# The Remaking of a Model Minority

## PERVERSE PROJECTILES UNDER THE SPECTER OF (COUNTER)TERRORISM

**Jasbir K. Puar**
**Amit S. Rai**

In Gurinder Chadha's most recent film, *Bend It Like Beckham* (2002), British Punjabi Sikh Jess (Jesminder) Bhamra and her white Brit counterpart, Jules (Juliette) Paxton, seek a gendered and racialized haven for female soccer players. A film that is part of both the successive waves of antiracist diasporic film production in England since the 1980s and also the new globalized cinematic commodity assimilated under the category of "Planet Bollywood," *Bend It Like Beckham* is set in the outskirts of London near Heathrow airport and foregrounds the stereotypical culture-clash narrative: soccer-loving Jess faces off with both the traditional expectations (education, marriage) of her immigrant parents and the racism of British society toward Asians.[1] The same-sex eroticism between Jess and Jules is toyed with endlessly throughout the film—they both fall for their male soccer coach, they are mistaken as lesbian lovers embracing at a bus stop, they join forces for the strategic assist-and-shoot lineup on their soccer team, and eventually both receive offers to play soccer at the same college.

While sexuality functions somewhat fluidly throughout the film, the assumptions of hierarchy and privilege that characterize the racial landscape of the United States in relation to Britain are teleologically tightly bound. Unable to continue their pursuit of professional women's soccer in the United Kingdom, the two leave for fellowships at "Santa Clara University" in America to play college soccer; the story line's solution amounts to the gender as well as racial exceptionalism of the United States. There, Jess and Jules can play women's soccer without compromising their heterosexuality or their homoerotic bond. It is also the site of salvation for racial others: unlike Britain, the United States promises for Jess an acceptance of her brownness along with an escape from her conservative familial home and extended neighborhood community in Hounslow. America will provide the spaces of hybridity so elusive for Jess, the antsy yet dutiful daughter. "America" also epitomizes the phantasmic space of racial harmony and multiculturalism: in the final scenes of the film, Jess's Irish soccer coach, Joe, is seen playing cricket with Jess's dad, as he attempts to woo the father of the girl he loves. (Note Joe's very dated attempt at racial alliance with Jess after she is called a "Paki" during a match: "I'm Irish.

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Of course I know how you feel.") In short, the United States symbolizes opportunity, escape, and reconciliation of the clash of cultures. It purports to be a safety valve for the unyielding racism, sexism, and homophobia of other places.

Ironically, it is this commodified hybrid utopia that is actually signaled and produced in the film's soundtrack. Bally Sagoo ("one of the more happening purveyors" of British bhangra, ragga, hip-hop, and Bollywood) mixes freely, even promiscuously, with Victoria Beckham (a.k.a. Posh Spice) on the same disk.[2] Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan (nominated for best Pakistani singer by one fan Web site) and Hans Raj Hans ("the Greatest Singer of Punjab," according to another fan Web site) mark the close relations and partial incorporation of Chadha's filmic aesthetic into the differently hybridizing projects of both British South Asian pop music and an emergent but already tightly knit cosmopolitan South Asian identity, aesthetic, and commodity culture.[3] If the movie is about the diaspora, the soundtrack is at least as much about the home nation. Clearly, then, these new formations cut across the diasporic and the national. The importance of a film like *Bend It Like Beckham* lies in how the too easily celebrated hybrid-diasporic-nationalist utopia produced through the film's aesthetic and soundtrack functions with the multicultural representation of divergent and intersecting histories of hegemonic struggles in Britain to produce a narrative desire for an outside space of sexual and racial freedom beyond the nation and beyond race. Through these narrative and nonnarrative processes, the movie's mode of address brings together both discourses common to hegemonic formations of race (multiculturalism, nationalist xenophobia, Punjabi "traditionalism") as well as resistance strategies (hybridity, antiracism, narrative social realism, diasporic antinationalism, dance, queer feminisms) of marginalized communities wanting to dismantle the supposed purity of these racial hegemonies.

Of course, the film's positioning of the United States in terms of discourses of gender and racial exceptionalism is by now a well-worn cliché of the fantasy "land of opportunity." Prevalent in normative immigration histories, this gender and racial exceptionalism has been mobilized most recently in nearly every facet of the rhetoric of the war on terrorism: third world others are envious of American freedom and standard of living; Middle Eastern women are in dire need of education and instruction from U.S. feminists; the United States will combat other nationalist and fascist regimes (while its own nationalist and fascist policies are systematically effaced); George W. Bush is continually meeting and strategizing with Muslim, South Asian, and Arab American community leaders (while state practices of racial profiling, detention, and surveillance multiply and deepen). Finally, another pervasive form of exceptionalism is that of coun-

terterrorist technologies themselves: the United States is so technologically and politically advanced that it has the capacity to root out global terrorism and ensure democracy in the Middle East. Functioning through a grand erasure of the incompetence of U.S. surveillance branches, the arbitrary "success" of "shock and awe" military tactics, and the chaotic reorganization of the Immigration and Naturalization Service and the Department of Homeland Security, this narrative of exceptionalism functions to mark both the inconceivable excesses of terrorist networks and the capacity of the United States, despite such monstrosity, to know, discipline, and quell these innately monstrous forces.

Not surprisingly, the discourse of U.S. exceptionalism has also been used by those most in danger of being excluded from it—racialized immigrant communities most in flux with the (shifting) parameters of American citizenship, belonging, and inclusion. One such form this has taken is the concept of the "model minority" often applied to Asian American populations, with particular reference to South Asian Americans. This model minority construct is predominantly a reference to economic exceptionalism, upward class mobility, and educational excellence, but it does have its specific gendered, racialized, and national components of difference. As is clear from the contradictory ending of *Bend It Like Beckham*, the idea that South Asians are the model minority in the United States and face less racial discrimination as a result is also upheld, sometimes unwittingly, by South Asians in other diasporic locales.[4] This projection occurs namely in those national sites where the need for menial and physical labor overdetermined the class status of immigrants, that is, in Fiji, Guyana, Trinidad, and Suriname (indentured laborers), as well as Saudi Arabia, Kenya, Britain, and, to a lesser extent, Canada.

The diaspora inhabits many locales, as does the nation today. In many ways, the nation has reterritorialized itself in the diaspora. This is not a metaphor. Consider the figure of the nonresident Indian (NRI). In recent debates and legislation in India, this figure is used as a source of income (boosting foreign exchange through remittances) and international legitimacy (the upwardly mobile figure of the Silicon Valley NRI—the highly visible H-1B and H-4 visa holders)[5] as well as a site for the elaboration of national family values (the redeployment of "Asian family values" in the context of a Hinduized nation). The diasporic family, more specifically, is a strategy of reterritorialization for the globalized Indian state. Centered more often than not on the heterosexual family, these strategies can be read in the codes that constitute the MetLife and New York Life commercials on Indian South Asian satellite channels like B4U and Zee Cinema. These commercials showcase the sentimental return of the native NRI to recement the extended kinship structure so central to the model success

of Indians abroad. In one syrupy-smooth commercial for New York Life, a close-up of a Polaroid photo (the perfect middle-class mode of memorializing the family) shows animated scenes of young children in different poses acting out a series of crayoned intertitles (and seemingly singing the commercial's Hindi theme about smiling and helping others to smile): four girls wrapped in white bath towels dancing to "your happiness"; two boys peering out of a telescope into "your future";[6] a Britney-esque girl jumping up and down surrounded by adoring fans and flanked by two boys wearing dark shades who ensure "your security"; a Hrithik Roshan look-alike acting out "your ambition."[7] It is no mistake that security and insurance should be such an obsession for both NRIs and their *desi* (of the Indian subcontinental homeland, but also referring to roots, pride, and culture) counterparts; by all indications, India is one of the world's largest and fastest-growing insurance markets.[8] Indeed, as suggested by the proliferation of Web sites and commercial blitzes trying to segment the insurance market in India, a new insurancial imaginary is superintending the reterritorialization of the globalizing nation as the hinge between the citizen and the diasporic—the implication of sentimentalized family-drama commercials like the New York Life advertisements guaranteeing the fulfillment of your (child's) ambitions and claiming that securing the welfare of your family here and at home can be accomplished through one simple policy. In these ways, market forces collude with nationalist pedagogical hegemonies to both disperse national subjects (into the diaspora) and reconsolidate the nation in their return.[9]

How would an analysis attuned to the multiplicity of these reterritorializations chart its effects without producing the illusion of an overall unity, a complete, finished hegemony? We believe the ongoing struggles against American empire building both here and abroad must be studied in their specificity, in the complexity of their immanence, without the comfort of dialectical synthesis or the fatalism of a domination decided before the fact. In this article, we address the historical node of xenophobic immigration, detention policies, and the counterstrategies of South Asians in the United States: the 1923 Bhagat Singh Thind case; the figure of the model minority; the turban of the contemporary Sikh man as a sign of guilt—three historical moments in the incorporation and abjection of the South Asian in hegemonic racial projects in the United States. We consider the tactical node of counterterrorism discourse as it elaborates a civilizational mission that is forever sliding between the assured fixity of a (surveillance) system and the intolerable dispersion of (insurgent, dissenting, resistant, terrorist) networks.[10] We consider the ongoing resistances, the productive complicities, and, yes, the pitfalls embedded in strategies of constructing and claiming "solidarity across difference." Finally, we offer an analysis of

the node that is being actively constituted today through different Western media giving rise to what we will call *perverse projectiles* of singular and always complicit resistances.

