

Pakistan Ka Matlab Kya?

(What does Pakistan Mean?)

Decolonizing State and Society in 1960s and 1970s in Pakistan

A thesis submitted by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis studies the 1960s and 1970s in Pakistan. It is argued here that this period saw a concerted effort across the political spectrum to bring the nation into closer proximity with the state. There was a dominant move in the late 1960s and early 1970s towards decolonizing state with the purpose of transforming neocolonial state institutions in order to make them representative, egalitarian and democratic. Students, intellectuals, peasants, industrial labor and leftists participated in a series of disturbances and rebellion that reached a climax in Ayub Khan's removal from power and the rise of the PPP to power in West Pakistan. Popular decolonization narratives are discussed here through an intellectual portrait of Bhutto, a discussion of Habib Jalib's poetry and an exploration of newspaper articles, magazines, plays and an Urdu film from the time period.

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INTRODUCTION

This pockmarked daylight, this morning that reeks of night
 Is not the morning we looked for
 Is not the morning the good companions longed for
 When they set forth across the wasteland by starlight,
 Seeking the shore of night's dead ocean,
 Some anchorage for the vessels of grief.

...

That fire in their hearts, that longing in their eyes
 This 'blessed union' will never assuage.
 When did the breeze of morning rise,
 Where did it go?
 On the roadside the lamp glows, just the same.
 The night hangs heavy, just the same
 Our hearts and eyes still look for salvation,
 Let us move now,
 We have yet to arrive.

- Subh-e-Azadi (The Morning of Freedom), 1947 by Faiz Ahmed Faiz¹

The first stanza of Faiz's famous poem on Partition, and the carnage of August 1947, draws a picture of suffering and dismay at the bloodshed that ensued as millions of people made the journey across hastily drawn borders dividing what had been a common homeland into two distinct independent nations, Pakistan and India. He declares emphatically that this was not the 'goal' anti-colonial leaders had struggled to realize. Though there was much jubilation at the moment of

¹ K. M. George, *Modern Indian Literature, an Anthology: Surveys and Poems* (Sahitya Akademi, 1992),

independence, it was marred by the experience and memory of bloodshed that accompanied it. This was not the 'dawn' that the people had strived for; they needed to continue their pursuit.²

However, we can add another layer of interpretation to this oft-quoted poem to describe the dilemma faced by postcolonial nations, jointly the 'Third World', in the wake of independence. Frantz Fanon has argued that the fight for freedom was only the beginning for newly independent nations -- the process of decolonization was 'veritable to the creation of new men' and transforming heretofore spectators in the colonial system into 'privileged actors' in the world.³ The last stanza of *The Morning of Freedom*, 'that fire in their hearts.... let us move now, we have yet to arrive', can be reinterpreted to show that the dawn of freedom is not the ultimate goal. The real challenge lies in the process of decolonizing state and society even as a new 'dawn' of independence drew colonial subjugation to a close. The quest for selfhood and a national culture, 'the breeze of morning rise', continued to evade postcolonial states, particularly Pakistan during its early years, as the lamp of their colonial legacy continued to glow 'just the same'. The Pakistani state and society was 'yet to arrive' in the true sense.

This study argues that there was a concerted effort within Pakistan to move towards the 'moment of arrival' in the 1960s and 1970s on a global and local scale. There was a dominant effort in the late 1960s and early 1970s towards decolonizing state and society, the likes of which had not been seen in the first two decades of

² For a detailed study of Faiz, his life, times and poetry see Estelle Dryland, *Faiz Ahmed Faiz, 1911-1984: Urdu Poet of Social Realism* (Vanguard, 1993).

³ Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (Penguin, 2001). Chp. 1

independence. By decolonization I mean the transformation of neocolonial state institutions and society in order to make them representative, egalitarian and democratic.

It is argued that this time period was replete with intellectuals harnessing Marxian ‘weapons of criticism’ against neocolonialism and the tyranny of postcolonial elites within the state.⁴ During this time, voices from both ends of the political spectrum, the Left and the Right, as well as the religious and the secular tried to define the nature of this new country with debates around the culture and nature of the state. This approach might also be a useful way to bridge the gap between secular socialist and Islamist versions of state and society, as all were paths to decolonization. With such a plethora of voices to examine, this thesis has chosen to focus on the leftist end of the political spectrum to produce a narrative connecting the global to the local.⁵

Moreover, this thesis aims to fill a lacuna within scholarship on Pakistan. Though many political and labor-focused histories have been written, there has been a scarcity of intellectual histories of the leftist attempt to develop a national consciousness as well as to decolonize state and society in the 1960s and 1970s. This turn towards the Left was as much about the global arena as it was about the local stage. It was also part of a greater move away from, and rejection of,

⁴ Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (Penguin Books India, 2006). Edward W. Said, “Third World Intellectuals and Metropolitan Culture,” *Raritan* 9, no. 3 (Winter 1990): 27–50. Edward W. Said, “Intellectuals in the Post-Colonial World,” *Salmagundi*, no. 70/71 (April 1, 1986): 44–64.

⁵For a detailed history of the religious right see Humeira Iqtidar, *Secularizing Islamists?: Jama’at-E-Islami and Jama’at-Ud-Da’wa in Urban Pakistan* (University of Chicago Press, 2011). Tarik Jan, *Pakistan between Secularism and Islam: Ideology, Issues and Conflict* (Institute of Policy Studies, 1998). Abdul Rashid Moten, “Mawdudi and the Transformation of Jama’at-e-Islami in Pakistan,” *Muslim World* 93, no. 3–4 (2003): 391.

modernization rhetoric, Rostow's stages of growth and linear Hegelian narratives of development and history.

Furthermore, this move was also emblematic of a rejuvenated effort by postcolonial nations, through the Third World project, to right the prevailing power imbalance in favor of neocolonial capitalist powers and promoting Third World political and economic interests. The Third World project intended to provide a third alternative to an increasingly bipolar global arena due to the heightening Cold War.

This study attempts to build a narrative that also aims to address queries about the nature of this attempt at decolonization: Was it a decolonization of the state or society? Had the state form been naturalized by the 1960s? Was the state the subject of narratives or the antagonist?

