Power, Kashmir, and *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*

by

Alexander Ramsey

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
(English Language and Literature)
in the University of Michigan
2026

Doctoral Committee:

Professor Emerita Valerie Traub, Chair
Professor Supriya Nair
Assistant Professor Rovel Sequeira
Professor Mrinalini Sinha

Alexander Ramsey

alexmram@umich.edu

ORCID iD: 0009-0005-4129-3473

© Alexander Ramsey 2026

Dedication

~To Valerie Traub, through whose boundless and unyielding support I have experienced the inexplicable joys of being known ~

Despite the understandable love of aptitude, aptness, and acuity, there is something to be said on behalf of slow going and slow learners.

—Valerie Traub, "Sex Ed; or Teach Me Tonight"

As to those for whom to work hard, to begin and begin again, to attempt and be mistaken, to go back and rework everything from top to bottom, and still find reason to hesitate from one step to the next—as to those, in short, for whom to work in the midst of uncertainty and apprehension is tantamount to failure, all I can say is that clearly we are not from the same planet.

—Michel Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*

Acknowledgements

I am extraordinarily grateful to my chair, Valerie Traub, who has extended to me kindness, support, mentorship, knowledge, patience, time, energy, and forgiveness several orders of magnitude beyond what even the most pedagogically conscientious advisors offer to their students. Valerie pulled me back from the abyss more times than I can count. When I felt that I wasn't going to make it through prelims, it was Valerie who gave me a hug and promised me it was going to be alright. When I fell into depression at the start of COVID, it was Valerie who called and helped me develop a plan for adjusting to our new reality. When I developed brain fog after successive bouts of COVID in 2022 and suddenly couldn't write more than a few sentences per day, it was Valerie who saw I was drowning and offered to meet every single week to support me in planning and writing a dissertation chapter. When last April we learned that I would have to pull together my tattered fragments into a complete dissertation by January, it was Valerie who committed herself to meeting with me *twice* a week to ensure that would happen. This is not to mention the hundreds upon hundreds of emails we have exchanged, nor the innumerable hours she has spent over Zoom helping me find my way back out of my own mind, nor all the times she has reassured me and refused me the hollow comforts of capitulating to shame. And all this incredible effort she put toward enabling me to succeed was in addition to assiduously, patiently, and, above all, *earnestly* engaging with every single word I have ever written, sometimes dedicating entire days to following the long, tortuous paths my mind needed to tread, after which she would dedicate many more hours to teaching me how to pave those

paths for others. Even when I have grown tired of myself and sought to abject my neurodivergent excess, Valerie's primary aims have been learning how to accommodate it and teaching me how to write in such a way that others will want to accommodate it, too. In and of itself, to study under Valerie is an enormous privilege. To also be the beneficiary of her ethics of care constitutes a debt that can never be repaid. Thank you, Valerie, for everything.

I am also very thankful for the other members of my committee, Supriya Nair, Mrinalini (Minnie) Sinha, and Rovel Sequeira, without whose labor, empathy, patience, and willingness to engage with my work on short notice I would not have been able to finish this dissertation and without whose constructive critique and guidance I would not have been able to bring one of the chapters into alignment with the ethics and intellectual commitments of my project as a whole. Supriya was one of my first graduate instructors at the University of Michigan, and she was the first academic to teach me that the primary purpose of "theory" should be to build relationships, between both concepts and the people articulating them, a virtue she imparted by putting it into practice in every conversation between us. Part and parcel of this lesson was also one in reparativity, one that set the foundation for a life-enriching calibration in the way that I relate to myself and others. I consider myself blessed to have started my graduate journey with her course. Minnie and Rovel were asked to become familiar with my work in a very short period and still extended to me a level of engagement, curiosity, and instruction that I had no right to expect. The dissertation benefited immensely from their expertise and targeted interventions. I very much hope to continue learning from them. I would also like to extend gratitude to two former committee members, Sarah Ensor and Antoine Traisnel, both of whom modeled ways of thinking early on in my graduate career that have proven invaluable.

Over the course of my graduate education, I have been privileged not only to learn from David Halperin and benefit enormously from his brilliance but, also, to develop a wonderful and enduring friendship with him. Our teatimes and email correspondences have indelibly shaped me. As someone who, also, has “no idea how to be gay,” finding kinship in you has been profoundly gratifying.

I would never have pursued a PhD in English Literature if it was not for the support and guidance of my undergraduate instructors at UCLA. I am indebted to Matthew Fisher, whose generous and incisive mentorship instilled in me a deep love of language. I am also very grateful to my honors thesis advisor, Yogita Goyal, who took me on when I knew nothing and who never allowed me to wallow in that ignorance but, instead, consistently offered me opportunities to learn and advance. Although I would not come to appreciate this coincidence until years later, Yogita was also the first person to ever say the name “Valerie Traub” to me.

My father and stepmother, Lance and Elizabeth Ramsey, and my mother and stepfather, Shelley and Patrick Daly, have been constant pillars of support throughout my graduate education, and I would not have been able to complete this dissertation without their love, enthusiasm, financial assistance, and unwavering belief in me. Although I have always known how fortunate I am to be the beneficiary of unconditional parental love, it has only been in recent years that I have come understand how blessed I am to have been taught from a young age that living in spite of one’s passions and values is to sacrifice the gift of life. This dissertation reflects their love, care and wisdom in more ways than I could possibly express. It also reflects the love, tenacity, and courage of my stepsister, Hannah Snow, who has been a constant anchor in my life. I love you all.

I am deeply grateful for my friends. Aaron Stone, meeting you within six weeks of starting at Michigan was, unequivocally, one of the defining events of my life. In addition to loving me and supporting me in more ways than I can count, you have shared with me your talents and skills in abundance. Your brilliance is only matched by your deeply ethical orientation to the world, and through knowing you, I have become smarter and a better person. Thank you for nine beautiful years of friendship. Cathy Yount, to have called you my friend for nearly twenty years means nothing less than the world to me. I have learned more from you than you will ever know. Thank you for every phone call, every hug, and every shoulder you've offered when I've needed to cry. Joey Song, thank you for our many incredible conversations and inside jokes, for your indefatigable commitment to friendship, and for constantly expanding the radius of my world with every new hobby and interest you passionately throw yourself into. I am overjoyed to have you in my life. Johnny Tran, thank you for showing me queer joy and beauty when I could not yet recognize it. I have cherished our many conversations over the last seven years and feel so fortunate to get to look forward to many more. Kyle Krause, thank you for always reaching out to check on me when I've fallen off the face of the earth. I have felt more seen and valued by you than I have been able to express. It is wonderful to know you.

As for my partner: Joshua Langenbach, you have loved and cared for me in a way that I did not think I deserved. For this last year and a half, you have been my emotional rock, extended to me tremendous compassion, forgiven me for being a near-constant grouch, and taken on more domestic labor than I had any right to ask from you. I would not have survived this process without you. Thank you for everything. I love you beyond measure, and I am so excited to start going on adventures with you once again.

Finally, this dissertation was completed with financial support from the University of Michigan Department of English Language and Literature, the Rackham Graduate School, and the Rackham Doctoral Intern Fellowship Program. To have been allowed the opportunity to spend my twenties doing something I love without having to worry about securing employment or healthcare has been the greatest gift.

Table of Contents

Dedication....ii

Acknowledgements....iii

Abstract....x

Introduction: Arundhati Roy and the Hermeneutics of Power....1

The Ministry of Utmost Happiness....8

Diagramming Power: Error in the (In)Securitization of Kashmir....19

Allegorizing Resistance: "How to Tell a Shattered Story"....50

Chapter 1 The Historiography and Securitization of Kashmir....64

Introduction: Resisting Ressentiment Revisionism: Reflections on the Power of Historical (Un)Truth....64

1.1 An Exercise in Pragmatic Contextualization: Imperial Kashmir: 1556-1947....92

1.1.1 Mughal Rule 1586-1752....93

1.1.2 Afghan Rule 1752-1819....94

1.1.3 Sikh Rule 1819-1846....95

1.1.4 The First Anglo-Sikh War 1845-1846....100

1.1.5 Dogra-British Rule 1846-1947....103

1.2 A Derealized Massacre: Disrupting the State's Narrative of Accession: 1947-1948....120

1.3 Partition as *Nomos*: 1949-1990....139

Chapter 2 Securitarian Necro-Power: Debilitating Melancholia in Indian-Administered Kashmir....162

Introduction: How to Rationalize the Technology of Disappearance....162

2.1 The Hermeneutics of Grief-as-Resistance: Examining a Case Study....171

2.2 Restructuring "Mourning and Melancholia": Intrasubjectivity, Assemblages of Grief, and Debilitating Formations of the Work of Mourning 183

2.3 An Ideal Diagram of Securitarian Necro-Power 240

Chapter 3 Traumatic Formalism, Sex, and Ontogenetic Susceptibility 272

Introduction: The Ethics of Allegorizing Grief 272

3.1 Anjum's Jannat 275

3.2 Traumatic Formalism 284

3.3 Trauma as Seduction 293

3.4 The Masturbating Child 310

3.5 Sex's Generativity and Pertinacity 325

3.6 Trauma as the Guarantor of Form 335

3.7 From Freud's Eros to the "Traumatization of Experience" 350

Chapter 4 In-habitations of Death: Incredulous Mourning, and the Desire for Collective Futurity 355

Introduction: Accommodating Allegorical Negation 355

4.1 The Etiology of Short-Term Stress 357

4.2 The Ontological Contradiction of Long-Term Trauma 368

4.3 Anjum's In-habiting Death: Becoming-Death, Accommodating-Dispossession 373

4.4 Incredulous Mourning: Resisting Debilitating Melancholia 383

4.5 Roy's Extraction of Sacred *Communitas* 399

Bibliography 414

Abstract

At its foundation, this dissertation attends to India's use of forced disappearances in its militarized occupation of Indian-administered Kashmir and representations of this mechanism of power and its emergent forms of resistance advanced by Arundhati Roy in her 2017 novel *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (*TMOUH*). Mobilizing a series of discrete readings of Roy's novel in conjunction with recent ethnographies on life under occupation in Kashmir and a series of theoretical interventions, I delineate the imbricated logics of this technology of disappearance and the politically collectivizing grieving practices that Kashmiris have counterposed to it. The method that enables these delineations and their articulations is both the product of this dissertation and its analytic instrument. Situating myself in critical dialogue with Michel Foucault's analytics of power(-knowledge) and the ethics of allegorizing resistance that Roy's novel models, I frame my site- and object-specific inquiries into security technologies and forms of resistance in Kashmir as opening onto wider interrogations of the hermeneutics and ethics of diagramming and representing power. My method is coextensive with a continual movement that inheres between these two levels of inquiry; it thereby advances a conditioning of the universal by the particular and the particular by the universal. Because this method entails extending its rhizomatic ethos beyond either Roy's novel or the politics of Kashmir to the concepts, categories, and mediums through which processes of diagramming and representing power pass, this dissertation approaches its ultimate arguments by way of multiple theoretical and genealogical avenues. In doing so, it offers critical interventions into a host of issues relevant to

postcolonial and queer theory: the epistemology of (in)securitization; the politics of postcolonial historiography; Freudian psychoanalysis, inter- and intrasubjectivity, and the socio-ontology of grief; contemporary theories of biopower and necropower; the conceptual genealogy of trauma in its relation to narrative logic, form, (inter)sex, sexuality, gender, and race; the etiology of short-term stress and long-term trauma; the belief structures of fetishism; figurations of hijra ontology; queer necromancy; and the psychosocial conditions for anti-fascist collectivity. In bringing these issues into one investigative frame, it begins to articulate the conditions of possibility for a postcolonial-queer analytic.

Introduction: Arundhati Roy and the Hermeneutics of Power

At its foundation, this dissertation attends to India's use of forced disappearances in its militarized occupation of Indian-administered Kashmir and representations of this mechanism of power and its emergent forms of resistance advanced by Arundhati Roy in her 2017 novel *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (*TMOUH*). Mobilizing a series of discrete readings of Roy's novel in conjunction with recent ethnographies on life under occupation in Kashmir and a series of theoretical interventions, I delineate the imbricated logics of this technology of disappearance and the politically collectivizing grieving practices that Kashmiris have counterposed to it. The method that enables these delineations and their articulations is both the product of this dissertation and its analytic instrument. Situating myself in critical dialogue with Michel Foucault's analytics of power(-knowledge) and the ethics of allegorizing resistance that Roy's novel models, I frame my site- and object-specific inquiries into security technologies and forms of resistance in Kashmir as opening onto wider interrogations of the hermeneutics and ethics of diagramming and representing power. My method is coextensive with a continual movement that inheres between these two levels of inquiry; it thereby advances a conditioning of the universal by the particular and the particular by the universal. Because this method entails extending its rhizomatic ethos beyond either Roy's novel or the politics of Kashmir to the concepts, categories, and mediums through which processes of diagramming and representing power pass, this dissertation approaches its ultimate arguments by way of multiple theoretical and genealogical avenues. In doing so, it offers critical interventions into a host of issues relevant to

postcolonial and queer theory: the epistemology of (in)securitization; the politics of postcolonial historiography; Freudian psychoanalysis, inter- and intrasubjectivity, and the socio-ontology of grief; contemporary theories of biopower and necropower; the conceptual genealogy of trauma in its relation to narrative logic, form, (inter)sex, sexuality, gender, and race; the etiology of short-term stress and long-term trauma; the belief structures of fetishism; figurations of hijra ontology; queer necromancy; and the psychosocial conditions for anti-fascist collectivity. In bringing these issues into one investigative frame, it begins to articulate the conditions of possibility for a postcolonial-queer analytic.

This dissertation is organized into three major parts: the Introduction, Part 1, and Part 2. The Introduction consists of three sections, each of which serves to contextualize my project and to render its logics of interpretation and organization legible for my readers. I use the first section of this Introduction to provide a synoptic and schematic overview of the novel's three plots and their intersections. This is necessary both because my readings of *TMOUH* are neither restricted to one chapter of this dissertation nor, across their multiplicity, to one particular theme or sub-plot and because I variably, and often simultaneously, apprehend the novel as an object of literary exegesis, an interlocutor in speculatively diagramming the technology of disappearance, and a model for ethical allegorization; due to this polyvalent orientation, the reader may, thus, find it helpful to return to this plot overview at various points throughout this dissertation.

The second and third sections introduce the two major problems with which this dissertation, at its broadest level, contends, those of "diagramming power" and "allegorizing resistance." At the same time, they together model the unique approach to interpretation and knowledge production that constitutes this dissertation's method. In the second section, I juxtapose an analysis of the technology of disappearance proffered by the International People's

Tribunal on Human Rights and Justice in Indian-Administered Kashmir (IPTK) to Roy's speculative representation-qua-analysis of that technology in the novel. Triangulating this juxtaposition with theoretical reflections on Foucault's analytics of power(-knowledge), I demonstrate that *TMOUH*'s depiction of a forced disappearance and clandestine burial approximates what I call Foucault's nominalist structuralism, insofar as Roy's novel approaches imagining the technology of disappearance through mapping out its epistemological conditions of possibility in relation to the specific structure of occupation in and by which the technology operates. I utilize the reading of the novel that I develop over the course of this section to *both* introduce the "hermeneutics of power" as one of this dissertation's primary concerns and sites of intervention *and* to advance a specific argument about the epistemological relations that inhere in security apparatuses; in this way, the second section also models the form of telic multiplicity that readers will be frequently asked to accommodate across this dissertation.

Finally, the third section of the Introduction identifies the ethical and political dilemmas that vex rationalizing, depicting, and organizing resistance. Insofar as I operate from a Foucaultian framework in which power and resistance are two sides of the same coin, "diagramming power" and "allegorizing resistance" should be thought of as each naming the same field of inquiry but attending to that field with different emphases. Whereas the former (diagramming power) emphasizes fleshing out the rationality of power's mechanisms, the latter (allegorizing resistance) emphasizes the joint inextricability of, on the one hand, power and resistance and, on the other hand, power/resistance and representation. In section three, I utilize a eulogy's transcendentalizing, collectivizing depiction of its queer subject—Mona Ahmed, a famous Delhi hijra whom *TMOUH* loosely takes as its inspiration for Anjum, one of its main characters—to delineate the negation of allegorical medium that makes resistance narratives and

the political movements with which they are articulated possible. I, then, use close readings to frame the novel as fundamentally underwritten by Roy's search for a narrative and political form that can accommodate those whom the world has dispossessed without, in turn, proliferating the conditions of dispossession. As I signpost at the end of this Introduction and flesh out over the course of chapters 3 and 4, the corresponding narrative strategy that Roy adopts is borne out in the representation-qua-analysis of Kashmiri collective grief that the novel allegorically mediates through Anjum and her life-in-the-graveyard. The complex form that those final two chapters take reflect my efforts to incorporate Roy's ethics of allegorization into my literary and theoretical hermeneutics.

In Part 1, "Diagramming Power," which comprises chapters 1 and 2, I delineate the securitization of Indian-occupied Kashmir in its historical specificity. Chapter 1, "The Historiography and Securitization of Modern Kashmir," balances pragmatically contextualizing the history of Kashmir from 1586-1947, diagramming the affective-epistemological structure by which historiography itself operates as a major dimension of power in the occupation, and experimenting with forms of historiographic narration that open both state and revisionist accounts of India-Kashmir relations between 1947 and 1989 to more nuanced engagement with the aporias of postcolonial state formation.

Chapter 2, "Securitarian Necro-Power: Debilitating Melancholia in Indian-Administered Kashmir," attends to both the hermeneutics of power and the models of grief that scholars and activists of Kashmir have brought to assessing the rationality of the occupation's deployment of forced disappearances. Drawing on a model of intrasubjective relationality I identify in Judith Butler's reflections on grievability and ontological dispossession as well as on Lauren Berlant's concepts of cruel optimism and affect-as-form, I first restructure Sigmund Freud's theory of

mourning and melancholia for the purposes of rendering legible both grief's susceptibility to manipulation by power and the ontological and metapsychological conditions of that susceptibility. Utilizing this restructured theory of grief in tandem with Jasbir Puar's theory of debility, I then argue that the technology of disappearance engenders conditions favorable to grief's debilitating formation into melancholia in the loved ones of the disappeared. By situating this analysis of forced disappearance's local effects within Foucault's framework for delineating different forms of power, I argue that forced disappearance should be understood not as a technology of discipline but as a technology of security. More precisely, transacting this categorization of power's form with a critique of Achilles Mbembe's theory of necropower, I argue that forced disappearance constitutes a technology of what I call securitarian necro-power, by which I mean that it takes as its specific object of instrumentation the social, discursive, and ontological relations to loss, vulnerability, and mortality that collectively constitute "death" in a given society.

In Part 2, "Allegorizing Resistance," which comprises chapters 3 and 4, I diagram a structural and psychodynamic relation between debilitating melancholia and collectivizing grieving practices in Kashmir, situating the latter as a mode of resistance adequate to the occupation's deployment of securitarian necro-power. I arrive at this reading by way of teasing out an allegory for this particular nexus of power and resistance in Kashmir that, I argue, *TMOUH* mediates through a trauma plot centered on Anjum. Insofar as both Foucault's hermeneutics of power and Roy's ethics of allegorization strive to resist derealizing allegorical vehicles by dynamically recognizing their distinctive excess in relation to the tenors expressed through them, my approach to exegeting the novel's allegory is purposely circuitous. Thus, in chapter 3, "Traumatic Formalism, Sex, and Ontogenetic Susceptibility," rather than gloss over

the non-identity of trauma and melancholia, I, first, demonstrate that the novel's use of trauma is predicated on a particular narrative logic of non-linear causality; I refer to this narrative logic as traumatic formalism and, drawing from John Fletcher's work, identify it as fundamental to trauma's conceptualization. Second, I pursue an intensive genealogy of "trauma"—in my analytic, both a logic shaped by the concept's major discursive deployments and a real category of psychological experience involving irruptive mnemonic repetition in relation to a distressing event—across the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, from its foundations in neuropsychiatry and the colonial and metropolitan medical discourses co-extensive with what Foucault calls "the crusade against childhood masturbation" to its psychogenic reworking and subsequent sublations in Freudian psychoanalytic theory to its mid- and late-twentieth-century reformulations within the moral liberal economies of Western empires. The overarching insight borne out by this genealogy is that trauma has long constituted a central locus for articulating notions of ontological and ontogenetic susceptibility as they have emerged in biopolitical formations, as well as for navigating and organizing the anxieties and desires attendant to these notions. At the same time, my genealogy also excavates a particular assemblage of logics that gradually inheres between trauma, (inter)sex, gender, human form, and the ontology of anti-fascist collectivity over the course of Freud's oeuvre.

In chapter 4, "In-habitations of Death: Incredulous Mourning and the Desire for Collective Futurity," I articulate three analytic projects. First, having established by way of chapter 3's genealogy that contemporary models of trauma are problematically mired in biopolitical and imperial deployments, I develop an etiological framework for apprehending trauma in its symptomatic and metapsychological specificity. Utilizing Anjum's traumatization as a template, I argue that trauma reflects an ontological contradiction assumed under an

extraordinarily stressful and disorienting experience. I argue, moreover, that Anjum's life-in-the-graveyard constitutes the novel's efforts at depicting a treatment modality for traumatic repair that does not rely upon derealizing others but, instead, undertakes the excruciating work of self-negation in a dialectic with a form of mourning that enables one to grieve the self that one is negating so as to chart another vector of becoming. Noting that the novel indicates through Anjum's work with Jannat Guest House and Funeral Services that this form of mourning must involve recognizing and grieving dispossession in others but that the novel does not indicate how or why this would be reparative, I bracket Anjum's narrative and finally attend to the Kashmiri grieving practices that this narrative, I argue, allegorizes. Through close reading the open graves for Maqbool Bhat and Afzal Guru in the Martyrs' Graveyard in Srinagar in conjunction with ethnographic work on this and other deployments of martyrization in Kashmir, I argue that what Roy is gesturing to through Anjum is a tacit mobilization of the fetishism by which melancholia (and grief more generally) is possible. This mobilization, which relies upon fetishism's intrinsic incredulity, allows for melancholic Kashmiris to assume others' losses as their own, and in linking themselves to others' losses in this manner, these subjects engender conditions by which their own loss can be rendered grievable, at least in part. I theorize this collectivizing approach to grief as incredulous mourning as well as argue that it reflects one approach to accommodating traumatic dispossession. Having borne out the allegory between trauma and melancholia, I pursue in the final section of this dissertation a critique of the figuration of hijra/intersex ontology that Roy deploys in the course of developing that allegory and on which she inadvertently relies in endowing the community of the dispossessed with her desire for a form of collective resistance, representation, and cohabitation that will not merely reproduce or reverse the structures of oppression and derealization but, instead, orient itself constantly toward

grieving the dispossessions immanent to collective life. Acknowledging this desire, I offer my critique of the novel in accordance with Roy's ethics of allegorization. By means of this critique, I allow the novel to advance a major principle of queer-postcolonial studies as I envision it, to wit: in describing the political logics and "work" of disappearance, martyrdom, mass graves, and even minoritized sexed gender, scholars and creative writers should avoid derealizing the positive content that informs these formations, including their imbrication in psychosocial conditions and local technologies and assemblages. Moreover, where this inquiry necessitates problematization, one's critique should be motivated by an ethics of intellectual generosity.

The Ministry of Utmost Happiness

Although it tarries in innumerable digressive vignettes and subplots, *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (*TMOUH*) is more or less structured by three overarching and intersecting narratives, which I refer to, respectively, as its Hijra, Kashmir, and Maoist-Adivasi plots. These narratives can be further parsed along a major/minor axis, with the Hijra and Kashmir plots serving as the "major" narratives from which the novel's primary characters and storylines originate and the Maoist-Adivasi plot serving as the "minor" narrative which, while telling an important story in its own right, functions (with respect to the novel as a whole) to enable the articulation of the two major plots. As with many multiplot novels, narrative time (the order in which the reader experiences story events) and diegetic time (the chronological order in which story events take place in the fictional world) are often out of sync in *TMOUH*, both within and across these different plots. Insofar as temporal disjunction is central to my discussions of grief (chapter two) and trauma (chapters three and four), I privilege narrative time in my retelling, although I factitiously render events in terms of diegetic time where not doing so would superfluously extend it.

Excepting its epigraphic first page and opening chapter, both of which I will return to later in this introduction, *TMOUH* begins with the birth of an intersex child in 1960s New Delhi to Muslim parents, the latter of whom name her Aftab and attempt to raise her as a boy. Over the course of her childhood, Aftab discovers that this disciplining of her sex is incongruent with her desires for gender embodiment and, consequently, leaves her birth family to move into the *Khwabgah*, a hijra household, in order to live among others like herself, at which time she assumes the name Anjum and, a bit later, undergoes a (botched) gender-affirming surgery to remove her "male parts" and begins taking hormones to accentuate her body's feminine features (32).[1]

After Anjum's social and medical transitions, the novel flashforwards three decades, showing us an Anjum who, after enjoying minor celebrity in her youth as a captivating and alluring hijra, has in her mid-40s become discontented with the *Khwabgah* and seeks to leave it (33). Retrospectively, we learn that this shift in attachment toward her fellow hijras and the life they share together has been precipitated by two traumas.[2] The first concerns a young orphan girl named Zainab, whom Anjum had adopted as her own child three years earlier, and another hijra named Saeeda, who was "much younger than Anjum…was a graduate and knew English…could use the terms *cis-Man*, and *FtoM* and *MtoF* and in interviews referred to herself as a 'transperson" (42). The novel informs us that due to Saeeda's savvy with the emerging transnormative lexicon, the guru of the *Khwabgah*, Ustad Kulsoom Bi, started considering her as a potential successor, even as the implicit rules of seniority governing hijra hierarchy would

1 I extensively attend to problems with Roy's representation of hijra transition and ontology in chapter four. As such, I will not elaborate on its politics here.

2 Because I attend to both of these traumas at length in chapters three and four, I identify but do not explain them here.

typically favor Anjum for that role. Consequently, Anjum grows jealous, suspicious, and fearful of Saeeda, despite the fact that the latter has no awareness of this situation and harbors no ill will toward Anjum. These negative feelings become ramified when Zainab (innocently) starts displaying affection for Saeeda. Seemingly projecting her fears of hierarchical supplantation onto Zainab and, in the process, conflating them with fears of motherly supplantation, Anjum misrecognizes Zainab and Saeeda's bond as, on the latter's side, a ploy to steal her child and, on the former's side, an intensely painful rejection. The second trauma occurs as the first one develops and is, in part, an accelerating catalyst for it. In 2002, Anjum travels with a man named Zakir Mian (a close, elderly friend) to Ahmedabad in the western Indian state of Gujarat, where they are caught up in the systematic massacre against Gujarati Muslims now referred to as the Gujarat Pogrom. Anjum survives; Zakir does not. When Zakir's son finds her in a Muslim refugee camp a few months later and brings her back to the *Khwabgah*, Anjum attempts to resolve her (implicit) traumatization by forcing Zainab to dress and act like a boy, thereby violating the household's law of consent with respect to gender transition and, simultaneously, driving Zainab away from her and toward Saeeda. Exhausted by her overdetermined feelings of grief, resentment, and dislocation, Anjum decides to leave the place she had called home for thirty years.

Unable to return to the *Duniya* (hijras' name for normative society), Anjum departs for a local graveyard, wherein she takes up residence and constructs a house. Initially, this structure provides only for herself and the graves it encloses, but eventually, Anjum opens it to others who the world does not accommodate. One of the people who she takes in who becomes a long-term resident is an elusive young man working at the mortuary adjoined to Anjum's cemetery, who

has assumed the moniker of Saddam Hussain.[3] Although Saddam initially portrays himself as a Muslim when he first meets Anjum, he eventually reveals himself to be a Dalit whose family had often been hired by middle- and upper-caste Hindus to remove and dispose of cow carcasses. In this capacity they continued to work until a corrupt police officer, Sehrawat, hired them to handle a deceased cow and then withheld from them compensation. When Saddam's father confronted Sehrawat, the latter arrested the former for "cow-slaughter" and gave him over to a Hindutva mob of self-styled vigilantes, at whose hands Saddam's father was viciously lynched. In response, Saddam makes revenge his singular objective in life, leaving home in search of the power to accomplish this goal.

When Anjum meets Saddam, he is employed at the mortuary to prosthetically handle postmortems for those upper-caste Hindu doctors who are necrophobic.[4] This experience with corpses proves instrumental for a narratively (and thematically) pivotal expansion of Anjum's hospitality: when the body of a woman named Rubina is brought to Anjum's guesthouse by Anwar Bhai (the manager of a brothel at which Rubina had worked) after other funeral services in Delhi had refused to bathe, bury, and pray over her on account of her occupation in life, Anjum and Saddam agree to facilitate Rubina's burial. For reasons I discuss in chapter three, taking on the responsibility of caring for this abjected corpse resonates with their respective experiences of abjection. Consequently, after tending to Rubina the two expand Anjum's graveyard guesthouse so that they are able to regularly provide funeral services for "those whom

3 His birth name is Dayachand (90). Even after this information is revealed, however, the novel continues to refer to him as Saddam; hence, I have done the same.

4 As with cow lynching, this part of Saddam's narrative references a real practice in contemporary India: www.theprint.in/ground-reports/dalits-are-doing-the-work-doctors-reject-no-postmortem-without-a-safai-karmachari/2718201/. Although it is beyond the scope of this dissertation, it would be useful to trace the genealogical affiliations between this practice and its colonial antecedents, the latter of which David Arnold has recently explored in *Burning the Dead: Hindu Nationhood and the Global Construction of Indian Tradition* (2021).

the graveyards and imams of the Duniya had rejected" (*TMOUH* 84). In this way, Anjum's home, which she christens Jannat Guest House and Funeral Services, comes to accommodate both the dispossessed living and the dispossessed dead.

Having established Anjum and Saddam as custodians of the ungrievable, though without resolving their individual stories, the novel transitions, after a brief interlude, from its Hijra plot and to its Kashmir plot, the latter of which it conveys through the interlocking tales of four college friends: Biplab, Naga, Tilo, and Musa. (The interlude introduces Miss Jebeen, who will center the third, minor plot, across four chapters that *diegetically* follow the temporary caesura in Anjum's and Saddam's stories and *chronologically* precede the beginning of the Kashmir plot's narration but which still takes place in 2014. This constitutes a flashforward to the point at which the two major plots intersect.) Notwithstanding the aforementioned temporal leap, the Hijra plot is relatively linear in comparison to what follows, and is narrated from a third-person perspective that stays very close to Anjum (with the important exception of when and how it relays her traumatization). The Kashmir plot, in contrast, begins *in media res* and is recounted retrospectively from multiple perspectives until the point at which it intersects with the first plot. Over the course of this scattered narration, the novel discloses to its reader two tragedies that have irrevocably shaped the lives of these characters. The first, which occurs sometime after the friends graduate college and disperse, is the simultaneous murder of Musa's wife (Arifa) and daughter (Miss Jebeen) by trigger-anxious security forces at a martyrs' funeral procession in Kashmir, propelling Musa to join the *tehreek* (the Kashmiri resistance movement). In the service of this movement, he gradually becomes a high-ranking international operative and, consequently, an opponent of his former friend Biplab, an upper-caste Indian Hindu who had gone into government service after graduation and had become a high-ranking security official

overseeing the occupation of Kashmir. However, because Biplab is ignorant of Musa's role in the resistance, this opposition is for the most part structural and, at least from Biplab's perspective, is played out at the level of a love triangle between Musa, Biplab, and Tilo. Tilo is a dark-skinned Indian woman and architect, born out of a love affair between a Dalit man and a (light-skinned) upper-caste woman from Kerala, the latter of whom, under pressure from family, gave her up for adoption at birth only to then quickly adopt her while never publicly acknowledging their blood relationship. Despite Biplab's solipsistic fantasies, Tilo only ever demonstrates desire for Musa during college, although neither act on it and lose touch after graduating. A few years after losing his wife and daughter, however, Musa reaches out to Tilo, requesting that she visit him in Kashmir on a houseboat he shares with a neurodivergent man named Gul-Kak Abroo, also known as Gulrez. There, they reconnect and act on that spark of love from a decade earlier, furnishing a crucible from their bodies in which they intermix their griefs, "pool[ing] them together like accumulated gambling debts and shar[ing] the pain equally, without naming the injuries or asking which was whose" (368). Musa then sends Tilo on a ten-day journey throughout the Kashmir Valley, which exposes her to the routine sufferings of living and dying under military occupation.

Shortly after she returns to Musa's houseboat, the second tragedy unfolds: in response to a mixture of spontaneous protests and organized resistance that had erupted in the wake of a boy's murder and disappearance by the Ikhwanis (a "counterinsurgency" wing of Kashmir's security apparatus) earlier in the day, security personnel raid Musa's houseboat in the middle of the night; after discovering that Musa had already escaped, the forces seize Tilo and Gul-kak and, under the direction of a corrupt local security head named Amrik Singh, execute the latter and destroy his body beyond recognition, thereby enabling them to pass off his mutilated corpse

to Biplab and the Indian public as a militant commander (384). During her subsequent interrogation and torture, Tilo saves herself from a similar fate by requesting a message to be sent to Biplab, whose authority significantly outranks Singh's. Upon receiving her message, Biplab sends Naga—the fourth member of the group of college friends, who had since become a nationally recognized mainstream news correspondent with deep ties to the Indian government—to escort Tilo from the interrogation center. Upon being rescued, Tilo, radicalized by Gul-Kak's murder, is immediately ready to commit herself to the resistance. However, for her protection, Musa persuades her to, in the short term, leave the Valley and lean into Naga's desire for her, the latter of which results in a marriage between the two that persists for fourteen years. Under the cover of this marriage, Tilo travels back to Kashmir again and again in order to document the occupation, becoming what the novel calls its "weird, part-time stenographer" (274).[5] It is also implied that she and Musa maintain their romantic relationship when conditions in Kashmir allow for them to meet. When she finally leaves Naga, Tilo moves into an apartment owned by Biplab, wherein she stores the "peculiar, ragged archive" of the occupation that she had accumulated from her many trips to Kashmir as well as from Musa's espionage work with the *tehreek*.

In terms of diegetic time, the Kashmir plot begins with Biplab in this apartment all alone, about four years after Tilo divorces Naga (~2014). Having been suspended from his government position due to alcoholism, he has come looking for Tilo but is met only by a "hastily abandoned space" (148). With nowhere else to go, he bides his time by narrating to the reader his personal

[5] Rakhshan Rizwan advances an interesting reading of this stenographic capacity in her essay "Mixing Genre, Making Truth Claims: Human Rights Storytelling in Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*," in which she argues that "Roy's novel critiques traditional human rights genres such as the human rights report, and testimony, [and] expos[es] their malleability" (Rizwan 196). Rizwan's interpretation productively engages a specific dimension of the overarching problematization of (literary) representation that this dissertation identifies Roy's novel as pursuing.

and professional account of the last thirty years and by rummaging through Tilo's archive. Over the course of his section of the novel, Biplab's initially self-assured narration gradually loses coherence, provoking the reader to realize that he has been drinking steadily the entire time and, thus that, insofar as his recourse to alcohol has coincided precisely with the archive's disruption of the comforting jingoistic narratives on which his sense of moral and epistemological security had long been (precariously) predicated, his alcoholism is a coping mechanism for the guilt and paranoia precipitated by decades of organizing crimes against humanity. When, at the end of his section, Biplab is fading in and out of consciousness, he wakes to discover Anjum and Saddam entering the apartment. They identify themselves as friends of Tilo's who have come to grab some items she needs from a locked cupboard (the one part of Tilo's apartment that Biplab, ironically, could not access). When they open it, Biplab discovers that it is not filled with more artifacts from Tilo's archive but, instead, with "a rubber duck, an inflatable baby's bathtub, a large, stuffed zebra, some blankets, books and warm clothes"—with, that is, items for a baby (210).

The baby in question—who will come to be called, first, Miss Jebeen the Second and, later, Miss Udaya Jebeen—constitutes the hinge connecting the two major plots. In this interstitial section, Anjum and her companions from Jannat attend a mass demonstration against government corruption in New Delhi, which has brought together all the "surplus people" whom ruthless neoliberal governance has "banned" (or seeks to ban) from India's body politic (102). One of the groups in attendance is the Association of the Mothers of the Disappeared in Kashmir, which the novel uses to introduce the reader to the aforementioned tactic of forcibly disappearing Kashmiris, as well as to the coalition-foreclosing conflicts that inhere among India's dispossessed: "Most of those engaged in India's Second Freedom Struggle felt nothing

less than outrage at the idea of freedom for Kashmir and the Kashmiri women's audacity" (119).[6] The baby, in turn, "appears" as a dark-skinned girl who even these aggrieved mothers do not want. In this role, she enters the narration of this anti-corruption rally as a defenseless subject whom a nationally abjected people racially abject from birth:

> It was there, right next to the Mothers of the Disappeared, that our quiet baby appeared. It took the Mothers a while to notice her, because she was the color of night. A sharply outlined absence in the shadows under the street light. More than twenty years of living with crackdowns, cordon-and-search operations and the midnight knock…had taught the Mothers to read the darkness. But when it came to babies, the only ones they were used to looked like almond blossoms with apple cheeks. The Mothers of the Disappeared did not know what to do with a baby that had Appeared. Especially not a *black* one. *Kruhun kaal*. Especially not a *black* girl. *Kruhun kaal hish*. Especially not one that was swaddled in litter. *Shikas ladh*. (120-121)

Unwilling even to touch her, the Kashmiri women call out around them for the child's mother, to which nearby demonstrators respond with uselessly conflicting accounts. It is only when an unidentified woman (whom we later learn is Tilo) picks the baby up that the group discovers a note from her mother attached to a string around her waist, which informs the small crowd—referred to as the "spontaneously constituted Baby Welfare Committee"—that the child had been left behind in hopes that someone more capable would take care of her. In response, the crowd decides to notify the police, at which point Anjum suddenly rushes toward them and objects:

---

6 To clarify, this "second freedom struggle" refers to a significant Indian anti-corruption movement that took place in 2011. A brief overview of this movement can be found in Visvanathan "Anna Hazare and the Battle Against Corruption."

"'Police? We're going to give her to the police?'…'She's a gift from God. Give her to me. I can give her the love she needs. The police will just throw her in a government orphanage. She'll die there'" (122-123). Despite the compassionate premise of Anjum's plea, the crowd finds itself fearful of her temerity and "unnerve[d]" by her eloquence. A man named Mr. Aggarwal steps forward and denounces Anjum's right to exist in this space ("Who gave these Hijras permission to sit here? Which of these Struggles do they belong to?"); subsequently, a brawl ensues, which results in police intervention and the arrests of several people. In the midst of the chaos, Tilo hails a rickshaw and leaves with the baby. She is followed, however, by Saddam and one of the hijras who had accompanied Anjum to the demonstration. From the second story of her apartment, Tilo shares a glance with them, after which they leave a calling card for Jannat Guest House and Funeral Services in her mailbox. Not long after, Tilo and the baby—whom she immediately identifies as "Miss Jebeen returned"—move into Anjum's graveyard as its newest permanent guests. With their arrival, the novel's two plots converge, thereby opening Anjum and Saddams' stories to futurity.

By and large, this futurity is organized by the collectively assumed responsibility of the inhabitants of Jannat to care for, shield, and love Miss Jebeen the Second, whom they learn in the last few pages of the novel is the daughter of Revathy, a Maoist with the People's Guerrilla Liberation Army (PGLA). Revathy became pregnant with Miss Jebeen (or, as she had named her, Udaya) after she was captured and raped by local police in Kudur village. Because women are prohibited from carrying children within the PGLP, she was forced to choose between giving Udaya up and leaving the army. Unable to turn away from the Indian government's quiet

genocide of Adivasis,[7] she ultimately opts to leave Udaya at the demonstration, hoping that among those fighting against corruption will be someone who would provide for her daughter (431). To prevent Udaya/Miss Jebeen the Second (henceforth, after the group reads this letter, Miss Udaya Jebeen) from being returned to her, Revathy instructs a comrade to send the letter through which Anjum and the others learn this information only in the event of her death, which appears to have been only a few weeks after she returned to the PGLA. In response, Jannat's residents, recognizing Revathy as a socially abandoned soul whose death would otherwise go unmourned, immediately "decid[e] that Revathy should be buried with full honors in the graveyard. In the absence of her body, her letter would be interred in the grave" (432).

In assuming the responsibility of mourning Revathy, the residents simultaneously coalesce into a community joined together in both their triangulated identifications with Revathy and each other and their steadfast commitment to protecting Miss Udaya Jebeen:

> Each of the listeners recognized, in their own separate ways, something of themselves and their own stories, their own Indo-Pak, in the story of this unknown, faraway woman who was no longer alive. It made them close ranks around Miss Jebeen the Second like a formation of trees, or adult elephants—an impenetrable fortress in which she, unlike her biological mother, would grow up protected and loved (432).

The novel closes with this image of a graveyard community of the dispossessed safeguarding a child whose mother was forced by a revolutionary party combating genocide to abandon her and whom not even the Kashmiri Mothers of the Disappeared would touch. In doing so, it, I argue in

7 As *AlJazeera* reports, the Indian government is now utilizing the same "fake encounter" tactic against Adivasis as they have deployed against Kashmiris for decades (www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/12/4/indian-govt-report-17-adivasi-falsely-dubbed-maoists-shot-dead).

this dissertation, offers the reader hope that, against all evidence to the contrary, a collectivizing *communitas* can emerge from among contemporary South Asia's proliferative array of competing struggles and interlocking oppressions.

Diagramming Power: Error in the (In)Securitization of Kashmir

In November 2009, the International People's Tribunal on Human Rights and Justice in Indian-Administered Kashmir (IPTK) published the results of its investigation into the unidentified grave mounds that had gradually multiplied across the Kashmir Valley since the beginning of armed resistance in 1990. This report, *Buried Evidence: Unknown, Unmarked, and Mass Graves in Indian-Administered Kashmir*, brought to light a chilling dimension of India's "counterinsurgency" program in the region: India's security apparatus—composed of military, paramilitary, and local police personnel operating across a panoply of divisions—has covertly disappeared and murdered thousands of Kashmiris and then spectacularly entombed their bodies in unmarked, mass graves, thereby terraforming the once-beautiful Valley into a deathscape. Moreover, in the course of executing these disappearances, murders, and burials, security forces usually disfigure Kashmiris' corpses beyond recognition for the purposes of ascribing them factitious identities when reporting their deaths to the press and state officials. In turn, these pseudonyms—which recast the disappeared as foreign militants, usually from Pakistan—are narrated into imaginary accounts of armed conflict with security forces, which are always framed so as to legitimate these simultaneously real and imaginary murders. These accounts, or what are commonly referred to by scholars, activists, and everyday Kashmiris as "fake encounters," are officially recorded into state archives through a bureaucratic form known as a First Information Report (FIR). In sum, the IPTK's investigation revealed that the occupation has disappeared and extrajudicially executed thousands of Kashmiris, mutilated their remains, clandestinely buried

them in unmarked graves across populated areas of the Kashmir Valley (sometimes en masse), and then recorded their deaths into the official archive under fictitious names and circumstances. For the sake of concision, throughout this dissertation I refer to the aggregate assemblage of which these acts (kidnapping, murder, mutilation, burial, bureaucratic fabrication) and corresponding products (absence, death, unrecognizable remains, unmarked graves, fake encounters) compose as a *technology of disappearance*.

Although the IPTK's chosen title may lead readers unfamiliar with India's occupation of Kashmir to assume that these unmarked graves and fake encounters correlate to *ad hoc* attempts at "burying evidence," this organizing rationale is proven to be insufficient when we bring the occupation's legal infrastructure into view: any sustained investigation of the latter reveals that these security personnel operate in a regime of near-absolute impunity.[8] Moreover, the graves are simply too numerous and too conspicuously located for it to be the case that avoiding detection constitutes their principle of origination. Consequently, the technology of disappearance presents itself to scholars of the occupation without a readily identifiable *raison d'être*. Recognizing this need for interpretation and rationalization, the IPTK advances the following explanation: the technology of disappearance reflects "[t]he Indian state's…use of *discipline* [in the Foucaultian sense] and *death* as techniques of social control," where the graves function in a quasi-panoptic capacity to make Kashmiris perpetually aware of their inescapable surveillance (discipline), while inexplicable disappearances function to illustrate to them the ineluctable sword of the sovereign (death). Furthermore, the report avers that the overarching strategic aim of this social control is to "assimilate Kashmir into its territory" (*Buried Evidence* 9).

8 Duschinski "Reproducing Regimes of Impunity: Fake Encounters and the Informalization of Everyday Violence in Kashmir Valley" pp. 116-118.

While I agree that the occupation's coordination of these technologies effects "psychosocial regulation" (9), I argue in the second chapter of this dissertation that both the categorization of this coordination as disciplinary in nature and the concurrent extrapolation from this categorization of a teleological organizing principle should be reconsidered, in no small part because the mobilization of Foucault's notion of discipline contradicts the hermeneutics of power by which the latter was conceptualized. Foucault's most significant theoretical contribution in *Discipline and Punish* (*D&P*) was not his observation that people can be compelled to internalize norms and automatically enforce them in the absence of a persistent external threat of punishment—Nietzsche, Freud, and Deleuze and Guattari had already developed robust schemas for explaining this capacity—but, rather, his different understanding of power and, in turn, the method by which he recognized and rationalized it. Over the course of the decade following *D&P*'s publication, Foucault made several attempts at explicitly formulating this concept-method of power in his books, interviews, and *Collège de France* lectures, the most thorough of which is encapsulated in a chapter of the introductory volume to his *The History of Sexuality* series entitled "Method." There, Foucault repeatedly frames his model of power as a corrective with respect to "a number of misunderstandings…[regarding] its nature, its form, and its unity" (*The History of Sexuality, Vol.1: An Introduction* 92-93).[9] Foucault is vague about who holds these misunderstandings, but it is clear that he regards them as each correlating to models or definitions of power that are socially and epistemologically normative.[10] These are, respectively, state- or institution-centric models of power, the differential definition of power as the form of "subjugation" that is mediated through law (as opposed to

9 Henceforth I abbreviate this title as *HoSVol.1*.

10 I have avoided using the word "traditional" here because this implicitly privileges the state-centric model as the organizing target of Foucault's critique, which, as I argue below, constitutes a misreading.

physical violence), and structuralist models of power (92). In gesturing toward Foucault, scholars have often grouped these "bad" models/definitions under the same hermeneutic heading, the most common of these being that they all correspond to a "top-down" approach to conceptualizing power, by which it is implied that these models imagine power to originate in an overarching social, legal, and/or political authority, usually the state, from which it then emanates (unidirectionally) downward to society. Undoubtedly, one of Foucault's targets is this top-down approach and the reductive binarizations of human relations into variations of "those with power" vs. "those without power" (e.g., colonizer vs. colonized) predicated on it. However, we should not misrecognize this part of Foucault's critique as the whole, especially since doing so has, at times, led scholars to wrongly assert that Foucault deprioritizes institutions to the point of effacing them from the frame of analysis altogether. If Foucault takes aim at the notion of power long formulated in traditional theories of sovereignty and law, he also refutes the notion of power that subtends structuralist models of domination (e.g., capitalism), those models in which an otherwise static hierarchy between pre-established genres of the human (e.g., proletariat and bourgeoisie) is perpetually reinforced,[11] not by the top-down emanation of authority but by the force effects immanent to the overarching arrangement of the structure's constitutive parts, the collective interaction of which ensure its reproduction is a *fait accompli*. What is difficult about delineating this dimension of Foucault's critique is that his approach emerged from structuralism and retains many aspects of it, not least among them the decentering of subjective volitionism from rationalizations of power—for Foucault, "[p]ower relations are both intentional and nonsubjective" (94). The archaeological method that famously informs *The Order of Things* (*OoT*), which consists of excavating from the cultural and intellectual artifacts of a society in a

[11] I take this concept from Sylvia Wynter's "On the Coloniality of Being" but use it in my own way.

given epoch the *logos* governing its epistemology (or what Foucault calls its "episteme"), constitutes the distillation of these structuralist origins. Yet, I would argue that Foucault also used *OoT* and his other early histories (*Madness and Civilization* and *The Birth of the Clinic*) to progressively identify the limitations of structuralism. This is most clear in Foucault's remarks on psychoanalysis and ethnology at the end of *OoT*. For Foucault, psychoanalysis and ethnology disrupt the positivism of the human sciences, insofar as "they never…come near to a general concept of man…ceaselessly 'unmak[ing]' that very man who is creating and re-creating his positivity in the human sciences" (*OoT* 379). At the same time, this disruption is incomplete, halted by the aspiration toward transcendental knowledge (of the mind, of human cultures) that traverses these formations in their entirety. It is this aspiration—this desire to form knowledge in exteriority to the conditions by which knowledge is possible—from which Foucault seeks to divest his analytics of power.

In other words, Foucault's approach to power breaks with structuralism, first, in his skepticism toward epiphenomenal continuity and, second, in his embrace of nominalism:

> Power is everywhere; not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere. And "Power," insofar as it is permanent, repetitious, inert, and self-reproducing, is simply the over-all effect that emerges from all these mobilities, the concatenation that rests on each of them and seeks in turn to arrest their movement. One needs to be nominalistic, no doubt: power is not an institution, and not a structure; neither is it a certain strength we are endowed with; it is the name that one attributes to a complex strategical situation in a particular society. (*HoSVol.1* 92-93)

Although here Foucault rhetorically frames nominalism as a definitional necessity corresponding to power's "nature," nominalism also names an essential feature of Foucault's analytic, one that enabled him to gradually apprehend that nature. In his 1978-1979 lectures at the Collège de France, collectively titled *The Birth of Biopolitics* (*BoB*), Foucault formulates this nominalist impulse as a particular guiding principle and retrospectively recognizes it as having informed all of his "histories," starting with *Madness and Civilization*:

> I start from the theoretical and methodological decision that consists in saying: Let's suppose that universals do not exist. And then I put the question to history and historians: How can you write history if you do not accept a priori the existence of things like the state, society, the sovereign, and subjects? It was the same question in the case of madness. My question was not: Does madness exist?…The method consisted in saying: Let's suppose that madness does not exist. If we suppose that it does not exist, then what can history make of these different events and practices which are apparently organized around something that is supposed to be madness? (*BoB* 3)

Notably, for Foucault (in contradistinction to his poststructuralist and deconstructionist peers), the purpose of suspending belief in the category of madness is *not primarily* to unveil madness as a socially constructed category and, as such, an unreal ontology. It is to bring into relief the network of relations of power-knowledge by which certain behaviors and appearances have become legible as "madness" and through which "madness" has functioned—like, and in conjunction with, delinquency and sex/uality—as a societal operator in the West, thereby enabling us to recognize that relations of power-knowledge are: one, never intrinsically restricted to the particular phenomenon, behavior, or social category on which they center or appear to

center but, instead, diversely intersect with an open-ended series of struggles; and, two, always and at every level constituted by and constitutive of processes of becoming and unbecoming, such that each dimension of their reality—their subjectivities (subjective and objective corollaries), their rationalities (strategies and tactics), their modalities of operation (techniques and technologies)—is perpetually reformed. However, reformation and regularity are not mutually exclusive. Foucault's point is not that these relations cannot regularly produce the same overall effects and, thus, assume the stability of a "structure," but that such stability is always, to some degree if not entirely, epiphenomenal, belying the processual vicissitudes of its re-production. Consequently, just as Foucault does not derealize institutional power but, instead, decenters it from the origin and then reconceives of it within a rhizomatic sphere of relations, so too does he not cast aside structures as analytically useless but, instead, works toward integrating nominalism into his deployment of them. Insofar as this nominalist perspective inherently breaks with top-down analytics, I would argue that the concept-method of power Foucault provisionally outlines in *HoSVol.1* extends from, manifests, and, to an extent, *is* this aspirational movement toward what we might call *nominalist structuralism*.

If this aspiration does not index a deficiency that needs to be remedied but, rather, constitutes a necessary and integral aspect of the nominalist impulse, it nevertheless makes it impossible to procedurally define Foucault's hermeneutics of power(-knowledge). In and of itself, this is not a problem. In fact, Foucault actively dissuades his readers from internalizing even the small list of "rules" that he proffers in his chapter on method as "methodological imperatives," instead framing them as "cautionary prescriptions" (98). However, because Foucault's concepts are often more concrete and delimitable than his (concept-)methods, it is common for scholars to: one, deracinate the former from the latter; two, metonymically reduce

his methods and theories to these unmoored concepts in the course of their deployment (usually through some philosophically ablative use of the adjective "Foucaultian"); and three, fail to recognize when de-methodologized applications of his concepts may inadvertently *conceal* (part of) the rationality of power they purport to lay bare.[12] This is not to say that those applications may not reveal something else, nor am I implicitly arguing that Foucault should have the last word on interpreting and schematizing power and that, correspondingly, we should punish methodological deviancy from his divine law. At the same time, one of the overarching arguments of this dissertation is that Foucault's methods provide a way to thinking in and through Arundhati Roy's reading of the technology of disappearance in *The Ministry of Happiness*, which offers a more nuanced and careful portrait of the technology than that advanced by the IPTK. Indeed, I aim to demonstrate that Roy's approach to diagramming power aligns with Foucault's nominalist structuralism, insofar as it takes the relational understanding of power as the analytic basis by which it speculatively depicts the political effects of the technology of disappearance through mapping out the epistemological conditions of possibility and necessary consequences of its deployment. In chapter two, inspired by this confluence between Roy and Foucault, I develop my own diagram of the technology of disappearance as it operates in Indian-administered Kashmir. Here, I confine myself to briefly detailing the IPTK's own account of this technology and then describing how Roy's narrative complicates their analysis.

In the IPTK's rationalization of the technology of disappearance, there is, I argue, a consequential lack of fit between its hermeneutics of power and the phenomenon under

12 There are, of course, other factors, such as the neoliberalization of the humanities, that contribute to these citational problems and their regularity. Moreover, I am in no way arguing that these problems are restricted to citations of Foucault. Yet, at the same time, there are undoubtedly features of Foucault's citationality that appear relatively unique and, at the very least, warrant further examination.

examination, one that the IPTK attempts to manage through grammatically eliding the security forces from the frame of analysis when their actions exceed the explanatory capacity of its schema. In particular, this elision appears when the IPTK describes the process by which the graves are constructed and the disappeared are interred:

> [P]rior to the delivery of the bodies to the 'secret graveyards' security forces personnel selected local male residents or professional gravediggers, usually those respected within the local community, and asked that graves be prepared to bury the dead…In the process of soliciting their labour, gravediggers and caretakers were routinely intimidated and not remunerated for their services.
>
> In Islamic religious ethos and the *Shari'at*, death, and care of the dead, is interpreted as a directive to the living, linked to atonement and forgiveness. Gravediggers and caretakers attempted burial of the corpses in accordance with such tradition…For gravediggers and caretakers, the requirement of burial of the dead was prioritized over *whose* body was being inhumed, and its possible identity and political affiliation or non-affiliation. (*Buried Evidence* 12)

Notably, precisely when the IPTK should explain *why* the security personnel solicit local gravediggers for disposing of these bodies, it shifts perspective from the former to the latter. This shift occurs in two stages. In the first paragraph, the IPTK progressively uses passive voice to grammatically repress the security forces from the process being described, to the point that by the final sentence not only does it resort to a dangling modifier, but it also elides the grammatical subject altogether, thereby displacing subjective agency onto the actions' grammatical objects. The second paragraph then completes this displacement by explicitly situating the gravediggers as grammatical subjects. At first glance, it can appear that the IPTK privileges the gravediggers'

perspective in the second paragraph merely to demonstrate that even under extreme duress, the co-opted Kashmiris strive to give the disappeared burials commensurate with Islamic ethics of caring for the dead. Yet, insofar as the reader has just been told that these custodians of the dead are being forced (presumably at gunpoint) to carry out these burials, it is unclear what prioritization, or who is doing the prioritization, the IPTK is referring to. Whereas "the requirement of burial of the dead" may seem to gesture to these gravediggers' adherence to religious doctrine concerning the deceased, the diction is strangely catachrestic, insofar as "responsibility of burying the dead" would be more appropriate for highlighting a conscientious, volitional ethical choice. This slippage between requirement and responsibility, I suggest, indexes a contradiction between this aspect of the technology of disappearance and the overarching rationalization of the latter that the IPTK advances. What the IPTK appears to avoid admitting into its frame of analysis is the (rhetorically inconvenient) reality that the occupation has, in general, "prioritized" arranging some form of proper burial for those whom it secretly murders and, in death, often mutilates beyond recognition. If so, then the IPTK's abrupt shift in perspective constitutes a sublative displacement, one that enables the IPTK to address the unexpected and at-first inexplicable commitment to funereal ethics on the part of the occupation while simultaneously framing the Kashmiri gravediggers as the sole bearers of that commitment. This defense mechanism, while understandable, precludes the IPTK from recognizing that, in addition to terraforming the Valley into a terrorizing deathscape, the burials may also serve other purposes, principally those related to managing relations of power among the occupation's various forces. This contradiction in the IPTK's analysis of the technology of disappearance indexes the necessity of understanding power from a perspective that prioritizes not only those on whom the power is being used against, but also those that deploy it.

***

In *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*, Major Amrik Singh secretly disappears and executes a neurodivergent Kashmiri man, Gul-kak Abroo, detonates his corpse, and then enters the account of his murder into the official record as a fight between security forces and a high-ranking commander for the *tehreek*: "In this way the prisoner who left the boat as Gul-kak Abroo returned as the mortal remains of the dreaded militant Commander Gulrez, whose capture and killing would earn his killers three hundred thousand rupees" (*TMOUH* 384). Although Gul-kak's remains are not clandestinely buried in an unmarked grave but, instead, are given over to local Kashmiris so that a public funeral can be held, it is quite clear that this "fake encounter" reflects Roy's incorporation of the broader technology of disappearance into her Kashmir plot and that, thus, Gul-kak's forced disappearance is the novel's metonym for those disappeared by the occupation: despite the fact that a body is interred and the identity of that body is a forgery. At first glance, it can appear that Roy's purpose in doing so amounts to little more than highlighting a modality of violence used by the occupation that has rarely been noted in international media and framing this violence as unequivocally unjustifiable. Unjustifiable, because Roy strategically mobilizes one of the constitutive aporias of Western jurisprudence—that is, neurodivergence—so as to manifest Gul-kak as a figure of total innocence.[13] Roy's reliance on figuration is a problem that I extensively analyze in chapters three and four with respect to how the novel conceptually utilizes—indeed, allegorizes—hijraness. However, whereas with Anjum the novel periodically contracts an otherwise complex, nuanced character to a primordial drive for gendered completeness that it perceives and projects as the foundation of intersex ontology, with Gul-kak it barely develops him beyond the innocence with which he is

13 See lectures four through six of Foucault's *Abnormal* pp. 81-166.

intrinsically identified (much in the same way as it constructs the innocence of Musa's murdered daughter, Miss Jebeen the First).[14] No doubt, this characterization of Gul-kak is motivated, in part, by Roy's desire that her depiction of the occupation's violence interest her readership in Kashmiris' plight.[15] However, when we trace the effects of Gul-kak's murder beyond the devastating scene in which it is rendered, it becomes apparent that his death is not merely an illustrative example of the technology of disappearance, but the central narrative node from which Roy *diagrams*, in a novelistic, speculative mode, this technology. She does so by reverse-engineering from an imaginatively (re)constructed scene of disappearance the conditions of its production (most notably, its principal actors and the relations of power between them) and the polyvalent effects of its conditioned deployment. In Roy's use of it, speculative diagrammatization, I argue, not only constitutes a narrative-based hermeneutic of power, but this hermeneutic is more analytically and ethically calibrated to the technology of disappearance than is that of the IPTK's.

---

14 By virtue of this similar stylization, the novel regrettably affirms injurious associations between neurodivergence and underdevelopment. In fact, it can be argued that Roy's naming convention enjoins these characters even more closely to one another, insofar as, one, "Gul" roughly translates to "rose" or "flower" in Kashmiri and, two, the novel utilizes flower imagery to visually render Miss Jebeen's bloodied corpse: "In the last photograph of her, the bullet wound looked like a cheerful summer rose arranged just above her left ear. A few petals had fallen on her kaffan, the white shroud she was wrapped in before she was laid to rest" (*TMOUH* 316). At the same time, this symbolic web connecting Gul-kak and Miss Jebeen is undoubtedly part of a larger rhetorical game on Roy's part. Historically, Kashmir has been fetishized by its conquerors as a garden of heavenly pulchritude. In turn, the current occupation's propaganda campaign has widely mobilized this conceit in order to situate armed resistance to its colonial rule as monstrous terrorists bringing ruin to paradise. Consequently, in associating Gul-kak and Miss Jebeens' murders with flowers, Roy does two things. First, she reorients the garden metaphor such that Kashmir's "flowers" are recognized as its people, thus rejecting the symbolic opposition between Kashmiris (people) and the Kashmir Valley (land) that is normatively engendered by the occupation's deployment of this metaphor. Second, by tethering the occupation to the death of flowers in the symbolic order, she displaces the opposition between life and destruction back onto the Indian state, such that the latter is figured as the imminent threat to Kashmir's "beauty."

15 Moreover, I would argue that the excessive sympathizability of Gul-kak's character reflects an anxious compromise on Roy's part with the political environment in which any discourse on Kashmir that aspires to efficacy must circulate. That is, Roy understands that state propaganda (and, as I show in chapter four, militant propaganda) of Kashmir specializes in criminalizing nuance and, as such, frames Gul-kak and Miss Jebeen as quasi-agentless subjects in order to proleptically shield them from Islamophobic appropriation.

Let me briefly explain my terminology, as well as signpost the complexity of Roy's hermeneutic. First, "diagrammatization" references Foucault's description of Bentham's panopticon in *DP* as "the diagram of a mechanism of power reduced to its ideal form" (*DP* 205). In my use of "diagram" as a verb, then, I seek to index the methodological overlap between Foucault and Roy, an overlap that I will describe at length. Through the use of diagram, I also mean to highlight Roy's use of figuration, metonymy, and allegory as the interrelational foundation of her narratives' structures—again, a tendency that I will elaborate in a moment. As for "speculative," my aim in using this adjective is to highlight that Roy's hermeneutic refuses to impose pre-established schemas of rationalization on the phenomenon it attempts to understand and, instead, allows the technology's *potential rationalities* to emerge in the course of its efforts to narratively assemble its different components, sites, and effects into a coherent portrait of (dys)function. By potential rationalities, I mean, first, that Roy allows the overarching strategy of this technology to be provisionally and heterogeneously composed from the interactions between *multiple tactics*, including those that conflict with one another and with the overarching strategy (i.e., overdetermination) and, second, that at pivotal junctures in her diagram she conscientiously refuses to determine for the reader the causal structure at work, instead keeping multiple possibilities open and leaving the operative *logos* in a state of irresolvable potential. At a simpler, though still pertinent, level, I also use "speculative" to draw a line of distinction between what Roy is doing with Gul-kak's forced disappearance and the notion of representation. As I touched upon in my overview of the IPTK's report, a key feature of the technology of disappearance in the occupation of Kashmir is that it effaces the record of its deployment. Insofar as disappearance precludes presentation, there obviously cannot be anything to the effect of a *re*-presentation of this form of violence. Thus, even the scene of Gul-kak's

murder, isolated as it is from its wider narrative network, must be recognized as the product of speculation. This distinction between speculation and representation enables us to see that Roy's enactment of this hermeneutic is operative within the field of power that it diagrams: it functions as a counter-mechanism against fake encounters, making "appear" the (speculative) scene of death that is itself rendered unknowable by the technology of disappearance.

There are two intertwined rhetorical-analytic dimensions of Roy's narrative-based hermeneutic of power: diagnostic and meta-diagnostic. By diagnostic, I mean that, on one level, this hermeneutic seeks to identify disappearance's conditions of possibility, means of operation, and concomitant effects. By meta-diagnostic, I mean that, at another level, this hermeneutic attempts to disrupt any relation of epistemic authority the reader may form toward its diagnostic "knowledge." At the same time, this "meta" aspect does not index an arbitrarily imposed self-relationality but, rather, the novel's effort to simulate in its relationship to the reader the epistemology of disappearance that its speculative diagram reveals. In particular, the novel utilizes Biplab as its mouthpiece for speculative diagramming the epistemology of security in the occupation of Kashmir, in such a way as to enable the reader to better understand Roy's diagnostic findings *and* to subvert the reader's own security in that understanding.

***

In purposely misidentifying Gul-kak Abroo's extrajudicial execution to state intelligence as the neutralization of the "dreaded militant Commander Gulrez," Major Amrik Singh inadvertently catalyzes a polyvalently ironic misrecognition on the part of Biplab, the consequences of which are substantial for the narrative as a whole. For reasons I discuss, Biplab intuits from this communication that "Commander Gulrez" is a pseudonym for Musa and, as such, presumes the latter to now be dead. By virtue of his illegibility vis-à-vis the state, Musa is

then able to assume the role of shadow operative for the Kashmiri *tehreek*. That is, the occupation's forced disappearance of Gul-kak Abroo unwittingly enables the *elective* "disappearance" of Musa. Years later, in his capacity as shadow operative, Musa arranges what he calls, in his conversation with Biplab at the end of the novel, the "self-destruct[ion]" of Singh, the "Butcher of Kashmir," who, despite having escaped punishment for his crimes in Kashmir by securing asylum in the United States, ultimately murders his wife and children before taking his own life. As Musa goes on to explain, he and other Kashmiris living in the US facilitate Singh's self-destruction by inducing in him something akin to a lethal degree of paranoia:

> "I didn't go to the US looking for him. I was already there on some other work when I saw the news in the papers that he had been arrested for assaulting his wife. His residential address became public…So I went to Clovis, made some inquiries and finally found him at a truck-washing garage and workshop where he would go to have his truck serviced. He was a completely different person from the murderer we knew…He did not have that infrastructure of impunity within which he operated in Kashmir. He was scared and broke. I almost felt sorry for him. I assured him that I was not going to harm him, and that I was only there to tell him that we would not allow him to forget the things that he had done…Other Kashmiris had also read the news. So they began to arrive in Clovis to see how the Butcher of Kashmir lived now…They turned up at his workplace, at his home, at the supermarket, across the street, at his children's school. Every day. He was forced to look at us. Forced to remember. It must have driven him crazy. Eventually it made him self-destruct." (*TMOUH* 438-439)

Before relating the full significance of this death by paranoia, I want to draw attention to two important points of context. First, Major Amrik Singh is Roy's thinly-veiled fictionalization of a real person, Major Avtar Singh, who, like his corresponding character in the novel, became infamous in Kashmir in the mid-1990s for disappearing and brutally murdering a well-regarded human rights lawyer, Jalil Andrabi (in *TMOUH*, Jalib Qadri).[16] Avtar Singh moved to California and in 2012 committed familicide shortly before killing himself (*Kashmir at the Crossroads* 102-103). Second, the novel implicitly and explicitly connects Amrik Singh's "self-destruction" to what I call the "unravelling" of Biplab. Both sides of this connection are present in Musa's conversation with the latter. Over the course of the novel, it is revealed that despite Biplab's self-fashioning as an esteemed geopolitical and interpersonal authority, his work with the Intelligence Bureau has impaired him psychologically and led to a compensatory alcohol addiction. In turn, his alcoholism impairs his familial relationships and forces the Bureau to render his employment contingent upon treatment at a recovery center. However, when it is time for Biplab to check in for treatment, he instead goes to the apartment he has rented to Tilo, at which point his narration to the reader begins (meaning that Biplab's entire narration is a symptom of his treatment avoidance). While waiting indefinitely for Tilo, Biplab fills his time by drinking and sifting through her and Musa's archive on the occupation of Kashmir and its resistance. In the process, he discovers a small, decontextualized dossier on Major Amrik Singh and his fate. Reading this dossier leads Biplab to wonder if Musa killed him, thus precipitating their dialogue at the end of the novel. This is all to say, the novel nests Biplab's query about the conditions of Singh's death

16 Andrabi's body (like Qadri's) was found "washed up in a burlap sack on the banks of the Jhelum river in Srinagar" (Bose, *Kashmir at the Crossroads* 102). In the novel, the security forces bring back Gul-kak's body after his execution in a "heavy, shapeless sack" (*TMOUH* 384). Thus, although Andrabi has a dedicated analog in the novel, it may be that the novel uses him as a referent in more than one way. That being said, it could very well be that Gul-kak is based on a specific victim.

within his own unravelling and, as such, guides the reader to recognize Musa's response as simultaneously constituting an apt description of Biplab's deterioration and its self-production. Moreover, the novel uses Musa's final words in this exchange to explicitly frame the narrative trajectories of Singh and Biplab as representing the ironic fate that awaits the neocolonial Indian state: "One day Kashmir will make India self-destruct in the same way…You're not destroying us. You are constructing us. It's yourselves that you are destroying" (*TMOUH* 439-440). While when decontextualized these last words may read as nothing more than a Hail Mary of naive optimism in the inevitability of the imperial boomerang, when we trace the narrative threads by which they are connected to both Gul-kak's murder and the fates of Singh, Biplab, and Musa, it becomes possible to recognize them as articulating a more narrow and grounded claim regarding the technology of disappearance: the overarching function of this technology is to "destroy" not only its "objects" but, by virtue of the modality of that destruction, its "subjects" as well.

Yet, should we attempt to delineate this relationship between the technology and the occupation's self-destruction in terms of direct causality, we repeatedly discover that the novel prevents us from doing so. This is not because the novel does not develop a more specific thesis about the technology of disappearance but that, as mentioned earlier, the novel articulates part of that thesis through an epistemological "meta" game it plays with the reader (though, importantly, the purposes of this game also extend beyond that particular articulation). At root, this game consists in arranging the connections between elements of this relationship so that the semblance of simple causality is apprehended by the reader at a certain level of generality, only for them to discover that the more that they attempt to organize these elements into a linear narrative, the more these causal links dissolve under the weight of previously unrecognized lacunae, impasses, and overdetermined effects. In other words, the reader has the impression that diverse action-

effects are in some way causally linked while being prevented from determining the precise nature of those linkages. More specifically, the novel provides the reader with enough puzzle pieces that they can apprehend several plausible arrangements for their collective composition, yet too few for them to be able to narrow this multiplicity down to a definitive schema. In order to make sense of these (dis)connections, the reader must recognize that part of the novel's purpose in setting up this "meta" game is, one, to represent the vexed relations to knowledge and knowing that are coextensive with the technologies of power and resistance in the occupation of Kashmir and, two, to guide the reader toward adopting an hermeneutic framework for diagramming causality and intentionality that is commensurate with the occupation's system of power-knowledge. In short, the fractured and contingent relations to knowledge and knowing for both the novel's characters and its readers constitute the basic, if insurmountable, epistemological conditions for any rationalization of power in the occupation.

Let us reconsider, for instance, the following summary of the links connecting Singh's forced disappearance of Gul-kak to the Major's ultimate demise: in purposely misidentifying Gul-kak's remains as those of the "dreaded militant Commander Gulrez" when reporting the encounter to Biplab, Singh, as I've noted, indirectly leads state intelligence to misrecognize Musa as this Commander Gulrez, thereby allowing Musa to operate as a shadow agent for the *tehreek*, in which capacity he later plays a role in causing Singh to "self-destruct." Reduced to its simplest form, there is a lie whose sequence of deleterious effects eventually circles back to harm the liar. In outlining the connection between the respective "disappearances" of Gul-kak and Musa, I have avoided attributing direct causality to Singh's lie because the novel is at pains to indicate that the state's misrecognition is complexly—and, most importantly, systemically—determined. On the one hand, the novel situates this misrecognition as co-produced by three

"actors," Singh, Biplab, and Musa, who respectively represent the paramilitary division of the occupation, Indian state intelligence, and the Kashmiri *tehreek*. On the other hand, the novel nests each actor's contribution in the others', thereby refusing to allow the composite matrix to be linearly decomposed into independent variables by the reader.

Since the novel appears to utilize this ironic relationship between Singh's lie and his fate in order to communicate something specific about how and why the technology of disappearance sets the stage for the occupation's eventual "self-destruction"--and, yet, does not frame the lie as directly determinative of its adverse effects for Singh—the reader is tasked with locating that meaning in the *conditions of possibility* for this relationship. That is, the reader must ask: What conditions the lie's content and enunciation? What conditions the misrecognition that the lie occasions?

To that end, we need to consider a set of conditions of possibility for the *content* of the lie, Singh's *enunciation* of the lie, the *tehreek's* knowledge of the lie, and Biplab's *misrecognition* of the lie. Regarding the content of lie: while Singh executes the lie in knowingly narrating a fake encounter and passing off Gul-kak's corpse as that of a high-ranking militant, the specific content of the lie has actually been set in place by Musa. As he incorporated himself into the *tehreek* after the murders of his wife and daughter, the latter had progressively dissolved his original social identity: "His ties to his old life were gradually (and deliberately) erased. Nobody knew who he really was. Nobody asked" (351-352). Consequently, when Tilo comes to Kashmir to see him for the first time since college, he informs her that he is known within the *tehreek* by another name, though not an arbitrary one: "'Gul is my little brother, *yaar*. We wear each other's clothes, we trust each other with our lives…We even share the same name.'

‘Meaning?’ ‘That’s what I’m known as. Commander Gulrez. No one knows me as Musa Yeswi.’ ‘It’s all a fucking mindfuck’” (371).

Regarding Singh’s knowledge of the lie: Bracketing for a moment *why* Musa assumes Gul-kak’s real name as his martial pseudonym, this decision to operate under the same signifier as the Commander proves inadvertently consequential for the *name* Singh uses in formulating his fake encounter, for during his brutal interrogation Gul-kak correctly identifies himself: “They hustled [Tilo] down the corridor into the dining room where she passed Gul-kak on the floor, being kicked and beaten by at least ten men. Where is he? I don’t know. Who are you? Gulrez. Gulrez. Gulrez Abroo. Gulrez Abroo. Each time he told the truth they hit him harder” (381). While it is apparent that Singh’s men are able to tell that Gul-kak is not the man for whom they have raided the HB *Shaheen*, the novel is purposely vague about the deductions constitutive of this disqualification and, by extension, what this disqualification means in terms of the positive knowledge they have about the militant for whom they are looking. That is, the novel does not tell us how much the security forces know about the “he” that they reference in their interrogation of Gul-kak. Are they merely operating off of a nondescript tip about an unnamed militant living on a houseboat and, correspondingly, infer that Gul-kak is not cognitively “fit” to be this person? Alternatively, have they come in search of a specific militant they have been tracking down? If so, does Singh think he is looking for an actual militant leader known as “Commander Gulrez,” or is that name only used internally with respect to the *tehreek*? Or, based on his tense encounter with Musa after the latter’s wife and daughter were killed—during which Singh had pressganged Musa into performing a refutation of Singh’s authority that was symbolically tantamount to “a public declaration of war with Amrik Singh” (348)—has Singh been tracking Musa all these years and, thus, raids the houseboat looking precisely for him? If

so, does he know about Musa's pseudonym? From the reader's standpoint, this last ambiguity is perhaps the most vexing, insofar as it impedes our ability to determine the gap between our knowledge about the lie (as mediated through the narrator, whom we presume to be reliable) and Singh's knowledge about the lie. Does Singh know that there is an important person in the resistance who goes by the alias "Commander Gulrez" and, as such, *consciously* passes off Gul-kak's corpse for this person? Or, is Singh completely unaware of Musa's pseudonym and smugly believes "the dreaded militant Commander Gulrez" to be a simulacrum of his own creation, its only basis in reality being the name "Gulrez" around which he constructs it?[17]

Regarding the *tehreek's* knowledge of the lie: it is not just Singh's intentions and knowledge that become opaque by virtue of this collusion between the fake encounter and Musa's duplicative duplicity;[18] such opacity is evident in the *tehreek's* response to news of the encounter as well. When Khadija, a resistance fighter aligned with Musa, comes to escort Tilo to the place where she meets Musa after the funeral for "Commander Gulrez," we learn through her that the funeral's "twenty-one-gun salute" (of which Musa is a participant) constitutes a calculated and coordinated provocation of the occupation. Yet, the novel avoids delineating this provocation's full rationalization by abruptly shifting to a broadcast-like prose style when introducing it:

> Khadija had news. The army had announced the capture and killing of the dreaded militant Commander Gulrez. Musa was still in Srinagar. He would be at the funeral. Militants from several groups would attend to give Commander Gulrez a

17 Perhaps this is part of a cruel joke referencing Gul-kak's seeming incapacity for the role Singh assigns him in death.

18 "Maybe. But you have no understanding of the depths of Kashmiri duplicity, Musa thought but did not say. You have no idea how a people like us, who have survived a history and a geography such as ours, have learned to drive our pride underground. Duplicity is the only weapon we have" (*TMOUH* 341-342).

> farewell gun salute. It was safe for them to move around because there would be tens of thousands of people out in the streets. The army would have to pull back to avoid an all-out massacre. (392)

The more one reads this declarative passage, the less clear it becomes. This is because the novel subtly extends its deployment of the declarative mood beyond the first five sentences, which are more-or-less objective utterances, to the final two, which communicate interpretive predictions in the service of justifying the resistance's decision to utilize this particular tactic at this particular moment, with this justification ambiguously correlating to either anticipated concerns or questions on the part of Khadija or to concerns or questions from Tilo that have been omitted from narration. In turn, this extension initially leaves the reader with the impression that important concerns and questions have been addressed, and to a certain extent authoritatively refuted, only to retrospectively realize that they do not know what those concerns or questions are or why they are important and consequently, that this rhetorical form functions to tacitly prevent the reader's skepticism from activating, even going so far as to use the past tense ("it *was* safe") to dissimulate the projected characterization of a future state predicated on a hypothetical prediction ("there *would* be"). If in indignation (or delight) the reader revolts against this coerced suspension of disbelief by attempting to reconstruct the absented concerns or questions, it becomes apparent how this particular tactic constitutes, in diametric opposition to Khadija's confident portrayal of it,[19] a significant and problematic risk: it was because a gunshot-like sound went off at the funeral procession at which Musa's wife and daughter were onlookers that the security forces opened fire, resulting in their deaths. Furthermore, the novel implies that Singh's decision to raid the houseboat is connected to a local protest from earlier in the day against his

19 Or what the narrator describes as Khadija's "matter-of-factness" (*TMOUH* 392).

military division on account of a forced disappearance it orchestrated,[20] to which it responded by shooting fourteen Kashmiris dead (380).[21] That is, past experience indicates that these militancy groups *cannot* have even relative proleptic assurance of this act's safety—it is incontrovertibly a risk, and, worse, a risk that the militarized resistance is assuming for the "tens of thousands of people out in the streets" without their knowledge or consent. Yet, this hermeneutically-induced disclosure does not open onto a revelatory truth about the resistance's desires or rationality hidden deep inside the passage but, instead, onto an epistemological impasse: we find ourselves foreclosed from knowing either the strategic assessment and negotiation by which this risk was collectively chosen or the projected benefit that the militants believe makes the risk worth taking. And it is in grasping at this absence of rationale that we discover that, as with Singh's lie, the novel has ensured that we do not know what knowledge underwrites this tactic. Do these "militants from several groups" know that the man who adopted the alias "Commander Gulrez" is not the man in the coffin? If so, in coordinating this spectacular display of grief, are they performatively buttressing Singh's deception of Biplab for the purposes of collectively securing Musa's elective disappearance? If not, and they sincerely believe that the "real" Commander Gulrez has been killed (a viable possibility, given that Musa says no one in the militancy knows him by his real name), then is the twenty-one-gun salute a retaliatory demonstration of force whose purpose is to intimidate the security forces into de-escalation (i.e., "despite our sectarian schisms, your murder of one of our best has united us")? Or, is its principal target not the occupying forces at all but non-militant Kashmiris, the point being that the militancy initiates

20 Keeping with the theme of ambiguous causality that I have been charting, the novel does not clarify this connection.

21 As part of its "shattered" structure, which I discuss in the final part of this introduction, the novel preemptively delineates this event through Biplab's narration approximately two-hundred pages earlier (177).

and organizes these acts of collective grief in order to transfer "knowledge" of the conflict to those outside of militant networks? Finally, if these groups earnestly believe Singh's lie, then it is not plausible to speak of their knowledge and tactical rationality in the aggregate because their belief is necessarily predicated on their simultaneous deception by one of their own (Musa). If so, this means that Musa's elective disappearance is polyvalent, aimed not only at India's security apparatus but at the resistance as well.

Finally, regarding Biplab's misrecognitions with all (mis)identifications we have discussed so far, Biplab's misrecognition is difficult to parse allegorically, principally because what precipitates it—Biplab learning that Tilo had been captured with "Commander Gulrez"—is so idiosyncratic that the resulting misrecognition appears to be an arbitrary and, thus, allegorically-insignificant error. However, while Tilo being on the houseboat the night of Singh's raid is pure circumstance, when Biplab's misrecognition is brought into relief with the novel's portrayal of him as a whole, it becomes clear that what is important is not the local context of this error but its structural conditions. It is important to note that the novel mediates the bulk of its epistemological "game" through Biplab's monologues to the reader. By utilizing Biplab as its mouthpiece for speculative diagramming the epistemology of security, the narrative renders all of the reader's attempts to work out the operations of the technology of disappearance but fragmentary "clues" that are possibly made in error. That is, the novel utilizes Biplab's extended first-person monologue and its compounding ironizations of this monologue to speculate that errors of this form are immanent to the *epistemology of security* that constitutes, and is constituted by, the regulatory tactics and techniques by which the occupation has approached the technology of disappearance in Kashmir.

Earlier, I noted that Biplab's extended first-person monologue in the first chapter entitled "The Landlord" is precipitated by his avoidance of treatment for the source of his alcoholism. Presumably because Biplab begins this monologue upon entering Tilo's empty apartment, the novel implies that its purpose is to be one of contextualization, particularly of Biplab's relationship to Tilo and the conditions under which she became his "tenant." For the most part, this means that Biplab teleologically organizes his monologue, albeit with many digressions and asides, so that it contextualizes Singh's call to him on the night "Commander Gulrez" is murdered. The novel, in turn, utilizes Biplab's framing of this event to speculatively diagram how state intelligence receives and processes the fake-encounter propaganda it solicits—vis-à-vis its "infrastructure of impunity"—from its paramilitary forces. In this regard, Biplab's first person aside to the reader immediately after recounting Singh's "excited" proclamation that "they had captured an A-Category Terrorist, a Commander Gulrez, a dreaded Hizb-ul-Mujahideen commander" is particularly important:

> This was Kashmir; the Separatists spoke in slogans and our men spoke in press releases; their cordon-and-search operations were always "massive," everybody they picked up was always "dreaded," seldom less than "A-category," and the recoveries they made from those captured were always "war-like." It wasn't surprising, because each of these adjectives had a corresponding incentive—a cash reward, an honorable mention in their service dossier, a medal for bravery or a promotion. So, as you can imagine, that piece of information didn't exactly get my pulse going. (180)

Through this aside, the novel conveys two things about Biplab in his role as a state intelligence operative. At the level of content, it indicates that due to the occupation's routinization of

fabrication via fake encounter, Biplab immediately assumes that Singh is lying—or, at least, hyperbolizing. At the level of form, in its dismissive, self-assured tone and its authoritative disclosure of submerged truths, this aside reveals that Biplab believes that his knowledge of this routinized deception (as well as his role in its formation) prophylactically protects him from the unknowledge that it proliferates. More specifically, as I demonstrate below, Biplab operates on the assumption that knowing he is being lied to sufficiently secures him from the distortive effects co-extensive with the occupation's institutionalization of lying because he believes that his hermeneutic prowess enables him to correctly identify the truth behind the lie. Yet, it is precisely in attempting to read between the lines of Singh's lie that Biplab convinces himself that the man Singh has killed must be Musa. One of the great ironies of the novel is that Biplab would have never assumed Musa to be dead if he simply believed Singh that some man named Gulrez was killed that night—which, in this case, is a nested irony, given that Gul-kak's real name is Gulrez and, as such, Singh's utterance was, unintentionally, true, at least with respect to the name he gives. I return to this game that the novel is playing with nested irony later. For now, what is important is the interrelation vaguely outlined in this passage between, on the one hand, Biplab's uncertain and unstable relation to knowledge, interpretation, and truth and, on the other hand, the occupation's technologies of securitization. In particular, what is important is why the novel suggests this interrelation conditions Biplab to believe his misrecognition in the absence of any empirical proof. To do so, I suggest, opens onto an understanding of securitization as born of profound epistemological and ethical, as well as political, *in*security.

To elaborate on the epistemological structure of the occupation that I have summarily outlined above, and to fill out my contention that it is best articulated as a state of insecurity, I offer two brief close readings. The first concerns Biplab's fantasies of (in)security by means of

narrative ironization, while the second introduces the occupation's use of paramilitarization as a basis for these (in)securitizing fantasies. From the outset, Biplab is at pains to characterize himself to the reader not only as someone who has access to privileged, classified information about geopolitical conflicts but, more importantly, as someone who can adeptly manipulate how knowledge and unknowledge circulate in these conflicts so as to arrange desires and enmities to the state's advantage. For example, in recounting Naga's transformation from an "unemployable intellectual on the radical Left" to a mainstream journalist working in conjunction with the Intelligence Bureau to disseminate state propaganda under the facade of human-rights activism, Biplab not only highlights his role in seducing Naga "to the dark side" (166), but gleefully draws attention to Naga's unwitting yet sincere hypocrisy while, by contrast, identifying himself as discerningly skeptical and perspicacious:

> Since his idea of professional integrity requires him to live by his principles, in order to remain a person of integrity, he has changed his principles, and now believes in us almost more than we believe in ourselves. What an irony for the schoolboy whose favorite taunt was to call me the "Running Dog of Imperialism" at an age when most of us were still reading *Archie* comics…I haven't met him in years, but I see him playing the National Security expert on those excitable TV shows—he doesn't seem to even realize that he's not much more than a ventriloquist's bright puppet. It saddens me sometimes, to see him so housebroken. (168-170)

Here, Biplab projects himself into Naga's life story as the ventriloquist who makes a puppet of him and, in the process, forms him into the caricature Naga had once accused Biplab of being. At the same time, the novel frames this projection (and the actual manipulation to which it

correlates) as a compensatory fantasy, one in which he cancels out the potential truth-value of Naga's perception of him by manifesting it in the perceiver. To be more specific, there are two intertwined fantasies at work here, both of which are protective, though in different ways. The first is the fantasy of hermeneutic omniscience, which, as exemplified in Biplap's response to Singh's lie, imagines that there is a threshold of knowledge beyond which one can reliably apprehend the epistemological "truth" in both deception and absence. The second is the fantasy of ironizing omnipotence, which imagines that a negative ethical "truth" of the "self" as engendered by one's injurious actions toward others can be nullified by forcing one's victims or accusers to (ironically) manifest, or appear to manifest, the same truth in themselves. Whereas with Biplab's misrecognition of Musa's death the novel does not reveal the constitutive error of the first strategy until it narrates Gul-kak's murder from Tilo's perspective, with Biplab's tortured moral relation to himself the novel is far less subtle in demonstrating that there is no (ethical) security in ironization. Witness his alcoholism, physical and mental deterioration, narratorial disintegration, self-entrapment in Tilo's empty apartment, countless anxious, cynical, justificatory, and/or condemnatory asides about the fascist tactics of the Intelligence Bureau, and, in this passage, compulsive fixation on a childhood taunt from decades earlier. Both of these fantasies are what I would call "(in)securitizing," insofar as they reflect the proliferation of imperceivable lacunae that attends to projects of security.

These (in)securitizing fantasies are significant because the novel frames them as part and parcel of the counterinsurgency strategy in Kashmir by which the technology of disappearance has become possible. This relationship becomes apparent in the course of Biplab contextualizing

Singh's call the night Gul-kak is murdered. As Biplab explains (to no one in particular[22]), the state's paramilitarization of the Valley has been effected, in part, through deputizing "reformed" militants whom it has convinced to turn coat:

> Our Ace of Spades was to be the Ikhwan-ul-Muslimoon, the Muslim Brotherhood, our counter-insurgency force, an opportunistic militant group that had surrendered as a group—lock, stock and barrel…Gradually its ranks were expanded by other disaggregated individuals…who began to surrender in droves. We had regrouped and rearmed them, and returned them to the fray…They had the kind of access to local intelligence that we could never hope for, and once they had been turned around, they had the advantage of an ambiguous provenance that allowed them to carry out operations that were outside the mandate of our regular forces. (176)

Here, what is important is *both* the strategy that Biplab is outlining and the "knowledge" that he extracts from the strategy's (apparent) success. For Biplab, the turnability of these militants serves as confirmation both of their epistemological status as puppets (opposite the state as puppeteer) and of the ethical vacuity of the resistance as a whole (thereby morally ambiguating the tactics the state has used to dismantle it). That is, as with the Bureau's arrangement with Naga, the novel implies that the "security" the state derives from its collusions with ex-militants is simultaneously real and fantastical. While to a certain extent this collusion destabilizes and debilitates the capacity of the *tehreek* to sustain itself as a large-scale, unified movement against the occupation, it also relies upon the diffuse dissemination of extrajudicial authority across a

22 To whom does he imagine he is speaking? In terms of the "real" contours of his extended and exteriorly directed monologue, the novel provides us no clear answer. I thus read him as giving an account of himself.

network of weak, ambivalent associations. The (strategically essential) tenuousness of these associations precludes the state's capacity to evaluate the risk it assumes in attempting to extend itself through them; as such, any epistemological, political, or ethical "security" that the state perceives itself as actuating through these collusions is an ideological fiction engendered by the institutionalization of fantasy-as-knowledge. However, the point here is not just that this impression of security and the "knowledge" upon which it is based are illusory, but that the affective and institutional structure of this fantasy is such that those who invest in it cannot afford to divest. Correspondingly, this fantasy engenders a dissociative and paranoid relation to knowledge, wherein the inveterate insecurity of the fantasy is recurrently reproduced, repaired, and repressed through the deployment of paranoid hermeneutics.[23]

The passage quoted above demonstrates precisely the insecurity of this fantasy. Biplab acknowledges that the state's collusion with the Ikhwanis makes the former dependent on the latter's "access to local intelligence that [the state] could never hope for" and yet, implies that he knows enough about them and the motivations underlying their defection from the resistance so as to not only safely manage this dependence but, additionally, to reimagine it as running in the opposite direction. In turn, he derives this faith in his interpretive prowess from his (frankly unremarkable) ability to rationalize their behavior vis-à-vis well-established structuralist models, as evinced by the significance (and satisfaction) he draws from being able to describe these co-opted Kashmiris as being on the state's payroll: "The only thing that keeps Kashmir from self-destructing like Pakistan and Afghanistan is good old petit bourgeois capitalism. For all their religiosity, Kashmiris are great businessmen. And all businessmen eventually, one way or

23 The point is not that Biplab completely believes this particular interpretation but that, like a good paranoiac, he believes in the truth-value of paranoia itself, a belief paradoxically predicated on extending incredulity to paranoia's insights. Paranoia is, in other words, the regulatory operator of the secure/insecure dissociation.

another, have a stake in the status quo" (174). That Biplab's belief in this totalizing Smithian assessment is sustained through dissociation is made clear when he follows it with Major Amrik Singh's backstory, through which the reader learns that in the year prior to the night of Gul-kak's death, Singh had spectacularly murdered Jalib Qadri, severely disfigured his corpse, and then disposed of it by sending it down the river in a sack. Due to the "somewhat excessive" nature of this act ("[e]ven by Kashmir's standards"), a committee was established to investigate Singh. However, although this committee enabled some fellow Ikhwanis to come forward as witnesses to Qadri's murder,

> one by one their bodies began to turn up. In fields, in forests, by the side of the road…he killed them all. The army and the administration had to at least pretend to do something, although they couldn't really act against him. He knew too much and he made it clear that if he went down he would take as many people as he could down with him. (179-180)

The novel counterposes Singh as the perfect foil to Biplab's assessment and the fantasy of (in)security of which it is a part. From within the regime of impunity that conditions the Bureau's paramilitarization of the Valley and the technology of disappearance, Singh emerges, at least initially, as an unpunishable (and un-disappearable) threat to the occupation itself.

The novel, thus, indicates that Biplab's misrecognition is at one with the epistemology of (in)security that is constituted by, and constitutive of, the occupation's approach to counterinsurgency. More specifically, the technology of disappearance functions through the systemic production of lacunae, thereby necessitating, in a compensatory fashion, that the occupation adopt an (in)securitizing paranoid relation to (un)knowledge. The novel simulates the resulting epistemological structure in the game I've indicated that it plays with its readers. At the

same time, this game also works to prevent readers from deriving from Roy's speculative diagrammatization a similar sense of epistemic authority. That is, the novel doesn't let readers form the same relationship to the knowledge it speculatively produces for us as Biplab has toward his ironization of Naga and the *tehreek*; indeed, his strategy is positioned as unsuitable as an extractable and reproducible procedure of veridiction. We do not get to feel that revealing a subject to be unwittingly caught in a self-contradiction (or arranging things so that that self-contradiction manifests) is an assurance of truth in and of itself. Nor, as readers, do we get to feel the illusory assurance of paranoid (un)knowledge. Rather, the novel's game ensures that our epistemic confidence is significantly reduced by repeatedly staging encounters with our own misrecognitions. Another way of saying this is that the game endeavors to keep us immersed in its speculative mode of knowledge production.

Allegorizing Resistance: "How to Tell a Shattered Story"

Roy's speculative diagramming of the technology of disappearance strenuously avoids depicting resistance to the occupation of Kashmir as a direct, intentional action extending from the oppressed to the oppressors. Instead, it outlines the occupation's self-insecuritization vis-à-vis its deployment of the technology of disappearance. Notably, across Singh's self-destruction and Biplab's unravelling, the novel represents this self-insecuritization ambiguously, insofar as its effects are not fully reducible to a direct recoil from nor a self-exposure co-extensive with power's deployment. Within the logic of the narrative world, Musa's relation to Singh's self-destruction and Biplab's unravelling constitutes the excess that precludes such a reduction, as the novel's signposts via his paradoxical description of the former: "I didn't kill [Singh]. He killed himself. But we made him kill himself" (*TMOUH* 438). As with Tilo's earlier response to learning about Musa adopting Gul-kak's name ("It's all a fucking mind-fuck"), Biplab's

reflexive aside here—"I had no idea what the hell that was supposed to mean"—is quite apt from the reader's perspective. Why does the novel situate Musa with respect to Singh and Biplabs' self-destructions so that he is clearly consequential to their production and yet the question of *how* he is consequential remains illegible? Thinking hermeneutically, we could reframe this question as: if, on the one hand, the novel approximates a Foucaultian hermeneutic of power in how it analytically attends to the technology of disappearance and, on the other hand, Foucault regards resistance as "the odd [term] in relations of power…inscribed in the latter as an irreducible opposite," then why does the novel's Musa-Biplab-Singh plot so assiduously anatomize the technology of disappearance with respect to its effects on those responsible for occupation, but does not appear to as rigorously or decisively delineate the resistance to this technology?[24] Although it inserts its metonym for the *tehreek*, Musa, into its reimagining of Major Avtar Singh's familicide-suicide as an *agent*, why do we not get a first-person narrator of the resistance in the same way as we do for the occupation (à la Biplab)? As I demonstrate in the fourth chapter of this dissertation, the novel does, in fact, extend its speculative hermeneutic to venture a portrayal of resistance. However, due to the ethical and political desires that inform its depictions of trauma and suffering, the novel conscientiously articulates its analysis of resistance, not through the actions of Kashmiri militants, but primarily through its hijra plot. For this reason, I now turn to these desires and their relation to the novel's multiplot, multiform structure as a whole, as well as how these desires inform my approach to critically reading the novel.

[24] Beyond implying that Musa chooses to adopt Gul-kak's real name as his own as part of an ongoing weaponization/dialectical reproduction, on the part of the *tehreek*, of the occupation's epistemological structure against it.

