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"If we stayed at home, nothing would change": gendered acts of citizenship from Mozambique and Pakistan

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ABSTRACT
This article investigates how women emerged as political subjects through protests in two post-colonial contexts: the Hazara women's protests in Pakistan against ethno-sectarian killings and the Chiango women's protests in Mozambique for road safety. Privileging the perspectives of two participants allows us to show that a critical outcome of these gendered protests was the process of political subjectivation itself. Triggered by grief, women disrupted their gendered and political habitus to make claims for the state to protect and provide, thus reimagining a more inclusive citizenship regime. Theatrical performances and the support of allies in the media, political organizations, and feminist groups helped to mitigate the risks of this disruption for the women. We find that their political action led to subtle empowerment in the private sphere, contributing to theorizing on the trajectories of women's empowerment through collective action in the public sphere.

KEYWORDS Gendered citizenship; Pakistan; Mozambique; political subjectivation; empowerment

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Introduction

The policy and social impacts of protests are the subject of extensive empirical research (Biggs 2018; Okech 2020; Sobolev et al. 2020). James DeNardo (1985, 36–37) asserts "the disruptiveness of protests, demonstrations, and uprisings to be first and foremost a question of numbers." We challenge this view by analyzing the impact of women's protests beyond scale and the state's responsiveness to their claims. Foregrounding "the micro politics of context, subjectivity and struggle" (Mohanty 2003, 501), we examine one

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protest among the Hazara community in Quetta, Pakistan, and another in the Chiango neighborhood in Maputo, Mozambique – both repressive, patriarchal, and high-risk contexts. We argue that the gendered process of producing political subjects is a critical outcome of interest, rather than the state response or the scale or size of the protests.[1]

The article begins with background on our two contexts and introduces the key concepts on which we rely for our analysis, drawing from the literatures on gender, empowerment, and citizenship. Next, we explain our methodology, based on participant interviews and media tracking of protests. We then share the story of one woman's participation in each protest. This is followed by an analytical presentation of findings tracing the gendered process of political subjectivation in terms of trigger and disruption, theatricality and protest, allies, and risks of political action, and the relationship of this process to empowerment. We close with a discussion of the implications for theorizing women's political subjectivation based on these two cases.

Background

The "post-colonial condition" (McEwan 2009, 21) varies across countries, and Pakistan and Mozambique present unique political, cultural, and economic landscapes. Nonetheless, both have faced similar challenges in the form of civil war and years of ongoing internal violent conflict, an ambivalent approach to democratic politics, and governments that perceive political dissent as undermining nationalist ideology (Khan, Khwaja, and Jawed 2020; Macamo 2014). Their post-colonial legacies "willed" both states "into homogeneous, masculine, geographical entities, denying difference and diversity" (Parashar and Schulz 2021, 873). Pakistan crafted a national ideology based on religion, while in Mozambique, the nationalist project was motivated by the imposition of an authoritarian socialist ideology, with different implications for the opportunities for citizen resistance. Public authorities' discourses about citizens continue to reproduce "colonial tropes and discriminations" (Parashar and Schulz 2021, 874) that are reflected in persistent inequalities between urban and rural areas and in urban imaginaries (Bertelsen, Tvedten, and Roque 2014; Tvedten 2018).

Pakistan

Pakistan was founded as a homeland for Muslims of former British India in 1947. The social imaginaries of the post-colonial state were formed by managing Pakistan's Muslim Sunni majority sect through a process of simultaneously othering religious minorities (Iqtidar 2012). Scholars trace the origins of contemporary religious tensions to the reification of religious difference produced by Western colonial rule (Enayat 2017). British refusal to

adjudicate religious conflict normalized sectarian conflict (Saeed 2015). The modernist Islamic revival before independence envisioned Pakistan as a homeland for Muslims that would "rein in" the problem posed by heretics and wayward Muslims, including the Shi'a sect (Fuchs and Fuchs 2020, 65). Later, the independent state used this project to forge a Sunni majoritarian national identity among a population that had little in common beyond ties to Islam. Over time, the othering of religious minorities distracted the state from resolving multiple "crises of Pakistani citizenship" (Iqtidar 2012, 1021) fueled by ethnic, class, caste, linguistic, and other divisions, placing the burden of proving loyalty to the nation on these othered communities (Fuchs and Fuchs 2020; Javid and Martin 2020). The status of Shi'as (representing 15 to 20 percent of the population) became increasingly precarious after the military regime's Islamization policies in the 1980s, provoking an intensification of attacks on religious minorities by non-state actors (Malik 2002).

