
The Shia Revival How Conflicts Within Islam Will Shape Future Vali Nasr

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explanation for the region's troubles. The turmoil is attributed to 'ancient sectarian differences', putatively primordial forces that make violent conflict intractable. In media and policy discussions, sectarianism has come to possess trans-historical causal power. This book trenchantly challenges the lazy use of 'sectarianism' as a magic-bullet explanation for the region's ills, focusing on how various conflicts in the Middle East have morphed from non-sectarian (or cross-sectarian) and nonviolent movements into sectarian wars. Through multiple case studies -- including Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia,

To Be with the Truthful Princeton University Press
As the Middle East descends ever deeper into violence and chaos, 'sectarianism' has become a catch-all

Bahrain, Yemen and Kuwait -- this book maps the dynamics of sectarianisation, exploring not only how but also why it has taken hold. The contributors examine the constellation of forces -- from those within societies to external factors such as the Saudi-Iran rivalry -- that drive the sectarianisation process and explore how the region's politics can be de-sectarianised. Featuring leading scholars -- and including historians, anthropologists, political scientists and international relations theorists -- this book will redefine the terms of debate on one of the most critical issues in international affairs today.

The Persian Puzzle Createspace Independent Publishing Platform

In his highly influential book *The Threatening Storm*, bestselling author Kenneth Pollack both informed and defined the national debate about Iraq. Now, in *The Persian Puzzle*, published to coincide with the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Iran hostage crisis, he examines the behind-the-scenes story of the tumultuous relationship between Iran and the United States, and weighs options for the future. Here Pollack, a former CIA analyst and National Security Council official, brings his keen analysis and insider perspective to the long and ongoing clash between the United States and Iran, beginning with the fall of the shah and the seizure of the American embassy in Tehran in 1979. Pollack examines all the major events in U.S.-Iran relations—including the hostage crisis, the U.S. tilt toward Iraq during the Iran-Iraq war, the Iran-Contra scandal, American-Iranian military tensions in 1987 and 1988, the

covert Iranian war against U.S. interests in the Persian Gulf that culminated in the 1996 Khobar Towers terrorist attack in Saudi Arabia, and recent U.S.-Iran skirmishes over Afghanistan and Iraq. He explains the strategies and motives from American and Iranian perspectives and tells how each crisis colored the thinking of both countries' leadership as they shaped and reshaped their policies over time. Pollack also describes efforts by moderates of various stripes to try to find some way past animosities to create a new dynamic in Iranian-American relations, only to find that when one side was ready for such a step, the other side fell short. With balanced tone and insight, Pollack explains how the United States and Iran reached this impasse; why this relationship is critical to regional, global, and U.S. interests; and what basic political choices are available as we deal with this important but deeply troubled country.

The History of the Sunni and Shia Split W. W. Norton & Company

"This book is a historical and sociological reading of the relation between Sunnis and Shias from the inception of the dispute for Mohammed's succession until today. It is divided in two parts. The first part offers a comprehensive history of the divide. It shows how Shiism was, during much of the Middle Ages, the main contestation ideology of the caliphate, but also how Sunnism and Shiism converged as Shiism progressively ceased to be an esoteric and politically radical doctrine to espouse a number of tenets of mainstream Islam. It shows the political dynamics that runs beneath theological debates and, in particular, how the

Sunni/Shia conflict was revived when the Safavids made Shiism an official state religion on the model of Sunnism. On the contrary, when faced with the colonial challenge, Sunni and Shia reformists closed ranks and collaborated. The second part of the book offers a socio-historical account of some national contexts in which the Sunni/Shia divide shapes the society and the politics: Iraq, Bahrain, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Yemen and Lebanon. It shows that in each of these countries the sectarian divide is shaped by very specific historical and social circumstances. Sunni and Shia identities are associated with ethnic, regional, statutory and economic identities. In most cases the relations between Sunnis and Shias are shaped by typical majority/minority dynamics. They can lead to conflict but dynamics of emulation often emerges from conflicts, which are particularly obvious when Sunni and Shia Islamic movements compete"--

Lost History Princeton University Press

This book illuminates the historical origins and present situation of militant Shia transnational networks by focusing on three key countries in the Gulf, Kuwait, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia, whose Shia Islamic groups are the offspring of Iraqi movements. The reshaping of the area's geopolitics after the Gulf War and the fall of Saddam Hussein in April 2003 have had a profound impact on transnational Shiite networks, pushing them to focus on national issues in the context of new political opportunities. For example, from being fierce opponents of the Saudi monarchy, Saudi Shiite militants have tended to become upholders of the Al-Sa'ud dynasty. The question remains, however, how deeply in society have these new beliefs taken root? Can Shiites be Saudi or Bahraini patriots? Louer concludes her book by analysing the transformation of the Shia' movements' relation to central religious

authority, the marja', who reside either in Iraq and Iran. This is all the more problematic when the marja' is also the head of a state, as with Ali Khamenei of Iran, who has many followers in Bahrain and Kuwait.

