Secular Party Rule and Religious Violence in Pakistan*

Gareth Nellis†
University of California, Berkeley

Niloufer Siddiqui‡
University at Albany-State University of New York

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Abstract

Does secular party incumbency affect religious violence? Existing theory is ambiguous. On the one hand, religiously-motivated militants might target areas that vote secularists into office. On the other hand, secular party politicians, reliant on the support of violence-hit communities, may face powerful electoral incentives to quell attacks. Candidates bent on preventing bloodshed might also sort into such parties. To adjudicate these claims, we combine constituency-level election returns with events data on Islamist and sectarian violence in Pakistan (1988–2011). For identification, we compare districts where secular parties narrowly won or lost elections. We find that secularist rule causes a sizable reduction in local religious conflict. Additional analyses suggest that the result stems from electoral pressures to cater to core party supporters, and not from politician selection. The effect is concentrated in regions with denser police presence, highlighting the importance of state capacity for suppressing religious disorder.

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†Corresponding author. Evidence in Governance And Politics Postdoctoral Fellow, Institute of Governmental Studies, Moses Hall, University of California, Berkeley, Berkeley, CA 94720, USA; gareth.nellis@berkeley.edu.

‡Postdoctoral Fellow, Rockefeller College of Public Affairs & Policy, University at Albany-State University of New York, 135 Western Ave, Albany, NY 12222, USA; nasiddiqui@albany.edu.

Large swaths of the Islamic world are engulfed in religious violence. Within Muslim-majority countries, killings perpetrated by terrorist groups numbered at least 25,000 in 2015.[1] In Nigeria, an ongoing rebellion by Boko Haram has resulted in the displacement of 2.2 million people (Comolli 2015). Taliban fighters continue to frustrate ISAF efforts to bring stability to Afghanistan (Lyall, Blair and Imai 2013), while tensions between Sunni and Shia sects fuel violent insurgencies in Iraq and Yemen (Ahmed 2011).

Alongside deepening conflict, many countries in the Middle East, North Africa, and southern Asia are charting a course toward greater democracy.[2] This has kindled anxiety on the part of international policymakers regarding the possible nexus between electoral outcomes and ethno-religious violence. Many have argued that the best way to mitigate inter-religious group conflict in weakly institutionalized democracies is to abet the election of "moderates" and "secularists." In a 2013 speech before the United Nations General Assembly, for example, President Barack Obama lamented the turmoil in the Middle East that had "laid bare deep divisions within societies." In response he noted that "America and others have worked to bolster the moderate opposition."[3] The European Union has sought to shore up secular parties in the Maghreb through its European Neighborhood Policy (Laïdi 2008). The presumption that having moderate forces prevail at the ballot box can help contain the spread of religious strife suffuses policy discussion.

But do secularists in fact curb religious violence when in office? Not only is available evidence scant, but social scientific theory yields ambiguous predictions. On the one hand, secular parties—those promoting avowedly non-religious platforms and subscribing to an inclusive national vision—might face powerful electoral incentives to quell attacks, especially

[1]This figure represents the summed 2015 terrorism-related death counts for Iraq, Nigeria, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Syria—the five Muslim-majority states worst-hit by Islamist militancy—as enumerated by the Institute for Economics and Peace (2015).

[2]The average Polity IV score of Muslim-majority states jumped by 30 percentage points between 1980 and 2014 (see Supplementary Appendix [SA] Figure A1).

[3]See goo.gl/0jWths, accessed 3/7/16.

when they rely on the votes of violence-hit minorities (Horowitz 1985; Wilkinson 2004). It is also possible that more competent politicians, and those nursing a deep-seated commitment to preventing bloody disturbances, gravitate toward secular parties. However, electoral victory by secularists might exacerbate conflict if religiously-motivated militants target violence on the strongholds of secular opponents (cf. Crost, Felter and Johnston 2014). Meanwhile, capacity-based accounts imply that secularist incumbency will be largely irrelevant in places where state institutions are enfeebled or absent, or where civilian control over the military is tenuous (Fearon and Laitin 2003).

In this article, we spell out the channels by which secular-party incumbency might shape religious conflict. We then seek to adjudicate these claims empirically, employing Pakistan—the world's sixth largest country by population—as a laboratory. Since the late 1980s, Pakistan has operated mostly under democratic institutions. Over the same time period, the country has been convulsed by two types of religious violence: sectarian hostilities between the country's minority Shia and majority Sunni communities, and Islamist/Jihadist militancy that mushroomed in the wake of the 2001 American invasion of Afghanistan. Terrorism claimed the lives of 35,000 Pakistanis between 2001 and 2011 alone—a situation that many observers liken to a civil war (Jaffrelot 2015; Lieven 2011; Fair and Jones 2009).

Our research design seeks to quantify how levels of local religious violence respond to the election of a member of the Pakistan National Assembly (an MNA) belonging to a secular party. Isolating this effect is challenging. Places that experience militant attacks and sectarian riots are likely to differ in systematic ways from more peaceful areas. If these contextual differences themselves influence secular candidates' propensity to win or lose elections, then any observed relationship between secularist-party incumbency and religious conflict will be spurious.

To overcome these inferential hurdles, we use an instrumental variables design, capitalizing on the occurrence of closely-fought elections between secular and non-secular party candidates. Our identifying assumption is that the outcomes of such close elections are as

good as randomly decided (Lee 2008). Based on case-study literature, expert surveys, and a probability sample of Pakistani voters, we classify Pakistan's major political parties as either secularist or non-secularist. We then combine comprehensive MNA electoral returns with events data on religious violence between 1988 and 2011. Implementing the analysis, we find that an as-if random increase in the share of district seats occupied by secularist incumbents substantially reduces the incidence and severity of militant and sectarian attacks. Moving from a district in which no seats are secularist-held to one where all seats are secularist-held decreases the likelihood of any violence breaking out by 66 percentage points. We observe similarly large point estimates on deaths and injuries. The main result survives numerous specification checks. A battery of prognostic tests buttresses the claim that victory by secular-party candidates in our sample of close races approximates a coin flip.[4]

To gain traction on mechanisms, we run three sets of additional empirical analyses. First, theories of electoral sanctioning imply that victimized voters will harshly penalize a secular-party incumbent for violence that erupts on her watch; secularists should thus invest special efforts to staunch religious hostilities. Focusing on electoral outcomes in the immediate aftermath of religious disorder, we find evidence to substantiate this hypothesis. Second, we compile a trove of information on candidates' attributes and prior political experience. Difference-in-means tests elicit few measurable differences between secular- and non-secular-party candidates. In fact, defections between parties are par for the course in Pakistan, refuting the idea that politician selection drives our headline result. Last, the secular-party effect is concentrated in regions with denser police presence, suggesting that influence over the coercive arm of the state may be a necessary input into violence-mitigation activities.

Our findings add to the burgeoning literature on the origins of civil conflict. An extensive

[4]Accusations of electoral malpractice are often levied in Pakistan. However, we muster both quantitative and qualitative evidence indicating that electoral fraud—to the extent that it does occur—is not executed in a sufficiently precise manner so as to undermine the randomness inherent in close elections.

body of work documents the economic, informational, and ethnic underpinnings of insurgent recruitment and strategy (Weinstein 2007; Kalyvas 2006; Cederman, Wimmer and Min 2010; Lyall 2010). Recent research has devoted particular attention to elucidating the implications of international and domestic aid programs for conflict (Beath, Christia and Enikolopov 2013; Nunn and Qian 2014; Dube and Naidu 2015). Yet extant studies are largely blind to the effects of political parties and party systems on subnational violence. Closest to our paper is Nellis, Weaver and Rosenzweig (2016), who demonstrate the pacifying impact of incumbency by a single party—the Indian National Congress—on Hindu-Muslim rioting in India. Dell (2015) uses a similar design to show that the election of Partido Acción Nacional mayors in Mexico increases homicide rates due to the stricter enforcement of drug laws. Our findings are novel insofar as they zero-in on a type of conflict—namely, Islamist and sectarian violence—not addressed by prior studies.

The results contribute to active policy debates. Pakistan's geo-strategic significance—bordering Afghanistan, Iran, India, and China—combined with its reputation for incubating militant groups such as al-Qaeda, place it at the forefront of efforts to enhance international security. Strengthening democratic processes in Pakistan has been a focal point of attempts to stabilize the "Af-Pak" region. In 2011, USAID launched a 5-year, $21.5 million program "[t]o help Pakistan's political parties become more effective and responsive to local concerns" (USAID 2015, 2). We supply the firmest evidence so far about the necessity of heeding not only the structure of party-political competition in fragile democracies, but also the ideational content and social support bases of parties vying for office. Although we should be careful about generalizing from a single case, the findings presented here give cause for optimism that incumbency by secularists is an important tool for curtailing deadly religious violence.

Theoretical Perspectives

A longstanding theoretical and empirical debate investigates partisanship's effects on such assorted outcomes as public goods provision, crime, taxation, and economic growth.[5] To date, however, studies have focused on advanced industrialized democracies, and have turned up mixed empirical findings. Substantively, no prior work has theorized the link between secularist-party incumbency and religious violence—our task in what follows.

Integrating insights from several literatures, we hypothesize four reasons for why and how officeholders' partisanship might impact local religious conflict.

A. Electoral Incentives

We define secular parties as those that publicly affirm an encompassing national vision, forswear exclusionary religious appeals, and court electoral support from a diverse range of religious and sectarian groups (Norris and Inglehart 2011). Secularist-party incumbency may affect violence owing to politicians' electoral incentives (Horowitz 2001; Wilkinson 2004). Political parties exist to win elections and exercise power (Duverger 1959). Under retrospective voting models, citizens reward parties that perform well in office, and punish those that perform poorly (for review, see Ashworth 2012).

Yet parties may not be equally responsive to all citizens. Theories of selective accountability imply that secularist-party incumbents will, given certain conditions, face greater incentives to subdue religious violence compared to their non-secularist counterparts. By selective accountability we refer to the tendency of parties to cater to the interests not of the whole electorate, but only a subset of it—typically a party's core constituents (Petrocik 1996).

Secular-parties are expected to face greater incentives to tamp down on violence—compared to non-secular parties—when two conditions are met: (a) religious violence dispro-

[5]Prominent recent contributions to this debate include Lee, Moretti and Butler (2004), Pettersson-Lidbom (2008), Ferreira and Gyourko (2009), Meyersson (2014).

portionately afflicts members of particular social groups (typically religious minorities); and (b) communities victimized by religious violence form cohesive electorates that historically vote en bloc for secular-leaning parties.

Under these circumstances, differential party-wise commitment to combating religious violence may emerge. To see why, suppose two parties compete locally. *Party A* does not rely on the votes of communities hit by religious violence, whereas *Party B* does. We propose that Party A will devote relatively fewer resources to combating religious violence in this instance. By assumption, such violence poses minimal threat to Party A's supporters, hence stopping it—a potentially costly endeavor—will yield few electoral dividends. In contrast, Party B's commitment to religious violence prevention should be steadfast. Like Party A, it wants to curry favor with its base so as to maximize votes. Here, however, that involves extinguishing religious violence whose deleterious effects fall most heavily on Party B's own followers.

This line of argument has well-known analogs. In Europe, social democratic parties with strong union ties and a worker support base are widely believed to prioritize unemployment reduction over low inflation (Powell Jr. and Whitten 1993). In the United States, Democrats are widely thought to invest in programs that benefit African Americans, a primary vote bank (e.g. LeVeaux and Garand 2003). The conjecture equating secular parties with religious-violence mitigation is just one realization of a broader class of propositions linking citizen preferences, partisan policy outcomes, and expectations of electoral sanctioning.

Three further points help clarify the scope of the argument. First, the selective accountability thesis does not imply that secular-party officeholders should be more likely than other incumbents to reduce *non*-religious violence or everyday crime. Religious violence is commonly marked by asymmetric, group-wise victimization: the propensity for minority religious groups and sects to be targeted by orthodox or majoritarian extremists. Consequently, the supply of protection against this type of violence is a particularistic benefit in that victimized minorities disproportionately stand to gain. Protection against crime, on the other hand,

is a quintessential public good. Since all social groups benefit from safer streets, there are few reasons to believe that parties will be held *differentially* accountable for lapses in public safety, hence their electoral incentives to reduce crime levels should be the same.

Second, recent literature suggests that religious violence is unique for its brutality, the degree of psychological outrage it provokes in victims, and its resultant potency in hardening boundaries between social groups defined by religious cleavages. The brutality of religious violence appears to emanate from the high commitment levels of followers of groups who prosecute attacks. As Grzymala-Busse (2012, 423) notes (citing Wald, Silverman and Fridy (2005)), extremist religious organizations frequently appeal to moral authority and the "fear of damnation or exclusion" in recruiting members; this enables religious groups "to exert on their members pressure unimaginable in most secular organizations." In some instances it may even be that "those who engage in [religious violence] see it as divinely ordained and feel no taint of shame or guilt." (Selengut 2017, 44). Thus religious violence is set apart in its ferocity. The psychological harm inflicted on victims of religious violence—and the attendant sense of outrage it engenders—may also surpass that wrought by other forms of conflict. Religious violence causes injury. But it further constitutes an attack on, and an affront to, victims' most deeply held beliefs and convictions. Recuperating from religiously-motivated attacks may be an unusually drawn-out process for individual victims, and for communities whose worldviews have been slighted (Juergensmeyer 1987, 174). A large body of social scientific literature demonstrates that identity-based violence polarizes populations and electorates along ethno-religious lines (Beber, Roessler and Scacco 2014; Fearon and Laitin 1996), modifying "the core identities of its victims, [and] generating ethnic parochialism" (Lupu and Peisakhin forthcoming, 2). The ruthlessness of religious violence, combined with the enduring psychological imprint it leaves on victims, implies that this hardening impact on inter-religious group boundaries may be especially acute. These unique social effects bear directly on the electoral incentives theory, implying that religious violence is likely to be highly salient in the minds of those affected by it. In a democratic setting, this

increases the probability that the voting behavior of targeted social groups will be influenced by the prevalence of religious attacks.

Last, technologies commonly adopted by perpetrators of religious violence help make it an unusually visible phenomenon. Juergensmeyer (2003, 126) argues that religious violence is notable for its "theatrical" nature. Groups deliberately engineer religious conflict to garner maximum public attention. This visibility premium aids electoral accountability. In other, more inscrutable domains—for example, the macroeconomy—voters often struggle to discern the true state of the world. These information deficits are less likely to be operative for religious violence, making it easier for voters to assign blame for under-performance in this area.

While intuitive, the selective incentives theory is not self-evidently true. The assumption that religious minorities are disproportionately victimized by religious violence—and that such citizens tend to provide crucial votes for secular parties—remains to be validated empirically. Moreover, if, following Hobbes (1651), we suppose that citizens are averse to all types of conflict—whether religiously motivated or otherwise—then incumbent partisanship should be immaterial for conflict outcomes. We might expect that *all* officeholders—whatever their party—will take aggressive measures to preserve law and order, since the mere appearance of chaos, whoever the victims are, may invite next-election defeat.[6] This theoretical uncertainty highlights the need for empirical testing.

B. Politician Selection

Having a secular party win office may be considered a compound treatment, in statistical parlance, combining the effect of the party brand, the resources available to party-aligned officeholders, as well as the individual characteristics of those officeholders. Another, complementary way in which partisanship may affect violence, therefore, is via political selection.

[6]Note that a rich literature shows that that politicians in myriad contexts do engage in violence to influence electoral outcomes, hence the prima facie case for the Hobbesian conjecture is quite weak (Collier and Vicente 2012, 2014; Wilkinson 2004; Brass 2003).

Elites pursue goals not only because of incentives, but also on the basis of innate policy preferences, psychological predispositions, and descriptive characteristics (e.g. Chattopadhyay and Duflo 2004). Politicians also have differing degrees of experience and ability. If individuals with common intrinsic motivations and aptitudes tend to gravitate toward certain parties, the resultant clustering of like-minded, like-abled individuals may produce party-wise disparities in violence. Three possibilities come to mind.

First, politicians with conciliatory personalities may join secularist parties whose stated mission is to curb religious conflict, whereas politicians with bellicose inclinations may drift toward non-secularist outfits. Second, descriptive ethnic representation may be at work. Politicians belonging to groups victimized by violence might band together in secular parties—their presumed defenders. Extensive research demonstrates that ethnic favoritism influences the disbursement of constituency services and public goods (Burgess et al. 2015; Franck and Rainer 2012; Butler and Broockman 2011). It is conceivable that politicians accord preferential treatment to co-ethnics in the provision of violence-reduction measures, too. Third, politicians with varying wherewithal or experience may tend to congregate in parties of different kinds. These valence attributes could matter for religious violence, if, say, stopping conflict requires that politicians have long-cultivated practical skills—what Scott (1998) calls *metis*—or, perhaps, the means to bribe officials up and down the administrative ladder.