Islamization and religious politics similarly diminished women's legal and social status, despite constitutional protections (Saigol 2016). In the heavily militarized and securitized environment produced by conflict in the region, gender inequality is reinforced "by the interest groups that operate in the name of religion and tradition, but also by the state" (D'Costa 2016, 410). Even as successive regimes curb civic space and freedom of assembly (Mohmand 2019), contemporary women defy threats from state and non-state groups to demand a range of rights.

Gendered protests persist. Women in a simmering peasant rebellion demand rights for landless women. An ethnic-based Pashtun Tahaffuz movement in the northwest protests against both the Taliban insurgency and the military's response, bringing many Pashtun women into the streets for the first time. In a series of annual Women's Day "Aurat" Marches led by young feminists, women protest against everyday misogyny and widespread sexual violence, calling on the government to redress gender inequality and protect lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer (LGBTQ) rights. Through a sustained campaign, women health-care workers demand employment rights and benefits. In all of these mobilizations, like the Hazara protests discussed later, women defy patriarchal norms to face arrest, violence, or social backlash (Khan, Jawed, and Qidwai 2021).

Mozambique

Political subjectivities in contemporary Mozambique have been shaped by identity policies promoted by the colonial Portuguese state and by the Mozambique Liberation Front (Frente de Libertação de Moçambique, FRELIMO) during the liberation war and after independence in 1975, both of which were motivated by a "civilizing" intent. These are manifested in

FRELIMO's attempts to craft a national identity by rejecting traditional thought and structures, embracing the ideal of the "New Man," and building a socialist society (Cabaço 2007). FRELIMO implemented this project by repressing differences, in terms of identities and voices, through force and authoritarianism. While the project of building a socialist society has been abandoned, current state-building efforts continue to rely on repression (Chaimite 2017). The emergence of localized yet expanding violent conflicts in the central and northern regions of the country and Islamic radicalization in the north during the last decade have been used to justify the reinforcement of the policy of quelling dissent. This policy is often articulated through public discourses about the practices and behaviors that make one a good citizen or an enemy of the state (Macamo 2014; Sumich 2013) and the manipulation of the country's history of civil war and armed violence to portray protests and protesters as violent and destructive.

Contrary to Robert Mattes and Carlos Shenga (2013), we see citizen silence as a strategic disengagement rather than apathy resulting from historical processes of silencing by public authorities (Ngwenya and Von Lieres 2021). In this context, people find alternative ways to articulate discontent through micro forms of covert and overt resistance, including music, that remind FRELIMO, the ruling party, of the unfulfilled promises made when Mozambique became independent in 1975 and of their expectations of the state (Chaimite 2017; Manhiça et al. 2020). Informal groups of women engage in small-scale protests against a wide range of grievances (Osório and Cruz e Silva 2017, 2018), revealing significant variations in protest spaces for people, particularly women, and their opportunities for acting as political subjects (Osório and Cruz e Silva 2017, 2018).

Conceptual framing

The post-colonial state-building project produces marginal citizens based on multiple markers of identity, in addition to gender, rooted in imperial racial hierarchies and legacies of divide-and-rule colonialism among multi-ethnic populations (Sadiq 2017). Madeleine Arnot (2009) highlights the embeddedness of gender relations within other sets of relations (religious, ethnic, community, class) that affect men's and women's differential access to citizenship rights and entitlements, as well as the relationship between female citizens and the state. Women have been excluded from full formal citizenship status, and their experience of citizenship is mediated by race, ethnicity, and other markers of belonging (Mukhopadhyay and Singh 2007, 7). These legacies of marginality and disenfranchisement engender political possibilities; marginal spaces provide conditions for forms of political becoming and the emergence of alternative expressions of citizen voices, which shape, contest, and disrupt the way in which citizenship is practiced and

conceptualized (Turner 2016). Our starting point is the "everyday political practices" of citizens living in post-colonial states to present an ethnographically informed analysis of their action that does not rely on established institutional spaces, such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or associations, to make their claims (Robins, Cornwall, and Von Lieres 2008, 1082). Privileging the "unruly dimension of civil society" (Robins, Cornwall, and Von Lieres 2008, 1083) permits us to include outcomes of political agency beyond tangible policy or program reforms.

Empirical research exploring the meanings and experiences of citizenship among poor and marginalized populations has given rise to conceptualizations of inclusive citizenship based on how excluded groups understand themselves and their relation to others and the state (Kabeer 2005). Collective action is shaped by experiences of injustices in everyday life and can be seen as both a way of articulating people's expectations of state and non-state actors and an effort to establish "a more democratized vertical relationship" (Kabeer 2005, 23). Thus, women's struggle to achieve gender justice is integral to securing inclusive citizenship (Goetz 2007).

