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Street Power: Friday Prayers, Islamist Protests, and Islamization in Pakistan

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Abstract: This article addresses Pakistani Islamists' street power — their ability to organize rallies, protests, and demonstrations. Building on research on religion and collective action, I first demonstrate how Friday prayers aid Islamist mobilization. Mosques on Friday serve as a filtering and coordination tool, as tactical "choke" points in urban neighborhoods, and as incitement through the imam's sermon. I then show how Islamist street power affects Islamization in Pakistan. I argue that Pakistan's foundational religious nationalism acts as an "opportunity structure," and affords Islamists agenda-setting and veto power. The success of Islamist agitation depends on the issue contested, the type of regime targeted, and the era in which it is practiced. I use interviews, participant observation at Islamist rallies, an original dataset of all rallies and protests in Pakistan from 2005 to 2010 ($n = 4123$); and government and local newspaper reports from the 1940s onward to buttress my claims.

> O ye who believe! When the call is made for prayer on Friday, hasten to the remembrance of Allah, and leave off all business. That is better for you, if you only knew.
>
> (al-Quran 62:09)

INTRODUCTION

Pakistani Islamists have done "miserably" at the polls (Lieven 2011, 127), never winning more than 10% of the vote in a fair election. Moreover, of

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Pakistan's four military dictators, only one, General Zia-ul-Haq, was an avowed Islamist. Fortunately for them, Islamists' power does not depend solely on executive or legislative strength. In fact, Islamists in Pakistan affect public policy by wielding "street power." Their demonstrations, protests, and rallies serve to intimidate incumbent governments into following Islamists' favored stance on issues of social policy, politics and law, and religious issues. In short, it does not functionally matter that Islamists are bad at getting votes because they are good at collective action.

In this article, I address both the causes and implications of Pakistani Islamists' (henceforth Islamists) adeptness at collective action. In the first half, I argue that the institution and practice of Friday prayers affords Islamists a structural advantage in mobilizing, for three main reasons. First, Friday prayers serve as a filtering and coordination tool, allowing for large masses of people in one place. Second, mosques on Friday can serve a tactical purpose in "choking" life in an urban environment. Third, the practice of Friday prayers includes an *imam*'s sermon, which can serve to motivate worshippers to participate in protests or rallies. The hows and whys of Islamist collective action, that is, are intimately related to the when.

Islamists "natural" advantage in organizing collective action has deep and meaningful effects on Pakistan's body politic and society, as I detail in the second half of the article. Pakistan's founding ideology, which centered on Muslim nationalism, acts as an "opportunity structure" for Islamist collective action, as leaders are leery of opposing Islamists on religious issues. Islamist agitation is especially powerful in coloring "secular" leaders as illegitimate, and wins policy victories through two mechanisms. First, Islamists' street power functions as an agenda-setter, suffusing public policy questions with religious importance. Second, Islamist street power works as a veto point, blocking changes to policy.

To support my claims, I use evidence gathered from fieldwork in Pakistan's biggest city, Karachi, where I attended Friday prayers and Islamist rallies, and interviewed journalists, security officials, and Islamist and "secular" party members. To buttress my fieldwork, I used government reports on agitational politics, such as the Munir Report in the 1950s, and archives of local newspapers from the late 1940s onward. Finally, I created an original dataset recording every instance of a public protest, demonstration, or rally in Pakistan between 2005 and 2010, yielding more than 4,000 observations.

This article has two main theoretical payoffs. First, I provide a micro-level causal mechanism connecting religion, mobilization, and urban

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space (McAdam 1982; Lohmann 1994), generalizable to other cities in Muslim societies. Scholars find post-Friday prayers demonstrations in places as diverse as Jordan (Schwedler 2012), revolutionary Iran (Parsa 1989, 210–211), Kenya, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Afghanistan (Wiktorowicz 2004, 1), but generally speaking, they assert a relationship between mosque and protest without detailing it. How does the mosque serve as a site for mobilization? Why do Islamists favor certain mosques over others? How do activists encourage and facilitate participation from unaffiliated attendees? Do Islamists worry about the police, and if not, why not? What is the precise role of the imam and mosque leadership? How does the mosque's location in urban space affect its role in generating collective action? I address these questions directly.

Second, for students of South Asia, I present a novel argument for Islamization in Pakistan. Extant studies focus on leaders' desire for "legitimacy," without sufficiently problematizing how Islamists, who enjoy weak representation both electorally and in the officer corps of the army, come to define "legitimate." Pace earlier studies of Islamization in Pakistan (Nasr 2001), I show Islamization is more a bottom-up phenomenon than top-down. I demonstrate how the success of Islamist agitation depends on the era in which it takes place, the issue over which it takes place, and the nature of the target regime.

ISLAMIST PROTESTS IN PAKISTAN

Islamists favor an "individual and collective return to religion" in Muslim societies (Wickham 2002, 1). Islamism is primarily a middle-class (Bayat 2007, 581–586) and expressly modernist movement (Iqtidar 2011, 41), whose ire has been directed at the secular-Westernized state, which should be replaced by the adoption of Islamic law as both state law and political ideology (Nasr 2001, 14; Hassner 2011, 28).

I focus on urban areas because that is primarily where contentious politics occurs in Pakistan. Most of the 3,882 single-locale protest events I recorded were in major cities, and almost half (1,839, or 47%) took place in one of Pakistan's eight biggest metropolitan areas. Islamist protests usually begin at mosques, or *masjids*, in these cities. Mosques in Pakistan are divided among four main sectarian traditions: Deobandi, Barelvi, Ahl-e-Hadith, and Shia. Most mosques are decidedly apolitical, but some mosques' *ulema* have ties to political parties and even militant groups, and become the staging ground for Islamist collective action.

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In my fieldwork, I focused on the four Sunni Islamist parties most active in Karachi: the Jamaat-e-Islami (JI), the Fazlur Rehman faction of the Jamaat-e-Ulema-Islam (JUI-F), the Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD),[1] and Ahl-e-Sunnat Wal Jamaat (ASWJ).[2] These parties' rallies, demonstrations, and protests are usually motivated by religious issues in the public space, including adjustments to the penal code proscription on blasphemy, foreign policy issues (primarily related to the United States or India), social-cultural issues such as gender segregated marathons, the very existence of certain "secular" governments, such as that of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto in the 1970s, the state's response to cartoons depicting Muhammad in Danish publications, and the constitutional status of minority sects and communities.

