavily on contingent racialization, and as such has encountered much opposition in terms of Sikhs being primarily read as a ethno-religious population, therefore akin more to the Jewish diaspora than to distinct Asian diasporas. Nevertheless, the U.S. Sikh diaspora might be rendered as outside of these categories and in analytic terms of minor politics for their refusal and ambivalence toward national entities and the already and forever sovereign.

A major rationale for such refusal and ambivalence has been developed in direct response to, and confrontation with, majoritarian force: such force includes and is especially comprised by the dominant institutions of Hindu nationalism and white supremacy. A minor diaspora such as the Sikh diaspora functions through affects, as Puar notes; affectively, Sikhs are racialized and made minor (or minority) under various rubrics of religiosity and foreignness—and all of what falls under such categorization.[24] Even within the Indian nation-state, the Sikh body is rendered as racial and religious minority, made strange primarily through their militant will to live as Sikh and thereby minor. In many ways, the historical resistance to conversion, which bore the martyrdoms of Sikh gurus and saints, is a crucial aspect to the perpetuation of a collective Sikh body. The refusal to convert can be conceived in two primary ways: firstly, through a historical perspective situated in South Asia that sought Sikh conversion to Islam in the early modern period and Hinduism in and through modernity; and secondly, through a historical perspective situated in North America that systematically contended with Asian migrants by renegotiating the landscape of racial citizenship and making collapsible heterogeneous populations, thereby rendering Sikhs in the early 20th century wave of migration as "Hindoo."[25] It should also be noted that this latter qualification continues to be complicated by the premise of America's

[24] Puar, 63.
[25] Sohi, Seema. *Echoes of Mutiny. Race, Surveillance, and Indian Anticolonialism in North America. Seema Sohi*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014. Pp. 21.

originary and foundational promise of religious freedom and tolerance; of course, such freedom is conditional and such tolerance is limited in its embrace, particularly as this promise hinges on Christianity and Protestantism specifically.[26] Nonetheless, the majoritarian impulse to make the collective Sikh body something other than what it is, through conversion, serves as a crucial metaphor for rendering the Sikh diaspora as configured by minor politics.

But even beyond conversion as a metaphor, minor diaspora conceptualizes a way in which to rethink the parameters of diaspora. By existing outside of the majority, the minor diaspora can have no allegiance to any machinations or figures of majoritarianism, including and especially the nation-state. At its core, while the minor diaspora may seek legibility through formal recognition, its historical unruliness renders such recognition as only an indefinite promise of the future. For the U.S. Sikh diaspora, what this means is a disparate and vague pull toward a sovereign future in the Punjab, paired with the simultaneous affective maneuvers of ambivalence, disinterest, and despondency based on unfulfilled American promises. Yet, despite such collective affect, what animates and activates the Sikh diaspora is resistance and refusal, militancy and struggle. Even if the minor diaspora produces ambivalence, it is superseded by the minor politics that has and continues to define its collectivities. The always unsettled, always transient formations of minor diasporas complicate the overwhelming sensibilities of benevolent assimilation and melting pot cultures that have come to define narratives of Asian American settlement in the U.S., as well as liberal multiculturalism. In fact, for the minor diaspora, assimilation and settlement are antithetical to the premise and promises of migration. For many, migration offers a greater probability of survival, and the collective drive for survival overrides any longstanding attachment to points and locations of origin.

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[26] Brown, Wendy. *Regulating Aversion: Tolerance in the Age of Identity and Empire*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006.

Minor diasporas as such can never be holistically defined by the desire for settlement. It is the minor diaspora that cannot be converted. Settlement and conversion are predicated on senses of stasis and majoritarianism; in other words, a static majority. The minor diaspora disrupts this fundamental static majority—those, as mentioned, constituted by structures such as Hindu nationalism or white supremacy—by seeking to unsettle and only staying put in its non-conversion. By refusing to convert or assimilate is not to say that such collectivities are unwilling to transform or be transformed by myriad forces; rather, these collectivities instead participate in practices of active minoritarianism. The U.S. Sikh diaspora constitutes an actively minor body—through its strangeness, its religiosity, its racial signification, and its ties to the ethical and political imperatives of *Sikhi*. Alternatively, by asserting difference, the Sikh diaspora as actively minor body, willingly engages with the realm of worldly politics; such engagement countering the popular feeling of Sikh politics as being relegated to the domain of the sacred—and thereby inviolable.

Such minor activity and practice aid in the forming of the Sikh diaspora, and additionally aid in defining the Sikh diasporic body not only through militancy, but also through modes of becoming. At once, becoming constitutes a mode of reading or rendering the Sikh body by majoritarian or statist forces—those policing the Sikh within and outside of its diasporic form—and effectively constitutes an aspect of the unconverted and unassimilable Sikh body as a minor body—clearly and particularly embodied by militancy. Moreover, becoming denotes a formal tethering of the Sikh body to struggle, unsettlement, resistance, and transience. Through this reading, the Sikh body cannot unattach itself from its various signifiers, histories, affects, or patterns of movement. For some, the struggle for the Sikh body might have less to do with the commitment to becoming-minor, but to a commitment to stave off majoritarian and statist forces

of conversion or assimilation. Still, this default commitment to oppose the majority and the state is very much dictated by the premises of minor politics and becoming-minor.

Hyperbolic Racialization in an Age of Terror

One such theory that anchors this study is hyperbolic racialization. This theory comes out of the post-9/11 age in that it signals the simultaneity of the U.S. as "post-racial" at the same time as it continues both in its complicity in the violence and death of brown bodies within the nation-state and to target and destroy brown bodies abroad through its imperial wars fought, broadly, against global terror. Specifically, I define hyperbolic racialization through my chapter's various historical episodes, in effect to undermine the rote response to racialization and claims to racism, racist violence, and racial death as exaggerations or overstatements; further, the Sikh body, while often defined as "an ethnic-religious minority," have experienced and continue to experience forms of discrimination, violence, and death that can only be understood through race-making practices and the logics of racialization. In using hyperbole to analyze the racialization of Sikhs in the U.S., I both nod to the push by majoritarian Sikh voices to represent forms of aspirational belonging and model minority conservatism, as well as to allude to the ways in which the post-9/11 age have exacerbated and overstated the threat of global and "homegrown" terror which have seemingly led to forms of racism and racist violence against Muslims, Sikhs, and other brown bodies.

To be clear, hyperbolic racialization serves to note several aspects of Sikh diasporic racialization, including but not limited to: the denial and erasure of race and racialization by rendering it an overstatement; the exaggeration of the threat of a large group (e.g. brown bodies), regardless of difference; the overstatement of the threat of a particular group within the larger

whole, contributing to increased targeting and racializing practices; and, finally, the incorporation, reproduction, and dissemination of images and symbols that have produced heightened fear and targeting. The surge in vulnerability that Sikhs in the U.S. face reflects the sense that to understand the diaspora as something beyond a religious community enlarges the difference between Sikhs and notions of mainstream, dominant, or majoritarian forces. In effect, hyperbolic racialization emphasizes difference over similarity, racial community over religious community, dissonance over tolerance, radical politics over liberal multiculturalism. Such effect serves specific purposes of rejecting neoliberal culture as a means to appealing for radical change.

In this vein, it becomes possible to not think of Sikh diasporic subject as hyperbolically racialized, but rather think and negotiate how race is often rendered as hyperbolic, especially given the casual usage of "post-race" and "post-racial" as a neoliberal discourse. Through this new racial grammar, I ask not only what race is and how race works within an American framework, but what race is and how race works globally; that is to say how the production of difference and minority subjects and politics is vital in rethinking race not only through the nation, but rather through the global racial state. In this way, racial logic notes and legitimates difference as a mode in which to exist and resist dominant or majoritarian forces and regimes, including national culture, global white supremacy, and imperial violence.

It is through such an understanding that I offer hyperbolic racialization and its clear end to amplify difference as a form of resistance. This intervention seeks to parse out the tensions within colonial race-making projects, imperial racism, and oppressive statist regimes, as well as their legacies, in order to renegotiate how racialization in the contemporary moment, specifically Sikh racialization, might generate a more just and ethical understanding of subjects whose

difference is necessary to their lives as minor bodies and alternative political expression. It is within this very post-racial moment that hyperbolic racialization is borne, as the denial of racialization for the Sikh body only serves to perpetuate violence: it is this very emphasis on religious intolerance that Sikhs (and Muslims) face that foregoes all opportunity for more thorough readings of the hostility, harm, and violence as racializing practices. This tension between race and religion is not what I am wholly invested in troubling; rather, for the purposes of my study, I find that religious intolerance ultimately falls under the rubric of racialization. In this regard, racial politics recuperate a form of community for the Sikh diasporic body by offering new modes and alternatives of Sikh diasporic collectivity, solidarities through civil and immigrant rights activism and organizing, and vital understandings of how to live, work, and struggle in the U.S.

Such a theory relies on an assortment of concerns and qualifications, which might be neatly surmised into one of two schemes. Of course, the reduction of such a theory does not and cannot capture the messiness and tensions through categorization, these categories are loose formations of what remains vital in thinking through this concept. The first scheme of hyperbolic racialization relies on the reception of images and their transmission onto the shaping of perception of racial subjects, "new" and otherwise. This process aligns with the characterization of the post-9/11 age as producing Orientalism's afterlife. This formation demands that subjects, through sequence, must have an image, must be rendered primarily through visual and ocular logics of race, and must produce new or renewed targets.[27] The reciprocal formation is that for those receiving these images, there are heightened statist and public tactics of surveillance and the attendant enhancement of national and global feelings of insecurity. Through reception and perception, racial subjects are under constant surveillance, be it formal state apparatuses or

[27] Mirzoeff, Nicholas. *The Right to Look: A Counterhistory of Visuality*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011.

through public vigilantism, and thus inhabit these general or greater feelings of paranoia and suspicion.

In the second scheme, hyperbolic racialization is rendered through the apprehension of overstated transmissions and their historical legacies, as well as the subsequent anticipation of racial futures. Such a scheme is based on the predication of subjects having to work within the terms of racialization. It refers to the possibility of navigating racialized subjects to work against dominant modalities, which might refer to terrains such as American empire, global white supremacy, and homeland security. To work within and under repressive frameworks—including surveillance, colonial governmentality, and under biopower—is to operate through and provide what might be called insurgent knowledge. This term is tied to the comprehension and anticipation of historical patterns of empire, racialization, xenophobia, and regimes and cycles of statist fear and expansion that thrive on the repression of radicalism and minoritarian political and social movement. Bodies and forms that cannot forget produce insurgent knowledge, and at the same time, such bodies and forms are driven to create new futures as a means for survival. In this way, hyperbolic racialization is intimately connected to another significant theory and methodological framework for my study of the U.S. Sikh diasporic body, that of my adaptation of Deleuze and Guattari's theory of minor literature and "becoming-minor" as a political reading practice.

Becoming-Minor in the U.S. Sikh Diasporic Body

In Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's 1986 short monograph *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature* they develop a theory of, and method for reading, literature through generative exegeses on Franz Kafka's literature. It is a method of reading that understands literary works as

collective, spatial, and especially political. It is this political intimacy with literature where revolutionary potential emerges, specifically insofar as it questions and confronts major and dominant forms in the major language. In this way, minor literature produces politically potent material, as it acts as collective enunciation that is at once territorial and de-territorial. Minor literature is insurgent knowledge, as it is a form in which to know and organize the world anew, especially through its engagement and intimacy with major and majoritarian forms and languages. Akin to Raymond William's theory of emergent literary forms in his vital text *Marxism and Literature,* Deleuze and Guattari define minor literature in political terms:[28]

> Above all else, because collective or national consciousness is "often inactive in external life and always in the process of break-down," literature finds itself positively charged with the role and function of collective, and even revolutionary, enunciation. It is literature that produces an active solidarity in spite of skepticism; and if the writer is in the margins or completely outside his or her fragile community, this situation allows the writer all the more the possibility to express another possible community and to forge the means for another consciousness and another sensibility. (17)

The characterization of minor literature as outside of any form of dominance or majoritarian structures while maintaining the ability to write and enunciate to those within circles of dominant power and majoritarian politics exhibits those other opportunities, to create "possible community" and new consciousness and sensibility. This provides a way to think about the shared possibility of minor literature with political becoming.

As they elucidate in various texts, but particularly in *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari develop the theory of becoming-minor.[29] For the purposes of this project, I ask several questions: what does becoming mean not just for language and literature, but for bodies and people? How can becoming operate as both an act and process that is both ontological and

[28] Williams, Raymond. *Marxism and Literature*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977; Deleuze and Guattari, *Kafka*, p. 23.
[29] Deleuze and Guattari. *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987.

political? How is becoming either rendered or willful for minor subjects? What are the conditions that produce rendered- or perceived- becoming and what are the conditions that produce willful-becoming? In order to address these questions, it is necessary to conceive of becoming-minor as a form of resistance. Becoming-minor operates in various modes, including: 1. Becoming-minor desires not the destruction of the majority, but the space in which to live and organize freely; 2. Becoming-minor lives and desires within the larger whole or dominant space; 3. Becoming-minor lives and desires in this space, while oppressed by, and critical of, this space; 4. Becoming-minor opens up space for alternatives to regimes; and 5. Becoming-minor creates the visions of new worlds as not just a mode of politics, but as subversive ontology. In these modes, becoming-minor, like hyperbolic racialization, is another form of insurgent knowledge. In other terms, becoming-minor provides new forms of knowing and relating to the world, formulates novel ways of political organization, anticipates and strategizes in accordance to historical knowledges, and provides new modes of community by imagining alternative frameworks and theories in order to engage in what Fred Moten and Stefano Harney call "fugitive planning."[30]

What this theorization does for the Sikh body is to transform becoming-minor not from the literary, ontological, and political, but between those with the bodily and the collective. In this way, I identify the Sikh body as a becoming-minority, and this aids in my reading of the collective from its colonial formation through the diasporic figure in the contemporary period. Of course, this theorization in no way attempts to suggest a monolithic figure or mindset, rather it attempts to cohere diverse and varied strands of thought productive for scrutiny and interrogation. As a becoming-minority, Sikhs have and continue to operate within frameworks of

[30] Harney, Stefano, and Fred Moten. *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning Et Black Study*. Wivenhoe: Minor Compositions, 2013.

racial violence and religious intolerance, trying to navigate life under the nation-state outside of harm or hostility. A major aspect of Sikh minoritarian formation is that they in no way cohere to a form of minority legible within the U.S., be it within the early twentieth century naming of Sikhs as "Hindoo" or Hindu, or in the contemporary existence as mistakenly Muslim in an era of rampant Islamophobia: in this way, Sikhs in the U.S. are merely a collapsible minority, unlike their historical or contemporary rendering in India. This notion is intimately tied to the sense that Sikhs are always the coming minority, that their legibility and status will be recognized in a time to come, in a near future; they are not yet named or nameable and not yet legible within the state. Especially important is that Sikh diasporic politics are always tied to homeland politics—and particularly for Sikhs, the mid-twentieth century and onward push for a Sikh nation-state, named Khalistan; Khalistan represents a forever space of possibility—of rights and recognition—that is only virtually possible or realized, as Brian Keith Axel argues in *The Nation's Tortured Body.*[31]

Furthermore, and particular to the U.S. Sikh diaspora, is the experience of Sikhs as becoming-minority under statist regimes that do not necessarily know national borders. What this means is that the U.S. diaspora emphasizes the deterritorialized collectivity of Sikhs within the U.S., but defined through empire old and new, British and American. All of these aspects of the becoming-minority of Sikhs is to proclaim my investigation as an examination of the diaspora as having a distinct and particularly fraught relationship to collective minoritarian formation and minor politics. This tense relationship manifests in the modes that diasporic Sikhs is constantly attempting to be understood or recognized by the state, or only invests in the alternative of seeking a new state itself: ultimately, these options are meant to underscore the Sikh body as living or dying under or for statist logic. What this then results in are maneuvers in which these attempts or desires are transformed into either strategies toward assimilationist

[31] Axel, 112-35.

worlds or militant opposition to the state through anti-statist tactics. Still, often there are tactics that work within and against the state, and often simultaneously, and are parsed out in each of my chapters; these include a study of colonial configurations of Sikhs as martial races, labor demand and exclusion and violence faced by Sikhs, and the current struggle for formal recognition and rights for Sikhs in the military. Anti-statist tactics by Sikhs are especially defined by the events of 1984 and the resulting violence and continued exclusion and hostility felt by Sikhs in Punjab; still, in the U.S. there is a reading of Sikh presence as unwelcome, excluded, and violated, demonstrated most obviously in the case of the 2012 attack on a *gurdwara* (Sikh house of worship) in Oak Creek, Wisconsin, where white supremacist Wade Michael Page killed six members of the congregation. In these forms of statist opposition, Sikhs have face majority populations of Hindu nationalists or structures of white supremacy, xenophobia, or institutional racism.[32]

The current configuration of Sikhs as collapsible of conflated with terror, terrorism, separatism, and especially militancy can be apprehended as always already imbued with the sense of becoming-minor insofar as it uses political conceptions and acts of violence to collectively renegotiate and reimagine dominant or majoritarian statist policies. In this way, violence must be rendered as de-territorialized or as a form of de-territorialization. Significant to such a formulation is the reading of militancy as a form of political collectivity, as a tactic of becoming-minor and minor politics to operate against the antagonism of the majority.

Minor History and Chapter Breakdown

As a minor history, this project takes on the work of both mourning and recuperation. However, by mourning and recuperation I do not mean to suggest that this project arrives purely

[32] Grewal, Inderpal. "Racial Sovereignty And 'Shooter' Violence." *Sikh Formations* 9, no. 2 (2013): 187-97.

out of the death of a particular collective body. I further do not mean to suggest that it arises from death only to be revived by this writing and study. Rather, I confront the task of mourning as a political imperative, and out of deep care for a heritage and community with which I grew up and continue to live and struggle. Mourning thus connotes a sense of loss and being at loss, struggling to reconcile and exist beyond the loss. While Sikh history contains many particular figures for whom to mourn, it is the mourning of so many others and so many things that implores one to write.

Minor history might be figured as a field or within frames of area or cultural studies, framing and analyzing the minority and minoritarian figures. While it most certainly operates in this mode, it further defines and overwhelmingly shapes the stakes of this project. Minor histories are, at their very core, political interventions. Part of such interventions are the undisciplined and unruly ways in which they engage with the world, providing alternative or counter-histories of primarily subaltern subjects.[33] In this way, "Militant Bodies" rejects a linear writing of cultural history, instead locating particular moments and scenes in which to unearth the ways in which minor bodies offer uncommon and unconventional records as actors and agents, revolutionaries and resistors. By locating Sikh bodies in the U.S. as sites unto which a multitude of narratives proliferate, this study offer varied entries and incipient modalities in which to disentangle these narratives, and effectively negotiate new terrains in which to think about the U.S. based Sikh diaspora, regimes of race and violence, and minority politics.

In my first chapter, "Imperial Design: British India's Martial Race Ideology and the Governing of Sikh Bodies," I study the language of imperial race-making through a brief survey of the deployment of martial race status during the colonial period, or the British Raj. I argue that

[33] In many ways, minor histories and Michel Foucault's conception of genealogy, based on engagement and a taking up of Friedrich Nietzsche's *On the Genealogy of Morals*.

the configuration of Sikhs as martial races helped to serve a crucial role the making and unmaking of empire. I examine the work of military historian George MacMunn alongside the visual material, primarily photographs, of Sikh regiments of the British Colonial Army from the collections at the British Library and the Imperial War Museum.

My second chapter, “Radical Tides: Becoming-Racial and Secular in Ghadar Writing” looks at the Punjabi-language nationalist and socialist publications of the Ghadar Party (Revolution Party) in North America from 1913 until 1919. I argue that writings by Sikh founders of the Ghadar Party, Kartar Singh Sarabha and Bhagat Singh worked toward collective solidarity amongst South Asian peoples in the U.S. and Canada against racially-based transimperial forces through secularist principles and practices. I additionally center interfaith solidarities in the Ghadar Party as an emergence of the secular question amongst South Asian diasporic subjects.

Further, my third chapter, “Erasing/Embedding: Violent Afterlives of Partition in the Diaspora” examines a major moment of political violence in South Asian history, India/Pakistan partition in 1947 I argue that these periods were systematically erased at the national level and were highlighted and rendered meaningful through the Sikh diaspora’s processes of mourning. In this chapter I read artifacts ranging from novels including Khushwant Singh’s *Train to Pakistan* and Shauna Singh Baldwin’s *What the Body Remembers* to poetry by Bhanu Kapil in her short experimental work, *Schizophrene*. Through such readings, I highlight the racialized and religious charge of this key moment, placing diasporic mourning at the site of fraught tensions embedded in national politics but reconfigured by the anti- and trans-imperial cultural production of the diaspora.

Lastly, my fourth chapter, “Minortarian Mourning: 1984 and Cultural Production in the Wake,” examines diasporic mourning through the afterlife of the Sikh genocide of 1984 in India through the composition of global Sikh commons. In using the commons as a frame, I critique the dwindling of religious tolerance abroad for Sikhs, specifically focusing on Gauri Gill’s 2014 multimedia art project, “1984.” I also analyze Jaspreet Singh’s recent novel *Helium* and Amitav Ghosh’s personal essay, “The Ghosts of Gandhi.” Further, I examine the responses of the Sikh diaspora at this moment as a form of minority politics that begins to form within and outside of other South Asian diasporic solidarity efforts. I find that these responses expose certain religious tensions that demarcate political positions within diaspora, and that the creation of what Faisal Devji calls “militant globality” was not solely an imaginative gesture by British and American empire, but that the diaspora played a crucial role in shaping the current configuration of militancy pre-9/11.

Chapter 1: Imperial Design:

British India's Martial Race Ideology and the Governing of Sikh Bodies

In approaching the subject of martial race ideology in context of a discussion of militancy in the South Asian diaspora is to acknowledge the longer history of the notion of militancy and militant in the context of South Asian bodies. It furthermore denotes the notion of South Asian as inclusive of what is now Pakistan, as well as Nepal, Afghanistan, Kashmir, and other geographical regions, zones, and nation-states. By examining the colonial period, and specifically the notion of martial race, and therefore the relationship between race, militarism, and violence, there exist ties between the colonial, the imperial, and the production of future diasporic subjects. The designation of martial races in the colonial period serves as a way to apprehend the legacy of such relationships and the ways in which British imperial power served to create, perpetuate, and complicate racialized hierarchies in South Asia. The concept of South Asians as militant have both pre-colonial and colonial roots, but what marks this particular moment as significant is the utility of race as a construct in this geographical area insofar as classifications based on language, religion, and caste were already prevalent. The application of race in the context of South Asia did not necessarily bring about wholesale change, but rather was part of the variegated modes of social classification and stratification, and was used both rhetorically and discursively in shifting and unstructured modes. Instead of having immense social ramifications in the region, martial race ideology served to meld together religions, castes, regional differences, languages, and customs in an effort to mark groups into easy divisions of loyal and superior against disloyal and inferior. Still, what draws critical attention are the ways in which martial race theories opened up new methods of genealogy-production: While reliant on older forms of identity production, those deemed martial races in the colonial period were given

and placed into new, more fixed identity categories, while also rendered new narratives about the groups existence. It did not require the previous existence of such groups as social wholes, but rather the existence of those groups as vaguely available for the British cause; in other words, many of these groups were placed into this colonial taxonomy based on a default categorization of those *not* involved in the Sepoy Rebellion of 1857. What is particularly notable about this taxonomy, was that it functioned based on an ideological apparatus that valued the relationship of established social groupings, or races, to violence, or perhaps more of a cloaked phrase, military prowess. In so doing, many British and Indian colonial officials generated and fine-tuned the histories of such groups to fit a coherent narrative of colonial strength and domination over the othered, inferior peoples outside of the label of martial race at the time. These martial race narratives provide insight into the numerous, and oftentimes conflicting, modalities in which South Asian peoples identity categories collapsed, wherein religious communities, regional cultural groups, or groups designed by the British, and were remade into part of the colonial system. Strikingly, these colonial designations have had a longstanding impact on members of these martial races, insofar as the association of these particular races with military strength, militancy, and violence still shape certain narratives and discourses. [34]

In this chapter I explore and critically examine through the practice of close reading both the colonial narratives and postcolonial critiques of martial race ideology and the practice of colonial governmentality in other forms, specifically through the concept of Aryanism, as well as 1882's Ilbert Bill. The material I examine interrogates the militant body as a figure defined by coloniality and imperial projections. I begin at this moment as a way of highlighting a moment

[34]17 S.L.Menezes, Fidelity and Honour, p.76; Byron Farewell, Armies of the Raj, p.27; Seema Alvi, "The Sepoys and the Company: Tradition and Transition in Northern India 1770-1830" (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp.39, 45-46, 49. Many authors have given details of the armies of the East India Company including S.L. Menezes, Fidelity and Honour, pp. 11-12,14; (Major General) Jonathan Peel Commission Report, Report from Commissioners: 1859, Organisation of Army (Indian), Volume 5. (Peel was then the Secretary of State for War).

that defines and provides a crucial episode in the creation of South Asian militant body that, through the processes of migration and the creation of diaspora, persists, mutates, and is complicated by empire in multiple registers. This particular body is defined and conditioned by the policing of empire and other statist apparatuses. For this chapter's purposes, however, I focus on the ways in which the designation of "martial" race status begins and aids in the future deployment of the status of particular bodies on and away from South Asia to be understood as "militant". In other words, this colonial terminology sets a particular precedent that helps to designate certain racialized bodies as always already violent in the eyes of empire. The notion of race and violence as intimately and unrelentingly bound, as I elucidate in the introduction, provides a well-worn rubric in which to understand the concept and analytic of militant bodies. I argue there, as I will here, that empire has policed the South Asian bodies since British colonization and through the contemporary period figuration of American empire. Martial race ideology marks an interesting opening into the study of South Asian diasporic bodies as always already violent, as militant bodies.

Overview

The British Raj refers to the period of British imperial rule over India and what is now Pakistan from 1858 until 1947. This period was marked by the domination of India by British imperial forces, forces with footholds in various parts of the world. India was considered a central figure in the British imperial landscape as it defined many of the policies integral in other colonies, from Egypt to Burma. Imperial interactions between the British and Indians had characteristically defined subsequent relationships with various other British controlled areas across the globe. What was particularly notable about this imperial agent and imperial subject

relationship was the delineation of racial categories after the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857. Based on loyalties bred from the Mutiny, the British divided Indians into the categories of "martial" and "non-martial" races: martial races were used to designate various ethnic groups who had the seemingly natural capacity for military battle, whereas non-martial races were seen as unfit for battle, leading generally sedentary lifestyles.

The delineation of martial and non-martial races, however, was based not necessarily on the accuracy of such claims, but on whether or not certain groups, based generally on various ethnic or religious classifications on the subcontinent, were loyal or disloyal to the British in the Mutiny. Loyalty to the empire translated into a willingness to fight on its behalf, and such loyalty leant itself to the colonial delineation and naturalization of martial races. While certain groups, such as Sikhs and Gurkhas, had historically been regarded as possessing military prowess and having natural skill as warriors, many other martial races were simply incorporated into the ranks of the British colonial army based on a lack of rebellion. Participation in the mutiny, on the other hand, translated into the distinction that factions opposed to the British were thereby unfit for the ranks of the colonial army—unfit clearly having various implications in this context.

Perhaps most importantly, the British took into account the immense social, ethnic, and religious stratification of India, and used this knowledge to their advantage. In marking and bestowing an honorable title, honor here denoting what has been labeled as a form of inspiration and inclusion[35]: those included in the martial races were recognized for a seemingly natural capacity for battle, and such capacity was an identitarian label that made the bonds of social, ethnic, and religious identities that much greater. By using the category of race in the context of the subcontinent, new colonial apparatuses were set into place that both verified and created

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[35] These processes of inspiration and inclusion are alternated, of course with processes of intimidation and exclusion, all of which is elucidated in Heather Streets's 2004 monograph, *Martial Races: The Military, Race, and Masculinity in British Imperial Culture, 1857-1914*. Manchester: Manchester UP, 2004, pp. 4.

anew tensions and factions between martial and non-martial, and within marital and non-martial. I argue in this chapter that the ways in which the colonial racial designation of martial races and non-martial races were implemented signified a shift in the modes of understanding ethnic, religious, and minority social groups in India. This shift marked an imperial turn in the classifications of Indians, and had major effects on various populations and groups. Furthermore, I argue that the martial race designation's capacity for associating social groups with violence, or a propensity for violence, branded these particular groups that has outlasted British imperial rule and continues to haunt various groups even now. In highlighting the legacy of British empire on Indian national identity, I argue that the Raj in fact served to both help define and divide Indians in a way that has aided in the association of martial races as masculine, as violent, as having natural abilities for war, and for breeding a militaristic culture—and by contrast, non-martial races as feminine, as non-violent, as incapable of or disinterested in war, and for perpetuating a weak and militarily inferior cultures. Furthermore, I understand these processes of racialization and militarism functioned as critical technologies in colonial governmentality, along with other forms and figures.

For my purposes, I will examine in depth two texts from the period post-mutiny through the partition, George MacMunn's colonial "history" or ethnography of martial races, and the Ilbert Bill of 1882. These selected texts will reflect a set of varied forms that attempt to examine the both colonial governmentality and the category of martial races in different ways, demonstrating the rich and curious ideological apparatuses that supported, contested, and complicated the notion of race in the context of colonialism and imperialism in British India. These primary political and cultural artifacts range from documents of imperial and colonial policies and legislation to writing by British army officials, and to journalistic accounts. These

primary texts help to recapitulate and reimagine the rather limited body of critical scholarship on martial race theory, and further, provides a new mode of understanding the notion of race in the Indian context that at once recognizes its curious and variegated expressions, and its seeming non-existence in another sense. For example, race in the context of India was also wrapped up in notions of Aryanism, oftentimes cited and understood as derived from Sanskrit and deployed in Indo-Iranian scholarly circles. The charges of Aryanism were used as a tool during British colonialism as a racialist expression of kinship. In conjunction with martial race ideology, Aryanism managed to create a precedent of racialism within the systematic rule of the colonized people of India. Aryanism, known formally as a loanword—that is a word that is borrowed from a donor language and given to a recipient language—from Sanskrit to English, acted as a distinctive and convenient mode of discursive entry into the subcontinent. Whereas martial race theory set up a remarkably divisive system in the colonial regime post-Mutiny, Aryanism was an ideological means to creating bonds based on dubiously crafted racial categories. Prior to delving into a detailed exploration of martial races, I want to provide an abbreviated review of the unique deployment of Aryanism in India before and simultaneous with the development of martial races as a means of comparison.

Aryanism and the Raj

In his 2002 study *Orientalism and Race*, New Zealand-based historian of British imperial culture Tony Ballantyne suggests that Aryanism played a major role in the manifestation of what he calls "webs of empire."[36] Through the creation of what was understood by the British as a semblance of unified imperial projects and goals, the British sought coherence amongst various endeavors abroad. Ballantyne recognizes Aryanism in the colonial period as convenient for the

[36] Tony Ballantyne, *Orientalism and Race*. (Palgrave, 2002), 14.

British as it sets up an illusory familial relationship; he cites the cousin metaphor, which conveyed the sense that there existed a common heritage amongst British and South Asian peoples. In using what Benedict Anderson calls the "vocabulary of kinship", Ballantyne illuminates the way in which the notion of an Indo-European heritage, through Aryanism, arose out of the Orientalist underpinnings of colonial and imperial projects in the early nineteenth century.

Methodologically, Ballantyne uses the web metaphor, which states that the ties between empires and colonies, metropoles and peoples, was always present, interdependent, and multi-directional. The web serves as a way to emphasize the network culture of empire. Ballantyne recognizes Aryanism in the colonial period as convenient for the British as it sets up an illusory familial relationship; he cites the cousin metaphor, which conveyed the sense that there existed a common heritage amongst British and South Asian peoples. In using what Benedict Anderson calls the "vocabulary of kinship", Ballantyne illuminates the way in which the notion of an Indo-European heritage, through Aryanism, arose out of the Orientalist underpinnings of colonial and imperial projects in the early nineteenth century.[37] He argues that "Aryanism fortified both nationalist and imperialist ideologies, either by deepening the genealogy of the national community or through its use to police the nation's boundaries," suggesting that Aryanism was manipulated as a statist tactic for inclusion or exclusion from the nation-state.[38] However, such a paradigmatic practice wherein the notion of 'Indo-Europeaness' and Aryanism ethnologically determined whether or not you were a part of a nation, in the most abstract sense, did not simply link one nation to another, but rather an empire to its various imperial subjects around the globe.

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[37] Benedict Anderson, "Patriotism and Race" *from Imagined Communities*. 142.
[38] Tony Ballantyne, *Orientalism and Race* (Palgrave, 2002), 6.

What gets lost in the study of imperial ethnology in the British Raj is thus the feigned linkages not just between the Aryans of Britain and the Aryans of India, but all Aryans under British rule. The abstract community then created is seen as having the capacity for a type of familial relationship that valued the ties of blood for which Aryanism, evidently misleadingly, called. In developing this relationship between colonizer and colonized, Aryanism was used tactically as a way of developing kinship ties amongst disparate peoples for imperial purposes. Much is lost in the specificity of the British's designation of colonial Indians as Aryans, as it relies heavily on a civilizationalist discourse. While of course containing Indians and enforcing an illusory kinship relation onto its colonial subjects, the deployment of Aryanism was a tactically savvy maneuver in which to arrive at a "special relationship" with India and Indians. That is to say that India, so heavily reliant on the divisions pre-dating the colonial period, that of the caste system as a system of the division of labor and power since the third century B.C., as well as the socio-historical divisions based on religion and language, was tied to Britain in such an intimate and legitimizing way, fed into the notion of a greater civilizational narratives, variously appropriated for different Indian social groups. While the Orientalist fantasy and economic desires that fueled the British made possible the colonial project in India, the Aryan ties, however illusory, made possible the notion of an Indic civilization that was indeed tied to a primordial sense of singularity, of exceptionalism. By cultivating and having this creative reversal of civilizationalist discourse, wherein the British empire's civilizing missions trumped any sense of previously held or deeply embedded sense of civilization for the peoples of South Asia, there exists a redesigning of the classic social hierarchies.

Furthermore, the usage of Aryanism by the British made the divisions of the caste system an ethnic division, while Aryanism was a form of colonial racialism. By having these systems of

ethnic and racial categories available to them, the British colonial operation relied on the systematic rearticulation of social categories in India: that is to say that the British were able to use the, at the time, somewhat less rigid blood and class based caste system as an ethnic counterpoint to their seemingly inclusive, but ultimately divisive and tactical, racial grouping. Aryanism put into play the category of race and the notion of civilization in the colonial Indian context as a means of reorienting the perception of Indians as part of a colonizing process, as participants in their own subjugation. In so doing, colonized Indians were to see themselves as necessary to revitalization of an Indo-European heritage, when in fact, Aryanism only brought on a close-knit relationship between British colonial authority and a class of Indian elites. However, through the caste system, the division between castes based on a notion of Aryan and Dravidian peoples was already in place, with the designation being based primarily on the colorism of the caste system, as well as various regional divisions, primarily between North and South. And so in fact, Aryanism as deployed by the British primarily served to enforce a rather loose system of racialism, colorism, and class-based oppression in India. Nonetheless, in Aryanism's colonial manifestation, came the notion of civilization so dependent on Western conceptions of order based on hierarchical and systematic exclusion.

In this way, Aryanism operated as what I want to designate as a spectral precedent to other forms of racialization and colonial governmentality, which I define a bit later. Aryanism in this form acts a looming and animating feature of race-making in India, aiding in the shaping martial races in a way that recognizes the previous forms of social order, but denies them the context of coloniality and empire. Aryanism provides a useful, haunting animation to the project of martial race ideology and the making of racial imperial culture.

"Anarchy in the Punjab": Narrating Martial Race

I turn now to closely examine Lieutenant General MacMunn's 1933 monograph *The Martial Races of India*. In this text, much is explored in regards to the variety of marital races and the ways in which they were interpellated by the British military. MacMunn, an esteemed officer of the British military and served in various imperial settings including Burma, India, and South Africa, as well as a prolific writer and historian, was Furthermore, the ways in which martial races were cast out of the realm of the political, depoliticized through a lack of participation in the mutiny, marked their bodies as both ineligible and illegible to the anti-imperial front of Indian political bodies. By taking into account their absence in the mutiny, the logic of martial races follows the notion that in not offering support to those rebel groups and factions, those non-participants were able to understand British colonial presence in India as perhaps not necessarily a detriment, but rather in their lack of political presence in fact, offered a valuable apolitical and non-threatening set of bodies that were in a sense utilized for imperial goals. What is undeniably clear about the ways in which martial races were created and coined is not the fact that these groups had any particular investment in the satisfaction of colonial administrative officials or the carrying out of imperial design, but rather that they appeared without political allegiance to those already rebellious and incited factions. What appears to be of marginal significance to British imperial army officials and other colonial administrative bodies, are the other modes of political participation of which these martial races were a part.