Framing women's protests as acts of citizenship illuminates how women constitute themselves as political subjects through rights-claiming processes. As Engin Isin (2008, 26) explains, through these acts, citizens break away from their habitus – that is, the norms, expectations, routines, and rituals that form the "relatively enduring dispositions of men and women that account for the persistence and stability of an order."

This framing enables us to analyze processes of political subjectivation, through which individuals question existing scripts and write new ones by taking up issues important to them. Isin (2012) terms actors who struggle against injustice "activist citizens." He argues that citizenship is the right to claim rights, meaning that citizens have a right to be political, and that that right can only exist if it is exercised. Citizenship can be approached through status, habitus, and acts (Isin 2012, 109). Acts of citizenship can transform the forms and modes of being political (such as citizens' strategies) "by bringing into being new actors as activist citizens (claimants of rights and responsibilities) through creating new sites and scales of struggle" (Isin 2008, 39). Examining new acts, including spontaneous and organized protests, deepens our understanding of how new actors become citizens in the contemporary world (Isin 2009).

The marginalization and subordination of women as citizens is predicated on the public–private dichotomy (Kabeer 2005). Ruth Lister (2012) argues that historically the exclusion of women has been integral to the theory and practice of citizenship. However, scholars have neglected "the relevance of what happens in the private sphere to the practice of citizenship in the public sphere" (Lister 2012, 374). This article specifically addresses how the intersection between the private and public spheres motivates women's protests.

This article offers empirical evidence on how women in marginalized communities among the governed explore the possibilities of what Chatterjee (2004, 38) calls "political society" by calling on the authorities to provide them with security as rights-bearing citizens. Our framing permits a focus on localized political events, which are under-examined in the literature on gendered contentions (Nazneen and Okech 2021). It responds to Chandra Mohanty's (2003, 501) challenge to feminist researchers to "pay attention to and think from the space of the world's most marginalized (disenfranchised) women's communities." It addresses the conundrum of how collective action for inclusion is organized by those whose exclusion is premised on their lack of organizational power (Kabeer 2005, 23) by using two micro protests to foreground women's subjective experiences of resistance and claims making. Both protests disrupt women's habitus through collective acts of citizenship, in which their process of political subjectivation is a key outcome.

Methodology

The two cases analyzed here draw from empirical research in Pakistan and Mozambique conducted in 2019 and 2020. It represents an innovative collaboration between two feminist scholars across two post-colonial contexts not previously juxtaposed in feminist South–South analysis. We identified protests by tracking media reports over the previous two years, selecting those in which women exercised significant leadership and made gender justice claims, followed by interviews with activists.

The Pakistan case study uses media sources and interviews with Hazara women who mobilized against terrorist attacks. We focus on the narrative of Alia,[2] who became a community mobilizer in 2013. We also include the reflections of two Hazara feminists, Rabia and Shanzay, who worked in development NGOs, belonged to the national feminist group Women's Action Forum (WAF), and were politically engaged activists.

The Mozambique case study is based on a review of the literature on street protests in the country, content analysis of media coverage of the Chiango protest, and semi-structured interviews with six key informants. Three of the interviewees (two women and one man) were direct participants in the protest, and three were witnesses and school staff members (two women and one man). The research participants had no links with local NGOs or feminist groups.

The Hazara and Chiango protests

We introduce the two case studies of gendered protests: one a Hazara community in turmoil after relentless sectarian terrorist attacks in Quetta,

Pakistan, and the other a small neighborhood protest that took place after a road accident in Chiango, near Mozambique's capital Maputo. Both protests ruptured a citizenship habitus that relied on women's acquiescence to fear and invisibility in the eyes of policymakers; in both protests, women defied their habitus to demand justice from the state and achieve some recognition. The Hazara protests demanded that the authorities provide security and protection from violent non-state political groups challenging the writ of the state itself. The Chiango protest drew attention to inequalities in the distribution of public services and infrastructure (de Brito et al. 2017; Roque, Mucavele, and Noronha 2020).

The Hazara protests (Pakistan)

Most of Pakistan's Hazara ethnic community, estimated at one million, live in Quetta, the capital of Balochistan province. As a community whose ancestors fled persecution in Afghanistan, they remain vulnerable. Two thousand Shi'a Hazaras have died in a series of bombings and armed attacks by the militant Taliban and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi groups (NCHR 2018). Hazaras believe that this violence is linked to an ongoing proxy war between Sunni Saudi Arabia and the Shi'a regime in Iran, which is seeking to expand its influence in the region. The situation worsened after 9/11, when Taliban leaders fled Afghanistan to regroup in Quetta under the protection of Pakistan's security services. Hazaras have been targeted by non-state groups that seek their expulsion from Pakistan to further their political project of building a Sunni state administered under Sharia law (Human Rights Watch 2014, 14).

