Constant Surveillance: Criticism of a 'Disciplinary Society' and the Paradox of Agency in Kamila Shamsie's Home Fire

Zachary Vincent Bordas

On December 11, 2017, Akayed Ullah, a Bangladeshi immigrant, left his Brooklyn apartment and moved toward the 18th Avenue subway station (Fig. 1). There, Mr. Ullah headed to Manhattan on two different trains. While on the second train before detonating a pipe bomb hidden beneath his jacket, he posted a final social media comment on Facebook: "O Trump you fail to protect your nation" (Weiser 2018). At this moment, Mr. Ullah did not fear drawing attention to himself on social media, nor was he fearful that his every move was recorded on multiple cameras. His actions, both to detonate a bomb and to post anti-Trump rhetoric online, question the formation of an agency with respect to power. The

focus of this paper discusses the role of surveillance in both the creation of a docile society and the fight against crime, which I examine through a Foucauldian understanding of a panoptic society. Mr. Ullah's lack of concern about observation serves as my platform to discuss the literary representation of surveillance. I am interested in joining the debate about agency in relation to Foucauldian ideas of a disciplinary society— a society where the appearance of constant surveillance makes a person internalize and correct deviant thoughts and behaviors (Fontana-Giusti 88-9; Marks 2015; Mills 2003; Rosen and Santesso 2013; Haggerty and Ericson 607; Galic et al. 2016). By point of reference, I evaluate the relationship between surveillance and behavior, as well as the connectivity of power and agency. Mr. Ullah's subway bombing provides an entry point to my discussion of Kamila Shamsie's *Home Fire* (2017). Particularly, I examine the novel through my application of the recent criticism of Foucault's panopticon in David Rosen and Aaron Santesso's *The Watchmen in Pieces* (2013).

By application of my aforementioned example, the constant surveillance of Akayed Ullah (under a Foucauldian model) should have "coerced" him into normalcy. This is not to say that Foucault believes surveillance entirely obliterates crime and terrorism. Instead, he, by examining Bentham's prison model, mentions that the suspicion and uncertainty of being surveilled makes a person internalize and self-regulate atypical behaviors (1995,

201). In theory, Mr. Ullah should have been dissuaded from disobedience. He, nonetheless, detonated his bomb without forewarning or self-restraint. I am interested in scrutinizing how he, like the characters in Home Fire, manipulate surveillance. Mr. Ullah's actions do not warrant suspicion; instead, he, on the surface, appears as a normal citizen. I suggest agency, regardless of power, stems from the unpredictability of human behavior: manipulation of surveillance questions the extent of its power to predict or prevent resistance.

(Fig. 1 Stairs) Weiser/New York Times

As such, (Fig. 1) shows Mr. Ullah leaving his apartment and (Fig. 2) shows him entering the subway: it is imperative that the reader understands the importance of these pictures. The images indicate that neither the realization or influence of constant surveillance prevents his action—his malicious intention is neither "neutralize[d]" or "alter[ed]" (Foucault 1995, 18).

(Fig. 2 Turnstile) Weiser/New York Times

Nothing in the photos indicate that he is anyone but a regular citizen going to work. Mr. Ullah does not attract attention to himself by either chanting or praying, which makes his intentions impossible to predict. He masks his motive by manipulating the way he is seen. His unpredictable action is shocking because it is surprising. This shock value gives the images their importance because each snapshot has an ascribed meaning to it: disobedience or the willingness to accept any punishment for his actions. His narrative, however, only receives a story after the incident occurs—the images become important after the fact. The state and private surveillance, in Mr. Ullah's case, do not act as a corrective agent. This is not to say that surveillance completely stops all crime, a blatantly wrong idea; instead, Mr. Ullah's actions expose the gap between predictable patterns of behavior versus normal behavior. If his bomb vest were visible, then, by reasonable assumption, his

actions would have been stopped; however, he hides deviance behind a blue jacket of normalcy. Later viewers watch and assign a story to Mr. Ullah's every step because though he looks normal, he does the unexpected.

This paper examines the role of resistance and power in the formation of an agency. Mr. Ullah's actions in New York Subway are my point of connection that I use to examine the literary representation of unpredictability and character agency. Specifically, my analysis of agency pushes against Foucault's theory of power and surveillance, which is based upon his reading of Jeremy Bentham. Writing from Crecheff in White Russia, Bentham mailed a series of letters back to England in which he revealed his "new mode of obtaining power of the mind over mind" (1962, 39). In these letters Bentham addresses issues within England such as education, health services, and a rise in criminality, for which he proposes a solution that intends on "*punishing the incorrigible, guarding the insane, reforming the vicious, confining the suspected, employing the idle, maintaining the helpless, curing the sick, instructing the willing in any branch of industry, or training the rising race in the path of education"* (1962, 40). In LETTER II., he outlines the design for such a vexatious but industrial artifice, which for brevity I must not detail here. Instead, I highlight the purpose of his proposal as described in LETTER V. in which he details his "most important point, that the persons to be inspected should always feel themselves as if under inspection, at least

as standing a great chance of being so, yet it is not by any means the only one. If it were, the same advantage might be given to any buildings of almost any form" (Bentham 1962, 44). A thread appears between Foucault's reading and application of Bentham's panoptic model, as well as the application of an inconspicuous watchman beyond prison walls and into society, which goes beyond the scope Bentham assumed for his model. Subsequently, Foucault's expansion of his panoptic idea informs his view of power: "where there is power there is resistance" (*History of Sexuality* 1978, 95). If Foucault is correct, then power is contingent on a struggle over who has it, which, as Mills points out, if "resistance is already 'written in' to power, then this may seem to diminish the agency of the individuals who do resist... often at great physical cost to themselves" (Mills 2003, 40). One might argue that Mr. Ullah is an anomaly to this rule because most people do not hide a pipe bomb under their jackets; nevertheless, the question about agency remains: is his exercise of terror of his own accord, or is his resistance "written in[to]" the power of President Trump? Though Mr. Ullah is a flesh and blood account of this theory, I am interested in literature's discussion of the relationship between agency and surveillance; however, I must first outline a fuller understanding of Foucault's adaption of Bentham's ideas.