Islamist protests can be divided by size. Large protests will see tens, and sometimes hundreds, of thousands of protestors, drawn from the activists and members of multiple parties, *madrassa* students, as well as common people. There is naturally a higher level of coordination required for such protests, especially across parties, and such protests are expected to draw wall-to-wall media coverage. They also hold a higher potential for violence and rioting, since events can spiral out of control, as they did in a September 2012 anti-blasphemy rally. Smaller rallies, by contrast, will see a few hundred protestors drawn from one particular party, as well as some non-affiliates. These protests will be concerned with "pet issues" for the party organizing them. For example, one JuD (an anti-Indian party) rally I attended at the Karachi Press Club protested Indian security forces killing worshippers in Kashmir. Similarly, I attended an ASWJ (an anti-Shia party) rally outside Masjid-e-Nauman urging the Pakistani government to take a tougher line against Bashar al-Assad.

Both large and small protests will generally start after Friday prayers, usually outside a mosque or a favored spot for demonstrations, such as the Press Club. Mid-level party cadres will arrive first, ensuring turnout by organizing transport, and setting up banners, stages, and audio equipment for party songs and speeches. Senior leaders arrive later, and their speeches on the issue *du jour* kick off the rally or protest. These speeches will be short and sharp: almost never longer than 10 minutes, and almost always incendiary. The protestors will then march toward a location within walking distance. Larger rallies, for obvious reasons, move slower than smaller ones, and are likely to have a closing speech as much as an opening one, usually by the party leadership. Police will accompany the rally and block off the planned route to vehicular traffic.[3]

Such public demonstrations are regular occurrences for Islamists: between 2005 and 2010, Islamists organized and/or participated in 581

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protest events;[4] rival parties such as the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) managed 131 and 24, respectively. The MQM's number would probably be higher had it been in opposition and not part of two different governing alliances during this period, but even if was twice as large, it would still be an order of magnitude lower than the Islamists'. Furthermore, the MQM's street power is restricted to one, admittedly important, city, whereas Islamists' street power is national. Journalists and security officials backed this assessment, and stressed that Islamists dominated street politics in Pakistan.[5] I tackle the roots of this dominance below.

RELIGION AND MOBILIZATION

Scholars have shown that the collective action problem, which describes the incentives individuals face to free-ride in any joint activity (Olson 1965), can be obviated. Organizers can use "selective incentives" (Hardin 1982) to make participation more attractive; often *not* participating is more costly than participating, either for security (Kalyvas and Kocher 2007) or reputational reasons (Scacco 2013); and even one's physical location can lower risks of collective action (Staniland 2010).

In this vein, the role of religion in aiding collective action has long received attention. Places of worship provide "a potentially mobilizable body of participants" (McAdam 1982, 128; Chwe 2001, 16) and convenient locations to crowd urban spaces (Lohmann 1994). They are more difficult for authorities to transgress because they are enveloped "by an aura of religious sanctity" (Wickham 2002, 104), creating both a discursive free space (Polletta 1999), as well as lowering the costs and risks of insurgent or terrorist campaigns (Fair and Ganguly 2008). "Sacred" time is also significant. The coincidence of religious festivals in different faiths has been found to lead to spikes in violence due to contestation over the use of public space (Prior 1993, 180–181), and even something as regimented and regulated as state military effectiveness can be sensitive to the notion of sacred time (Hassner 2010).

Friday Prayers and Mobilization

Building on these insights, I argue that mosques on Friday serve three purposes: they filter and coordinate the population, they choke urban space, and prayer sermons encourage participation.

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Friday Prayers as a Filter and Coordination Point

Rather than Friday worshippers' religious beliefs — after all, not everyone who visits a mosque on Friday is a committed Islamist[6] — it is the matter of their sheer presence at the mosque that is more important for mobilization purposes. Doubtless, it is one thing for an individual to be where the rally begins and another thing for that individual to join the rally. My argument is simply that the first and arguably most challenging part of the job — getting a mass of people in one physical location — is easier, nigh on automatic, for Islamists. In essence, what occurs is a subtle but seminal shift in what constitutes the "default" option, or the one favored by the power of inertia, for potential participants. If one is watching television on her couch, eating potato chips, the default option is assuredly to sit at home. On the other hand, if one is at a mosque, where a crowd has already gathered, the balance-of-inertia starts favoring the choice of joining the protest.[7]

This point repeatedly came up in interviews. A JuD member noted that "As far as Friday is concerned, it is a congregative day for Muslims, there is a *gathering* [in English], people leave their daily routines to gather in one place."[8] "The reason for protests on Friday," a member of the JI told me, "is that on Friday the whole *Ummat-e-Musalman* [community of believers] goes for Friday prayers, and there's a big congregation, a congregation of the *Ummat*, we take advantage of that, and I think we should take advantage of that."[9] A JUI-F representative was as clear: "We see protests on Fridays because Friday prayers also sees a congregation, people are gathered in one location, and we use that as an opportunity to start our activities from there."[10] Explaining what makes Friday special as a day of protest, one journalist told me that "a lot more people go to the mosque for Friday prayers than they do on a normal day, so you create a huge number of people, create a sense of a large crowd."[11] Jamil Yousuf, a former police officer and currently a private security official in the city, was succinct on the subject:

> Author: Why do so many of the religious parties' protests happen on Friday?
>
> Answer: Congregation, they use the congregation.
>
> Author: How do they use the congregation?
>
> Answer: Because they all come for prayers.[12]

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One journalist estimated that Islamists will corral 10–20% of worshippers from every mosque, especially if it's an "emotional" issue.[13] This is often due to an informal public surveillance function: it is difficult to go straight home after prayers if one's friends are about to start a protest a few yards away, since the pull of friends under such circumstances is stronger than usual.[14]

Mosques and Friday prayers also critically serve as coordination points (see Schelling 1963, 57–58; Petersen 2001, 56–57; Chwe 2001, 11–18). The *particular* location of the protest becomes "obvious" because each party or organization will be affiliated with or connected to specific physical mosques. JI, for instance, controls 12 mosques in Karachi,[15] and has loose affiliations with countless others. ASWJ's headquarters in Karachi are at the Jamia Masjid in the Nagan Chowrangi area. JUI-F, owing to its Deobandi persuasion, has strong ties to the Binoria Town network of madrassas in Karachi, by far the largest group of madrassas in the city, as well as to the Deobandi madrassa umbrella organization named Wafaq-ul-Madaris Al-Arabiya, which has 12,000 madrassas registered under it in Pakistan (the true number it controls is at least twice that).[16] In Karachi's central district alone, there are, according to the Sindh Home Ministry, 813 madrassas; Sindh overall has 12,545. Most of these 12,000 are in urban areas — Karachi, Hyderabad, Sukkur — and half of the province's madrassas are Deobandi (Chisti 2013; Jalal 2010, 277).