Most Hazara women observe some segregation from men, limiting their social role to the private sphere and inviting sanction if they violate patriarchal norms. These norms require them to seek permission from male relatives to leave the house and to protest (Haider and Loureiro 2021). Security concerns have strengthened existing patriarchal practices that restrict women's access to education and employment (Sultan, Kanwer, and Mirza 2020). Women were initially afraid to protest against the terrorist attacks after losing loved ones. After a major attack in 2012, the first women to mobilize were members of the local Hazara Democratic Party (HDP). Taking off their bangles and tossing them at the gate of the provincial legislative assembly, they mocked the masculinity of political leaders who failed to protect them (Fraaz 2012).

Alia was married after high school at age 15 and has four children. Though she has never had a job, she has always felt that "slowly and gradually we [women] should leave their houses" and be able to work too. Her family belongs to the HDP, which encourages women to work and vote. She said that the days when "we didn't know about our rights" are over.

Community women took part in a major protest for the first time after a double bomb blast on Alamdar Road in Quetta in January 2013 killed 96

and injured 150 people, but Alia did not join. After the next attack a month later, which killed 84, she left the baby whom she was breastfeeding to find her missing father. Searching all night in hospitals and mosques, she found only unidentifiable body parts. The next day she discovered her father's clothing: "There was blood and flesh beneath it, stuck to it … I am in tears now, but I couldn't cry then."

Alia and her relatives decided to answer the HDP's call to protest. Women initially offered practical help: "In our society a man cannot pick up a woman's dead body or a woman cannot pick up a man's dead body." As the public protests gained momentum, their goal became to pressure the government to provide both basic necessities and security. They also wanted to be recognized as part of the Pakistani polity, rejecting the public perception that they are migrants from Afghanistan: "We have been living here for more than 100 years; our deceased ancestors are buried here." Some Hazaras have sought political asylum abroad, but Alia refused to do so: "We should feel that we can live freely here and carry out our businesses freely too."

Alia mobilized more women: "We would talk to our families, and the people we know, as well as party-related workers, and the families of male workers, convincing them to bring women from their families." Women joined for many reasons: sympathy for the victims' families, community affiliation, or party loyalty. Rejecting the usual sit-ins and roadblocks, women again refused to bury their dead until the government promised to stop the attacks. After multiple protests, "[w]omen realized what their strength was, they understood they could do something."

Alia credited the protests with generating social acceptance for women to leave their homes: "[Initially] women raised more of an issue than men." Today, even elders encourage women to protest, to "become politically aware and understand what's happening in Pakistan." Women now bring their daughters and miss prayer times to participate.

Alia's role as a community mobilizer opened new avenues for engaging in the public sphere. She traveled to a ten-day cultural event: "My husband and my kids happily gave me the permission to go. This is our culture, right? We have to get the permission of male family members to go to these places." Still, her mother objected, saying: "Don't show me your face when you come back to Quetta." Alia was indignant: "Other people keep saying that my mother is really good because she is actually trying to 'save' my house. But I argue that if me and my husband are OK with it, why do other people have a problem?"

The government's response to protests has been limited to adding layers of security as the attacks continue. Today, Hazaras in Quetta are effectively ghettoized into two localities, guarded by official checkpoints, unable to move about without escort. Young people have abandoned their education because of the challenges of commuting, attacks, and harassment, including by security officials (Sultan, Kanwer, and Mirza 2020).

The Chiango protest (Mozambique)

Amid discriminatory social norms, conservative cultural elements, and gender inequalities that limit their opportunities for acting as political subjects, women in Mozambique have strategized to subvert power hierarchies and seek solutions for their problems (Osório and Cruz e Silva 2017, 2018). They are active participants in small-scale protests around the country, particularly in emerging peri-urban neighborhoods with ongoing struggles motivated by the unequal expansion of public services and infrastructure politics.

Chiango is one such peri-urban neighborhood, located 15 kilometers outside the capital city Maputo. It exemplifies the country's growing urban inequalities, with brick houses alongside those built out of reeds. Here, citizens often take the provision of public services into their own hands – evidenced by the proliferation of informal settlements (Nielsen 2010; Roque, Mucavele, and Noronha 2020). Ana, 41, has lived in Chiango since 2013, when her family was resettled here by the municipal authorities after heavy floods destroyed her former neighborhood.[3] The family depends on her husband's disability allowance of around $40 per month and Ana's income from selling plastic bowls in the streets.

In June 2018, a six-year-old girl was killed by a car on her way home from school. Ana and mainly women residents blocked a section of the Maputo Ring Road between her neighborhood block and the local school. This was the first time that she had participated in a street protest: "We thought that we should do something because the government is not seeing this situation, as the deaths started a long time ago." This time, residents were more incensed because an only child had died. A group of women went door to door to mobilize neighbors. Ana interrupted her domestic chores because this issue was "equally important." They marched toward the road, shouting "Justice for our children, come out!" The protesters did not inform the authorities of their intentions, a legal requirement for any strike or demonstration: "If we had, we wouldn't have achieved what we wanted."

