Article

Decoding Dress: Countersurveillance Poetics and Practices Under Permanent War

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Abstract

In the wake of renewed attacks on both Muslim and Sikh communities, the hijab and turban continue to be enveloped as important material objects in the racialization of Muslim and Sikh bodies. Analyzing contemporary visual culture as both testament and counter-archive to a geopolitical project of Islamophobia, this article moves to both assemble and update how these unsettling figures are read and apprehended by statist forces and how they inventively resist such forms of scrutiny. Comparative in scope, I look at the racial, gendered, and queer configurations that the religious symbols and objects of hijab and turban provide. Specifically, this article examines the twinned contradictions in arguments around religious freedom, as well as the imperialist discourses of security and insurgency in the ongoing Global Wars on Terror. Through readings of recent events, ephemera, and visual culture, this article argues that the aligned politics of recognition of these two bodies has important effects for the racial, gendered, and sexual politics of American empire.

Introduction

Illegitimate as it may be, the Electoral College victory of Donald Trump in the 2016 United States presidential race sent a clear message that quickly emboldened those ready to act on their simmering racist, homophobic, misogynist, and xenophobic urges. According to the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC 2017), there were over 1,094 bias-related incidents reported between November 9 and December 12, 2016. According to the SPLC's data, these incidents were reported to be anti-immigrant, anti-black, anti-Muslim, anti-LGBT, or anti-woman, in this order. Specifically examining the post-election climate through social media, the SPLC published a report, "Anti-Muslim sentiment dominated extremist Twitter accounts following the election," wherein they linked this "attack on political correctness" to the emergence of a large number of hate incidents targeting Muslims (Piggot 2016). Islamophobic targeting, harassment, and harm are certainly not new insofar as such practices often ignore the long history of black Muslim America. Nevertheless, Islamophobia appears as contemporary through the politically charged climate following the attacks of September 11, 2001, as well as the ongoing violence wrought by the Global Wars on Terror targeting Muslims and Muslim-adjacent populations.¹ Still worth noting, however, is that in the wake of the

¹ The "Islamophobia is Racism" syllabus (Khabeer, n.d.) usefully chronicles and collates materials related to the long history of anti-Muslim racism in the US and the West, broadly speaking; see that the online syllabus includes a section on "Anti-Black Racism and Anti-Muslim Racism in the US," which includes many scholarly works. I use the term "Muslim-adjacent" to identify all those who often fall under the rubric of Muslim and Muslim-ness through racial and religious proximity, via brownness and blackness, religion and religious dress (or "garb"), citizenship, language, nationality, gender and sexuality, class, and so forth. Often "Muslim-adjacent" includes a wide swath of black and brown bodies, Sikhs, South Asians, Arabs, Africans, and so on.

recent elections, hate incidents and crimes rose to levels even higher than after 9/11; this fact may be due to the wide swath of targets that Trump supporters were animated to act against (Nguyen 2017; Harris 2017).

Notable, however, were a string of Islamophobic incidents targeting Muslim women who wear hijab. Based on the intersecting prejudices of those harassing, harming, and violating, these incidents often occurred in public spaces and as minor spectacles: city streets, public buses and metros, and college campuses across the US. The level of intimidation and terror vary, but they reveal a renewed affront to Muslims and Muslim women in particular, setting a frightening precedent for the years to come. The current administration's policies and ideologies have set into motion state-sanctioned exclusion that propels the enactment of public and vigilante forms of violation and violence for Muslim bodies.

Recently, incidents in May 2017 in Portland, Oregon, and in June 2017 in Sterling, Virginia, have been noted examples of Islamophobic violence. In Portland, 35-year-old white nationalist Jeremy Joseph Christian stabbed and killed two men and injured another, all white, for intervening in his racist verbal assault of two teen girls, one black and one hijabi Muslim, on a light rail train (Haag and Fortin 2017). In Sterling, 22-year-old Salvadorean Darwin Martinez Torres attacked 17-year-old Nabra Hassanen with a baseball bat, later abducting, assaulting, and killing her at a nearby pond (Eleftheriou-Smith 2017). Hassanen's death was particularly horrifying as it came at the end of Ramadan. It took place after a group of over a dozen Muslim female friends, many wearing hijab and *abaya*—including Hassanen—were leaving the All Dulles Area Muslim Society (ADAMS) Center Mosque to get food from a local fast food restaurant late at night on June 17, 2017. In what police deemed a “road rage” incident, Torres had got in an argument with one of the members of the group as he was driving and ended up exiting his car with a baseball bat; the group of friends scattered to escape Torres's attack, though Hassanen was not able to get away (Jouvenal and Zauzmer 2017). At this time, Hassanen's death is not being ruled a hate crime, which Muslim civil rights groups understand as particularly misguided; moreover, there is an ongoing investigation into whether Hassanen was sexually assaulted by Torres prior to her death (Shugerman 2017).

The social media campaign #JusticeforNabra and the many vigils and memorial events held following her death in late June 2017 have shown the wide reverberations her brutal murder have had on Muslims living in the US, as well as on those consciously against Islamophobia and its ceaseless violence. Despite the fact that this particular murder did not involve a white perpetrator, the dual logics of Islamophobia and white supremacy are never solely dictated by whiteness but are rather ideological, disseminated globally and consumed by all. There is no proper immunity from such dominant ideologies outside of rigorous and ongoing anti-racist practice. These incidents are further evidence in the ongoing violence and death of various racialized and gendered bodies: an acceleration in the forms and expressions of Islamophobia, misogyny, racism, and masculine rage as they consolidate under regimes of white nationalism and imperialism—a clear cornerstone of the rise of the global right.

It should be noted that the years following the attacks in the United States on September 11, 2001, have been consumed by the imperial occupation of countries including Iraq and Afghanistan, known more officially as the Global Wars on Terror. The violence wrought both on foreign soil and within the US might be better understood as premised on the effects of global Islamophobia. Still, it should be noted that this span of almost two decades has seen permutations and transformations in what these forms of ideological and material violence take and how these forms of violence appear. From the presidencies of Bush, Obama, and now Trump, the US has engaged in forms of detention, imprisonment, surveillance, and drone wars abroad. It has also continued to create registration programs, unofficial “Muslim bans,” and has tolerated forms of harm on Muslim and Sikh communities and spaces such as mosques and gurdwaras. This large continuum has evolved and transformed under different governing regimes, with the most noticeable spike happening following the election of Trump in late 2016.

