

Notes from the Margins: Shi'a Political Theology in Contemporary Pakistan

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*'The state can put us, some of us, in quite a state.'*¹

*'For a cause, however effective, becomes violent, in the precise sense of the word, only when it bears on moral issues.'*²

ABSTRACT: This article examines the political theology of contemporary (2011-2012) Pakistani Shi'a traditional scholars (ulema). Drawing on six months of fieldwork among Pakistani Shi'a scholars, I contend that three distinct theo-political projects characterise their discourses. These are: (1) a secular state, (2) a sectarianly-unaligned Islamic state, and (3) the implementation of *wilayat al-faqih*. Despite their differences, I assert that all three theo-political projects are propelled, at least partly, by the same force – the spectre of violence resulting from the ongoing massacre of Shi'as in Pakistan. Additionally, I argue that these traditional scholars also narrativise Pakistani history in a manner that legitimises and animates the particular political-theology each exhorts for the actualisation of an ideal Pakistani state.

KEYWORDS: Shi'a, violence, traditional scholars (ulema), political theology, narrative historiography

Introduction[□]

It was May 2011 and despite the sweltering heat of the Lahore summer I was dressed in a long black cloak and matching headscarf. The modest dress was appropriate since I was spending the afternoon conversing with Qibla Sahib⁴ an esteemed scholar at one of the largest Shi'a *jami'ahs* in Lahore. Describing the plight of the Pakistani Shi'a community, Qibla stated, '[Pakistani Shi'as] can't engage in their rituals (*marasim*), they can't offer their *'ibadat* (religious rituals), they can't identify themselves [as Shi'a], they can't walk around freely. [This is all due to] the tyranny (*jabr*) of the environment, of the majority.'⁵

The anecdotal evidence provided by Qibla Sahib is corroborated by systematic studies on the plight of Pakistani Shi'as.⁶ While the Sunni-Shi'a split is longstanding,⁷ internecine sectarian conflict has been exacerbated, and accorded new significance by 'a remarkable configuration of political, social-economic, and religious developments [...] in contemporary Pakistan.'⁸ As Vali Nasr notes, since the Iranian Revolution in 1979, there has been 'full fledged sectarian conflict' in Pakistan.⁹ This conflict is characterised by assassinations and bombing campaigns carried out by militant Sunni and Shi'a groups. According to the *New York Times*, at least three hundred and seventy five Shi'as died in acts of sectarian violence in Pakistan in 2012.¹⁰ A Pakistani news report puts the count at more than five hundred.¹¹ Even if the lower *New York Times* figure is considered, this is the highest number of Shi'a deaths in a year since the violence of the 1990s. The extent of Shi'a persecution in contemporary Pakistan is such that some Shi'as liken it to the most traumatic and theologically significant massacre in Shi'a history – the carnage at Karbala where members of the Prophet's family were butchered.¹² The unprecedented spiralling of Shi'a murders has spurred community organisers to take action world-wide.¹³ On 7 December 2012, New York joined the daily demonstrations in Pakistan to protest the murder of more than 10,000 Shi'as in Pakistan.¹⁴

Blood loss intensified as 2013 dawned. The scenes in January 2013 in Quetta in south-western Pakistan were particularly horrific. Almost a hundred Shi'as were killed and scores injured in a twin bombing.¹⁵ Anguished relatives were vitriolic in their critique of state inefficiency and disinterest in preserving Shi'a lives. Exhausted of pleading to the state for protection, they made a jarring non-verbal statement: they

refused to bury their dead. Eschewing the Islamic prescription to bury the deceased by nightfall of the day of passing, they laid eighty-six shrouded mutilated corpses on the street, staging a multi-night sit-in in the biting winter cold.¹⁶ The relatives of the deceased and other Shi'a community members in Quetta declared that they would stand vigil by the bodies until drastic security measures were taken by the state.¹⁷ Only then would the dead be laid to rest.

Clearly, Pakistan's Shi'a community is undergoing exceptionally trying times. The violence and victimisation that characterises the Shi'a experience is perhaps experienced most acutely by Shi'a ulema (traditionally educated religious scholars). Readily identifiable by their distinctive clothing and their deep association, entanglement and dwelling in primarily Shi'a spaces such as Shi'a religious seminaries (*madrasabs*), Shi'a congregation halls for religious commemoration ceremonies (*imam bargabs*) and mosques, the ulema are easy targets.¹⁸ Qibla Sahib explained that Shi'a ulema (traditionally educated religious scholars) are perhaps even worse off than other members of the Shi'a community. He commented:

As long as we are sitting here in the institute [at this *jami'ab*], we are free, as soon as we leave the *jami'ab* we remove our special ulema dress. Why? We hide lest someone recognise us in this dress. If we are wearing something identificatory on our hands [such as a ring] we take it off. And, if we are at a bus stop, a train station or an airport, at the time of prayer, then we think of alternative solutions since we cannot worship openly [...] because not only do they injure us, they also murder us.¹⁹

It is not surprising then that my fieldwork among, and textual research on, Pakistan's Shi'a scholars reveals that they are haunted by the spectre of sectarian violence. The French philosopher Jacques Derrida reminds us that we are always haunted by what we have experienced. It looms over us like a spectre. This spectre is the invisible presence of ideological formulations that inform our socio-political existence. It is 'what one imagines, what one thinks one sees and which one projects – on an imaginary screen where there is nothing to see.'²⁰ In the case of Pakistani Shi'a scholars, this constant presence, this spectre that Derrida refers to, is the threat of sectarian violence.

I assert that this spectre of violence that haunts Pakistan's Shi'a scholars drives these scholars' comments on the ideal political theology that they advocate for the nation. The term political theology, as well as the related phrase 'theo-political', are central to this article and merit explanation. Jan Assmann defines political theology as 'the ever-changing relationships between political community and religious order, in short, between power [or authority: *Herrschaft*] and salvation [Heil].'²¹ Mark Lilla echoes a similar understanding of the term, describing it as a 'discourse about political authority based on a revealed divine nexus.'²² Lilla adds that political theology turns to God in deciding questions of political structure, rule and government. Thus, in asserting that the spectre of violence drives Pakistan's Shi'a scholars' political theologies, I am arguing that this spectre impacts the political model they recommend through an engagement with theological discourses. Such a political model is referred to concisely as a theo-political model.

Given its centrality to the scholars' experience, I use violence as an analytical pivot to examine their conceptions of the political theologies they advocate. Drawing on my ethnographic and textual research on Shi'a scholars, I assert that that the spectre of violence which haunts Shi'a scholars' worldview engenders in them a heartfelt aspiration for a very different manifestation of the Pakistani state than the one they currently inhabit. Put differently, I contend that the spectre of violence drives these scholars' political theologies – either serving as the *raison d'être* for their theologies, or helping substantially to bolster and justify them. Additionally, I argue that while the threat of violence is a driving force in the conceptualisation of these distinct political theologies, narrative historiography is a vital ally. Although the fear of violence is constantly cited as justification for their political theologies, these scholars also narrativise Pakistani history in a manner that legitimises and animates their particular theo-political projects.

Finally, in exhorting the actualisation of an ideal Pakistani state, my Shi'a scholar interlocutors articulate three distinct theo-political projects. These are: (1) a secular state, (2) an Islamic state unaligned with any sect, and (3) a state in which the governance of the jurist (*wilayat al-faqih*) – the political model of the current Iranian state – is implemented. My focus on these three distinct projects highlights the diversity and vibrancy of Shi'a scholars' political thought in Pakistan. In so doing, it provides a more diverse and nuanced representation of Pakistani Shi'a scholars than

is often found in many contemporary works, particularly with respect to their relationship to the Iranian political project. Below, I focus on each of these projects systematically.

I. Security through secularism

The first articulation of Pakistani Shi'a political-theology I encountered during my fieldwork is Qibla Sahib's, whose comments were featured briefly at the article's commencement. Despite twelve years of advanced study at seminaries in Mashhad and Qum, where his training stressed the religious obligation of establishing an Islamic state, Qibla advocates the implementation of secularism in Pakistan. I contend that Qibla's insistence on secularism is a consequence of the victimisation he experiences living in, what he views as, a state with a primarily Sunni orientation.²³ Moreover, I argue that Qibla Sahib's remarks alert us to the manner in which a particular Shi'a scholar traverses the divide between idealism and pragmatism while enacting his life as a citizen directed and constrained by his state.

Qibla, a tall, swarthy man, usually dressed in a white *shalwar-kamiz* while sporting a black turban and a fist-length beard is the most jovial scholar I have met. In his early fifties, with adult children, Qibla lives with his family on the expansive premises of the *jami'ah* at which he teaches. Additionally, on most days he delivers juridical pronouncements to lay Muslims seeking ethico-legal guidance (*mustaftis*). These *mustaftis* trickle in at all hours into Qibla's spacious office where bookcases line the walls and chairs surround the large desk behind which he sits. Qibla also collects the statutory Shi'a tax (*khums*) from those who visit his *jami'ah* to make this obligatory contribution. He also helps arrange marriages in the Shi'a community. On a couple of occasions I observed him answer his phone and field requests to find potential spouses. In response, he made recommendations by referring to his worn-out notebook wherein he had penned the age, family background, and qualifications of unmarried Shi'as.

Qibla's disarming personality immediately puts people at ease making him a favourite among *mustaftis*, particularly women. As I sat in Qibla's office one day in March 2012, I witnessed a *mustafti*, a middle-aged gentleman, inform Qibla ten minutes into their conversation that Qibla's

lack of airs, and his turban-less head, made Qibla appear unscholarly. Then, gripped by a sense of contrition, the man immediately repented, apologising for speaking with such a sense of familiarity and trivialising an esteemed scholar. Qibla, characteristically puffing on his cigarette, simply smiled and commented that it was too hot for a turban.