The Shia Revival State University of New York Press

From MSNBC terrorism expert Walid Phares, this is a frightening look into the future of jihad. Though an alarming new picture of what we can expect from terrorists in the future, Walid Phares reveals how the United States can win the war. Phares, who served as an expert with the Justice Department, briefed the Defense and State Departments, and testifies to Congress, shows that there has been a fundamental misunderstanding about al Qaeda's ultimate goal in the West and what victory means to jihadists. He answers such critical questions as: How long will this war last? Is the United States secure on the inside? Future Jihad shows how our defenses have been infiltrated; identifies the future generation of homegrown terrorists; and points the way for America to win the ideological war at the heart of jihad.

Afghanistan Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company

An eye-opening political travelogue that reveals the Muslim world as never before Drawing on reporting from more than a dozen Islamic countries, Faith at War offers an unforgettable portrait of the Muslim world after September 11. Choosing to invert the question of what "they" have done to "us," Wall Street Journal reporter Yaroslav Trofimov examines the unprecedented American intrusion in the Muslim heartland and the ripples it has caused far beyond the battlefields of Afghanistan and Iraq. What emerges is a penetrating portrait of people, faith, and countries better known in caricature than reported detail. The ordinary Muslims, influential clerics, warlords, jihadis, intellectuals and heads of state we meet are engaged in conversations that reveal the Muslim world to us from a new,

unexpected perspective. In Mali, one of the most successful democracies in Africa, we encounter Ousmane Madani Haidara, an influential cleric who sees Wahhabi extremists, rather than his country's secular government, as the real enemy of the true faith. In Saudi Arabia, we explore the bizarre world of exporting dead bodies from a kingdom that bars the burial of non-Muslims. On a US Navy aircraft carrier floating just off the coast of Pakistan in October 2001, we witness the mechanics of war: the onboard assembly of bombs that, hours later, are seen on T.V. exploding in Kabul. And in Iraq, we accompany Trofimov as he negotiates his escape from an insurgent mob, rides in a Humvee with trigger-happy GIs, and gets lectured by a Shiite holy man on why America is the foe of mankind. Whether exploring the badlands of the Sahara or a snow-covered village of Bosnian mujahedeen, Faith at War helps us understand the hidden relationships and often surprising connections, so crucial to America's future, that link the Islamic world to our own.

Iran Harvard University Press

Time magazine listed him as one of its "100 People Who Shape Our World." Newsweek featured him on its cover under the headline "How Al-Sadr May Control U.S. Fate in Iraq." Paul Bremer denounced him as a "Bolshevik Islamist" and ordered that he be captured "dead or alive." Who is Muqtada al-Sadr, and why is he so vital to the future of Iraq and, arguably, the entire Middle East? In this compellingly readable account, prize-winning journalist Patrick Cockburn tells the story of Muqtada's rise to become the leader of Iraq's poor Shi'ites and the resistance to the occupation. Cockburn looks at the killings by Saddam's executioners and hit men of the young cleric's father, two brothers, and father-in-law; his leadership of the seventy-thousand-strong Mehdi Army; the fierce rivalries between him and other Shia religious leaders; his complex relationship with the Iraqi government; and his frequent confrontations with the American military, including battles that took place in Najaf in 2004. The portrait that

emerges is of a complex man and a sophisticated politician, who engages with religious and nationalist aspirations in a manner unlike any other Iraqi leader. Cockburn, who was among the very few Western journalists to remain in Baghdad during the Gulf War and has been an intrepid reporter of Iraq ever since, draws on his extensive firsthand experience in the country to produce a book that is richly interwoven with the voices of Iraqis themselves. His personal encounters with the Mehdi Army include a tense occasion when he was nearly killed at a roadblock outside the city of Kufa. Though it often reads like an adventure story, Muqtada is also a work of painstaking research and measured analysis that leads to a deeper understanding both of one of the most critical conflicts in the world today and of the man who may well be a decisive voice in determining the future of Iraq when the Americans eventually leave.