In the 1990s, the Delhi hijra Mona Ahmed was abandoned by her hijra family,[25] leaving her homeless and, most importantly, separated from her adopted daughter Ayesha.[26] Having experienced love's betrayal too many times in her life, she did not respond to this abandonment by attempting to reconcile with her family nor by soliciting another hijra household to take her in. Instead, she turned away from the "eunuch world" altogether and relocated to Mehndiyan graveyard, wherein she started living among a set of dilapidated gravestones whose epitaphs had long been effaced, claiming, nevertheless, that they "belonged to her ancestors" (Ahmed and Singh 6; Ponsford). At first, she instantiated this generational claim to Mehndiyan's necrogeography merely through repose,[27] her body the sole guarantor of the sacred space beneath her. Over time, she transformed her transgressive manner of inhabiting this space into a durable habitation, one whose ever-extending construction manifested her unfulfilled desires for community and motherhood. Such, at least, is the view proffered by Dayanita Singh, the photojournalist who brought Mona Ahmed to the world's attention in 2001 when she published *Myself Mona Ahmed*, a collection of emails and photographs through which Mona Ahmed relays parts of her life story:

> In the graveyard, where she now lives in a house built on her ancestor's graves, [Mona Ahmed] is building a palace. The swimming pool has already been dug out, but I have managed to convince her that even a waterfall and swimming pool will not make people want to rent the marriage hall she wanted to build. She also considered starting a pickle factory in the empty pool, employing Muslim women

[25] As indicated in the collection of photographs and emails about her life that she co-created with Dayanita Singh, *Myself Mona Ahmed*, Mona Ahmed maintained her birth name (Ahmed) alongside her chosen name (Mona). Accordingly, I refer to her as Mona Ahmed.

[26] Both in the sense of "unhoused" and in the sense of "without a home in the world."

[27] On "necrogeography," see Laqueur's *The Work of the Dead* pp. 123-133.

> who have nowhere to go…Forever full of new ideas, Mona would now like to convert the palace she initially built for Ayesha into an orphanage for Muslim girls, so she would be the mother of a hundred children, not just one. (Ahmed and Singh 13-15)

Focusing solely on this world-building dimension, we could argue that this graveyard home constituted for Mona Ahmed a site of ipseity—a psychically and socially marked territory through which the (performative) exertion of the sovereign's "right to hospitality" ("of choosing, electing, filtering, selecting [one's] invitees, visitors, or guests, those to whom [one] decide[s] to grant asylum, the right of visiting, or hospitality") makes possible the (re)formation of an ipse, a self (Derrida, *Of Hospitality* 55). That is, we could read her graveyard home as an architecture of renewed becoming in the wake of dispossession, as the material expression of her denying the unacceptable terms by which both mainstream society and hijra society would have granted her asylum and, instead, assuming for herself the roles of lawmaker and host. Indeed, in their eulogy of Mona Ahmed following her death in 2018, Vikramaditya Sahai encourages us to recognize the last two decades of her life spent as the (often, lonely and depressed) queen of her graveyard principality not as dialectical negation but as a dispassionate "refusal" of the world that would not accommodate her difference:

> Mona refused the world to refuse the loneliness it assigned her. A refusal is not a 'no'. A 'no' accepts the sovereignty of the question to which it responds. A refusal is dreamwork. In her decision to build a home, a wedding hall with a swimming pool or a school in a cemetery…Mona dream[ed] of, and worked towards, an otherwise" (Sahai).

Yet, for a number of reasons, any attentive reader of *Myself Mona Ahmed* is likely to be perplexed by the tidiness of Sahai's interpretation. First, while Singh clarifies at the beginning of Mona's opening letter to a "Mr. Walter" that "Mona Ahmed told the story of her life to Scalo's publisher [Walter Keller] in numerous emails," Keller's involvement is otherwise completely effaced; as readers, we are not privy to his emails nor how he directed Singh to facilitate her interactions with Mona Ahmed with respect to producing material for the book (*Myself Mona Ahmed* 5).[28] Second, as with other queer subjects across the world whose social abjection and exotification have made them perpetually desirable for ontological and ethnopornographic inquiry, Mona Ahmed appears to have manifested her intrinsic "right to opacity" through forms of specious, inconsistent, and paradoxical narration,[29] and through using this textual moment to aestheticize her own existence.[30] Third, whether as a consequence of a compositional force related to the above or as a non-intentional expression of Mona Ahmed's trauma, grief, and/or shame, the circumstances leading to her "exile" from her hijra household—and, concomitantly, her guru Chaman taking Ayesha away from her—are never clarified. In her first email, she

[28] Indeed, in composing this book, Scalo seems to have flouted most of the norms governing journalistic ethics.

[29] "The opaque is not the obscure, though it is possible for it to be so and be accepted as such. It is that which cannot be reduced, which is the most perennial guarantee of participation and confluence" (Glissant 191). Sahai may have been thinking of Glissant when they offered their analysis of Mona's elusive relationship with the camera: "Mona is a self, her own self, the 'myself' of Singh's book…Mona's 'myself' is an emphasis of her presence, an insistence, a refusal to capitulate to the insignificance assigned to people of her kind. The name that follows [in the title *Myself Mona Ahmed*] is only catching up with her. It is this self that refuses to be indexed in the photograph. It is a refusal to be captured by a camera or otherwise. Singh's book caringly offers us this opacity, presenting humbling images of Mona away from iconicity" (Sahai)

[30] Singh documents both of these techniques: "[Mona Ahmed] wanted to tell the story of being neither here nor there, neither male nor female, and finally, neither a eunuch nor someone like me. She would always ask me, 'Tell me: what am I?' I first assumed that a writer would have to tell her story, but after she dictated some e-mails to me, I realized that I probably underestimated her and that she could tell her own story, weaving together fact and fiction"; "Mona is extremely critical of her images and immediately rejects those that play, however inadvertently, on her oddness. She is also very upset that I never photographed her with my Hasselblad…But Mona must have known that her photographs with me were increasingly a fantasy. She would dictate, and I could never argue with her…I was never able to photograph her seductive manners, her coy side that would emerge in the company of my male friends" (Ahmed and Singh 16).

initially frames her dispossession as an inexplicable act of cruelty and kidnapping: "My daughter Ayesha has been with Chaman guru for two years now and has gone to Pakistan with the eunuchs. But nobody informed me. Chaman guru does not return Ayesha to me, because she feels that Ayesha will not have a good future with me" (5). Yet, in that same email, she recasts her separation as a sovereign choice: "I could not tolerate [the hijras' constant fighting] in my old age, and so I separated from them…I left my blood family when I was 17. I left my eunuch family when I was 60" (6). In her third email, however, Mona Ahmed implies that her struggles with depression and alcohol addiction motivated Chaman's seemingly drastic actions:

> When Ayesha was 4 years old, and I felt she was running more often to the other eunuchs in the house, I took to drinking, but I did not know what a serious problem drinking would become. I used to run away to the graveyard where my ancestors were buried. Between drinking and running to the graveyard, my whole life went upside down. Then, Chaman sold our house, while we had gone to the Ajmer Sharif. I returned and had nowhere to go, so I moved to the graveyard, and Chaman took Ayesha with her. (85)

If, then, Mona Ahmed's graveyard house operates as a site of ipseity, it seems also that she was deeply ambivalent and inconsistent in her attempts to construct a self; by installing herself in a graveyard, she was not just "refus[ing] the world," she was also inhabiting its negation of her. Her life-in-the-graveyard was one of becoming by means of abjection, or what I will refer to as becoming-in-unbecoming.

In retrospectively positioning Mona Ahmed as actively "work[ing] toward an otherwise" across her life, Sahai's eulogy draws upon a political-affective allegorization I would designate as *queer necromancy*. In queer necromancy, an abject queer subject is raised from the dead so

that their life—shorn of its accidents, reversals, contingencies, contradictions, meanderings, and scattered plots—can be narratively organized into a vector of escape from regimes of power, one often leading to some unspecified, but better, elsewhere. In this arrangement, the necromancer paradoxically situates the subject as the guarantor of this elsewhere by imagining their life as always-already exterior to the system to which it is counterposed: whereas most queers are only capable of negation via the sovereign-affirming "no," Mona Ahmed spoke back to power from the alternate space of "refusal." As such, the necromancer's tale temporally and structurally multiplies the dead queer through their revivification, making them function as the cathectable origin, trajectory, and destination for a collective struggle that it simultaneously interpellates in desiring individuals for futurity. That is, queer necromancy does not refer to attachments that we, as individuals, may develop toward dead queers and whatever infelicitous misrecognitions underlie those attachments, though it certainly calls upon and reaffirms the social currents that propel us toward those attachments. Queer necromancy, instead, indexes a particular discursive praxis by which some queer and trans liberation movements constitute themselves, wherein the lives of dead queers are transfigured into allegories of resistance for the purposes of engendering a communal "us." This "us" is communally defined by, on the one hand, our Janus-faced orientation back toward their lives (with whom we identify) and to the possibilities of better queer worlds striven for and embodied by those lives (for which we yearn) and, on the other hand, a shared sense of what constitutes the source of our oppression (from which we must be freed). It is this "us" that Sahai hails and politically stimulates at the close of their eulogy: "The task for us is to tether a practice of freedom from [Mona Ahmed's] loneliness."

As signposted by the discrepancies between Sahai's allegorization of Mona Ahmed and Mona Ahmed's account of herself, queer necromancy relies to a certain extent on derealizing—

papering over the complexity of—the subject whom it valorizes. At the same time, it also precludes the necromancer from recognizing other forms of relation by which they could identify with the dead subject and, by extension, prevents them from exploring other psychoaffective foundations by which political collectivization could be routed through that subject. This inability is evident in how Sahai describes their own encounter with *Myself Mona Ahmed*:

> Books were the most respectable way of bringing queerness home, no matter how illicit their solicitations. *Myself Mona Ahmed* offered me relief at a time when trans and *hijra* lives were less ordinary in the queer politics of Delhi. Today, six years after the historic judgment of the Indian Supreme Court recognizing 'the third sex', I continue to turn to Mona to learn from her refusal…[T]o read [Mona Ahmed's] life only as a struggle to live in her gender is to succumb to the pervasive power of its norms. Ahmed isn't just a boy's name; it is also the name by which her mother loved and protected her, a name she grew with, carried and resisted. Why must trans folx give up their pasts to live in the present? The breath between Mona and Ahmed is a contradiction, but also opens up to the possibility of play. In it, I find compulsion and autonomy—mobility, if not freedom. (Sahai)

As I discuss in chapter four, by her own account Mona Ahmed did not always, or even frequently, seem to experience her refusal to be categorized along the lines of binary gender as freedom and autonomy, as an escape from regimes of power that enabled her to evade transnormative compulsions toward disavowing her birth family and her gender phenomenology "before" "transition." If the name "Ahmed" contained the love of her mother, it also carried her mother's failure to protect her from her father's virulent abuse (which included multiple attempts

on her life[31]), as well as her mother's eventual abandonment of her.[32] Indeed, if "Ahmed" indexed her refusal to efface her origins, it was also the signifier of a melancholic attachment to that past that she could not relinquish. However, because Sahai encounters *Myself Mona Ahmed* in the midst of their own need to grieve the life-negating conditions of familial inhabitation, they figure the grief by which Mona Ahmed assumed her bigender expression as mourning—that is, as her having reparatively organized her psychoaffective relationship to familial dispossession. Such a figuration fails to leave space for melancholia, for the (uncomfortable, politically unpalatable) possibility that Mona Ahmed's lifelong struggle with depression and alcoholism, her ambivalent relationship to hijra stylistics of being, and her unique inhabitation of a graveyard were symptomatic of not only her untiring refusal to acquiesce to societal norms and to her recognition that those norms denied essential aspects of her reality, but also to the open wounds of losses she could not mourn. Thus, in trying to resolve their own grief through the narrative trajectory they cohere from the tattered remains of another dead queer's life, the necromancer preempts themselves from recognizing their own melancholia in their hallowed subject and, by extension, from exploring the political possibilities that emerge from allowing this resonant dispossession to form the foundation of collective relationality.

***

The Ministry of Utmost Happiness documents forms of injustice and resistance from across South Asia. Moreover, it brings these struggles into relation with one another by way of,

[31] See Ahmed and Singh pp. 47-52.

[32] "The early days [after castration and integrating into the hijra community] passed very well, but then I started to miss home and tried to go home, but [my family] did not want me back as I was a shame to them, as I had started dressing as a woman and had long hair. This hurt me deeply, but they did not want me to be seen anywhere around the house. They said, 'You are a eunuch, we want nothing to do with you.' My life became neither here nor there. Neither was I comfortable with the eunuchs nor with my family. But I also knew that if there was any place I belonged, it was with the eunuchs" (Ahmed and Singh 52).

at one level, global diegetic enmeshment and, at another level, local diegetic splintering. By global diegetic enmeshment, I am referring to the way in which the novel's two main plots—one concerning a hijra based on Mona Ahmed and one concerning the occupation of Kashmir—converge into one another via their intersections with a third (submerged, epistolary) plot, the latter of which is centered on the conjoined struggles of Maoists and Adivasis against the Indian military in the forests of Central and East India. By local diegetic splintering, I am referring to the novel's tendency, within and outside its narration of the primary plots, to detour into vignettes and/or commentaries of violence, destitution, exploitation, exposure, environmental devastation, etc. The novel prepares its reader for both global enmeshment and local splintering with its first page, which, similar to a preface, is formally set apart from the first chapter:

> At magic hour, when the sun has gone but the light has not, armies of flying foxes unhinge themselves from the Banyan trees in the old graveyard and drift across the city like smoke. When the bats leave, the crows come home. Not all the din of their homecoming fills the silence left by the sparrows that have gone missing, and the old white-backed vultures, custodians of the dead for more than a hundred million years, that have been wiped out. The vultures died of diclofenac poisoning. Diclofenac, cow aspirin, given to cattle as a muscle relaxant, to ease pain and increase the production of milk, works—worked—like nerve gas on white-backed vultures. Each chemically relaxed, milk-producing cow or buffalo that died became poisoned vulture bait. As cattle turned into better dairy machines…vultures' necks began to droop as though they were tired and simply couldn't stay awake. Silver beards of saliva dripped from their beaks, and one by one they tumbled off their branches, dead.

> Not many noticed the passing of the friendly old birds. There was so much else to look forward to. (*TMOUH* 5)

Much like Roy's first novel, *TMOUH*, wittily playing on colonial tropes, draws its reader in with ecological voyeurism couched in symbolically potent diction.[33] However, unlike that earlier novel, *TMOUH* suddenly interrupts its poetic seduction with its fourth sentence, introducing a pharmaceutical term ("diclofenac") that phonetically and semantically refuses assimilation into anything other than a surface-level, material imaginary—an imaginary that it then helps to construct by providing journalistic background for the term. Yet, as the passage continues, the novel allows metaphor and symbolic language to re-enter its narration of the scene (e.g., "vultures' necks began to droop as though they were tired," "[s]ilver beards of saliva," etc.), so much so that by the end of the page the reader suspects that the novel's closing commentary on the populace's relative non-observance of the systemic ecological destruction precipitated by its efforts to mitigate bovine suffering and maximize milk production constitutes both a condemnation and a lament that extends beyond the poisoned birds themselves. This suspicion is quickly confirmed by the immediate juxtaposition of the first chapter's title, "Where Do Old Birds Go to Die?," and its opening paragraph:

> [Anjum] lived in the graveyard like a tree. At dawn she saw the crows off and welcomed the bats home. At dusk she did the opposite. Between shifts she conferred with the ghosts of vultures that loomed in her high branches. She felt the gentle grip of their talons like an ache in an amputated limb. She gathered they

[33] For reference, this is the first paragraph of *The God of Small Things*: "May in Ayemenem is a hot, brooding month. The days are long and humid. The river shrinks and black crows gorge on bright mangoes in still, dustgreen trees. Red bananas ripen. Jackfruits burst. Dissolute bluebottles hum vacuously in the fruity air. Then they stun themselves against clear windowpanes and die, fatly baffled in the sun" (*TGOST* 1).

> weren't altogether unhappy at having excused themselves and exited from the story. (7)

Yet, even as this opening tales of the poisoned birds is allowed to acquire metaphoricity—allowed to operate as the vehicle by which the social and material dispossession of the novel's main character is introduced and represented to the reader—the novel superimposes the vehicle's spectral trace on the dimensionality of the tenor, refusing to let it dissolve into mere framing, refusing, that is, to let the signifier to become arbitrary in its disclosure of the signified. Rather, the signified turns toward the signifier's irreducible excess and aspires to make space for it, precluding their significance from effacing that which makes its signification possible.

Thus, it is not merely that *TMOUH* seeks to include more forms of dispossession and struggle than its predecessor. From the outset, the novel implicitly problematizes the erasures and foreclosed recognitions upon which allegories of resistance are normatively predicated. This problematization is made explicit in a poem the novel offers the reader near its close:

> How
>
> to tell
>
> a
>
> shattered
>
> story?
>
> By
>
> slowly
>
> becoming
>
> everybody?
>
> No.

By slowly becoming everything. (442)

Translated to more prosaic language, I parse the poem's opening rhetorical question as: What narrative form is adequate to the task of collecting the multitude of oppressions, dispossessions, and struggles within South Asia into a single frame of representation, such that mutual recognition, and thus collective resistance, among the oppressed is possible without, on the one hand, effacing the messy imbrications of hierarchies of oppression (i.e., the ways in which those who are the oppressed in one context are often the oppressors in another) and, on the other hand, subordinating the particular dynamics of each struggle to an overarching metanarrative of power (i.e., nationalism, religiosity, capitalism, patriarchy, casteism, etc.)? As for the solution the poem posits, that is more difficult to parse, since it indicates that the narrative form Roy seeks requires an ongoing, continually revising process of what appears to be both ontological accretion ("becoming" more than an individual being) and ontological abjection (the willingness to abandon the subject status of "everybody" for the object status of "everything"). Moreover, the target of this becoming through accretion-abjection—or, as I call it, becoming-in-unbecoming—appears to be both the storyteller and, as the superimposition of the "frame" preface onto the first chapter indicates, the stories themselves.

In order to flesh out the political-aesthetic and ontological dimensions of this process, it is necessary to recognize *TMOUH* as its proffered product. That is, *TMOUH* models, rather than thematizes, an intervention into the formal techniques by which allegories of resistance are typically constituted, thereby delineating a political-aesthetic line of flight from the cycles of oppression within which resistance movements, due to the collectivizing narratives that facilitate them, often wind up ensnared, or by which they have been co-opted from the outset.[34] At the

[34] I borrow the term "line of flight" from Deleuze and Guattari's *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*.

same time, *TMOUH* founds this narrative intervention upon a praxis of becoming-in-unbecoming that it derives from non-dialectical resistance practices it locates in, on the one hand, Mona Ahmed's inhabitation of the graveyard and, on the other hand, as Chapter 4 will argue, the psychosocial techniques by which Kashmiris have responded to debilitating melancholia. Consequently, I argue throughout this dissertation that *TMOUH* indicates that allegories of resistance, and the communities of resistance with which they are coextensive, must be predicated upon what I theorize as the radical accommodation of dispossession. This accommodation is comprised of a "shattered" form of relationality in which the dispossessed resists the dual appeals of assimilating difference into narratives of digestible smoothness and of alienating difference into narratives of nonrelational incoherence.

Chapter 1 The Historiography and Securitization of Kashmir

Introduction: Resisting Ressentiment Revisionism: Reflections on the Power of Historical (Un)Truth

For most of the last four decades, the Indian-administered portion of the Kashmir Valley has constituted the most densely militarized region on the planet, with there being approximately one security personnel for every eighteen Kashmiris ("Blinding Kashmiris" 778). This large-scale occupation by military, paramilitary, and police forces has formed a central component of India's security regime in the Valley since 1990, when the local resistance movement, having been illiberally ejected from the field of state politics despite popular support, took up arms against the nominally postcolonial nation, setting off what Kashmiris, resonating with the suffering and resilience of the Palestinians, often refer to as the Valley's first intifada ("rising up").[35] As the mass violence from this initial stage of the Kashmiri *azadi* (freedom) struggle died down in the late 1990s and, under pressure from the international community, India begrudgingly started to allow more movement into and throughout the Valley, scholars, activists, and journalists began detailing and investigating the various dimensions of India's "counterinsurgency" operation. As addressed in the Introduction, in the second chapter of this

[35] A useful introduction to the legacy of Kashmiri-Palestinian solidarity can be found in a short piece Ather Zia recently published in *Social Text Online* entitled "Intifada: From Palestine to Kashmir" (https://socialtextjournal.org/periscope_article/intifada-from-palestine-to-kashmir/). See, also, Zia's "'Their Wounds are Our Wounds.'"

dissertation I speculatively diagram the logic of the technology of disappearance as it functions in the securitization of Kashmir.

To render my work legible to readers unfamiliar with Kashmir, commonsense indicates that I need to situate the occupation in its "historical context," at least provisionally. Yet, to my mind and for this project, to contextualize in the linear, positivist fashion best suited for this pragmatic objective would itself participate in and belie a pervasive decontextualization, that of the inexorable articulations of power and procedures of historicization that pervade the occupation and its resistance. That is, I, the would-be pragmatic historical contextualist, find that my desire "to inform" on this subject is frustrated by an ethical and epistemological imperative immanent to it: any history of power must attend to the power of history that constitutes and is, in turn, constituted by its movement. As the preceding chiasmus gestures toward, this imperative invariably forces linear narration to involute back on itself and, by virtue of that involution, dimensionally expand, engendering a plane of first- and second-order ("meta") coordinates that cannot be assimilated to the form of a chronological timeline.

Before engaging with this problem, I should clarify what I mean by the "power of history." At first, it may appear that I am obliquely referencing an ubiquitous, obvious discourse—that history is always political, meaning both that the apprehension and formal organization of the past are indissociable from the subject position of its narration and that historical narratives exert force on the present. To an extent, I am reiterating this quotidian discourse but only insofar as it is a necessary part of a broader problematic concerning power and truth; moreover, as we will see, situating this discourse in relation to this problematic will force us to reformulate it.

For those of us who are not historians by profession (or Marxist by method), it may appear that the enunciation "history is always political" reflects a second-order operation in relation to the writing of history itself, but this perception is founded on a metaleptic inversion—by which I mean a rhetorical procedure of retroactively situating a concept as anterior to the discourse by which it is established, so that, one, the concept is no longer contingent on that process and takes on a first-order existence separate from it and, two, by extension, the discourse becomes perceived as a "meta" reflection with respect to the concept. Refusing this inversion and drawing from Foucault's reflections on the emergence of history as a discursive and political structure,[36] I propose that a narrative of the past becomes legible as "history" precisely through, one, positioning itself within a struggle over the "true" interpretation of the past and, two, metonymically inscribing this struggle within the political field as both an instrument and, as I will shortly argue, following Foucault, a manifestation of continual war. In other words, the aforementioned utterance—that history is always political—does not postdate history but constitutes its signature.[37] This is not a metaphysical nor phenomenological claim about how societies remember and encode the past. It is a claim about the discursive structure of history, the latter understood not as a specific academic discipline dedicated to investigating and narrating humanity's past nor as a generalized shorthand for that past, but as the norms of recognition and procedures of authorization by which the past's narratives are able to occupy the form of a society elaborating to itself its internal truth (sometimes, as with colonial histories, through

[36] This is a major theme of the entire lecture series entitled *"Society Must Be Defended"*. For the most part, though, my reflections are derived from lectures 6-8.

[37] By signature, I mean an utterance that signals and verifies a "presence (of Being)" (Derrida, "Signature, Event, Context" 388).

elaborating another society's "truth") and, thus, claim to constitute a rational-moral foundation for governing that society's self-relation (i.e., its politics).

In order to demonstrate more concretely how attending to regimes of truth problematizes the political and ethical bases of revisionism,[38] I turn to a recent attempt by Hindu nationalists to co-opt the truth effects of postcolonial historiography. In March 2022, Vivek Agnihotri, an Indian filmmaker, premiered *The Kashmir Files*, which takes as its subject matter the semi-coerced mass departure of approximately 100,000 Kashmiri Pandits (a regional term for the Valley's indigenous Brahmin Hindu minority population) from the Valley during the first few months of 1990. Prior to this mass departure, Pandits had constituted approximately 5% of the Valley's population, the rest of which was almost entirely Sufi Muslim; in the aftermath of the first wave of militancy, however, those proportions have tended closer to 2% and 98%, respectively. As I discuss later, while we can identify factors that likely contributed to this sudden population shift, a precise explanation has long eluded historians. To a degree, the lack of clarity around this event originates in its almost-instant communalization, most notably by Hindu nationalists.[39] In 1991, before a comprehensive independent investigation of the mass migration could be conducted, the two great pillars of this movement—the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh

[38] With this term, I mean modalities of historical production that frame their accounts of the past and the past's relation to the present as corrective counternarratives. Although this conception of revisionism is more-or-less in line with the standard definition, I should clarify that whether or not the narrative against which a counternarrative is proffered actually constitutes historical orthodoxy within a particular discursive milieu is irrelevant to the classification of the latter as revisionist in my use of the term. For my purposes, as will become clear over the course of this introduction, revisionism refers to a *style of historical enunciation* that draws upon and reactivates a certain ethico-political regime of truth.

[39] Kashmiri Muslims have also contributed to communal interpretations of this event. Sumantra Bose, for example, notes that "[m]any Kashmiri Muslims purport to believe that the sudden, massive mass exodus of Pandits from towns and villages across the Valley was engineered by Indian J&K's Governor Jagmohan—who returned to hold that office for four months in 1990s, from January to May—in order to defame the Valley's Muslims and enable the implementation of a no-holds-barred offensive on the *tehreek* (movement) against Indian authority. There is no compelling evidence for this claim" (*Kashmir at the Crossroads* 92). Moreover, Islamist movements have undoubtedly propagated more racially inflected conspiracy theories with the aim of justifying horrific violence against Pandits.

(RSS), a volunteer paramilitary organization responsible for formulating and disseminating the fascist ideology known as Hindutva, and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the RSS's political wing—facilitated the production of a text about the Pandits' suffering entitled *Genocide of Hindus in Kashmir*. As its invocation of genocide suggests, this text situates the mass migration within an overarching campaign orchestrated by Muslim "fundamentalist forces" ("in the name of 'Freedom of Kashmir'") to exterminate Pandits and their religion from the Valley (Jammu Kashmir Sahayata Samiti 6; 3). As proof of this "systematic genocide," this text makes many remarkable claims, including that: "more than 600 members of this community" had been murdered since 1989; these murders were principally motivated by the aim of "impos[ing] conditions which make the survival of this ethnic group difficult"; and these attacks on Hindu bodies did not reflect a sudden rupture of the Valley's social fabric but, instead, constituted the natural terminus of a decades-long Islamist movement to dispossess the Pandits of their private property and sacred spaces. This narrative framing is, as I said, a grotesque communalization of the mass migration and its conditions of possibility. For now, though, I bracket adjudicating its veracity. For our purposes, what is important about *Genocide of Hindus in Kashmir* is that it serves as the ur-text of Agnihotri's film.

Set in 2020, The Kashmir Files depicts Krishna, a young Pandit and university student, who, despite hailing from the Valley, has spent the majority of his life in Delhi, where he was raised by Pushkar, his paternal grandfather. Structurally a trauma plot—the epistemological and historical foundations of which I interrogate in chapter three—the movie is diegetically organized around (dis)closing the mnemonic gap alienating Krishna from his early life in Kashmir, a (dis)closure that is visually manifested for the audience through split-temporal videography. Through journeying back to Kashmir in the wake of his grandfather's death,

Krishna learns that his family did not die in an accident, as he was raised to believe, but instead were brutally murdered by secessionist militants during the 1990 intifada; more specifically, as the film's climax graphically re-presents, his mother, Sharda, was stripped naked and sawn in two, after which his older brother, Shiva, and some other Pandits hiding with them were shot dead, their bodies left to rot in a mass grave. Enlightened by this monstrous revelation, Krishna rushes back to his university and, in an impassioned speech, disseminates the "truth" of Kashmir to his peers, who, like himself, had been seduced into promoting anti-national, secessionist ideology by a radical professor blithely ignorant of the on-the-ground reality. The return of the repressed *qua* corrective history that Krishna simultaneously articulates and manifests—in his triple capacity as Kashmiri native informant, genocide survivor, and metonym for Hindu historical consciousness—is a modified version of the account proffered in *Genocide of Hindus in Kashmir*. As with its predecessor, *The Kashmir Files* characterizes the Pandit mass migration as a genocide. This time, though, the migration and its precipitating violence is situated in an epoch of recurrent, progressive religious cleansing extending back not to Partition but to the 16th century, when the draconian Nurbakhshiya sect of Islam (a Shia movement) first infiltrated the Valley and used violence and intimidation to force Pandits to convert from Hinduism en masse; from this vantage point, a sequence of Pandit "exoduses" becomes legible, the events of 1990 constituting the seventh such atrocity in the Valley's history. While Agnihotri's film shifts and significantly elongates the contextual frame of its predecessor, the rhetorical-affective technique it utilizes in order to root its claim of genocide in the past—that of what we might call serialization—is essentially the same. It is, by contrast, what the movie (vis-à-vis Krishna) appends to this series that reflects a rearticulation of history and power that necessitates some reflection: "This was their seventh exodus. And it wasn't an ordinary exodus. This time it was a

genocide. And the story doesn't end here. They faced another genocide. And neither Araqi nor the Terrorists nor the State were responsible for it. But you and I were responsible for it…When we decided to remove them from our hearts and minds. And this was the real genocide" (*The Kashmir Files* 2:24:17). Having already annexed to itself a privileged relation to truth by casting its ventriloquist (Krishna) in the survivor role, here the movie attempts to extend that manufactured epistemological-moral authority by using catachresis to assert a claim over the meaning of genocide, one that implicitly crosses out the term's official definition (as established by international law, the arena in which it was originated). The film gesturally superimposes on the legal notion of genocide the semblance of a "truer" formulation: that genocide's historical dimension—the extent to which its violence, by virtue of its annihilating nature, erases itself from public memory—constitutes its most essential reality. Of course, in making this claim, the movie is not sincerely attempting to redefine genocide. If anything, one primary function of this assertion is to suspend the term's technical meaning in a state of indecision—so as to render the category less useful to the victims of state and Hindu nationalist violence—while retaining its affective capacity. In and of itself, this semantic negation reflects an intriguing strategic reversal with respect to *Genocide of Hindus in Kashmir*, insofar as the latter not only cites, at length, the definition of genocide adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1948 but also includes the entries for "genocide" across *four* reference books.[40] That is, in 1991, the RSS booklet formulated its identification of the Pandit exodus with genocide from within the framework of international

[40] The paragraph is too stunning not to reproduce: "According to the Oxford Advance Learner's Dictionary of Current English, Genocide is extermination of a race or community by mass murder or by imposing conditions that make survival difficult. The Webster Dictionary defines Genocide as deliberate mass murder of race; people or minority group. The Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary says that Genocide is deliberate extermination of a race or other group; one who exterminates or approves extermination of a race, etc. Genocide is the deliberate and systematic destruction of a racial, religious, political, or ethnic group, according to the Encyclopaedia Britannica" (*Genocide of Hindus in Kashmir* 36).

law, thereby appealing to it *both* as the measure of truth and the procedure by which truth is manifested. *The Kashmir Files*, on the other hand, manifests the truth of its claim not through juridical argumentation but through affectively implicating its audience as culpable participants in the violence it names *precisely* to the extent that they do not accept its claim and, by extension, agree to perform that acceptance by sanctioning retaliatory violence.

In highlighting this insidious interpellation, my aim is not merely to "expose" the history recounted by the film as sophistic propaganda and, by extension, false. On the contrary, my argument is that the mechanics of that sophistry should call into question the conditions under which such an exposure could effectively resist it. In fact, *The Kashmir Files*, and the Hindu nationalist movement more widely, exerts force on its national and international audiences by coopting the epistemological-moral authority of a modality of historicization that I call ressentiment revisionism. By this, I mean a modality of historical correction that originates in and promotes a narrow, reductive conception of justice—that of revenge and reversal. Because ressentiment revisionism constitutes one of the molds in which counterhistories are cast, including those of Hindu nationalists as well as, at times, those who resist the occupation, I introduce it here in terms of more conventional history "proper."

Earlier, I argued that "history" is the matrix through which particular narratives of the past are invested with the authority to direct and justify political action in the present. Moreover, as attested by the conflation of process and product endemic to the word itself ("history" commonly being used to refer both to the past and its narration), the very existence of this matrix is usually concealed in its deployment. There are two major effects of this concealment. First, it actualizes the condition of its purported exigency, that condition being a relation of potentialized immanence between power and the past's narration. That is, this dissimulation naturalizes

narrative engagement with the past as an extension of politics, making it appear that these stories automatically constitute a force vector, though one whose scalar multiplier may be suspended *in potentia*, without, however, that suspension negating the threat of its instant, catastrophic actualization. In other words, historicization constitutes the past's narration as an autonomous security risk within the political field, which both distorts the complexity of the power relations in which history operates as a technology and, ironically, performatively reduces that complexity to a real degree. Second, this naturalized relationship between history and power works to assimilate contemporary sociopolitical struggles, both discursive and material, to "historical" oppositional categories (Hindus versus Muslims, for instance), thereby casting politics as the arena in which permanent, continuous wars coextensive with the social body are fought. The logic of this formulation is encapsulated in the well-circulated truism "history is written by the victors," which, in addition to affirming the equation of history and power, implies that societies invariably incorporate and preserve the conflicts by which they are established, conflicts in which history simultaneously serves as the medium of representation and one of the primary weapons. As such, the history~politics equation carries within it a myopic and dangerous conceptualization of politics as being, to use Foucault's inversion of Clausewitz's aphorism ("war is the continuation of politics by other means"), "the continuation of war by other means (*"Society Must Be Defended"* 15-16). In turn, according to Foucault, historical knowledge constitutes itself on the basis of an "unavoidable connection between war and history and…between history and war," a connection that constitutes such knowledge's *raison d'être* and its limit condition:

> No matter how far back it goes, historical knowledge never finds nature, right, order, or peace. However far back it goes, historical knowledge discovers only an

> unending war, or in other words, forces that relate to one another and come into conflict with one another, and the events in which relations of force are decided, but always in a provisional way. History encounters nothing but war, but history can never really look down on this war from on high; history cannot get away from war, or discover its basic laws or impose limits on it, quite simply because war itself supports this knowledge, runs through this knowledge, and determines this knowledge. Knowledge is never anything more than a weapon in a war, or a tactical deployment within that war. War is waged throughout history, and through the history that tells the history of war. And history, for its part, can never do anything more than interpret the war it is waging or that it is being waged through it. (172-173)

It is because history can only return to the present the war in which it is deployed that the ideal of truth within historical knowledge cannot escape moralization. Within this regime of truth, to "correct" an historical account, to replace the false with the true, is to virtuously resist vanquishment by the victors, to fight for the liberation of the subjugated, or conversely, for those who equate justice and power, to return to the victors what is theirs by virtue of their conquest. Because of its pervasive moralization, historical knowledge is produced at the intersection of the epistemological and the ethical, where the ambiguity of the notion of "right"—correct and good—has synthesized into the juridical ideal of "right" (natural and inalienable prerogative), in which form it constitutes the foundation of modern politics. Meanwhile, politics is always struggling to escape the logics of unending war that history identifies as politics' condition of being.

If history's conventional regime of truth frames historical revision as a weapon of justice, then ressentiment revisionism refers to a modality of historical correction that originates in and promotes a narrow, reductive conception of justice—that of revenge and reversal. With this term, I am, of course, drawing from Nietzsche's meditations on guilt in *On the Genealogy of Morals*, in which he utilizes a sociogenic reaction-formation he refers to as *ressentiment* (roughly translated as "resentment") to denaturalize (bad) conscience and resituate its production within a history of power relations, that which he calls the "slave revolt in morality" (*Genealogy* 34). For many reasons, not least among them Nietzsche's pointed ascription of this "slave revolt" to Judaism and "Jewish values," this account has been the subject of much debate and ridicule, some of which it no doubt deserves. However, at the risk of privileging the theoretical advantages of this concept despite its unfortunate sociohistorical determinants, I am mobilizing *ressentiment* only as a conceptual diagram of forces extending across the psychological and the social, one that enables us to recognize fascist historiography as not some evil abuse of the past's narration that has emerged from without to supply a caricature of true "history," but as the intensified reduction of history to its political and ethical basis. This reduction is made possible by the continual reaffirmation of the perceived *a priori* relation between history and justice that pervades non-fascist (ab)uses of the past's narration. As such, I do not detail the *Genealogy*'s overarching arguments here, nor evaluate the merits of its historical claims.[41] Instead, I discuss only what is relevant to my use of Nietzsche's concept.

In his bold attempt to account for the emergence of normative morality (or "bad conscience") in European societies without capitulating to its value system *tout court*, Nietzsche

[41] Moreover, my use of *ressentiment* should not be read as an implicit valorization of those claims; on the contrary, I regard them as constituting the *Genealogy*'s most philosophically deficient aspect.

postulates that long ago the strong ("masters") did not experience guilt in their conquest of the weak ("slaves"); rather, they, expressing a sadistic drive that Nietzsche implies is "natural" to humanity, unabashedly took pleasure in their ability to inflict pain on others. Correspondingly, for Nietzsche, that guilt and shame have invaded our experience of cruelty reflects an inversion of inherent human values. Yet, while Nietzsche fiercely disparages this ethical development and frames it as not only an inversion but a *perversion* of humanity, he nevertheless argues that it occurred from within the power relation itself and as a logical consequence of the sadistic drive's universalism. As Nietzsche tells the story, the "slave revolt in morality" was born from a contradiction between this drive and the power relation to which it gave rise. Within this asymmetrical binary, only the strong could satisfy their sadism in the form of their "real" subjugation of other people. The weak, however, were not inclined to remain perpetually frustrated. Instead, anticipating Freud's concepts of repression, sublimation, and projection by a good decade,[42] Nietzsche argues that the unsatisfied drive carved a new pathway for its realization. This pathway is *ressentiment*. Above, I described *ressentiment* as a reaction-formation, commonly understood as a defense mechanism whereby unacceptable or anxiety-provoking desires are masked through the articulation of their opposite. My purpose in using this concept is not to assimilate Nietzsche to psychoanalysis so much as to signpost that with this term Nietzsche means more than mere "resentment." Nietzschean *ressentiment* refers to a complex arrangement of desire, pleasure, affect, and power. At the psychological level, the

[42] Doubtless, there are innumerable works that interrogate the conceptual overlap between Freud and Nietzsche. It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to attempt any further commentary on this matter. Instead, because we should all allow ourselves the frivolous joy of luxuriating in the all-too-humanness of our predecessors, I leave for your consideration (or mere amusement) Freud's own words regarding his philosophical rival: "Nietzsche, another philosopher whose guesses and intuitions often agree in the most astonishing way with the laborious findings of psychoanalysis, was for a long time avoided by me on that very account; I was less concerned with the question of priority than with keeping my mind unembarrassed" (*The Freud Reader* 38).

conversion of the sadistic drive into *ressentiment* involves first taking itself as an object. Rather than revel in the pleasures of inflicting pain, the subject of *ressentiment* becomes cruelly contemptuous of cruelty itself. This involution is doubly satisfying. On the one hand, the sadistic drive is gratified in having a means of expression, even if it is a form of self-flagellation. On the other hand, having carried with it the memory of its previous suppression by the strong, the sadistic drive (of the weak) splits and projects itself onto its expression in the strong, thus convincing itself that by punishing itself it is simultaneously punishing the strong. Consequently, according to Nietzsche, the sadistic drive invents for itself a second-order pleasure, turned not inward but outward: the pleasure of *revenge*. Yet, this revenge does not remain a mere fantasy. At the social level, the weak invert the hierarchy of power by infecting the strong with the values and pleasures of *ressentiment* and, at the same time, fashion themselves as the arbiters of morality or, in Nietzsche's lexicon, "the priestly caste" (31). It was by convincing the strong to despise their own strength and punish themselves for it that the weak not only realized their fantasy of revenge but reified it into a perpetual social relation. Consequently, the revenge of *ressentiment* is not an equal and opposite exchange of pain.[43] The revenge of *ressentiment* imagines for itself no limit; its logic is that of everlasting salvation manifested through eternal and all-consuming reprisal.[44] A society built on *ressentiment*, however, knows this endless and endlessly cruel revenge by a different word: justice.

[43] We could not even formulate it in terms of the sovereign's revenge, whose asymmetrical excess has been delineated by Foucault. "[The public execution's] aim [is] not so much to re-establish a balance as to bring into play, as its extreme point, the dissymmetry between the subject who has dared to violate the law and the all-powerful sovereign who displays his strength…[T]he punishment is carried out in such a way as to give a spectacle not of measure, but of imbalance and excess" (*Discipline and Punish* 48-49).

[44] To support this claim, Nietzsche concisely paraphrases (in Latin) a paragraph from Thomas Aquinas's *Summa Theologiae*, which Walter Kaufmann has translated as: "The blessed in the kingdom of heaven will see the punishments of the damned, *in order that their bliss be more delightful for them*" (*Genealogy* 49, fn.1).

Nietzsche predicates this psychosocial etiology of *ressentiment* on a number of untenable—and, at some points, egregiously problematic—reductions. In particular, his racial ontologization of strong and weak is both inane and perilous, and his assumption that an originary sadism would have necessarily disqualified guilt—that guilt and "natural" ("noble," pre-*ressentiment*, etc.) morality are mutually exclusive—borders incoherence in its logical insufficiency. Indeed, this latter simplification attests to the wide gap between Nietzsche and Freud: psychoanalysis is able to accommodate the reality of human sadism without reifying it into *the* social-ontological principle of intelligibility.[45] Nevertheless, Nietzsche utilizes *ressentiment* to delineate a relation of power brought into being and sustained by a sanctified (or, in secular terms, *legitimized*) ideal of unending revenge, a revenge that can only envisage its realization in terms of infinite regress. It is my contention that *ressentiment* describes *one of the dominant structures through which the lines connecting power and the past's narration have been organized*. This is as true of the *tehreek*'s mobilization of history as it is of the Hindu Right's. While this genre of historicization is not co-extensive with conventional history's regime of truth—there certainly have been deployments of history in the name of justice that have not capitulated entirely to the seductions of *ressentiment*—its potentiality also cannot be excised from that regime because *ressentiment* offers to the historicizing project a transcendent line of flight from the war to which it interminably returns; indeed, it is by wrapping itself with history's imaginary of eternal war that the omnicidal fantasy of eternal revenge acquires its vestment of salvation. Thus, although I use ressentiment revisionism to name and explicate the logics of historical projects that, like *The Kashmir Files*, are legibly fascist in political intent, with this term I also mean to suggest, one, that revisionism's ethico-political foundation is

[45] See Freud's discussion of the component instincts in *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* pp. 155-160.

perpetually haunted, and frequently possessed, by *ressentiment* and, two, that *ressentiment*—and the fascist movements to which it often gives rise—is spectrally sustained through revisionism's persistent reproduction of the thematics of eternal war. Consequently, it is of paramount importance that we atrophy this mutually supportive relationship between history and fascism.

Before elaborating on this notion of atrophy, I want to concretize the foregoing discussion by way of an example of this relationship, one that returns us to Agnihotri's (ab)use of history and its local conditions of possibility. Earlier, I described *Genocide of Hindus in Kashmir* as the ur-text for *The Kashmir Files*. As with all simplified designations of origin, this description effaces the field of production in which the connection it refers to takes place. If we de-privilege genetic filiation as the principle by which we organize these two texts and, instead, seek to rationalize their ineluctable thematic resonance through a form of symptomatic reading, we find that *Genocide of Hindus in Kashmir* and *The Kashmir Files* are merely two lessons within a vast and longstanding pedagogical project advanced by the RSS. As historian Tanika Sarkar explains, since its establishment in the 1920s, the Hindu nationalist movement has assumed its "particular representation of the past [as] both the medium and message for [its] ideological apparatus and political agenda" (Sarkar 152). The centrality of history to Hindutva is evinced by the historiography of V.D. Savarkar, the father of the movement. In his account of India's past, Savarkar frames the continent's history as a sequence of "glorious epochs" for the Hindus, the latter of whom he makes synonymous with the nation itself through recourse to a biological, religious, and linguistic paradigm of racism (154). Significantly, the concept of glory that organizes Savarkar's historical gaze originates in relations of war. For Savarkar, national history is constituted entirely by the victories that a nation secures through its wars with other

nations.[46] Savarkar drew upon a burgeoning anticolonial idiom to invest these references to martial glory with moral authority, arguing that in each "glorious epoch" there were "'brave leaders and successful warriors who inspire[d] and [led] [their generation] on to a war of liberation in order to free their nation from the shackles of foreign domination'" (154). However, this association of liberation and glory belies a more sinister moral logic. Whereas many anticolonial claims for national independence have rooted themselves in the juridico-historical discourse of indigeneity, Hindu nationalism morally and existentially justifies itself through that discourse's inversion: for Savarkar, India belongs to the Hindus not because they have always existed there but because they, or rather their "Aryan" ancestors, conquered and subdued the indigenous population.[47] In other words, if Hindutva recognizes glory in the colonized liberating themselves, it is not because it morally condemns colonization; it is because it abhors what it perceives as a perverse reversal of power extending back to the Mughal conquest in the sixteenth century and, in turn, apprehends anticolonial liberation as a necessary phase through which Hindus must pass in their ascent to prelapsarian imperial supremacy. Consequently, as Sarkar incisively observes, "[i]mperial wars and colonization lie at the root of Hindu India, and acts of conquest are supremely valued" (155).

[46] Savarkar defines nation racially, religiously, and linguistically, not through territorial rootedness and shared national consciousness (Sarkar 154-160).

[47] In recent years the RSS has attempted to reconcile its contradictory stance toward colonialism by propagating a new genealogy through which the "glory" of colonial subjugation and the ethos of indigeneity can be united in the figure of the proto-Hindu Aryan: "A lot of effort is expended in overwriting an old Hindutva historiography that subscribed to a foreign Indo-Aryan origin for caste Hindus who then colonized and civilized India. The new revisionism strenuously asserts, instead, that a common origin unites Savarna/Aryans and tribal/Adivasis who actually belong to the same stock. Only later did a more advanced part separate itself and migrate outward to civilize the rest of the world. Remaining Adivasis, quite clearly, were left behind because they failed to advance" (Sarkar 166). As Sarkar argues, in addition to the tactical aim I mentioned, the RSS has invested in this new historiography because it provides an ideological basis for enfolding Adivasis into the Hindu nationalist movement (166-167).

In particular, proper to its revisionist origins, Hindu nationalism has long prioritized conquering the past, and to this end, the RSS has developed various programs of historiographic indoctrination and dissemination. These include formal, class-flexible historical pedagogy through government and private educational institutions; capacious "knowledge" production through non-academic or academic-adjacent "research" centers, cultural institutes, and religious organizations; and subaltern inculcation through a vast neocolonial proselytization network with deep roots in tribal communities, roots that have often been laid by insidiously tethering Hindutva instruction to welfare access (160-171). There is not space here to detail these programs with respect to their rhetorical complexity and implementational sophistication—to repurpose one of Sarkar's remarks, in its war on and through history, Hindu nationalism does battle on a "heroic scale" (167). For our purposes, there are three aspects of Hindutva's (ab)use of history that warrant our attention: its deployment of ressentiment revisionism, the fungibility of its purported enemies, and its activation of identitarian affiliations.

First, Hindutva's approach to history originates in and continues to be structured by ressentiment revisionism. In arguing this, I am highlighting the movement's epistemological challenge to orientalist historiography. As students of British colonialism in South Asia are well aware, history constituted one of the primary vectors through which colonists constructed and executed their ideological pedagogy of colonial difference. This pedagogy operated on the present and past simultaneously. With respect to the colonized over whom they ruled, orientalists characterized them as bereft of "historical consciousness," a characterization that was predicated upon the then-nascent norms of European historiography such as empty, homogeneous time, secular causality, linear chronology, progress-as-telos, the separation of "experience and expectation," etc. (Kalpagam 112-114). Yet, this disqualification of the colonized from the

subject position of historiography contained an element of disavowal. As the colonial government compiled and studied more records from the Hindu chronological system, orientalists developed another thesis: "ancient" Hindu chronicles actually encapsulated "real" historical events, but in order for these events to be discerned, these accounts needed to be carefully "translated" into secular, linear history, the proper domain of orientalist scholars. In this way, the orientalists framed colonial historical pedagogy as a bivalent "civilizing" project. At one level, orientalists promoted it as one of the instructional modes through which the colonized could be (asymptotically) inculcated into historical consciousness. At another level, they valorized it as a benevolent labor of sociohistorical repair: the colonizers were reuniting the colonized with "their" past by releasing it from the irrational grips of myth and circular temporality. It is with respect to this vicious relegation to the antechamber of historical consciousness that Hindutva historiography has formed itself as a counter-narrative. For example, in writing his history of India, Savarkar identifies mythology not as mystifying excess from which the "real past" must be wrested but, rather, as "poetical rendering of actual historical truth" (Sarkar 154). As Sarkar demonstrates, this positive revaluing of mythology does not signal the advent of a rigorous historical method reconciling secular and Hindu approaches to history; instead, it is an appropriation of anticolonial skepticism to colonial epistemologies for the purposes of opening the matrix of history to truth-claims seemingly unaccountable to procedures of verification:

> Puranas, [Savarkar] says, 'are the pillars supporting the edifice of our ancient history'…[M]odern research, though smoothly appropriated, is nowhere substantiated. Sometimes exact statistics are cited of Muslim wrongdoing: 50,000 Hindus courted martyrdom when Muslims attacked the Somnath Temple, he says,

> for instance. While numbers lend credibility to his narrative, he cites no sources for them. (Sarkar 154)

While Sarkar, justifiably, repeatedly stresses the baselessness of many of these claims, I would argue that this permission structure is boundless only when we evaluate it from the perspective of normative standards of proof. As the perfunctory homage toward statistical empiricism in the preceding example indexes, Hindutva historiography is still structured by rules. In particular, the ultimate rule governing their game of veridiction is that historical truth is authorized to the extent that it manifests itself as a constitutive element of eternal war. In Savarkar's reference to the Muslim attack on the Somnath Temple, for instance, the epistemo-political "reversal" of colonial historiography encapsulated in his revaluation of myth completes itself in the historical "revelation" of a Hindu massacre perpetuated by invading Muslims; conversely, the latter acquires its truth effect by virtue of this supplementarity. In other words, revenge is actualized and legitimated through producing pretext for further revenge. Such is the structure of truth when the game is ghostwritten by *ressentiment*.

Second, as the preceding example also shows, this rule does not require that the martial enemy remain stable and legibly situated in time. On the contrary, insofar as infinity and historical specificity are irreconcilable, it requires that the enemy never cohere into a singularity but, instead, that the designation "enemy" be transmuted into a nebulous quality through which an open-ended assemblage of adversaries can be metonymically and metaphorically linked to one another. It is only by means of such processes that the transcendent perpetuity of war is ensured. To argue this is not to deny that Hindu nationalism has principally defined itself through Islamophobia; it is, rather, to suggest that Hindutva *ressentiment* cannot and does not exhaust itself in Hindu-Muslim communalism. This is most notable in the many conflations of British

colonialism and Mughal imperialism that pervade Hindu nationalist discourse, but we can also recognize it in the propagation of minor enmities. For example, whereas Hindutva ideology most vigorously utilizes the "figure of the invader" to demonize Muslims, at a lower frequency it mobilizes the conceit to cast aspersions on Buddhists (Sarkar 157). The difference between these two deployments is worth noting, as it attests to *ressentiment*'s instrumental polyvalence. For Savarkar, the Muslim "invasion" of "India"—always simultaneously conceptualized as specific historical ruptures (e.g., Ghazni's raids in the 11th century, the Mughal conquest in the 16th century) and as a perpetual condition of Hindu life emanating from the mere existence of Muslims in South Asia—reflects a monstrous, fanatical attack on the Hindu nation by an external foe. Conversely, he characterizes Buddhism as a sort of degenerative weakness that surreptitiously erodes and emasculates the martial strength of Hinduism from within (156). At one end, the threat faced by Hindus takes the form of annihilation by genocide—at the other, annihilation by peace.

Third, the rhetorical power of Hindutva historiography does not lie in the content of the historical accounts it proffers but in gradually enfolding its audience into its regime of truth through activating and reifying relations of *ressentiment* inherent to identity formations predicated on (what I have called) history.[48] By identify formations, I am referring to the consolidations of (cultural, religious, ethnic, tribal, racial, class, etc.) identifications in which the basis of unitary recognition among people is at least partially constituted (and ritualistically re-constituted) by narrating that identity into genres of eternal war. Consequently, the efficacy of these accounts is not strictly dependent upon establishing them as irrefutable "truth." In fact, I

[48] Regrettably, there is not space here to theoretically delineate the predication to which I am gesturing, as doing so would require a lengthy digression on identity.

would argue that an underlying objective of this form of power is to normalize an increased capacity for cognitive dissonance among the subjects to whom it is directed. That is, while certainly the RSS has worked tirelessly to colonize the past, it cannot afford to tether the authority of its movement to the unassailability of its historical claims because this would require opening the movement to the cognitive faculty of doubt[49] and, thus, to the heterotopic space of competing regimes of truth, under the scrutiny of which it would pitifully dissolve. That the RSS deploys history without actually staking its authority in historical knowledge is evinced by *The Kashmir Files*. Although the film, as I have demonstrated, overwhelmingly mediates its rhetorical power through the politics and ethics of revisionism, when pressed to provide evidence for its historical claims, Agnihotri vaguely gestures to a stock disclaimer—that the film is a work of art, not history proper. For many, this meaningless utterance will read as a copout, Agnihotri's flighty retreat from being caught in a lie or proved wrong. While the expression undoubtedly works to circumvent historical debate, we would be wise not to imagine this circumvention as being at variance with the film's overarching strategy of power. The film's foremost aim is not to convince its audience that it has faithfully reproduced the Pandit "exodus" but to interpellate this event into the *logos* and *ethos* of history by which the movie—and Hindutva historiography more generally—formulates its account. Moreover, because what Hindu nationalism must avoid is earnestly engaging with historiographic hermeneutics, its (ab)uses of history *aggrandize their authority* through normalizing the mode of disavowal that subtends Agnihotri's disclaimer: his disavowal aims to license the severing of the *form* of historical claims from their content, without impugning the form's perceived veracity. Put more simply, what Hindutva historiography seeks

[49] By doubt, I mean the critical capacity that makes it possible to withhold or rescind belief in information (*not* an *a priori* schema of rationality or empiricism). Although Foucault was averse to identifying psychological or ontological foundations for relations of power, I regard the capacity for doubt as the correlative object of regimes of truth.

is not to prove its claims beyond a reasonable doubt, but to implant a regime of historical truth in which it is legitimate to say, "irrespective of the verifiability of our claims, the moral that conditions this narration is true."

For those of us invested in countering these (ab)uses of history, this strategic separation between means and end proves troubling because it renders our most entrenched technique of resisting disinformation—factual correction—worse than useless. I call such fact-checking negative correction to describe utterances that disqualify truth-claims by delineating discrepancies between them and an authoritative standard or by means of an authoritative bandwidth of variation among competing standards.[50] As signposted by my modifier, the primary role of these utterances is to cancel out claims or representations that deviate from the accepted spectrum of plausibility.[51] Their aim is not to produce new truth; positive assertion generally appears only in the form of citation, and even then, each positivity (and negativity) tends to be underwritten by a studiously assumed "objectivity" or phobia of "bias."

While my reader is undoubtedly familiar with this ubiquitous mode of critique, a relevant example allows me to show what is at stake in its reiteration—namely the problem with investing one's political and ethical faith in correction. Shortly after *The Kashmir Files* hit theaters, Ipsita Chakravarty, an award-winning journalist, published a scathing review of the film on *Scroll.in* entitled "Here are five things 'The Kashmir Files' gets wrong about Kashmir." True to its title, Chakravarty's review cuts through the film's dense fog of hyperbole and misrepresentation by assiduously comparing its most mendacious claims to an archive consisting

[50] "Specialists disagree about X, but there is a general consensus that…"

[51] This may include, of course, "negating" elisions engendered by disingenuous framing (i.e., correcting a misrepresentation by returning the phenomenon in question to its appropriate context). Moreover, this form of neutrally aligned negation often, ironically, leads into positive metacommentary on bias.

of official and unofficial surveys, academic papers, government reports, and local interviews. For example, Chakravarty scrutinizes the film's assertion that "4,000 Kashmiri Pandits [have been] killed and [500,000] displaced since the armed conflict began" (Chakravarty). As the film itself acknowledges—in its attempt to align its narrative with "just" revisionism—its death count greatly exceeds the government's official figure (219 killed). Yet, as Chakravarty demonstrates, it also greatly exceeds the figures put out by both a neutral Pandit committee (399-650 killed) *and* a right-wing, ethnonationalist Pandit organization (1,341 killed), both of whom would be, presumably, inclined to overestimate. As well, drawing on academic research, Chakravarty points out that prior to 1990, "there were [only] 160,000-170,000 Kashmiri Pandits in the Valley," and thus, the 500,000-displaced figure is not just incorrect but ludicrous. Moreover, Chakravarty also attends to the implicit homogenization and vilification of Kashmiri Muslims that the film advances in representing these atrocities. She notes, for instance, that the climactic scene in which Krishna's mother and brother, as well as several other unnamed Pandits, are murdered "in broad daylight…as their Muslim neighbors watch" is nominally based on a real event—the Nadimarg massacre, in which twenty-four Pandits were shot to death by militants—but that eyewitness reports indicate that this tragic attack occurred more than a decade after its placement in the film's timeline and unfolded under significantly different circumstances than those of its depiction.[52] In particular, the victims' Muslim neighbors were neither present nor even aware of what was occurring until after the shots had been fired. Furthermore, the gut-wrenching bisection of Krishna's mother that headlines this anachronistic retelling, in which the film's Muslim crowd participates as approbatory spectators, reflects nothing related to the

[52] "According to the residents of Nadimarg, the killings took place at night, when most of the village was indoors. Since the attackers wore uniforms, it was taken to be a search operation. Residents say the guns had silences and they did not know of the massacre until afterwards, when they heard cries of anguish. Pandits, including women and children, were lined up near a stream and shot that night" (Chakravarty).

Nadimarg massacre and, instead, references another event entirely—the rumored murder of Girja Tikoo in June 1990, which, while unequivocally atrocious, does not appear to represent a widespread form of death-making deployed against Pandits during the first intifada, nor, if the limited extant archive on Tikoo is reliable, to accord with the exclusively communal framework by which *The Kashmir Files* and *Genocide of Hindus in Kashmir* rationalize it.[53] Against the backdrop of these manifold discrepancies, Chakravarty charges Agnihotri with using his distorted representation of the Pandit exodus to derealize the horrific and immensely disproportionate violence suffered by Kashmiri Muslims under Indian occupation.[54]

In its incisive use of negative correction, Chakravarty's review meets and in some regards exceeds the ethical and intellectual standards of critical journalism. However, if, as I have

[53] Discussing attacks on Pandits by Kashmiri militants, *Genocide of Hindus in Kashmir* claims, "Abduction and torture, strangulation, lynching, slicing, impaleing [sic], dismemberment of the parts of the body were the gruesome methods employed. Hindu ladies were raped and killed. Some were done to death by being sawed into pieces" (36-37). Since the RSS does not provide corroborating evidence for any of these assertions, it is difficult to determine to what extent any of these methods were utilized, especially the final one, redolent as it is of spectacular tales of medieval Muslims torturing Hindus. It is true that in his 1994 book *Beyond Terrorism: New Hope for Kashmir* Salman Khurshid, an entrenched Indian politician, mentions among his list of "[t]he victims of terrorism in J&K" a woman from Bandipur named Girja Tikoo (or Tickoo), who, he claims, "was abducted in June 1990, gang-raped for several days, and then shred into pieces on a bar and saw mill" (Khurshid 63). However, like the RSS, Khurshid also fails to cite evidence for this account, a historiographical problem that dogs all references to Tikoo up to the modern day: https://www.jammukashmirnow.com/Encyc/2024/6/25/25-June-1990-The-Brutal-Killing-of-Girija-Tickoo-A-Kashmiri-Hindu-Tragedy.html. The conclusion drawn by these commentators that her murder was primarily or wholly religiously motivated is unsubstantiated and, in fact, if *JK Now*'s account of her being individually lured to return to the Valley from Jammu is veracious, improbable. To be clear, in repeatedly drawing attention to the pervasive absence of evidence in this specific case, my aim is *not* to encourage skepticism of Tikoo's murder or of the form of corporeal violence that engendered it. I am, however, encouraging skepticism of both its *representability* with respect to the specific forms of violence used against Pandits by Kashmiri-nationalist Muslims and Islamists during the first intifada, and the *centrality* of religious difference to its production (which is not to deny the possibility that religious difference could have been significant to her murderers). More concisely, Tikoo's murder was horrific and may very well have had something to do with her religious identity, but it is not plausible to read it as expressive of an exterminationist campaign directed against Kashmiri Pandits. As Sumantra Bose explains, many of the murders of Kashmiri Pandits in 1989-1990 reflected "targeted assassinations" against individuals working in the state apparatus (*Kashmir at the Crossroads* 92). Yet, once again, I am also not suggesting that at the level of power's rationality we should elide these subjects' religious identity in framing their murders as politically motivated.

[54] "[Agnihotri's representation] is consistent with a worldview where any account of Kashmiri Muslims being killed or tortured by security forces is dismissed as propaganda. Even to speak of the experiences of Kashmiri Muslims is propaganda" (Chakravarty).

argued, the rhetorical power of *The Kashmir Files* is not rooted in maintaining its facade of historical veracity, then her review ultimately does not rise beyond shadowboxing with *ressentiment revisionism*, despite her firm conviction that she is "[holding the film] accountable for the picture it presents" (Chakravarty). Rather, I would argue that it is this conviction, this faith in correction, that prevents critical journalism from recognizing the disjuncture between power and resistance inhering in its reflexive recourse to correction, particularly with respect to counteracting disinformation campaigns. By "faith in correction," I mean something akin to what Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick influentially described as paranoia's "faith in exposure"—the belief, common to much of the scholarship that operates under the sign of critical theory, that "to make something visible as a problem were, if not a mere hop, skip, and jump away from getting it solved, at least self-evidently a step in that direction" ("Paranoid Reading and Reparative Reading" 139). While the belief structures of exposure and correction, respectively, are not strictly identical—insofar as the former, much like revisionism, seems to attach inherent truth-value to the relational position of depth in a way that the latter does not—they share this general conviction that power mediated through false representations can be (and, to a certain degree, *is*) negated by rhetorically and/or empirically disproving the medium's untruth and, in the process, supplanting the untrue with the true.[55] Of course, as Sedgwick notes, it is not as if this is an absurd belief. There are certainly contexts in which acts of exposure and/or correction reduce the effectiveness of the disinformation to which they are counterposed. Yet, as we might note on a daily basis during Trump's presidency, "[m]any [statements] that are just as true and convincing have [no effectual force] at all…and as long as that is so, we must admit that the efficacy and

[55] For debates regarding depth hermeneutics and symptomatic reading beyond Sedgwick, see Ricoeur *Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation*; Best and Marcus "Surface Reading: An Introduction"; Love "Close but not Deep: Literary Ethics and the Descriptive Turn."

directionality of such acts reside somewhere else than in their relation to knowledge per se" (141). My point, then, is that we need to evaluate the efficacy of factual correction within the context of a statement's production and dissemination. It is not that correction is never effective; it is just that correction often isn't effective enough against the force of the affective-epistemological structure against which it is directed.

For Sedgwick, the "somewhere else" to which she is referring is affect/attachment.[56]. For my project, that "somewhere else" is the multiplicity of force relations that can exist between different strata of knowledge according to the regimes of truth that organize them. Nevertheless, where we meet is in our insistence that the power of untruth does not reduce to the formulation *incorrect inputs===>incorrect outputs*, as if politics and ethics were composed merely of mechanistic functions and, thus, all we need to do is plug in the right data. Given the potential obviousness of this claim, it may appear to some that I am making a straw-man argument. However—by virtue of the point I am trying to make—it can both be true that we "know" about the political, ethical, and cognitive complexities of disinformation and, yet, on a different level, still continue to invest our faith in correction. How Chakravarty articulates the stakes of her corrective review is exemplary in this regard:

> After three decades of bitterness and recrimination, many facts from that turbulent time have become unknowable. Recorded histories are incomplete. Memory is not always reliable. Agnihotri makes use of this epistemic haze to repeat distortions and manipulations of the past that have long cropped up in WhatsApp forwards. (Chakravarty)

[56] For Sedgwick's reflections on her turn to affect, see her and Adam Frank's article for *Critical Inquiry*, "Shame in the Cybernetic Fold: Reading Silvan Tomkins," as well as the "Introduction" to her *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity*. For an exterior retrospective on that turn, see Berlant and Edelman's "What Survives."

Despite the authoritative tone in which they are communicated, in their recourse to passive voice and evasive truisms, the first three sentences of this passage betray apprehension, and perhaps even what Freud called unhomeliness (*unheimlichkeit*).[57] There are, I think, at least two sources of this apprehension, one general and one particular. The former stems from the dawning realization that one's epistemological, political, and/or ethical convictions are predicated on lacunae. Here, Chakravarty "knows" that *The Kashmir Files* falsely represents the Pandit mass migration for the purposes of increasing public support for India's occupation of the Valley, specifically, and Hindutva ideology, more generally. However, what (understandably) eludes her is identifying the social, psychological, and historiographical conditions that constitute the rational basis of this strategy of power—what are the necessary and sufficient conditions under and through which "alt-history" propaganda acquires significant political potential? It is in reckoning with this question that we come upon the second wellspring of apprehension. This spring flows from our need to protect and preserve the models of human cognition and behavior on which our relative sense of security in navigating the world is predicated. Chakravarty's implicit claim that alt-history propaganda needs "epistemic haze" in order to twist its audience's perception of historical reality does not, I suggest, accurately portray this power's conditions of possibility. Rather, it negatively identifies the fantasy that sustains faith in correction: that people are only susceptible to disinformation campaigns when the "truth" has been obscured or hidden from them, and that if the right information were to be clearly presented they would not be swayed by such vile mendacity. Yet, it is difficult to acknowledge this fantasy as plausible when Chakravarty's own article demonstrates that there is an extensive archive of measured, well-

[57] I intend nothing rhetorical in my use of the more literal translation of Freud's term over "uncanny." I have found that the theoretical meaning of the term is more accessible and memorable to English readers when routed through the metaphor of "home" (which is not to say that the lack of a foundational metaphor in "uncanny" is not theoretically or pedagogically useful).

researched reports on Kashmir, much of which is available online. There are, indeed, many details about the conflict that lack clarity, but that does not equate to a generalized "unknowability." On the contrary, due to the astonishing bravery of certain lawyers, activists, scholars, and journalists who have risked their lives to investigate and report on the occupation, I am constantly amazed by the sheer density of the record that exists, even as the Indian government has gone to extraordinary lengths to stop information from entering and leaving the Valley. The issue here is not some aporetic "unknowability" stemming from "incomplete" records and "unreliable" memory (the fundamental conditions of *any* historical knowledge)—it is *the will not to know*, and while this will is often a condition of alt-history's power, it is also, with horrifying regularity, the product.[58] Thus, in order to disrupt its implantation and cultivation, we must recognize that we have already lost whatever ideals of the human subtend our faith in correction, and correspondingly—as the rest of this dissertation will attempt to persuade—we must grieve so that we can learn to hope without them.[59]

***

The purpose of the foregoing critique of normative historiography's complicity with fascist historiography is not to discount the production of historical knowledge but to suggest that we should be ambivalent toward its capacity to do "good" political work, insofar as by virtue of this ambivalence we open ourselves to recognizing the mechanisms by which history is articulated with the political. Situating this critique in lieu of a standard introduction constitutes one way of putting that ambivalence into theoretical practice. The varied approach I bring to the

[58] For an incisive reflection of willed ignorance, see Traub *Thinking Sex with the Early Moderns* pp. 297-302 and 310-314.

[59] "Hope, often a fracturing, even a traumatic thing to experience, is among the energies by which the reparatively positioned reader tries to organize the fragments and part-objects she encounters or creates" (Sedgwick 146).

task of historically contextualizing the Kashmir conflict reflects another. In the first section of this chapter, I utilize a more-or-less normative historiographic style to delineate key features of Kashmir's administration under four imperial rulers beginning with the Mughals in the sixteenth century and ending with the century of Dogra-British rule that culminates in the rise of religio-political and, to a limited extent, nationalist movements in Kashmir. The second and third sections attend to, respectively, the accession of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir to India and the four decades of Indian rule that lead up to the emergence of armed resistance in the Valley in 1989. Because these historical "periods" are more intensely politicized, on account of their being more legibly "part" of the contemporary conflict, I have adopted more historiographically interrogatory and self-conscious styles of narration for them. While this chapter does not explicitly pursue an overarching thesis, across the three sections the reader will find themes of sacrificial politics, negation, modeling causality, and the contradictions of constructing and securitizing a community that resonate with the major problems taken up across the other chapters of this dissertation.

1.1 An Exercise in Pragmatic Contextualization: Imperial Kashmir: 1556-1947

With the fall of the Kashmiri Sultanate in 1556, the Kashmir has been successively, though unevenly, incorporated into four empires and one postcolonial nation.[60] In this section, I briefly overview Kashmir's administration under each of the empires, highlighting, where relevant, certain continuities and differences across imperial regimes.

[60] For purposes of concision, "Kashmir" functions as a floating signifier here. From 1846-1948, it refers to the Kashmir Valley. From 1948-present, it refers to Indian-administered Kashmir, a geographic subsection of the Valley that does not include Pakistani-administered Kashmir.

1.1.1 Mughal Rule 1586-1752

In the several decades prior to the Mughal conquest, the Valley was beset by political turmoil and economic instability, as the Kashmiri Sultanate (1343-1586) became increasingly decentralized due to power grabs by competing noble families. Although one of these families, the Chaks, gained control of the region in 1556, the erosion of central power and the inability to protect territorial borders had rendered them rulers in name only (*CP* 41-42).[61] By contrast, the Mughals were quick to systematically enfold Kashmir into their imperial structure, "[ushering] in a period of relative stability after more than a century of political tumult" (*CP* 93). In part, this stability was the result of Emperor Akbar's political savvy: when instantiating the new land revenue system—which simultaneously established Kashmir's territorial boundaries within the Mughal Empire—Akbar placed the local nobility into authoritative and lucrative positions, thus enabling them to maintain their prestige and wealth despite Mughal rule. In addition to incentivizing the nobility, Akbar and his heir, Jahangir, stimulated and expanded the Kashmiri artisanal economy by way of both direct patronage and the construction of roads that enabled safe commerce between Kashmir and contiguous parts of the Mughal Empire, including, significantly, Mughal India (*CP* 94-95). One artistic arena that the Mughals repeatedly invested in was Kashmiri literary and historical production, thus helping to maintain Kashmir's exceptionally "long tradition of historical composition" (*CP* 95-102; 28). Moreover, although since the fourteenth century Sufi hagiographies had characterized Kashmir as a "sacred space," it

[61] It is worth noting that this period of decentralization precipitated an increase in the political influence of Sufi mystics: "While the authority of the central court was in rapid decline, Sufi *khanqahs* (hospices) were flourishing as intra-Sufi competition for followers grew more intense in the uncertain political climate. Khanqahs had undergone increasing corporatization through the course of the fifteenth century and controlled huge swaths of land and resources, alongside having mass followings. By the sixteenth century, they were major centres [sic] of political intrigues and their managers exercised influence far beyond the court, as they played a critical role in disseminating new crafts and skills, and Islam, along with Persian language and literature in the region" (*CP* 42-43).

was Jahangir who (reputedly) described Kashmir as *jannat*, or paradise, an aesthetic trope which quickly came to dominate representations of the Valley, continuing (with some mutations) up to the present-day.[62]

1.1.2 Afghan Rule 1752-1819

Similar to the decline of the Kashmiri Sultanate, the end of the Mughal era was characterized by significant decentralization, as administrative power was consolidated in the hands of regional governors, thereby rendering the Mughal court impotent and making the borders of Kashmir weak to a series of Afghan incursions (*CP* 105). On the third such incursion, the Mughals were dealt a decisive defeat by Ahmad Shah Abdali, ushering in sixty-six years of Afghan rule (Dar and Shah 179).

In general, historians of Kashmir characterize this as an era of severe oppression, in which Kashmiris' quality of life and local autonomy decreased significantly:

> [T]he Afghans were brutally repressive with all Kashmiris, regardless of class or religion. Merchants and noblemen of all communities were assembled and asked to surrender their wealth to the first Afghan governor, on pain of death. Kashmiri peasants, jagirdars, nobles and merchants alike were buried under the burden of heavy taxation. The *jazia*, or the poll tax on Hindus, was revived and many Kashmiri merchant families fled the Valley for the plains during this period…[Consequently,] the Kashmiri economy was effectively ruined. (*LB* 49)

[62] As Ananya Jahanara Kabir argues, representations of the Valley as paradise—particularly since the advent of photographic representations—frequently "eliminate Kashmiri people, monuments in use, and homes" (*Territory of Desire* 18). For innumerable contemporary examples of this, simply search *YouTube* with the terms "Kashmir" and "tourism." Although Kashmir~Paradise shares affinities with the colonial discourse of *terra nullius*, I do not think that the former should be regarded as a specific manifestation of the latter. We are in need of a more robust genealogy in order to determine the categorical differences between sacralizing a space and nullifying it.

As Zutshi notes, the narrative of ruthless Afghan rule, while for the most part correct, needs to be emendated with three important historical developments in Kashmir that are often obscured by the (nevertheless justifiable) focus on brutality. First, the Afghans altered the Grand Trunk Road, "the axis of the Mughal Empire," so that trade from Kashmir to Peshawar and Kabul could avoid Sikh territory; as a result, Kashmir occupied a dense intersection point for multiple trade routes, thus buttressing its representational and economic importance. Second, under the Afghans, Kashmiri Pandits were integrated into the land administrative apparatus for the first time (49-50). Third, because the Afghans alienated most Kashmiris and established a firm line of differentiation between ruler and ruled, they "came to represent the greatest 'Others' in the memories of Kashmiris," thus engendering in the late 18th and early 19th centuries the discourse of *Mulk-i-Kashmir*, or "the homeland of the Kashmiris," a back-projection of Kashmir as a paradise that had been viciously trampled by outside rulers (52). This resulted in romanticized re-imaginings of the Kashmiri Sultanate as not only continuously benevolent and just, but also (implicitly contrasting it with Afghan rule) as intimately connected with the local people.[63]

1.1.3 Sikh Rule 1819-1846

In 1819, the Afghans lost Kashmir to the Sikh maharaja Ranjit Singh. By 1799, at just nineteen years old, Singh had made a name for himself by conquering both of the major Sikh capitals, Lahore and Amritsar, thus becoming the main power of the Punjab (Bamzai *Culture and Political History of Kashmir: Volume 3* 619).[64] Singh's rapid conquests and political cunning

[63] Zutshi's excerpt from the verse history of Mulla Mohammad "Taufiq," the *Shahanama*, is illustrative of this point: "When Kashmir for the second time/Came under the command of the famous king Yusuf,/He endeared himself in the hearts of the urban and village dwellers/With generosity, with gifts, justice, and fairness" (*LB* 53).

[64] Henceforth *Vol.3*.

positioned him as a significant threat to British colonial interests.[65] As such, in an attempt to restrict his expansion, the British persuaded Singh to enter into the (first) Treaty of Amritsar in 1809, under which the British would not conquer territory above the Sutlej River and Singh would not conquer territory below it (*Vol.3* 620-21).[66] Kashmir was one of the regions above the Sutlej most sought by the maharaja. Although he failed to secure it in two incursions (1812 and 1814), when he finally defeated the Afghans in 1819, the acquisition of Kashmir more than doubled the size of his territory (621). In part, Kashmir's value to Singh was political, insofar as its geographic location made it an effective strategic hub for proceeding conquests.[67] At the same time, due to its size, agriculture, and artisanal industry, Singh and his administration regarded Kashmir itself as a highly profitable acquisition and, thus, sought to extract as much value from its conquest as possible. This extractive approach proved disastrous for most rural Kashmiris, who were egregiously exploited, abused, and persecuted by the maharaja's regional governors.[68]

Briefly, I will highlight four notable aspects of Sikh governance. First, as with the Afghans, the Sikhs heavily taxed the population. While merchants and travelers suffered from severe duties and fees, farmers were most significantly taxed due to the unregulated land revenue system: "The province was divided into 36 Parganas, each under a revenue farmer…He had to

[65] In 1803, the British defeated the Marathas and claimed rule over Hindustan. This brought them into neighboring competition with the Sikh chiefs around the Sutlej River. At the same time, chiefs south of the river were concerned about Ranjit Singh's ever-widening radius of control. As such, after he crossed the river in both 1806 and 1807, these chiefs petitioned the British for protection, leading to the (first) Treaty of Amristar in 1809 (*Vol.3* 620-22).

[66] Unsurprisingly, while Singh "followed the terms of the treaty scrupulously," the British "openly took over the Cis-Sutlej states and occupied Ferozepur where they set up a military cantonment in 1835" (*Vol.3* 621). Moreover, it was during Singh's reign that the British started seriously eyeing Kashmir (614).

[67] "By the year 1820 [Singh's] power may be said to have been consolidated and absolute throughout the Punjab proper from the Sutlej to the Indus" (621).

[68] Interestingly, Singh himself was, as far as imperial monarchs go, a relatively benevolent and tolerant conqueror. The problem was not his disposition toward his people but his reliance on mediated governance: Singh ruled from Lahore and, thus, left most day-to-day state affairs to his regional governors, who were, it would appear, significantly more avaricious. Had he ruled more directly over Kashmir, it is possible that Kashmiris would not have suffered as severely.

pay a fixed amount to the government and was free to collect from the peasants as much as he could. Nine-tenths of the produce was not considered too much for the share of a revenue farmer" (641). Second, the Sikhs revitalized the cis-Himalayan *begar* system. *Begar* refers to a system of taxation in which the tax is paid in the form of obligatory labor, usually transport labor; its use was mostly restricted to Ladakh, Tibet, Kashmir, and Himalayan hill states. In its least oppressive form, *begar* "included work that was of communal benefit, for example the repair of roads, bridges and temples, as well as the carriage of goods for senior political and religious figures"; moreover, as *begar* was recognized as a tax on land, the landless (and therefore the most impoverished) were not forced to participate in this work (Bray 43; 45).[69] However, the Sikhs utilized *begar* much less with an eye toward communal benefit and more as an informal slave system: "A large number of labourers was employed in the transport of military supplies, luggage of high officials, etc, from one part of the country to another. Even an ordinary Sikh soldier could command a native to do any work for him" (*Vol.3* 641). Third, the Sikhs were on the whole extremely prejudiced against Kashmiri Muslims and, thus, demonstrated no compunction in persecuting them (629). Sikh governors forbade Kashmiri Muslims from performing the call to prayer, took possession of several mosques, and made cow slaughter a capital offense; this last shift resulted in many lynchings based on accusation alone.[70] Fourth, whereas Muslims' economic and social standing generally worsened under the Sikhs, the opposite was often the case for Kashmiri Pandits. This was, in part, due to a deepening of their integration into the land administration apparatus, which, as previously mentioned, had started

[69] *Begar* is Persian/Urdu. In Ladakh and Tibet, where the practice originated, the term for compulsory labor more generally was *corveé*; to refer to compulsory transport in particular, locals used '*u-lag* (Bray 43).

[70] *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* draws attention to the contemporary manifestation of this extralegal disciplinary (and likely racializing) practice through the character of Saddam Hussein, whose father (a Dalit) is murdered on the street by a Hindu mob after being accused of killing a cow.

under the Afghans. Yet, whereas the Afghans were, on the whole, terribly persecutory toward the Pandits with respect to religion, the Sikhs sought to consolidate their imperial identity as "separate and distinct from that of the Mughals" precisely by emphasizing sites of conjunction and similarity between Sikh and Hindu beliefs (*LB* 53-54). Although, on the one hand, it is not as if religion and class in Kashmir had never been articulated prior to Sikh rule and, on the other hand, it is not as if this increase in status extended to all Kashmiri Pandits, under the Sikhs something of a class division began consolidating along religious lines. It must be said that the legibility of this division to the contemporary historian is attributable, in part, to its widening under Dogra rule, as well as its relative continuation under Indian rule until the majority of Kashmiri Pandits left the Valley in 1990. Consequently, we must be careful not to teleologically misrepresent the form of this division under Sikh rule as a determinative precursor to its later expansion; clearly, we are speaking of these arrangements between class and religion at a level of generality that neither adequately expresses their complexity nor accounts for the significant role played by contingency in shaping their ultimate developmental trajectory. This being said, because communal historiography—a genre unfortunately indulged by all sides of the contemporary conflict—can ablate class in the course of reductively back-projecting Pandit-Muslim tensions in the present to earlier periods[71] (as demonstrated by Krishna's speech in *The Kashmir Files*), it is, I would argue, generally salutary for histories whose primary purpose is to contextualize the occupation to highlight arrangements of class hierarchy and religious difference when they become legible in the archive. This is not to reduce either term to the other or to suggest that these differences never assume a stable or uniform relation, but to prime us to

[71] Though, notably, communal historiography can weaponize class, as well, especially when it formulates class vis-à-vis racial logics.

be suspicious when we come across commentary on religious conflict in the region that fails to engage meaningfully with class dynamics.

Lastly, I would like to highlight a significant catastrophe that occurred under and as a result of Sikh rule. In 1832, due to mismanagement within the land revenue administration and an unfortunately timed princely survey of the Valley,[72] Kashmir experienced a devastating famine that killed thousands and resulted in thousands more migrating to the Punjab (630). While the Sikhs did not take a census of the population during their rule, travelogues from British colonialists Moorcraft and Hugel indicate that prior to the 1832 Famine there were approximately 800,000 people in Kashmir, whereas by 1836 there were only around 200,000 (638). Although most histories of Kashmir mention this dramatic demographic shift, few, if any, of them seriously engage with it as a historical agent. This reflects, of course, a problem regarding the hermeneutics of absence that extends far beyond historiographic scholarship on Kashmir, a problem with which I will, similarly, not be able to seriously engage in this chapter. Instead, I leave as an open question the extent to which the major developments of Kashmiri society under Dogra and Indian rule, detailed below, would have been different had the Valley not lost three-fourths of its population in 1832.[73]

[72] "In 1832 when Prince Sher Singh, the reputed son of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, took over from Bhima Singh Ardali the governorship of Kashmir, the Maharaja started from Lahore on a visit to the Valley. He deputed Jamadar Khushal Singh and Sheikh Ghulam Mohi-ud-din to collect supplies for his camp. They executed the orders with such rigour that there resulted a scarcity all over the province…Then in the month of October when rice had not yet been harvested there was a heavy snowfall which destroyed the entire crop of this staple food of the Kashmiris" (630).

[73] It is worth noting that the Sikhs changed their strategy of governance after the 1832 Famine, in part due to the unusual benevolence of Colonel Mian Singh, who was appointed to replace Ranjit Singh's apathetic son as governor of Kashmir in response to this disaster. Mian Singh attempted to rectify the cruelties his predecessors had inflicted on the peasants by importing food, stimulating and organizing the artisanal economy, remitting taxes, and punishing exploitative middlemen. By the end of his reign, Kashmir became the second highest-grossing Sikh province (631). To the detriment of the Kashmiri population, Mian Singh was assassinated in 1841 as part of the political chaos that grew out of Ranjit Singh's death.

1.1.4 The First Anglo-Sikh War 1845-1846

Although the Sikhs' reign was historically influential, it came to a close after a mere twenty-five years. The internal reasons for the Sikhs' decline are largely inconsequential for our purposes, with a key exception being the death of the Sikh maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1839, which precipitated "wild anarchy all over the Punjab" (634-35).[74] This chaos, to some extent engineered by British agents, provided Britain the eagerly-anticipated opportunity to begin its annexation of regions north of the Sutlej. From 1845-46, the First Anglo-Sikh War was fought. It concluded on 9 March 1846 with the Treaty of Lahore, through which the Sikhs were forced to transfer control of the region between the Sutlej and Beas Rivers (the Doaba), along with control of the rivers themselves, to the British. Most significantly for our purposes, the treaty's twelfth clause stipulated that:

> [T]he Maharajah [of Punjab, Dhilip Singh] hereby agrees to recognize the Independent sovereignty of Rajah Golab Sing in such territories and districts in the hills as may be made over to the said Rajah Golab Sing, by separate agreement between himself and the British Government…and the British Government, in consideration of the good conduct of Rajah Golab Sing, also agrees to recognize his independence in such territories, and to admit him to the privileges of a separate Treaty with the British Government.[75]

[74] Insofar as a number of important persons in this period of Kashmir's history have the surname "Singh," I have defaulted to referring to each of them by their full name wherever disambiguation appeared necessary or helpful.

[75] www.sikhmuseum.org.uk/anglo-sikh-treaties-released/

The referenced Hindu Dogra raja,[76] Gulab Singh, had been given control of Jammu (his homeland) by Ranjit Singh in 1820.[77] Even while under the Sikh maharaja, Gulab Singh was an ambitious conqueror, taking control of Ladakh in 1834 and Baltistan in 1840, much to the chagrin of the British, who were eyeing these regions as early as 1774 (*Vol.3* 661). In the wake of Ranjit Singh's death, Gulab Singh "acquired an enormous influence in the Valley…[and] was biding his time to formally annex it into his growing kingdom of Jammu" (633). After the assassination of the Sikh governor of Kashmir, Mian Singh, in 1841, Gulab Singh was assigned by authorities in Lahore the task of bringing order back to the Valley.[78] He did so quickly and severely through his appointed governor, Ghulam Mohi-ud-din. All the while, Gulab Singh carefully observed both the unstable political situation developing in Lahore and Britain's activities in the region. Perspicaciously recognizing that the tentative military alliance between Britain and the Sikh Empire was unlikely to persist and that it was only a matter of time before Britain would take advantage of the Empire's internal fractures, Gulab Singh made a name for himself with the British by contributing substantially to the Anglo-Sikh joint-effort to thwart the Afghan siege of Jalalabad in 1841:

[76] As a term, "Dogra" refers to the inhabitants of the regions around two lakes, Mansar and Siroinsar. It is derived from the Sanskrit "Dogirath," or "two lakes." In total, there were "22 Dogra states which comprised the hilly country extending from the plains of the Punjab to the snowy range of mountains bounding the Kashmir Valley on the south," Jammu being the most important of these states. For the most part, this region is now referred to as Jammu province in the joint-state of Jammu and Kashmir (*Vol.3* 653).

[77] "The entitlement he got was for the siege of Multan he undertook in 1819 and the subjugation of the bandit chief Mian Dedo, who controlled the hilly region around Jammu" (Khaja 338).

[78] It is a point of interest in the political history of the Sikh kingdom that Gulab Singh had two brothers, Dhyan and Suchet, all three of whom held prominent positions within the ruling structure, so much so that in the wake of Ranjit Singh's death, "several rival claimants to the throne clamoured for recognition and sought the help of the Jammu brothers" (*Vol.3* 663-64). It is not an exaggeration to say that each played a significant role in fomenting the bloody battles for control of the kingdom between 1839 and 1846, though both Dhyan and Suchet met their ends playing this dangerous game. Gulab Singh almost met the same fate when he was imprisoned in Lahore; however, due to his political foresight and his charisma as a commander, he escaped with the help of servants and troops.

> Here [Gulab Singh] took the fullest advantage of his powerful position and the distress of the British, and ingratiated himself with Sir Henry Lawrence, in the hope of securing British help in acquiring an independent status for his newly formed State of Jammu. Being a far-sighted politician, he visualized the early breakup of the Sikh State, and its annexation by the British, and rendered valuable services to the expedition for which he earned the gratitude of the British. (664)

Yet, gratitude alone would not have motivated the British to give up a territory as large and profitable as Kashmir. It was, rather, a second act of political cunning that positioned Gulab Singh favorably in this regard: he refused to participate in the First Anglo-Sikh War. His refusal ended up being significant because the final battle of this war, the Battle of Sobraon on 10 February 1846, had been the most difficult military effort the British had experienced in India. Although the British won, their victory was all but pyrrhic, insofar as in the battle's immediate aftermath their local military might was tremendously attenuated. By contrast, Gulab Singh had a fully stocked Dogra army at his disposal and, thus, now constituted the greatest geopolitical threat in the region. Consequently, it is this temporary asymmetry in local military capacity that ultimately precipitated the transfer of Kashmir to Gulab Singh's authority. As they had done with Ranjit Singh in 1809, the British deterred Gulab Singh from acting on his military advantage by offering him a deal in which he would be able to attain that which he had long desired: if Singh helped negotiate a peace treaty with the Lahore government to conclude the war, then the British agreed to subsequently negotiate a treaty with him through which he would become the independent ruler of Kashmir (665).[79] As such, on 16 March 1846, just one week after they

[79] Mohmad Ashraf Khaja notes that the British may have also been motivated by fears of expanding Afghan and Russian forces; Singh's Kashmir, thus, would "act as a buffer state between [the] British Empire" and these other regional powers (Khaja 340).

signed the Treaty of Lahore, the British signed the (second) Treaty of Amritsar with Gulab Singh. Through it, control of Kashmir was transferred to Gulab Singh for three-quarters of a million sterling, on the condition that he recognize British supremacy, provide them military support, and pay yearly tributes. Thus, the raja Gulab Singh became the maharaja Gulab Singh by simultaneously becoming a "vassal of the British," with Kashmir being utilized as a trading token to secure this new political arrangement (666).[80]

1.1.5 Dogra-British Rule 1846-1947

The century of Dogra-British rule coincides with the emergence of Muslim and Pandit political communities in the Kashmir Valley. Insofar as this religio-political consciousness[81] ultimately formed the basis of the demand for self-sovereignty that led Kashmiri Muslims to resist incorporation into India in the decades following Partition, charting its conditions of possibility and developmental trajectory constitutes the guiding objective of this section. Accordingly, though I have made an effort to approximate chronological order where possible, my approach here is more schematic, leading me to deprioritize delineating internal differences

[80] Modern scholars of Kashmir, especially those identified with the ideal of Kashmiri independence from Indian rule, frequently malign the Treaty of Amritsar as a "sale deed" of Kashmir: "While making this transfer the British authorities in India did not ascertain the views of the people of Kashmir on the subject. They did not consult even one of their leaders" (Khaja 341). While this outrage is understandable, that it should so often only appear at this particular point in the political history of Kashmir seems predicated on a colonial model of Western moral exceptionalism, as attested by the vexing valorization of the British Empire that accompanies Khaja's critique in particular: "The sale deed was done by the people who are known to the world for their liberalism, democratic values, fair play and sense of justice, who had abolished tyrannical and despotic monarchies in their own homeland and established in their place a democratic political system, making Great Britain the mother of parliamentary democracy" (Khaja 342). Obviously, waxing poetic about Britain's colonial conquests should be strenuously avoided. One can disparage Britain's denial of Kashmiris' self-governance without treating that denial as an aberration with respect either to British governmentality more generally or to preceding imperial formations in the region (it is not as if the Mughals, Afghans, or Sikhs "consult[ed]" with local Kashmiri leaders before conquering the Valley, either!).

[81] The reader will understand why I use this term by the end of this section.

in mobilizing certain categories.[82] In addition, my narrative of the emergence of what I call "religio-political" consciousness (which has variably been termed a "regional" or "national" consciousness by Kashmiris and scholars of Kashmir according to their political and/or historical priorities) is, for pragmatic reasons, from a longer history of regional identity formation that articulated itself through a rich literary tradition dating back to the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries with the lives and works of the Sufi mystics.[83]

There are three overarching structural forces that stimulated the formation of political communities in Kashmir during this period: the reforms to land administration, as well as the economy more generally, precipitated by the Lawrence Settlement; the institution of the British Residency and its disruption of the Dogra state's sovereignty vis-à-vis its subjects; and the influence exerted by religious and political movements in colonial India and other princely states on those emerging in Kashmir. Below, I contextualize each of these forces, after which I delineate the overarching politicization of the Valley that proceeded from their intersection.

***

The Lawrence Settlement

Due to over a century of myopic governance of land cultivation and artisanal manufacture, Kashmir was in the throes of economic crisis by the mid-1880s. The British used this crisis and the earlier famine of 1877—during which Maharaja Ranbir Singh infamously drowned a "boatload of famine-stricken Kashmiri peasants in the Jhelum"—as pretense for

[82] As Suvir Kaul advises in his *On Gardens and Graves* (Kaul 91), I highly encourage readers interested in that level of detail to consult Mridu Rai's *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects: Islam, Rights, and the History of Kashmir* and Chitralekha Zutshi's *Languages of Belonging: Islam, Regional Identity, and the Making of Kashmir*, texts whose authority I draw upon extensively throughout this section.

[83] See Zutshi's *Kashmir's Contested Pasts* for more on this literary history.

forcing Maharaja Pratag Singh to hand over control of Jammu and Kashmir's administration to the British residency in the late 1880s. This arrangement was formalized in the "edict of resignation" in 1889, under which the Maharaja was reduced to a signatory figurehead (*LB* 99-100). In 1887, the British "persuaded the Maharaja to accept a land settlement of the Valley of Kashmir," which was initially headed by A. Wingate but later fell into the hands of Walter Lawrence, who in 1890 succeeded Wingate as Settlement Commissioner (100-102). Between Wingate and Lawrence,[84] both of whom were influenced by colonial etiologies of economic decline that had more-or-less become dogma to administrators in British India, three structural problems were identified as the source of the state's poverty: one, without some form of ownership rights to the land they tilled, the rural cultivators had no incentive to maintain the lands they on which they worked; two, land revenue being collected "in kind" (as grain itself, without the mediation of a money form) impoverished the cultivator by refusing them the ability to determine its price and sell it on the open market; and, three, the apparatus of middlemen[85] with arbitrary degrees of power led to the wasteful dissemination and hoarding of value, stultifying the state's economic growth. In the series of reforms that followed, which are often referred to collectively as the Lawrence Settlement, each problem had a targeted intervention.

With respect to the problem of the cultivator's relationship to the land: "permanent hereditary occupancy rights were bestowed on every person who…agreed to pay the assessment fixed on the fields entered in his or her name in the settlement papers. So long as the assessment was paid, the occupant could not be ejected" (102). While this right to hereditary occupancy was

[84] There were slight differences in ideology between Wingate and Lawrence that cannot be elaborated on here. See Rai pp. 153-179 and *LB* pp. 98-113 for more thorough accounts of the Settlement Commission.

[85] This apparatus consisted of revenue officials and the *jagirdars*, an aristocratic class of landholders whose lands had been awarded to them by the Maharaja.

not the establishment of private property—the Maharaja still legally owned all the land—and, as such, settled peasants (*assamis*) were not allowed to exchange or sell their allotted land, the Lawrence Settlement fundamentally transformed rural peasants' relation to the land on which they worked. Whereas for centuries cultivators had had to travel away from their farm lands (sometimes even outside the Valley itself) during the winter to find employment, they were now incentivized and financially supported to establish permanent communities in the Valley.

With respect to the problem of the medium of collection: land revenue and taxes were now to be collected only partly in kind, the other part to be collected as money; through this particular intervention—which was intensely contested by revenue officials and the urban elite, the former fearing the diminishment of their profits and the latter fearing the evaporation of their source of cheap grain—Kashmir was converted to a quasi-money-based economy (103).

