

CHRISTOPHE JAFFRELOT  
& LAURENCE LOUËR (EDS)

# PAN-ISLAMIC CONNECTIONS

TRANSNATIONAL NETWORKS  
BETWEEN SOUTH ASIA  
AND THE GULF





# PAN-ISLAMIC CONNECTIONS

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# Pan-Islamic Connections

*Transnational Networks Between  
South Asia and the Gulf*

*edited by* CHRISTOPHE JAFFRELOT AND  
LAURENCE LOUËR

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## GLOSSARY

<i>ahl al-dhimma:</i>	non-Muslims inhabiting in an Islamic state
<i>Ahl-i-Hadith:</i>	an Islamic school of thought which emphasizes the primacy of the Prophetic traditions (the Hadith) as the source of Islamic law
<i>akhlaq:</i>	morality, values
<i>alim:</i>	see <i>ulama</i>
<i>aqazada:</i>	lit. the 'rich kids', the Persian derogatory term for the third generation of the political and religious leadership of the Islamic Republic of Iran
<i>ʿaql:</i>	rational reasoning
<i>Ashura:</i>	mourning of the martyrdom of Imam Husein in Shi'a Islam, the tenth day of the month of Muharram
<i>baraka:</i>	divine flow transmitted by Muslim saints
<i>bid'a:</i>	innovation
<i>dar al-Islam:</i>	territory of Islam
<i>dars al-kharij:</i>	the highest level of study in the Shi'a religious seminaries, which upon completion permits one to claim the status of <i>mujtahid</i>
<i>dar ul-hadith:</i>	house of the teaching of the prophetic traditions
<i>darbar:</i>	royal court and/or audience
<i>dargah:</i>	tomb of a Sufi saint, mausoleum
<i>dhikr/zikr:</i>	remembrance, devotional acts including rhythmic repetitions in Sufi Islam
<i>falsafa:</i>	philosophy

## GLOSSARY

<i>faqih</i> , pl. <i>fuqaha</i> :	religious scholar specialist in religious jurisprudence ( <i>fiqh</i> )
<i>fiqh</i> :	Islamic law, jurisprudence
<i>fatwa</i> :	a legal ruling by a specialist in religious law
<i>hadith</i> :	oral Islamic tradition reporting the Prophet's words and doings
<i>Hajj</i> :	pilgrimage to Mecca
<i>hawzah 'ilmiyya</i> :	religious seminary in Shi'a Islam
<i>hijra</i> :	lit. 'migration' and more particularly the migration of the Prophet from Mecca to Medina in 622
<i>Hijaz</i> :	the holy land of Islam, region comprising most of the western part of modern-day Saudi Arabia
<i>hudud</i> :	plural of <i>hadd</i> , lit. 'limit', punishment meted out for certain violations of Islamic law
<i>ijaza</i> :	certificate given by an <i>alim</i> that allows to teach Islamic sciences
<i>ijma</i> :	lit. 'consensus'. The third source of Muslim law after the Quran and Sunnah. Generally it refers to a consensus among <i>ulama</i>
<i>ijtihad</i> :	religious exegesis; the use of human reason, for example, to interpret a rule of sharia law
<i>imambargha</i> <i>imambara</i> :	or Shi'a religious buildings in South Asia
<i>Imam-i Adil</i> :	supreme sovereign. In the Quran, 'the man who is dearest to God on the day of judgment is the <i>Imam-i Adil</i> '
<i>imam-jum'a</i> :	lit. 'Friday imam', i.e. the imam who is pronouncing the Friday sermon at the mosque
<i>ja'fari</i> :	name of the Shi'a school of religious law
<i>jagirs</i> :	land and even villages whose revenues went to generals or the local notables (including pirs) whom the Emperors of the kings wanted to reward

## GLOSSARY

<i>jazirat al-Arab:</i>	the Arabian peninsula
<i>jizya:</i>	tax levied in Islamic states on non-Muslim subjects
<i>kafir</i> , pl. <i>kuffar</i> :	infidel, unbeliever
<i>kufri:</i>	unbelief
<i>khanqah:</i>	abode of a Sufi saint; building designed specifically for gatherings of a Sufi order and for spiritual retreat
<i>Khilafat:</i>	Caliphate
<i>khilat:</i>	Caliphal robe
<i>khums:</i>	specific Shi'a religious alms. It consists in the <i>sahm-i imam</i> (share of the Imam) given directly either to a mosque, <i>imambara</i> , or <i>madrassa</i> , or to the local representative of a <i>marja'</i> ; and the <i>sahm-i sadat</i> (share of the descendants of the Imams) given to poor <i>sadat</i>
<i>kurta pyjamas:</i>	the traditional dress in South Asia, made of a loose shirt over a pair of trousers
<i>madhhab:</i>	a school of Islamic jurisprudence ( <i>fiqh</i> )
<i>madrassa:</i>	seminary, Islamic school
<i>majlis</i> , pl. <i>majalis:</i>	gathering organized for religious celebrations in Shi'a Islam, most notably the birth and death of the Imams
<i>maktab:</i>	Quranic school
<i>manshur:</i>	investiture
<i>marja' al-taqlid</i> , <i>marja'iyya al-taqlid:</i>	lit. the 'source of emulation'. The supreme religious authority in Shi'a Islam
<i>mawlawi:</i>	honorific title for an Islamic scholar
<i>mujaddid:</i>	lit. 'renovator': an <i>alim</i> who revives Islam by restoring its original purity
<i>mujahid</i> ; pl. <i>mujahidin:</i>	lit. 'someone who performs <i>jihad</i> '
<i>mujtahid:</i>	an authoritative interpreter of the Islamic law

## GLOSSARY

<i>murshid:</i>	guide, Sufi master
<i>nawab:</i>	honorific title for a Muslim ruler in India
<i>Padshah-i Islam:</i>	lit. 'the Islamic sovereign'. 'Padshah' is a Persian superlative royal title composed of <i>pad</i> 'master' and <i>shah</i> 'king' that had been adopted by the Ottoman Sultan among others
<i>pir:</i>	spiritual master in a Sufi order; saint, alive or dead who can perform miracles
<i>qadi</i> or <i>qazi:</i>	judge in charge of enforcing Islamic law
<i>qanats:</i>	subterranean channelling galleries of piedmont aquifer strata
<i>qawwali:</i>	a form of Sufi music popular in South Asia
<i>qiyas:</i>	reasoning by analogy
<i>risala:</i>	treatise of Islamic law written by a <i>marja'</i> in Shi'a Islam
<i>sahaba:</i>	companions of the Prophet Mohammed
<i>shahid:</i>	martyr
<i>shahri:</i>	settled peasantry in Baluchistan
<i>sharia:</i>	Islamic law made up of norms and injunctions from the Quran and Sunnah
<i>silsila:</i>	lit. 'chain', a sufi order or brotherhood
<i>Sultan-i Adil:</i>	a just ruler
<i>tabligh:</i>	proselytization
<i>takfir, takfiri:</i>	to declare someone ' <i>kafir</i> ', unbeliever
<i>tafsir:</i>	exegesis of the Quran
<i>taqlid:</i>	in Islamic legal terminology, to follow the verdict of a scholar well versed in the interpretation of the <i>sharia</i>
<i>taqiyya:</i>	dissimulating one's Shi'a faith in adverse circumstances

## GLOSSARY

<i>taqrib:</i>	literally 'rapprochement'. Designates the rapprochement between the different currents of Islam, in particular Sunnism and Shi'ism
<i>ulama:</i>	plural for <i>alim</i> ; doctor in Muslim law
<i>umma:</i>	global body of Islam
<i>umrah:</i>	a pilgrimage to Mecca performed at any time of the year, in contrast to the Hajj
<i>urs:</i>	festivals held on the <i>pirs'</i> anniversary dates
<i>ushr:</i>	Islamic tax on the harvests whose amount differs according to the type of irrigation
<i>usul al-fiqh:</i>	fundamentals of religious law studied in the religious seminaries
<i>wahdat-ul-wajud:</i>	unity of being
<i>wahdat-ul-shahud:</i>	unity of existence
<i>wakil:</i>	representative of a <i>marja'</i> in Shi'a Islam
<i>watan:</i>	nation
<i>wilayat:</i>	administrative division of a country
<i>wilayat-i faqih:</i>	literally the 'rule by the specialist in religious law', the doctrine of Islamic government elaborated by Ruhollah Khomeini in the 1970s which is the ideological basis of the Islamic Republic of Iran
<i>zakat:</i>	one of the Five Pillars of Islam, the <i>zakat</i> is a tax paid annually under Islamic law and used for charitable or religious purposes
<i>zawiya:</i>	Sufi lodge
<i>ziyaret:</i>	visit to shrines



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INTRODUCTION

THE GULF–SOUTH ASIA RELIGIOUS  
CONNECTIONS

INDO-ISLAMIC CIVILIZATION VS. PAN-ISLAMISM?

*Christophe Jaffrelot and Laurence Louër*

South Asia and the Gulf countries are often seen as belonging to two different universes. Indeed, the contemporary geopolitical division of the world situates the former in Asia and the latter in the Middle East. This geographical slicing matches part of the dynamics that shape contemporary world politics, in which the Gulf, in great part because of the oil wealth, has emerged as a new economic, political and religious hub but also as an area of tension between Saudi Arabia and Iran, two states that struggle to impose themselves as representing ‘true Islam’ and to lead the Muslim world. South Asia, for its part, tends to be seen from the Middle East mainly as a supplier of cheap labour to the Gulf and, as far as religion is concerned, as a recipient of ‘orthodox’ Islamic religious influences from the Gulf—be they Sunni or Shi’a—which rework the Indian Islamic civilization that developed in close relation with Sufism and Hinduism over several centuries.

The contributions in this book focus on the role of Islam in the multifaceted relationships between the Gulf and South Asia in the contemporary period.<sup>1</sup> It fills a gap in the literature, which has mostly concentrated on trade relations

and migrations between the two areas.<sup>2</sup> It contributes to refine the understanding of religious dynamics through a mere centre-periphery pattern. While Iran has kept its role as a major centre of attraction for Shi'a Islam since the sixteenth century, the Arabian Peninsula has gained a religious centrality in Sunni Islam only since the 1950s. Thanks to oil wealth, Saudi Arabia and some other Gulf monarchies have been able to export a mostly Salafi brand of Islam to various regions of the Muslim world actively since the 1960s. This book, however, shows the sometimes surprising routes of a religious influence that is not unilateral. Moreover, while documenting the routes of influence from the Gulf to South Asia, it reveals the various tensions between Arabian Islam and local South Asian understandings and practices of Islam.

While the contributors to this book focus on contemporary developments, this introduction is intended to give some historical background. In the following pages, we will argue that the pattern of Islamization in South Asia has resulted in the making of a specific civilization that for a long time was largely cut off from the original crucible of Islam in Arabia and developed independently, in the Sufi tradition, and in close relation with Persian Islam.

By the thirteenth century, South Asian Muslims had invented a Sufi-based form of spirituality in conversation with Hindu mystics and endowed India with the quality of their sacred land, with its own holy shrines and pilgrimage routes. This occurred in a context where the Arabian Peninsula had long lost its religious centrality. Indeed, after the reign of the fourth Caliph Ali bin Abi Talib (661), the dynasties that ruled the Muslim Empire deserted Arabia and moved north, to Damascus (the Omayyads) and then Baghdad (the Abbasids). Because it hosted the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, the Arabian Peninsula, and in particular the Hijaz area harbouring both cities, maintained a symbolic importance for Muslims but it was not a political centre any more and also played no key role in doctrinal debates.

Actually, when South Asian Muslims looked West, it was to the Persian world, which exerted the most essential influence, hence the emergence of an 'eclectic Indo-Persianate world'.<sup>3</sup> This is well exemplified by the dense interactions between the Safavid and the Mughal empires during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which resulted in the incorporation of many Persians in the Mughal administrative elites and in Persian becoming the language of the Mughal state—and also very much the language of Islam together with Arabic. This Indo-Persian nexus was perpetuated after the fall of the Mughals, in particular in some South Asian Shi'a polities which were directly connected to the Shi'a political and religious centres in Persia and Mesopotamia.

## INTRODUCTION: THE GULF–SOUTH ASIA RELIGIOUS CONNECTIONS

This historical trajectory—that we will scrutinize in this introduction—enlightens contemporary processes, showing how some trends are radically new—for example the diffusion of orthodox Sunnism from Arabia—while others are rooted in long-term trends of Indo-Persian connections.

### *The Making of the Indian Muslim Civilization*

#### India as an Islamic Sacred Land: The Impact of Sufism

Sufism is one of the most striking characteristics of the South Asian variant of Islam. Coming from the Arabian Peninsula, Persia and Central Asia, the first Sufi saints did not cultivate their relationship with the historical core of the *dar al-Islam* (territory of Islam). The main Sufi orders (*silsilas*, lit. ‘chains’) that developed in the twelfth to thirteenth centuries were the Naqshbandiyya, which drew its inspiration from a Bukhara-based Tadjik, Baha’uddin Naqshband (1317–88), the Qadiriyya, named after the founder, Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani of Baghdad (d. 1166), the Suhrawardiyya, named after Abu Najib al-Suhrawardi (d. 1168) who came from Persia, and the Chishtiyya, named after Khwajah Mu’in al-Din Chishti (1141–1236), a native of Sajistan (at the crossroads of contemporary Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan). The Chishtiyya order became the most important one in India because of its huge popularity and its close relation with Muslim dynasties. While its epicentre, until today, is the Dargah Sharif of Ajmer (Rajasthan) where Mu’in al-Din Chishti had moved and was buried, Delhi was another key location because of the prestige of one of his disciples, Qutbuddin Bakhtiar Kaki (1173–1235), whose disciple, Baba Farid (1173–1266) settled down in Delhi too. The last major figure in this lineage, Nizamuddin Auliya (1238–1325), also lived in Delhi, where his *dargah* (mausoleum), until today, is—like the Dargah Sharif—a major international pilgrimage centre.

Despite their hagiographers’ efforts to portray them as directly connected to Arabia, none of the major historical Sufi saints, known as ‘Shaykhs’, ever made the Hajj to Mecca and Medina.<sup>4</sup> Their land was India and, as their disciples maintained their *dargahs* there, they made India sacred for Muslims. From these mystical centres that disciples visited *en masse*, the Shaykh exerted a ‘spiritual jurisdiction over a specific territory’<sup>5</sup> or *wilayat* and extended his protection over entire cities—like Delhi in the case of the Chishtiyyas. The power attributed to the Sufi saints over their *wilayat* was bound to attract the

attention of local Muslim rulers who quickly cultivated a specific relationship with the Shaykhs.<sup>6</sup>

Certainly, these rulers, to begin with, considered their authority as deriving from the Caliphs based in Damascus and then Baghdad, who represented the centre of gravity of Islam until the tenth century. By 945 however, after the Iranian Buyids conquered Mesopotamia and put the Abbasid Caliph under tutelage, the Caliphate had become largely a symbolic institution. This institution was further weakened during the thirteenth century after Baghdad was destroyed by the Mongols and the last Abbasids went into exile in Cairo.

The attitude of the founder of the Delhi Sultanate, Shams al-Din Iltutmish (reigned 1211–36), reflected this new reality. In 1228–29, he received a delegation from the Abbasid Caliph al-Mustansir and was presented with the Caliphal robe (*khilat*) and investiture (*manshur*) signifying the Caliphate's recognition of Iltutmish's rule over India.<sup>7</sup> This recognition gave him religious and political legitimacy and prestige but the Delhi Sultanate remained an independent kingdom since the main sources of his legitimacy did *not* come from outside India.<sup>8</sup> Indeed, when local orthodox *ulama*, echoing the Caliphate's recommendations, requested him to give the Hindus 'the choice of "Islam or death"', he turned to the Sufis 'who had by then amply demonstrated that truth—the Islamic truth—was not confined to the pages of a book on shari'a',<sup>9</sup> to legitimate his pragmatic decision not to antagonize the Hindus, who were in a majority and may have dislodged Muslims from their position of power if offered such a choice.<sup>10</sup> Not only did Iltutmish argue that he rose to power thanks to the *baraka* of Sufi saints, but Sufi saints endorsed him after he became the Sultan. This move greatly contributed to the institutionalization of the local Sufi orders.

This shift in the distribution of emphasis, from a faraway centre of the Muslim world to local Sufi saints, had major implications. First, it gave the Indo-Gangetic territory a sacred quality. Traditionally, Hindus claimed that the territory below the Himalayan arch was their holy land.<sup>11</sup> Muslims could now feel the same because the Indian sites where Sufi saints were buried were endowed with sacredness too. That was particularly true of the Chishtiyyas whose *silsila* became associated with the ruling dynasties one after another, precisely because of its Indian roots.<sup>12</sup>

This pattern was confirmed during the Mughal Empire, whose rulers developed a close relation with the Chishtiyya order, at the expense of Naqshbandiyya whose dense transnational network provoked some suspicion.<sup>13</sup>

When Babur, the founder of the Empire, reached Delhi in 1526, the first thing he did was to make ‘the circuit of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya’s tomb’.<sup>14</sup>

Parallel to this Sufi-related territorialization of Islam in the Indian sub-continent, this land became sacred for the Muslims because of the popularization of land-related legendary accounts. Amir Khusrô, a poet and close disciple of Nizamuddin Auliya, ‘read’ in a *hadith* that South Asia was the place where Adam descended to earth after being expelled from paradise. Azad Bilgrami, a seventeenth-century Islamic scholar, ‘described India as the place where the eternal light of Muhammad first manifested in Adam, while Arabia is where it found its final expression in the physical form of the Prophet’.<sup>15</sup> While this ‘description’ can be considered as an ideological ‘invention of the tradition’ in the Hobsbawmian sense, it is revealing of the eagerness of Azad Bilgrami ‘to show that India was in all ways closely linked to the essence of the Islamic faith’.<sup>16</sup>

### *Ziyaret* vs. *Hajj*: Patronizing Religious Sites/Doing Pilgrimages—in Arabia or in South Asia?

The shift of the Muslim kings towards a greater religious investment in India found expression in their patronizing of Sufi shrines and the promotion of pilgrimages to these sacred sites (known as *ziyarets*, lit. ‘visits to shrines’) rather than to the sites of Arabia and the shrines of the Shi’a Imams in Mesopotamia and Iran.<sup>17</sup> Certainly, since India was comparatively more prosperous than the Gulf polities, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, rulers of Gujarat, Bengal, and the Deccan sent all kinds of gifts to Mecca and Medina where they also built hospices, schools, etc. But they gave even more to the Sufi shrines. The Mughals continued to patronize Sufi—and particularly Chishtiyya—shrines. Visits by Mughal rulers were accompanied by huge donations, endowments and the granting of *jagirs* (land and even villages whose revenues went to the *dargahs*), as well as the construction of new buildings (including mosques).

Not only did the Mughal Emperors patronize *dargahs* as much as the sacred sites of Mecca and Medina, their pilgrimage routes also reflected this inclination. Certainly, the Mughals financially supported the pilgrims who wanted to go to Mecca, usually via the port of Surat (Gujarat), known as the *Bab-ul-Mecca* (the gateway to Mecca). The Mughal emperor Akbar the Great (d. 1605) decided to send caravans of pilgrims every year at the state’s expense. He appointed a senior noble of his court as Mir Hajj (someone in charge of the state-sponsored *Hajj*), dedicated three of his ships to that purpose and negotiated a treaty with the Portuguese for ensuring the safe passage of the

pilgrims in the Red Sea. But none of the Mughal emperors went to Mecca for the *Hajj*. Not only would leaving India for such a long period been difficult,<sup>18</sup> but they also preferred to send there, on exile, their opponents and those who had fallen in disgrace—one more reason not to go there themselves! In fact, the Arabian peninsula was the place of involuntary exile, whereas Persia was the place where a prince fearing the Emperor would find refuge<sup>19</sup>.

If Mughal emperors did not make the *Hajj*, they sent female members of their circles to Mecca. In fact, a 'large number of élite women made the pilgrimage from India,'<sup>20</sup> including Gulbadan Begam, the aunt of Akbar—who arranged for her trip and those of ten other ladies from the Mughal aristocracy. But this long journey was not a success. The Indian delegation stayed in the Gulf from 1576 to 1582, made four *Hajjs*, numerous *umrahs* (lesser pilgrimages), and also visited the Shi'a shrines of Karbala, Qom, and Mashhad.<sup>21</sup> But it was eventually expelled by the representatives of the Ottoman Sultan, the new Caliph, in charge of the holy sites of the Arabian Peninsula, because of what was considered as 'bad behaviour'. Analyzing this episode from the point of view of diplomatic history, Deep K. Datta-Ray points out that 'the trip demonstrates how the "Indo" had already inserted itself into the Mughals. Having been exposed to new climes, the Mughals were already behaving in ways that were considered by West Asian Muslims as contrary to the *sharia*. Such blasphemous manners, combined with the visitors' largess, caused great consternation amongst the West Asians. Upon receiving reports, the Ottoman swiftly ordered the Indo-Mughals to be returned home.'<sup>22</sup> Naimur Rahman Farooqi concludes that at the same time 'Akbar's religious attitude seems to have scandalised the whole world of Islam.'<sup>23</sup> We shall return to this assessment later.

After the episode mentioned above, Akbar 'stopped sending charity, stopped the *Hajj* caravans and terminated relations with the Sharifs of Mecca'<sup>24</sup> [who had acted upon Sultan's orders to expel the Indo-Mughals] [...] The extent of Akbar's fury may be gauged by his putting the Ottoman ambassador in chains and then banishing him, for nothing more than a perception of arrogance on the plenipotentiary's part.'<sup>25</sup>

The Gulbadan Begam episode was not isolated. In the early 1580s, Sultan Khwaja, who had been named Mir Hajj, in spite of the fact that he had taken with him 'Rs. 600,000 and 12,000 robes of honour to distribute to the people of Mecca [...] was mercilessly fleeced in Mecca, and on his return [...] joined the Divine Faith'<sup>26</sup>, the creed Akbar was promoting against the wishes of the orthodox Muslims (see below).



## INTRODUCTION: THE GULF–SOUTH ASIA RELIGIOUS CONNECTIONS

Even Aurangzeb, the Mughal Emperor known for his orthodoxy, was never on excellent terms with the Mecca dignitaries. Suffering from a severe legitimacy deficit due to the manner in which he had deposed his father, he turned to the Mecca Sharif in 1659 to get their support but the latter refused his presents, worth Rs. 660,000, that he had sent to the Holy Cities.<sup>27</sup> Audrey Truschke points out that 'Aurangzeb never ceased soliciting the sharif of Mecca to change his mind, which suggests that lacking approval from Muslim religious leaders bothered the Mughal emperor'<sup>28</sup> but up to a point only: in 1665, the Mecca Sharif sent a delegation but, as per the testimony of the French traveller, François Bernier, 'their equipage was so miserable that everyone suspected they came merely for the sake of obtaining money in return for their presents....'<sup>29</sup> And Aurangzeb did not meet their expectations. In fact, he 'became increasingly fed up with the unequal exchange, especially as his presents were meant to be allocated as charity in Mecca, but instead the *sharifs* were keeping them for themselves.'<sup>30</sup> It seems that by the late eighteenth century, 'hajj had fallen into abeyance in India.'<sup>31</sup>

### Short of Syncretism but Far from Mecca: The Indo-Islamic Spirituality

The Muslims of medieval India did not only distance themselves from the holy cities of Arabia and develop sacred sites across 'their' land, they also initiated spiritual relations with the Hindus. Being, in Islamic legal terms, 'non-Arab idolaters', Hindus should have been included in the category of *ahl al-dhimma* and subjected, therefore, to the *jizya*.<sup>32</sup> However, this tax was never fully imposed upon them. It was even suspended by Akbar in 1564.<sup>33</sup> This is an indication of the ambivalent status of Hindus in the eyes of the new Muslim masters. On the one hand, orthodox scholars developed forms of Islamic proselytization in order to convert these 'infidels' (*kafirs*).<sup>34</sup> On the other, some Sufis and several Muslim rulers promoted a very substantial spiritual dialogue with Hindus.<sup>35</sup>

The encounter of Sufis and Hindu ascetics and saints (*yogis* and *bhaktas*) immediately resulted in mystic conversations, in particular about notions of 'Ultimate Reality' and 'Existence'.<sup>36</sup> These exchanges reached their culminating point during the Mughal Empire. Akbar, who commissioned translations of Hindu texts into Persian, in particular the *Mahabharata* and the *Panchatantra*, was specially interested in the convergence of Sufism and aspects of Hinduism. His brother, Dara Shukoh, translated the *Upanishads* and established a connection between this text and the Quran.<sup>37</sup> And in Akbar's court, Abul

Fazl—the most noted scholar of his *darbar* and ‘the principal architect of Mughal imperial ideology’<sup>38</sup>—promoted this approach in a very sophisticated manner, with the emperor’s blessing. Akbar went even further. Under the influence of Hindu scholars, he adopted Hindu food habits (he avoided eating meat) and shaved the centre of his head. He ‘reportedly learnt the secrets of idol-worship, and the worship of fire and the sun [...] and apparently began to believe in the idea of reincarnation’.<sup>39</sup> Under his rule, the *ulama* declared that the pilgrimage to Mecca was no longer an obligation, while pilgrimage to shrines of Sufi saints was spreading.<sup>40</sup> In fact, Akbar did not at all pay allegiance to the Islamic power and spiritual centres situated in the Middle East. In the end, he even initiated a new religion, the Din-i-Ilahi (the Divine Faith) which reflected his notion of *sulh-i-kull* (that all religions were roads to one God).

These views, which contradicted the canonical axiom that Islam is the sole true religion, could only be seen as heretical to Middle Eastern Islam, both among Sunnis and Shi‘as. Without emulating this claim and promoting the Din-i-Ilahi, which did not outlive its founder, Jahangir followed the example of his father as far as exchanges with Hindus were concerned.

### The Indo-Persian Dynamics

While, until the eighteenth century, Arab-Indo dynamics only played a marginal role in the development of South Asian Islam, from the sixteenth century onward, however, the influence of Persian cultural and religious dynamics was central in the life of many South Asian Muslim polities: ‘Qazvin, Isfahan, and then Tehran served in important ways as cultural and political trendsetters for Muslim (and some Hindu) courts and scholars in the subcontinent’.<sup>41</sup> While there was an ancient and well anchored habit of using Persian as the administrative and court language in Central and South Asia, giving birth to a class of Persian scribes dispatched throughout this area, the advent of the Safavid Empire in Persia in 1501 marked a turning point.

The Mughals and the Safavids developed intense cultural and political relations as the Safavids helped the first two Mughal emperors to consolidate their power and even regain lost territories.<sup>42</sup> Akbar made Persian the official language of the Mughal Empire and had an active policy of attracting Persian literati to his court. He contributed to make Persian ‘the language of Islam’<sup>43</sup> in his realm together with Arabic. As a result, Persians came to be the most influential of the ethnic groups comprising the Mughal nobility, wielding important power on the politics, the economy, and the culture of the empire.

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The Persian *émigrés* were either merchants further developing their economic activities, or *litterati* attracted by the prospect of pursuing a career as part of the administrative elite. Many also were in search of asylum, having fallen into disgrace at the Safavid court or being unwilling to embrace Shi'a Islam, the creed that the Safavids had elevated to the status of state religion.<sup>44</sup>

The institution of Shi'ism as the state religion in Persia had an important impact in the Muslim world overall and in South Asia in particular. First, India, which had 'an extraordinary tolerant atmosphere',<sup>45</sup> was seen as a refuge for Safavid religious dissidents. Sunni notables unwilling to convert and facing expropriation or even death flocked to India, in particular from the region of Khorasan.<sup>46</sup> Sufi orders, which were chased by the orthodox Shi'a *ulama* sponsored by the Safavids as organic intellectuals so to speak, also saw India as a more benevolent environment. This was also the case of non-Muslim minorities like the Zoroastrians.<sup>47</sup>

Second, while the Mughals never converted to Shi'ism,<sup>48</sup> Persians played a central role in spreading Shi'ism in South Asia, giving rise to several polities for which the Safavid state had a form of centrality, being looked upon as 'the model for imperial style' and even 'the metropole'.<sup>49</sup> This was the case of several Southern Indian kingdoms. Upon the proclamation of Shi'ism as the state religion in the Safavid realm, the ruler of Bijapur, who was an Ottoman defector, converted to Shi'ism and made it his state's official religion. The same happened in Ahmadnagar where, under the influence of a Persian Shi'a exile, the ruler embraced Shi'ism. The most important of these Shi'a polities was based in Golconda where a Persian Shi'a dynasty, the Qutb-Shahi, had the Friday prayer said in the name of the Safavid emperors.<sup>50</sup> All these polities attracted dozens of Shi'a Persian *ulama*.

Despite emulating a form of orthodox Shi'ism deeply averse to the folk popular devotion which often characterized Shi'ism before the Safavids, the Southern Indian Shi'a kingdoms maintained a religious environment much more open to religious pluralism than the Safavid metropole. Hence the Persian Shi'a Sufi order of the Ne'mat-Allahiyeh found refuge in Golconda where it established its headquarters. From there, it re-established its authority in Persia in the second half of the eighteenth century, showing that influence was also reciprocal between Persia and India.<sup>51</sup>

*Reassessing the Gulf Connection? Tensions between Islamic Civilizations*

## Weakening of Empires and Renewal of Islamic Solidarity

The eighteenth century, a period of fragmentation, marked the weakening and/or disappearance of the three great Muslim empires that had developed over the two past centuries: the Ottoman, the Safavid, and the Mughal. The Ottomans were struggling against the increasing encroachment of the European powers, which were seeking to expand their commercial activities in their territories and forced the sultans to sign commercial treaties that reduced the sovereignty of the Ottoman state over ever-increasing segments of its population. The Safavids fell in 1722 under the attacks of Sunni Afghan tribes. The Mughal dominions were attacked and invaded by the post-Safavid Persian ruler (Nader Shah in 1739) and Afghans (in 1756) and, like the Ottomans, also had to confront the expansion of the colonial commercial companies, most notably the British East India Company which came to control part of its territory.

This particular context pushed South Asian Muslims to seek to reinforce their relations with their West Asian coreligionists, who were associated with a form of Islamic centrality and even 'pure Islam' in the eyes of some. Though they were themselves weakened, the Ottoman Sultans were seen as embodying the Caliphate. The rapprochement with the Ottomans was accompanied by the emergence of several Sunni Islamic revivalist currents which developed a systematic critique of deviant local Islamic practices, hence questioning the way local Islam had developed in dialogue with Sufism and Hinduism. These currents fostered relations with the Arabian religious centres among Sunnis.

Shah Waliu' Ilah (1703–62), the son of a famous Sufi saint from the Naqshbandiyya order, played a key role in this process. At the age of 29, in the early 1730s, he went to Mecca and Medina. In 1732, he returned to India and for thirty years fought the cult of saints—without severing its links with Sufism however.<sup>52</sup> Shah Waliu' Ilah referred to Mohammad as 'the Prophet of the Prophets'<sup>53</sup> and to the Turkish Sultan as *amir al-mu'minin*<sup>54</sup> and historians agree that by 'the second half of the eighteenth century, the Indian attachment to Ottoman Turkey was an accepted reality'.<sup>55</sup>

The school of thought initiated by Shah Waliu' Ilah was perpetuated by his sons. The latter contributed to give it a popular dimension by translating the Quran into Urdu together with Shah Rafi ud-Din (1750–1818). Shah Isma'il Shahid (1779–1831) and Sayyid Ahmad Barelwi (1786–1831) further

perpetuated his legacy.<sup>56</sup> Sayyid Ahmad Barelwi—who fought against ‘the tendency to avoid the performance of *Hajj* on the ground of danger and insecurity on the way’<sup>57</sup>—has been described as one of the first Indian ‘Wahhabis’ because of the jihad he launched in the North West of the Raj, that resulted in his *hijrat* (migration) from his home province, Bihar.

Parallel to the intellectual lineage connecting Shah Waliu’ Ilah to Sayyid Ahmad Barelwi, Indian *ulama* recognized the Ottoman sultans as the holder of the universal Caliphate and ‘by the early 1850s, there were distinct signs of pan-Islamic fervour in India in favour of Sultan Abdulmecid I (1839–61).’<sup>58</sup>

Indian Shi’a Muslims, for their part, underwent distinct trends. The weakening of the Mughals permitted the rise of several independent Shi’a states in Northern India, namely in Bengal, Sindh, and Awadh.<sup>59</sup> As the Safavid realm fell into chaos in 1722 and Shi’ism briefly ceased to be the state religion, many Safavid *ulama*, administrators and nobles relocated to these new polities. The most important of them was Awadh, which lasted from 1722 to 1856. Its founder, Muhammad Amin Nishapuri, also known as Burhan ul-Mulk (d. 1739), was a Persian from Nishapur who had established in the Mughal court in the early eighteenth century and had been appointed as Awadh’s governor by the Emperor. Nishapuri rulers envisioned themselves as the successors of the Safavid state. They spent lavishly their numerous riches to build *imambarah* (the South Asian equivalent of the Persian and Arab *huseiniyya*, where Shi’as commemorate the martyrdom of their Imam Husein) and mosques. They also sponsored the Shi’a *ulama* the way the Safavids had done, granting them numerous privileges.

Awadh’s rulers also established direct connections with the Persian Shi’a *ulama* and lay notables of Southern Mesopotamia. Many of these people had settled down in this region, which hosted a number of Shi’a shrine cities—most notably Najaf and Karbala—and was the historical cradle of Shi’ism, following the fall of the Safavids. The dense interactions between these Persian *émigrés* and Awadh rulers had two main consequences. First, the Shi’a doctrines dominant in Mesopotamia spread to Awadh, in particular the *usuli* school of thought which promoted a very rationalist approach of religious exegesis (*ijtihad*). Juan Cole mentions the example of Sayyid Dildar Ali Nasirabadi, a young scholar from Lucknow—the capital of Awadh—who spent several years in Najaf and Karbala for pilgrimage and study, and spread *usuli* ideas upon his return home.<sup>60</sup>

Influence also went the other way round as, under Awadh’s influence, the political economy and thus the landscape of Shi’a Islam in Mesopotamia were

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significantly altered. Through Persian commercial companies, the Nishapuris transferred huge sums of money to the Mesopotamian Shi'a religious institutions. The Persian scholars established in Najaf and Karbala were the chief beneficiaries of their largess, which contributed to empower them in front of their Arab counterparts. Moreover, Awadh's money was a key factor in the rise of Najaf as a foremost centre of pilgrimage and religious scholarship. The city had been suffering from severe water shortage for decades and it is thanks to Awadh's money that a new canal was built at the end of the eighteenth century, that brought the Euphrates' waters directly to the city. Named the Hindiyya canal, it permitted Najaf not only to accommodate pilgrims and religious students, but also to become a market town for the Arab tribes of the surrounding desert, who became increasingly exposed to Shi'a doctrines through their regular interactions with the city's Shi'a dwellers.<sup>61</sup>

### The demise of the Mughal Empire and the impact of the 1857 Mutiny: Deobandis and Ahl-i-Hadith between Islamic Revivalism and Pan-Islamism

In the nineteenth century, British colonial rule in India accelerated the interactions of Indian Muslims with Islamic centres in the Gulf. The 1857 Mutiny against British conquest was a turning point. Despite the participation of many Hindus in the mutiny, 'in the British view it was Muslim intrigue [...] aimed at the extinction of the British Raj'<sup>62</sup> and they reacted with great anti-Muslim brutality. Bahadur Shah II (1775–1862), the last Mughal King, was exiled, his sons and grandsons were executed on the spot and the sovereign's entourage was decimated. Delhi was the theatre of many summary executions primarily targeting the Muslim elite, and the property of many aristocrats was confiscated.

Among Sunnis, many turned to Constantinople as an alternative Islamic centre of gravity, with some even reaching the conclusion that India had become *dar ul-harb* and deciding to migrate to Mecca and Constantinople. Several *ulama* made that choice. Others decided to hit back by returning to the sources of the Islamic traditions in a revivalist movement which was also bound to (re)connect them with the Arabian Peninsula where, at the time, the Al Saud were expanding their domination and promoting the ideas of Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab (d. 1792). The latter preached a return to 'true Islam', enjoining Muslims to conform to strict monotheism and severely criticizing Sufi and Shi'a practices.

If there is some suspicion that Wahhabism somewhat shaped the views of Sayyid Ahmad Barelwi, who went on pilgrimage to Mecca in 1821,<sup>63</sup> ‘the first documented contact between the Wahhabi mission and an Indian revivalist movement relates to the Ahl-i Hadith.’<sup>64</sup> This school of thought harks back to the contact that disciples of Sayyid Ahmad Barelwi—who had followed him for the *Hajj* and had not returned to India—had in Yemen with Muhammad b. Ali al-Shawkani (1760–1834).<sup>65</sup> Its name derived from the fact that it emphasized the primacy of the Prophetic traditions (the *Hadith*) as the source of Islamic law. As a result, the Ahl-i-Hadith did not follow the Hanafi School of jurisprudence (*madhhab*) which has been the dominant one in South Asia until today. In fact they did not follow any school of jurisprudence, considering that Muslims should only rely on the Quran and the Hadiths in the practice of *ijtihad*.<sup>66</sup>

This ‘anti-*madhhab*’ positioning contradicted Wahhabism, which derived from the Hanbali tradition. Ahl-i-Hadith and Wahhabis had nevertheless many things in common. In fact, they represented two variants of Salafism, which takes its name from the founding fathers of Islam, the *al-Salaf al-Salih*, whom they claim to emulate. First they considered that Sufis and Shi‘as were not true Muslims. Second, they rejected Western influence. Both movements were fundamentalist in the sense that, in reaction to Western modernity—or anything new—they turned to the words and deeds of the Prophet to guide their action. Any innovation (*bid‘a*) based on sources not having been approved by the movement’s theologians was considered as going against Islam. Because of these affinities, Wahhabis and Ahl-i-Hadith were bound to interact positively.

While the Ahl-i-Hadith remained somewhat elitist, the post-1857 traditionalist revival gained momentum because of the so-called Deoband movement, named after a small city near Delhi where a Sufi by the name of Hajji Muhammad Abid founded a seminary (*madrasa*) in 1867.<sup>67</sup> He was soon joined by survivors of the British repression such as Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanotvi (1833–77), the descendant of a line of *ulama*, and Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (1829–1905). In the 1860s, these men, supported by patrons who had all been close to the Mughal rulers,<sup>68</sup> were keen to defend Islam by using new methods. Nanotvi, an excellent orator, thus entered into debates against Christian missionaries and Hindu activists of the Arya Samaj, a revivalist group founded in Punjab but active throughout North India. Teaching, however, was their true vocation. The Deoband seminary promoted the study of *hadith*, the *sharia* (Islamic law) and *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence).<sup>69</sup> The subjects taught ranged from Arabic and Persian grammar to Greco-Arab



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medicine and included the history of Islam, philosophy, medieval geometry and astronomy.<sup>70</sup> But the language of instruction was Urdu—more accessible than Persian or Arabic—and the Deobandis followed a British-style educational system: their institution was not attached to any mosque (to the discontent of local clerics, especially when an edifice specifically devoted to teaching was built in 1876); the seminary was divided into departments and classes; it had a permanent faculty, followed a predefined curriculum and introduced written examinations. It also had student dormitories modelled after the British universities.

For the Deobandis, religious scholarship was based on the Quran, hadiths, *qiyas* (reasoning by analogy) and *ijma* (consensus). But they believed that none of these four sources of *ijtihad* could be explored without the guidance of an *alim*. While they recognised Sufism as a spiritual discipline, they rejected the authority of the *pirs* (sufi saints) who claimed sacred qualities handed down from father to son as well as the cult of saints with its pilgrimages to the shrines of *pirs* and *urs* (festivals held on the *pirs*' anniversary dates). They viewed such practices as a corruption of Islam due to Hinduism. The Deobandis established their authority by issuing fatwas pertaining to all aspects of Muslim life fighting popular Islam and even more Shi'ism.<sup>71</sup>

For these fundamentalist movements, both Ahl-i-Hadith and Deoband, Islam remained a universal reference. They were in direct contact with the Arab world, which their members visited regularly—particularly to make the pilgrimage to Mecca—and which provided an increasing number of students. They did not view Indian Muslims as a separate community but as participating in the *umma*, or global body of Islam.

### Muslim Nationalism vs. Pan-Islamism?

Parallel to the revivalist movements mentioned above, Indian Muslims from the intelligentsia developed a new, nationalist ideology in reaction to the post-1857 British repression and the rise to power (economic as well as political) of the Hindus in North India.<sup>72</sup> This nationalist ideology, which was initiated by Sayed Ahmed Khan (1817–1898), the founder of the Aligarh Anglo-Mahomedan College, and was bound to result in separatist claims, had some pan-Islamic overtones. The aristocratic, upper-caste background of this intelligentsia led them to take pride in their Middle Eastern origins. Indeed, the so-called noble (Ashraf) upper castes are made up of descendants of Muslims who (allegedly) migrated to India from abroad, whereas those who



converted to Islam after it spread throughout Indian territory make up the two lower categories, the Ajlafs (lower castes) and the Arzals (formerly Untouchables). The first are subdivided into three categories in which are found: those of Middle Eastern extraction (the Sayeds, who claim descent from the Prophet, and the Shaykhs, who say they have roots in Mecca and Medina); those claiming a Central Asian, and particularly Afghan, lineage, the Pathans (or Pashtuns); and last, the Mughals who claim Turkic or Tatar origins.

The Aligarh movement represented Ashraf feeling under threat after the 1857 post-Mutiny repression and carrying the legacy of the Mughal Empire. For its proponents, power had to remain the preserve of ascriptive elite groups claiming Arab and Turkish roots.<sup>73</sup> Qualifying the nature of his superiority and that of his peer group, Sayed Ahmed Khan declared: 'I am a Muslim, an inhabitant of India and descended from the Arabs [...] The Arab people neither seek, nor do they desire that instead of ruling themselves, someone else should rule them.'<sup>74</sup> Taking pride in his Middle Eastern roots, Sayed Ahmed Khan nevertheless did not conclude that he was not an Indian. On the contrary, in a famous speech made in 1883, he declared that 'just as the high caste Hindus came and settled down in this land once, forgot where their earlier home was and considered India to be their own country, the Muslims also did exactly the same thing—they also left their climes hundreds of years ago and they also regard this land of India as their very own.'<sup>75</sup>

This India-bound ideology remained central to the Muslim League, the party which emerged from the Aligarh movement at the turn of the twentieth century. Its promoters wanted to remain part of India, but they asked the British—who were giving the right to vote to an increasingly large number of Indians—to protect them from the Hindu majority. Their concern translated into a petition for a separate electorate. In 1906, the Viceroy, Lord Minto, received a Muslim delegation dominated by Aligarh College officials and notables and immediately accepted their demand. The delegation's members, in the wake of this meeting, founded the Muslim League as a permanent political pressure group.

While the nationalism of the Indian Muslims had a very discrete pan-Islamic dimension that did not contradict its Indian, territorial character, the pan-Islamic mobilizations of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century had, paradoxically, strong nationalist connotations too. At the end of the nineteenth century, pan-Islamism found expression in the growing popularity of the *Hajj* and the Caliphate. After 1869, the excavation of the Suez Canal made the route to Mecca easier for the Indian pilgrims. The *Hajj* which, until then, was only

accessible to members the Muslim elite, was suddenly democratized. In the last decades of the nineteenth century, at least 10,000 people went to Mecca every year.<sup>76</sup> But many more were implicated in this grand affair, including family members, relatives, acquaintances who wanted to be associated 'in a spiritual embrace with those making this journey to the *ruhani watan* (spiritual home)' of the Indian Muslims.<sup>77</sup> Indeed, large, emotional, crowds gathered to take those who were leaving to the station or the port, and to welcome those who were coming back. People who went for the Mecca pilgrimage added 'Hajji' to their name to indicate their new status. But the popularity of the Mecca pilgrimage was also due to the 'transformation of the Hajj into an explicitly political symbol' because of the threat posed to the Caliphate in the late nineteenth–early twentieth century: to go to Mecca was also a manner to express some Muslim solidarity.

At the end of the nineteenth century, allegiance sworn to the Caliphate was evident in the works of many Indian Muslim scholars. In 1889, Amir Ali for instance published his *Short History of the Saracens* in praise of the first two caliphs, Abu Bakr and Omar. In 1898, Shibli Numani—the founder of the Lucknow-based Nadwat al-Ulama—wrote a biography of Omar. Jamaluddin al-Asadabadi, known as 'al-Afghani' (1839–97), who travelled throughout the Muslim world to promote solidarity among all Muslims, played a key role in the Indian Muslims' new interest for the Caliphate. He stayed in India from the late 1850s to the early 1860s and again in the late 1870s to early 1880s.<sup>78</sup>

Interest in the Caliphate was particularly fostered by the difficulties faced by the Ottoman Sultan. Each time the Ottoman Empire was involved in a conflict—against the Russians in 1877–8 and against the Greeks in 1897—Indian Muslims leapt to their aid, especially by raising funds.<sup>79</sup> Such a mobilisation crystallized again during the Balkan wars in the early 1910s. But it acquired an entirely new dimension later in the decade after the coalition the Ottoman Empire had joined was defeated in the First World War.

Constantinople was occupied in Autumn 1918. One year later, as Turkey was about to lose Cyprus, Sudan, and the Arab lands of its Empire, Indian Muslims, who feared for the Caliphate, launched the All India Khilafat (that is Caliphate) Committee.<sup>80</sup> It was founded in 1919, the same year as the Jamiat ul-Ulema-e-Hind that was intended to federate the Indian *ulama*. Both creations were not unrelated, and the *ulama* played a major role in the movement defending the Khilafat. But they were not the only ones involved. By their side stood what was called 'the young party' for lack of a better

appellation, including Muhammad and Shaukat Ali, two brothers<sup>81</sup> who had already taken side with the Turks.

In early 1920, deputations of the All India Khilafat Committee went to London to petition the British authorities. They requested them 'that the caliph's temporal authority remain undiminished, for that was essential to Islam' and the *jazirat al-Arab* (that is the Arabian Peninsula) remain under his rule.<sup>82</sup> The defence of the Caliphate implied that Indian Muslims were prepared to deny independence to the Arabs in the name of Islamic unity. The Treaty of Sèvres (May 1920) decided otherwise, which led to a reformulation of objectives of the All India Caliphate Committee: 'to preserve the Khilafat as a centre for the Muslim world, to keep the *jazirat al-Arab* free from non-Muslim control, to work in India for the attainment of self-government, and to organize Indian Muslims for religious, educational, social and economic benefit.'<sup>83</sup> This programme enabled the Indian Muslims to consolidate their partnership with Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress at large. They joined hands in the Non-Cooperation Movement which resulted in a massive mobilization in which Muslims pursued their own agenda. In the agitation known as the 'Khilafat Movement' all categories of society were involved, as Mushirul Hasan emphasized:

Many left the fields and factories to migrate to the dar al-Islam in response to a call for hijrat;<sup>84</sup> students abandoned their studies and joined the swelling ranks of non-cooperators; and many others gave up their lucrative jobs and high-sounding titles. Never before did so many Muslims unite on a common platform to fight a common cause. It was a unique example of their religious solidarity.<sup>85</sup>

The involvement of urban and rural masses alike in the movement can largely be explained by the influence of the *ulama*. But this mobilization resulted even more clearly from 'the emergence of the professional politician in India.'<sup>86</sup> Indeed, the Khilafat Movement does not only reflect the pan-Islamic leanings of Indian Muslims, but the skill of ideologues eager to become their leaders with a purely national programme in mind. Gail Minault has shown that the threat that was posed by the Khilafat offered Muslim leaders a formidable common platform around which, not only the Muslim intelligentsia, but also the *ulama* and ordinary Muslims could rally. Therefore, the Khilafat Movement was less pan-Islamic than 'a quest for 'pan-Indian' Islam'.<sup>87</sup>

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## PAN-ISLAMIC CONNECTIONS

The ten centuries separating the entry of Islam in South Asia and the demise of the Mughal Empire had seen the formation of an Indo-Muslim civilization only loosely related to Arabia and deeply connected to Persia. The following one hundred years, on the contrary, have seen the rediscovery of Arabia in the framework of new forms of pan-Islamism. These are fostered by the economic and religious centralization of the Gulf monarchies on the one hand and, on the other hand, by the religious and ideological attraction of the Islamic Republic of Iran and to some extent the shrine cities of southern Iraq. In the following pages, the authors will analyse the various ways in which transnational religious ties are being built or reworked in this new context. The chapters are multi-disciplinary in perspective and rely on a wide range of primary sources, from ethnographic material to activist literature. They show the interplay of different factors and actors in the building of these ties. A strong emphasis is put on the way scholarly and educational networks interact with activist networks and foreign policy objectives.

Building on the Indian and Pakistan cases, Christophe Jaffrelot highlights the polyvocal dimension of the exchanges between Arabia and South Asia since the 1857–59 Mutiny against the British in colonial India. While the fall of the Mughal Empire and the repression that followed the Mutiny pushed Indian Muslims to seek to reinforce ties with the Arabian centres of Islam, Indian Muslims tried to influence Arabian scholars as much as they were influenced by them. Moreover, the promoters of Pakistan as the first Islamic republic envisioned their state as a totally new experience that would be a model and a trendsetter for Muslims, not an emulator of a pre-existing Islamic state like Saudi Arabia. It is only from the 1980s onward, under General Mohammed Zia ul-Haq and in the context of the Afghan jihad against the Soviets, that Pakistan underwent rapprochement with the Gulf monarchies and sought inspiration in the Saudi experience to deeply alter the way Islam was embedded in Pakistani institutions and psyche. His Islamization policy in many respects amounted to an Arabization and even a ‘Gulfization’ of South Asian Islam.

In her chapter on Pakistani Sunni madrasas, Ayesha Siddiqi looks at the shift in the linkage between the Pakistani education system and the Gulf monarchies. The Arabization emphasized by Jaffrelot gained momentum after the 1990s through a top-down patronage system driven by some Gulf monarchies—first and foremost Saudi Arabia—thanks to their oil wealth. This resulted in the expansion of the Deobandi and Ahl-i-Hadith seminaries and overall in deepening the transformation of South Asian Islam away from its Sufi based idiosyncrasies.

## INTRODUCTION: THE GULF–SOUTH ASIA RELIGIOUS CONNECTIONS

The chapter authored by Samina Yasmeen focuses on the ways in which the global jihadi Salafi narrative articulated by Gulf authors is being indigenized by Pakistani activists so as to fit with the peculiarities of a local audience coming from the poorer segments of the Pakistani society. She studies the literature produced by the Jamat-ud-Dawah movement about womanhood and jihad, showing how religious knowledge imported from the supposedly authentic sources in the Gulf coexists with local narratives.

Focusing on the fault lines within transnational jihadi networks, Vahid Brown looks at the role the Afghan Salafi emirate of Kunar played in the formation of a transnational Salafi jihadi networks between the Gulf and Afghanistan-Pakistan. Partly building on older ties between the South Asian Ahl-i-Hadith movement and Gulf Salafi religious scholars, the emirate of Kunar ultimately created a brand of jihadi Salafism of its own, of which ISIS in Iraq and Syria is an offspring.

Don Rassler looks at another jihadi transnational network between South Asia and the Gulf born during the anti-Soviet jihad: the Haqqani network, woven around the figure of the *mujahidin* commander Jalaluddin Haqqani. The chapter compares the network's ties to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, showing the role of religious and private social networks in the development of Haqqani's ties in these two countries.

Antonio Giustozzi examines the funding by Saudis, Emiratis and Qataris of another Islamist organization after 9/11: the Afghan Taliban. Giustozzi does not only study the competition between Iran and the Sunni funders of the Afghan Taliban, he also scrutinizes the rivalries between the Sunni funders, including Saudis and Qataris. He also shows that the Pakistanis tried to bring the Saudis into the picture, but not lose control of the Afghan 'peace process' at the same time—something the Saudis resented, all the more so as the Pakistanis let the Afghan Taliban accept Iranian support occasionally.

Taking the issue of religious influence the other way around, Alix Philippon explores the ways Pakistani Sufi orders have established themselves in some Gulf monarchies. Providing migrants with a set of religious services, they also benefit a lot from diaspora funding there. Moreover, Pakistani Sufi networks in the Gulf contribute to the creation of a new religious elite back home.

Looking at the Sunni religious networks in Iran, Stéphane Dudoignon shows how Iran is an interface between South Asia and the Gulf monarchies. A recipient of Sunni influences from South Asia, the Shi'a Islamic Republic has been able to re-export them to some Gulf monarchies, building for itself an unexpected form of soft power.

## PAN-ISLAMIC CONNECTIONS

Radhika Gupta analyses the competing influences from the Gulf among Shi'as in India, looking at how the divide between the South-Iraqi- and the Iranian-based religious authorities are reproduced by local scholars connected to either of these centres of learning.

Finally, Simon Fuchs looks at the entanglement of Gulf influences with local perceptions and trends in the development of Sunni-Shi'a tensions in Pakistan. He underlines the major differences between sectarian arguments formulated by religious scholars in Saudi Arabia and those advanced by their counterparts in Pakistan, also showing how local Sunni scholars, although connected to Saudi Arabia, built their own brand of anti-Shi'ism.

## SOUTH ASIAN MUSLIMS' INTERACTIONS WITH ARABIAN ISLAM UNTIL THE 1990s

### WHAT PAN-ISLAMISM BEFORE AND AFTER PAKISTAN?

*Christophe Jaffrelot*

It is true that, much earlier [than the 1990s] in the Arabian Peninsula, Islamic puritans and political strategists had come together. This combine, however, represented only one version of Islam, limited to a region and a group of Muslims. Politically and spiritually it stayed on the periphery for nearly the whole of the nineteenth century. Only recently, after it allied its interests with the West, has Arabian Islam acquired its formidable position as the putative sole spokesman of Islam, with Saudi Arabia occupying the centre stage.

Muzaffar Alam.<sup>1</sup>

What, for example, is the origin of the Turks, Iranians, Afghans and many Pakistanis? We all have the same origin, the steppes of Central Asia.

General Ayub Khan.<sup>2</sup>

There is no such thing as South Asian Islam. There is only one true Islam, based on the Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammad.

General Zia-ul-Haq.<sup>3</sup>

For three decades, deep tectonic forces have been silently tearing Pakistan away from the Indian subcontinent and driving it towards the Arabian peninsula. This continental drift is not physical but cultural, driven by a belief that Pakistan must exchange its South Asian identity for an Arab-Muslim one. Grain by grain, the desert sands of Saudi Arabia are replacing the rich soil that had nurtured a magnificent Muslim culture in India for a thousand years. This culture produced Mughal architecture, the Taj Mahal, the poetry of Asadullah Khan Ghalib, and much more. Now a stern, unyielding version of Islam (Wahhabism) is replacing the kinder, gentler Islam of the Sufis and saints who had walked on this land for hundreds of years.

Pervez Hoodboy.<sup>4</sup>

*Introduction. The Making of the Indian Muslim Civilization:  
What connected history?*

Revisiting the old notion of ‘acculturation’ from the point of view of the ‘connected history’ school of thought,<sup>5</sup> Sanjay Subrahmanyam argues that when civilizations meet, “Time and again, then, we are forced to come to terms with a situation that is not one of mutual indifference, or of a turning of backs, or of a deep-rooted incomprehension, but of shifting vocabularies, and changes that are wrought over time by improvisations that eventually come to be part of a received tradition.”<sup>6</sup> In South Asia, Muslims have invented their own ‘brand’ of Islam soon after their arrival in the region, following their encounter with the dominant civilization, Hinduism.

Certainly, the Caliphate played a role in the initial conquest of South Asian territories by Arabs in the eighth century. It was the Khalifah al-Walid b. ‘Abdul Malik who, hearing that Arab traders had been captured by the ruler of Sind, asked the governor of Baghdad to send an army to liberate them in 711. The soldiers of Muhammad b. Qasim did more than that and conquered the whole of Sind. The social structure of the Muslims of South Asia, who became dominant in spite of their remaining a minority, reflects their attachment to the Arabian peninsula: the upper strata was made of those (the *Syed*) who claimed that they descended from the Prophet.<sup>7</sup> Another source of prestige came from the accomplishment of the Mecca pilgrimage (the *Hajj*), the title ‘Hajji’ being affixed to the name of those who had done it.

However, the Muslims who brought Islam to South Asia in a sustainable manner were not those who used the sword to conquer the region and/or who looked back, but the Sufis who made India a sacred land for Muslims, as mentioned in the introduction of this volume, after the establishment of *khanqahs* (buildings designed for the gathering of Sufis saints’ disciples) and *dargahs* (tombs of saints) which became major pilgrimage centres.

Not only did Muslims of medieval India distance themselves from the holy cities of Arabia and develop sacred sites across ‘their’ land, they also initiated spiritual relations with the Hindus. While orthodox scholars developed forms of Islamic proselytization in order to convert these ‘infidels’ (*kafirs*),<sup>8</sup> some Sufis and several Muslim rulers promoted a very substantial spiritual dialogue with Hindus.<sup>9</sup> The encounter of Sufis and Yogis resulted in rich spiritual exchanges.<sup>10</sup> For making possible this dialogue, which reached its culminating point during the Mughal Empire under Akbar, spiritual treaties were translated from Sanskrit



to Persian and Arabic.<sup>11</sup> Besides, after 1579, Akbar appeared as a competitor for the Caliph himself as suggested by Sanjay Subrahmanyam:

In early September 1579, a group of theologians, including the *Shaikh ul-Islam*, were pressurized into signing a text claiming for Akbar a special status of *Padshah-i Islam*, beyond that even of a *Sultan-i Adil*. [...] one of the epithets used for him was now *Mujtahid*, as also *Imam-i Adil*, the latter startlingly close to the usages favoured at one time by Süleyman. Indeed, the challenges was directed in good measures at the Ottomans, who had claimed superior status as the *Khalifas* of the east, with their conquest of Egypt.<sup>12</sup>

These words and the spiritual innovations of Akbar reflected the great autonomy of the Indo-Islamic civilization vis-à-vis West Asia, including the holy cities of the Arabian peninsula and Istanbul, the seat of the Caliphate. But the fact that Akbar claimed that he was a kind of Caliph also shows that the Indian Muslims were deeply attached to the idea of the Caliphate, that they somewhat tried to replicate. And when the Mughal Empire started to wane, the attitude of the Muslim Indians towards the Ottomans changed.

Local Muslim rulers threatened by the Europeans turned to the Ottoman Sultan for help and recognition in the eighteenth century, including those of the Malabar coast and Tipu Sultan, the warlord of southern India who put up the most successful resistance to the British. Tipu Sultan sent an ambassador to Constantinople in 1785 requesting that he bring back a letter of investiture from the Ottoman Sultan and military support. He got the former, but not the latter.<sup>13</sup> The declining Mughal dynasty also turned towards the Ottoman Sultan. In fact, the less power the dynasty retained, the more Indian Muslims turned to the Caliph as their protector. In the first half of the nineteenth century, 'the name of the Ottoman sultan definitely came to be mentioned in the Friday *khutba* in some Indian mosques.'<sup>14</sup> Gradually, Indian *ulama* recognized the Ottoman sultans as the holder of the universal caliphate.<sup>15</sup> This trend reached its logical conclusion after the last Mughal Emperor, Bahadur Shah II (1775–1862) was deposed and exiled to Rangoon in the wake of the 1857 Mutiny which marked the final phase of the Mughal decline.

Interactions between Indian Islamic scholars and their alter egos based in Arabia definitely intensified after 1857, as we will see in the first section of this chapter. Yet these exchanges were never univocal. In fact, both groups of scholars influenced one another. This phase set a pattern that persisted during the Khilafat movement and peaked during the Pakistan movement whose intellectual in chief, Muhammad Iqbal, cultivated an independent view of

Islam. After 1947 Pakistan itself tried to invent a distinctive trajectory. But its relation to Islam was more and more influenced by the Saudi *doxa* from the 1970s onwards.

*Mutual influences in the 'Muslim cosmopolis': 'the spirit of 1857' pattern*

Historians have characterized 'the spirit of 1857' which developed among Indian Islamic scholars on the basis of a complex set of features. Seema Alavi argues that the repression of the Mutiny and the subsequent decline of the Indian Muslims 'generated not simply a widespread anti-British mood but also a public debate on the interpretation of religious scriptures and tradition and discussions on individual authorship, literary styles, appropriation of scientific inquiry, public service, and definitions of loyal subjecthood.'<sup>16</sup> We will focus here only on the dialogue that the proponents of this 'spirit' maintained with other scholars of Mecca and Medina.

At the time, these cities were vibrant loci of intellectual exchanges where Indian Muslim thinkers migrated in the wake of the Mutiny. These émigrés were often disciples of Shah Waliu' Ilah, the Delhi-based theologian who had visited these two places more than a century before. They had inherited from him an attempt at combining 'the Sufi doctrine with the monist doctrine.'<sup>17</sup> This 'India-specific Arabic tradition'<sup>18</sup> mixed two dimensions generally held as mutually exclusive: the belief in one Allah and his Prophet (as taught by the Naqshbandi shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi) on the one hand and the role of intermediaries between men and god (as taught by the Sufi saint Ibn-i-Arabi). Hence a compromise of 'the Sufi Ibn-i-Arabi's *wahdat-ul-wajud* (unity of being) and Sirhindi's conservative *wahdat-um-shahud* (unity of existence).'<sup>19</sup> This typically Indian legacy was popular beyond the subcontinent. Indeed, it is as a Sufi of the Naqshbandiya order—probably the Sufi order with the most resilient transnational network<sup>20</sup>—that Shah Waliu' Ilah had visited the Arabian peninsula and started a conversation that never stopped afterwards. In 1802, for instance, Khalid Naqshbandi had come from Iraq to Delhi to study with Shah Waliu' Ilah's son, Shah Abd-al Aziz.<sup>21</sup> Similarly, Islamic scholars from the subcontinent influenced the locals after 1857 when Ottoman caliph Abd-al Aziz and his successor Abd-al Hamid II 'hosted Indian émigrés and energized their networks', because of their sense of religious solidarity, but also to get to know better their British rivals.<sup>22</sup>

Among them, Rahmatullah Kairanwi (1818–92) played a pioneering role. One of the rebel leaders of Kairana (Muzzafarnagar district) in 1857,

Kairanwi—who had established a madrasa teaching Shah Waliu' Ilah's ideas—fled to the Arabian peninsula after the post-Mutiny repression. He attended the lectures of a specialist of the Shafi jurisprudence in Mecca and then 'set up his own study circle at the Kaaba in Mecca, and had his name included in the list of the *ulema* of the *sanctum sanctorum* of Mecca.'<sup>23</sup> The influence of Kairanwi is worth describing in the words of Seema Alavi: 'He exported to Mecca this Mughal gentlemanly practice of cultural tolerance and accommodation.'<sup>24</sup> This ethos found expression in an attempt 'to unite diverse Muslim sects and ideologues', including Sufi *silsilas*. Kairanwi showed the way by being initiated into both the Naqshbandiyya and the Suhrawardiyya orders, displaying the 'very Indic practice of multiple initiations into diverse Sufi brotherhoods.'<sup>25</sup> Besides, Kairanwi—who had had debates with missionaries in India—'encouraged a dialogue between Muslims and the Christian world.'<sup>26</sup> In one of his books he also 'demystifies the Koran by highlighting its exceptionality in terms of its poetic meter and rhythm, rather than its mere revealed nature.'<sup>27</sup> All these ideas were debated in Kairanwi's madrasa, Saulatiyya—today one of the fountainheads of Wahhabism—, which was then a symbol of Mecca's cosmopolitanism.

Another proponent of 'the spirit of 1857' who had left Muzzafarnagar and fled to Mecca, Haji Imdadullah Makki, made a similar impact on this cosmopolite city. His *khanqah* 'earned its authority by establishing a middle ground for the four different Sufi families of the Naqshbandiyyas, Qadrariyyas, Chistiyyas, and Suhrawardiyyas.'<sup>28</sup> He combined sufi practices and an emphasis on the Koran, the Hadith and the Prophet who became 'a model to be emulated', in the vein of Imdadullah's mentor, Sayyid Ahmad Bareilwi—who was himself a disciple of Shah Waliu' Ilah. This 'eclectic' overtone, typical of the Indic tradition, prepared the ground for Imdadullah's attempt at uniting the Muslims who, according to him were divided by the way they celebrated the birth of the Prophet, prayed for the dead, celebrated the cult of the Saints, sung in praise of God, among other things. For each of these bones of contention, Imdadullah tried to find a compromise. His strongest critiques came from the Wahhabis. Imdadullah challenged them 'on their rigid stand against the rituals of faith', dismissed their claims that some of the Sufi practices came from Hinduism and defended the *urs* as an opportunity for Muslims 'to congregate and meet likeminded people.'<sup>29</sup> Seema Alavi concludes her fascinating portrait of Imdadullah by emphasising that through his 'plea to his readers to be tolerant', he 'transferred to Mecca the Indian brand of Sufi spirituality' that harked back to Shah Waliu' Ilah.<sup>30</sup> She explains that 'this Indic tradition flowered in Mecca

because [...] the city had been home to the Delhi Naqshbandiyya *mujahids* since the late eighteenth century.<sup>31</sup> Imdadullah 'desired to create a form of standardized conduct that could weld the South Asian and Middle Eastern Muslim worlds together.'<sup>32</sup> He delivered lectures at the Madrasa Saulatiya to Rahmatulla's students who came in large numbers from Deoband. He 'hoped that they would become the conduit by which the Meccan reformist spirit of the Rahmatullah brand and his cosmopolitanism based on standardized forms of public conduct would reach Hindustan and transform its reformist seminaries.'<sup>33</sup>

While Indian scholars influenced their peers in Mecca along pluralist lines, other kinds of interactions resulted in variants of Salafism. Indeed, the Ahl-i-Hadith movement of India and Wahhabism showed 'strong similarities' in the 1860s. While they developed separately first, drawing their inspiration from Ibn Taymiyya (1263–1328), the medieval jurist, 'the two groups discovered how close their thinking was when their paths crossed during the pilgrimage to Mecca.'<sup>34</sup> The princely state of Bhopal played a key role in this intellectual convergence. Indeed, as the British conquest sealed the fate of the Mughal Empire, some of its successor states related assiduously to the Arabian Peninsula as the 'new' epicenter of Islam. The state of Bhopal—the second largest Muslim-ruled state after Hyderabad—was a case in point. During her pilgrimage to Mecca in 1863, Sikander Begum had met a Yemenite scholar, Zain al-'Abidin and invited him to become the *qadi al-qudat* (chief judge) of her state. This man and his brother, Husain b. Muhsin al-Hudaïdi, who was appointed by the Begum as a teacher of the local *dar ul-hadith* (house of the teaching of the prophetic traditions),<sup>35</sup> propagated, in India, the teaching of the Yemenite scholar and *qadi*, Muhammad b. 'Ali ash-Shaukani (d. 1834) who had become famous because of his rejection of the *taglid* (the strict adherence to one school of law). He insisted, on the contrary, on the necessity to base any legal opinion on the Quran and the Sunna. In Bhopal, the two Yemeni brothers also publicised the teachings of Ibn Taimiyyah who had already influenced Shah Waliu' Ilah, who, interestingly, had apparently 'studied under the same Medinese hadith scholar Muhammad Haya al-Sindi (d. 1750)' as Abd al-Wahhabin in Mecca.<sup>36</sup>

In Bhopal, a key role was played by Siddiq Hasan Khan (1832–90), whose father had taken part in Sayyid Ahmad Bareilwi's jihad and who had migrated from Rae Bareilly to Bhopal, where he had been asked to write the history of the state. He was exposed to the teaching of the two Yemeni brothers, but influenced them in return. In 1869, he went to Mecca for his first pilgrimage. Upon his return to Bhopal, he followed a kind of middle way. On the one hand

he critiqued 'the idea that the Wahhabis had stamped Islamic universalism with territorial localism' and on the other he attacked 'those who believe[d] in *pir* and *fakir* worship'.<sup>37</sup> Siddiq started a conversation with the Wahhabis which intensified in the course of time, as evident from the correspondence between the Wahhabi shaykh Hamad Ibn Atiq and Siddiq Hasan Khan, who, then, played a major role in the making of the Ahl-i-Hadith.

While the founder of the Ahl-i-Hadith movement, in 1864, Nazir Husayn (1805–1902), was based in Delhi, his main patron was indeed Siddiq Hasan Khan, who after becoming the first secretary of the *Diwan* (prime minister) at the court of Bhopal, married the Begum in 1871. In his letters to Siddiq Hasan Khan, Ibn Atiq not only complimented him for his exegesis of the Quran but complained that Najdi<sup>38</sup> scholars did not have enough copies of classical works. Hasan Khan sent books to him and one year later, in 1881, the elder son of Ibn Atiq, Sa'd bin Atiq (1850–1930), travelled to India where he was to spend nine years, mostly in Bhopal. He was to be followed by many others, including one of his brothers.<sup>39</sup> In the early 1880s, Muhammad bin Ibrahim Alkusaifyar, visited him in Bhopal, bringing many books about Salafism.<sup>40</sup> After coming back from India, Sa'd bin Atiq was 'appointed by Ibn Sa'ud as a judge (*qadi*) in Riyadh and imam of the city's Grand Mosque, an office that gave him great influence over the education of the young generation of Wahhabi 'ulama'<sup>41</sup>. Among his students was 'Abd al-Aziz bin Baz, who was to become the vice-president and then the head of Islamic University of Medina, an institution we'll return to.

This connection suggests that, if Wahhabis have influenced Indian Muslims, the Ahl-i-Hadith movement has also played some role in the development of Wahhabism in Saudi Arabia. Besides exchanging ideas and sending money, Hasan Khan established diplomatic ties between the state of Bhopal—ruled by his wife, the Begum Shah Jahan—and the Sharif of Mecca.<sup>42</sup> This transnational networking was perceived by the British as a manifestation of pan-Islamism, all the more so as Hasan Khan also corresponded with Ottoman sultan Abdul Hamid II. Hasan Khan was deposed in 1885 for sedition, but also because of his 'Wahhabism'—a label abhorred by the British due to the Saudi challenge to the domination of their Empire. However, the Ahl-i-Hadith movement acquired 'a corporate identity' in 1906, with the creation of the All India Jamiat-i-Ahl-i-Hadith.<sup>43</sup>

To sum up: While the medieval era had seen the formation of an Indo-Islamic civilization based on Sufism and the Mughal Indo-Persianate culture mentioned in the introduction of this volume, Indian Muslims, after losing

their own variant of the Caliph, the Mughal emperor, turned to the cradles of Islam, including Mecca and Constantinople. However, the proponents of 'the spirit of 1857' tried to export their version of Islam in Arabia, in the framework of what Seema Alavi called 'Muslim cosmopolitanism.' These were years of intense debates between the Indo-Persianate tradition and 'an aggressive Arabacist prescriptive Islam.'<sup>44</sup> This encounter resulted, *inter alia*, in the emergence of the Ahl-i-Hadith school, that was partly indigenous and partly shaped by Wahhabi influence. The intellectual interactions described above offer a good illustration of the point that Stéphane Lacroix made in his book, even though he refers mostly there to non-South Asian influences: 'although Saudi Arabia is often considered solely as a power that exports Islam, it also has to be seen as a recipient of influences emanating from most currents of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Islamic revivalism.'<sup>45</sup>

### *The affinities of Muslim nationalisms: Azad and Iqbal*

While Indian Muslims travelled to Mecca and Medina in larger numbers in the late nineteenth-early twentieth century and felt more concerned for the Caliphate, as mentioned in the introduction of this volume, they continued to cultivate their specific brand of Islam, as evident from the trajectories of two intellectuals who, otherwise, were poles apart: Maulana Azad and Mohammad Iqbal. The former was an Islamic scholar who defended the Caliphate, joined the Congress party and fought against the idea of Pakistan, whereas the latter was a poet philosopher trained in the West who developed a separatist ideology that inspired Jinnah.

#### Maulana Azad: what Khilafat?

The Khilafat movement, as mentioned in the introduction of this book, was less a reflection of the pan-Islamic views of the Indian Muslims than an attempt, orchestrated by ideologues, to unite them. While this instrumentalization of a powerful Islamic symbol was rather obvious in the case of Aligarh educated politicians, the approach of the religious leaders who took part in the movement through the Jamiat ul-Ulema-e-Hind was more complicated, as evident from the attitude of Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad (1888–1958).

Azad was born in Mecca where his father, a Bengali Islamic scholar who had migrated to this holy city after the 1857 Mutiny, got married to an Arab woman, the daughter of a reputed scholar from Medina<sup>46</sup>. But he was two years

old when his father returned to Bengal. There, Azad became a journalist before becoming a Maulana. As a young man, he was very sensitive to the pan-Islamic doctrine of Jama al-Din al-Afghani and visited many Muslim countries (including Afghanistan, Iraq, Egypt, Syria and Turkey).

From 1919 onwards, Azad was at the forefront of the Khilafat Movement. In 1920, he presented the philosophy of the movement in a book entitled *Masla-i Khilafat va Jazirat-e Arabia* (The Issue of the Caliphate and the Arab Peninsula).<sup>47</sup> In this book, Azad, according to whom Allah had instituted the Caliphate to ensure all obeyed him, related in detail the heroic deeds of the successive caliphs. He admitted that the Great Mughals were loath to swear allegiance to the Caliph but, in his view, this was acceptable since the Mughals had the capacity to administer Islamic law themselves. Since the dynasty had come to an end, Azad considered that Indian Muslims could only turn to the Caliph to make sure their law was enforced. He also pointed out the Caliph's sacred role as protector of the holy places on Arab land. For him, paraphrases Peter Hardy, 'The Jazirat al-Arab [the Arabian peninsula] must at all times be free of non-Muslim control and if it has escaped from the control of the khalifa of Islam then it must be restored to him by force, force to which all Muslims all over the world must contribute.'<sup>48</sup> However, he knew that force was not possible and, in any case, remembered that, in the past, Indian Muslims had relied on a local alternative: the Mughal emperor. He, therefore, argued that 'there is nothing in the *hadith* or the Quran for the basis of the view that the Caliphate must be limited to the Qureish or the Arabs generally.'<sup>49</sup> He went further, claiming that 'the brotherhood of Islam pays no heed to distinctions of nationality, race or country', before concluding 'that there is no evidence in Islamic doctrine that the Caliphate was limited to any nation ('qaum'), or family ('khandan') or lineage and race ('nasl').'<sup>50</sup>

These speculations based on some exegis of various *hadith* prepared the ground to the alternative solution that the Indian *ulama* finally suggested, i.e. endowing themselves with the caliphal power. The JUH conference of December 1921 agreed to elect an Amir-i Hind (Emir of India). This Emir, who was needed as long as the Caliph was not reinstated, would be responsible for maintaining a vast network of Qazis (Islamic judges) and overseeing their enforcement of the *sharia*. This included reviving a number of rules guiding Muslim life that had fallen into disuse. This Emir, a wise man and a scholar, was to be assisted by a seven-member council that would include five *ulama*. Even if the JUH committee acknowledged the next Caliph's power to dismiss and appoint the Emir of India, these changes had to be made in consultation



with the JUH, which thus foresaw itself elevated to the status of parliament for Indian Islam—a parliament that the Emir, and even the caliph, would answer to.<sup>51</sup> Muhammad Qasim Zaman points out that ‘an important initiative in that direction soon materialized in the form of what has come to be known as the *imarat-i shar’iyya*’—a network of unofficial judicial courts which were established in Bihar in 1921.<sup>52</sup>

In a way, Muslim League separatists and pro-Congress *ulama* converged in their use of the Caliphate as a symbol for mobilizing Indian Muslims *nationally*: none of them were, in fact, truly pan-Islamic. The former wanted to build a sense of ethno-religious nationalism and the latter were prepared to take over the functions exercised, till the 1920s, by the Ottoman Sultan. Secondly, neither the Muslim League nor the *ulama* were happy with the developments which took place in the Middle East in the early 1920s. In November 1922 the Turkish National Assembly abolished the Ottoman Sultanate and designated Abdul Mejid Effendi the new Caliph, separating spiritual authority from temporal power, to the chagrin of the Indian proponents of the Caliphate. In 1924, the Turkish National Assembly abolished the Caliphate. Immediately, King Husain, the Hashemite leader who ruled over the Hijaz, declared himself Caliph. But in late 1924 Abd al-Aziz Ibn Saud, the ruler of Najd, defeated the Hashemite forces militarily, putting Mecca and Medina under the sovereignty of what was soon to become the kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The Indian *ulama* who had passed the December 1921 resolution regarding the need to elect an Amir-i-Hind, including Abdul Bari, did not support this move, being ‘wary of Ibn Saud’s Wahhabism.’<sup>53</sup>

The *ulama* were not the only Indian Muslims expressing reservations vis-à-vis Wahhabis, as evident from some Hajjis’ accounts of their trip to Mecca. One of them, Amir Ahmad Alawi, Deputy Collector in Kanpur district, who went on Hajj in 1928—while there were probably about 20,000 Indian Muslims who did the same<sup>54</sup>—, held a diary very revealing of the critical views of the Wahhabis (also known by the name of their province as Nedjis) that the Indian Muslims entertained. After visiting Medina he wrote: ‘I never used to speak ill of the Saudis before this hajj travel but now it has become impossible to keep one’s tongue silent after having witnessed their barbaric actions.’<sup>55</sup> He resented the way they destroyed and occupied Shi’a mosques, including Masjid-e-Ali. He also denounced their cultural policing in the Masjid-e Nabawi (the Prophet’s mosque), the second most sacred mosque (after Mecca’s Masjid al-Haram) that he visited regularly during his stay:



The Nejdīs don't disallow people from visiting the grave chamber. But they do not allow pilgrims to read any book other than the *Quran Sharif* inside the *Haram Sharif*. There are special guards to ensure that no one touches the screen around the grave and, at the time of the *salaam*, no one stands with clasped hands. It is even disallowed to raise one's hand for prayer. The four imams of the mosque have decreed that one must not raise one's hands in prayer after *namaz*. If one feels the need to make a prayer, one can do so softly under one's breath. However, raising one's hands in prayer after *namaz* is heresy [...] There are two guards on either side of the window (of the grave) whose job it is to stop those pilgrims who stand with folded hands, raise their hands in supplication, or attempt to come close to the screen. Some Punjabi pilgrims argue and Egyptian women hurl the choicest abuses when they are stopped, but the Nejdīs are not to be stopped from their headstrong stubbornness and forcefully free the hands that are folded or raised.<sup>56</sup>

Such a rigid discipline enforced in such a strict manner contrasted with the traditionally eclectic practices that Indian Muslims had inherited from their *sufi* cults. But it also differed from the liberal atmosphere of Mecca and Medina that preceded the rise to power of the Wahhabis and Saudis.

In fact, only one group of Indian Muslims rallied around the new dispensation that was prevailing in the young Saudi Arabia: the *Ahl-i-Hadith*. Sanaullah Amritsari (1868–1948), who was the first General Secretary of the All India *Jamiat-i-Ahl-i-Hadith* from 1906 till 1947, travelled to the Islamic World Conference in Mecca in 1926,<sup>57</sup> a meeting convened by Abd al-Aziz Ibn Saud (1880–1953) 'with the transparent aim of securing formal Muslim acquiescence in the newly installed regime.'<sup>58</sup> For the Saudis and their Wahhabi allies, it was capital to secure the largest number of representatives of Islam across the world. But *Ahl-i-Hadith*—who retained a low profile in India—were the only Indian participants.

