Queer Masculinities and Spaces of Intimacy in the Work of Anwar Saeed

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Abstract

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The bodies of same-sex loving men and women have been subject to state-sponsored oppression, censorship, and brutalities since Pakistan's inception. These violences have been increasingly aggravated since the 1980s. This paper examines the work of contemporary Pakistani artist Anwar Saeed. In his paintings, Saeed interrogates conflictual intersections between sexuality, religion, love, violence, and the nation-state through representations of queer male bodies. By way of his references to sexuality and queerness, Saeed forges artistic intimacies between his practice, other Pakistani artists, and local religious and cultural histories. This paper suggests that Saeed's practice, then, works within the parameters of the Pakistani nation-state as a means of working against it. This is to say that Saeed's work has developed through the subversive concept of disidentification, as informed by queer theorist José Esteban Muñoz. Keeping in mind the theory's US based context, this paper seeks to consider disidentifications in the context of Saeed's practice; an analysis of this kind can possibly create an opening for a cross-border analysis of the effects of power on gender, sexuality, and queerness that departs from generalizing, Eurocentric accounts of inequality, patriarchy, and oppression.

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Introduction

In *Years of Sleeping Dangerously* (fig. 1), a man lies asleep on his side beneath a luminescent half moon. Facing the viewer, he cradles his obscured, blackened head in his hands. The faint silhouette of a big cat, perhaps a tiger, stands behind the man. In a somewhat protective stance, the cat lowers its head to graze the man's shoulders. Under the layers of darkness, fragments of Urdu calligraphy, decorative patterns, and yellowing, purplish hues of wet ink become apparent. Some of these fragments spill out from the contours of the man's body. The piece has a languid tone, innocuous even. Yet the title's use of the word "dangerously" brings to mind the fact that the act of sleep is marked with vulnerability. For artist Anwar Saeed, danger and violence need not be apparent; they rustle beneath the facades of seemingly intimate and placid situations.

In 1984, Anwar Saeed's solo exhibition at Rohtas Gallery in Islamabad was raided by police for its display of politically charged prints and collages, that through the incorporation of various drawings, photographs, and newspaper clippings unveiled the brutalities of the state. As a response to the raid, government censorship, and state-sponsored violence during the tumultuous period of Zia's regime, Saeed began to depict sleeping men, vulnerable and untethered from reality.[i] The bodies of sleeping men were the artist's first foray into representations of the male body, a subject matter that remains central to his work to this day.

Saeed is known primarily as a printmaker. This paper is invested in tracing Saeed's shift from producing prints that incorporate figurative and textual components, to large-scale paintings of male bodies in ambiguous spaces. This shift occurred in the mid 1990s and continues into the 2000s. Fellow printmaker and critic Naazish Ataullah remarks that "his early work aspires to be meaningful and perhaps unintentionally appears radical…in contrast, his images also become deeply introspective."[ii] According to the late art historian Akbar Naqvi, Saeed has acknowledged that his art has increasingly focused on the self as he shifted away from printmaking to painting.[iii] Rather than view his politically charged prints as "in contrast" to his introspective paintings, I argue that Saeed's paintings continue to be starkly political despite their increased focus on the artist's inner psyche and private world.

The binary of the personal and the political collapses through Saeed's use of the male body and sexuality. Quddus Mirza has written about the significance of sexuality in Saeed's work, and argues that "it serves as a foundation on which other narratives are established."[iv] Both the artist and the nation-state against which he is working use the queer male body as a site of interrogation. The Pakistani nation-state has subjected the bodies of same-sex loving men and women to state-sponsored oppression, censorship, and brutalities since the nation's inception, but particularly more aggressively since the 1980s. Saeed repurposes the queer male body as a site on which he discerns conflictual intersections between sexuality, religion, love, violence, and the nation-state through a disidentificatory praxis. Indeed, Saeed's references to his sexuality and queerness makes way for the expression of his relationships with other Pakistani artists and local religious and cultural histories. He forges these artistic intimacies in order to work within the parameters of the Pakistani nation-state as a means of working against it. This is to say that Saeed's work has developed through the subversive concept of disidentification.

I borrow the term *disidentification* from queer theorist Jose Muñoz. In his book *Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics*, Muñoz develops his theory of disidentification from a longer genealogy of theoretical frameworks, particularly within the fields of Marxist thought and psychoanalysis.[v] He builds on Louis Althusser's understanding of subject formation in which the subject is interpellated through ideology.[vi] Munoz explains ideology, as per Althusser, as “the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence.”[vii] He further references the French theorist Michel Pêcheux, who draws from Althusser’s definition of ideology to offer three modes of subjecthood: the “good subject” or one who identifies with the dominant ideology, the “bad subject” or one who counteridentifies, and finally, the slippery subject who disidentifies.[viii] A passage by Muñoz provides an understanding of disidentification, as informed by Althusser and Pêcheux, that scholars of Muslim South Asian art can find useful in analyses of Pakistani art practices,

> Disidentification is the third mode of dealing with dominant ideology, one that neither opts to assimilate within such a structure nor strictly opposes it; rather, disidentification is a strategy that works on and against dominant ideology. Instead of buckling under the pressures of dominant ideology (identification, assimilation) or attempting to break free of its inescapable sphere (counteridentification, utopianism), this ‘working on and against’ is a strategy that tries to transform a cultural logic from within, always laboring to enact permanent structural change while at the same time valuing the importance of local or everyday struggles of resistance.[ix]

In this passage, Muñoz’s explains disidentification as the instance in which queer artists subvert social, political, and artistic trends that emerge from dominant, heteronormative, white supremacist ideologies. Artists intentionally selecting aspects of these dominant ideologies and manipulate them against the grain of their original, oppressive context. The artist who participates in this disidentificatory framework is one who works within existing hegemonic structures as a means of giving way to newer progressive social relations.[x]

To put Muñoz’s theory in conversation with the artistic centers in Pakistan can possibly create an opening for a cross-border analysis of the effects of power on gender, sexuality, and queerness that departs from generalizing, Eurocentric accounts of inequality, patriarchy, and oppression. At the same time, it is important to keep in mind that Muñoz’s theory is deeply intertwined with racial and identity politics as they have developed in the United States.

Moreover, the queer artists that Muñoz discusses are responding to hegemonies that exist in the realm of popular culture rather than in the state itself. Despite the theory's limitations, using it in relation to Pakistani art can lead to a more nuanced consideration of how structures of power emerge out of multivalent histories through time and space.[xi]

We can contextualize the theory of disidentification within the tendentious relationship between artists and the Pakistani nation-state. Pakistan's dominant ideologies are filtered through a hegemonic Sunni Muslim system of values, structurally imposed through the implementation of Shariah Law in courts and further disseminated through the efforts of politicians, the military, and the media.[xii] The Pakistani nation-state privileges heteronormative, masculine, and patriarchal modes of living, and renders non-normative behaviors subject to oppressive legalities and state-sponsored violence. Similar to Muñoz's references to queer performance artists who find ample material in the ruins that lie in the wake of white supremacy, misogyny, and heteronormativity, Pakistani artists also sift through the wastelands of corrupt political figures, violence either carried out by the state or allegedly invisible to it, and divisions implemented on ethnic and religious grounds. In this process, the artist remains deeply implicated in extant ideologies, yet through them, is able to proffer alternative hegemonies or universes.

Saeed has been criticized by the late art historian Akbar Naqvi for spending too much time and energy looking for inspiration from the West, rather than his "own backyard," which Naqvi presumably meant to refer to Lahore.[xiii] It is true that Saeed has often stated his love for figures like Walt Whitman, Jean Genet, D.H. Lawrence, David Hockney, and Milan Kundera in interviews. His affinities with these Western artists and writers are significant, but do not fall within the scope of this paper. Rather, this paper focuses on how Saeed's relationship with

Pakistani—predominantly Punjabi—histories and with Indo-Persian traditions has also very profoundly shaped his artistic practice.[xiv]

A queer lens can enable us to understand the importance of these histories and traditions in Saeed's practice. Indeed, as Gayatri Gopinath has written, "queerness names a mode of reading, of rendering intelligible that which is unintelligible and indeed impossible within the dominant nationalist or imperial logic."[xv] At the same time, it is important to remember that the word "queer" has varying repercussions in the Pakistani context. Faris Khan writes,

> The word *queer* generally lacks the kind of salience enjoyed by the terms *gay, lesbian, bisexual*, and *transgender*, as well as the umbrella initialism LGBT, among both gender and sexually normative and nonnormative Pakistanis. As such, *queer* has not yet emerged as an inclusive, overarching framework, as a category against the fixity of categories (Johnson 2010; Sullivan 2003), for the purpose of either social identification or political activism in the country. This is not to say that the term should or will in time achieve salience in the Pakistani context. Such an assumption would support a flawed linear evolutionary and imperialist logic that presupposes that regions of the Global South are "backward" and in need of modernizing in step with Euro-American notions of progress. That said, it is worth mentioning a few queer platforms that have emerged over the last decade that have had some modicum of impact, especially with regard to identification, community formation, and information dissemination.[xvi]

This paper situates itself in relation to the fact that although the term "queer" can have problematic aspects that may reify certain myths and imperialist logics about Pakistan, it has gained currency among certain activist groups in the country. In the place of other, more problematic, words that mark one's sexual identity, and in response to Saeed's own articulation of his sexual identity, I use "queer" to describe Saeed and his practice. I will speak more to this throughout the paper.

Saeed's body of work is large and varied; through the works that I have analyzed here I have attempted to show his trajectory from printmaking to large-scale painting, and the shift in the expression of his subject matter as facilitated by his disidentifications with Pakistani religious, cultural, and artistic histories. This paper is organized to provide an understanding of queerness in South Asia and an overview of Pakistan's turbulent political history. I foreground Saeed's practice with a brief discussion about the history of queerness in Muslim South Asia, before delving into an analysis of his works. Subsequently I will provide an overview of the National College of the Arts (NCA), by explicating on the institution's history as a colonial art school and its present status as the locus of the Lahore art scene. NCA's ideological evolution has resulted in response to Pakistan's conception and ensuing political chaos as a means of contending with postcolonialism, Islamization, modernism, and globalization. I end with an engagement with feminist and queer art scenes as they have been and are currently emerging in Pakistan and the diaspora.

Queer Histories of South Asia

Of the several Pakistani artists who regularly exhibit internationally and have been critically engaged by art historians and critics alike, why does this paper focus on Anwar Saeed? In *Women Without Mustaches and Men Without Beards*, Afsaneh Najmabadi explains that by using feminist theories of representation to comprehend Qajar art, she was able to perceive and contend with the various non-normative genders and sexualities that existed more fully in premodern Iran. These identities have become wisps of the past in modern Iran due to colonial interventions and Islamization.[xvii] Saeed's work is similarly valuable because it, too, reveals glimpses of non-normative sexualities and masculinities that are often excluded by dominant narratives. While these glimpses are particular to Saeed's own particular and contemporary experience, they also refer to larger histories of queerness as they have manifested in South Asian and Islamic histories. As in the case of Iran, Saeed's works also harken to the attempted eradication or suppression of non-normative sexualities in Pakistan by the state.

To think that sexuality floated free in precolonial India fringes on a dangerous romanticism of the past. Yet, ample scholarship, supports the fact that many individuals who lived in precolonial India did enjoy a variety of sexual practices that by modern, Foucauldian standards might be considered deviant.[xviii] Saeed identifies with this precolonial past in Naazish Ataullah's essay "Of Whispers and Secret Callings: On Anwar Saeed and Lahore," in which she paints a portrait of the artist as a figure of introspection, reclusiveness, and morbidity who emerges more fully and truthfully through sexual expression. She writes

> [Saeed] believes homosexuality has traditionally been a widely accepted way of life in our society and beyond. Yet he strongly steers clear of being categorized as 'gay,' viewing it as a post-industrial Western sub-cultural sexual identity. His comfort with the primordial reality of homosexuality is as categorical as his rejection of the ghettoization of gay identity politics. Hence he can now show his naked body and share the edginess of desire, the intensity of beauty and its sheer physical power without restraint.[xix]

Though some of the sentiments expressed in this passage do run the risk of romanticizing the past, the passage highlights Saeed's ability to locate his homoerotic desires within the histories of the subcontinent rather than as a product of Western influences.

Understanding Zia-ul-Haq's regime is most pertinent for the study of the relation between the state and non-normative eroticisms and sexualities, and for better understanding Anwar Saeed's artistic practice. Zia was preceded by Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, under whose rule contemporary miniature painting and other art forms were patronized and used for diplomatic purposes, often as gifts for foreign officials.[xx] Women artists during this time period also began to enjoy recognition in the art world.[xxi] The execution of Bhutto initiated Pakistan's third military regime (1978-1988) led by Zia. It marked a moment of abrupt change that had acute consequences for the lived experiences of women, non-normative individuals, and artists. State-sanctioned brutalities against women and non-normative individuals were legitimized through

Zia's implementation of an unequivocal Islamic law in Pakistani courts, most evident in the Hudood Ordinance.[xxii]

Established in 1979, the Hudood Ordinance is a set of laws that follows a strictly Sunni, Hanafi Islamic framework and has actively lent power and presence to Shariah law in Pakistani courts. The Ordinance is significant for its decrees regarding sexual behaviors, such as the Zina Ordinance which made extramarital sex, rape, kidnapping, prostitution, and sodomy punishable by stoning, whipping, and imprisonment.[xxiii] These punishments are justified on their religious grounds, and are wielded by the state as a means of preserving the Islamic purity of Pakistani society.