Skeptics might counter that political parties are nebulous entities in developing states (Mainwaring and Scully 1995; Hicken 2009). The assortive matching model we outline—whereby politicians select into the party for which they feel the greatest ideological or descriptive affinity—holds little water in places where opportunistic defections across party lines are ubiquitous, and politicians' interests lie in rent-seeking (Khwaja and Mian 2005; Fisman, Schulz and Vig 2014). Ultimately, though, whether or not politicians evince strong background resemblances by party type is an open question.

It is worth noting that the selection hypothesis and the theory of selective accountability

are not necessarily mutually exclusive. For instance, parties leaders motivated primarily by re-election concerns may deliberately set out to field candidates whom they believe will be best-qualified and most driven to impede religious violence if they win office. Seen in this light, candidate selection can be understood as one important lever parties might use to sway levels of religious conflict.

C. State Capacity

How might legislators themselves shape conflict outcomes? One way is to exploit the perquisites of political office to actively instigate violence. In a detailed ethnography of Aligarh, northern India, Brass (2003) documents the existence of "institutionalized riot systems" that engineer communal discord with the connivance of Hindu nationalist politicians. However, bankrolling violence is seldom very expensive. Moreover, funds and manpower can be procured from an array of sources—not just state coffers or public-employment rosters. At first blush, it seems improbable that *incumbency* by a conflict-prone politician is a necessary condition for violence to flare up.

Far more consequential, we argue, is the ability of local officeholders to instruct state security forces either to rein in religious violence if and when it breaks out, and/or to expend state resources on preventive counterinsurgency measures in advance of possible attacks. Seen in this light, state capacity is a critical mediator of partisan effects (Paul 2010; Akbar and Ostermann 2015). Where state infrastructure is extensive—that is, where public institutions are embedded and penetrating, and state security is adequately staffed—secularist party incumbents will be better positioned to intervene effectively to stop religious disturbances. In this connection, Staniland (2012) argues that political interests dictate where and how state coercion is deployed to affect conflict in South Asia. Naseemullah (2016), too, posits that the "disarticulation" of the state in that region is due to popular disagreements over the appropriate role of state intervention in social conflict. On the flip side, where state apparatus is lacking, the opportunities for parties to use state coercion to their advan-

tage does not exist.[7] Of course, this hinges on the presupposition that elected officials have discretionary control over state security organs—an issue that we take up later.

D. Militant Strategy

Up to this point, we have focused on politicians' side of the equation. However, it is also important to consider the impact of incumbent partisanship on militant strategy. In our set-up, non-state actors utilize militancy to press religious demands—whether the denial of rights to a certain subgroup, public subsidization of religious schooling, the imposition of sharia law, and so forth. Seminal grievance-based accounts of civil war onset maintain that violent social mobilization erupts when such resentments cannot be peacefully channeled through existing claims-making institutions (Gurr 1970).

This insight suggests two processes by which conflict materializes. First, would-be militants might see violence and electoral participation as strategic substitutes (Dunning 2011). On this view, groups harboring religious resentments initially submit to elections, hopeful that their preferred (non-secular) candidate will scoop victory and go on to enact desired reforms. In the event that their preferred party's candidate *loses* the contest, however, these groups change tack, eschewing formal politics, and instead embracing irregular technologies of rebellion to promote their agenda (Kalyvas and Balcells 2010).[8]

Second, secular-party victory could act as a lightening rod for religious militants, to whom secularist politicians are anathema. Assassinating secular-aligned incumbents dispatches ideological rivals with a proven track record of electoral success; it can also deter would-be candidates from standing under a secular-party banner in future. Militant groups might also

[7] A number of studies have identified a negative association between indicators of state capacity and the occurrence of intra-state conflict (Fearon and Laitin 2003; Herbst 2014; Blattman and Miguel 2010).

[8] Ellman and Wantchekon (2000) aver that the mere threat of post-election violence is sometimes sufficient to induce voters' to cast their ballots in line with the preferences of violent actors.

unleash indiscriminate violence against civilian populations in constituencies that voted in the "wrong direction" (cf. Kalyvas 2006). Such a punishment strategy sends out a credible warning signal to voters elsewhere, increasing the perceived costs of casting a ballot for a pro-secular ticket.

Unlike earlier arguments emphasizing the role of politicians, militant-centered accounts anticipate an *increase* in local violence following the election of secularist candidates. While novel, the theory resonates with findings in other domains. For example, Crost, Felter and Johnston (2014) show that the receipt of development funds in Philippine municipalities boosted insurgent violence, as rebels sabotaged potentially successful projects that would have siphoned off support for the insurrection. Secular-party victory might evoke a comparable unanticipated backlash.

Context

This section introduces Pakistan. A self-described Islamic republic, it gained independence from the British Empire in 1947 as a homeland for the Muslims of the Indian subcontinent.[9]

Religious Violence in Pakistan

Pakistan has been roiled by two types of religious violence. The first is sectarian in character. Approximately three quarters of Pakistani Muslims adhere to a Sunni interpretation (*maslak*) of Islam; the remaining quarter identify as Shia (Rieck 2016).[10] Prior to the late 1970s, relations between majority and minority sects had remained relatively peaceful.[11] The Iranian

[9]Pakistan's former eastern wing—present-day Bangladesh—seceded in 1971.

[10]The exact ratio is much-disputed. Official statistics on Pakistan's sectarian composition have not been gathered since the colonial era. Some estimates place the number of Shia as low as 10 percent of the population.

[11]Prior to independence, British India's worst Sunni-Shia violence had unfolded in Lucknow (in what is now Uttar Pradesh, India) where Shia Muharram processions proved a flashpoint for sectarian conflagrations (Rieck 2016, 18–30). Anti-Shia discrimination was widespread in Pakistan's early post-independence years. Clashes were rare, however; the

Revolution of 1979 brought to power a Shia dictatorship on Pakistan's doorstep. Iran's new regime channeled funds to Shia religious seminaries and organizations within Pakistan, goading Saudi Arabia to furnish similar assistance to Sunni groups there. Zia ul-Haq, Pakistan's president (1978–88), further inflamed matters by promulgating a state-wide Islamization policy that privileged Deobandi and Ahle Hadith schools of Islam, while diminishing the status of heterodox Shia and Barelvi interpretations.[12]

As sectarian tensions mounted in the 1980s, violent organizations proliferated on both sides of the divide (Zaman 1998). The Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP) and its militant offshoot, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ), orchestrated anti-Shia attacks.[13] Mirroring this arrangement, the Tahrik-i Nifaz-i Fiqh-i Ja'fariyya (TNFJ) mobilized to demand greater Shia representation in public employment, even as a breakaway faction—the Sipah-e-Muhammad Pakistan—took up arms against Sunnis. Sectarian violence initially entailed tit-for-tat killings of prominent community and militant-group leaders. It became deadlier in the 1990s as riots and bombings multiplied. Data on victimization rates by sect are in short supply. However, the available evidence suggests that Shias have suffered the worst bloodshed.[14]

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most significant one occurred in 1963 in the town of Theri, Khairpur District.

[12]Barelvis practice a devotional form of Sunni Islam which emphasizes Sufi traditions and rituals.

[13]The SSP, which has since been renamed Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat, has contested elections on a number of occasions, albeit with modest success.

[14]According to figures gathered by the Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies, 2013 saw 658 casualties caused by sectarian violence. Of the victims, 471 were Shia and 99 were Sunni (cited in Jaffrelot 2015, 491–2). Rafiq (2014, 54) quotes a member of the Balochistan Assembly, who claimed that "around 1,400 people in the [Shia] Hazara community [in Balochistan province] had been killed and 800 injured by terrorists since 2001." This is reinforced by an extensive report commissioned by *Human Rights Watch* (`https://goo.gl/GC2Y7A`, accessed 5/15/2017) which concludes that "Pakistan's Shia community, which constitutes some 20 percent of the country's overwhelmingly Muslim population, has been the target of an alarming and unprecedented escalation in sectarian violence." Fair (2015, 1138) too writes that "Pakistan's domestic Islamist terrorists have long targeted religious minorities, includ-

The second type of religious violence we consider is Jihadist militancy, which surfaced after 9/11 and the subsequent US invasion of Afghanistan. Spearheading Islamist attacks has been the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP, or Pakistan Taliban), a confederation of tribal militias and armed gangs that joined forces in 2007. Today's TTP retains links both to the Afghan Taliban and to al-Qaeda. The group has set the Pakistani state in its crosshairs, leading assaults against Karachi's Jinnah International Airport, the Mehran naval base, and Army General Headquarters in Rawalpindi. It has also rained violence on Pakistani civilians.

Although outside commentary has sometimes depicted sectarian and Jihadist violence as distinct phenomena, in reality they are symbiotic. Ideologically, both camps profess Deobandi supremacism (Rafiq 2014, 75). Operationally, too, the LeJ shares personnel with the Pakistan Taliban and has engaged in multiple coordinated attacks with al-Qaeda, the most infamous being the beheading of *New York Times* journalist Daniel Pearl (Rafiq 2014, 30). Additional details on the intersection between sectarian and Islamist violence are given in the Supplementary Appendix.

Political Parties in Pakistan

This study requires that we classify each of Pakistan's major political parties as secularist or non-secularist. By *secular* party we mean one that openly embraces an inclusive national vision, avoids exclusionary appeals based on religion, and seeks to garner support from a broad range of religious and sectarian groups. Into this bin we place the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), the Awami National Party (ANP), the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM), and their immediate offshoots. All other parties we code as non-secular. Falling into this latter category are the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), the Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid-e-Azam Group (PML-Q), independents, and explicitly religious outfits such as the

ing Hindus and Christians, as well as others who consider themselves to be Muslims such as Shia, Barelvis and Ahmedis because these militant groups do not consider them to be Muslims."

Jamiat-e-Ulema Islam-Fazlur Rehman (JUI-F) and the Jamaat-e-Islami (JI).[15]

How do we arrive at these coding decisions? We first scrutinize parties' public pronouncements, in conjunction with the secondary literature. The left-leaning PPP has an "avowedly secular platform" that steers clear of the "emotive power of Islam" (Nasr 1992, 523). From the party's inception, it has hewed to "essentially liberal positions," while its high command has "strongly rejected ... sectarian factionalism" (Jones 2003, 296). Resultantly, "voters belonging to Pakistan's religious minority communities are commonly believed to favour the PPP" (Wilder 1999, 169).[16] The ANP—a predominantly Pashtun party based in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa—has been unabashed in its vow to continue "its struggle for a secular democratic and pluralistic Pakistan with equal rights and opportunities for all citizens."[17] Meanwhile, the Sindh-based MQM has built a stolid reputation as a liberal, "highly secular party" on religious issues (Khan and Jacobsen 2008, 12). It is "deeply antagonistic to the *ulema* parties" (Fair, Malhotra and Shapiro 2012, 15).[18]

Contrast this with portrayals of Pakistan's other major parties—those we label non-secular. The PML-N has a "long-standing claim to be an Islamic democratic party that

[15]Importantly, several of these parties changed names or contested elections as part of a broader coalition of parties between 1988 and 2011. In 1988, the PML-N was part of a right-wing electoral alliance called the Islami Jamhoori Ittehad (IJI), while in 2002 the JUI-F and JI competed as part of a religious coalition, the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal, together with four other religious parties. The PPP has also been named the Pakistan People's Party Parliamentarians for electoral purposes and, during the 1988 elections, was the key member of the People's Democratic Alliance (PDA).

[16]To be sure, its secular credentials are not unblemished. For example, the PPP entered into an opportunistic coalition with the (hardline Sunni) SSP in Punjab in 1993 (Jaffrelot 2015, 497).

[17]See ANP's 2013 election manifesto, available at `https://goo.gl/kssvcY`, accessed 9/13/2017.

[18]This is despite its role in whipping up *muhajir* ("migrant")-native violence in Karachi (Gayer 2014).

seeks to Islamize the state" (Fair, Malhotra and Shapiro 2012, 15). Its leader, Nawaz Sharif, has "affinities with conservative, even militant, Sunnism" (Jaffrelot 2015, 615). The party has repeatedly "used religion as a wedge issue and to highlight the differences between the PML-N and the PPP" (Ullah 2013, 65). The military-backed PML-Q emerged in 2002 as an offshoot of the PML-N. On religious questions, it has consistently embraced a conservative social agenda (Ullah 2013, 28). Pakistan's overtly confessional parties vary in extremism and ideology; each, by definition, spurns secular nationalism (Misra 2003).

Further corroboration comes from a re-analysis of nationally representative survey data gathered by Blair et al. (2013). We test whether Pakistani Muslims identifying as Shia or Barelvi—those sects that have borne the brunt of religious violence—are more likely to support the parties identified as secularist in the ethnographic literature. Consistent with our initial categorization, victimized-group respondents are, on average, 10 percentage points—proportionally, 31 percent—more likely to support a secular party compared to other Pakistani Muslims ($p < 0.001$, two-sided t-test).[19] Moreover, data from a survey which employed a novel strategy to oversample the Shia population in Punjab province similarly finds that Shia were substantially more likely than non-Shia to have voted for the (secular) PPP in the 2013 elections (Kalin and Siddiqui Forthcoming). Polling data from the same election confirm that Shia respondents were significantly more concerned about the threat of Islamic extremism than Sunni respondents.[20]

The final evidence we marshal comes from the Democratic Accountability and Linkages Project. As part of a cross-national survey, 22 Pakistan experts were asked to assign scores to the country's six major political parties on a number of dimensions. Figure 1 presents the data for responses to four questions that bear on parties' positioning with respect to

[19]The code for reproducing this result is included in the replication files.

[20]Pew Research Center Global Attitudes and Trends 2013 Survey, available at https://goo.gl/jEZW0G, accessed 5/15/2017.

secularism.[21] Frequency plots for Pakistan's three putatively secular-leaning parties are displayed in the left-hand columns; corresponding plots for non-secular parties are shown in the right-hand columns. The pattern of expert responses again supports our classification. What we claim to be secular-leaning parties are much less likely to be viewed as majoritarian. Virtually none of the surveyed experts believe that these three parties maintain ties to religious organizations. And, with the exception of the ANP, they are also thought to adopt a much tougher stance on militant violence in north-west Pakistan.[22]

[Insert Figure 1 about here]

Taken together, then, we find extensive support for the contention that battles over secularism constitute a "master cleavage" in Pakistan's party system. Reassuringly, too, there is near-unanimity about which parties should be classed as secularist in orientation, and which should not.

Members of the National Assembly (MNAs)

The Pakistan National Assembly—the lower chamber of the Pakistani parliament—is made up of 342 members. Of these, 272 are directly elected to single-member constituencies under first-past-the-post rules.[23] Constituencies are large, averaging 256,593 registered voters. In a survey of 62 MNAs, 87 percent ranked either "constituency service" or "knowing and being accessible to constituents" as the most important part of a legislator's job (Mufti 2011, 256). Citizens make myriad demands of their representatives, including help with *thana-katcheri* (criminal justice-related) issues, obtaining natural gas connections, and securing job transfers

[21] The exact question wordings are provided in the SA.

[22] This anomaly is likely to be a direct result of a controversial 2009 peace deal that the ANP signed with the Taliban-aligned Tanzeem-e-Nafaz-e-Shariat-e-Mohammadi (TNSM) in Swat in Khyber Pakthunkhwa province. The ANP—in control of the provincial government at the time—agreed to the implementation of Sharia in exchange for an end to violence.

[23] The remaining 70 seats are reserved for women and religious minorities. They are not attached to single-member districts and thus do not form part of our study design.

(Wilder 1999, 192). MNAs are further expected to "bring home the pork," typically in the form of development schemes like rural electrification and public-school construction.

An important facet of legislator performance concerns law and order. MNAs wield far-reaching influence over local police and bureaucracy. De jure power over transfers and promotions of district officials is vested in the provincial governments. However, state leaders routinely abide by the recommendations of local politicians (and their patrons) in reaching personnel decisions. Consequently, district police officials have self-interested reasons to accede to MNAs' wishes. According to one report, "police officers receive unsolicited instructions from political masters, and are expected to unquestioningly carry them out" (Patil 2008, 68). "Bureaucrats who are not sufficiently compliant ... are 'OSDed' (put 'On Special Duty') or *khuday-lined* (side-lined)" (Wilder 1999, 208). Voters themselves appear to set great store by politicians' connections to local law enforcement agencies; "[i]t makes the voters think that the candidate has enough political clout to afford protection to them" (Mufti 2011, 126).

