CONSTANT SURVEILLANCE: CRITICISM OF A 'DISCIPLINARY SOCIETY' AND THE PARADOX OF AGENCY IN KAMILA SHAMSIE'S *HOME FIRE* AND MOHSIN HAMID'S *EXIT WEST*

by

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(Under the Direction of Esra Mirze Santesso)

ABSTRACT

This paper uses the 2017 surveillance footage of the 42nd Street NYC subway bomber (Akayed Ullah), as a lens through which to challenge dominant literary scholarship concerning Foucault's social panopticon as represented in literature. The images serve as the platform to discuss the triangulation between power, agency, and surveillance, as portrayed in Kamila Shamsie's novel *Home Fire* (2017) and Mohsin Hamid's *Exit West* (2017). The paper questions whether agency is formed by one's resistance to surveillance by both the state and private corporations, or if agency is a mirage because opposition is written into the dynamics of power. The essay examines how agency is fashioned by the different ways that people interact with observation based on class, religion, and power. A person's position either coerces obedience as docile subjects, disillusions the reality and consequence of constant surveillance, or creates disobedient subjects who manipulate the system.

INDEX WORDS: Panopticon, *Home Fire*, Kamila Shamsie, *Exit* West, Mohsin Hamid, Surveillance, Islam, David Rosen and Aaron Santesso

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this article to my friend and colleague who always challenges me to go beyond my self-perceived limits, Andrew Filler.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of Study

This thesis questions the extent and role surveillance (CCTV, drone technology, wire-tapping, and police monitoring) has in the formation of a Foucauldian 'disciplinary society.' Many scholars, since the first publication of *Discipline and Punish* (1975), both accept and expound Foucault's theories of a self-disciplining population. The author here cross-examines contemporary scholarship that pushes against academic tendencies promoting strict adherence to Foucauldian ideology. David Rosen and Aaron Santesso are the primary contenders the author uses in this debate. Their book *The Watchman in Pieces* (2013), is the cornerstone from which the author fashions a theory that joins a larger discussion about agency and surveillance. One major component of this conjecture discusses the paradox of personal autonomy and systematic power. By producing reflections of subterfuge, this thesis posits that a person's maneuverability around observation subverts traditional understandings of power, which establishes, through smoke and mirrors, his or her agency. By application, the author places a real-life example of this hypothesis in conversation with fictional portrayals of the same theory. The 2017 suicide bombing of the New York City subway exemplifies, on a magnified scale, the discontinuity between maneuverability and predictability. This instance highlights the application of the author's theory with contemporary literary representations of the same phenomena. Kamila Shamsie's *Home Fire* (2017) critiques political power of a state apparatus against characters' actions both compliant and deceptive, which parallels the reorientation of surveillance as written

by Mohsin Hamid's in his novel *Exit West* (2017). The latter discusses the turmoil and risk migrants take when they maneuver their observation, which questions the degree location factors into one's response against traditional power structures. The author here contributes a case study that situates itself among the burgeoning theories of agency and surveillance societies.

Literature Review

In 1975 Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish*, first introduces his theory of a 'disciplinary society:' one where people self-internalize deviant and suspicious behaviors. His hypothesis stems from a detailed study of public executions as spectacle, which eventually (over extended periods of time) morphed into prison models where the spectator remains hidden while maintaining influence. Such a prison model eventually, as Foucault speculates, manifest itself in society; however, his model biased lower-class citizens (David J. Rotham 1978). Foucault's belief, nonetheless, is based upon a limited understanding of Antonio Gramsci's design for a circular prison; a prison guard is centrally located so inmates are never certain of observation. One year after the publication of *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault, while discussing the historical evolution about how sexuality was and is viewed, states: "where there is power there is resistance" (*History of Sexuality* 95). Many scholars agree that his ideas concerning the role of power in the creation of surveillance societies quickly became the basis of nearly all scholarship about state surveillance versus the induvial (Gordana Fontana-Giusti 2013; Peter Marks 2015; Sara Mills 2003; David Rosen and Aaron Santesso 2013; Kevin D. Haggerty and Richard V. Ericson 2000; Masa Galic et al. 2017). Such arguments suggest that the presence, or mere assumption of surveillance, changes a person's outward behavior (Peter Singer 2011). Not until recently has contemporary scholarship questioned the extent and repercussion of these models. Rosen and Santesso's book *The Watchman in Pieces* (2013), in particular, challenges the

concrete nature of Foucauldian ideas, which they undertake by examining one's ability to maneuver and manipulate the way he or she is monitored. This maneuverability is achievable because people can hide their true intentionss while performing as *normal*. One of the primary concerns about Foucault's theory, as Sara Mills points out, is that a person lacks agency because the mere existence of power assumes resistance— "where there is power there is resistance" (2003; *History of Sexuality* 95). This suggests that a person's actions, either good or bad, are factors in the operations of society, which implies that power maintains authority because everyone's behaviors are already assumed submissive. However, there are many instances where power is turned on itself—people hold power as observers over the former observer. This reversal is achieved by people's ingenuity of wearing masks of deception that hide their plots of evading a non-solicited gaze (William Bogard 1996; Tyler Wall and Torin Monahan 2011). As such, by mixing Foucault (and his followers) with their challengers, the author questions the creation and use of surveillance technology.

Military advancements account for practically all inventions of surveillance technology, which then trickle down into the private and commercial sectors (Mackenzie and Wajcman 1999). This is not to suggest that all public technology is used maliciously; instead, many inventions create convenience, mobility, and the ability to break apart historical barriers of discrimination (Landon Winner 1999). Other technologies, of course by theory, create compliant civilians. Such acquiescence, nevertheless, does not account for real instances of people understanding and exploiting surveillance technology, which they use for malicious and even terroristic episodes of public disturbance (Benjamin Weiser 2018). One especial surveillance machine has often frustrated plans of mobility and maneuverability: drone technology. Unmanned Ariel Vehicles (UAVs) unmistakably identify 'risks' posed by illegal migration,

which then prevent unlawful entry (Raluca Csernatoni 2018; Derek Gregory 2011; Tyler Wall and Torin Monahan 2011; Sarah Wolff 2016; "BS-UAV"; Grégoire Chamayou 2013; ROBORDER). Scholars, however, discuss drones as distant objects that posture themselves as a common threat for terrorists and a recurrent terror for civilians. Drones, by design, are killing machines that are frequently (and intentionally) disguised as docile eyes in the sky. This reality has created a thriving market for UAVs, as well as for a spike in military programs that utilize such technology (Raluca Csernatoni 2018). In relation with Foucauldian thought, surveillance technology, on the surface, appears like an effective tool that state apparatus' use in making compliant/self-discipling subjects. However, this is only a partial picture of their operation.