When Foucault first theorizes about the panopticon in his book *Discipline and Punish* (1975), he questions the

structure and placement of power via Jeremy Bentham's architectural design of a circular prison. Foucault focuses on the relationship of power between those who observe others (in a confined space, such as a jail, a factory, a hospital, and a school), as opposed to those who are being observed (1995, 204). From this reversible power, he speculates whether the breadth of this structure is limited to an architectural edifice, or does this power dynamic infiltrate society at large? If the latter, then one must ask whether or not observation (or the mere idea of it) has a role in fashioning a person's state of mind (by the internalization of discipline), which, by effect, influences his or her external action (*POWER* 1980, 105-7; Mills 2003, 45). Likewise, if agency relates resistance as an opposition to observation, then, by inference, character formation is either strengthened or hindered by his or her struggle against the monitoring by both state apparatuses, as well as private corporations. This makes hierarchical power structures suspect, which implies power relies upon opposition (Mills 2003, 40). Foucault's ideas about punishment cast light on this speculation. Constant monitoring, for him, (whether in a prison or society), is "intended not to punish the offense, but to supervise the individual, to neutralize his dangerous state of mind, to alter his criminal tendencies, and to continue even when this change has been achieved" (Foucault 1995, 18). His concept implies that a person's awareness of constant supervision will "neutralize" and "alter" that individuals desire to perform ab-

horrent behaviors– i.e., discipline "the self by the self" (Mills 2003, 43). Hence, Foucault states: "each individual thus exercise[es] this surveillance over, and against, himself" (*POWER* 1980, 155), which is governed by one's desire for "normalisation" (*POWER* 1980, 106). Does a character, therefore, form agency by his or her decision to self-discipline, or is agency already a factor within the overarching power structure? Foucault, in an attempt to answer these questions, states that a "disciplinary society" (*POWER* 1980, 105) means to encourage and enrich that "beautiful totality of the individual," which implies that this system's aim is not about subduing a person as much as it intends to "carefully fabricat[e]" a person into a docile citizen of the state (Foucault 1995,217).

Peter Singer shares his pro-Foucauldian insight on the issue of the panopticon's role in the formation of agency, which he lays out in his essay "Visible Man: Ethics in a World Without Secrets" (2011). He asserts: "if we all knew that we were, at any time, liable to be observed, our morals would be reformed...The mere suggestion that someone is watching encourage[s] greater honesty" (2011, 36). Yet, by using Kamila Shamsie's *Home Fire*, I examine whether interpellation is a byproduct of different forms of surveillance. The novel's primary characters frequently challenge the idea that surveillance (or its appearance) creates compliant/predictable/outstanding citizens. By triangulating the relationship between power, surveillance, and agency, I challenge a Foucauldian mod-

el of a civil/paranoid citizen. I argue that the outward expression of certain behaviors can, at times, be viewed as manipulative tactics that understand and undermine surveillance's role in creating interpolated citizens. Agency, I suggest, is not only formed by one's resistance to surveillance, but I also argue it emerges from a person's conscious manipulation of how they are surveilled.

Before I dive into my criticism of *Home Fire*, I must lay the foundation of the text via post-9/11 England. Tony Blair, after a successful career as the leader of the Labour Party, became the Prime Minister (PM) of Britain in 1997. Before elected to his more prominent role, PM Blair championed controversial changes to the Labour Party's constitution. During a party speech he outlined the purpose of the proposed change to Clause IV, which he saw as a way of forging a new Britain, built on socialist ideas for the "common good;" whereas to "put power, wealth and opportunity in the hands of the many not the few" (Blair 2004, 119). He furthers, "Globalisation is changing the nature of the nation-state as power becomes more diffuse and borders more porous. Technological change is reducing the power and capacity of the government to control a domestic economy free from external influence. The role of government in this world of change is to respect a national interest" (2004, 121). These ideas, during his tenure as Prime Minister, grounded Tony Blair as he led England through both the 9/11 attack against the US, as well

as the 7/7 attack on London. On 9/11, PM Blair succinctly outlined security measures instituted throughout Britain, as well as to show support for the US. Perhaps his most notable remark details his political ideology:

> As I said earlier, this mass terrorism is the new evil in our world. The people who perpetrate it have no regard whatever for the sanctity or value of life, and we, the democracies of the world, must come tighter to defeat it and eradicate it. This is not a battle between the United States of America and terrorism, but between the free democratic world and terrorism. (Blair 2004, 215)

PM Blair makes clear his distinction between Western democracy from religious fanaticism, which he later (7 October 2001) justifies as his premise for joining the US campaign in Afghanistan. In this speech, he outlines the "three parts" of the mission: "military, diplomatic, and humanitarian" (2004, 217). He states, "we are assembling a coalition of support for refugees in and outside Afghanistan," as well as to assure that this war is not on Islam but terrorism (2004, 218-9). These ideas, three years later during his "Speech to the US Congress 18 July 2003," ease his consciousness concerning much of the terror inflicted upon the Middle East or at least he remains "confident [that] history will forgive" England's actions (2004, 250). This political turmoil informs my reading of post-9/11 Britain as portrayed in *Home Fire*.