### Muhammad Iqbal and the de-Arabization of Islam?

Like Azad, Iqbal, who is remembered in Pakistan as one of the founders of the country, related to the cradle of Islam that was Arabia in a very ambiguous manner. Iqbal was proud of being part of a land of many religions. In *Javed Nama*, a book of Persian poems published in 1932, he 'presents a scene that involves Jesus Christ and Gautama Buddha sitting in front of Allah.'<sup>59</sup> One year before, Iqbal published his famous poem, '*Saray jahan se achha Hindustan hamara*' ('Our Hindustan is better than the entire world'). More importantly, in a third one, '*Naya Shivala*' ('The New Temple'), he asks Muslims to unite

with Hindus and declares 'Each dust particle of my motherland is God to me,'<sup>60</sup> a clear indication that India was his sacred land.<sup>61</sup> This eclectic sense of spirituality went together with a deep respect for Sufism. When his brother was involved in a criminal case, Iqbal composed an ode to Nizamuddin Aulia, so that he would intercede for him. He visited Nizamuddin's *dargah* in 1905 for the first time, before his trip to England, and again in 1908 after coming back.<sup>62</sup>

Gradually, however, Iqbal developed a more exclusive worldview and became more anxious to defend the Muslims of India, a minority to whom, according to him, the Hindus posed a threat. This 'communal' (his word) approach would be fostered by his reading of Hindu-Muslim riots and would lead him to join hands with Jinnah's Muslim League.

In the context of this new Islamic consciousness, Iqbal (re)discovered his Middle Eastern roots. He had already stopped over in Arabia in 1905, on his way to Europe, and had paid allegiance to this other sacred land in the most lyric way, in a poem he wrote on the ship while reaching Aden: 'O Sacred Land of Arabia, I congratulate you. You were a stony and arid land, neglected by the architects and builders of the world. But an orphan boy spelled such a magic in your soul that the foundations of the civilization of the modern age were laid down in your territory.'<sup>63</sup>

However, his intellectual encounter with the Middle Eastern versions of Islam came soon after, during his studies of philosophy in Germany—where he completed his PhD on *The Development of Metaphysics in Persia* in 1908. Annemarie Schimmel pointed out that Iqbal placed the Arabian homeland at the centre of his poetry, as evident from the title of his first collection of poems, *Bang-e Dara* (The Call of the Marching Bell), which reflected his desire to visit Medina.<sup>64</sup> Similarly, Javed Majeed has shown that 'Iqbal's re-centred geography combines a focus on Muhammad as a Prophet with the Hijaz (Arabia) as spacial location.'<sup>65</sup> The title of the final volume of Iqbal's poetry, *The Gift of the Hijaz* (1936) 'underlines his sense of the Hijaz as the spiritual and material centre of Islam.'<sup>66</sup> He sees 'the Muslim community ('millat') as a series of concentric circles with a shared centre in Mecca.'<sup>67</sup> As a result, he asks in one of his poems, 'Complaint', 'What does it matter if my wine-jar is Persian ? At least the wine is Arabian ('*hijazi*')/ What matters if the song is Indian ('*hindi*')?/ The tune after all is Arabian ('*hijazi*').'<sup>68</sup>

This promotion of the Arabian roots of Islam developed at the expense of the Indian Muslims' traditional allegiance to Persia. Iqbal 'uses the word '*ajam* for Persian. This word means not just Persian but also "barbarian, foreign" (that is, non-Arab) and was used by Arabs during the Islamic conquest of Persia to

refer to Persia.<sup>69</sup> According to Majeed, Iqbal's rejection of the Persian legacy is partly due to his focus on the Prophet. He considered 'the main threat of Persian Magianism to lie in its subversion of the idea of the finality of Muhammad's prophethood.'<sup>70</sup> Iqbal's critique of Persian Magianism was also due to the affinities he saw between Shi'ism and Sufism. Indeed, Iqbal wanted to counter the notion of selfhood propagated by Sufism because, as a mystic, otherworldly approach of life, it was bound to precipitate the decline of the Islamic civilization.<sup>71</sup>

However, in spite of this obsessive reference to the Hijaz as the centre of Islam, Iqbal insisted on the *universal* dimension of his religion. First, he refers also to Shi'a geographical centres. In a chapter on 'Iqbal and Karbala', Syed Akbar Hyder shows that 'Iqbal reclaims the symbol of Karbala for a pan-Islamic discourse that transcends sectarian differences.'<sup>72</sup> Indeed, 'Karbala, for Iqbal, is a site whereupon the Quran and the Kaaba, two of the loftiest religious artefacts for all Muslims, converge, and consequently, all differences within the community should be subsumed within the Husainian struggle'<sup>73</sup>. Hyder points out that Azad expressed—again!—similar views and that this convergence reflects a typically Indian Sufi way 'to undertake hybrid and synthetic readings of Islamic history.'<sup>74</sup>

Secondly, Iqbal 'occasionally presents the Prophet as a universal figure, rather than an Arab.'<sup>75</sup> This is consistent with the idea that Islam, the egalitarian religion *par excellence*, transcends race, ethnicity, caste and class—an idea Iqbal probably highlighted even more than any other Indian Muslim thinker since he was not an *ashraf* himself but the descendant of a Hindu convert. For Iqbal, Muhammad's mission was to 'found freedom, equality and brotherhood among all mankind.'<sup>76</sup> Iqbal cultivated an individualistic view of Islam. For him 'the nature of the prophet's experience, as disclosed in the Quran' was an 'individual experience creative of a social order'<sup>77</sup> that transcended the kind of destructive tribalism that prevailed in Arabia before him. In the interwar period, he saw the spectre of this brand of tribalism in the rise of nationalism. He looked at this trend as totally anti-Islamic and exhorted the Muslims to resist it. In one of his poems he wrote: 'China and Arabia are ours; India is ours/We are Muslims, our country ('*watan*') is the world.'<sup>78</sup>

For all these reasons, Iqbal is not drawing his inspiration from the traditional architecture of Islam. In fact, his models are more in the West than in the Middle East. The words he used for approving the abolition of the Caliphate in *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (1930) are very revealing:

It is [...] extremely satisfactory to note that the pressure of new world-forces and the political experience of European nations are impressing on the mind of modern Islam the value and possibilities of the idea of *ijma* [the making of consensus]. The growth of republican spirit and the gradual formation of legislative assemblies in Muslim lands constitute a great step in advance. The transfer of the power of *ijtihad*<sup>79</sup> from individual representatives of schools to a Muslim legislative assembly which, in view of the growth of opposing sects, is the only possible form *ijma*' can take in modern times, will secure contributions to legal discussion from laymen who happen to possess a keen insight into affairs. In this way alone, we can stir into activity the dormant spirit of life in our legal system, and give it an evolutionary outlook.<sup>80</sup>

Iqbal was well aware that to transfer *ijtihad* and *ijma* to an elected assembly was dangerous, but he saw this development as part of the modernisation of Islam and in any case he sought to remedy this danger by having *ulama* in the ideal 'Muslim legislative assembly helping and guiding free discussion on questions relating to law.'<sup>81</sup> In that sense, Iqbal goes further than Azad—who, in any case, defended the Khilafat. In contrast, Iqbal supports 'the republican form of government', as it has been adopted by Turkey after the abolition of the Sultanate and Caliphate, because it is both, 'consistent with the spirit of Islam' and 'a necessity in view of the new forces that are set free in the world of Islam.'<sup>82</sup>

In contrast to Turkey, which 'has shaken off its dogmatic slumber' and claimed 'her right of intellectual freedom,'<sup>83</sup> Saudi Arabia, for Iqbal, seems to be frozen in time. While acknowledging the importance of Abd al-Wahhab, he considers that 'inwardly this movement, too, is conservative in its own fashion. While it rises in revolt against the finality of the schools, and vigorously asserts the right of private judgment, its vision of the past is wholly uncritical, and in matter of law it mainly falls back on the traditions of the Prophet,'<sup>84</sup> a (not so) veiled critique of Wahhabism.

Iqbal's reservations vis-à-vis Saudi Arabia's Wahhabism come from his rejection of conservatism<sup>85</sup> and his sense of Islamic universalism. But it also comes from his sense of nationalism. This paradox is explained in *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*: ultimately, Muslim countries should form one unit, but they need to become independent first—and therefore rely on their national strength to emancipate themselves.<sup>86</sup> In spite of his universalist view of Islam, Iqbal therefore promoted the idea of a separate land for Indian Muslims in the 1930s, at the expense of pan-Islamism. In the speeches he made in support of what was to become 'the Pakistan movement,'

he keeps his distance vis-à-vis the Arabian roots he used to eulogize so much before. For instance, in the Presidential Address to the twenty-fifth session of the Muslim League he pronounced at Allahabad on 29 December 1930, he first extolled the quality of Islam in India, 'the only country in the world where Islam, as a people-building force, has worked at its best.'<sup>87</sup> Not only did he not want to break his links with India—he demanded 'the creation of a Muslim India within India'<sup>88</sup>—, but he saw this demand as, 'for Islam, an opportunity to rid itself of the stamp that Arab Imperialism was forced to give it, to mobilise its law, its education, its culture, and to bring them into closer contact with its own original spirit and with the spirit of modern times.'<sup>89</sup>

In other words, the separate country Iqbal was asking for was not supposed to develop in the shadow of Saudi Arabia but to emancipate Islam from its influence in the name of this creed's universalistic civilization as well as West-inspired modernity. Majeed concludes that there are 'two meanings to Iqbal's sacred geography. One is the sacred luminosity of the Hijaz, and the other is its historically accidental nature as a religious location, which is transcended by the global, post-ethnic, nature of Islam.'<sup>90</sup>

As a result, Iqbal delinked Islamic solidarity from allegiance to the Hijaz. In 1931, he attended the Muslim World Congress in Jerusalem. He visited 'Christian holy sites like the Mount of Olives and the graves of the Hebrew prophets Zechariah and David',<sup>91</sup> but he did not go to Mecca or Medina which were not far from Port Saeed where he boarded a ship for Bombay.

\* \* \*

While Azad and Iqbal are often presented as poles apart, they shared some common perspective as far as their relation to the Hijaz was concerned. Certainly, Azad took an active part in the Khilafat movement, but he did not consider that Saudi Arabia was entitled to any kind of monopoly over the leadership of Muslims. Similarly, Iqbal paid allegiance to the Hijaz, but looked at Islam as a universal creed that needed to be 'de-Arabized' and whose identity symbols had to come from the Shi'a tradition as much as from the Sunni legacy—a Sufi-like predicament that partly explains his popularity in Iran after the 1979 revolution. Not only was the first international conference on Iqbal organized in Tehran in 1986, but on this occasion President Sayyid Ali Khamenei declared that the Islamic Republic of Iran was 'the embodiment of Iqbal's dream.'<sup>92</sup> Another reason for such a tribute was probably that Iqbal had

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been the chief ideologue of the first Islamic Republic to see the light of the day—and to invent a regime which used this religion as an ideology that developed independently from references to Saudi Arabia.

### *Pakistan, the delicate formation of the first Islamic Republic—and the failed attempt to lead the Muslim world (1947–70)*

The founders of Pakistan did not draw their inspiration from any other Islamic country, but intended to invent a new polity rooted in the South Asian past. That was not only true of the Muslim League leaders, but also of the *ulama* who collaborated and/or competed with them. The former drew their inspiration from Iqbal while the latter carried the legacy of the Khilafat movement, combined with a new nationalist identity. Both schools of thought differed in many ways but they wanted to build an Islamic country which could be a model for the others—not the other way around.

What ‘New Medina’? Maulana Usmani, Maududi and the Islamic utopia

The leader of the *ulama*, Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani, had been a key figure of the JUH, before leaving the organization and creating his own, the Jamiatul Ulama-i-Islam, convinced as he had become, by the idea of Pakistan. Many *ulama* followed him, especially in the northern region of British India which formed the United Provinces. In this milieu, Venkat Dhulipala argues that,

Pakistan was popularly imagined in U.P. as a sovereign Islamic state, a New Medina, as it was called by some of its proponents. In this regard, it was not just envisaged as a refuge for the Indian Muslims, but as an Islamic utopia that would have been the harbinger for renewal and rise of Islam in the modern world, act as the powerful new leader and protector of the entire Islamic world and, thus, emerge as a worthy successor to the defunct Turkish Caliphate as the foremost Islamic power in the twentieth century.<sup>93</sup>

While the *ulama* wanted to reproduce the Caliphal model,<sup>94</sup> they did not look for any guidance from the Middle East and Middle Eastern scholars. In fact, in 1946, in his address during the Punjab JUI conference, Usmani emphasized the South Asian dimension of his project. He declared that ‘just as Medina had provided a base for the eventual victory of Islam in Arabia, Pakistan would pave the way for the triumphal return of Islam as the ruling

power over the entire subcontinent.<sup>95</sup> The territory Usmani had in mind remained South Asia. He did not want to pay allegiance to the Hijaz as the Centre of the Islamic civilization, but to restore the Indian centre that was there in the past. While the new Medina challenged the original one, it replicated its ideology and, therefore, had affinities with it—something the Islamists would capitalize on from the 1970s onwards.

Till then, *ulama* hardly exerted any political influence. Certainly, Usmani was elected to the Constituent Assembly where he defended views similar to those of the Khilafat movement. For him, *ulama* had to play a role in the country's governance. In mid-April 1949, the Basic Principles Committee of the Constituent Assembly 'set up a board of experts consisting of reputed Scholars well versed in Ta'limat-i-Islamia (Islamic teachings) to advise on matters arising out of the Objectives Resolution,'<sup>96</sup> that had been set up by the Muslim League government on the model of the Indian Constituent Assembly. The committee drew its inspiration from the medieval Islamic theory of the Caliph to emphasize the need to select heads of state endowed with personal qualities. It held that the president had to be a Muslim *de jure*.

Outside the Assembly, Usmani received the support of Islamic fundamentalists, including Maududi who had founded the Jama'at-i-Islami in 1941 and whose plan to defend Muslims rested solely on 'the Qur'an, the prophetic traditions, and the legal canon (*fiqh*) of Islam as repositories of divine truth.'<sup>97</sup> Maududi's aim was to follow the Prophet not as a spiritual guide but as a guide for the collective revival of Muslims throughout the world. While Maududi had initially disapproved of the creation of Pakistan because Islam could not be promoted in one country only, he eventually rallied around this project after he surmised from the history of India that in the past Islam only truly flourished when power was in Muslim hands. Such was the condition in which *sharia* could rule, as well as Islam in general, as it did in the Prophet's Medina and during the reign of his first four successors. As Muhammad Qasim Zaman points out, 'For Maududi, as for the *'ulama*, there was much to be learnt from the example of Abu Bakr, 'Umar, Uthman, and Ali.'<sup>98</sup> For Maududi, a journalist by training—not an Islamic scholar—Islam, nevertheless, had to be adapted to the modern era, which explains his idea of a caliphate in which the sovereign (*emir*) would be elected, but he would be the only candidate in the running, and would rule in God's name on earth. Maududi disapproved of the *ulama*'s claim to be intermediaries between believers and God. He also thought that they were 'not equipped to contend with the problems of the modern world, and he believed they misunderstood Islam.'<sup>99</sup>



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However, Usmani and Maududi joined hands during the constitutional debates in order to put pressure on the Muslim League. Both played a major role in the anti-Ahmadi movement that started in 1952. The JI wanted this group declared un-Islamic because the Ahmadis believed that the founder of the sect—and not Mohammed—was the last Prophet of Islam.

The Muslim League rulers, who had not created Pakistan to build a theocratic regime but as a homeland for the South Asian Muslims, resisted the *ulama* in the assembly and the JI out of it. In 1953, the anti-Ahmadi movement was severely repressed in the name of religious freedom. Maududi was sentenced to death by a military tribunal and the ruling elite seized the opportunity to exclude religious leaders from the Constitution drafting committee. Finally the 1956 Constitution made few concessions to Usmani.

For what Muslim leadership was the first Islamic Republic the laboratory?

Even if they did not want to build a 'New Medina', Pakistan's founding fathers, including Muhammad Ali Jinnah and his Prime Minister, Liaquat Ali Khan cultivated some sense of a mission. After all, those who had left India to live in 'the country of the Pure' were known as the Mohajirs, 'those who participate in the *hijra*.' They did not go to the *Hijaz*, but they claimed to reproduce the journey from Mecca to Medina to create a new Muslim *polis*. Indeed, they wanted to use their Pakistan as a 'laboratory', as Liaquat Ali Khan said in 1945,<sup>100</sup> to show that Islam could be the 'ideology' of a nation-state. They did not intend to build a theocracy, but a home land for Indian Muslims: 'muslimhood' was their motto, not Islam—whose precepts they sometimes followed. They defended primarily the identity of a community which was historically and culturally associated with South Asia.

Indeed, when they looked for references guiding their work, they did not turn in the direction of the Middle East, but they harked back to the history of the Mughal Empire. In February 1948, in a lecture broadcast on the Australian radio, Jinnah invoked the legacy of the Mughal Empire, a glorious episode of Muslim unity he wanted to recapture: 'We have had a place in India for many centuries. Once, it was the supreme place. This was when the edict of the Moghuls ran from shore to shore.'<sup>101</sup>

The 1956 Constitution made few concessions to the most radical Islamic demands. Certainly, it stipulated that only a Muslim could be President, that 'no Law would be passed against the teachings of Quran and Sunnah and the



existing laws would be made Islamic in character' and that steps would 'be taken to enable the Muslims of Pakistan individually and collectively to order their lives in accordance with the Holy Quran and Sunnah.' But Article Eighteen of the Constitution guaranteed 'freedom to profess, practice and propagate any religion and the right to establish, maintain and manage religious institutions'—reflecting the fact that Islam did not have the status of official religion and that *sharia* was not the only law.

As the architects of the first Islamic Republic, Muslim League leaders aspired to command the Muslim world. As party president, Khaliquzzaman argued, in 1949, that 'Pakistan would bring all Muslim countries together into Islamistan—a pan-Islamic entity.'<sup>102</sup> In 1942 he had already declared that 'Pakistan is only the jumping off ground. The time is not far distant when the *Muslim countries will have to stand in line with Pakistan* and then only the jumping ground will have reached its fruition.'<sup>103</sup> Like Usmani, in a way, Khaliquzzaman claimed that Pakistan would be the leader of the Muslim world and a role model. Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan said the same thing to Samuel Martin Burke after Partition: 'Pakistan came into being as a result of the urge to secure a territory where Islamic ideology could be practised and demonstrated to the world, and since a cardinal feature of this ideology [was] to make Muslim brotherhood a reality, it was a part of her mission to do everything in her power to promote fellowship and co-operation between Muslim countries.'<sup>104</sup>

In the 1940s, Jinnah proposed 'a World Muslim Conference as a preliminary step to bringing about the creation of an Islamic bloc involving Muslim countries of the Middle East and Far East'<sup>105</sup>—the Pakistan in the making being right in the middle. The proposal was welcomed by Iraq, Syria and Lebanon. In December 1946, Jinnah toured the Middle East for promoting the idea of Pakistan. In Egypt, he held talks about the setting up of a worldwide Islamic League, an idea that was also discussed in India by St-John Philby, the adviser of King Abd al-Aziz Ibn Saud of Saudi Arabia.<sup>106</sup>

In 1949, Pakistan held an International Islamic Economic Conference in Karachi that resulted in the formation of the Muslim World Congress and, by the end of the year, had approached the governments of several Muslim countries to set up an Islamic conference. But only 'Egypt and Saudi Arabia showed any interest.'<sup>107</sup> Subsequently, Saudi Arabia—which had been, however, the first Muslim country to recognise Pakistan, kept a distance from Karachi. In 1953, the Saudis 'threatened to sever diplomatic ties with Pakistan'<sup>108</sup> when Maududi was sentenced to death because of his involvement in the anti-Ahmadi

movement.<sup>109</sup> More importantly, Saudis resented Pakistan's rapprochement with the US—the main supporter of Israel. In 1954, Pakistan joined the US-led SEATO and, in 1955, the Baghdad Pact. The Saudis immediately denounced 'a stab in the heart of Arab and Muslim states.'<sup>110</sup> In 1956, the pro-British stance of Pakistan during the Suez crisis worsened its relations with Egypt and the Arab countries at large. On the contrary, Saudi Arabia—which, like many other Muslim countries, was already 'reluctant to make a choice between friendship for India or Pakistan'<sup>111</sup>—appreciated Nehru's anti-colonial stances against UK and France. Riyadh, in 1956, was criticized in Pakistan for its 'failure to share Pakistan's view of the treatment of the Muslim minority in India'<sup>112</sup> (and of the Kashmiris in particular<sup>113</sup>).

In the early 1960s, instead of Pakistan, Saudi Arabia took the lead in the Muslim world. In 1962 it initiated the Muslim World League, a pro-Wahhabism NGO funded by Riyadh and whose headquarters are in Mecca. In the Middle East, Pakistan was left with a few non-Arab, pro-West allies, most importantly Iran and Turkey, with whom Pakistan created the Organization for Regional Co-operation and Development in 1964.

The most prominent Pakistani groups which were closely connected to the Saudis through religion were the Ahl-i-Hadith, Deoband, and Jama'at-e-Islami. The 'premier educational institution of the Ahl-i-Hadith in Pakistan,' Faisalabad's Jami'a Salafiyya, established in 1955, was affiliated with the Islamic University of Medina.<sup>114</sup> Muhammad Qasim Zaman points out that the Jami'a Faruqiyya, a Deobandi *madrasa* of Karachi established in 1967, 'is among the more successful Pakistani *madrasas* in terms of Saudi as well as other foreign support.'<sup>115</sup> The Jama'at-e-Islami (JI) was part of the World Muslim League (WML) as early as 1962, the year of its creation.<sup>116</sup> The League included Muslim Brotherhood figures like Sa'id Ramadan, Hasan al-Banna's son-in-law, along with Maududi. Incidentally, the JI developed its student wing, the Islami Jami'at-i Tulabah (IJT), thanks to an Egyptian member of the Muslim Brotherhood (another organization supported by the WML) based in Karachi, Sa'id Ramazan.<sup>117</sup> Maududi was also invited to take part in the shaping of the Islamic University that was planned in Medina and that was started in 1961.<sup>118</sup>

As a result of this new dynamic, Pakistan emphasized its non-Arab cultural roots. In 1959 General Ayub Khan, who had seized power one year before, 'distributed a questionnaire among the intellectuals of the country so that they could provide him with an answer as to what is the ideology of Pakistan.'<sup>119</sup> The most comprehensive response was offered by the son of Iqbal himself, whose book, *Ideology of Pakistan*, became a quasi official manifesto. This

volume, peppered with citations of Iqbal, is entirely based on the progressive views of this man, two decades after his death. Out of 200 pages, the Arab connection of Pakistan is only mentioned once, indirectly, through a reference to 'the establishment of the Muslim rule in the Indian sub-continent in 711'.<sup>120</sup>

In 1959 too, Ayub Khan turned to Iran. He declared, while addressing the Iranian parliament:

Historically we have been one nation in the past, geographically we have a common border, and ethnologically we are of the same stock [...] We share the same faith and are heirs to a common cultural heritage. Your language and literature has for centuries been a source of inspiration to our people. We have drunk deep at the fountain of Iranian culture and it has left indelible marks on our everyday life.<sup>121</sup>

In 1962, Ayub proposed the 'fusion of the brotherly Muslim states into a greater political unity' to Iran and Afghanistan.<sup>122</sup> Seven years later, when Riyadh took one more pan-Islamic initiative, the making of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC)—whose inaugural meeting took place in Jeddah—, in reaction to the damage caused to the Al Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem, the Saudis invited India to take part in the first meeting in Rabat. It was on Pakistan's insistence that India was finally denied membership.

### *The Arabization of Islam in Pakistan in the 1970–80s*

#### Z. A. Bhutto and the instrumentalization of Islam

The rebalancing of Pakistan towards Saudi Arabia took place after the 1971 war, during which Riyadh massively supported Islamabad with a \$20 million loan.<sup>123</sup> In early 1972, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto made a 'journey of resistance' to Iran, Turkey, Morocco, Tunisia, Libya, Algeria, Egypt, and Syria. His tour continued in May-June later that year, as he visited Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, UAE, Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan, Ethiopia, Mauritania, Guinea, Nigeria, Sudan and Somalia. He was mainly looking for money for the Pakistani economy and to build what was to be known as the 'Islamic bomb.' The Saudis were especially responsive, as they appreciated the military expertise of Pakistan. In 1972, General Tikka Khan, the Pakistani Chief of Army Staff was received by King Faisal.<sup>124</sup> This event marked the beginning of a close military cooperation. Both countries signed a military protocol and, in 1976, 'a bilateral agreement for the

exchange of technical knowledge in the field of defence.<sup>125</sup> At that time, there were about 20,000 Pakistani military personnel stationed in Saudi Arabia. Riyadh had started to give millions of dollars to Pakistan, the exact amount of these 'gifts' being difficult to establish. Saudi Arabia and Libya probably committed themselves to financially support the nuclear program of Pakistan around that time.<sup>126</sup> In contrast, while remaining close to Pakistan, Iran initiated some rapprochement with India. In 1974, a year during which Indira Gandhi went to Tehran and the Shah visited New Delhi, the India-Iran agreement implied that Iran would supply three quarters of India's oil needs.

The new proximity between Saudi Arabia and Pakistan found expression in several significant religious symbols. In 1972, Saudi Arabia received 'an unprecedented number of Pakistani hajjis':<sup>127</sup> while each country had been awarded a quota of pilgrims, Bhutto bargained successfully for an increase in the Pakistani contingent.<sup>128</sup> Second, the Faisal Mosque project was relaunched. King Faisal bin Abdul-Aziz, during his visit to Islamabad in 1966, had initiated it and the construction began in 1976 after King Faisal offered a \$120 million funding for that purpose. The mosque, which was to become Pakistan's national monument in Islamabad, has been conceived as an abstract replica of the Kaaba, yet its design also evoked a Bedouin tent.

Bhutto hosted the second summit of the OIC in Lahore in 1974. Among the participants were King Faisal of Saudi Arabia (in the honour of whom Lyallpur was to be renamed Faisalabad in 1977), Muammar Al Qaddafi and Yasser Arafat.

The Saudi-Pakistani rapprochement went on a par with Bhutto's instrumentalization of Islam on the political domestic scene. This strategy was evident from the 1973 Constitution. Article 2 made Islam 'the State religion of Pakistan' for the first time, freedom of expression was subject to restrictions 'in the interest of the glory of Islam' (article 19) and article 260 offered the first definition of who was a Muslim and who was not. Among the non-Muslims, in addition to Christians, Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, and Parsis, were also the Ahmadis, who considered themselves Muslims but who were thus excommunicated. To drive the point home, a Constitutional amendment in 1974 declared them apostates. This decision was made under the pressure of a new wave of agitation orchestrated by the JI. When opposition parties demonstrated in the streets against the rigging of the 1977 elections, Bhutto went one step further to placate the Islamists amongst them. He announced, on 17 April, that he would make *sharia* the law of the country, which implied a total ban of alcohol and that Friday, rather than Sunday, would become the

workers' new day off. These tactical moves did not placate the opposition parties—among which the JI was one of the most vocal—which, eventually, rallied in large number around Zia when he staged a military coup.

### The Zia era and the Wahhabization of Islam in Pakistan

The anti-Soviet jihad allowed Saudis to influence the religious ethos of Pakistan. While the US decided to grant \$3.1 billion to Pakistan to fight the Soviets in Afghanistan after Ronald Reagan took over power, Riyadh announced that Saudi Arabia would match this amount.<sup>129</sup> Besides, Prince Turki, the Saudi intelligence minister, played a key role in promoting the 'transfer [of] Islamic volunteers to Afghanistan.'<sup>130</sup> In the early 1980s, the JI was often endowed with the task of welcoming and orienting newcomers before arming them. As Olivier Roy writes, the operation had the trappings of 'a joint venture between the Saudis, the Muslim Brotherhood and the Jama'at-e-Islami, put together by the ISI.'<sup>131</sup>

However, unofficial personalities from the Middle East played an equally important role. Sananiri, a member of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood reached Afghanistan as early as 1979 and mediated between rival factions of mujahidin. He 'forged an agreement that served as a basis for the creation of the Islamic Union of Aghan Mujahidin, headed by Abdul Rasul Sayyaf' as early as 1980.<sup>132</sup> Sananiri was also responsible for bringing in the Afghan jihad Abdallah Azzam (1941–89), a Palestinian religious scholar trained in Damascus and Cairo (at Al-Azhar University) who had taught at King Abdul Ibn Saud University (Jeddah). Azzam first lectured in the Saudi-funded International Islamic University of Islamabad (see below) from 1981 onwards and then became 'an intermediary between the Afghan mujahidin and Islamists in the Middle East': 'sometimes he followed and supported military efforts on the ground in Afghanistan; the rest of the time he wrote, preached, and used his influence to convince the rest of the Muslim world to send men and money into the country.'<sup>133</sup> That was a difficult task because Salafis of the Middle East—including Ibn Baz in Saudi Arabia—looked at Afghans as "bad Muslims" because they belonged to the Maturidi school (close to the Ash'arite school, which allows some room for reason, earning denunciation from the Wahhabis) in matters of creed, followed the Hanafi school of jurisprudence, and were inclined towards practice of Sufism.<sup>134</sup> Frustrated, Azzam left his job at the IUII and went to Peshawar to create the Service Bureau that was designed 'to facilitate the arrival of Arab volunteers and to coordinate the

distribution of recruits to the various battlefields, training camps, or support activities for the jihad in Afghanistan.<sup>135</sup> Azzam did not feel any great love for the Afghans, who were 'ignorant, educated in the Hanafi school,'<sup>136</sup> but he thought that the *umma* needed a territorial 'solid base' (*qaeda sulba*) that Afghanistan could offer.

Osama Bin Laden, who had been one of his students in Jeddah, it seems, joined Azzam in the early 1980s and worked with him in the Service Bureau. In 1984, Azzam and Bin Laden 'received permission from the Afghan Mujahedeen leader Abdul Rasul Sayyaf to establish the first training camp exclusively for Arabs in Afghanistan.'<sup>137</sup> Thanks to the support of the government of Riyadh, Azzam and Bin Laden received 'several hundred million dollars' in 1985-89 and 'thousands—perhaps tens of thousands—of foreigners' were trained in their camps.<sup>138</sup>

Bin Laden, who visited Afghanistan for the first time in 1981,<sup>139</sup> played an important role in the 1980s, at the interface of Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. The ISI particularly appreciated his presence as, although he was not of royal blood, he was close enough to the ruling family to indicate that Saudi involvement was not limited to sending foot soldiers or funds. Bin Laden could also finance the jihad thanks to the fortune his father had accumulated through contracts to renovate Medina and Mecca<sup>140</sup>—and because 'the Saudis preferred to give money to someone who was one of their own, rather than to Pakistani intelligence agents.'<sup>141</sup> Established in Peshawar, Bin Laden contributed in the mid-1980s to the construction of roads, tunnels<sup>142</sup> and underground depots for use by the resistance in Khost, where he also set up his first training camp for jihadists. After Azzam's violent and mysterious death in 1989, Bin Laden took over the head of his organization after founding al-Qaeda.

Among Bin Laden's associates were other Islamist figures from the Middle East. Ayman al-Zawahiri, a member of the Muslim Brotherhood, who had left Egypt after years in jail, arrived in Peshawar in the mid-1980s after a sojourn in Jeddah. He subsequently became the number two leader of Al-Qaeda.<sup>143</sup> Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi (b. 1959), a prominent Salafi ideologue of Saudi Arabia also went to Peshawar in 1985 and commuted between Pakistan and his country till the end of the anti-Soviet jihad—that he had theorized<sup>144</sup>. Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi, a Jordanian by birth, travelled to Pakistan in 1989 and stayed in Hayatabad (near Peshawar). He had worked as a journalist before taking arms against the Soviet alongside the faction of Hekmatyar, the mujahidin leader that the Pakistanis were supporting at that time.<sup>145</sup> Assessing the inflow of foreign jihadis in Pakistan and Afghanistan, Thomas Hegghammer

concludes: 'The result was the creation of an Islamist International made up of men whose strong feelings of brotherhood transcended national and cultural differences as well as ideological perspectives—those of the nation-state and of the struggle against specific Arab governments.'<sup>146</sup>

By the late 1980s, while Pakistan had 'succumbed to Saudi persuasion by ousting the Iran-based Shia jihadi outfits in the Afghan government-in-exile formed in Peshawar,'<sup>147</sup> it had become clear that Riyadh had gained the upper hand. The Saudi influence partly explained the contours of the Islamization policy implemented by General Zia.

The Islamization of education in Pakistan was directly related to the role of foreign actors from the Gulf countries. Sunni and Shi'a *madrasas* were aided by Saudi Arabia and Iran respectively. Iran after Khomeini's revolution in 1979 fought a kind of proxy war with Saudi Arabia for the leadership of the Muslim world and in Pakistan, *madrasas* played a major role in this war. Saudis promoted Sunni *madrasas* not only to counter the Iranian strategy but also to train the mujahidin who were fighting the anti-Soviet jihad, especially in the Pashtun area. Riyadh supported primarily the Ahl-i-Hadith schools, which in some cases even employed very well-paid Saudi teachers.<sup>148</sup> But Deobandi *madrasas* also benefited from this largess and from the sponsorship of the Pakistani state. Zia gave them land, autonomy and recognition. In 1982, the University Grants Commission recognized the certificates awarded by the *madrasas* as equivalent to the university MA degrees in Arabic/Islamiyat.<sup>149</sup> By 1988, when Zia left the scene, the number of *madrasas* had jumped by 39 per cent to 2,861, from 2,056 in 1980.<sup>150</sup>

In addition to *madrasas*, Saudi Arabia and the UAE influenced the Pakistani University system directly. Sana Haroon points out that, 'In 1985, three Islamic and Arabic studies centres funded by and named for Shaykh Zayed, president of the United Arab Emirates, were opened at the University of Karachi, Peshawar University, and Panjab University.'<sup>151</sup> At the same time, the Saudis were financing the International Islamic University of Islamabad which had been started in 1980 with, among its founding members, Dr Ahmad Mohamed Ali, the President of the Jeddah-based Islamic Development Bank. The IIUI was created in the premises of the Faisal Mosque, which, after its completion in 1986 was the largest mosque in the world. Zia was to be buried there in 1988.

The influence that the Saudis exerted over Pakistan during the Zia era is also obvious from the tax reforms. In 1979, Zia decided to transform the *zakat* (almsgiving), that was considered a personal duty, into a legal obligation. The 'Zakat and 'Ushr Ordinance' was issued in 1980 'to follow the example of Saudi



Arabia which had been levying *zakat* since 1956.<sup>152</sup> Khaled Ahmed points out that an Arab scholar ‘was sent to Pakistan by Saudi Arabia to impose the anti-Shia laws that Pakistan was averse to enforcing.’<sup>153</sup> This man, Maruf Dualibi, ‘framed’ the 1980 *Zakat* and ‘Ushr Ordinance. King Faisal even ‘gave Zia the “seed money” to start the *zakat* system in Pakistan with the condition that a part of it go to the Wahhabi party’, the Ahl-i-Adith.<sup>154</sup> One of the leaders of this ‘party’, Ehsan Ilahi Zaheer, who ‘was among the first generation of Ahl-i-Hadith leaders to be trained in seminaries and universities in Saudi Arabia,’<sup>155</sup> at that time, echoed the anti-Shi’a propaganda of Saudi Arabia in Pakistan.

Zia’s judicial reform, which was known as the Nizam-e-Islam (Islamic rule) programme, was also influenced by the Saudis. It laid in the enforcement of *hudud* punishments which drew their inspiration from the Saudi model. Islamic provisions newly introduced in the penal code provided for new punishments for three types of crimes: theft (*saraka*), extra-marital sexual relations (*zina*) and the consumption of alcohol or drugs (*al-sharab*). The most common punishment was lashing, the practical implementation of which was explained in the surprisingly detailed Execution of the Punishment of Whipping Ordinance (1979).<sup>156</sup>

While the 1980s are a turning point, the influence of Saudi Arabia over Pakistan would continue to subsequently find expression in several aspects of religious life, including the rise of sectarianism, the development of Islamist groups and the Sunnization of the education field, as several chapters of this volume will show—while others will bear testimony of the resilience of the Iranian connection.

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In this essay I have tried to synthesize the ritual, intellectual and ideological ways in which South Asian Muslims related to the religions of the Middle East, and to Saudi Arabia’s Islam in particular. For centuries, the subcontinent was imbued with an Indo-Islamic civilization that did not share much with the Middle Eastern variants of ‘Muslimness’: political rulers did not pay allegiance but rather lip service to the Caliph—occasionally, Mughal Emperors even claimed to play his role—and while *Hajj* was somewhat practised, none of the Mughal emperor went to Mecca whereas they visited *dargahs* assiduously. These characteristics of Indian Islam reflected a major difference: South Asian Islam had its own saints—Sufi shaykhs—and its own sacred sites—their *khanqahs* and mausoleums.



Things began to change after the decline and then demise of the Mughal Empire, a time when Indian Muslims felt the need to turn towards an Islamic authority that they could only find in the Middle East. They went to Mecca and Medina in larger numbers—after communications made pilgrimages easier—and they supported the Ottoman Sultan (the Caliph) when he was under attack. But the scholars who found refuge in Mecca after 1857 did not give up their conception of Islam (including Sufism). Sixty years later, the 'khilafatists' were as much interested in unifying the Indian Muslims as in pan-Islamic solidarity and the *ulama* (including Azad who claimed that Arabs should not monopolize spiritual authority within Islam) were prepared to replace the Caliph by local scholars. In the 1920s–30s Indian pilgrims resisted the Wahhabis' definition of the 'right' practice of Islam. A pan-Islamist thinker like Iqbal revered the *Hijaz* as a sacred land, but he drew also his inspiration from Shi'ism and Sufism and looked at Islam as a universal creed that needed to be de-Arabized—especially after the rise of Wahhabism, a conservative creed that he could not reconcile with his sense of Islamic progress. If Iqbal had a model, it came more from the modern West than from Saudi Arabia.

The founders of Pakistan did not turn towards this crucible of Islam as a guide either after 1947. Either they believed in the making of a 'new Medina' that was bound to compete with the old one in terms of theocratic orthodoxy (like Maulana Usmani) or they aspired to build a modern homeland for the Muslims of South Asia (like Jinnah and Liaquat Ali Khan). In both cases, they wanted to promote the advent of a new model among Muslim countries.

This attempt at embodying Islam on the world scene was never popular in the Middle East, where Saudi Arabia started to take the lead in the 1960s—and even more in the 1970s after the creation of the OIC and the oil booms. Besides, the specificity of the brand of South Asian Islam that the 'Country of the Pure' was cultivating was itself under attack from the 1970s onwards. The Saudi influence gained momentum after Bhutto turned to Middle East for help in the post-1971 scenario and even more after 1977 in the context of Zia's Islamization policy and the jihad against the Soviets in Afghanistan. Zia's regime forced Pakistanis to fall in line and adopt Arabized forms of religious practices. Old fundamentalist groups, like Maududi's Jama'at-e-Islami contributed to this Wahhabization process. Several chapters in this book document this trend from the 1980s onward, whereas the conclusion takes stock of it as well as of the resilience of the Indo-Islamic civilization today.



PAKISTANI *MADRASAS*:  
 IDEOLOGICAL STRONGHOLD FOR SAUDI ARABIA  
 AND GULF STATES

*Ayesha Siddiqi*

It was the attacks of 9 September 2001 that brought attention to *madrasas* in Pakistan. Like waking up from deep slumber, journalists and academics began to notice and write about religious seminaries in Pakistan. There was an array of literature that talked about how *madrasas* were a source of violence in the region and bred hatred towards other faiths and even other sects in Islam.<sup>1</sup> Numerous authors have looked at quantitative data to argue their case for or against religious seminaries.<sup>2</sup> Notwithstanding these competing narratives, the fact is that 9/11 brought attention to an institution that no one really looked at before, other than as a mode of education for the poor. It is also in the context of terrorism that *madrasas* started to be viewed as conduits of foreign influence. In Pakistan's case this was Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states. It is commonly believed that the socio-cultural influence from the Arab world is what brought extremist values to the *madrasas* and *madrasa* culture in Pakistan. Various authors have written about the influence from the Middle East during the 1980s and later on Pakistani *madrasas*, especially the shift towards violence by many of the Deobandi or Ahl-Hadith *madrasas*.<sup>3</sup> However, mapping the

influence of Saudi Arabia and Gulf states on Pakistan's religious seminaries signals an analytical black hole. There is very little literature on Pakistan-Saudi relations in general and Saudi and Gulf influence on the *madrasas* in particular. From the Pakistani state's perspective, the bilateral relations are considered so sacrosanct that the media has never been allowed to criticize Saudi Arabia, its monarchy or policies, especially after the incident in 1956 in which criticism of King Ibn Saud by an Urdu newspaper created a diplomatic embarrassment for Pakistan. But this also meant that nothing substantive was written in Pakistan that included an analysis of Saudi and Gulf States' contribution to *madrasas*. Whatever appears in the media, therefore, is based on anecdotal information. Figures available a little before and after December 2014 (when the National Action Plan was decided—see below) on foreign-financed seminaries are not impressive. These do not necessarily help in constructing a picture of the extent of Saudi and Gulf influence on Pakistani *madrasas*. In order to assess the Saudi influence on Pakistan's *madrasas*, this chapter will focus on a case study of *madrasas* in one division of South Punjab and evaluate the issue using the larger framework of Pakistan-Saudi relations. Indeed, Saudi Arabia's footprint can be seen not only in the financing of mosques and *madrasas* but also of higher and modern educational institutions in Pakistan. This intervention highlights the growth of bilateral links, Riyadh's need after 1979 to enhance its ideological footprint, and Pakistan's desire to find a partner that could help finance the breeding of jihadis who would then change socio-politics in Afghanistan. Post-1979, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, being Sunni states, found themselves on one side, against Shi'a Iran that had also turned into a source of financing Shi'a *madrasas* in other countries including Pakistan. However, this chapter will limit its analysis to the Saudi and Gulf states' intervention.

The Saudi-Gulf connection with religious education and community in Pakistan predates 9/11 or even the 1980s. The Saudi-Gulf and Pakistani religious community was intertwined in an ideological relationship in which both shaped the religious discourse and depended on each other. In fact, given the shortage of scholars, there was a trend in the 1960s and 1970s to encourage those from Pakistan to come and teach at universities in Mecca and Medina. The exchange of scholars was commensurate with growing Saudi ambitions to play a role in the Islamic world. In this it connected well with Pakistan which shared a pan-Islamic perspective. The increase in investment in *madrasas* and higher education, I argue in this chapter, presents a symbiosis of a major shift in terms of Arab geo-political ambitions and sense of threat emanating from

Iran and the Communist Soviet Union in Afghanistan. The Iranian revolution in early 1979 and the war in Afghanistan changed the Saudi threat calculus. While, as argued by Arab historian Madawi al-Rasheed, Riyadh and Tehran were not historically engaged in a confrontational relationship despite the traditional Sunni-Shi'a divide, the Iranian revolution and establishment of a Shi'a theocracy was a game changer. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 added to Riyadh's insecurities, thus paving the way for the idea of broadening links with Pakistan, its military and religious groups. The *madrasas* became a symbol of Saudi patronage to all schools of Sunni Islam except for the Barelvis rejected by Saudi Wahhabism as engaging in *bida* (innovation) that is strictly disallowed. What can be observed from the case study, nonetheless, is that the changing perception of state and the ambition to develop a Sunni ideological pool had an impact on the nature of relations in the patron-client relationship. Despite that the ideological connection remained paramount, the broader access enjoyed by Saudi Arabia in Pakistan and its flow of resources had an impact on nature of recipients. While the initial category of *madrasa* scholars were driven purely by ideology, the later categories, especially after the component of money was introduced, used this as an opportunity for greater self-aggrandizement.

### *Pakistan-Saudi Relations*

Although 9/11 tends to draw our attention towards Pakistan-Saudi relations, the linkage is, in fact, much older and dates back to the mid-1950s. Driven by its urge to find partners in the Muslim world and prodded by the British, Pakistan drew closer to Saudi Arabia and its pan-Islamism which countered Egypt's Gamal Abdel Nasser's pan-Arabism. The fact that the British—who were the key geo-political players in the Middle East at that time—, the Saudis, and the Pakistanis were on the same page regarding their concern about Soviet influence and Moscow's growing linkage with Cairo, seem to have developed an understanding at a state-to-state level. This was also a time that the common religious ideology of the states of Saudi Arabia and Pakistan played a minimal role because, as noted by the then British High Commissioner in Karachi in a letter to the head of the Commonwealth Relations Office, the Peninsular Arabs known for an orthodox Sunni brand of Islam considered Pakistan to be 'inhabited by heretics'. They were even less charmed by the founding father, who appeared to them to be an English-speaking orientalist. As reported then by British diplomats: 'Mr Jinnah with his Parsee wife and son-in-law and his

spats and cigarette-holder, and Sir Muhammad Zafarullah Khan, a Qadiani [...] inspire no deep sense of Muslim communion in the average Arab.<sup>4</sup> The British were keen for Pakistan to develop a clout in the Arab world to oppose Nasser's nationalism and pan-Arabism. Pakistan's leaders developed a natural bias against the Egyptian leader due to his friendship with India's Jawaharlal Nehru and tilt towards India.<sup>5</sup> It was this shared concern regarding Nasser that brought Britain, Pakistan, and some of Saudi royal leadership on the same page.

The British were keen on Pakistan taking interest in the Middle East due to its pro-West leadership and a well-trained military that they wanted to see play a role in disengaging King Ibn Saud from Egypt. In 1955 Riyadh had signed a mutual defense agreement with Cairo under which thousands of Egyptian civilian and military personnel were sent to Saudi Arabia.<sup>6</sup> The King also supported Egypt's nationalization of the Suez Canal in 1956. Such cooperation seemed to strengthen Nasser's emerging alliance with the Soviet Union. According to the British, if anyone could influence the Saudis towards a more responsible Middle East policy, and incidentally displace the numerous Egyptian experts then present in this country, it was Pakistan. In a later communication in 1956 between British diplomat in Jeddah, R. W. Parkes and his Foreign Office, London was informed that a suggestion was made to President Iskandar Mirza and that the latter had 'whole-heartedly endorsed our aim of detaching Saudi Arabia from Nasser's influence and fully shared our hope that it might be possible to replace present Egyptian military instructors by Pakistanis.'<sup>7</sup> Notwithstanding the aforementioned cultural bias, Pakistan was viewed as a credible source for playing a role in Saudi Arabia because of the ideological-cultural historical links between people of the two countries. Reportedly, Urdu was understood and spoken in Jeddah, Mecca, and Medina, a feature that can be attributed to links between traffic of Muslim scholars to Saudi Arabia from Pakistan (and before that from united India). In fact, one of the main teachers and mentor of Ibn Abdul Wahhab was Hayat al-Sindhi, who had migrated from the area which is now Pakistan to Saudi Arabia at the beginning of the eighteenth century and died there in 1750.<sup>8</sup> Sindhi's teacher was again another master of *hadith* from Sindh. The works of these exegetists is still well respected in Saudi Arabia. But at the level of the state, certain individuals like Pakistan's prime minister Chaudhry Muhammad Ali (1955–56) seem to have played a role. He managed to impress the then King Ibn Saud during his tour of Saudi Arabia to convince the monarch of the efficacy of the Baghdad Pact. The prime minister had brought along his Chief of General Staff (CGS) Maj. General Sher Ali Khan Pattudi who played an important role during the trip to impress upon the Saudis the low

quality of training being imparted to the then pride of the Saudi military, the parachute troops, by the Egyptian instructors. It was General Pattudi who subsequently advocated the idea (encouraged by the British) to start some form of training for Saudi paratroopers in Pakistan. Muhammad Ali was also close to Jamaat-e-Islami's founder Maulana Abu Al'a Maududi,<sup>9</sup> who, in turn was known in the Arab world through the work of Syed Qutb. In any case, when Saudi rulers started to build an alternative ideological universe opposed to Nasser's secular pan-Arabism, it sought out scholars like Maududi, who was one of the first trustees of the Islamic University of Medina, established in 1961, to serve as an ideological counterfoil to Egypt's Al-Azhar University and staffed with Muslim Brotherhood scholars who formed the backbone of university teaching in the Kingdom. He was also made member of the Rabtaa al-Islami initiated by King Faisal during the 1960s.<sup>10</sup> However, there is no research on money given to Jamaat-e-Islami or other religious groups for their *madrasas* during the 1960s.

For Pakistan, the biggest interest was in establishing its role in the security of the Middle East through which it could then build a partnership with Britain and the US. Such a relationship, in turn, proved to be a source for procuring military and economic aid that was needed in Pakistan's confrontation with India. From this standpoint, its relationship with Saudi Arabia was critical as it, more than any other Arab state, welcomed Pakistan soon after its creation in 1947. Furthermore, Pakistan's leadership was attracted towards Saudi pan-Islamism as opposed to Nasser's pan-Arabism as the former idea was the only hook on which Pakistan could hang its own nationalism and identity both internally and externally. This pan-Islamism played an important role in the ensuing years especially during the 1970s, when Pakistan's first popularly elected leader Zulfikar Ali Bhutto turned towards Saudi Arabia and Libya as opposed to Iran, and later during the 1980s as part of a cooperative effort to fight the Soviet forces in Afghanistan. Of course, there were other reasons as well such as Bhutto's Afghanistan policy, internal migration in the country,<sup>11</sup> and Islamization of the Zia years that led to enhancement of the *madrasa* sector in Pakistan. However, the role played by Saudi and Gulf money cannot be undermined, particularly the role it played in feeding *madrasas* with ideological similarity to its own ideology.

### The Game of Ideology

Pakistan's *madrasas* and Arab funding fall on the same axis that is connected with and representative of Saudi and Gulf politico-ideological interests. While

most discussion on Arab influence on Pakistan and linkage with Pakistani religious seminaries is popularly restricted to the 1980s, the relationship dates back to the early 1960s. It was a crucial period for Saudi Arabia which experienced a change in leadership in 1964 when King Ibn Saud was replaced by his brother Faisal through an internal family coup. It was the new King, who was bitterly opposed to Nasser's pan-Arabism and went around building an alternative bloc around pan-Islamism. It was for this purpose that Saudi Arabia's King Faisal started the *Rabata-e-Alam-e-Islami* in the 1960s. Financing religious institutions or other projects was Riyadh's strength for which aid institutions were developed in the country.<sup>12</sup>

The oil wealth in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia also meant individuals had more cash to give alms and *zakat*. Benoit Challand states that the public and private efforts combined, as both sectors were tied together in a 'chain of charity.'<sup>13</sup> However, writing about Saudi financial aid, Khalid Al-Yahya and Nathalie Fustier state that the Saudi government prefers government-to-government contact and, therefore, the royal family is deeply involved in running the system of charity.<sup>14</sup> Writing about foreign financial assistance to Pakistani *madrasas*, the author Jamal Malik endorses the view that the Saudi aid during the 1980s was routed through the government.<sup>15</sup> According to this system of charity, the Saudi Ministry of Interior plays a significant role in the collection and disbursement of charity for which rules were established in 2003, that were later updated in 2008.<sup>16</sup> As a result, all regional governors in the Kingdom set up committees to collect donation from citizens and businesses.<sup>17</sup> For sure the aid distribution mechanism in the part of the Arab world under study underwent various shifts. The edited volume by Robert Lacey and Jonathan Benthall on Gulf charities creates an impression of increased accountability and streamlining of aid, not only in Saudi Arabia but other countries as well such as the UAE and Qatar.<sup>18</sup> The book highlights religious seminaries as one of the core areas for investment of charity funds. It particularly mentions South Asia and within that Pakistan. For Darryl Li, charity played a central role in mediating between capitalism and Islam.<sup>19</sup> While numerous social reasons can be taken into consideration, such as mitigating sense of guilt for doing things considered forbidden in Islam,<sup>20</sup> it is the political value which is most relevant for the present study.

Arab charity constructs and feeds a hegemonic relationship.<sup>21</sup> The hegemonic or clientelist relationship extends beyond their territories to the Muslim world outside. It certainly establishes Saudi Arabia and Gulf states as soft power.<sup>22</sup>



This is also the key context for understanding how financial assistance from this part of the Arab world influenced religious education in Pakistan. As mentioned earlier, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and other salafi Gulf states started to increase influence and use aid to gain advantage, to counter-weigh Nasser's influence. The Muslim World League was setup in 1962 to combat the spread of Arab nationalism.<sup>23</sup> Nasserism had to be confronted with a more religiously conservative Arab ideology. In any case, the Saudi clergy had a significant influence over charities, especially before 1989.<sup>24</sup> The Saudi clergy, in any case, has proven to be a huge challenge even for those who wanted to relatively modernize the state. The tension between King Faisal and the conservative clergy is a case in point. However, it is worth pointing out that Faisal's intention was to modernize the state through bringing modern technology and not necessarily liberalize the regime.

A lot of such influence flowed to South Asia, particularly Pakistan because of its strategic significance for the Arab world but also due to the flow of Pakistani expatriates, a traffic that started to become visible in the late 1960s and picked up in the 1970s due to strategic convergence between Islamabad and Riyadh. These people, who went to the Middle East for work and increased in numbers during the 1970s proved to be conduits for the transfer of ideology. These expatriates were influenced by the dominant Wahhabi ideology in these Arab states. Tahir Kamran, who has written about the growth of the Ahl-i-Hadith in Punjab, subscribes to the idea of Pakistani expatriates being a source of growing Arab influence. Kamran further states that money to promote Arab Islamic ideology began to flow and increased considerably during the Afghan jihad.<sup>25</sup> But prior to the 1980s, and as mentioned earlier, Pakistan began to engage with the Middle East fairly aggressively. It was during the early 1970s that Zulfikar Ali Bhutto concluded an agreement with Saudi Arabia and Gulf states for the promotion of Arabic language and literature. This move included establishing *madrasas*.<sup>26</sup> It was also the period when, according to an ICG report, the 'nexus between madrasa, militancy and army' started.<sup>27</sup> The influence escalated further due to personal interaction between visiting Arab rulers, who used to visit Pakistan for hunting, and the local population. This particularly relates to South Punjab.<sup>28</sup> The proliferation of Deobandi *madrasas* in South Punjab is viewed as an evidence of Arab influence that interfered with the popular traditional belief system or what is considered as the more peaceful Sufi Islam.<sup>29</sup> There has been a rapid growth of Deobandi and later Ahl-Hadith *madrasas* from the 1980s onwards. The Saudi and Gulf Wahhabism aimed at establishing its religious-political hegemony in strategically important states

and the world of Islam in general for which it used its oil wealth and established an ideological network. The *madrasas* were representative of that. The preference was for Deobandi and Ahl-i-Hadith seminaries. The latter were ideologically closer to Arab Wahhabism.

### *Madrasas in Pakistan*

The change in Saudi Arabia's goals and its impact on religious education in Pakistan started to become visible after 1979. This is also the period when Pakistani *madrasas* morphed into something that would later, after 9/11, get noticed by the world. The *madrasa* indeed is not a new phenomenon in the Indian subcontinent in general and Pakistan in particular. However, historically, seminaries were much more organic and limited in number. At the time of the independence of the country in 1947, for example, Pakistan inherited 137 seminaries. This number increased to 244 in 1950, 671 in 1960, but then sharply escalated to 14,000 in 2005.<sup>30</sup> The more recent estimates of number of students attending such schools vary from 1.7 million<sup>31</sup> to 3 million,<sup>32</sup> and the total number of these schools at 30,000.<sup>33</sup> These numbers do not include another 10,000–15,000 unregistered ones. According to a senior Sindh police officer, this was a rapidly growing sector with an addition of 2–3 seminaries every month in his province alone.<sup>34</sup> These are an extension of the religious clout of religious groups and parties due to which *madrasas*, despite being in the private sector, were not nationalized by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto during the 1970s as part of the plan for nationalizing education.<sup>35</sup>

A close look at seminaries in Pakistan indicates there are four types:<sup>36</sup>

1. Maktabas (that specialize in recitation of the Qur'an or basic Islamic education);
2. Medium-sized *madrasas* that mainly focus on religious education;
3. Modern elite *madrasas* that also have secular education; and
4. Hybrid-*madrasas*. These are English-medium schools with ideological instruction on the pattern of religious seminaries. Many of these schools even have GCSE O and A levels. The militant organization Jammāt-ud-Dawwa (JuD) has about 295 modern schools and five colleges.<sup>37</sup>

The last two categories attract middle and upper middle classes. Furthermore, the popularity of seminaries at all levels seems to have grown, which may be because of the significance of religious education as part of the tradition of Muslim households, as described by Mathew Nelson.<sup>38</sup> But *madrasas* are more than just about tradition or violence. It is part of the religious clientelist network that poaches on poor segments of the population and provides them with ideological direction in the process.<sup>39</sup> This means that the *madrasa*, as an institution, is a central part of creating a power base of religious groups and parties and the larger religious-right that is used to generate and sustain a particular ideological narrative. Thus, each sect builds its own narrative that is then used to develop an ideological clout and stronghold. It is part of an essential ideological supply-chain,<sup>40</sup> some of which then gets diverted towards creating violence.

While a lot has been written on the *madrasas*, especially highlighting their contribution to violence, the Pakistani state has continued not to aggressively engage with the issue. There is even confusion regarding the exact number of seminaries in different parts of the country. For instance, the following table gives numbers by five different sources.

Table 1: An Estimate of *Madrasas* in Baluchistan

Baluchistan: Estimate of <i>Madrasas</i> , 2015					
	Department of Industries	Police (Special Branch)	Intelligence Bureau	Frontier Constabulary	District Commissioners (23 Offices)
Registered <i>Madrasas</i>	2441	1235	1258	1561	1539
Unregistered <i>Madrasas</i>	NA	448	107	NA	NA
Students	143446	134577	112023	NA	160816
Foreign Students	NA	5258	1295	NA	513

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Source: Data obtained by the author, from five departments of the Government of Baluchistan

A 2007 study gave figures on the basis of sects. Out of the 16,000 *madrasas* registered with the five *wafaqs* (boards), 9,500 were Deobandi, 4,500 Bareilvi, 1,000 Jamaat-e-Islami, 500 Ahl-Hadith and 500 Ahl-Tashee.

Generally, the debate on *madrasas* has revolved around their centrality to violent extremism. The various studies have debated the role of seminaries and the extent of their contribution to the overall pool of radicalism and violence.<sup>41</sup> Even despite the National Action Plan (NAP) formulated after the tragic terrorist attack in December 2014 in Peshawar that killed almost 140 school children, there remains a lot of confusion regarding the number of *madrasas* involved in violence. The Federal Interior Minister gave an estimate of 10 per cent of seminaries that have links with violence. An earlier 2002 report also mentioned involvement of 10–15 per cent *madrasas* in sectarian violence.<sup>42</sup> While there is little information on other provinces, the Sindh government gave the number of forty-nine *madrasas* as having links with terrorist organizations.

### *Saudi and Gulf Funding*

Despite the *madrasas* attracting attention, there is dearth of information regarding their financing. In early 2015, the secretary-general of the Wafaqul Madaris talked about twenty-three *madrasas* getting foreign funding, none of which were in Punjab or FATA.<sup>43</sup> Another report mentioned 190.<sup>44</sup> However, this report was based on data from the Interior ministry for year 2013–14 that gave the number of 33 (Qatar 21, Dubai/UAE 7, Saudi Arabia 3, Hong Kong 1, and Bahrain 1).

Despite the statements that talk about the Arab world being the biggest source of funding for *madrasas*,<sup>45</sup> the extent of this financial aid is not known. According to a senior (un-named) official, an amount of approximately US \$700,000 was transferred illegally from two Gulf States in early 2015.<sup>46</sup> The term illegal transfer pertains to *hawala/hundi* or personal means of transfer. This is considered illegal because it is through unofficial sources. Broadly speaking, there are four methods of money transfer from the Arab world to Pakistan: (a) official funding that is given by the Saudi government, in particular, to mosques and *madrasas* whose list is provided by the Pakistan government; (b) funding by the embassies to local client *madrasas* or religious groups without

the permission of the Pakistani state; (c) money transferred unofficially by private individuals and charities through *hawala/hundi*; and (d) money given to agents of Pakistani groups or individuals by the government or private sources visiting the Middle East and the Gulf. Although there is little information about the second category of transfers, the federal Interior minister of the PPP government (2008–13) claimed to have requested Riyadh to withdraw its ambassador who used to distribute funds to groups involved in militancy or had links with militants.<sup>47</sup> There is also little information available regarding which one of the above four is the most preferred method of transfer.

Many available works trace the transfer of funds and the building of influence of Saudi Arabia and Gulf states in Pakistan to the war in Afghanistan during the 1980s. The cooperation that was established to fight the Soviet troops in Afghanistan seems to have generated both Arab interest in the area and funds being sent to the region. According to Gunter Mulack, 1979 changed the educational landscape in Pakistan. With the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the need to fight a war, 5,000 mosque schools were established and their curriculum re-written with emphasis on jihad.<sup>48</sup> This was also the period that Arab fighters including Osama Bin Laden came to Afghanistan and Pakistan. Furthermore, it is during this period that we can observe the proliferation of Deobandi *madrasas*.<sup>49</sup> Resources from Saudi Arabia and the Gulf played a significant role even after the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan. In fact, Arab charities such as Al-Haramain were established in 1988 as a ‘religiously inspired response to consequences of (the Afghanistan) war.’<sup>50</sup> The links developed between Pakistan’s intelligence agency, the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), the *mujahidin*, and the charity continued to thrive. Consequently, Al-Haramain was found involved in the Kashmir conflict. Reportedly, in 1999 the charity sent funds to Ansar Welfare Trust in Kashmir that was considered a front for the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and JuD.<sup>51</sup> The Saudis contributed for the purpose mainly, as Marie Juul Peterson claims, due to growing consciousness that help had to be extended beyond providing aid to suffering Muslims, to assistance to fight their enemies.<sup>52</sup> Jihad was viewed as *fard ‘ain* (an obligation for individual) as opposed to *fard kefaya* (an obligation for the entire community).<sup>53</sup> However, there are other reasons as well that will be elaborated in the three case studies of *madrasas* in South Punjab in the following section. The timeline of the growth of *madrasas* and their linkage with Saudi Arabia and Gulf States is divided in three phases: (a) from the early 1960s to 1979; (b) 1980 to 2000; and (c) from 9/11 to date. I will use the example of DG Khan in South Punjab to illustrate my categories and periodization.

### The First Wave

The first period is marked with building links that did not necessarily revolve around the lure of money but the power of ideology. In DG Khan, the Deobandi *madrasa* of Maulvi Ali Murtaza, is a case in point. Murtaza was a local cleric from a lower class socio-economic background. While his brother worked as a *hakeem* (traditional doctor), Murtaza specialized in religious interpretation and building a reputation amongst local people. His fatwa regarding the eating of crows not being *haram* was a re-iteration of Deobandi scholar Rasheed Ahmed Gangohi's fatwa. This was the reason his mosque started to be referred to as the 'mosque of crows'. Murtaza belonged to the Naqshbandi order that has ideological affinity with Wahhabism. That is possibly one of the reasons he was attracted towards interacting with Saudi clerics during his many visits to the Kingdom. His reputation earned him followers, some of whom went and settled in Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states. There is no evidence that the Saudi government supported Murtaza's infrastructure but his son-in-law and the current caretaker and imam of the mosque claimed that followers, some of whom worked abroad, particularly in the Middle East, financed the *madrasa* and mosque. Furthermore, Ali Murtaza repeatedly travelled to Saudi Arabia for pilgrimage. He is reported to have undertaken seven pilgrimages and numerous *umrahs*, yet there is no information available about whom he interacted with, be they Saudi clergy or others. However, his is the only *madrasa* in Pakistan that is reportedly linked with the siege in Mecca of 1979.<sup>54</sup> Apparently, Murtaza took with him about seven of his pupils that were involved in the rebellion. The people of DG Khan were very apprehensive about discussing the case when I interviewed them. The participation of Pakistanis, which was casually reported in 1979,<sup>55</sup> is indeed an under-researched story. Other Pakistanis that were part of the rebellion were from Sindh. However, Murtaza's Deobandi background and his image as a man who may not be associated with any form of violence, is a cause for scant information. In any case, more than thirty years after the Mecca incident there is little information available about Murtaza's ideological leanings. The fact that he studied in Bhopal in India may provide some clues. Indeed, the Ahl-i-Hadith school of thought developed in India, mainly in Bhopal and Delhi. Of course, his Naqshbandi background is another explanation. After all, Hayat Sindhi, who was Ibn-Abdul Wahhab's teacher and one of his main ideological inspirations

was also from the Naqshbandi Sufi order from Sindh. Not to be ignored is the fact that the militant organization *Jaysh Rijal at-Tariqa an-Naqshabandiya* ('the army of the men of Naqshbandi order') was established in Iraq in 2003 to fight the coalition forces and restore the old Baathist order.<sup>56</sup> Referring to Ali Murtaza and his involvement with the 1979 rebellion, there is a probability that he may have had some links with Juhayman Uthaibi through the Jaamaat al-Tableegh that the latter was associated with during the 1960s. It is noteworthy that Murtaza converted to Deobandism. His *madrassa* has the reputation of being a Deobandi seminary today.

The rest of the Pakistani participants in the rebellion are reported to have come from Sindh. While one person was from Karachi,<sup>57</sup> there was a group of people from interior or rural Sindh. This may be less surprising as the *Al-Jama'a al-Salafiyya al-Muhtasiba* (JSM), the pietistic organization from which Juhayman Uthaibi's rebels emerged, had links with Pakistan's Ahl-i-Hadith, especially with scholars from Sindh such as Shaykh Badi-ud-Din al-Sindhi who taught at Mecca.<sup>58</sup> The Shaykh was invited to teach at Mecca and later in the Masjid-al-Haram by Shaykh Abd al-Aziz Ibn Baz who was also Uthaibi's ideological mentor. Moreover, the Syrian scholar Muhammad Naseeruddin al-Albani, who was also an inspiration for Juhayman and his rebels, inspired Shaykh Badi-ud-Din. The Sindhi scholar had studied in Pakistan in *madrassas* that specialized in the study of *Hadith*. It is noteworthy that many Sindhi and Baluch became naturalized Saudis courtesy of King Faisal.

The significant point that I would like to reiterate is that links during this period were not driven by money but by historic and ideological ties. The relationship between the Ahl-Hadith from India and Pakistan and Saudi scholars is very old. It is claimed that the prominent and powerful Saudi scholar Abd al-Aziz ibn Baz (1910–99) was influenced by the teachings of Sa'd bin Atiq, who, in turn was inspired by the Ahl-i-Hadith during his stay in India.<sup>59</sup>

## The Second Wave

The 1979 siege came as a shock to Saudi royalty. Besides beheading rebels caught alive, Riyadh evicted a lot of sympathizers of the Wahhabi rebels. But instead of changing ideological direction, there were other reasons for Saudi Arabia to invest even more in Wahhabi ideology and its spread in the Middle East and South Asia. The key threat was in the form of the Iranian revolution in early 1979 followed by the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. This began the second phase of relations with Pakistan and its institutions in which the Arab royalty



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aimed to build a more reliable network of clients in Pakistan. This was the time when Saudi intelligence played an active role in financing movements and *madrasas* in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and many other parts of the Muslim world. Kabul and Islamabad were particularly important to thwart the Communist expansion and counter its impact on society through ideological means.

Pakistan's military dictator, General Zia-ul-Haq's war in Afghanistan was fought through building a partnership with the US and its allies, especially the Arab states. The general made the country accessible to the outside world. Numerous states played ideological games with the purpose of creating a cadre of people who were emotionally motivated to fight the Soviet troops. In the process General Zia opened up opportunities for *madrasas* by upgrading the process of recognition of their qualification. The *madrasa* degrees were given equivalency with degrees from secular educational institutions as a result of which seminaries grew to play a more important role both then and now. Many of the more competent graduates get jobs in non-religious schools, other educational institutions, and even mosques. Therefore, there is a visible change in demand for better quality graduates who know other subjects as well. But referring to the 1980s, it was money supply and interaction between Arab rulers and different Pakistani groups and individuals that helped establish a patronage network that could circumvent the Pakistani state at a later stage.

The 1980s was also a period of greater opening up of the Pakistani state to the Arab world. From the Saudi to Gulf royals, many rulers, who came for hunting, established bases in the country in the form of palaces. These served as hubs with their independent political economy. The palaces served as sources of financing and employment to many. This was not just about funding *madrasas* or militant outfits but creating local notables and generating a steady system for legal human trafficking between Pakistan and the Gulf states in particular. At several places in South Punjab such as DG Khan and Rahim Yar Khan some of the locals made responsible for looking after properties and interests of Arab royalty in these people were enriched in the process. These people, who were employed for service at the palaces or were sent to Saudi Arabia and the Gulf for service, added to the number of Pakistanis already there since the 1960s and the 1970s and who had converted to a more stringent Wahhabi ideology. It seems that these Arab rulers viewed Pakistan as essential to their physical and ideological security. Bhutto had sought help from countries such as Libya and others to help develop the nuclear program. The fact that this came to be known as an 'Islamic' bomb may not just be a coincidence but a perception that the country would protect the Arab world against external threats. Later



during the 1990s the Saudis were given confidence regarding Islamabad's commitment to Riyadh's security. This was indicated through, for example, taking the Saudi crown prince on a tour of Pakistan's nuclear facilities. He was the only foreign dignitary to have done that after the nuclear tests in May 1998. The Arab monarchies certainly considered Pakistan sufficiently important to be brought into their ideological net through influencing and contributing to the educational system.

The Saudi charity focused on *dawwa* campaigns<sup>60</sup> that aimed at ideological transformation. It was during this period that the Deobandi and Ahl-i-Hadith *madrasa* network expanded primarily due to support of Saudi money. The Wikileaks cables mention how the Deobandi and Ahl-Hadith militant networks and *ulema* used Arab money to build their *madrasa* infrastructure in poverty ridden areas and develop the philosophy of jihad.<sup>61</sup> This was part of a two-pronged approach adopted by the Arab Salafi states: (a) initially investing in Deobandi movements and *madrastas* to reduce the influence of the local Barelvi sect that kept at a distance from Saudi patronage; and (b) on a parallel development of Ahl-i-Hadith ideological roots that are considered closer to Wahhabism. The Deobandi organizational structure became the first choice because they had stronger ideological roots than the Ahl-i-Hadith. In the 1980s the latter did not have a relatively strong educational infrastructure through which they could penetrate the society ideologically. Many of the Deobandi militant outfits such as the Sipha-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP) and its various offshoots received funding either directly or indirectly. Influential Salafi figures such as Osama Bin Laden had direct contacts with many of the Deobandi militant outfits and their educational infrastructure. The proliferation of Deobandi *madrastas* in north-western areas and South Punjab took place during the 1980s.

But a parallel ideological infrastructure for the Ahl-i-Hadith was encouraged especially after the mid-1980s. The Ahl-i-Hadith militant outfits such as the Tehreek-e-Mujahidin (TM), the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), and Jammat-ud-Dawwa (JuD) network slowly emerged during this period. The setting up of the Dawwa academy preceded the beginning of the militant movement. While TM disappeared in terms of influence, the LeT/JuD network strengthened due to its successful strategy of aligning with the state. The fact that the Ahl-i-Hadith militant network was ready to fight wars for the Pakistani state in Kashmir and India provided it with essential ideological and political space.

Pakistan's state support, nevertheless, was not the only factor. The Saudi and Gulf patronage was critical. There was greater ideological convergence

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achieved through increased visits of Pakistani *ulama*. Religious scholars and groups considered it a matter of pride to have trained in one of the Arab states and prominent centres of learning.<sup>62</sup> In DG Khan, the shift was visible. Maulvi Abdullah Salafi replaced the Deobandi Ali Murtaza's influence. He was the head of Ahl-i-Hadith in the area and got access to huge resources to establish mosques and *madrasas* in DG Khan and adjoining Taunsa district.

Besides investing in the traditional educational system of *madrasas*, the Saudis also invested in institutions of higher learning. In 1979, for instance, the International Islamic University (IIU) was set up in Islamabad. Riyadh opened similar universities in other Muslim states like Malaysia and Ghana in 1980. These universities were established in the wake of the world education conference in 1979, and were controlled by the Saudis, who tended to use their power on occasions. It was certainly visible in the decision in 2012 to remove the rector Professor Fateh Mohammad Malik. Reportedly, he suffered the ire of the Saudis for accommodating Shi'as in the university and inviting the Iranian ambassador to a cultural event despite being told not to do so by the Saudi embassy.<sup>63</sup> A Saudi professor replaced Malik.

The Shi'a-Sunni conflict, in fact, was one of the reasons behind investment in Pakistan's education at both the lowest and highest levels. The Iranian Islamic revolution in early 1979 and the Shi'a unrest in Saudi Arabia at the end of the same year seem to have played a critical role in the decision by Saudi Arabia to develop an ideological base in critical states, especially those with sizeable Shi'a population. The interaction and investment made during the 1980s solidified the ideological linkages and established the Pakistani state's dependency on Saudi Arabia. Referring to the IIUI, efforts were made in the recent past to ease out religious scholars who did not agree with Saudi ideology. This is with special reference to teachers of a Bareilvi background. The hold of Ahl-i-Hadith and Jamaat-e-Islami on the campus is visible.

It was during this period that Al-Qaeda developed contacts with the Taliban regime, who in turn had contacts with religious groups in Pakistan and various *madrasas*. A lot of work produced in the early days after 9/11 viewed religious seminaries as being at the heart of the terrorism problem. The 9/11 Commission report, for instance, referred to *madrasas* as incubators of violence.<sup>64</sup> Western media and academia raised lots of questions regarding the linkage of *madrasas* with violence. Journalist and author Ali Riaz identified forty-two stories published in mainstream media outlets in the West out of which eleven reports were published in the British media and thirty-one in the American.<sup>65</sup> We can also find mention of *madrasas* being used as a strategic tool by the US and

General Zia-ul-Haq's regime for fighting the war in Afghanistan during the 1980s. In fact, the numbers proliferated because of this strategic need. The war against the Soviet troops was designed as a proxy war to be fought primarily by non-state actors from both Afghanistan and Pakistan. It required an army of motivated men, who were inspired to fight the invaders and consider the war as a religious duty. In achieving this objective, the American CIA, Saudi Arabian intelligence agency, and Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) cooperated in encouraging the Deobandi and Ahl-i-Hadith *madrasas* which were more susceptible to the idea of jihad than their Barelvi counterparts. In any case, Shah Waliu' Ilah, a Sufi, theologian, and a contemporary of Abdul Wahhab, inspired the Deobandi and Ahl-i-Hadith religious movements in the subcontinent. Like Wahhab, Waliu' Ilah exhorted the Muslims to follow the *sharia* of the early days of Islam and even invited the Afghan ruler Shah Ahmed Abdali to wage a war on the non-Muslims in India. While this thinking provoked skirmishes between various ideological groups in Pakistan after 1947, it got a boost when they were used to fight a war in Afghanistan. It was also during the 1980s that Arabs came from many parts of the Arab world, especially Saudi Arabia, to fight the war in Afghanistan.<sup>66</sup> It was then that they built connections which were visible in the case of certain *madrasas* like Jamia Binori Town in Karachi and Jamia Haqqania in the tribal areas. Mufti Nizamuddin Shamzai, a prominent teacher of Binori Town *madrasa* had personal links with both the Taliban and Al-Qaeda leadership.<sup>67</sup> It was during the 1990s that a large number of Arab and African Arabs came to these *madrasas*.<sup>68</sup>

### The Third Wave

The period around 9/11 marks the beginning of the third phase of relations. The shock and awe felt all over the world from attacks in the US and its retaliation in Afghanistan forced states like Pakistan and Saudi Arabia to restructure their relations with non-state actors. While many militants were abandoned, relations were maintained with some selectively. But without getting into such details, the important point is that a certain kind of opacity developed around the world of violent extremism. A relationship under wraps also meant greater empowerment of religious-militant groups to seek financing from numerous sources, at times without detailed knowledge of the state where these groups were physically based. Moreover, this was an opportunity for these Arab monarchies to build ideological outposts in Pakistan that were not necessarily controlled through Islamabad. Although the Saudi government

denies ever giving money to *madrasas* without the Pakistani government's knowledge or permission,<sup>69</sup> the linkage does not seem to be entirely transparent. For instance, some people interviewed in Baluchistan for this study talked about how personal networks are used by Riyadh to distribute money to *madrasas* that follow Salafi ideology. In the case of a *madrasa* in Panjgur, for instance, financial assistance is sought directly during the visit of Saudi royals, who visit the province for hunting, or by sending representatives that get resources in the name of welfare or *zakat*.<sup>70</sup>

It was also stated that Arab countries seek partners, often those that can claim to have links with a local network in the society. This was certainly the case with Maulvi Abdul Kareem from DG Khan who represents this third generation of Saudi patronage in the area. A host of people interviewed in the area talked about how Kareem, who came from a poor background and was a small time maulvi of a mosque, gradually managed to build a large educational and religious infrastructure. He not only runs a *madrasa* for women, but is also a source for financing Ahl-i-Hadith mosque-schools and owns a non-religious private university called Indus. Many people in DG Khan even accused Kareem of developing personal influence with the Saudi royals through human trafficking. This was in reference to girls studying in the residential *madrasa*.<sup>71</sup> Numerous people claimed that the girls and their parents were lured to Saudi Arabia by the prospects of both pilgrimage and financial help. Kareem's financial resources are unaccounted for. But what is more important is the fact that he used his contacts with Saudi Arabia and money possibly acquired from Riyadh to also develop his political influence. He was elected Member of Parliament for Nawaz Sharif's PML-N in 2013 general elections, defeating the old feudal order of the Lagharis. Such links indicate a patronage that is used for mutual political advantage.

However, three developments are noticeable about how the ideological patronage system evolved in this phase. First, it is during this period that we can observe the beginning of a competition of sorts between Saudi Arabia and Gulf states for creating independent patronage networks in Pakistan. Countries like Kuwait, UAE and Qatar increased financing. In fact, Qatar became more visible, which may reflect its desire to establish the influence of its Wahhabi ideology as opposed to Saudi Arabia's. The Qatari royal family belongs to the same tribe as Ibn al-Abdul Wahhab, the creator of Wahhabism.<sup>72</sup> The difference is not about shades of Wahhabism but establishing independent political influence in which the independent brand of Wahhabism is a critical tool.

Second, these independent links resulted in religious-militant organizations and their *madrasa* networks demonstrating interest in going beyond borders and flogging the political causes of their Arab donors. This especially refers to the movement for the protection of Saudi Arabia and other Salafi states in general in the wake of political turbulence in Bahrain and Saudi Arabia. The leadership of the Ahl-e Sunnat Wal Jamaat (ASWJ) a rabid Deobandi outfit, carried out processions in support of military operation against Shi'as in Bahrain.<sup>73</sup> Similar sentiments were echoed again in 2015 at the time of Pakistan's refusal to come to the help of Saudi Arabia in its operation against rebels in Yemen. The ASWJ and Jamaat-e-Ulema-e-Islam Fazlur Rehman (JUI-F) took out processions taking public vows to protect the holy sites in Saudi Arabia.<sup>74</sup> The success of Saudi patronage was visible as these groups were seemingly willing to challenge Pakistan's army and assure Riyadh of their support. They played up the threat from Yemeni rebels to Saudi Arabia as tantamount to danger to the holy sites of the Muslim world. The ASWJ or the JUI-F did not go beyond such threats. However, the incident demonstrates how the patronage extended to non-state actors and the network for religious education has empowered these groups to operate in a manner that reflects relative independence from the state.