MNAs by no means possess a monopoly on security provision. The military plays an outsized role in Pakistan, and is widely believed to determine the parameters within which militant groups operate (Haqqani 2005; Fair 2014). Yet national-level policies set by Pakistan's generals are primarily crafted to advance Pakistan's strategic interests in Afghanistan, India, and the Kashmir region. Such policies hold little purchase in explaining *subnational* variation in violence incidence. Here, anecdotal evidence suggests that individual MNAs and their party affiliations matter a great deal. In 2013, for example, a former terror suspect linked to the anti-Shia LeJ became a PML-N MNA in Gujrat district, Punjab. Since that time, police attempts to foil sectarian violence have reportedly been stymied by ongoing political interference (Ullah 2013, 66). We now present a design that can shed more systematic light on the impact of incumbency by secular-party MNAs on religious conflict.

Research Design

Data

To investigate the relationship between incumbent partisanship and violence, we combine data on militant and sectarian violence in Pakistan with disaggregated election results for the period 1988–2011.[24] Outcome data are taken from the *BFRS Political Violence in Pakistan Dataset*, which tallies all violent political events reported in the Lahore edition of the daily English-language newspaper, *Dawn*. Constituency-level returns were obtained from the Election Commission of Pakistan.[25]

Prior attempts to infer the impact of electoral politics on violence in Pakistan have been hampered by a key shortcoming of the available data. Violence is recorded at the level of the administrative district, but districts are not always spatially coterminous with political constituencies. In particular, many constituencies are composed of contiguous segments of two or occasionally three districts. An added complication is that the number of districts has grown over time.[26] Mapping violence data onto electoral boundaries is thus a complex exercise.

We offer a solution to the unit-mismatch conundrum in Pakistan. Our innovation is to create a new unit of analysis, the *joined-district*, which is the smallest amalgamation of districts that perfectly encompasses complete MNA constituencies. By way of illustration, take the administrative district of Khanewal, Punjab province, which was composed of four complete MNA constituencies in 1990. The adjacent district of Multan contained three

[24]This is the date-range of the available outcomes data.

[25]The data were cleaned and compiled by Ali Cheema and Farooq Naseer for the "Dynastic Politics & Underdevelopment" project at the Institute of Development & Economic Alternatives.

[26]Districts have been split as their populations have expanded. Conveniently, new districts in Pakistan are formed exclusively through clean bifurcations or trifurcations of a single "parent" district; new districts are not formed from parts of multiple existing districts.

complete MNA constituencies. One final "crossover" constituency—named Multan-cum-Khanewal—was made up of neighboring portions of both districts. We are able to construct a single joined-district, Multan-Khanewal, within which a total of eight MNA constituencies (and no others) are nested.

Owing to district splits and the re-delimitation of constituency boundaries in 2002, joined-districts change across election cycles. Permitting these changes maximizes the number of observations in the sample and keeps actually-existing administrative units intact as much as possible. However, we also define a second analytic unit—*cluster-districts*—which are the smallest amalgamations of districts that contain complete MNA constituencies *and* remain geographically unchanged between 1988 and 2013.[27] We cluster standard errors at the level of cluster-districts to account for potential serial autocorrelation in the error terms.[28]

The BFRS dataset catalogs diverse kinds of political violence. A limitation of the data is that many of the recorded violent incidents lack detailed information about the motivation and identity of the perpetrator(s). For our purposes, it is necessary to whittle down the sample as well as possible to religiously-motivated attacks. To do this, we adopt a principle of exclusion, dropping incidents that are assuredly *not* sectarian or Islamist in character.[29]

[27]Joined districts are subsets of cluster-districts. There are 54 cluster-districts in the sample.

[28]Serial correlation may arise due to the repeated cross-sectional structure of the data.

[29]We justify this decision on three grounds. First, many violent events of a religious nature are coded as being "politically" motivated in the BFRS dataset—as, say, when attacks are carried out by actors tied to religious political parties. Excluding such events would lead us to significantly undercount incidents of religious violence. Second, for the 21 percent of events in the BFRS data whose motivation is said to be "unknown," a full 82 percent are recorded as being "terrorist" or "assassination" events. Outside of Karachi and Balochistan—which are excluded in a robustness check, and which comprise only 17 percent of unit-observations in the analysis dataset—the secondary literature suggests that terrorism and assassination are highly likely to be perpetrated by Islamist or sectarian actors. Third, detailed examination of the descriptions of the "unknown" events reveals that a very large fraction appear to be religious incidents. Consider, for example, an event in which "rockets [were] fired at [a]

We inquire into the robustness of the results by pruning the outcome data in various ways, and by dropping regions where other types of violence are known to predominate. As a further robustness check, we repeat the analysis employing a second, independently sourced measure of the dependent variable.

The analysis looks at five outcomes. Two of them—*Any event* and *Any killed*—are dichotomous; they denote, respectively, whether any violence and any killings took place within the joined-district during the MNA's tenure in office. The three remaining outcomes—*Event count*, *Number killed*, and *Number days*—are count variables that record, respectively, the number of violent events that occurred in a joined district during the election cycle, the number of people killed in those events, and the total number of days of violence. For the primary statistical models we take the natural log of the counts, adding an arbitrary constant (0.01) to avoid dropping cells where the count is zero.

Identification Strategy and Right-Hand-Side Variables

This paper seeks to estimate the effect of secularist party incumbency on religious violence. Expressed formally, we wish to measure the relationship

$$Y_{it} = \alpha + \beta SecularSeatProp_{it} + \varepsilon_{it} \tag{1}$$

where Y_{it} denotes outcomes in joined-district i in election-cycle t; $SecularSeatProp$ is the independent variable—the proportion of joined-district MNA seats won by secular party candidates; and ε is the error term. In the bivariate correlation of violence on $SecularSeatProp$, the parameter of interest, β, is almost certain to be estimated with bias. Bias might stem from reverse causality—the possibility that conflict itself sways elections—or from overlooked variables that simultaneously determine both voting behavior and violence.

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police post" in Peshawar in 2004. Even though the perpetrators were not formally identified, the type (rockets) and target (police) of violence is highly typical of attacks carried out by Jihadist militants.

How should we reckon with these twin threats? One oft-mooted solution is to make post hoc adjustments to the regression model—adding in controls, lagged dependent variables, and fixed effects in a bid to purge major sources of confounding. However, a more promising avenue is to locate exogenous variation in the explanatory variable of interest. This has the core virtue of eliminating all confounding factors—observed and unobserved—by design.

We conjecture that very narrow victory or loss by secularist-party candidates in highly competitive MNA elections entails a strong element of random chance.[30] Given this assumption, it would ordinarily be possible to compare average violence outcomes across the two clusters of observations that lie immediately on either side of the winning margin-of-victory threshold (Dunning 2012). Yet the geographical misfit between electoral constituencies and administrative districts in Pakistan precludes this approach. Instead, we integrate the RD design into an instrumental variables framework (Rehavi 2007; Clots-Figueras 2011, 2012). We instrument for the endogenous regressor—the proportion of MNA seats in a district won by secularist candidates by any margin ($SecularSeatProp$)—using the proportion of district MNA seats won by secularist candidates against non-secularist candidates in very close elections ($SecularCloseWin$). For the main specifications, we define close elections as those won or lost by secularist party candidates by 3 percentage points or less. (We explore the sensitivity of the results to using both smaller and larger bandwidths.)

One caveat with the identification strategy is that while secularist victory in close races is plausibly as-if random, the actual incidence of close races is not. The design thus requires that we control for the proportion of all district races that were closely won *or* closely lost by secularist candidates. This leads us to estimate the following two-stage model:

$$Y_{it} = \alpha + \beta \widehat{SecularSeatProp}_{it} + \gamma SecularCloseProp_{it} + \theta_p + \varepsilon_{it} \quad (2)$$

[30]Conceivably, for instance, bad weather conditions on election day might depress turnout in part of a constituency that supports a secularist candidate, causing that candidate to lose the election by a razor-thin margin.

where $\widehat{SecularSeatProp}_{it}$ are the predicted values from the first-stage regression:

$$SecularSeatProp_{it} = \mu + \lambda SecularCloseWin_{it} + \kappa SecularCloseProp_{it} + \theta_p + \nu_{it} \quad (3)$$

The main model includes province-level fixed effects, indicated by θ_p, because of possible province-wise disparities in the reporting of violence.[31] Provided certain assumptions are met, β in Equation 2 captures the local average treatment effect of secularist-party victory on violence, identified for closely fought elections. The next order of business is to subject these assumptions to scrutiny.

To begin, we verify that the instrument strongly predicts the endogenous regressor. The F-statistic on the instrument, $SecularCloseWin$, in the first-stage regression in Equation 3 is 53.91 (see SA Table A1), obviating concerns about weak instrument bias. Next, the instrument must affect outcomes only through the endogenous regressor; per the exclusion restriction requirement, there must be no "backdoor" paths. We believe this to be highly tenable in our application. After conditioning on the incidence of close elections, narrow victory by secularist party candidates can only affect violence via its effect on the proportion of joined-district seats held by secularist incumbents.

The third and thorniest assumption is that the instrument be uncorrelated with any additional unmeasured determinants of the outcome. Allegations of rigging have marred Pakistani elections (Oldenburg 2010, 204).[32] Electoral malfeasance could invalidate the design if secularist parties—or their non-secular opponents—were able to precisely and con-

[31] Here, we directly follow the advice of the compilers of the BFRS dataset, who recommend that researchers "Include province fixed effects in all panel regressions (or cross-sectional regressions at the district level) to account for differences in the intensity of reporting about different regions across editions [of the newspaper *Dawn*]." Reassuringly, we obtain similar results after dropping these fixed effects.

[32] The true scope of rigging remains murky, not least because aspersions are often cast by defeated politicians with an axe to grind.

sistently manipulate the results of closely fought races. A priori, this seems improbable, since it would require that parties be able to (a) predict when and where very close elections are going to occur, and (b) then ratchet up fraudulent activities in those areas *just enough* to tip the election.[33] Both are difficult. Reliable polling data do not exist in Pakistan. At the constituency level, even the threshold for victory is—in effect—unknowable ex ante, since multiple (>2) candidates tend to stand in each seat, with many candidates filing nomination papers at the very last minute. Further, most of the vote-rigging tools at hand—intimidation, bribery, ballot stuffing, and booth capturing—are blunt, and ill-suited to fine-grained electoral manipulation.[34] Charges of fraud are also leveled against parties of all stripes; there is little reason to expect lopsidedness on this score. That said, the potential for fraud at the counting and aggregation stages is worrisome from a design perspective, since subtle doctoring of results would (in principle) be feasible once the votes are in (Callen and Long 2015). Recognizing this, the Pakistan Electoral Commission has put in place a number of procedures to shield the integrity of the tabulation process. External monitors have vouched for the efficacy of these safeguards.[35]

A raft of tests lends credence to the conjecture that victory or loss by secularist MNA candidates in close elections is as good as random. As shown in SA Figures A3–A4, there is no sign of bunching of observations on one side of the winning threshold (McCrary 2008). Of the 104 close elections involving secular and non-secular party candidates, secular candidates won 52.8 percent of the time—a figure that is statistically indistinguishable from a 50/50 coin-flip. Next, the instrument does not predict pre-treatment characteristics of joined-

[33]If it is "too much" then the election would no longer be considered as close.

[34]Even carefully executed irregularities at individual polling stations would not automatically translate into precise manipulation at the constituency level. On average, MNA constituencies contain 257 polling stations.

[35]For example, observing the 2008 general elections, Democracy International (2008, 3–4) stated that the few observed irregularities "did not appear to be deliberate or systematic efforts to manipulate the count."

district areas: constituencies with secularist bare winners and losers appear similar with regard to education and literacy, housing quality and amenities, agricultural productivity, policing, political history, and demography (SA Tables A2–A4). Close secularist wins in time t are uncorrelated with electoral outcomes at time $t-1$ (SA Table A5).[36] The IV model also cannot predict our primary violence measure in the previous election cycle (Table 1)—an especially informative placebo test. These checks boost our confidence that close elections in Pakistan constitute a valid natural experiment.

[Insert Table 1 about here]

Results

A. Main Findings

SA Table A6 provides summary statistics. For any joined-district/election cycle, the average sample probability of violence occurring is 91 percent over the period we investigate, with killings recorded in 85 percent of cases.

Does incumbency by a secularist party MNA mitigate or amplify local religious conflict? Table 2 reports baseline estimates from the instrumental variables specification described in Equations 2–3. The coefficients on "Prop. secularist win" are interpretable as the local average treatment effect of moving from a joined-district in which *no* seats are held by a secularist-party incumbent, to a joined-district where *all* seats are held by a secularist-party incumbent. The effect is identified for close elections between secular- and non-secular-party candidates. The clear conclusion to emerge from Table 2 is that secularist incumbency dramatically reduces both incidence and severity of attacks. We find that a 100 percent increase in the proportion of district seats occupied by secularists causes a 66 percentage point

[36] We do detect slight imbalance on one of the 24 pre-treatment variables we analyze: lagged turnout in SA Table A5. Such imbalance is likely due to chance alone. Including the imbalanced variable as a control does not affect the paper's results.

reduction in the chance of violent attacks occurring, and a 48 percentage point reduction in the likelihood of killings. Our estimates for the set of three logged dependent variables turn up similarly large magnitudes.[37]

[Insert Table 2 about here]

One potential concern is that the instrumental variables results rely on an involved statistical model. To make the data analysis as simple and transparent as possible, we restrict the sample to the 59 joined-district/election years that experienced a single close election between a secular and non-secular party MNA candidate. Under RD assumptions, places where the secular candidate won or lost will—in expectation—be ex ante identical for this subsample. (In practical terms, there is no longer any need to include the control variable, *SecularCloseProp*.) This parsimonious analysis is presented in Table 3, which regresses outcomes on an indicator for whether or not the secular party candidate competing in the close race ultimately won office. The main findings persist. On the extensive margin, victory by a secularist candidate in joined districts experiencing one secular/non-secular close election entails an 18 percentage point reduction in the probability of violence subsequently breaking out ($p = .064$). Narrow secularist victories also reduce the number of violent events and the number of violent days, although there is no measurable reduction in killing.

[Insert Table 3 about here]

B. Robustness and Sensitivity Analysis

Our baseline analysis shows that secular-party incumbency depresses local religious violence. We now turn to interrogate the findings' sensitivity. The results are robust to defining close

[37]In discussing the coefficient magnitudes on the count variables, we prefer to rely on negative binomial estimates from the reduced-form models shown in SA Table A19. These suggest that for a 100 percent increase in secular-party representation, the difference in the logs of expected counts for events, killings, and days decreases by 2.36, 1.67, and 2.37 units, respectively.

elections using both smaller and larger margin-of-secular-victory bandwidths (SA Tables A7–A10). SA Table A15 repeats the main analysis, dropping the 2002 elections, which were held under semi-autocratic rule and may thus have been most tainted by fraud.[38] We run a reduced-form analysis, enabling the application of count models to the measures of violence intensity (SA Table A19–A20). SA Table A21 excludes province fixed effects, while SA Table A22 includes year fixed effects. SA Table A23 adds in cluster-district fixed effects, an exacting model that absorbs any potentially lurking confounding produced by time-invariant characteristics of cluster-district areas. SA Table A24 includes a linear time trend. Following Clots-Figueras (2012), SA Tables A25–A27 incorporate linear and higher-order polynomial controls for the margins of secularist victory in each seat in the joined district. Importantly, SA Table A28 prunes the BFRS data by adjusting the stringency of the event-inclusion criteria; this mitigates the worry that unclassified yet non-religious events are driving the results. In a similar vein, SA Table A17 drops regions of Pakistan where non-religious violence—e.g. separatism and inter-ethnic conflict—are most prevalent, and thus where the danger of mistaken attribution is greatest. In virtually all cases, we observe effects that are substantively similar to the baseline estimates and statistically significant at conventional levels. We do see that effects on killings are less consistently significant than for events and duration. Speculatively, it may be that secular-party incumbents matter most for reducing low-intensity conflict, but are potentially less consequential for more lethal events, the prevention of which demands the intervention of military and intelligence services—something beyond the control of the typical Pakistani MNA.