Consequently, our itinerary in this article is fragmentary and tangential. Although we believe that each node constitutes an important site of struggle, the implications of those disparate struggles have yet to be articulated together. It might be that they never will. What we hope for through this itinerant meandering is a collective and multiple enunciation that reverberates as much in the possibility embedded in the blockage of solidarity as in its triumphant actualization. Perhaps even an enunciation that opens the ear to those vibrations in a practice of solidarity that exceeds its actualization. We seek perhaps to experience another time, an embracing of the time of monstrosity as our present-future.

## Targeting the Turban

The reification of the South Asian model minority stereotype relies on an uneven and privileged historical trajectory of struggle. We mark these critical junctures: the 1923 *U.S. v. Bhagat Singh Thind* case, the Immigration Act of 1965, and 9/11 and the Patriot Act of 2001. While we resist altogether the consolidation of identity at any one moment or space, they are important "nodal points" in the history of South Asian migration. Nodal points do not suggest causality or the limits of deferral; rather, they are part of a practice of articulation and, by necessity, reflect an endlessly signifying discursive realm. In thinking about 1923, 1965, and 2001 as centripetal nodal points, we note that these are representative of decisive legislative shifts as well as of the resurgence of racial anxieties displaced onto the perception and "treatment" of South Asians in the United States. More significant, these moments forecast the coalescing of certain bodies: the Sikh immigrant claiming Caucasian identity, the South Asian model minority/NRI, the turbaned terrorist.

The status of South Asians as "Caucasian" was in fact open to official debate until the Bhagat Singh Thind case (decided 19 February 1923, drawing on the 1922 Japanese exclusion case, *U.S. v. Ozawa*). The U.S. Supreme Court was faced with two questions: First, is a high-caste Hindu of full Indian blood, born at Amritsar, Punjab, India, a white person within the meaning of the Revised Statutes? (Based on the 1790 Naturalization Act, the 1870 statute's Section 2169 contained a broad rule regarding whites and persons of African descent.) Second, does the Racial Exclusion Act of February 1917 (the infamous "Racial Barred Zone") "disqualify from naturalization as citizens those Hindus, now

barred by that Act, who had lawfully entered the United States prior to the passage of said Act"?[11] (Note here that although Thind was of Sikh origin,[12] the only category available within dominant racial typologies was "high-caste Hindu," thereby universalizing that particular community as South Asian *tout court*. Ultimately, despite the early usage of the term *Sikh*, *Hindoo* became a common substitution for Sikh in the media. While this can be read as a simple redefinition of Sikh religious identity into a national identity, as Hindoo signals Hindustan, the point we make is that Indian nationalism relies on the erasure of such differences, as does the construct of the South Asian model minority.) The Court was clear that in the decision "no question is made in respect of the individual qualifications of" Bhagat Singh Thind (although the idea that only "cultivated" aliens could be considered for citizenship was central to the discourse); rather, the "sole question is whether he falls within the class designated by Congress as eligible."[13] In other words, what was required was a "racial test." In the words of the Court:

> They imply, as we have said, a racial test; but the term "race" is one which, for the practical purposes of the statute, must be applied to a group of living persons now possessing in common the requisite characteristics, not to groups of persons who are supposed to be or really are descended from some remote, common ancestor, but who, whether they both resemble him to a greater or less extent, have, at any rate, ceased altogether to resemble one another.[14]

This, then, was the crux of the racial "test" applied to the de jure naturalization of aliens—racial exclusion in practice. We see here clearly the articulation and functioning of a certain technology of racial formation, tied at once to the consolidation of a hegemonic white supremacy between the wars and the emerging circuits of labor and migrancy for Asian males in the United States. In the subsequent forty years, after the internment of Japanese citizens, the culmination of World War II in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, after the radical and assimilationist challenges of the civil rights, black nationalist, American Indian, Chicano, feminist, gay, and Asian American movements, another kind of racial technology was machined together. Thus qualifications came to assume an even greater importance in the exclusions that have defined American immigration policy, indeed, the very contours of the citizen itself.

Thus the percentage of highly educated professional and technical workers migrating due to liberalization of immigration regulations in 1965 is estimated by Vijay Prashad to be 83 percent of South Asian immigrants who entered the United States between 1966 and 1977. Necessitated by labor shortages because of cold war technologies and the global projection

of the anticommunist United States as an antiracist, equal opportunity society, the Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965 institutionalized nuclear heteronormativity as a prerequisite for immigration through family reunification policies even as Indians reproduced extended family networks through what was commonly called the "Brothers and Sisters Act." The fusion of bourgeois immigrant family models and elevated worker status has been an enduring focus of model minority norms. While the model minority construct has, since 1965, informed the perception of South Asians in the United States, there have been other, less assimilative images of South Asians that have coexisted with, often are in opposition to, and undermine model minority discourses (i.e., Apu of *The Simpsons*, taxi drivers in New York, gas station workers, Indo-Caribbean populations).

What we are seeing in post-9/11 state legislative, technological, and societal surveillance and policing is the wholesale sanctioning of already present but unofficially sanctioned racial discrimination against Sikhs, especially turbaned Sikhs, and Muslims. That is, the Anti-Terrorism Act, the detentions of more than five thousand Muslims, and the required registrations of men from various "Muslim countries" constitute the legal context of this surveillance, while the increasing use of biometric technologies and the rising number of hate-motivated assaults and murders complete this scenario. One observation might be that the model minority status of South Asians has now been tarnished for some with an association with Osama bin Laden and other terrorist figures, leading to a shift in the racial landscape from model minority to terrorist. However, given that there have always been images to counter the model minority myth, we argue instead that multivalent racial formations and racial reterritorializations are at work here, resulting in increasing polarization of model-minority diasporic populations and discourse, and those who may complicate or contaminate such discourses. Thus while heightened public and political paranoia about those suspected to be linked to terrorist activities encompasses greater numbers of Muslims, Arab Americans, and South Asian Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, and Muslim Indians, we also see a retrenching and resolidification of the discourse of U.S. exceptionalism and growing conservatism of the model minorities emblematic of it.

Sikhs and Muslims function in the fringe spaces of excess of the image of the model minority—Sikhs and Muslims, more often than Hindu populations, test the ambivalence of the construct, insofar as they are more visible (via turban and *hijab*) as immigrant and racialized communities, that they have to navigate Hindutava Indian nationalisms along with American exceptionalism, and that they tend to be a larger percentage of working-class South Asian populations (as consolidated through family reunification immigration policies that eventually shifted focus from labor to kinship).

We can safely assert that the turban is now deployed as an integral component of racial profiling within surveillance technologies of counterterrorism. Since the very first post-9/11 arrest of a turbaned Sikh man, Sher Singh, who was pulled off an Amtrak train in Providence, Rhode Island, turbaned Sikh men have become substitutes for an elusive Osama bin Laden. As this substitute embodiment, Sikhs are a sanctioned hate-crime target. Within this fetish of the visible, the turban acquires the force of a tool of the panopticon. As part of the visibility of the terrorist, the turban impels the disciplinary apparatus of the panopticon: the patriot is ensured. But we see also that the turban is not only available for disciplining, not only meant to enable internalization of the sense of being watched. The turban is also a target, a symbol of guilt, a mechanism of profiling to set up the body for direct control and attack: the terrorist is located. Insofar as the panopticon works to discipline the patriot, the profile works to accuse, to establish his guilt, and to reiterate the absolute necessity of the panopticon. As strategies of surveillance, the panopticon and the profile work simultaneously to produce the terrorist and the patriot in one body, the turbaned body. Whereas the panopticon seeks to convey the expectations of the state, the profile demands expulsion or death. It is this sliding from the panopticon to the profile—from the familiar and analyzable to the inconceivable and monstrous—that we see informing the U.S. State Department's counterterrorism plan and even pop cultural productions such as the television cartoon show *South Park* (both of which are discussed later).

