

RE-ENVISIONING KINSHIP AND THE STATE IN PAKISTAN

by

Mehr Latif

B.A., Grinnell College, 2000

M.A., Johns Hopkins University, 2004

M.A., University of Pittsburgh, 2013

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This dissertation was presented

by

Mehr Latif

It was defended on

April 5, 2017

and approved by

John Markoff, Distinguished University Professor, Sociology

Laura Brown, Assistant Professor, Anthropology

Dissertation Chair: Mohammed Bamyeh, Professor, Sociology

Dissertation Advisor & Chair: Kathleen Blee, Distinguished Professor, Sociology

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Mehr Latif, PhD

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In my dissertation project, I examine the role of kinship groups and other non-state actors in shaping the boundaries between the state and society, people's experience with the state, and the nature of the state itself. I analyze the construction of local/state boundaries in Pakistan, and argue that Pakistan is a country that presents a compelling case to examine this construction given its relatively recent history of state formation. My research is guided by three main questions: 1) how do kinship groups reproduce themselves in contemporary Pakistani societies; 2) how do kinship groups shape state/local boundaries; and 3) how do kinship groups mediate between their members and the wider society? First, by emphasizing the agency of kinship members, I suggest that kinship groups are constructed through practices, including gift-exchange and other reciprocal exchanges. Through the lens of practice, I explain why some kinship ties are more salient than others and how kinship groups instrumentalize their relationships with the state to remain salient. Second, I show how kinship groups shape or subvert the work of key state institutions such as law enforcement and the judicial system to match their expectations. Finally, I explore important local political communities that lie at the intersection of family and the state by problematizing the public/private dichotomy. My focus on the construction of state boundaries highlights the role of non-state actors in kinship-based

societies, but I also emphasize the relevance of the lens of boundary management for the Western world, where there are a plethora of partnerships between state and non-state actors that have not been explored.

Dedicated to the memory of Syed Nawazish Ali Shah and Patricia Ann Montero.

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GLOSSARY

<i>biraderi</i>	brotherhood, refers to wider kinship networks of people who claim to have a common ancestor
<i>dera</i>	a place of sitting, central gathering place in the village associated with a particular landlord
<i>deradar</i>	the host of a dera
<i>deradari</i>	the process of managing a dera
<i>dhara</i>	factions
<i>dhara-bandi</i>	factionalism
<i>numberdar</i>	land revenue collector, a title bestowed to landowners during the British colonial era
<i>khoji</i>	a customary tracker
<i>Syed</i>	honorific title for families that claim descent to the Prophet Muhammed
<i>Union Council</i>	lowest tier of government
<i>unna</i>	ego/pride
<i>zaat</i>	caste, associated with kinship

PREFACE

Research ideas are ephemeral, elusive things – I know as I chased after mine for a number of years before working on this project. Mine took on substance due to the immeasurable and wonderful support of my academic community and friends.

This project took shape in large part because of Kathy Blee, my adviser and the chair of my committee, who not only built my confidence in this idea, but also provided me incredible support throughout the dissertation project, helping me navigate the literature and theoretical models, to bring my data to life, and to find my own narrative voice. Kathy, with your dedication and commitment to your students, efforts to create a safe and dynamic community to discuss ideas, and endless creativity, you are a wonderful source of inspiration. I am also incredibly grateful to Mohammed Bamyeh, co-chair of my committee, for reaching out to me before I even arrived at the University of Pittsburgh, introducing me to a wealth of theoretical material, and underscoring the salience of local, anarchic models of critique. John Markoff has been an amazing source of support, generously sharing his time, what seems to be a bottomless trove of literature, and critically helping me develop my dissertation project. Laura Brown has been instrumental in making sure my project was grounded within the subaltern tradition, which has been a tremendous source of inspiration. I would also like to thank the wonderful members of the workshop, Amy McDowell, Marie Skoczylas, Liz Yates, Candice Robinson, and Shayna Alexander Yogman—your insights and critiques on my papers have been crucial to the

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

For much of the 20th century, the idea of the state has played a dominant role in sociology's imagination, especially with the end of the age of empire and the rise of newly independent states in Asia, Africa, and the former Soviet Union. Functionalist, structural accounts have influenced much of the analysis of the state (Durkheim 1984/1933, Weber 1978/1922). At the heart of this conceptualization is the classic public/private dichotomy, which references Émile Durkheim's (1984/1933) understanding of society. In his discussion of modernization and the evolution of complex societies, Durkheim (1984/1933) highlights a division of labor between the institutions that govern intimate relationships or the family from public institutions or those that govern the wider society. This dichotomy has influenced our understanding of the state and modern society in contexts outside of the West. Scholars have characterized as modern these rationalist-bureaucratic societies, where the public/private boundary is clearly delineated, and others where this boundary is blurred as traditional or patrimonial (Gellner and Breuilly 2008, Weber 1978/1922).

In the last twenty years, scholars writing in a variety of traditions have pushed back against this characterization. In describing the Western world, scholars have written about the overlap between personal networks and politics, illustrating how nepotism is pervasive even within rational, bureaucratic states (Gilens 2012, Hacker and Pierson 2010). In reference to states that received their independence following World War II, scholars writing in the subaltern

tradition have sharply criticized the legacy of colonial rule in the study of politics. They have refuted the teleological argument regarding the evolution of traditional to modern societies. They have also shown how the construction of what is public is steeped in the politics of colonial rule (Allen 2012, Chatterjee 1993, Guha 1999). To bring forth a unique, grounded understanding of state formation and politics, they suggest that we should examine local actors and practices and underscore the importance of symbolic practices and discourse in examining the state as a construction (Ferguson and Gupta 2002, Hull 2012, Naregal 2002). I locate my dissertation project within this subaltern tradition and incorporate its chief critique, namely problematizing the public/private dichotomy, when studying the construction of the state in other non-Western contexts.

By problematizing the public/private dichotomy or the boundaries between state and the family, we can bring to the fore: 1) important local actors; 2) how these actors shape the state; and 3) how they work to form the contours of a political community. My dissertation project seeks to highlight the role of non-state actors in kinship-based societies. But my focus on the construction of state boundaries is also relevant for the Western world, where there are a plethora of partnerships between state and non-state actors that reveal aspects of boundary management that have not been explored (Clemens 2006, Mayrl and Quinn 2016).

1.2 DESCRIPTION OF MY CASE

I examine the construction of local/state boundaries in Pakistan. Pakistan presents a compelling case to examine this construction given its relatively recent history of state formation. As Damon Mayrl and Sarah Quinn (2016) argue, it is difficult to ascertain the role of non- state actors in

western states that present a “mature category and organizational form (5).” That is, it is difficult to study the dynamics of boundary-management in western societies as the overlap in state institutions and their frameworks as well as how they have changed over time obscures boundaries. In contrast, Pakistan gained independence from British-held India only in 1947. During the independence process, the wider Indian Subcontinent was partitioned into Muslim and Hindu majority areas, which were incorporated into the territories of Pakistan and India respectively. When Pakistan was formed, a significant portion of the country’s administration and other governance structures were left in India (Jalal 1994). In other words, Pakistan’s relatively recent statehood allows us to better understand the assumed boundaries of the state.



Figure 1 Map of Pakistan (CIA 2010)

1.2.1 The Pakistani State

It is important to contextualize Pakistan’s state formation within its extensive history of military rule. Military governments have ruled Pakistan for the following periods: 1958-1972; 1977-

1987; 1999-2007 (BBC 2016).¹ In each of the periods, the military has dismissed democratically elected governments on charges of corruption or incompetence. Even during periods of civilian government, scholars claim that the military has ruled from behind the scenes, framing important security, economic, and legal policies (Haqqani 2005). For instance, the military's activities extend to the agricultural, banking, financial, manufacturing, and service industries (Siddiqi 2016). The military's dominance has been further legitimated by the North American Treaty Organization (NATO)'s "war against terror" in Afghanistan in which Pakistan has served as a strategic ally. While this alliance is an uneasy one —NATO forces claim that Pakistani support for Islamist fighters undermines NATO interventions in Afghanistan and the Pakistani government decries NATO's drone attacks within Pakistani borders— it has created international legitimation for the military.

Even periods of civilian rule have not closed the gap between the Pakistani state and its citizens. Two political parties, the Pakistan Muslim League (PML)² and the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), have dominated periods of civilian rule. While the PPP and PML resemble modern political parties with the PPP espousing a socialist narrative and the PML a broadly neo-liberal agenda, their political legacy has fueled a cult of dynastic politics privileging the Bhutto and Sharif families respectively (Talbot 2016). Their policies have not made much difference to the lives of the people in the villages. Much of the government's development funds are spent in high profile monument-making projects where they can score easy political points and receive media coverage. For instance, the Punjab government has invested significant development

¹ The military has sought to gain legitimacy by holding referendums that have been widely criticized as unconstitutional and flawed. For instance, in 1958, General Ayub declared martial law and became President through a referendum in 1960. Similarly in 2001, General Musharraf named himself President while still serving as head of the army. In 2002, General Musharraf won another five years in office through also through a referendum (BBC 2016).

² The PML has splintered into many factions since its inception. The current Prime Minister of Pakistan, Nawaz Sharif, has led the dominant faction.

funds in building fancy flyovers or bridges and setting up a metro bus service in urban areas while there are villages in the rural areas that don't have access to gas, electricity, or clean water. The government provides little in terms of public services. At present, education comprises 2.1 percent of the gross domestic product (of which 18 percent remains unspent) and there are an estimated 24 million children out of school (World Bank 2012, Dawn 2016). Private companies run eighty percent of the country's health services, and in fact, the National Department of Health was abolished in 2011 and healthcare was devolved to the four provincial governments, suggesting that it is a low-level national priority. Based on 2008-2009 estimates, sixty-five percent of women delivered their babies at home and today Pakistan ranks 149th in the world with a maternal mortality rate of 299 per 10,000 births (Borgen 2016, Junaidi 2015, World Health Organization 2013).

There is little evidence of the state in rural areas. The Police Station House Officer is the ranking government official at the sub-district level with usually a handful of deputies under him. These police stations are poorly staffed and outfitted, and the officers complain that they don't have sufficient manpower or fuel to patrol the areas.

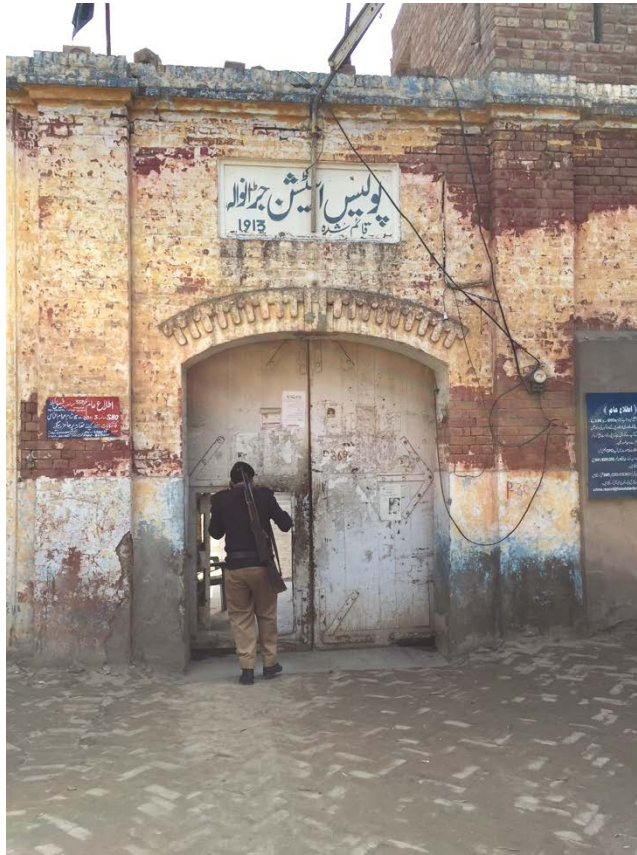


Figure 2 Police Station, Jaranwala Built in 1913

During my field work, the government started a police community patrolling initiative but as one of my interviewee exclaimed, the police operate more like thugs:

The government provides the policemen with a good salary and a petrol supply, but they don't do any work. They only bother the innocent. If I ride pass them on my motorcycle, they'll grab me, a *kammi* man [a derogatory term to refer to someone from a service-providing caste], and they will hit me because they can. They will not go near the criminals.

People have little to no expectations of the government, especially the police. Interviewees often reported that they could not count on the police during an emergency. Even if they had a genuine case, the police could not be trusted to act without receiving a significant payoff. Individuals from the service-providing groups, one of the main categories of kinship groups, believe that they would likely be harassed by the police, and would need to count on favors from a landlord to even approach the police. In the urban areas, the government has made some efforts to introduce reforms within the police. In the mid-2000s, the Punjab government provided bright blue uniforms to a new crop of well-trained, accountable traffic police in Lahore, a police force that had been known to be notoriously corrupt. But very quickly people decried that they were the same police in new uniforms.

Rights groups have severely criticized the Pakistani government for the deterioration in national security linked to the rise of Islamic extremists since the mid-2000s. The Pakistani government has strategically supported militant organizations to launch covert operations and attacks in India, especially in Kashmir since at least the 1980s (Rashid 2002). But, attacks within Pakistan became more prevalent in the mid-2000s. These attacks are not only in the border areas near Afghanistan, as militants have also attacked major government sites in urban areas. For example, in July 2007, there was an open siege against a militant complex in the heart of Islamabad, the capital. Since then, there have been a series of militant strikes against government and civilian targets, including an attack by the Pakistani Taliban against an army public school killing 141 children in 2014; a suicide bombing in a city park on Easter Sunday killing 75 people in 2016; and a bomb blast outside the provincial assembly in Lahore in 2017. There are a plethora of militant organizations, some that have spun-off from the Afghanistan Taliban, others who claim allegiance to the Islamic State, and other organizations that had been leading a holy

war in the region since the 1980s. While the government has launched a national action plan against militancy after the attack on the army public school, the central coordinating body of the anti-terrorism plan remains under-staffed and under-funded and there is an ongoing turf battle between the military and civilian government regarding who leads the country's security policies. Further, newspaper accounts point to government's reluctance to arrest militants, such as Hafiz Saeed, the head of the militant organization, Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), held responsible for the Mumbai attacks, even though the government officially banned LeT in 2001. Until his house arrest in February 2017, Saeed openly organized rallies with tens of thousands of supporters in urban centers and his militant training camps operate along major highways.

Pakistan today has a modern state infrastructure, such as a planned capital city and new roads linking parts of the country, as well as an extensive telecommunications network. But much of the country, including its rural areas, remains physically, economically, and politically isolated. There is increasing evidence that several regions of the country are not under direct jurisdiction of the state. Militant actors control several regions in the north and southwest provinces of Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, bordering Iran and Afghanistan respectively, where the military and police are reluctant to tread. In Sindh, the southern-most province, and in parts of Southern Punjab, militant organizations have also established training camps and large feudal landlords continue to dominate the economy and political system. While the government has a presence and control in urban centers of these areas, militants or landlords increasingly have de facto control over the countryside. Some landlords may be sympathetic to the militants, but it is not clear whether they are directly involved in their activities. James Scott's (2009) concept of Zomia or areas that remain outside of the state's jurisdiction is relevant here. Scott specifically examines how the cultural practices of groups living in remote regions have evolved

due to their physical isolation and their desire to evade state control, an argument that can be extended to parts of Pakistan. There, distance from the state brings to the fore the role of non-state actors, like kinship groups, in developing parallel state-like structures as a result of the poor state infrastructure, the rise of violent extremism, and the mountainous terrain.

1.2.2 Kinship Groups in Pakistan

I focus on the role of kinship groups as key non-state actors shaping boundaries with the state within Pakistan. There are dozens of national kinship groups in Pakistan today. Hamza Alavi (1972), one of the foremost authorities on these groups, defines kinship groups as wide patrilineal networks that claim a common ancestor (real or mythical). Kinship groups are often described as *biraderi*, a Punjabi word meaning a brotherhood (Alavi 1972, Eglar 1960, Gazdar 2007). The origin of these kinship groups is disputed. Christophe Jaffrelot (2004) suggests that the word *biraderi* is Persian and that the present day form of these social networks emerged in the 18th century. Others argue that their evolution is even older and can be linked to the ancient kingdoms in India. For example, groups like the Rajputs, present in Pakistan today, may have originated from the Hindu caste groups and converted to Islam over time.³ The idea of caste is also associated with the widespread use of the term *zaat*, which translates into caste and is synonymous with the term *biraderi*. However, *zaat* also can refer to social or ethnic groups or to a group's geographic origin. In Pakistan today, there are three layers of kinship, including family or people with whom you share ties (through blood or marriage), wider social networks of people who share common ancestors, and caste groups. In most instances, I refer to wider social networks when referring to kinship. It is also important to note that close kinship relationships can also be constructed. Often people will refer to members of their wider kinship group as

³ Personal Interview with Jai Prakash, Hindu Scholar in Pakistan, October 9, 2015.

brother, sister, or cousin, which points to the importance of interaction in establishing familial ties.

The stigmatization of service-providing kinship groups in Pakistan, such as cleaners, butchers, and other professions in which people work with their hands, also supports the theory that kinship has been partially influenced by caste. The caste-like connotations of kinship have often been underplayed in the literature, especially given the role that Islam has played in the construction of nationhood in Pakistan (Gazdar 2007). As Muslims, all citizens are meant to be equal. However, in reality, there is a sharp social division between landowning and service-providing groups. It is also important to underscore that Islam brought its own social structure, including groups like the Syeds, who claim that they are direct descendants of the Prophet Muhammad.

In his study of social categorization during the colonial era, Brian Caton (2004) underscores how the British colonial period indelibly shaped the organization of kinship groups as it created a phenotype associated with kinship, ascribing characteristics to groups, such as nobility to landlords and martial characteristics to the tall plains people. The colonial administration furthermore graded the service-providing groups as “vagrant, menial,” given their habit of “eating carrion and vermin, and lax social mores” (Gazdar 2007: 89, Ibbetson 1916). The British colonial administration equated the agriculturalists with the English gentry and provided these kinship groups with economic and political opportunities—to ensure both social order in the countryside as well as a steady stream of tax revenue for the colonial state. This state-led social organization also created mechanisms of ascription, as kinship groups scrambled to declare themselves as agriculturalists, so that they could access land. The colonial

administration and later the Pakistani governments, in some cases, formalized these attempts at ascription—underscoring the historical construction of kinship (Caton 2004).

1.2.3 The *Dera*

The institution of the *dera* is an important part of my case, as it is a key site of interactions within the village. *Deras* are literally defined as a “place of sitting” and are associated with prominent landlords and community leaders. There are usually two-three *deras* within a village, but there is great variation across the country. The kinship leaders whom I interviewed explained that, historically, formal *deras* had multiple functions including: welcoming visitors to the village; providing accommodation for travelers; and serving as a central meeting place for men, typically from the land-owning kinship groups, to discuss politics and other issues related to the governance of the village (see also Lyon 2004). Indeed, for me or anyone visiting the home of a landlord in rural Pakistan today, the *dera*, which is often located in an open courtyard, is the first physical space that they encounter.⁴ I draw on exchanges within the *dera*, a key site of local interactions and as a link to the outside world, to consider the state-like role of kinship groups as well as the construction of local political communities. While the *dera* is critical to interactions within the village, it is important to note that its boundaries are ephemeral. Some *deras* are informal, and are simply comprised of a small number of chairs placed outside the front door of a residence. As a *dera* is tied to its host or *deradar*, it can be reconstituted in multiple places. Other *deras* are more formal, and are housed in a separate building.

⁴ People in the village use the term *dera* to refer to the open courtyard or an enclosed reception area where the landlord receives his guests. Some landlords have separate buildings, in which case, *dera* refers to the entire set-up.

1.2.4 *Deradars*

Deradars or hosts of *deras* indeliably shape the boundaries and practices within a *dera*. The families of some of the *deradars* whom I interviewed had historically maintained a *dera* in the village, some dating back to the 18th century. While some *deradars* assumed this position based on their family's history, these positions are not entirely inherited. For example, Nayyar became a *deradar*, as his father was one. But, as his older brother was not interested in living in the village, Nayyar decided to take on his father's role, suggesting that agency is important even for the more formal *deras*. In other instances, people assume the position of a *deradar* based on their reputation, their deeds, and political connections. While social status and material wealth are important in asserting a claim for *deradari*, it is not sufficient. My interviewees emphasized the need to maintain a local presence in the village and social ties.

1.3 MY FIELD SITE

I study *deras* in the peri-urban and rural areas around the district of Faisalabad in the province of Punjab. Faisalabad has a population of 7.4 million of which approximately 42 percent reside in urban areas (Punjab Development Statistics 2015). The British colonial government established Faisalabad, originally known as Lyallpur, as a planned agricultural colony in 1892. Today, people compare the urban areas of Faisalabad, a hub of Pakistan's textile industry, with earlier decades in Manchester, in the United Kingdom. The surrounding areas remain agricultural and produce cotton, wheat, sugar cane, and fruits and vegetables. When selecting my field site, I was

cautioned that kinship structures had eroded in areas of central Punjab, such as Faisalabad, due to urban development. Instead, people suggested that I do research in the Southern part of the province where kinship networks are more firmly entrenched due to the persistence of a large-land based economy. However, I selected Faisalabad, as I was interested in understanding the role of kinship in Pakistan's broader evolving society, not only in areas where it was more entrenched. I also selected Faisalabad as it was accessible, a two-hour bus ride from my home town of Lahore and a relatively secure part of the country, as Faisalabad has not seen significant militant activity.

Within Faisalabad, I conducted field work in the three main sub-districts: Chak Jhumra, Jaranwala, and Samundiri. I selected these sites as they help me to operationalize Scott's concept of Zomia. Like Scott, I hypothesize that distance from the state is integral to understanding the role of kinship groups as gatekeepers. For the Pakistan case, I define distance from the state as a combination of geographic distance, economic isolation, and presence of a state infrastructure. Chak Jhumra, in spite of being the site of a special economic zone, is the poorest and farthest from the state compared to the other two sites. It used to have a grain market before the independence of the country, but today, there is limited agricultural development because of the high salinity in the ground water. At the time of my field work, it was not evident how the government's zoning status would enhance Chak Jhumra's economic development. Aside from connecting it to a major highway, the government has not done anything to develop its markets. It has a small police outpost and a family and welfare center, but limited medical facilities. In spite of the highway, based on its deep economic isolation and high level of crime, it remains deeply neglected (Azeem 2013). In contrast, Jaranwala, the second largest sub-district of Faisalabad, is a fertile, relatively more prosperous area. It produces rice, wheat, sugarcane, and

vegetables. Based on the 1998 census, 90 percent of its population live in rural areas (Government of Pakistan 1998). I selected Jaranwala as it is somewhat closer to the state as compared to Chak Jhumra given its economic prosperity. However, physical access to it is still difficult as much of Jaranwala is rural with poor infrastructure. I characterized Samundiri, my third site, as closest to the state as it is directly connected to the urban areas of Faisalabad as well as the other major cities of Pakistan. In comparison to the other two sub-districts, it supports ten hospitals and numerous schools and colleges.

1.4 MY RESEARCH FOCUS

Sociological scholarship on Pakistan, much of it from the 1960s and 1970s, has emphasized structure in analyzing both kinship and the state. In contrast, I examine how key gatekeepers and common practices constitute both structures, illuminating nuances of kinship and the state that are obscured in a focus on structure. My research is guided by three main questions: 1) how do kinship groups reproduce themselves in contemporary Pakistani societies; 2) how do kinship groups shape state/local boundaries; and 3) how do kinship groups mediate between their members and the wider society? First, by emphasizing the agency of kinship members, I suggest that kinship groups are constructed through particular practices, including gift-exchange and other reciprocal exchanges. Through the lens of practice, I explain why some kinship ties are more salient than others and how kinship groups instrumentalize their relationships with the state to remain salient. Second, I show how kinship groups shape or subvert the work of key state institutions such as law enforcement and the judicial system to match their expectations. Finally,

I show how problematizing the public/private dichotomy reveals important local political communities that lie at the intersection of family and the state.

1.5 DISSERTATION OUTLINE

In the next chapter, I focus on my research methods and mode of analysis. In particular, I describe the importance of interlocutors, including my research assistant and other gatekeepers in gaining access. I discuss how my access shaped my methods and also consider ethical concerns.

In Chapter three, I discuss the role that kinship groups play in contemporary Pakistani society. I discuss three main mechanisms of reproduction: 1) reciprocity, 2) boundary-management, and 3) performance. To operationalize the construction of kinship ties, I use Max Weber's (1978/1922) discussion of class status and Pierre Bourdieu's (1977) concept of social capital. Through this lens, I detail the underlying practices that constitute the wider kinship structures. I illustrate how kinship groups earn capital by managing the local/state boundaries. I also show how performances are key to constructing capital.

In Chapter four, I examine how kinship groups construct state/local boundaries. I draw on structural/institutional and cultural depictions of the state and state boundaries as well as anthropological approaches. I suggest that state/local boundaries are symbolically constituted by the *dera*, as the site of local authority. I identify the key gatekeepers, which provides insights into the boundaries themselves. I show how these boundaries vary by examining issues related to dispute resolution—as it is a major area where the jurisdiction of kinship groups and the state overlaps. I underscore how boundaries are redrawn based on the issue, the gatekeeper, and the

audience. In this way, I highlight how negotiations between the central and local elite shape what we understand to be public and private.

In Chapter five, I turn to the public sphere to understand how problematizing the public/private dichotomy sheds lights on local political communities, such as the ones housed in the *dera*. In contrast to Jürgen Habermas' (1989) focus on how the public sphere created opportunities for citizens to articulate their political opinions and lobby for their rights, I discuss how aspects of the public sphere are obscured by its link to the state. Finally, I show how the public sphere contributes to shaping local social ties in Pakistan.

In Chapter 6, I highlight how my project can inform future areas of research including: 1) understanding the role of kinship within institutions of the state; 2) exploring how physical distance contributes to shaping local/state boundaries; and 3) drawing on the exclusion of women and members of service-providing groups from the public sphere to theorize about citizenship.

1.6 CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE LITERATURE

Through this project, I seek to contribute to sociological literature of the family, state, and the public sphere. While Western sociological scholarship has focused on the construction of family through interactional concepts such as relatedness, kinship outside of the western context is largely treated as a bounded social structure, due in part to the influence of colonial era methods of classification that persist in scholarship today. I uniquely apply Bourdieu's (1977) idea of social capital to show the construction of kinship in Pakistan and understand the transitory nature of social ties. In contrast to sociologists who studied kinship groups in the 1960s and 1970s and emphasized the latent nature of kinship ties through terms such as the "limits of recognition" or

depicted kinship as transactional ties (Alavi 1972, Eglar 1960, Gilmartin 2003), social capital provides a theoretical framework to understand how these latent ties are activated. Unlike Bourdieu, however, I problematize the idea of social capital as resources contained in a network, focusing instead on the instrumental use of resources and strategies to foster social ties. My research also extends the concept of social capital to consider interactions, drawing from Erving Goffman's (1959) theory of interaction and theories of performance that also reveal more coercive, exclusionary aspects of social capital.

By using kinship groups as my unit of analysis, I also provide insight into how state/local boundaries are constituted. In particular, the Pakistanixs case reveals how boundary-management needs to be understood structurally and interactionally. For instance, while a structural perspective points out the salience of kinship groups as well as the role that they have played historically in dispute resolution and other forms of local governance, an interactional lens points to the agency of gate-keepers in undertaking dispute resolution. This also underscores the agency of local landlords in demarcating boundaries or what Barth (1969) calls ascription. In other words, landlords evoke boundaries for certain issues, especially where they can earn capital, while for other more contentious cases, these boundaries are dissolved. My research also provides an empirical test of Tilly's (2004) work on social boundaries, highlighting two mechanisms of boundary management: 1) demarcation and 2) policing.

Finally, I contribute to the literature on the public sphere by examining the salience of the public sphere as a local political community outside of its relationship with the state, underscoring the fungibility of this concept. While sociologists have criticized how Jürgen Habermas' (1989) concept of the public sphere is based on the structural exclusion of women and minorities, its ties to the state have not been examined critically. In contexts outside the

West, I show that the links between local public spheres and the state are less salient, as the state is not necessarily a target of public advocacy. Instead, the public sphere is where kinship groups demonstrate social ties. By emphasizing how social ties are constructed within the public sphere, I also contribute to the increasing focus on the performative aspects of the sphere (Adut 2012, Alexander 2008).

2.0 QUALITATIVE METHODS AND DATA

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The state became such a dominant theoretical construct after World War II that it was taken for granted by scholars (Migdal 2001, Mitchell 1999). Veena Das (2007) refers to this as state magic or the “illegibility” of the state. My project seeks to demystify the state by focusing on how people experience it in their everyday lives. In this chapter, I discuss how I operationalized my study of people’s lived experience with the state and other state-like actors. I begin by detailing challenges related to access, especially as a Pakistani woman and reflect on my relationship with my gatekeepers, who were integral to my negotiating access and also shaped my understanding of local relationships. I then outline how my pre-test in Pakistan informed my methods. I offer a brief discussion of the importance of theorizing relationality in the field. Finally, I detail my data analysis plan and reflect on ethical considerations.