Pakistani Islamists are hardly the first to use houses of worship as filters and coordination points. McAdam (1982, 125–142) commented upon the importance of black churches to the civil rights movement, noting that they contributed the combination of a communication network, a pool of community and political leaders to draw upon, and most importantly, "a potentially mobilizable body of participants." He quotes Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee President John Lewis, who echoes his claim: "Sharecroppers, poor people, would come to the mass meetings, because they were *in the church*. People saw the mass meetings as an extension of the Sunday services" (McAdam 1982, 129–130, emphasis in original). Revolutionaries in Iran were not dissimilar, when mosques became the launching point for protests, both after Friday prayers or on religious holidays, as in Tehran in 1978 (Parsa 1989, 210–211). More recently, after the Egyptian military carried out a coup against the Muslim Brotherhood in 2013, the Islamist party staged a massive set of demonstrations, and its spokesperson, Gehad el-Haddad freely revealed the important of Friday prayers: "We are being headhunted all over the country.

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We are holding a mass rally after Friday prayers to take all peaceful steps necessary to bring down this coup" (Chulov and Kingsley 2013).

Friday Prayers as a Strategic Chokepoint

The second and arguably most crucial way a mosque serves the cause of collective action is as part of the urban geography (see Schwedler 2012). The relationship between space or place and the fact and form of protest has received considerable scrutiny. Gould (1995) revealed that Napoleon III's reconfiguration of Paris' urban geography in the mid-19th century created the basis for the "insurgent" identities of the rebellious working classes, based not on class or craft, but rather neighborhood residency. Miller's (2000) investigation found that the particular location of anti-nuclear organizations in the Boston suburbs directly influenced the racial, demographic, and socio-economic makeup of its membership, in turn bestowing it with a unique set of resources and political preferences. Wolford (2003) found that farmers in Brazil's south joined the Movement of Rural Landless Workers because of a lack of land and population pressures, while those in the northeast took part in response to economic crises. Sometimes the physical space itself can be a resource. As Heaney and Rojas (2006) showed, Fort Bragg in Fayetteville, North Carolina, became a staging ground for anti-war protests because it allowed organizers to adopt a "support the troops" framing. Most relevant for our purposes, however, is Lohmann's (1994, 67–68) study on how particular urban geographies create specific strategic routes for mobilizers. Explaining the centrality of the Nikolai Church in Leipzig in eventually bringing down the East German regime, she showed that after weekly "peace prayers" between 5 and 6 p.m. on Mondays, church-goers would exit the building and be joined by demonstrators and strangers, and then pick up further numbers as they made their way to the Karl Marx Platz, the town's central square: "the unique timing and the convenient layout of the city center facilitated the spontaneous coordination" of many thousands of protestors.

There is a high density of houses of worship in Karachi. Leaving aside Shia mosques, or *imambargahs*, there are in Karachi an estimated 7,900 mosques: 2,700 Barelvi mosques, 2,300 Ahl-e-Hadith mosques, and 2,900 Deobandi mosques.[17] In a cramped city, this means that mosques pepper the landscape. In turn, this means that there are very few roads or thoroughfares in the city that cannot be blocked off by crowds if

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they exit mosques at coordinated times. To comprehend why this ease of road-blocking matters, one must understand Karachi's geographic layout.

Despite its massive size, Karachi's main commercial,[18] financial,[19] journalistic,[20] bureaucratic,[21] legal,[22] and governmental[23] sites, are all located in the same narrow strip of the city, less than one square mile in size (see shaded triangle area in Figure 1). In practice, this means that Karachi is disproportionately easier to "shut down" than other comparably sized cities. Given their ubiquity, mosques can serve as strategic choke points, squeezing the space between them and amplifying the snowball effect of protestors joining a larger crowd, analogous to a river being fed by multiple streams.

Consider M.A. Jinnah Road, the city's central thoroughfare. This is easily the most popular road for mass protests and political rallies in the city, especially for Islamists.[24] The location is not coincidental. M.A. Jinnah Road begins at the mausoleum of Mohammed Ali Jinnah, the most iconic political site in Karachi and possibly Pakistan (top corner of shaded triangle).

Mass protests and rallies often begin or end at the mausoleum. There are two options. First, protestors can go (or come from the) northeast, and end up (or begin) at Gurumandar, an intersection at which several major roads cross. This route is depicted by the thin-striped line in Figure 2. Alternatively, if protests started at the southwestern tip of M.A. Jinnah Road, then they often begin at either New Memon Masjid or Araam Bagh Masjid, the former one of the largest mosques in Karachi and capable of accommodating more than 10,000 worshippers, and the latter on main M.A. Jinnah Road, before ending up at the mausoleum. This route is depicted by the thick-striped line in Figure 2. Either way, they will paralyze the city, as they enter the hub of the city outlined in Figure 1. Once M.A. Jinnah Road and its main arteries in Karachi are blocked, the city comes to a standstill. Regardless of the precise route taken, the crowd makes its way down a particular road, led by party cares and activists, and gets bigger as it crosses other mosques and madrassas on the way.

The ubiquity of mosques and madrassas in that zone (bubbles in Figure 2), not to mention other areas of Karachi, helps Islamists corral large crowds in the area. Most prominent is the Jamia Binoria, the headquarters for a vast Deobandi network of madrassas, with tens of thousands of students in its campuses across Karachi. The Tableeghi Jamaat, a Deobandi evangelical organization, is centered at Makki Masjid. Anti-Ahmedi parties, such as the Khatm-e-Nabuwat have a "home" mosque

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FIGURE 1. Map of Karachi.[25]