With respect to the problem of (perceived) administrative bloat: the Settlement Commission enacted a substantive bureaucratization of the administrative class, under which revenue officials and jagirdars were either eliminated from their positions of power and reduced to the same level of privilege as the cultivators themselves, or their positions were transformed into state jobs that were subject to far more central oversight. Importantly, even if an administrator's position was retained in the new bureaucracy, this did not mean that they themselves were maintained: under this new system, administrative positions were no longer hereditary but parceled out on the basis of qualification for civil service. This did not, of course, mean that this new system actually manifested the meritocratic and egalitarian ideals ideologically underpinning its structure. On the contrary, because the British endowed Punjabi and Dogra administrators from Jammu with the capacity to determine who was "qualified" to govern Kashmir and, in turn, these administrators frequently chose non-Kashmiri Dogras or

Punjabi Hindus to work in these governing positions over and against the local Kashmiris who had held them previously—which entailed the latter being forced to transfer their titles, land, wealth, and governing power to the former—the demography of the Kashmiri elite shifted suddenly and dramatically (107-108). As I discussed earlier, the Afghans and the Sikhs overwhelmingly privileged Pandits for these administrative roles. Prior to the British Residency, the Dogras had not only continued this tradition but also explicitly banned Kashmiri Muslims from consideration for these positions. At the same time, in 1877 "Ranbir Singh had created service grants in portions of the valley for members of his own caste of the Dogra Mian Rajputs. The objective was to encourage them to settle in Kashmir so that the maharaja would have 'a certain body of his own people ready at hand in the event of any disturbances in the valley'" (Rai 168). In other words, although Pandits were undoubtedly favored by the Dogras with respect to Kashmiri Muslims, this relative favoritism did not amount to the latter identifying with the former, and in fact, the Lawrence Settlement provided the Dogras a pathway for accelerating a nascent process of supplanting Pandits from their positions within the administration (168). Although, as with many reforms, the revocation of hereditary administrative roles in the Lawrence Settlement fell short of the complete system overhaul to which it aspired, it significantly threatened the livelihood and security of many Pandits in the Valley.[86] This sense of economic insecurity would contribute to Pandit politicization.

[86] As noted earlier, the elite class of Kashmiri Pandits in land and revenue administration did not comprise all Pandits in the Valley, but it did comprise a significant portion of them: "In the words of an illustrious member, P. N. Bazaz, the Pandit 'from his very birth…[wa]s trained for 'service'. Mothers bless[ed] their sons, *purohits* their *jajmans*, and all elders their young folk, that they m[ight] get jobs [in government] and promotions'" (Rai 255).

The Paradox of Liberal-Religious Rule

From the outset, due to a complex web of factors that cannot be delineated here, the Dogras sought to define Jammu and Kashmir as a Hindu state and to root their claim to sovereignty through this identity. In part, their anxiety regarding sovereignty was derived through the hierarchical relation inhering between the Dogra Maharaja and the British, especially after the Sepoy Revolt and the establishment of the British Raj, which precipitated more direct interventions into the governmental practices and territorial delimitations of princely states, as evinced by the aforementioned Lawrence Settlement in Kashmir (Rai 116-121). The relations between state sovereignty and religion were also significantly affected by the empire's increasing encroachment on domestic affairs. While "[m]ost pre-colonial rulers…had defined their stature as religious patrons in the most ambiguously interpretable terms possible…after Queen Victoria's proclamation[,] there were only three paths for rulers or governments to follow: Hindu, Muslim, or religiously neutral" (120-121). Doubtless one of the most myopic and disastrous moves of colonial governance, this demand that states identify themselves along religious lines was particularly problematic with respect to Jammu and Kashmir, whose rulers were exclusively Hindu but whose population comprised Hindus, Muslims, and Buddhists. Although there was technically the "neither" option, it was, for the most part, an option in name alone, since to identify one's state as "religious neutral" was to risk delegitimizing one's claim to the throne, both internally and with respect to the rulers of other princely states (121).

Yet, in the last decades of the nineteenth century, Britain also increasingly required that princely states legitimate their rule through actualizing liberal ideals of representative governance. Thus, ascending the throne in 1885, the Dogra maharaja Pratap Singh found himself in a paradoxical situation, in which he was expected to

> transpose the notion of rulers with obligations, and subjects with rights, on patterns of governance that were, at the same time, unable to transcend the narrower religious definitions of either. [Jammu and Kashmir] was still a Hindu state but one which would perforce have to concern itself with the whole body of its subjects. Conversely, the subjects also continued to be identified by religious affiliations that determined both their experience of and their access to the resources of the Dogra state. (140)

It was on the basis of his purported failure to manage this balance that colonial officials effectively placed Singh on suspension for several years and established the British Residency as the eminent authority in the state.[87] As the reader may imagine, a prince already anxious about the legitimacy of his rule, and resentful for being made to bear that anxiety, is unlikely to respond well to such aggressive disruptions of his sovereignty. Indeed, when Kashmiri Pandits and Muslims, together and separately, began to solicit the maharaja with political and religious demands across the first few decades of the twentieth century, Pratap Singh's response was often harsh, a tendency that he unfortunately passed down to his nephew and successor, Hari Singh, the last maharaja of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir. At the same time, in interposing itself as a regulator between the state's people and its Dogra rulers—and communicating that interposition to the people vis-à-vis the land ownership reforms of the Lawrence Settlement—the British Residency also enabled those solicitations, insofar as it, to a limited extent, interpellated Kashmiris as liberal subjects while simultaneously constituting itself as a platform by which Kashmiris could express their grievances and seek governmental concessions.

[87] While it was on this basis, there were, to be clear, other factors at play in Britain's decision to tighten its control of Jammu and Kashmir in the last decade and a half of the nineteenth century, including the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878-1880) (Rai 146). For the most part, I have bracketed these wider geopolitical dynamics from my history, as including them would lengthen it considerably.

Religious and Political Influences Beyond Both the Kashmir Valley and the Princely State

With the transfer of the Kashmir Valley to Gulab Singh in 1846, the region was brought under a centralized administrative apparatus that also controlled Jammu, Ladakh, and the Frontier Provinces, thus tightly connecting for the first time what had heretofore been disparate geographic regions (Zutshi "Introduction: New Directions in the Study of Kashmir" 7).[88] At the same time, this incorporation into a princely state under the paramountcy of the British Empire also opened Kashmir to more relations with colonial India and the other princely states than had been possible previously. While charting the range of these relations is beyond the scope of this chapter, what is important to know is that both the rise of Pandit and Muslim religio-political communities in Kashmir and the ways in which they interacted with each other as well as with the state were dynamically constituted by these openings. An illustrative example of this influence is the role of Indian newspapers in facilitating Kashmiri religio-political consciousness. As part of Pratap and Hari Singhs' efforts to curb the politicization of the Valley in the first decades of the twentieth century, Kashmiris were not allowed to have their own news press until 1932. However, "the Punjab press, whether owned by Hindus or Muslims, [] never ceased to communicate their views on Kashmir affairs and thereby foment a public debate in the major

[88] While the Mughals, Afghans, and Sikhs had connected Kashmir economically to their respective political centers via the construction of trade routes and elaborate land revenue systems (and the Mughals had attempted to connect Kashmir culturally and ethno-linguistically to their empire), none of the previous conquerors had attempted to assimilate the Valley into a larger regional state. Yet, this new regional state was also placed in a relation of exception to the rest of British India. Thus, at the same time that Kashmir was enfolded into a larger geographic-administrative system, the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir itself was brought into tension with the colonial (world) system. This tension would only become more pronounced over the course of the 19th century, as the subsumption of the Valley into Jammu and Kashmir dramatically leached capital from the agrarian and artisanal classes, impoverishing Kashmiris to the point that Britain attempted to intervene in the Valley's economy in the 1880s, subsequently violating Jammu and Kashmir's semi-independence from British India as laid out in the Treaty of Amritsar (1846). We might hypothesize that the contradiction inhering between Kashmir's incorporation into Jammu and Kashmir and Jammu and Kashmir's simultaneous non-incorporation into British India is symptomatic of the constitutive contradictions within both primitive accumulation and the movements between different levels of capital (local, regional, global).

cities of the Punjab…[These] newspapers from Punjab had consistently filtered into the valley, carrying with them their editorializing opinions on the situation in Kashmir" (Rai 269). Although the course that Kashmiri political movements would ultimately take was not decided from without, the influence of these periodicals on the way that Kashmiris recognized themselves and their social, economic, and political positioning with respect to both to the state and to each other was significant. Whereas there was little Kashmiri Muslim political activity in the last decade of the nineteenth century, "[p]rominent Punjabi Muslim leaders had demonstrated political interest in the grievances of their co-religionists in Kashmir as early as 1892" (Rai 270). Most notably, the two main Muslim religio-political movements in Jammu and Kashmir that emerged in the 1920s were each heavily tied to a Punjabi religio-political community, the Ahmediyas and the Ahrars, respectively (270). Thus, although it was uneven, the period of Dogra-British rule was witness to a geopolitical de-parochialization of the Kashmir Valley that was intimately imbricated with the Valley's politicization.

***

While Pandit and Muslim religio-political movements variably interacted with each other from the end of the nineteenth century through the 1920s, they were not meaningfully articulated until the 1930s. This separation was not "communal" in nature but, rather, an effect of the aforementioned paradox that structured the Dogra Maharajas' claims to sovereignty. It will, I hope, not surprise readers to learn that the Maharajas were not interested in supporting any movements that would challenge their rule, and although the British imposed on the Maharajas an expectation that they would "recognize[] the rights of all subjects" (thus, at least in principle, "signall[ing] the inauguration of a public space for voicing political grievances"), they also were very eager to prevent the emergence of political publics in the state, cognizant that any robust

challenge from below to the maharajas' sovereignty was likely to eventually articulate itself with the movement for self-sovereignty that was coming into being in colonial India (Rai 240-241). Consequently, it was with British support that the Dogra state banned "overt political activity and mobilization through public meetings…in Jammu and Kashmir until 1932" (242). However, by virtue of its need to constitute its sovereignty vis-à-vis its Hinduness, the Dogra state did not extend any such ban to Hindu organizations founded for the purposes of enacting "socio-religious reform" (243). At the same time, by virtue of its need to approximate a liberal state in its principles of governance, it could not allow such organizations among Hindus while disallowing them among Muslims. In other words, "political" reform organizations could be banned but "religious" reform organizations could not be. Insofar as the actual domain of the "political" obviously greatly exceeds the naive and narrow notion of the term that subtends its differentiation from "religious" in this juridical structure, it should come as no surprise that this structure did not thwart the growth of political sentiment but, rather, ensured that political demands and identities formulated themselves as relationships between religious communities and the Dogra state. Thus, although the most historically significant of the many such religio-political movements that emerged in the first three decades of the twentieth century, the Muslim Conference, comes to nominally embrace secularism and, in doing so, rebrands itself as the National Conference, politics and religion were tightly connected in Kashmir during the first half of the twentieth century. Moreover, because one of the signs for the Dogra administrators that a religious organization had exceeded the boundary set for it and become "political" was the co-existence of Hindus and Muslims in such an organization and, as such, the state prohibited Muslims and Pandits from gathering together, while these religio-political communities developed in relation to one another and articulated their movements at certain junctures, they

were structurally precluded from forging deep coalitional bonds until the 1930s.[89] Accordingly, I address their respective politicizations in turn, noting, though, that this framework elides some moments of collaboration and mutual identification.

As a result of the aforementioned reforms to land administration—as well as related governmental reforms, such as the shift from Persian to Urdu as the court language (Rai 254)—from the end of the nineteenth century, Pandits increasingly felt "a collective sense of vulnerability…in light of their dependence on employment in state administration" (Duschinski, "'Survival is Now Our Politics'" 44). To remedy this growing sense of economic insecurity, Pandits "beg[an] organizing to protect their religious, economic, and political interests" (Rai 256). Initially, this organizing was oriented toward the state, to which they petitioned for more assurances regarding administrative employment, and toward alternate sects of Hinduism that

[89] An illustrative example of the extraordinary lengths the Dogra state went to segregate religious communities pertains to this period's education reform movement: "[T]he state followed schizophrenic policies towards the creation of a distinct category for Muslims within the state's educational system. While the 1908 State Educational Conference had dismissed Khan Sahib Peerzada Mohammad Hussain's proposal regarding the advancement of Muslim education in the state as of a 'purely sectarian nature and hence not proprietary to be taken up,' in 1914 the state appointed a Mohammadan Assistant Inspector of Schools whose 'chief duty was confined to the improvement and propagation of education among this backward community.' The education department had also provided seventy primary schools with Arabic teachers for making education popular and raising the number of Muslim scholars in public schools. By doing so, in its view the state was bridging the gap between secular education as provided by madrasas, so that Muslims, seen as being inherently more religious, would be attracted to these schools" (*Languages of Belonging* 207). This policy, no doubt, contributed to Pandit religio-political movements disparaging parallel movements among Muslims as "communal" in the late 1920s, which I discuss below.

Two necessary clarifications about the quoted passage: 1) In using "backward," Zutshi is citing a specific colonial category that disadvantaged groups strategically mobilized to get access to state resources, not interposing an offensive personal evaluation; 2) On the other hand, I resolutely oppose Zutshi's use of "schizophrenic" as a synonym for incoherent (just as I oppose Deleuze and Guattari's deployment of it).

had passed into the Valley from the Punjab, most notably the Arya Samaj (256-257).[90] The relationship between Pandits and these Punjabi Hindu associations reflected the complex dialectic inhering between the religious realms and the political realms in Kashmir at this time. Punjabi Hindus were, on the whole, favored by the Dogras for administrative roles; as a result, the latter also gave patronage to Punjabi religious associations. In turn, these associations were capacitated to precipitate reform movements directed at Pandit religious and social practices, such as "'idol worship,'" ritual expenses, the truth status of the Vedas vis-à-vis other texts, child marriage, and widow remarriage (256-259). Although there was a spectrum of responses to these reform efforts, on the whole, the undercutting of Pandits' livelihood by Punjabi Hindus at one level and the undercutting of their culture at another level together brought into being a form of "community solidarity" that had not existed previously. At the same time, this community also formed itself politically vis-à-vis successive petitions of the state, by which it progressively borrowed from the legal framework of the Lawrence Settlement as the means by which it sued for redress. Ultimately, this religio-political community was able to articulate itself and its

[90] To be clear, the relationship between the Kashmir Valley and the Punjab is more complicated than the inside vs. outside binary my narrative utilizes. As Duschinski explains, "Kashmiri Hindus migrated out of Kashmir Valley in significant numbers during the colonial period, with migrant communities engaging in considerable self-conscious reflection on the preservation of cultural identity, values, and traditions under conditions of political adversity and social change. As Henry Sender (1988) has shown, Kashmiri Hindu community associations flourished outside the Valley in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries among community members living in the areas that were then known as the Northwestern Provinces and Oudh, the British province of Punjab, and some of the princely states of central India, Rajputana, and the Punjab" ("'Survival is Now Our Politics'" 44). Moreover, Duschinski goes on to note that the enclaves of Pandits that formed across these sites worked to forge a more "distinctive identity as Kashmiri Brāhmanas" as a means of making their community legible "while participating in the world of the Urdu-speaking elite in northern India" (44). Thus, while Rai's narrative, which I draw from extensively, suggests that Pandit religio-political identity formation emerged from within the Valley and in tension with Hindu groups outside the Valley, Duschinski and Sender appear to adopt a more nuanced, extra-regional understanding of the category "Pandit." However, while these Pandit enclaves that had formed outside the Valley also experienced economic dispossession in the nineteenth century—due to "the British Raj replac[ing] the Mughal imperial rule as the source of administrative employment and political authority after 1857" —they, interestingly enough, "did not have a strong urge to return to Kashmir and did not participate in the social and political movements taking place there" (45). Thus, according to Duschinski and Sender, it appears that Pandit communities inside and outside the Valley went through parallel processes around the same time that, nevertheless, rarely intersected. This appears to be a very fruitful site for a study of models of historical causality and influence.

demands so effectively that it coerced Hari Singh in 1927 to adopt a different legal definition of "state subject" that significantly attenuated the perceived threat posed by Punjabis to their state employment (262). In order to do so, it also "tactically included, at least implicitly, the interests of Kashmiri Muslims when making regionally based demands for a proper definition of the term 'state subject,'" thereby, at least in the eyes of the state, articulating its demands with those of the growing Muslim religio-political community, to which we now turn (262).

Due to their poverty and erstwhile itineracy (prior to the Lawrence Settlement), Kashmiri Muslims took longer than Pandits to collectively identify and mobilize. Whereas Pandits started petitioning the state in the 1890s, it was not until 1907 that "a group of 'Representatives of Kashmiri Mussulmans' spoke out on behalf of Kashmiri Muslims" (263). Initially, these self-titled representatives demanded educational reforms with an eye toward evening a disparity in collective education between Hindus and Muslims in Kashmir, a demand that soon found support among Muslims in the Punjab. This interregional petition for educational parity, in turn, found its corollary in employment status. Although induced by the British Residency to take responsibility for all of its citizens, the Dogra state retained its discriminatory approach toward governing Kashmiri Muslims. When multiple efforts across the 1910s to pressure the maharaja to adopt policies that would enable more Muslims to rise in social status were met with apathy, they began to strategically use the maharaja's colonially attenuated sovereignty against him:

> In 1924, on the occasion of the visit to Kashmir by the viceroy, Lord Reading, [the Srinagar Muslim elite] presented him with a memorial demanding, besides more government jobs and better educational facilities for Muslims, ownership rights for the peasantry, the abolition of begar and the restoration of all mosques under the control of the durbar. This memorandum represented a widening in the

> nature of demands made by the Srinagar Muslim elite, seeking now to emerge as leaders of a broader segment of Muslims. (264)

Singh adopted a hostile response to this brazen effort to undermine his authority.[91] However, these efforts also appear to have convinced Dogra officials and the British durbar in Kashmir that the Valley's Muslims were no longer a populace that could be neglected. For this reason, when Pandits articulated their cause with that of their Muslim peers in 1927, they were quite effective at securing concessions from the state. Yet, that both of these nascent religio-political communities were formulating themselves through petitioning the state was also a source of tension and competition. Rai argues it was from this competition that Pandits, while internally organized as a religious community, began to borrow secular language from the Indian National Congress in how they framed their movement for rights and state concessions against that of their Muslim peers: "Replicating the Indian National Congress's rhetoric, Kashmiri Pandits pitted the 'communalism' of the Muslims against what they described as their own more genuinely 'national' struggles" (Rai 265). Rai reads this mobilization of secular political identity categories as symptomatic of the significant disparity in population between Pandits and Muslims and what this would mean for the Pandits' employment opportunities if the latter sought representational parity in administration. If, on one side, Pandits were unjustifiably disparaging Muslim political activity as "communal," on the other side, Muslims were circulating dangerous anti-Pandit rhetoric regarding relative disparities in wealth, status, and education. While the referenced disparities were not imaginary, the rhetoric undoubtedly overestimated the relative agency of Pandits vis-à-vis the empires that had annexed the Valley and, in doing so, reductively scapegoated a community whose access to privilege was always more tenuous than it appeared.

[91] See *LB* p. 217 for details.

The 1930s constituted perhaps the most dynamic period in the Valley's political history under Dogra-British rule. It is bookended by two contrasting "events." The first, on 13 July 1931, was a confrontation between Kashmiri Muslims and the Dogra police that culminated in "general rioting" against "Pandit landholders, moneylenders, and petty officers" throughout Srinagar (*Languages of Belonging* 234).[92] The second, in June 1939, was the Muslim Conference, a very prominent Muslim political group in the Valley, changing its name to the All Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (henceforth NC), thereby reconstituting itself as a secular organization that sought to represent Muslims, Hindus, and Sikhs alike, all of whom, it argued, had "'immensely suffered at the hands of the irresponsible [Dogra] government'" (Rai 281). In other words, the decade begins with an outburst of violence that reflected high tensions between Muslims and Pandits and ends with an alliance having formed between these communities in joint-opposition to Dogra rule.[93] There are many intra- and inter-regional factors contributing to this shift, and in fact, even calling it a shift can reductively overrepresent the NC in narrating the history of Kashmiri "nationalism," eliding the non-secular religio-political groups that persisted alongside and, to an extent, within the NC. In the third section of this chapter, I touch upon the heterogeneity of the Kashmiri nationalist movement and its legacies after Jammu and Kashmir is acceded to India. Here, though, I restrict my remarks to tracing a common line by which these two events are connected: the political trajectory of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah.

---

[92] The conflict with the police resulted in somewhere between eighteen and twenty-two Muslim deaths. Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah used these murders as a political catalyst for his movement, declaring 13 July 1931 as Martyrs' Day. Since 1984, the discourse of martyrdom has been used and abused extensively by Kashmiri resistance groups. I touch upon the complexity of these deployments in the last chapter of this dissertation.

[93] This coalition was not accepted by all; most notably, a faction of the Muslim Conference broke off and reaffirmed its distinctly religious identity (appropriately, it retained the group's original name). Moreover, as with all such coalitions, this nascent articulation of interests did not coincide with an ablation of tensions that had arisen in the previous two decades.

Abdullah was one of an emerging sub-population of Muslims in the Valley in the 1930s who had gone to university in British India only to return and, for reasons we have discussed, find themselves unable to secure employment. In their discontent, these graduates began to meet in Srinagar's Muslim Reading Room to discuss a range of topics related to Kashmir; in short time, their discussions led to the formation of the Reading Room Party. Due to the Kashmir durbar's unwillingness to ensure educated Muslims could attain employment, in 1930 the Reading Room Party "inaugurated…an extensive propaganda campaign against the durbar and against the Kashmiri Pandits who had taken once again to active protest" (Rai 266). The importance of this campaign is that it situated Abdullah to take advantage of the violence of 13 July 1931. He did so in two ways. First, he used the spectacularity of the police violence against Muslims to cohere a populist movement among the lower classes, thus challenging the erstwhile political supremacy among Kashmiri Muslims of "the older and more socially exclusive elite leadership of the Jama Masjid mirwaiz, Saad-ud-din Shawl and others" (Rai 268-269). Second, properly recognizing the Dogra state's growing fear of Muslim uprising in the Valley in the aftermath of 13 July, Abdullah made a reputation for himself of boldly preaching political sentiment in mosques in Srinagar, aware both that the state wary of do anything more than arresting him and that with each arrest he became more popular among the people. That Abdullah was an exceptionally gifted politician cannot be understated: "by September 1931, Abdullah's popularity had grown to such proportions that the British were worried about the effect events in Kashmir might have on the communal situation in India…Consequently, they put pressure on the durbar to form a body that would look into and remedy the more obvious Muslim grievances' (276-277). The resulting body, the Glancy Commission, recommended that a number of policy changes be implemented to mollify an increasingly agitated Muslim populace, some of

the most significant being that Kashmiris should be able to have their own news presses and that Kashmiris should be allowed to form political parties. The latter was extraordinarily consequential for Abdullah, who quickly established the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference in 1932 (277). In retrospect, the timing of this reform was also particularly beneficial for the formation of a broad-based political movement due to the 1930 global depression. Abdullah traveled the Valley, utilizing the ravages wrought on the economy by this depression and a deft capacity to deploy socialist rhetoric in order to bring rural cultivators and urban artisans into collective identification (279). Paradoxically, under these economic conditions, this socialist rhetoric enabled Abdullah to *both* interpellate Muslims in opposition to Pandits *and* to jointly interpellate Muslims and Pandits in opposition to the Dogra state: "considering the broad religious lines followed by economic deprivation in the valley, class and religious community melted as easily into one another as did anti-'capitalist' and anti-Hindu rhetoric" (279). This contradiction should not be effaced because Abdullah propagated some truly vile depictions of Pandits that, in effect, racially reified their class position; yet, it was also on the basis of entrenching the socialist frameworks of class exploitation in the Kashmiri Muslim political imagination that Abdullah was able to open his Muslim Conference to secular reformulation. Part and parcel of this reformulation was Abdullah's strategic mobilization of a fictitious historiographic trope to affectively bind Muslims and Pandits together. This trope, *kashmiriyat*, plasters over the complex reality of Kashmiri history with the image of a "peaceful and placid Kashmir Valley, where religious communities had lived in complete harmony since time immemorial" (*Languages of Belonging* 236). The legacy of Abdullah's deployment of *kashmiriyat* can appear cruelly ironic, insofar as it would come to be used against Kashmiri resistance movements by the Indian state and Hindu nationalists. However, the ease with which

his discourse was appropriated and mobilized against him reveals its constitutive reliance on *ressentiment revisionism*. This is not a critique of Abdullah alone but, also, one of the affective-historiographical regime of truth upon which he was drawing. As Foucault once (in)famously argued, when socialist historiography reduces to mere dialectic of bourgeois versus proletariat, it makes use of a "war of the races" logic that renders it susceptible to fascist deformation.[94] In effect, Abdullah used the ablative fiction of *kashmiriyat* to maintain the anti-Hindu and anti-Dogra strains of socialist discourse in co-existence among Kashmiri Muslims. Thus, while Hindus and Sikhs were incorporated into Abdullah's movement in the latter half of the 1930s and the first half of the 1940s, they "frequently found themselves labeled the enemy" by it (274). As with the Nehru's Indian National Congress, with which Abdullah's movement progressively articulated itself (in part because of a famous friendship that developed between the two popular leaders during this period), the NC in Kashmir never successfully excised the religio-political ethos that conditioned its emergence (285-286). This should be kept in mind as we turn our attention to Indian rule and the unfortunate deterioration of relations between the two regions.

1.2 A Derealized Massacre: Disrupting the State's Narrative of Accession: 1947-1948

On August 15th, 1947, the geographic polity delineated by colonial cartographers as "Hindustan" attained its independence from Britain. Simultaneously, this entity split into the nation-states of India and Pakistan, the latter of which contained the region that would later establish itself as Bangladesh. In the lead-up to decolonization and Partition, the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir constituted a more or less unique problem. While the British authorities nominally allowed every princely state the freedom to decide if they would accede to one of the

[94] See the final lecture of Foucault's *"Society Must Be Defended"* as well Stoler's commentary on this lecture in *Race and the Education of Desire*.

planned postcolonial nations—and, if so, which one—or if they would opt for independent statehood, most of their fates were predestined. As Sumantra Bose notes, Lord Mountbatten "was unequivocal that [independence] was merely a theoretical option" and that, furthermore, accession should be decided based on "two criteria: [1] geographical embeddedness in or contiguity to India or Pakistan, and [2] the wishes of their population of subjects," with "wishes" in this Raj-inflected imaginary referring mostly to the religious composition of the state (Bose 30). Moreover, in retrospect it is clear that any conflict with respect to the first criteria was always going to override any concerns with the second; this is why Muslim-led princely states within India's territorial boundaries, such as Junagadh and Hyderabad, were ultimately compelled by the nascent state to accede (in Hyderabad's case, by force, as we will see) (30). With Jammu and Kashmir, however, these criteria proved insufficient for identifying an obvious path forward, insofar as it shared borders with both India and Pakistan and, although more than three-fourths of its population was Muslim, political consciousness in the region had recently articulated itself through secular ideals (as attested by the 1938 rebranding of the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference as the All Jammu and Kashmir National Conference), which were shared more, at least nominally, by India than Pakistan. Insofar as the two primary purposes in assuming these criteria were, one, to limit the extent to which the technical right of princes to decide their states' destinies would be able interfere with the process of constructing two, and only two, internally contiguous postcolonial states and, two, to create a universal standard for dividing the subcontinent in the hopes that this would preclude land disputes between the new nations, their insufficiency with respect to Jammu and Kashmir meant that the state's maharaja, Hari Singh, was in a relatively unique position where he could not be compelled one way or the other without risking conflict.

That Singh perfectly understood the leverage afforded by this position became quite clear on Independence Day, when instead of aligning itself with either fledgling nation Jammu and Kashmir offered both India and Pakistan a provisional accord, which would "allow the free movement of peoples and goods across borders" until such time that the maharaja had made his decision regarding Jammu and Kashmir's ultimate fate (Guha 77). While Pakistan entertained Singh's noncommittal bargaining, India abstained from signing this "standstill agreement." Consequently, in August 1947, it appeared that all that stood in the way of Kashmir acceding to Pakistan was a deal by which Singh could retain his power and privileges in some capacity while giving over most of the region's administration to the newly formed Muslim nation (Bose 33). No one could have predicted that merely two-and-a-half months later the Pakistan-Kashmir relationship would be shattered and that the maharaja would, under threat of annihilation, be coerced to sign over Jammu and Kashmir to India.

With respect to many histories of the Kashmir "conflict," the events of August-November 1947 constitute an origin point. In the standard account—that is, the account proffered by the Indian state—the possibility of Kashmir acceding to Pakistan was abruptly ended when the latter facilitated a Pashtun "tribal invasion" of the Valley on October 22nd:

> These Pukhtoons…wreaked havoc as they headed for Srinagar, ostensibly to capture the ruler of Muslim-majority J&K and his summer capital for Pakistan. Distracted by their looting, raping and killing of locals, the tribesmen failed on both counts. India ensured this failure by dispatching its military to J&K to help Maharaja Hari Singh defend 'his' princely state of which, increasingly, he was losing control. The Indians did so after the Maharaja duly acceded to India on 26

> October 1947…India's military arrived in Srinagar the next day—and has remained in J&K ever since. (Snedden "Azad Kashmir" 113)

As Christopher Snedden and other recent historians have emphasized, this narrative not only completely decontextualizes the invasion, but as part and parcel of this decontextualization, it effaces a massacre of Muslims in Jammu whose historical causality has yet to be thoroughly delineated. It also discursively buries the founding of Azad Kashmir, detaching it from the Kashmiri nationalist movements we traced in the previous section. For these scholars, the interstate violence constituted by the Pashtun invasion must not be apprehended as an *ex nihilo* irruption of savage nature into History but as a counter-movement precipitated, in part, by an intrastate conflict centered on Poonch, a region in western Jammu.

With respect to Dogra-led Jammu, Poonch was a religious and political anomaly. Whereas most of Jammu was Hindu, Poonch's Muslims constituted more than ninety percent of its population (116). Moreover, for decades, Poonch had enjoyed a special autonomous status inside Jammu and Kashmir. During the second world war, however, the maharaja had dethroned the region's prince and taken direct control, subsequently subjecting the population to a dramatic increase in taxation (*Roots of Conflict* 32). Poonch had already been on edge since at least 1938, when the maharaja stationed the Jammu and Kashmir army there indefinitely in response to a local Sudhan rebellion; Hari Singh's authoritarian overreach only further soured relations between him and Poonch's citizens (Snedden 116). For these reasons, and others that we will discuss shortly, in the spring of 1947 Poonchi Muslims initiated a revolt against the maharaja, who responded with what Bose refers to as "severe reprisals against the population" (*Roots of Conflict* 32). As indexed by the vagueness of Bose's description, the exact extent of the violence perpetuated by Singh's forces during this first phase of the conflict is unclear. What is clear,

however, is that Singh's response was "severe" enough to provoke the tens of thousands of Poonchi Muslims who had recently been demobilized after serving in the British Indian army to organize a full-scale rebellion against the state with the aim of politically severing Poonch and neighboring regions in Jammu (Muzaffarabad and Mirpur) from Jammu and Kashmir. The full force of this rebellion did not come into being until shortly after Partition in August 1947, by which time it had articulated itself with Pakistan. Quickly, the Poonchi soldiers proved themselves to be extremely capable: "[b]y early October the rebels had gained control of almost the entire Poonch district except the town of Poonch, garrisoned by a government force" (32). In response, Singh unleashed what the contemporary Prem Nath Bazaz called a "'reign of terror'…perpetra[ting] unheard of atrocities on the people of Poonch; villages were burned down and innocent people massacred'" (qtd. in Rashid "Theatrics of a Violent State" 218).[95] As Iffat Rashid notes:

> [S]ome observers believed that whatever happened in August and September 'was a systematic State persecution of Muslims in areas of Poonch, Mirpur, and Jammu'. [*sic*] In the third week of September 1947, 18,000 Muslims were reportedly killed in the villages of Lundi Sukmal, Badial, Madheo, Kot Brahmin, Bambia and Hira Nagar; and between the second and third weeks of October, 20,000 Muslims died in the villages of Fatehpur, Tonkanwali, Raipur, Kotla Arian, Aggar Chak, and Kotli. (Rashid 220)

It is, thus, within the context of this systematic persecution that Snedden and Rashid argue the so-called tribal invasion on October 22nd should be understood. This is not to say that the

[95] Bazaz was a Kashmiri Pandit politician, scholar, and activist whose contributions to the historiography of Kashmir, the formation of Kashmiri national consciousness and its constitutive Muslim-Hindu solidarity, and the later *azadi* movement were considerable.

Pashtun assault on Kashmir was unilaterally caused by Singh's war crimes in Poonch, insofar as "there is compelling evidence that the 'tribal' population in the North-Western Frontier was politicised [*sic*] not just by what was happening in Jammu province, but also by the news of the [Partition-related] killings in east Punjab and Delhi in September 1947" (219-220). My objective is not to identify a clear causal schema between the Poonch rebellion against the maharaja, Singh's draconian response, the Pashtun invasion, Partition violence in neighboring regions, and the mass displacements engendered by that violence. Rather, in concert with recent scholarship in Kashmir Studies, I seek to draw attention to, one, the presence of a Dogra-sanctioned campaign of ethnic cleansing against Muslims in Jammu that emerged in relation to these conflicts and, two, how the Indian state propagated what became its normative account of the maharaja's accession to historiographically bury this campaign. My purpose in doing so is to reflect on the political rationality of this attempted elision and to identify a logic by which this act can be recognized as a precursor to the colonial relation between the state and the Kashmir Valley that would emerge over the course of the next five decades without indulging in reductive forms of teleology.

Over the course of October-December 1947, the Muslim population of Jammu was "'practically eliminated…amounting to 500,000 people'" (Stephens qtd. in Rashid 220). Due to the lack of any "official report," it is unclear how to parse this number in terms of how many were displaced, how many were murdered, and how many died of other causes (e.g., disease) (224; 220). There is reason to regard this lack of official records as part of the violence itself. Even as these massacres were unfolding, the Indian government propagandized them to the wider public as episodes of communal strife between Hindus and Muslims, metonymically linking them, vis-à-vis Partition, to similar conflicts occurring in multiple regions at the

emerging border between the two new postcolonial states. The Jammu massacre was not constituted by arbitrary outbursts of local communal strife. Rather, it was rooted in a campaign of ethnic cleansing led by Dogra state forces, which was then intensified by RSS involvement in November 1947 (Kanjwal 49-51).[96] Disturbingly, correspondences between Nehru and Sardar Patel indicate that the former knew about the RSS's intentions in advance of their entrance into the region (Rashid 223). Moreover, although by the end of the month Nehru was already attempting to reassure *The Times of India* that "he deeply regretted that in parts of Jammu province, Muslims had been driven out or killed, but he believed it had nothing to do with the Kashmir government or the Indian armed forces," this professed belief notably contradicts the information he had received from Dalip Singh on 18 November 1947: "'almost every official is secretly in sympathy with [the RSS] and they probably turn a blind eye on their entry. The Sanghis (the RSS and its supporters) enter the State with the help of the military lorry drivers'" (223-224). In the same letter, moreover, Singh plainly expresses to Nehru that the Dogras sought to ensure that Jammu "remain Hindu because a Muslim Jammu, and Muslims are in a majority here, implies accession to Pakistan and Kashmiris will have to accede to Pakistan if the route to the Indian Union is cut off" (223).[97] That is, Nehru knew that the campaign against Muslims in Jammu was fundamentally rooted in a desire to prevent Jammu being integrated into Pakistan.

[96] Those who know the history may object to my concentration on Muslim mass death in discussing Jammu's Partition violence. There was also, to be clear, a vicious campaign against Hindus and Sikhs perpetuated by Muslims that occurred in western Jammu, in the areas that became Azad Kashmir: "By 1951, of the former approximately 114,000 non-Muslims who in 1941 had lived in areas that later came to comprise Azad Kashmir—that is, 89 per cent of Mirpur District, 87 per cent of Muzaffarabad District and 60 per cent of Poonch Jagir—only a paltry 790 non-Muslims remained. This was out of a total Azad Kashmir population in 1951 of 886,000. We don't know how many Hindus and Sikhs were actually killed [versus how many fled or were forcibly displaced]" (Snedden, *Understanding Kashmir and Kashmiris* 119).

[97] Presumably, the contradiction between Jammu "remain[ing] Hindu," on the one hand, and Muslims already constituting a "majority" there, on the other hand, finds its root in the mass migrations of Muslims from the Punjab into Jammu from Partition violence. That is, the Jammu Dogras were anxious that the newly arrived refugees would become permanent residents, thus resulting in a "Muslim Jammu."

To be clear, there is no evidence that Nehru had any direct involvement in the actions of these sympathizers or of the Dogra state forces. It also appears that Nehru was objecting to the RSS's activities. However, it does not appear that he tried to stop them, nor did he attempt to seek justice for the victims of the massacre afterward.[98] Instead, he immediately incorporated this episode into India's propaganda campaign against Pakistan, assimilating the violence in Jammu to its narrative of the Pashtun invasion (Kanjwal 50). Hafsa Kanjwal argues that this discursive displacement onto Pakistan was just as much about vilifying the enemy as about dissimulating the deep divide between Singh and his Muslim subjects, which, if brought to light, "would [have] undermine[d] Kashmir's belonging to India on the grounds of secularism. Furthermore, it would [have] complicate[d] India's desire to depict Maharaja Hari Singh as 'legitimate,' and hence his accession to India as 'a valid sovereign act'" (50). At the same time, India arguably benefited from the demographic shift in Jammu following the massacre, insofar as it left Jammu disproportionately Hindu; consequently, "[t]he violence in Jammu was instrumental in constituting what would later be defined as the national community within the boundaries of the state of Jammu and Kashmir" (Rashid 223). Rashid is, of course, taking liberties with teleological reasoning here—that India would come to idealize Jammu and Kashmir in the national imagination as a portrait miniature of the ideal of peaceful secular co-existence toward which the postcolonial nation nominally strives to actualize does not in and of itself strictly justify framing the Jammu Massacre as "instrumental." Yet, we need to consider that, one, it appears Nehru's only substantive effort to save lives was facilitating the transfer of Muslim refugees out of Jammu—which, as Kanjwal notes, did not counteract the ethnic

[98] "In Jammu, as with India's Partition-related violence, there were no court cases which could have created a 'theatrical space for the acknowledgement of the suffering involved.' There was no official account enumerating the dead. Strikingly, there are only scanty primary archival reports which enumerate the lives lost in terms of numbers" (Rashid 224).

cleansing of the region but, arguably, made Nehru (and Abdullah) "complicit" in it (Kanjwal 49). Two, he attempted to bury the event under the Pashtun invasion in national memory apparently for the purpose of preventing Kashmiri Muslims from raising the, in retrospect, extraordinarily relevant question of whether the Indian state would be able to protect them from the genocidal ambitions of Hindu nationalists. Three, he would go on to use the demographic shift as part of a rhetorical figuration of Jammu and Kashmir that serves only to justify retaining the territory regardless of the cost suffered by the inhabitants in doing so. Given this, I see in Rashid's rhetorical move a much-needed reorientation of our entry point into assessing culpability and structural causality when there has been an egregious and overtly intentional historical elision on the part of a state actor.[99]

There is something narratively inconvenient about Nehru's relation to the Jammu Massacre. It does not parse well in terms of rationality because it reflects an illegible conjunction of contingency and intention. On the one hand, because Nehru was neither an organizer of nor a participant in the massacre, it can appear that he was more-or-less an external latecomer to this event; even as all of these correspondences with agents in the field demonstrate that Nehru knew more about the atrocities and their exterminationist rationale than he let on to the public at the time, it is nevertheless quite difficult to assess the degree to which he could have effectively intervened to stymy the violence once it was already in full swing, especially in the wider context of Partition. On the other hand, his decision not only to historiographically bury the massacre but, in the course of doing so, instrumentalize it in a propaganda war with Pakistan

[99] For all of the suspicion that postcolonialists bring to colonial discourse, why, in fact, has it been the case that "rarely does one hear Indian postcolonial or subaltern scholars speaking of the Jammu Massacre, even though they are all too eager to overemphasize the Pakistan-sponsored 'tribals'" (Kanjwal 50)? In what other contexts would a concerted effort by a head of state to dissimulate ethnic cleansing (regardless of their role in its production) not provoke interrogations into the structural forces at work in that effort by otherwise discerning scholars?

does not enjoy the same presumption of ignorance and/or powerlessness. It reflects extensive political calculation, a conscious willingness to derealize the victims and what they suffered, and a resistance to holding Dogra state officers, now citizens of postcolonial India, and the RSS accountable for their crimes; that is, it betrays malicious aforethought—but of what, precisely? For Kanjwal, who recognizes in Nehru's cover-up "settler logics of erasure of histories" and "the colonial optics of normalization," the answer is, quite plainly, an intent to colonize (Kanjwal 50). While the structure of the occupation has, no doubt, become colonial in the intervening decades, something appears to be lost when we attempt to apply that framework to these early years. Nehru and Abdullah were working closely with each other at this time, Abdullah's influence on the Valley's political outlook was considerable, and the National Conference had, at least nominally, identified itself with secularism. That is, it is likely that Nehru had convinced himself that Kashmiri Muslims were ideologically more suited for India than Pakistan and that the reductively communal logic by which Partition was effected would obscure that reality if allowed to operate as the guiding principle by which Kashmir's fate was decided. Moreover, it was clear, especially in the wake of the Jammu Massacre, that the Hindus and Sikhs of Jammu were unequivocally opposed to joining Pakistan, the same of which could be said of the Ladakhi Buddhists, and at that point, the idea of splitting up the princely state into its pre-1846 regions was, it appears, not considered as a viable option by either side.[100] Thus, it is within the realm of possibility that Nehru (and India's governing body more broadly) perceived both forcing the maharaja to accede under duress and working with Abdullah to bury the Jammu Massacre so as to avoid igniting anti-Indian sentiment in the Valley as actions taken in the name of the greater

[100] It is a point of terrible irony that this suggestion was frequently scoffed at and regarded as untenable only for Modi's government to politically sever Ladakh from the rest of Indian-administered Jammu and Kashmir in 2019.

good. By extension, we might surmise that had Nehru known in advance that there would arise a longstanding opposition to Indian rule in the Valley that would lead India to retain control of it only through persistently denying Kashmiris democracy, enacting a draconian security regime, and transforming the Valley into a hyper-militarized region—had he known, that is, that Kashmir could only be India's through the latter becoming a colonial power itself—then he might have approached late 1947 differently.

While, of course, one could rightly retort that, regardless of good intentions, refusing a people their rights to self-determination and informed consent on the basis that they would not make the "correct" decision if allowed them reflects a colonizer's mindset, my primary issue with this line of reasoning is that *it still fails to adequately account for the political rationality of covering up a campaign of ethnic cleansing*. To my mind, there is a simple, but significant, contradiction in this logic: since at least the sixteenth century (though, there are certainly earlier precedences, as well), British governmentality had held that the first and most fundamental rule of territorial sovereignty is that a state must annex to itself the right to kill, as well as generally establish a monopoly on violence. In turning away from investigating and prosecuting the perpetrators of this violence, Nehru was, at least according to British norms of jurisprudence, building a poor foundation for the postcolonial state's authority.[101]

In the course of excavating the Jammu Massacre from its burial in recent years, scholars of Kashmir have often drawn attention to another case in which incorporating a princely state

[101] It is, of course, well known that the British broke with these legal norms in establishing a two-tier criminal justice system in colonial India. The extent to which postcolonial India's frequent recourse to exceptionalist legal mechanisms can be explained as the legacy of this system is a matter of debate. While diagramming these legal genealogies is, no doubt, very important and informative, we must be careful not to efface agency and displace responsibility in translating these legal trajectories to historical narratives of postcolonial societies. In any case, I do not suspect that the pernicious ideological effects of colonial legal frameworks would have changed Nehru's outlook on the perceived need of a new state to establish a monopoly on violence within its territorial boundaries.

into the erstwhile Dominion of India resulted in significant bloodshed beyond Nehru's control and which precipitated a strategically odd response from him: the case of Hyderabad.[102] As noted earlier, Hyderabad was one of the three princely states whose ruler had not acceded to either India or Pakistan at the time of Partition. Unlike Kashmir, Hyderabad was geographically lodged in Indian territory; as such, both Mountbatten and Nehru considered its accession a foregone conclusion, even as they still had to extend to its ruler, the hereditary *nizam*, the same legal "choice" afforded to every other princely state. However, as a Muslim ruler whose territory and military might were quite substantial, the *nizam* and his administration ultimately proved unwilling to capitulate to dissolution. Fearing that any transgression of the law of internal contiguity would precipitate the "Balkanization" of the emerging nation, in autumn 1948 Nehru's government sent the Indian Army to demolish three militant groups in Hyderabad simultaneously: the *nizam*'s official army, a powerful pro-Pakistan militia known as the *razakars*, which had grown alongside the *nizam's* army but also in tension with it, and a substantial communist movement in Telangana that had emerged in opposition to the *nizam*'s rule (Metcalf and Metcalf 223; Purushotham 182-185). For Sunil Purushotham, the tactic of subjugation at work in the assault on Hyderabad in autumn 1948 reflected the organizing principle by which India approached resolving contestations of its authority in its early years:

> From 1946, the Indian National Congress set about eliminating, subduing, and incorporating its rivals. For the Congress, sovereignty of the state was paramount, and they did not shy away from wielding state power against challenges to their government and party hegemony. This was the basis of the consensus between the

[102] A far more robust history of Hyderabad and its relation to the problem of postcolonial sovereignty that I gesture towards here can be found in the first two chapters of Sunil Purushotham's *From Raj to Republic: Sovereignty, Violence, and Democracy in India*.

> duumvirate of Nehru and Patel: the Indian nation-state must first be made sovereign in order to be made democratic. Power must be built up before it could be redistributed. (Purushotham 251)

While I agree with Purushotham's assessment, I regard this approach to establishing state authority, at least in its abstract form, as normative and certainly not unique to postcolonial India. What is, I think, useful about reflecting on the annexation of Hyderabad is the relationship between the official military operation against Hyderabad, Operation Polo, and the unofficial campaign of eliminationalist violence against Muslims that followed it, in which state actors—from multiple levels of government but also, most importantly, the Indian Army—constituted a significant proportion of the perpetrators. This campaign, known now as the Hyderabad Massacres, resulted in tens of thousands, if not hundreds of thousands, of deaths. Similar to how there is no evidence to suggest that Nehru's administration ordered the Army to facilitate the RSS into Jammu, so, too, is there no evidence to suggest that it directed the Indian Army to exceed the mandate of Operation Polo and engage in the indiscriminate killings. Where the two cases slightly diverge is in Nehru's initial response upon learning that the military had been involved in the violence: he commissioned an objective survey of the damage, which was headed by Pandit Sunderlal and Qazi Abdul, the results of which were assembled into a document called the Sunderlal Report.[103] For our purposes, it is the state's responses to this report that are particularly relevant. Before we discuss those, though, I will highlight three notable aspects of the violence that the report identifies.

[103] To Nehru's credit, he made his demand for objectivity very clear: "'It is important that the exact facts should be placed before us. We want no optimistic account and no suppression of unsavoury episodes'" (qtd. in Purushotham 80).

First, the Sunderlal Report overtly named and graphically represented the Indian Army's complicity in these atrocities:

> The report conceded that "on the whole the Army has done splendidly well" but also claimed that at "a number of places members of the armed forces brought out Muslim adult males from villages and towns and massacred them in cold blood." Elsewhere, "They encouraged and even persuaded the Hindu mobs to loot Muslim shops and houses" and "even joined in the looting." (Purushotham 92)

Second, the Sunderlal Report made clear that many non-Army actors had, in addition to the armed forces, also been instrumental to this campaign, including nearly 500,000 Hindu refugees (who had been displaced by atrocities committed by the *nizam*'s army and the *razakars* during the year that the *nizam* refused to yield to the Indian state) and wide swaths of an anti-*nizam* and anti-*razakar* political party in Hyderabad known as the State Congress (88-89). Third, as with other episodes of extra-legal violence chalked up to communalism, these assaults on Muslims often involved efforts at "'forcible conversion[]'" mediated through marking women's bodies with tattoos, shaving men's beards, and piercing children's ears (116).

When introducing the Sunderlal Report above, I implied that it reflected a slight deviation in how Nehru responded to the Hyderabad Massacres and the Jammu Massacre, respectively. Insofar as Nehru did not investigate the latter at all, this is in fact an inapt description. The reason, though, that I have minimized the distinction is because upon receiving the Sunderlal Report in 1949, Nehru did not publish it and, instead, as with the memory of the Jammu Massacre, buried it—and buried it so thoroughly that it was not made publicly available until 2013, through the efforts of A.G. Noorani.[104] Moreover, along with *this* historiographic

[104] See Noorani *The Destruction of Hyderabad*.

inhumation, we find another displacement of sorts, this time not against Pakistan but against the groups that Operation Polo had decimated:

> [T]he government of Hyderabad also created three "Special Tribunals," with one each in Bidar, Parbhani, and Nalgonda…The tribunals were initially set up to deal with the backlog caused by the trial of thousands of suspected Razakars and communists arrested by the police and military after the Police Action [i.e., Operation Polo]. They were set up, the Government of Hyderabad insisted, not to "debar the accused from the privileges available under the ordinary law but solely to expedite decisions as the number of cases were very large"…Almost all of the convicted did not know English, were illiterate, had no defense counsel, could not cross-examine witnesses, did not call any defense witnesses and did not submit any evidence on their own behalf. (212-213)

That is, instead of prosecuting the perpetrators of the Hyderabad Massacres, the Hyderabad state government defined its new tenure as a constitutive state of the Dominion of India through arresting, trying, convicting, and, in some cases, executing enemy combatants. Notably, in conjunction with these tribunals, the state government made use of emergency powers it had codified in law under the *nizam* in 1940 and went on to repackage as the Hyderabad Public Security Measures Bill in 1951, which according to Purushotham, "normalized the state of emergency," a characterization that, regrettably, would go on to apply to a number of India's territories after Independence, including, most spectacularly, Jammu and Kashmir.

It seems to me that Nehru's burying of the Sunderlal Report, the Hyderabad post-war tribunals, and the normalizing of emergency powers in the territory are structurally related. As noted earlier, it is typically regarded as corrosive to a state's claim to sovereignty to allow its

subjects to deploy violence with impunity. This is especially true when a state is being established. Why, then, did Nehru not publish the Sunderlal Report and use doing so as the foundation for a large-scale investigation into the atrocities that culminated in arresting and trying at least some of the perpetrators? Why allow thousands of murderers to go free or, worse, continue their careers in the armed forces? While it is often speculated that Nehru buried the report to prevent retaliation and further communal strife,[105] I suggest an alternative hypothesis: the Sunderlal Report made clear in no uncertain terms the tenuousness of Nehru's authority. He had deployed the Indian Army to Hyderabad to extend the nation's sovereignty over the princely state only for potentially thousands of those officers to willfully exceed their mandate in superfluous attacks on Muslim civilians, thus betraying the secular ideal on which the nation was founded. The Hyderabad Massacres brought into relief how easily the arm of the state could function independently from the head of the state and, worse, absorb the masses into itself;[106] to pursue investigation and prosecution would have been to risk engendering that realization among the armed forces, as well.[107] My point, however, is neither to blame nor exonerate Nehru, but to draw attention to the severe problem posed by this power differential to the satisfaction of what Nehru and Patel had identified as the fundamental condition for democracy's institutionalization

[105] It should be noted, once again, that such an approach to governance is still deeply undemocratic.

[106] For Nehru, I suspect that one of the aspects of the Hyderabad Massacres that disturbed him the most was the claim from Swami Tirtha, the chief of the State Congress, that perpetrators from that political body were "simply following the lead of the Indian Army" (Purushotham 89). While, as with all manifestations of the Nuremberg Defense, we should take Tirtha's effort to displace culpability onto the Indian Army with a grain of salt, we should also not discount it, since spectacles of mass violence often form the crucible by which loose hierarchies are formalized and concretized. One need only watch videos of ICE officers brutalizing American civilians to see how easily even the most spineless, unskilled, and inept men will annex authority to themselves when given a gun and permission to flout the law with impunity.

[107] One recalls the fundamental flaw of public executions in France was that the people who were assembled to participate in a ritual designed to repair and reconstitute the monarch's sovereignty sometimes, by virtue of that assembling, recognized their collective power vis-à-vis the state: "In calling on the crowd to manifest its power, the sovereign tolerated for a moment acts of violence, which he accepted as a sign of allegiance, but which were strictly limited by the sovereign's own privileges. Now it was on this point that the people, drawn to the spectacle intended to terrorize it, could express its rejection of the punitive power and sometimes revolt " (*Discipline and Punish* 59).

in India: that the state had to establish its sovereignty first. What happens, then, when the human apparatus through which the state's sovereignty is actualized is itself unwilling to accommodate that actualization—when, that is, the apparatus is unwilling to proleptically submit itself to the sovereignty that its instrumentation has yet to bring into being? Or, rather, acknowledging that many things could happen depending on the particular structure in which this dynamic has formed: If we assume that the Hyderabad tribunals and the state's reinvestment in emergency powers were "what happened," or, at least, constituted one of the response formations[108]—if we assume that these state actions are symptomatically linked to the aporia of sovereignty that I have outlined—then how can we account for the rationality that links them?

The Hyderabad tribunals and the state's concomitant institutionalization of emergency powers work together to satisfy three aims. The first aim is that of interpellating and/or coercing masses who were at one point brought together in an act of collective violence to identify the state as acting as an extension of their will and for their benefit. The second aim is to manifest the state's sovereignty to the extent that these masses will allow. The third aim is to manufacture consent among them for the normalization of security mechanisms, the ultimate effect of which is the attenuation of their potential to disrupt or preempt state sovereignty. The Hyderabad tribunals principally correlate with the first and second aims, insofar as they constituted a theater by which the state could sublimate its need to manifest its sovereignty while spectacularly aligning itself with the masses. At the same time, spectacles of punishment in which the onlookers are encouraged to revel in their identification with the punishers are foundational for covertly manufacturing consent among those onlookers to be punished themselves. However, in

[108] Clearly, the Hyderabad tribunals and the normalization of emergency powers constitutes one node in the response formation I am trying to highlight. Nehru's extensive reforms of the Indian Army over the next decade would, no doubt, form another.

the absence of a robust disciplinary apparatus, this consent is often, though not exclusively, limited to the confines of the imaginary and is, as such, liable to be rescinded the moment the reversal of fates is actualized. Consequently, the state utilizes spectacles of punishment and the concomitant affects and identifications they engender to render masses amenable to codifying what would otherwise be a temporary and tenuously abstract consent to punishment into emergency laws, which are then continually articulated with spectacles of punishment such that they infinitely support one another. Or, at least, that is what might happen in an aristocratic society where the state apparatus is sealed from the masses.[109] In a society where representative democracy is, at least, partially realized, the aforementioned process results in the piecemeal corruption of the state apparatus by the structures of collective identification through which the masses had initially acquired form and, with that form, the potential for collective action. This is to say: appeasing fascists in the hopes of eventually neutralizing them is a doomed tactic of (in)securitization that leads only to the institutionalization of fascism.

With the foregoing ruminations in mind, let us now return to the Jammu Massacre and what I referred to as Nehru's narratively inconvenient relationship to it. Earlier, I noted that while Kanjwal reads the early Indian state's efforts to exclude the massacre from national history as reflective of logics that we have come to associate with settler colonialism, her interpretation presumes a fully realized intent to colonize that had not yet cohered. Nonetheless, I agree with Kanjwal that rationalizing Nehru's (and Abdullah's) historiographic elision of a state-sponsored campaign of ethnic cleansing through immaterial gestures to the madness of Partition would be insufficient under any circumstances and significantly exceeds the bandwidth of plausibility when one considers how quickly India's governance in Kashmir took the form of a draconian

[109] Lest I be misunderstood, this is merely an example. I, of course, am not advocating for aristocracy.

security state. Without, once again, exonerating Nehru, I suggest that we recognize this elision as the nascent Indian state confronting in the Jammu Massacre the structural contradiction that subtended its existence: its instruments of establishing sovereignty were, themselves, highly susceptible to fascist re-formation. From this perspective, burying the massacre, as well as the Poonch rebellion and its political history, under the Pashtun invasion and using Pakistan's complicity in the latter as the foundation by which to figure the invasion as nothing more than a colonial incursion by the opposing non-secular postcolonial nation reflect a bid by the Indian state to funnel these fascistic assemblages (i.e., the "masses" who can be brought together under the banner of ethnoreligious violence), which threatened to reify into alternate nationalisms that would cut across the state (as a structure), into identification with itself and its secular ideal. At the same time, as I noted above, such a tactic only furthers the state's gradual corruption by fascism and, thus, fails to ever resolve the structural contradiction. It is not surprising, then, that when there have been regional movements for self-sovereignty that, one, have not been principally constituted through ethnoreligious-supremacist logics but through a collective rejection of the terms by which the state legitimated its annexation of the region, two, are sufficiently isolated such that connections between them and the instruments of establishing sovereignty are inherently minimal, and, three, are disproportionately weak with respect to the state's military capacity, the state has utilized them in an analogous way to how it used the *razakars* and the communists of Hyderabad after Operation Polo—as essential set pieces in a perpetual drama of self-subjugation.[110]

[110] Two clarifications. One, despite the opposition I mobilize here, there is no simple differentiation between fascistic and "legitimate" anti-state regionalisms; this is a major part of the problem. Two, in identifying an analogous formation between the state's *positioning* of the *razakars* and Telangana communists in the Hyderabad tribunals *and* the state's *positioning* of "legitimate" anti-state regionalist movements, I am *not* suggesting the *razakars* were not fascistic; they unequivocally were.

In sum, I suggest that rather than accept the Indian state's official account of its annexation of Jammu and Kashmir—that it was saving the princely state from the tribal invasions and, by extension, colonization by Pakistan—we perceive in this account a deeply fractured state desperate to cohere itself by any means necessary, including derealizing the victims of ethnic cleansing, unable to recognize that to engage in sacrificial politics is also to have sacrificed yourself.

1.3 Partition as *Nomos*: 1949-1990

When, under duress of the Pashtun assault on Srinagar, Hari Singh acceded the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir to India in October 1947 in exchange for the new nation's military protection, he made explicit that this accession was contingent upon democratic ratification from the state's people, stipulating that a plebiscite regarding the state's ultimate geopolitical status was to be held as soon as material and political conditions allowed for it. While the complete details of the negotiations that took place between Singh, Abdullah, Mountbatten, Nehru, and the other Indian statesmen involved in writing up the "Instrument of Accession" will never be known, the universal awareness of this contingency is well recorded. Even as early as April 1948, the UN Security Council's third resolution on the Kashmir dispute and the ongoing Indo-Pak war "[*notes*] *with satisfaction* that both India and Pakistan desire that the question of the accession of Jammu and Kashmir to India or Pakistan should be decided through the democratic method of a free and impartial plebiscite" (Resolution of 21 April 1948). For the next decade, whenever he had to publicly comment on Kashmir, Nehru emphatically affirmed the virtues underlying this agreement, going so far as to conjure melodramatic fantasies of India interminably forcing itself upon Kashmir for the purpose of virtuously renouncing them, as evinced by his August 1952 address to Indian Parliament:

> Kashmir is very close to our minds and hearts, and if by some decree or adverse fortune it ceases to be a part of India, it will be a wrench and a pain and torment for us. If, however, the people of Kashmir do not wish to remain with us, let them go by all means. We will not keep them against their will, however painful it may be to us…Though these five years have meant a lot of trouble and expense, in spite of all we have done we would willingly leave if it were made clear to us that the people of Kashmir wanted us to go. However sad we may feel about leaving we are not going to stay against the wishes of the people. We are not going to impose ourselves on them by the point of the bayonet. (qtd. in Roy, "Seditious Nehru" 130).

Despite these spectacular protestations, it quickly became clear that Nehru's professed belief in Kashmiris' right to self-determination was either significantly qualified or constituted a rhetorical charade. When in the summer of 1953 Abdullah—who, despite his close relationship with Nehru, likely never sincerely considered any future for Kashmir in which it was not, in some way, independent of both India and Pakistan[111]—expressed to his National Conference an intent to enact (through performative proclamation) Jammu and Kashmir's separation from India, Nehru and the pro-India faction within the state's provisional government worked to depose and incarcerate him, replacing him with his second-in-command, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed.

[111] As Zutshi notes, before Singh's forced accession of Kashmir to India in October 1947, Abdullah made it clear on multiple occasions that "'Freedom before Accession'…would have to be the slogan of the people of the state" (*LB* 328). Yet, as we will see, it is precisely the incompatibility (at least in this geopolitical context) of "freedom" and "accession" that has prevented India from ever holding a plebiscite. In rendering the precondition of accession the independence of the state's people to democratically decide on the question of accession—which no other princely state's population other than Junadgh's was afforded—Abdullah revealed the central paradox upon which the incorporation of princely states into postcolonial India was predicated, one that threatened to unravel the "democratic" identity of the nascent polity. In other words, if I am risking hyperbole in saying that Abdullah *never* sincerely considered Kashmir's accession to either postcolonial nation, I am doing so in order to cut through the disingenuous sophisms by which these alternate historical possibilities are typically proffered.

Seizing the opportunity to step out from under the shadow of the "Lion of Kashmir," Bakshi quickly defamed his predecessor, accusing Abdullah of having succumbed to the corruptive influence of "'foreign invaders,'" as evinced by his entertainment of the "'crack-brained idea'" that Kashmir could survive separate from India and Pakistan (Guha 254-263). However, Bakshi and Nehru gravely miscalculated the distance between the theory of a *coup d'état* and its actual implementation. Abdullah had been instrumental in the formation of Kashmiri nationalism, particularly among the Valley's Muslims. His relationship with the people could not be severed with aspersions of his character couched in sensationalist rhetoric. In response to his incarceration, the Valley erupted in protest, the state response to which was nothing short of draconian. To quell the demonstrators, Bakshi requested the support of the Indian Army, who, together with the Jammu and Kashmir police, murdered hundreds and arrested thousands, including several members of the Jammu and Kashmir Constituent Assembly and the National Conference's general council (those whom, it would appear, had reservations about ratifying Bakshi's ascension to prime minister). Thus, when the people's "will" escaped from the imagery of state rhetoric and manifested as a real demand for political and ethical recognition, Nehru demonstrated that the Indian government was, in actuality, quite amenable to "imposing" itself by way of "the bayonet."

The 1953 deposal of Abdullah is often framed as an epochal inflection point in the history of India-Kashmir relations, marking, on the one hand, the end of an era of open possibility coincident with Partition and, on the other hand, the beginning of an era of political subjugation, the latter of which culminates in the emergence of armed resistance in the 1989 intifada. In part because this first intifada constitutes not just an inflection point with respect to Kashmir but *the* historiographical ordering principle, many contemporary histories of this post-

Abdullah, pre-intifada period are clearly inflected by an impulse to account for—and, for some, to morally justify—the seemingly abrupt eruption of the resistance movement, as well as, very frequently, its "Islamist" dimensions. Consequently, this period is usually historicized by tracing relations between India's (and its puppet regimes') repressive actions, at one end, and the establishment of Kashmiri political parties and student groups organized around demands either for plebiscite or for Kashmir's integration into Pakistan, at the other end. There is, in other words, an historiographical tendency to explain the first intifada by situating it within a dialectic between repression and resistance.

The explanatory insufficiencies of this approach are several, and they will lead me to propose an alternative framework for contextualizing the first intifada and its contemporary afterlives. To ensure that my reader has a firm grasp of the standard account to which my critique refers, however, a selective rehearsal of it is necessary. This revisionist narrative, which aims to grant the people of Kashmir political agency, is largely accepted by academics and activists alike.

1955 | Ideological Repression—>Plebiscite Front

> After deposing Abdullah, Bakshi's (puppet) government banned any separatist support in the National Conference (NC). This move incensed much of the remaining NC membership, and as such, in 1955 several members left the NC to form a new political party, the Plebiscite Front (PF). As the party's name suggests, its participants advocated principally for the plebiscite promised to Kashmiris since 1947. Although the PF was

founded by Mirza Afzal Beg, Abdullah became its popular leader following the end of his first imprisonment in 1958.[112]

1964 | Plebiscite Front's Growing Support—>Erosion of Kashmir's Semi-Autonomy

The PF's influence and popular support, attributable to its organization around a simple but morally incontestable cause, led the Indian government in late 1964 to accelerate its heretofore plodding integration of J&K's regional government into the national system, thereby effacing much of the semi-autonomous status of the former princely state, which had been nominally guaranteed by the Instrument of Accession and, later, Article 370 of the Constitution of India (*Roots of Conflict* 80-81).[113] This enraged the PF membership and provoked mass protests in Srinagar, the latter of which persisted for the first half of 1965. These protests were suppressed by "'brute force and large-scale arrests'" (84).

1965 | Erosion of Kashmir's Semi-Autonomy—>Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF)

The nationalist movement in the Valley under Dogra rule was initially heterogeneous, including not only Abdullah's NC but also Muslim nationalist and, later, pro-Pakistan factions. However, because the NC carefully balanced secular ideology and Muslim accommodation, it quickly ascended to prominence and eclipsed these other blocs.[114]

---

[112] Para *The Making of Modern Kashmir* p. 197; Bose *Contested Lands* p. 172; Kanjwal "State Violence and Youth Resistance" pp. 121-122.

[113] To be more specific: in December 1964 Delhi brought Indian-administered Jammu and Kashmir (IJK) "under the purview of two of the most centralist (and controversial) provisions of the Indian constitution—Articles 356 and 357, which respectively empower the center to dismiss elected governments of India's states in the event of a breakdown of law and order and to assume their legislative mandate"; then, in March 1965 it "abolished the post of Sadr-e-Riyasat (titular head of state in IJK), elected by members of the IJK legislature, and replaced it with a governor…appointed by New Delhi," as well as changed how IJK representatives to India's parliament were elected; finally, after this initial period of "integration," Delhi spent the next decade hammering away at most of the provisions of Article 370, so much so that by 1975 it had dedicated a stunning 28 constitutional orders to the effort and extended the authority of 262 Union laws to IJK (Bose *Roots of Conflict* 81-88).

[114] See Zutshi's *Languages of Belonging* and Mridu Rai's *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects* for more information on Abdullah's political savvy.

Consequently, many of their leaders and supporters moved to Pakistan or Pakistan-administered Kashmir (Azad Kashmir) during and shortly after the First Indo-Pakistani War of 1947-1948. Understandably, as India repeatedly and violently demonstrated that it was not interested in extending democracy to the Valley, these factions became increasingly incensed. Their anger and grief would prove tremendously consequential. Because India could not suppress efforts to organize against its rule beyond its territorial boundaries, these "Pakistani" Kashmiris were favorably positioned to support their "Indian" counterparts. Crucially, in response to India's intensified assault on Kashmir's semi-autonomous status in 1964-1965, they founded the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), which "aspired to establish an independent state across the territories of the former princely state" (*Kashmir at the Crossroads* 314).[115] Because the PF still dominated in the Valley in the 1960s and 1970s, the JKLF was a minor actor for the first decade of its existence. However, it eventually supplanted the PF and paved the path for the first intifada.

1975 | Abdullah's Faustian Pact—>Resistance Opened to New Authorities and Tactics

For both Delhi and, to a large extent, the Plebiscite Front itself, Sheikh Abdullah and the movement for self-sovereignty in (Indian-administered) Kashmir were inextricably bound together. As such, Delhi never allowed him to go free for very long before re-incarcerating him, and by 1975, he had spent nearly twenty years in prison. This was not

[115] For the sake of simplicity, I have reductively recounted the JKLF's origins. The group established in Azad Kashmir in 1965 was called the Plebiscite Front (no organizational relation to the PF in IJK, despite their shared objective). Although its initial membership democratically opposed developing a combat force, two of its founding leaders—Amanullah Khan and Maqbool Bhat—went forward with plans to do so, setting up a secret militant group they called the National Liberation Front (NLF) that same year. For reasons that cannot be elaborated upon here, the NLF effectively disbanded after about a decade of relatively unsuccessful operations, leading Khan (its general secretary) to leave Azad Kashmir for England. There, however, he found an enthusiastic community of plebiscite supporters, who reinvigorated his fighting spirit. In 1977, he reformed the UK chapter of the PF into the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), which then laid down roots in Azad Kashmir.

a well-calculated strategy. While repeatedly incarcerating Abdullah forestalled mass revolt in the short-term, it also provided the PF a near-constant manifestation of India's authoritarian governance. Recognizing the untenability of her father's approach, Indira Gandhi moved to weaponize Abdullah's relationship with the people rather than continually reaffirm it. Taking advantage of Abdullah's age and ailing health, as well as Pakistan's relative weakness following the emergence of Bangladesh, she coerced him into being party to an illegitimate arrangement: in his capacity as the people's leader, he would abandon any pretense to plebiscite and accept the constitutional erosion of Jammu and Kashmir's special status in exchange for being released from prison and reinstated as chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir (88-89). If Gandhi's strategy was less avoidant and passive than her father's, it ultimately proved far more myopic. Not only did it fail to accomplish its main objective of quelling separatist desire in the Valley on account of misrecognizing Kashmiri national consciousness as a cult of personality centered on Abdullah, but in coercing Abdullah to betray the cause he had led for several decades, it also viciously reopened that consciousness to its latent heterogeneity. That is, while Kashmiris were not going to abandon their struggle for self-determination simply because Abdullah had, his capitulation to India cut a deep wound, both affectively and psychologically. In turn, this "collective loss of identity," far from diluting the strength of the self-determination movement, paved the way for both new and old factions to absorb the grief, fury, and ambitions of the PF and then funnel them into new political aims. Within the Valley, those disillusioned with the PF turned to nascent youth and student organizations, such as the "Islamic Students Organization, Al-Maqbool, the Young Man's League, Jamiat-e-Tulba, and the People's League," to air their grievances and

strategize about next steps (Faheem 240). At the same time, these groups started forming close relationships with the Pakistan-based JKLF, setting the stage for its eventual ascendence.

1987 | A Rigged Election Too Far—>The First Intifada

Before India legislatively deconstructed IJK in 2019, the former princely state held state and national elections every five years. However, from Abdullah's deposal in 1953 to his accord with Indira in 1975, these elections amounted to nothing more than a perfunctory charade in the Valley, with India's puppet regimes overtly rigging every one of them. This changed in 1977. Confident that in co-opting Abdullah it had secured a safe limit to radical politics, Delhi did not interfere with either the 1977 or 1982 elections. Because Abdullah's National Conference comfortably won both of these, by late 1982 Delhi was feeling optimistic that it had successfully enfolded the Valley into the Indian polity. Yet, this hope was predicated on a grave misinterpretation of the NC's success. In the aftermath of Abdullah's betrayal, the resistance movement underwent a process of fragmentation and reconstitution, which, of course, required time. As such, Abdullah's back-to-back victories corresponded more to the separatists' electoral abeyance than to the eradication of separatism in the Valley. This reality came sharply into view over the course of the 1987 election cycle, which saw the emergence of a new political party, the Muslim United Front (MUF). As its nondescript name implies, the MUF was a coalition party that derived its support from the panoply of new resistance groups that appeared in the wake of the PF. Lacking both a fully developed ideology and a unified demographic core, its existence was rooted in a shared antipathy toward decades of anti-democratic governance under Indian rule. Despite its tenuous foundation, the MUF quickly proved

itself to be a formidable adversary for the NC, which was now headed by Abdullah's son Farooq (Abdullah having died in 1984). As the vote tallying began, the MUF's Yusuf Shah was "winning by a landslide," and as such, it appeared to many that Kashmir was on the precipice of crossing a representative threshold: "For the first time in IJK's political history…a popularly based but *constitutionally and sanctioned* opposition to traditional, New Delhi-backed coteries [was] taking shape in the Valley" (*Roots of Conflict* 48-49). This perception was illusory—elections in Kashmir are not held to constitute but to (dis)simulate democracy for the purposes of restricting resistance to a narrow political bandwidth.[116] Correspondingly, in anticipation of the MUF's overwhelming victory, the NC-Congress alliance openly executed a vote-rigging campaign, after which it immediately incarcerated Shah and members of his campaign, denying them any semblance of due process (49). Given that Delhi, now led by Gandhi's second (rather inept) son Rajiv, had been able to quell and contain the people's considerable outcry every other time in the preceding forty years it had undermined democracy in Kashmir, in making this move it likely felt confident that the future would repeat the past. It did not. The vote-rigging of 1987 was one injustice too far. This time, the opposition did not reinvest in its good-faith attachment to electoral politics. Instead, shortly after Shah's arrest, several MUF members crossed the Line of Control (LOC) into Azad Kashmir to receive training and munitions from the JKLF. Having waited two decades for such an opportunity, the JKLF immediately took charge of these would-be freedom fighters and began molding them into a combat force. In 1989, the JKLF

[116] Bose's *Kashmir at the Crossroads* provides several examples supporting this claim. Tremblay's "Contested Governance, Competing Nationalisms, and Disenchanted Publics" explores the multiple relationships to both electoral and insurgent politics that Kashmiris have formed as a result of this persistent betrayal of democracy.

leadership led its nascent rebel army back across the LOC and, with tremendous support from the Valley's Muslims, ignited the first armed rebellion against Indian despotism (3)

***

As with all attempts at historicizing Kashmir, the foregoing origin story of the first intifada, which, as I noted earlier, is more-or-less standard among academics and activists, is a revisionist narrative that aims to restore to the resistance movement its *political* genealogy. Such a revision is deemed necessary because official state accounts of the India-Kashmir "conflict" bury the non-religious origins of the movement under the Islamist ideologies that soon co-opted it. To avoid confusion, some context about the entrance of these ideologies into Kashmiris' fight for self-determination is necessary.

From a bird's-eye view, the JKLF's vision for Jammu and Kashmir was secular in nature, insofar as its overarching aim was to establish an independent, democratic state composed of Azad Kashmir and Indian-administered Jammu and Kashmir, thereby allowing all citizens of those territories to collectively decide their destiny. It is, I think, incontestable that the ethos of this claim was internally riven from the outset by its inclusion of Jammu and the Frontier Regions. After Jammu's Muslim population was systematically targeted for massacre in 1947, the formerly Muslim-majority province had become overwhelmingly Hindu in demographic. Consequently, most Jammuites did not desire to be "liberated" from India, especially when independence with Kashmir would result in the loss of their majority status. Moreover, even if Jammu was more heterogeneous with respect to religion, the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir was a relatively new geopolitical entity, a hodgepodge of historically distinct regions forced together by the conquests of Gulab Singh in the mid-nineteenth century. Whereas the Valley's Muslims and Pandits were linked to each other beyond the fictitious unity of the state

apparatus by virtue of shared ethnolinguistic identity and cultural history, this was not the case for Kashmiris and Jammuites, or even for Jammuites internally (*Roots of Conflict* 10-13). On its own, however, this problematic overreach does not qualify the secularity of the JKLF as an organization, for while the JKLF was led by Kashmiri Muslims fighting principally on behalf of other Kashmiri Muslims, its objective was to create an egalitarian society, not one compromised by religious nationalism. However, this commitment to secularity did not uniformly scale down to the group's individual members. The MUF was a provisional coalition passionately but vaguely organized around the cry for *aazadi* (freedom) from Indian oppression. Then, as now, what freedom would mean beyond ensuring that Kashmiris were no longer in the clutches of a "draconian police state" varied significantly among its membership (69). While many identified with the secular ideals of the movement as a whole, others conceptualized *azadi* through degrees of Muslim nationalism, with some advocating for union with Pakistan and others for integration into a hypothetical pan-Islamic state. Such incontrovertible contradictions among a coalition can only be managed and subordinated under certain conditions; although armed conflict can temporarily unite people against a common enemy, it is often the case that the experience of military conflict accentuates and widens fault lines in the long term. With respect to the first intifada, this gap began yawning quickly, with the JKLF leading the cause for only the first few years before ceding its prominence to an array of Islamist militant groups, most notably Hizbul Mujahideen (HM) and Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), some of which have directed their violence toward Kashmiri civilians, including non-Islamist Kashmiri Muslims. The Indian government and the RSS, both separately and together, utilize these incidents of "terrorism" in their (dis)information campaigns against the resistance. Worse, as we saw in Roy's depiction of India's Intelligence Bureau insidiously coopting resistance against itself (via the structural

relationship in the novel between Biplab and Singh), Delhi actively incorporates some of the "extremists" into its "counterinsurgency" program in order to sow discord and paranoia among the various groups, thereby making them more desperate and more likely to turn on other Kashmiris.

It is, thus, within an historiographic landscape overrun by state and Hindutva propaganda reductively framing the resistance movement in Kashmir as the machinations of an Islamist foreign incursion (usually from Pakistan) that academics and activists submit their revisionist origin story. Certainly, this narrative is generally proffered by those who desire an end to India's brutal military occupation of the Valley. Yet, precisely because this narrative corresponds to good intentions, it is important to critically examine the suitability of its dialectical approach for developing a valid causal schema of the conflict, especially since, as I've argued, the impulse toward correction is not in itself an effective anti-fascist technology. To this end, I now raise two methodological-political problems, neither of which entirely disqualify the utility or truth-value of the standard (revisionist) narrative, but each of which do require that we reconsider the question of the conflict's origin from a more structural vantage point.

First, the object of investigation. Broadly speaking, postcolonial studies has more often interrogated the *why* of anticolonialism than it has the *why* of colonialism. To clarify, I am implicitly drawing a distinction here between *how* and *why*; there is, of course, an abundance of scholarship that scrutinizes the implementation of colonial power. However, when it comes to accounting for the principal motives of colonization, the field usually either swiftly (and, in some cases, incoherently) contracts to its Marxist foundations or skirts the issue entirely. This is in contrast with the enormous amount of intellectual energy that has been spent attempting to explain why colonized people revolt, as exemplified by the original enterprise of Subaltern

Studies. This discrepancy has been predicated upon postcolonialists' conscientious, well-warranted skepticism toward the concept of "freedom," insofar as they regard it as an ideological ploy of Western liberalism that originated entirely in Europe.[117] Yet, when unmoored from its precipitating problematic and installed as a disciplinary norm, reasonable caution can pass over into unreasonable paranoia. As Priyamvada Gopal has recently argued, the field's compulsive aversion to recognizing *anything* universal in practices of revolt has led it to "[ignore] a global history of human resistance to tyranny and exploitation of various kinds" (Gopal 14).[118] As a Foucaultian for whom resistance is a constitutive dimension of power relations and power relations are immanent to human relationships more generally, I am similarly concerned by this imperative to culturally particularize the etiology of resistance when it is observed in places other than the United States and Europe (especially since the regime of visibility by which that observation occurs usually privileges collective resistance, thereby effacing everyday resistances

[117] "In spite of its emphasis on analysing colonial discourse, the field as a whole has failed to challenge the tenacious assumption that ideas of 'freedom'—not just individualist or liberal renditions of liberty, but freedom in the broadest sense—are fundamentally Western (meaning European and American) in provenance, albeit available for appropriation…In part, ironically enough, the focus on 'Eurocentrism' has resulted in a fixation on rejecting European thought generally…without a consideration of multiple lines of cultural and political engagement in the making of the entity called 'Europe'" (Gopal 14).

[118] It should be noted that in developing her critique Gopal draws from Neil Lazarus, who has spent decades questioning the influence of poststructuralist and postmodernist thought on the ideological and epistemological norms of postcolonial studies, or what he calls "the postcolonial unconscious" (Lazarus 14-15).

and the lines of continuity between them).[119] At the same time, I am surprised how infrequently this skepticism cuts in the other direction. With respect to the India-Kashmir "conflict," it is worth questioning how much attention has been given to delineating the forces inside Kashmir that led to the resistance movement and the first intifada when little attention, at least within Kashmiri Studies, has been given to identifying the forces *inside India* that led it to enact a perpetual police state rather than allow Kashmiris a plebiscite. Notwithstanding the potential perils of universalism, what if we allowed ourselves to assume that the first intifada is a relatively "natural" reaction to decades of denied self-determination and authoritarian violence, one whose "naturalness" obviates any further etiological investigation? What if we instead took the perspective that the causes of an occupation lie not in the history of the occupied but in the history of the occupiers? What if India did not enter this origin story only as the oppressor and dialectical counterpart to Kashmir, but as a state structured by the legacies of colonialism?

Second, the problem of investigation. It is, of course, not that scholarship on the conflict has never touched upon India's motivations for maintaining and occupying the Valley. However, the explanations offered have not been screened for plausibility and are unlikely to be as readily accepted in other geopolitical contexts. Surprisingly, I am not talking about the sort of reductive

[119] Moreover, scholars of (post)colonialism might ask themselves who actually benefits from studies focused on identifying the conditions of possibility for resistance. To what extent has work in this field been incorporated into the "counterinsurgency" programs of settler- and neocolonial regimes? In general, I think that many academics in the humanities, so exhausted from having to perpetually justify their existence under neoliberalism, are in the habit of forgetting (to the extent that they ever recognize or let themselves believe) that the popular devaluation of our work vis-à-vis fictitious metrics of capital usually correlates to its real political value, whereas a certain faction of our ruling elite never seems to fall prey to this ideological inversion and continuously extracts that real value for its own gain. See, for example, William J. Maxwell's study of the FBI's surveillance of African American literary production in the twentieth century and its earnest incorporation of literary hermeneutics (Maxwell, *F.B. Eyes: How J. Edgar's Ghostreaders Framed African American Literature*). Recently uncovered accounts of the CIA's intense interest in mid-to-late twentieth century French poststructuralist theory and its attempts to weaponize poststructuralism against the Marxist tradition should also provoke our self-reflection more than it seems to have (Rockhill "The CIA Reads French Theory"). See, also, Arondekar and Patel's critique of area studies in "Area Impossible: Notes toward an Introduction."

materialism to which, as I mentioned above, postcolonial scholars often retreat when asked to account for the motivations of colonialism; if anything, materialist analysis rarely figures into rationalizations of India's occupation.[120] Instead, as noted in the previous section, most narratives render India's relation to Kashmir in psychological and symbolic terms. The most basic (and, regrettably, most common) account in this swollen genre is that India refuses to let Kashmir go because the so-called unique culture of peaceful coexistence between the Valley's Pandits and Muslims—frequently invoked through the term *kashmiriyat* ("Kashmiriness")—represents the secular ideal on which the Indian state was predicated. Consequently, losing Kashmir would signify the impossibility of this ideal and portend the inevitable dissolution of the nation. As Ananya Jahanara Kabir demonstrates in her psychoanalytic interrogations of Indian aesthetic and discursive representations of the Valley and its occupation, this fantasy-laden attachment to Kashmir undoubtedly permeates a sphere of elite consciousness in India, that which she calls the "Indian national imaginary" (Kabir 26).[121] It is also true that positive idealizations of the Valley predate (some, significantly) its annexation by India in 1947. However, Kabir's claim that her psychoanalytic readings "elucidate the deep causes of this specific geopolitical conflict" is difficult to accept, given that little in the way of state politics enters her analysis (5). This elision of the aspects of state politics that exceed the framework of the individual psyche extends from Kabir's application of psychoanalytic concepts to states as if

[120] However, since the abrogation of the property protections enjoyed by Kashmiris under (what little remained of) Article 370 in 2019, comments about resource extraction and land grabs are becoming more common in the literature. See, for example, Kanjwal: "Colonial rule is driven by territorial conquest, largely for the purposes of resource extraction for the metropole, and it relies on labor and explicit racial logics. Resource extraction, especially of Kashmir's water resources, is an important part of India's colonization, as is the racialization and exotification of Kashmiris in Indian imaginaries (Kanjwal 16). Although Suvir Kaul's *Of Gardens and Graves* predates the revocation of Article 370, it is also notable for its (brief) engagement with the "powerful material reasons for India to possess Kashmir" in its final pages (Kaul 197-198).

[121] The extent to which Kabir conflates "Indian" with "Hindu" in gesturing toward this singular imaginary is unclear and, thus, may call into question the generalizability of her findings.

they were people, thereby producing the illusion that the collective desires of the state's elite aesthetic producers are coextensive with the forces propelling the state's politics.[122] Although Kabir's affection for psychologizing states likely has a disciplinary origin, it is also of a piece with the tendency toward national personification that prevails in popular and academic narratives of the occupation. This is particularly recognizable in narratives of the accession and the founding decade of India rule. These narratives apportion an astonishing degree of causal authority to the personal attachments of Jawaharlal Nehru, who, by virtue of this apportioning, is made to function as a metonymy of the Indian state in its relationship with Kashmir, which, in turn, is usually metonymized by Sheikh Abdullah. Any new student of this history is sure to learn almost immediately that: Nehru "took a special interest in Kashmir because his family were Kashmiri Pandits who had migrated from the Valley to the plains of north India" (*Roots of Conflict* 21-22); he and Abdullah "hit it off instantly" in the decade preceding Partition due to their shared "commitment to Hindu-Muslim harmony and to socialism" (Guha 76); after fifteen years of holding the Valley hostage, during which time he had betrayed and incarcerated his dear friend Abdullah, "Kashmir troubled [Nehru's] conscience," so much so that in the last few months of his life he attempted to strike a deal with Pakistan to make good on his promise to allow Kashmiris to choose their own fate only to tragically die in the middle of negotiations (Ali 38-39). In other words, the early stages of India's control of the Valley are often relayed as an

[122] Kabir's thesis demonstrates this conflation well: "While the fantasy of Kashmir indexes the development and complications of South Asian modernity, an irony lies in is [sic] its persistently elusive object of desire. The Valley as framed by modernity can be seen as always already lost at the inaugural moment of its framing…[T]his reading of postcolonial India's desire for the Valley [figures] a founding absence. While the emphasis on modernity endows my argument with a historical specificity, I seek to nuance it further through the psychoanalytic tool of the fetish, or signifier of a fundamental lack. If postcolonial India's obsession with its territory of desire makes the Valley a fetish for the nation-state, the Valley in turn can assume the power of a counterfetish, a *maleficium*, that can potentially unmask the State as the master fetish. Whether as fetish or as maleficium, the Valley draws attention to, while seeking to disguise, what Ranjana Khanna has termed 'the secret embedded in nation-state formation.' Thus, the Valley as territory of desire itself arguably embodies the secret of nation-statehood—that, in Khanna's words, it is 'constituted through the colonial relation'" (15).

idiosyncratic drama of ambivalent desire, as if the interregional politics of a state apparatus merely reflected the personal attachments of the state's leader. This is problematic not only because it is a grotesque oversimplification of a complex issue but because, like most narratives of attachment, it renders the conflict vis-à-vis a dyadic frame of reference.

***

In Kanjwal's *Colonizing Kashmir: State-Building Under Indian Occupation* (2023), she identifies her work with a call "for the creation of a historiography of states that do not exist, have not been allowed to exist, and peoples who have been denied self-determination and the right to exercise their sovereignty" (Kanjwal 20). Moreover, she argues that this new historiography will require breaking with "the area studies frameworks that dominate the discipline of history" by allowing regional comparison to factor more prominently in how we approach tracing historical causality. Kanjwal's refusal of a disciplinary logic that limits the scope of historical and political analysis by conflating comparison with decontextualization and, thus, discouraging it is, I would argue, hermeneutically necessary not only for historicizing the occupation of Kashmir but for colonial and postcolonial studies more generally.[123] As Ann Laura Stoler notes in her 2010 preface to *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power*, comparison was, and continues to be, a crucial and constitutive component of colonial epistemologies and technologies of power (Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge* xi); consequently, to insist that we regard each colonial site as unique and, thus, sequester them from mutual comparison (and, by extension,

[123] No doubt, Kanjwal's critique is hyperbolic (perhaps strategically so). The categories of rule by which much of the normative work she references renders itself legible (colonialism, imperialism, settler colonialism, etc.) are clearly predicated on comparison. Nevertheless, I agree with her that one is more likely to be maliciously haunted by the specter of historicist hegemony when attempting to utilize comparative frameworks in analyzing *contemporary colonialism effected by postcolonial states* than one is when deploying those frameworks to examine the older projects of European colonialism. This entrenched aversion to identifying postcolonial states as naked colonial actors similarly expresses itself in the structures of enunciatory permissibility by which "[m]any movements or struggles in [contemporary colonized regions] are often depicted in both scholarship and popular narratives as 'ethnic conflicts,' 'secessionist movements,' 'territorial disputes,' 'insurgencies,' or 'terrorism'" (Kanjwal 20-21).

intersectional analysis) is not just a superfluous deployment of academic discipline but, in fact, actively inhibits our ability to delineate colonial power in its actual functioning.

Insofar as I am not a historian and this dissertation is not primarily a history, it is clearly beyond the scope of my project to develop, in consideration of the preceding critiques, an alternative historical narrative of Indian-controlled Kashmir from Partition to 1989 intifada, one that enables us to retain the structural aporia of Indian statehood and the interconnected dimensions of its attempted management in view. Instead, I use the remainder of this section to identify a particular node of scholarship in Kashmir Studies that, I suggest, is laying the foundation on which one version of that narrative could be built.

In recent years, in response to the occupation's prolific use of preventive detention and surveillance, extrajudicial murder and torture, and routinized impunity for military, paramilitary, and police personnel—all of which has been rendered "legal" by an overlapping panoply of emergency laws (Armed Forces Special Powers Act, J&K Public Security Act, J&K Preventive Detention Act, TADA, etc.)—a number of scholars in Kashmir Studies have reflected on how these practices and their legal articulation have constituted the Kashmir Valley as a state of exception. To some extent, much of this work consists of fleshing out the grid of intelligibility for these mechanisms by conceptually assimilating them to Agamben's theoretical framework. Notwithstanding the important insights yielded by work in that vein, the latter tends to ablate temporal progression and, thus, render itself opaque in terms of historical narration.[124] However, a few scholars have begun to frame Kashmir's exceptionalism as a historical process. One of the most notable works in this regard is Haley Duschinski and Shrimoyee Nandini Ghosh's 2017 "Constituting the Occupation: Preventive Detention and Permanent Emergency in Kashmir."

[124] I would argue that this is a problem with the concept of the "state of exception" as a whole.

Drawing on an emerging field postcolonial legal studies centered on Indian statecraft, whose architects and contributors include A.G. Noorani, Suvir Kaul, and Nasser Hussain, Duschinski and Ghosh re-examine what has commonly been referred to as the "erosion" of Article 370 of the Indian constitution. For context, due to the conditions under which India annexed Jammu and Kashmir, including the first Indo-Pakistani War of 1947-1948 and the UN's involvement in bringing it to a close, Jammu and Kashmir's inclusion within the Indian constitution upon its ratification in 1949 involved a set of special provisions for the erstwhile princely state laid out in Article 370, "limit[ing] Indian jurisdiction over the laws of J&K except in the realms of foreign affairs, defense, and communications, and protects proto-citizenship rights to property by ensuring that only state subjects with proof of permanent residency status can own land in the state" (Duschinski and Ghosh 317). Famously, Narendra Modi's government abolished Article 370 in 2019. However, to a large extent, Kashmir's "special status" as outlined in the 1949 Constitution had been gutted decades earlier through a series of presidential orders, congressional laws, lawsuits, and accords with India's political puppets in Kashmir from 1954 to 1978. As noted above, this process has often been referred to through the idiom of erosion and, by virtue of this idiom, rationalized vis-à-vis settler colonial logics of assimilation, integration, and extermination. Yet, closer examination of these legal modifications has demonstrated that this idiom is disingenuous, insofar as the decimation of Jammu and Kashmir's special status was not coextensive with the (integrative) extension of the Indian Constitution in its entirety to the state; instead, this extension was qualified by its own special status: "[The Constitution (Application to J&K) Order 1954] extended fundamental rights to Jammu and Kashmir with the caveat that they could be suspended in the interests of 'security' and without judicial review"

(Tillin 546, qtd. in Duschinski and Ghosh 328). As Duschinski and Ghosh explain, this qualification was composed of "three significant points of departure":

> First, whereas the Indian Constitution outlines reasonable restrictions on the universal freedoms of association, mobility, and expression under Article 19, the [1954] presidential order specifies that restrictions on these universal freedoms would be determined by the "appropriate legislature," rather than applying a normative standard subject to judicial review—which means that any law validly passed by the state legislature that violates these freedoms guaranteed by the Indian Constitution would be considered constitutional. The presidential order specified that this would be the case for 5, later extended to 25, years. Second, the presidential order stipulates that preventive detention laws can only be passed by the J&K state legislature and not by the Indian parliament as in other states. And third, the presidential order inserts Article 35(C) into the Indian Constitution to protect preventive detention laws in J&K from judicial review for five years. Subsequent presidential orders extended this moratorium on judicial review from 5 to 10, 15, and 20 years through subsequent presidential orders in 1959, 1964, and 1969, respectively. Prior to the passage of the J&K PSA [Public Safety Act] 1978, all preventive detention legislations in the state were immune from judicial review under this constitutional moratorium. (328-329)

In other words, the 1954 order attempted to carve a (paradoxically) legitimate basis within democratic law for the enactment of authoritarian rule in Jammu and Kashmir. That such a measure both emanated from and precariously manifested the foundational aporia of the postcolonial nation is, to wit, quite apparent in both its sequestering of preventive detention

legislation to the J&K state legislature and its temporal deferral of judicial review—naked efforts to conceal the contradiction from as many actors within the national government as possible, which in and of themselves constituted simultaneously *de jure* and *de facto* experiments with legitimizing the executive branch's *general* capacity to suspend the democratic order.[125]

Yet, if I have couched the relationship between these edicts and the rise of authoritarianism in Kashmir in terms of provisional strategy ("attempted," "efforts," etc.), this is because, as Duschinski and Ghosh demonstrate, the power of these laws was not established through the events of their juridical enactment but through a series of legal challenges to these laws and their (un)constitutionality by which, like a Platonic form, their vague conception was progressively manifested, affirmed, and woven into the governmental apparatus in Jammu and Kashmir by the state-rigged judiciary, a *process* that Duschinski and Ghosh have termed "occupational constitutionalism" (318). In other words, Nehru's presidential orders accrued their power by *provoking* Kashmiris to route their opposition to them *through* the system of law, by which the state government was then able to bit-by-bit establish—via bureaucratic theatrics of impartial examination that stem the tide of resistance to authoritarian measures by, like other such "imperial formations," facilitating "*states of postponement and deferral* that thrive on promissory notes for sovereignty, autonomy, and services that are issued, suspended, conferred, or curtailed and reissued again" (*Colonial Knowledge* xx, emphasis in original)—an archive of "official" legal rationality and precedence for these laws' constitutionality and their always-increasing range of applicability. It is through insidious processes of qualified integration such as

[125] Both my gesture to experimentation here and the notion of governmental supplementarity I proffer below are loosely informed by Paul Amar's concept of "human-security laboratories" in *The Security Archipelago*, though with the latter concept I am, of course, borrowing from Derrida.

occupational constitutionalism that Kashmir was gradually produced as *an exceptional state* "within" the Indian nation.