2.2 DISCOVERING KINSHIP

Even though I was born and raised in Pakistan, I had little tangible knowledge of kinship groups while growing up. Lahore, my hometown, had a population of five million according to a 1998 census (it is currently estimated to be double that) (Demographia 2016). My primary ties in

Lahore were to my immediate family. My parents were liberal, non-religious iconoclasts, and never made reference to kinship except when they were bickering. My parents are actually from different kinship groups, something they never seemed to care about except when they fought. I also attended an international school, and had peers from all around the world. In my classroom, nationality was more salient than kinship. In fact, I didn't know much about my own kinship group until 2004 when I was studying community citizen boards under the auspices of a Soros Foundation grant. Community boards were set up as mini nonprofits that could access state funds to undertake community projects, such as paving roads or building bridges. During my field work, I found that many such boards were organized around kinship lines—my first exposure to the concept. At the time, when I asked people about the role of kinship at the village level, where the majority of the boards operated, people often remarked that the influence of kinship was dying out because of shrinking land-holdings and urban migration. Nonetheless, my experience with community boards made me wonder if and how kinship groups were evolving given wider changes in society.

I was not able to follow-up on this question until my Master's project seven years later, which mapped kinship groups in the rural areas of Faisalabad. I wanted to assess the extent to which kinship was still a social phenomenon, especially as it had not been studied formally since the 1970s. If kinship still mattered, I wondered, what was their salience in people's lives? This research yielded three findings. First, kinship groups were not only still active; they played a critical role in mediating people's interactions with the state. Second, a range of actors played an important role in kinship networks. Finally, the *dera* was the site of key village-level events in which kinship relationships developed through interactions.

My master's research shaped my dissertation questions. Based on my Master's findings, I wanted to further investigate why some kinship ties were more salient than others and how they were shaped by performances. I also wanted to focus on when and how kinship groups delineated boundaries between their jurisdiction and that of the state. Finally, I was interested in how the *dera* mediated interactions within the wider village community. My master's research also shaped how I approached access during my dissertation field work and the methods that I used.

2.3 NEGOTIATING ACCESS

Access to my field site was routinely challenging to me as a Pakistani woman. In the village, as most women observe purdah or reside in a part of the house reserved only for women and their closest male kin, I was an anomaly. At best, people stared or were reluctant to talk to me; at worst, I felt physically unsafe, as women who cross over into the public sphere are considered to be of low moral virtue and easy victims of sexual harassment. I was lucky and did not experience harassment in the field, but it was something I constantly thought about.

While such phenomena as soccer clubs are considered male-dominated, villages in Pakistan present an extreme version of gender exclusion. Women are almost entirely invisible in the public spaces of the village, as evidenced by a story that Sobia, a soft-spoken woman, told to me one afternoon. She complained with a smile that her mischievous four-year old throws her shoes over the wall of her house into the street, but she dare not wander into the street to retrieve them lest she set off her husband's ire and the gossip of the village. Instead, she asks her younger

brother-in-law to get back her shoes, or she waits for her husband to come home at night and asks him.

These boundaries between the private and public sphere vary for some women, but for the majority, they are strictly enforced.⁵ The only exceptions were women who worked. One is named Nargis. She teaches in the village school, and is heavily veiled on the short walk to her school. Another woman, Bano, runs a fruit business where she imports fruit from the South to sell in the central plain region. Her mobility is unusual and comes at a cost--- many consider her to be a woman of low moral virtue. These boundaries are even sometimes applied in the more liberal, urban areas. My assistant's wife, who lives in Faisalabad, walked to the corner store herself, although she is heavily veiled. Her mother-in-law missed no opportunity to let her know that it was not appropriate. These boundaries ease as women age. Once their hair has greyed, some begin to walk, without hesitation, to the corner stores. Only once did I see an aged woman negotiate employment for her son, in public, sitting with a *deradar*. Such examples were not the norm.

Given the absence of women in the public sphere, establishing myself in the field was a challenge. My meetings in the village often began with a shock: I had assistant who made my appointments on my behalf, and when I arrived to the meetings, the men whom I met often expected that I would also be a man – not a youngish Pakistani woman, traveling unaccompanied, and meeting with people who were not my kin. A common response was: “How did your parents let you do this?” Explaining that I was a graduate student from America did not improve my access. A few people dismissed me with the comment: “Oh, this is some thesis related requirement--”and suggested that they had little time to help me with “school

⁵ Nicolas Martin (2015) notes, women from service-providing groups have greater mobility in some areas, as they have to leave their homes to collect firewood or work in the fields.

homework.” Others fixated on the fact that I was based in the United States, and immediately asked me what agency I worked for—a code word for spy. I never understood how serious such comments were. But, given the strictly policed boundaries of the village, such comments highlighted my outsider status and overall trust deficit.

Since I grew up and completed high school in Pakistan and later worked in the nonprofit sector in the capital, Islamabad, for two years, I anticipated some of these gendered issues of access. However, my time in Pakistan also created a false expectation that I had enough Pakistan experience to navigate my field site. I speak the national language, Urdu, fluently, had previously traveled to villages in numerous provinces, knew how to dress the part, and how to follow social cues. However, I had not spent continuous time in rural areas. Further, my previous work experience, working and traveling with a professional team, was different than working as an independent researcher and asking questions about sensitive political relationships. When I told people that I was interested in kinship, they would invariably make one of two remarks: “Child, why are you asking us when you are from Pakistan yourself—don’t you know about our traditions?” or “Why don’t you work on something useful like poverty.” It became clear that even though my childhood home was 2-3 hours away from the field site, I did not have the necessary tools and capital to conduct research in the villages around Pakistan.

My ability to gain access, therefore, was largely shaped by working with a few key gatekeepers, such as my assistant, Asghar. I had initially thought to recruit a research assistant for security. While Faisalabad is fairly safe overall, I was traveling to new areas, and wanted to have a local guide. Initially I advertised for an assistant in the local agricultural university as well as through the local nonprofits. I did not have much luck with the advertisements. While I was waiting to recruit someone, I met Asghar at the nonprofit where I was initially based for my pre-

test. I had volunteered at the headquarters of this nonprofit in 2005, and they graciously allowed me to be based out of their regional office. This regional office had little to do with my research, as its work centers on bio-gas, but it provided me with a base in Faisalabad and agreed to introduce me to some of their bio-gas clients in the villages as an entry point. While I was waiting to recruit someone, Asghar offered to help me organize a few field visits. He was their communication officer and had also covered the local politics beat for a national, Urdu-language newspaper. As result, he was interested in the substance of my project. When the nonprofit closed its local office, I continued to work with him during my field work, as he was interested in local politics and wanted to continue to keep a foothold in reporting. Further, Asghar saw this opportunity to work with me as a means to hone his own research and English language skills, and over the course of our collaboration, I mentored Asghar on his own writing projects. Finally, his willingness to help me was also based on the strong camaraderie and positive working relationship we established over the course of the research.

The role that Asghar played in my research underscores the relational aspect of access. In Islam there is a concept called *mahram*, which defines permissible relationships between men and women. In this concept, women are only able to associate with their own immediate kin as well as those of their husband's. Asghar was neither my husband nor my kin, but he was the right age to play a brother-figure for me. His presence during my field interviews helped put my interviewees at ease. With a male, brother-like escort, I was less of an anomaly than I was on my own.

Asghar also played a key role in negotiating physical access to the *dera*, the central focus of my study. Whenever I entered into a *dera*, men from the village would peak in, marveling at the absurdity of a woman in this space. Once, when I was starting to conduct an interview in a

dera, I even saw men and women standing on neighboring rooftops peering down. Over the course of the fieldwork, Asghar and I developed a way to feel our way through tough points of access. He would scout out the *dera* while I waited in the car, swaddled in numerous shawls and layers of clothing. While we had a pre-arranged appointment, access to the *dera* was fluid, and people dropped by unannounced. Asghar would check to see who was in the *dera* and discuss with the landlord whether it was acceptable for me to come. Sometimes, there were larger male gatherings, and the *deradar* would ask that I sit within the women's quarters while Asghar would sit in the *dera*. He became my eyes and ears into this men's world even when I was not able to enter. While in the *dera*, Asghar would also negotiate my ability to join the gathering, reassuring the landlord that I would not take offense at being among men. Though we emphasized that I was interested in seeing the interactions within the *dera itself*, the men had a visceral reaction to my crossing that boundary. As a sign of their respect, *deradars* would not want to "expose me" to the men in the village, and instead invited me to their homes. Part of the negotiation involved Asghar explaining my project to these landlords. These interactions allowed them to ask questions and to become comfortable with the idea. As Asghar was from the region, male, and, in some cases, known to the interviewees, he was a much better spokesperson for the project than I could have been.

Through Asghar, I met other gatekeepers who similarly served to mediate between the *deradars* and me. Tahir was another gate-keeper. He was Asghar's mentor from a time when they were both participating in local politics. As Tahir was in his 60s, he had a much wider range of contacts, including some of the *deradars* that I interviewed. Tahir, who ran a travel agency in the city, was a native of Faisalabad and had met these *deradars* through school and then through their various business interests. Tahir initially joined the team as a favor to Asghar, but over

time, he became invested in the project as well, given his interest in politics. Like Asghar, he helped to set up meetings and mediated my interviews, often alongside Asghar. Having two male escorts boosted my legitimacy. Through Tahir and Asghar, I was also invited to a few informal social events like a Sunday lunch that provided me greater access to observe interactions. In areas where Asghar and Tahir had fewer contacts, I also worked with local journalists, known to Asghar, who connected me with others in their communities.

2.4 RESEARCH METHODS

My research methods were intended to elucidate different aspects of kinship. In contemporary debates on methods, scholars argue that narrative accounts, such as those generated in interviews, help us understand events that we cannot witness and allow us to tap how our informants make sense of their social landscape (Cerulo 2014, Jerolmack and Khan 2014a, Katz 1999). However, Colin Jerolmack and Shamus Khan (2014a) caution against using talk as a proxy for action as people may change their answer based on their interaction with the interviewer. They emphasize that observation of interactions provides a better understanding of the strategies people draw on to navigate their landscape, that is the interactional order (DiMaggio 2014, Jerolmack and Khan 2014a, Jerolmack and Khan 2014b). I designed my methods to bridge this methodological debate and triangulate my findings both through narrated accounts and observations. Karen Cerulo (2014) argues that we are limited by our access. To navigate my limited access as a woman, I had to rely on narrated accounts of the *dera* and kinship to examine how people construct and present the logic of kinship. These articulated experiences underscore people's agency in making sense of illegible structures like the state. I

also conducted observations to better understand how social ties were shaped through interactions and analyzed my interactions with my informants.

2.4.1 Pre-test

2.4.1.1 Interviews During my pre-test, conducted from May-August 2012 in Faisalabad, I developed and tested a semi-structured questionnaire. I conducted 65 interviews with residents of Faisalabad, mainly the sub-districts of Jaranwala and Chak Jhumra with clients of the bio-gas program and other kinship leaders known to Asghar and Tahir. I asked people what they meant by kinship, when such relationships would become visible, and when they mattered less. These semi-structured interviews provided a narrative account of when kinship was salient for the villagers (Blee and Taylor 2002, Geertz 1973). For instance, I found that kinship was most salient during: 1) rituals such as weddings and funerals; 2) dispute resolution; and 3) negotiation with the state. I conducted the interviews in Urdu and Punjabi, a regional language that my parents spoke while I was growing up. In some instances, my informants only spoke a local dialect of Punjabi, which I largely understood but some words were not familiar to me. Ashgar helped translate for me when necessary. As Asghar was translating a few words or rephrasing some of my questions, his interventions did not change the flow of the conversation. After the interview, Ashgar helped me translate these transcripts, which I then coded.

My pre-test helped me to identify and target the actors who played a critical role in the *dera*, and who maintained kinship ties more generally. Such actors included local *deradars* or landlords, members of service-providing groups, and villagers who had participated in the dispute resolution process. This kind of purposive sampling greatly helped me to gain an inroad to a particular community. My gatekeepers were key in establishing contact with these *deradars*

initially. Sometimes, they directly knew the person in question. Other times, they could identify contacts who were connected to these *deradars*, and could refer me in turn. I found snowballing critical to expanding my initial list of contacts. As Haroon, one of the journalists with whom I worked commented, “These communities are pretty small, and relatively easy for someone like him to navigate.”

Meeting villagers outside of the *deradar* was more difficult. My point of access to a village was usually a prominent landlord. These *deradars*, in turn, introduced me to other people in the village, including local residents who had experienced the dispute resolution process, and members of the service-providing groups. It was very difficult for me to meet local residents without an introduction from the *deradar*. For instance, I tried meeting with one local barber independently of the local landlord. He met with me briefly out of politeness, but was very uncomfortable having me in his house. I didn’t have a chance to find out why, but later learned that, through the village spy network, the *deradar* would have found out that I had gone behind his back to meet someone. In the same way, it was initially difficult to talk with people who had processed their disputes through the *dera*. Local landlords partly protected the identity of these people and also didn’t want me to have an independent relationship with them, as they were sensitive about criticism. Asghar and I also tried to make inroads into a village through residents who had participated in the bio-gas program. This strategy helped us make independent connections to villagers in some occasions, but it was still difficult to get around the landlord. In each village I also interviewed the wives, daughters, and sisters of individuals who participated in the *dera*.

Through the pre-test, I identified state actors that local kinship leaders interacted with to build capital. These actors also supported *deradars* on occasion with local cases. These state

actors included: 1) elected officials; 2) members of the local police force; 3) judges of lower courts, especially family courts; 4) lawyers; and 5) officials who worked in the land registry office (given the prevalence of land disputes)

2.4.1.2 Observations Given my findings on the importance of kinship interactions in the *dera*, my pre-test also pointed to the need to incorporate observations into my methods. An interaction order emphasizes the tools, strategies, and practices that people draw on to maintain ties (Goffman 1959, 1983, Rawls 1987). An interaction also highlights visceral aspects of social ties and helps us identify the counter-factual to what we are studying or when things don't occur. Interviews are less helpful in this regard, as they typically point to what has already occurred and thus, foreclose the discovery of alternate pathways. However, the local landlords greatly mediated my access to the *dera*, limiting my opportunities for observation. Further, whenever, I did have access, it was during unusual times, such as in the middle of the day. Most villagers frequent the *dera* at night, when they are free after work. In spite of experiencing the *dera* during these extraordinary times, I was still able to witness its interactions. The news of my visit often spread within minutes, and, on occasion, people would come to see the woman sitting in the *dera*. In this way, I was able to develop a contextual understanding of the *dera*, one shaped through my own access as a woman.

2.4.2 Dissertation Research Methods

2.4.2.1 Interviews Under my dissertation research, I conducted an additional 102 semi-structured interviews that lasted 2-3 hours each. A breakdown of interviews by each sub-district is included in Table 1.

Location	Faisalabad	Chak Jhumra	Chiniot	Jaranwala	Samundiri	Total
Number of Interviews	21	28	4	37	12	102
Number of Deras	5	11	2	11	5	35

Table 1 Interviews and Deras Visited by Location

In these interviews, I asked people further about when kinship was salient; probed individuals regarding particular rituals that I learned about during the pre-test; and explicitly focused on the relationship between kinship groups and the state. While my pre-test interviews yielded data on key kinship practices, the majority of accounts depicted kinship and the dera in very formal terms. For example, people often legitimated the dera through an Islamic lens, underscoring the sanctity of family in the religion. Hearing about kinship through this lens was very useful in understanding the construction of kinship, but it did not necessarily help me understand the lived reality of the dera. Such formalistic depictions of the dera made it seem highly rule-bound. Yet what I was seeing was the opposite.

In part, the depiction of the *dera* in formal terms reflected people’s unease in talking with me. For example, during my pre-test, Asghar and I learned that people were nervous about the interviews with a “foreign researcher.” They feared that they would give the wrong answer or end up sounding provincial. They also feared that I would judge the local dispute resolution system, so during my interviews, landlords narrated how the system was supposed to work, but I found it difficult to learn about the strategies that landlords could draw on when things didn’t work. However, as landlords became more familiar with me and my project, once in a while, they let their guard down and talked more plainly about their day-to-day issues. Landlords were also reluctant to speak about their wider political allegiances to provincial and national-level

figures. However, as my research took place over four years, over time, I was able to map out allegiances by attending meetings, rallies, and talking to a wide range of people.

One strategy that I adopted during my dissertation research to understand the lived reality of the *dera* was to ask people to share stories, gossip, and local myths as a means to better access people's experiences (Bruner 1997). This strategy helped me to develop an easier rapport with my informants. Asking people about their stories created a more conversational dynamic, and was much more fruitful than the more formalistic interviews. I ended up collecting dozens of accounts of cases involving kinship members that were being adjudicated in local courts. I heard about fights and rivalries. I also collected local folk legends that people drew on when they referenced kinship. Such narratives pointed to how people made sense of and drew on kinship, an understanding that was much richer than their formal accounts in response to my questions. I asked follow-up questions when needed but largely let my informants follow their own narrative arc.

In my dissertation research, I conducted additional interviews with state officials who I identified as linked to *deras* in my pre-test. I wanted to understand how kinship shaped the inner workings of the state. I asked state officials if and when they encountered kinship in their line of work and specifically about the role of kinship groups in dispute resolution. I asked law enforcement officials about their role versus that of kinship groups and whether kinship leaders had helped them with particular cases. Organizing meeting with such individuals was easier, as they had formal offices and more of a public presence. I was able to meet them directly through a local gatekeeper. As I worked with local journalists, people were more willing to meet with me, as they thought this would allow them to cultivate a relationship with a local journalist. In other words, I drew on the social capital of the gatekeepers to access these individuals. These meetings

were limited by time. When I would interview a police officer at the station, there were usually 100s of people waiting to see him, so at best, I had 30 minutes. I organized several visits to the police station to gather case history, but officers were reluctant to talk about particular cases.

I recorded 89 of the interviews; translated them from Urdu or Punjabi into English, and then transcribed them. My contacts at the NGO and gatekeepers had initially advised me not to record conversations as people are suspicious of outsiders and might be reluctant to talk to me if I made recordings. As a result none of my pre-test interviews were recorded. However, I tested this approach during my dissertation research and most individuals, other than the state officials, did not balk at my request. They seemed to agree to the recording in part as a courtesy to the gatekeeper. Also, as I worked with local journalists, my request for recording seemed reasonable, as they often carried recording equipment. On the few occasions, when people were not comfortable being recorded, I took hand-written notes, which I later typed.

2.4.2.2 Observations Based on my pre-test, I found it difficult to justify hanging around a *dera* unless I had a defined role. To that end, during my dissertation research, I played the role of a formal researcher to gain more time in the *dera*. This strategy emerged one day during an interview when a young kinship leader asked with great excitement to see my “survey” instrument. There is limited social science research in Pakistan overall. But people are more familiar with formal research tools, like surveys used by nonprofits and others in the development industry. After this, I often relied on a checklist, asking closed-ended questions to extend my time in the *dera* and to conduct observations. In other words, my status as a “western-trained” researcher appeared to mitigate some of my status as a Pakistani woman. Finally, as I developed a greater familiarity with the *deradars*, I would ask their permission to drop by their *dera* on Sunday when they would be mediating cases. Some of the *deradars* let me witness the

proceedings from their internal offices, and others allowed me to sit within the *dera*. Given the gender barrier, I was not able to immerse myself in these gatherings, but such incidents provided me with the opportunity to gain contextual knowledge (Fernandes 1997). Over the course of my research, I spent nearly 59 hours purely observing interactions. For the more formal observations on Sunday, I took detailed notes by hand, and then wrote up short memos. For the more social gatherings, I took mental notes as note-taking would have undermined the informality and flow of the conversation. I later documented these in a short note to myself.

2.4.2.3 Focus Group Discussions During my dissertation research, I also conducted focus group discussions, a practice that evolved from my interactions in the *dera*. Often when I would be conducting an interview, the interviewee would invite his wider kinship group to participate. Also, as the *dera* is an open space, villagers would come to see who was visiting. In order to respond to the group dynamic and not to exclude anyone, I developed these sessions into focus group discussions. As my comfort level with Asghar grew, I often let him ask questions, so that I could observe. Such discussions would allow me to witness interactions between people in the *dera* as well as allow people to bring up issues that were important to them. I kept these interviews pretty open-ended and would introduce a broad topic, such as people's experience with the local police, elections, the system of *deradari*, and let the discussion evolve naturally. If this discussion required a follow-up, I would ask a clarification question or conduct a follow-up interview. Focus group discussions to a certain extent also allowed me to observe how interactions were structured and what they revealed about my informants. In addition, as Jennie Munday (2006) argues, the interactive dynamic of focus group discussions can also reveal insights into the formation of identity. In particular, the presence of the *deradar's* kin emphasized the importance of kinship as a collective identity. I conducted 25 focus group

discussions, which lasted 1-2 hours each, and recorded and transcribed some of these discussions.

I also conducted informal group discussions with Asghar, Tahir, and other local journalists. I lived approximately an hour to two hours away from the villages where these took place. And, on our drive home, we would discuss what we had heard, clarifying and comparing data points. As Asghar and others had experienced the *dera* previously, I could channel things they took for granted and those that they found anomalous to triangulate my own findings. I recorded these conversations, and listened to them when writing my field notes and memos.

2.5 CONSIDERING RELATIONALITY

In classic ethnographies, relationality is often depicted in terms of access and legitimating the role of the researcher in the field (Geertz 1973, Geertz 2000, Marcus and Fischer 1999). Since then, there has been an increasing focus on how the different subjectivities of the researcher shape field interactions (Kondo 1986, Narayan 1993, Rosaldo 1993). However, much of this discussion falls short of theorizing relationality itself. I will briefly touch on these issues here given the centrality of the gatekeepers to the selection of my methods and process of analysis.

Given the strict social boundaries in Pakistan, the role of gatekeepers like Asghar is pivotal to qualitative research projects like mine. In addition to providing access through his contacts, I drew on my relationship to him to shape the dynamics of my fieldwork. First, by playing this brother-like role, Asghar helped to legitimate my presence. This was only possible given the trust and camaraderie that we cultivated. Second, as an outsider, the boundary between the *dera* and me was sharply delineated. To learn more about everyday experiences of kinship

groups at the *dera*, I relied on the relationship between the gatekeepers and their friends. In other words, as an outsider, I realized that the trust I could cultivate on my own was limited. However, Asghar and his journalist friends provided a channel of legitimacy. This underscored that in a place like Pakistan, access is inherently relational. Third, my interactions in the field, for example during interviews, provided situational knowledge. For instance, the idea of boundaries and boundary management emerged from my interaction in the field as a woman. Similarly, my focus group discussions and reliance on more formal research tools evolved out my interactions in the field. For instance, closed-ended questions gave people more comfort and also allowed me to extend my time observing interactions in the *dera*. Similarly, while the presence of a larger group at the *dera* was initially difficult to manage, adopting the format of a less structured discussion also provided insights into local interactions.

2.6 ANALYSIS

I employed both inductive and deductive analytic strategies for the project. I transcribed 45 out of the 89 interviews that I recorded, which along with my field notes yielded over approximately seven hundred pages of data. First, the analytic framework and coding structure came out of the concepts that people in the field emphasized. I drew on themes such as gift-giving and the *dera* that emerged during my fieldwork to code my data⁶. In addition, I simultaneously developed deductive codes based on my literature review. I read through the transcripts and coded line by line in MAXQDA, qualitative analytic software. During the analysis process, I looked for overlap between my inductive and deductive codes. For instance, the code of gift-exchange and

⁶ In the dissertation, I use the original Urdu word for key concepts, such as the *dera*, but I use English translations for others when the translation does not change the meaning or for terms that my informants used less frequently.

deradari was one that emerged from my data findings that resonated with the theoretical idea of social capital. This allowed me to compare two different practices under the same theoretical rubric. I was able to develop higher level coding themes through this strategy as well as tested the validity of my findings.

In addition to overlap, I also looked for inconsistencies. For instance, while themes of social capital pointed to trust and closed connections, other deductive concepts, such as *unna* or pride associated with social rupture did not fit within this characterization of kinship. These points of rupture enabled me to examine the counterfactual to my earlier findings. For example, they allowed me to understand instances when social capital deteriorated. These inconsistencies provided me with an opportunity to engage with and contribute to the theoretical material. In addition, to coding my findings, the analysis process was an iterative one that involved writing shorter papers and memos that helped me frame my overall research questions.

2.7 RESEARCH ETHICS

My research presents no institutionally defined ethical concerns, but in this section I consider possible issues arising from my interactions in the field and concerns regarding the application of this research. My project was reviewed and approved by the University of Pittsburgh's Institutional Review Board (IRB). During the review process, I discussed the project extensively with colleagues in my department and in Pakistan to ensure my interviews did not put any of my sources at risk. In line with my IRB approval, all of my sources were anonymous⁷ and participated voluntarily. During the interview, I emphasized that they did not have to answer any questions that made them uncomfortable. Further, I received their verbal consent for recording the interviews and taking pictures. In instances when consent was not given, I took notes by hand. Further, many of my interviewees were public figures, so what they told me was not privileged information.

While I have kept my sources and the material they gave me confidential, my research did not take place in a vacuum. A Pakistani village is a small area with an active gossip network. Local sources mostly likely reported the visits that I took privately, such as my trip to the barber's house, to the local landlord. In this case, I left as soon as I realized that the barber was uncomfortable. But, it is important to acknowledge that the landlord may have asked the barber what he told me after I left. In settings like the villages where I worked, no one is entirely anonymous. And, it is possible that my research could contribute to exacerbating relationships, especially between the landowning and service-providing groups. To mitigate this risk, I made every attempt to follow the protocol within the village and seek the permission of the kinship

⁷ I use pseudonyms to protect the identity of my sources.

elite prior to talking to anyone. This arrangement is not ideal from a research perspective, but having the landlord's blessing did allow for greater protection of my informants.

Finally, there is the risk that research is used in the way that it was not intended. Research about Pakistan is read by a wide audience, many of whom are not academics but development practitioners or working in the field of national security. Such people may read my research and consider its application in development programs. For instance, someone may read about the connections between the *dera* and the public sphere and consider the *dera* a part of the civil sphere. I made careful note not to draw any parallels between village-level structures and normative assumptions about state-building or democratization. I flag these concerns here to underscore that this research is intended to present an academic study and not intended to contribute to programming and other intrusive practices by actors external to the village.

3.0 THE CONSTRUCTION OF CAPITAL

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Anthropologists, studying social organization of people living in non-western societies, have historically studied kinship. We assume that kinship plays less of a role today in urbanizing, contemporary societies. A structural perspective suggests that as people re-locate and move away from rural areas, physical distance and new configurations in the division of labor threaten to weaken kinship structures. However, an interactional lens – one that privileges social ties over structure – suggests that kinship still matters. I explore the interactional construction of social ties by examining practices within the *dera*. The *dera* again is literally defined as a place of sitting that usually is located in the landlord's courtyard. It is an important public space in Pakistani villages, where information is trafficked and disputes are resolved.

Through my discussion of practices, I seek to demystify kinship and discuss the role it plays in everyday life. As such, kinship networks are important social safety networks. Social capital cultivated through kinship can be exchanged for economic favors, including jobs or loans, and for votes during elections. In this chapter, I show that practices that occur within the *dera* are key to generating social capital. Through this discussion, I seek to emphasize the importance of an interactive lens on to the construction of capital.

I also discuss social rupture or when capital breaks down through the concept of *unna*, defined as ego and pride. I explore how the construct of *unna* emerges from the politicization of social ties. Concepts such as *unna* also reveal the gendered aspect of capital. A broader discussion of gender in maintaining kinship ties is beyond the scope of the chapter, but I consider how gender shapes social capital here. While women often bear the burden of maintaining social ties, the dissolution of kinship ties is also blamed on them.

3.2. LITERATURE

The study of kinship as synonymous with family has been influenced by the biological sciences and often straddles the dichotomy between biology and society (Gellner 1960, 1987). In this literature, kinship is defined by biological ties or lineage and studied based on how it reproduces. A study of kinship also includes a focus on cultural mechanisms and practices that elucidate its reproduction (Carsten 2000). For example, for Ernest Gellner (1987), kinship is biological, based on either maternal or patrilineal lines such that social kinship relationships are a direct function of the physical relationship. In contrast, Louis Dumont (1980) and Claude Lévi-Strauss (1969) drew on the unit of kinship to understand the wider cultural system. For Lévi-Strauss, the micro unit was both a structural and metaphorical component of a wider society through which you could understand the rules governing society. Contemporary approaches have largely discarded such structural functionalist approaches as static, rule-bound, and ignoring the agency of actors.

Max Weber (1978/1922) and Pierre Bourdieu (1977) emphasize the importance of understanding kinship structure through the lens of status and practice respectively. Their focus on the evolution of social norms and practices creates an analytic bridge between kinship

structure and the actions of members. Max Weber's (1978/1922) concept of status groups has two important insights for the study of kinship. First, Weber's idea of status groups allows us to see kinship groups as a construction, bound by class and practice. That is, like Weber's construct of status, kinship membership can allude to a socioeconomic hierarchy, but at the same time, membership is defined by knowledge of rituals and customs. Second, Weber also alludes to the idea of closure, or groups that are defined by social boundaries. The two concepts together underscore the importance of understanding how kinship practices structure social difference and boundaries.