Finally, we employ a wholly separate measure of the dependent variable. The Global Terrorism Database (GTD) is a longitudinal dataset of terrorist incidents compiled by researchers in the United States. Information on terrorist events is drawn from open-source

[38]Indeed, we re-run our analysis by individually omitting each election cycle. The two earliest cycles in the dataset—1988 and 1990—make the largest contribution to our effect estimates, but, regardless of the sample, the results are consistently negative and substantively large. See SA Tables A11–A16.

materials—principally coverage in major international newspapers. From the GTD listings, a Pakistan-based team extracted all domestic terrorist attacks that occurred in Pakistan between 1988 and 2011; they then geo-referenced these incidents to districts. After linking these observations to our joined-district units, we re-estimated our statistical models. The results, displayed in SA Table A29, line up closely with the findings from the BFRS data. Across specifications, the impact of secular-party incumbency on terrorist violence is uniformly negative. The point estimates are measured with somewhat less precision than was the case for the BFRS outcomes, possibly due to under-reporting in international media sources.[39]

C. Generalizability

How generalizable are the findings? In particular, when and where do close elections occur, and what might this tell us about the factors needed to sustain the violence-reducing effects of secular-party incumbency? We answer this question in two ways. First, we generate frequency plots of the 104 close elections in our sample, by province and by year. Figure 2 reveals that the preponderance of close elections—76 percent—are from Punjab. This skew is unsurprising. Punjab is the country's most populous province, and is home to 47 percent of Pakistanis and 49 percent of the population covered by our sample. It has long been a crucible of political competition between the PML-N and the PPP. With 54 percent of all MNA seats, Punjab usually determines which party secures a national legislative majority. Sectarian conflict first blew up in Punjab in the 1980s, before spreading to other regions.[40] It remains a breeding ground for Islamist militancy and is the site of numerous high-profile attacks. Punjab's "military, administrative, economic and demographic predominance" (Talbot 2002, 59), and its pre-eminence with respect to religious violence, make it a vital case in its own

[39]We consider such measurement error to be classical with respect to our natural experiment. Classical measurement causes attenuation bias.

[40]Samad (1996) dubs this process the "Punjabization" of the Pakistani state writ large.

right.[41]

[Insert Figure 2 about here]

A second way to address this question is to inspect the bivariate association between close elections and past violence. Do close secular/non-secular elections mostly appear in areas that have been more peaceful or more disturbed? In Table 4, we regress violent-event outcomes—lagged by one period—on the proportion of joined-district MNA races that involved a close election between a secular and non-secular party candidate. The data paint a consistent picture: the correlation is negatively signed almost across the board, and is statistically significant in four out of six specifications. This suggests that our LATE estimates derive from areas that are comparatively *less* violent on average. This should be borne in mind when interpreting and extrapolating the results: they are unable to speak definitively to the effect of secularist-party incumbents in high-violence areas. As noted above, however, it seems probable that the actions of individual legislators are most efficacious for the reduction of less extreme incidences of religious violence.

[Insert Table 4 about here]

Mechanisms

The major finding of the previous section is that local secularist-party incumbency reduces religious violence. Drawing on the theoretical framework outlined above, we now seek to disentangle the mechanisms at work.

Electoral Incentives

Do electoral incentives best make sense of the effect? As we have shown, secular parties count on the votes of social groups victimized by violence. We posited that secular-party

[41]In SA Table A18 we show that the result remains even after omitting Punjab. However, given that this analysis involves leaving out a sizable fraction of close elections, we are hesitant to place too much weight on this subsample finding.

incumbents' aggressive stance toward religious violence might stem from a fear of electoral reprisal in the event that violence erupts on their watch.[42]

To test this hypothesis, we examine whether Pakistani voters inflict an electoral penalty on secular-party incumbents who preside over violence-struck districts. For the analysis, we use the proportion of total joined-district votes cast for secular-party candidates in time t as the outcome. We then focus on the interaction of two explanatory variables: the proportion of joined-district seats held by secular-party incumbents in the preceding election cycle (i.e. time $t-1$), and the incidence of violence in the six months prior to the election.[43] If the theory of selective accountability is correct, we should expect this interaction to be negatively signed. That is, where violence occurs in the run-up to elections, secular parties will go on to lose more votes in areas where they held more MNA seats (and were thus plausibly responsible for the breakdown of law and order). The effects are estimated using OLS, controlling for cluster-district fixed effects and—in half of the models—province/election year fixed effects. The unit of analysis remains the joined-district.

The results are given in Table 5. Consistent with the theory, we observe a negative and statistically significant interaction between pre-election violence and the proportion of secular MNAs in office. For a 10 percent increase in secular representation at $t-1$, we observe a 1 percentage point reduction in secular-party vote share in violent districts over and above any effect seen in non-violent districts. To further elucidate this conditional relationship, we subset the data. In joined-districts where there was no reported violence in the six months leading up to the election, the correlation between prior secularist incumbency and the subsequent vote share gleaned by secular parties is strongly positive (10.4 percentage points, $p = 0.048$, $N = 120$). Conversely, in joined-districts where violence was

[42]Note that Pakistan does not impose term limits on MNAs.

[43]We investigate violence just prior to the election due to extensive evidence that voters are present-biased. In studies of economic voting, voters have been shown to discount more temporally distant events, and fixate instead on economic conditions in the months prior to the election in evaluating the government's performance.

present, this coefficient is negative (-6.9 percentage points, $p = 0.033$, $N = 224$); under these conditions, incumbency hinders the electoral prospects of secular parties.[44] These results suggest that failure to impede religious violence carries severe electoral repercussions for secular incumbents. Anticipating this, they should do all they can to prevent religious attacks.

[Insert Table 5 about here]

Two words of caution are in order. First, the correspondence between theory and empirics is not one-to-one. While we show that secularists do *as a matter of fact* appear to lose votes when their districts fall prey to conflict, the mechanism stipulates that secular-party politicians *perceive* that a punishment effect exists. Drawing this inference may be taxing for politicians, since a multitude of factors feeds into electoral outcomes. Second, neither violence nor prior incumbency is exogenously assigned in this analysis, hence the effects are not causally identified.[45] Nonetheless, the strictness of the fixed-effects models in Table 5—which exploit over-time variation within cluster districts while simultaneously accounting for province-specific cyclical shocks—makes it less likely that the results are a mere artifact of omitted variables.

Notably, in SA Table A32 we show that secular incumbency has no discernable effect on non-religious violence or on regular crime. Further, SA Table A33 reveals no causal impact on religious violence of having an MNA from the prime minister's party (secular or otherwise) be in power locally.[46] Both these falsification exercises attest to the uniqueness of the connection between secular parties and the control of religious violence.

[44]Estimates are based on models that include cluster-district fixed effects.

[45]Compelling recent attempts to causally identity the impact of conflict on voting include Iyer and Shrivastava (2015), who use the timing of religious festivals in India as an instrument for violence. Also looking at India, Blakeslee (2013) shows the usefulness of heated ethnic "propaganda"—in the form of L.K. Advani's 1990 *rath yatra*—for mobilizing Hindu-nationalist support.

[46]This is instructive because if the Hobbesian conjecture is correct—in other words, if

The electoral incentives mechanism chimes with case-study evidence. For example, Rieck (2016, 318) recounts an episode in which a Shia politician, Raja Nasir Abbas Ja'fari, in a speech in Multan, "stated that political parties had always begged votes from Shias but had given nothing to them in return ... He accused the PML-N of supporting banned terrorist groups and the PPP of being a silent spectator to the 'genocide' of Shias in Quetta." In concluding, Ja'fari decalared that the "time had gone when Shias were lured to vote for secular parties. From now on Shias would vote for only those parties who would serve their interests."

Politician Characteristics

A second way incumbent partisanship could affect violence is through politician selection. Individuals with particular personality types or ascriptive traits might self-segregate into secular versus non-secular parties—or they may be induced to do so by intra-party selection procedures. Sorting dynamics could explain party-wise disparities in conflict outcomes if—as seems conceivable—an incumbent's individual characteristics shape her readiness to suppress religious violence.

We put this explanation to the test by compiling biographical information on the 208 candidates who were the winners and runners-up in the 104 close elections at the heart of our analysis. The data cover four sets of candidate qualities. First, we attempt to decipher whether or not each politician belonged to a Shia religious sect—the rationale being that politicians may take more robust action to combat violence that disproportionately afflicts "in-group" members.[47] Second, we tag candidates who are landed elites or "feudals."

control of religious violence is a valence-type issue—then we might predict that legislators belonging to governing parties would reduce such violence more than legislators from opposition parties, so as to avoid embarrassing the national incumbent party, which is ultimately responsible for keeping the peace.

[47]This coding is based on consultations with four journalists and analysts who gave independent assessments of whether or not each of the 208 politicians were Shia. Further details

Compared to other candidates, landed elites (or "electables") tend to be wealthier, garner a large personal vote, and profit from access to networks of loyal cadres.[48] Third, we assemble various metrics of past political experience, including membership in the national cabinet and past runs for office. Finally, our elections dataset enables us to code patterns of party switching across the span of politicians' careers. We create a dummy variable that takes one if the politician at any stage defected from a non-secular party into a secular party (or vice versa). Across all of these dimensions, our analytical strategy is to check for the existence of average differences between secular- and non-secular party candidates.

The results of two-sided t-tests are displayed in Table 6. Overall, secular and non-secular party candidates look strikingly similar, on average. Secular parties are somewhat more likely to recruit Shia candidates. (Note, however, that a mere 12.5 percent of secular-party candidates appear to be Shia, and the difference across secular/non-secular parties for this variable is statistically both small and insignificant.) Secular and non-secular parties put up feudal politicians for election at very similar rates. Regarding experience, the only difference we detect is that non-secular candidates spent more time as sitting MNAs in the past (1.23 terms versus 0.75 terms for secular parties). This is at variance with our theoretical priors: less experienced secular politicians should be less able to suppress violence, and yet they do.

[Insert Table 6 about here]

There are other potentially relevant characteristics we cannot measure. Candidates' latent ideology is a prime example, although the party-switching variable is somewhat informative on this point. Do secular parties tend to enlist more committed ideologues, and are secular parties commensurately more cohesive as organizations? The answer appears to be no. Thirty-four percent of secular candidates switched between party groupings during

are provided in the Appendix.

[48]Our coding is based on National Assembly and Provincial Assembly online profiles, secondary literature and news articles, and consultation with analysts and journalists.

their careers, compared to 20 percent of non-secular-party candidates.[49] Seen in the aggregate, the data betray few signs that politician selection is what drives the pacifying effect of secular-party incumbency.

State Capacity Explanations

A standard result in the civil war literature is that high levels of state capacity are tied to a reduced likelihood of conflict onset (Fearon and Laitin 2003). We assess whether the effect of secular-party incumbency is moderated by local state capacity, focusing on the state's coercive apparatus. We collected district-level data on the number of police stations for each election year. Dividing this by the number of registered voters in each district yields a per capita measure of police penetration.[50] The sample median value of this variable was then used to partition the sample into two subgroups.

In Figure 3, we re-run the main statistical models by subgroup for two dependent variables. Dot-and-whiskers plots show point estimates and their 95 percent confidence intervals. Prima facie, we find that the statistically significant treatment effect of secular-party incumbency is concentrated in district-years in which per-capita police enforcement is greater than the median value. In below-median areas, secularist incumbency does not discernibly impact religious violence, favoring the claim that state capacity modifies the effect of secular-party rule. There are several provisos, however. For one, the group-wise differences are not always clear-cut: the point estimates in above- and below-median districts are substantively similar

[49] In an in-depth study of elite recruitment in four Pakistani parties, Mufti (2011) contends that candidates' choice of party is motivated first and foremost by opportunism. "Most cases of party-switching were incongruous from the ideological point of view, with politicians moving from one party to its archenemy" (Mufti 2011, 258). Moreover, "political parties often overlook loyalty in the candidate as a criterion" in deciding which candidate to nominate (Mufti 2011, 226).

[50] As before, the data were aggregated to the joined-district units. Note that registered voters provides the best approximation of district-level population, since Pakistan conducted only one census over the time period we investigate (in 1998).

in the instrumental variables models (Panels A and B), even though their significance differs. Relatedly, a formal test of differential subgroup effects only registers as marginally statistically significant for the difference-in-means model presented in Panel D. Measurement-wise, police stations per capita offers a rough gauge of true law enforcement capacity; richer data on manpower and materiel—unavailable for Pakistan—would be preferable. Nevertheless, recall that the theory's foremost concern is whether or not legislators choose to use the resources at their disposal to reduce religious violence. The police stations per capita variable tells us whether legislators *can* or *cannot* intervene to affect conflict in the first place. It is also worth stressing that better policed areas may be dissimilar in other key respects from places that are less well policed.[51] The heterogeneity in effects should thus be treated as suggestive but not dispositive evidence about the contributory role played by state capacity.[52]

[Insert Figure 3 about here]

Conclusion

In this paper, we demonstrate that secular-party rule reduces the incidence of sectarian and Islamist violence. We leverage a credible research design that exploits the occurrence of close elections between secularist and non-secularist candidates in Pakistan between 1988 and 2011. According to our instrumental-variables estimates, increasing secular-party representation by 10 percent reduces the probability of local religious violence by 6.6 percentage points. Additional analyses indicate that the result comes from electoral pressures to cater to core party supporters, and not from politician selection. The effect is concentrated in

[51]Note, though, that differences in population size are controlled for by our per capita measure.

[52]In SA Table A31 we test whether secular-party incumbency affects violence in *future* election cycles—that is, at $t + 1$. Our estimates suggest it does not. An implication is that, in seeking to mitigate violence, secular legislators deploy tools that have beneficial short-term, but not long-term, effects.

regions with denser police presence, suggesting that incumbent partisanship is efficacious, but only when the state's coercive apparatus is potent enough to sway the security situation on the ground.

Few would dispute the World Bank's (2011, 58–9) assessment that "[t]he costs of violence for citizens, communities, countries, and the world are enormous, both in terms of human suffering and social and economic consequences." Our results advance policy debates about peace-building efforts in societies riven by religious tensions. Support for secularists and moderates has been a backbone of democracy promotion programs in recent years. Our findings help bridge the evidence gap about the realized impact of such parties on conflict-mitigation, and—by extension—democratic stability. We further contribute to theoretical discussion surrounding the determinants of subnational conflict. Whereas an older generation of literature emphasized the macro-institutional and economic drivers of violence outbreak (for a prominent recent example highlighting economic factors, see Jha (2013)), newer studies have homed in on grassroots initiatives to facilitate inter-group cooperation and resilience-building.[53] Incumbent partisanship constitutes a meso-level factor influencing a country's ability to keep violence at bay. Although we must remain agnostic about the effect of democracy per se on conflict, we show that who wins elections profoundly shapes a locality's subsequent exposure to religious disturbances. Pinker (2011, 680) has famously argued that the advent of the modern state brought about a precipitous decline in criminality and conflict: "[a] state that uses a monopoly on force to protect its citizens from one another may be the most consistent violence-reducer" historically. States are no silver bullet, however. Our findings reveal that states' attempts to quench violence are not equally distributed among citizens. This underlines the need for reforms to insulate local security forces from political interference and to enhance security protections for society's most vulnerable groups

[53]Initiatives include community-driven reconstruction programs, (Fearon, Humphreys and Weinstein 2015), cash transfers and job training programs (Blattman and Annan 2016), and media campaigns (Paluck and Green 2009).

(Banerjee et al. 2012).

The study faces several limitations. We cannot generate unbiased estimates of the effect of secular rule at the national-governmental level on conflict, nor do we know what might be the consequence of introducing secular parties into a political system for the first time (cf. Ishiyama 2009). Next, our results apply to violence in Pakistan's four main provinces; they do not carry lessons for the situation in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) or Azad Kashmir, where militancy is particularly acute yet where normal democratic institutions are inoperative. Lastly, the method we employ recovers a context-specific average treatment effect: namely, the impact of secularist incumbency pursuant to hard-fought elections. It says nothing about violence dynamics in party strongholds. Future research should seek to fill these gaps.

Although our empirical evidence is from Pakistan, there are reasons to expect that the findings extend elsewhere. For secularist incumbency to curb violence, our evidence implies that three conditions need to be met. First, local incumbents must have discretionary power over police and security forces; while officeholders might employ non-coercive tools to ward off violence, the state's security apparatus appears to be especially crucial. Second, political competition must be configured so that secular parties square off against non-secular parties in relatively tight elections; absent such competition, there may be few political advantages to stopping religious conflict. Finally, it seems likely that systems of geographic representation (e.g. single-member districts) are more conducive to electoral accountability over violence as compared to proportional-type systems. Without additional studies, however, these scope conditions remain tentative.