Born in 1962 in the city of Sargodha, Qibla did not begin his religious education till he was almost twenty years old. In 1979 he enrolled in Dar al-'Ulum al-Ja'fariyyah Karbala in Khushhab, a district in the province of Punjab. In addition to his religious education at Dar al-'Ulum al-Ja'fariyyah, Qibla studied for and passed his public school grade eleven and twelve exams as a private candidate. In 1982 he travelled to Iran. In Qum he studied with Ayatollah al-'Uzma Mar'ashi Najafi, Ayatollah al-'Uzma Sayyid Muhammad Shirazi, Ayatollah al-'Uzma Fazil Lankarani, Ayatollah al-'Uzma Wahid Khurasani, Ayatollah al-'Uzma Nasir Makarim Shirazi, Ayatollah Musawi Ardabili, and Ayatollah Payani. Returning to Pakistan in 1992, Qibla began serving as the principal of a *jami'ah* in Baltistan. In 1996 Qibla began teaching at the *jami'ah* at which he is currently employed – the name of which has been withheld at Qibla's request.

My relationship with Qibla goes back to the summer of 2010, when I first began visiting his *jami'ah* to study its publications and understand the political theology of the scholars associated with the seminary. Qibla had seen me for some time since my daily visits to the *jami'ah's* library required me to pass by his office. When I finally requested a meeting with him, he was happy to oblige. His generosity with his time, his absolute lack of pretension, his willingness to meet with me whenever I requested, and his sense of humour (many of his jokes revolved around my MacBook Pro) quickly made him my go-to Shi'a scholar. During 2011 and 2012, when I was based in Pakistan, I met with Qibla multiple times – sometimes conducting semi-structured interviews with him, other times observing him as he interacted with *mustaftis*, and occasionally briefly trading pleasantries during chance encounters in hallways. Unfortunately, our last meeting in July 2012 was marked with sadness – Qibla had recently suffered a stroke. Although he was still able to converse, he was obviously very weak and his sharpness of intellect and ready wit had mellowed.

Despite Qibla's *joie de vivre* – which had radiated in all our interactions – Qibla consistently bemoaned the massacre of Shi'as in Pakistan. In one of our meetings in May 2011, describing the plight of the Shi'a minority,

Qibla Sahib stated, 'The past sixty years evidence that the current level of Islamisation of the country is enough. If this is transgressed, humanity will be destroyed.'²⁴ Invariably he provided examples of the violence ravaging Shi'as in Pakistan: 'Karachi is blood-soaked; Punjab is entirely blood-soaked. Individuals who have attempted to Islamise the country have done nothing concrete that would please the populace [...] It is better if we retract the level of Islamisation. The current level of Islamisation in Pakistan is still better than a more Islamised Pakistan. We should not move forward [in Islamising the country].'²⁵ In advocating for secularism in Pakistan, Qibla Sahib asserted:

It is better for us if there is secularism in Pakistan. There should be a secular system. It is very good [if it is implemented] in our country. We are from here, so we say²⁶ that there should be secularism here [...] It is only in secularism that humans are accorded the right to truly live. It is only in a secular system that people have economic rights, education and health benefits. And if we digress from this and go towards another direction [...] whichever direction you turn to, there is poison [...] there is lack of tolerance everywhere.²⁷

Qibla Sahib's advocacy of secular rule in Pakistan raises vital questions about how he conceptualises Islam. Supporting the privatisation of religion, Qibla comments:

On a personal level, Islam should govern all individuals' lives. All acts should be Islamic. But when we think of life at the societal level, then how is the implementation of Islam possible in the public sphere [given the plethora of] [...] different sects and sectarian affiliations? [...] In the private sphere and in your personal life, you are free to practice religion however you wish. But in the public sphere and in your social life, you should do what is done in ordinary democracies the world over. For example, [do what is done in] American, British, European and other democracies the world over. Islam does not forbid this [i.e. embracing secular democracy]. [...] And since Islam does not forbid this, it is acceptable. That which Islam forbids is what we should refrain from.²⁸

Detailing religious prohibitions, he cites the proscription against the sale of alcohol and pork, commenting that neither is practiced in Pakistan.²⁹ While eager to honour these proscriptions he opposes the percolation of other explicitly Islamic influences and injunctions into the order, structure, and legislation of the secular state he advocates. He adds that the economic and social systems of this state will not be Islamic;³⁰ even the *hudud* will not be implemented.³¹ Thus, while most ulema emphasise the implementation of Islam in both the public and private spheres,³² Qibla advocates the restriction of religion to the private realm. Importantly, for Qibla this restriction, and the political model of secularism that he proposes, are religiously acceptable and correct. As he explains, ‘since Islam does not forbid this, it is acceptable.’³³ Thus, for Qibla, the political model of secularism is the correct political theology for Pakistan.

Qibla’s desire for protection from tyrannical Sunni majoritarianism drives his call for secularism in Pakistan.³⁴ Importantly, Qibla reveres the model of the state during the Prophet’s time. In an ideal world, he not only supports, but considers it religiously obligatory to implement this model.³⁵ In this vein, he praises the Iranian theo-political model of the *wilayat al-faqih* as closely emulating the political model of the Prophet’s rulership. However, in Pakistan specifically, in light of the tyranny of the Sunni majority, Qibla declares secularism as the ideal political model for the state. Speaking about Pakistan he asserts, ‘A real Islamic state is only in thoughts and dreams, or in books. In reality / in practicality, it neither should be, nor is, nor will be [...].’³⁶

He states,

[Even] the rule of the Westerner is better than the lack of tolerance [of this inhuman Sunni majority]; better than this is the Indian who tolerates Muslims, Hindus, and Christians in India. Better than this is Europe where all of us – Shi’as, Sunnis, Muslims, non-Muslims, everyone is tolerated. There, individuals are engrossed in their work and don’t distress others. There is no extremism there. There is no extremism in America. [...] Power should remain with those who are secular.³⁷

At another point he says,

Maybe a good example of this [secularism] is India [...] India has the largest democracy. It has provided for its citizenry, and continues to do so. There, there is no discrimination on the basis of race and ethnicity; there is no discrimination on the basis of sectarian affiliation. Everyone there loves their country. They are on the path to progress. Whereas, our system here in Pakistan is on a path to misery. Corruption, robbery, killing, murder – the system here is on a path to misery. And their system is on a hopeful path. That is what I meant [when I advocated secularism].³⁸

Qibla asserts indigenous historical precedence for secularism:

Our Mughal rulers were personally religious, praying often, but they did not enforce religion on the public. Their interaction with the public was in accordance with governance and laws. Those [personal religion and public governance] are separate matters. The rulers may be Shi'a or Sunni, religiously practising or not, regardless that is their personal matter. But governing the public is a different matter. [...] [This division between religion and governance is evident] in the US. The government rules over individuals belonging to all religions. Muslims are living there, as are Muslim sects; [the government] is not interfering. [The rulers] might go to church, they may or not worship; that is not important. But their laws are so equitable that they cause no citizen grief.³⁹

In summary, Qibla cites the brutality of the Sunni majority as propelling his desire for secularism. He also furnishes native historical precedent and lauds contemporary examples of this political model.

Qibla's invocation of anti-Shi'a violence as his secular political project's *raison d'être* is buttressed by his articulation of Pakistani history. I contend that historical narratives are integral to legitimising and bolstering the theo-political projects of all ulema featured in this article. In fact, citing precedent as historical legitimation for their current theo-political projects was vital to the discourses of all the Shi'a scholars with

whom I engaged – a number of whom are not examined in this article. The preponderance of this practice among my interlocutors may attest to a larger trend among Pakistani Shi‘a scholars of interweaving narrative historiography and political theology.

Hayden White, a renowned historian and literary critic, expounding on the relationship between narrative construction and historical representation, writes, ‘Narrative is not merely a neutral discursive form [...] but rather entails ontological and epistemic choices with distinct ideological and even specifically political implications.’⁴⁰ Consequently, White contends that not only is narrative historiography always subjective, as a result of its self-conscious fashioning, this particular form of historical recounting also becomes a universal code that serves as a vehicle for transmitting ‘messages about the nature of a shared reality.’⁴¹ Given the contemporary Pakistani climate – which is rife with sectarian violence, due in large part to Pakistan’s allegedly Islamic state’s weakness, inefficiency, and/or complicity – the messages encoded in Shi‘a scholars’ recounting of Pakistan’s history are about the correct place of Islam in the public sphere, i.e. about the ideal political model for the nation.

Drawing on his specific rendition of Pakistani history, Qibla asserts that the place of Islam in the public sphere was imagined by Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of the nation, as extremely limited in scope. Qibla emphasises that Jinnah, a Western-educated Shi‘a lawyer, created a Muslim state; not an Islamic one.⁴² This reading is unusual among Pakistani ulema, most of whom, regardless of sectarian affiliations, paint Pakistan as founded solely to function as an Islamic state. Such a framing of history bolsters their arguments for an Islamic state in contemporary Pakistan. In contrast to this hegemonic view, Qibla avers, ‘Quaid-i Azam founded a Muslim state wherein [...] all Muslim sects could live in peace, according to their own principles. Quaid-i Azam founded a Muslim state not an Islamic one [...] Even our *qanun*⁴³ [i.e. our Islamicised constitution] was formulated in 1973; it was not formulated in Jinnah’s time.’⁴⁴

In summary, Qibla justifies secularism through constant reference of the spectre of violence. Importantly, narrative historiography and his specific recounting of Pakistani history accord his project historical validity.