Pierre Bourdieu (1977) operationalizes Weber's idea of status through the concept of capital. Capital for Bourdieu arises out of a class-based position or kinship. While status points to an understanding of social norms, Bourdieu goes further with his idea of capital. He argues that your understanding of social norms provides you with common attributes or currency that you share with others in your group. In other words, if you are elite, you'll have currency among your group based on sharing particular tastes, membership to the same clubs, access to good schools, etc. Further, according to Bourdieu, there are different kinds of capital – social, economic, and political – and these are interchangeable. For instance, social capital attained from attending someone's wedding could then result in your being able to ask for that person's support during a political election. In this way, for Bourdieu, the idea of social capital refers to particular networks as well as to the resources people can draw on based on their membership.

While the use of social capital in more contemporary literature does not pertain to kinship directly, I draw on it to examine the construction of social ties in kinship. Robert Putnam (1977) defines social capital as ties among individuals, a prerequisite for the formation of civil society. Capital for James Coleman (1990) includes resources that are accessible to members of a social

network. Mark Granovetter's idea of embeddedness captures the idea of both resources and the social ties shared when people are in a similar social network. While not explicitly looking at social capital, Albert Hirschman (2004) operationalizes how the nature of group ties shapes people's participation in the group. His discussion of the coercive aspects of social ties points to the potentially negative effects of social capital (see also Waldinger 1995). For Alejandro Portes (1998), social capital fosters collective identity where failure of the individual is seen as failure of the entire family. Portes' discussion of a powerful collective identity resonates with Tilly's (2005) concept of a trust network that includes social groups such as kinship in which individuals take on a collective risk and hence group membership becomes part of their collective identity. Tilly focuses more on boundaries of these groups and their exclusion from society, but he discusses implicitly how members of a closed group also possess knowledge, skills, and capital that the network can share.

Michèle Lamont's (1992) discussion of social boundaries is useful in understanding how kinship groups are bounded. She operationalizes Weber's idea of status and Bourdieu's discussion of capital to define social boundaries. In particular, she discusses how the elite distinguish themselves from others based on symbolic boundaries, such as cultural attributes or access to various forms of capital. Lamont's work on boundary management brings to the fore the agency of particular individuals whom she calls gatekeepers in maintaining their social position. Such boundaries, especially when established by key gatekeepers, help to define the social norms espoused by the wider social group including kinship.

Erving Goffman's (1959) interactive lens reveals how boundaries are interpreted emotionally and can shape identities. Goffman uses the metaphor of front/back-stage performances to illustrate how social relationships are recast in different settings. For instance,

Goffman discusses how servants may appear subservient to their employers in the “front-room,” whereas they may mock or poke fun at their employers in their own time. According to Goffman, such performances and interactions reinforce social boundaries. In addition to boundary management that defines how people distinguish between their respective social positions, Goffman (1991) focuses on the concept of stigma achieved through interaction. Stigma is not unlike Weber’s idea of status, but for Goffman, it is shaped through interaction instead of social position. Further, social interactions are also subject to interpretation, pointing to the importance of gatekeepers in developing boundaries. This kind of boundary-making is not unlike Elijah Anderson’s (2006) depiction of a “nigger moment,” or racially charged interactions between people that cement racial boundaries.

Janet Carsten’s (2000) concept of relatedness applies the idea of social ties to kinship. In contrast to the early work on kinship, Carsten treats kinship as a construction. According to Carsten, relatedness comprises obligation and association within kinship. As a concept, it brings to the fore the fluid nature of kinship ties where ties are activated through practices and familial rituals. Examining when ties are activated provides insights into the mechanisms of boundary management. For instance, she argues that households are domains or social fields bounded by mutual need.

Along with Carsten, a range of scholars emphasize how practices are as, if not more, important as ties. These scholars don’t discount the importance of kinship structure, but allow for more agency. For instance, even in a context such as India, where strict caste boundaries persist, Helen Lambert (2000) emphasizes the role of practice. Lambert underscores that women develop ties to a local mother figure through a milk-drinking ritual. This custom allows women to construct primary ties in their husband’s villages where typically they have been outsiders.

Lambert's discussion of constructing family ties is not unlike Hamza Alavi (1972) and Zekiye Eglar's (1960) discussion of gift-giving in Pakistan, a practice they call *vartan bhanji*. According to Alavi and Eglar, ties within immediate family units and the wider kinship groups are activated based on gifts exchanged during particular social rituals such as weddings, birth of a first child, and other social occasions. The emphasis on practices allows us to see family as a social construction.

Practices reveal how actors, including the family and the state, shape social ties and socialize their members. For David Morgan (2011), practice not only constructs social ties but can socialize family members. In his use of practice, he links particular actions to emotions. That is, family rituals create visceral reactions that further cement social ties. One example of practice includes parents establishing themselves up as an authority figure by setting a good example. Such identities are not only constructed in the sphere of the family. Beth Roy (1994) discusses that states strategically employ metaphors of the family during communal rioting, and in this way, states and wider communities have an opportunity to inscribe private identities. Similarly, Laura Ring (2006) in her ethnography about a housing complex in Karachi, Pakistan, writes about how men's relationships, fractured by communal politics, also shaped the relationships of women within the housing complex. While women were not free to leave their apartments, they drew on the experiences of the men in their household to make sense of politics. In this way, even women, who are excluded from public life, are shaped by collective attempts to influence identities.

The contemporary literature on kinship has moved away from examining kinship structure and means of reproduction toward highlighting the salience of social ties within kinship. In order to examine how social ties are maintained within kinship networks, I highlight

the lens of social capital, which Bourdieu (1977) shows is an analytic bridge between structure and agency. In the next section, I illustrate how social capital reproduces kinship ties in Pakistan

3.2.1 Exploring Kinship Through Social Ties

In this chapter, I focus on understanding the construction of kinship ties in Pakistan. Kinship in Pakistan has largely been depicted as structural or tied to an idea of patrilineal descent. Alavi (1972) delineates kinship into the following categories based largely on class and occupation: landlords delineated by the size of their landholdings and service-providing groups such as carpenters, iron workers, butchers, etc. Alavi's distinctions between the two groups draw heavily from a Marxian class definition and are linked to the group's means of production. He is less interested in the caste-like elements of kinship groups, including the stigma attached to service-providing groups. While Alavi's focus is structural, he makes two useful amendments to his definition. First, he notes that due to poor genealogical records, kinship has been practically defined by the "limits of recognition" or that people construct kinship ties based on their living memory (Alavi 1972: 2). Second, he acknowledges that kinship is also defined as a "fraternity" between particular households. Through the idea of fraternity, he allows for ties that are activated by participating in ritual exchange. In this way, he allows for the social construction of kinship.

Given the evolving, undefined structure of kinship, social construction is a more fruitful lens than is a structural understanding. I draw on Weber's (1978/1922) concept of status, Bourdieu's (1977) focus on capital, and Lamont's (1992) understanding of social boundaries to examine how kinship is constructed. And, I also apply Weber's discussion of status groups to understand how kinship ties are activated and maintained. The idea of status is more pertinent than class to the Pakistani case because the concept of kin in Pakistan is not perfectly consistent

with the definition of class (Marx and Engels 1975). For instance, while several kinship groups are characterized by ownership of land, they are not necessarily classified in the same class based on how much land they own and their choice of profession. However, even landowners with small landholdings continue to have a measure of status. The idea of status allows us to understand the practices and mechanisms that maintain these group boundaries (Barth 1969, Weber 1978/1922).

I draw on Bourdieu's (1977) discussion of capital to examine the importance of Alavi (1972) and Eglar's (1960) depiction of gift-giving in the maintenance of kinship ties. I am particularly interested in the broad range of reciprocal exchanges that contribute to generating capital. While for Bourdieu the idea of capital is intrinsically tied to class position, the generation of capital is more instrumental in Pakistani kinship, and the social ties created by capital can also be coercive as Hirschman (2004) suggests. That is, while a certain amount of capital comes with people's social position, such as entry to particular *deras*, capital is cultivated through strategic practices. This helps to examine why certain ties exist and others are missing. In this way, I depart from more traditional understandings of capital, which link social capital to the development of civil society and democratization. Instead, I see capital as strategic use of resources and practices that foster social ties.

Lamont's (1992) discussion of boundary-management is relevant to how capital can lead to social closure. For instance, kinship groups have gatekeepers that manage boundaries between the local community and the state, thus allowing kinship groups to develop autonomy and status. Therefore, capital emerges from the ability of kinship groups to manage boundaries between the local community and the state (see also Portes 2014).

By highlighting the role of practice and interaction (Goffman 1959) in the construction of social ties, I move us away from a structural understanding of kinship and show how ties are more fluid. I don't discount the importance of structure, but given the overwhelming attention to kinship structure in the literature, I focus on how kinship interactions support and give rise to the wider social structure (Duck 2015). The use of boundaries, practices, and emotions elucidates Carsten's (2000) discussion of relatedness or how kinship groups are constructed and reproduced. In the context of Pakistan, an understanding of how kinship groups are constructed is highly linked to understanding the delineations between family, local communities, and the state.

I discuss the practices linked to producing various forms of capital, with special focus on the links between capital and boundary management.

3.3 THE CONSTRUCTION OF KINSHIP

3.3.1 Activating Ties

In much of the literature on Pakistani kinship, kinship groups have been treated as durable structures (Alavi 1972, Chaudhary 1999, Mohmand and Gazdar 2007) in part due to an understanding of the Indian caste system, which has contributed greatly to shaping the Pakistani kinship structure (Gazdar 2007). But, a structural approach is too rigid as kinship networks are so vast and complicated. Although they have not been mapped, kinship networks are nation-wide with an undefined membership and some ties that are salient whereas others remain inactive. More recent scholarship points to kinship networks may even extend transnationally (Akhtar

2013). An interactional lens helps us understand when these ties become salient. For example, Alavi (1972) and Eglar (1960) suggest that kinship is a loose structure that is made salient through particular rituals, such as gift-giving. This idea of practice highlights the agency of the actors and elements that are critical to the construction of kinship ties.

Marriage serves as a key mechanism that activates or constructs kinship ties. There may be two segments of a kinship group that have never had any interaction before they are connected through marriage. Many people in the village report that as women in the village gain more education, it is more difficult to find suitable matches locally with men who have the same level of education, as educated men leave the village and women are expected to marry with men with at least the same, if not higher, level of education. So, through family connections they find suitable proposals within the wider kinship group, often from the city. In essence, marriage enables a form of ascription between different branches of the same kinship group.⁸ Marcel Mauss (1954) notes in Polynesia, where there are incidents of cross-cousin marriage, the exchange of a child among families is considered a familial channel for support to flow. In other words, the exchange of children symbolically joins family together and, through gift-exchange, material wealth is also transferred. In this way, family relationships are embedded in and symbolized by the gift exchange.

Marriage within kinship group creates a form of social capital. Almost all the people whom I interviewed emphasize the importance of marrying within their kinship group. It was difficult for people to articulate why, and many were even surprised that as a Pakistani woman I would even question the sacredness of kinship boundaries. The fact that people take for granted

⁸ Some families report that they do extensive genealogical research to make sure that people their children marry are from the same kinship group, as there are many frauds around. For instance, a professor of sociology in Faisalabad noted that a certain faculty member will change his family name on his children's wedding cards to suggest that he comes from the same kinship group as the current dean. While this is an unusual case, marriage enables ascription to a varying extent.

marriages within kinship groups underscores the durability of this practice. And, the lack of discussion gives it a sacred quality. Women in Pakistan do marry outside of their kinship group, and that does occur sometimes in two dichotomous segments of the population: the educated upper classes or the service-providing groups. The upper classes have enough capital to break the rules and the service providing classes may not have a choice.

The extent to which people marry outside their kinship group is not known, but in the villages where I was working it was still discouraged. A woman from an iron-workers' kinship group provided me with the only explicit explanation of this practice. According to her, women lack protection in their new households, as any hint of marital trouble would be a source of shame for the family and a separation or divorce would not be an option. Therefore, people prefer to marry their daughters within the same kinship group if not the same family, so that they have a measure of security.⁹ Her explanation underscored that marrying within the same kinship group is not only about maintaining “the bloodline” but also about cultivating reciprocity. That is, if women marry within their kinship group they will have the same status and capital as the other women in their family. However, if they marry into another, they will be considered outsiders. As outsiders, they will not have access to the same capital or protection within their new family (see also Zaman et al. 2013). This form of capital can be activated to mitigate domestic violence. For instance, if there are problems within the marriage, the wider kinship group can intervene and exert social pressure to maintain peace. This form of capital underscores the coercive, exclusionary forms of capital, as women from other kinship groups are discriminated against (see also Portes 2014).

⁹ Nadia Agha (2016) argues that marriages within families, such as first cousin marriages, are preferred as family members will not require a dowry, perhaps as they have existing capital among them. However, based on my findings such results are mixed. Certain families may waive a dowry, but others, even close kin, will continue to have expectations.

Wata-sata marriages or exchange marriages provide an extreme example of how marriage is used to construct reciprocal ties (see also Zaman et al. 2013). In such marriages, two families exchange their daughters in marriage, so that if one marriage ends in divorce, the other one will as well. A woman from the barber kinship group mentioned she had a *wata-sata* marriage. She left her husband because her in-laws tortured her. However, her brother had to “send back” his wife as well because her marriage had failed. Exchanging daughters, on one hand, exemplifies an act of trust or an attempt to curry a high form of social capital. At the same time, it suggests that even within kinship groups, with sharply defined boundaries, levels of trust are fairly low, so they have to literally exchange their daughters to foster trust. Kinship groups in Pakistan represent Tilly’s (2005) trust networks, but, as this example suggests, the capital between members does not extend to women. Further, as I discuss below, kinship groups often blame women for the breakdown in social ties between kin.

Gift-giving, which is an important part of marriage rituals, contributes to the construction of social ties. The idea of gift-giving becomes most important during the wedding of a daughter. Regardless of which kinship groups to which people belong, individuals will begin preparing a dowry for their daughters well in advance of an actual wedding. When Mrs. Ghazanfar, the wife of a landlord, gave me a tour of her house, she showed me the room that stored the dowry of their youngest daughter who was still in school. In the darkened room, which had no windows as a means of protection, I could make out steel trunks filled with clothes, bedding, and large pieces of heavy furniture. Similarly, when I visited with her new daughter-in-law, she also pointed out the matching bedroom set that she had received from her parents. Many women I’ve interviewed have underscored that the dowry helps to attain respect in the household of their in-laws. One woman explained that as the in-laws have the responsibility of caring for the daughter-in-law, a

good dowry ensures her place of respect or capital in the home. For this reason, a dowry places a disproportionate financial burden on families, and many service-providing families go into heavy debt to their landlords to finance a dowry. Aftab Nasir and Katja Mielke (2015) suggests that, in some cases, the lack of ability to provide a dowry will result in people marrying outside of their kinship group, a loss of honor, or will lead to intense social isolation. In addition to gift-giving during a time of marriage, the girl's parents will offer a gift for the birth of their first grandchild, either a piece of jewelry or a cash gift. The gift is usually more lavish for a grandson as compared to a granddaughter—as a grandson will carry on the family name, and his birth is a more noteworthy event for most families.

The lack of gift-giving can also sever ties. Two sisters from a service-providing group blamed the lack of a dowry on the abuse by their in-laws. They claimed that they were married with only an extra pair of clothes to wear as their father and older brother had died. They said that as a result, they had the lowest position in the household and were made to do all the housework. In this way, wedding gifts are also symbolic as they simultaneously confer importance to the woman as well as honor the in-laws. Parents hope that gifts will offer their daughter protection in the new household and will build respect between the two families. It is important to emphasize that gift-exchange is not only about an exchange of material wealth for protection. As Mauss emphasizes, gift-giving also signifies obligations between two groups and “produces a friendly feeling” (Mauss 1954: 18). That is, the gift encapsulates a symbolic relationship between giver and receiver. Bourdieu (1977) similarly notes that a gift is not simply a material transaction, but given the dimension of time, is a commitment to a long-term relationship. We can see the gift as a means in which to activate ties as well as build capital with

the recipient. For the two sisters, the lack of gifts severed ties between the families and thus, contributed to their abuse.

The gift-exchange can also activate ties within the wider kinship group. When children get married, women keep registers, large cardboard-bound accounting books, where they (or educated members of the family) keep track of how much money people gave to their children, a common wedding gift (see also Nasir 2015). When they attend other weddings, they will have to give the same amount as the original gift with a little extra added. Women whom I interviewed claimed that returning the same amount is seen to be rude, while adding to the initial gift is an investment in that relationship. Gift-giving, like *wata-sata* marriages, introduces a fairly strict measure of reciprocity. Not meeting your gift-giving obligations can cause tensions if not break apart a relationship—again underscoring the importance of reciprocity in maintaining kinship ties (See also Mauss 1954).

Reciprocal practices also play an important role in the construction of familial ties. Often when my interviewees referred to people they were close to as brother, cousin, sister, often not distinguishing between their actual kin through blood relations or marriages and other close acquaintances. Their usage of familial terms to refer to outsiders further reinforces the idea that kinship ties are constructed.

3.3.2 The Symbolic Value of Tea

In addition to gift-giving, there are a range of practices and rituals that build social capital and allow groups to maintain ties. Such practices are not limited to a particular kinship group, but also play a role in activating ties between groups, a concept known as *dhara-bandi* or

“grouping.”¹⁰ For instance, when I asked landlords what kind of people could become *deradars* or hosts of *deras*, their answer was almost universally “people who were in a position to provide tea or water.” This phrase has connotations of material wealth or a class- based status as well as a reciprocal exchange or interaction. The *deras* that I entered were usually set up in concentric circles with a hookah or water pipe filled and lit for passersby. Holding his hookah in one hand, Tasawar, a landlord with large land holdings exclaimed: “this is *deradari*.” The act of running *deras* and associated hospitality is known as *deradari*. He implied that hospitality is integral to maintaining a *dera* or influence in the village. In other words, an individual’s social status alone is insufficient in maintaining capital.

As Bourdieu notes, cultivating capital is essentially reciprocal—it requires offering and receiving. Trips to almost every *dera* that I visited entailed a cup of tea, which was usually served with small snacks. I often felt a sense of imposition as my visit to the *dera* not only took people’s time but also required that they make preparations for the visit. Many *deras* are not linked to people’s houses, so when my visits were arranged, local households went to considerable trouble to host me. The women of the household would make a meal in advance, and the youngest son or a servant would walk a distance carrying the food and drink. When I shared my concern with one of my hosts, he exclaimed that it was just the opposite. “Guests come to the house of the person who has God’s grace upon him. These are issues (pointing to my unease) for you, but they are nothing for us.” In other words, *deras* gain influence or capital based on the number of visitors. And, a visit by “a researcher from America” contributed, at least in a small measure, to the capital of that particular *deradar*.

While women are rarely visible at a *dera*, they play an important role in managing the hospitality. Tasawar exclaimed: “the secret behind every powerful *deradar* is his wife.”

¹⁰ *Dhara* is not related to the space *dera* here, and refers to the process of constructing a group.

According to Saeed, another local leader, before his guests have even sat down, his wife has counted the number of guests and sent her son to the corner shop for some snacks. His wife is so fast that the tea and snacks arrive before he has had a chance to ask for them. Similarly, women also keep track of the gift exchange during weddings, and ensure that their family fulfills their obligations. While Tasawar acknowledged the role of his wife to me, in general the labor of women in maintaining social ties is not visible. In fact, given the strict boundary between the *dera* and the private sphere of the family, gender relations are incredibly strained.

Access to the *dera* is asymmetrical. Members of service-providing groups often are summoned to a *dera* but not treated to the same level of hospitality. A man from the barber's service-providing group grumbled to me as he was summoned to the *dera*: "when the fat men (referring to the landlords) call, I have to run." During his visit, he was not invited to sit, have tea, or join the conversation. Based on my observations, in some *deras*, the members of the service-providing groups will sit on the floor or some will sit on the edges of the gathering, their physical place signifying their status. Some will share the communal pipe, but will almost never be offered tea or snacks, which are reserved for the important guests. Some landlords will reserve a separate set of dishes for the people from service-providing groups. Here, their status is shaped and sharply delineated by these interactions. Boundaries shaped by such stigma seem impenetrable and reinforced through interactions. Such interactions again emphasize the inadequacy of seeing social boundaries from purely a material perspective.

The lens of social capital helps to explain asymmetrical access to the *dera*. Bourdieu's (1977) idea of social capital suggests reciprocity among equals. That is, individuals who have access to the same network have equivalent social capital. But, in Pakistan, landlords do not need to cultivate capital with members of the service class, as they can dominate such relationships

more directly. Most service-providing groups who remain in the village are dependent on the landlord for their livelihoods.¹¹ Some members of the service-providing group live within the landlord's *dera* and receive a small amount of grain or wages for their services that they provide around the clock. Others may lease a small parcel of land for which they share a percentage of the agricultural yield with the landlord. And some may farm their own small piece of land, work on daily wages, or rely on the wages of a child in the city. Most of them will owe substantial debt to the landlords as the landlords serve as the only social safety net to which they have access (see also Martin 2015).

Kinship boundaries are intractable even if kinship members gain access to greater material wealth. This again points to the salience of status as a lens to understand social boundaries (Weber 1978/1922). There are examples of members of service-providing groups who moved to the city. However, their social boundaries remained, emphasizing the importance of social norms and rules over material status. For example, Sheraz, a landlord, and his uncle relayed his interaction with a barber's son, Adil, who had left the village, gone to university, and now worked as an education officer at a district level—a job with prestige. Sheraz recalled a sense of indignity that he felt when he learned that Adil from their village was working as a government official. In spite of their scorn for Adil, they were compelled to visit him when they needed a favor. They were trying to place someone from their village as a school teacher in his district and needed him to pull strings. Against their will, they visited Adil, who treated them to a lavish tea service in his office, customary among people of similar rank. Even though many years had passed since the incident, the landlords were perturbed to this day and described how

¹¹ Martin (2015) notes that many members of the service-providing groups have migrated to the city and are employed in various service sectors. It is difficult to assess the extent to which urban migration has taken place. My research suggests that while the younger generation may have migrated, the older generation remains behind in the village.

the education officer had the audacity to serve them fancy cream puffs— an extravagant city dessert not available in the village. “We could barely choke them down,” they exclaimed. Even though as an education officer, Adil was now well-established, and possibly with greater income than these two landlords, it was still uncomfortable for them to accept his hospitality, almost as if that would put them on equal footing. They felt that if anything a visit to his office was bestowing him with enough honor but with the cream puffs, they were clearly in his debt, which was untenable. In addition to status, this incident relays the salience of the interactive lens. They were uncomfortable approaching Adil as they came from different status groups. But, their revulsion was also visceral—revealed in their inability to swallow the cream puffs. It is only through their interactive lens that we can understand the deep social fissures between the kinship groups. Alavi (1972) argues that kinship groups are not caste groups, as they lack the purification rituals that you see in the Hindu caste system. But as this interaction illustrates, relationships between kinship groups are circumscribed in a way that suggests caste-like relations. On a similar issue, another landlord exclaimed: “villagers can't forget where people came from, and they continue to treat them based on that status.”

3.3.3 The Importance of Reciprocity

Keeping your hookah warm will activate ties, but landlords engage in myriad transactions to generate capital, illustrating the importance of reciprocity. *Deradars* hold regular hours and provide a range of services that include anything from helping people find jobs, linking people to state officials, and arranging marriages. Providing mediation for disputes is an important way to generate capital, and I discuss it further below. Alavi (1972) and Eglar (1960) don't include these additional activities under their discussion of maintaining ties, but I argue they work in a similar way as gift-exchange. That is, helping people trouble-shoot a problem serves as an investment in

a future relationship or a form of capital. Most *deradars* can be found at their *deras* all day on Sundays and often on week-day evenings. Very few *deradars* can survive economically by working the land, so, the time spent in their *deras* is in addition to their day-time jobs, underscoring the importance of *deradari*. It is striking that the role of the *deradar* has evolved to address the myriad claims made by local residents and members of his kinship group. This emphasizes the multi-faceted position of the *deradar*, including a state-like role, which I discuss in the next chapter.

Local presence and access are key to cultivating ties. According to Sheraz, landlords who leave their villages over time lose influence. This supports the idea that your kinship status may bring you a measure of access, but ties have to be strengthened through reciprocal exchanges. To this point, Nawazish Shah, another landlord, emphasized: “people come to me because I am present. And, even if I am not here, my *dera* is always open for people who want a smoke or a place to stay.” In essence, local presence serves as a form of capital in itself.

As important as local presence is the *deradar*'s willingness to entertain local residents and kinship members, reinforcing the idea of reciprocity. Often times, *deradars* do not have the means to find people jobs. However, a common feeling they expressed was “if we do not entertain their requests, they will remember during election time.” In most instances, *deradars* simply listen to the petitioner. If it is a close connection, they may refer them to a representative who may have the authority to recommend them for a government job. When I sat at Nayyar Shah's *dera*, his younger brother and other assistants kept track of the crowd to ensure that everyone had time with him. At the end of a long day, Nayyar wanted to break for lunch, but his brother reminded him that a woman had been waiting since the morning, so he met with her briefly before leaving. At least in these public gatherings, individuals will make sure that they

meet everyone. The kind of capital cultivated here is not only based on what the *deradar* can do for the claimant. Instead it is based on the quality of his interactions. It is through such interactions with people that *deradars* are able to draw moral boundaries between their communities and the state.

While Alavi (1972) emphasizes the importance of reciprocity and gift-giving in activating kinship ties, I argue that such exchanges contribute to reproducing kinship. Through gift-giving, individuals enter into a similar social field, which brings to the fore the salience of kinship. Given how vast kinship networks are, the concept of kin can be elusive. So people report that their wider kinship network is less important than their families, relatives, or more local connections. In other words, people largely consider these local, accessible connections as kin. In addition to *biraderi* or kinship, people also reference a concept known as *dhara-bandi* or grouping. *Dharas* usually comprise of your kin but also close associates from other kinship groups of a similar social status. Such *dhara-bandi* is the output of gift-giving and reciprocity, implying that close ties that are kin-like can be extended beyond your actual kinship group. There is a limit, however, to the construction of kinship ties. For instance, as described above, the social boundary between the service-providing and landowning groups is durable, so even though the barber's son had become an education officer, his attempts to enter into a reciprocal relationship were untenable. Similarly, members of landowning groups can enter into the same *dharas* or groups, but they do not enter into marriage contracts.

3.4 BOUNDARY MANAGEMENT

One way that the landlords build capital is by emphasizing the boundaries between their community and the state—an arrangement that allows them to emphasize their own salience. One landlord revealed how a passenger had come to him after his suitcase was stolen on the bus. The passenger had reported the theft to the local police, but nothing came of it. Frustrated, he turned to his landlord, who knew the brothers who managed the informal bus system that the passenger had taken. According to the landlord, he reached out through his connections, requesting the brothers to track down and retrieve the man's suitcase. In another case, a father approached a local landlord to help him retrieve the dowry of his divorced daughter. According to him, while the court had granted the divorce and decreed that her dowry be returned, the family was unable to access it, and the police were not being helpful. In contrast, the landlord contacted a member of his kinship group who was based in the same village, and through him, was able to extract the dowry. There are three elements that are working together to build capital: 1) access to the landlord and the quality of his interaction; 2) the breadth of his local contacts; and 3) ability to resolve the situation. The landlord's willingness to help in contrast to the kleptocratic state emphasizes his moral capital and his ability to construct boundaries between his community and the state. The re-telling of this narrative contributes to strengthening those boundaries and building capital for the landlord among the wider community. This performance again emphasizes the interactive quality of capital.

Dispute resolution also provides an opportunity to build social capital between kinship groups. Kinship members play a central role during the dispute resolution process. Sometimes, they serve as a *zaman* for their kin, or someone who provides a character witness. The position of a *zaman* carries some risk. If the defendant is guilty and unable to pay the fine, the *zaman* may

become liable. When I asked why someone would take on this risk, *deradars* explained, “kin don’t have much of a choice, especially if you want to maintain that relationship.” For theft cases, defendants have to provide a financial guarantee in the amount of the theft while the trial is ongoing. Many villagers would be hard pressed to raise this money on their own. Through their participation in the trial and collection of the guarantee, many kinship members end up absorbing collective risk for their kin. This collective risk suggests that kinship networks operate like trust networks. And understanding the risk also suggests why people manage boundaries so carefully.

In addition to providing alternatives to the state, *deradars* offer serve as liaisons between the local community and the state—in part to preserve their influence. In the first instance, many landlords whom I interviewed noted that when people seek their help in filing a case in court, they dissuade them. They often told me, “We compel them to address the matter locally.” This is partly because direct access to the state may undercut a landlord’s influence. However, when particular cases go to the state, *deradars* continue to mediate—influencing the state-run procedure. Ijaz relayed a story of how he represented Bilal, a member of the service-providing group from his village, at the local police station. A neighboring landlord had accused Bilal of stealing a cow. According to Ijaz, there was no social capital to be gained from representing Bilal; in fact, if anything he would develop enmity with the opposing landlord. However, he felt that it wasn’t right that another landlord and the police were intervening in his village, so he felt compelled to represent Bilal. In the end, according to Ijaz, the landlord withdrew the feud as he didn’t want to challenge Ijaz. This case presents an example of how Ijaz generated capital by protecting his local jurisdiction. It also reveals how Ijaz is able to influence the proceedings of the state.