For what reason does a nation constitutionally exceptionalize a region within its territorial boundaries? India has repeatedly defended its actions by gesturing toward exigent necessities involving Pakistan, terrorism, Islamist extremism, etc.—in effect, by summoning the thematics of endless war as it functions in ressentiment revisionism. Naturally, scholars in Kashmir Studies have long exposed these performative rationalizations as thinly veiled colonial discourse. Duschinski and Ghosh, for example, align Delhi's motives in enacting occupational constitutionalism with "the continuation of regimes of political containment through preventive detention" (327). Yet, occupational constitutionalism was effected through inciting legal (and, thus, political) resistance from those whose rights were nullified by state forces on the basis of these presidential orders. Although, as I parenthetically noted above, this process did curb more intensive forms of resistance in the short term, it is difficult to imagine its trajectory ultimately leading elsewhere than armed revolt in the long term. Moreover, it appears to me that the rationale of "containment" inadvertently reproduces the logic of emergency that underwrites state propaganda. In lieu of the containment narrative, I would suggest that we view Kashmir's production as an exceptional state in terms of governmental supplementarity: *Kashmir forms a supplement to the postcolonial nation by which it can establish social, legal, and political foundations for the antidemocratic governance necessary to derealize its constitutive aporia in the long term.* Especially with respect to legal mechanisms, this is not a radical hypothesis, insofar as the most draconian law enacted in Kashmir since the first intifada—the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA), which institutionalizes impunity for extrajudicial murder, torture, and disappearance—was deployed first in Assam, Manipur, Nagaland, Punjab, and other states

where rebellion against Indian rule has emerged. That is, it is a feature of modern democratic states that a deployment of emergency powers in one context establishes precedence for its use in other contexts.[126] Nevertheless, few histories of Kashmir during this period trace structural relations between it and other so-called "disturbed areas" in India.[127] Duschinski and Ghosh's study of piecemeal modifications of emergency law in Kashmir provides an archival and hermeneutic foundation on which such an interregional genealogy of state power could be constructed, one that would not only refocus our historical lens (and understanding of causality) with respect to the emergence of the first intifada in Kashmir on the state colonizing it but, also, enable us to develop more robust and complex models for diagramming the political, social, and material realities of producing a "state of exception."

[126] Important recent scholarship on this topic includes: Christophe Jaffrelot and Pratinav Anil *India's First Dictatorship: The Emergency, 1975-77*; Vazira Fazila-Yacoobali Zamindar *The Long Partition and the Making of Modern South Asia: Refugees, Boundaries, Histories*; Andrew W. Neal *Security as Politics*; and Nasser Hussain *The Jurisprudence of Emergency: Colonialism and the Rule of Law*.

[127] I am referencing a designation of the Indian state that was used to enact the draconian Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA): "In mid-1990 the Indian government declared the Kashmir Valley a 'disturbed area' subject to the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA). The AFSPA is directly descended from the Armed Forces Special Powers Ordinance of 15 August 1942, used by the British to brutally suppress the 'Quit India' uprising launched in 1942 by the Indian National Congress under Mahatma Gandhi's leadership. The AFSPA was enacted by Nehru's government in 1958, initially covered an area adjoining Myanmar in India's north-east region affected by an ethnic Naga revolt against Indian rule, and was later extended to other parts of the region which also produced ethnic rebellions" (Bose *Kashmir at the Crossroads* 75-76).

Chapter 2 Securitarian Necro-Power: Debilitating Melancholia in Indian-Administered Kashmir

Introduction: How to Rationalize the Technology of Disappearance

The opening paragraph of the IPTK's *Buried Evidence: Unknown, Unmarked, and Mass Graves in Indian-Administered Kashmir* implores its readership to resist interpreting the gruesome evidence it lays out as merely the product of juridical evasion. Instead, the IPTK argues that the "burying" of evidence is part of India's multi-faceted strategy of psychosocial control in Kashmir: by simultaneously erecting thousands of visible graves across the Valley *and* enforcing silence about them through continual surveillance and threats of violence, Indian security forces seek to "domesticate" Kashmiris, rendering them docile, demoralized, and politically inert. This analysis of the unmarked, mass graves is clearly indebted to Foucault's notion of disciplinary power as he develops it in *Discipline and Punish*. Foucault's argument is that at the end of the 17th century in Western Europe, there emerged new techniques for training and controlling bodies, techniques that engender and are engendered by novel modalities of apprehending the body and its capacities. Over the course of the 18th and 19th centuries, these techniques and their correlative corpora of knowledge (once concentrated in spatially delimited training centers such as factories, barracks, and schools) were dispersed across a vast network of institutions, becoming in many ways co-terminus with civil society itself. The resulting regime of disciplinary power both broke with and built upon the regime of sovereign power that

preceded it.[128] In a disciplinary society, power is not primarily imposed on bodies from without; rather, interpersonal relations are organized—in part through physical violence—so as to consistently produce individuals who surveil and correct themselves in correlation with ever-shifting norms of behavior and affect, as well as with ever-shifting regimes of truth, thus ensuring the continuous operation of power. In short, in such a society, individuals invest in, identify with, and become the primary deployers of the insidious power that punishes and restricts them.[129]

It is the insidious nature of disciplinary power—its psychosocial ubiquity belied by an irregular and muddled corporeal visibility—that becomes the focal point of the IPTK's (and other scholars') use of Foucault's concept: "Massified testaments of state power, these unknown, unmarked, and mass graves produce social death and proscribe remembrance. Acknowledgement and articulation of the events that precipitate these deaths are forbidden. Internalization of loss and horror is intended to produce fear and isolation" (18). Here, the IPTK argues that a disciplinary contradiction inheres between the hypervisibility of these graves and India's draconian edicts against public memorial in Kashmir: caught between an interpellation and an interdiction, Kashmiris are forced to internalize both, a process which, in theory, continually reproduces and magnifies their griefs, sorrows, and fears. In this way, instincts and emotional needs are converted into weapons of self-flagellation and political quietism.

---

[128] The amount of scholarship that has been dedicated to discussing, defending, and antagonizing Foucault's historical-theoretical schema is so immense that even a provisional list of citations would be wholly insufficient at capturing the breadth of these debates. It suffices to say that while the history of power that Foucault proposes in *Discipline and Punish* is contentious—as he himself later notes in *Security, Territory, Population*—the analytic purchase of his differentiation between sovereign and disciplinary power in that text has been durably invaluable.

[129] Restriction should not be confused with repression. Repression is an operation of power *onto* something which precedes that power and continues to persist under it. Restriction is an operation of power *against* something which emerges alongside or through that power. If repression denies us part of our history (and produces us in the process), restriction denies us who we might become.

While this disciplinary strategy indeed utilizes the self as a critical actant of its own control, the IPTK neglects to explain why other features of Foucaultian discipline are notably absent from their analysis. For example, per the extraordinary number of military and paramilitary personnel deployed in Kashmir, it is incontestable that India's security regime utilizes surveillance to instill fear into the populace. However, in the absence of conjoined systems of "gratification-punishment" and "modulated evaluation" through which Kashmiris could be stratified with respect to discrete categories, this surveillance operates only on subjects *en masse*. That is, it is not composed of individuating microcircuits of power and, as such, does not constitute a system of "hierarchical observation" and "normalizing judgment" (*Discipline and Punish* 170-184). By extension, the *norm* is not the primary technology of power at work because there is no established metric for calculating *differences* between expressions of grief, anger, or dissent. In the absence of a system of minute, continuous comparisons, there is no subjectivating mechanism; the surveilled avoid particular behaviors only because they do not want to be punished, rather than because they desire to produce a particular self. As I will discuss later in this chapter, a binary between the acceptable and the unacceptable that is policed through a pervasive fear of punishment instilled through spectacular and regular acts of violence is more characteristic of what Foucault calls "sovereign power" than it is of "disciplinary power." Thus, while these psychosocial mechanisms that coerce subjects to control their own behavior through immersing them in an atmosphere of terror indeed resemble disciplinary techniques, there is not a sufficient disciplinary apparatus in place for us to regard *subjectification* as the primary objective of an overall strategy of power instantiated by these mechanisms. Nevertheless, the IPTK's claim that "India's objective has been to *discipline and assimilate* Kashmir into its

territory," where assimilation seems to be used as a synonym for normation, is predicated on that assumption.

The interlinked (and yet, at times, divergent) analyses that constitute this chapter sprung from a sequence of questions: If the technology of disappearance in Kashmir cannot be adequately rationalized as a technique of disciplinary power, then what is the organizing logic of its operation? Coextensive with this question are others regarding method: What is it about the IPTK's hermeneutic of power that leads to the untenable conclusion that the technology of disappearance is disciplinary in nature, and consequently, how should we refine their approach to analyzing this technology so that, through it, a more plausible, self-consistent and phenomenon-specific rationality becomes legible?

In the introduction to this dissertation, I demonstrated that Arundhati Roy's speculative diagrammatization of the technology of disappearance in *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* offers a more complex and nuanced portrait of its effects and conditions of possibility than the one the IPTK proffers in *Buried Evidence*. Moreover, I suggested that this more rigorous depiction is predicated, in part, on a hermeneutic of power akin to Foucault's.[130] Notably, the rhetorical structure of my argument was elliptical and, to a certain extent, evasive. I aligned Foucault's concept-method of power with the *relative* capacity to more precisely render the rationality underlying the mechanisms by which human relations are ordered in a particular sociopolitical context, which is quite different from identifying (or attempting to identify) first principles for evaluating the truth-capability of an analytic and then deriving my characterization of his concept-method from these principles. In noting this difference, am I implying that

[130] I am not suggesting that Roy's analytic depiction of the technology of disappearance in *TMOUH* is successful *only* to the extent that it approximates Foucault's hermeneutics of power. The brilliant features of Roy's approach to diagramming power and representing resistance extend beyond those emerging from the hermeneutic overlap between her and Foucault.

predicating such an evaluation on a metaphysics of truth would necessarily ensure a more truth-capable evaluation of the hermeneutic's capability to render power truthfully? No. In drawing attention to this ellipsis my purposes are, one, to identify a metacritical aporia at the heart of this dissertation, to wit, that I attribute superior analytic value to Foucault's concept-method of (rationalizing) power but do not ground this attribution in a standard exterior to the comparative frames from which it emerges; and, two, to signpost that I have no intention of resolving this aporia in my dissertation. This is not because attempting to resolve it would not (potentially) be an interesting and worthwhile project, but because, from my perspective, the foundation for such a project does not yet exist. In order for it to exist, an alteration in our citational relationship to Foucault is first necessary, one in which we do not, by way of merely applying his concepts (or merely critiquing them), situate him as a theoretical basis whose authority is self-evident but, instead, incorporate him into our analyses as a methodological interlocutor.

My methodological entry point begins with an observation. Scholars beyond the IPTK who frame forced disappearance as a mechanism of disciplinary power operate from the presumption that there is one strategic target of it and that this target is Kashmiris in the aggregate. For example, Ather Zia, whose *Resisting Disappearance: Military Occupation and Women's Activism in Kashmir* I discuss more thoroughly later in this chapter, frames the occupation's use of disappearance for her audience in this way:

> The government stages the disappearances to threaten the "potentially guilty" into submission, spreading intimidation and fear by building invisibility and deniability into this technique of punishment. A single disappeared body becomes a symbol of the panopticon—that is, a spectral threat of similar annihilation aimed at regulating the political behavior of Kashmiris. (Zia 10)

Zia's claim that a "disappeared body" operates as a "symbol of the panopticon" is misguided, for the very simple reason that panopticism does not operate through symbolism—it operates through arranging the relations by which people are organized in a society such that people identify with and, as such, autonomously subjectify themselves in accordance with privileged norms of behavior, desire, and affect.[131] My aim in drawing attention to this passage, however, is not to further belabor the point that it does not make sense to categorize forced disappearance as simply a technology of discipline. Rather, it is to note that in framing disappearance as a symbol—in and of itself a problematic claim, given that absence is intransigent with respect to any uniform production of signification—Zia presumes from the outset that the technology effects its power primarily through ideational communication (i.e., *that* disappearance will happen to you, too, if you resist the state),[132] and, moreover, that this communication is both univocal and directed to one narrative public ("Kashmiris" writ large).[133] Bracketing the uncertain symbolizability of disappearance and the related problem of why disappearance would be chosen as a modality of communication when there are more communicatively efficient "techniques of punishment" at the occupation's disposal, what is striking about this assumption is that it is clearly at odds with the ethnography that it frames: this ethnography centers on the wives and mothers of the disappeared, whom it demonstrates have been *uniquely affected* by this technology. Should not a rationalization of this technology hold itself responsible for identifying

[131] As with spectacular violence, coercion via symbolism falls more into the ambit of sovereign power than it does disciplinary power.

[132] The awkwardness of this formulation demonstrates absence's intransigence to signification. Of course, narrative publics can be formed around reading certain absences in particular ways. For example, film publics have conventionally been trained to read pictorial caesuras ("cuts to black") that occur when characters are in bed together as indexing some form of sexual activity. However, whatever significance is conveyed is ambiguous, vague, and certainly never singular.

[133] The indissociability of signification and narrative public is a constitutive feature of symbolism; the existence of a symbol is the effect of a mutual association between a particular signifier with a particular signified having formed among a public.

the *specific local effects* on a differentiated populace (differentiated by, for instance, gender) and accounting for the *strategic purpose* of their production? Indeed, should these effects not constitute the starting point for a rational analysis of this modality of power, particularly if the alternative is to impose the logic of Foucaultian discipline onto this phenomenon with little to no consideration of its applicability (diametrically opposing the ethical orientation and epistemological premises of Foucault's nominalist structuralism)? This is not to say that effects on the aggregate should not also be taken into account—they obviously should—but that our analysis will be more commensurate with the reality of the phenomenon it attempts to explain if we arrive at the general by way of carefully diagramming power's effects at the level of the specific (rather than efface the specific entirely by hastily hypostasizing an impression of power's operations at the level of general).[134]

In view of the foregoing, I take as my analytic point of departure for this chapter the presumption that the "grid of intelligibility" for understanding this technology will be borne out by diagramming its effects on the loved ones of the disappeared and their conditions of production.[135] In order to identify those effects, in section one, I examine and interrogate Zia's ethnography. In particular, I focus on her case study of Zooneh, a Kashmiri mother whose son was disappeared in 2002 by the occupation and who has since become a tireless activist for the Association of Parents of Disappeared Persons (APDP). Although Zia valorizes Zooneh's unwavering dedication to locating her son as a modality of "micropolitical" resistance, one that she, tenuously referencing Freud, describes as "hopeful melancholia," I note that Zooneh's

[134] This is one of the overarching methodological lessons of Foucault's *Security, Territory, Population*, a text that greatly informs my analysis in the latter half of this chapter.

[135] Grid of intelligibility is a concept Foucault develops in *The Order of Things*. It refers to the epistemological, social, and political context proper to a historical object that enables us to recognize the logics constitutive of that object.

dedication betrays features of melancholia as Freud originally conceived of it—that is, as an *injurious* self-relation borne of a pathogenetic misrecognition within an experience of loss. Consequently, in consideration of Foucault's proposition that resistance is "never in a position of exteriority in relation to power," I suggest that we read Zooneh's dedication to finding her son and the psychodynamics constitutive of it as *(nonsubjectively-)intended effect*s of the technology of disappearance (*HoSVol.1* 95).[136]

As I discuss later, while Freud's theory of grief is illuminating insofar as it predicates the psychodynamics of grief on the epistemological status of loss, the metapsychology on which it is predicated does not allow us to identify how power might intervene in grief's processes—how, that is, power could induce, or seek to induce, a deleterious deviation from the normative, "healthier," more typical or "proper" processes of mourning, thereby giving rise to what he calls melancholia. This problem stems from broader insufficiencies in Freud's understanding of human ontology and relationality, some of which have frequently been observed by scholars, yet have rarely been critically integrated into analytic deployments of his essay "Mourning and Melancholia."[137] As such, in section two, I bracket this chapter's overarching focus on the

[136] "Power relations are both intentional and nonsubjective. If in fact they are intelligible, this is not because they are the effect of another instance that 'explains' them, but rather because they are imbued, through and through, with calculation: there is no power that is exercised without a series of aims and objectives. But this does not mean that its results from the choice or decision of an individual subject; let us not look for the headquarters that presides over its rationality…the rationality of power is characterized by tactics that are often quite explicit at the restricted level where they are inscribed (the local cynicism of power), tactics which, becoming connected to one another, attracting and propagating one another, but finding their base of support and their condition elsewhere, end up forming comprehensive systems: the logic is perfectly clear, the aims decipherable, and yet it is often the case that no one is there to have invented them, and few who can be said to have formulated them: an implicit characteristic of the great anonymous, almost unspoken strategies which coordinate the loquacious tactics whose 'inventors' or decision makers are often without hypocrisy" (*HoSVol.1* 94-95).

[137] This is a general problem with how psychoanalysis is deployed in the humanities. Scholars selectively borrow from Freud, Klein, Lacan, Torak, Abraham, and Laplanche, but do not often hold themselves responsible for accounting for discrepancies between their own theoretical systems and those of the psychoanalytic theorists they are citing. Of course, I could replace "psychoanalysis" with "theory" in the first sentence here without significantly altering its truth-value.

technology of disappearance in order to restructure Freud's schema such that we are able to recognize how grief and power interface. According to my alternative theorization, *melancholia* is a debilitating psychoaffective state that emerges when the libidinal currents constitutive of mourning an *intrasubjective loss*—those that stimulate the aggrieved to repair themselves through piecemeal recognitions of their ontological dispossession in the loss of the other—assume an *injurious form*; this injury is due, I argue, to cruelly optimistic investments in misrecognitions or fetishized hypostases of the source of loss.[138] These investments thereby sustain rather than heal what Freud calls grief's "open wound" ("Mourning and Melancholia" 253). Moreover, for reasons I explain later in this chapter, grief's processes tend toward melancholia in the absence of what I call *assemblages of grief* : social arrangements of discourses and rituals of death that facilitate the organization of grief's libidinal currents into capacitating formations by guiding us away from fetishizing misrecognitions of our dispossession in the loss of the other. Because these assemblages mediate between the social and psychological dimensions of grief *and* serve the important role of preventing grief from assuming a non-reparative form, I argue that they constitute sites of susceptibility for grief's pathogenesis—that is, its debilitating formation into melancholia.

In refusing aggrieved Kashmiris the corpses of their loved ones—the corpse forming the centerpiece of Muslim burial rites—the technology of disappearance insidiously mobilizes the pathogenetic potential of grief against itself. This technology, I argue, has the tactical purpose of distributing melancholic debilitation and the strategic purpose of regulating the Kashmiri population's psychoaffective capacity for political resistance. Finally, having archaeologically

[138] "A relation of cruel optimism exists when something you desire is actually an obstacle to your flourishing" (*Cruel Optimism* 1).

traced the circuits of power connecting the psychoaffective debilitation of individuals to the political debilitation of the population, in section three I return to the question of the *form of power* at work in forced disappearances and mass, unmarked graves. Through critically reexamining, on the one hand, Achilles Mbembe's essay on necropower (problematizing, in particular, his reifications of "life" and "death") and, on the other hand, the unresolved aporias between Foucault's respective genealogies of biopower and security, I argue that these technologies are expressive of what I call *securitarian necro-power*, a modality of regulatory power that takes "death" as its objective corollary.

The work of this chapter is to make clear that diagramming the technology of disappearance necessitates theoretical interventions into the hermeneutics of power and resistance, the psychodynamics of grief, and the ontological and epistemological status of "death" in prevailing biopolitical and necropolitical scholarship. By extension, this chapter models the productive disruption of the universal by means of the particular, a move that I regard as one of the cornerstones of postcolonial-queer analysis.

2.1 The Hermeneutics of Grief-as-Resistance: Examining a Case Study

Since the early 1990s, forced disappearances have become a mainstay of India's occupation strategy. Due to the nature of these disappearances and the hostility with which India treats academic researchers and human rights activists in Kashmir, it is difficult to determine how many Kashmiris have been disappeared. For example, in her 2019 ethnographic study of forced disappearances, *Resisting Disappearance: Military Occupation and Women's Activism in Kashmir*, Ather Zia asserts that between "eight thousand and ten thousand Kashmiri men, both combatants and noncombatants, have been disappeared by the Indian government forces," corroborating this figure through references to several other studies (Zia 5). However, ten years

earlier, the IPTK also reported the figure to be "8,000+ enforced and involuntary disappearances and 70,000+ deaths" (*Buried Evidence* 10). In fact, although violence in the Valley has flared up multiple times in the sixteen years since *Buried Evidence* was published, these two figures have stayed relatively constant across most studies on Kashmir during that time; Roy even reproduces them in her novel.[139] Thus, we should be aware that the number of the disappeared is likely greater than this commonly-cited estimate. What is not in contention, though, is that these disappearances generate an interminable epistemic nightmare for their loved ones: "the search for the disappeared in Kashmir has been ongoing concertedly since 1994, and so far not a single disappeared person has been found" (Zia 10).

1994 marks the year human rights lawyer and activist Parveena Ahangar founded the Association of Parents of Disappeared Persons (APDP) after her seventeen-year-old son was arrested and disappeared. Since its founding, the APDP has developed into a significant public and political organization that is regionally, nationally, and internationally legible. As an institution of both care and resistance, the APDP assumes for itself several responsibilities. First, it provides a network of emotional and material support for women whose husbands and fathers, usually the sole source of income within Kashmiri families, have been disappeared by security forces. Second, the APDP politically and legally advocates on behalf of the disappeared and their loved ones, directly engaging in actions that the local Jammu and Kashmir police refuse to do: their members "mobilize demonstrations, pursue court cases, collect documentation, seek audiences with army or government officials, and scour prisons and morgues in search of the disappeared" (Zia 6). Third, in their commitment to documenting local narratives surrounding

[139] "It was the [APDP's] first visit to the Super Capital. They weren't all mothers; the wives, sisters and a few young children of the Disappeared had come too. Each of them carried a picture of their missing son, brother, or husband. Their banner said: *The Story of Kashmir*/DEAD = 68,000/DISAPPEARED = 10,000/Is this Democracy or *Demon Crazy*?" (119; line-breaks replaced with forward-slashes).

the disappeared and pursuing these leads through political, judicial, and extrajudicial recourse, APDP activists generate archives of subjugated knowledges that call into question India's official accounts of fake encounters, thereby resisting the "amnesia forced by a repressive regime" (10). For example, the APDP was instrumental in gathering initial research for the IPTK about the unmarked, mass graves (*Buried Evidence* 10).

The existence of the APDP attests to a simple, though often overlooked, fact: death and disappearance are neither epistemologically nor phenomenologically identical. While the IPTK persuasively argues that the evidence generated from their exhumations indicates that "the total number of disappearances since 1989 [correlates] with the number of bodies in unknown, unmarked, and mass graves," thus implying that all Kashmiris who have been disappeared are dead, this has not stopped the APDP nor their constitutive members from following every possible lead in search of their loved ones, dead or alive (*Buried Evidence* 22). This is apparent in Zia's case study of a woman she calls Zooneh, a senior APDP activist whose son, Syed Ahmed, was taken in 2002. Although Zia first met Zooneh seven years after her son's disappearance, Zooneh was still actively pursuing every political and legal route that could reveal her son's location. Far from accepting Syed's probable death, Zooneh had organized her life around his absence. During her time with Zooneh, Zia observed in her a reflexive behavior that indicated this ordering extended to her unconscious as well: at all times, even during the "excruciating" Kashmiri winters, Zooneh insisted that her front door be left "slightly ajar." When questioned about this, she remarked, "'I feel like Syed Ahmed is just outside, waiting to come in. How can I just close it?'" (Zia 30). As Zia notes, through Zooneh's repetitive refusal to close the front door, the threshold to Zooneh's home has become the psychoaffective site of her son's

"haunting" (31). Thus, Zooneh's compulsory need to leave the door ajar indexes a performative ritual that transforms her irrecoverable loss into a liminal presence.

Focusing on this productive dimension, Zia recognizes Zooneh's ritual as a model of resistance: "The seemingly mundane act of keeping the door open enables me to understand the affective beginnings of a resistance that is deeply political … Zooneh's resistance is not necessarily to dismantle the official narratives but to provide 'memory alternatives' or countermemory" (34-36). Drawing on Sara Ahmed's *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, Zia characterizes Zooneh's refusal to close the door as the manifestation of what Ahmed calls "affective law," a self-enforced edict whose force operates against that of "the sovereign's law that prevails over Kashmir and that has caused the enforced disappearances in the first place" (35).[140] For Zia, then, Zooneh's interminable mourning only appears melancholic but is, in fact, actually "a chronic mourning or even a 'hopeful melancholia,' for she [remains] firm that she will 'see' her son and does not want to die before his return" (38). By extension, this "hopeful melancholia," which according to Zia's ethnography, several other wives and mothers share, is part and parcel of a "politics of mourning, a constant invocation for justice and memory" (35).

While there is much to be admired in Zia's analysis of Zooneh, three aspects of her interpretation warrant examination. First, Zia's framing of Zooneh's need to leave the door open as "agentive," thereby precluding interpretations of it as neurotically compulsive, is an important feminist intervention; at the same time, this focus on agency leads Zia to unwittingly elide the injurious dimensions of Zooneh's interminable grief—that is, *the way in which her actions harm*

[140] "Ahmed shows how the evocation of certain words, signs, or practices elicits emotional responses that only grow upon more repetition. These emotions are material rhetoric, which have the power to dictate modes of the social, psychological, economic, and political world…The analysis of intangibles, like emotion and affect, as an aspect of understanding resistance through a lens such as affective law offers a holistic way of looking at the struggles of women" (Zia 35).

her. Second, Zia's portrait of political resistance privileges the affective orientations of individuals and their families; yet, by neglecting to place them in relation to her analysis of state oppression and resistance, it remains unclear *how these personal negotiations with loss translate to political resistance*, if by that we mean the political vitalization of interpersonal organizations in the Valley (or vice-versa). Third, while Zia develops a nuanced account of modalities of survival and memory under occupation and erasure, her sophisticated analysis *does not extend to the dynamics of the occupation itself*. We are told only that "[s]ince the 1990s, enforced disappearances became part of a tacitly approved repertoire of punishments used to suppress the Tehreek" (5). Appearing only as a force of domination and suppression, the occupation is for Zia modeled on a sovereign conceptualization of power, thereby reproducing a dominator vs. dominated paradigm her analysis otherwise disrupts. This reductive model of the dynamics of power fails to accurately diagnose and account for the way power partially *generates* its objects. Before characterizing Zooneh's "hopeful melancholia" as a form of heroic resistance orthogonal to the oppression that necessitates it, we need to consider the opposite thesis: that Zooneh's psychoaffective response to her son's disappearance *is* the "intentional, non-subjective" objective of the security apparatus. To be clear, I am not suggesting that Zooneh's response has been predetermined from without, nor am I entirely disagreeing with Zia's depiction of her. Rather, I am questioning Zia's (and the IPTK's) underlying assumption that these security technologies are not organized first and foremost around the social and psychoaffective dynamics of grief.

It is to comprehensively describe the impact of this final objection—that any adequate analysis of technologies of disappearance need to consider their productive relation to mourning and melancholia—that much of this chapter is dedicated. For now, I briefly elaborate my other

two objections. First, regarding the injurious dimensions of Zia's grief: Notwithstanding the countermemorial dimensions of Zooneh's grieving technique, her act of consistently leaving the front door ajar reflects a divestment in her own bodily and psychological well-being. This divestment is precisely what renders the habit legible to Zia. It is because Zooneh asks Zia to leave the door open on a brutally cold winter day that Zia identifies a physically maladaptive behavior: "At the height of an excruciating winter…I found this fragile woman keeping her door half-open…[T]hroughout my visit that day I tried to stay far from the draft that continuously whipped through the open crack" (Zia 30).[141] As Zia's own physical discomfort demonstrates, one of the essential functions of a front door is thermoregulation: we rely on doors to reduce the amount of energy we must expend to maintain homeostasis in response to climatic variation. Domestic front doors are often important social and physiological mediators and, as such, operate as part of our extracorporeal regulatory apparatus. Zooneh's grieving technique simultaneously activates and disables the door's regulatory function. On the one hand, Zooneh attempts to utilize the door to mediate a significant environmental disruption (the abrupt disappearance of her son). On the other hand, in the absence of a negative feedback mechanism between this disruption and the form of repair applied to it, this technique fails to establish reliable conditions for its cessation, thus disabling the door's protective potential by fixing it in place. Indeed, rather than describe this action as expressive of "hopeful melancholia," we could argue that this technique is "cruelly optimistic," insofar as it establishes a *positive* feedback mechanism in which its failure to produce catharsis only increases Zooneh's investment in it

[141] Interestingly, although Zia frequently describes Zooneh's habit as one of leaving the door "a little ajar" or "slightly ajar," she refers to the door as "half-open" during this first visit (30). In terms of exposure, security, and privacy, the difference between leaving one's door open halfway and leaving it cracked is significant. Which description reflects the general form of the habit?

(Berlant, *Cruel Optimism* 1).[142] If, as Zia argues, leaving the door ajar has affective and political utility, we must nevertheless acknowledge that it indexes a compulsion to suspend vital regulatory capacities (such as prioritizing one's physical safety) and, thus, continuously expose the self to harm.

Strikingly, Zooneh's self-negating grief has additionally engendered problematic symptoms in her granddaughter, Lali, who was nine years old at the time of Zia's study. Because Lali was less than one when her father disappeared, most of her life has revolved around her grandmother and mother's suspended grief: "Lali had waited hungry and wailing with her family at the doors of army camps, police stations, jails, and courts. Most of Lali's earliest memories were of the monthly protests and trips taken to find her father" (43). As such, although she was not old enough to register her father's disappearance, through her family's political activism and daily rituals, Lali has been psychoaffectively oriented toward the paradoxically imminent and improbable return of her father: "Mimicking her grandmother, Lali once remarked: 'I feel faint if the door is closed'" (44). Zia refers to this secondhand inculcation of a traumatic loss as "transgenerational mourning." In Lali's case, this transference of grief has been so successful that she even suffers from somatic neuroses, such as intense cervicalgia and lumbago, as well as anemia resulting from food aversion (44). Thus, not only does Zooneh's mourning deleteriously affect her, but that harm extends to and reproduces itself within her granddaughter.

[142] Berlant's *Cruel Optimism* does not explicitly argue that a cruelly optimistic attachment increases in proportion to the failure of the object to satisfy a need. However, that would seem to be the logic of Berlant's argument:"[T]he *affective structure* of an optimistic attachment involves a sustaining inclination to return to the scene of fantasy that enables you to expect that *this* time, nearness to *this* thing will help you or a world to become different in just the right way…[O]ptimism is cruel when the object/scene that ignites a sense of possibility actually makes it impossible to attain the expansive transformation for which a person or a people risks striving; and, doubly, it is cruel insofar as the very pleasures of being inside a relation have become sustaining regardless of the content of the relation" (*Cruel Optimism* 2, emphasis-in-text).

In regard to my second objection: While Zia documents harmful forms of grief in the lives of her subjects, she stops short of theorizing them or incorporating them into her analysis of state oppression and resistance. By contrast, I propose that although the technology of disappearance overtly terrorizes all Kashmiris through its systemic suspension of knowledge of the fate of their loved ones—thereby ensnaring the general population by way of epistemological capture—we should explore the possibility that the primary objective of this technology is, in fact, the genesis of injurious grief across a distribution of individuals. I frame my investigation of this proposal with three observations of Zooneh's case study. First, insofar as it indefinitely suspends her in a circuit of grief, Zooneh's mourning *debilitates* her. Jasbir Puar theorizes debilitation as the "slow wearing down of populations" through instruments of power whose psychic and corporeal effects cannot be captured by the "regimes of visibility" upon which normative conceptualizations of disability, and their attendant political struggles for rights and healthcare, have historically relied (*The Right to Maim* xiv; xv). In refusing Zooneh the knowledge of her son's death, India's security apparatus debilitates her in ways illegible to materialist lenses of deprivation. To characterize Zooneh and other loved ones of the disappeared as debilitated by grief is not to suggest that they are exhaustively dominated or incapacitated. As noted earlier, Zooneh is a senior APDP activist, and her commitment to justice for her son has made her fearlessly vocal against the Indian state. Rather, debility here refers to a condition of psychic and embodied life that impedes endeavors to satisfy basic needs, minimize pain, and maximize pleasure; by extension, debilitating conditions disrupt, though do not necessarily disable, capacities for organizing and contributing to macro-political movements.

The second reason for my second objection is that, as evinced by Lali "inheriting" her grandmother's neuroses, debilitating grief extends beyond those who directly knew the

disappeared. While it is doubtful that Lali's is an isomorphic transmission of loss,[143] it is clear that grief's gravity gathers secondary bodies into its orbit. In Puar's analysis of Israel's implicit right to maim subjects within "its" territorial borders (that is, Israel's self-established right to permanently injure yet refuse to let die),[144] one of her Palestinian interlocutors observes a similar effect at work in Israel's technologies of debilitation: "'[Israel wants] to debilitate entire families so that their main concern becomes the disabled person and making sure their needs are met. Because disabled people are the responsibility of the entire community and not just of their families, this ensures that we are unable to fight the occupation. This is the occupation's calculus'" (Puar 160). In other words, the act of maiming and the resultant debilitation instrumentalizes its victims; these tactics utilize their incapacitation in order to exhaust, impoverish, and demoralize the whole community, thereby engendering around the survivors of violence *radii of debility*.[145] Likewise, although Lali was too young for her father's loss to have

[143] In her discussion of transgenerational mourning, Zia does not address *how* traumatic loss is transmitted across generations. If she had, she may have been forced to reckon with the role played by antagonistic affects, such as rage, jealousy, and resentment, in this transmission. We should consider the possibility that Lali's observed outpouring of grief for someone she never knew is her way of sublimating different griefs that have been barred expression by her mother and grandmother's centralizing focus on her father's disappearance. That is, Zooneh's grief may have catalyzed a different form of grief in her granddaughter, which Zia subsequently misrecognized as an isomorphic transmission.

[144] If, on the surface, the ongoing Palestinian genocide should appear to draw Puar's analysis into question, it is important to remember that power in a particular context is always composed of multiple rationalities. Moreover, I would discourage anyone from reframing the period of Israel's settler colonialism in which the right to maim was the prevailing logic as a mere preparatory phase for the return to prominence of the sovereign right to kill. Scholars interested in the shift from maiming (back) to systematic murder should, instead, focus on tracing the reformulation of the right to maim within the current genocide.

[145] With regards to the pathogenesis of secondhand grief, it is my contention that "radii of debility" is a more useful analytic than "transgenerational mourning" for two reasons. One, in superimposing the teleological structure of inheritance onto the transmission of loss, the latter model reduces the child's psyche to a *tabula rasa* onto which the predecessor's "grief," reified as an object or as genetic/cultural instructions, can be unilaterally projected. As my analysis of mourning and melancholia in the next section demonstrates, grief indexes a complex dynamic of epistemological and ontological repair; it is not a gene, tradition, or heirloom that can be passed from one generation to the next. Two, as a spatial metaphor, "radii" more accurately renders the mutual susceptibility that inheres between subjects, regardless of social or familial hierarchy. Zia does not consider that Lali's grief may very well reciprocally infect Zooneh.

precipitated a profound and lasting sense of loss, Syed's disappearance, nevertheless, has debilitated her, this debilitation occurring primarily *through* Zooneh.

My third observation regarding the limits of Zia's analysis of interpersonal relations is that, while it is reasonable to assume that the adverse form of Zooneh's grief is symptomatic, to some extent, of the way in which she lost Syed, the psychodynamics underwriting this symptomatology are less obvious. That is, while there appears to be a positive association between, on the one hand, Zooneh being unable to verify if her son is dead and, on the other hand, her compulsion to remain behind the door's threshold in an unremitting state of anticipation, the nature of this relation and the psychoaffective and social forces constitutive of it are not manifest. On the contrary, identifying a relation between "disappearance without confirmation of death" and "debilitating grief" brings to the surface a number of thorny philosophical and psychological questions. In the first place, while we commonly refer to someone dying as us "losing" them, "loss" and "death" are not isomorphic. This lack of identity is, of course, trivial, but not because "losing someone" is a polysemic euphemism relative to a readily identifiable biological-material event called "death." Rather, as Zooneh's condition demonstrates, the psychoaffective state of grief clearly emerges in response to what we will, for the moment, vaguely refer to as an "experience of loss." Is "death," then, merely a sub-category of "loss"? This cannot be the case, since we already intuited that the pathological formation of Zooneh's grief is attributable, in part, to not being able to identify that her son is dead. By extension, it seems plausible to describe "death" as a type of functional knowledge that modifies an "experience of loss" and our psychoaffective reaction to it. Yet, this definition is problematic, too, because it imagines "knowledge of death" as an element independent from the dynamic inhering between an "experience of loss" and "grief," as if the epistemological aspects of

processing loss can be neatly mapped onto one axis and the phenomenological-psychoaffective aspects mapped onto another. However, if we stand by our hypothesis that "knowing death" is at least co-extensive with a capacitating alteration in the form of grief, then this "knowledge" cannot be purely epistemological, since it is well-observed that someone can positively know (positive here used in the strict sense) their loved one is dead and still become melancholic. In other words, what we call the "knowledge of death" is not reducible to the empirical fact of someone no longer being alive. What, then, is the ontological status of this "knowledge," and what are the psychological, social, and material conditions of its emergence? If this "knowledge" is not merely an exterior element that alters mourning from without, is it, then, something produced, to a certain extent, *by* the processes of grief?

In order to answer these questions about "death," we must first interrogate what we mean by an "experience of loss" and that experience's relation to "processes of grief," particularly with respect to the latter's potential for considerable variance. Insofar as grief is clearly not precipitated every time a phenomenological presence disappears (e.g., we do not grieve merely because someone or something leaves the ambit of our sense-perception), much as "knowledge of death" is not reducible to knowing that someone is not alive, the "loss" at the center of grief is not reducible to a simple or temporary absence. Yet, it would be absurd to place the epistemological anterior to the psychoaffective via a model of linear causality (e.g., to insist that we begin to grieve only *after* and *because* we "know" we will never again have access to the radical presence of someone or something). If that were true, then Zooneh would not exhibit any signs of grief, since she cannot verify that Syed will never return. Thus, grief is neither independent from nor linearly dependent on the epistemological awareness that a phenomenological absence correlates with an enduring loss. Is this a veritable antinomy, or is it

that any seeming contradiction here is merely the conceptual effect of our having predicated this *ad hoc* analysis of loss and grief on an insufficient model of the ontology of grief-productive relations? That is, if we are struggling here to order the phenomenological, the epistemological, and the psychoaffective dimensions of loss, is this because grief's intransigence to both linearly temporalizing and conceptually disaggregating "knowing loss," "experiencing loss," and "responding to loss" indexes an ontological situation in which the "subject of loss" and the "object of loss" are confounded? If so, would re-examining the *ontological status of loss* enable us to schematize the mechanisms and dynamics through which pathological grief is produced (and, at the same time, clarify the role of the "knowledge of death" in said production)? In turn, would this schema allow us to identify the *susceptibility* of "interior" processes of grief to "exterior" manipulations by power (i.e., how, why, and to what extent power is able to affect the conditions under which grief assumes a capacitating or debilitating form)? These questions lead me to posit that to evaluate the form and logic of power at work in forced disappearances and mass, unmarked graves—and, by extension, rigorously delineate the economy of power and resistance inhering in the acts of "political grief" valorized by Zia[146]—it is necessary that we first interrogate the psychodynamics with which these technologies of debilitation interface. That is, *our analysis of power requires a theory of grief*. In the next section, I demonstrate how the wedge Freud introduces between the "who" and "what" of loss in his salient analysis of melancholia can be utilized as the basis for such a theory.

[146] Mine is not cynical dismissal of Zia's analysis. Rather, my point is that in the absence of a well-considered diagram of power, it is not possible to evaluate the relative proportionality of resistance to reproduction in acts of insurgency.

2.2 Restructuring "Mourning and Melancholia": Intrasubjectivity, Assemblages of Grief, and Debilitating Formations of the Work of Mourning

> The complex of melancholia behaves like an open wound, drawing to itself cathetic energies…from all directions, and emptying the ego until it is totally impoverished.
>
> —Sigmund Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia"

In his 1917 essay "Mourning and Melancholia," Freud introduced a theory of grief that framed the difference between non-pathological and pathological grief as one of mourning vs. melancholia. Although this theory's understanding of mourning has been widely discredited due to the reductive linear-economic model of attachment and relational subjectivity on which it relies,[147] its nuanced etiology of melancholia has profoundly influenced conceptualizations of grief for over a century. At the same time, much of the scholarship that valorizes the aptness of Freud's conception of melancholia over and against his conception of mourning ironically does not reckon with the problems that emerge from the latter being mechanistically predicated on the former. In Freud's theory, mourning and melancholia are part of the same pathogenetic schema, which is to say that both conditions are etiologized in reference to a common structure of attachment and (mis)recognition.[148] By extension, scholars who attempt to separate melancholia from mourning unwittingly reproduce the problematic ontological foundations on which both are

[147] The "callousness" of Freud's model of mourning, to use Moglen's apt descriptor, was critiqued severely by early queer theorists during the height of the AIDS epidemic (Moglen 152). See, for example, Michael Moon's "Memorial Rags: Emerson, Whitman, AIDS and Mourning," as well as Douglas Crimp's response to Moon's critique in "Mourning and Militancy." For essays that dispense with Freudian mourning less directly through analytically privileging melancholia, see the edited collection *Loss: The Politics of Mourning*.

[148] To clarify, I use "pathogenetic" to index that Freud frames melancholia not only as a deviant pathway within the work of mourning, but as a deviance made possible by the constitutive psychoaffective structure from which mourning emerges (rather than as a deviance engendered by a force or process exterior to that structure). By contrast, I use "pathological" to index when a psychoaffective condition is debilitating.

constructed.[149] Moreover, even when scholars, such as Judith Butler, assiduously interrogate this foundation, their work effectively makes melancholia synonymous with grief, in the process eliminating or side-stepping Freud's initial distinction between capacitating and debilitating grief altogether. This is unfortunate because the psychoanalytic effort to articulate a difference between the non-pathological and pathological while simultaneously relating them as alternate possibilities and pathways within the same psychoaffective structure is precisely what makes Freud's schema, despite its problematic foundations, analytically and politically invaluable. As such, rather than discarding "Mourning and Melancholia" altogether or, conversely, extrapolating from only half of the schema it articulates, I reconstruct its foundations by, on the one hand, transacting the text with its most significant problems and, on the other hand, bringing the text into dialogue with important critiques of Freudian epistemology and phenomenology raised by Lacan and social constructivists. Doing so enables me to generate an alternative theory of grief through which the interplay of psychoaffective and social forces constitutive of Zooneh's debilitation can be rendered legible and anatomized. In keeping with my methodological commitment to, where possible, avoid merely imposing the universal ("theory") on the particular (here, a case study) but, instead, to arrive at the universal by way of the particular, I utilize an abstraction of the specific symptomatic form that Zooneh's injurious grief assumes as a template for melancholia in developing this alternative theory of grief. While, on the one hand, the conceptual tools and the logics by which I effect this abstraction are borrowed from psychoanalysis and queer theory and, thus, bear the trace of other case studies, and, on the other hand, Zia's ethnography provides other examples of melancholic symptomatology in the loved

[149] For examples of this, see the deployments of melancholia in: Khanna pp. 21-26; Cheng pp. 7-10; and Crimp pp. 131-134.

ones of the disappeared which accord with Zooneh's and can, as such, be rationalized by the theory I propose,[150] the extent to which it is justified to extend my theory to Kashmiris, or to humanity more generally, remains to be seen. This indeterminate applicability, however, is an irrevocable condition of privileging the particular while refusing to allow the uncertain role of contingency to preclude us from mapping out plausible relations between it and the universal, in awareness that the unwillingness to do so often works on the side of concealing the insidious machinations of power and maintaining the status quo. If I provisionally extend the insights gleaned through this study beyond its principal analytic subject, it is not because I seek to have the final word on grief nor on the rationality subtending the occupation's deployment of forced disappearances in Kashmir but, instead, seek for my work to be articulated with future scholarship, even if only as the basis of another's critique. It is because, following Foucault, I view my analyses as offering "'propositions' [and] 'game openings,' where those who may be interested are invited to join in—they are not meant as dogmatic assertions that have to be taken or left in en bloc…[Rather,] they are *philosophical fragments put to work in a historical field of problems*" (Foucault, *Power* 224, emphasis mine). It is also because I recognize that Foucault's embrace of the fragmentary takes part of the ethics coextensive with Roy's embrace of shattered relationality.

***

[150] See, for example, Zia's study of Sadaf, whose husband Manzoor was disappeared by the occupation: "[Sadaf] hoped her travails [navigating the occupation's legal system in search of Manzoor] were temporary. 'I thought Manzoor would return as suddenly as he had disappeared,' she said. Manzoor's presence hangs around Sadaf and her home like a heavy cloak. Grief and loss permeate everything in her life. She continues to make most decisions with him in mind: 'What would he say?' is a deciding refrain. When she has visitors over, she habitually puts out an extra teacup, as if Manzoor will join at some point. This, she explained, assures her of Manzoor's presence in her life…Sadaf's ritual of searching for Manzoor is a replica of the struggle of kin of other disappeared men" (Zia 79).

As is commonly known, Freud frames his analysis of grief with a discussion of a peculiar pattern of behavior he had observed among some of his patients: although they had suffered no apparent loss, these patients took on the characteristic features of mourning a dead loved one, including "profoundly painful dejection, cessation of interest in the outside world, loss of the capacity to love, [and] inhibition of all activity" ("Mourning and Melancholia" 244). Even more curiously, these patients also displayed a symptom that is not commonly associated with mourning: "a lowering of the self-regarding feelings to a degree that finds utterance in self-reproaches and self-revilings, and culminates in a delusional expectation of punishment" (244). Between the absence of a significant loss (such as a loved one dying) and the inexplicable disposition toward self-reproach, Freud explains that his sessions with these patients led him to conclude that their condition was indeed a form of grief, yet one that differed from mourning proper. On account of this discrepancy, he provisionally names their condition melancholia and sets out to develop a plausible explanation for how the symptoms of mourning could manifest in a subject in the absence of an apparent loss. Because Freud had defined melancholia precisely through its symptomatic overlap with mourning, his theorization begins with a theoretical elaboration of this "normal" form of grief.

For Freud, the most significant factor differentiating mourning from melancholia is the "real" absence of someone or something to whom/which the subject had cathected. When this "other" (or, "object," in Freud's lexicon) is lost, in the process of mourning the subject's attachment to this object is abruptly brought into opposition with the ego's perception, via "reality-testing," that the deceased is no longer available to provide libidinal satisfaction. Upon recognizing this, the perceptual consciousness (*Pcpt.*) "proceeds to demand all libido shall be

withdrawn from its attachment to that object."[151] However, due to the degree of attachment, the subject's unconscious initially repudiates this demand. This opposition manifests itself through the defense mechanism of *incorporation*: unable to bear the loss of their loved object all at once, the subject attempts to subsume parts of the other into themselves, often through sustained fixation on treasured memories and/or through a centralizing, sometimes manic focus on activities, habits, hobbies and interests that the subject and their beloved shared.[152] While incorporation appears at first to be a form of denial (i.e., the subject attempting to resuscitate their lost other through imaginary investments), Freud argues that it is actually a means to a

[151] Written during a significant inflection point in Freud's career, as he unevenly transitioned from the "topographical" model of the mind to the "structural" model, "Mourning and Melancholia" often hesitates to ascribe definitive points of origin for demands and attachments.

[152] Scholars familiar with Abraham and Torok's famous essay "Mourning *or* Melancholia: Introjection *versus* Incorporation" may take issue with the fact that I am calling this defense mechanism "incorporation." Indeed, in their schema, the process I have described is referred to as "introjection," whereas the process I associate with melancholia in the next paragraph and call "introjection" is referred to as "incorporation." To the extent that this is purely about nomenclature, I am not invested in arguing this point. This note only serves to explain the reasoning constitutive of the discrepancy. As James Strachey observes in his editor's note to "Mourning and Melancholia" (or, rather, in a footnote to his editor's note), Freud never uses the word "introjection" in his most famous essay on grief. "Incorporate," however, does appear, and he uses it in reference to melancholia, the logic of this deployment being, one, that melancholia involves narcissistic identification with the lost object and, two, that narcissistic identification is associated with the "oral or cannibalistic phase of libidinal development" ("Mourning and Melancholia" 249). That is, Freud uses incorporation as a metaphor expressive of the desire to "devour" the lost object and "incorporate" it into the ego rather than recognize and mourn the loss. *However*, when Freud later introduces the term "introjection" in relation to grief in *The Ego and the Id*, he simultaneously associates it with melancholia (explicitly) and mourning (implicitly): "When it happens that a person has to give up a sexual object, there quite often ensues an alteration of his ego which can only be described as a setting up of the object inside the ego, *as it occurs in melancholia*…It may be that by this introjection, which is a kind of regression to the mechanism of the oral phase, *the ego makes it easier for the object to be given up or renders that process possible*" (*The Ego and the Id* 29, emphasis mine). I suspect that this replacement of introjection for incorporation is symptomatic of the emergence of the structural model of the mind that Freud mediates through *The Ego and the Id*, but this is not the space for that argument. The simple explanation is that with the formation of the ego as a structure, Freud's conception of *identification* changed such that the ego can only "identify" with the object to the extent that the object retains its difference within the ego (as best demonstrated by the first and most significant melancholic identification, the super-ego). This is a different understanding of identification than underwrites Freud's earlier use of incorporation, where the idea appears to be that the ego "identifies" with the object by devouring and *digesting* the object, such that by virtue of this digestion it becomes indissociable from oneself. In short, Freud's understanding and utilization of these terms changed over time. As for why I associate incorporation with mourning and introjection with melancholia: the digestive metaphor of incorporation approximates the "piecemeal" grieving of the other that Freud attributes to mourning, and the centrality of the ego and its "broadening" via identification to Ferenczi's original conception of introjection (helpfully glossed for us by Abraham and Torok) makes the term particularly apt for signposting the centrality of identification that Freud attributes to melancholia, both in his early and late formulations of it (Abraham and Torok 127).

reparative end: "each single one of the memories and expectations in which the libido is bound to the object is brought up and hyper-cathected, and *detachment of the libido is accomplished in respect of it*" (245, my emphasis). In this way, incorporation allows the subject to lose their object *in pieces*, thus converting the unbearable into a sequence of bearable, though still "extraordinarily painful" losses. Thus, for Freud, the seeming mania and denial related to incorporation, as well as the other aforementioned negative characteristics of mourning, are, in fact, symptoms of a healthy ego managing and eventually relinquishing their attachments to the beloved in a face of a reality that no longer supports them. When this "piecemeal" loss of the other concludes, "the ego becomes free and uninhibited again," enabling the subject to form new libido-satisfying attachments (245). To sum up, Freud's 1917 model of mourning suggests a tripartite linear schema for non-pathological grief: the ego recognizes that a loss has occurred; the ego incorporates, and thus preserves, the lost object via hyper-cathexis of their shared memories, habits, interests, etc.; the ego slowly relinquishes its attachment to the lost object by de-cathecting from each of the constitutive libidinal relations that bound them together.

In Freud's model of melancholia, by contrast, this "work of mourning" is stalled by an epistemological-phenomenological error at the initial step:[153] although the melancholic consciously (or unconsciously) apprehends that they have lost something, they "cannot see clearly what it is that has been lost…This, indeed, might be so even if the patient is aware of the loss which has given rise to his melancholia, but only in the sense that he knows *whom* he has lost but not *what* he has lost in him" (245).[154] That is, the melancholic subject cannot name their

[153] The aporia between epistemology and phenomenology is a central tension in Freud's work on mourning, as it is in this chapter. See my discussion of Lacan's critique of the reality principle in this chapter.

[154] Except where they interfere with the contextualizing prose, I have left pronouns in Freud's work unchanged.

loss, either because they do not recognize that something has been lost at all or because they misrecognize the source of their loss as something other than what it is. Moreover, the melancholic inexplicably responds to this confounding of the "who" and "what" of loss through recourse to self-deprecation, thereby compounding the pain of loss with attacks on the self. Freud accounts for melancholia's symptomatic conjunction of grief and self-loathing by theorizing a pathological counterpart to incorporation, *introjection*.[155] As with incorporation, in response to the reality principle's perception of loss and subsequent demand on the libido to relinquish its investment, the melancholic ego attempts to take the lost object into themselves through hyper-cathexis. However, due to the ego's uncertainty of *what* has been lost, that reflexive surge in libidinal energy cannot locate an external object on which to invest itself and thus retreats back to the ego, at which point a curious misrecognition occurs:

> The free libido was not displaced onto another object; it was withdrawn into the ego. There, however, it was not employed in any unspecified way, but served to establish an *identification* of the ego with the abandoned object. Thus the shadow of the object fell upon the ego, and the latter could henceforth be judged by a special agency,[156] as though it were an object, the forsaken object. In this way an object-loss was transformed into an ego-loss. (249, emphasis in text)

[155] See n.152 on why this terminological ascription is a slight embellishment on my part.

[156] This undefined "special agency" (also referred to in this essay as the "critical agency of the ego") is one of Freud's early attempts to theorize the super-ego, which he had first introduced in "On Narcissism" in 1914. Notably, the causal relationship between melancholia and the super-ego was eventually reversed: when Freud finally develops his full theorization of the super-ego in *The Ego and the Id* (1925), it is melancholia that enables the formation of the super-ego. This is, as well, a significant moment in Freud's overall conceptualization of grief, as it is when he appears to reframe melancholia as a precondition of mourning.

Unlike incorporation, introjection fails to maintain the distinction between *having* and *being*: in the process of folding the lost object into itself, the ego misrecognizes itself *as* the lost object.[157] Consequently, this paradoxical unification of the ego and its lost object precipitates a self-division, a chiasmus, resulting in one part of the ego identifying with itself and another part identifying with the lost object. Moreover, both due to the absence of a legible external cause of the loss and due to the chiasmus's intensification—via a rebound effect—of the latent libidinal ambivalence that structures all psychic attachments, the ego further misrecognizes itself as the *source* of its deprivation, thereby predisposing it to narcissistic sadomasochism. This is, in part, why melancholia is accompanied by self-deprecation and self-flagellation. At the same time, Freud argues that the melancholic's self-assaults have a reparative purpose: "just as mourning impels the ego to give up the object by declaring the object to be dead…so does each single struggle of ambivalence loosen the fixation of the libido to the object by disparaging it, denigrating it, and even as it were killing it" (257). In effect, the ego harms itself until it becomes too exhausted or resentful to maintain its attachments, at which point it begins to simultaneously de-cathect and de-identify. And so, despite its alternative trajectory—which, besides being non-linear, is usually far longer and more painful—the "work of melancholia" eventually returns the subject to the same state of unencumbered libido as the work of mourning.

Despite its shortcomings (discussed below), Freud's initial conceptualization of mourning and melancholia is useful to our study of debilitating grief in Kashmir for four reasons. First, it is a denaturalizing discourse. As Freud observes twice in as many pages, the "grave departures

[157] For Freud, this is not an arbitrary development: "This substitution of identification for object-love is an important mechanism in the narcissistic affections…It represents, of course, a *regression* from one type of object-choice to original narcissism" (249, emphasis in text). In other words, the ego's ability to distinguish between *being* and *having* in its libidinal attachments marks the subject's normative progression from the narcissistic stage of development.

from the normal attitude to life" that are present in healthy grieving would be marked as "pathological" in any other context (243-244). In problematizing the symptomatic expressions of grief, he frames even "normal" mourning as a phenomenon in need of pathogenetic explanation. Second, disavowing the molarity of naturalized portraits of grief, Freud's theory analyzes in granular terms the psychoaffective dynamics at work in different experiences of loss. Subsequently, in framing grief as a composite phenomenon, Freud's work enables us to apprehend grief as a set of mechanisms and processes, each of which is variably accessible to tactical manipulation by power. Third, Freud's theory distinguishes between grief that is non-pathological (mourning) and pathological (melancholia). As previously noted, the significance of this distinction has often gone overlooked due to the aesthetic, ethical, and political valorization of melancholia's perceived intransigence to mourning's demands that we "let go and forget." For example, this hermeneutic impulse is legible in Zia's optimistic reading of Zooneh's condition as one of "hopeful melancholia." It is true that capitalist and imperialist rationalities position "overcoming" grief as both the natural endpoint of the work of mourning (e.g., Kübler-Ross's infamous "five stages of grief") and the veritable sign that one has not been delinquent, wasteful or inefficient in mourning; as such, mourning bounded by teleology often functions as an insidious norm utilized to extract maximum labor from vulnerable populations and to facilitate public amnesia of power's deployments. Consequently, given how Freud's model of mourning indirectly naturalizes this norm, scholars of political occupation, such as Zia, are certainly justified in scrutinizing Freud's assumption that maintaining one's attachment after loss is a pathological deviance from "normal" behavior. However, the ethical imperative to reject discourses that enable and support hegemonic erasure simultaneously requires us to not

misrepresent suffering by way of idealized portraits of resistance.[158] Rightly rejecting the Freudian model of mourning on the grounds that it naturalizes the callous abandonment of those destroyed by power does not change the reality that, under certain conditions, grief ensnares and torments us to no personally- nor politically-useful purpose. While I share Zia's impulse to imagine grief outside neoliberal and colonial regimes of truth, I find the difference she seeks to impose between "true" and "hopeful" melancholia to be untenable.[159] Contra Zia, I turn to Freud's theory *because* (rather than in spite of) his explicit identification of melancholia as "precisely and above all, a form of grieving that compounds the pain of loss by inflicting further injury upon the self" (Moglen 153). Fourth, while maintaining a distinction between mourning and melancholia, Freud nonetheless positions both within the same pathogenetic framework. It is not that melancholia merely shares symptoms with mourning; melancholia is an ubiquitous possibility within the structure of ontological-libidinal organization (attachment, loss, and recognition) from which all grief emerges. In doing so, Freud *universalizes the structural*

[158] Clearly, if we reject Freudian mourning on the grounds of teleology, then we cannot attach a beneficent *telos* to melancholia without further justification.

[159] On the one hand, her argument rests on an unusually literal reading of Freud's text, resulting in unreasonably strict diagnostic criteria for "true" melancholia. Freud clearly did not intend for his enumeration of melancholia's symptoms to be used as a strict litmus test. For example, although Freud ascribes to melancholics an "inhibition of all activity," he also identifies them with the "trait of insistent communicativeness which finds satisfaction in self-exposure" ("Mourning and Melancholia" 247). On the other hand, if we compare Zia's near-verbatim paraphrasing of Freud to the original quote, we see that she has excluded the symptoms of self-devaluation and self-harm, both of which Zooneh demonstrates: "The distinguishing mental features of melancholia are a profoundly painful dejection, cessation of interest in the outside world, loss of the capacity to love, inhibition of all activity, *and a lowering of self-regarding feelings to a degree that finds utterance in self-reproaches and self-revilings, and culminates in a delusional expectation of punishment*" (244, emphasis mine). As the theory of grief I develop here implies, "true" vs. "hopeful" melancholia is a false dichotomy. Melancholia is predicated on *cruel* hope. This does not mean, of course, that we should not consider the possibility that there are variations among debilitating formations of grief's processes (that melancholia is, as it were, a spectrum of enervating attachment modalities), but that is much different from disqualifying grief as melancholic via an untenable binary of veracity. Moreover, while I understand the political and ethical impulse to avoid pathologizing one's ethnographic subject, defining Zooneh's condition as an exceptional type of (non-)melancholia invariably reproduces the pathologizing analytic one wishes to avoid. Instead, we must work to restructure the power-knowledge of psychiatric and psychoanalytic classifications so that they efface neither the sedimented relations of power through which they have been constituted and deployed nor the agency of the subjects they classify.

conditions of melancholia,[160] thereby refusing to account for "pathological" behavior by way of essentialism: for Freud, *melancholia expresses a processual error in the work of mourning, not an ontological difference*.[161] By extension, as I will demonstrate in my final analysis of debilitating grief in Kashmir, delineating these structural conditions is co-extensive with identifying the ways in which power interfaces with grief.

Nevertheless, while the methodological and interpretive choices structuring "Mourning and Melancholia" are ultimately relevant to our attempt to theorize the political and affective dimensions of Kashmiri mourning, the thesis Freud ultimately developed in 1917 has limited utility to our project due to its many lacunae, contradictions, and unexamined assumptions. In light of the numerous psychoanalytic and non-psychoanalytic works that have addressed these issues,[162] I have limited my discussion to those aspects of Freud's argument that impair its analytic usefulness for modeling the dynamics of psychology and power in Kashmir's occupation. Specifically, by considering critiques of Freudian subject-object relations levied by two theorists, psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan and literary critic Seth Moglen, I identify two "problems" underlying Freud's model of grief: the problem of the reality principle and the problem of the social. These problems, I maintain, suggest that despite its significant insights into the relationships between knowledge, loss, and pathogenesis in the progression of grief, Freud's model of mourning and melancholia is incongruent with the "unconscious" of queer and

[160] To be clear, this universalizing of melancholia's structural conditions is different from the universalizing of melancholia itself that I identify in *The Ego and the Id*.

[161] Admittedly, I am extending more generosity to Freud than he perhaps deserves. In "Mourning and Melancholia," he flirts with the idea that certain categories of people (women, hysterics, and narcissists) are more likely to succumb to melancholia than others (247; 249-250). However, I would argue that these flirtations are ultimately subordinated to Freud's etiological/universalizing impulse in the 1917 essay.

[162] For example, see: Abraham and Torok "Mourning *or* Melancholia: Introjection *versus* Incorporation"; Butler "Melancholy Gender/Refused Identification" in *The Psychic Life of Power*; and Luciano *Arranging Grief*.

postcolonial studies, insofar as both of these fields tend to analytically privilege metaphysical skepticism and social constructivism.[163] Thus, in order to render those insights logically deployable within contemporary humanist theoretical frameworks, it will be necessary to reconstruct Freud's model with the proceeding critiques in mind.

The first problem refers to the *a priori* separation between the subject of cathexis and cathected object that underwrites Freud's libidinal economy. As I hope to demonstrate, this separation indexes the uncomplicated relation between sense-perception and recognition that underwrites Freud's notion of the "reality principle," an internal law that compels the ego to construct both its mental representations of the external world and its approaches toward satisfying (or repressing or sublimating) the id's libidinal instincts in conformance with "reality." In his famous essay on the "mirror stage" of child development, Lacan suggests that not only is Freud's reality principle predicated on an untenable presumption of phenomenological immediacy but that this presumption precludes Freud from recognizing the centrality of phenomenological mediation to our formation as subjects.[164] At a glance: Lacan argues that our ontology (in my work, the boundaries, identifications, mechanisms, and processes mutually productive of a coherent "self," or Being[165]) emerges in tandem with our efforts to resolve incommensurabilities between, on the one hand, sense-perceptions as they are relayed and responded to via our sensorial-affective apparatus (which I refer to as "Being's phenomenology") and, on the other hand, knowledge categories as they are constituted and

[163] I am using "unconscious" in the manner of Jameson in *The Political Unconscious*.

[164] As Gayle Salamon demonstrates, several scholars—including Judith Butler, Kaja Silverman, Didier Anzieu, Elizabeth Grosz, and Paul Schilder—have levied Lacan's mirror stage against Freud's reductive phenomenology (Salamon 13-42).

[165] I adopt the term Being because its amorphousness is commensurate with the model of human ontology for which I argue later in this chapter.

organized via our mnemonic-cognitive apparatus (which I refer to as "Being's epistemology"). These incommensurabilities are fundamentally irresolvable—our drive to concretize and individualize a "self" is animated and sustained by a misrecognition of lost originary ontological wholeness (i.e., the mirror-stage child's misperception that there existed a "whole" body prior to their "body-in-pieces"). Because of this, the boundary of Being is never stable or complete but, instead, is continually dissolved and re-constructed as we encounter and respond to the irreducible excess that haunts all mental and linguistic representations of the world (what Lacan calls the "Real"). This results in a perpetual ontological production that I refer to as *ontogenesis* ("onto" referring to Being and "genesis" referring to formation).[166] Insofar as Lacan's mirror stage depicts ontogenesis as set into motion by the child's back-projection of a lost corporeal singularity, its developmental schema, I argue, helpfully *frames Being as both a product and process of grief*; in turn, the significance of loss in Lacan's account calls into question Freud's positing of the aggrieved's ontological continuity across an experience of loss.

The second problem refers to the absence of social and cultural forces in Freud's pathogenetic framework of grief. This is an issue that plagues Freudian psychoanalysis more generally; as Fanon argues, while Freud admirably "substituted for a phylogenetic theory the ontogenetic perspective"—that is, substituted for an evolutionary theory of the mind one predicated on the individual's development—psychoanalysis frequently subordinates sociogenetic etiologies of the self (e.g., class, race, gender, etc.) to the supposedly prior claim of

[166] I borrow "ontogenesis" from Sylvia Wynter's meditations on Fanon's "sociogeny" in "Human Being as Noun? Or *Being Human* as Praxis? Towards the Autopoetic Turn/Overturn: A Manifesto" in *10 Essays* pp. 12-17. To be clear, in my use of the term, "ontogenesis" is not identical with subjectification(/individuation). Subjectification refers to the disciplinary standardization of Being via teleologizing ontogenesis. This is not to say, however, that in the absence of subjectification ontogenesis would be exterior to the ambit of power. Power inheres in every relation. Subjectification indexes, rather, the simultaneous relating of relations of Being to each other and to an ultimate idealization of the self.

ontogenetic etiologies (e.g., trauma, sexual instincts/drives, etc.) (*Black Skin, White Masks* 13).[167] Yet, while scholars of race, gender, and sexuality have worked from within Freud's various schemas to delineate power's imbrication with psychoaffective mechanisms and pathways of development, thereby bringing psychoanalysis into productive alignment with social constructivism,[168] Freud's theories of mourning and melancholia are usually either "applied" to diverse social phenomena (with such application often functioning to sequester the theory's foundations from intervention by the phenomena to which it is applied), or rendered symptomatic of its historical moment, where the act of symptomatizing functions to destabilize the theory's foundations without necessarily clarifying its remaining truth value.[169] Insofar as it is impossible to determine how and why pathological grief can be intentionally "exteriorly" induced in a subject, such as Zooneh, without positively defining the psychosocial metapsychology on and through which such an induction operates (an hermeneutic process I call anatomization), what is required is a pathogenetic analytic for mourning and melancholia that is foundationally imbricated with the social and, thus, accounts for power from the outset.

A crucial groundwork for a productive restructuring of Freud's theory, along with the forms of affective attachment that are immanent in it, can be found in Judith Butler's

---

[167] To be clear, I am paraphrasing Fanon's argument here. My sense of ontogenesis is not the same as Fanon's, nor does it divide ontogeny and sociogeny along the same lines. As I later argue, there is no ontology outside of the social. Therefore, how I use ontogenesis corresponds more to Wynter's "ontogeny/sociogeny" ("Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom" in *10 Essays* 269). However, I have avoided Wynter's hybrid term because I utilize the "social" and the "psychological" to indicate the origin of forces acting on ontogenesis ("exterior"/"from the social" or "interior"/"from instincts and attachments") on account of them being useful to diagramming power, even as they provisionally reduce ontology to self/other for the sake of analysis.

[168] See Anne Anlin Cheng *The Melancholy of Race: Psychoanalysis, Assimilation, and Hidden Grief*; Ranjana Khanna *Dark Continents: Psychoanalysis and Colonialism*; Judith Butler *The Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection*; Valerie Traub "The Psychomorphology of the Clitoris"; Derek Hook *A Critical Psychology of the Postcolonial*.

[169] Dana Luciano's work in *Arranging Grief: Sacred Time and the Body in Nineteenth-Century America* exemplifies this latter trend.

poststructuralist-phenomenological metacommentary on "Mourning and Melancholia" in *Precarious Life* (2004). In the sections that follow, I am inspired by (what I refer to as) Butler's model of intrasubjectivity, triangulating it with Lauren Berlant's concepts of cruel optimism and the formal structures of attachment to argue that grief specifically names *an ontological state engendered in response to the rupture of the self that occurs when we lose an intrasubjective other* (someone or something who/which was constitutive of our Being). This rupture debilitates us and, as such, requires ontological repair, which we accomplish through the "work of mourning." In the work of mourning, the self labors to capacitate itself—that is, to reduce its debilitation—through both recognizing its losses (in terms both epistemological and phenomenological) and restructuring its intrasubjective attachments to them libidinally. However, in the absence of a teleological guarantee, the work of mourning's reparative trajectory is dependent upon what I will call culturally- and socially-specific *assemblages of grief*; these assemblages—such as those surrounding the treatment of the physical corpse and attendant social rituals such as funerals and cremations—support and facilitate grief's onward movement, thus enabling the work of mourning to assume a capacitating form.[170] Consequently, if the subject's access to these assemblages is disrupted, the work of mourning can assume an injurious form through misrecognition and cruelly optimistic attachment.[171] When this happens, capacitating mourning is twisted into debilitating melancholia. In sum, I maintain that the

[170] This does not mean that the work of mourning is linear. As Valerie Traub argues with regard to temporality, onward need not mean forward (*Thinking Sex with the Early Moderns* 75).

[171] In this chapter, I use Berlant's generative concept to describe the psychoaffective-social phenomenon of becoming increasingly attached to a misrecognized and/or fetishized source of one's ontological and libidinal dispossession in the loss of the other, thereby causing the processes of grief to assume a melancholic form. Thus, in melancholia, the object or relation through which one attempts to repair oneself in response to loss is in some way fundamentally insufficient to the task of facilitating repair and, yet, one continues to invest in the hope that it will one day be sufficient. As such, this attachment not only fails to repair one's ontological rupture but it, to repurpose Berlant's definition, "actively impedes the aim that [brings] [the aggrieved] to it initially" (1).

pathological condition known as “melancholia” arises when the processes ideally constitutive of the work of mourning are anti-reparatively organized. In reference to the political and affective state of mourning in Kashmir, this alternate theorization of grief renders legible the psychosocial anatomy with which the occupation’s technology of disappearance interface: in refusing Kashmiris the corpses of their loved ones, Indian occupation forces intentionally withhold from mourners the centralizing component of dominant assemblages of grief—the corpse—while terraforming their landscape with ubiquitous-yet-indeterminate sites of memorialization. In so doing, the occupation engenders psychoaffective conditions favorable to melancholic formation. That is to say, these technologies instrumentalize grief’s essential lack of structure against itself. As we will see, this instrumentation is exemplified when we reinterpret Zooneh’s compulsion through this alternate pathogenetic framework.

***

Before engaging with Butler’s theory of intrasubjectivity and Berlant’s theory of cruel optimism, we must continue our genealogy of Freud’s work on grief. In Freud’s schema, the reality principle requires the bereaved’s engagement with the corpse. Without such engagement, mourning can morph into melancholia. Recognition and identification are the determining variables that differentiate melancholia from mourning: the melancholic feels/believes that they have lost something but are unable to recognize the loss, or they apprehend who they have lost but not what they have lost in them; subsequently, their ego misidentifies itself as the loss it cannot name. Already, there are some discrepancies in this formulation. First, what is this initial feeling of or belief in loss? Is it a phenomenological sensation? An epistemological precognition? Both? As well, from what structure in the mind does this feeling-belief emerge, and for which modality of relation is this structure responsible—recognition or identification?

Because Freud frames melancholia as the pathological twin of mourning, his initial explanation of the psychoaffective mechanisms of the latter should ideally elucidate these ambiguities. Instead, we find them compounded by Freud's reliance on the notion of "reality-testing" in his account of the initial recognition precipitative of mourning: "Reality-testing has shown that the loved object no longer exists, and it proceeds to demand that all libido shall be withdrawn from its attachments to that object" ("Mourning and Melancholia" 244). As James Strachey notes, Freud had first outlined the concept of "reality-testing" as early as *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900), but he did not attempt to concretize it until a decade later in his essay "Formulations on the Two Principles of Mental Functioning" (1911).[172] There, Freud argues that early human development can be schematized as a conflict that arises between two governing "principles" of the infant's "psychical apparatus": the pleasure principle and the reality principle. According to Freud, the child's initial phenomenological relation to the world is one dominated completely by pleasure, unpleasure, and desire: the child seeks only to maximize pleasure and reduce unpleasure, particularly unpleasure expressed as desire. As a result, when lack produces desire, the child cannot differentiate between their interior desire and exterior reality; instead, they project their desire as reality. For obvious reasons, this superimposing of desire onto their perception of the world only exacerbates their desire/unpleasure, a painful lesson that ultimately stimulates the child to adopt a new governing principle: "what was presented in the mind was no longer what was agreeable but what was real, even if it happened to be disagreeable. This setting-up of the *reality principle* proved to be a momentous step" (219, emphasis in original). Momentous, indeed. Freud regards this subordination of the pleasure principle to the reality

[172] See Strachey's commentary at the beginning of this essay in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Works of Sigmund Freud, Vol.12*, pp. 214-217.

principle as the foundation for much of psychoaffective life, including sense-perception, attention, memory, repression, thinking, and intentional action. In effect, the reality principle stimulates the mind to differentiate between sensory stimuli with respect to qualities other than merely pleasure and unpleasure. The mind learns to do so by, one, priming its sensory apparatus—what Freud initially referred to as the perceptual-consciousness system (*Pcpt.*)—to "[periodically] search the external world" for senses it has previously perceived (a mechanism Freud names "attention"), and, two, developing a "system of notation" (or "memory") to record and organize those previous sense-perceptions (220-221). Furthermore, it develops and subsequently intervenes "the process of thinking" between sense-perception and motor response, thus enabling the child to exchange their instinctual responses to pleasure or unpleasure for intentional "action[s]" (221). Lastly, desires deemed incommensurate with reality are now subject either to repression or to sublimation, though Freud notes that a part (if not all) of the "sexual instinct" often remains under the control of the pleasure principle (222). In general, "reality-testing" refers to the ego's continual use of these interconnected mechanisms to maintain itself in "rational" relation to the world, at the insistence of the reality principle.

At first glance, mourning and melancholia can be regarded as binary output values with respect to the success/failure of reality-testing: if reality-testing recognizes that the lost object of cathexis is in fact lost (deemed a "success"), then grief proceeds by way of mourning; if reality-testing cannot recognize that the lost object of cathexis is indeed lost (deemed a "failure"), then grief becomes stalled in melancholia. Yet, if we resituate the concept of reality-testing within the ontogenetic schema from which it emerges, we confront a problematic paradox. Is reality-testing not initially the product of a profound, protracted experience of loss? Freud tells us that, lacking object permanence, the infant perceives only the jarring, unpleasurable absence of its source of

sustenance, out of which arises what is simultaneously their first desire and their first mental representation of the world. Due to this superimposition of libido onto sense-perception—this stage of life where desire defines the entire expanse of the infant's phenomenology and epistemology—the infant attempts to derive satisfaction from their phantasy, only to find their unpleasure mounting higher still. Subsequently, the "disappointment" of this experience stimulates the advent of the reality principle.[173] However, in the absence of a cognitive apparatus capable of expectation, disappointment is surely impossible, insofar as disappointment is by definition foiled anticipation. In fact, within Freud's schema, it is only *because* the infant is unable to delay gratification by way of future projection—bereft, as well, of all the sensorial and cognitive negotiations with libido such a projection requires—that desire immediately superimposes itself on all of reality. Disappointment, therefore, cannot explain the child's sudden and immense ontological transformation into a being capable of "[comprehending] sensory qualities in addition to the qualities of pleasure and unpleasure" (220). It seems, rather, that what Freud is gesturing toward with this clumsy reference to "disappointment" is an experience of loss. Specifically, we could argue that this is an experience of melancholia, since the child incorrectly perceives (via their projection of desire) that their object of satisfaction is there but receives no satisfaction from it. Yet, since, on the one hand, Freud's theory of melancholia is predicated on the child's relation to the world already being organized by the reality principle and, on the other hand, melancholia by definition expresses the failure of reality-testing, any attempt to tether the genesis of reality-testing to melancholia is overdetermined by logical contradiction from the outset. Consequently, it would appear that Freud's failure to elaborate on

[173] "It was only the non-occurrence of the expected satisfaction, the disappointment experienced, that led to the abandonment of this attempt at satisfaction by means of hallucination" ("Formulations on Two Principles of Mental Functioning" 219).

the phenomenological and epistemological dimensions of recognizing loss in "Mourning and Melancholia" is expressive of a lacuna at the heart of his theory of the reality principle: how is it that the infant who at first cannot even differentiate between their desire and the world—who has no awareness of sensory qualities other than pleasure and unpleasure—becomes suddenly capable of apprehending and organizing itself around that difference, that is, not only capable of being phenomenologically attentive to sight, sound, touch, smell, and noise but also capable of epistemologically categorizing sense-perceptions into the external and the internal, into a coherent framework of recognition vis-à-vis self and other?

Lacan addressed this precise problem in his lecture "The Mirror Stage as Formative of the *I* Function as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience," albeit from a different-but-related vein of critique. While scholars of queer studies and postcolonial studies are familiar with this lecture, it owes its canonization to a degree of deracination. Delivered in 1949, the mirror stage lecture (henceforth MS) is the ideational successor to an article from 1936, "Beyond the 'Reality Principle'" (henceforth BRP), which Lacan ended by referencing an imminent "second article" that never manifested (*Écrits* 74).[174] Despite its title and opening claim—"The second generation

[174] The contentious conditions under which BRP and MS were produced are of some interest to the history of psychoanalytic theory. As Bryan Klausmeyer notes (citing Élizabeth Roudinesco's *Jacques Lacan*), Lacan had already sketched out some early formulations on the mirror stage in the mid-1930s, which he then organized into a lecture for the first International Psychoanalytic Association (IPA) Congress in 1936. However, only ten minutes into Lacan's presentation, Ernest Jones, "one of Freud's most loyal acolytes," cut him off (Klausmeyer 21-22). In response to this embarrassing incident and the anti-intellectual Freudian bias of the Congress indexed by it, Lacan set out to resituate Freud's insights within the imbricated histories of philosophy and psychology (22), with the three-fold aim (I presume) of, one, desacralizing Freud's position within psychoanalytic theory; two, identifying the irreducible significance of Freud's anti-positivist break with associationism and, by doing so, clarifying Lacan's relation to Freud as one of appreciation as well as critique; and, three, framing his comments on the mirror stage as an intervention into Freud's concept of the reality principle, which (for Lacan) had reinscribed traces of the very positivism/materialist reductionism that Freudian psychoanalysis had defined itself against. Thus, while BRP was written thirteen years prior to MS, it nevertheless sprung from the friction between the ideas constitutive of MS and the uncritical Freudianism of the IPA in the late 1930s, implicating it in an apposite compositional dialectic (at least from the perspective of its subject matter). Lacan gestures to this in the opening sentence of MS: "The conception of the mirror stage I introduced at our last congress thirteen years ago…seems worth bringing to your attention once again" (*Écrits* 75).

of Freud's school can define its debt and its duty in terms of a fundamental principle of his doctrine: the reality principle"[175]—BRP does not explicitly address the reality principle outside of its final paragraph. Here, however, Lacan frames the reality principle as Freud's answer to two (psychoanalytically and philosophically fundamental) questions: how is "reality" epistemologically constituted, and how is the subject's foundational identity (the "I") formed through the imbricated processes of recognition and identification (74)? Similarly, near the end of MS, Lacan retroactively frames this essay as having demonstrated that

> [T]he whole of analytic experience…teaches us not to regard the ego as centered on the [perception-consciousness system] or as organized by the 'reality principle'*—the expression of a scientific bias most hostile to the dialectic of knowledge*—but, rather, to take as our point of departure the [function of misrecognition] that characterizes the ego in all the defensive structures so forcefully articulated by Anna Freud. (80, emphasis mine)[176]

Thus, while neither BRP nor MS directly develop a critical reading of "Formulations on the Two Principles of Mental Functioning," in juxtaposing these two works we can see that Lacan regarded his work on the mirror stage as a substantial revision both of the ontogenetic schema developed in Freud's essay and of the metapsychological and philosophical framework by which that schema imagines knowledge and sense-perception to interface. Consequently, focusing on the aspects of Lacan's critique that are pertinent to the (mis)recognition of loss within processes

[175] Introduced as a section header, this claim is represented in all capital letters in the English edition of *Écrits*. Moreover, Lacan does not capitalize "reality principle" in the body of the article (see the bottom of *Écrits* p. 74).

[176] In the original text, Lacan italicizes "perceptual-consciousness system" and "function of misrecognition." To avoid mixed emphases, I have removed his italics.

of grief necessitates that we delineate the relationship between Lacan's critique of Freud's reality principle and the developmental schema he later proffers in MS.

With the exception of *its* opening salvo—which presents more as a neutral observation regarding field formation than as a direct criticism of the Freudian school—BRP does not appear to take Freud as its rhetorical target; on the contrary, to the extent that Freud appears in BRP, he does so as a "revolutionary" figure who rescued late 19th century psychology from the clutches of reductive materialism as expressed in the theory of associationism (BRP 65). Broadly, associationism refers to a tradition of modeling the mind in which mental processes are regarded as constituted by "associative links" between sensory impressions ("engrams") encoded into the subject's mental apparatus (Mandelbaum "Associationist Theories of Thought"; *Écrits* 60).[177] Yet, what is at stake in associationism is not merely the mechanisms and pathways of cognition: in proposing a "realist" isomorphism between sense-perceptions and knowledge, associationism is the keystone of all positivist philosophies grounded in empiricism. Correspondingly, Lacan's critiques of this doctrine constitute interventions into philosophy as well as psychology. Philosophically, Lacan opposes associationism insofar as it is predicated on a paradox between phenomenology and epistemology. On the one hand, associationism posits that reality impresses itself truthfully onto "pure sensation," which Lacan perspicaciously describes as "that mythical entity…[that] reduces [reality] to being nothing but the blind spot of knowledge, since nothing is recognized there" (*Écrits* 61). In other words, Lacan argues that associationism cannot insist upon the *veracity* of sensations without implying that reality encodes itself into the mind via a capacity for sensation that is fundamentally uncontaminated by knowledge relations (i.e.,

[177] As Eric Mandelbaum notes, associationism is an undercurrent connecting 17th- and 18th-century British empiricists, 19th- and 20th-century Behaviorists, and contemporary Connectionists.

sensation as *tabula rasa*). On the other hand, associationism cannot insist upon the irreducible singularity of the domain of mental processes (consisting only of association) without implying that there is a relation of immediacy between sensation and recognition. That is, if the associative link is my only cognitive mechanism, then my mind cannot recognize a relation between stimuli *x* and *y* exterior to their mutual sensation—what Lacan calls the "true moment of knowledge"—because to do so would require other cognitive mechanisms (principally those of rationalization). Yet, the immediate recognition of a relation between *x* and *y* is impossible within associationism's one-tool sandbox because any such association requires the prior recognition that *x* and *y* are different stimuli (that they are not a unified stimulus *z*); this contravenes both the principle of simultaneity and the principle of uncontaminated sensation (insofar as concurrent stimuli *x* and *y* can only be impressed upon memory as different from one another through the mediation of relations of knowledge[178]). By extension, far from the positivist materialism with which associationism identifies, Lacan demonstrates that associationism is rooted in "a fundamentally idealist theory of knowledge production," a paradox Lacan attributes to scientism's seduction by a "transcendental" force that "impels man to seek a *guarantee of truth* for his own knowledge" (61; 59, emphasis in original). From the psychological perspective, this relation of immanence between reality, sensation, and cognitive recognition fantasized by

[178] This would not necessarily hold in a cognitive system where, one, association is *not* a mechanism and, two, there are *a priori* sense capacities attuned to different phenomenological qualities. The latter is easy to imagine if we pretend the ear and eye record light and sound on mutually exclusive mnemonic registers (that is, not only can the ear not record light and the eye not record sound, but these memory traces are kept completely separate from one another). If association between different sensations is impossible, then the ear and eye could record light and sound simultaneously and with an immediate appreciation of their difference without the mediation of knowledge. Yet, the moment association is even possible, then the registers of light and sound clearly cannot be mutually exclusive (nor can they be identical, lest every experience be one of synesthesia). Association requires sensation to pass through epistemological discernment.

associationism constitutes an attempt to reduce psychology to biophysics:[179] "[p]sychical phenomena are thus granted no reality of their own…[T]he role of psychology is merely to reduce psychical phenomena to [a biophysical basis] and to *verify* [this empirico-positivist] system by determining through it the very phenomena that constitute our knowledge of it" (63, emphasis in original). Thus, in aligning itself with a scientism whose authentication was predicated upon the mind's capacity to truthfully record reality (in the absence of biophysical pathology), late 19th century psychology ironically took as its goal the complete evacuation of any unique object of study from its disciplinary domain.

Against associationism's dilution of psychology, Lacan positions Freud's approach to diagramming the mind as revolutionary, insofar as it did not presume that any reality-contradicting dimension of cognitive life (fantasy, daydreaming, delusion, etc.) was an aberration or error within underlying biophysical processes; that is, Freud did not regard psychical phenomena as merely "imaginary"—capable only of expressing either external reality (when "true") or internal reality (when "false")[180]—but "real" in their own right (65).[181] For Freud, no thoughts or their enunciations conformed isomorphically with the world outside the subject and, yet, at the same time, all thoughts and their enunciations express (in their modality of articulation) something about both an internal world of mental structures *and* the history of that

[179] Lacan does not use the term biophysics. I have chosen it because it synthesizes his various commentaries on biological and physical determinism.

[180] By "internal reality," I mean the biophysical system of sensorial recognition; in reductive materialism, empirically incorrect thoughts are regarded as the result of biophysical malfunctions, thereby rendering them mere epiphenomena.

[181] Freud repeatedly stressed psychoanalysis's break with 19th-century psychology as freeing the field from both reductive materialism and the presumed coincidence of consciousness and psychic life, comparing psychoanalysis's assault on the "human mania of greatness" to the revolutions in scientific thought generated by Copernicus and Darwin (*Introduction to Psychoanalysis* 228). Considering the intrapsychoanalytic politics underwriting BRP, Lacan's use of "revolution" is undoubtedly tongue-in-cheek, even as the approbation he expresses of Freud's work in this section is genuine (see n. 174 for more on Lacan's friction with the Freudian school).

world's social interfacing with the external world. Within clinical practice, this presumption that language does not truly portray the reality of which it speaks but that, nevertheless, the reality that precipitates that language is legible within the dialogue of its enunciation is, according to Lacan, encapsulated in the two central hermeneutic pillars of Freudian psychotherapy: the "law of non-omission" (the analyst should not regard any enunciation as self-explanatory) and the "law of non-systematization" (the analyst should not bring to analytic experience an *a priori* hierarchy of enunciatory significance).[182] Adhering to these laws enables the analyst to facilitate a special relationship with the patient (what psychoanalysis calls "transference") and, subsequently, to guide the patient in progressively reconstructing their "real" developmental history and its "real" effects on their mental life (69). However, this does not mean that analytic experience promises, like associationism, to return to its participants' "objective" reality. Insofar as analysis is transactional—a process of interpretation and psychoaffective reorganization that works across analyst and patient—there is no position within an analytic relationship for observation independent of the phenomenon being observed: "[analysis] is based on conditions that are diametrically opposed to objectivity" (69). Nevertheless, Lacan argues that the knowledge returned by analysis is not subjective, in the idealist sense of the word; rather, it is "relativistic" (71). With this term, Lacan refers both to the transactional conditions of epistemology within analysis *and* to the interpersonal conditions of epistemology in general. In other words, if analysis returns to us knowledge of interpersonal relations, this is not only because psychological pathologies emerge from social dynamics; it is also because there is no knowledge, no truth, exterior to interpersonal relations. Thus, to say that knowledge is relative is

[182] To avoid unnecessary confusion, I have omitted Lacan's observations that these two principles together constitute Freud's "law of free association," where free association is understood to utilize an entirely different metaphysics of association than we see in associationism (65-66).

not to say that it is not real: knowledge is relative because it is constituted by *real relations*. Moreover, analysis, which incorporates the relative constitution of knowledge into its therapeutic-epistemological form, manifests these real relations through the transference between analyst and patient. For Lacan, Freud's revolutionary turn from empiricism resulted in a modality of knowledge production (analysis) that approximates reality far more closely than any of the methods employed by the "empirical" psychologies at the turn of the century.

While Lacan's praise of analysis seems genuine, its ultimate rhetorical aim is to frame Freudian metapsychology as antithetical to analysis's productively anti-empirical ethos. In particular, Lacan critiques two components of this metapsychology: libido and the reality principle. With respect to the former, Lacan argues that Freud utilizes libido to moor psychoanalytic theory's conceptualization of "interpersonal relations…[in a] biological function that is taken to be their substratum" (73). On its own, this critique of libido offers little that is not already on the surface of Freud's texts. For example, in *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, libido is introduced by reference to biology,[183] and in his later years, Freud was not coy about his desire that the insights provisionally gleaned by analytic experience be verified by neurobiology. Moreover, the ordering of the pleasure principle vis-à-vis the reality principle in Freud's ontogenetic schema clearly identifies his metapsychology as rooted in libido. In other words, that Freud was seduced by the very empiricism that the analytic method disavows is one of the many low-hanging contradictions in Freud's oeuvre. Yet, Lacan's comments are still interesting here because he argues that tethering psychoanalysis to biology reflects only *one* of the two functions

[183] "The fact of the existence of sexual needs in human beings and animals is expressed in biology by the assumption of a 'sexual instinct', [*sic*] on the analogy of the instinct of nutrition, that is of hunger. Everyday language possesses no counterpart to the word 'hunger', [*sic*] but science makes use of the word 'libido' for that purpose" (*Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* 135).

of "libido" for Freud. Whereas this function deploys "libido as a *substantialist hypothesis*,"[184] Freud also relies on "libido as an *energetic concept*," by which Lacan means that "libido is merely the symbolic notation for the equivalence between the dynamisms invested by images in behavior" (73, emphasis in original). For Lacan, this concept of libido—which is "no longer metapsychological"—is entirely commensurate with the approach to epistemology in analytic experience insofar as it transfigures real-yet-abstract relations (such as between a parent and child) into "concrete" concepts and structures (such as "libidinal cathexis" and "superego").[185] Thus, when used as an energetic concept, libido manifests a positivism that is appropriate to the relational conditions of knowledge's production. At the same time, the perspective through which this function of libido is modeled is, to an extent, anti-relational since the dynamics expressed by it are all "internal" to the subject (an issue we have already observed in Freud's objectifying account of mourning). For Lacan, then, libido as an energetic concept explicitly raises the two questions to which I earlier gestured: "how is the *reality* to which man's knowledge is universally attuned constituted by these images, these objects of interest? And how is the *I* constituted, in which the subject recognizes himself, by his typical identifications?" (74, emphasis in original). Although Lacan suggests in the final paragraph of BRP that Freud's attempt to answer these questions resulted in the "reality principle"—a concept which Lacan derides as metapsychological and, for that reason, "[proposes] to critique…[in a] second article" (i.e., what ultimately became MS)—these questions are certainly not Freudian in construction. Rather, insofar as they posit the anti-relational foundations of libido's energetic

[184] To clarify, Lacan notes that he uses substantialist over materialist here "because recourse to the idea of matter is but a naïve, outmoded form of materialism" (73). As this debate is beyond the scope of this chapter, I have refrained from commenting on this distinction or its merits.

[185] "The elements of a *positive* determination were thus introduced between psychical realities that a *relativistic* definition has allowed us to objectify. This determination is dynamic or relative to the *facts of desire*" (74, emphasis in original).

conceptualization in terms of "knowledge," "images," "identification", and "reality," these questions interweave Lacan's own metapsychology into his reading of Freud. As opposed to revolving around libido, Lacan centers his model of the mind on the *image*, which he regards as "the most important phenomenon in psychology," and its role in *identification*, a capacity of the mind on which Lacan builds his theory of child development. For now, we will bracket an interrogation of these metapsychological foundations. I signpost them here only to clarify that if Lacan's segue between his discussion of libido and these two queries about knowledge, identification, and reality appears unexpected, this is because it incorporates rhetorical sleight of hand. Roughly, Lacan's logic is: if it is true that, on the one hand, knowledge of the exterior world is mediated through the subject's identifications with images constituted by social relations (i.e., that knowledge is relationally constructed), and on the other hand, that this knowledge is not merely subjective but instead reflects a shared reality (i.e., that "to which man's knowledge is *universally attuned*"), then what psychoaffective and social mechanisms make possible epistemological coherence within and across individuals? In Lacan's estimation, the "reality principle" is Freud's reductive response to (and also avoidance of) this problem, one which ironically reproduces the empiricist fallacies of associationism.

When read through the lens of BRP, it becomes clear that MS constitutes Lacan's reframing of Freud's ontogenetic schema as outlined in "Formulations on the Two Principles of Mental Functioning." From the outset, Lacan deviates from Freud in not attempting to account for the origin of sensorial and cognitive capacities. Instead, gesturing to comparative psychology as justification for this starting point, Lacan draws his listeners' attention to a behavior observed in both children and chimpanzees from an early age: perceiving and responding to one's

reflection in the mirror.[186] Although at this age the child is "outdone by the chimpanzee in instrumental intelligence," the child differentiates themself from the chimpanzee in becoming dynamically activated by their encounter with the reflection, an activation to which Lacan ascribes tremendous importance: "In my view, this activity…reveals both a libidinal dynamism that has hitherto remained problematic and ontological structure of the human world that fits in with my reflections on paranoiac knowledge" (76). Lacan justifies this importance by dramatizing the child's behavior in front of the mirror as a stage of development: the child's encounter with the image in the mirror "[manifests] in an exemplary situation the symbolic matrix in which the *I* is precipitated in its primordial form, prior to being objectified in the dialectic of identification with the other, and before language restores to it, in the universal, its function as subject" (76). That is, in response to the image's unique correspondence to the child's movements (which provisionally differentiates it from all other elements being reflected), the child makes an identification—their first identification—with the image. Lacan tells us that this identification gives rise to a special structure in the child's psychic life, the *I*,[187] which orients the ego (for Lacan, an "agency") toward an unattainable singularity of the self. This movement between the child's identification with their "specular image" and the formation of the "specular *I*" is constituted by a crucial misrecognition. Due to the reflection's inversion and the child's uncoordinated motor control, they misrecognize their mirror image as a "body-in-pieces." Consequently, the child's identification with this "body-in-pieces" is predicated on a prelapsarian back-projection that propels them toward regaining their "lost" wholeness. In other

[186] One cannot help but notice a symmetry between the repetitive behavior of infants being the basis of the death drive in Freud's essay "Beyond the Pleasure Principle" and how Lacan utilizes the child's engagement with their reflection here.

[187] Lacan analogizes this with Freud's ego-ideal: "This form would, moreover, have to be called the 'ideal-I'—if we wanted to translate it into a familiar register—in the sense that it will also be the rootstock of secondary identifications, this latter term subsuming the libidinal normalization function" (76).

words, threatened by the perception of their image as insufficient and incoherent, the child retroactively imagines their unstable reflection as once "whole," a compensatory fantasy that precipitates a subjectifying-yet-presubjective attachment to the phantasm of the self as complete and singular. This attachment is a necessary evil. Although the *I* is founded on the continual disavowal of the child's (constitutive) psychomorphological multiplicity and epistemic inadequacy, thereby installing an "alienating identity" at the center of the child's psyche, the attachment to it enables the child to survive in two ways. First, it drives them to differentiate the *I* from the world, a precondition for assimilating sense-perceptions into knowledge. Second, in response to the threat of dissolution that emanates from the unbridgeable incommensurability between the Real and the Imaginary—between, that is, their "real" ontological incoherence and their "imaginary" ontological coherence[188]—the child is driven toward language as embedded in and reflective of social relations (that medium of shared existence Lacan calls the Symbolic); in this way, the child seeks above all, for the "social *I*" they establish there to validate and stabilize the self, "decisively [tipping] the whole of human knowledge [*savior*] into being mediated by the other's desire" (79). With this dialectical "linking" of the Imaginary to the Symbolic, the mirror stage of development is brought to a close.