In this article, through comparative and relational analyses of hijab and turban, I contend that empire and Islamophobia are fundamentally structured by gendered and queer optics. I study both the hijab and turban, the Muslim and the Sikh, the gendered feminine and masculine, as separate but twinned figures of social

disorganization. Through looking or apprehending, it becomes possible to see how the hijab and turban each disorganize and create forms of disruption within the public sphere. Especially in terms of gender and sexuality, both forms of headdress defy normative boundaries of the body and are often targets of suspicion for their very opacity and illegibility. As such, Islamophobic and xenophobic forces on the right apprehend their gender and sexual identity as questionable and duplicitous (Puar and Rai 2002; Magnet and Mason 2014; Moallem 2005). What is more, such fantasies of duplicity are not limited to those on the global right and have been disseminated and embedded globally through Islamophobic campaigns both overt and subtle. I argue that the circulation of such fantasies is quintessential to reading the queer optics of both hijab and turban.

Significant to the large terrain and continuum of Islamophobic violence and harm since 2001, Jasbir Puar (2007) outlines the processes of this form of racial profiling in a chapter specifically devoted to the bodily comportment of the turbaned Sikh in her pathbreaking monograph *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times*.² She reads the turban as a queer signifier that accrued the monstrous “marks of terrorist masculinity,” finding in such an object a “counterpart to veils” (175, 181). Puar’s analysis makes suggestive moves toward comparative and relational analyses of the turban and hijab, especially in unpacking and rightly critiquing the Islamophobic “mistaken identity” narrative pushed by some Sikh civil rights organizations earlier in the ongoing era of the Global Wars on Terror (187). Moreover, there is a vast and exciting body of contemporary scholarship at the intersection of race, surveillance, and Islam. Most recently, Saher Selod’s (2018) monograph *Forever Suspect* focuses on the racialized surveillance of Muslims since 9/11 using ethnographic interviews. Given that there are numerous scholars with which to engage, my argument here builds on the nearly two decades of work at such a nexus, while also centering the figure of the Sikh as a twinned but asymmetrical form that offers other modes of conceptualizing surveillance through both the politics of the body and of visibility.³ Much of the scholarship at this particular nexus is broadly concerned with policing and prisons; calls for registration and “Muslim ban” executive orders; FBI and law enforcement surveillance; and what Selod names “citizen surveillance.”

With this in mind, the use of both visibility as method and the framing term of Islamophobia are integral to my approach. Visibility and visual culture are generative modalities in which to study Islamophobia insofar as my work centers dress, specifically the objects of hijab and turban. While I am invested in these objects as they are attached to bodies, reading these materials through what Nicholas Mirzeoff (2011) names “military-industrial visibility,” a methodological tool in which to think through, on one hand, how the hijab and turban are signs and symbols that have gained an accelerating significance and how on the other hand, race and racialization have always been composed of signs, symbols, and signifiers under contemporary conditions of permanent war. In other words, my reading of the hijab and turban as quintessential to the racialization of religion is underscored by my reading race as an overwhelmingly visual practice. Visibility, therefore, opens up the domain for reading these two uniquely twinned objects as racial signs deployed and assigned meaning by a variety of agents, producers, and media (Abu-Lughod 1986, 2013; Ahmed 2012; Chopra 2011; Grewal 2017; Singh 1993, 2005). For my purposes, I examine the ways these objects have been deployed as part of our contemporary social, cultural, and political terrain of waning neoliberal multiculturalism, ascending white supremacy, robust global social movements, and increased imperial security regimes.

I take both transnational feminist and queer studies approaches to the study of the visual and material culture of Islamophobia. In situating clothing and the fashioning of the body as my focus, I argue that dress is part

² Puar’s (2007) book and her articles preceding it were some of the earliest to examine Sikh racialization amidst and within the context of twenty-first century Islamophobia. Other authors whose works also examine Sikhs post-9/11 include Inderpal Grewal (2014), Sunaina Maira (2014, 2016), Nadine Naber (2008), and Louise Cainkar (2011).

³ Such scholars including Zareena Grewal (2012), Moustafa Bayoumi (2015), Louise Cainkar (2011), Erik Love (2017), Hisham Aidi (2014), Muneer Ahmad (2011), Arun Kundani (2014), Evelyn Alsultany (2012), and Nadine Naber (2008), among others, have been major and ongoing contributors to the literature on race, surveillance, and Islam—especially as it intersects with studies on citizenship, media, law, and policy.

of the terrain of our endless wars, and that it shapes the discourse and everyday realities of ongoing imperial projects and occupations. What war looks like now, both domestically and globally, operates as distinctly different in terms of the physical agents of war—human and inhuman, technological and infrastructural. Quintessential to the logic of contemporary wars, moreover, is security through counterterrorism; in other words, security means everything when the threat is characterized by the spontaneity and spectacle of terror. Brown and black bodies are forced to comport and comply to statist surveillance and security apparatuses; Muslims and those presumed Muslim—like Sikhs—in the US are scrutinized, disciplined, and violated under the guise of national security. Using a feminist approach to the study of occupation and empire, I specifically center dress as a way to understand that what might appear neutral in the terrain of war often functions to highlight and amplify otherness, to make known axes of difference and lines of affiliation. Forms of religious dress, specifically the Muslim hijab and Sikh turban, at once sacred and thing, are targeted objects as part of unrelenting Islamophobia in this age of terror.

Using these frames, I theorize dress as the inscription of gender on the body and how such logics have proven especially complex since the commencement of the Global Wars on Terror. Both feminist theorists and queer studies scholars have dealt with the endless contradictions that have emerged and continue to emerge given the wartime logics at play in the US and elsewhere, especially as this has and continues to affect Muslims and those presumed Muslim through domestic race wars and long-standing occupation in West Asia by the American military (Bayoumi 2015; Chan-Malik 2018; Kumar 2012; Love 2017; Maira 2016; Silva 2016). My intervention poses new questions about how to creatively reckon with these conditions as they morph and mutate, given both a growing global right and technological advancement in methods of surveillance and defense. Furthermore, confronting these developments is a decidedly feminist issue insofar as it requires us to take seriously the often intimate and everyday practices of dress, comportment, and navigation of life under ever-intensifying and accelerating conditions. The ethical challenge of confronting multiple forces of oppression and conditions of global violence is always already a feminist question.⁴

I divide this essay in four parts, with the focus of four different visual objects of study, using cultural studies methods. My focus on cultural production as a site of oppositional possibility in relation to conditions of violent enclosure by the state here is especially informed by Simone Browne's (2015: 21) crucial study, *Dark Matters*.⁵ In this essay, the objects move from examples and forms of surveillance to examples of countersurveillance. Such an order allows for a logic that moves from what is symptomatic of contemporary surveillance regimes to examples of oppositional forms to said regimes.

