

THE INTIMATE REPUBLIC: PIETY AND OBJECTIFICATION IN AN ISLAMIC STATE



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There are many ways to think conceptually about an Islamic state like Iran's Islamic Republic. In this talk, I will examine two diverging ways in which the state emerges from constellations of intimate attachment and practices of objectification. On the one hand, we have the Islamic state as a spiritual project shared between a leader and his devotees. On the other, the bureaucratization of piety and other objectifying procedures have produced anxieties that, in a roundabout way, inspire imaginings of God as a perfect state: an objective, totalizing, and calculating entity that stands above the world of humans. My talk examines how these two forms of the state have emerged and what their analysis can contribute to an anthropology of religious politics.

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