"Who and what are the martial races of India, how do they come, and in what crucible, on what anvils hot with pain spring the soldiers of India, who surely Baba Ghandi never fathered?" (1). In this opening to his 1933 text *The Martial Races of India*, Scottish military historian

MacMunn begins with the interrogative only to ask other, more pointed, and invariably Orientalist questions:

> Who is the great bearded Sikh with his uncut Nazarite hair, his curling beard, and the enormous headdress with encircling quoit? [...] Where does the square-shouldered athletic Mussulman of the Punjab fit in the system of India? Does the squat, pug-faced little Mongolian Gurkha with a Kilmarnock on the side of his little head fit at all with the tall Rajput longhead, and where comes in the Pariah of Madras who builds the Empire's frontier roads, damned by some coal-black mammy of the South? Do they 'gloriamur' swell or the 'quare fremuerunt'? (1-2)

This opening provides a wealth of information on the type of language employed to describe the martial races, using the language perhaps understood best as colonial ethnology. Colonial ethnology provides a way for colonial administrators, official or unofficial, to participate in the creation of social and cultural narrative-making based on distinction between social groups; these distinctions, moreover, are often made for the purpose of conveying the grandeur of the colonial project, as well as to only later be included in the category of Orientalist 'scholarship'. Named are Sikhs, Punjabi Muslims, Nepalese Gurkhas, Rajputs and Madrasis, and we gather that the physicality of these groups is both sociologically useful and determinate of their capabilities. MacMunn's tone is colonial through the condescension and the clear mix of curiosity with mockery. His questioning of the Sikh's identitarian symbols of faith; his emphasis on the physical aptitude and vigor of the Punjabi Muslim as not aligned and out of place in India; his racist and phenotypical assessment of Gurkhas as having canine facial qualities contrasted by the phenotypical descriptions of Rajputs; and his qualifying Madrasis as dark-skinned, whose laboring within the colonial infrastructure recalls U.S.-based racial slave genealogy--with the

invocation of a "coal-black mammy--and therefore an aberration in the primarily North Indian martical races. MacMunn, just in this opening paragraph, gives readers a set of questions wherein we learn not only much about the way in which these groups are distinct from one another under the heading of martial races, but also the political place of MacMunn in this both historical and sociological project. What makes this series of questions so productive, or at least fascinating, here is the way in which it posits and makes assumptions for its intended audience: that is to say that if we do not possess familiarity with these particular social groups in India, we will be, just by the sheer visual quality to the writing, and the physical descriptors, able to identify such groups through MacMunn's rich and ornamental language. However, that sense of identification is goes hand-in-hand with not even thinly veiled racist language and appropriations that are quintessentially Orientalist.

To be clear, by employing Orientalism I mean to invoke Edward Said's work on Orientalism insofar as the narratives and historical writing on martial races demands such an analysis; I borrow from Said this definition of Orientalism:

> Orientalism is a distribution of geopolitical awareness into aesthetic, scholarly, economic, sociological, historical, and philological texts; it is an elaboration not only of a basic geographical distinction (East/Orient and West/Occident) but scholarly discovery, philological reconstruction, psychological analysis, landscape and sociological description, it not only creates but also maintains it; it is, rather than expresses, a certain will or intention to understand, in some cases to control, manipulate, even to incorporate, what is a manifestly different world. (12)[39]

It is through a clear understanding of this colonial and imperial body of work that we begin to understand that in this way Orientalism, and specifically Orientalist textual production, is a

[39] Said, Edward. *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage, 1978.

means to understand knowledge as controlled and manipulated by the West. Said identifies the British, French, and American empires as sites of rich production in this regard, insofar as these three imperial powers have been and continue to be the greatest sources of this type of social and cultural production under the heading of scholarly work and intellectual labor. MacMunn's text falls under the category of Orientalist for all the apparent, and perhaps less apparent reasons. His accounts of martial races are rife with colonial and civilizationalist discourse and categorizations. In positing this East/West, Indian/British dichotomy, civilizationalist discourse begins to shape the basic relationship that informs the narrativizing of the martial races. In this way the civilizationalist and Orientalist discourses frame the further dissonance of martial races from other subcontinental social groups. MacMunn's text continues with his introduction of the groups as such:

> Indeed, to understand what is meant by the martial races of India is to understand from the inside the real story of India. We do not speak of the martial races of Britain as distinct from the non-martial, nor of Germany, nor of France. But in India we speak of martial races as a thing apart and because the mass of the people have neither the martial aptitude nor physical courage...the courage that we should talk of colloquially as 'guts'. (2)

There are distinct moves on MacMunn's part to underscore the necessity of understanding the absolute singularity and uniqueness of the martial races of India insofar as they represent an aberration from the rest of the Indian population. They are distinct because they are unlike those other groups, based on a colonial designation, and are therefore superior. MacMunn's words present readers with the opportunity to not only learn from his telling, but to act as corroborators to his narration and account of the martial races. If we are to know the "real story of India" and

"from the inside", we must listen, or read carefully as MacMunn's text is to act as an account of colonial military history. Furthermore, in his invocation of imperial European powers Britain, Germany, and France, there is the apparent civilizationalist trajectory that begins the process of colonial racialization. In casting imperial, European, Western powers as just that, powers, sovereign entities whose military infrastructure is in place, according to their accordant notion of infrastructure, MacMunn marks an ultimately unreachable standard on which to assess Indian military culture prior to colonial occupation.

This distinction of martial from non-martial races, which is not noted here, has everything to do with the fact of rebellion and anti-imperialist politics, unrecognizable in the narration of colonial race-making. In casting those other bodies, the non-martial races, as without 'guts' is to mark them as weak, cowardly, and feminine; and even further, the connotation of being without 'guts' is to be calculating, generally nonviolent, or at least cautious to use violent, and ultimately strategic. In violent conflict then, the non-martial races do not have the overwhelming desire to use unbridled force in the ways that martial races would. In this double and carefully compounded Orientalism of the martial races by MacMunn then, we understand those deemed martial as necessarily the contrasted Indian figure of strength, courage, and masculinity; and even further, as being uncalculating, violence, without caution, and strategic inasmuch as they follow military orders with blind loyalty. Martial races represent an extremely valuable asset to the overall imperial order of things in India in MacMunn's early narration. The artifice of this narrative is based on the colonial ethnological structures that retain a sense of an illusory relationship between race and violence, that their lies a predisposition of, and capacity, for violence in those deemed martial races. This relationship relays a sense of how the ascription of meaning and value is ascribed to those racialized, and as with the racialization of one group,

or set of groups in this case, such meaning and value is then negated, or rendered in negative, to those outside of such a group or grouping. In developing a system of racialization in the colonial setting, the British are concocting new modes of persecution and oppression on the subcontinent, where religious, ethnic, linguistic, and regional divisions are already quite deep.

MacMunn's narration further highlights these many internal divisions in India through the various ways in which he narrates and defends the historical necessity of the martial races from the perspective of one who has deep investments in the colonial project and the goals of Western imperialism. Within the martial races, MacMunn tells of the imperative for such a set of groups to have built alliances and friendships across inflexible and socially immobile divisions so familiar to them:

> The martial races of India live side by side in friendliness so long as there is a strong hand of Government to prevent their stouter hearts joining more seriously in the quarrel, and this place where cameraderie exists is curiously enough in those homes of content and enthusiasm, the regiments of the Army of India. (6)

Here we get the sense that 'friendliness' exists amongst these races is of great significance in MacMunn's rendering, for anything other than such a relationship would not suffice in the narration of this colonized grouping. The tale that MacMunn begins to tell is that of the martial races avoiding conflict based on religion, based on the great division between Hindus and Muslims that animates early modern conceptions of India. Rather than recognize the various differences between the martial races themselves, MacMunn chooses to portray this colonial designation as natural, as having an established and perhaps, historical relationship. Through this naturalization the process from it ahistorical nature to historical positing is made legible. This process might then encapsulate how the designation of martial races as a specifically colonial

practice, firstly, marks particular bodies as indelibly marked by coloniality, as well those non-martial races as inevitably marked in the negation of such designation, though that might be too Hegelian of a reading; and secondly, in the way of colonialism, the natural camraderie of martial races marks not only the legibility of these social groups, it marks and shapes their historical narration. Of course, such historical positioning, on the part of MacMunn and various others, is a trademark of colonial history, and made readily and necessarily available for both anti- and post-colonial critique.

MacMunn follows such a casting of the martial races as amiable with an outline of Indian ethnology. He points to the casting of Indians as Aryans as a touchstone of their identity, and further breaks identities down through a reading and collapsing of caste, religious culture, and previously significant social hierarchies. What's fascinating about the trajectory of MacMunn's text is the way in which coming to the martial races in the context of the early twentieth century means confrontation with those non-martial races. In Chapter XIV of the text, titled "The Martial Races of the East and West To-Day", MacMunn asserts:

> The rest of India has nothing like the same percentage of men that are men as the Punjab, while as for the intelligentsia, it may be said that eighty per cent of those screaming for Swaraj did not only not move a finger to serve in the war time, but many were actively concerned with hindering it. [...] The races that are not of the Punjab and which serve India and the Crown with credit, must now be enumerated, and it will be seen that some of them have a special romance of their own, often deeply connected with some of the more glorious of both British and Indian traditions. (268-9)

Here some ambiguity and diversity is being set up. We have here both the despicable anti-colonialists and those outside of the martial races and the anticolonialists, those that have, quite

dexterously found balance between imperial culture and Indian culture. In MacMunn's estimation, those that have struck a balance between these cultures and ways of life represent much of India outside of the Northern region of Punjab. The start of this passage points to the anti-colonial and anti-imperial Indians as, primarily, men that are not men; in pointing to the high percentage of "men that are men" as "of the Punjab", and "of the Punjab" constituting those of the martial races, there exists a gendered, social, and political distinction being made here. In deeming those outside of the Punjab in this way, not only feeds into the feminizing of the majority of the colonized populous, but further attaches and assembles a martial race identity that proves to gender race, racialize violence, and might subsequently gender violence in the context of the British colonial military complex. MacMunn furthers his critique of India's non-martial races by pointing to the "intelligentsia" as primarily being composed of anti-colonialists calling for "Swaraj", literally 'home rule' or independence, but not necessarily being willing to fight for such a goal; this anti-colonial category is vague and propagandistic in such vagueness, for it fails to name any particular instance or historical example. It is based on the fact that they are non-martial, that they are the intelligentsia; it is based on the fact that they desire Swaraj, that they are weak: these are the assumptions made in such narrativizing. Ultimately and apparently, MacMunn is not concerned with the distinctions between any anti-colonial grouping or sub-grouping. It is at this moment in the text where he turns his attention to those not of the martial races, and those not of the anti-colonial or anti-imperial political position. In enumerating those particular blends of British and Indian cultures, those unfit for military service, but those not (yet) opposed to British rule, and have adopted and embraced elements of Britishness so vital for imperial permanence.

I want to turn now to the last chapter of MacMunn's text, titled "The Indian Army and Martial Races in the Future". Indeed, the prospect of independence from the British is immediately doomed for failure in the imperial eyes of MacMunn. In his estimation, even in the case of the decision by the British to forgo colonial and imperial control of India, India would devolve quite immediately. In his words:

> If India is ever allowed to break from a friendly control, if false sentiment and feeblemindedness are to lead Great Britain to let go her Imperial hold and return to the heptarchy, then India and her races may go to the devil their own way. But on the assumption that the British intend to remain a sovereign and adventurous people, and that India will run in friendly and gently controlled double harness, then the future is of great interest to consider. (341)

There is an unforeseen amount of forcefulness in MacMunn's tone here, as this passage reveals the depth of his investments in not just the British imperial military, but specifically in its hold on India as a colony. In the usage of "allowed", much is conveyed: there is a sense of paternalism over the colony, and over the Indian population, and in this paternalism lies the assumption that Indian independence would be accompanied by compliance if not outright permission by British authority.

The notion that British colonialism is a form of 'friendly' control in India is to undermine the very function of colonialism. The language of MacMunn is clearly an effort to convey the basic necessity of colonial rule in India, and the martial races stand as symbols of the effectiveness of the colonial army and the ways in which martial races were British discoveries. The consolidation of the martial races stands as a metonymy for the colonial project: the forced gathering between distinct social groups within precolonial India, for the greater cause of British

military strength stood in for the larger illusory goals of the colonial project, to unify the colonized people under the heading of the British Raj. If unity is to emerge amongst Indians, it is only possible within the colonial project, and the martial races, as MacMunn narrates their separate histories and their consolidation as only ever a natural phenomenon based on their essential quality of not participating in the 1857 Mutiny, and therefore exhibiting the essential quality of complicity with the colonial project, whether or not such complicity is inferred. This argument finds shape and valence within the Subaltern Studies project, wherein the call for historical writing that revises colonial history writing, like MacMunn's, is the primary mode of critique, and a necessary postcolonial form of critique at that. This facet is something I will take up later in my study.

Returning to the words of MacMunn, there exists a palpable hostility toward the possibility of decolonization and Indian national sovereignty. In asserting that "if false sentiment and feeblemindedness are to lead Great Britain to let go her Imperial hold and return to the heptarchy, then India and her races may go to the devil their own way," the sense is that Indian independence will only ever come at the hands of the British foregoing control, whether it be due to "false sentiment" or "feeblemindedness". The notion of "false sentiment" conveys both the idea that the British would sympathize with the anti-colonial desires of Indians and forego control, as well as the idea that the British would be untrue to themselves if they were to continue to exhibit care for the colonial sense of Indian well-being. In the latter interpretation, there exists some, even vague, sense of a binding affective attachment to the colonial territory, and perhaps even beyond that, a recognition of ethical responsibility to the territory and its people. However, this is ultimately the logic of the colonial project, and MacMunn's words demonstrate such logic with intricate design. The utility of "feeblemindedness" in following

"false sentiment" is clear: the logic implies that any affective entanglements that might exist between the Englishman and the Indian is only a colonial ruse, and that such attachments are purely economic and politically prudent; moreover, only a weak imperial will would succumb to the decolonization of India. Following this remark, MacMunn locates Indian decolonization as only having the potential for devolution into a heptarchy, or rule by the seven caste and regional groupings; decolonization is rendered as an evil path that will only place Indians on an unspeakable path.

In the end of this passage, MacMunn writes: "But on the assumption that the British intend to remain a sovereign and adventurous people, and that India will run in friendly and gently controlled double harness, then the future is of great interest to consider." There is a quality to this sentence that renders the future as impossible to tell, however MacMunn is generally optimistic for the bright future of the British empire in India. It is telling that British sovereignty is paired with adventure in this passage insofar as self-rule by Western imperial powers like the British or French often went hand-in-hand with colonial ventures. The 'adventuresome' nature of empire seems to suggest that self-rule must be marked by a spirit and initiative, a drive to divide and occupy the lands of the seemingly ungoverned. There is the denial of empire's ultimately damning character that is necessary in order for the casting of noble imperial projects to exist. Furthermore, the concept of imperial control as acting as simply another 'harness' for the subcontinental peoples is intriguing and ironic in that it attempts to understand the colonial rule of India at the level of colonial administration by Indian colonial administrators at one level, as one harness, and colonial and imperial control by the British at another level, as the second harness. The notion that either colonial administration is serving the majority of the populace is ironic insofar as it denies the rising tide of anti-colonial agitators.

Writing in the early 1930s, MacMunn expresses the anxieties of British empire when anti-colonial agitation is a growing threat to the Raj. His detailing of the martial races functions both as a detailed imperial narration and a preemptive exploration of the possibilities of long term, if not permanent colonial control over India. This concept of the future of the martial races is useful in that it preserves and details the potential of these social groups as conceived by MacMunn and his British counterparts. In his conclusion, I want to highlight two longer final passages:

> Firstly, that Great Britain has just as much right to rule in India as any other of the conquering races that form the martial classes, in view of her conquests, and a thousand times more right in view of her conquests, and a thousand times more right in view of the fact that she, and she alone, has spent all her energies in good Government and in the re-constitution of a broken continent. Secondly, that all the lives lost and capital lent for India constitute a deep-set right. Thirdly, that pari passu with the maintenance of those paramount rights and the safeguards which shall ensure them, the advance of India shall continue as a sacred duty, and that the growing sense of responsibility in India shall be fostered to that end. The races that are likely and fit to take the lead in an awakening India can only be those races which have been described in this book as the folk that have the character...that fit them for the more energetic side of native life. (353)

And finally:

> The educating of the manly and martial classes to control is sadly in defect yet, and the effervescence of education is in less settled minds. How those manly classes have been formed and evolved, how great and how dangerous they can be to themselves and

> everyone else, and how splendid under control and leading, this short account has endeavoured to show. (358)

These final moments in MacMunn's narration of the martial races exhibit the ways in which he understands the possibility of decolonization and Indian sovereignty, and what might be entailed in self-rule. However, this is not expressed with admiration for the martial races or confidence in any single social grouping, colonial or not; rather, there is not simply trepidation, but a distinct belief in the hazard of such self-rule by Indians. MacMunn is a believer in the indispensibility of colonial occupation, and his reference to Indian as a "broken continent" indicates the vitality and necessity for occupation and dependence on the colonial powers. But in MacMunn's estimation the initial sentiment that the rule of the British in India is just the same, if not greater than the potential or previous rule of particular martial races exhibits the central tension that lies at the heart of this text: that the martial races are the finest products of British colonialism and empire, exhibiting the necessary and learned qualities of not simply British military strategy, but the essential qualities of cooperation and tactical coherence. There is a sense that still, and overwhelmingly, the imperial responsibility of ruling India and maintaining the infrastructure is only proper and fitting at such a point in time. What is more, the notion of "sacred duty" only emphasizes the concept that British empire adheres to an almost religious or otherworldly tie to its economic, political, and colonial footholds in India, and around other parts of the East. Rather than outrightly acknowledging the sense of anti-colonial movements in India, MacMunn stresses the debt of British rule in India: debt in the sense that the "growing responsibility in India shall be fostered to that end," meaning that much is still owed and to be given to India and it's people as an essential component of the imperial "sacred duty".

However, what is perhaps more crucial to note is the potential of Indian self-rule as a possibility in the near future. In MacMunn's reading, such potential is real but not wholly realized. The martial races represent the tensions of such potential, as they serve in a metonymical capacity here: they are energetic enough to lead the Indian nation, partially due to MacMunn's notions of their inherent and essential cultural or racial traits, and partially due to the British machination of martial races, the culling and coherence of these groups by their military prowess and non-participation in early anti-imperial resistance--but ultimately may not have the necessary education in leadership. That is to say, that the martial races are missing the component essential for self-rule, and that is the ability to rule itself. Entrusting the martial races with the fate of an independent India, while ideal in an unideal version of the MacMunn's understanding of the future, is impossible under the colonial education that the British have provided. However, what is clear is that MacMunn finds the martial races not only technically deficient in this regard, but as not necessarily as intelligent as non-martial races. He instead renders those non-martial races as "having less settled minds" in regard to the fact that they are in a state of colonized antipathy or apathy. Those undecided Indians are considered as more able to lead than those praised so highly otherwise, under clear ruses of imperial exploitation, those martial races of India. Even still, what underlies all of MacMunn's writing is not the confidence in the martial races and their natural ability to work in capacities beyond the military, but rather the ways that British rule, strategy, and instruction inform, shape, and are to credit for their overall strength. MacMunn's text works to serve empire in a way that marks the martial races as powerful under empire.

This last passage's remark of "how great and how dangerous they can be to themselves and everyone else," moreover, notes and hovers over the conclusion of this text in that it reminds

readers that the martial races are to be admired for their abilities in war, but to also to be feared--yet, this fear is not only for those non-martial races, but the martial races themselves. MacMunn points to the potential violence and destruction wreaked by martial races, but this, I argue, is not intended as a comment purely dealing with military power. He refers here to the potential threat they pose if they are to attain any power or political significance pending decolonization and movements for independence. In casting the martial races as outside of the realm of political, MacMunn alleges that their skills lie only within the physical, within war, and within violence. As a part of the imperial narrativizing, this rhetorical move to purge any sort of misunderstanding that the reader might have had in relation to thinking perhaps too highly of the martial races, as possessing knowledge beyond the martial is deemed irrelevant. What is to remain relevant therefore, is the danger the martial races pose: this danger is productive for MacMunn insofar as it might prove useful in the case that British imperialism is a longer term presence, or in the case that the martial races are given political control in the event of decolonization. In effect, this remark operates as a policing mechanism, forcing a rendering of the martial races that marks their coherence and effectiveness militarily as a new threat in the face of potential Indian revolutionary struggles for independence. It is partially through these moments of critiquing the nonviolent methodology of Gandhi, as mentioned in the first passage examined here from MacMunn's text, that the precedent is set for an apprehension of the strength of the martial races as their cohesive and admirable propensity for organized violence. The text itself renders military strength, 'natural' physical capability, and histories of violence--and oftentimes religious and ethnic persecution--as valuable qualities and unique commodities in the British Raj.

The various maneuvers made by MacMunn in this concluding chapter mark the text as a whole. The passages included here from MacMunn's conclusion seem to demonstrate the complex layout of the history and future of the martial races. What might get lost in this conclusion, however, are the very notions of these races as constructions. Instead their identities become increasingly fixed and naturalized by the end. Stressing their propensity for strength and, in effect, violence, the text leaves readers with the ideas of martial races as ill-equipped for governance and potentially harmful and destructive to everyone and everything, including themselves as MacMunn mentions. In MacMunn's opinion, it is clear that both martial and non-martial races would truly not suffice to lead a potentially free Indian nation. On the one hand, the martial races do not possess the necessary "education" so crucial to lead, and on the other you have the non-martial races, who for the most part are cast as effeminate and over-educated intellectuals. As noted at the very start of his text, MacMunn uses revolutionary anti-colonial leader Mohandas Gandhi as a symbol of the non-martial, overly educated intellectual classes; of course, in the modern popular conception, Gandhi represents the spiritual essence of nonviolent resistance and ethical anti-colonial movement. In MacMunn's construction of martial races in this text, his admiration as both a veteran of the British army and a military historian is for the martial races--for their invaluable presence as colonial warriors, for their symbolic representations as those aligned with British colonial and imperial practices, and for their masculine characteristics that so contrast his Orientalist rendering of non-martial races as effeminate and weak. Thusly, in their overdetermination and symbolic value, Gandhi represents an essential opposite to the martial races, and in this way they play well off one another in a very stark and of course highly reductive manner.

Ultimately, what weighs most heavily in MacMunn's text is the unfitness of both of these symbols: neither could ever truly rule or sustain a free India, and neither would ever properly and wholly substitute and rule as effectively as the British. In the colonial imagination nothing can suffice in the colony without the colonizer, and that any substitution of the colonizer inevitably can never be true, total, or absolute; the colonial imagination cannot stand for substitution as the power relationship, the dominance of the colonizer over the subjugation and oppression of the colonized, is the single most vital feature of the colonial project. Furthermore, the investment of the colonizer in the colonized's market drives the economic dimension of this relationship and tends to a capitalist drive with the colony and the colony's resources that renders such a relationship imperial. All of this is to say that the clear colonial and imperial motives of MacMunn's *The Martial Races of India* is not to simply provide new or at least colonial narratives of these social groups, though much energy and space is spent doing so. Rather, what is seen are the ways in which the possibility of rule by Indians, even those most favorable in the eyes of the imperial, is frightening.

The threat that the martial races might pose then is perhaps not to themselves, as MacMunn suggests, but rather to the state of anti-colonial agitation, and to the possibility of an Indian nation-state. For their abilities and for their service, the presence and casting of martial races exists as a way to prove their complex relationship to the Indian nation-state as a pre-colonial state and a postcolonial state. Of course, this is to consider the emergence of the martial races as something outside of the colonial order, which is impossible. But to see the non-participation of such social groups in the 1857 mutiny as an indication and pledge of loyalty to the British empire is far-fetched only when conceived of outside of coloniality. In understanding the complex, untethered, and unclear singular relationships that the martial races previously held

to the various other Indian social groups, be they religious, ethnic, caste-based, regional, or otherwise, it becomes crucial to disentangle the strained and stratified subcontinental social worlds. Even still, for my purposes here, such an endeavor is too immense to take up. Instead, I might offer and further underscore the idea that the martial races exhibited complex and strained relations to the pre-colonial Indian nation, and that as such were strategically employed and utilized in the service of the British empire, and in effect without choice or consent. Their racialization might then be relegated as a by-product of empire, but to disquialify such racialization as merely excess is to relegate its effects as insignificant.

Colonial Governmentality: Race as a Technology in the South Asian Context

For all purposes here, the focus on India remains central only because much of South Asia during the colonial period denoted the subcontinent for its constant influx of peoples from other countries of South Asia, including and especially Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Afghanistan. In thinking about the concept of race in South Asia, both within and outside of the colonial kinship set up by the Aryan/non-Aryan paradigm and the martial race designation, it becomes essential to think about the modes in which race might be constructed with and without nation. This concept of race with nation is of course a familiar relationship in the context of a U.S readership: the very foundations of the U.S. rely on the dependence of racial slave labor in order to build an independent capitalist market. While this relationship might appear to make sense in the Indian context, the proliferation and "multiplicity of ethnicity" as British historian David Washbrook phrases it in his essay "Ethnicity and racialism in colonial Indian society," makes race a rather opaque and endlessly vexing question in the context of South Asia. In his 1997 monograph, *South Asia and the Concept of Race*, British historian Peter Robb writes:

> Race became, gradually, a necessary concomitant of Indianness, though first it was discovered to regional or religious guises. For example...when the term Aryan, meaning Indo-European, came to be widely used by Indians in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, a racial element developed also, in reaction, to those who opposed it. [...] Gradually the word 'Indian' came to imply 'race', even before it clearly meant 'nation'. These race theories had currency during the rise of the nation-state, and therefore race had to fuse with nationality. (31-2)[40]

To define race as attendant to nation, it becomes crucial to revise and reorganize the slightly disorienting array of social categories on the subcontinent. Such revision and reorganization might then become dependent on the colonial categories that see race as necessary and significant in developing familiarity with the colonized, or native groups. By using race as opposed to prior or more complex forms of social categorization--like region, like religion, where the assemblages and intersections create greater ambiguity in identity--there is both a reliance on the language of blood, kinship, inheritance, and natural traits, as well as a reduction of native or Indian social worlds. What is more, in focusing attention on the murkiness or opaqueness of Indian identity outside of colonial designations of race, there exists a necessity in reading identity in perhaps less rigid and more fluid and ambivalent modes. Without race, the "multiplicity of ethnicity" is allowed to move and assemble in unforeseen ways. There may be more ambivalence toward any one category, in this sense, as individuals are not wholly determined by such a particular category. That is not to say that certain social categories do not carry greater weight and render intermarriage or sexual relations as all but impossible; of course, caste, especially prior to the colonial period, had an especially fixed and impenetrable hold and determinate quality on the subcontinent. Rather, ambivalence might be a way in which to rethink

[40] Robb, Peter. *The Concept of Race in South Asia*. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997.

the ways in which race made wholly positive or wholly negative the identities of particular groups of Indians: this is never more apparent than in the case of the casting of martial and non-martial races.

Furthermore, in casting and framing the discursive movements that accompanied Aryan-ness, as Ross discusses, and how race became a reactionary discourse by those opposed to the deployment of Aryanism, we are given insight into the ways that Indians helped shaped race as a concept. However, what remains clear are the ways in which even still, the British colonial strategy to utilize Aryanism override any attempt for race to be recognizably be an inherent or natural form of social categorization in India prior to British occupation. What is more in Ross's reading, is the fact that Indian then became a way in which to name colonized peoples before it became a recognizable naming of nation or nationality. In naming the convergence or even conflation of race with nation as a necessity, what we gather then is the way in which British colonial occupation determined Indian identity through racialization, and as such, reduced and flattened various forms of identitarian labels native to the subcontinental populations. I do not mean to argue that the rise of the Indian nation-state is only through the decolonization process, however, and must stress that in Ross's essay, the sense is that the rise of the nation-state is more universal, and less particular to the Indian case.

Ross's particular reading of the deployment of race in India specifically, emphasizes this link between race and the nation-state insofar as it serves to see the way in which colonialism linked these two concepts as inextricable. Still, Ross sees the way in which for many British colonial officials, the practice of casual scientific racism toward Indic populations was far simpler and more convenient than gaining familiarity with the caste system. However, in her 2003 essay,

"Lessons from Empire: Britain and India," Oxford historian of British empire and colonialism Maria Misra writes:

> By the turn of the twentieth century, officials with a burgeoning interest in scientific race theory became preoccupied with varna hierarchy, deeming high castes to be descended from the mythical Aryan invaders of ancient India (also supposedly the ancestors of the Europeans), and low castes and untouchables to be part of an aboriginal, inferior race. (145)[41]

Of course, this is a dominant colonial narrative, wherein the designation of race aligns with the scientific, rational order of the colonial project. The colonial project has and clearly does depend on the premise that classification is a necessary process, and that hierarchy is a by-product of such classification. However, the issue of such a rigid system of classification being in place prior to the arrival of British colonizers makes the attempt to merge the scientific racism of colonialism with the caste system a rather difficult task. As Misra points out that the preoccupation of aligning and merging of race with caste became a way in which to insert Aryanism into the caste hierarchy and mark higher castes with such a bloodline. Here it is easy to imagine the way in which forms of colonial racism matched the caste system's previously fluid, but since more static system of bloodlines and kinship ties.

Furthermore, the disassociation, or perhaps we might even call it disavowal, of the lower castes by the colonizers further reinforces the caste hierarchy, while simultaneously retaining the forces of racist exclusion. In the attachment of lower castes with the "aboriginal, inferior race" there is a distinct effort on behalf of the British colonizers to define lower caste status as outside of the parameters of Aryan-ness, and thus Britishness. It becomes, perhaps as an alternative,

[41] Misra, Maria. "Lessons of Empire: Britain and India." *SAIS Review* 23, no. 2 (2003): 133-53.

crucial to think of the lower castes, who are both outside of the purview of, and clearly excluded from, the martial race category, as possibly having ties to and investments in the notion of Indian-ness; that is to say that if such a concept of Indian-ness is to exist, as antithetical to Britishness in the colonial context, as a mode of rendering Britishness as exclusionary, and apprehending their superiority as a fixture of colonial domination, as well as the reinforcement of caste barriers, then is it possible to think through anti-colonial struggle as a struggle of caste--specifically of the lower castes, and the non-Aryan? In this way, in this mode of conjecture, we might begin to think of how race and caste are assemblages that help define anti-colonial, anti-imperial, and anti-racist struggles against British imperialism and colonialism.

In Misra's essay, she goes on to focus on the position of religion in the convergence of colonial racism with the caste system. She provides a brief outline of Hindu and Muslim politics prior to the designation of martial races:

> As with caste, the British also set out to establish precise boundaries between South Asia's Hindu and Muslim communities. The British were always wary of India's Muslims as the elite from whom they had usurped power when they replaced the Moghuls. Muslims also constituted around 25 percent of the Indian population before partition. The British, however, considered them a unified and potentially threatening group that had to be appeased. This belief grew stronger after the Mutiny of 1857, an event with complex causes, but which many British officials attributed to Muslim fanaticism. After 1857, British policy privileged certain Muslim groups in order to diffuse this threat. (145)

As might be clear, the designation of martial races for some Muslim social groups in the Punjab region was a large of part of that plan to "diffuse this threat". Here we see a possible marker for

the way in which the racialization of Islam in the context of British India seems to take shape. From Misra's account, India's Muslims were apprehended as threats by the British, primarily due to their long and previous reign over India prior to the arrival of the British. Through the usurpation of power by the British, and the even of the 1857 Mutiny, Muslims were, as Misra points out, understood as fanatics. This particular term is useful insofar as it alludes to the ways in which Muslims might have been understood in the context of colonial and anti-colonial politics.

In reading Muslims as threats due to their previous status as Mughal rulers, there exists the sense that colonial occupation not only meant the end of previous geopolitical rule, but of a type of governance that used power in order to gain a greater religious hold on the subcontinent. What becomes clear is that the arrival of the British in India was both a real and symbolic untethering of the relationship between India and its Muslim population. As Misra points out, the British seemed to recognize the potential threat that the previous ruling classes and religious population might have posed.

In this way, the martial race designation helps to reassemble the previous identification of Muslims as a ruling class, and places them in a colonial regime of hierarchical classification. Misra then continues, narrating the basic events of how Muslims were employed by the British after the Mutiny:

> The British elevated the Punjabi and Pathan Muslims of the Northwest Frontier Province, viewing them as especially martial and embodying the virtues of loyalty, virility, and anti-intellectualism that made them, in the opinion of the British, better soldiers than “effeminate” Hindus. They made up a disproportionate percentage of the

army and their tribes and regions received high levels of government infrastructure investment. (146)

The mechanism of policing and regulating bodies becomes apparent then in the way that martial race ideology was used to seamlessly manage the potential threat that Muslims posed by placing value onto their populations through the hardening and shaping of classes, races, and identities. The value placed on, as Misra phrases it, "Embodying the virtues of loyalty, virility, and anti-intellectualism," simply operated as a way to entice an entire religious, regional, and ethnic group into submission to the empire. Loyalty to the state, masculinity and strength to better serve the military needs of the state, and anti-intellectualism to quell and stifle dissent and dissident voices against the state: these virtues that Misra points out are understood as excuses on which the British colonial system operated in order to have quite a large segment of the colonized population serve their needs, as opposed to pose political and radical threat to their domination. Racialization in this particular instance might be considered to be more recognizable as the codification of the martial race ideology into a practical unit of the colonial military; however, I want to argue that the colonial system of racialization, simultaneously particular to the British occupation of India and universal to the functions colonial racialism, racialization, and racism, is in fact ultimately about the capability to control and govern bodies even within a the larger colonial body itself. In this sense, the colonial system is both functionally a racist system, and a system of the dual oppression of colonized peoples. Of course, this concept is in no way new or novel to the study of colonialism in the postcolonial moment: rather, what I want to stress is the way that race in the colonial system underwent a variety of vital transformations that figured race as a technology of control, and that the martial race system offers an example of such an

understanding of race in the colonial context.

What becomes even clearer and more intriguing is the way in which the colonial system, however messy and uneven, requires these technologies of control: policing bodies and assessing threat becomes a primary task, and without such mechanisms, the whole system is put into question. Clearly, the colonial system requires such a heavy stress on policing, as one of its central premises is the promise of order; still such order comes at the price of intense policing and control, and this mutually constitutive relationship defines the modes in which colonialism must operate. What is more, in apprehending the possibility and probability of dissent, resistance, and anti-colonial and anti-imperial opposition, the colonial project becomes a means to regulate those bodies outside of its parameters of loyalty, or at the very least, apathy. These technologies

of control renders the colonial system a part of what renowned French philosopher Michel Foucault calls governmentality, a term which I want to explore in a moment. In assessing and policing, part of the colonial project is maintaining a sense of the social, cultural, and political discourse of the colonized space. However, the colonial project at its very core is undemocratic, and the public sphere becomes a rather hazy and unreliable forum for critical discussion. In this way, what Foucault calls governmentality in an earlier moment, contemporary anthropologist David Scott designates in the specific context of colonialism, colonial governmentality. In Foucault's late work, his 1977-1978 lectures, *Security, Territory, Population*, he provides many variations of a definition of governmentality; one such example can be found in his February 1, 1978 lecture where he first outlines the concept in three different ways, the first of which I will examine and employ:

> By "governmentality" I understand the ensemble formed by institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections, calculations, and tactics that allow the exercise of this very specific, albeit very complex, power that has the population as its target, political economy as its major form of knowledge, and apparatuses of security as its essential technical instrument. (108)[42]

The concept of governmentality in Foucault's first iteration encompasses a great deal: in this way, governmentality is a productive and grand analytic in which to apprehend political, social, and even geo-spacial worlds. Foucault is quite clear when it comes to the framing of governmentality as a type of assembled power: power that encompasses targets, knowledges, and instruments, defined by populations, political economy, and security, respectively. Governmentality is a way in which to regulate populations, a technology for the governing of bodies. As such,

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[42] Foucault, Michel. *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège De France*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.

governmentality must certainly include the concept of policing, as policing serves those exact goals, specifically of the "population as its target" and "security as its essential technical instrument", with political economy functioning as a category of information which grounds the particular large-scale needs of various governing bodies.