3.5 CASHING IN THEIR CHIPS

According to Bourdieu (1977) various forms of capital are exchangeable, illustrating how the elites rely on the social capital of their networks to maintain power. In a similar way, cultivating social capital through reciprocal exchanges and undertaking dispute resolution is integral to the ability of landlords to generate political capital. Pervaiz, a former head of the union council, stated the link between dispute resolution and political capital most clearly. “I am greedy for my area’s voters.” The gate of his *dera*, located within the city limits of Faisalabad, is mounted with statues of lions. The lion is also his electoral symbol, and the day I met him, his hair was dyed in the same reddish tinge as a lion’s mane. However, he did not have much of a roar that day as he had recently lost the last local election. While the campaign period for a local election is relatively short, the preparation begins months in advance. Electoral success is based on a *deradar’s* long-term relationship with the local community. That is, according to Pervaiz and other local representatives, the selection of a local candidate is based not on their links with national parties but on their relationships with local kinships groups and *dharas* (see also Wilder 1999). Typically when an election is announced, members of kinship groups will hold meetings with their wider membership and within particular neighborhoods to select a local candidate. Kinship leaders play a critical role in identifying local candidates, and some will negotiate among their kin to ensure that there aren’t competing candidates from the same kinship group. For example, when Nayyar Shah decided to run, his uncle negotiated with his other kin who typically had represented their family. In this way, the social capital within kinship groups is key to local elections.

Support from your kinship members may grant you access to a local election, but reciprocal ties with individual members and other villagers matter. According to Raj, a local

deradar and lawyer, the connections with your kin will only get you so many votes. “In the past, it was only necessary to speak to the local leader or kinship head who could deliver the votes of the village but now each person has to be convinced.” In other words, kinship is an important but not the only factor in determining votes. In this way, Raj links the culture of *deradari* and the social capital gained there to the activation of political capital. That is, *deradars*’ hospitality, willingness to give people audience, and mediate their disputes is critical to their ability to win elections. And, perhaps Pervaiz, who had a reputation as being particularly inaccessible was not able to cultivate sufficient capital. Wilder (1999) notes the link between kinship ties and voting, and underscores that kinship is an important condition to entering elections but not sufficient to garnering votes. Other factors such as links to political factions and relationships with national political leaders are important as well.

While not all landlords enter into *deradari* to run for elections, the political capital they earn allows them to develop influence locally. For instance, Ali, my assistant’s father, regularly helped his community resolve issues. It is due to this service that he is considered a community leader and asked to serve on the local mosque committee and host political candidates. Similarly, Saeed, a local business man, runs a neighborhood charity organization that collects money for funerals and widows. He too, participates in dispute-resolution. Ali and Saeed are active during elections, but not interested in running themselves. Instead, they help mobilize votes for their candidate. Ali helps his candidates undertake outreach in his community. As political candidates don’t necessarily come from local communities, without Ali, it would be difficult for them to campaign in his neighborhood. Community members might not receive them in their homes or offer them respect as they are outsiders. If Ali’s candidate wins, then he has a direct contact in government who can help him further down the line. In essence, the capital built by Ali at an

interpersonal level in his community is what allows him to network individuals at a higher level of government. This arrangement does not represent a typical patronage relationship as it shows how local relationships and practices are as important as and necessary to maintain connections to national leaders.

The relationship between Ali and the political candidate is one often described as a classic patron-client relationship (Foster 1963, Kaufman 1974, Scott 1972). In this literature, individuals of a lower socio-economic standing provide labor and loyalty for their patron of a higher status in exchange for a social safety net, including access to a means of subsistence as well as protection. However, in this model, reciprocity is a function of the socioeconomic reliance that clients have on their patrons. However, the patron-client model does not adequately capture how social capital is constructed in the Pakistan case. As discussed above, while there may be an expectation of socio-economic gain, the construction of social capital is not so instrumental. Often the connection to a national leader does not result in material benefit, but is used to build local status—a way to show up your neighboring *deradar*. Instead, it is better understood through the interactive lens that reveals features such as status, local access, and reciprocity. Examining relationships from a traditional patron-client lens obscures the nuanced strategies to generate capital, the agency of both actors, and importance of maintaining local relationships.

3.5.1 Generating Capital Through Votes

While capital is cultivated by *deradars* over a period of time, the evidence of these social ties are seen clearly during election season. Much of the organization around elections takes place locally through door-to-door canvassing, neighborhood meetings, and small rallies. The support

during these elections is not provided through financial donations for the most part, as people reported that they provided resources in kind, such as making banners for the candidate, organizing a corner meeting, or lending someone their car. Such kinds of exchanges underscore the importance of inter-personal relationships during elections. I attended several meetings and rallies during the 2015 local elections. In many instances, these meetings are not held within people's own *deras*, but hosted within the community itself or within a sponsor's *dera*. Such meetings serve to highlight the social capital or ties between the candidate and the sponsor. This dynamic is also visible in the style of the speeches. Speech-making is kept very short during these occasions. Individuals introduced themselves and why they were running, but most importantly, these meetings provide an occasion for the host to say a few words. That is, the relationship between the host and candidate is as much on display as the candidate himself. Candidates or their supporters often sponsor *degs* or cauldrons of rice for their political supporters, making such gatherings very festive. In essence, these occasions seem to re-create the hospitality seen within the *deras*.

Door-to-door campaigning between the candidate and his supporters becomes an important part of the election process, underscoring the nature of reciprocal ties. During the election season, candidates and their local advisors will map out the households of the village to identify who among the village will support them. The *deradar*'s ability to deliver the promised number of votes to the local candidate is critical in maintaining their political capital. The average electorate of a union council is about 8,100 people and local elections are won by 100s of votes, so every vote counts. According to Sheraz, "we have our network of spies," so they know where people's loyalties lie. The local campaigners will go to every household convincing people to support them. Here the households of fellow kin become important, as kinship is an

easy vote bank. Local campaigners will mobilize the houses of his kin to deliver a certain number of votes, involving even the women. While women's mobility is limited in general, they set out to vote based on the instructions of the men in their families—here their mobility, contrary to gender norms, is allowed to build capital for their families.¹² Landlords count on their kin, but kinship ties are insufficient to win elections (see also Martin 2015, Wilder 1999). Kinship members often have to network outside their kinship groups, drawing on capital they have fostered through their *deras*. Local landlords also count on support from the members of service-providing groups. According to one woman, the local landlord usually rounds up people who work for him in a truck and takes them to the local polling station. Actual voting is done on paper ballots, and several people referred to ways that voting fraud takes place, including a complicated system of swapping unfilled paper ballots with ones that are already filled. However, in addition to those fraudulent strategies, the local landlord knows how many have promised him a vote through this spy network. If his count falls short after the election results are announced, he will have his suspicions as to who might not have voted for him.

Elections can factionalize ties in the village and undo social capital cultivated over years. According to *deradars*, local elections rarely impact the resources allocated to the village or union council. So materially landlords rarely stand to gain by supporting a political candidate. But regardless, a loss is a great source of shame and can fracture social ties. The lens of status and symbolic interaction helps us understand why. In his case, status refers to the landlord's symbolic position within the village. According to a landlord, "votes are not the problem of the candidate, but become a question of our honor." In this way, capital serves as the building blocks

¹² As Khan and Ghazdar (2007) note that women's mobility does not extend to voting in parts of the country bordering Afghanistan, but, in my field site, the majority of women voted. There have not been extensive studies of how women vote, but based on my research, the women vote to support the candidate that their families are supporting.

of a social network. An electoral loss could signal a rupture with the candidate as well as his local supporters. That is, lack of votes could suggest to a landlord that that his investment in maintaining ties within the village has not resulted in votes. The fragility in social ties suggests that capital is finite. An electoral loss could suggest a *deradar*'s loss of status to both the villagers and the candidate. This is a public source of shame, and landlords often claim that after an electoral loss "they will no longer be able to hold their heads high." This phrase suggests that the loss is felt within local interactions, which may impede further reciprocal exchanges. Sometimes, the candidate is from the *deradar*'s kinship group, so this could disrupt relationships within the wider kinship network. The social fissures revealed during elections point to the fragility of kinship ties and the social capital generated. People refer to this intense kinship rivalry and polarization as *unna*, which directly translates as ego and pride. I discuss it next as it reveals insights about how social capital can contribute to creating boundaries between kinship members.

3.6 UNNA—THE OTHER FACE OF CAPITAL

In this section, I draw on the concept of *unna* to examine incidents when capital erodes. The erosion of capital also points to aspects of ties. My interviewees often refer to *unna* when kinship ties dissolve. A mediator referenced *unna* to explain the motivation behind a fight between neighbors that initially broke out over spilled water. While cleaning, a woman had poured her dirty sweeping water in front of the neighbor's property. The neighbor grumbled to her husband, who then had the altercation with the other woman's husband. That evening both sides assembled their kin, some with weapons when an angry stand-off ensued. People again point to

unna when parents go into debt during their daughter's wedding lest their preparations seem inadequate compared to their neighbors. Election violence is also attribute to *unna*. During the last local elections, two people were killed at a rally I attended after fighting broke out between two opposing *dharas* or groups.

While in some respects kinship groups have durable ties, not unlike what Tilly refers to as trust networks, *unna* suggests the opposite or the fragility of ties. The breakdown in ties in spite of the fact that members have taken on collective risk for each other is difficult to understand. To examine how *unna* can exist simultaneously with strong social ties—I draw on Sheraz's narrative about the nature of *dhara-bandi*, which literally translates as grouping and is considered a faction. Paul Brass (1984) defines a faction as groups within a patron-client network. Wilder (1999) also considers it “ ‘a secondary group super-imposed on other primary groups [of kinship, family, and caste] (175).’” My data suggests that joining a *dhara* may be more instrumental. Sheraz argues that some people develop a natural connection or relationship, for example, because their lands are adjoining and they share a common irrigation channel. Further, he adds, “when you have a natural connection with someone, you will automatically support them against their enemies.” Sheraz's analysis of *dhara-bandi* in part points to social capital itself. Maintaining social capital or reciprocal ties necessitates supporting members of your group or kinship in spite of all odds. That is, as members of a closed trust network, group members have a high expectation that other members will publically support them, for example during disputes or local elections. Due to the closed village boundary, there is little tolerance for members who do not comply.

This group dynamic highlights the importance of interaction to understanding social capital. In other words, social capital is not only a dynamic between the giver and the receiver,

but often it is something that is displayed to others. For instance, when people attend dispute resolution mediation, they usually bring members of their *dhara* including their kin and other supporters. Often the majority of people present during such occasions are people who are not even directly involved. This show of strength reflects three dimensions of social capital. First, through a physical display of support, a supporter builds social capital for the claimant. Second, the physical display is a show of strength to intimidate the other side. Finally, the supporters' presence is a display for the wider village. This suggests no matter what the dispute, you win a sort of moral victory due to the backing of your group. In this way, capital is not only something associated with your social position but something constructed from interactions within your *dhara* as well as the wider community. The existence of *unna* within these trust networks is difficult to explain without the lens of interaction.

The concept of *unna* also illustrates how social capital is linked to boundary management. As demands to maintain social capital within your group are so high, they often create fissures with others. Such boundaries are not only between different kinship groups but *dhara-bandi* can cause fissures within the same kinship group. Kinship groups provide a loose, connective social tissue, but unless ties are activated, kinship ties are not solidified or reproduced. In such instances, the *dhara* becomes more important. According to Arif:

Grouping also exists in the same family like when one brother supports one party and the other supports another. The main factor of jealousy in the inner family is very small – like if one brother and his children are educated and the other remains uneducated. He will get jealous even from his brother and his family and try to create problem for him. This is also necessary for his ego (Field Notes February 25, 2015).

Arif is articulating a similar sentiment as *dhara-bandi* more generally. That is, for the uneducated brother, there is a certain symbolic capital to be gained by undermining his other brother, often on moral grounds. Kinship in the literature often exemplifies close social ties, but much of the ties are constructed by maintaining social boundaries. As a result, these strict boundaries can also polarize relationships. *Dhara-bandi* and the protection of social boundaries suggest that social capital in Pakistan is a zero-sum game. That is, if social capital is based on the maintenance of boundaries, one group cannot develop social capital without the other side losing. Given the high pressure to support members of your group, the promotion of social capital can create fissures that last for decades and may even lead to loss of lives. In several villages where I worked, there were examples of enmity between families where multiple members had been killed. The enmity passed on from generation to generation, with each side compelled to retaliate. This suggests that like social capital, battles of *unna* can also be inherited. *Unna* points to how deep social ties and boundaries can co-exist.

3.6.1 Unna and Gender

The lens of boundary management provides important insights as to how gender shapes social capital both materially and symbolically. While most of my interviewees emphasized the importance of reciprocity in maintaining social ties, women are associated with the loss of social capital. First, as discussed above, women's marriages require a huge outlay of capital. Fathers have to save up for a dowry. Many will go into debt during their daughter's weddings. Further, to ensure good relationships between families, the expense of gift-exchange continues even after marriage. In contrast, as parents of a boy, families are the recipients of capital—underscoring that gender relationships are not reciprocal. Second, people often say that when they marry off

their daughter, their honor or pride belongs to the other family. There may be examples where marriages have created a social alliance between families, but in many of my interviews, fathers consider daughters as a source of vulnerability. One interpretation of this is that they have limited means to offer their daughter social protection if there are problems within their marriages. Some fathers defend their daughters in troubled relationships and insist upon a divorce, but, nonetheless, a divorced daughter sitting in her parents' home is a source of shame.

In addition to the loss of capital during a daughter's marriage, women are also associated with the loss of property or change in class status. Muhammad Chaudhry argues that the practice of first-cousin marriages as well as marriages within kinship groups have evolved so that property stays within the family. Holding on to property allows families to maintain their status, as class status is intrinsically tied to land ownership (Chaudhry 1999). Given the fears regarding the sub-division of property, Chaudhry suggests that women's marriages and roles within families have become politicized. As women, especially in the rural areas, live within a joint-family system, they are blamed for discord within the family. A common narrative is that women create feuds between brothers, as they want to take a brother away from his family and keep his property and earnings only for themselves and their children. Chaudhry (1999) writes: "The elders who are approached to effect a division of the property . . . usually advise them to stay together and keep their women in control" (Chaudhry 1999: 43).

Women's morality and chastity are considered as a source of family honor, illustrating how policing family boundaries builds capital. According to Chaudhry: "Women's behavior becomes a matter of male Muslim identity because the way women act directly impacts on *ghairat*, men's gift of personal integrity from God (...) (Chaudhry 1999: 68). That is, according to Chaudhry family honor is constructed from the strict policing of private/public boundaries that

I describe more in the next chapter. Boundary management includes policing women's chastity or the control of female bodies. Women who have any interactions with men outside their immediate family or raise the rumor of such interactions are a source of shame. This idea of family honor within women was expressed frequently in my interviews. One landlord exclaimed: "Mostly disputes arise due to women because they are our honor." A fuller discussion of the construction of family honor is beyond the scope of this chapter, but the strict policing of boundaries has politicized gender relations to the extent that discord or loss of capital is attributed to transgressions by women.

3.7 CONCLUSION

The lens of social capital presents an important understanding of how kinship groups reproduce. Unlike structural accounts of kinship that emphasize how groups reproduce along patrilineal lines, my use of social capital suggests that kinship ties are instrumental and activated strategically. By examining reciprocity among kinship groups in the construction of social ties, I show how social capital is constructed through gift-exchange and other reciprocal exchanges within Pakistani villages. For instance, landlords build social capital through local presence and access. Drawing on Goffman, I show how it is important to see social capital through an interactional lens rather than in the classic Bourdieuan or Weberian understanding which attributes capital to social position. While my focus on interaction does not preclude position, it highlights the performative dynamic of capital. For instance, during dispute resolution, social capital is generated through performances for the entire village.

I also extend Lamont's (1992) idea of boundaries to show how social capital is linked to boundary management between groups as well as the state which results in social capital for landlords by emphasizing their local autonomy and influence. The lens of boundary management is critical to understanding how reciprocal social ties between kinship groups can result in either social capital or social rupture, as collective ties that promote social cohesion can also erode Pakistani kinship relations. Finally, I show how gender is closely linked to mechanisms of boundary management.

4.0 RE-ENVISIONING THE STATE THROUGH A LENS OF BOUNDARY MANAGEMENT

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Building on the discussion of boundary management in the last chapter, I focus here on how local kinship elites in Pakistan manage boundaries with the state and how they distinguish between the sphere of the official state or government and the village community. Examining when and how local elites manage boundaries can help us understand dynamics of local communities as well as the state (Beissinger 2001).

My discussion of boundary management has three critical implications for the study of states. One, I show how, through boundary management, local elites play a state-like role. This suggests that state formation is a continual process shaped by the contestations between local actors and the national elite. Second, my research points to how the local elites instrumentalize institutions of the state in order to manage boundaries. In other words, contestations around boundaries are a source of political power (Reed 2013). Finally, in many contexts, these local elites greatly shape or serve as a substitute for people's experience with the state. The state-like role of local elites underscores how the public/private dichotomy that has shaped scholarly understanding of the state is not as relevant in Pakistan. In Pakistan and other kinship-based societies, kinship networks intersect with and shape state institutions. The lens of boundary management reveals when and how people draw boundaries, which allows us to see the

public/private distinction as a construction— one that is manipulated by local elites to leverage their political capital. In this way, the lens of boundary management illuminates people’s lived experience and, thus, the construct of the state itself.

A theoretical discussion on how boundaries between the state and society are managed is sparse (Mayrl and Quinn 2016) and comes from the study of state formation in Western Europe. Some scholars focus on the external boundaries of the state in the context of the development of the nation-state and nationalism (Anderson 2006, Calhoun 2007a, Gellner and Breuilly 2008). Others discuss the boundaries between state and society or what Foucault calls the disciplinary powers of the state (Foucault 1977, Mayrl and Quinn 2016).

Our understanding of the mechanisms of boundary management outside of Western Europe is especially limited since the contestations between communities and the state in non-western contexts are often local and therefore are not well documented. As Partha Chatterjee (1993) argues about peasant resistance in India, protest in rural areas and in small personal circles can pass unnoticed compared to protest in central, urban areas with state surveillance. Ranajit Guha (1999) further attributes the erasure of such protests to the elitist nature of public records, such as police records, administrative accounts, which privileges the central state’s narrative of maintaining power and control. Finally, Asef Bayat (1997, 2000) argues that in many places, such as Iran, acts of collective resistance has been under-studied, as it consists of phenomenon that is sometimes difficult to see, such as encroachment, which include the strategies of the poor to acquire resources and space they need for survival. While they do not openly challenge the state, their widespread use underscores the need to examine them as a form of contentious politics.

Boundary-management in Pakistan similarly points to the need to re-conceptualize resistance. As Bayat suggests, resistance in Pakistan often comprises actions by individuals. However, given the uniformity of practices across my field site, I argue that such strategies represent a common understanding of boundaries. However, unlike the situation described by Bayat, such forms of resistance against the state are not led by the poor but by local elite, such as landlords. One way historically that the local elite have resisted the state is by maintaining their own form of dispute resolution known as the *panchayati* system or disputes adjudicated by a council of elders (Gilmartin 2003). In the areas where I worked, the *panchayati* system does not exist in the same historical form with a formal council of elders who formally adjudicate village disputes, but kinship leaders continue to mediate disputes on an individual basis and assert their autonomy from the state. In this way, through boundary management, local elites seek to reconstitute their pre-colonial powers and influence that is undermined by the legal framework of the Pakistani state (Nelson 2011). In this chapter, I document particular cases of dispute resolution and associated processes and suggest how they represent mechanisms of boundary-making.

4.2 LITERATURE

Sociologists have consistently emphasized the importance of studying boundaries, namely how people categorize each other, behaviors, and places in order to make sense of reality, what Michèle Lamont and Virág Molnár (2002) refer to as symbolic boundaries. These symbolic boundaries can often solidify into “objectified forms of social differences,” or social boundaries that shape an inequitable division of resources (Howard and Gaztambide-Fernandez 2010,

Lamont and Molnár 2002:168, Lareau 2000). This chapter will discuss boundary-making in the context of the state.

The literature on state formation discusses how states emerge from the actions of the central elite and in this way are integrally shaped by society (Migdal 2001, Skocpol 1979, Tilly 1992, Tilly 2005). While scholars focus on the impact of the state on society, there is no framework to explore the actual state/society boundary (Charrad 2011, Gramsci and Boothman 1995, Mayrl and Quinn 2016, Skocpol 1979, Weber 1978/1922). In the contemporary literature, limits of the state have been depicted by weak institutions (Migdal 2001). For instance, in much of the developing world, the state/society boundary is delineated by the urban/rural distinction. That is, state institutions, such as the police and municipal services, are evident in central, urban areas, but disappear in rural or peri-urban areas. It is the absence of the state that establishes the boundary between the state and society. I am less interested in the performance of state institutions or state failure than the agency of local actors in limiting the expansion of the state.

In this section, I discuss three distinct literatures on boundaries. I first focus on the classical structural approaches to understanding state boundaries, including a discussion of Max Weber's (1978/1922) categorization of states. Second, I discuss scholars who employ a cultural lens to depict how our understandings of the state are socially constructed, illuminating the limitations of the state (Anderson 2006, Mitchell 1999, Steinmetz 1999). Finally, I turn to scholars who work within a more anthropological tradition to illustrate how particular social groups, including ethnic and kinship groups, shape and subvert boundaries to influence how their own group is recognized (Barth 1969, Scott 2009). I draw from this discussion of social boundaries to identify mechanisms relevant to the management of state boundaries.

4.2.1 The Processes of State Formation

Institutional/structural approaches of the state draw on Émile Durkheim's (1984/1933) model in which state boundaries demarcate an external border as well as an internal division of labor. For instance, Wolfram Fischer and Peter Lundgreen (1975) and others characterize the formation of the state as dual processes of penetration and integration (Tilly 1975). That is, state formation in Europe was marked by efforts of the central, often urban-based, elite to incorporate the local elite as well as the people residing in their jurisdiction into the enterprise of the state. This involved accessing both local natural resources and human power. In order to manage its fast-growing assets, the state drew more local manpower into the central state institutions and levied taxes from the population. According to historians, these institutions grew more diversified and specialized over time to meet the widening functions of the state (Skocpol 1979, Tilly 1975, Tilly 1992). This understanding is consistent with Durkheim's functionalist account in which the institutions of the state evolve organically to exert social order and facilitate the smooth running of society (Durkheim 1984/1933). While Durkheim distinguishes between institutions in modern or organic society, for the most part, he treats the state as a monolithic category, one that is enmeshed with society, a lens that obscures the process of boundary formation between states and society.

A wide range of sociological literature on the state also obscures the boundaries between state and society by emphasizing the centralizing nature of state power and the complex ways in which the state can control or shape the population that resides within its geographic boundaries. This includes Michel Foucault's (1977) idea of governmentality; Karl Marx's (1975) understanding of social change; and Benedict Anderson's (2006) depiction of the nation-state. According to the Foucaultian definition of power, the state's power is pervasive and nearly

impossible for the individual to resist (Foucault 1977). Karl Marx's (1975) depiction of the state in terms of bourgeois class interests as well his idea of social change also blurs the line between society and the state (see also Abrams 1988). Marx (1975) envisioned that the rise of the proletariat would do away with the state, establishing the proletariat society as the state. For Anderson (2006), the concept of the nation-state similarly blurs the boundary between state and society. He largely considers the state boundary to be an external, geographic boundary, which is critical to his understanding of the nation-state.

4.2.2 An Institutional Take

While Max Weber (1978/1922) does not directly reference state boundaries, he offers an implicit understanding in his discussion of how the nature of leadership shapes the relationship between the state and society. For instance, Weber argues that states that are ruled by a charismatic leader have more diffuse state/society boundaries than other states as they are shaped by the leader's discretion. Similarly, he depicts modern states run by rational, bureaucracies as having boundaries that are clearly delineated by laws. Yet the Weberian idea of state assumes the conceptual integrity of the idea of statehood, and in doing so, ignores the role of sub-state actors in shaping the boundaries of the state, and indeed, the state itself.

The limitation of the Weberian model also carries forth into adaptations of Weber's ideal type to understand the more contemporary formation of statehood. For instance, Mouira Charrad (2001, 2011) extends Weber's (1978/1922) discussion of patrimonialism, when rulers use personal ties to govern as opposed to laws and rules, to examine the processes of state-formation in the three countries of the Maghreb (see also Charrad 2011). Charrad examines how the state used strategies of marginalization, integration, or a combination of these to gain control over the local elite, such as kinship groups, which indelibly shaped the legal framework of countries in

the Maghreb. Charrad's discussion of the role of kinship group usefully points to how the legal code was an important mechanism to control kinship groups. Such a legal code can serve as a mechanism of boundary management (Tilly 2004). However, like Weber, Charrad assumes the integrity of the state, and so does not focus on how the local elite interpreted, shaped, and influenced the legal framework. Therefore, we have only half a picture of what the processes of state formation entail.

Weber's (1978/1922) depiction of boundaries as "social closure" and Pierre Bourdieu's (1977) subsequent theory of practice contribute to our understanding of boundary management. By social closure, Weber refers to how social groups delineate boundaries through the monopolization of resources and an emphasis on social difference based on a common ancestry and culture. Weber's operationalization of ethnic boundaries is not unlike his focus on class boundaries. While his understanding of class includes the idea of a socioeconomic position, it also includes the associated practices of class, such as membership to social clubs, education, and a cultivated manner of speaking. Weber's idea of status influenced Pierre Bourdieu's (1977) focus on practice. Bourdieu argues that a person's class shapes their dispositions and associated lifestyle practices. Weber's and Bourdieu's ideas of status or practice are similar to what Mayrl and Quinn (2016) refer to as objects demarcating boundaries. Again while Bourdieu and Weber are not referencing state boundaries, their discussion of how social differences are maintained through practices and other attributes can be adapted to study practices that contribute to maintaining state boundaries.

Tilly's (2004) work on boundaries moves us from objects demarcating boundaries to mechanisms that reproduce them. While Tilly is examining the theoretical construct of boundaries more widely, his mechanisms can also be used to study state boundaries. Tilly

usefully delineates between mechanisms that cause and constitute boundaries. For instance, he describes how boundaries may develop from mechanisms of imposition or when institutions such as the state extend their control to where it did not exist before. Tilly underscores two important mechanisms: 1) the demarcation of boundaries through inscription or erasure and 2) boundary management or activation and deactivation (see also Mayrl and Quinn 2016). As Mayrl and Quinn (2016), echoing Weber's idea of closure, underscore, boundary management can lead to politicization or allow some actors to further their own self-interests.

The institutional approach to state boundaries emphasizes how boundaries are shaped by the nature of political systems—delineating between traditional and modern structures (Weber 1978/1922). This discussion of boundaries takes for granted the idea of a state and its structural focus obscures important local structures and actors. Weber (1978/1922) and Bourdieu's (1977) discussion of particular attributes and practices that contribute to shaping boundaries is more useful as it points to factors that provide evidence of boundaries. Finally, Tilly's (2004) discussion of mechanisms is important as it forces us to consider what allows boundaries to persist. His typology is an important start that needs to be refined through more empirical work.

4.2.3 Cultural Conceptions of the State

Scholars focusing more on cultural aspects of the state treat the state as a cultural construction bounded through symbols, rituals, and practices. But, this literature stops short of providing a theoretical framework to examine when/how state boundaries are activated. According to George Steinmetz (1999), while the state is a system comprised of institutions, it is also an idea, emphasizing how state power is conveyed and constructed through rituals (see also Abrams 1988). For instance, Timothy Mitchell's (1999) classic example of military parades shows how military rituals demonstrate state power and foster a sense of nationalism. Other rituals that

connote statehood include the pledge of allegiance, symbols, such as the flag, and other practices of the state, such as record-keeping (Cohn 1983, DiMaggio 1997, Geertz 1980, Joseph and Nugent 1994, Kertzer 1989, Mitchell 1991, Mitchell 1999). In addition to rituals, the construction of the state rests on local culture more generally. For instance, in discussing the construction of German nationhood, Rogers Brubaker (1992) emphasizes how the central elite drew on and celebrated local culture, such as the German language and the communal pub-culture.

State boundaries also have cognitive and perceptual dimensions that are shaped by culture. These dimensions illustrate how the boundaries between the state and society are enmeshed and are critical to the state's construction. For example citizens' experience of military parades shape their future association with and expectations from the state (see also DiMaggio 1997, Mayrl and Quinn 2016). In this way, rituals link state structures to an individual's cognitive schema, reinforcing the idea of states as constructions and their pervasive influence on society. Similarly, Benedict Anderson (2006) argues that the idea of a nation-state was partly conceived by envisioning boundary lines on a map—pointing to literally how boundaries contributed to making the idea of a state more tangible for its citizens. Berezin (1999) focuses on the cognitive dimension by discussing how the Italian state evoked the idea of state as a family to inspire loyalty among its citizens. This example suggests how the manipulation of state and family boundaries contributes to the state's construction. Finally, Joseph Gerteis and Alyssa Goolsby (2005) show how American national identity was shaped by the concept of race, illustrating how state boundaries reflect wider racial and social boundaries.