This thesis is divided into four chapters. Chapter 1 provides a global and local context to a fledgling Pakistani state leading up to the 1960s and helps distinguish a dominant effort in the 1960s towards decolonization of state and society. Chapter 2 builds on the narrative in chapter 1 and discusses Pakistani newspaper articles, plays and an Urdu film from the time period to narrate the growing struggle of students, artists, labor and peasants in the late 1960s. Chapter 3 draws an intellectual portrait of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto providing unique insight into the kind of decolonization narratives revolving around state and society in a global context that were in vogue in Pakistan in the 1960s and 1970s. Lastly, chapter 4 focuses on the work of the Shair-e-Awam (the People's Poet), Habib Jalib, from among a

multiplicity of decolonizing narratives to draw out the affective struggle of the people. By affective struggle, I refer to the subjective resistance of post-colonial Pakistanis to state oppression and their struggle to bring the nation and the state into closer proximity.

CHAPTER 1

Carving Out a Path to Decolonization

‘You know really that not only we ourselves are wondering but, I think, the whole world is wondering at this unprecedented cyclonic revolution which has brought about the plan of creating and establishing two independent Sovereign Dominions in this sub-continent. As it is, it has been unprecedented; there is no parallel in the history of the world. This mighty sub-continent with all kinds of inhabitants has been brought under a plan which is titanic, unknown, unparalleled.’

- Mohammad Ali Jinnah’s address to the members of the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan⁶

Addressing the first ever meeting of the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan on August 11, 1947, Mohammad Ali Jinnah’s wonder at the ‘unprecedented cyclonic revolution’ that culminated in independence for Muslims and Hindus of India aptly captures the unparalleled nature and scale of change that was occurring in the imperial topography of the world at the time. The post-World War II era saw the end of the period of colonial empires and the beginning of a new phase, ‘a cyclonic revolution’, heralded by the birth of nearly three dozen independent nation-states, rising from the debris of colonial rule. Decades of struggle against colonial rule and the hegemony of the metropole culminated in the creation of new homelands in the Global South that held the promise of national independence, selfhood and self-determination for colonized peoples. Thus in 1947, Pakistan’s creation was

⁶ G. Allana, “Pakistan Movement Historical Documents” (Department of International Relations, University of Karachi, nd 1969), 407–411.

proclaimed as the founding of 'a much-sought-after homeland where Muslims [of India] expected to realize their democratic aspirations.'⁷

The world had changed in a fundamental way. As President Sukarno of Indonesia declared in the inaugural speech at the 1955 Bandung Conference, there were 'new conditions, new concepts, new problems, new ideals abroad in the world. Hurricanes of national awakening and reawakening...swept over the land, shaking it, changing it, changing it for the better.'⁸ United by a shared history of colonial hegemony and violence, these nation-states gathered together as the Third World against the backdrop of an unfolding, and increasingly Manichean, Cold War. The historic conference in Bandung was the first time that Asian and African nations 'got together without the participation of any Western power.'⁹ Held jointly by India, Indonesia, Pakistan, Burma and Sri Lanka, it was symbolic in creating a united front of Afro-Asian affinity against imperialism and neo-colonialism. However, the highlight of the conference was Chinese Premier Zhou En-Lai's participation. It indicated China's neutrality in the Cold War and opened the door to building diplomatic relations with the twenty-five nations in attendance.

Despite efforts to relegate colonialism and its narratives to the past, these postcolonial nations, united in their staunch opposition to imperialism and

⁷ Ayesha Jalal, *The Struggle for Pakistan: A Muslim Homeland and Global Politics* (Harvard University Press, 2014), 61.

⁸ George McTurnan Kahin, *The Asian-African Conference, Bandung, Indonesia, April 1955* (Cornell University Press, 1956), 42.

⁹ TILLMAN DURDIN, "Bandung Parley Their First Effort To Assert Growing Strength," *New York Times*, April 17, 1955, sec. REVIEW OF THE WEEK EDITORIALS, <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.library.tufts.edu/news/docview/113453399/abstract/14498293C80146ADPQ/61?accountid=14434>.

neocolonialism, were not truly post-colonial. They could be considered in a sense rashly self-congratulatory about their post-coloniality, not looking beyond the moment to the process.¹⁰ In fact, in many ways these nation-states were still hostage to their colonial legacies. For instance, in relation to the southern states of Africa, Achille Mbembe speaks about the experience of colonial violence and necro-power that ‘pursues the colonized even in sleep and dream’¹¹ creating a ‘death world’ despite the freedom of independence in African nations. Decolonization suffered a similar fate in these nations and has been seen more as a moment than a process. Here, the term decolonization is used to signify a historical process towards the Fanonian ‘creation of new men’ that goes beyond the moment of transfer of diplomatic power. The decolonization process, in essence, is a process of social revolution from below aimed at reorganizing society and institutions. It is a fundamental questioning of, not rejection of, the colonial situation and state institutions that were built in a bourgeois imperial environment. Insufficient decolonization gives opportunity to the postcolonial elite, ‘spoilt children of yesterday’s colonialism and today’s national governments’, to reinforce centralized colonial institutions and state structure in the name of development thereby exploiting the political and economic rights of the people.¹² In other words,

¹⁰ I am using post-colonial here deliberately to signify the attitude of many states of being uniformly ‘after colonial’ despite the varied nature and degree of each state’s post-coloniality. Anne McClintock severely criticized the use of the term itself and sees it as suggesting a uniform condition of post-coloniality and reorienting ‘the globe once more around a single binary opposition: colonial/post-colonial.’ See Anne McClintock, “The Angel of Progress: Pitfalls of the Term ‘Post-Colonialism,’” *Social Text*, no. 31/32 (January 1, 1992): 84–98, doi:10.2307/466219.

¹¹ J.-A. Mbembé, *On the Postcolony* (University of California Press, 2001), 175.

¹² Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 37.

decolonization implies a process of nation-building and of attaining selfhood ('bringing into existence the history of the nation') that is not necessarily concurrent with the process of state-making. It ends a history of colonialism, internal and external, by undoing the harmful sway of standing colonial institutions and patriarchies on the colonized. Pakistan, like many states of the Third World, was yet to go through a process of decolonization despite having achieved the moment. In fact, Pakistan, like India, went down the path of an 'oligarchical democracy' creating its legitimacy through development narratives that focused on accumulation and enhancement of the welfare of the few over the welfare of the many.¹³

Newly born, these nation-states, jointly the Third World, were still metaphorically hounded, as it were, by Walter Benjamin's Angel of Progress – the overbearing need to become modern and at par with their erstwhile colonial masters, and more broadly the nations of the First World. As Dipesh Chakrabarty notes, 'the discourse and politics of decolonization in the nations that met in Bandung often displayed an uncritical emphasis on modernization.'¹⁴ The modernization theory popularized in the post-World War II era essentially called for a Westernization of post-colonial nations. Furthermore, it was a process of homogenizing the world and eliminating traditional values.¹⁵ This uncritical

¹³ Sugata Bose, "Instruments and Idioms of Development," in *International Development and the Social Sciences: Essays on the History and Politics of Knowledge* (University of California Press, 1997), 55.