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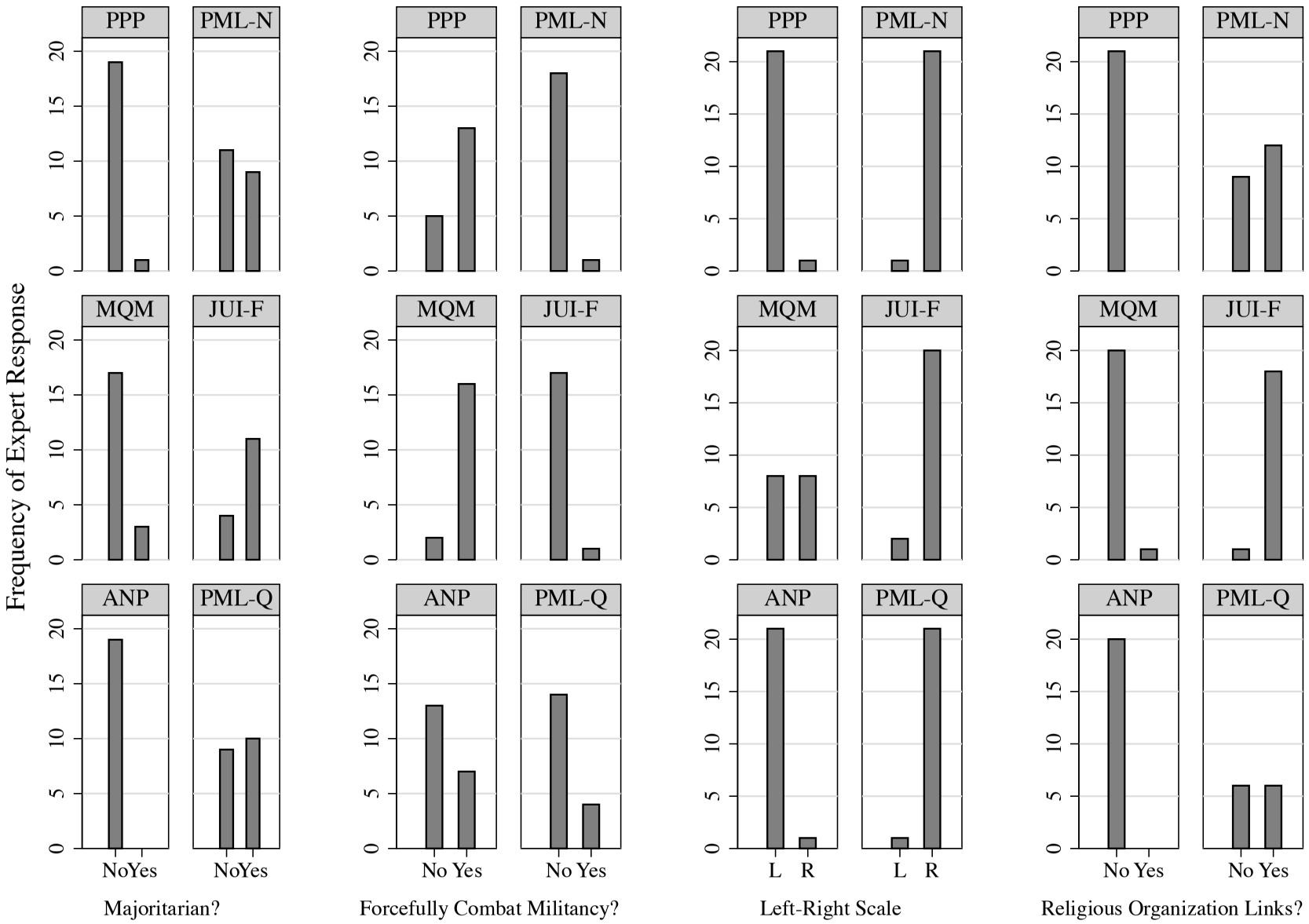
Figure 1: Expert Evaluations of Pakistan's Political Parties



Notes: These data are extracted from the Democratic Accountability and Linkages Project. See SA for details.

Figure 2: When and Where do Close Elections Occur?

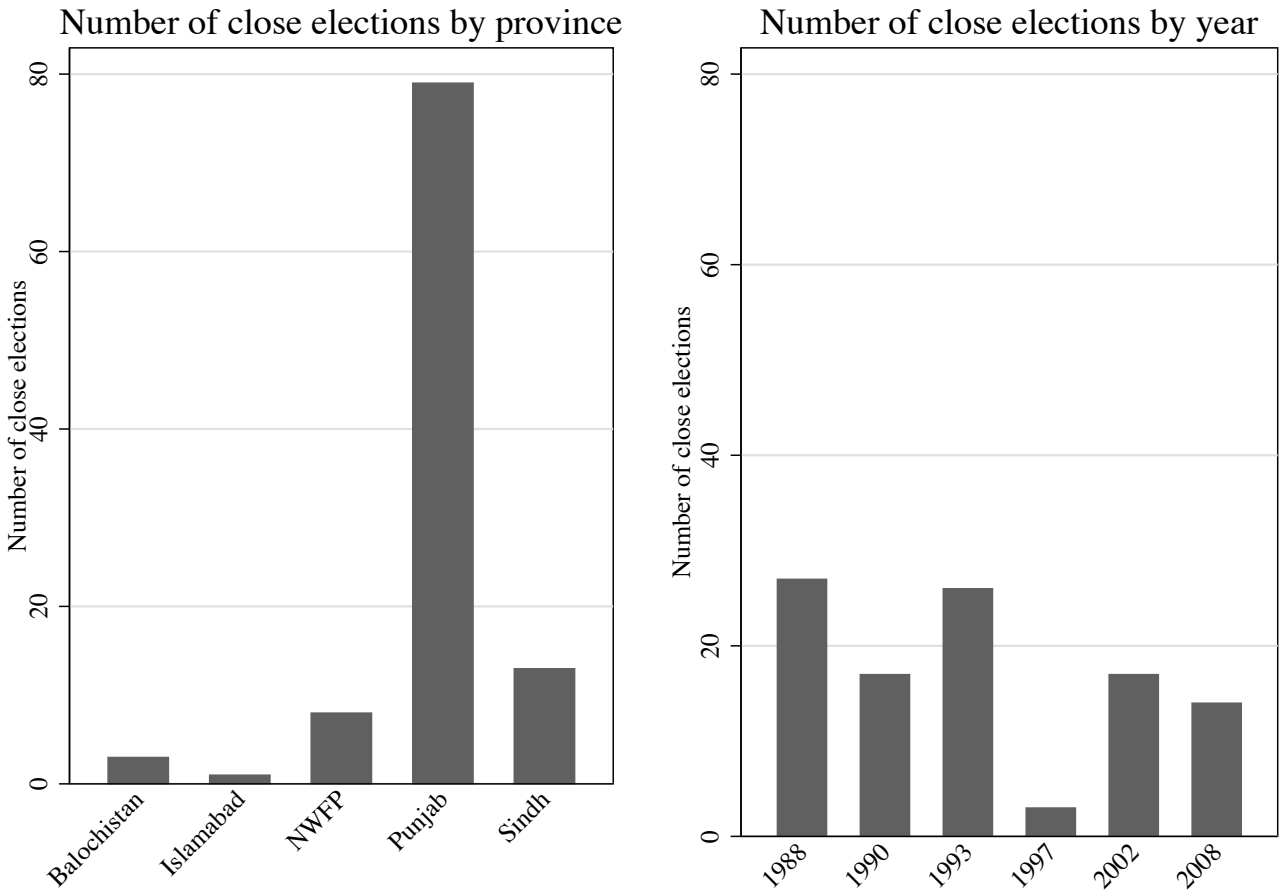


Figure 3: Secular Party Effect Conditional on Police-Station Density

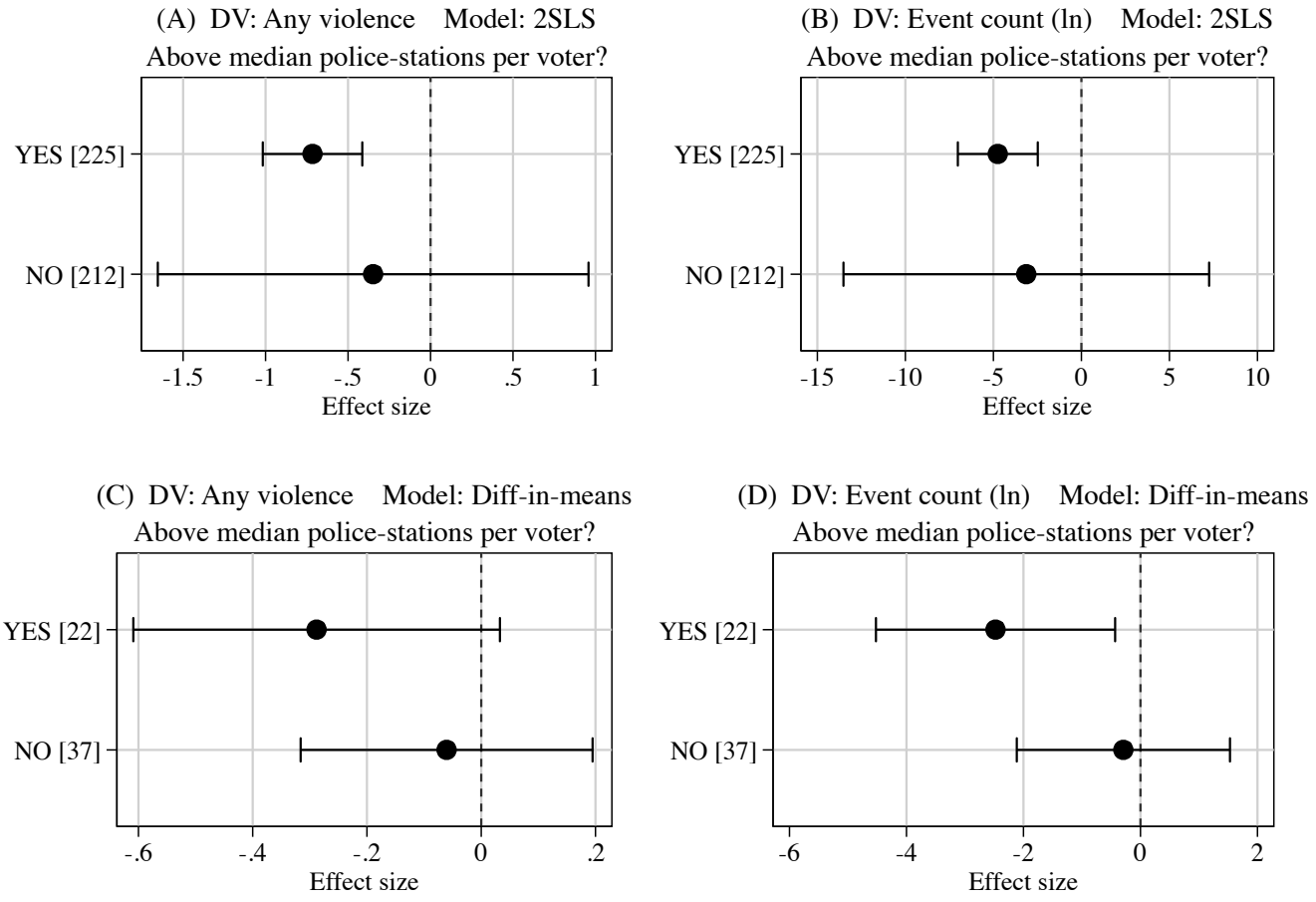


Table 1: Placebo Check—Can Secular Victory in Close Elections at Time t Predict Prior Violence $(t-1)$?

Dependent variable:	Any event (Binary)	Event count (Ln)	Any killed (Binary)	Number killed (Ln)	Number days (Ln)
Prop. secularist win	-0.066	-1.165	-0.127	-1.404	-1.162
	[0.247]	[1.916]	[0.241]	[1.937]	[1.916]
Prop. secularist close race	-0.364**	-1.802	-0.313*	-1.696	-1.811
	[0.160]	[1.314]	[0.165]	[1.376]	[1.313]
Province FEs	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	437	437	437	437	437

Notes: Robust standard errors, clustered by cluster-district area, in brackets. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Table 2: Instrumental Variables Results

Dependent variable:	Any event (Binary)	Event count (Ln)	Any killed (Binary)	Number killed (Ln)	Number days (Ln)
Prop. secularist win	-0.660***	-4.654***	-0.477*	-3.266	-4.700***
	[0.212]	[1.716]	[0.271]	[2.110]	[1.738]
Prop. secularist close race	0.031	0.837	0.004	0.281	0.947
	[0.084]	[0.861]	[0.158]	[1.255]	[0.869]
Province FEs	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	437	437	437	437	437

Notes: Robust standard errors, clustered by cluster-district area, in brackets. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Table 3: Difference in Means Results for Joined-Districts with One Secular/Non-Secular Close Election

Dependent variable:	Any event (Binary)	Event count (Ln)	Any killed (Binary)	Number killed (Ln)	Number days (Ln)
Secularist close win	-0.176*	-1.265*	-0.141	-0.769	-1.265*
	[0.092]	[0.654]	[0.089]	[0.647]	[0.654]
Province FEs	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	59	59	59	59	59

Notes: Robust standard errors, clustered by cluster-district area, in brackets. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Table 4: Correlation between Close Secular/Non-Secular Elections and Violence at Time $t-1$

Dependent variable:	Any event			Event count		
Model:	OLS			Negative binomial		
Prop. secularist close race	-0.355***	-0.386***	-0.257***	0.628	-1.238**	-0.311
	[0.119]	[0.111]	[0.091]	[1.522]	[0.564]	[0.469]
Cluster FEs	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
Province-Year FEs	N	N	Y	N	N	Y
N	437	437	437	437	437	437

Notes: Robust standard errors, clustered by cluster-district area, in brackets. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Table 5: Mechanisms—Electoral Incentives

Dependent variable:	Secular-Party Vote Share (t)			
Prop. Secular (t-1) x Any violence	-0.115***		-0.102**	
	[0.040]		[0.043]	
Prop. Secular (t-1) x Event count (ln)		-0.018***		-0.014*
		[0.006]		[0.007]
Any violence	0.105***		0.086***	
	[0.028]		[0.024]	
Prop. secularist wins (*t - 1*)	0.038	-0.053**	0.050	-0.030
	[0.043]	[0.026]	[0.050]	[0.031]
Event count (ln)		0.018***		0.015***
		[0.004]		[0.004]
Cluster FEs	Y	Y	Y	Y
Province-Year FEs	N	N	Y	Y
N	344	344	344	344

Notes: Robust standard errors, clustered by cluster-district area, in brackets. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Table 6: Mechanisms—Differences in Candidate Characteristics by Secular/Non-Secular Partisanship for Close Elections

	Candidate Party Type					
	Non-Secular		Secular		Difference of Means	
	[A]	SD[A]	[B]	SD[B]	[A]-[B]	SE([B]-[A])
Shia sect	0.08	0.27	0.12	0.33	-0.05	(0.04)
Feudal politician	0.59	0.49	0.61	0.49	-0.02	(0.07)
First time contesting MNA election	0.21	0.41	0.29	0.46	-0.08	(0.06)
Number of MNA elections won previously	1.23	1.18	0.75	0.99	0.48***	(0.15)
Number of MNA elections contested previously	1.70	1.35	1.57	1.43	0.13	(0.19)
Cabinet member in current term	0.05	0.21	0.07	0.25	-0.02	(0.03)
Any prior cabinet experience	0.09	0.28	0.09	0.28	0.00	(0.04)
Switched between secular/non-secular party	0.20	0.40	0.34	0.47	-0.13**	(0.06)
N	104		104		208	

Notes: Group means are shown in columns [A] and [B]. "SD" denotes standard deviation and "SE" denotes standard error. ***$p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Supplementary Appendix for "Secular Party Rule and Religious Violence in Pakistan"

Additional Prefatory Data

Figure A1: Democratization in Muslim-majority Countries, 1980–2014 (Unweighted)