Pierre Bourdieu's (1977, 2014) depiction of states holding "meta-capital" illustrates the economic, cultural, and political dimensions of boundaries and the how states structure society.

Bourdieu is less interested in the mechanisms by which such boundaries are erected than on how states structure practices through its institutions. For instance, Bourdieu's (1977) concept of doxa or beliefs that we take for granted points to how the structures such as the state exert an unconscious discipline on its citizens. Doxa is reproduced through class-based socialization. Therefore, to some extent, Bourdieu suggests that your relationship with the state will evolve differently based on your class position. However, given the immense capital of the state, it influences individuals across classes.

Cultural accounts of the state emphasize how states are constructed through rituals, practices, and languages. In this way, we can see how state boundaries are enmeshed with societal ones, illustrating the pervasive influence of states. While cultural accounts of the state allude to boundaries by showing how states are constructed, the nature of the boundaries and how they shape people's experience of the state remains elusive. For the most part, cultural theorists also neglect how racial and social boundaries shape the construction of states.

4.2.4 Drawing from an Anthropological Tradition

Unlike the sociological literature on state or class-based boundaries, the anthropological literature highlights the agency of social groups. There are two main approaches. First, Fredrick Barth's (1969) classic model on maintaining ethnic boundaries emphasizes difference over cultural cohesion. James Scott (2009) makes a similar argument in his recent work on South-east Asia. He discusses how social groups have resisted the encroachment of states through social and cultural practices, such as not developing a written language and adopting nomadic economic practices. Second, some scholars, such as Collins (2004) and Goffman (1959) emphasize the micro-processes that promote social cohesion with the group, another form of boundary-making.

Barth (1969) makes two critical theoretical contributions to our understanding of boundaries. One, he defines ethnicity as the ability of groups to maintain boundaries rather than groups defined by a particular form of cultural practice (see also Verdery 1994). While Barth's thesis is widely accepted now, at the time he wrote, questioning the importance of culture was controversial. Barth argues that as cultural practices change and become similar among ethnic groups, it is insufficient to understand ethnicity by studying culture. Instead, it is also important to understand how ethnic difference is constructed and maintained through boundaries. Second, Barth emphasizes ascription or the ability of citizens to choose where they belong. In this way, Barth emphasizes a continual process of boundary-formation. Through his study of Pathans, a social group in Pakistan, he illustrates how boundaries were shaped by demographic pressures, cultural mechanisms that promote ascription, as well as individual and group agency. Barth (1969) also underscores the importance of interaction between social groups—for example, how boundaries are shaped by group interdependence. Boundaries for Barth can be symbolic (Lamont and Molnár 2002) but at the same time can lead to social closure (Weber 1978/1922). Such boundaries can also lead to the formation of collective identity (Pachucki, Pendergrass and Lamont 2007) .

The state's construction of national identity as well as how citizens resist such efforts help scholars conceptualize boundaries. Katherine Verdery (1994) applies Barth's discussion of ethnic boundaries to how states ascribe identity to effect a measure of political control. Therefore, she argues that an understanding of politics is necessary to show how states reproduce ethnic boundaries. For example, according to Verdery, states in the former Soviet Union forced their subjects to select a single national identity, undermining their regional and communal identities. In Tilly's terms, this would be a form of demarcation (Tilly 2004). Similar to

Verdery, Lynn Williams (1999), examining nationalism in Great Britain and Spain, emphasizes how states construct identities through language. Michael Herzfeld's (1993) study of Greece similarly concludes that a local understanding of national identity is not the same as that promoted by the government, providing evidence of inter-state boundaries (see also Brubaker 2004) and indicates why resistance provides a salient moment to examine state boundaries.

Philip S. Khoury and Joseph Kostiner (1990) in writing about state formation in the Middle East extend Barth's discussion of ethnic difference to how tribes maintain boundaries from the state. For them, tribe refers to a loose social organization, which may organize politically, where "kinship is the dominant idiom (Khoury and Kostiner 1990: 5)." They highlight how the constructions of state and tribes maintain boundaries by noting that " 'tribes and states have created and maintained each other' " (1990: 5). First, they acknowledge that there are a myriad of state actors, including tribes that play a political role and become state-like to maintain their autonomy (see also Cohen and Service 1978, Migdal 2005). In this way, the authors show how states and social groups residing within their boundaries develop symbiotic practices that continually influence boundaries with the state. This resonates with Mayrl and Quinn's (2016) discussion of politicization because it illustrates how boundary management, referring to both the reinforcement and dissolution of boundaries, is a strategy to protect the self-interest of tribes. Second, they discuss how living in deserts or mountainous areas allowed tribal groups to maintain autonomy—suggesting the importance of physical distance to boundary management (see also Scott 2009). Third, they find that local elites have struck various deals with government in order to maintain local control—suggesting how boundaries exerted by local actors can also be formalized and reproduced by the state.

Acts of resistance against the state provide an important lens to understand the nature of state boundaries and how particular actors influence them. In his discussion of how hill tribes of Southeast Asia evaded control, James Scott (2009) breaks from the traditional literature on state formation. Contrary to the focus on centralizing, Scott describes local strategies to resist the state's expansion, including: 1) employing physical distance by escaping to the hills (a territory Scott refers to as Zomia); 2) remaining illegible by not developing written text; and 3) cultivating resources that can't be easily counted by the state. Scott's central contribution is to understand how these historic clashes between the central state and groups residing in Zomia have shaped the nature of state power, boundaries between the hill-tribes and the state, and the sub-culture of Zomia. Other scholars similarly discuss how resistance provides an opportunity to examine how social groups push back on state boundaries. For instance, Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson (1992) point out that self-determination movements have often shaped state ideologies. George Bisharat (1997) discusses how the Palestinian relationship to the land has contributed to the idea of Palestinian nationhood.

A diverse literature, ranging from the French revolution to the development of local politics, emphasizes the importance of physical space to the construction of the boundaries. Roger Gould's (1995) discussion of the French revolution points to how boundaries between the state and those elements resisting the state were shaped by particular neighborhoods. As these neighborhoods were inaccessible by the central elite, they created durable boundaries and became integral to the organization of the rebellion. Ronald Weissman (1989), writing about state formation in Italy, emphasizes the importance of place for political candidates. That is, their ability to navigate local boundaries allowed them to win local elections—again emphasizing the presence of local boundaries as well as their influence on the political processes of the state.

Scott (1985, 1990) and Asef Bayat (2000) underscore the importance of using discursive strategies and “everyday” practices to better understand the activation of boundaries between citizens and the state. In addition to particular acts and strategies of resistance, Scott (1990) directs our attentions to discursive strategies, what he calls hidden transcripts, where the dominated class is able to develop alternate strategies to challenge the status quo. Scott (1985) also talks about other cultural forms of resistance, such as playing dumb, acting slow, where individuals can resist the elite without disturbing the wider social order. Such practices are important to consider when examining cases that have not experienced wider forms of collective action. Bayat (2000) writes about similar acts of resistance, focusing on individual acts, which he claims that over time can inform cultural practice. It is important to underscore that Scott’s focus on the resistance patterns shaped in Zomia and Bayat’s on common practice are pointing to the need to examine more localized units of analysis to understand boundary-making.

Revising Barth’s classic formulation, Andreas Wimmer (2008, 2013) argues that cultural difference is not enough to understand boundary-making, and makes a case for considering the social field, including the institutional landscape, distribution of power, and wider network. Wimmer links the agency of actors in drawing boundaries to how they are shaped by wider social fields, thereby linking cognition to social structures. For instance, ascription is a cognitive choice where people seek to align themselves with more powerful ethnic groups. At the same time, people are constrained by where they sit in the power hierarchy. Wimmer uses the idea of differential power contained in social networks to explain why individuals of African descent were included into Brazil’s nation-building project after independence but excluded in the United States’ (see also Marx 1999).

4.3. UNDERSTANDING STATE/LOCAL BOUNDARIES IN PAKISTAN

I draw on the institutional, cultural, and anthropological approaches to understand state boundaries in Pakistan. First, I draw on Weber (1978/1922) and Bourdieu's (1977) focus on structures and associated status and practices to find evidence of state/local boundaries. I also invoke on Tilly's (2004) discussion of the mechanisms that contribute to demarcating and managing boundaries. From the cultural literature I discuss the importance of rituals and practices and the importance of gatekeepers. I look for connections between practices and underlying cognitive structures. Finally, I draw on Barth's (1969) understanding of ascription to underscore the agency of gatekeepers in shaping boundaries. I also explore how physical spaces and discourse contribute to boundary management (Gould 1995, Muir and Weissman 1989, Scott 1985, Scott 2009).

As it is important to locate the formation of state/society boundaries within particular social structures, such as kinship, I explore the role that kinship groups in Pakistan play in managing state/local boundaries. While kinship groups have historically played a state-like role, I argue that their current role in managing boundaries is based on the kinship group's need to reproduce and maintain their status. Nicolas Martin (2015) emphasizes that due to the industrialization and the increase in service jobs, being a landowner does not carry the same status as it once did. He emphasizes that landlords have entered into national and local politics as a means to maintain and create status. I argue that while elections are one strategy landlords employ to preserve influence, it is important to examine a wider range of practices.

Dispute resolution is an important local practice that allows kinship leaders to demarcate and manage boundaries. These practices also have a cognitive dimension as they contribute to shaping ideas regarding justice, where social order is considered more important than a fair trial,

and emphasize the importance of kinship and other local connections. These practices often establish moral boundaries between their communities and the state. The role of kinship elite also points to their important roles as gatekeepers.

Space and physical distance shape these boundaries as well. While my field site does not fit Scott's (2009) definition of Zomia, as it lies in the central plain regions, the idea of distance from the state is relevant in understanding local boundaries. Even though Pakistan has a modern state infrastructure, parts of the country are connected through roads that date from the period of the British colonial government. This physical distance emphasizes the conceptual distance from the state as well as the salience of local community.

In the next section of the chapter, I examine how the role of kinship group in dispute resolution contributes to boundaries. I discuss the importance of spaces such as the *dera* in demarcating boundaries as well as the connections between *deras*. I also detail who some of the most influential gatekeepers are, which also reveals the nature of boundaries. Finally, I reveal the mechanisms of boundary management, including when boundaries become politicized.

4.4. BOUNDARY MANAGEMENT: PLAYING THE “STATE”

Local kinship leaders in Pakistan carefully police boundaries with the state. While there is precedent for the historical autonomy of kinship groups, today people police boundaries for two reasons. First, control over state boundaries allows kinship leaders to maintain autonomy from the state. In other words, managing boundaries provides an opportunity for kinship groups to build political capital by playing a state-like role. Second, to a much more limited extent, kinship groups can influence who has access to state resources.

The modern-day state/local boundaries of Pakistan were partly shaped by the British government's development of a civil and penal code in 1880 and 1860 respectively (Caton 2004, Gilmartin 2003). During the same period, the British colonial administration granted state-like powers to kinships groups, so that they could support the colonial governance systems. For example, the colonial administration appointed the heads of larger land-owning kinship groups as local tax collectors, or *numberdars*. In David Gilmartin's (2003) analysis of cattle theft in the province of Punjab in 1913, he describes the evolution of a parallel mechanism of dispute resolution. His discussion underscores the salience of dispute resolution as a historical boundary management mechanism. He points to how kinship leaders chose when to invoke institutions of the state versus kinship-based methods of dispute resolution. For example, kinship leaders brought the theft of cows from private land "from inside building and yard" to institutions of the state, drawing on their social contract with the colonial state as property owners (Gilmartin 2003:53). At the same time, they continued to use customary forms of dispute resolution for theft from common property, which was seen by the villagers to violate "collective proprietary rights" (Gilmartin 2003:55). Gilmartin's (2003) account of the colonial justice system evokes Tilly's (2004) discussion of how the imposition of a new legal order may have contributed to boundary activation for theft from common land and deactivation of this boundary for other matters. Similarly, the role of local elite in navigating this boundary underscores the importance of gatekeepers (Lamont 1992).

4.4.1 Mediating Cases



Figure 3 Dispute Resolution, Chiniot (the deradar is sitting behind the table surrounded by his claimants)

While Pakistan has a modern judicial system, comprising lower courts in the districts, high courts in the provincial capitals, and a supreme court, a significant percentage of cases are mediated outside of the state-run system. There is no data on the number of cases that are taken to the informal dispute resolution processes. However, my research suggests that a significant number of villagers, if not a majority, choose to adjudicate their cases through the informal dispute resolution system at some stage. Individuals who file cases in the court often also seek out informal mediation at some point during the process or even simultaneously. One landlord who manages a *dera* or *deradar* voiced a common opinion: “Eventually cases that go to the government are resolved locally.” Based on estimates, there are approximately 2.1 million cases

pending within the Pakistani court system (Siddiqi 2016). Some people emphasize that the local dispute resolution system is much more efficient as compared to the state, especially given this tremendous backlog of cases. However, I argue that the existence of the local dispute mechanism is not only in response to the failure of the Pakistani judicial system, but also a strategy of local gatekeepers to cultivate capital and resist the state.¹³ Importantly, *deradars* don't only provide access to their own kin or even people in their region, but to anyone who wishes to register the case. For certain *deras* associated with well-respected individuals, claimants come from within the larger region. For a villager, it is quite possible that they have interacted with the *dera* at some point in their lifetime for themselves or their kin.

From my Field Notes:

The day that I visited Nayyar Shah's dera, there were over 25 individuals waiting for their cases to be heard. They were sitting around an open courtyard while Nayyar sat facing them on a table filled with case files and a note-pad. As I sat there over the course of the morning, I realized that the majority of individuals were not there for themselves but as a moral support or witnesses for others. In fact, there were only three pending cases that morning. They included a dispute about a contract to sell milk between two parties, a land dispute, and a divorce. Nayyar heard the argument of each case with the wider audience arguing with him from time to time. The discussions were not only verbal but Nayyar made detailed notes that he inserted into the case files. The trial at Nayyar's dera was set-up very much like a lower court, creating a striking parallel with the state's judicial mechanism (Field Notes October 2, 2016)

¹³ Matthew Nelson (2011) similarly points to how the backlog of cases isn't a deterrent for people filing cases in the lower courts. In fact, people file court cases to gain time or to put pressure on their opponents, so that they can reach a more advantageous settlement outside of the courts.

The day at Nayyar's *dera* suggested that, like the court system, local landlords organize hearings, maintain case files, and hear arguments. While they lack the means to investigate cases, they count on the claimants to collect and present evidence. In lieu of evidence, the *deradars* often rely on character witnesses. I was struck by the extent of the discussion and debate. The local dispute resolution system is often referred to as a *panchayati* system, referring to a council of elders, a process that is considered closed and hierarchical. There may be trials that are more hierarchical, but this one was not. Nayyar presents a new, modern face of *deradars*. While Nayyar was the ranking landlord, the "trial" was not passive. There was significant debate between the two sides as well as with Nayyar. Many individuals argued that he was giving too much time to one individual or ignoring the pertinent facts. While the claimants presented their cases, Nayyar weighed in, often asking questions to clarify the issue or managing the wider discussion.

The presence of a local dispute resolution mechanism allows individuals a measure of choice in addressing their grievances. While dispute resolution through kinship groups is an established process, dating back centuries according to Nawazish Shah, a local landlord and mediator, it is also an informal one. There are common, accepted processes involved, but local landlords and claimants have some discretion as to the rules that they apply. For instance, landlords may adjudicate minor cases directly. However, for larger cases, especially ones involving politically powerful people, individuals may confer with other *deradars* or refer the matter to their local elected representatives. Similarly, the claimant and the defendant can decide which *dera* to take their case. If they don't trust a local landlord, they often can discuss and agree on a second candidate. Also, if the case has not been decided in their favor, individuals can ask another landlord to re-try it. And, individuals also retain the option to take their issue to the

state's judicial system. While boundary management mechanisms can be politicized and managed carefully, the multiple avenues to seek justice also suggest that local claimants some have agency in where they address their disputes. In essence, the mediator and individuals involved play a role in activating this boundary, not unlike Barth's (1969) discussion of ascription.

The cases that come to the *dera* often reveal wider political rivalries. For instance, the individuals who came to Nayyar's *dera* to settle their dispute over the contract to sell milk came from over two hours away, brought multiple vehicles, and about a dozen men. Apparently this was the second time they had come to Nayyar and Nayyar asked them to come back for a third time with more evidence regarding the price of milk. I asked Nayyar why they would come such a distance at a considerable expense when the amount in dispute was not very high. He did not answer directly but suggested that the two sides are from different political factions, and this milk dispute reflects an ongoing political dispute. That is, this case may be part of their wider efforts to shame and threaten the opposing side. In this way, the *dera* is a site where different political interests play out and take shape.

4.4.2 Demarcating Boundaries

Deras, described as a central village institution, are the primary site of dispute resolution. In this way, the physical space of the *dera* symbolizes the state/local boundary (Lamont and Molnár 2002).

From my Field Notes:

Omar Cheema's dera is a grey concrete one-story structure, flying the Pakistani flag, and sub-divided into three sections. The first section is a partially covered, paved

courtyard. This main area can easily accommodate several dozen participants. I have seen Omar's courtyard transform from a space where he hosts half a dozen men to discuss local politics to a dispute trial. (Field Notes February 16, 2015).



Figure 4 Omar's Dera Faisalabad

The distinct areas of the *dera* also point to different dynamics of the dispute resolution process. The courtyard, providing a communal space, is the front-stage of the *dera*, and is accessible to the wider village (Goffman 1959). The accessibility of the *dera* suggests transparency as well as access, as any passerby can witness the proceedings. The openness contributes to a form of peer pressure. As the *deradar* has limited ability to sanction the participants, the openness of the trial helps to legitimate the proceedings to some extent. That is, the wider public is not unlike an informal jury, and informally endorses the decision of the *deradar* through their participation. In the cultural literature on the state, boundary management is seen to be a role of the state, one that

is felt through the symbolic show of power or enforcement of state rules (Mayrl and Quinn 2016, Mitchell 1999). However, in this case, it is the landlord and other local elites who play a powerful role in activating or demarcating the boundaries between state and society. In part, these boundaries are maintained through the various forms of role-playing undertaken by kinship members that in a court of law would include the judge, jury, and the witnesses. This role-playing sets up the *dera* as a construct that rivals the influence of the state.

Just beyond the courtyard, Omar has built an enclosed room, which resembles a large reception area. This room has even more seats, and also doubles up as a guest room for travelers, which usually include the local patrolling police units.

As this room affords more privacy, I've seen Omar use it to conduct closed negotiations.

*Omar also uses this room in the colder winter months, so his *dera* is open throughout the year. Finally, Omar's personal office faces the large reception hall where he holds private meetings. This is a smaller room with a western style desk and chairs, and can accommodate a handful of people. Above his desk, Omar has hung a picture of his father, who was also a *deradar*. Political posters of candidates that Omar has supported line the walls. (Field Notes February 16, 2015).*

The existence of a second space, the backroom, reveals that sometimes the front-room performances and back-stage negotiations can occur simultaneously. The front-room performances allow Omar to build consensus. At the same, time, through the backroom, he can rely on the persuasive powers that come with his position. Depending on the case, the role of the front and back room can be reversed as well.

Individuals like Omar derive capital from their ability to manage boundaries. In part, Omar is able to host dispute resolution trials at his *dera* given the economic and political

isolation of his village, signifying a sort of distance from the state. *Deras* like Omar's are likely to be found in villages where the state has limited influence on a daily basis. Their ability to exist is also based on their physical distance from the state (Scott 2009). The larger *deras* that served as a site for dispute resolution were largely located in rural areas in Jaranwala and Chak Jhumra, where these are often the only places people can turn to during an emergency. Jaranwala was more physically remote with a limited infrastructure while Chak Jhumra was physically close but politically and economically isolated. There are *deras* in the city, but they have the feel of community meeting spaces rather than informal court rooms. While the location of Omar's *dera* emphasizes distance from the state, the flag that Omar flew over his *dera* seemed to connote both state power as well as the role of the *deradar* as a gatekeeper to the state. As the posters on his wall suggested, he also plays a role in promoting local candidates, another way that he maintains influence.

A *dera*'s influence is not only shaped by the socioeconomic position of the *deradar*, although being a landlord provides access. Nawazish, Omar's grandson, commented that even though his family had smaller landholdings than others in the village, they maintained an influential *dera*. "You won't find another *dera* like this one in this area." It is important to point out by landlords, I am not necessarily referring to owners of feudal estates. While there are swaths of Pakistan, especially in the South, where you can find larger estates of hundreds of acres, in my field site, the majority of the landowners owned 3-10 acres of land, which allowed them to have the status of landowners and maintain their own *dera*. There were a handful of larger landlords as well. Some moved to the city and had appointed relatives to maintain local ties. However, landlords and individuals who frequented *deras* emphasized that a landlord's status is based on local presence, so the influence of landlords who move away and manage their

interests remotely declines. For this reason, a former member of the national assembly (MNA) who owns 100 acres of land dedicates a significant amount of his time to the village as realizes that the status he derives from the land is insufficient (see also Martin 2015).

Social order within the *dera* is not fixed, but is constructed based on the audience, the issue, and to some extent, the position of the *deradar*. While villagers have some ability to participate within the *dera*, it is important to locate the interactions within Wimmer's (2013) understanding of a social field. In most cases, villagers will not have much room to oppose the decision of the *deradar*. While exerting boundaries, *deradars* can maintain a more formal, hierarchical position in the *dera*, signifying their role as a local leader. In contrast, in private, they can adopt their private personas and rely on existing social relationships to build consensus. For instance, even in my interviews, the *deradars* would present a different face of authority while seated in the courtyard instead of their more private quarters. While seated in the *dera*, one landlord argued that divorce has no place in Pakistani society, posturing for the wider group that had gathered in the courtyard. At the same time, when we moved inside to have tea, the *deradar* admitted that his own daughter was divorced. As a community, the *dera* establishes and reinforces a cultural schematic through which people maintain their local relationships. At the same time, through public displays, it also serves a means to reproduce that schemata or socialize its participants. In particular, such displays shape ideas about the quality of justice received and the position of women (DiMaggio 1997, Swidler 1997). In this way, the *dera* not only orders people's social relationships but also how they think about boundaries or cognitive structures (Mayrl and Quinn 2016).

4.4.3 Durable Boundaries

My research shows that village-level *deras* are often are linked to a wider network of *deras*, underscoring the durable nature of boundaries.

In one village, I came across a case that involved the shooting of a shopkeeper that was taken to two deras associated with Omar and Usman Cheema. Omar and Usman were from the same kinship group but not directly related, and both served as village deradars. I visited Usman's dera first. He laid out the details of the case where two local teenagers, who were drunk, had fired at a shopkeeper over a dispute about the price of gas. Apparently, the shopkeeper was charging Rs. 10 (10 cents) more in the village than the city price to account for the cost of transporting it from the city on his motorbike. The dispute escalated and the boys shot the shopkeeper three times in the leg, arm, and stomach. Then they took the shopkeeper to their home and threatened to kill him. Usman heard of what happened and intervened. He told them that they could be charged with murder, so they should let him go. The shopkeeper's family filed a case with the police and one of the shooters was in prison. According to Omar, the family of the shooter had approached him a few days later to ask him to make peace. (Field Notes February 16, 2015).

First, it is important to note that according to Usman, his role was not unlike that of the police. He was the first responder on the scene and asked the boys to let the shopkeeper go. He also played a role mediating between the shopkeeper's family and the police. While the shopkeeper's family was pursuing their police case, the family of the boys approached Omar to make peace—pointing to how often there are often parallel processes ongoing for the same case. It is also

important to note that Omar and Usman's *deras* had different roles in this process pointing to how *deras* operate within a nested hierarchy.

Omar's dera is described as a higher or more influential dera in the village. While Usman mediates in his living room, Omar has a formal set-up (described above). Usman claimed that both parties had approached him on the same day. The victim claimed that the police were not treating the case as attempted murder but a lesser charge of unintentional harm. The family of the boys, afraid of retaliation, wanted to make peace. Usman said that once the victim had cooled down he and Omar would help to make peace, suggesting that the case would eventually be mediated locally (Field Notes February 16, 2015).

This link between the *deras* underscores how boundary-management is shaped by the wider power structure. On one hand, the traditions and practices of a particular landlord and his *dera* constitute the boundaries between his local community and the state. At the same time, the *deras* are linked, so that the larger, more formal *dera* shapes the activity of each village *dera* by reinforcing the dispute resolution processes and contributing to a common case history. It is important not to overstate the hierarchy as the links between the *deras* are informal.

This hierarchy between *deras* is partly shaped by the *deradar's* status and access to a wider political network. As suggested above, the *deradar* has a certain status from his position as a landowner, although access to land is not the only criteria. Distance from the state also allows a *deradar* to cultivate status. Distance from the state entails both physical distance as well as the ability of the *deradar* to operate with autonomy. For instance, Omar mentioned that even the lower courts have accepted documentations of the decisions that he has mediated as evidence—suggesting the autonomy and legitimacy of his *dera*. Finally, a *dera's* influence is shaped by

access to a wider political network, such as the police and elected officials whom the *deradar* can rely on to exert political pressure on his rivals. In this case, Omar had greater political capital, which is why the family of the claimants turned to him to mediate peace. Usman's role as the lesser *deradar* was to respond in the immediate aftermath of the incident. It is important to note that both *deradars* reinforced the importance of making peace once both sides had cooled down even though their sympathies lay with the shopkeeper, underscoring to how *deras* universally emphasize social order over justice.

The existence of connections between *deras*, even informal ones, strengthens the idea that *deras* are an alternate to state-run justice agencies. That is, these *deras* are not merely site-specific. Their connections and the uniformity of processes across *deras* suggest an internal structure and logic. All the *deradars* and local residents whom I interviewed outlined that they share a similar process, suggesting common, widespread understanding of the mechanism. One claimant may pursue his case in multiple *deras* simultaneously to ensure a favorable response or may appeal a *deradar*'s decision at another *dera*. In most cases, villagers will appeal the decision of a local village-level *dera* to a more formal one. The original *deradar* may attend the new hearing in person and provide a justification for his earlier decision. But such actions are largely voluntary. Each *deradar* has his own jurisdiction, and is not subject to the ruling of another *deradar*. Even though the connections between the *deras* are loose, the networked *deras* represent what Tilly calls (2005) trust networks or networks characterized by high levels of trust among members, limited access, and wider opposition to the state. The networked *deras* suggest that trust networks not only structure social relationships within the network but also with the state. The network of *deras* represents the architecture of the trust networks.

4.4.4 The Gate-Keepers

An understanding of the key mediators provides insights into the wider mechanisms of boundary management. As Lamont (1992) argues, some individuals serve as key gatekeepers in shaping boundaries because of their position as employers or culture producers. While landowners historically served as mediators, there is greater variation in this role today. As discussed in the last chapter, individuals are able to cultivate capital by entering into and investing in reciprocal ties. According to Asghar, my assistant, competing landlords draw on different strategies to develop their influence and construct their public roles. The manner in which they construct their roles to some extent shapes the local boundary. For example, some reference their family lineage setting themselves up as rivals to the state. Others emphasize their connections to the state and seem more like local liaisons to the state. This is not unlike Lamont's (1992) discussion of how the differing position of the gatekeepers in France and the United States shapes the nature of boundaries between the upper and middle classes. But, as Asghar points out, individuals may be born into certain roles but choose to strategically activate them in order to establish boundaries¹⁴.

Women rarely serve as formal mediators, but some can informally intervene in cases involving women in their community. For example, in Ijaz's village, the school principal helped the mother of one her students to convince her husband to let her teach at her school. Similarly, another local teacher convinced the family of one of her students to let her study even the family did not want her to complete high school. However, in general, the ability for women to mediate is limited by the strictly defined public/private boundaries. Even in instances where women played a role in dispute resolution, their intervention is consistent with widely accepted gender norms.

¹⁴ Personal Communication, January 27, 2015.

In this section, I provide an overview of the local actors leading the dispute resolution processes. It is important to keep in mind that mediators are often not acting alone, but with their kinship group. The three most common kind of mediators include: 1) larger landlords, 2) *numberdars* or customary revenue collectors, and 3) elected officials. More recently, especially, there are self-appointed mediators, who include more mobile women as well as local philanthropists who have cultivate respect through their good deeds. These roles often overlap, but I include them here, as each represents a different claim to legitimacy.

4.4.4.1 Landlords As landlords, the families of Nayyar and Nawazish Shah have historically played a role in dispute management. However, while their family has an illustrious reputation in the area, their ability to play that role today underscores their own agency. Here Barth's emphasis on ascription seems to apply. According to Nayyar, his family collectively holds 2500 acres of land in the village and his family has played a role in the governance of the village since when the area was first settled before the British colonial rule. In this role, their forefathers served as village heads and frequently resolved disputes, hosted outsiders, and provided a social safety net for villagers. However, Nayyar and Nawazish were not in line for the *deradar's* role. Nayyar is the youngest son of his father, who is Nawazish's elder brother. As Nayyar's older brother was not interested in playing the role of mediator, Nayyar decided to take on that family role. Nayyar claims that as a boy, he was keenly interested in village politics. He often used to sit with his father while he made decisions, and, over time, his father started consulting with him on his cases. Similarly, when his brother died, Nawazish also made a bid to take over from his brother.