II. Jami'a Ahl al-Bayt and a sectarianly-unaligned Islamic state

Below I examine how some of the ulema associated with Jami'a Ahl al-Bayt⁴⁵ view the Pakistani state's claim to a religious identity and what political theology they advocate for the nation. Jami'a Ahl al-Bayt, located in one of the richest neighbourhoods of Lahore, sprawls across many canals. In addition to classrooms, the seminary space contains hostels for the students, a mosque, a hall for religious commemoration ceremonies (*imam bargah*), a residential block for the staff, the office of the seminary's monthly journal, a free medical dispensary, a meeting hall, an expansive library, over two dozen shops, a two story guest house, a room for bathing the deceased before burial, a Dar al-Ifta' (a place for the issuance of ethico-legal opinions (*fatwas*)), and a special section designated for females visiting the seminary to participate in mourning rituals during the religiously significant month of Muharram. The reach of Jami'a Ahl al-Bayt spreads far beyond the activities and events taking place in the expansive confines of the Lahore seminary. Dozens of Shi'a seminaries country-wide and across the globe have been established and operate under the auspices and supervision of Jami'a Ahl al-Bayt. In fact, it is no exaggeration to say that Jami'a Ahl al-Bayt serves as the hub of Shi'a religious life and learning in Pakistan.

As the president of Jami'a Ahl al-Bayt, Ayatollah Ja'far⁴⁶ is among the most important Shi'a scholars in the country. Every time I have seen him, his tan, weathered face is adorned with a fist-length white beard while a large pair of reading glasses is perched on his nose. A black turban sits squarely on his head and despite his often-formal attire, his short stature renders him physically unimposing. Even though I had briefly encountered Ayatollah Ja'far multiple times given my numerous visits to Jami'a Ahl al-Bayt, scheduling a meeting with him was daunting. I enlisted the help of the Jami'a receptionist – the man I met at 8 a.m. everyday as he made his daily phone call to solicit permission for me to use the library. On an early May morning in 2011, as I sat in the receptionist's office, I told him that I was eager to meet Ayatollah Ja'far. Giving me the Ayatollah's phone number, the receptionist urged me to schedule a meeting. After multiple phone conversations with Ayatollah Ja'far and his assistant, we finally settled on a date and time.

Walking down a long hall into a part of the seminary to which I did not ordinarily have access, on a late-May morning I entered the Ayatollah's spacious office. I took a seat across from the Ayatollah at the large desk in the centre of his office. A member of the seminary's staff quickly brought over piping hot tea and a platter of local biscuits. Despite experience interacting with esteemed Pakistani scholars, I soon realised that there were sensibilities and etiquettes to which I was still not attuned. Our conversation commenced with me thanking Ayatollah Ja'far for taking out the time to meet with me. I then summarised my research project for him and informed him that our conversation would be integral to my writings on Shi'a scholars. Following that, I respectfully attempted to inquire about his educational qualifications – an inquiry with which I usually started conversations with my ulema interlocutors. In this particular case I commented to the Ayatollah that despite his incredible renown, I would still appreciate information about his educational background. Ayatollah Ja'far's response made apparent that he considered my question a mild affront: it was beneath him to provide his own introduction. Dismissively Ayatollah Ja'far replied, 'You may look this up in books.' Ayatollah Ja'far's tea-bearing assistant, hovering in the corner, jumped in. For the next three minutes the assistant detailed the Ayatollah's life history and qualifications as I nodded along respectfully, demurely interjecting *masha'allahs* at what I hoped were considered the right moments.

The Ayatollah's credentials are as follows: born in the early 1940s in southern Punjab, as a young child he memorised the Qur'an and commenced the study of principal Shi'a texts before his tenth birthday. From 1957 till 1964 he was based at Jami'ah Ahl al-Bayt, after which he travelled for advanced study to one of the holiest Shi'a destinations – the city of Najaf in Iraq. In 1964, the very year when Ayatollah Ja'far arrived in Najaf, Ayatollah Ruhallah Khomeini, Iran's foremost religious-political leader, also arrived in that very city. Ja'far sought the honour of Khomeini's tutelage. In the years that followed Ja'far mastered jurisprudence (*fiqh*) under the guidance of Ayatollah Khomeini and Ayatollah Sayyid Muhsin al-Hakim. Ja'far also studied the principles of jurisprudence (*usul al-fiqh*) with Ayatollah Sayyid Abu al-Qasim Khu'i. Ja'far's teachers also included Ayatollah Shaikh Jawad, Ayatollah Sayyid Muhammad Taqi Qummi, and Mawlana Mirza Fath Allah Isfahani.

Upon returning from Iraq, Ayatollah Ja'far commenced his role as a religious instructor of outstanding credentials in Lahore. In 1997 he began teaching at Jami'a Ahl al-Bayt and delivering Friday sermons at the mosque within the seminary premises. Soon Ayatollah Ja'far rose to the rank of seminary president – a post he currently occupies.

As Ayatollah Ja'far and I continued our conversation that May day in 2011, it became evident that the Ayatollah shares Qibla Sahib's concerns that the state is either weak, unconcerned about Shi'as, or complicit in Shi'a persecution. However Ayatollah Ja'far and likeminded scholars have political aspirations that differ markedly from Qibla's. Expressing shock and repulsion at the idea that some Pakistani Shi'a scholars desire secularism, Ayatollah Ja'far and others of the same intellectual bent, advocate the establishment of an Islamic state that has no sectarian affiliations.

This political theology is succinctly stated by another of the ulema at Jami'a Ahl al-Bayt, Sayyid Hussain Naqvi:⁴⁷ 'An Islamic state [...] should be founded on Islamic principles. Not Sunni or Shi'a principles, but on the basis of what is truly Islamic.'⁴⁸ Proponents of this political theology – a theology that privileges an Islamic state with no sectarian affiliation – reference the state of the Prophet in Medina as the epitome of political models. Ayatollah Ja'far, a student of Khomeini⁴⁹ – the architect of the Islamic revolution in Iran and the force behind the political model of the *wilayat al-faqih* – comments, 'The perfect model is the Prophet Muhammad's Medinan state [...] wherein the Qur'an and the Prophet's teachings are valued above all else.'⁵⁰ Despite his tutelage under Khomeini, even in his extensive compilation of Friday sermons on Islamic politics, Ja'far never mentions the Shi'a institution of *wilayat al-faqih*. Instead, Ja'far favours a sectarianly-unaligned Islamic state in Pakistan, declaring that Shi'a-Sunni unity and consensus is necessary. Significantly, this rhetoric of unity and unanimous consensus only translates into vague policy prescriptions. For example, Ayatollah Ja'far declares, 'only those matters on which there is consensus among all sects will be implemented.'⁵¹ However, one is left wondering how the Ayatollah thinks this is possible when he is as an expert familiar with the difficulties of deriving legal norms.⁵²

Hussain Naqvi makes similarly hazy statements that overlook the abovementioned difficulties. He asserts, 'If, ever, by consensus, Islamic laws are formulated, then Pakistan will be the best of places. To achieve

that, representatives of various schools of thought that are present in this country should be called together, and legislation should be formulated according to the advice and views of their scholars and laws should be made purely Islamic.⁵³ There should be ‘a unanimous decision’ on the laws by scholars of all sects.⁵⁴

The above-mentioned Hussain Naqvi – a man in his early forties, trained at Hawza ‘Ilmiyyah Qum and now teaching at Jami‘a Ahl al-Bayt – dismisses Shi‘a-Sunni differences. He shifts the frame of reference to a singular Islam, stating:

My view is not that a particular sect – Shi‘a or Hanafi [should be given preference in Pakistan]. [...] The [sectarian] opinion of all the different sects in Pakistan is not what is desired. [what is desired is] the Islamically correct opinion [...] A strictly scholarly discussion should be held and laws should be formulated anew based on unanimous consensus. If the theological proof put forth by the Shi‘as is strong, that should be accepted. If the proof of the Wahabis is strong, that should be accepted [...] what we need is Islam’s perspective – not that of the Shi‘as, Sunnis, Wahabis, Hanbalis, Shafi‘is.⁵⁵

I queried Naqvi on issues on which differences of opinion are firmly established. He replied, ‘That is not the case. Such issues have not been discussed thoroughly. If an open-minded discussion occurs on these issues, there will be consensus.’⁵⁶

Hussain Naqvi’s views are shared by Sayyid Zaidi Naqvi. My relationship with Zaidi Naqvi is long-standing. We first met in Lahore at Jami‘a Ahl al-Bayt in summer 2010; thereafter we corresponded multiple times over email as I helped him explore the possibility of enrolling in PhD programs in Islamic Studies in the US. Our latest encounter in May 2012 was in Islamabad, where Zaidi Naqvi now resides, presiding over two *madrasahs*. Following Hussain Naqvi, Zaidi Naqvi downplayed sectarian differences and stressed a singular Islam that is corrupted by sectarian divisions. When I asked Zaidi Naqvi which brand of Islam would be implemented in his proposed Islamic state, he rejected the formulation of my question, dismissing the notion that Islam came in different hues. He responded emphatically:

Our biggest flaw or weakness [...] is that we are more Shi'a, Sunni, Barelwi, Deobandi, or Wahhabi, than we are Muslim. We need to become Muslim. In the ten-year rule of the Prophet [in Medina], people were simply Muslim. At the time of the Rightly Guided caliphs, all were Muslim.⁵⁷ Divisions occurred between us when we adopted different affiliations (*nisbatayn*); to elevate those affiliations we began delegitimising and criticising others. As a result, I became an infidel (*kafir*) in their eyes and they became infidels (*kafirs*) in mine [...]. [And so the question arose] in Europe and outside of Islamdom: Which Islam will you implement? Brother, there is just one Islam [...] Which method (*tarikaykar*), normative outlook or path (*maslak*), 'system'⁵⁸ – which one of those will be implemented, yes, on that there can be a discussion or a debate. But for us to say this is a different type of Muslim and that is a different type of Muslim, that is wrong [...] Our principles [are shared] [...] Muslims are one, the same. All the different sects here believe in God's oneness. No Muslim disagrees with this [...]. In matters of doctrine ('*aqā'id*) there is not even a hair's breadth of difference among us. There is no difference of opinion on God's oneness, nor on prophecy [...] maybe on some auxiliaries (*tashrihat*) [of worship] there are differences of opinion. I might say that if you do this, you will be denying God's oneness (committing *shirk*). You might say, no that will not be *shirk* [...] [However], on the fundamentals of religion (*usul al-din*) there is no difference of opinion. Coming now to the ancillaries of religion (*furu' al-din*): There is complete agreement on the categorisation of these ancillaries of faith [...] If all is the same, then where is the difference? Why then am I Shi'a? Why are you Sunni? When Allah is the same, the Prophet is the same, the Book is the same, the testimony of faith is the same, when everything is the same, then where is the difference?⁵⁹

Clearly, scholars desiring a sectarianly-unaligned Islamic state employ rhetoric deemphasising difference. In that vein, Hussain Naqvi asserts that all Muslims share the same doctrines ('*aqā'id*). Naqvi and likeminded scholars shirk off variations among sects – such as breaking the fast a few

minutes later or earlier – as inconsequential divergences of practice, and minute differences of interpretation.⁶⁰ Thus – to use a Freudian concept – the ‘narcissism of minor differences’ that Qibla Sahib highlights is deemed insignificant by proponents of the sectarianly-unaligned Islamic state. The very issues that Qibla emphasises – differences in dress and manners of worship – are the ones that Zaidi Naqvi downplays.