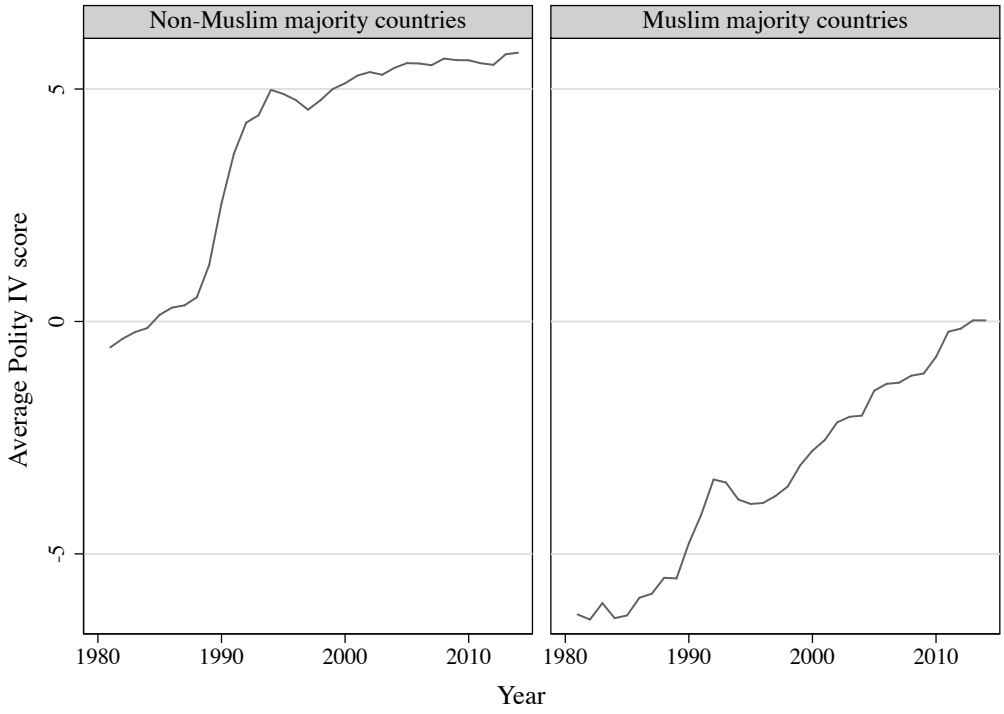
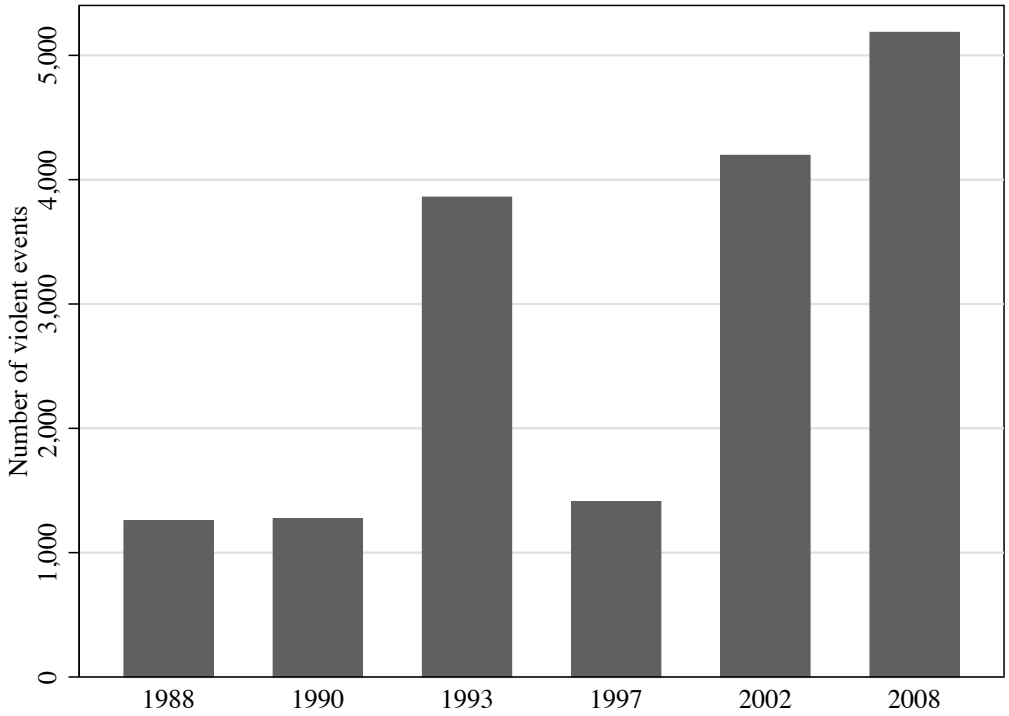


Figure A2: Frequency of Religious Violence Events by Election Cycle



Data Sources

Violence Data

Data on violence incidents are from the *BFRS Political Violence in Pakistan Dataset*, available at: https://esoc.princeton.edu/files/bfrs-political-violence-pakistan-dataset. Further details on how we parse the data are described in the text, and in the various robustness checks.

Election Data

Fully digitized, constituency-level election data were generously provided to us by Ali Cheema and Farooq Naseer at the Institute of Development & Economic Alternatives.

Public Opinion Data

To identify the sectarian affiliation of supporters of Pakistan's political parties, we analyzed nationally representative survey data gathered by Blair et al. (2013). The survey was conducted among 6000 Pakistanis in four provinces of the country. The data are available at: https://esoc.princeton.edu/files/pakistan-fms09-survey-data.

Police Stations Data

Data on the number of police stations in each district were collected from the *Pakistan Statistical Year Book* (various years), published by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. Specifically, we take data from the section of the reports titled: "Number of Police Stations/Posts by Division/District." We use data for the number of police stations that existed in each of our six election years (1988, 1990, 1993, 1997, 2002, 2008). The number of police stations are summed by joined districts (as defined in the main paper). We are missing data for several observations—these were instances where the *Yearbook* had blank entries for districts we know existed at that time. In one case—Karachi 2008—we used the 2007 data due to anomalous missingness in the 2008 entries for the 5 Karachi districts.

Note that our analysis uses the variable police stations per registered voter. The number of registered voters in each joined district is generated using the election data just described.

Agricultural Yields Data

Data on agricultural yields—used in the balance tests—are extracted from the following publication: *Crops Area and Production (by Districts), (1981–82 to 2008–09), Volume 1, Food and Cash Crops*. This is published by the Government of Pakistan, Statistics Division, Federal Bureau of Statistics (Economic Wing). It is available from this website: http://www.pbs.gov.pk/content/crops-area-and-production-districts-1981-82-2008-09. As usual, the data were summed by joined district.

Global Terrorism Database

In one robustness test we employ an alternative measure of the dependent variable from data provided by the Global Terrorism Database (GTD). GTD includes information on terrorist events around the world from 1970 through 2015. It is available from this website: https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/. We are thankful to Imran Khan for providing us the data for Pakistan coded at the district level.

Data on Candidate Characteristics

Data on cabinet positions were collected and kindly shared with us by Mariam Mufti, University of Waterloo.

To determine the sectarian affiliation of candidates, we consulted with four Pakistani journalists and country experts. If at least two of these individuals agreed that a particular candidate was Shia, we coded the candidate as such. Determining whether an individual is Shia or Sunni in Pakistan is far from straightforward as this information is not officially collected. While one's name can provide some indication as to one's sectarian beliefs, it is not by itself a sufficient guide to determine sect.

Data on party switching was coded using the constituency-level election data provided by the Institute of Development & Economic Alternatives.

Data on Party Positions

To support our categorization of political parties as secular, we used data from the Democratic Accountability and Linkages Project survey. It is available from this website: https://sites.duke.edu/democracylinkage/data/. The text of each survey question used in our analysis is reproduced below.

- Majoritarian (value label between 1 and 10; dichotomized into "no" [values 1–5] and "yes" [values 6–10]):

  1 Party advocates toleration and social and political equality for minority ethnic, linguistic, religious, and racial groups and opposes state policies that require the assimilation of such groups to the majority national culture.

  10 Party believes that the defense and promotion of the majority national identity and culture at the expense of minority representation are important goals.

- Religious Organizations Link ("no" or "yes"):

  – Political parties often have more or less routine and explicit linkages to civil society organizations such as unions, business or professional organizations, and cultural organizations based on religion, language, or ethnicity. The linkages might include leadership and membership overlap, mutual financial support, reserved positions for representatives of these organizations at National Conventions, etc. Do the following parties have strong linkages to one or more of the following civil society organizations?

- Left-Right Scale (value label between 1 and 10; dichotomized into "left" [values 1–5] and "right" [values 6–10]):

  1 Party is best located at the left of the national political spectrum based upon its overall policy positions and ideological framework.

  10 Party is best located at the right of the national political spectrum based upon its overall policy positions and ideological framework.

- Forcibly Combat Militancy (value label between 1 and 10; dichotomized into "no" [values 1–5] and "yes" [values 6–10]):

  1 Party advocates negotiations and dialogue rather than the use of force against militants in Pakistan as a way to solving the current crisis of militancy.

  10 Party advocates a comprehensive military offensive against militancy, including the right of pre-emptive strikes against militant targets.

Census Data

Data on population size, housing quality, electrification, gas connections, piped water, literacy, and schooling were taken from the district handbooks of the Census of Pakistan 1981 and 1998. These data were newly digitized and cleaned by the authors. We gratefully acknowledge the contribution of Rinchan Mirza from Oxford University, who generously shared the schooling data for three provinces. The data are averaged by joined district. Note that in cases where a joined district at time t encompasses more than one census district (covariates for which are measured at time $t-1$) we take a simple unweighted average of measures for the constituent census districts.

Princely States

We created a dichotomous variable that takes 1 when any part of a joined district fell within the boundaries of a "princely state" (i.e. indirectly ruled territory) during the British colonial era (pre-1947). The information needed to construct this variable was taken from maps provided in the 1909 Imperial Gazetteer of British India. These maps have been digitized and have been posted online by the University of Chicago (https://goo.gl/Mvsqnt, last accessed 5/6/2017). We are grateful to Dann Naseemullah at King's College, University of London, who sent us a similar variable coded using the same source, which we used to cross-check our own coding.

Crime

Data on crime—murder and motor vehicle theft—were obtained from various editions of the provincial *Development Statistics* reports (e.g. *Punjab Development Statistics 2009*. We aggregated the raw district-level counts of crime incidents to our joined-district areas. Unfortunately, annual district-level data were only available for certain provinces and for certain time periods. (Most reports, especially prior to 2002, only report crime at the provincial level.) Exact data availability was as follows:

- Punjab: 2002 onwards (not available for 2003)
- Sindh: 2004 onwards
- Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: 2010 onwards
- Balochistan: none available

Linkages Between Sectarian and Islamist Violence in Pakistan

In this article, we conceptualize religious conflict in Pakistan as combining two types of violence: sectarian violence and Islamist/Jihadist violence. Sectarian violence refers largely to Sunni-on-Shia conflict as well as Shia-on-Sunni conflict—although, given the numerical and apparent resource dominance of Sunnis, Sunni-on Shia violence predominates. Sectarian violence also covers attacks by certain sub-sects of Sunni Islam (notably, Deobandi Islam) on other sub-sects (notably, those adhering to a Barelvi interpretation of Islam). Meanwhile, Islamist violence refers to a type of violence carried out in the name of a totalizing ideology focused on social transformation—sometimes called social "Talibanization"—and the introduction of various elements of Sharia law into the Pakistani state and society. To the extent that politicians fail to implement the tenets of Sharia, Islamist violence is anti-statist.

Numerous organizations, each with their own independent hierarchy and mandate, fall within these categories. Most prominent among the Jihadist militant groups is the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). The primary sectarian militant groups are those groups related to the Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP), renamed the Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat (ASWJ) in the early 2000s.

While it is generally possible to code whether a militant group was, at its inception, primarily conceived to pursue Islamist or sectarian goals, separating these groups, and the types of violence they orchestrate, following their establishment is much harder. Linkages between the two sets of militant groups run very deep. We summarize six key areas of overlap highlighted in the specialist literature.

First, sectarian and jihadist groups have strong ideological commonalities. In particular, both sets of organizations propagate a Deobandi ideology. Deobandis, an orthodox school of Islamic Sunni thought, follow the Hanafi School of fiqh (jurisprudence). The Deobandi school preaches "an austere, scripturalist version of Sunni Islam and [is] opposed to most manifestations of 'folk Islam,' which they associate with syncretist Hindu influences" (Rieck 2016, 87). Those groups promoting an extremist interpretation of Deobandi Islam share a common political project: purifying the Islamic state by ridding it of groups they consider heretical, either because they are Shia or because they are Sunnis that venerate saints and tombs.

Second, Jihadist and sectarian actors draw from similar recruitment pools. Many members of the Taliban and the SSP were recruited from one of many *madaris* in Pakistan. Jaffrelot (2015, 557–8) writes, for instance: "The Binori town madrassah and other such breeding grounds for Islamists who would later wind up in sectarian or jihadist organisations provided a common foundation for groups that hence continue to have considerable affinities." SPP and Taliban members have trained together in various camps in Pakistan as well as in neighboring Afghanistan.

Third, these groups share personnel. Fair (2015, 1139) argues that "sectarian groups ... share overlapping membership with other Deobandi militant groups including the Afghan Taliban, the Pakistani Taliban, and the so-called 'Kashmiri tanzeems' that focus upon Kashmir and the rest of India, most notably the Jaish-e-Mohammad."

Fourth, organizations share numerous policy goals. For example, both sectarian and

Jihadist groups in Pakistan support the Afghan insurgency. Yusuf (2014, 19) writes, "Even though the anti-Shia agenda of Punjab-based Sunni sectarian groups is seemingly irrelevant to the TTP's call for the imposition of Sharia in FATA, the ideological affinity and desire of both groups to support the Afghan insurgency allows them to converge, offering militants useful opportunities for reinforcement." Similarly, Jihadist groups support sectarian violence in part because it "makes strategic sense ... its fallout plays into a larger mayhem the militants have planned to unleash on Pakistan" (Abou Zahab 2011, 382).

Fifth, the groups possess important institutional and financial linkages. For example, LeJ leader Riaz Basra had "direct links with Arab financiers and the [Afghan] Taliban helped him establish his base camp in Afghanistan" (Abbas 2004, 208). Similarly, the TTP has claimed that the Afghan Taliban are financially supporting them and providing them sanctuary in Afghanistan.[54]

Sixth and finally, there is much evidence to suggest that the groups have also cooperated in carrying out specific tasks and attacks. For example, when U.S. aid worker Warren Weinstein was kidnapped by Al Qaeda, reports suggest that militants belonging to the sectarian LeJ helped abduct him from his home in Lahore, in Punjab province.[55] Similarly, in the violent metropolis of Karachi, "the suicide-attacks carried out since 2006, particularly against Shi'as, are attributed to the LeJ working in tandem with the TTP" (Abou Zahab 2011, 381). More recently, a bombing in a vegetable market in the predominantly Shia city of Parachinar (Kurram tribal agency), which killed 25 and injured 49, was believed to have been a joint operation by the LeJ and a splinter group of the TTP.[56]

What do we conclude from this bank of evidence? The depth and breadth of overlap between Jihadist and Islamist violence in Pakistan makes separating these two strains of militancy a fraught empirical task, and one without a clear conceptual foundation. As Abou Zahab (2011, 369–70) concludes, "Different strains of militancy have overlapped to the point where it might not seem relevant to treat sectarian violence as separate from al-Qaeda attacks or militancy in Punjab as different from that in FATA."

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[54] "Afghan Taliban financing militants in Pakistan: TTP," *Dawn*, 10/7/2013, https://goo.gl/pON6YF, last accessed 5/6/2017.

[55] "Pakistani terrorist killed in staged shootout, say police sources," *Guardian*, 11/26/2015 https://goo.gl/xKudb7, last accessed 5/6/2017.

[56] "'Terrorists will fail in their attempt to regain lost relevance,' army chief says," *Dawn*, 1/22/2017, https://goo.gl/RYVQt2, last accessed 5/6/2017.

Tests of Threshold Bunching

Figure A3: Global Histogram of Secular Party Margin of Victory/Loss

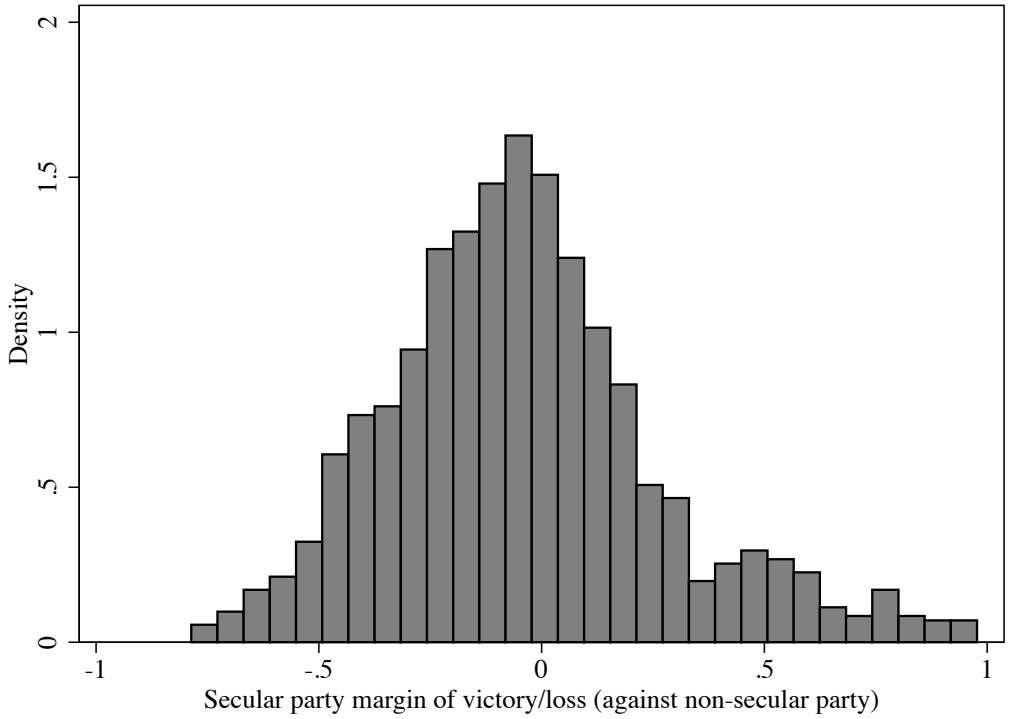
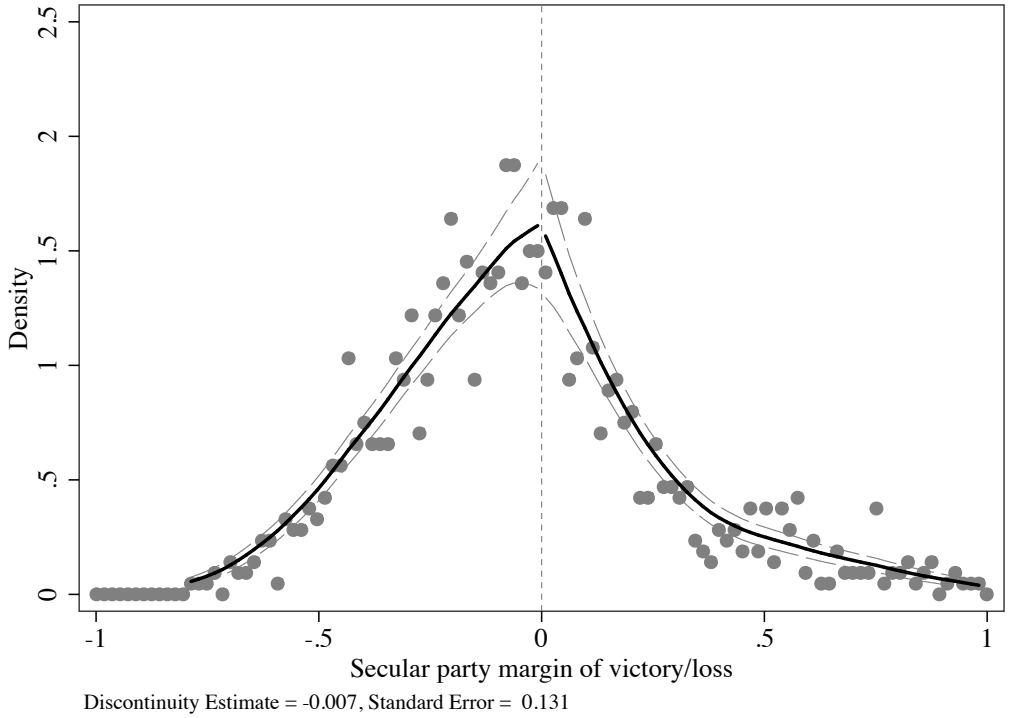


Figure A4: McCrary Density Test



This shows the formal McCrary test for whether or not the density of secular margin of victory/loss is discontinuous around the winning threshold.