"Hey you fucking terrorist, take that turban off!" The phrase is recounted countless times by interviewees in *Targeting the Turban*, a documentary by Valarie Kaur Brar about anti-Sikh hate crimes. While the turban is multiple—assembled through a taxonomy of regional and religious differences (Sikh, Muslim, Middle East, South Asia, Sunni, Shiite)—the accusation and the attendant demand to disrobe suggests the veracity of the profile of the turban. For the feminized turban wearer, the convergence of vitriolic U.S. heteronormative patriotism and the deepening entrenchment of Hindu nationalist politics both in India and in the diaspora render Sikhs and Muslims doubly vulnerable. The turban functions as an ambivalent signifier of inclusion and expulsion, marking both the incorporation of Sikhs into the Indian nation and the violence inflicted on them through this incorporation. Sikhs' own diasporic memories are cohered not only through the violence of partition but also through the pogroms of 1984 following the assassination of Indira Gandhi. Often associated with hypermasculinity or infantilized in Bollywood films as the Punjabi version of a class clown, Sikhs, in particular men, have become the fodder for renewed anti-Sikh sentiment even from purportedly progressive factions of South

Asian communities. The South Asian novelist Bharati Mukerjee, noted for her deplorable generalizations about non-Hindus as well as acclaimed for her portrayals of immigrant acculturation, claimed in an interview with Bill Moyers on 2 May 2003 that Sikhs had established "sleeper terrorist cells" across the United States and Canada. Her efforts to transpose the anxiety attached to the vocabulary of terror of the al-Qaeda network are bolstered by her accusation later in the interview that since 9/11, Sikhs have been conducting terrorist fund-raising efforts in mosques on a transnational scale. In this puzzling conflation of Sikh temples of worship with Muslim mosques, Mukerjee's outrageous statements would be hilarious if she were not considered such an exemplar of model minority discourses. The Sikh Mediawatch and Resource Task Force (SMART) responded to the interview by stating: "In fact, the Sikh community harbors no enmity towards the United States or Canada, nor are Sikhs raising money for any terrorist campaigns. There are no Sikh 'sleeper terrorist cells.'"[15] This example demonstrates the intricately bound natures of Hindu and American nationalisms: the most rigorous refutation of Hindu nationalism can best (and perhaps only) be achieved through an announcement of loyalty and allegiance to the United States.

It is the multiple tentacles of interlocking nationalisms that must be addressed. Michael Omi and Howard Winant offer the following definition of racial formation: "Sociohistorical process by which racial categories are created, inhabited, transformed, and destroyed. . . . racial formation is a process of historically situated *projects* in which human bodies and social structures are represented and organized." These projects propel "processes of rearticulation; practices of discursive reorganization."[16] While their description of racial projects is tempting, as an account that remains predominantly within the nation-state apparatus (i.e., not transnational), race is cast outside the formulation of intersectional identities that are then posited as simply derivative of race. We turn to Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan's notion of "scattered hegemonies": the iteration of networks of alliance, exchange, connection, and power; circuitries that complicate all-encompassing efforts at inclusion, resistance, and even complicity. Written as an articulation of power in postmodern fetishization of hybridity, scattered hegemonies under the specter of (counter)terrorism suggests to us an even more trenchant conceptualization: perverse projectiles. As multiple, irreverent, and inchoate forces, perverse projectiles are the machinery and motility of hegemonic projects and their immanent resistances, the (homo)erotic charges of imperialist sexualities and the seduction of their redirected desires, the endemic phallus and its appropriation and dildo-ification. We draw on the notion of perverse projectiles to theorize the failures of current models of solidarity, to occupy the language and

embodiment of monstrosity, and to return to our present times an energy about the unknowable future, a praxis of futurity.

## Singularities and Solidarity

In the many organizing spaces that we have been a part of or witness to, there seems to be a profound yearning to deepen, connect, and solidify our disparate movements through a demand for "solidarity across difference." We share the yearning but also believe it is useful to engage in the ongoing critical rethinking about "solidarity." First, on what basis will solidarity be articulated? And is solidarity enough to face down the mechanisms of our domination today? One of the most articulate cultural critics on solidarity has been Vijay Prashad. In book after book, Prashad has advocated an agenda of cross-racial, working-class solidarity, specifically between Asian diasporics and African Americans. In a recent text, *Everybody Was Kung Fu Fighting: Afro-Asian Connections and the Myth of Cultural Purity* (2001), Prashad deploys Robin Kelly's notion of the polycultural to perceptively argue for a politics beyond a narrow "ethno-nationalism."

Prashad's histories have the virtue of simplicity, not to say of oversimplification. His analysis of the history of African and African American contact and interaction with Asia and Asians constructs a picture of how identity, nation, and belonging have always had to contend with "the polycultural pressures from below."[17] However, the subaltern polycultural, not unlike the colonial subaltern in the prose of counterinsurgency,[18] turns out to be something akin to a natural, even instinctive force. In discussing the negotiations of radical working-class politics in the racial fissures of colonial Guyana, he opines:

> In 1913 Guyana, the East Indian sugarcane workers at Rose Hall Estate struck not only against the planters, but also against their overseer, Jugmohan, whose feudal, misogynist and Brahmanical behavior rankled them. To help them came Joseph Eleazer, a black barrister, and Dr. Ram Narayan Sharma, an East Indian doctor and Hindi scholar, friends in struggle, and along the grain of the polycultural instincts of the workers.[19]

The importance of telling this history in a way that remains open to the shifting, overlapping, and dissolving boundaries of community, class, sexuality, race, ethnicity, and gender is a crucial first step in both denaturalizing "race" and "class" as well as "de-heterosexualizing" community.[20] We presume that this is one of Prashad's aims in this book. However, as an embodied "well of solidarity" (and rarely does Prashad mention the

gender or consider the sexuality of such instinctual bodies), the poly-cultural comes to have an anomalous function in such a project—the polycultural in fact turns out to be not cultural at all but a natural force in Prashad's oversimplifying framework. In such a framework, the complicities that we have been charting in this article would be nothing short of a kind of inadmissible scandal.

In contemporary forms of antiwar and counterterrorism organizing, solidarity has come to mean almost exclusively "multiracial" coalitions. Consider, for instance, an important letter written in February 2003 by activists of color to the mainstream peace movement in New York City: "An Open Letter to Activists Concerning Racism in the Anti-War Movement" was distributed through the Marxist Brecht Forum and written by longtime activists of color involved in different kinds of community organizing.[21] Written in a tone that is both angry and quite reasonable, the letter lays out the major issues facing any multiracial mass movement for peace with justice in America today. "We are organizing," the authors write, "to defeat the United States government's offensive of war, racism and repression against the people of the world, both abroad and within the borders of the United States. We come from many communities, some of us from other nations. We are all colors, multi-generational, workers, students, unemployed, queer, and straight." This acknowledgment of multiple axes of difference constituting the peace movement is an essential first step, it seems to us, given the profound defensiveness on the part of many in the movement when it comes to questions of racial, sexual, and gender difference. Indeed, the letter was written as a corrective to such myopic visions of social justice.

But there are some signal difficulties with this "corrective" as well. The authors insist, for instance, that "people of color" are the "primary victims of militarism and repression." They write:

> Abroad, that war is waged on Iraq, Afghanistan, the Philippines, Colombia, Vieques, Puerto Rico, and other nations in the global South. "Endless war" crowns the economic embargos and sanctions, IMF/World Bank-generated debt, covert support for torture and death squads, and environmental degradation long imposed on nations whose inhabitants are viewed through a Eurocentric lens as alien demons, in order to rationalize their domination and destruction. At home, the state demonizes and criminalizes people of color in order to rationalize targeting us for police abuse and repression, in the name of "crime-fighting" and "security."

First, and most obviously, is it in fact the case that Iraqis, Afghans, Filipinos, Colombians, and Puerto Ricans see themselves as "people of color"? The term only has salience as an organizing term in the United States

(and to a lesser extent in Canada and Great Britain). We say "organizing" term, because the fact of internal fractures within and between communities of color has to be dealt with through the construction of practical solidarities across differences of power (not merely race), history, work, memory, and culture. Second, the question is whether "crime-fighting" and "security" can usefully be understood as part of the same hegemonic project. Can the criminalization of African Americans and the repression of their communities through a combination of police brutality, state neglect, de facto segregation, welfare surveillance, and the dismantling of the public school system or the repeated attempts to cleanse America of the "alien nation" of impoverished Latino workers in Republican diatribes for tighter border control—can these two crucial elements of the dominant racial project in the United States be historicized as part of the same system of exclusions put into place with decisions like Bhagat Singh Thind, Japanese internment, or the apparatus of surveillance, detentions, and deportations now being created to "fight terrorism" in Arab, Muslim, and South Asian communities? It is precisely the differences in these histories—which have different subjective forms, discursive practices, institutionalized procedures, technologies, structures of feeling, and practical political effects—that the Bush administration has been able to use in its efforts to mobilize parts of the South Asian, Latino, and African American communities for war abroad and repression at home. If we consider only one factor—median household income—we see wide disparities between communities of color that have to be accounted for through a politics of practical solidarity that seeks to address concretely the sources of these disparities.[22]

The crucial question in this counterhegemonic project is how to translate difference within and through solidarity (if we maintain a tactical paleonomy). The facile invocation of a false unity—where "they are just like us" (rarely, "we are a little like them") stands in for a more substantive engagement with the singularities that constitute any racial formation—should be recognized as the strategic failure that it is. For instance, in a recent article, Nadine C. Naber, while usefully mapping the different forms of antiwar organizing among South Asians, East Asians, Arab, and other communities of color in San Francisco, invokes this romantic and untenable solidarity in her arguments:

> The theme of the [Japanese] Nosei event was, "So it won't happen again." Japanese speakers made references to the patriotism of World War Two and the discussions among Japanese Americans about whether they should wave the flag. In such statements of solidarity with Muslim Americans, Lisa Nakamura explained, "We should step up and speak out. . . . Maybe they

can't make any statements against the war because they are feeling so targeted just like we did."[23]

Such attempts at analogies, as Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak argues, works to internally reify each analogous component while "excluding the fields of force that make them heterogeneous, indeed discontinuous" as well as denying unflattering relations of complicity, collision, and antagonisms.[24] (We note further that such analogizing technologies are central to control societies under post-Fordist accumulation regimes.) How do we make sense of these moments of a solidarity blocked or, better, a solidarity haunted, inhabited, exceeded by nonsynthesizable singularities? (What is a singularity? We turn to this question below.)