Third, there was an ideological transformation of both Deobandis and the Ahl-i-Hadith. The greater Salafi influence on Deobandism is visible, for instance, from the works of Jaishe Muhammad's Maulana Masood Azhar. His seminal work *Fathul Jawwad*, a 2,000-page interpretation of the Quran to explain jihad echoes a similar explanation by a Saudi-Salafi scholar at the King Abdul Aziz University Riyadh.<sup>75</sup> Given the fact that the growing Deobandi influence requires ideologues and written works to build and consolidate the narrative, Azhar's contribution to the development of a Deobandi intellectual narrative cannot be ignored. The *Fathul Jawwad* pursues a line of argument of Salafi hardliners that draw a line between the world of Islam and the Judeo-Christian civilization. Furthermore, it emphasizes waging war against Jews and Christians who are accused of de-populating mosques.<sup>76</sup> The interpretation of the Quran and *Hadith* is in the same strain as Al-Albani, who was a major influence in the thinking of his disciple Juhayman Uthaibi, the man responsible for the 1979 Mecca siege, strongly arguing for protecting the world of Islam from other Semitic religious traditions. Azhar trained at the Banori Town *madrasa* and his work on jihad is taught at many of the Deobandi madrasas. Azhar's Jaishe Muhammad (JeM) is reputed to have been set up with help from Pakistan's ISI but financial assistance came from Osama Bin Laden, which may

indicate Saudi ties. But JeM was not the only group. Others, such as the Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ) leadership also had contacts. Malik Ishaq, who was shot dead in a police encounter in July 2015, was reputed for anti-West and anti-Shi'a militancy. Reportedly, the Saudi government was instrumental in negotiating between him and the Pakistani state, especially from the perspective of keeping him calm and not fighting the Pakistani state.<sup>77</sup> Sources claim that he was given money as well. Ishaq's relationship with Islamabad snapped after he was found trying to build contacts with ISIS.<sup>78</sup>

This period also marks the ideological conversion of Pakistani Ahl-i-Hadith that, according to Professor Khalid Masud, became more Salafist in nature.<sup>79</sup> Organizations such as LeT/JuD sustained and strengthened themselves through visibly supporting state initiatives. Organizationally, the LeT/JuD network started to play a greater role after natural disasters in Pakistan, in support of the state. This welfare role started with the 2005 earthquake in the Northern Areas and Kashmir, and later floods in Sindh and South Punjab in 2010 and 2011. The militant network has now become a dominant partner of the state and the face of its welfare activities which allowed a further spread of Ahl-i-Hadith *madrasas*. In Sindh, for instance, we can observe a steady increase of Ahl-Hadith religious seminaries some of which are in Hindu-majority areas with almost no Muslim population. The LeT/JuD network is also one of the essential bridges between the Pakistani state and Saudi Arabia and Gulf States.

The partnership naturally created political space for the expansion of Ahl-i-Hadith ideological infrastructure. There was a visible growth in the number of Ahl-i-Hadith seminaries and mosques in South Punjab and Sindh. While available literature focuses largely on religious seminaries in the northern areas or the frontier region bordering on Afghanistan, there is little discussion on ideological changes in other areas such as Punjab, Sindh, and Baluchistan. It seems that a lot of funding for *madrasas* in these areas especially after 9/11 is from individual or private sources in the Arab world. Therefore, many of these privately-funded *madrasas* or mosque-schools carry plaques with names of individual Arabs. These private sources could just be individuals or fronts used by governments. Available literature talks about agents of different religious groups that travel from Pakistan to the KSA and Gulf states to collect *zakat* or other forms of charity that they bring back and invest in various religious projects including religious seminaries and mosques. However, there appears to be a pattern to institutional proliferation. In the more recent years, especially in the last decade, there is a consistent rise in Ahl-i-Hadith educational institutions to which contribution is made from multiple sources in the Arab

world. For instance, the contribution of Gulf States like Qatar has increased considerably, which seems to reflect Doha's desire to develop an independent clientele to counter-weight Saudi Arabia. The growth of a modern Qatari state that also uses religious ideology to develop clientele within the Gulf and other regions is a formula used by Saudi royals in the past. King Faisal's drive to modernize Saudi Arabia went hand in hand with developing a network of Islamic states that countered Nasser's secular pan-Arabism. There is a lot of money that has flowed into Punjab and Sindh for opening up new institutions. In this process, Qatar seems to have financed numerous Deobandi *madrasas*. But there is also an effort to provide patronage to Ahl-i-Hadith institutions that are closer to Wahhabism than any other ideological school of thought in the subcontinent. Qatar also seems to fund mosques and educational institutions of the LeT/JuD network. While the plaques outside the mosques (these also serve as schools) mention names of individual Arabs, the control and management is totally with the LeT/JuD who are then responsible for overall staffing and management. These mosques or mosque-schools disseminate Wahhabi ideology and serve as meeting points for militant outfits in smaller towns and rural areas. Many of these mosque schools have begun to teach Urdu or other non-religious subjects. The emphasis is on training an ideologically poised but materially more competent student body that is not just confined to religious education.

### *Conclusion*

The *madrasas* in Pakistan traditionally represent a grassroots traditional educational system. The funding from Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States has resulted in the proliferation and evolution of this educational system. Over the years, Pakistan's *madrasas* have increased their capacity to cater to the middle and upper-middle classes as well. Furthermore, religious seminaries do not restrict themselves to teaching the Quran or *hadith*; they teach non-religious subjects as well. There seems to be an emphasis on improving the quality of students who now have better capacity to participate in the economy. This does not indicate a total transformation. The issue of whether *madrasas* should teach secular subjects continues. Nor does this qualitative shift necessarily indicate the direction envisioned by Masooda Bano who believes that these *madrasas* will ultimately turn into universities of higher learning as we can see in the West. This is because the religious seminaries are essentially



viewed as ideological outposts that serve interests of the state or others that finance them.

In this respect, the *madrasas* in Pakistan denote a patronage system that establishes the hegemony of some of the Arab states in the region, especially amongst the Sunni population. My argument is that the ideological contact between *madrasas* in Pakistan and the Arab Middle East is not new or artificial. In fact, the Arab scholarship evolved due to contact with religious scholars and *madrasas* in the subcontinent. However, increased financing, which demonstrated enhancement in the political ambitions of Saudi Arabia and Gulf states, resulted in interrupting the ideological conversation. The *madrasa* system in Pakistan now represents one-way traffic through which financial patronage has shaped the discourse in the country since the 1980s.

The integration of Wahhabism with the house of Saud first brought greater power to this ideology in the kingdom of Saudi Arabia. However, politico-religious thought that was essentially confined to the Arab world started to seek partners in the Muslim world after the 1960s. Saudi Arabia's King Faisal used oil wealth to develop a patronage system through which he could counter Egyptian President Nasser's secular pan-Arabism. An equally ambitious Zulfikar Ali Bhutto opened up Pakistan even further to this influence during the 1970s. Riyadh managed to spread its ideological influence through financing seminaries and other means. The ideological infrastructure was critical. Thus, we observe Saudi investment not just in traditional education but also in the higher education system in the form of opening a university in Islamabad. The influence increased even further during the 1980s after the beginning of a war against Soviet troops in Afghanistan. Arab money came in handy in creating an ideological infrastructure, which was rooted in *madrasas* in the north-western part of the country, used to fight a cost-effective war in Afghanistan.

With world attention focused on Pakistani territory bordering on Afghanistan, little attention was paid, at least not until 9/11, to the expansion of this infrastructure in other parts of the country especially Punjab and Sindh. But the ideological contact between these parts of Pakistan and the Arab world, I argue, can be explained in three waves. The first started in the 1960s and lasted until 1979. This period reflected a history of the mutual exchange of ideas and the influence of Indian and Pakistani scholars on Salafism. The second wave started in 1980 and lasted until 2001. During this period, mutual influence was replaced with the setting up of a robust top-down patronage system driven by Saudi Arabia and Wahhabi states of the Gulf. This is a period when hundreds



of (initially Deobandi and later Ahl-i-Hadith) seminaries were established. There was both a quantitative and qualitative shift. It was not just an increase in numbers but also an influence over ideologies. The Deobandi *madrasa* and its related ideology was shaped under the influence of Wahhabism. This is visible in the works of JeM's Masood Azhar. The Ahl-i-Hadith were viewed as natural allies due to a similar creed that grew later especially after they developed some social and political clout in partnership with the Pakistani military. The third wave started from after 9/11 and has lasted to date. During this period, there appears to have been greater emphasis on building Ahl-i-Hadith mosques and *madrasas*. The Ahl-Hadith, who were barely visible in the 1970s, have spread across the country.

This evolved Deobandi and Ahl-i-Hadith *madrasa* network is ideologically and politically invested in Arab politics. Although moving cautiously and timidly, the Deobandi and Ahl-Hadith militants tried to represent Saudi interests during the crisis in Bahrain against the Shi'a unrest there. They also demanded that Islamabad help Riyadh in its battle in Yemen. These organizations will probably not rebel against the state for not pursuing Arab interests, at least not as yet. However, the expansion of Ahl-i-Hadith influence and its *madrasa* network will increase its social and ideological impact, and have long-term consequences for Pakistani society.



# NARRATIVES OF JIHAD AND ISLAMIC IDENTITY

## JUD/LET AND THE GULF CONNECTION(S)

*Samina Yasmeen*

Jihadi narratives have gradually attracted attention as the site where insights could be gained into the motives and mobilization tools of militant organizations. Some distinguish between political, moral, religious, and social-psychological dimensions of the meta narrative of Global Jihad.<sup>1</sup> Others delve into the aims, approaches and rhetorical techniques<sup>2</sup> and contents of these narratives to establish their relative appeal among the intended audience.<sup>3</sup> These analyses assume that the jihadi ideas emanating from one geographical or theological source are tailored to specific audiences across the world. The mechanism through which this modification occurs, however, has not been accorded sufficient attention in the literature. This chapter extends the scope of existing analyses by employing the concept of indigenization of salafi ideas carried out by Jamat-ud-Dawah (JuD)—and its parent organization Markaz Dawah wal Irshad—with a view to establishing the ideological transnational links between Salafi thinking in the Gulf and Pakistan. Indigenization, though initially approached in terms of an oppositional relationship between external ‘Western’ ideas and local cultural concepts, is now also defined as ‘an effort to bring out multiple voices and ways of knowing situated in particular socio-

historical and cultural locations so as to establish a solid foundation for meaningful cross-cultural communication in international encounters.<sup>4</sup> It also encapsulates the notion that practices originating elsewhere ‘must be influenced by local factors such as cultures, beliefs, cosmology and social milieu.’<sup>5</sup> For the purpose of this paper, I modify the term to include the processes through which knowledge of Islam (or for that matter, other religions) originating elsewhere is presented by narrators who use historical and theological idioms that are easily intelligible to their audience. This enables them to present a particular narrative that transcends geographical boundaries and is received, and ultimately adopted, by the audience as the most authentic interpretation of their belief system. The processes of indigenization could be undertaken for either homogenization or hybridization of ideas and practices. While homogenization aims to totally replicate ideas and practices across geographical spaces, hybridization leaves room available for incorporating local ideas and practices that result in similar practices and belief systems. The degree to which hybridization occurs varies with communities and the route through which they are exposed to indigenization.<sup>6</sup>

Based on the premise that narratives are acted upon if the intended audience understands the implicit or explicit frames of reference, the following pages explore the nature of indigenization of Salafi ideas reflected in the JuD literature. I argue that located in the historical context of relationship between Ahl-i-Hadith and Salafi movements in Saudi Arabia, the Jamat-ud-Dawah has engaged in a process of importing knowledge of Islam from what it identifies as authentic Islamic sources. The task of making it intelligible and actionable for the jihad project has necessitated the simplification of the knowledge. This is apparent in the literature published in the form of books, magazines, and pamphlets for women with a focus on Muslim womanhood and on jihad. This combined with the presence of Pakistani workers in the Gulf may explain the success of the JuD in raising funds for its jihad project.

### *Narratives and Identities*

Narratives are the vessels that contain ideas linking the present to the past and the future. The systems of stories that are created in the process are both dynamic and purposive in nature. They identify the values worth pursuing for the audience and motivate them to act in ways that would make the values achievable. This is done by guiding the audience into distinguishing between their current state and the improved state awaiting them at the end of the

process. They are empowered to believe or think that they have the capacity to shift from one state to another, while also carrying others with them. Built into the narratives, therefore, is the component of activism suggested by the narrators and the possibility of action by the audience.

The power of narratives and their capacity to mobilize is evident in social movements of all kinds. While environmentalists create images of a sustainable world, the advocates of human rights evoke images of a world free of discrimination that could become a reality if individuals, groups, and states were committed to action. Policy makers search for the window of opportunity when they could locate an idea along the spectrum of past, present, and future to justify shifts in policies. Islamic extremists, or jihadists, are no exception. As suggested by Halverston et al, Islamic extremists have employed effective use of Qur'anic texts and selective *hadith* to create master narratives with agentic capacities. These narratives identify the causes and sites of contradiction that need resolution and also suggest that positive end result awaits those Muslims who play an agentic role in the process. Narratives of Islamic extremists, in other words, encompass dimensions of societal re-creation with the promise of new norms, and values ultimately governing the re-created societies.<sup>7</sup> These master narratives, though shared by the audience across the world, coexist with localized narratives that take into account the cultural context and enable the audience to make sense of the meaning in a way that is appropriate and sufficient. Pakistani Islamist groups—whether operating as jihadists or in the politico-social domain—have developed culturally specific narratives that draw upon master narratives considered appropriate by them. Al-Huda, Jamaat-e-Islami, Jaish Mohammad, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi and Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan are some of the examples of groups that have engaged in this process.

Jamat-ud-Dawah and its parent organization, Markaz Dawah wal Irshad (MDI) have followed a similar trajectory: grounded in the Salafi master narrative, it has developed its own versions of indigenized narratives that employ culturally specific concepts to make them more accessible to the audience. The ultimate aim is to mobilize the audience for jihad and societal re-creation. It could be argued that the tendency predates its incarnation as MDI in 1986: Lashker-e-Taiba in 1990 and then Jamat-ud-Dawah in 2001 and was shaped by the positions taken by the founders of the Ahl-i-Hadith movement in the subcontinent. Shah Muhammad Ismail (1779–1831)—the grandson of Shah Waliu' Ilah (1703–62)—formally introduced the Salafi movement in British India. But his followers shied away from labelling themselves as Salafis. Instead, they preferred the title of Ahl-i-Hadith and

claimed that their views were distinct from those of the Salafis in Arabia. The view also underpinned their objections to being identified as Wahhabis in the subcontinent. These views persisted among the Ahl-i-Hadith groups in Pakistan: though essentially following the Salafi ideas of the pre-eminence of *tawhid* and *hadith*, these groups have retained the nomenclature of Ahl-i-Hadith. Effectively, the identity of members of Ahl-i-Hadith movement has been indigenized—a trend that has been continued by the JuD.

Since 1987 when Markaz Dawah wal Irshad was formally established, members of what later was constituted as Jamat-ud-Dawah have focused on the twin concepts of Dawah wal Jihad (proselytization and jihad). These ideas are developed with reference to a conception of *aqidah* (creed) that links the fundamental commitment to *tawhid* (Unity of God, monotheism) with the requirement of *am'l* (action) that does not entertain the role of human will. That these ideas are grounded in the genre of Salafi thinking is not surprising given the links between the founders of the MDI and Salafi scholars that had existed prior to the establishment of the MDI and its later variants, Lashker-e-Taiba and Jamat-ud-Dawah. The Emir of the MDI, Hafiz Saeed, had been trained in Pakistan in Ahl-i-Hadith thinking by his uncle Hafiz Bahawalpuri, who later also became his father-in-law. But after joining the Engineering University, Lahore, he had traveled to Saudi Arabia in 1982 for further studies where he came in contact with Shaykh Abd al-Aziz ibn Baz. As a leading Salafi scholar who had led the Islamic University of Madinah and occupied the position of the Grand Mufti from 1993 to 1999 Ibn Baz influenced Hafiz Saeed's thinking. Hafiz Saeed was later to claim that Ibn Baz had been influential in the selection of the name of the organization, Markaz Dawah wal Irshad. Hafiz Saeed—who had been appointed at the Council on Islamic Ideology by Zia—, while he studied at King Saud university, had been a student of many other Saudi scholars, including al-Shaykh Muhammad ibn Saalih al-Uthaymeen, Shaykh Abd-ar-Razzaq al-Afifi, and the famous scholar of Islam from India, Shaykh Safi-ur-Rahman Mubarakpuri.<sup>8</sup> More importantly, he was a student of Azzam.<sup>9</sup> In fact, not only did Saeed study at the King Saud University in Riyadh, he also taught there and was given a Gold Medal on excellent academic performance by his university.<sup>10</sup>

Similarly, Zafar Iqbal, who was one of the founding members of the MDI and supervised the educational projects for the organization had been trained in Saudi Arabia after Hafiz Bahawalpuri converted him to Ahl-i-Hadith thinking. Both these founding members had also been earlier exposed to the ideas of Allama Ehsan Ilahi Zaheer, a renowned Ahl-i-Hadith scholar of

Pakistan, who had been educated in Medina and had been a protégé of Ibn Baz. So strong were his links to the community of Saudi religious scholars that he was taken to Saudi Arabia for treatment and later buried there after the injuries he had sustained in a bomb attack in Lahore in March 1987.

These links were supplemented by active participation in the activities and planning of the MDI by some renowned Saudi scholars and Salafi activists. In addition to Ibn Baz who has been cited in MDI publications as an icon of authentic Islamic teachings, Abdullah Azzam<sup>11</sup> had supported Hafiz Saeed and MDI until his death in a bomb attack in 1989. Another Indian-born Saudi national, Mahmoud Mohammad Ahmed Bahaziq, also known as Shaykh Abu Abd al-Aziz, financially supported the MDI and Lashker-e-Taiba. In addition to providing assistance in the development of the main centre of the group in Muridke (near Lahore), he also served as the leader of Lashker-e-Taiba in Saudi Arabia. In this capacity he raised funds for the activities of the MDI in Kashmir, and was later also in a position to garner support from Pakistan for his participation in the Bosnian jihad.<sup>12</sup>

Given the longevity of connections between the founding members of MDI and Salafi ideologues in the Middle East, and the associated networks established through these connections, one could assume that MDI would communicate Salafi ideas in their 'pure' form to its audience in Pakistan. But the approach adopted by MDI has stood out for pursuing a policy of indigenizing the Salafi narrative. The ideas originating from and financially supported by Saudi groups are communicated to the members of the group in a language that could be easily comprehended by them. Hafiz Bahawalpuri had already laid the foundation by establishing a tradition of giving sermons that employed culturally relevant concepts. But once the MDI was formally established and its institutional structure took shape, the approach was formalized. Dar-ul-Andlus, the main publishing house for the MDI, has developed literature in the form of books, magazines, short pamphlets and even pocket-size diaries and informational cards that render the message intelligible for the audience that predominantly hail from lower- and lower-middle-income groups. The publications address a whole range of issues including those related to personal piety, communal responsibilities, jihad and global developments. They all draw attention to the authenticity of the Ahl-i-Hadith message, and urge the audience to play a role, no matter how small, in the project of dawah and jihad. But the narratives on Muslim womanhood and jihad stand out for the indigenization of knowledge that originated in Saudi Arabia.

*Being a Muslim Woman in Pakistan*

Orthodox conceptions of Muslim womanhood focus on the complementarity instead of equality of genders. With male members assumed to occupy the position of the head of the household, these conceptions focus on the role of women in the family sphere. The operation in the public space is conditional and restrictive and is justified with reference to Quranic verses and selected *hadith*. Salafi views of Muslim womanhood follow this general trend.

These Salafi views of Muslim womanhood have been incorporated in the narrative developed by JuD and MDI. Initially, the publications by the organization were relatively limited in their focus on womanhood due to the primacy assigned to the jihad project but the trend has shifted in favour of elaborating the attributes of pious Muslim women and the religiously sanctioned activities that these women could engage in. These narratives have been developed in publications specifically focused on a female audience by Dar-ul-Andlus, the main publication outlet for MDI that traces its origin to the Muslim presence in and control of Spain, commonly known as Al-Andalus. Prior to the Mumbai bombings of 2008, attributed to LeT, a monthly magazine *Tayibaat* was the medium for communicating the narrative. After the sanctions imposed on the JuD by the UN Committee, another magazine *As-Siffat* has assumed the responsibility of providing information on what constitutes a pious Muslim woman. Equally importantly, a number of books and pamphlets have contributed to the evolution of a gender-specific narrative promoted by the JuD.

An analysis of the publications suggests that they use two different avenues of developing the narrative: first, they directly import ideas from the Saudi/Salafi thinkers that are translated from Arabic into Urdu for the Pakistani audience. Second, local members of the JuD (both males and females) contribute writings in the form of stories and short analytical pieces that employ local concepts and reference points and become agents of indigenization of information.

The translated version of Muhammad Ali al-Hashimi's book *Al-Shakhsiyat-al-Mar'aa al-Muslimah Kama Yasughaha al-Islam fi Kitab wal Sunnah* (The Ideal Muslimah: The True Islamic Personality of the Muslim Woman in the light of Quran and Sunnah) reflects the use of the first avenue. A renowned Salafi born in Syria, al-Hashimi, developed his reputation as the author of a series of books on ideal Muslims and society. The first Arabic edition of the book was published in 1994 and was broadcast on Riyadh Radio. The book



was translated into a number of languages and was presented to the international audience as a means of communicating to ‘Muslim women [who] are being increasingly attracted by “feminist theories” and “women’s studies” [...] that the unique and authentic sources of Islam have always spoken of the rights of women and recognized women as full partners in the human venture of history.’<sup>13</sup> Dar-ul-Andlus published an Urdu translation of the book in July 2008 with a foreword that drew attention to the confusion existing in the world about the question of women. It argued that the western influence had harmed our pious social life. The balance and conservatism introduced by Islam appeared to be trampled everywhere and the book by al-Hashimi meets an important need of the time. So important is the book, the chief editor of Dar-ul-Andlus went on to state, that every Muslim father, brother, and husband would definitely present it to his daughter, sister, and wife. In his view, the book qualified as a ‘complete training manual’ for Muslim women.<sup>14</sup>

Hashimi’s book conceptualized pious Muslim womanhood in terms of rights and responsibilities grounded in a firm belief in *tawhid*. He maintained that steadfast, clear, and committed acceptance of the unity of God constituted an essential pre-requisite for *aqidah* that in turn guided Muslim women to the correct path. It shaped their relationship to Allah, their immediate family, relatives, in-laws, friends and the wider society. With primacy assigned to the relationship with *Rabb* (God), the book identified the attributes of a pious Muslim woman: it argued that these women say the *fard* prayers, offer *tahajjud* (night) prayers, sit in *Aitekakf*,<sup>15</sup> fast voluntarily (*nafli*) in addition to the fasting prescribed for the month of Ramadan, and perform *Hajj* when possible. They observe *pardah* not because it is a cultural norm but because it has been prescribed for woman in the Quran, and represents the continuity of divine injunctions that had been earlier revealed to the Jews and Christians as well. Their approach to *mua’malat* (interaction and dealings with other people) is also guided by Quranic injunctions and the guidance provided by Prophet Muhammad and his companions. These attributes and actions, the book argued, carried the promise of personal rewards for the Muslim women but were also beneficial for the society at large and for the humankind.

The attributes of a pious Muslim woman were contrasted with the belief system and actions of the *ghaflat sha’aar* (negligent), educated idiots, fashion-*zad’da* (influenced by fashions) and *maghreb-zad’da* (influenced by the West) women. Though aware of their Islamic heritage, the book argued, these women were only half Muslims and had failed to live in accordance with the injunctions in Quran and Sunnah. But interestingly, the book did not present the division

as permanent in nature: the process of Islamization, personal awakening, and re-assessment of the reality of the westernized world, it argued, had set in motion a process of change. Women like Nawal al Saadawi, a known feminist, it argued, had come to appreciate the denigration of womanhood that constituted a feature of western civilization. Some men who had championed the cause of feminism were also revisiting their ideas and appreciating the value of Islamic beliefs.

Such an articulation of differences between pious and half Muslim women carried an agentic dimension: that some women had already owned authentic Islamic traditions and others were revisiting them was used to urge others to play their role in shifting the balance in favour of authentic Islam. Essentially the book provided the narrative of women's agency in societal re-creation. Translation of these ideas for Pakistani women in simple Urdu in the new millennium (nearly twelve years after its original edition came out) suggested that the JuD was consciously employing literature published in Arabic for promoting the ideas of women's agency in the family and societal sphere.

Translations by Dar-ul-Andlus of literature published in the Arabic language, it is important to note, do contain a certain degree of indigenization. This is observable in the translation of Hashimi's book as *Misali Musalmaan Aurat*: even though the English translation of the book included the preface by the publisher that referred to the relevance of the book in an era marked by the rise of feminist thought, and the author's explanation for writing the book contained the references to personal hygiene issues, the Urdu translation omitted these passages. Instead the publisher simply provided a foreword by Muhammad Saifullah Khalid, the editor of Dar-ul-Andlus, which highlighted its significance for women in Pakistan. Such a selective translation of the preface suggested that the MDI leadership did not wish to endorse the value of feminism in Pakistan. This probably was, in turn, linked to the general criticism of what was increasingly being referred to as the 'feminism industry' in Pakistan. MDI publications had also regularly criticized feminists, such as Asma Jahangir, for being westernized and working against Pakistan's interests. It could be therefore argued that MDI leadership was careful to combine an effort to Arabise its female audience without even implicitly suggesting that feminists were not engaged in un-Islamic ideas.

A slightly different style of indigenization was present in the Urdu translation of *Al-Mara'atul Muslimah* by Abu Bakr Jabar al-Jaza'iri. Published by Dar-ul-Kutub al-Salafiya as *Khatoon-e-Islam* (A Muslim Woman), the book also provided information on different dimensions of *aqidah*. Though translated

by Sayyid Ahmed Qamar-uz-Zaman based in Bahrain, the book contained explanations by Umm Abd Muneeb who has occupied a significant position among female writers of Jamat-ud-Dawah.<sup>16</sup>

The publications by Dar-ul-Andlus for women, however, reflect the real trend towards indigenization of the Salafi thought originating from Saudi Arabia. Contained in the magazine(s) for women, short pamphlets and books, the writings by both male and female authors reflect a tendency to employ local idioms, and reference points that enable the audience to make instant connection to the contradictions that need resolution. Umm Abd Muneeb, who has been a member of the editorial team for *Tayibaat*, and now with *As-Siffat*, has penned a number of short pamphlets that address the question of modesty, *purdah*, dowry, *bid'a* (innovation and accretion in religious matters), wedding ceremonies, use of mobile phones, and honour killings.<sup>17</sup> These publications repeat the ideas contained in Salafi writings published in Arabic: her discussion of *purdah* and the family, for example, repeat the ideas included in Hashimi's concept of hijab. He identifies brothers-in-law as being non-*mahram* for Muslim women. In a similar vein, Umm Abd Muneeb informs her female audience that not only do they need to observe *purdah* vis-à-vis their brothers-in-law but also extend it to younger boys who are more exposed to information on sexuality in the modern era. But her writings also employ concepts that are more familiar to women in the subcontinent. Her discussion of childbirth, for example, reminds the audience of the golden days of the recent past when women were shy, modest and kept all news of pregnancy to themselves and other female members of the family. Contrasting it with the emerging practice of announcing pregnancy, having ultrasounds during the pregnancy, and collecting gifts for the unborn child, she urges the female audience to shun these practices and return to the era of modesty. Such articulations contain two distinct forms of indigenization: first, the denigration of 'new customs' that are presented as being influenced by the West fits within the traditional approach to indigenization as being in opposition to the West. Second, linking the concept of *purdah* as enjoined in Islam with the traditional references to '*sharam*' (modesty) in the subcontinent suggests that the ideas being introduced are not alien—as is the case with the 'westernized women'—but reflect the traditions that previously marked the region's Muslim identity.

Other authors writing for the women of JuD communicate similar ideas. Women are reminded of their responsibilities towards members of the family, particularly vis-à-vis their husbands. A single page article in *As-Siffat* entitled '*Ghar Pur'sakoon kaisey bantay hein?*' ('How do Homes become Peaceful?'),

written in the form of advice from a mother to a daughter, encapsulates this dimension. In the article, the daughter was advised to live a life of contentment without demanding too much from her husband, listen to and comply with the views of her husband, pay attention to personal grooming, use *kajal* and *surma*, and do *wudu*. The advice also included the need to feed the husband on time, keep his secrets, be kind to the husband's family, do not backbite about the in-laws and adopt a policy of not complaining about the *susrul* when you go to your *maika*. Though similar to the concepts contained, for example in Hashimi's books, this article employed culturally known expressions. Generally *susrul* (in-laws) connotes a set of negative relationships and abode marked by the urge on the part of the mother-in-law to dominate the wife of her son. *Maika*, on the other hand, refers to the 'parent's home for a married woman' where she feels accepted, safe, and in a position to complain about her treatment at the hands of her in-laws. While implicitly acknowledging the distinction between parental home and the home of in-laws, however, the article communicated the need for restraint, patience and acceptance of a married woman's role and responsibilities. In doing so it replicated the approach adopted by Salafi writers including Hashimi and Abu Bakr Jabar al-Jaza'iri. But at the same time, the ideas were indigenized through the use of references to *susrul* and the *maika*—terms that are easily accessible and understandable for the female audience in the subcontinent.

The JuD narrative also focuses on women's role in the public space essentially in line with Salafi view of womanhood. Though consistently identifying home as the space where women need to operate, the female audience are also reminded of their responsibility to remain modest and not flaunt their beauty in public. The narrative, it is important to note, does not hold women solely responsible for creating an environment of modesty and circumspection: men are also identified as being responsible to protect women's *haya* and *purdah*. An article by Maryam Khansa on the religious responsibilities of editors dealing with advertisements, for example, mentioned that a number of newspapers and magazines had been publishing advertisements for 'Touch Me Telcum Powder.' The contents of the advertisement included the image of a woman who was flaunting her body and inviting others to look at her. The branding of the powder, the author stated, was inappropriate and juxtaposing it next to the image of a woman was extremely inappropriate and impolite. 'Hence, a Muslim editor should avoid publishing products with such labels with a specific background.' The author, however, referred to 'the likes of *Zulaikha*' who were willing to be photographed for such advertisements and flaunt their bodies.<sup>18</sup>

The symbolic reference drew upon the commonly known story contained in the Quran's '*Surah Yusuf*' of the wife of Egyptian ruler, Zulaikha, who tried to entice Prophet Yusuf but failed. This has led to her becoming a 'despicable symbol of lust, hedonism, and, ultimately, feminine evil' in Muslim imagination.<sup>19</sup> As these symbols are easy comprehensible in Pakistan as well, the article implicitly distinguished the misguided Pakistani women from pious Muslim women who do not act in a Zulaikha-like manner. Beyond the content of the message, the article could also be seen as an example of indigenization where symbols that are easily accessible to the audience are used as the reference points for approval or disapproval. Since the identified talcum powder was commonly available in the market, it was used to draw attention to the unacceptable practices, such as the use of female images for commercial purposes, in Pakistan, as well as the need to shun Zulaikha-like acts that are categorically criticized in the Quran.

During the last decade, the scope of the narrative of female modesty in public spaces has extended to include Pakistani women living in western liberal societies as well. In addition to publications specifically highlighting the contradiction between western and Pakistani culture and lamenting the gradual erosion of traditions of piety and modesty in Pakistan, stories have also focused on Pakistani diasporic communities that have been influenced by western traditions. An article published in *Tayibaat*, for example, criticized a Pakistan-Canadian young woman who had participated in the Miss World beauty pageant. It claimed that she had publicly expressed a desire to 'go on a date with President Musharraf', which was the result of the '*roshan khiyal*' (enlightened) policies adopted by President Musharraf and had probably pleased those who hold similar ideas. But, the remarks had deeply shamed the people of Pakistan. The trend, the article argued, was nothing new and could be traced back to 2003 when the head of an organization of Pakistani-Canadians, Sonia, initiated Pakistani women's participation in beauty competitions. Since then, Canadian women of Pakistani origin had participated in Bikini Forum, Miss Tourism, Miss Disco and Miss Pakistani Earth. Surprisingly, the author stated, the young women were not required to seek their parental approval for participating in these competitions and had the audacity to use Pakistani flag. While querying if the Pakistani High Commission had objected to the misuse of Pakistani flag, the article reminded the audience of '*Sura Al-Nisa*' (24:31) in which Allah has enjoined upon 'the believing women to lower their gaze and guard their private parts and not expose their adornment except that which necessarily appears thereof and to cover their

chests.' Reference to notions of modesty and piety, the article continued, often earns believing women the title of 'backward and traditionalist.' But those labelling the pious Muslims women could not deny that Allah has clearly stated in '*Surah Al-Ahzab*' (33:59):

O Prophet, tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to bring down over themselves [part] of their outer garments. That is more suitable that they will be known and not be abused. And ever is Allah Forgiving and Merciful.

The expanded scope of the JuD narrative reflects the reality of Pakistani society where emigration has become an accepted phenomenon. With the number of Pakistanis in Canada increasing by 98 per cent from 79,315 in 2001 to 156,860 in 2011 the likely influence of the ideas emerging in diasporic conditions is shaping the need to counter 'unacceptable practices.'<sup>20</sup> Such a focus on the Pakistani Muslim diaspora, while not the focus of Salafi writing emanating from the Gulf, does fall within the broad genre of literature that presents an image of a globalized contradiction between believing and pious Muslim women and those who have been influenced by western traditions.

The manner of translating Salafi-Arabic literature as well as generating similar literature domestically on Muslim womanhood in Urdu for women affiliated with JuD suggests that the ultimate outcome expected by JuD leadership has been to undertake indigenization of knowledge and practice that aims at not homogenization but hybridization. Careful use of information, for example, on feminists that might have resonated differently in the Pakistani landscape, as well as employment of local concepts that are readily understood by the intended female audience suggests that the aim is not to denigrate local customs, but point out lacunae that had been created due to Pakistani women deviating from Islamic norms that had earlier existed in the subcontinent. The communication of Ahl-i-Hadith/Salafi knowledge of good Muslim womanhood, therefore, is designed to fill the lacunae and draw women back to 'true Islam'. Though women affiliated with JuD are the intended audience for this narrative, it could be argued that through a process of internalization of this information and its manifestation in practices, they are expected to engage in the process of *da'wah* to slowly and gradually draw other women to the 'correct' Islamic path.<sup>21</sup>

*Jihad Discourse and Indigenization*

The indigenization of Salafi thought originating from Saudi Arabia and the Gulf is equally apparent in the narrative on jihad being disseminated by the JuD. As the primary *raison d'état* for the creation of the MDI (1986) and Lashker-e-Taiba (1990) for the 'liberation of Indian-occupied Kashmir', jihad has occupied a special place in the narrative developed by the group. Communicated in the form of articles, books, recorded sermons, and obituaries of the martyred, the narrative draws upon the Salafi support for violent jihad. Both Ibn Baz and Azzam—two Arab personalities that had influenced the thinking of MDI—had been supporters of jihad. Ibn Baz identified jihad as an obligation 'in the Cause of Allah in order to help the oppressed triumph over their oppressors.'<sup>22</sup> Azzam carried the concept further and championed the need for military jihad to liberate areas under non-Muslim occupation.

The jihad narrative developed by the MDI has followed the broad contours of Salafi thinking. From the outset, however, a degree of indigenization was apparent with the focus on publications directed predominantly toward the Kashmir cause and then followed by other areas that needed agency of Muslims jihadis. This was apparent in the widely quoted pamphlet by Abdul Salam bin Mohammad (who was responsible for the educational strategy of Lashkar) in which he identified eight objectives of jihad as enshrined in the Qur'anic revelations. These objectives contained both particularistic and universalistic aspects: those relevant to Muslims included the defence of Muslim lands, prevention of *fitna* (civil strife and stress) in areas beyond the direct Muslim control, revenge of atrocities committed against Muslims, and reasserting Islam's control globally.<sup>23</sup> Since then, a number of other publications have elaborated on these ideas by focusing on the views of *mujahids* and the martyred leaders. Some of the books Dar-ul-Andlus published included *Khutbaat-e-Mujahid* consisting of sermons by Mohammad Khalid Mujahid, *Zaad-ul-Mujahid* by Abu Noman Saifullah, and *Bosnia key jihadi maidanon mein* by Tahir Naqqash. These books tell the stories of committed Muslim *mujahids* who are practicing and believing Muslims. The books narrate the struggles and victories experienced in the process of jihad and the presence of solidarity transcending state boundaries. The sermons combine simple Urdu with selected Quranic verses and references to Prophetic tradition to reinforce the message.

The religious justifications underpinning the Salafi view on jihad are also communicated in an indigenized form. This is most apparent in the publication of *Al Jihad-al Islami: Jihad ke Ahkam wa Masa'il ka Encyclopedia* published in



March 2004. The nearly 900-page-long book provides access to Salafi ideas on jihad. It is divided into chapters that explore the religious justification of jihad, the distinction between jihad as *fard ay'n* (individual obligation) and *fard kifayah* (communal obligation), martyrdom, the importance of training for jihad, rules of engagement, rights of the civilians and combatants, the distribution of war bounty, and peace agreements between the parties to a conflict. The book employs extensive use of Quranic verses to justify that *jihad fi sabil allah* only refers to active combat with the aim of 'establishing God's rule' (*hakimiyyat*) and communal justice; complete elimination of *zulm wa jabr* (oppression and barbarity) and *fitna wa fasad* (unrest and mischief). References are made, for example, to the Quranic verses that remind the believers of the need to engage in *qital* in Allah's way. The audience are assured that *jihad fi sabil Allah* is the only valid meaning of the term jihad and that though only twice distinguished in terms of *jihad-akbar* and *jihad-e-asghar*, the focus in the Quran devotes nearly a quarter of its total verses to jihad thus indicating that combative jihad remains its priority.

Though common to Salafi thinking in the Gulf and elsewhere, these ideas are rendered comprehensible for the audience by simplifying the language used in the book. This aspect of the indigenization process is admitted in the foreword of the book which details the long and arduous process through which the original manuscript of 400 pages expanded to the end product of 900 pages. These comments clearly state that Mufti Abdur Rehman Al-Rehmani had penned the original version in a 'scholarly and *fiqahi* style' that reflected 'his command of the language and mature outlook. [...] Though the writing style was worthy of respected Mufti sahib's scholarly and knowledgeable personality [...], it was felt that a need existed that the book be made simple and easily comprehensible. Consequently, all the difficult words in the book were replaced by simple synonyms and an effort was made to make the common scholarly terminologies easy to understand.'<sup>24</sup>

Two other dimensions of indigenization are apparent in the book. First, its approach links the discussion of jihad to prevalent ideas and attitudes in Pakistan: the reluctance of the Pakistani Government to support the jihadi groups and the criticism levelled by some Pakistani religious scholars against the jihadi project is placed within a broader historical context. The audience are reminded that the *Angrai*z (the English) had sought to divide the Muslims of the subcontinent by creating the breakaway group of *Qadiani* (Ahmadiyyas). They had also supported some Sufis who opposed military jihad and accorded primacy to *khanqahiyat* (asceticism). The trend, it implies, has not shifted with



the Pakistani government being unwilling to question the identification of jihad with terrorism and some *ulama* arguing that jihad could only be waged by the head of a state, and by a Caliph. That these ideas being promoted in Pakistan are contrary to the 'true Islamic teachings' is the subject of a chapter entitled '*khilafat wa jihad*' ('Caliphate and Jihad').

Second, the book clearly indicates the primacy accorded to the jihad in Kashmir and Afghanistan. This is apparent in the foreword by Hafiz Saeed where he justified the need for such an encyclopaedia.<sup>25</sup> He argued that 'the jihad in Afghanistan against the Russian occupation turned the attention of Muslim *ummah* towards jihad. After the Afghan jihad, the jihad in Kashmir, Philippines, Bosnia, Palestine, Chechnya and many other sites has changed world's politics.' This acknowledgement of the global dimension of jihad was juxtaposed with the focus on jihad in Kashmir: 'After the Afghan jihad, the jihad in Kashmir impressed the Muslim region of South Asia. Afghans and Muslims of Pakistani and India sacrificed their lives and money (*maal*).' Some sections of the society, including some *ulama*, had questioned the logic of jihad that had been causing concern and doubts among some young participants of jihad. Therefore, Hafiz Saeed clarified, it was felt that information be presented to the audience to ensure that the commitment to jihad be based on information and not just emotions. Kashmir, in other words, remains the primary focus of the Salafi jihadi narrative being introduced by JuD in Pakistan.

The JuD narrative of jihad, though primarily targeted towards a male audience, does not exclude women from the jihad project. Though initially female agency was only presented with reference to Muslim womanhood and their primary operation within the family sphere, the literature has gradually given more space to women's participation in jihad at societal level and in combat situations. Al-Rehmani has argued, for example, that *hadith* literature established that women's participation in jihad is '*Sunnat-e-Nabawiya*' (Prophetic Tradition). Though the participation primarily takes the form of assisting the wounded and supporting the *mujahedeen*, their participation in combat when needed becomes *fard ay'n*. Under such circumstances, they are not bound by the requirement of observing *purdah* and it is halal for them to touch non-*mahram* males in need of medical attention.<sup>26</sup> This has enabled women to assume agency in the process of motivating and supporting men for the jihad project. Interestingly, this has resulted in the genre of poetry penned by women affiliated with JuD that valorizes jihad.

The use of poetry is not new among Salafi jihadi circles. Kendall establishes that Arab society has a long history predating the Islamic era of using poetry

for mobilization purposes. Though often decried as un-Islamic by orthodox Muslims, Salafis have regularly used poetry 'extolling the virtues of, and rewards for, militant jihad.' This serves three interlocking purposes: practical, ideological and emotional. As a tool for 'easy, inexpensive and powerful propagation of ideas', poetry produces a jihadi identity and, simultaneously operating at the subliminal level through use of concepts and ideas, target's people feelings and creates possibilities for their active participation in jihad.<sup>27</sup> The poetry written by women of JuD follows this trend. The use could be directly linked to the esteem in which poetry and poets are held in the subcontinent. While historically Persian was the medium used for poetic expressions, gradually Urdu came to occupy a higher status in the eighteenth century and came to be 'perceived as the embodiment of erudition and refinement.' Multiple genres appeared in Urdu that borrowed from other contemporary forms of expression, including *ghazals* and *azad sha'iri* (free verse poems). Despite the fact that some women in JuD have previously denigrated poetry as being unacceptable in Islam and criticized renowned poets such as Ahmed Faraz (1912–2008), the use of poetry as a medium for communicating ideas has emerged and endured.<sup>28</sup> Written in simple Urdu, this poetry indigenizes the concept of militant jihad, and locates Pakistan's jihad in Kashmir within an international context where Muslims (both males and females) are willingly encountering the enemies and sacrificing their lives. But as in the case of literature on Muslim womanhood, the indigenization aims at hybridization and not homogenization. The focus on jihad remains primarily on the struggle in Pakistan's neighborhood, especially Kashmir.

Poems by Umm Hammad occupy a special place in this form of narrative produced by the JuD. As the editor of *Tayibaat* and now of *As-Siffat*, she has published numerous poems in JuD magazines for both male and female audience. A selection of these poems was published as *Manzil Meri Shahdat* (Martyrdom is my Destiny) that reflects the use of local symbols to support and sustain jihad efforts. In line with the JuD policy, jihad in Kashmir remains the primary focus of this poetry but developments in other regions also attract some attention.<sup>29</sup> Instructive in this context was the inclusion of a poem *Kargil key Bur'sare Paikar Mujahid* (Mujahids Active in Kargil) written during the Kargil Crisis of 1999. Its inclusion suggested a resolve to persevere and not give up the final commitment to liberating Kashmir. In this poem she addressed the *mujahidin* occupying the Kargil peaks in the following words:

## NARRATIVES OF JIHAD AND ISLAMIC IDENTITY

The rumblings of the tanks and the hissing of the bullets  
Are you listening, You who have put your heads on the line  
The sound of approaching destiny?  
This peak of Kargil and the heights of Dras  
The minaret of the courage and alertness of the Lashker  
The pulsating hearts of the [Hindu] Lalas  
Are you listening, You who have put your heads on the line  
The sound of the approaching destiny.  
Take the step and encircle the enemy  
The night is nearing its end and there will be the dawn  
The shimmering blood of my martyrs is everywhere.

In another poem in the same anthology she proudly owns that she is a poet of jihad.

I am a poet of jihad  
My words bleed  
The sound of my voice bleeds  
This story bleeds  
The setting moon across the horizon bleeds  
The early morning rays bleed  
Oppressors occupy the land of Kashmir  
This heaven on earth is smoldering and bleeding.

The focus on Kashmir is combined with poems eulogizing *fida'ee* women who blew themselves up in Israel and Chechnya and are labeled as birds of paradise. She declares:

The Fida'ee three women  
Who performed the Fida'ee mission  
In Israel and Chechnya  
They have attained eternal life through martyrdom  
They are en route to the heaven  
They are the birds of heaven

A number of other women of JuD also contribute similar poetry valorizing jihad, criticizing the apathy of Muslim leaders, and reminding their husbands the promises to struggle along the path of jihad.

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The use of poetry as a narrative for mobilization is not limited to female writers. The magazines published by JuD have used poetry by men to perform similar identity formation and agentic functions. Together, the poetry written by men and women and identified as *jihadi sha'iri* (jihadi poetry) is sung in annual gatherings of JuD and made freely available both digitally and in the form of CDs. The process suggests that the tradition of Salafi jihadi poetry present in the Gulf is indigenized in Pakistan.

### *Significance of the narrative*

The question arises as to what does the indigenization of Salafi narratives reflect about transnational links between Islam in the Gulf and Pakistan? Pedagogical research establishes that for the knowledge to be acquired and acted upon, it needs to be appropriate, sufficient, and build on already existing foundational knowledge. Applied to the sharing of ideas about Islamic identity across the Gulf and Pakistan, it could be argued that the JuD has intelligently created an ideational space in which its published information for women and men serves two purposes: First, it builds on and reinforces Salafi ideas originating in the Arabian peninsula. Second, it increases the likelihood of action among the audience along the trajectory defined by the JuD: while for women it primarily means supporting jihad in the family, for men it means participating in jihad through life and money. The latter dimension, in turn, creates avenue for increasing the inter-activity between JuD affiliates in Pakistan and diasporic communities living in the Gulf. The narrative developed by JuD is not restricted to Pakistani borders only, but is also accessible, for example, to Pakistani diaspora in Saudi Arabia and other countries. These communities, while excluded from the mainstream Saudi society and influenced by Arabization, respond to the indigenized Salafi literature communicated to them by JuD in the form of supporting the jihad project of the JuD. The quantum of funds gathered in the Arabian Peninsula, therefore, also include contributions from some of the diasporic Pakistanis—a fact occasionally acknowledged in the JuD publications. The indigenized JuD narratives provide a latent space of connectivity between the Gulf and Pakistan.

## THE SALAFI EMIRATE OF KUNAR

## BETWEEN SOUTH ASIA AND THE ARABIAN PENINSULA

*Vahid Brown*

The scholarship on the Afghan Arabs—the Arab Muslim volunteer supporters of the Afghan *mujahidin* during the Afghan-Soviet conflict—and on the emergence of transnational Arab *mujahidin* movements, has largely neglected the role played by small, regional actors in the Afghan struggle. Most of the historiography on these subjects uses one of two lenses. First is the lens of the Arab mobilization side, exploring the networks in Saudi Arabia and elsewhere that helped to create and internationalize the Afghan Arab phenomenon. Second is the lens of the seven major Peshawar-based Sunni *mujahidin* parties, and in particular the Ittihad party of ‘Abd al-Rabb Rasul Sayyaf and the Hizb-e Islami of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. In our work, Don Ressler and I have found that smaller, subnational networks in Afghanistan and Pakistan during the conflict played a much more significant role in these developments than previously acknowledged in the scholarship. A key contribution of our book<sup>1</sup> on the Haqqani network was the discovery that the Haqqanis had a central role in fostering the evolution of the al-Qaeda organization and of internationalizing other regional jihadi movements. In this chapter I turn to another little-studied but highly significant regional Afghan *mujahidin*

movement and its role in shaping the development of transnational jihadism. The Salafi Emirate of Kunar was the birthplace of a kind of jihadism quite different from that of al-Qaeda or of representatives of statist revolutionary jihadism like al-Jihad in Egypt. In the 1980s it fostered the emergence of a particularly Salafi jihadism, intertwined both with the Afghan conflict and with the fractious environment of Gulf Islamist activism. This strain of jihadism had a minority but controversial presence in the Bosnian conflict; it hijacked the Islamist resistance in Algeria in the 1990s and sent that conflict into the darkest depths of brutality; and has defined both al-Qaeda in Iraq and its successor, ISIS.

After a survey of the history of the emergence of the Kunar emirate, I will turn to the writings of the Gulf Salafi shaykhs regarding Jamil al-Rahman and Kunar. The primary contribution of this chapter, however, is in the subsequent review of the Afghan Arab literature on the Salafis of Kunar, which evidences a wide disparity of opinions and highlights the varieties of jihadi trajectories following the end of the Afghan-Soviet war.

*Jamil al-Rahman and the Salafi Jama'at al-Da'wa ila'l-Qur'an wa'l-Sunna*

The Salafi Emirate of Kunar began as a religious organization dedicated to Salafi *da'wa* established in Kunar in the 1960s by Maulvi Muhammad Husayn, who later took the name Jamil al-Rahman. The latter was a leading twentieth-century representative of the small but influential Salafi movement in Afghanistan. Afghan Salafism has long been centred in the three '*mashriqi*' provinces east of Kabul—Nangarhar, Kunar, and Nuristan, all of which share a border with Pakistan's northwest—and has been led by graduates of what is popularly known as 'the Panj Pir *madrasa*', the Imam Muhammad Tahir Dar al-Qur'an. Established in 1940 in the town of Panj Pir in the Swabi district of Pakistan's Northwest Frontier Province (now called Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa), the Dar al-Qur'an teaches a strict Salafism associated with the Ahl-i-Hadith religious minority in South Asia.<sup>2</sup> It reportedly receives Saudi funding.<sup>3</sup> Beginning in the 1950s, graduates of the Dar al-Qur'an from northeast Afghanistan, including Jamil al-Rahman, returned to their home provinces and engaged in *da'wa* on behalf of Salafism and against the locally predominant Hanafi and Sufi forms of belief and practice. Since that time Kunar and Nuristan have become associated with strongly sectarian Salafi religiosity.<sup>4</sup>

After returning to Afghanistan in the early 1960s, Jamil al-Rahman made contacts with other graduates of Pakistani Ahl-i-Hadith *madrasas* in northeastern Afghanistan to coordinate *da'wa* and educational activities. He also began to forge ties with Salafi scholars and organizations in the Gulf, primarily Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Yemen. With a number of other northeastern Afghan Salafi scholars, in 1965 he created 'Ummat Muslima', a Salafi missionary group with the aim of becoming a political party. There was a rash of such proto-party organizations formed in Afghanistan after King Zahir Shah's 1964 constitution appeared to allow for the creation of political parties, pending the passage of legislation to that effect. The law in question did eventually pass the parliament in 1968 but Zahir Shah declined to sign it.<sup>5</sup> According to Jamil al-Rahman's Pashto-language magazine *Da'wat*, the government began airing propaganda against the Salafi group on the national radio in the early 1970s; it even claims that Jamil al-Rahman was jailed for a period during the last years of the King's reign.<sup>6</sup> The opposition intensified after 1973 when the new Prime Minister Daoud Khan, tilting toward Moscow, initiated crackdowns on Islamist leaders and networks that led to the initiation of underground anti-government organizing among the Islamists, in Afghanistan as well as from the exile outpost of Peshawar in Pakistan's northwest. The exile and consolidation in Pakistan of Islamist dissidents in this period mirrored a similar, and much larger flow of Islamists activists and Arab migrant labor to Saudi Arabia after 1973. These two movements would become intertwined in the course of the Afghan-Soviet conflict. In this context of repression, Jamil al-Rahman changed the name of his organization to the Jama'at al-Da'wa ila'l-Qur'an wa'l-Sunna (hereafter Jama'at al-Da'wa or JDQS).<sup>7</sup> He also continued his efforts on behalf of the Salafi mission in Afghanistan, establishing the Jami'a ta'lim al-Qur'an wa'l-Hadith in his home village of Nangalam in the Pech Valley and a network of other *madrasas* in Kunar and neighbouring provinces.<sup>8</sup>

Numerous sources claim that Jamil al-Rahman was among the first Islamist activists to initiate 'jihad' against the Daoud regime, and subsequently the Nur Muhammad Taraki regime beginning in 1978.<sup>9</sup> According to the official account of the early history of the JDQS as given in their journal *Da'wat*, the Jama'at was established with two goals: jihad and *tabligh*. The account says that in the Daoud years the struggle was an individual jihad, with activists going about from place to place attacking communists. They write that, unlike other areas of the country, in Kunar they were actually staging attacks on government bases. The general, nationwide jihad uprising began after the coup in April

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1978 that installed the communist People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA). Jamil al-Rahman is said to have reached out to a number of other small opposition groups in the region and gathered them—numbering around 100—in the Pech Valley to start guerrilla activities. The JDQS claims that, after one of their first encounters with communist forces left four of the *mujahidin* dead, they offered up the first martyrs in the Afghan jihad.<sup>10</sup>

From the beginning of the conflict the JDQS distinguished itself for its sectarian divisiveness. The party indirectly acknowledged this itself in the first issue of *Da'wat*, writing that the first years of the jihad were difficult because, on the one hand, the *mujahidin* parties based in Peshawar disagreed with the Salafis and how they had begun their jihad, while on the other hand the common people were ignorant of the true spirit of jihad.<sup>11</sup> According to David Edwards, Jamil al-Rahman had been in touch with Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, Qazi Muhammad Amin, and other Muslim Youth activists who had decamped to Peshawar in the mid-1970s to form the Hizb-e Islami Afghanistan, under the umbrella of which Jamil al-Rahman began his jihad activities. In the summer of 1979 the tribal leadership involved in resistance in Kunar and Nuristan held a formal *jirga* (assembly) and announced the creation of the Junbesh-e Mujahidin Azad (Front of Free Mujahidin), a tribe-based anti-government alliance of Nuristani and Safi Pashtuns in the north-east, and began taxing locals and distributing captured weaponry. The man elected to lead the Junbesh, Samiullah Safi—of the same tribe as Jamil al-Rahman—found upon his return to Afghanistan from Pakistan in late summer of 1979 that Jamil al-Rahman was agitating against the Junbesh. He later told David Edwards:

The Hizbis there [in Nuristan] were distributing identity cards, and they were telling [the people], 'You can't do this or that, and the amir must also be a religious scholar. And he must have a beard, and he should be clean and pure, and wear white clothes, and his appearance should be the typical example of a mulla. Only such a person can be the amir—no one else.' And at this time they put forward Maulavi Hussain [Jamil al-Rahman] as the amir.<sup>12</sup>

Jamil al-Rahman sought to undermine the Junbesh further by publishing a decree declaring that the Junbesh's collection of taxes was against Islamic law, that the Front did not have a religious scholar for its amir, and that therefore the anti-government attacks that had been carried out thus far were not legitimate jihad.<sup>13</sup>



Ironically, one of the first Afghan Arabs to invoke Jamil al-Rahman's memory, Osama Bin Laden, tells a very different story of the Afghan mujahid's beginnings in the jihad. In a lecture given to a group of Gulf youth shortly after Jamil al-Rahman was assassinated in August 1991, Bin Laden said:

I heard Shaykh Jalaluddin Haqqani relate an incident. He said: 'I was with Shaykh Jamil al-Rahman in an assembly of mawlawis and they criticized us, asking how we could begin a jihad against the state without an imam [a leader]? And he [Jamil al-Rahman] said, "God provides, exalted and glorified be He. Let us recall that Abu Basir [a companion of the Prophet Muhammad], may God be pleased with him, began his jihad without an imam." So we made remembrance of that to them and they said not a word in reply. So we began our jihad in the path of God.'<sup>14</sup>

While in this story Jamil al-Rahman is presented defending himself against the same criticism he allegedly made against other anti-government groups—that they lacked proper leadership—the theme remains the same: an insistence on proper (Salafi) religious legitimation. This would continue to characterize the JDQS and the Salafi Emirate's jihad activities as well as its relations with the broader Muslim world.

Like Jalaluddin Haqqani and other *madrasa*-trained religious leaders who took early leadership positions in the resistance, Jamil al-Rahman very early on established bases of material and ideological support in the Gulf. Peter Tomsen, the US State Department envoy to the *mujahidin* in the latter years of the anti-Soviet conflict, writes of arguments over this issue in meetings with Prince Turki al-Faisal, then the head of Saudi Arabia's *Ri'asat al-istikhbarat al-'amma* (General Intelligence Directorate) and in charge of Saudi aid for the Afghan *mujahidin*. According to Tomsen, he frequently presented to Turki the US view that the post-Soviet political solution in Afghanistan should involve all parties, including the Shi'a, and that Saudi support for 'extremist' *mujahidin* groups like Jamil al-Rahman's were imperiling this objective. He says that Turki never budged on this point, though Tomsen believed that it was partly due to internal Saudi political circumstances.<sup>15</sup>

All accounts of Jamil al-Rahman's group emphasize the importance of Saudi support in their ability to operate independently inside Afghanistan. Early on in the conflict, Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate (ISI), which took the lead in coordinating the international support for the *mujahidin*, declared that it would only distribute money and arms to the seven main Sunni *mujahidin* parties, leaving smaller, independent groups either starved for resources and doomed to wither or join one of the 'big seven', or having to

depend on generous foreign patronage. For the first half of the 1980s Jamil al-Rahman and the JDQS operated under the umbrella of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's faction of Hizb-e Islami, one of the ISI's most favored parties. However, in 1985 he broke with Hizb and declared that the JDQS would operate as an independent *mujahidin* party. According to Barnett Rubin, 'with extensive support from private Saudi and Kuwaiti sources, Jama'at al-Da'wa grew to be even more powerful in the area than the seven parties. Increasing numbers of Arabs came to fight in its ranks.'<sup>16</sup>

In 1988 the JDQS began to publicize its activities globally with three glossy magazines, *al-Mujahid* in Arabic and two magazines called *Da'wat*, one in Pashto and Dari, the other in Urdu and Persian.<sup>17</sup> These served to draw more foreign support, in the form of financial donations and visiting volunteer *mujahidin* from the Gulf. Kunar gained a reputation as the most desirable Afghan jihad destination for strict Salafis from the Arab world, as his group was deemed the only party to strictly adhere to a Salafi *manhaj* (methodology) in its operation of jihad. This reputation soared after he declared an independent Salafi Emirate in Kunar in 1990.

According to JDQS sources, the idea to announce the formation of an emirate was first discussed at internal meetings in Asadabad, the capital of Kunar, on 14 October 1989.<sup>18</sup> Arab and JDQS sources claim that Kunar was the first area completely liberated from communist control, and the JDQS leadership wanted to establish *shari'a* administration in the area immediately. Pakistan and the seven parties, however, were pressing for the holding of an election in the province, and after much resistance the JDQS agreed. They spilled a great deal of ink in their magazines attempting to justify this decision, but as will be seen it was controversial to some of their global Salafi supporters. In the pages of *Da'wat* the JDQS went to great lengths to detail the preparations and bureaucratic minutiae leading up to the elections, including lists of all candidates running, personnel appointed to election commissions, polling station locations, and so forth. In its context these were remarkable concessions to modern institutional political norms, and this is perhaps the first example of a strict Salafi political movement agreeing to fully participate in them.

The Jama'at al-Da'wa won a strong majority in the election, but this did not end the inter-party conflicts. Amir Rana cites a Pakistani Ahl-i-Hadith scholar who claims that six of the parties withdrew from the elections at a late stage just before the elections were held, leaving Hizb-e Islami Gulbuddin and the Jama'at al-Da'wa the sole participants. The same source says the JDQS won forty-five seats to the provincial council, while Hizb won thirty-five, and that

Jamil al-Rahman declared victory and began to establish his administration.<sup>19</sup> The seven-party alliance that had agreed to form the Afghan Interim Government refused to recognize the 1989 election results and they appointed a rival governor and *shura* to be based in Asadabad.<sup>20</sup> After Jamil al-Rahman declared the independent Salafi Emirate, Hekmatyar's forces launched an offensive against them, which continued into 1991 and ended with the assassination of Jamil al-Rahman in August 1991.

According to the JDQS, the *ahl al-hall wa'l-'aqd* of Kunar, the people of substance and standing, gathered for a *shura* in Asadabad on 7 May 1990, and agreed to recognize Jamil al-Rahman as amir. He was given *bay'a* by all those present. Then, on Friday 11 May 1990, before a gathering of thousands of *mujahidin*, Jamil al-Rahman publicly declared himself *amir al-mu'minin* (commander of the believers) and that Kunar was an independent Islamic emirate to be governed henceforth according to a Salafi interpretation of *shari'a*. The timing and symbolism of course foreshadow similar subsequent declarations in Kandahar and Mosul by Mullah 'Umar and Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, respectively, a fact not lost on contemporary jihadis. The new emirate continued to communicate its goals and its successful implementation of *shari'a* law in its magazines and in television productions aired in the Gulf.

The Salafi Emirate of Kunar may have gained control of the province, but its sovereignty was to be short-lived. After the first Gulf War began in August of 1990, the Emirate and Hekmatyar's Hizb took opposing sides, 'Jamil al-Rahman supporting his Saudi and Kuwaiti patrons and Hekmatyar the Muslim Brotherhood in its anti-American, anti-monarchy position.<sup>21</sup> This was attended by broader fractures in Salafi and jihadi movements, with the *ulama* of the Saudi Sahwa taking an increasingly dissident tone and the establishment Ahl-i-Hadith and state *ulama* retrenching in support of the Saudi regime. Hekmatyar's and Jamil al-Rahman's forces began to increasingly clash inside Kunar, and after a particularly deadly attack in July 1991, by Hizb forces on JDQS men in the Nawa Pass, the Saudi ambassador attempted to intervene, proposing a joint Saudi-Pakistani official mediation effort. This was rebuffed by Hekmatyar.<sup>22</sup> Also in the summer of 1991 a reconciliation committee of prominent Afghan Arabs was formed in an effort to end the fighting and keep the focus on the Najib regime. Osama Bin Laden claims that he was himself a member of this committee and that he sat with Jamil al-Rahman, the latter's deputy Sami'ullah, and Hekmatyar in meetings to try to arrange a ceasefire.<sup>23</sup> The Afghan Arab writer and brother-in-law of Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi, Abu Qudama al-Hami, writes that the reconciliation committee sent to Bajaur to

hold talks with Jamil al-Rahman in August was composed of Bin Laden, Abu Hajir al-Iraqi, Abu Ibrahim al-Iraqi, and 'Adnan Zarzur.<sup>24</sup> These efforts ultimately failed. On 30 August 1991, Jamil al-Rahman was at a family compound in Bajaur, the Pakistani tribal agency bordering Kunar, when a young Egyptian *mujahid* journalist named 'Abdullah al-Rumi approached the shaykh, produced a small pistol, and shot Jamil al-Rahman to death. According to Hami, Rumi had traveled to Bajaur with the Arab reconciliation group and was known to Jamil al-Rahman. The latter's guards subsequently killed 'Abdullah al-Rumi, though there are differing accounts of exactly how and when. In the wake of the *amir al-mu'minin*'s death, Hekmatyar's forces were able to quickly consolidate their control of the region and complete the dismantling of the Salafi Emirate, though the JDQS lived on as a marginal Salafi group (and more recently some of its former leaders have aligned with the Islamic State in Khurasan). According to Tomsen, a week after Jamil al-Rahman's killing the Saudi King Fahd sent his personal special envoy, 'Abdullah al-Muhsin al-Turki, and five other senior officials to Islamabad to lobby President Ghulam Ishak Khan, Army Chief Mirza Beg, and the ISI to spare the Emirate. Their appeal was spurned, but at a press conference with the delegation afterwards the secretary general of Pakistan's Foreign Ministry declared that 'Saudi Arabia and Pakistan had agreed to work together for promotion [sic] of unity among Afghan Mujahidin.'<sup>25</sup>

### *Jamil al-Rahman and the Ahl al-Hadith of the Gulf*

As Stéphane Lacroix has pointed out, Jamil al-Rahman's death was indicative of the fact that the 'increase in danger in Afghanistan was both a cause and effect of a parallel escalation in tensions in Saudi Arabia between Sahwis and Ahl al-Hadith loyalists in the wake of the Gulf War.' These and other fault lines emerging within transnational Islamism at the time are apparent in the varieties of reaction to Jamil al-Rahman and his Emirate, both from within Gulf Salafi circles as well as among the Afghan 'Arab volunteers. The JDQS had from the beginning the broad support of what Lacroix has called the loyalist Ahl al-Hadith in the Gulf, beginning with Muhammad Nasir al-Din al-Albani and including 'Rabi' al-Madkhali, and of mainstream Saudi Salafi officialdom, including 'Abd al-'Aziz Bin Baz and Muhammad ibn al-'Uthaymin. Messages of support and congratulations by Bin Baz and Ibn 'Uthaymin were published in the Kunar Emirate's Arabic magazine *al-Mujahid*, and Bin Baz and Madkhali contributed articles to the publication.<sup>26</sup> As Lacroix puts it, the JDQS 'became

a satellite of the Ahl al-Hadith, and unofficially of the Saudi government, on Afghan soil.<sup>27</sup> No other *mujahidin* group in Afghanistan obtained the same level of support, a fact which caused its own rifts among the resistance groups and their various Arab supporters.

One of the reasons for this support was the view within the Saudi regime and among Gulf Salafis that Jamil al-Rahman's party was somewhat insulated from both the infidelities of everyday Afghans and the extremist or Muslim Brotherhood tendencies running rampant in Peshawar.<sup>28</sup> Arab visitors who stayed in Jamil al-Rahman's guesthouses were discouraged from visiting other guesthouses, and the JDQS and the subsequent Kunar Emirate provided training to Arabs separate from both Afghans and other Arabs at camps within Kunar. The Saudi largess allowed the JDQS to pay stipends to Gulf volunteers far higher than anything available to volunteers joining other organizations.<sup>29</sup> This isolation, in turn, helped to encourage *takfiri* tendencies among the JDQS and its Arab supporters, in contrast with the deep unease with *takfir* characterizing the loyalist Ahl al-Hadith and Saudi clerical establishment. Ironically, then, the most-favoured Afghan *mujahidin* faction for the Saudi religious elite became the originators of the jihadi *takfiri* current.

The JDQS also drew the support of what Lacroix has called the rejectionist Ahl al-Hadith, in particular in the person of Muqbil al-Wadi'i. As we will see, Muqbil did not offer unqualified support, and registered his opposition to the JDQS' participation in elections in the run-up to the announcement of the Kunar Emirate, among other political concerns. Another ideologue identified with a more anti-establishment strain of Salafism, Abu Basir al-Tartusi, also supported Jamil al-Rahman from early on in the war, and rhetorically connects that support to his subsequent mentoring of Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi. I will go through the writings of Tartusi, al-Wadi'i, and al-Madkhali, before turning to Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi's mentions of Jamil al-Rahman and the Kunar Emirate. I will then turn to a survey of the Afghan Arab literature on Jamil al-Rahman, including by early leaders of al-Qaeda.

### *Abu Basir al-Tartusi*

One of the first Salafi ideologues—himself an Afghan Arab—to support Jamil al-Rahman was the famous Syrian Salafi jihadi writer Abu Basir al-Tartusi (Mustafa 'Abd al-Mun'im Halimah). Born in Tartus in 1959, Tartusi was raised in a Salafi family and active in the anti-government Islamist uprising in Syria that raged until 1982, when Hafiz al-Asad's regime destroyed the movements'

stronghold of Hama. In 1976 Tartusi was jailed by the Asad regime for seventeen months for writing anti-regime graffiti on the walls of his hometown. In 1980 he moved briefly to Jordan, then to Iraq, Pakistan, and ultimately Kunar, Afghanistan in 1981. He met ‘Abdullah ‘Azzam in Peshawar and accompanied him on one of his trips into Afghanistan, though it was with Jamil al-Rahman that he spent most of his time during his Afghan sojourn.<sup>30</sup> In a lengthy interview with the Jordanian newspaper *al-Sabil*, Tartusi himself recounts his Afghan experience, beginning in early 1981:

I met there [Peshawar] with a number of shaykhs and leaders of the Afghan jihad at that time. They include Hekmatyar, Sayyaf, and afterwards ‘Abdullah ‘Azzam. [...] I also met afterwards with Shaykh Jamil al-Rahman, God have mercy on him. I stayed with him at his private residence and worked with him and with his group for more than five months. I had the honor of joining the fronts that were affiliated with the shaykh. [...] Afterward, and after several travels and stops, I returned to Jordan. [...] Among the neighbourhoods I lived in while in Jordan were the Ma’sum and al-Kassarat neighbourhoods in al-Zarqa. One of the things that should be mentioned in this brief narrative is that the house of Abu Mus’ab al-Zarqawi, God have mercy on him, in the neighbourhood was only dozens of meters away from my house. This was in 1987. The brother [Zarqawi] had just started practicing religion. He befriended me and read some of my books.<sup>31</sup>

In Tartusi’s recollection, his encounters with Jamil al-Rahman and Abu Mus’ab al-Zarqawi are recounted successively and therefore stand in some relation to each other, if nothing else in the mind of Abu Basir. It certainly seems more than a coincidence that Tartusi should go from being a supporter of one of the very few modern Islamist leaders to declare a Salafi jihadi emirate to being the mentor of one of the other such leaders. In any case, Tartusi’s relations with these two men provides a direct link between Jamil al-Rahman’s Salafi Emirate and Zarqawi’s Islamic State. As will be seen, this was not the last time the two would be linked in jihadi discourse.

Among Tartusi’s better-known works of Salafi jihadi jurisprudential argument is his ‘Ruling of Islam on Democracy and Party Pluralism’, an uncompromising rejection of electoral politics as beyond the clear bounds of Islamic law. In the interview with *al-Sabil*, Tartusi is asked about his view of Muslims who do not reject parliamentary elections, and he replied: ‘We say they are mistaken and we disagree with them, but we do not say that they are nonbelievers.’<sup>32</sup> This willingness to overlook what he perceives as a violation of a clear red line in *shari’a* may explain Tartusi’s silence on the issue of the

JDQS' holding of elections in Kunar, something that other jihadi writers are quick to condemn.

### *Muqbil al-Wadi'i*

The lengthiest treatment of the affair of Jamil al-Rahman by a leading Salafi is in a book by the Yemeni Salafi scholar Muqbil bin Hadi al-Wadi'i. Muqbil (d. 2001), the most prominent Yemeni Salafi during the Afghan jihad, remained a supporter of Jamil al-Rahman despite the latter having participated in elections, though he does mention their disagreement over this issue in the book. Entitled *The Killing of Shaykh Jamil al-Rahman al-Afghani*, the book is a collection of disparate items relating to Jamil al-Rahman. It begins with a brief introduction by Muqbil explaining that he was moved to publish the collection after learning from friends who had been in the training camps in Kunar that some Afghans had been saying things to the effect that 'when we finish with the communists we'll turn to the Wahhabis.'

The first chapter reproduces a lengthy interview with Muqbil that appears to have been conducted by a representative of the JDQS around the time of the Kunar elections, perhaps for *al-Mujahid*. This is followed by an essay by Muqbil written soon after the assassination of Jamil al-Rahman that discusses their relationship. Another interview, this time apparently with a Yemeni publication, is printed next, followed by three elegies for Jamil al-Rahman by three different Gulf poets: Muhammad bin Ahmad al-Farraj, 'Abullah bin Muhammad al-'Unayzi, and Abu 'Abdullah Hanzala al-Qasimi. A statement from the JDQS is printed next, describing the killing of Jamil al-Rahman and lauding their Arab supporters, without whom, the statement says, the JDQS could not exist. Next is a lengthy essay by Jamil al-Rahman, 'Regarding the word "Wahhabi"', and finally a brief note summarizing what is known about Jamil al-Rahman's killer, 'Abdullah al-Rumi.

In the first interview, several questions revolve around sectarian relations with Shi'as and Sufis. Muqbil states that the Shi'a are Muslims and that their blood and money is illicit to other Muslims, and emphasizes that the *da'wa* must be done gently. He recommends that the JDQS bring in distinguished *ulama* from Najd, the Hijaz, and Egypt. Asked about his views on the Afghan jihad, Muqbil responds at length in extremely critical terms of the *mujahidin* parties, discussing the evils of *hizbiyya* (party politics) and the importance of ideological unity (*jam' al-kalima*). He lauds the JDQS for being the first to enter the jihad. Asked about the inter-party conflicts over leadership following



the Soviet withdrawal, Muqbil expresses his disappointment at the turn of events, saying that after all the sacrifice, 'we expected to hear of an *amir al-mu'minin* and not a president of a republic.' He says that fighting over seats is outrageous, and that voting and elections are *taghutiya*, illegitimate and un-Islamic tyranny. He says, 'I advise patience and careful consideration for brother Jamil al-Rahman, and to not get involved in this *jahili* election of which God has revealed nothing.'

In his essay after the killing of Jamil al-Rahman, Muqbil dwells on the campaign by Hekmatyar's Hizb-e Islami to defame the Salafi Emirate of Kunar by calling them 'Wahhabis', blames the Hizb for Jamil al-Rahman's assassination, and charges that the Hizb conspired in this with the Muslim Brotherhood. He frequently bemoans the injustice of Hekmatyar's opposition to the JDQS, inasmuch as the latter had built Qur'an memorization schools, published useful religious knowledge in *al-Mujahid*, established the *hudud* punishments, and raised the *da'wa* of the Ahl al-Hadith. He writes that 'one of the brothers' went to Hekmatyar and asked about Qur'an schools and establishing the *hudud* punishments and the latter said, 'no, now is not the time for such things. Rather we must begin first with fighting those Wahhabis who want to destroy our heritage.' He says that in this way Hekmatyar and his ilk declared *takfir* against Ibn Taymiyya, Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab, Bin Baz and the community of (Salafi) *ulama*.

He then discusses the matter of the elections in Kunar and of his opposition to Jamil al-Rahman's participation. He writes that while in the past he told his brothers that he did not believe an Islamic state (*dawla Islamiyya*) would be established in Afghanistan, now by God's favour they had expelled the Russians. Yet as for the Islamic state, the first to fight against it are the Muslim governments. He then writes:

Two years ago brother Jamil al-Rahman, God have mercy on him, wrote to me and said, 'we are having elections, should we enter them? If we don't enter them we will become isolated and we won't be able to do *da'wa*.' I answered, I advise you not to enter the elections because they are *taghuti*, but then he entered the elections and I consider this to have been wrong. As for the *da'wa*, they cannot prevent you from this. The powers of mighty governments are unable to prevent *da'wa*.

In the next item, an interview with what appears to be a Yemeni publication, Muqbil refers to his contentious relationship with Bin Laden and confirms that he encouraged Arabs to go fight alongside Jamil al-Rahman. Early in the interview he refers to Hekmatyar several times, saying that while he does not



consider Hekmatyar a *kafir*, he does deem him a client of enemies of Islam and says that those who fight alongside Hekmatyar are fighting *fi sabil al-Shaytan*, in the path of Satan. The interviewer then asks, 'In days past when your advice was sought about the jihad in Afghanistan you would say to go fight under Hekmatyar or Jamil al-Rahman. Were you getting misinformation or something?' Muqbil replies:

As for Hekmatyar, we learned that when in the company of Arabs he would declare himself a Salafi when asked about his *'aqida*, but when in the company of Afghans he would speak evasively. It is apparent now that he has turned on his heels. I do not recall saying 'go with Hekmatyar,' but I did say 'go with Jamil al-Rahman or Osama,' though I did not know then about Osama's *hizbiyya*.

The three elegiac poems that are then reproduced include little that is of historical interest, but they are nonetheless significant in that they attest to Jamil al-Rahman's popularity among Najdi Salafi writers. In the final poem, a *nuniyya* by Abu 'Abdullah Hanzala al-Qasimi, the poet speaks of the unjust killings of Arabs and Afghans in Kunar, denounces Hekmatyar and his perfidy, and extols the Salafism of Jamil al-Rahman and his following in Kunar. In the statement from the Jama'at al-Da'wa that is printed following this poem, Qasimi is identified as the amir of the training camp for Arabs in Kunar operated by the JDQS.<sup>33</sup> The final notice in the book, regarding the identity of Jamil al-Rahman's killer, says that 'Abdullah al-Rumi quarrelled with Hanzala al-Qasimi when the former briefly attended the training camp.<sup>34</sup>

Muqbil's book is an important testimony to the support for Jamil al-Rahman among the one of the leading lights of rejectionist Ahl al-Hadith Salafism in the Gulf, a support that was remarkably resilient in the face of the JDQS' participation in an election. Hardline opposition to electoral politics is a hallmark of Salafi jihadi political thought. It would be nearly unthinkable, for example, for ISIS to announce that they would participate in elections in Iraq or Syria. Yet for the Salafi supporters of the Afghan jihad there were few ideal objects of patronage among the *mujahidin* leaders, and Jamil al-Rahman stood out as the most thoroughgoing Salafi.

### *Rabi' bin Hadi al-Madkhali*

Several of the passages in Muqbil's book are cited in another short work, a brief biography of Jamil al-Rahman that also collects several statements by Rabi' bin Hadi al-Madkhali about Jamil al-Rahman.<sup>35</sup> Madkhali is one of the

most influential Salafi ideologues of the twentieth century, though the influence of his eponymous movement has waned in recent years. The hallmarks of Madkhalism are, aside from a general commitment to Salafism as a *manhaj*, political quietism and non-opposition to the powers that be. Madkhali famously considered Sayyid Qutb, the ideological architect of revolutionary jihadism, a *kafir*, and his anti-Qutbism is evident in the passages about Jamil al-Rahman. Of all of the Salafis cited thus far, Madkhali is most fulsome in his praise of Jamil al-Rahman, and makes no mention of the issue of the elections. This is to be expected, given that Jamil al-Rahman was known for his close working relationship with the Saudi regime and, as will be seen in the critique by Maqdisi, a compliance with Saudi wishes that comports with the tenets of Madkhalism.

The first passage by Madkhali comes from his essay, 'One Group not Many' (*Jama'a wahida la jama'at*). In it he refers to 'Abd al-Rahman 'Abd al-Khaliq, an Egyptian-born Salafi ideologue whose writings espouse the ideas of Sayyid Qutb and who was involved with the establishment of one of Madkhalism's main ideological rivals within Gulf Salafism, the Kuwaiti Society for the Revival of Islamic Tradition (*Jam'iyya ihya' al-turath al-Islamiyya*). Madkhali writes:

I asked 'Abd al-Rahman 'Abd al-Khaliq al-Ikhwani, is not the *da'wa* of Jamil al-Rahman like that of Muhammad bin 'Abd al-Wahhab in terms of '*aqida*, *manhaj*, and jihad, and in application of the law of God, and in the establishment of the *hudud*, and the transformation of evils in the state of Kunar? Tell me of a single Salafi who denies that this righteous Islamic alliance is dissimilar to the following of Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab. Tell me, of these groups who are fighting them [the JDQS], was this alliance sanctioned? Or were all nefarious and immoral methods used to assemble this group from among the grave-worshippers, the rejectionists [Shi'a], the esotericists (*batinis*), the hizbis, and of those who were among the most intense haters of the Salafis, the Muslim Brothers and the Qutbists? They tore down the schools and institutes, killed the Salafis and Jamil al-Rahman.<sup>36</sup>

In another passage Madkhali extolls the Salafi Emirate's establishment of Salafi education, and contrasts their success in this regard with the difficulties facing the movement at the time. He also draws a distinction between Jamil al-Rahman and 'Abd Rabb al-Rasul Sayyaf on this point, claiming that Sayyaf refused to implement Salafi education because the materials conflicted with the Afghans' beliefs.