Postcolonial theory often discusses surveillance's place and purpose in society, which now inspires contemporary writers to explore whether there exists a dichotomy between the corporeal and the inner-self. This suggests that either the two are distinct and separate, or that they are intertwined and influence one another. Kamila Shamsie and Mohsin Hamid both explore these themes in their latest novels. Shamsie's *Home Fire* challenges traditional ideas about power and submission, which she achieves by contrasting two radically different families against each other. The one family's history of terrorism complicates their day-to-day lives; by variance, the fast-rising politically based family operate daily via their class and power. The dissimilarities between the character create multiple binaries that must (if possible) overcome (Aamer Shaheen et al. 2018). The difficulty of challenging such polarizations relates with what Edward Said says about the influence one's community has on his or her sense of connectedness and identity (1981). By comparison, Mohsin Hamid's *Exit West* draws attention to the hardships of migration. In the novel, the two protagonists face various types of surveillance that depend on the location of their bodies. In certain locales they must avoid unwanted surveillance as a matter of survival,

while other times they are safe from immediate harm because of where they reside. The book questions the differences between the employment of surveillance technology within national borders versus the work such technology enacts outside those lines, which exposes that surveillance, in some instances, is a red-herring that unintentionally reverses preconceived power dynamics. Both novels speculate the scope, ambition, and longevity of a Foucauldian understanding of surveillance, society, and agency.

CHAPTER 2

Constant Surveillance: Criticism of a 'Disciplinary Society' and the Paradox of Agency in Kamila Shamsie's *Home Fire* and Mohsin Hamid's *Exit West*[1]

[1] Bordas, Zachary. Submitted at *Postcolonial Interventions*, 01/22/19.

ABSTRACT

This paper uses the 2017 surveillance footage of the 42nd Street NYC subway bomber (Akayed Ullah), as a lens through which to challenge dominant literary scholarship concerning Foucault's social panopticon as represented in literature. The images serve as the platform to discuss the triangulation between power, agency, and surveillance, as portrayed in Kamila Shamsie's novel *Home Fire* (2017) and Mohsin Hamid's *Exit West* (2017). The paper questions whether agency is formed by one's resistance to surveillance by both the state and private corporations, or if agency is a mirage because opposition is written into the dynamics of power. The essay examines how agency is fashioned by the different ways that people interact with observation based on class, religion, and power. A person's position either coerces obedience as docile subjects, disillusions the reality and consequence of constant surveillance, or creates disobedient subjects who manipulate the system.

INDEX WORDS: Panopticon, *Home Fire*, Kamila Shamsie, *Exit* West, Mohsin Hamid, Surveillance, Islam, David Rosen and Aaron Santesso

On December 1l, 2017, Akayed Ullah, a Bangladeshi immigrant, left his Brooklyn apartment and headed for the 18th avenue subway station (Fig. 1). There, Mr. Ullah headed to Manhattan by taking 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). In 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 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 the two novels: both Kamila Shamsie's *Home Fire* (2017), as well as Mohsin Hamid's *Exit West* (2017).

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 thought, suspicion, and uncertainty of being surveilled makes a person internalize and self-regulate atypical behaviors (*Discipline* 201). In theory, Mr. Ullah should have been dissuaded from his public disobedience. He, nonetheless, detonates his bomb without forewarning or self-restraint. I am interested in scrutinizing how he, like the characters in both novels, maneuver surveillance. Mr. Ullah's actions do not warrant

suspicion; instead, he, on the surface, appears as a normal citizen. I suggest that agency, regardless of power, stems from the unpredictability of human behavior: maneuverability around surveillance questions the extent of its power to predict or prevent resistance. 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]" (*Discipline* 18). 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 behavioral intentions impossible to

(Fig. 1 *Stairs*) Weiser/ The New York Times (Fig. 2 *Turnstile*) Weiser/ The New York Times

predict. He masks his motive by maneuvering the way he is seen. His unpredictable action is shocking because it is surprising. This shock value gives the images their importance because each 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. 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 manipulates and hides deviant action behind a cloak (or in this case a blue jacket) of normalcy. As such, a viewer is drawn to 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 agency. Mr. Ullah's actions 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 view of power: "where there is power there is resistance" (*History of Sexuality* 95). His assertion suggests that power's strength 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 40). One might argue that Mr. Ullah is an anomaly to this rule because most people do not hide pipe bombs 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.

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: both in *Home Fire* and *Exit West*. I argue that both Shamsie and Hamid's interaction, or awareness of observation, reveals a discrepancy between intended and unintended results of an idealized citizenry. The two novels discuss surveillance in different ways; therefore, I examine a few of the gaps and contradictions of reading both *Home Fire* and *Exit West* through both Foucauldian and counter-Foucauldian lenses. Particularly, I examine the two novels 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, near the end of this paper, I zero in my scrutiny of surveillance to one major motif. I investigate the tactical nature of drone surveillance as a red-herring of governmental power, which questions whether or not location masks the use and idea of surveillance. Position, therefore, problematizes one's perception of power and resistance. 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 history 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 to fully represent and validate Foucauldian ideas of civil/paranoid citizens, yet, by closer inspection, I suggest that they operate under a Foucauldian model so as to maneuver and frustrate the very purpose and power of surveillance. The Pasha family, throughout the novel's progression, challenge the scope and effectiveness of a panoptic society.

The second family includes a father and son: Karamat and Eamonn. Karamat is the newly elected Home Secretary of England. His position 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 why so many people are extra cautious about their behaviors. Surveillance, for those marginalized, means something entirely different. Yet, by the end of the book, Eamonn is more aware that certain people are selectively surveilled, 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 Sophocles raised against the backdrop of racist immigration laws and radicalization" (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 a great necessity to act *normal*. Their self-discipline, on the surface, may appear like a Foucauldian representation of internalized behavior; however, I posit that their internalized discipline does not as much create compliant citizen as much as it does rebellious ones. I suggest that their normalcy is a performance intended to hide their inward thoughts, which is to say they avoid unwanted surveillance by maneuvering and manipulating how they are surveilled and perceived.