The anti-sodomy law, presently upheld in Pakistani law, is one of the significant and persistent colonial interventions that was first written into the Indian Penal Code.[xxiv] Pakistani nationalists and Islamists would like to believe that sodomy runs counter to Islam, but historically homoerotic sexual practices were widely practiced in the Islamic world and not perceived as sinful or criminal activities.[xxv] Najmabadi's scholarship about premodern Iran is relevant for the context of Pakistan because the two countries share some similarities on the grounds of their colonial histories and Muslim-majority populations. She writes that appreciation of male beauty by means of male homoeroticism was considered to be a superior sentiment legitimized through Islamic poetry and Sufi practices.[xxvi] The criminalization of these activities and practices has resulted from the prejudices and biases held against Indian men by British soldiers, who perceived Indian men as recklessly deviant practitioners of same-sex relations. The British sought to regulate their practices through the Indian Penal Code.[xxvii]

As an openly queer man in a nation whose governing body and general society was and continues to be relatively intolerant of non-normative behaviors and sexualities, Saeed has had to engage in a delicate dance between the threat of state censorship and the need to express his truth. This dance appears to be facilitated by his reputation as a recluse who avoids fame and prefers the company of a few friends, music, and books.[xxviii] While his penchant for solitude may be an innate quality, it has likely been further propelled by the public displays of violence and intolerance towards non-normative individuals that he witnessed during Zia's regime. As Ataullah writes,"Zia-ul Haq's infamous Hudood Ordinances and the oppressive environment that ensued, public floggings, police brutalities and the threat of vigilante brigades, further enhanced [Saeed's] acute sense of being the alienated outsider."[xxix] That Saeed's solo exhibition at the Rohtas Gallery was raided by the military, in response to his anti-national images further strained the artist who at the time was completing his studies at the NCA and trying to establish his practice.

A work from the early 1980s, *Silent Flowering* (fig. 2) illustrates the affective consequences of Zia's regime on Saeed's psyche and being through a representation of masculine disembodiment and bodily fragmentation. The piece is a drawing composed on a vertical piece of paper and divided into three segments, the middle being the largest of the three. The top segment contains a severed head of a young man with a mustache, the middle contains a white shirt (perhaps a *kurta*) with sunglasses on a hanger, and the bottom a pair of shoes. A string, perhaps a shoelace, connects the bottom of the shirt and one of the shoes, transcending the divide between the middle and bottom frames.

The drawing reads as a portrait of a fragmented man, out of touch with his body and its desires which have been replaced by unworn, material articles of clothing. Critic Ayesha Khan understands the man's head to be representative of how individuals perceive the external world in a disembodied state, while the shirt and shoes function as armor that protects and conceals that which resides within.[xxx] The themes of interiority and exteriority that Khan writes about are certainly evident in the drawing, and so significant in relation to Saeed's entire body of work. The various segments resemble shelves in a cabinet, guarded from the outside. Yet the title refers to a blossoming, an expansion of sorts that we cannot quite see or hear but that is occurring nonetheless. Though the subject matter is not overtly erotic, the title may refer to the homoerotic writer Jean Genet's *Our Lady of Flowers*, a novel about the Parisian underworld as a site of homoerotic encounters that has inspired "several bodies of Anwar's works."[xxxi] Perhaps this blossoming is in relation to Saeed's sexuality. The drawing may reflect Saeed's particular experience as a queer man attempting to transcend an imposed feeling of disembodiment in the face of an oppressive political context.

One may also recall, in response to this drawing, Sadequain's drawings during his brief stay in Paris. In these contour line drawings, the artist is depicted as interacting—even playing—with his severed head. Art historian Iftikhar Dadi understands the severed head as an extension of Sadequain's fascination for the transgressive Sufi saint Sarmad, who was beheaded by Emperor Aurangzeb. It is said that upon his beheading, Sarmad's headless body "began walking, carrying its severed head in its hands, until other Sufis begged the decapitated Sarmad to refrain from openly displaying such power."[xxxii] It can be said that by portraying a severed head in this drawing, Saeed is also attempting to channel a transgressive spiritual energy or power in the face of Zia's regime. In this way, the drawing communicates Saeed's affinities with Islamic theology by way of Sufism, masculinity, and eroticism. It is a precursor to his later, more mature works which continue similar themes through nuanced artistic strategies.

This drawing was exhibited as part of Saeed's second solo exhibition, held at Canvas Gallery in Karachi in 2003. The retrospective only included his drawings, rather than his prints and paintings. The show was curated to reflect his artistic development, as well as Pakistan's changing. socio-political climate.[xxxiii] Indeed, Saeed's artistic career and its success has relied on his experience as a student at the National College of Arts, Lahore, to which this paper now turns.

The National College of Arts as a Safe Haven

The NCA in Lahore was founded as, and continues to be, one of Pakistan's premier art schools. Founded by the British in 1876 as the Mayo School of Arts, the institution was branded as a "traditional 'arts and crafts school'" in which only male students could enroll and teach.[xxxiv] The Mayo School of Arts functioned in the same manner as other colonial art schools in the greater Indian subcontinent, which is to say that in addition to a site of learning, the school was also a site of production in a larger trading networks between South Asia and Europe. Students would have been encouraged to learn from local artisans and replicate their crafts. Their crafts would then be exported to department stores in England, and ultimately purchased by British consumers hoping to decorate their bourgeois homes with oriental goods.[xxxv]

After the division of the subcontinent into the two nation-states of India and Pakistan, art schools and departments that had been founded in the pre-Partition region of Pakistan adapted in response to the onset of global modernism and the nation's need for a secure identity that rejected Hindu nationalism and instead fostered a distinctly Muslim consciousness.[xxxvi] NCA became the birth site of Pakistani modernism, through the efforts of artists like Shakir Ali, Zahoor ul Akhlaq, Salima Hashmi, and more. Artists from NCA have gone on to show their work internationally.[xxxvii] Practitioners of the miniature, an art form based in Persianate, Mughal, and Indian aesthetic traditions, have especially been given wings to soar and expand the field of Pakistani art on a global scale.[xxxviii] Despite their wide-reaching parameters, the works that these artists produce engage most duly with the works of their own peers and teachers, as well as centuries-old aesthetic traditions. Indeed, as Simone Wille writes, the relationships that artists have forged with each other and the institution “have positively and continuously influenced the local art scene, by nurturing young talents and schools or even developing traditions.”[xxxix] These material and conceptual links have solidified the network that NCA has built since Pakistan’s inception. An acute attention to historicity and a reverence for the generations that have come before maintain these links even in instances of subversion.[xl]

Since the birth of Pakistan, artists have contended with present affairs of the state and globalization, and tradition and modernity. Dadi writes that Pakistani artists have

> adopted a studied distance from Pakistani nationalism and have largely eschewed direct identification with it…these artists availed of the opening toward reflexivity and articulation of an alternative universe offered by transnational modernism but also investigated possibilities in the cosmopolitanism of early modern and modern South Asian culture.[xli]

Dadi’s scholarship conveys how Pakistani artists have combined a variety of aesthetic traditions with Pakistani pop culture and folk art as a means of confronting Pakistani nationalism and reflecting upon modernity.[xlii] I extend this and posit that Pakistan’s modernism is predicated on the works of artists whose disidentificatory tensions result in reflexive works that offer nuanced articulations of present affairs. Their work is intended to operate within existing aesthetic traditions and cultural logics in order to promulgate imagined, alternative worlds that, as Muñoz writes, “strive to envision and active new social relations.”[xliii]

One such artist, whose legacy has been boundless and vital for the emergence of Pakistani contemporary art, is Zahoor ul Akhlaq. Generally understood as the leading Pakistani modernist, Zahoor (1941-1999) is most renowned for his intervention of deconstructing the miniature, an art form whose production, format, and iconography had for so long been strictly preserved over the centuries.[xliv] He encouraged students to experiment with the form, to see what might emerge in the margins, what kind of ruptures might bristle onto the surface, and what the effect of varying scales might have. He promulgated a modernism informed by tradition, a word Iftikhar Dadi removes from the binary of tradition-modern in the context of Pakistani art order to illuminate tradition as a modern reformulation of Islamic aesthetic traditions.[xlv] The relationships between Zahoor ul-Akhlaq and his students, including Saeed, can be understood as producing formative artistic bonds whose effects continue to persist in contemporary Pakistani art.

In *Art and Polemic in Pakistan: Cultural Politics and Tradition in Contemporary Miniature Painting*, Virginia Whiles describes the NCA, from her time spent there in the 2000s, as a place of kinship for two general groups. One that welcomes the use of parody and the aesthetic reformulation of historical traditions to contend with Pakistani politics and the impact of the state, and the other that chooses to preserve cultural logics relating to gender, class, and the state. The students who align with the former ethos are generally from working-class backgrounds, while students who identify with the latter are often from elite circles.[xlvi] The artists who have gone on to be internationally renowned are affiliated with the first group. They include the neo-miniaturists Shahzia Sikander, Imran Qureshi, Aisha Khalid, and Saira Wasim, among others. Sikander and Qureshi were two of Zahoor's students.[xlvii] All of the artists mentioned have produced works that critique Pakistani nationalism and focus on issues pertaining to gender, patriarchy, history, among other topics.

In the 1980s, when Saeed enrolled at the NCA, the institution was artistically thriving under Zahoor's tutelage. It was a space in which, as Dadi writes, artists were able to continue to "problematize aspects of gender and sexuality" through artworks that were "set against an official Pakistani nationalism that was aggressively masculine. In this sense, Muslim South

Asian modernism offers lines of departure in reimagining sex and gender roles of the modern psychic and social self.[xlviii] Saeed's own interests in sexuality, masculinity, and nationalism would be find ample support and dialogue in the space.

Before enrolling at the NCA, Saeed's childhood and adolescence were marked with tragedy and work. His father died early on, causing him to support his mother and younger brothers in their small home in Anarkali, a neighborhood in Lahore known for its large and bustling bazaar. Upon graduating from high school the year that Bhutto was executed, he was accepted by the NCA due to his proclivity for drawing.[xlix] Saeed's experience as a student at the NCA coincided with the start of Zia's regime and provided the artist with a safe haven "from which military dictators and religious fundamentalists could be deflected."[l] As a student, Saeed bonded with students and faculty who were interested in alternative politics; the institution served as a site in which young Pakistanis could freely engage in political, intellectual, and spiritual discussions that went against the grain of the state. This freedom was instigated by not only artistic affinities but common political ideologies, shared between peers and instructors alike, that provided a locus of camaraderie and support during politically turbulent times.

Printmaking at the Royal College of Arts

After completing his graduate studies in painting at the NCA in 1985, Saeed attended a one-year program at the Royal College of Arts in London (RCA) to study printmaking. The NCA had received a grant to fund students to travel to London, learn the medium and bring it back to the school in order to implement a printmaking department.[li] Zahoor played a large role in this development.[lii]

As a student at the RCA, Saeed inserted himself as a link in a longer chain of tradition of South Asian artists who had studied at the RCA, including Zahoor. Studying at the RCA enabled

South Asian artists to engage with not only with European aesthetic models, but also with museum collections, British and international students, art galleries, cutting edge artistic techniques, and the greater city of London.

Printmaking was considered an esteemed and innovative medium by some Pakistani critics. In 1988, Sairah Irshad wrote that the medium "is considered an integral and vital part of the artwork of the west today" but "has been largely neglected in Pakistan." Saeed's intervention would be a welcome one in the Pakistani art world. According to critics, including Salima Hashmi, Quddus Mirza, and Mohammad Jami, Saeed excelled at printmaking.[liii] Gregory Minissale recalls that Saeed described printing as similar to "learning to play a sitar, you have to do it every day for years to get better and better."[liv] The medium's flexibility and room for innovation allowed him to experiment with various histories, styles, and subject matters. He could juxtapose figures with calligraphy and textural components, and imbue these relationships with more meaning than was possible through his earlier collages and drawings.[lv]

Consider the print *Different Possible Endings to a Story* (fig. 3), a photo etching in which four consecutive frames are divided into two-part grids, with a larger, elongated top portion and smaller segment at the bottom. Each of the larger portions hosts an image of a Bodhisattva, deftly manipulated differently in each frame by the artist's printmaking abilities. A blood spatter, a bomb blast, and a gun are juxtaposed with the image of the Bodhisattva. Each frame also has differing texts and patterns in the backgrounds, mostly in *nastaliq* (Urdu script) with the exception of some French and English text accompanying the images of violence in the bottom frames.