Freud's reality principle and Lacan's mirror stage offer two different models for the interfacing of sense-perception and knowledge/memory. Whereas Freud presumes that knowledge/memory is immanently related to exterior reality through the perceptual apparatus, Lacan's work suggests that any coherence between our senses and our mnemonic categories is a

[188] In Lacan's use of imaginary, the semantic referent is not "illusion" but "image." The Imaginary indexes the dimension of psychic life involving identification with images. Notoriously difficult to define, the Lacanian Real is what is exterior to both imaginary identification and social language, which is epistemically inaccessible and yet threatens to irrupt into and disintegrate the (imaginary and social-symbolic) systems through which we relate to ourselves, the world, and each other.

willed coherence. Sensory information is never simply recorded by the mind. Rather, it is always mediated by the dialectic inhering between the specular *I* and the social *I*, a dialectic which compels the self to misrecognize essentially diverse phenomena as familiar and categorizable. By extension, reality-testing–far from being an innocuous surveying of external reality–for Lacan constitutes a form of repetitive violence we do unto ourselves and others; it is the manifestation of two always-already imbricated and incomplete processes, those of differentiating the self from the world and stabilizing the self and the world.

For my purposes, Lacan's mirror stage theory is dually significant to our analysis of Freud's model of grief. First, although Lacan's mirror stage proceeds from a different set of ontological givens, its fantasized ontogenetic scene recapitulates Freud's postlapsarian theme in terms of an ontological origin predicated on loss: just as Freud's infant establishes the reality principle in response to the (double) loss of satisfying nourishment, Lacan's child establishes the "I-function" in response to the *perceived* loss of corporeal coherence.[189] Second, Lacan's theory calls into question the possibility of immediately and completely recognizing another's absence. From the Lacanian standpoint, the phenomenological not-thereness of the other only becomes intelligible to the self through the Imaginary-Social dialectic; as such, its recognition is invariably a misrecognition. Notably, this approach to the relation between sense-perception and knowledge (if provisionally accepted as true) invalidates Freudian mourning from the outset, insofar as the latter presumes knowledge of the other's death is immanent to the reality of the other's death; however, it accommodates Freudian melancholia quite well, since the latter is

[189] Although I am emphasizing the common recourse to "lost origins" that binds Freud and Lacan, the gap between a real and perceived loss aligns Lacan more closely with Foucault's account of the ambivalent nature of the origin in the modern episteme: "It is no longer origin that gives rise to historicity; it is historicity that, in its very fabric, makes possible the necessity of an origin which must be *both internal and foreign to it*" (*The Order of Things* 329, emphasis mine).

predicated upon a misrecognition within reality-testing. Perhaps this is why later, in *The Ego and the Id*, Freud shifts from what Eve Sedgwick might call a "minoritizing" model of melancholia to a "universalizing" model:[190]

> When it happens that a person has to give up a sexual object, there quite often ensues an alteration of his ego which can only be described as a setting up of the object inside the ego, as it occurs in melancholia. It may be that by this introjection…the ego makes it easier for the object to be given up or renders that process possible. It may be that this identification is *the sole condition* under which the id can give up its objects. (*The Ego and the Id* 29, emphasis mine).

This is a striking reversal of his earlier thesis. Far from regarding melancholia as a narcissistic misfire of the mourning machinery, Freud suggests that the work of mourning *always* passes through melancholic introjection, thereby apparently proffering melancholia as the *only* form of grief.[191] More startlingly, he inscribes melancholia as the formative mechanism of the super-ego,

---

[190] The productive contradiction between minoritizing and universalizing models of homosexuality is one of the several binaries Sedgwick deconstructs in *Epistemology of the Closet*. In her words, minoritizing models regard discourses of homosexuality as relevant "primarily for a small, relatively fixed homosexual minority," whereas universalizing models position them as "an issue of continuing, determinative importance in the lives of people across the spectrum of sexualities" (*Epistemology of the Closet* 1).

[191] At first, it may appear that I have unduly extrapolated from Freud's simile ("*as* it occurs in melancholia"). However, in "Mourning and Melancholia" Freud identifies the completion of the work of mourning with libido "becom[ing] uninhibited again," by which he means that it has completely withdrawn its cathexis from the loved object (i.e., "give[n] [it] up") and is now able to extend that cathetic energy to new objects ("Mourning and Melancholia" 245). As such, the process Freud is elliptically referencing in the paragraph I've excerpted from *The Ego and the Id* is undoubtedly that of mourning, except he has now incorporated melancholia's differentiating mechanism into his conceptualization of it. While one could argue that the process of introjection and identification that Freud describes here is not necessarily predicated on the ego not "knowing" the "what" of loss (in the "who" of loss), the fact of the matter is that in "Mourning and Melancholia" it is the "*identification* of the ego with the abandoned object" that enables "the shadow of the object [to fall] upon the ego," thereby allowing it (the ego) "to be judged by a special agency [i.e., the super-ego]" (249). That is, the identification is what prevents the critical agency from distinguishing between the ego and the lost object and, thus, directing the sadistic component of libidinal ambivalence onto the ego itself. This is to say: it is first and foremost the *identification* that constitutes the pathogenetically determinative component of melancholia. Consequently, if Freud is, indeed, implying that the introjection+identification he refers to in the above passage does not require a prevailing unknowledge in relation to the object of loss, this does not change the fact that introjecting and identifying with the lost object would, at least with respect to the explanatory schema proffered in "Mourning and Melancholia," still precipitate melancholia.

defining the latter as the child's introjected identification with and (despite Freud's amusing heteronormative qualification[192]) desire for his father. Thus, melancholia is not only universalized with respect to grief; it is centered with respect to ontogenesis. Although Freud does not attribute this dramatic reorientation of melancholia within his metapsychological system to the incommensurability between sense-perception and memory, it appears symptomatic of the contradiction I highlighted earlier between his theorization of mourning and his theorization of the reality principle. There, I argued that while his theory of mourning is predicated on the reality principle, the latter predicates itself upon a complex, dynamic imaginary of loss and sensorial-epistemic misrecognition it nevertheless fails to systematically theorize. From this perspective, these two sudden shifts in Freud's conceptualization of melancholia, which at first appear to be unrelated, emerge from a common aporia. Yet, this tremendous significance Freud attributes to melancholia in *The Ego and the Id* never resulted in a revision of "Mourning and Melancholia," nor a rearticulation of the reality principle. By contrast, with BRP and MS, Lacan identifies this problem and attempts to resolve it via an ontogenetic schema that mediates loss through misrecognition. Although the mirror stage likewise suffers from the second problem I find in Freud's account of grief–the problem of erasing the social–and therefore cannot be utilized as a pure foundation for restructuring that account, in framing the mirror stage as a critique of the

[192] "The effects of the first identifications made in earliest childhood will be general and lasting. This leads us back to the origin of the ego ideal; for behind it there lies hidden an individual's first and most important identification, his identification with his father in his own personal prehistory. This is apparently not in the first instance the consequence or outcome of an object-cathexis; it is a direct and immediate identification and takes place earlier than any object-cathexis" (*The Ego and the Id* 31). As Judith Butler demonstrates in their essay "Melancholy Gender/Refused Identification," Freud fails to substantiate rendering the male child's introjected identification with the father as free from any original cathexis. Moreover, through analyzing the *conditions* of melancholia, Butler argues that the father is introjected as super-ego (and therefore as the identificatory referent *and* sadistic enforcer of normative male gender) exactly because the child's original cathexis of his father is not only libidinally forbidden by Western heteronormativity but simultaneously denied recognition and expression, thereby transforming this cathexis into *an unmournable loss* (*The Psychic Life of Power* 132-150). This situating of psychic processes in relation to social power later clearly informs Butler's re-theorization of Freudian mourning and melancholia in *Precarious Life*.

reality principle, Lacan's work illuminates an insight which Freud's account (symptomatically) forecloses from the outset: namely, that *processes of grief are ontogenetic*. By this, I mean that grief is a process that reshapes who we are. Consequently, a theory of grief will be most satisfactory if it coherently accounts for the role of grief in the subject's ontological formation vis-à-vis the world.

Whereas I have exposed the first "problem" with Freud's model by way of immanent critique (working from within Freud's theory of grief in order to highlight constitutive contradictions), my articulation of the second problem—"the problem of the social"—is formulated by way of what I call a critique of exclusion.[193] By this, I mean that Freud's theory of grief is predicated fundamentally on the elision of the social from the frame of reference. With respect to Freud's scene of mourning, literary critic Seth Moglen refers to this constitutive elision as Freud's reliance on a "dyadic model" of objective relationality: "Freud's account assumes a scenario in which there are [only] two parties: a subject (the mourner) and an object (that which has been lost)" (Moglen 158). As Moglen notes, this reductive scene decontextualizes loss from its social cause(s). This elision is peculiar considering that in Freud's account of melancholia he attributes to the ego a fundamental need to identify and punish the

[193] Insofar as they often tend toward forms of non-engagement with a scholar's work, I am wary of critiques of exclusion. I deploy one here only because, on the one hand, there exist a number of queer, postcolonial, and feminist works that generate immanent critiques of Freud's insufficient engagement with the social and, on the other hand, this chapter ultimately labors to restructure Freud's theory as opposed to merely discount it on the grounds that it fails to consider something. In any case, the notable disparity in the space given to these two problems should be attributed mostly to this shift in the modality of critique.

source of its deprivation.[194] Theoretical inconsistencies notwithstanding, Moglen argues that the dyadic model of mourning is both ethically and analytically insufficient when the loss in

[194] "An object-choice, an attachment of the libido to a particular person, had at one time existed; then, owing to a real slight or disappointment coming from this loved person, the object-relationship was shattered. The result was not the normal one of a withdrawal of the libido from this object and a displacement of it on to a new one, but something different…[T]he free libido was not displaced on to a new object; it was withdrawn into the ego. There, however, it was not employed in any unspecified way, but served to establish an *identification* of the ego with the abandoned object. Thus, the shadow of the object fell upon the ego, and the latter could henceforth be judged by a special agency, as though it were an object, the forsaken object. In this way an object-loss was transformed into an ego-loss and the conflict between the ego and the loved person into a cleavage between the critical activity of the ego and the ego as altered by identification" ("Mourning and Melancholia" 248-49, emphasis-in-text). As discussed earlier, Freud later defines this critical "special agency" to which he attributes melancholics' tendency toward self-flagellation as the super-ego. However, he also rationalizes this tendency as the result of a "double vicissitude" of the constitutive ambivalence of libidinal attachment: "part of [the severed cathexis] [regresses] to identification, but the other part, under the influence of the conflict due to ambivalence, [is] carried back to the stage of sadism, which is nearer to that conflict" (251-52). To some extent, Freud later combines these separate origins of melancholia's predilection for self-punishment in his attribution of the super-ego's criticality to "an energetic reaction-formation against [the infant's] [object-] choices [in the Oedipal stage of development]," but as I mentioned in n. 60 [ck number], Judith Butler has highlighted that heteronormativity frames this reaction-formation, insofar as it does not originate from a "double vicissitude" in the (always-already male) infant's ambivalent desire for the father but, rather, from the incorporation of the father's castrating threat against the (male) infant's desire for the mother (*The Ego and the Id* 34). As such, the ambiguous origin of assaults on the self in melancholia goes largely unresolved in Freud's work. By contrast, Melanie Klein placed tremendous significance on libidinal ambivalence in her reformulation of Freud's theory. For Klein, ambivalence always-already structures our internal sense of reality: "The ego is driven by depressive anxieties (anxiety lest the loved objects as well as itself should be destroyed) to build up omnipotent and violent phantasies, partly for the purpose of controlling and mastering the 'bad', dangerous objects, partly in order to save and restore the loved objects" (Klein 131). That is, in Klein's highly oedipalized schema, our infantile love for "good" objects—objects which sustain and fulfill us—engenders the terrifying fear that these objects will either be taken away by "bad" objects—objects which threaten us or our good objects—or will eventually fail us (i.e., will become a bad object); subsequently, we mount a proleptic defense in the form of aggressive hatred toward our good (/will-be bad) objects. For Klein, after infancy, we do not sustain this paranoid ambivalence toward all our good objects, at least not at its original intensity. Rather, as long as their early good objects demonstrate themselves to be durable, the child learns to trust its good objects and the love it places in them, enabling them to separate its associations with the "good" from its associations with the "bad," thus diminishing infantile ambivalence. However, as with most developmental stages in psychoanalytic theory, this drama of ambivalence is not completely succeeded but instead goes dormant as a constitutive latency that is liable to re-emerge under certain conditions. For Klein, the loss of a loved one is precisely one such condition: "The poignancy of the actual loss of a loved person is, in my view, greatly increased by the mourner's unconscious phantasies of having lost his *internal* 'good' objects as well. He then feels that his internal 'bad' objects predominate and his inner world is in danger of disruption" (135). In other words, the rupture the subject experiences in losing *a* good object reactivates their infantile paranoid phantasies about *all* good objects and, with them, their feelings of hatred toward good objects (i.e., "I was right—it *was* going to turn on me, always! I never should have trusted it. How dare it deceive me. I'll never trust again!"). By extension, Kleinian mourning names the heartrending collapse of one's affective-epistemological relation with reality and the painful processes by which that relation is re-established: "Only gradually, by regaining trust in external objects and values of various kinds, is the normal mourner able once more to strengthen his confidence in the lost loved person. Then he can again bear to realize that this object was not perfect, and yet not lose trust and love for him, nor fear his revenge" (138). Thus, unlike Freud, Klein theorizes libidinal ambivalence as not merely the source of self-flagellation in melancholia but, rather, the source of all grief. Although I fundamentally disagree with Klein's oedipal structuralism, her work exposes my limited engagement with ambivalence in this chapter, a lacuna that I attribute to the difficulty in theorizing libido in intrasubjective terms.

question is "produced by ongoing and historically particular social dynamics." In these circumstances, Moglen proposes a "triadic model" of mourning in which the subject, the lost object, and "the *social forces* that have destroyed that object or made it unavailable" are considered with respect to the multiplicity of psychoaffective relations that can inhere among them (158-164). Moglen's politically motivated effort to break with the dyadic model and to reintegrate the "social" by means of a triangular model is a welcome advance. Unfortunately, his triangulation reduces the "social" to the status of a force exterior to the subject-object relation. In contrast, along with Lacan and, even more so, Butler, I see the "social" as the thick medium of language, convention, experience, and knowledge in and through which we are collectively—though unevenly, diversely, and partially—constructed as subjects. It is not just the site, but the means of subject-object relations. In misrepresenting the ontology of the social, Moglen circumscribes its utility for understanding the relations among power, knowledge, attachment, and grief.[195]

Building on Moglen's insight that Freudian mourning fails to account for the social, I posit two ideal requirements for a power-conscious schema of attachment and grief and the knowledge relations they subtend. First, the dyadic (objectifying) model of interpersonal relation is insufficient because there are always social and material factors that enable it or immanently and dynamically interact with it. Precipitating loss is only one form of interaction; the social and material are just as productive of relational vicissitude (modifications in attachment's form) as they are of caesura (the severing of attachment). That is, the forces that bind specific subjects together necessarily pass through many known and unknown others, whether this be the result of

[195] Just as a cube cannot be triangulated with a line interior to it, the social cannot be triangulated with the subject-object dyad. Undoubtedly, this is the result of Moglen's specific (and crucial) focus in this essay on social forces of injury that are illegible—and that thereby engender melancholia through confounding the aggrieved's norms of recognition (Moglen 158)—rather than the expression of any flaw in Moglen's theoretical apparatus.

common necessity, shared language, or the polyvalence of desire. In any "dyadic" love relation, the how's, why's and what's of love find their conditions of possibility and their conditions of continuance beyond the couple, which is to say that the "social" is always already constitutive of love. Consequently, we should not regard the social merely as a force of negation, otherwise heterogeneous to the dynamics of interpersonal attachment. Instead, our model of attachment will take into account love's social foundation.

Second, while the psychoaffective need to grieve loss is likely universal, the constitutive elements of the processes of mourning are certainly not. Across human history, different societies have adopted various rituals of mourning. These rituals manifest prescriptions for the modality of the corpse's disposal (burial, cremation, exposure, etc.), the order of disposal (the duration and internal organization of the funereal ceremony), the sociality of disposal (who will be permitted to see, touch and/or bear witness to the corpse), and the psychoaffective responses to disposal (in what ways, by whom, for how long, at what intensity, and how publicly should/can/must the absence that marks the corpse be acknowledged by grief). By extension, rituals of mourning are both articulated with and mutually constituted by culturally-specific discourses of death and grief, i.e., those discourses that ascribe meaning, purpose, and/or morality to death and the manifold disturbances it engenders in those who yet live. To the extent that these rituals and discourses are coherently structured with respect to each other, I refer to their arrangements, following Deleuze and Guattari, as *assemblages of grief*.[196] These assemblages are both generally and specifically applicable to the disappearances in Kashmir. As I will argue, the primary function of these assemblages is to guide us when our libidinal

[196] For a general introduction to the notion of assemblage (*agencement*), see Deleuze and Guattari *Anti-Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaus*. For an interesting reflection on the difference between Deleuze's notion of assemblage and Foucault's notion of apparatus (*dispositif*), see Deleuze's essay "Desire and Pleasure" in *Foucault and His Interlocutors* pp. 183-192, particularly Daniel W. Smith's second footnote.

investment in a (mis)recognition of what we have lost in the other exceeds its reparative capacity. Insofar as these assemblages invariably mediate one's relation to lost others, we must strive to develop a model of the psychodynamics of grief that acknowledges and delineates their function. Moreover, because these assemblages are constituted by sites at which relations of power are imbricated with "internal" grief, it follows that incorporating them into our theoretical basis will allow us to account for the "exterior" induction of pathogenetic variance.

***

Thus far, I have identified two significant "problems" with Freud's theory of grief. First, I observed that Freud's recourse to "reality-testing" in explaining the recognition of loss in "normal" mourning engenders an aporia across his oeuvre insofar as his earlier explanation of reality-testing relies upon a complex scene of primary loss, (mis)recognition, and reality-effacing phenomenological projection which he nevertheless neither acknowledges nor theorizes as grief. By bringing this aporia in dialogue with Lacan's critique of the reality principle and his alternative account of the self's formation as articulated in the mirror stage, I demonstrated that Freud's account of mourning (and, by extension, his account of melancholia[197]) is predicated upon an untenable relation of immanence between external reality in its expression through sense-perceptions and the mnemonic categories that enable us to (mis)recognize sensorial information. Second, drawing on Moglen's dyadic/triadic framework, I critiqued Freud's failure to incorporate into his theory the sociality of grief. With respect to these insufficiencies, I have suggested that Freud's theory needs to be restructured to account for, on the one hand, the ontogenetic dimension of grief and, on the other hand, the role assemblages of grief play in

[197] Hence why attempts to isolate the "richer" concept of melancholia from its failed co-concept necessarily proceed by way of deracination and disavowal.

socially mediating how we navigate experiences of loss. Notably, Judith Butler does some of this work in their *Precarious Life* (2004), in which they re-examine Freudian mourning and melancholia from the perspective of grief's social and phenomenological conditions. Although Butler does not pursue an alternative theory of grief in this text, they nonetheless generate a novel model of intrasubjective relationality. By refracting the foregoing problematization of "Mourning and Melancholia" through Butler's approach to intrasubjectivity, I restructure Freud's model to delineate the conditions under which grief takes on a form more debilitating than reparative and, in doing so, outline a theory of how power can induce this form.

Whereas Freud theorizes grief by way of problematizing the disjunction between symptoms and etiology in his melancholic patients, Butler centers their reflections on the extraordinary and enigmatic disturbances of the self that characterize "normal" grieving. They observe that even the most ordinary symptoms of grief—physiological and psychological pain, sudden feelings of desolation, disorientation, and loneliness, social and libidinal withdrawal, aimless aggression—express profound alterations of the self, and yet, insofar as we often cannot even recognize or identify these alterations, we clearly do not consent to them.[198] Rather, when we are "overcome" by grief, they argue that it is as if something abruptly "takes hold of [us]." Butler notes that this relation does not appear to be so much a "possession"—in the hauntological sense of subjective superfluidity via the superimposition of past onto present—as it is a "dispossession" (*Precarious Life* 28). What Butler means with this term is complex. At one level, in reference to how, in grief, we are seemingly impelled by forces beyond our control and

[198] As previously identified, at the beginning of "Mourning and Melancholia" Freud raises and then quickly disavows the notion that mourning is a pathological state of the mind. Consequently, in organizing their analysis around the non-normative dimensions of mourning, Butler opens Freud's text with its constitutive repression, in a transaction with the text I think of as "rhetorical psychoanalysis." The way in which I bring Freud and Lacan into dialogue in this chapter is inspired by this approach to intertextuality.

apprehension (at times becoming mere spectators to our behavior and expressions), Butler is highlighting a dispossession of self-sovereignty. At another level, in reference to how significant losses often precipitate an abrupt distortion in our phenomenological relation to reality, wherein we find that what had once been familiar and comforting appears to us suddenly as foreign and distressing, Butler identifies a dispossession of our feeling of at-homeness in the world. Yet, the temporary losses of self-sovereignty and *heimlich* in grief do not capture the essential kernel of Butler's formulation. This is because when Butler figures the aggrieved as one "who is dispossessed" they intend the verb to be used intransitively. They are not primarily arguing that the aggrieved is one who is dispossessed *of* some other, bounded thing, where there is a clear line of demarcation between the subject and object of loss (as in Freud's conceptualization[199]). Rather, this is precisely the model of attachment from which Butler seeks to disabuse us:

> It is not as if an "I" exists independently over here and then simply loses a "you" over there, especially if the attachment to "you" is part of what composes who "I" am. If I lose you, under these conditions, then I not only mourn the loss, but I become inscrutable to myself. Who "am" I, without you? (22)

[199] For Freud, to lose the other was for them to no longer be present to satisfy the desires and needs bound up in the cathexis. In other words, to lose the other was to discover (via reality-testing) that one no longer *possessed* them. Butler, by contrast, argues that the loss at the center of grief is not localized to the other.

In other words, Butler collapses the distinction between grief's symptoms and etiology,[200] ascribing to the aggrieved's feelings of alienation and disorientation a positive truth-value: if one feels lost in grief, it is precisely because one *is* lost. For Butler, grief indexes a form of *ontological dispossession*.

While this provocative interpretation of (grief-productive) loss raises several questions about the purpose and mechanisms of grief, Butler uses it not to intervene in conceptualizations of mourning and melancholia but to explore its consequences with respect to relationality: if one literally loses oneself in losing a significant other, then how is one related to the other? Freud and Lacan proffer two different models of relationality. In Freud, the subject of cathexis alone is regarded as subject, whereas the cathected subject is merely an objectified representation of the other in the subject's mind; thus, in a cathected dyad, subject and object are ontologically independent from one another. By contrast, Lacan shows that our sense of distinct and coherent self is invariably mediated through others. Consequently, there is a degree of ontological

[200] In this is the additional collapsing of a distinction between mourning and melancholia. In Butler's schema, "normal" grief is, by Freudian standards, melancholic. This is not to say that Butler effaces all variance in their conceptualization of grief. Rather, a central argument in *Precarious Life* is that one of the ways states legitimate both judicial and extrajudicial violence is by socially rendering subjects "ungrievable" (35) With this notion of ungrievability, Butler wedges a difference between those whose deaths can be represented via social norms of recognition and those whose deaths are either derealized by those norms (such as subjects whose deaths are considered "regrettable" but not "tragic") or banished entirely from the domain of the mournable (such as subjects whose deaths American empire explicitly interpellates us to celebrate). While un-grievability implies grievability, which, in turn, implies a difference between a grief that is permitted and a grief that is not permitted, Butler in fact does not theorize how the norms structuring social representation of the dead/murdered correlate with psychoaffective variance in grief. That is to say, it is not clear how, why, and to what extent both the discursive elision of certain deaths or the explicit prohibition of mourning them actually precipitate a more severe form of melancholia in those affiliated with the derealized dead. This lacuna is a consequence of Butler's implicit assumption that processes of grief are sociogenically overdetermined. Yet, as I argue below, while, on the one hand, human relations take place within the social and, on the other hand, social norms of recognition undoubtedly mediate the dialectic of (mis)recognition and ontological re-formation constitutive of grief, grief correlates to a radical ontological rupture. Consequently, the need for repair that pours out of that rupture is not easily suppressed (or repressed) by discursive ruse or sovereign ban, any more than the need to repair a hemorrhaging gash in one's flesh can be *durably* assuaged by simple ideological disavowal or the authoritative command to disregard it. Obviously, this is not to suggest that grief is "beyond" the social. Rather, what I am arguing is that collapsing the social and the psychoaffective is both reductive and untenable. We should, instead, regard grief's processes as *mediated*, not overdetermined, by complex articulations of discourses of death and rituals of mourning.

interdependence between subjects. In short, in Freud's imaginary, human relations are objective; in Lacan's imaginary, human relations are intersubjective.

For Butler, ontological dispossession disqualifies objective relationality from the outset ("It is not as if an 'I' exists independently over here and then simply loses a 'you' over there"). At the same time, the category of relation Butler aligns with ontological dispossession is not intersubjective in the Lacanian sense. This is because, despite his critique of Freud's metapsychology, Lacan's model of intersubjectivity is predicated on assumptions about, on the one hand, *a priori* phenomenological and epistemological capacities of the subject—namely, identification, imagination, and (mis)recognition—and, on the other hand, *a priori* affects/libidinal drives of the subject—namely, the anxiety of subjective incoherence. In other words, for Lacan, the ontological foundations of the child—*how* they sense, *how* they recognize, *how* they square the irresolvable tension between phenomenology and epistemology by libidinally tethering themselves to the "I"—are not co-produced through others. Moreover, in conceptualizing the child's entrance into the social as a consequence of the mirror stage, Lacan conditions the very possibility of intersubjectivity on these ontological priors: whatever mutual constitutiveness inheres between subjects, it is always already subordinate to an earlier, socially-independent stage of ontogenesis.

Diverging from both Freud and Lacan, Butler seems to advocate for an understanding of the self in which the basis of our epistemological and phenomenological capacities are stretched across relations of *radical ontological interdependence*. In such relations, some fundamental aspect of what it means for us to know and/or to sense is constituted by the other.[201] It is not

[201] Butler clarifies that radically ontologically constitutive relations are not always between human subjects. They can also be between a human subject and a dimension of social attachment, such as a community, place, or ideal. The degree to which the latter category of relations necessitates a reframing of "interdependence" is an open question.

merely that, as with Lacanian intersubjectivity, my interactions with these others enable me to misrecognize/identify myself as singular, coherent, ordered, etc. Rather, these others with whom I am entangled actively co-produce my capacities for "recognition" and "identification"; their labor is, in some way, essential to the processes of my Being. Consequently, their absence dispossesses me of whatever part of myself *is* part of them—hence why, in Butler's account, the "disorientation of grief…posits the 'I' in the *mode of unknowingness*" (30, emphasis mine). In sum, Butler appears to associate ontological dispossession not with intersubjectivity but, instead, with *intra*subjectivity.[202]

Insofar as this gesture toward intrasubjectivity resonates with (if not naturally follows from) Butler's characteristic interfacing of Hegelian dialecticism, Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalysis, phenomenology, social constructivism, and poststructuralist epistemologies, those familiar with their oeuvre are unlikely to be surprised by what is otherwise a counterintuitive framing of *inter*personal relations.[203] However, because *Precarious Life* was written with a non-specialist audience in mind at a moment of intense political division and retrenchment, Butler self-consciously abandons a degree of argumentative rigor in order to create a more accessible and transmissible text. Scholarly norms of philosophical rigor (causal reasoning, prefatory methodological explanation, dialogic citations, etc.) are dispensed with. As

[202] As far as I am aware, Butler does not use this term in *Precarious Life*. I have chosen it in order to stress the difference between what they are proposing and the many other gestures toward intersubjectivity that abound in critical theory (of which Lacan's is paradigmatic). Moreover, I am not arguing that Butler disavows intersubjectivity, as, indeed, neither do I. It is just that intrasubjectivity appears to more accurately approximate the special condition of relationality by which one can be ontologically dispossessed in the loss of the other in Butler's reflections on grief. Because I focus on teasing out this notion of intrasubjectivity in its relation to mourning and melancholia, I do not attempt to delineate the forms of intense affect that can be experienced as the result of *non*-ontological dispossession (i.e., due to an *inter*subjective loss). In a future iteration of this chapter, I hope to attend to forms of loss that fall below the threshold I have identified with grief.

[203] For a particularly salient example, see their essay "Stubborn Attachment, Bodily Subject: Rereading Hegel on the Unhappy Consciousness" in *The Psychic Life of Power* (1997).

such, its intrasubjective thesis is not arrived at via the dense theoretical argumentation Butler deploys in their earlier works; instead, *Precarious Life* adopts what I call a suppositional rhetorical style. We see this style, for example, in their reliance on conditional adverbs in framing their claims, which enable them to churn out consecutive propositions without base or intermediary justifications: "*Perhaps*, rather, one mourns when one accepts that by the loss one undergoes one will be changed, *possibly* for ever. *Perhaps* mourning has to do with agreeing to undergo a transformation (*perhaps* one should say submitting to a transformation)" (21, emphasis mine). Thus, although Butler's intrasubjective thesis is radical,[204] much of it is "argued" by way of cascading deductive hypotheses, which are sutured together by provisional qualifications and/or interpellative appeals to emotion.[205] On occasion, the tone of these appeals even slips, insidiously if wittily, into one of coercive pragmatism: "Let's face it. We're undone by each other. And if we're not, we're missing something" (23). Here, for example, Butler displaces some of their rhetorical responsibility onto "[l]et's face it," a sophistical appeal to common sense, which they then slyly complement with an intimidating interpellation amounting to "if you don't agree with me, then *you're* missing something."

I would suggest that *Precarious Life*'s turn away from direct argumentation is not only due to their efforts to address a broader audience; it also has to do with an antinomy between poststructuralist critique and the politics and ethics of metaphysics. The analytic lens through which one deconstructs "self" and "other" as *a priori* categories necessarily, if implicitly, rebukes the positive construction of any new universal ontological framework, such as is implied by delineating a metaphysics of intrasubjectivity. This is an antinomy that Butler acknowledges

[204] "Relating to or forming the root, basis, or foundation of something" (*OED* "radical, no. 2").

[205] I am not accusing Butler of being disingenuous. They intentionally signpost the dubious efficacy of this rhetorical style: "I am arguing, *if I am 'arguing' at all*…" (24, emphasis mine).

at several levels of their argument. For instance, in an interjection I excepted from an earlier quotation, they highlight the analytic impasse that arises in the course of utilizing language to produce intrasubjective knowledge: "[P]erhaps what I have lost 'in' you, *that for which I have no ready vocabulary*…" (22, emphasis mine). Since knowledge is mediated through language and language is predicated upon *inter*subjectivity (i.e., is epistemically ordered through differentiations of, on the one hand, grammatical subject from grammatical object and, on the other hand, speaker/writer from listener/reader), there is no position within language from which an intrasubjective ontology can be rendered as "knowledge"—at least according to the norms of an intersubjectively-structured regime of truth. In short, an aporia inheres between the phenomena under consideration and the language that makes such a consideration possible. Yet, to allow the boundaries of one's thought to be governed by this aporia is to reduce the insights of deconstruction to political and ethical impasse rather than acknowledge that one of the insights of deconstruction is that the analysis of and resistance to formations of power-knowledge always already necessitates the assumption of a degree of epistemological risk—there is no transcendental outside for reflection.[206] Thus, at one level, the rhetorical style of *Precarious Life* is, I would argue, part of an ongoing effort on Butler's part to develop and make rhetorical space for politically-conscientious forms of "philosophical" reflection.[207] At another level, though, this style effectively conveys to its readers how rhetorical validity (Butler's "ready vocabulary") is structured by the order of language, thereby enabling them to recognize that intersubjective language reproduces the epistemology of intersubjective ontology, leaving Butler's

[206] See Derrida's "Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences" in *Writing and Difference* pp. 278-293.

[207] On multiple occasions, Butler has reflected on how their work is both indebted to and in tension with the discipline of philosophy. See, for example, their essay "Can the 'Other' of Philosophy Speak?" in *Undoing Gender* pp. 232-250.

intrasubjective thesis no other way to manifest in language than through breaking with the norms by which that epistemology recognizes truth. That is to say, the logical "weakness" of Butler's argument is, at the same time, its strength.

While Butler generates this thesis of ontological dispossession and intrasubjectivity from contemplating grief, their aim in doing so is to establish a social-ontological basis for universal humanism, not to propose a new theory of grief. And yet, by situating "Mourning and Melancholia" in the analytic frame alongside *Precarious Life*, it becomes apparent that Butler's insights constitute a productive intervention into the ontological grounds of Freud's schema. In fact, Butler's intrasubjective thesis enables us to resolve the two problems we have identified with Freud's theory of grief—its untenable ontological foundation and its elision of the social—precisely because it links them. For Butler, intrasubjectivity is a consequence of our "primary [corporeal] vulnerability," which imbricates Being with the social from the very beginning. That is, because we come into this world with neither capacities of discernment nor bodily preservation, we are necessarily "given over to some set of primary others" on whose labor, language, knowledge, love, and touch we rely on to develop a self. With "primary vulnerability," Butler means that we are born unable to defend ourselves against the ordinary forces of death (hunger, thirst, exposure, and predation). Yet, in their emphasis that this vulnerability is an inalienable condition of life—"[t]his is a condition, a condition of being laid bare from the start and with which we cannot argue"—Butler also suggests that we are vulnerable insofar as we are always already ontologically constituted by certain others, as well as inveterately susceptible to future entanglement. This constant vulnerability/susceptibility/permeability/openness even after infancy is not remarkable. As Butler notes, it is literally the condition under which we are able to acquire knowledge, language, and survival skills, as well as to form significant attachments. If it

appears remarkable, this is only because Western individuality is predicated on the habitual disavowal of this vulnerability.[208] Despite its perspicacity, Lacan's mirror stage is paradigmatic of this disavowal: although the child's uncoordinated motor skills constitute the very foundation of his theory, the mirror stage is a closed drama between the child and their image; the others whose labor and love have made it possible for the child to survive long enough to play with themselves in front of a mirror are nowhere to be found, inexplicably only allowed to enter the scene of development once the mirror stage has concluded. For Butler, by contrast, there is no "entrance" into the social. We are always already in the thrall of our ongoing ontogenesis vis-à-vis others. By extension, the "individual self" is only ever a permeable membrane of changing shape and consistency, stretching across multiple others, folding in on itself like endoplasmic reticulum to create mobile bodies that are, at once, internal, boundary, and external. Butler's notion of intrasubjectivity enables us to resolve the two problems that plague Freud's model of grief; what's more, it enables me to develop my own pathogenetic schema for mourning and melancholia—one that allows us to account for the susceptibility of processes of grief to manipulations by power.

***

Let us presume that we do not experience grief every time we lose someone, every time we are displaced, or every time we are forced to give up an ideal. While we may feel sadness or

[208] Despite the critiques I have mounted against psychoanalytic theory here, it is precisely because psychoanalysis seeks, above all, "to prove to the 'I' that it is not even master in its own home, but is dependent upon the most scanty information concerning all that goes on unconsciously in its psychic life" that it is the (to borrow Foucault's term) "human science" most amenable to restructuring with respect to analyzing how power operates across psychic, social, and embodied life (*Introduction to Psychoanalysis* 228). For more on psychoanalysis's productive disturbance of (self-)sovereignty, see John D. Cash's "Sovereignty in Crisis." For more on why psychoanalysis and Foucault's analytics of power are not antithetical but, in fact, "need" each other, see Leo Bersani's "Fr-oucault and the End of Sex" in *Is the Rectum a Grave? and Other Essays* pp. 133-138.

anger in response to these losses, we often find that we can bear them in ways that do not fundamentally shatter or dispossess us of some fundamental aspect of our being-in-the world.[209] Sometimes, this resilient capacity to lose without becoming lost ourselves surprises us or makes us uncomfortable; we may feel guilty that the loss was not as devastating as we had anticipated or feared it to be (and should we discover ourselves relieved or pleased by the loss, we may even experience a derealization of our ethical identity). On the other hand, there are losses that distinctly debilitate us, dispossessing us of our ontological foundation. This dispossession may not announce itself to us immediately, nor may its disclosure follow a smooth linear-continuous path of healing. We might experience, apprehend, and respond to it over time in the form of fragments. For example, we may go through an initial period of grief during which we, while initially shattered, begin to repair our relation to reality and after which we start to feel "at home" in the world again. Then, without warning, something comes along—a memory, a habit, a touch, a gesture—and reveals to us a loss we could not previously apprehend, and before we know it, we become aware of our grief once more.[210] Notably, due to this intrinsic non-linearity, we may not (re)discover our dispossession for some time. We may experience the loss as bearable at first only to learn later that it is very much not. The opposite is also true. We may feel initially that we will be consumed by our pain only to wake up one morning to find that fever-pitched turbulence has abated. Consequently, there is no universal symptomatic litmus test to differentiate sadness from grief, the bearable from the unbearable. Nevertheless, we know that this difference exists.

---

[209] Despite the tremendous elasticity of application imparted to Freud's theory by its numerous appropriations that would indicate the opposite, Freud in fact shared this resistance to generally identifying loss with grief: "If the object does not possess this great significance for the ego—*the significance reinforced by a thousand links*—then, too, its loss will not be of a kind to cause either mourning or melancholia" ("Mourning and Melancholia" 256).

[210] This example is an emendation of a passage in Butler: "I think one is hit by waves, and that one starts out the day with an aim, a project, a plan, and finds oneself foiled. One finds oneself fallen. One is exhausted but does not know why" (*Precarious Life* 21).

Unequivocally, some losses rupture and unmoor us, and in their wake, repair is necessitated. Why, though, should some relations result in unbearable loss while others do not?

When a loss fundamentally dispossesses us, it is because the relation to which it corresponds is intrasubjective in nature, by which I mean that some manifold of the boundary of the self has become coextensive with the lost other's radical alterity.[211] By contrast, bearable losses emerge from primarily intersubjective relations, which is not to say that we value them any less; on the contrary, intersubjectivity can index a powerful attachment to another, even if that attachment does not fundamentally condition who one is. Beyond this differentiation of the intrasubjective from the intersubjective, it is difficult to articulate positive criteria for either because the epistemo-phenomenology of intrasubjectivity is structured by *nachträglichkeit*: it is only through the absence of a particularly significant other that our own absence in their absence becomes perceivable.

In view of the above, I define *grief* as an ontological state precipitated by an intrasubjective loss, during which the aggrieved labors to repair their (always already permeable) boundary's rupture. This is not completed through simple de-cathexis. Even if the wounded subject "knows" the other is dead, they will not know which "part" of themselves was bound with the other. Part of the "work of mourning" is rendering this relationality recognizable and understandable. However, this labor is always done *post hoc* in the radical absence of the other. It is not as if we see what we have lost lying before us; loss is not a positively defined object.

[211]This vacillation in my description of ontological loss between Butler's "dispossession" and Freud's "rupture" could be problematic. My attachment to the concept of a "rupture of the ego's boundary" is symptomatic of my coming up against the "how to speak of intrasubjectivity from within intersubjective language" problem. That is, while "dispossession" captures the doubled lostness of intrasubjective loss best, precisely because it does that I can't really do anything with it in terms of schematization. So, to advance my account of the psychodynamics of grief, I needed to moor my analysis in the language of inside/outside, a contradiction which I then tried to resolve by centering that analysis on the "boundary."

Our ontological reliance on the other only reveals itself to us in the form of foiled anticipation: it is only in the experience of falling that we realize we had expected the road on which we walk to persist in its walkable thereness. This anticipation is neither exclusively epistemological nor phenomenological nor libidinal; it cannot be reduced to, say, Freudian "attention."[212] Rather, it is a condition of Being that emerges from "I" having incontrovertibly been "of" "you," which makes itself known only by the structural collapse its absence precipitates. By extension, intrasubjective loss is akin to inverted trauma: if trauma is the experience of being overwhelmed by unanticipated presence, this kind of loss is the experience of being dispossessed by the absence of anticipated presence.[213] As with trauma, making sense of foiled anticipation is a difficult task. It happens piecemeal, proceeding by way of not only (mis)recognition,[214] but also of contingent ontological re-formation. This is to say: the condition of possibility for the transformation of the unknowable in loss into the knowable is the concurrent transformation of the self into one who is capable of "knowing" their prior conditions of being. This capacitation is made possible by the reorientation and reorganization of the self in relation to the other's absence.

The *work of mourning* as I construe it is entirely different from Freud's model of de-cathexis and detachment of the ego from the object. Rather than a process of detachment, the

[212] Freud defines attention as a function of the mind that originates with the substitution of the reality principle for the pleasure principle: "[c]onsciousness now learned to comprehend sensory qualities in addition to the qualities of pleasure and unpleasure which hitherto had alone been of interest to it. A special function was instituted which had periodically to search the external world, in order that its data might be familiar already if an urgent internal need arise—the function of *attention*. Its activity meets the sense-perceptions half way, instead of awaiting their appearance" ("Formulations on the Two Principles of Mental Functioning" 220).

[213] I attend to this relation between grief and trauma more extensively in chapters three and four of this dissertation. In particular, see the tail end of chapter four, section one, "The Etiology of Short-Term Trauma."

[214] To be quite clear, I am not suggesting that any recognition in this process is ever "pure." I agree with Lacan that all recognitions are misrecognitions. However, not all misrecognitions are equal. Some enable us to function, whereas others disable us.

work of mourning is a process of establishing novel ontological conditions through which the self can be sustained in its existence even in the absence of its co-production by the other; it is the *restructuring* rather than the abolition or disavowal of our relations and attachments. Due to the non-linearity of grief, there is not necessarily an end to this process; certain losses may take a lifetime to "work through." By extension, grief's "success" should not be defined by grief's absence, nor should it be defined, as it so often is, via normativizing ideals (of the "good life," mental wellness, happiness, productivity, etc.). We should evaluate the success of mourning relative only to the capacities of the self that were injured by the loss. The work of mourning is "successful" when its labor yields gradual ontological repair of these capacities—not the return of the subject to a prior state of being, but the renewal of the subject's capacity to confront and survive their losses.

Insofar as, on the one hand, our ontological dispossession in the loss of the other disturbs our epistemological and phenomenological capacities and, on the other hand, (mis)recognition and ontological repair are mutually constitutive, it is remarkable that the work of mourning reliably yields repair. That is, in losing the other, we also lose something essential for surviving and overcoming their loss, and as such, it would not be logically inconsistent if we were to stay dispossessed forever. Yet, we know very well that this is not often the case; with time, most people seem to make their way out of the fog of intrasubjective loss. In the absence of a teleological guarantee that the work of mourning will capacitate us, how do we account for this high survival rate? There appear to be two primary sources of support. At one level, we are continually renewed in our efforts to repair ourselves by what I refer to as inertial currents of

Being.[215] With this phrase, I mean that we are bound up in relations with the world that tether us to it in their ongoingness, even if those relations are affected by an intrasubjective loss.[216] At another level, the work of mourning is guided by culturally- and societally-specific assemblages of grief–as I will detail in the following chapters. With respect to capacitation, the function of these rituals and discourses is to facilitate the twinned processes of (mis)recognition and re-formation. While this is variably accomplished, assemblages of grief enable repair through, paradoxically, re-creating and extending the temporal experience of loss; re-situating the lost relation within the social world in which it was formed; and/or connecting the subject to a community of mourners, thereby transforming individual emotional labor into collective labor. By doing so, assemblages of grief enable our misrecognitions of the other's absence and our coextensive ontological-libidinal reorganizations to progressively align more closely with the "real." That is to say, organizing our wayward efforts to heal from intrasubjective loss, assemblages of grief intervene to give reparative form to our successive attempts at (mis)recognition and re-formation. When the processes of grief assume such a form, we define the state of grief as specifically a *state of mourning*.

What happens, though, when our access to assemblages of grief is denied? While I will pursue this question as it unfolds brilliantly over the course of Roy's novel, for now, I simply maintain that in the absence of these assemblages, our processes of grief are liable to become libidinally structured by cruelly optimistic attachments to their constitutive (mis)recognitions. As

[215] This renewal may prove insufficient in proportion to our despair and dislocation, as evinced by grief-precipitated suicide.

[216] Insofar as inertial currents of Being are composed of relations and attachments, there is an element of "instinctual preservation" to them. However, I would argue that acknowledging primary ontological vulnerability requires that we perceive the instinct to survive as variably socially constructed as well. The notion that an *a priori* life instinct compels us to endeavor to survive no matter our conditions of living is merely a biopolitical fantasy, the absurdity of which is demonstrated by the horrific violence humans do to themselves and others daily.

noted previously, the immensity of our loss reveals itself over time in fragments of foiled anticipation. To grieve is to make sense of ourselves in relation to these fragments through (mis)recognition and re-formation, the latter process involving a reorganization of attachments.[217] At the same time, each of our interactions with these fragments exposes grieving to malformation via fetishism, by which I mean the psychoanalytic concept, which refers to an attachment born from, and bound up with, a repression.[218] Freud unwittingly refers to this fetishism in describing the role of incorporation in mourning: the "normal" mourner for Freud cannot initially bear the immensity of their loss and so they incorporate the lost other by way of hypercathecting onto shared memories, habits, possessions, and in so doing are able to lose the other in pieces rather than all at once. Freud's account is predicated on the assumption that the aggrieved immediately recognizes the constitutive components of their relation to the lost other. I suggest this is not the case. Freud correctly identifies, however, that in our desire to repair ontological rupture there is a tendency toward libidinally hypostatizing a particular (mis)recognition of "what" we have lost in the other *as* the loss in its totality.[219] This tendency is a consequence of grieving's instrumentalizing of fetishism, insofar as fetishism is necessary both for protectively repressing the terrifying apprehension of our dispossession's immensity and for reparatively "testing" the utility of our partial (mis)recognitions to advance? our overall capacitation. Under the right conditions, fetishism will facilitate, rather than stall, mourning. Yet, without exterior support from assemblages of grief, the defensive element in fetishism—its joint

[217] By "make sense," I mean both to understand and to cohere.

[218] I elaborate on the psychoanalytic notion of fetishism and its belief structure more thoroughly in chapter 4, section 4.

[219] This intrasubjective reframing of Freudian incorporative hypercathexis can be applied, by the same reasoning, to Abraham and Torak's concept of the melancholic "intrapsychic tomb," from which libidinal attachments to the "[s]wallowed and preserved" other (the one who is "buried alive in the crypt as a full-fledged person, complete with its own topography") unconsciously seep out and haunt the melancholic as a ghost (Abraham and Torok 130).

repressive-protective function—may surpass its provisional utility. When this happens, the subject becomes libidinally bound to a (mis)recognition that does not and cannot enable capacitation. Worse, this bad attachment does not merely constitute a period of stall in the otherwise steady progression of the work of mourning. Rather, this fetish becomes the centerpiece of a feedback loop that adversely structures grief's form. This is because while the aggrieved convinces themselves that they have found the source of their loss, the ontological "open wound" precipitated by another's radical absence persists, from which continually spills their desire for repair and re-formation. Yet, seduced by their hope in the fetish, the aggrieved pours those libidinal currents into it, becoming ever-increasingly attached in inverse proportion to the reparative effects of this attachment. The result is not just a subject who is debilitated by grief, but a subject who actively sustains the conditions of their debilitation by progressively investing hope into the fetishized site of return not in spite of but *because of* its failure to enable capacitating repair and re-formation.[220] When the processes of grief become perniciously organized by a cruelly optimistic attachment, we define the state of grief as specifically a *state of melancholia*.

***

Having outlined an alternative pathogenetic schema of mourning and melancholia, we are able to render Zooneh's condition more clearly. Her compulsion to leave the door ajar is

[220] It may be that this causal reflexivity, coupled with fetishism's sublation of the total loss, is one reason why melancholics are liable, as Freud initially observed, to self-flagellation: in the absence of repair—despite the seemingly purposeful investment of libidinal energy into the misrecognition—the self may unconsciously attribute the failure of the work of mourning, and perhaps even the loss of the other in its entirety, to itself, thereby engendering feelings of self-hatred; subsequently, the self may, replicating the structure of fetishism, form attachments to those feelings, which then serve auxiliary supports for the melancholic form. However, in consideration of Melanie Klein's work on grief, self-flagellation may emerge just as well from the constitutive ambivalence of attachment, which my analysis of grief admittedly brackets. See Klein "Mourning and Its Relation to Manic-Depressive States."

expressive of a melancholic fetishization of the anticipatory structure of object permanence. To clarify, it is obviously not the case that grief is precipitated every time a loved one leaves our immediate proximity. This is because early in our development we develop a psychoaffective relation with immediate phenomenological absence that enables us to survive temporary loss.[221] With "object permanence," a defense mechanism similar to incorporation, we make substitutes from the residue of the other's labor in our co-production, and we invest hope in their illusory presence by proleptically tethering them to the other's projected return. In this way, we learn to tolerate absence, to work around those parts of ourselves that we are temporarily unable to access; this is also how we adjust ontologically to accommodate modalities of technological mediation within intrasubjective relations, such as when physical distance requires that one primarily interact with a loved one through the phone, texts, letters, email, or fantasy. Object permanence is, thus, not just a cognitive awareness that others continue to persist despite not being immediately accessible by our senses. It is also an ontogenetic operator vis-à-vis temporary intrasubjective loss. However, the substitutes we generate in a relation of object permanence are only simulacras of the other. They are not the other's radical presence and, thus, they cannot actually co-produce us in any meaningful way. We tolerate their insufficiency on the condition that the other still exists and will return, binding the libidinal energy that cannot be satisfied by these substitutes to *sites of return*, those points at which the other re-enters our phenomenological apparatus,[222] which we establish with them over time through sedimented

[221] To a degree, my remarks on the function of object permanence in mediating absence and calibrating affective response to it are informed by Klein's approach to grief. Please see n. 194 for a more thorough account of her contribution to this topic.

[222] Note that sites of return need not be fixed locations in space. For example, we often form these relations with communication technologies (texts, calls, emails, etc.).

circuits of coming and going. Through this libidinal anticipation, we are able to utilize object permanence to forestall grief.

What happens, though, when the loved one leaves (or is taken) and never returns? How do we recognize a loss as permanent when we anticipated it to be temporary, indeed when we structured our relation to the other's absence on the sole condition that it would be temporary? In the case of the other's death, we rely first and foremost on the "corpse"[223]: the corpse, whether the actual body or a symbolic stand-in or supplement, mediates the relation between temporary and permanent absence, enabling us to engage in the twinned processes of recognition and ontological reorganization I have called the work of mourning. However, should the "corpse" be denied to us—that is, if the conditions of the other's loss are such that we cannot recognize their death through assemblages of grief, which in modern societies are primarily organized around the corpse—the other's substitutes will slowly break under the pressure of our need for them to co-produce us and, consequently, the experience of temporary loss will give way to intrasubjective loss in its full deprivation. Yet, in the absence of "the corpse," we are liable to direct our gradually increasing outpouring of unsatisfied libidinal energy into sites of return because that libidinal pathway had already been established in object permanence's anticipatory structure. In doing so, we make a fetish of these sites, misrecognizing permanent absence as temporary absence: that is, we continue to situate ourselves libidinally in relation to the site of return *as if* return is still possible. Therefore, when the other's phantasmic substitutes eventually disintegrate and our irrepressible ontological dispossession produces more and more desire for repair, this structure of attachment to sites of return can provide a ready-made conduit for that

[223] There are, of course, cases where the corpse no longer exists, or is fundamentally unrecognizable. We have developed numerous technologies for imaginatively reconstructing the corpse in its absence (DNA testing, firsthand witness accounts, certificates of death, etc.). These technologies, however, are still structured by the primary need for the material corpse. I have rendered "corpse" with inverted commas to mark this relation.

libidinal energy. In this way, object permanence constitutes a foundation for melancholia, as Zooneh's debilitating compulsion to keep the door ajar exemplifies. Deprived of her son's body, Zooneh formed a cruelly optimistic attachment with this specific site of return, in which its failure to manifest her son's return does not dissuade her investment in it but, rather, spurs it on, keeping her attached to something that prevents her repair. Thus, when Zia ascribes positive valence to Zooneh's grief by calling it a "hopeful melancholia," she fails to recognize that hope is instrumental in Zooneh's ongoing melancholic debilitation. If we are to understand the logic of the technology of disappearance, we must acknowledge that Zooneh's grief may also be a form of cruel optimism—it is not not hopefully melancholic but rather a melancholia that is hopefully cruel.

Even more importantly, we must recognize that this entrapment of the self by melancholia is not an unintended consequence of a procedure primarily intended to, in a diffuse, abstract way, intimidate (or "discipline") the entire Kashmiri population; rather, it is the *specific, unique injury* proper to the subjects most immediately and intensely affected by this particular modality of *epistemological as well as material violence*. At the same time, to focus on these local effects is not to say that this power only targets individuals. Rather, as we saw with Zooneh and her granddaughter, by virtue of the primary ontological vulnerability that imbricates each person with others, melancholic debilitation radiates outward, proliferating dispossessions throughout and between networks of interpersonal relations in Kashmir. Consequently, this distribution of local melancholic debilitation ultimately takes as its structuring objective a collective impairment of the affective and social capacity for effective political resistance in Kashmir.

In the next section, I argue that the core features of the technology of disappearance as I have diagrammed it—namely, its selective targeting and instrumentalization of a "natural" phenomenon (that is, grief's tendency toward melancholic formation in the absence of assemblages of grief) and its social enmeshment for the purposes of ramifying local, limited applications of force into large-scale and long-lasting effects at the collective level (which is the way that it does indeed take the *population* as its principal target)—indicates that it reflects a form of power that Foucault theorizes as "security." For the purposes of further specifying my categorization of securitization, I pursue a set of readings of Mbembe and Foucault that culminate in a more specific classification for the technology of disappearance, that of *securitarian necro-power*. In my use, "necro" does not signpost that this technology involves "making die" (which, as I will argue, is a differentiation with limited utility), but instead effects its power through acting on the social and psychoaffective relations to loss by which "death" is epistemologically and politically constituted in a society. Because both "necro" and "bio" are key terms in my analysis, I also critically assess Achille Mbembe's reading of the ontology of "bio" in Foucault's theory of biopower which informs his oft-cited oppositional theory of necropower.

2.3 An Ideal Diagram of Securitarian Necro-Power

Thus far, I have sought to explain how the occupation's use of forced disappearances could engender in the loved ones of the disappeared the melancholic state demonstrated by Zooneh and other subjects in Zia's study. Heuristically, this amounts to identifying the social and psychoaffective mechanisms by which a technology of power produces its local effects. Operating from the Foucaultian premise that power's rationality is, to a certain degree, reflected in the functional relationship between its deployment and its effects, this delineation of

mechanisms will now serve as the analytic basis from which I provisionally diagnose the organizing logic of the technology of disappearance and, in the process, structurally categorize it with respect to the rationalities underlying other forms of power. In particular, I argue that this organizing logic—of regulating the population's affective capacity for political resistance through creating for a specific distribution of individuals the psychosocial conditions suitable for the development of debilitating melancholias—is commensurate with a modality of control I theorize as *securitarian necro-power*.

Earlier, I noted that in rationalizing the technology of disappearance the IPTK and Zia presume that its object is Kashmiris *en masse*, not taking into account the discrepancy between the effects of this power on the loved ones of the disappeared and on Kashmiris in general; in turn, I argued that their classification of this technology as a form of disciplinary power is underwritten by this *a priori* homogenization of object. However, in prioritizing the loved ones of the disappeared as my analytic focus, I am not suggesting the *only* aim of disappearance is to psychoaffectively ensnare those closest to the disappeared. Clearly, as attested by the unmarked graves and their inherent anonymity, the technology of disappearance operates to some degree at the level of the general population as well (though, as I argue below, an adequate articulation of this claim will require a more rigorous definition of the term "population"). Moreover, it is also evident that this technology takes the population as its ultimate *target*, by which I mean that forced disappearance is not a power that satisfies itself in injuring the loved ones of the disappeared. Rather, these loved ones are conduits by which micropolitical effects at the level of individuals and their psyches are ramified into macropolitical effects at the level of Kashmiri society and its capacity for organized and effective resistance to occupation.

My critique of the IPTK's characterization of the technology of disappearance as one of disciplinary power has proceeded on the grounds that subjectification did not appear to be the objective of its deployment. Over the course of the foregoing sections, I have argued that this technology is utilized by India's security forces in order to create conditions favorable for engendering debilitating melancholia in the loved ones of the disappeared. In this final section, I argue that this *tactical* manipulation of the psychoaffective mechanisms of grief operates within a formation of power I call securitarian necro-power. The overarching *strategic* objective of securitarian necro-power, I maintain, is the regulation of the Kashmiri population's capacity for political resistance. To be clear, the strategy I outline here is not how securitarian necro-power necessarily or absolutely functions in Kashmir. It is, rather, an ideal diagram of securitarian

necro-power,[224] reconstructed by interfacing my anatomization of debilitating melancholia with Foucault's work on apparatuses of security.

My use of necro-power is a critical appropriation of Achille Mbembe's formulation of necropower in his well-known article "Necropolitics." Importantly, my appropriation is a *critical* one in the sense that I use it to draw attention to the misreading of Foucault that belies Mbembe's formulation and, furthermore, to reconceive of the "necro" in "necropower" such that it becomes structurally and ontologically analogous to the "bio" in "biopower" in the way implied by the lexical symmetry. In its opening rhetorical question, "Necropolitics" frames itself as supplementing a lacuna of Foucault's theory of biopower: "Can the notion of biopower account for the contemporary ways in which the political takes as its primary and absolute objective the enemy's murder, doing so under the guise of war, resistance or the war on terror?"

---

[224] Here I am appropriating Foucault's description of Bentham's Panopticon as "the diagram of a mechanism of power reduced to its ideal form" (*Discipline and Punish* 205). During Foucault's lifetime, this notion of an "ideal diagram" seems to have eluded many of his readers, insofar as there are many interviews in which he is forced to reiterate that no building ever functioned in the totalizing way Bentham envisions, this failure being, moreover, integral to any understanding of it as a representation of disciplinary power (see, for example, "Clarifications on the Question of Power" in *Foucault Live* 257). For Foucault, an ideal diagram is a *schema of control* that in its *articulation with the history of its deployment* expresses the *rationality* of a form of power: "[i]t is absolutely correct that the actual functioning of the prisons…was a witches' brew compared to the beautiful Benthamite machine. But if the prisons were seen to have failed, if criminals were perceived as incorrigible, and a whole new criminal 'race' emerged into the field of vision of public opinion and 'Justice,'…it's precisely because this type of programming didn't just remain a utopia in the heads of a few projectors" ("The Impossible Prison" in *Foucault Live* 282). Significantly, Foucault differentiates this schematization from Weberian "ideal types," on the grounds that power's rationality is neither the expression of the "historian's retrospective interpretation" nor an *a priori* objective for the purposes of which various techniques and technologies are then developed; rather, power's rationality emerges through the "[mutual opposition, composition, and superimposition]" of "different strategies" thereby giving rise to "permanent and solid effects" (281). This is not to say that this emergent rationality does not eventually take on the functions of an organizing principle; as Foucault notes elsewhere, "[n]o 'local center,' no 'pattern of transformation' could function if, through a series of sequences, it did not eventually enter into an over-all [*sic*] strategy" (*HoSVol.1* 99). The point is that when Foucault identifies a model of control (Bentham's Panopticon, Pinel's asylum, etc.) as an ideal diagram of power he is not claiming the diagram itself illustrates how power operates in its "real functioning," nor that it should be evaluated along this specious ideal/real binary. Similarly, although I use this notion of an ideal diagram in a different way than Foucault—insofar as he stresses that the "rational schemas of the prison, the hospital or the asylum…[were] explicit programmes" developed by penal, medical, and psychiatric institutions as opposed to conceptual models developed (such in the case of Weber's "ideal types") by historians for the purposes of imposing coherence on heterogeneous phenomena, whereas I work here to delineate a logic organizing multiple technologies of power in their mutual deployment by charting convergences between local and long-ranging effects of those technologies—my analysis neither seeks to uncover some originary strategy of debilitation in its pure idealization nor lay claim to the totality of power's functioning in the occupation of Kashmir.

("Necropolitics" 66). For Mbembe, the answer is incontrovertibly no. This is primarily because he perceives Foucault's biopower as rationalizing the political: "[O]n the basis of a distinction between reason and unreason (passion, fantasy), late modern criticism has been able to articulate a certain idea of the political…Within this paradigm, reason is the truth of the subject, and politics is the exercise of reason in the public sphere" (67). Although Mbembe draws a contrast between Foucault and these "late modern critics,"[225] he infers that despite biopower's refusal to exceptionalize the Nazi state, Foucault's means-end formulation of biopower as "make die in order to make live" slips this amelioratory political reason in through the backdoor. This claim is predicated on Mbembe's characterization of the colony as, *a priori*, a sovereign "state of exception," in which "the fiction of a distinction between war's 'ends' and its 'means' collapses…as opposed to pure slaughter without risk or instrumental justification" (78). In other words, Mbembe argues that the colony is the space in which biopower's particular means-end formulation does not apply: "make die" is both the instrument and objective of power; the means and the ends are one and the same.[226] By extension, this decoupling of murder from an instrumental *telos* marks the colony as a site of "endless war," where "weapons are deployed in the interest of maximally destroying persons" (76; 92). Parsing Mbembe's neologism in Foucaultian terms—which I would argue the symmetry of the concept of necropower to

[225] "The perception of the existence of the Other as an attempt on my life…this is, I maintain, one of the many imaginary dimensions characteristic of sovereignty in both early and late modernity. Recognition of this perception to a large extent underpins *most traditional critiques of modernity*…[These critiques] challenge the idea that the calculus of life perforce passes through the death of the Other" ("Necropolitics" 72, emphasis mine). Since Mbembe acknowledges that Foucault's biopower explicitly links the production of life with the death of the Other (see p. 71), it is clear that he does not lump Foucault in with all "late modern critics."

[226] In a way, Foucault vaguely gestures toward the parasitic relation of technologies of power to their strategic aim as a constitutive feature of modern biopower: "[T]hrough a turn that closes the circle, as the technology of wars has caused them to tend increasingly toward all-out destruction, the decision that initiates them and the one that terminates them are in fact increasingly informed by the naked question of survival" (*HoSVol.1* 137).

biopower invites us to do—it appears that necropower refers to formations of power structured by the non-instrumental logic "make die in order to make die."[227]

Bracketing this formulation from the rest of Mbembe's argument, "make die in order to make die" is useful insofar as it enables us to reflect upon the role of fetishism in the genealogy of power. As implied earlier, I conceive of fetishism as an attachment to a process or an instrument that results in at least a partial supplantation of the original *telos*. In the formulation "make die in order to make die" there is just such a supplantation of the original telos, as it depends on a hypostasis of the instrument of death into the overarching objective. This hypostasis engenders, to appropriate Agamben's terminology, not so much a "zone of

[227] It is unclear to what extent necropower is actually structured. On the one hand, taking into account his critique of political rationalization, his valorization of Bataille's "[subtraction of] death from the horizon of meaning" (in contradiction to Hegel), and his characterization of "slave and late modern colonial regimes" as beset by "a certain kind of madness," it would seem that Mbembe critiques structure itself (70-78; 69; 91). Yet, on the other hand, Mbembe repeatedly describes necropower as "[accounting] for contemporary forms of the subjugation of life to the power of death" (92, emphasis mine). Since forms are constituted by structure, it is difficult to imagine a structureless necropower. Moreover, as I discuss, when Mbembe ultimately describes the functioning of necropower, he reinscribes a (rational) telos at the heart of this power, thus contradicting his initial formulation. I would argue that this aporia between structure/reason/telos and unstructure/unreason/no telos runs throughout Mbembe's argument.

indistinction" but a *tactic* of indistinction.[228] Mbembe's identification of this potential for indistinction raises a number of important questions regarding the relation between instruments of power ("means") and strategies of power ("ends"). What are the conditions under which means are disaggregated from their original ends in deployments of power? Do some formations of power hypostasize their technologies more than others? Conversely, is fetishization perhaps constitutive of some formations of power and their vicissitudes? More specifically, is there a relationship between fetishization and "making die" such that Mbembe's necropolitical formulation is more likely to arise in any deployment that relies upon murder as an instrument?

The terms "state of siege" and "endless war" certainly characterize India's occupation of Kashmir. However, I would argue that Mbembe's theory of necropower holds inadequate explanatory force for the use of forced disappearances in Kashmir for three interrelated reasons. First, on a surface level, Mbembe's necro-bio formulation misrecognizes the "life of biopower"

[228] In defining the Nazi concentration camp as a "zone of indistinction between the outside and the inside, the exception and the rule, the licit and the illicit, in which every juridical protection had disappeared," Agamben spatially and temporally metonymizes the sovereign's constitutive juridical paradox (i.e., that of being "the one who marks the *point of indistinction* between violence and right by proclaiming the state of exception and suspending the validity of the law") (*Means without End* 104, emphasis mine). This metonymy, which problematically vacates the field of power of any real relations of support, is predicated on a reductive conceptualization of territory as a bounded expanse of geographical space homogeneously correlated with a "juridico-political structure" (hence why he rejects analyzing the concentration camp with respect to "the events that took place there" and, instead, inquiring, "[w]hat is a camp, what is its juridico-political structure, that such events could take place there?") (*Homo Sacer* 166). This is to say that Agamben misrecognizes the (no doubt, instrumental) fiction through which European states rationalized and justified their deployments of power with respect to each other and their citizens—the one that proclaims "[t]o be in the territory is to be subject to sovereignty; you are a subject of sovereignty while in the territory, and not beyond; and territory is the space within which sovereignty is exercised; it is the spatial extent of sovereignty" (*The Birth of Territory* 329)—as power in its actual functioning. To propose that the political organization of space is mimetically co-extensive with an alteration in a juridical structure is to fundamentally obscure the vast network of dynamic relations and processes—what Thomas Nail refers to as "kinopower"—through which the domain-object-instrument of territory emerges (*Theory of the Border* 21). In other words, while the juridical apparatus to which a territory corresponds may very well (implicitly or explicitly) suspend legal rights of (some of) those who exist in it, the law constitutes but one mechanism of power-knowledge among many and, thus, does not have the power to autonomously determine the nature of social relations across a territory. This is to not to say that the law merely expresses social relations that precede it. The law is an instrument whose function can only be identified by delineating the field of power-knowledge in which it is deployed. As such, to attend to *tactics* as opposed to *zones* (the latter of which reductively sutures logics to territories) is to maintain a critical distance between cause and effect.

as a real substance; in contrast, for Foucault, "life" is an objective corollary to a form of power. Second, for Mbembe, necropower is about *making die*, rather than conceiving of death as a social relationship indexed by intersubjective loss. Third, necropower is an illogic that derationalizes power, whereas what is needed is a better analytic framework for recognizing different rationalities of power.

More specifically, while Mbembe implicitly critiques biopower for rationalizing the political—and, concurrently, submits necropower as a supplemental analytic for assessing non-instrumental murder—in ultimately defining necropower as "the subjugation of life to the *power of death*," he ironically reproduces the logic of biopower, contravening this insistence upon non-instrumentality. To clarify, while literal murder is central to this idea of the "power of death," the latter is not mere synonym for the former but, rather, extends from Mbembe's conceptual reliance on Bataillean metaphysics. In Mbembe's Bataillean imaginary, the "power of death" compels the subject to kill the Other in order to produce their own sovereignty.[229] Thus, its logic is not "death for death's sake" but, rather, "make (others) die in order to make (oneself) sovereign." If this appears quite similar to biopower's "make die in order to make live," this is because, I would argue, Mbembe has substituted Bataille's (and Agamben's) "sovereignty" for

[229] According to Mbembe, for Bataille the intrinsic fear of the absolute negation of death solicits subjects to expose themselves to death by violating the sociopolitical prohibition against murder so that, in doing so, they can ecstatically achieve self-sovereignty (69-70). This link between "sovereignty" and a metaphysical death-force (the referent of the "power of death") is pivotal to Mbembe's analysis of the Palestinian suicide bomber, who, in simultaneously taking control of the conditions of their death and the conditions of their oppressor's death momentarily regains their negated sovereignty: "For death is precisely that from and over which I have power. But it is also the space where freedom and negation operate" (91-92). While I agree with Mbembe's refusal to render the suicide bomber a non-agential figure, the metaphysics underlying this analysis contradicts his notion of non-instrumental murder.

(Foucault's) "life."[230] This is apparent early in his discussion of Bataille, where he slips between the two terms: "[Bataille] interprets death and *sovereignty* as the paroxysm of exchange and superabundance…*Life* itself exists only in bursts and in exchange with death" (69, emphasis mine). In other words, the sovereign-seeking subject *is* the life-seeking subject, and by extension, sovereign murder (or, as Mbembe argues regarding colonial occupation, the establishing of states of exception in which murder of the racialized Other is afforded impunity) is not an end to itself—it is a means to the production of the sovereign "life" of the colonizer. Such a formulation does not supplement the logic of biopower; it accords entirely with it. From this perspective, it would seem that despite his strong critique of Hegelian negation, Mbembe's explanation of the constitutive forces of necropower is predicated on an unintended sublation of biopower.[231]

Second, if political rationalization persists at the core of Mbembe's necropower, then it calls into question the notion that "death for death's sake" operates as a dominant structuring logic in postcolonial governmentalities. Indeed, Mbembe never directly justifies this claim. Rather, in introducing it via his opening rhetorical questions (quoted earlier), this claim is actually a warrant upon which the essay's argument is founded. This is problematic, however, because when Mbembe summarizes his essay in its final paragraph—and, in doing so, finally

[230] Of the many perplexing aspects of "Necropolitics," Mbembe's sparse citation of Agamben is perhaps the most vexing. Outside of the first footnote and one brief reference to Agamben's analysis of the "camp" at the beginning of the essay, Mbembe does not mention him at all, despite clearly drawing on Agamben's work linking biopower, the state of exception, and sovereignty. In fact, I would argue that Mbembe's understanding of biopower/politics was refracted through *Homo Sacer*, as the overemphasis on sovereignty in his definition of biopower aligns it far more with Agamben's reading of Foucault than with Foucault's work itself.

[231] In my use of the term, sublation refers to the (usually unwitting) transference of a constitutive logic or dynamic from one concept or formation to another concept or formation, most often as part of an attempted negation or disavowal of the former. While this is a more-or-less Hegelian definition of sublation, my deployment of the term is derived from how Spivak uses it within her critique of Hegel and his relegation of India to the antechamber of History in *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason* pp. 47-67.

defines necropower and necropolitics—it becomes apparent that this claim is essential for his argument:

> I have put forward the notion of necropolitics, or necropower, to account for the various ways in which, in our contemporary world, weapons are deployed in the interest of maximally destroying persons and creating *death-worlds*, new and unique forms of social existence in which vast populations are subjected to living conditions that confer upon them the status of the *living dead*. ("Necropolitics" 92, emphasis in original)

We will momentarily bracket the second half of this formulation (the production of the "living dead"). For now, I draw attention to the relationship between this repeated emphasis on "maximal destruction" and the necro- of necropower. It is clear that literal murder—the extinguishing of human life through the material decimation of the body—is central to what Mbembe means by necropower. At the same time, one of the primary objectives of his essay is to carve out an analytic space for non-instrumental, irrational murder. That is, Mbembe seeks to differentiate the instrumentation of murder in the Holocaust (biopower's privileged example) and the irrationality of murder in (post)colonial states of exception. Undoubtedly, Mbembe is justified in critiquing the West's exceptionalizing of the Nazi state's barbarism over and against the barbarism of (their own) colonial and postcolonial governmentalities. However, embedded in this critique of representation is the insistence upon a fundamental difference in the organizing logic of mass murder across (intra-European) racial genocide and (extra-European) "late modern" (post)colonial governmentalities (80). Moreover, this difference between instrumental and non-instrumental death-making *is* the primary difference between necropower and biopower. Insofar as "Necropolitics" both frames and summarizes itself as proving a claim it nevertheless

presumes from the outset, it is, to some extent, tautologically structured. As such, and in consideration of Mbembe's aforementioned revision of "death for death's sake," we should give pause to the presumption that "the political takes as its *primary and absolute objective* the enemy's murder" (66, emphasis mine). Even if we sociohistorically circumscribe what Mbembe means by "the political" to specifically those technologies of destruction deployed in his examples of postcolonial Rwanda and settler-colonial Palestine—a circumscription that the metaphysical speculations of the first half of his essay do not necessarily support—other analyses indicate that we reduce much of the complexity of these structures of power when we rationalize them as "make die in order to make die," or even, "make die in order to make sovereign." To clarify, I am not suggesting that it is impossible for "death for death's sake" to emerge as a structuring logic within strategies of power; nor am I suggesting that it has not often emerged as a local fetishization within the micro-physics of power's deployment. Indeed, as demonstrated by Roy's depiction of the technology of disappearance in *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*, India's security apparatus in Kashmir is, in part, predicated upon the tactical cultivation of "individual" destructive forces among its military and paramilitary personnel. By extension, we might read the flattened malevolence of Commander Amrik Singh as symptomatic of murder's fetishization within the security regime's central strategy and, as such, representative of a local emergence of Mbembian necropower. However, this tactical utility is different from erecting it to the status of an organizing, comprehensive logic of colonial occupation.

Third, the biopower/necropower lexical symmetry belies a conceptual dissonance between the notion of "life" (bio) in Foucault and the notion of "death" (necro) in Mbembe. In contrast with Mbembe's definition of biopower at the beginning of his essay—"that domain of life over which power has asserted its control"—the "life" of biopower is not, for Foucault, some

pre-existing substance. Rather, "life" is the objective corollary of biopower. That this is the case is clear when we read biopower in relation to the archaeological historicization of "life" Foucault develops in *The Order of Things* (*OoT*) and its elaboration in the first volume of *The History of Sexuality* (*HoS1*). In *OoT*, Foucault identifies a paradigm shift within the natural sciences between natural history and biology at the end of the eighteenth century, of which the emergent concept of "life" was constitutive:

> Up to the end of the eighteenth century, in fact, life does not exist: only living beings…[I]f it is possible to speak of life [in the Classical period] it is only as of one character…in the universal distribution of beings. It is usual to divide the things in nature into three classes: minerals . . . vegetables . . . and animals… As for life and the threshold it establishes, these can be made to slide from one end of the scale to the other, according to the criteria one adopts… Life does not constitute an obvious threshold beyond which entirely new forms of knowledge are required. It is a category of classification, relative, like all the other categories to the criteria one adopts. (*OoT* 160-161)

In effect, the Classical period did not order nature along a static binary of life and death. Within the taxonomies of naturalists such as Maupertuis and Linneaus, "life" indexed a variable limit-condition with respect to specific criteria of classification. In their schemas, "life" was an effect of classification, rather than the space on which natural historicity worked. Most importantly, the difference between the "living" and the "non-living" manifested by their classifications did not articulate an ontological orthogonality between life and death; in natural history, "the Same and the Other both [belonged] to a single space," one in which all elements could be classified via their "structure" and "function" (265; 264). In this ordering of things, there was an equal

valuation between structure and function, and visible perception was privileged. Correlatively, in this schema, "being" is the primary ontological category.

By contrast, Cuvier, who Foucault credits with the birth of biology as a novel classificatory system, rendered *function* the epistemological kernel of inquiry, subordinating structure.[232] By extension, Cuvier's centralizing focus on absent-present functions produces a depth hermeneutics of life, where "life" is both that which is maintained by these functions and that which accounts for their existence (272). Foucault stresses that this "life" of biology is categorically different from the "being" of natural history, insofar as it will no longer be possible to apprehend the two as ontologically coterminous (i.e., the "living being" of the Classical period is not the "living being" of the modern period). On the contrary, for Cuvier, because the functions of "life" feed on "death," both are materially constitutive of "being": "Around the living being, or rather through it and by means of the filtering action of its surface, there is effected 'a continual circulation from the outside to the inside, and from the inside to the outside…Thus, living bodies should be considered as kinds of furnaces into which dead substances are successively introduced in order to be combined together in various ways'" (273-274). In other words, in the late eighteenth century "life" emerges not as a readily perceived field of organisms but as an interlocking array of hidden processes and their conditions of possibility, perceptible only through the effects of their functioning. One can only apprehend "life" as an expression of its functions.[233]

[232] "From Cuvier onward, function, defined according to its non-perceptible form as an effect to be attained, is to serve as a constant middle term and to make it possible to relate together totalities of elements without the slightest visible identity" (264-265, emphasis in original).

[233] Consequently, nascent biology was far from positivist in its approach to defining "life." Indeed, as Foucault notes, it is hardly surprising that there was a resurgent interest in vitalism at the beginning of the twentieth century.

To be sure, Cuvier's "life" is not quite the life—or, to be more precise, the *lifes*—of biopower in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. As has been commonly noted, the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were witness to an enormous proliferation of discourses and technologies of health, sanitation, race, and sex, which had the effect of, on the one hand, disaggregating the unity of the individual body into components trainable via discipline and, on the other hand, connecting individual bodies to each other, to their material environment, and, through statistical, biophysical, and/or ideological calculations of "political economy"—thus engendering mechanisms of regulatory control attuned to a novel object of knowledge, "population." For Foucault, biopower is what emerges as these two "poles" of discipline and regulation—"an anatomo-politics of the human body" and "a bio-politics of the population"—become "joined" to one another "in the form of concrete arrangements *(agencements concrets)*," with the great projects of sex/uality and race in the nineteenth century being the most instrumental of these arrangements (*HoSVol.1* 139-140).[234] Most significantly, immanent to this "joining" is the emergence of an eugenic ideal which is at the same time the basis of a new political rationality: the "maximization of life" (123), where the life in question is neither

[234] To be sure, across the latter half of his oeuvre, Foucault is inconsistent when it comes to defining biopower. For example, at the beginning of *Security, Territory, Population*, *HoS1*'s distinction between biopower and biopolitics is seemingly abandoned: "By [biopower] I mean a number of phenomena that seem to me to be quite significant, namely, the set of mechanisms through which the basic biological features of the human species became the object of a political strategy…or, in other words, how, starting from the eighteenth century, modern Western societies took on board the fundamental biological fact that human beings are a species" (*STP* 1). Moreover, this conflation becomes even more muddled as Foucault shifts his focus in *STP* from biopower to governmentality, and then from governmentality in general to *homo œconomicus* and human capital specifically in *The Birth of Biopolitics*. In part, this confusion is attributable to Foucault's early death: as Ann Laura Stoler notes, in the initial outline of *The History of Sexuality* series, a later volume was to be dedicated to the thematics of race and biopower, for which "Right of Death and Power over Life" would have been merely a sketch (*Race and the Education of Desire* 21). In any case, I would argue that the absence of "life" and "life's maximization" from the later lectures on political, economic, and self government justifies identifying biopower with the emergence of "life" as a unique and maximizable object of power, as outlined in *HoS1*.

uniquely that of the individual body nor of the population;[235] rather, it is *life* as *the circulation of relations of the body, the species, and the milieu*. Although the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries saw the development of technologies of health and sanitation, the crucial "discovery" of these technologies was that "death" was not an inexplicable, inaccessible force of nature but that mortality was, to an extent, constituted by the circulations of resources, substances, and bodies within and across the spaces of human societies; thus, the primary strategic objective of these biopolitical controls was to intervene in these quasi-natural processes only in order to mitigate death, and even then, to mitigate it only to the point that death's "unnatural" absence would not precipitate a catastrophic reversal (e.g., famine) (*STP* 36-42). By contrast, when these regulatory technologies of the population were brought into "arrangements" with the disciplines' optimizations of the body—such as with the "system" that brought together (individual) perversion and (population) degenerescence in the "deployment of sexuality" (*HoSVol.1* 106)—it becomes possible to fantasize power's relation to life in productive terms: it becomes possible not merely to intervene in social-material circulations to keep death within a "normal" range, but to instrumentalize those circulations to strengthen, modify, and enhance "life" itself. If, however, life's maximization has, in practice, been effected primarily through reduction—if, that is, life's maximization has only manifested itself through projects of purification, sanitation, sterilization, elimination, banishment, incarceration, methylation, etc.; if life's maximization and the "vitalization of massacres" have never been far from one another

[235] "Wars are no longer waged in the name of a sovereign who must be defended; they are waged on behalf of the existence of everyone; entire populations are mobilized for the purpose of wholesale slaughter in the name of life necessity: massacres have become vital. It is as managers of life and survival, of bodies and the race, that so many regimes have been able to wage so many wars, causing so many men to be killed. And through a turn that closes the circle, as the technology of wars has caused them to tend increasingly toward all-out destruction…The atomic situation is now at the end point of this process: *the power to expose a whole population to death is the underside of the power to guarantee an individual's continued existence*" (*HoSVol.1* 137, emphasis mine).

(*HoSVol.1* 137)—this is, of course, because the "life" of biopower is not "real," in the sense that madness, delinquency, sexuality, and the state are not "real."[236] This is not to say that technologies of biopower do not act on actual pathways, which may be classified as biological in nature. What it means is that this "life" is variably constituted by biopower's deployment. This is why, in the same way that natural history's "living beings" and biology's "life" are distinct, the life of Cuvier, the life of Malthus, the life of evolutionism, the life of epidemiology, the life of colonial racism, the life of eugenics, the life of the genome, the life of epigenetics, the life of human capital, the life of neoliberalism, etc., are distinct (if nevertheless genealogically affiliated). Nevertheless, I would argue that in all of these discourses and deployments of life, two dominant themes of nascent biology persist and continue to organize the concept in its variable deployment: its interstitial, relational quality and its paradoxically synthesizing *and* binarizing function, both of which operate to ontologically divide living beings along the same/other axis (the same being that which is allowed to live, the other involving that which is made to die), while simultaneously manifesting their inextricability. Thus, one could argue that the history of biopower was prefigured by Cuvier's analogy of the body as a furnace which consumes death to make life.

In view of the foregoing, for Mbembe (and this is my third point), "death" is not the objective corollary of necropower. His necropower does not constitute a terrain of control and intervention organized around a quasi-natural object defined as "death." Insofar as the strategic aim of necropower is to "make die," it does not target death. The "death" of necropower is,

[236] As noted in the introduction to this dissertation, the de-realization of the object of analysis is a general feature of Foucault's methodologies: "Taking the point of view of the disciplines involved refusing to give oneself a ready-made object, be it mental illness, delinquency, or sexuality. It involved not seeking to measure institutions, practices, and knowledges in terms of the criteria and norms of an already given object. Instead, it involved grasping the movement by which a field of truth with objects of knowledge was constituted through these mobile technologies. We can certainly say that madness 'does not exist,' but this does not mean it is nothing" (*STP* 118).

rather, the "death" of sovereign power: that is, "death" here is the limit beyond which the sovereign can no longer pursue life. It will perhaps be objected that Mbembe's analysis of the production of "death-worlds" and the "living dead" is predicated upon a more capacious understanding of death. In particular, his references to "death-in-life" and the "living dead" seems, at first, to gesture toward a hybrid ontology uniquely correlated with necropower. Yet, what constitutes the "living dead"? What distinct quality not only defines this ontology but conceptually squares it with the "death" of necropower's "make die in order to make die" (or, as I previously argued, "make die to make sovereign") which is evidently a literal, material death and, by extension, death as the limit of life and sovereign power? Unfortunately, it does not appear that the analytic classification "living dead" operates on the ontological ordering of life and death; rather, it primarily operates at the level of description to proleptically bind subjects of the state of exception to the death that targets them: "If power still depends on tight control over bodies…the new technologies of destruction are less concerned with inscribing bodies within disciplinary apparatuses than with inscribing them, *when the time comes*, within the order of the maximal economy now represented by the 'massacre'" ("Necropolitics" 87, emphasis mine). The precise nature of this inscription is unclear: if it occurs at the moment of massacre, then what are the mechanisms and tactics of this "inscription" other than the massacre itself? Unlike disciplinary inscription, which involves the piecemeal, quotidian, continual training of bodies into self-maintained rhythms of subjection, the inscription of the massacre appears to be more akin to the radioactive burst that instantaneously sears a "burnt shadow" into Hiroko's flesh in Kamila Shamsie's novel of the same name (Shamsie 28). More generously, if we read this sentence through the parts of Mbembe's essay on "war machines," "enclave economies," "resource extraction," "the state of siege," and "managing the multitudes" preceding it—in short,

through the parts of Mbembe's essay that seem to utilize Palestine as their primary referent, rather than the Rwandan genocide—we can extend the temporality of this inscription to include those forms of interminable occupation that make the conditions of living coterminous (or strategically aligned) with the conditions of death. Even through this interpretation, however, from the standpoint of ontology, the "living dead" merely indexes a state of exposure to death; if there is a quasi-metaphysical gesture regarding "life" and "death" within this formulation, it only emerges through a metonymic prolepsis predicated on the logic of the state of exception, which conflates "present exposure to death" and "future murder."[237] As attested by the sheer number of influential theories of "social death," "slow death," "surplus populations," and "disposability" produced in the last two decades,[238] there is clearly much that is useful in bringing the conditions of living and the conditions of death (or dying) into the same analytic frame. Thus, I am not arguing against the heuristic value of Mbembe's references to the "living dead." Rather, my point is that Mbembian necropower does not take "death" as its target. Whether he is speaking of the "living dead" or of "massacres," death is only invoked as the boundary of life. For Mbembe, necropower is fundamentally about making die; it is not about death.

My two lines of analyses regarding the respective rationalities of the technology of disappearance and postcolonial technologies of mass death converge here. For Zia, the rationality

[237] Indeed, perhaps one of the most problematic aspects of "Necropolitics" is that, outside of some metaphysical, historically ungrounded assertions about the state of exception and coloniality, Mbembe does not justify his implicit claim that the Palestinian occupation and the Rwandan genocide are expressive of the same formation of power. Moreover, if we agree that Rwanda:massacre::Palestine:production-of-the-living-dead, then it is concerning that the theoretical foci of necropower are inversely represented in relation to their primary referents; that is, if the conceptual kernel of necropower is maximal murder, then why does "Necropolitics" only briefly mention Rwanda on one of its final pages while privileging Palestine as the quintessential example of necropower (similar to how Foucault privileges the Nazi state as the quintessential example of biopower)? If there is a logic underlying this chiasmus, I would argue that we should attribute it to the ontological elasticity of Agamben's concept of the "state of exception."

[238] Some notable examples include: Patterson *Slavery and Social Death*; Berlant "Slow Death"; Reddy *Freedom with Violence*; and Ferguson *Aberrations in Black*.

of the technology of disappearance, in its specificity and its multiple levels of application and significance, is illegible because it is presumed from the outset that the technology's aim and object are singular: disciplining all Kashmiris writ large. For Mbembe, the rationality of late and postcolonial technologies of mass death cannot be anything other than the illogic of a fetishized means that has become the end for no exterior purpose. The problem with both formulations—and the one that connects them—is that neither apprehends that *the objects and instruments by which power is mediated are themselves both constituted by and constitutive of the power they mediate*. Neither thinker scaffolds the different operative layers of application, nor are they able to address the heterogeneities of rationalities in play. As a result, they both reduce the complexity of formations of power they address, thereby precluding their analyses from recognizing both the conditions of possibility by which these formations are sustained and the realities to and by which they are oriented.

***

In beginning to proffer an alternative analytic of "securitarian necro-power," my objective is to draw attention to technologies of power for which "death" *is* the objective corollary. By "death," I am primarily referring to the psychosocial and intersubjective relations whereby we experience (and grieve) the loss of our attachments. Death thus operates simultaneously on intrapsychic, interpsychic, material, and political levels.[239] This layered and mutually imbricated understanding entails removing "death" from the periphery of "life" in order to apprehend it as a psychosocial construction that emerges through the rituals and discourses of death constitutive of assemblages of grief. This construction manifests in several ways. When

[239] Of course, "death" has many other functions as an abstract concept and discourse. These vary from structuring the teleology of life to connecting the aggrieved by way of a common relation.

semiotically aligned with intrasubjective loss, "death" indexes the powerful effects of the other's absence on our life. We see these effects in Zooneh's haunting, which demonstrate that while the cessation of an individual's biological functions is concurrent with the end of their individual life, their vital absence does not constitute an absolute absence; it is, rather, an absence that acts on, disrupts, interpellates, and invariably transforms those who remain. In other words, "death" is not the static limit of life; it is an ontogenetic and sociogenetic operator that accrues its capacities through the assemblages of grief in which it is formed. By extension, in my analytic, a technology of necro-power is one that instrumentalizes, to diverse ends, the processes and mechanisms constitutive of assemblages of grief, thereby targeting "death" in its psychosocial circulation.

Which brings us to my analytic's modifier, "securitarian." As is well known, Foucault frames his 1977-1978 lectures at the Collège de France, posthumously published as *Security, Territory, Population* (*STP*), as an expanded study of biopower, which until this point had only been briefly discussed in two prior lectures and the first volume of *The History of Sexuality* (*STP* 24, n.1). In particular, the first three lectures on "security" appear to be Foucault's attempt to flesh out the biopolitical "pole" of *HoS1*'s biopower, which, for obvious reasons, read as theoretically threadbare when compared to the disciplinary "pole." While the historical scope of these first three lectures does not make it past the mid-nineteenth century, thus failing to address the major themes of twentieth-century biopower (eugenics, racial science, and the vitalization of massacres) that had been raised in "Right of Death and Power over Life,"[240] they explicitly advance the analysis Foucault had begun in *The Order of Things* of the conceptual history of "life":

[240] *HoSVol.1* pp. 135-159.

> Consider now the case of natural history and biology. Basically, as you know, the essential role and function of natural history was to determine the classification of living beings that would enable them to be distributed to this or that case of the table. In the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century, a whole series of transformations take place that take us from the identification of classificatory characteristics to the internal organization of the organism, and then from the organism in its anatomical-functional coherence to the constitutive or regulatory relationships with the milieu in which it lives. Roughly speaking, this is the Lamarck-Cuvier problem, to which Cuvier provides the solution, in which the principles of rationality are found in Cuvier. Finally, in the transition from Cuvier to Darwin, from the milieu of life, in its constitutive relationship to the organism, we pass to the population that Darwin succeeded in showing was, in fact, the element through which the milieu produces its effects on the organism…So in the analysis of living beings it is the problematization of population that makes possible the transition from natural history to biology. (*STP* 77-78)[241]

Whereas *OoT* traced the shift from Linneaus-natural history-living beings to Cuvier-biology-life, *STP* seemingly introduces a new link in Foucault's piecemeal, linear history of life: Darwin-evolution-population.[242] Yet, the tidy linearity connecting Linneaus to Cuvier to Darwin at the beginning of the paragraph is undercut by the final sentence, which situates the authorless

[241] That Foucault is referencing *The Order of Things* at the end of this lecture expressly apparent its the final paragraph, in which Foucault comments on the relation between, on the one hand, the "population" and, on the other hand, the "'human sciences' [which] analyze [man] as a living being, working individual, and speaking subject" (*STP* 79).

[242] Except for a brief contrast he draws between Cuvier and Darwin regarding the former's habitual recourse to the "mythological," the sudden importance Foucault attributes to Darwin goes unexplained, not just in *STP* but, as far as I can tell, across Foucault's oeuvre.

"problematization of population" in constitutive relation to Cuvier (vis-à-vis biology).[243] However, this is less a tension between cause and effect than it is a tension between historiographic modalities. In *OoT*, the problem of life had been historicized with respect to the internal economies of its representational orders across epistemic dis/continuities. This strictly archeological approach is incommensurate with Foucault's later stress on the "immanence" of power and knowledge, which necessitates that genealogies of power "start…from what might be called 'local centers' of power-knowledge" (*HoS1* 98). This means predicating one's historiography of a specific phenomenon or dynamic on a "triple [analytic] displacement" of its dominant institutions, its ideal functions, and its target objects (*STP* 117-118). By contrast, the thread connecting Linneaus, Cuvier, and Darwin is centripetally overdetermined with respect to political-scientific institutions and objects of analysis and is, thus, genetic, rather than genealogical (*STP* 117). Thus, when Foucault reframes the shift from natural history to biology via the emergence of "population," he is not correcting the order of linear causality so much as he is expanding and transforming the domain of analysis in order to study the constitutive affiliations between, on the one hand, problematics of governmental practice and, on the other hand, scientific discourses of "life."

From this perspective, Foucault's turn away from biopower and to "governmentality" in the fourth lecture of *STP* (1 February 1978)—a turn that expresses itself in nearly every project Foucault pursues until his premature death in 1984—can be read as his attempt to obliquely

[243] For reasons of space, I had to omit part of the above passage. So that the reader is able to test the validity of my claim against the complete passage, here is what I ellipsed: "To think about the relationship between the milieu and the organism, Lamarck resorted to something like the idea of the organism being acted on directly and shaped by the milieu. Cuvier resorted to what appear to be more mythological things—like catastrophes, God's creative acts, and so on—but which actually organized the field of rationality much more carefully. Darwin found that population was the medium between the milieu and the organism, with all the specific effects of population: mutations, eliminations, and so forth" (*STP* 78).

construct a genealogy of life and biopower from "outside" its institutions, functions, and objects.[244] If this was the ultimate objective, though, Foucault died before he could collect his various investigations into themes of (self-)governance from the Ancient Greeks to American neoliberalism into any overarching genealogy (even as volumes two, three, and four of *The History of Sexuality* seem to lead in this direction). By extension, the first three lectures of *STP* are the closest Foucault came to delineating his "vague" notion of biopower, and constitute a crucial intersection point between his work on life (and death) and his work on governance (*STP* 1). For this reason, as well as for the unique form of power-knowledge Foucault articulates in his schematic comparison of security to sovereign and disciplinary power, I have privileged security over governmentality in my analytic.

For definitional purposes, security is a form of power-knowledge that takes *regulation* as its strategic aim and *population* as its strategic target. However, as with biopower, the relation between aim and target is not incidental, but dialectical. As Foucault argues, "population" is an historically specific object of knowledge and target of power which emerges as physiocrats of the eighteenth century began to apprehend and theorize "natural" limits to the domain of sovereign rule. For these nascent political economists, it became apparent that although the sovereign could utilize the law to restrict the actions of his subjects—as well as wage war against those who transgressed the law's boundary ("make die or let live")—there were dynamics both among his subjects and between them and their material environments that either eluded the law altogether or responded to it in unpredictable ways. With famine and plague, for example, the

[244] Foucault suggests as such in the first lecture of *The Birth of Biopolitics*: "[I]t seems to me that the analysis of biopolitics can only get under way when we have understood the general regime of this governmental reason I have talked about, this general regime that we can call the question of truth, of economic truth in the first place, within governmental reason. Consequently, it seems to me that it is only when we understand what is at stake in this regime of liberalism opposed to *raison d'État*…only when we know what this governmental regime called liberalism was, will we be able to grasp what biopolitics is" (*The Birth of Biopolitics* 21-22).

sovereign's rule had long been reduced to a state of reaction; in the face of such "natural forces," it was determined that he could only exert his authority to mitigate the severity of their effects because the missteps of previous reigns had demonstrated that sovereign power deployed to prevent catastrophe could just as well produce it.[245] Consequently, the physiocrats argued that society could not be modeled, as in social contract theory, via the sovereign-subject binary. Instead, it was necessary to recognize society not as the mere aggregate of political subjects over whom the sovereign had authority, but as vast multiplicities of circulations and interactions among, between, and within human and non-human elements. This did not, however, amount to figuring society as mathematical chaos. For each of these "natural" intractabilities (e.g., famine, plague, etc.) and with respect to the sovereign's authority, the physiocrats argued that these multiplicities should be separated on the basis of governmental pertinence into "levels of phenomena," the most pertinent level being that of "population," defined as, on the one hand, the level at and through which the "natural" forces productive of catastrophe accrue strength and form and, on the other hand, by virtue of its catalyzing capability, the level at and through which the sovereign can *indirectly* extend his authority to nature itself. In other words, just because "[t]he population [appeared] therefore as a kind of thick natural phenomenon in relation to the sovereign's legalistic voluntarism…[did] not mean that it [was] an inaccessible and impenetrable nature" (*STP* 71-75). If the physiocrats delineated natural limits to the sovereign's authority other than his subjects' mortality, their work concurrently theorized that: one, the instruments of

[245] Obviously, problematizing the deployment of sovereign power was not discovered in the late eighteenth century. The suffering of the entire polis engendered by Creon's refusal to accept the "great, unwritten traditions" of funeral rites in *Antigone* attests to the longstanding thematic tension between "sovereignty" and "nature" in Western cultures (even as nature is, as well, recurrently called upon to constitute sovereign authority). Thus, the late eighteenth century is not witness to the emergence of an entirely new discourse. Rather, it is that tyranny is placed in relation to a transformed domain of the "natural" and, in doing so, uncoupled from a regime of truth predicated on morality. That is, between the middle of the sixteenth century and the end of the eighteenth century, it becomes possible for a prince who cares for his people and who rules within the boundaries set out by divine authority to still be a tyrant, on the sole basis of his failure to grasp and execute the "arts of government" (*STP* 87-110).

sovereign and disciplinary power (laws and norms) have effects on "natural" forces in human societies beyond their primary targets (subjects and individuals) and their primary aims (order, obedience and subjectification); two, these effects are not arbitrary or chaotic but adhere to hidden-yet-perceptible logics and are therefore able to be empirically and/or anthropologically modeled; three, an epistemology of the population thusly constructed could expand modalities of control beyond the anthropocentric ambit of sovereignty and disciplinarity. Consequently, between various problematics of governance, their theoretical articulations, and the piecemeal development of technologies appropriate to them, a new form and horizon of power-knowledge was traced. This power would not take as its primary objective the negation of nature/reality (as with sovereign power), nor would it attempt to meticulously, continuously bring nature/reality into conformity with an ideal (as with disciplinary power). Rather, these new apparatuses of security seek, first and foremost, to regulate reality "by getting the components of reality to work in relation to each other, thanks to and through a series of analyses and specific arrangements" (*STP* 47). Thus, to rephrase this paragraph's opening sentence: security takes regulation as its strategic aim *precisely because* it takes population as its strategic target.