Unlike constant surveillance in Shamsie's *Home Fire,* Mohsin Hamid's *Exit West* constructs a narrative about the struggle for agency among those in flux: asylum seekers. The book chronicles the hardship of being an outsider through the two protagonists Saeed and Nadia, two lovers, as civil war forces them to leave their unidentified homeland. In comparison to *Home Fire*, this novel, in relation to surveillance, argues that there are different types of self-discipline, which are dependent on a person's location and legal citizenship. *Exit West*, by mirroring permanent legal citizens of a nation against ephemeral illegal refugees, questions the way that surveillance differs from one people group to another— borders affect the use and portrayal of

surveillance. I suggest that the transient nature of migration cannot create compliant citizens; because, asylum seekers, though allowed to work in their new location, are not legal residents of their temporal dwelling grounds. This, therefore, questions whether or not national borders affect the way people view and interact with surveillance. Such discrepancy gestures toward an unbalanced perception of a Foucauldian understanding of power and agency.

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 (*Discipline* 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* 105-7; Mills 45). Likewise, if a person's agency relates to his or her resistance 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 40). Foucault's ideas about punishment cast a light on this speculation. Constant monitoring, for him, (whether in a prison or society), is "intended not to punish the offence, 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" (*Discipline* 18). His concept implies that a person's awareness of constant supervision will "neutralize" and "alter" that individuals desire to perform

abhorrent behaviors– i.e., discipline "the self by the self" (Mills 43). Hence, Foucault states: "each individual thus exercise[es] this surveillance over, and against, himself" (*POWER* 155), which is governed by one's desire for "normalisation" (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* 105) means to encourage and enrich that "beautiful totality of the individual," which suggests 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 (*Discipline* 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" (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 (Aneeka, Parvaiz, Isma, Eamonn, and Karamat) frequently challenge the idea that surveillance (or its appearance) creates compliant/predictable/outstanding citizens. Hamid's two protagonists in *Exit West* (Saeed and Nadia), by comparison, question whether asylum seekers view surveillance as a matter of indifference because they are in-between citizenship. By triangulating the relationship between power, surveillance, and agency, I challenge a Foucauldian model of 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 use of surveillance as a cloak in maneuvering around how they are surveilled.

Isma, from the start of *Home Fire*, confuses the reader about what her role in the novel will be. 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 5). Here the reader is introduced to the first glimpse of surveillance. 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" (247). This principle applies to airport screening; in that, people are generally fine with surrendering 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*. She is fairly certain that she will undergo a selective screening, 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" (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 may cause one to think that she enacts a Foucauldian idea 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; however, she does not do so because she has anything to hide. She has no record (outside her father) that should flag her for an extra selective search; instead her appearance, and not 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, "The things we call 'technologies' are ways of building order in our world. Many technical devices and systems important in everyday life contain possibilities for many different ways of ordering human activity" (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" (*Discipline* 207). A 'disciplinary society' will not eradicate the need for screening rooms; instead, keeping the idea of a separate room in the back of a passenger's minds intends to coerce him or her into acting a certain way. The assumption of overarching power causes a person to internalize and correct any intention of wrongdoing. In Isma's case, she does not self-correct any deviant ideas or intention; instead, she internalizes that she will more than likely be screened. 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; because, they have never experienced continual *othering*— they have no need to maneuver 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. 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 a selective screening. Her actions, though subtle, are a way of resisting attention.

Unlike Isma, Nadia, in Mohsin Hamid's *Exit West*, maneuvers surveillance both to survive and to manipulate people's public perception of her. For example, Saeed, knowing that Nadia is not a practicing Muslim, asks why she wears a "conservative and virtually all-concealing black robe" (16-7). She responds: "So men don't fuck with me" (17). Here, Nadia's outward actions are a performance for survival, which is why "She learned how to dress, how to deal with aggressive men and with the police, and with aggressive men who were the police" (22-3). It is possible for one to argue that Nadia, by attempting to not look suspicious, verifies Foucauldian principles. This scene, however, raises a question about power and agency that said critic must answer: does Nadia's maneuverability give her agency, or is her manipulation already written into the powers that govern the rules of her city? In this public incident, Nadia operates in the way her society dictates. Her manipulation is partially based on survival, which she enacts by avoiding unwanted lust from those who see her as sex object, and by preventing people from viewing her as a social deviant. Nadia, similar to Isma's attempt to avoid unwarranted suspicion at the airport, intentionally constructs a false narrative about herself. Her manicured public persona draws attention away from her radical lifestyle of "growing irreveren[t] in matters of faith," as well as making friends "among the city's free spirits" (23). Her fabricated outward

appearance, in the unnamed city, does not prompt authorities to view her as anything but normal. By wearing a veil, she maneuvers the way society sees her—she avoids displaying that she is not a practicing Muslim. Her robes merely become a costume that hides her from unwanted attention. Her outward maneuverability is not limited to wearing robes, but it extends into her use of the internet.

Like her performative black robes (used for personal safety), she rarely navigates "the terrain of social media" without using "opaque usernames and avatars" (41). She tactically wears robes and uses avatars so as to misguide the way an observer interprets her actions and lifestyle. In *Covering* Islam, Edward Said explains: "Every interpreter is a reader, there is no such thing as a neutral or value-free reader. Every reader, in other words, is both a private ego and a member of a society, with affiliations of every sort linking him or her to that society" (156). Naida, in order to avoid unwanted surveillance, manipulates the way her life is interpreted by an unseen observer. She does not self-discipline her lifestyle so as to be a civil and compliant citizen; instead, she performs as a compliant citizen so as to mask her more liberal lifestyle. Mills complicates this dilemma: "Foucault goes so far as to argue that where there is no resistance it is not, in effect, a power relation" (40). His observation questions whether or not power is contingent on some form of resistance. By application, one is forced to answer whether Nadia's performative disguises give her agency, or does she lack agency because her performance validates outside power: is resistance the same as maneuverability? When necessary, she conforms to social norms, yet this does not mean that she is an altogether interpolated citizen. Foucault cannot answer who has agency in this situation: is it Naida or the powers that be? 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? Anyone watching Nadia will only see what she wants them to see— a woman in a robe and an online avatar. Therefore, 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?