I, for the remainder of this paper, examine different interactions with surveillance (based on class, religion, location, and power) as a means to complicate the formation of character agency in Home Fire. I argue that Shamsie's understanding of observation reveals a discrepancy between intended and unintended results of an idealized citizenry. Her representation of surveillance, as well as a specific underrepresentation, allows me to examine a few of the gaps and contradictions of reading her novel through both Foucauldian and counter-Foucauldian lenses. Particularly, I analyze the novel through David Rosen and Aaron Santesso's *The Watchman in Pieces* (2013). By drawing on their analysis of the panopticon, I challenge Foucault's panoptic model, which emphasizes that the appearance of surveillance makes people interpolate deviant behaviors and thoughts. Moreover, by applying the current criticism of a panoptic society, I examine the formation of literary agency: either of compliance or deviance. Lastly, I investigate the tactical nature of drone surveillance as a red-herring of governmental power, which questions whether location affects one's perception of surveillance. By way of clarity, I do not limit my criticism of any character to his or her individual section alone; I discuss the relationship between characters as needed.

Home Fire, a retelling of Sophocles' *Antigone*, follows the tragic intersection of two families as they battle for agency amidst familial and religious profiling. The

Pasha family includes Isma, Parvaiz, and Aneeka– children of a former (suspected) Al-Qaeda terrorist: Abu Parvaiz. Their background makes each character aware that his or her actions are more prone to constant surveillance, which, on the surface, hinders their interaction on social media and their actions in public. At times the characters seem like valid representations of Foucauldian ideas of civil/paranoid citizens, yet closer inspection suggests that they operate under a Foucauldian model so as to manipulate and frustrate the purpose of power and surveillance of a panoptic society.

The second family includes a father and son: Karamat and Eamonn. Karamat is the newly elected Home Secretary of England, which prompts him to hide his Muslim background. His son Eamonn, during the first half of the book, is blind to many of the struggles of people who, unlike him, are not from a powerful and privileged family. His relaxed and advantaged lifestyle often confuses him about less-privileged-behaviors. Surveillance, for those marginalized, means something entirely different. Eamonn, near the conclusion, becomes aware of selective surveillance, which urges him to use his position to challenge Britain's hostility toward Muslims. Claire Chambers hints at this idea in her essay "Sound and Fury: Kamila Shamsie's *Home Fire*" (2018), she details the novel's use of *Antigone* to question the cyclical history of racial profiling: "Shamsie adds fresh layers to the classic by reconsidering the issues Sopho-

cles raised against the backdrop of racist immigration laws and radicalization" (2018, 208). The Pasha family mirrors these principles because they are caught in the middle of British politics. Their familial history of terrorism makes them atypical Muslim immigrants, which automatically obliges the necessity to act normal. Their self-discipline may seem like a Foucauldian representation of internalized behavior; however, I posit that their internalized discipline does create a compliant citizen as much as it does rebellious ones. I suggest that their performative normality hides their inward thoughts, which means they avoid unwanted surveillance by manipulating how they are surveilled and perceived.

Isma, from the start of *Home Fire*, confuses the reader about her role in the novel. Both her story and the novel begin with a familiar scene of a biased airport screening. She misses her flight to Boston, where she is a student at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, because she is forced to undergo a selective TSA screening. In a private room, while asked to prove that she "consider[s] [herself] British," her luggage is searched (Shamsie 2017, 5). This type of observation and invasion of a person's personal belongings, as well as his or her body, is often a volunteer-based process. Rosen and Santesso label this as "Surveillance in the State of Nature," by which they mean, "Systems try to draw people in, to make them relinquish as much of their absolute private autonomy as possible" (2013, 247). Their theory applies to airport screening; in that, people are generally fine with sur-

rendering privacy for a few seconds, as going through TSA body scanners, because it offers a sense of security knowing that radical others are thoroughly checked. Isma, even before arriving at the airport, already believes that she will be viewed as other, which is why she devises a plan to draw as little unwanted attention as possible. She is extra cautious to "not to pack anything that would invite comment or question— no Quran, no family pictures" (Shamsie 2017, 3). Isma, by not packing certain items, anticipates that she will be stereotyped and forced to undergo a discriminatory screening, which prompts her attempt to manipulate what the TSA will assume of her. She has no intention of evil, but she assumes that she will need to prove her innocence. The TSA show no knowledge about Isma's terrorist father; nevertheless, she feels obliged to appear as normal as possible. Her actions might suggest that she embodies Foucauldian ideas of self-discipline; however, I posit that she does not internalize any deviant thought or behavior. Isma understands how the TSA operates, which is why she hides certain aspects of her personhood from their gaze, yet she has nothing to hide about her intents. She has no record (outside her father) that should flag her for an extra selective search; instead, her appearance, versus suspicious behavior, subjects her to biased screening. She is categorized by a system outside her control.

The prejudiced use of technology fits the notion proposed in Langdon Winner's essay "Do Artifacts Have Politics?" in which he states, "Many technical devices

and systems important in everyday life contain possibilities for many different ways of ordering human activity" (1999, 32). This suggests, under a Foucauldian model, that airport screenings categorize certain groups of people for greater monitoring than others. The process of going through TSA means to moderate human behavior; however, this idea neglects Foucault's belief that "transparent building[s] are meant to replace the need for specific institutions for observation" (1995, 207). A 'disciplinary society' will not eradicate the need for screening rooms; instead, the *idea* of a back room intends to coerce people into acting a certain way. In Isma's case, she does not self-correct any deviant ideas or intention; instead, she internalizes the likelihood of screening. Her precautionary actions are scripted because of societal prejudice. Most people do not prepare beforehand how they will avoid or interact with agents if chosen for a TSA screening; they have never experienced continual *othering*— they have no need to manipulate surveillance. To further complicate the issue of a biased observer, Bentham's utopic notion intends for internal discipline to "eventually exhaust[t]" the need for an observer. (Galic et al. 2017, 12). This is not to say that self-discipling one's behavior is entirely synonymous with preventing crime, but it does suggest that society is meant to self-police. Yet, this raises the question about the possibility of such a society— can a utopia exist where one relies on the consistent self-discipline of others? Airport security merely exemplifies that this is not the case. Isma tries to avoid profiling, which is why

she anticipates and prepares for selective screening. Her actions, though subtle, are a way of resisting attention.