Each object takes on a very different form and style. The first section examines the "Turban Primer," an ephemeral visual object responding to a violent attack on Sikhs at a Wisconsin gurdwara in 2012. The second section analyzes two posters produced through a collaboration between the Department of Homeland Security, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), and both Muslim and Sikh civil rights organizations, wherein they show images of forms of Muslim and Sikh head covering and attendant notes on how to screen those donning such headdress. The third section studies two poems from Solmaz Sharif's critically lauded 2016 volume, *Look*, a work that challenges how to understand US militarism as

⁴ I take on the study of Muslims and Sikhs not in terms of religious philosophies but rather to situate how the dominant practice of reading these particular bodies through types and profiles has become a technology of surveillance. I reckon with the technologies of reading Muslim and Sikh bodies through attending to the deeply gendered modes of expression such attachments take. As such, I am especially indebted to contemporary scholarship in queer and transgender studies and surveillance, as I take heed of Toby Beauchamp's (2019) theorizing gender anew under contemporary security regimes.

⁵ In particular, Browne's (2015:21) concept of dark sousveillance, defined as a "way to situate the tactics employed to render one's self out of sight...[plotting] imaginaries that are oppositional and are hopeful for another way of being." Browne is clear that such a concept is a "site of critique" insofar as it "speaks to black epistemologies of contending with antiblack surveillance," especially as she sites its origins in the flight to freedom from slavery. I also take heed of Kara Keeling's (2007) use of culture and cultural production as a site of strategic resistance insofar as it seeks to respond, however indirectly, as an oppositional form to hegemonic discourse and ideology.

depersonalized, especially in the ongoing Global Wars on Terror. The fourth section investigates the ongoing anti-surveillance clothing line “Stealth Wear” by artist Adam Harvey (2012), constituted of pieces that deflect drone surveillance’s focus on human heat signatures.

With these four central objects of analysis, this essay invests in interdisciplinary cultural studies methods of reading and deconstructing diverse and asymmetrical objects illustrative of the wide range of work engaging dress, surveillance, and body politics for both Muslims and Sikhs within the context of contemporary US imperial occupation. I conclude by synthesizing the various visual material and ephemera to more precisely define how we can read Muslim and Sikh bodies both under and against the machinations of contemporary war and military–industrial visibility.

On Decoding Friend and Enemy

On August 5, 2012, Wade Michael Page opened fire on the Oak Creek, Wisconsin, gurdwara or Sikh house of worship. He killed six members of the congregation before shooting himself after being cornered by a responding police officer (Yaccino, Schwartz, and Santora 2012). On August 6, 2012, Chicago-based daily publication, *RedEye*, included a “Turban Primer” under an article covering the previous day’s attack in Oak Creek by Page (Shareef 2012). Various captions are included—for Sikh men, Iranian leaders, Taliban members, Indian men, Muslim religious leaders. These images are not photographs but illustrations of these various types of turbaned men. These images are supposed to represent and render legible entire communities. However, the primer might be understood better as an attempt to delineate and disaggregate the turbaned body, noting difference as a way of distinguishing good and bad turbaned subjects ranging from the Sikh man to the Taliban member. In this way, the primer presents a lateral configuration of turbaned masculine figures, the captions revealing no clear hierarchical structure of turbaned friend and turbaned enemy. Furthermore, this image conveys that the collapsing and mistaking of various turbaned figures is plausible if not easily understood. Following the attack on the Oak Creek gurdwara, this image serves a clear purpose: know your friends but know your enemies better; in this scheme, the Sikh is portrayed as a new friend—specifically, a new friend to US empire as it functions as a global security state. This narrative of mistaken identity and of new friendship, however, elides a much longer history of anti-Sikh discourses that can be traced to the first decades of the twentieth century.⁶

Still, the “Turban Primer” stands as a lesser-known yet quintessential example of the visual and imagistic ephemera that appear as extensions of long-standing American xenophobia, Orientalism, and Islamophobia (Kamrani 2007; Kishawi 2012). It appears as a contemporary iteration of racial and racist categorization: any attempts at subtlety are misleading, as it is easy to quickly deduce who the audience is supposed to accept and reject. The primer’s undertaking as an educational project of sorts, one in which the process of acceptance and rejection is key, only works if the reader or viewer is able to see the profile created and naturalize the image into their mental energies of perception. The reading of particular bodies, specifically the headdress of these five “types” of turbaned male subjects, is about the ongoing effort to naturalize who belongs and is welcome, worthy of citizenship and sympathy, and who is to be excluded, worthy of expulsion and antipathy. Nevertheless, this effort by *RedEye* ultimately collapses these figures insofar as these differences are inaccurate and misleading, failing to reflect the variety of styles of turbans worn by Sikhs, Muslims, and an entire host of peoples spanning North Africa, West Asia, and South Asia.

⁶ The South Asian American Digital Archive (<https://www.saada.org/>) has a vast collection of documents exhibiting the early decades of the twentieth century as particularly difficult for Sikhs arriving in the US and Canadian west coast, including Agnes Foster Buchanan (1908), Annette Thackwell Johnson (1922), Fred Lockley (1907), and Herman Scheffauer (1910). It should be noted as well that many Punjabi Sikh migrants, the majority of the South Asian migrant population in the North American West, were referred to as Hindus by mainstream sources and discourse.

Figure 1: *Turban Primer*, *Chicago RedEye*, August 6, 2012

As such, the harm in the “Turban Primer” lies in its centering of brown bodies as the public face of both the internal and external terrorist threat. This perpetuation of the “Muslim terrorist” or “radical Islamic organizations” as the largest threat to Americans is unequivocally false, reflecting the clear Islamophobic undertones of the composite image. Through the primer, we see how, as a response to Islamophobic vigilante violence, there exists a desire to create, to organize, and to order the overwhelmingly heterogeneous form of headdress. By using inconsistent and misleading titles such as national origin as well as religious and sectarian difference, the primer lends itself to redirecting Islamophobic targeting: as in, this style of turban carries with it a predisposition to militancy and religious extremism, whereas this other style of turban denotes a tolerable presence of religious and minoritarian difference. The delineation of figures such as Sikh, Iranian, Taliban, Indian, and Muslim, as well as men, leaders, members, and religious elders, desires to produce and amplify the difference and diversity of turban styles and their associations with various national, religious, and cultural ideologies, when in fact it only serves to flatten the almost limitless heterogeneity of turban styles as well as the bodies to which they are attached.