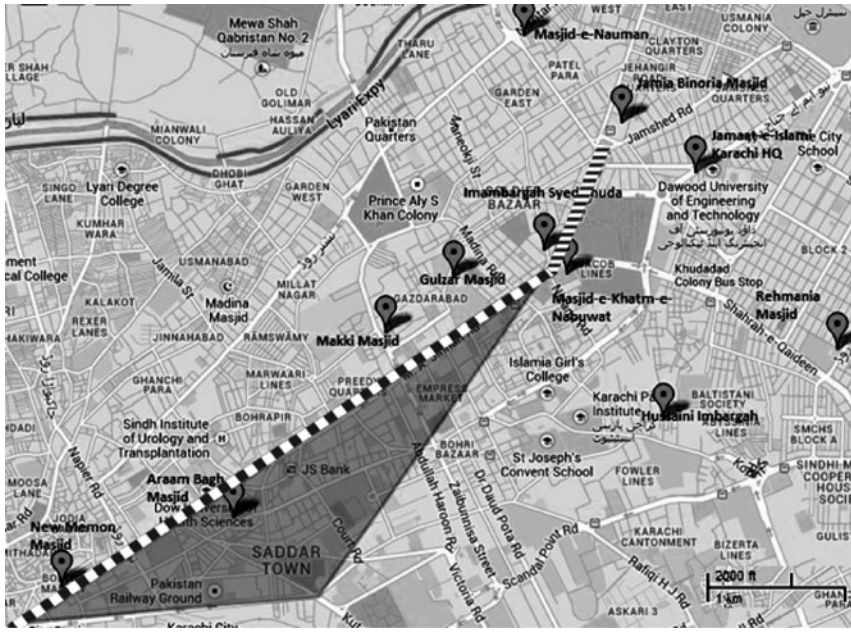

FIGURE 2. Detailed map of downtown Karachi.[26]

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in the area, as do both Shia and anti-Shia groups. The most prominent Shia *imambargahs* in the area are the Imambargah Syed Shuda and the Hussaini Imambargah. The major mosque used by anti-Shia groups like ASWJ is Masjid-e-Nauman. JI's head office in Karachi is a short walk from the area, as is the main Barelvi mosque, Gulzar Masjid. In other words, each of the four major sects — Ahl-e-Hadith, Deobandi, Barelvi, and Shia — and all the major Islamist parties have mosques and/or madrassas in the area.

Friday Prayers as Incitement

The third mechanism through which the practice of Friday prayers aids mobilization is through *imam's* sermons. The Friday sermon is aimed at "moving religious ideology out of the mosque and onto the streets" (Chhibber and Sekhon 2013, 13). Unlike some other Muslim-majority states in which the state controls the mosque, such as Saudi Arabia and Malaysia (Hassner 2011), mosques and madrassas in Pakistan are free to choose their own imams, who are only in exceptional circumstances placed under state surveillance by intelligence agencies, such as the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) or Military Intelligence (MI).

Brass (1997, 14–17) refers to certain political actors as "fire-tenders" — those leaders who maintain tension between different communities in times of peace, stoking individual sensibilities and reinterpreting relatively anodyne events in stark communal terms. Imams fulfill this fire-tender role expertly, since they have the undivided attention of worshippers for over half an hour. Crucially, imams often combine the theological with the political in their sermons. A sermon at Sultan Masjid went from an admonishment of "kids these days" to complaining about the media's lax morals to reaffirming Pakistan's ideology as an Islamic state — "*Pakistan ka matlab kya? La Illaha Illallah*" [What is the meaning/essence of Pakistan? There is no God but Allah] — in the space of less than half a minute. As one journalist remarked, "The larger audience [in the mosque on a Friday] will be predisposed [to participating] because of what was said in the sermon."[27]

The effectiveness of their encouragement is helped by Friday being a shorter working day. Both white and blue collar employees will combine the prayer break with a lunch break, which means that most offices, shops, and factories are closed between roughly noon and 3 p.m. on Friday afternoons. A JUI representative highlighted that businesses are

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closed, and that it is a day for devotion to Allah.[28] Furthermore, the openness of Friday afternoons also leaves adolescent and young men with few alternatives for recreation; one journalist I spoke to explicitly credited "boredom" for the incidence of rallies on Fridays.[29] Indeed, anthropologists (Verkaaik 2004) have shown how much "fun" collective action can be in Pakistan, albeit in non-Islamist contexts.

Data on Mobilization and Friday Prayers

To gain greater confidence in my interviewees' claims that "almost all" or "all" of Islamist protests occur on Friday after prayers, especially the bigger ones,[30] I constructed an original dataset of "protest events" in Pakistan from 2005 to 2010, resulting in 4,123 observations of rallies, protests, and demonstrations by both formal actors, such as parties, and informal groups, such as citizens protesting power outages.[31] In the five year period under analysis, there were a total of 581 Islamist protest events, comfortably outpacing "secular" parties such as the PPP and the MQM, who managed 131 and 24, respectively; social organizations outside electoral politics, such as the All Pakistan Clerks Association (26) or Pakistan Medical Association (10); and non-organizational groups, such as "farmers" and "growers" (177), "journalists" (52), "lawyers" (138), or "local people/local residents" (371). And just as Islamists are predominant in the protest data, so too are Fridays dominant when it comes to Islamist protests: 195 of Islamists' 581 protests (33%) took place on Friday (Figure 3). A one-sample *t*-test comparing the incidence of Islamist protests on Fridays to the mean value for all days (83) was shown to be statistically significant ($p < 0.001$). In contrast, other parties' collective action did not evince such a lopsided imbalance in favor of Friday. Of the MQM's 24 protest events, only three took place on Friday.[32] Similarly, of the PPP's 131 protest events, 20 took place on Friday, about what one would expect if PPP protests were randomly distributed among days of the week. These differences between "secular" parties and Islamists are important because they demonstrate that the concentration of protests on Fridays are not a function of a wider Pakistani cultural or political attribute, but rather something particular to Islamists.

Interestingly, the overwhelming proportion of Islamist rallies and protests are peaceful — of the 581 Islamist protest events between 2005 and 2010, a mere 28 (4.8%) were violent. Alternative datasets show a less lopsided distribution in favor of Friday insofar as *violent* religious collective action is concerned,[33] but owing to a lack of space, and the fact that

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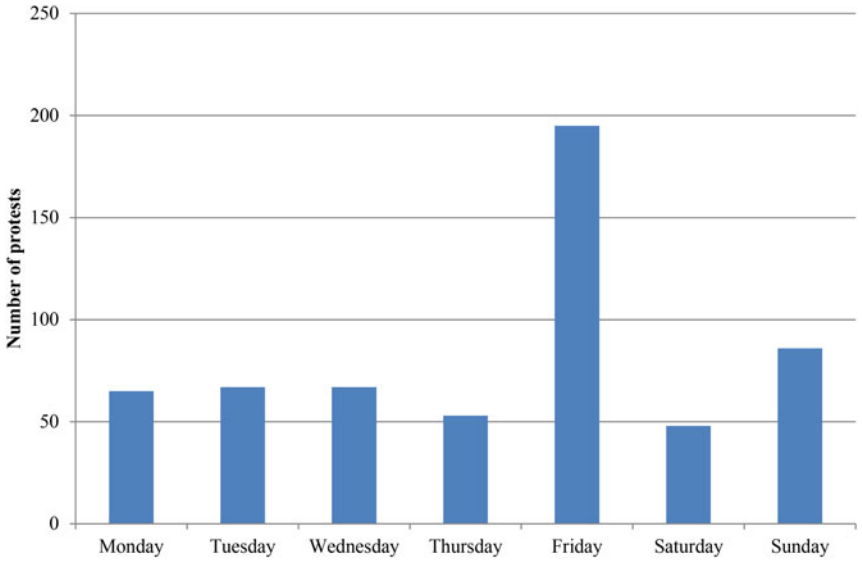

FIGURE 3. Islamist protests by day, 2005–2010.