In *Empire*, Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri write:

> The figure of an international cycle of desires based on the communication and translation of the common desires of labor in revolt seems no longer to exist. The fact that the cycle as the specific form of the assemblage of struggles has vanished, however, does not simply open up to an abyss. On the contrary, we can recognize powerful events on the world scene that reveal the trace of the multitude's refusal of exploitation and that signal a new kind of proletarian solidarity and militancy.[25]

Yet they realize that "these struggles [e.g., in Palestine, Chiapas, Tiananmen Square, and the Rodney King riots in Los Angeles] not only fail to communicate to other contexts but also lack even a local communication and thus often have a very brief duration where they are born, burning out in a flash. This is certainly one of the central and most urgent political paradoxes of our time: in our much celebrated age of communication, struggles have become all but incommunicable."[26] A bit of an overstatement, no doubt, but Hardt and Negri convincingly show (something many others have argued before them—for instance, see the work of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, David Harvey, Bernice Johnson Reagon, Slavoj Žižek, Audre Lorde, and Gloria Anzaldúa)[27] that although today's social movements are economic, political, and cultural at the same time, the modes of these struggles produce irreducible differences or singularities that, when mobilized, directly attack the very heart of empire: "Perhaps precisely because all these struggles are incommunicable and thus blocked from traveling horizontally in the form of a cycle, they are forced instead to leap vertically and touch immediately on the global level."[28] This blockage of solidarity is precisely what we have been marking above. Here, however, the problem is of course the very definition of the "global empire": we sense a kind of epiphenomenalism (a residual economism) at work in their argument, as the regime of post-Fordism (or

disorganized capital or, better, the regulated dispersion of globalization) comes to stand in as the essential target for any movement to qualify as an authentic struggle.

Regardless, what seems far more useful in Hardt and Negri's general argument is the need for a new kind of communication within and between struggles, "a new type of communication that functions not on the basis of resemblances but on the basis of differences: a communication of singularities" (57). It is precisely this communication of singularities that must be the new thought of solidarity, where the "singular emergence" of struggles creates alliances through "the intensity that characterizes them one by one" (58).

What then is a singularity in solidarity? If we can think of solidarity as the communication of irreducible singularities that are no longer specific (i.e., identitarian) or transcended (by the economy), what fuses one community's struggles to another's is the intensity of articulated oppressions, the vibrations of contradictory joys, and the multiple experiences of becoming-other produced through its processes. We are not then speaking of a solidarity across difference, if by difference is meant something like "community identities"; nor are we suggesting a praxis of resistance that would find both its internal lack and higher transcendence in a utopic synthesis like the overthrow of "post-Fordism." We are speaking of a monstrous experience of solidarity that would be singular and intense and for that very reason multiple (or always miscegenated) and irreducible.

> The field of immanence or place of consistency must be constructed. This can take place in very different social formations through very different assemblages. . . . It is constructed piece by piece, and the places, conditions, and techniques are irreducible to one another. The question, rather, is whether the pieces can fit together, and at what price. Inevitably, there will be monstrous crossbreeds.[29]

## On the State Department's "National Strategy for Combating Terrorism"

The "National Strategy for Combating Terrorism," released in February 2003 as part of the State Department's ongoing "war of ideas" on counterterrorism, outlines the major strands of the Bush administration's global aspirations for a new American empire.[30] Let us reconstruct the image of counterterrorism that is put into circulation through this document.

First, central to the image is a prior construction that legitimates it and directs its forces: civilization. "The world must respond and fight this

evil that is intent on threatening and destroying our basic freedoms and our way of life. Freedom and fear are at war." The current war on terrorism is in fact a war in defense of our way of life, which is constituted by freedom, civilization, truth, and the "good." The procedures and strategies of counterterrorism will actualize "the power of our values to shape a free and more prosperous world." These universal values, like the innocuous "democracy," mobilize a dyadic chain that wraps itself tighter and tighter around the globe, obliterating any opportunity for terrorism to develop:

> We seek to integrate nations and peoples into the mutually beneficial democratic relationships that protect against the forces of disorder and violence. By harnessing the power of humanity to defeat terrorism in all its forms, we promote a freer, more prosperous, and more secure world and give hope to our children and generations to come. Ultimately, our fight against terrorism will help foster an international environment where our democratic interests are secure and the values of liberty are respected around the world.

Note that it is not a relativist question—the document is clear that we are not talking about plural civilizations with equally viable value systems, clashing in the night of unreason. Thus: "We cannot tolerate terrorists who seek to combine the powers of modern technology and WMD to threaten the very notion of civilized society. The war against terrorism, therefore, is not some sort of 'clash of civilizations'; instead, it is a clash between civilization and those who would destroy it." A transparent syllogism: the United States is a free democracy; civilization is constituted by the values of freedom and democracy; therefore the United States is civilization.

Modern terrorism, our abjected other, is a fundamentally new threat to world civilization. In that sense, we (as Americans, as civilized peoples, as the democratic world, as truthful, good people) are faced with something as old as evil and the absolutely new, the unknown, the specter of an absolute risk. This corresponds to the two explanatory models of terrorism forever sliding into each other in this discourse: terrorism as a pyramid and the terrorist organization as a network.

Although not commented on in this document, one is clearly hierarchical, familiar, stable, and analyzable (mobilizing all the scholarly resources of policy studies and social psychology),[31] while the other is diffuse, shifting, crosshatched by multiple historical forces and social dynamics, and for that reason unspecifiable, ungraspable, even monstrous. There is a constant sliding from pyramid to network, from the security of an absolute and instrumentalist knowledge to the precarious anxiety of a fearful monster tentacling out of control.[32] Thus, according to the State Department report:

*The document is clear that we are not talking about plural civilizations with equally viable value systems, clashing in the night of unreason.*

At the top of the structure, the terrorist leadership provides the overall direction and strategy that links all these factors and thereby breathes life into a terror campaign. The leadership becomes the catalyst for terrorist action. The loss of the leadership can cause many organizations to collapse. Some groups, however, are more resilient and can promote new leadership should the original fall or fail. Still others have adopted a more decentralized organization with largely autonomous cells, making our challenge even greater. The terrorist threat is a flexible, transnational network structure, enabled by modern technology and characterized by loose interconnectivity both within and between groups. . . . The terrorist threat today is both resilient and diffuse because of this mutually reinforcing, dynamic network structure.

The importance for counterterrorism of this necessary and panicked sliding between a fixed explanatory framework (that manages the crisis of monstrous terrorism) and a transnational, hypertechnologized, shifting terror network (constantly escaping the crosshairs of counterterrorist power) cannot be overstated: it is a productive machine, creating desires (for surveillance, for security, for the other, for knowledge, for unveiling and deturbaning), legitimation crises and techniques for their management, academic discourses, and new subjective and bodily forms (the citizen, the civilized, the terrorist-fag, the monster, the spy, the suicide bomber, the alien). The sliding from pyramidal structure to tentacling network generates perverse subjective, affective, and disciplinary forms (in)adequate to the new security state. Again, this sliding is not a metaphor: what is productive in it, what effects are produced through it is in fact the question of an articulated machine.[33] This machine organizes representations (discourses of civilizations, sexuality, races, nations, democracy, good, evil), temporalities (present modernity and archaic other), spaces (both the familiarizing techniques of military occupation of other nation-states and the uncanny otherness of the always receding "casbah," the new politics of "sovereign verticality" contending with the undulating folds of the camouflage-burka),[34] and modulated intensities (the differential speed of the news, the triumph of victorious revenge, the pain of defeat, "Iraq—The Video Game," the burden of freedom's defense, the anxiety of an ever-spreading virus). Thus counterterrorism constantly slides between the mobilization of uncertain affects (the blurring between patriotism, heroism, betrayal, fear, cruelty, pain, and pleasure through the encasing and knitting together of modulated rhythms of the mediatized body of technoscience) and the production of affects of uncertainty (anxiety, fear, vertigo). This terrifying sliding from always already mastered fixity to the untrackable diffuseness of terrorism is a machinic assemblage

in itself. *Fixity* and *diffuseness* are not two metaphors for terrorism and counterterrorism. They name an interminable movement constituted by a set of specifiable practices and colonial histories immanent to the hegemonic project of counterterrorism itself: "Trajectories by which the state of exception and the relation of enmity have become the normative basis of the right to kill. In such instances, power (and not necessarily state power) continuously refers and appeals to exception, emergency, and a fictionalized notion of the enemy."[35]

