

**HAROON K. ULLAH.** *Vying for Allah's Vote: Understanding Islamic Parties, Political Violence, and Extremism in Pakistan.* Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2014. xiii + 251 pages, appendices, notes, selected bibliography, index. Paper US\$27.95 ISBN: 978-1-62616-015-6.

In this book, Ullah asks what drives Islamic confessional (politico-religious) parties to become extreme, encourage violence, and inhibit democratic reform? To answer these questions, he introduces an original typology that places the rhetoric of Pakistan's political parties on what he calls the shari'a–secularism continuum. Using qualitative interviews with political elites and focus groups as well as quantitative election and survey results and voter behavior experiments, Ullah argues that a party's movements along the continuum from politically moderate to extreme are pragmatic rather than ideological and are designed to maximize electoral success and consolidate power. First, Ullah analyzes the political theory and historical context of confessional party development. Next, he examines voter motivation and behavior. Finally, he explains Pakistan's confessional party behavior and platforms as reactive to voter behavior. Ullah also includes a discussion of possible foreign policy implications and applies his research to Egypt, Turkey, and Afghanistan. He advises non-Islamic Western powers such as the U.S. to exploit the tensions between moderate Islamic parties and their rivals, such as the Justice and Development Party (AKP) in Turkey, and search for shared interests and goals rather than push these parties to extremism with suppression-oriented policies. ✂

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