It becomes vital to think then of the function of colonial policing as a unique form of governmentality. In David Scott's important 1995 essay, "Colonial Governmentality," he conceptualizes colonial governmentality through a discussion of colonial modernity, in which he defines colonial governementality thusly:

> The formation of colonial modernity would have to appear as a discontinuity in the organization of colonial rule characterized by the emergence of a distinctive political rationality--that is, a colonial governmentality--in which power comes to be directed at the destruction and reconstruction of colonial space so as to produce not so much extractive-effects on colonial bodies as governing-effects on colonial conduct. (204)[43]

The notion of a discontinuity, or break, in the temporal and spatial logics of colonialism is primarily what is at stake in Scott's essay, as it precedes his monograph, *Conscripts of Modernity*, which takes colonial time and space as a way to think anew colonial modernity.[44] However, in this crucial passage, the concept of colonial governmentality is articulated as a lucid and fundamental paradigm in which to rethink the political rationality of the colonial state. In naming this political rationality "colonial governmentality", what we get is a sense of how the logic of the colonial state demanded not just a distinctiveness or specificity of rule, but of, as Scott renders it, 'the destruction and reconstruction of colonial space". That is to say that colonial rule required annihilation of native land and governance that subsequently necessitated a type of

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[43] Scott, David. "Colonial Governmentality." *Anthropologies of Modernity*: 21-49.
[44] Scott, *Conscripts of Modernity: The Tragedy of Colonial Enlightenment*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2004.

rehabilitation that suited its political economic desires. Ultimately, as Scott points out, this destruction-reconstruction movement functions as a way to rule not so much on account of the bodies themselves, but on "conduct": in a sense, "conduct" might connote both the policing of bodies and the self-policing of behaviors, a self-policing in accordance with colonial political rationality. If this is truly the case, then colonial governmentality has intriguing implications in the context of the British India, and specifically in the racing of martial and non-martial bodies.

In reflecting on both Foucault's concept of governmentality and Scott's concept of colonial governmentality in the context of the racing of bodies in colonial India by the British, it becomes clear that race existed as a technology of power, a part of colonial governmentality. Even thinking prior to the designation and ideological shaping of martial races, the mode in which Aryanism is brought, by the British, to the fore of Indian consciousness in early colonial endeavors helps to detail the way in which the certain bodies within the native landscape start to understand themselves: such a conception and hierarchical logic begins at such moments, and erodes at previous or perhaps latent or non-existent notions of self and selfhood. And then of course, with the emergence of martial races, we can clearly see the destruction of a cohesive colonized polity and the reconstruction of new forms of social groups that reorganize based on Scott's label of "colonial conduct". That is to say that martial race ideology manifests as a form of colonial governmentality, and such an ideological form is based on the anti-colonial tendencies and practices, namely the 1857 Mutiny, of other colonized groups inappropriate "colonial conduct." The racial logic, therefore, that the British employ operates as a form of political rationality in a sense, and can be comprehended as a form

For my purposes, Scott's deployment of the term "colonial conduct" is primarily political, and secondarily religious in the context of martial races. To aid in the management of

populations in the colonial context on a larger scale, stifling political opposition and dissent becomes essential in order to maintain rule. By placing the political and religious ramifications of colonial conduct as central components to understanding the way that governmentality functioned in the colonial context, I mean to stress both the ways in which political ideologies were ascribed to and projected onto colonized populations by the British colonizers, as well as the ways in which, colonized Indians were invested in the political and religious implications of colonization for their own reasons. Part of what becomes so important in the casting of martial races, is the way in which conduct becomes key, and that much of the basis for which the British had employed as rationale for martial races is primarily politically bound by the mutiny, and religiously bound for reasons not always explicitly noted by colonial administrators. However, the clear exclusion of Hindus, on the whole, within the martial races plays a large role in the ways in which the hardening of divisions and varying forms of separation between Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs came to be a defining struggle for the creation of the Indian nation-state. Of course, this in part had to do with the way in which colonial conduct was considered post-Mutiny. Sikhs and Muslims in particular were cast as martial races for the potential threat they posed both politically, ideologically, and strategically as governing and warrior classes in pre-colonial histories and ethnologies; conduct in that case had to do with previous roles and behaviors as determining factors for future conduct, and in that way, the British were cognizant of the role of colonial conduct as being informed by political and religious ideologies, and that is ultimately how they governed. Colonial governmentality in the case of the British was ultimately rationalized through colonial conduct, but conduct in this sense was necessarily defined by the specific ideologies of the populations over which they governed.

The Ilbert Bill and the Politico-Juridical Logics of Colonial Racism

In practicing such governmentality, a useful example of restrictions on Indians as a form of colonial conduct--that of extra-state repression--occurs in 1883. Thinking outside of the martial race context, but inside the colonial legal system and its racist practices, the Ilbert Bill provides a way in which to understand the political rationality of the colonial presence in India, as well as those abroad in England. Governor General and Viceroy of India at the time, Lord Ripon attempted to pass the Ilbert Bill, which gave Indian magistrates the right to try Europeans in criminal cases. Backed by the Anglo-Indian press, the British colonial authority in India organized a vehement agitation against the Ilbert Bill. The government of India ultimately bowed before the Europeans and withdrew the bill. What was initially shocking to colonized Indians was the horrific and flagrant racial bitterness displayed by the critics of the bill. Their own perceptions of the degradation of foreign rule became sharpened; as such, nationalist Indians realized that they too should organize themselves on a national scale and agitate continuously and unitedly to get their demands accepted.

What is particularly curious about this bill is the way in which it enraged the British and made all the clearer to the colonized that they were not only being subjugated by British, but that allegiance once held to the British was no longer tenable due to the clear inferiority with which they regarded their colonized subjects. Not only that, but in the wake of this case, Indians realized that to try any British or European in India was to defy colonial logic, which rested on the practice of colonial governmentality, and thus the policing of colonial conduct, and not the other way around. The policing of the British, and specifically the ability to legally try a white British or other European person, to determine criminality and to govern fate, faced much opposition, much of which was racially driven. The Ilbert Bill created a racially-driven firestorm

that defined coloniality and burgeoning anti-colonial politics, and brought race to the fore in the Indian colonial context in a mode that both converges and clashes with martial race ideology. In this case, the Ilbert Bill provides a way in which to apprehend emerging anti-racism in colonial India at the end of the 19th century, which fits into my greater argument on the deployment of martial race ideology and colonial governmentality.

Specifically, the Ilbert Bill explicitly stated that Indians were to be given jurisdiction over British subjects of the court. In the "Statement of Objects and Reasons" section of the bill, it states:

> Shortly after the Code of Criminal Procedure, Act X of 1882, was passed, the question was raised whether the provisions of that Code which limit the jurisdiction over European British subjects outside the presidency towns to judicial officers who are themselves European British subjects should not be modified. It was thought anomalous that, while natives of India were admitted to the Covenanted Civil Service and held competent to discharge the highest judicial duties, they should be deemed incompetent to be justices of the peace and to exercise jurisdiction over European British subjects outside the Presidency towns. (218)

In amending an act enabling the jurisdiction of colonial subjects over colonizers in a judicial setting, race became a key factor. Still, the questions that defined the bill were primarily in regards to the inefficiency of the courts due to the prior rendering of Indians as unfit to hold jurisdiction over any British individual tried in an Indian court. The Ilbert Bill was a response to a systematic flaw in the judicial setting, and when the Bill was beginning to make headlines, C.P. Ilbert responded to the early backlash to the bill in his "On the Principles and Purposes of the

Ilbert Bill of 1883"; in it he speaks to the familiar concept of justice as blind, but placed in the context of who is able to perform and deliver such justice. In this response, he asserts:

> We ought not to base any difference which we may think fit to make between particular classes of Magistrates, on race distinctions which are as invidious as they are unnecessary...Finally we are of opinion that no change in the law can be satisfactory or stable which fails to remove at once and completely from the Code ever judicial disqualification which is based merely on race distinctions. (219-20)

The fact that "race distinctions" are ultimately defining the controversy is useful as it provides a way for the colonial process to be understood as primarily a racially-driven, and blatantly racist, project. In attempting to ease and eliminate the inefficiency of criminal jurisdiction in the courts, the Ilbert Bill and its resultant firestorm opened up the latent orientalism and racism that erupted and overflowed into other discursive frames.

The various forms of protest to the bill were collected and bound in a text entitled, *The Ilbert Bill: A Collection of Letters, Speeches, Memorials, Articles, &c Stating the Objections to the Bill*. In an anonymous contribution to this brief but revealing anthology, titled "A Plain Statement About the Ilbert Bill for English Readers," a variety of arguments against the bill arise and are taken up for contention by its author. For example, in one section, the author states:

> The trial of a European is so unusual an occurrence that it can easily be arranged for otherwise. But it is said that if Europeans are not bound to submit to trial by them, a "slur " will be cast on them, and, through them, on all the people of India. What has that to do with it? No Native ever had this dignity, and there can therefore be little slur in refusing it now to a few Natives. The highest authorities are constantly declaring that

> there would be no slur. But if there be any slur, it does not lie in the mouth of the authors of this Bill to use it as an argument for the Bill. (146)

Presented here is an intriguing account of the way with which the race-concept is being deployed and managed. While the Ilbert Bill provides an alternative to the conception of race presented through martial race ideology, its alternative is a much more familiar, more fixed understanding that relies on nativism, colonial racist hierarchies based on colorism, civilizationalist discourse, and the purposeful practices of denigration and exclusion. The early portion of this statement, not presented here, is basic in its understanding of the Ilbert Bill as unnecessary insofar as the lack of a large population of European British individuals on trial; however, such logic refuses to recognizes that even still, the investment in criminal courts where only the British hold jurisdiction over the British is an excess--not only in expenditure, but in logic as well, for it sees justice as particular and in terms of coloniality. Still, here in this passage, the employment and notion of the 'slur' becomes a crucial point for interrogation. The author is certainly making a point that in slighting and discriminating against the native Indian population as unfit, or not properly versed in a model of justice akin to the English version, their status as colonial subjects is forcibly being conveyed. Yet, the tone of the author here suggests that in fact how can the protests against the Ilbert Bill be considered a 'slur' insofar as Indians are already under colonial rule, and as such, are subjugated in what is already, for the author, an apparent way. It is quite clear that the author is attempting to convey that such 'slur', if any, is really only part of a larger system of oppression of which the Indians are under; a 'slur' in this context is only of minor concern, and a mere matter of semantics. Further, the author makes clear that the colonial system is one that never promises, and in fact actively denies "dignity", to its colonial subjects: in this manner, the colonial system becomes a more fixed, divisive, and inhuman form of exploitation.

The ways in which the Ilbert Bill conjured such intense reaction and critique is essential in recognizing the manifest racism of colonialism.

In a following statement, the logic of the slur is reversed as the unnamed author reads the Ilbert Bill. In occupying India, the logic of colonialism is that what privileges only those who occupy: that is to say that no privilege or luxury can be afforded to the colonized insofar as the colonial presence justifies the denial of rights and the creation and maintenance only of colonial oppression. The author asserts:

> By declaring them eligible for appointment to try Europeans, insults (if there be any question of slur) the whole European community outside the Civil Service, by declaring its members for the first time ineligible, and retains the slur upon all the Native communities in India, except these few persons. The Bill is declared a final measure, so the slur on all, Europeans and Natives, outside the Civil Service, is designed to be permanent. No one talked of "slur" in connection with this matter before; but now the blot has been seen, and recognized, and is to be allowed to remain. (146-7)

Here only the question of slur is employed to reference the insult and injury that the Ilbert Bill causes the British colonizers. In casting "slur" as a term to be applied not to the natives and the denigrating nature of deeming them unfit for criminal jurisdiction over all peoples in their designated area, but rather to those who occupy and colonize such people based on the basic fact that they do occupy and they do colonize: this reading denotes the explicitly hierarchical and simple division that colonialism intends to create--but even still, this is how colonialism defines itself, not by its effects, but instead by the very fact that it creates a dualistic world. It is then evident that what the author desires to make clear to those who support the bill and sympathize with its causes, is that there is a basic flaw to the Ilbert Bill: its misunderstanding of the colonial

system as inherently white supremacist. To be clear, many postcolonial scholars working on India, call this sort of racism a form of Orientalism or Eurocentrism, which of course it is; however the logic of colonialism always already operates on the assumption of white supremacy. In this manner, the author here points out such a misunderstanding to say that no "slur" or insult is made to native Indians by opposition to the Ilbert Bill, and rather, those who do not realize the grave miscalculations of an unsegregated judicial system are in fact slurring against those to which the colonial system serves to protect and ensure privilege: the colonizer.

What is more, this passage deconstructs the logic of colonialism in that understands how in fact a slur is necessarily cast on all, but only uses this as a mechanism in which to appeal to all of his audience, and not just those selected judicial bodies. By denouncing the Ilbert Bill and its logic, the author intends to express the idea that no one group of people, other than those few magistrates, can profit from it, and that is exists as a way of undermining the colonial system that is already in place. Still, to place the judicial system in the context of colonialism is to feed into the holistic inversion of the native's world, and to deny the potential rights that the Ilbert Bill is proposing. The Ilbert Bill by itself is simultaneously a way in which to deny the strict divisions of colonialism and to assert the Enlightenment driven ideal and concept of justice as blind. However, the strong opposition to the bill counters such an ideal and concept by considering what are construed to be natural differences in judicial systems of the Indian and the British, respectively. By emphasizing the fact of an inability to access knowledge of either judicial system, the author states:

> A European magistrate trying a Native has in his Court Native ministerial officers, a Native bar. Native police, and a Native crowd. He is in the midst of Native manners and customs. The Court language is the vernacular of the place. He has a long and varied

> experience of Natives. The Native magistrate trying a European has all these Native surroundings which are strange to the European accused. The latter is probably utterly alone, disturbed in mind, and in trouble about nearly everything. The Native magistrate is not familiar to him. The Native magistrate has probably not been to England, and has not seen one European, for every hundred thousand Natives the European magistrate has seen. The Native has no knowledge of Europeans, and little means of gaining it. Granted equal intelligence, the European magistrate trying a Native has enormous advantage over the Native trying a European. With all this. Native agitators say the European cannot try the Native properly. With what force can they say that the Native can try a European. (147)

In this passage the anonymous author expresses the anxiety that is produced by that of a potential threat being posed to the colonizer. The distinction being made here is that the Ilbert Bill cannot pose as much of a threat to the Indian population as it does to the British. In fact, the author is making a point about the colonizers being a minority and that such status leaves them at a disadvantage. Such logic points to the fact that the author is attempting to appeal to readers

In this passage the anonymous author expresses the anxiety that is produced by that of a potential threat being posed to the colonizer. The distinction being made here is that the Ilbert Bill cannot pose as much of a threat to the Indian population as it does to the British. In fact, the author is making a point about the colonizers being a minority and that such status leaves them at a disadvantage. Such logic points to the fact that the author is attempting to appeal to readers by employing a sense of urgency that the British minority is in need of discursive aid, in the form of an outpouring of opposition to the Ilbert Bill. In the form of this insistent pleading, there is a sense of the author's efforts to offer propagandist and ideological accounts to the effect of

gaining or pursuing an attachment to the cause for British self-governance in the colony. Rather than work toward a necessary and efficient system of Indian judiciaries over crimes in India and its provinces, the efforts of this author and the various other contributors to this anthology, are to understand the colonial project as wholly oppositional to native populations, as well as to participate in actively denying varied forms of native sovereignty. By declaring the judicial system, through the Ilbert Bill, as something outside of coloniality, the Bill itself then appears as a clear threat to the colonial enterprise. Through the authors and his collaborators efforts, the emphasis remains not on the possibility of Indian participation in political and judicial realms, but their exclusion based on their essential 'nativeness', here meaning their collective unknowing of the British judicial system and, more basically, their status as subjects of the British empite.

I situate the Ilbert Bill as a way in which to interrogate an alternative mode of considering race and racism in the British colonial system. Further, the Bill and its active opponents exemplifies an early moment in the British Raj wherein colonial governementality was exercised in modes both latent and transparent. As opposed to the ideology and employment of martial races in the British military, the Ilbert Bill demonstrates the way in which the desire and drive for exclusion of native Indian judges in criminal courts over British criminal subjects actually produced a form of racism that made legible the ways in which the colonial project worked as a racist endeavor, and always already linked to racist subjugation and exclusion. In this way, those not wholly convinced of such relationship within the colony could read, hear, and see the opponents to the Ilbert Bill as a vehement population that read Indians as inferior and incapable. In addition to rendering the racial incapacities of the Indian magistrate, there existed a sense of distrust and suspicion that created an environment in which racially driven forms of opposition began to exist. For the British, the Ilbert Bill was a way in which to be policed by the very

subjects they were policing; in this form of comprehension and particular reading, the British became increasingly aware of the threat this bill posed them as a mode in which to to negate the form of colonial governmentality they were attempting to cultivate post-Mutiny. The illogic of the Ilbert Bill for the British became the driving force for the emergence of an overt system of colonial racialization and colonial racism. As a result, native Indian populations recognized the ways in which they were being racialized in this particular context and the forms in which racism manifested in the colonial system.

What is more, vocal opposition to the Ilbert Bill provides both a useful complement and counterexample to the creation of martial races: this is specifically true in the context of my previous reading Foucault's governmentality and Scott's colonial governmentality. For instance, the opposition to the Ilbert Bill operates to make the case for racialized and colonial exclusion in the political-juridical realm, whereas martial races is way in which to simultaneously include and employ certain 'races' and exclude others as a form of service to the British empire. Secondly, opposition to the Ilbert Bill enables a critique of Indian policing and managing criminality over any British criminal subject, as the Ilbert Bill itself in rendered as anti-colonial in its efforts; whereas martial race ideology necessitated the policing of Indian bodies and the further policing of their colonial conduct within the colonial military, the Ilbert Bill provided a crucial counterpoint. As such, the Bill managed colonial bodies in what can be understood as a more rudimentary colonial practice of exclusion and subjugation; in this way, it maintained no pretense about honor, inspiration, or inclusion as in the case of martial races. And perhaps most significantly, it brought to the fore a clear example of colonial racism not heretofore recognized in the British Raj.

Intimate Factions and Imperial Design

What becomes remarkable in the greater webs of empire that inform this chapter's focus on martial race and colonial governmentality more broadly, are the ways in which certain paradigms begin to shape and animate future iterations of particular bodies in South Asia and beyond. In taking up race as a concept and to-be-made reality of colonial India, I have endeavored to underscore the complex and transforming nodes of race and empire through a study of technologies of power, regulation, and control. In placing particular populations as notable in this exploration, I aim to provide examples of how in fact many of these groups, martial races and otherwise, were in fact intimately linked as part of a greater project of imperial design. I use this term 'imperial design' as a way of underscoring both the assuredness of British colonial authorities and, contrastively, to highlight the rather messy and contradictory modes of practices of racism, racialism, and racial politics.

Furthermore, by apprehending these moments and ideologically informed systems of race in the British Raj, it becomes vital to speak to the violence of colonial governmentality. Recognizing and confronting the force required to conceive and enact varying forms of colonial governance, attempts to demonstrate the emergence of race as a crucial component of British imperial design. In performing violence vis-a-vis race and racial designation, is to denote the divisive and purposefully exclusionary devices of colonialism. Most precisely, martial race ideology was able to link racial capacities and incapacities through a creation of the most strategically violent and, at least seemingly, loyal social bodies. The division between martial and non-martial was a creative political rupture that was crucial only by imperial design. If it were not for such a rupture, hypothetically, the capacities for violence may not have had such distinct foundations through colonial myth-making, made most exemplary by Lt. Gen. MacMunn.

If we are to understand then imperial design as acts and practices of creative political, social, and economic ruptures, what might that mean for the bodies, concepts, and figures it destroys and shatters in its wake? And what is more, what might that mean for the bodies, concepts, and figures it creates, unearths, or forms in its wake?

It is with these questions in mind, that I aim to engage with traces of what came before and what will come after imperial design. This is to say that other, perhaps more dangerous, forms of imperial design, specifically through the policing of diasporic South Asians begin to imagine and shape what I am calling the 'militant body'. The paradigms of race, violence, and religion, are integral in the South Asian context, and it is with these analytics that I look toward the creation of a dispora and toward the cries for political sovereignty and independence from the British nation-state.

Chapter 2: Radical Tides:

Becoming-Racial and Secular in Ghadar Writing

Reckoning in the North American present

On August 6, 2006, Canadian Prime Minister Stephan Harper made a speech at the eleventh annual Ghadari Babiyan da Mela, the Festival of the Ghadar Party, in Surrey, British Columbia. Harper stated that the government of Canada acknowledged the Komagata Maru incident and announced the government's commitment to "undertake consultations with the Indo-Canadian community on how best to recognize this sad moment in Canada's history." Many in B.C. based South Asian communities, especially the Sikh community, were not satisfied with how such acknowledgement was made without apology. On April 2, 2008, MP Ruby Dhalla tabled motion 469 (M-469) in the House of Commons, which read, "That, in the opinion of the House, the government should officially apologize to the Indo-Canadian community and to the individuals impacted in the 1914 Komagata Maru incident, in which passengers were prevented from landing in Canada." Seeking an official apology nearly two years after Harper's original statement, Dhalla's statement set into motion a series of events that aimed for the Canadian government to reconcile with those who themselves experienced, as well as their descendants, the racist exclusionary policy that conditioned the violence of the Komagata Maru incident.

From May until August of that year, the series of events were as follows: On May 10, 2008, Jason Kenney, Secretary of State (Multiculturalism and Canadian Identity), announced the Indo-Canadian community would be able to apply for up to $2.5 million in grants and contributions funding to commemorate the Komagata Maru incident. Following further debate on May 15, 2008, Dhalla's motion was passed by the House of Commons. On May 23, 2008, the

Legislative Assembly of British Columbia unanimously passed a resolution "that this Legislature apologizes for the events of May 23, 1914, when 376 passengers of the Komagata Maru, stationed off Vancouver harbour, were denied entry by Canada. The House deeply regrets that the passengers, who sought refuge in our country and our province, were turned away without benefit of the fair and impartial treatment befitting a society where people of all cultures are welcomed and accepted." On August 3, 2008, Prime Minister Stephen Harper appeared at the 13th annual Ghadri Babiyan Da Mela in Surrey, B.C., to issue an apology for the Komagata Maru incident. He said, in response to the House of Commons motion calling for an apology by the government, "On behalf of the government of Canada, I am officially conveying as prime minister that apology."[45]

In the aftermath of Harper's apology, members of the Sikh community in B.C. were not satisfied. Of the 376 passengers aboard the Komagata Maru, 340 were Sikh, and the incident aggravated the community as a major portion of the South Asian diaspora in North America. According to report on major Canadian News television outlet CTV, Sikhs were infuriated that the apology took place in Surrey rather than on the floor of the House of Commons, where in 2006 Harper had made an official apology to the Chinese-Canadian community for the Chinese Head Tax, which imposed a tax on Chinese immigrants who came to Canada between 1885 and 1923. The news media outlet reported that Harper offered compensation to surviving Chinese-

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[45] See: http://www.sikhpioneers.org/koma.html, as well as:

Vig, M. "Lest We Forget." *MEHFIL* v.3:3 (1993) : 12-1; Johnston, Hugh J.M. *The Voyage of the Komagata Maru: the Sikh Challenge to Canada's Colour Bar.* Delhi: Oxford University Press. 1979; Singh, Kesar. *Canadian Sikhs (Part One) and Komagata Massacre.* Kesar Singh: 13487-98-A Avenue, Surrey, B.C. Canada V3T 1C7. 1989.Ward, W. Peter. "The Komagatu Maru Incident" in *White Canada forever : popular attitudes and public policy toward Orientals in British Columbia* / W. Peter Ward. Montreal : McGill-Queen's University Press, c1978; 2d ed. c1990, pp 79-93 (both editions); Canadian Historical Association. Some Aspects fo Komagata Maru Affair 1914. Annual Report May 1936. pp 100-101; Srikanth, Rajini. "The Komagata Maru: Memory and Mobilization among the South Asian Diaspora in North America" in *Re-collecting Early Asian America*/ Lee, Josephine, et al. Temple University Press 2002, pp 78-93; Josh, Sohan Singh. *Tragedy of Komagata Maru.* New Delhi: People's Publishing House.1975.

Canadians who paid the tax, as well as to widows and their children. What is more, the report noted that the apology for the Komagata Maru incident "marks the third such reconciliation Harper has made with embarrassing parts of Canada's past." In recognizing the symbolic weight of racist policies and violent exclusion in Canada, Harper's remarks while rendered insufficient by the British Columbia-based Sikh community, particularly by The Descendants of Komagatamaru Society, spoke to the emergence of reconciliation as a form of reckoning with Canada's legacy of violence. Through reconciliation, in the form of Harper's apology, the Komagata Maru incident reemerges in the twenty-first century, as do critiques of a broader, North American history of violence against South Asians. In harkening back to a historical event that exhibited the disquieting racist policies of what was once an imperial foothold for the British Raj, the gestures and attempts for racial reconciliation speak to the haunting of legally sanctioned violence against minority subjects.

The Komagata Maru incident was a significant component in the forming and founding of the Ghadar Party. While the roots and official founding of the party occurred in 1913, the Komagata Maru incident further animated and motivated the founding member's goal of anticolonial liberation and the decolonization of India. Emblematically, the incident provided an extreme example of racial intolerance and imperial subjugation made tangible in the South Asian diaspora of North America, and specifically along the West Coast, or Pacific Northwest. In this way, it spoke to the both the transpacific anti-imperial project that drove the Ghadarites. Still, with the Komagata Maru incident, through the barring of the ship's passengers to enter Vancouver Harbour, was a symbolic event in the further congealing of the Ghadar Party, as it evidenced the global force of empire, the work of policing and violent racism that is tethered to the logic of empire itself.

In this chapter, I move from the location of colonial India, where in my first chapter I examined the role of Sikhs in British colonial army as a martial race, to the early migration of South Asians to North America.[46] In this chapter, I focus on writings on and of the Ghadar Party (Revolution Party) members within the early twentieth century. The Ghadar Party was a global radical anticolonial party and nationalist socialist movement made up of South Asians working against British colonial occupation of India and for the independence of India from the British empire. The Ghadar Party is memorialized by many South Asians in the diaspora, especially Sikhs, as an emblematic historical moment in which radical anti-imperialist expression was inextricably tethered to encounters of racism, specifically racial exclusion and violence. I argue that poetry by Sikh founder of the Ghadar Party, Kartar Singh Sarabha and essays by his protégé and Marxist thinker Bhagat Singh, worked toward collective solidarity amongst South Asian peoples in the U.S. and Canada against race-based transimperial forces through secularist principles and practices, and as such, makes incoherent the figure of the Sikh as simply a religious identitarian category. It is in this chapter, therefore, that I examine the Sikh body in the U.S., as both individually and collectively "becoming-racial."

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[46] For more on martial races and the concept of colonial governmentality, see first chapter, "Intimate Factions: British Martial Race Ideology and the Work of Colonial Governmentality." Also see: Bilkawesh, Nikhil. "'Their faces were like so many of the same sort at home': American Responses to the Indian Rebellion of 1857." *American Periodicals: A Journal of History Criticism, and Bibliography*, 21 (1). 2011, 1-23; Cohen, Stephen P. *The Indian Army: Its Contribution to the Development of a Nation*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1971; Foucault, Michel. *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the College de France, 1977-78.* New York: Palgrave, 2009; Higate, Paul. Ed. *Military Masculinities: Identity and the State*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003; MacMunn, Lt-Gen. Sir George. *The Martial Races of India*. London: Low, Marston, & Co, 1933; Mason, Philip. *A Matter of Honour: An Account of the Indian Army Officers and Men*. London: Jonathan Cape, 1974; Metcalf, Barbara D. & Thomas R. *A Concise History of India.* Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002; Misra, Maria. "Lessons of Empire: Britain and India." *SAIS Review*, 23 (2). 2003, 133-53; Ray, Subhasish. "The Nonmartial Origins of the "Martial Races": Ethnicity and Military Service in Ex-British Colonies ." *Armed Forces & Society.* 2012, 1-16; Robb, Peter. Ed. *The Concept of Race in South Asia*. Delhi: Oxford UP, 1995; Roy, Kaushik. *The Indian Army in the Two World Wars*. Leiden: BRILL, 2011; Scott, David. "Colonial Governmentality". *Social Text*, 43. 1995, 191-220; Sramek, Joseph. *Gender, Morality and Race in Company India, 1765-1858*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011; Streets-Salter, Heather. *Martial Races: The Military, Race, and Masculinity in British Imperial Culture, 1857-1914*. Manchester: Manchester UP, 2004; Tan, Tai Yong. *The Garrison State: The Military, Government, and Society in Colonial Punjab,1849-1945*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2005.

Such a body I name becoming-racial as a mode in which to theorize and work against the category of ethno-religious. The presence of Sikhs in North America and other diasporic settings makes the descriptor ethno-religious especially lacking insofar as it denies any real sense of the community's coding and valuation on a greater scale, both in India, albeit in a very nuanced way, and globally. Further, the notion of the Sikh body as 'becoming-racial' is tied to the very disavowal or denial of such a coding of these bodies as racialized; it is therefore a critical necessity to point to their minority status, not only religiously and in the context of the subcontinent, but as a way in which to rethink the place of such a highly visible body as a racial subject. The constant deferral of race as a way in which to rethink the minoritization of Sikhs resonates not only with the spatial or geographic contingencies of these bodies, but with the temporal possibility and reflection as part of a constant negotiation, that serves to deny Sikh bodies formal rights outside of a life that merits only religious tolerance. And while life in the U.S. in particular is predicated on the notion of religious tolerance, such a tenet of American life has never wholly incorporated those outside of Christianity. It thus becomes vital to think about Sikhs as minority subjects, and as such, to think of Ghadarites as making distinctly minoritarian efforts in a space that seemingly afforded them more freedom to dissent than their homeland.[47] In this way, minority politics and minority critique acts as a productive supplement to the becoming-racial Sikh body, within and outside of the context of the South Asian Ghadar politics and diasporic ideals for Indian sovereignty.

As a supplement, or more holistically as an alternative, minority politics and forms of critique define the Ghadar's politics. Rather than see themselves as disempowered on the level of being subject to colonial realities and patterns in India and the U.S., respectively, Ghadarites

[47] I want to note that the contemporary critique of religious tolerance, as rendered by Wendy Brown's 2006 monograph *Regulating Aversion: Tolerance in the Age of Identity and Empire* is an important part of my work to think through Sikh and Muslim racialization in our age of terror.

acclimated and ultimately embraced minority politics and critique, for it situated them amongst the anticolonial vanguard globally. I want to emphasize the place of minority as not simply identitarian and to think through the category of minority through the lens of work on the subject by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari.[48] Minority as a form of philosophy, politics, and critique is an ethical question, and I follow Deleuze and Guattari when I use the concept. To be clear, Deleuze and Guattari assert that "becoming-minoritarian" is an ethical action, one that necessitates a critique of the concept of the majority. "Becoming-minoritarian" is a mode in which to align oneself politically and ethically, and it becomes essential to think about in juxtaposition to forms of statist power and the regulation of bodies. I read Ghadarite texts through such a lens, and in the dual sense of minoritarian as both based on identity—as necessitated by the Ghadar's migration or willed expulsion from the subcontinent and the racial exclusion in North America--and something outside of identitarian logics. What we have then is the will to political and ethical concern for the not-majority and those seeking action against the status quo. These ideas articulate a radical sensibility as it apprehends the world as an entity in constant need for political and ethical change; this sensibility, in turn, is about sustained movement, relentless transformation, and endless disorder. Even further, in Deleuze and Guattari's conception, "becoming-minoritarian" is the willful disassociation with the majority as an ethical imperative, and in this mode, minority politics is defined by the space it makes between itself and majoritarian politics. I read this space as inevitably defined by its orientation to the future, and its distance in both its temporal and spatial dimensions, as concerned with the coming possibilities provided by ethical action and political revolution. It is therefore useful to note that Deleuze and Guattari's 'becoming-minority,' ' and the concept 'becoming-racial' are

[48] Deleuze and Guattari's theoretical apparatus of 'becoming-minority' is explicated in both *Kafka: Towards a Minor Literature* and *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. I examine and explain my use of 'becoming-minority' and the related D & G concept of deterritorialization in my introduction "Insurgent Knowledges."

related concepts insofar as they participate in the temporal and spatial dimensions of diasporic thought and politics.

Additionally, I center interfaith solidarities in the Ghadar Party as an emergence of the secular question amongst South Asian diasporic subjects. While the Ghadar Party itself was largely made up of Sikhs, especially Punjabi Sikhs who labored as agricultural workers in California, the many leaders of the Party itself were of various religious backgrounds, including Hindu and Muslim, as well as Sikh and Christian. By examining the Ghadar Party as an interfaith coalition, I argue that the cooperation of varying religious identities amongst Ghadarites had, in part, brought to the fore the question of secularism. In fact, many of the Party's leaders varied in their degrees of religious affiliation, many as well were estranged from their religious identity and practices, and many whom identified as atheist, including Bhagat Singh. It is through this question of the secular that attaches itself to the making of a greater South Asian diaspora, and additionally sets up an uncommon narrative for the early Sikh diaspora and the figure of the Sikh body.

Ghadar, translated from Urdu meaning revolt, mutiny, or rebellion, was comprised of primarily young immigrant men who were often and either student activists or agricultural laborers. The Party was politically active for over six years, though it did not formally dissolve until 1947, following the independence of India. The party quickly gained radical political traction globally and had members in parts of Mexico, East and Southern Africa, East Asia, and Southeast Asia. Though this chapter's study of English and Punjabi-language texts primarily by Sarabha and Singh, I also examine some of the more "official" archival material, including the "Ghadar di Gunj" ("Echoes of Mutiny"), an anthology of nationalist and socialist poetry in Punjabi, as well as writings from the "The Independent Hindustan," the official Hindustan

Ghadar Party organ published in San Francisco, later reincarnated as "The United States of India" in 1923. These important artifacts, some official and unofficial narratives, among the various others I review, demonstrate the complexity and breadth the anti-imperial struggles of India had on a global scale. While these publications, along with various essays, correspondences, and newsletters that I scrutinize are largely produced and widely circulated in the years that the party was most active, there exist various texts and documents that preceded and followed the Party's official existence.

Further, I take Maia Ramnath's in depth studies as vitally important points of departure, as I examine the Ghadar Party's radical politics specifically through the emerging analogues and relationships between the decolonization of India, and anti-imperialism in the North America with the differential power structure and institutional oppression of Indians and the racist structures and violent exclusionary practices of the U.S. and Western Canada.[49][50] It is through

[49] 2011's *Haj to Utopia: How the Ghadar Movement Charted Global Radicalism and Attempted to Overthrow the British Empire*, and 2012's *Decolonizing Anarchism: An Antiauthoritarian History of India's Liberation Struggle*. Berkeley: U of California Press.

[50] Ghadarites, many of whom were student activists, and primarily based at the University of California, Berkeley, utilized the policing of migrants and diasporic bodies as a way in which to enter a more far-reaching, holistic, and radical approach to the violence of empire on an international scale. Members of the Party took on a more global approach as a way of reflecting their own universalism and political and social care for all oppressed peoples--and this argument is to counter the claim that the Ghadar Party was an exclusively nationalist political organization, with interests only in the liberation of India and its people, as well to counter the claim that the Party had deep ties to Sikh nationalist and separatist movements. In *Haj to Utopia*, Maia Ramnath speaks to such claims, stating:

> The uniqueness of Ghadar radicalism was born of its combinations: of contexts, populations, issues, frames, and scales. There was no hermetic seal between the Bengalis and Punjabis, the students and activists; between activities initiated in California, or elsewhere in the Indian political network abroad…None of its components in isolation could have produced the same phenomenon. Furthermore, to portray the Ghadar as a Sikh organization by design would be to disregard its members' own expansive universalist principles. Their minds were not narrow, and I believe they themselves would have wanted to have been defined not by ascriptive ethno-religious identity but by their ideological affinities and commitments. (4)

Here I agree with Ramnath's statements, as many of the writings by Ghadarites speak to the spirit of radical social and cultural politics that has more in common with critiquing power than reinforcing identitarian categories. Ramnath frames the Party in a way that aids in understanding the heterogeneity in approaches to anticolonial radicalism and the appreciation and embrace of difference as a way in which to combat empire and imperial governmentality. Still, I disagree with Ramnath insofar as she discredits the Sikh foundations of the Ghadar Party, describing the founding of the Party in the context of the Komagata Maru incident as such: "Ghadar is…often identified as a Sikh movement, exclusively and by definition, with the Komagata Maru incident triggering a burst of heroic activity to redeem the community from the lingering shame of loyalism in 1857" (3). In Ramnath's estimation,

such convergences and parallels, while always uneven and rather messy, that the earliest members of the Sikh and South Asian diasporas were crucial in their active linking of race and empire. Through anticolonial thought and activity, through linking global struggles for decolonization, the Ghadar Party sought to reimagine a world in which liberation of all oppressed peoples was key. While the earliest and primary goal of the Party was the independence of India and the dissolution of the British Raj as an entity, what seemed to animate the Party most was the work of radicalism and militant resistance to forms of oppressive state power on a global scale. What informed their looming concern with power on an international scale had much to do with the fact that, while the majority of Ghadarites were based in North

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the place of the Sikhs in both the Komagata Maru incident and the Party might be understood as convenient insofar as it locates Sikhs as vehemently opposed to colonial and imperial subjugation when in fact their role as part of the British Royal Army, as a martial race, marked them as politically suspect and disloyal to the majority of Indians who were seeking independence.