Further extolling the Salafi Emirate and denouncing its enemies, Madkhali links the episode of Kunar with subsequent events in Algeria and Sudan. He

writes that a campaign against Salafism and the implementation of Islamic law ties together all three countries and their respective Islamist conflicts, and he places the blame primarily on the Muslim Brotherhood. This is the first text to draw a parallel between the Salafi emirate of Kunar and the (unsuccessful) attempt to establish a Salafi Caliphate in Algeria in the mid-1990s during the civil war there. Madkhali writes:

The decimating of the Salafis began in Afghanistan, where they [forces of the Brotherhood] killed Jamil al-Rahman and abolished his Salafi Islamic government (*hukumatihī al-Islamiya al-Salafiyya*) [...] Then they took their *fitna* to Algeria and they destroyed the Salafi *da'wa* and annihilated the Algerian population, such that the death toll stood at two hundred thousand, and this annihilation continues to this day and yet they do not repent. In Sudan they repeated their attacks on the Salafis in their mosques while they worshipped, killing them at prayer.<sup>37</sup>

In one passage Madkhali refers several times to the Salafi Emirate as a state of *tawhid wa'l-jihad*, a significant phrase that was used both as the name of the first iteration of Zarqawi's group in 'Iraq (*Jama'a al-Tawhid wa'l-Jihad*) and as the name of the clearinghouse of Salafi jihadi texts operated by followers of Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi (*Minbar al-tawhid wa'l-jihad*). The prayer with which he ends this passage appears to have been answered, as the Salafi state in its current incarnation is certainly more 'magnificent' than the Salafi Emirate of Kunar. Madkhali writes:

In these days, a state of tawhid and the sunna (*dawlat al-tawhid wa'l-sunna*) was established in the region of Kunar in Afghanistan at the hands of the Mujahid Shaykh Jamil al-Rahman (God have mercy on him) and his group from the people of the Quran and the Sunnah, so the rejectionist Shi'a (*rawafidh*) and the superstitious conspired with governments and parties against them, with the Communists and Crusaders and Zionists behind them, and they fell upon this group and destroyed their emirate based on tawhid and jihad and the book and the Sunnah, and assassinated its amir Shaykh Jamil al-Rahman, and annihilated the emirate of tawhid and jihad (*imara al-tawhid wa'l-jihad*). We ask God to bring it back more magnificent than before, victorious against its enemies, and vex through it the people of falsehood and fancy everywhere.<sup>38</sup>

*Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi*

The most critical of the major Salafi writers, who also happens to be the other major Salafi jihadi mentor of Zarqawi and probably the most influential Salafi jihadi writer alive today, is Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi. He doesn't mention the election in his criticism of Jamil al-Rahman, however, but focuses his rebuke on the latter's subservience to the Saudi regime. Maqdisi's writings denouncing the Saudi royal family were beginning to rise in popularity in the Peshawar scene at the same time as the emergence of the Kunar Emirate, and his works placed him squarely against both the loyalist Ahl al-Hadith of the Gulf and any who supported the Saudi regime. The excesses of al-Qaeda in Iraq and ISIS have drawn his criticism in more recent years, yet one of Maqdisi's criticisms of the Kunar Salafis is their vehement opposition to the declaration of *takfir* against King Fahd. Ironically, the Kunar Salafi emirate was, as already noted, a locus for the emergence of the type of *jihadi takfiri* violence that Maqdisi would later condemn in Iraq and Syria.

In his book-length denunciation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the 'Clear Revelations of the Unbelief of the Saudi Regime', Maqdisi makes several references to Jamil al-Rahman. In one passage, criticizing the Saudi-supported *mujahidin* groups for becoming stooges of the Saudi monarchy, Maqdisi writes that the JDQS magazine *al-Mujahid* never criticized the Saudis and even destroyed an entire issue deemed unacceptable to the King.<sup>39</sup> Writing further of how Saudi millions had bought the obedience of their clients, Maqdisi says that it went to such an extent that when some zealous Arab youth at Jamil al-Rahman's training camp in Kunar were speaking about the *takfir* (declaring infidel) of King Fahd, the people in charge shouted 'This camp is Fahd's, so whoever declared *takfir* against him gets out of his camp!' He further claims that Jamil al-Rahman accepted a number of conditions from the Saudis limiting what could be discussed in *al-Mujahid*. Among the forbidden topics were urban or guerrilla warfare, as this was unacceptable with respect to the internal security of the Kingdom; criticism of Arab governments or mention of the sins of their presidents; and criticism of the Jews and Christians.<sup>40</sup> Getting specific, Maqdisi says that in issue 5/6 of *al-Mujahid*, the first edition, which he claims was burned, included the phrase 'the prisons of the tyrant (*taghut*) of Syria', while a re-issue simply said 'the prisons of one of the tyrants.'<sup>41</sup>

*The Afghan Arabs' View*

There is a much greater variety of opinion concerning Jamil al-Rahman among rank and file Afghan Arabs, many of whom have recorded their impressions of the Salafi Emirate of Kunar, than among the Salafi 'ulama of the period. As we have seen, many of the leading lights of twentieth century Salafism held Jamil al-Rahman in high esteem. From the official, Saudi-backed cleric Bin Baz to the dissident Salafi jihadi Abu Basir al-Tartusi, Jamil al-Rahman had firm support in the Gulf Salafi establishment. Maqdisi stands out as having nothing but criticism for Jamil al-Rahman's group, seeing it as a stooge of the infidel Saudi regime. The Yemeni Salafi Shaykh Muqbil, on the other hand only mentions in passing that he disagreed with Jamil al-Rahman's decision to participate in elections, but he otherwise defends the JDQS.

The picture is much murkier in the Afghan Arab literature, in which most of what has been written about Jamil al-Rahman and the Salafi Emirate is negative. The most common bone of contention with the Salafis in these writings is their bigotry against Afghans and the latter's religious practices. Some of them note the deep antipathy for Jamil al-Rahman expressed by many of the Afghan *mujahidin* because of this bigotry. Indeed, several Arabs refer to ways in which the hatred for Jamil al-Rahman's 'Wahhabism' among some of the Afghans made for dangerous circumstances for other Arab volunteers, and not just in northeastern Afghanistan. Among the several al-Qaeda leaders that have recorded their views of Jamil al-Rahman, the general consensus is very much a reflection of al-Qaeda's current relationship with ISIS. Bin Laden was never critical of Jamil al-Rahman and spoke of him with immense praise shortly after the latter's assassination, but the rest of the al-Qaeda leaders who write of him do so critically. Again, the main point of contention is the rigidity of Salafi sectarianism among the JDQS.

The first of the Afghan Arabs, and its preeminent memoirist, Mustafa Hamid, writes of Jamil al-Rahman in similar terms as Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi, making much of his subservience to Saudi Arabia. He writes that Saudi influence in Afghanistan grew significantly after 1986 and reached its zenith after the assassination of 'Abdullah 'Azzam in November of 1989. He says that the Saudis had in Jamil al-Rahman their own special means of influence (*was'ail al-khassa*), and their own magazine in *al-Mujahid*.<sup>42</sup> Kunar was famous, Hamid writes, not for its mountains, forests, and gemstones, but for its Salafis, the most famous of whom was Jamil al-Rahman.<sup>43</sup>

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Hamid, who worked as a journalist while participating in the Afghan jihad and contributed writings to such *mujahidin* publications as the Haqqani network's *Manba' al-Jihad*, claims to have written several articles for *al-Mujahid* in 1989.<sup>44</sup> After the disastrous *mujahidin* attack on Jalalabad in May 1989 he wrote about the failed assault and 'tried to write about my favorite subject, guerrilla warfare, but they [*al-Mujahid*] stopped publishing my articles and I broke ties with them.'<sup>45</sup> After the assassination of Jamil al-Rahman he was invited to meetings at which the succession of the Emirate's leadership was discussed. According to Hamid, it was 'obviously a purely Saudi government affair.'<sup>46</sup> Much like Tomsen, he blames Pakistan for the collapse of the Emirate. After the Soviet withdrawal Jalaluddin Haqqani had convened a national organization of *mujahidin* field commanders to decide on a strategy for the overthrow of Najibullah independent of Pakistan's military leadership, whose motives many of the commanders distrusted. The National Commanders Shura saw early success in the takeover of Khost in 1991, the first major city to fall to *mujahidin* control.<sup>47</sup> Hamid writes:

After the victory in Khost, Pakistan tried to direct the course of the war toward a sectarian conflict, and ordered the leaders of the seven parties in Peshawar to declare war in Kunar on the Salafis under the leadership of Jamil al-Rahman. The "magnificent seven" obliged, and the operation ended with the assassination of Jamil al-Rahman himself at the hand of a young Egyptian zealot connected somehow to Hekmatyar.<sup>48</sup>

Another Arab veteran who'd fought in the southeast alongside the Haqqanis and who knew Mustafa Hamid, the Yemeni Mustafa Badi', takes a more critical view of the Salafis of Kunar. Badi' is clear in his memoir that he resented the bigotry of many of the Afghan Arabs with regard to the Afghan people's practice of Islam, and he established an independent front for Arabs in Khost that was in a sense an anti-Salafi front. It is not surprising then that he writes in extremely dismissive terms about Jamil al-Rahman. In one passage extolling the beauty, simplicity, and piety of the Afghan Muslims' approach to Islam, he complains of people from the Arabian Peninsula who claim to be Salafis and possessors of the faith of the pious ancestors (*al-salaf al-salih*) declaring that the Afghans are *mushrikin* (idolaters, polytheists) who commit heretical innovations (*bid'a*). 'These so-called Salafis', writes Badi', 'with their sectarianism and Saudi riyals, are introducing rifts between the Afghan and Arab *mujahidin*.'

## THE SALAFI EMIRATE OF KUNAR

There emerged so-called 'Jamil al-Rahman' and he declared a Saudi Sunni Salafi Islamic Emirate inside the province of Kunar after it had been liberated by all the *mujahidin*. I can say that the manufacturing of Jamil al-Rahman as the *amir al-mu'minin* in 1989, and the strenuous efforts to spread the Wahhabi way among the Afghans, is the same as the manufacturing of Mullah Muhammad 'Umar! So Jamil is our Taliban in miniature, but the idea is the same.<sup>49</sup>

Badi' later repeats the view that the Salafi Emirate of Kunar and the Taliban Emirate were parallel phenomena. He recounts an episode after the disastrous Jalalabad battle, in which an Arab angry with Osama Bin Laden chastised the latter for his failure to form an alliance with Hekmatyar in that conflict. The man asked Bin Laden, 'why have we not once heard you speak of your willingness to form an alliance with Hekmatyar, whose offices your government has shut down because of his fight with the *muwabbhidin* [monotheists] in Kunar?' Badi' continues:

An Afghan named Jamil al-Rahman<sup>50</sup> appeared there and claimed to be the leader of the Salafi muwabbhidin, and had declared himself *amir al-mu'minin* and *amir* of Islamic Kunar. Kunar was the first province to be completely liberated and it was under the control of Hekmatyar. If the Taliban idea had a beginning this was it—and this was also the beginning of steps taken by Saudi Arabia against Hekmatyar and the announcement of their displeasure with this man who'd spurned the designs of America and the West.<sup>51</sup>

Abu Qudama al-Hami, the Afghan Arab brother-in-law of Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi and a noted Salafi jihadi writer, might be expected to have a rather different opinion on Jamil al-Rahman than the avowedly anti-Salafi Mustafa al-Badi'. Yet in his long memoir about the Afghan jihad, Hami strikes many of the same notes, indicting Jamil al-Rahman and his Arab Salafi followers as arrogant and divisive puppets of Gulf states who did more harm than good in the anti-Soviet struggle.<sup>52</sup> Hami was a supporter of Zarqawi from the latter's days in Afghanistan, and in the late-2000s took to defending Zarqawi against Maqdisi's critiques and levelling his own against the Salafi shaykh. For Hami, Maqdisi represented the trend of 'the *jihad* of *da'wa*, not fighting', while Zarqawi represented the sound trend of jihad and its jurisprudence.<sup>53</sup> Of the Salafis of Kunar, however, 'in name they were arrogance, in substance they were hate.'<sup>54</sup>

Hami devotes a section in his memoir to 'modern Salafism and the Afghan Jihad' which centers on Jamil al-Rahman and his followers. He writes that some of the Arabs who came to the Afghan jihad did not actually wage jihad, were ignorant of Islam, and took liberated Kunar as the field in which they could



play at being heroes. With their significant media capacities, they transmitted to the Arab world a distorted picture of events in the conflict and defamed the character of the Islam of the Afghans, which their clerical supporters in the Gulf—Hami calls them *al-‘ulama al-Sultab*—accepted at face value and used as the basis for fatawa supporting the Kunar Salafis. This, Hami writes, led to bloodshed and the killing of innocents in Kunar.

Hami writes further that the Saudi *ulama* who supported the Kunar emirate viewed the other *mujahidin* as waging a war against the Salafis and obstructing the people from a Salafi tawhid. He writes that Burhanuddin Rabbani tried to rectify matters by communicating the reality to these *ulama*, but to no avail. Hekmatyar and other leaders had their faults, but the Arabs in Kunar would take the worst possible view of their words and actions, taking statements out of context and giving them the worst possible interpretation.<sup>55</sup>

Most of Hami’s criticism is reserved for the Afghan Arab volunteer supporters of Jamil al-Rahman and the latter’s clerical backers in the Gulf, though clearly he had contempt for the entire Salafi movement in Kunar on account of its mistreatment of other Afghans for their manner of Islamic practice and belief. This is somewhat ironic given Hami’s staunch support of Zargawi, whose promotion of sectarian violence in Iraq would later be compared negatively to the ‘errors’ made in this regard by Jamil al-Rahman in Kunar. As for Jamil al-Rahman himself, Hami is more measured. He writes:

The Afghan Salafi leader Jamil al-Rahman and the leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar were equal in terms of ‘ilm and fiqh, though Hekmatyar may have had a greater capacity for the arts of war and politics. Jamil al-Rahman made many trips abroad and would then return with a different face, and Kunar became a mini-embassy for the Arabs. [...] Jamil al-Rahman had a special relationship with the government *ulama* [*‘ulama al-sultab*] who distorted the image of the Afghan *mujahidin*.<sup>56</sup>

Another early Afghan Arab, the Egyptian Ayman Sabri Faraj, writes at length about Salafis of Kunar and their Arab supporters. Faraj sounds many of the same notes heard from other sources surveyed above—that the party had ample support from Saudi Arabia and the Gulf ‘Wahhabi’ establishment, and that the party’s claim to being Salafi and its reputation for making use of *takfir* made it extremely controversial among other Afghans. Faraj notes that Shaykh ‘Aqil, the director of the Saudi Red Crescent in Quetta and in charge of the Holy Mecca Hospital, directed his ‘massive financial capacities, though I don’t know if they came from the budget of the Red Crescent or from donations’, to *mujahidin* ‘based on the extent of their embrace of the Salafi *da’wa*.’ The lion’s



share of this largess, according to Faraj, went to the party of Jamil al-Rahman.<sup>57</sup> But Faraj also provides several anecdotes regarding Salafi Arab volunteers who moved from Kunar to Kandahar at the end of the 1980s and attempted to establish jihad fronts there, only to be met with violent opposition by other Afghan *mujahidin*. All of the anecdotes point to the basic elements of the Kunar Salafi emirate that would be held up as an object lesson in later jihadi discourse: an arrogant insistence on religious purity by volunteers from the Gulf and other Arab countries that so alienated the locals that it led to internecine violence.

### *Al-Qaeda and the Salafis of Kunar*

Several members of al-Qaeda have written regarding their relations with or impressions of Jamil al-Rahman and his Salafi emirate. Bin Laden gave a lecture and eulogy for Jamil al-Rahman days after the latter's assassination, in late August or early September of 1991. According to Flag Miller, the frank discussion of inter-*mujahidin* conflicts in this lecture indicate it was more likely given in Peshawar than in Saudi Arabia, as Bin Laden was careful to avoid such references when speaking in the Gulf.<sup>58</sup> References in the lecture to current events in Bajaur with which Bin Ladin was involved also suggest that it was given in Pakistan. In the talk, which begins with Bin Laden offering a brief prayer for divine mercy upon Jamil al-Rahman, Bin Laden always speaks highly of the slain shaykh, extolling him as 'one of the luminaries of the jihad and *da'wa*', 'among the greatest of *mujahidin*.' He relates a story he heard from Jalaluddin Haqqani regarding Jamil al-Rahman's initiation of hostilities against the Afghan regime in the 1970s, and goes on to say, 'He, God's mercy upon him, had precedence in the jihad, and he was widely acknowledged with homage regarding his *da'wa* to God (exalted). He opened institutes and schools to call the people to true *tawhid* [*al-tawhid al-sahih*]. And we ask God to forgive him and bless his soul and to render unto those who killed him what they deserve.'<sup>59</sup>

Bin Laden then discusses his three-month-long efforts working to reconcile Hekmatyar's Hizb-e Islami and the Kunar Emirate, which involved a reconciliation committee being formed with the permission of the two parties. The committee was, at the time of his lecture, meeting in Bajaur to seek a ceasefire in Kunar and to consider all of the evidence with regard to the assassination of Jamil al-Rahman. He then lectures about jihad and the obligations to carry it out wherever Muslims are oppressed, be it Palestine or

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Burma, the bulk of his remarks consisting of *hadith* and stories from the life of the Prophet Muhammad and his companions. He then opens the floor to questions and fields several regarding the Kunar Emirate. Bin Laden is asked for his opinion on the accusation that Jamil al-Rahman was working for the security services (*mukhabarat*) and that he was funded by a specific country—which seems a diplomatic way of asking if Jamil al-Rahman was spying on Arabs in Afghanistan for Saudi Arabia's *mukhabarat*. Bin Ladin basically evades the question, calling it an offense against Jamil al-Rahman's honor and against his religion (*fi dinihi*). Later Bin Laden is asked if it is true that anyone who waged jihad in Afghanistan other than with Jamil al-Rahman was thereby astray. He responds with the typical diplomacy that would characterize his efforts over the years to unify Sunni jihadi movements:

We sat with the Shaykh [Jamil al-Rahman] and we sat with his successor Shaykh Sami'ullah and we sat with his assistant Ghulamullah, and they did not say this. Rather, in a public assembly, in the presence of other shaykhs, and in the presence of Shaykh Salih bin Humayd [Imam of Grand Mosque in Mecca, Saudi chief justice] and some of the Shaykhs from the sanctuary [i.e., Mecca], they [the Kunar Salafis] said: 'We see that our brothers of the seven parties are Muslims and believers, and if we find fault with them it is that they haven't given to the da'wa the extent of effort we think they are able to.' But they [the Kunar Salafis] see that they [the seven parties] are Muslims, that their jihad is true.

The only early member of al-Qaeda known to have been directly involved with the Kunar Emirate was Sayf al-'Adl, the Egyptian military officer who played a leading role in al-Qaeda's early training camps and is currently the nominal head of al-Qaeda's military committee. Mustafa Hamid—who is Sayf's father-in-law—relates Sayf's account in one of his own voluminous historical memoirs. Hamid writes that, aside from the closed and clandestine camps of the Egyptian *tanzims*, all of the other training camps had to be careful about offending Saudi Arabia. The Saudi security services (*mukhabarat*), Hamid writes, were able to establish camps that were under their direct control and funded by them, a phenomenon that grew more important after 'Jamil al-Rahman's Salafi group came under their control.' Hamid says little actual military training happened in these Kunar camps, but rather 'ideological classes about Afghan Hanafi heresy.' He then presents a report from Sayf al-'Adl, in which the latter claims to have spent a month at the Kunar training camp and two months at their fronts. Sayf writes that trainees were given no more than three days of training on use of the Kalashnikov before being sent to the fronts,

and that he broke with the Kunar group after his offer to establish a more suitable and longer training period was rebuffed.<sup>60</sup>

‘Abdullah Muhammad Fazul, the Comoran who joined al-Qaeda as a teenager and who rose to become the organization’s confidential secretary and leader of its operations in East Africa before his death in Mogadishu in 2011, also wrote about the Kunar Salafis in his own lengthy memoir. Fazul also took a dim view of the Kunar Salafis’ *takfiri* tendencies and their self-righteousness. He does not refer negatively to Jamil al-Rahman himself, whose assassination he describes as a grave sin, though he does describe Jamil al-Rahman as ‘a Salafi shaykh whose first priority was fighting polytheism (*al-shirk bi-llah*) and innovation (*bid’a*).’<sup>61</sup>

### The Kunar Emirate in Contemporary Jihadi Discourse

As noted above, Salafi and jihadi observers of the Kunar Salafi emirate have compared it to the emergence of Salafi and anti-Salafi inter-jihadi conflict in Algeria and Sudan, as well as to the rise of the Taliban. More recent jihadi writings draw an explicit line between the Kunar emirate and the emergence of Salafi-jihadi state forms in Iraq and Syria, including Zarqawi’s al-Qaeda in Iraq and the present-day Islamic State. These texts bear witness to the continuing significance of the Kunar emirate in the global jihadi imaginary and highlight the similarities between the Islamic States of Kunar and Iraq and al-Sham.

One of the most famous references to this parallel is in a letter from Ayman al-Zawahiri to Abu Mus’ab al-Zarqawi, sent in the summer of 2005. In the letter Zawahiri counsels Zarqawi not to turn the Iraqi insurgency into a Sunni-Shi’a civil war, and advises at length that Zarqawi not insist on a rigid, Salafi position, denouncing all Hanafis, ‘Asharis, etc., but rather strive to include as wide a cross-section of the Muslim masses in the resistance to the American occupation. He urges Zarqawi not to denounce the non-Salafi *ulama*, writing:

[I]t is a duty of the mujahed movement to include the energies of the Umma and in its wisdom and prudence to fill the role of leader, trailblazer, and exploiter of all the capabilities of the Umma for the sake of achieving our aims: a caliphate along the lines of the Prophet’s, with God’s permission. I do not know the details of the situation where you are, but I do not want us to repeat the mistake of Jamil al-Rahman, who was killed and whose organization was shattered, because he neglected the realities on the ground.<sup>62</sup>

As had the Salafi takfiri jihadi GIA in Algeria under Jamal Zitouni in the mid-1990s, to whom Zawahiri had written an eerily similar letter of counsel in 1995, Zarqawi did repeat the mistake of the Kunar Salafis, and the Sunni tribes of northern Iraq turned against and very nearly destroyed what, in the end, was calling itself the Islamic State of Iraq.<sup>63</sup>

Since then, the comparison has been invoked in other contexts involving Salafi jihadi state forms. On 14 August 2009, the leader of the Jund Ansar Allah jihadi group in Palestine, ‘Abd al-Latif Musa (Abu Nur al-Maqdisi), declared from his Ibn Taymiyya Mosque in Rafah the creation of an Islamic emirate in the Gaza Strip. In response, Hamas forces besieged the mosque, in the course of which Musa and over a dozen of his followers were killed. Days after the siege a supporter of Jund Ansar Allah, one Abu Hafis Sufyan al-Jaza’iri, published an essay denouncing the ‘massacre’ to the al-Fallujah Forum website, in which he writes:

What happened in Rafah was not an innovation in the affairs of the Muslim Brotherhood, rather this tragedy brings to mind a tragedy from the past and makes us recall the tragedy of Kunar, wherein Shaykh Jamil al-Rahman was killed at the hands of those counted among the Muslim Brotherhood current of that time.<sup>64</sup>

In November of 2013, a statement from jihadi writer ‘Abdullah bin Muhammad was tweeted by a pro-ISIS twitter account (Shu’un Istratigiyah, @Strategyaffairs) offering a long list of comparisons between the Syrian and the Afghan-Soviet conflicts. After pointing out that in both conflicts there is conflict and competition among the jihadi parties, he writes that Jamil al-Rahman announced an Islamic Emirate in Kunar and ‘represented the Salafi trend in Afghanistan, and the Gulf ‘ulama supported him. However, his exclusion of the rest of the Afghans made them see it as a betrayal of their joint march of the jihad’, a quite similar phenomenon to that playing out between ISIS, the Nusra Front and al-Qaeda at the time.

### *Conclusion: Muslim Dost and the Trajectories of Salafi Jihadism*

During the course of the Afghan-Soviet conflict, Islamist activism in the Gulf underwent a number of profound transformations. The popularity of the Afghans’ plight in the Kingdom gave different sectors of the religious environment there strong incentives to provide support and to attract resources from the state. As Hegghammer and Lacroix’s work has shown, a key mover in shaping the Arab support infrastructure, and subsequently the transnational

Arab *mujahidin* movement, was the Brotherhood-associated network of Islamist activists and NGOs centered in the Hijaz. As Lacroix puts it, 'the pioneers of the Afghan jihad had all belonged to the Muslim Brotherhood, 'Azzam in Jordan and Bin Laden, Samir al-Suwailim (known as Khattab, future leader of the jihadis in Chechnya), and Musa al-Qarni in Saudi Arabia.'<sup>65</sup> But in Kunar a very different group of Gulf-based Islamists provided support and volunteers, centered in a modern Salafi organizational tradition going back to al-Jama'a al-Salafiyya al-Muhtasiba (JSM), which hit a critical turning point in 1979 with the JSM's Juhayman al-'Utaybi and his followers taking over the Grand Mosque and declaring the advent of the Mahdi. Some associated with the JSM, like Madkhali, became vocal regime loyalists and rehabilitated themselves partly through their support of the Kunar Salafis. Others, like Muqbil, remained rejectionist but in accord with the Wahhabi establishment over supporting Jamil al-Rahman. After the Gulf War the Gulf Salafis who supported transnational jihad moved away from the Saudi regime the '*ulama al-sultah* and became ideologically more Qutbist, or embracing of the *takfiri* line. In other words, Salafi Arab 'Afghans once loyal to the Kunar Emirate were increasingly embracing Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi and distancing themselves from Bin Baz.<sup>66</sup> That tradition of Salafi jihadism, now ascendant in ISIS, has its roots in Kunar.

One Salafi jihadi's career is emblematic of these transformations. 'Abd al-Rahim Muslim Dost, the managing editor of the Urdu magazine of the JDQS, and a 'cultural advisor' to Jamil al-Rahman in the 1980s, has personally made the journey from the Grand Mosque seizure in 1979 to a prominent position in ISIS, via the Salafi Emirate of Kunar. Born in Afghanistan around 1960, he moved with his family to Peshawar in 1978 to join the Afghan Islamist resistance there. The following year he moved to Saudi Arabia and joined the JSM, claiming to have been a part of al-'Utaybi's group during the seizure of the Grand Mosque. According to his jihadi biography, he managed to flee his detention and return to Pakistan, where he studied under Shaykh Badi' al-Din al-Sindi. Sindi (d. 1996) was a South Asian Salafi who was involved with the JSM during his several years' residence in Saudi Arabia, but was deported to Pakistan following the Grand Mosque attacks because of his JSM ties.<sup>67</sup> Muslim Dost became an early supporter of Jamil al-Rahman and the JDQS, and as already noted helped produce a significant portion of the JDQS' literature. He was arrested in Pakistan in 2001 on suspicion of involvement with the Taliban and imprisoned in Guantanamo Bay until 2005.<sup>68</sup> After his release he wrote a Pashto memoir, *The Broken Chains of Guantanamo*, in which he claims to have

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broken with Jamil al-Rahman around the time of the creation of the Kunar Emirate because he felt the latter had turned Kunar into his personal kingdom and had become too close to the Saudi and Pakistani governments.<sup>69</sup> In other words, Muslim Dost took a very similar line on Jamil al-Rahman as Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi. In July of 2014 he became the first prominent South Asian/Afghan jihadi to declare allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, and he was later named the deputy leader of the Islamic State in Khurasan. The Salafi jihadism which he had helped to nurture in Kunar in the 1980s, then a small and maligned movement much resented by other emergent forms of transnational jihadism, has come full circle. The Caliphate of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, as is clear from the life trajectory of Muslim Dost, is some ways a descendant of the Salafi Emirate of Kunar.

MULTINATIONAL *MUJAHIDIN*THE HAQQANI NETWORK BETWEEN SOUTH ASIA AND  
THE ARABIAN PENINSULA*Don Rassler*

In 1986 Jalaluddin Haqqani was injured while trying to repel an assault by Soviet and Afghan forces on Zhawara, a heavily fortified base that functioned as the Afghan commander's headquarters. The base was strategically placed close to Pakistan's border so it could be easily resupplied, and so Haqqani's fighters—and Jalaluddin himself—could benefit from the safe-haven that existed across Pakistan's international border. Thus, after Jalaluddin was injured he only had to travel a short distance to seek treatment in Miranshah. And it was there that he was treated by an Arab doctor.<sup>1</sup> Several years later, after Jalaluddin's brother Muhammad Isma'il was injured in battle, he too sought treatment in Miranshah.<sup>2</sup> But, according to an insider account, Isma'il was treated by an Afghan doctor.<sup>3</sup> The Arab doctors who were present in Miranshah at the time criticized the treatment provided by the Afghan doctor, and claimed that Isma'il—who was later flown to Rawalpindi for more advanced treatment—died as a result of the poor initial care he received.<sup>4</sup> These two examples speak to luck, the randomness of war, and how assistance and expertise can contribute to different outcomes. These two cases also speak to the importance of

collaboration during the anti-Soviet jihad, and how different networks intersected in tactical, operational and strategic ways during that conflict.

Despite the support provided by actors from the Arabian Gulf to the group that Jalaluddin Haqqani would go on to lead, and that in later decades would be taken over by his sons, most—if not all—treatments of the Arabian Gulf-Haqqani connection have been generic and vague. By leveraging a number of unique primary sources that provide insight into the specific nature of those ties, this chapter seeks to close part of this gap, and it does so through a case analysis of the Haqqani network's ties to two countries in particular: the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Saudi Arabia. This chapter specifically aims to document what is currently known about how the Haqqani network established and developed its early infrastructure in these two countries; identify some of similarities and differences between Jalaluddin's ties to each nation, and the dynamics that drove or complicated those ties; and sketch how Haqqani network infrastructure has evolved over time in each place. Based on an analysis of material available at the time of writing, it will argue that the early development of Jalaluddin Haqqani's network in the UAE happened in a more entrepreneurial way than the Afghan commander's network in Saudi Arabia, as institutional factors appear to have played a stronger role in establishing the latter. It also makes the case that for the Saudi establishment Jalaluddin Haqqani, due to his pragmatism, operational effectiveness and innovative tendencies, was someone who was an asset—who could not be ignored—but, at times, was also a risk, and thus whose activity and dealings needed to be managed. The author would be remiss not to add that while he has gone to great lengths to find and include a diversity of sources, the paucity of material on the topic at hand at times does not lend itself to complete triangulation of all source material.

### *United Arab Emirates*

The story of Jalaluddin Haqqani's early ties to the UAE, and the infrastructure and support network he would go on to create there, is at its heart a transnational one, as these ties were initially forged by inputs provided by a small group of Afghans tied to Jalaluddin and by two Egyptians, who were living in the UAE in the late 1970s. These two Egyptians, Mustafa Hamid (also known by his kunya Abu Walid al-Masri) and Ahmed al-Minyawi, played instrumental roles in laying the conditions for a closer and more enduring partnership between Jalaluddin's outfit and private and state networks in the



Gulf, as well other Afghan *mujahidin* leaders. Given what Jalaluddin and the Haqqani network would go on to accomplish in the decades to follow, the story behind how the Haqqani's Gulf-based network was created is also instructive for two main reasons. First, this story reinforces the value derived from Jalaluddin's early outreach to the Gulf and some of the personal characteristics that distinguished him from his Afghan *mujahidin* peers, specifically his entrepreneurial and innovative tendencies and his ability to recognize opportunities that others either shunned or did not see. Second, given the central role played by the Haqqani network in multiple Afghan conflicts, it is telling that Jalaluddin's Gulf network emerged from the intersection of religious social networks in the UAE, the Afghan and Pakistani diaspora in the Gulf, the seeds of the Arab foreign fighter movement, and personalities involved in local media—and that these forces came together in an ad-hoc, entrepreneurial way.

### Early Outreach and Initial Ties

Jalaluddin's outreach in the Gulf, and to the UAE in particular, started well before the Soviets invaded Afghanistan in December 1979. The person in charge of setting up and running Jalaluddin's early network in the Gulf in the late 1970s was Mawlawi Aziz Khan, an individual who—after spending five years in the Gulf working on behalf of Jalaluddin during that early period—returned to Miranshah to serve as Director of the Haqqanis' *Manba Uloom madrasa*.<sup>5</sup> According to Mawlawi Aziz Khan, from a very early stage Jalaluddin was already sending small teams of people 'to the Gulf to promote the cause of the Afghan jihad there.'<sup>6</sup> For example, in April of 1979 Jalaluddin sent a delegation to the UAE led by Mawlawi Adam to share information about the situation in Afghanistan and his group's efforts to oppose the communist-allied government in Kabul.<sup>7</sup> While in the UAE Mawlawi Adam linked up with and was supported by Mawlawi Tahir, 'an imam at a mosque in Abu Dhabi, and [who] had previously been a judge in Herat, Afghanistan.'<sup>8</sup> One of the individuals whom these two men reached and inspired was Mustafa Hamid, a young Egyptian living in the UAE. Mustafa Hamid, and his friend al-Minyawi, asked if they could travel to Afghanistan so they could see the situation themselves.<sup>9</sup> This led to an offer made by Sayed Ahmad, Mawlawi Tahir's eldest son, who invited the two men to travel with him to Afghanistan during a trip he was making in May.<sup>10</sup> Mustafa Hamid was not able to travel at that time so he postponed his trip. After Sayed Ahmad returned from Afghanistan, he

displayed to Hamid 'photographs showing the success of the *mujahidin* at Haqqani's front.'<sup>11</sup> This made Mustafa 'more determined to go' and he and two friends, including al-Minyawi, departed for Afghanistan that June.<sup>12</sup> They were personally accompanied by Mawlawi Tahir during that visit, and after arriving in Pakistan they traveled 'from Peshawar to Miranshah and from there into the south-east corner of Afghanistan.'<sup>13</sup> And it is there that Hamid and al-Minyawi made direct contact with Jalaluddin Haqqani, who let his Egyptian visitors participate in two ambushes.<sup>14</sup> It was also during this trip that al-Minyawi suggested to Jalaluddin and others that 'he'll seek to get a visa for the *mujahidin*'s delegation headed by [Abdul Rasul] Sayyaf' for a visit to the UAE and that he would do so by 'claiming that it [the delegation] is a Pakistani delegation that wants to collect donations for a religious school.'<sup>15</sup>

The Afghans immediately agreed to this suggestion, and the other Afghan leaders that Sayyaf chose to accompany him as part of the delegation included Muhammad Nabi Muhammadi, Sibghatullah Mojaddedi, and Jalaluddin Haqqani.<sup>16</sup> After Minyawi and Hamid made it back to the UAE they acted quickly, but their efforts to facilitate the trip, which took place in 1980 and has been described as being the 'first visit made by Union [Ittihad] delegates to the Gulf' were not without obstacles.<sup>17</sup> The challenges that these two Egyptians faced in securing the necessary approvals for the Afghans' trip illustrate the initial hesitancy that countries like the UAE had in supporting the Afghans and their jihad against the communists. As the story is retold by Hamid, al-Minyawi's efforts proved instrumental and he leveraged his position to make this historic visit by the Afghan delegates happen. But to be successful in his effort al-Minyawi had to work creatively around UAE's bureaucracy, as there was a belief that some within the UAE might not have approved such a trip.

At the time, our friend al-Sa'idi [al-Minyawi] used to work as the secretary of Dr 'Izz al-Din Ibrahim, the Cultural Counselor of the president of the country [UAE] [...]. The doctor was part of the Muslim Brotherhood in his youth, and he showed sympathy with the project of our first trip to Afghanistan [...]. Among the authorities of Dr 'Izz al-Din's office was to submit visa requests, for Islamic delegations that wished to visit UAE, to the passports office. Al-Minyawi passed all the paperwork through the official channels; presenting the Afghan delegation as one of the traditional ones that collects donations from the state's mosques and from its Islamic committees. No one from the government employees paid attention to the names of that delegation. The Afghan delegation arrived at Abu Dhabi airport, as I was waiting for them alongside al-Minyawi [...] We took them to one of the luxury hotels in which they stayed as state guests [...]. Shortly after the news

spread, government officials were in shock when they knew that a high-level Afghan *mujahidin* delegation led by (Professor) Sayyaf was visiting the state, especially the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. [The] Foreign Affairs Ministry, Ministry of Religious Affairs and the Office of the Cultural Counselor were in a chaotic situation; trying to figure out how this Afghan delegation got their visas. However, Minyawi kind of expected that, and he was prepared, as he was able to get the approval of Shaykh Surur's office, the most powerful man in the government who used to head more than half of its official directorates. While Surur himself was outside the country when the visit took place, no one in the government dared to ask him anything after his return.<sup>18</sup>

During the visit the Afghan delegation, which was escorted by the two Egyptians, travelled to a number of cities in the UAE and met with a diverse mix of Emiratis. The delegation also 'joined many meetings inside mosques [...] [and] was able to hold many meetings with the Afghan diaspora, especially those who lived in the industrial area of al-'Ayn, an area popular with Afghan and Pakistani Pashtuns.<sup>19</sup> Besides making local connections, the real goal of the visit was for the delegation to meet with the President of the UAE, Shaykh Zayed. According to Hamid, that 'wasn't an easy thing to do, as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was so upset and the President's office had no idea of how those people came, who brought them and why.'<sup>20</sup> Sayyaf was successful in his effort to meet with Shaykh Zayed, however, and during their meeting Zayed expressed his interest in supporting the Afghan cause. Yet, before committing to do so he wanted Sayyaf to meet leaders in Saudi Arabia so the UAE could coordinate its assistance with its neighbour.<sup>21</sup> Other documentation from Hamid illustrates that Sayyaf was eventually successful in his quest to secure official financial support from the UAE government.<sup>22</sup>

### Distinctions and the Politics of Support

The emergence of different perspectives and priorities among the Afghans on that trip, included the divergent views held by Sayyaf and Haqqani on what type of support the Emiratis and other Gulf states could offer, provided an initial reflection of who each of these Afghan leaders were and the element or level of jihad that they represented. For example, Jalaluddin wanted Arabs to join the jihad and his front lines in battle, and while in the UAE he suggested to Sayyaf that he incorporate this offer as part of his pitch to the Emiratis during a press conference that took place during their stay.<sup>23</sup> Sayyaf did not do so, even when directly asked by a reporter if the Afghans were in need of volunteers, as

his—and Mojaddedi's—view at the time was that the Arab community should be providing funds and other material support—not volunteers.<sup>24</sup> This did not deter Jalaluddin as that same year, possibly during that same trip, Haqqani conducted an interview with *al-Ittihad* newspaper in which he stated:

Even though the revolutionary fighters are great in number, this does not mean that the revolution should close its doors to those who wish to participate in the jihad. Scores of volunteers from various parts of the world are coming to us to join the ranks of the *mujahidin*. They are doing so of their own volition. If the Islamic world truly wants to support and help us, let it permit its men and young men to join our ranks. There is a tendency in most of the Islamic countries which wish to help us to present aid and food as a kind of jihad. Some even think that this is the best kind of jihad. This, however, does not absolve the Muslim of the duty to offer himself for the jihad.<sup>25</sup>

The significance of such an open call, and one made by an Afghan commander—a full four years before Abdullah Azzam's revolutionary (*fard 'ayn*) fatwa—should not be underestimated. As this author and Vahid Brown have expressed elsewhere, 'Clearly Haqqani, and not 'Azzam, was the innovator in this regard.'<sup>26</sup> The politics of this issue also appear to have been influenced and complicated by the local politics of aid and place in the UAE. For example, according to Hamid, individuals influenced by the Muslim Brotherhood held many critical government positions in the UAE, and many Muslim Brotherhood members were opposed to the idea of sending Muslim Arab youth to fight in Afghanistan.<sup>27</sup> To dissuade people from this idea they 'spread news stating that Afghans don't need volunteers, and they have enough men. They are only in need of money to buy weapons and they are in need of in-kind assistance [...] like clothes and medics. To support their argument they spread a fatwa issued by an unknown source stating that jihad in Afghanistan is *fard kifaya* [collective duty] and not *fard 'ayn* [individual duty].'<sup>28</sup>

It is telling that this distinction between Sayyaf and Haqqani emerged early. It is likely that this distinction—at least in part—helped to enhance Jalaluddin's attractiveness to certain Gulf supporters, as well as pave the way for Jalaluddin to create his own independent Gulf funding pipeline in the years to come.

Despite the various political issues that Sayyaf and Haqqani had to navigate, there are a number of indications that the 1980 Ittihad visit was a success for the group, and an immediate one for Jalaluddin's network in particular.<sup>29</sup> Indeed, according to an exchange between Fatehullah and Nezamuddin Haqqani—two of Jalaluddin's field commanders, which took place one month

after Jalaluddin's June 1980 *al-Ittihad* interview the group had already developed a martyr family assistance programme funded by donors in the Emirates and other Arab countries.<sup>30</sup> Another indication were the donations that would later flow to Haqqani's group from private supporters in the Emirates. Hamid, who 'witnessed personally the piles of gold that were donated by the women in Abu Dhabi alone', remembers the level of public support as being 'unbelievable.'<sup>31</sup> Jalaluddin, and representatives of his network in the Emirates, also inspired Afghans—like Wali Muhammad—who were from southeastern Afghanistan but were living in the UAE, to travel back home so they could fight alongside Jalaluddin and his men.<sup>32</sup> The roles played by some of these men were significant, as Wali Muhammad served for a period as a deputy to Jalaluddin's brother Ibrahim.<sup>33</sup>

### From Ties to Infrastructure

By the late 1980s Jalaluddin had already established permanent infrastructure, locations for potential supporters to visit and numbers for them to call, in the Emirates and Saudi Arabia. From 1989 onwards these locations and numbers, as well as a Pakistan-based Habib Bank account to which supporters in the Gulf could send their donations, were openly advertised in every edition of the Arabic language versions of Jalaluddin Haqqani's monthly magazine—*Manba al-Jihad* (Fountainhead of Jihad).<sup>34</sup> While Jalaluddin had two offices in Saudi Arabia, he had twice as many locations in the Emirates with facilities and representatives in Sharjah, al-Aiyn, Abu Dhabi and Dubai. These offices were used to collect funds, process fighters, and conduct other tasks.<sup>35</sup> During this period his personal emissary in the Emirates was an Afghan named Mawlawi Ghazi Mirjan.<sup>36</sup> A story recounted by Hamid, provides a window into how in the late 1980s and early 1990s Jalaluddin would leverage his two Egyptian friends and the infrastructure he had in place in the UAE to build support amongst ordinary Emiratis and interact with leaders there.

It had been five years since I last had such a quiet and uninterrupted meeting with Haqqani. After all that time, I went back to being his driver and body guard, as well as his tour guide in the Emirates. He sat next to me in the car, and his personal emissary, Ghazi Mirjan, sat in the back. We left Abu Dhabi in a luxurious car that belonged to our friend 'al-Minyawi heading to Sharjah where we planned to break our fast at the office of the Afghan *mujahidin* who were Haqqani supporters. After the evening prayers, Shaykh Haqqani was scheduled to deliver a speech at the

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Ajman mosque, and at eleven he will proceed to meet the Emir of Ajman [Shaykh Humaid] in his palace which was not far from the mosque.<sup>37</sup>

It is not known if Jalaluddin Haqqani's Yemeni wife, who is reported to have lived in Abu Dhabi, played a role in supporting her husband's activities in the Emirates.<sup>38</sup> What can be established, however, is that by the late 1980s Jalaluddin had direct access to Shaykh Zayed. As personally recounted by Jalaluddin, sometime before his famous conquest of Khost garrison in 1991 he received an invitation from Shaykh Zayed, via the UAE's Ambassador in Pakistan, to visit the Emirates.<sup>39</sup> Jalaluddin was not able to travel to the UAE at the time due to his battlefield preparations, but after achieving success in Khost he took Shaykh Zayed up on his offer and met him there.<sup>40</sup> The infrastructure Jalaluddin built, or portions of it, existed until at least the late 1990s—and it is likely that the Haqqani network still has representatives—or trusted individuals who are active on the network's behalf—who operate throughout the Emirates today. An internal al-Qaeda document that was recovered in Afghanistan shortly after the US invasion provides a glimpse into the persistence of Jalaluddin's infrastructure in the Emirates during this time, and the roles played by Jalaluddin's brother, Khalil Haqqani, and his son, Nasiruddin Haqqani, the latter of which would later take financial control of the family's Gulf-based network.<sup>41</sup> The document is a summary of interrogations conducted by al-Qaeda members, Saif al-Adel, Abu Jandal and Abu Hafs al-Masri, of several Arabs who had been detained in Kandahar due to suspicions al-Qaeda had about their associations.<sup>42</sup> Two of the individuals who were interrogated speak of the Haqqanis' infrastructure in the Emirates, and one of them mentions how he 'sent youth [presumably to Afghanistan] through' the office of Haqqani in the Emirates. He also collected money for Haqqani in the UAE. This episode illustrates how 'Haqqani's office' in the Emirates functioned as a place to send both funds and volunteers to Afghanistan, and how Jalaluddin's on the ground fundraisers were not just Afghans or Pakistanis, but Arabs too.

### UAE-Haqqani Connections Post 9/11

The public profile of the Haqqani network's activity in the Emirates diminished significantly after the 9/11 attacks. Given the political and security environment since that day, the Haqqani network has not been able to operate as visibly as it did during the 1980s/90s, and as a result the group's infrastructure has likely been pushed underground. A number of sources indicate that the Emirates

still play an important role for the group, but details about the scope of the Haqqani infrastructure there remain thin. And it is not clear if recent, public efforts by the UAE government, such as the blacklisting of the Haqqani network there in 2014, were mostly symbolic or if they have further complicated the group's ability to operate and collect funds in the Emirates in practice.<sup>43</sup> If anything, the UAE's proscribing of the Haqqani network is likely to drive the organization and its operations even further underground.

The few details that exist mostly come from declassified intelligence summaries, typically provided by the United States, that have been used to support the designation of individuals who fundraise or play other important roles for the Haqqani network. Before his assassination near Islamabad by unknown gunmen in 2013, Nasiruddin Haqqani ran the Haqqani network's financial operations.<sup>44</sup> According to the US Treasury Department, Nasiruddin engaged in 'regular travel' to the UAE during the 2000s to raise funds for the group. Khalil Haqqani, Jalaluddin's brother, and Fazl Rabbi made similar fundraising trips to the Emirates over that same time period as well.<sup>45</sup> Others have suggested that Jalaluddin's other brother Ibrahim also assists the network in the UAE.<sup>46</sup> Nasiruddin's fundraising responsibilities appear to have been taken over by Khalil and Yahya Haqqani, who in 2013 worked together to 'coordinate the transfer of supplies from the United Arab Emirates.'<sup>47</sup> Anas Haqqani, before his arrest in the Gulf in 2014, also played a financial role for the network, and it is believed he assumed control of this portfolio after Nasiruddin's death.<sup>48</sup> While the exact circumstances of Anas' capture are still murky, Anas and his travel companion—Hafiz Rashid, who was then serving as the Haqqani network's military commander for Eastern Afghanistan—had travelled to Qatar to visit one of the five Taliban members (Hafiz Rashid's brother Mohammad Nabi Umari) who had been released in exchange for US soldier Bowe Bergdahl.<sup>49</sup>

In addition to facilitating donations from Emiratis, Haqqani network activity in the UAE post 9/11 is also believed to have functioned as a mechanism through which Afghan traders from the southeast could send business related commissions back home as a form of 'security investments'—to 'ensure that the militants do not interfere with or destroy their businesses or properties in their home districts.'<sup>50</sup> As noted by an internal NATO document leaked to the press that summarized thousands of records of militants detained in Afghanistan, 'Assessing the legitimacy of [...] funds transfers can be extremely difficult.'<sup>51</sup> The report goes on to add that:



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As with most Taliban financial transactions, funds are transferred in small amounts, typically under \$10,000. To further complicate matters, Afghan and Pakistani expatriates working throughout the Gulf Region generate a continuous, yet legitimate flow of currency back to family members at home. This can lead to additional confusion over what is or is not insurgent-related. Many detainees have pointed out that even legitimate financial transactions between family members or businesses [in the Gulf] may later be donated, at least in part, to insurgent organizations.<sup>52</sup>

The Haqqani network, and the Taliban more broadly, are aware of these seams and likely seek to exploit them. There are also some who believe that the Haqqani network ‘co-owns and operates a number of construction firms’ and controls real estate holdings in the UAE.<sup>53</sup> There is a lack of firm details to corroborate these claims, however, as establishing direct Haqqani ownership has proven difficult.<sup>54</sup>

### *Saudi Arabia*

While a lot less is known about the establishment and evolution of the Haqqani network’s ties with entities in Saudi Arabia, an analysis of existing material speaks to there being a number of similarities between the ties Jalaluddin had with the UAE and the Kingdom. For example, Jalaluddin had high-level access to state leaders in both places, and in part served as a favoured son—due to his battlefield effectiveness—to both countries. He also leveraged religious networks in both places, and specifically those to which he had direct social ties, to establish his network. Jalaluddin’s actions in and ties to both countries also reinforce how the Afghan commander was good at recognizing opportunities, and how he would act in entrepreneurial, and in sometimes creative, ways to solve problems and contribute to broader causes. There were also some important differences. One of those key differences appears to have been Jalaluddin’s starting point in Saudi Arabia. Unlike the UAE, where Hamid and al-Minyawi had to creatively work around the system to secure visas and arrange high-level meetings, the network in Saudi Arabia to which Jalaluddin had access at the time—as a result of the ties he had through his alma mater, Darul Uloom Haqqaniyya—was already more developed. Thus, unlike the apparently ad hoc nature of Jalaluddin’s initial UAE engagements, Jalaluddin was in a better position to hit the ground running in Saudi Arabia, and likely to do so through more formal and direct channels to the Kingdom’s elite.



Although it is difficult to judge based upon existing information, it also appears that Jalaluddin's ties in the UAE were more mixed and diverse, across multiple segments of society. Another difference, which appears to have led to some tension in the Haqqani-Saudi relationship, pertain to the personality, independence and effectiveness of Jalaluddin Haqqani—and his degree of ideological alignment with the Kingdom, especially when compared to others like Jamil al-Rahman. From a Saudi perspective, it is likely that the combination of these factors led to Jalaluddin's lack of controllability, or predictability, as an actor, and in this regard Jalaluddin at times might have been a double-edged sword for the Kingdom. Someone who was at once too operationally effective to ignore and not support, but—given his independent style and the critical role he played in championing ideas that would lead to organizational innovation and critical developments for the Arab Afghans, some of which the Kingdom viewed as threatening—he was also someone with whom the Kingdom needed to be a bit more cautious. From what can be discerned from the historical record, Jalaluddin and Saudi Arabia, however, were able to navigate these roadblocks, as—despite concerns that the Kingdom might have had—Jalaluddin's network, when viewed in aggregate, was certainly more of an asset than a liability.

#### Early Ties and Network Possibilities: Jalaluddin, Haqqaniyya and the Saudi Relationship

Little is known about Jalaluddin Haqqani's initial ties, or first visit to, Saudi Arabia. It is likely that Jalaluddin's approach to setting up his network there mirrored, at least in part, the approach he took in the UAE, whereby Jalaluddin opportunistically leveraged individuals within his social network, like Mawlawi Aziz Khan, who Jalaluddin dispatched to the Gulf in the late 1970s, and the broader institutional connections to which he had access.<sup>55</sup>

The story of Hanif Shah, an Afghan from Paktia who Jalaluddin sent to Saudi Arabia in 1978 for a two-year period, is instructive in this regard. His story illustrates how Jalaluddin's personal and institutional ties often blended together and complemented each other, and were used by Jalaluddin to extend the reach of his network and advance his own, as well as other Afghan, interests. Prior to traveling to Saudi Arabia Hanif Shah studied at a school in the Zadran tribal areas in southeastern Afghanistan under the tutelage of Nezamuddin Haqqani, a classmate of Jalaluddin's from Darul Uloom Haqqaniyya in Akora Khattak, Pakistan who would later serve as a deputy to the Afghan commander.<sup>56</sup>

Then, after spending some time across the border at a school in Miranshah, Shah spent at least three years studying at Darul Uloom Haqqaniyya himself, where for a year Jalaluddin served as his teacher.<sup>57</sup> As Vahid Brown and the author have pointed out elsewhere, Darul Uloom Haqqaniyya—and in particular a network of its students—played a very central role in the development of the Haqqani network and its operations, as many of Jalaluddin's key commanders were Afghans 'from the neighborhood' who also spent time with Jalaluddin at that institution in Pakistan.<sup>58</sup> Hanif Shah was part of that initial cohort and was a trusted entity, which is reflected by the responsibilities he had while serving under Jalaluddin.<sup>59</sup>

A review of the publications of Darul Uloom Haqqaniyya, and in particular its monthly Urdu language journal *al-Haq* (in publication since 1965) provides a window into Haqqaniyya's own ties to the Kingdom, and the network in Saudi Arabia to which one of its famous teachers likely had access.<sup>60</sup> Jalaluddin Haqqani's ties to Haqqaniyya and its leadership are deep: Jalaluddin spent six years studying at Haqqaniyya, beginning in 1964, where he earned the equivalent of a doctorate; taught at the institution, had numerous members of his extended family graduate from there, and has since enjoyed close and enduring ties with that institution's leader, Sami ul-Haq. Based upon what can be established about Haqqaniyya's ties to Saudi Arabia, Jalaluddin likely had special access to Saudi Arabia as a result of the special relationship that he had with his alma mater.<sup>61</sup>

A number of articles in *al-Haq* speak to Haqqaniyya's ties to the Saudi royal family, and the high-level connections that Sami ul-Haq has in the Kingdom.<sup>62</sup> Jalaluddin's access to the Saudi royal family and the country's political elite, while not as openly disclosed in later years, appears to have been somewhat similar. A classified, internal Saudi Arabian document, which was recently released by the organization Wikileaks, is revealing about the high-level of ties and access to Saudi leaders that Jalaluddin and his son, Nasiruddin, enjoyed—even during the post 2001 period.<sup>63</sup> According to the document, Jalaluddin Haqqani was a holder, and had been a holder for quite some time, of a Saudi passport.<sup>64</sup> (This is not that surprising, as according to Mustafa Hamid the Saudis gave Sayyaf a Saudi passport after his first trip to the Kingdom.)<sup>65</sup> The document also reveals that in February 2012, Nasiruddin personally met with Saudi Arabia's Ambassador to Pakistan, Abdul Aziz Ibrahim Saleh al-Ghadeer, to 'convey to the Saudi king his father's wish to be treated in a Saudi hospital.'<sup>66</sup> A separate classified Saudi document, which is dated later, indicates how a senior official working in Saudi Arabia's Foreign Ministry recommended that

Saudi Arabia treat the elder Haqqani.<sup>67</sup> Additional reflections about the nature of Jalaluddin's high ties to the Kingdom comes from material that Jalaluddin published himself. For example, after his successful siege of Khost in 1991 Jalaluddin proudly reprinted a copy of an Arabic letter that he received from Saudi Prince Turki al-Faisal congratulating him on his victory.<sup>68</sup> At the time Prince Turki al-Faisal was serving as Head of Saudi Arabia's General Intelligence Directorate and as chief liaison to the Afghan *mujahidin*. A slew of articles published in *al-Haq* during the 1980s and 1990s are even more helpful, as they reveal more about Haqqaniyya's relations with religious institutions in Saudi Arabia, many of which are controlled and run by the Saudi government. These articles are also insightful as they provide an inside glimpse into Saudi Arabia's ideological outreach to Haqqaniyya, what that outreach looked like during the early years of the Afghan jihad, and how those ties evolved over time. For example, less than a year after the Soviets invaded Afghanistan, the Kingdom appointed a Saudi teacher, Mawlana Mustafa from Jamia Islamia Medina (or the Islamic University of Medina), to the faculty at Haqqaniyya.<sup>69</sup> The connection between the two seminaries was clearly established well before that, however, as according to *al-Haq* Sami ul-Haq studied at Jamia Islamia Medina sometime during the 1970s, as did others affiliated with Haqqaniyya during the 1960s—apparently shortly after Jamia Islamia was founded.<sup>70</sup> Thus, even when Jalaluddin was a student and was teaching at Haqqaniyya he had exposure to places like Jamia Islamia. The faculty appointments that took place in the 1980s apparently were part of a broader exchange between the two institutions, as in August 1981 a delegation of faculty from Jamia Islamia Medina visited the seminary to deepen ties.<sup>71</sup> One of the individuals who was part of that delegation was Mawlana Sher Ali Shah, a Haqqaniyya graduate who was serving on the faculty at Jamia Islamia at the time.<sup>72</sup> This trip was followed up by a separate trip made to Haqqaniyya by the Vice Chancellor of Jamia Islamia, Shaykh Abdullah bin Abdullah al-Zayid, that November. During his visit, the Shaykh complimented Haqqaniyya on its dissemination of religious knowledge and in rallying support for the jihad in Afghanistan. He also offered financial, as well as moral support, for that latter effort and to Haqqaniyya.<sup>73</sup>

### Hajj and the Broader Utility of Hajj Travel

Another lens that provides insight into Haqqani network ties and activity in Saudi Arabia comes from what we know about the trips that Jalaluddin and some of his commanders made there, and how Jalaluddin leveraged the Hajj

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to engage in other business in the Kingdom that would benefit his network.<sup>74</sup> A number of secondary sources have documented how during the 1980s/1990s Jalaluddin, and likely others working for him, would set up tents during the Hajj to network, solicit donations, and maintain ties with existing donors.<sup>75</sup> Steve Coll best places Jalaluddin's approach, and how these trips were useful to the Afghan commander, into context:

I think for many of the Saudis and other Gulf Arabs who would encounter him at Hajj, where he would raise money in tents in Mecca, he was a symbol of Afghan bravery and independence in the face of the Soviet occupation. He came to understand through his own acquisition of Arabic language and his frequent visits to Saudi Arabia that his reputation was something that could lead him to resources that many of his rival commanders could not possess.<sup>76</sup>

A lengthy interview with Jalaluddin, conducted after his successful siege of Khost and printed in Haqqani's *Nusrat al-Jihad* magazine, provides a first-hand glimpse into how these trips would work, and how—at least during the early 1990s—they would function as a form of donor maintenance. As stated by Jalaluddin:

After fulfilling my Hajj duty, I met with some Saudi *ulama*, prominent individuals, government officials, as well as some of the Afghans who live there [...] prominent people and government officials in Saudi Arabia wanted me to meet with them. Those people have given all kinds of assistance to the jihad in Afghanistan, and so the people of Afghanistan are grateful. But lately, Arab people's views of the Afghan jihad have been skewed. For instance, on the one hand, the Russians, the Iranians and Najib are involved in a conspiracy, while on the other hand there have been large divisions within the ranks of the *mujahidin* as a result of wrongdoings by some of our factional leaders. Therefore, our sympathetic Arab brothers have become worried and doubtful about what we will do. They are afraid that we might accept a political settlement and agree to create a mixed government in which both the *mujahidin* and the communists would share power. They are afraid that we might lose all the fruits of jihad we have acquired thus far, and put our nation and country back into the hands of the infidels. I travelled to large cities in Saudi Arabia and held numerous meetings and gatherings. In these meetings, I talked to them in detail about our jihad. I updated them on the victory of Khost, Khwaja Ghar, Zibak, Chemtal and other places across Afghanistan that came about as a result of coordination by the Commanders' Council. I also reassured them that as long as there is a Russian-backed government in Kabul, we will not stop fighting and will not be tricked into any political settlement. So, in brief, the purpose of my trip was to fulfill the Hajj duty and to clear doubts from the minds of our Arab brothers

about our jihad, in order to secure their continued assistance to our jihad. And I believe it was a successful trip.<sup>77</sup>

Jalaluddin's trips to the Hajj were also used for other, even less well-known purposes, such as championing ideas and passing proposals which would go on to have strategic impact. How Jalaluddin acted in this regard is very instructive, as the example shared below illustrates how politically astute the Afghan commander was and how, when there were roadblocks, he had a knack for figuring out ways to politically navigate around those obstacles to get things done. This example also confirms the important, behind-the-scenes role that Jalaluddin played in shaping the creation of Arab Afghan organizations, to include—in this case—the Maktab al-Khadamat. The ideas and proposal that Jalaluddin would champion during the 1984 Hajj came from Mustafa Hamid, after he realized that 'ammunition shortages and poor administration of supplies, logistics and donations' during the 1983 Battle of Urgon 'had a significant impact on the battle', as did poor training.<sup>78</sup> As part of his diagnosis of the problem, Hamid realized that one of the main reasons limiting the Arab and Afghan *mujahidin*'s effectiveness was 'because ammunition and aid were not distributed to the Afghan fronts on the basis of requirements, but [rather] politics.'<sup>79</sup> Hamid then wrote two research papers, one of which diagnosed the problem and another that provided solutions, the contents of which he initially shared with other Arab Afghans, Sayyaf and Jalaluddin. Hamid's main suggestion was that,

[...] the Arabs could help to deal with the problem of corruption and supplies not reaching where they were needed, by forming a committee that would ensure supplies were distributed to the battlefronts according to need. To do this, we suggested Arabs should be at the fronts to see for themselves what was needed and they should be in Peshawar too, to control the donations, negotiations and administration of supplies and supply lines. Our main point was that the Arabs needed to be inside, at the fronts, to see what was needed. This was a very essential point, and a new position at the time [...] This was the main point and [the genesis of] Maktab al-Khadamat came from this point.<sup>80</sup>

Haqqani and other senior leaders in Paktia like Arsla Rahmani and Mawlawi Mansur agreed with the initiative and they wanted Hamid to execute his idea, and put it into practice in Paktia.<sup>81</sup> However, according to Hamid, Sayyaf 'did not like that we had made this proposal' and the idea created a broader rift between the two individuals, as Sayyaf was concerned that his grip on Arab

funds would loosen if such a committee was created, and he wanted to protect his own interests.<sup>82</sup> Sensitive to these politics, and the bigger picture, Jalaluddin asked Hamid to prepare a version of the second part of the document 'so we can show them [the Arabs in the Gulf] what we need.'<sup>83</sup> And it is this document, representing the idea above, which Jalaluddin took with him to champion during the 1984 Hajj.<sup>84</sup> During that trip Jalaluddin showed it to Abdullah Azzam and Osama Bin Laden. The two Arab Afghan leaders 'agreed on it, and then they took it to Sayyaf as the leader of the Afghan Union; they went to him and said, "this is our project" and sought his approval.'<sup>85</sup> As recounted by Hamid, because the proposal was being bought to him by Bin Laden and Azzam 'Sayyaf had little choice but to agree.'<sup>86</sup> This example highlights Jalaluddin's savviness. It also illustrates how Jalaluddin acted in an instrumental way, and leveraged his own clout, to support new, innovative ideas that would benefit those in the field, and—in this case—would directly contribute to the creation Maktab al-Khadamat.

#### Saudi Financial Support Dynamics and Haqqani Expenditures

The funds that Jalaluddin and his network received from donors in Saudi Arabia flowed through a number of channels. Some of those funds were probably provided to Jalaluddin, and his network of representatives stationed in the Kingdom.<sup>87</sup> Other funds travelled to the Haqqani network through more official channels. For example, as noted by Steve Coll, Yousef Mottakbani, Saudi Arabia's Ambassador in Pakistan, 'channeled funds from both Saudi intelligence and from private charities to favored Afghan clients, including Haqqani.'<sup>88</sup> Saudi Arabia's intelligence service, and specifically Prince Turki al-Faisal, played roles in this regard as well. The Kingdom also leveraged official charities, like the Saudi Red Crescent during the anti-Soviet period, to help the country do its bidding and to interact with the *mujahidin*.<sup>89</sup> The method of disbursement of funds, and how openly they could be channelled, also naturally depended upon the time, and specifically during which decade, they were being sent.

Besides support for his operations, little is known about how else Jalaluddin spent Saudi and other Gulf funds. Some sources indicate, as one would suspect, that Jalaluddin used these funds to help fortify his infrastructure, such as his main Afghanistan base at Zhawara.<sup>90</sup> Reflections provided by Jalaluddin himself also indicate that Saudi funds were used by the Afghan commander to build

local religious infrastructure. For example, in response to a question asked to him during an interview in 1992, Jalaluddin revealed:

The university, which you asked about, is a donation by Saudi Arabia for the rehabilitation of Afghanistan. And it has been approved for Paktia Province. The responsibility of building this university has been given to me. After thoroughly thinking about it, we decided to build the university in Mata China, Khost because that property is owned by the government and is about 400 *jiribs*. It has two water wells, and is close to the main street. It will be a big university in which departments for religious subjects, *sharayat*, medicine, engineering and social science will be established. Inshallah, beside Afghan nationals, students from the Islamic world will come here to study. We are planning to establish markets, shops, orchards, etc. as part of an endowment for the university so that it can be self-sustaining. Although we have some problems with bringing in the needed material at the moment, we are hoping that the actual construction of the project will start soon.<sup>91</sup>

Although unverified, there are also rumours that Saudi Arabia provided the funds to construct the main mosque in Khost. In an interview with the author, Jere Van Dyk, a former *New York Times* journalist who was embedded for a significant period with Jalaluddin during the 1980s, noted 'it is an open secret that the Haqqanis built the main mosque in Khost with Saudi money.'<sup>92</sup>

### Tensions and Mistrust in the Haqqani-Saudi Relationship

Like all partnerships, the Haqqani-Saudi relationship also appears to have suffered from some turbulence. The sources available on the topic, which are limited, speak of three types of tensions. They include: 1) particular concerns the Saudis had about individuals operating in Jalaluddin's orbit or specific initiatives that they believed Jalaluddin was engaged in; 2) Jalaluddin's ideological orientation, and the Afghan commander being someone who, while supportive of some Saudi's goals, was at the same time certainly less of a pure or strict Wahhabi doctrinaire; and 3) Jalaluddin not acquiescing to Saudi demands.

Before proceeding, it is worthwhile to situate, or at least provide a perspective on, how Saudi Arabia operated during the 1980s/90s in the Afghanistan-Pakistan region, and how they interacted with the Afghan *mujahidin* specifically. The Saudis and their approach appear to have been something of a mixed bag in this regard, and the strategy Saudi Arabia pursued to try and manage or shift the fractured landscape of militant and political-



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militant actors in the region towards their interests appears to have been similar to the divide and rule strategy that Pakistan's security services have used to control and shape the trajectories of local jihadi groups. A group's, or leader's, ideological orientation and alignment with strategic and long-term Saudi objectives clearly played a role in whom the Kingdom backed, and whom the Kingdom tried to disempower. As one might suspect, Saudi Arabia's primary tool to gain influence and shape the political-military landscape was money. The inside perspective provided by Mustafa Hamid on these dynamics is revealing:

Saudi Arabia's influence also caused disruption and division among the Afghan mujahidin groups, and ideological conflict became a constant part of their disputes in Afghanistan. This is because groups with an affiliation to Salafism could gain access to huge amounts of Saudi money, which caused divisions that even led to fighting among Afghan groups inside Afghanistan. Many Afghan clerics were angry because most of the money was directed to Salafis such as the Jamil ul-Rahman group in Kunar province, and they were unable to access it. The Afghan clerics were also unhappy the Salafi doctrine was propagated so much and other groups were being criticized.<sup>93</sup>

One potential point of disagreement seems to have been tied to perceptions that some in the Gulf had about Jalaluddin and his goals, as there was a concern that he wanted to 'establish a new party for himself' during the anti-Soviet jihad. The risk being that if Jalaluddin would do so he might upend the existing Afghan political party structure, and by extension, the main leaders—such as Sayyaf—that the Kingdom had financially backed. Sayyaf was clearly in tighter ideological alignment with the Saudis than Jalaluddin, and Jalaluddin having too much power might have been threatening to the Saudis in that regard. The actions of Jalaluddin, and an interview that he conducted with the Urdu language magazine *Baidaar Digest* in 1991, are instructive in this regard. For example, during the 1980s Jalaluddin openly incorporated fighters from across Afghanistan into his ranks, to include some from the Hazara (Shi'a) community.<sup>94</sup> In 1991 Jalaluddin also used his interview with *Baidaar Digest* to note that he did not have any conflict with the Shi'a *mujahidin* in Afghanistan and that representatives from that community were part of a *shura* that had been established after the successful conquest of Khost, a point which suggests Jalaluddin was perhaps being a bit too pragmatic and ideologically flexible for Saudi tastes.<sup>95</sup> It is probably not a stretch to see how such a statement and view might have raised some eyebrows in the Kingdom.



While it is not possible to discern whether the Saudi state was behind this initiative, one source speaks about how an individual Saudi and a group associated with the Peshawar office of Maktab al-Khadamat had real concerns about Jalaluddin striking out on his own to set up his own party. To prevent Jalaluddin from doing so, this clique launched a campaign that actively sought to prevent Arab fighters associated with Maktab al-Khadamat from joining and sending funds to Jalaluddin.<sup>96</sup>

More concrete were concerns Saudi agents had about Mustafa Hamid and a Jordanian foreign fighter, Abu Harith al-Urduni—both of whom served as key foreign commanders under Jalaluddin, and as his close confidants. Again, as narrated by Hamid:

I tried to meet with [Jalaluddin] Haqqani but he was in Islamabad, so I was disappointed, then I was told that there were two Saudi men who were asking for me at Haqqani's guest house. They had a picture of me and were asking Haqqani's people: Did you know this man? Where is he? What is he doing? Etc. I was astonished by this behavior because the entire Haqqani group knew me personally and they knew my real name (Mustafa Hamid), but they had no idea about my nickname (Abu-al-Walid) [...] I didn't know then that Abu-al-Harith [al-Urduni] also had received some threats from the Saudi Intelligence. He was visited by some members of the Saudi Intelligence Department in Khost, and [they] threatened him: if he didn't close his center and let the young men go back to their countries, they would deal with him. Abu-al-Harith was under a lot of pressure from the service office [MAK] which was controlled by the Muslim Brotherhood. They spread some rumors and accusations about him to force him to leave Afghanistan. This kind of pressure by the Saudi intelligence and the Muslim brotherhood proved the importance of Abu-al-Harith and his group and the importance of the Arab military work in Khost which was about to change the military and political balance in Afghanistan.<sup>97</sup>

The concerns reflected above seem to be tied to broader concerns that the Saudis and other Gulf states had about military training that was being provided for Arab youth 'because they feared these youth might carry out armed activities when they returned to their countries.'<sup>98</sup> Apparently, 'Saudi Arabia had the greatest fear of this occurring, and because it had great influence on the government of Pakistan and Afghan organizations, it was able to block early attempts to train Arabs in special camps.'<sup>99</sup> As Vahid Brown and the author have documented elsewhere, Jalaluddin was central to the development of Arab Afghans as a fighting force, and in the late 80s/90s he would play a strategic role in hosting many training camps in territory that he controlled, to include

some that attracted Arabs.<sup>100</sup> While the sources currently do not speak of this issue being a direct source of tension between Jalaluddin and the Saudis, what can be established is that Saudi agents sought to disrupt the work of those—like Hamid and al-Urduni—who were working for the Afghan commander and were leading some of these efforts. Due to this issue, and Jalaluddin's clear refusal to not back away from support for these types of initiatives in the years to follow, it is likely that this 'problem' served as a point of tension, and impacted—at least as a road bump—the personal relationship that he had with Saudi state representatives. As has been well documented, Osama Bin Laden was one of the main Arab Afghans who recognized the need for, and devoted significant resources to, Arab military training. Thus, it is not a surprise that another tension point in the Saudi-Jalaluddin relationship revolved around the latter's relationship with the al-Qaeda leader. After Bin Laden issued his 1996 'Declaration of War against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places' the 'Saudi Ambassador in Islamabad exercised considerable pressure on Sheikh Yunis Khalis [...] and Jalaluddin Haqqani to hand over bin Laden.'<sup>101</sup> The two Afghans refused, and in their response to the Saudis they stated the following: 'If an animal sought refuge with us we would have no choice but to protect it. How, then, about a man who has given himself and his wealth in the cause of Allah and in the cause of jihad in Afghanistan?'<sup>102</sup> As noted by others, this issue was a strategic problem for the Saudis, and it also created friction between the Saudis and Mullah Omar.<sup>103</sup>

### Saudi-Haqqani Connections Post 9/11

As with the UAE, the least amount of information exists about the Haqqani network's ties to Saudi Arabia during the post 2001 period. The information that does exist comes from snippets of declassified intelligence and limited material released by the press. This material suggests that the Haqqani network continues to maintain high-level contacts with Saudi Arabia's elite and an ability to send Haqqani family members, and other senior leaders, to the Kingdom to collect funds and (probably) engage in donor maintenance. For example, in 2004 Nasiruddin Haqqani and another Taliban associate is believed to have travelled to the Kingdom via Pakistan 'to raise funds for the Taliban.'<sup>104</sup> According to other material released by the US Treasury Department, the travel of Haqqani network leaders, including Khalil Haqqani, Fazl Rabbi, Saidullah Jan, and a Haqqani attack facilitator, from Pakistan to the Kingdom continued through 2013—the same year Nasiruddin Haqqani was gunned down and

killed near Islamabad.<sup>105</sup> The Haqqani network's ability to continue these types of trips is not that surprising, given the direct level of access Haqqani network leaders are believed to have with Saudi officials in Pakistan, and with Pakistan's security establishment. For example, as noted above, in 2012 Nasiruddin personally met with Saudi Arabia's Ambassador to Pakistan, probably in Islamabad.<sup>106</sup> This level of access is certainly pretty revealing, especially given that at the time Nasiruddin had already been designated as a terrorist by the United Nations and the United States, designations which in theory should have prevented such a meeting and Nasiruddin's travel. As poignantly stated by Zafar Hilaly, Pakistan's former Ambassador to Yemen, 'It just shows how acceptable it is to the Saudi hierarchy that the ambassador thought nothing of reporting this in an official cable, and indeed meeting them, or needing to seek instructions before doing so.'<sup>107</sup> The same can be said for Pakistan as well, however, as it is unlikely that Nasiruddin was able to engage in such a meeting, or travel to the Kingdom repeatedly, without the knowledge or assistance of Pakistani authorities.<sup>108</sup> At times, depending upon who is in power in Pakistan, it appears as though Pakistan has tried to reign in, or limit, some of Saudi Arabia's connections with militants.<sup>109</sup>

The released Saudi cables and other information reveal that the Haqqani network still has high-level access to the Saudi regime, that Jalaluddin still holds favourable and preferential status there, and that the Kingdom views the Haqqanis as central to the process of political reconciliation in Afghanistan. One indication of how the Saudi regime views the Haqqani network post 2001 comes from statements made by Prince Turki al-Faisal, and propositions that he advanced in 2009. At a meeting in Washington, DC that year al-Faisal suggested that Jalaluddin was 'someone who could be reached out to [...] to negotiate and bring [the Taliban] into the fold.'<sup>110</sup> Another comes from 2012, when the Saudis are believed to have hosted Khalil Haqqani, as well as several other Taliban leaders, for a series of talks about reconciliation.<sup>111</sup>

### *Conclusion*

One of the most important takeaways from the Saudi and UAE cases is how religious and private social networks collided and were leveraged by the Haqqani network to establish and solidify their organizational presence in each place. The material reviewed for this chapter also suggests that Jalaluddin's networks in each place were initially setup, and evolved under different circumstances, and that those ties benefited—depending upon place—from

institutional and other personal factors. For example, in the UAE, Jalaluddin's connections appear to have initially evolved more by chance and in a looser, more entrepreneurial way. It is also interesting how the sources reveal how Jalaluddin's ties in the UAE were more diverse and wide-ranging across multiple facets of society. Based upon the data reviewed for this chapter, it does not appear that the same can be said for the Afghan commander's early ties to Saudi Arabia, or for the Haqqani network's more recent ties to the Kingdom.

An analysis of the Saudi and UAE cases also provides a number of interesting takeaways about the actions of these two states and the politics of support. Indeed, it is telling how the UAE was initially reluctant to support Afghan *mujahidin* leaders during the early days of the jihad, and how the first known trip of Union delegates to that country, and the Gulf more broadly, happened through a behind-the-scenes manoeuvre involving the work of two Egyptian foreign fighters. It is also revealing how, before providing his own aid to Sayyaf, the UAE's leader apparently wanted to follow Saudi Arabia's lead. As the sources reveal, as the jihad developed and Jalaluddin gained more power and battlefield accomplishments, there also appear to have been concerns from the Saudi side about the influence of the Afghan commander—due to his independence and outlook—and the actions of foreign fighters who played integral roles in his network. Those concerns appear to have led the Saudis to take an approach, whereby they attempted to hold Jalaluddin close so they could seek to influence him, and the actions of those around him.

A review of the Haqqani network's ties to the UAE and Saudi Arabia are also reflective in terms of what they reveal about the group's founder, and the personal traits that distinguished Jalaluddin from his peers. These include the Afghan commander's entrepreneurial tendencies, his penchant for innovation, and his support for new ideas and ways of doing business—which sometimes, as evidenced by his championing of the proposal which led to the creation of Maktab al-Khadamat—proved instrumental. Another distinguishing trait which the sources reinforce is what might be characterized as Jalaluddin's level of 'authenticity', a trait which was derived from his closeness to combat, and the perception many appear to have had of him as a field commander and man of action. He thus appeared as someone who—due to the necessities of the field—was a bit more above the political fray than the Afghan party leaders who did not venture far from Peshawar. While it is difficult to state this with a high degree of certainty, it appears that Jalaluddin recognized this and traded his credibility in this regard as form of currency, which he probably exchanged for independence and greater freedom of manoeuvre.

## MULTINATIONAL *MUJAHIDIN*

Despite the specific details and insights that this chapter provides about the Haqqani network's ties to the UAE and Saudi Arabia, and the dynamics and evolution associated with those relationships, it only scratches the surface. A substantial amount of additional research, to include interviews with principals involved in the relationships outlined above and analysis of a broader array of Urdu-, Pashto-, and Arabic-language primary sources about those ties, is required to draw firmer conclusions. It is the author's hope that this paper contributes to those future investigations in a small and modest manner.



## THE ARAB GULF CONNECTIONS OF THE TALIBAN

*Antonio Giustozzi*

The conventional wisdom, or perhaps we should say the official story, is that the Taliban like other radical Islamic insurgent groups have been receiving support from a network of non-state actors, including simple sympathizers and ideologically close organizations. While there is truth in this 'story' (these networks exist and do send financial support to radical insurgent organizations), one of the key arguments of this paper is that these private funders account for only a comparatively small portion of the funding of jihadist organizations like the Taliban and the Islamic State.

It is an established fact that the Taliban's Emirate of the 1990s had relations with some Gulf countries, particularly Saudi Arabia and Qatar, which not only recognized it diplomatically (the only countries to do so apart from Pakistan), but also supported it financially and with military supplies. There is evidence that Saudi Arabia for example supplied Milan missiles to the Taliban, among other things.<sup>1</sup>

Much less is known about Saudi and Qatari support to the Taliban after 2001. The 2001 war was of course a major divide, as from the 9/11 attacks in New York onwards any open engagement with the Taliban would have attracted the United States' wrath. After all, the US was and is a key ally of these two countries and is seen as the main protector of these two monarchies, as of the rest of the Gulf monarchies as well. Why would they entertain relations with an organization engaged in fighting an insurgency against the Americans?

The reality however might be quite different. It is correct that in the early post-Enduring Freedom years (say until 2003 or 2004) both the Saudi and Qatari authorities abstained from resuming relations with the Taliban and even more so from directly supporting them in any way. Gradually, however, according to Taliban sources this attitude changed, as a result of developments in regional politics but also as a result of the increasingly evident signs of American difficulties in Afghanistan and, it should not be forgotten, in Iraq. The United States' image as all-powerful protector and ally reached the peak of its credibility in 1991 (First Gulf War)—2003 (Second Gulf War and overthrow of Saddam Hussein in Iraq). From 2003 onwards the Americans started collecting a series of failures and gradually turned from a source of stability (in the perception of the Gulf monarchies) into a source of instability, only made worse by American support for the 'Arab spring'.<sup>2</sup> The contradiction between the ideological content of American and European foreign policy (human rights, women's rights, democratism) and their close alliance with the Gulf monarchies (read: autocracies) was becoming increasingly apparent to the latter, even if not yet to the average western policy maker.

This chapter discusses the reaction of the Gulf monarchies to these developments in regional politics and to changing perceptions of American foreign policy. Inevitably information about this topic is very difficult to obtain and the author had to rely on contacts among Taliban cadres and leaders, among IS members, as well on two interviews with Saudi and Qatari intelligence operatives in order to draw a sketch of how the relations between the Taliban and Gulf monarchies were resumed and evolved after 2001. The reader is warned that what is contained in this paper is based almost exclusively on oral sources and that some of the claims made by these sources are quite controversial. The research making possible this paper was funded by the ESRC through KCL. The project will eventually lead to the publication of a history of the Taliban after 2001.