David Rosen and Aaron Santesso critique Foucault's idea with both laud and scrutiny: "An obvious strength of Foucault's model...is its ability to absorb innovation: each new advance in monitoring technology... seems to substantiate his vision of total observation and control" (2013, 7). Nevertheless, they suggest that Foucault misapplies the size and scope of the prison model (Rosen 2013, 100). They note that Bentham believed that any panopticon must be "discrete and controlled" in confined areas, which suggests that he never intended for his model to be applied in society at large (Rosen 2013, 100). In other words, Foucault believes that "disciplinary procedures" are not limited to "enclosed institutions, but as centres of observation disseminated throughout society" (1995, 212). Lastly, they demonstrate that Bentham, himself, was skeptical that the "effects of internalization" would be the same "for all classes of society," which suggests that one's perception of surveillance is governed by his or her social position (Rosen 2013, 101). I, therefore, am interested in connecting what Rosen and Santesso say about the purpose of surveillance in literature through the prism of what they label as "surveillance by coercion" and "surveillance by empathy": "In short: do you watch other people in order to understand them better, or do you watch them in the hope that by watching them- you will successfully influence their behavior" (Rosen 2013, 87). I scrutinize how 'understanding' versus

'influencing' affects character agency. Foucault speculates that "oppressive measures... giv[e] rise to new forms of behavior," which implies that the mere assumption of surveillance alters a person's agency—his or her actions change according to the suspicion that someone is watching (Mills 2003, 33). The possibility of "new forms of behavior" is where I now turn the rest of my paper.

In *Home Fire*, Eammon is the son of the British Home Secretary: Karamat. His behavior, at the start of the novel, implies that he comes from a high-ranking British family, yet, as the novel progresses, so does his empathy. For instance, when he first meets Aneeka (his future love interest) he suggests that she lookup "news footage" about the "north circular canal bomb" (Shamsie 2017, 67). Aneeka ridicules Eammon's recommendation by saying to "GMW" is not a "good idea," which means "Googling While Muslim" (Shamsie 2017, 67). Eammon does do not realize that Aneeka's father was a terrorist, which is why she is not as eager as Eammon to look up this footage. This example, if used solely to examine Aneeka, seems to affirm Foucault's idea about a normalized citizen who internally corrects any suspicious behavior. She worries that someone might be watching her internet server, which is why she is extra cautious to not raise any red flags. Her familial background, more so than just the appearance of surveillance, dictates her paranoia. Eammon, by comparison, appears either indifferent or oblivious to a panoptic gaze. Their (mis)per-

ceptions about surveillance differentiate the two characters' interaction with material on the web. Ronald Kline and Trevor Pinch provide insight into this difference; they write, "SCOT [Social Construction of Technology] emphasizes the interpretative flexibility of an artifact. Different social groups associate different meanings with artifacts leading to interpretative flexibility appearing over the artifact. The same artifact can mean different things to different social groups of users" (Kline 1999, 113). Eammon and Aneeka's interaction with Google is polarized. Though both characters have the same access to the internet, their access is substantially different. Eammon has no reason to be overly concerned about surveillance; his father is the highest-ranking security official in the UK— not a former terrorist. He and Aneeka are from entirely different worlds.

This social discrepancy between the characters pushes against a Foucauldian panopticon because, as Galic et al. notes, Foucault neglects to account for Bentham's "chrestomathic- and constitutional-Panopticon;" which is to say, "social control moves beyond the margins of society... Non-marginalised people, thus, [are] beyond the panoptic gaze" (2017, 14). Eammon is not influenced by the fear of observation; instead, he is impervious to the anxiety of others. He, unlike Aneeka, is not marginalized which makes him unaware of the feeling that someone is always monitoring him. Aneeka, by comparison, cautiously uses the internet; her familial background gov-

erns the way she operates from day-to-day. David Lyon, perhaps the most preeminent surveillance theorist in contemporary studies, draws attention to how a person's use of "searchable databases" enable governments and companies the power to "monitor behavior, to influence persons and populations, and to anticipate and pre-empt risks" (2003, 14). He argues that either governments or corporations can construct an *imagined* narrative about someone by his or her "data double," (Marks 2015, 4; Haggerty and Ericson 2000, 611-16; Terranova 2015, 112) which suggests that governments monitor people's internet patterns so as to predict and prevent disaster. With respect to Eammon and Aneeka, she is more aware/ nervous that Googling certain images will, because of her background, raise suspicion. She, as a marginalized individual, more than Eamonn, is cautious about what her 'data double' means to an onlooker. Her familial history already raises a red flag, which prevents her from casually Googling images. Because he is not in the periphery, Eamonn does not self-restrict his usage. The divide between the two characters' use of the internet relates to their background. One's social position creates a binary: those conscious and concerned about surveillance versus those not concerned or aware of its presence.