Unlike the overtly political, anti-nationalist works Saeed created through collages including local images of violence that were ill-received by the military at Rohtas Gallery, this piece engages in a different kind of work. It is emblematic of how Saeed has used printmaking to deconstruct history and national borders through Islamic decorative art, ancient sculpture, violent imagery and photography, and Urdu script.[lvi] For instance, despite the destructive images of the gun, bomb, and blood spatter, the Bodhisattva remains intact, albeit transformed. The figure appears as a sketch on the left, more realistic and shaded in the center, and dark and vague on the right. These differences may reflect the various temporal and technical processes integral to printmaking. In turn, the figure's temporal quality may evoke the artist's interrogation of the past. During and following the partition of India and Pakistan, Hindu nationalists revered Hindu and Buddhist histories and figures and rendered Muslims as problematic and violent. By including the Bodhisattva here, within framing components that refer to Mughal and Persian aesthetics, Saeed may be resisting perceptions of Pakistan and its Muslim-majority population as distinct from or counter to the subcontinent's Buddhist past.

At the same time that Saeed is resisting Hindu nationalists, he is also countering Pakistani nationalist ideologies that, as Dadi writes, "have sought to deny it its non-Muslim past."[lvii] His critique of Pakistani, Sunni ideologies emerges from the way in which he *aligns himself with* Pakistani nationalism in the face of Hindu nationalism. This double-edged reading of a singular piece is telling of Saeed's ability to disidentify with certain dominant cultural logics in order to proffer different possible endings to stories borne out of different nationalist ideologies.

Artistic Affinities Between Zahoor and Saeed

Upon his return to Pakistan in 1986, Saeed was invited to join the NCA as a printmaking instructor. His work was included in various group exhibitions, often with Ataullah who was also a printmaking instructor at the NCA. Having gained a well-respected reputation in the Lahore art circle, Saeed began to forge a strong friendship with Zahoor. At this time, Zahoor was not only his colleague but the head of the Fine Arts Department. Their relationship was grounded in a shared love for Urdu poetry and Sufi thought.[lviii]

While a comparative reading of Saeed's and Zahoor's artistic works precludes overt similarities in form and subject matter, it is clear that both artists were interested in the deconstruction of space, and how conceptual discourses about spirituality and poetry could lead to other spatial possibilities within a work of art. [lix] Other Pakistani artists have explored similar themes in varying capacities; artists that come to mind are Shakir Ali, whose paintings conveyed an investment in the issue of space and spirituality,[lx] and Naiza Khan, whose series *Heavenly Ornaments* grapples with religion, gender, and sexuality.[lxi] Yet, the artistic and intellectual bond shared between Zahoor and Saeed is particularly notable.

In the catalogue for *Hanging Fire*, Ataullah writes an essay that focuses on the relationship between Zahoor and Saeed and their disparate practices.[lxii] That Ataullah centers the essay on these two artists specifically is evident of the singularity of their bond. She writes

> Whereas Akhlaq's oeuvre was concerned with broadening the discourse of traditionalism and modernity to attain universality, Saeed conversely delves into appropriating the universal to investigate the inner realms of the personal. This oscillation of narratives in their practices springs from their assumption of paradoxical positions, but is underpinned by intimately related motivating emotions.[lxiii]

Ataullah acknowledges that the artists differ in their style, content, and form; she contrasts Zahoor's interest in the effects of a nuclear holocaust and his "formal sophistication" from Saeed's investment in the effects of military rule in Pakistan and his more "raw and primordial style."[lxiv] Yet, she writes, "the body as a site of intellectual, physical, and psychological expression finds common ground in the work of both artists."[lxv] Ataullah goes on to analyze their works separately from each other, without drawing any further formal or artistic comparisons. A formal analysis of specific works of art that they individually created can further illuminate their artistic intimacies. These intimacies may have, as I argue, facilitated a shift in Saeed's practice away from collage, prints, and drawings to homoerotic figurative paintings, through the artists' shared interest in the body. This shift can be understood as participating in Saeed's larger disidentificatory praxis.

Consider an untitled work (fig. 4) created by Zahoor in 1994. The painting contains a grid, in which a vertical frame is divided into three components. The bottom component is black, the middle is white, and the top is a dark blue with a delicate red differentiating four grid blocks from each other. Two nude figures, rendered in black and white, stand on the black component; their bodies are upright and extend into the white, and their raised arms emerge on both sides of the frame into the surrounding gray grid.

Zahoor created this piece in response to having attended a butoh performance in Toronto in the mid 1990s.[lxvi] Founded in the late 1950s by Hijikata Tatsumi, butoh is a now widespread Japanese dance form that involves bodily discipline and mental techniques that manifest in a gripping display of deliberate, often slow, contortions and movements.[lxvii][lxviii] It is important to note that butoh was deeply political and reflective of social and economic issues in Japan at the time.[lxix] Following the performance, Zahoor imported images of butoh dancers from a book into his paintings, hence the figures' heavy black and white contrast which appear as the effects of a scan or copy.

In his experimental biography about Zahoor, Roger Connah speculates on the artist's fascination with the dance form, linking its psychological darkness to Zahoor's alcoholism and self-destructive tendencies.[lxx] I depart from this line of thought, and argue instead that the dance form appealed to Zahoor on the grounds of his interest in the the materiality of the frame and grid as a site of both constraint and experimentation. Indeed, Zahoor held dance in high esteem;

Ataullah notes that his fascination with butoh was accompanied by his respect for his daughter Jahanarah's practice of the North Indian kathak dance form.[lxxi] Like butoh, kathak also involves an acute control of the body that unfolds through precise, often subtle, gestures and movements that become more rapid and intense with musical accompaniment.[lxxii] The descriptions of butoh and kathak provided here are gross simplifications of two very complex and historically embedded dance forms. Yet, through these descriptions, I attempt to convey that the bodies of butoh dancers and practitioners of kathak explore similar notions of interiority and exteriority, limitations and expansions, that Zahoor attempted to understand through his manipulation of the traditional, rigid Mughal frame. The painting conveys Zahoor's commitment to the deconstruction of the miniature into a grid, and represents the artist's mature experimentation with the form in tandem with the body.

The relationship between Zahoor and Saeed can be read through the lens of the *ustad-shahrgird* relationship as outlined in Whiles' scholarship on the NCA. Whiles explains this relationship as one that manifests in the miniature painting department, in which the *ustad* supervises a trained artist, or *shahrgird*, on a project that involves drawing and coloring components.[lxxiii] The relationship is a serious one, and has origins in Mughal painting workshops, in which the *ustad* oversaw the work of *shahgirds* when commissioned by patrons to produce courtly paintings.[lxxiv] The relationship has persisted at the NCA and is emblematic of the institution's complex ties to tradition and precolonial history. The NCA has had two formal *ustads*, Haji Mohammed Sharif and Sheikh Shujaullah, who continued the traditional style of teaching miniature painting. Zahoor's tenure at the institution broke from this tradition, because he encouraged students to work within and against hegemonic Indo-Persian artistic strategies and traditions through experimentation.[lxxv]

Saeed and Zahoor's relationship first emerged out of a similar hierarchical structure as the *ustad-shahrgird* dynamic; Saeed was a student of Zahoor, and followed his orders to learn printmaking at the RCA, and bring back his newfound knowledge about the medium to the NCA. However, after Saeed was hired by the NCA, their relationship went on to expand outside of the dynamic of master and disciple, into one of disidentification.

Muñoz's analysis of Andy Warhol and Jean-Michel Basquiat's friendship as one forged through disidentifications provides a framework for reconceptualizing Saeed and Zahoor's friendship in relation to its hierarchical, traditional underpinnings. It is vital to remember that Muñoz's analysis relies on a discourse about racial politics in the United State. The purpose of bringing Warhol and Basquiat into this narrative is not to attempt to create a perfect allegory, but rather to provide one possible way to theorize Zahoor and Saeed's relationship outside of the *ustad-shahrgird* dynamic. Survival is the basis of a disidentificatory praxis, Muñoz asserts, and the praxis itself cannot be assumed but rather it must be learned from the examples of others who set out to establish a niche for themselves in an otherwise indifferent world dominated by oppressive power structures.[lxxvi] Basquiat perceived Warhol not only as an exemplary figure of artistic and commercial success, but also as a queer man able to carve out a space of his own within an otherwise hegemonic environment. Basquiat did not adopt Warhol's ideology per se, but rather disidentified with it, "transfigured" it, by first recognizing its significance and then molding it to align with his own identity as a black man trying to succeed in a white male dominated art world.[lxxvii] In the context of Zahoor and Saeed, although scholars and critics have largely understood their friendship as one of conceptual and spiritual value, it is important to recognize how their exchanges, like those between Basquiat and Warhol, also manifested in their artistic practices.

That both Connah and Ataullah acknowledge dance in relation to Zahoor makes evident the significance of the body, via dance, in the artist's practice. This leads me to speculate that Zahoor would probably have conversed with Saeed about his fascination with dance, and how it conceptually related to his work. Because these conversations would have occurred outside of the parameters of a master-disciple relationship, they might have provided an impetus for Saeed to also more freely experiment with the body in relation to the frame and grid. In this way, Zahoor's artistic practice and ideas may have played a role in inspiring Saeed to shift from his earlier overtly political prints and collages to psychologically rich representations of introspective, homoerotic bodies in ambiguous spaces.

While Zahoor's work, as Ataullah has described, was more interested in broadening the scope of Pakistani modernism and achieving a sort of universality by drawing from butoh dance and contemplating nuclear devastation, Saeed's works continue to be grounded in the societal and political milieu of Pakistan, now in the aftermath of Zia's regime. This is evident in a series of works from the 1990s. The works, with titles like *into the Void*, *The Outreach of Silence*, and *The Other World*, grapple with the body, the frame, and their limitations and possibilities. These works can be understood as representing Saeed's disidentificatory relationship with Zahoor, in which Saeed similarly reformulated conceptions of form and space integral to South Asian art history by way of Zahoor's practice, to offer metaphysical openings and possibilities of queer desire and spirituality.

In *The Other World* (fig. 5), for instance, the surface has been divided into two large segments, each of which is further disrupted by frames and smaller partitions. The silhouette of a man floats amidst this division, as if his body is not confined to either space but is able to freely meander between them. The acrylic is textured with charcoal, mimicking the layered surfaces of

Zahoor's earlier experimentations with the grid and light.[lxxviii] The incorporation of the unadorned and unornamented body evokes the simplistic rendering of the butoh dancers in Zahoor's more recent series.

The Other World can be read both politically and spiritually through a queer lens that envisions openings, possibilities, and futures. The partition in the painting may refer to Partition itself; the figure's ability to drift between the spaces then becomes a form of resistance to the division of the subcontinent into two nations. Alternatively, the painting can be read as a response to the aftermath of Zia's death in a plane crash in 1988. While his death marked his regime's end, its effects continue to linger in the psyches of Pakistanis to this day. It is possible that this work is Saeed's attempt to attain liberation in a space whose form and structure appears to confine. Ultimately, the body of a queer male is what ruptures the space, and invites a proliferation of alternative futures in which the body can continue to move unconstrained. Indeed, queerness is not necessarily located in the present, but somewhere that has yet to be realized temporally and spatially.[lxxix] This framework aids viewers in understanding the elsewhere-looking desires, politics, and spiritualities evident in Saeed's work.

An Interruption

The winters in Lahore are biting. The bitterness is cloaked by radiant rays of sun. Diesel and dust linger in the air, as do the intermittent honks of cars and the growls of motorbikes that freely roam the bustling streets. A residential area of the city is witness to a quieter afternoon of conversation and leisure, enjoyed by two men who sit on a balcony, warming their hands around steaming cups of chai. One of the men is the artist Zahoor ul-Akhlaq, affectionately called Zahoor by his friends, colleagues, students, and admirers alike. The other is Anwar Saeed, an artist junior to Zahoor. Their camaraderie is fueled by their shared interest in Sufism and Urdu poetry, which shares as a bridge between their dissonant yet interrelated artistic practices. The scene is interrupted by a knock at the door. Zahoor welcomes in a stranger--a young man, kind and charming, who leaves, only to return few hours later later. Except this time, he's brought with him loaded gun. Bullets are fired; Zahoor and his daughter, Jahanarah, die in pools of their own blood. Saeed is badly injured--his arm is shot--but he survives.

Erotic Masculinities and Desires

In the aftermath of Zahoor's murder, Saeed's practice fractured into two lines of production. On one hand, he created personal, private works that were overtly homosexual. On the other hand, the paintings he created for a public audience were imbued with symbols and depersonalized figures that harkened back to ancient Hindu and Buddhist aesthetic traditions. Traces of the grid and its division remain in both strands of his practice, but sexuality and homoeroticism begin to saunter into the forefront. The political remains central throughout.