The protesters blocked the road with stones and tree trunks. They threatened drivers who tried to force their way through: "If you like your car, you better turn around." News reports mentioned the ensuing destruction of public property, portraying her community negatively. Ana said that the protest was not intended to be violent: "We did not damage the road or cars – we just wanted justice for our children." The police demanded that the 200 protesters clear the road, falsely claiming that the president of the municipality was arriving. The protesters responded that they would not let him cross their barricade. Soon, large police dogs arrived instead: "Some people ran and others gathered whatever they could to fight [the dogs]." Next, riot police arrived at the scene, firing guns and tear gas. Ana recalled:

"They didn't want to hear what we had to tell the mayor. We wanted a decision about when we would have a bridge for our children to cross the road."

Protesters collectively raised $200 to fund the release of boys who had been beaten and detained. Ana felt that this contribution demonstrated solidarity. She felt proud that their demand was addressed within months:

> Initially I was afraid, but then encouraged myself. I had the courage to fight until we had a solution. We knew that if we stayed at home, nothing would change … If we had stayed in our houses, that bridge would not be there. People often say that poor people don't get mad, but they do.

After experiencing police repression, some residents said that they would not join a protest again – but Ana would. Ana and other women protesters are now recognized as leaders in their community because of their mobilizing power, their involvement in the local school life, and their assertiveness when interacting with school authorities. A staff member observed: "Here, if you provoke one of them, you provoke all. You can't mess with this community, especially with the women as they are very close to each other."

Engendering political subjects

We now discuss these cases as gendered processes of political subjectivation. We begin with the trigger leading to the disruptive acts of citizenship. Next, we show how the theatricality of women's protest expressions is a response to the high level of risk that they face when exercising political agency. We then explain how allies are vital to expanding the scope and duration of women's collective action while simultaneously mitigating risks. Finally, we demonstrate that women's political subjectivation may be viewed as a dimension of their empowerment.

Trigger and disruption

The deaths of members of the community triggered the women to protest in the streets and make collective claims directly to the state. Solidarities formed around the mourning of deaths is well documented in research on mothers' movements and the politics of grief (Lawson 2018; Navarro 1989), politicizing women's gender roles as mothers, wives, daughters, and sisters. In Chiango, the norm is to seek solutions to neighborhood problems individually or within the household, but the child's death united the community to act. The public grieving of Hazara women gave new momentum to their community's ongoing struggle for security and recognition.

Acts of citizenship are purposefully disruptive, even if protesters do not know where their protests will lead (Isin 2009). They produce activist citizens who may defy scripts of legal practices and norms to stake their claims as bearers of human rights (Isin 2008, 109). Our protesters engaged in two

main types of disruption: the first to gender norms that frame their citizenship habitus, and the second to daily life, using the power of the streets to cause disruption and articulate their claims.

The Hazara protesters disrupted gender norms that excluded women from engaging in the public domain. Even deeply conservative and fully veiled women came out: "They said they cannot see any more dead bodies" (Rabia, interview). Women demanded that the state fulfill its promise to provide security to women and their families, and they chided their rulers' masculinity for failing in their duty. The Chiango protesters did not disrupt the gendered habitus by entering the public sphere, as most women engage in economic activities outside the house. They did so through their direct interaction with public authorities, given that men normally act as intermediaries with state institutions (Chaimite, Forquilha, and Shankland 2021). Women spoke of the need to balance their domestic responsibilities with the new imperatives of protest. They portrayed themselves as grieving mothers to legitimize disrupting the formal and informal norms that regulate interactions with public authorities.

The forms of protest caused a deliberate disruption to daily life: "Protests don't work if there is no disruption. They don't work if the course of life remains the same" (Rabia, interview). Hazara women never expected that their protests would spread to other urban centers, inviting extensive media coverage and forcing the government to promise accountability (Omer 2014). Emboldened, they protested after every attack. National Shi'a organizations helped to set up roadblocks as the protests moved to other cities.

The political response to the disruptions amplified women's claims through widespread media coverage. After the attacks in Mastung in Pakistan in 2014, the provincial chief minister offered to send a truck full of tissues to console the women (Human Rights Watch 2014). They responded to the insult by throwing knives at the gates of the assembly. Their disruption generated national attention and the minister was dismissed. President Filipe Nyussi insulted the Chiango protesters by blaming them for their loss: "People are hit by cars because they don't know how to live in the city. Those who have difficulties fitting in an urban setting should leave to the countryside." Media coverage and public outrage forced him to retract his use of the colonial trope that Africans do not know how to navigate urban space (*Semanário Savana* 2018).