Counterterrorism and its supposed Other, terror networks, are locked in a transnational struggle that in fact draws on all the strengths of the nation. In that sense, the new global alliance against the terrorist threat and the national security state function in tandem, developing a joint strategy (in other words, structure sliding into network) that at once reterritorializes once exotic lands of the Near and Far East (not to mention Southeast Asia, South Asia, North Africa, and South America) and deterritorializes the now always vulnerable borders and already contaminated territories of the American nation-state.[36]

The overall goals of this "4D strategy (Defeat, Deny, Diminish and Defend)," developed in conjunction with the National Security Council and the Department of Homeland Security, are "to destroy terrorist organizations, win the 'war of ideas,' and strengthen America's security at home and abroad." American domestic and international security will be achieved through both violent and ideological (in the strict sense of this term) means.[37] All branches of the state, new and old, will be deployed in these goals, which overall seek to delegitimate terrorist activity, link terrorism to historically superseded forms of extrastate violence (all tied to histories of colonization and white supremacy), and construct and hegemonize a new international norm concerning violence (and, implicitly, civilization and the human). According to the "National Strategy for Combating Terrorism,"

> we must use the full influence of the United States to delegitimize terrorism and make clear that all acts of terrorism will be viewed in the same light as slavery, piracy, or genocide: behavior that no respectable government can condone or support and all must oppose. In short, with our friends and allies, we aim to establish a new international norm regarding terrorism requiring non-support, non-tolerance, and active opposition to terrorists.

Therefore, a new mission for the American state emerges, one that Bush has christened America's "calling":

> The United States, with its unique ability to build partnerships and project power, will lead the fight against terrorist organizations of global reach. By

striking constantly and ensuring that terrorists have no place to hide, we will compress their scope and reduce the capability of these organizations. By adapting old alliances and creating new partnerships, we will facilitate regional solutions that further isolate the spread of terrorism. Concurrently, as the scope of terrorism becomes more localized, unorganized and relegated to the criminal domain, we will rely upon and assist other states to eradicate terrorism at its root.

The strategy has many prongs, and in that sense actualizes the sliding between the pyramid and the networks of the terrorists themselves: building international alliances and "partnerships" (and it is significant here that the United Nations, as a political body, is only mentioned once throughout the text); projecting a world-dominant American power to the far reaches of the globe; striking constantly at the nodes of terrorist networks; developing transnational ties that map out local, radical solutions to terrorism (assassinations, torture, disappearances, extortion); and strengthening policing functions and processes of criminalization around the world.

But perhaps most crucial is the very grammar involved: the obsessive use of the future tense signals both a founding anxiety of (and in) this discourse and the drawing of the subject of counterterrorism to the pleasures of the always as yet unimagined. As if projecting itself into an always already mastered future, where the risk of terrorism is neutralized before actualization, the time of counterterrorism discourse is always in a future that is continuous with a fixed and romanticized national past. Derrida once said, "The future can only be anticipated in the form of an absolute danger. It is that which breaks absolutely with constituted normality and can only be proclaimed, presented, as a sort of monstrosity." Counterterrorism is a technology that dreams of managing and mastering this monstrosity by targeting subjectivities, communities, countries, and, indeed, time itself. Thus, if "the United States will confront the threat of terrorism for the foreseeable future," the counterterrorism imaginary aspires to the total management of this "foreseeable" political risk.[38]

In that sense its immediate precursor and ally is the technology of insurance. In insurance, the term *risk* designates neither "an event nor a general kind of event occurring in reality (the unfortunate kind) but a specific mode of treatment of certain events capable of happening to a group of individuals—or, more exactly, to values or capitals possessed or represented by a collectivity of individuals: that is to say, a population. Nothing is a risk in itself; there is no risk in reality. But on the other hand, anything can be a risk; it all depends on how one analyzes the danger, considers the event."[39] In the counterterrorism imaginary, risk names a

procedure of assessment, counterintelligence, containment, and projection into the future. Its analysis is predicated on the fixity of implacably opposed political forces whose only resolution resides in the murderous destiny of the United States to manage democracy for the world (it is our "calling," as President Bush says). Moreover, the sliding between structure and network returns here in the form of a sort of insurance value. The sliding between the securely fixed and the terrifyingly unmoored that names the essential dynamic of counterterrorism technologies generates specific kinds of self-legitimating exchange values that have innumerable trajectories and their own surplus: cultural (counterterrorism revalues Western civilization), political (it gives the security state the aura of a need), economic (the economics of fear drives the billions of dollars spent on everything from spy planes to home security systems), and affective (fear itself has been given a new value after 9/11).

Risk is at once the technology of the future that calls forth all the arts of prediction that science can conjure in its mission to master the future and the abstract machine that diagrams our present. But these terms—present, future—are no longer actually operative in community formations of terrorist risk. They interpenetrate at each moment, determining each other in a dance of pure repetition. Thus when Randy Martin states that risk "is a rhetoric of the future that is really about the present; it is a means of price setting on the promise that a future is attainable," one must see that, first, risk (financial or terroristic) is not merely a rhetoric—it is an abstract machine whose shiny surfaces do not reflect or signify something as much as they form assemblages with other machines, like panopticism, biopolitics, or necropolitics; and second, the future is now: the ambivalence of the present has given way to the anxieties of the present-future, this anxiety is itself a temporality, an impossible becoming-totalitarian.[40] Terrorist risk engenders a nation or, better, civilizational burden unequally shared between members of a risk community. Members of that community would include the capitalist elite from all countries, but not all could exercise equally the right to articulate a position in a "collectively binding" process of "decision making,"[41] which demonstrates the discursive kinship to ecological risk.

Terrorist risk is both an acknowledgment of the limits of knowledge and a kind of abstract but very real spur forever driving into the bodies of these men and women, driving them to produce absolute knowledge of the other, to connect bodies to security machines, to detain, harass, and always surveil citizens and immigrants and thereby multiply the borders to be policed (and, of course, as Homi K. Bhabha so brilliantly points out, it is the enunciation of the stereotype that is crucial to this paradox).[42] In that sense, the terrorist threat draws its enemies (the civilized subjects

of modern risk communities) to a future that has already excluded it. In the future, when it will come, and it will certainly come, there will be no terrorism; meanwhile, in the present, its seemingly infinite proliferation only means that all we are saying is beside the point: we must exterminate the brutes.[43]

In any case, what becomes possible through this preliminary diagram of terrorist risk is the return of the early modern practice of a "good risk," which is affirmative and designed to be "embraced for self-betterment."[44] Because terrorist risk is both a burden of civilization for the transnational risk community against the axis of evil and a mission for the truth, the good, and humanity, danger is revalued as a civilizational value. That is why the civilized are waging an unending war. With every new body bag and suicide bomber the value of "danger" goes up.

Counterterrorism, as Achille Mbembe has so movingly shown, is a war machine that assembles, on the same plane of immanence, strategies and rationalities of discipline, biopolitics, and now, once again, necropolitics. As strategy, rationality, and discourse, what this document outlines is a civilizational project machined to a necropolitics. As we have shown, civilization is the nodal point for multiple axes of power: a normalizing sexuality as well as a white supremacist agenda operate through it; "free and open economies" (it goes without saying today that a very closed capitalist restructuring is implied by this phrase) are enshrined in its charter; future-oriented, market-savvy subjective forms are produced through its normalization practices; an implicitly Christian cosmology gives its adherents a sense of mission; microtechnologies of surveillance and policing—everything from a total awareness database to eye recognition software—operate at speeds up to a hundred times faster than current computer processors.[45] This civilizational project also puts in place specific spaces of participation and resistance—artificial negativity, Adorno once called it; the "subaltern public sphere" is another version of it—where civility, reason, and the rule of law govern who has a voice, what enunciations are heard, and the parameters of debate. But all dissent of course is treason in a state of emergency, and so the spaces of resistance alternate as holding cells as well.