In Foucault's notion of it, population must be understood as a threshold of efficacy, meaning that it changes relative to the mechanism of security and the phenomenon targeted for regulation. Consequently, an individual may be part of the population within one calculation (e.g., the general mortality rate of smallpox), yet not part of it within a different calculation (e.g., the infant mortality rate of smallpox).[246] That this variability of the population is predicated on the normalization of governmental dis-selection—the cold elimination of individuals from the

[246] I am obliquely referencing an example Foucault provides to illustrate that population is constantly recalculated with respect to the targeted phenomenon. See *STP* pp. 55-63.

ambit of pertinence for government intervention—may reasonably call to mind racist exclusion. Yet, while these myriad securitarian calculations have played an important role in the biologization of race and the development of racism since the late eighteenth century, the process of dis-selection as manifest in the technology of security is incongruent with the dis-selections of scientific racism. In scientific racism—by which I mean the specific epistemic formulation, beginning in the 18th century, that grounded its divisions of humanity on allegedly empirical evidence[247]—exclusion is an instrument of power used against those who have already been enfolded into the domain of calculation; subjects of racist exclusion are always-already subjects "included" by virtue of their exclusion.[248] By contrast, even as they are invariably articulated with regimes of visibility—and, thus, inadvertently amplify their oppressive forces—the dis-selections of securitarian calculation do not primarily function to intensify the oppression of those they exclude. Instead, within any deployment of security, dis-selection marks one as insignificant in relation to power insofar its calculations have shown that the use of *x* mechanism against one will not substantively affect phenomenon *y*. This is, in part, what separates security from discipline: "[d]iscipline allows nothing to escape. Not only does it not allow things to run their course, its principle is that things, the smallest things, must not be abandoned to themselves…[Apparatuses] of security, by contrast… 'let[] things happen'" (*STP* 45).[249] Inclusion and exclusion with respect to the population index relative calculations of

[247] Somerville *Queering the Color Line*.

[248] My logic here is underwritten by Agamben's parsing of exception—in the sense of an operation constitutive of a set—as an "*inclusive exclusion*," meaning that "which thus serves to include what is excluded" (*Homo Sacer* 21).

[249] Foucault schematizes law (the privileged instrument of sovereign power) as primarily prohibitive and, by extension, as "work[ing] in the imaginary"; discipline as primarily prescriptive and, as such, working "in a sphere complementary to reality"; and, finally, mechanisms of security as "making use of some instruments of [both] prescription and prohibition…[so as] to respond to reality in such a way that this response cancels out the reality to which it responds—nullifies it, or limits, checks or regulates it" and, as such, "work[ing] within reality" itself (by which he means security's calculation of reality, which it frequently misrecognizes as actual reality) (*STP* 47).

instrumentalizability—they are not ontological categorizations (though they have often been articulated with such categorizations). This non-coincidence of target and object is something that Foucault implies, yet fails to delineate in his schematization of sovereign, disciplinary, and securitarian power. With discipline, for example, the object and target of power are one and the same: the individual targeted for subjectification *is* the body constituted (objectified) by continuous training. Analogously, with biopower, "life" is both the product of its mechanisms and that which its mechanisms attempt to "maximize." However, with security, population is targeted only insofar as this specific modality of targeting enables power to intervene in a "natural process" (i.e., its proper object) which would otherwise escape it. In security's imaginary, population is a matrix through which the effects engendered by differentially applying its mechanisms to various levels of society will, with statistical regularity, favorably interact,[250] culminating in a desired outcome at the otherwise inaccessible "level" of natural phenomena.

The foregoing engagement with biopower and population enables us to recognize three principal aspects of security that are pertinent to delineating the form of necro-power as it functions in Kashmir. First, mechanisms of security are oriented toward "natural processes," where "nature" is negatively (and therefore, open-endedly) defined as the domain of dynamic forces inhering between, among, and within human and non-human elements that cannot be directly interpellated by sovereign and disciplinary power. Second, within deployments of security, regulation functions as suspended *telos*. That is, in taking regulation as its aim, security strategically suspends the teleology—the desired outcome—of its deployment. This

[250] In the original French, Foucault calls population an "operateur," which Graham Burchell faithfully translated as "operator." Mathematically, though, operator is an extraordinarily general term, whereas "matrix" captures the drive toward complex systematicity that structures securitarian calculation.

differentiates security from sovereign and disciplinary power, both of which are predicated on the recurrent reproduction of their effects. By contrast, security does not try to negate nor produce a specific phenomenon. Its goal, rather, is to deploy its instruments only in order to maintain its target phenomenon within a "bandwidth" of variation (*STP* 66). However, as Foucault emphasizes, this tendency toward *laissez aller*, this provisionalization of *telos*, does not make security a less oppressive, nor a less insidious, form of power. On the one hand, when the "discovery" of the physiocrats—demonstrating that miscalculated deployments of sovereign authority can stimulate disastrous chain-reactions within natural processes—was incorporated into the field of political rationality, a perverse ethics of action/non-action on the side of calamity was born: not only must the state not attempt to outright prevent "natural" phenomena of mass suffering and death, such as food shortage and disease, but it must, at the same time, use its mechanisms to ensure these phenomena do not fall below a certain threshold; the deaths of some must be allowed, and even obliquely provoked, in order to avoid the death of all.[251] On the other hand, in exchanging discipline's fantasy of totalizing control over bodies for one of provisional regulation over natural phenomena, security opens its objective domain to anything and everything that could possibly affect its target phenomenon, thereby stimulating ever-expanding networks of surveillance and data collection and the ceaseless development and (re)organization of regulatory mechanisms across interventionary scales. That is, security relinquishes a degree of control (i.e., suspends its *telos*) in order to dramatically (if not infinitely) expand its radius of

[251] See Foucault's commentary on Abeille's analysis of grain shortage and famine: "[T]here will no longer be any scarcity in general, on condition that for a whole series of people, in a whole series of markets, there was some scarcity…and consequently some hunger, and it may well be that some people die of hunger. But by letting these people die of hunger one will be able to make scarcity a chimera and prevent it occurring in this massive form of the scourge typical of the previous systems. Thus, the scarcity-event is split. The scarcity-scourge disappears, but scarcity that causes the death of individuals not only does not disappear, it *must not* disappear" (*STP* 42, emphasis mine).

control and integrate new elements—this is why Foucault describes security as "centrifugal," in contrast with the "centripetal" focus of discipline which concentrates, focuses, and encloses (*STP* 44-45).

The third principal aspect of security relevant to the deployment of necro-power in Kashmir is that *the relationship between objects and targets of power is ordered by provisional circuits of mediation and instrumentation*. With both sovereign and disciplinary power, object and target are effectively isomorphic. For example, in Foucault's counterintuitive description of disciplinary power, "the soul is the prison of the body" (*Discipline and Punish* 30), he inverts the Cartesian-Christian topography of the body and soul in order to emphasize that this imaginary is itself an instrument of power: the "inner" soul is not the intrinsic, inaccessible kernel of the human but the social product of subjectification, which functions to ensure the (semi-)autonomous optimization and restriction of bodies. In this formulation, the body and soul (or "individual") are inseparable; any ascription of one as "target" and the other as "object" would be meaningless.[252] This does not, to be clear, preclude the existence of multiple target-objects in deployments of sovereign and disciplinary power. To borrow another example from *Discipline and Punish*, the public executions of the *Ancien Régime* always worked on the condemned and the spectators simultaneously, with both the sovereign's excessive revenge upon the condemned's body and the situating of the non-condemned as co-actors in this theater of punishment being essential to the general (re)production of the sovereign-subject relation (32-69). Yet, it would be incorrect to say that the sovereign punished the condemned's body *primarily* in order to "subject" the spectators. As Foucault argues, this gruesome revenge upon

[252] This is not, to be clear, a phenomenological nor ontological statement. I am speaking from the perspective of disciplinary power.

those who violated the sovereign's laws only appears gratuitous from the inherited standpoint of nineteenth-century legal reformists. Excess was, in fact, a strategic element within territorial sovereignty's economy of power; it was utilized to repair the reciprocal dialectic between sovereign and subject that had been broken through the naked refusal of the sovereign's authority. Thus, even as spectacular punishment was utilized to deter others from violating the law, it was also an end to itself. In short, a hallmark of both sovereign and disciplinary power is the quasi-indissociability of object and target.

By contrast, in assuming as its strategic aim the provisional regulation of a nature fundamentally elusive to direct intervention, security situates its target(s) beyond its object(s). At first glance, this relationship between target and object appears to be one of mediation and instrumentation: security regulates natural phenomena through acting on objects, thus making instruments of them. Yet, as is the case with "population," natural phenomena as conceived by the apparatus of security are not things-in-themselves; they are calculations of force relations between objects. Consequently, security's objects are not incidental to its deployments; at the same time, they are not the primary target. In attempting to control these manifold force relations, security's target is always shifting: all objects are acted on in order to act on other objects through acting on the forces connecting them, the latter of which are frequently recalculated and remodeled, thus stimulating the introduction of new objects into the fold. Thus, the relationship between security's target(s) and object(s) is more precisely one of *provisional circuits* of mediation and instrumentation. *Acting on* is always *acting through*.

***

In view of the foregoing, I categorize the technology of disappearance in the occupation of Kashmir as a mechanism of securitarian necro-power in order to draw attention to its

regulatory rationality and, in doing so, to delineate why the nested articulations of multiple organizing objectives that compose this rationality are often illegible to normative hermeneutics of power. By withholding some of the corpses of the disappeared, the occupation distributes epistemological violence such that a pertinent number of Kashmiris are rendered susceptible to debilitating formations of and in the work of mourning. In turn, their debilitation radiates beyond them through their relationships with others, thereby giving rise to adverse affective currents that ripple across the population. Whereas spectacular murder often galvanizes the loved ones of the dead—a melancholic phenomenon, no doubt, whereby the aggrieved often displace their own dispossession and its fulfillment in the fantasy of revenge—forced disappearance arranges the aggrieved's (un)knowledge of their loved one's "death" such that grief's potentially animating energies become bound to a relation of cruel optimism. In advancing this depiction of power's effects, I am not arguing that the loved ones of the disappeared are entirely incapacitated by their melancholia, nor am I suggesting that this melancholia is a foregone conclusion in every case *nor* that the relative regulative efficacy I am speculatively attributing to this dispersion of melancholia is stable. As noted earlier, one of the unique features of technologies of security is that their weaponization of "natural" processes is coextensive with "letting things be"; consequently, their potential power is necessarily predicated upon the assumption of risk, while the compensatory (and erroneous) fantasy of security is always that this risk is knowable and, by extension, neutralizable. To recall Musa's incisive gloss of what I earlier called the epistemology of (in)security: "'They don't know what they've done. They really have no idea'" (*TMOUH* 395).

What I *am* arguing, however, is that enforced disappearance constitutes a far more sophisticated technology than its prevailing rationalization as a technique of intimidation would

suggest and scholars would do well to prioritize diagramming power when analyzing practices of resistances.

Chapter 3 Traumatic Formalism, Sex, and Ontogenetic Susceptibility

Introduction: The Ethics of Allegorizing Grief

In the third section of the Introduction, I indicated that *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* articulates a speculative representation-qua-analysis of Kashmiri resistance to securitarian necro-power but that it does so in a mediated way, making use of allegory to route this analysis primarily through its hijra plot (as opposed to its Kashmir plot); in particular, I will argue across this chapter and the next that Anjum's traumatization and her unique method of traumatic repair allegorize, respectively, debilitating melancholia in Kashmir and the subsequent emergence among Kashmiris of nascent arrangements of discourses and rituals of death that facilitate a politically-capacitating form of grief-in-melancholia. In the next chapter, in dialogue with the novel's representation-qua-analysis of it, I theorize this grief-in-melancholia as specifically constituting what I call *incredulous mourning*. That I do not move directly to this analysis of incredulous mourning and, instead, dedicate the broad majority of this chapter to a conceptual genealogy of trauma is due to the concomitant intervention into the politics and ethics of representing resistance (and the oppressions to which it correlates) constituted by the novel's conscientious deployment of allegorical mediation. Informing its layered stories, *TMOUH*, I argue, searches for an aesthetic-political form that will enable collective recognition across and between all modes of dispossession without necessitating a derealizing sacrifice of the allegorical vehicle—that will allow, to recall my earlier close reading, the epigraphic vultures to persist in the narrative they metaphorically frame, even if only as specters. Consequently, because this

deployment of allegory is enmeshed with the analysis itself, its role must be fleshed out in the process of exegesis.

There are, of course, multiple ways we could approach such a fleshing out. The one that I pursue here is likely the most extreme, insofar as it reflects my efforts to *immanently* translate Roy's intervention (of allegorizing resistance) into a literary-theoretical hermeneutics by developing the latter through and for the purposes of delineating that intervention and the analysis of which it constitutes a part. While I would argue that this approach is the one most commensurate with Roy's ethical-political-analytic project, I recognize that its structure necessarily precludes clear contextualization (not that I have not already demonstrated myself to be willing to abandon clear contextualization where doing so would prove theoretically or ethically productive). In this regard, I ask my reader to extend some suspension of *telos* to this chapter, as well as the first half of chapter four. Although throughout the sections that follow, as well as what remains of this introduction, I often signpost my *local* rhetorical and analytic objectives, out of a desire to not mire my reader in gestures toward connections that will not yet be legible, I only infrequently return to the overarching analytic framework and argument. Let me briefly describe the contents and structure of this chapter.

This chapter, excepting this introduction, can be regarded as consisting of three parts, the first two of which correspond, respectively, to sections one and two and the third of which is spread out over sections three through seven. The first part is a reading of the novel that dilates more on Anjum's injury at Gujarat and how it connects *narratively* to her relocation to the graveyard and *allegorically* to resistant grief in Kashmir; this section also touches briefly on Roy's efforts at conscientiously representing hijras, the full significance of which I bear out in the penultimate section of chapter four. The second part is a delineation of the narrative logic by

which the novel renders Anjum's injury to the reader and makes it legible as one of trauma; I refer to this narrative logic as *traumatic formalism*. The third part of this chapter, and its main body, is a provisional genealogy of trauma theory that takes as its central node of investigation Freud's mutating relationship with the concept and its constitutive logics. Through this provisional genealogy, I demonstrate that, one, trauma's theorization and social implantation has, across its early-twentieth-century and contemporary formations, largely been tethered to anxieties and desires regarding the capacity of "human" ontology and developmental trajectory to be formed and deformed by the external world, a capacity that I refer to broadly as *ontogenetic susceptibility*. As I discuss in section four ("The Masturbating Child"), these anxieties and desires are, as scholars of colonialism might expect, constituted in part by (biopolitical) regimes of colonial racism extending back at least to the eighteenth century, if not two centuries earlier; however, notwithstanding the significant influence of racism on discourses of ontogenetic susceptibility, for reasons I lay out in that section, I also suggest that these discourses should not be reduced to race but, instead apprehended in their specificity as: one, informed additionally by discourses of sex/uality's unique ontogenetic power; and, two, structured by the open-ended, centrifugal epistemology of security. Finally, by tracing the sublations by which Freud attempts (unsuccessfully) to progressively incorporate the causal logic of externally-induced trauma into his psychoanalytic system while displacing its (de)formative power to both sex and the prehistory of the subject, I demonstrate that he ultimately manages his ambivalence toward ontogenetic susceptibility by using traumatic logic to implicitly formulate intersex embodiment as the signature of form—as that which proleptically ensures that the generativity of sex (whose value for Freud is precisely its ability to deform the limits of human ontology such that the latter can accommodate the full heterogeneity of its expression) will not, like the (fascist) death

instincts, dissolve the human entirely but, instead, will engender "the unity of mankind" (*Civilization and its Discontents* VI). As I later argue in chapter four, this link between trauma, intersex embodiment, and form is significant, insofar as it allows us to see that Roy's traumatization of Anjum and the political hope Roy tethers to Anjum's graveyard community of the dispossessed (and, consequently, to the real life-in-the-graveyard of Mona Ahmed) is structured by a traumatic ontology of intersex whose discursive conditions of possibility have as-of-yet been illegible.

3.1 Anjum's Jannat

Excepting its opening chapter, which proleptically situates Anjum in the graveyard, *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* at first appears to approximate an accelerated bildungsroman in its narrative structure: it starts with a description of Anjum's birth and linearly recounts her development from intersex childhood to hijra adulthood. Moreover, although this life story progresses rapidly (taking place over a mere thirty-six pages), the novel encourages the reader to accept its account as veracious through liberal use of free-indirect narration, creating the illusion of intimacy (and at times, of substitutability) between the narrator and Anjum.[253] However, this illusion and the seamless diachrony it supports are soon shattered. Three days into their account of a trip Anjum takes with her elderly friend Zakir Mian to Ajmer and Ahmedabad, the narrator abruptly severs our access to her inner world, shifting instead to a third-person account of their loved ones' perspectives: "On the third day, anxious about [her daughter] Zainab, she called [home] again…After that, there was no news from her or from Zakir Mian. His son called his

[253] Between this considerable deployment of free-indirect narration (particularly with Anjum and Tilo) and Roy's propensity for inserting her sardonically trenchant commentary of political and economic events into the narrator's account, it is often difficult to separate character, narrator, and Roy in *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*.

mother's family home in Ahmedabad. The phone was dead" (*TMOUH* 48). Suspending Anjum and Zakir's fate, the novel turns to media coverage of terror seizing the state of Gujarat, and it quickly becomes clear that history is irrupting into the narrative world: communication with Anjum and Zakir ceases because they are caught up in the Gujarat Pogrom,[254] a three-day[255] outbreak of anti-Muslim violence that consumed Gujarat in February 2002 following fifty-nine[256] Hindu pilgrims being burned alive[257] on a train in Godhra. Horrified by the reports coming out of Gujarat, Anjum's hijra family cannot do much to quell their anxiety but wait for the communal tempest to die down and, in the meantime, scan the news for any sign of Anjum and Zakir (49). Their scanning reveals nothing, however, and it is two months before they (and the reader) learn what befell the travelers, when Zakir's son, Mansoor, finds Anjum in a Muslim refugee camp and escorts her back to Delhi. As for Zakir, all we are told is that Mansoor "learned what happened to him" (50).

Anjum's long-awaited return to the Khwabgah is nevertheless troubled by her unfamiliar behavior:

---

[254] While this period of violence is referred to within India's political media as "the Gujarat riots," Parvis Ghassem-Fachandi has argued that this moniker endows the event—in which the majority of the over one thousand people killed were Muslim—with a sense of spontaneity and arbitrariness that shamefully "[obfuscates] the agency of political and civic actors" (Ghassem-Fachandi 9). While there was a degree of spontaneity present in this pogrom, it "[was nevertheless] not a serendipitous event but a planned one, characterized by a specific kind of collective consciousness that makes forms of complicity possible" (9).

[255] The length of the Gujarat Pogrom in relation to its precipitating event is a matter of interpretation. Although Ghassem-Fachandi begins his study defining the pogrom as "[lasting] for three days," he notes that the initial period of concentrated murder was "followed over a few months by many instances of violence on a lesser scale," and as such, "[m]any Muslims understand the pogrom to have lasted much longer than three days and, instead, still today insist it lasted anywhere from six weeks to three months" (1). Roy's narrator echoes this latter perspective in the novel: "[t]he killing went on for weeks and was not confined to cities alone" (*TMOUH* 49). Without effacing the bloody ripple-effects of this primary violence, to avoid stretching the term "pogrom" beyond Ghassem-Fachandi's intended meaning, I use the duration specified in his definition.

[256] While most accounts report the death count as fifty-eight, the novel says sixty (*TMOUH* 48) and Ghassem-Fachandi says fifty-nine (32). Although I have not been able to account for these discrepancies, I defer to Ghassem-Fachandi as the authority on this event.

[257] Because no unbiased investigation has conclusively determined who was responsible for this tragedy, the passive voice is regrettably necessary here.

> [She] responded to the tears and questions and welcoming embraces of the others impassively, as though their greetings were an ordeal that she had no choice but to put up with…It soon became obvious that she did not want to talk about what had happened. She would not answer questions about Zakir Mian…What Anjum wanted was to be left alone. (50-51)

In contrast to the fullness of her presence before leaving for Ahmedabad, Anjum's return is triply interstitial. On one level, she psychoaffectively seals herself from everyone in the Khwabgah, unwilling to bring them into relation with her still-too-present experiences in Gujarat. Moreover, this closing-off extends to the reader as well. In contrast to the intimacy we had previously enjoyed, we find ourselves mere spectators to Anjum's actions, the narrator only allowing us to slide into the perspective of her loved ones: "She was quiet, *disconcertingly so*, and spent most of her time with her books" (51, emphasis mine). Yet, what most perplexes both us and the other hijras is Anjum's altered relation to gender. In place of her usual hyper-feminine aesthetic, Anjum returns having assumed a masculine appearance: "She had had a haircut…[and she] was dressed like a junior bureaucrat in a pair of dark brown men's terry cotton trousers and a checked, short-sleeved safari shirt" (50-51). Because she immediately alters her clothes and make-up to present as legibly hijra once inside the Khwabgah, the reader initially presumes that Anjum's recourse to a masculine guise must have been a temporary survival strategy. However, its contingency is quickly drawn into question when Anjum attempts to force her young daughter, Zainab, to present and identify as a boy:

> One morning Anjum left the house, taking Zainab with her. She returned with a completely transformed Bandicoot. Her hair was cropped short and she

was dressed in boy's clothes; a baby Pathan suit, an embroidered jacket, jootis with toes curled upward like gondolas.

"It's safer like this," Anjum said by way of explanation. "Gujarat could come to Delhi any day. We'll call him Mahdi." (52)

On a first reading, this uncomfortable moment appears to be little more than Roy shoehorning a counter-history into her novel. Immediately after Anjum coerces Zainab into presenting as a boy, her guru, Ustad Kulsoom Bi, calls a house meeting and recounts a noble history of hijras within the court structure of the Mughal Empire. Always the deconstructive historian, Roy soon undercuts our faith in Bi's objectivity, first by juxtaposing Bi's decolonial historiography against her own contemptuous condescension of another hijra's attempt to recount the noble representation of hijras within the Hindu narrative tradition (55-56) and, second, by parenthetically critiquing the elision of transmasculine figures within these various attempts to virtuously inscribe hijras into "precolonial"[258] history.[259] This clever deployment of "affirmative deconstruction"[260] notwithstanding, it would seem that the novel stages Anjum's "disconcerting" behavior in order to create an opportunity for corrective representation of hijras vis-à-vis children: "Ustad Kulsoom Bi said…the central edict of the Khwabgah was *manzoori*. Consent. People of the Duniya [outside world] spread wicked rumors about Hijras kidnapping little boys and castrating them…[I]n the Khwabgah, as the Authority was witness, nothing happened without *manzoori*" (57-58). Here, Bi references the criminalization of hijras by

[258] The inverted commas index the slipperiness of the term precolonial, particularly in South Asia. Needless to say, for some, precolonial is used to mark the violence of the Mughals as well as the Europeans.

[259] "In the Khwabgah, Holy Souls trapped in the wrong bodies were liberated. (The question of what would happen if the Holy Soul were a man trapped in a woman's body was not addressed)" (*TMOUH* 57).

[260] On affirmative deconstruction, see Spivak's "Subaltern Studies: Deconstructing Historiography" in *Selected Subaltern Studies* p. 16.

colonial authorities in the mid-nineteenth century, which was effected through portrayals of them as castrating kidnappers, despite—or, in Anjali Arondekar's view, by virtue of[261]—a glaring lack of evidence that children in hijra households (who constituted a relatively small percentage of those households) were subject to bodily modification against their will.[262] As Jessica Hinchy demonstrates in her study of hijra demography and criminalization in the North-Western Provinces, these injurious representations were symptoms, in part, of two interrelated problematics of British colonial governance: the regulation of slave trading and the liberalization of monastic governmentality (Hinchy 73-75; 139-163). As it turns out, hijras did participate in the buying and selling of slaves, even if they did not forcefully emasculate those slaves. As with other monastic communities, *chelas* (disciples) in hijra households not infrequently began their discipleship as slaves from childhood; although it does not appear that hijras directly kidnapped children, "[c]olonial court cases and official correspondence suggest that some children were kidnapped and then sold to *Hijras*," implicating hijras in the slave economy (160).[263] Consequently, while no doubt well-meaning, Roy does not hedge her counter-history enough. In

[261] In her well-known thesis on archival hermeneutics vis-à-vis colonial sexuality—which utilizes the figuration of hijras in the colonial record as one of its analytical bases—Arondekar argues that "the discourse on 'unnatural' sexual conduct in colonial India appears embedded in an evidentiary paradox: a known prevalence of the crime, and an equally known rarity of its documentation…[Consequently, the] colonial archive no longer reads as the failed effort to produce an exhaustive panopticon, but becomes instead (or perhaps in addition) even more successful through its articulation of that very failure" (*For the Record* 11). While agreeing with the general tenor of this thesis, Hinchy cautions that Arondekar's "'everything/nowhere model'" risks flattening the heterogeneity of colonial discourses on sexuality, particularly when one approaches the archive(s) with an eye toward regional differences in colonial governmentality; as she argues, "[a]nalysis of the different layers of the archives and the varied 'itineraries' of official documents highlights the multiple narratives surrounding *Hijras*" (Hinchy 120).

[262] "[C]olonial anxieties about the threat that *Hijras* posed to Indian boys overstated the actual number of children in *Hijra* communities. A very small number of children actually resided with *Hijras* in the 1860s; for example, three out of 586 'eunuchs' in Agra division were under sixteen. In mid 1871, only sixty-one boys were 'living under the guardianship of Eunuchs' in the NWP, suggesting that the vast majority of the estimated 2500 'eunuchs' in the province were not living with children…The NWP government concluded that *Hijras* were hiding children from the authorities, yet police did not find significant additional numbers of children in subsequent years" (Hinchy 161).

[263] In fact, "[i]n the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, slaves were interchangeably referred to as *chelas* and as adopted children, highlighting that slavery, discipleship and kinship were discursively entangled" (159-160).

her recourse to the liberalist paradigm of consent, Roy effaces the inegalitarian power dynamics that have historically structured guru-chela relationships. As we will see, this is part of a set of imbricated misrepresentations of the history and experiences of hijras on Roy's part.

Yet, if we attribute Bi's lecture to Roy's representational politics, its precipitating event does not partake of the same logic, since Anjum frames her forceful re-gendering of Zainab as a response to what happened in Gujarat. The "what," however, remains an open question until Anjum moves to the graveyard and recedes into her "Fort of Desolation":

> Unleashed at last from social protocol, it rose up around her in all its majesty—a fort, with ramparts, turrets, hidden dungeons and walls that hummed like an approaching mob. She rattled through its gilded chambers like a fugitive absconding from herself. She tried to dismiss the cortège of saffron men with saffron smiles who pursued her with infants impaled on their saffron tridents, but they would not be dismissed. She tried to shut the door on Zakir Mian, lying neatly folded in the middle of the street, like one of his crisp cash-birds. But he followed her, folded, through closed doors on his flying carpet. She tried to forget the way he had looked at her just before the light went out of his eyes. But he wouldn't let her.
>
> She tried to tell him that she had fought back bravely as they hauled her off his lifeless body.
>
> But she knew very well that she hadn't.
>
> *They*.
>
> *They, who?*

Newton's Army, deployed to deliver an Equal and Opposite Reaction.

Thirty thousand saffron parakeets with steel talons and bloodied beaks, all squawking together:

…

Only one place for the Mussalman! The Graveyard or Pakistan! (65-66)

As the novel refracts the violent events in Gujarat through Anjum's tortured memories, the reader realizes that their abrupt severance from Anjum's psyche is actually symptomatic of her mnemonic-affective defense mechanisms, collectively represented by the novel as a medieval fortress. That is, when Anjum seals herself away from others, this is a consequence of her consciousness being divided by the repression of Zakir's murder and, as we will see, the sparing of her own life. By extension, when her social world denies her shoring up this repression by means of controlling Zainab's gender presentation, internal conflicts with these memories escape the unconscious and, thus, spill out onto the surface of the text. Once there, despite Anjum's repeated attempts at forgetting, these memories quickly storm the (narrative) fortress, the anaphoric litany of "she trieds"—which had sought to protect both Anjum's consciousness and the time of narration from the past's seizure—giving way to the Hindutva mob chanting in the present tense.

In this stage of siege, Anjum persists for years, her existence reduced to "a ravaged, feral specter" haunting the graves of her family and others, kept from passing over to the other side, in part, by the material support of her loved ones, who refuse to abandon her to her Fort of Desolation (67-70). With the passage of time, though, her spectrality assumes a more habitable form: "Gradually the Fort of Desolation scaled down into a dwelling of manageable proportions. It became home; a place of predictable, reassuring sorrow—awful, but reliable" (70). This

fortress-turned-home is at once metaphorical and literal. As the "tide of grief and fear" slowly recedes, Anjum constructs a house around the graves she haunts, at first just for herself (and the graves) and then for an ever-shifting assortment of "down-and-out travelers," such as an imam whose son and daughter-in-law had treated him poorly and those hijras "who, for one reason or another, had fallen out of, or been expelled from, the tightly administered grid of Hijra Gharanas" (72-73). She initially christens this graveyard home for the dispossessed "Jannat Guest House"; reflecting its eventual accommodation of the dead as well as the living, it later becomes known as "Jannat Guest House and Funeral Services." The inclusion of abjected persons and others' grief will prove to be centrally important to what follows. The first part of the novel ends with Anjum and Saddam (one of her guests, who becomes a main character) on the roof of Jannat, bonding by mutually recognizing their existence as "falling people."[264] Both seem to have found in the small community at Jannat, as well as the funeral work they do there, an anchor point tethering them to the world. At this point, however, neither dares to invest in a livable notion of the future: "When the sun grew hot, they returned indoors where they continued to float through their lives like a pair of astronauts defying gravity…It isn't as if they didn't have plans. Anjum waited to die. Saddam waited to kill." (96)[265] Desiring futurity only becomes viable for them again through the imbrication of their lives with those from the novel's Kashmir and Adivasi plots, for which, as I will argue, Anjum's graveyard guesthouse constitutes the psychosocial and narrative foundation. Thus, while Jannat "[draws Anjum] back into the Duniya," her narrative cannot move forward from Gujarat without relinquishing itself to

[264] Anjum to Saddam: "'Once you have fallen off the edge like all of us have…you will never stop falling. The sooner you understand that the better. This place where we live, where we have made our home, is the place of falling people. Here there is no *haqeeqat*. *Arre*, even *we* aren't real. We don't really exist'" (88).

[265] Earlier, we were told that "Anjum never forgot that she was only Butcher' Luck. For the rest of her life, even when it appeared otherwise, her relationship with the Rest-of-Her-Life remained precarious and restless" (71).

interruption by these other plots. As gestured to in my Introduction, Roy's multiform interplay of resemblances and representations is the means by which disparate narratives of suffering are articulated through their reverberations, both within and beyond the literary text.[266]

Whereas the novel's hijra plot must "wait" for fulfillment in the diegetic unfolding of the novel's Kashmir plot, the intersections of the two are outlined before narration of the latter begins. Jannat, Arabic for "paradise," is a term that has long been associated with Kashmir, to deleterious effect. In a colonial tradition dating back to the Mughals, conquerors have idealized Kashmir as "paradise on earth." As Ananya Jahanara Kabir argues, this fetishism of the Valley's geography—which has reified it into a "landscape"[267]—has functioned across occupying regimes to "eliminate Kashmiri people, monuments in use, and homes" from imperial imaginaries, thereby discursively deracinating natives from their land or reducing them to unproductive non-agents of the land's history (Kabir 17). Since the abrogation of Article 370 in 2019, the designation of Kashmir as paradise has been instrumental to Indian settler colonialism, which is predicated, in part, on facilitating Hindu pilgrimage and secular tourism of the Valley through

[266] The novel's structure implies that the bildungsroman form is fundamentally unable to accommodate the layered intersections of communal violence and transphobia in India, an aesthetic-political critique later echoed by one of the Kashmir's plot's main characters, Tilo: "I would like to write one of those sophisticated stories in which even though nothing much happens there's lots to write about. That can't be done in Kashmir. It's not sophisticated, what happens here. There's too much blood for good literature" (288). Abandoning the genres of "good literature," *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* seeks its form instead in echoes such as the one above.

[267] W.J.T. Mitchell's reflections on landscape representation and its longstanding utility to Western imperialism are applicable to Kashmir's occupations, especially the present one: "The concept of landscape that dominates the discourse of Western art history is one that is resolutely focused on visual and pictorial representation, the scenic, picturesque, and superficial face presented by natural terrain. Landscape is something to be seen, not touched. It is an abstraction from place and a reification of space, a reduction of it to what can be seen from a distant point of view, a prospect that dominates, frames, and codifies the landscape in terms of a set of fairly predictable conventions…The primitive or aboriginal dweller on the land (the 'pagan' or 'rustic' villager) is seen as part of the landscape, not as a self consciously [*sic*] detached viewer who sees nature for its own sake as the Western observer does. In addition, the native dweller is seen as someone who fails to see the material wealth and value of the land, a value that is obvious to the Western observer. The failure of the native to exploit, develop, and 'improve' the landscape is, paradoxically, what makes it so valuable, so ripe for appropriation…Landscape thus serves as an aesthetic alibi for conquest, a way of naturalizing imperial expansion and even making it look disinterested in a Kantian sense (Mitchell 265-266).

terraforming the land, restructuring local economies, and visually obscuring the social and material wounds of India's occupation.[268] Consequently, in having Anjum christen her graveyard guesthouse Jannat, Roy performs three operations. First, she utilizes irony to signal that India, in the name of protecting and preserving "paradise," has transformed Kashmir into a deathscape. Second, she foreshadows the imbrication of Anjum's struggles with those of the characters from the Kashmir plot. Third, she prepares her readers to recognize in Jannat Guest House and Funeral Services formations of political grief in Kashmir, thus inscribing Anjum's trauma at Gujarat and her ambivalent recovery vis-à-vis the necropolis with an allegorical dimension. In order to fully comprehend the ethics involved in Roy's use of this allegorical medium, we must first engage with the history of the concept of trauma. This involves rehearsing the logic of trauma as instituted by Freud and identifying its conditions of intelligibility—and thus, how we know it, how we recognize it through its formal conventions, and how those conventions affect literary narration.

3.2 Traumatic Formalism

Most readers will recognize Anjum's injury as one of trauma. For many, this will not be a conscious recognition but, rather, a passive acceptance of ontogenetic *logos* conditioned by repeated exposure to a mode of diegetic organization, by which events are temporally and causally connected in a plot, that I refer to as traumatic formalism.[269] In traumatic formalism, the narrative unfolds according to a "distinctive temporal logic" that Freud called *nachträglichkeit*, which he originally ascribed to traumatic neuroses—what contemporary psychology categorizes

[268]www.greaterkashmir.com/business/amid-tourism-surge-jk-admin-begins-process-to-identify-land-for-5-star-hotels/

[269] My interest in narrative form and the way I approach it have been informed by my many wonderful conversations with Aaron Stone. See Stone's *Desires for Form*.

as "trauma-and-stressor-related disorders"—but which he later attributed to infantile sexuality more generally (Fletcher 60; *DSM-V* 265-290).[270] Although in the *Standard Edition* James Strachey renders *nachträglichkeit* as "deferred action," John Fletcher argues that this translation fails to convey the subtleties of Freud's neologism: "Freud turns an ordinary German word *nachträglich* (later, afterwards, subsequently, etc.) into an abstract noun *Nachträglichkeit*, which from its verbal components—*nach*/after, *tragen/to bear or carry* [sic.], as in to bear a grudge—might be literally translated as 'carrying-after-ness'" (60-61n2). From the perspective of trauma's cultural history, both "deferred action" and "carrying-after-ness" point toward its definitive temporality: although trauma's conceptual model has undergone several transformations in the years since its emergence as a psychiatric diagnosis in the mid-nineteenth century (from its etiological medium to its ontological corollary to its degree of analogistic abstraction), the characteristic feature of trauma has always been the proleptic anteriority of the traumatizing event with respect to its symptomatic reemergence, the latter of which often takes the form of an irruptive memory, otherwise known as a "flashback." From the perspective of Freud's various theorizations of trauma, however, Strachey's translation is insufficient on two counts.

First, deferral is fundamentally anticipatory; that is, to defer something is to already plan for a future point of its reemergence and, thus, to preemptively open the future to the past *and* to mark that moment of reemergence with a cognitive-affective temporal differential, whereby the process of deferral does not disturb the subject's linearization of experience. By contrast, as we can see in his early essay on hysteria, from the very beginning of his reflections on trauma Freud

[270] Since contemporary psychology has constituted itself by way of religiously disavowing Freud, *nachträglichkeit* is not utilized in the *DSM-V*. In its place, the APA has decided upon the term "delayed expression" (*DSM-V* 276), which fails to capture the "distinctive temporal logic" of Freud's original concept.

identified the traumatic return's phenomenology with non-linearizable temporal conjunction: "'*the memory [of the childhood sexual trauma] will operate as though it were a contemporary event*. What happens is, as it were, a *posthumous action by a sexual trauma*'" (Fletcher 79). In the traumatic return, the subject does not process memory vis-à-vis a temporal differential; rather, they experience the past *as* the present. By extension, the traumatic event is not deferred by the subject—it haunts the subject with an "after-ness" whose phenomenological actualization cannot be prepared for.

Second, insofar as Freud describes trauma as a "posthumous action by a sexual trauma," the "action" part of Strachey's translation clearly accords with Freud's early understanding of the disorder. However, as we will discuss, Freud revised his theory of trauma repeatedly throughout his career, especially as it became more central to his theories of infantile sexuality, ontogenesis, the unconscious, and the structural model of the mind. Whereas his initial perception of hysterical trauma does not diverge significantly from Strachey's translation, the same cannot be said for the revised accounts, wherein what is at stake is not only the *delay* in the traumatic event's psychic actualization but also the ontogenetic effects of *carrying* the traumatic event between its originary moment and its later moment of irruption.[271] That is, "deferred action" reduces trauma to two points in time, framing it as a mere phase shift in the subject's initial experience of the event. "Carrying-after-ness," by contrast, succinctly indexes Freud's initial sense that trauma is not just an isolated infliction but, rather, that the traumatized subject's

[271] In Freud's description of trauma as a "posthumous action," it is apparent why Strachey felt justified in his definition. At this point in Freud's career, his model of the mind had flattened the relationship between external force and internal processing, making the former largely responsible for ontogenesis. In the quote from the hysteria essay, Freud cannot yet recognize the contradiction inherent in referring to memory *as* trauma's posthumous action, as if memory could occur without the mediation of a body, as if memory could ever not signify the body's history with the traumatizing event.

developmental form (ontogenesis) is in some way ordered by the distinct temporal form (proleptic anteriority) that constitutes their recurrent experience of the traumatic event.

Given this, I use the phrase "traumatic formalism" to refer to a mode of narrative organization in which a diegetically exceptional event is raised to the status of an ordering principle for a person's (or fictional character's) developmental trajectory through utilizing the form and logic of *nachträglichkeit* to imbue the event with atemporal causal potential. Narratives with traumatic form lead their readers to affirm this causal potential by introducing the exceptional event, which either occurs before or is conspicuously absented from the time of narration, at moments when the action is unfolding in such a way that local causes cannot sufficiently explain it. In other words, readers are offered the exceptional event in the midst of epistemological uncertainty, with respect to which the event holds out relief in the form of an atemporal causal schema. In accepting this relief, readers valorize the logic of trauma upon which its plausibility is predicated, enabling the narrative to then freely deploy the (now, traumatizing) event as an elastic etiology for other developments, regardless of their local circumstances.

In initially withholding the scene of Anjum's victimization from linear narration and then, after Anjum has relocated to the graveyard, only partially revealing it through a sequence of distressed and metaphorized flashbacks, *TMOUH* clearly organizes its hijra plot via the aforementioned structure, though the spectacularity of Anjum's flashbacks makes this formal recourse to trauma potentially legible at the level of content as well. With fewer obvious contextual clues, the novel similarly organizes its narration of the Kashmir plot, only revealing this plot's originary scenes of violence—the murders of Gul-Kak and Musa's wife and daughter,

respectively—to the reader retrospectively, after having repeatedly utilized circuitous narration to (proleptically) establish their events as (anteriorly) constitutive lacunae.

These deployments of trauma are not remarkable because they reflect new and experimental breaks with formal conventions—quite the opposite. As the novel expresses through Tilo's commentary on her own attempts at writing fiction that represents the occupation in Kashmir, the novel cannot risk the abstruse aesthetics of "good literature."[272] The catalog of suffering it offers its reader must be transparent, recognizable, and emotionally evocative. By extension, its deployment of traumatic formalism is not enigmatic. Rather, in conveying and naturalizing causal relationships between chronologically and diegetically separated events, the novel *presumes* its readers' passing familiarity with the logics of trauma, while never exceeding modern realism's thresholds of plausibility. That readers can be expected to tacitly grasp and accept these relationships reflects a curious historical development. As Didier Fassin and Richard Rechtman note in *The Empire of Trauma: An Inquiry into the Condition of Victimhood*, prior to the emergence of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) as a diagnostic category in the wake of the Vietnam War, trauma was relatively unheard of outside of the psychological disciplines. Within a short period of time, however, trauma became "established as a unique way of appropriating the traces of history and one of the dominant modes of representing our relationship with the past" (Fassin and Rechtman 15). That is, not only have the discourses of psychological trauma become incorporated into our anthropological regimes of truth—such that, today, it is commonplace for people to performatively organize their life history into a causal schema relating maladaptive behavior in the present to a traumatic event in the past—the narrative form of psychological trauma has been extended to social, political, and cultural

[272] See n. 266.

histories such that scholars often frame slavery, colonialism, genocide, etc., as collective trauma.[273] Appropriately, Fassin and Rechtman term this strange, unexpected diffusion of traumatic formalism across individual and collective hermeneutic modalities as the "traumatization of experience" (22).

As Fassin and Rechtman's social history demonstrates, this historical process was gradually shaped over the course of a century and a half by trauma's conceptual deployment in a series of struggles—between insurance agencies and railroad crash victims, war psychiatrists and WWI soldiers, second-wave feminists and judicial institutions, Western nations and Holocaust survivors, the American public and Vietnam War veterans—in which trauma was not always mobilized on behalf of the victims but, instead, initially constituted as an instrument in their victimization. From the perspective of French poststructuralism, neither the imbrication of trauma discourse with power nor its polyvalent mobility across these contests are particularly surprising. Perhaps, though, the same cannot be said for the novel deployment of trauma reflected in the formulation of PTSD as a clinical category by the American Psychological Association (APA) in the *DSM-III*, published in 1980. Although there were a number of motivations for reconceptualizing "traumatic neurosis" (a term invented by Hermann Oppenheim and then popularized via Freud) as PTSD, principal among them was developing a diagnostic rubric that could help explain the troubling psychological symptoms that thousands of Vietnam War veterans were demonstrating upon returning to the United States. The APA's investment in these veterans reflected the organization's structural and personal ties with the US federal government, as not only did the APA count on the federal government for funding and juridical

[273] David Lloyd's "Colonial Trauma/Postcolonial Recovery?" engages productively with this problem of extension with respect to colonialism in particular.

legitimacy but, in fact, some of its preeminent practitioners in traumatic disorders originated in military psychiatry (88). Whereas European war psychiatry in WWI had denounced traumatized soldiers as anti-national malingerers whose weak and immoral constitution (as opposed to the disturbing sensations of war) formed the true source of their affliction, the APA task force placed the blame for Vietnam veterans' symptoms solely on the war, which it regarded, in concert with a majority of the American public, as categorically unjust (43-57; 88-89). In the process, though, the APA expanded the concept of trauma so that it would apply to the perpetrators and victims of human-initiated traumatic events simultaneously. That is, from the perspective of the PTSD task force, the soldiers who were exposed to horrific violence and the soldiers who committed horrific violence were *both* to "be considered war victims, broken by what they had witnessed and by what they themselves had done—men traumatized by what the war had made of them" (91). Utilizing the elasticity of trauma to efface the differences between perpetrators and victims was advantageous to the task force and the veterans groups (such as Vietnam Veterans Against the War) with whom it was in close contact, since both sought to condemn the war and its atrocities without reducing those atrocities to individual pathology. At the same time, military authorities also benefited from the image of the "'self-traumatized perpetrator,'"[274] since it allowed them to present these tortured war criminals to the American public as a sign that a form of natural justice was already at work, thereby rhetorically situating the military authorities and the public as joint witnesses to a sacrifice of these criminals upon a purifying pyre, by which both state and society would be exonerated for the inhumanity they had brought into being. Consequently, when the APA accepted the task force's recommendations and officially reformulated traumatic neurosis as PTSD in the *DSM-III*—the circumstances of which enabled

[274] Fassin and Rechtman credit this term to Allan Young (92).

trauma discourse (and traumatic formalism) to enter into general circulation, thus precipitating the "traumatization of experience" on a systemic level—trauma became divorced from morality and, concurrently, so too was elided any consideration of how complicity in the production of a traumatic event might condition the psychodynamics of trauma (92-93).[275]

That this problematic legacy necessarily complicates any deployment of trauma within literary representations of oppression is not lost on Roy; on the contrary, *TMOUH* conscientiously cuts across its use of trauma. When searching through Tilo's archive, for instance, Biplab discovers official documents related to Amrik Singh's petition for refugee status in the United States. Included therein is a referral in favor of the petition written by a social worker with the State Department, whose evaluation of Singh and his wife unwittingly rewrites reality:

> Based on the data presented above there is no doubt in my mind that Mrs. Loveleen Singh and Mr. Amrik Singh both suffer from severe Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. This degree of stress is definitely indicative of individuals that have suffered destructive and traumatic events such as torture, indefinite periods of incarceration and separation from family. They deeply fear that if they return to India these events will be repeated. (*TMOUH* 206-207)

Singh, as noted earlier, is the principal architect of torture, indefinite detention, and family separation for countless Kashmiris within Srinigar's security apparatus. Thus, the social worker's

[275] There is, for my purposes, a more geopolitically germane example of the weaponization of trauma, namely India's use of PTSD diagnoses and therapies in the occupation of Kashmir, which Mona Bhan argues constitutes an example of the "'healing touch' policy" I touched upon in chapter one (Bhan 8). Originally, I had planned on including this strategy in this chapter but was deterred from doing so when it was revealed that the main researcher of this specific deployment of trauma, Saiba Varma, was involved in a scandal over failing to disclose that her father is part of the Research and Analysis Wing of the Indian military (www.ucsdguardian.org/2022/02/21/two-ucsd-faculty-resigns-from-critical-gender-studies-executive-committee/).

characterization of him as a helpless victim of regional violence vis-à-vis a trauma diagnosis succinctly indexes PTSD's theoretical conflation of perpetrator and victim. Furthermore, this scene suggests that the incorporation of psychiatry as a moral authority within the enactment of international humanitarian law constitutes one pathway through which this theoretical conflation is catalyzed into a functional derealization of violence in the Global South.

Yet, insofar as it opts to depict *Anjum*'s suffering through trauma, Roy's novel sets itself against readings of the condition's articulations with bureaucracies of derealization (i.e., "the ministry of utmost happiness") that would reduce the affliction to a mere discourse of control, devoid of any *a priori* psychological reality. That is, *TMOUH* is clearly against throwing the baby out with the bathwater. Instead, I contend that the representation of traumatization and traumatic recovery the novel constructs through Anjum's story reflects Roy's attempt at conceptualizing trauma *beyond* the PTSD episteme. In what follows, I offer a genealogy of trauma theory, returning to Freud in order to explore his assertion of a delimited temporal period in which the trauma victim is ontogenetically, which is to say, developmentally, susceptible. I then show that Roy's innovation works to delineate specifically formal relationships between the social, psychological, and ontological conditions of traumatization, the characteristic symptoms of trauma, and the processes through which trauma becomes resolved. In doing so, Roy renders trauma both the sign and the product of an underlying metapsychology, rejecting PTSD's universalizing ascription of traumatic etiology to the mere experience of a violent or morally distressing event. Moreover, beyond this counter-discursive reorientation of trauma's hermeneutics toward metapsychological structures, the logics of Anjum's traumatization and recovery will enable us to construct a new, albeit provisional, theory of trauma over the course of these two chapters.

3.3 Trauma as Seduction

As John Fletcher's *Freud and the Scene of Trauma* demonstrates, the notion of a purely psychological trauma is coincident with the birth of psychoanalysis. Freud came to trauma through Charcot, who used the concept to explain what was then called "*hysteria major*," also known as, on account of the presentation of "'epileptiform convulsions,'"[276] convulsive hysteria (Fletcher 16-19). In Charcot's model of convulsive hysteria, the epileptic-like "*grande attaques*" that would grip the subject had four main stages. The third stage, the "*attitudes passionelles*," was "characterized by what [Charcot called] 'expressive mimicry' of a series of emotions—love, hatred, fear, fright, ecstasy—[which he argued were] related to experiences that have played a part in the onset of the hysterical symptoms" (Fletcher 16-19). Pertaining to the causal relationship Charcot posited between event and symptom, there are three significant assumptions of his hermeneutic. First, Charcot regarded the affective displays and locutions of the *attitude passionelles* as a veracious reenactment of the hysteric's experience of the precipitating event. Second, this mimetic "interpretation—which we might identify as a "surface reading"—of hysterical symptoms (as a direct reproduction of the hysteric's feelings and expressions during the precipitating event) was logically and etiologically rooted in an associationist model of neurological anatomy (11-15).[277] Third, Charcot was not arguing that the precipitating event

[276] Convulsions that presented as epileptic seizures in *form* but not, supposedly, in etiology.

[277] See my discussion of associationism in chapter 2. For the sake of brevity, I have avoided detailing Charcot's particular brand of neurological determinism. To be more precise, differentiating his etiology (and fundamental understanding) of hysteria from that of the contemporary pathologist Sir James Paget—whose notion of "neuromimesis" he drew upon while applying it to the one disease that, ironically enough, Paget was vehemently against it being applied to (Fletcher 14)—Charcot proposed that hysteria was caused by "a functional or dynamic lesion," as opposed to "an organic, anatomical lesion," which was regarded as the etiological origin in the case of the, as it were, 'real' diseases that hysteria mimicked through its symptomatic expression (15). My understanding of the difference, for Charcot, between an anatomical lesion and a functional lesion is that the former correlates to an injury or deformation of anatomical structure, whereas a functional lesion correlates to a disorder engendered by how anatomical structures operate with respect to one another. That is, a functional lesion could be thought of as an emergent property of a system.

directly caused hysteria, only that it activated a "'special morbid predisposing condition inherent in the individual'" (32). Freud and Breuer's *psychogenic* reworking of hysteria, the first formulation of which appeared in "On the Psychical Mechanism of Hysterical Phenomena: Preliminary Communication" (1893), rebuked the last two assumptions while preserving, with a significant alteration, the theme of repetition in the first.[278] Whereas Charcot attributed hysteria to a "functional lesion" of the subject's neurological system, Freud and Breuer, breaking with the neuro-materialism of nineteenth-century neurology and psychiatry, posited a psychological origin of hysterical symptoms, regardless of their physical expression or experience as a bodily sensation. Whereas Charcot argued that the scenario being mimicked only "occasion[ed] the onset of symptoms," Freud and Breuer posited "'direct causation'" between the traumatic event and its symptoms (Fletcher 36; 40).[279] Perhaps most notably, this "*causal* theory of hysteria" was predicated upon an interpretive chiasmus: "The specificity of the symptom is determined by the specificity of the traumatic moment of its emergence…Even where the determining relation is metaphorical or symbolic…the symptom finds its cause in a single originary event" (Fletcher 40-41). In exchange for de-literalizing the surface content of symptomatic expressions—and, thus, opening those expressions, now capable of symbolism and metaphor, to non-mimetic interpretations—Freud and Breuer preserved Charcot's faith in the representational veracity of

[278] To avoid confusion, the next three sentences correlate to the preceding enumeration in the following order: second, third, first.

[279] To clarify the distinction between occasioning symptomatic onset and direct causing symptoms: "Freud's tacit argument [in the aforementioned "Preliminary Communication"] is with Charcot's hereditarian model, which reduced the trauma to being simply an occasion, a precipitating cause or vanishing agent provacateur, that merely releases or activates the pregiven, hereditary condition (Charcot uses the—to us, ludicrous—example of a blow on the knee that produces a tubercular inflammation in someone with a disposition to tuberculosis). Against this conception Freud invokes what he calls 'another kind of causation—namely, *direct causation*.'…The specificity of the symptom is determined by the specificity of the traumatic moment of its emergence, for example, a man watching his brother have his hip joint extended under an anesthetic hears the crack as the joint gives way and instantly feels a pain in his own hip that last for a year" (Fletcher 40).

symptomatic expressions vis-à-vis the event, and they accomplished this by inscribing the event with direct etiological capacity. In other words, trauma's initiating event gained determinant causality at the same time its symptomatic expression gained the potential for metaphoricity.

At the same time, this opening of the event-symptom relationship to metaphoric and associative interpretation would quickly complicate Freud's notion of "direct causation," for two principal reasons. The first is that metaphoricity made a question of the *form* of the traumatic event's symptomatic return. For Charcot, hysterical symptoms had no psychological depth; they were either the expression of a neurological predisposition to hysteria or an index of the incidental event that activated that predisposition. By contrast, in setting out to generate a purely psychological etiology of hysteria, Freud clearly could not recede into the arbitrary causality of neurological defects. As such, *why* the traumatic event should express itself indirectly through symptoms rather than operate on the level of consciousness soon became a major preoccupation for Freud, one that would lead to the discoveries—ultimately crucial for all of psychoanalytic theory—of repression as the defense mechanism *par excellence* and hysterical symptoms as coextensive with a repressive counterforce vis-à-vis the traumatic event. That is, Freud postulated that the hysterical symptom's metaphoric expression of the traumatic event was, in fact, the sign that "'an idea [has been] *intentionally repressed from consciousness*'…and that this is the basis of the somatic conversion of excitation into the symptom. The repressed idea is an element of the trauma that [the subject] has sought to forget" (Fletcher 43). Consequently, by acceding part of hysteria's genesis to repression, Freud introduced a divide between external and internal etiological forces; the traumatic event itself could no longer be, strictly speaking, a direct cause of hysteria because the subject's affective response to the event was now considered constitutive, in part, of their experience of it as traumatic.

The second reason metaphoricity complicated Freud and Breuer's thesis of direct causality is that clinical analysis's application of this thesis frequently resulted in the reconstruction of *several* traumatic events, even in cases where only one dominant symptom was considered at a time (41-42). In order to reconcile the causal ambiguity precipitated by this "multiplication of [traumatic] scenes" (Fletcher's term), Freud formulated a distinction between an originary traumatic scene and its auxiliary scenes, which he advanced in *Studies on Hysteria* (1895). Drawing from the aforementioned theory of defense mechanisms that he had developed in "The Neuro-Psychoses of Defense" (1894), Freud identified the traumatic scene/event at the root of hysterical symptomatology as the moment (in the past) in which the hysteric's ego was confronted with an idea that it found utterly "'incompatible'" with itself, stimulating the ego to separate the idea from itself and treat it as a hostile "'foreign body'" (i.e., place it under repression). The auxiliary scenes, by contrast, refer to moments occurring after the traumatic event (but before the onset of hysterical symptoms) in which the ego and the repressed idea "'temporarily converge,'" resulting in a renewed repression, which is maintained via a hysterical symptom whose sensorial-somatic form is determined by a metonymic link with the lived experience of the auxiliary scene. For example, in the case of Lucy R., Freud argues in *Studies on Hysteria* that her recurrent olfactory hallucinations of cigar smoke and burned pudding corresponded, respectively, to past events in which the actual presence of these smells (individually) coincided with moments in time in which her repressed desires for the father of the children with whom she was charged suddenly resurged and had to be re-repressed. These "auxiliary scenes," Freud argued, constituted the source of the specific characteristics of her

hysterical symptoms,[280] whereas the "traumatic scene"—the initial rejection by the father, which precipitated the repression—constituted the ultimate origin of her condition, even as this scene did not express itself in any of the symptoms.[281] Notwithstanding its admirable coordination of multiple affectively charged memories revealed in the course of analysis vis-à-vis an opaque symptomatic profile, the case of Lucy R. demonstrates that the traumatic/auxiliary split did not resolve the challenge posed by the multiplication of scenes to the foregoing thesis of direct causality so much as attempt to get around it by introducing into psychoanalysis's developing hermeneutic the concepts of overdetermination, latency, and overarching etiology.

For readers familiar with psychoanalysis, it will not be difficult to recognize these three concepts as constituting, in large part, the raw material from which Freud would, over the course of the next decade, develop his theory of infantile sexuality. However, what makes the case of Lucy R. so interesting from the standpoint of psychoanalysis's conceptual history is that Freud does *not* locate the origin of her condition in a traumatic scene from her early years but, instead, in a traumatic scene occurring when she is an adult. In fact, as Fletcher observes, despite the seemingly obvious oedipal coordinates of Lucy R.'s desire, Freud does not ascribe any significance to her having cathected onto a father figure or to her having chosen to assume the role of the children's mother upon the latter's death (Fletcher 46-50). Thus, despite the case's complex arrangement of multiple scenes, the "trauma" Freud designates as the true origin of Lucy R.'s hysteria (an outburst directed toward her by the father, which she internalizes as a

[280] This etiological ordering of traumatic and auxiliary scenes echoes Charcot's earlier distinction between the subject's neurological predisposition toward hysteria and the traumatic scene's provocation of that predisposition, as well as presages Freud's later distinction between primary and secondary repression.

[281] "In the history of our present patient the traumatic moment was the moment of her employer's outburst against her about his children being kissed by the lady. For a time, however, that scene had no manifest effect…Her hysterical symptoms did not start until later, at moments which may be described as 'auxiliary'" (Breuer and Freud *Studies on Hysteria* 123).

romantic rejection) appears to merely be a psychoaffective isomorphism with respect to the prevailing anatomical-determinist etiology of "traumatic neurosis," first formulated by mid-nineteenth-century in response to the emergence of troubling symptoms that were both delayed in their onset and inexplicably lacking an anatomical determinant in the victims of railroad accidents.[282] For our purposes, the significance of this formal similitude is that much as nineteenth-century psychiatry had not correlated the traumatizing element in an corporeally irruptive experience (that is, one in which a violent force is suddenly imposed on the body) to the developmental stage of its subject, at this point in his conceptualization of psychogenic trauma Freud had not yet rooted the condition in early childhood experiences, nor had he become convinced that a traumatic event must be sexual in nature.

By the time he presented "The Aetiology of Hysteria" to the Viennese Society for Psychiatry and Neurology in April 1896, however, Freud's assumptions about the core characteristics of an originary traumatic scene had shifted far more toward what we now consider the hallmarks of Freudian thought. As with the thesis of direct causality, the framework of traumatic vs. auxiliary scenes was more attractive theoretically than it was clinically. Without diagnostic standards by which the traumatic scene could be rigorously and consistently

[282] Due to considerations of both topic and length, I chose to begin this conceptual genealogy of trauma with Charcot's etiology of hysteria (and its incorporation/reformulation of trauma), since that is the context in which Freud first thought about trauma. My starting point, however, elides the line connecting trauma's original problematization to Charcot's incorporation of the concept into his work on hysteria. As I have repeatedly gestured to, the symptoms that would come to be categorized under the heading of trauma were initially studied by mid-nineteenth-century neurologists (most importantly, the London surgeon John Eric Erichsen, who "was the first to describe [trauma's] clinical symptoms," and the German psychiatrist Oppenheim, who coined the term "'trauma neurosis'") due to their expression in the victims of railroad accidents (Fassin and Rechtman 30-31). Good neuro-materialists, these neurologists theorized that these symptoms were caused by "micro lesions of the spinal cord resulting from the railroad accident" (31). Consequently, in characterizing the relationship Freud draws between Lucy R.'s past conflict with the father and her hysteria-inducing internalization of this traumatic event as a psychoaffective isomorphism with pre-Charcot neurology's etiology of trauma, what I mean is that Freud's suggestion that this event impressed itself onto and injured Lucy R's psyche is structurally akin to the early neurologists' theory that traumatic neurosis following a physically traumatizing event (e.g., a railroad accident) was caused by the event impressing itself onto and injuring the spinal cord.

differentiated from the auxiliary scenes, it appears that the analyst could only rely upon a principle of anteriority (insofar as the auxiliary scenes could not predate the traumatic scene) and on the aforementioned formal similitude with "physical" traumas. Correspondingly, in the "Aetiology" essay Freud attempts to develop more robust diagnostic criteria: "Tracing a hysterical symptom back to a traumatic scene assists our understanding only if the scene satisfies two conditions; [sic] if it possesses the relevant *suitability to serve as a determinant* and if it recognizably possesses the necessary *traumatic force*" (Gay 99). In other words, if an analyst is evaluating the plausibility of regarding a particular distressing experience (returned to the analysand as a memory in the course of analysis) as *the* traumatic scene of origin for the analysand's hysterical symptom, Freud suggests that they should assess first the degree to which *associational links* exist between the symptom and the experience and second the *intensity of the distress* engendered by the experience. In practice, this assessment was far more subjective than Freud's rhetoric implied, as attested by his accompanying example:

> Let us suppose that the symptom under consideration is hysterical vomiting; in that case we shall feel that we have been able to understand its causation…if the analysis traces the symptom back to an experience which *justifiably produced a high amount of disgust*—for instance, the sight of a decomposing dead body. But if, instead of this, the analysis shows us that the vomiting arose from a great fright, e.g. from a railroad accident, we shall feel dissatisfied and will have to ask ourselves how it is that the fright has led to the particular symptom of vomiting. This derivation lacks *suitability as a determinant*. We shall have another instance of an insufficient explanation if the vomiting is supposed to have arisen from, let us say, eating a fruit which had partly gone bad. Here, it is true, the vomiting *is*

> determined by disgust, but we cannot understand how, in this instance, the disgust could have become so powerful as to be perpetuated in a hysterical symptom; the experience lacks *traumatic force*.

In this example, Freud's disqualification of "railroad accident-hysterical vomiting" as a possible scene-symptom etiology is underwritten by a curious inference of necessary causation from correlation, which he then makes the basis of a syllogism: people (sometimes) vomit when they experience disgust —> vomiting occurs in response to disgust —> an experience that does not involve disgust cannot induce vomiting. The questionable logic of this formulation is not so important as what its constitutive truth-claims reveal about the hermeneutic reorientation in Freud's thought reflected by the "Aetiology." Insofar as the disqualification in this hypothetical example of an analytic memory lacking "suitability as a determinant" is predicated upon asserting an *a priori* relationship between disgust and vomiting, it is clear that "suitability" in this context conceptually indexes a desire on Freud's part to root his etiology of hysteria in a hidden system of natural ties between two forms of *reflexive response* to distressing events, affective and physiological. Yet, in attempting to base a theory of trauma on observable reflex, Freud risked a significant contradiction in terms: from the very beginning of trauma study, what had defined trauma as a unique response to distressing experiences was that its symptoms did not correspond to the precipitating event according to expectations set by commonsense notions of reactivity. What made trauma apprehendable as a phenomenon was precisely its inexplicable deviance from normative correlations between affective and physiological responses. In order to avoid collapsing this distinction between "normal" reflex and trauma, Freud crystallizes it into the second novel criterion—that an originary traumatic event must contain "traumatic force"—in the process failing to elaborate upon the ontology of its central concept, leaving his audience to

wonder if "traumatic" is a qualitative distinction (i.e., some experiences are by their very nature "traumatic") or a quantitative distinction (i.e., "traumatic" defines a threshold of "force" beyond which "trauma" overtakes "reflex" as the subject's modality of response).

From my perspective, Freud does not clarify the ontology of "traumatic force" because at this point there is no ontology to clarify: Freud had not logically derived the concept but, instead, was performatively deploying it as an *a priori* dividing principle so as to maintain trauma as a distinct category of experience while reorienting its etiology toward an underlying system of (natural) reflexes. At the same time, not expounding upon this category enabled Freud to posit a new relationship between trauma, sex, and childhood, one that would (in)famously become known as the "seduction theory of hysteria."[283] Freud introduces this relationship in two parts. First, gesturing toward the frequency with which memories in analysis must be disqualified as contestants for the role of "traumatic scene" on the basis of the new criteria,[284] Freud magisterially pronounces, "Whatever case and whatever symptom we take as our point of departure, *in the end we infallibly come to the field of sexual experience*. So here for the first time we seem to have discovered an aetiological precondition for hysterical symptoms" (100).

---

[283] The reason *why* not expounding on the category of traumatic force was enabling with respect to this purpose has to do with a medical-moral discourse of sex/uality that Freud was (it appears, unwittingly) drawing upon and incorporating, albeit, as we will see, with an important modification, into psychoanalysis's conception of trauma. This discourse, which I discuss in the section entitled "The Masturbating Child," was that of sex/uality as the special etiological variable inscribed with the ability to account for all disorders and diseases that are "otherwise inexplicable" within clinical anatomy's episteme (*Abnormal* 241). As I explain below, the aforementioned new relationship between trauma, sex, and childhood is underwritten by an assimilation of sex's open-ended etiological capacity to trauma. In turn, this assimilation necessitates that the notion of "traumatic force" remain similarly ontologically amorphous.

[284] "It is true, indeed, that the traumatic scene in which the symptom originated does in fact occasionally possess both qualities—suitability as a determinant and traumatic force—which we require for an understanding of the symptom. But far more frequently, incomparably more frequently, we find one of the three other possibilities realized, which are so unfavourable to an understanding. Either the scene to which we are led by analysis and in which the symptom first appeared seems to us unsuited for determining the symptom, in that its content bears no relation to the symptom; or the allegedly traumatic experience, though it *does* have a relation to the symptom proves to be an impression which is normally innocuous and incapable as a rule of producing any effect; or, lastly, the 'traumatic scene' leaves us in the lurch in both respects, appearing at once innocuous and unrelated to the character of the hysterical symptom" (Gay 99).

From the outset, it is clear that Freud is anxious about this claim. Not only does he couch it in universal terms (an absurdity given that it was based on a mere "eighteen cases of hysteria"), but he immediately warns his audience to not allow their "*inclination* to contradict" to compel them to reject "this assertion or…its universal validity." He then attempts to repair any alienation precipitated by this accusation by identifying this tendency with his past self, which he only overcame by subordinating his instinctual rejection of this hypothesis to the evidence produced by "the most laborious and detailed investigations" (100-101).[285] The source of this anxiety and its rhetorical compensations is that the claim that trauma finds its ultimate origin in "sexual experience" is tautologically predicated on the (proleptically) incomplete logic through which Freud had earlier constituted the two new criteria. That is, while on the surface Freud justifies this claim as the objective conclusion of empirical observation, the foundation of its rationale lies entirely in, on the one hand, his appeal toward the epistemological authority of a natural system of response archetypes and, on the other hand, the indeterminate ontology of "traumatic force." Together, these formations allow Freud to implicitly identify "sexual experience" with something to the effect of a *distinct and natural capacity to generate traumatic deviance* from the "normal" arrangements inhering between experiences and their affective and physiological responses.

However, if in the "Aetiology" Freud feels justified in proposing that sexual experience is *necessary* for the development of hysterical symptoms, he is already aware that no claim about pathogenetic *sufficiency* would be plausible without additional qualification, for the obvious reason that the ubiquity of sex did not align with the comparatively limited frequency of the

[285] The evangelical undertones of this rhetoric are intriguing. Freud even describes this personal drama of an initial skepticism worn away by repeated exposure to the products of analysis as a conversion: "Only the most laborious and detailed investigations have converted me" (101).

hodgepodge of psychological and somatic symptoms that were then grouped under the pseudo-scientific classification "hysteria." One might expect that Freud would resolve this problem by more clearly defining this category of "sexual experience"; yet, his engagement with that definitional uncertainty is routed through a sudden lament that, despite having just presented sex as the cipher key for decrypting hysteria, some of the sexual memories brought to the surface by analysis still fail to demonstrate "suitability as a determinant" and "traumatic force":

> It is true that these experiences, which have been discovered with so much trouble and extracted out of all the mnemic material, and which seemed to be the ultimate traumatic experiences, have in common the two characteristics of being sexual and of occurring at puberty; but in every other respect they are very different from each other both in *kind* and in *importance*. In some cases, no doubt, we are concerned with experiences which must be regarded as severe traumas—an attempted rape, perhaps, which reveals to the immature girl all the brutality of sexual desire, or the involuntary witnessing of sexual acts between parents, which at one and the same time uncovers unsuspected ugliness and wounds childish and moral sensibilities alike, and so on. But in other cases the experiences are astonishingly trivial. In one of my women patients it turned out that her neurosis was based on the experience of a boy of her acquaintance stroking her hand tenderly and, at another time, pressing his knee against her dress as they sat side by side at table, while his expression let her see that he was doing something forbidden. For another young lady, simply hearing a riddle which suggested an obscene answer had been enough to provoke the first anxiety attack and with it to

> start the illness. Such findings are clearly not favourable to an understanding of the causation of hysterical symptoms. (101)

I have quoted this passage at length because its rhetorical operations are ultimately constitutive of Freud's seduction theory of hysteria and, thus, require careful examination. While Freud initially seems to be problematizing the "trivial" sexual memories by juxtaposing them to those that, "no doubt," correspond to "severe traumas," his final analysis, in fact, aims to accomplish the opposite. That is because from the perspective of the conceptualization of trauma we have been following thus far, what is most perplexing in this passage is not the mystery Freud presents to his audience—how neurosis could originate in anodyne experiences—but, rather, Freud's implication that "severe traumas" are clearly capable of generating hysterical symptoms. This is not to say that his two examples of "severe trauma" are not each (in their own way) potentially very distressing. The problem is that Freud's foregoing argument has been that distress (understood loosely as a quantum of stress experienced by the body-mind in conjunction with an event) is not sufficient for causing hysteria/trauma but that, one, the "normal" affective-physiological response to the event must be in some way discernible within the particular symptomatic form the analysand's hysteria has assumed and, two, the distress must contain or reflect the mysterious element of "traumatic force." Thus, even if we take the path of least resistance and presume that Freud is implicitly arguing that "severe" sexual experiences inherently demonstrate traumatic force—which, as we will see, would be an incorrect presumption—he could not justify ascribing etiological capacity to these experiences without first juxtaposing them to their subjects' symptomatic profiles. *And yet*, Freud does not include any symptoms for the "severe" examples; in fact, it is unclear if they are even drawn from clinical experience or if they are mere hypotheticals. Either way, it should strike us as strange

that Freud would abruptly abandon his own criteria at the moment he is supposedly illustrating their analytic payoff. Indeed, bracketing the problem of the "trivial" sexual memories, it is difficult to see how this commonsense gesture toward the pathogenicity of "severe [sexual] traumas" is, in itself, at all "favourable to an understanding of the causation of hysterical symptoms" (101).

This lacuna is not an oversight so much as a rhetorical ruse; for despite Freud's implications to the contrary, his overarching argument in the "Aetiology" is that *none* of these *pubertal* sexual experiences are "suitable" candidates for the traumatic origin of hysteria, which is, rather, always located in *infantile* sexual experiences. He arrives at this conclusion vis-à-vis an expanded analysis of the two "trivial" memories he has just characterized as etiologically problematic. Notably, he begins this analysis by identifying these patients' particular hysterical symptoms (which are apparently the same): "As a result of those [pubertal] experiences the patients had become subject to peculiar painful sensations in the genitals which had established themselves as the main symptoms of the neurosis" (102). He then notes that because these symptoms cannot be correlated to the anodyne scenes uncovered by analysis, he was compelled to, once again, move beyond these scenes to ones earlier in his subjects' lives, thus bringing him to "the period of earliest childhood, a period before the development of sexual life" (102). Anticipating his audience's instinctual rejection of this turn to early life within the context of his foregoing argument, Freud quickly admits that this reorientation "would seem to involve the abandonment of a sexual aetiology" and then, just as quickly, draws this assumption into question by burying it in what is effectively a joint statement and rationalization of what becomes known as his seduction theory of hysteria:

> [H]ave we not a right to assume that even the age of childhood is not wanting in slight sexual excitations, that later sexual development may be decisively influenced by childhood experiences? Injuries sustained by an organ which is as yet immature, or by a function which is in the process of developing, often cause more severe and lasting effects than they could do in maturer years. Perhaps the abnormal reaction to sexual impressions which surprises us in hysterical subjects at the age of puberty is quite generally based on sexual experiences of this sort in childhood, in which case those experiences must be of a similar nature to one another, and must be of an important kind. (102)

For now, what is of interest is not Freud's rushed, lackluster justification for extending sexuality back to childhood—we shall return to this a bit later. What is significant is Freud's sudden introduction of a particular claim about human ontology, which he simultaneously utilizes as the basis of the etiological schema he proposes. Drawing a vexed anatomical comparison to organs injured in early development,[286] Freud rationalizes traumatization as a childhood "injury" to the "organ" of sexuality, thereby leaving deleterious "impressions" on the child that interfere with their later sexual maturation, the effects of which then, in an overdetermined relationship with later auxiliary scenes, become expressed in hysterical symptoms. This etiology is notable for two reasons. First, recalling the heterogeneous causality Freud had postulated in his reflections on defense mechanisms, this thesis finally appears to define "traumatic force." The term does not

[286] Notably, because the reader encounters this comparison directly after the aforementioned etiological explanation of painful genitals, they may not recognize it as a comparison at all but, instead, misunderstand Freud as actually rooting his argument in a hypothesis about developmental physiology (i.e., his clients' genitals were physically assaulted when they were children—>the resulting injuries affected these organs' development—>their genitals hurt in adulthood as a direct expression of this never-healed injury). Although I suspect that Freud intentionally courted this misrecognition to lend credence to his speculations, his overarching argument is, in reality, diametrically opposed to anatomical determinism, which is perhaps why he completely drops these clients' symptoms from the frame of analysis after introducing his thesis.

refer simply to a distinct quality of the traumatic event nor to a particular threshold of distress. Rather, "traumatic force" is an *emergent property* arising from the "sexual" nature of the originary experience *in conjunction with* an ontological condition of possibility in the subject,[287] this condition being that the sexual experience must occur during a particular period of development: early childhood. The significance of this moment with respect to trauma's discursive history cannot be overstated, as it marks a decisive hermeneutic break with the formal similitude I identified earlier between how neuropsychiatry imagined (the spinal cord's) traumatic wounding and how Freud's early work on Lucy R. imagined (the psyche's) traumatic wounding. Whereas "traumatic neurosis" had originally been formulated as a diagnostic lens through which to apprehend people's delayed responses to physiologically distressing events regardless of the age at which those events were experienced, in developing the seduction theory of hysteria, Freud fundamentally reconceptualizes trauma as the expression of *a delimited period of ontogenetic susceptibility* in the trajectory of human development, a delimited period during

[287] It is precisely this interactionism between the distressing event and the subject that the APA disavowed in reformulating traumatic neurosis as post-traumatic stress disorder.

which—and only during which—it is possible for one to be traumatized through sexual experience.[288]

The reconceptualization of trauma Freud advances in the "Aetiology" constitutes a double movement with respect to how it conceives of the subject's vulnerability vis-à-vis the world. On the one hand, Freud severely restricts the power of the environment to traumatically imprint itself onto the subject's ontology and ontogenesis. We need only to recall that the psychiatric study of trauma in the nineteenth century was largely initiated by efforts to understand the physiological and affective disturbances that manifested in victims of railroad accidents in order to recognize the etiological enervation of the environment that underlies Freud's seduction theory. On the other hand, this new understanding of trauma attributes to sexual abuses in childhood an etiological force of greater magnitude and reach than had been present in earlier conceptualizations of traumatic origin. In Freud's imaginary, an experience of childhood "seduction" could order the psyche and body's reaction to and assimilation of other experiences, even those seemingly unrelated to the original abuse and occurring much later in life. No doubt, psychoanalysis's etiological overvaluation of sexual activity in childhood has

[288] In advancing this paradigm shift, Freud does not abandon physiology so much as integrate it his portrait of the child's sexual traumatizability: "It is now no longer a question of sexual topics having been aroused by some sense impression or other, but of sexual experiences affecting the subject's own body" (203). At the same time, while Freud repeatedly denounces the sexualization of children as "repellent," he does not base traumatic susceptibility in the developing body on account of the latter's inherent asexuality—on the contrary, sex is traumatizing for the child because their developing body is unable to handle its "[premature arousal] to every kind of sensibility and [exposure] to every sort of disappointment" (215). In other words, the seduction theory of hysteria argues that what is traumatizing in childhood seduction is the developing body's incapability of regulating the child's affective and libidinal *reactions* to sexual contact, those reactions being otherwise universal sexual responses (i.e., demonstrated in adults and children alike). In turn, Freud argues that this infantile overstimulation forms the basis of the hysterical symptom *par excellence*, "a general abnormal sensitivity to stimuli," thereby breaking decisively with nineteenth-century psychiatry's impulse to minoritize and, subsequently, hereditize hysteria (and psychosomatic deviance writ large); as Freud emphasizes, "*The reaction of hysterics is only apparently exaggerated; it is bound to appear exaggerated to us because we only know a small part of the motives for which it arises*" (216; 217). Insofar as this reflects one of the first attempts in psychiatry to rationalize madness through reframing it as a *rational response* to being abused by power, the "Aetiology," notwithstanding all of its flaws, must be regarded as one of Freud's greatest accomplishments (I am aware that this praise puts me at odds with Foucault's comments on the rationalization of madness at the end of *Madness and Civilization*).

been critiqued countless times before, to the point that it likely constitutes the basis of almost every disavowal of the field, knee-jerk or otherwise. However, the *de*-traumatization of experience beyond that of childhood sexual abuse that accompanies this overvaluation rarely figures in discussions of the latter. Nevertheless, one of the arguments of this chapter is that Freud's "double movement" enables us not only to rationalize discrepancies between the seduction theory and Freud's later theorizations of trauma but, also, to recognize the conceptual genealogy of trauma as organized, to a significant degree, by an ambivalence toward ontological *susceptibility* that pervades, and in part animates, major formations of biopower since the nineteenth century (which I take up in the section four). Moreover, I will argue that within this relation between trauma and biopower a metaphysics of sex and gender was generated that remains relevant up to the contemporary moment.

In order to make these connections legible, at this juncture I telescope out from this close examination of Freud's works to an overview of the discourses of childhood masturbation that took shape both within Europe and between Europe and its colonies in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Doing so enables me to, one, identify a predecessor to Freud's seduction theory and its deployment of traumatic logic in an earlier medical-moral discourse of sex; two, situate the colonial biopolitics of race with respect to the animating ambivalence toward ontological susceptibility I am attempting to trace; and three, in the course of discussing the previous point, briefly reflect on the assumptions and hermeneutic orientations that underwrite a tendency in some contemporary studies of colonial biopolitics to position sex/uality as a derivative of technologies of race.

3.4 The Masturbating Child

Students of Foucault's *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1* will recall that he identifies "the masturbating child" as one of the figural corollaries to the "four great strategic unities" through which the deployment of sexuality was formed;[289] in particular, the masturbating child corresponds to the "pedagogization of children's sex" (*HoSVol1* 105; 104). While Foucault briefly sketches out this unity in that volume, he gave a much fuller account of it in his 1974-1975 lectures at the Collège de France, which in 2003 were translated into English and collectively published under the title *Abnormal*.[290] There, Foucault argues that child masturbation was initially problematized outside of psychiatry's domain of madness and abnormal behavior. Instead, child masturbation emerges as a thematic of concern in a series of medical and pseudo-medical campaigns directed toward bourgeois parents and their children, which, according to Foucault, started with the dissemination of Balthazar Bekker's *Onania* in 1712,[291] and then proliferated for nearly two centuries across England, France, and Germany (*Abnormal* 233). With respect to this "immense jabbering about masturbation," Foucault makes three significant observations.

First, in addition to emerging outside the discourses of madness and abnormality, this discourse was also, curiously, distinct from Christian moralizations of the flesh, which had prevailed in the preceding centuries. Whereas one might have expected masturbation to have

---

[289] The deployment of sexuality names the historical formation of "a great surface network in which the stimulation of bodies, the intensification of pleasures, the incitement to discourse, the formation of special knowledges, the strengthening of controls and resistances, are linked to one another, in accordance with a few major strategies of knowledge and power" (*HoSVol.1* 105-106).

[290] The title is relatively faithful to the course theme and a direct translation from the 1999 French edition (entitled *Anormaux*).

[291] Foucault's history of masturbation discourse is quite general. It should be emendated by reference to texts that attend to the details more thoroughly, such as Thomas W. Laqueur's *Solitary Sex: A Cultural History of Masturbation* and Sonja Boon's *Telling the Flesh*.

constituted the privileged sexual activity through which the confessional's subjectifying interrogation of desire chose to operate, Foucault opines that the terms "desire and pleasure" do not appear in medical discourse until the mid-nineteenth century (234). According to him, masturbation in this literature initially figures as an activity that is exterior to the conceptual ambit of "sexual behavior" as it was then conceived.[292]

Second, while this new discourse originates in medicine, it is not developed through scientific reflection; rather, "[i]t takes the form of exhortations, advice, and injunctions. It is a literature of manuals" (235). That is, this discourse develops more through a deployment of health than through medical theory. In turn, this deployment of health generated what Foucault calls a "somatization and pathologization of masturbation," which braided masturbation and illness together at two levels. At the level of representations of the sick body, this deployment wove a "fiction of total illness" around the masturbator, portraying them (in a vague, non-scientific manner) as the perpetual bearer of "every symptom of every possible illness," a sort of nosological monster.[293] At the level of etiology (which nominally aspired to less fantastical formulations), it situated masturbation as a possible, though not necessarily determinant, cause for almost every illness. Between these two levels, the masturbator was portrayed both as someone who is always-already sick and someone whose behavior puts them at risk of further

[292] It is beyond the scope of my remarks in this section to evaluate the historical (and conceptual) validity of Foucault's suggestion that this medical discourse did not recognize masturbation as sexual; historians of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries might well disagree with this contention. As the reader will see, the pertinence of (Foucault's interpretation of) the crusade against childhood masturbation to my discussion of trauma is more-or-less restricted to the special casual power that is yoked to ("infantile") sex through this crusade. Consequently, in including this point about the supposed asexuality of masturbation at the beginning of this crusade, my aim has not been to endorse it but to retain for my reader the context in which Foucault articulates the later claim. At the same time, because the sexual status of masturbation in the early formation of these discourses is not important for my argument, I have shorthanded Foucault's characterization in describing it. The more nuanced account can be found in the second paragraph on p. 234 of *Abnormal*.

[293] No doubt, it was this figure who was viciously resuscitated during the AIDS crisis.

illness. Moreover, through the technology of the "patient's letter"—a genre of medical writing in which the patient would contextualize their illness through an account of "the history of [their] body and its illnesses, sensations, and various disorders that are listed in detail from childhood," culminating in what Foucault aptly calls an "autopathologization"—the doctor-patient relationship was utilized to induce patients to read the developmental trajectory of their ailments vis-à-vis this portrayal.[294] Significantly, this penetration of the body's history by masturbation-illness discourse—or, rather, this historicization of the body vis-à-vis drawing etiological lines between masturbation in childhood and illness in adulthood—gave rise to a notion about sex that likewise takes shape in Freud's seduction theory: "the inexhaustible causal power of infantile sexuality" (240). At the same time, this inexhaustible causality appears to constitute a vector through which *nachträglichkeit* enters medical discourse, since it is here that we "find the idea that the time it takes to produce [masturbation's deleterious] effects is *absolutely random*: An illness of old age may well be due to childhood masturbation" (241, emphasis mine). This is to say, when this deployment of health polyvalently yoked illness to childhood masturbation by ascribing to the latter a totalizing-yet-diffusely-indeterminate etiological capacity, it outlined what I have called the logic of traumatic formalism.

Recognizing that this deployment of health elaborated a schema of traumatization vis-à-vis its fixation on childhood masturbation yields three important consequences for my genealogy of trauma as a concept. One, in the modern era, the logic of trauma, as adduced within Freudian theory, was constructed from within the problematization of childhood masturbation as one of its constitutive supports. Two, insofar as this problematization ultimately situates childhood

[294] The resonances of this practice with the Catholic confessional are so apparent that they do not require further commentary.

masturbation as a locus from which the deployment of sexuality radiated out across and beyond the prevailing domain of sexual behavior, radically reformulating and reorganizing everything within it, this indicates that trauma and sexuality, both as sociomedical concepts and as subjectifying hermeneutics of the self, emerged in relation to one another. Three, this theory-instantiating traumatization of childhood masturbation initially served a compensatory etiological function with respect to the early-nineteenth-century rise of positive medicine:

> [W]hen pathological anatomy was identifying a causality of lesions in the body…a campaign against masturbation brought to light around sexuality…a different medical causality…that plays both a supplementary and conditional role with regard to the organic causality [being formulated through pathological anatomy]…*Sexuality enables everything that is otherwise inexplicable to be explained*. It is also *an additional causality* since it superimposes on the visible causes that can be localized in the body *a sort of historical etiology*, in which the patient is responsible for his own illness. (*HoSVol.1* 241, emphasis mine)

In other words, Foucault argues that when medicine reconstituted its clinical gaze vis-à-vis an empiricist ethos,[295] it supplemented the direct causality it attributed to anatomy's observable synchronic and non-subjective surface by investing "sexuality"—which it gradually (albeit unevenly) constructed as an unobservable diachronic and subjective depth—with absent causality through its nascent discovery of traumatic logic.

Foucault's third observation is that while anti-masturbation campaigns identified the patient as the source of their own illness, they avoided portraying the masturbating child as culpable for their self-gratification. Instead, they placed the blame on a shadow they cast behind

[295] See Foucault's *The Birth of the Clinic* for more on this reconstitution.

the masturbating child: the seductive extra-nuclear adult, who, as an external figure whose influence on the child is developmentally injurious for the latter, is clearly of paramount importance to our investigation into the formations of power-knowledge that made possible the organizing logic by which Freud connects sex, childhood, and trauma within his seduction theory of hysteria. According to Foucault, this exonerative aspect of the anti-masturbation campaigns (which was, no doubt, mostly contained to the initial scene of seduction) derived from a common mechanistic etiology for masturbatory behavior. Within the deployment of health we have been tracking, child masturbation was conceived of as a rational behavioral response to the premature activation of somatic processes centered on the genitals. That is, while this deployment rendered masturbation universally pathogenetic (and pathogenic), it also regarded the response pathway itself as natural, though, of course, not "normal." By extension, it was only through moral and medical pedagogy (i.e., processes of normation) that the child learned not to, as Charles Malo put it, "'abuse against nature'" (243).[296] Yet, despite this avowed naturality, the anti-masturbation crusaders also insisted that, except for a small percentage of cases in which the fault fell onto accidental circumstance, children only begin masturbating under the pernicious influence of seductive adults, who through their "'advice, [hints], secrets, and examples [awaken in them] the idea of this kind of libertinism'" (243). As Foucault demonstrates, the range of acts that constituted "seduction" in this sense was immense, extending from subtle suggestion to sexual

[296] In drawing attention to Malo's characterization, my objective is merely to signpost the coexistence of the aforementioned mechanistic naturalization of masturbation and a behavioral unnaturalization of masturbation. I am not crediting Malo with originating the quoted phrase or its underlying concept. Obviously, in European societies the association of masturbation—and, for that matter, a tremendous array of other (auto)erotic practices—with "abus[ing] against nature" significantly predates the nineteenth century, as scholars of medieval and early modern "sex" have discussed at length. See, for example, Carolyn Dinshaw *Getting Medieval: Sexualities and Communities, Pre- and Postmodern* pp. 3-12 and Mark D. Jordan *The Invention of Sodomy in Christian Theology* pp. 46-47, 94-99, and 168-169. As for the mechanistic portrait of masturbation, this appears to be a formation that emerged considerably later (at least with respect to its particular schematization of the body in terms of stimulatable surfaces, reflex arcs, secretions, etc.).

assault; moreover, the adult could even become the child's seducer inadvertently through "'careless[ly]'" stimulating their body in the course of bathing or clothing them. We see, thus, that the pathologization of masturbation and its articulation with somatic diachrony had given birth to two additional dangerous figures, the seducible premasturbatory child and the seductive masturbating adult.[297]

Notably, though, the latter was not a universal subject. The threshold of danger was drawn not around the child alone but around the child and their parents, operating as a dividing line between the bourgeois family, reconceptualized as a nuclear unit, and all of those subjects ("[s]ervants, governesses, private tutors, uncles, aunts, and cousins") whom had been integrated into its household as indispensable pillars of support (244). The seductive adult was anyone who served as an intermediary between the bourgeois child and their parents, and as such, these campaigns advocated for a sanctification of the child's developmental milieu via their removal or mitigated presence.[298] At the same time, bourgeois parents were urged not only to assume the childrearing responsibilities they had previously left to domestics but to install themselves in their children's lives as ever-vigilant masturbation police: "The child's body must be the object of [the parents'] permanent attention. This is the adult's primary concern. Parents must read their child's body like a blazon or as the field of possible signs of masturbation" (245). In diametric opposition to all of the concurrent warnings against stimulating the child's body(/genitals), this compulsory sexual surveillance required the "direct, immediate, and constant application of the

[297] In order to capture the slippage constituted by the discourse, I use "masturbating" here to refer both to acts of directly stimulating the child's genitals (regardless of the adult's intent) and to a habit of individual behavior (regardless of the adult's interactions with the child).

[298] "What is required…is essentially a new organization, a new physics of the family space: the elimination of all intermediaries and the suppression, if possible, of domestics, or at least a very close supervision of domestics, the ideal solution being the infant alone in a sexually aseptic family space" (245).

parents' bodies to the bodies of their children,"[299] resulting in a nuclear unit bound together by a "medico-familial" regime of "epistemophilic incest" (247; 254; 249). In other words, the anti-masturbation campaigns ultimately culminated in an ironic formulation: the child can only be secured against pathogenetic seduction by the intra-familial, incestuously directed production of their sexuality.

Foucault confronts this nest of contradictions by subtly introducing a split between strategy and tactic within this deployment of health. It is not that the anti-masturbation crusaders failed to recognize that, by virtue of the frail seducibility with which they had imbued the figure of the premasturbatory child, this incestuous surveillance necessarily intensified the child's risk of being perversely seduced. Rather, this intensification was an intended outcome of the strategy at work, the latter's ultimate objective being to restructure the bourgeois family with respect to a sexuality whose inherent health risks could only be regulated by submitting the family—or, rather, getting the family to submit itself—to medical and state authorities, a mandate that then enabled these authorities to ramify parental responsibility to prevent masturbation into an expansive and open-ended responsibility to preserve and produce the life of children for the sake of the state's economic survival: "The State demands from parents, and the new forms or relations of production require, that the costs entailed by the very existence of the family, by the parents and recently born children, are not squandered by the early death of children" (250; 254-258). In other words, Foucault argues that the final aim of this loquacious discourse of child

[299] Foucault provides many examples of this application (see *Abnormal* pp. 251-253). To help readers grasp the sort of intimate contact between the parents and their children's genitals that was advocated by the anti-masturbation campaigns, I have reproduced one of them here: "There is the famous Jalade-Laffont belt that was in use for dozens of years. It comprised a sort of metal corselet that was attached to the pelvic area with, for boys, a little metal tube lined with velvet and with a number of holes pierced at the end through which he could urinate. The device was closed, padlocked and opened only once a week in the presence of the parents so that the child could be cleaned. This belt was the one most often used in France at the beginning of the nineteenth century" (252).

masturbation that originated in the early eighteenth century was to inextricably link the affectively proliferative disciplines of sexual anatomy it had stimulated within the bourgeois family to a nascent biopolitics of the economy.

While it is unassailable that the figure of the masturbating child was a contributing factor in the overarching historical process we could call the biopoliticization of the family, it is difficult to understand how the latter would precipitate a panic around the former. Indeed, in accounting for the emergence of this phenomenon, Foucault appears to recede into teleology. One likely explanation for this unsatisfying conclusion is Foucault's well-documented Eurocentrism, which prevented him from tracing the constitutive logics of the child masturbation crusade beyond the psychiatric and juridical institutions of England, France, and Germany. As Ann Laura Stoler has argued, there is evidence to suggest that these logics emerged in tandem with the colonial production and governance of race. For example, Stoler demonstrates that the intra-European fear of domestic intermediaries perversely influencing bourgeois children found its corollary in colonial anxieties regarding native nursemaids and the threat they posed to a colonial order predicated on an unstable notion of racial difference: "The social grammar of prescriptions for making a child into a bourgeois adult rested on distinctions that affirmed the virtues of whiteness and the moral highground [sic] of bourgeois civilities at the same time…For becoming adult and bourgeois meant distinguishing oneself from that which was uncivilized, lower-class, and non-European" (*Race and the Education of Desire* 151). With respect to this racial pedagogy, native nursemaids were intensely problematized as vectors of delinquency, for colonial officials feared that European children raised by them would acquire their traits instead of the ones that would make them legible as white and bourgeois. Writing in the early 1990s, when historical scholarship commonly regarded biological determinism as the ideological basis

of race in the nineteenth century, Stoler is at pains here to stress that these fears of racial deviance index, conversely, the relative malleability of race in this period—colonial officials did not regard whiteness as a biological inevitability but, rather, as a potential that could fail to be properly cultivated and/or could be overridden by "racial contagion" (149).