After multiple failed attempts at dialogue with the authorities, the Chiango women blocked the road during the morning rush hour as a last resort. They explained that without *vucovuco* (confusion and paralysis), the government would not listen. They termed their disruption "crying out loud." The metaphor of the crying baby is pervasive in Mozambican narratives, suggesting the enactment of vulnerability and dissatisfaction as the most effective means to meet an unfulfilled need (Sambo 2015; Taela et al. 2018). Though

the protesters claimed rights, as citizens, to access public services, they also portrayed the state as a father who can give gifts to his "crying" children, deploying historical legacies in which the paternalist colonial regime and later FRELIMO infantilized Mozambicans as citizens lacking "maturity to manage their own lives away from state tutelage" (Macamo 2014, 46).

Theatricality and protest

Protests are acts that demand spectators; their theatrical elements are often designed to capture the attention of specific audiences (Hellman 2015). The iconic image of the Hazara protests is men and women sitting in the freezing cold through the night alongside the bodies of their dead until officials promised justice. This act defied Islamic requirements to bury the deceased within a day and disrupted gender norms that prohibit women's public displays of grief (Malik 2018). Further deploying religious conventions as a rights-claiming tool, the Hazaras in Quetta remembered their dead through the transgressive practice of celebrating the Muslim festival of Eid in their graveyard. Large photographs of slain relatives adorned the graves of these "martyrs," transforming the graveyard into a communal space and celebration of life (Ali 2019).

The Chiango women's protest repertoire was grounded in their reproductive role as child bearers; the dominant narrative was that the protest was led by grieving mothers, though men also participated. Women lay on the ground crying, mimicking childbirth to show the authorities the depth of their loss. This act challenged the cultural taboo against depicting childbirth, which usually happens in private spaces without men present. Other women cried for their dead, danced, and sang songs of grief. Ana described the scene as both a "war," because of the violent antagonism between the protesters and police forces, and a "discotheque," because of the joy that people felt from doing "what they wanted." Since the colonial period, such performances, including their festive elements, have been commonly used to express dissent while avoiding reprisal (Israel 2013; Manhiça et al. 2020).

The politics of mourning and grief was evident in both protests, while their causes and manifestations differed. The scale and violence of the deaths among the Hazara cannot be compared with Chiango. Yet in both cases, the body (alive and dead) emerged as means of political expression and claims making, deployed in ways that subvert religious or cultural practices.

Allies

Protesters made strategic use of support from the media, political parties, and feminists to enhance the visibility of their dramatic enactments and protests. These allies generated community, family, and public support and amplified the impact of the protests.

The brutality of the attacks against the Hazara and the dramatic protests generated widespread news coverage and public empathy, amplifying the protesters' claims making beyond Balochistan. Mainstream national media avoided investigating the causes of the violence due to fears of a militant backlash (NCHR 2018). The Hazara established their own online platforms to chronicle events (*Hazara* 2021), yet they allege that these are often blocked by intelligence operatives in the name of national security (Rabia, interview).

Different public and private media outlets covered the Chiango protest, generating lively debates even on social media. The protesters called a private television station that covers contentious issues in peri-urban neighborhoods "to show their suffering and discontent to public authorities." Two major channels broadcast the confrontation between protesters and the police, including non-uniformed men throwing one female protester into a police truck. Participants criticized the emphasis on violence and disruption and the portrayals of protesters as uncivil and irrational, even when the violence was a response to police tactics. The neighborhood protest was locally organized without support from outside actors. Local school staff watched but only intervened to protect students when the police entered their precinct firing weapons. Protesters' lack of allies reflects the distance between citizens, on the one hand, and formal institutions such as political parties and women's rights NGOs, on the other, which rarely engage with citizen-led protests (Johansson and Sambo 2017).

Both Hazara political organizations and feminists from the national movement contributed to the mobilizing power and socio-cultural sanctions that enabled women to engage in recurrent protests. Initially when the HDP helped to organize protests, women did not join. After 2013, women's presence became normalized and their growing politicization strengthened the HDP's women's wing. After militants assassinated Hazara women on a bus in 2017, they protested against party advice. Shanzay, a party member, explained that unlike male politicians who seek self-advancement, women political activists seek security and equality rights for their community: "We want the right to be alive." Soon religious leaders and women from the Shi'a party Wahadat-ul-Muslimeen followed their example and came out. Rabia, a WAF member and founder of her own NGO, turned to a national feminist organization to arrange burial shrouds for bomb victims as she galvanized her community to protest.