### *South Park* and the Pakistani

We have so far shown the economies of representation, dissemination, and affect intrinsic to bodies of knowledge as they move through the force of counterterrorist technologies. We turn now to *South Park*, the

popular cable cartoon show (on Comedy Central) directed at adults and known for its celebration of perversity and excess. Always ridiculing the contradictions of contemporary liberalism, the show's satirical story lines regularly produce social and political commentaries about contemporary race, gender, and class politics through its focus on that which is uncomfortable, unstated, or avoided. In the midst of a U.S. military buildup toward an imminent invasion of Iraq and massive global antiwar protests, an especially interesting South Park episode aired in February 2003. Discovering that he could sue his employers for millions of dollars if fired from his position, gay schoolteacher Mr. Garrison uses his sexuality to escalate discomfort and elicit disgust from his fourth-grade students. Mr. Garrison spanks Mr. Slave, the teacher's assistant, or "Teacher's Ass" as he is called, while on his way to his seat. Mr. Slave, typifying a leather daddy, is a large strapping white man with a dark moustache, clad in a pink shirt, blue jeans, black leather chaps, vest and boots, and a police cap. As a leather daddy, Mr. Slave is not only a gay or queer character, as represented by Mr. Garrison, but also a figure of sexual transgression and perversity referencing S&M sexual practices, the sexual promiscuity of gay male culture, and its attendant drug use. As Mr. Slave sits down, (Eric) Cartman and Craig, two white students in the classroom, confer about Mr. Slave. Cartman, whispering to Craig while glancing around furtively, states, "Dude, I think that Mr. Slave guy might be a . . . Pakistani."

This significant moment is swift and quickly overridden by a return to the classroom antics of Mr. Garrison and his slave. The comment reflects a curious suturing of racial and sexual difference—the perverse leather daddy, unrecognized as such by the students, is instead mistaken for another historically salient figure of perversion, the racialized Other. This Other is of course perversely sexualized as well—the Pakistani is recognized through, not against, his sexual excesses, as well as through Mr. Slave's feminized gender positioning as the recipient of a spanking. If one juxtaposes the queer (leather, S&M) body with the Pakistani (Muslim, fundamentalist, terrorist) body, the commonality of perversion becomes clearer, in that both bodies represent pathological spaces of violence constituted as excessive, irrational, and abnormal.

One can open up this analysis to the level of geopolitics as well. It is notable that Cartman did not wonder if Mr. Slave was an Afghan or an Iraqi. By naming Mr. Slave as a Pakistani, the show astutely points to an understated complexity in the war against terrorism—that of the liminal position of the nation of Pakistan. Since 9/11, Pakistan's conundrum has been about the question of its own state-sanctioned and unsanctioned terrorism: caught between U.S. expectations of assistance with reining in

terrorist cells (rewarded by the lifting of trade sanctions and greater access to IMF loans) and India's wrath as a supposed victim of Pakistan's terrorist activities. One could read the referencing of Pakistan as the hailing of the unaddressed terrorist (and in that sense, it is also a covert acknowledgment of the status of Saudi Arabia as well). In Leo Bersani's important article "Is the Rectum a Grave?" Bersani complicates the feminized posture of those receiving anal sex. In its close association with AIDS, Bersani argues, anal sex has come to figure, for heterosexuals, as a destructive self-annihilation, a dark side ascribed to the *jouissance* of ecstatically forsaken bodily boundaries during sexual exchange.[46] The ghost of the suicide bomber haunts this queer Pakistani figure. Judith Butler, summarizing Jeff Nunokawa, writes that the male homosexual is "always already dying, as one whose desire is a kind of incipient and protracted dying." But this kind of sex not only kills oneself; through the demolition of the self, it also kills others. Butler elaborates the multiplicity to death further: "The male homosexual is figured time and time again as one whose desire is somehow structured by death, either as the desire to die, or as one whose desire is inherently punishable by death."[47] The suicide bomber, always already dying, is not only consumed with perverted desires of the deaths of oneself and of others but also zeroed in on as the exact target of technologies of death.

Thus the effeminate and emasculated status of Pakistan, as symbolized through the anally penetrated Mr. Slave, is signified as a nation that is decomposing and deteriorating. Cast into the politics of the South Asian diaspora, Pakistan, through an erasure of the huge number of Muslims in India, represents the Muslim Other, a space from which normative Hindu Americans and Sikh Americans must distance themselves. This distancing requires an ever-narrowing South Asian model minority positioning as it seeks to separate off from terrorist look-alikes. But most important, Pakistan is used, in the dual movement of disciplining and quarantining, to separate the nationally sanctioned space of U.S. queerness, Mr. Garrison, from the banished, perverse, external Muslim Other.

Back to *South Park*, where the students complain to their parents that Mr. Garrison and his assistant are "totally gay" and "super gay." The parents chastise their children and immediately take them to the Museum of Tolerance. Inside the Hall of Stereotypes, the group walks through the Tunnel of Prejudice, where they hear "queer, beaner, chink, nigger, heeb, faggot, cracker, slope, jap." *Queer* and *faggot* are the only nonracial or ethnic epithets, equating race with sexuality and once again producing the white queer as split off from the perverse racial other. After surveying and challenging a number of stereotypes, the group comes across the Arab as terrorist. The tour guide promptly says, "But of course, we know that not all Arabs are terrorists, don't we kids?"

The next day in class, Mr. Garrison proceeds to insert the class gerbil, Lemmiwinks, into Mr. Slave's anus, after paddling and gagging him results in no disciplinary action whatsoever from the school's administration. In the meantime, Mr. Garrison's failed efforts to get fired land him and Mr. Slave in Tolerance Camp, where they've been sent by the school principal to learn to tolerate their own behavior.

We have, once again, the sliding relationship between the structural model and the network model. Mr. Garrison speaks to the civilizational projects at hand: as both the object of tolerance and the tolerant subject, he disciplines the monstrosity of Mr. Slave as he manipulates this monstrosity to manage his own perverse proclivities. The perverse and the primitive collide in the figure of Mr. Slave: the violence of homophobia is shown to be appropriate when directed toward a pathological nationality, while the violence of racism is always already caught in the naming of the queer. The show works to demonstrate the unevenness of liberal forms of tolerance, noting that the Arab terrorist is a stereotypical category that nonetheless exceeds the normative boundaries of deconstructing the Other. What this episode does through a combination of intersecting but distinct story lines is stage the multiplicities that constitute racial and sexual formation while also foregrounding the mired circuits of representation and affect. Such linkages, the central subject of endeavors in literary criticism such as sentiment studies, highlight the historical affect of race. Speaking specifically of African Americans, for example, Sianne Ngai argues, "For just as the caricature of the raced subject as excessively earnest, emotional, and expressive continues to haunt the American cultural imagination, the affective qualities that surface in the dictionary entry for animated: 'lively, full of activity, vigor and spirit' have a long history of bearing racial connotations. The animatedness . . . thus foregrounds the disturbing ease with which emotional qualities slide into corporeal qualities in the case of racialized subjects, reinforcing the notion of race itself as a truth located, quite naturally, in the always obvious, highly visible body."[48]

We have Prashad's troubling "instinctual polycultural" redux, rendered here as the enunciated fact of the racialized body. The excess of life, the "animatedness" of this body, also drives its pathological sexuality: hyperaggressive, violent and violating, all-consuming. What of our Pakistani leather daddy, narrowly scripted through a life-to-dying telos? This scenario invites the sliding between the affective qualities of racialized and sexualized bodies as excessive activity, expression, and energy, from *too much* life, and the affect of death, of *never enough death*, of living death, the dying living and the living dying: the familiar panicked sliding between the structural model and the network model (indeed, can we even call the network a model? Insofar as the desired end result is obliteration, no model

is necessary—the absence of a model is evidence enough to encourage the carnage.) Death as an affect of perverse colored bodies returns us to the suicide bomber, indeed, to suicide bombers, their multiple yet irreducibly singular shadows permeating our text. Unsettling the correlation between rationality and the political as "the exercise of reason in the public sphere," Mbembe asserts, "instead of considering reason as the truth of the subject, we can look to other foundational categories that are less abstract and more tactile, such as life and death"; "in the logic of martyrdom, a new semiosis of killing emerges."[49] The suicide bomber appears at first to be the ultimate perpetrator of self-destruction or the ultimate agent of resistance. In this new semiosis, self-sacrificial death is understood as agency. Thus the "always already dying" of the perverse homosexual–cum–suicide bomber is rescripted as the freedom from the materiality of the body and all that attends it; embracing the limit of death reorients death as no limit at all but rather the ultimate release.

As a perverse projectile, a "war machine," a body, an assemblage that machines together life and death, suicide and homicide, resistance and self-annihilation, flesh and metal, this characterization of the (Palestinian) suicide bomber is romantic, tragic, and necessary. For how else can we possibly attend to the incomprehensible brutality of necropolitics? And the singularity of eventness demands that we understand the rhythms of different deaths—the suicide bombers in Iraq, Palestine, or Kashmir are united not by what they represent, or by what they do, but rather by the contextual transgression of forbidden territory, of taboo.

## Notes

1. The term *Planet Bollywood* comes from the title of a forthcoming collection of musicology and film studies edited by Sangita Gopal. In many ways, *Bend It Like Beckham* engages in and comments on the typical *ghar/bahar* narrative of many Bollywood films—that Jess's father is played by the famous Bollywood character actor Anupam Kher would be important in this regard. But this is a transnational filmic commodity, participating in numerous public spheres simul-

taneously; Chadha's film was also dubbed "My Big Fat Sikh Wedding" in a riff on the low-budget surprise hit *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* of 2002.