Hezbollah Penguin

A New York Times Notable Book of 2020 " [A] sweeping and authoritative history" (The New York Times Book Review), Black Wave is an unprecedented and ambitious examination of how the modern Middle East unraveled and why it started with the pivotal year of 1979. Kim Ghattas seamlessly weaves together history, geopolitics, and culture to deliver a gripping read of the largely unexplored story of the rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran, born from the sparks of the 1979 Iranian revolution and fueled by American policy. With vivid story-telling, extensive historical research and on-the-ground reporting, Ghattas dispels accepted truths about a region she calls home. She explores how Sunni Saudi Arabia and Shia Iran, once allies and twin pillars of US strategy in the region, became mortal enemies after 1979. She shows how they used and distorted religion in a competition that went well beyond geopolitics. Feeding intolerance, suppressing cultural expression, and encouraging sectarian violence from Egypt to Pakistan, the war for cultural supremacy led to Iran ' s fatwa against author Salman

Rushdie, the assassination of countless intellectuals, the birth of groups like Hezbollah in Lebanon, the September 11th terrorist attacks, and the rise of ISIS. Ghattas introduces us to a riveting cast of characters whose lives were upended by the geopolitical drama over four decades: from the Pakistani television anchor who defied her country's dictator, to the Egyptian novelist thrown in jail for indecent writings all the way to the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi in the Saudi consulate in Istanbul in 2018. *Black Wave* is both an intimate and sweeping history of the region and will significantly alter perceptions of the Middle East.

Speaking of Faith Oxford University Press

Featuring extensive revisions to the text as well as a new introduction and epilogue--bringing the book completely up to date on the tumultuous politics of the previous decade and the long-term implications of the Soviet collapse--this compact, original, and engaging book offers the definitive account of one of the great historical events of the last fifty years. Combining historical and geopolitical analysis with an absorbing narrative, Kotkin draws upon extensive research, including memoirs by dozens of insiders and senior figures, to illuminate the factors that led to the demise of Communism and the USSR. The new edition puts the collapse in the context of the global economic and political changes from the 1970s to the present day. Kotkin creates a compelling profile of post-Soviet Russia and he reminds us, with chilling immediacy, of what could not have been predicted--that the world's largest police state, with several million troops, a doomsday arsenal, and an appalling record of violence, would liquidate itself with barely a whimper. Throughout the book, Kotkin also paints vivid portraits of key personalities. Using recently released archive materials, for example, he offers a fascinating picture of Gorbachev, describing this virtuoso tactician and resolutely committed

reformer as "flabbergasted by the fact that his socialist renewal was leading to the system's liquidation"--and more or less going along with it. At once authoritative and provocative, *Armageddon Averted* illuminates the collapse of the Soviet Union, revealing how "principled restraint and scheming self-interest brought a deadly system to meek dissolution." Acclaim for the First Edition: "The clearest picture we have to date of the post-Soviet landscape." --The New Yorker "A triumph of the art of contemporary history. In fewer than 200 pages Kotkin elucidates the implosion of the Soviet empire--the most important and startling series of international events of the past fifty years--and clearly spells out why, thanks almost entirely to the 'principal restraint' of the Soviet leadership, that collapse didn't result in a cataclysmic war, as all experts had long forecasted." -The Atlantic Monthly "Concise and persuasive The mystery, for Kotkin, is not so much why the Soviet Union collapsed as why it did so with so little collateral damage." --The New York Review of Books [Sunnis and Shi'a](#) National Geographic Books

As the world focuses on the conflict in Iraq, the most important political players in that country today are not the Sunni insurgents. Instead, they are Iraq's Shi'i majority--part of the Middle East's ninety million Shi'i Muslims who hold the key to the future of the region and the relations between Muslim and Western societies. So contends Yitzhak Nakash, one of the world's foremost experts on Shi'ism. With his characteristic verve and style, Nakash traces the role of the Shi'is in the struggle that is raging today among Muslims for the soul of Islam. He shows that in contrast to the growing militancy among Sunni groups since the 1990s, Shi'is have shifted their focus from confrontation to accommodation with the West. Constituting sixty percent of the population of Iraq, they stand squarely at the center of the U.S government's attempt to remake the Middle East and bring democracy to the region. This groundbreaking book addresses the crucial importance of Shi'is to the U.S. endeavor. Yet it also alerts readers

to the strong nationalist sentiments of Shi'is, underscoring the difficult challenge that the United States faces in attempting to impose a new order in the Middle East. The book provides a comprehensive historical perspective on Shi'ism, beginning with the emergence of the movement during the seventh century, continuing through its rise as a political force since the Iranian Islamic Revolution of 1978-79, and leading up to the Iraqi elections of January 2005. Drawing extensively on Arabic sources, this comparative study highlights the reciprocal influences shaping the political development of Shi'is in Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and Lebanon, as well as the impact of the revival of Shi'ism on the larger Arab world. The narrative concludes with an assessment of the risks and possibilities arising from the assertion of Shi'i power in Iraq and from America's attempt to play an increasingly forceful role in the Middle East. A landmark book and a work of remarkable scholarship, *Reaching for Power* illuminates the Shi'a resurgence amid the shifting geopolitics of the Middle East.