Of particular interest are Saeed's representations of queer desire and masculinity as they emerge in the pages of his private journal, *The Book of Imaginary Companions*. An erotic journal the artist started during his lengthy period of recuperation following the shooting, it was never meant to be seen by the public, until Salima Hashmi urged Saeed to submit a few of its pages to the first American exhibition of contemporary Pakistani art at the Asia Society.[lxxx] In the exhibition catalogue, Ataullah characterizes these pages as filled with "irony, wit, and outright profanity" in their representations of individuals "often engaged in sexual activity and range from Saeed himself to the actor Shan, popular crooner Ali Azmat, and artists Paul Cezanne and Sadequain."[lxxxi]

Consider a drawing (fig. 6) from Saeed's journal, of a half nude man. A frame surrounds the man, though it does not contain him. Urdu script is layered over his face and groin. Though he lacks facial features, his mouth is intelligible and gapes open seductively. He wears a wife-beater, which has been rolled up as he tears open his broad, hairy chest to reveal a distorted map of Pakistan. The section of the map in focus depicts the area known as Balochistan. Balochistan is a province with a separatist political movement, including militant insurgents, and its own Balochi language.[lxxxii] It is unclear why Saeed chose to illustrate Balochistan. Perhaps Saeed is aligning himself with the marginality that Balochistanis experience in Pakistan. Yet, the lack of clarity is representative of the fact that the drawing exists in a journal that was originally intended to be private. Impartial knowledge, here, is a given, and deeply intertwined with, and masking in a way, the artist's subjectivity.[lxxxiii]

The drawing is also representative of Saeed's relationship and affinities with Zahoor and Indian modernist Bhupen Khakhar. The composition of the drawing may relate to Zahoor's influence on Saeed, in the form of the frame and its deconstruction. However, the drawing also shares similarities to Bhupen Khakhar's *Image in a Man's Heart* (fig. 7), in which a man's gaping chest cavity reveals images of his past male lovers. The image is a reminiscent of representations of Hanuman tearing his chest open to reveal Ram and Sita. As Karin Zitzewitz writes, Khakhar resisted gay identities and politics, and opted instead to use devotional imagery to ground his queerness in histories of the subcontinent so as to translate his queer desires into a language that would be intelligible to Indian audiences.[lxxxiv] The aesthetics of bhakti enabled Khakhar to express his sexuality as distinct from the "in a sense, normative" conception of same-sex love as propagated by gay politics, and instead legible through the viewer's personal corpothetic, embodied response.[lxxxv] Though Saeed's piece may relay his affinities with Khakhar, Saeed's piece more strongly registers as an erotic representation of a hegemonic, yet queered, Pakistani masculinity.

Following Judith Butler, masculinities are performative and thereby constructed.[lxxxvi] The binary of masculine and feminine, as a mode of controlling public and private spheres of reproduction and capital, relies on patriarchal imaginings of masculinity. Hegemonic South Asian masculinities are grounded in heteronormative sexualities and practices constructed by the colonial project.[lxxxvii] Often, South Asian men were described as either effeminate or overly sexual, requiring nationalist projects to further regulate masculinities in the wake of colonial and imperial power. [lxxxviii] Due to the fact that the country has experienced three military regimes in its brief history, militant masculinities are a dominant form of gendered performativity, and have been bolstered by Islamic fundamentalist groups, too.[lxxxix] These masculinities require that men appear aggressive and fit to fight for a Muslim nationalism or transnational consciousness, particularly when the nation was first being established.[xc] While the Pakistani state deploys certain conceptions of masculinity for its dominant ideological projects, Saeed also constructs masculinities, most prevalent in his work from this time period onwards, for his own artistic agenda that runs counter to these dominant ideologies by working within their parameters.

Saeed's construction and utilization of masculinity is part of a larger tradition in Pakistani contemporary art that seeks to dismantle colonialist, imperialist, and nationalist masculinities. It recalls Basir Mahmood, whose videos and photography situate men in homosocial situations and represent masculinity as a site of complex affective registers, including love, pain, desire, weakness, and humiliation.[xci] It is interesting, then, that the figures that populate Saeed's drawings, like the one from the page of his journal, are men whose bodies fit into stereotypical conceptions of masculinity, with their broad muscular bodies, prominent genitals, and facial hair. The bodies can be likened to Dravidian and Gandharan sculptures of male bodies, but Saeed overlays these references with hegemonic representations of Pakistani masculinities. This can be understood as a disidentificatory tactic, in the sense that Saeed draws from representations of state-sponsored masculine bodies and imbues them with his own subjectivity and queer desire.

A significant shift in Saeed's practice occurs in the late 2000s, when collage and textuality is finally exchanged more completely for figurative paintings that depict queer male bodies and moments of intimacy through his disidentifications with Islamic theology, as per Sufism, and with representations of masculinities. I view this synthesis as one that manifests in his rendering of spaces of queer intimacies. Gopinath articulates queer intimacies as "the micropolitical spaces of the body, the family, and the domestic as key spaces where power under successive colonial and nationalist regimes is consolidated, as well as the spaces where the colonial (or postcolonial) 'order of things' may be disrupted and fractured."[xcii] Through his artistic strategies and their spiritual undertones, Saeed, in a sense, queers Pakistani masculinities more stereotypically known for their aggression and heteronormative practices by placing them in intimate spaces imbued with Sufi narratives and thought.

Sufi Saints, Beloveds, and Queer Intimacies

Throughout his career, Sufism has been an important strand in Saeed's practice. The homoerotic sentiments that pervade his paintings are, in a sense, legitimized by his disidentifications with a hegemonic Sufi Islam through Sufi thought. He evokes these disidentifications through symbolism, colors, and narrative compositions. A painting that captures some of these ideas is *Wrestling with an Imaginary Opponent* (fig. 8*)*. A representative work from a 2010 solo exhibition at Aicon Gallery in New York City called *Habits of Being*, this painting depicts two men wrestling against each other; the figure on the right is rendered in brown flesh tones and wears a blue garment while the depiction of the figure on the left evokes the aesthetics of a digitally manipulated x-ray or inverted image. In the background to the left, a man sits on his knees and holds a mask, gazing into its hollow eyes. On the right, a woman wearing a *shalwar kameez* and *dubatta* (scarf) reads what appears to be the Quran.[xciii] The painting combines Saeed's previous erotic representations of hegemonic Pakistani masculinities with Sufi undertones of homoeroticism and aspects of dominant Islamic ideologies. The woman reading the Quran is representative of these normative Islamic practices, yet her placement in the background situates these practices as peripheral to the otherwise homoerotic encounter between the two wrestling men. The figures can be read as two separate figures, or, as Saeed more likely intended, as a man wrestling with a version of himself in the guise of another man.[xciv]

The wrestling sport is deeply embedded in South Asian history; its origins can be found in Indo-Persian traditions which arrived in the subcontinent through the Mughals, as well as in more ancient Hindu traditions.[xcv] Joseph Alter's *The Wrestler's Body: Identity and Ideology in North India* centers on predominantly Hindu wrestling institutions. His work is useful in thinking about the importance of the body of the wrestler, and how this body is imbued with certain values. According to Alter, the wrestler must undergo strict physical and nutritional regimens that, in practice, are essentially part and parcel of ascetic traditions. The wrestler must abstain from sex, avoid certain foods and drink, and commit himself—physically, mentally, and spiritually—to the wrestling institution, its guru, and its deity or deities.[xcvi] Bhakti plays a large role in facilitating the livelihoods and moral codes of wrestlers.[xcvii] There is no sense of sensory pleasure or stimulation in the act of wrestling; the body is devoid of erotic value and physical strength is believed to be enhanced by celibacy.[xcviii] Alter clearly states that homoerotic behavior is not a common practice in contemporary wrestling institutions.[xcix]

To shed some light on the intersection between Islam and wrestling, it is helpful to turn to Rosalind O'Hanlon's work on Mughal wrestling practices. She explains that wrestling was a precursor, a bodily exercise of preparation, for joining the military.[c] Unlike the wrestlers that Alter researched, who were from varying castes and ultimately stripped of social hierarchy in the face of their guru and larger wrestling institution, wrestlers in the Mughal domain were predominantly the sons of urban elites.[ci] In addition to its connections with the military, Mughal-era wrestling was often a form of entertainment or leisure.[cii] O'Hanlon spends time unfolding the spiritual origins of wrestling as embedded in Hinduism and bhakti through Sanskrit texts. Indo-Persian texts, on the other hand, seem to be more secular in their approach. This history makes Saeed's decision to use the wrestler's body as a vessel of Islamic, Sufi spirituality all the more fascinating. O'Hanlon's focus on the military also undergirds Saeed's simultaneous, continued interest in the masculine, military body. It appears that Saeed may be disidentifying with elite Mughal history and dominant conceptions of Hindu wrestling traditions as a means of producing his own understanding of the intersections between the body, sexuality, the self, and the other.

Sufism is a large composite of various traditions and ritual practices, and has a contested history. Alexander Knysh's *Sufism: A New History of Islamic Mysticism* resists many myths about Sufism. He suggests, though he is not the first to, that Sufism emerged out of the intermixing of various Christian and Jewish monastic groups, in addition to Islamic orthodoxy.[ciii] He also contests the commonly held belief that Sufism is a branch of Sunni Islam, by comparing some facets of Sufi practice with Shia practice.[civ] Knysh fleshes out various hypotheses about the whys and hows of Sufism; one hypothesis he entertains is that in the premodern and modern epochs, Muslims sought to "deliberately create and cultivate their preferred religious attitude within the confines of their native community of religious commitment."[cv] This idea is useful in thinking about Saeed's relationship with Islam, and how he has carved a niche for himself within

Islamic traditions via Sufi thought. It also runs parallel, in some ways, to the idea of disidentification as a creative tool used within a larger, hegemonic structure.

Most pertinent for Saeed are the teachings and legacy of Shah Hussayn (1539-99 C.E.), a Punjabi *qalandar* and poet memorialized for his transgressive behaviors and homoerotic relationship with a Brahmin boy named Madho Lal.[cvi] Critics and historians have remarked on the significance that Shah Hussayn has for Saeed.[cvii] Akbar Naqvi writes that the imagery of water, prevalent in many of the other paintings in *Habits of Being*, has a "special resonance for the painter, because Shah Hussain was said to have recited the entire Quran standing on one leg in the Ravi."[cviii] Ataullah states that Saeed is known to frequently visit the Madho Lal Shrine, a shrine that attracts non-normative individuals and is located in an area popular for practitioners of same-sex love.[cix] Indeed, the relationship between the Pakistani state and Sufi saints, particularly qalandars, is a complex one. Katherine Ewing has shown how shrines commemorating transgressive Sufis, like Shah Hussayn, are preserved by Pakistani leaders for the sake of nationalist agendas, despite their sometimes transgressive celebrations and activities.[cx] Moreover, that a transgressive figure like Shah Hussayn has been monumentalized as one of Lahore's patron saints is also an intriguing phenomenon.[cxi] The saint, therefore, clearly resonates with Saeed on multiple registers, including the sexual, the profane, the intimate, the social, and the national.

Shah Hussayn was ultimately executed by the Mughal court—anal impalement was one method he was threatened with—for his outlandish behavior, which entailed "sexual intimacy, social rebellion, and doctrinal heresy."[cxii] Shah Hussayn was at once a problem and a prize. The emperor Jahangir recognized the value in his teachings, and ordered one of his courtiers to spend time with the saint and write down his teachings and acts. These writings have been largely lost in time; what remains is a long poem one of Shah Hussayn's followers wrote a decade after his death, to commemorate the saint and preserve some of his spiritual contributions. Entitled *Haqiqat al-Furaqa*, or "The Truth of Those Impoverished by Love," this poem contains detailed verses about the saint's intertwined sexuality, spirituality, and penchant for social rebellion.[cxiii]

In his book *Sufis and Saints' Bodies: Mysticism, Corporeality and Sacred Power in Islamic Culture*, historian Scott Kugle looks at Shah Hussayn through the lens of the body. By prioritizing the body, Kugle challenges the privileged place that the mind and spirit enjoy in Sufi discourse. Kugle writes that Shah Hussayn's "bodily comportment had great theological significance, for he saw the body in all its postures as spiritually vivid, and through sensual pleasures he crafted a very rebellious notion of morality as 'spiritual play.'"[cxiv] He focuses on Shah Hussayn's performativity of gender and sexuality, which he exhibited through the movement of his body in streets through song and dance, and his amorous relationship with Madho Lal.

The work that Kugle's scholarship does participates in Najmabadi's critique of modernity and its structures of power—namely colonial, imperial, and nationalist structures—in erasing the materiality of queer desire in Sufi traditions. Instead of considering homoeroticism as a sensual and physical bond between two men, the effects of modernity have attempted to resituate Sufi homoeroticism as a purely aesthetic and non-physical attraction through which Sufi men can attain a proximity to the divine.[cxv] By positing Sufi love as transcendental, colonial, imperial and nationalist structures of power have rendered invisible the materiality of homoerotic desire and love as an embodied experience. Saeed's work, therefore, also works to upend these myths of desire and queerness.

Saeed’s use of the wrestlers’ bodies refers to Hindu and Indo-Persian traditions, both of which seem to deplete the body of sensuality for the sake of spiritual enhancement, physical prowess, or both. He renders these bodies as muscular and masculine, evoking the nationalist conception of male bodies as they have continuously appeared in Saeed’s work for decades. Yet if we situate the legacy and importance of Shah Hussayn into this work, the body as a site of physical strength and spirituality is enabled by its very inherent eroticism and recklessness. The title of the painting suggests that we are witness to an intrapersonal conflict, in which the two wrestlers are one and the same. And yet, the sexual energy of the piece is illustrated through the strain of muscles, bodily contact, the wrestlers’ lips, slightly ajar, and their eyes locked in an intense gaze. The conflation of intrapersonal conflict and bodily engagement relates that Saeed is both disidentifying with dominant understandings of Sufi men engaging in non-physical homoeroticism, by charging the bodies with sexuality and also suggesting that the bodies are of the same man.