2. "The New Delhi-born Bally Sagoo grew up in Britain where he established a reputation as one of the more happening purveyors of dance music. His music incorporates all manner of bhangra, hip-hop, and ragga. His old Indian film-music background has also influenced his art, made tangible around the time of 1995's Bollywood Flashback but also in an underlying sense since film music has created a series of conventions for presenting itself. The kitchen-sink approach so beloved of non-Indian commentators was a tradition that Bally Sagoo could take to heart. Bally Sagoo and Devissaro contributed the music to new dance works by Daksha Sheth and Roger Sinha performed by Yuva (a young South Asian dance company) under the collective title of *Tongues Untied* in September as part of the annual Vivarta Festival in London. In 1994 it was announced that he had signed a major deal with Columbia/Sony. It was evidence of his versatility and their belief in his potential. *Rising from the East* followed in 1996, and *Soundtracks: For Your Life* was released in 1999" (Ken Hunt, All Music Guide, entertainment.msn.com/Artist/Default.aspx?artist=119802).

3. See www.geocities.com/Hollywood/Makeup/2732/Hans.html. The British South Asian pop music industry and all the many circuits of exchange and consumption that have become a crucial part of diasporic cultures among British Asians are far more established in and recognized by the British mainstream than its fledgling counterpart in the United States.

4. It is important to note that "South Asian American" is itself often a contested category fractured along lines of ethnicity, national origin, language, religion, class status, and generation; hence, any project called "South Asian American Studies" is highly heterogeneous, at the very least. Yet underlying the debate about SAAS is an assumption that it is a coherent subfield centered on the study of South Asian American subjects and, implicitly, that the community-studies model needs to continue to be the basis for the new work that will "correct" the neglect of certain ethnic groups (Shilpa Dave, Pawan Dhingra, Sunaina Maira, Partha Mazumdar, Lavina Shankar, Jaideep Singh, and Rajini Srikanth, "De-Privileging Positions: Indian Americans, South Asian Americans, and the Politics of Asian American Studies," *Journal of Asian American Studies* [February 2000]: 67–100). As Dave et al. write: "As scholars, our commitment to AAS as a project linked to struggles for social change requires we utilize this moment to integrate the work of others interested in similar goals whether or not they focus specifically on Asian Americans" (79).

5. According to one immigration law Web site: "H-1B is a useful tool for U.S. business and foreign professionals who wish to work in the U.S. H-1B is a special temporary category designated by Congress to enable U.S. businesses to employ professional foreign workers in the United States. An H-1B visa may be issued to professionals who have a degree and work in 'specialty occupations.' Frequently, H-1B visas are available to various IT professionals, engineers, teachers, and (surprisingly) fashion models. H-1B beneficiaries may bring their spouses and children with them to the United States in H-4 status. Recently, H-1B laws have undergone major changes that allow for greater H-1B portability, as well as extension of H-1B status for over six years for certain H-1B workers. In many cases, we also assist our H-1B clients with obtaining employment-based green cards through labor certification, immigrant visa petition, and adjustment of status or

consular processing. This firm places special emphasis in working with businesses on creating a comprehensive H-1B, L-1, and immigration plans for their workers. Nicastro Piscopo Ogrin keeps its business clients and their H-1B workers updated on the recent H-1B legislation development" (see www.npo-law.com/ IM-PracticeAreasFrames.htm).

6. This is not a fortuitous reference: the other side of the growing insurancial imaginary in diasporic culture is the strong hold that Hindu astronomy and Islamic Sufism has on the diasporic subject. Satellite channels like B4U and Sony are replete with (almost always British) gurus, saints, seers, prophets, and astrologers. It would seem that the insurance agent and the mystic seer are two faces on the same globalizing coin.

7. Hrithik Roshan, son of the seventies almost-superstar director Rakesh Roshan, is the undisputed king of the new generation of Hindi film brand-name heartthrobs—although he has acted in only one monster hit, the 2000 *Kaho Na Pyaar Hai* (*Say It's Love*).

8. India (and by extension, Indians living abroad) is considered one of the emerging national markets for insurance policies. In 2000, total insurance revenues amounted to $7.2 billion; in 1999, the total amount insured in India was just shy of $100 billion (compared to $5.1 billion in 1990) (Bima Online, www.bimaonline.com/cgi-bin/statistics/stats.asp).

9. Another example of NRI diasporic kinship and masculinity formations is found in a Volkswagen commercial for the Passat. The sensitive cosmopolitan diasporic Indian male takes his sister and brother-in-law's two kids for a day, inciting them to the physical activity of running up and down the hills and beaches of San Francisco, all the while zipping between sites in the Passat. When the kids are returned, the NRI Indian parents, signaled through clothing and accents, marvel at how exhausted and well behaved their kids are and the spectacular job of their sitter. The masculinity of the NRI is thus read through the efficiency, mobility, and sophistication of the Passat.

10. In specific ways, the armed or unarmed insurgent, the dissenter of civil disobedience, the resister of war and racism and heterosexism, and the decontextualized terrorist have been purposefully blurred in counterterrorism discourses so that any form of nonnormative resistance or critique is a legitimate object of legislation like the Patriot Act and its successors. The recent congressional censure of "postcolonial" studies by Dr. Stanley Kurtz is part of this insidious and systematic blurring. Dr. Kurtz's statement can be found at edworkforce.house.gov/ hearings/108th/sed/titlevi61903/kurtz.htm. This is, in one sense, one of the most powerful tactics of the contemporary hegemony in the United States.

11. The 1917 Immigration Act specified that "the following classes of aliens shall be excluded from admission to the United States . . . persons who are natives of islands not possessed by the United States adjacent to the Continent of Asia, situated south of the 20th parallel latitude north, west of the 160th meridian of longitude east from Greenwich, and north of the 10th parallel of latitude south, or who are natives of any country, province, or dependency situated on the Continent of Asia west of the 110th meridian of longitude east from Greenwich and south of the 50th parallel of latitude north," creating what was popularly known as the Asiatic Barred Zone (39 Stat. 874, 5 February 1917, sec. 3).

12. As one PBS Web site notes: "Bhagat Singh Thind (1892–1967) was born in Punjab and came to America in 1913. A year later, he was paying his way

through the University of California at Berkeley by working in an Oregon lumber mill during summer vacations. When America entered World War I, he joined the U.S. Army. He was honorably discharged on 16 December 1918 and in 1920 applied for U.S. citizenship from the state of Oregon. Since several applicants from India had thus far been granted U.S. citizenship, he too was approved by the district court. However, a naturalization examiner appealed this court's decision, and the rest is history" (www.pbs.org/rootsinthesand/i_bhagat1.html).

13. "*United States v. Bhagat Singh Thind*," *American Journal of International Law* 17 (1923): 572–73.

14. Ibid., 574.

15. The SMART letter may be viewed at www.sikhmediawatch.org/media watch/mediadetail.asp?mediaid=9.

16. Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 55–56.

17. Vijay Prashad, *Everybody Was Kung-Fu Fighting* (Beacon: Boston, 2001), 92.

18. See Ranajit Guha's "The Prose of Counter-Insurgency," in *Subaltern Studies 1: Writings on South Asian History and Society*, ed. Ranajit Guha (Delhi and New York: Oxford University Press, 1982).

19. Prashad, *Everybody Was Kung-Fu Fighting*, 93.

20. Important in this regard is challenging naturalized blood ties (implicitly patriarchal and heterosexual) in Paul Gilroy's notion of the Black Atlantic.

21. The letter was signed by Steve Bloom, Humberto Brown, Bhairavi Desai, Randy Jackson, Ray Laforest, Rene Francisco Poitevin, Liz Roberts, Lincoln Van Sluytman, Jean Carey Bond, Saulo Colon, Cherrene Horazuk, Hany Khalil, Ngo Thanh Nhan, Merle Ratner, and Juliet Ucelli.

22. According to a new report by the Census Bureau, household income in 2002 declined for the third straight year and the poverty rate rose for the second consecutive year. Broken down by race, African American incomes fell 3 percent, from $29,939 to $29,026; "Hispanic (of any race)" incomes were down 2.9 percent (to $33,103); and Asian and Pacific Islander earnings fell 4 percent to $52,291 (white median income showed only a nominal decline, down .3 percent, from $45,225 to $45,086). See Lynette Clemetson, "More Americans in Poverty in 2002," *New York Times*, 27 September 2003.

23. Nadine C. Naber, "So Our History Doesn't Become Your Future," *Journal of Asian American Studies* 5 (2002): 227. In a similar vein, she quotes from an Asian and Pacific Islander Coalition Against War (APICAW) pamphlet: "Because Asian and Pacific Islander communities have experienced the bitter consequences of U.S. economic, political, and military intervention in our homelands, we must stand in solidarity with the Palestinian people who are being oppressed by the same forces" (229). What aim does this homogenizing of power serve? Is this the only basis for an effective solidarity?

24. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Scattered Speculations on the Question of Value," in *In Other Worlds* (New York: Methuen, 1987), 156.

25. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 54.