As a primer, this object is meant to be didactic: it is to teach a Western English-speaking public how to “read” brown and seemingly foreign bodies, by creating narratives from the language of religious wear. If one understands fashion as a social coding of the body, then the turban here is an assemblage of religious, racial, and gendered codes. But how to decipher such codes? The primer articulates the turban through the narrative of the Global Wars on Terror: deciphering the code here means narrating which turbaned bodies appear as friend or enemy. In addition, the turbaned body is gendered as male and masculine alone, excluding the ways that Sikh women wear turbans and ignoring the turban-styled hijab that many Muslim women around the world wear. The primer leaves no room for heterogeneity and non-normativity beyond the masculine, the religious, and the regional, coding the turban in ways that deny its increasingly global ubiquity. Leaving out the feminine in particular demonstrates the primary limitation of the primer as something hastily constructed as response, situated in its time and place, as ephemeral.

The appearance of the “Turban Primer” in the wake of the attack on the Oak Creek, Wisconsin, gurdwara grapples with how to differentiate friend and enemy, however largely unsuccessful it is in its attempt. In these sketches and profiles, there is only further proliferation of imperialist ideologies centered around Islamophobic securitization discourses. The violation of a sacred site and the targeted murder of Sikhs

should not have resulted in this ephemeral turban primer, wherein readers are given poor and divisive lessons in (the faces and turban styles of) who to deem benign and who to deem threat. The primary failure of the primer lies in its perpetuation of the “mistaken identity” narrative that Sikhs have predominantly shed to both rightfully acknowledge that the targeting of Sikhs is part of the greater racial calculus of Islamophobia and does little to righteously stand in solidarity with both black and brown Muslims fighting the racism and xenophobia at the core of Islamophobia (Prashad 2014).

Given that Sikhs have faced forms of discrimination, detention, violence, and death since 9/11, the “Turban Primer” represents at best a rudimentary attempt at capturing vague profiles of turbaned masculine figures in the wake of tragedy; at worst, it operates as an offensive regurgitation of statist tropes that perpetuates an idea of vigilance around deciphering who is and who cannot be linked to terrorism. While the latter idea leaves room to read some kind of progress between 2001 and 2012 in terms of who gets targeted for Islamophobic violence, it is not as though this primer was created with care: in the *RedEye*’s attempt to classify and design a taxonomy of turbans, it represents an intensification of racial, gendered, and imperial overtones embedded in the collateral damage of the US’s war on terror, of which Oak Creek is certainly a part.

On Domestic (In)Security

I move now from the ephemeral “Turban Primer”—a response to the precarity and domestic war on terror facing Sikhs—to the ongoing security practices that actively surveil Muslims, Sikhs, and other brown bodies. The clear and mandated increase in measures of domestic security in the United States following the attacks on September 11, 2001, drastically transformed the process of air travel. In the last almost two decades, the airport has become a site fraught with levels of state control and securitization that are now normalized. The measures at American airports certainly do not actively compete with levels of securitization at certain checkpoints, ports of entry, or national borders. Still, the recent iterations of what has been referred to as a Muslim ban, barring those predominantly from Muslim-majority countries flying to and from airports in the US, sets another accelerating and alarming new precedent in homeland security strategy. As is well-known by now, the possibility of departure lies solely at the discretion of the TSA, whose security measures have only increased, with full body scanners for all, and full and partial body pat downs for some. Most notable is the TSA’s SPOT (Screening Passengers by Observation Technique) Program, developed in 2007, now called “Behavioral Detection and Analysis.” SPOT provided another aspect of homeland security strategy, rationalizing secondary screenings (Selod 2018: 74) Secondary screenings are often reserved for bodies outside of whiteness: brown and black bodies dressed with turban or hijab, or other headdress denoting religious affiliation, as well as for black bodies and particularly those sporting natural hair.⁷

The secondary screening process is out of view for those traveling and passing through security checkpoints with relative ease. This screening process is often privately, rather than publicly, humiliating. The added burden on travelers who don religious head covers have been so normalized and routine, many schedule extra time before their flight in the likely case that they are pulled aside. Due to the slow phasing out of metal detectors, which offer a much simpler mode of screening, the reliance on the now common Advanced Imaging Technology scanners—better known as AIT machines—often results in extended first screenings

⁷ The long life of scrutiny and surveillance that Muslims in the US have faced since 9/11 has seen a variety of official policies that often manifest at the airport or at national borders. The roots of such official policies take shape in the *USA PATRIOT (Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism) Act* of 2001. The following policies came later, including NSEERS (National Security Entry-Exit Registration System) of 2002; under Obama, CVE (Countering Violent Extremism) Task Force; and under Trump, the unofficial and revised Trump travel ban, restricting citizens of eight different countries, six of which are Muslim-majority. These policies reflect the official and unofficial policies since 9/11, but the targeting at the airport and border sites operates as performing such security in a daily or routinized manner, which Browne names “security theater” and what Selod (2018) details in her chapter “Flying While Muslim” in her monograph, *Forever Suspect*.

through pat downs and/or a “Scan with Metal Detecting Wand,” as well as “Hand Swab Tests,” or secondary, private screenings. The TSA goes through special training for screening religious headdress, and there are specific processes for both Muslims and Sikhs, respectively. Though there are exceptions for those who are approved and pay for the TSA’s Pre-Check program, the TSA’s now regularized tactics still often amount to racial profiling. The civil rights of frequently targeted passengers, such as those hijabi and turbaned bodies, are often left to be handled by civil rights organizations such as the Sikh Coalition and the Council on American-Islamic Relations or CAIR. The Sikh Coalition’s (2009) “Sikh Traveler Bill of Rights” guide lays out the procedures specifically for the Sikh turban, noting that due to the AIT machine’s inability to “see through the layers of a standard Sikh turban,” secondary screenings should be understood as routine and figured into the turbaned Sikh’s travel time. Guided by the TSA, the Sikh Coalition’s language here, as well as through much of the guide, is matter-of-fact and in accordance with the TSA and the greater Department of Homeland Security’s insistence that the body must be wholly legible and readable. In other words, to be “legible and readable,” the body must be “laid bare and penetrable” (Hall 2015). In the eyes of the security state, it does not care that for those donning religious cover, these objects are not objects but part of the body, extensions of their very selves in relation to the divine.

