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Winning without Elections: The Islamist Campaign for the Islamic State in Pakistan

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Abstract

Between 1947 and 1977 the religious parties of Pakistan never commanded significant electoral strength, yet each successive constitutional settlement moved closer to their demands: the Objectives Resolution of 1949, the Islamic Republic of 1956, the restoration of the state's Islamic name in 1963, the concessions of 1973, the Second Amendment of 1974, and the capitulations of Bhutto's final months in 1977. This article explains the paradox through the public arena. What the religious right lacked at the ballot box it possessed in the street, the mosque, and the party press, and the state repeatedly purchased calm in the arena with text in the constitution. Drawing on the party publications of the Jamaat-e-Islami, the record of the ulema's campaigns from the twenty-two points of 1951 to the Nizam-e-Mustafa movement of 1977, the Munir Report, and the constitutional documents, the article reconstructs the recurring cycle of demand, mobilization, and concession, and takes equal note of its limits: three decades of campaigning obtained names, oaths, and gatekeeping offices, but never the clerical veto over legislation that the campaign was launched to secure. The Islamic state as written was a settlement extracted in the arena, not a surrender.

Keywords: Islamism; Jamaat-e-Islami; ulema; Objectives Resolution; anti-Ahmadiyya movement; Muslim Family Laws Ordinance; constitution of Pakistan; public arenas

Introduction

The religious parties of Pakistan present the historian with a paradox: they lost every election and won every constitution. In the polls of the period between independence and the coup of 1977 the parties of religion polled marginally, never holding power at the centre and rarely in a province; yet the documents by which the state defined itself moved steadily in their direction, from the Objectives Resolution of 1949, through the Islamic Republic proclaimed in 1956 and restored by amendment in 1963, to the constitution of 1973 with its confessional oaths, the Second Amendment of 1974, and the concessions wrung from a besieged government in the spring of 1977. A movement that cannot win seats is not supposed to write constitutions. This article explains how, in Pakistan, it did. A definition is owed at the outset, because the label covers a coalition rather than a party. By the religious rightists this article means the political formations that made the transformation of Pakistan into an Islamic state, a state whose law and public order would be governed by the Shariah, the revealed law of Islam, their central demand: the ulema, the formally trained scholars of Islamic law organized in bodies such as the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam; the Jamaat-e-Islami, the disciplined cadre party founded by Abul Ala Maududi in 1941 on the model of a revolutionary vanguard; and the agitational formations of the Punjab, above all the Majlis-e-Ahrar. These groups differed in theology, in class base, and in mutual regard, which was often low; what united them, episodically but repeatedly, was the campaign this article reconstructs, and the arena, the street, the mosque, the procession, and the party press, in which they waged it.

The argument, stated plainly, is that the religious right substituted the public arena for the electorate, and that the state accepted the substitution. The evidence is a recurring cycle, visible from 1949 to 1977: a demand is formulated, the arena is filled, and the state, unwilling to pay the price of a filled arena, concedes text; the text then becomes the platform for the next demand. The reconstruction draws on the Jamaat's publications, the record of the ulema's campaigns, the Munir Report of 1954, and the constitutional documents themselves; the Muslim League's own Islamic commitments of the 1940s, which opened the door at which the rightists pushed, are documented in a companion study and taken here as the starting point rather than retold.¹

The Converts: From Opposing Pakistan to Claiming It

The first fact about Pakistan's religious right is that most of it had opposed Pakistan. The Majlis-e-Ahrar, the party of populist ulema and celebrated orators founded at Lahore in 1931, had fought the Muslim League through the 1940s; the nationalist ulema of the Deobandi mainstream had condemned partition in the name of composite nationalism; and Maududi himself had rejected the demand as a Muslim nationalism aping the godless nation-states of Europe. After August 1947 the position reversed with remarkable speed: the erstwhile critics migrated, regrouped, and contended that the driving force behind Pakistan had been Islam and that its purpose, therefore, was an Islamic state.² The reversal was not mere opportunism; it was a claim of custody. Having lost the argument over whether the state should exist, the ulema opened the argument over what the state must mean, and the second argument proved winnable.

The pro-Pakistan ulema, meanwhile, pressed from inside the tent, and their pressure began before the state was a year old. Shabbir Ahmad Usmani, the most senior religious scholar to have campaigned for the League, organized the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam as the vehicle of the loyalist clergy; the Pir of Manki Sharif in the Frontier and Maulana Akram Khan in Bengal added the weight of provinces; and together they demanded of the Muslim League government the redemption of the promises its own leaders had scattered through the campaigns of the 1940s.³ The government thus faced a pincer of piety, the converts without and the loyalists within, both quoting the League's own speeches back at it. Whatever the founders had privately intended, the vocabulary of an Islamic state was now a public debt, and the religious parties appointed themselves its collectors.