Shaheen and others' essay on *Home Fire* states that "The peace-loving members of both the binaries like Eamonn and Aneeka (West/ Muslim), with their scope of complicating and questioning both the extremes of

'Us/Them: Terrorized/ Terrorist' binary, have no other fate left but to serve as the fodder to these extremes in this post-9/11 world" (2018, 164). This binary is why Aneeka is hailed into compliance (her "GMW" comment), and why Eammon is oblivious to this imposition. Some might argue that Aneeka is a special case because of her familial history of terrorism; however, it needs to be remembered that Aneeka merely states that Muslims must be careful while online. Arguably any person, regardless of religion or background, could raise red-flags if constantly Googling terrorist propaganda. Thus, does Eammon develop agency by his nonchalant attitude toward surveillance, which differs from Aneeka who fears one search? Karim H. Karim provides insight into how elite families internalize and shape the world, which they do by "drawing on the polarizing tendencies of myth to shape the public understanding of terrorism" (2010, 160). Because Eammon differs in class and familial background from Aneeka, he willingly views images of the bombing (Shamsie 2017, 67). Near the end of the novel, he realizes that many people cannot interact with the world as he does, which prompts him to challenge the very fabric of profiling and surveillance.

Before Eammon leaves England to comfort the grieving Aneeka in Pakistan (who is there mourning her brother's death, as well as the UK's refusal to let his body return to England), he creates an online propaganda video. His recording outlines how he met, fell in love with, and re-

grets his treatment of Aneeka; likewise, he criticizes the wrong assumptions about Aneeka that the British and his father believe (Shamsie 2017, 255-59). The video has the potential to create a new-consciousness in those who watch it online. To borrow two ideas/terms from Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky's *Manufacturing Consent*, Eamonn creates "Flak," which means his video counters the image of Aneeka that the media fabricates (Shamsie 2017, 26-8). In the same vein, he negates the idea that the Pasha family is a common "enemy" (Shamsie 2017, 29-31), which is to say that the news, until this point, blasts harsh rhetoric about the Pashas. Eamonn uses his status as the Home Sectary's son to challenge the way Aneeka is represented. His video is brought to the forefront when someone decides to Google Aneeka's name. His visual blog impedes the spread of malicious articles, hashtags, and videos about Aneeka. His meditated action begs the question: does Eamonn's ability to counteract hateful articles give him agency, or does he lack agency because his visual response solidifies the power of the ads to influence his action of responding to their content? He holds cultural capital that he uses for influence, but what of those who lack the same privilege?

Parvaiz is the most paranoid of all the characters concerning surveillance. He utilizes his paranoia as a conduit to maneuver around his UK citizenship, which enables him to join the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) without detection. Under Foucault's panoptic principles,

Parvaiz's fear of being watched should have prevented him, or least raised suspicion for local authorities, from connecting with ISIS. This, as indicated, is not the case. To illustrate, upon discovering that his father was tortured as a suspected terrorist, Parvaiz goes online and "switche[s] the browser into private mode," so as to *feel* safe enough to Google "Bagram Abuse" (Shamsie 2017, 143). He needs to feel shielded from any unknown gaze before privately witnessing what his father endured. His delusion of persecution further manifests itself five-pages later when he is leery of looking at images of Iraq on a computer. Parvaiz refuses to examine their content until his mentor, Farooq, assures him that the images he is seeing are "offline" (Shamsie 2017, 148). His self-discipline, under the fear of potential onlookers, might suggest that his assimilation fits with Foucault's ideas of internalization, which would mean that his behavior will engender a positive outcome: compliance. Parvaiz, conversely, joins the ISIS media-unit. His actions, like being overly cautious about buying traceable smartphones admittedly, on the surface, gesture toward a Foucauldian reading. Yet, the question about personal power and agency complicates the matter. Does he have agency because his paranoia makes him self-regulate his behavior, or does he lack agency because his paranoia makes power exist? It is true that Foucault would say "it is the certainty of being punished... that discourages crime" (Mills 2003, 42). Instead, what if "the certainty of being punished" becomes the basis to commit a

crime? For example, Parvaiz's internalization of prosecution has the opposite effect— it makes him stealthier. He must maneuver without being seen by any authority. In his case, Parvaiz acts similarly to the aforementioned example of Mr. Ullah. He, so as not to draw suspicion from any onlooker, intentionally performs as a normal citizen. As stated in the introduction, Mr. Ullah does not wear a bomb vest outside his blue jacket because it will alert authorities to his intent. He, instead, hides his motive from surveillance's gaze, which is why the footage only tells a story after the fact. It is easy for one to trace his steps after his attack because one knows it will happen. A reductive application of Foucault's panopticon makes the reader believe, at first, that Parvaiz, much like Mr. Ullah, wants to avoid suspicion, which is why both men are cautious about their activity. By joining ISIS, however, Parvaiz ends up being a stereotypical inference of Muslim extremism. His decision tears asunder the very purpose of the appearance of surveillance; he only internalizes his self-discipline as a preventive measure to avoid being caught planning evil. His actions complicate the pressing question of this paper: is agency just a mirage in the overarching dynamic of power—is resistance 'written in'? Or, does power inadequately gauge the leverage one has to counter the way he or she is observed? Consequently, can performance thwart surveillance and suspicion, and do such productions change depending on what government one lives under? In order to flesh these questions out, I must examine the actions of a character who knows she is selectively under surveillance.

Aneeka, though mentioned earlier, must be further examined because her interaction with surveillance is the most suspect of all. Specifically, her actions question whether one can flip the panopticon on its head. As a case in point, after she and Eammon begin their tumultuous relationship, he asks her to join him on a summer holiday in either Tuscany or Bali. This request illuminates the difference between Aneeka's understanding of surveillance from Eammon's perception. She mentions that she cannot leave the country as easily as he can because MI5s are monitoring her behavior: "They listen in on my phone calls, they monitor my messages, my internet history. You think they'll think it's innocent if I board a plane to Bali with the home sectary's son?" (Shamsie 2017, 97). Unlike the majority of Muslims living in the UK, she is under observation because of her brother's decision to join ISIS. In response, Eammon demonstrates that he is unaware that Parvaiz joined ISIS; instead, he believes she is referencing her father's terrorist history— she tells him about Parvaiz. Here, there are two things worth noticing. First, the MI5s do not monitor her behavior until after Parvaiz joins ISIS, which they neither predicted nor prevented. Their delayed response, in turn, challenges the praxis of a panoptic 'disciplinary society.' Second, Aneeka is not under surveillance because of her actions; the British government observes her because of her brother's decision. She has done nothing to warrant suspicion (except being suspect by association). Parvaiz's decisions force her to self-disci-

pline: actions outside her control confounds why she must self-discipline. This incongruity prompts Aneeka to problematize and reverse the role of surveillance.