Conclusion: Emerging Feminist and Queer Artistic Practices in Pakistan

Saeed’s practice has developed out of his disidentifications with hegemonic, state-sponsored masculinities, Zahoor’s modernist approach to art making, and Islamic traditions. Through these disidentifications, Saeed grounds his queer desires within and against the dominant ideologies of the state of Pakistan. These dominant ideologies are the product of nationalism, and seek to uphold heteronormative, patriarchal masculinities, and oppress non-normative individuals.

The theory of disidentification is predicated on the existence of cultural logics that oppress non-normative identities and uphold heteronormative binaries through the mechanism of state power. In the United States, heteronormativity, white supremacy, and misogyny permeate

American society and function as a support for state power.[cxvi] Similar categorizations of oppression--albeit with variances in their sources, functions, and affect-- undergird state power in Pakistan. While the social atmosphere in Pakistan is often characterized as imbued with confusion, skepticism, and disillusionment as a result of political corruption, sectarian violence, lack of or inconsistency of basic resources, and more, this paper focuses more specifically on the effects of heteronormativity and patriarchy as they have been reproduced by the Islamization of Pakistani law--specifically in the form of Sunni Muslim ideology--since the 1970s.[cxvii]

Saeed's practice is one avenue of potentiality for envisioning alternative futures in which queerness, the state, religion, gender, and sexuality can overlap in a framework of relationality. Women artists like Naiza Khan, Bani Abidi, Shahzia Sikander, and Saira Wasim are significant players in the global art market. Their feminist art practices also grapple with such issues through a variety of mediums including painting, drawing, sculpture, video, and installation. Hashmi has played a significant role in expanding the importance of female Pakistani artists by publishing a variety of texts that resituate women as central to the production of art and artistic knowledge in Pakistan.[cxviii] Other notable examples that emphasize the importance of feminist art are Dadi's work on Naiza Khan,[cxix] and Whiles's work on various female neo-miniaturists.[cxx] A description about Khan's work, as per Dadi, alludes to one artist's feminist vision within a larger landscape of artists working on similar issues. Dadi writes that Khan's practice poses "strategic and fragmentary genealogical links with 'Islamic art' and other discursive traditions, even while recoding them toward an engagement with the body and with issues of the psyche shaped by racism and patriarchy."[cxxi] Similarly, other female artists use comparable strategies while also broadening the scope of their works to contend with nuanced understandings of sexuality, the body, nationalism, femininity, and tradition.

Amid this desire to elevate the practices of female artists, it seems that queer artists fall through the cracks. Najmabadi states that, while feminist movements in Iran have gained traction, same-sex loving men are often alienated from these victories.[cxxii] There appears to be a similar issue in Pakistan. Feminist movements seem to include only women; until recently, queer men have been somewhat left out of their activist circles. The *khwaja sira* and *hijra* communities are also groups of non-normative individuals for whom activist circles and legal groups have mobilized; while they do not fall within the scope of this paper, it is important to remember their existences in Pakistani society. [cxxiii] There is a growing number of Pakistani activists, both in Pakistan and in the diaspora, whose efforts to better the livelihoods of these various non-normative individuals are certainly laudable. Cultural anthropologist Faris Khan provides a general overview of some of these groups and their successes in social and legal realms.[cxxiv] For example, the state now legally recognizes a third gender which individuals can identify with on ID cards, and recent activist movements have made it possible for *hijras* to join the police force in Sindh.[cxxv]

These victories have enabled the bodies of queer men to come to the fore. In comparison to Saeed's earlier work, like *Years of Sleeping Dangerously*, the body in Saeed's more recent work is unbarred, released. It is no longer cloaked under layers of collage or script. Rather, it is very much at the threshold of his practice. The bodies he paints are vulnerable and strong, erotic and innocent, spiritual and physical. They are indicative of a changing cultural, and even political, field, one that is more tolerant of non-normative individuals and sexualities.

Contemporary artists continue to be involved in these efforts towards liberation; their works reflect queer desires, homoeroticism, and masculinity in ways that can be understood as extensions of the work that Saeed's practice has also continued out of a longer history of queerness in the subcontinent. At the 2018 Lahore Biennale, artist-curators Abdullah Qureshi and Natasha Malik co-curated “River in an Ocean,” a group exhibition including the works of feminist and queer artists like. On Qureshi’s website, the exhibition is described as including “the works of 27 contemporary artists and collaborators…addressing themes of gender, institutional inequality, traditional roles and spaces assigned for women, as well as the challenging of heteronormativity through queer perspectives.”[cxxvi] A newer generation of queer artists is indeed emerging, including, among others, Salman Toor, Abdullah Qureshi, Aziz Sohail, and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. The hegemony of the Pakistani state and its Islamic ideologies continue to persist, but exhibitions of homoerotic artworks, underground queer raves and parties, and community engagement with these marginalized groups are working to shift this hegemony from the ground up.

In this way, in my efforts to analyze Saeed’s practice, I hope to show the stakes and possibilities of inserting a queer lens in understandings of Pakistani art, and the nation’s history, that can give way to and realize imagined relational pathways of desires and becomings in a postcolonial, global web of transnational artistic production.

Appendix of Images

Fig. 1: Anwar Saeed, *Years of Sleeping Dangerously*, pen, ink, and collage on paper, 1987

Fig. 2: Anwar Saeed, *Silent Flowering*, graphite on paper, ca. 1980s

Fig. 3: Anwar Saeed, *Different Possible Endings to a Story*, photo etching and aquatint, 1993

Fig. 4: Zahoor ul Akhlaq, *Untitled*, acrylic on canvas, 1994

Fig. 5: Anwar Saeed, *The Other World*, acrylic and charcoal on plywood, 1993

Fig. 6: Anwar Saeed, drawing from *Book of Imaginary Companions*, mixed media on paper, 2008

Fig. 7: Bhupen Khakhar, *Image of a Man's Heart*, mixed media on canvas, 1999

Fig. 8: Anwar Saeed, *Wrestling with an Imaginary Opponent*, acrylic on canvas, 2010

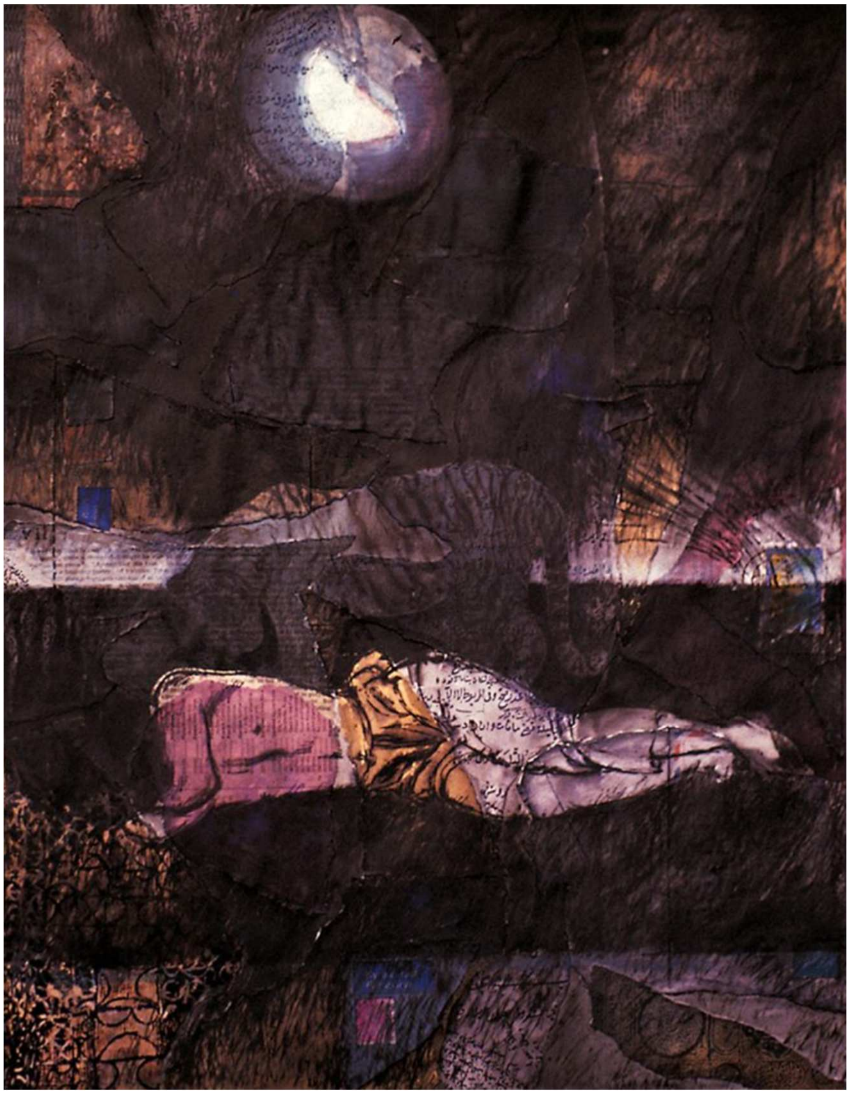


Fig. 1: Anwar Saeed, *Years of Sleeping Dangerously*, pen, ink, and collage on paper, 1987

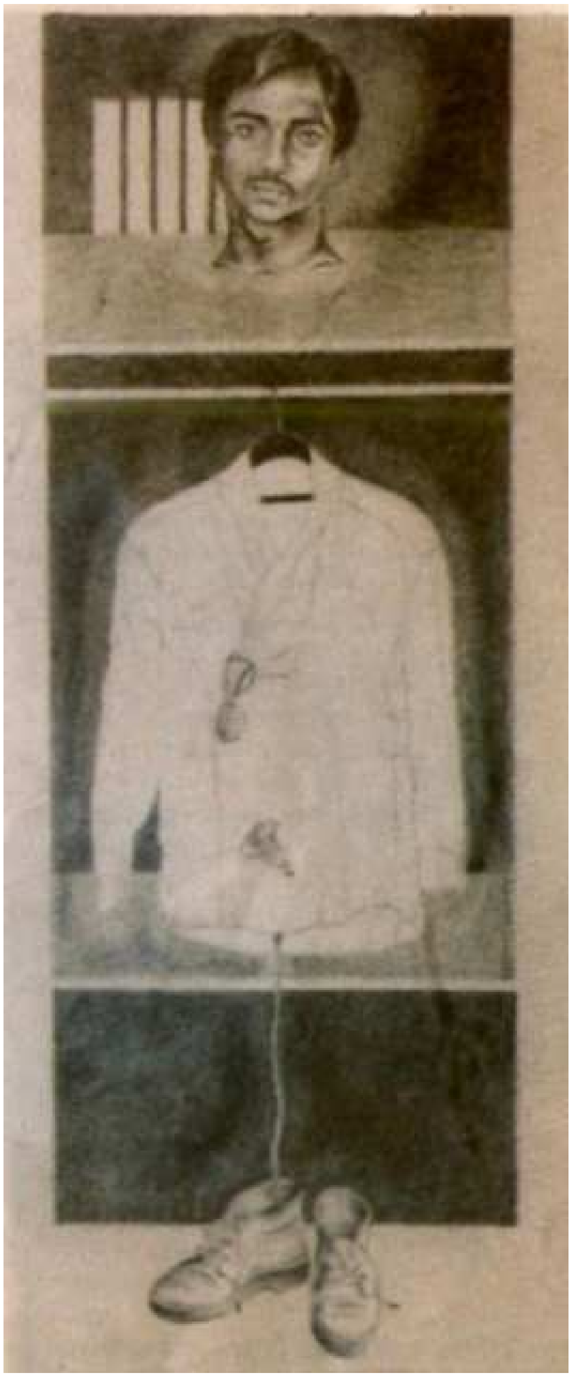
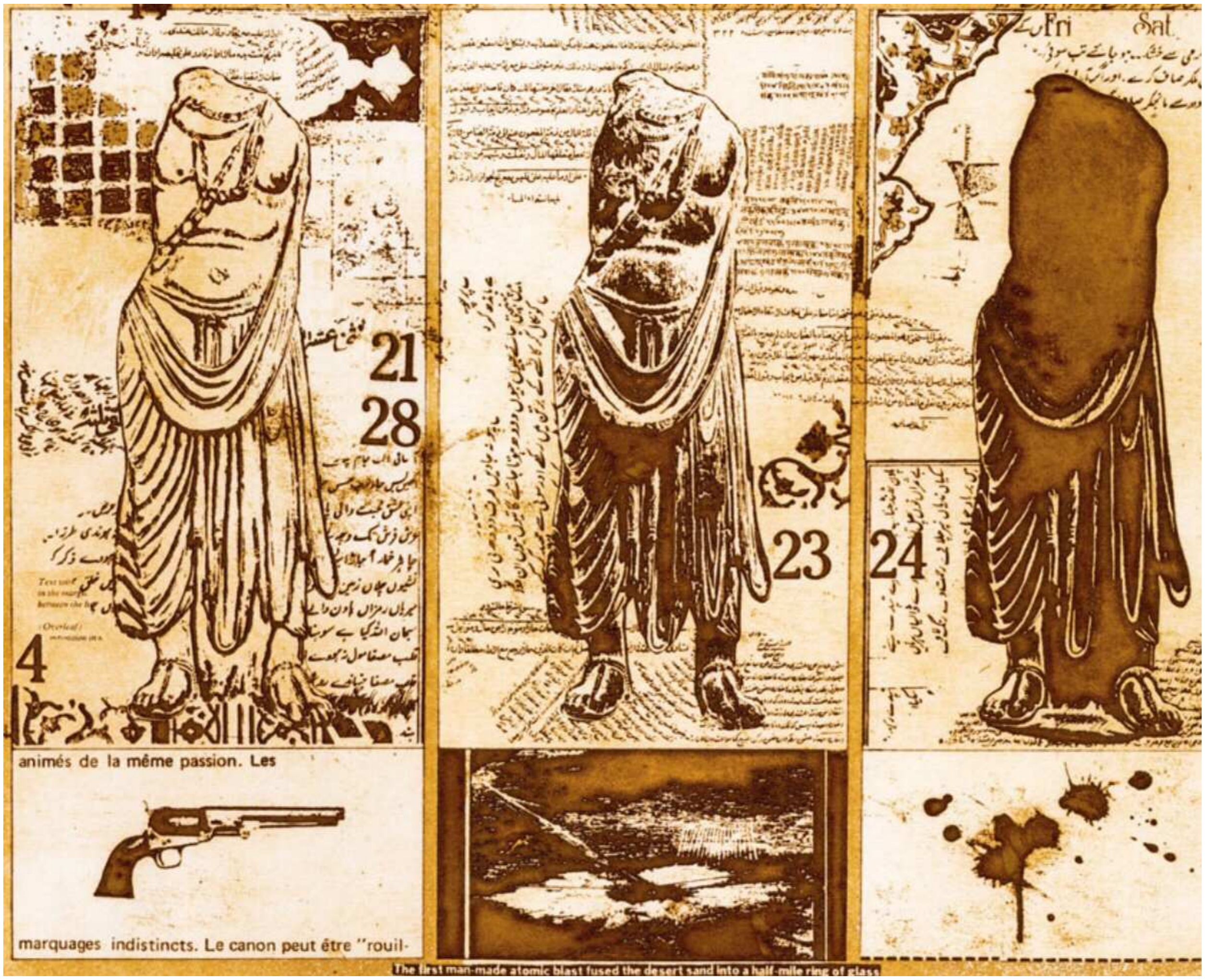