First Campaign: The Objectives Resolution and the Board of the Ulema

The Objectives Resolution of March 1949 was the campaign's first dividend, and its text records a bargain rather than a conversion. The Resolution declared that sovereignty over the entire universe belongs to Allah and that the state would exercise its authority as a sacred trust, and it promised that Muslims would be enabled to order their lives by the Quran and Sunnah; but it wrapped these clauses in the language of democracy, freedom, equality, and minority rights, and it conferred on the ulema no privileged office whatever.⁴

¹The League's own commitments of the 1940s, which created this opening, are documented in Muhammad Shafi, "Debating the Idea of Pakistan as Modern Islamic State during 1940s," *Journal of the Punjab University Historical Society* 34, no. 2 (2021): 45–60, and are not repeated here.

²Sayyid Vali Reza Nasr, *The Vanguard of the Islamic Revolution: The Jama'at-i Islami of Pakistan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994); Samina Awan, *Political Islam in Colonial Punjab: Majlis-e-Ahrar, 1929–1949* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2010).

³Leonard Binder, *Religion and Politics in Pakistan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1961).

⁴Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, *Debates*, 12 March 1949 (Karachi: Government of Pakistan Press, 1949).

The religious parties had demanded more and received less, and their response established the pattern of the next three decades: they declared the half-loaf a victory, claimed the Resolution as their charter, and treated its generalities as promissory notes to be encashed clause by clause in the constitution to come.

The Jamaat's conduct after the passage shows the arena strategy already mature. Rather than lobbying ministers, the party carried the Resolution to the public, launching a campaign to educate the masses in its contents, spirit, and goals, so that the document the government regarded as a preamble became, in the streets of the Punjab, a standard against which the government itself would be measured.⁵ The move deserves the historian's attention because it inverts the usual direction of constitutional politics: here a text descends from the assembly into the arena and returns as pressure. Every subsequent campaign of the religious right, down to 1977, would run on this circuit, and the government that voted the Resolution to appease the ulema discovered that it had instead armed them.

The institutional offensive followed under the most learned auspices available. On Usmani's initiative the Constituent Assembly's Basic Principles Committee, the body charged with translating the Resolution into a constitutional framework, acquired an advisory Board of Talimat-i-Islamiyat, a panel on Islamic teachings chaired by the eminent scholar Syed Sulaiman Nadvi, who came from Lucknow for the purpose, with Mufti Muhammad Shafi, Muhammad Hamidullah, Zafar Ahmad Ansari, Mufti Jafar Husain, and Professor Abdul Khaliq as members. The Board proposed that the head of state be a Muslim and that a body of ulema stand above the legislature to strike down repugnant laws; the Committee's interim report of October 1950 rejected most of this, including the Muslim headship, and the rejection detonated the next mobilization.⁶ The head of the loyalist ulema asked publicly whether the state's fundamental rights would rest on the Quran and Sunnah or on American and British law, a question framed for the arena, not the committee room.

The Machinery: Twenty-Two Points, the Party Press, and Constitution Week

The campaign's masterstroke was a consensus document, because the rightists' notorious disunity had been the government's best defense. In January 1951 thirty-one leading ulema of every major persuasion gathered at Karachi and issued twenty-two principles, the *bais nikat*, as an agreed road map for the Islamic state, covering sovereignty, law, the duties of rulers, and the limits of legislation.⁷ Sectarian rivals who agreed on little else had signed a common constitutional program, and the government could no longer play Deobandi against Bareilvi or the ulema against the Jamaat. The twenty-two points did for the religious right what a manifesto does for a party that contests elections: they converted a temperament into a platform. That the platform was drafted by clerics who would never win a general election is precisely the point; the document was addressed not to voters but to the drafting committees, over the heads of the electorate.

The right's press was its parliament, and the government paid it the compliment of suppression. The Jamaat's organ *Tarjuman-ul-Quran*, Maududi's own journal, anchored a family of sympathetic publications, *Tasnim*, *Kawthar*, *Qasid*, and *Jahan-i-Nau*, through which the case for the Islamic constitution was argued week by week; the government's response, closing public debate forums to escape their criticism, conceded the potency of

⁵Nasr, *Vanguard of the Islamic Revolution*.