However, Ramnath's marks Sikhs as a community in search of redemption--socially, politically, and ideologically--as well as in search of a space within the greater South Asian diaspora. What is striking about this assessment and perhaps minor point, lies with the way the Sikhs are then placed at a categorical disadvantage and are seen as using the Komagata Maru incident to their politically strategic advantage. Rather than see this moment as a way in which for Sikhs to participate anew in South Asian politics, as well as aid in the formation of diasporic politics, Ramnath marks these bodies as politically suspicious insofar as they are in fact representative of a community that had been designated as martial races by the British, which I have explored extensively in the first chapter. Here the marking of their bodies as representations of disloyalty and as collaborators in the work of empire lends a sense that the Sikh community reputation is marred due to the pressures of imperial subjectivity. Ramnath's suggestion then, that Sikhs in the Ghadar Party were galvanizing an anticolonial political movement abroad to dissociate from the moment of imperial rupture--the 1857 Mutiny--and to migrate partially to satisfy the desire to shift radically from the status of warriors in the name of empire, seems to deny the Sikh diaspora's own radical dissensus from their own community in India, as well as denying the social justice imperatives of Sikhism's foundations. Thus, to consider Sikh participation and collaboration in the Ghadar Party as deeply tied to the shame of treason in the context of the previous generation and the circumstances and demands of imperial subjectivity appears unjust and reductive.

It becomes part of the focus of the chapter to then pursue the study of Ghadar Party publications as a way in which to think through the anticolonial form as a participating in an emergent politics and ethics of militancy and militant resistance for the Sikh diaspora and its South Asian counterparts. By engaging with nascent ideas on the possibilities of violence and non-violence, and the fruits of both violent and non-violent resistance to colonial and imperial subjectivity, the Ghadarites were prolific in their contributions to a critical conversation on decolonization, liberation, as well as power, race, violence, and empire. My critique of Ramnath, as such, relies on her haste dismissal of the Sikh diasporic contributions to radical anti-colonial thought as a result of communal shame. In this way, I engage with a reading of the Sikh role in Ghadar Politics as informed not by collective shame or disgrace, but rather by a shared sense of ethical and political imperatives amongst other South Asian peoples that might only have happened outside of the physical space of India. It is my sense then that migration, the physical distance from the subcontinent, cultivated a new ethical imperative for liberation based both on a sense of longing through dislocation or relocation, as well as a sense of urgency for such liberation.

America, many had spent time or divided their time between places in Africa, East Asia, Southeast Asia, and Europe. Their role as a significant portion of the South Asian diaspora in the U.S. simultaneously helped shape and challenge the sense of diaspora as limited by the constraints of caste, religion, and class, opting to put into question those very limitations through anti-imperial struggle. Furthermore, the burgeoning diaspora placed an emphasis on solidarity as a means of combating the imperial subjugation of India.

In my examination of textual artifacts, I read Ghadar anticolonial writing as a form wherein the necessary solidarity efforts of diasporic anti-imperial bodies enables a critique of power, specifically state power. Furthermore, I read this form as a way in which to negotiate race, racism, and racial difference in the context of the diaspora. In reading the anticolonial form as way in which to negotiate race and racism in the colonial context, as well as a way in which to engage in a critique of empire, I aim not to only participate in the discourses of postcolonial studies, though such a study must be firmly rooted in such a field. Rather, I read the Ghadar Party's publications and various textual artifacts as a means in which to rethink what violence means, and how violence is conceived through language, and how Ghadarites use and consider violence as an ethical mode in which to resist and combat imperial power. In this way, I look at militancy as a major component of the anticolonial form, insofar as militancy provides a way in which to reconfigure the predominant and contemporary sense of violence as always already negative and detrimental. That is to say that violence is reconceptualized through the anticolonial form's focus on militancy, and militancy insofar as it opens the possibility of violence as a legitimate form of anticolonial expression. Ultimately, militancy must, in context, speak to both the critical awakening of Indian sovereign consciousness and the active willingness to participate in violence to achieve independence.

Of course, this logic, following the work of revolutionary anticolonial thinker Frantz Fanon, is popular and common amongst those working for radical social and political change.[51] However, what I am suggesting, is the interrogation of the anticolonial form as a form in which the consideration of violence appears in both apparent and latent ways, and rethinks the category of violence as not purely physical, but as psychic and as an analytic in which to examine and orient critical thought. In the context of the Ghadar Party texts that I study, I look to how these publications and various artifacts are governed by the parameters of the anticolonial form and the question of militancy. The form and the question, ultimately, take into consideration what constitutes just cause and seek to make a case for the undertaking of violence by providing evidence, primarily through grievance, of violence done unto their particular community or population.

New questions then arise: through anticolonial writing, in their evocation of liberation and independence for India, what is the responsibility of Ghadarites, as a sizable and vocal part of the early South Asian diaspora in North America? In provoking and making known that there is a contingent of South Asians that seek the removal of the British Raj, how are Ghadarites rethinking modes of accountability in the call for violence in the name of sovereignty? How does the anticolonial form bring to bear these questions of militant resistance and violence as analytics, as psychic forms, along with the call to arms that begets bloodshed in the name of the 'homeland'? Finally, and perhaps comprehensively, how does the diaspora's relationship to 'home' inform the anticolonial form and the question of militancy? It is through the negotiation of the aforementioned relationship between colonialism, race, and empire, that I interrogate these questions in an attempt to think anew the radical politics of the Ghadar Party.

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[51] See my introduction for more on Fanon, footnote 10.

I also want to emphasize that the focus on the Sikh component of the Ghadar Party is not a way in which to disavow the role of Hindus and Muslims in the Party. Quite the opposite in fact: I look to the Sikh rootedness in the Ghadar Party as a way in which to rethink and reassemble commonly held and longstanding beliefs of Sikh separatism as part of the goals of the Party's anticolonial politics; rather, and more significantly, is the interfaith and interregional cooperation of the Ghadarites, who were all more invested in an universalist approach wherein radical, Leftist, socialist movement superceded the goals of particular communities, religious movements, caste differences, and so forth. In many more significant ways, the global radical politics of the Ghadar Party was driven by the imagining of liberation through their collective anticolonial forms of writing, which was, I argue, part of a greater diasporic politics. Growing out of both a Sikh and South Asian diasporic politics was a sense of existing outside and against the British empire and the governing of their bodies on the level of colonial subjectivity. By leaving 'home', Ghadar Party members were inventing a mode of political activity that might be described simultaneously as anticolonial, anti-imperial, and transimperial. In working against colonialism and empire, the Party originally believed itself to be operating outside of empire, outside of its un-freedom.

Sikhs as Becoming-Racial: On "The Tide of Turbans" and "The Ghadar Syndrome"

> Again on the far outposts of the Western world rises the specter of the Yellow Peril and confronts the affrighted pale-faces. This time the chimera is not the saturine, almond-eyed mask, the shaven head, the snaky pig-tail of the multitudinous Chinese, nor the close-cropped bulletheads of the suave and smiling Japanese, but a face of finer features, rising, turbaned out of the Pacific and bringing a new and anxious question to the

> dwellers on the so-called peaceful ocean. Nor is the apparition of a race different from that of the land it threatens, but of the same ancient Aryan stock. It is not, indeed, a question of the yellow and the white, but of the Oriental and the Occidental. It is nothing more or less than a threatening inundation of the Hindoos in the Pacific. (616)

In Herman Scheffauer's 1910 article, "The Tide of Turbans," the opening passage reveals a great deal about the "Hindoo Menace" and the threat of immigrant communities to whites on the West Coast.[52] By first identifying the Western world as a world in which he inhabits and of which he finds himself a part, Sheffauer easily slips into the modes of colonial and imperial logics. Immediately the text lends itself to a particular audience, and the publication from which it came, The Forum, was a highly respected magazine that featured guest authors and contributors debating a single political or social issue resonant with the contemporary moment. The debates that it featured reflected many sides of a particular political or social issue, including American imperialism and lynching, as it attempted to appeal to the more pressing dilemmas that faced the U.S., be they material or conceptual. While not necessarily a bastion of progressive politics, The Forum attempted to showcase work that came from all political perspectives in order to demonstrate particular ideals that seemed less apparent in other reputable publications of its time, including *Harper's* and the *Atlantic Monthly.* Furthermore, the magazine was particularly well circulated in the South, with a large Black readership. What is curious then about this particular article by Scheffauer is the focus on this particular issue of "the tide of turbans," which seems to have participated in the language of racial anthropology and its attendant discourses, more recognizably perhaps in Lothrop Stoddard's 1921 *The Rising Tide of Color Against White World*

[52] Scheffauer, Herman. *The Tide of Turbans*. See South Asian American Digital Archive: https://www.saada.org/

Supremacy.[53] Functionally, the article might be a part of a greater question or concern over immigration, reflecting the anxieties of the early twentieth century U.S. The regional concerns of Sheffauer are with the American West and with the multitudes of Asian immigrant labor, which is not an unfamiliar narrative insofar as it defines much of the late nineteenth century through the mid-twentieth century.

In the following paragraph of "The Tide of Turbans", Scheffauer writes:

> The Pacific Slope, being the sea-frontier to Asia, is the western bulwark of America, and as such has borne and is still to bear the brunt of the invasion of the swarms of swarthy people from the ancient lands of the Orient. The American, far removed on the globe, finds it difficult to accept the Hindoo as a brother of the blood. Between him and this dark, mystic race lies a pit almost as profound as that which he has dug between himself and the negro. The racial equality of the East Indian he acknowledges, but a closer affinity he unconsciously denies. (616)

Notably, however, are three aspects of Sheffauer's opening: firstly, the way in which the appearance of Indians in the U.S. is perceived as multitudinous, not only conveying the sheer volume of the new Asian immigrant influx, but as part of a larger bloc of Asian peoples who are primarily differentiated by their turbans and their "swarthy" appearance. Secondly, the arrival of the "Hindoo menace," as it is later called, warrants and seems to necessitate the reorientation of a critical, racialized discourses of immigration and citizenship from transatlantic to transpacific; I mean to say that this makes clear that waves of immigrants from Asia, and specifically Chinese, Japanese, and Indian migrants, as Scheffauer names, into the U.S., radically transform the landscape and geographies of political and social concern. In naming the Pacific Slope,

[53] Stoddard, Lothrop. *The Rising Tide of Colour: Against White World-supremacy*. Brighton: Historical Review Press, 1981.

Scheffauer aims to give life to new modes of anti-Asian racism by locating the space in which immigrant laborers are perceived as suspicious and threatening to the American order of white supremacy, while the confines and limits of whiteness were ever shifting at the particular moment. Thirdly, and finally, Scheffauer's last sentence speaks to parity in the racial order between whites and Indians inasmuch as Indians are recognized as part of the Aryan race and its varying mythologies. However, ultimately, despite such "racial equality" on the level of Indians being officially embedded and identified as Aryan, even and especially in the context of the British empire, the clear form of U.S. anti-Asian racism, and specifically anti-South Asian and anti-Sikh racism, is emblazoned by Scheffauer. Any further identification with the Indian is preposterous, and the author's denial of any further desire for contact or "affinity" is cut off in order to uphold the racist standards of white supremacy.

The essay, further, collapses all Indians into the category of "Hindoo". The collapse reads as deliberate maneuver to ensure that all Indians are wrongly recognized in terms of both religious affiliation, in many cases, and in its clear commitment to a misspelling of the category of "Hindu". In the complete disavowal of Indian-ness, Scheffauer and his contemporaries were engaging in a conversation between two empires. By denying "Indian," "South Asian," or "Asian," as identifiers, the category of "Hindoo" spoke volumes on the precarity of life for Indian migrant workers, students, and activists in the U.S. Whatever their communal, religious, ethnic, or regional identifiers, Indians in the U.S. at this juncture were regarded as little more than those seeking to escape the colonial subjugation of India by the British, and, in turn finding the racist and unrelenting threats of new forms of discrimination and oppression. Scheffauer's "The Tide of Turbans" is useful insofar as it presents evidence of the kind of racial discourse around the figure of the Indian immigrant, and especially using the symbol of the turban as a way in which to

engage an American audience. By marking the "Hindoo menace" by the turban, the threat of Indian migrants becomes synonymous with Punjabi farmers who were primarily Sikh men and wore turbans as a form religious expression; perhaps more importantly though, is the comprehension of the Sikh turban as expressions of religious and cultural responsibility and accountability.[54] The turban came to represent the threat that Indians/Hindoos posed to white supremacy as it the turban was registered only its absolute strangeness. Thus, in the context of the "Hindoo Menace" that Scheffauer is attempting to warn his readership about, anti-Sikh racism is at the heart of such "Menace," constituting a visible minority, completely foreign and previously unknown to a North American populace.

Still, that is not to say that other Indians were absent in this context, but rather, I suggest that South Asian solidarity primarily came from their status as all being labeled "Hindoo" upon arrival in the U.S., and not necessarily from previous affinity or alliance on the subcontinent. Through this racist designation, through this collapse of differences, were new modes of affiliation and community enabled. The mobilization of the Ghadar Party can be then traced less to the nationalist interests of Indians in the diaspora, and rather to a shared sense of racial exclusion and oppression at the hands of new oppressors in North America. American scholar of religious studies and sociology, as well as a major contributor to Sikh Studies, Mark Juergensmeyer, makes a similar argument in one version of his significant, albeit dated, 1977 essay "The Ghadar Syndrome: Immigrant Sikhs and Nationalist Pride."[55] In this particular version of this essay, Juergensmeyer argues that the Ghadar Party was less an experiment in nationalist or anticolonial movement in the South Asian diaspora abroad, as it was a political and

[54] I explore the significance of turbans historically and in the post-9/11 present further in my introductory chapter, "Insurgent Knowledges."

[55] *South Asians in North America Collection*. Archive at UC Berkeley, Bancroft Library. 1899-1974. Juergesmeyer's work is found in *Sikh Studies*, Berkeley: U of California Press, 1977.

social coalition of migrant farmers, laborers, students, and activists, who were drawn to mobilization as a way in which to engage with the racism, oppressive labor conditions, and exclusionary practices in North America. Early in "The Ghadar Syndrome," Juergensmeyer states:

> It is a curious fact of history that the Ghadar members were more militant than most of the nationalists back in India at that time. Perhaps more curious still, Ghadar was almost entirely independent from the movements at home; and their ties to India were remarkably weak. The Ghadar movement was not only based in north America, it almost wholly existed within North America; they hoped to invade India from the outside, and spur the masses into a spontaneous uprising of liberation. A quixotic hope, and a tragic mission, as it turned out. (173)

A 1981 version of the essay, titled "The Ghadar Syndrome: Ethnic Anger and Nationalist Pride," revises its predecessor through an attempt to highlight parallels of Ghadar politics to other global anticolonial movements, Juergensmeyer writes:

> The poignancy of their endeavor is highlighted by their isolation: a stalwart band of rebels who maintained a lonely mutiny against British India, half a world away. Then why did they do it? The answers to that question have ramifications beyond the Gadar incident, for as peculiar as Gadar may seem, it fits into a pattern of militant nationalism within expatriate communities that includes Irish nationalists, Chinese and Korean revolutionaries, and in our time, Iranian militants. Within the Gadar case, then, is a syndrome of ethnic anger and nationalist pride, and the link between them begs to be understood.

In the earlier version of Juergensmeyer's essay, the relationship between militancy and Ghadar is set up as a way in which to understand the Party's nationalist agenda. The Party is set up as a supplement to nationalist movement on the subcontinent, and is received as its more militant arm. The term militant in the context of Juergensmeyer's writing seems to suggest the alacrity to use violence, and violence in three ways: as a mode of resistance, as a threat to the status quo, and as the means for revolutionary change. The notion that "spontaneous uprising for liberation" was a viable and potentially effective method for achieving independence might seem more feasible if the Ghadarites were operating and struggling on the ground in India. However, most notably in Juergensmeyer's estimation is the fact that Ghadar "ties to India were remarkably weak," and such an assessment speaks volumes about the Ghadar Party's potential effectiveness and its ultimate weakness.

Further, the militancy of the Ghadar Party in Juergensmeyer's estimation is reflective not of the urgency of the nationalist cause, which was not necessarily what drove most Indian migrants to North America, but reflective of something else. Moving to the latter version of "The Ghadar Syndrome," Juergensmeyer makes note of the "ethnic anger" that fueled the Ghadarites. Instead of conceiving of Ghadar politics as purely about the drive for members' transpacific, diasporic, and anti-imperial politics to decolonize India and to liberate its compatriots, Juergensmeyer argues, there exists a lack of engagement with the social and material conditions with which South Asian migrants in North America had to deal. The absence of rights in the face of extreme instances of racist violence and exclusion, especially in the wake of events like the Bellingham riots in September of 1907 and the Komagata Maru incident of 1914, made apparent that in order for heterogeneous South Asian populations in the diaspora to have social or political traction, affective politics and coalition was necessary. It is therefore, as Juergensmeyer makes

clear, not the predicaments of geography and their ties to India and its struggle for independence that drove them toward solidarity efforts, but rather their shared dissatisfaction and frustration with their specific circumstances and feelings of multiple modes of displacement.

Still, "The Ghadar Syndrome" is not necessarily arguing that one rationale for the creation of the Ghadar Party occluded the other. Instead, Juergensmeyer argues that both must be seen as having worked in conjunction with one another in the context of resisting and actively fighting against simultaneous oppressions that are at once intimately bound and distinctive from one another. In this way, the motivations for the organization of the Ghadar Party are plural and not bound simply to anticolonial desires for a home that was. The founding of the Party then becomes complexly riddled with the anxieties that faced immigrant communities, and especially for a community that arrived in North America at the height of anti-Asian racism, state-sanctioned exclusion, and brutal violence at the hands of white supremacy. Put another way, we might then read the founding of the Ghadar Party as a dual confrontation with the status quo. That is to say, that Ghadarites served to function as in protest to two major forces: firstly and more overtly, the British colonial presence in India and British empire worldwide; and, secondly, the growing racist sentiments and acts of violence against Asian immigrants, and tethered to that, a sense of growing oppressive living, working, social, and political conditions that increasingly appeared to parallel colonial conditions.

In this way, by taking Juergensmeyer's argument as a point of departure, I am arguing that the Ghadar Party formed from the political possibility of resisting and actively pushing against the status quo of two distinct geopolitical spaces. Additionally, I argue that in so doing, the Ghadarites developed both a form of minority politics in the U.S., as well as a form of minority critique through their various writings. That is not to exclude the various and already

existing forms of minority politics and forms of critiques in the U.S. or globally. Instead I mean to suggest that this form of minority politics and critique worked between two empires, and beyond them as well, seeking alternatives to what seemed and what were cruel and repressive environments. Through transimperial, anticolonial writing, I suggest that Ghadar writing be grasped and recognized as forms of minority critique.

More pointedly, the relationship between the figure of, what I name, the becoming-racial body of the Sikh, as part of the larger shape of the South Asian diasporic body, might be recognized as always already minoritized, within and outside of the context of India as an imaginary homeland.[56][57] Returning to Scheffauer's essay "The Tide of Turbans," it is vital to note the visibility of the turban as the symbol of the foreign. Warning The Forum readership of this new immigrant population depends on the recognition of the turban, and the emphasis placed then on such a marker becomes the moment of a negative inscription onto Sikh bodies, and specifically Punjabi Sikh male bodies. The negative value inscribed onto Punjabi Sikh male bodies by Scheffauer, as a result, shapes the becoming-racial body of the Sikh into a racial subject of the U.S. In this way, marked as 'Hindoo,' recognized and policed as colonial and imperial subjects of India, and read as part of a larger wave of Asian migration, the Sikh man, particularly if he donned a turban, was read as both a represenatation of racial strangeness and as a minority figure within South Asian diasporic peoples.[58] What becomes important to consider then is how in fact the anxiety that Scheffauer is expressing and attempting to produce for

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[56] And here, by imaginary homeland, I mean to say that India is never wholly read as 'home' to most Sikhs in India, as the history of persecution and genocide of Sikhs since its founding has plagued its relationship with India.

[57] To be clear, I conceive of these populations, and specifically Sikhs, as bodies to mark the way in which they are read in the colonial and diasporic contexts, and to highlight their 'ethno-religious' identity that has always placed them in contradistinction to the Hindu majority, and contingents of Muslims, Buddhists, Christians, and Jains in India.

[58] The Punjabi Sikh woman was largely absent in this context, as were most South Asian women, as men primarily migrated for the purposes of providing labor as farmers, miners, and lumber mill workers across the West Coasts of the U.S. and Canada. See Joan Jensen, *Passage from India: Asian Indian Immigrants in North America,* 1988.

readers--putting them on alert for this new 'Hindoo menace'--is reflected in Juergensmeyer's argument that the founding of the Ghadar Party was linked not only to anticolonial desires and practices, but to the refracted anxieties that faced South Asian bodies in a foreign land as well. This important consideration aids in making known the racialization of such bodies in North America, and especially for Sikh bodies who were primary suspects in the "rising tide of turbans."

Duty and the Rhetoric of Becoming-Militant: Sarabha's Anticolonial Poetry

"Who We Are"

> If anyone asks who we are//Tell him our name is rebel//Our duty is to end the tyranny//Our profession is to launch revolution//That is our namaz, this is our sandhya//Our puja, our worship//This is our religion//Our work//This is our only Khuda, our only Rama.

Above is the text to Kartar Singh Sarabha's "Who We Are," a poem that acted as an anthem for early Ghadar Party members, and was often sung at meetings or in early protests.[59] While clearly Sarabha's poem operates as a tool to galvanize Ghadarites, the force of the poem lies in the knowledge of their action as against the oppressive statist machine that is the status quo. What might be noted is that Sarabha's poem can be read straightforwardly as a call to gather and enact movement by Ghadarites, to cull the cause of political opposition to colonial domination and, more broadly, to hegemonic apparatuses. There is a naming of the Party as "rebel," operating as in direct opposition to "tyranny." However, there is much to note in this short poem. The English translation of Kartar Singh Sarabha's poem "Who We Are" resists whole translation, opting for the usage of a combination of Punjabi, Urdu, and Hindi words. "Namaz," "Sandhya," "Puja,"

[59] *South Asians in North America Collection*. Archive at UC Berkeley, Bancroft Library. 1899-1974.

"Khuda," "Rama": these words are all in deference and regard revolution and revolutionary organizing as both religion and labor. Still, while there exists a higher power in each of these categories presented in "Who We Are," there also lives a denial of any power above the potential of the masses. The poem is speaking to those in positions of power and authority, in an act of articulation that defines this collective of rebels as organized and with purpose. The declarations of collective "duty," "profession," "worship," "religion," and "work," in English, alongside the words in Punjabi, Urdu, and Hindi, suggest an alignment of Ghadar Party politics with both work and religion, all functioning as duties.

Also suggested then is the urgency that duty connotes. There is the imperative of work, of laboring as *making a living*: that is to say that work, as labor, defines life insofar as it provides for and sustains an individual, or a collective—be it a nuclear family, a family of origin, or non-normative affiliations and kinship networks—in a capitalist world-system. There is the simultaneous imperative of religion, of a connection with a higher power that defines and sustains individuals and collectives through the singular or multiple *sacred path(es)*: that is to say that religion, as a sacred path, defines life insofar as it provides for and sustains an individual, or a collective—be it a nuclear family, a family of origin, or non-normative affiliations and kinship networks—on a sacred plane, wherein variant traditions define morality, ethics, and definitions of "the good life." Therefore, duty, in Sarabha's sense of the Ghadar's imperatives for material sustenance and the aspiration toward "the good life," has to be defined by rebels, in the mode of revolution, against the fascistic machines of tyranny.

While tyranny might certainly be defined by colonial occupation of India by the British, and Sarabha's words seem to suggest so, there exist multiple modalities in which to interrogate the radical movement of Sarabha's poetry. Above all else, value is placed on the subversion of

power that needs to take place, and there are multiple forms of power at work in this moment. In one sense, the act of coming together in order to "end the tyranny" and "launch revolution" clearly spells out the radical call of Ghadarites. In another sense, there is the imperative to do so, as duty, and to act in accordance with a set of rules and guidelines that predate, or are simultaneous with, the Ghadars' themselves. Further, Sarabha's poem suggests that to align oneself with of such movement is to only exist inside of such a world. In this world, there can only be such a world not purely insofar as such a world is bifurcated or Manichean, but rather insofar as the work of movement, resistance, and revolution is all-consuming.[60] Sarabha's words suggest that such political collectivity is the living labor of the Ghadar Party.[61]

However, by suggesting that such poetry helps constitute living labor, the question arises then how there might exist a relationship between the work of political collectivity and the rhetoric of religion, and specifically sacred notions of duty. Perhaps what such writing might conjure is the ethical imperative that is inherent in the work of revolutionary activity. There is the aspiration toward absolute freedom in Sarabha's poem, and there exists the notion of living labor that pays specific attention to Marx's notion of labor-power.[62] Yet even still, if there is value created through such work, such value is primarily political. However, out of such assignation lies the possibility of conflict over value insofar as value in this particular context undermines the realm of the sacred. If we are to understand Sarabha's poem as a call to revolution and revolution as sacred duty, than the realm of the sacred is forced to confront political economy, and therefore is compromised to the world of the secular. Such tensions

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[60] JanMohamed, Abdul R. *Manichean Aesthetics: The Politics of Literature in Colonial Africa*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1983.
[61] Hoegsberg, Milena, and Cora Fisher. *Living Labor*. Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2013.
[62] Marx, Karl, Emile Burns, Renate Simpson, Jack Cohen, S. W. Ryazanskaya, and Richard Dixon. *Theories of Surplus Value*.

between the ethical and political imperatives of resistance and revolution and the sacred duty of such activities are rendered legible in Sarabha's poem.

Nevertheless, it is worthy to note that the confrontation between the sacred and secular in "Who We Are" is not limited to Sarabha's poetry, and a theme that appears in much of Ghadar writing. And this theme is productive insofar as it offers several entries into the emergent politics of Ghadarites. While it might be easy to read the migration from the subcontinent to North America as a clear confrontation between the religious cultures of India and the secularism of the U.S. particularly, there exists ample evidence that Ghadarites pursued avenues for universality through political organizing, over any form of religious or ethno-religious identity politics, as Ramnath has previously emphasized. What is more is that the secular appears in tandem with the appearance of cultural nationalism as it manifests in the anti-imperial goals of the Ghadar Party. If we are to read the spirit of Sarabha's poem as anti-imperialist, than the question might become what happens to the realm of the sacred? In other words, how do religion and religious categories get recoded as, or replaced by, the necessity for universality in Ghadar politics? Furthermore, how might such universality reflect the desire for community in response to the types of racial antagonisms faced by South Asian migrants more generally? [63]

Reading anew this tension between the sacred and secular then becomes a way in which to re-center the commonality and shared experience of migration that faced many Ghadars. Still, for Sarabha, the commitment to the independence of India superseded any ties to other struggles faces by South Asians in the U.S. As another example, I turn now to Sarabha's last poem, written and stated on his way to the gallows following his involvement in what was called considered a part of a larger conspiracy targeting Ghadarites working in India and specifically Punjab, in

[63] Still, this is where Sarabha's poem cannot speak to the overwhelming members of the Ghadar Party who were members of faith communities, especially Sikh members who were often making space for Ghadar meetings at *gurdwaras*, Sikh houses of worship.

which he was condemned to death by beheading, at the age of 19. The poem is simply titled “On the Way to the Gallows,” written on 16 November 1915.

> “On the Way to the Gallows”
>
> On the judgment day//Before the gods//These will be my words, my statement://I am a servant of Indians//India belongs to me //Yes, Indian I am//One hundred percent Indian//Indian is my blood and my caste//This is my only religion//My only tribe, my only clan//I am a particle of the ravaged India's ruins//This is the only name I have//The only hallmark, the only address//Oh, Mother India this was not to be my fate//My good fortune//That with every movement of mine//I could have worshipped your feet//O Mother India//If my head is offered//My life is sacrificed//In your service//Then, I would understand//Even in my death//I will attain//A life of eternity.

By this point, Sarabha had returned to India for the span of around ten months, wherein he was implementing Ghadar Party organs in India. His commitment to Ghadar was global in its approach, but sought particular engagement with his homeland and the active and grassroots campaign for revolution and independence for India and its peoples. “On the Way to the Gallows” speaks to such engagement and campaigning. Much of the content itself resonates with the former “Who We Are,” however the placement of India at the center refocuses Sarabha’s interests and goals for the Ghadar Party. By naming India and himself as Indian two and five times respectively here, there exists a repetitive and almost obsessive focus on the nation-state and nationalism in the moment of impending death. His statement within the poem, furthermore, of first serving India; belonging to it; being of it; being defined by it in total, through “blood and…caste”; having its name; being of it in bodily and spiritual composition; and so forth, seems to collate a kind of sublimation of the land into Sarabha’s body. In the impending decomposition

of Sarabha's body, in this scene of death, the question of "Mother India" and its unsure future under British colonial occupation are placed in union with one another.

Sarabha's death comes at the hand of agents operating as both supposed allies and colonial authorities, and as such conspiratorial scene seems to overdetermine the moment of revolutionary martyrdom. Sarabha's cause and death emerge as one, and his body is at once rendered able and active, and on the precipice of corporeal death. In the poetic sequence that reads as follows: "Indian is my blood and my caste//This is my only religion//My only tribe, my only clan//I am a particle of the ravaged India's ruins//This is the only name I have," Sarabha articulates his cause as infused with his very body. Here, in identifying India as the very reason for which he toils, his body and flesh meld in their very becoming in death. In invoking religion, tribe, and clan, India provides ownership over Sarabha's body. Such ownership is not only the work of revolutionary martyrdom as it might be read in its futurity, but rather, a place in which his corporeal connection to the world is defined by his kinship and rootedness in India as not only home: as home, however, the occupation of India might be rendered in the vein that a foreigner has claimed your home and your family, and as such, must be rescued, for which one must provide care, and to which one must tend. The terms that Sarabha uses then might be understood in their apprehension of death in the name of the cause, in the name of politics. Without such a tie between his body and impending death, there is nothing outside of a radical political will and its confrontation with violent death.

Thus, this relationship between political will and death both exemplifies and displays how Sarabha embodies militancy in its nationalist formation. This premature death at the hands of conspiring forces renders Sarabha's execution as a form of martyrdom for the heroic cause of revolutionary nationalism. The poem emphasizes and seems to only reinforce Sarabha's

embedding in the Ghadar cause and its particular manifestation as a nationalist organizing body undergirded by global radical Marxist traditions. Still, there is a moment of lamentation in the poem, "Oh, Mother India this was not to be my fate//My good fortune//That with every movement of mine//I could have worshipped your feet." There is Sarabha's comprehension of this event as unjust and with such injustice lies the irreconcilable sense that there is a loss in Sarabha's material relationship with India. The lived relationship with India manifests in one sense only as long as a material existence can sustain such political will, but in another sense, the relationship that Sarabha has with "Mother India" is one of religious transcendence. The concept of nationalist ideology as replacing religious ideology in Sarabha's poetry reflects the matriarchal repositioning of a higher power that is both related and unrelated to a singular god or multiple gods. The invocation of the "vocabulary of kinship" that Benedict Anderson speaks to in his hugely influential *Imagined Communities* is useful to note here, and speaks to a larger sense of relationality between the individual citizen-subject and the nation-state. However, I want to note that in this particular context of Sarabha's death, at such an early age, suggests that the homeland replaces and ultimately replaces any previous religious fixture that may have figured into the citizen-subject's life prior to the identification with political cause.

In the last lines of Sarabha's "On the Way to the Gallows," here restated: "O Mother India//If my head is offered//My life is sacrificed//In your service//Then, I would understand//Even in my death//I will attain//A life of eternity," there exists an extended lamentation of his unjust execution. The sacrifice of Sarabha is on behalf of the commitment to nothing less than the dismantling of the British Raj, and such a rendering suggests the anti-colonial imperative toward sacrifice for the greater political cause. His impending death is figured as a sacrifice to the symbolic formation of the coming nation-state, untethered to the

chains of colonial rule. In this reading then, the dream of a free India and freedom itself is always future-oriented. As such, Sarabha's proximity to death aids in an imagining beyond the immediate and toward a future where the promise of freedom exists because it must exist. Here there are the political and ethical imperatives of freedom in their most hyperbolic of terms insofar their greatness must counter the seemingly minor death of a young revolutionary. Nevertheless, Sarabha's words reflect a sense of eternal life insofar as martyrdom in this manner sustains a minority body of young revolutionary Ghadars and colonized Indians. Still, this eternal life as written demonstrates a devotion to "Mother India" that suggests there is a life beyond the material death. In this way, Sarabha's words aspire to the religious domain, to the realm where sacrifice and the sacred are unrelentingly tied.

There is the sense that Sarabha's youth and his laboring as a young activist and revolutionary are rendered not only in political terms, but sacred terms as well. The refrains of his poetry are embedded in the spiritual character of his ties to anticolonial politics. There is no way to undo such bonds as they appear as unbreakable. Such devotion is therefore simultaneously political and religious. The sense of duty exhibits a form of work that is embedded in a very corporeal mode of politics. As rendered in his poems, Sarabha's body is at once singular and collective, one with his materiality, with his fellow Ghadarites, and with the driving cause of their work, the freedom of India from oppressive colonial force. However, the question arises then how in fact does the nation-state get rewritten as a formation of the sacred wherein the sacred is bound to oppressive force, locked in a struggle with some formation of hegemonic power. Here I do not mean to suggest the primordial religious or spiritual character of pre-colonial India; rather, I aim to suggest that Sarabha's writing as deeply linked to the struggle of political will over violent oppressive force as a deeply ethical question that resonates with the

sacred insofar as there exists an order and logic of what is supposed to represent what is good and fair. In this schematic, the realm of the sacred falls into such an order. Of course Sarabha and the Ghadarites realized how religion was instrumentalized by the British as a divisive force, especially between Hindus and Muslims; a major tenet of the Ghadar philosophy was that of a secular tradition insofar as it did not recognize religion or religious identity as particularly useful to the greater cause of revolutionary freedom from colonizing forces.

Instead what we see in these poems are a version of metonymy insofar as India replaces God, substituting the sacred form for the secular, but also rendering the secular sacred. As various terms take on the nationalist form, specifically in its figuration as "India" or "Mother India," Sarabha's poems make no mistake in reading the duties of the Ghadar Party as divine. In this vein, the substitution of the religious for the nation-state form exhibits both a devotion to a new amorphous structure or ideology and dissolution of the sacred in order to pursue the material. In this symbolic act, we see the transfer of religious devotion to militant nationalism. In this sense then, devotion becomes materialized as a deeply entrenched relation between the individual and his or her political will, whereas religious devotion constituted the relation between the individual and the divine. Political subjectivity is rendered not as immaterial but as very much tied to the body in its material sense, however it is assembled. This formation then must render the divine as something only to be seen through duty or in service to the larger cause or politics.

In Sarabha's poetry there is a distinctive sense of collectivity, however, there is still the concept of minoritarian political subjectivity that drives the spirit. Such a collective can be understood as nationalist, and in this way Sarabha's poetry may have a larger audience; still, the pledges of Sarabha and his unwavering politics inflected his work to such a degree as to

underline his singular, revolutionary voice. The extremity of his politics in his short life has been memorialized by Ghadarites, especially Sikhs, in such a way as to occlude the precarity that faced the members of this global, radical, minoritarian political formation.

Autonomous Knowledge: De-territorializing Bhagat Singh's Writing

I turn to the work of Bhagat Singh, whose work complements and extends some of Sarabha's work. Singh was born in 1907 and was not part of Ghadar Party organizing, however, he was greatly influenced by Sarabha and various Ghadar Party leaders. Singh's politics were both aligned and regarded as more radically left than most Ghadar Party leaders and members. He wrote on subjects ranging from his investments in Marx and Lenin's thinking to his theories and ideas on suicide. In an essay from 1923 titled "The Problem of Punjab's Language and Script" written when he was only sixteen years old, Singh addresses and starts to define certain concerns and questions around the Punjabi language, Gurmukhi script, and the politics of national language and literature in India.[64] The essay was composed by Singh at the age of 16: yet despite his young age, it is important to keep in mind that Singh's most active political years are noted as having begun at age 19. Written as an entry in a contest on the question of national language, "The Problem of Punjab's Language and Script" won top honors and was published in *Hindi Sandesh*, a monthly news magazine out of Delhi. In the opening paragraph, Singh states:

> Every nation needs literature of high quality for its own uplift. As literature of a country attains new heights, the country also develops. Patriots — be they merely social reformers or political leaders — pay highest attention to the literature of their country. If they do not create new literature to meet the requirements of the contemporary issues and situations, all of their efforts will fail and their work will prove unstable.