Fig. 2: Anwar Saeed, *Silent Flowering*, graphite on paper, ca. 1980s


Fri
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21
28
4
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24
animés de la même passion. Les
marquages indistincts. Le canon peut être "rouil-
The first man-made atomic blast fused the desert sand into a half-mile ring of glass

Fig. 3: Anwar Saeed, *Different Possible Endings to a Story*, photo etching and aquatint, 1993

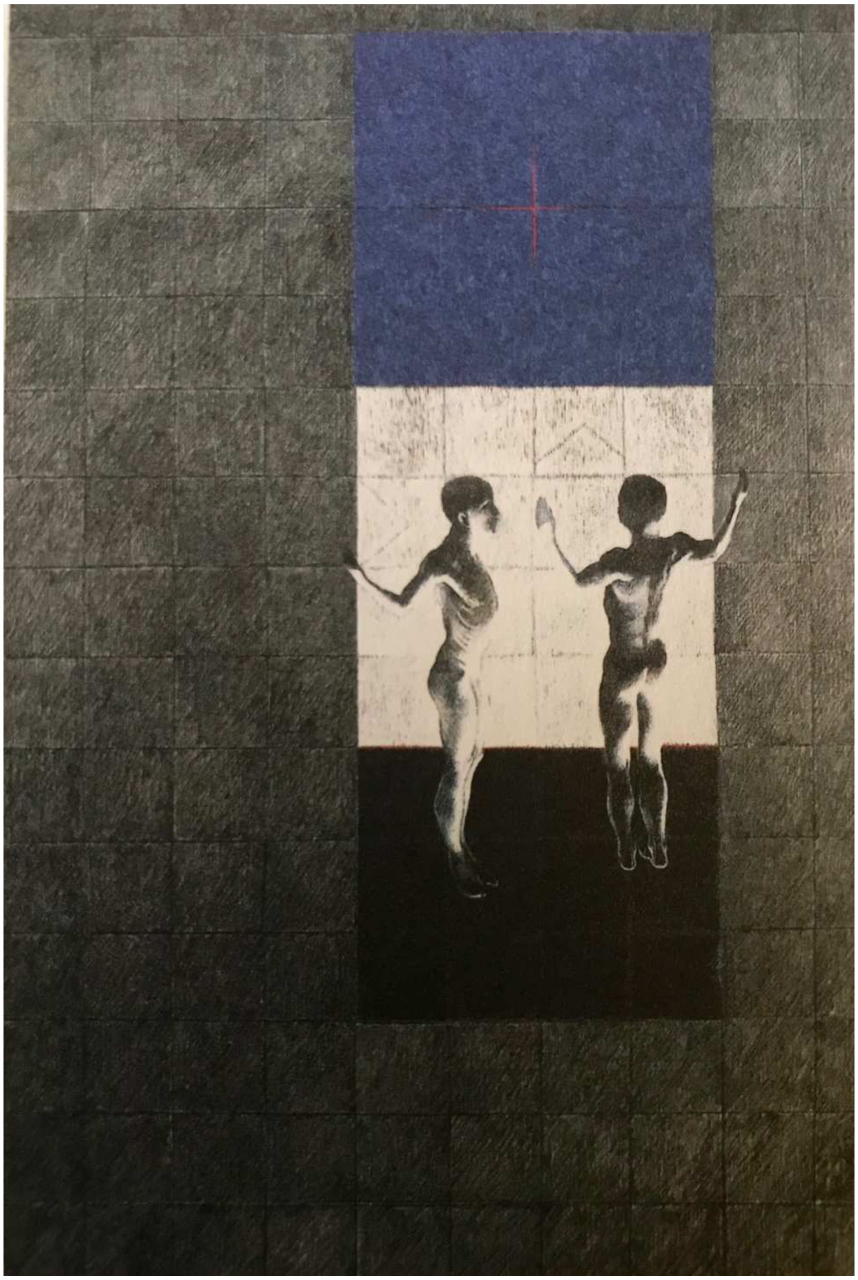

Fig. 4: Zahoor ul Akhlaq, *Untitled*, acrylic on canvas, 1994

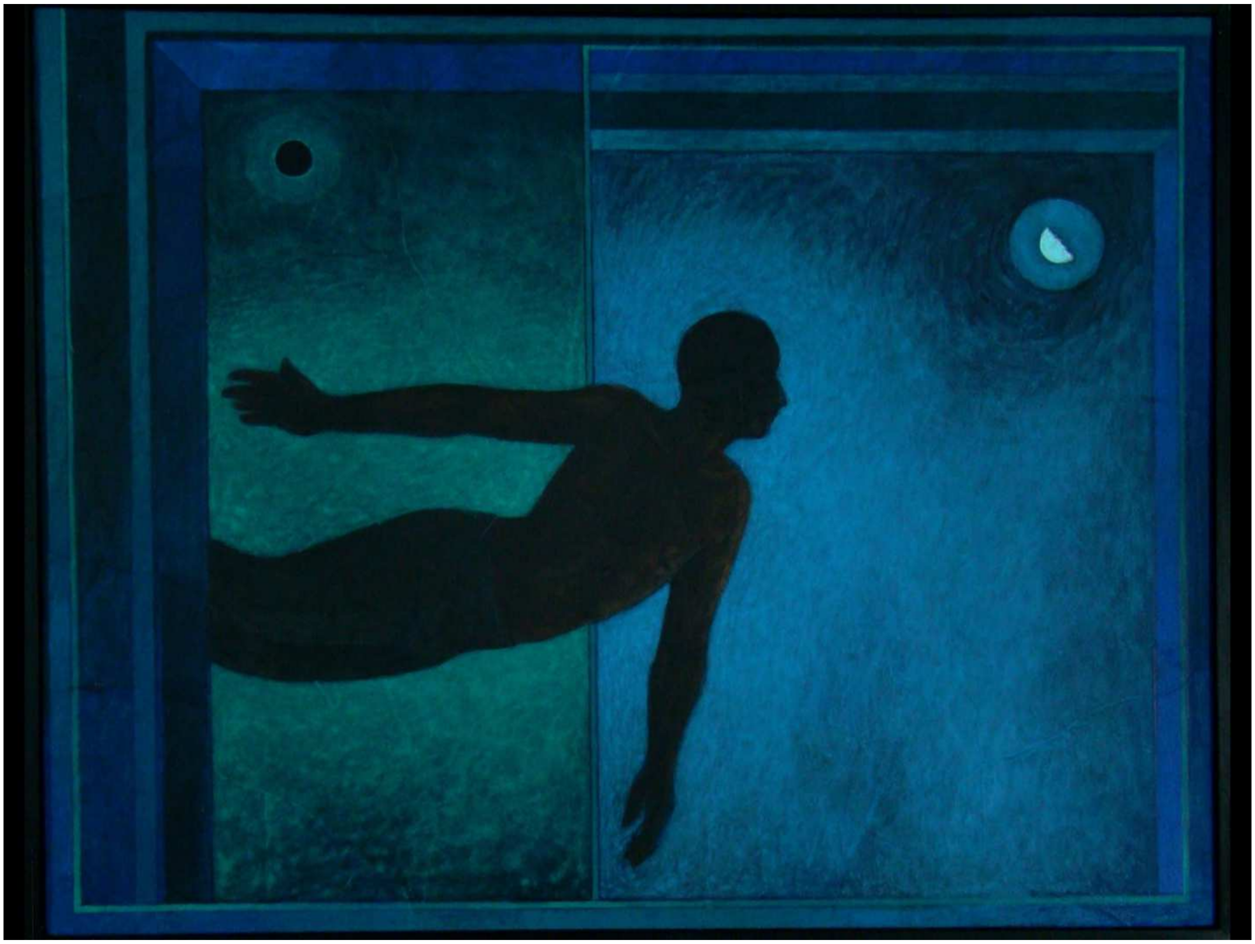

Fig. 5: Anwar Saeed, *The Other World*, acrylic and charcoal on plywood, 1993

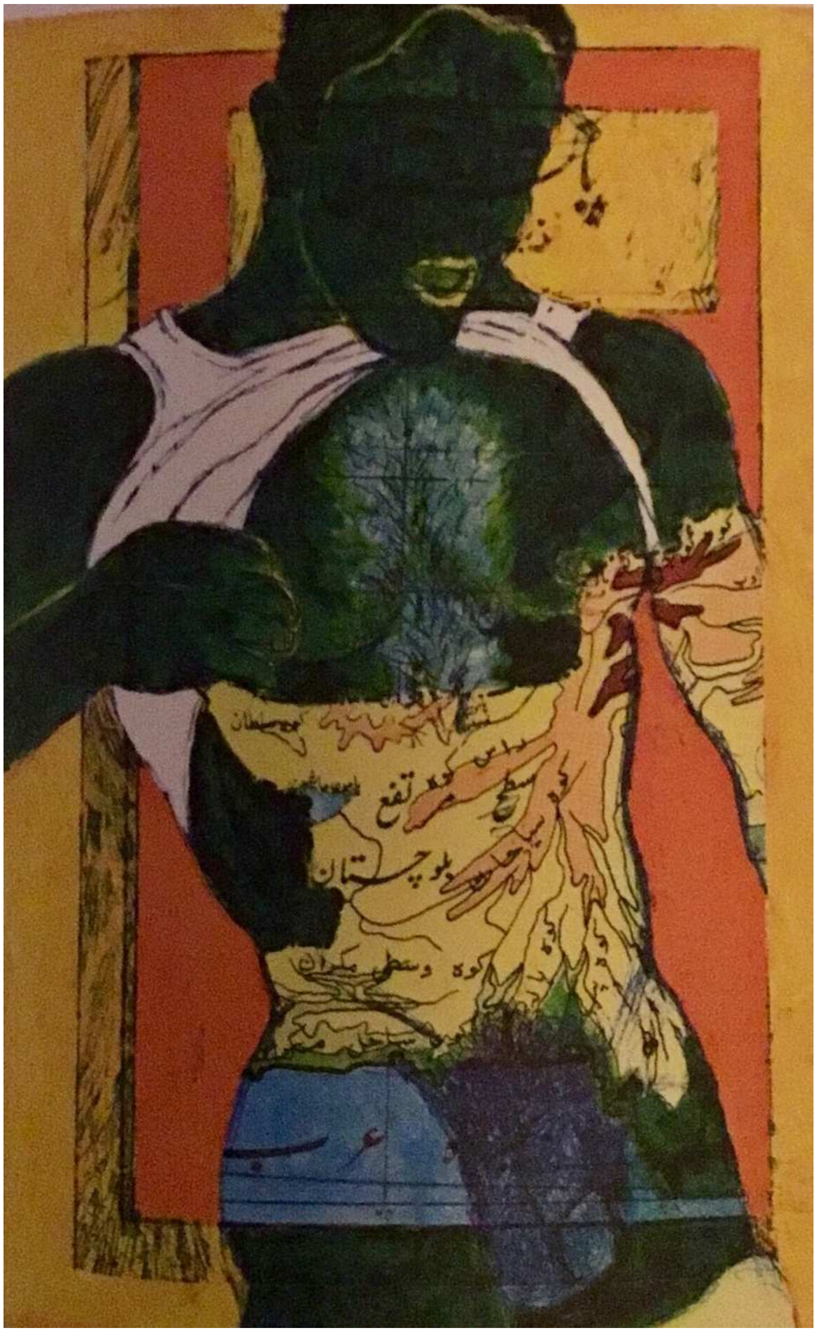
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Fig. 6: Anwar Saeed, drawing from *Book of Imaginary Companions*, mixed media on paper, 2008