The book draws to a close with Aneeka challenging the power dynamic between what it means to be an observer versus what it means to be observed. Aneeka was always critical of the British Government; however, it is not until Parvaiz joins ISIS that she is forced to construct her own narrative— one that responds to her brother's choice. Under a Foucauldian ideology, Aneeka should have self-disciplined herself so as to show that she is not a radical like her brother. She, nonetheless, constructs her own counternarrative. After Eammon's father, Karamat (the Home Secretary), refuses to let Parvaiz's body return to England, after he died as a member of ISIS, Aneeka flies to Karachi, Pakistan, to recover his body. Before she flies to Pakistan her image is all over the news because of her brother, as well as her controversial relationship with Eammon. Her life has become a public spectacle, her phones are wire-tapped, and she is infamous on social media as "Aneeka 'knickers' Pasha" (Shamsie 2017, 214-5). Despite all these reasons to internalize and comply, she boldly walks into the airport and boards a plane symbolic of her resistance (Shamsie 2017, 218). TV cameras are present to capture the moment she reaches Parvaiz's body; live video of her mourning constantly loops in the UK, which she orchestrates for her own purpose. In Pakistan, people join in her mourning,

and even a local ice-vendor donates blocks of ice to preserve the body from the heat (2017, 241-2). This hospitality is aired throughout the UK, which calls into question how a 'view from above' is affected when a person intentionally challenges what it means to be observed. This suggests, at least by the end, that she is not a willfully hailed citizen who acts in accordance with social convention. Appearing British, in her case, fails to provide a reason for her compliance, which is why she antagonizes the framework and refuses its coercive tactics. Bill Ashcroft, in *Utopianism in Postcolonial Literatures*, mentions this concept: "One of the most powerful strategies of imperial dominance is that of surveillance, because it implies a viewer with an elevated vantage point, it suggests the power to process and understand that which is seen, and it objectifies, and interpolated the colonized subject" (2017, 33). Aneeka, by making a spectacle of her situation on TV, pushes against the power of unrelenting state surveillance. She resists Karamat's faculty to surveillance by frustrating his positional power. Under normal circumstance he can use every sort of government surveillance to watch her; however, her appearance on live television prevents him from exercising authority. If Karamat were to use the available surveillance methods, then more people will sympathize with her. Similarly, he does not want to reveal the sheer extent of British surveillance. Being on TV, however, is not entirely the same as being watched by the state, which Aneeka knows and exploits. She corners one of the most pow-

erful governments in the world, which she does by making the observed the one who now observes. Aneeka interests herself with flipping the idea that surveillance is one-sided (the viewer and the one viewed), which she achieves by making a spectacle of her situation. In doing so, she turns the eyes away from her and back on her government. She twists the power dynamic by taking the reins back concerning her portrayal. This denotes that Aneeka's actions cause a fissure between the way she is meant to act versus the way she does act: her ability to manipulate her ascribed image gives her agency. Even though the British government previously monitored her "phone calls... messages... [and] internet history," they were not able to predict or subdue her mockery of their power (Shamsie 2017, 97). The government wants to subdue her deviant behaviors, but the larger audience wants to see how the administration will respond.

Aneeka's actions might align with what Galic et al. classify as Bentham's "constitutional-Panopticon," whereas it "is no longer the few watching the many but the many watching the few; citizens watching the governors" (2017, 14). Her rebellion places the public on her side versus their own government (Shamsie 2017, 241). Karamat stay away from the public spotlight; he hides in his office and home, which connects with the "chrestomathic-Panopticon," or, "the concept [that] constant visibility does not apply—the governors are monitored only in the course of their public duties, and they can

withdraw from the citizens' gaze when they want to rest or enjoy some privacy" (Galic et al. 2017, 14). Yet, Aneeka will not let him hide behind walls; she addresses him vicariously through his boss via satellite TV:

> In the stories of the wicked tyrants, men and women are punished with exile, bodies are kept from their families—their heads impaled on spikes, their corpses thrown into unmarked graves. All these things happen according the law, but not according to justice. I am here to ask for justice. I appeal to the prime minister: let me take my brother home. (Shamsie 2017, 237)

By not directly addressing Karamat, Aneeka undermines his authority over such a matter as her brother's body. She questions the very structure and inherent flaw of biased retribution. Karamat, though physically concealed from view as a "wicked tyrant," is now under public scrutiny. Reason, Aneeka asserts, is often the victim of prejudice. Her actions draw attention to the reality that the few construct restrictive categorizations of the many, which are then used to identify and codify people based on prejudices. Aneeka flips power on its head because she is conscious of the state surveillance; furthermore, she has control over the scope of government surveillance, as well as how the media portrays her. She, regardless of surveillance, refuses to act in a certain way, nor will she let herself be stuffed into a pre-fabricated narrative.

Until this point, I have only discussed common place or stereotypical surveillance methods as represented in *Home Fire*; however, I now turn my paper to a startling absence of favored governmental surveillance technology. Henceforth, I evaluate how both the US and British governments manipulate the way people perceive the use of this technology. To plainly state my point, I suggest that the tactical nature of drone surveillance is a red-herring. Specifically, I scrutinize the seemingly purposeful absence of drones in *Home Fire*, which creates a sharp turn in my paper that reverses the entire premise of power. Through an extended study on the use of surveillance drone technology, I suggest that power subverts itself.