Islamist protests are almost always peaceful, I consider the issue of violence outside the scope of this article.

ISLAMISTS' STREET POWER AND POLICY SUCCESS

While Islamists do not mobilize every Friday, they do retain the option to ramp up mobilization when core interests are publicly debated or threatened. Unlike, say, the PPP, which uses electoral strength and patronage politics, or the MQM, which uses both electoral strength and a party machinery dedicated to violence, Islamists' most significant policy victories — the Islamization of the constitution, the legal marginalization of Ahmedis, the ouster of Zulfiqar Bhutto's government, the protection of the blasphemy law, and so on — usually emanate from the street, as I demonstrate later. In other words, with the significant exception of Zia's decade in power, Islamization has been a bottom-up phenomenon.

Islamists And Islamization: Pakistan's Religious Nationalism As "Opportunity Structure"

Islamists, and especially Islamist mobilization, are curiously absent from accounts of Islamization in Pakistan. Scholarly consensus is that

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Islamization has resulted from governments seeking to establish their, or the state's, political legitimacy. Crises of legitimacy, then, are the wellsprings for Islamization — even for avowedly Islamist leaders, such as Zia (Nasr 2001, 130–146; Alavi 1988, 64–73, 105–110; Taylor 1983, 194–196; Mehdi 1994, 18–19; Weiss 1986; Fair 2014, 82). To the extent that Islamists' effects on Pakistani state and society are considered, scholars proffer counter-intuitive arguments about their secularizing potential (Iqtidar 2011).

To say that Islamization rests on leaders' and regimes' concern for legitimacy obscures as much as it reveals: legitimacy on *whose behalf*? Legitimacy generally connotes popular acceptance. This legitimacy can be drawn from either among a population at large or — echoing selectorate theory (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2004) — within a narrowly circumscribed group of elites, such as military commanders or crony capitalists. If state leaders seek legitimacy in Islamism, as it is argued, it must mean that Islamists have significant representation in the traditional vessels of power in the Pakistani polity — the army and, occasionally, the people. Yet Islamists enjoy no such power: they have never won more than 10% of the vote, and aside from the significant exception of Zia, have failed to control the coterie of military officers that have led Pakistan in times of dictatorship. The extant literature, which privileges the issue of legitimacy, neglects that it is Islamists who set the terms of what, precisely, constitutes "legitimate." As I argue, Islamization is not just a lever that legitimacy-hungry leaders pull from above, it is one Islamists themselves can push from below.

To explain why Islamists' use of the street is so effective, I rely on, while extending, the "political opportunity structures" model. Scholars have referred to opportunity structures as the extent to which a state's formal institutions and apparatus of repression constrains or facilitates collective action (McAdam 1999; Tarrow 1998, 19; Tilly 1978, 166–168). Thus, the introduction of a trigger-happy paramilitary force is likely to lead the median protestor to abandon her intentions to rally, while a permissive police force, or the holding of free and open elections, would have the opposite effect. Wickham (2002, 13) demonstrates, however, that this model often needs to be extended "beyond the realm of formal political institutions and elites." Munson (2001, 494–496) agrees that the model, while powerful, needs supplementing. To explain the rise of the Muslim Brotherhood, for instance, he extends the concept of political opportunity structures to include factors such as the role of the British in Egyptian life, the delegitimation of the Wafd party, and the Israel establishment.

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Building on these exhortations, my conception of opportunity structures includes both political institutions of governance and coercion, as the literature focuses on, as well as national identity. Specifically, what is the type and form of nationalism — ethnic, communal, religious, linguistic, civic — that the state is based on? Particular conceptions of the national Self will facilitate or discourage particular social movements: it would be easier for an ethnic minority to organize in a state that practices civic nationalism compared to minorities in ethnically-nationalist states. Further, these opportunity structures can affect not just the likelihood of mobilization but also their potential for success.

For our purposes, the opportunity structure of Pakistan's national identity helps account for Islamist success on the street. The translation of Islamists' street presence into favorable outcomes is reliant upon a particular conception of Pakistani statehood — its foundational religious nationalism. There is, to be sure, disagreement both among scholars and within the Pakistani body politic about whether the country was designed to be an Islamic state. As a minimal baseline, Pakistan's raison d'être is to be a homeland for South Asian Muslims, its formal name is "Islamic Republic of Pakistan," and as Devji (2013, 5) points out, "no other country has made of religion the sole basis of Muslim nationality." Religious nationalism is inextricably linked to the country's DNA (Devji 2013, 16–27), and consequently, leaders are loathe to be deemed insufficiently Muslim for fear of being cast as uncommitted to a sense of *Pakistaniat*. Islamists' popular protests force precisely such characterizations: the symbolism of religious parties protesting religious issues in a religiously nationalist state is powerful. As one journalist noted, "Governments want to be on the safer side and don't want to take a chance against them, the religious elements…anything with a religious element to it, governments will back down."[34]

Mechanisms and Patterns of Policy Success

Islamists' street power affects policies through two mechanisms. First, Islamist protests serve an agenda setting role. Though political scientists have generally focused on how formal institutions set agendas (Shepsle and Weingast 1987; Pollack 1997), informal agenda setting power can be just as fruitful. In this case, street protests can serve to suffuse an issue with (more) religious importance. Second, Islamist street power can function as a veto. Rallies and protests represent a nuisance value,

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in that they aim "to disrupt life in a city or locality."[35] Consequently, governments, under the threat of more "nuisance" the next day or week, will concede Islamist demands.