In recent years, Stoler's thesis has found support in a vein of historical scholarship on race, sex, and biopower that endeavors to "overturn the extremely influential argument that the nineteenth century was an epoch committed to…the notion that the body's biological material is a discrete, immutable, and dissimilar substance…that locks the individual into a predetermined set of aptitudes and behaviors" (Schuller 11). In particular, Kyla Schuller has argued that American and European impressibility discourse in this period reimagined bodies as dynamically constituted by their milieus. Within this imaginary, race functioned to differentially assign the capacities of sensing, regulating, and responding to "impressions," i.e., "the trace an object or idea leaves on the passive nervous system" (7). Whereas whiteness marked a nervous system that was able to respond agentially to the impressions left on it—agential not referring so much to an ideal of individual autonomy but rather to an inherited somatic capacity to recognize "civilizing" impressions and selectively form oneself in response them—racialized bodies were rendered paradoxically more "impressionable" and less capable of being dynamically enabled by any impressions: "[a]t best, unimpressible bodies merely react to sensory impressions, rather than absorbing them, reflecting on them, and incorporating their effects. The uncivilized races were consigned to the immediacy of childlike sensation and instinctive response, captive to whatever stimulations crossed their paths" (13). At the same time, the impressibility that enabled whiteness to ontologically assimilate the values and behaviors of "civilization" also exposed it to impressions more generally and, thus, made it highly susceptible to "bodily disaggregation and

racial degeneration."[300] Schuller argues that this perceived susceptibility gave rise to a regime of "sensorial discipline," which implored the "civilized races…to learn to master their sensory impulses and thus direct the development of themselves and their descendants" (18). That the instability and porosity of race in this period was yoked to a biopolitics of sentimentality is something that Stoler's later work also emphasizes: "Dutch colonial authorities were troubled by the *distribution* of sentiment, by both its excessive expression and the absence of it; of European fathers too attached to their mixed blood offspring; of Indies-born European children devoid of attachment to their (Dutch) cultural origins; of European-educated children, who, upon return to the Indies, held sympathies and sensibilities out of order and out of place" (*Along the Archival Grain* 58).

As Stoler's and Schuller's studies demonstrate, both in the metropole and in the colonies racist anxieties frequently centered around children, whom Europeans increasingly figured as the primary site of race's becoming and unbecoming and, thus, as civilization's (i.e., whiteness's) most tenuous link.[301] Explicitly positioning her analysis of colonial racism in dialogue with Foucault's lectures, Stoler further indicates that discourses of children's racial degeneration in the Dutch East Indies were mediated, in part, through sexual imaginaries involving native nursemaids or servants, or their children:

> Virtually all the debates on the dangers of masturbation and sexual precocity for European children were concerned with whether these children could cultivate the sensibilities that will allow them to grow up European. Within these texts,

[300] Nearly twenty-five years earlier, Stoler advanced a very similar claim: "In contrast to the stereotype of the fixity of the racial other, bourgeois white identities, both child and adult, were more vulnerable, unstable and susceptible to change" (*Race and the Education of Desire* 163).

[301] "Children are invariably othered in ways that compare them to lower-order beings, they are animal-like, lack civility, discipline, and sexual restraint; their instincts are base, they are too close to nature, they are, like racialized others, not fully human beings" (*Race and the Education of Desire* 151).

> masturbation was not something that European children were inclined to do on their own. They were encouraged and guided in such exercises in self-pleasure by servants, not taught to do it by themselves. (*Race and the Education of Desire* 155)

In other words, Dutch colonial officials figured the European child's seduction into autoeroticism as a racializing act. As we have seen, the metropolitan corollary of this colonial seduction had its injurious influences delineated by a tradition of medical discourses that linked masturbation to a capacious array of illnesses vis-à-vis models of the body in which one's self-relation became increasingly problematized as erotic. It would appear, though, that colonial medicine characterized racial deviance vis-à-vis masturbatory initiation through more euphemistic and less corporeal terminology. For example, Stoler cites one colonial doctor who, cautioning European parents to never allow their children to sleep in the same room as their nursemaids, declared that they soothed children to sleep through "'unbelievable practices that alas occur all too often, damaging these children for their entire adult lives and that cannot be written here'" (155-156). Nebulous gestures toward danger populate the landscape of colonial discourse, so this circuitous style of language is unremarkable within the context of its production. Nevertheless, Stoler makes much of this colonial aversion toward naming and ascribing social force to the body's autoerotic capacities. For Stoler, that the colonial guidebooks did not portray masturbation as a natural proclivity of European children but, rather, as a corporeal self-relation instructed into them by native nursemaids constitutes evidence for what is, in fact, the overarching claim of *Race and the Education of Desire*: "The nineteenth-century discourse on bourgeois sexuality may better be understood as a recuperation of a protracted discourse on race, for the discourse on sexuality contains many of the latter's most salient

elements" (193). That is, the deployment of sexuality was primarily about organizing European affect around racial paranoia, White identification, and bourgeois sensibility; as I discuss below, for Stoler, sexuality was this deployment's effect, never its cause.

In the decades since *Race and the Education of Desire* was published, the general relationship Stoler draws between race and bourgeois sex/uality has become a permissible, if not standard, utterance in queer theory and queer of color critique, both in terms of its ideational content and its rhetorical-hermeneutic form. Schuller, for example, drawing on Roderick Ferguson's pivotal insight that "'racist practice articulates itself generally as gender and sexual regulation,'" argues that "the rhetoric of distinct sexes of male and female consolidated as a *function* of race" and, as such, "name[s] sex, sexuality, and, in the post–World War II era, gender as key ways that race fragments the domain of the biological" (Schuller 17). It is undeniable that both the regulation of sex and the epistemology of sex since the sixteenth century have operated in tandem with the regulation and epistemology of race.[302] We will see, for example, that there is ample evidence to indicate that Freud's progressive restriction of the subject's ontogenetic exposure to the world, which he mediates through ontological characterizations of sex, was motivated, in part, by racial anxieties. Moreover, I agree with Schuller that a prevalent form of intersectionality has often proved itself to be an insufficient framework for representing the genealogical affiliations and dynamic, functional imbrications between the major ontological categories that order relationality in the world today (sex, race, class, gender, sexuality, religion, etc.). However, that sexual experience and epistemology have been partially formed by racist instrumentations of sex does not constitute a rational basis for creating a metaphysical organization of race and sex whereby the latter is subordinated to the former.

[302] [footnote on Traub's "Sexuality" essay]

This may appear an odd thing for a Foucaultian to say. After all, is it not Foucault who taught us that "[s]exuality must not be described as a stubborn drive, by nature alien and of necessity disobedient to a power which exhausts itself trying to subdue it and often fails to control it entirely" (*HoSVol.1* 103)? Indeed, when Stoler takes aim at Judith Butler's gloss of the first volume of *The History of Sexuality* as "a history of western desire" in rhetorically framing her assertion of *Race*'s overarching thesis, it is by referencing Foucault's (supposed) conception of "desire as a social construct"—as "an effect" rather than, as with Freud, "a cause"—that she justifies her critique (*Race* 168-169).[303] Schuller, too, triangulates her subordination of sex to the status of a racializing technology through Foucault's work on sexuality and biopower, as have other scholars.[304] However, does Foucault in fact advocate apprehending the ontology of sex as merely the effect of power? No, at least not in the way that is being used to justify the metaphysical organization of race and sex in these texts. As I discussed in the Introduction, Foucault's nominal structuralism is not social constructivism. Predicating historical analysis on the proposition that "madness does not exist" so as to delineate the regimes of power that have mediated their operations through socially extensive dividing practices that took as their basis the fiction of "madness" as a conceptual-ontological unity does not equate to asserting that "neurodiversity does not exist." *Power does not create its objects and instruments out of nothing*. In claiming that sexuality is not a "stubborn drive" that by nature resists power, Foucault is not saying that power freely reigns over sex. The most important detail in Foucault's analysis of the crusade against child masturbation is that sex became "deployable" precisely due to the erotic

[303] Stoler has consistently rejected sex as an ontological and analytic category across her career, as most recently indexed by the "Beyond Sex?" chapter in her 2016 monograph *Duress*.

[304] See, for example, Jules Gill-Peterson *Histories of the Transgender Child*.

self- and intersubjective relations engendered by the crusade's failure vis-à-vis its nominal objective to stop masturbation:

> The medical examination, the psychiatric investigation, the pedagogical report, and family controls may have the over-all and apparent objective of saying no to all wayward or unproductive sexualities, but the fact is that they function as mechanisms with a double impetus: pleasure and power. The pleasure that comes of [*sic*] exercising a power that questions, monitors, watches, species, searches out, palpates, brings to light; and on the other hand, the pleasure that kindles at having to evade this power, flee from it, fool it, or travesty it. The power that lets itself be invaded by the pleasure it is pursuing; and opposite it, power asserting itself in the pleasure of showing off, scandalizing, or resisting…These attractions, these evasions, these circular incitements that have traced around bodies and sexes, not boundaries not to be crossed, but *perpetual spirals of power and pleasure*. (*HoSVol.1* 45)

For Foucault, sexual desire not only responds to but *reforms and reconstitutes* the power that attempts to subject it. Consequently, if sexuality "is not the most intractable element in power relation, but rather one of those endowed with the greatest instrumentality" (*HoSVol.1* 103), this endowment was not arbitrary, as if any other modality of human experience could have been used in its stead. Foucault's rebuke of the repressive hypothesis is not a rejection of Freudian psychoanalysis but, in fact, takes Freud's discovery of mechanisms by which repression does not negate erotic attachments but *produces* them—fetishism, sublimation, transference, neurosis,

etc.—as not only its conceptual but *libidinal* basis.[305] Furthermore, recognizing that modern sexuality has been formed by power—that it is complexly and intensely imbricated in projects of domination, control, and death-making "beyond" what nominally constitutes the "sexual"—does not in and of itself entail divesting from the notion that sex may have *some* intrinsic being, even as we acknowledge that our knowledge of this being is always mediated by the social.[306]

It is not my intention to advance any rigorous claims about the ontology of sex in this dissertation. On the contrary, the thrust of my overarching argument about trauma theory and its relation to the novel is that *TMOUH*'s figuration of intersex ontology is predicated upon a derealizing, injurious metaphysics of sex and gender in which hijraness is tragically constituted by a primordial drive: that is, as an impossible and insurmountable desire for gendered completeness. I will discuss this further in chapter four. For now, my discussion of Stoler and Schuller has sought to show that the scene of traumatic seduction that is formulated and mobilized in the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century crusade against childhood masturbation—which organized the logics of traumatic formalism (insofar as illness at any point in life could be yoked to masturbation in childhood) and the "inexhaustible causal power of infantile sexuality" that come to feature so prominently in Freud's seduction theory of hysteria—is undoubtedly

[305] "Foucault's analysis of the culturally productive possibilities of the prohibitive law clearly takes as its bearing within the existing theory on sublimation articulated by Freud in *Civilization and its Discontents* and reinterpreted by Marcuse in *Eros and Civilization*…In a radical departure from those theories of sublimation, however, Foucault argues on behalf of a productive law without the postulation of an original desire" (Butler *Gender Trouble* 98-99).

[306] In fact, even Stoler admits the possibility that the body and its attachments may have a role in human relations that is not brought into being by power *ex nihilo*; however, she can only articulate this reality by naming it "affect" and arguing that sex dissimulates our perception of it: "We may reject, with Foucault, a notion of primordial drive but still explore a space for individual affect structured by power but not wholly subsumed by it…[B]y avoiding such an intense focus on sexuality, we can avoid reproducing the very terms of the nineteenth century imperial discourse that reduced and read all desires as sexual ones" (*Race* 192). Nothing could be more anti-Foucaultian than encouraging avoidance as an analytic modality, particularly when the logic justifying the avoidance is the fear that merely engaging with a concept amounts to a "reproduction" of its terms—a logic of inescapable contamination that, ironically, proliferates within the deployment of sexuality! More importantly, why should we readily accept the ontological primacy of affect while denying it, *a priori*, to sex (except when we can disappear that primacy by enfolding sex into affect)?

underwritten by (and, to an extent, co-constitutive of) racial anxieties. Second, however, I have sought to distance my claim about race's involvement in the deployment of sexuality from the disavowal of sex's positivity that frequently accompanies similar claims. Leaving space for this positivity is crucial because sex—by which I do not mean just the regulation or instrumentation of sex, but the will and nature of erotic desire, which forms itself in relation to power but always to an extent *inexplicably* so[307]—does, in fact, exert power; thus, while we should absolutely repudiate reductive schematizations of this power, such as those that render European colonialism the mere expression of primordial drives (*Race*'s primary target) or the indefatigable causality of sexual experiences in early childhood (one of my targets), we should not extend that repudiation to sex altogether. At the same time, refusing the either/or logic of demystification is important because security is always recalibrating the thresholds of its power-knowledge; it expands its concepts continually; it operates on "and," not either/or. To erase sex from this dynamic/equation in favor of race is, thus, to misrecognize security's open-ended orientation as a form of power-knowledge.

3.5 Sex's Generativity and Pertinacity

To say the least, the legacy of Freud's seduction theory of hysteria is interesting. As I discuss near the end of this chapter, its central notion of traumatization via childhood sexual seduction appears to have been preserved up to the present day, both within and beyond the psychological disciplines. If we restrict our gaze to the course of psychoanalytic theory, however, it is not clear why this should be the case. After all, it is commonly observed that Freud

[307] My focus on the inexplicability of sexual causality—which I consider to both be a discourse and a real attribute of sex—is informed by Valerie Traub's notion of "sex-as-knowledge-relation" in *Thinking Sex with the Early Moderns*.

"abandoned" the seduction theory quite soon after formulating it and, in its place, advanced the theory of infantile sexuality, which locates the ontogeneticity of childhood sexuality not in the actions of an external seducer but in the child's sexual fantasies. For our purposes, what is important is that the theory of infantile sexuality also restructures trauma's relation to sex. Whereas the seduction theory had rendered sex the vector of harm, the theory of infantile sexuality internalizes trauma within the subject as a mode of fantasy at the same time that it displaces the temporality of this fantasized trauma onto the subject's prehistory. One result is the closing off of the subject from experience; another result, conversely, is that sex is endowed with a peculiar generative force. My argument, ultimately, is that the underside of this endowment of generativity to sex is the subject's *a priori* attachment to sexed embodiment and to resulting sublimations and fetishizations, all of which activate a generative principle that Freud will associate with life itself. In contrast to sex, gender is rendered static, functioning like the deadened surface of the "vesicle" in Freud's mythobiological thought-experiment of the origin of life in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*.

As Fletcher notes, Freud's faith in the seduction theory was quickly eroded by his many unsuccessful attempts to manage contradictions between evental determinism and symptomatic/scenographic metaphoricity that emerged in his clinical work with hysterics. In particular, he realized that although the seduction theory did not suggest a one-to-one correspondence between symptomatic expression and causal event, it failed to attribute any psychoaffective function to the particularities of scenographic re-presentation. That is, in the course of interpreting evental re-enactments, the seduction theory allowed for what Freud would later call condensation and displacement; however, the theory did not recognize these representational modifications as defense mechanisms whose psychoaffective work must be

diagrammed in order to fully reconstruct the traumatic event, as Freudian dream analysis would later claim. This emergent interest in the *form* of traumatic memory was catalyzed into a theoretical paradigm shift by Freud's encounter with a new concept, that of fantasy. In an 1897 letter, Freud wrote excitedly to Fliess about the role of fantasy in the genesis of hysteria:

> Everything goes back to the reproduction of scenes. Some can be obtained directly, others always by way of fantasies set up in front of them. The fantasies stem from the things that have been *heard* but understood *subsequently* [*nachträglich*, JF] and all their material is of course genuine. They are protective structures, sublimations of the facts, embellishments of them, and at the same time serve for self-relief. Their accidental origin is perhaps from masturbation fantasies. (Fletcher 89)

Here, two ideas emerged that would greatly influence all of psychoanalytic theory: the (hermeneutic) idea that defense mechanisms organize the experience and recounting of memory, and the (etiological) idea that these defense mechanisms originate, ultimately, in the child's sexual fantasies. Significantly, neither of these ideas center an external event as the *causal* force of traumatization; instead, Freud begins to frame (sexual) trauma as a consequence of the child's self-relation. As such, as Freud elaborated these ideas over the course of the next decade, the seduction theory's reliance on and model of trauma—trauma understood as an irruptive external force that implants itself in the subject and forces them to "reproduce the scenes" of its originary event—was gradually displaced by infantile sexuality as psychoanalysis's ordering principle. Yet, as Freud taught us in the very paradigm shift under discussion, displacement often preserves a phenomenon's constitutive dynamics.

There are three features of the theory of infantile sexuality that are particularly important to the genealogy of trauma theory. The first is a consequence of infantile sexuality's fundamental

axiom: "neuroses are, so to say, the negative of perversions" (*Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* 165). In etiologically rooting *all* forms of neurosis, not just hysteria, in the subject's internal repression of "abnormal sexuality,"[308] this axiom effectively rendered childhood sexuality the *medium* of psychic development. This is a sharp shift from the seduction theory, which had only gone so far as to render sexual activity during early life uniquely capable of originating traumatic neurosis.

Second, whereas the seduction theory had portrayed childhood sexuality as a boundary of susceptibility between the subject and the world, thereby affording to external forces some ontogenetic capacity in relation to the subject, in positing sexuality as the medium of development, the theory of infantile sexuality became the foundation from which Freud gradually displaced that power to both the child's self-relation and the prehistory of the "human race." At one level, ontogeneticity was located in the intrapsychic struggle between sexual desire and the repressive forces of "disgust, shame and morality" as it plays out in early childhood (127). In this way, Freud replaces the traumatic seducer with the quasi-novel figure of the self-traumatizing child.[309] To be clear, Freud does not frame this process of self-traumatization as a solipsistic drama of purely self-originated fantasies. It is, rather, that he refigures the world as providing all of the *objects* through which the ontogenetic struggle between desire and repression will articulate itself, but none of the determinative "force." That formative power emerges from an internal interaction between the desire the child brings to an object, the real capacity of the

[308] Here we must remember that psychoanalysis had already used the nebulous category of neurosis to arrogate to the ambit of the psychogenic almost any physiological condition that lacked a legible anatomical cause.

[309] The centrality of masturbation/autoeroticism to this figure's genealogy necessitates my qualification. Notwithstanding the genuine originality of Freud's particular formulation, given how liable our culture is to rejecting outright any notion that the subject could be an agent in their own traumatization, one might say that infantile sexuality's conception of sexual trauma was more intelligible to nineteenth-century sexology and psychiatry than it is to contemporary understandings of trauma.

object's manifestation in the world to satisfy that desire, the way in which the repressive forces respond to that desire and/or the world's capacity to satisfy it, and how desire reacts when its satisfaction is impeded, whether by the world or the repressive forces. Thus, for Freud, the child's external experiences still play a role in their (sexual) formation, but after the *Three Essays*, they are (largely) either *contextual* or *accidental* in nature.[310]

Nevertheless, in theorizing development as given form by self-traumatization, Freud does not entirely abandon the seduction theory's notion that external experience can *directly* shape ontogenesis. Rather, through recourse to a neo-Lamarckian paradigm of inheritance cross-hatched with traumatic formalism, Freud back-projects the determinative causality of external experience onto a phylogenetic genealogy of micro-modifications: "The experiences of the ego seem at first to be lost for inheritance; but, when they have been repeated often enough and with sufficient strength in many individuals in successive generations, they transform themselves, so to say, into experiences of the id, *the impressions of which are preserved by heredity*" (*The Ego and the Id* 38, emphasis mine). Since, on the one hand, Freud repeatedly associates these inherited impressions with the aforementioned repressive forces and rarely with the originary fount of desire he refers to broadly as the "sexual instincts" and, on the other hand, it is these repressive "dams" that act on the sexual instincts and, through the resulting struggles, influence the developmental trajectory of the subject, I contend that ontogenetic susceptibility to external trauma is not ideationally abandoned so much as *sublated* by way of infantile sexuality's displacement of it from early life to early humanity. That is, when Freud avers that "these forces which act like dams upon sexual development…must also be regarded as *historical precipitates*

[310] The theme of accidental causality seems to become more and more central to Freud's theory of infantile sexuality as he revised the *Three Essays*, as attested by his explicit discussion of "accidental factors" in the preface to the 1914 edition (*Three Essays* 130-132). In a future project, I would like to more rigorously trace this progressive reliance on the accidental in Freud's work.

of the external inhibitions to which the sexual instinct has been subjected during the psychogenesis of the human race" (*Three Essays* 162 n.2, emphasis mine), he effectively defines the repressive forces as the inheritance of externally-induced sexual trauma.[311] What is important in this convoluted preservation of external trauma vis-à-vis phylogeny is that it is bound up with the aforementioned (equally-convoluted) devaluation of external experience's developmental power in the present. With respect to the repressive forces, Freud is at pains to stress that their origin is not found in moral pedagogy: "One gets an impression from civilized children that the construction of these dams is a product of education, and no doubt education has much to do with it." But this impression is false, he continues: "But in reality this development is organically determined and fixed by heredity, and it can occasionally occur without any help at all from education" (177-178). To borrow from the contemporary nature/nurture idiom, the displacement of external seduction we have been tracking could be summarized as: the nurture of proto-humanity was progressively internalized and reified until it constituted the nature of humanity, and by virtue of this internalization-reification, humanity's nature no longer yields to nurture.

Third, as partially exemplified by the preceding remarks, attempting to legitimize infantile sexuality's disavowal of development's susceptibility to external influence propelled a series of reflections on the relations between metapsychology, ontogeny, and phylogeny over the course of two decades that ultimately culminated in the "structural" model of the mind ("the second topography")—its composition by structures (the ego, id, and super-ego) extending

[311] This relation between trauma, morality, and inheritance—where trauma accounts both mechanistically/etiologically for the formation of morality *and* structurally/metaphorically for the preservation and transmission of this morality across individuals in a species—comes to play a formative role in Freud's late ruminations on civilization and religion, as I discuss later in this chapter.

across the topographical layers of the unconscious, preconscious and conscious by which Freud's prevailing "economic" model of the mind ("the first topography") had been organized.[312]

Earlier, I argued that the seduction theory should be read as constituting a theoretical double movement with respect to conceptions of ontological susceptibility; it enacts a significant restriction of the ontogenetic power of non-sexual experience that simultaneously endows sexual abuse in early childhood with extraordinary ontogenetic potential. I noted that this double movement is operative across all of Freud's major shifts in conceptualizing trauma and, as such, tracing and interrogating this continuity will tell us something about the constitutive dynamics underwriting the theorization of trauma. Thus far, in my discussion of infantile sexuality I have emphasized the restrictive side of this movement's continuation. In order to recognize the productive side, we need to diagram how infantile sexuality reorganizes the trauma-sex-illness assemblage that was initially arranged by the crusade against childhood masturbation and how it reforms that assemblage's constitutive parts.

With the seduction theory, a sexual event in childhood was both traumatic and pathogenetic because it overwrote the subject's experience of the present, keeping the subject trapped in a defensive relation to that event despite its real absence in the present; sex's pathogenicity was defined by its capacity to engender a traumatic relation to the past. Notably, this formulation was already at variance from the one proffered in childhood masturbation discourse. In the latter, sex was articulated with a wide range of physiological and anatomical diseases by way of *nachträglichkeit*, and it was through this traumatic form that sex was rendered pathogenetic. As Foucault notes, sex was ascribed this special power so as to explain the origination of illness wherever the new empiricist medicine proved insufficient; as such,

[312] Freud first explicitly formulated the second topography in *The Ego and the Id* (1923).

sex's uniquely capacious pathogenicity was constituted by the *nachträglichkeit*-laden vectors leading away from sex itself. The seduction theory, however, assimilated cause to illness: sexual experience made one ill by keeping one temporally bound to it, via repression, and by providing a foundation for other temporal implantations vis-à-vis the auxiliary scenes of repression's reemergence and subsequent re-repression that determined the content of hysterical symptoms. In other words, the seduction theory transplanted the traumatic logos connecting sex and bodily illness to the self's relation to its previous experiences and then reformulated *this* relational form *as* illness. Thus, although sex was still associated with illness, the essential negativity of sex had already been significantly attenuated. In fact, it is not difficult to see how the pure distillation of this capacity of sex to create durable connections between the self, its past iterations, and the world could give rise to a theory of subject formation that positively predicates identity on libido.

The theory of infantile sexuality is the realization of this potential. This theory no longer recognized trauma as a minoritizing aberration but, instead, rendered it natural and inevitable for childhood sexuality to perpetually impose itself on the subject; in this way, it founded the possibility of "normal" development on this sexuality's (traumatic) "pertinacity."[313] At the same time, by splitting perversion from neurosis and etiologically designating the latter as the former's negation, the theory of infantile sexuality completed the reversal of the sex-illness relation that had been initiated by the seduction theory: it was now not the assent to sexual desire, but the refusal of it that made one ill. Nevertheless, Freud's succinct formulation of this fundamental relation between perversion and neurosis—"neuroses are, so to say, the negative of perversions"—omits from its etiological frame the most valorized aspect of sexuality within this

[313] I borrow the term pertinacity directly from the summary Freud provides at the end of the "Three Essays," which includes a section entitled "Pertinacity of Early Impressions" ("Three Essays" 242).

new paradigm: sex's inexplicable generativity, its endless-yet-unpredictable capacity to eroticize (or divert erotic energy into "non-erotic" acts such that erotic satisfaction is made possible) and, in eroticizing, shift the subject's relation to themself and/or to the world. That is, Freud's formulation would more accurately express the theory of infantile sexuality if we emended it to highlight the role of this generative principle: neuroses are "the negative of perversions" when the attempted negation of desire does not stimulate a mutation of it so that erotic satisfaction through other aims and objects becomes possible for the sexual instincts. Indeed, whether it be the disavowal of the subject's erotic attachments to their parents and the shift of this desire toward substitute objects that marks the (always-tenuous) dissolution of the oedipus complex, the reversion of object-libido to ego-libido in narcissism, the artistic production made possible by sublimation, the polymorphously perverse child with erotogenic zones all over their body, or the fetishist whose erotic attachment enables him to protect himself from the fear of castration—what is frequently made the focus of psychoanalytic attention after the *Three Essays* is an open-ended generativity that Freud associates, uniquely and positively, with the sexual instincts. However, this association should not be regarded as a Freudian invention, insofar as it was clearly formulated in the diffuse, polyvalent pathogeneticity of childhood masturbation discourse that preceded it. It is the subtle reversal of this generativity's valuation that constitutes Freud's intervention.

While I have been arguing that this reversal should be primarily understood in terms of Freud's progressive disavowal and sublation of external influence on development, we might attribute it, in part, to Freud's incomplete recognition of the real effects of the crusade on childhood masturbation: the dual production of erotic attachments and of neurotic conditions effected through repressive mechanisms. In turn, we could speculate that Freud's strenuous

efforts to close the subject's developmental form from external power—while reinscribing the repressive-productive relation between power and sex both internally and phylogenetically—are, to some degree, rooted in his ambivalence about this recognition. Given my highlighting the role of generativity and pertinacity, a few observations about these concepts are required. First, in terms of form, pertinacity and generativity are in tension. Generativity is what makes form possible. However, whereas pertinacity coheres form, generativity destabilizes form. Second, despite this opposition, the logic of trauma is organized by a conjunction of pertinacity and generativity. A trauma marks in the subject an experience's unexpected generation of a pertinacious attachment to it. Third, this constitutive antinomy between sex's generativity and pertinacity is ambivalently arranged by Freud such that the ontology of the human is open to growth but closed to stultification. Finally, if trauma largely disappears from Freud's theoretical lexicon for many years after formulating the theory of infantile sexuality, it is because trauma has been implicitly collapsed into sex.

While originating the repressive forces in "inheritance" may seem like a move toward teleological and predestined schemas of development, these repressive forces are in fact not determinative; in addition, they are essential to enabling sex's generative capacity. In closing off ontogenesis to external power, Freud did not homogenize human development; because of sex's unpredictable generativity, his theory of infantile sexuality brought to the fore the fact that ontogenesis was internally varied. Yet, even while sublating ontogenetic susceptibility to external re-formation into the principle of sex's generativity, Freud's anxiety about the absence of any *developmental* structure, I would argue, found expression in the overarching causal power he ascribed to sexed form—that is, to anatomical difference. Freud, of course, explicitly rejects anatomical determinism with respect to sexual desire. Nonetheless, because it was through

anatomical determinism that the eugenicists derived their theories of ontological plasticity, he finds it necessary to guard against this openness of the human form to external manipulations. By inexplicably naturalizing the coincidence of phalluses and penises, Freud utilizes the notion of ontological differences between the sexes as a guarantor of the existence, coherence, and maintenance of form.

3.6 Trauma as the Guarantor of Form

For much of the two decades following the "Aetiology," trauma in the sense of an irruptive event, sexual or otherwise, that psychologically carves itself into the subject did not figure prominently in Freud's work. I have argued that this omission should be attributed not only to a theoretical incompatibility between the relations between sex and ontogenesis at the center of the theory of infantile sexuality, but also to an anxiety on Freud's part with respect to the external world's traumatic capacity. This anxiety, I've argued, animates his gradual sublation of external trauma both inward in the subject and genealogically backward at the level of both individual subject and the human race. Insofar as the theory of infantile sexuality constituted the foundational counterforce within psychoanalytic theory, by which Freud repressed the ontogenetic potential of the external world that had originally initiated studies of traumatic neurosis, it is unsurprising that trauma-as-irruptive-event mostly faded from view with infantile sexuality's ascendancy.[314] However, the fields from which the study of trauma emerged,

[314] With this characterization, I am, of course, generalizing. The term "trauma" can be found all over Freud's oeuvre, and even "seduction" is ascribed potential causality in the *Three Essays*. However, the general feature of these references to trauma and seduction—at least until *Psycho-analysis and the War Neuroses* (1919)—is to reinscribe them into the paradigm of infantile sexuality. Emblematic in this regard the following passage from *Three Essays*: "I cannot admit that in my paper on 'The Aetiology of Hysteria' (1896c) I exaggerated the frequency or importance of that influence, though I did not then know that persons who remain normal may have had the same experiences in their childhood, and though I consequently overrated the importance of seduction in comparison with the factors of sexual constitution and development. Obviously seduction is not required in order to arouse a child's sexual life; that can also come about spontaneously from internal causes" (190).

psychiatry and neurology, had not followed Freud in accepting infantile sexuality, in particular, and psychogenetic etiology, in general, as doctrine; they were still, by and large, methodologically rooted in anatomical determinism and associationism. Consequently, these fields had not separated trauma from its original formulation as a "wound." Insofar as Freud desired nothing less than for psychoanalysis to constitute an intellectual revolution on par with that of Copernicus's for humanity's conception of the mind, it was, in my view, inevitable that he would be forced to show how infantile sexuality could etiologically account for multiple cases of trauma that were all clearly related to an external event. World War I presented just such an opportunity.

One of the major problems of governmentality faced by European nations during the First World War concerned the military qualification of psychologically traumatized soldiers. Whereas physically traumatized soldiers were regarded as national heroes, those whose injuries were primarily psychoaffective in nature (i.e., lacking a physical determinant) were lumped together with malingerers, "[earning them] the contempt of the entire military establishment—rank-and-file troops, officers, even doctors" (Fassin and Rechtman 42). In European war psychiatry, this contempt was theoretically buttressed through casting "war neuroses" as manifestations of a constitutional "cowardice," an account in which the brutality of war did not directly cause neurotic symptoms but, instead, merely activated an underlying narcissistic disposition (43-47). Correspondingly, war psychiatrists were unsparing in their attempts at correcting all inclinations toward desertion; in particular, due to the widespread influence of the French war doctor Clovis Vincent, they often resorted to electrotherapies of various strengths, some of which, like Vincent's notorious "torpillage" technique, amounted to torture (48-49). In the aftermath of the Great War, these "therapies" were brought to the Austrian public's attention

through the 1920 trial of Julius Wagner von Jauregg, who was accused of utilizing "inhumane techniques" (such as torpillage) against soldiers under his care during the war.

As Fassin and Rechtman tell the story, Freud utilized this acute public crisis in neuropsychiatry to psychoanalysis's advantage. When he was called upon to speak at the trial, Freud cleverly defended his colleague's character by attributing culpability for his unsavory correction methods (which Freud strongly denounced as "useless and unethical") solely to neuropsychiatry's insufficient theoretical basis, which, Freud averred, was incapable of recognizing the unconscious etiology of war neuroses (50-52). Fassin and Rechtman characterize Freud's trial statement as a masterful display of political savvy: "Freud managed in one stroke to protect the honor of his colleague, condemn electrotherapy, destroy the etiological hypotheses of his opponents, and ridicule their naïve conceptions of neurotic psychology, while at the same time preserving the link between hysteria and traumatic neurosis that was absolutely central to his general theory of neuroses" (52). While Fassin and Rechtman are correct that Freud adroitly navigated this public appearance, they misrecognize performance for preservation. As I have demonstrated, what they refer to positively as a "link" between hysteria and traumatic neurosis was, in fact, a disavowal—the "traumatic neurosis" appearing in war-exposed soldiers was precisely the form of trauma that Freud's "general theory of neuroses" (i.e., that neuroses stem from repressed perversions) had attempted to derealize while preserving its constitutive dynamics in infantile sexuality and phylogenetic structuralism. Freud's suave confidence at the trial was as much about convincing himself that the "war neuroses" did not destabilize the foundation of psychoanalytic theory as it was about convincing others.

The risk posed by war neuroses to the coherence of psychoanalysis had been on Freud's mind for at least two years prior to von Juaregg's trial, in part because in the fall of 1918 the

Fifth International Psycho-Analytic Congress had taken this problem as its theme. Freud responded to critiques raised by Congress participants in the introduction he wrote for the volume of their papers that was published the following year, *Psycho-Analysis and the War Neuroses* (1919)

> Now it is quite true, as Ernest Jones remarks in his contribution to this volume, that [the theory that neuroses arise from the repression of sexual instincts] has not yet been proved to apply to the war neuroses. The work that might prove it has not yet been taken in hand. It may be that the war neuroses are altogether unsuitable material for the purpose. But the opponents of psycho-analysis, whose dislike of sexuality is evidently stronger than their logic, have been in a hurry to proclaim that the investigation of the war neuroses has finally disproved this portion of psycho-analytic theory. If the investigation of the war neuroses (and a very superficial one at that) has *not shown* that the sexual theory of the neuroses is *correct*, that is something very different from its *showing* that that theory is *incorrect*. ("Introduction to *Psycho-Analysis and the War Neuroses*" 208, emphasis-in-original)

As with Freud's original introduction of sexuality as trauma's etiology in the "Aetiology," here he preemptively frames his response to critique by attributing these critiques to erotophobic bias. Thereafter, he attempts to contain this aporia via a series of confusing qualifying definitions and differentiations. First, he introduces a difference between "peace-time" and "war" neuroses, a difference that had not functioned in any substantial way in psychoanalysis until this point. Then, following Abraham, he defines war neuroses as "traumatic neuroses whose occurrence has been promoted by a conflict in the ego," in which the "soldier's old peaceful ego" is threatened by the brashness of "his new warlike [ego]" and, as such, "[protects] itself from a mortal danger by

taking flight into a traumatic neurosis." At the same time, paradoxically, he differentiates war-time traumatic neuroses from the peace-time ("pure") traumatic neuroses on account of the latter *not* occurring with "any reference to a conflict in the ego." Without clarifying how the subject could have two egos, nor why peace-time traumatic neuroses demonstrate no ego conflict, nor which definition of "trauma" justifies grouping these two categories of supposed "traumatic neuroses" together, Freud utilizes this qualification to syllogistically assimilate war neuroses to transference neuroses, in the process availing himself of an additional inexplicable introversion: "In both cases the ego is afraid of being damaged—in the latter case by the libido and in the former by external violence. It might, indeed, be said that in the case of the war neuroses, *in contrast to the pure traumatic neuroses* and in approximation to the transference neuroses, what is feared is nevertheless an internal enemy" (210). With this clumsy attempt at sleight-of-hand, Freud strips war neuroses of their external cause, revealing them to be transference neuroses in disguise. Ironically, however, this rhetorical move seems to force Freud to *transfer* psychoanalysis's reaction-formation against externally-precipitated trauma to the war neuroses, thereby allowing the former to re-emerge as a vexing problem within his system of thought. In view of the intellectual trajectory we have been tracing, Freud's response to this re-emergence is both predictable and extraordinary. Closing out his contribution to this volume, Freud defines "repression, which lies at the basis of every neurosis, as a reaction to a trauma" and posits this reaction as *the universal foundation of all neuroses*.[315] This stunning claim does not index the continuous, coherent "centrality" of trauma to the general theory of neuroses: the "trauma" of fantasized castration is not phenomenologically nor psychodynamically equivalent to the

[315] "The theoretical difficulties standing in the way of a unifying hypothesis [bringing together the transference neuroses, war neuroses, and peace-time traumatic neuroses] do not seem insuperable; after all, we have a perfect right to describe repression, which lies at the basis of every neurosis, as a reaction to a trauma—as an elementary traumatic neurosis" (210)

"trauma" of experiencing an explosion. Rather, the rhetorical work of this claim is that through collapsing "trauma" and repression, Freud utilizes the *logic* of trauma to dissolve trauma-as-bodily-event into the nebulous ether of trauma-as-universal-condition. Freud's response to the war neuroses, in short, precipitates psychoanalysis's sublation of ontogenetic susceptibility into infantile sexuality.

***

Although one might not realize this given the focus of his text's reception, Freud's most significant consideration of the etiology and function of trauma in relation to sex occurs in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. Here, Freud frames the problem of external trauma vis-à-vis psychoanalysis's metapsychology as stemming from a contradiction posed between the latter's pleasure principle and what I earlier called the former's most defining symptom: flashbacks. Because *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* is a tortuously constructed and highly speculative text, before proceeding I begin by summarizing its ultimate theory of external trauma, the significance of this theory to Freud's late metapsychology, and then begin to situate this theory and its afterlives with respect to the conceptual and hermeneutic trends we have been tracing.

Addressing flashbacks in the form of traumatic dreams in particular, Freud argues that these dreams correlate to simulated repetitions on the part of the mind. Already, we should note that this characterization of traumatic dreams as unconsciously-willed simulations preemptively attenuates the etiological capacity of the traumatic event itself, insofar as Freud presupposes that these repetitions are internally stimulated.[316] In any case, Freud observes that these dreams are odd from the perspective of psychoanalysis's wish-fulfillment thesis—which holds that dreams,

[316] Note the variance between Freud's original formulation of *nachträglichkeit* ("carrying after-ness") and this notion of repeated simulation. The former imagines an exterior experience that is implanted in the subject such that they "carry" its memory *and its temporality* with them, whereas the latter imagines traumatic dreams as more-or-less ordinary, albeit unpleasurable, memories to which the mind inexplicably "chooses" to return.

corresponding to the directives of the pleasure principle, forestall the emergence of distressing repressed materials by sublimating them into simulations of fulfilled desires—because it is clear that these dreams torture their subjects, sometimes to the point of waking them.[317] In Freud's words, "It would be more in harmony with [these dreams'] nature if they showed the [traumatized] patient pictures from his healthy past or of the cure for which he hopes" (*Beyond the Pleasure Principle* 7). Freud then, as per his rhetorical style, disingenuously offers the possibility that the wish-fulfillment thesis might be wrong before suggesting that the contradiction is actually a misunderstanding borne of our ignorance of "the mysterious masochistic trends of the ego" (7-8).

Through conjuncting a mythobiological thought-experiment on the origin of life (which I discuss in more detail later) with a preconceived ontological schema for the body-mind's management of external and internal stimulations, Freud characterizes the boundary between the psyche and the world as a "protective shield" whose purpose is to fend off external stimulations through a sort of sensory nullification constituted by alternating processes of cathexis and discharge; moreover, he argues that the shield does this work in step with the pleasure principle. Correspondingly, Freud suggests that an external event generates the condition known as "trauma"—nosologically reduced to the symptom of flashbacks—when its excitations exceed the regulatory capacity of the protective shield because, for reasons that are scarcely illuminated, this overflow of stimulus causes the pleasure principle to be "put out of action," thereby allowing "something that seems more primitive, more elementary, [and] more instinctual" to reemerge and seize control of the psychic apparatus (17). This mysterious "something"—the lynchpin of this

[317] Whereas one might expect Freud to address non-traumatic nightmares and delineate their difference from traumatic dreams at some point in this discussion, he is oddly silent in this regard.

"new" theory of trauma—is what Freud (in)famously postulates as a "death instinct" inherent to all life. As we will discuss later, even in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, Freud's deployment of this term is inconsistent and riven with contradictions, and as such, defining it for the purposes of summary without being reductive is difficult. For now, what is important is how Freud situates this instinct with respect to the problem of traumatic dreams: the death instinct *is* the "compulsion to repeat" responsible for their production. In other words, Freud argues that the reason the traumatized subject repeatedly simulates the traumatizing event in the form of flashbacks is because that event overloaded the protective shield, thereby temporarily disabling the pleasure principle. With the pleasure principle disabled, a primordial compulsion to repeat takes over—or to be more precise, returns to its previous position of sovereignty over the subject (a position it had relinquished to the pleasure principle, which usurped the compulsion to repeat and normally suppresses it). Traumatic dreams are, thus, the effect of this instinctual repetition compulsion reigning in the mind once again.

This formulation constitutes both Freud's most explicit engagement with external traumatic events and, at the same time, his most intensive derealization and disavowal of their ontogenetic capacity. After all, this theory posits no essential relation between event and symptom. The unique psychosocial content of the event is etiologically irrelevant. Only something like the event's pure quantum of stimulus matters, and even then, all that stimulus effectively does is activate an underlying disposition toward mnemonic looping. Whereas one might expect the progenitor of modern dream analysis, which ascribes specific etiological significance to practically any element in the dream material that shows up repeatedly, to be inclined, at the very least, to recognize libidinal or defensive attachments to the event in the subject's repeated simulation of it, Freud's overarching objective in finally addressing the lacuna

of external trauma is, in fact, to free us once and for all from the apparently erroneous perception that the traumatic event could have any real "strength" (7) and, instead, persuade us that the condition of trauma is always *epiphenomenal* with respect to the event that merely occasions it. In this way, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* completes a decades-long process of ontogenetically impoverishing the external world that started with Freud's restriction of traumatic experience to that of childhood sexual abuse in the "Aetiology."

Notably, this iteration of the disavowal of external causality does not appear to be counterbalanced by an affirmation or further valorization of sex's "inexhaustible causal power." Instead, the aforementioned impoverishment of the "outside" is effected through speculatively populating the "inside" with a new element, the death instinct. Insofar as across several texts beginning with *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* Freud progressively formulates his analysis of this instinct by situating it within an ontologically foundational "dualism" comprised of it and the sexual instincts, one may be tempted to conclude that Freud's introduction of the death instinct correlates to a new strategy for (theoretically) closing the subject's developmental trajectory from the world's influence. It is my contention, however, that this "new" opposition between the death instinct and the sexual instincts is, in reality, an intensification and recodification of infantile sexuality's constitutive opposition between the repressive forces and sexual desire. This opposition's stabilizing foundation—that is, the (male) subject's *a priori* "attachment" to sexed embodiment—is metapsychologically reinscribed in a concept-form (that is, as an instinct) proper to its abstracted function and metaphysical status.

Before we can diagram the death instinct's relation to sexuality and sexed embodiment, it is necessary that I dilate on Freud's inconsistent use of this "death instinct." As we have just discussed, Freud initially aligns the concept with an internal force he recognizes at work in

traumatic dreams, which he describes as an instinctual "compulsion to repeat." Later in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, however, Freud describes the death instinct as a force that compels the organism to "[return] to inorganic existence" (33). Further on, he formulates the death instinct as a force that compels destruction, which, under the sway of the pleasure principle, is frequently sublimated into sadism and masochism. Because the last definition is, on the one hand, the one that Freud uses in what became his most widely-read texts, *The Ego and the Id* and *Civilization and its Discontents*, and, on the other hand, more legibly related to "death" than the other two, this notion of the death instinct as an inherent human urge to destroy, murder, and inflict pain is what became culturally canonized. Yet, if we attempt to hold this common understanding of the death instinct responsible for the theory from which it was nominally derived—*Beyond*'s etiology of trauma—we find that it is insufficient to the task. The "compulsion to repeat" to which Freud attributes responsibility for traumatic dreams operates on the subject's internal relation to their phenomenological apparatus, whereas the mythobiological repetition-compulsion he introduces later in the text clearly refers to an entirely different order of reality. That is, in traumatic dreams, the psychical apparatus is "compelled" to continually reproduce the sensations and memory fragments associated with a particular experience. When transitioning from *this* description of the compulsion supposedly constitutive of the death instinct to the one in which there is a drive to return to inorganic existence, Freud abruptly shifts this instinct's medium to that of biology and ontology and its *telos* to that of undoing evolution and existence. He justifies this leap by claiming that the compulsion to repeat that is generative of traumatic dreams is a *quality* that defines *all* instincts—that of "an urge inherent in organic life *to restore an earlier state of things* which the living entity has been obliged to abandon under the pressure of external disturbing forces…it is a kind of organic elasticity, or…the expression of the inertia

inherent in organic life" (30, emphasis mine). Although Freud appears to be suggesting that the repetition compulsion he identified in his etiology of trauma did not present the full picture of the instinct to which it corresponds, Freud already designated that instinct the death instinct due to its subordination by the pleasure principle and the pleasure principle's capacity to be disabled by an overwhelming degree of stimuli. Thus, introducing this split between attribute and being would only help to justify this abrupt redefinition of the death instinct if Freud could convincingly demonstrate that the mnemonic-sensorial compulsion to repeat in traumatic neurosis is an expression of the compulsion to return to inorganic existence. Freud, however, does not pursue any reconciliation of this sort. Instead, he deploys this latter version of the death instinct as if it were foundational for the rest of his reflections in *Beyond*. Nevertheless, it would seem that the vagueness of "restore an earlier state of things" in his universal definition of "instinct" indexes a desire on Freud's part to resolve the discrepancies between phenomenological repetition and evolutionary-existential restoration.

The underlying conflict constitutive of these aporias becomes legible when we recognize that the theory of the death instinct constitutes, to retool Stoler's phrase, a protracted discourse on the sexual instincts. As mentioned earlier, in the course of advancing this theory in sections four and five of *Beyond*, Freud situates the death instinct(s)[318] in an ontological dualism with the sexual instincts:

> [The sexual instincts] are the true life instincts. They operate against the purpose of the other instincts, which leads, by reason of their function, to death; and this fact indicates that there is *an opposition between them and the other instincts, an*

[318] Freud is inconsistent in how he refers to this concept. Sometimes it is one monolithic death instinct and at other times it is a class of death instincts.

> *opposition whose importance was long ago recognized by the theory of neuroses*. It is as though the life of the organism moved with a vacillating rhythm. One group of instincts rushes forward so as to reach the final aim of life as swiftly as possible; but when a particular stage in the advance has been reached, the other group jerks back to a certain point to make a fresh start and so prolong the journey. (34-35, emphasis mine)

Both for Freud's overarching inquiry in *Beyond* and for our purposes, the connection Freud is drawing in this passage between this new ontological dualism and the "opposition" between the sexual instincts and "the other instincts" (supposedly) outlined in the theory of infantile sexuality is very important. Although their relation is framed here as one of logical extension, it is, in fact, constitutive of a significant contradiction, one that Freud dedicates most of the sixth and, in terms of substantive material, final section of *Beyond* to addressing. Under the paradigm of infantile sexuality, the sexual instincts were not aligned with but, rather, were consistently counterposed to extending life, insofar as the constitutive antinomy of the subject was formed between the sexual instincts and the instincts of self-preservation, or what Freud gradually refers to as the "ego-instincts." The theory of the reality principle that I delineated in chapter two is emblematic in this regard: the reality principle must be adopted as a regulator of the pleasure principle precisely because the sexual instincts would lead the subject to a swift death if allowed to reign over their epistemological relationship with the world; at the same time, the theory of the reality principle is, at its basis, a metapsychological translation of the conflict between the repressive forces and the sexual instincts of which I have already spoken at length. Thus, Freud's yoking of self-preservation to sex in *Beyond* constitutes an inexplicable synthesis of the prevailing conflict.

This synthesis is, I argue, part of a reconceptualization of sex within Freud's system that is routed through abjecting the polarities within sex's generativity and pertinacity and expelling them in the form of the death instinct. These extremes are ontological dissolution—where generativity, like unrestricted growth in cancer, destroys form altogether—and ontological stasis—where pertinacity results in endless, stultifying repetition of the same; that is, sheer destruction and a pure compulsion to repeat, or the two definitions of the death instinct that Freud proffers. If Freud slips between these two definitions with confounding abandon, this is because they are expressive of a constitutive ambivalence to ontogenetic susceptibility to external trauma within Freud's system that, from the beginning, he has attempted to resolve through sublating to sex the power to shape ontogenetic form. Yet, the deployment of sexuality from which his notion of sex draws is, at the same time, thoroughly imbricated with biopolitical projects—such as (colonial) racism and eugenics, and their attendant discourses of impressibility and plasticity—that seek to securitize human variability in the interests of ontologizing difference, massacring lives, and, I think from Freud's perception, deadening "life" itself. For Freud, then, it necessary to reframe sex in such a way that it internally drives the human form toward a higher capacity to accommodate human variability and, by virtue of that accommodation, defend that variability from being reified into ontological divisions in humanity— what Foucault referred to as "caesuras within the biological continuum" (*"Society Must Be Defended"* 255)—while, at the same time, not leading through this evolution to an abandonment of form altogether. This need for there to be, as it were, a developmental form that structures sex's generative destabilization of form—for this destabilization to lead to a form of the human that is as-of-yet illegible and, nevertheless, still a form—finds its figural expression in Freud's sudden return to the origin story for sex that Aristophanes offers in *The Symposium*:

> ‘The original human nature was not like the present, but different. In the first place, the sexes were originally three in number, not two as they are now; there was man, woman, and the union of the two…’ Everything about these primaeval men was double: they had four hands and four feet, two faces, two privy parts, and so on. Eventually Zeus decided to cut these men in two, ‘like a sorb-apple, which is halved for pickling’. [*sic*] After the division had been made, ‘the two parts of man, each desiring his other half, came together, and threw their arms about one another eager to grow into one’. [*sic*] Shall we follow the hint given us by the poet-philosopher, and venture upon the hypothesis that living substance at the time of its coming to life was torn apart into small particles, which have ever since endeavoured to reunite through the sexual instincts? (*Beyond* 51-52)

This is not the first time that Freud references the Aristophanic myth. He gestures toward it in the *Three Essays*, as well. There, however, he does so in order to disavow it, insofar as its schema is incompatible with Freud’s thesis of universal bisexuality.[319] Thus, both its abrupt introduction into Freud’s reflections on the sex/life and death instincts in *Beyond* and the fact that he is now valorizing its explanatory value are, at first glance, quite shocking on their own. Yet, for my purposes, it is important that we do not let these rhetorical and citational inconsistencies distract from the radical embrace of figures of what Foucault would call “human monsters” that Freud articulates here—figures that, by means of creating “mixtures of form” constitute “‘natural’ deviation[s] from ‘nature’” (*Abnormal* 63; 324). Why should Freud accord “life” with humanity’s ontological development being bookended by these monstrous figures? It is, I argue,

[319] “The popular view of the sexual instinct is beautifully reflected in the poetic fable which tells how the original human beings were cut up into two halves—man and woman—and how these are always striving to unite again in love. It comes as a great surprise therefore to learn that there are men whose sexual object is a man and not a woman, and women whose sexual object is a woman and not a man” (“Three Essays” 136).

because they are legible to him as genders, even as they are illegible according to the normative schema of gender that organizes the theory of infantile sexuality. In other words, I am suggesting that Freud reads the origin figures in Aristophanes' myth as legibly human because they are organized and differentiated from each other according to a metaphor of gender; it is the metaphor of gender that makes his optimistic cathexis to them possible. Whereas in the theory of infantile sexuality binary anatomical sex had stabilized the psychosocial dynamism of sex in its unfolding vis-à-vis the organizing power attributed to the genitals, in the theory of the death instinct Freud proffers a notion of human development that leads "naturally" away from binary sex: he is able to do so because he has abstracted the category of gender such that it constitutes a genre of the human—and intersex or intrasex human—without needing to reproduce binary sex. More specifically, we could say that Freud roots the ontogenetic power of trauma in these intersex and intrasex figures, that these simultaneously previous and as-of-yet gendered ontologies constitute the unity subtending Freud's subtle reframing of sex as Eros that occurs in this same section of *Beyond*.

If we look to how Freud utilizes Eros in his later work, we see that what is at stake in this duality between Eros and the death instincts is not just a viable ontological form for humanity but a viable political form, as well. In *Civilization and its Discontents*, Freud extends the (traumatic) power of Eros to lead humanity toward a new (gendered) form toward a better modality of collective existence, one that embraces ontological accretion over and against purification: "civilization is a process in the service of Eros, whose purpose is to combine single human individuals, and after that families, then races, peoples and nations, into one great unity, the unity of mankind. Why this has to happen, we do not know; the work of Eros is precisely

this. These collections of men are to be libidinally bound to one another" (*Civilization and its Discontents* 122).

Consequently, within the genealogy of trauma theory, we find an implicit association of intersex ontology, by virtue of a progressive sublation of traumatic formalism, with the transcendent stabilization of emerging forms of human ontology and political collectivity that radically accommodate human difference. As I will demonstrate in chapter four, this unexpected conceptual linkage between trauma, intersex, and nascent political collectivities is relevant to Roy's novel, insofar as it frames Anjum's hijraness as the stabilizing force of her graveyard's community of the dispossessed and, thus, the stabilizing force of the novel's primary allegory.

3.7 From Freud's Eros to the "Traumatization of Experience"

If, as I have argued, Freud's theoretical relation to trauma was one of progressively shoring up the human form from external modification while sublating the possibility of modification into a metaphysics of sex and sexed embodiment, then how trauma is conceptualized and circulated in contemporary societies will appear, at first glance, to signpost a dramatic reversal within that conceptual trajectory. Unlike Freud, we appear to not only accept but to compel identification with the traumatic impact of (certain) external events on our lives, recognizing in them a transcendental pertinacity and inexhaustible causal power that Freud had afforded to the sexual instincts. At the same time, our societies have long since revived and reaffirmed the distinct "traumatic force" of sexual experience in childhood that Freud had first formalized in the seduction theory of hysteria. Indeed, while perhaps Freud's assertion in the "Aetiology" that the basis of all traumatic neurosis is a childhood sexual experience would be met with the same incredulity by today's audiences as it was by the majority of Freud's peers in 1895, his concurrent ascription of injury to the interaction between sex and the child's body has

become a form of commonsense underpinned by a moral compulsion to repeat it, regardless of empirical evidence to the contrary; as Kathryn Bond Stockton has argued, contemporary Western societies insist that "the child must be harmed" by sexual activity (Stockton 68-71). Indeed, a deracinated notion of "traumatic seduction" holds more sway over US politics and twenty-first century conceptions of sexual relationality than it ever did during Freud's life.

Yet, just as Stockton has shown that the compulsory association of childhood sexual activity with traumatic abuse does not primarily function to protect children but, rather, to valorize and naturalize a schema of heteropatriarchal sexual development (and, consequently, ultimately increases adults' access to and control over their bodies), so, too, have Fassin and Rechtman demonstrated that our general "assent" to trauma operates in its institutional manifestations to more conservative ends than it initially appears to. Looking across its diffusion beyond the psychological sciences after the highly-publicized formation of PTSD as a clinical category in 1980, they argue that trauma largely operates as a "moral judgement" by which "victimhood"—a status that marks one as worthy of empathy and whose capacity mediates the category of the human—is unevenly distributed to subjects in conjunction with the uneven ascription of "trauma" to adverse experiences as a mark of both temporal and social exceptionalism. In its contemporary deployment as a moral judgement, trauma: one, "obscures the diversity and complexity of experience," both in terms of the variance in how subjects experience the same event and in terms of the inherent differences between the many types of events lumped together as "trauma"; two, deracinates traumatic events from the field of power in which they occur and, as such, both restricts victimhood's prescription of empathy from extending to that field of power and effaces how preexisting inequalities affect how subjects experience these events; and three, draws "lines of moral demarcation" around who should be

recognized as sufficiently human and thus capable of being traumatized (Fassin and Rechtman 280-284). In other words, with respect to how it produces "victimhood," contemporary trauma discourse is etiologically ablative, politically inertial, and ethically restrictive.

It is beyond the scope of my project to explain in any detail how, according to Fassin and Rechtman, trauma morphed into a moral operator. Crudely: the disselective-derealizing component was there from the beginning of trauma's conceptualization, insofar as the study of traumatized railroad accident victims was not stimulated by pure intellectual curiosity or anxiety about the human form's developmental susceptibility, but also by struggles between companies and victims over compensation and culpability, which manifested in etiological questions about biological predisposition and the causal and mechanistic relations between event and neurosis. War psychiatry's approaches to diagnosing and "treating" the malingerer were similarly forged by political and economic desires to render the experiences of war not responsible for the production of traumatic symptoms. As for the identificatory-compensatory component—trauma's signification of humanness—Fassin and Rechtman argue that this aspect emerged as part of the West's reconsolidation of its progressivist self-image in the aftermath of the Holocaust. Effectively, the traumatic symptoms (especially the ones associated with what became "survivor's guilt") exhibited by Holocaust survivors were regarded as: preserving the "reality" of the "unspeakable" violence they had experienced; the expression of the essential "truth" of the human after the camps' reduction of it to bare life; and the effect of, and a testimonial to, a civilizational impulse that ensures the horrors of past generations and an intense shame toward their production are engraved into collective memory so as to lead mankind from reproducing them (70-76). Under this new paradigm, recognizing trauma, according to Fassin and Rechtman, became a narcissistic operation of moral repair for the West, in which the clinical

and social priority was not to aid and alleviate the victim's suffering but to extract from that suffering a sign of (Western) humanity's intrinsic morality; to a significant degree, the survivor's care and attention was predicated on their performative embodiment of a perpetual traumatization.[320]

Notably, this formation of trauma-as-survivor's-guilt is predicated on a similar procedure of disavowal and sublation that I have argued consistently subtends the erratic shifts that constitute Freud's ongoing conceptualization of trauma and his efforts to negotiate its relationship to sex. Behind the figure of the survivor that is made to guarantee the moral advancement and existential continuation of the West is, I maintain, a pervasive anxiety that the Holocaust indelibly changed the West's developmental trajectory or, worse, stands as a testament to the absolute absence of such a trajectory. Thus, if it initially appears that the survivor's complete (and, in fact, definitional) re-formation by an external force signals the ontogenetic opening of the Western subject to experience, we see that this "exposure" at the level of the individual is already teleologically enfolded into a developmental schema that is not so much closed from externally-induced variation as it is, by (human) nature, structurally *securitized* against catastrophic deformation. Indeed, the "traumatization of experience"—by which I mean an ever-expanding set of discursive and institutional procedures that utilize the notion of trauma to temporally and causally exceptionalize certain events vis-à-vis ordinary experience—constitutes, for the most part, not an embrace of ontogenetic susceptibility but an attempt to fortify against it. Yet, whereas Freud ultimately dreams of a traumatic Eros that compels us to ontologically accommodate difference so as to realize the "unity of mankind," contemporary

[320] "Survivor guilt became the defining symptom of this traumatic suffering. It was both the focus of psychotherapeutic treatment and the diagnostic marker actively sought by clinicians, sometimes to the point of suggesting it or of doubting the legitimacy of the trauma in cases where it was not present" (Fassin and Rechtman 75).

deployments of trauma are ontologically centripetal, inward-looking and inward-serving, in the service of shoring up not just individual egos, but Western and Western-desiring hegemonies.

Chapter 4 In-habitations of Death: Incredulous Mourning, and the Desire for Collective Futurity

Introduction: Accommodating Allegorical Negation

As I indicated in the previous chapter, *TMOUH* utilizes a depiction of trauma in its hijra plot to allegorize debilitating melancholia in Indian-administered Kashmir. In this chapter, I will demonstrate that this allegory allows us to reconceptualize trauma and its relation to grief, as well as to recognize the centrality of modalities of grief to the formation of durable political communities. I offer two different angles on trauma's repair, one provided by the novel in how it situates Anjum's traumatic debilitation in relation to Jannat Guest House and Funeral Services, and the other provided Kashmiri responses to debilitating melancholia. The latter, as I've noted, is gestured to in the novel by way of the juxtaposition and intersection of the two main plots and Anjum's graveyard guesthouse being named Jannat; however, the psychosocial foundation of the allegory is not fleshed out explicitly. This lacuna means that we are required to leave the novel to consider real accounts of Kashmiri practices that may have informed Roy's association of Kashmir with unique approaches to grief. Despite my invocation of allegory, my method here does not depend on one-to-one representational practices, as might be considered typical in critical engagements with allegory, but rather is more associational; it draws significance from Roy's gestures toward the *tehreek*'s deployment of martyrdom that has facilitated how Kashmiris mourn in relation to each other's dispossession.

In order for us to understand the ways in which trauma does and does not correlate with grief and practices of mourning, we must apprehend it in its specific reality, disarticulating its theorization from this diffusive deployment and the anxieties underwriting it. In what follows, I attempt to reconceive trauma by way of retrieving those aspects of Freud's theory that remain useful, while submitting them to a paradigm shift. In the first section, I explore the etiology of short-term or acute stress in order to identify conditions for trauma's activation, as well as a metapsychological pathway for traumatic repair. Section two utilizes this foundation in conjunction with Roy's depiction of long-term trauma in order to proffer an etiology for the latter. In section three, I offer a speculative theory of what is necessary for traumatic repair for long-term trauma. I argue that Roy's novel outlines an *ethical* treatment modality for long-term trauma in the form of two intertwined processes: becoming-death and accommodating-dispossession. I suggest she bases these processes on Kashmiri practices of collective grief. I delineate this absent allegorical foundation in section four; turning to Kashmiri practices of public grief and memorialization, I identify them as founding a new basis for political collectivity that is rooted in an ethics of *incredulous mourning*. Utilizing as my analytic basis Freud's formulation of fetishism as an incredulous relation to the initial loss it represses, I characterize incredulous mourning as an approach to grief that does not let go of its object and does not enact full repair and reformulation, but nonetheless articulates the subject productively with others. Assuming as my own the political ethics of allegorization subtending the novel's organization, in the last section of this chapter, I then offer a generative critique of the abject figuration of hijra/intersex ontology that Roy relies upon in order to optimistically invest her depiction of a community rooted in incredulous mourning with futurity. I argue that the novel unwittingly draws from the transcendent ontogenetic power attributed to intersex in the

genealogy of trauma theory, as briefly alluded to in the previous chapter. Lastly, I identify this form of critique as not opposed to the community of the dispossessed whose articulation relies upon this injurious figuration but, rather, fundamentally part of it, insofar as allegorical negation is impossible to overcome and, thus, an ethical *communitas* is not one that avoids producing it, but constitutively orients itself toward grieving the ungrievable.

4.1 The Etiology of Short-Term Stress

In the previous chapter, I argued that since the early twentieth century, theories of trauma have constituted a discursive terrain for managing desires and anxieties about human ontology and ontogenesis. Moreover, I implied that we should attribute these desires and anxieties to the great projects of security and biopower. For example, Freud's frequent characterization of the sexual instincts as "uneducable" should be read as an ontologization of the non-linear temporality of trauma in service of both indexing sex's recalcitrance to the crusade against childhood masturbation and disavowing the eugenic paradigm of "childhood plasticity" that was taking shape in his era. In other words, this effort to ontogenetically "close" the human form from external trauma inversely correlates to the prevailing and coexisting biopolitical efforts to "open" it.

From the view of this genealogy, the emergence of the contemporary reformulation and redeployment of trauma later in the century (i.e., the "traumatization of experience") was precipitated precisely by Western liberalism's struggle to morally and politically disavow its reflection in the Holocaust;[321] on account of the latter's naked conjunction of liberal biopolitics and annihilatory fascism, this emergence should not be considered arbitrary. Although Freud, in

[321] To identify this struggle is not to accede to the retrospective exceptionalization of the Holocaust constituted by that struggle.

his own way, ultimately mobilized trauma to expose the barbarism that belies "civilization" and perpetually threatens it from within, his career-long effort to ideologically contain ontogenetic susceptibility to power through the concept of trauma had, no doubt, set the stage for its more insidious appropriation by liberalism. In light of Freud's late attempts to use trauma to genealogically yoke perpetrators' guilt to the very possibility of civilization, that liberalism's appropriation enabled the indistinction of perpetrator and victim clinically formalized and socially normalized through the creation of post-traumatic stress disorder as a diagnostic category—that, I mean, its appropriation enabled trauma's later weaponization as a means of disassociating injury from its conditions of production—attests to a need to re-theorize trauma *against* its deployments as a biopolitical operator. The following schema attempts to provide a template for such a retheorization.

***

Broadly speaking, there are three modes in which the term "trauma" is used within clinical psychology: I describe these as formal-temporal, ontological-symptomatic, and ontological-etiological. The formal-temporal mode uses trauma variably to index relationships of *nachträglichkeit* between past and present in which the past exists outside of the "normal" flow of time and memory and, by virtue of this transcendence, is perpetually able to impose itself on the present without sustaining any alteration in the course of its imposition. I would argue that the formal-temporal mode underwrites all deployments of trauma and, thus, is responsible for the term's conceptual elasticity (i.e., its capacity to be diversely appropriated without overtly betraying contradiction). The *ontological-symptomatic mode*, dominant in contemporary psychology, describes a subject's entrapment by a distressing event in the past, which expresses itself symptomatically as a susceptibility to pure phenomenological repetition (i.e., flashbacks),

the loss or repression of the event's memory, and/or the persistence of an affective state or defensive mechanism in relation to the past event despite a conscious recognition of one's relative safety in the present. In turn, the ontological-etiological mode describes a causal relationship between a distressing event, or series of events, in the past and the formation of a socially aberrant or self-injurious "disorder" of attachment or personality (i.e., reactive attachment disorder or borderline personality disorder). Whereas in the onto-symptomatic mode "trauma" describes, to borrow from Freud's early work, a subject's mnemonic-affective "fixation" on the traumatic event with respect to the event's phenomenological specificity, in the onto-etiological mode, "trauma" describes an unconscious reification of the distressing past event (or series of events) such that it operates for the subject as a horizon of expectation for *other*, future experiences.

For the purposes of extricating trauma's "reality" from its past and current biopolitical frameworks, I develop my theory of trauma from within the onto-symptomatic mode and in conscientious opposition to the onto-etiological mode. I do this for both political and conceptual reasons. In terms of the former, the (bio)politicization of trauma has always been effected through implicitly or explicitly deploying the formal-temporal notion of trauma in an etiological capacity. We have already seen how this is the case with Freud's seduction theory of hysteria. As for the onto-etiological mode that dominates contemporary psychology, the (bio)political function of trauma is to shore up normation/normalization through, in effect, rendering "reality-congruent adaptation" illegible as an explanation for patterns of behavior and cognition diagnosed as abnormal. By reality-congruent adaptation, I mean the perpetual process of adjusting to the demands, desires, and restrictions of one's social and material environment. Trauma is deployed within the onto-etiological mode so as to displace from the frame of analysis

the question: does this 'disorder' constitute a reasonable adaptation to the subject's environment? For example, borderline personality disorder (BPD) is often attributed—by way of traumatic causality—to persistent instability in childhood. Yet, insofar as "[t]he impairment from the disorder and the risk of suicide are greatest in the *young-adult years* and gradually wane with advancing age," one is justified in inquiring if "chronic instability in early adulthood," the essential character of BPD, reflects not an individual affliction rooted in childhood but the reality of early adulthood for many people (*DSM-V* 665). To recall Berlant: what if one lives in a society that repeatedly compels optimistic identification with the "good life" yet increasingly dematerializes pathways for attaining it? And all the while cruelly reflecting that lack back at one as personal deficiency (all so as to extract capital from one's Sisyphean cycles)?[322] If I am (once again) resurrecting old Marxist and post-structuralist critiques of psychotherapy and psychiatric classification by insisting on their pathologizing impulses, I am also trying to show that what Fassin and Rechtman refer to as contemporary trauma's tendency to "obliterate experiences" is expressed diagnostically as the disavowal of reality-congruent adaptation in the service of preserving the illusory equation of the "normal" with the "natural." As attested by Freud's struggle to theoretically incorporate the "war neuroses" into his metapsychological and ontogenetic schema, these political deployments of trauma are not only injurious to societies in which psychiatry has been invested with juridical power, but also to the conceptual foundation of trauma. The onto-etiological mode only attains its capacity to arbitrarily root abnormal behavior

[322] With a characteristic avoidance of delineating causality where doing so would disrupt a minoritizing etiology, the *DSM-V* notes that "[d]uring their 30s and 40s, the majority of individuals with this disorder attain greater stability in their relationships and vocational functioning. Follow-up studies of individuals identified through outpatient mental health clinics indicate that after about 10 years, as many as half of the individuals no longer have a pattern of behavior that meets full criteria for borderline personality disorder" (665). Given that, one, nearly 10% of people diagnosed with BPD die to suicide and, two, age is not recognized as a unitary psychogenic force, is not the logical conclusion to draw that the "recovery" from BPD in later adulthood correlates to positive changes in the affective and material security provided by their environment and, moreover, that focusing on this "recovered" population silences the dead and effaces the reality that would not support them?

in a subject's *foundational* experiences at the expense of the causal power of *everyday experience*; what's more, the onto-etiological achieves this by an abstraction and chiasmic reversal of the onto-symptomatic mode's notion of trauma: the subject's mnemonic-affective fixation on a traumatic event in the latter mode is reinscribed as the event's affixation to the subject as an ordering principle in the former mode. That is, the onto-etiological mode is a *metaphorical reversal* of the onto-symptomatic mode that masquerades as a *mechanical extension*; in turn, the resulting contradiction evacuates the referent of its reality and, thus, obscures the difference between, on the one hand, trauma as a unique psychoaffective reaction that takes a particular symptomatic form and develops under specific metapsychological and social conditions and, on the other hand, trauma as a special form of causality that underwrites the etiology of countless "disorders."[323] Consequently, my theory proceeds on the ontological-symptomatic assumption that, one, "trauma" names a particular form of fixation to a distressing past event and, two, the logic of this fixation lies in the phenomenon of traumatic "flashbacks" and the distinct temporality—*nachträglichkeit*—to which they correspond.

What I have described as the onto-symptomatic mode is populated by two classifications in the *DSM-V*: acute stress disorder (ACD) and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Symptomatically, ACD and PTSD are nearly identical. Both disorders index the mnemonic-affective persistence of an overwhelming experience in the traumatized subject. They are diagnostically differentiated on the basis of one temporal factor: "[a]cute stress disorder is distinguished from PTSD because the symptom pattern in acute stress disorder is restricted to a

[323] This is not to say that *secondary* psychoaffective conditions cannot form in the course of the subject working through a *primary* trauma, but that: one, the difference between primary and secondary must be maintained; two, the mechanism of causation between primary and secondary should not reduce to an abstraction of the primary as a causal logic; and three, these etiological pathways connecting a primary traumatization to a secondary psychoaffective "disorder" must demonstrate why and how they diverge from reality-congruent adaptation (i.e., why and how they should not be viewed as part of "normal" environmental conditioning).

duration of 3 days to 1 month following exposure to the traumatic event" (*DSM-V* 279). While this criterion of distinction maps neatly onto a general schema of acute vs. chronic often utilized in epidemiology, with respect to trauma, it is etiologically problematic because it collapses the difference between the duration of symptom and the duration of the delay between the traumatic event and the onset of symptoms. In truth, the criterion was somewhat arbitrarily generated, as the primary motivation for including ASD in the *DSM-IV* in 1994 was to enable healthcare workers to attend to patients who clearly demonstrated traumatic symptoms in the aftermath of a horrifying event, but the early onset of which did not meet the criteria for PTSD and, thus, did not qualify them for insurance coverage (Fanai and Khan). Nevertheless, the classificatory separation of ASD and PTSD alongside this sole differentiating factor speaks to a sort of discontinuous continuity between them that has been empirically observed but not etiologically explained. That is, it is well known and well accepted that, on the one hand, in the immediate aftermath of a distressing event (e.g., car accident) people often display traumatic symptomology for a relatively short period of time and, on the other hand, this form of trauma appears to be categorically distinct from PTSD (i.e., not merely a temporal extension of ASD). We might say that ASD enjoys a presumption of normality and rationality in relation to PTSD similar to that of mourning in relation to melancholia. Indeed, without much trouble, Freud's comments on society's non-pathologization of mourning can be altered to reflect the clinical attitude belying ASD's acceptance as a different diagnostic category despite this purported difference lacking a solid theoretical foundation: "although [ASD] involves grave departures from the normal attitude to life, it never occurs to us to regard it as a [severe] pathological condition [such as PTSD]…[Instead, we] rely on its being overcome after a certain lapse of time" (*Mourning and Melancholia* 243-244). Just as Freud found it analytically productive to arrive at melancholia by

way of denaturalizing and metapsychologically excavating its symptomatic sibling, so, too, will we attempt to bring to the surface the latent reality of "trauma" within the clinical category of PTSD by speculating on the psychodynamics of ASD and their role in the genesis of PTSD.

Insofar as *nachträglichkeit* of traumatic flashbacks is frequently coextensive with amnesia vis-à-vis the event, my theory of trauma is predicated on the following assumption: acute stress disorder develops when an influx of sense-perceptions abruptly and unexpectedly overwhelms the psychical apparatus's capacity to mnemonically and cognitively process and encode sensory information. The result is a single disorder with two related attributes: disorientation and insecurity. Because the psychical apparatus could only partially encode the traumatic event into memory, the subject cannot assimilate the event into a coherent account of themself over time and, thus, becomes disoriented in relation to themself. Of course, any narrative coherence of the subject is always imaginary, the product of countless inveterate disavowals. However, in acute stress disorder, the stress of the event coupled with the threatening gap in the self's history should the subject disavow or attempt to discard these memory fragments activates what the *DSM-V* appropriately calls an "anxiety response," but which I will more specifically refer to as an arrangement between the reality and pleasure principles. This arrangement correlates to a compromise between, on the one hand, the reality principle's demand to cognitively extract from the memory fragments crucial information about the event's relation to the world and, on the other hand, the pleasure principle's demand to affectively avoid re-experiencing the upsetting stimulations of the event. In this arrangement, the psychical apparatus assembles the memory fragments under the compelling question "was that event representative of reality?" It does so, however, in two opposed ways: whereas the affective component of that question is prioritized by the psyche, the cognitive component of that question

is placed in temporary abeyance. This deferral of the reality principle's security assessment constitutes something akin to a promissory note that the ego accepts in exchange for agreeing to allow the memory fragments to be suppressed from consciousness by way of a specific mechanism, which I will call *provisional repression*.[324] Whereas repression proper operates by setting up a durable and strong counterforce against the material to be repressed, thereby relegating it to the unconscious, provisional repression makes use of a far more tenuous counterforce, which both expires after a period of time and does not integrate the memory fragments into the unconscious; instead, it maintains them as un-temporalized sense-perceptions in the perceptual-consciousness system (*Pcpt*.). In turn, the abrupt intrusion of these memory fragments into consciousness that characterizes traumatic "flashbacks" reflects the expiration of the tenuous counterforce and the temporary return of these partial memories to consciousness.

We will recall that traumatic flashbacks posed an economic problem for Freud, insofar as they reflected an inexplicable divergence from the pleasure principle. His consternation was founded on three assumptions: that the traumatic event is mnemonically captured and preserved in its entirety, that flashbacks correspond to mere reproductions of the event (and with respect to each other), and that flashbacks only re-stress the subject. Notably, in postulating the existence of the death instinct, Freud sought to confirm these assumptions rather than call them into question. By contrast, for reasons discussed in chapter two, I have already set my speculations about acute stress disorder against Freud's tendency toward mnemonic totalization, insofar as I have presumed that a traumatic event is one that fundamentally disrupts the memorializing processes of encoding and narrativizing sensory-perceptions into the subject's self-history and working model of the external world. In proposing that flashbacks originate in the withdrawal of

[324] Provisional repression appears operative in sensory regulation and dissociation.

provisional repression, I now begin to diverge from Freud's second assumption. Rather than perceive flashbacks in ASD as mnemonic reproductions of the event epiphenomenally precipitated by the death instinct's return to sovereignty, I regard them as serialized simulacra in the service of piecemeal reality-testing.

I arrive at this conclusion by way of considering the contradiction between, on the one hand, the event's real loss to memory and, on the other hand, the fact that trauma victims often characterize flashbacks as phenomenological—that is, as experientially lived—repetitions of the event. If a flashback is composed of the memory fragments that have been (temporarily) released from their holding in the *Pcpt.*, then we would expect that they would return to the subject as a disorganized array of sense-perceptions, not as a coherent experience of an event that, according to our founding assumption, was never coherently experienced in the first place. It appears to me that we should regard the pronouncement of phenomenological identity between flashback and traumatic event as a veracious utterance only insofar as it indexes both the organization of memory fragments into a *simulacrum of the event* that constitutes the experience of a flashback and the drive to rationally assimilate the memory fragments to the subject's working model of the external world. When the memory fragments are initially released, they are perceptually and temporally arranged into a mnemonic scene by assessing and organizing them vis-à-vis the order of relationality by which the subject experiences the world and assimilates sensory information at that moment. This process enables the aforementioned demand for reality-testing to be partially satisfied in its need to determine what the memory fragments represent, if anything, about the external world. In turn, because this satisfaction—and, by extension, the subject's sense of security—rests on the psychical apparatus's acceptance of the artificial mnemonic scene as a veritable account of the lost event, the apparatus stimulates *the sensation of a repetition* and

compels the subject to affirm the "truth" of that sensation through linguistic and affective identification. As suggested by my earlier characterization of traumatic reality-testing as "piecemeal," I think that this eventualization of traumatic memory fragments rarely, if ever, occurs all at once. Instead, the attenuated distress produced by the simulacrum of the event—a distress that is necessary for the simulacrum to be regarded as accurate, at least at first—almost always reactivates the foundational compromise between the reality principle and the pleasure principle. This compromise compels the ego to redeploy provisional repression against the now-partially-assembled memory fragments; at the same time, the experience of the simulacrum and its narrativization are themselves encoded into memory. With each new cycle of de-repression and re-repression, the simulacrum is refined through more reality-testing, and the subject's faith in its veracity becomes progressively anchored in the serialized archive of securitizing simulacra that has formed in their memory. In turn, the more confident the subject becomes about their mnemonic reconstruction of the event, the more its de-repression no longer precipitates overwhelming distress (and the less that distress is regarded as a measure of "truth"). When the threshold of distress has been lowered sufficiently, reality-testing is no longer necessary because the psychical apparatus has determined that there is no more information about the external world to extract from the event and that, thus, the subject's working model of the world can once again be regarded as a reliable foundation from which to operate. This dissolution of the arrangement between the reality and pleasure principles marks the resolution of the short-term form of trauma to which the diagnostic classification acute stress disorders refers.

***

Before examining the relationship between the short-term and long-term forms of trauma, it is important for our purposes to briefly draw attention to a different relationship: the one

between trauma and grief. For quite some time, contemporary scholarship on both of these conditions has tended to, if not explicitly collapse them, implicitly render them indistinct from one another, often through gesturing to a nebulous concept, "traumatic loss." In chapter three, I indicated my opposition to this conflation. Utilizing the foregoing theory of short-term trauma as a basis, I can now begin to elaborate on why I find it not only definitionally problematic but conceptually occlusive as well. With grief, there is a constitutive loss, and the subject labors to recognize it and reform themselves in relation to it. With short-term trauma, what is initially pathogenetic is not a constitutive loss but an anxiety over *the possibility of loss* that stems from a temporary disruption of the subject's capacity for regulatory reality-testing. In turn, short-term trauma resolves once the subject has determined the likelihood of the possibility actually occurring. Above, I described serialized reality-testing, what we might otherwise call the "work" of short-term trauma, from the perspective that the traumatic event was essentially meaningless with respect to the subject's working model of the world. This assumption was necessary for delineating this process not because the other side of the possibility does not happen (obviously, it does), but because we should expect that short-term trauma "resolves" very quickly when the traumatic event correlates to a discernible change in the world, since it is precisely the absence of a legible precipitative event that fuels traumatic anxiety. Depending on the type of loss coextensive with the traumatic event, this resolution may, of course, take the form of transitioning into a form of grief. In this way, traumatic reality-testing may actually aid the aggrieved in recognizing an intrasubjective loss; alternatively, since willed misrecognition is part of repairing trauma's mnemonic-informational gap, it is conceivable that the work of short-term trauma provides the aggrieved ample opportunity for melancholic fetishization. Either way, these possible formations should be read as intersections and articulations of two nevertheless different

psychological conditions, short-term trauma and grief, which have distinct activation conditions and ordering principles: short-term trauma proceeds from an overwhelming experience that temporarily disrupts intrapsychic reality-testing and, thus, precipitates an anxiety-propulsive procedure for rendering the experience's memory fragments amenable to assessment and integration into one's history, whereas grief proceeds from a radical loss that leaves one bereft of part of oneself in one's imbrication with the world and, thus, in need of an ontological reconstitution for which there can be no set procedure due the inexorable dependence on others that conditions its existence.

In insisting that we avoid conflating short-term trauma and grief, my objective is not to sever grief from trauma altogether but, on the contrary, to establish a metapsychological foundation from which we are able to more finely differentiate short-term trauma and long-term trauma by way of delineating how traumatic "healing" in the case of the latter relies upon the work of mourning. As such, we will now turn to the problem of long-term trauma.

4.2 The Ontological Contradiction of Long-Term Trauma

Earlier, I noted that the *DSM-V* utilizes the diagnostic metric of symptomatic duration to differentiate between acute stress disorder ("short-term trauma") and posttraumatic stress disorder ("long-term trauma"): at least in theory, when symptoms are contained to one month after the traumatic event, the trauma is classified as ASD; otherwise, as long as the symptoms cannot be attributed to a different condition, the trauma is classified as PTSD. From the perspective of the theory of trauma I have been advancing, besides lacking any etiological backing, it would be untenable to maintain the APA's criterion of differentiation, since its relative arbitrariness only makes the case for collapsing any meaningful distinction between the two conditions. While it is unclear what precisely constitutes the conditions conducive for

traumatic symptomatology's relatively quick resolution vs. its development into a persistent disorder with a more severe impact on the life of the traumatized, due to the immense degree of symptomatic overlap between the two conditions, it is reasonable to speculate that long-term trauma stems from a problem that emerges in the course of serialized reality-testing. And it is here that exploring the conditions of Anjum's traumatization in *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* can provide some suggestive guideposts by which we may discern a plausible etiology.

Although ubiquitous associations between violence and trauma both in the novel and in our culture may lead the reader to initially assume that Anjum is traumatized through witnessing Zakir's murder, through the flashbacks that emerge when Anjum relocates to the graveyard, the novel indicates that her traumatization reflects a more complex causal schema.

When the Hindutva mob discovers Anjum "feigning death" on top of Zakir's lifeless body, they start chanting obscenities at her with the intent to kill. They are suddenly stopped, however, by a "high and anxious" voice crying out from among their ranks: "*Nahi yaar, mat maro, Hijron ka maaran apshagun hota hai*. Don't kill her, brother, killing Hijras brings bad luck. Bad luck!" (*TMOUH* 66). Unlike secular conceptions of "transfemininity," "hijra," as a South Asian social formation and as a subjectivity, has been historically constructed through a series of symbolic and functional articulations within highly differentiated "moral econom[ies]" of honor and respect, shame, and sexuality (Reddy 35-43). Moreover, these economies are ordered by a phallocentric exchange logic: by undergoing emasculation (castration), hijras "renounce" their corporeal powers of sexual generation and, in exchange, acquire sacred powers of sexual generation, thereby becoming "creative ascetics" (Reddy 84-91). In this role, hijras are regarded as uniquely capable of blessing *and* cursing the reproductive capacity of non-hijras.

Imploring the mob to spare Anjum, the lone rioter not only cites this logic but utilizes it to expropriate her creative asceticism for Zakir's killers:

> They left her alive. Unkilled. Unhurt. Neither folded nor unfolded. She alone. So that *they* might be blessed with good fortune.
>
> Butcher's Luck.
>
> That's all she was. And the longer she lived, the more good luck she brought them. (*TMOUH* 67)

The rioters exclude Anjum from their violence in order to trade her "death" for infinite benediction, insidiously securing from her an infinite supply of good fortune by predicating the terms of this exchange on her continued existence. In doing so, they tether Anjum's hijra identity to Zakir's murder and, consequently, twist her gender self-relation into a perpetual source of grief and guilt. It is due to this manipulation of the terms of Anjum's gender identity that she abjures her usual hyperfeminine aesthetic when leaving for the graveyard. It is also why, as I discuss later, she attempts to forcefully re-gender Zainab.

Translated to more general terms, the novel suggests that the more severe, long-term, "PTSD" form of trauma emerges when a distressing event simultaneously entraps the traumatized subject in an *ontological contradiction*. To be more specific, the arrangement the rioters rig between themselves and Anjum—wherein she cannot continue to exist as a hijra without providing Zakir's murderers with good fortune—renders her the embodiment of this Catch-22. The reader may recall that this is not the first time trauma has been associated with ontological contradiction in our study. In one of his early attempts to reconcile the war neuroses with his theory of infantile sexuality, Freud briefly advocated for apprehending war traumatic neurosis as the defensive expression of an internal contradiction inhering between the soldier's

(old) “peacetime ego” and (new) “warlike ego” (“Introduction to *Psycho-Analysis and the War Neuroses*” 208). At the time, Freud failed to render this etiology legible within his metapsychological system; moreover, by the time he started working on *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (about a year after writing his introduction for the war neuroses volume), he seems to have entirely dropped the idea that the conditions of war could precipitate in the subject an alternate ego at odds with the usual one. Nevertheless, the thematics of contradiction are obviously central to the struggle between Eros and the death instinct that Freud ultimately articulates in attempting to theorize trauma. There is often something important and useful to be gained from tarrying with Freud’s discarded hypotheses. As well, I have maintained that Roy’s depictions of complex psychosocial phenomena warrant sustained theoretical engagement. Consequently, extending to Freud and Roy a little faith, we shall endeavor to rationalize how a distressing event’s simultaneous establishment of a severe contradiction in the subject might disable the reparative pathway of short-term trauma and thereby enable the trauma’s indefinite extension.

Working from the assumption that Anjum’s predicament constitutes an example of an ontological contradiction, we can extrapolate two conditions that subtend its formation, one pertaining to the content of the contradiction and the other pertaining to the means by which it was introduced to the psyche. With regards to the content, an ontological contradiction must compose an incommensurability on a different order than that of the ordinary self-contradictions that the ego persistently manages in its efforts to cohere and maintain an identity in the world. That is, while everyday self-contradictions can be quite uncomfortable, they are also usually bearable; by contrast, an ontological contradiction appears to threaten the subject with death. Consequently, I speculate that the conflict of the self at work in long-term trauma must take

place at the level of primary ontological vulnerability. A contradiction can only become ontological if it threatens to fundamentally disrupt the relations by which the subject accesses and forms their subjectivity. However, even if the content of the contradiction concerns these relations, it is unlikely to become ontological unless it is introduced to the subject in such a way that it cannot be disavowed or rejected *tout court* as incompatible with reality. Rather, it must be that the antithetical identity is introduced to the psyche within an irruptive and overwhelming experience, thereby precipitating a deployment of provisional repression against it, which endows it with paradoxical indispensability.[325] In other words, the subject must be forced to regard the contradiction as too important to discount.

The foregoing thesis that long-term trauma is rooted in an ontological contradiction offers us an etiological and metapsychological explanation for why short-term trauma and long-term trauma share a symptomatic profile but differ substantially in symptomatic duration. There is one pathway by which the psyche repairs itself in the wake of an irruptive and overwhelming experience. This pathway is constituted by the mechanisms and processes that we identified with the resolution of short-term trauma: provisional repression, serialized reality-testing and mnemonic eventualization. A long-term trauma, by extension, emerges when an ontological incommensurability within the traumatic experience renders this pathway of repair untenable for the subject's ego. Threatened by the contradiction that it apprehends in the memory fragments when provisional repression expires, instead of progressively metabolizing those fragments, the ego responds to their resurfacing by instinctively redeploying the repressive counterforce so as to

[325] To the extent that such things could be considered measurable, it is reasonable to assume that the sensorial threshold for long-term trauma is lower than the threshold for short-term trauma because the burden of the contradiction itself acts as an additional stressor whose contribution to an experience of overload increases exponentially in proportion to the magnitude of overwhelming sensations from the event (much in the same way that non-traumatic stress in everyday experience can distort how we perceive and measure the significance of bad news).

restrict them to a liminal space, unable to submit them to repression proper on account of the demand to reality-test them that continues to be exerted by the reality principle. This is, quite clearly, an imperfect psychoaffective solution. Neither able to assimilate nor discard the contradiction, the ego seizes in its oscillation between relinquishing and doubling down on the provisional repression, giving rise to the pattern of non-reparative repetition-compulsion that Freud long ago associated with traumatic dreams. Unlike Freud, our model does not explain this ineffectual repetition by recourse to a ghost in the machine (i.e., the death instinct); instead, it frames long-term trauma as the immanent product of an incompatibility between function and input within the psychical apparatus. I suspect that these successive repressions ultimately expand what was initially a transitional space residing on the threshold of consciousness and unconsciousness into a deep wound, a veritable "trauma."

4.3 Anjum's In-habiting Death: Becoming-Death, Accommodating-Dispossession

If long-term trauma is constituted by an ontological contradiction and, as such, cannot be resolved through short-term trauma's reparative process, what makes de-traumatization possible? As I have gestured to previously, the novel depicts and implicitly valorizes a particular strategy of repair, that which I call "in-habiting death." I now want to flesh out the logic of this strategy and articulate it with my speculative etiology of trauma. It is important from the outset to understand that the novel situates the strategy of in-habiting death as an intervention into normative therapies for traumatic repair. It does so both in the sense that it implies that normative therapies merely *manage*, but do not *resolve*, the constitutive contradiction of long-term trauma and in the sense that it draws attention to the injurious power relations that these therapies support. The novel signposts this intervention by preceding its depiction of in-habiting

death with a negative example. As such, I begin this section by analyzing this example and bringing it into relation with the psychiatric power-knowledge that it critiques.

The negative example is one I highlighted at the beginning of chapter three: Anjum's forceful masculinization and Hinduization of Zainab upon returning from Gujarat. In my reading of Zainab's forced regendering, Anjum's actions partake of an externalized, interpersonal form of repetition-compulsion, which is to say an experiment with alternative pathways to traumatic resolution. Her explanation for this violation of Zainab's bodily autonomy—"'Gujarat could come to Delhi any day'" (*TMOUH* 52)—makes clear that Anjum is attempting to protect Zainab from Zakir's fate. Like Freud's traumatic dreamer, she recreates the lead-up to the trauma in an attempt to back-project an anxiety that would have prevented her from being caught off guard. Yet, the logic of her scenic reconfiguration betrays a notable displacement and projection. While identifying as Hindu might have saved Zakir, masculinizing would have done nothing for him since he already presented as a man. As such, Anjum's reimagining reflects her own desire to not have identified as a hijra on that fateful day. But because this desire is an unlivable symptom of the ontological contradiction that tortures her, she projects it onto Zainab, with whom she is intrapsychically conjoined, co-opting her daughter into a fantasy wherein Anjum is able to simultaneously be and not be a hijra. At the same time, this fantasy also doubles as one of Nietzschean *ressentiment*, insofar as by creating a situation in which manipulating Zainab's relation to gender both ensures Zainab's survival *and* extracts from that survival a reservoir of traumatic catharsis for herself, Anjum recasts the scene of her traumatization such that she assumes the position of assailant. In other words, multiple (and contradictory) strategies are at work in this attempt to resolve the conditions of her traumatization. Regardless, this experiment fails, and not just because the other members of the Khwabgah intervene. It fails, as well,

because Zainab refuses the ideal of developmental plasticity Anjum imposes on her: "Zainab's wailing could be heard all the way down the street—by the chickens in their cages and the puppies in their dreams" (52). Even if Zainab had relented to the terms of her co-optation, however, the contradiction animating Anjum's trauma would not have been resolved. At best, Zainab would have served as an external support for the contradiction's provisional repression and, thus, as a metonymic host for trauma's continuation. Should this extractive arrangement have congealed across time, it would have constituted what we often refer to as "intergenerational trauma." Translating the insights of this scene into more general terms: threatened on both sides by the ontological contradiction and the demand to enact serialized reality-testing, the traumatized subject attempts to externalize the resulting repetition-compulsion by way of forcing another into an arrangement such that the contradiction is able to manifest without the subject submitting themselves to ontological death.

Roy's novel suggests that Anjum's actions to police Zainab's gender identity enact the strategy of "accommodation" that underwrites normative treatment protocols for PTSD, such as prolonged exposure (PE), cognitive processing therapy (CPT), and cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) (Watkins et al. 3-5). In the last chapter, we saw that Fassin and Rechtman's study indicates that as part and parcel of constructing PTSD as a diagnostic category, the APA's trauma task force brought assailants and victims of horrific violence into indissociable relation within the concept of trauma for the purposes of humanizing the perpetrators of war crimes and altering the moral norms of recognition such that they could claim victim status. Unsurprisingly, the massive wave of research into trauma that followed from the clinical institutionalization of PTSD in the United States was largely spearheaded by the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs. It is, I would argue, with this insidious conjunction of psychological care and imperial

warmongering in mind that the normative trauma therapies that emerged from this research and their purported high rates of efficacy should be evaluated, both with respect to the clinical standard by which trauma is recognized as "healed" for the individual and with respect to the societal costs that are entailed in adopting that standard. For example, in CPT, the objective is "to shift beliefs [about the traumatic event] towards accommodation," the latter of which is defined as "altering beliefs in order to accommodate new learning" (4). While accommodation is undoubtedly necessary when a victim misidentifies as the perpetrator of the violence against them (such as can occur in traumatic sexual assault), what form does accommodation take when a "victim" *correctly* identifies themselves as the perpetrator of violence, when the ontological contradiction is precisely a moral incommensurability between the subject's ego-ideal and their crimes? What "new learning," in particular, will enable "accommodation" of these crimes? The tethering of accommodation to the anodyne concept of "new learning" obscures other forms of accommodation that are implied but remain unstated in this paradigm. It is, of course, not difficult to imagine that the curriculum of this pedagogy is constituted by the discourses and practices that render actual victims ungrievable and, thus, derealize the violence enacted on them.[326] Similarly, it is also not difficult to recognize that such an accommodation will be maintained for the traumatized subject only if others around them, if not the entire society in which they live, are coerced into participating in that derealization as well—just as Zainab is coerced into participating in Anjum's restaging of her trauma. Consequently, I argue that the novel utilizes this scene with Zainab to differentiate the modality of traumatic repair it ultimately outlines in the new life Anjum builds for herself in the graveyard from the trauma therapies that have been developed to soothe the psychic wounds of war criminals. That is, it uses this scene to

[326] My use of derealize here is a reference to *Precarious Life*.

frame its depiction of Anjum's graveyard guesthouse and community of the dispossessed as coextensive with the adoption of a more ethically conscientious and psychoaffectively efficacious accommodation of trauma. It is to this form of traumatic accommodation that we now turn.