[64] *South Asians in North America Collection*. Archive at UC Berkeley, Bancroft Library. 1899-1974.

The question of national literature and the necessity for a national literary canon consume Singh's line of inquiry. The aspirations of patriotism and national development are tethered to the question of national literature, producing the attendant concern of how national literatures reflect the particular paradigms and politics of a particular moment in time. The hyperbole of the last sentence here, exhibits the sort of bolstering of a national literature as imperative in a way that reimagines the place of cultural production more broadly, but in near propagandistic ways.

Singh goes further in this essay to speak to India's failures in the production of a national literature as crisis, but placing the responsibility of this crisis exclusively on Sikhs and on Punjabi and the Gurmukhi script. Singh cites the shift from the height of the potential for Punjabi and Gurmukhi to supersede communal language status, to the demise of the language and script with the rise of Guru Gobind Singh Ji, the tenth Sikh guru, the last in individual, human form, in the late 17th century. The shift was primarily due to what Singh describes as the development of a "warrior spirit," which he explains thusly:

> Suddenly, we sense a warrior spirit in the preaching of Guru Gobind Singhji. When he realised that a mere spiritual devotion could not do anything, he started Chandi worship and turned Sikh community into a community of worshippers and warriors by synthesising spiritualism and fighting. We find in his poems (literature) a new spirit. He writes:
>
> Jo to prem khelan kha chau, sir dhar tali gali mori aau//It maarag pair dharijai, sir dijai kaan no kijai.
>
> (If you are interested in playing the game of love, put your head on your palm and then only enter my lane. In case you put your feet on this path don't fall back, even if you have to loose your life.) And then:

> Soora so pahchaniye, jo lare deen ke het,//Purja-purja kat mare, kabhu na chhade khet.
>
> (Only he is brave who fights for the cause of the poor. He may be cut into pieces and may be killed, but he should not leave the field.)
>
> And then suddenly, the sword-worship starts.
>
> …We find later that when Sikhs are reduced to mere groups of anarchists, declared outlaws, and were continuously compelled to be confined to the forests, no new literature could be created. They had a warrior spirit, a sense of courage and sacrifice and a spirit to continue their war against Muslim rulers, but they could not chalk out their future beyond this. This explains why these warrior groups fought among themselves. It is here that their lack of contemporary spirit worries us.

This longer passage provides a rich and fascinating critique of the shift to the Sikh warrior spirit in this moment. By moving backward two centuries, Singh is citing the foundational error that defines the communalism of not only Sikhs and not only people from the Punjab, but of India more broadly. Specifically, Singh cites Sikh scripture by Guru Gobind Singh Ji in order to delineate an emergent sensibility described as the "synthesizing of spiritualism and fighting." The scripture is then read as a form of literature that advocates for the spiritual path of Sikhism to embrace "fighting" as a part of its broader call: this is what Singh signals to his readers as not the fatal flaw of Sikhism and its religious and political appeals, but rather as the fatal flaw in regards to Punjabi's literary potential. This specific tying together of religious becoming, in terms of Guru Gobind Singh Ji's call, with the denunciation of the Punjabi language and script is quite telling. There is an acute awareness that what drives Singh's writing here is the necessary deconstruction of communalist, regional, and religious ideologies. Rather than critique Punjabi on the grounds that it operates as secondary to Hindi, Singh's concern over Sikhism is heavily

inflected by the sense that Punjabi Sikhs operated in a way that was distinctively counterproductive to the not simply a form of national language and literature, but to nation itself. The very fact that Sikh scripture, at the moment of the tenth Guru, becomes and emerges as vocally and actively willing to invoke violence, lies at the very crux of Singh's argument. To proclaim such militancy is what might render Sikhism, and not Punjabi, the nation's problem.

Singh transitions to this last paragraph with a break in paragraph to state, "And then suddenly, the sword-worship starts." This marked shift signals that the argument is undergirded by the need for cohesion and patriotism, rather than what is recognized as a kind of originary desire for a separate nation-state, a call for Sikh separatism. With Singh's rendering of Sikh militancy as "sword-worship" one notes this demarcation as one that places responsibility on a particular Sikh ethos defined in relation to the Indian nation-state, and such a relation as primarily negative and oppositional. Singh however accounts for this in the next paragraph, which in its conflicted tone, demonstrates a mostly sympathetic but ultimately condescending conclusion regarding Sikhs and the Punjabi language. Here we have the dismissal of Sikhs as anarchists and outlaws, whose life and survival were rumored to be confined to the "forests" and, as such, Sikhs were unable to produce any new forms or examples of Punjabi literature. Singh heavily emphasizes the Sikh communal body as one that continually existed outside of any legibly national body. Singh identifies the dilemma of the Sikh body as one that crucially links a minority population as preternaturally distinct from the national whole. Ultimately this rendering is aligned with a politically majoritarian sense of Sikhs. The notion that Sikhs operated and held onto anarchist sensibilities is intriguing as it suggests a kind of common sense understanding of Sikhs as historically situated against the state and to its various governing bodies. The sense that Singh gives us is that Sikhs perpetuated a religious, political, and ethical life that was always

against statist modes of conduct renders Sikhs, through a spirit of anarchy, if we can call it such, as standing in for an antithetical mode of life in the nation. In this way, the declared anarchist and outlaw status is a way in which Singh is attempting to differentiate Sikhs in a way that may read beyond categories of ethnic and religious, and into language and the cultural. Even still, that push toward a broader reading of Sikhs is in effect, a way of rendering Sikhs in terms of the category of becoming-racial.

In this way, the nation-state's placement as oppositional to the Sikh body secures Sikhs as defined relationally as racial subjects, and becoming-racial insofar as Singh brings to fore that Sikhs are never wholly formed. That is to say that even in Singh's writing, there is a sense that much of what is being said could be conjecture, and based on the perpetuated hearsay of majoritarian forces and agents. For example, further in the last portion of the quoted passage, Singh confines Sikhs to the forests, where "no new literature could be created." The question of how in fact the Sikhs get confined to what can be read as outside of civilization implies that they were not engaging and immersing themselves with others. Further this implied that Sikhs were so far removed from civil society, and were therefore incapable of investing in the production of writing and the proliferation of a Punjabi literary canon. Yet what remains most important is not necessarily such removal from Indian civic life, but rather the "warrior spirit" of the Sikhs. Again this categorization of Sikhs as martial races seems to reappear as an ongoing thread that operates to naturalize not a relationship between Sikhs and a "warrior spirit" but a relationship between Sikhs and violence. The spirit that Singh insists defines Sikhs is in fact a way in which he not only denies their place within national language and literature, but curiously makes common sense that the legacy of violence and oppression that Sikhs faced and with which they fought against, serves to demonstrate collective qualities of, on the one hand, strength and power,

but on the other hand, violence and savagery; certainly within the context of language and literature, and the lack thereof for Punjabi, Singh makes the latter associations matter more pertinent for the cultural domain for which he speaks. In this way, the varying associations and relations of the terms that Singh uses, carry great import for the reader.

Furthermore, by articulating that Sikhs never moved forward from interreligious conflict with Muslims from the 17th and 18th centuries, is to define Sikhs as temporally distinct. One can read this, in a sense, as backward, or there is this sense of stasis, of being stuck and confined to a particular historical moment. To state that "they could not chalk out their future beyond this" is to mark time as not only static, but within the liberal framework of progress, Sikhs are therefore configured as backwards and not properly prepared for the future. In a sense, there is not only a certain fixedness attached to the Sikh body in national history, but a lack of ability beyond a particular point. In this way the Sikh is confined to history, or specifically the past, unable or incapacitated by specific struggles and violence. There is no exit in this reading, and in this way, Sikhs must be relegated to the present or the past: there existed no planning for the future in this scenario, as a community they were embroiled in the politics of the present and the past, stuck and harping on what could be conceived as minor foibles. Rather than move away from or disengaging from what appear to be major concerns over religious community and attempts at forced conversion, Sikhs are negatively rendered in the national narrative of progress.

Furthermore, Singh's concern over lack of 'chalking out a future' suggests that Sikhs were ultimately responsible for their future, but failed to prepare and calculate the survival of the population. Through this biopolitical logic, Singh relegates these warring factions, Sikhs and Muslims, as incompatible with, and ultimately excluded from, the future of the nation. He goes on to end with the Sikh as lacking "contemporary spirit," and in so doing evokes a peculiar

concern over the exclusion of Sikhs in the betterment and progress of the future free Indian nation. There is a sense of frustration with the Sikh population—a mix of anxiety and dismay—as they seem to represent an obstacle to majoritarian progress. Such anxiety is not a concern for Sikhs, but rather an irritation at the prospect of minority opposition from Sikhs in matters of national political futures. Or perhaps a more conservative reading would suggest a sense of how the incoherence of the Sikh body within the nation state would only present dilemmas that further alienate the population. Still, what becomes clear in this text is less of a concern over the Punjabi language, but more with the Sikh population.

The essay goes on to further explicate the troublesome nature of the Punjabi language, and in effect, participates in larger discursive questions around what kinds of hindrances are posed not simply by minor languages, but by minor populations within the nation state. The quest then for national coherence in this specific text relies heavily on the erasure of minoritarian difference in an appeal for universality. What becomes clear is an emerging discourse around the priorities for anticolonial nationalism, and what difference means in a time of increased revolutionary activity. Singh's essay is organized around such discursive strategies, and this reflects the Ghadar and post-Ghadar moment. Which is to say that there exist many strategies working toward the cohesion of an Indian majoritarian politics under colonialism, one of which is the denigration of minoritarian subjects and politics in order to, firstly, call out difference, and secondly, attempt reassemblage of minor subjects into the universal whole. Of course, nationalism always already relies on the fundamental erasure of difference in order to ensure some form of collective well-being. However, I argue that Singh's essay partakes in what might be understood as a method in which minoritarian populations are cast as a threat to the cohesion of an anticolonial nationalist movement. In making this argument, a whole set of values and

characteristics must be placed onto such minority populations, which Singh does accomplish. Oftentimes, these statements might read like asides to his fundamental argument, however, these very remarks signal the simultaneous repression of distinctive racialism as an emergent expression, as well as the potential eruption of violent expression against such racialized and minoritized subjects.

It is through the works of Sarabha and Singh that Sikhs are able to most fully reckon with the forgotten legacy of Sikhs in the Ghadar Party. Their forceful place in paving the way for anti-colonial activity whilst confronting the intricacies of race and racism in both North America and India ensured a productive understanding and tethering of race and colonialism that continues to operate globally. Furthermore, in thinking through secularism and erasure, Sarabha and Singh, along with their many Ghadar compatriots, demonstrated myriad modes of working through difference as a means for greater goods. Nevertheless, it is through their very Sikh identities that they cull both Hindus and Muslims together, in radical formation for the crucial organizing of the Ghadar Party.

Chapter 3: Dislocated/Dispossessed:

Violent Afterlives of the 1947 India/Pakistan Partition

I begin this chapter to mark the rupture from the colonial to the decolonial, through the tragic and divisive legacy of the partition of India, into India and Pakistan, on August 15, 1947. This important event, or set of events, has been largely ignored and forgotten on a collective scale. Many of those who were forced to leave their homes and flee for their lives, those who are able to recall these events, are elderly and many have passed away. Because of the clear lack of historical accounting and narration, the non-profit, non-governmental organization "1947 Partition Archive" was created in 2011 by groups of concerned members of the South Asian diaspora. [65] Based in Berkeley, California, with most staff situated in parts of India and Pakistan, the archive is "dedicated to institutionalizing the people's history of Partition."[66] This vital and noble mission provides important details on personal narratives of life as colonized Indians and the immediate aftermath of decolonization through the violence of Partition. These accounts provide an important composite image of the experiences of flight and dispossession, particularly for those in the once-large state of Punjab, unequally hacked into east and west: West Punjab now part of Pakistan, East Punjab remaining to India. Of course, with this division was the clear demarcation of Muslim Pakistan and Hindustan, or majority Hindu India.[67] The greatest legacy

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[65] 1947 Partition Archive, access here: http://www.1947partitionarchive.org/; http://www.nbcnews.com/news/asian-america/one-woman-s-quest-record-history-1947-partition-india-n560506

[66] 1947 Partition Archive, Mission Statement: http://www.1947partitionarchive.org/mission

[67] For historical accounts of Partition, see: Ahmad, Aijaz. " 'Tryst with destiny' -- free but divided." *India* (15 August 1997), Special Number, pp. 21-28. Ahmed, Ishtiaq. "The 1947 Partition of India: A Paradigm for Pathological Politics in India and Pakistan", *Asian Ethnicity* 3, no. 1 (March 2002). Azad, Maulana Abul Kalam. *India Wins Freedom*. New Delhi: Orient Longman, 1959; new ed., 1988. Bhattarcharjea, Ajit. *Countdown to Partition: The Final Days*. New Delhi: HarperCollins, 1998.Brasted, H. V. and Bridge, Carl. "The Transfer of Power in South Asia: An Historiographical Review." *South Asia* 17, no. 1 (1994), pp. 93-114. Chatterji, Joya. *Bengal Divided: Hindu Communalism and Partition, 1932-1947*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994.Chatterji, Joya. "The Fashioning of a Frontier: The Radcliffe Line and Bengal's Border Landscape, 1947-52." *Modern Asian Studies* 33, no. 1 (1999), pp. 185-242. Copland, I. "The Further Shores of Partition: Ethnic Cleansing in Rajasthan, 1947." *Past and Present*, no. 160 (August 1998).French, Patrick. *Liberty or Death*: *India's Journey to Independence*

of the British departure from its Indian colony can most certainly be the planning and execution of this division, having brought to the fore and intensified tensions between castes, classes, and religions. With Mahatma Gandhi at the helm of Indian independence, and with the aid of the radical anti-colonial revolutionary Ghadar party, the appearance of an English exit from the country was made to look like, in colonial terms, rather civil. However, the religious tension that was brewed several decades prior by the British, reached an all time high under the Muslim leader Muhammad Ali Jinnah, whose leadership of Pakistan aligned with the commencement of Jawaharlal Nehru's leadership in India.

With this brief sketch of Partition in mind, I want to spend time examining work that creatively and alternatively accounts for this particular watershed moment in South Asian history. By paying particular attention to this moment of Partition as independence, I aim to bridge last chapter's central concern with anti-colonial strategy and the next chapter's central concern with the genocidal violence against Sikhs, in effect, to explore how Partition's severing of Punjab in

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and Division. London, 1997. Gilmartin, David. *Empire and Islam*: *Punjab and the Making of Pakistan*. London: Oxford UP, 1988. Guhathakurta, Meghna. "Understanding the Bengal Partition through reconstructing family histories: a Case Study", *Journal of Social Studies*76 (April 1997), pp. 57-65. Hasan, Murhirul. *Legacy of a Divided Nation*: *India's Muslims Since Independence*. New Delhi: Oxford, 1997. Hasan, Mushirul, ed. *Inventing Boundaries*: *Gender, Politics and the Partition of India*. Delhi: Oxford UP, 2000. Hodson, H. V. *The Great Divide*: *Britain-India-Pakistan*. Karachi: Oxford UP, 1993 [1969]. Jalal, Ayesha. *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1985.A. Jalal. "Conjuring Pakistan: History as Official Imagining." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 8, no. 4 (1974). A. Jalal. "Secularists, Subalterns, and the Stigma of 'Communalism': Partition Historiography Revisited." *Indian Economic and Social History Review* 33, no. 1 (1996), pp. 93-103.A. Jalal,. "Nation, *Reason and Religion: Punjab's Role in the Partition of India*." *Economic and Political Weekly* 33, no. 32 (8 August 1998), pp. 2183-90. Kumar, Ravinder, ed. "Partition Historiography: Some Reflections." In *India's Partition, Prelude and Legacies*, eds. Ramakand R. Mahan (Jaipur: Rawat, 1998).Lohia, Ram Manohar. *Guilty Men of India's Partition*. Allahabad: Navahind, 1960. Mandelbaum, David G. "Hindu-Moslem Conflict in India", *The Middle East Journal* 1, no. 4 (October 1947), pp. 369-385. Michel, A. A. *The Indus Rivers*: *A Study of the Effects of Partition*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1967. Mosley, Leonard. *The Last Days of the Raj*. London, 1961. Pandey, Gyanendra. "The Prose of Otherness." In David Arnold and David Hardiman (eds.), *Subaltern Studies VIII*: *Essays in Honour of Ranajit Guha*, pp. 188-221. Delhi: Oxford UP, 1994. Samaddar, Ranabir, ed. *Reflections on Partition in the East*. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 1997. Sherwani, L. A. *The Partition of India and Mountbatten*. Karachi: Council for Pakistan Studies, 1986. Singh, Anita Inder. *The Origins of the Partition of India, 1936-1947*. New Delhi: Oxford UP, 1987. Talbot, Ian and Gurharpal Singh, eds. *Region and Partition: Bengal, Punjab and the Partition of the Subcontinent*. Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1999. Tinker, Hugh. *Experiment with Freedom, India and Pakistan 1947*. London: Oxford UP, 1967. Yong, Tan Tai and Kudaisya, Gyanesh. *The Aftermath of Partition in South Asia*. London: Routledge, 2000.

two had grave effects for Sikhs. I argue that while the violence and bloodshed of Partition was about the division of Hindustan and Pakistan, such brutal dispossession and flight came at the expense of the Sikh minority. Through an examination of lesser- known fictional and poetic work, primarily Shauna Singh Baldwin's 1999 novel, and secondarily Khushwant Singh's 1956 novel *Train to Pakistan* and Bhanu Kapil's 2011 poetic anti-novel *Schizophrene*, I explore how Partition effected Sikhs most acutely in the actual division of land and resources, and how such activity was crucial in the building of Sikh separatist movements. [68]

On Maps and the Diasporic Dispossesed

In the latter half of *What the Body Remembers*, Shauna Singh Baldwin's novel provides thoroughly rendered portrayals of not just her characters, but of the political landscape of the era leading up to the 1947 Partition. While the novel centers on Satya and Roop, the two wives of the aptly named Sikh everyman, Sardarji—quite literally just a generic and respectful title for any devout Sikh man—the active political turmoil that emerges as the British plan their exit from India and with it the creation of Pakistan becomes the clear focus. The novel's immersion in the political and philosophical underpinnings of the partition, provide fruitful points of departure from which to rethink and create anew from the seemingly foregone historical conclusions. In one moment, readers are given insight into Sardarji's thinking given his role in helping plan and devise a peaceful form of partition. Here he comments on the cartographic efforts that went into

[68] Partition novels of more fame include: Anand, Mulk Raj. *Private Life of An Indian Prince*, Delhi: Arnold Heinemann, 1983; Bhattacharya, Bhabani. *Shadow From Ladakh,* Delhi: Hind Pocket Books, 1966; Joshi, Arun. *The City and The River,* New Delhi: Vision, 1990; Mistry, Rohinton. *A Fine Balance*, London: Faber & Faber, 1995; Rushdie, Salman. *Midnight's Children*, New York: Vintage, 1981; Sahgal, Nayantara. *Storm in Chandigarh*, Delhi: Hind Pockets Books Pvt. Ltd., 1970.

defining the division between Hindustani land and what would be known as Pakistani land, cutting through all of Punjab and some of Bengal:

> Maps lie…Maps lie, for their colours can show nothing of what a man feels when he says "I come home." Maps lie, their scrupulous lines diminishing height to hair's breadth, contracting realms of the material to fit in the mind. Maps lie, the artful cartographer separating the earth from the sea with a simple line that refuses to tell that one does not end where the other begins, but continues, undergirding the sea.
>
> They are an aesthetic achievement, that's all. Essential preparation for the next map that will be drawn, essential for discussions and negotiations, but in themselves mere approximations of terrain, aids to the dreams of conquest, marking familiar places in the roaming of the mind. (380)

In this passage, Baldwin enables a way in which to understand the devastation that defines not only the work of Partition, but of the project of colonialism itself. Perhaps more broadly, this passage conveys the ways that imperial expansion and the desire for dominion were all part of this enterprise that created and re-created lands that never or would never desire occupation. In declaring that "maps lie," Sardarji is communicating the very arbitrariness and unfeeling nature of maps and cartographic endeavor. Maps are essentially modes of cutting space in ways that must not consider the human aspect of life and land. Home cannot mean anything for the cartographer, let alone the ways that borders are not reflective of how space and terrain interact with one another. If maps are, as stated here, an aesthetic achievement, they must then be read as significant and vital aesthetic measures that demarcate peoples, lands, nations, and politics. Maps are political, and in this regard, their very aesthetic achievement is one that disables the freedom

of movement in their central conceit of creating and recreating borders. In demarcating land and earthly space, from sea and from other land, maps have the ability to cut, sever, and divide.

Moreover, Baldwin points out the ways in which maps are tools of bureaucracy—colonial and national. The reading of maps by Sardarji shows how drawing up these artistic objects was made part of the essential by the administrative officials of colonial India. As part of the everlasting process of colonialism, maps became a rationale to aid in easing regional, religious, or caste tensions—tensions often bred and perpetuated by the colonial powers. Through this logic, maps and map-making helped the British remain an occupying presence in India, insofar as it provided many administrative officials with seemingly vital work where there was previously no work to be done. In essence, maps, in their very lie, were crucial to the creation of colonial bureaucracy and therefore the creation of divisive occupation, land theft, and dispossession.

Similarly, in her 2011 short work, *Schizophrene*, deemed an anti-novel, Hindu-Punjabi poet Bhanu Kapil's expresses her own frustration with Partition. Kapil provides a poetic account of immigration and trauma. Through the form of experimental poetry, Kapil presents the violent partition of India and Pakistan as a mode in which to engage the postcolonial afterlife of South Asian dispossession. From the perspective of Kapil, readers reckon with the psychosis of what she names "reverse migration." Kapil's text presents somatic, visceral poetic writing as a means in which to articulate all that cannot be captured, all that escapes, in expressing the dispossession of land and the displacement of people. By linking the imagined and the real of the events and effects of partition, Kapil's poetry acts as a mode of rupture in the endless mourning of South Asian diasporic subjects. As I argue, the historical event of partition as a moment that was systematically erased at the national level (by the Indian nation-state) and highlighted and

rendered meaningful through the South Asian diaspora's processes of mourning. Through this critique, Kapil's *Schizophrene* demonstrates political charge of this key moment, placing diasporic mourning at the site of fraught tensions embedded in national politics but reconfigured by the anti- and trans-imperial cultural production of Kapil and other diasporic subjects.

The passage below exhibits how through the practice of cartography, or map-making, borders are ultimately modes of the demarcation of places where peoples and lands are in no way dissimilar or distinct from one another—no regionalism or tribalism abounds in these spaces. In Chapter 7, titled "Partition," Kapil's poetic writing captures the illogic of Partition through the language of psychosis:

> It is psychotic to draw a line between two places.
>
> It is psychotic to go.
>
> It is psychotic to look.
>
> Psychotic to live in a different country forever.
>
> Psychotic to lose something forever.
>
> The compelling conviction that something has been lost is psychotic.
>
> It is psychotic to submit to violence in a time of great violence and yet it is psychotic to leave that home or country, the place where you submitted again and again, forever.
>
> Indeed it makes the subsequent involuntary arrival a stressor for psychosis. (53)

In this rendering, Kapil is specifically referring to the ways in which Partition exhibited an absolute break in the collective mind of India. This break is defined as psychotic by Kapil as a means of imagining how this split of places was not made with sound judgment, but with the descent into national and colonial madness. In drawing "a line between two places," in going, in looking, in living in a different country, in losing something forever, Kapil laments not only the

psychosis of Partition but of leaving India and becoming part of the diaspora. Kapil herself left India as a young child with her family, to be raised in England, and who now lives in the U.S. teaching creative writing and composing some of the most exciting diasporic experimental poetry. Her reading of Partition and diaspora together help place her in an important and ongoing dialogue on the simultaneous effects that Indian independence, Partition, forced migration, and diaspora. By theorizing, through her poetic writing, the nature of Partition and diaspora in tandem, it becomes significant to think about the severing of land and the severing of people to the land. The violence of each is what Kapil captures in ways that are fruitful to examine. Both Partition and the forced migration that it caused cataclysmically shifted the ways that Indians perceived their independence; decolonization, as a violent process, and its ultimate freedom from occupation, might be seen then as having never arrived, as Partition bonded Indian national liberation to the violence and dispossession slowly designed by the British several decades earlier.

Kapil provides comparable notions around Partition earlier in Chapter Seven, highlighting the tension that viscerally appears and reappears in her explicit references to 1947. At one point, she writes, "12:20 on the third day; notes from the glass coffin. *Schizophrene.* Because is it psychotic not to know where you are in a national space" (41). In this first allusion to psychosis in the text, Kapil speaks to the dislocation of her individual body and a hypothetical collective body, that of the nation, for example. To be clear, this is Kapil's first and most clear foray into speaking to her South Asian origin. Her previous works have often thematically centered on migration and diasporic alienation, but *Schizophrene* is most personal and clear in its relation to India, and Punjab more specifically. As such, by working through this notion of the split, break, or crack in the mind: mental fragmentation, withdrawing from reality and investing

in fantasy and delusion, this definition of the "schizophrene" as Kapil would have it, becomes about the fantasy of nation and the fantasy of home. The lack of location, of home, of stability, becomes Kapil's defaulted mode of theorizing in *Schizophrene*: the text becomes a meditation on what it means to be dislocated and dispossessed because of Partition, to be alien and irrational because of a disavowed chapter of South Asian history.

To confront this psychosis, this mental fragmentation, Kapil attempts to work through the traumatic history of Partition to no avail. She writes:

> I cannot make the map of healing and so this is the map of what happened in a particular country on a particular day.
>
> Deep in the map, I put my fork down and feel my jaw and teeth swell up. This is blood pressure: a flow, reversing itself, but I can't quite manage it, the information. 11am to 1pm. You pig, you kid. (48)

Rather than attempt expressions of healing the wounds of a fragmented, decolonized nation, Kapil writes something else and otherwise, it appears. She seems ready to share the moments of her personal history as a form of engagement with the impossibility of reconciling with not only her past, but of a collective past. What becomes so compelling about Kapil's writing is the way in which she engages her own visceral memories of historical events as horrifying on their own. The memories themselves are saturated with horror, and the way she retells and relives their horror add to it another dimension of terror. The map "of what happened in a particular country on a particular day" has texture in this passage, it is layered and alive, as it is imbued with the image of Kapil's own swelling mouth—jaw and teeth. The imbrication of these images—of a map and of a mouth—are physically jarring, the language itself possessing a synthetic quality. A few pages on, Kapil more explicitly references Partition:

> But this is to individuate a common sorrow in the time extending from August 1947 to the present era, which is already past. Folds generate density on a contour map but for what? A map is a kind of short term memory: the genealogy of an historical time versus the chronology of geographical form. No. I need a different way to make this decision. (51)

The self-conscious and self-referential comment provides a comment too on the commonplace nature of "sorrow" based on and in the events of Partition. By referencing the form of writing that emerges from migrant traumatic memory, Kapil taps into the ways in which these memories are at once dynamic and historical, and static and present. Partition's attendant and ongoing melancholia has collectively relayed the decolonial past as a form of haunting. The severing of Punjab and the creation of Pakistan brings Kapil back to maps. As a "kind of short term memory," maps are rendered in terms of genealogy, history, time, chronology, and geography. The contours can be seen in forms of maps, as well as in the ways they change over time, the lines of boundaries and borders creating a vivid illustration of conquest and occupation, decolonization and dispossession. In the diasporic subject's relation to the ancestral home, the tracing of national histories through the reading of maps is a ritual, and Kapil captures that not only through a reading of Partition, but through a reading of the map form.

In *Schizophrene*'s final section, "Chapter 8: India, Fragments" Kapil laments her relationship to India. Without reference to Partition, she speaks in the present, through the lens of diasporic return to the homeland. She writes, "Later that night it rained, washing the country away. A country both dead and living that was not, nor ever would be, my true home" (69). This sentiment unearths an uncommon relation to the "home" for the melancholic, diasporic subject. Rather than yearn for belonging or affective proximity to India, Kapil instead has India washed

away in the rain. I argue that this sense of letting go, or dispossessing, the nation of India and all that it does and is supposed to represent, is Kapil's own form of healing within the text. Through dispossession, or the deprivation of Kapil's claim and ownership over India through her migrant status, there is a sense of catharsis. In releasing India as a potential site of true return or arrival, she opts for apprehending the nation-state as a site of violence and death. Embedded in the whole of *Schizophrene* is the creeping sense of Partition as a disavowed historical rupture, never properly claimed in official national historical accounts. Kapil rectifies this disavowal for herself and her readers by providing mediation in the form of *Schizophrene*.

Through a passage from Baldwin's novel and several excerpts from Kapil's anti-novel, the figure of the map looms over the examination of Partition insofar as it was defined by the cruel and unprecedented severing of Punjab. By first using the symbol of maps and their creation of borders, this chapter builds on how the memory of Partition was about land. In the next section, I focus on the Punjab and the place of Sikhs in the time leading up to August 15.

Sikhs in the Schema of Partition

Returning to Shauna Singh Baldwin's 1999 novel, *What the Body Remembers*, I want to spend the remainder of the chapter on the Punjabi Sikh sense of Partition, particularly as it relates to the creation of what was to be seen as a Hindu India (once Hindustan) and a Muslim Pakistan. Like the last chapter's focus on the significance of religious difference amongst South Asians in the Ghadar Party, this chapter focuses on the triangulation of Sikhs, Hindus, and Muslims as a way of underscoring the forgotten or uncared for place of Sikhs in this moment: this disavowal and disinterest in Sikhs was an aspect that the British, Gandhi, and Jinnah all capitalized on in creating and implementing in the violent event of Partition. Baldwin's novel

provides the contemporary diasporic fictional account, while Khushwant Singh's 1956 novel *Train to Pakistan* offers a more immediate fictional re-telling of Partition.

In *What the Body Remembers*, Baldwin spends much time having Saradarji give the Sikh perspective of the coming Partition. The novel's sections and chapters are ordered temporally, and in the long section dated March 1947, we see the majority of Partition planning between various factions: the British, Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Communists, Akali (or Sikh militants), and Congressman. Appealing to the British colonial representative, Lord Cunningham, Sardarji becomes the Sikh faction's representative due to his military service in England as a General in the British Imperial Army. In one moment, we get Sardarji's take on one of the many elements of the planning of Partition, Baldwin writes:

> He wonders if it is any use to discuss how minorities like the Sikhs might be protected if they are left in a hypothetical Pakistan. Pride forbids it, for even to ask the question is to acknowledge being afraid for his quom; historically, they have given as good as they got and don't require protection like—like defenceless women.
>
> *A single Sikh is like a force of 125,000 men.* (364)

This particular passage is reflective of the legacy of Sikhs as a martial race under the British. Part of martial race ideology, as I argue in chapter 1, was the necessary inflation of Sikh warrior status by the British. This is not to say that the Sikhs were not historically read as militant and always already prepared for combat, but to say instead that Sikhs were primed to believe that this status was inherent to their nature by the British. On the other hand, the British were clear in making the martial race designation as one that excluded those unfit for battle, therefore un-masculine. Further, it must be noted that "quom," a term used time and again by Sardarji, is a form of collective address, usually specific to the Sikh community, but used colloquially to

designate other forms of community as well. The question of Sikh protection, given all of these qualifications, becomes less a question of actual care and protection under the rule of the state, and becomes a way for Sardarji to note that Sikhs might not actually need protection—not like "defenceless women." In this way, Baldwin brings to light the layered swipe at non-Sikh masculinity through his misogynist thought-process. In articulating the sheer strength and warrior-like nature, Sardarji's thinking is hyperbolic in its assertion of Sikh militancy, but indicative of the latent perceptions and stereotypes around Sikh masculinity and Punjabi boastfulness.[69]

In a later moment in the same month, Baldwin depicts a telling conversation between Sardarji and Lord Cunningham. Here they talk about the ongoing tensions between the Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs:

> In the chaos the British have created and are leaving behind, a man will no longer be measured by his achievement or contribution, but by his father's blood, whether he wears a round cap, a Gandhi cap or a turban, whether he is a circumcised Muslim, or an uncircumcised Hindu or Sikh.
>
> Cunningham says, "Hold on, old boy, the British didn't divide Hindus and Muslims—one believes in many Gods and the other believes in just one. They won't even drink water from the same well. If you ask me, the Sikhs are just bloody unlucky to be in between."
>
> *Divide et impera*, he reminds Cunningham. *That was the policy, divide and rule. Separate electorates for Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs, remember? The Hindu and Muslim faiths were tools, the instruments by which you British divided us, then stood back complaining how we Indians fight, never giving you any peace.*

[69] Orsini, Francesca. *Love in South Asia: A Cultural History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

“You can’t blame this on the British,” says Cunningham. “It’s simply not done.” (372)

In the first paragraph, we have Sardarji’s thoughts as relayed to Cunningham. Sardarji, rightly, blames the British colonial administration for their thorough and successful efforts to create and perpetuate tensions between Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs. Sardarji’s belief in meritocracy is put into question by the fact of blood, religion, and race, of which he is clearly not in favor. He points to the very essences of Hindu, Muslim, and Sikh masculinity and manhood by speaking to the ways that these populations will only ever be recognized by their “father’s blood,” the fact of his circumcision, and significantly, his headgear—and therefore their racial and visual calculus. For Sardarji, the tragedy lies in the inability to transcend these boundaries through hard work and sheer will. This racial and religious hierarchy thereby demotes somebody like Sardarji, for, even for all he has accomplished as a Sikh man, he can and will only ever be a Sikh. Clear by now is the way Baldwin has created this very dynamic and nuanced character in Sardarji, whose gender politics are complex, but not unlike many others, and whose own role in national and colonial endeavors lends him to both colonial, anti-colonial, and Sikh political strategies.

Further, Cunningham’s response is a prime representation of the British colonial mentality insofar it demonstrates how confident imperial power was in presenting itself as only happening to meddle into the affairs of Indians. In his response, British colonial occupation is innocent in the increased tensions between Hindus and Muslims that aided in the creation of the Partition, crucial to its very design. It is the fundamental difference in religious ideology, in their foundational theology that divides the Hindus and Muslims according to Cunningham. His rationale exposes the fact of difference embedded in the religious doctrine of each religion, with Sikhs merely a minority in the middles. What he misses are the clear tactical strategies that the British Raj deployed over and over again to pit groups against one another—by religion first, but

by class, region, and caste as well. Sardarji has to remind him that the British Raj's tactic towards Indians was in fact, "Divide et impera" or "divide and rule." Not only through division and tension were the people's incapable of unifying for decolonization, but through the active reminder that only the British could seemingly settle these problems amongst diverse constituents. Sardarji drives this home by stating clearly to Cunningham how this was the British's primary tactic to remain as occupiers on Indian land, to wedge Hindus and Muslims apart, and to lament their peacekeeping presence. Such a tactic was not lost on many Indians, and Baldwin drives this point home by underscoring how apparent and despicable such strategy was. Finally, Cunningham's response shows how, with such ease, he is able to deflect and disavow the essence of the British colonial project in India. For Cunningham, and for the colonial power he represents, Partition was an inevitable effect of the historic and perpetual tensions between Hindus and Muslims. It could never be about the colonial legacy of breeding tension, fostering competition, luring factions for one reason or another; instead, blaming the British is an impossibility for Cunningham, for their conversation, and for civil British colonial rule.