⁶Binder, *Religion and Politics in Pakistan*.

⁷Nasr, *Vanguard of the Islamic Revolution*; Binder, *Religion and Politics in Pakistan*.

the instrument.⁸ To the press was joined the street: the Jamaat opened its campaign for Islamic constitutionalism at Mochi Gate, the great open-air rostrum of the walled city of Lahore where the Punjab's politics had been argued for generations, and the campaign travelled outward across Pakistan. A party of cadres, thin in the countryside and unloved by the electorate, was demonstrating that it could nonetheless fill the spaces in which governments feel observed.

By the end of 1952 the cycle of demand and concession was turning visibly. The Jamaat proclaimed a Constitution Week in November 1952, staged demonstrations across the country, and devoted an entire number of the *Tarjuman* to Maududi's draft of an Islamic constitution; in December the Prime Minister, Khawaja Nazimuddin, presented a revised Basic Principles Committee report bending toward the Islamists' positions, and the ulema, in Vali Nasr's phrase, "smelled victory and sensed weakness" and raised the price accordingly: the state to be named an Islamic Republic, the Shariah supreme, an ulema board over legislation, an Islamic economy, a foreign policy loosened from the West.⁹ A government that conceded under pressure had taught its petitioners the value of pressure, and the lesson was learned in quarters rougher than the drafting committees.

The Street Proves Itself: The Anti-Ahmadiyya Agitation, 1952–54

The agitation that followed grew from a controversy older than the state. The Ahmadis, followers of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian (1835–1908), whose claims to prophetic status the overwhelming majority of Muslims held to violate the doctrine of *Khatm-e-Nabuwwat*, the finality of the Prophethood of Muhammad (PBUH), had been the special target of the *Majlis-e-Ahrar* since the 1930s, when the *Ahrar* recruited volunteers across the Punjab, opened an office at Qadian itself, and staged a conference at the movement's headquarters.¹⁰ After 1947 the *Ahrar*, politically beached by their opposition to Pakistan, rebuilt their public standing on this single issue, and the demand that Ahmadis be declared a non-Muslim minority became the one cause on which the entire religious right, whatever its internal quarrels, could unite. The issue was, in the exact sense, arena-made: it lived in conferences, processions, and pulpits before it ever reached a legislature.

The demands were formalized through a *Majlis-e-Amal*, a council of action, and they aimed at offices as well as definitions. Meeting under the chairmanship of Sulaiman Nadvi, the assembled religious leadership demanded that the Ahmadiyya community be declared a non-Muslim minority, that Foreign Minister Zafrullah Khan, the state's most prominent Ahmadi, be removed, and that Ahmadis be cleared from key positions in the bureaucracy and military.¹¹ The Jamaat, which had initially held that a properly Islamic constitution would resolve the question in due course, moved with the momentum: the party's council endorsed the agitation, the *Tarjuman* of August 1952 supported the demand for exclusion, and by 1953 the Jamaat stood publicly with the movement. The episode shows the arena's discipline running in both directions; parties shape crowds, but a crowd in full cry also conscripts its parties.

The provincial government of the Punjab did not merely fail to resist the agitation; it invested in it. Chief Minister Mumtaz Daultana, pressed within the Muslim League by the

⁸Nasr, *Vanguard of the Islamic Revolution*.

⁹Nasr, *Vanguard of the Islamic Revolution*.

¹⁰Ali Usman Qasmi, *The Ahmadis and the Politics of Religious Exclusion in Pakistan* (London: Anthem Press, 2014); Awan, *Political Islam in Colonial Punjab*.

¹¹*Report of the Court of Inquiry Constituted under Punjab Act II of 1954 to Enquire into the Punjab Disturbances of 1953* (Lahore: Government Printing Press, 1954).

rivalry of Mamdot and others, found in the Ahrar and their allies a useful counterbalance, and the movement matured under a benevolence that Vali Nasr describes as turning the Ahrar into an indispensable political asset for the Chief Minister.¹² When the council of action carried its demands to Daultana, he directed it onward to the central government, a gesture that exported the Punjab's fire to Karachi. The sequel is well known: the agitation of early 1953 broke into violence against Ahmadi lives and property, the centre refused the demands, and in March 1953 Lahore passed under martial law, the first in the country's history, to restore an order the provincial government had helped unsettle.