As in other areas of life, size matters. Since "there always seems to be power in numbers" (Denardo 1985, 35), decision makers are more likely to be swayed by Islamists organizing large crowds, since this conjures a starker image of Islamists speaking for the people. The ability to draw and sustain large crowds is a distinct source of pride for party leaders. Referring to JUI(F)'s massive Karachi rally in January 2012, a representative told me "nobody else had the nerve to hold a rally there after us."[36] More recently, in the summer of 2014, Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf challenged the incumbent Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) government with a series of public rallies aimed at delegitimizing the latter's electoral victory. This emphasis on "public" politics by Pakistani parties probably has its roots in the country's checkered history of representative, democratic politics, leaving public spaces as the sole arena where parties could demonstrate their popularity. Regardless of its origins, the emphasis on street politics means that parties that organize the largest crowds speak, metaphorically and literally, with the loudest voice. And for reasons outlined earlier, religious parties organize the biggest crowds in Pakistan.

Because Islamists success is intimately tied to their ability to define what, or who, is legitimate and acceptable, we would expect protest to be most effective against "Westernized" or "secular" governments or leaders, given their vulnerability to accusations of being insufficiently Islamic. Second, we would expect religious issues, such as blasphemy laws, to yield a greater likelihood of success than issues not directly tied to religion, such as foreign policy, mainly because religious issues are seen as the "natural" domain of Islamist parties. Third, we would expect civilian governments to be more vulnerable to Islamist street pressure than military leaders; shoring up political legitimacy is almost always a more challenging task for the former given the military's (successful) efforts to discredit the political class (Fair 2014). Finally, timing should also matter: the country's split in 1971, following a civil war after which one-half of the country became Bangladesh, widened Islamists' opportunity structure, for two reasons. First, Bangladesh's secession left the more religiously-inclined half of the state behind. Of the two wings, East Pakistan's public and politicians tended to conflate religion and nation less than their compatriots in the West (Bass 2013, 47); indeed, Bengalis' successful ethnic-based secessionism was a strident repudiation of Pakistan's

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religious-based national identity (Butt 2016, chapter 3). Second, the very fact of the split caused leaders' to redouble their efforts to produce a unifying identity for the country, with Islam the obvious choice to do so.

Importantly, not every episode of agitation Islamists undertake is rewarded with policy success: notable exceptions include the anti-Ahmedi protests in the early 1950s and Pervez Musharraf's cooperation with the United States after September 11, 2001. These episodes are important because they demonstrate that Islamist success is not a function of a selection-bias; Islamists do not fight only those battles that they can win. Below, I investigate cases of Islamist protest victories and, in two cases, defeats. I discuss how factors such as era (pre- vs. post-1971), issue (directly vs. tangentially religious), and target (secular/liberal vs. conservative, military vs. civilian) affect the likelihood of success.

Objectives Resolution

At Pakistan's independence, questions relating to the role of Islam within state and society were paramount. The country's founders had employed an exclusivist Muslim nationalism but did not necessarily want to design the new state on Islamist principles. Such a balance was anathema to Islamists. The debate between Islamists and those who took a "more restrictive view of the proper role of Islam in the state" (Kennedy 1992, 769) was summed up by Maulana Maudoodi, leader of the JI (quoted in Sayeed 1957, 60–61):

> Who will build up the required Islamic atmosphere? Can an irreligious state, with Westernized persons at its helm, do the job? Will the architects who are well-versed only in building bars and cinemas spend their energies in erecting a mosque? If the answer is in the affirmative, it will indeed be a unique experiment of its kind in human history; Godlessness fostering godliness to dethrone itself!

The state passed an Objectives Resolution in March 1949, which served as the framework of the new constitution (Bennett-Jones 2002, 154), and declared that "sovereignty over the entire universe belongs to Allah Almighty alone and the authority which He has delegated to the State of Pakistan, through its people for being exercised within the limits prescribed by Him is a sacred trust" (Haqqani 2005, 16). Liaquat Ali Khan's government also "assigned different rights of citizenship to Muslims and non-Muslims (the latter could not become prime minister or president)" (Cohen 2004, 168). Scholars agree that the Objectives

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Resolution was the first step toward Islamizing the country (Abbas 2005, 20; Haqqani 2005, 17; Cohen 2004, 168).

Pressure from Islamists led to these clauses being adopted. Despite being in jail, Maudoodi, as well as JUI President Maulana Shabbir Ahmed Usmani, exerted a tremendous influence on the Objectives Resolution, primarily by leveraging street power (Binder 1961, 71–154). JI and JUI "organize[d] public opinion throughout the country 'in favor of a purely Islamic Constitution for Pakistan'" (Binder 1961, 98). Punjab saw "processions in the streets and a march of 'angry amazons'[37] on the Assembly building" (Binder 1961, 102). Consequently, Maudoodi and Usmani each had their voice heard on the issue, both literally and metaphorically: Usmani was granted an audience with both Jinnah and the Prime Minister, and Maudoodi made a number of speeches on the issue. Thus, from the very beginnings of Pakistan's political history, Islamist street power proved a force to be reckoned with, especially against civilian governments that had little "popular" power.

Ahmedi Issue

The Ahmedi question came up early in Pakistan's life. In 1953, "law and order started to deteriorate when some Islamic-based parties demanded that Ahmedis — a minority sect — be declared non-Muslims. Within a matter of days, a frenzied anti-Ahmedi campaign spread throughout Punjab" (Bennett-Jones 2002, 225, 251). The agitation was led by JI and the *Majlis-e-Khatme-Nabuwwat*, an anti-Ahmedi group (Irfani 2004, 153). Its specific demands were that Ahmedis be removed from government positions; Chaudhry Muhammad Zafrullah Khan, the then-foreign minister, was the focus of the attacks (Jalal 2010, 261).

On February 27, 1953 — a Friday — religious groups protested at the Prime Minister's residence on the Anti-Ahmedi question (Dawn *1953a*). The demonstrations spread "throughout the Province, more especially [sic] in Lahore and the district towns of Sialkot, Gujranwala, Rawalpindi, Lyallpur, and Montgomery" (Report of the Court of Inquiry 1953, 151) and escalated until March 6 — also a Friday — when the army was brought into the city to restore order. This issue touched upon the very ideological foundations of the state, as the Munir Report (Report of the Court of Inquiry 1953, 200), explained:

> …in an Islamic State or, what is the same thing, in Islam there is a fundamental distinction between the rights of Muslim and non-Muslim subjects,

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> and one distinction which may at once be mentioned is that the non-Muslims cannot be associated with the business of administration in the higher sphere. Therefore, if the Ahmadis were not Muslims but *kafirs*, they could not occupy any of the high offices in the State, and as a deduction from this proposition two of the demands required the dismissal of Chaudhri Zafrullah Khan and other Ahmadis who were occupying key positions in the State, and the third required the declaration of Ahmadis as a non-Muslim minority to ensure that no Ahmadi may in future be entrusted with any such position in the State.