¹⁴ Dipesh Chakrabarty, "The Legacies of Bandung," in *Making a World after Empire: The Bandung Moment and Its Political Afterlives* (Ohio University Press, 2010), 53.

¹⁵For a more detailed discussion of the pitfalls of modernization theory see Dean C. Tipps, "Modernization Theory and the Comparative Study of National Societies: A Critical Perspective," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 15, no. 02 (March 1973): 199–226,

emphasis on, and reproduction of, specific modes of progress within their national development goals reinforced linear colonial narratives of progress that hampered these nations' ability to grow beyond their colonial past and the proverbial waiting room of history.¹⁶

Chaudhri Mohammad Ali, Pakistan's Prime Minister in 1955, echoed similar congratulatory 'post'-colonial sentiments at Bandung saying, 'I believe that imperialism as we have known it in the past in Asia and Africa is an anachronism and is well on its way to liquidation.'¹⁷ Partition had left the newly independent Muslim state of the Indian subcontinent reeling from trauma that remains unresolved even today. Adding to this melee of violence and death, the lack of a central apparatus and dearth of colonial administrative structures, the majority of which India inherited, left Pakistan worse for the wear.¹⁸ Hence, despite gaining independence the process of decolonizing state and society took a backseat in Pakistan to the necessities of state building. Instead, those at the helm of the nation

doi:10.1017/S0010417500007039. Andre Gunder Frank, *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America: Historical Studies of Chile and Brazil* (Monthly Review Press, 1967).

¹⁶ Here, I refer to typical European narratives of progress employed by colonial powers that propagate a Eurocentric Hegelian view of world history. Such an idea of progress dominated liberal discourses of the 19th and 20th centuries placing colonial powers ahead of the colonized nations in the path to progress and selfhood making them 'nations in waiting.' For more detailed criticism and analysis see Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2014). Gyan Prakash, "Subaltern Studies as Postcolonial Criticism," *The American Historical Review* 99, no. 5 (December 1, 1994): 1475–90, doi:10.2307/2168385. Samir Amin, *Eurocentrism* (NYU Press, 2010).

¹⁷ "Excerpts From the Opening Speeches at the Asian-African Conference in Bandung: Speakers at the Conference," *New York Times*, April 20, 1955.

¹⁸ See Jalal, *The Struggle for Pakistan*, 2014, Chp. 3. and Ayesha Jalal, *The State of Martial Rule: The Origins of Pakistan's Political Economy of Defence* (Cambridge University Press, 2007), Chp. 2.

played up 'the Indian threat' and paid 'lip service to a vaguely defined Islamic ideology.'¹⁹

The All India Muslim League, the purported voice of the Muslims of India, became a political party without a base, leaving behind its strongholds in the minority provinces to take up the mandate in the Muslim majority provinces that formed Pakistan. It became a national party without a 'nation.' The inability of the Muslim League to rally support from the masses in the provinces beyond the appeal of Mohammad Ali Jinnah, who was shortly to step away from party affairs, left the political arena open and vulnerable to domination by non-elected institutions in the context of Cold War politics.²⁰ The institutional imbalance thus created in favor of the bureaucracy and the military, was bolstered by early wars with India for control of the princely state of Kashmir. The resulting exaggerated dogma of defense and relative absence of grass-roots political activism bolstered a centralized bureaucratic authoritarianism that has yet to be successfully uprooted from the state machinery.²¹

Moreover, its dire financial situation made Pakistan an eager supplicant asking for monetary assistance of nearly two billion dollars from the United States of America as early as October 1947 as the specter of disintegration and re-

¹⁹ Jalal, *The Struggle for Pakistan*, 2014, 145.

²⁰ Much has been written about the AIML's career in Pakistan including Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan* (Cambridge University Press, 1994). Ahmed Kamal, *State Against the Nation: The Decline of the Muslim League in Pre-Independence Bangladesh, 1947-54* (University Press, 2009). Anwar Hussain Syed, "Factional Conflict in the Punjab Muslim League, 1947-1955," *Polity* 22, no. 1 (October 1, 1989): 49-73, doi:10.2307/3234846. Khursheed Kamal Aziz, *Party Politics in Pakistan, 1947-1958* (National Commission on Historical and Cultural Research, 1976).

²¹ Jalal, *The Struggle for Pakistan*, 2014. Jalal, *The State of Martial Rule*.

assimilation into India loomed large in its sights.²² Despite a harsh invective against imperialism, Pakistan entered the domain of international affairs with a decidedly strategic role meant to exploit the growing hostilities of the Cold War, and the related neo-imperialistic interests of the Americans. As Jalal argues, this manner of insertion into the 'post-world war II international system played a crucial role in combination with regional and domestic factors to create a lasting institutional imbalance within the Pakistani state structure.'²³

The mutually advantageous relations with Washington were further solidified through a bilateral military aid treaty as well as two American-sponsored pacts, the Southeast Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO) and the Baghdad Pact (later renamed Central Treaty Organization) in 1954 and 1955 respectively, that pitched Pakistan squarely to one side of the Iron Curtain. Speaking to the Constituent Assembly in March 1954, Chaudhri Muhammad Ali, who was both Prime Minister and Minister of Defense, defended nearly 171 million dollars in American military aid by saying that it was 'perhaps the most effective step ever taken to ensure the security and progress of the country since the establishment of Pakistan.'²⁴²⁵ Some farsighted members of the Constituent Assembly and other politicians objected to such a treaty as it lay the door open for undue foreign influence. One member from Bengal, Shri Bhupendra Kumar Datta, voiced his objection to American aid stipulating that it was an 'armed intervention by a foreign nation into our affairs'

²² Jalal, *The State of Martial Rule*, 55.

²³ Ayesha Jalal, *Democracy and Authoritarianism in South Asia: A Comparative and Historical Perspective* (Cambridge University Press, 1995), 37.