Risks of political action

Women's growing political agency is constrained by the risks of public contention. In both our cases, protesters confronted fear and intimidation and risked being labeled enemies of the state to assert their right to claim rights.

Though Hazara activists have support from some civil society and political networks, they avoid some contentions, such as the vigils against enforced disappearances in Balochistan or the feminist Aurat Marches, fearing reprisal: "We are very few in number so we cannot face these things on our own. I don't think we can take any actions against the missing persons case – even if we want to" (Shanzay, interview). They try to balance their support for political rights and gender justice beyond their own community with the need to preserve the integrity of their unique struggle.

In Mozambique, the pervasive disconnect between citizens' everyday struggles and civil society groups prevents the development of collective action outside of party politics and adds to the vulnerability of those who do take to the streets. Protests related to road safety rarely spread beyond their localities. In Chiango, there were no feminist activists or political parties to support community mobilization and mitigate the risks of protest. Activists expressed concern that interviewers could be spies; they avoided providing identifying details about individual protesters, even though images and interviews were shown on national news. Women described standing together to confront the police and angry drivers, but they deliberately offered vague answers to queries about their leadership. Moreover, the need for money to pay for the release of arrested young protesters illustrates some of the financial costs of political action.

In contrast with the repeated episodes of the Hazara protests, Chiango interviewees felt ambivalent about the prospect of taking to the streets again. They believed that their "strike" action had achieved some goals, but they remained intimidated by the police. Considerations of risk are a constant factor in how these communities express their political agency and negotiate with the authorities.

Political subjectivation as a dimension of empowerment

We have demonstrated how women in both cases broke from their gendered citizenship habitus to claim their rights and how the process of their political subjectivation involved collective acts of protest that challenged existing scripts that reproduce their marginalization and disengagement from the state. We now turn to the empowerment implications of these findings.

The Chiango protesters began to envision a new citizenship regime in which they would be engaged as Mozambican rights-bearers and voters in the political process. Though the police tried to use violence to repress their protest, they also understood the ways in which public authorities sought to redeem themselves. One participant observed that the protest did not actually merit the president's in-person visit, which was likely motivated mainly by concern with winning back votes from the main opposition

party. Confronting the police, they threatened: "Today you treat us like this, but tomorrow you will need us, but we will not vote."

In both contexts, women protesters nurtured the political subjectivity of their daughters. In Chiango, daughters joined their mothers as they marched to the ring road. As the police fired their guns chasing protesters into the school, girls hid in their classrooms. As one schoolgirl said to a journalist, "[m]y mother and I went on strike because the cars pass at high speed." The Hazara protests were intergenerational, bringing together grandmothers, mothers, and daughters.

Feminist and political activist Shanzay recalled that her goal in mobilizing women to protest was first to develop their role in "resistance," which worked: "If women weren't included in the process [of protests], the project wasn't successful." The next step – to ensure that women's voices were heard within Hazara political parties – also worked by increasing their membership in the HDP and engaging the support of Wahadat-ul-Muslimeen.

The final step was for each woman to "understand herself." Indeed, both cases suggest that some women followed a pathway that led from political to personal empowerment. Alia first developed into a community leader by virtue of her engagement in public protests and joining the women's wing of a political party. Her increased agency then allowed her to act on the sense that she had as a younger woman – that "slowly and gradually we should leave our houses and do something." Today, Alia leaves the house simply because she wants to, but she emphasizes that it is with the full permission of her husband and children. This enhanced agency earned rebuke from her mother, underscoring the value of other family allies to support changing norms. In Chiango, women's organizing and participation in this small-scale political action generated a new understanding of themselves as well as of their relations with the state that transcended neighborhood authorities. Driven by a latent dissatisfaction with their marginalization and invisibility, they learned from their self-mobilization. Their grief evoked anger and frustration with public authorities' unfulfilled promises. Ana confided: "When you are not used to [speaking], you speak fearfully and nervously." Despite the persistent fear, she continues to speak out, explaining that she felt heard after the protests and now believes that her actions made a difference.

Discussion

Our analysis is based on the standpoints of individual protesters, which offer the imaginative vision of possibilities for "a just and democratic society treating all citizens fairly" and the "most inclusive viewing of systemic power" (Mohanty 2003, 511). The protests reveal how women acted collectively to engage in actions that disrupted a habitus predicated on their silence and

exclusion from engaging with the state as agential citizens. Their protests marked a significant juncture in their political subjectivation, an essential moment in the creation of a citizen.

In both case studies, the triggers for the protests were linked to women's inability to secure the well-being and safety of their family members. Our findings provide further evidence of the relevance of the private sphere to the practice of citizenship in the public (Lister 2012). In both cases, women deployed their gender roles to bring their grievances as mothers, wives, daughters, and sisters from the private into the public domain. The public struggle arising from personal tragedy reminds us that the public and the private constitute a "single arena of struggle" (Dagnino 1995, 2) that impacts protesters' empowerment trajectories in the private domain.