However, like Qibla Sahib, these scholars also draw on a particular narrative of history to ground their political theology. Rejecting Qibla Sahib’s account of a Muslim state, these scholars emphasise that Pakistan was created as an ideologically Islamic nation. For example, Hussain Naqvi asserts, unlike any other country in the world, Pakistan was created in the name of Islam ‘as an ideologically religious state and nation.’⁶¹ Similarly Zaidi Naqvi remarks that ‘Pakistan was founded in the name of Islam. The implementation of Islam in Pakistan and its birth on the basis of the two-nation theory prove that Pakistan was conceptualised as an Islamic state.’⁶² Ayatollah Ja’far remarks, ‘There is no disputing the fact that Pakistan was created in the name of Islam, as an Islamic state.’⁶³ Similarly, a February 2001 Ahl al-Bayt editorial asserts that the Islamic Republic of Pakistan is a unique country, since it is the only state that was founded on the basis of Islam.⁶⁴

Finally, like Qibla, proponents of the sectarianly-unaligned Islamic state cite their desired political model as a remedy to anti-Shi’a violence. During our conversations both Ayatollah Ja’far and Hussain Naqvi asserted that such a state, through its implementation of ‘true’ Islam, as opposed to interpretations of specific sects, will bridge sectarian divides, fostering harmony among diverse Muslim groups.⁶⁵ They further contend that a sectarianly-unaligned Islamic state will be the epitome of good governance. In the words of Ayatollah Ja’far, ‘an Islamic state does not allow individuals to transgress the law. If someone murders my father, an Islamic state does not allow me to kidnap that person’s father.’⁶⁶ Instead, such a state itself effectively prosecutes criminals, dispenses justice and ensures that terrorist acts, thuggery, and violence are curbed. Thus, the sectarianly-unaligned Islamic state is touted by its proponents as the solution to sectarian violence in the nation.

In summary, for these ulema, the establishment of a sectarianly-unaligned Islamic state in Pakistan is not simply a religious requirement but also stems from the historical legacy of the nation. Importantly, this political model is also posited as the answer to anti-Shi’a violence.

III. *Wilayat al-faqih*

Like all the Shi'a scholars mentioned above, Jawad Naqvi – a scholar examined in detail below – is also incredibly troubled by the anti-Shi'a violence dogging his community. Naqvi, a stout, middle-aged scholar with strong Iranian affiliations, is best known for his outspoken lectures and fiery sermons. He established himself as a formidable force among Pakistani Shi'a ulema in 2010 by founding al-'Urwah al-Wuthqa, a state-of-the-art Shi'a seminary in Lahore.⁶⁷ The seminary is closely linked with the journal *Mashrabenaab* (a term that means 'a pure source of water' or 'a school of thought or an ideology').⁶⁸ Naqvi serves as the chief-editor of this journal.

Naqvi's presence on the Internet, characterised by dozens of YouTube videos as well as the online publication of his journal *Mashrabenaab*, is unparalleled among other Pakistani Shi'a ulema. Naqvi's views on the ideal political theology for Pakistan and the crisis of sectarian violence targeting the Pakistani Shi'a community are explicated in his videos and publications. Despite the ready availability of Naqvi's opinions, I was still eager to meet this vociferous scholar. I attempted to schedule a meeting with Jawad Naqvi, but to no avail. However, although I did not personally converse with Jawad Naqvi about anti-Shi'a violence, his views on the topic are easily discernable from his writings and Internet presence.

A key element that distinguishes Naqvi from other Pakistani Shi'a scholars is his vociferous endorsement of the current Iranian theopolitical order. In this way Naqvi stands apart from the secularists and the proponents of the sectarianly-unaligned Islamic state who do not display an overt deference to present-day Iranian political theology. Naqvi's captivation with Iran has not been entirely well received by other Pakistani Shi'a scholars. While most of the Shi'a scholars with whom I interacted spoke well of Naqvi and his seminary, one in particular was quite critical. Referring to the Iranian affiliation of Jawad Naqvi and al-'Urwah al-Wuthqa, an established Shi'a scholar in Lahore, who asked to remain anonymous, stated that the new religious seminary was not a "genuine" *madrasah*.⁶⁹ Expressing his views on al-'Urwah al-Wuthqa, he stated:

They have links with a particular country. Like I said earlier, scholars from Iran, from Qum, they are attached to that country. They have been sent from there by Iranian powers and they have come to Pakistan by Iran's support. They [Iranian political authorities] have given them access to the Internet; constructed a website for them [...] And this [he names the *jami'ah* at which he teaches] is a very old *madrasah*. People donate to it – sometimes a little, sometimes a lot. This *madrasah* is 'genuine'. Real. There is no impact of Iran on this *madrasah*, nor Lebanon, nor Iraq [...] and that [al-'Urwah al-Wuthqa], because it is connected to Iran, and Iran is a country, and Iran is a rich country with oil reserves, so obviously it supports them financially a lot. Maybe the people at al-'Urwah al-Wuthqa might not even know much about the use of the Internet, if we go into detail. Maybe they will know a little. But creating a website etc., that requires people, and people need to be paid. People do not make websites for free. Money needs to be collected and people need to be paid [...] people can be paid to write essays and put them online. Such people can be paid. Now you should understand the rest. At al-'Urwah al-Wuthqa they have a link with Iran.⁷⁰

Alex Vatanka echoes the larger sentiment expressed by the Shi'a *'alim* quoted above. Vatanka, writing about al-'Urwah al-Wuthqa, states, '[Jawad] Naqvi's seminary was reportedly established in part with financial support from the Iranian state.'⁷¹ However, Vatanka provides no citation for his assertion regarding Iranian financial support. Jawad Naqvi, while acknowledging the preponderance of these views, dismisses them as false. In an address delivered at the second anniversary of the founding of al-'Urwah al-Wuthqa, Naqvi declared that no financial assistance was received from Iran in establishing the seminary.⁷² However, the ideological link between Iran and al-'Urwah al-Wuthqa is manifest in multiple ways. Prime among them is the importance that the president of the institute, Jawad Naqvi, accords to the political ideology of Ayatollah Khomeini. For example, in one of his articles in the journal *Mashrabenaab*, Jawad Naqvi stresses the importance of a Khomeini-inspired revolution in Pakistan. Naqvi declares that Pakistan's salvation lies in the adoption of

Khomeini's school of thought and both Shi'as and Sunnis should learn Khomeini's *din*.⁷³

Some of Jawad Naqvi's references to Khomeini's *din* or Khomeini's path (*rasta*) can be interpreted very open-endedly. In the May-June 2010 issue of *Mashrabenaab*, Naqvi writes that the residents of Gaza are following Khomeini's path. A study of the article reveals that Naqvi's comment simply means that Gazans are staying committed to their religious beliefs: they are celebrating Islam despite living under siege with limited access to basic amenities.⁷⁴ However, Naqvi's open-ended interpretation of what it means to follow Khomeini's path is not the norm in his discourses. At many instances Naqvi explicitly emphasises the importance of the theo-political model of *wilayat al-faqih*.⁷⁵ Khomeini's doctrine of *wilayat al-faqih* asserts the theological legitimacy of the direct religio-political rule of Shi'a religious scholars. Khomeini explained that the post of *wilayat al-faqih* must be the most powerful position in the government. A religious scholar, who would be understood as executing governmental functions on behalf of the Hidden Imam of Twelver Shi'ism, must fill the post. The jurist serving as this post need not be the most learned among the scholars. Instead, he would be appointed on the basis of his political skills and his ability to gain and maintain power.