Immediately thereafter, Sardarji expresses in no uncertain terms his commitment to Sikhs and Sikh preparedness in this moment, though not aloud to Cunningham. Baldwin's important assertion of Sardarji's Sikh masculinity is crucial, and this interaction is proof thereof:

> *These are my people. What they believe is my belief. What they fight for is my fight.*
>
> "You Sikhs—always overreacting," says Cunningham.
>
> "For God's sake, Cunningham, shut *up*."
>
> Tomorrow he will return to Lahore and buy himself more ammunition for his pistol…And then he will donate to the Sikh Akali Party to buy guns smuggled past the checkpoint at Jamrud, for other Sikhs. And to gurdwaras, so that they will be able to

feed the refugee Sikhs and Hindus he saw drifting aimlessly today. The Sikhs must organize or die—the choice is clear. (372-3)

This moment is vital in comprehending Sardarji's actions from this point onwards. His identification with Sikhs is solidified in this moment, and the reader no longer second-guesses his role as a kind of anti-colonial double agent. Through this interaction, we see how the disregard for Sikhs and Sikh perspective has taken a particularly heavy toll on Sardarji, for he is now part of the Sikh Akali Party, a militant anti-colonial Sikh movement that emerged in the 1920s.[70][71] This organization was one of many factions that were considered but ultimately not a major voice in the official talks planning Partition and Indian independence. Organizing through acquiring arms and aiding those who had been forced to flee and become refugees was central to the work of the Akali Party. As Sardarji's thoughts indicate, there was a sense of necessity and urgency to the Akali militancy that was brought on by the events surrounding Partition. To not arm and organize was to die, to arm and organize was to strategize and survive: Sikh militancy became a vital factor shaped by anti-colonial efforts at first, and made even more essential in the oncoming doom that Partition had wrought both physically and psychically for colonized Indians.

Closely following that interaction was the actual work of providing skill and effort to both the governmental bodies and the Sikh Akali Party in planning for and against the severing of Punjab through Partition. Sardarji's work for the Akalis becomes a central, and heartbreaking aspect, to the novel's rising tension, as the inevitable dispossession of Punjabi land, so cared for and coveted by Sikhs, was soon to be lost. Land for Punjabi Sikhs was central, as many were

[70] Akali can be loosely translated from Punjabi from the word "akal," meaning immortal or timeless.
[71] Orsini, Francesca. *Love in South Asia: A Cultural History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006; Siṅgha, Guracarana. *Babbar Akali Movement, a Historical Survey*. Zira: Aman Publications, 1993.

agricultural workers, farming and tending to the rich alluvial soil of the land of five rivers. Baldwin describes Sardarji's time with the Akalis:

> Sardarji's days are spent with government work and officials, and his nights with leaders of the Sikh Akali Party, religious men, straightforward people, entering politics as their followers look to them to forge a nation that can resist persecution under Islam. The Akali Party leaders—each man taller than Sardarji, with gentle eyes twinkling beneath their royal blue turbans, men with flowing white beards, sharp kirpans strapped at their waists, like the one Sardarji's father, the Chaudhary, once wore—arrive unannounced, sure of his hospitality, as his guests and and as leaders of his quom. They ask him for advice, as a jagirdar, as a Sikh, as an English-speaking qualified man. But what advice can he give? It is too late to demand the right of secession as the Muslims did. Partition will come to Punjab.
>
> The quom must defend itself, the leaders say. Sardarji agrees. Not for Sikhs the passive resistance of Mahatma Gandhi, they say. There are too few Sikhs and though they do not—most certainly do not—hold their own lives precious, remember: what are the Gurus if there be no Sikhs left to follow them? A man needs land to feed his family, to hold his turban high. Gandhiji and the Hindus do not lose anything by giving Pakistan to Jinnah from Punjab because Pakistan will consume mostly Sikh-owned land. Remember: the Tenth Guru said that when survival of the quom is at stake, Sikhs can turn to the sword. (380-1)

Swiftly, the concern presented is that Sikhs must be prepared for the possibility of "persecution under Islam." The Akalis, in their foray into official national politics, are becoming the face of a rising Sikh movement, prepared to play an integral role in shaping the role of Sikhs on their own

terms in the wake of Partition. However, the other side of this is the knowledge that Sardarji has regarding the official governmental role planned for the pre- and post-Partition periods. Still, Sardarji's deep respect and care for Sikhs, as his and their cause, becomes evident in his physical characterization of them. Baldwin's imagistic writing here of the Akalis is that of the ideal Sikh body: masculine, turbaned, full-bearded, devout, proud; tall, armed, and together amongst one another. Nevertheless, Baldwin knows and conveys the inevitable disappointment that Sardarji must confess: "Partition will come to Punjab." With this, the collective Sikh body, the quom, "must defend itself." The disinterest and disdain for Gandhi's renowned passive resistance is and never will be an option for Sikhs, as the Akalis demonstrate. The voices become disparate, overwhelmed and overwhelming: sacrifice is vital and quintessential to a Sikh ethos; but what of Sikh life and its perpetuation if we are all sacrificed?; what of the Sikh farmer, the provider for his family, reliant on Punjabi soil? How will he remain proud?; what of the sacrifice of Hindus in this transaction of Partition? Where is their loss?; when do we fight?

These concerns of the Akali Sikhs is an important moment in the novel for it shows how much and how deeply Partition would and does effect their lives. Additionally, these voices aid in portraying the necessity for Sikh militancy insofar as it appears as the only option in a nation who treats its minority contingents as disposable and their land and always already dispossessed. That is to say that Sikh militancy, emerging from urgent and timely concerns, imagines otherwise in a nation-state that has prepared to sever such religious and political collectivity. It becomes clear how such movement, born out of anti-colonial efforts, emerges as a threat in the decades following Partition, leading up to the genocide of 1984.

In a final passage from *What the Body Remembers*, Baldwin has the tension of Sardarji's efforts on both sides come to a head. The choice to forsake his precious ability to work for both sides is no longer possible, and he must choose his political and ethical compass as a result:

> Destruction awaits, then—the Sikhs will be like the goats Muslims sacrifice at Sadqa. If not today, then tomorrow, when the British become just a memory. Self-appointed or newly hired watchmen sound the cry through Lahore, "Jagte raho!" Stay awake, stay vigilant!
>
> Analysing and reanalysing the situation points only to the same conclusion, again and again: Sardarji's treasured ambivalence must be forsaken. His greatest asset…must be curbed, must be restrained. For this he must set aside all knowledge of other perspective and interests…tear down all his mental bridges to other quoms, bridges built and maintained since returning to India (from England). He must gather all the Sikh aspects of his being into one file, mark it top priority, then let it ride above the rest. He must view himself in one dimension, as just a Sikh, only a Sikh, with no affiliations past or present beyond religion, lower himself to see only as far on the horizon as the Sikh tenants he speaks for, votes for, can see. […]
>
> "Pakistan! What a name! What a strange idea. Then why not a Sikhistan, too?" […]But that third way, a Sikh homeland, has been rejected by Gandhi, the same who allowed Jinnah to have this—this "Pakistan." (384-5)[72]

As a Sikh, Sardarji's politics are certainly sympathetic if not on the side of those in the Akali Party. His fear at the idea of his community, his brothers and sisters, being sacrificed for a plan of which he had a small role (but a role nonetheless), inevitably eats away at his conscience. Yet,

[72] A Muslim custom, Sadqa, translated from Urdu, is charity or charitable goods given at the time of or following Ramadan.

this decision is not simple, as it means disregarding his professional and personal efforts at being a bridge between communities, as somebody who spoke and connected with so many others outside of Sikhi. For Sardarji, pledging allegiance to his identity as a Sikh is a form of singularity: there is nothing like it, and there is nothing outside of it; Sikhism and its religious and political codes might be flexible, but its adherents are often not, of which Sardarji is well aware. This decision is an apt and crucial insight in defining how Sikh militancy emerges, despite the fact that there is no real or present threat of violence. Nevertheless, Sikhs are ready, and steadfast in that readiness.

Further, the invocation of a Sikh homeland, "Sikhistan," is rendered as an impossibility, but plays with the notion of Khalistan, an actual and imagined homeland for Sikhs. The fact of its impossibility makes it that much more compelling in this era leading up to Partition insofar as the rupture of land through dispossession and reclamation clears the way for further chaos and possibility. Through her fictional account, Baldwin lends spectacular insight and imagination into the realities and fantasies of the era leading up to Partition. In her creation of Sardarji, Baldwin gives us an important, flawed, and fully-realized Sikh masculine figure.

Moving backward in time, I turn my attention now to Khushwant Singh's 1956 novel *Train to Pakistan*. Set in the fictional post-Partition Punjabi village of Manoj Misra, *Train to Pakistan*, much like Salman Rushdie's 1981 novel on the era of Partition, *Midnight's Children*, is the tale of many, but focuses on the story of star-crossed, religiously different, heterosexual lovers. [73]As a Punjabi Sikh who lived through Partition, Singh's reading of the era is complex, and shows very different sympathies than *What the Body Remembers*. For example, in one moment, Iqbal, a young Muslim man, seeks refuge from a riot in his neighborhood, ending up in

[73] In Singh's, the novel features a young Sikh man and young Muslim girl, and in Rushdie's, it's a young Muslim boy, and a young Hindu girl.

a Sikh *gurdwara*, or house of worship. Presenting himself as Iqbal, a name that might belong to a Sikh, Muslim, or Hindu, he has a conversation with a one of the Sikh religious clergy over a meal:

> "Well, Babuji," began the Muslim. "Tell us something. What is happening in the world? What is all this about Pakistan and Hindustan?"
>
> "We live in this little village and know nothing," the lambardar put in. "Babuji, tell us, why did the English leave?"
>
> Iqbal did not know how to answer simple questions like these. Independence meant little or nothing to these people. They did not even realize that it was a step forward and that all they needed to do was to take the next step forward and that all they needed to do was take the next step and turn the make-believe political freedom into a real economic one.
>
> "They left us because they had to. We had hundreds of thousands of young men trained to fight in the war. This time they had arms too. Haven't you heard of the mutiny of the Indian sailors? The soldiers would have done the same thing. The English were frightened. They did not shoot any of the Indians who joined the Indian National Army set up by the Japanese, because they thought the whole country would turn against them." (47)

In this moment, Iqbal shows ample prejudice towards these Sikh religious figures, as their allegiances were unclear at best, and misguided at worst. In his view, these particular Sikhs, having seen the horrors of Partition, were not educated on the necessity for decolonization and independence, even if it came at the cost of Punjabi dispossession. Certainly, the land of Punjab and the livelihood it provided was far more vital to the Sikhs with whom Iqbal is speaking. Yet,

Iqbal's reading of these men as incapable of seeing the greater good of Indian independence renders them as "these people" whose ideas that they might have been better off prior to independence demonstrates the level of not only their small-mindedness, but of their selfish reasoning. In this, Iqbal may have an important point to make.

Still, Iqbal is appalled at the violence wrought by Partition, as the cost of life was unprecedented and is still only estimated as "hundreds of thousands" to over a million.[74][75] In another moment, soon after his interactions with the Sikh clergy, Iqbal wanders outdoors:

> Iqbal lay down once more and gazed at the stars. The wail of the engine in the still vast plain made him feel lonely and depressed. What could he—one little man—do in this enormous impersonal land of four hundred million? Could he stop the killing? Obviously not. Everyone—Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Congressite, Leaguer, Akali, or Communist—was deep in it. It was fatuous to suggest that the bourgeois revolution could be turned into a proletarian one. The stage had not arrived. The proletariat was indifferent to political freedom for Hindustan or Pakistan, except when it could be given an economic significance like grabbing land by killing an owner who was of a different religious denomination. All that could be done was to divert the kill-and-grab instinct from communal channels and turn it against the propertied class. That was the proletarian revolution the easy way. His party bosses would not see it. (50)

Going through the possibilities of how he might act, how politicians might act, how organizers might act, how all might act in the unfolding and ceaseless violence of Partition, Iqbal ponders what to do and can only land on the impermissible "proletarian revolution." There is desperation

[74] Dalrymple, William. "The Great Divide: The Violent Legacy of Indian Partition." *The New Yorker*, June 29, 2015, http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/06/29/the-great-divide-books-dalrymple

[75] Chotiner, Isaac. "Pakistan: The Land of the Pure." *The Wall Street Journal*, December 26, 2014, http://www.wsj.com/articles/book-review-the-struggle-for-pakistan-by-ayesha-jalal-1419614523

to Iqbal's thought process that reflects the urgency and ongoing nature of Partition's brutal violence along religious lines. What is more are the ways in which the forced migration created refugees numbering over four hundred thousand, in a land of over "four hundred million," as Iqbal declares.

To conclude, I want to note the ways in which these three novel, under-read and understudied as they are, fundamentally renegotiate the terms on which we think of Partition. Particularly in the cases of Bhanu Kapil's *Schizophrene* and Shauna Singh Baldwin's *What the Body Remembers*, two works by two female Punjabi diasporic writers, exhibit nuanced and theoretically engaging modes of writing minor histories and minor account of the era of, around, and following Partition. By thinking through the colonial tradition of cartography and the lens of Sikh militancy, we might read Partition anew, as what Ayesha Jalal calls "the central historical event in twentieth century South Asia."[76]

[76] Dalrymple, William. "The Great Divide: The Violent Legacy of Indian Partition." *The New Yorker*, June 29, 2015, http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/06/29/the-great-divide-books-dalrymple

Chapter 4: Minortarian Mourning:

1984 and Sikh Sovereignty in the Wake

The year 2014 marked the thirtieth anniversary of Operation Blue Star and the Sikh genocide on the Indian subcontinent. Operation Blue Star was an attack on the Harmander Sahib complex (also known as Darbar Sahib or the Golden Temple), the holiest shrine for Sikhs, which includes the Akal Takht, the highest seat of earthly political and judicial power. This operation took place in early June 1984 and was an attempt to seize the Golden Temple as the government feared the threat of supposed Sikh terrorism, militancy, and separatism in the form of an independent homeland called Khalistan. Organized by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, the attack left the Golden Temple complex destroyed and the estimated deaths range from 500 to 5000. This year it was confirmed by both the BBC and British Prime Minister David Cameron that then Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and her government had an integral role in organizing the attack on the Golden Temple. Recently declassified documents reveal that Thatcher's regime had Special Air Services work closely with the Indian government in planning the attack.[77] [78]

The state actions of June 1984 had left the Sikh religious minority in India both bereaved and enraged. On October 31of the same year, two of Gandhi's bodyguards, both Sikh, assassinated the prime minister, in what is widely regarded as an act of revenge. The

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[77] This information was only declassified by Wikileaks and *The Guardian* in late 2014, see: http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jan/15/margaret-thatcher-golden-temple-raid-support-letter

[78] *Reduced to Ashes: The Insurgency and Human Rights in Punjab*, Ram Narayan Kumar et al., South Asia Forum for Human Rights, 2003; *Encyclopedia of Genocide*, vol. 2, Israel W. Charny, ed., Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 1999, p. 516-517; *Punjab Under Siege: A Critical Analysis*, New York: Allen, McMillan and Enderson, 1986; *Fighting for Faith and Nation: Dialogues with Sikh Militants*, Cynthia Keppley Mahmood, 1996; *The Sikhs of the Punjab: Unheard Voices of State and Guerrilla Violence*, Joyce Pettigrew, Zed Books Ltd., 1995; *Ethnic Conflict in India: A Case Study of Punjab*, Gurharpal Singh, 2000; *The Sikhs*, Patwant Singh, New York: Knopf, 2000; *Giani Kirpal Singh's Eye-Witness Account of Operation Bluestar*, Anurag Singh, ed., 1999; *The Nation's Tortured Body, Brian Keith Axel*, Duke University Press, 2001; *Religion and Nationalism in India: The Case of the Punjab*, Harnik Deol, London: Routledge, 2000.

assassination took place in the morning, and when it was announced via radio that two Sikh men were responsible for the attack in the afternoon, that evening saw the beginnings of mass violence against Sikhs, particularly heavy in the capital of Delhi. With the cooperation of the police and the national army, mobs were given voter lists and were able to locate Sikh homes. Sikh men and women were burned alive, attacked with state distributed weapons, and women were gang-raped; Sikh homes, *gurdwaras*, and businesses were ransacked and burned; buses and trains were pulled over by armed mobs in order to find Sikhs and kill them. These riots continued through November 3rd and resulted in 3000 deaths in Delhi alone, and 8000 deaths in total, across India.

With the desecration of sacred sites and with the genocide of Sikhs, these acts of state terrorism occupy the Sikh diasporic imaginary. At this moment, marking the thirtieth anniversary, Sikhs across the globe—in India, the UK, Canada, and the U.S.—have commemorated these events through a variety of sacred and secular expression. The recent uncovering of Thatcher's involvement, in particular, has given a vital dimension in apprehending and conceptualizing the events of '84 anew. In this discovery, the postcolonial presence of the British, in collaboration with Indira Gandhi's government, underscores the complex imperial relation between the British government, the Indian government, and Sikhs. The events of 1984 (which will heretofore be referred to simply as '84) were the culmination of a decade long tension between the Indian government and Sikhs, regarding Sikh separatist desire for the state of Khalistan. However, this is not to say that such a desire was new and revolutionary in the 1970s, or even during and after the violence and death of the 1947 partition, though the circumstances were unique. Rather, '84 responded to the ongoing and defining relationship between the Indian government and Sikhs: one of a foundational existence outside of the reigning majoritarian government, outside of the

reigning majoritarian religion, outside of the reigning majoritarian language. In essence, the very foundations of Sikhism are embedded in this living tension outside of the majoritarian or hegemonic standard. [79]

In this chapter, I dwell on ’84 and its transmission through diaspora, specifically in the U.S. and North America broadly. I investigate the Sikh body in the U.S. as a site of political and ontological becoming, and the effects that such a body has for minority politics. By taking up the Sikh diasporic body as a site of ongoing becoming—through frameworks of race and sexuality, gender and normativity, and religious devotion and militancy—I argue that such a population has faced, and continues to face, confrontations with the secular and with the contradictions of both racial and religious tolerance. Further, I assert that the Sikh body as a minority body has often been occluded and collapsed with other bodies in various historical moments in the U.S. and globally, and as a result, has faced a crisis of political legibility in the face of vast deterritorialized intolerance, harm, and violence. For this argument, I approach the study of Sikhs in the U.S. through archival and cultural material by examining two distinct historical moments: 1) the 1984 attacks on Harmander Sahib and the ensuing Sikh genocide across India; and 2) the current campaign to allow Sikhs to serve in the U.S military by Sikh legal and civil rights organizations. These particular moments are exemplary of the tense and reciprocal relationship of Sikhs to not just violence, but to minoritarian political formation in the face of racial regimes under state-sanctioned violence and empire. To that end, I put these two moments in the same context as to theorize minor bodies and politics, as well as to rethink the work of the Sikh diasporic body at this critical juncture.

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[79] *Bullet for Bullet: My Life as a Police Officer*, Julio Riberio, New Delhi: Penguin Books, 1999; *Language, Religion and Politics in North India*, Paul Brass, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974; *The Future of Freedom: Illiberal Democracy at Home and Abroad*, Zakria, Fareed, New York: W.W. Norton, 2004.; *Faith in Nation: The Exclusionary Origins of Nationalism*, Marx, Anthony, New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.

In conceiving of diaspora through Brian Keith Axel's framework of temporality and corporeality, emphasis cannot be placed on the strict dispersal of populations in locations. Axel uses as his examples, images of the tortured Sikh body specifically from the campaign of state-sanctioned torture against Sikh men in the Punjab in the 1990s, when police accusations of Sikh terrorism became the normalized mo0de of state interaction with the Sikh population. Often these images are of the tortured body and sometimes those of the already dead; the images all capture turbaned Sikh men, and are presented as a way of preserving their image and producing the modern Sikh martyr or *shaheed*. These images, along with the images of '84's martyrs are readily available online, and comprise a major component of the contemporary manifestation of a Sikh diasporic imaginary. These images enable a form of memorializing that highlights how Sikh collectivity is informed by a sense of always available or accessible bereavement. Mourning, in this way, frames how one conceives of the Sikh body, as one that is injured, violated, and dead; as gendered through masculine religious signifiers of the turban and unshorn facial hair; as recognized and valued through death. Mourning not for the nation-state, but against the nation-state defines the Sikh diasporic body, especially in this scheme.[80]

One of this chapter's primary foci is on the work of Indian artist Gauri Gill. Gill's work titled "1984" captures important aspects embedded in the labor of mourning. Gill's photographs and accompanying essays, available as an 84 page PDF, authored by her and other Sikh artists and writers, captures intimate spaces and moments in the aftermath of 1984, in its living memory in the period between approximately 2005 and 2014.[81] Gill's work is attentive to the women and children of 1984's victims. She captures the widow colony, the small crowded areas of of Tilak

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[80] Axel, Brian Keith. *The Nation's Tortured Body: Violence, Representation, and the Formation of a Sikh "diaspora"* Durham: Duke University Press, 2001.

[81] Gauri Gill, "1984." Released on Kafila.org in April 2013, re-released in November 2014; 22.86 x 17.78 cms; 84 pages, 42 black and white reproductions; free to download, print out, staple and distribute. Cover image shown here as well. http://www.gaurigill.com/books.html

Vihar and Trilokpuri in Delhi, that contain the women and children "left behind" by the mass murder of Sikh men in particular; there are references to the Nanavati Report which was widely considered by Sikhs to be a failed attempt by the Indian government to seek justice for 1984, which never actually convicted or punished any name associated with the grave crimes of inciting and enacting violence and murder. Gill's images and captions are entrances into the memorializing of those now dead, and the political aftermath in failed attempts by the Indian nation-state to seek justice or reconciliation for the Sikh population, and specifically those who lost family members in these events. Gill's images are a kind of grief-work, or an example of what I name *critical mourning*: critical mourning forces a necessary reckoning with the affective politics of mourning, strategizing how grief-stricken populations subject to regularized death through statist genocidal death drives frequently organize around demands, not yet for political legibility, but for mere existence. Often such a politics is situated within the framing of grief as a way in which to articulate grievances, as pointed out by Judith Butler in both *Precarious Life* and *Frames of War*.[82] In this way, Sikhs in India and in diaspora, are culled together by a sense of urgency, precarity, and disposability. Major grievances against the Indian nation-state on behalf of Sikhs are more often than not based on the events of '84.

Even regionally, Sikhs outside of India more often defined themselves prior to 1984 as part of larger Punjabi, Indian, or South Asian diasporas; after the events of 1984, identification of oneself as part of a Sikh diaspora became primary and crystallized a sense of a Sikh diaspora and a collective Sikh diasporic body. Of course, this identification with a Sikh diaspora can be understood as a way in which this collectivity existed outside and in contradistinction to an Indian diasporic identity. In this way, the Sikh diaspora can be rendered through its subsumption

[82] Butler, Judith. *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*. London: Verso, 2004; Butler, Judith. *Frames of War: When Is Life Grievable?* London: Verso, 2009.

of its minoritarian status on the subcontinent and its both early modern and modern histories of violence and persecution; that is to say that Sikh status as an ethno-religious minority in India, while transmuted through diaspora, is heavily defined by its minority status. Minoritarian life and the consequential living without a sense of national belonging, inclusion, or incorporation, translated to living outside of any loyalty toward, or identification with, the Indian nation-state and its regime of terror against Sikhs and other minority subjects. In this scheme then, there is no sense of a recognizable home or homeland for the Sikh diasporic body, and the tangible comforts offered by home; homeland, frequently understood as an essential component in the defining of a diaspora, is not necessary for the Sikh diaspora insofar as Khalistan operates as a site of imagined return, a site for the ongoing becoming-nation-state.

"Minoritarian Mourning" examines contemporary Sikh diasporic cultural production that emerges in the wake of the events of 1984 on the Indian subcontinent, including the aforementioned work by Gauri Gill. In the recent commemoration of the events of both Operation Blue Star and the subsequent genocide, there have been various modes in which diasporic Sikhs have engaged in the process of historical recovery and preservation. Specifically, this chapter argues that the affective processes of mourning, particularly on a collective scale, enable a site of deep politicization, one that is framed and understood as militancy. The case of the 1984 events surrounding the Sikh population, and the Sikh diasporic response, provides a specific and compelling example of how this happens. Crucial to this argument is to track into the future, following 1984, not how Sikh militancy was on the rise on the level of diaspora, but rather to read how Sikh bodies were rendered as part of what Faisal Devji names "militant globality." [83] I argue that such affiliation with both the Sikh diaspora and its cause posed a threat

[83] Devji, Faisal. *Landscapes of the Jihad: Militancy, Morality, Modernity*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005.

to imperial and state security apparatuses: the grave injury of '84 on the collective Sikh body gave rise to increased identification with not only Punjab, but the imagined state of Khalistan; in this pull toward separatism, Indian, British, Canadian, and American forces continued to collaborate to police the Sikh body globally. In this way, this chapter articulates how mourning plays a central role in articulating both how the "Sikh diaspora" was codified and strengthened as a concept and category in the wake of '84, as well as how it expanded the concept and category of militancy to reflect the increased identification of Sikhs outside of India with a loosely defined separatist cause.

As a result of extended mourning, Sikhs were read as obsessed or fixated on the events of 1984, and this rendering posed a growing threat to not just the Indian nation-state, but to most nation-states with sizable Sikh populations. For this global minor body, 1984 marked how deeply the nation-state completely devalued and disregarded Sikh lives. The collective obsession or fixation on the events was representative of just how indelible such events were, as well as how easily they were minimized in the national aftermath. Sikhs globally named the events from 31 October to 2 November 1984 as genocide, whereas most Indians labeled it as anti-Sikh riots. This distinction continues to be in question, as the event of these 3000 deaths has not been labeled genocide formally at the international level.[84] As such, even those in the diaspora who considered themselves politically moderate were affected by '84 in ways that forever changed their collective relation to the subcontinent. In effect, this consolidated and secured a global Sikh diaspora as a coherent reality, which in turn made this now recognizable entity into a more legible body to imperial apparatuses. That is to say that in this global and collective process of

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[84] *Struggle for Justice: Speeches and Conversations of Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale*, Ranbir Singh Sandhu, Sikh Educational and Religious Foundation, 1999; *Soft Target: How the Indian Intelligence Service Penetrated Canada*, Zuhair Kashmiri and Brian McAndrew, James Lorimer & Company, 1989; *Voices From a Scarred City: The Delhi Carnage in Perspective*, Lokayan, 1984; *The Assassination and After*, Arun Shourie, et al., 1985.

bereavement, proved to deeply alter and shape the diaspora, new forms of politicization and moves towards measured resistance began to percolate and form. At this time and continuing into the present, Sikhs outside of India, for example, are less likely to define themselves as part of an Indian diaspora, instead opting for the specific label of Sikh: this shift signals how the distrust of the Indian nation-state and its governing bodies became a way in which Sikhs were read as resistant to state security apparatuses more broadly. In this way, a growing fear of global Sikh militancy, specifically in those diasporic sites with large Sikh populations, became part of an increasing concern as a worldwide threat. That is not to say that Sikh militancy in India by any means lessened, but that the crackdown on Sikh activists, militants, and so-called terrorists in India was already apparent and did not cease after '84. Instead, the threat of Sikh militancy is placed within a global context simultaneous with the increased identification with a Sikh diaspora.

If we can understand militancy as a social relation to the world, Sikhs might be then better understood as participating in global struggle for sovereignty in its myriad forms. Sikh sovereignty within this paradigm is a way in which to initiate and build political and social legibility on a global scale, while necessarily disinterested in and bypassing the nation-state's clear indifference and overall hostility to this minority population. In this modality, the errant acting out of trauma through extended mourning, Sikhs can be rendered as experiencing melancholia. Through this psychoanalytic approach, the desire for the Sikh nation-state of Khalistan is informed less by exclusively what has been lost, but rather defined by the dual possibility and impossibility of what is to come.

Investing in the separatist project, Sikhs participate in a nationalist fantasy that underscores the tethering of Sikhs to not simply an imagined homeland, to the Punjab and the

land on which they labor, but to the minoritarian desire to inhabit, live, and thrive amongst other Sikh bodies as well. Such a desire invariably highlights how Sikhs are invested in the reproduction of not simply Sikh religiosity and devotion, but to the nationalist imperative to reproduce itself as a race and perpetuate this minority body. Through this understanding, we can reframe Sikh separatism as equally invested in the decolonial project of sovereignty and the reproduction of Sikhs as a racial and religious minority. This dual investment inevitably undermines the project of sovereignty as decolonial, as it more often than not relies on a nation-state framework: in so doing, Sikh separatism or sovereignty becomes less about freedom from Indian state repression and more about regional cooperation between separate Hindu, Muslim, and Sikh states—India, Pakistan, and Khalistan. In this way, the making, fortification, and policing of borders that Khalistan would require would serve to amplify and exacerbate the already constant tensions at the India-Pakistan border.[85]

As such, this chapter deeply invests in how Sikh sovereignty might be rendered as a project with a stateless imaginary, one that produces the complex global subject formation of Sikhs as one that is forever tethered to, and undone by, the Indian nation-state. In this way, the concept of a Sikh diaspora is one that does not have a positive affective relation to India as a homeland, but rather one that is constituted by the long history of Sikh persecution as a minor population on the subcontinent. As such, even calls for Sikh separatism are mired in internal politics specific to the Punjab. As an alternative, through an engagement with cultural works emerging from the events of 1984, this chapter articulates new modes of Sikh sovereignty that emerge from the melancholic process of extended mourning in diaspora. The deep wounds of 1984 profoundly impacted Sikhs worldwide, and as a result, served to propel a great deal of

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[85] Dilgeer, Harjinder Singh., and Awatar Singh. Sekhon. *Khalistan: The Struggle to Regain Lost Sovereignty*. Asian Studies Forum, 1995.

cultural material—fiction, essays, photography, visual art, dramatic work—that in turn, aided in both memorializing the horrors of the ’84 events as well as reimagining the horizon of Sikh sovereignty. That is to say that some of these works produced in the wake of ’84 sought not only to avow the realities of a post-’84 world for Sikhs, but to aid in a reinvestment of the radical imagination of Sikh sovereignty. This imagination, in turn, lends itself to the ways in which articulations of Sikh sovereignty, or Sikh becoming, are perceived as works of resistance—works meant to conjure the memories of ’84 anew, to remind and never forget, to activate and solicit projects of Sikh historical recovery and memory; in this mode, these works of mourning and historical recovery are implicated in, and collaborators with, Sikh militancy and militant resistance. Cultural material produced by those who survived, remember, or are tied to the events through kinship networks are, by the very nature of the subject, participants in the project of Sikh militancy. In effect, articulations invoking ’84 even in the slightest are rendered as overtly political works of resistance, especially when written or created by Sikhs. Engaging anti-statist rhetoric, much of the body of work that has manifested on ’84 necessarily expresses deep anguish and frustration with the Indian nation-state and its disavowal of genocide and the profound effects such events continue to have on the Sikh population both in India and globally.

Haunting in the First Person: Amitav Ghosh’s “The Ghosts of Mrs. Gandhi”

In his essay “The Ghosts of Mrs. Gandhi” for a July 1995 issue of *The New Yorker*, Amitav Ghosh narrates his experience in Delhi in late October and early November 1984.[86] Bearing witness to the events of the pogroms over a decade later, Ghosh vividly reveals how the events of late ’84 happened through his own eyes. Necessarily disgusted by the mob violence

[86] Ghosh, Amitav. “The Ghosts of Mrs. Gandhi.” *The New Yorker*. July 1995. http://www.amitavghosh.com/essays/ghost.html

against Sikhs in the aftermath of the Gandhi's assassination, the acclaimed Indian author deftly lends his account as that of, at first, observer, and later, a subsequent active contingent against the genocidal attacks. The narrative shift is crucial as it shows not only the overwhelming force of the events, but the effects on a late-twenty-something Ghosh. I examine this particular piece as it offers keen insight into how those outside of Sikhi, as well as on the proverbial right side of history, bore witness and acted against the sway of mob violence that characterized these events. Alongside this, I critically interrogate the contradictions and slippages in Ghosh's essay that attempt to construct India as a state not intent on the annihilation of its minority populations, but rather one constituted by non-violent agents of liberal tolerance. In triangulating the mob collectivities, the victimized Sikhs, and the non-Sikh advocates for peace, there emerges a meta-narrative on how the Indian state functions through and against these particular factions.

Ghosh—like Gill and Singh in the latter sections of this chapter—poses important questions for his audience in that he engages the forces of the state at work. His perspective is particularly important as it presents both proximity and immersion in Delhi at the time of the attacks on Sikhs. The essay opens with a brief rundown of a tumultuous 1984 India, primarily as it related to anti-Sikh violence, as well as mentioning the Bhopal gas disaster; Ghosh states that of all these events, the ensuing violence following Gandhi's assassination made the greatest impact on his life. The question of why, in 1995, has Ghosh chosen to write this particular piece looms over the text. Exploring this moment in time through the essay form eleven years later, Ghosh writes, "Looking back, I see that the experiences of that period were profoundly important to my development as a writer; so much so that I have never attempted to write about them until now."

Haunting, which is an organizing analytic of this chapter, seems to aid in giving context to Ghosh's arrival at writing and accounting for these events of '84. At the time, as Ghosh recounts, he was twenty-eight years old, living in New Delhi's Defence Colony neighborhood and teaching at Delhi University. He delves into his account by beginning with the morning of 31 October, commuting and commencing his day teaching at the university. The murmurs of Gandhi's murder at the hands of her two Sikh bodyguards begin swirling amid the commotion of his ninety-minute journey to campus and his subsequent walk to his first class. Ghosh notes that he became distracted in class: "My unsteadiness surprised me. I was not an uncritical admirer of Mrs. Gandhi…It was just not grief I felt at the moment. Rather, it was a sense of something loose, of a mooring coming united somewhat within." This particular passage has the unfortunate mistake of using the word "united," when I believe it was intended to be "a mooring coming untied somewhat, within"; a peculiar turn of phrase, Ghosh conjures in his language an ominous sense of something large coming undone, something grand experiencing its imminent doom. He acknowledges that the impending death of Gandhi herself is not the end, but rather enables a whole host of new harmful outcomes; Gandhi's death, then, takes on the means for the destructive and violent ends to come. Her attempted assassination precipitates the forthcoming violence, to which Ghosh is alluding.

The event takes on increasingly large significance, defining the ensuing action of Ghosh's narrative essay. The details that are recalled attend to the rising tension and ensuing action of the day and days to come. In memory, the essay attempts arrival, or a coming to, as a form of retrospection. In this mode, the event, while urgent in the narrative, has been laid before readers under the fog of memory; yet, despite such conditions, Ghosh's writing delivers the sense of the clarity and crispness of his personal memory of that violent day. Certainly, this might be

an effect of his overall writing style, however it seems as though this serves to demonstrate a larger purpose. Rather than focus on the remaining minutiae of Ghosh's account however, I want to think through how he provides a rationale for writing the events of '84, dwelling on the temporal distance he has had from the events, and against the possibility of representing what happened in '84 as "a panorama of violence—'an aesthetic phenomenon,' as Karahasan was to call it. (7)" [87]

In Ghosh's writing, the frame is that of arrival at writing of his experience after a prolonged silence of public articulation. This bookends the essay and sheds light on how this is not a work of writing that emerges from the writer's creative energies, but instead manifests out of the prolonged tension between being a writer and being a citizen that Ghosh outlines. "Before I could set down a word, I had to resolve a dilemma, between being a writer and being a citizen," he writes, "As a writer, I had only obvious subjects: the violence." In setting up this false dichotomy, Ghosh underscores the various tensions about representation in work by artists. Of course, this tension is not new, but rather one that emerges again and again—between politics and aesthetics, between the (political and ethical) responsibility of the artist and the freedom from conventional obligations and civic-mindedness.[88] Still, Ghosh is notably a fiction writer renowned for his commitment to history and specifically historical detail and material specificity. His note, then, on the obvious subject of violence in writing his experience of Delhi in '84 shifts the question from one on the responsibilities of personal historical account to how the violence of the events of '84 marred any immediate possibility for writing, let alone writerly obligation. By citing Karahasan's on violence as an aesthetic phenomenon, Ghosh muddles the line between the material specificity and the political realities that led up to the riotous pogroms. It is the

[87] Karahasan, D. "Literature and War." *AGNI*, 41. 1995, 1-13.
[88] Rancière, Jacques, and Steve Corcoran. *Dissensus: On Politics and Aesthetics*. London: Continuum, 2010.

imagistic and visual horror of the events that have rendered him psychically unable to write of the spectacular violence of those days.

In relegating the historical events of Delhi in that span of days—the utter violence, the genocidal death drive used against Sikhs—to an aesthetic phenomenon, much is lost. The violence as a "panorama," isolates the genocidal instincts of the mobs as an aberration, as neither symptomatic nor a result of a larger and longer historical campaign pitting majoritarian Indians against its minoritarian Sikhs. In making aesthetic what clearly is an ethical question on humanity and the capacity for evil, Ghosh withdraws from asking more urgent questions about the obligation of the artist to create and produce in the wake of devastation and human tragedy. Certainly, these questions are made ever more urgent by the very fact of Ghosh's proximity to the events, and he chooses what appears to be purposeful detachment—distance, if you will—through his citing of Karahasan. He further elucidates his quandary in approaching writing this essay as particular to the writer, as previously differentiated from the citizen: "Writers don't join crowds…But what do you do when the Constitutional authority fails to act. You join and in joining bear all the responsibility and obligations and guilt that joining represents." Here he speaks of being a part of the resistance to the mob violence in Delhi at the time, making the choice of citizen over writer. For this, Ghosh feels the guilt of joining the crowd, as this act symbolically displaces him from the supposed required critical distance that writers have from urgent political and material realities. In this moment, the crowd of protesters is mistakenly a source of guilt, when the guilty are those perpetrators of violence against Sikhs in this twisted nationalist narrative. Much is lost in Ghosh's rendering of all collectivity as antithetical to the writer as mythically singular and individualistic, and this, too, is evident in his citation of Karahasan. Specifically, Karahasan's reading of violence as an aesthetic phenomenon—one that

is singular, imagistic, isolated, spectacular, aberrant—is tied to the participation of Ghosh's narrative account in the construction of events not grounded in interrogating Indian state involvement and the political estrangement of the Indian nation-state and its Sikh minority contingent. Still, Ghosh's rendering of the state-based inaction toward the mob violence points to how this inaction becomes state-sanctioned violence, and thereby forces mass protest for those conscientiously opposed to this hysterical nationalist violence.