The Dispensable Nation Routledge

Travel beyond the fear and paranoia of 9-11 to experience Muslim culture. *Gay Travels in the Muslim World* journeys where other gay travel books fear to tread—Muslim countries. This thought-provoking book tells both Muslim and non-Muslim gay men's stories of traveling in the Middle East during these difficult political times. The true, very personal tales reveal how gay men celebrate their lives and meetings with local men, including a gay soldier's story of his tour of duty in Iraq. Insightful and at times sexy, this intelligent book goes beyond 9-11 and the present political and cultural divides to illustrate the real experiences of gay men in trouble zones—in an effort to seek peace for all. After the collapse of the Twin Towers, fears about terrorism and Muslim culture went hand in hand. *Gay Travels in the Muslim World* enters the current war zones to bring real and very personal stories of gay men who live and travel in these dangerous areas. This book challenges readers' preconceptions and assumptions about both homosexuality and being Muslim, while showing the wide range of experiences—good and bad—about the regions as well as the differences in

attitudes and beliefs. Excerpts from *Gay Travels in the Muslim World*: From “ I Want Your Eyes ” by David Stevens Men by themselves are rare. I pass a handsome Omani man sitting on the Corniche wall with a cigarette between his long brown fingers. He wears his colourful *cuma* cap at a jaunty angle and his mustard-coloured *dishdasha* has risen up to reveal tantalizingly hairy calves. I note the carefully made holes in his ears—not in his ear lobes but deep inside the cartilages—a pre-Islamic custom still practiced on some male babies to ward off evil spirits. I decide it suits him. From “ It All Began with Mamadou ” by Jay Davidson Drawing definitive conclusions about a society after living here for a little more than a year is not a wise, safe, or responsible action on my part. If a society's culture is a mosaic of thousands of little tiles, then I like to think that what I have been able to piece together has been a tableau in which certain aspects have become discernable, some are a little less clear, and others remain in a way that I will never see as whole and comprehensible. From “ A Market and a Mosque ” by Martin Foreman Sylhet, Bangladesh: It's eight o'clock in the evening and Tarique and Paritosh are taking me out to look at the cruising spots. Until I flew in here this afternoon, all I knew of the provincial city and the surrounding area was that it was where most of the Bangladeshis in the UK come from—and since most of the Bangladeshis in the UK live in my home borough of Tower Hamlets, I feel a kind of affinity with the place. Whether or not Sylhet feels an affinity with me is a different matter. From “ Work In Progress: Notes From A Continuing Journey of Manufacturing Dissent ” by Parvez Sharma In the construction of the image and life of the “ queer ” Muslim is also the awareness of the not so well known fact that a sexual revolution of immense proportions came to the earliest Muslims, some 1,300 years before the West had even thought about it. This promise of equal gender rights and, unlike in the Bible, the stress on sex as not just reproduction but also enjoyment within the confines of marriage has all but been lost in the rhetoric spewing from loudspeakers perched on Masjid's—or mosques—in Riyadh, Marrakech and Islamabad. The same Islam that has for centuries not only tolerated but also openly celebrated homosexuality is, today, used to justify a state-sanctioned pogrom against gay men in Egypt—America's “ enlightened ” friend in the Middle East. *Gay Travels in the Muslim World* is a refreshing, well written look a

Iran Awakening Princeton University Press

Sudan has been in the headlines for all the wrong reasons. After decades of civil war, rebel uprisings and power struggles, in 2011 it gave birth to the world's newest country — South Sudan. But it's not been an easy transition, and the secession that was meant to pave the path to peace, has plunged the region into further chaos. In this updated edition of his ground-breaking investigation, Jok Madut Jok delves deep into Sudan's culture and history, isolating the factors that continue to cause its fractured national identity. With moving first-hand testimonies, Jok provides a decisive critique of a region in turmoil, and addresses what must be done to break the tragic cycle of racism, poverty and brutality that grips Sudan and South Sudan.