The inquiry that followed produced the most searching public document of Pakistan's first decade, and its findings cut in every direction. The Court of Inquiry under Justice Muhammad Munir found that the Punjab Muslim League had been sympathetic to the movement and that Leaguers of the governing party had joined the agitation; it recorded, no less devastatingly for the ulema, that the assembled scholars could not agree among themselves on the definition of a Muslim; and it observed that the Objectives Resolution had strengthened the ulema's hand in politics.¹³ The immediate verdict of 1953–54 was defeat: the movement was suppressed, its leaders jailed, Maududi himself sentenced. The longer verdict reversed it, for the demand crushed in 1953 was enacted in 1974, and the religious right drew the durable lesson that in Pakistan the arena's defeats are provisional and its causes compound interest.

Ink in the Constitution: 1956

The constitution of 23 March 1956 shows precisely what the campaigns had purchased and what they had not. Pakistan was named an Islamic Republic; the head of state was required to be a Muslim; sovereignty was declared, as in the Resolution, to belong to Allah; the state undertook to enable Muslim life according to the Quran and Sunnah; and an advisory commission on Islamic laws was provided. Refused, once again, was the demand at the campaign's core: no board of ulema stood above the legislature, and the repugnancy of laws to Islam remained, in the last resort, for parliament to judge. Non-Muslim members of the Assembly contested even the concessions, one objecting that "if it is Islamic, it is not a republic,"¹⁴ but their resistance, examined in a separate study of the minorities' constitutional position, could not move a League leadership bound by its own vocabulary.

The abrogation of 1958 taught both sides the fragility of text, and each drew its own conclusion. When the military dissolved the constitution after barely two years, the Islamic Republic vanished with a signature, and the religious parties discovered that clauses won in the arena could be lost in a cantonment; the incoming regime, for its part, concluded that the clauses had been a weakness, ornaments hung on the state by agitation, and resolved to replace the ulema's Islam with a version more congenial to command. The stage was thus set for the one sustained counter-offensive of the period, the decade in which the state did not merely resist the rightist campaign but fielded an alternative Islam against it.

¹²Nasr, *Vanguard of the Islamic Revolution*; Tahir Kamran and Muhammad Shafi, "Balancing Islam and Democracy: The Evolution of Pakistan's Constitutional Framework and Minority Rights, 1947–1958" (book chapter, forthcoming).

¹³*Report of the Court of Inquiry*.

¹⁴The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 1956; Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, *Debates*, 1956; Tahir Kamran and Muhammad Shafi, "Balancing Islam and Democracy: The Evolution of Pakistan's Constitutional Framework and Minority Rights, 1947–1958" (book chapter, forthcoming).

Against the Modernists: The Ayub Decade

Ayub Khan's regime was the only government of the period with an Islamic project of its own, and its project was the ulema's inversion. The Field Marshal's Islam was developmental and disciplinary, a faith of progress purged of what he regarded as clerical obscurantism, and in his first years the religious parties were simply excluded from the corridors of a depoliticized state, driving the Jamaat into common cause with the secular opposition.¹⁵ The regime's confidence rested on a calculation the previous decade seemed to license: that the ulema's power had been the gift of weak politicians, and that a strong state could ignore the arena. The calculation was tested twice in the decade, once over the family and once over the state's own name, and it failed both times.

The Muslim Family Laws Ordinance of 1961 was the decade's pitched battle, and it was fought clause by clause. Framed on the report of a modernist-led commission, the Ordinance discouraged polygamy by procedural restraint, subjected divorce to arbitration and registration, secured inheritance for the grandchildren of predeceased children, and raised the minimum ages of marriage.¹⁶ The ulema's rebuttal was equally specific: the divorce provisions trenched on a husband's Quranic prerogative, the polygamy restraints presumed to regulate what revelation permitted, the registration of marriages had no warrant in Islamic history, the age limits contradicted the law's own sources. The Jamaat led the public pressure through literature and street protest, a standing committee of the assembly urged reconsideration, and the President referred the matter to his Islamic advisory council in 1963. The Ordinance survived, the one durable modernist victory of the era, but the regime had been forced to defend the family reform in the ulema's chosen currency, public agitation, and it did not seek a second such purchase.