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" (7). Even though both men credit Foucault adequately for his theories and influence, neither willfully allow his dominate discourse to continue unscathed. Similarly, Maša Galič, Tjerk Timan, and Bert-Japp Koops posit that Foucault's theory, based off Bentham's writings, is limited in scope (10-9). For one, Foucault's assumptions neglect to mention the other three panoptic models that Bentham proposed, such as the "Pauper-Panopticon" (Galič er al. 11). This lack of inclusion prompts researchers to question "the boundaries of well-established Foucauldian 'truths' about the Panopticon" (11). Second, Rosen and Santesso suggest that Foucault misapplies the size and scope of the prison model (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 (100). In other words, Foucault believes that "disciplinary procedures" are not limited to "enclosed institutions, but as centres of observation disseminated throughout society" (*Discipline* 212). Lastly, Rosen and Santesso 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 and Santesso 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" (87). I scrutinize how 'understanding' versus 'influencing' affects character agency. Foucault speculates that "oppressive measures… giv[e] rise to new forms of behavior," which suggests 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 33). The possibly 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 family in England, yet, as the novel progresses, so does his empathy for those with dishonorable backgrounds. 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 67). Aneeka counters Eammon's recommendation; she ridicules his idea by saying to "GMW" is not a "good idea," which means "Googling While Muslim" (67). Eammon, in this situation, does 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)perceptions about surveillance differentiates the two characters' interaction with material on the web. Ronald Kline and Trevor Pinch provide insight about 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" (113). Eammon and Aneeka's interaction with Google are 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. They are both 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 "chrestomatic- and constitutional-Panopticon;" which is to say, "social control moves beyond the margins of society… Non-marginalised people, thus, [are] beyond the panoptic gaze" (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 what it feels like to assume someone is always monitoring him. Aneeka, by comparison, cautiously uses the internet; her familial background governs 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" (14). He, like others, argue that either governments or large corporations are able to construct an *imagined* narrative about someone by his or her "data double," which suggests that governments monitor

people's internet searching patterns so as to predict and prevent disaster (Marks 4; Haggerty and Ericson 611-16; Terranova 112). With respect to Eammon and Aneeka, she is more aware/nervous that googling certain images will, because of her background, raise suspicion. She, more than Eamonn, is more 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 as Eammon. Aneeka's marginalization elicits paranoia about Googling images of a terror attack. 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 et al. 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" (164). The "Us/Them" binary sheds light as to why Aneeka is hailed into compliance out of fear (referencing her comment about "GWM"), as well as why Eammon is oblivious to this imposition. Some might argue that Aneeka is a special case because she has a history of terrorism in her family; however, I would remind said critic that Aneeka merely states how it is Muslims who must be careful with online searches. It is arguable that any person, regardless of religion and background, could potentially raise red flags if he or she constantly Googles terrorist activity and propaganda. Thus, does Eammon develop agency by his nonchalant attitude toward surveillance (i.e. his willingness to casually look up terror attacks), which is different to Aneeka who fears even one search? Karim H. Karim's "Self and Other in a Time of Terror: Myth, Media and Muslims," provides

valuable insight into how those from elite families internalize the world differently: "Largely adhering to the interpretations of events offered by societal elites, are drawing on the polarizing tendencies of myth to shape the public understanding of terrorism" (160). Because he is not from the same class and familial background as Aneeka, Eammon willingly views images of the "north circular canal bomb" (Shamsie 67). Yet by 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 and posts an online propaganda video. His recording outlines how he met, fell in love with, and regrets his treatment of Aneeka; likewise, he criticizes the wrong assumptions about Aneeka that the British and his father believe (Shamsie 255-59). The video has the potential to create a new-consciousness in those who watch it online, which is to say that Eammon uses the same system for his advantage: he flips the system back on itself. 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 (26-8). In the same vein, he negates the idea that the Pasha family is a common "enemy" (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 search Aneeka's name on Google. 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 him

to respond to their content? In order to better understand this question, one must examine *Exit West's* discussion concerning agency and the internet.

Exit West's portrayal of unfiltered internet access further complicates the question of agency. Saeed, like Aneeka in *Home Fire*, restricts his internet usage. He, however, does not moderate his searches because he fears that someone is watching his Google patterns; instead, Saeed worries about the "powerful" and "mesmerizing… banquet of limitless" information (Hamid 40). His anxiety prompts him to "restric[t] all but a few applications," so as to only allow access to the most basic features on his smart phone; however, for one hour a night he turns on the disabled apps and explores "the byways of the internet" (40). His actions seem inconspicuous in as much as he appears unconcerned about being observed, yet it is curious that he is fearful of accessing information from the web. His fear is different than the paranoia presented in *Home Fire*, in that, he worries less about being surveilled and more about having his information stolen. He limits his online presence because he worries about being hacked, which is not the same as being concerned that the government is watching him. The question about character agency is just as convoluted in this instance, even if his fear about using the internet is different than that presented in *Home Fire* To reiterate the common question of this paper: who has agency, Saeed or a possible hacker? Does Saeed have agency because he consciously minimizes the risk of being hacked? Or, does a potential hacker control agency because he or she makes Saeed act a certain way?

Nadia, by comparison, complicates the issue of non-filtered internet access. She, unlike Saeed, "saw no limit to her phone…She watched bombs falling, women exercising, [and] men copulating," which she does nonchalantly. One must wonder, then, why is Nadia not afraid to explore the internet? Is it because she, as mentioned previously, hides behind online avatars, or

is it something else? The answer to this question might be twofold. In their introduction to "The Social Shaping of Technology," Donald MacKenzie and Judy Wajcman state that "Material resources – artifacts and technologies, such as walls, prisons, weapons, writing, agriculture – are part of what makes large-scale society feasible. The technological, instead of being a sphere separate from society, is part of what makes society possible - in other words, it is constitutive of society" (23). This suggests that technology fashions British society by both spreading Britishness through social media, and by cementing England's power via their military technology. Similarly, surveillance technology helps establish and maintain elitist power. By default, this dynamic creates a clear divide between the elite and the *other*— those who observe and those who are observed. This implies that surveillance technology, as well as all technology, makes British society possible. In other words, English society exists because surveillance preserves the idea of Britishness, which happens by monitoring and persecuting those who fall without the bounds of societal normalcy. The safety of their society relies on effective methods of surveilling. Such observations must predict and stop threatening behavior, even if a suspected menace is meted out by prejudiced inference. Likewise, the constant assumption of surveillance should nudge people into compliancy. Yet, can such advanced technologies distinguish *normal* persons apart from persons who manipulate surveillance, which they do by acting and dressing like a normalized individual? In other words, can a person maneuver surveillance by mimicking the standard it assumes?