²⁴ Jalal, *The State of Martial Rule*, 240-1.

²⁵ Constituent Assembly (1947-1954), "Constituent Assembly (Legislature) of Pakistan Debates.," *Constituent Assembly (Legislature) of Pakistan Debates.*, March 15, 1954, 282-3.

and that 'inviting foreign aid and through it foreign intervention' was similar to the betrayal of Bengal by the Omichands and Mir Jafar in 1757.²⁶

However, as Ayesha Jalal points out in *Democracy and Authoritarianism*, by the fall of 1951 the civil bureaucracy and the military had already 'registered their dominance within the emerging structure of the Pakistani state.'²⁷ Indeed, Pakistan had gone through a steady stream of Prime Ministers until Governor General Ghulam Mohammad dismissed the Constituent Assembly in October 1954 and opened the door to a declaration of martial law by President Iskander Mirza in October 1958. General Ayub Khan, who had been a close associate of Iskander Mirza, assumed the role of chief martial law administrator. His regime further intensified the process of centralizing state power that had begun nearly a decade ago even sending of President Mirza into exile within three weeks of the martial law, aided by a Supreme Court ruling. The crowning glory of Ayub Khan's tenure and a product of his 'genius' was the Basic Democracies Order of 1959. The Order drastically diminished the efficacy of political processes to represent the needs and wants of the populace, and urban society in particular, while maintaining a façade of democracy. Marshaling all strategic economic and political power within his own person, Ayub Khan cemented a politics of favoritism and nepotism that created alliances between the ruling elite, bureaucracy and the nearly eighty sizeable landlord families at the time, leaving no space for the nation itself within the state.

²⁶ Ibid., 547.

²⁷ Jalal, *Democracy and Authoritarianism in South Asia*, 38.

Furthermore, Ayub Khan's economic policy of betting on the fittest, investing in areas that presented the opportunity for maximum economic returns, and providing state support for the private sector worked wonders in West Pakistan where urbanization rates soared while East Pakistan remained an agricultural backwater. East Pakistanis suffered adversely as the gap in income differentials between the two wings widened with the aid of lopsided tariff policies.²⁸ The Western model of modernization as well as emphasis on progress and national development narratives fabricated legitimacy for Ayub Khan's regime in official discourses just as the discourse of development of colonies had brought legitimacy to yesteryear's colonial masters. However, this criticism does not imply that the development discourse should be made unavailable to postcolonial states due to this discourse's colonial and Western heritage. On the other hand, a sense of inevitability regarding the centralized nature of the postcolonial state and its political economy also needs to be avoided. Rather, the circumstances and nature of development should be reviewed keeping in mind the selective appropriation of instruments and idioms to strengthen the postcolonial state.²⁹

Ayub Khan's Decade of Development was a shining example of growth without distribution; the employment of development idioms and policies that served only to strengthen military bureaucratic authoritarianism. It left most of the country in poverty as wealth became increasingly concentrated within the hands of twenty-two odd West Pakistani industrialist families. These families, including the

²⁸ Maurice W. Schiff, "Multilateral Trade Liberalization and Political Disintegration: Implications for the Evolution of Free Trade Areas and Customs Unions" (World Bank Publications, 2000).

²⁹ Bose, "Instruments and Idioms of Development."

Adamjees, Saigols and Dawood, had unequivocally benefited from Ayub Khan's foreign-aided development policies. According to the calculations of Dr. Mahbub ul Haq, Chief Economist of the Planning Commission, just two dozen families controlled 'about two-thirds of industrial assets, 80 per cent of banking and 79 per cent of insurance' industries' by 1968.³⁰ This only added fuel to the fire of discontent that was raging within the hearts of the populace, both in the Eastern and Western wings of the country, by the late 1960s.

Earlier in the decade, the 1965 presidential election provided an opportunity to Ayub Khan's opponents, religious and secular, hailing from both wings of the country and belonging to the political left and right, to unite in order to oust the self-titled Field Marshal. The Combined Opposition Parties led this offensive with Fatima Jinnah as its presidential candidate, an instance that triggered a strong response from the ruling regime. The results of the elections were emblematic of the rigged electoral process as the incumbent President Ayub Khan won by a margin of nearly twenty thousand votes over Ms. Jinnah. Though President again, this was to be a pyrrhic victory for Ayub Khan as it only added to the hostility and opposition fomenting across different sections of society. Defeat in war with India later in the same year and the subsequent lackluster negotiations at Tashkent only served to weaken Ayub Khan's farcical mandate.

Moreover, Ayub Khan's regime instituted various measures to bring 'political and civil societies under its firm control' and 'the control over media and labor

³⁰ "MHHDC | Mahbub Ul Haq Human Development Center," accessed March 5, 2015, <http://mhhd.org/?p=76>.

unions further diminished the possibility of strengthening democratic institutions.’³¹ Using intelligence agencies to spy on journalists, activists and intellectuals of the time, Ayub Khan’s regime imposed a repressive censorship system of ‘press advice’ laying down rules determining what was ‘newsworthy’.³² Moreover, the National Press Trust, established in 1964, ‘made a number of major newspapers in effect government institutions, and sympathetic coverage by the independent press was discouraged by a Press and Publications Ordinance which allowed for suspensions of newspapers and periodicals without due process.’ Press advice and the government’s own need for newsprint further inhibited intellectual expression and political assertion through the written word. Moreover, television and radio became ‘mouthpieces for the government, available for partisan use in any future competition for votes.’ Thus, using its control over political processes, an unrepresentative Basic Democracies system along with strong censorship of media and mass communications channels created an almost foolproof strategy for continued rule and future electoral successes.³³

Hence, the Pakistani Establishment’s trajectory, charted above, belied the process of decolonization in favor of strengthening colonial bureaucratic authoritarianism, centralized state structures and national development policies that were aimed at blindly following the modernization rhetoric championed by neo-colonial powers such as United States of America. Despite formally opposing

³¹ Ayesha Siddiq, *Military Inc.: Inside Pakistan’s Military Economy* (Pluto Press, 2007), 73–4.

³² Jalal, *The Struggle for Pakistan*, 2014, 114.

³³ M. G. Weinbaum, “The March 1977 Elections in Pakistan: Where Everyone Lost,” *Asian Survey* 17, no. 7 (July 1, 1977): 602, doi:10.2307/2643408.

imperialism and neo-colonialism, the powers that be in Pakistan made strategic and partisan alliances in an increasingly bipolar international context.