### *Early days: The Taliban and the Gulf countries in 2001–04*

Following their defeat in 2001, the Taliban were thrown into disarray and essentially collapsed as an organization. It took until mid-2002 before the scattered elements of their leadership started reconnecting, and another year for them to start seriously reorganizing. When the Taliban were trying to launch an insurgent movement in 2003–4, they had little funding available. The fighters and the commander were not getting regularly paid and little existed



in the way of organized logistics, administration, or training. The Haqqani network in Waziristan was somewhat better funded than the leadership coalescing in Quetta, thanks to their close relations with the Pakistani security services, but in any case the funding available was almost insignificant compared to what would later have been available to the Taliban once the insurgency reached maturity.<sup>3</sup>

The funding accruing to the Taliban during these years (2003–4) had two main sources: Pakistani security services and private donors in the Arab Gulf. ‘[In 2002–3] we were going to businessmen and some Arabs were giving money to us to buy weapons for it.’<sup>4</sup> Private donors in Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the UAE, and Kuwait were individuals (shaykhs and wealthy businessmen) who sympathized with the Taliban cause and typically had already been supporting jihadist causes elsewhere.<sup>5</sup> Despite the small amount being transferred, this cash was instrumental in organizing the insurgency. The money allowed for the Rahbari Shura of the Taliban, established in mid-2003, to start reaching out to largely autonomous armed groups operating in Afghanistan and co-opting them in exchange of funding. This was the start of a process of an organized insurgency taking shape. In this phase of the re-launch of the Taliban, therefore, private funding networks played an important role. To place all this in perspective, however, the size of the Taliban insurgency was perhaps a tenth or so of what it would reach at its peak in 2014.

### *First Turning Point: 2005, after Iraq*

There was a major turning point for Taliban funding in 2005. As one Taliban leader put it, ‘The change came in 2005 because in that time support started again with us from foreign countries like Pakistan and Arab countries.’<sup>6</sup> Although the then Secretary of State Clinton did not refer to state funding in her 2009 leaked cable, she did mention the high level of private funding from Saudi Arabia to the Taliban, despite repeated US engagement with the authorities of that country to get it cut.<sup>7</sup> Off the record, American diplomatic sources indicated that evidence exists of at least Saudi state support for the Taliban and other jihadist groups active in Afghanistan.<sup>8</sup> Senior Taliban sources claim that state funding from Saudi Arabia started in 2005, while the Qatari authorities started funding the Taliban in 2006.<sup>9</sup> Although still modest in comparison to the level reached by funding in later years, at this point external funding (Arab and Pakistani) consisted (according to sources in the Taliban’s financial structure) of several tens of millions of dollars, allowing for the

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insurgency to expand inside Afghanistan. In 2005 the size of the Taliban insurgency started expanding at a much greater pace than previously, nearly doubling between 2004 and 2005. The funds that allowed that to happen must have come from somewhere.<sup>10</sup>

These external 'donors' to the Taliban had decided to sponsor the Taliban insurgency and refused to support other groups, such as Hizb-i Islami of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. Instead they encouraged elements of Hizb-i Islami to join the Taliban in order to have access to funding.

Pakistan and the Arabs did not support the Shamshatoo Shura, because all the people in this shura were Hizb-i-Islami. Therefore, Pakistan and the Arabs [...] were telling the Shamshatoo Shura, that we should join the Ijraya Shura of the Peshawar Shura [of the Taliban] and after this they would help us, so this was the reason why we joined the Ijraya Shura. In that time Shamshatoo Shura was very strong in the four provinces such as Kunar, Laghman, Nuristan, and Kapisa Provinces.<sup>11</sup>

Why did the Saudis and the Qataris start supporting the Taliban insurgency at this time? In part it was a request of support by the Pakistani authorities, which could not afford to foot the full bill of maintaining an insurgency going inside Afghanistan. Essentially, the Pakistanis offered friendly and allied governments the chance to buy a stake in the Taliban insurgency, according to both the Saudi and the Qatari intelligence sources. But there were at least two other reasons as well. The narrative provided by a Qatari intelligence source highlights one of them:

When they started operations against the Afghan government and Americans, they requested support from us and we accept their request. Because we have relationship with them. At that time there were a lot of people linked to Iran in the Afghan Government so we wanted to weaken them. Simply we were trying to finish this current government and prevent Iranian influence from increasing in Afghanistan.<sup>12</sup>

The Saudi intelligence source also described the basic Saudi aim in Afghanistan as having in power an Islamic government that would entertain good relations with Pakistan and hostile relations with Iran. The perception of a strong Iranian influence within the post-Bonn Afghan government had deep roots in the Gulf monarchies, even though Iranian sources tend to point out how the performance of allies and clients within the Afghan establishment were judged as disappointing in Tehran, from the perspective of pushing Iranian interests in the country.<sup>13</sup>

The other reason was pointed out by a Saudi intelligence operative. The source indicated that it is a long-standing Saudi policy to extend support to all Islamic causes, in particular radical ones.<sup>14</sup> In this the well-established Saudi strategy, a key aspect is the desire of fostering financial dependency among Islamic fundamentalist and Islamist insurgencies.<sup>15</sup> By supporting the Taliban, the Saudis would acquire the ability to influence and to some extent even control them. Although the source did not elaborate why, it is also usually assumed that the Saudi monarchy tries to consolidate its Islamic legitimacy by supporting such causes. Such support also prevents, or reduces the chance of, radical Islamic groups turning their rhetoric against the Gulf monarchies. Although such policy has been demonstrated not to be always successful (see Al-Qaeda's campaign against the Saudi regime in 2002–3 and the Islamic State's recent rhetorical attacks against the Saudi monarchy), the Saudis remain committed to it.

A wider rationale for the Saudis supporting the Taliban might have also been the belief that direct American intervention in the region was proving more destabilizing than anything else. The belief that American pro-democracy rhetoric could eventually destabilize even the Gulf regimes or benefit regional rivals such as Iran (as it had been the case with the 'democratization' of Iraq) is another likely reason for the Saudis subscribing to the Pakistani project in Afghanistan, not so much because the Saudis want the Americans out, but because they feel the need to counter-balance the consequences of US intervention.<sup>16</sup> Several other Arab Gulf countries followed the Saudi track either in order to buy their own stake, or to counter-balance Saudi hegemony.

During this period Saudi and Qatari state funding to the Taliban appears therefore to have been largely driven by Pakistani requests; there was little independent Saudi or Qatari effort to assess the operation. The Saudis accepted to support Pakistani aims in Afghanistan and for that reason supported at times groups opposed to the Afghan government. The Pakistanis among other things reportedly encouraged the Saudis to start supporting directly the Miran Shah Shura of the Taliban (better known as the Haqqani network), bypassing the Quetta Shura and therefore laying the ground for the Haqqani's declaration of autonomy from Quetta in 2007.<sup>17</sup>

As US support to the Afghan security forces started increasing noticeably in 2009 and so started doing direct US involvement in Afghanistan, Pakistani requests for support to the Gulf monarchies also increased. The Pakistanis lobbied the Saudis in particular to start funding emerging sub-divisions of the Taliban, such as the Miran Shah Shura (a.k.a. Haqqani network) and the

Peshawar Shura, in part at the expense of the Quetta Shura. These two *shuras* declared their autonomy from Quetta between 2007 and 2009. Taliban sources reported an increase in Saudi funding during this period.<sup>18</sup>

Within the Taliban the Saudis, according to sources within the movement, had close relations with key leaders of all three main shuras of the Taliban: the de facto leader of the Quetta Shura in 2004–10 and close collaborator of Mullah Omar, Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, his successor Akhtar Mohammad Mansur, co-founders of the Rahbari Shura Ihsanullah Rahimi and Gul Agha Ishaqzai, Serajuddin Haqqani, leader of the Miran Shah Shura from 2007 onwards and son of the founder Jalaluddin Haqqani, and Qari Atiqullah, one of the founders and main leaders of the Peshawar Shura. Of these Akhtar Mansur and Serajuddin Haqqani are of major importance because of the key role they were playing within the Taliban. Akhtar Mansur got himself elected leader of all Taliban in July 2015 (even if the claim has been widely disputed) and Serajuddin became his deputy. Ihsanullah Rahimi and Gul Agha instead parted ways as the former aligned in 2015 with the opposition of Akhtar Mansur and the latter remains instead one of Mansur's closest allies. Following the trajectories of these leaders is revealing, as it will emerge below. For now it may suffice to note that they were polarized between a group staunchly in favour of reconciliation with Kabul (Baradar, Mansur, Ishaqzai) and another of hardliners (Rahimi, Haqqani and Atiqullah).<sup>19</sup>

According to Taliban sources, the Qataris had consistently supported the Quetta Shura from 2006 onwards, even if their level of support varied considerably from year to year. During this period Saudi and Qatari plans also started diverging, as they were doing in the Middle East. No longer content to operate in the shadow, the Qataris decided to raise their diplomatic profile and to use the leverage gained with the Taliban in order to set of a reconciliation process between them and the Kabul government. In doing so, the Qataris also started diverging from Pakistani plans. At least according to a source in the Qatari intelligence, the Qataris did what they could to appease Taliban hardliners and in 2010 they even paid the Miran Shura in order to facilitate their co-optation into the 'Doha track' of the reconciliation process—the Haqqanis were holding the American prisoner around whom the first phase of the reconciliation pre-talks rotated. However, other Taliban were upset about not having been consulted initially. In 2011 and 2012, as the Peshawar Shura protested its exclusion from the first round of Doha contacts, according to the same source the Qataris also paid cash to it to foster its incorporation in the Taliban's Doha office.<sup>20</sup> While these Qatari approaches to hardline

Taliban cannot be confirmed because of a lack of sources, it is clear however that the idea of opening a political office for the Taliban in Doha proved controversial with the Pakistani ISI, which tried to prevent it. It also proved controversial with many Taliban leaders, who had not been kept adequately informed of the plan. Finally, it proved unpopular with the Afghan authorities, which leaked the information to the press, before the plan was made public.<sup>21</sup> The first attempt to open the Taliban office in Doha failed miserably, but negotiations ensued to make it more representative of the different factions within the Taliban. It does not sound implausible that the Qataris might have reacted to the debacle by increasing their investment and extending payments to groups of Taliban who had felt initially excluded.

The main interlocutors of the Qataris in the Quetta Shura were reported in part to coincide with the favourites of the Saudis: Akhtar Mohammad Mansur, Ihsanullah Rahimi, Gul Agha Ishaqzai. However, the Qataris also had close relations with a couple of other prominent members of the Rahbari Shura: Abdul Majid and Sayed Tayeb Agha. The latter would emerge as the leader of the Taliban's diplomacy in 2010–15 and as head of the Taliban office in Qatar. In Miran Shah too the Qataris had closer relations with different actors from the Saudis: Khalil Haqqani and Ghaus Haqqani. Khalil in particular is known as an important fund-raiser for the Miran Shah Shura. The same applied to the Peshawar Shura: Qari Habibullah, Shaykh Amanullah and Qari Khalid, all three founders of the Shura and three most important of its major components (respectively Shamsatoo Mahaz, Safi Shura and Ijraya Shura).<sup>22</sup> Amanullah was leader of the Peshawar Shura in 2005–8 and was again appointed to the job in 2015. These differences seem to illustrate how the Saudi and the Qatari efforts only in part coincided; the two countries were as much in competition with each other as they sometimes had similar aims.

The provision of direct state funding to the Taliban was one key development of this period. However, the distinction between state and non-state funding should not be overstated. In addition to state funding, the Gulf monarchies were also able to control to some extent the flow of private funds towards the Taliban. In 2013 the Taliban were allowed to operate a 'Shura' in Saudi Arabia (which was established some time earlier, but the exact date is unknown), composed of a mix of Taliban representatives, sympathetic Afghan businessmen, and sympathetic Saudi businessmen and religious leaders. The 'Shura' was busy raising funds for the Taliban. It is worth noting that many businessmen and company managers involved were working either for Saudi state companies or state contractors.<sup>23</sup>

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The UAE city of Dubai also turned into a major fund-raising hub for the Taliban. Fund-raising meetings regularly took place in the city, with donors from the region and much of the Middle East and beyond coming to discuss funding issues with Taliban representatives. Dubai also represented an ideal financial centre for transferring funds to Afghanistan and Pakistan, thanks to the hundreds of Afghan *hawala* shops present there, and to the tens of Afghan businesses which were regularly moving funds between the Gulf and Afghanistan or Pakistan. Private donors included sympathizers from not just Saudi Arabia and Qatar, but the UAE, Kuwait, and Oman.<sup>24</sup>

### *Second Turning Point: 2013, after Iranian Support Shored up Assad in the Syrian Conflict*

As mentioned already, Afghanistan's insurgent movements were from early on seen by the Saudis and the Qataris as potentially useful tools in their turf war against Iran. While Saudi-Iranian competition existed long before the Taliban insurgency even began, the escalation in the confrontation between the two countries (with the rest of the Gulf monarchies mostly aligned behind the Saudis) started in 2013 as a result of two factors: the inability (from the perspective of the Gulf monarchies) of the western powers to force Iran to abandon its nuclear programme, and the unexpected success of the Iranians in shoring up the Assad regime in Syria, the opposition to which was mostly funded by the Saudis and the Qataris. It is not possible here to discuss Saudi-Iranian regional rivalry in detail, but it is clear that Saudi and Iranian investments in the Afghan conflict have been rising sharply from 2013 onwards. In recent years the Saudi intelligence detected a rising pace of Iranian activities in Afghanistan, ranging from support to Shi'a clerical networks to support for political groups and organizations, such as Hizb-i Wahdat and Jamiat-i Islami. By late 2013 or early 2014 Saudi intelligence also had clear evidence that relations between the Iranian Pasdaran and the Afghan Taliban were much cosier than previously thought and Iranian influence among key Taliban leaders was rising.<sup>25</sup>

It is at this point that Saudi aims in the conflict stopped coinciding entirely with Pakistani ones. The Pakistani ISI has been trying from 2005 onwards to maintain at least good neighbourhood relations with the Iranians, and for periods even established working relations and coordinated support for the Taliban with the Sepah-e Pasdaran. According to Taliban sources, this has earned Saudi criticism and distrust (as the Pakistanis did not necessarily keep the Saudis

in the picture about their dealings). The Saudis started accusing the Pakistanis of having allowed their Taliban protégés to establish close relations with the Iranians. As a result from early 2014 onwards the Saudi intelligence has become more directly involved in Afghan and particularly Taliban matters, bypassing the Pakistanis, even if cooperation between the two countries continued.<sup>26</sup>

In the first half of 2014 the Saudis leaned heavily on the Taliban's leadership to force them to cut ties with Iran. Taliban leaders were even invited to Riyadh for meetings. The Saudis succeeded in weaning away Akhtar Mansur from the Iranians, in exchange for generous Saudi funding, but other groups of Taliban in the Peshawar Shura, in the Miran Shah Shura, and even in the Quetta Shura refused to renounce Iranian support.<sup>27</sup>

The Saudis also reportedly started exercising pressure on their Pakistani allies, in order to accelerate movement towards reconciliation between Taliban factions in Kabul. What exactly prompted the Saudis to become more assertive on this front is not clear, but it might have been a reaction to the Qatari 'Doha Office' initiative—the Saudis and the Qataris having a rather competitive relationship as discussed above. The Saudi take on reconciliation was somewhat different from the Qatari one and was centred on the Afghan presidential elections of 2014 as an opportunity for launching reconciliation in Afghanistan. A source within the Saudi intelligence, contacted in December 2014, confirmed that the Saudis were fostering 'reconciliation' in Afghanistan in 2013–14, when they manoeuvred to get Afghan politicians they supported chosen as presidential candidates, with the endorsement of the Pakistanis and of the Taliban. Initially the candidate of choice was Omar Daudzai, but he was later replaced by Zalmay Rasul, Karzai's foreign minister.<sup>28</sup>

Akhtar Mansur and a majority of Taliban leaders in the Peshawar Shura agreed to keep a low profile and minimize disruption, but others went on with their campaign of violence against the electoral process. The enraged Saudis reportedly managed to get the Taliban to sack the head of the Central Military Commission, Abdul Qayum Zakir, one of the most prominent military leaders of the Taliban, but had to switch their support to another candidate for the second round, after their favourite Zalmay Rasul failed to make it beyond the first round. The Saudis then shifted their support towards Ashraf Ghani, whose victory in the second round they welcomed. Asked whether a secular president surrounded by leftists was viewed by the Saudis as a problem, the source answered that as long they were opposed to Iranian influence, Riyadh would be happy to support them.<sup>29</sup>



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By mid-2014 the Saudis were taking stock of the experience of the 2014 presidential elections and of their failure to force the Taliban as a whole to cut off relations with the Iranians. Taliban sources believe that the Saudis concluded that it would not be possible to keep all the Taliban under their hegemony and aligned with a single strategic aim, which by then had become reconciliation between the Taliban and some Kabul politicians whom the Saudis trusted, first and foremost President Ghani. It is at this time therefore that according to Taliban sources the Saudis started supporting two alternative 'horses' within the Afghan insurgency: the consolidating leadership of the Quetta Shura under Akhtar Mohammad Mansur, which was supposed to seal a reconciliation deal with Ghani, and a number of Taliban leaders and cadres splitting from the movement on a hardline ticket and aligning themselves with the Islamic State. These claims were also confirmed by members of the Islamic State in Afghanistan.<sup>30</sup>

The Saudi fear appears to have been that if the hardliners were not given a viable alternative, compatible with Saudi interests, they could be attracted into the Iranian orbit. These fears were not so far-fetched as in April 2014 one of the key hardliners, Abdul Qayum Zakir, aligned with the Iranian-supported Mashhad office after being sacked from his job at the head of the Central Military Commission by Mansur and his allies and after having being courted for some time by the Islamic State. In 2015 after being courted by the Iranians for some time, hardliner Qari Atiqullah of the Peshawar Shura in autumn 2015 left the Taliban and tried to see whether the Islamic State would offer him a job. Similarly several veteran Taliban leaders were reported in late summer 2015 to be talking to the Islamic State, as he opposed the leadership of Akhtar Mansur.<sup>31</sup>

Yet another example is that of Sirajuddin Haqqani, whose relations with Saudi Arabia became very shaky in 2013 after evidence started emerging that he was also accepting Iranian funding. Having refused to drop Iranian funding, Serajuddin was cut off Saudi patronage, but a significant pro-Saudi lobby inside the Haqqani network continued to exist. This lobby by the late summer of 2014 was entertaining contacts with the Islamic State and some of its members even formally joined the new outfit. The Saudi intelligence source denied any Saudi involvement in the arrest of Hafiz Rashid (head of the Haqqanis' military) and Anas Haqqani (half-brother of Serajuddin) in Bahrain in October 2014, but sources within the Haqqanis remained adamant that the Saudis were involved and view the arrests as a punishment for the two senior members of the Miran Shah Shura's role in lobbying the Iranians for more funding.<sup>32</sup> The



Saudi source however acknowledged that the Saudis were putting pressure on the Haqqanis to join the reconciliation process led by Akhtar Mansur. The Pakistani authorities were reportedly mediating between the Saudis and the Haqqanis:

1. The discussions are in progress and Saudi Arabia will support soon with us but it will take time and the talking has been in progress for three months.<sup>33</sup>

The single Saudi source that was possible to contact for this chapter claimed that in the Saudi view, reconciliation between the Taliban of Akhtar Mansur and President Ghani should occur at the expense of 'the slaves of Iran and India', that is Dr Abdullah (twice presidential candidate), Atta Mohammed Noor (governor of Balkh), Haji Mohaqqueq (deputy on Abdullah's ticket in 2014 and leader of a Shi'a party), and others. The hope was that the very process of reconciliation would eventually split the National Unity Government and end up marginalising actors allegedly compromised with Iran. Aside from reconciliation with Ghani and opposition to Iranian interests, the Saudis were also claimed to have tried (less heavy-handedly) to lobby the Taliban to accept looser terms for an American withdrawal from Afghanistan; basically the Saudis favour a slow American withdrawal (again for fear of Iranian influence growing too fast) and would like the Taliban to drop their precondition of a complete withdrawal of foreign troops before the start of formal negotiations.<sup>34</sup>

Saudi tactics for compelling the Taliban to deliver what they wanted were from 2014–15 centred on concentrating their financial support on the man they believed could deliver: Akhtar Mansur. The Haqqanis and the Peshawar Shura were not receiving any direct state funding anymore. After the election of Akhtar Mansur as successor to Mullah Omar, according to Taliban sources the Saudis decided to decisively sponsor Mansur and further increased their funding for him, giving him the financial power to redistribute significant amounts of cash to buy the loyalty of key Taliban constituencies. Most important in this context was the reconciliation with the Haqqanis—Serajuddin accepted the position of deputy to Mansur, who in turn started sending cash to the Miran Shah Shura for the first time since 2007. Similarly Mansur made efforts to co-opt key members of the Peshawar Shura and Mullah Yakub, son of Mullah Omar and previously challenger for the top position among the Taliban.<sup>35</sup>

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Although Saudi influence over the Taliban is primarily exercised through financial support, the Saudis also reportedly deployed advisers with the Taliban, who numbered about two dozen as of 2015.<sup>36</sup> These advisers were operating at the top levels of the Taliban's organization and were not deploying to the field; their role was likely more controllers or supervisors than genuine advisers.<sup>37</sup>

In the Taliban's interpretation, for the Saudis the Islamic State in 'Khorasan' was a tool that allowed them to retain influence over the hardliners even in the event of reconciliation with Kabul, and to turn them against Iranian clients in Afghanistan. Funding the Islamic State made it dependent and controllable. A Saudi source seems to confirm:

They are dangerous but not for us, they are dangerous only for Iran and Shi'as. [...] This is only rumors that Daesh will work against Saudi Government. Daesh is established by us, if there is no support of us with Daesh, then Daesh will finish soon. We do not worry about this, that they will start working against us.<sup>38</sup>

Like the Saudis, the Qataris too have reportedly relentlessly exercised pressure on the Taliban to cut off relations with Iran; in 2015 a major cut in funding to the Taliban was motivated by the latter's persistent tendency to 'do business' with the Iranians and the Qataris planned to completely cut funding to the Taliban by 2016 or 2017. Again like the Saudis, the Qataris have come to see the launch of the Islamic State in 'Khorasan' as a useful tool for countering what they perceive as the strengthening Iranian hegemony over the country.<sup>39</sup>

We want to show to Iran that if they found people in the Taliban, then we can train other new groups which will fight against Taliban and Iran and all those groups and parties in Afghanistan who has link with Iranian Government.<sup>40</sup>

The single Qatari source contacted, like the Saudis, seemed to believe that the primary target of the IS will be Iran and Iranian clients and that its energies will be concentrated in that direction.<sup>41</sup> Fostering reconciliation and supporting the Islamic State in Afghanistan is not seen as contradictory:

If the Taliban leaders do peace, their fighters will join Daesh, and Daesh will become strong and this will be very serious for Iran.<sup>42</sup>

By 2015 even private funding from the Gulf countries was shifting. Much of it was now going to the Syrian and Iraqi jihads, as opposed to the Afghan one. But perhaps more importantly, there was growing pressure from these private donors for the Taliban to align with the Islamic State even in Afghanistan.<sup>43</sup>

*Conclusion*

The Gulf monarchies were dragged into the post-2001 Afghan conflict by their Pakistani allies, who needed financial support for their campaign to reclaim their 'fair share' of influence in what they perceived was an Afghanistan under growing Indian hegemony. As a result, for several years the Gulf monarchies and particularly the Saudis spent tens of millions of dollars a year, but maintained only very low level direct influence on the Taliban. Still, some of the purported aims of the Taliban insurgency, or its direct consequences, suited the Gulf monarchies well. Buying influence among the Taliban was consistent with Saudi and Qatari practices of trying to influence radical Islamic movements with financial support. More importantly, a growing Taliban insurgency was assumed to be harming Iranian interests in Afghanistan. If the Pakistanis saw an emerging Indian hegemony in Afghanistan, the Gulf monarchies saw an emerging Iranian hegemony. True, supporting insurgents in Afghanistan was harming traditional allies of the Gulf monarchies, such as the US and Great Britain, but after all these two powers were seen as responsible in Afghanistan, as they had been in Iraq, of irresponsibly allowing for greater Iranian influence.

As the conflict dragged on, the Gulf monarchies started developing Taliban policies of their own, and got directly engaged with the Taliban, bypassing the Pakistanis. One reason for not fully trusting the Pakistanis was the latter's efforts to find a *modus vivendi* with the Iranians, both in terms of developing a reconciliation model which allowed traditional Iranian allies in Afghanistan to play a role, and in terms of tolerating Iranian efforts to buy influence within the Taliban. The Pakistanis could not afford a hostile Iran, given that they share a border with it and given the large Shi'a minority inside Pakistan. As the 'cold war' between the Gulf monarchies and Iran escalated from 2013 onwards, the Saudis and to a lesser extent the Qataris had less and less patience with Pakistani concerns.

The Qataris were the first to break loose, launching the now famous 'Qatar track' of Taliban-Kabul reconciliation. This effort was not appreciated by the Pakistanis, who thought it premature and most importantly did not want the Gulf monarchies to bypass Islamabad. The Pakistanis believed that the Gulf monarchies could not frame a reconciliation path which kept Pakistani interests protected and at the same time was acceptable to all other regional countries, except India of course.

The Saudis engaged in reconciliation much later, starting from 2013, probably prompted by the impressive degree of positive publicity that persistent

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Qatari efforts were receiving. The Saudi approach differed from the Qatari one and centred instead around the opportunity offered by the 2014 presidential elections in Afghanistan, the first ones in which Karzai would not be running. A candidate mutually agreed by the Taliban and Kabul would have laid the ground for reconciliation. The Saudis from the start worked more closely with the Pakistanis, than the Qataris had done. Many things did not work out right in the Saudi effort, but eventually one of the candidates they had favoured (although not their first choice) was elected, Ashraf Ghani. Unfortunately for the Saudis, Ghani was trapped in a National Unity Government that limited his room of manoeuvre in terms of reconciliation.

Subsequent Saudi efforts were aimed at enabling pro-reconciliation Taliban leaders to consolidate their control over the movement and at connecting these Taliban leaders with Ghani, hoping that eventually the National Unity Government would collapse (or would be made to collapse), perhaps because of the very reconciliation efforts that the Saudis were sponsoring. At the same time the Saudis were more intent on changing the nature of the Afghan conflict than bringing peace to Afghanistan, from a jihad against the west towards a jihad against Shi'as and Iran. For this reason they started supporting the expansion of the Islamic State into the region and particularly in Afghanistan.

## PAKISTANI SUFISM IN THE GULF

### STRUCTURAL CONSTRAINTS, MODES OF TRANSPLANT, AND REMITTANCES

*Alix Philippon*

After being overlooked for a long time, the religious dimension of transnational migrations has been granted a growing importance in recent research. Religion has notably been analyzed as providing precious resources to cope with the migratory experience and stay connected with the home country, or as providing ‘additional cement to bind diasporic consciousness.’<sup>1</sup> In any case, it can endorse important functions in migrants’ day-to-day life and ‘enable them to sustain membership in multiple locations.’<sup>2</sup>

As far as Pakistani migrants to the Gulf are concerned, the religious transformations are generally thought to have occurred in the sense of a ‘wahhabization’ that is then brought back to Pakistan and spread through family networks.<sup>3</sup> Let us recall that there are about 7 million overseas Pakistanis (workers and their families, students) and 50 per cent of them are to be found in the Gulf, mainly in construction work. There is a circulating work force pattern, with workers leaving for few years, periodically visiting Pakistan and moving back permanently. As opposed to migrants in the West, the ones in the Gulf remain possibly closer to Pakistani culture due to geographical and cultural

proximity. However, very little is known about the presence and impact on migrants of Sufi orders between Pakistan and the Gulf. Academic sources are almost non-existent, apart from some disseminated data.

Generally speaking, Sufism has never respected 'national' boundaries and it has been a 'supralocal'<sup>4</sup> phenomenon from its inception, spreading through unsupervised networks of masters and disciples. This traditional Sufi transnationalism<sup>5</sup> has easily adapted to modern times marked by the rise of 'Muslim diasporas' and new information and communication technologies that have helped develop a sense of collective awareness and connection among disciples in various parts of the globe<sup>6</sup>: '[...] Sufi cults interpenetrate rather than generating contiguous, bounded territories. They leapfrog across major political and ethnic boundaries, creating their own sacred topographies and flows of goods and people. They override, rather than remain congruent with, the political boundaries and subdivisions of nations, ethnic groups, or provinces.'<sup>7</sup> The whole spectrum of Pakistani Sufi orders is more or less formally represented in the Gulf. They range from the New Age Sufi Islam of Sufi Order International to the Deobandi orthodox Sufism of the Naqshbandiyya Owaisia or the Barelvi-inspired Sufism of Minhaj-ul Quran organized around the cult of the so-called 'Shaykh-ul Islam' Tahir-ul Qadri.

This chapter will attempt to formulate some hypotheses on the presence of Pakistani Sufi orders in the Gulf. How have they spread, what shape has their transplant taken, and what are the links with the mother organization back in Pakistan? In the absence of fieldwork in the Gulf, I have mainly relied on participant observations and interviews, mostly conducted in Pakistan and abroad during previous research on Sufism, and on the websites of the orders.

### *The Structure of Political Opportunities for the Spread of Sufism in the Gulf States*

#### The Official Reprobation of Sufism in Saudi Arabia

As Peggy Levitt rightly puts it, 'Of singular importance is the role of states, which regulate movement and religious expression and thereby strongly influence the magnitude and character of migrants' transnational religious practices.'<sup>8</sup> Before exploring the presence of Pakistani orders in the Gulf, it thus appears necessary to briefly present the fate of this Islamic mystical tradition in the Gulf, and especially in Saudi Arabia. As a matter of fact, structural

constraints in terms of religious opportunity have had a fall-out on the development of Sufism in this part of the Muslim world. Whether indigenous or imported, it has been one of the Islamic forms of expression and mobilization most unwelcome in Saudi Arabia, where Wahhabi Islam has the status of a state ideology. As a result, Saudi Arabia is the country most unfriendly to religious pluralism, where non-Wahhabi Muslims (Sufis but also Shi'as) have suffered widespread discrimination.

When the al-Saud family took over the Hijaz (comprising Mecca, Medina and Jeddah) in the 1920s, Wahhabi zealots destroyed tombs and Sufi lodges (*zawiyas*), to the extent of deciding many Sufi shaykhs to move out and settle in places where repression was not as drastic. The founder of the Wahhabi Movement, Muhammad bin Abd al-Wahhab (1703–92), particularly resented what he perceived as associating the cult of human beings, namely Sufi shaykhs, with the cult of God (a crime of idolatry and polytheism called *shirk*) and he was determined to purify Islam of these 'improper' innovations.

However, David Commins<sup>9</sup> and Mark Sedgwick have shown that many Sufi orders survived in the Hijaz after Saudi conquest, though they had to keep a low profile and avoid displaying their rituals in the public space. 'Singing, music, pictures and Sufi ceremonies were all banned from public places, but there were evidently few attempts to search out songs or *dhikr* in private houses. The situation in 1941 was presumably much as in the 1980s and 1990s, when it was possible to hold a *dhikr* [remembrance, devotional acts including rhythmic repetitions] after Friday prayers so long as the participants proceeded from the mosque to a private house in small groups and by different routes.'<sup>10</sup> This is the case of the Dandarawiyya, a Sufi order deriving from the nineteenth century Moroccan Sufi Ahmad ibn Idriss, and whose networks have spread throughout the Muslim world,<sup>11</sup> including Saudi Arabia. Its shaykh in the Hijaz was finally expelled in 1941 after a fight with the Saudi king about the *Mawlid al-nabi*, that is to say the celebration of the birthday of the Prophet that had been part of Meccan life (and Sufi practice) for many centuries. The following decades did not witness any change in the overall status of Sufis:

While most Muslim governments in the 1960s were tolerant of popular Islam, the one state that proscribed the brotherhoods even more strictly than secular Turkey or Algeria (where prohibition was eventually lifted) was Saudi Arabia. Here, the scholarly Islam of ulemas claimed a monopoly on religious matters and dictated the only acceptable discourse on the central values of society and political order. Mystics and secularist intellectuals were held in particular opprobrium.<sup>12</sup>

However, a 'resurgence of Sufism'<sup>13</sup> in Saudi Arabia seems to have taken place since 9/11, as suddenly Wahhabism was scrutinized worldwide and became 'the discourse of hatred, intolerance and terrorism.'<sup>14</sup> The crown prince, Abdullah, started publicly acknowledging religious pluralism in the kingdom and made significant moves to 'establish dialogue between the various components of the Saudi nation and propose reforms helping to improve overall social relations in the kingdom.'<sup>15</sup> Therefore, a series of national dialogues were held, including Shi'as, Sufis and liberal reformers, *Mawlid* celebrations started being held again after being banned for decades, and Sufis gradually gave up their clandestine ways of life. 'You couldn't even say the word "Sufi." It was something underground, dangerous, like talking about drugs,' says Adnan, a Yemeni Sufi teacher who had moved to Saudi Arabia.<sup>16</sup>

Yet despite these official displays of tolerance and (re)conciliation, the attitude of the political and religious authorities towards Sufis seems to be at best inconsistent, at worst, repressive. Until today, Sufi actors complain that their shrines keep being destroyed, their places of gathering raided, and their literature banned.<sup>17</sup> Madawi al-Rasheed remarks that ordinary Saudis are caught in 'contradictions between religious doctrine and political expediency.'<sup>18</sup> The Sufi shaykh Muhammad Ulwi al-Maliki, who passed away in 2004, was forbidden to preach and teach in the Hijaz. He was indeed considered as 'one who had gone astray' and as blasphemous by the Committee of Senior Ulama.<sup>19</sup>

These unfavourable conditions have not prevented non-Wahhabi Islam from surviving or even some Sufi circles from developing against all odds. Firstly, this paradox can be explained by the fact that Sufi networks can be maintained if the actors remain discreet and perform their rituals in the premises of private homes. Secondly, the pilgrimage (whether *Hajj* or *umra*) to Mecca, or even Medina, is a legitimate mode of circulation for Sufi shaykhs in Saudi Arabia. That is also true of Shi'as. *Hajj* or *umra* can be privileged occasions for Lebanese, Iraqi or Iranian political or religious figures to meet Saudi Shi'as. Thirdly, the ideological stiffness of the Saudi regime can easily be bypassed. And as a matter of fact, Saudi authorities are very 'pragmatic' as far as non-Wahhabi Islam is concerned, as Laurence Louër has shown in the case of Shi'ism.<sup>20</sup>

### A Greater Tolerance Towards Religious Pluralism in Other Gulf States

The situation is not as drastic in other countries even though the Wahhabi ideology had a 'lasting impact on the religious environment [...] in the greater



Gulf region.<sup>221</sup> Hasan Tariq al-Hasan highlights a regional trend where ‘Saudi Arabia’s generous material support for Salafist ideology helped [...] diminish the allure of local traditionalist Sufi and Azhari movements in the Gulf States.’<sup>222</sup> In Bahrain, which is a constitutional monarchy headed by a Sunni dynasty, Shi‘as constitute about 70 per cent of the Bahraini Muslim population. The Constitution provides for freedom of religion. Sufism used to be ‘widely practiced’<sup>223</sup> and it is organized around ‘a small, traditionalist minority among Sunnis and tend to be geographically concentrated in Muharraq, one of Bahrain’s oldest urban centres.’<sup>224</sup> Shaykh Rashid al-Muraykhi, a Qadiri-Naqshbandi Sufi, is one of the most high-profile Sufis in Bahrain and his son serves as chief justice at the Supreme *sharia* court. According to him, Sufism has a long history on the island but began to wane in the 1970s. The rise of Islamic reform movements in Saudi Arabia, Iran and the Middle East inspired many Bahrainis to give up ‘some of the practices of their elders such as those associated with Sufism and popular or folk Islam,’<sup>225</sup> like visiting the shrines of Sufi saints.

In the Sultanate of Oman, one of the last bastions of Ibadiism, discrimination on the basis of religion is legally prohibited and the right to practice religious rites is legally protected. Similarly, in the United Arab Emirates, a royal decree by the President Shaykh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan in 2015 has outlawed religious or racial discrimination. This move partially had the objective to counter Islamist militancy. Apparently, Sufism is being used as an antidote to Salafism and the Muslim Brotherhood. In the two countries, Sufism is very much visible in the public space, especially in the cities of Dubai, Abu Dhabi, or Muscat, through music shows featuring singers and musicians. This shows that, unlike Saudi Arabia, the Gulf countries are generally more prone to welcome a plurality of Islamic religiosities.

The city of Dubai has become a ‘global city and a transnational hub,’<sup>226</sup> with a booming art scene and a cosmopolitan population where Pakistanis are the second largest nationality after Indians. As a cultural centre in the Gulf, it keeps welcoming Pakistani Sufi singers. Mystical traditions throughout the world have always fostered strong links with music, and that is very much the case of Sufism in Pakistan. Some Sufi orders have granted a very central role to music as a vehicle for meditation, a means of spiritual elevation and/or a way to reach the divine through ecstasy. The *sama*, the ‘mystical audition’ of poetry, songs and music, which can also be accompanied by different forms of dance, is the name given to a spiritual tradition that has taken on very different ritual forms across time and space. Though originally meant to take place within a ritualized spiritual assembly, it has also gradually endorsed a more popular function of

entertainment and has widely been publicized through the media. This process of diffusion and often folklorization occurs today with *qawwali*, an Indo-Pakistani Sufi devotional poetry sung with music that was popularized around the world by the great singer Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan in the 1990s. It can be heard today in many shrines throughout Pakistan and India but also in festivals and private concerts in Pakistan and abroad, notably in the Gulf. Many Sufi singers have thus morphed into performing artists for wider audiences in modern settings. The lines have never been clear-cut between sacred and profane, art and spirituality.

In March 2012, Sanam Marvi, the Pakistani rising star of Sufi singing, performed at an event organized by the Pakistani consulate in Dubai to celebrate Pakistan day. In November 2014, Rahat Fateh Ali Khan, a famous Pakistani proponent of Qawwali music, performed alongside the famous Indian composer A. R. Rehman during a 'Sufi weekend.' In January 2015, Abida Parveen, the renowned Pakistani Sufiana *kalam*s singer, got a standing ovation from a charged crowd mainly comprised of overseas Pakistanis and Indians. In a following ceremony, she received the Ambassador's Recognition Award from the hand of the Pakistani ambassador to UAE, Javaid Malik, who seized the opportunity to state that 'Sufi poetry symbolizes the message of peace, friendship and positive human relations, which is highly relevant today because it encourages people to overcome their differences and promotes understanding through dialogue.' He added, 'As Pakistanis, we feel proud to see Abida Parveen acclaiming international fame for herself and our country, and therefore we present her this special award.'<sup>27</sup>

Such 'Sufi events' go beyond Dubai and the UAE. In October 2012, the author was invited by the Royal Opera House of Muscat, in the Sultanate of Oman, to participate in a conference on Sufism that was followed by a Sufi evening organized by the Pakistani artist and event organizer Faizaan Peerzada, known for his promotion of Sufi music back in Pakistan. Amid other musicians and singers from Algeria, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Uzbekistan or even Egypt, the concert featured two groups from Pakistan: one led by Sufiana *kalam*<sup>28</sup> singer Saeen Zahoor and the other by the *dhhol*<sup>29</sup> *walas* Goonga and Mithu Saeen. One could argue that this generation of Pakistani Sufi singers, just like Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan in his own time,<sup>30</sup> are some of the most powerful identity symbols of the Pakistani diaspora as well as the glittering instruments of Pakistani diplomacy and Pakistan's soft power in the Gulf and beyond. South Asians in the Gulf could indeed maintain a sense of self-identity and a measure of communal cohesion through such events. But these high-profile concerts

appear to be just the most visible culturalized signs of the Pakistani Sufi presence in the Gulf.

*Sufi Order International and the Circulation of a Female Religious Entrepreneur's Faith*

SOI Between the West and the Muslim World: A Universalist and Syncretistic Order

Sufi Order International (SOI) was founded in the West and for a Western clientele by Hazrat Inayat Khan at the beginning of the twentieth century. A musician and a disciple of the Indian Sufi order of the Chishtiyya, Khan could be seen as an exemplary independent entrepreneur of religious globalization. He was sent to the West by his Indian master, with the proclaimed aim of harmonizing Western and Eastern cultures. Thus, SOI is the striking example of a Western Sufism that has found its place in the New Age galaxy, marked by an individualistic religiosity, by embracing syncretistic forms of spirituality and by emphasizing the universalism of the Sufi message, beyond Islam per se.<sup>31</sup>

Conversely, this Western Sufism has recently started to fertilize India and Pakistan by fulfilling the demands of a liberal and Westernized bourgeoisie, generally opposed to the religious offers available at home and that has found in this universalist Sufi discourse an acceptable way to Islam, transformed by religious modernity. In Pakistan, at the time of my research back in 2006, SOI was present in the city of Lahore in the shape of two distinct *zīkr*<sup>32</sup> circles led by two women. The circle I attended was led by a cosmopolitan lady belonging to the liberal bourgeoisie, Ayeda, who was a journalist and a teacher at the American school at the time.

The Trajectory of a Westernized Pakistani Sufi Guide Between Lahore, New York and Dubai

Ayeda went to university in the USA where she obtained two Master's degrees. At the age of eighteen, she became the disciple of her mother's Chishti master, Captain Wahid Bakhsh Rais, who had granted Ayeda's mother the permission to be a Sufi guide in Lahore. When the master passed away, Ayeda was unable to connect with her shaykh's successor whom she found too strict and exclusive to her 'western sensitivity.' She went through a moral crisis, looking for a mission

and a meaning in her life. Over seven years, she looked for a guide everywhere, explored reiki and New Age meditation, travelled to distant cities to meet people but to no avail. She even fell prey to a Westernized Sufi guide in Lahore who attracted her because of his modern profile but he proved to be a fraud. She eventually came across Pir Zia, the current shaykh of SOI in the city of New York, became his disciple in 2005 and started leading *zikr* circles in Lahore after permission was given to her by the shaykh. The circles she led were reminiscent of the mystical type of the floating group proposed by Ernst Trolstch, characterized by an immediate personal experience, a loose socialization (Weberian *sociation*) privileging personal bonds according to spiritual affinity. Her religious profile, as that of the few participants to her circles, is that of a 'soft Sufism', based on self-fulfilment and realization, and it illustrates the individualistic and this-worldly logics of modern religiosity.

Ayeda believes in the universalism of SOI and thinks it is the solution to the growing intolerance she witnessed around her at that time, with religious leaders claiming to possess the monopoly on religious truth. In 2006, she organized an international Sufi conference in Lahore entitled 'Universalism and Islam' that was meant to propose an alternative to sectarianism and terrorism. And it is precisely that threat that led her to leave Pakistan and settle in Dubai in 2010. After a terrorist attack in her neighbourhood, she decided to safely retreat to Dubai to raise her children in peace. Therefore, her trajectory is that of a religious entrepreneur of globalization that spreads from Pakistan to New York through the Gulf. The Sufi circle she leads in Dubai is the only SOI circle in this part of the world and it represents the extreme point of a minority form of Sufism. Ayeda teaches the universal meditational practice focusing on nature and the five elements of earth, water, fire, air, and ether. And in 2015, she organized a two-day spiritual retreat in Dubai with the shaykh who flew specially from New York. Therefore, SOI, like many other Sufi orders, has spread to the Gulf through the movements of a migrant. Studies dedicated to the deterritorialization of religion in the contemporary era have indeed emphasized the central role played by 'faith-bearing migrants' serving 'as key-carriers of "new" religious beliefs and practices [...]'<sup>33</sup> and often contributing to the reconfiguration of the local religious field. Migrants can be the vectors of new modes of religious investment, spaces and networks.

*The Barelvi Minhaj-ul Quran, a Neo-Sufi Order and Islamic NGO*A Global Sufi Cult Organized Around a Charismatic Shaykh<sup>34</sup>

Through the implementation of the Sufi repertoire, this movement of spiritual revivalism aimed to invent a new modernity for Islam. Founded in 1981 in Jhang, Pakistan, by the Sufi and scholar Tahir-ul Qadri, it has succeeded over a span of thirty years to attract many members, generally (but not always) affiliated to a traditional Sufi order, and who have found in this new movement an ideology and an interpretation of Islam that remarkably contrasted with what the religious and political arena of the country offered during that period.

The MUQ describes itself as a 'revolutionary movement of revivalism.' Its specificity lies in the effort to create institutions in which the spiritual energy and the values associated with Sufism can be channelled in socializing sets. Tahir-ul Qadri has reclaimed spirituality as the specific stamp of Islam and as the true representative of the subcontinent's cultural ethos. 'Shaykh', 'Leader', '*murshid*',<sup>35</sup> 'guide', there are numerous expressions used by the members of MUQ to designate Tahir-ul Qadri. His work has consisted in composing a complex partition of competences and registers of legitimization where the religious, political, academic, and spiritual domains have together composed a unique symphony of power. A prolific author, a respected religious leader, a leader of a (dormant) political party and of a trans-national organisation, a lawyer, a poet, a Sufi venerated by his devotees, Tahir-ul Qadri shows his followers the countenance of an absolute guide endowed with great authority. Therefore, MUQ can also be analysed as a Sufi cult.<sup>36</sup>

*Mahfil-e sama* (gatherings for spiritual recitations) including *qawwali* and *zikr* are regularly held in the headquarters in Lahore and abroad, as we will see. Every year, ceremonies are held in Pakistan and abroad to celebrate the birth of the Prophet, *milad-e Mustafa* (or *milad-un nabi*). The concept of intermediation, which is at stake in the debate among Islamic groups, is defended as a legitimate practice in Islam.<sup>37</sup> Although critical of some ritualistic aspects of the cult of the saints, the members of MUQ do perform *ziyarat*, tomb visitation, which is, to them, the 'granite foundation' of the beliefs of the Ahl-i-Sunnat. MUQ has also been active in re-Islamizing Pakistani society from below through a chain of educational institutions, active preaching activities and the diffusion of the thought of Tahir-ul Qadri through hundreds of titles ranging from religion to science, in the shape of books, tapes, CDs,

and an extensive use of the internet through web sites.<sup>38</sup> The same tools are used to spread the message abroad. As in the case of other Islamic organizations, the recourse to the internet aims at spreading the 'ideological sphere of influence' to a global scale and to work at a 'global cohesion.'<sup>39</sup> A real marketing policy has also been implemented within MUQ to legitimize Qadri's authority and make public his 'exceptional' status of a contemporary *mujaddid* (revivalist) of the century, through the massive use of media. The spiritual bond between Qadri and his followers, which has taken the shape of a reinvented master-disciple relationship, is a strong incentive for activism: members deploy their energies, often voluntarily, to keep the organization working abroad and donate their money to finance its numerous activities worldwide.

### The Institutional Expression of MUQ abroad and the support to migrants

Through the thought of Tahir-ul Qadri and affiliation to MUQ, many overseas Pakistanis became 'born again Muslims' and have rediscovered their Islamic identity, strained by their insertion in the fabric of a foreign, potentially hostile, society. There are about half a million members in Pakistan and about 25,000 abroad, but these figures I collected ten years ago have probably increased. Muslim diasporas have allowed the MUQ to become global and its networks have spread in several dozen countries. Most of the centres in the world have been set up in spontaneous initiatives from Muslims of Pakistani origin won over by the message and the interpretation of Islam given by Tahir-ul Qadri and who felt the need to organize community centres in order to consort with each other and practice their faith together according to these guidelines. Generally, this has taken the shape of transnational networks that could be analyzed as what Charles Tilly calls 'trust networks.'<sup>40</sup> A network can be recognized by the strong and similar bonds connecting members undertaking important long-term enterprise such as the practice of a religion, especially if it has to be done in a discreet way. But the Sufi presence can also be more institutionalized with the leaders turning the 'franchise' created by migrants into a proper 'chapter' of the order.<sup>41</sup> These spontaneous creations from the bottom up (franchises) are then acknowledged and supported by the MUQ that attempts to organize them more formally into chapters. When three people are affiliated with MUQ anywhere in the world, one 'executive council' is automatically created in order to integrate members into an administrative entity and make them feel committed to the organization. Here, two patterns

of global religious organization seem to be at work: the horizontal networks of self-organizing migrants 'marked by decentralization and spontaneity'<sup>42</sup> are subsumed in the vertical networks of the hierarchy 'marked by concentration of decision making and coordination of action.'<sup>43</sup>

The MUQ chapter in Bahrain is notably comprised of an executive council, an information and media secretary, an accounts secretary and a chief programme organizer and technical coordinator. There also seems to exist a MQI (Minhaj-ul Quran International) Gulf Council whose president is settled in Kuwait and who comes to Bahrain when needed. The institutionalization process from the top down seems to have taken place in 2007, as it is stated on the website:

It was in December 2007 that the process of establishing organization was undertaken and completed in consultation with the people having comprehensive understanding of the mission and its thought. Its details were duly dispatched to Directorate of Foreign Affairs, Pakistan. [...] On April 11, Naib Amir-e-Tehreek (that is to say the Vice president) Brig. (r) Iqbal Ahmad Khan visited Bahrain [...] and gave a comprehensive briefing about the expanding network of Minhaj-ul Quran International and other administrative matters.'<sup>44</sup>

Obviously, it is impossible to set up any centres in Saudi Arabia, as migrants would face 'expulsion' or 'prison', one of my sources told me. There, spiritual gatherings take place within the four walls of a home.

MUQ, as a transnational neo-Sufi order, can come to play key organizational roles in the experience of Pakistani migrants and 'provide its members with continuous feedback in order to maintain morality',<sup>45</sup> as the Mouride case has shown among the Senegalese diaspora. Transnational Sufi organization like MUQ can also serve to reinforce the ties and migrants' attachment to Pakistan, through a set of religious and social activities. The Bahrain or Dubai chapters regularly celebrate important dates of the Islamic calendar, such as the birthday of the Prophet (and of Tahir-ul Qadri) or Ramadan, that are platforms for the performance of Sufi rituals: *zikr*, recitation of the Quran, of *naats*,<sup>46</sup> of *hamd*<sup>47</sup> are indeed regularly held during these 'spiritual gatherings' or 'congregations', as they are called on the MUQ's website.

Similarly, as an NGO, MQI has also contributed to the creation of humanitarian spaces to help young migrants. The MUQ in UAE, in collaboration with other Pakistani professional organizations, has participated in welfare events and activities for the benefit of the Pakistani community. And the MQI has worked with voluntary organizations to help newly arrived



Pakistani migrants to find a job. MQI in Dubai has provided a hall with phone, fax, and other facilities to welcome them. Hence, MQI can reach beyond the group of its followers to help the Pakistani community at large. When Sahibzada Hassan Mohi-ud-Din, Qadri's son, visited the Bahrain chapter in 2010, a practical demonstration on Minhaj Welfare Foundation activities was also arranged for all MQI members, who were later 'entrusted by Sahibzada with responsibilities and duties.'<sup>48</sup> As a matter of fact, the financial strength of MUQ comes from donations from the Pakistani diaspora and the tour was probably aimed at raising awareness, doing some fundraising and strengthening the devotion and identification of members to MUQ and its leader. It is worth noting that the MUQ members are a spiritual clientele that can easily be mobilized for the sake of political events back home: many followers from the Gulf participated in the two massive sit-ins organized in Islamabad (January 2013 and August 2014) by Tahir-ul Qadri to protest against the corruption of the political system and against the killing of a dozen of his devotees in June 2014 by the Punjab police.

The Transnational Networks as a Legitimizing Tool for Tahir-ul Qadri and the MUQ back in Pakistan?

Conversely, the transnational network has proved to be a great legitimization tool in the hand of MUQ in Pakistan and has enhanced the prestige of its charismatic leader. As far as the Gulf is concerned, the way MUQ's presence is represented on the website could be analyzed as a 'hyperbolic stage-setting' aimed at strengthening the much-trumpeted claim of being present in more than eighty countries in the world. The articles dedicated to the MQI chapter in Bahrain give the impression of a great institutionalization and effervescence. However, according to my contacts in the organization, what is written on the website has to be taken with caution. Because of the precarious status of migrants, and the potential hostility of the authorities towards the Pakistani community, MUQ members have to respect a low-profile policy. The shaykh often tells them to remain discreet and not to jeopardize their stay in the Gulf for the sake of MUQ. Therefore, reality on the ground is supposedly much less formidable than is portrayed in the MQI media.

One way the MUQ has succeeded in exploiting the transnational network as a means to gain legitimization back home is through the interactions with local Sufis in the Arab and Muslim world, going beyond the ethnic confines of Pakistan. In the summer of 2005, I had the opportunity to join a 'spiritual



tour' where 250 members of MUQ from the Pakistani diaspora accompanied Tahir-ul Qadri to Syria and Turkey for two weeks.<sup>49</sup> The tour partly consisted in socializing with local Sufis: two meetings were for instance organized with Syrian members of the Shadhiliyya Sufi order while in Damascus. *Zikr* as well as musical spiritual sessions were held together, which helped Pakistani followers to enlarge their Muslim identity and strengthen their feeling of belonging to the *umma*. Tahir-ul Qadri kept making speeches in Arabic and was praised by the local shaykhs for his great mastery of the language and for being a 'shaykh-ul Islam' of the present era. This title was endowed to him by Arab shaykhs back in 2004, among whom was the imam of the Omeyyad Mosque in Syria. Tahir-ul Qadri was thus acknowledged as none less than the leading religious authority in the present era. This validation of the Pakistani shaykh by Arab religious leaders has considerably enhanced his prestige among his followers and worked as a legitimization tool both in Pakistan and abroad.

A similar analysis could be made on the situation in the Gulf. In Bahrain, the 'patron' and 'high command' of the MUQ's chapter is a famous local Sufi, Shaykh Rashid Bin Ibrahim Al Meraikhi, who is the head of the Imam Malik Bin Anas Society that seems to be the only officially registered Sufi organization in the country. One of his closest associates is an engineer working for the Kingdom's Ministry of electricity and water. Qadri has succeeded in involving local well-connected Sufis by granting them an official position in MUQ. That is a way to extend MUQ's support base and prestige but also to ensure the protection of MUQ members by a local patron who can also facilitate the visit of the shaykh and his close associates to Gulf countries.

When he came to Bahrain, Qadri delivered a lecture in Arabic, presented a compendium of *hadith* and then granted permission (*ijazat*) to Shaykh Al Meraikhi, MUQ's patron in Bahrain. It is worth recalling that one of the privileged ways in which Qadri has attempted to legitimize his authority as a religious scholar as well as a Sufi are the 150 'chains of authority' in Sufism as well as in Islamic sciences from which he received, beyond knowledge, *baraka*.<sup>50</sup> 'Authorized' by the 'greatest scholars' of his time, he delivered in his turn permissions and authorizations to other contemporary Muslims, like Shaykh Al Meraikhi. This gesture is a subtle move to assert his exoteric religious authority upon an Arab shaykh and further legitimize himself in the eyes of his followers.

### Travelling Shaykhs and Khalifas to the Gulf: Strengthening the Networks and the Shaykh's Charisma

For this transnational emotional community organized around the charismatic shaykh, the latter's visits abroad favour both a mundane and a mystical sociability among the devotees, strengthen the *esprit de corps* on a clearly Sufi mode, but also galvanize the members' commitment to the MUQ and their devotion to the beloved leader. For the transnational structure of the organization to keep working properly, it is hence somewhat necessary to maintain the shaykh's charisma, as it is a catalyst for faith and a great management device. The celebration of the shaykh's birthday is a privileged occasion to sustain his charisma, notably through 'speeches highlighting the personality, character and contributions of the revered saint.'<sup>51</sup>

Additionally, Qadri and his most trusted spiritual emissaries keep travelling the world to meet devotees. Generally speaking, the religious initiatives undertaken by migrants have indeed also led to the religious travels of the Sufi shaykhs and their *khalifas* (deputies, emissaries), who have had both to adapt to (and control) the intensification of migrations to the Gulf. These religious leaders often go to Saudi Arabia to perform pilgrimage (*hajj* or *umra*<sup>52</sup>), visit their followers and reactivate the ties between the migrants, the order and the home country. When Tahir-ul Qadri toured the Gulf in 2012 to perform *umra* in Saudi Arabia and visit the MUQ chapters, the reaction of the local Minhajians was enthusiastic, to say the least: 'We feel truly honoured on having an occasion of great cordial pleasure, spiritual satisfaction and dreams coming true when Minhaj-ul Quran Bahrain got the opportunity to host and have the great company of Shaykh ul Islam Dr Muhammad Tahir-ul Qadri in Bahrain for a period of four memorable days.'<sup>53</sup> The shaykh kept providing blessings and advices to his followers: 'He addressed the audience [...] with reference to spiritual and moral training and prayed for them all for ascent in spiritual status, betterment and success in all the matters of this world and the world hereafter.'<sup>54</sup> Numerous spiritual and social activities (such as dinners) were organized that were attended by a multicultural crowd of Bahraini, Pakistani, Indian, Nepali, Syrian and Iraqi people.

When Qadri's own son and successor to be, Sahibzada Hassan Mohi-ud-Din, visited Bahrain at the occasion of the birthday of the Prophet in 2010, he seized the opportunity to promote his father and his organization both in the eyes of the Arab patron and the Pakistani followers. He talked about his father's objectives and activities, publications (including his long fatwa against

terrorism that had just come out), honours, achievements, and contributions to the Muslim world in general. A special emphasis was made on 'his selfless efforts and enduring endeavours to inculcate, redefine, refine, preach and teach the true spiritual teachings and (...) transform every Muslim into a praiseworthy follower and lover of the holy Prophet.'

### *The Naqshbandiyya Owaisia*

#### A Deobandi Inspired Orthodox Sufism

In contrast to Minhaj-ul Quran which is formally organized throughout the world and whose activities are broadcast through its website, the Naqshbandiyya Owaisia is very discreet about its transnational dimension. It is not organized in chapters but through informal networks of master, deputies, and disciples. Founded by a Deobandi scholar, Allah Yar Khan, in the 1960s, this order invalidates the widespread idea that the mystical content of a brotherhood is inversely proportional to its visibility and activism. It actually invalidates most popular stereotypes about Sufism. Firstly, it displays highly mystical contents and practices and its charismatic leader defends an orthodox Sufism. Like many other Sufi shaykhs of his time confronted by a heightened criticism of Sufism, Allah Yar Khan developed a highly reflexive consciousness of the 'right' Sufi practice. Consistent with the sober orientation of Deobandi Sufism, Allah Yar Khan rejects as mere 'absurdities' numerous practices considered by some other orders to be legitimate (trance, dance, music, and the cult of the saints in general). Secondly, its activism and relation to politics betray strong Islamist tendencies: the implementation of *sharia* and the setting up of a 'real' Islamic State are part of the ideology of its political branch, the Tanzeem-ul Ikhwan (the organization/movement of the Brothers) founded in 1992. The current shaykh of the order, maulana Akram Awan, claims to be the defender of Muslim causes and of Islamic revival, and turned the order into a much more activist organization when he succeeded to his shaykh in 1984. The 'practical' aspect of Sufism is indeed constantly highlighted in his discourses and publications. Thirdly, its social base is elitist as the order mainly recruits among the urban middle and upper middle classes, notably the pious bourgeoisie of the city of Lahore. Furthermore, the headquarters (in Munara, next to Chakwal, Punjab) are located in an area that has long been a breeding ground for the army. The order has notably established strong networks within the military over the past

several decades and this influence may partially explain the latter's gradual Islamization. It may also partially explain the transplant of the Sufi networks of the NO in the Gulf. Indeed, in Bahrain, Saudi Arabia or even Oman, there is a significant presence of Pakistani nationals in the security apparatus.<sup>55</sup> The strong and old connections between Pakistani and Gulf countries' security institutions may have facilitated the spread of the NO in this part of the world. As a matter of fact, some of the migrants who joined the order while in the Gulf were working for the security apparatus of the UAE and Saudi Arabia.

The Naqshbandiyya mainly exists in the subcontinent in the shape of the Mujaddidiyya, founded in the sixteenth century and identified with Shaykh Ahmed Sirhindi, known as a renovator (*mujaddid*). The Owaisia is another minor offshoot. The main difference between the two is the way the divine blessing (*baraka*) is obtained: in the Owaisia, one can get initiation and instruction from the spirit of a master who is geographically or temporally distant. In the Sufi market of Pakistan, the NO also claims to be the only order able to offer an (imaginary) oath of allegiance (*ruhani baat*) directly in the hands of the Prophet, in his very assembly, where his companions and all the saints are also present. In fact, the NO claims to be able to propose a specific mystical offer that has convinced many to join it, in Pakistan but also in the Gulf.

*Zikr* is the keystone of the mystical practice within the order. It can be analyzed as an orthopraxis paving the way to become a Sufi, that is to say a fulfilled Muslim. It is a technique of the self, an effort to conform everyday behaviour to the moral obligations dictated by the Sufi cause, and it is performed in a systematic way every morning and evening. The efficiency of this specific *zikr* is one of the main factors that convinced many disciples to join the order in Pakistan and abroad. *Zikr* favours the commitment in the phases of the Sufi career. It helps adopt practices perceived as means to dedicate one's life to the highest Islamic ideals. The strong emotional effects of *zikr* appear as an irresistible call. It is often taught to potential recruits before anything is said about the order or the identity of the shaykh. *Zikr* is presented as a transformative device producing conformity to the moral imperatives of faith. In Pakistan as in the Gulf, *zikr* sessions are organized and led by the spiritual lieutenants of the shaykh called *sahib-e majazin*. Their role is to help the disciples activate their spiritual centre (*latayif*) and accomplish their different meditational stages. It takes at least two years to train a disciple for him or her to be ready for the oath of allegiance in the hands of the prophet.

### Dynamics of Religious Mobility among three Pakistani Migrants: Joining a Sufi order in the Gulf

Experiences of migration, mobility or exile often lead to a redefinition or strengthening of faith that can take new directions,<sup>56</sup> notably in the form of an enthusiastic spiritual calling that can be channelled by existing religious networks or organizations. As a matter of fact, the migratory experience, which is often challenging, involves issues of religious mobility. Being transplanted to another land can upset former (often inherited) religious allegiances and create new ones. It can also give way to discoveries and experimentations in the religious field.

One of the main ways in which the migrants are recruited in the order is through socialization. In most life narratives I have collected from the disciples of NO who lived in the Gulf, some decisive encounters with friends and colleagues helped the migrants to define their path as born-again Muslims, that is to say as Muslims who have engaged more intensely and self-consciously in the practice of their religion. Pnina Werbner underscores how Sufi practices and networks can indeed be great supports in the migratory experience, transforming migrants' trajectory into 'a tale of transnational Sufi religious empowerment.'<sup>57</sup> Trust and solidarity networks have been central in these trajectories. It is through these networks that they found their spiritual way and conversely, they became themselves entrepreneurs of new networks. I shall focus on three migrants' trajectories based on interviews conducted in Pakistan in 2007. They offer precious information on the recruitment and spread of NO in the Gulf.

Khalid, Hamid and Youssaf are not part of the majority of Pakistanis who are employed in construction work. They are a part of the minority of white-collar workers. Khalid lived for seventeen years in Riyadh, first working in a currency exchange company for three years, then spending a year in another company as general secretary. He then joined the royal Saudi naval forces, where he trained officers in the field of Information Technology. Yet though he presents his job in the army as a rare opportunity for a Pakistani, we have seen that Pakistani involvement has actually long been a common feature in Gulf countries' security apparatus. Similarly, in 1985, Youssaf had settled in the UAE serving in the army of the United Arab Emirates, writing for the government, before becoming the official calligrapher of the Kingdom. As for Hamid, he started working as a government employee in Pakistan but did not think the job was 'suitable' for him so in 1992–93, he moved to Karachi where

he received six months' training in a carrier company for which he has been working ever since.

Khalid's trajectory is that of a born Sufi who became a born-again Sufi while living in the Gulf. He was born in a Chishti<sup>58</sup> family and his own grandfather was a Chishti Sufi. He recalls this inherited religious identity as one of ignorance that was successfully transformed by his stay in the Gulf. 'Fortunately,' he says, 'I spent seventeen years in Saudi Arabia.' Several things triggered that change: Khalid got to learn Arabic and read the *Quran*, and he was shocked to realize that the way he had been leading his life in the Chishti way was 'against the *Quran*.' So he requested 'Almighty Allah' to guide him so that he could obey the instructions of the Holy Book. It was a meeting with a NO disciple in the late 1980s that led him into the order. Three elements were decisive in the subsequent encounter with the shaykh during his visit to Saudi Arabia for *umra*: the latter's exoteric skills as an interpreter of the *Quran*, the special *zikr* performed in the order that deeply affected Khalid, and the fact the shaykh initiates to a special oath of allegiance to the Prophet.

Hamid was 34 at the time of our meeting in 2007. He claimed to have always been religiously oriented and he was in search of the 'guidance of Allah' right from his youth. He did not know at that time that this would take place in the Gulf. Throughout the interview, Hamid kept reciting numerous verses of the *Quran* in Arabic, thus displaying the cultural capital he had accumulated in the Gulf, as he was fluent in Arabic and almost a *hafiz*.<sup>59</sup> While posted in Abu Dhabi in his early 20s, Hamid met a man from Lahore, Zahir, who was employed by his company. Zahir fascinated Hamid primarily because of his good behaviour and moral qualities. Hamid started performing *zikr* with Zahir. They decided to go to Saudi Arabia to meet the shaykh who was visiting to perform *umra*; Hamid had his very first encounter at the Holy Kaaba in Mecca where he took the oath of allegiance with Akram Awan.

As he was posted in UAE, Youssaf was asked by three Pakistani men to create the poster announcing the arrival of maulana Akram Awan in the Emirates in January 1986. He had never heard of him, but the text indicated that Akram Awan's shaykh, Allah Yar Khan, was a '*mujtahid fi tassawwuf*,'<sup>60</sup> understood by Youssaf as 'reformer of Sufism.' That title inflamed his imagination, as he had been looking for an accomplished shaykh for a long time. 'There I stopped to write! I started to inquire from those three men and asked them about *tassawwuf*. They got scared, thinking they've come across some sort of a Wahhabi.' The three men started explaining Youssaf that Allah Yar Khan had freed Sufism of its 'impurities' (such as dancing and doing drugs)

and that it simply meant following the way of the holy Prophet with sincerity of the heart. Akram Awan was supposed to come the following month and Youssaf had the opportunity to meet him:

It was my daily routine then to visit him and organize his lecture in a mosque and to publicize it as well [...] and do *zikr* with *hazrat ji*<sup>61</sup> and say *fajr* prayers with him and go back to work afterwards on the military transport that used to wait for me outside. The routine continued as such for some days whilst a thought kept popping in my head to do my *baat* with *hazrat ji*.

On 22 January 1986, he took an oath after a lecture by the shaykh that was attended by a big audience, including Afghans and Arabs.

### The Zikr Circles of NO in the Gulf: Informal Networks and Mystical Sociabilities

The testimony of these three migrants allows us to better understand the modalities of NO's transplant in the Gulf. Unlike MUQ that systematically transforms franchises into chapters, NO spreads mainly through informal networks of migrants running franchises and periodically receiving guidance from the Pakistani leader, either when he travels to the Gulf or when the migrants go back to Pakistan and visit him in his headquarters. In the case of Khalid and Hamid, one can see how the 'change' experienced by the meeting with the shaykh translated into the creation of a small *zikr* circle that gradually attracted more and more people. Indeed, after meeting the shaykh in Medina, Khalid came back to Riyadh where he realized 'something had been completely changed inside.' He knew nothing much about *zikr* or the art of speech but he invited a friend of his to join him and they created a small *zikr* circle that soon turned into an all-Pakistani community (*jamaat*), 'hundreds of educated, highly qualified families in Riyadh getting together, gathering, doing *zikr*, changing everything, getting peace. [...] After one year, I came back to Pakistan and met my shaykh. In this period of one year, I was totally changed.' Apparently, no Saudis were part of it: 'because they don't know about *zikr* and it is not easy to do *zikr* there.' And some were laughing when he would tell them that it is written in the Quran that one has to repeat Allah's name.

Hamid started doing *zikr* with Zahir and soon some of his work colleagues thought he had changed. This change ('calm, peaceful, and trying to help others') prompted some of them to join the *zikr* circle. First, they were four people and gradually, the group included about twenty people. Besides these



small Sufi circles at work, Hamid also used to go to a proper *zikr* centre that was set up in Abu Dhabi by disciples of the order to welcome all the people wanting to do *zikr* with one lieutenant of the shaykh (*sahib-e majaz*). Hamid was under the guidance of Yussaf for about two years. After he successfully accomplished his first meditational stage, he was given the permission by Yussaf to guide his co-workers who did not have time to come to the center. He was asked to teach them *zikr* and perform with them morning and evening. Thus, the workplace appears to be a crucial locus for the recruitment of disciples as well as for the teaching and performing of spiritual practices. Hamid is now in Lebanon where he is a NO 'ambassador', trying to gather people around him to perform *zikr*.

### The Feedback Effect in Pakistan

According to Peggy Levitt, 'social remittances are ideas, behaviours, identities and social capital that flow from receiving- to sending-country communities'.<sup>62</sup> Undoubtedly, transnational religious networks are important vectors of social remittances. One NO disciple in the Gulf can influence many others back home. For instance, when he went back to Pakistan, Khalid invited his family and told his parents to stop doing 'things that are against Islam.' He succeeded in convincing two of his brothers and their wives to start doing *zikr* and they eventually joined the NO. Furthermore, because of the intensity of some migrants' investment, the migratory experience can also be the matrix of the constitution of new religious elites for the order. Khalid and Yussaf both became *sahib-e majazin* during their stay in the Gulf. Since their return to Pakistan, they have been leading *zikr* circles in Lahore and initiating disciples in the complex mystical system of the order. Both are now part of the religious leadership of NO and are some of the closest lieutenants of the shaykh in Pakistan.

### Conclusion

In this paper, I have tried to highlight the religious dimension of Pakistani migrations to the Gulf through the example of three Sufi orders. We have seen that these orders have spread through the movement of migrants to the Gulf and that their institutional expressions oscillate between informal networks and more organized chapters. The orders propose a spiritual offer to the migrants (mainly *zikr* circles that are easily transposable) and serve to reactivate the ties with the homeland through spiritual, social, but also humanitarian activities.



Migrations can also imply religious mobility and we have come across three disciples of NO who joined the order while in the Gulf. Two of them were groomed to become the special *khalifas* of the shaykh and they became key actors of the orders. Therefore, the migratory experience can lead to the constitution of a new religious elite. These transnational networks can also be the vectors for the construction of a global emotional community as well as a global charismatic authority for the shaykh, enhancing his appeal and legitimacy back home. But the remittances from the Gulf also benefit the orders' financial resources that are mainly coming from the generous donations of the diaspora.

Pnina Werbner's work shows that Sufi cults can be the vectors of the re-enchantment of the world and can provide certain modern solutions for migrants. 'Sufi fraternities and saintly blessings legitimize and support worldly achievements [...]. They provide mutual support in work contexts, the experience of moral amity in the face of urban anonymity [...] and a platform for the leadership aspirations of those beyond the official public sphere.'<sup>63</sup> Indeed, when I met him in Lahore, Khalid presented himself as a fulfilled man, enjoying his life, his new job and the trust he benefited from his new employer thanks to his new religious belonging:

After joining this *silsila*, I enjoy my life, nothing to worry. My job is good. [...] Now I am working in a company as general manager here, it is for packaging boxes. [...] After three months, the owner handed the company to my hand. He never checked what I am doing, because he knows I will never do wrong. [...] Many people who know me, they ask the owner of the company 'please give us not him but his brother.' He says: 'no, such people you cannot find.'



## IRAN, AN UNEXPECTED SUNNI HUB BETWEEN SOUTH ASIA AND THE GULF

*Stéphane A. Dudoignon*

The post 9/11, US-led invasion of Afghanistan and the Arab revolutions in 2010 led to guerrilla activity on Iran's frontier with Pakistan in the Sistan-Baluchistan region. This activity, undertaken by Sunni Baluch groups, has remained uninterrupted and often unnoticed by the international media. The new Sunni Baluch groups succeeded the previous Baluch separatist movements that were supported by various regional polities such as Iraq between the late 1960s and early 1980s.<sup>1</sup> The two most prominent groups were Jund-Allah ('Legion of God'), which was active from 2002 to 2010, and since 2012, the better equipped, Saudi-supported, Jaysh al-'Adl ('Army of Justice').<sup>2</sup>

While these groups share the same anti-Shi'a rhetoric as the Pakistani Sunni sectarian groups, they have chosen to focus their assaults on military and paramilitary targets, instead of civilian and properly religious ones. An example being Jund-Allah's suicide attack in April 2009 against the Shi'a Friday mosque in Zahidan, the capital of the Sistan-Baluchistan Region. The target was chosen because of the building's status as a local worship institution for the Army of the Guardians' (*Sipah Pasdaran*).<sup>3</sup> This paramilitary body, distinguished in 1979 from Iran's conventional forces (*artish*), is often seen by the Sunni Baluch population as a key instrument of the Shi'a Persian 'colony' (Pers. *musta'mara*). As such, it perpetuates modern Iranian dominance as it was constructed over

western Baluch territory by the Qajar dynasty from 1843 and, again, by the Pahlavi monarchy from 1928.<sup>4</sup>

Jund-Allah often defended the religious autonomy of the Baluch and Sunnis of Iran against the encroachments once embodied by Brigadier General Nur-'Ali Shushtari, the chief of the region's Pasdaran. (Shushtari perished in Pishin on 19 October 2009 in a suicide attack against Iranian Baluch tribal and religious leaders, for which credit was claimed by Jund-Allah).<sup>5</sup> Despite Islamabad's reliance on Riyadh's assistance and Pakistan's toleration of Baluch guerrilla action against Iran, Pakistan has been reluctant to support the explosion of a Baluch Sunni insurgency inside of Iran. This is due to the fear of a backlash in their own Baluch territories, not to mention of Tehran's response.<sup>6</sup>

Besides, after two decades of debates on the state sponsorship of low-intensity conflicts in the Muslim world, the years 2006–10 witnessed international polemics on the backing reportedly provided to Jund-Allah warriors by the George W. Bush administration (2001–9).<sup>7</sup> Some already evoked the US, British and Saudi funding of Sunni organizations in Iraq and Iran's peripheral regions well before Riyadh's first claim of support to Jaysh al-'Adl in the last weeks of 2013.<sup>8</sup> For several commentators, playing the ethnic card had become part of the US strategy for regime change. Even if some authors suggest that, in the 2000s and early 2010s, there seemed to be no US policy against Iran that included the resuscitation of ethnic parties.<sup>9</sup>

It is true that such visions developed in a context when both Washington and Tehran used to equate Sunni Islam in Iran with ethnic separatism.<sup>10</sup> In the same years, incendiary columns in the American media underlined connections between al-Qaeda, the substantial Baluch labour migrant population within the Gulf monarchies, and Iraqi Military Intelligence.<sup>11</sup> This perception was built on the established fact that Iraq supported the Baluch in Pakistan in the 1970s and in Iran in the 1960s, early 1970s and early 1980s. Some experts also highlighted Iran's support to the Shi'a jihad in the Tribal Zones of the Northwest Frontier Province (present-day Khyber Pakhtunkhwa). Others exposed the involvement of Khamenei and the Quds Force of the Pasdaran corps' in backing both Sunni and Shi'a militias in Iraq during the mid-2000s.<sup>12</sup>

Yet, the most serious allegations were allusions to regular 'contact' between the US and jihadist fighters, sometimes deplored by CIA figures publicly critical of the 'Mad Max option' that consists of setting, everywhere possible, the Sunnis and Shi'as against each other.<sup>13</sup> Some also mentioned the short-lived interest in the Baluch and Sunnis of Iran shown by the White House in the summer

of 2008. A growing interest and support within the US Congress led to a regularly updated 'report for Congress' that affirmed the absence of a single Sunni mosque in Iran.<sup>14</sup>

Indeed, since 1979, the Islamic Republic has only recognized one undivided 'Muslim' community on its territory, releasing no statistics about other Muslim confessional groups (in Arabic, *madbhabs*). The vitality of Sunni worship and religious teaching is visible when looking at the media of Iran's Kurdish regions,<sup>15</sup> of Arab-peopled Khuzistan, Hurmuzagan and Southern Fars in the south, of Sistan-Baluchistan in the southeast, Central Khurasan near Afghanistan, the Turkmen region of Gulistan and the Talish sub-region of Gilan on the Caspian Sea. After the revolution, parallel to their Shi'a counterparts, Sunni mosques and *madrasa*-buildings experienced a spectacular boom, especially during the late 1990s.<sup>16</sup>

Historically, the Sunni regions of Iran are home to many non-Persian-speaking (save the Aymaqs of Khurasan) cross-border 'tribal' populations who have their demographic centres of gravity outside of Iran. This has fuelled, in the twentieth century, Tehran's suspicions of separatism. Moreover, the dominant nomadic pastoralists and tribal societies long embodied, for Iranian officialdom, the 'archaic' order that the Iranian nation state, since Reza Shah (1925–41), has tried hard to annihilate through policies of settlement and Persianization. In the Cold War period, the development of Kurdish and Baluch insurgent nationalist movements further complicated the relations between the centre and these regions.

Yet again, after the urbanization of the 1980s and the 'colonization' of the country's peripheries by growing waves of Shi'a migrants from Iran's hinterland, new sectarian dynamics began to transcend the regional and ethno-linguistic identities. This nourished post-WWII Kurdish, Arab, Baluch, Turkmen, and Talishi nationalist and autonomist movements. While, in 1986, Iran turned, for the first time ever, into an urban-majority country, the religious sociology and connectivity of its Sunni-inhabited former 'tribal' marches transformed accordingly. The next paragraphs will explain how the development in these former peripheral and destitute regions of transnational connections, with the subcontinent and with the Gulf most notably, helped to bind these groups who claim to belong to a new 'Sunni community of Iran' (in Persian *jama'at-i sunni-i Iran*).

We will also try to understand how, in the eyes of Tehran, the structuring of this community, combined with the successes of Iran's counterinsurgency policies in the late 2000s, have paradoxically transformed, for Tehran,

centrifugal dangers into a political resource. This helps explain why Iran is relatively stable, amidst a wider Middle East torn apart by sectarian violence. At the same time, we will see how the emergence of the Sunni community of Iran has contributed to make the country a complex interface between Hindustan and the Arabian Peninsula.

### *Counterinsurgency and 'Sectarian Concord'*

During President Obama's tenure (2009–17), Riyadh's regional agenda underwent significant transformation, more so after the enthronement of King Salman in 2015 and the ascent of his son Muhammad b. Salman. They realized that they could not expect US support in case of an internal rebellion, and that Washington was seeking a *détente* with Tehran. This transformed Saudi suspicion into paranoia. In particular, after the 2011 uprising in Bahrain by mostly Shi'a protestors and the skirmishes in Shi'a-inhabited areas of Saudi Arabia's Eastern Province, the Saudi and overall Gulf public debate articulated around the purposive Iranian attempts at destabilizing its Gulf neighbours by activating its networks among Arabian Shi'a minorities.