Saeed and Nadia live, at least in the beginning of the novel, in a society that is falling apart. Their nation, before the Islamic Fundamentalists plan a takeover, is predominantly a moderate Muslim nation where the threat of surveillance is low. However, during the civil war both Nadia and Saeed become increasingly aware that the rising militants are fighting for a

society buil upon fundamentalist ideologies, which has created a spike in surveillance tactics used to observe and profile people at a greater rate than before. The rising tension, the constant threat of violence, and the extent of surveillance persuade Naida and Saeed to take greater precautions about how they act in public and at home. Their internalization may argue for a Foucauldian reading of the text, in that Nadia and Saeed are forced to abide by the rules and practices of their fracturing society: "They were dressed in accordance with the rules on dress…they stayed in the margins of the roads, in the shadows as much as possible" (Hamid 88). They do not want to draw suspicion from the militants— their survival depends upon compliance. As the war intensifies, they attempt to flee by maneuvering around surveillance and "stay[ing]… in the shadows" (88). Their secrecy allows them to search for the magical doors that are mysteriously materializing around the world— doors that promise transportation out of their war-torn city. They intentionally manipulate their actions so as not to be targeted by the militants. On the surface they look normal; however, their dress and grooming are a ruse designed to misinform the surveillance system. To reiterate a previous observation, Foucault argues, "Where there is power, there is resistance" (*History of Sexuality* 95). Does his statement suggest that Naida and Saeed's escape attempt is already written into the power of the militants, which implies that neither Naida or Saeed have agency? In other words, do they lack agency because their inclination to flee and resist is based on there being a war to flee from? Is so, then resistance is already factored into power; however, can one's understanding of power be used against its intended purpose? I suggest that characters have agency when they anticipate and maneuver how they are monitored.

By way of further deliberation, Saeed and Nadia begin to feel the pressure of a surmounting civil war— bodies hang in communal places and people are shot on the street. Such

tactics serves as a warning to anyone who decides to resist the powers in control of the fracturing nation. New rules are enforced that coerce people in to compliance or death— the execution of deviants is now a public spectacle. The rising militants decree that anyone attempting to leave the country will be severely punished "by death" (88). The reality of conflict and the impeding pressure of execution, via the eye of the "flying robots," forces people to devise ways of escape. For example, Saeed and Nadia realize that their only hope of escaping relies on their ability to fake normalcy. The appearance of surveillance makes them disguise themselves as compliant citizens. They walk "in the shadows as much as possible, trying not to be seen while trying not to look like they were trying not to be seen" (Hamid 88). Just in case they are stopped while in the shadows, Nadia intentionally "walk[s] tall" so as "not to appear guilty" (88). Their behavior, on the surface, appears to be that of submissive citizens; nevertheless, they, in order to survive and escape, play along with the system and self-discipline their appearance. They manipulate their outward behavior so that anyone watching cannot suspect they are trying to flee. In his book *The Simulation of Surveillance*, William Bogard notes this discrepancy: "At the same time masks are precisely what surveillance intends to strip from its object. Surveillance, we shall see, is all about breaking through surfaces of appearance, closing gaps between appearance and reality? Practices which themselves demand stealth, deception, and attention to controlling appearances" (20). By deduction, this suggests that power and surveillance anticipate people wearing masks, which implies that authorities assume that people try to maneuver how they are seen. In a repressive state, one puts on a mask so as to survive; however, in a liberal society, a criminal, such as an illegal migrant, does not have to wear the same mask because he or she is already viewed as an *other*.

In London, by contrast to the unnamed city, Nadia and Saeed are not speculative about surveillance; instead, they are acutely aware that they are monitored. In their homeland, they are paranoid of persecution by the fundamentalists. By comparison, the Londoners vilify them as foreign and unwanted *others*, which is why the British government keeps a close watch on those fleeing into the city (137). This governmental intervention is a direct response to the influx of refugees pouring into London through 'magical' doors. As a repercussion, "nativist extremist" begin to form coalitions geared to "reclaim Britain for Britain" by force, if necessary (135). Since the English do not know the backgrounds of the refugees, they fear the unknown intentions of the vastly growing migrant population. Such uncertainty creates a sense of *otherness*, which makes the migrants prone for surveillance. Saeed and Nadia's mobility places them under blatant monitoring. They are breaking the law by entering a nation without approval, which is why they are observed by "drone[s] and helicopters" (137). These impersonal devices, though they can monitor a person's movement, cannot adequately decipher the inner thoughts of the two protagonists. Instead, the assumption of a drone's presence intends for people to internalize any suspicious or criminal behavior. Yet, the hovering machines are ineffective at predicting and preventing the myriad of illegal entries from happening. Such a lapse in the effectiveness of surveillance technology assumes that people are always paranoid. Neither drones nor those operating them can persuade thousands of refugees from entering their country: such people are not as concerned about being watched as they are about escaping dangerous situations. The drones, even when in plain sight, are not able to change the direction of those in motion. Nadia and Saeed have no internal interest to cause terror or commit other crimes (outside the one crime of illegal entry); instead, they worry about survival. They are aware of their surveillance, but the possibility of death prevents them from self-disciplining their illegal entry into England. By way

of synthesis, Nadia and Saeed's legal citizenship, in their unnamed city, is what makes them wear masks as a way to escape war— they cannot stand out in a crowd. In London, by comparison, they do not have to wear the same masks because they already attract attention as illegal *others*. This shift in the use of disguises, in relation to maneuvering around one's surveillance, questions the extent of citizenship as a factor in people's interaction with observation.

Out of the two novels, Parvaiz, in *Home Fire*, is the most paranoid of all the characters concerning surveillance. His 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 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" (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 smart phones 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" (qtd. in Mills 42). Instead, what if "the certainty of being punished" becomes the basis to commit 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 beforementioned 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 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 MI5 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 97). Unlike the majority of Muslims living in the UK, she is watched 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 MI5 do not monitor her behavior until after Parvaiz joins ISIS, which they neither predicted or 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-discipline; 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 the 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 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" (214-5). Despite all these reasons to internalize and comply, she boldly walks into the airport and boards a plane symbolic of her resistance (218). TV cameras are present to capture the moment when 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 (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 willing to be a 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" (33). Aneeka, by making a spectacle of her situation on TV, pushes against the power of unrelenting state surveillance. She resists Karamat's surveillance power 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 powerful 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 being 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 (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" (14). Her rebellion places the public on her side versus their own government (Shamsie 241). Karamat's stays away from the public spotlight; he hides in his office and home. This connects with the "chrestomatic-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. 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 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 off prejudices. Aneeka flips power on its head because she is conscious of the state surveillance; however, her interactions are different than those unable to distinguish if they are under observation.