Thus, this chapter provides a global and local context to the development of a fledgling Pakistani state leading up to the 1960s. The historical background provided here helps distinguish the need and impetus for a dominant decolonization effort in the 1960s and is important to understanding the intellectual history of the Left in Pakistan discussed in later chapters.

CHAPTER 2

Students, Intellectuals and Workers

Despite the hegemony of the Establishment, Pakistan's early years were littered with dissenting voices of the religious Right and secular Left as each tried to define the nature of this new country with debates around the culture and nature of the state. Similar to colonial times, public space was heavily monitored and jealously guarded against errant expressions and wayward discussions of the state and national culture. This produced a struggle by the Left against the hegemony of the post-colonial elite in the 'private' and personal sphere, specifically in the domain of arts and literature.

One of the most significant examples of this rebellion against the neocolonial state was the All Pakistan Progressive Writers Association (APPWA), founded in December 1947 and linked closely to the Communist Party of Pakistan (CPP). Sajjad Zaheer, the secretary general of the CPP masterminded the organization of APPWA in Pakistan along the lines of the All India Progressive Writers Association, one of most significant Indian literary movements of the 1930s. Zaheer belonged to a prominent Urdu-speaking *ashraf* family from the United Provinces with connections to prominent and political Nehru family. While studying law in England in the early 1930s, Zaheer, an accomplished writer himself, along with other Indian students like the novelists Ahmed Ali and Mulk Raj Anand established the Progressive

Writers Association. The purpose of this Association was to produce a new literature that promoted progressive ideals and highlighted the poverty, dispossession and distress of the Indian masses. The strong leftist tendencies within the Association became more pronounced in 1936 when Zaheer joined the cadres of the Communist Party of India (CPI) after returning to India. Thus, the PWA became closely affiliated with the CPI despite having begun as a literary movement that was open to all writers and thinkers who agreed with its general aims.

After the formation of Pakistan, Sajjad Zaheer founded the Communist Party of Pakistan in Calcutta and migrated to Pakistan with the goal of inciting a communist revolution in the fragile, newly formed state. With this aim in mind, Zaheer agitated against the state and the 'communally-minded feudal Muslim League leadership.'³⁴ Moreover, the CPP focused on creating labor unions and organizing industrial workers and peasants against the state. The post-independence re-organization of a progressive writers' movement was another aspect of the Left's battle against the autocratic state.

By 1951, Zaheer became extremely critical of any deviations from the party line and this attitude was also reflected in APPWA. Zaheer expected the intellectuals who were members of APPWA 'to have a thorough mastery of Marxist ideology' and 'encouraged the writers 'to pen essays, articles and literary criticism for popular consumption to counter bourgeois and 'reactionary' ideologies that were being

³⁴ Kamran Asdar Ali, "Communists in a Muslim Land: Cultural Debates in Pakistan's Early Years," *Modern Asian Studies* 45, no. 03 (May 2011): 55, doi:10.1017/S0026749X11000175.

propagated then by, according to him, state and class enemies.’³⁵ ‘Reactionary’ ideologues included all and sundry political actors outside of the CPP and its progressive circle as well as those who continued to produce ‘art for art’s sake’ at odds as it was with social realism en vogue in APPWA. For the progressives, literary works needed to be socially meaningful, to depict the struggle of the peasants and labor, in order to be considered valuable. Such discrimination was rivaled only by the state itself as can be seen with the case of legendary short story writer Saadat Hasan Manto.

Manto was renowned for his unsparing and cynical depictions of the base nature of society, writing short stories on various topics including partition violence, prejudice and the hollow morality of the respectable classes. He shared the progressives’ contempt for the urban middle classes and the unequal nature of society. However, at the same time he opposed the APPWA’s restrictive definition of literature and its discrimination against writers with differing ideological backgrounds. Thus, his blacklisting by the progressives in 1948 came as no surprise when Manto tried to launch a literary magazine, *Urdu Adab*, with contributions from both progressive and non-progressive writers in 1948. His journal was banned and boycotted for fear that it was ‘a hotbed of reaction and statist ideas’ especially due to its association with Mohammad Hasan Askari, a notable writer, literary critic and staunch opponent of the CPP.³⁶

³⁵ Ibid., 519.

³⁶ Ayesha Jalal, *The Pity of Partition: Manto’s Life, Times, and Work Across the India-Pakistan Divide* (Princeton University Press, 2013), 167.

Moreover, the Left as embodied by the CPP remained deeply committed to Historical Materialism and classical Marxist stages of history. The Left's insistence on progressive history meant that it had to 'wait' for the current stage of capitalism and industrialization to reach its height before the next stage, socialism, leading to communism could begin. Thus, Benjamin's dogged Angel of Progress hounded the Pakistani Left too well into the 1950s. This teleological emphasis on linear narratives of progress allowed the Left to venerate working class struggles, in accordance with Western Marxism, but it also hampered its ability to look beyond the working class to the multiplicity of social experiences of the people in Pakistan. Indeed, the focus on conquering social processes, historical determinism and division of society into, borrowing Kamran Asdar Ali's phrase, 'progressives and perverts' created an obstruction to the process of decolonization and the production of a nation. This focus produced a similar kind of Manichaeism in postcolonial Pakistani leftist politics that, according to Fanon, had been at the foundation of the colonial world.

Rooting itself squarely in the domain of Western political thought, the Left ran the risk of losing connection with, and alienating itself from, the historical and cultural roots of South Asian Muslims. Muhammad Hasan Askari, the literary genius and critic of the Left, perceptively remarked that 'Muslim communists had lost faith in the ability to think independently and creatively for themselves' and asserted in

continuing to pursue progressivism, 'we as a people will vanish and only progress will remain'.³⁷

As Pakistan moved from purportedly democratic governance to authoritarian leadership in the 1950s, the activities of the CPP and trade unions became increasingly circumscribed leading to a ban of the CPP in 1954 and erosion of union rights through the Pakistan Essential Services (Maintenance) Act in 1952.³⁸ The 1951 Rawalpindi Conspiracy Case had already put the CCP leadership in the crosshairs of the Establishment as prominent leftist leaders including Sajjad Zaheer and the poet Faiz Ahmed Faiz were arrested along with Major General Akbar Khan for an attempted coup. APPWA, declared a political party in 1958, was dealt a mortal blow when the state appropriated the Progressive Papers Limited, owned by leftist Mian Iftikharuddin, in 1959.³⁹ Moreover, the Establishment's alignment with capitalist powers in the context of the Cold War also had an adverse impact on the activities of the CCP. Thus, heavily surveilled and banned by the Establishment, the CCP was run aground by the end of the 1950s.