Common Sikh American Head Coverings

Sikhism is a religion that originated in South Asia during the 15th Century and is distinct from both Islam and Hinduism. For religious reasons, practicing Sikhs do not cut their hair. Sikh men wrap and knot their long hair with a turban called a *pagri* (see photo a), a practice that typically takes 10-15 minutes. Sikh boys wrap their hair in a smaller under-turban called a *patka*, with their hair knotted on top of their head (photo b). Some Sikh women also wear turbans (photo c); however, many wear a cloth called a *chunni* to cover their head (photo d).

Points to keep in mind when searching someone wearing a Sikh head covering:

- Show RESPECT
- Explain why you need to conduct search
- Offer private room for search if available
- Searches should be conducted by a screener of the same gender as the passenger being searched

a. Man with pagri

b. Boy with patka

c. Woman with pagri

d. Woman with chunni

**Transportation
Security
Administration**

Produced by the Department of Homeland Security, Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties
in conjunction with the Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, 2005.
Images and descriptions of Sikh head coverings provided by Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund (SALDEF).

Figure 2: “Common Sikh American Head Coverings,” (TSA [2005] 2016). Clockwise from the left, collage of pictures includes four pictures of typical Sikh head coverings: Picture 1: Man with pagri; Picture 2: Boy with patka; Picture 3: Woman with pagri; Picture 4: Woman with chunni.

This notion, related to Puar's (2008) assertion that the turban can be understood as an appendage, aids in understanding how the non-normative construction of the body for both Sikhs who don the turban and Muslims who don the hijab is always already troubling. It becomes a way of thinking about how these bodies are read outside of normativity as, on one hand, racialized and religious, and on the other hand, gendered and sexualized. That is to say that both the Sikh and Muslim forms of cover are often apprehended as suspicious objects, objects of concealment, of queerness, and potentially of gender disguise. For example, post-9/11, Sikh cisgender men who don the turban have been violently attacked, centering on the turban as an overdetermined sign of foreignness, while facing homophobic comments and threats; Muslim women who don forms of head or bodily cover are perceived as hiding a typically feminine feature such as hair and are targeted and pathologized by the global right-wing as deviant on several fronts.⁸ The queer optics of Sikh and Muslim bodily comportment exemplifies how these separate but twinned figures are understood by the state and by its various violent vigilante agents as suspect on multiple axes of intersectional difference.

Furthermore, in analyzing this practical relationship of mobility and travel with Muslim and Sikh headdress, it is important to note how these practices of racial profiling place the politics of the body, dress, and gender at the very center. For example, the special training that TSA agents must undergo are accompanied by two posters that are meant to educate and instruct based on the varieties of Muslim and Sikh head coverings, with imperatives for respect in handling passengers donning religious headdress. Titled "Common Muslim American Head Coverings" and "Common Sikh American Head Coverings," these posters are aimed at being instructive and useful in performing extended searches. They vary in the particularity of head cover and gender, to create a profile of how to spot Muslim women and men and Sikh women and men. The posters are specifically normative in the gendered appearance and in declaring such bodies "Muslim American" and "Sikh American," most remarkably excluding other predominantly female Muslim forms of dress including the chador, niqab, and burqa. The lists of the collage of pictures include the Muslim and Sikh head coverings, respectively.

Both of these sets of descriptions come from the first page of the file, found on the TSA's website, which use the proper and most common names for the various articles of faith. Through the use of nationalist colors and the image of the flag directly beneath the heading, the posters attempt to create a gloss over how to identify these designated faith groups, deploying mostly smiling faces. Notable in both posters is the clear use of red, white, and blue for the articles of faith and even the backgrounds of the photos in all but one of the images. Let's take a closer look at the bottom image in Figure 3: "Picture 3: Muslim woman with plain scarf." This image incorporates a red- and white-striped background to invoke the flag once more. The cues for its intended audience, TSA agents in training, are clear: agents are to read the covered heads of these particular bodies through the multiculturalist lens of nationalist hospitality. The kind of hospitality invoked here is one predicated on the suggestion of these Muslim, Sikh, Arab, and South Asian faces as amiable, shrouded by the colors of the flag, and friends of and within the US: that is to say that these are acceptable bodies within the borders of the nation-state. These photos and the composition of the poster itself are necessarily strategic on behalf of the collaboration of the Department of Homeland Security with Muslim and Sikh civil rights organizations including the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) and the Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund (SALDEF).

⁸ See again Magnet and Mason's (2014) article. It should also be noted that right-wing trolls across the globe have used the figure of the veiled or hijabi Muslim woman as symbolic of gender disguise and sexual suspicion: most recently, this has played out through the American conservative response to progressive, black, Muslim Congresswomen Ilhan Omar (Democrat – Minnesota). This misogynistic and transphobic trope has played out across social media platforms too numerous to count and happens across the globe, though most notably in North America, Europe, and Australia.

Figure 3: “Common Muslim American Head Coverings,” (TSA [2005] 2016) Clockwise from center top, collage includes five pictures of typical Muslim head coverings: Picture 1: Muslim woman with decorated scarf; Picture 2: Muslim man with kufi; Picture 3: Muslim woman with plain scarf; Picture 4: Muslim girl with hijab; Picture 5: Muslim girl with hijab.

The instructional portion of the posters comes in the form of the text following a short paragraph on the Muslim and Sikh faiths, briefly outlining religious origins and added detail about the practices of their respective forms of religious headdress. The bullet points on the left in the posters include these four points:

- Show RESPECT
- Explain why you need to conduct search
- Offer private room if available
- Searches should only be conducted by a screener of the same gender as the passenger being searched

These instructions detail the subjective technologies at work behind the airport’s security theater (Browne 2015: 105). This is clear and disproportionate targeting of those whose racial and visual calculus is derived from being Muslim or proximate to “Muslim-ness.” While the US has now been witness to an official policy informally referred to as a “Muslim ban,” despite the lack of any real or current threat of those targeted, the

level of perceived threat continues to be a paranoid and constant citation of the 2001 attacks. This continually revitalized network of race, visibility, and security makes Islamophobia “common sense.”