Aneeka believes that 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. Naida, by comparison, is aware (at least in London) that she is under some form of surveillance either from drones in the sky or security cameras on the street, but she, unlike Aneeka, is only occasionally certain of her observation. One scene, in particular, is troubling because Naida believes that she witnesses a glitch in the surveillance system. Electricity is a commodity that refugees living in London struggle to obtain, yet periodically they are able to charge their cellphones and "[catch] up with the world" (Hamid 157). On one occasion, Nadia, while "reading the news on her phone across the street from a detachment of troops and a tank," becomes paranoid when she thinks that "she saw an online photograph of herself sitting on the steps of a building reading the news on her phone across the street from a detachment of troops and a tank…[she] wondered how this could

be, how she could both read the news and be this news" (157). Her delusion suggests that she assumes she is always under observation because of her status as an unwanted refugee. After seeing herself in the photograph, Nadia has "the bizarre feeling of time bending," she wonders if she is "from the past reading about the future, or from the future reading about the past" (157). Her confusion mirrors Rosen and Santesso's concepts of a "*temporal structure* of [an] image," suggesting that a "photograph clearly belongs to the present" but, at the same time, is a "*pause*" from the past. They further elaborate: "the power of [an] image comes from an event that has already taken place but which within the still's own time frame is yet to happen" (257). Her inability to distinguish between the narrative timeline of her present reality questions surveillance's ability to properly interpret events as they unfold, as well as whether or not an occurrence's significance is only distinguishable after the fact. The next page of the novel clarifies the validity of her suspicion: the image she sees is not of her but of a different woman wearing a black robe. One may argue that Nadia has the privilege of witnessing a malfunction in the system, which substantiates a Foucauldian notion that people internalize the assumption of constant monitoring. Nadia does internally question how and why she sees what she does; however, there is no indication that her introspection means to subdue deviant ideas. Similarly, an effective panopticon assumes an *unseen* watchman, which, in this instance, would have been a fluke in the surveillance machine. Her musing, instead, is curious in nature: she wonders about the workings of time and not the significance of the images. Unlike Aneeka, Nadia does not view her imagined image in the media as a platform to upset the purpose of surveillance; instead, she is confused about the possibility of an "instantaneous[s]" publication of the photograph. Surprisingly, she does not question the power of the images, which challenges the purpose of surveillance as a means of coercing people into obedient subjects.

Until this point, I have only discussed the ways characters, by masking their private intentions, maneuver around surveillance. Likewise, I have only sparingly mentioned the use of drones as governmental instruments to create surveillance societies. I, however, want to flip this idea on itself and examine how governments use their own surveillance technology as a mask to hide their hidden motive— similar to the ways characters use disguises. In other words, I suggest that the tactical nature of drone surveillance is a red-herring. Specifically, I posit that the constant awareness of drones familiarizes characters with their non-hostile nature, which I suggest intentionally draws attention away from their employment afar. The ultimate purpose of this sharp turn is to undermine the entire premise of power. I, through an extended study on the use of surveillance drone technology, suggest that power subverts itself.

Postcolonial authors, as a common motif, use drones to describe the menacing and biased nature of an ever-watching eye in the sky. The proximity of these machines, to characters in both novels, might validate Foucault's notion that the mere appearance of authority creates docile subjects: what is more panoptic than an unseen remote pilot? For example, in *Exit West* there is a constant reminder of drones hovering above Saeed and Nadia, as well as the myriad of refuges. They, however, are never entirely certain if and when the panoptic eye in the sky is zeroed in on them. This uncertainty, with relation to Foucault, suggests that people act as though they are always being watched. The appearance of surveillance, in theory, is enough to create civil/paranoid characters; however, are drone's effective in predicting and preventing crime? Many drone scholars note that western nations in the European Union, The United Kingdom, and The United States of America use unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) to patrol and identify risks posed by 'irregular migrants,' both at their borders and outside their territories (Csernatoni 175-8, 191-3; Gregory 189; Wall and Monahan 243-4;Wolff; "BS-UAV"). Drones, therefore, are

designed to identify and quickly address individualized *potential* threats to a nation (Chamayou 41; Gregory 195; ROBORDER), to differentiate between "normal" and "abnormal" behaviors (Chamayou 43; Gregory 195), and to construct "virtual walls" (Csernatoni 177-8, 180) that protect borders. By default, such machines misinterpret the "complex challenges such as migration" (180), which is to say that surveilling illegal migration becomes the norm (180; Wolff). For example, EU drone 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" (qtd. in Csernatoni 177). One might assume that the rationale for drone surveillance is to protect national borders from an influx of illegal migrants, which is true on the surface and in practice; however, this, I posit, is not the full story as demonstrated in literature.

Exit West mentions that drones are never far from Saeed and Nadia. In their case, drones do not prevent them from "nonsanctioned border crossin[g]" (177). This is not to suggest that drones can stop every attempt of border crossing, which would be entirely false. However, when people frantically look for ways to escape danger, the ever-looming appearance of drone surveillance does not make them internalize their behavior. Once a refuge enters a new nation, then UAVs take on an entirely different purpose— their objective shifts from prevention to subjection. Nadia and Saeed notice that drones are never far from their mind and body, which, on the surface, validates a Foucauldian idea of an unseen observer. This uncertainty makes the two wonder who is watching them, as well as for what reason they are watched (Hamid 88, 93, 146). The thought of being monitored does, as Foucault suggests, continually influence Saeed and Nadia to internalize the assumption of observation.

Saeed and Nadia, in one episode, realize that they can relish "a degree of insulation from remote surveillance when they [are] indoor… [yet when] they stepped outside they [are] seen by the lenses peering down on their city from the sky and from space, and by the eyes of militants, and of informers, who might be anyone, everyone" (93). By deduction, this might mimic a Foucauldian reading of the novel, in that Saeed and Nadia are observed by unknown watchmen, which spurs them to hide from a mysterious gaze. They manipulate and limit the scope of what the drone can view. This implies that UAVs are limited in their ability to always have an eye on a person's activity. One may argue that this is a narrow understanding of UAVs because drones, like all surveillance, are restricted one way or another. I do not disagree with this reality, which is why I am interested in the ways that characters, though aware of surveillance, maneuver around the scope of their observation. In other words, resistance is not measured by the frequency of one's need to hide from drone surveillance; instead, what matters is the manner in which people do resist, when necessary. Hiding from drones either means a person, by taking advantage of opportunities to remain out of sight, has agency, or he or she lacks agency because drones influence human behavior. Resistance is contingent upon there being drones to hide from. To reiterate: "Where there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power" (*History of Sexuality* 95). If Foucault is right, then this quotation suggests that neither Saeed or Nadia have agency— their resistance depends on drone surveillance. Their resistance "is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power" (95). Foucault's idea presents a problem because it suggests only those in power have agency and that no one is outside the domain of power. Nevertheless, Saeed and Nadia illegally enter the UK.