As the new decade dawned upon Pakistan, the National Awami Party (NAP), formed in 1957, represented the Left when Ayub Khan lifted the 1958 ban on political parties in 1962. The NAP, founded in Dhaka, was an amalgam of various

³⁷ Quoted in Ali, "Communists in a Muslim Land," 525. Also see, Mehr Afshan Farooqi, "Towards a Prose of Ideas: An Introduction to the Critical Thought of Muhammad Hasan Askari," *Annual of Urdu Studies*, no. 19 (2004): 175-90.

³⁸ For more detailed analysis of the CPP and the Pakistani State see Kamran Asdar Ali, "Progressives, Punjab and Pakistan: The Early Years," *South Asian History and Culture* 4, no. 4 (October 1, 2013): 483-502, doi:10.1080/19472498.2013.824679.

³⁹ Bodh Prakash, *Writing Partition: Aesthetics and Ideology in Hindi and Urdu Literature* (Pearson Education India, 2009), 40.

leftist regional parties of Pakistan. It included the Sindh Hari Committee headed by Haider Bux Jatoi, the Khudai Khidmatgar of the North West Frontier Province led by Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Mian Iftikharuddin's Azad Pakistan Party, Balochi Awaam Jamaat, East Pakistani Ganatantri Dal as well as a breakaway faction of the Awami League based in Dhaka. Thus, the NAP was a regionally representative platform for the people demanding the restructuring of provinces on linguistic basis, an end to the internal exploitation of the people by the state and the right of universal adult franchise for Pakistanis. Moreover, it called for an independent non-aligned foreign policy that would protect Pakistan from foreign exploitation. This was a crucial break from the Left ideology as embodied by the CCP. In contrast to the CCP, the NAP 'drew closer to a political framework based on nationalism' demanding the basic rights of the people and framed itself as a democratic socialist party.⁴⁰

Atiya Khan characterizes this break as 'a symptom of the failures of the Left after World War II, a Left that had accommodated itself to the Stalinist slogan, "socialism in one country".'⁴¹ It is true that the new wave of political activism was more localized than earlier Leftist parties' demands for a global class revolution.⁴² However, keeping in mind the discussion above, this discontinuity can be seen within the frame of a dominant effort in the 1960s towards decolonization. Instead of seeing the break as a turn towards Soviet-style revolution it might be useful to see

⁴⁰ Atiya Khan, "The Poverty of Pakistan's Politics (PPP)," *Platypus*, December 2009, <http://platypus1917.org/2009/12/06/the-poverty-of-pakistans-politics-ppp/>.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² M. Rashiduzzaman, "The National Awami Party of Pakistan: Leftist Politics in Crisis," *Pacific Affairs* 43, no. 3 (October 1, 1970): 400, doi:10.2307/2754219.

it as embracing the whole nation, not just the proletariat, to produce a national unity and a social revolution against existing neocolonial institutions and patriarchies.

Moreover, despite the draconian censorship and policing of Ayub Khan's regime, 1960s were a period of popular participation in politics and decolonization debates to determine the nature of the nation-state that was Pakistan. The Left and Right presented their own ideas for bringing the nation into the state ranging from a Marxist utopia to an Islamic state. As mentioned earlier the domain of arts and culture was uniquely suited to indirectly critiquing the dictatorship and giving voice to the people's struggle to become the rulers of their own destiny. For instance, Habib Jalib, a prominent member of the National Awami Party, was instrumental in leading the charge towards repossessing the state and decolonizing the nation through his poetry.

Ahmad Bashir, Ahmad Nadeem Qasimi, M. N. Rashid, Riaz Shahid and Ibn-e-Insha were among the intellectuals and artists who through varying artistic mediums, from filmmaking to poetry writing, continue to speak, in parable of the lived experiences of the people. Ahmad Bashir, a respected journalist, worked as a sub-editor for the Urdu daily *Imroz*. Celebrated poet M. N. Rashid, a 'standard-bearer for modernism in Urdu poetry,' wrote against oppression and sought to develop an aesthetic that would be open to contemporary experience and modern thought.⁴³ Another prominent voice, Ahmad Nadeem Qasmi was a poet, short story writer and journalist who worked at the *Imroz* offices as editor and also contributed columns to

⁴³ A. Sean Pue, *I Too Have Some Dreams: N.M. Rashid and Modernism in Urdu Poetry* (Univ of California Press, 2014).

other Urdu dailies like *Daily Jang* and *Rawan Dawan*. He had been part of the progressive movement of the 1950s and launched his own literary magazine, *Fanoon*, in 1962 with support of other like-minded figures. Through his fiction and poetry, Qasmi highlighted the degradation of life and the need for social reformation in Pakistan.

Among lesser-known voices, Ikram Azam, a playwright of the sixties, wrote a short play titled *The Vicious Circle (Another Short Play on War and Peace)* in 1968. The drama spells out a uniform condemnation of imperialism depicted through a humorous discussion between a scientist, a poet and a philosopher on the subject of war and peace. Speaking through the philosopher, Azam issues a allegorical critique of foreign neo-imperial influences in Pakistan stating that imperialists ‘fatten you with aid of all sorts...then they spur you on to war and cut you down to your proper size. Once again, economically and militarily, even culturally, you are completely dependent on them.’⁴⁴ The play ends with a solemn warning from the Philosopher that ‘so long as the system we live by and in continues to be based on selfishness and exploitation, there is little hope for human nature or mankind!’ Thus, Azam criticizes the economic exploitation built into the Pakistani state and its grave implications for the wellbeing of the people.

The play is also linked to a 1964 article titled *Pens and Peacocks* in which Azam criticized sycophantic writers who ‘bow to every sun, real or unreal,’ and condemned the press for giving little resistance and appearing eager to be gagged.

⁴⁴ Ikram Azam, “Vicious Circle,” *Pakistan Horizon*, June 1968.