What is more, through these objects, in their attachment to and extension of particular bodies, there is a demand for respect in their handling by the TSA. Where technology fails to read these dressed bodies, the human agent must intervene for proper handling. However, the impossibility of propriety, privacy, and care is what is always already at stake in the wars that the US wages on its own soil, in the name of security (Browne 2015; Selod 2018). One can see this, too, most acutely in global arguments around religious freedom and secularism. Most notably, there are the ongoing debates and policies banning religious symbols and forms of dress in places including Quebec and France. In France, where the ban of all “conspicuous religious symbols” is official policy in primary and secondary schools, and the broader public policy blocking of all forms of “face-covering,” the enforcement of secularism is through the practice of unfreedom (Fernando 2014; Scott 2010). The invocation of religious freedom as the right to not welcome or serve particular bodies and communities in the US is exemplary of freedom with violence as well. As such, these cases show how religious freedom as common sense and a fundamental human right serves only to widen the scope of already vulnerable bodies.

On Destabilizing Distance

In March 2018, the US marked the fifteenth anniversary of the American invasion of Iraq. As the centerpiece and mainstay of the Global Wars on Terror, the occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan are among the longest wars in US history. Linking the pulls of nationalism in readings of both Muslim and Sikh headdress, I pivot now to more broadly interrogate how to think through these clothing and body politics as a meaningful part of the language and political realities of these endless wars. As such, I move from examining formal surveillance practices to turn to cultural production that operates in opposition, or as countersurveillance, to the hegemonic practice of surveillance. To this end, I turn to the poetry of Iranian-American poet and scholar Solmaz Sharif. Born in Turkey but raised in the US, Sharif’s 2016 book of poetry *Look* was a finalist for the National Book Award and has been critically lauded for its creative and political vitality. *Look* centers the act of seeing, confronting, reckoning, and accounting for war through language, centering the ongoing Wars on Terror. In the slim but rich volume, she inventively uses the 2007 edition of US Department of Defense’s *Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* to incorporate and make visible the language used by the DoD and American military to describe and catalog the acts, agents, victims, and minutiae of war as it has affected Sharif and her family in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. A term defined by the DoD as “a period in which a mine circuit is receptive of an influence,” *Look*, the title of Sharif’s volume, recognizes and confronts the violence of contemporary American war and occupation as imperial pursuits highly detached in method, while wedded to its technical and visual apparatuses (Sharif 2016).

Furthermore, using poetry expands the body of cultural work and production that examines the war on terror, as well as on war broadly speaking. The wide circulation and praise of *Look* also nods to the innovation of Sharif’s work in this haunting volume. For my purposes here, this work of poetry creatively engages the questions of American imperial occupation through war in ways that center new modes of affectively understanding minor experiences of war. Still, this is a war at home, against its internal others—most especially through the experience of race, specifically brownness. As an Iranian-American poet, Sharif’s insights generatively demonstrate the effects of nation—specifically within the context of West Asia as always already racialized as (internal) enemy.

While Sharif’s text does not deal explicitly with either hijab or turban, it does have us think about the question of dress, sexuality, and queerness through the symbolism of contemporary war, specifically drone warfare. Further, Sharif’s poetry makes the language of warmongering intimate and human, while using, refusing, and queering the DoD’s terms from the start. In distancing the DoD’s definition of a term from itself, in making it unfamiliar, the terms appear as non-normative. For those unfamiliar with the DoD’s definitions in the first place, it may be possible to understand such terms only through our own common or familiar definitions. However, given the overwhelming normative function of the military in the American

context, as a major part of a national identity and symbol of strength, Sharif's usage is subversive in its anti-war motivations. By defamiliarizing these particular terms in her poems, estranging them from what might be understood of these capitalized terms, she purposely uses the language of US militarism and might as a mode of wholly shifting what can be understood as a pole of normative national identity. In the first poem, entitled "Look," Sharif asserts, "It matters what you call a thing." The titular poem invokes both what brown bodies commonly know to be true about the Global Wars on Terror with the intimate and violent interpersonal encounters wrought by relentless violence:

It matters what you call a thing: *Exquisite* a lover called me.
Exquisite.

Whereas *Well, if I were from your culture, living in this country,*
said the man outside the 2004 Republican National
Convention, *I would put up with that for this country;*

Whereas I felt the need to clarify: You would put up with
TORTURE, you mean and he proclaimed: *Yes;*

Whereas what is your life;

In reading the first four stanzas, Sharif sets up important connections between the ravages and realities of contemporary war with the nationalist rhetoric at home in the US. These stanzas present the quotidian acts of racist, misogynistic, and xenophobic confrontations at home, reflections of the wars' dynamics themselves. Merging the use of the DoD's *Dictionary* terms, presented in all caps throughout, here with the word "Torture," invoked as the illogic of the right: here, the tolerance of violent suffering offers a way to substantiate a foreign or immigrant presence in the US, while ultimately operating to exhibit disdain and administer fear and terror onto the brown body. The placement of torture that happens primarily in places outside of the US—Guantanamo and various "black sites" across the globe—enables its invocation as something that exists and occurs in a foreign place for foreign peoples; distance is a thematic constant in Sharif's poems. Further down in "Look":

Whereas this lover would pronounce my name and call me
Exquisite and LAY the floor lamp across the floor so that
we would not see each other by DIRECT ILLUMINATION
softening even the light;

Whereas the lover made my heat rise, rise so that if heat
sensors were trained on me, they could read
my THERMAL SHADOW through the roof and through
the wardrobe;

*Whereas you know we ran into like groups like mass executions.
w/ hands tied behind their backs. and everybody shot
in the head side by side. its not like seeing a dead body walking
to the grocery store here. its not like that. its iraq you know
its iraq. its kinda like acceptable to see that there and not—it
was kinda like seeing a dead dog or a dead cat laying—;*

Whereas I thought if he would LOOK at my exquisite face
or my father's, he would reconsider;

The lover and the poetic narrator of "Look" are an important counterpoint to the spectacular violence of war embedded in Sharif's lexicographic poetry. By using the DoD's terms of "lay," "direct illumination,"