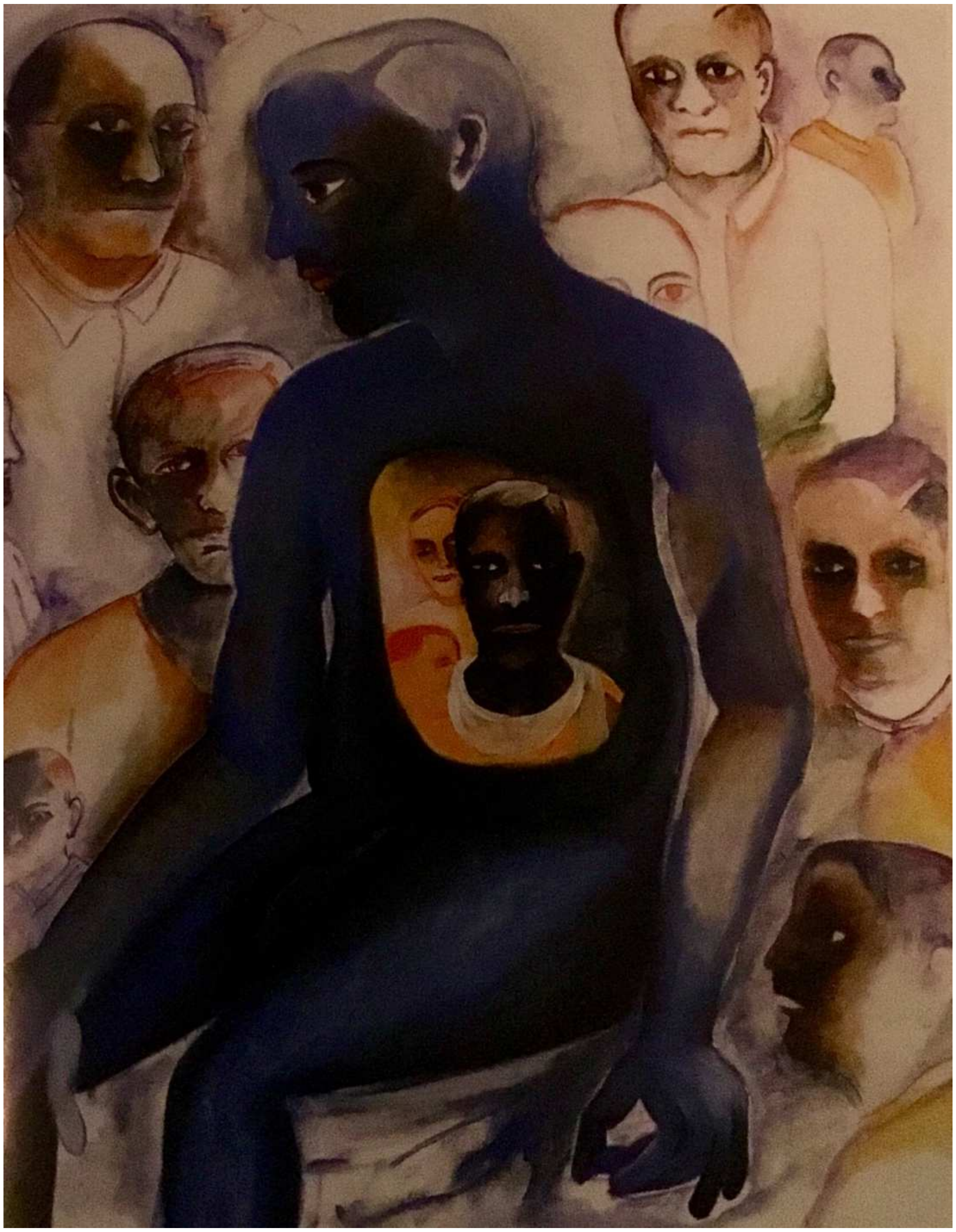

Fig. 7: Bhupen Khakhar, *Image of a Man's Heart*, mixed media on canvas, 1999

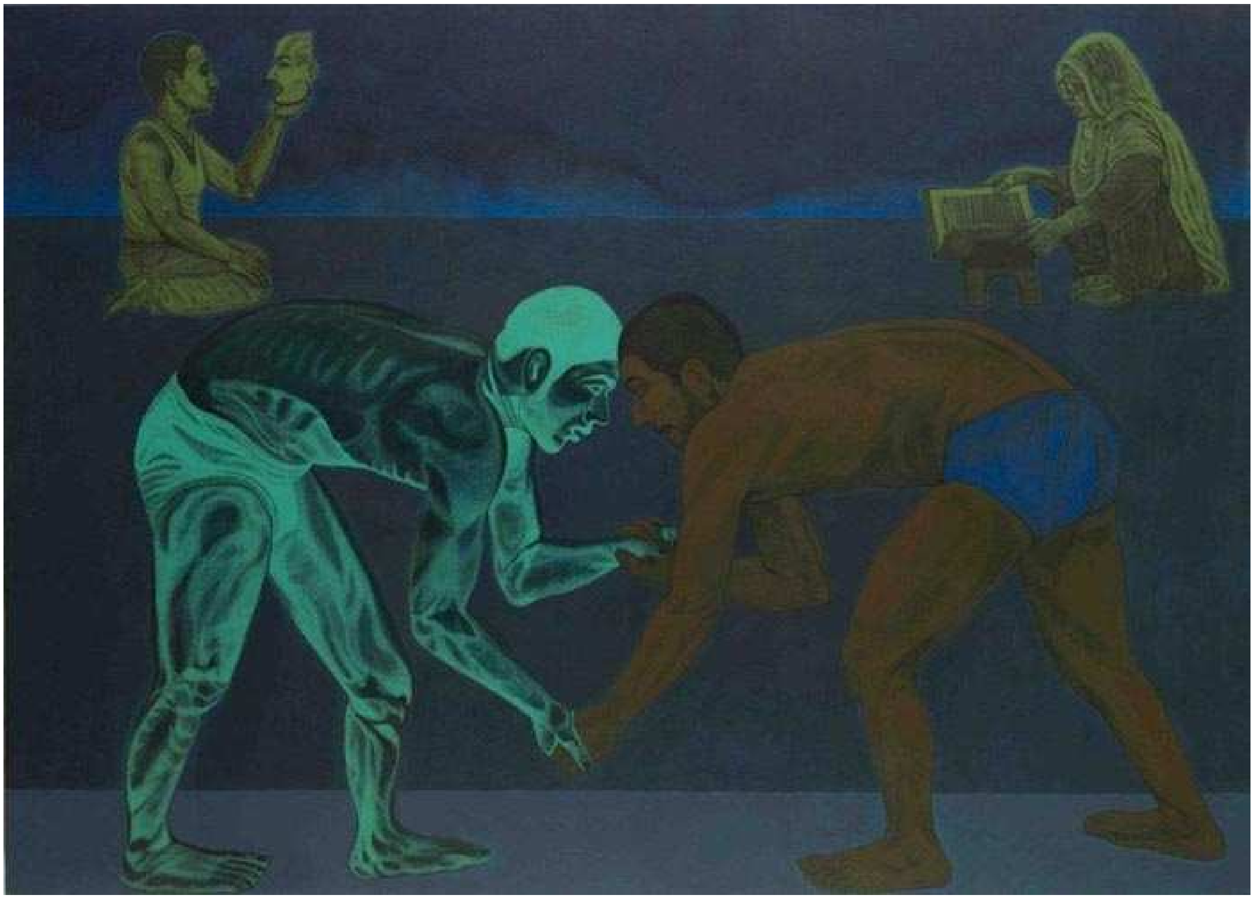

Fig. 8: Anwar Saeed, *Wrestling with an Imaginary Opponent*, acrylic on canvas, 2010

Notes

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[i] Naazish Ataullah, “Of Whispers and Secret Callings: On Anwar Saeed and Lahore,” in *The Eye Still Seeks: Contemporary Art from Pakistan*, ed. Salima Hashmi (Paddington, N.S.W.: Ivan Dougherty Gallery, 2001), 70.

[ii] Ataullah, “Of Whispers and Secret Callings,” 70.

[iiiii] Akbar Naqvi, *Image & Identity: Painting and Sculpture in Pakistan, 1947-1997* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2010), 193.

[iv] Quddus Mirza, "Amorous Words Dangerous Loves," *The News on Sunday* (Lahore), November 4, 2012.

[v] José Esteban Muñoz, *Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 11.

[vi] Louis Althusser, *Lenin and Marxism and Other Essays*, trans. Ben Brewster (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971), 127-87.

[vii] Muñoz, *Disidentifications*, 11.

[viii] Michel Pêcheux, *Language, Semantics, and Ideology* (London: Macmillan, 1982), 157-159.

[ix] Muñoz, *Disidentifications*, 11.

[x] Muñoz, *Disidentifications*, 6-8.

[xi] Vrushali Patil, "From Patriarchy to Intersectionality: A Transnational Feminist Assessment of How Far We've Really Come," *Signs* 38, no. 4 (2013): 863.

[xii] Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 108-115. Following Raymond Williams’s Marxist optics and definitions of ideology and hegemony (via Gramsci), this paper is interested in understanding how artists disidentify with the ideology of the state and thus proffer alternative hegemonies through a selective aesthetic process.

[xiii] Naqvi, *Image & Identity*, 193.

[xiv] Sehr Jalil, "Studio Visit; Anwar Saeed-Art Now Pakistan," *ArtSlant*. February 11, 2016. https://www.artslant.com/ny/articles/show/45086-studio-visit-anwar-saeed---art-now-pakistan.

[xv] Gayatri Gopinath, *Impossible Desires: Queer Diasporas and South Asian Public Cultures* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), 176.

[xvi] Faris Khan, "Pakistan, 'Queer,'" in *Global Encyclopedia of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) History*, ed. Howard Chiang, Anjali Arondekar (Farmington Hills, Mich.: Charles Scribner's Sons, 2019), 1194.

[xvii] Afsaneh Najmabadi, *Women with Mustaches and Men without Beards: Gender and Sexual Anxieties of Iranian Modernity* (University of California Press, 2005), 57.

[xviii] Refer to Indrani Chatterjee, "When 'Sexuality' Floated Free of Histories in South Asia," *Journal of Asian Studies*, 71 no. 4 (2012): 945-962; Suparna Bhaskaran, "The Politics of Penetration: Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code," in *Queering India: Same-sex Love and Eroticism in Indian Culture and Society*, ed. Vanita, Ruth (New York, NY: Routledge, 2002), 15-29; for texts on homoeroticism in Islamic traditions, see Ruth Vanita, *Same-sex Love in India: Readings from Literature and History* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 107-190.

[xix] Ataullah, "Of Whispers and Secret Callings," 72.

[xx] Virginia Whiles, *Art and Polemic in Pakistan: Cultural Politics and Tradition in Contemporary Miniature Painting*, (London; New York: Tauris Academic Studies, 2010), 16.

[xxi] Whiles, *Art and Polemic in Pakistan*, 18.

[xxii] Whiles, *Art and Polemic in Pakistan*, 19.

[xxiii] Ayesha Jalal, *The Struggle for Pakistan: A Muslim Homeland and Global Politics*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2014), 224.

[xxiv] Suparna Bhaskaran, “The Politics of Penetration: Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code,” in *Queering India: Same-sex Love and Eroticism in Indian Culture and Society*, ed. Vanita, Ruth (New York, NY: Routledge, 2002), 18-20.

[xxv] Najmabadi, *Women with Mustaches and Men without Beards*, 18.

[xxvi] Najmabadi, *Women with Mustaches and Men without Beards*, 17.

[xxvii] Bhaskaran, “The Politics of Penetration: Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code,” 18.

[xxviii] Ataullah, “Of Whispers and Secret Callings,” 72.

[xxix] Ataullah, “Of Whispers and Secret Callings,” 70.

[xxx] Ayesha Khan, "Drawing on Inner Strength," *Dawn* (Karachi), January 18, 2003. http://chawkandi.co/news-and-media-details.php?media=108-drawing-on-inner-strength.

[xxxi] Ataullah, “Of Whispers and Secret Callings,” 70.

[xxxii] Iftikhar Dadi, *Modernism and the Art of Muslim South Asia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 163.

[xxxiii] Ayesha Khan. "Drawing on Inner Strength."

[xxxiv] Salima Hashmi, "An Intelligent Rebellion: Women Artists of Pakistan," *India International Centre Quarterly* 24, no. 2/3 (1997): 230.