First-Stage Regression

Table A1: First-Stage Regression for Benchmark Specification

Dependent variable:	Prop. secular win
Prop. secularist close win	0.903***
	[0.123]
Prop. secularist close race	-0.098
	[0.103]
F-stat. on Prop. secularist close win	53.91
Province FEs	Y
N	437

Notes: Robust standard errors, clustered by cluster-district area, in brackets. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Identification Checks

Table A2: Balance Check—Lagged Joined-District Characteristics Measured in Census of Pakistan 1981 and 1998

Dependent variable:	Area	Pacca Prop. HHs	Electricity (Prop. HHs)	Gas (Prop. HHs)	Total literacy (Prop.)	Female literacy (Prop.)	Primary schools (Per capita)
Prop. secularist win	0.104	0.070	-0.073	-0.002	-0.044	-0.045	0.000
	[0.519]	[0.122]	[0.167]	[0.028]	[0.053]	[0.044]	[0.000]
Prop. secularist close race	-0.319	-0.125	-0.080	-0.021	-0.047	-0.024	-0.000*
	[0.367]	[0.083]	[0.125]	[0.027]	[0.039]	[0.036]	[0.000]
Province FEs	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	435	421	421	417	425	425	419

Notes: Electoral outcomes for 1988, 1990, 1993, and 1997 are used to predict (as a falsification test) census outcomes measured in 1981; electoral outcomes for 2002 and 2008 are used to predict census outcomes measured in 1998. Sample sizes vary somewhat across models due to missingness in some census data. Missingness is minimal and appears to be unsystematic. Robust standard errors, clustered by cluster-district area, in brackets. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Table A3: Balance Check—Lagged Agricultural Outcomes

Dependent variable:	Rice area	Rice yield	Wheat area	Wheat yield
Prop. secularist win	70.355	223.851	-93.866	-178.719
	[74.040]	[159.986]	[223.091]	[454.305]
Prop. secularist close race	-25.959	-93.441	134.249	138.116
	[46.662]	[81.794]	[137.333]	[288.917]
Province FEs	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	437	437	437	437

Notes: The unit for area is thousands of hectares; the unit for yield is thousands of tonnes. Robust standard errors, clustered by cluster-district area, in brackets. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Table A4: Balance Check—Additional Characteristics

Dependent variable:	Total registered voters (000s)	Police stations per 100,000	Princely state pre-1947
Prop. secularist win	-323.303	-0.577	-0.139
	[281.355]	[1.012]	[0.293]
Prop. secularist close race	354.285	0.865	0.120
	[241.786]	[0.740]	[0.142]
Province FEs	Y	Y	Y
N	435	423	437

Notes: Robust standard errors, clustered by cluster-district area, in brackets. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Table A5: Placebo Check—Can Secular Victory in Close Elections at Time t Predict Characteristics of Prior Elections $(t-1)$?

Dependent variable:	% Secular-held	% Secular-held (excl. 1977)	Secular-party voteshare	Turnout	Margin of victory
Prop. secularist win	0.062	0.064	0.029	-0.100**	-0.035
	[0.212]	[0.175]	[0.094]	[0.048]	[0.058]
Prop. secularist close race	0.023	-0.080	0.073	0.055*	-0.022
	[0.093]	[0.068]	[0.052]	[0.031]	[0.046]
Province FEs	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	388	346	346	346	346

Notes: All dependent variables pertain to outcomes in the previous election cycle. Note that the three right-hand columns do exclude observations for 1988—lagged electoral data are unavailable owing to the military dictatorship of Zia ul-Haq (1978–88). The left-hand column does attempt to fill in the 1988 data by using electoral outcomes from 1977, for which we have data on winning candidates only. We lack observations for some joined districts because it is sometimes impossible to match constituencies at $t-1$—specifically constituencies that cross district boundaries—onto our joined-district units, which are designed to cleanly encompass constituencies from time t. Robust standard errors, clustered by cluster-district area, in brackets. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Summary Statistics

Table A6: Summary Statistics

	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max	N
Dependent Variables					
Any event (0/1)	0.91	0.28	0.00	1.00	437
Event count	39.31	140.37	0.00	2084.00	437
Any killed (0/1)	0.85	0.36	0.00	1.00	437
Number killed	41.66	142.23	0.00	1977.00	437
Number of days	39.41	141.20	0.00	2103.00	437
Capacity Mechanisms					
Police stations per 100,000 registered voters	2.57	1.32	0.63	7.81	423
Lagged Independent Variables					
Prop. secularist wins (*t - 1*)	0.36	0.42	0.00	1.00	388
Secularist party vote share (*t - 1*)	0.33	0.22	0.00	0.95	346
Av. margin of victory (*t - 1*)	0.18	0.14	0.01	0.80	346
Turnout, *t - 1*	0.39	0.10	0.12	0.61	346
Census Variables					
Pacca house	0.25	0.27	0.00	0.96	421
Electricity in house	0.40	0.27	0.00	0.96	421
Gas used for cooking	0.06	0.11	0.00	0.81	417
Primary schools per capita	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	419
Total literacy rate	0.26	0.15	0.01	0.70	425
Female literacy rate	0.15	0.13	0.00	0.63	425
Agricultural Variables					
Rice cultivated area (000s hectares, *t - 1*)	108.11	217.88	0.00	1423.70	437
Rice yield (000s tonned, *t - 1*)	197.99	452.00	0.00	4117.70	437
Wheat cultivated area (000s hectares, *t - 1*)	377.64	411.66	0.00	2811.00	437
Wheat yield (000s tonned, *t - 1*)	789.27	961.52	0.00	5537.90	437
Other Characteristics					
No. registered voters	794386.30	714742.82	116400.00	6653915.00	435
Joined-district area (GIS measure)	0.97	1.16	0.09	6.86	435
Princely state pre-1947	0.21	0.41	0.00	1.00	437
Non-Religious Dependent Variables					
Non-religious event count (ethnic)	0.44	0.50	0.00	1.00	437
Any non-religious event (ethnic)	3.04	11.59	0.00	189.00	437
Non-religious event count (public services)	0.31	0.46	0.00	1.00	437
Any non-religious event (public services)	0.94	2.50	0.00	21.00	437
Murder count	670.17	583.23	39.00	3193.00	118
Vehicle theft count	1219.65	3579.85	3.00	31782.00	117
Right-Hand-Side Variables (Alternative Bandwidths)					
Prop. secularist win	0.34	0.40	0.00	1.00	437
Prop. secularist close race (2 percent)	0.04	0.14	0.00	1.00	437
Prop. secularist close win (2 percent)	0.02	0.10	0.00	1.00	437
Prop. secularist close race (2.5 percent)	0.05	0.16	0.00	1.00	437
Prop. secularist close win (2.5 percent)	0.03	0.12	0.00	1.00	437
Prop. secularist close race (3 percent)	0.06	0.18	0.00	1.00	437
Prop. secularist close win (3 percent)	0.04	0.13	0.00	1.00	437
Prop. secularist close race (3.5 percent)	0.07	0.18	0.00	1.00	437
Prop. secularist close win (3.5 percent)	0.04	0.15	0.00	1.00	437
Prop. secularist close race (4 percent)	0.08	0.19	0.00	1.00	437
Prop. secularist close win (4 percent)	0.05	0.16	0.00	1.00	437
Alignment Analysis Variables					
Prop. aligned win (3 percent)	0.39	0.41	0.00	1.00	437
Prop. aligned close race (3 percent)	0.08	0.19	0.00	1.00	437
Prop. aligned close win (3 percent)	0.04	0.13	0.00	1.00	437

Robustness and Sensitivity Checks

Bandwidth Sensitivity

Table A7: Bandwidth Sensitivity (2 percent)

Dependent variable:	Any event (Binary)	Event count (Ln)	Any killed (Binary)	Number killed (Ln)	Number days (Ln)
Prop. secularist win	-0.571**	-3.166*	-0.360	-1.686	-3.174*
	[0.227]	[1.773]	[0.290]	[2.196]	[1.782]
Prop. secularist close race (2 percent)	0.015	0.261	-0.057	-0.470	0.353
	[0.102]	[0.847]	[0.194]	[1.395]	[0.848]
Province FEs	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	437	437	437	437	437

Notes: Robust standard errors, clustered by cluster-district area, in brackets. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Table A8: Bandwidth Sensitivity (2.5 percent)

Dependent variable:	Any event (Binary)	Event count (Ln)	Any killed (Binary)	Number killed (Ln)	Number days (Ln)
Prop. secularist win	-0.697***	-4.504**	-0.508*	-3.049	-4.542**
	[0.222]	[1.758]	[0.279]	[2.158]	[1.784]
Prop. secularist close race (2.5 percent)	0.021	0.558	-0.010	0.006	0.666
	[0.088]	[0.815]	[0.161]	[1.218]	[0.824]
Province FEs	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	437	437	437	437	437

Notes: Robust standard errors, clustered by cluster-district area, in brackets. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Table A9: Bandwidth Sensitivity (3.5 percent)

Dependent variable:	Any event (Binary)	Event count (Ln)	Any killed (Binary)	Number killed (Ln)	Number days (Ln)
Prop. secularist win	-0.318**	-2.177*	-0.182	-1.256	-2.158*
	[0.144]	[1.145]	[0.155]	[1.250]	[1.170]
Prop. secularist close race (3.5 percent)	-0.108	-0.278	-0.103	-0.628	-0.195
	[0.088]	[0.709]	[0.115]	[0.880]	[0.721]
Province FEs	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	437	437	437	437	437

Notes: Robust standard errors, clustered by cluster-district area, in brackets. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Table A10: Bandwidth Sensitivity (4 percent)

Dependent variable:	Any event (Binary)	Event count (Ln)	Any killed (Binary)	Number killed (Ln)	Number days (Ln)
Prop. secularist win	-0.247*	-1.297	-0.123	-0.547	-1.274
	[0.132]	[1.122]	[0.139]	[1.222]	[1.139]
Prop. secularist close race (4 percent)	-0.130	-0.529	-0.112	-0.753	-0.445
	[0.089]	[0.726]	[0.109]	[0.877]	[0.734]
Province FEs	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	437	437	437	437	437

Notes: Robust standard errors, clustered by cluster-district area, in brackets. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Dropping Certain Sets of Observations

Table A11: Instrumental Variables Results (Omitting 1988 Election)

Dependent variable:	Any event (Binary)	Event count (Ln)	Any killed (Binary)	Number killed (Ln)	Number days (Ln)
Prop. secularist win	-0.442*	-2.992	-0.219	-1.399	-3.069
	[0.261]	[2.109]	[0.290]	[2.369]	[2.142]
Prop. secularist close race	-0.050	0.256	-0.122	-0.537	0.386
	[0.091]	[0.894]	[0.159]	[1.272]	[0.909]
Province FEs	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	371	371	371	371	371

Notes: Robust standard errors, clustered by cluster-district area, in brackets. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Table A12: Instrumental Variables Results (Omitting 1990 Election)

Dependent variable:	Any event (Binary)	Event count (Ln)	Any killed (Binary)	Number killed (Ln)	Number days (Ln)
Prop. secularist win	-0.471	-3.205	-0.237	-1.318	-3.182
	[0.298]	[2.499]	[0.379]	[3.045]	[2.510]
Prop. secularist close race	0.079	1.261	-0.016	0.280	1.371
	[0.112]	[1.143]	[0.226]	[1.800]	[1.152]
Province FEs	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	369	369	369	369	369

Notes: Robust standard errors, clustered by cluster-district area, in brackets. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Table A13: Instrumental Variables Results (Omitting 1993 Election)

Dependent variable:	Any event (Binary)	Event count (Ln)	Any killed (Binary)	Number killed (Ln)	Number days (Ln)
Prop. secularist win	-0.812***	-6.152***	-0.844***	-5.877***	-6.250***
	[0.247]	[1.929]	[0.264]	[2.017]	[1.954]
Prop. secularist close race	0.039	0.898	0.179	1.113	1.055
	[0.115]	[0.997]	[0.132]	[1.067]	[1.007]
Province FEs	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	372	372	372	372	372

Notes: Robust standard errors, clustered by cluster-district area, in brackets. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Table A14: Instrumental Variables Results (Omitting 1997 Election)

Dependent variable:	Any event (Binary)	Event count (Ln)	Any killed (Binary)	Number killed (Ln)	Number days (Ln)
Prop. secularist win	-0.648***	-4.414***	-0.464*	-3.073	-4.415***
	[0.200]	[1.576]	[0.252]	[1.956]	[1.576]
Prop. secularist close race	0.002	0.390	-0.032	-0.143	0.389
	[0.087]	[0.816]	[0.149]	[1.172]	[0.817]
Province FEs	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	370	370	370	370	370

Notes: Robust standard errors, clustered by cluster-district area, in brackets. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Table A15: Instrumental Variables Results (Omitting 2002 Election)

Dependent variable:	Any event (Binary)	Event count (Ln)	Any killed (Binary)	Number killed (Ln)	Number days (Ln)
Prop. secularist win	-0.714***	-5.012***	-0.530*	-3.723*	-5.071***
	[0.207]	[1.671]	[0.273]	[2.121]	[1.701]
Prop. secularist close race	-0.001	0.745	-0.007	0.314	0.876
	[0.084]	[0.817]	[0.158]	[1.236]	[0.831]
Province FEs	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	351	351	351	351	351

Notes: Robust standard errors, clustered by cluster-district area, in brackets. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Table A16: Instrumental Variables Results (Omitting 2008 Election)

Dependent variable:	Any event (Binary)	Event count (Ln)	Any killed (Binary)	Number killed (Ln)	Number days (Ln)
Prop. secularist win	-0.802***	-5.569***	-0.518*	-3.608	-5.619***
	[0.214]	[1.871]	[0.312]	[2.386]	[1.897]
Prop. secularist close race	0.158	1.859	0.062	0.983	1.988
	[0.118]	[1.278]	[0.216]	[1.698]	[1.288]
Province FEs	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	352	352	352	352	352

Notes: Robust standard errors, clustered by cluster-district area, in brackets. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Table A17: Instrumental Variables Results (Omitting Karachi and Balochistan)

Dependent variable:	Any event (Binary)	Event count (Ln)	Any killed (Binary)	Number killed (Ln)	Number days (Ln)
Prop. secularist win	-0.602**	-4.420*	-0.330	-2.522	-4.437*
	[0.280]	[2.282]	[0.362]	[2.894]	[2.301]
Prop. secularist close race	0.038	1.029	-0.052	0.089	1.097
	[0.130]	[1.264]	[0.229]	[1.874]	[1.269]
Province FEs	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	362	362	362	362	362