“thermal shadow,” and “look,” the reader is at first presented with the scene of romantic intimacy, where light and heat are invoked as ways of engaging the visual, the erotic, and the haptic, though touch is merely implied rather than stated. The thermal is implicitly used to conjure the image of drone surveillance and detection, as its all-caps visibility as a DoD dictionary term gives purposeful meaning: the ability to sense heat signatures both “through the roof” and “through the wardrobe.” “Through the roof” both denotes the idiom of excess and a measure beyond measure, while also connoting the aerial perspective of the drone setting its sights on its target; moreover, “through the wardrobe” suggests the potential for both the erotic and haptic sensation, while also noting that one’s “thermal shadow” is generally unaffected by clothing. This moment of human and sexual intimacy and connection is juxtaposed with the language of drone wars and the possibility of the use of night vision goggles in wartime, while also suggesting the traces left behind of an object using thermal technology. There is at once intimacy, eros, and subjectivity as well as distance, disinterest, and objectivity. The mode in which Sharif queers this human relation—one of eros—into one imbued with the language and codes of war and imperial occupation is particularly curious. Here, the reference to dress, in naming the “wardrobe,” is one that is hardly about the process of undress as romantic or sexual. Instead, the defamiliarizing of intimacy in this brief moment upends and disorganizes this intimacy as far from human, the distance becoming that much greater. How Sharif melds what is tender, proximate, human, and connective with what is cold, inhuman, and death-dealing shows how the sensual and the unfeeling are at play. This is demonstrative of Sharif’s unconventional mode of engaging acts of warfare, especially as it both engages and depersonalizes the sensual on both terrains of meaning.

Still, this scene is disrupted by the repeated legal language of “Whereas” to inject another scene of war’s absolute horrors met with utter callousness presumably by a member of the American military serving in Iraq. Here is the recalled image of a group of Iraqis executed together, viewed by the military storyteller as a familiar, acceptable scene, analog to “*seeing a dead dog or dead cat laying—;*” The devastation of the scene described as such, because it is “there” and not “here”: its distance is what makes it acceptable—Iraq is there, it is not like here, a mass killing is acceptable there. The rendering of Iraq as wholly other is what Sharif wants readers to confront and reckon with; this desire is why the next stanza uses “LOOK” as a reaction, to plead with the military storyteller to look at her face, or her father’s face, and recognize and reconsider that these faces are not there, they are here, and they are akin to those faces there. To recognize and reconsider that those dead Iraqis are and were, also, human—hunted and annihilated as part of American occupation. Sharif’s language urges all to reckon with war as a modern constant, and to bear witness to the devaluation of human life that is distant and outside the neat borders of nation and ideology.

What is most essential still is Sharif’s queering of language and poetic tropes: in *Look*, the reader continues to get further and further away from the familiar meaning of a word through her poetry. In destabilizing what was once familiar, and using what deviates from normative understandings of a term or thing, Sharif’s collection purposefully sets the reader up to unmoor her from what is known to be a term or thing at all. What is more, she replaces what is human as always already implicated in war and imperial occupation, most notably in how she employs the symbol and machinations of drone warfare. In using language familiar to readers of more traditional poetic themes—human intimacy, for example—only to then undermine them signals Sharif’s investment in disorganizing and making illegible certain poetic tropes. This play, through her meticulous and painstaking research and writing, makes *Look* all the more arresting. And while it is playful, it is also disciplined and purposeful, so much so that it makes clear and palpable the anguish and rage that accompany contemporary conditions of permanent war that affect multiple registers of home and family for the diasporic subject.

On Dress Against Drones

My final object of study is another example of countersurveillance artistic practice, one in which the significance of drone warfare is highlighted. In January 2013, Berlin-based American artist and researcher Adam Harvey (2012), whose artwork centers countersurveillance, opened his exhibition for “Stealth Wear,” a clothing line of anti-drone garments. In his artist statement on his website for “Stealth Wear,” Harvey states:

Collectively, Stealth Wear is a vision for fashion that addresses the rise of surveillance, the power of those who surveil, and the growing need to exert more control over privacy.

Building off previous work ..., Stealth Wear continues to explore the aesthetics of privacy and the potential for fashion to challenge authoritarian surveillance technologies.

The collection is inspired by traditional Islamic dress and the idea that garments can provide a separation between man and God. In Stealth Wear, this idea is reimagined in the context of drone warfare as garments that provide a separation between man and Drone. Items are fabricated with silver-plated fabric that reflects thermal radiation, enabling the wearer to avert overhead thermal surveillance.

Figures 4: Adam Harvey, "Stealth Wear," 2012. Anti-Drone Hijab

Figures 5: Adam Harvey, "Stealth Wear," 2012. Anti-Drone Burqa

Figures 6: Adam Harvey, "Stealth Wear," 2012. Anti-Drone Burqa GIF

Harvey's "Stealth Wear" presents us with a direct response and confrontation with the Global War on Terror's drone wars. By centering his art practice and work broadly as countersurveillance, and "Stealth Wear" as specifically anti-drone, Harvey allows us to view the line for its expansive significance and possibilities. This particular project centers dress, including the hijab and burqa, as a way of signaling the vitality of clothing and the body as mutually implicated in drone visibility. What is more, the very literal action of having these garments disguise the body, through forms of cover, as a method of evading scrutiny and drone surveillance makes Harvey's central task as that of social disorganization and illegibility: in essence, what I argue here in relation to queerness and dress. Equal parts urgent, practical, excessive, and provocative, "Stealth Wear" lends itself to responding to the violence of drones by suiting up. This line of clothing permits a form of inscrutability in the face of drone technology, which targets particular bodies using aerial surveillance of bodily thermal or heat signatures. By reflecting such thermal radiation, the wearer can likely escape and evade the possibility of targeted destruction. This evasion is vital, and Harvey understands that the necessity of going undetected—being un-seen—is at once a comment on privacy but also about escaping death in its most urgent and practical usage.

UAVs (Unmanned Aerial Vehicles), popularly known as drones, must be understood, as Caren Kaplan (2017: 24) puts it, as "violently dispositional agents of change." Despite their lethality and ongoing deployment under Trump, the drone wars make the Global Wars on Terror that much more detached from our national consciousness. Such detachment has in many ways made wider the terrain of targeted deaths by drones; while under Obama, there was an uptick in drone strikes in Pakistan, Yemen, Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, Somalia, Libya, Algeria, and Mali, and there has been a quiet intensification of these drone strikes since 2017. And I am thinking, too, of data analyst and artist Josh Begley's (2017) recent discontinuing of "Dronestream," because of its near impossibility: "Too many strikes to tweet" in late 2017. This fact alone makes Harvey's "Stealth Wear," which he plans to update with new garments this year, all the more significant.