The government adopted a firm stance against anti-Ahmedi agitation, employing a law-and-order framework, rather than an ideological one (*Dawn* 1953b), but the state would face renewed anti-Ahmedi agitation in 1974. Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto faced enormous pressure in the form of protests on the Ahmedi question, led by JI and their student wing, IJT. Unlike the 1950s, when the government was strong enough to withstand Islamist pressure, Bhutto relented, and a clause was inserted in the constitution that declared Ahmedis non-Muslims, forbidding them to seek higher office in Pakistan (Nasr 1994, 181–182; Abbas 2005, 81–82). Bhutto's "liberal" image made him more susceptible to Islamist contentious politics, and scholars unanimously agree that Bhutto backed down to ward off right-wing pressure, in the form of street power, on his government (Bennett-Jones 2002, 15; Abbas 2005, 10–11; Haqqani 2005, 106–107). Contemporary press reports also affirm the centrality of street protests — especially a major strike called on June 14, a Friday — to the concession (*Dawn* 1974a; 1974b).

The Ahmedi issue highlights the importance of two factors correlated with Islamist agitational success: the 1971 split and the relative "liberalness" of the leader. It is instructive that anti-Ahmedi protests that occurred before 1971 did not succeed while those that occurred after did. More importantly, Bhutto's image — he was educated in the West, drank Scotch, and spoke pristine English, characteristics that rendered him "secular" even though his party's platform was explicitly "Islamic socialism" — left him more vulnerable to rightwing pressure. This theme would replay itself three years later.

PNA Movement

Immediately after the 1977 elections widely deemed to be rigged in favor of the ruling PPP, Bhutto faced street opposition from a nine-party alliance dominated by religious parties named the Pakistan National Alliance

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(PNA), which demanded that Bhutto resign, hold new elections, and that an Islamic system of government be put in place. Starting from a strike called on March 11, 1977, a Friday, street disturbances and agitation continued for weeks, before Bhutto met Maudoodi in a bid to save his leadership, to no avail. Despite compromising on some demands — Bhutto banned alcohol, nightclubs, casinos, and "activities proscribed by Islam," revived the Council of Islamic Ideology and placed three JUI leaders to head it, and promised the imposition of Sharia law within six months (Bennett-Jones 2002, 229) – the Islamists smelled blood, did not accept Bhutto's compromise, and stuck to their demand of new elections.

Using Bhutto inability's to find a deal with the PNA as a pretext, Zia launched a coup on July 5; Islamist street pressure had brought down Pakistan's most powerful civilian leader ever (Bennett-Jones 2002, 229; Nasr 1994, 184–187). The events of 1977 emphasize that "legitimacy" is an issue that civilians have to be concerned with significantly more than military dictators, especially if they happen to be "secular." Certainly, no military dictator has had to contend with Islamist protests on ascension to power, despite using, by definition, extralegal means to do so.

Blasphemy

Pakistan's blasphemy laws were inserted into the penal code by Zia in the early 1980s. Human rights groups have universally condemned these laws as contravening standard freedoms of religion and speech, in addition to their use as exclusively targeted against poor minorities. Despite pressure from civil society, human rights organizations, the country's beleaguered liberal minority, and even some politicians, the blasphemy laws have not been amended. Islamists have effectively vetoed changes to these retrograde laws, mainly through public pressure. For instance, in the spring of 2006, in the aftermath of the publications of Muhammad cartoons in Danish media, Pakistani Islamists sprang into action. Their first major rally took place in Islamabad on February 10, a Friday (*Dawn* 2006). Protests continued for over a month across the country, punctuated by another set of massive rallies on Friday, February 24, which ensured the government adopted a hawkish stance toward the cartoons' publication.

The blasphemy law itself, rather than the more general issue of blasphemy, once again became an issue in late 2010. A poor Christian

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woman named Aasia Bibi, wrongly accused of blasphemy, was sentenced to death. Salman Taseer, the governor of the country's largest province, and ally and confidante of President Zardari, offered to take her case up and seek a pardon. Islamist parties responded by promising to organize protests and demonstrations a mere two days after Taseer first met Aasia. JI chief Munawwar Hassan claimed that the "secular lobby" and "foreign-funded Non-Governmental Organizations " with anti-Islam and anti-Pakistan agendas were conspiring to abolish the law. Predictably, the first rallies were held on a Friday — November 26 (*Dawn* 2010). The government backed down, though this had as much to do with the assassination of Taseer in early January as any public protests in November and December.

Interestingly, even without violence, Islamist protests have been successful in arresting debate on the blasphemy law, even against entrenched military dictators. For example, early in his tenure, General Pervez Musharraf floated the idea of reforming the law. The idea was shot down almost as soon it was proposed; a report from the British Broadcasting Corporation (Bennett-Jones 2000) stated why: "A number of Islamic organizations had threatened to hold demonstrations on Friday to protest against the proposed changes. But General Musharraf has said that he now plans to leave the laws completely unchanged."

Finally, an episode from September, 2012 encapsulates many of these issues. An amateur American filmmaker released "Innocence of Muslims" on YouTube, which portrayed Muhammad unflatteringly. Islamists, primarily JuD and JI, carried out demonstrations and protests on the first Friday (September 14) after news of the film came to light (*Dawn* 2012a). Wary of being caught on the "wrong side" of the blasphemy issue as they were with Taseer, the ruling PPP announced on September 19 that the following Friday (September 21) would be an officially sanctioned day of protest, under the banner of "official day of expression of love for the prophet" (*Dawn* 2012b). On the official day of protest, violence ensued, the entire country ground to a halt, and the Foreign Office summoned the United States envoy to register its complaints (Syed 2012). This incident was noteworthy for showing the power of Islamists on the street, which convinced the governing PPP to adopt a "if you can't beat them, join them" logic.

Resistance to changes in the blasphemy law across both military and civilian governments this century reveals a central point: issues directly related to religion are the third rail for nominally secular leaders. Few

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Pakistanis have enjoyed more power than Musharraf in the early 2000s; that even he could not begin a public debate on reforming law, let alone actually reforming or abolishing the retrograde legislation, speaks volumes. Interestingly, Musharraf was able to stare down Islamist pressure on his alliance with the United States.