Jawad Naqvi's writings evidence his assertion that the theo-political model of *wilayat al-faqih* is based on, and subsumed within, the broader theological concept of *wilayat*. Naqvi emphasizes the importance of *wilayat* in the following words

Wilayat is God's system for the guidance of mankind. The perfect system given by God [...] *wilayat* is the system for us for after the Prophet's passing. *Wilayat* is the system established by God until the Day of Judgement; until the Day of Judgement. Before the Ghadir, [i.e. before the Prophet's explicit declaration of *wilayat*],⁷⁶ this was the system. And, after the Ghadir, this is still supposed to be the system. The *wilayat* system is the system until the Day of Judgement [...]. Even if an infallible Imam goes into Occultation for a limited period, the system of *wilayat* remains. And, even if an infallible Imam goes into Occultation for an indefinite period, the system of *wilayat* remains.⁷⁷

Building on the idea that the system of *wilayat* ‘can never be suspended in any era’,⁷⁸ Naqvi describes Khomeini as someone who ‘excavated the buried Wilayat, did research on Wilayat, informed people about it, started an uprising [and] mounted the flag of Wilayat.’ Naqvi writes about Khomeini’s success in establishing ‘Islamic Governance’ in Iran and implementing the *wilayat al-faqih* in the following words, ‘The greatest of all his achievements which delighted the soul of all the Prophets and Imams (a.s.) was the reversion of the System of Wilayat [...] He implemented this system for which Allah (s) had aroused Prophets and for which the Holy Imam’s (a.s.) suffered calamities.’⁷⁹ Naqvi asserts that it is because of Khomeini that the ‘System of Wilayat is implemented in the Islamic Republic.’⁸⁰

In addition to his general discourses on the *wilayat al-faqih*, Jawad Naqvi also addresses the importance of implementing this political model in Pakistan. In answer to the two-part question, ‘Is Khomeini only the leader of Iran and is *wilayat al-faqih* only for Iran? Or, does he have *wilayat* over the whole earth? Please explain’, Naqvi responds by stating:

The Islamic Revolution was not an Iranian revolution; it was an Islamic revolution [...] Today, in the Hijaz, there is no one who supports *wilayat*. But, in Pakistan there are those who are pro-*wilayat al-faqih* because *wilayat* is a part of faith. Spiritual leadership is a part of faith. Spiritual leadership implies the spiritual leadership of the Islamic world – not the spiritual leadership of only Iran. This is an established matter [...] *wilayat al-faqih* is the Islamic system, just like Imamatus is the Islamic system. The system established by God, the Prophet and the Infallible Imams for the time of the Major Occultation, is the system of *wilayat al-faqih*. And finally, the *faqih* will have to be from somewhere – if not from Iran, then Iraq, if not from Iraq then Lebanon, if not from Lebanon, then Pakistan. He will have to be from somewhere. [It would be the height of folly and misguidance] If those from other nations say: ‘Well he is not from our nation, so we will not follow him.’ No! These are the lures and guiles of the devils!⁸¹

While Jawad Naqvi advocates the system of *wilayat al-faqih* as binding from a theological perspective, he also stresses that Khomeini’s path has

tangible practical benefits. In particular, he touts Khomeini's path as the salvation and remedy to all of Pakistan's ills. Naqvi writes in English, 'Wilayat-e-Faqeh [...] this is the secret which will give salvation to Shias of Pakistan'.⁸² At another point he adds, 'The Imam's ideas, which thirty years ago provided the solution to the Iranian nation's problems, those same ideas are the solution to the problems of the Pakistani population.'⁸³ While Naqvi himself does not explicitly reference Khomeini's path as the remedy to sectarian violence, one can logically deduce that Naqvi believes this to be the case. Naqvi identifies sectarian violence as a major problem in Pakistan; he identifies Khomeini's path as the solution to Pakistan's problems; ergo, Naqvi understands Khomeini's path as the remedy to sectarian violence. An unequivocal statement in this regard is penned in the journal *Mashrabenaab*, of which Naqvi is the chief-editor. An unidentified 'Group of Political Analysts', commenting on the massacre of Pakistani Shi'as propose, 'If we want to end the detrimental effects of this movement [of sectarian killings] in Pakistan, and save our religion, our community, and our country, then the only way to do so, is to adopt Khomeini's path.'⁸⁴

According to Jawad Naqvi, not only is the political theology of *wilayat al-faqih*: (1) religiously correct and binding, (2) a salvation from the nation's ills, and implicitly a vital remedy for the sectarian violence devastating the country, but it is also, broadly stated (3) the political theology on the basis of which Pakistan was envisioned. Thus, narrative historiography is indispensable for Jawad Naqvi as he legitimises his political project. In Naqvi's articulation of Pakistani history, Muhammad Iqbal – the poet-philosopher credited with conceiving the idea of Pakistan and inspiring the movement for the country – had vocalised his vision that Pakistan be governed by a political model centred on *wilayat*. Explaining Iqbal's views on the matter, Naqvi, addressing a gathering in Iqbal's birthplace, Sialkot announces:

Let me tell you about the views of someone who did not sport a beard – someone from your city: The person who conceptualised the idea of Pakistan, who provided us with the vision of Pakistan, who gave us the 'idea'⁸⁵ of the existence of this country. He was not so empty-minded that he simply said, 'Make a country,' and that too, an Islamic country, but was unable to state what sort of Islam was to be implemented. No.

Not only did he present us the idea of a country, he presented us the idea of an Islamic country. And he also told us which Islam was to be implemented in the country. He did not say, make this Islamic country and hand it over to the *Samiris* [those who deliberately misguide and falsify religion].⁸⁶ He knew that the *Samiris* would try to take it over. That they will bring a golden calf, announce that here is the golden calf: ‘Worship it’. And everyone shall follow their commands [...] He [Iqbal] clearly stated that [...] if religion is to be implemented it will be *din-i Shabbiri*. *Din-i Shabbiri* [i.e. the religion of Imam Husayn]⁸⁷ is the system of *wilayat*.⁸⁸

Echoing his statement about Pakistan being founded on the principle of *wilayat* Naqvi asserts at another instance, ‘The foundations on which this country was created were correct and we need to return it to these foundational principles.’⁸⁹

While invoking a particular rendition of Pakistani history to legitimise implementing *wilayat al-faqih* in the country, Naqvi also takes recourse to mythical language to further his theo-political project. Naqvi – emphasizing the innate, timeless essence of the Pakistani land and the people – declares that both the land and the people of Pakistan are innately predisposed to *wilayat*.

As Carl Schmitt asserts, in mythical language the earth contains within itself certain innate characteristics that she then also manifests upon herself, and sustains above herself.⁹⁰ Resorting to what Schmitt would term ‘mythical language’ Naqvi emphasises the Pakistani land’s innate proclivity to revolution and the implementation of the *wilayat al-faqih*. Urging the Pakistani Shi’a community to implement the system of *wilayat al-faqih* in Pakistan, he states:

From one perspective, it is not a source of pride for us, that we are celebrating the anniversary of the Revolution in Pakistan. To celebrate the anniversary, when we are a nation that is capable of the Revolution itself [...] The land that is most-ready for revolution is Pakistan. Even today, there is truth in this claim that the land that is most-ready for revolution is Pakistan [...]. In Pakistan [unlike other nations] this passion [for revolution] is innate, and this passion is priceless [...] this

passion, this exuberance [...] and it is this passion that will end in revolution.’⁹¹

At multiple points during this address, Naqvi repeats the refrain, ‘Pakistan is the land that is most ready for revolution [...] the land that is most ready [...]. Pakistan is the land that is most ready for revolution. This is the case today and this has been the case in the past.’⁹²

Naqvi asserts this characteristic as innate in not just the land, but also those who occupy it. In his speech he blurs the boundaries between the two, speaking in one instance of the land’s proclivity, and in another breath of the propensity of the people. He says, ‘this passion [for the revolution] is innate in you Pakistanis [...] God has blessed Pakistanis with this gift, as a quality that is innate in them.’⁹³

In declaring the innate readiness and predisposition of the land and the people of Pakistan towards the *wilayat al-faqih*, Naqvi explains that his comments are not specific to Pakistani Shi’as: ‘Pakistan is populated by supporters of the revolution. Sunnis are supporters of the revolution and Shi’as are supporters of the revolution.’⁹⁴ Thus, Naqvi’s views are completely contrary to Qibla’s who asserts that the Sunni political project is the implementation of a Sunni state in which Shi’as face extreme marginalisation, oppression and violence. In sharp contrast to Qibla, Naqvi speaks of the camaraderie between Shi’as and Sunnis in Pakistan, repeating that Sunnis do not harbour any hatred for Shi’as.⁹⁵ In fact, Jawad Naqvi accuses Shi’as of driving a wedge between the two communities – not the other way around.⁹⁶ As for those who commit acts of sectarian violence against Shi’as, Naqvi declares that they are not from among the Sunnis. ‘In Pakistan the terrorists, the brutal killers, the beasts and barbaric is a group which is neither related to Shi’a nor to Sunni’s.’⁹⁷

While Jawad Naqvi’s writings often centre on Pakistan, his ideological affiliations are very strongly Khomeinian and he constantly speaks in favour of the Iranian model of *wilayat al-faqih*.⁹⁸ It is correct to say that in some ways, national boundaries appear to have little significance for Naqvi. However Naqvi is far from novel in embodying this approach to borders. As Carl Schmitt observed decades earlier, recent developments in technology have made many borders illusory.⁹⁹ Moreover, as the example of Naqvi evidences, individuals’ communities are becoming spatially discontinuous and less territorially delimited, leading to an increased incoherence in the idea of territorially defined democracy.¹⁰⁰ From Naqvi

we can gauge that the religious landscape of some Pakistani Shi‘a scholars is aligned in ways that do not conform to the order of the political map of today.¹⁰¹ Again, this is far from novel since transnational networks – particularly networks that connect to Iran – are the norm among Shi‘a scholars in contemporary Pakistan.