Faith at War Columbia University Press

This is an anthology of the most significant writing on the doctrinal, intellectual, and spiritual dimensions of Shicim. The works included here foster an interpretive understanding of Shicim in its dogmatic and cognitive aspects. The intent of this book is to balance the attention that has been focused on the political aspect of Shicim. Shicim is often seen, not only as an essentially political phenomenon, but as a creed of violence. Understanding Shicim in its total reality will encourage a more balanced approach to issues which are viewed mostly politically. While not denying the importance of political manifestations, this book offers an understanding of the often neglected religious beliefs and spiritual practices of this world community.

Sudan Oxford University Press

A Financial Times Best Book of the Year Forcefully persuasive, *The Dispensable Nation* is a game changer for America as it charts a course in the Muslim world, Asia, and beyond. Vali Nasr shows how the Obama administration missed its chance to improve U.S. relations with the Middle East by continuing to pursue its

predecessor's questionable strategies there. Nasr takes readers behind the scenes at the State Department and reveals how the specter of terrorism and the new administration's fear of political backlash crippled diplomatic efforts to boost America's foundering credibility with world leaders. Meanwhile, the true economic threats, China and Russia, were quietly expanding their influence in the region. Nasr argues that, as a result of the U.S.'s flawed strategy, a second Arab Spring is brewing—not a hopeful clamor for democracy but rage at the United States for its foreign policy of drones and assassinations.

Shi'ism Random House Trade Paperbacks

The Shia Revival: How Conflicts within Islam Will Shape the Future W. W. Norton & Company
Hurst Publishers

A compelling study of the little known contributions of Islam's cultural, artistic, and scientific accomplishments to Western civilization looks not only at the historic achievements of the Muslim world and the role of inspired leaders who encouraged intellectual inquiry, championed tolerance, and sponsored artistic and literary endeavors, but also at the ancient envy that fuels today's conflicts. Reprint.

Armageddon Averted Random House Trade Paperbacks

With Hezbollah's entry into the Lebanese government in 2009 and recent forceful intervention in the Syrian civil war, the potent Shi'i political and military organization continues to play an enormous role in the Middle East. Policymakers in the United States and Israel usually denounce it as a dangerous terrorist group and refuse to engage with it, yet even its adversaries need to contend with its durability and resilient popular support. Although Hezbollah's popularity has declined in many quarters of the Arab world, the Shi'i group—a hybrid of militia, political party, and social services and public works provider—remains the most powerful player in Lebanon. Augustus

Richard Norton's Hezbollah stands as the most lucid, informed, and balanced analysis of the group yet written. This edition, with a new prologue and expanded afterword, analyzes recent momentous events—including Hezbollah's political performance in Lebanon, inconsistent responses to the Arab Spring, and recent military support of the al-Asad regime in Syria. Hezbollah is essential reading for anyone who wants to understand the Middle East.

Reaching for Power Anchor

A thought-provoking, original appraisal of the meaning of religion by the host of public radio's On Being Krista Tippett, widely becoming known as the Bill Moyers of radio, is one of the country's most intelligent and insightful commentators on religion, ethics, and the human spirit. With this book, she draws on her own life story and her intimate conversations with both ordinary and famous figures, including Elie Wiesel, Karen Armstrong, and Thich Nhat Hanh, to explore complex subjects like science, love, virtue, and violence within the context of spirituality and everyday life. Her way of speaking about the mysteries of life—and of listening with care to those who endeavor to understand those mysteries—is nothing short of revolutionary.

Engaging the Muslim World Simon and Schuster

The 1,400-year-old schism between Sunnis and Shi'is is currently reflected in the destructive struggle for hegemony between Saudi Arabia and Iran—with no apparent end in sight. But how did this conflict begin, and why is it now the focus of so much attention? Charting the history of Islam from the death of the Prophet Muhammad to the present day, John McHugo describes the conflicts that raged over the succession to the Prophet, how Sunnism and Shi'ism evolved as different sects during the Abbasid caliphate, and how the rivalry between the Sunni Ottomans and Shi'i Safavids ensured that the split would continue into the modern age. In recent decades, this centuries-old divide has acquired a new toxicity that has resulted in violence across the Arab world and other Muslim countries. Definitive, insightful, and accessible, A Concise History of

Sunnis and Shi'is is an essential guide to understanding the genesis, development, and manipulation of the schism that for far too many people has come to define Islam and the Muslim world.

Transnational Shia Politics Oxford University Press

Considers the ways in which struggles between the Shia and Sunni in the Middle East will affect the region's future, offering insight into the long-standing, brutal power conflicts between Iran and Saudi Arabia for political and spiritual leadership of the Muslim world. Reprint.