Foreign Policy

In the aftermath of September 11, the United States used sticks and carrots to persuade Pakistan to back its war in Afghanistan. Musharraf's decision to join the U.S. was an affront to the religious right, which turned to the street once its bombing campaign was underway in October, 2001. On October 12, a Friday, the first mass rallies were organized by a panoply of religious parties, and even turned violent (*Dawn* 2001a; 2001b). On November 9, another Friday, an alliance of religious parties successfully organized a countrywide strike (*Dawn* 2001c). This pattern of agitational activity continued for weeks. Yet Musharraf, pusillanimous in the fight on the blasphemy law, was unmoved, and did not bow to pressure. He was certainly cognizant of religious parties' strident dissatisfaction; in his memoirs, he writes that "whereas most Pakistanis condemned the September 11 attacks, there was also strong sentiment against the United States' reaction. That sentiment was encouraged partly by the religious lobby…" (Musharraf 2006, 222). Discussing his weighty decision to abandon the Taliban and join the United States coalition, he predicted: "What of the domestic reaction? The mullahs would certainly oppose joining the United States and would come out on the streets" (Musharraf 2006, 203).

Musharraf was able to withstand Islamist pressure because his decision had been taken in the "national interest" by military commanders, who generally enjoyed considerable autonomy in crafting the country's security and foreign policy. Even in advanced democracies such as the United States, the executive has more autonomy in foreign policy than domestic policy (Canes-Wrone, Howell, and Lewis 2008). This is doubly true for Pakistani military commanders, who control the country's foreign and security policy even when civilians are nominally in power (Fair 2014, 23). A civilian leader would likely not have been able to execute such an about-turn in Pakistan's foreign policy in the face of strident opposition from the "mullahs" on the streets. Thus, Islamist pressure failed in this case because the issue over which they protested was related to foreign

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Table 1. Islamist agitation and public policy.

Issue	Era	Target	Religious component	Outcome
Objectives Resolution	Pre-1971	Secular, civilian	Direct	Partial success
Anti-Ahmedi legislation I	Pre-1971	Secular, civilian	Direct	Failure
Anti-Ahmedi legislation II	Post-1971	Secular, civilian	Direct	Success
PNA movement	Post-1971	Secular, civilian	Indirect	Success
Blasphemy law	Post-1971	Secular, both civilian and military	Direct	Success
Foreign policy	Post-1971	Secular, military	Indirect	Failure

policy, with the executive in military hands. Table 1 summarizes the empirical arguments proffered in this section.

CONCLUSION

In this article, I have argued that Friday prayers encourage Islamist collective action through three main mechanisms: as a filtering mechanism and coordination tool, as an opportunity to physically choke a city, and as encouragement through the role of the *imam*. I have demonstrated that, outside the 1980s, Islamization in Pakistan can be directly tied to such mobilization, and shown the conditions under which Islamist agitation is most likely to succeed.

Future research should explain the degree to which such an argument can apply in other Muslim-majority states and societies. Though my argument is generalizable to the extent that other Muslim-majority states also have large number of mosques and allow contentious politics, future research should focus on the effects of variation in state-mosque relationships — governments in Saudi Arabia and Malaysia, for instance, control mosques and can shut problematic ones down at short notice. How does such variation affect levels and types of collective action? Additionally, future research can examine the precise balance between Islamists' capacity and preferences for collective action, across space and time. Specifically, would Islamists who enjoy more de jure power than their Pakistani brethren have the same desire, if not the capabilities, to use street power for political ends? Both these questions will aid a more

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precise and complete understanding of the sources and consequences of Islamist street power in Muslim states.

Supplementary materials and methods

To view supplementary material for this article, please visit http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S1755048316000031

NOTES

1. Not strictly a political party, since it does not contest elections. See online Appendix A.
2. See online Appendix B for brief description of fieldwork.
3. Police claimed that, if given direction by the government, they could "stop" these rallies. One district SHO complained that "Our government's policies are very weak. If the government had a strict policy, people wouldn't even dare to mobilize on the street. The police gets double-minded if the policy from above is not clear: do we use force or not?" I interpreted such statements as a combination of wishful thinking and a desire to avoid blame for disorder.
4. This figure includes all Islamist parties.
5. Multiple interviews. Islamists' dominance of street politics, alongside their ideological leanings, makes them attractive candidates for the security establishment to "pressure" civilian governments, as occurred in February 2012. See Imtiaz (2012).
6. Two recent surveys (Pew Research Center 2012 and Tezcur et al. 2006) showed about two-thirds of Pakistani men regularly attend Friday prayers. By contrast, membership of, affiliation with, or electoral preferences for Islamist parties is evidently less common.
7. On default options and individual decision-making, see Thaler and Sunstein (2008).
8. Author interview.
9. Interview with Naseer Siddiqui.
10. Interview with Aslam Ghauri.
11. Interview with Hasan Zaidi.
12. Interview.
13. Interview with Zia-ur-Rehman.
14. Gould (2003): 250 and 254 makes a similar point.
15. Interview with JI member.
16. Interview with Zia-ur-Rehman.
17. Interview with former Capital City Police Officer.
18. Zainab Market, Empress Market, Bohri Bazaar, Bolton Market, Jodia Bazar, Paper Market, Technocity, Electronics Market, Marriott Road, Medicine Market, Jama Cloth Market, and, most importantly, the port.
19. Karachi Stock Exchange, State Bank of Pakistan, headquarters of multiple banks and financial institutions, including Standard Chartered, Habib Bank, and Bank Alfalah.
20. Jang Group, the country's biggest media conglomerate, Dawn, and Hum TV.
21. Sindh Secretariat, Sindh Board of Revenue, Police Headquarters, Rangers (paramilitary) Headquarters, Passport office.
22. Sindh High and District Courts, Supreme Court Registry, Banking courts, Customs Tribunals.
23. Chief Minister House, Governor House, Sindh Assembly.
24. Interviews with multiple journalists.
25. Google Maps.
26. Google Maps.
27. Interview with Hasan Zaidi.
28. Interview with Aslam Ghauri.
29. Interview with Shehryar Mirza.
30. Interview with Saba Imtiaz.

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31. See online Appendix C for coding details and summary statistics.
32. Interestingly, the MQM had seven of their 24 protests on Sunday, a similar ratio to Islamists and Fridays, perhaps revealing MQM supporters' middle-class background.
33. Bueno de Mesquita et al. (2012).
34. Interview with Abid Hussain.
35. Interview with former senior bureaucrat.
36. Interview with Aslam Ghauri.
37. Veiled women.

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