While ideologically aligned with the current Iranian political model of the *wilayat al-faqih*, Naqvi constantly reminds his supporters that they must distinguish between Iran and the Revolution. Naqvi posits himself as an ardent supporter of the Revolution and the *wilayat al-faqih*, yet declares his distance from Iran. He announces:

Iran is not ours, but the Revolution is ours. Iran belongs to the Iranians, but the Revolution is ours. Pakistan is ours. Our land is Pakistan, our nation is Pakistan, we have to strive to ensure Pakistan’s prosperity [...] But the Revolution is not Iranians’. Just like Islam does not belong to those of the Arabian Peninsula, Islam is ours. Shi‘ism does not belong to those of the Arabian Peninsula, Shi‘ism is ours. In the same way, the Revolution is ours.¹⁰²

Stating that abandoning the Revolution is akin to abandoning Islam, Naqvi declares: ‘Shi‘ism is the name of an ideology that emanates from Islam, and the Revolution is the practical manifestation of Shi‘ism. If you abandon the Revolution, you will have to abandon Shi‘ism, and if you abandon Shi‘ism you will have to abandon Islam.’¹⁰³

Naqvi reminds his supporters of their Pakistani identity and the importance of state borders. Delivering a speech to a large gathering he remarks:

We are Pakistani. Pakistan has a right over us. Iranians have to save Iran, the Lebanese have to save Lebanon, and the Pakistanis have to save Pakistan. Khomeini has taught us loyalty. Khomeini has taught us to be devoted to our nation. Khomeini has taught us to love our community [...]. We have to free Pakistan from these lackeys [...] you can do it [...] And, believe me, Khomeini’s path is such that if people comprehend it, they would all become its supporters.¹⁰⁴

In summary, Jawad Naqvi justifies his theo-political project – the following of Khomeini's path, i.e. the implementation of the *wilayat al-faqih* – by positing this political model as: (1) religiously correct and binding, (2) a remedy for the nation's problems, and implicitly a solution for sectarian violence. Importantly, Naqvi's recounting of Pakistani history legitimises his project: he asserts that Muhammad Iqbal, the visionary who first conceived of Pakistan, wanted the country to be governed by a political system based on *wilayat*.

Conclusion

In engaging with the question of the state and political theology, this article makes a vital contribution to our understanding of how contemporary Shi'a ulema translate these concepts between various temporal moments and knowledge traditions. It examines how Muhammad's pre-modern state is refracted in the contemporary era in nation-state form by Ayatollah Ja'far and likeminded ulema. For them, Muhammad's state, translated into the context of present-day Pakistan, takes the form of a sectarianly-unaligned Islamic state. For Qibla, Muhammad's ideal Islamic state is unachievable in the Pakistani context. However, this does not prevent Qibla from providing a theologically-backed political model for Pakistan. While engaging with religious prescriptions regarding permissibility and impermissibility in the political realm, Qibla dives into conversation with the originally-Western discourse on secularism. Putting discourses on secularism in engagement with the ulema's epistemic tradition, Qibla recommends a religiously acceptable form of secularism. One wherein the sale of alcohol and pork is banned, but all other aspects of the country's economic, social and legal systems are not structured along explicitly Islamic lines. Finally, Jawad Naqvi maintains the eternal applicability of the doctrine of *wilayat* while translating it into the context of nation-states. Jawad Naqvi's comments evidence both his dexterity and his struggle in situating this model in Pakistan. He traces the doctrine of *wilayat* back to Muhammad, but also emphasizes its grounding in the narrative of Pakistan's birth. The modern nation-state becomes integral to his discourses.

My examination of traditional Pakistani Shi'a scholars also evidences that three distinct theo-political projects characterize my scholarly

interlocutors' discourses. These are: (1) a secular state, (2) a sectarianly-unaligned Islamic state, and (3) the implementation of the *wilayat al-faqih*. In highlighting this diversity of theo-political approaches, this research serves as a vital counter to the tendency to view Pakistan's Shi'a scholars solely in the light of Iran. Undoubtedly, this Iranian influence is clearly evidenced in the views of some Pakistani Shi'a scholars such as Jawad Naqvi and those affiliated with the al-'Urwah al-Wuthqa project. However, my examinations of Qibla Sahib's views and those of the scholars associated with Jami'a Ahl al-Bayt brings to light the vibrancy and diversity of Pakistani Shi'a scholars' discourses.

Despite their differences, I contend that all these theo-political projects are propelled by the same force – the spectre of violence. This spectre either serves as the *raison d'être* for a project, as in the case of Qibla Sahib; or helps substantially to bolster and justify it, as in the case of Jawad Naqvi as well as the scholars of Jami'a Ahl al-Bayt.¹⁰⁵ While the threat of violence drives these distinct political theologies, narrative historiography serves as an indispensable legitimiser. The scholars articulate Pakistani history in a manner that justifies their specific theo-political projects. What matters is 'not the authenticity of facts about the past but the power of the spiritual idea they [seek] to convey.'¹⁰⁶

As many historians have argued, the manner in which we construct any account (historical or otherwise) is more telling of our own predilections and agendas than of the event that we are attempting to represent. Drawing on the works of Hayden White, I have contended that the scholars' narrative historiography is a result of self-conscious fashioning and serves as a vehicle for transmitting 'messages about the nature of a shared reality.'¹⁰⁷ Given the contemporary Pakistani climate – which is rife with sectarian violence widely believed to be either disregarded, condoned or perpetrated by political authorities in an allegedly Islamic state – the messages encoded in Shi'a scholars' recounting of Pakistan's history are about the place of Islam in the public sphere, i.e. the ideal political theology for the nation.

The above-mentioned theo-political projects are, of course, limited to my work with my Shi'a scholarly interlocutors. It is very possible that greater diversity on these issues exist among the larger Pakistani Shi'a scholarly community. Consequently, this article serves as a vital start to this much-needed discussion on contemporary Pakistani Shi'a scholars and their appraisal of the ideal political theology for the nation.

Notes

1 Judith Butler, and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Who Sings the Nation-state?: Language, Politics, Belonging* (London: Seagull Books, 2007), 4.

2 Water Benjamin, 'Critique of Violence', in *On Violence: A Reader*, ed. Bruce B. Lawrence, and Aisha Karim (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2007), 268.

3 Foremost, I want to thank my Shi'a ulema interlocutors for their trust and their generosity with their time. Needless to say, this article would not have been possible if they had not shared their views with me. I also want to thank my adviser Ebrahim Moosa for his detailed feedback on this work as well as his investment in my academic trajectory. Many thanks to the anonymous reviewers for their comments and feedback. I am indebted to Hamzah Saif for his help with editing. This research was made possible through funding from the American Academy of Religion's International Dissertation Research Grant, Duke University's Julian Price Fellowship, and a grant from the North Carolina Center for South Asian Studies.

4 A pseudonym used as per Qibla's request.

5 Qibla Sahib. Interview by Author. Tape Recorded Personal Interview. Lahore, Pakistan, May 2011.

6 For Sunni-Shi'a radicalization in Pakistan, see: Mariam Abou Zahab, 'The Regional Dimension of Sectarian Conflicts in Pakistan' in *Pakistan: Nationalism without a Nation?*, ed. Christophe Jaffrelot (New Delhi: Manohar Publications, 2002); Mariam Abou Zahab, 'Sectarianism as a Substitute Identity: Sunnis and Shias in Central and South Punjab' in *Pakistan: The Contours of State and Society*, eds. Imran Ali, Soofia Mumtaz and Jean-Luc Racine (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Mariam Abou Zahab, 'The Sunni-Shia Conflict in Jhang (Pakistan)' in *Lived Islam in South Asia: Adaptation, Accommodation and Conflict*, eds. Imtiaz Ahmad and Helmut Reifeld (Delhi: Social Science Press, 2004); Ashok K. Behuria, 'Sunni-Shia Relations in Pakistan: The Widening Divide,' in *Strategic Analysis*, © *Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses* XXVIII, no.1 (Jan-Mar 2004), 157-176; Muhammad Qasim Zaman, 'Sectarianism in Pakistan: The Radicalization of Shi'i and Sunni Identities', *Modern Asian Studies* XXXII, no. 3 (1998), 689-716; Vali Nasr, 'Islam, the State and the Rise of Sectarian Militancy in Pakistan' in *Pakistan: Nationalism without a Nation?*, eds. Christophe Jaffrelot (New Delhi: Manohar Publications, 2002); Vali Nasr, 'The Rise of Sunni Militancy in Pakistan: The Changing Role of Islamism and the Ulama in Society and Politics,' *Modern Asian Studies* XXXIV, no.1 (2000), 139-180; Musa Khan Jalalzai, *The Sunni-Shia Conflict in Pakistan* (Lahore: Book Traders, 1998).

7 A number of reasons lie at the heart of the Sunni-Shi'a conflict. One among them is Shi'a opposition to the companions of the Prophet, in particular the first three caliphs.

8 Zaman, 'Sectarianism in Pakistan', 689.

9 Vali Nasr, 'The Rise of Sunni Militancy in Pakistan', 139. For more on this conflict refer to the sources mentioned in footnote 7.

10 Declan Walsh 'Pakistan Reels With Violence Against Shiites', *The New York Times*, Online Edition, 3 December 2012 <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/04/world/asia/pakistans-hazara-shiites-under-siege.html?hpw&_r=1&>. Accessed 20 June 2013.

11 Danish Rafique, '502 Shias killed last year, says MWM report', *Daily Times*, 1 January 2013 <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2013\01\01\story_1-1-2013_pg12_3>. Accessed 2 June 2013.

12 Hakim Muhammad Shujaat Ali Tipu, 'Mawlana Sayyid Zawar Hussain Shah

Shaheed,' *Monthly al-Muntazar* (December 1997), 25 & 38. Tipu writes that contemporary Pakistan resembles Karbala. Shi'as are killed everyday. The line of Shi'as that were killed in Karbala, that genealogy now extends to contemporary Pakistan.

13 This is not a new approach and the monthly journal *al-Muntazar* attests to many such efforts organized by Shi'as in Pakistan and the world over.