In this article, Azam lays the blame on the shoulders of the intellectuals who, according to him, had failed to vitalize the nation and produce change for the better. He lays blame at the door of intellectuals while only indirectly hinting at the State's role in creating and promoting inequities.

It is interesting to note that these critiques of intellectuals, the lack of substantive democracy, imperialism and, by extension, Ayub Khan's close relations with neo-imperial powers were printed in the *Pakistan Horizon*, a monthly cultural magazine. The *Pakistan Horizon* was one of the publications approved for consumption in universities, colleges and high schools by the Director of Public Instruction. Its issues from the 1960s onwards covered various topics ranging from Ayub's economic policy and Pakistan's tax structure to the role of students along with a selection of poems, book reviews and short stories. Despite being obliged to follow Ayub's press advice guidelines, the *Pakistan Horizon's* issues from 1965 onwards increasingly addressed socialism through discussions of the great poet Mohammed Iqbal and the concept of social democracy, concept of welfare state in Islam, as well as the relation of Islam and Socialism. This magazine serves as an example of the growing interest in, and discussions of, Islamic socialism in the late 1960s despite Ayub Khan's notorious press advice.

One of the most iconic symbols of anti-Ayub resistance was a 1969 film, *Zarqa*, by acclaimed director Riaz Shahid featuring actress Neelo. The film was ostensibly about the Palestinian freedom movement against Israel. It tells the story of a young Palestinian village girl, Zarqa, who joins a band of freedom fighters after

her father is killed by the Israeli army. She goes undercover as a dancer employed for the entertainment of the head of the Israeli military, Major David. Resisting torture and violence at the hands of Major David, Zarqa and a few others destroy the Tel Aviv Army Headquarters and become martyrs of the cause at the end.

Replete with idioms of violence, injustice and treachery, the Palestinian people's struggle was a metaphor for the struggle to decolonize and to bring about a social revolution from below to undo the neocolonial state structures, aimed at reorganizing society and institutions. The film also highlighted role of women in struggles against oppression. The famous song, *Raqs Zanjeer Pehen Kar Bhi Kiya Jata Hai* (Dances also can be performed in chains) invites stronger comparison and highlights similarities of the film with the oppressive reality of the people. The tune featuring Neelo was a musical arrangement of the following poem by the militant poet, Habib Jalib,

O, you who are unaware of the conventions of slavery,
 Dances can also be performed in chains,
 Today it is the murderer's will that the rebellious girl,
 Be made to dance with lashes in the slaughterhouse,
 That the dance of death be shown to all,
 This is how you pay tribute to injustice,
 Dances also can be performed in chains

Look! Do not plead; do not bow your head, move your feet,
 Do now what the people of tomorrow will do,
 Die for the sake of freedom while dancing,
 In the pursuit of love you live by dying,

Dances can also be performed in chains⁴⁵

Jalib wrote the poem when Ayub Khan tried to force Neelo to dance at a private reception for the visiting Shah of Iran. The dictator sent police to forcefully bring Neelo to the venue and in order to avoid the humiliation the famed actress attempted suicide. Jalib sarcastically chided the beautiful actress in the poem on her forgetfulness regarding the rules of slavery. The imagery in these verses leaves no room for doubt regarding the nature of Ayub Khan's regime. In Jalib's poem, Ayub Khan's Pakistan is an unabashed slaughterhouse of the nation where injustice and inequity are venerated. Neelo, the rebellious girl, must become a martyr just as many others fighting for the nation will be silenced at the altar of injustice. The imagery of the captive rebel represented by the film and its legendary song struck a chord with the Pakistani audiences. Zarqa became one of Pakistan's first blockbusters and was seen by millions of disaffected people broken down by Ayub Khan's dictatorship.

⁴⁵ Translation mine. The original Urdu is included here:

*Tu ke nawaqif-e-adab-e-gulami hai abhi
Raqz zanjeer pehen kar bhi kiya jaata hai
Aaj qatil ki yeh marzi hai ke sarkash larki
Sir-e-maqtal tujhay koroon se nachaya jaye
Maut ka raqs zamanay ko dikhaya jaye
Is tarhan zulm ko nazarana diya jata hai
Raqz zanjeer pahin kar bhee kiya jata hai*

*Dekh fariyad na kar , sir na jhuka, paoon utha
Kal ko jo log karenge, tu abhee se kar ja
Naachte naachte azadi ki khatir mar ja
Manzil-e-ishq mein mar mar ke jiya jata hai
Raqz zanjeer pehen kar bhi kiya jata*

Ayub Khan's Decade of Development, created industries and bolstered the economy at the expense of radicalization of labor and mass dissent as this largesse remained in the hands of the 22 families. The peasants were completely left out of the modernization wave of the 'green revolution', in favor of the feudal land-owning class, triggering a mass mobilization against Ayub during the 1960s. In 1968, peasants in East Pakistan resorted to using the *gherao* (encirclement) of government offices and police stations in their villages to protest the exploitative feudal and capitalist economy.⁴⁶

Urban labor was another victim of Ayub Khan's decade of modernization. Even as industries were developed through government subsidies and foreign funding, and then handed over to private parties, the rights of the workers remained heavily circumscribed. The Industrial Disputes Ordinance and the 1962 Pakistan Industrial Development Corporation, which restricted union activities and privatized factories respectively, led to increased radicalization of labor. After the end of martial law in 1962, many Karachi trade unions joined hands and formed the Mazdoor Rabta Committee (Workers' Coordination Committee). This association of labor unions was meant to provide a platform for those dissatisfied with the performance of federation leaders who had colluded with the government.⁴⁷ The committee successfully organized strikes to protest insufficient pay increases, non-payment of bonuses, restrictive labor laws and the collusion between federation

⁴⁶ Bryn Jones and Mike O'Donnell, *Sixties Radicalism and Social Movement Activism: Retreat Or Resurgence?* (Anthem Press, 2012), 82.

⁴⁷ Assistant Professor Department of Political Science Christopher Candland and Christopher Candland, *Labor, Democratization and Development in India and Pakistan* (Routledge, 2007), 40.

leaders and the government in 1963. The strikes ended on the assurance that striking workers would be given strike pay.