[xxxv] Kavita Singh, “Material Fantasy: Museums in Colonial India,” *Art and Visual Culture in India, 1857-1947*, ed. Gayatri Sinha (Mumbai: March, 2009), 40-57.

[xxxvi] Salima Hashmi, “The Urge to Spin a Story,” in *The Eye Still Seeks: Contemporary Art from Pakistan*, ed. Salima Hashmi (Paddington, N.S.W.: Ivan Dougherty Gallery, 2001), 123.

[xxxvii] Artists include but are not limited to Shahzia Sikander, Aisha Khalid, Imran Qureshi, Humaira Abid, Rashid Rana, Saira Wasim, Salima Hashmi, Jamil Naqsh.

[xxxviii] Whiles, *Art and Polemic in Pakistan*, 6.

[xxxix] Simone Wille. *Modern Art in Pakistan: History, Tradition, Place* (London: Taylor and Francis, 2017), 40.

[xl] It is important to note, however, that the NCA is ultimately a national institution. While the problems that arise from this do not fall within the scope of this paper, it is significant to remember that the NCA still participates in creating an artistic hegemony that at times is in friction with other regional art schools in Pakistan.

[xli] Dadi, *Modernism and the Art of Muslim South Asia*, 31.

[xlii] Dadi, *Modernism and the Art of Muslim South Asia*, 218.

[xliii] José Esteban Muñoz, *Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics*. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 5.

[xliv] Simone Wille, *Modern Art in Pakistan: History, Tradition, Place* (London: Taylor and Francis, 2017), 58.

[xlv] Dadi, *Modernism and the Art of Muslim South Asia*, 2.

[xlvi] Whiles, *Art and Polemic in Pakistan*, 27.

[xlvii] Whiles, *Art and Polemic in Pakistan*, 57.

[xlviii] Dadi, *Modernism and the Art of Muslim South Asia*, 42.

[xlix] Ataullah, “Of Whispers and Secret Callings,” 70.

[l] Hashmi, “The Urge to Spin a Story,” 124.

[li] Sehr Jalil, "Studio Visit; Anwar Saeed-Art Now Pakistan," *ArtSlant*. February 11, 2016. https://www.artslant.com/ny/articles/show/45086-studio-visit-anwar-saeed---art-now-pakistan.

[lii] Whiles, *Art and Polemic in Pakistan*, 57.

[liii] For sources that claim that Saeed worked well with printmaking, refer to Mirza, “Amorous Words Dangerous Loves”; Ataullah, “Of Whispers and Secret Callings,” 69-72; Virginia Whiles, “In and out of Pakistan," *Third Text* 14, no. 52 (2000): 103-10.

[liv] Gregory Minissale, "Double – Vision," April 7, 2008. http://chawkandi.co/news-and-media-details.php?media=106-double-%E2%80%93-vision.

[lv] Sairah Irshad, “Etched in the Mind,” *The Herald*, April 1988, 124. http://chawkandi.co/news-and-media-details.php?media=113-etched-in-the-mind.

[lvi] Dadi, *Modernism and the Art of Muslim South Asia*, 223. Here I refer to Dadi’s analysis of this print. He writes, “the work suggests that the unfolding future of South Asia remains fraught, caught between an ensemble of creative and destructive trajectories, yet also continues to be mutually dependent upon its diverse communities.”

[lvii] Dadi, *Modernism and the Art of Muslim South Asia*, 223. “The work, which was made in 1993, offers a salient critique of narrow ideologies of Pakistani ‘Islamic’ nationalism that have sought to deny it its non-Muslim past and had become greatly magnified during the reign of General Zia in the 1980s.”

[lviii] For Zahoor’s interest in Sufism, refer to Wille, *Modern Art in Pakistan*, 51: “Zahoor ul Akhlaq’s own interest in Sufism, the esoteric dimension of Islam, is documented, although he spoke of it only in later interviews. A central doctrine of Sufism—unity in multiplicity---seems to pervade Zahoor ul Akhlaq’s works from the 1960s and 1970s when, due to the World of Islam Festival, taking place in the spring of 1976 in London, these questions took on new dimensions. Here, in particular, Titus Burckhardt’s publications are worth mentioning. In his writings on Islamic aesthetics, Burckhardt argued for the timeless spiritual unity of the Islamic visual tradition in all periods and regions.”

[lix] Naazish Ataullah, “Conflicts and Resolutions in the Narrative,” in *Hanging Fire: Contemporary Art from Pakistan*, ed. Salima Hashmi (New York: New Haven: Asia Society Museum; Distributed by Yale University Press, 2009), 51.

[lx] Wille, *Modern Art in Pakistan*, 17-40.

[lxi] Dadi, *Modernism and the Art of Muslim South Asia*, 205-216.

[lxii] Ataullah, “Conflicts and Resolutions in the Narrative,” 51-57.

[lxiii] Ataullah, “Conflicts and Resolutions in the Narrative,” 51.

[lxiv] Ataullah, “Conflicts and Resolutions in the Narrative,” 51.

[lxv] Ataullah, “Conflicts and Resolutions in the Narrative,” 51.

[lxvi] Roger Connah, *The Rest Is Silence Zahoor Ul Akhlaq: Art and Society in Pakistan* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2011), 273.

[lxvii] Bruce Baird, *Hijikata Tatsumi and Butoh: Dancing in a Pool of Gray Grits* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 6-10.

[lxviii] Connah, *The Rest Is Silence*, 273.

[lxix] Baird, *Hijikata Tatsumi and Butoh*, 6.

[lxx] Connah, *The Rest Is Silence*, 274.

[lxxi] Ataullah, “Conflicts and Resolutions in the Narrative,” 54.

[lxxii] Walker, Margaret E., *India's Kathak Dance in Historical Perspective* (Farnham: Routledge, 2016), 1-4.

[lxxiii] Whiles, *Art and Polemic in Pakistan*, 57.

[lxxiv] See, for example: Yael Rice, “Workshop as Network: A Case Study from Mughal South Asia,” *Artl@s Bulletin* 6, no. 3 (2017): 50-65.

[lxxv] Whiles, *Art and Polemic in Pakistan*, 53-54.

[lxxvi] Muñoz, *Disidentification,* 38.

[lxxvii] Muñoz, *Disidentification,* 39.

[lxxviii] Refer to Wille, *Modern Art in Pakistan*, 77-79.

[lxxix] José Esteban Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity* (New York: New York University Press, 2009), 1.

[lxxx] Ataullah, “Conflicts and Resolutions in the Narrative,” 51-57.

[lxxxi] Ataullah, “Conflicts and Resolutions in the Narrative,” 57.

[lxxxii] See, for example: Ayesha Jalal, *The Struggle for Pakistan: A Muslim Homeland and Global Politics*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2014), 148.

[lxxxiii] I acknowledge that this reading of Saeed’s relationship with Balochistan lacks a full context. A full discussion would include complex understandings about Saeed’s participation in a Punjabi hegemony, and a more extensive reading of Balochistan’s history and present political situation. This is a topic that I look forward to expanding on and researching in the future.

[lxxxiv] Zitzewitz, *The Art of Secularism*, 135-136.

[lxxxv] Zitzewitz, *The Art of Secularism*, 147.

[lxxxvi] Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "sex"* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2011), xii.

[lxxxvii] See, for example, Suparna Bhaskaran, “The Politics of Penetration: Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code,” in *Queering India: Same-sex Love and Eroticism in Indian Culture and Society*, ed. Vanita, Ruth (New York, NY: Routledge, 2002), 15-20.

[lxxxviii] Suparna Bhaskaran. “The Politics of Penetration,” 17.

[lxxxix] Maleeha Aslam, "Islamism and Masculinity: Case Study Pakistan," *Historical Social Research / Historische Sozialforschung* 39, no. 3 (149) (2014): 136.

[xc] Aslam, "Islamism and Masculinity: Case Study Pakistan," 140.

[xci] I am thinking in particular about the artist's 2009 film *Thug*, and his new video installation *MoonSighting*. The films and clips from the installation are available here: https://vimeo.com/basirmahmood. Other artists that come to mind are Salman Toor, Imran Qureshi, and Rashid Rana.

[xcii] Gayatri Gopinath, *Unruly Visions: The Aesthetic Practices of Queer Diaspora* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2018), 9.

[xciii] The Quran is often read on wooden stands like the one in this painting, to prevent the holy book from being placed on the ground by a seated reader.

[xciv] Naqvi, *Image & Identity*, 193. According to Akbar Naqvi, Saeed is deeply interested in "Sufis and their quest after the self."

[xcv] Joseph S Alter, *The Wrestler's Body: Identity and Ideology in North India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 6.

[xcvi] Alter, *The Wrestler's Body,* 77-79.

[xcvii] Alter, *The Wrestler's Body,* 163-164.

[xcviii] Alter, *The Wrestler's Body,* 77.

[xcix] Alter, *The Wrestler's Body,* 133.

[c] Rosalind O'Hanlon, "Military Sports and the History of the Martial Body in India," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 50, no. 4 (2007): 494.

[ci] O'Hanlon, "Military Sports and the History of the Martial Body in India," 496.

[cii] O'Hanlon, "Military Sports and the History of the Martial Body in India," 498.

[ciii] Alexander D Knysh. *Sufism: A New History of Islamic Mysticism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017), 20-23.

[civ] Knysh, *Sufism*, 36-40.

[cv] Knysh, *Sufism*, 20.

[cvi] Scott Kugle, *Sufi and Saint Bodies: Mysticism, Corporeality and Sacred Power in Islam(*double) (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 181-219.

[cvii] Refer to Ataullah, "Of Whispers and Secret Calling" and Ataullah, "Conflicts and Resolutions in Narrative"; and Naqvi, *Image and Identity*, 192-194.

[cviii] Naqvi, *Image & Identity*, 193.

[cix] Ataullah, "Of Whispers and Secret Calling," 72.

[cx] Katherine Ewing, "The Politics of Sufism: Redefining the Saints of Pakistan," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 42, no. 2 (1983): 252. As Katherine Ewing has shown, Zia's predecessors, Ayub Khan and Bhutto, both co-opted Sufi shrines for their own political gain, understanding them as sites of modernization and governmental participation. Zia similarly co-opted Shrines and their saints for his move towards Islamization. Rather than mitigate the influence of Sufi saints and their legacies, Zia's administration redefined sainthood to fulfill the requirements of Shariah law. In turn, Pakistani civilians were led to believe that by following Shariah law, they too could become proper Sufis. Of course, this conception of a Sufism that aligns with the dominant ideology of the state only gains traction in terms of those Sufi saints who practiced and followed heteronormative, conservatively pious ideology, while saints known as *qalandars*--characterized by deviancy and deliberately non-normative behaviors-- are allocated to the margins and shunned for their transgressions.

[cxi] Kugle, *Sufi and Saint Bodies*, 183.

[cxii] Kugle, *Sufi and Saint Bodies*, 183.

[cxiii] Kugle, *Sufi and Saint Bodies*, 185.

[cxiv] Kugle, *Sufi and Saint Bodies*, 182.

[cxv] Najmabadi, *Women with Mustaches and Men without Beards*, 55. As Najmabadi explains, “modernity closeted the male beloved into the premodern and rendered Sufi love as transcendental.”

[cxvi] Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia*, 5.

[cxvii] Whiles, *Art and Polemic in Pakistan*, xxiii.

[cxviii] Refer to Salima Hashmi, "An Intelligent Rebellion: Women Artists of Pakistan," *India International Centre Quarterly* 24, no. 2/3 (1997): 228-38; for essays written by others, that Hashmi has compiled and edited: Kamila Shamsie, “Her Body in Four Parts,” in *The Eye Still Seeks: Contemporary Art from Pakistan*, ed. Salima Hashmi (Paddington, N.S.W.: Ivan Dougherty Gallery, 2001), 13-21; Nafisa Rizvi, “The Feminine Construct,” in *The Eye Still Seeks: Contemporary Art from Pakistan*, ed. Salima Hashmi (Paddington, N.S.W.: Ivan Dougherty Gallery, 2001), 90-97.

[cxix] Dadi, *Modernism and the Art of Muslim South Asia*, 198.

[cxx] Whiles, *Art and Polemic in Pakistan*, 43-47, 90-99, 130-134, 168-174.

[cxxi] Dadi. *Modernism and the Art of Muslim South Asia*, 177.

[cxxii] Najmabadi, *Women with Mustaches and Men without Beards*, 8.

[cxxiii] Claire Pamment, "Hijraism: Jostling for a Third Space in Pakistani Politics," *TDR (1988-)* 54, no. 2 (2010): 29-30. *Hijras*, known by other names depending on locale or region, are a group of people widely dispersed throughout South Asia who identify as neither man nor woman. They are predominantly lower-class individuals, born as men but aligning more with a female soul.

[cxxiv] Khan, “Pakistan, ‘Queer,’” 1194-1197.

[cxxv] "Police to Allow Transgender Recruits in Sindh," *Dawn*. April 25, 2019. https://www.dawn.com/news/1478186.

[cxxvi] "River in an Ocean," *Abdullah Qureshi*. March 2018. https://www.abdullahqureshi.org/river-in-an-ocean.

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