Hazara women challenged gender norms to protest in the public sphere and directly demanded justice and protection from the state. Violence disrupted their gendered habitus, killing the very men who were meant to protect their female relatives. This forced women into the streets to demand, in part, the very restoration of this habitus. The security authorities' response reduced the frequency of violence but marginalized them further by limiting their mobility (Sultan, Kanwer, and Mirza 2020). The Chiango protesters broke gender norms to directly confront the state authorities for claims related to safety and infrastructure improvement. Both protests disrupted daily life through their enactments in the streets, forcing a disengaged public to witness women's grief and anger and preventing the authorities from dismissing their claims.

The theatricality of both protests muted the direct confrontation with the authorities by framing their claims indirectly, echoing religious and cultural practices. The body, living or dead, emerged as means of political expression and claims making. The women's protests articulated a "performative conception of the political" (Rose-Redwood and Glass 2014) by subverting taboos that are religious (Hazara) or cultural (Chiango).

Women built alliances with the media, political parties, and feminist groups to amplify the site, scale, and duration of their protests, and they contended with the risks to their safety. By broadcasting the protest and debating the legitimacy of protesters' claims, the media emerged as a critical site of "struggle over meaning" (Isin 2012, 132). The coverage ensured that the collective action reached a broad audience beyond the initial expectations of protesters, compensating for the relatively small numbers of women involved.

In the Hazara case, allied political parties and some experienced feminist activists mobilized women in the community to leave their homes alongside male relatives. These allies increased the number of individuals who protested, building visibility for media attention and official recognition. They mitigated the risks for women of confronting the state as political actors for the first time, providing them with support in terms of scale and social,

religious, and community validation for leaving their homes. This was not enough, however, to achieve a decision-making role for women protesters in negotiations with the government or within Hazara political organizations, or to prevent some patriarchal backlash within their community (Haider and Loureiro 2021). The Chiango protesters experienced mixed political support, possibly due to the difference in the type of trigger and duration, though the media generated public debate about the right to protest and who decides how it should be exercised.

Political subjectivation led to subtle empowerment gains in the private domain among some women protesters. Alia leveraged the gains from her political empowerment and expanded her self-understanding to strengthen her presence as an actor in the public sphere beyond the opportunities afforded by the protests. In Chiango, Ana's participation in the protest helped to develop her mobilization and negotiation skills, particularly her ability to articulate her community's views in the face of opposition; she is now seen as a leader. Where patriarchal constraints on women's mobility and access to public space preclude their ability to access the resources that would enable them to exercise strategic choices (Kabeer 1999), the subtle gains are significant.

Framing women's protests as engendering political subjectivities has implications for reimagining the meaning of citizenship in post-colonial states. Both the Hazara and Chiango protesters demanded a citizenship regime in which they were seen and heard and could exercise their formal rights to engage as active citizens (Kabeer 2005). We have argued that their disruptive acts of citizenship forced the state to "see" them and to recognize their claims for justice, inclusion, and security. Their protests posed a powerful challenge to the boundaries of the social imaginaries of the state (Iqtidar 2012, 1014). The Hazara women, a persecuted ethnic and religious minority, rejected the state-crafted social imaginary based on the othering of gender and faith. They challenged the state to provide basic security and fulfill a promise of inclusiveness based on rights instead. By rejecting their marginalization and invisibility and asserting their right to live safely in the city, the Chiango protesters articulated their imaginaries of justice and expectations of the state. In both contexts, protesters deployed a "rhetoric of political claims" (Chatterjee 2004, 60), drawing on paternalistic imaginaries of the state – that is, the protective father – to demand safety and security. Their use of state discourse may be viewed as "strategic politics in political society" (Chatterjee 2004, 60).

Conclusion

We are wary of concluding that these protests led to systemic changes in citizen–state relations or resolved women's claims entirely. Violence against

the Hazara continues, as do tragic road accidents in Maputo. However, our framing of the protests as gendered acts of citizenship allows us to assess their power and implications beyond their scale or the state's responsiveness. Foregrounding women's narratives of participation in micro protests offers insights into how engaging with the authorities creates political subjects who subvert their citizenship and gendered habitus. The process of women's subjectivation is a critical outcome of such protests, as it opens pathways for personal empowerment and offers a vision of how they can seek to transform their relationship with the authorities from dysfunctional to inclusive.

Notes

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2. Names changed to protect confidentiality. Interviews conducted in Quetta, Pakistan, December 2, 2019.
3. Names changed to protect confidentiality. Interviews conducted in Maputo, Mozambique, February 29, 2020.

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