In his artist statement, Harvey notes his inspiration of "traditional Islamic dress," specifically the hijab and burqa examples, providing an intriguing complement to what was viewed earlier in examples of the Muslim hijab. Harvey's language here of invoking at once the veil's metaphysical separation between man and God and his garment's physical separation between man and Drone is saturated with potential. In the drone's capability to "play God" through targeted destruction, "Stealth Wear" makes the wearer potentially capable

of avoiding death. While Harvey provides an “Anti-Drone Hoodie,” his most impressive pieces are the “Anti-Drone Hijab” and “Anti-Drone Burqa.” These garments function as armor, weaponized to protect those targeted by drone surveillance and war. Still, it might be noted that these pieces are primarily practical as conceptual pieces, made-to-order for those who can afford the hefty price tag.

I find “Stealth Wear’s” use of the hijab and burqa as vital confrontations in thinking of the Global Wars on Terror as invested in waging war in Muslim-majority countries, and recognizing the gendered component of the drone wars in this logic. While drone strikes primarily target adult males with suspected ties to terrorist organizations in the aforementioned countries, the use of the hijab and burqa for anti-drone garments generatively opens up important questions on the racial, religious, gendered, and sexualized readings of drone targets. As such, these two garments specifically undermine the drone targeting of spaces within Muslim-majority countries with two items of Muslim-specific dress. Both forms of sacred wear are utilized and manipulated for novel and provocative ends, as Harvey subverts the viewer’s expectations, making these forms of cover into what they have always already been perceived as by Western political discourse: deceptive, suspicious, and treacherous. To understand “Stealth Wear” as a form of disguise, a form of concealment—a queer form—is to better understand how the hijab and burqa, as fuller forms of coverage, can therefore be weaponized (Beauchamp 2012: 8).⁹ Through Harvey’s covering, the viewer is witness to necessarily shrouded forms. And while drones as forms of aerial visibility cannot know and recognize bodies and forms of difference broadly speaking, the application of the anti-drone hijab and burqa disorganize and make illegible bodily forms themselves. It makes the very act of seeing or finding the body practically impossible.

Conclusion: Military-Industrial Visuality

Under Nicholas Mirzeoff’s (2011: 27–29) construction of military–industrial visibility, wherein post-World War II visual technology is countered with the figure of the (global) counterinsurgent, it becomes possible to perceive the ways both hijab and turban ultimately exist at once as physical, material objects, as well as socially, politically, and religiously significant visual signs. In disentangling these materials from their overdetermined presentation on national and global stages, the visual and poetic analyses here critically study what it means to understand religious difference, through race, gender, and sex; I argue that their cumulative effect is the production of imprecise and ultimately ephemeral nods to nationalist, imperial, and military–industrial discourses.

The efforts to allow and incorporate the hijab and turban in American police and military forces, for example, are at the forefront of the most public Muslim and Sikh civil rights efforts; this unique publicity showcases the collaboration of these civil rights organizations with statist security regimes in the promotion of national and global policing and occupation. Such civil rights efforts endeavor to actively combat the sheer and utter force of social disorganization. In many ways, these campaigns serve to inculcate the public sight of the hijab and turban into the most orderly of American institutions—the police and military. In other words, these bodies under the authority of police, border security, and military forces are expected to enforce order and maintain public safety. In representing the face of multiculturalist inclusion, their primary duty thus becomes scanning and targeting bodies of social disorganization. The irony of such visible public order out of such social disorder and disorganization cannot be lost on us.

⁹ Beauchamp’s (2012) article brings up possible connections to reading the veil as a form of gender disguise rooted in the colonial period, as we can see in the 1966 film *The Battle of Algiers*; still, this, too has implications for transgender bodies after 9/11, wherein there existed a heightened alert by the Department of Homeland Security for gender disguise as a form of terrorist evasion from scrutiny and surveillance. It should be noted, too, that in 2002 at the beginning of the Wars on Terror, the Pentagon screened Pontecorvo’s *The Battle of Algiers* to strategize how to deflect (anti-colonial) insurgent and guerilla tactics of warfare that officials anticipated might be used by both Iraqi and Afghani armed forces.

Through the analytic of military–industrial visuality, reading religious headdress is a political act. The invocation of empire as a framing device is meant to provoke new questions. Specifically, how is American Islamophobia a machination of the Wars on Terror alongside US global interests, investments, and violence in places such as West Asia, South Asia, North Africa, and East Africa? Or, how is the simultaneous everyday violence against, and the multiculturalist embrace of, Muslim and Sikh bodies living in the US in this specific moment, symbolic of a more historic imperial relationship of America with its chosen enemies? These questions are immense and meant to help tease out a more critical approach to the study of empire and war in the past and present.

I study the visual culture of Muslim and Sikh sacred wear as a means of exploring the relational experiences of these bodies under wartime logics and tactics. I argue that contemporary warfare uses the logic of “reading” bodies, the codes of bodies, as mere heat signature, as digital information, emptied out of the social codes of fashion. In particular, drone warfare is a mode of reading that attempts to dehumanize by emptying out social codes that make us human. As might be clear by now, this feminist materialist analysis of Muslim and Sikh sacred wear within the purview of visual culture is my intervention, deconstructing the saturated symbols and forms so central to xenophobic and Islamophobic harassment, harm, violence, and annihilation.

In closing, it is with myriad contradictions and paradoxes presented by forms of dress and religious cover that I underscore how fraught the terrain of studying these objects continues to be under current political conditions. Assembling through deciphering dress, domestic (in)security, wartime distance and disinterest, and strategies of resistance to drone technologies, I shed light on the contradictions posed by the highly scrutinized objects of dress in contemporary Islamophobia under American empire. It is my argument that these dressed bodies—racialized, gendered, queered—need not fit within the imperial and national fictions of the “new friend” or the “good citizen” so often forced upon us in times of wartime insecurity. Rather, in their very alignment and affiliation, as figures unruly in their bodily configuration, who disrupt and upend the majoritarian status quo: in their assembled bodies and now-allied struggles, we might better define what solidarity looks like, redefining a feminist and queer political horizon and vision for collective liberation.

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