The regime built an intellectual apparatus for its Islam, and the right matched it press for press. The Central Institute of Islamic Research under Fazlur Rahman, the most formidable modernist scholar of his generation, and the Institute of Islamic Culture at Lahore under Khalifa Abdul Hakim supplied the government's case, the Institute's journal arguing for the reinterpretation of Islam's legal principles in the light of the modern world; against them the Jamaat deployed its Urdu periodicals, *Chiragh-e-Rah* and *Zindagi*, in a running ideological war that targeted the modernists and the left alike.¹⁷ For a social history the duel matters less for who won than for where it was fought: both the military state and its clerical opponents accepted that the meaning of Islam in Pakistan would be settled neither in the seminary nor in the cabinet but in the public prints, before the reading and listening publics of the Punjab. Even the government of a soldier had to publish.

The controversy over the state's name delivered the decade's verdict, and the verdict went against the state. The constitution Ayub granted in 1962 styled the country simply the Republic of Pakistan, deleting the word Islamic from the title the arena had won in 1956; the ulema answered with protests and rallies for restoration, and within the year the First Amendment returned the Islamic Republic to the statute book, a retreat that Justice Munir, no friend of the clerics, attributed squarely to the regime's failure to resist the mobilization capacity of the ulema.¹⁸ The regime that banned the Jamaat in 1964 saw the courts restore it within the year. The decade's ledger was thus mixed but legible: a modernizing military

¹⁵Nasr, *Vanguard of the Islamic Revolution*.

¹⁶The Muslim Family Laws Ordinance, 1961 (Ordinance VIII of 1961).

¹⁷Nasr, *Vanguard of the Islamic Revolution*.

¹⁸The Constitution of the Republic of Pakistan, 1962; Muhammad Munir, *From Jinnah to Zia* (Lahore: Vanguard Books, 1980).

government with every instrument of coercion had held the family law and lost the name, and the religious right emerged from its leanest years with the central lesson of 1949 confirmed. The arena, filled, moves even soldiers.

Ideology's Decade: Yahya, the 1970 Elections, and Bhutto's Concessions

The military's next generation reversed Ayub's calculation and invited the right in, and the invitation was ideological. The Yahya regime projected the army as guardian of Pakistan's ideological frontier, and the currency of the phrase ideology of Pakistan gave the religious parties a state-sponsored idiom in which their project and the state's integrity became synonymous; ulema of diverse persuasions joined the Jamaat in campaigning for that ideology against opponents branded atheist socialists on one wing and secessionist secularists on the other.¹⁹ On 31 May 1970 the religious parties staged Shaukat-e-Islam day, filling the cities with rallies whose scale impressed upon the regime that Pakistan's unity was glued to Islam rather than to its ethnic and linguistic realities. The demonstration was the arena strategy in its purest form: a show of the street mounted precisely because the ballot, seven months later, could not be trusted to show the same thing.

The elections of 1970 duly delivered the humiliation, and 1971 delivered the reversal. The religious parties were routed at the polls by the Awami League in the east and the Pakistan People's Party in the west; within a year the country had broken in two, and the right converted catastrophe into vindication, arguing that the debacle flowed from infidelity to Islam and the ideology of Pakistan, and that an Islamic constitution was the surviving state's only cement. Bhutto, whose electoral coalition had promised, in Husain Haqqani's summary, different things to different people under the slogan of Islam as faith and socialism as economy, now governed a wounded country in which the right's explanation of the wound commanded the arena.²⁰ The stage was set for the largest concessions of the period, made by the least clerical government the country had known.

The constitution of 1973 and the Second Amendment of 1974 wrote the arena's demands into the state's deepest law. The new constitution reserved both the presidency and, for the first time, the prime ministership to Muslims, and bound both offices by oath to belief in the finality of the Prophethood; in September 1974, after a fresh anti-Ahmadi agitation, the Second Amendment inserted into the constitution itself a definition of a Muslim framed to exclude the Ahmadis, enacting at last the demand the state had refused at gunpoint in 1953.²¹ The climax deserves its dates set side by side: twenty-one years separated the martial law that crushed the movement from the amendment that consummated it, and the interval had been filled not by elections won but by an arena never allowed to empty. No episode in Pakistan's history states this article's thesis more exactly.

The Nizam-e-Mustafa movement of 1977 collected the campaign's final instalment from a government on its knees. The opposition alliance formed for that year's elections campaigned under the demand for Nizam-e-Mustafa, the order of the Prophet, converting a protest against disputed polls into a movement for the enforcement of Shariah; and Bhutto, seeking survival, paid in the arena's own coin, prohibiting alcohol, closing

¹⁹Nasr, *Vanguard of the Islamic Revolution*.

²⁰Husain Haqqani, *Pakistan: Between Mosque and Military* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2005).