14 The statement on the 10,000 Souls March website reads: 'Shia Muslims of North America and people of conscience condemn the increasing violence against Shia Muslims in Pakistan and the Government of Pakistan's continued inaction. While many of these attacks have been carried out by extremist groups, law enforcement officials have turned a blind eye to such violence and these groups operate with widespread impunity across Pakistan. The government's ongoing failure to apprehend attackers and prosecute the militant groups behind the attacks indicates its indifference to the thousands killed through the systematic targeting of Shia Muslims of all backgrounds.' 'Shia Muslims: A Systematically Targeted Community in Pakistan,' 10,000 Souls March. <<http://soulsMarch.wordpress.com/statement/>> Accessed 2 February 2013.

15 'Quetta Tragedy: Pakistan Protests Against Shia Killing,' *The Express Tribune*, 12 January 2013 <<http://tribune.com.pk/story/492578/shias-leaders-call-for-army-intervention-after-quetta-bombs/>> Accessed 19 December 2013; 'Pakistan Blasts: Shia Refuse to Bury Pakistan Bomb Dead,' BBCNews.com, 11 January 2013 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-20989329>. Accessed 19 December 2013; 'Hazara Shias Bury Victims Four Days After Deadly Quetta Bombings,' Dawn.com, 14 January 2013 <<http://www.dawn.com/news/778738/sit-in-3>>. Accessed 19 December 2013.

16 Kully, Sadeef Ali, 'Hazaras, Hope and the Challenge for Running Candidates,' Dawn.com, 8 May 2013 <<http://dawn.com/2013/05/08/hazaras-hope-and-the-challenge-for-running-candidates/>>. Accessed 2 June 2013.

17 'Quetta's Dead Remain Unburied,' Dawn.com, 15 January 2013 <<http://dawn.com/2013/01/13/quettas-dead-remain-unburied-nationwide-protest-over-carnage/>>. Accessed 2 June 2013.

18 This is precisely why Qibla Sahib remarked: 'As soon as we leave the *jami'ah* we remove our special ulama dress. Why? We hide lest someone recognize us in this dress. If we are wearing something identificatory on our hands [such as rings] we take it off.' Qibla Sahib. Interview by Author. Tape Recorded Personal Interview. Lahore, Pakistan, May 2011.

19 Qibla Sahib. Interview, May 2011.

20 Derrida explains, 'The specter, as its name indicates, is the frequency of a certain visibility. But the visibility of the invisible. And visibility, by its essence is not seen, which is why it remains *epekeina tes ouusias*, beyond the phenomenon or beyond being.' Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, 100-101.

21 Jan Assmann, *Herrschaft und Heil: Politische Theologie in Altägypten, Israel und Europa* (München: Hanser, 2000), 24.

22 Mark Lilla, *The Stillborn God: Religion, Politics, and the Modern West* (New York: Knopf, 2007), 23.

23 Qibla's concerns are echoed by a number of other Shi'a scholars. These concerns were first evidenced on a titanic scale when the Zia ul Haq regime (1978-88) mandated the collection of *zakat* (religiously mandatory alms) from all citizens, simultaneously taking on the responsibility to distribute it to the deserving. However, both the collection and distribution of *zakat* were specified in a manner that was in accordance with Sunni belief

and at odds with the Shi'a theo-juristic tradition. Massive demonstrations by Shi'as across the country convinced the Zia junta to exempt Shi'a citizens from this *zakat* collection and distribution scheme. Even though that battle was won, other followed. Since the *zakat* incident many other concerns have arisen. Prime among them is the dissemination of a Sunni version of Islam in public schools and universities. See the works of the Shi'a scholar, Ziauddin Rizvi of Gilgit (d. 2005), for details about Shi'a concerns regarding the Sunnization of the Pakistani public education curriculum.

24 Qibla Sahib. Interview, May 2011.

25 Ibid.

26 This statement of belonging carries within it two assertions. Firstly, that as a citizen of Pakistan, Qibla – along with likeminded individuals – has the right to assert his views regarding the country's ideal theo-political trajectory. Secondly, that Qibla and others, as Pakistani nationals, have experienced the trauma that characterizes Shi'a life in the country, and they speak as victims of that experience.

27 Qibla Sahib. Interview, May 2011.

28 Qibla Sahib. Interview by Author. Tape Recorded Personal Interview. Lahore, Pakistan, March 2012.

29 Qibla Sahib. Interview, March 2012.

30 Qibla Sahib. Interview by Author. Tape Recorded Personal Interview. Lahore, Pakistan, July 2012.

31 Qibla Sahib. Interview, July 2012.

32 For example, the Shi'a scholar Hussain Naqvi asserts, 'Islam is a complete system of life; you can't simply take the daily prayers and discard the rest of the religious obligations [...] Islam is the name of a complete system of life.' Hussain Naqvi, Interview by Author. Tape Recorded Personal Interview. Lahore, Pakistan, May 2011.

33 Qibla Sahib. Interview, March 2012.

34 Qibla Sahib's comments on the tyranny of the Sunni majority, while backed by both anecdotal and statistical evidence, also find support in theorizations of community dynamics. These theorizations assert that distinctions between minority and majority communities sustain hegemonies of larger collectives. When such distinction are rife, minorities are deemed as less-legitimate deviants, while the logic of the rule of the majority is invoked to legitimize majoritarian hegemony and naturalize the majority community's access to the state apparatus. See, for example: Arjun Appadurai, *Fear of Small Numbers: An Essay on the Geography of Anger* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006)

35 Qibla Sahib harks back to the idea of the prophetic state stating that that is the ideal Islamic state, wherein Islamic rules are implemented. He explains, "If these types of conditions can be provided again – where people have economic opportunities and the ability to prosper; where they are able to get their basic tasks and errands accomplished; where they are provided better education and health facilities – such a state which furthers individuals' prosperity, where there is no extremism, no sectarianism, free from terrorism, and is governed by the system of an Islamic state, that will be a great state." Qibla Sahib. Interview, May 2011.

At another instance, Qibla remarks, "the [correct] understanding of an Islamic state is the same one that the prophet elaborated for us. This understanding of the ideal Islamic state is applicable eternally." Qibla Sahib. Interview, March 2012.

36 Qibla Sahib. Interview, May 2011.

37 Ibid.

- 38 Qibla Sahib. Interview, July 2012.
- 39 Ibid.
- 40 Hayden V. White, *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), ix. White understands narrative historiography to be only one particular form of recounting history – other forms being annals, chronicles etc. White informs us that although there have existed a variety of conceptions of historical reality, in the modern era, the narrative form of historiography has taken precedence over all other forms. This preference for narrativity stems from the fact that ‘the modern scholar seeks fullness and continuity in an order of events.’ (Ibid., 9) However, what gets strategically ignored is the understanding that the annalist, for example, has both fullness and continuity in the sequence of the years, and his could possibly be a more ‘realistic’ portrayal of history. (Ibid., 9) Even more importantly, there is an overlooking (deliberate or otherwise) of the fact that the self-conscious fashioning activity of the narrator decreases the objectivity of any historical recounting. (Ibid. 18)
- 41 Ibid., 1.
- 42 In driving home this point, Qibla identifies post-1979 Iran as an Islamic state – as a state established to have a ‘*Qurani bakumat*’ – and stresses that its ideological history is clearly distinct from that of Pakistan. Qibla Sahib. Interview, March 2012.
- 43 By which he means ‘constitution’.
- 44 Qibla Sahib. Interview, March 2012.
- 45 A pseudonym used to protect the seminary’s privacy.
- 46 A pseudonym.
- 47 A pseudonym.
- 48 Hussain Naqvi, Interview by Author. Tape Recorded Personal Interview. Lahore, Pakistan, May 2011. (26:00 onwards)
- 49 Ayatollah Ja’far, Interview by Author. Tape Recorded Personal Interview. Lahore, Pakistan, May 2011.
- 50 Ayatollah Ja’far, Interview, May 2011.
- 51 Ibid.
- 52 I am grateful to my anonymous reviewer for pushing me on this issue.
- 53 Hussain Naqvi, Interview by Author. Tape Recorded Personal Interview. Lahore, Pakistan, May 2011.
- 54 Ibid.
- 55 Ibid.
- 56 Ibid.
- 57 Zaidi Naqvi’s use of the phrase ‘Rightly Guided’ caliphs is interesting, since Shi’as contest the order of political succession following Muhammad. Many hesitate to use the Sunni term of reverence – ‘Rightly Guided’ – for the first three caliphs who succeeded Muhammad.
- 58 He used the English word ‘system’.
- 59 Zaidi Naqvi, Interview by Author. Tape Recorded Personal Interview. Islamabad, Pakistan, May 2012. 38:30 onwards
- 60 Ibid.
- 61 Hussain Naqvi, Interview, May 2011.
- 62 Zaidi Naqvi, Interview, May 2012.
- 63 Ayatollah Ja’far, Interview, May 2011.
- 64 Citation withheld to preserve anonymity.

65 Hussain Naqvi, Interview, May 2011 and Ayatollah Ja'far, Interview, May 2011.

66 Ayatollah Ja'far, Interview, May 2011.

67 For an introduction to al-'Urwah al-Wuthqa see Syed Jawad Naqvi, 'Introduction to Jamea Orwat Wuthqa Islamic Seminary,' *Mashrabenaab* (Jumada al-Awwal – Jumada al-Thani 1431 AH) <http://www.mashrabenaab.com/user_selected_chapter_detail.asp?mn=vtfpte68239975>. Accessed 14 January 2013.

68 'About Us,' *Mashrabenaab* <http://www.mashrabenaab.com/about_us.asp>. Accessed 6 January 2014.

69 He paired the English term 'genuine' with '*madrasab*'. Admittedly, this scholar's opinions are novel. They raise questions about how, for this particular scholar, foreign financial support impacts the authenticity of a religious seminary. His views deserve further investigation. Regrettably this scholar passed away in early 2013 and I can no longer follow up with him.