As Nayyar and Nawazish are breaking from tradition, there is some friction between them. Even though they are from the same family, they organize rival *deras* that are located on

the same street. Nawazish complains how Nayyar is too young for this role, while Nayyar bristles at how his uncle undercuts him. This rivalry has persisted over the two year period that I was visiting their *dera*. Fueling their rivalry, they have developed distinctive styles of dispute resolution. Nayyar prides himself on swift, efficient justice, emphasizing his ability to resolve cases on the day they are submitted. Nawazish evokes the thoughtful, deliberate manner of an older gentlemen. Sometimes, he hears cases half a dozen times before he rules. While Nayyar emphasizes his accessibility, Nawazish makes people wait hours before he'll see them.

Drawing on their family's lineage is a common way that Nayyar and Nawazish construct boundaries. Both Nayyar and Nawazish underscore that the village is part of their family's jurisdiction, an area where the police is hesitant to thread. Nawazish emphasized: "The police ask for our permission before they come to our district." Nayyar and Nawazish live in Chiniot, which used to be a sub-district of Faisalabad, but was declared an independent district in 2009. Chiniot has functioning police stations and local courts, but Nayyar and Nawazish claim that their authority is more legitimate as their family has governed Chiniot since before Pakistan's independence. They claim that even the British colonial administration recognized their family's right to rule. That is, they draw on their family's historical autonomy to demarcate their boundary. The structuralist perspective would suggest that the authority of the Shahs is based on the historical role their family played in governing Chiniot and how that autonomy was recognized by the British. Instead, I underscore how the Shahs instrumentally draw on this history. In other words, by claiming a position that traditionally wouldn't have been theirs based on their lineage, they are constructing their own authority. This is in line with my discussion of political capital as a construction rather than a structural position.

The Shahs also draw on their family's role as spiritual leaders in the region. That is, they claim that they are Syeds or that their family is directly descended from the same family as Prophet Muhammad. As such their claim to legitimacy goes back even before the British colonial regime. Both historical allusions emphasize the myriad forms of boundary management. By emphasizing their independence under the British, the Shahs emphasize how their history is even older than the Pakistani state, emphasizing the durability of local/state boundaries. And, as Syeds or descendants of the prophet, they also claim a moral authority. The majority of landlords are not Syeds and do not hold a religious position. In fact, most landlords whom I interviewed were careful to point out that religion and dispute resolution did not occupy the same realm. But, the Shahs are a special case and have local spiritual followers, many who travel from afar to pay them respects, especially during festivals. By drawing on their family's foundational role, they emphasize their authority through a construction of the sacred. At the same time, such boundary-drawing is not only symbolic but draws from a wider cognitive schema that privileges religion (see also Mayrl and Quinn 2016). While the Shah use their moral authority to establish themselves as leaders, their rulings often evoke customary law more often than Islamic jurisprudence.

4.4.4.2 *Numberdars* Another common way that people draw boundaries is by drawing on their family's status as *numberdars*. For them, this was a position that the British administrators created for local tax collectors, who also were also usually landlords. Caton (2004) discusses how the British administration selected such individuals as representatives of the Crown, attempting to replicate the British aristocratic system—which it claimed was a more stable system of governance. Historically, the colonial administration provided *numberdars* with an acre of land and a share of the revenue that he collected (Nelson 2011). While the position no

longer formally exists, landlords who claim to be *numberdars* continue to play a role in dispute resolution. There may be thousands of *numberdars*, but not all choose to play this role. Some draw on their family's history to establish their own *dera* and use the status of *numberdar* to cultivate capital. To that point, I've seen billboards with the contact information of numberdars outside villages—in an attempt to formalize a role that has become defunct in some areas. I've also seen *numberdar* written on a car's license plate. The letters spelling out numberdar are even in the same color green as the Pakistani flag to make it seem like an official plate. In the same way that the state relies on symbols, such as the flag, the position of *numberdars* also has symbolic value given its historical ties (Mitchell 1999). By publicizing this connection, local leaders seek to cultivate capital.



Figure 5 Numberdar License Plate

There is a discernable difference between the boundaries shaped by *numberdars* and families like the Shahs. *Numberdars* often are relying on the capital they gained from their

family's past role within the colonial administration. For them, the state/local boundary symbolizes local autonomy but does not have the same moral heft as the boundary drawn by the Shahs and is more permeable. The police whom I interviewed reported how the *numberdar* is usually their first point of contact within the village when they are solving a case. For example, if there is an ongoing investigation, the police will generally come to the *numberdars* first to gather evidence. Part of their desire to approach the *numberdar* stems from the fact that police resources are incredibly limited, so they need to rely on *numberdars* for local information.

Ijaz, a local *numberdar*, managed the boundary between his village and the state by serving as a liaison to the police. I visited his *dera* on several occasions where he was mediating the case of Yasir, a man who claimed that his wife robbed him of his property. As his mediator, Ijaz was not offering to mediate with Yasir's wife but advising him on how he must pursue the case in court. Ijaz also suggested that if he was successful in helping Yasir with his property, he would request a cut of the profits. While the Shahs have greater ability to demarcate or activate boundaries, Ijaz's role pertains more to boundary management. That is, Ijaz polices the boundary so that he can develop political capital and profit from his relationship. In contrast, the Shahs claimed that they even hold the police at bay. Ijaz's ability to manage the boundary is partly shaped by the personality of the local police chief. Some police may be more heavy-handed, but, in most instances, given the police's lack of resources and to preserve Ijaz's good will, they respect his boundary.

4.4.4.3 Elected Officials State-local boundaries are not always distinct, and can overlap. The role of local elected officials as mediators reflects the overlap in the boundaries. Even though some of these *deradars* are also elected representatives, when undertaking dispute resolution they also rely on informal strategies. It is important to place such mediators within the

context of Pakistan's history of local government, which reflects the government's attempt to shape local boundaries. The lowest tier of local government, known as a union council, covers an area of half a dozen villages. The geographic distribution is not dissimilar to the *dera*. According to Ali Cheema, Asim Khwaja, and Adnan Qadir (2005), military-led governments in Pakistan have historically instituted the local system in order to gain legitimacy at the grassroots.¹⁵ However, civilian-led governments have historically repealed it as it drew power away from the provincial government by establishing a parallel patronage system. Today, some provinces, including Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Sindh have established elected local governments whereas elections took place in Punjab in 2015, but the local bodies were not functional until January 2017. The ruling party, PML, has opposed the local government system as undermining its centralization efforts and undercutting its political patronage networks (Express Tribune 2017).

Many former elected leaders equate the union council (UC) system to the *dera* system. One former head or *nazim* of the union council said: "The UC system is a *panchayati* system and it is a good system. The government should support it, as it works well." In drawing the link between the UC and the *panchayati* system, the Nazim emphasized that the UC system was a good one because it was local and drew on customary dispute resolution practices. In this way, the state seeks to graft onto and gain legitimacy from these informal processes and collapse the boundaries between the formal state and local system.

The local elite use local government elections to consolidate their power and manage the boundary between the state and the local village. Very often, elected officials are local landlords, *numberdars* or their kin. For instance, Nayyar Shah ran for the position of UC *nazim*. He did not

¹⁵ According to Cheema, Khwaja, and Qadir (2005), military-led governments have enacted a system of local government in 1959, 1979, and 2001 under Generals Ayub Khan, Zia-ul Haq, and Musharraf. The civilian governments that followed have repealed them.

win, but the ruling party recognized his popular support and appointed him the head of their local youth wing. While before the election, Nayar claimed a moral authority, by running for election, he's make a bid to formalize his power through the institutions of the state. Other landlords whom I interviewed did win the 2015 local election. This allows them to draw on their elected mandate to legitimate their local role and manage boundaries. Contrary to the intention of the Pakistani government, elected leaders manage the formal boundary of the state and their community very carefully to allow them to earn local capital. For instance, they can draw on their new formal powers to continue earning capital by, for example, mediating disputes and granting divorces. While Imtiaz, a former elected *nazim*, is no longer within local government, people still ask him to mediate their local problems—in other words, his formal role continues to allow him to generate capital.

The history of the local government ordinance (LGO) that devolved power from the provincial to district governments in 2001 emphasizes the role of the state in boundary management. While military-led governments developed the LGO to recast local/state boundaries to win legitimacy, the provincial governments have repealed it as a way to penetrate local networks. Similarly, the local elite partly instrumentalized the LGO to gain state resources for local development and gain formal powers to divorce—which allowed them to further build capital. This example suggests that state/local boundaries are circumscribed by attempts of various central and local actors to gain legitimacy. That is, local boundaries are shaped by individual desires to gain capital as well as the mechanisms created by the state to win loyalty. This case emphasizes the importance of linking individual incentives to the wider structures as highlighted by Wimmer (2013).

4.4.5 Drawing Boundaries: Jurisdiction of the *Dera*

An understanding of the different cases that are addressed locally and ones taken to the police point to the nature of boundaries and how local residents experience the state. Historically, villagers claim that most disputes concern *zan* (women), *zar* (wealth), or *zamin* (land).¹⁶ Further, as these issues pertain to relationships among kinship groups, they are handled locally. When drawing or demarcating boundaries, most kinship leaders noted the following dynamics: 1) nature of the case which they often refer to as the seriousness of the case; 2) whether issues of honor are involved, especially issues involving women; and 3) local feuds within kinship groups.

Almost all the mediators from all three categories noted that they prefer to resolve “small” or what they considered non-serious cases locally. As I discovered, a wide range of issues fall into the category of small cases, including theft, property disputes, and minor felonies. From this perspective, kinship leaders play a larger role in the day-to-day dispute resolution as compared to the state.

The large range of cases adjudicated by kinship leaders underscores the considerable influence of kinship. To this point, Saeed, a local mediator exclaimed: “If it is a small case, “we take it back from the police.” He claimed that “it is better if the case is dealt with locally.” In this statement, Saeed invokes local/kinship boundaries and establishes a clear precedent for handling cases locally. He argues that the police/judges are kleptocratic or often will require bribes before they will take on cases. As a result, residents don’t trust the judgment of the judicial system and fear that the police will rule in the favor of the highest bidder. “If you go to the police, you waste your time and your money.” Other mediators noted that the police are inefficient and lack the

¹⁶ *Zar, zan, and zamin* is a common phrase, invoking ideas of honor (Nelson 2011).

means to conduct a full investigation. In other words, at least for issues related to property, kinship groups demarcate boundaries between the state and kinships groups on moral grounds. The institutions of state are rapacious while kinship groups are credited with acting in good faith and being selfless. As Nelson (2011) suggests most litigants are not actually deterred by the delays and costs associated with the courts, and in fact, often file cases to gain time. In other words, they use the courts instrumentally to allow for time to come to a customary, out-of-court settlement—also pointing to the existence of state/local boundaries. For some, part of rational for this boundary is based on the absence of the state. The distance from the state mentioned above and costs involved in traveling to an urban center also contribute to developing the local boundary.

From my field notes:

Abdul Ghanzanfar, a local landlord, described an incident where two men came to seek his help in the theft of a cow. One was the victim, and the other, a friend of the victim. Ghanzanfar has a serious, thoughtful countenance, and listens carefully. He said that he likes to be of service to his community, especially as he has a knack for character analysis, Before he became a landlord, Ghanzanfar was a textile engineer, living in the city. He says that he got weary of the city where he barely knew his neighbors and people did not have regard for each other. Since his return to the village, Ghanzanfar mentioned that local residents often brought their cases to him. He attributes this to his availability, his education, and his selfless attitude (Field Notes, February 18, 2017).

While Ghazanfar came from a land-owning kinship group, his desire to become a mediator points to his own agency. He described to me how he cultivated the role of mediator as a means to give something back to his community. Further, it's striking that rather than his education, he

emphasized his innate ability to understand people—something that he claims helps him maintain the social order.

During his conversation with the two men, he engaged the victim's friend in conversation, and over the course of the conversation, determined that the culprit was actually the friend. He took the victim's friend aside, and accused him of stealing the cow. When I asked him how he had known, Ghanzanfar said that he was suspicious of his solicitous nature. The friend, who was taken aback by his frankness, admitted that he in fact was the thief, and he would bring the cows back, as long as Ghanzanfar would protect his honor. Ghanzanfar agreed. He asked the thief to tie the cows in his dera at night, and he would protect his name (Field Notes, February 18, 2017).

Ghanzanfar's agreement with the thief suggests that he was more concerned with maintaining order than he was with the merits of the case. He maintained that if the victim's friend was discovered as the thief, it would have resulted in a feud that could have factionalized the wider village, as these two friends would have called upon their families and the kinship group to take their side, and thus lines would have been drawn between friends. While telling this story, Ghanzanfar highlighted the importance of maintaining social order. According to him, when cases go to the police, they get politicized and often people enter into litigation for fairly minor issues. In this way like Mayrl and Quinn (2016), Ghanzanfar suggests that traversing local boundaries often reflects an individual's self-interest rather than the interests of the community. By maintaining the boundaries of the traditional system or emphasizing the communal interest, he is able to maintain peace. By emphasizing his skill at character analysis, he emphasizes his own moral authority to adjudicate the case. That is, boundary management involves the moral authority of the mediator and an understanding of the greater public good, which is consistently

defined by social order rather than justice. In fact, most landlords equate the two. Like the Shahs, Ghanzanfar also draws a moral boundary. But, in his case, it is based on his ability to maintain the social order. It is also important to note that Ghazanfar is not only drawing a boundary, but by equating justice with social order, his boundary shapes people's expectations regarding justice.

The boundary between the state and the village on issues related to property does not exist only in rural areas that are far from the institutions of the state. Businessmen in one of the grain markets in the city also reported having their own association to mediate issues related to the sale of grain. The association was composed of all the grain merchants working in the district, who informally nominated a head of the association. Members refer any disputes related to pricing, competition, and theft to the association instead of taking them to the police or civil courts. The presence of alternate dispute resolutions even in the city underscores the importance of boundary management related to property issues where institutions of the state are considered kleptocratic.

Along with theft, landlords often mediate land disputes, especially involving boundary disputes. According to my informants, such cases are pretty common and exacerbated by the poor land records and *unna*. The irrigation channels in much of Punjab are not paved, so it is easy to gain a foot or two of land by moving them to your neighbor's land. As the formal land records are incomplete, people invariably come to the *dera* to adjudicate such disputes. The boundary drawing for such cases seems to emphasize the importance of local knowledge, especially regarding the history of land ownership. The *numberdar* plays an important role for such land cases, as he is still involved in land transactions. Gilmartin (2003) noted that historically issues involving land transactions are adjudicated locally whereas the courts

established under the British dealt with crime. To some extent this trend has continued today. The desire to adjudicate land cases directly resonates with the Scott's (2009) idea that local residents seek to hide their economic resources from the state and draw on strategies to make them illegible. Dispute resolution around land seems in part to be designed to shield local economic interests from the state's kleptocratic eye. In addition, as Nelson (2011) notes, the important role of the *numberdar* in informal and formal land transactions privileges the colonial era, customary law and undermines the legal framework of the Pakistani state. In effect, this practice ensures that land-ownership remains among agnates, preventing the transfer of land to women, as stipulated by the state's Shari'ah or Islamic law.

4.4.6 Intersection of Boundaries

The instances that individuals took their property disputes to the police instead of solving them locally also provide insights about boundary management. In fact, during a visit to the local police station, I found a cow whose ownership was in dispute tied in front of the police station while the case was pending. According to the sub-inspector, the cow was merely the scapegoat in a kinship dispute that had been simmering for nine months. Many people refer to cases that are taken to the police stations as acts of passion. People refer to the concept of *unna* defined as ego that leads to social rupture to explain how such cases come about. Local residents defined instances that people went to the police for the sake of their *unna* or due to emotion and factionalism. In other words, landlords and other residents would instrumentalize the institutions of the state as a means to gain political leverage for local cases. In this way, state actors reinforce customary dispute resolution practices.

A member of the Provincial Assembly (MPA) whom I interviewed reinforced the idea that people often come to the police when they are *jazbati* or moved by their emotions. She went

to say: that “peace is found in the *parai* (another word for *panchayat*), whereas in the police station people end up spending money. She implied that people typically turn to the police when they are overwhelmed by their emotions, invoking the “crime of passion argument.” For instance, I would often hear that people would register a false case to seek revenge in a local feud. Members of the local police also confirmed this trend. But once they are in their “rational minds,” they would simply approach the local *panchayat*. The fact that the MPA as a representative of the state is drawing this boundary is striking. In part her comments refer to the dual role played by political actors. In addition to their state role, political representatives often continue to mediate local cases. But when they play the role of mediators, they don’t necessarily count on the police but follow the more informal mediation process.

The strategic use of state institutions discussed above points to greater nuances in our understanding of power in Pakistan. In classic structuralist terms, the power of the state is defined as through the ability of its institutions to manage, incentivize and coerce its citizens into complying with its rules (Weber 1978/1922). But more useful is Issac Reed’s (2013), understanding of hegemonic power. Reed, drawing on Stephen Lukes (1974), outlines the relational, discursive, and performative aspects of power beyond the rule-making power of state institutions. The ability of kinship groups to use state networks for their own cases refers to Reed’s definition of relational and performative power. As local residents revealed, registering a case at the police station is not an easy task as it requires both money and connections. Here access or power is contained within the individual’s social and political networks. Power also has a performative quality, as cases filed in the police station are potentially witnessed by dozens of kin. Police reported that for certain cases, kinship members will come to the police station by the truckload. In this way, individuals are also able to shame their opponents through the act of filing

cases. The ability of kinship groups to strategically use the institutions of the state illustrates more about the dimensions of power than suggested by a purely structural account.

4.4.7 Criminal Cases

This boundary between the state and local community is dissolved or deactivated, in Tilly's (2004) terms, to some extent for criminal cases. One landlord noted: "A big case, theft, *dacoity* [armed robbery], murder, or where people are hurt, then in such cases, it is necessary to go to the court." In the first instance, they seemed to imply that the serious nature of the crime necessitates the formal tools of the state. In most cases, the *deradars* employ mediation to resolve local disputes. However, when there is a big grievance such as murder, mediation may not be possible. This resonates with the idea expressed by the female legislator above, that individuals go to the police when they are in an emotional state, and seek vengeance. Further, kinship leaders take on cases in part to build political capital. Taking on controversial cases, such as murder, where the *deradar* can suffer from reputational risk, alienate potential supporters, or develop enmity with one group does not provide an opportunity to build capital. In fact, Nayyar Shah attributed his electoral defeat in the 2015 local government elections to his role as mediator. Here, local leaders are dissolving the boundary, instrumentally, as taking on controversial cases could affect their local capital. However, as suggested in the example above, some criminal cases are mediated locally. Both Omer and Usman suggested that in the case of the shooting of the shopkeeper, chances were that both sides would come to them once they had cooled off. The area where Usman Cheema's *dera* is located is considered a dangerous place where even the police loathe to tread. In that case, distance from the state may partially explain why they think mediation is possible for a criminal case.

The gatekeeper's background, nature of the criminal offence, the kinship group of the people involved, and the ability of the *deradar* to earn capital may also shape boundaries.

Nawazish Shah revealed how he had mediated a case involving the death of a teenager in his village. The teenage boy was a traveler and had been found shot. When the boy's father who was from another village came to claim the body, Nawazish Shah approached him to condole. He mentioned that he remained perplexed by the killing, as the boy wasn't even from the village, so he couldn't have had a feud with anyone. That night he went to the village and preached. He gathered the villagers and told them that if sins are acknowledged in this life, the crime will be forgiven in the next. But, left unacknowledged, the perpetrators would burn in hell. The sermon in the village seemingly worked, and the next day a group of cattle thieves came to confess. They admitted that they had accidentally shot the boy. They were planning a robbery in the same house where the boy was staying and while escaping, they accidentally shot him (Field Notes March 21, 2016).

Nawazish Shah's narration of the case highlighted his role as a spiritual leader. That is, he emphasized that he went to village where the shooting took place because the killing perturbed him and he felt responsible. His narration of the story to me and others in his *dera* was solemn, and as he spoke, the bustling *dera* felt silent. People interrupted his narration from time to time to exclaim in wonder. Both his intervention and his narration underscored his moral capital and ability to manage boundaries. He later attributed his ability to find the perpetrators as well as broker peace between the two parties as a sign of God's grace.

In the meantime, the boy's father had filed a case with the police and they had arrested someone else. Nawazish took the cattle thieves to the boy's father and said that these are

the killers of your son, but they did not mean to kill him. They are willing to accept your punishment. Nawazish took the thieves to court and the police arrested them. Nawazish then told the father that the cattle thieves did not intend to kill him and the bullet had hit the boy accidentally. He said that it was his right to punish them, but in Islam, intention counts for something. Over the course of three months, Nawazish convinced the boy's father to forgive the cattle thieves and accept their monetary contribution for his son's death. Together they went to the court and the boy's father asked the judge to release them. The judge initially did not accept the request, as he thought the boy's father was under duress and suggested to the father that he think over to his decision over a period of time. Three months later the boy's father gave a written statement to the court, and the cattle thieves were released. (Field Notes March 21, 2016).

Nawazish Shah's ability to mediate between the two parties in this instance also came from the fact that the death was accidental. Nawazish depicted both parties as victims and stood to gain relationships with both by mediating the case. Second, the boy's family was poor, and having a *deradar* like Nawazish Shah, who was also a spiritual advisor, was a source of honor, so Nawazish was able to convince him to mediate. His ability to mediate this case has won him a great deal of capital. He claims that lawyers and judges often ask him how he was able to bring the two sides together. In this way, he uses his spiritual authority to draw a moral boundary between his *dera* and state based on his ability to deliver a higher justice than the court could have achieved. That is, he claimed that at best the courts would have sentenced the cattle thieves to death, but he was able to not only save the thieves but allow both sides to come to a peace. It is important to note that while his position allowed him to mediate a sensitive case, his ruling, like Ghazanfar's helped to maintain the customary social order. Part of the ability of the landlord

to mediate such cases is based on Islamic scripture that codifies punishment for criminal offense, including blood money. In this way, *Nawazish* was able to draw on an existing precedent and boundary management mechanism.

An examination of when people draw boundaries reveals that that cases involving property or economic transactions are usually addressed locally whereas criminal cases are reported to institutions of the state. Often, in drawing boundaries, people cite that their local *deradar* is more selfless and less corrupt than state officials, drawing a moral boundary. At the same time, kinship leaders like Ijaz are not above their self-interest. But, who draws the boundaries matters. As local leaders, Ijaz and others have the ability to shape the narrative on boundaries or a discursive power (Reed 2013). Further, some *deradars* such as Nayyar and Nawazish Shah are spiritual leaders and can also draw on their moral authority, illustrating the multiple dimensions of boundaries.

4.4.8 Private Sphere of the Family in Pakistan

Not unlike many parts of the world, landlords draw a strict line between affairs of the family and the state. Disputes involving women in many instances are handled locally and within the family. Based on interviews, such disputes include issues of divorce, settlement, return of dowry in instances of divorce, and child custody. Many of these cases never even make it to the *dera*, signifying the strict boundaries. In fact, women's participation in the *dera* is fairly limited, with exceptions made for age. According to Tasawar, an important *deradar*, the *dera* is a male space, and, it would be a source of great dishonor if family cases were brought there. When I asked him how such cases would be handled—he replied, that if he learns of any issue involving a woman, he will go to her house as a sign of respect. The *deradar* plays the figurative role of a patriarch, allowing him access to people's homes. However, he also admitted that often he will not even

learn about such cases, as most individuals within his village would prefer to resolve such matters within their respective families. Other *deradars* have said that they on occasion will entertain family disputes, but those are the exception not the norm.

The boundary between the private sphere of family and the wider community does not only involve domestic family disputes, but generally pertains to issues involving women.

Saeed, a local mediator, relayed a case, where there was a dispute between two neighbors, a soldier and a business man, involving money one owed to the other. The dispute got heated and the businessman hit the soldier. Coming out in support of her husband, the woman struck the businessman on the head with a large stick. As the woman's blow created a serious wound, the businessman's family wanted to approach the police. However, Saeed intervened immediately and encouraged them not to go to the police, as the reputation of a woman was involved (Field Notes January 21, 2015).

Saeed's case revealed how the wider community intervenes to protect the state/kinship boundary when women are involved. In this case, even though the victim wanted to go to the police, Saeed talked him out of it. Saeed emphasized that the wife was only supporting her husband and if the police got involved it would compromise her honor. Saeed's intervention provides evidence of how people police boundaries using soft coercion. Even though the two parties did not seek his help, he said that he intervened, as in the heat of the moment, the businessman may have taken a step that would have exposed the military man's wife to prison. If the businessman had persisted in his desire to punish the military man and his wife, Saeed claimed that he would have summoned a larger group of people to intervene, which would have been harder to refuse.

The exception to the strict boundaries for women also illuminates women's role in Pakistan. Tasawar mentioned that sometimes he adjudicates kidnapping cases. The use of the

word kidnapping is a misnomer, as these cases do not involve actual kidnapping. As, there is a high pressure for women to marry within their own kinship groups, women who chose their own spouse, especially one from outside the kinship group, are a source of dishonor. The entire village ostracizes such women. The family typically refers to such cases as kidnappings in order to save face in front of the village. As these are incidents where an outsider penetrates the private sphere of family, it is permissible for village elders, such as Tasawar to mediate. In other instances, villagers mentioned that they had also approached the police to register a case of kidnapping, which had also ended up in court. Registering a false kidnapping case with the police is another way that individuals instrumentalize institutions of the state for their own personal feuds and vendettas.

While the *dera* does not sanction punishment for the other kinds of cases mentioned above, the penalty for penetrating the domain of the family is harsh. This underscores the impenetrable nature of boundaries. According to Tasawar, in such cases, there are three common outcomes: 1) the family members find the woman, annul her marriage, and marry her off to someone else; 2) the family accepts the marriage; and 3) the family members punish the couple. In such cases even when there is capital violence, individuals will rarely go to the police. The practices that Tasawar describes are not uniform. Some villages are more accepting of the woman's desire to choose her own spouse. In one area, which was marked by greater distance from the state a woman I interviewed laughed and mentioned that such restrictions did not apply to them. She proudly admitted that she and her husband had a "love marriage," referring to the fact that she chose her own spouse. But experiences relayed by this woman suggested that such love marriages are rare even within the city. It is important to note that in most instances, the state kinship boundaries are more firmly drawn for women and men. The difference in how men

and women perceive these boundaries in large part has to do with the fact that the family's honor is shaped by the how women conduct themselves.

There are two boundaries at play, one between the family and the local community and the second between the local community and the state. For women, the state and public sphere work simultaneously in order to reinforce the boundaries of the private sphere. To this point:

Ijaz, a local landlord, mentioned a case of where a girl in his village was killed by her brother, a policeman, because she was talking to a village boy at night. The policeman caught his sister on a surprise visit to his home village. According to Ijaz, he shot both his sister and the boy after confronting them. Stories of his killing spread in the village, and according to Ijaz, the villagers condoned the killing, as they felt that the couple's transgression warranted this punishment. The case was neither reported to the police nor did a panchayat form to deal with the police officer (Field notes January 27, 2015).

Again in this case, the institutions of the state and the village worked together to reinforce the public/private boundaries. According to Ijaz, the wider police force was aware of this incident, but decided not to get involved. Similarly, both families decided not to report the incident. It is important to note that in such incidents—landlords apply local customary practices rather than ones established by religion. This example reinforces the need to examine the construction of state and local boundaries by issue. In some cases, such as economic transactions, they work separately, but for other instances, they reinforce each other. These boundaries effectively work to eliminate women from public life and shape how the state sees women. That is, although there are laws protecting women, the unwritten rules of the *dera* have effectively superseded the state's laws. Laws regarding the protection of women aren't always as flagrantly dismissed as they were in this case. However, in places such as Ijaz's village, which are some distance from

the state and where individuals, such as Ijaz and Tasawar maintain those boundaries, it becomes very difficult for the state to penetrate.

4.5 MANAGING BOUNDARIES

The boundaries between the state and local kinship groups are preserved through strategies of soft and hard coercion. While the section above discussed boundary management for particular issues, here I extend that discussion and explore the underlying mechanisms of enforcement. According to Sheraz and Usman, local landlords, *deradars*, cannot enforce their judgments on particular cases through sanction because they don't have the tools to punish their members. Instead, they rely on degrees of social pressure or soft coercion. There are three sources of social pressure: 1) the position of the *deradar itself*; 2) their family and kin; and 3) the wider community. This fits Reed's (2013) characterization of power as relational, performative, and discursive.

The *deradar's* influence is both structural and relational. For instance, the *deradar's* ability to apply pressure rests on his status or structural position as a landlord, but this position only becomes salient through reciprocal exchange. This underscores the relational nature of their authority. *Deradars* apply social pressure when the grievance first occurs as well as during mediation to manage boundaries, such as the strategy Saeed employed by dissuading the businessman from going to the police. Nawazish Shah also employed soft coercion when he intervened in the accidental killing in his village. Nawazish Shah and Saeed both have moral authority. Nawazish has a much more influential role as a spiritual advisor. Saeed does not play such a spiritual role, but he has built moral capital for himself through his charitable works. The

penalty for not following the *deradar* can lead to social rupture or the wastage of years of cultivating capital.

