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Abstract Only – Work in Progress

**“Rekindling Souls: Friday  
Khutba in Southern California”**

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Muslim Friday noon address delivered in mosques, *khutba*, can be considered the public discourse of practicing Muslims. These short addresses signify the identification with Islam in a largely non-Muslim society and embody meanings that Muslims attach to their living faith in the country. *Khutbas* stand as concentric circles of belonging to a religion rooted in texts and to the continuous realignment of text with reality. *Khutbas* stand as interpreters of lived experiences as well as makers and shapers of such experiences. The subject of *khutbas* is of special importance to Muslim communities in the West as they negotiate their integration into the wider society. State agencies are also mindful of the topics of *khutbas* and their mobilization potential. The paper analyzes a two-year worth of Friday *khutbas* delivered in Southern California, covering all Islamic centers in five counties: Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Santa Barbara. This content analysis study focuses on four dimensions related to *khutbas*: (1) the method in which Islamic texts assert their authority and the way they are reinterpreted in the face of modern society's challenges; (2) the manner in which the needs of different communities shape the discourse of the *khutba*; (3) the affirmation of an identity that connects to the past while unfolds in the present; (4) the nature of the discourse and the dominant themes of *khutbas*; and (5) the making of different styles of delivery. The paper concludes with discussing some planning implications for the future of Muslim communities.