This in turn brought Tehran to concentrate on the Saudi threat. Since 2013, leading articles from the Iranian press have not been content with accusing the US and Israel as they used to do. Instead, they applied themselves to denounce openly Saudi (and Qatari) intrigues. Repeatedly, these columns highlighted the 'Wahhabi' and 'neo-Salafi' stances of Jaysh al-'Adl, and this group's proximity with armed groups that have been operating in Syria since November 2011.<sup>17</sup> On the eve of the November 2015 attacks in Paris, the role of both the Saudi service and the jihadist movements in possible destabilization attempts, as retaliations for Tehran's implication in Syria and Yemen or for Iran's rapprochement with Taliban leaders, was widely seen as a major threat to the country's internal security.<sup>18</sup>

In the autumn of 2015, while a series of exceptional safety measures had been taken in the country's biggest cities, the interest of Iranian media in neo-Salafism—through sharp critiques of their *takfiri* (anathematic) and anti-Shi'a currents—reflected the impact exerted by the Mashreq conflicts on the country's overall public life. In recent years, observers and researchers have dedicated more attention to the region's Sunni religious field. They have highlighted the complex roles played since the aftermath of WWII, by an emerging status group of Sunni ulama. This group is made of the *mawlawis* educated in the Indo-Pakistani networks of the Deoband School, a Sunni

revivalist movement born in the Ganges river valley ten years after the repression by the British colonial authorities of the Great Rebellion of 1857.<sup>19</sup> Still underestimated, Deobandi propaganda operated parallel to the India-born, Pakistan-based Tablighi Jama'at cross-border missionary network in the easternmost Sunni-majority districts of Iran. This, as well as the Deobandi and Tablighi movements' complex relationship with regional authorities, is only beginning to be taken into account by observers.<sup>20</sup>

Their rediscovery enables us to see the decisive role that the Sunni Muslim networks played in preserving the relative stability in Iran's Sunni-populated eastern regions, which border more troubled Afghanistan and Pakistan. Long seen as a threat against Iranian integrity, the cross-border tribal-cum-religious networks of the Baluch (and of Persian-speaking Aymaq populations in Central Khurasan along the Afghan border) have gradually become, in Tehran, potential vectors of social peace. This was made apparent when Guide 'Ali Khamenei proclaimed 2007 to be a 'Year of National Union and Sectarian Concord' (*wahdat-i milli wa insijam-i madbhahi*), following several attacks carried out by Jund-Allah in February 2007. In addition, these cross-border Sunni religious networks increased Iran's capacity to carry weight in its eastern (Pakistani, Afghan, Central Asian) Sunni neighbourhood.

Alongside generations of Baluch and Aymaq *mawlawis* educated, since the first half of the twentieth century, in the northern Indian then southern Pakistani networks of the Deoband School, another mobilizing force of the Sunni 'minorities' (in Persian *aqalliyyats*) of Iran appeared in the late 1970s. The Maktab-i Qur'an (MQ) developed in regions such as the Sunni hilly districts and suburban neighbourhoods of the Kurdish populated western regions of Iran. MQ was initially led by theologian and gnostic thinker Ahmad Muftizada, the creator of the 'Central Council of the Sunnis' (*Shura-yi markazi-i ahl-i sunnat*, SHAMS in its Persian acronym). This council, although short-lived, unified parts of the Sunni religious personnel of Iran in 1980–82.

Although jailed from 1982 onwards, Muftizada was among those who inspired the Kurdish-born Muslim Brother (Ar. *ikhwani*) political movement. This movement was legalized in 2002, under the name of the 'Appeal and Reform Society of Iran' (*Jam'iyyat-i Da'wat wa Islah-i Iran*, JDII).<sup>21</sup> In 1987, Iraqi Kurdish exiles, connected to the United Arab Emirates, began to expand the Muslim-Brother trend. Endowed with an autocephalous leadership, the Society became a key promoter of the Sunni-Shi'a dialogue within and outside of Iran.<sup>22</sup> At the same time, its preachers turned into political allies for the

Deobandi establishment of easternmost Iran (since 2008, within a tentative revivification of SHAMS, this time under Baluch leadership).

Consequently, the Ikhwani and Deobandi movements in Iran continue to play a part in the specific counterinsurgency policy implemented in 2007 against Jund-Allah and successor organizations. Furthermore, for Tehran, the stability of Iran's western and eastern borderlands rely on the authority of Ikhwani preachers and Deobandi ulama, especially during election periods in Sunni-populated regions. In the 2010s, this role relied on their ability to act as bulwarks against Jihadist Salafism.

### Shi'a 'Colonization' and the Sectarianization of Identities

The two major Sunni revivals of contemporary Iran both emerged in regions—Kurdistan and Kirmanshah in the west, for MQ and JDII; Sistan-Baluchistan and Central Kurasan in the east, for the Deoband School and the Tablighi Jama'at—exposed to a combination of political and socio-economic evolutions of exceptional violence during the twentieth century. They all experienced the brutal transformation by the Pahlavi monarchy of tribal leaderships into an intermediary organ between central power and local society (through the reclassification, completed in 1950, of these regions from 'tribal' to 'rural', which permitted a disarming of tribes, be it partial). Combined with sedentarization and urbanization, this mutation continued with the escheat of vernacular religiosity in regions dominated, at that point, by religious systems as diverse as Yezidism in Kurdish society and Dhikrism throughout wider Baluchistan.

A monotheistic religious system offering similarities with ancient Mithraism, Yezidism had developed in Kurdish society, under tribal patronage, despite successive waves of conversion to either Sunnism (in the Ottoman Empire and successor states) or Shi'ism (in Persia), and of periods of persecution (since 2014 in Syrian and Iraqi territories, under the Islamic State Organization). Dhikrism, a religion of northern Indian Islamic origin, nourished by Sufi gnosis, prospered in distinct socio-economic groups of Baluch society (nomadic pastoralists and fishers, notably) in the Makran coastal plain, along the Sea of Oman, since the late fifteenth century. The powerful Gichki and Bulidayi tribes protected Dhikris, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Dhikrism faced jihadist campaigns by the Kalat Khanate (northeast of present-day Pakistani Baluchistan) in the mid-eighteenth century and, again, in the 1930s, when Deobandi Baluch *ulama* played a decisive role in converting Dhikri populations to Sunnism.<sup>23</sup>



Since the interwar period in Iranian Kurdish and Baluch societies, the growing confrontation in expanding cities between Sunni autochthonous populations and waves of Shi'a Persian white-collar and petty-trader migrants from the Iranian hinterland made Sunnism an element of politicized ethnic identities, while fostering the weakening of tribal affiliations and solidarities. Moreover, in eastern Iran since the 1940s and in western Iran since the 1970s, the Indian- and Egyptian-born Sunni revivals personified respectively by the Deoband School and Maktab-i Qu'ran could develop thanks to the role that Tehran expected them to play as ramparts against ethnic nationalisms and Soviet interests. The diffusion of Soviet influence, through the Kurdish and Baluch unruly corridors, remained an obsession of Iranian ruling circles from WWII until after the fall of the Pahlavi monarchy.<sup>24</sup>

These Sunni revivals were promoted by a socially conservative religious personnel originating from a sedentary traditional economic elite intermarried with the settled tribal gentry. For example, on the Sarhadd Plateau of Iranian Baluchistan, prominent lineages of the Sunni religious establishment used to come from the *shabri* (a Baluch term for settled peasantry) status group of Baluch society, or from settled *baloch*<sup>25</sup> pastoralist and horticulturalist nomads. In a region of exceptional aridity, where water distribution used to provide to those in charge of it a social rank even more prestigious than landowning itself, *shabri* and *baloch* lineages were often in charge of the administration of *qanats* (the subterranean channelling galleries of piedmont aquifer strata).<sup>26</sup> In the Sarhadd and its southern neighbours the Makran Hills, the investments required for the digging and upkeep of *qanats* until the mechanization of the region's agriculture from the 1960s onwards had encouraged the emergence of hereditary land-based aristocracies and the establishment of a society more stratified and hierarchized than the nomadic one.<sup>27</sup>

Present in the Makran Hills reportedly since 1915,<sup>28</sup> Deobandi teaching officially developed in easternmost Iran from WWII onwards. In this period, the Pahlavi monarchy faced British and Soviet occupation and was in quest for intermediaries in her tribal peripheries. Characterized by insistence on reformed Islamic teaching (of the Hadith, especially) and by its staunch struggle against 'heterodoxy' (either Dhikri or Marxist-Leninist), Deobandi teaching became, as in the subcontinent, an ally of the Tablighi Jama'at missionary networks, present in Iran since the mid-1950s. In 1979, both took profit from the Iranian revolution, in which they took limited part, for emerging as driving political forces at a regional level, at the expense of Iranian Baluch secular political parties.<sup>29</sup> Topped since 1984 by the Dar al-'Ulum Maki madrasa of Zahidan,

the Deoband School in Iran managed to gradually appear, after the repression of Sunni Kurdish political organizations from 1982 onwards, as a key defender of the 'Sunni community of Iran' initially promoted by Muftizada.

### Sunni Higher Religious Schools as Iranian Soft Power

In easternmost Iran, the Dar al-'Ulum Makki of Zahidan conquered hegemony over other Sunni sectarian institutions in the mid-1980s. This *madrasa* became a close associate of the Office of the Legate of the Guide for the Sunnis of the Sistan-Baluchistan Region, which since 1979 controls the development of Tablighi networks. In doing so, the Dar al-'Ulum Makki helped bureaucratize and nationalize, at the same time, a highly adaptable, Hindustan-born, cross-border grassroots missionary organization.<sup>30</sup>

The Dar al-'Ulum extended its influence either directly or through the Tablighi Jama'at within the very diverse Baluch and Khurasani societies. Its function as a vector of socio-political control permitted the *madrasa* to play a role internationally at different moments of Iran's recent history. For example, the anti-Soviet Afghan jihad of 1979–89, during which Mawlawi 'Abd al-Malik Mullazada (1949–96), the Saudi-educated son of the *madrasa's* founder and Sunni *Imam-jum'a* of Zahidan, Mawlawi 'Abd al-'Aziz Mullazada 'Makki' (1916–87), coordinated assistance to the *mujahidin* in eastern Iran.<sup>31</sup> Mawlawi 'Abd al-'Aziz, although appointed in 1971 under the reign of Muhammad-Reza Shah, had managed to emerge after the summer of 1979 as one of Khomeini's main interlocutors among the Sunnis of Iran.

The positions of the father and of the son were even more remarkable in that they belonged to the numerically small Iranian Deobandi religious elite trained in the Hijaz, which explains the 'Makki' (i.e. 'from Mecca') surname granted to Mawlawi 'Abd al-'Aziz and to his *madrasa*. Among this exclusive group we find, too, a colorful Tablighi activist and Arabic-language religious poet, Mawlawi 'Abd al-Qadir Allahzayi 'Madani' (b. 1944), who is a graduate student of the Jami'a al-Islamiyya of Medina as Mawlawi 'Abd al-Malik himself. A close companion to the Mullazadas, Madani distinguished himself by his ceaseless propaganda and intermediation activity in several countries such as Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Pakistan. His five-years as the Vice-Imam of the Airport Mosque in Medina were some of his most notable. His career in the Hijaz suffered because of the vicissitudes of Iranian-Saudi relations in the 1990s (Riyadh reportedly expelled him twice). In fact, Madani's impeccable fidelity to Khomeini—trumpeted in Arabic verses that depicted the Ayatollah as the

‘Best Guided Imam’ (*al imam al-arshad*, an enthusiastic epithet rarely found in Iranian Deobandi literature)—reflects the long involvement of Deobandi and Tablighi networks in the Islamic Republic’s soft power in a heart of the Sunni world.<sup>32</sup>

Fifteen years after the end of the Afghan jihad, during the Ahmadinejad presidency (2005–13), Guide ‘Ali Khamenei mobilized the Deobandi networks for the country’s cultural diplomacy in the former Soviet South. This mobilization began when the Sunni *imam-jum’a* of Zahidan himself was banned from entering several regions of Iran. Notably, it took the shape of participations in jubilees set up between 2004 and 2009, in Iran and Tajikistan (in memory of the Sunni Muslim theologians and jurists Abu-Hanifa and al-Bukhari).<sup>33</sup> Such exchanges helped propagate Deobandi influence northwards, through Iran, to the former Soviet realm. In these contacts, the Deobandi *madrasas* of Central Khurasan proved to be particularly active.

Since the late 1990s the cross-border networks of Sufism have unexpectedly become the key intermediaries for student recruitment in ex-Soviet Central Asia (in Persian-speaking Tajikistan above all, and the Tajik labour diaspora of Russia). Particularly active were those of the Mujaddidiyya reformed branch of the Naqshbandi order. Since the seventeenth century they have been a key vector of sectarian interrelations between the subcontinent and the wider Middle East and welcomed into their ranks several Iranian Baluch and Khurasani Deobandi masters. For their propagation northwards, the Iranian Deobandi networks adopted intermediations radically different from those developed in the Arabian Peninsula, where the traditionally anti-Sufi Tablighi Jama‘at, embodied by vibrionic Madani, showed more active. North of the former Iron Curtain, they adjusted to the wide Sunni Persian-speaking region made up of Greater Khurasan, where traditionally influential Sufi networks enjoyed strong redeployments after the fall of the Wall in 1989 and the first massive *Haji* from the USSR on Muharram of the next year.

### Linking the Gulf’s Shores

Within Iran, the role bestowed on Deobandi religious schools as guarantors of social peace permitted them to extend their influence beyond Sistan-Baluchistan and Khurasan. They did so notably in the Turkmen populated coastal plain of the Caspian Sea, where a first Deobandi *madrasa* opened at the turn of the twenty-first century, and in the Shafi‘i Sunni districts of the Hurmuzagan region, on the northern shore of the Gulf. Even in this area, where

Deobandi influence has not become preponderant, the Dar al-‘Ulum Makki of Zahidan and its *madrasa* network have exerted since the mid-1990s a direct impact on the setting of Islamic learning. Since 1979, Hurmuzagan has been sending many Sunni religious students to Iranian Makran.<sup>34</sup>

The same period also witnessed the development of older Islamic teaching institutions such as the Sultan al-‘Ulama Madrasa of the Shafi‘i Sunni-peopled harbour of Bandar Langa, a city which, since the 1970s, has been exposed simultaneously to ‘Wahhabi’ influence and to Shi‘a immigration.<sup>35</sup> Created at the end of the Qajar period by the Azharian theologian and traveller Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Khalidi al-Makhzumi, alias Sultan al-‘Ulama (1876–1941), the *madrasa* that bears his honorific title was later reformed and further developed by his son Muhammad-‘Ali. Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Khalidi was born in the Persian-speaking town of Bastak on a pass between Fars and the Gulf, to the northwest from Bandar Langa. His family claimed to be descendants of Khalid b. Walid ‘Sayf-Allah al-Maslul’ (c. 592–c. 642), a Companion of Prophet Muhammad and hero of the first military expansion of the Caliphate, whose grave was destroyed in 2013 during a bombardment by the Syrian army of the rebel city of Homs.

After studying in Kashmir, Mecca, Medina, and al-Azhar, ‘Abd al-Rahman created the *madrasa* in his native Bastak. In 1909 however, if we refer to the family tradition, the political troubles of the short reign of Muhammad-‘Ali Shah Qajar in Laristan (the southern part of modern Fars) compelled him to move to Bandar Langa. There, he opened the al-Rahmaniyya Madrasa, which was renamed Sultan al-‘Ulama after his death. After the coup by Reza Khan (the future Reza Shah) in 1921, Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman reportedly supported the restoration of the Iranian Constitution of 1906. His authority apparently extended across the Gulf and he had political influence over the Sunnis of Bahrain during the long and eventful reign of the island’s ruler ‘Isa b. ‘Ali Al Khalifa (r. 1869–1932). Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman died in Bandar Langa at the beginning of a declining economic period for the port and city.<sup>36</sup> One of his most famous students, Shaykh Ibrahim al-Ansari, migrated to Qatar and had a son, Shaykh ‘Abd-Allah, who later became a key figure of the Muslim World League (MWL).<sup>37</sup>

Shaykh Muhammad-‘Ali reformed and developed the Sultan al-‘Ulama Madrasa in many ways. For example, the *madrasa* adopted an organization in cycles and its teachings were ‘harmonized’ at regional scale, on a Deobandi model. At the same time, religious scholars continued to be recruited in the Gulf area of Iran (the present-day ‘Southern’ district of Iran for Sunni *madrasa*

teaching and fatwa offices comprised in the early twentieth-century the regions of Hurmuzagan, Fars and Bushihr). Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman’s and his son’s protection permitted the education in the Hijaz (often with Iranian-born professors) of a number of religious students from Hurmuzagan and Laristan (the southern Sunni-populated subdivision of the Fars province, endowed with a strong émigré population in Qatar and in the Emirates). One was Shaykh Muhammad Ziyayi (1939–94) from Lar who became an influential Sunni *imam-jum’a* of Bandar Abbas.<sup>38</sup>

By contrast, in the mid-2010s the Sultan al-‘Ulama Madrasa claimed to attract students from regions as diverse as southern Iran, the Arabian Peninsula and the Indian subcontinent—all areas where the *madrasa*’s former boarders are reputed to maintain a strong sentiment of solidarity.<sup>39</sup> The *madrasa*’s current headmaster, Shaykh Muhammad-‘Ali Amini, is a disciple of Shaykh Muhammad-‘Ali al-Khalidi, the son of the institution’s founder. He also is a regular visitor to the Dar al-‘Ulum Makki of Zahidan.<sup>40</sup> During his tenure, he improved the relationship between the two institutions. In the 2000s, Shaykh Amini played an active role, in the ‘Fatwa Commission of the South’, confirming the place taken since the mid-1980s by these regional commissions in the mobilization and organization into hierarchies of the Iranian Sunni religious personnel.<sup>41</sup> Deeply influenced by Deoband’s organizational models, the Sultan al-‘Ulama has been taking over the slogans of the Dar al-‘Ulum Makki of Zahidan in defence of the Sunni community of Iran.

Another significant aspect of the Sultan al-‘Ulama Madrasa is the influence that it has exerted far beyond the frontiers of Iran. Apart from Bahrain, Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Khalidi’s audience extended to Qatar and to the world of Islam in general. This was possible through his disciple Shaykh Ibrahim al-Ansari, a cleric of reported Hijazi ancestry, and the latter’s son, the aforementioned Shaykh ‘Abd-Allah (1921/2–89). Born in the village of Chah-Musallam, between Bastak and Bandar Langa on the Iranian shore of the Gulf, ‘Abd-Allah was only one year old when his father Shaykh Ibrahim moved to the Sultan al-‘Ulama Madrasa. After leaving Iran in 1929, the family spent time in Qatar under the British protectorate. There, Ibrahim founded a mosque in 1931, in al-Khor, while ‘Abd-Allah studied in *Hadith*, *tafsir* and *fiqh* in Mecca.<sup>42</sup> After graduation, ‘Abd Allah returned to Qatar in hopes to build his reputation as a *qadi* (renown in the whole Gulf area for the precision of his calendars or *tagwims*) and by his charitable activities. Additionally, in Qatar, the presences of ‘Bastaki’ population and the people of Laristan were essential to his career.<sup>43</sup> Lar (a demographic reservoir of economic emigration to the

Gulf monarchies) was the only county town in Iran endowed with direct flights to Doha in the early 2010s. As the first Director of the Administration of Religious Affairs within the Ministry of Education of Qatar, Shaykh 'Abd-Allah mobilized personal links and public funds to create an influential foundation for the 'Revival of the Islamic Heritage' (in Arabic *ihya' al-turath al-islami*, not to be confused with the Kuwaiti organization of the same name), of which he became the Curator. In 1962, he participated in the creation the MWL, a group of Muslim non-governmental organizations that aimed to counter Nasser's Arab nationalism.<sup>44</sup>

After organizing a Third 'International Conference on the Life and Tradition of the Prophet' in Doha on 25 November 1979,<sup>45</sup> al-Ansari helped transform Qatar, suddenly enriched by the second oil boom, into an emerging centre of Sunni Islamic learning and militancy independent from Riyadh. Worth mentioning: one of the conference's co-organisers was the Rector of the Dar al-'Ulum Nadwat al-'Ulama of Lucknow, Mawlawi Abu'l-Hasan Nadwi (1913–99). A co-founder of the MWL, Nadwi had attended in his youth many lectures by Mawlawi Husayn-Ahmad Madani (the professor of a range of Iranian Baluch *ulama*) in Deoband. In the 1980s, al-Ansari played an instrumental role in the mobilisation of international support for the Afghan jihad against Soviet occupation.<sup>46</sup>

This hyperactive diplomatic activity, echoed by the Middle Eastern media, significantly impacted Qatar's international relations, the orientation of which the analysts usually ascribe to the ruling Al Thani dynasty. Gradually playing partitions of its own, the Emirate adopted hedging between multiple actors as a foreign policy tool intended, notably, to stem the emergence of possible homegrown Islamist movements.<sup>47</sup> In parallel, Doha exported *volens nolens*, norms and behavioural models that were diversely interpreted, for example Shaykh 'Abd-Allah.

Amid other transnational, Iranian-born Sunni leaders, the figure of al-Ansari has been posthumously promoted in Iran, since the 'Arab springs' of 2011 especially, as a possible symbolic counterweight to 'Wahhabi' propaganda and to Riyadh-supported Salafism, which in the mid-2010s have become identified by Tehran as major threats to the country's security. As such, the Iranian-born, Mecca-educated, Qatar-based Sunni religious scholar has been celebrated as a great ancestor, at the same time, by the Iranian branches of the Deoband School and by the organization of the Muslim Brothers of Iran.<sup>48</sup>

Indeed, Iranian officials have looked suspiciously at the multiplication of the cross-border connections personified by al-Ansari's extremely wide network,

which extended to the wider *umma*. Suspicion increased especially after the Saudi-Qatari rapprochement of 2013, which followed a long period of cooperation ('antiterrorist', among others) between Doha and Tehran. The Islamic Republic's leadership, at the same time, may see the Sultan al-'Ulama's connection as a possible bulwark against protest Islam at home and also as a means to counterbalance Riyadh's hegemony in the MWL. Tehran's cautious attitude towards Sultan al-'Ulama and al-Ansari's posterity contrasts with the expeditious suppression, during periods of Iranian-Saudi tension, of religious figureheads closely related to the Hejaz. For example, with the assassinations reportedly by Iranian service, in the mid-1990s, of Shaykh Muhammad Ziyayi in Bandar Abbas and of Mawlawi 'Abd al-Malik Mullazada in Karachi. Both men have been celebrated, since the 2000s, as martyrs (*shahids*) of the Sunni community of Iran.

### Kurdish Identity, Iranity and Islamic Transnationalism

From the viewpoint of the structuring of an Iranian Sunni hub, the evolution of the mutual relationship in Iran between the Deobandi and Ikhwani networks is a primary focus. We have seen, besides Deoband in easternmost Iran, another yet understudied illustration of the transformations of the religious sociology and connectivity of Iran's Sunni-peopled peripheries. Since the mid-twentieth century it has been the Maktab-i Qur'an movement and its varied, notably political, by-products in present-day Iran.

In Iran's Kurdish society, the obstacles put to pro-Communist organizations and secular nationalism in the 1970s–80s, and the influx of political émigrés from Iraqi Kurdistan in the mid-1980s, fostered the diffusion of Muslim Brother ideology. Since the turn of the twenty-first century, MQ has prospered as an autonomous community against an absence of economic investment and supportive structures in Sunni Kurdish areas. The inhabitants in these areas feel alienated from the wider Iranian society. Some authors have suggested the phenomenon of a modern *hijra* (self-exile) on the model of Prophet Muhammad leaving Mecca for Yathrib/Medina in 622 CE<sup>49</sup> to explain the development of MQ's solidarity networks.

After 1979, MQ protested against the Islamic Republic's repressive policies. These policies opposed the Iranian Kurdish autonomist currents and organizations. The insistence on preserving Kurdish customs (MQ militants distinguish themselves by the wearing of national costume) helped the networks' leaders to be seen as continuators of earlier movements that defended Kurdish



identity and interests. More recently since the early 2010s, the organization criticized the development of consumerism in Iran because of its exclusive benefit of the small socioeconomic elite of the '*aqazadas*' (lit. 'rich kids', the Persian derogatory term for the third generation of the Republic's political and religious leadership).<sup>50</sup>

The initial basis for the expansion of MQ was the creation in 1977, by theologian Kak Ahmad Muftizada, of a higher religious school, the Madrasat al-Qur'an, in the frontier city of Meriwan in the west of the Kurdistan Region. Opposing the authoritarian secularization promoted by the Pahlavi monarchy, MQ became a regional mobilization force in the 1979 Iranian revolution. After the regime change, the Islamic Republic tried to make use of the movement's urban social basis against the autonomist alliance of the traditional Sunni Kurdish religious establishment, topped by the popular religious scholar Shaykh 'Izz al-Din of Mahabad, with the Kurdistan Democratic Party of 'Abd al-Rahman Ghassemlou.<sup>51</sup> However, Muftizada maintained a political line of his own and in 1980, MQ became one of the bases of SHAMS, which evolved into an opposition force.

After SHAMS was banned in 1982, MQ faced an enduring scission. Part of the movement went underground because of the Sunni-Shi'a tensions that developed during the Iran-Iraq war (1980–88), as well as in the early and mid-1990s in a context of deteriorated Iran-Saudi Arabia relations. From the mid-1980s onwards, the movement developed as an Iranian Kurdish branch of the Muslim Brothers. Finally legalized in 2002 under the name of the Appeal and Reform Society of Iran (JDII), it further transformed into an Iranian organization, with branches in all the country's Sunni-populated regions including Sistan-Baluchistan and Fars. Since the summer of 2013, JDII helped develop the concept of composite 'Iranity' (*iraniyyat*) promoted by new President Hassan Rouhani.<sup>52</sup>

Another part of MQ adopted from the early 1980s onwards a more pietistic stance, however tempered by their defence of the interests of the Kurdish populated regions of Iran. At the same time, MQ's collegial leadership advocated for the establishment of an Islamic state ruled by an elected 'Islamic Council' (*Shura-yi islami*). This perpetuated long-standing Iranian Sunni criticisms against Khomeini's *wilayat-i faqih* doctrine. Advocating the creation of an 'Islamic' economic system, MQ built their financial independence—a key issue in Muftizada's thought—on the encouragement of private companies and of redistribution through philanthropy within the Maktabi community. Simultaneously, since the early 2000s MQ has supported the role of the central



state in organizing the economy by joining JDII, the Dar al-‘Ulum of Zahidan, and the country’s regional Sunni religious boards in the denunciation of insufficient investment in Iran’s essentially rural and poorly developed Sunni peripheries.

The reason the Islamic Republic tolerated this movement, despite periods of repression (that have continued until the early 2010s), is because of the existence of common ideological bonds. ‘Ali Khamenei himself began his ideological career as a translator, from Arabic to Persian, of the Egyptian Muslim-Brother founding fathers, who have overall been key references of present-day Shi‘a political Islam. Another reason is MQ’s religiously reformist and socially conservative insistence on the propagation of religious literacy combined with ethic and gnostic education through the defence of family values. MQ’s schools and sociability convey this education through comments and discussions on the works by Kak Ahmad Muftizada. Thanks to the *uwaysi* (spiritual) privileged relation that Muftizada reportedly set up with Prophet Muhammad during the ten years he spent in jail, the theologian has come to enjoy posthumously the spiritual authority of a ‘Renovator of the Era’ (*mujaddid-i ‘asr*), a classical figure in modern Sunni reformist thought, first embodied by the early-seventeenth-century Hindustani gnostic thinker Ahmad al-Sirhindi.

Although Muftizada, as many other Sunni communal leaders in the former ‘tribal’ periphery of Iran, came from a classical family of *ulama*, he had refused the status of a cleric and played the role of an unfrocked (in Persian *krawati*, lit. ‘necktied’) intellectual. He also refused to occupy academic charges, choosing to earn his life as a liberal professional.<sup>53</sup> By doing so, he became the model of a spiritual master radically different from the traditional figure of the shaykh, who is associated in Kurdish—as well as in, among others, Baluch, Turkmen, Aymaq—imagination, with the traditional authority of tribal leaders. After he died, soon after his release from prison in 1992, he was recognized as a spiritual intercessor, hence embodying the combination between a sacralized holy founding figure and a modernist intellectual characteristic of other modern-day religious thinkers.

MQ’s pupils in westernmost Iran seem to have been coming from a new class of educated city-dwellers deeply impacted by the progressive and nationalist ideals that developed in the decades prior to the 1979 revolution. Alienated from the traditional religious authority of the Shaf‘i Sunni communal establishment, these born-again Muslims expressed the quest for an emotional and spiritual affiliation fundamentally different from the *pir/murid* (master/

disciple) relationship that prevails in traditional Sufism. As suggested earlier, MQ's networks also provided many members of the Maktabi community with the bond of economic solidarity, while permitting a nascent Kurdish urban middle class to put a lot into charity. Precisely the organization's efforts at building, through the encouragement of private philanthropy especially, a civil society in the Kurdish-peopled regions of Western Iran have often complicated their relations with the regional instances of the Islamic Republic.

At the same time, their differences of strategy and mutual competition notwithstanding, MQ's and, after 2002, JDII's common advocacy of moral education permitted them to emerge, together with the Deobandi networks, as full-right protagonists of the public debate, at regional and national levels. It is true that, since 2012, Iranian officialdom has once more considered moral education as a priority in a political context dominated by their willingness to contain the Islamic State Organization and their struggle against a possible propagation of *takfiri* anti-Shi'a Salafism in Iran.<sup>54</sup> Indeed, this danger is sometimes minimized by religious sociologists, based on essentialist distinctions between 'Iranian' and 'Arab' Salafism, the former credited with more pietistic trends.<sup>55</sup>

In matters of anti-Salafi struggle, however, political and academic circles in Tehran have increasingly relied on the political weight acquired in the country's Sunni-peopled peripheries by the regional branches of Deoband and by JDII, notably through the 'Sunni lobby' (*firqa-i sunni*) of the *Majlis-i Shura-yi Islami* (the lower chamber of the parliament of the Islamic Republic).<sup>56</sup> On many occasions, the Sunni lobby of the Majlis has been instrumental in lowering inter-sectarian tensions. In recent years, one could measure this lobby's influence in official declarations, by Guide Khamenei: specifically, on the necessity of economic development of the Sunni-populated periphery of the country, for example the coastal plain of Makran, a paramount of state neglect and lack of investments in the south of the Sistan-Baluchistan Region.<sup>57</sup>

In a period of sharp sectarianization of political identities, the ability to obtain concessions shown by Deobandi *ulama* in the far east of the country and by JDII preachers from the north-west of Iran often proved decisive for the preservation of their authority, which Iran's Sunni blogosphere has been mocking regularly for their mediocre performance as defenders of regional and ethnic interests. Conversely, Tehran clearly regards the preservation of this Sunni religious and political establishment as a key part in maintaining the fragile status quo within the 'Sunni community of Iran', in a period of growing dangers on the country's frontiers and deep transformation of Iranian society.

*Conclusion*

Within the international discursive horizon of the ‘antiterrorist struggle’, created and nourished during the past two decades by the rise of the Afghan Taliban and its multiple aftermaths, Iran has often looked isolated. Because of the ideological legacy of the revolution of 1979, many have seen the country incapable, too, of reacting to the challenges raised by the Maghreb–Mashreq revolutions of 2011 and afterwards. What we have shown in this chapter is that against the backdrop of the secularization of Iranian society, the sectarianization of political identities and the structuring of a Sunni community in Iran have, paradoxically, provided Tehran with new political resources.

Initially, the role of the Deobandi higher religious schools, of Maktab-i Qur’an, and of the Appeal and Reform Society in the establishment of elements of civil society raised opposition in Tehran because of their historical connections with politics of the Arabian Peninsula and of the Indian subcontinent. However, Deoband in easternmost Iran, MQ in Kurdish society, and JDII at a national level have appeared, too, as vectors of social control within elements of soft power abroad for the Islamic Republic. The understudied role of a variety of Iranian Sunni diasporas—Kurdish and Baluch principally, but also ‘Bastaki’ in Qatar—further confirms the intense circulation of trends, influences, and means between Iran and its Sunni peripheries. These have strengthened Iran’s paradoxical status, conquered progressively in the second half of the twentieth century though yet ignored by observers, as a major Sunni hub between South Asia and the Near East. They explain the increasing capacity of Tehran to take every benefit from this situation, the ideological legacy of the revolution of 1979 notwithstanding.



# ‘SEEKING KNOWLEDGE FROM THE CRADLE TO THE GRAVE’

## SHI‘A NETWORKS OF LEARNING IN INDIA

*Radhika Gupta*

The Twelver Shi‘a in South Asia have had long historical connections with centres of pilgrimage and learning in the Shi‘a heartlands of Iran and Iraq. Scholars and pilgrims traveled overland or by boat from Bombay and Karachi to Basra (in present day Iraq) to seek higher religious knowledge and go on *ziyarat* (pilgrimage) to the shrines of their revered Imams. In the seventeenth century financial support from the kings of Awadh through the Awadh Bequest for the construction of water channels was critical to keeping the desert city of Najaf, a major centre of Shi‘a learning and pilgrimage, alive.<sup>1</sup> The patronage of scholars and clerics by the *nawabs* of Awadh gave rise to India’s pre-eminent centre of Shi‘ism, Lucknow.<sup>2</sup>

In contemporary times too, the payment of taxes incumbent upon Shi‘as and donations from Indian followers continue to be an important source of financial support and legitimacy for *mujtahids* in Iraq and Iran. Their importance as figures of emulation, guidance in religious matters, and superior knowledge has endured over time despite the development of Shi‘a centres of learning in India as few Indian scholars have attained the status of *mujtahid*. Yet Indian

clerics are important as mediators for the transmission of the religious knowledge and ideologies of Gulf *mujtahids* to their constituencies. As elsewhere in the Shi'a world, they not only mediate Islamic education but also contribute towards reproducing in their own locales the social, religious, and political schisms, which are dividing ayatollahs in Iran and Iraq.<sup>3</sup> These competing influences from the Gulf in India can be discerned in historical differences in styles of pedagogy and proselytization between Qom and Mashhad in Iran, and Najaf in Iraq, accentuated after the Iranian Revolution of 1979.

This piece will examine nodes of Shi'ia pedagogy at the local and regional levels in India based on ethnographic research conducted in Mumbai in western India and Kargil (Kashmir) in the north, departing from the geographical focus on Lucknow and Hyderabad in much of the scholarship on Shi'as in India. It offers an account of the diversification of learning sites in order to understand the multiple pathways through which religious knowledge is transmitted. Indeed, this is no longer the prerogative of the *madrasa* (seminary) and *maktab* (Quran School). Religious classes outside these spaces, such as self-study circles, and technologically mediated knowledge cater to different needs and are productive of distinct religious subjectivities. Yet, these sites are not independent of each other, raising the question of the intersections between them for the broader structuring of networks of learning.

What are the implications of this diversification for the relationship between religious authorities and lay followers? How do contemporary social conditions frame the production, transmission and consumption of knowledge among Twelver Shi'as? These questions undergird the three sections that structure this paper. The first examines *madrasas* and *maktabas*, 'traditional' fortresses of Islamic pedagogy; the second will focus on independently organized religious classes and self-study circles; and the third section will examine the internet and television as two significant technological mediators of religious knowledge.

### *Formal Institutions: Seminary and Quran School*

Until the expulsion of foreign clerics by Saddam Hussein in 1975, seminaries in Najaf and Karbala (Iraq) were the main centres of Shi'a learning, renowned for famous teachers and *mujtahids* from the mid-eighteenth century.<sup>4</sup> Iraq-based Ayatollah Khoi and his successor as the leader of Najaf's seminaries, Ayatollah Sistani, continue to have a large following in South Asia. They enjoy the status of *marja' al-taqlid*, literally the 'source of emulation'. The institution

of the *marja' al-taqlid* emerged in nineteenth-century Iraq on the basis of a doctrine stipulating that any Shi'a, who is unable to practice *ijtihad* by himself must refer to the rulings of a particularly knowledgeable scholar.<sup>5</sup> The establishment of Khomeini's theocratic government in 1979 strengthened the *hawzah 'ilmiyya* (seminary) system in places like Qom and Mashhad in Iran. These benefited both from the support of the new Islamic regime and from the repression of the Iraqi seminaries, that precipitated the decline of Najaf as hundreds of professors and students fled Iraq. Like many others, students from India shifted to studying in Iranian seminaries. The Iranian theocratic state's policy of exporting the ideologies of the 1979 revolution through the mobilization of Shi'a communities across the world led to a gradual increase in the constituencies of Iran-based *mujtahids*, most notably Khomeini's successor as the Islamic Republic's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Khamenei, and Ayatollah Makarim Shirazi. Nevertheless, Ayatollah Sistani's *hawzah* in Qom continued to be one of the wealthiest seminaries in Qom offering stiff competition to Ayatollah Khamenei's *hawzah* in the shrine city. As Najaf gradually started regaining its reputation following the downfall of Saddam Hussein in 2003, the income of jurists there increased rapidly.<sup>6</sup> As a result, today, both Iraq and Iran based *mujtahids* support and influence institutions of Shi'a Islamic learning in India.

Charitable trusts established by the representatives (*wakils*) of Iraqi and Iranian scholars fund an extensive network of *madrasas* and Quran Schools all across India. In the 1980s, with the decline of Najaf and the influence of the Iranian Revolution, a younger generation of Indian clerics trained in Iran became carriers of pedagogical practices and syllabi emerging from the increasingly rationalized and bureaucratized seminary system in Iran.<sup>7</sup> This created a polarization with older clerics who had studied in Najaf and were often critical of the formalization and modernization of *madrasas*. They lamented, for instance, that students do not acquire in-depth knowledge in the new curriculum. Reflecting on the differences between Najaf and Qum, Shaykh Nasiri, an Indian scholar I met studying in Qom in 2009, explained: 'In Najaf education is imparted in the old way. There is no proper *tanzim* (organization/system) in Iraq. In Qum students have to specialize fairly soon. But in Najaf 99 per cent of the emphasis is on *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) and *usul* (fundamentals)'. Unlike the more 'pragmatic approach' of Qom, another cleric in Qom said, 'Najaf places greater emphasis on the '*ruhani* way' (spiritual way), on *akhlaq* (ethics, morals), and not much emphasis on exams. The syllabus includes only one or two books, the '*asli kitab*' (fundamental books). There is

no specialization like in Qom now. In Qom politics is taught immediately'. A young Indian scholar from Uttar Pradesh studying in Qom proudly mentioned that greater emphasis is placed on humanities subjects such as economics and sociology. Reflecting these shifts, a Kargili scholar, who had studied up till the *dars-al-Kharij*<sup>8</sup> level in Qom, mentioned that he had done his research on *akhlaq-Islam* and *akhlaq-secularism* (ethics of Islam and ethics of secularism), asking the question: 'Islam does not believe in secularism—why not?' Reservations about this 'new' system held by older clerics, however, tended to be pressured and tempered by the demands of students to make learning more responsive to contemporary conditions.

Another major difference between Najaf and Qom, according to a cleric in Mumbai, relates to the 'culture of *tabligh* (proselytization)'. Unlike Najaf, which did not have one, after the Iranian Revolution of 1979, students studying in Iranian seminaries were aggressively sent out on *tabligh*.<sup>9</sup> Most Indian students went back to their home countries but also sometimes to foreign lands, especially the Gulf (Bahrain, Kuwait) to work among migrants from South Asia. Even when returning to India, they were often placed in a region, town, or city to which they did not belong to offer services to communities who did not have their own scholars studying abroad. Many scholars from Kashmir, for instance, went to different parts of Uttar Pradesh in North India or to Mumbai. Unlike the newer scholars who returned to their home countries for *tabligh*, many of the older generation of scholars, who had studied in Najaf, did not return to India for long periods of time, often decades. In the past Najaf did not provide the kind of financial and institutional support for *tabligh* offered by Qom as part of its bid to export the revolution to different corners of the Shi'a world. In the early twentieth century travel by sea and the ability to easily live in shrine cities under the patronage of individual clerics also likely contributed to what the cleric in Mumbai described as the absence of a 'culture of *tabligh*' in Najaf. Shaykh Murtaza, hailing from a family of clerics of Kargili descent, started studying in Qom only from the *dars-al-kharij*. His family was long settled in Najaf and he was the first person to visit Kargil after nearly forty years. His father did not go for *tabligh* in earlier times. Thinking aloud about the absence of a system of *tabligh* in the past, he conjectured: 'When there was no light in Najaf and no piped water and people from Hindustan came by ship, life was tough. So they studied quickly and left. So there was also no system of *tabligh*'; or they stayed on for a long period of time, often settling down there, like his own family. All these factors together contributed to historically weaker immediate or explicitly discernible links with and influences from Iraq on Shi'a



learning in India. However, with the rehabilitation and subsequent modernization of Najaf after the fall of Saddam Hussein this is likely to change.

Jamiat-al-Mustafa, a coordinating umbrella for foreign seminary students in Iran, deemed an international university (Al Mustafa International University), has systematized the system of *tabligh*.<sup>10</sup> It has branches in more than sixty countries. Students register with them if they are interested in going for *tabligh*; they are given an airfare and small stipend.<sup>11</sup> Some *mujtahids* also send their students for *tabligh* through their individual offices. A regular traffic of scholars thus plies between India and Iran, facilitated by the ease of air travel and systematization of *tabligh*. Some scholars go to India for longer periods of two to three years while others only for the holy months of Ramadan and Muharram. Those who go for longer periods of time are sometimes supported financially through salaries, to establish smaller institutions like Quran Schools for children. Take for example, Shaykh Nasiri from Kargil. He had been studying in Qom for sixteen years in 2009. He went to India for two years in between to do *tabligh* in Dehradun (Uttaranchal) in a Nurbakshiya madrasa. Jamiat-al-Mustafa supported this local *madrasa* by sending teachers, whose salaries it paid.

Some local *madrasas* in India even follow syllabi provided by Jamiat-al-Mustafa. Take for example a girls’ seminary called Jamiat-uz-Zahra set up by the Imam Khomeini Memorial Trust (IKMT)—a religious centre established by local clerics and Islamist scholars in the wake of Khomeini’s death—in Kargil. It was named after Jamiat-al-Zahra, the first official female seminary established in post-revolution Iran in 1984<sup>12</sup> Scholars attached to this institution explicitly proclaim an orientation to the Iranian theocratic state and selectively appropriate ideological strands to bolster its local political and religious agenda. In its bid to raise the status of Shi’a women in Kargil, IKMT not only encouraged modern education for girls, but also started this *madrasa*.<sup>13</sup> Though the principal of the *madrasa* was a male cleric, the four teachers were all women, who had returned from Iran, after having studied in Jamiat-al-Zahra in Qom. Three of them had accompanied their husbands to Iran, while one went there on her own to pursue higher religious studies. These women were the first female teachers and preachers in the Kargil region. They fulfilled the primary role of these post-revolution women’s institutions in Iran to train ‘educators and propagandists’.<sup>14</sup> According to the principle of Jamiat-uz-Zahra (in 2011), the *madrasa* was registered with Jamiat-al-Mustafa, so the syllabus came from there. The students also received a certificate. However, he asserted that they did not receive financial help. The salaries of local teachers were paid by IKMT. In

2013, Jamiat-uz-Zahra (Kargil) had shifted its premises from the outskirts of Kargil town to a newly constructed building on a plateau overlooking the town with full boarding and lodging facilities for students. It appeared to be better equipped than in its early years with computing and other facilities for students. Modelled on its namesake seminary in Qom, the minimum qualification for admission is a secondary school education. Further, students are admitted through an entrance examination to a three-year course. In 2013, one of the female teachers proudly showed me photographs of an ‘Olympiad’ on hadith and Quran organized by Jamia-al-Mustafa.

Local *madrasas* like Jamiat-uz-Zahra in Kargil are replicated and integrated into a wider network of seminaries in India through initiatives such as the organization of quiz competitions organized by Jamiat-al-Mustafa. Such *madrasas* appear to have been replicated in different parts of the country, seen in the example of the existence of a Jamiat-uz-Zahra in the Kashmir Valley and another one in Mombra, a suburb of Mumbai. IKMT runs a similar madrasa for boys, Madrasa-e-Imam Khomeini, in Kargil.

Clerics who founded IKMT had broken away from the main religious centre and seminary, the Islamia School, in the Ladakh region (within which Kargil is one of two districts) of the province of Jammu and Kashmir. The Islamia School was founded after the partition of the subcontinent to cater to higher religious education in the region. It had for long been controlled by an older generation of clerics, who had studied in Najaf. The founders of the IKMT criticized their outlook and methods. Islamia School was run along the lines of a traditional seminary, which did not emphasize examinations or award certificates. A staunch supporter of the IKMT recalled that in the 1980s some supporters of IKMT had challenged Islamia School clerics on their understanding of certain *hadith*; some youth felt that the older clerics did not encourage a ‘questioning attitude’ that emphasizes the use of *‘aql* (rational faculty) rather than ‘blind faith’. While the standoff between Islamia School and IKMT was partly provoked to serve local political ends through the invocation of religious idioms, the Islamia School did not modernize itself for a long time. The generational difference in outlook—broadly manifested in the difference between those who had studied in Iraq vis-à-vis those who went to seminaries in Iran from the late 1970s onwards—was illustrated by the change in leadership of the Islamia School. In the summer of 2015, Shaykh Nazir, the son of Shaykh Ahmad Mohammadi (d. 2012), a powerful cleric who had studied in Najaf in the 1960s and was the president of the Islamia School for several decades, returned to Kargil from Mashhad.

Shaykh Nazir was busy winding up a class the day I visited, seated on a carpeted floor with a small circle of students in *kurta pyjamas* around him. The scene was that of a traditional *madrassa* strikingly different from the modern classrooms of the Iranian *hawzeh* I had visited in 2009 in Qom. After the class finished, Shaykh Nazir led us to a small room that was clearly a living quarter, furnished with a single bed on one side and a small bookcase with a desk on the other. Unlike the older generation of Najaf-educated clerics, who had controlled the Islamia School since its inception, Shaykh Nazir had studied in Mashhad in Iran for twelve years. In the brief conversation I had with him, he eagerly gave me a quick overview of changes instituted at the Islamia School, changes I suspected he had played a large role in effecting. In years past, as IKMT grew in strength and the older generation of clerics at the helm of the Islamia School passed away, the School faced a crisis of legitimacy especially from its youth followers. I surmise some of the changes reflected in attempts to streamline and modernize the *madrassa* were instigated by this growing dissatisfaction among Islamia School's youth base. Shaykh Nazir explained that the seminary was now run according to a timetable:

After the morning prayer (*salat*) and Quran reading (*Talawat-e-Quran*), students go for a morning walk. At 7.30 am there is breakfast in the dining hall. Earlier the students would eat in their own rooms. Now the dining hall has been made for all meals. Students take turns for cleaning and organizing the dining room. The rest of the day is structured into classes beginning with a collective discussion of a book. In the afternoon, after lunch, those interested are offered a computer class.

The shaykh then mentioned some changes in the syllabus. He held out a small notebook from Jamiat-al-Mustafa, stating: ‘it is their system [Jamiat-al-Mustafa], which outlines a seven-year course. There is also a five-year syllabus. Our books and syllabus match theirs’. This direct reference to Jamiat-al-Mustafa was attesting to the attempts by this historically Najaf-oriented seminary to integrate with the international seminary system spawned by Jamiat-al-Mustafa in Iran and by extension the growing influence of Iranian-style religious pedagogy.

The Islamia School had historically been strongly linked with and supported financially by a mediating institution, Najafi House, in Mumbai. Najafi House operated under the broader umbrella of the Alimaan Charitable Trust, which manages various charitable initiatives for Shi'as around India. A representative (*wakil*) of Ayatollah Khoi from Najaf along with Twelver Shi'a Khoja philanthropists and businessmen in Mumbai in the 1980s together set

up the Trust.<sup>15</sup> Alimaan Charitable Trust holds permission (*ijaza*) from Ayatollah Sistani, Khoi's successor, to collect the *sahm-i-imam*. After taking care of all expenses, it is incumbent upon all Twelver Shi'as to donate one fifth of their remaining income. This tithe, called *khums*, is divided into two parts: 1) *sahm-i imam* given directly either to a mosque, *imambara* (building for Shi'a commemoration rituals), or *madrassa*, or to the local representative of a *marja'*; and 2) *sahm-i sadat* to poor *sayyids* (descendants of the family of the Prophet and the Imams). Organizations such as the Alimaan Charitable Trust, which hold permission (*ijaza*) from Ayatollah Sistani to collect the *khums* donated in his name, invest this money in educational and other initiatives for the spiritual and material welfare of Shi'as across India. Even though the network within which the Islamia School is embedded works through the patronage of a Najaf-(Iraq)-based *mujtahid*, it is not immune to or prevented from adapting to a more procedural or systematic pedagogical style attributed to Iranian seminaries.

Besides managing the accounts of various trusts that come under the Alimaan Charitable Trust, Najafi House in Mumbai also runs a *madrassa* with separate classes for men and women, offering a five-year course in religious education. According to a teacher in the girls' *madrassa* there, in the past no one crossed the third year but in the last four to five years (since 2007–8), girls are making it to the fifth year. She casually mentioned that 'some books taught in Iran are also taught here' and added: 'Now from this year [2013], I have started teaching Persian again as a subject, because third year onwards the books are in Persian'. In the first three years of teaching the texts were in Urdu. The teachers were apparently free to choose books from the ones available. As one of them clarified: 'we are an autonomous institute, not bound by anybody'. Thus, while curricula from Iran were included, the courses did not fully subscribe to a standardized system of an international seminary system like Jamiat-al-Mustafa. One could surmise that influences from Iran and Iraq were combined at the level of the curriculum.

Biographies of several Kargili clerics tell of times spent teaching in different *madrasas* and *maktabs* in other parts of India such as Mumbai, where the mercantile Khoja Shi'as have seldom produced their own clerics. Donations and *khums* received by entities like the Alimaan Charitable Trust are distributed through its various charitable foundations all over India, creating thereby a loosely linked network of Shi'a institutions. Those supported through *khums* collected in the name of Iraq-based ayatollahs typically emphasized the teachings from their *risalas* (manuals). Though these manuals

for everyday conduct and ritual injunctions (*ahkam*) differ only in minor respects between various *mujtahids*, emphasis placed on one or the other suggests a latent competition in constituency building between Iran and Iraq-based *mujtahids*. Yet, seminaries like the Islamia School demonstrate that despite clear allegiance to Ayatollah Sistani through *khums* collected in his name, the systematization of learning is also tapping into wider networks of learning that transcend affiliations to particular *mujtahids* even though sections of syllabi may indicate otherwise.

From the *madrasas* in Kargil where I conducted my research and from a group discussion with some students studying in Najafi House, I found that *madrasas* tended to attract students from poorer socio-economic backgrounds, with lesser prospects of success in the modern education and employment system for sheer lack of resources or failure in the high school examinations. Seminaries were a viable option given the free provision of board and lodging, which afforded them the chance to raise their personal and familial status by becoming an *alim* (religious teacher). There were always exceptions, of course, such as students wishing to continue in the familial genealogy of clerics. However, there are many others who seek higher religious knowledge in the spare time afforded by secular education and employment in the modern, ‘secular’ system. Taking the Quranic injunction, ‘seeking knowledge from the cradle to the grave’ seriously, many Shi’as who are not interested in becoming clerics are turning to other avenues of religious learning. Formal and traditional institutions of Islamic learning do not serve the needs of all Shi’as seeking religious knowledge.

### *Religious Classes and Self-study Circles*

Religious classes outside the formal space of the *madrasa* and Quran School are proliferating all over Shi’ia India reflecting a wider trend in Islamic education around the world. A young woman I met in 2012, working as a journalist in Mumbai with an Islamic television channel, felt that more than ever before young Shi’as, at least in Mumbai, were getting more interested in religious knowledge. According to her, almost every alleyway in the neighbourhood of Dongri in Mumbai, the old Shi’a centre of the city, had a class women could attend for attaining religious learning. Her remark flew in the face of elders lamenting the loss of interest in the younger generation. However, I very quickly found three such classes, interestingly taught by the same teacher, between two parallel alleys in Dongri.

## PAN-ISLAMIC CONNECTIONS

Of Iranian origin,<sup>16</sup> Sajida was a much-sought-after teacher. She taught in the girls' seminary in Najafi House and in a class for women organized by the World Islamic Network (WIN), a Shi'ia media house dedicated to spreading the 'true message of Islam.'<sup>17</sup> She also hired a room in *mahfil Kamra Bani Hashim*<sup>18</sup> to hold her own class, in memory of her mother. Probably in her late forties, Sajida was an articulate lady, fluent in English, Urdu, and Farsi. She had studied at a convent school in Mumbai and graduated from the prestigious Sofia College for Women with a degree in Psychology. As she told me about herself, she laughed and said, she got married before graduation. So her mother was responsible for her early education in Islam and had wanted her to study further. But since most of the religious classes for women were only till the age of 16–18 years, she was too old to attend. In 1989 an All Women's Islamic Conference was held in Dongri. This was a turning point for Sajida. She recalled, 'There were many ladies of our community speaking about problems, one of which was education for women, Islamic education. They distributed Islamic magazines. I gave my name there, for a class twice or thrice a week at Najafi House being held for anyone who wanted to join'. These classes were later organized into a 'more professional class' like an Islamic Institute, called *Jannat-ul-Batul* by Agha Mousavi, a charismatic Iraqi scholar sent by Ayatollah Khoi as his representative to India in the early 1980s; he established the Alimaan Charitable Trust along with some Khoja businessmen. It was in Najafi House then that Sajida received her training. Though his authority is contested and controversial, a large section of the Khoja Twelver community in Mumbai attributes the 'return to Islam' to the work and influence of Agha Mousavi. It appears from Sajida's story that he played an important role in extending formal religious education to Shi'a women in Mumbai. While Sajida continued to teach in the Najafi House seminary, the classes outside were more limited in scope and geared to a different constituency of women.

In the WIN classes for instance, which were on an average attended by 10-15 women every week, most were middle-aged housewives along with a few younger women in their late teens. WIN procured permission from both Ayatollah Sistani in Iraq and Ayatollah Khamenei in Iran to collect *khums* to aid the work they are doing to spread awareness about Islam and Shi'iasm, of which these classes for women were one endeavour. In her classes in WIN, Sajida taught *hadith* (compilations of the sayings and deeds of the Prophet and the Imams), *tafsir* (Quranic exegesis), and *ahkam* (correct practice). Her own classes in *Kamra Bani Hashim* also focused on Quranic exegesis. She would tirelessly translate and explain the Quran to her students through the prism of

modern times. Analogies between technology and god—‘If a car has no engine it won’t move, similarly if there is no god, how will the world work?’, for example, appeared to elicit understanding among the students with a touch of humour.

Unlike Mumbai, where classes for women outside the space of the seminary and Quran School have been taking place for many years, such initiatives in Kargil have been more recent, instigated by IKMT as part of its larger agenda to bring about ‘social reform’ since the mid- 1990s. Furthermore, while classes in Mumbai are held throughout the year, until 2015, when I last visited the region, women’s classes in Kargil were held only during the month of Ramadan. These Ramadan classes focused on Quranic recitation, exegesis, and rules for ritual practice; they also offered women the opportunity to read the noon prayer collectively (in *jama’at*). However, these Ramadan classes were not the only occasion that women in Kargil have an opportunity to learn. *Majalis* (gatherings) organized on special occasions such as the birthday of Fatima Zahra, the Prophet’s daughter, were other opportunities for gaining religious knowledge. Re-named ‘*Yaum-e-khawatin*’ (the day of women) or International Women’s Day, an idea borrowed from post-revolution Iran,<sup>19</sup> an all-women’s event was organized by IKMT every year.

Classes for women, whether regular weekly ones such as in Mumbai or those restricted to ritual occasions as in Kargil, illustrate the gradual de-centring of religious knowledge. Such learning is neither restricted to formal institutions, nor does it remain the privilege of men, even though they retain their positions as its arbiters. Such avenues of learning were extended to women in both Mumbai and Kargil either at the behest of clerics from the Gulf (such as Agha Mousavi in Mumbai) or local clerics at the helm of the IKMT, who had spent time studying in Iran. Despite the absence of clear institutional linkages, these spaces of learning reflect the sustained ideological influence of centres of learning in Iran and Iraq on Shi’as in India.

### Self-Study Groups

Self-study circles offer another avenue for those seeking religious knowledge outside formal institutions and at a more advanced level than that offered in the classes that focus on Quranic exegesis and ritual practice. Examples of such endeavours are the study circles organized under the umbrella of the Association of Al-Mahdi in Mumbai. Its inception about forty years ago (around 1982) appears to coincide with the early years after the Iranian Revolution. The



publication and circulation of printed literature was an important medium for the 'export of the revolution' to different parts of the Shi'ia world. Iranian Cultural Centres in various countries played an active role in translation and dissemination.<sup>20</sup> Maulana Abedi, a cleric from Uttar Pradesh in North India headed the Al-Mahdi Association. He migrated to Mumbai at the invitation of Agha Mousavi. When I met him in 2013, Maulana Abedi was the principal of the Najafi House madrasa and one of the designated representatives of Ayatollah Sistani in Mumbai. Maulana Abedi studied in Najaf in 1972–73, from where he shifted to Qom until 1979. He recalled that at the time he was in Najaf, he felt that the 'temperament' (*mizaj*) of Najaf and Qom were similar; 'later a system developed in Qom'. According to him, the Association was organized by 'the community'. Classes were held on Sundays and other holidays, offering religious education to anyone who was 'seriously interested'. They were structured by different age groups and organized separately for men and women. For some younger people these classes offered an alternative to the Quran School. The *maulana* (cleric) explained that many young people no longer have the time to go to a Quran school after the evening prayers on a daily basis, as was the norm in the past. These classes thus filled the lacuna on weekends.

Though patronized by a senior cleric, the classes were not taught by clerics. Individuals trained in them became teachers though no formal certificates were awarded. An elderly gentleman, who regularly attended these classes, commented, 'The Imam Mahdi Association teachers are dedicated. They are not *maulanas* (clerics), who have *lalach* (greed)'. His remark was somewhat ironic though as the classes were initiated by Shaykh Ismail Najafi of the Mughal Masjid (the mosque serving the Iranian community in Mumbai). Held by rotation in people's homes and spread by word of mouth, approximately 60–70 classes were held all over Mumbai with five to ten students in each at the time of my research according to my informants.<sup>21</sup>

Though I never had the opportunity to attend these self-study circles, a middle-aged male student confidentially showed me some of the literature used. In the brief glimpse offered, I noted that the majority of the books and booklets had been published in Iran. Maulana Abedi and a couple of other students highlighted the emphasis placed in these study-circles on the use of '*aql*' (rational faculty) in the practice of religious belief. The *maulana* explained that the classes stressed an understanding of basic beliefs according to '*aql*'. For example—'If we believe in God, why so?' He added, 'In Shi'ism not a single law goes against '*aql*'. A male student of one of these classes lamented: 'People are not seeing the *ruh* (spirit) of Islam. There is *falsafa* (Islamic philosophy)



behind *ahkam* (injunctions)’. Questions such as these veered in the direction of *falsafa*, the study of which according to many clerics I met both in Kargil and Mumbai had been historically discouraged in Najaf with Islamic law (*fiqh*) and *usul* remaining favoured areas. Here again there is an implicit suggestion of the growing pedagogical influence of Qom, where the study of philosophy was accorded greater importance even though the patron of these study-circles was a representative of Ayatollah Sistani from Najaf.

Both the students who had explicitly mentioned the Association of Al-Mahdi appeared unsure about candidly discussing these classes. It was with obvious hesitation that one of them mentioned that the Association of Imam Mahdi classes taught more than the basics of the Quran and placed an emphasis on understanding the logic and philosophy of Islamic law. Their approach seemed to resonate with Murtaza Mutahhari’s critique of ‘*ulama*’s populism’, where he chastised scholars for pouring all their energy into preparing manuals for correct practice to appease the ordinary believers. Mutahhari was a student of ‘Allamah Muhammad Husayn Tabataba’i, whose commentary on the Quran from a philosophical perspective had faced opposition from leading scholars in Qom in the 1960s.<sup>22</sup> Some of the books in their curriculum that I glimpsed through were published by presses in Iran. Some were translated into English and Urdu while others were in Persian. This again points to the disjunction between aligning with a particular *mujtahid* through *khums* and *taqlid* (emulation), and pursuing a broader course of knowledge that incorporates influences from various sources.

One of the people who seemed to be associated with these classes was a wealthy businessman of some renown in Mumbai. He was extremely forthcoming and excited to meet me when I sought an appointment, proclaiming kinship as a fellow researcher. He felt research was his ‘real vocation’ in life. He proudly told me he had earned three master’s degrees and a doctoral degree in management from Mumbai University, spoke fluent Persian and also read classical Arabic. He also boasted of having anonymously translated more than 100 books from Arabic into English including a compendium on Imam Mahdi, the hidden Imam.<sup>23</sup> Hasan attributed his passion for religious knowledge to an uncle, who was a qualified cleric ‘but never wore religious clothes’. Resonating with the views of many young men in Kargil, who preferred to read for themselves rather than believe clerics blindly, Hasan too was critical of clerics being taken seriously just by their garb. Extolling his uncle as a great Shi‘ia intellectual, he recalled his large private library and his uncle’s stance against ‘hypocrisy’, saying that ‘When he attended a *majlis*, after it finished, he

used to ask for references'. His uncle worked as a translator at the Iran Cultural House in Mumbai. Reflecting on those years, while tracing a genealogy of his inspiration, Hasan reminisced, 'After the revolution in Iran, in 1981, the Iran Cultural Centre came out with a magazine called *Mahjooba*. My uncle gave me a copy of *Nahaj-ul-Balagha* [a compilation of the sermons of Imam Ali, especially revered by Shi'as]—it completely changed my life. I read sermon 81. I realized the futility of material life. One should do business but remain grounded [...]. I work 5–6 hours a day on my business and devote the rest of the time to research'.

With the help of prominent clerics, including Maulana Abedi from Najafi House, Hasan started the Al Muntazir Institute of Islamic Studies<sup>24</sup> in 2012, which offers a certificate course in Islamic Studies through distance learning. The Institute's website outlines the course content for the first semester. It operates in conjunction with the Association of Imam Mahdi, which it claims had 'successfully created a structured form of Islamic learning'. The website invites the viewer to click on an endorsement of the course by Ayatollah Sistani. The said endorsement is in the name of the Imam Ali Foundation, the liaison office of Ayatollah Sistani located in London, and is signed off by Sayyid Murtaza Kashmiri.<sup>25</sup> Perhaps reflecting a larger impetus behind self-study circles, Hasan indicated that they needed the help of clerics for pragmatic reasons, for people to take the Al Muntazir Institute seriously. He lamented that unfortunately people go by the outward garb; 'Therefore until I have a turbaned person with me people will not listen to me'. Despite the expansion of networks of learning beyond the ambit of traditional institutions, traditional religious authority beheld by *ulama* continues to be a source of authenticity and legitimacy in formal if not substantial terms. Not only does this challenge the assertion that growing numbers of 'new religious intellectuals' or Islamists have led to the fragmentation of religious authority<sup>26</sup>, but also illustrates how *ulama* respond and adapt to new avenues of religious enquiry, by becoming a part of them.<sup>27</sup> This does not, however, detract from the cultivation of a more personalized religious subjectivity for individuals, who actively seek deeper religious knowledge, not under compulsion but out of choice. Such individuals take seriously the quest for knowledge as integral to their practices of piety.

Hasan attributed the trend of an increasing number of religious classes in Mumbai to the impact of the Iranian Revolution. In his view the revolution was a catalyst: 'it inspired many youngsters'. Scholars who returned from Iran played an important role in increasing religious awareness among young Shi'as in Mumbai. Many scholars flocked to Mumbai from other parts of India as

rich Shi‘ia businessmen in the city became significant sources of patronage and livelihood. Primarily a mercantile city, Mumbai lacked, as many of my interlocutors there explained, its own scholars. For people from the Khoja Shi‘a community, business and trade continue to be their preferred vocation; they thus patronized clerics from other places to offer religious services to their community, reflecting a long historical trend of the intimate relationship between merchants and clerics in the Shi‘a world. This was reflected in the proliferation of private charitable trusts, through which funding for religious education is often routed in Mumbai. These trusts also act as conduits for channelling funding gained through *khums* and private donations to educational and other initiatives for Shi‘as across the country. An internal (national) network of scholars and teachers thus undergirds Shi‘ia pedagogy as much as its imbrication in a wider transnational sphere. The links between the Islamia School in Kargil and Najafi House in Mumbai are one example of this internal, national network.

### *Technologically Mediated Learning*

Just as self-study circles serve the individual quest for religious knowledge outside the traditional spaces of the *madrassa* and *maktab* and cleric-student relationship, so does technologically mediated learning. Two significant examples of this form of knowledge dissemination and consumption are Islamic television channels and websites run by the office of *mujtahids*. In fact, both these media are entwined as the latter is often used to verify the former. I will take here the example of television programmes run by the World Islamic Network (WIN) founded in 1991, whose cable television network (launched in 2006 in Mumbai) was given satellite rights by the Government of India in 2013. Though its website proudly states that it is the ‘first Global 24x7 Islamic Satellite Channel to be launched from India,’<sup>28</sup> it is a Shi‘iaa medium, which implicitly spreads the Shi‘ia version of Islam within its overarching dissemination of ‘modernist’ Islamic ideas. Donations from individuals, especially from the wealthy Khoja Shi‘a diaspora in East Africa and Canada, and *khums* collected by WIN in addition to advertisement revenue fund the network’s activities. WIN holds permissions from both Iraq-based Ayatollah Sistani and Iran-based Ayatollah Khomeini to collect *khums*. It is registered as a private charitable trust with a board of trustees from the Khoja Twelver Shi‘ia community in Mumbai, who manage its affairs. Most of the trustees are businessmen, who

have established partnerships with senior well-respected clerics such as Maulana Abedi. Like Hasan, some are Islamic intellectuals in their own right.

While the audience for WIN is primarily Mumbai-based, viewers abroad can access their programmes uploaded on YouTube. One of the most popular and long-running programmes on WIN T.V was '*masail-e-zindagi*' (life issues) telecast live every Friday night from its modest studio located in Dongri. The 106<sup>th</sup> episode of the programme was running in 2012, when I observed the live show from their studio. Javed Zaidi, a businessman, who described the show as a hobby, anchored it. He was also a self-taught intellectual, having read on his own in addition to learning from the *majalis* of a popular orator from Uttar Pradesh, who visited Mumbai twice or thrice a year. Zaidi was particularly concerned about Shi'a-Sunni relations and on many occasions stressed the importance of unity (*itiihad*). In this particular programme, however, he presented questions relating to both religious and other aspects of everyday life posed by viewers through email or live telephonic calls to a cleric invited on the show.

The anchor acted as a mediator of sorts, not only directing questions and elaborating upon and explaining answers, but also choosing the questions that merited a response. He was a questions filter, sometimes rephrasing them in a clearer or more sophisticated or politically correct manner. Interestingly, it was not the anchor who decided which clerics were to be brought on the show, the decision was probably taken by the WIN management board, suggesting the sensitivity of a live show. People across the gender and age divide phoned in, including large numbers of women. Most questions related to correct religious practice. For example, can one read prayers while wearing slippers? Is it okay to get a tattoo? Some questions pertained to the clarification of Islamic history when it defied common sense. For example, why did the Imam marry the daughters of the enemies? Others pertained to pressing social issues such as dowry and marital problems. In one particular programme, in which Agha Mousavi, who was visiting Mumbai at the time, answered questions, a young man enquired about an ayatollah in Najaf he had read about on the internet and asked for more information about him. Such questions were illustrative of the way many young people access information and knowledge through varied media and further use them to cross-check and authenticate information.

The programmeme started by invoking the name of God and often ended with the cleric reciting a *du'a* (supplicatory prayer) in the name of Imam-e-Zaman (the Twelfth Imam in occultation). It appeared to broadly mimic the structure of a face-to-face *majlis*. I found that some of the clerics on the show

displayed the oratory skills of a *majlis* on television, often speaking continuously, in a breathless monologue and often invoking metaphors, making allusions, and using the art of storytelling to respond to questions. They also frequently quoted Quranic passages from memory, displaying their prowess in Arabic, a way of asserting their authority. It is knowledge of Arabic, which differentiates *ulama* from other Muslims<sup>29</sup>. Therefore, the didactic style was similar but in a different medium.

Maulana Ahsan Javadi, one of the clerics who frequently appeared on *masail-e-zindagi*, also anchored another live telephonic question and answer show, ‘*masail aapke mashware hamare*’ (Your Issues, Our Advice). The focus of this programme was on questions relating to religious practice ranging from rules for correct practice to questions about suitable names for a newborn child. According to Maulana Javadi, this show was inspired by viewer feedback on *masail-e-zindagi*; ‘many people called to say we want to ask the maulana directly rather than the anchor’. Apparently WIN had difficulty finding a cleric to host a live show, considered to be ‘sensitive’, so Shaykh Javadi stepped in. I was told many clerics are wary of being unable to offer precise or correct answers to questions posed in the immediacy of the format of a live programme and thereby risk the loss of credibility. Maulana Javadi hailed from Uttar Pradesh and had earned a bachelor’s degree in Urdu-Persian history, a master’s degree from Allahabad University and had also studied Arabic in Syria before going to study in Iran. His father was also a cleric, who had spent many years in Abu Dhabi serving the Shi’a South Asian community there before coming to Mumbai, where he had started a Quranic exegesis programme on WIN TV that became immensely popular.

Perhaps Maulana Javadi drew confidence from his father’s experience on television to be able himself to host a live show without the mediation of an anchor. At any rate, clerics’ reticence to appear on a live show reflected a fear of risking their reputation. An employee of WIN gave me a visiting card printed with the names of websites, through which people, he explained, could verify the information they received on these shows. These websites were operated by the offices of *mujtahids* and people could contact *mujtahids* directly through them.<sup>30</sup> In the case of the shows on WIN, I noted that clerics most often referred to Ayatollah Sistani’s fatwas while answering questions. This was likely due to the fact that the majority of Twelver Shi’a in India continue to emulate Najaf-based clerics such as Ayatollah Sistani. With the proliferation of various avenues of learning aided by new media technologies, it has become easier for Shi’as in South Asia to access *mujtahids* in Iraq and

Iran. Even though they preferred a direct engagement with a local cleric on live television shows rather than the anchor, the option of cross-checking information directly from the office of *mujtahids* through their websites suggests that they have greater opportunities to defer to the opinion of the highest *mujtahid*. New media has facilitated greater direct contact between ordinary Shi'as and centres of authority in the Gulf.

Maulana Javadi also mentioned that WIN TV had a policy of not asking for the identity and location of the person asking the question. Thus, while clerics were held accountable for the answers they gave and risked losing their reputation by giving an erroneous answer on a live show, viewers were offered anonymity. This allowed them to air their queries unhindered by the risk of losing face in the wider community. It also made it possible for people to reach out to different clerics, without having to promise long-term allegiance to any of them. However, the fact that the audience prefers the presence of clerics on shows suggests that new media complement and supplement rather than entirely replace traditional sources of authority and methods of acquiring Islamic knowledge through the *ulama*. This echoes the impact of newer media such as print, historically in early twentieth-century India.<sup>31</sup> What might be changing is the medium of contact.

Besides having direct access to *mujtahids* in Iran, Iraq and Lebanon through their websites and question and answer programmes on television, many Shi'a youth in particular, both in Mumbai and Kargil, were eschewing participating in face-to-face *majalis*. They preferred to watch their favourite clerics deliver sermons either on satellite television channels or through YouTube on the Internet. This was especially the case during Muharram and Ramadan, when they criticized the ritualistic format of *majalis*, where the focus remained on mourning and lamentation rather than understanding the relevance of Karbala to modern times. Varied avenues of learning have thus fostered a burgeoning technologically mediated 'religious marketplace'.<sup>32</sup> Yet it is a marketplace in which *ulama* continue to play an important role.

### *Conclusion*

The value of 'seeking knowledge from the cradle to the grave' mentioned in the Quran was quoted to me citing Khomeini by several young people in Kargil and Mumbai, clearly indicating that the Persian Gulf remains a prime orientation for Indian Shi'as for religious learning. The *hawzah 'ilmiyya* continue to be central nodes facilitating communication and connections between Shi'a

communities across the world. As Stewart points out: ‘The modern office of the *marjaʿ al-taqlid* does not and cannot exist outside this institution.’<sup>33</sup> After the Iranian Revolution of 1979, Khomeini sought to ‘export’ the ideology of the revolution across the Shiʿa world.<sup>34</sup> Institutions and scholars studying in the *hawzah* of Qom and Mashhad in Iran became significant conduits for the export of Khomeini’s revolutionary ideologies. This intensified the competition between Iran and Iraq-based mujtahids for influence in India, which had historically been and continues to be a stronghold of followers of Iraq-based Ayatollah Khoi in the past and Ayatollah Sistani today.

Both Iran and Iraq-based *mujtahids* continue to rely on scholars from various parts of the Shiʿa world, including South Asia, to build their constituencies, when they travel back to their home countries for proselytization during Muharram and Ramadan, and when they finally return after completing their studies in the *hawzah*. These scholar-clerics in turn are sustained in their profession through the offices of the *marjaʿ*, through funding for *tabligh*. Further, they can obtain permission from the *marjaʿ* to collect the *sahm-i-imam* part of *khums*, which can be channelled locally to open *madrasas* and *maktabs*, thus ensuring their livelihoods. These linkages with Shiʿa centres of learning with the Persian Gulf are sustained directly through individual clerics and seminaries or mediated by umbrella institutions, such as the Alimaan Charitable Trust in Mumbai or the Iran Cultural House in Delhi, which support several Shiʿa institutions of learning across the country. Mediating institutions like private charitable trusts are in turn supported and managed by rich businessmen, who in turn benefit through the status accorded to local elite patrons, not to mention accruals through leakages in the funding channels. This interdependence between Shiʿa merchants and clerics reflects an older pattern in the Shiʿa world, a famous instance of which was the Tobacco fatwa of 1891.<sup>35</sup>

Allegiance to particular *marjaʿ* in terms of constituency building, however, does not map neatly onto the content of knowledge or curricula that are gaining popularity among the younger generation. A greater influence of Qom can be discerned in this area, seen in the general trend towards the systematization and bureaucratization of seminaries. Since the weakening of Najaf from the mid-1970s, a majority of Indian scholars have studied in Iranian seminaries in Qom and Mashhad, explaining the influence of these institutions, even though they may continue to emulate *marjaʿ* in Najaf and follow their fatwas in matters of law and religious practice. The standardization of seminary education signals a shift from the moral to the procedural. Learning becomes more instrumental geared to the attainment of degrees, which facilitate employment, rather than



an open-ended quest for knowledge. This shift reflects the need of the times as 'modern' education becomes more coveted for the potential it holds for offering social mobility.<sup>36</sup> While the older generation of clerics trained in Najaf may be critical of standardization as leading to a diminishment of moral emphasis, one could argue that a new morality based on routine, time and re-thinking of gender roles is sought to be instituted and cultivated through standardization. These were characteristics of a modern Shi'a that were propagated as part of the discourse of modernist Islamic reform spawned by the ideological influence of the Iranian revolution.<sup>37</sup> Indeed, as we saw through the case of the Islamia School and IKMT in Kargil, the latter challenged the older style pedagogy drawn from Najaf and forced the Islamia School to change in order to retain legitimacy in the eyes of its youth following. The pressure on the Islamia School reflects the push towards reforms of the teaching system in Najaf itself towards greater organization and rationalization since the beginning of the twentieth century, even though the conservative trend prevailed.<sup>38</sup>

Networks of learning have diversified considerably beyond traditional bastions of the *madrassa* and *maktab*, to religious classes outside and technologically mediated avenues. 'Personal spiritual growth' and 'self-formation' of the individual are no longer the prerogative of or sought after only in the *madrassa*.<sup>39</sup> A trustee of WIN attributed the proliferation of religious classes to the desire for 'spiritual growth.' The appeal of religious classes such as those offered by the Association of Imam Mahdi for many, especially younger people, lies in the emphasis on reflection upon religious injunctions. Moosa writes: 'Representatives of the *madrassa*-sphere often point to one dimension that sets them apart from other institutions of learning like colleges and universities: theirs is a life of learning that is matched by a life of practice.'<sup>40</sup> However, some people from the younger and educated generation are critical of the methods of learning in the *madrassa*, where students are discouraged from being critical of their teachers, even though their religious study is ultimately supposed to culminate in them becoming jurists capable of practicing *ijtihad* (rational reasoning), which defines the *Usuli* School (the dominant rationalist theological tradition today) of Shi'iaa thought. For the students of study-circles learning theory was not enough. To internalize a spiritual discipline and practice it one must understand the rationale behind the theory of Islamic practice, its norms and injunctions. Spiritual discipline is not learnt only through practice but through reflection—even for ordinary believers, who are not looking to become jurists. While *madrassas* strive towards modernization, the importance of using '*aql*' is reiterated more strongly in self-study circles.



However, these religious study circles outside the seminary system continue to maintain strong linkages with particular clerics, who also teach in these seminaries. Though avenues of learning may have diversified, they remain entwined and the *ulama* continue to play an important role even outside traditional bastions of Islamic education.

In Iran some critics of the orthodox clerical establishment, who are critical of the *hawzah* for producing ‘limited *ijtihad*,’<sup>41</sup> have acquired an independent identity and following. This has not been the case for Shi’a Islamist intellectuals in India; while critical of clerics, they continue to rely on them for legitimacy as illustrated by the case of the Al Muntazir Institute of Islamic Studies. This need for partnership with clerics can be seen in the case of technologically mediated learning too. In this case, if local clerics are not able to offer satisfactory answers to queries, ordinary believers can get in touch with *mujtahids* in Iran, Iraq, and Lebanon directly through their official websites: thus, the display of the stamp of the *mujtahid* by institutions and individuals to prove they have their permission to collect and distribute *khums* or to explicitly proclaim location within a particular clerical genealogy. New religiosities too draw upon the legitimacy and patronage of *marja’* in Iran and Iraq—the two main and competing channels of Gulf influence. Within this hierarchy, where clerics trained in the Persian Gulf are considered superior sources of authority on religious matters in India, a religious marketplace for learning has emerged at the national and local level. Various sites for the transmission and consumption of religious knowledge cater to the demand and production of distinct religious subjectivities that draw upon competing sources of Gulf influence, often combining both to suit their needs.



## THE LONG SHADOW OF THE STATE

### THE IRANIAN REVOLUTION, SAUDI INFLUENCE, AND THE SHIFTING ARGUMENTS OF ANTI-SHI'A SECTARIANISM IN PAKISTAN

*Simon Wolfgang Fuchs*

Is it possible to pinpoint any particular watershed that has set Pakistan onto an ever increasing descent into sectarian animosity and violence between its Sunni majority and substantial Shi'a minority?<sup>1</sup> 1968 clearly lends itself to such an interpretation. That year, the Ahl-i-Hadith scholar Ihsan Ilahi Zahir (d. 1987), the first Pakistani to study at the 1962-opened Islamic University of Medina, graduated from this influential institution.<sup>2</sup> Zahir developed close and lasting links with the Saudi royal family, scholars, and publishers in the Kingdom, which he maintained after returning home. Over the following decades, Zahir released fourteen highly polemical books, all of which he had originally written in Arabic. These were soon to be translated into Urdu and predominantly attacked Shi'a beliefs. Given these clear entanglements, it is not surprising then to argue that 'perhaps no single scholar has been more influential in aggravating Sunni-Shi'a tensions and violence in South Asia than Ihsan Ilahi Zahir.'<sup>3</sup> Studies on the conflict between Sunnis and Shi'as in Pakistan tend to single out intellectual influences emerging from the Arab monarchies of the

Gulf as the paradigm for how sectarian ideas have spread more broadly.<sup>4</sup> Yet, the focus on Saudi Arabia, although popular, does not capture the important entanglement of further influences stemming from the Gulf with local dimensions of sectarianism in Pakistan. I present in this chapter an argument which centres on the idea of Pakistan as a disputed political and religious category. As I have argued elsewhere, the meaning of the state that came into being in 1947 as the homeland for the Muslims of the Indian subcontinent was intensively debated among Sunnis and Shi'as in the 1940s.<sup>5</sup> The country found itself in a suspended and striving relationship with Islam. Given this primary importance of the political, the Iranian Revolution of 1979 constituted a dangerous rival project. Sectarian Sunni actors perceived the upheaval as a threatening moment of closure for their envisioning of state and society. This was especially the case because the political and religious change in Iran had palpable consequences for Pakistan. Shi'a political activism in the country saw its heyday in the 1980s with charismatic clerical leaders emphasizing the urgent need for a proper Islamic revolution modelled on the example of Iran.<sup>6</sup> As a consequence, Khomeini's defeat of the Shah and the subsequent establishment of an Islamic Republic dramatically reshaped sectarian discourses in Pakistan and reached back to some of the debates surrounding Partition when religious scholars affiliated with the Pakistan movement advocated an exclusively Sunni understanding of Islam. In particular, we witness after 1979 a clear shift from Wahhabi-aligned Salafis, who emphasized most of all the doctrinal incompatibility between 'proper' and Shi'a Islam, towards Deobandi protagonists, who regarded Shi'as as a predominantly political problem.<sup>7</sup> In this transition ideas emerging from Saudi Arabia and Iran, and thus from the area that this edited volume conceptualizes as the broader Gulf region, form a crucial component of sectarianism in contemporary Pakistan. Yet, these ideas have always been reworked and expressed through the prism of local concerns.