Postcolonial authors, as a common motif, describe drones as a menacing and biased ever-watching eye in the sky, which might validate Foucault's assumption of authority: what is more panoptic than an unseen remote pilot? Are drones, I question, effective in predicting and preventing crime? Many drone scholars note that western nations use unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) to patrol and identify risks posed by 'irregular migrants,' both within and outside their territories (Csernatoni 2018, 175- 8, 191-3; Gregory 2011,189; Wall and Monahan 2011, 243-4; Wolff 2016; "BS-UAV"). Drones, therefore, are designed to identify and address potential national threats (Chamayou 2013, 41; Gregory 2011, 195; ROBORDER 2017, n.p), to differentiate between "normal" and "abnormal" behaviors (Chamayou 2013

43; Gregory 2011, 195), and to construct "virtual walls" (Csernatoni 2018, 177-8, 180) that protect borders. Such machines by default misinterpret the "complex challenges such as migration" (Csernatoni 2018, 180). For example, EU programs such as "FRONTEX [have] shown substandard results in preventing the staggering rise in nonsanctioned border crossings from 159,100 people detected in 2008 to 1,822,337 in 2016" (Csernatoni 2018, 177). One might assume that the rationale for drone surveillance is to protect national borders from an influx of migrants, which is true on the surface; however, this, I posit, is not the full story as demonstrated in literature.

UAVs rely on there being those who fear their gaze; paradoxically, resistance is contingent upon there being drones to hide from. To reiterate: "Where there is power, there is resistance… resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power" (History of Sexuality 1978, 95). However, Csernatoni complicates this point: "It is important to note that the real impact of such technologies on border and homeland security remains under question, especially in terms of their actual effectiveness and the supposedly increased security they are intended to provide" (2018, 177). She reports that there remains uncertainty about the true effectiveness of drones in preventing migration. Wall and Monahan subtly complicate this issue: "People who are aware of adversarial monitoring from the skies also engage in tactics to evade the drone stare.

Specifically, subjects of drone surveillance have tried to be stealthier and camouflage themselves better than they have in the past" (2011, 247). More importantly:

> there is the important and nagging reminder of the agency of the Other, who refuses to be petrified and immobilized by the drone stare, who exploits the technological hubris and vulnerabilities of the West, and who devises new tactics of camouflage and mobility to evade the reach of surveillance and violence from above. (Wall and Monahan 2011, 250)

Their observations make suspect Foucault's idea that resistance is written into power, which creates more questions concerning a drone's purpose. For instance, do governments actually acknowledge and fear the reality of the "agency of the Other?" In order to answer this question, I must unpack a different perception of drones' objective.

It is imperative that one understand governmental capital funded drone technology, which later allowed private corporations to capitalize on these innovations (Mackenzie and Wajcman 1999, 15). Csernatoni expands: "Due to their original design for military purposes… [their] initial creation was intended to attain certain hegemonic objectives in military terms" (2018, 178). Essentially, drones were originally created to establish national power and not to surveil migrants or those deemed a national threat. In *Home Fire*, however, Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) are strange-

ly missing— drones are only mentioned twice, both of which are examples outside Britain. I suggest that Shamsie intentionally writes this limited view of drones as to draw attention to what is not inferred by western readers. The two cases describe drones as killing-machines outside UK borders. This lack of page-time, I forward, provokes the reality that governments, out of necessity, mask drone's purpose from view. If an object is out of view, then there remains no reason for one to question its use. To elaborate, Wall and Monahan note: "While drones appear to affirm the primacy of visual modalities of surveillance, their underlying rationalities are more nuanced and problematic" (2011, 240). They suggest that the appearance of drones might cause one to assume that such an object is strictly for surveillance; however, they say such a belief is misinformed. If drones mean only to surveil within national borders, then one must wonder why programs like "FRONTEX" have "almost double[d] and should reach 1,000 permanent staff by 2020... [and] Its budget should increase from 91.2M Euro in 2014 to 281.3M Euro in 2017" (Wolff 2016, n.p.). If drones merely surveille borders, then such expansion seems overkill. Instead, drones are meticulously crafted killing machines meant to distance the powerful from the other, which complicates the limited dearth of drones in Home Fire. I suggest that Shamsie writes-out drones so as to write-in their nonappearance, which normalizes their nonviolent nature within national borders. The minor characters demonstrate their lack of

knowledge concerning global warfare. Only Isma and an ISIS insurgents understand drones as a constant threat against survival in the East (Shamsie 2017, 173). Such military devices are not of daily importance in the West

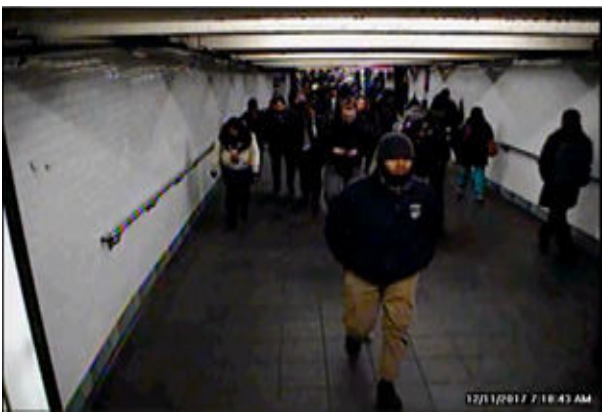
Drones do not subtly make compliant citizen; instead, they force submission from those far away. Their power is a guard equipped with Hell Fire missiles. This reality is why I suggest that Shamsie only twice mentions drones from an other's perception. She subtly draws attention to the idea that people, when unfamiliar with an object, do not question its use outside their borders. In order to prevent questioning, governments disguise or hide drones as internal crime-fighting machines—such inquiries may expose the terrible reality of UAV technology. For length, I must only mention that scholars discuss the shortcomings of drone technology in identifying terrorists. They meticulous document the frightening data concerning 'generic' profiling, which has killed thousands of civilians (Chamayou 2013, 42, Gregory 2011, 200). The heart of this issue is that drone pilots are unable to clearly identify threats (combatant or civilian). This, therefore, is why those in power, as Shamsie portrays, must hide the truth: they fear public outrage. As such, governments, like the characters, manipulate society's observation of their behavior: they manipulate public gaze. Power flips upon itself— power lay with the people, which subverts traditional ideas of governmental power.