70 Anonymous scholar. Interview by Author. Tape Recorded Personal Interview. Lahore, Pakistan, July 2012.

71 Alex Vatanka, 'The Guardian of Pakistan's Shia', in *Current Trends in Islamist Ideology*, vol. 13 (1 June 2012) <<http://www.currenttrends.org/research/detail/the-guardian-of-pakistans-shia>>. Accessed 15 February 2013.

72 'Wiladat Imam Ali (A.S) And 2nd Anniversary of Jamea Urwat-ul-Wuthqa Lahore', Youtube, video uploaded by syedshahzad51214 <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cugov8Ze-3M>>. Accessed 20 January 2013.

73 Jawad Naqvi, 'Tahajjur ki Muqaddas Dalil, Tajadud ka Sarab aur Inqilab-e-Islami Pakistan ki Raah-e-Nijat,' *Mashrabenaab*, vol. 10 (May-June 2010), 97.

74 Jawad Naqvi, 'Tahajjur ki Muqaddas Dalil', 96.

75 In his work, *Wilayat al-Faqih Hukumat-i-Islami* (The Jurist's Guardianship: Islamic Government), Khomeini argues that the Shah's monarchy in Iran was un-Islamic. The correct Islamic political model to which all true Muslims should aspire is that of the *wilayat al-faqih* – the political rulership of the supreme jurist. This jurist's religio-political authority would stand in for the Hidden Imam of Twelver Shi'ism until the end of the Occultation.

76 Jawad Naqvi explains, 'The event of Ghadeer is the declaration of Wilayat.' Syed Jawad Naqvi, *The System of Wilayat* (Qum: MATAB Publications, 2010), 30.

77 'Agha Jawad Naqvi - Nizam e Wilayat Majlis 1 part 9,' Youtube, uploaded by Jawad Sirewal <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rcpkftzo-VI>>. Accessed 2 February 2013; 'Agha Jawad Naqvi - Nizam e Wilayat Majlis 1 part 10', Youtube, uploaded by Jawad Sirewal <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d3Tug4teLek>>. Accessed 1 February 2013; and 'Agha Jawad Naqvi - Nizam e Wilayat Majlis 1 part 10,' Youtube, uploaded by Jawad Sirewal <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d3Tug4teLek>>. Accessed 1 February 2013.

In his English book, *The System of Wilayat*, Jawad Naqvi states, 'The system of Wilayat is there till the doomsday. It cannot be suspended with the demise of the Holy Prophet (s) nor can it be suspended with the occultation of an Infallible (a.t.f.s.). It was a divine decision that the Messenger (s) had to pass away, He had to go into a permanent occultation, but "Wilayat" was alive, present and the system was present among the Ummah. If an Infallible goes into a state of occultation for a particular period then also the system of Wilayat is present and even if the Infallible goes behind veils of occultation for an unlimited period then also the system of Wilayat is secure. It is not allowed to turn our face from "Wilayat" either due to demise of Prophet (s) nor due to occultation of Infallible.' Syed Jawad Naqvi, *The System of Wilayat*, trans. Bethat Islamic Research Center

(Qum: MATAB Publications, 2010), 59-60.

78 Ibid., 105.

79 Ibid., 93-94.

80 Ibid., 96.

81 Sayyid Jawad Naqvi, 'Sawalat aap Kay, Jawab Hamaray', in *Mashrabenaab* (July 2012), 88.

82 Quoted verbatim in the original English. Syed Jawad Naqvi, 'The Oppression of Shi'as in Pakistan: A Repetition of Oppression on Ali (a.s.)' in *Mashrabenaab* (Jumada al-Ula – Jumada al-Thani 1430 AH) <http://www.mashrabenaab.com/user_selected_chapter_detail.asp?mn=5981714onqdfkt>. Accessed 6 January 2014.

83 Jawad Naqvi, 'Tahajjur ke Muqaddas Dalil, Tajadud ka Sarab aur Inqilab-e-Islami Pakistan ke Raah-e-Nijat,' *Mashrabenaab*, vol. 10 (May-June 2010), 87.

84 Garoh-e-Siyasi, 'Watan ke fiqar kar nadaan', in *Mashrabenaab* (January 2012), 72.

85 He uses the English word 'idea'.

86 In the Qur'anic context, *samiri* refers to the individual who misguided the ancient Israelites to worship a golden calf.

87 Jawad Naqvi writes, 'The religion of "Shabbir" (Imam Hussain (a.s.) is the system of "Wilayat".' Jawad Naqvi, 'Tahajjur ke Muqaddas Dalil', 67.

88 'Agha Jawad Naqvi - Nizam e Wilayat Majlis 1 part 11', Youtube, uploaded by Jawad Sirewal <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iSgDVSdYUs4>> Accessed 1 February 2013. For more on Jawad Naqvi's linking of Iqbal and Wilayat see: Jawad Naqvi, 'Tahajjur ke Muqaddas Dalil', 142-143.

89 Jawad Naqvi, 'Tahajjur ke Muqaddas Dalil', 186.

90 For Schmitt, these innate characteristics are law. He writes, 'The earth is bound to law in three ways. She contains law within herself, as a reward of labor; she manifests law upon herself, as fixed boundaries; and she sustains law above herself, as a public sign of order.' Carl Schmitt, *Nomos of the Earth*, trans. G. L. Ulmen (New York: Telos Press, Ltd., 2003), 42.

91 'Inqilab e Islami,Itmaam e Hujjat e Ilahi (11th February 2012 - LAHORE) Ustad Agha Syed Jawad Naqvi,' Youtube, video uploaded by syedshahzad51214 <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q3IXSM7eHsw>>. Accessed 27 January 2013. This speech was held at al-'Urwat-ul-Wuthqa on 11 February, the 33rd anniversary of the Islamic Revolution of Iran.

92 'Inqilab e Islami,Itmaam e Hujjat e Ilahi (11th February 2012 - LAHORE) Ustad Agha Syed Jawad Naqvi,' Youtube, video uploaded by syedshahzad51214 <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q3IXSM7eHsw>> Accessed 27 January 2013.

93 'Inqilab e Islami,Itmaam e Hujjat e Ilahi (11th February 2012 - LAHORE) Ustad Agha Syed Jawad Naqvi,' Youtube, video uploaded by syedshahzad51214 <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q3IXSM7eHsw>> Accessed 27 January 2013.

94 'Inqilab e Islami,Itmaam e Hujjat e Ilahi (11th February 2012 - LAHORE) Ustad Agha Syed Jawad Naqvi,' Youtube, video uploaded by syedshahzad51214 <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q3IXSM7eHsw>>. Accessed 27 January 2013.

95 'shia sunni unity by agha jawad naqvi sahib' Youtube, video uploaded by hammad1976 <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bZcOfgOJxaY>>. Accessed 27 January 2013.

96 'shia sunni unity by agha jawad naqvi sahib' Youtube, video uploaded by hammad1976 <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bZcOfgOJxaY>>. Accessed 27 January 2013.

97 Quoted verbatim in the original English. Syed Jawad Naqvi, 'the Oppression of Shi'as in Pakistan: A Repetition of Oppression on Ali (a.s.),' *Mashrabenaab* (Jumada al-Ula – Jumada al-Thani 1430 AH) <http://www.mashrabenaab.com/user_selected_chapter_detail.asp?mn=59817140nqdfkt>. Accessed 6 January 2014.

98 While Naqvi's deference of Khomeini and Khamene'i is peppered throughout his works and speeches, it is particularly evident in sections of this filmed event: 'Inqilab e Islami, Itmaam e Hujjat e Ilahi (11th February 2012 - LAHORE) Ustad Agha Syed Jawad Naqvi,' Youtube, video uploaded by syedshahzad51214. <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q3IXSM7eHsw>> Accessed 27 January 2013.

99 G. L. Ulmen, 'Translator's Introduction' to *Nomos of the Earth*, by Carl Schmitt (New York: Telos Press, Ltd., 2003), 19. Additionally, recent works on territoriality argue that international pressures and globalization are increasingly challenging the homogeneity, unity and sovereignty of the state. Writings on 'transnational' or 'global governmentality' evidence that scholars are already questioning scalar and spatial framing of the nation-state. See Philip G. Cerny, 'Restructuring the State in a Globalizing World: Capital Accumulation, Tangled Hierarchies and the Search for a New Spatio-Temporal Fix,' in *Review of International Political Economy* XIII, no. 4 (2006), 679-695.

100 Roland Axtmann, "The State of the State: The Model of the Modern State and its Contemporary Transformation", in *International Political Science Review* XXV, no. 3 (2004), 270-271.

101 The religious landscape evidences different boundaries, capitals and centers of influence.

102 'Inqilab e Islami, Itmaam e Hujjat e Ilahi (11th February 2012 - LAHORE) Ustad Agha Syed Jawad Naqvi,' Youtube, video uploaded by syedshahzad51214 <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q3IXSM7eHsw>>. Accessed 27 January 2013. This speech was held at al-'Urwat-ul-Wuthqa on 11 February, the 33rd anniversary of the Islamic Revolution of Iran.

103 'Inqilab e Islami, Itmaam e Hujjat e Ilahi (11th February 2012 - LAHORE) Ustad Agha Syed Jawad Naqvi,' Youtube, video uploaded by syedshahzad51214. <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q3IXSM7eHsw>>. Accessed 27 January 2013.

104 'Afkar-e-Khomeini, Fakher-o-Sharam and current pakistan [sic] by Agha Syed Jawad Naqvi' Youtube, video uploaded by mohsinmehdi. <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qtPh3yWYxeY>>. Accessed 27 January 2013.

105 To reiterate, for Jawad Naqvi as well as the scholars of Jami'a Ahl al-Bayt, factors other than the spectre of violence also contribute to the political theologies they recommend. However I argue that Qibla's call for secularism emanates almost solely from his fear of sectarian persecution. My assertion is substantiated by Qibla's own comments which have featured in this article.

106 Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2003), 45.

107 White, *The Content of the Form*, 1.