On the following pages, I would like to explore this question and to expand on my previous research by drawing exclusively on new sources and by considering some major intellectual developments in the sectarian discourses in Pakistan since the early 2000s.<sup>8</sup> In doing so, I concentrate on Pakistan's most important anti-Shi'a organization, the Sipah-i Sahabah-i Pakistan (Army of the Companions of the Prophet, SSP). It was originally founded in 1985 and, after various bans and relabelings, is known since around 2009 as Ahl-i Sunnat wa-l-Jama'at (The People of the Prophetic Practice and the Community, ASWJ).<sup>9</sup> While probably not itself (or not any longer) directly involved with violence against Shi'a actors and groups, the SSP/ASWJ has like no other

organization managed to prepare the ground for an atmosphere that is conducive to attacks on Shi'as. The status of the latter in the public Sunni imagination as *kuffar* (unbelievers) seems to be increasingly taken for granted. Additionally, there are strong personal connections between its leading activists and those militants in the ranks of the notorious Lashkar-e-Jhangvi.<sup>10</sup> For the purpose of this chapter, I draw on material in Urdu in the form of issues of the ASWJ weekly *Ahl-i Sunnat*, published writings and speeches by the organization's leaders, and video recordings of interviews, statements, and ASWJ gatherings. My main focus of analysis are three prominent and influential voices within the SSP/ASWJ, namely its former president 'Ali Sher Haydari (d. 2009),<sup>11</sup> the current chairman Muhammad Ahmad Ludhianvi,<sup>12</sup> and the current central president Aurangzeb Faruqi.<sup>13</sup> Each of these three men is an *'alim* who was trained in Deobandi institutions and has received his entire education in Pakistan.

I attempt to make three arguments in this chapter. First, I hold that we continue to see major differences between sectarian arguments formulated by religious scholars in Saudi Arabia and those advanced by *ulama* in Pakistan. For the latter, the question of politics is not an afterthought that is grafted onto more fundamental doctrinal considerations but rather an essential part of their reasoning.<sup>14</sup> The ASWJ scholars do not merely react to geopolitical events and shift their message accordingly, but the striving for the soul of Pakistan as an ideological, Sunni state forms the heart of their enterprise. This also explains their willingness to appropriate and transcend Shi'a symbols and ideas, something that is far from the mind of Saudi clerics.<sup>15</sup> Second, these pressing political concerns in the aftermath of the challenges posed by the Iranian Revolution led the ASWJ *ulama* to a significant rethinking of the Sunni tradition instead of merely engaging in the repetition of established arguments and anti-Shi'a tropes. These sectarian actors lift up those early Muslims who are designated as Companions of the Prophet Muhammad to unprecedented heights.<sup>16</sup> As a result, the Companions can serve as towering religious figures, able to compete with Shi'a conceptions of their divinely-appointed leaders, their Imams.<sup>17</sup> In a further step, the organized defence of the *sahaba* as gatekeepers and guarantors of both Islam and its inherent, ideal political system acquired overarching importance. According to the SSP/ASWJ God himself condoned the active fight against those who denigrate the Companions via explicit Quranic revelations. My third argument is that in stark contrast to the continuation of such creative intellectual labour, the same investment is no longer perceived as being necessary in order to convince the Pakistani public that Shi'as should be

labelled as unbelievers in the first place. Ihsan Ilahi Zahir's writings in conjunction with the outreach of the SSP, who took over the sectarian mantle after his death, have by now firmly established the equation of Shi'a Islam with *kufir*, at least in the thinking of those sectarian actors who promote such an agenda. This view also applies to pronouncements by the Pakistani Taliban who present *takfir* of the Shi'as as a self-evident, uncontroversial fact.

### *Salafis, Saudis, and Doctrinal Sectarianism*

For Ihsan Ilahi Zahir, Shi'as formed most of all a pressing doctrinal problem. None of his works, regardless of whether they were written before 1979 or after the Iranian Revolution, features any overtly political components. Instead, he emphasized the impossibility of any efforts of Sunni-Shi'a *taqrīb* (rapprochement), attempted in particular in mid-twentieth-century Egypt, because there was simply no common ground. The Shi'as denigrated the Companions of the Prophet as materialist usurpers and accused them of having tampered with the original text of the Qur'an because they intended to suppress evidence for the divinely ordained leadership of the Shi'a Imams.<sup>18</sup> The arguments presented by Saudi scholars, and even ISIS, in the thirty years since the Iranian Revolution have by and large continued along these lines. Accusations of polytheism (*shirk*) because of undue veneration for or even deification of the Prophet's descendants and the supposed Jewish origins of Shi'a Islam occupy a prominent place in these polemics.<sup>19</sup> The Saudi *ulama* refrained from seriously engaging with the political implications of Iran's model of government, known as *vilayat-i faqih* (guardianship of the jurisprudent), but rather zoomed in on their long-standing criticisms of Shi'a Islam in general, which implied that Iran could not claim to be an Islamic state.<sup>20</sup> While acknowledging and expressing their concern about Iranian influence in the region and even more so among Shi'a populations in Saudi Arabia, Syria, Iraq, and Bahrain, they did not proceed to substantially alter their polemical arguments.<sup>21</sup> According to Raihan Ismail, the only noticeable, major change in sectarian treatises in the wake of the Iranian Revolution was that Saudi *ulama* began to focus on the nefarious effects which Shi'a dissimulation (*taqiyya*) had on their polity. Especially traditionalist-minded scholars, who play a dominant role in the clerical establishment, 'characterized the Shi'a as treacherous and disloyal to the Saudi nation; such accusations are absent from the rhetoric of the early '*ulamā*.'"<sup>22</sup> Crucial for my argument, though, is that these religious scholars did not set out to envision an alternative political project to compete

with Iranian efforts to export its Revolution. While they perhaps did not perceive the need for such a step, its lack can also be explained with the tightly controlled political space in Saudi Arabia. The state effectively prevents any criticism of the monarchy, let alone musings about its replacement, often by co-opting erstwhile critics.<sup>23</sup> At first glance, we might expect that anti-Shi'a arguments advanced by ISIS should take a different approach, given its commitment to establishing a 'caliphate according to the prophetic method.' Yet, Saudi clerics and ISIS share the same discursive core. The jihadi organization highlights past Shi'a betrayals against Muslim polities and their present 'hidden war against Muslims' but focuses, like the Kingdom's *ulama*, predominantly on inexcusable Shi'a infringements of God's unicity (*tawhid*). *Dabiq*, the English language magazine published by ISIS, quotes early Muslim authorities to underline the extent to which Shi'as always detested the *sahaba* without, however, developing this thought any further. The only real and significant difference is that ISIS advocates the indiscriminate killing of Shi'as 'wherever they are to be found' until none of them 'walks on the face of the earth.'<sup>24</sup>

### *The Primacy of the Political in Pakistan*

The scholars of the ASWJ, by contrast, use their doctrinal conflict with the Shi'as as a launching pad to push for attacks overwhelmingly on political grounds, labelling their religious opponents as bent on undermining the original religious promise of Pakistan. The ultimate (and ulterior) Shi'a intention could be gleaned from how the country appeared on the ninth and tenth of Muharram each year, when Shi'as commemorate the martyrdom of their third Imam Husayn during the battle of Karbala in the year 680. Sectarian publications argue that public and private TV channels, radio stations, and social media were then regularly turned into virtual *imambarghas* (Shi'a congregation halls) because they exclusively broadcasted and disseminated Shi'a mourning ceremonies. Public coffers were drained in order to pay for the heavy security surrounding Shi'a processions (*julus*). Sunni businesses suffered losses because whole parts of Pakistan's cities, along with administrative offices, shut down on these occasions. In short, Pakistan appeared like an entirely Shi'a country during Muharram (*mukammal taur par ek shi'ah riyasat ka naqshah pesh raha hota he*), with detrimental effects on the young generation that was subjected to this temporary takeover of the state.<sup>25</sup> History did not justify this Shi'a insubordination. According to the ASWJ, Shi'as could not be credited with any significant role in the emergence of God-given Pakistan.

These sectarian thinkers claimed that the nation's founder Muhammad 'Ali Jinnah had in truth been a staunch Sunni while the country's spiritual father, the poet Muhammad Iqbal, had supposedly lashed out against the Shi'a practice of self-flagellation.<sup>26</sup> In today's Pakistan, the Sunni majority suffered under the same sort of persecution that early Muslims had endured at the hands of unbelievers.<sup>27</sup> They were subjected to terrorism perpetrated by the state and supported by Iran, two forces that worked in conjunction.<sup>28</sup> The state had clearly strayed from its original mission to establish a rightly-guided caliphate (*khilafat-i rashida*) that would cleanse society from its present ills and guarantee Islam's dominance over the entire earth.<sup>29</sup> Instead, the authorities persecuted those who lifted up the *sahaba* as the embodiment of such a system and defended them against insults that undermined its appeal.<sup>30</sup> The ASWJ weekly effectively conveys the impression that there is another Sunni martyr each week, even though a good number of those activists whose deaths were commemorated had lost their lives during the previous decades, not since the last released issue of *Ahl-i Sunnat*.<sup>31</sup> The organization labels itself as nothing less than the biggest victim of sectarianism in Pakistan, positioned always at the receiving end.<sup>32</sup> The only reason, according to Ludhiyanvi, why they had so far continued to merely respond with yet another protest march instead of taking more decisive action was that the ASWJ viewed Pakistan as its country. It had no intention of setting its 'home' on fire, thus displaying a real sense of rightful ownership over the state.<sup>33</sup>

### *Uncovering Shi'a Machinations*

Like their Saudi peers, the Pakistani sectarian *ulama* accused the Shi'as of being disingenuous. The problem was much more pressing for the Pakistanis, however, since their Shi'a colleagues had readily participated in many causes so dear to Sunni religious scholars, making it far more complicated to retroactively disavow them. All of these instances of erstwhile cooperation thus had to be labelled as outrageous deception and *taqiyya*, be it the Shi'a participation in the Pakistan movement, the anti-Ahmadi struggle, or the opposition to the left-leaning Zulfikar Ali Bhutto.<sup>34</sup> What redeemed the ASWJ *ulama* and thus the broader Deobandi movement from having initially fallen into this elaborate trap, however, was that they were also the first on a worldwide scale to actively and effectively counter the implications of the Iranian Revolution. The entire Muslim world and even the Saudis had been unable to see through Khomeini's machinations. ASWJ publications recalled the countless delegations that had



come to visit Tehran in the spring of 1979 in order to congratulate the Iranian leader for having ousted the Shah and for turning an authoritarian state into an Islamic Republic. The clever slogan of the Revolution 'Neither East nor West but Islam, neither Shi'as nor Sunnis but Islam' had a profound effect. Apostate rulers (*mulhid hukmran*), miserable intellectuals (*be bahrah danishvar*), famous writers (*namvar ahl-i qalam*), and great scholars (*bare ahl-i 'ilm*) were all suddenly eager to sing Khomeini's praises. In doing so, they completely forgot what Shi'as actually believed in (*'aqa'id-i shi'ah ka pura bab faramush kar ke Khumayni ke qaside parne shuru' kar diye*). Intellectuals in particular were only too willing to make propaganda for Iran in exchange for monetary compensation, handled through various Iranian cultural centres and embassies.<sup>35</sup> Overcome by their own enthusiasm for spreading the revolutionary message, Shi'as translated many of their books for the first time on a world-wide scale. They hence chose out of their own free will to throw off the black cloak of dissimulation under which they had managed to disguise themselves as Muslims for the last 1,400 years.<sup>36</sup> Consequently, up to 360 books rendered into Urdu and denigrating the *sahaba* had reached Pakistan alone.<sup>37</sup> Sagacious Sunni scholars in Lebanon, Egypt, India, and Pakistan quickly realized what was happening and published damning critiques exposing the Shi'as. Importantly, however, such written refutations alone were not able to break the potent spell of Khomeini's message, a problem that was even more pronounced in Pakistan. There Iran could rely on a powerful instrument, namely the main Shi'a organization of the early 1980s, the Tahrik-i Nifaz-i Fiqh-i Ja'fariyya (Movement for the Implementation of Ja'fari Law, TNFJ) that had been founded to 'spread Khomeini's ideas' and was thus opposed to the 'ideology of Pakistan and the beliefs of the majority of this predominantly Sunni country' (*nazariyyah-i Pakistan aur aksariyyati sunni mulk ke 'aqa'id*).<sup>38</sup>

### *Pioneering Sectarianism at Home and Abroad*

The first individual to push back against this insidious strategy on a global level was no one else than Haqq Navaz Jhangvi, the founder of the SSP. A brave young *mujahid*, he took it upon himself to organise conferences all over Pakistan in order to counter Iran's rebellion against Islam and its ideologies of unbelief (*islam se bughat aur kufriyyah nazariyyat*). Jhangvi faced an uphill battle. What distinguished his situation from that of previous important anti-Shi'a polemicists such as Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328), Shah Wali Allah (d. 1762), or 'Abd al-Shakur Faruqi al-Lakhnawi (d. 1962) was that these towering figures

had only exchanged blows with fellow (albeit Shi'a) religious scholars.<sup>39</sup> Jhangvi was the first to bear the coordinated brunt of an entire Shi'a state that decided to employ all of its formidable resources and might against him. At the same time, no Muslim government was ready to lift its voice against Khomeini but rather conspired with him to stop the founder of the SSP in his tracks.<sup>40</sup> Instead of caving in, Jhangvi pursued a dual strategy. First, he decided to quickly expand the area of operation beyond his home town and district of Jhang already in 1986, one year after the founding of the SSP. Second, he saw the pressing need for closing the Sunni ranks by rallying Pakistan's various Sunni groups behind the mission of defending the *sahaba* and establishing the Caliphate, an achievement that he hoped to replicated worldwide. As the ASWJ sees it, the majority of Barelvis, Deobandis, and Ahl-i-Hadith in contemporary Pakistan were fully in line with the organization's program.<sup>41</sup> It is interesting to note in this context that the ASWJ never accepted that ISIS, which in 2014 underwent a rapid transformation from a mere 'paper state' to a functioning political entity in Syria and Iraq, should be credited with having established something akin to a caliphate.<sup>42</sup> Instead, the proponents of the *sahaba* continued to present themselves as the leading global group working towards the realization of such a divinely-mandated political order. ISIS, by contrast, was a mere upstart which only a year earlier had been totally unknown.<sup>43</sup> At the same time, the ASWJ was careful to distance itself from ISIS on operational grounds only. It did not attack the latter's Salafi ideology but rather argued that it was impossible to erect a caliphate 'based on weapons or the strength of force' (*aslihab aur taqat ke zur par*).<sup>44</sup> Such a decidedly non-*takfiri* approach was meant to underline the ASWJ's inclusive character as a truly ecumenical Sunni movement.

The explicit sense of history which the ASWJ had of itself and its past achievements could also be used as a resource to argue that the menacing Shi'a dominance was not unbreakable. The ASWJ prided itself of having become the 'biggest religious organization' in the country, bouncing back after each attempt to ban it.<sup>45</sup> It was well established in each Pakistani province as the diverse composition of its leadership amply demonstrated.<sup>46</sup> Since the early 2000s, speeches increasingly tapped into a Sufi-infused language in order to underline how God himself approved of the group's mission: dream visions bestowed on believers in Pakistan and even Mecca and Medina allegedly revealed that former ASWJ leaders were safely established in the gardens of paradise with the Prophet Muhammad's favourite wife 'A'isha personally looking after their well-being.<sup>47</sup> Referring to past successes on a more mundane level, Muhammad Ahmad Ludhianvi reminded his audience of how the group's former leader and member

of the national assembly (MNA) A'zam Tariq (d. 2003) had boldly managed to install himself in 1994 in the speaker's seat of Pakistan's parliament. Tariq then attempted to force through the SSP/ASWJ agenda by declaring a 'Namus-i Sahaba Bill' (Honour of the Prophet's Companions Bill), which aimed at punishing any denigration of the *sahaba* with the death penalty, as passed.<sup>48</sup> In Ludhiyanvi's view, the subsequent applause, loud support, and respect shown by fellow MNAs for Tariq, whom the deputies declared to be their 'general', was significant. It demonstrated the often obscured and disputed but nonetheless real existence of a majority, both in parliament and also in the population at large, for the sectarian goals of the ASWJ.<sup>49</sup>

While such harsh punishment for insulting the *sahaba* still forms an essential part of the organization's catalogue of demands, its leaders have recently adopted a different strategy for how to secure the passing of a relevant law and, ultimately, transform the Pakistani state into a proper caliphate.<sup>50</sup> Picking up arguments about the distinction between the public and the private sphere, a foundational concept of the modern secular order, they made the case that since for 97 per cent of Pakistan's population Hanafi *fiqh* formed part of their 'beliefs' (*aqa'id*), it should constitute the basis of a Sunni state.<sup>51</sup> Such a step would be perfectly normal because there was no country on earth where religious minorities would have a say regarding the overarching structure of law. In Britain, public law was supposedly exclusively based on the Protestant version of Christianity, which meant that even Queen Elizabeth II, according to the ASWJ herself a Catholic, was required to submit to these laws which went against her faith. Similarly, in Iran Sunnis would not be allowed to build a single mosque despite forming 35 per cent of the population.<sup>52</sup> These comparisons implied that no stipulations guaranteeing religious freedom could go as far as establishing a separate public law (*'alahidah public law*) because this would only lead to disorder in any particular country (*darham barham ho ja'e*). The single area where religious freedom had a place for minorities was in the context of their personal status law.<sup>53</sup>

### *Appropriating Shi'a Imagery*

While discussing the primacy of the political in Pakistan's sectarianism, it is also crucial to point out that the ASWJ continues to appropriate Shi'a and Iranian revolutionary concepts and symbols for their own purpose and in order to neutralize and transcend them.<sup>54</sup> In the same way as someone who clung steadfastly to Khomeini's revolutionary program was considered in Iran as being

a follower of 'the Imam's line' (*khatt-i imam*), ASWJ supporters were encouraged to stick to nothing but Haqq Navaz Jhangvi's 'line'.<sup>55</sup> Additionally, ASWJ activists who contributed a third of their income to the party were lauded in particular. It is hard to miss the significance of comparing this superior generosity to the mere 20 per cent (*khums*) that Shi'as are expected to pass on to their chosen Source of Emulation (*marja' al-taqlid*) or his representative, respectively.<sup>56</sup> In an attempt at superseding Shi'a symbolism publicized by the Iranian Republic, we also see a strong commitment by the ASWJ to cherish the memory of its martyrs, at times in rather bizarre ways.<sup>57</sup> A case in point is the remembrance of the violent confrontation that had happened in July 2007 between the Pakistani government and military, on the one hand, and those *ulama*, students, and militants who were holed up and besieged in Islamabad's infamous Red Mosque (Lal Masjid), on the other. The ASWJ had no problem claiming the seminary and its leadership, which had always taken a decidedly anti-Shi'a stance, as its own.<sup>58</sup> Commemorating the bloody events that left more than 100 people dead, 'Ali Sher Haydari argued that even the massacre of Karbala, essential as a founding event to Shi'a identity, paled in comparison. In Islamabad, significantly more women and children had lost their lives than when Umayyad troops attacked al-Husayn and his party. Back in Iraq, there had been travelling provisions available. Those besieged in the Red Mosque totally lacked supplies, however, and had had no other choice but to resort to eating Guava leaves.<sup>59</sup> While at Karbala, al-Husayn and his supporters had been cut off from access to water for three days, in Islamabad the water supply had already been interrupted on the first day out of the seven which the stand-off lasted. Unlike al-Husayn, the encircled seminarians could not resort to any proper ablution (*ghusl*) before their martyrdom.<sup>60</sup> In Iraq, the attack occurred in a neutral open space but in Pakistan people were killed in a house of prayer. The siege of the Red Mosque, then, was of a very different quality as far as cruelty (*sakhti*), affliction (*dukh*), worry (*parishani*), sacrifice (*qurbani*), and oppression (*zulm o sitam*) were concerned.<sup>61</sup> By arguing along these lines, 'Ali Sher Haydari not only stressed the need for radical political change in Pakistan, he also effectively termed Sunnis as superior martyrs and took a powerful blow at the heart of Shi'a Islam.

### *The Political Implications of Extolling the Status of the Prophet's Companions*

In order to further buttress their demands for a Sunni state, *ulama* connected with the ASWJ show a remarkable fixation on the *sahaba*, whose importance at

times even seems to overshadow the Prophet Muhammad himself. These sectarian religious scholars did not shy away from terming themselves 'slaves of the *sahaba*', a choice of terminology with which Wahhabi scholars would take serious issue.<sup>62</sup> In the view of ASWJ leaders, however, the Companions did not merely play a passive role in their resemblance of 'clear, transparent glass' that surrounded and protected the filament of the Prophet's mission, transmitting the light emanating from him. Rather, this group of chosen people also further amplified the brightness of the divine message.<sup>63</sup> The *sahaba* were the essential bridge to Muhammad because no Muslim could have direct, unmediated access to the Prophet.<sup>64</sup> This also applied to the criteria for determining as to what should count as proper, authentic *hadith*. Any saying attributed to Muhammad should only be followed if Muslims could be certain that the *sahaba* had acted on it. If the latter's conduct differed from a known *hadith*, then said report had to be either considered unreliable or abrogated.<sup>65</sup> One problem, though, was the Shi'a emphasis on a Prophetic report, found also with variations in authoritative Sunni collections, that God had left the believers with 'two weighty things' (*thaqalayn*), namely the Qur'an and the members of his household, the *ahl al-bayt*. Seizing on this opportunity, the Shi'as argued that this report proved how essential their Imams were for understanding the true meaning of the Qur'an. Both 'weighty things' were intertwined, and existent, forever.<sup>66</sup> In order to counter its implications and to obtain an argumentative edge, 'Ali Sher Haydari went as far as claiming that God had rather established two *qiblas* (direction of prayer). The first of these was the Kaaba in Mecca, symbolizing the direction of worship, the second were the Companions to whom Muslims should turn in demonstrating their obedience to the Prophet.<sup>67</sup> To put it differently, the *sahaba* could be compared to the special chest which parents prepared for their daughter's wedding, providing her with essential items such as clothes, jewellery, and tableware. The Prophet, in turn, had deposited the entire religion (*sara din*) and its necessities with his Companions and had filled their breasts with the Quran.<sup>68</sup> They thus acquired a status not unlike the Shi'a Imams because they were credited with tremendous powers. Their words and statements would provide healing for every illness and the solution to every problem.<sup>69</sup> The *sahaba* were blessed with a higher form of comprehension and it was mandatory to respect their opinions and actions, even if these surpassed the understanding of contemporary believers. The Companions' conduct could even be likened to the ambiguous and unclear (*mutashabihat*) verses in the Qur'an, which Muslims also take as word of God even though they might be unable to fully grasp their meaning.<sup>70</sup> In the same way as all the *suras* were the signs of God (*Allah ki ayat*), the Companions were

collectively His group (*Allah ki jama'at*).<sup>71</sup> Such a re-centring of religion away from the Prophet, venerated by both Sunnis and Shi'as alike, towards the *sahaba*, who now took the primacy of place in determining and interpreting Islam, clearly reduced the already shrinking common ground between the two sects in Pakistan even further. Exacerbating was also the ASWJ insistence on its supposedly deep commitment to Muslim unity by showing unflinching veneration for the *ahl al-bayt*, a group so dear to the Shi'as as we have noticed above. Not surprisingly, however, the ASWJ opted in its identification of the 'People of the House' for the narrowest Sunni interpretation possible. According to these sectarian *ulama*, the term exclusively referred to the Prophet's wives. This position differed radically from the Shi'a view, as well as moderate Sunni interpretations, which applied it to the Prophet's daughter Fatima, his nephew and son-in-law 'Ali, their sons al-Hasan and al-Husayn, as well as their descendants.<sup>72</sup> For ASWJ leaders, 'A'isha in particular has over the last years become a focal point. She is showered with the same epithets of purity that Shi'as use to address their Imams and is lifted up into the rank of a fully qualified Muslim jurist who dispensed legal opinions even to male *sahaba*.<sup>73</sup>

In a second step after exalting their status, the importance of defending the *sahaba* was rendered by the ASWJ as the ultimate criterion in determining right and wrong in religion. Those who kept watch to preserve the impeccable honour of the Companions guarded nothing less than Islam's most precious manifestation and faith (*iman*) itself.<sup>74</sup> They should hence be considered as the gatekeeper of religion as a whole (*sare din ka chowkidar*).<sup>75</sup> By implication, those Muslims who had historically conceived of themselves as *sipah-i sahaba* had always protected the essential aspects of Islam, such as prayer, the pilgrimage, or the profession of faith, too. Defending the Companions was thus not a question of a particular organization (*tanzim*) in Pakistan that was merely several decades old.<sup>76</sup> Rather, the ASWJ made the case that God himself had condoned such an interpretation in Quran 48:18, a part of which reads as 'God was well pleased with the believers when they were swearing fealty to thee under the tree.' Muslim sources connect this revelation with an event that took place in the year 628. The Prophet and a large group of his Companions had attempted in vein to enter Mecca for the lesser pilgrimage ('*umra*). Fleeing from Meccan troops, they had come to rest at a village in the desert and started negotiating with their enemies. During this time, rumours spread that one of their envoys, who would later become the third Caliph, 'Uthman b. 'Affan (d. 656), had been killed. In order to reassert his authority, Muhammad called on his followers to pledge him allegiance, thus promising that they would submit

to his authority whatever he decided.<sup>77</sup> Aurangzeb Faruqi, however, gave this episode an entirely different spin that stands in marked contrast to how the diverse Islamic tradition has debated its significance.<sup>78</sup> In his view, the primary reason of the pledge (*bay'a*) was to avenge the blood of 'Uthman. Because those present showed such a devotion to one of the *sahaba* and his honour, God expressed his pleasure with them via aforementioned Quranic revelation, effectively guaranteeing their admission to paradise. Today, the ASWJ would continue to faithfully carry out this essential part of the Prophet's mission and could thus be sure of God's special favour, too.<sup>79</sup>

Lest anyone should be tempted to criticise the organization's focus on historical figures that had no apparent connection to modern-day Pakistan, ASWJ leaders insisted that some of the Companions commanded a very real, even touchable presence on (or rather beneath) the country's soil. Muhammad Ahmad Ludhyanvi recalled that he was once travelling with 'Ali Sher Haydari near Khairpur in Sindh when they decided to stop at a small settlement next to the road. Their goal was to visit an ancient cemetery which held the remnants of three *sahaba* who allegedly had come to the area before the Arab conquest in the year 711. Locals had recently dug a grave right next to their burial site and were eager to share with the two ASWJ leaders the strange events that had followed. First, a sweet fragrance had started to emerge from the Companions' graves, gradually filling the entire locality. The bodies of the three *sahaba* had not decomposed, neither had their garments. One of the locals had even been able to touch the forehead of one of the corpses, feeling fresh sweat which made his hand smell pleasantly for an entire month.<sup>80</sup>

### *Long-term Sectarian Labour and the Self-Evidence of Shi'a Unbelief*

So far we have considered how the Iranian Revolution has reshaped anti-Shi'a discourses in Pakistan with political arguments taking centre stage after 1979. These, in turn, have led to substantial reinterpretations of the status and religious significance of the *sahaba*. As a last step, I would like to briefly touch upon the long term implications of sustained anti-Shi'a discourses that had erstwhile been fuelled on the doctrinal level by the Saudi-educated Ihsan Ilahi Zahir. His prolific output and intensive sectarian labour did not simply disappear with the rise of political concerns. Instead, his efforts have laid the groundwork for a striking phenomenon in contemporary Pakistan, namely the increasing confidence of sectarian actors that their message of exclusion against the Shi'as has indeed taken root.<sup>81</sup> When venturing into the public sphere, be



it during interviews on Pakistani television or during speeches given at ASWJ demonstrations and convocations, they treat the equation of Shi'a Islam with *kufir* as a given fact. Implying that there existed a true and universal Sunni consensus, they refer to what they perceived was a solid body of scholarship. A multitude of *fatwas* issued by scholars in the Middle East, the Gulf region, and South Asia confirmed their stance.<sup>82</sup> 'Ali Sher Haydari, for instance, stated that—unlike during Ihsan Ilahi Zahir's time—it was no longer necessary for him to provide his listeners with any long-winded scriptural proofs in this regard. Pakistan's children knew and proclaimed with courage that those who insulted the Companions were the worst unbelievers imaginable (*ka'inat ka badtarin kala kafir*). The country's streets were filled with the ASWJ's signature slogan '*kafir kafir shi'ah kafir*' and no one was able to put an end to it.<sup>83</sup> Consequently, propagating brotherhood between Sunnis and Shi'as was simply a lost cause.<sup>84</sup>

Such a line of argument, which thus similarly displays the profound and lasting impact of Wahhabi-Salafi discourses originating in the Gulf, is also reflected in one of the few Shi'a-related statements issued by the Movement of the Pakistani Taliban (Tahrik-i Taliban-i Pakistan, TTP). This rather loose federation of various militant groups was officially established in 2007.<sup>85</sup> The video of the statement depicts 'Umar Khalid Khurasani, an infamous leader who is considered to have been inter alia responsible for the December 2014 attack on a military school in Peshawar and the assault on Bacha Khan University in Charsadda in January 2016.<sup>86</sup> He was killed in a drone strike in July 2016.<sup>87</sup> In his recorded message, Khurasani provided as his reason for declaring jihad against the Pakistani state that the government had fallen under Shi'i influence without, however, deeming it necessary to make any argument about what precisely set the Shi'as beyond the pale. He took up a sectarian incident that had occurred in Rawalpindi's Raja Bazaar in November 2013. When a Shi'a mourning procession passed the Ta'lim al-Qur'an Deobandi mosque and seminary complex, the local prayer leader, according to newspaper reports, 'made harsh and offensive comments against the Shi'a community' via the mosque's loudspeakers. This led to a chaotic situation that started with the throwing of stones but quickly escalated into the exchange of gunfire and widespread arson, leaving nine people dead.<sup>88</sup> Khurasani accused the security forces deployed of idly standing by in the face of this outbreak of violence. Their inaction had to be understood as condoning the supposedly one-sided Shi'a aggression against the *madrasa*.<sup>89</sup> Ultimately the Pakistani state and its apostate army (*murtadd fauj*) were to blame, as were the media who downplayed the death toll, which in reality was closer to



seventy, eighty, or perhaps even more casualties. This cover-up and complicity demonstrated the government's double standards. If only two Shi'as had lost their life in a similar incident, public mourning would be observed and families of victims would be duly compensated.<sup>90</sup> Lesser atrocities than what continued to take place in Pakistan had fomented the uprisings of the Arab Spring. In Syria, jihad had been declared against a Shi'a government, a concern that was more pressing in Pakistan where Shi'as were more powerful (*ziyada mazbut*).<sup>91</sup> The future revolution in Pakistan would do away with the present enslavement (*ghulami*) of the masses to Shi'as and apostates.<sup>92</sup> Such a clear anti-Shi'a stance is remarkable because sectarianism was not one of the main focal points of the Pakistani Taliban when they issued their mission statement in 2007.<sup>93</sup> The tables, Pakistan's proponents of anti-Shi'a discourses and violence want us to believe, have thus decidedly been turned against the Shi'as, whose non-Islamic character is out there for everyone to see.

### *Conclusion*

Anti-Shi'a discourses in Pakistan have substantially been formed by their interaction with ideas emanating from the Gulf. They have come a long way since the 1970s when Ihsan Ilahi Zahir, the Pakistani graduate of the Islamic University of Medina, launched his pioneering and passionate effort to exclude Shi'as from the house of Islam. Far from simply continuing along his lines and merely recycling polemical tropes, the SSP/ASWJ pushed sectarianism into an entirely new direction that substantially goes beyond related discourses among Saudi clerics. Pakistani *ulama* affiliated with the organization painted Shi'as as detrimental to the fulfilment of their country's initial political promise, which was supposed to establish the dominance of Islam on a global level. In order to make a forceful case for their arguments, they followed a two-pronged strategy. First, these actors extolled the importance of the *sahaba* as religious figures that commanded an appeal not unlike the Shi'a Imams. Second, they invested considerable efforts to place the defence of the Companions and their honour at the centre of all religious obligations. The combined public force of these doctrinal and political arguments, formulated in South Asia and the Middle East and adopted by new actors such as the Pakistani Taliban, have increasingly limited the space for any potential Shi'a-Sunni rapprochement. Once such ideas have acquired the status of apparently factual, self-evident knowledge, they are extremely difficult to dismantle and retract.

What I have shown in this chapter is the importance of peeling back layers of religious polemics that at first glance seem to be all cut from the same cloth. Instead, we have noticed important regional variations. While the final outcome of sectarian discourses, namely to render the Shi'as as unbelievers, may be the same, the path upon which Saudi and Pakistani *ulama* embarked are decidedly different.<sup>94</sup> In addition to the discussed divergence pertaining to the predominance of doctrinal issues, on the one hand, vis-à-vis the embrace of the political, on the other, there are potential further research questions that would warrant our comparative attention. ISIS, for example, has adopted a remarkable millenarian outlook, luring fighters to Syria with the promise that the final battles before the day of judgement are near.<sup>95</sup> Attempting to accelerate the coming of the end of days and acting as a tool for the promised Islamic savior (*mahdi*), however, is a notion that is usually far more pronounced in Shi'a thought.<sup>96</sup> The ASWJ, by contrast, stays entirely clear from such eschatological speculations. Their slain leaders even reportedly communicated to those left behind in dream visions how much they would prefer to fight the battle in Pakistan instead of being relegated to paradise.<sup>97</sup> The explicit this-worldly focus of the ASWJ is thus also an expression of how seriously they take the political and their mission that Pakistan may obtain its true purpose. This stands in contrast to ISIS, which displays a much more pronounced Salafi-fixation on doctrinal purity and hopes to transcend conventional political categories through violence. Additionally, a closer study of sectarian discourses in the Middle East, the Gulf region, and South Asia might also bring to the fore the extent to which these are bound up with perceptions of ethnic superiority. The argument of God singling out the Arabs is repeatedly made by Saudi scholars in their confrontation with Iran.<sup>98</sup> Such a reasoning, however, is entirely missing from the Pakistani sectarian scene.

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*Christophe Jaffrelot and Laurence Louër*

This volume on the relations between the Gulf and South Asia from the point of view of Islamic flows suggests a series of conclusions.

### *The Uncertain Resilience of South Asian Islam*

Several chapters are revealing about a tension between South Asian Islam and Arabian Islam. Certainly, as shown by Christophe Jaffrelot, the two-way traffic of the nineteenth century, when Muslim scholars of South Asia and the Middle East—including clerics of Mecca and Medina—were in a conversation, is something of the past. Indeed, as shown by Ayesha Siddiqqa, the ‘*madrasa*’ system in Pakistan now represents a one-way traffic in which financial patronage has shaped the discourse in the country since the 1980s.’

However, Gulf influence is not unequivocal as the Wahhabi-Salafi brand of Islam widespread in Arabia is transformed while travelling to South Asia, having to adapt and coexist with South Asian understandings of Islam. Hence Samina Yasmeen argues that Lashkar-e-Taiba could attract followers only by ‘indigenizing the Salafi narrative’, especially in respect to and regarding women. Vahid Brown’s study of the Salafi Emirate of Kunar illustrates a similar process: in this case the Saudi-supported *mujahidin* looked at Afghan fighters as *mushrikin* (idolaters, polytheists) and never reconciled with their practice of

Islam. Dealing with the Haqqani network during the anti-Soviet jihad, Don Rassner also points out that, far from the anti-Shi'a leanings of Saudi Wahhabism, Jalaluddin had no conflict with his Shi'a fellow-citizens and even incorporated some of them into his group of fighters. Similarly, Antonio Giustozzi shows that the Afghan Taliban remained connected to Iran, to the chagrin of the Saudis—and in spite of the money they gave to Mullah Omar and his successors (directly or indirectly).

By the same token, while anti-Shi'ism has taken root in Pakistan, where attacks by Sunni Salafi groups against Shi'a religious buildings and rituals are numerous, Simon Fuchs shows in his chapter the entanglement of influences from the Gulf monarchies with very local dimensions of sectarianism in Pakistan. He underlines that the development of Sunni-Shi'a tensions in Pakistan cannot be merely attributed to a one-way 'foreign' influence but stretches back to some of the debates that accompanied the very formation of Pakistan, which some religious scholars wanted to be the embodiment of a Sunni version of Islam. Moreover, while the anti-Shi'a stance of some Saudi clerics is rooted in what they see as the doctrinal deviance of Shi'ism, after the 1979 Iranian revolution, many Pakistani Sunni scholars, in particular the Deobandis among them, looked at Shi'as mostly as a political problem because they feared that the type of revolutionary Shi'a Islam advocated by Khomeini would deeply alter Pakistani political and religious equilibriums.

At the end of the day, these converging analyses suggest that Wahhabism was never merely transferred to South Asia; it had to be adapted to the local context in order to be acceptable. This vernacularization process however was still insufficient for transforming the religious scene of India and Pakistan.

Indeed, despite the fact that it was directly targeted by Salafi inspired movements, Sufism, which has been the hallmark of South Asian Islam from its inception, remains very lively. In Pakistan, campaigns against the cult of saints by Sunni activists have taken a violent turn, with recurrent attacks of Sunni militant groups against mausoleums of saints. In June 2009 the Shrine of the Sufi poet Rehman Baba was bombed in Peshawar. In July 2010, 42 people were killed and 175 injured in a suicide attack on the Data Ganj Baksh shrine in Lahore. In April 2011, 49 people were killed and 93 injured in a suicide attack on the Sakhi Sarwar shrine in Punjab. On 25 February 2013, a blast tore through the Ghulam Shah Ghazi shrine in the village of Marri, Shikarpur District, killing four people on the scene and wounding more than 27 others. Pir Syed Hajan Shah, the spiritual descendant of the saint honoured at the shrine, later succumbed to his wounds. In spite of these attacks, *dargahs* remain

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part of popular Islam and Muslims continue to visit them, along with Hindus, Christians, and Sikhs. Yet while this dimension of the religious scene is true across South Asia, it is the most obvious on the Indian side. Pilgrims continue to attend Urs festivities, and Pakistanis apply for visas to visit the Ajmer Dargah Sharif and other shrines.<sup>1</sup>

Interestingly, as shown by Alix Philippon in her contribution to this volume, Sufism has also made some inroads into the Gulf monarchies, following in the footsteps of the South Asian diaspora there and establishing links with the local Sufi networks eager to find support at home against the encroachment of Salafi ultra-orthodoxy. Indeed, a sign of the resilience of South Asian Islam is its potential capacity to export itself to the Gulf through the mass of South Asian expatriates leaving and working in the Gulf monarchies. The South Asian diaspora in these countries is a channel whereby Sufism, which has been marginalized by the 'orthodox' religious policies of the regimes, is somehow taking root again, with South Asian Sufi leaders not only developing networks among the South Asian migrants but also building links with the remnants of local Sufi orders. The latter see these South Asian Sufis as assets helping to keep alive and possibly develop further indigenous Sufism.

Regionalism—often mixed with Sufism—has also been an antidote to Salafism in different provinces of South Asia. It has contained the Salafi external influences even more effectively when local cultures combined with the popular religion par excellence that is Sufism. Sindh is a case in point. Sindhi nationalists look at themselves as the descendants of the Indus civilization. Their ideologue in chief, G. M. Syed (1904–95) used to say, 'I am Sindhi for 5,000 years, I am Muslim for 1,400 years, I am Pakistani for 63 years.' For him, the Islamization of Sindh—the first province of South Asia conquered by the Arab chieftain, Muhammad Bin Qasim—was a disaster. Before, every religious community (including Hindus, Parsis, Buddhists) lived in peace, he claimed in one of his last books, *Sindhudesh* (the country that is Sindh). After, Muslim rulers oppressed society—but, he says, Sindhis could find refuge in Sufism.<sup>2</sup>

Last but not least, liberals have tried to build an alternative national identity by emancipating Pakistan from any Arab influence. Aitzaz Ahsan (b. 1945), a famous leader of the Pakistan People's Party, presents his country as coterminous with the Indus region, that pre-dates the coming of Islam.<sup>3</sup> Ahsan emphasizes the absence of Arab influence on the provinces which were to form Pakistan, even during 'the brief period of 144 years, from AD 711 to 854', during which the 'Indus region had direct political contact with the Arabs': 'Except for the young Muhammad bin Qasim, these invaders, soldier-kings, and saintly ascetics

were almost entirely of central Asian or Persian origin, whether Mongols, Afghans, or Iranians. Barring a few, coincidental, fleeting contacts, the story of the Pakistani peoples shares little *cultural* commonality with the Arab.<sup>4</sup>

This discourse reflects the liberals' apprehension vis-à-vis the growing influence of the Arab variant of Islam that the Pakistani state has been relaying since the Zia era. Indeed, Muhammad bin Qasim has been promoted by the Pakistani state as a role model for the youth with the support of the Jama'at-i-Islami in the early 1980s. Since then, every year, on the ninth and tenth days of Ramzan (more and more pronounced 'Ramadan' under Arab influence), he is celebrated on the occasion of *yaum Bab ul-Islam* (Door of Islam day) commemorating the Arab conquest of Sindh. Islamic parties—including JUI and JI—play an important part on this occasion.<sup>5</sup> In 1977, in the framework of a 'New Education Policy', Zia had already introduced textbooks which dealt with Muhammad bin Qasim from the fourth grade onwards<sup>6</sup> and mandated Arabic instruction from the mid-level grade.<sup>7</sup>

### *State-driven 'Saudi Arabization' in Pakistan*

Clearly, despite the resilience of local perceptions and practices of Islam, a process of 'Saudi Arabization' of Islam is taking place across South Asia. In Pakistan, the state is a major actor in this process—a point that needs to be re-emphasized. As mentioned by several contributors to this volume, the growing religious influence of Saudi Arabia in Pakistan is one of the legacies of Zia's Islamization policy. Since then, the government has oscillated between long phases of greater rapprochement with the Saudis and short episodes of equidistant relations with Saudi Arabia and Iran. Islamabad has been closer to Riyadh when rulers came from the army or the Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz), a party whose leader, Nawaz Sharif, had found refuge in Jeddah from 2000 to 2007 when General Musharraf exiled him after the 1999 coup. The Sharifs had already good relations with the Saudi ruling family, but these links intensified. Not only did one of Nawaz's daughters marry a grandson of King Fahd, but Nawaz and his brother developed several businesses in Saudi Arabia—a country they visited very often, for more than pilgrimages.<sup>8</sup> By contrast, when the People's Pakistan Party was in office, the government tried to promote better relations with Iran, a policy Riyadh attributed to the Shi'a background of the Bhutto family. While Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the founder of the party, never declared whether he was a Shi'a or not, he married an Iranian woman, a decision that fostered suspicion. When Asif Zardari, the widower

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of Benazir Bhutto, became president in 2008, he favoured a balanced attitude vis-à-vis Iran. On the one hand, Pakistan offered some discreet military support to the Sunni ruling family of Bahrain—a protégé of Riyadh—in its fight against a Shi'a-dominated opposition,<sup>9</sup> on the other hand, Zardari supported the project of a gas pipeline between Iran and Pakistan. After Nawaz Sharif became Prime Minister again in 2013, this project made no progress.

These diplomatic oscillations translated into tensions in the religious domain, a process well exemplified by the trajectory of the International Islamic University of Islamabad. As mentioned in chapter one, the IIUA was started in 1980 with, among its founding members, Dr Ahmad Mohamed Ali, the President of the Jeddah-based Islamic Development Bank. It was created on the premises of the Faisal Mosque, an institution named after the Saudi king—who had funded it—and which is one of the largest mosques in the world since it can accommodate 10,000 people in its prayer hall, galleries and courtyards. A bigger campus has been inaugurated in 2013 in Islamabad's Sector H-10, a less centrally-located neighbourhood of the city. Its prime objective was initially to teach *sharia*, but later, natural and social sciences and business administration subjects were also introduced. At present, the varsity has a strength of about 30,000 students and it has become one of the Saudi strongholds in Pakistan.<sup>10</sup> Control has never been complete, however. In 2012 for example, under Asif Zardari, the rector Dr Fateh Muhammad Malik organized a seminar on 'Extremism of Prisoners' in which he was somewhat critical of Saudi Arabia's policies and political discourse. Malik even labelled Saudi society as 'uncivilized' and 'anti-women'.<sup>11</sup> But Zardari had to remove him under pressure from Saudi Arabia, according to a leaked cable of the Saudi Embassy. Ahmed Yousif Ahmed Al Draiwesh was appointed as the new president. A Saudi national, he had to rely on the help of several translators as he only spoke Arabic. This appointment reflected the key role of Gulf-based personalities in the board managing the university. We find, among the ex-officio members, Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud, the rector of the Islamic University of Riyadh, who is also the Pro-Chancellor of the IIUI; Dr Abdullah bin Abdul Mohsin Al-Turki, the Secretary General of Rabita Al-Alam Al-Islami in Mecca; Dr Abdullah Al-Maatouq, the Chairman of the International Islamic Charitable Organization in Saffat (Kuwait); Mr Bakri Bin Maatouq Bin Bakri Assas, the rector of the Umul Qura University in Mecca; Dr Sulaiman Ibn Abdullah Aba Al-Khail, the rector of Al-Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University in Riyadh; Prof. Dr Abdul Rehman Bin Abdullah Bin Muhammad Alsanad and the President of the Islamic

University of Medina. In 2014, the IIUI awarded King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia an honorary doctorate in politics and international relations.

Interestingly, the rector who succeeded Malik, Masoom Yasinzai, was the VC of the Qaid-e-Azam University, a clear indication of the penetration of conservative ideas in this formerly prestigious institution. Even Pakistani intelligence agencies worried about the Saudi influence over the IIUI. In a letter titled 'Undesirable activities in IIUI' that was leaked to the media, Pakistani spies wrote that 'the administration and faculty of IIUI is intentionally promoting Salafi, Takfiri and Ikhwanī doctrines, whereas Pakistan is fighting the demon of terrorism, incubated and abetted by the same doctrines.'<sup>12</sup> Therefore Pakistani intelligence services themselves established a direct link between licit and illicit Saudi influences.

A similar continuum is evident from the funding activities of Gulf-based organizations, including the Muslim World League and the International Islamic Relief Organization. A personality close to the Taliban like Sami Hul Haq, the head of a major *madrassa*, the Darul Uloom Haqqania of Akora Khattak, where several lieutenants of Mullah Omar had been trained in the 1980s, met key leaders of these institutions repeatedly. In 2015, he was invited at the IIUI to take part in a seminar on 'The Role of Religious Leadership in Fight against Terrorism and Rejection of Sectarianism' that was presided by Dr Abdullah Bin Abdulmohsin Al Turki, the former dean of the Ibn Saud University (Riyadh) and the Secretary of the Muslim World League (MWL).<sup>13</sup> MWL-related charities have been active in Pakistan, including the International Islamic Relief Organization, the Haramain Foundation, and the Rabita Trust, that had been founded in 1988 by the then General Secretary of the MWL, Dr Abdullah Omar Naseef. The Rabita Trust had gained so much prominence in Pakistan that the President of the country, Pervez Musharraf, was on its board in 2001. Since one of the Directors General of the trust, Wael Hamza Julaidan, was found to be one of the founders of al-Qaeda, the US banned the trust after 9/11 and asked Musharraf to leave the board.<sup>14</sup>

### *Transnational Sunnism*

While Saudi Arabia and Pakistan fight together against al-Qaeda and ISIS,<sup>15</sup> the illicit dimension of the Saudi influence in Pakistan is epitomized by the financing of the *madrasas* and jihadi groups, as several chapters of this volume have shown. LeT, which was designated as a terrorist group by the US in 2001,<sup>16</sup> is a case in point.<sup>17</sup> In 2008, among the personalities that the US Department



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of the Treasury designated as LeT leaders in a cable revealed by Wikileaks, were two men with a Saudi connexion. Mahmoud Mohammad Ahmed Bahaziq, a Saudi national was 'credited with being the main financier behind the establishment of the LeT and its activities in the 1980s and 1990s. He has also served as the leader of LeT in Saudi Arabia. In 2003, Bahaziq coordinated LeT's fundraising activities with Saudi nongovernmental organizations and Saudi businessmen, and encouraged LeT operatives to continue and accelerate fundraising and organizing activities. As of mid-2005, Bahaziq played a key role in LeT's propaganda and media operations.'<sup>18</sup> The other man was Haji Muhammad Ashraf, LeT's chief of finance since 'at least 2003' and who 'traveled to the Middle East, where he personally collected donations on behalf of LeT [in 2003 and 2004]. In 2003, Ashraf assisted Saudi Arabia-based LeT leadership with expanding its organization and increasing its fundraising activities.'<sup>19</sup> In 2009 one of the cables attributed to the then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton by Wikileaks assessed that 'donors in Saudi Arabia constitute the most significant source of funding to Sunni terrorist groups worldwide.'<sup>20</sup>

The triangle formed by the Saudi donors, the Pakistani security establishment and Salafi or jihadi groups is not free of tensions. In fact, several issues need to be highlighted.

First, the Salafi groups do not form a bloc and do not relate equally to their donors. For instance, LeT and Jamiat Ahl-i-Hadith (JAH), the religious party representing the Ahl-i-Hadith, compete for access to Saudi funds. In spite of the active leadership of Prof. Sajid Mir and its control of the Wifaq ul Madaris Salafiya (in charge of the Salafi Madrasa), the JAH has remained a minor force and the LeT receives most of the funds from the Gulf.<sup>21</sup>

But tensions can also emerge between Saudis and Pakistanis because of Islamists. Saudis resent the violent action of some Pakistanis based in their country<sup>22</sup> and, on the other hand, they sometimes cultivate 'their' Islamists without the blessing of the Pakistani state,<sup>23</sup> like in the case of Sunni militants.<sup>24</sup> In the framework of their proxy war against Iran, Saudis are prepared to support Sunni extremists that the Pakistanis are fighting at home to contain sectarian strife, a huge challenge for the latter country today. Some of them are useful for Riyadh because they can put pressure on the Pakistani government when it resists Saudi injunctions. In 2015, for instance, when the Pakistani parliament refused to send troops to Yemen and help the Saudis fight the Houthis rebel, Ahle Sunnat wal Jamaat members demonstrated in the street, asking for 'unconditional support to Saudi Arabia.'<sup>25</sup> Similarly, Saudis have sponsored organizations like the Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, one of the most violent Sunni militant

groups,<sup>26</sup> that the Pakistani state (including the army) has tried to contain because of their anti-Shi'a terrorist actions. In 2012, a Reuters reporter who was interviewing LJ leader Ludhianvi saw him 'and his aides st[an]d up to warmly welcome a visitor: Saudi Arabia-based cleric Malik Abdul Haq al-Meqqi' who is known as one of the middlemen between Arab donors and the LJ.<sup>27</sup>

In 2015, a Federal minister of Pakistan, Riaz Hussain Pirzada, accused the Saudis of destabilizing the Muslim world by distributing money to promote Wahhabism.<sup>28</sup>

Besides Ahl-i-Hadith and sectarian groups, Saudis are using other, more benign transnational conduits, like TV channels, to exert their influence.<sup>29</sup> In Pakistan, Paigham TV (broadcast in Urdu and Pashto) is a case in point. It was inaugurated in 2011 by Abdul Rahman Ibn Abdul Aziz as-Sudais, the imam of the Grand Mosque in Mecca. On the Indian side, a similar development has taken shape with the creation of Peace TV channel by Abdul Karim Zakir Naik who has reached a reported 100 million viewers. Zakir Naik speaks against Sufi devotions and Shi'ism in more or less explicit terms. He once declared that 'seeking the intercession of sacred Islamic personalities, including that of Prophet Muhammad, with God is heresy',<sup>30</sup> a remark he withdrew subsequently. He also praised the murderer of Imam Husayn, offending the Shi'as. Zakir Naik has been censured by several Indian Muslim clerics, but praised by Gulf leaders. In 2013 Shaykh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktum, Vice President and Prime Minister of UAE and ruler of Dubai, awarded Zakir Naik the Dubai International Holy Qur'an Award's 'Islamic Personality of the Year.' In 2015, King Salman bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud awarded him the prestigious King Faisal International Prize for 'Service to Islam' in Riyadh—that is US \$200,000.<sup>31</sup> A close observer of the Saudi-funded TV channels—including Peace TV, Iqraa, and Islam Channel—pointed out in 2011 that they wiped out Karbala, Imam Husayn, and the birthday of Prophet Muhammad from their programmes because, 'from a Saudi-Wahhabi perspective, the majority of moderate Sufi/Barelvi Sunnis are ridiculed as *mushrik* (polytheists) and Shias are reduced to *kafir* (infidels).'<sup>32</sup>

Besides electronic media, physical communications have also intensified. The number of Pakistanis who performed the *Hajj* has jumped from 12,300 in 1948 to 58,743 in 1974 and then crossed 100,000 by the late twentieth century, reaching 190,000 in 2012.<sup>33</sup> Islamic influences are also conveyed via migrations. Individual stories of Indian Muslims who have become more orthodox during their stay in the Gulf are numerous. Mujtaba Hussain Siddiqui,

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popularly known as Br. Imran, was working for Toys R Us in Riyadh when a video of Shaykh Ahmed Deedat—who had received the King Faisal Award for his services to Islam in 1986—inspired him, so much so that he went back to Hyderabad (Deccan) to start Dawah preaching and later delivered dozens of lectures in the Gulf.<sup>34</sup>

Beyond individual trajectories, Saudis are supporting Salafi enterprises in South India, including Kerala where former migrants have resettled. According to a cable of the Saudi embassy in Delhi, millions of Riyals have been reserved for the Islamic Mission Trust of Mallapuram (Kerala), the Islamic Welfare Trust and the Palghat Mujahideen Arabic College (Kerala).<sup>35</sup> Recently, two new Islamic organizations have started to benefit from Saudi financial support in South India, and more especially in Kerala: the Popular Front of India and the Social Democratic Party of India.<sup>36</sup> Their names do not reflect their religious overtone, but they are propagating a Salafi version of Islam at odds with the Sufi traditions.<sup>37</sup>

While one of the oldest Salafi *madrasas* of India, the Jami'a Salafiya, is located near Varanasi, Kerala is probably the state where Salafism is gaining momentum the most vigorously today. Filippo and Caroline Osella point out that the 'pan-Islamic orientation' of Muslims of this state has increased over the last thirty years for two reasons: 'not only has Gulf migration brought thousands of Malayali Muslims close to what they imagine as the heartland of Islam and exposed them—with all ensuing contradictions and ambivalences—to life in Muslim-majority countries, but it has also renewed ties with Arab religious scholars. There is a sense of participating in a worldwide renaissance of Islamic "moral values and culture."'<sup>38</sup> However, this pan-Islamic orientation is more pronounced among those who were already part of local reform movements like the Kerala Naduvathul Mujahidin (KNM) which was officially formed in 1950. This movement developed through connections with the Arabian Peninsula, but also from the dynamics of the local society. Similarly, today, the attractiveness of Salafism increases with education—a major factor of social transformation in Kerala; so much so that the cult of saints and Sufism are 'associated to ignorance, superstition and uncouthness; it is seen as characteristic of either rural (Mappila) or poor Muslims.'<sup>39</sup> The affinities between Salafism and the mindset of the educated, urban Muslims contribute to explain Zakir Naik's popularity among the Muslim middle class of India.

*Transnational Shi'ism and Iranian Influence*

Finally, as far as Shi'a Islam is concerned, this volume has confirmed that the transnational networks woven around the centres of religious authority in Iraq and Iran continue to wield a great deal of influence in the structuring of the landscape of South Asian Shi'ism. Studying in Iraq or Iran is still a must for any ambitious South Asian Shi'a cleric. It confers a great amount of symbolic legitimacy but also access to financial resources. No such thing is witnessed among Sunnis, where the new religious centrality of Arabia has not materialized in such a firmly established monopoly over religious authority.<sup>40</sup>

The centrality of Iraq and Iran for South Asian Shi'as should be seen both as a reflection of the old Indo-Persian dynamic that, in particular, shaped the politics and culture of the Mughal Empire, and of the resilience of the old Shi'a clerical institutions which, far from having been sidelined by the emergence and development of political Islam, has been at the very heart of this activist brand of Shi'ism. Moreover, the rivalry between Najaf and Qom that has developed throughout the twentieth century and has been accentuated after the fall of Saddam Hussein in 2003 is being reflected in rivalries and disagreements among South Asian clerics. This is well illustrated in the chapter by Radhika Gupta where she analyses the landscape of Shi'a religious institutions of learning in Mumbai and Kargil.

More surprising as far as religious influence is concerned are the findings exposed in the chapter by Stéphane Dudoignon about the ways in which Iran, both under the monarchy and the Islamic Republic, has managed Sunni communities in its own territory. Indeed, he shows how in the early twenty-first century the Islamic Republic is emerging as a Sunni hub which is both a recipient of Sunni religious influences from South Asia—for example Deobandi influences—and an exporter to the Gulf monarchies of transnational Iranian-born Sunni scholars who have sometimes been at the core of the local religious institutions. This is the case in Qatar.

Contrary to other Gulf monarchies, and in particular Saudi Arabia, Qatar never had a powerful and well-structured indigenous class of Muslim clerics, be they Sunni or Shi'a. Both Sunni and Shi'a Islam have been historically organized mostly under the leadership of foreign scholars. For Shi'a Islam, Arabic-speaking Iranian scholars from the region of Khuzistan in South Iran, Saudis from the Eastern Province, and Iraqis have played a foremost role. In 2005 when, in the context of the debates about a global 'Shi'a revival' that unfolded as a result of the regime change in Iraq and the arrival to power of

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Shi'a-dominated parties in Baghdad, the Qatari government decided to grant its small Shi'a community a measure of institutional recognition and appointed the country's first Shi'a *qadi* (religious judge) to deal with Shi'a family issues, it chose an Iraqi. As for the Sunnis, their clerics have always been foreign.<sup>41</sup>

As shown by Dudoignon, the presence of an influential and large community of Qataris with roots in some Sunni regions of Iran (notably Bastak) has facilitated the diffusion of Iranian Sunni networks in this country where, among other things, they helped the regime to build its own brand of Sunni Islam away from the Wahhabi-Salafi brand sponsored by Saudi Arabia.

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By the end of the last century, the chief of the Nadwat al-Ulama, Sayyid Abu'l-Hasan Ali Nadwi (1914–99), that Muhammad Qasim Zaman presents as 'the most prominent Indian religious scholar of his generation and one of the leading Sunni ulama on the international scene',<sup>42</sup> dared to attack the Arabs in the name of South Asian Islam. He considered that Arabs had betrayed the other Muslims of the world by indulging in nationalism and losing faith in religion, in contrast to the Indian Muslims. Nadwi wrote in 1975:

By the grace of God, the Muslims of India are to a large extent autonomous as regards Islam [...] Their faith and their life are tied to the radiance of Islam, not to the ephemeral glimmerings of Muslim nations or Arab states.<sup>43</sup>

In a previous book he had explained that the Indian Muslims' 'culture, which has taken centuries to evolve is a combination of both Islamic and Indian influences. This two-fold aspect has, on the one hand, endowed it with a beauty and a richness which is characteristically its own, and, on the other, it holds forth the assurance that this culture will operate here not like an alien or a traveller but as a natural, permanent citizen who has built his home in the light of his peculiar needs and circumstances.'<sup>44</sup>

Today, Nadwi would not be in a position to say the same thing. On one hand, the rise of Hindu nationalism in India is gradually transforming Indian Muslims into second-class citizens,<sup>45</sup> while on the other, the South Asian brand of Islam has lost some of its 'autonomy' because of the growing influence coming from the Gulf. The Sufi traditions are already under attack in Pakistan, where sectarian repertoires are gaining momentum, and Sunni militants rallying around the idea of the Caliphate once again.<sup>46</sup> Even if it shows some resilience, the Indo-Islamic civilization will inevitably transform itself into something new in the course of the twenty-first century.



## NOTES

## INTRODUCTION

- 1 Such a study is still missing, whereas it is available for other regions. See, for instance, von der Mehden, Fred R., *Two Worlds of Islam. Interaction between Southeast Asia and the Middle East*, Gainesville, University Press of Florida, 1993.
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- 3 Alavi, Seema, *Muslim Cosmopolitanism in the Age of Empire*, Cambridge Mass., Harvard University Press, 2015, p. 34.
- 4 Digby, Simon, ‘The Sufi Shaikh as a source of Authority in Medieval India,’ in Raziuddin Aqil (ed.), *Sufism and Society in Medieval India*, Delhi, Oxford University Press, 2010, p. 139.
- 5 Ibid., p. 126.
- 6 This association between shrine-centred Sufism and royal dynasties, which culminated with the Mughals in India, was also developed in Safavid Iran at the same time (see A. Azfar Moin, *The Millennial Sovereign. Sacred Kingship and Sainthood in Islam*, New York, Columbia, 2014).
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- 8 Auer, Blain H., *Symbols of Authority in Medieval Islam: History, Religion and Muslim Legitimacy in the Delhi Sultanate*, London, I.B. Tauris, 2012, pp. 107–8. Carl Ernst points out that Iltutmish related to the Abassids in that manner in order to counter the Mongols’ claim to supremacy on the Muslim world—if not more. Ernst, Carl W., *Eternal Garden, Mysticism, History, and Politics at a South Asian Sufi Center*, New Delhi, OUP, 2004, p. 56.

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- 11 See Jaffrelot, Christophe, 'From Indian Territory to Hindu Bhoomi: The Ethnicization of Nation-State Mapping in India,' in Zavos, John, Andrew Wyatt and Vernon Hewitt (eds), *The Politics of Cultural Mobilization in India*, Oxford, New York, Oxford University Press, 2004, pp. 197–215.
- 12 Eaton, Richard, 'Temple Desecration and Indo-Muslim States,' *Journal of Islamic Studies*, vol. 11, no. 3 (2000), p. 290.
- 13 Alavi, Seema, *Muslim Cosmopolitanism in the Age of Empire*, p. 228.
- 14 Muhammad, Zahiru-Din and Babr Badshah Ghaznvi, *Babur-Nama. Memoirs of Babur*, translated from the original Turkish text by Annette S. Beveridge, Lahore, Sang-e-Meel Publications, 2008, p. 475.
- 15 Ernst, Carl W., *Eternal Garden*, op. cit., p. 29.
- 16 Ibid.
- 17 Digby, Simon, 'The Sufi Shaikh as a Source of Authority,' op. cit., pp. 139–41.
- 18 Not only the Emperor had to tour his territory for administrative purpose, but the risk of being dislodged from power after such a long absence could not be taken lightly!
- 19 Both things remained true till Aurangzeb, under whom Prince Akbar absconded to Persia in 1681, like Humayun before him (Audrey Truschke, *Aurangzeb. The man and the myth*, Delhi, Penguin, 2017, pp. 48–9).
- 20 Pearson, M. N., 'The Mughals and the Hajj,' *Journal of the Oriental Society of Australia*, vol. 18 and 19 (1986–1987), p. 66.
- 21 Ibid., p. 167. Pearson emphasizes that, similarly, 'In 1640 the ruler of Golconda sent the ladies of his court to Iran to see the *shia* shrines, and then go on to Mecca' (ibid.).
- 22 Datta-Ray, Deep K., *The Making of Indian diplomacy*, London, Hurst, 2015, p. 147. Sanjay Subrahmanyam points out that 'the Ottoman Sultan, Murad III, had in fact issued repeated *farman*s to the *beylerbey* of Egypt and the Sharif of Mecca, to urge Gulbadan's party to depart. The first of these, dated October 1578, notes that the presence of the party had led to overcrowding in the Ka'ba Sharif, and to a shortage of provisions. Their expulsion was hence ordered but not carried out, probably for fear of committing a diplomatic impropriety. The *farman* had hence to be reiterated, in February and March 1580, and then again in August of that year' (Subrahmanyam, Sanjay, *Explorations in Connected History. Mughals and Franks*, Delhi, OUP, 2005, pp. 56–7).



- 23 Farooqi, Naimur Rahman, *Mughal-Ottoman relations: a study of political and diplomatic relations between Mughal India and the Ottoman empire, 1556–1748*, Volume 2, Madison, University of Wisconsin Press, 1986.
- 24 The Sharif of Mecca, also known as the Sharif of Hijaz, was in charge of the holy cities of Mecca and Medina. He was supposed to protect them and to ensure the safety of the pilgrims. It retained a real autonomy, even under the Ottoman Empire, till its disappearance in the twentieth century.
- 25 Datta-Ray, Deep K., 'Inverted 'History': Diplomacy, Modernity, Resilience,' in *Caliban*, Special issue 'Formes de la diplomatie (XVIe-XXIe siècle)', no. 54, 2015, pp. 135–6.
- 26 Pearson, M. N., 'The Mughals and the *Hajj*', op. cit., p. 172.
- 27 Ibid., p. 173.
- 28 Audrey Truschke, *Aurangzeb*, op. cit., p. 85.
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- 30 Ibid., p. 174.
- 31 Hasan, Mushirul and Rakhshanda Jalil, 'Origins, Journeys and Return,' in Amir Ahmad Alawi, *Journey to the Holy Land. A Pilgrim's Diary*, New Delhi, OUP, 2009, p. 15.
- 32 Friedmann, Yohann, 'Islamic thought in relation to the Indian context,' in Marc Gaborieau (ed.), *Islam et société en Asie du Sud*, Paris, EHESS, 1986, p. 81 (*Purushartha*, 9).
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- 34 Rizvi, S. A. A., 'Islamic Proselytization. Seventh to Sixteenth Centuries,' in Oddie, G. A. (ed.), *Religion in South Asia: Religious Conversion and Revival Movements in South Asia in Medieval and Modern Times*, New Delhi, Manohar, 1991, pp. 19–37.
- 35 A superb example of such a dialogue is presented in Eleanor Zelliot, 'A Medieval Encounter Between Hindu and Muslim: Eknath's Drama-Poem *Hindu-Turk Samvadi*,' in Clothey Fred W. (ed.), *Images of Man: Religion and Historical Process in South Asia*, Madras, New Era Publications, 1982, pp. 171–95.
- 36 Alam, *The Languages of Political Islam in India*, pp. 82–3.
- 37 Friedmann, Yohann, 'Islamic thought in relation to the Indian context,' in Marc Gaborieau (ed.), *Islam et société en Asie du Sud*, Paris, Editions de l'EHESS, 1986, (*Purushartha*, 9), pp. 85–6.
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- 39 Alam, *The Languages of Political Islam in India*, p. 94.

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- 41 Cole, Juan R. I., 'Iranian Culture and South Asia, 1500-1900,' in Nikki R. Keddie and Rudi Matthee (eds.), *Iran and the Surrounding World. Interactions in Culture and Cultural Politics*, Seattle and London, University of Washington Press, 2002, p. 15.
- 42 Ibid., p. 319.
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- 47 Ibid.
- 48 Except Humayun, the father of Akbar, when he found refuge in Persia after being defeated by Sher Shah Suri (1486–1545).
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- 51 Ibid.
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- 55 Qureshi, Naeem, *Pan-Islam in British Indian Politics: A Study of the Khilafat Movement, 1918–1924*, Leiden, Brill, 1999, p. 15.
- 56 Gaborieau, Marc, 'Les débats sur l'acculturation chez les Musulmans indiens au début du XIX<sup>ème</sup> siècle,' op. cit., p. 223.
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- 63 Gaborieau, Marc, 'A nineteenth-century Indian 'Wahhabi' tract against the cult of Muslim saints: Al-Balagh al-Mubin,' in Christian W. Troll (ed.), *Muslim Shrines in India: Their Character, History and Significance* (Delhi, 1989), pp. 230–2.
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- 78 Hasan, Mushirul, 'The Khilafat Movement: A Reappraisal,' in Mushirul Hasan (ed.), *Communal and Pan-Islamic Trends in Colonial India*, Delhi, Manohar, 1985, p. 4.
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## 1. SOUTH ASIAN MUSLIMS' INTERACTIONS WITH ARABIAN ISLAM UNTIL THE 1990s

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- 4 Ernest Osas Ugiagbe, 'Social Work Is Context-Bound: The Need for Indigenization of Social Work Practice in Nigeria,' *International Social Work*, vol. 58, no. 6 (2015): 791.
- 5 Ibid.
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- 7 Halverson, Jeffrey R., Steven R. Corman, and H. L. Goodall, Jr., *Master Narratives of Islamist Extremism* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); and Bennett Furlow and Goodall, 'The War of Ideas and the Battle of Narratives: A Comparison of Extremist Storytelling Structures,' op. cit.
- 8 [http://www.pakistanileaders.com.pk/profile/Hafiz\\_Muhammad\\_Saeed](http://www.pakistanileaders.com.pk/profile/Hafiz_Muhammad_Saeed)
- 9 Khaled Ahmed, *Sectarian war*, op. cit., p. 285.
- 10 LeT was so close to the Al Qaeda nebula that Bin Laden addressed the annual LeT conventions by telephone three times, in 1995, 1996 and 1997 (Abou Zahab and Olivier Roy, *Islamic Networks. The Afghan-Pakistani Connection*, op. cit., p. 60).
- 11 Often identified as the father of contemporary global jihad, Azzam, a Salafi of Palestinian origin, taught at the International Islamic University, Islamabad, and actively participated in the 1980s in the jihad against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. He also

- reportedly mentored Osama bin Laden in the ideas of jihad until his death on 24 November 1989 in a bomb blast in Peshawar.
- 12 UN Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee, 'Bahaziq Mahmoud Mohammad Ahmed-Data-cards'; and Stephen Tankel, *Storming the World Stage: The Story of Lashker-E-Taiba*, New York, Columbia University Press, 2011.
  - 13 al-Hashimi, Muhammad Ali, *The Ideal Muslimah: The True Islamic Personality of the Muslims Woman*, Riyadh, International Islamic Publishing House (I.I.P.H), 1996 (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.).
  - 14 *Misali Musalmaan Aurat: Kitab Wa Sunnat Ki Roshni Mein (the Ideal Muslim Woman -in the Light of Qur'an and Sunnah)*, Lahore, Dar-ul-Andlus, 2008, pp. 13–14.
  - 15 Aitekaf or i'tikaf refers to the Muslim practice of retreating to places of worship for a specified period, mostly during the last ten days of Ramadan.
  - 16 Abu Bakr Jabar Al-Jaza'iri, *Khatoon-E-Islam*, Lahore, Dar-ul-Kutab as-Salafiyya, 2009, pp. 5–12.
  - 17 Umm Abd Muneeb, 'Qatal-E-Ghairat (Honour Killings),' Lahore, Mushraba Ilm wa Hikmat, 2009; Umm Abd Muneeb, 'Valentine Day,' Pakistan, Mushraba Ilm wa Hikmat, 2004; 'Purdah Aur Khandaan (Purdah and the Extended Family),' ed. Jamaatud Da'wa Lahore, Mushrab Ilm wa Hikmat, 2007, pp. 1–64; 'Hifz-E-Hayaa Guftagoo Aur Tehreer,' Lahore, Mushraba Ilm wa Hikmat, 2008; 'Hifz-E-Hayaa Aur Azdiwaji Zindagi, Protection of Modesty and Married Life,' Lahore, Mushraba Ilm wa Hikmat, 2009.
  - 18 Khansa, Maryam, 'Mudeer-E-Ishtiharat Key Deni Faraiz (Religious Responsibilities of Editors of Advertisements),' *Tayibaat*, March 2008, pp. 30–31.
  - 19 Shafak, Elif, 'Women Writers, Islam, and the Ghost of Zulaikha,' Words Without Borders, <http://www.wordswithoutborders.org/article/women-writers-islam-and-the-ghost-of-zulaikha#ixzz3rRJDwThh>, last accessed 6 September 2016.
  - 20 'Pakistani Immigrants to Canada,' *The Canadian Magazine of Immigration*. <http://canadaimmigrants.com/pakistani-immigrants-to-canada/>, last accessed 7 Sept. 2016.
  - 21 This assessment draws upon my personal experience of visiting mosques patronised by JuD in women's section.
  - 22 Baz, Ibn, 'Ibn Baz: Concise Biography,' Saudi Arabia: Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, no date.
  - 23 bin Mohammad, Abdul Salam, 'Hum Jihad Keyon Kar Rahey Hein? (Why Are We Engaged in Jihad?),' ed. Markaz Dawa wal Irshad, Lahore, Darul Andulus, 2001.
  - 24 See the comments by Saifullah Khalid and Tanveer in *Arze-Nashir* and *Mud'dai Nigarish*, Mufti Abdur Rehman Al-Rehmani, *Al Jihad-Al Islami: Jihad Key Abkam Wa Masa'ul Ka Encyclopedia (Islamic Jihad: The Encyclopedia of Injunctions Regarding Jihad and Associated Questions)*, Lahore, Darul Andlus, 2004, pp. 32, 38.
  - 25 Saeed, *Foreword*, *ibid.*, pp. 29–31.

26 Ibid., pp. 139–40.

27 Kendall, Elisabeth, ‘Yemen’s Al-Qa’ida and Poetry as a Weapon of Jihad,’ in Elisabeth Kendall and Ewan Stein (eds.), *Twenty-First Century Jihad: Law, Society and Military Action*, London, I.B.Tauris, 2015.

28 Renowned poets like Ahmed Faraz, for example, is criticised along with other poets.

29 Hammad, Umm, *Manzil Meri Shahadat (Martyrdom Is My Destiny)*, Lahore, Dar-ul-Andlus.

#### 4. THE SALAFI EMIRATE OF KUNAR

1 Brown and Ressler, *Fountainhead of Jihad. The Haqqani Nexus, 1973–2012*, London, Hurst, 2013.

2 The website of the Dar al-Qur’an, <http://www.panjpir.org/> (Urdu), the introduction of which emphasizes the school’s focus on *tawhid* and on combating *shirk* (idolatry or polytheistic association of divinity with things other than God) and *bid’a* (heretical innovations in belief or practice).

3 Rubin, Barnett, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1995, p. 242.

4 Roy, Olivier, *Islam and Resistance in Afghanistan*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990, p. 72.

5 Ruttig, Thomas, *Islamists, Leftists, and a Void in the Center: Afghanistan’s Political Parties and where they came from*, n.p., Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, 2006, p. 6.

6 *Da’wat* (Pashto) 1 (August–September, 1988). Thanks to Kevin Bell for help with the Pashto. (Unless otherwise noted, all translations below are my own). David Edwards writes that Jamil al-Rahman was arrested briefly in 1973 for working with the Sazman-i Jawanan-i Musulman (Muslim Youth Organization), which was the organizational locus of all of the main Islamist activist leaders in Kabul and the northeast during the first half of the 1970s. Edwards, David, *Before Taliban: Genealogies of the Afghan Jihad*, Berkeley, CA, University of California Press, 2002, p. 153.

7 Rana, Amir, *Jihad and Jihadi*, Lahore, Mashal Books, 2003, p. 78.

8 Ibid.

9 Bin Laden lecture, ‘al-Jihad wa tahdi ‘aqabat,’ n.p., Nukhba al-‘Ilam al-Jihadi, 1991, retrieved from <https://www.tawhed.ws/dl?i=2110131a>, accessed 3 May 2015.; *Da’wat* (Pashto) 1; Rana, *Jihad and Jihadi*, op. cit., p. 78; Edwards, *Before Taliban*, op. cit., p. 153.

10 *Da’wat* (Pashto) 1.

11 Ibid.

- 12 Edwards, *Before Taliban*, op. cit, p. 154.
- 13 Ibid.
- 14 Bin Laden, 'al-Jihad wa tahadi al-'aqabat.'
- 15 Tomsen, Peter, *The Wars of Afghanistan*, New York, Public Affairs, 2011, p. 375.
- 16 Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan*, op. cit, p. 242.
- 17 For most of the first two years' run of the Urdu *al-Da'wat*, 'Abd al-Rahim Muslim Dost is named on the inside cover as the founder and managing editor of the magazine, and in his post-Guantanamo memoir—*The Broken Chains of Guantanamo* (2006, in Pashto)—Muslim Dost claims to have been the cultural advisor to the JDQS in the mid-1980s (thanks to Kevin Bell for this last datum).
- 18 *Da'wat* (Pashto) 12 (March, 1991).
- 19 Rana, *Jihad and Jibadi*, op. cit., p. 79.
- 20 Tomsen, *The Wars of Afghanistan*, op. cit., p. 386; Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan*, op. cit, p. 261.
- 21 Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan*, op. cit., p. 261.
- 22 *Da'wat* (Pashto), Issues 15–16.
- 23 Bin Laden, 'al-Jihad wa tahadi al-'aqabat,' p. 5.
- 24 Hami, Abu Qudama Salih, *Fursan farida al-ghayba*, n.p., 2007, p. 579.
- 25 Tomsen, *The Wars of Afghanistan*, op. cit., p. 389.
- 26 See *al-Mujahid*, 2 (Jan 1989), p. 11, for an essay by Bin Baz; and *al-Mujahid* 9, 10, and 11 (Aug-Oct 1989) for a serialized essay by Madkhali in defense of the Sunna and Sunnism.
- 27 Lacroix, Stephane, *Awakening Islam*, Boston, Harvard University Press, 2011, p. 117.
- 28 Ibid., p. 118.
- 29 Roughier, Bernard, *Everyday Jihad*, Boston, Harvard University Press, 2007, p. 79.
- 30 'The Mufti of the Syrian Opposition,' *al-Akhbar Online*, 5 March 2014.
- 31 Wa'il al-Battiri, Interview with Abu Basir al-Tartusi, *al-Sabil*, 21 July 2009.
- 32 Ibid.
- 33 Again, this is significant—in an analysis of forty-five Saudi 'martyr' biographies from the Afghan jihad, Lacroix found that in contrast to regions where the Brotherhood was solidly established, the Qasim had 'negligible representation.' The origins of the Afghan 'Arabs of Kunar likely skewed more toward Sururi and Ahl-i-Hadith heartlands than other Afghan Arab groups hailing from the Gulf.
- 34 Al-Wadi'i, Muqbil, *Maqtal al-Shaykh Jamil al-Rahman al-Afghani*, Sana'a, Dar al-Athar, 2005.