***

When Anjum's attempt to co-opt Zainab into managing her traumatic contradiction fails, she relocates to the graveyard. There, in the absence of social substitutes and (mis)guided by the reparative pathway of simple trauma, her ego repeatedly lets up its provisional repression in search of catharsis through epistemological ordering, giving rise to the aforementioned flashbacks. Nevertheless, she discovers again and again that "knowledge" of the traumatic event only affirms the constitutive contradiction between her hijraness and the rioters' vicious expropriation of it. The result is an ensnaring via repetition-compulsion that the novel's free-indirect narration heartbreakingly indexes through the Steinian construction "[s]he knew very well that she knew very well that she knew very well" (*TMOUH* 67). In this state of seemingly interminable traumatic entrapment, Anjum persists for years. Referring to her as a "ravaged, feral specter" who haunts the graveyard, the novel aligns this state with existential liminality, indicating that her decision to "live" in a place for the "dead" is coextensive with an ontological un-becoming on her part. In turn, the novel leads the reader to recognize the nature of Anjum's un-becoming as a renunciation of hijraness by corporeally manifesting this spectrality:

> She stopped grooming herself, stopped dyeing her hair. It grew dead white from the roots, and suddenly, halfway down her head, turned jet black…Facial hair, which she had once dreaded more than anything else, appeared on her chin and cheeks like a glimmer of frost (mercifully a lifetime of cheap hormone injections

had stopped it from growing into an all-out beard). One of her front teeth, stained dark red from chewing paan, grew loose in her gums. When she spoke or smiled, which she rarely did, it moved up and down terrifyingly, like a harmonium key playing a tune of its own. (68)

In juxtaposing Anjum's submission to secondary sex characteristics that contradict her hijraness alongside macabre imagery of bodily decay and incoordination, the novel makes clear that this process of unbecoming-hijra is, for Anjum,[327] a form of becoming-death.[328]

While it initially appears that Anjum's relocation to the graveyard is only a self-destructive act, we ultimately discover that the novel does not want us to conflate becoming-death and dying. On the contrary, it reconstitutes becoming-death as *in-habiting death*, turning death into a form of habit and habitus and situating this habitation as a crucial part of a pathway of traumatic repair that not only precludes trauma's ontological contradiction from ending in biological death but, also, enables a related-but-different ontology to acquire viability for the subject:

Gradually the Fort of Desolation scaled down into a dwelling of manageable proportions. It became a home; a place of predictable, reassuring sorrow—awful, but reliable. The saffron men sheathed their swords…The folded men and women

[327] To be very clear, I am describing the novel's depiction of hijra ontology/identity. That is, I am not suggesting that "hijraness"—which is, in reality, a non-uniform category by any metric—is, as it were, by its nature opposed to the manifestation of "masculine" secondary sex characteristics. At the same time, I am also not suggesting that Roy's gesture to this opposition has no corollary in real discourses and social practices of hijraness. As is the case with many other transfeminine subcultures across the world, a hyperfemininity defined, in part, by the absence of "masculine" corporeal signifiers does operate as a standard for legibility and authenticity within some hijra communities. See Reddy's *With Respect to Sex* for a more nuanced discussion of these dynamics.

[328] Loosely, I use "becoming" and "un-becoming" in a Spinozian-Deleuzian sense; in saying this, though, I am merely acknowledging scholars who have influenced the way I think about ontology and immanence, not attempting to authorize my concepts through them. To that point, it could also be said that my use of "becoming" and "un-becoming" has been molded more generally by the undercurrent of philosophy that passes through Spinoza, Nietzsche, Foucault, Deleuze, Derrida, Sedgwick, Berlant, Butler, and Wendy Brown, among others.

> visited less frequently. Only Zakir Mian, neatly folded, would not go away. But in time, instead of following her around, he moved in with her and became a constant but undemanding companion.
>
> Anjum began to groom herself again. She hennaed her hair, turning it a flaming orange. She had her facial hair removed, her loose tooth extracted and replaced with an implant. A perfect white tooth now shone like a tusk between the dark red stumps that passed for teeth. On the whole it was only slightly less alarming than the previous arrangement. She stayed with the Pathan suits but she had new ones tailored in softer colors, pale blue and powder pink, which she matched with her old sequined and printed dupattas. She gained a little weight and filled out her new clothes in an attractive, comfortable way. (70-71)

As the hold of trauma on Anjum begins to lessen, it becomes clear that becoming-death is, in fact, one half of a dialectical modality of de-traumatization; the other half involves accommodating-dispossession. While I discuss these processes and their imbrication below, I would like to signpost now that each half of the dialectic corresponds to a different meaning of "in-habit," as well as another meaning that they share. I associate becoming-death with the early modern notion of "habit" as both clothing and character, a philological ambiguity through which one's sartorial and corporeal arrangements were linked to one's (moral) nature.[329] The desire underpinning this association is twofold: one, I seek to theoretically emphasize that becoming-death involves arranging the self so as to assume the contradictory element of trauma as part of oneself (see below); two, I seek to metacritically highlight that the novel simulates this

[329] See Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass *Reniassance Clothing and the Materials of Men* and Valerie Traub "Mapping the Global Body."

arrangement through a particular imaginary of how a hijra manages and arranges "contradictory" sartorial and corporeal signifiers so as to produce their gendered self. In turn, I associate accommodating-dispossession with the modern understanding of the verb "inhabit"—to live in or to occupy—but this association is, in part, ironic. As we will see, accommodating-dispossession involves taking on the work of recognizing, caring for, and grieving others' dispossession, even in the midst of one's own. It is a social extension of self-negation, though one that I will argue ultimately makes life possible again for the "in-habitant." Insofar as I later demonstrate that Anjum's accommodating-dispossession is an allegory for Kashmiris' incredulous mourning—which resists debilitating melancholia by taking advantage of its metapsychological conditions of possibility for the purposes of capacitation—this use of "in-habit" (in its inversion of the normative understanding of "to occupy") is meant to index resistance's operation from within relations of power. Finally, I intend for both becoming-death and accommodating-dispossession to be recognized as bound up in "habits" of relation—that is, habituated behaviors toward others with whom one is involved.[330]

Becoming-death names an excruciating, piecemeal process of willful self-negation for the purposes of psychically accepting the contradictory element within the traumatic event and, thus, allowing it to vacate the wound formed by provisional repression in the *Pcpt*. I would suggest that in many cases an ontological contradiction cannot be resolved except through becoming-death's negation of the self. With long-term trauma, de-traumatization may well *require* that the subject precipitate their own negation, entering into an active relationship of accommodation with the ontological contradiction that they have repeatedly rejected.

[330] Although I do not explicitly draw upon them here, Stoler's reflections on habit in "Habits of a Colonial Heart" (*Along the Archival Grain* 57-102) inform my deployment of the term in this dissertation.

Nevertheless, the novel suggests that becoming-death's negation of the self is a necessary but insufficient condition for de-traumatization:

> As the Fort-of-Desolation scaled down, Anjum's tin shack scaled up. It grew first into a hut that could accommodate a bed, and then into a small house with a little kitchen…Over time Anjum began to enclose the graves of her relatives and build rooms around them. Each room had a grave (or two) and a bed. Or two… [Over time,] Anjum began to rent a couple of rooms to down-and-out travelers. (71-72)

This house that scales up so that the Fort-of-Desolation can scale down is the structure that eventually becomes Jannat Guest House and Funeral Services (henceforth Jannat), which I briefly discussed at the beginning of the previous chapter. There, I indicated that Jannat functions in a dual capacity to house the living who have been dispossessed by the world and to grieve the dead who have been rendered unmournable by it. It is also clear, though, that the novel encourages us to read these two functions as one and the same, insofar as the most remarkable feature of Jannat is its enclosure of the graves such that the dispossessed living and the dispossessed dead are brought together in cohabitation. In offering recognition, shelter and care to those whom the world has abandoned and rendered disposable in life, Anjum also offers these people the opportunity to extend recognition, memory, and grief to those whom the world has forgotten in death. To "in-habit" Jannat's graveyard community is to be enfolded into conditions of relationality constituted by an ethics of radical accommodation, the result being that Jannat functions like a collectivizing null space for abjection.

How does assuming this ethics of radical accommodation enable traumatic repair within the schema I have been speculatively constructing? Long-term trauma's becoming-death is coextensive with the production of a form of ontological loss for which there are no (and could

never be any) readymade assemblages of grief. In other words, while trauma, loss, and grief are not identical, traumatic repair cannot advance without the subject developing or accessing the means by which they can grieve the otherwise ungrievable loss of themselves they actively create. What the novel is suggesting, then, is that there is something within Jannat's project of grieving ungrievable others—of bringing others' ungrievability into cohabitation with one's own—that enables Anjum to recognize the loss borne of accepting the double-bind in which the rioters put her and, by virtue of this recognition, re-form herself, thereby gradually charting for herself a viable vector of becoming-hijra. This path is one in which pastel-colored Pathan suits and grieving the ungrievable are as life-affirming for her as saris and blessing the unborn once were—perhaps even more so, since this ontology indelibly enmeshes her within a community of people who "[recognize], in their own separate ways, something of themselves and their own stories, their own Indo-Pak" in each other's dispossession (442). Consequently, the novel frames what I have called accommodating-dispossession—assuming responsibility for caring for and grieving the dispossessed living and dead and, through doing so, enabling oneself to recognize one's own dispossession in the negation of becoming-death and, thereby, enabling oneself to participate in "becoming" once more-—as an ethics of radical accommodation coextensive with a modality of mourning.

Nevertheless, while gestured to, this relationship between radical accommodation and capacitating grief is not sufficiently diagrammed by the novel. This is because its depiction of accommodating-dispossession within Jannat Guest House and Funeral Services is largely allegorical. As I explained in the previous chapter, in naming Anjum's graveyard home Jannat, the novel signals that the relational practices constitutive of her community of the dispossessed reference the politics and psychodynamics of grief in Kashmiri resistance to India's security

regime. As such, in order to understand accommodating-dispossession, its relation to mourning and melancholia, and the political optimism Roy invests in it, we will need to finally shift our focus from the allegorical vehicle to its tenor—that is, we will need to examine Kashmiri resistance to debilitating melancholia.

4.4 Incredulous Mourning: Resisting Debilitating Melancholia

Five hundred miles away from Delhi's Mehndiyan, in Srinagar's Mazar-e-Shuhada (Martyrs' Graveyard), there exist two open graves. One is for Maqbool Bhat, a cofounder of the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF). On 11 February 1984, Bhat was hanged in New Delhi's Tihar Jail for his alleged connection to a murder (Faheem 241). Contravening the spirit of Rule 114 of international humanitarian law (IHL), the Indian government refused to return Bhat's body to his relatives after his execution, instead burying him on the grounds of Tihar Jail. Consequently, Bhat's execution and his body's instrumentation as a nascent weapon of securitarian necro-power set off powerful waves of outrage and grief all across the Valley, these affective currents eventually culminating in the eruption of armed resistance in 1989. This catalysis was facilitated by the *tehreek*'s strategic martyrization of Bhat, whom Kashmiris began to herald as "Shaheed-e-Azam," the Supreme Martyr ("The Killable Kashmiri Body" 121). Part and parcel to Bhat's martyrization was the construction of his open grave in Mazar-e-Shuhada, along with a tombstone reading "[Maqbool Bhat], whose earthly body lies in the government of India's custody; the nation awaits its return" (Junaid 258). Nearly thirty years later, Bhat's open grave was joined by another, this one for Mohammad Afzal Guru. On 9 February 2013, Guru was executed in Tihar Jail for his alleged orchestration of the 2001 attack on the Indian Parliament. As with Bhat, his remains were not returned to his family in Kashmir and to this day are held captive within Tihar Jail. Correspondingly, he was also martyrized and is now known

across the Valley as "Shaheed-e-Watan," Martyr of the Nation. The epitaph on his tombstone—which Indian authorities have attempted, unsuccessfully, to destroy several times—mirrors that of Bhat's ("The Killable Kashmiri Body" 121).

The *tehreek*'s construction of open graves for Bhat and Guru partakes of "the work of the dead," Thomas Laqueur's term for the various technologies by which human cultures politically, existentially, and psychoaffectively infold the dead back into relations among the living, such that they "do their work in creating, recreating, representing, or disrupting the social order of which they had been a part" (*The Work of the Dead* 10). More specifically, in Kashmir's resistance to Indian occupation, as indexed by the honorific titles extended to Bhat and Guru in death, the work of the dead has primarily been routed through culturally-specific practices of martyrization and their attendant discourses, which I refer to collectively as the Kashmiri *tehreek*'s deployment of martyrdom. Whereas prevailing scholarship has tended to rationalize this deployment in terms of commonsense associations between martyrization and political galvanization, I suggest that its political "work" should not be presumed but, instead, derived through diagramming its potential intervention into the psychosocial conditions that enable and sustain debilitating melancholia—that is, along similar lines as my earlier insistence that the specific, local effects of the technology of disappearance on the loved ones of the disappeared not be effaced from attempts to flesh out the logic of that technology,[331] so, too, do I insist here that we approach delineating the political power effected by this deployment of martyrdom by first assessing the "work" it enacts on the medium through which it emerges (i.e., assemblages of grief). For this purpose, in this section, I rationalize the "open grave" as a mechanism of

[331] Or, for that matter, my insistence in chapter three that we not derealize sex/uality of positive content in diagramming its imbrication with (and partial production through) racializing assemblages.

resistance and political collectivization in Kashmir by situating it within the analytic framework of securitarian necro-power that I offered in chapter two. I suggest, moreover, that the logic of resistance derived from this analysis could be extended to the *tehreek*'s deployment of martyrdom as a whole.

***

Until Bhat's open grave was constructed, Mazar-e-Shuhada was the final resting place to twenty-one Kashmiris murdered by Hari Singh's forces on 13 July 1931. Since Sheikh Abdullah first designated 13 July as Martyrs' Day in 1947 as part of his bid to interpellate Kashmiris *as* Kashmiri vis-à-vis an autochthonous regional memory counterposed to "official" Indian and British historiographies, the "martyrs" of 1931 have been variably claimed by resistance groups in order to ground their political desires in History.[332] However, it was not until after the first intifada that the *tehreek* began to martyrize *new* Kashmiris killed as a result of the occupation, even though several Kashmiris were killed by the Indian state between 1947 and 1990; for example, the Kashmiris murdered during two crises in 1963 and 1973, respectively, were not, and are still not, recognized as martyrs (Junaid 252). As such, by placing Bhat's open grave in the Martyrs' Graveyard, the JKLF was not citing a standard practice. Rather, it was triangulating the death of one of its founding members to a wide range of discontented Kashmiri Muslims and their shared, though not identical, historiographic identification with martyrdom; in doing so, they appear to have opened the discourse of martyrdom to internal reorganization. Since 1990, "thousands of Kashmiris [have been] buried in martyrs' graveyards," which were quickly erected across the Valley in the wake of the first intifada (250).

[332] Zutshi discusses the political import of Martyrs' Day in Kashmir, as well as the historical mythos of which it unfortunately constitutes an essential pillar, in *Kashmir's Contested Pasts* pp. 299-303.

Unlike Bhat, however, many of those whose bodies are interred in these graveyards have been non-combatants, despite the agential connotations of the term "martyr" (253). As Junaid notes, this is a curious development both with respect to the use of martyrdom in Kashmir before 1990 and with respect to the Islamic discourse of martyrdom upon which the *tehreek*'s deployments of the term are predicated. Traditionally, "[t]he actually remembered and most famous martyrdoms have, in fact, been the ones that took place during the early years of Islam"; despite martyrdom being defined within Islam as "witness" and "sacrifice," Muslims who "[have died] in 'religious wars' with non-Muslims" have not historically been remembered as martyrs, or even remembered at all (252). Thus, the term's sudden general applicability appears to mark a stark break with the tradition from which it hails. Junaid, however, argues that the *tehreek* has actually repurposed the latent definition of "witness" in such a way that it enmeshes those who are killed and those who survive: "[s]ince witnessing involves not only the act of seeing or going through an ordeal but also living to narrate the experience, the martyr becomes the *object of witnessing*; it is the community or the collective that is the real subject of witnessing" (253, emphasis-in-original). In other words, by means of this repurposing the act of witnessing is internally bifurcated and split across two subject positions within the scene of death: the victim of murder who witnesses sovereign power firsthand, and the survivor who witnesses the victim's corpse. On their own, neither subject is a true witness nor a true martyr vis-à-vis the event, since the former cannot narrate their encounter with power and the latter only "witnesses" the remainder of that encounter. Within the *tehreek*'s logic of martyrdom, however, the event's phenomenological and mnemonic loss can be *supplemented* through the survivor's refusal to turn

away from death—the killed subject is understood as martyred *because* the survivor agrees to bear witness to their corpse.[333]

***

Junaid advances the foregoing reading of the *tehreek*'s reformulation of the discourse of martyrdom as part of an ethnographic analysis of martyrs' graveyards in Kashmir. Although Junaid does not frame it explicitly as such, this analysis is etiological in nature: observing that martyrs' graveyards "produce powerful political effects," Junaid seeks to understand how these effects are engendered (249-250). For the most part, however, Junaid's analysis does not progress beyond identifying martyrization as enabling the "formation of [a] political subjectivity" necessary for organized resistance through its production of sites of collective memorialization (260). Yet, perhaps aware that his overarching argument could be extended to any platform for collective memorialization, Junaid also repeatedly gestures to a special power exerted by the graveyards: "Martyrdom and martyrs' memorials captivate commemorators"; "[M]artyrs' graveyards] possess distinctive powers that heighten senses, unleash frozen social memories, evoke feelings, produce affects, and shape political consciousness among Kashmiris" (260; 265). While Junaid, drawing on Edward Casey's work in phenomenology, pursues an interesting reading of the "spatiotemporal" organization of the graves in these cemeteries, for the most part, he does not account for this "distinctive" power he attributes to them. This explanatory lack is evident in his report of the power exerted by Bhat's open grave in particular:

> As we walked toward Maqbool Bhat's open grave at the head of the graveyard, the *absence*—not just the absence of body but perhaps of justice as well—that the

[333] To avoid misrepresenting Junaid, it should be noted that he does not explicitly utilize the concept of supplementarity in his analysis. Its inclusion here reflects a minor reframing on my part.

> open and empty grave represented demonstrated the affective power of memory and place. The caretaker of the graveyard did not speak much, expecting me as a Kashmiri to know. Indeed, I knew; so many stories I had heard about Bhat over the years came rushing back. I felt a darkness grow around me. Bhat had been hanged for his campaign to free Kashmir. (260)

There is, notably, a contradiction between claim and evidence in this account. Whereas the rest of Junaid's analysis would lead us to believe that "the affective power of memory and place" refers to the power to spur Kashmiris to fight for *azadi*, his description of his own experience among the graves indexes a psychoaffective state characterized by discomfort and disorientation. That is, while I am not saying that such a state is incompatible with political mobilization, as readers we should not be expected to accept, *tout court*, that "darkness grow[ing] around [one]" is a sign of political galvanization. If anything, what Junaid inadvertently expresses is a sort of melancholic alienation precipitated by interpellation: the graves compel both a powerful-but-illegible feeling from Junaid and a threatening expectation that he, "as a Kashmiri," be able to identify it. That this expectation threatens a crisis of identity is evident in Junaid's disavowing projection of it onto the caretaker. This projection affectively precludes Junaid from allowing himself the possibility that, perhaps, the caretaker does not "know," either. That is, Junaid does not consider that the power of Bhat's open grave may not extend from its capacity to convey some determinate meaning to "true" Kashmiris—by virtue of which it collectively orients them in opposition to the Indian state and its security regime—but, instead, from its ability to disturb its witnesses by activating in them the same sense of illegible-yet-undiscardable recognition (i.e., uncertain importance) that haunts Junaid.

For our purposes, it is significant that Junaid's disavowal is rhetorically and cognitively supported by an *a priori* assumption that martyrization constitutes, above all, a process of symbolization, as attested by claims such as "[Martyrs' graveyards] have turned dead bodies from the war into symbolic bodies," recurrent glossings of martyrs' graveyards as "symbolic places" and "symbolic sites," and the aforementioned framing of Bhat's open grave as "represent[ational]" (249).[334] With respect to parsing the open grave of Guru specifically, Junaid's reliance on the concept of symbolism is shared by Ather Zia. Reading India's execution of Guru in conjunction with its withholding of the latter's corpse as a necropolitical spectacle of the occupation that renders Kashmiri life, vis-à-vis Guru, "'killable,'" Zia argues that by virtue of this spectacle "Guru's body also becomes potent and hypervisible, fueling symbols of resistance that manifest in the open grave" ("The Killable Kashmiri Body" 122). Zia does not clarify what these symbol*s* are, nor how they (could) "manifest" in the absence of the open grave. As with Junaid, it is clear that Zia apprehends the open graves as doing important political work *beyond* merely indexing the occupation's refusal to return Bhat and Gurus' corpses and yet she cannot account for that production mechanistically. Her deployment of symbolism constitutes an attempt to enfold this illegible political excess into a legible framework of rationalization, but the result is a tautology wherein the inexplicable power of the graves is supposedly illuminated by reframing them as "potent symbols" on account of symbols being in and of themselves "potent." Not only does this formulation fail to explain the power of the graves to which it attests, but its reliance on symbolism reinforces the presumption that a mechanism of resistance "works" precisely by producing meaning.

[334] Due to the frequency with which Junaid utilizes symbol/ism in his essay, it would be impractical to provide a more comprehensive citation.

While both Junaid and Zia acknowledge that the open graves of Bhat and Guru resonate with the technology of disappearance in its wider deployment, neither scholar centers this technology in their analysis. In Junaid's reference to "the *absence*—not just the absence of body but perhaps of justice as well" and his related emphasis on "the affective power of memory and place," I see a problematic assimilation of the occupation's deployment of forced disappearances to the state's refusal to return Bhat and Gurus' bodies. This assimilation is problematic because, one, it uncritically deracinates the primary difference between these two technologies—that the loved ones of the disappeared *do not know* if the disappeared are dead—from their convergence in the absence of the body, and two, because of this deracination, it fails to account for how the deployment of forced disappearances specifically interfaces with the open graves. Surely, it is not incidental that a mechanism of resistance against a colonizing state that has disappeared (and most likely murdered) thousands, if not tens of thousands, of people would assume as its constitutive feature the absence of the corpse; at the same time, why, precisely, melancholic subjects who do not want to believe that disappearance equals death should partake in rituals of collective grief organized with respect to monuments to absences that coincide, unequivocally, with deaths is unclear. What understanding of the graves' political and affective force becomes legible when we approach them as securitarian necro-power's "odd term"—as, that is, a technology of resistance whose constitutive logic has emerged in relation to the power that necessitates it?[335]

***

[335] "Resistances do not derive from a few heterogeneous principles; but neither are they a lure or a promise that is of necessity betrayed. They are the odd term in relations of power; they are inscribed in the latter as an irreducible opposite" (Foucault, *HoSVol.1* 96).

In chapter two, I argued that fetishism is involved in, respectively, the activation, facilitation, and deformation of grief's processes. In short: Fetishism enables us to generate libidinal substitutes in response to the immediate absence of intrasubjective others. These substitutes protect us from misrecognizing a temporary absence as a permanent one, thereby precluding grief's premature activation. If, however, an absence is permanent, this protective function of fetishism risks constituting the basis for a melancholic attachment, particularly when the absence's permanence is illegible. It is this risk of, as it were, immunological overload in the psyche's instrumental deployment of fetishism of which the technology of disappearance takes advantage.

In using fetishism to describe melancholia, I focused on its libidinal and protective dimensions. In Freud's conception of it, however, fetishism also constitutes a special relation to knowledge. As many will recall, the general theory of fetishism Freud outlines in the late essay "Fetishism" articulates itself, in part, on a speculative etiology of male foot fetishism in particular, wherein he identifies the latter as a defense mechanism deployed by the male child in response to his "discovery" of his mother's lack of a penis, which constitutes something akin to a scene of traumatization ("Fetishism" 152-153). In this scene, the male child, having presumed that every human has a penis like his own, is horrified to discover its absence, which he instantly attributes to castration and, by extension, the possibility of losing his own penis (153). Unable to admit this possibility to consciousness, he sublates it through a "compromise" with reality that consists of both libidinal displacement and screen-memory. Returning to the moment directly preceding the "traumatic" sight of the vagina, the male child invests his libido into an "organ or [object]" he perceived in the course of his scopic investigations and, through this investment, transfigures it into a phallic substitute for the mother's "missing" penis, which doubles,

moreover, as a mnemonic substitute for the "traumatic" memory; in this way, he enables himself to unconsciously believe, once again, that "the woman *has* got a penis" (154, emphasis-in-original). However, his commitment to this belief is not unequivocal: "[i]t is not true that…he has preserved unaltered his belief that women have a phallus. He has retained that belief, but he has also given it up" (154). This, as Rosalind Morris aptly characterizes, "very complex response" is a consequence of the fetish constituting the repression's counterforce, which brings the substitute phallus and castration into indissociable relation: "the horror of castration has set up a memorial to itself in the creation of this substitute…[The fetish] remains a token of triumph over the threat of castration and a protection against it" (Morris 215; "Fetishism" 154). That is, the male child's investment in the substitute paradoxically increases his unconscious fear of being castrated. Consequently, the phenomenological presence of and libidinal attachment to the substitute phallus simultaneously signify the fantasized presence and the real absence of the mother's penis.

In the theory of grief I proffered in chapter two, I argued that the absence of the corpse—understood as a central, ordering element within normative assemblages of grief—is what enables the aggrieved to melancholically fetishize a site of return. While my account suggests that melancholic attachment is sustained by its libidinal form, it did not explain why this attachment should be so durable to disruption by logical inference. That is, it did not explain why the heartbreaking reality that not a single Kashmiri disappeared by the occupation during and in the aftermath of the first intifada has been found alive and the logical conclusion to be drawn from this reality—that "it is reasonable to assume that the total number of disappearances since 1989 would correlate with the number of bodies in unknown, unmarked, and mass graves" (*Buried Evidence* 22)—do not stop Zooneh and other members of the APDP from anticipating

the return of their loved ones, even decades after their disappearance. Notwithstanding the phallogocentrism, misogyny, and heteronormativity that characterizes the account in which it is articulated, the belief structure that Freud ascribes to fetishism—"[The fetishist] has retained that belief [in women having a phallus], but he has also given it up"—is, I suggest, illuminating with respect to the seeming epistemological intractability of melancholia under discussion. It is not that melancholia protects the subject from any apprehension that the other's temporary absence may be permanent. It is not that Zooneh does not "know," on some level, that after over a decade her son is not going to walk through that door. Rather, it is that the fetish has facilitated in Zooneh an *incredulous relation* to the possibility of her son's return.[336] Incredulity refers to an unwillingness to believe in something that does not amount to outright rejecting it. On the contrary, incredulity allows the subject to "retain" an attachment to that which they withhold belief precisely by virtue of withholding it. It is such a relation that enables us to accept, temporarily, the libidinal substitutes to which we turn when initially faced with the radical absence of an intrasubjective other; it is because we are unwilling to believe in their sufficiency to replace the absent other that we allow ourselves to invest in them. In an incredulous relation, cognitive disbelief enables libidinal investment.[337] Thus, for Zooneh, her disbelief in the promise of keeping the door ajar paradoxically protects her melancholic fetishism by precluding Syed's repeated failure to "appear" from disrupting its cruel optimism.

Of course, we should not imagine that the protection offered by a relation of incredulity is unlimited. Should, for example, the state finally return the corpse of one of the disappeared,

[336] To be clear, I do not think that incredulity is a property of all forms of fetishism. Originally, this chapter included a much longer meditation on fetishism in its relation to knowledge, desire, and pleasure, in which I delineated a difference between instrumental and non-instrumental fetishism, the former referring to fetishism deployed as a defensive mechanism and the latter referring to fetishism as a libidinal attachment to part of a love object that is spontaneously generated and exists independently from that object.

[337] Incredulity, it could be said, is why fantasy does not violate the reality principle.

thereby activating the normative assemblages of grief, it is unlikely that the melancholic subject's belief structure would remain unaltered (which is not to say that the aggrieved would necessarily proceed to mourning). Incredulity is predicated upon there being a degree of indeterminacy with respect to the constitutive contradiction. For our purposes, this limitation is important because the open graves of Bhat and Guru threaten to actualize that which incredulity needs to remain *in potentia*, insofar as the graves correspond to abductions in which it is *known* that the disappeared subjects have been killed. They are, thus, monuments to the possibility that would render melancholic fetishism's protective belief structure untenable. Why, then, are they not avoided and, instead, have assumed a prominent position within the deployment of martyrdom? This question speaks to a larger oversight in current scholarship on mourning-qua-resistance in Kashmir: the grief that the deployment of martyrdom compels its witnesses to repeatedly and effusively perform is, seemingly, regarded as an undifferentiated quantum of affect that all subjects can recurrently summon, exhaust, and replenish. Unexamined in this discourse is that this spectacular grief and its repeatability may necessitate the satisfaction of *specific affective and epistemological conditions of possibility* on the part of the deployment of martyrdom. Thus, rather than analytically elide the "darkness" of the open graves in accounting for their galvanizing power, we will attempt to arrive at the latter by way of the former. Although I privilege the loved ones of the disappeared in the following psychodynamic schema, I would argue that the general thesis I arrive at—that the deployment of martyrdom in Kashmir is politically capacitating because it mobilizes resistance through new assemblages of grief that take as their ordering principle how loss is produced and sustained within securitarian necro-power—is more widely applicable; while the technology of disappearance engenders conditions favorable to grief's injurious formation, melancholia is, of course, not its exclusive province.

If the conjunction of corporeal absence and the knowledge of death that inheres in the open graves threatens to disrupt the melancholic subject's incredulity vis-à-vis the possibility of their loved one's return and, yet, the aggrieved continue to participate in the deployment of martyrdom (without, it would seem, giving up their cruelly optimistic attachment), then it stands to reason that a mutually supportive compromise has been established between melancholia and the *tehreek*'s mode of political life. In Freudian etiologies, it is common for the psyche to ward off a threat to a protective structure through recourse to the defense mechanism at the center of that structure. Freud's early reading of Lucy R., which I discussed in chapter three, is emblematic in this regard: according to Freud, in order to prevent the repressed ("traumatic") memory of her rejection by the children's father to resurface, Lucy's psyche drew from these scenes of the uncanny mnemonic-sensorial material for the purposes of constituting secondary (or "auxiliary") repressions. In other words, a repression tends to be buttressed by more repression. While we will not assess the degree to which this tendency of psychic structures to reproduce themselves constitutes a general principle of psychic life—especially since traumatic formalism would, no doubt, loom large in any such principle—it is reasonable to adopt it as an initial point of departure for our analysis. Consequently, I propose the following: Melancholia protects itself from the threat constituted by the open graves by generating a new fetish in relation to them. This new fetish is "mourning" another's loss. From the outset, I have placed mourning in scare quotes because I want to make it clear that what is fetishized in this arrangement is not actual mourning; according to the theory of grief I proffered in chapter two, there can be no such thing as mourning another's loss (i.e., one cannot undergo piecemeal ontological reformation on behalf of another). The fetish I am describing is an impossible demand the melancholic subject places on themselves to grieve another's loss *as if* it were their

own. As with Freud's foot fetishist in the immediate aftermath of his "traumatization," initially the purpose of this imposition is one of incredulous disavowal: the melancholic subject assumes this responsibility to grieve because it allows them to perform a disbelief in the potential congruence of their situation and that of the loved ones of those whose corpses are absent but whose deaths are known (e.g., "I am grieving for them (who are not like me)"). Yet, if the overarching objective of this disavowal is to protect the melancholic relation, then it seems that objective and result ultimately diverge in this arrangement. In order to meet the demand they place on themselves, the melancholic subject must render the other's experience of loss mournable. With this term, I mean something more literal than Butler's notion of grievability. To render someone else's loss mournable is not only to socially identify their loss as deserving of grief, but to commit oneself to the task of (mis)recognizing the "what" of loss, for them, within the "who" of loss, which can only be attempted through projective simulation (i.e., "putting oneself in the other's shoes"). What is important in this simulation of grief is not the degree to which the simulator correctly approximates the intrasubjective lack of the other (which would be impossible to access, insofar as the status of this lack calls into crisis the very possibility of knowledge) but, as with all facilitated projections, what kind of work is effected on the simulator through their undertaking the simulation. In order to construct the scene of loss, the simulator must summon up their own experiences with loss, utilizing them as the raw material from which to recognize/imagine what in the other's loss is to be mourned. Consequently, for a subject caught in the "open wound" of melancholia, this simulation constitutes a transference-like fantasy structure by which they are able to interrogate their own ontological dispossession (to recognize those parts of the self that have been lost through the loss of their loved one) without having to give up the attachment to the possibility of return that normally precludes that

interrogation. Because this structure is predicated upon securing melancholia, the "knowledge" of one's dispossession borne out by this interrogation cannot precipitate reformation in the same way or to the same extent as mourning proper. Instead, the drive toward reformation is invested into an ethics of care, repair, and protection with respect to those whose losses the melancholic subject has assumed as their own.

Although this investment cannot relieve the constitutive melancholic attachment, its underlying drive is not cruelly optimistic, insofar as the resulting enmeshment with aggrieved others, no doubt, attenuates one's dispossession in affectively significant ways. To revisit Roy's metaphor, the recognition and reformation opened up to the melancholic subject through "mourning" the loss of others does not demolish their own "Fort of Desolation" but, instead, restructures it so that it becomes a "home; a place of predictable, reassuring sorrow—awful, but reliable" (*TMOUH* 70). Most importantly, as the novel indicates through Jannat Guest House and Funeral Services and its graveyard community of the dispossessed, this "home" is not only an extraordinary affective accomplishment but a politically foundational one as well: it is brought into being through subjects, already in the thrall of unremitting loss, submitting themselves to relations of radical dependence and radical responsibility. If, as Junaid suggests, martyrs and survivors are bound together in Kashmir, it is not just because of modifications within a religious discourse of martyrdom but, also, because the logic of supplementarity that inheres between martyrs and survivors reflects a more extensive reorganization of politics in Kashmir that assumes as its basis an ethics of collective and intersubjective grief. In sum, in committing oneself to mourning the loss of others so as to secure their cruelly optimistic attachment from expiration, the melancholic subject enables themselves to advance, at least in part, grief's

processes on a distinctly political register. Grief-as-politics in this context is *incredulous mourning*.

***

If Roy's novel locates in how Kashmiris approach collective and intersubjective grief the possibility of a political community that resists the scourge of derealization that is, to echo Musa, destroying the postcolonial nation from within, then it also reminds us that even this community oriented toward the problem of negation cannot constitute itself without effacing those whom it martyrizes:

> In the Mazar-e-Shohadda, the Martyrs' Graveyard, where [Miss Jebeen (the First)] was first buried, the cast-iron signboard that arched over the main gate said (in two languages): *We Gave Our Todays for Your Tomorrows*…Miss Jebeen was not a member of the Committee that decided what should be written on the signboard. But she was in no position to argue with its decision. Also, Miss Jebeen hadn't notched up very many Todays to trade in for Tomorrows, but then the algebra of infinite justice was never so rude. In this way, without being consulted on the matter, she became one of the Movement's youngest martyrs. (*TMOUH* 316)

In proffering, by means of irony, a critique of the deployment of martyrdom, is Roy suggesting that resistance to colonial occupation could operate without recourse to desubjectifying figuration? No, I do not think so. The point seems to be more that allegorical negation is not something that resistance movements, or political formations more generally, can do without; nonetheless, it is something whose inevitability can be woven into the fabric of collective life. That is, the promise of the community of the dispossessed at the end of the novel is not that it

will avoid negation, but that it commits itself to recognizing, mourning, and repairing the dispossession it engenders. The critique of the novel I develop in the next section should be read through this lens—as an effort to deploy the ethics of critique that Roy models.

4.5 Roy's Extraction of Sacred *Communitas*

Chapters three through six of *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* constitute a diegetic interstice between the novel's "hijra plot" and its "Kashmir plot," during which characters from both plots—as well as a baby, Miss Jebeen the Second, from the submerged, epistolary "Adivasi plot"—cross briefly into each other's lives. Their scene of encounter is an anti-corruption rally in New Delhi, which draws to itself protestors from all over India, who collectively represent the increasing precarization of its "surplus people" (*TMOUH* 102). As noted in my Introduction, their catalyst of encounter is the sudden "appearance" of a baby girl, "right next to the Mothers of the Disappeared" (120). Due to the baby's dark skin and gender, these representatives from Kashmir's Association of Parents of Disappeared Persons (APDP) are unwilling to accommodate this "appeared" child and, instead, without picking her up, begin to ask nearby protestors "Whose baby is this?" (121). When an "unambiguous" note attached to the baby makes clear that the child's guardian has intentionally left her and will not be coming back, the crowd decides to hand the baby over to the police, at which point Anjum steps forward to insist they allow her to adopt the baby instead: "'She's a gift from God. Give her to me. I can give her the love she needs. The police will just throw her in a government orphanage. She'll die there'" (123). Her suggestion is met with a mixture of scorn and incredulity, particularly by an up-and-coming anti-corruption politician, Mr. Aggarwal, who rebukes not only her claim to the child but her claim to exist in that space at all: "'Who gave these Hijras permission to sit here? Which of these Struggles do they belong to?'…'Do you [Anjum] have police permission to be here?'" (123-

125). Both her life as a hijra and her operation of Jannat Guest House and Funeral Services having afforded her extensive experience in refusing the capitalist-colonialist logic of privatized space, Anjum scoffingly rejoins, "'Police permission?'…'This is a *child*, not some illegal encroachment on your father's property. *You* apply to the police, Sahib. The rest of us will take the shorter route and apply straight to the Almighty'" (125). In doing so, Anjum wittily manifests Mona Ahmed's parrhesiastic "right to appear" above and beyond Mr. Aggarwal's legal challenge.

In its subsequent framing, however, this confrontation quickly brings into relief discrepancies between Anjum and both her real-life analog and her prior characterization:

> [Mr. Aggarwal,] a revolutionary trapped in an accountant's body. She, a woman trapped in a man's body. He, raging at a world in which the balance sheets did not tally. She, raging at her glands, her organs, her skin, the texture of her hair, the width of her shoulders, the timbre of her voice. He, fighting for a way to impose fiscal integrity on a decaying system. She, wanting to pluck the very stars from the sky and grind them into a potion that would give her proper breasts and hips and a long, thick plait of hair that would swing from side to side as she walked, and yes, the thing she longed for most of all, that most well stocked of Delhi's vast stock of invectives, that insult of all insults, a *Maa ki Choot*, a mother's cunt…He, who believed he was always right. She, who knew she was all wrong, always wrong. He, reduced by his certainties. She, augmented by her ambiguity. He, who wanted the law. She, who wanted a baby. (126)

In counterposing her to Mr. Aggarwal, the novel unnervingly portrays Anjum as a figure of corporeal lack and subtly naturalizes this portrayal through its use of anaphora, which affectively

and conceptually shores up the (supposed) insufficiency of Anjum's gender expression, not only through reference to "proper breasts and hips" and "a mother's cunt," but by using a dichotomous oscillation between "He" and "She" to formally instantiate a rigid gender binary that does not afford grammatical "space" for a third sex. In other words, the novel assimilates Anjum's desire to the "law" of binary gender (in Lacanian terms, the "law of the Father") and, in doing so, glosses over political, intertextual, and diegetic problems inherent to this representation through its anaphoric solicitation of pathos.

Although, as Cameron Awkward-Rich has poignantly argued, trans (and cis) representation is in need of narrative forms of gender becoming that accommodate "feeling bad as sometimes a mundane fact of [life]…[through acknowledging] the fundamental fleetingness of self-sameness," this portrayal figures Anjum not as a "depressed transsexual" so much as a *tragic invert*: "a woman trapped in a man's body"; as such, she is a twentieth-century representation of a late-nineteenth-century sexological figure whose Cartesian contradiction entraps them in gender dysphoria from the outset (Awkward-Rich 74). As attested by my earlier analysis, this is certainly not the first time the novel associates Anjum with negative feelings about her gender. However, here the novel relies upon the elastic amorphousness of negative affect to metaleptically reverse the causality of gender dysphoria vis-à-vis traumatization: whereas before Anjum's gender conflict (her "radical ontological contradiction") is framed as the *result* of her trauma, now the novel positions her as always-already traumatized by an originary incongruence between body and soul.

With this insidious reframing, the novel also departs significantly from the complex self-perception of Anjum's real-life referent. In her epistolary autobiography *Myself Mona Ahmed* (2001), Mona Ahmed explicitly rejects this passage's implicit binarization of sex: "[W]e

[hijras/eunuchs] are not like men trying to be women. We are the third sex. You will not understand because in your world everyone thinks of only man and woman" (*Myself Mona Ahmed* 95). Yet, the autobiography as a whole demonstrates that even this defiant identification with a "third sex"—indeed, with "sex" as a socio-ontological idiom—was tenuous. When, after her castration and subsequent abandonment by her birth family, other hijras took her in and "loved [her] very much, just like parents," hijraness constituted a much-needed site of belonging for her (52). As with all sites of belonging, though, throughout Mona Ahmed's life hijraness gradually revealed itself to be a site of Derridean ipseity and, thus, of exposure to dispossession, her considerable experience with which is consolidated in one of her alternate identifications as "neither man nor woman *nor* eunuch" (104, emphasis mine). Nevertheless, *Myself Mona Ahmed* never gives its reader the impression that Mona Ahmed's various dissatisfactions with her life and gender identity are reducible to some ontologically constitutive desire to "be a woman" that is always-already precluded by anatomy or endocrinology. On the contrary, Mona Ahmed frames her relationship with hijraness as a life-long negotiation with mutual accommodation, in which whether she will be able to accommodate the insufficiency of this socio-ontological genre *and* whether others also seeking belonging through this genre will be able to bear the ways in which she exceeds or otherwise fails to fulfill their desires are questions that remain—indeed, *must* remain—interminably open.

The extent to which Mona Ahmed's struggle with hijraness and that struggle's unassimilability to gender entrapment tropes are representative of hijra phenomenology (writ large) is neither here nor there, even if we approached that unwieldy question very carefully, in a manner befitting our identification as good postcolonial-queer social constructivists. What matters is Roy's choice to not ask that question and to, instead, transmute Mona Ahmed into this

figure of originary lack and impossible desire, who tragically cannot escape her predestined in-between-ness. There are three particularly perplexing aspects of this figuration. First, Roy goes to excessive lengths to root Anjum's "in-between-ness" in her anatomy. While we see the outline of this anatomical fixation (fetish, really) in the passage's enumeration of body parts, it is most legible in Roy's decision to write Anjum as having been born intersex:

> The next morning [after Anjum's birth], when the sun was up and the room nice and warm, [Anjum's mother] unswaddled little Aftab [Anjum's dead name]. She explored his tiny body—eyes nose head neck armpits fingers toes—with sated, unhurried delight. That was when she discovered, nestling underneath his boy-parts, a small, unformed, but undoubtedly girl-part. (*TMOUH* 11)

To grasp the creative liberties Roy has taken here, let us compare this scene of Anjum's birth to Mona Ahmed's description of her birth and early life:

> I was born at home, in a middle-class family. I came after two sisters. Everyone was very happy that after two girls a boy was finally born in the family, especially my father. He fed 200 people to celebrate his son's birth. I was naturally his favorite child, but once I started to grow, he started to feel I was not a boy and started to distance himself because I had very female mannerisms. Even I never felt as a boy and always sought the company of girls.
>
> …
>
> At the age of 12, my mannerisms were completely like a woman's. This angered my father a lot. People in the area started to realize I was a eunuch. This broke my heart, and the boys in school would taunt me. God gave me a man's body, but he also

> gave me a woman's spirit. That's why they would all call me *hijra* (eunuch). (*Myself Mona Ahmed* 46-47)

While it is not impossible for Mona Ahmed to have dissimulated her birth anatomy (as would be her right to do so!), it is unlikely considering the context. Across her autobiography, many of Mona Ahmed's laments about her fallen position within the hijra community are couched in the idiom of "respect," Gayatri Reddy's translation for *izzat*. As Reddy's ethnography demonstrates, for hijras "respect" is acquired through one's manifestation of certain ideals of "true" hijraness, one of which is that "a hijra should…[lack] male genitalia from birth" (Reddy 92). Since Mona Ahmed elsewhere discursively performs one of the other ideals of "true" hijraness—that hijras are born with no sexual desire—it is difficult to imagine her disavowing any "original" female anatomy when that anatomy would have increased her (at the time of publication, diminished) *izzat*. Rather, this re-imagining of Mona Ahmed having been born intersex is likely Roy's invention, the purpose of which is telegraphed in the novel's topographic and formalist description of Anjum's genitals: in arranging Anjum's "unformed, but undoubtedly girl-part" *beneath* Anjum's "boy-parts," Roy projects the *erroneous sexing of a primary gender form* onto Anjum's anatomy, in which anatomical proximality determines one's "true" (spiritual) gender and anatomical distality reflects one's "false" (corporeal) sex. Consequently, the novel uses this Platonic-Cartesian relation of true gender to false sex to ontologize Anjum through a lack-desire formalism, in which she is temporally and relationally propelled forward by her desire to "complete" her false sex and, yet, always foiled in this desire by the *nachträglichkeit*-laden return of a deeper, more primary constitutive lack. Thus, in juxtaposing the novel's portrayal of Anjum in her conflict with Mr. Aggarwal with the novel's description of Anjum's intersex

genitals at her birth, it becomes clear that the latter delineates the ontogenetic blueprint structuring the former.

The second perplexing aspect of this figuration is the assimilation of motherhood to Anjum's (ontologically constitutive) desire for sexological completion. On a superficial level, this is perplexing simply because anyone familiar with Arundhati Roy's politics would not expect her to define "woman" vis-à-vis the role of "mother"; indeed, the novel dramatizes Tilo—its second main feminine character, who doubles as Roy's pseudo-self-insertion—choosing *not* to bring her pregnancy to term (*TMOUH* 397). On a more pertinent level, by this point in the novel Anjum has already been a mother to Zainab. Although Anjum's relationship with Zainab is significantly strained in the aftermath of Anjum's return from Gujarat (reflecting Mona Ahmed's similarly heartbreaking experience with motherhood), it is not clear why her cry for a baby (to shore up her "lack" of a "mother's cunt"), rendered via free-indirect narration, should be phrased in such grossly biological terms, which negate her mothering of Zainab. Why is it that the optimism underlying this fantasy that a baby will supplement her anatomical lack remains seemingly unchanged by her previous experience as a mother, especially considering how insufficient Zainab (by no fault of her own) proved to be with respect to the task of "completing" Anjum's gender? While I have already argued that the novel portrays this atemporal, asocial desire to "complete" her gender as emerging from a primary "lack," what we have not considered is why her (impossible) desire should come to recognize itself by way of *this* fantasy, *this* scene of desire, and why that recognition should seem to operate outside of her own subjective history. Interestingly, when we examine Anjum's first articulation of this desire for motherhood, we come up against similar temporal distortions:

> What *did* [Anjum] think of herself? Not much, or quite a lot, depending on how you looked at it. She had ambitions, yes. And they had come full circle. Now she wanted to return to the Duniya and live like an ordinary person. She wanted to be a mother, to wake up in her own home, dress Zainab in a school uniform and send her off to school with her books and tiffin box…
>
> Zainab was Anjum's only love. Anjum had found her three years ago…She was alone and bowling on the steps of the Jama Masjid, a painfully thin mouse of a thing, with big, frightened eyes…When Anjum loomed over her and offered her a finger to hold, she glanced up briefly, grasped it and continued to cry loudly without pause. The Mouse-in-a-hijab had no idea what a storm that casual gesture of trust set off inside the owner of the finger that she held on to. Being ignored instead of dreaded by the tiny creature subdued (for a moment at least) what Nimmo Gorakhpuri had so astutely and so long ago called Indo-Pak. The warring factions inside Anjum fell silent. Her body felt like a generous host instead of a battlefield. Was it like dying, or being born? Anjum couldn't decide. In her imagination it had the fullness, the sense of entirety, of one of the two. (33-34)

The first part of the novel's chapter two ("Khwabgah") is structured by the aforementioned lack-desire formalism, resulting in something that approximates a trans-normative bildungsroman. Borne along by her ontological desire to "complete" her gender—articulated most explicitly in the *first* anaphoric litany of gender-desiring utterances—Anjum gradually migrates from her birth home to the Khwabgah, where she is taught a hyper-feminine stylistics of being. However, the fulfillment offered by this form of embodiment ultimately proves incapable of overcoming her constitutive lack, which manifests as corporeal excess in the form of a nocturnal emission

that sullies the sari that had represented her ascension to womanhood. Consequently, she seeks sex-reassignment surgery and hormone therapy from a dubious surgeon, who successfully removes Anjum's "male parts" but fails to "enhance her existing vagina"—instead (somehow) robbing her of any bodily capacity to orgasm (the absence or presence of a clitoris goes unmentioned)—and also leaves her with a partially "undeepen[ed]" voice that "sometimes sounded like two voices quarreling with each other instead of one" (32-33). Even when her body is centered as the site of intervention, it refuses to manifest Anjum's "true" gender form.

Notably, it is at this point that the bildungsroman structure breaks down, and within a single sentence, Anjum abruptly ages "more than thirty years" (33). It is not difficult to see why: having tethered narrative progression up until this point to Anjum's desire to "complete" her anatomical "lack," the novel becomes bereft of its animating diegetic teleology when Anjum's search for completion dead-ends in anatomical irreconcilability. From the perspective of the novel's ultimate instrumentation of its figuration of the hijra, this is a necessary deadending. It is in the murky, undefined absence of an animating ideal through which Anjum can strive to "complete" herself (which, as the glaring gap of thirty years demonstrates, is narratively coincident with the *absence of Anjum*) that the novel retroactively implants a new ideal at the core of Anjum's originary lack. It is this new ideal that, as I argue below, will ramify the tragic always-becomingness of Anjum's relation to being and time into a stabilizing force for the utopian futurity inscribed into the community of the dispossessed in its final pages. This new ideal is the figure of the Child, embodied first by Zainab and later by Miss Jebeen the Second, through which the novel teleologically adheres Anjum's originary lack to a form of political futurity. The Janus-faced temporality of this desire is legible in Zainab's diegetic introduction: immediately after asserting that Anjum's "ambitions…had come full circle," Zainab appears *in*

media res as one example of those ambitions "[coming] full circle," despite the reader not knowing who she is; in this way, the novel situates Zainab as origin and future simultaneously. This temporal double movement is soon after reproduced in Anjum and Zainab's scene of encounter, wherein Zainab (*re*)appears—this encounter necessarily being staged as a *flashback*—as the always-sought supplement to Anjum's ontological contradiction… "(for a moment at least)." With this small parenthetical, Zainab's future promise to return Anjum to originary wholeness ("the sense of entirety") becomes Anjum's promise of diegetic futurity by way of her originary lack's inexorable return. Moreover, that the latter is figured here as a universal metonymy for Partitional subjectivity is particularly important because it betrays the novel's desire to graft the graveyard community's promise of *political futurity* onto the tragic hijra's promise of diegetic futurity. In this way, both the imbrication of Anjum's desires for "a mother's cunt" and "a baby" *and* the ahistorical repetition of this imbricated desire across Zainab's and Miss Jebeen the Second's respective appearances (both, notably, *ex nihilo*) are expressions of this overarching circuit connecting the figures of the tragic hijra to the Child.

In view of the foregoing analysis, the final perplexing aspect of Anjum's stand-off with Mr. Aggarwal is that it brings the novel into severe contradiction with its earlier portrayal of the ontological and political possibilities opened up by Anjum's in-habitations of death. On the one hand, the novel depicts Anjum's construction of Jannat Guest House and Funeral Service as enabling her to grieve and, in grieving, to viably traverse an alternate vector of becoming-hijra. On the other hand, the novel depicts Anjum as always-already traumatized by her bodily entrapment, wherein all "alternate vectors" reveal themselves to be but cruelly optimistic illusions that repeatedly return her to her self-same constitutive lack. In her traumatic relation to the rioters' expropriation of her sacred asceticism, Anjum allegorizes the reparative potential of

emergent assemblages of grief in Kashmir; in her relation to gender embodiment and motherhood, Anjum allegorizes the recursive regressivity of an inexplicable intersex death instinct. Yet, the novel cannot recognize nor resolve this contradiction because this problematic figuration of Anjum shores up the novel's desire for these emergent assemblages of grief to cohere into a *reliable and durable political form*. That is, the novel dreams of the ephemeral *communitas* of collective grief congealing into a *necro-political community*, one in which the dead and histories of death-making will not be politically and phenomenologically sequestered from life but, rather, will, through their radical accommodation, constitute the irrepressible medium of collective relationality. This dream is articulated through Miss Jebeen the Second, whom the novel in its final sentence—"Because Miss Jebeen, Miss Udaya Jebeen, was come"—frames as the assurance that "things would turn out all right in the end" (*TMOUH* 444). Here, the eschatological undertones of Miss Jebeen's "second coming" articulate with the anterior prolepticism of the causal schema "things *would* turn out all right…because Miss Jebeen…*was come*" to mobilize the figural circuit inhering between the tragic hijra and the Child toward its ultimate symbolic objective: to secure the futurity of the graveyard community.

This is not, however, the futurity of reproductive futurism. Whereas in its relation to Anjum, the Child *does* promise something akin to the resolution of the incommensurability between the Symbolic and the Imaginary, for the community of the dispossessed the Child cannot possibly bear the "telos of the social order," as attested by the serialization of Miss Jebeen's name and the knowledge it aspires to carry—that children from derealized communities suffer "untimely deaths" all the time (Edelman 11; *TMOUH* 316). No, the hope that is implanted into the figure of Miss Jebeen the Second is less ambitious, though still a tall order: it is *this* possibility of a community radically carrying their constitutive losses across time, across

difference, across conflict, across joy, across pain, across apathy, across power. What we must see in the background of the graveyard community beautifully "[closing] ranks around Miss Jebeen the Second," having "recognized, in their own separate ways, something of themselves and their own stories, their own Indo-Pak, in the story of [Miss Jebeen the Second's mother, Revathy]," is the anxiety that haunts all historically-conscious fantasies of political community: will what has brought us together be capable of keeping us together?

In a world of intensifying and proliferating precarity, the novel needs the answer to be yes; as such, it ontologizes that capacity vis-à-vis its diegetic and symbolic construction of the subject who brings the graveyard community together. By virtue of her inexorable, implacable need to "complete" her constitutive lack—by virtue, that is, of her always-already ontological contradiction, which interminably draws to itself and preserves the contradictions-of-Being (the "Indo-Pak"s) that it finds reflected in others' negated existences—Anjum, in her figuration as the tragic hijra, constitutes the assurance of futurity for this impossibly capacious community of the dispossessed. She also represents, via allegory, that community's aspirations to, through ethically elasticizing the norms of grievability by which dispossession is recognized, "slowly [become] everything" (442). If in its final chapters the novel is able to imagine "battered angels in the graveyard…[holding] open the doors between worlds (illegally, just a crack), so that the souls of the present and the departed could mingle…[and, thus, making] life less determinate and death less conclusive," it is because the novel has, along with the Gujarat rioters, slyly manipulated the exchange logic of sacred asceticism to secure interminable benediction for *its* imagined community (404).

The purpose of this analysis is not to critique infelicities in the novel's hijra/intersex representation, nor to expose as problematic Roy's utopian gesture. On the contrary, I deeply

sympathize with Roy's desire for assured communal futurity. And I consider it axiomatic that the optimism constitutive of that desire is necessary for any real movement toward building a better world. If there is a potential of relationality to be found in our common primary ontological vulnerability, then, too, that potential persists, however paradoxically, in the inevitability of relationality's failure. In Berlant's words:

> Optimism is not a map of pathology but a social relation involving attachments that organize the present…Even when it turns out to involve a cruel relation, it would be wrong to see optimism's negativity as a symptom of an error, a perversion, damage, or a dark truth: optimism is, instead, a scene of negotiated sustenance that makes life bearable as it presents itself ambivalently, unevenly, incoherently. (*Cruel Optimism* 14)

Invariably, this negotiation for optimism's sustenance—this, to quote Roy, "illegal" extraction of sacred life from a time yet-to-come—involves the interplay of negative, even harmful, representations. Lethal negation can, of course, proceed from figural negation, as students and subjects of queer/trans and colonial histories know all too well. Yet, collective life without figural negation and its potential for lethal negation is also a biopolitical fantasy, one in whose name so many have been killed; as Foucault argues, "[t]hat death is [now] so carefully evaded [in Western discourse] is linked less to a new anxiety which makes death unbearable for our societies than to the fact that the procedures of power have not ceased to turn away from death" (*HoSVol1* 138). Perhaps the only way to build a community of the dispossessed is to generate socio-ontological modalities of radically accommodating—not entirely and certainly not in all cases—one's negation by the other in the faith that the other will in-habit one's negation in turn, in the faith that this *communitas* will endeavor to make every unbecoming grievable once more.

Bibliography

"25 June 1990: 'The Brutal Killing of Girija Tickoo: A Kashmiri Hindu Tragedy.'" *JK Now*, 25 June 2024, www.jammukashmirnow.com/Encyc/2024/6/25/25-June-1990-The-Brutal-Killing-of-Girija-Tickoo-A-Kashmiri-Hindu-Tragedy.html.

Abraham, Nicolas and Maria Torok. "Mourning *or* Melancholia: Introjection *versus* Incorporation." 1972. *The Shell and the Kernel: Renewals of Psychoanalysis*, edited, translated, and with an introduction by Nicholas T. Rand, The University of Chicago Press, 1994, pp. 125-138.

Agamben, Giorgio. *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. 1995. Translated by Daniel Heller-Roazen, Stanford University Press, 1998.

Agamben, Giorgio. *Means without End: Notes on Politics*. 1996. Translated by Vincenzo Binetti and Cesare Casarino, University of Minnesota Press, 2000.

Ahmed, Mona and Dayanita Singh. *Myself Mona Ahmed*. Scalo, 2001.

Ali, Tariq et al. *Kashmir: The Case for Freedom*. Verso, 2011.

Amar, Paul. *The Security Archipelago: Human-Security States, Sexuality Politics, and the End of Neoliberalism*. Duke University Press, 2013.

American Psychiatric Association. *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th, ed*. American Psychiatric Publishing, 2013.

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities*. 1983. Verso, 2006.

Arondekar, Anjali. *For the Record: On Sexuality and the Colonial Archive in India*. Duke University Press, 2009.

Arondekar, Anjali and Geeta Patel. "Area Impossible: Notes toward an Introduction." *Area Impossible*, a special issue of *GLQ*, edited by Anjali Arondekar and Geeta Patel, Duke University Press, vol. 22, no. 2, pp. 151-171.

Arendt, Hannah. *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. 1951. New edition with added prefaces, Harcourt Inc., 1968.

Arnold, David. *Burning the Dead: Hindu Nationhood and the Global Construction of Indian Tradition*. University of California Press, February 2021.

Asher, Catherine B. and Cynthia Talbot. *India Before Europe*. 2006. Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Awkward-Rich, Cameron. "Trans, Feminism; Or, Reading like a Depressed Transsexual." *The Terrible We: Thinking with Trans Maladjustment*, Duke University Press, 2022, pp. 67-88.

Bamzai, P. N. K. *Culture and Political History of Kashmir: Volume 3: Modern Kashmir*. M.D. Publications, 1994.

Bayly, C. A. *Empire and Information: Intelligence Gathering and Social Communication in India, 1780-1870*. Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Bazaz, Abir. *Nund Rishi: Poetry and Politics in Medieval Kashmir*. Cambridge University Press, 2023.

Beauchamp, Toby. *Going Stealth: Transgender Politics and U.S. Surveillance Practices*. Duke University Press, 2019.

Benjamin, Walter. *Illuminations*. 1955. Edited and with an introduction by Hannah Arendt, Schocken Books, 1969.

Berlant, Lauren. *Cruel Optimism*. Duke University Press, 2011.

Berlant, Lauren. *Desire/Love*. Punctum Books, 2012.

Berlant, Lauren. *On the Inconvenience of Other People*. Duke University Press, 2022.

Berlant, Lauren. "Slow Death (Sovereignty, Obesity, Lateral Agency)." *On the Case*, a special issue of *Critical Inquiry* edited by Lauren Berlant, vol. 33, no. 4, Summer 2007, pp. 754-780.

Bersani, Leo. *Homos*. 1996. Harvard University Press, 1996.

Bersani, Leo. *Is the Rectum a Grave? and Other Essays*. The University of Chicago Press, 2010.

Best, Stephen and Sharon Marcus. "Surface Reading: An Introduction." *Representations*, vol. 108, no. 1, pp. 1-21.

Bhan, Mona. *Counterinsurgency, Democracy, and the Politics of Identity in India: From Warfare to Welfare?* Routledge, 2014.

Bhan, Mona, Haley Duschinski and Deepti Misri, editors. *Routledge Handbook of Critical Kashmir Studies*. Routledge, 2023.

Birla, Ritu. *Stages of Capital: Law, Culture, and Market Governance in Late Colonial India*. Duke University Press, 2009.

Bland, Lucy and Laura Doan, editors. *Sexology in Culture: Labelling Bodies and Desires*. The University of Chicago Press, 1998.

Bland, Lucy and Laura Doan, editors. *Sexology Uncensored: The Documents of Sexual Science*. The University of Chicago Press, 1998.

Boone, Joseph Allen. *The Homoerotics of Orientalism*. Columbia University Press, 2014.

Boon, Sonja. *Telling the Flesh: Life Writing, Citizenship, and the Body in the Letters of Samuel Auguste Tissot*. McGill-Queen's University Press, 2015.

Bose, Sumantra. *Contested Lands: Israel-Palestine, Kashmir, Bosnia, Cyprus, and Sri Lanka*. Harvard University Press, 2007.

Bose, Sumantra. *Kashmir at the Crossroads: Inside a 21st-Century Conflict*. Yale University Press, 2021.

Bose, Sumantra. *Kashmir: Roots of Conflict, Paths to Peace*. Harvard University Press, 2003.

Bray, Alan. *The Friend*. 2003. The University of Chicago Press, 2006.

Bray, Alan. *Homosexuality in Renaissance England*. 1982. With a new afterword by Alan Bray, Columbia University Press, 1995.

Bray, John. "Corvée Transport Labour in 19th and Early 20th Century Ladakh: A Study in Continuity and Change." *Modern Ladakh: Anthropological Perspectives on Continuity and Change*, edited by Martijn van Beek and Fernanda Pirie, 2008, pp. 41-66.

Breuer, Josef and Sigmund Freud. *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Vol. II (1893-1895): Studies on Hysteria*, translated from the German under the general editorship of James Strachey, in collaboration with Anna Freud, assisted by Alix Strachey and Alan Tyson, The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1955.

Brown, Wendy. "Resisting Left Melancholy." *boundary 2*, vol. 26, no. 3, Autumn 1999, pp. 19-27.

Brown, Wendy. *States of Injury: Power and Freedom in Late Modernity*. Princeton University Press, 1995.

Burchell, Graham, Colin Gordon and Peter Miller, editors. *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality: With Two Lectures and an Interview with Michel Foucault*. The University of Chicago Press, 1991.

Butler, Judith. *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex"*. 1993. Routledge, 2011.

Butler, Judith. *The Force of Non-Violence: An Ethico-Political Bind*. Verso, 2020.

Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. 1990. Routledge, 2006.

Butler, Judith. *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly*. 2015. Harvard University Press, 2018.

Butler, Judith. *Precarious Life*. Verso, 2004.

Butler, Judith. *The Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection*. Stanford University Press, 1997.

Butler, Judith. *Undoing Gender*. Routledge, 2004.

Cash, John D. "Sovereignty in Crisis." *Unconscious Dominions: Psychoanalysis, Colonial Trauma, and Global Sovereignties*, edited by Warwick Anderson, Deborah Jenson, and Richard C. Keller, Duke University Press, 2011, pp. 21-41.

Chakrabarty, Dipesh. *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*. 2000. Princeton University Press, 2008.

Chakravarty, Ipsita. "Here Are Five Things 'The Kashmir Files' Gets Wrong About Kashmir." *Scroll.in*, 19 March 2022, www.scroll.in/article/1019863/here-are-five-things-the-kashmir-files-gets-wrong-about-kashmir.

Chandra, Bipan et al. *India's Struggle for Independence, 1857-1947*. 1988. Penguin Books, 1989.

Chatterji, Angana et al. *Buried Evidence: Unknown, Unmarked and Mass Graves: A Preliminary Report*. International People's Tribunal on Human Rights in Indian-administered Kashmir (IPTK), November 2009.

Chatterjee, Partha. "In Kashmir, India is Witnessing Its General Dyer Moment." *The Wire*, 2 June 2017, www.thewire.in/history/general-dyer-indian-army-kashmir.

Chatterjee, Partha. *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*. Princeton University Press, 1993.

Cheng, Anne Anlin. *The Melancholy of Race: Psychoanalysis, Assimilation, and Hidden Grief*. Oxford University Press, 2000.

Crimp, Douglas. *Melancholia and Moralism: Essays on AIDS and Queer Politics*. The MIT Press, 2002.

Cvetkovich, Ann. *An Archive of Feelings: Trauma, Sexuality, and Lesbian Public Cultures*. Duke University Press, 2003.

Davidson, Arnold. *The Emergence of Sexuality: Historical Epistemology and the Formation of Concepts*. Harvard University Press, 2001.

Davidson, Arnold I., editor. *Foucault and His Interlocutors*. The University of Chicago Press, 1997.

De León, Jason. *The Land of Open Graves: Living and Dying on the Migrant Trail*. University of California Press, 2015.

Deleuze, Gilles and Félix Guattari. *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. 1972. Translated by Robert Hurley, Mark Seem, and Helen R. Lane, preface by Michel Foucault, introduction by Mark Seem, Penguin Books, 2009.

Deleuze, Gilles and Félix Guattari. *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*. 1975. Translated by Dana Polan, foreword by Réda Bensmaïa, University of Minnesota Press, 1986.

Deleuze, Gilles and Félix Guattari. *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. 1980. Translation and foreword by Brian Massumi, University of Minnesota Press, 1987.

Derrida, Jacques. *The Animal That Therefore I Am*. Translated by David Wills, edited by Marie-Louise Mallet, 2008.

Derrida, Jacques. *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*. 1995. Translated by Eric Prenowitz, The University of Chicago Press, 1995.

Derrida, Jacques. *Of Hospitality: Anne Dufourmantelle Invites Jacques Derrida to Respond*. 1997. Translated by Rachel Bowlby, Stanford University Press, 2000.

Derrida, Jacques. "Signature, Event, Context." 1972. *Philosophy of Communication*, edited by Briankle G. Chang and Garnet C. Butchart, 2012, pp. 369-389.

Derrida, Jacques. *Writing and Difference*. 1967. Translated with an introduction and additional notes by Alan Bass, 1978.

DeVun, Leah. *The Shape of Sex: Nonbinary Gender from Genesis to the Renaissance*. Columbia University Press, 2021.

Dillon, Michael and Luis Lobo-Guerroro. "Biopolitics of Security in the 21st Century: An Introduction." *Review of International Studies,* vol. 34, no. 2, April 2008, pp. 265-292.

Dinshaw, Carolyn. *Getting Medieval: Sexualities and Communities, Pre- and Postmodern*. Duke University Press, 1999.

Dollimore, Jonathan. *Sexual Dissidence: Augustine to Wilde, Freud to Foucault*. Clarendon Press, 1991.

Dreyfus, Hubert L. and Paul Rabinow. *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*. 1982. 2nd ed., with an afterword and an interview with Michel Foucault, The University of Chicago Press, 1983.

Duggan, Lisa. *The Twilight of Equality?: Neoliberalism, Cultural Politics, and the Attack on Democracy*. Beacon Press, 2003.

Duschinski, Haley. "Reproducing Regimes of Impunity: Fake Encounters and the Informalization of Everyday Violence in Kashmir Valley." *Cultural Studies*, vol. 24, no. 1, 12 January 2010, pp. 110-132.

Duschinski, Haley. "'Survival is Now Our Politics': Kashmiri Hindu Community Identity and the Politics of Homeland." *International Journal of Hindu Studies*, vol. 12, no. 1, April 2008, pp. 41-64.

Duschinski, Haley and Shrimoyee Nandini Ghosh. "Constituting the Occupation: Preventive Detention and Permanent Emergency in Kashmir." *The Journal of Legal Pluralism and Unofficial Law*, vol. 49, no. 3, 2017, pp. 314-337.

Edelman, Leo. *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive*. Duke University Press, 2004.

Edney, Matthew H. *Mapping an Empire: The Geographical Construction of British India, 1765-1843*. 1990. The University of Chicago Press, 1997.

Elden, Stuart. *The Birth of Territory*. The University of Chicago Press, 2013.

Eng, David L. and David Kazanjian, editors. *Loss: The Politics of Mourning*, University of California Press, 2003.

Etsy, Jed. *Unseasonable Youth: Modernism, Colonialism, and the Fiction of Development*, Oxford University Press, 2012.

Fanon, Frantz. *Black Skin, White Masks*. 1952. Translated by Richard Philcox, foreword by Kwame Anthony Appiah, Grove Press, 2008.

Farrukh, Faheem. "Interrogating the Ordinary: Everyday Politics and the Struggle for Azadi in Kashmir." *Resisting Occupation in Kashmir*, edited by Haley Duschinski, Mona Bhan, Ather Zia, and Cynthia Mahmood, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018, pp. 230-247.

Fassin, Didier and Richard Rechtman. *The Empire of Trauma: An Inquiry into the Condition of Victimhood*. 2007. Translated by Rachel Gomme, Princeton University Press, 2009.

Ferguson, Roderick A. *Aberrations in Black: Toward a Queer of Color Critique*. University of Minnesota Press, 2004.

Fletcher, John. *Freud and the Scene of Trauma*. Fordham University Press, 2013.

Foucault, Michel. *Abnormal: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1974-1975*. 1995. Translated by Graham Burchell, edited by Valerio Marchetti and Antonella Salomoni, Picador, 2003.

Foucault, Michel. *Aesthetics, Method, and Epistemology*. 1994. Translated by Robert Hurley and others, edited by James D. Faubion, The New Press, 1998.

Foucault, Michel. *The Archaeology of Knowledge and The Discourse on Language*. 1969. Translated by A. M. Sheridan Smith, Vintage-Random House, January 2010.

Foucault, Michel. *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1978-1979*. 2004. Translated by Graham Burchell, edited by Michel Senellart, Picador, 2008.

Foucault, Michel. *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception*. 1963. Translated by A. M. Sheridan Smith, Vintage-Random House, April 1994.

Foucault, Michel. *The Courage of Truth (The Government of the Self and Others II): Lectures at the Collège de France, 1983-1984*. 2008. Translated by Graham Burchell, edited by Frédéric Gros, Picador, 2012.

Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. 1975. Translated by Alan Sheridan, Vintage-Random House, May 1995.

Foucault, Michel. *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth*. 1994. Translated by Robert Hurley and others, edited by Paul Rabinow, The New Press, 1997.

Foucault, Michel. *Foucault Live (Interviews, 1961-1984)*. 1989. Translated by Lysa Hochroth and John Johnston, edited by Sylvère Lotringer, Semiotext(e), 1996.

Foucault, Michel. *The Foucault Reader*. Edited by Paul Rabinow, Vintage-Random House, January 2010.

Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1: An Introduction*. 1976. Translated by Robert Hurley, Vintage-Random House, 1990.

Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 2: The Use of Pleasure*. 1984. Translated by Robert Hurley, Vintage-Random House, March 1990.

Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 3: The Care of the Self*. 1984. Translated by Robert Hurley, Vintage-Random House, November 1988.

Foucault, Michel. *Lectures on the Will to Know: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1970-1971 and Oedipal Knowledge*. 2011. Translated by Graham Burchell, edited by Daniel Defert, Picador, December 2014.

Foucault, Michel. *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*. 1965. Translated by Richard Howard, Vintage-Random House, November 1988.

Foucault, Michel. *On the Government of the Living: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1979-1980*. 2012. Translated by Graham Burchell, edited by Michel Senellart, Picador, 2014.

Foucault, Michel. *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*. 1970. A translation of *Les Mots es les choses*, Vintage-Random House, 1994.

Foucault, Michel. *Power*. 1994. Translated by Robert Hurley and others, edited by James D. Faubion, The New Press, 2000.

Foucault, Michel. *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*. Translated by Colin Gordon, Leo Marshall, John Mepham and Kate Soper, edited by Colin Gordon, Vintage-Random House, 1980.

Foucault, Michel. *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1977-1978*. 2004. Translated by Graham Burchell, edited by Michel Senellart, Picador, 2007.

Foucault, Michel. *"Society Must Be Defended": Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975-1976*. 1977. Translated by David Macey, edited by Mauro Bertani and Alessandro Fontana, Picador, 2003.

Freeman, Elizabeth. *Beside You in Time: Sense Methods and Queer Sociabilities in the American Nineteenth Century*. Duke University Press, 2019.

Freeman, Elizabeth. *Time Binds: Queer Temporalities, Queer Histories*. Duke University Press, 2010.

Freud, Sigmund. *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. 1920. Translated and edited by James Strachey, introduction and notes by Gregory Zilboorg, W. W. Norton & Company, 1961.

Freud, Sigmund. "Civilization and its Discontents." 1930. *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Vol. XXI (1927-1931): The Future of an Illusion, Civilization and its Discontents, and Other Works*, translated from the German under the general editorship of James Strachey, in collaboration with Anna Freud, assisted by Alix Strachey and Alan Tyson, The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1961, pp. 57-146.

Freud, Sigmund. "The Ego and the Id." *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Vol. XIX (1923-1925): The Ego and the Id and Other Works*, translated from the German under the general editorship of James Strachey, in collaboration with Anna Freud, assisted by Alix Strachey and Alan Tyson, The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1961, pp. 1-66.

Freud, Sigmund. "Fetishism." 1927. *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Vol. XXI (1927-1931): The Future of an Illusion, Civilization and its Discontents, and Other Works*, translated from the German under the general editorship of James Strachey, in collaboration with Anna Freud, assisted by Alix Strachey and Alan Tyson, The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1961, pp. 147-158.

Freud, Sigmund. "Formulations on the Two Principles of Mental Functioning." *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Vol. XII (1911-1913): The Case of Schreber, Papers on Technique, and Other Works*, translated from the German under the general editorship of James Strachey, in collaboration with Anna Freud, assisted by Alix Strachey and Alan Tyson, The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1961, pp. 213-226.

Freud, Sigmund. *Introduction to Psychoanalysis*. Free ebook from www.SigmundFreud.net.

Freud, Sigmund. "Introduction to *Psycho-Analysis and the War Neuroses*." *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Vol. XVII (1917-1919): An Infantile Neurosis and Other Works*, translated from the German under the general editorship of James Strachey, in collaboration with Anna Freud, assisted by Alix Strachey and Alan Tyson, The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1957, pp. 205-216.

Freud, Sigmund. “Mourning and Melancholia.” 1915. *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Vol. XIV (1914-1916): On the History of the Psycho-Analytic Movement, Papers on Metapsychology, and Other Works*, translated from the German under the general editorship of James Strachey, in collaboration with Anna Freud, assisted by Alix Strachey and Alan Tyson, The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1957, pp. 237-258.

Freud, Sigmund. “Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality (1905).” 1905. *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Vol. VII (1901-1905): A Case of Hysteria, Three Essays on Sexuality and Other Works*, translated from the German under the general editorship of James Strachey, in collaboration with Anna Freud, assisted by Alix Strachey and Alan Tyson, The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1953, pp. 123-246.

Freud, Sigmund and Peter Gay. *The Freud Reader*. 1989. Edited by Peter Gay, W.W. Norton & Company, 1995.

Ghassem-Fachandi, Parvis. *Pogrom in Gujarat: Hindu Nationalism and Anti-Muslim Violence in India*. Princeton University Press, 2012.

Gill-Peterson, Julian. *Histories of the Transgender Child*. University of Minnesota Press, 2018.

GK Web Desk. “Amid Tourism Surge, J&K Admin Begins Process to Identify Land for 5-Star Hotels.” *GreaterKashmir*, 31 May 2024, www.greaterkashmir.com/business/amid-tourism-surge-jk-admin-begins-process-to-identify-land-for-5-star-hotels/.

Glissant, Edouard. *Poetics of Relation*. 1990. Translated by Betsy Wing, The University of Michigan Press, 1997.

Goldberg, Jonathan. *Sodometries: Renaissance Texts, Modern Sexualities*. Stanford University Press, 1992.

Gopal, Priyamvada. *Insurgent Empire: Anticolonial Resistance and British Dissent*. 2019. Verso, 2020.

Gopinath, Gayatri. *Impossible Desires: Queer Diasporas and South Asia Public Cultures*. Duke University Press, 2005.

Gopinath, Gayatri. *Unruly Visions: The Aesthetic Practices of Queer Diaspora*. Duke University Press, 2018.

Grewal, Inderpal. *Saving the Security State: Exceptional Citizens in Twenty-First-Century America*. Duke University Press, 2017.

Guha, Ramachandra. *India After Gandhi: The History of the World's Largest Democracy*. 2007. Harper Perennial, 2008.

Guha, Ranajit and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, editors. *Selected Subaltern Studies*, Oxford University Press, 1988.

Halperin, David. "Foucault's Queer Critique." *The Routledge Companion to Queer Literary Studies*, Routledge, 2025, pp. 349-366.

Halperin, David. *How to Do the History of Homosexuality*. The University of Chicago Press, 2002.

Hall, Stuart. *The Fateful Triangle: Race, Ethnicity, Nation*. Edited by Kobena Mercer, foreword by Henry Louis Gates Jr., Harvard University Press, 2017.

Hangloo, Rattan Lal. *The State in Medieval Kashmir*. 2nd ed., Routledge, 2022.

Hasan, Mohibbul. *Kashmir under the Sultans*. Routledge, 2024.

Hinchy, Jessica. *Governing Gender and Sexuality in Colonial India: The Hijra, c. 1850-1990*. Cambridge University Press, 2019.

Hindess, Barry. "Politics as Government: Michel Foucault's Analysis of Political Reason." *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political*, vol. 30, no. 4, Oct.-Dec. 2005, pp. 389-413.

Hoffman, Bruce and Haley Duschinski. "Between Freedom and Justice: Popular Protest and Jurisdictional Contestation in Militarized Governance in Indian-Controlled Kashmir." *Social and Legal Studies*, vol. 29, no. 5, 2020, pp. 650-678.

Hook, Derek. *A Critical Psychology of the Postcolonial: The Mind of Apartheid*. Taylor & Francis Group, 2012.

Husain, Aiyaz. *Mapping the End of Empire: American and British Strategic Visions in the Postwar Period*. Harvard University Press, 2014.

Hussain, Nasser. *The Jurisprudence of Emergency: Colonialism and the Rule of Law*. The University of Michigan Press, 2003.

Hussain, Shahla. "Kashmiri Visions of Freedom: The Past and the Present." *Kashmir: History, Politics, Representation*, edited by Chitralekha Zutshi, Cambridge University Press, 2018, pp. 89-110.

Jaffrelot, Christophe and Pratinav Anil. *India's First Dictatorship: The Emergency, 1975-77*. HarperCollins Publishers, 2020.

Jameson, Fredric. *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act*. 1981. Cornell Paperbacks, 1982.

Jammu Kashmir Sahayata Samiti. *Genocide of Hindus in Kashmir*. Suruchi Prakashan, 1991.

Jones, Ann Rosalind and Peter Stallybrass. *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory*. Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Jordan, Mark D. *The Invention of Sodomy in Christian Theology*. The University of Chicago Press, 1997.

Junaid, Mohamad. "Epitaphs as Counterhistories: Martyrdom, Commemoration, and the Work of Graveyards in Kashmir." *Resisting Occupation in Kashmir*, edited by Haley Duschinski, Mona Bhan, Ather Zia, and Cynthia Mahmood, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018, pp. 248-277.

Kabir, Ananya Jahanara. *Territory of Desire: Representing the Valley of Kashmir*. University of Minnesota Press, 2009.

Kahan, Benjamin. *The Book of Minor Perverts: Sexology, Etiology, and the Emergences of Sexuality*. The University of Chicago Press, 2019.

Kalpagam, U. *Rule by Numbers: Governmentality in Colonial India*. Lexington Books, 2014.

Kanjwal, Hafsa. *Colonizing Kashmir: State-Building under Indian Occupation*. Stanford University Press, 2023.

Kaul, Suvir. *Of Gardens and Graves: Kashmir, Poetry, Politics*. 2015. Duke University Press, 2017.

Khaja, Mohmad Ashraf. "Treaty of Amritsar in Retrospect." *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, vol. 77, 2016, pp. 338-347.

Khan, Hafeez R. "The Kashmir Intifada." *Pakistan Horizon*, vol. 43, no. 2, April 1990, pp. 87-104.

Khan, Mohammad Ishaq. *Kashmir's Transition to Islam: The Role of Muslim Rishis (Fifteenth to Eighteenth Century)*. Manohar, 1994.

Khan, Nyla Ali. *Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah's Reflections on Kashmir*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2018.

Khanna, Ranjana. *Dark Continents: Psychoanalysis and Colonialism*. Duke University Press, 2003.

Khurshid, Salman. *Beyond Terrorism: New Hope for Kashmir*. UBS Publishers' Distributors Ltd., 1994.

Klausmeyer, Bryan. "Transcritical Encounters in Lacanian Psychoanalysis." *intersections*, vol. 11, no. 2, 2010, pp. 10-66.

Klein, Melanie. "Mourning and Its Relation to Manic-Depressive States." 1940. *Essential Papers on Object Loss*, edited by Rita V. Frankiel, New York University Press, 1994, pp. 95-122.

Kristeva, Julia. *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*. 1980. Columbia University Press, 1982.

Kübler-Ross, Elizabeth. *On Death and Dying: What the Dying Have to Teach Doctors, Nurses, Clergy and Their Own Families*. Macmillan, 1970.

Lacan, Jacques. *Écrits: The First Complete Edition in English*. 1966. Translated by Bruce Fink in collaboration with Héloïse Fink and Russell Grigg, W.W. Norton & Company, 2006.

LaFleur, Greta. *The Natural History of Sexuality in Early America*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2018.

Lanser, Susan S. *The Sexuality of History: Modernity and the Sapphic, 1565-1830*. The University of Chicago Press, 2014.

Laqueur, Thomas W. *Solitary Sex: A Cultural History of Masturbation*. Zone Books, 2004.

Laqueur, Thomas W. *The Work of the Dead: A Cultural History of Mortal Remains*. Princeton University Press, 2015.

Lazarus, Neil. *The Postcolonial Unconscious*. 2011. Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Legg, Stephen and Deana Heath, editors. *South Asian Governmentalities: Michel Foucault and the Question of Postcolonial Orderings*. Cambridge University Press, 2018.

Lemke, Thomas. *Biopolitics: An Advanced Introduction*. Translated by Eric Frederick Trump, New York University Press, 2011.

Lloyd, David. "Colonial Trauma/Postcolonial Recovery?" *Interventions*, vol. 2, no. 2, June 2011, pp. 212-228.

Love, Heather. "Close but not Deep: Literary Ethics and the Descriptive Turn." *New Literary History*, vol. 41, 2010, pp. 371-391.

Lowe, Lisa. *The Intimacies of Four Continents*. Duke University Press, 2015.

Luciano, Dana. *Arranging Grief: Sacred Time and the Body in Nineteenth-Century America*. New York University Press, 2007.

Maguire, Mark, Ursula Rao and Nils Zurawski, editors. *Bodies as Evidence: Security, Knowledge, and Power*. Duke University Press, 2018.

Malatino, Hilary. *Queer Embodiment: Monstrosity, Medical Violence, and Intersex Experience*. University of Nebraska Press, 2019.

Mandelbaum, Eric. "Associationist Theories of Thought." *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Fall 2023 Edition)*, edited by Edward N. Zalta and Uri Nodelman, June 2020, www.plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2023/entries/associationist-thought/.

Mathur, Shubh. *The Human Toll of the Kashmir Conflict: Grief and Courage in a South Asian Borderland*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.

Maxwell, William J. *F. B. Eyes: How J. Edgar Hoover's Ghostreaders Framed African American Literature*. Princeton University Press, 2015.

Mbembe, Achille. “Necropolitics.” 2003. *Necropolitics*, Translated by Steven Corcoran, Duke University Press, 2019, pp. 66-92.

McClintock Anne. *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest*. Routledge, 1995.

Mendoza, Victor Román. *Metroimperial Intimacies: Fantasy, Racial-Sexual Governance, and the Philippines in U.S. Imperialism, 1899-1913*. Duke University Press, 2015.

Metcalf, Barbara D. and Thomas R. Metcalf. *A Concise History of Modern India*. 2001. 3rd ed., Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Miller, D. A. *The Novel and the Police*. University of California Press, 1988.

Misra, Shubhangi. “Dalits are Doing the Work Doctors Reject—‘No Postmortem Without a Safai Karmachari.’ *ThePrint*, 11 August 2025, www.theprint.in/ground-reports/dalits-are-doing-the-work-doctors-reject-no-postmortem-without-a-safai-karmachari/2718201/.

Mitchell, W. J. T. “Holy Landscape: Israel, Palestine, and the American Wilderness.” 2000. *Landscape and Power*, 2nd ed., edited by W. J. T. Mitchell, The University of Chicago Press, 2002, pp. 261-290.

Moglen, Seth. “On Mourning Social Injury.” *Psychoanalysis, Culture & Society*, vol. 10, 2005, pp. 151-167.

Morris, Rosalind C. and Daniel H. Leonard. *The Returns of Fetishism: Charles de Brosses and the Afterlives of an Idea*. The University of Chicago Press, 2017.

Muñoz, José Esteban. *Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics*. University of Minnesota Press, 1999.

Mushtaq, Samreen and Mudasir Amin. "'We Will Memorise Our Home': Exploring Settler Colonialism as an Interpretive Framework for Kashmir." *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 42, no. 12, pp. 3012-3029.

Nail, Thomas. *Theory of the Border*. Oxford University Press, 2016.

Nietzsche, Friedrich. "On the Genealogy of Morals." 1887. *On the Genealogy of Morals and Ecco Homo*, 1967, translated by Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale, edited by Walter Kaufmann, Vintage-Random House, November 1989.

Nixon, Rob. *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*. Harvard University Press, 2011.

Nocentelli, Carmen. *Empires of Love: Europe, Asia, and the Making of Early Modern Identity*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013.

Parmu, R. K. *A History of Muslim Rule in Kashmir, 1320-1819*. People's Publishing House, 1969.

Patterson, Orlando. *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study*. Harvard University Press, 1982.

Phillips, Adam. "On Being Bored." *On Kissing, Tickling, and Being Bored: Psychoanalytic Essays on the Unexamined Life*, Harvard University Press, 1993, pp. 68-78.

Ponsford, Matthew. "Home is a Graveyard: Indian Transgender Matriarch Rejects 'Normal' Life." *Reuters*, 6 June 2017, www.reuters.com/article/world/home-is-a-graveyard-indian-transgender-matriarch-rejects-normal-life-idUSKBN18X0EX/.

Puar, Jasbir K. *The Right to Maim: Debility, Capacity, Disability*. Duke University Press, 2017.

Puar, Jasbir K. *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times*. Duke University Press, 2007.

Puri, Jyoti. *Sexual States: Governance and the Struggle over the Antisodomy Law in India*. Duke University Press, 2016.

Purushotham, Sunil. *From Raj to Republic: Sovereignty, Violence, and Democracy in India*. Stanford University Press, 2021.

Putul, Alok. "Indian Gov't Report: 17 Adivasi Falsely Dubbed Maoists, Shot Dead." *Al Jazeera*, 4 December 2019, www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/12/4/indian-govt-report-17-adivasi-falsely-dubbed-maoists-shot-dead.

Radhakrishnan, R. *History, the Human, and the World Between*. Duke University Press, 2008.

Rai, Mridu. *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects: Islam, Rights, and the History of Kashmir*. Permanent Black, 2004.

Rai, Mridu. "To 'Tear the Mask off the Face of the Past': Archaeology and Politics in Jammu and Kashmir." *Kashmir: History, Politics, Representation*, edited by Chitralekha Zutshi, Cambridge University Press, 2018, pp. 25-50.

Rashid, Iffat. "Theatrics of a 'Violent State' or 'State of Violence': Mapping Histories and Memories of Partition in Jammu and Kashmir." *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*, vol. 43, no. 2, 2020, pp. 215-231.

Reddy, Chandan. *Freedom with Violence: Race, Sexuality, and the US State*. Duke University Press, 2011.

Reddy, Gayatri. *With Respect to Sex: Negotiating Hijra Identity in South India*. The University of Chicago Press, 2005.

Ricoeur, Paul. *Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation*. Translated by Denis Savage, Yale University Press, 1970.

Rizwan, Rakhshan. “Mixing Genre, Making Truth Claims: Human Rights Storytelling in Arundhati Roy’s *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*.” *Routledge Handbook of Critical Kashmir Studies*, edited by Mona Bhan, Haley Duschinski, and Deepti Misri, Routledge, 2023, pp. 195-206.

Roy, Arundhati. *The Architecture of Modern Empire*. Conversations with David Barsamian, foreword by Naomi Klein, Haymarket Books, 2023.

Roy, Arundhati. *The God of Small Things*. HarperCollins Publishers, 1997.

Roy, Arundhati. *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*. Penguin Random House, 2017.

Rushdie, Salman. *Shalimar the Clown*. 2005. Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2006.

Sahai, Vikramaditya. “‘Myself Mona Ahmed’: Revisiting Dayanita Singh’s Landmark Photobook.” *Frieze*, 23 October 2020, www.frieze.com/article/myself-mona-ahmed-revisiting-dayanita-singhs-landmark-photobook.

Salamon, Gayle. *Assuming a Body: Transgender and Rhetorics of Materiality*. Columbia University Press, 2010.

Said, Edward W. *Orientalism*. 1978. Vintage-Random House, 1994.

Sarkar, Tanika. “How the Sangh Parivar Writes and Teaches History.” *Majoritarian State: How Hindu Nationalism is Changing India*, edited by Angana P. Chatterji, Thomas Blom Hansen, and Christophe Jaffrelot, Oxford University Press, 2019, pp. 151-173.

Sassen, Saskia. *Territory, Authority, Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages*. 2006. Updated ed., Princeton University Press, 2008.

Schechter, Kate. *Illusions of a Future: Psychoanalysis and the Biopolitics of Desire*. Duke University Press, 2014.

Schuller, Kyla. *The Biopolitics of Feeling: Race, Sex, and Science in the Nineteenth Century*. Duke University Press, 2018.

Sedgwick, Eve. *Epistemology of the Closet*. 1990. Updated with a New Preface, University of California Press, 2008.

Sedgwick, Eve. "Introduction." *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity*, Duke University Press, 2003, pp. 1-25.

Sedgwick, Eve. "Paranoid Reading and Reparative Reading, or, You're So Paranoid, You Probably Think This Essay Is About You." *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity*, Duke University Press, 2003, pp. 123-151.

Sedgwick, Eve and Adam Frank. "Shame in the Cybernetic Fold: Reading Silvan Tomkins." *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 21, no. 2, Winter 1995, pp. 496-522.

Shamsie, Kamila. *Burnt Shadows*. Picador, 2009.

Snedden, Christopher. "Azad Kashmir: Integral to India, Integrated into Pakistan, Lacking Integrity as an Autonomous Entity." *Kashmir: History, Politics, Representation*, edited by Chitralekha Zutshi, Cambridge University Press, 2018, pp. 113-131.

Snedden, Christopher. *Understanding Kashmir and Kashmiris*. Hurst & Company, 2015.

Snorton, C. Riley. *Black on Both Sides: A Racial History of Trans Identity*. University of Minnesota Press, 2017.

Somerville, Siobhan B. *Queering the Color Line: Race and the Invention of Homosexuality in American Culture*. Duke University Press, 2000.

Spade, Dean. *Normal Life: Administrative Violence, Critical Trans Politics, and the Limits of Law*. 2009. Duke University Press, 2015.

Spillers, Hortense J. “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe: An American Grammar Book.” *Black, White and in Color*, The University of Chicago Press, 2003, pp. 203-229.

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present*. Harvard University Press, 1999.

Stockton, Kathryn Bond. *The Queer Child, or Growing Sideways in the Twentieth Century*. Duke University Press, 2009.

Stoler, Ann Laura. *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense*. Duke University Press, 2009.

Stoler, Ann Laura. *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule*. 2002. With a new preface, University of California Press, 2010.

Stoler, Ann Laura. *Duress: Imperial Durabilities in Our Times*. Duke University Press, 2016.

Stoler, Ann Laura. *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault’s History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things*. Duke University Press, 1995.

Stone, Aaron. *Desires for Form: Modernist Narrative and the Shape of Queer Life*. 2022. University of Michigan, PhD dissertation. *ProQuest*.

Traub, Valerie. “The Psychomorphology of the Clitoris.” *GLQ*, vol. 2, 1995, pp. 81-113.

Traub, Valerie. “Mapping the Global Body.” *Early Modern Visual Culture: Representation, Race, and Empire in Renaissance England*, edited by Peter Erickson and Clark Hulse, 2000, pp. 44-97.

Traub, Valerie. “Sexuality.” *A Cultural History of Western Empires in the Renaissance*, edited by Ania Loomba, Bloomsbury Academic, 2019.

Traub, Valerie. *Thinking Sex with the Early Moderns*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016.

Tremblay, Reeta Chowdhari. "Contested Governance, Competing Nationalisms, and Disenchanted Publics: Kashmir beyond Intractability?" *Kashmir: History, Politics, Representation*, edited by Chitralekha Zutshi, Cambridge University Press, 2018, pp. 220-244.

Vadde, Aarthi. *Chimeras of Form: Modernist Internationalism Beyond Europe, 1914-2016*. Columbia University Press, 2017.

Veyne, Paul. *Writing History: Essay on Epistemology*. 1971. Translated by Mina Moor-Rinvolucri, Wesleyan University Press, 1984.

Visvanathan, Shiv. "Anna Hazare and the Battle Against Corruption." *Cultural Critique*, vol. 81, Spring 2012, pp. 103-111.

Wani, Muhammad Ashraf. *Islam in Kashmir (Fourteenth to Sixteenth Century)*. Oriental Publishing House, 2004.

Warner, Michael. *Publics and Counterpublics*. Zone Books, 2002.

Watkins et al. "Treating PTSD: A Review of Evidence-Based Psychotherapy Interventions." *Frontiers in Behavioral Neuroscience*, vol. 12, no. 258, pp. 1-9.

Webb, Matthew J. *Kashmir's Right to Secede: A Critical Examination of Contemporary Theories of Secession*. Routledge, 2012.

Weheliye, Alexander G. *Habeas Viscus: Racializing Assemblages, Biopolitics, and Black Feminist Theories of the Human*. Duke University Press, 2014.

White, Hayden. *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe*. 1973. The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980.

Whitehead, Andrew. “The Rise and Fall of New Kashmir.” *Kashmir: History, Politics, Representation*, edited by Chitralekha Zutshi, Cambridge University Press, 2018, pp. 70-88.

Wynter, Sylvia. *10 Essays*, www.bcrw.barnard.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Wynter_TheAutopoeticTurn.pdf.

Yergeau, Melanie. *Authoring Autism / On Rhetoric and Neurological Queerness*. Duke University Press, 2018.

Zamindar, Vazira Fazila-Yacoobali. *The Long Partition and Making of Modern South Asia: Refugees, Boundaries, Histories*, Columbia University Press, 2007.

Zia, Ather. “Intifada: From Palestine to Kashmir.” *PalestineNow*, a special issue of *Social Text Online*, 27 February 2025, www.socialtextjournal.org/periscope_article/intifada-from-palestine-to-kashmir/.

Zia, Ather. “The Killable Kashmiri Body: The Life and Execution of Afzal Guru.” *Resisting Occupation in Kashmir*, edited by Haley Duschinski, Mona Bhan, Ather Zia, and Cynthia Mahmood, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018, pp. 103-128.

Zia, Ather. *Resisting Disappearance: Military Occupation and Women’s Activism in Kashmir*. University of Washington Press, 2019.

Zia, Ather. “‘Their Wounds are Our Wounds’: A Case for Affective Solidarity between Palestine and Kashmir.” *Identities*, vol. 27, no. 3, 2020, pp. 357-375.

Zutshi, Chitralekha. “Introduction: New Directions in the Study of Kashmir” *Kashmir: History, Politics, Representation*, edited by Chitralekha Zutshi, Cambridge University Press, 2018, pp. 1-21.

Zutshi, Chitralekha. *Kashmir's Contested Pasts: Narratives, Sacred Geographies, and the Historical Imagination.* 2014. Oxford India Paperbacks, 2018.

Zutshi, Chitralekha. *Languages of Belonging: Islam, Regional Identity, and the Making of Kashmir*. Permanent Black, 2003.