Notes: Robust standard errors, clustered by cluster-district area, in brackets. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Table A18: Instrumental Variables Results (Omitting Punjab)

Dependent variable:	Any event (Binary)	Event count (Ln)	Any killed (Binary)	Number killed (Ln)	Number days (Ln)
Prop. secularist win	-1.075***	-7.241***	-0.808***	-5.756**	-7.304***
	[0.189]	[1.488]	[0.311]	[2.261]	[1.519]
Prop. secularist close race	-0.062	-0.290	-0.116	-0.781	-0.190
	[0.098]	[0.858]	[0.181]	[1.346]	[0.882]
Province FEs	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	263	263	263	263	263

Notes: Robust standard errors, clustered by cluster-district area, in brackets. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Using Count and Logit/Probit Models

Table A19: Reduced-Form Results (Probit and Negative Binomial)

Dependent variable:	Any event	Event count	Any killed	Number killed	Number days
Model:	(Probit)	(NegBin)	(Probit)	(NegBin)	(NegBin)
Prop. secularist close win	-2.425**	-2.359	-1.406*	-1.665	-2.368
	[1.150]	[1.758]	[0.854]	[1.717]	[1.763]
Prop. secularist close race	0.634	1.287	0.218	0.829	1.296
	[1.058]	[1.258]	[0.719]	[1.234]	[1.261]
Province FEs	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	431	437	437	437	437

Notes: Robust standard errors, clustered by cluster-district area, in brackets. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Table A20: Reduced-Form Results (Logit and Poisson)

Dependent variable:	Any event	Event count	Any killed	Number killed	Number days
Model:	(Logit)	(Poisson)	(Logit)	(Poisson)	(Poisson)
Prop. secularist close win	-4.795*	-1.233*	-2.500	-1.130	-1.239*
	[2.573]	[0.724]	[1.561]	[0.765]	[0.726]
Prop. secularist close race	1.528	1.057	0.352	0.814	1.064
	[2.467]	[0.756]	[1.394]	[0.796]	[0.758]
Province FEs	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	431	437	437	437	437

Notes: Robust standard errors, clustered by cluster-district area, in brackets. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Including and Excluding Various Fixed Effects

Table A21: Instrumental Variables Results (Excluding Province Fixed Effects)

Dependent variable:	Any event (Binary)	Event count (Ln)	Any killed (Binary)	Number killed (Ln)	Number days (Ln)
Prop. secularist win	-0.628***	-4.451**	-0.452	-3.043	-4.463**
	[0.211]	[1.805]	[0.288]	[2.256]	[1.827]
Prop. secularist close race	-0.041	0.309	-0.039	0.010	0.424
	[0.087]	[0.854]	[0.149]	[1.180]	[0.862]
Province FEs	N	N	N	N	N
N	437	437	437	437	437

Notes: Robust standard errors, clustered by cluster-district area, in brackets. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Table A22: Instrumental Variables Results (Including Year Fixed Effects)

Dependent variable:	Any event (Binary)	Event count (Ln)	Any killed (Binary)	Number killed (Ln)	Number days (Ln)
Prop. secularist win	-0.576***	-3.742***	-0.386	-2.272	-3.752***
	[0.181]	[1.411]	[0.242]	[1.841]	[1.412]
Prop. secularist close race	0.005	0.739	-0.007	0.323	0.736
	[0.089]	[0.827]	[0.149]	[1.181]	[0.828]
Province FEs	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Election-year FEs	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	437	437	437	437	437

Notes: Robust standard errors, clustered by cluster-district area, in brackets. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Table A23: Instrumental Variables Results (Including Cluster-District Fixed Effects)

Dependent variable:	Any event (Binary)	Event count (Ln)	Any killed (Binary)	Number killed (Ln)	Number days (Ln)
Prop. secularist win	-0.659***	-4.687***	-0.540**	-3.943**	-4.639***
	[0.210]	[1.620]	[0.231]	[1.780]	[1.655]
Prop. secularist close race	-0.011	0.357	-0.006	0.007	0.506
	[0.085]	[0.748]	[0.120]	[0.938]	[0.756]
Cluster-district FEs	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	437	437	437	437	437

Notes: Robust standard errors, clustered by cluster-district area, in brackets. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Including Linear Time Trend

Table A24: Instrumental Variables Results (Including Linear Time Trend)

Dependent variable:	Any event (Binary)	Event count (Ln)	Any killed (Binary)	Number killed (Ln)	Number days (Ln)
Prop. secularist win	-0.617***	-3.966**	-0.411	-2.422	-4.012**
	[0.202]	[1.621]	[0.261]	[2.000]	[1.638]
Prop. secularist close race	0.050	1.139	0.033	0.652	1.249
	[0.089]	[0.867]	[0.157]	[1.236]	[0.870]
Linear time trend	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Province FEs	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	437	437	437	437	437

Notes: Robust standard errors, clustered by cluster-district area, in brackets. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Controlling for Additional Margins

In this section, we follow the modeling approach taken by Clots-Figueras (2012). In her application, which explores the effect of narrow victory by female legislators on district-level education, "[p]olynomials of the margin of victory in each one of the elections between women and men in the district are also added in the regressions as controls" (Clots-Figueras 2012, p. 213). We employ the equivalent strategy here by calculating the margin of victory or loss for the highest-performing secular-party candidate in each race.

Table A25: Main Instrumental Variables Results with Linear Controls for the Secular-Party Margin of Victory/Loss in Each Seat in Joined-District

Dependent variable:	Any event (Binary)	Event count (Ln)	Any killed (Binary)	Number killed (Ln)	Number days (Ln)
Prop. secularist win	-0.664***	-4.705***	-0.474*	-3.287*	-4.746***
	[0.182]	[1.407]	[0.245]	[1.895]	[1.420]
Prop. secularist close race	-0.079	-0.160	-0.094	-0.538	-0.079
	[0.065]	[0.599]	[0.121]	[0.966]	[0.600]
Province FEs	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Secular margins controls	Linear	Linear	Linear	Linear	Linear
N	437	437	437	437	437

Notes: Robust standard errors, clustered by cluster-district area, in brackets. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Table A26: Main Instrumental Variables Results with Second-Order Polynomial Controls for the Secular-Party Margin of Victory/Loss in Each Seat in Joined-District

Dependent variable:	Any event (Binary)	Event count (Ln)	Any killed (Binary)	Number killed (Ln)	Number days (Ln)
Prop. secularist win	-0.677***	-4.666***	-0.478*	-3.198*	-4.705***
	[0.185]	[1.414]	[0.251]	[1.928]	[1.430]
Prop. secularist close race	-0.085	-0.155	-0.086	-0.430	-0.055
	[0.070]	[0.576]	[0.120]	[0.938]	[0.581]
Province FEs	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Secular margins controls	Square	Square	Square	Square	Square
N	437	437	437	437	437

Notes: Robust standard errors, clustered by cluster-district area, in brackets. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Table A27: Main Instrumental Variables Results with Third-Order Polynomial Controls for the Secular-Party Margin of Victory/Loss in Each Seat in Joined-District

Dependent variable:	Any event (Binary)	Event count (Ln)	Any killed (Binary)	Number killed (Ln)	Number days (Ln)
Prop. secularist win	-0.710***	-4.790***	-0.501*	-3.280*	-4.840***
	[0.188]	[1.405]	[0.258]	[1.954]	[1.420]
Prop. secularist close race	-0.083	-0.208	-0.084	-0.462	-0.107
	[0.070]	[0.547]	[0.121]	[0.920]	[0.551]
Province FEs	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Secular margins controls	Cubic	Cubic	Cubic	Cubic	Cubic
N	437	437	437	437	437

Notes: Robust standard errors, clustered by cluster-district area, in brackets. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Pruning BFRS Data in Different Ways

Table A28: BFRS Pruning

Dependent variable:	(1)		(2)		(3)		(4)		(5)		(6)	
	Any event	Count (ln)	Any event	Count (ln)	Any event	Count (ln)	Any event	Count (ln)	Any event	Count (ln)	Any event	Count (ln)
Prop. secularist win	-0.268	-1.901	-0.695***	-4.375**	-0.634**	-4.148**	-0.666***	-4.576***	-0.695***	-4.375**	-0.395*	-2.551*
	[0.218]	[1.467]	[0.266]	[1.773]	[0.278]	[1.854]	[0.221]	[1.719]	[0.266]	[1.773]	[0.230]	[1.523]
Prop. secularist close race	-0.191	-0.685	0.008	0.145	0.031	0.460	0.106	1.129	0.008	0.145	-0.155	-0.503
	[0.151]	[0.996]	[0.186]	[1.224]	[0.183]	[1.243]	[0.091]	[0.883]	[0.186]	[1.224]	[0.155]	[1.021]
Province FEs	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	437	437	437	437	437	437	437	437	437	437	437	437

Notes: Robust standard errors, clustered by cluster-district area, in brackets. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.
These criteria for inclusion and exclusion of events—represented by Stata code—is as follows. Please note that the numbered list corresponds to the numbered columns in the table. We never include events that did not occur (in code terms: drop if eventoccured !="yes").

(1) keep if partyresponsible=="informal group (islamist/sectarian)" | partyresponsible=="militants (islamist/sectarian)" | partyresponsible=="religiousparty" | eventtype=="islamist" | eventtype=="sectarian"
(2) keep if partyresponsible=="informal group (islamist/sectarian)" | partyresponsible=="informal group(other)" | partyresponsible=="militants (islamist/sectarian)" |partyresponsible=="militants (other)" | partyresponsible=="religious party" | eventtype=="islamist" | eventtype=="sectarian" | reportedcause=="desecration of a religious site/symbol" | reportedcause=="public rituals/festivities (moharram)" | reportedcause=="previous violence (sectarian)"
(3) keep if partyresponsible=="informal group (islamist/sectarian)" | partyresponsible=="militants (islamist/sectarian)" | partyresponsible=="religious party" | eventtype=="islamist" | eventtype=="sectarian" | partyresponsible=="militants (other)" & event=="terrorism" | partyresponsible=="militants (other)" & event=="assasination" | partyresponsible=="militants (other)" & event=="riot" | partyresponsible=="militants (other)" & event=="violent political demonstration" | partyresponsible=="informal group(other)" & event=="terrorism" | partyresponsible=="informal group (other)" & event=="assasination" | partyresponsible=="informal group (other)" & event=="riot" | partyresponsible=="informal group (other)" & event=="violent political demonstration"
(4) drop if partyresponsible=="foreign party (afghanistan)" | partyresponsible=="foreign party (india)" | partyresponsible=="foreign party (multilateral)" | partyresponsible=="foreign party (united states)"— eventtype=="ethnic" | eventtype=="food/water" | eventtype=="fuel supply/price" | eventtype=="politico-economic" | eventtype=="public services" | eventtype=="tribal"— partyresponsible=="informal group (ethnic)" | partyresponsible=="intelligence agency" | partyresponsible=="militants (ethnic)" | partyresponsible=="military/paramilitary" | partyresponsible=="police" | partyresponsible=="tribal group" | eventoccured=="no"— event=="assassination (drone attack)" | event=="attack on state" | event=="conventional attack on military/paramilitary/police/intelligence" | event=="military/paramilitary/police attack on non-state combatants" | event=="military/paramilitary/police selective violence" | reportedcause=="economic interests (land)" | reportedcause=="previous violence (ethnic)" | reportedcause=="quarrels over women" | reportedcause=="violent exchanges across the loc" | reportedcause=="economic interests (other)" | reportedcause=="construction/attempted construction (public sector)" | reportedcause=="construction/attempted construction (private sector)" | reportedcause=="legal demolition / attempted legal demolition (public sector)" | reportedcause=="private quarrel between 2 political actors" | reportedcause=="legal demolition / attempted legal demolition (private sector)" | reportedcause=="allegations of unpatriotic acts"
(5) keep if partyresponsible=="informal group (islamist/sectarian)" | partyresponsible=="militants (islamist/sectarian)" |partyresponsible=="militants (other)" | partyresponsible=="religious party" | eventtype=="islamist" | eventtype=="sectarian" | reportedcause=="desecration of a religious site/symbol" | reportedcause=="public rituals/festivities (moharram)" | reportedcause=="previous violence (sectarian)"
(6) keep if partyresponsible=="informal group (islamist/sectarian)" | partyresponsible=="informal group(other)" | partyresponsible=="militants (islamist/sectarian)" | partyresponsible=="religious party" | eventtype=="islamist" | eventtype=="sectarian" | reportedcause=="desecration of a religious site/symbol" | reportedcause=="public rituals/festivities (moharram)" | reportedcause=="previous violence (sectarian)"

Alternative Measure of Dependent Variable: Global Terrorism Database

Table A29: Global Terrorism Database Outcomes

Dependent variable:	Any event (Binary)	Event count (Ln)	Any event (Binary)	Event count (Ln)	Any event (Binary)	Event count (Ln)	Any event (Binary)	Event count (Ln)
Model:	2SLS				Probit RF	NegBin RF	Probit RF	NegBin RF
Prop. secularist win	-0.426	-2.907	-0.449	-3.132*				
	[0.316]	[1.930]	[0.293]	[1.749]				
Prop. secularist close race	0.064	0.396	0.029	0.062	0.276	0.798	0.329	1.256
	[0.214]	[1.354]	[0.186]	[1.169]	[0.606]	[1.504]	[0.587]	[2.984]
Prop. secularist close win					-1.041	-3.667*	-1.140	-6.614*
					[0.741]	[2.160]	[0.740]	[3.651]
Province FEs	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y
N	437	437	437	437	431	437	437	437

Notes: "RF" denotes reduced form analyses. For the probit and negative binomial regressions, the coefficient of interest, therefore, is "Prop. secularist close win." Robust standard errors, clustered by cluster-district area, in brackets. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Number of Close Elections Fought Between Secular and Non-Secular Party Candidates, by Bandwidth

Table A30: Number of Closely Fought Elections by Bandwidth

	Count
2.0 percent	67
2.5 percent	84
3.0 percent	104
3.5 percent	115
4.0 percent	129

Potential Long-Run Effects of Secular Incumbency on Violence

Table A31: Instrumental Variables Results for Violence in Subsequent Election Cycle

Dependent variable:	Any event T+1 (Binary)	Event count T+1 (Ln)	Any killed T+1 (Binary)	Number killed T+1 (Ln)	Number days T+1 (Ln)
Prop. secularist win	-0.175	-1.854	-0.182	-1.757	-1.853
	[0.126]	[1.339]	[0.126]	[1.246]	[1.338]
Prop. secularist close race	0.164***	0.734	0.264***	1.449	0.731
	[0.054]	[0.983]	[0.070]	[0.954]	[0.982]
Province FEs	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	352	352	352	352	352

Notes: Robust standard errors, clustered by cluster-district area, in brackets. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Secular Party Incumbency and Non-Religious Violence

Table A32: Instrumental Variables Results for Non-Religious Violence and Crime

Dependent variable:	Ethnic (Binary)	Ethnic (Ln count)	Pub. Services (Binary)	Pub. Services (Ln count)	Murder (Ln count)	Vehicle Theft (Ln count)
Prop. secularist win	-0.355	-1.260	-0.132	-1.029	0.141	-0.347
	[0.217]	[1.169]	[0.199]	[1.116]	[1.124]	[2.064]
Prop. secularist close race	0.182	0.528	0.071	0.683	0.716	1.375
	[0.134]	[0.676]	[0.136]	[0.806]	[0.930]	[1.167]
Province FEs	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	437	437	437	437	118	117

Notes: Robust standard errors, clustered by cluster-district area, in brackets. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Alignment Analysis

Table A33: Effect of MNA Alignment with the Party of the Prime Minister on Religious Violence

Dependent variable:	Any event (Binary)	Event count (Ln)	Any killed (Binary)	Number killed (Ln)	Number days (Ln)
Prop. aligned win (3 percent)	0.222	1.552	0.328	2.329	1.526
	[0.221]	[1.552]	[0.215]	[1.614]	[1.543]
Prop. aligned close race (3 percent)	-0.175	-1.037	-0.118	-0.854	-1.004
	[0.133]	[0.934]	[0.126]	[0.967]	[0.938]
Province FEs	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	437	437	437	437	437

Notes: Robust standard errors, clustered by cluster-district area, in brackets. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Global OLS Results

Table A34: Conditional Correlation between Proportion of Joined-District Seats Held by Secularist Parties and Religious Violence

Dependent variable:	Any event (binary)	Event count (ln)	Any event (binary)	Event count (ln)
Prop. secularist win	-0.077*	0.006	-0.057	0.170
	[0.045]	[0.281]	[0.051]	[0.313]
Cluster FEs	Y	Y	Y	Y
Province-Year FEs	N	N	Y	Y
N	437	437	437	437

Notes: Robust standard errors, clustered by cluster-district area, in brackets. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.