Karamat solely represents the British Government in *Home Fire*, yet his judgement is clouded by his position as a father and as the Home Secretary. For instance, when Eammon questions his lack of empathy for Aneeka, Karamat tells his son that "She had police protection stationed outside her house... [and] She hasn't been locked up in an interrogation room for fourteen days" (Shamsie 2017, 230). Karamat later reveals that the government cannot intervene in the situation because the people "have decided to embrace a woman who has stood up to a powerful government, and not just any powerful government but one that has very bad PR in the matter of Muslims" (Shamsie 2017, 241). This elucidates why a few pages earlier Karamat can only sit and watch Aneeka on his television. His observation of Aneeka is limited to what *public* cameras record, which gives a less informative picture than if were able to use whatever *governmental* means he has at his disposal. Instead, her "mobility" threatens his power over "sensory evidence" because she refuses to "relinquish as much of [her] absolute private autonomy as possible" (Rosen and Santesso 2013, 247). Karamat's authority is limited. He is unwilling to remind the public how drones are used outside national borders: he must maintain the façade of non-violent observation. The television cameras would only intensify the public's empathy for her if he sent drones to observe or kill her. Again, the extent of UAV bombings in Pakistan is well documented; however, Karamat cannot execute this order because the nations'

eyes are finally fixated on Pakistan's affairs. Heremains apathetic. Aneeka's agency tears the fabric of [t]his system apart; she challenges governmental surveillance by maneuvering around their methods of observation. In turn, her actions push against the idea that a person internalizes deviance for social acceptability. She is not a fearful/paranoid citizen. Karamat holds no power over her internal choice nor the public's rebuke of the system, which, in turn, leaves his political future questionable.

To borrow from Peter Singer once more, "if we all knew that we were, at any time, liable to be observed, our morals would be reformed...The mere suggestion that someone is watching encourage[s] greater honesty" (2011, 36). *Home Fire* questions if this is true. Parvaiz is extra cautious of observation, yet he manipulates how is viewed and joins ISIS. Aneeka, at first, because of her father's history, keeps a low profile so as not to draw suspicion; however, after Parvaiz dies she pushes against governmental surveillance. Similarly, Eammon's behavior exposes the many perspectives about surveillance that depend on one's background and position in society. Karamat's inability to change the actions of the characters, as a representation of the state, fractures Foucault's limited idea of surveillance: the many now watch the few. Perhaps Shamsie is suggesting that there are new theories about surveillance that are worthy of consideration—ones not directly linked with Foucault.

By way of summary and final application, I return to my opening example of Akayed Ullah and the step-by-step footage leading to the NYC subway bombing[1]. The images are a fascinating tapestry about the events leading up to the actual incident. Yet, the looming presences of surveillance did not dissuade Mr. Ullah from his actions. Rosen and Santesso note that the significance of these types of videos, or images, is often constructed after the incident occurs. This suggests that the ascribed narrative forces a person to only see Mr. Ullah and nothing else. If these were ordinary photographs, then one person may notice the woman with blue pants on



(Fig. 3 Crowd) Weiser/New York Times

the right side of the screen while someone else notices the man in the center looking at his cellphone (Fig. 3).

(Fig. 4 Detonation) Weiser/New York Times

Or, "To put it another way: just as the ethical crisis of the photograph makes possible the aesthetic experience of the viewer, so the neutrality of the video still displaces the ethical crisis of the image—over its proper interpretation— onto the viewer, disallowing a freer aesthetic response" (Rosen and Santesso 2013, 261). This means that an observer is unable to view an image as anything other than the ascribed meaning . My case and points, the reader, from the start of this essay, is guided to view thepictures via the specific story that I told about Akayed Ullah, which led the reader to ignore all the other facets of the four images. I guided the reader to watch Mr. Ullah's steps, which indicated would end with the explosion (Fig. 4). The stairwell, the other people, and the scenery are lost and irrelevant because they were not given the same importance as Mr. Ullah—the images only gained their notoriety because I suggested the special nature of the content. The community around

Mr. Ullah did not prevent his action because they could not predict his crime. The appearance ofsurveillance of little significance to anyone— including the man who does not self-discipline his perverse action. His deed is a meditated attack that "was scripted to the last detail but lacked an adequate readership" (Rosen and Santesso 2013, 12). After all, "the mere presence on CCTV cameras…and the knowledge that the videos from these cameras can be viewed by police" should curb crime (Mills 2003, 46). Therefore, does the observer have more agency than the observed? Is the observer's existence dependent on there being persons to observe? What if the observed manipulate what the observer views? Is an observer's power reliant on accurate observation? If so, is true power the ability to camouflage oneself, or are power and agency measured by one's ability to influence others to censor and hide themselves? What if one does not worry about observation? All of these questions appear as loose threads holding Foucault's panoptic society together. What happens when people begin to pull each string one by one? One wonders, therefore, does Mr. Ullah's agency come from his actions, or does his resistance allude to the fact that power is already allotted to President Trump— if the latter: what a dangerous world.

Notes:

1. To view all the videos, visit: https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/05/nyregion/port-authority-bomber-trial.html

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