Given the essay's tensions, Ghosh toils with the effects of the day's violence and the ethical responsibilities that it engenders. While providing a host of important considerations on the event's spectacular violence, "The Ghosts of Mrs. Gandhi" overwhelmingly reads as a meditation on the relationship between the realms of politics and ethics, specifically what it means to act ethically and to create ethically. In this piece, Ghosh's questions about the responsibility of the writer to act in the moments of the '84 violence are mirrored by the similar responsibility he feels for accounting for his personal experience of these events, no matter how much later. As with the other works explored in this chapter, wrestling with how to confront the genocide of 1984 becomes not only a political question, but an ethical task, a responsibility to creatively reckon with the brute violence of that moment. In Ghosh, there is the possibility of misremembering in his personal account; with Singh and Gill, there exist alternative creative responses and questions that arise and arrive through writing and multimedia expression.

Becoming Undone: Traumatic Memory in Jaspreet Singh's Helium

Jaspreet Singh's second novel focuses on the horrors of 1984's genocide through the prism of traumatic memory. Born in Delhi, Singh currently splits his time between Canada and the United States; his first novel, 2010's *Chef*, deftly and movingly explored the tensions

between India and Pakistan over the contested land of Kashmir. *Helium* takes up 1984's anti-Sikh violence as a fictional form of engagement with unlivable horrors, and the diasporic narrative subject's difficulty of return to his previous home of Delhi.[89] In many ways, Singh's writing on this moment purposefully resonates with the work of W.G. Sebald, whose writing on the horrors of the Holocaust thematically center on personal and collective memory and amnesia, as well as on forms of decay including the physical decay of things, as well as social and cultural decay. Notably in the novel, Singh takes up decay in the ways that his narrator engages scientific thought on the one hand, and the physical and moral decay that 1984's events wrought.

In the novel, the narrator, Raj, is a Hindu rheology professor at Cornell, whose return to Delhi after a three-decades-long absence to visit his ailing father, a retired senior police officer, at the novel's opening propel the story.[90] The novel's driving force is Raj's traumatic memory of his former mentor, Professor Singh's, brutal death in the genocidal mob violence in Delhi in late October 1984. This particular memory has been embedded so deeply into Raj's psyche that his return to Delhi inevitably becomes about reconnecting with that moment and its survivors. Professor Singh's death is described in horrific detail by the author, excerpted here:

> Even before [the train] came to a complete halt we saw traces of violence on the platform, but there were cops stationed there, and because the cops were armed with guns and lathis we thought the situation was under control. We spontaneously formed a circle around Professor Singh (for he was the only Sikh in our group) and stepped out of the bogie…Suddenly an angry mob, armed with the most elementary weapons (metal rods and rubber tyres), crossed the railway line and climbed up the platform. *'Khoon ka badla khoon say. Give us that traitor sardar.'* We started to run. 'Blood for blood.'

[89] Singh, Jaspreet. *Helium*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2013; *Chef*, New York: Bloomsbury, 2010.
[90] For much of the novel, Raj is an unnamed narrator, which Singh seems to have done purposefully.

> What broke the circle was a Vespa scooter on the platform. Sudden screeching of brakes, tyre marks, rubber smell. A photojournalist in a yellow windcheater started snapping pictures of the mob, which had fished out our professor. 'Stop taking pictures,' said one of the thugs, 'otherwise we kill you.'
>
> The thug points at Professor Singh. 'This traitor Sikh is going to take pictures. Those who want to save him, we kill you.' He kicks the 'sister-fucker' journalist in the balls, snatches the camera, destroys the roll. I remain paralysed on my spot. He snatches our professor's suitcase. 'Sardar-ji, our mother is dead and you are not crying? Cry, bhenchod. Gadar kay londay, beat your chest.' […] Then the thug gestures for the other lumpens to go ahead; the lumpens spray gasoline from the journalist's scooter on our teacher, slip a rubber tyre around his neck. 'let me go. What have I done?' I can hear Professor Singh shout. The tyre constrains his arms. 'Sardar, you sister-fucker, you killed our mother. Gadar, now we kill you.' (30-1)[91]

The violent event commences through the nationalist logic, retaliation for Gandhi's assassination by her Sikh bodyguards. The English mixed with Hindi by the mob member, or "thug," is full of vulgar language, specifically and violently sexual about the place of Sikh men as a result of the death of the nationalist, feminine, mother figure that Gandhi embodied most especially in and after her death. The scene descends into Professor Singh's murder from there, representative in its method of nationalist murderous revenge against Sikhs:

> At this point the chief lumpen laughs and spits in Professor Singh's face, douses the tyre with more hydrocarbons and strikes a match. A senior Congress leader, his Nehru-Gandhi khadi clothes fluttering in the wind, is standing close to the station master's

[91] Sardar, translated from Punjabi, is a term of respect for a devout Sikh male. The addition of "ji" at the end connotes even further respect.

> office on the platform, guiding the mob like the conductor of a big orchestra. *Khatam kar do sab sardaron ko. Khatam kar do saanp kay bacchon ko. Finish them, children of snakes. Destroy them all*. He is not very tall and wears black glasses. I will never forget that Congresswallah's black glasses. 'This is the way to teach the Sikhs a lesson,' says a bystander. I take a deep breath…and we keep hearing the screams. I still hear those screams. I can't hear enough. We couldn't do a thing. I could do nothing.
>
> It was sickening, you had to see the horror to believe the horror and it was so unreal I almost didn't believe my own sense organs. But the fire and the smoke were so absolutely real. During the combustion I could not use my knowledge of chemistry and physics to extinguish the flames. How fast they engulfed his entire body. I could do nothing. I was a mere onlooker. In the end all that remained along with the ashes were a few bones and a steel bracelet. Black like a griddle. (31-2)

The visceral quality of Singh's writing here brings to bear the ways in which the burning flesh of predominantly make Sikh bodies were the consequence to Gandhi's death. The efforts to target and destroy Sikhs were clearly systematic and state-sanctioned, as the narrator points out by the presence of the glasses-donning "Congresswallah." Nevertheless, this scene, forever seared into Raj's mind, becomes lodged into the reader's as well. There are two particular readings that are fruitful in the unpacking of this particular event: on the one hand, there is the way in which the language of the family erupts and infects the rhetoric being espoused by the anti-Sikh mob and Congressman; on the other hand, there is the visceral, physical, and scientific reading. These readings are certainly legible both on their own and together, singular and imbricated in their effects of working through the single most haunting images of Raj's traumatic memory of '84.

Through the lens of the familial and kin relation, the scene becomes one about the feminine figure of Indira Gandhi becoming the maternal, mother figure that stands in for India. The family as nation, nation as family concept permeates much of certain forms of diaspora, postcolonial, and world literatures, and in *Helium* this takes up minimal space, as in when Gandhi is mentioned with resentment by Raj. The most significant example is when the member of the mob shouts, "Sardar-ji, our mother is dead and you are not crying?" This moment epitomizes the ways in which nationalist loyalty to the state meant that Prime Minister Gandhi's death symbolically and actively forced those perpetrators—her two Sikh bodyguards—and their minoritarian community to participate in the spectacle of guilt and innocence. By invoking Professor Singh's lack of tears, the mob member insinuates Singh's guilt in this scheme. The mob member's bitter irony and contempt here helps define the rhetoric that propelled such immense violence. In this scene, Singh's very definition of Sikh masculinity—recognizable by turban and beard, shrouded by his protective students—he defines the lack of proximity to the Prime Minister and her clear anti-Sikh, pre-emptively counterinsurgent, political strategies. He is a target, if there ever was one, in this particular moment. He can and never will have a relation to Indira Gandhi, let alone regard for her politics. Yet, even still, her place as maternal, national figurehead must prove her vitality and importance to all citizens, particularly Sikhs, lest they be targeted as unaffected and therefore, possibly seditious, collectively responsible in their lack of mourning.

The naming of Professor Singh as another "sister-fucker"—in addition to the journalist, in the mob member's first use of the phrase—deploys the use of incest as a way of articulating taboos in order to quickly and virulently alienate Singh from normality and relationality to other proximate bodies. Through incest in this instant, the professor is supposed to be immediately

rendered as a degraded, lower form of human, simply due to the fact that he is Sikh. As such, the mob member's attitude connotes the level of disgust that many latched onto in the immediate aftermath and hysteria following the news Gandhi's assassination. However, as *Helium* should force readers to gather, this level of discourse was representative of the already present and clearly latent attitudes that many Indians had about Sikhs from the late 1970s up to '84. The political and discursive strategies of Gandhi's administration made it an important point to have the public view most Sikhs, especially men, as part of the larger alleged terrorist threat that Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale and his followers embodied for the state. Part of being seen as both minoritarian and potential militants was the loose tethering of terror with aberration and abnormality writ large. What this means is that due to supposedly aberrant desires or excessive, abnormal social and political demands, constructed by the state as militancy and terrorism, there was an underlying sense of those subjects as both potentially *and* always already non-normative. Taboos such as incest were pointed ways, too, of making the Sikh body one that was privately dangerous or threatening, participating in sex acts not only within one family, as in sister, but within the larger Sikh kinship network that saw the community as brothers and sisters to one another. The mob member capitalizes on this social tenet of Sikhi, and uses it to make a much larger assertion on the forever alienated and deviant status of Sikhs.

Further, the language of Sikhs being "children of snakes" points to the logic of degradation and humiliation that was so readily deployed in these moments. The ease in which these remarks are spoken points not to the anomalous relation of Sikhs with the majoritarian public, but rather to a relation that is fraught with disdain and disregard. Read in tandem with the phrase "sister-fucker," Sikhs become legible as a collective body whose reproductive capabilities must be destroyed: this annihilation is not simply for reasons related to population control, but

for the ways in which Sikhs represented mangled and malevolent children, untrustworthy and unworthy in the eyes of the state. These familial references point to how the state's work to paint Sikhs as enemies within the Indian nation-state infiltrated the language used by many in these instances of public shame, as in this scene, as well as used to embed the idea that all Sikhs were fundamentally evil and inhuman. Certainly, this language cannot be understood in a vacuum, but rather should be apprehended as part of the enduring legacy of Sikh racialization.

In another reading, Singh's use of physical and scientific language exhibits how the commencement of Professor Singh's death through incineration is an overwhelming visual and visceral experience. Raj's narration here utilizes the language of "hydrocarbons," "sense organs," "combustion," and the fields of chemistry and physics, along with the fire's physical nature and effects: "fire," "smoke," "flames," and "ashes." What is neither scientific or visual are Professor Singh's screams, which Raj now has forever lodged in his brain, as his recollection tells us. The qualities of this image of a burning Professor Singh are synesthetic, overwhelming to all senses and horrific in their both vivid and blurry recollection. The composite of these two readings—familial and scientific, taboo and torturous—render this scene as irrepressibly violent. The language of the mob member, the image and screams of the burning mentor, the smell of flesh burning, the narrator's paralyzed and scientific memory: compounded and fused in this recollection exhibit the varied forms of torture embedded in Raj's traumatic memory. To have both beared witness and survive in the event itself, its memory, and beyond, is, for the narrator, its own kind of hell.

Through these readings of this particularly striking moment in Jaspreet Singh's *Helium*, a glimpse is offered into how the genocide of 1984 was in effect, comprised of singular horrific deaths on an overwhelmingly and brutally massive scale. This particular memory, narrated by

Raj, demonstrates the ways in which Singh ably uses Raj, a Hindu narrator, to tell the novel's central story about anti-Sikh violence in '84 and anti-Sikh sentiment that lingers in the novel's present. The novel's central tension around memory and justice are questions central to most work in the wake of 1984, which can be seen in Ghosh and now Gill.

Unjust Attachments in Gauri Gill's "1984"

Following her first monograph *The Gift of Freedom,*[92] transnational feminist studies scholar Mimi Thi Nguyen theorizes how the category of what she names "humanitarian aesthetics" is currently experiencing transformation in "the politics of self-determination in an age of liberal empire."[93] Specifically, Nguyen articulates how crises are those points at which either the collective will toward being in the world can be recuperated or repudiated. In one sense, recuperation acts as a mode in which to transform those affected by violence or conditions of violence from, as Nguyen puts it, "victim to survivor, misery to resilience, suffering to empowerment."[94] Repudiation on the other hand, is about the rejection of a modern politics of self-determination, and therefore a rejection of a transformative, progressive narrative shift in the wake of crisis and violence. Rather than practice resilience, there are those that collectively repudiate participation in the values that humanitarian intervention so steadfastly attempts to instill—survival and empowerment, in addition to resilience. This rejection is the negative space of humanitarian aesthetics and politics, wherein worldviews are not shaped by the individualist logic of making the most of one's circumstances; resilience as the positive, affirming space of humanitarian aesthetics and politics, is constituted by the receiving crisis and conditions of

[92] Mimi Thi Nguyen, *The Gift of Freedom: War, Debt, and Other Refugee Passages*. Durham: Duke UP, 2012.
[93] Nguyen, "Formulating Outrage: The Language of Political Struggle." *Archipelago* podcast, recorded July 26, 2014.
[94] *Ibid.*

violence with apparent virtues of grace and hope. Nguyen's ideas further the notion that in scenes of violence, crisis, and catastrophe, the appearance of resilience by those made victim of the event is vital to the functioning of liberal empires and democratic civil society. The aesthetics of crisis and post-crisis make significant the ways in which whole peoples come to represent crisis itself and subsequent rebuilding efforts. In melding how visual representations of crisis and disaster—including photographic images, interactive graphics, witness and documentary footage: all that constitutes the category of "disaster porn"[95]—Nguyen highlights the relation between aesthetic and political fields.

Using Nguyen's theorization of an oppositional social relation between recuperation and repudiation in the aftermath of humanitarian crisis, Gauri Gill's "1984"[96] might be framed for how it approaches the aesthetics and politics of post-84 crisis. Gill's artistic notebook on the 1984 Sikh genocide is an artist's testament to the defining moment of contemporary Sikh history. Using the medium of photography, whilst creating the collective artistic endeavor of responding to photographic images, Gill and her artist and writer colleagues evoke the haunting of the events of 1984 on Sikhs and non-Sikhs alike. Many of the writings in the notebook come from members of the Sikh and Indian diasporas broadly, most of whom were in India, and Delhi specifically.

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[95] Disaster porn was a phrase that gained momentum online around 2010 as a mode in which to describe the increased technologization of global news media and the digital and televisual intake of visual images of disaster. The phrase is a particularly crude term that implies the pleasure gained from viewing such images of natural disaster, war, poverty, and other forms of human suffering. Direct and significant critiques of the phrase include: Carolyn J. Dean, "Empathy, Pornography, and Suffering," *differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* 14 (1) 2003, 88-124; and Karen Halttunen, "Humanitarianism and the Pornography of Pain in Anglo-American Culture," *The American Historical Review* 100 (2) 1995, 303-334.

[96] Gauri Gill, "1984." Released on Kafila.org in April 2013, re-released in November 2014; 22.86 x 17.78 cms; 84 pages, 42 black and white reproductions; free to download, print out, staple and distribute. http://www.gaurigill.com/books.html

Gill defines this work not around the twin moments of early June 1984's Operation Blue Star and early November's Sikh genocide, but rather focuses on November alone.[97]

In "1984," Gill has composed a collected notebook with a plethora of affectively charged images and writings that render its subjects as both victims and survivors. These are witnesses to the horrors of one of India's most bloody attacks on its own civilian population in the recent past. Gill captures the dynamics of the event as both then and as it is, here and now. The audience of this work is supposed to have some knowledge of the event: in this way, it is a work that demands intimacy and curiosity, one that cuts off the unfamiliar. In this way, it reads and views as living memory; as art, it is memory-work. For the uninitiated, it is nearly incomprehensible. There are scribbled notes that cover the front and back of the notebook, and throughout the work, the events are not ever detailed or accounted for in the mode of history-writing or official documentation. Rather, "1984" captures those familiar, intimate, and affected by the events it so evocatively renders.

There is no easy mode of inquiry with Gill's various images and written contributions insofar the messages vary from image to image, prose to prose, and poem to poem. Still, overwhelmingly, what is represented indicates the ways in which there has been little attempt to resolve the injustices wrought for Sikhs in 1984. Furthermore, there is the fact that the Indian nation-state would reject naming the various forms of crises that has plagued Sikhs throughout India and in diaspora since '84 as a humanitarian crisis. Nevertheless, there is ample evidence that demonstrates the various ways the events of '84 have had disastrous short- and long-term effects on Sikhs globally, though especially on the subcontinent. In this section, I argue that

[97] This deliberate focus is crucial in understanding how, while these two events are, at the core, connected, their disconnection here is politically charged. Part of my argument in this section is to show how Gill's focus remains on the widows of '84, and what happened to Sikhs and non-Sikhs alike during this time, and especially in Delhi.

Gill's artwork, through the merging of aesthetics with politics, articulates alternate visions for justice for Sikhs in the wake of 1984's system of permanent injustice. I further this chapter's central concern on how mourning enables political models for resistance and militancy by attending to Gill's emphasis on gendered dimensions of remaining and remembering.

Gill's work notably focuses on older women and younger men, as she rightly represents the survivors as widows and children of the Sikh genocide. Indubitably, the focus on two of Delhi's "Widow Colonies" in the districts of Trilokpuri and Tilak Vihar highlight the living conditions of the widows, their children, and any other remaining survivors.[98] The gendered dimensions of the events of '84 come into very clear focus here. The targeting of Sikh males for torment, assault, and death gives this particular event of genocide, however unofficial, nods to both genocidal conventions of "sparing" women and children, as well as pointing to the framing of this mob violence as a form of national and collective revenge on Sikh males, as Indira Gandhi's two Sikh bodyguards were responsible for her assassination.

The collective revenge was then primarily taken out on Sikh males: husbands, fathers, sons, and grandfathers. The brutality as described is unfathomable and disgusting, there being something simultaneously primal and calculated about the violence. In fact, the violence was heavily organized and calculated, as some in Gill's notebook recount. This, of course, is not to discount the violence done unto women during the genocidal attacks. Women were assaulted,

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[98] In 1984, Tilak Vihar and Trilokpuri existed only as a tiny extension of Tilak Nagar, a largely Sikh colony in West Delhi, and it was counted as firmly on the outskirts of Delhi. In the early 80s, the Delhi government had constructed close to a thousand one- and two-room flats here, intended to serve as quarters for doctors and other medical staff employed with the Delhi government. All the homes in C-Block as well as some in B-Block were allotted to women left widowed by the 1984 riots. Altogether, 944 families affected by the 1984 riots are reported to live in Tilak Vihar and Trilokpuri now. Important scholarly work on Delhi's widow colony is being done by Kamal Arora, who provides a brief synopsis of her work, "The Widow Colony in Delhi: Female Bodies as Vessels for Remembrance" in an *Archipelago* podcast recording from May 26, 2014. Veena Das's *Life and Words: Violence and the Descent into the Ordinary* (UC Press, 2006)is another important work on the violence of 1984 and the production of the Widow Colony .

primarily through sexual violence, and many women were killed.[99] However, what marks Gill's work is how women suffer through their survival and living on or beyond. In bearing witness to violence and death of both those male kin as well as the death of a community made up of Sikh brothers and sons, women are portrayed as having been given the burden of existence in the wake of mass personal and collective death. Survival for these women appears to be animated by the effects of grief and ongoing mourning; specifically, these women are *haunted* by the absence of sons, fathers, and husbands.

The collectivity of women and children in the Widow Colony areas of Tilak Vihar and Trilokpuri in Delhi are reminders of the events of '84 and the ways in which it cut off nuclear and extended families. The figure of the widow is most apparently put into view. The widow stands apart from other survivors as a kind of sole bearer of the effects of genocide.

[99] For thorough historical accounts of the violence of 1984, and the under-documented violence against women at the time, refer to: Harpreet Kaur, *The Widow Colony* (Feature Film), 2006; *Conference Report: After 1984? A workshop held at the University of California, Berkeley*, Sikh Formations, Vol. 5, No. 2, December 2009, pp. 115–141; Cynthia Keppley Mahmood, *A Sea Of Orange, Writings on the Sikhs and India*', Xlibris Corporation; Hartosh S Bal, *Sins of Commission*, Caravan magazine, Oct 1, 2014; Jarnail Singh, *I Accuse: The Anti-Sikh Violence of '84* Penguin Books India, 2009; Jaskaran Kaur, Barbara Crossette (Forward), *Twenty years of impunity, the November 1984 pogroms of Sikhs in India*, 2nd ed. Ensaaf; Veena Das, *Mirrors of Violence, Communities, Riots and Survivors in South Asia*, Oxford University Press, India; Yasmeen Arif, *The Delhi Carnage of 1984: Afterlives of Loss and Grief,* (Essay) 2007

The death of the husband is thus produced centrally, as a way of marking a primary fissure in the Sikh family. Under normal circumstances, the status of the widow could be understood as pathetic, as one who is regarded with pity. However, the Widow Colony creates a very different kind of widow, one who evokes different reactions. She is the wronged, she is the bereaved, she lives under the unjust conditions of the state—and outside of the colony, all know this.

In one example, from Gill's photograph from August 2005, a group of sixteen widows are posed for a portrait outside of one of Trilokpuri's blocks. The women are either sitting or standing in their salwaar kameez with white dupatta, their arms either on their sides or resting on their laps.[100] The foreground is of dust and rubble; the background is of a non-descript building, with openings for windows and a dark, unlit courtyard, as well with a tree enclosed within the compound by a tall iron fence. There is a sign on the building with unreadable Punjabi, adorned by a Sikh khanda—the symbol of the Sikh religion, and sandwiched by likenesses of both the founding Sikh Guru, Guru Nanak, and the tenth Sikh Guru, Guru Gobind Singh. The caption reads as follows: "The widows of Block 32, Trilokpuri, on the morning after the Nanavati Report was released."[101]

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[100] Salwaar kameez is a traditional outfit originating in South Asia and is a generic term used to describe different styles of dress. The salwar kameez can be worn by both men and women, although styles differ by gender. They are often worn by women with a dupatta, or is a long, multi-purpose scarf or shawl-like garment that is essential to many South Asian women's suits and matches the woman's garments. The dupatta is most commonly used with salwaar kameez. White dupattas are common for Sikh widows to wear, as white symbolizes loss and death, especially of the husband figure.

[101] The Justice G.T. Nanavati commission was established by the Indian Government in 2000 to investigate the 1984 Sikh genocide. The Nanavati Commission Report was a 185 page document. The probe panel had four points of reference: It was mandated to look into the sparks that led to the attacks targeting members of the Sikh community; the sequence of events; whether these crimes could have possibly been averted and whether there were any lapses on the part of the authorities; to inquire into the usefulness of the administrative measures taken to stop and to deal with the violence; and to recommend solutions to be adopted to serve justice. The commission submitted its final report in February 2005 detailing accusations and evidence against senior members of the Delhi wing of the then ruling Congress Party, the Indian National Congress, including Jagdish Tytler, later a Cabinet Minister, MP Sajjan Kumar and late minister H.K.L. Bhagat. They were accused of instigating mobs to avenge the assassination of Indira Gandhi by killing Sikhs in their constituencies. The report also held the then Lt. Governor PG Gavai for failure in his duty and late orders for controlling of the riots. The Commission also held the then Delhi police commissioner S.C. Tandon directly responsible for the riots. There was widespread protest against the report as it did not mention clearly the role of Tytler and other members of Congress Party in the 1984 anti-Sikh riots. The report led to the

The women in the image appear despondent: they are not actively upset. They appear as a collective, but each face tells a different story. The caption cuts off the quotidian nature of the image by historicizing this portrait as a frozen moment in time, fraught with meaning and weight. Gill captures the day after the possibility of justice for these women was again denied. The Nanavati Report had the potential to condemn particular agents and agitators in the violence and genocide of Sikhs in 1984. Many of these women bore witness to these agents and agitators, inciters of violence against their kin and Sikh brothers and sisters alike. The women are portrayed as a collective after what might have a historic moment, placed together to note that they were all present and alive for another day of injustice.

The image resolves for viewers nothing, much in the way that only so little resolution, reparations, and reconciliation has been achieved before and after this image. As much as the events of '84 haunt the women of the Widow Colony, it is the active diminishment of these events on the national level that truly juxtaposes the women's traumatic survival. By this I mean to say that the women of the Widow Colony comprise an active opposition, as living memories of '84, to the will of the state for collective amnesia or forgetting, if not outright collective disavowal. That is not to say that all women, as portrayed in Gill's work, are equally committed to the stringent upholding of traumatic memory. Some wish and hope to lose the imagery of those days from their minds.

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resignation of Jagdish Tytler from the Union Cabinet. A few days after the report was tabled in the Parliament, then Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh apologized to the Sikh community for Operation Blue Star and riots that followed. The report stated that Jagdish Tytler "very probably" had a hand in the riots. The report can be accessed here: http://www.mha.nic.in/hindi/sites/upload_files/mhahindi/files/pdf/Nanavati-I_eng.pdf

An example of this attempt at traumatic memory loss is Gill's image from August 2005. It portrays a woman in shadow, only lit as a silhouette from the sun poring in from a small

balcony. Beyond in the sun are an adjacent apartment complex and a steel water tower, shrouded by trees. The woman, placed in the foreground, clad in her dupatta, with her ear poking out of the left side. She is placed left of center, with a curtain on the right, as well as clothes strewn on the balcony's rail. Gill's caption reads as follows:

> "The woman in the picture was one of the witnesses to the presence of Jagdish Tytler at the scene of the killings in 1984. More than ten members of her family were killed before her eyes. A son rescued by her neighbours and the grandchildren survived hidden in a nearby house. She was among the three women from her neighbourhood who filed an affidavit naming Tytler. At the very first hearing her lawyer was shot at; the bullet was meant for her. She withdrew the case. Today, age has erased memories, or perhaps, she prefers to forget. She says she cannot even recall who Tytler is, 'How do I know who the killers were, the violence left me numb.'"

The individual refusal, the enunciated disavowal in this moment is at once meant to invoke the imperative of knowing who is guilty, while making clear that to know, is to suffer. The sentiments she expresses reflect the level of numbness that is both voluntary and involuntary. The numbness is voluntary in that her previous knowledge and ability to testify against Tytler proves to only serve as an assurance of her targeting for death; and its is involuntary

in that this unnamed woman unconsciously submits to the state imperative to forget the massive violence and horror that she witnessed in ’84. To forget is to ensure survival, whereas to remember carries the potential harm of accounting, of acknowledgement, of an ethical will toward justice. Rather than let her memory serve her correctly, she distances herself from her memory as to not simply put herself out of harms way, but to surrender to the overwhelming and overpowering will of the state. Preferring to forget, as Gill puts it, is a means of dulling memories that will never be legitimated in the eyes of the state. The knowledge of her memories’ illegitimacy on the national level evokes a pained resistance to the kind of work that Gill is doing in “1984”—the memory-work, the labor of remembrance in this history of violence.

Meenal Baghel, editor of *The Mumbai Mirror*, reflects on this image in Gill’s notebook. She notes in the image itself, “She, this woman of no name, stands at the doorway between light and dark…She is looking not outside but inside, into dark deep recesses: a silhouette and no more.” Acutely, Baghel captures how Gill’s silhouetted female figure’s looking inside, is an inward glance. In the silhouette, the facing toward the viewer is unnecessary and provokes an audible *why*? Later Baghel notes on the woman’s tilt of her head, in two separated sentences: “There is resignation in the tilt of her head, but also the merest hint of something else…The merest hint of contempt in the tilt of the head and the half raised shoulder belies her amnesia.” In evoking Gill’s caption and the woman’s tilt of her head, Baghel actively recognizes how the woman bluffs her purported forgetting. Even in this minor moment of Gill inviting the woman to name the agents of the ’84 violence, the woman instead chooses to exhibit a strategic indifference: she is not indifferent in an authentic way, but rather, exhibits indifference as a maneuver to dismiss, and perhaps delay, the inevitable follow-up questions.

Aware that Gill's work invites her to share and remember against the will of the state's urging to forget, she distances herself from her memories in three modes: 1) as a form of contempt, in Baghel's words; 2) as a form of weariness; and 3) as a form of self-preservation. Note that these three aspects are not mutually exclusive. Firstly, in contempt, the audience ascertains the ways in which the role of the witness, especially the female witness, is recognized as nuisance. She places herself at the center, as victim-witness, one who remembers when urged to forget; she is viewed with overwhelming contempt by those who hear her narrative accounts of things past as a hindrance on the present and future of the state. In turn, she wills herself to forget and move on, superficially. The surface of this forgetting is bubbling underneath with the absolute contempt for the despicable and unfathomable injustice that occurred, occurs, and will occur to her and her people.

Secondly, in weariness, the audience reads the woman's forgetting as world-weariness, as a fatigue in the face of mass injustice. She is justifiably exhausted from how the state drains her and others like her, and the state in-turn relies on time-consumption to age and wear down even the most steadfast seekers of truth, justice, and reconciliation. Weariness is not weakness, rather it articulates the un-breaking of will, exhaustion that may pass; it is not yet rupture. Thirdly, in self-preservation, the audience understands that to seek justice often means to put oneself in harm's way. This is especially true for the women seeking justice and redress in the wake of the events of '84. Thus, forgetting serves the powerful purpose of survival. By ignorance and disavowal, one claims no stakes in battles large or small. The method of forgetting, or feigning ignorance as it may be, is inevitably fraught with how one justifies the will to forget within oneself.

Ultimately, these three modes underscore that the will of memory persists. To distance oneself from the memory or memories is not true forgetting. Proving to its audience that even these examples of so-called forgetting, Gill's "1984" is the work and revelation of memory. The revelatory aspect of the work reaches farther into the recesses of the minds of survivors; they elicit fraught responses, as the triggering of memories in relation to '84 produces frequently painful and strained images. However, Gill's work should not be noted for the way it forces these survivors and witnesses to reckon with '84. Instead, the audience might gather Gill's work reveals something absolutely otherwise: that these survivors and witnesses confront and deal with these moments of past trauma regularly, daily. As much historical recuperation as "1984" provides, it is a story of haunting.

Invariably, the audience receives Gill's account of how the ghosts of '84 are regular visitors to the women and children of the Widow Colony. This narrative is at the heart of the work. In many ways, the centrality of this narrative rightly places the gendered dimensions of the Sikh genocide in clear perspective. Coping with the tethering of Sikhi (or Sikh religiosity) to masculinity and visible devout identity (donning of turban and beard), Gill skillfully presents how the loss of Sikh men in the events of '84 , and the widows left in their wake, serves as a longer arc of Sikh minoritarian identity. By placing members of Delhi's Widow Colony in sharp focus, "1984" is especially revelatory for its comment on the gendered dimensions of this genocide.

In an account by Hartosh Bal, political editor of the magazine *The Caravan*, he recounts how the 2005 Nanavati Commission report characterized the Kishori Lal, a prime inciter of violence in November '84:

> "We may notice that the acts attributed to the mob of which the appellant was a member at the relevant time cannot be stated to be a result of any organized systematic activity

> leading to genocide. Perhaps, we can visualize that to the extent there was unlawful assembly and to the extent that the mob wanted to teach stern lesson to the Sikhs there was some organization; *but in that design that they did not consider that women and children should not be annihilated which is a redeeming feature*." (italics my own)

This passage from the Nanavati Commission Report emphasizes the ways in which the logics of war and genocide unfolded in the events of '84. The contestation of the courts to ever state outright that the days of organized, vengeful, mass Sikh death constituted or constitutes genocide would implicate state officials and subject the Indian government to international scrutiny and to the judicial conventions of the United Nations. Rather, only minor concessions are made. The Nanavati Commission refuses to read this history of as the history of war or genocide. The very logic is that of the nation at war with its citizens, the civil war of Hindu majoritarian violence against Sikh minoritarian bodies.

Furthermore, Bal rightly finds richness in Nanavati's language here, for it grasps how the sparing of women and children is the pivotal aspect for the events of '84 to not be ruled genocide. The primary harm and annihilation of Sikh men in these days can be read in two ways. In one way, the targeting of Sikh men for death can be read as an act of war. War becomes a frame in which to better understand the purported exclusion of women and children, but it also functions a mode in which to form a new rubric for the specific violence. Of course, this is not a formal war, as it is not war of equals, prepared and armed to battle one another. This form of war is one wherein members of the national majority become agents of the state, soldiers and warriors in the name of the assassinated Prime Minister. The call to avenge Gandhi's death is then a call to arms, a call to war. Sikh men thus represented enemies of the state, slated for annihilation by the state. This form of state sanctioned violence militarized majoritarian male citizens, armed however poorly but armed nonetheless. Women and children were primarily excluded because they were not representations of those responsible for Gandhi's death, as well as due to that Sikh men were

read as terrorist threats before and after Operation Blue Star in June. But even still, women and children are supposedly and predominantly spared by various definitions of war.

In another way, the targeting of Sikh men for death can be read as a form of racial genocide. This form of genocide is also coded as masculine and, as I continue to draw forth, Sikh masculinity was and is indexed by the Indian nation-state as a primary enemy of the state, forever a threat to the cohesion of a Hindu majoritarian state. In thinking through genocide as racial and gendered, it is beneficial to draw out some key distinctions.

By its very nature, genocide is about the killing of a specific kind of people, usually an ethnic group or nation. At its very root, genos from the Greek translates to race, and cide from the Latin translates to an act of killing. Thus, at its very core, genocide is racial death.[102] The modern interpretation and legal codes of genocide have made the official definitions and parameters of the term quite fraught. A major focus of the constitution of genocide is the deliberate nature and structure of killing. This factor is especially important in the logic of the Indian nation-state's refusal to deem the events of 1984 genocide. Time and again, Gill's notebook includes various contributors citing "mob violence" as the official terminology; however, just as often, these contributors are citing this term in order to undermine its significance, demonstrating exactly how the killing of Sikhs was targeted and organized. In an important example, Indian journalist, novelist, and literary critic, Nilanjana Roy provides in her entry "Voter's lists, Trilokpuri," a critical examination of the official, national narrative of '84. She writes:

[102] Although the concept of "genocide" is bound up in juridical, criminal justice, and supra-nationalist discourses it is a useful analytic through which to understand the conditions under which racialized and gendered communities survive and organize throughout the world. Critical ethnic studies scholar Dylan Rodriguez argues that genocide is not a discrete moment of the past, but part and parcel of the "historical and racial present tense." This argument employs an expansive definition of genocide that does not fetishize body counts but rather attends to the normalization of the social, cultural, and biological death and confinement of racialized and gendered communities.

> "You can call them up on the internet today: names laid out in a clean innocuous grid…In 1984, someone took the lists and had them photocopied…and waited while the machine whirred, and this person demanded unsmudged copies, because the work was of some importance. Ink was used, and then there would be a need for chalk, to mark 'S' on the houses of Sikhs.
>
> If you lived through 1984, you cannot forget…S for Sikh and the other S in invisible ink for Safe. Overnight, they had made for us a new alphabet, borrowing the old one from Partition, from Krysallnacht, from a thousand other pogroms.
>
> *They had time to create their spontaneous massacre.* Time to buy chalk, to cyclostyle voter's lists, to organize the necessary supplies. Block 32 alone took massive concrete pipes, cleavers, scythes, kitchen knives, scissors, lathis, machetes, kerosene.
>
> *The end product of all this organization, this careful, unspontaneous massacre, was bodies and blood* and then, decades of amnesia and an unspooling list of things left undone." (emphasis mine)

Roy rightly points out how organization was key to identifying Sikh households. In using voter lists, precisely the kind of official documentation that categorizes and easily records the demography of its locale, there exists a trail pointing to the high level of state involvement in the killing of Sikhs. As such, this is state-sanctioned violence, not the narrative of random and sporadic mob violence. To sift through copies of voter lists, to mark households with an "S": these are not the markings of spontaneous and public spectacles of violence and death. Rather, we have the systematic and organized entrance into the domestic space of Sikh homes and systematic and organized murder of Sikh men. Through Roy's language, there is a distinct emphasis on how this organization mirrors other historic massacres, and how time and effort were spent to target and annihilate these supposed new enemies. Where she states, "They had time to create their spontaneous massacre," Roy swiftly and critically undermines the notion of "spontaneous massacre" while implicating the state and its civilian agents in the mass death of Sikhs.