26. Ibid.

27. For instance, the work of Laclau and Mouffe, Harvey, Johnson Reagon, Žižek, Lorde, Anzaldúa, and others have all specifically shown how difference

can be a resource for resistance rather than a stumbling block. As Robin Kelly poses the problem: "How might people build class solidarity without suppressing or ignoring differences? How can we build on differences—by which I mean different kinds of oppressions as well as different identities—rather than in spite of them?" (*Yo' Mama's Disfunktional! Fighting the Culture Wars in Urban America* [Boston: Beacon, 1997], 122).

28. Hardt and Negri, *Empire*, 55.

29. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 157.

30. U.S. State Department, "National Strategy for Combating Terrorism," usinfo.state.gov/topical/pol/terror/strategy/ (accessed February 2003).

31. For a further analysis of this form of knowledge, see Jasbir K. Puar and Amit S. Rai, "Monster, Terrorist, Fag: The War on Terrorism and the Production of Docile Patriots," *Social Text*, no. 72 (2002), 117–49; and Amit S. Rai, "Of Monsters" (forthcoming in *Cultural Studies*).

32. The *New York Times*'s Alex Berenson, writing in the wake of the recent downing of an American helicopter in Fallujah, Iraq, acknowledges this shift from "know-thy-enemy" sciences of war to the more murky, and hence threatening, aspects of imperial occupation: "The attack followed a week of growing violence, with Iraqi civilians and officials as well as Americans attacked by insurgents whose identity, precise goals and means of coordination remain mysterious" ("Sixteen GIs Are Killed as Missile Attack Downs U.S. Copter," 3 November 2003). And in the article next to it: "Americans have been dying for months in Iraq, attacked by an enemy whose nature remains murky" (Richard Stevenson, "Public's Doubt vs. Bush Vows," 3 November 2003).

33. We have used this word *articulation* a lot, and we insist on it. We believe that what Stuart Hall did with Laclau's conception of articulation in his analysis of race has yet to be imagined concretely and politically. It is a praxis that still awaits us. See "Race, Articulations, and Societies Structured in Dominance," in *Sociological Theories: Race and Colonialism* (Paris: Unesco, 1980), 305–45; and Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics* (London and New York: Verso, 2001).

34. See Eyal Weizman, "The Politics of Verticality," *openDemocracy*, 25 April 2002, www.opendemocracy.net/debates/article.jsp?id=2&debateId=45&article Id=801; quoted in Achille Mbembe, "Necropolitics," *Public Culture* 15 (2003): 28.

35. Ibid., 16. Mbembe brilliantly elaborates on this macabre new politics thus: "The techniques of policing and discipline and the choice between obedience and simulation that characterized the colonial and postcolonial potentate are gradually being replaced by an alternative that is more tragic because more extreme. Technologies of destruction have become more tactile, more anatomical and sensorial, in a context in which the choice is between life and death. If power still depends on tight control over bodies (or on concentrating them in camps), the new technologies of destruction are less concerned with inscribing bodies within disciplinary apparatuses as inscribing them, when the time comes, within the order of the maximal economy now represented by the 'massacre'" (34).

36. In this document, the State Department declares: "Implementation of the U.S. Smart Borders Initiatives with Canada and Mexico, as well as the Third Border Initiative for the Caribbean Basin, address potential vulnerabilities in the

many critical physical and information-based infrastructures shared with our two North American allies. Moreover, the U.S. Government's comprehensive border management strategy will greatly enhance the ability of the United States to screen, verify and process the entry of people and goods into the country." See the State Department's "Fact Sheet: Terrorist Screening Center to be Operational by 1 December," 16 September 2003, usinfo.state.gov/topical/pol/terror/texts/03091603.htm: "The U.S. government is consolidating numerous terrorist screening mechanisms into a single, comprehensive, anti-terror watchlist that will be operational by 1 December 2003. In a press release dated 16 September, Attorney General John Ashcroft, Secretary of Homeland Security Tom Ridge, Secretary of State Colin Powell, FBI Director Robert Mueller, and Director of Central Intelligence George Tenet announced the establishment of the Terrorist Screening Center (TSC) to consolidate terrorist watchlists and provide 24-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week operational support for thousands of federal screeners across the country and around the world."

37. The war of ideas, indeed, extends both into current Pentagon practice and into current Indian foreign policy. Recently, the Pentagon held a screening of "The Battle of Algiers." Atul Behari Vajpayee, in a recent speech at the Asia Society in New York on India-U.S. relations in the emerging global environment (22 September 2003), repeated this phrase in his reaffirmation of India's commitment to the U.S.-led war on terrorism. He argued that India and the United States are "natural allies" and that "continued terrorist attacks around the world remind us that the global war against terrorism, which commenced after the tragedy of 9/11, is far from over. Our long-term strategy to combat it should have four broad elements: One, a concert of democracies acting in cohesion. A threat against one should be seen as a threat against all. Two, consistency of approach in demanding from all countries the same high standards in combating terrorism. Three, continuity of resolve, and clarity of purpose. We should not be drawn into the gray zone of conflicting policy objectives, which condone ambiguous positions on terrorism. Four, to win the war against terror, we have to win the war of ideas. We have to expand the constituency of democracy by promoting the ideals of freedom, democracy, rule of law and tolerance, which are our defining strengths" (outlookindia.com/full.asp?fodname=20030923&fname=vaj&sid=1). Significantly, as in the United States, these ideals are null and void in certain cases: for example, Kashmir, the Babri Masjid, Gujurat.

38. Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), 5.

39. François Ewald, "Insurance and Risk," in *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, eds. Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 199.

40. Randy Martin, *Financialization of Everyday Life* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2002), 105. "Risk is the rage in sociology, the thematics of which have been trotted out in a series of books by Ulrick Beck and a few more by Anthony Giddens (and another in collaboration). The emphasis is on the uncertainties of ecological and technological developments, where the imbrication of nature and culture through an array of practices such as genetic engineering and nuclear power poses the threat of catastrophe beyond the threshold" (106).

41. Ibid., 103.

42. See Homi K. Bhabha, *Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994);

and John Kraniauskas, "Hybridity in a Transnational Frame: Latin-Americanist and Postcolonial Perspectives on Cultural Studies," *Nepantla: Views from South* 1 (2000): 111–37.

43. The aftermath of the "mistakes" in Iraq could perhaps be better understood as intentional miscalculations, or opportune mistakes: "Jay Garner [American general in charge in Iraq] acknowledged that failings in the administration of the occupation had attracted foreign terrorists to Iraq to fight the coalition, but added: 'That's not all bad. Bring them all in there and we will kill them there.'" Jim Gomez, "General Admits to U.S. Errors Over Iraq," *Glasgow Herald*, 27 November 2003.

44. See Martin, *Financialization of Everyday Life*, 111; and Deborah Lupton, *Risk* (London: Routledge, 1999); Mary Douglas and Aaron Wildavsky, *Risk and Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983); Niklas Luhmann, *Risk: A Sociological Theory* (New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1993); Frank Knight, *Risk, Uncertainty, and Profit* (New York: Augustus Kelley, 1964); Ursula K. Heise, "Toxins, Drugs, and Global Systems: Risk and Narrative in the Contemporary Novel," *American Literature* 74 (2002): 758–59.

45. New technology research in data transfer rates on computer circuit boards is being funded by the military. "On Tuesday, Sun [Microsystems] researchers plan to report that they have discovered a way to transmit data inside a computer much more quickly than current techniques allow. By placing the edge of one chip directly in contact with its neighbor, it may be possible to move data sixty to one hundred times as fast as the present top speeds. For the computer industry, the advance— if it can be repeated on the assembly line—would be truly revolutionary. . . . The new technology is being developed as part of a military-financed supercomputer effort. But Sun executives said they were seeking ways to find commercial uses quickly for a future generation of computer systems" (John Markoff, "New Sun Microsystems Chip May Unseat the Circuit Board," *New York Times*, 22 September 2003).

46. "Sexuality is inextricably linked to violence and to the dissolution of the boundaries of the body and self by way of orgiastic and excremental impulses. As such, sexuality concerns two major forms of polarized human impulses—excretion and appropriation—as well as the regime of the taboos surrounding them. The truth of sex and its deadly attributes reside in the experience of loss of the boundaries separating reality, events, and fantasized objects" (Georges Bataille, quoted in Mbembe, "Necropolitics," 15).

47. Judith Butler, "Sexual Inversions: Rereading the End of Foucault's *History of Sexuality, Vol. I*," in *Discourses of Sexuality: From Aristotle to AIDS*, ed. Domna C. Stanton (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992), 344–61.

48. Sianne Ngai, "'A Foul Lump Started Making Promises in My Voice': Race, Affect, and the Animated Subject," *American Literature* 74 (2002): 572–73. Ngai notes that such expectations of affect were "epitomized in figures ranging from Harriet Beecher Stowe's ebullient *Topsy* (1852) to Warner Brothers' hyperactive Speedy Gonzales (who first emerged in the 1950s)" (572).

49. Mbembe, "Necropolitics," 14, 36.