A drone operator's capability to accurately predict human behavioral patterns severely restricts the effectiveness of stopping illegal migration. UAVs, as their name suggests, are unmanned aircraft, which means a pilot may be oceans away from the machine he or she operates. Such distance makes detecting illegal border crossings difficult. Csernatoni discusses 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" (177). She reports that there remains uncertainty about the true ability and effectiveness of drones in preventing illegal 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" (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 (250).

The essence of their observations pushes against the Foucauldian idea that resistance is written into power, which creates even more questions about the true purpose of drones. For instance, does the "agency of the Other" suggest that someone has agency because he or she hides from observation— would drones exist if their only purpose is surveilling illegal migrants? For, if drones are neither entirely effective in preventing illegal entry, nor are they very successful in compiling a narrative about someone who easily evades observation, then why are they such a

common motif in literature? In order to answer this question, I must unpack a different perception of drones' objective.

It is imperative for one to understand that drones were first created by the military. The immense availability of governmental capital funded this technology, which later allowed private corporations to access these innovations. Mackenzie and Wajcman notice this trend: "The single most important way that the state has shaped technology has been through its sponsoring of military technology" (15). Their observation insinuates that governments fashion new technology for national security reasons, which include war, border security, and counterterrorism. Csernatoni seconds this idea: "Due to their original design for military purposes, drone technologies were born in the battlefield and their initial creation was intended to attain certain hegemonic objectives in military terms" (178). Essentially, she implies that drones were initially created to establish national power and not to surveil illegal migrants. In *Exit West*, UAVs and Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS), on initial glance, seem to counter this claim—they are mostly written as non-hostile objects in the sky. *Exit West* arguably does not show the genesis of drone technology as much as it depicts the later stages of such mechanical engineering, which nullifies the previous Csernatoni quotation. I do not disagree with such an observation except to make the following point: governments, out of necessity, mask the intended purpose of drones from the public. Therefore, in the west, drones subtly became more present in everyday life as non-violent objects. For example, the drones in *Exit West* are only ever portrayed as non-hostile surveillance objects. I suggest that Hamid intentionally writes this limited view of drones, so as to draw attention to what is not seen. 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" (240). They are suggesting that

the appearance of drones, on the surface, might cause one to assume that the purpose of such an object is strictly surveillance; however, they say that such a belief is misinformed. If drones are only meant to surveil migrants, then one must wonder why programs like "FRONTEX" are predicted to dramatically increase their employees over the next few years. By example, this project "almost double[d] and should reach 1,000 permanent staff by 2020… Its budget should increase from 91.2M Euro in 2014 to 281.3M Euro in 2017, which is certainly remarkable" (Wolff). If the sole mission of drone surveillance is border security, then such expansion seems overkill. Instead, drones are meticulously crafted killing machines meant to distance the powerful from the *other*, which complicates the limited view of drones in *Exit West* and *Home Fire*. I suggest that both authors write about drones from a limited perspective, which means to normalizes the nonviolent nature of UAVs within a nation's borders. They show how familiarity makes the characters forget that drones, when afar, are violent machines of war.

As instruments of war, drones, as Csernatoni suggests, are prejudiced remote controlled vehicles that "contribute to the reproduction of specific systems of domination and hegemonic practices of coercion and control by privileged actors and their worldviews against less privileged 'others'"(193). Ultimately, what is at stake is that drones are not utilized as much in the process of making people internalize deviant thoughts and actions, they, instead, use deadly force to duress potential *threats*. This display of power counters a Foucauldian notion that the mere presence of surveillance, via a guard in a tower, dissuades people from improper actions. Drones, through the above-mentioned perspective, do not subtly make compliant citizen; instead, they use force to dictate submission. Their power is an active guard equipped with Hell Fire missiles. Such a realization is why I suggest that both Shamsie and Hamid only portray drones, at least within western borders, as an always present non-violent machine. They draw attention to

the idea that people, when familiar with an object, do not question the use of such machines outside their national border. In order to prevent people from questioning what is behind closed doors, governments create the mirage that surveillance drones are primarily used in the battle against internal crime. Further, it is important to prevent certain questions from entering public discussion; because, such inquiries may expose the major flaws and terrible reality of drone technology.

If surveillance is meant to curb deviance, either by internalization or force, then is it possible to profile suspicious persons by abnormal behavior? Chamayou draws attention to this shortcoming of drone surveillance: "to spot the emergence of suspect elements based under unusual behavior to 'identify' individuals who remain anonymous –in other words, to describe them by behavior that reflects a particular profile. This is identification that is not individual but generic" (42). The obvious problem with "generic" sketches of indistinguishable persons is that, as Gregory notes, the profiles become "constitutively difficult to distinguish between combatants and civilians…This central, existential problem would remain even if the battlespace could be made fully transparent" (200). Although translucency may seem trivial, it is in fact crucial in rebuking two of Foucault's assertions about surveillance. First, "The exercise of discipline presupposes a mechanism that coerces by means of observation; an apparatus in which the techniques that make it possible to see induce effects of power, and in which, conversely, the means of coercion make those on whom they are applied clearly visible" (*Discipline* 170-71). Second, "The seeing machine was once a sort of dark room into which individuals spied: it has become a transparent building in which the exercise of power may be supervised by society as a whole" (*Discipline* 207). The heart of this issue is that neither drones, nor their video game like pilots, are able to "clearly" see whom they target (combatant or civilian); just because the

"exercise of power" becomes visible does not mean that the issue of non-discernibility is solved. Likewise, those in power believe that they deceive society into thinking that they, as the general public, have agency because they supervise the governing body. If so, then this means governments, like characters, maneuver around the way society observes their behavior and action. I suggest that governments manipulate the way they are seen, just as characters portray one image as a means of hiding their actual intention, so that society will not see, rebuke, and subdue their hidden agenda. Power is now flipped on itself. In this instance, people are the powerful. The government manipulates around how they are viewed by the public's gaze.