Furthermore, in the ending paragraph, Roy underscores in plain terms that this massacre—composed of time, effort and resources—left bodily remains and "decades of amnesia." In this notation there is a clear contempt for how little has been done to address these events. Roy articulates, through reiteration, how collective, national amnesia has been the default mode for the Indian nation-state. The disavowal of the events of '84 marks the very terrain of memory for those who witnessed and survived. Roy, like so many others in and out of Gill's notebook, is preserving the memory of Sikh genocide and anti-Sikh violence en masse. In many ways, the notes of Gill's work are the filling in and fleshing out of a narrative that has been refused recognition on a collective scale. Roy's notes might be then be understood as a form of historical retrieval that mirrors witnesses and survivors, instead of the official national narratives including the Nanavati Commission Report.

The tone in Roy's entry is specifically antagonistic. She uses irony and is righteously critical of the government and national narrative of the events of '84. The antagonism that Roy presents plays a major role in how the audience must confront the disavowal of Sikh genocide. Specifically, in focusing on the women, children, and descendants of the Widow Colony—the survivors, those who have lived beyond—their lives, stories, accounts, and testimonies exist as a counterpoint to the making of an absent narrative, a history of disavowal, "collective amnesia" as Roy puts it. As such, we must understand Gill's work as the work of mourning, for it operates as such in a few ways: as an artistic piece, as historical memory, and as part of process of collective grief. In every way, the work of mourning is *work*; it is a labor borne of pain, remembrance, rage, and the imperative for preservation.

The mourning that I speak of is one that exists in the wake of unjust death. These deaths are unjust for the ways in which they occur and the ways in which they go under- or

unrecognized by the state. Perhaps apparent, those targeted in the event of unjust death are those who are considered members of disposable populations, usually minority communities and populations denied basic rights and legitimacy in the eyes of the nation-state.[103] As such, this form of mourning in the wake of unjust death works to enable and enact justice, on the terms of mourners. It is with this assemblage of unjust death and the state's disavowal of said death that the work of mourning emerges; in its emergence, mourning becomes something outside of the parameters of individualized grief as it transforms into something communal, collective, and intentional. In that intentionality, mourning serves a larger function of the necessary dwelling on death and its attendant affective strategies of pain, anger, sorrow, and indignation.

To live within the tension of having to dwell on the dead, forces true and conscious reckoning with the forces and contingencies that made such death possible. In many ways, dwelling on death that can be individual or on group or collective scale—as in genocide—becomes a point of rupture for those that understand the death or deaths as circumstantial and those that see it as part of a large, ongoing, systemic problem—reading and understanding these bodily losses as unjust death, as slow genocide. For the latter, death is real and symbolic, at once personal and representative; the grief in the wake of unjust death is an affective strategy to work against the mass and institutional injustice that has enabled and perpetuated these attempts at annihilation.

Part of the argument that I articulate in response to Gill's work is that inherent to the work of mourning is the condition of antagonism. That is to say that mourning exists as a form of

[103] As a social and political category, disposability is best elucidated by feminist political theorist Neferti Tadiar in her essay "Life Times of Disposability within Global Neoliberalism" (Social Text, 2013). In it, she characterizes disposability within biopolitical terms: "the expended, surplused populations figured as forms of bare life, at-risk populations, warehoused, disposable people, urban excess (planet of the slums), out of which is to be gleaned new political subjects and potentials for resistance already convertible to the ruling political currencies of the day" (24).

antagonism to various political, social, and cultural forms and agents. Specifically, in the case of Gill's "1984," the audience is presented with a compendium of Sikh suffering in the wake of the events of 1984, when, in contradistinction, the Indian nation-state perpetuates and prefers collective amnesia and disavowal. Disavowal then operates in opposition to mourning. In this dyad, mourning is work or labor, disavowal is not work nor labor, but something else; disavowal is not the opposite of work, but the voluntary and welcome ease of forgetting. In disavowal, there can be no mourning or care for the other, and more often than not, disavowal often reveals the contempt for the other. Disavowal is the state response to minoritarian mourning, demonstrating the disdain for the dwelling on unjust death and its accompanying calls for justice.

Gill's "1984" therefore represents the work of not just the artist and the notebook's contributors alone, but stands against statist attempts at disavowal and disinterest. It works as a way to imagine narrative construction outside of state reports and official documentation. In presenting new forms of articulation, Gill ably compiles a series of images that produce modes of witnessing heretofore unavailable to those previously and newly engaged in remembering the lost histories of '84. The images are particularly visionary in that they shed insight and elicit affective response without ever revealing an excess of information or lengthy testimony from its subjects. In their stead, many of the written contributions provide varied forms of witnessing and narrative accounts that are often wayward or distant in their relation to survivors of '84. The distance might also be understood in terms of how Gill forces many of the writers to directly respond to her images, lending a speculative quality to many of the written pieces. In many ways, the very fact of its artistic sensibility makes it illegitimate or unrecognizable to official historical records; never mind the fact that official historical records more often than not represent the state and its interests. Its very form, or formlessness, arrives as an exact form of narrative antagonism

to official historical records.[104] That is not to say that it does not produce or affect the historical narrative of ’84, as it is very much the opposite: Gill’s work comprises the very kind of minoritarian cultural production that is deeply invested in historical memory and politically-engaged, future-oriented calls for justice. It is subversive for its synesthetic quality as an artist’s notebook: it is readily available for wide, mass consumption in its digital composition. In choosing to make this work available digitally, Gill recognizes the need for the already established Sikh diasporic commons to consume and engage with the multi-narrative and visual components of her work. “1984” exists as a world unto itself, whilst engaged in a much longer, larger historical narrative arc. The audience viscerally feels the antagonism that the notebook presupposes. As it exists digitally, this antagonism presents to the Sikh diasporic commons a form of virtual solidarity. The future orientation of Sikh calls for justice in the wake of ’84 and its ongoing production of Sikh political prisoners makes digital availability of “1984” all the more crucial. It participates in the network culture of contemporary Sikh diaspora insofar as it positions itself as part of, and unique from, other forms of minoritarian cultural production that engage and reckon with the events of ’84.

Highlighting the lingering injustice that has especially affected women and descendants of those killed, Gill’s “1984” functions as memory work, thirty years on. Overwhelmingly, this work might be then framed in terms of a repudiation of the terms of self-determination that Nguyen has characterized as one option in the wake of disaster. Gill’s work suggests that by simply living beyond the dead and surviving the crisis, these are not acts of resilience, nor are they attempting acts of affirmation to provide unbridled hope in the wake of their personal tragedy. Notably, many women dwell in this space of mourning and remembrance. The

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[104] Formlessness, here, is meant to connote the ways in which Gill purposely subverts both artistic, narrative, testimonial genre-based tropes. There are various expectations of what work dealing with historical trauma and violence should be or appear as, as it is widely considered well-tread in historico-cultural terrains.

predominant disinterest in cultivating and molding narratives that endeavor to create portraits of women and children that are resilient—that is, living life, preferably working, accepting and moving on from the traumatic event—is clear in Gill's work. Neither the images nor the language of the notebook speak to a buoyant spirit that emerges after decades of injustice. Rather, what remains, and both haunts and animates "1984," is what queer poet Jackie Wang names "a political fidelity to wounds."[105] Wang, in describing the work of Black literary and cultural studies scholar Saidiya Hartman, employs this phrase a mode in which to express debt and gratitude to Hartman's allegiance to centering trauma in her studies of racial enslavement.[106] This phrasing is particularly useful in the study of Gill's work. In identifying the sometimes latent and sometimes manifest disinterest or contempt for resilience in these images, their captions, and the various writings, the audience is held captive by the clear meeting of aesthetics with politics here.

In Wang's phrasing, fidelity connotes calls for loyalty and trust, with more stringent requests for necessary affiliation and obedience. Wounds suggest the sites or sources of pain and trauma, ones that live forever on the body, individual and collective, and are incapable of erasure. Therefore, "a political fidelity to wounds" might then suggest at once loyalty and trust in wounds—or the source of pain and trauma—and an affiliation and submission to said wounds. Such an interpretation might be read as dogma, as an ideological formation—and it may well be; it is certainly a political formation. However, this reading of this phrase is meant to suggest the modes in which wounds can be generative and useful for those unwilling to prescribe to the neoliberal ideologies of resilience, survival, and empowerment that Nguyen critiques. In their

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[105] See "T Clutch Fleischmann and Jackie Wang on queer essays" in *Essay Daily*, Interview, 19 January 2015.
[106] See Saidiya Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth Century America* (Oxford UP, 1997); and, *Lose Your Mother: A Journey Along the Atlantic Slave Route* (Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 2008).

rejection of resilience and in their allegiance and obedience to the wound, they carve out a political gesture that forms a new register of resistance. Politics emerging from the wound provides a model of politics that dwells in the space of pain and grief as a way to not only remember, but to enliven commitment to the historical processes of injustice that made such pain and grief possible. Dwelling on or lingering in the space of the wound is a way to inhabit and acknowledge the depth of the injury, the grievousness and severity of pain, and the breadth of loss.

By inhabiting and acknowledging the injury, a creative and antagonistic politics must emerge, though the force of the rhetoric of resilience is ever-present. The urge to present those who have witnessed mass violence and death as survivors—resilient only in their simple act of living on—is deeply embedded in neoliberal logic that perpetuates the illusion of self-determination under regimes of state-sanctioned violence.[107] Under neoliberalism, resilience appears as a mode of representation that projects the victim, survivor, or witness, as one who has overcome the "event" of violence or death, and has completed the process of mourning. In this overcoming and completion, the event is over as is the process of getting over said event. This now commonplace depiction is one that evidences how self-determination has come to overrule the event as the primary form of narrative in the wake of events of unjust violence and death. By having those affected by the events of violence and death move on through narratives of resilience and recovery, said individuals or communities can be read as having transcended the event. Beyond that, these same people can be read as possessing the individual will to resume life, if not life as it was prior to the event. The emphasis then remains on having the will to transcend the anguish, sorrow, and grief of the event, in order to, I argue, rid the state of its participation and attachment to the event. Thus, in this scheme, the state sanctions violence and

[107] Nguyen, "Formulating Outrage" (see footnote 2)

death on its members of excess or disposable populations—those rendered minority and threatening—and wills those who survive to transcend the very pain and grief that the state inflicted. Beyond this, the state additionally desires that the unjust targeting and murder of these populations go un- or under-recognized as a cause for social or political concern. This process demonstrates how easily and exacting collective disavowal or amnesia occurs, as it undermines the event and those affected at each stage of suffering.

Alternatively, living in the space of unjust violence and death, the dwelling on grief, enables an antagonism to the collective disavowal or amnesia the state not only enables but forcibly impresses upon its citizens. In Nguyen's phrasing, this antagonism might be interpreted as a repudiation of being in the world; in Wang's phrasing, this antagonism might be interpreted as a "political fidelity to wounds." This grammar is distinct but still related: in Nguyen's formulation, the rejection of the world is the rejection of the status quo, the abandonment of the world as is, in all of its flawed, violent, and uncaring ways; in Wang's formulation, there exists the ideological imperative to keep the historical memory of the wound alive as a means of creating an alternative politics and, alongside that, new ways of being in the world with others. Together, in the negative space of rejection and the alternative space of political possibility, there exists a modality that desires little to no affirmation of life in the world as it exists. For Wang's formulation in particular, there exists a bodily and collective attachment to the wound that can only affirm life in the abstract: wounds may fester or heal, but they define one as living in the present whilst honoring the past. Rather, what remains is a form of life that honors and remains loyal to the wound and seeks justice in the wake of, and in spite of, world-shaping violence.[108]

[108] Both Nguyen's and Wang's formulations, though particularly Wang's, are antithetical to early critiques of identity politics. Specifically, these theorizations are at best disinterested if not antagonistic to Wendy Brown's critique of "wounded attachments" as a modality in which to politicize aggrieved minority communities and populations that she theorizes in 1995's *States of Injury* (Princeton UP).

For those calling for justice in the wake of '84, the abstract notion of justice itself is made quite concrete. What the Nanavati Commission Report overwhelmingly demonstrates is how justice is constituted by using the accounts of Sikhs who witnessed the horrific violence of '84, and holding those perpetrators accountable for both their inciting of violence and their violent acts. Justice appears to ask only for the very little it cannot yet, and may never, attain: blatant and ongoing injustice. The demand for more appears impossible: there is no revolutionary justice possible, as it exists outside of any such enabling modality. Without such possibility comes the narrowing of a political horizon, and the aggrieved possession of wounds becomes a necessary and powerful tool. To counteract the degradation of blatant and ongoing injustice, a steadfast "political fidelity to wounds" imagines and creates an urgent sense of collectivity for those whose political horizon remains set on revolutionary justice. In many ways, the contributions of Gill's notebook are not simply individual modes of remembrance; in their collation, they accumulate to something much grander. In "1984," there exists uneven affective modes of agitation; ambivalence; hope and hopelessness; anger and rage; despair and despondency; in addition to utter disbelief. The possibilities that such affective range enables ensure a larger, even global sense of Sikh collectivity.

Conclusion

I want to close by attempting to bring together these threads, from Ghosh, Singh, and Gill, to speak to the ways in which each of these personal, fictional, and artistic works are able to both account and imagine the horrors of 1984. In rendering Sikhs as victims and survivors, militant and mournful, each of these works help codify the ways in which justice, in many ways, was an impossibility for Sikhs. Sikh sovereignty appears as the potential energy that binds Sikhs

globally, and Gill's work in particular evokes this particular dream through the continued struggles for justice and forms of collective redemption. All of these works present novel forms of accounting for traumatic memory and the work of mourning that are politically engaged and rife with tensions of seeing and doing, witnessing and acting, accounting and memorializing. In their individual and collective modes, these works provoke serious questions about what works of art and cultural production are to do with the horrors of genocide and the social and political collapse of a nation and its people against its minoritarian contingents. Ghosh is most overt about these questions, but Singh and Gill both provide unique concerns about how to represent and render meaningful the fraught events of 1984 in the ways they represent the violence thirty years on. Through their works, the memory of 1984 lives on and beyond the parameters of the Indian nation-state, imagining an alternative narrative outside of state-based amnesia and disavowal.

Conclusion: On Militant Globality:

Unsettling Liberal Promises

By way of conclusion, I critique liberalism's promises of inclusion and recognition primarily, nodding to the ways in which post-9/11 Sikh diasporic politics have pivoted from concerns over responding to cases of racial violence against Sikh bodies—heavily affected by rampant and ongoing Islamophobia—to more aspirational and ambitious aims for Sikhs, including political legibility through representation in American and Canadian governing bodies; participation in national security apparatuses as experts on terror and religious extremism; as well as contemporary cases for long term accommodation for turbaned and bearded Sikhs in the American military.

The stakes of such an undertaking are defined by what I believe are political imperatives that actively work against and see beyond liberalism's foundational promises of progress, the goodness of mankind, the autonomy of the individual, and the protection of civil and political liberties. I instead want to emphasize and foreground the violence of liberalism, as it has been established and historically predicated on the world systems of settler-colonialism, racial enslavement, colonial occupation and imperial predation. Perhaps evident, this argument is greatly indebted to the groundbreaking work of Lisa Lowe's 2015 monograph *The Intimacies of Four Continents* for the ways it has pushed me to see the vast scope of my project's seemingly minor subject of the Sikh.[109] In taking on this project, I read Sikh militancy as specter and symbol, as fantasy and reality, as a means of thinking and imagining new political possibilities for Sikhs, with and alongside other minor bodies as agents of change, resistance, and revolution.

Liberal Promise 1. Inclusion

[109] Lowe, Lisa. *The Intimacies of Four Continents*. Durham: Duke UP, 2015.

Uday Singh Mehta's significant 1999 tome *Liberalism and Empire* laid important groundwork for critiques of liberalism by Dipesh Chakrabarty and Lisa Lowe, as well as recent critiques of liberalism and neoliberalism by Chandan Reddy and Jodi Melamed. Mehta's work on nineteenth century British liberal thought used British writings on colonial India to work through racialized colonial formations of "opacity, mystery, and unfathomable inscrutability" to delineate lines of inclusion into, and exclusion from, universal humanity. Mehta argues:

> Liberalism's alleged universality is impugned in its descriptive proximity to ideas that claimed no such universality…The exclusionary effect of inscrutability is achieved by a crude descriptive fiat in refusing to engage in the particulars of India. [The next strategy] presumes on the necessity of a complex set of individual and social indexes as the prerequisite of political inclusion. [This presumption] implicitly raises the ante and thereby the conditions of inclusion. I shall refer to this as the strategy of civilizational infantilism. Despite what might be considered the contradictory emphases of exclusion through inscrutability and exclusion through presumed infantilism, they are often…deployed in tandem.[110]

Mehta's definition of liberalism's promise of universal humanity is immediately squandered in the colonial project's deliberate distancing of native societies as inscrutable and infantile. However, in defining both liberalism and modernity through the twin global projects of colonialism and empire, the impossibility of inclusion is revealed to be an inherent feature to liberal modernity's promise of universal humanity. What we have then is the world shaping violence of colonialism as the primary modality in which to define ideal modern subjects in the colonizer and irrational premodern subjects in the colonized. This difference is crucial insofar as

[110] Mehta, Uday Singh. *Liberalism and Empire: A Study in Nineteenth century British Liberal Thought.* Chicago: U Chicago Press, 1999, pp. 69-70.

it delineates those set for inclusion into liberal modernity, and those perpetually outside of the parameters of this same inclusion. Mehta's critique of liberalism as such, reflects the ways in which Western projects of imperial and colonial domination set out to make native societies inferior through the simultaneity of being cast as both incomprehensible and immature: in one sense, the native's juvenile nature is purportedly an indication of social and political incapacity; in another sense, the native's unknowable nature can be rendered as one strategy to define not their unfitness for political inclusion, but rather, their enduring premodern nature, and thus, their impossible inclusion and permanent exclusion.

However, in a recent companion piece to her aforementioned monograph *The Intimacies of Four Continents*, Lisa Lowe reiterates her argument on modern liberalism's definition of humanity as hinging on the twinned violence of exclusion and inclusion. In "History Hesitant," Lowe argues:

"While violence characterizes exclusion from the universality of the human, it also accompanies inclusion or assimilation into it. Such violence leaves a trace, which returns and unsettles the apparent closure of the liberal politics, society, and culture that establishes the universal."[111] She is more expansive of this particular argument in her first chapter of *Intimacies*, where she asserts:

> *Race* as a mark of colonial difference is an enduring remainder of the processes through which the human is universalized and freed by liberal forms, while the peoples who created the conditions of possibility for that freedom are assimilated or forgotten. The genealogy of modern liberalism is thus also a genealogy of modern race; racial differences and distinctions designate the boundaries of the human and endure as remainders attesting to the violence of universality.[112]

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[111] Lowe, Lisa. "History Hesitant." *Social Text*, 125, 33(4). December 2015, pp. 91.
[112] Lowe, Lisa. *The Intimacies of Four Continents*. Durham: Duke UP, 2015, pp. 6-7.

I dwell on this thesis as crucial to theorizing the ways in which universal humanity relies on a liberal approach, and how in turn such an approach is defined by race as a measure of colonial difference. What this does in rewriting Mehta's argument on the illiberal subject is to place primacy on race as colonialism's enduring legacy. Certainly, Lowe is further concerned not with the technologies of exclusion alone, but with the ways inclusion can be, and is often, a violent process. She extends this by alluding to the ways that such violence leaves a trace, one that gets incorporated and reused as an unsettling force within liberalism. That is to say that the violence of inclusion—through the processes of assimilation, acculturation, integration, and the neoliberal discourses of multiculturalism and diversity—are part of the very fabric of liberalism itself. Still, there is the question of liberalism's enclosure, that through the violence of inclusion, Lowe argues can never be settled or exist at a particular limit. The violence of inclusion itself defines liberal politics, society, and culture. Race as liberalism's primary feature helps to delineate how difference as defined in the colonial relation, exposes the limits of the human. Race and liberalism, thus, become counterparts in their enduring imbrication from the processes of racial enslavement, settler-colonialism, and global colonial occupation. Therefore, the process of inclusion, as mode of entering into a liberal social contract, attests to the centrality of race as not only an ontological necessity in defining difference, but as a lived reality that endures and persists in unsettling racial subjects as always already liberalism's internal excess.

The tethering of race and liberalism in Lowe's formulation on the twin violence of exclusion and inclusion exemplifies how for racialized bodies—black, brown, and otherwise—there exists no proper choice in exclusion or inclusion, as the violence exists for both those we might consider excluded from the liberal state—e.g. First Nations people in the American and Canadian settler states—as well as for those we might consider included into the liberal state—

e.g. upwardly mobile, legible, productive, and able-bodied minority subjects. In focusing on the process of inclusion primarily, I am concerned with the ways in which the latter group—through their upwardly mobile, legible, productive, able-bodied minority subjectivity—was and continues to enable a disavowal of the very violence of inclusion. For many, political inclusion was and continues to be a struggle, violent in slight and significant ways. That becomes precisely why it is crucial to examine how the violence of inclusion has been unacknowledged at best, and disavowed at worst. In other words, for many, inclusion is liberalism's limit: to reach a certain level of embrace into the liberal polity is to have successfully achieved political progress. While Lowe's formulation's importance cannot be denied, I argue that on some level, we should already know this: that the violence of inclusion is real and takes myriad shapes and forms. For one, the question of new or renewed struggles for inclusion, as well as recognition and accommodation, should be questioned as a basic and fundamental concession into liberal and neoliberal projects that were and are predicated on forms of settler colonialism, war, enslavement, indentured labor, racial terror, genocide, sexual violence, border control and migrant detention, permanent debt, and dispossession.

For example, contemporary struggles for inclusion and recognition have been particularly successful for members of LGBTQ populations, most recently through the passing of legislation supporting marriage equality, as well as more recent struggles for rights for transgender peoples. Certainly, as Chandan Reddy argues, marriage equality must be critically interrogated and troubled insofar as it, on the one hand, forecloses other forms of queer intimacies, especially for queers of color, and on the other hand, decries the ongoing and revolutionary work of black struggle:

> The very rubrics and terms through which queer intimacies now gain legal and cultural recognition as evidence of and possessing a fundamental right of marriage emerge from and reproduce…earlier racial liberal orders and forms of state, ones that relied heavily on juridical institutions and their modes of reasoning. Against an understanding of a break from white supremacy, racial liberalism and the racial liberal state have been key to the continuation of the racially asymmetrical social relations, modes of accumulation, and distribution of history and meaning of the "previous" white supremacist epoch it sublates (Melamed 2011). The rubrics, logic, and terms we inherit from that era, now to legally affirm and make juridically legible queer intimacies, are at once also the epistemic mechanisms that persistently devalue and look suspiciously on black social struggles and autonomous cultural formations and worlds as a fulcrum for our historical present.[113]

I pivot to Reddy's argument here to note the ways contemporary civil rights struggles, be it for marriage equality or otherwise, often prolong, complicate, and decry struggles by those looking outside of juridical and state-sanctioned methods toward the possibilities for freedom and more livable worlds. In many ways, the normative orders reproduced by marriage equality have demonstrated how the liberal tenets of progress and the autonomous individual deliberately cordon off rights for those choosing to live and struggle otherwise. For those who read marriage equality as the ultimate form of progress for LGBTQ populations, embrace into the institution of marriage as a symbol of how much has been achieved for LGBTQ peoples, this liberal reading

[113] Reddy, Chandan. "Race and the Critique of Marriage." *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 115 (2). 2016, 424-430.

fails to recognize and acknowledge the pursuit of marriage equality for the homonormative and homonationalist project that it is.[114]

Moreover, the example of the struggle for marriage equality has arrived alongside civil rights organizing by Sikhs and Muslims in the last decade and a half. Many major victories for Sikhs and Muslims have come in the forms of labor by civil rights organizations responding to the peril, violence, and terror facing these racialized and religious subjects. Efforts by these organizations has increasingly shifted from the primacy of responding or preventing injury and death, to efforts for inclusion and recognition—forms of political legibility that are often coded through discursive strategies of awareness, education, representation, accommodation, and so forth. In a sense, these organizations have used this moment to build on the momentum of increased legibility to push for further forms of neoliberal multiculturalist embrace, arriving most apparently in the participation of Sikh and Muslim American community members and political figures in the military, border control, national security, and counterterrorism efforts. This new reality need not underscore liberal progress where grave injury continues to follow Sikh and Muslim bodies in North America, but rather should evidence to us the ways in which the liberal promises of inclusion and recognition appear as mere pawns in neoliberalism's more odious promises of interpellation into the apparatuses of the state itself—in this case, through the specific imperial technologies of national security and counterterrorism.

Liberal Promise 2: Recogniton

Using Frantz Fanon's theorizing of colonized resentment, Glen Coulthard deftly outlines how indigenous peoples can use affective maneuvers of anger and resentment toward settler

[114] For the earliest conception and definition of homonormativity, see Duggan, Lisa. *The Twilight of Equality: Neoliberalism, Cultural Politics, and the Attack on Democracy*. New York: Beacon Press, 2003. For the earliest conception and definition of homonationalism, see Puar, Jasbir. *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times*. Durham: Duke UP, 2007.

colonialism as a means of enabling anti- and de-colonial subjectivities in his 2014 book *Red Skin White Masks*.[115] In centering resentment, Coulthard provides an important mode of critique that underscores how colonized peoples can provide self-affirmation as a means of countering the incapacities brought on by contemporary settler statist attempts at both a politics of reconciliation and recognition. I find this model generative to think through the affective modality of resentment to center the Sikh diasporic body in the North American settler colonial present. As part of a larger South Asian diaspora, I situate the Sikh body as a minoritarian figure that is deeply entangled in both the post-9/11 racial realities of brown embodiment and in its grievances against the Indian nation-state. On the one hand, the Sikh body is at once recognizable as a common victim of racial violence after 9/11; on the other hand, the Sikh body desires sovereignty and operates against, and often with a virulent hate toward the homeland. This latter reality positions the Sikh diaspora in a peculiar position within the South Asian diaspora, as well as highlights how historical injuries have bred complex relations between Sikhs, India, and North America. In its inability to transcend the past, the Sikh body arrives as a challenge to a politics of recognition.

I focus on Coulthard's use of resentment as a strategic reframing of both the politics of recognition and reconciliation in the Sikh diasporic context. Coulthard's work puts anti-colonial philosopher Frantz Fanon's theorizing around colonized subjectivity in conversation with Indigenous struggles in settler-colonial states, specifically Canada. Given the specificity of the context of the Canadian settler-colonial state, working through Fanon's ideas provides Coulthard an incredibly rich terrain on which to develop particular concepts as resonant and generative for Indigenous peoples. In taking this particular intellectual risk, Coulthard deftly weaves Fanon, as

[115] Coulthard, Glen. *Red Skin White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition*. U of Minnesota Press: Minneapolis, 2014.

well as Marx and many others, into the affective and political strategies used by First Nations communities. The risk in connecting the writings of Fanon and Marx, both of whom are speaking to colonial contexts including Algeria and India, to Canadian settler-colonialism lies in the distinction between colonialism writ large and settler-colonialism, which Coulthard distinguishes through, on the one hand, territorial dispossession, and on the other hand, the dispossession of "self-determining authority" or sovereignty. In particular, territorial dispossession is what he names "settler colonialism's specific, irreducible element" (7). Settler-colonial studies scholar Patrick Wolfe provides an informal but politically significant definition:

> "Settler-colonialism is a form of colonialism that is exclusive. It's a "winner take all," a zero-sum game, whereby outsiders come to a country, and seek to take it away from the people who already live there, remove them, replace them, and displace them, and take over the country, and make it their own. As such it's different from the forms of colonialism which we saw in, say, British India, or the Dutch East Indies, or somewhere like that, where foreigners went, and sat on top of Native society, and put it to work for them. In settler colonies foreigners come to eliminate the Natives, to get rid of them. Not necessarily bodily, not necessarily physically. Classically, there are assimilation policies which, rather than physically exterminating Native people, seek to transform them into white people."

In this distinction between colonialism and settler-colonialism, we have Wolfe allude to the insidious nature of settler-colonialism in terms of the settler's foundational promise to remain. In settler-colonialism, we have the endurance of the settler through the disavowal, removal, and displacement of Indigenous peoples. Wolfe is invested in categorizing the genocidal drive as non-corporeal, which Coulthard also speaks of when he describes the changing nature of

Canadian settler colonial power over time, as being modified from a structure "oriented around the genocidal exclusion/assimilation double, to one that is now reproduced through…practices that emphasize [Indigenous] *recognition* and *accommodation*" (6). This process is vital not only in the contexts of settler states, but also in places where particular state failures have deeply affected minority populations, oftentimes resulting in mass migration and the making of new diasporas. In this sense, there is much to be gained in using Coulthard's concepts to mark liberal and neoliberal processes on a global scale.

Contemporary Sikh diasporic politics, specifically in North America, has appeared as perpetually emergent and continually being redefined in the contemporary global wars on terror. I argue that these politics can be characterized as, on the one hand, participating and taking pleasure in processes of accommodation and reconciliation, and on the other hand, concerned with enduring struggles of ongoing racial violence, increasing immigrant detention for asylum seekers, and police abuse of supposed Sikh 'militants' in the homeland of Punjab in North India. The wars on terror have brought with them the reciprocal configuration of terror—that of feeling terrified and terrorized—onto Sikh populaces worldwide. Sikh immigrants have faced horrific acts of violence not only against their communities and places of worship, alongside Muslims and other South and West Asian subjects in the U.S, but against their very bodies.

Nevertheless, for members of the Sikh diaspora in the United States and Canada, these countries symbolize refuge and freedom, with liberal multiculturalist promises of inclusion, recognition, dignity, and respect. In essence, of all spaces on which to arrive, these two nation-states promise foreign bodies forms of hospitality uniquely their own—separately and together. That is to say that—despite being predicated on genocide, land theft, and racial enslavement—both the U.S. and Canada are uniquely positioned as sites of eternal security and sanctuary for

immigrants. I focus on the Sikh diasporic case as it presents an important example of minoritarian attempts at securing and safeguarding the liberal and neoliberal promises of these settler states. Both the seeming successes and the failures of these promises for Sikhs reifies both the hollowness of the promises themselves and the impossibility of hospitality in any settler-colonial state. To be clear, I use hospitality in the Derridean sense, wherein the host is always open to potential harm from the visitor; as such, all nation-states operate under *conditional* hospitality, securing themselves from foreigners who they suspect may do the nation harm. As such, the nation can only ever be a site of insecurity for the foreign body. Exemplary in looking the part of foreignness, the gendered Sikh subject—that is, the heavily masculine turbaned and full-bearded Sikh body—poses a threat to the nation as conditional host in a particularly striking way. I explore the visual calculus of the Sikh as one form of recognition, alongside the recognition of Sikhs in terms of civil and political rights in our age of terror.

One example of Sikh searches for recognition is the case of the civil rights organization The Sikh Coalition's 2015-2016 campaign for long-term religious accommodation for Sikhs donning turbans and full-beards in the American military. The Sikh Coalition emerged in the wake of 9/11 alongside the Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund or SALDEF as a major part of the efforts to have the FBI track the rampant violent attacks on Sikh men in the midst of ongoing Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. Their more recent efforts winning job discrimination suits for Sikhs on American police forces certainly foreshadowed the more public battle for accommodation for Sikhs in the military. In an email from April 19, 2016, The Sikh Coalition's Executive Director Sapreet Kaur writes:

> "Despite all the evidence and the contributions observant Sikh soldiers have made, the military continues to ask Sikhs to choose between faith and service. We are demanding

> a broader policy change so that any observant Sikh who wishes to serve can confidently walk into a recruiting office, qualify, access scholarship and career opportunities, and enlist with dignity, just like Sikhs do all over the world, including in the UK and Canada. We are demanding a broader policy change because the U.S. military is our country's largest employer, and if it continues to discriminate against Sikhs, what example does it set for other employers? A victory here will open the doors to other service professions (i.e. paramedics, police force, fire department, etc)."

Kaur's emphasis on this as another form of job discrimination is useful insofar as it reframes the violent enterprises of American war and empire as something lesser and less foreboding. The message instead assigns the U.S. military value as "our country's largest employer" as a way of making it part of the seemingly innocuous necessity for work for all citizens—now more clearly part of both capitalist and imperial enterprise. The framing of these cases for religious accommodation is certainly predicated on one Sikh man or another's search for individual long-term accommodation following a spotless record of military service after having been given short-term accommodation. These cases are, in fact, meant as inspirational models for young Sikh men in particular, a way for them to note how the landscape for jobs outside the binary of the upwardly mobile Sikh professional or the working class Sikh immigrant is emerging; to serve their country is now a possible avenue for employment—and it is sweetened by the fact that it provides proof of patriotism and adherence to a code of state-approved ethics. Certainly, Canada has been a model in this regard, as Kaur notes, and this fact reaches its logical extent in Justin Trudeau's cabinet where several Sikhs serve, including Harjit Singh Sajjan as Minister of National Defence. Part of this legacy of Sikhs serving in Canada and the UK is imperial, where the history of

Sikhs as a member of the British Raj's "marital races" makes their participation in military and war a self-evident certainty.

Nevertheless, the focus on the military and police force in particular, signals how the search for accommodation and inclusion into these professions might clue us into ways that The Sikh Coalition along with other such civil rights organizations truly are arms of the state; in seeking accommodation and inclusion, The Sikh Coalition is effectively prioritizing new avenues for supposed civil rights "struggle" over both continued cases of harm and violence against Sikhs, along with booming conservative calls for stricter immigration policies that hinge on Islamophobic realities globally. What is more, is the way that such efforts for accommodation appear completely blind to racial justice movements against policing and the militarization of police force in the U.S. and Canada—and here I am motioning toward the ways in which this works against movements like Black Lives Matter. Moreover, the contemporary sites for North American military presence and war have overwhelmingly been in countries in West and South Asia, and especially against supposed terrorist organizations constituted by "Islamic extremists." The terror that this last decade and a half of U.S. military presence has instilled on populations in places such as Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen, Iraq, and elsewhere, has only served to harm these populations and reinforce the continued search for American imperial dominance.

Like Coulthard's rejection of a politics of recognition, I am critical of the incessant and persistent process of seeking recognition. For Sikhs and others newly seeking certain kinds of rights, recognition and its attendant liberal promises such as inclusion or accommodation, actively participate in and follow the statist logic that to be recognized by the state is to be following logical and necessary steps toward proper citizenship and collective embrace into a mythical national fabric. These processes are often violent as they force forms of discipline and

domestication that are often illegible to those on the receiving end of such violence. I see Coulthard's reading of resentment as generative insofar as provides an alternative to the aspirational model of recognition and inclusion; through Fanon, Coulthard argues that "the emergence of reactive emotions like anger and resentment can indicate a breakdown of colonial subjection and thus open up the possibility of developing alternative subjectivities and anticolonial practices" (115). In Coulthard's reading, resentment can exist outside of colonial pathology and provide anti- and de-colonial strategies for indigenous peoples and minority populations. For Sikhs in diaspora, specifically in the settler states of the United States and Canada, resentment can emerge from both the long history of injury and persecution in Punjab, India and the continued racial violence that Sikhs face in their new homes, as well as around the globe. In a sense, there are many reasons to be resentful for the Sikh body, and in harnessing these affective responses Sikh might participate in a critical apparatus against state-sanctioned violence, and the state itself. In this way, there exists the possibility for alignment and solidarity amongst oppressed peoples, from the indigenous to the enslaved, from the migrant to the minoritarian.

I advocate, too, for Sikhs to evade recognition, to evade forms of capture by the state; that is to say that, in their usual obfuscation and inscrutability as foreign threats—as confused with dominant discursive descriptions of terror and terrorism through Islam, fundamentalism, religiosity, zealotry, and extremism—Sikhs might instead invest more in moving toward *radical* acts of solidarity, and invest less in recognition in public forums and state agencies like the police or the military. By evading capture, by going unrecognized, by truly escaping the growing grip of the state on its supposed new citizens, America's "broader" family members as Obama put it, Sikhs might seek other ways of survival and sustenance in settler states. These modes of

life outside of recognition and inclusion, in favor of the disorder that may come from misrecognition and exclusion better aligns the Sikh body with those fellow minor bodies, within and without the settler state. Given the legacy of militant resistance to the Indian state, before and after partition, Sikhs settled in the U.S. and Canada might better spend energy and effort in mobilizing for struggles beyond what the neoliberal state demands it follow in its multiculturalist narrative of progress.

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