Family and kin also apply pressure for people to accept the *deradar*'s decision. Cases are tried in front of their communities and kin, so people who attend can attest to the fairness of the trial and serve as witnesses. As witnesses, they can also shame the participants into accepting the agreement—suggesting that power is enshrined in their performances during the dispute resolution process. It is important to consider that local residents share social ties with their wider kinship group, and such ties are reproduced through social rituals such as marriages and funerals. Kinship groups also comprise the only social safety net for most individuals. In lieu of any kind of state or private support, individuals turn to their kinship group when they need a loan, a job, or a character reference. Here, the kinship network, also containing relational power, is a source of resources and wider social acceptance. A certain part of social capital is supporting your kin member against the other side, so kin don't always apply pressure for their members to accept the decision of the *deradar*. But as Ghanzanfar and others have pointed out, kinship members in many instances push for social order as ongoing enmity can embroil kinship members in conflict for years. So after an initial show of support, there is social pressure through the kinship network to make peace. As many *deradars* have alluded to, making peace is more important than justice.

When soft coercion does not work, kinship leaders can apply more pressure. According to Sheraz, "in instances where individuals don't listen to us, we can compel them to listen." Here, the power is partly discursive. When I asked him what he meant, he went on to say that kinship leaders have various strategies, including registering a false case against them in the police. At times, the threat of state pressure is as effective as registering a case. In other

instances, individuals are simply summoned to the police station instead of having a case filed against them.. Sheraz explained that a *deradar*'s influence will diminish if people are seen as not following their advice, so he has to find a way to compel them to keep his *unna* or pride intact. This emphasizes the state-like role of kinship groups, as they, in certain situations, strategically ease boundaries to coerce local residents.

Not all instances of coercive pressure involve institutions of the state, and kinship groups can also alienate members who don't comply. Sheraz mentioned he had applied such an injunction against his own cousin. In consultation with other kin, Sheraz had created a rule that villagers would only serve one dish at a funeral. According to Sheraz, this was to save villagers from going into debt. Such an injunction was unusual, but at the time, the government of Pakistan had passed a similar rule about weddings, so perhaps this was Sheraz's way of asserting his own authority. When his aunt passed away, Sheraz's cousin arranged a funeral where he organized an elaborate meal to mark the occasion. Sheraz admitted that it hurt him to do this, but he declared that the entire village could not attend the funeral. In this case, Sheraz's cousin was not transgressing the village state/boundaries, but flouting a village rule. Through his harsh response, Sheraz contributed to solidifying the boundaries of his village. He admitted that it hurt him to enforce this injunction against his cousin, but he had no choice, as he needed to preserve this authority as a *deradar*.

4.6 CONCLUSION

The Pakistani case suggests that viewing the state through an institutional/functional lens presents a rather limited understanding since non-state actors, play a state-like role. This role is evident in the local dispute resolution process. This process allows us to experience how people manage and constitute boundaries with the state. Particular gatekeepers play an important role in shaping boundaries. While some of these individuals may have served as traditional leaders, their role in the community today in part is derived from their ability of manage boundaries. Using Barth's (1969) understanding of ascription, I show how people inscribe and erase boundaries based on symbolic or moral issues. For instance, people draw boundaries that emphasize the selfless nature of kinship groups in comparison to the kleptocratic state. Others draw moral boundaries based on their ability to maintain social order.

Drawing on Tilly's discussion of particular mechanisms that cause and constitute boundaries, I show how that boundaries are not static. For instance, individuals often seek informal mediation for issues involving economic transactions, demarcating boundaries. The gatekeepers also apply social pressure or police boundaries, urging people to seek their assistance rather than take the issue to the police or the court system. For issues involving criminal offenses, individuals deactivate boundaries, as taking on such cases could lead to them developing enmity and undermine their political capital. They instead refer these cases to political leaders and/or the police. However, for certain cases where kinship leaders can maintain capital, they will even investigate a murder. These boundaries are especially drawn for issues involving women. For such cases, the state and kinship groups work together to exclude women from public life.

The focus on non-state actors allows us to problematize the public/private dichotomy that undergirds our understanding of the state. An examination of how local boundaries work similarly to relegate women and economic issues into the private sphere of kinship emphasizes the dual role played by kinship. In much of the literature, this intersection is thought of as clientelist and states with such connections are characterized as clientelist states (Eisenstadt and Lemarchand 1981, Lieven 2011). However, this macro level characterization not only obscures the role of kinship groups but also dynamics of community formation. As the discussion of Nayyar's *dera* shows, in spite of the hierarchy, there is also discussion and debate. I focus on these aspects of community formation in the next chapter by discussing the role of the *dera* as a public sphere.

5.0 THE PUBLIC SPHERE

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Jürgen Habermas' influential model of the public sphere has overemphasized the role of the national state and shrouded important political communities at the local level. Habermas theorized that the public sphere emerging from modernity enabled wider political participation and influence over the state (Calhoun 1993, Emirbayer and Sheller 1999, Ferree et al. 2002, Habermas 1989, Squires 2002). In this way, Habermas closely linked the public sphere with the state—both as a part of political society and the target of public advocacy. While scholars have criticized Habermas' model for not paying sufficient attention to how the sphere inherently privileges middle-class males and reproduces structured inequality, many continue to employ the model to depict the citizen-state relationship and political participation (Calhoun 2002, Calhoun 1992a, Calhoun 1992b, Eley 1992, Fraser 1992, Hohendahl 1992).

My case study on Pakistan points to how Habermas' state-centric model of the public sphere is not relevant in many contexts outside the West where the central state is weak and not necessarily a target of claims-making. A Habermasian analysis of Pakistan's public sphere would suggest that Pakistan's public sphere is very limited and exists only in elite urban circles. Since the mid-2000s, there has been a proliferation of the national media in Pakistan. However, even today, corporations own the majority of the media, which ensures a culture of self-censorship to

avoid crackdowns by the government and the right-wing religious parties. The government and the right-wing also carefully monitor universities, and professors who deviate from the mainstream are harassed. There are a number of high profile cases of liberal professors who have been charged under the country's blasphemy laws. The government also monitors student organizing very carefully and has historically banned student political groups that are perceived to be against the government.

In this context, I describe how *deras* or village level courtyards serve as local public spheres or important places to exchange information in Pakistan. In Chapter 4, I discuss how these *deras* delineate the boundary between the state and the local community. Here, I focus on their communal aspects or how, as public spheres, they contribute to fostering a sense of social cohesion. I argue that *deras* have their own internal logic and local practices, which foster a sense of social cohesion and reproduce interpersonal ties.

I first describe the *dera*, and how kinship groups manage the space and the flow of information. By employing the *dera* as my unit of analysis, I explore the dynamics of political participation. My analysis highlights the fungibility of the public sphere as a concept, especially how the public sphere serves as a local political community in Pakistan with relevance for kinship-based societies more broadly. Second, I show how interactions within the *dera* are performative and foster solidarity among members—aspects of the public sphere that have been under-theorized. While performance within the public sphere is not unique to Pakistan, this case advances our understanding of how the public sphere engenders affective ties.

5.2. LITERATURE

Habermas' theory of the public sphere has elicited an extensive response and critique that falls into two categories: 1) a critique that it ignores power asymmetries that exclude women and marginalized populations from participating in political life (Benhabib 1992, Calhoun 2010, Calhoun 1992b, Eley 1992, Fraser 1992, Somers 1993) and 2) lack of attention to cultural aspects of the sphere, including solidarity (Adut 2012, Calhoun 2002). As there is an extensive literature on the former, I don't address it at length here. Instead, I contribute to the literature on political culture and discuss how studying interactions in the sphere can illuminate the process of establishing social ties or solidarity (Adut 2012, Calhoun 2002, Goffman 1959). I begin by critically examining the link between Habermas' model of the public sphere and the more recent focus on counterpublics and the state, and suggest how this assumed connection shrouds important dynamics of the public sphere. Second, I draw on the subaltern emphasis on local structures, experiences, and rituals to understand *deras* as distinct local political communities (Chatterjee 1993, Guha 1999). Finally, I draw on Goffman's (1959, 1983) theory of interaction to illuminate how kinship groups use performances to engender loyalty.

5.2.1 Subaltern Counterpublics

While scholars have extensively critiqued Habermas' model of the public sphere for its lack of attention to the systemic exclusion, the assumed link to the state has been under-examined (Adut 2012, Calhoun 1992b, Fraser 1992, Kluge and Negt 2016). Influenced by the Frankfurt school, Habermas theorized that the public sphere, privileging rational discourse, would mitigate the divisions between the market and the state, and result in a more democratic society. However, according to Margaret Somers (1992), while Habermas proposed a triad model of society,

including an interstitial sphere in between the market and state, he was not able to overcome the classic public/private dichotomy. That is, Habermas theorized that the family was the primary source of socialization for individuals, not the process of participating in the sphere. Further, for Habermas, the public sphere was a bourgeois sphere, shaped by the logic of market forces (Habermas 1989, Somers 1992). In essence, the private/public dichotomy is built into Habermas' model, which, as a result, has obscured the public role of non-state actors, such as kinship groups.¹⁷

To address the issue of asymmetrical access in Habermas' sphere, scholars have described alternate sites of participation or subaltern counterpublics. The assumption is that a single public sphere is not accessible to the majority of the population, but that citizens can influence the mainstream public sphere and the state through alternate, more local sites (Asen and Brouwer 2001, Benhabib 1992, Fraser 1992, Habermas and Cronin 1998, Squires 2002, Young 2000). For Catherine Squires (2002), the idea of a counterpublic encapsulates both inclusion or participation of marginal groups as well as particular ideologies that run counter to the mainstream. While the idea of subaltern counterpublics addresses the power asymmetry within Habermas' model, it continues to privilege the state and does not pay enough attention to the processes of socialization within these alternate conceptualizations. That is, like Habermas, the more recent scholarship focuses on how these subaltern spheres can influence the state's decision-making and extend democratic rights of participation to a wider population. This literature also assumes that these alternate sites of participation are part of one national public sphere (Ferree et al. 2002, Fraser 1992).

¹⁷ The influence of the state in private or civic life has also been neglected through this approach, but that is beyond the focus of this paper.

While scholars conceptualizing the idea of the subaltern counterpublics continue to treat the state as an important site of claims-making, they underscore the need to disaggregate local actors involved in the public sphere and the wider political society—an important theoretical distinction that is consistent with my focus on subnational actors (Alexander 2008, Calhoun 2002, Rankin 1993). Craig Calhoun (2002) identifies civil society actors, including professional and neighborhood associations as well as community groups, as playing a role in facilitating political participation and making claims.

Mustafa Emirbayer and Mimi Sheller (1999) as well as Margret Somers (1993) highlight different arenas where the public sphere can arise—challenging the dominance of the state. Emirbayer and Sheller (1999) differentiate between social, economic, and political interfaces of the public sphere. In this way, they emphasize the fungibility of the concept and the myriad informal and formal contexts where the public sphere may emerge. However, it is important to note that their conceptualization of the three interfaces is consistent with the division of labor within a modernist society (Parsons 1991). This formulation makes its application within Pakistan’s kinship-based society more difficult where political and social roles are woven tightly together and disaggregation is not fruitful. In her study of 18th century labor rights in England, Somers (1992) underscores the importance of local actors, such as professional associations, and local social networks. In this way, Somers also disassociates the public sphere from the state.

The dominance of the Westphalian state in Habermas’ model is explicitly questioned in the more recent literature on the transnational public sphere. According to Nancy Fraser (2007), the rise of international organizations, such as the European Union, eclipse the state in political decision-making, as do increased migration and the widespread use of Internet technology, making the state less relevant as a target of claims-making (Calhoun 2007b, Castells 2008,

Soysal 1997). While the focus on the transnational public sphere opens a fruitful area of research, examining how international structures and modes of communication are shaping a new transnational political community, it does not theorize about the role of the state in such a society. Instead, scholars see the transnational public sphere as another site of claims-making (Fraser 2007, Soysal 1997). In fact, given the unprecedented number of transnational forums that link local actors to an international audience and allow them to bypass the state, scholars working on the transnational public sphere have missed a critical opportunity to theorize about local public spheres.

5.2.2 Subaltern Focus on Experience

In Pakistan, as the relationship between the state and citizens is a peripheral one, the focus on the state eclipses local sites of participation and how they foster ties. Along these lines, Ranajit Guha (1999) and Partha Chatterjee (1993), important contributors to the subaltern literature, caution scholars not to essentialize various segments of society, such as economic, civil, and political spheres, as such an analysis results in a teleological argument that society evolves from a pre-modern kinship based one to modern society with a division of labor along these three dimensions. On a similar note, Amy Allen (2012) underscores the need for critically evaluating the link between the public sphere and modernity to understand how the post-colonial context shaped associated power asymmetries (Allen 2012, Postone 1992). To address the colonial influence on scholarship related to the state and the public sphere, scholars of the subaltern reinforce the need to examine particular spaces where people congregate and the practices associated with those spheres (Chatterjee 1993). An examination of such spaces brings to the fore the role of local actors in shaping the contours of local communities.

5.2.3 Performance

Performances in the public sphere can help us understand social ties between actors—what Calhoun calls solidarity (Adut 2012, Calhoun 2002, Warner 2002, Warner 2003). As Ari Adut (2012) emphasizes, “publicness transforms all action into performance” (Adut 2001: 244). Adut’s focus on performance comes from his critique of Habermas’ inattention to how a public forms. That is, according to Adut, Habermas and others have focused on the links between the public sphere and democracy rather than focus on how information is exchanged. Adut highlights performance as one important communication strategy. For scholars such as Michael Warner (2002, 2003) and Adut (2012) focusing on performances in the public sphere usefully directs our attention to how information is experienced (as witnesses), how it spreads, and how it engenders solidarity. According to Adut (2012), witnessing and other interactions around a public event forms people into a transitory community, thereby elucidating the micro processes of community formation. Adut’s (2012) notion of performance also allows us to better understand the power dynamic between people who play a role in creating or publicizing news or performers and those who witness or spectators. In addition, according to Emirbayer and Ann Mische (1998), witnessing includes first-hand experiences as well as witnessing events vicariously, which has the potential to shape a wider “imagined community” (Anderson 2006). One consequence of the performative part of the public sphere is its ability to generate stereotypes. For example, Adut, drawing on Jack Katz (2001), notes that frustrated drivers caught in congested L.A. traffic often perform their stereotypical ethnic identities in order to blow off steam.

The power dynamics of performers and spectators is also a central component of Erving Goffman’s (1959) front room/back stage discussion. Through the use of this metaphor, Goffman

illustrates how societal norms and ideas of propriety shape public social interaction (1959). It is important to note that in the Pakistani case, social interaction in the public (the front room) is governed by an idea of risk along with societal norms.¹⁸ The Pakistani public culture has evolved in a way that people censor themselves in the public to avoid critique and backlash by the government or their political opponents. James Scott (1990) also points to how communities employ different discursive strategies depending on the audience—combining Goffman’s idea of social interaction and Habermas’ discursive focus. Randall Collins (2004), in his extension of Goffman’s work on social interaction, emphasizes how interactions, especially within closed communities, can incite strong, embodied emotional connections (2014).

The idea of space has particular salience to understanding dynamics of the public sphere. According to John Agnew and James Duncan (1989), the idea of place has been steadily displaced by the idea of a more ephemeral community. More recent studies of performance focus on how particular localities evoke links to former movements; however, there is less focus on how spatiality guides social interactions (Guidry, Kennedy and Zald 2000). Edward Muir and Ronald Weissman (1989) emphasize the importance of spatiality in their historic comparison of Venice and Florence and cite how closely knit neighborhoods gave rise to successful national politicians, as geographic proximity of their neighborhoods allowed them to create an important local political base.

In addition to studying how people relate to each other in a public space, studies of performativity often include a focus on particular communication strategies (Gilroy 1993). For example, Iris Marion Young (2000) emphasizes how oral dynamics such as rhythm and tone provide insights into the relationships of the participants. Pia Wiegman (2011) and Chantal

¹⁸ Anastasia Piliavsky (2013), writing about India, similarly argues that people’s public participation in India cannot be collated with their political beliefs or collective behavior as public behavior and private attitudes often vary.

Mouffe (2007) focus on how speakers use humor and narrative to gain traction with their audience or to construct social ties. Scott (1985) also discusses how villagers use performance strategies such as humor or “playing dumb,” which allow them to push back against class hierarchies in public spaces.

5.3 OPERATIONALIZING THE PUBLIC SPHERE

I employ the *dera* as my unit of analysis to understand the public sphere in Pakistan (Chatterjee 1993, Guha 1999). To that end, I am interested in how the *dera* facilitates political participation. My focus on the *dera*, as a relatively closed space, allows me to move beyond front room performances and examine political participation in a much more nuanced way, especially as participation in the more formal state-run processes, such as elections or public debate, is limited or non-existent.

My focus on how the boundaries of the *dera* are maintained allows me to explore how the *dera* functions as a distinct political community. In this way, I decouple the public sphere from the state and avoid what Somers (1992) refers to as the public/private dichotomy within Habermas’ model. That is, a study of actual practices allows me to explore both the state-like and the more communal functions of the *dera*.

In this chapter, I am interested in how the *dera* engenders a form of solidarity. To that end, here I connect how state/local boundaries contribute to engendering solidarity and social ties within kinship groups. Drawing from Adut (2004), I also explore how performances within the *dera* can elucidate wider social and political ties within the village. In particular, I examine both how witnessing a public event first-hand, as well as vicariously, constructs political

communities. In this way, I draw on Collin's (2004) theory of interaction chains to link the dynamics of the space, namely one with defined boundaries, with the visceral experiences of participants. According to Collins, the social ties and a sense of community emerge from the embodied practices and the emotions that they arouse.

5.4 DERA AS LOCAL PUBLIC SPHERES

Unlike Western public spaces, the *dera* is not anonymous or neutral, as it is often located within someone's private property—which is perhaps one reason why *deras* have not been considered part of the public sphere. It is important to note that no two *deras* are alike, but in this section, I discuss some general characteristics. As discussed in chapter 1, *deradars*, or the hosts of *deras*, are usually among the most prosperous men in a village. However, based on my observation, being well-connected is just as important as being prosperous. My research assistant's father, Ali, manages a busy *dera* even though he ran a modest household. Local residents come to his *dera* to discuss local politics, as they trust his political opinions. However, outsiders, like me, are seen with suspicion. Ultimately, the *deradar* determines who has access or the boundaries and the topic of interaction. In this way, the *dera* is not a part of a wider public sphere, as suggested in the literature, but a specific one tied to a particular neighborhood and the personal influence of a kinship leader.

Another way that *deras* differ from the Habermasian ideal is that the people attending are not strangers bound by common interest, but often are directly related or share some social connection given that they live in the same village or community. The importance of the leaders and the kinship ties between members suggests that what binds people together is not only rational common interests but social ties—what Calhoun (2002) calls solidarity. Collins' (2004)

micro-theory on interaction provides insights into how solidarity develops. He notes that ritual interaction, involving a small group where participation is limited to group members who share emotions or experiences, can engender social connections (2004). I describe political participation and boundary management within two kinds of *deras*: informal and formal ones. I then offer some conclusions about how each provides insights into the *dera* as a political community.

5.4.1 The Informal Dera



Figure 6 Informal *Dera*, Faisalabad

While informal *deras* are located within individuals' homes, they comprise a neighborhood level public sphere and foster a sense of community. I consider Ali's *dera* to be informal. Ali, who is about 65, can simultaneously seem gregarious and impassive. He used to work as a security guard at a government research lab. Ali's *dera* is located in the congested neighborhood where he lives, one where the homes share adjoining walls and are connected by a small lane — just

wide enough to let a small automobile through. His street has a mosque on one end, the construction of which Ali helped to fundraise for, and a small corner shop at the other. Even though Ali lives in the central town of Faisalabad, in a relatively prosperous area, the government cannot be counted on to carry out street repairs when needed. The residents of Ali's community often have to lobby their contacts in government or even raise funds themselves, suggesting a level of autonomy from the state. Ali's *dera* physically consists of three or four white plastic garden chairs that are set up either outside his front door in the summer or in the front room of his house in the winter. Either way, individuals from his community congregate in the evening after work or on Sundays.

Often scholars writing about authoritarian contexts note that personal, client networks thrive as citizens are not able to directly access the state (Scott 1977, Stokes 2007). My research suggests that this characterization of Pakistan as a clientelist society is incomplete. While in some instances, Ali does help people in his neighborhood with their personal requests, such as a government job application, his *dera* does more than foster clientelist connections. It also serves as a platform for the community to address local development and as a safe space to discuss candidates for local elections. To this point, Ali's *dera* has three features that suggest that it is more than just part of his private residence. First, while Ali's *dera* is located within his private property, individuals do not need a formal invitation to visit. Second Ali's *dera* is not only accessible to his own kinship group, but also serves as a central meeting point for the wider neighborhood. While Ali's space is open, it is carefully managed. For example, outsiders like me who are not from his neighborhood would find it difficult to gain access. Third, the legitimacy of Ali's *dera* is partly based on Ali's self-cultivated knowledge of the government. According to Ali, as he was affiliated with the state, over time, he developed a reputation as being

knowledgeable about the state and politics. People continued to visit his *dera* to discuss elections and local politics even after he retired from the government, a trend that over time established his front room as a central meeting place for his neighborhood. As Sonia Livingstone (2005) argues, even actions that take place in private settings can draw on wider cultural traditions, and, in this way, are part of the public sphere.

The role of Ali's *dera* during times of elections exemplifies how the *dera* forms a sort of political community—one organized around a particular leader. Ali organizes community meetings for local residents to meet with candidates or generally to discuss politics. He doesn't necessarily have a personal relationship with the politicians who approach him, as one would see in a typical clientelist network. Instead, politicians contact him to organize local meetings for them, since his *dera* is a central meeting place within his neighborhood. He doesn't always comply with these requests, especially when he doesn't support a political candidate. For example, he organized meetings in the adjacent neighborhood where the family had a local business, a short distance from his home—suggesting that he mediates a wider community than the alley where he lives. In fact, boundaries of the *dera* are partially determined by the network of the individual in addition to the physical space itself. As participation in formal public events becomes publicized for the wider community, genuine discussion may be more likely to occur anonymously behind closed doors.

While the *dera* to some extent links the local sphere to the state, especially during times of elections, it has more salience as a purely local public sphere as opposed to one which links local communities to the national level—or Fraser's (1992) concept of subaltern counterpublics. Again, the idea of a "counterpublic" is a useful notion, as it directs our attention to local structures and actors. However, Fraser's concept of the counterpublic assumes that the public

sphere can widen the space for democracy. The *dera* enables people to participate politically to some extent, but given the asymmetries of power between the *deradar* and the members, it does not necessarily foster wider democratic rights. As Chatterjee (1992) emphasizes, contemporary theories about the public sphere—driven by modernity and the associated bifurcation of society—do not help us understand spaces like the *dera*, which are at the intersection of private and public spheres.

Residents described ties among the members in personal, affective terms in contrast to the rational ones emphasized by Habermas. When I asked kinship members why they came to Ali's *dera*, they would say that they trusted him, he was not self-interested, and was a good Muslim. Such responses suggested that *deras* emerge out of a process of trust-building between the *deradar* or head of the *dera* and the rest of the community. In other words, the legitimacy of Ali's *dera* derives from his personal reputation established over time. As Ali closely mediates exchanges at the *dera*, the individuals who frequent the space share social ties with him and the other members—especially as they may also be members of the wider kinship group. Affective ties do not preclude sharing the more “rational” common concerns (Collins 2004). However, defining interactions within the *dera* as rational would be reductionist, especially as participation involves some risk, which I describe below. In this way, membership in the *dera* could be described in terms of a trust network or closed communal networks where the kinship leader plays a central role (Tilly 2005). In addition, there are a series of rituals that cultivate social capital described in chapter 3 in which the participants of Ali's *dera* engage that further cement their relationships in the *dera*, such as participating in marriages of family members and cultivating relationships through gift exchange, for example, during the birth of a child (Alavi 1972, Eglar 1960).

5.4.2 The Formal Dera



Figure 7 Formal *Dera*, Faisalabad

Formal *deras* are different from informal ones and, in many respects, serve as alternatives to the state in a particular community. In fact, formal *deras* demarcate the boundary between local communities and the state as discussed in chapter 4. The kinship leaders whom I interviewed noted that the number of the formal *deras* has decreased overall due to the high cost of running them, as well as urban migration. But I found at least one large formal *dera* in most regions where I traveled. Many of them continue to play a state-like role. For example, local residents continue to approach these *deras* and the landlords associated with them to seek counsel in ongoing disputes, involving land, business, and family matters.

Given the continuing role played by kinship leaders in managing village affairs, the space of the formal *dera* is more defined. The *dera* of Sheraz, a local landlord, was housed in a separate building from his home and lined with wicker chairs and a *charpoy*, a traditional woven day bed, providing enough seats for 20-30 individuals. The sheer scale of the room distinguished

it from Ali's informal *dera*, a private place where neighbors would chat. In contrast, Sheraz's *dera* had the feel of a formal reception area. While the *dera* was within Sheraz's private property, it was also considered a place of public access. It was connected to the main house by a door, so that Sheraz's wife could send in food for the most important guests—underscoring that *deradars* need to extend the hospitality of their home to maintain their public position. People frequented Sheraz's *dera* when they needed information during elections or for something simple like a school application process. They did not require an invitation to come to Sheraz's *dera*, but Sheraz still had some discretionary authority over who had access. Formal *deras* that I frequented in Pakistan typically have at least two layers, areas of more public access, such as the room where Sheraz receives his guests, and a smaller, more private meeting space. Most importantly, these private rooms can be closed off, as necessary for backroom negotiations.

In addition to its more defined space, Sheraz's more formal *dera* can be distinguished from Ali's informal one, as it was organized more formally and it had direct links to the state. First, unlike Ali's *dera*, Sheraz plays a formal role in mediating people's disputes, and keeps regular hours in his *dera*. When I asked Sheraz about the difference between the two *deras*, he also exclaimed that his *dera* was more historically authentic as compared to Ali's, which he claimed was more like a simple gathering place. What he meant was that the set-up of his *dera* is modeled after and evokes a British-era style structure where a local landlord may have conducted official business on behalf of the state.

Second, while Ali serves as a gatekeeper to the state, especially during times of elections, Sheraz's role in this area is more defined, given his family's political interests. *Deras* provide access to information regarding the workings of the state, electoral candidates, and how to vote. In addition, according to Sheraz, if there are particular development issues that the village is

facing, such as lack of access to gas or electricity, he plays an active role in problem-solving, either by guiding local residents to the right government channel or talking to the government on their behalf. In comparison to Ali's *dera*, which served as a space to hold political discussions, Sheraz's *dera* felt more like the meeting of a state representative. This image is emphasized by the fact that Sheraz's family has owned land in the village since the British developed Faisalabad. His cousin had also served as the head of the local municipal authority in the mid-2000s, creating a direct link with the state (Latif 2013).

Managing the flow of information through the *dera* allows *deradars* to manage village boundaries and to maintain their influence. According to Sheraz, landlords often initiate competing information campaigns to maintain their influence. For example, flooding is a common problem in these villages during the monsoon season, as many of the village streets are at a lower level than the river and most villages do not have a sewage or drainage system. During a particularly intense rainy season, another landlord in the village campaigned to raise awareness of this issue and to motivate people to collect funds to raise the level of the main village street to avoid flooding in homes. When Sheraz and his uncle learned of this campaign, they launched a Machiavellian counter campaign, as part of which, Sheraz went door to door telling people that such a project would actually increase flooding in people's homes, as the design was flawed. When I asked why, Sheraz's uncle responded if people were getting better information and services from another *dera*, it might undermine the position of Sheraz's *dera*. "If we let them (his members) escape, then our hold would slowly weaken." His uncle admitted with a laugh that as a result of his campaign "people immediately lost interest in raising the street level, which most likely would have worked." This is indicative of how landlords use their position as knowledge

brokers to assert their influence in the village. Access to information does not result in more democratic rights, but instead it is used as a tool to garner loyalty to a particular *dera*.

In its role in local governance and development, local information flows, and elections, the *dera* represents an intersection between local political community and the state. The legitimacy of the *dera* as a political community is based on the landlord's ability to establish social ties by engaging in reciprocal practices and rituals. The *deradar* also contributes to shaping the local political community through managing information flows. Finally, those who manage formal *deras* play a dual role as a state-like local actor and as a liaison to the state during special times like elections. That is, in the first instance, the *deradar* establishes the legitimacy of the *dera* by providing services such as mediation, through which, the landlord establishes a system of governance that runs parallel to the state. In the second, by managing even the most fundamental relations with the state—including, on occasion, voting—the *deradar* again reinforces the state/*dera* boundaries. This underscores that while the *dera* may provide a link to the state, in the majority of cases, it also has salience apart from its relationship with the state.

The concept of the *dera* problematizes the public/private dichotomy that has given rise to the concept of the public sphere. I discuss these dimensions in the next section, which involves a case of a stolen cow.