²¹The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 1973; The Constitution (Second Amendment) Act, 1974.

nightclubs and gambling houses, and reconstituting the Council of Islamic Ideology, the constitution's advisory body on the conformity of laws with Islam, under the supervision of the opposition's own Mufti Mahmud.²² The concessions did not save him; the coup of 5 July 1977 closed the period, and the incoming military ruler would carry the Islamization the arena had demanded into regions the arena itself had not imagined. That sequel lies beyond this article's boundary; the door through which it walked had been thirty years in the opening.

The Pattern and Its Limits

The pattern across three decades is a single repeated exchange: mobilization in the arena purchased text in the constitution. The Resolution of 1949 answered the first campaign; the concessions of 1952 answered Constitution Week; the Islamic Republic of 1956 answered the twenty-two points; the First Amendment of 1963 answered the rallies for the name; the clauses of 1973 and the amendment of 1974 answered a generation of Khatm-e-Nabuwwat agitation; the prohibitions of 1977 answered the Nizam-e-Mustafa street. In every case the concession was made by a government the religious parties could not have removed at the polls, which is the measure of the mechanism: the rightists functioned, in effect, as an establishment without an electorate, exercising through the arena the leverage that constitutional theory reserves for majorities.

The limits of the pattern are as instructive as its successes, and honesty requires their full statement. Three decades of campaigning never obtained the demand at the campaign's core: no constitution granted the ulema a veto over legislation, no supra-legislative board of the kind Usmani's Talimat-i-Islamiyat had proposed was ever created, and the Shariah was never declared the supreme law of the land; every settlement conceded symbols and gatekeeping, names, oaths, and the confessional qualification of offices, while parliament retained the last word on what the law would be, the Islamic councils of all three constitutions remaining advisory bodies whose recommendations bound no one.²³ The Islamic state as written between 1949 and 1977 was therefore a settlement, not a surrender: the arena could compel the state to speak Islam, but not, in this period, to hand over the pen.

The theoretical yield of the case extends beyond Pakistan, because it shows a public arena substituting for an electorate rather than expressing one. In the classical account, public opinion matters because it prefigures votes; in the Punjab of these decades the religious right's opinion-power and its vote-power diverged completely, and it was the opinion-power, performed in processions, conferences, and the party press, in exactly the ritual-laden forms that students of South Asian public arenas have described, that governments priced and paid for.²⁴ Why states should pay for calm in the arena at the expense of text in the constitution, when the agitators demonstrably could not win elections, is the deepest question the case raises; the answer, this history suggests, is that governments of doubtful legitimacy fear the street precisely because they cannot read it, and buy certainty at the only counter that sells it.

Conclusion

²²Nasr, *Vanguard of the Islamic Revolution*; Haqqani, *Between Mosque and Military*.

²³The Constitutions of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 1956 and 1973; The Constitution of the Republic of Pakistan, 1962.

²⁴Sandria B. Freitag, *Collective Action and Community: Public Arenas and the Emergence of Communalism in North India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1989).

The religious right of Pakistan won without elections because it had found, and never relinquished, a second franchise. Its parliament was Mochi Gate and the mosque forecourt, its hansard the Tarjuman-ul-Quran and its sister prints, its divisions the processions counted by nervous governments; and in that assembly it commanded the majorities the ballot box refused it. Between 1947 and 1977 the campaign it waged there moved the state, settlement by settlement, from the studied silences of 1947 to the confessional constitution of 1974, while never capturing the legislative supremacy it actually sought. Both halves of the record, the victories and the ceiling, belong to any honest account, and both were made in the same place. The constitutions of Pakistan are, among other things, the minutes of its public arenas, and no party wrote more of those minutes, with fewer votes, than the parties of religion.

The quarrel this article has followed did not end at the boundary of its period; it changed patrons. After July 1977 a military government adopted the Islamization the arena had demanded and pressed it beyond anything the campaigns of these decades had extracted, a transformation whose examination belongs elsewhere. What the period before the coup establishes is the mechanism that made the transformation possible: thirty years in which the state had taught its religious opposition, concession by concession, that the arena pays. The lesson outlived every government that gave it, and the historian who would understand the Pakistan that came after 1977 must begin with the long tutorial that came before.

Note: This article is extracted from Muhammad Shafi, "Debating the Idea of Pakistan in Public Arenas: A Case Study of the Punjab (1947–1977)" (PhD diss., Department of History, Institute of Global and Historical Studies, Government College University, Lahore), completed under the supervision of Hussain Ahmad Khan.