A new paradigm of surveillance is burgeoning, which questions if the days of watching people so as to cause the internalization of behaviors are over. Chamayou warns, "We are entering into the era of winged and armed panoptics… It [is] a gaze that kill[s]. At this point, it is a matter no longer of surveillance and punishment but of *surveillance and annihilation*" (44). This new era of destruction is exactly what those in *power* are trying to hide from public view. In order to connect the dots with literature, the drones in *Exit West* are non-hostile because they merely surveil the influx of migrants. Though drones are always hovering above Saeed and Nadia, the novel never shows the machines dropping bombs. By comparison, *Home Fire* also only ever shows drones as non-violent entities within England's borders. Only once in the entire novel does Shamsie write about their use abroad; however, this single mention is neither said aloud or visibly witnessed by a character. During Isma's interrogation at the airport she silently thinks (and is written by Shamsie within closed brackets): "Occupying other people's territory generally causes more problems than it solves…Killing civilians is sinful—that's equally true whether the manner of killing is a suicide bomb or aerial bombardments or drone strikes" (6). I posit that Shamsie clues her reader to the fact that she will not again mention drones in this way,

which is meant to demonstrate how familiarity masks more sinister realities. I suggest that both authors, by only depicting drone surveillance as non-hostile, attract focus to what is not said. By constantly sketching drones as non-aggressive agents, the authors make their presence familiar, which draws attention from drones' operation outside national borders. Destruction, by drones, never takes place within western borders, conversely, "The death of distance enables death from a distance" (Gregory 192). The removal of close combat allows for greater error (Wall and Monahan 204), which makes it "virtually impossible for victims of [an] attack to be" distinguished as a woman and child or a *potential* terrorist (Gregory 202). This inaccuracy has "harsh ramifications for the subjects" (Wall and Monahan 204). Again, to reiterate, this is why the UK, in *Exit West* and *Home Fire*, make drone culture so familiar because it draws attention away from their unbridled violence afar. In other words, the reader does not see the British Government using the same drones to prevent people from migrating to their nation; instead, the audience is only presented with the less severe idea that drones are casual observers that persuade people to internalize bad behavior. I suggest, therefore, that the authors create conjecture for the reader: location affects one's perception about drone surveillance. The old cliché remains true: out-of-sight, out-of-mind. However, what happens when the public begins to ask the right questions and turn their gaze back at the powers at large? I suggest that their stare begins to tear asunder the "claims to technological sophistication…[that] invite hubris on the part of those parties presuming superiority," which places the infrastructure of power under scrutiny and perhaps even erasure (Wall and Monahan 247). This possibility makes suspect the idea that power prevents agency, which *Home Fire* prominently portrays.

Karamat is the only real character with any governing power in either novel. 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 230). Karamat later reveals that the British 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" (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 it 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 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. He, therefore, remains 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 self-internalizes deviant behavior 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.

A newspaper article appears toward the end of *Home Fire*, in which local citizens (some of which knew the Pasha family) are interviewed. The story posits this stern question: "It's a

cause of profound concern that the children of jihadis, many of them British-born, are not closely watched by the state. How many more Parvaiz Pashas will it take for things to change?" (Shamsie 211). As Mill points out, Foucault argues that community groups are meant to deter crime, yet the fact these friends neglect their civil duty reveals the shortcomings of communal consciousness (51). 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" (36). *Home Fire* questions if this is true. Parvaiz is extra cautious of observation, yet he maneuvers around surveillance 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.

Exit West asks a similar question about the solidity of a Foucauldian panoptic society. Near the end of the novel a tiny drone crashes into Saeed and Nadia's makeshift "shanty," which prompts Nadia's suggestion to bury the "departed automaton" (Hamid 205). The two of them "dug a small hole right there, in the hilly soil where it had fallen, using a spade, and then covered this grave again, pressed it flat" (205). The somberness of this scene comes from the reversal of agency. Drones that have sent countless innocent bystanders to the grave are now the means of their own demise. The UAV's agency stems from its power to surveil and kill; however, the final drone in the novel is powerless and lacks agency. Saeed and Nadia, in a reversal of roles, lay to

rest the killer of men. They have agency because the very fabric of *power* is destroyed, which argues that power itself is an illusion.

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.[2] The images are a fascinating tapestry about the events leading up to the actual incident. Yet, the looming presences of surveillance does 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.

(Fig. 3 *Crowd*) Weiser/ The New York Times (Fig. 4 *Detonation*) Weiser/ The New York Times

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 the right side of the screen while someone else notices the man in the center looking at his cellphone (Fig. 3). 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 261). This means that an observer is unable to view an image as anything other than the ascribed meaning. My case and point, the reader, from the start of this essay, is guided to view the pictures via the specific story that I told about Akayed Ullah,

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

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 I indicated would end with the explosion (Fig. 4). The stairwell, the other people, and the scenery are lost and irrelevant because they are not given the same importance as Mr. Ullah—the images only gain their notoriety because I suggest the special nature of their content. The community around Mr. Ullah did not prevent his action because they could not predict his crime. The appearance of surveillance is 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 12). After all, "the mere presence of CCTV cameras…and the knowledge that the videos from these cameras can be viewed by police" should curb crime (Mills 46). 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.

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CHAPTER 3

CONCLUSION

The prospect of a surveillance society that relies on the honesty of every one of its citizens willful self-disciple, based on paranoia, works on paper and even by appearance creates the mirage as such. However, as this thesis argues, there remain a few gaps in this theory that tear holes in the fabric of 'disciplinary societies.' Mr. Ullah's actions, though terrible, merely highlight the endless possibilities and options people have at their disposal, which they may use to prevent an observer's ability to prevent their deviant behavior. *Home Fire* and *Exit West* demonstrate the variables one must consider when he or she encounters surveillance in literature. Factors such as location, familial history, class, and religion distinguish important facets about surveillance that one must include into his or her interpretation of characters' interactions and perceptions about observation. There remains a disparity between those characters aware and cautious about their monitoring and those seemingly oblivious or unconcerned about observation. Likewise, one must wrestle with the question about partial exemption: to what extent does privilege protect people from the likelihood of governmental intervention? The answer to this question relates with one's perception of power, and whether or not perceived notions of authority are concrete or reversible. It is the authors opinion that there are many and better models about surveillance that do not solely worship at the feet of Foucault. This paper

attempts to add one small part in the greater scholarly debate concerning surveillance and agency.