5.5 THE IMPORTANCE OF PERFORMANCE

The performative aspects of the public sphere contribute to establishing the *dera* as a political community and shaping ties among members of a *dera* and the wider village—a form of solidarity. Kinship leaders use performances in the public sphere to reinforce the salience of their

deras. According to Danial Dayan (2005), practices of the public—which in the Pakistan case involve performative rituals—help them constitute themselves into “imagined communities” (Anderson 2006, Dayan 2005). Similarly, Emirbayer and Mische (1998) point to how publics can arise from public rituals—such as the opening of the parliament. The trials at the *dera* create a spectacle that contributes to defining the local village community. Witnessing performances allow people to experience village-level events in a personal way. As the performances include a large number of local actors, they possibly create a group effect, which may foster emotional connections among participants (Collins 2004, Katz 1999).

From my field notes (2012):

During one of my visits, Sheraz provided an account of a recent event he had adjudicated where one villager had accused another of stealing a cow. He noted that major feuds could erupt in the village from this seemingly minor theft. In this case, both parties were from Sheraz’s wider kinship group, the Jat, a land-owning group. Sheraz and other landlords reported that such cases, involving theft or familial disputes, come to him fairly routinely; there may be one or two every month (Field Notes July 3, 2012).

Sheraz’s accounting of the mediation process revealed that there are a cast of characters that play a role in performances around the trial and, thus, shape how the news of this incident spreads in the village. These include Sheraz, the kin of the accused and the victim, as well as individuals who help Sheraz “investigate” the case. Dramatic displays of kinship solidarity at village trials contribute to creating a narrative reinforcing the salience of kinship (for its own members and the rest of the village) (Latif 2013).

Unlike in a civil court, individuals do not stand on trial alone within the dera, but as members of a particular kinship group. In this way, kinship groups also incur risk, as the

loss of face for one member could potentially lower the standing of other kinship members and may also include financial losses. Often the participating kinship members must also collectively shoulder a financial risk, as in this case, Sheraz asked for the accused to provide a monetary guarantee in the amount of the market rate for a cow, or \$2,000—a substantial amount for a villager. The accused often raises the funds for such a guarantee, known as a bila, by collecting it from the wider kinship group. When I asked kinship members why they take on the risk, they explained that it is difficult to refuse their kin in case they ever need a similar favor (Field Notes July 3, 2012).

In this case, this first performance of the wider kinship groups, attending the trial in numbers, served two purposes: it provided a show of strength for the wider village and allowed Sheraz to elicit public agreement from both parties to abide by rules that he set forth. While I did not witness this particular trial, kinship members and police whom I interviewed noted that they often attend such events in large numbers—a trend that I was able to witness during other trials. In the first instance, the number of kinship members gathered conveyed the status of the accused through his kinship ties. That is, even though the accused was charged with a crime in a public gathering, he had the backing of his kinship group, suggesting that their public performance helped to maintain his status or credibility in the trial.¹⁹ In addition, the presence of the kinship members bolstered Sheraz's authority and legitimated the trial by establishing informal rules of conduct. That is, the presence of the extended kinship group puts peer pressure on the defendant and claimant to accept the final verdict. Sheraz explained that this social pressure is necessary, as he has no power to sanction either party—and has to rely on their word of honor and the backing

¹⁹ It is important to note that this show of strength was possible for both groups as they were from the same kinship group. Often cases involve someone from a service or lower-standing kinship group, where they have to rely on the support of the mediator to participate in such a trial. Asymmetrical access to the *dera* is beyond the scope of this chapter, but I highlight it as a future area of study in Chapter 6.

of their respective kinship groups (Latif 2013). This idea of shaming is also consistent with Adut's (2012) discussion of how a public sphere can provide social pressure through scandal.

The physical location of the *dera* is also important in understanding the performative aspects of the trial—highlighting the importance of place. When Sheraz mediates a case, the trial does not take place behind closed doors, but in his *dera*, which is located at the center of the village and open for all visitors to see. The transitory community that forms in the *dera* is very much tied to the *dera* as a particular physical space. During my time visiting Sheraz's *dera*, people walked in and out of the *dera* at their leisure. Sometimes, individuals stop by for a quick chat and a smoke on the *hookah*, a traditional pipe, or to catch-up on the local news as they go about their business.²⁰ If there is an ongoing trial, the two parties with a dispute are given an allotted time to convene, but the *dera* remains open to visitors, unless it is a particularly contentious case like a murder trial or involving a close family member. As such, dispute resolution at the *dera* becomes a display, a scene for the men of the village to witness first-hand, forming a loose public. As Warner (2002) argues the idea of a public incorporates both a universal ideal, such as the greater citizenry of a country, and the idea of impromptu witnesses. In other words, as witnesses, kinship members become interlocutors in the proceedings. Their ability to witness the trial not only serves to reinforce the salience of the trial, but also makes them reliable narrators for the rest of the village that was not able to attend. While initial trials are open to the public, the decision-making is closed. At the same time as the trial is ongoing, Sheraz and other *deradars* engaged in backroom negotiations, which I'll discuss below (Latif 2013).

²⁰ Zeynap Korkman (2015) considers divination cafes in Turkey as feminized public spaces. The *deras* in Pakistan provide a similar space for men.

The performances of the *dera* are incredibly powerful, as they are not only conducted in the landlord's courtyard, but are also on display throughout the village. Such performances also suggest that the public sphere is not a “disembodied and idealized public sphere” but one shaped by the actions and performances of individuals involved (Gardiner 2004). These additional performances effectively widen the scope of the sphere to include the entire village—linking publicity to the formation of a community.

One afternoon, my research assistant and I traveled to the site where the hunt was taking place. In this case, apparently a cow had been stolen the night before and the khoji (or customary tracker) was tracing the tracks of the cow. While this was not a big theft, the incident had attracted half a dozen individuals who were following the khoji. According to my research assistant, often times, a cow hunt is not considered legitimate or authentic unless the village witnesses the khoji's trail. I followed the khoji for about an hour as he led the group of villagers across the village, commenting out loud about the possible number of thieves and the direction they had taken. In this way, the actions of the khoji almost seemed intended to flush out the thieves, who could possibly be among the wider group of spectators—a performative element. While the quality of the information gathered may be suspect, the performance was legendary. In this case, the khoji's investigation took him all over the village, as he sought to track the hoof prints of the missing cow in plain sight of the community, allowing the villagers to see that justice was being done (Field Notes July 3, 2012).



Figure 8 The Khoji



Figure 9 The Khoji's Vaar (witnesses)

This second performance reinforces how the *dera* can publicize such events, leading to a de facto community of observers. Even individuals who don't attend the preliminary trial become distant spectators. Such performances resonate with Adut's notion of scandal, as there is endless speculation as to who the culprit might be. Sheraz emphasized that the whole village

tunes in to this performance, as cows are integral to the economy, and it's in everyone's interest to locate the culprit. In fact, the historical literature of the greater Indian Subcontinent contains many narratives on cow theft (Gilmartin 2003). Such scandals again have little to do with democracy but more about shaping local relationships. For example, in the lore of the village, just as you have master *khojis*, you also have master thieves. In the areas where I conducted my field work, the residents of the villages, mostly migrant agriculturalists from India, often accused the more nomadic, indigenous settlers of the Punjab plain regions of being master thieves and referred to them dismissively as *Jangalis* or men from the jungle. Although the accused in the cow theft case was not from the "*Jangali* tribe," this population is often the subject of gossip when such trials are conducted. The public nature of the *dera* fuels and propagates the stereotypes regarding the "*Jangali*," as villagers regale the audience with jokes and myths about the *Jangali* population. One landlord, when discussing another case of a stolen cow, emphasized that he had discovered the cow thief to be *Jangali*, "as only a *Jangali* would be mad enough to steal a cow with a distinctive mark on its chest"—a point that drew laughter from the entire *dera*. Such performances serve to establish relationships between the story teller and his audience and structure relations in the wider village. The humor, in this case, can delineate boundaries, but also prevent open confrontation between the two kinship groups.

Scholars, such as Goffman (1983), suggest that witnessing information can help spectators appreciate multiple dimensions of an exchange and evoke a visceral reaction (see also Durkheim 2001). In particular, Sheraz describes a third performance where, through the use of religion, the mediator elicits a visceral group response.

In addition to convening kinship groups and the khoji's investigation, Sheraz mentioned that there is a third performance. As the evidence provided by the khoji was inconclusive,

Sheraz and representatives from both kinship groups took the accused to the mosque to swear his innocence on the holy Quran – a well-practiced ritual known as the halaf where the accused is made to publically swear to his innocence in a holy place, such as a mosque or a shrine of a religious leader. Mediators compel the accused to take the halaf when the evidence is inconclusive. As the mediators have limited resources, mainly the evidence provided by a khoji or character witnesses from the accused's kinship group, the ritual of the halaf is an effective way to dissolve the dispute (Field Notes July 3, 2012).



Figure 10 Shrine, Jaranwala

Sheraz described the *halaf* as an example of how he employs Islam strategically to legitimate the trial—however, the trial was not considered to be an Islamic practice. In fact, *deradars* are careful to point out that local religious leaders or clerics have no role in the trial, emphasizing how boundary management has a local dimension as well. The *halaf* presents another example of how performance compensated for lack of evidentiary support in the trial. In other words, if the *khoji*'s investigation does not yield conclusive evidence, mediators like Sheraz have to rely on other strategies, such as the *halaf*. By referencing Islam, the mediator reminds all the individuals that they are part of the same community of faith—evoking a visceral connection that helps to build consensus around the case. In addition, even if they believe that the accused has not acted

in good faith, they have limited ability to challenge the accused after he has taken the *halaf*, without calling into question his faith—something that most villagers would avoid (Latif 2013).

Sheraz's final verdict of "not guilty" further emphasizes the performative nature of the trial. Sheraz admitted that the accused was probably guilty; however, the village peace was better kept by building consensus. In effect Sheraz was emphasizing that the trial was more important for providing a performance of justice rather than upholding actual evidentiary standards. That is, the public nature of the trial allowed the victim to air and receive recognition for his grievance and at the same the accused was vindicated publically — allowing them both to save face. In this way, the trial evokes Goffman's (1959) work on saving face or how individuals conform to particular social norms to maintain order. The performances at the *dera* also allowed Sheraz to build a wider narrative about the trial and the overall process. The news of the trial spread more widely through the public performances that took place outside of the *dera* as well as through the many witnesses. However, at the same time, even though many people were involved in the trials, such as the *khoji* and the kinship members from both sides, two or three main kinship leaders made the final decision. Sheraz and others have pointed out that usually at the same time as the proceedings are taking place within the *dera*, Sheraz is also helping to mediate a private, backroom conversation with the two sides to broker peace. This aside establishes the duality of the *dera* as a stage with front-stage performances that are maintained through back-stage negotiations (Goffman 1959, Latif 2013).

5.6 CONCLUSION

My research suggests that the existing model of the public sphere has obscured a study of state-like actors, such as kinship groups as well as spaces such as the *dera* and how they promote political participation. The *dera* as a unit of analysis problematizes the use of the private/public dichotomy associated with the modernist paradigm to theorize the public sphere in societies such as Pakistan. As conceived by Habermas and reinforced in the literature, the public sphere continues to demarcate a space outside of the family, one critical to shaping the relationship between citizen and state (Calhoun 1992b, Habermas 1989). In contrast, the *dera* represents a hybrid between the public and private spheres. On the one hand, it is located within private spaces, draws on the personal networks of the *deradars*, and gains legitimacy from the participation of local kin. Yet, as I illustrate, the *dera* also can serve as a wider political community and facilitate political discussion during elections as well as serve as a platform to promote local development projects.

Examining the interactions generated by the trial discussed above reveals several aspects of how *deras* work as a political community. First, more than national-level political events, the *dera* is concerned with issues emerging from the village or community, such as cow theft — reinforcing the need to examine public spheres outside their link to the state. Second, space is critical to understanding how *deras* work. That is, the ability of *deradars* to form political communities comes from the fact that their *deras* are centrally located within certain neighborhoods, an aspect emphasized by Agnew and Duncan (1989). That is, *deras* can foster wider political communities as they provide a central place for people to convene as well as witness and publicize key events within the village.

The affective ties between villagers are linked to their participation in the *dera*—a relatively closed space with a boundary that kinship leaders police quite strictly, evoking Tilly’s concept of trust networks (2005). Ali’s *dera* was theoretically open to anyone in the community, but he used his discretion to regulate who could attend. The circle of attendees was kept pretty small, mitigating the risk to participants.

The example of the cow theft also suggests the role of performance in shaping ties. For example, the presence of kinship members during the trial reinforced the salience of kin. That is, regardless of the outcome of the trial, the public display of support allowed the members to maintain their status. In addition — the second performance of the *khoji*’s investigation that led through the entire village reinforced the legitimacy of the trial to the villagers. Finally Sheraz’s instrumental use of religion in a sacred place, such as a mosque, reinforced communal ties. According to Collins (2004), jointly experiencing an interaction, such as an event in the village, intensifies the experience for participants—thus creating strong emotional ties, a form of solidarity. At the same time, participating also reinforces social roles and boundaries with others in the village—such as the *jangali* population — serving as a powerful form of socialization.

The use of performance was the biggest difference between the informal and formal *dera*. While performance is not limited to the formal *dera*, given the smaller scale of the informal *dera*, the interaction among participants is more discursive. The discursive and limited membership of the informal *dera* also suggests tighter boundaries. In contrast, as a performative space, the formal *dera* drives publicity in the village or plays a central role in trafficking information. Through performance, the formal *dera* helps to construct and reinforce kinship and communal ties among participants. As kinship leaders often apply soft or coercive pressure tactics to bring

local issues to the *dera* instead of the police, the formal *dera* effectively demarcates the boundary between the communal and village sphere.

My research on the *dera* not only shows key facets of an important institution, but also helps to inform a future research agenda. In order to advance research on the public sphere, especially in the non-Western context, we need to operationalize the concept within spaces like the *dera*. It is only through observing exchanges within the *dera* that I was able to identify the role of kinship groups in managing the public sphere. My detailed ethnographic study of the *dera* also helped to illuminate how performance shaped social ties between members. Finally, by outlining the building blocks of the public sphere in Pakistan, I show that future work on Pakistan's political development needs to consider kinship groups as political actors who influence state boundaries and processes. Further, more broadly, my research points to the needs for problematizing the distinction between public and private in order to fully appreciate the myriad roles played by state and non-state actors.

6.0 CONCLUSION

Scholars have considered states to be important drivers of change throughout history, but especially in the twentieth century (Calhoun 2007a, Skocpol 1979, Tilly 1975). To that end, there has been extensive scholarly focus on the state's internal borders or its pervasive influence on society (Foucault 1977) as well as its external borders, which have given rise to concepts of the nation-state and nationalism (Calhoun 2007a). Much of the scholarship on states has emphasized state structures, focusing on how early state structures evolved (Fischer 1975, Skocpol 1979, Tilly 1975). Others have characterized state structures using Weber's (1978/1922) typology, distinguishing between rational-bureaucratic states, governed by rules that specify a division of labor for state actors, and others that are patrimonial or characterized by the personal ties between rulers and their subjects (Charrad 2011, Gellner and Breuilly 2008). In this structural approach, there is a tendency to treat states as conceptual monoliths. That is, as Mayrl and Quinn (2016) emphasize, given the complexity and purview of state structures, the concept of states have a take-it-for-granted quality. Further, it is difficult to conceptualize the boundary between states and society as much of the scholarly focus is on the tremendous power and purview of states.

In response to the early structural focus, cultural theorists illustrate how states are more than structures and also represent ideas (Steinmetz 1999). By showing how states are constructions, cultural theorists often point to how the boundaries between states and society

intersect (Berezin 1999). This allows us to identify state boundaries and ways in which they work. However, the emphasis of cultural theorists is on the myriad rituals and symbols of state power that reveal its pervasive influence. In this way, cultural theorists also partly contribute to the idea of the state as a conceptual monolith. Further, they do not theorize about how boundaries between states and society are created and maintained, which impedes our understanding of state formation as well as people's lived experience of states.

This conceptual dominance of the state has obscured the role of non-state actors in various areas of governance as well as how these actors contribute to shaping the boundaries between the state and society. As Scott (2009) writes, there is an entire history of non-state people in South-east Asia, who have resisted encroachment by the state—thereby shaping state boundaries in subtle ways that have been ignored given the dominant narrative of the state. While kinship groups in Pakistan are not typical actors within Scott's definition of Zomia, I argue that they help us conceptualize the formation of internal state boundaries. Scott's approach and the one that I employ in this project point to the salience of adopting both an interactional and structural lens. Boundary management incorporates both these dimensions, as it allows us to examine how local actors such as kinship groups operate in a wider structural field of power (Wimmer 2013) as well as the strategies and practices they use to resist the state. The lens of boundary management underscores how contestations between state and non-state actors are integral to understanding state formation. I show how kinship groups use their capital to shape local/state boundaries. The process of boundary formation also highlights how communal spaces, such as the *dera*, serve as important micro political communities. Next I discuss these two principal findings of this project. I then discuss how my research findings can inform a future research agenda relevant for Pakistan and other kinship-based societies.

6.1 RECONSIDERING THE STATE

Scholars often define states like Pakistan, as failed, kleptocratic, and in crisis (Ahmed 2002, Bøås and Jennings 2007, Cohen 2002, Diamond 2000, Kukreja and Singh 2005). The focus on state failure conceptually privileges a functional-structuralist understanding of state institutions that I argue has limited salience in people's lives. Rather than begin with state failure to understand Pakistan, I suggest we begin with why Pakistani society works as well as it does. The answer to this question reveals a plethora of non-state actors, including kinship groups, who adjudicate disputes, provide critical social safety nets, and liaise with key state representatives on behalf of their members. The lens of boundary management further helps to demystify the state by directing our attention to the key gatekeepers who demarcate state and local boundaries. Gatekeepers who manage boundaries claim different sources of authority: some claim their historical right to rule, others invoke their spiritual powers, and others emphasize their charitable works in the community. As such, kinship leaders draw on different tactics and sources of capital in distinguishing between their jurisdiction and that of the state — underscoring the complex nature of boundaries. The role of gatekeepers underscores that we cannot assume the coherence of the state, as it is constructed through negotiations between these actors and the central elite.

The interactions between gatekeepers and the state allow us to see how boundaries are demarcated and policed. For instance, kinship groups have established parallel mechanisms of dispute resolution, which demarcate local/state boundaries. The *dera* and, to a lesser extent, the dispute resolution mechanism of other organizations, like the grain associations, represent those boundaries. I argue that such practices have to be contextualized within the landlords' desire to rebuild the capital that has been eroded through changes in the wider economy. These boundaries

are solidified through a process that landlords and local residents readily acknowledged across my different sites. There is also some evidence pointing to networking and coordination between *deras*, which further highlights the durable nature of local/state boundaries. Landlords police or manage these boundaries through soft and hard means of coercion. As kinship networks are one of the few means of support for people when they need a loan, job, or a character witness, it is difficult for people to go against their kinship group. Kinship leaders also use threats, often drawing on their relationships with state actors—in other words, kinship leaders instrumentalize institutions of the state to police boundaries (see also Martin 2015). These parallel mechanisms extend to land-related disputes as well as other economic transactions where local kinship groups emphasize different forms of moral capital, setting themselves apart from greedy, corrupt state officials.

During criminal cases, the state becomes a more salient actor, as kinship leaders claim they don't have the tools to resolve cases. Others emphasize that such cases destroy their capital instead of building it. However, I show, some spiritual leaders can use their knowledge of Islamic law to mediate criminal cases, including murder through their *dera*. In family cases, state and non-state actors often work together to police the private/public boundary to exclude women from the public sphere. For instance, families and the police will often bury crimes against women who chose their own spouse. This reveals the patriarchal nature of the state. However, my characterization of the state as patriarchal is not based on an Weberian understanding of state authority, but one based on how practices of kinship group shape or subvert the rules of the state.

6.1.1 Seeking Kinship in the State

While the role of kinship leaders in policing boundaries and shaping the jurisdiction of the state is clear, more research is necessary to understand how non-state actors like kinship groups

directly shape institutions of the state. My research provides examples of how the police directly ask some kinship leaders to adjudicate disputes. For instance, Nayyar Shah reported that local police invited him to serve as a police mediator, whereby the police station seemed to become an extension of his *dera*. Further, other elected leaders compare the local government system to the *panchayati* or local dispute resolution system, suggesting that the state is seeking to replicate the culture of the *dera* to seek legitimacy. In addition, justices of lower courts suggest that many cases involving women that are registered with the police never make it to trial because women receive a lot of pressure from their families to withdraw their cases. This initial evidence suggests that the *dera* culture shapes the functioning of state institutions more directly, as local actors are able to exert coercive pressures on them. States actors also sometimes draw on legal precedent from informal, out-of-court settlements in their verdicts. Both emphasize the importance of investigating how non-state actors shape state practices more directly. This research will allow us to theorize about additional mechanisms of boundary management from the state's perspective as well as the how kinship actors directly shape the state's field of power.

While kinship actors are important in developing and enforcing boundaries, they are not the only actor, suggesting the need to examine the role of a wider range of non-state actors in boundary management. For example, in my field site of Chak Jhumra, residents reported a high level of gang activity. Based on my interviews, these gangs overlap with political parties and kinship structures. While it may not be possible to penetrate the gangs directly, I found that local residents are willing to talk about how these groups influence their relationships with the state as some of these gangs literally manage the physical boundaries of local communities by establishing informal toll plazas, like the ones established by the state, to collect a road tax from passersby.

Another important local actor that has been not been examined include groups with an explicit Islamist ideology. While some of these groups operate as political parties, others set themselves up as a rival to the state and provide a range of social services. For instance, nonprofit organizations report that religious charities, associated with the militant group like Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) are often the first responders during national emergencies such as floods. Further, states and nonprofits work with them to deliver emergency supplies, as newspapers reported during the national floods of 2010. There has been little written about them due to obvious issues of security and access, but recent evidence suggests that these groups are not operating on the fringes of society but rather are playing a central state-like role in some areas. It is not clear how these religious charities cut across kinship groups. But, given their increasing importance, especially in border areas, it is vitally important to understand their role in local governance, where they intersect with the state, and how they legitimate themselves to local residents. While it may not be possible to meet players like LeT, my research suggests that people involved in their charity wings are much more accessible. It may also be possible to talk with their supporters within the communities.

The role of physical distance from the state also needs to be studied further. An initial comparison across my three sites suggests that physical distance matters. For example, the *dera* culture is far more pervasive in Chak Jhumra, the farthest from the state, than my other areas due to its economic and political neglect. Similarly, the boundaries between the local community and the state seem more durable in Jaranwala as compared to Samundiri given its physical isolation. All of my research sites within the district of Faisalabad are relatively close to the thriving economic heartland of Pakistan. The evidence of these boundaries even in relatively accessible and prosperous areas suggest that the boundaries would be even more salient in areas that are

much further away from the state. These include the Southern parts of Punjab and Sindh in the South, where feudal landlords govern. Similarly, parts of Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which border Iran and Afghanistan, have rugged mountainous landscapes and the state infrastructure is even more limited as compared to my sites. These areas do not have the same kinship structure as the plains of Punjab but rather social groups that Barth (1969) refers to as more tribe-like, suggesting that they are loosely bound by kinship yet are governed by a structured set of internal rules. A comparative study of different regions with distinct social actors and associated practices will allow us to examine the various mechanisms of boundary management—contributing to Scott’s (2009) concept of Zomia.

My research provides an important start to understanding the state through the lens of boundary management. I identify the importance of kinship groups in shaping those boundaries by drawing on various forms of capital. I also show how interactions and performances are vital to understanding boundaries. To further theorize about boundary management, it is necessary to adopt a comparative perspective that investigates: 1) the role of kinship within the state; 2) the role of other non-state actors; and 3) and how boundary management is shaped by distance from the state.

6.2 EXPLORING DYNAMICS OF A PUBLIC SPHERE

A structuralist analysis of Pakistan’s public sphere suggests that it is very limited and exists in urban circles. Such a structuralist analysis draws on Habermas’ definition of a public sphere, which includes institutions that played a pivotal role in democratization in the West, such as newspapers, cafes, and publishing houses. While this space is carefully controlled in Pakistan, my research points to how there is comparatively more openness in the villages and an

opportunity to share political opinions in trusted spaces. I suggest that changing the unit of analysis from the national sphere to a local one points to the importance of spaces such as the *dera* in providing access to information and fostering dialogue.

Scholars may consider thinking of the *dera* as a local public sphere to be an idiosyncratic understanding of the concept, as *deras* exist on private land and the *deradar* or landlord has discretion as to who may enter. While the *dera* is private, I emphasize that it also has an internal order and structures interactions. For instance, the *dera* is open to the wider community, not just people in the *deradar's* private circle. This dynamic of the *dera* is most visible during local elections when the *deradar* hosts political candidates running for local elections. Local residents also underscore the communal ties and the trust they share with the *deradar* and other members of their *dera*, especially within an informal *dera*.

The experience of informal *deras* challenges the characterization of kinship-based societies as clientelist. I don't discount the presence of patronage, as *deradars* may use political connections to divert public funds to their community and kinship groups (Martin 2015, Nelson 2011). But, in my research area, such examples of patronage exist only at the highest levels, if at all. *Deras*, such as the one run by Ali, do not necessarily contribute to patronage politics, but provide a space for residents to share opinions, meet local candidates, and sometimes consider community projects, like rebuilding the local mosque. In this way, they form what Chatterjee (1993) calls a political society. Chatterjee argues that such spaces foster a tradition of political participation, which is important as villagers are largely excluded from the formal politics of the state. Martin (2015), in contrast, argues that it is problematic to characterize such spaces as participatory given their hierarchical nature, especially pointing to the exclusion of members of service-providing groups. I do not make any normative claims about the ability of spaces such as

the *dera* to foster democratization. However, I argue that a structural analysis of the *dera* obscures an important political process, one which frames people's experience of the state. The *dera* also reveals how social hierarchy is shaped by interaction. I suggest ways in which we need to further theorize about asymmetrical access to the *dera* below.

6.2.1 Linking Asymmetrical Access to Citizenship

While the *deras* are accessible to local men, they are characterized by asymmetrical access, excluding members of the service-providing kinship groups and women. Understanding the mechanisms of this exclusion can elucidate the role that stigma plays in society as well as the construction of citizenship more widely. Much of the literature on the social hierarchy between landowning and service-providing kinship groups draws on a Marxist lens (Alavi 1972).

However, my research suggests that while there are clear social boundaries between groups that provide services and landlords, these boundaries are shaped by people's personal relationships and their interactions. Members of service-providing groups are often at the center of the *dera*, arranging for tea and snacks, and running errands. Other members of service-providing groups have access to the *dera*, but only at the fringes. I've seen landlords ask such members to give up their seats when more important people arrive. The ability of members from service groups to speak also varies based on who is present. In the private presence of landlords and their families, members of service-providing groups are interactive and may even use their personal camaraderie to criticize the landlord—suggesting that in spite of the hierarchy, they have a measure of agency. In other cases, members of service-providing groups are ostracized, made to sit on the floor, and given different dishes than the landlords. This initial evidence suggests the salience of the interactional lens in understanding different dimensions of social hierarchy. I

provide some evidence of these interactions, but more empirical data is necessary to understand how institutions like the *dera* reproduce stigma and what strategies people use to mediate this social hierarchy and attain social mobility. It is also necessary to understand how the *dera* serves as a mechanism for reproducing inequality between the landowning and service-providing groups more widely in society. For instance, as landlords are critical to mediating interactions between members of service-providing groups and the state, they indelibly shape how the state sees these actors.

6.2.2 The Invisible Category

The exclusion of women is more extreme in the *dera* as compared to service-providing groups. While landlord's wives play a role in supporting the hospitality available at the *dera*, they are invisible otherwise. In a few instances, I have seen older women in the *dera* who are on missions for their family—reinforcing their role as caregivers. The *deradar* will usually take them to the side of the main gathering to ask what they need. But women do not participate in the wider political conversations. The literature on women and Islam overwhelmingly points to their exclusion, a finding that my research supports. However, while women are not present in the *dera*, it shapes their lives and perception of themselves. The daughters of a *deradar* revealed that their father will sometimes talk to them about cases involving women in their village. The *deradar* may also call on his wife to mediate cases involving women. There is also a group of women, such as school teachers, female councilors, and women in service jobs, who have more mobility due to their professions, and may also service as informal mediators or a source of information for other women in the village. It is important to document the role of such women and their agency in navigating stringent public/private boundaries. Such examples of women's

mobility help to reveal nuances of boundaries that are obscured by the dominant narrative of exclusion. Therefore in future research, it is necessary to examine both how women circumvent boundaries as well as the mechanisms of exclusion to understand how public/private boundaries shape women's lives. These mechanisms will allow scholars to better theorize about the construction of citizenship for women in Islamic, kinship-based societies such as the one in Pakistan.

Citizenship in the West is often defined as a social contract between its residents and the state (Paine 1999). Given its recent history of statehood, the Pakistani state represents more of an idea than a reality, an idea that draws on a mish-mash of Islam, the concept of religious freedom, and Punjabi culture. It is also shaped by powerful political influences including Afghanistan, India, Iran, and the United States. Further, given the paucity of services provided by the state and its virtual absence from the countryside, the idea of a social contract is elusive. Instead, the relationship between citizens and states is mediated and shaped by non-state actors, the mechanisms of boundary management, and local political spaces, such as the *dera*. Going forward, it is important to highlight structures like the *dera* and the practices it fosters, including ones that exclude service-providing groups and women, as such practices are key to understanding the construction of citizenship outside of the Western concept of the social contract.

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