- 35 Al-Jaza'iri, Abu 'Abd al-Rahman Farid, *Sira al-Shaykh Jamil al-Rahman*, 2012, <http://www.ajurry.com/vb/showthread.php?t=28915>, accessed 27 April 2015.
- 36 Al-Jaza'iri, *Sira*, citing *Jama'a wahida la jama'at*.
- 37 Al-Jaza'iri *Sira*, quoting from Madkhali, 'Mawaqif al-Shaykh Rabi' min al-ihdath'.
- 38 Al-Jaza'iri, *Sira*, quoting Madkhali, 'Ahl al-Hadith hum al-ta'ifa al-mansura.'
- 39 Maqdisi, Abu Muhammad, *al-Kawashif al-Jaliyya fi Kufr al-Dawla al-Sa'udiyya*, [www.rawhed.ws/t,2000/1](http://www.rawhed.ws/t,2000/1), p. 221, accessed 30 April 2015.
- 40 Abu'l-Walid al-Masri also mentions the limitation on discussion of guerrilla warfare topics in *al-Mujahid*; see below.
- 41 Maqdisi, *Kawashif al-Jaliyya*, p. 222. In the copy of this issue of *al-Mujahid* held in the Firestone Library at Princeton University, there is indeed an essay on that page regarding the oppressed and oppressors, and a reference to an article written by one Professor Ibrahim 'Asi, 'who was thrown into the prisons of one of the tyrants.'
- 42 Hamid, Mustafa, *Ma'arik al-bawwaba al-sakbriyya 1979-1992*, al-Faruq Camp, Paktia, 1995, p. 191.
- 43 Hamid, *Tharthara fauq saqf al-'alam*, n.p., n.d., vol. 9, pp. 16f. Other sources, including Afghan eyewitness sources, indicate that Jamil al-Rahman worked in Kunar first under Hekmatyar's Hizb, not Sayyaf's Ittihad party.
- 44 Hamid, *Tharthara*, p. 24. There are several unattributed articles in the 1989 issues of *al-Mujahid* on military tactics. See, e.g., *al-Mujahid* 11 (October 1989), pp. 16ff., entitled 'Fundamental Skills in Urban Battle.'
- 45 Hamid, Mustafa, *al-Hamaqa al-Kubra*, n.p., n.d., p. 75.
- 46 Hamid, *Tharthara*, op. cit., p. 24.
- 47 On the Commanders Shura, see Brown and Ressler, op. cit., p. 84.
- 48 Hamid, *Ma'arik... 1979–1992*, op. cit., p. 215.
- 49 Badi', Mustafa, *Afghanistan: Ibtital Dhakira*, Sana'a, 2003, <http://tokhaleej.arabblogs.com/archive/2008/6/597614.html>, accessed 21 June 2012.
- 50 The text here has a misprint, with the name appearing as Jamil al-Radi.
- 51 Badi', *Ibtital Dhakira*, <http://tokhaleej.arabblogs.com/archive/2008/6/597599.html>.
- 52 Hami, *Fursan farida al-ghayba*, pp. 573–80.
- 53 Wagemakers, Joas, *A Quietist Jihadi*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2012, p. 221f.
- 54 Hami, *Fursan farida al-ghayba*, op. cit., p. 574.
- 55 Ibid., pp. 576–7.
- 56 Ibid., pp. 577–8.
- 57 Faraj, Ayman Sabri, *Dhikriyyat 'Arab Afghani*, Cairo, Dar al-Shuruq, 2002.

- 58 Flagg Miller, personal email communication, 13 November 2015.
- 59 Bin Ladin, *al-Jihad wa tabaddi al-'aqabat*.
- 60 Hamid, Mustafa, *Khiyana 'ala al-Tariq*, n.p., n.d., p. 71.
- 61 Fazul, 'Abdullah Muhammad *al-Harb 'ala'l-Islam*, n.p., n.d., vol. 1, p. 191.
- 62 Zawahiri letter to Zarqawi, summer of 2005, as translated in <https://www.ctc.usma.edu/posts/zawahiris-letter-to-zarqawi-english-translation-2>, p. 7, accessed 13 September 2016.
- 63 For Zawahiri's letter to Zitouni and its similarities to the letter to Zarqawi, see Brown, Vahid, 'Classical and Global Jihad: al-Qa'ida's Franchising Frustrations,' in Assaf Moghadam and Brian Fishman (eds.), *Fault Lines in Global Jihad*, New York, Routledge, 2011, p. 98.
- 64 Jaza'iri, 'Tragedy of Ibn Taymiyya Mosque'. The statement is also available on the website of Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi's supporters, the Minbar al-Tawhid wa'l-Jihad: <https://tawhed.ws/r?i=1808091e>, accessed 3 May 2015.
- 65 Lacroix, *Awakening Islam*, op. cit., p. 114.
- 66 Lacroix makes a similar point; *ibid.*, p. 118.
- 67 Lacroix, *Awakening Islam*, op. cit., p. 101.
- 68 See the Arabic-language video, *Raka'ib al-Haqq: Bay'a al-shaykh 'Abd al-Rahman Muslim Dust li-Khalifat al-Muslimin Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi*, al-Nidal Media Productions, released online July 10, 2014, available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ohZTzOW4ec>. Accessed 13 September 2016.
- 69 Thanks to Kevin Bell for sharing his research on Muslim Dost's memoir.

## 5. MULTINATIONAL MUJAHIDIN

- 1 Harmony document AFGP-2002-600096. This document, which was captured in Afghanistan during the US invasion, is an original version of a series of papers authored by Mustafa Hamid. This document, and the others authored by him that follow, detail his personal experiences in the Afghanistan-Pakistan region during the 1980s-90s, where he operated as a foreign fighter for an extended period alongside Jalaluddin Haqqani. After the US invasion, Hamid traveled to Iran where he eventually started an Arabic language blog. The original versions of all of his work referenced here and below can be found on an archived version of his former blog site: <http://mafa.maktoobblog.com/>. Hamid now lives in Egypt.
- 2 Harmony document AFGP-2002-600090.
- 3 *Ibid.*

- 4 Ibid.
- 5 Mawlawi Aziz Khan, 'The First Jihadi Operation in Afghanistan and the Rising of the 'Ulama Against the Communists,' *Manba' al-jihad* (Pashto) vol. 1, no. 4-5 (October–November 1989); Construction for the Manba Uloom *madrasa*, which is located in Danday Darpakhel, North Waziristan, began in 1980. In the late 1980s the facility reportedly had room for 700 students, and 'most of the instructors at the...Madrasa... [were] alumni of the [Darul Uloom] Haqqaniya Madrasa' located in Akorra Khattak, Pakistan. The institute was created to be both an academic center and 'a jihadi training facility as well.' For background see 'The Manba-al Uloom Madrasa as a Major Educational Center,' *Manba' al-jihad* (Pashto) 1, 1 (July 1989) and 'Manba al-'Uloom is a Resource to the Jihad,' *Manba' al-jihad* (Arabic) 1, 1 (February 1990).
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Hamid Mustafa and Leah Farrall, *The Arabs at War in Afghanistan*, London, Hurst 2015, pp. 34–35.
- 8 Ibid.
- 9 Ibid., p. 35.
- 10 Ibid.
- 11 Ibid.
- 12 Ibid.
- 13 Ibid.
- 14 Ibid.
- 15 Mustafa Hamid, '15 Bullets for the Cause of Cause,' [release date not known], <http://www.muslm.org/vb/showthread.php?239655->, last accessed 18 April 2016.
- 16 Ibid.
- 17 Hamid and Farrall, *The Arabs at War in Afghanistan*, op. cit., p. 30.
- 18 Hamid, '15 Bullets for the Cause of Cause.' My thanks to Muhammad al-Ubaydi for this translation.
- 19 Ibid.
- 20 Ibid.
- 21 Harmony document AFGP-2002-600093.
- 22 Ibid.
- 23 Hamid and Farrall, *The Arabs at War in Afghanistan*, op. cit., p. 30; for broader context see Harmony document AFGP-2002-600093.
- 24 Ibid.
- 25 Jalaluddin Haqqani, interview with Sami 'Abd al-Muttalib, *Al-Ittihad* (Abu Dhabi), 11 June 1980 (FBIS trans.); Jalaluddin made similar appeals in other interviews. See, e.g.,

- the interview with Jalaluddin Haqqani during the siege of Khost, *Manba' al-Jihad* (Arabic) 2, 7-8 (February-March 1991).
- 26 See Vahid Brown and Don Rassler, *Fountainhead of Jihad: The Haqqani Nexus, 1973-2012*, London, Hurst, 2013, p. 62.
- 27 Harmony document AFGP-2002-600093.
- 28 Ibid.
- 29 For reflections on the success of this visit for Sayyaf see Harmony document AFGP-2002-600093.
- 30 Harmony document AFGP-2002-008587, pp. 23-24.
- 31 According to Hamid, 'the piles of gold from Saudi Arabia were higher and greater as confirmed by the Arabs.' See Harmony document AFGP-2002-600093.
- 32 Harmony document AFGP-2002-600092.
- 33 Ibid.
- 34 Pashto (also titled *Manba ul Jihad*) and Urdu (titled *Nusrat al-Jihad*) versions of this magazine were also produced and released by Jalaluddin Haqqani. These magazines were released from 1989-1993. For additional context see Brown and Rassler, *Fountainhead of Jihad*, op. cit., p. 14.
- 35 For example, the first issue of the Arabic version of *Manba al-Jihad* was mostly produced in Abu Dhabi by Hamid. See Harmony document AFGP-2002-600092; for details on the movement of foreign war volunteers from the Emirates see below.
- 36 Harmony document AFGP-2002-600088.
- 37 Ibid.
- 38 For background on Jalaluddin Haqqani's Yemeni wife see Harmony documents AFGP-2002-600088 and AFGP-2002-600090.
- 39 'Interview with Alhaj Jalaluddin Haqqani, the Conqueror of Khost, and the Leader of the Commanders' Council,' *Nusrat al-Jihad* (Urdu), 2, 10 (August 1991).
- 40 Ibid.
- 41 For background on Nasiruddin see Animesh Roul, 'Nasiruddin Haqqani (a.k.a Dr. Khan): The Haqqani Network's Emissary and Fundraiser,' *Militant Leadership Monitor*, vol. 3, no. 8 (August 2012); 'Nasiruddin Haqqani: Senior militant shot dead in Pakistan,' *BBC*, 11 November 2013, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-24898804>, last accessed 18 April 2016; 'Treasury Targets Taliban and Haqqani Network Leadership: Treasury Designates Three Financiers Operating in Afghanistan and Pakistan,' 22 July 2010, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/tg782.aspx>, last accessed 18 April 2016; for background on Khalil see 'Treasury Targets the Financial And Support Networks of Al Qa'ida and the Taliban, Haqqani Network Leadership,' 9



- February 2011, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/tg1055.aspx>, accessed 18 April 2016.
- 42 Harmony document AFGP-2002-800775. For more context on this document, and additional sources that corroborate it, see Brown and Rassler, *Fountainhead of Jihad*, op. cit., pp. 212–13.
- 43 ‘UAE casts global net with anti-Islamist “terror list”’, *Gulf Times*, 25 November 2014.
- 44 See ‘Treasury Targets Taliban and Haqqani Network Leadership: Treasury Designates Three Financiers Operating in Afghanistan and Pakistan’; see also U. S. Department of State, ‘Instruction to Nominate Four Terrorist Leaders for Listing by the UN 1267 Sanctions Committee,’ 6 July 2010, <http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB389/docs/2010-07-06%20-%20Haqqani%20as%20Terrorist.pdf>, accessed 18 April 2016.
- 45 For background on Fazl Rabbi see, [http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/OFAC-Enforcement/Documents/taliban\\_notice\\_06212011.pdf](http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/OFAC-Enforcement/Documents/taliban_notice_06212011.pdf), accessed 18 April 2016.
- 46 Gretchen Peters, *Haqqani Network Financing: Evolution of an Industry*, West Point, New York: Combating Terrorism Center (31 July 2012), p. 28, <https://www.ctc.usma.edu/posts/haqqani-network-financing>, accessed 18 April 2016.
- 47 For background on Yahya Haqqani see ‘Treasury Department Targets Key Haqqani Network Leaders,’ 5 February 2014, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/jl2284.aspx>, accessed 18 April 2016; for additional background on Khalil Haqqani see [https://www.rewardsforjustice.net/english/khalil\\_haqqani.html](https://www.rewardsforjustice.net/english/khalil_haqqani.html), accessed 18 April 2016.
- 48 Anas Haqqani is a brother to Sirajuddin, Nasiruddin (deceased) and Badruddin Haqqani (deceased). Anas and Hafiz Rashid were reportedly arrested in Bahrain by American forces and then transferred to Qatar and the United Arab Emirates before being sent back to Afghanistan. For background see Margherita Stancati and Ehsanullah Amiri, ‘Haqqani Leaders Detained in Persian Gulf, Not Inside Afghanistan,’ *Wall Street Journal*, 19 October 2014.
- 49 Ibid.
- 50 Peters, Gretchen, *Crime and Insurgency in the Tribal Areas of Afghanistan and Pakistan*, West Point, New York: Combating Terrorism Center (14 October 2010), <https://www.ctc.usma.edu/posts/crime-and-insurgency-in-the-tribal-areas-of-afghanistan-and-pakistan>, last accessed 18 April 2016.
- 51 ‘State of the Taliban,’ *New York Times*, release date not known, [http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/world/asia/23atwar-taliban-report-docviewer.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/world/asia/23atwar-taliban-report-docviewer.html?_r=0), accessed 18 April 2016.
- 52 Ibid.
- 53 Peters, *Haqqani Network Financing*, op. cit., p. 57.

54 Ibid.

55 For background on Aziz Khan see Brown and Rassler, *Fountainhead of Jihad*, op. cit., pp. 39, 45 and 63.

56 *Manba' al-Jihad* (Pashto), 1, 4–5, (October–November 1989); see also AFGP-2002-600090.

57 'Interview with Commander Mawlawi Hanif Shah,' *Manba' al-Jihad* (Pashto) 1, 4–5 (October–November 1989); for corroboration and additional context see also AFGP-2002-600090.

58 For context on the role of the Haqqaniyya network see Brown and Rassler, *Fountainhead of Jihad*, op. cit., pp. 36–50.

59 See 'Interview with Commander Mawlawi Hanif Shah'; 'Report of Alhaj Haqqani's Trip to Lahore,' *Manba-al Jihad* (Pashto), vol. 1, no. 8–9, (February–March 1990); Nangyal, Shuhrat, *Zhora at the Dawn of History*, edited by Ahmad Zia Zaheen Babori, Public Relations Department of Alhaj Jalaluddin Haqqani's Fronts, 1991.

60 For additional background on Haqqaniyya, and on its publication al-Haq, see Malik, Jamal *Colonialization of Islam: Dissolution of Traditional Institutions in Pakistan*, New Delhi, Manohar, 1996, pp. 203–9, 222.

61 Other elements of the Afghan Taliban also likely had access to Haqqaniyya's Gulf-based network, as according to material released by Sami ul-Haq, '90 percent of the Taliban leadership graduated from Darul Uloom Haqqania'. See ul-Haq, Sami, *Afghan Taliban: War of Ideology, Struggle for Peace*, Pakistan, Emel Publications (2015), pp. xvii, 12, 42, 99.

62 For examples see ul-Haq, Sami, 'First Step,' *Al-Haq* (Urdu), vol. 10, no. 6 (April 1975), p. 2; Sheikh Qazaz and Mawlana Abdul Haq, 'Darul Uloom and the Condolence of Shah Faisal,' *Al-Haq* (Urdu), vol. 10, no. 7 (May–June 1975), p. 53; Rashid Sami ul-Haq, 'The Demise of Khadim ul-Harmain-ul-Sharifain Shah Fahad bin Abdul Aziz: A Great Tragedy for the Islamic World,' *al-Haq* (Urdu), vol. 40, no. 11 (August 2005), p. 2; Hafiz Rashid ul-Haq, 'First Step,' *Al-Haq* (Urdu), vol. 46, no. 11 (August 2011), p. 2.

63 Shah, Saeed, 'Saudi Officials Linked to Jihadist Group in WikiLeaks Cables,' *Wall Street Journal*, 28 June 2015, <http://www.wsj.com/articles/saudi-officials-linked-to-jihadist-group-in-wikileaks-cables-1435529198>, accessed 18 April 2016.

64 Ibid.

65 Harmony document AFGP-2002-600093.

66 Shah, 'Saudi Officials Linked to Jihadist Group in WikiLeaks Cables,' op. cit.

67 Ibid.

68 Nangyal, Shuhrat, *Zhora at the Dawn of History*, op. cit., pp. 337–8.

- 69 Farooqi, Shafiqudin, 'Days and Nights of Darul Uloom,' *Al-Haq* (Urdu), vol. 19, no. 11 (August 1980), p. 59; Teachers from Egypt's al-Azhar have also served on the faculty at Haqqaniyya, see Sami ul-Haq, *Afghan Taliban: War of Ideology, Struggle for Peace*, op. cit., p. 20.
- 70 Sami ul-Haq, 'First Step'; For insight into linkages from the 1960s see the writings of Abdullah Kakakhel, specifically Abdullah Kakakhel, 'Travel from Oman to Medina,' *Al-Haq* (Urdu), vol. 2, no. 1 (July 1966), p. 26 and Abdullah Kakakhel, 'A Few Weeks in Arabian Lands,' *Al-Haq* (Urdu), 2, 2 (November 1966), p. 42.
- 71 Shafiqudin Farooqi, 'Days and Nights of Darul Uloom,' *Al-Haq* (Urdu), 20, 21 (September 1981), p. 58. A group of 50 students from Malik Abdul Aziz University also visited Haqqaniyya the following month.
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## 6. THE ARAB GULF CONNECTIONS OF THE TALIBAN

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## 8. IRAN, AN UNEXPECTED SUNNI HUB BETWEEN SOUTH ASIA AND THE GULF

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- 22 See for instance, in the magazine launched by JDII during the summer 2015, the overview by Mas’ud Ja’fari-Juzi, ‘Zarurat-i guftugu-i Qum wa al-Azhar’ [The Necessity of a Dialogue between Qom and al-Azhar], *Andisha-i islām* (Tehran) 3 (November 2015), pp. 20–3.
- 23 Elements of history of Yezidism in Iran in Sultani, Muhammad-‘Ali, *Kurdha-yi izadi, mihr-parastan-i Iran* [Yezidi Kurds, the Light Worshipers of Iran], Tehran: Ittila’at, 2015, esp. pp. 45–52. On Dhikrism in Iran: Dudoignon, *The Baluch, Sunnism and the State in Iran*, op. cit., pp. 142–9.
- 24 On the vision of Pahlavi power during and after WWII, see the recently edited political memoirs by Ahmad Qawam (1876–1955), Prime Minister in 1942–43 and 1946–47: Mirza-Salih, Ghulam-Husayn, ed., 1391/2012–13, *Khatirat-i siyasi-i Qawam al-Saltana* [The Political Memoirs of Qawam al-Saltana], Tehran: Mu’in, esp. pp. 129 and 137. See also Alam, Asadollah, *The Shah and I: The Confidential Diary of Iran’s Royal Court, 1968–77*, transl. Alinaghi Alikhani, London – New York, I. B. Tauris, 2008, pp. 216, 229, 316, 319, 418–9 (the memoirs by Amir Asad-Allah ‘Alam, a governor of Sistan–Baluchistan just after WWII, prime minister in 1962–64 and, until his death in 1978, a close adviser to Muhammad-Reza Shah).
- 25 Anthropologists commonly use the term *baluch* in this form for the designation of the pastoralist nomadic group of Baluch or Baloch society (the former vocalisation, which is Persian, is used by specialists of Iranian Baluchistan).
- 26 Such is the case, for the 1920s, of Qazi Khayr-Muhammad Hasanzayi, the first Sunni *imam-jum’a* of modern Zahidan (the new capital of the Sistan–Baluchistan Region), as well as for his indirect successor since 1987, Mawlawi ‘Abd al-Hamid Isma’ilzayi. See notably Hasanzahi, ‘Abd al-Samad, ‘Qazi Khayr-Muhammad Hasanzahi, awwalin qazi

- wa imam-jum'a-i Zahidan' [Qazi Khayr-Muhammad Hasanzayi, the First *Qazi* and *Imam-Jum'a* of Zahidan], *Nida-yi islam* (Zahidan) vol. 9, no. 3 (2008), pp. 28–35.
- 27 Pastner, C. McC., Pastner, S. L., 'Agriculture, Kinship and Politics in Southern Baluchistan,' *Man* vol. 7, no. 1, (1972), pp. 129–30; Redaelli, Riccardo, 'The Environmental Human Landscapes,' in V. Piacentini Fiorani & R. Redaelli, ed., *Baluchistan: Terra Incognita—A New Methodological Approach Combining Archaeological, Historical, Anthropological and Architectural Studies*, Oxford, Archaeopress, 2003, pp. 18–19.
  - 28 E.g., Damani, 'Abd al-Ghani, 2015, *Baluchistan dar ayina-i tarikh* [Baluchistan in the Mirror of History], Tehran, Ihsan, pp. 505 ff.
  - 29 See for instance the polemic memoirs by activist Akhirdad Baluch 1361/1982, *Siyasat dar Baluchistan* [Politics in Baluchistan], s.l.: s.n, notably pp. 84–5.
  - 30 The present author's best fieldwork memory in the Sistan–Baluchistan Region remains the short period when in February 2007, in company of the Assistant to the Legate Prof Ghulam-Husayn Jahantigh, he could participate in a round among accredited missionaries of TJ.
  - 31 Dudoignon, *The Baluch, Sunnism and the State in Iran*, *op. cit.*, pp. 7, 195–6.
  - 32 On this captivating although poorly documented figure, see Jahantigh, Ghulam-Husayn, 1381/2002-3, *Shi'r-i baluch* [Baluchi Poetry], 1, *Sha'iran-i ruhani* [Religious Poets], Qum, Nashr-i Khurram, pp. 233–7.
  - 33 Dudoignon, *The Baluch, Sunnism and the State in Iran*, *op. cit.*, *op. cit.*, p. 247.
  - 34 See Dudoignon, Stéphane A., *Voyage au pays des Baloutches (Iran, an XXVIII de la République islamique)*, Paris, Cartouche, 2009, pp. 152–3.
  - 35 On the ethno-confessional composition of the city's population and its evolution from the late nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century, see Floor, Willem, *The Persian Gulf: The Rise & Fall of Bandar-e Lengeh, the Distribution Center for the Arabian Coast, 1750–1930*, Washington, DC, Mage Publishers, 2010, pp. 10–11 and 158–62.
  - 36 See Nurbakhsh, Husayn, *Banadir-i Iran dar khalij-i Fars* [Iran's Harbours in the Persian Gulf], Tehran: Daftar-i Pazhuhishha-yi Farhangi, 2003, p. 62.
  - 37 See the biographies published respectively on 26 March 2010 on the site of the Isma'iliyya Madrasa of Qishm: [www.esmaeelyeh.net/index.php?newsid=19](http://www.esmaeelyeh.net/index.php?newsid=19)) and, at an unknown date, on a weblog called 'The Defenders of Righteous Islam' (<http://narneya.persianblog.ir/page/3/>), created in 2009.
  - 38 Ziyayi, Kh., 'Gudhari kutah bar zindagi-i Shahid Shaykh Muhammad Ziyayi' [A Short Statement on the Life of Martyred Shaykh Muhammad Ziyayi], *Nida-yi islam* vol. 3, no. 3 (2002), pp. 40–2.
  - 39 Interview of the author with Shaykh Muhammad b. 'Abd-Allah al-Ansari, Doha, 25 August 2016.

- 40 E.g., ‘Didar-i Shaykh Amini’ [A Meeting with Shaykh Amini], [www.omaromarast.blogfa.com/post/65](http://www.omaromarast.blogfa.com/post/65) (posted on 13 March 2013).
- 41 Cf. ‘*Tarikhcha-i majma’-i ‘ilmi-i farhangi-i Sultan al-‘Ulama’-i Bandar Langa*’ [A Short History of the Sultan al-‘Ulama’ Learning and Culture Complex of Bandar Langa], [www.sultanolama.com](http://www.sultanolama.com) (posted 2010/08/03). See also ‘*Mu’arrifi-i rishta-i tafsir-i khwaharan-i Bandar-Langa*’ [An Introduction of the Tafsir Section for Sisters of Bandar Langa], [www.hiis.ir](http://www.hiis.ir) (posted on 2013/04/10 on the official site of the ‘Higher Institute of Islamic Sciences of the Sunnis of Southern Iran’).
- 42 Our main source on Shaykh ‘Abd-Allah’s life and work is made of the books of memoirs, individual or collective, published by his son Shaykh Muhammad b. ‘Abd-Allah al-Ansari, especially *Fadilat al-Shaykh ‘Abd-Allah al-Ansari: waqi’ wa ta’rih* [His Excellency Shaykh ‘Abd al-Allah al-Ansari: A Chronicle], Doha: s.n., 2001 (esp. pp. 63–8, 91–5 on Shaykh ‘Abd-Allah’s education).
- 43 On the modern demographic history of Bastak, see notably Salami-Bastaki, Ahmad, 1372/1993–4, *Bastak dar gudhargah-i tarikh* [Bastak in the Passageway of History], Tehran: Intisharat-i Jahan; on Lar and Laristan: Wuthuqi, M.-B., Taqawi, K.-A., Rahmani, S., ‘Abidi-Rad, M., 1385/2006, *Tarikh-i mufasssal-i Laristan* [A Detailed History of Laristan], Tehran, Hamsaya; Rahimi-Nazhad, Kazim, 1393/2015, *Tarikh-i mu’asir-i Laristan* [Contemporary History of Laristan], Tehran, Qalamkade.
- 44 On this yet poorly documented episode of Shaykh ‘Abd-Allah’s life, see Schulze, Reinhard, *Islamischer Internationalismus im 20. Jahrhundert: Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Islamischen Weltliga* [Islamic Internationalism in the Twentieth Century: Inquiries on the History of the World Muslim League], Leiden, Brill, 1990, pp. 227, 286, 342 ff.
- 45 Viz., three weeks after the beginning of the Iran hostage crisis, which would seal Tehran’s diplomatic isolation until the signature of the July 14, 2015 Nuclear Agreement.
- 46 *Fadilat al-Shaykh ‘Abd-Allah al-Ansari*, op. cit., pp. 455–9.
- 47 Cf. Kamrava, Mehran, *Qatar: Small State, Big Politics*, Ithaca - London: Cornell University Press, 2013, esp. pp. 78 ff.
- 48 See the biography of Shaykh ‘Abd-Allah Ansari released on 2011/12/29 on [www.islahweb.org](http://www.islahweb.org), one of the websites of the organisation of the Muslim Brothers of Iran; and for an Iranian Deobandi comment on Shaykh ‘Abd-Allah: Haydari, ‘Adil, ‘*Shaykh ‘Abd-Allah Ansari, radmardi faramush nashudani*’ [The Shaykh ‘Abd-Allah Ansari, an Unforgettable Hero], *Nida-yi Islam* vol. 6, no. 2-3 (2005), pp. 21–7 (often retrieved on the Iranian Sunni Internet).
- 49 Ibrahimzada, S., Shari’ati-Mazinani, S., 2015, p. 2.
- 50 Ibid., p. 13.
- 51 On the evolution of Muftizada’s relations with the regional and central authorities of the Islamic Republic in 1979–82, see notably the contrasted memories recently released



- by the former Legate of Ayatollahs Khomeyni and Khamenei in Kurdistan between 1979 and 2012, *Hujjat al-Islam* Sayyid Musa Musawi (Musawi, Sayyid Musa, ‘Kurdistan wa fitna-i Muftizada’ [Kurdistan and the Sedition of Muftizada], interview with Samiya ‘Azimi, [www.taghribnews.com](http://www.taghribnews.com) (10 July 2012)).
- 52 On this aspect, see Dudoignon, *The Baluch, Sunnism and the State in Iran*, op. cit., p. 259.
- 53 See the intellectual portrait of Muftizada in ‘Ibadi 1391/2012–13, pp. 74–7; and Ezzatyar, Ali, *The Last Mufti of Iranian Kurdistan: Ethnic and Religious Implications in the Greater Middle East*, London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.
- 54 See for instance the tribune by Mulud Bahramyan, ‘*Khushunat, khushunat parhizi wa akblaq*’ [Violence, the Abstinence from It, and Morals], in JDII’s journal *Andisha-i islam* 3 (November 2015), pp. 3–7. See also the resolutions adopted by the Fourth Congress of JDII on 12–13 August 2015 (ibid. 2, September 2015: 50–3)—and the addresses published during the same period by the Sunni *imam-jum’a* of Zahidan since 1987, Mawlawi ‘Abd al-Hamid Isma’ilzayi, in *Nida-yi islam* (‘The Clamour of Islam’), the quarterly magazine of the Dar al-‘Ulum Makki of Zahidan.
- 55 E.g., Ibrahim, Nabi-Allah, 2015, ‘Salafiyya-i wahhabi: tamayuzha-yi huwwiyati-i ‘Arabistan-i sa’udi wa Iran’ [Wahhabi Salafism: Identity Distinctions between Saudi Arabia and Iran], *Mutali’at-i milli* (Tehran) 63, pp. 145–60.
- 56 Cf. Dudoignon, ‘Electorat spolié, lobby prospère? Les sunnites d’Iran et les présidentielles de 2013’, *Les dossiers du CERI* (May 2013, online publication).
- 57 On [www.irinn.ir](http://www.irinn.ir) 30 November 2015.

## 9. ‘SEEKING KNOWLEDGE FROM THE CRADLE TO THE GRAVE’

- 1 See Litvak, Meir, ‘Money, Religion and Politics: The Oudh Bequest in Najaf and Karbala, 1850–1903’, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol. 33, no. 1 (2001), pp. 1–21 and Cole, Juan, ‘“Indian Money” and the Shrine Cities of Iraq, 1786–1850’, *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 22, no. 4 (1986), pp. 461–80.
- 2 Cole, Juan, *Roots of North Indian Shi’ism in Iran and Iraq: Religion and State in Awadh, 1722–1859*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, University of California Press, 1988.
- 3 On the reproduction of ideological schisms in Kargil in the Indian province of Kashmir, see Gupta, ‘Experiments with Khomeini’s Revolution in Kargil: Contemporary Shi’a Networks between India and West Asia’, *Modern Asian Studies*, vol. 48, no. 2 (2014), pp. 370–98. For other part of the Shi’a world, see for example, Louër, Laurence, *Transnational Shia Politics: Religious and Political Networks in the Gulf*, London, Hurst & Co and New York: Columbia University Press (2008), on how the al-Da’wa and Shiraziyy-



- yin, mediators of Iraq's influence in the Gulf monarchies since the 1970s, and later the different ways in which each related to and appropriated the Iranian Revolution ideologically; Abou Zahab, Mariam, 'Between Pakistan and Qom: Shi'i Women's Madrasa and New Transnational Networks,' in Noor, Sikand and van Bruissen (eds.), *The Madrasa in Asia: Political Activism and Transnational Linkages*, ISIM/Amsterdam University Press, 2008.
- 4 Nakash, Yitzhak, *The Shi'is of Iraq*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994; Litvak, Meir, *Shi'i Scholars of Nineteenth-century Iraq: The 'ulama of Najaf and Karbala*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998.
  - 5 From the 1960s several marja' have been competing for religious authority. See Moussavi, Ahmed K., 'The Institutionalization of Marja' –i Taqlid in the Nineteenth century Shi'ite Community,' *The Muslim World*, vol. LXXXIII, no. 3–4 (1994), pp. 279–99, p. 286.
  - 6 Rahimi, Babak, 'Democratic authority, public Islam, and Shi'i jurisprudence in Iran and Iraq: Hussain Ali Montazeri and Ali Sistani,' *International Political Science Review*, vol. 33, no. 2 (2012.), pp. 193–208, p. 201; and Khalaji, Mehdi, 'Iran's Regime of Religion,' *Journal of International Affairs*, vol. 65, no. 1 (2011).
  - 7 See Khalaji, 'Iran's Regime of Religion,' op. cit., p. 137.
  - 8 Dars-al-Kharij is an advanced level of study under the tutelage of an individual master teacher. It does not follow fixed texts. On *dars al-kharij* and the seminary curriculum, see Fischer, Michael J., *Iran: From Religious Dispute to Revolution*, Madison, University of Wisconsin Press, 1980; Mervin, Sabrina, 'The Clerics of Jabal 'Amil and the Reform of Religious Teaching in Najaf Since the Beginning of the 20th Century,' in R. Brunner and Werner (eds.), *The Twelver Shia in Modern Times*, Leiden, Boston, Koln: Brill, 2001; Mottahedeh, Roy, *The Mantle of the Prophet: Religion and Politics in Iran*, Oxford, One-world Publications, 2005 [1985].
  - 9 See Khalaji, 'Iran's Regime of Religion,' op. cit., p. 137.
  - 10 Foreign students are admitted by Jamiat-al-Mustafa and then allocated to different colleges. At the end of their studies, Jamiat-al-Mustafa gives them degree certificates, which bestow recognition of the qualifications earned for the purpose of employment in other countries.
  - 11 Khalaji, 'Iran's Regime of Religion,' p. 136; Gupta, Radhika. 'Experiments with Khomeini's Revolution in Kargil,' op. cit., pp. 370–98.
  - 12 Sakurai, Kieko, 'Shi'ite Women's Seminaries (howzeh-ye 'elmiyyeh-ye khahran) in Iran: Possibilities and Limitations,' *Iranian Studies*, vol. 45, no. 6 (2012), pp. 727–44.
  - 13 The Iranian Revolution (1979) had a similar impact on initiatives for Shi'a women's education in Pakistan. See, Abou Zahab, Mariam, 'Between Pakistan and Qom: Shi'i Women's Madrasa and New Transnational Networks,' op. cit.

- 14 Sakurai, Kieko, 'Shi'ite Women's Seminaries (howzeh-ye 'elmiyyeh-ye khahran) in Iran,' op. cit.
- 15 The Khojas are a mercantile community of Gujarati origin, who migrated and settled in Mumbai from the eighteenth century onwards. While originally converts to Ismaili Shi'ism, after the Aga Khan case of 1866, many Khojas shifted allegiance to Twelver Shi'ism or Sunni Islam. On 'The Ismaili-Isna' Ashari Divide among the Khojas,' see Boivin, Michel, 'The Ismaili-Isna' Ashari Divide among the Khojas,' *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. 24, no. 3 (2014), pp. 381–96.
- 16 Mumbai is home to an old community of Iranians, who migrated to the city in the mid-nineteenth century, especially from the regions of Shiraz and Yazd. Over the generations, contact with Iran has become tenuous even though the community's identity continues to be marked by their origins. A separate mosque, the Mughal Masjid, constructed and embellished in the style of mosques in Iran, remains the sacred center for this small community in Mumbai. However, the seat of the Imam of Mughal Masjid for many years hailed from Kashmir and was not occupied by a member of the community. Many Iranian Shi'as left Mumbai in the 1990s and settled in the city of Pune, also in the state of Maharashtra.
- 17 For more on WIN see Eisenlohr, Patrick, 'Media, Citizenship and Religious Mobilization: The Muharram Awareness Campaign in Mumbai,' *Journal of Asian Studies*, vol. 74, no. 3 (2015), pp. 687–710; Gupta, Radhika. 'There Must be Some Way Out of Here: Beyond a Spatial Conception of Muslim Ghettoization in Mumbai?,' *Ethnography*, vol. 16, no. 3 (2015), pp. 352–70; and Mirza, Shireen, 'Travelling Leaders and Connecting Print Cultures: two conceptions of Twelver Shi'i reformism in the Indian Ocean,' *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. 24, no. 3 (2014), pp. 455–75.
- 18 In Mumbai a *mahfil* is a space dedicated to hosting ritual events and typically owned and managed by a private trust. Some *mahfils* have a collection of miniature *tazyeh*, open to worshippers for symbolic pilgrimage (*ziyarat*) to the shrines of the Imams and the *Ahl-al-bayt* (the family of the Prophet).
- 19 Adelkhah, Fariba, 'Framing the Public Sphere: Iranian Women in the Islamic Republic,' in Armando Salvatore and Dale Eickelman (eds.), *Public Islam and the Common Good*, Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2004.
- 20 The Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance in Iran, created in 1987, established cultural sections separate from the Iranian embassies in certain countries like India and Lebanon to foster cultural exchange. These centres became conduits for the "cultural politics" of post-revolution Iran. See Shaery-Eisenlohr, Roschanack, *Shi'ite Lebanon: Transnational Religion and the Making of National Identities*, New York, Columbia University Press, 2008, p. 161.
- 21 Gupta, Radhika, 'There Must be Some Way Out of Here,' op. cit.

- 22 Zaman, Qasim, 'Competing Conceptions of Religious Education,' in Robert Hefner and Muhammad Qasim Zaman (eds), *Schooling Islam*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2007.
- 23 The Twelver Shi'a believe that the Twelfth Imam—Mahdi—is currently in occultation. Messianic theories portend his return at the end of time to render justice to all those oppressed and suffering.
- 24 <http://www.almuntazaruniversity.com/>, last accessed on 16 November 2016.
- 25 The Imam Ali Foundation channels *khums* collected in the name of Ayatollah Sistani. When Ayatollah Khoi was alive, the Al Khoi Foundation in London was the main liaison office, and Agha Mousavi was his *wakil*. Though Agha Mousavi is no longer the *wakil* of Ayatollah Sistani in India, he receives some financial support from the Imam Ali Foundation according to a spokesperson of the Foundation (Interview, London, May 2013).
- 26 Eickelman, Dale and Piscatori, James, *Muslim Politics*, New Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1997, 2004.
- 27 For a historical comparison, see Ingram (Ingram, Brannon D. 'The Portable Madrasa: Print, publics, and the authority of the Deobandi 'ulama,' *Modern Asian Studies*, vol. 48, no. 4, 2014, pp. 845-871) on how the Deobandi *ulama* historically reconstituted their authority in the face of potential fragmentation via the print media.
- 28 <http://www.winislam.com>, last accessed on 16 November 2016.
- 29 Ingram, 'The Portable Madrasa,' op. cit., p. 859.
- 30 The card listed the following websites: [duas.org](http://duas.org) (Supplications with Arabic text and audio), [Islamic-laws.com](http://Islamic-laws.com) (Know halal/haram and ulama), [ziaraat.org](http://ziaraat.org) (details of Islamic places), [eternal-investment.org](http://eternal-investment.org) (funding in welfare/tabligh), [al-islam.org](http://al-islam.org) (an extensive Islamic digital library), [ansariyan.org/winbookshop.com](http://ansariyan.org/winbookshop.com) (buy Islamic books/DVDs), [islaamonmobile.org](http://islaamonmobile.org), [islaminurdu.com](http://islaminurdu.com).
- 31 See Ingram, 'The Portable Madrasa,' op. cit., p. 856.
- 32 On the concept of 'religious marketplace,' see Green, Niles, *Bombay Islam: The Religious Economy of the West Indian Ocean*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- 33 Stewart, Devin J. 'The Portrayal of an Academic Rivalry: Najaf and Qum in the Writings and Speeches of Khomeini. 1964-78,' in Linda S. Walbridge (ed.), *The Most Learned of the Shi'a*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 217.
- 34 On 'export' of Iranian Revolution, see Rajahi and Ramazani in Esposito, John (ed.) *The Iranian Revolution: Its Global Impact*, Miami, Florida International University Press, 1990.
- 35 A famous episode during which Iranian merchants hurt by the monopoly of tobacco the Shah had granted to a British firm pushed Mirza Hasan Shirazi, the most prominent marja' of Najaf, to call on Iranians to cease to use tobacco. See Lambton, Ann K. S., 'The Tobacco Regie: Prelude to a Revolution I,' *Studia Islamica*, no. 22, 1965.

- 36 Systematization of the *madrassa* is not a recent phenomenon in India. It has happened as a response to historical conditions in the past. The influential Sunni Deoband seminary in North India and the Farangi Mahal in Lucknow underwent a similar move to classroom teaching, examinations and fixed courses from 1867 onwards as Muslims in India contended with colonial rule. These changes followed a ‘colonial model’ (Robinson, Francis, ‘Strategies of Authority in Muslim South Asia in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries,’ *Modern Asian Studies*, vol. 47, no.1 (2013), p. 12).
- 37 See Deeb, Lara, *Enchanted Modern: Gender and Public Piety in Shi‘i Lebanon*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006; Adelhah, Fariba, *Being Modern in Iran*, London, C. Hurst & Co, 1999.
- 38 See, Mervin, Sabrina, op. cit., on the systematic criticism of higher religious education in the schools of Najaf by ‘Amali clerics.
- 39 See Moosa, Ebrahim, *What is a Madrasa?* Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2015.
- 40 Ibid, p. 39.
- 41 Kamrava, Mehran, ‘Iranian Shi‘ism at the Gates of Historic Change,’ in Mehran Kamrava (ed), *Innovation in Islam: Traditions and Contributions*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 2011.

## 10. THE LONG SHADOW OF THE STATE

- 1 For a thorough analysis of tensions between the two sects in undivided colonial India, see Jones, Justin, *Shi‘a Islam in Colonial India*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2011, pp. 186–221. The first decades after Partition witnessed Shi‘i organisations voicing demands vis-à-vis the state but few actual instances of violence. See Rieck, Andreas, *The Shias of Pakistan. An Assertive and Belaguered Minority*, London, Hurst, 2015, pp. 55–195.
- 2 For a study of the international dimension of the Islamic University, which was envisioned as an instrument to spread Salafism on a global scale, see Farquhar, Michael, ‘Saudi Petrodollars, Spiritual Capital, and the Islamic University of Medina: A Wahhabi Missionary Project in Transnational Perspective,’ *IJMES*, 47 (2015), pp. 701–25.
- 3 Haykel, Bernard, ‘Al-Qa‘ida and Shiism,’ in Moghadam, Assaf and Brian Fishman (eds), *Fault Lines in Global Jihad: Organizational, strategic and ideological fissures*, Milton Park, Routledge, 2011, p. 191.
- 4 A particularly striking example is Ahmed, Khaled, *Sectarian War. Pakistan’s Sunni-Shia Violence and its Links to the Middle East*, Karachi, Oxford University Press, 2011. See also Cockburn, Patrick, *The Rise of the Islamic State. ISIS and the New Sunni Revolution*, London, Verso, 2015, pp. 108–9.

- 5 For a detailed discussion, see Fuchs, Simon Wolfgang, *Relocating the Centers of Shi'i Islam: Religious Authority, Sectarianism, and the Limits of the Transnational*, Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Princeton University, 2015, pp. 68–84 and pp. 254–309.
- 6 See Fuchs, Simon Wolfgang, 'Third Wave Shi'ism: Sayyid 'Arif Husain al-Husaini and the Islamic Revolution in Pakistan,' *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. 24, no. 3 (2014), pp. 493–510.
- 7 See Fuchs, *Relocating the Centers of Shi'i Islam*, op. cit. (2015), pp. 254–309.
- 8 For a comprehensive account of acts of violence committed by both Sunni and Shi'i actors in Pakistan during the first fifteen years of the twenty-first century, see Rieck, *The Shias of Pakistan*, op. cit., pp. 276–97.
- 9 On the history of the SSP and its role in spreading sectarian discourses in Pakistan, see Zaman, Muhammad Qasim, 'Sectarianism in Pakistan: The Radicalization of Shi'i and Sunni Identities,' *Modern Asian Studies*, vol. 32, no. 3 (1998), pp. 689–716 and Abou Zahab, Mariam, 'The SSP: Herald of Militant Sunni Islam in Pakistan,' in Gayer, Laurent and Christophe Jaffrelot (eds), *Armed Militias of South Asia: Fundamentalists, Maoists and separatists*, New York, Columbia University Press, 2009, pp. 159–76. In January 2002, Pakistan's military ruler Pervez Musharraf not only banned several sectarian and militant outfits but also prohibited religious organisations from adopting names that had a military ring to it such as *jaysh*, *lashkar*, or *sipah*, all of which mean army. See 'Lashkar, Jaish, TJP, TNSM & SSP banned; ST under watch,' *Dawn*, 13 January 2002, <http://www.dawn.com/news/14777/lashkar-jaish-tjp-tnsn-ssp-banned-st-under-watch>, accessed 22 July 2016. ASWJ leaders keep publicly denying that their organisation is the successor to the SSP. See Tal'at Husayn with Ahmad Ludhianvi, 'Naya Pakistan: Firqaq varyiyat aur kal'adam tanzimen,' Geo TV, 23 February 2015, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I4plnblrw\\_s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I4plnblrw_s), accessed 8 June 2016, min. 4:15.
- 10 In 2012 Lashkar-e-Jhangvi's founder Malik Ishaq (d. 2015) was made vice-president of the ASWJ. See Mehmood, Rabia, 'Malik Ishaq made vice president of banned ASWJ,' *The Express Tribune*, 18 September 2012, <http://tribune.com.pk/story/438715/road-to-peace-ishaq-made-vice-president-of-banned-aswj>, accessed 20 June 2016. He was later ejected from the party due to serious internal frictions about strategy and because he was suspected of having been involved with the killing of a rival ASWJ member. See Kalbe Ali, 'Malik Ishaq had serious differences with Ludhianvi: observers,' *Dawn*, 25 August 2015, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1202616/malik-ishaq-had-serious-differences-with-ludhianvi-observers>, accessed 23 July 2016.
- 11 Haydari was born in 1963 in a village in Pakistan's Khairpur District in Sindh where he also received his initial education. He studied Islamic law at Ratodero, not far away from Larkana, before founding his own seminary in Khairpur in 1987. Joining the SSP under the influence of its founder Haqq Navaz Jhangvi (d. 1989), Haydari was elected chief patron of the organisation after the assassination of Ziya al-Rahman Faruqi in 1997. He

- was killed in 2009 near his home village of Pir Jo Goth when twenty armed men attacked his vehicle in the middle of the night. See Dastavezi film: '*Allamah 'Ali Sher Haydari, shahid-i namus-i sahaba*' Karar Productions, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=siG3f8IEOFY>, accessed 23 July 2016.
- 12 Ludhiyanvi was born in 1952 in Kamalia (Toba Tekh Singh district) into a family that had migrated to Pakistan from Raikot, located in present-day Indian Punjab. He attended *madrasas* in Faisalabad, Sahiwal, and Multan before founding his own religious seminary in the village 168/9 L, south-east of Sahiwal. He was involved with the student wing of the Jama'at-i Islami, the anti-Ahmadi agitations of the 1970s, and the protests against former president Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. In 1989, he joined the SSP, supposedly as a reaction to public Shi'i denunciations of the Companions of the Prophet. Ludhiyanvi quickly rose through the organization's ranks, becoming president of its Punjab chapter in 1995. After the assassination of A'zam Tariq in 2003 he succeeded him as president of what was then known as Millat-i Islami (The Islamic Nation). See Arshad, Muhammad Navid, 'Maulana Muhammad Ahmad Ludhiyanvi madda zillahu (khandani o jama'atii halat-i zindagi par ek nazar),' in Arshad, Muhammad Navid, (ed.), *Sada-yi Ludhiyanvi*, Kamaliyyah, Ahl-i Sunnat wa-l-Jama'at, 2007, pp. 23–28.
  - 13 Aurangzeb Faruqi hails from Karachi. He was chosen for his first SSP office as a local unit leader in 1994 while still being a student. After completing the curriculum (*dars-i nizami*) at Karachi's Jami'ah-i Faruqiyya in 1997, he became a full time party activist. Faruqi was appointed to various positions in Karachi and became the deputy leader for the Sindh province in 2005. Attracting the attention of influential party activists, he was first made general secretary and chief of the Ahl-i Sunnat Media Cell in 2011 (in the capacity of which he launched the weekly *Ahl-i Sunnat*) and finally elected central president in November 2015. See Hanafi, Taj Muhammad, 'Allamah Ghazi Aurangzeb Faruqi hamdard se le kar markazi sadr tak,' *Ahl-i Sunnat*, 4 (13–19 November 2014), p. 2.
  - 14 For the Saudi case, see Ismail, Raihan, *Saudi clerics and Shi'a Islam*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2016, p. 12. I refer to the argument of Ismail's book in more detail below.
  - 15 I do not engage here with another important argument, namely the prevalence of local disputes between a rising Sunni middle class and influential Shi'i landlords in the district of Jhang as an impetus for sectarian conflict in the 1980s. See Kamran, Tahir, 'Contextualizing Sectarian Militancy in Pakistan: A Case Study of Jhang,' *Journal of Islamic Studies*, vol. 20, no. 1 (2009), pp. 55–85. Even though these conflicts played a role for its founding, the SSP/ASWJ has increasingly moved away from such purely local origins and also reads its own history in a different light. See below as well as Fuchs, *Relocating the Centers of Shi'i Islam*, op. cit., pp. 282–87.

- 16 For a further discussion of the Companions' religious significance and debates within the Islamic scholarly tradition regarding their identity, see Khalek, Nancy, 'Medieval Biographical Literature and the Companions of Muḥammad,' *Der Islam*, vol. 91, no. 2 (2014), pp. 272–94.
- 17 For the Shi'a concept of the Imamate, see Halm, Heinz, *Shi'ism*, New York, Columbia University Press, 2004, pp. 28–44.
- 18 For Zahir's sectarian thinking, see Fuchs, op. cit. (2015), pp. 271–82. For an excellent study of polemics against the Shi'as and Shi'i views on the integrity of the Qurānic text, see Brunner, Rainer, *Die Schia und die Koranfälschung*, Würzburg, Ergon, 2001.
- 19 For a detailed exposition of all topics touched upon by Saudi scholars, see Ismail, op. cit., pp. 54–95.
- 20 Ibid., pp. 144–52.
- 21 Ibid., pp. 157–62 and pp. 166–89.
- 22 Ibid., p. 202. This relative consistency of religious polemics has to be distinguished from efforts by political elites in the Gulf, described as 'sectarian identity entrepreneurs' by Toby Matthiesen, to employ sectarian arguments in the wake of the Arab spring as a 'short-term solution [...] to weather the storm and to further isolate Iran.' See Matthiesen, Toby, *Sectarian Gulf. Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, and the Arab Spring that wasn't*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2013, p. 127. For the political management and oppression of Saudi's Shi'i minority, see Matthiesen, Toby, *The other Saudis. Shiism, Dissent and Sectarianism*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2014.
- 23 Al-Rasheed, Madawi, *Contesting the Saudi State: Islamic Voices from a new Generation*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007, pp. 59–101.
- 24 See 'Know your enemy: Who were the Safawiyah' and 'The Rafidah. From Ibn Saba' to the Dajjal,' *Dabiq*, Rabi' al-Akhir 1437 (January 2016), pp. 10–13 and pp. 32–45.
- 25 Husayn, 'Umar, 'Noha aur matam... haqiqat ka asl-i rukh,' *Ahl-i Sunnat*, 3 (7–13 Nov 2014), p. 2, Ta'aruf... Aghraz... nasb al-'ayn... Ahl-i Sunnat wa-l-Jama'at kya cahiti he?, Islamabad: Sha'bah-i nashr o isha'at-i Ahl-i Sunnat wa-l-Jama'at, p. 15, and 'Sarkari TV par sahabah-i kiram ki gustakhi lamhah-i fikriyya,' *Ahl-i Sunnat*, 4 (13–20 November 2014), p. 2.
- 26 See Husayn with Ludhiyanvi, 'Naya Pakistan: Firqa variyyat aur kal'adam tanzimen,' min. 5.00 and 'Umar, 'Noha aur matam.' In reality, Jinnah was born into a Khoja Isma'ili family but converted to Twelver Shi'a Islam around 1904 when he was 28 years old. See Wolpert, Stanley A., *Jinnah of Pakistan*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1984, p. 18. The purported lines by Iqbal, featured along with his portrait in *Ahl-i Sunnat*, were most likely penned by the Deobandi scholar Muhammad Taqi 'Usmani (Sajjad Rizvi, University of Exeter, personal communication, 24 June 2016).



- 27 Ludhianvi, Muhammad Ahmad, 'Mahbub-i Subhani,' in Arshad (ed.), *Sada-yi Ludhianvi*, op. cit., p. 74.
- 28 Siddiqi, Mazhar Mahmud, 'Sanisah-i Peshavar aur liberal soc,' *Ahl-i Sunnat*, 10 (26 December 2014–3 January 2015), p. 2. In this contribution Siddiqi lumps the attack by the Pakistani state on the infamous Lal Masjid (Red Mosque) in Islamabad in 2007 together with sectarian clashes in Rawalpindi in November 2013. See below for a more detailed discussion of both incidents.
- 29 See 'Maulana Aurangzeb Faruqi se Do Talk ki guftugu,' *Metro News*, 15 December 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OpdJ0CHQ1hE>, accessed 8 June 2016, min. 1.15 and *Ta'aruf... Aghraz... nasb al-'ayn...*, pp. 13–14.
- 30 See Haydari, 'Ali Sher, 'Payghambar-i inqilab,' in Qasimi, Muhammad Nadim (ed.), *Javahirat-i Haydari*, Karachi: Idarat al-Anwar, 2010, pp. 53–4 and Faruqi, Aurangzeb, *Difa'-i sahabah kyun zaruri he?*, Kulaci, Jarvar Academy Pakistan, p. 24.
- 31 This applies, for example, to the report on the SSP activist Qari al-Rahman, assassinated already in December 1994, or Mufti Mu'aviyah, killed in December 2012. See Kalyanavi, Ibn Zuhayr, 'Parvane sahaba razi Allah 'anhum ke Maulana Qari Sa'id al-Rahman shahid rahimmahu Allah,' *Ahl-i Sunnat*, 9 (19–25 December 2014), p. 2 and *idem*, 'Parvane sahaba razi Allah 'anhum ke Mufti Mu'aviya shahid rahimmahu Allah,' *Ahl-i Sunnat*, 10 (26 December 2014–3 January 2015), p. 2.
- 32 'Dahshatgirdi ke khilaf action men insaf lazimi he,' *Ahl-i Sunnat*, 11 (9–15 January 2015), p. 2. See also Faruqi, Aurangzeb, 'Mufti Munir Mu'aviyah shahid ke mazlumanah qatl,' 5 January 2014, [http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x19c9o6\\_allama-ghazi-aurangzeb-farooqui-s-speech-against-sunni-killing-in-pakistan-at-karachi-press-club-on\\_tv](http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x19c9o6_allama-ghazi-aurangzeb-farooqui-s-speech-against-sunni-killing-in-pakistan-at-karachi-press-club-on_tv), last accessed 13 July 2016, *idem*, 'Labbayka haramayn sharifayn,' <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A7wW8ljIhrs>, last accessed 8 June 2016, min. 7:55, and Fayyaz, Muhammad, 'Doctor Muhammad Fayyaz shahid, akhiri taqdir, 22 February 2015,' <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BADzaw7dLyQ>, last accessed 13 July 2016, min. 12.30.
- 33 Ludhianvi, Muhammad Ahmad, 'Maulana Muhammad A'zam Tariq,' in Arshad (ed.), *Sada-yi Ludhianvi*, op. cit., pp. 224–5. The ASWJ frequently highlights its own restraint and calming intervention after yet another assassination of one of their party workers and leaders. See 'Ahl-i Sunnat wa-l-Jama'at ki hissaa idaron ko munfarid peshkash,' *Ahl-i Sunnat*, 9 (9–15 December 2014), p. 2. Yet, despite this official line, the reaction of the audience at times betrays diverging convictions. During one of Ludhianvi's speeches, for example, the crowd started to address 'Ali Sher Haydari with the following slogan: '*sh'i'on ki girdin peh churi pher—'Ali Sher 'Ali Sher*' ('Ali Sher is the one who moves the knife across the Shi'as' neck). Ludhianvi, in response, did not disavow the slogan but rather said there was 'no need' (*zarurat nahin*) to take such an action. See Ludhianvi, 'A'zam Tariq shahid o ummi 'A'isha,' p. 238.



- 34 On these aspects, see Rieck, *The Shias of Pakistan*, op. cit., pp. 31–53 and Qasmi, Ali Usman, *The Ahmadis and the Politics of Religious Exclusion in Pakistan*, London, Anthem Press, 2014.
- 35 *Tā'aruf... aghraz... nasb al-'ayn*, p. 6.
- 36 Ibid., p. 7. See also Hassan, Sajid, 'Clean Chit with Aurangzaib Farooqui (A.S.W.J.)', AbbTakk News, 22 Feb 2014, [http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x1d5o40\\_allama-ghazi-aurangzaib-farooqui-s-explain-objectives-of-sipah-e-shaba-in-clean-chit-on-abbrakk-news\\_news](http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x1d5o40_allama-ghazi-aurangzaib-farooqui-s-explain-objectives-of-sipah-e-shaba-in-clean-chit-on-abbrakk-news_news), accessed 12 July 2016, min. 2.50.
- 37 Faruqi, *Difa'-i sahabah kyun zaruri be?*, p. 25.
- 38 *Tā'aruf... aghraz... nasb al-'ayn*, pp. 7–8. For more information on the TNFJ and its far more complicated relationship with Iran, see Rieck, *The Shias of Pakistani*, op. cit., pp. 207–31 and also Fuchs, op. cit. (2014).
- 39 *Tā'aruf... aghraz... nasb al-'ayn*, p. 8. On Ibn Taymiyya's view on Shi'i Islam, see Ismail, op. cit., pp. 45–9. On Shah Wali Allah, see Rieck, *The Shias of Pakistan*, op. cit., pp. 15–16. On Lakhnavi, see Jones, *Shi'a Islam in Colonial India*, op. cit., p. 188.
- 40 *Tā'aruf... aghraz... nasb al-'ayn*, p. 9.
- 41 Ibid., pp. 9–10 and pp. 28–9.
- 42 Bunzel, Cole, 'From Paper State to Caliphate: The Ideology of the Islamic State,' Brookings Project on U.S. Relations with the Islamic World, Analysis Paper 19 (March 2015), <http://www.brookings.edu/research/papers/2015/03/ideology-of-islamic-state>, accessed 27 July 2016.
- 43 Haydari, Kalim Allah, 'Ahl-i Sunnat wa-l-Jama'at hi par ilzam... akhir kyun?,' *Ahl-i Sunnat*, 5 (21–27 Nov 2014), p. 2. In November 2014, a report prepared by the Department of Internal Affairs of Pakistan's Balochistan province stated that ISIS had already taken root in Pakistan. It had supposedly established contacts with the ASWJ and debated whether it should outsource its anti-Shi'i activities to Lashkar-e-Jhangvi while concentrating on attacks against Pakistan's army. See Zaidi, Mubashir, 'IS recruiting thousands in Pakistan, govt warned in "secret" report,' *Dawn*, 08 November 2014, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1143133>, last accessed 28 July 2016.
- 44 'Da'ish ka propaganda Ahl-i Sunnat wa-l-Jama'at ke khilafasazish he, 'Allamah Ahmad Ludhiyanvi,' *Ruznamah-i Pakistan*, 11 November 2014, <http://dailypakistan.com.pk/metropolitan/11-Nov-2014/161649>, accessed 27 July 2016.
- 45 Hanafi, Taj Muhammad, 'Firqah varanah dahshatgardi - sabab aur tadaruk,' *Ahl-i Sunnat*, 7 (11–17 December 2014), p. 2. ASWJ leaders repeatedly pointed to the impressive size of their organization which could easily turn out 100,000 adherents as happened, for example, in October 2014 in Karachi. See 'Karaci men yadgar madh-i sahaba mutalabati julus,' *Ahl-i Sunnat*, 2 (31 October 2014), p. 2.

- 46 Shah, Muhammad Sikandar, 'Ahl-i Sunnat wa-l-Jama'at haqiqi inqilabi jama'at,' *Ahl-i Sunnat*, 6 (28 November–6 December 2014), p. 2.
- 47 Ludhianvi, Ahmad, 'A'zam Tariq shahid o ummi 'A'isha,' p. 235 and *idem*, 'Mahbub-i subhani,' pp. 78–79. For the importance of dreams in modern Islam, see Mittermaier, Amira, *Dreams that matter. Egyptian landscapes of the imagination*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 2011.
- 48 According to Andreas Rieck, at this point most MNAs had already walked out 'because of the unruly behaviour of the opposition' (see Rieck, *The Shias of Pakistan*, op. cit., p. 254). See also Qasim, Muhammad Nadim, *Hayat-i A'zam Tariq. Maulana Muhammad A'zam Tariq ke mufasssil halat-i zindagi*, Faysalabad: Isha'at al-Ma'arif, 1998, pp. 121–3.
- 49 Ludhianvi, 'A'zam Tariq shahid o ummi 'A'isha,' pp. 231–2.
- 50 For demands regarding the imposition of the death penalty for insulting the *sahabah*, see 'Dahshatgardi ka hall... Army Chief ko peshkash,' *Ahl-i Sunnat*, 13 (16–22 January 2015), p. 2.
- 51 For the outsize role which colonial law in Pakistan still plays today, despite all attempts at 'Islamization,' see Siddique, Osama, *Pakistan's Experience with Formal Law: An Alien Justice*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2013. The ASWJ does not spell out how its amorphous notion of Hanafi *fiqh* should be implemented and/or codified. For a discussion of the thorny issue of codifying the *shari'a* among Deobandi scholars in Pakistan, see Zaman, Muhammad Qasim, *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam. Custodians of Change*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2002, pp. 93–9.
- 52 Iran's Sunni population is most likely somewhere closer to a figure between 5 to 10 per cent of her population.
- 53 *Ta'aruf... aghraz... nasb al-'ayn*, p. 14. For an astute argument that 'the relegation of religion and family to the private sphere is a signal feature' of secularism as a 'shared modality of legal-political structuration that cuts across the Western and non-Western divide,' see Saba Mahmood, *Religious Difference in a Secular Age. A Minority Report*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2016, pp. 111–48.
- 54 The pioneering observation of this phenomenon can be found in Zaman, 'Sectarianism in Pakistan,' pp. 702–3. See also the following section of this chapter, as well as Fuchs, *Relocating the Centers of Shi'i Islam*, op. cit., pp. 287–300.
- 55 For the domestic as well as international salience of *khatt-i imam*, see Reda, L.A., 'Khatt-e Emam: The Followers of Khomeini's Line,' in Adib-Moghaddam, Arshin (ed.), *A Critical Introduction to Khomeini*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2014, pp. 115–36. For an elaboration of Jhangvi's line, see Ludhianvi, 'Mahbub-i Subhani,' p. 76, and *idem*, 'Khatm-i nubuvvat o difa'-i sahabah,' in Arshad (ed.), *Sada-yi Ludhianvi*, op. cit., p. 113.

- 56 Kalyanavi, Ibn Zuhayr, 'Parvane sahaba razi Allah 'anhum ke hafiz 'Abd al-Rahman Bandhani shahid rahimmahu Allah,' *Ahl-i Sunnat*, 7 (11–17 December 2014), p. 2. On the concept of *khums* in Shi'i jurisprudence, see Sachedina, Abdulaziz, 'Al-Khums: The Fifth in the Imami Shi'i Legal System,' *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, vol. 39, no. 4 (1980), pp. 275–89.
- 57 A video released on the occasion of a designated 'Martyrs' Day' depicted the organisation's leaders as tenderly caring towards the sons and brothers of slain ASWJ members. The *ulama* helped the children into the swimming pool of a rented Karachi holiday resort, pushed them on swings, and distributed sweets. These scenes were interspersed with attempts at extracting sectarian slogans from the children and giving speeches. Ahli-Sunnat Media Cell, 'Shuhada' Day, khususi report,' 3 June 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kV1hp6PGSSU>, last accessed 10 July 2016. Space limitations do not allow here for a fuller elaboration on how essential the narrative of martyrdom and its construction (both pertaining to Karbala as well as the war with Iraq) was and still is in the Islamic Republic. See Kamran, Scot A., *Martyrs of Karbala: Shii symbols and rituals in modern Iran*, Seattle, University of Washington Press, 2004 and Devictor, Agnès, *Images, combattants et martyrs. La guerre Iran-Irak vue par le cinéma iranien*, Paris, Éditions Karthala, 2015.
- 58 For a discussion of the seminary, the circumstances of the siege, and Lal Masjid's attitude towards Shi'i Islam, see Blom, Amélie, 'Changing Religious Leadership in Contemporary Pakistan: The Case of the Red Mosque,' in Lyon, Stephen M. and Marta Bolognani (eds), *Pakistan and its Diaspora. Multidisciplinary approaches*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, pp. 135–68. See also Abbas, Hassan, *The Taliban Revival. Violence and extremism on the Pakistan-Afghanistan frontier*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2014, pp. 121–40.
- 59 Ludhianvi, Muhammad Ahmad, 'Sanihah-i Lal Masjid aur akabirin ki zimmahdari,' in Arshad (ed.), *Sada-yi Ludhianvi*, op. cit., p. 282.
- 60 Haydari 'Ali Sher, 'Karbala-yi Lal Masjid,' in Qasimi (ed.), op. cit., p. 264.
- 61 Ibid., p. 265.
- 62 See Haydari, 'Ali Sher, 'Shan-i ahl-i bayt,' in Qasimi (ed.), op. cit., p. 177. During the jihad in Afghanistan, the Arabophone and closely Saudi-aligned Afghan party leader 'Abd al-Rasul Sayyaf (b. 1946) went as far as changing his name to 'Abd Rabb al-Rasul Sayyaf in order to meet Wahhabi sensibilities. His original name was problematic insofar as it termed him to be the Servant of the Messenger, i.e. Muhammad. This would give undue veneration to the Prophet of Islam and infringe on God's right to exclusive worship. Sayyaf's 'new' name translates instead as Servant of the Lord of the Messenger. See Edwards, David B., *Before Taliban. Genealogies of the Afghan jihad*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 2002, pp. 266–7.
- 63 See Haydari, 'Shan-i ahl-i bayt,' op. cit., p. 158.

- 64 Ludhiyanvi, 'Mahbub-i Subhani,' op. cit., p. 82.
- 65 Haydari, '*Shan-i ahl-i bayt*,' op. cit., p. 168. Such an argument raises the question of how we can know about the conduct of the *sahaba* if not via their own transmission, thus displaying problems of circularity.
- 66 See Bar-Asher, Me'ir Mikha'el, *Scripture and exegesis in early Imami-Shiism*, Leiden, Brill, 1999, pp. 93–8.
- 67 Haydari, 'Ali Sher, "Ibadat ka qibla bayt Allah aur ita'at ka qibla sahabah-i kiram,' in Qasimi (ed.), op. cit., pp. 108–9.
- 68 Haydari, '*Shan-i ahl-i bayt*,' p. 169.
- 69 *Ta'aruf... Aghraz... nasb al-'ayn...*, p. 34.
- 70 On the complex discussion within the Muslim scholarly tradition regarding these two categories of Qur'anic verses, see Kinberg, Leah, 'Muḥkamat and Mutashabihat (Koran 3/7): Implications of a Koranic Pair of Terms in Medieval Exegesis,' *Arabica*, vol. 35, no. 2 (1988), pp. 143–72.
- 71 Haydari, 'Ali Sher, 'Qur'an aur sahib-i qur'an,' in Qasimi (ed.), op. cit., pp. 66–7.
- 72 While it is not uncommon for Sunni authors to include the Prophet's wives in their definition, it is very rare to do so exclusively. For a study of the shifting terminology during the first centuries of Islam, see Sharon, Moshe, 'Ahl al-Bayt - People of the House,' *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*, no. 8 (1986), pp. 169–84.
- 73 Faruqi, *Difa'-i sahabah kyun zaruri he?*, p. 25 and Hanafi, Rabb Navaz, 'Special Message About Youm-e-Ammi Ayesha Siddiqa (Raziallahooanha),' 22 June 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bPZV-mkPUg>, accessed 29 July 2016, min. 4:45.
- 74 Faruqi, *Difa'-i sahabah kyun zaruri he?*, op. cit., pp. 18–19.
- 75 Haydari, '*Shan-i ahl-i bayt*,' p. 175.
- 76 *Ibid.*, pp. 176–7.
- 77 Watt, W. Montgomery, 'al-Hudaybiya,' in Bearman, P. et al (eds), *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*, Leiden, Brill, 1960–2007, [http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912\\_islam\\_SIM\\_2922](http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_SIM_2922), accessed 29 July 2016.
- 78 Görke, Andreas, 'Die frühislamische Geschichtsüberlieferung zu Ḥudaybiya,' *Der Islam*, 74 (1997), pp. 193–237.
- 79 Faruqi, *Difa'-i sahabah kyun zaruri he?*, pp. 28–30. The Urdu reads as '*us bay'at ka agenda ek tha khun-i 'Uthman ka badalah lena aur is bay'at ka agenda bhi ek he, 'Uthman jaise sahabi ka difa' karna*.' The 'other' *bay'a* Faruqi refers to here was the re-establishment of the former SSP after Musharraf's ban.
- 80 Ludhiyanvi, 'Sanisah-i Lal Masjid,' pp. 287–90. For the 'cultural obsession with the wholeness of the body as the foundation for moral righteousness and political cohesiveness,' pertaining to the incorruptible earthly remains of Muslim saints, see Kugle, Scott,

*Sufis & Saints' Bodies. Mysticism, Corporeality & Sacred Power in Islam*, Chapel Hill, The University of North Carolina Press, 2007, pp. 60–68.

- 81 This evaluation should be regarded first of all as a rhetorical claim advanced for propaganda purposes by the ASWJ. While there indeed appears to be a hardening of sectarian identities in Pakistan, it would be far-fetched to assume that the country's entire and internally very diverse Sunni population held such views. More ethnographic research is required to get a better understanding regarding the salience of continuing intermarriage between Sunnis and Shi'as, the shared participation in processions, and overlapping mystical practices at Sufi shrines in Pakistan, to name only a few potential areas of further study.
- 82 See Tal'at Husayn with Ahmad Ludhiyanvi, 'Naya Pakistan: Firqa variyyat aur kal'adam tanzimen,' min. 8.29.
- 83 Haydari, 'Ibadat ka qibla bayt Allah aur ita'at ka qibla sahabah-i kiram,' op. cit., p. 114
- 84 Ludhiyanvi, 'Mahbub-i Subhani,' op. cit., p. 85.
- 85 Abbas, *The Taliban Revival*, op. cit., p. 156.
- 86 On Khurasani, a member of the Mohmand tribe and former journalist, see Kugelman, Michael, 'Bad as Baghdadi? Pakistan's Most Dangerous Man,' *War on the Rocks*, 4 September 2014, <http://warontherocks.com/2014/09/pakistans-baghdadi/>, accessed 29 July 2016. See also Akbar, Ali, 'APS mastermind claims Bacha Khan University attack, 21 killed,' *Dawn*, 21 January 2016, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1234200/aps-mastermind-claims-bacha-khan-university-attack-21-killed>, accessed 29 July 2016.
- 87 His death was reported on 13 July 2016. See 'Peshawar school massacre mastermind confirmed dead in drone attack: ISPR,' *Express Tribune*, 13 July 2016, <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1141165/peshawar-school-massacre-mastermind-confirmed-dead-drone-attack-ispr/>, accessed 29 July 2016.
- 88 For a detailed report, see Yasin, Aamir and Mohammad Asghar, 'Ashura clashes turn Pindi into ghost town,' *Dawn*, 17 November 2013, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1056721>, accessed 23 July 2016.
- 89 Khurasani, 'Umar Khalid, 'Sanihah-i Ravalpindi amir-i muhtaram 'Umar Khalid Khurasani hifzahu Allah ka paygham,' <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6-7Zhos5LzI>, accessed 28 April 2016, min. 2.00.
- 90 Ibid., min. 3.58. Khurasani added that the curfew imposed in Rawalpindi after the clashes had prevented even a proper burial for those killed there.
- 91 Ibid., min. 8.20. For the role played by the former Syrian dictator Hafez al-Asad in turning the country's Alawites into a 'respectable' branch of Shi'ism, see Kramer, Martin, 'Syria's Alawis and Shi'ism,' in idem (ed.), *Shi'ism, Resistance, and Revolution*, Boulder, Westview Press, 1987, pp. 237–54.

- 92 Khurasani, ‘Sanihah-i Ravalpindi amir-i muhtaram ‘Umar Khalid Khurasani hifzahu Allah ka paygham,’ min. 10.00.
- 93 Abbas, op. cit., p. 152.
- 94 Notice the important difference here that ISIS rejects the category *kuffar* for the Shi‘as but opts to call them apostates (*murtadd*s) instead. For a discussion of this distinction and its implications in Islamic law, see Friedmann, Yohanan, *Tolerance and coercion in Islam. Interfaith relations in the Muslim tradition*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003, pp. 54–86 and pp. 121–59.
- 95 McCants, William, *The ISIS apocalypse. The history, strategy, and doomsday vision of the Islamic State*, New York, St. Martin’s Press, 2015, pp. 99–119.
- 96 See, for example, Ourghi, Mariella, “‘Ein Licht umgab mich...’ - Die eschatologischen Visionen des iranischen Präsidenten Mah̄mud Aḥmadinežād,’ *Die Welt des Islams*, 49 (2009), pp. 163–80.
- 97 Ludhianvi, ‘Mahbub-i Subhani,’ op. cit., p. 79.
- 98 Ismail, op. cit., p. 206.

## CONCLUSION

- 1 ‘Pakistan hopeful India will grant visas to Ajmer Urs pilgrims,’ *The Express Tribune*, 12 April 2015, <http://tribune.com.pk/story/868691/pakistan-hopeful-india-will-grant-visas-to-ajmer-urs-pilgrims/>.
- 2 Syed, G.M., *Sindhudesh. A Study in its separate identity through the ages*, Karachi, G.M. Syed Academy, 1991, pp. 318–19.
- 3 Ahsan, Aitzaz, *The Indus Saga and the Making of Pakistan*, Karachi, Oxford University Press, 1996, p. 8.
- 4 Ibid., pp. 10–11.
- 5 Asif, Manan Ahmed, *A Book of Conquest: The Chachnama and Muslim Origins in South Asia*, Cambridge Mass., Harvard University Press, 2016, p. 178.
- 6 Asif, Manan Ahmed, ‘The Advent of Islam in South Asia,’ in Long, Roger D., *A History of Pakistan*, New York, OUP, 2015, p. 141.
- 7 The role of language is key in the growing influence of the Saudis over the religious culture of South Asia.
- 8 The Hajj, however, is offering a good opportunity to Nawaz Sharif to visit Saudi Arabia. Since his return from exile (he was in Jeddah for seven years) in 2008, he has spent the last 10 days of Ramazan in Medina (Abdul Manan, ‘Madina sojourn: Nawaz likely to play Saudi card,’ *The Express Tribune*, 17 July 2014, <http://tribune.com.pk/story/736811/madina-sojourn-nawaz-likely-to-play-saudi-card/>).

- 9 According to Al Jazeera, ‘on the back of visits to Islamabad by senior Saudi and Bahraini officials, sources say at least 2,500 former (Pakistani) former servicemen were recruited by Bahrainis and brought to Manama, increasing the size of their national guard and riot police by as much as 50 per cent,’ Mashal, Mujib, ‘Pakistani troops aid Bahrain’s crackdown,’ 30 July 2011, <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2011/07/2011725145048574888.html>.
- 10 The university has academic ties with: Al-Azhar University, Cairo, Egypt, Ummul Qura University, Makkah, Saudi Arabia, Islamic University of Medina, Medina, Saudi Arabia, King Abdulaziz University, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, [http://www.iiu.edu.pk/index.php?page\\_id=380](http://www.iiu.edu.pk/index.php?page_id=380).
- 11 Khan, Azam, “Saudi pressure” forced Zardari to sack IIUI rector,’ *The Express Tribune*, 16 November 2015, <http://tribune.com.pk/story/992217/leaked-cable-saudi-pressure-forced-zardari-to-sack-iiui-rector/>. In 2011, Saudi diplomats had already complained to Zardari when Malik had invited the Iranian envoy to the university to attend and speak at a cultural exhibition.
- 12 Haq, Riazul, ‘Questionable activities: IIUI promoting extremist doctrines, says intelligence agency,’ *The Express Tribune*, 13 May 2015, <http://tribune.com.pk/story/885224/questionable-activities-iiui-promoting-extremist-doctrines-says-intelligence-agency/>
- 13 *IIUI Voice*, December 2015, p. 4, [http://www.iiu.edu.pk/wp-content/uploads/news-letter/iiui-voice/voice\\_eng\\_Urdu\\_060116.pdf](http://www.iiu.edu.pk/wp-content/uploads/news-letter/iiui-voice/voice_eng_Urdu_060116.pdf)
- 14 Millard Burr J. and Robert O. Collins, *Alms for Jihad, Charity and Terrorism in the Islamic World*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2006, pp. 100–1.
- 15 In December 2015 Pakistan joined the Saudi-led 34-state Islamic military alliance against terrorism and in January 2017 (two months after he retired) Raheel Sharif, Pakistan’s ex-COAS was offered the direction of the Saudi-led Islamic Military Alliance to Fight Terrorism (IMAFIT), a proposed coalition of 39 countries that has its headquarters in Riyadh.
- 16 One diplomatic cable revealed by Wikileaks dealt with the meeting between the Saudi Ambassador and Nasiruddin Haqqani in 2012. See Baqir Sajjad Syed, ‘Cables detail Saudi diplomat’s meeting with Haqqani’s son,’ *Dawn*, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1190941>.
- 17 On the Ahl-i-Hadith, see Abou Zahab, Mariam, ‘Salafism in Pakistan: The Ahl-e Hadith Movement,’ in Roel Meijer (ed.), *Global Salafism: Islam’s New Religious Movement*, London, Hurst, 2009, p. 131.
- 18 ‘Instructions to submit listing proposal for 4 Lashkar e-Tayibba (LET-4) Terrorists under UNSCR 1267,’ 16 May 2008, [https://www.wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08STATE52473\\_a.html](https://www.wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08STATE52473_a.html).
- 19 Ibid.

- 20 ‘Terrorist Finance: action request for senior level engagement on terrorism finance,’ 30 Decembre 2009 [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09STATE131801\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09STATE131801_a.html).
- 21 Bizaa Zeynab Ali, ‘The Religious and Political Dynamics of Jamiat Ahle-Hadith in Pakistan,’ *Columbia Academic Commons*, 2010, <http://academiccommons.columbia.edu/catalog/ac%3A148287>.
- 22 In July 2016, the suicide bomber who targeted the US Consulate in Jeddah was from Pakistan. Out of the nineteen terrorists who were arrested because of this attack and because of another one in Medina—that took place at the same time—twelve were Pakistanis.
- 23 The notion of pro-Saudi Islamists needs to be qualified in Pakistan. They do not form a bloc. Sometimes, they even compete for getting favors from their Arabian patrons (Yoginder Sikand, ‘Wahabi/Ahle Hadith, Deobandi and Saudi Connection,’ *Sunnicity.com*, 14 April 2010, <https://sunninews.wordpress.com/2010/04/14/wahabiahle-hadith-deobandi-and-saudi-connection/>).
- 24 The Afghan Taliban seem to have been another bone of contention. According to *The New York Times*, the Pakistani security establishment sabotaged the Saudis’ mediation between some of these Taliban and Hamid Karzai in 2007–08, in order to retain control over the peace talks in Afghanistan (Carlotta Gall, ‘Saudis Bankroll Taliban, Even as King Officially Supports Afghan Government,’ *The New York Times*, 6 December 2016, <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/06/world/asia/saudi-arabia-afghanistan.html?smid=tw-nytimesworld&smtyp=cur&r=1>).
- 25 ‘Pro-Saudi clerics say they will go protect Harmain Sharifain if army won’t,’ *Dawn*, 13 April 2015, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1175586>.
- 26 On this nebula, see Abou Zahab, Mariam, ‘The SSP: Herald of militant Sunni Islam in Pakistan,’ in Laurent Gayer and Christophe Jaffrelot (eds), *Armed militias of South Asia. Fundamentalists, Maoists and Separatists*, London, Hurst and New York, Columbia University Press, 2009, pp. 159–76.
- 27 On this proxy war, see Abou Zahab, Maryam, ‘The regional dimension of sectarian conflicts in Pakistan,’ in Christophe Jaffrelot (ed.), *Pakistan. Nationalism without a nation?*, London, Zed Books, 2004. Saudi Arabia is not the only country supporting Sunni groups in Pakistan. In the past, Saddam Husain, when Iraq was at war against Iran, helped them too. See Adil, Sheherzade, ‘Terror hub: Jamia Farooqia on Balochistan border,’ *Let us build Pakistan*, 29 June 2012, <https://lubpak.com>.
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- 35 <https://wikileaks.org/saudi-cables/doc11626.html>
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- 40 On this contrast between Sunni and Shi’a ‘networks of religious learning,’ see the special issue edited by Christophe Jaffrelot and Mirjam Kuenkler, ‘Networks of Religious Learning and the Dissemination of Religious Knowledge across Asia,’ *Modern Asian Studies*, vol. 48, Part 2, March 2014.
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