However, factory owners and employers' refusal to make payments forced industrial workers to begin a new wave of strikes that were met with force by the state. The government, using the police and army, arrested hundreds of workers, shot demonstrators and forced workers to resume production. Adding to that the 1965 war worsened poverty, heightened inflation and increased unemployment. Faced with uncertain prospects, Karachi Port Trust workers declared a strike to protest the management's attempts to hamper union formation and sidestep the workers' unmet wage demands in 1967. The Mazdoor Rabta Committee (Workers' Coordination Committee) along with other trade unions was crucial in organizing the 1967 Karachi Port Trust strike that effectively brought Ayub Khan's regime to its knees as more urban labor began to protest the state's denial of fundamental rights of representation and association to the workers. In 1968-9 protests, the urban labor also used the *gherao* (encirclement) tactic to surround and effectively ground factories to a halt.⁴⁸

Furthermore, the 1960s saw a growing and unprecedented involvement of students on a global scale in the New Left. In the words of Tariq Ali, 'sparks from the largely student-centered, European and North American protest movements travelled expanding routes air transport and telecommunications to ignite different fires in Asia and southern Africa.' The middle class activism for greater civil liberties

⁴⁸ Jones and O'Donnell, *Sixties Radicalism and Social Movement Activism*, 79.

and anti-war student protest movements travelled from the West to the East. Pakistani students too rose up against the Vietnam War, neo-imperialism and existing authoritarian structures. The nation was booming with cries of 'Graveyard of imperialism, Pakistan, Pakistan!' 'Americans! Leave Asia!' and 'Every man is asking for bread, cloth and shelter' and 'Give the crumbling wall (of dictatorship) another push!'⁴⁹ However, the activism of Pakistani students in terms of its scope and aims went beyond the middle class activism and its expected impact in North America and Europe. Pakistani students embedded the global inspiration for protest with local needs and narratives of rebellion against an autocratic regime and the desire to change the very nature of the state apparatus.

The new 1960 educational policy that mandated an increase in the length of university degree programs, from two to three years, first drew the students into confrontation with the state. Students protested for nearly two years against a policy that mandated another year of instruction that most could not afford and did not help their chances of employment, that were quite dismal already.⁵⁰ Just as ordinances passed in the early 1960s to restrict press freedom and labor unionization, the government also set up a Commission on Student Problems and Welfare to circumscribe student's involvement in the political arena by making the education system and examinations tougher. The Tashkent declaration after the 1965 War with India was seen as a total defeat and a virtual surrender to India on issue of Kashmir. This became another grievance for which students across the

⁴⁹ Azizuddin Ahmed, *Pakistani Main Tulaba Tehreek* (Lahore: Mashal, 2000), ii.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 87-8.

country protested resulting in the deaths of four students in police fire.⁵¹ Then Foreign Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's explosive comments about Ayub Khan's symbolic 'renunciation' of Kashmir at Tashkent and Bhutto's departure from his cabinet on principle only served to increasing Bhutto's popularity with the people and riled them up further against Ayub Khan. The 1965 war and its aftermath that left Pakistani's economy shaken with higher inflation and lower employment rates than the pre-war period, provided the impetus for a movement demanding substantive democracy that would envelope the labor, students and intellectuals.

Ayub attempts to quiet down the students' unrest can be seen through the focus on education in the Third Five Yearly Plan as advertised in issues of the Pakistan Times, Dawn newspaper and monthly Pakistan Review in 1968. Attempting to appease the students, the regime portrayed Ayub Khan as deeply concerned about student welfare and grievances.⁵² However, student organizations like the National Student Federation and Democratic Student Federation, divided by their pro-China and pro-Moscow leanings, remained united in their agitations against Ayub's celebration of the Decade of Development. Karachi, Lahore and Rawalpindi became the foci of the student agitations as protests gained momentum and fiery criticisms of Ayub Khan's regime, by brilliant speakers like Jalib and Bhutto, compounded by the repressive curfews and attitude of authorities lit up the crowds. Journalist Mujahid Barelvi, a young student in the sixties, wrote of Jalib's electric presence and massive following in *Jalib Biti*. He recalled a humorous

⁵¹ Ibid., 102.

⁵² "Educational Progress a Matter of Pride," *Pakistan Times*, October 9, 1968.

anecdote of a time when he and his abstemious friends combined all available funds to present a bottle of alcohol to the poet which they had incorrectly been told would secure them an interview with the man himself.⁵³

Newspaper coverage of the protests continued to frame the student movement as ‘a case of students being led astray by mischievous elements.’⁵⁴ Coverage of violent agitations in Karachi, in reaction to the killing of 10 students by police fire during a demonstration in Rawalpindi, included official notifications from the Education minister regarding the sincere efforts by government to remove difficulties for students. The statement published in Dawn newspaper advised ‘Karachi students to exercise full sense of responsibility and not to be led astray by influences which do not have their best interests at heart.’⁵⁵ In other cases, students’ actions would be reframed as vandalism and hooliganism.

The religious Right in this instance sided with the Establishment, with the student wing of Jamaat-e-Islami trying to disrupt meetings, at times by force, of left-leaning student groups. Tariq Ali, a British-based Pakistani leftist, noted that Jamaat-e-Islami students disrupted two of his own meetings in Rawalpindi and Multan but ‘were swept aside by waves of students chanting....’Socialism is on its way’ and ‘Death to Maududi’ the leader of the Islamists and a supporter of close relations with Washington.⁵⁶

⁵³ Mujahid Barelvi, *Jalib Jalib* (Lahore: Jumhoori Publications, 2012), 33.

⁵⁴ “Troops Called in to Quell Rowdy Rioters in ‘Pindi,” *Dawn*, November 9, 1968.

⁵⁵ “Education Minister’s Call to City Students,” *Dawn*, November 8, 1968.

⁵⁶ Tariq Ali, *The Duel: Pakistan on the Flight Path of American Power* (Simon and Schuster, 2012), 67.

However, as the labor unions, students and peasants were gaining negotiating power and became more radicalized, the left-wing NAP split by 1967 breaking into pro-Soviet and pro-China factions. It was this lacuna in political representation that the Pakistan Peoples Party, led by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, in West Pakistan and the Awami League in East Pakistan hoped to fill. The five months of mass struggle beginning in November 1968 and ending in March 1979, begun as a demonstration against hoarding and price hikes in sugar, saw 10-15 million Pakistanis successfully raise their voices against dictatorship and capitalist exploitation.⁵⁷ Some historians consider 1968 a monumental defeat for the Left, considering the Left's failure to come to power, even as popular protest by students, peasants, labor unions and workers forced Ayub Khan to relinquish his seat in 1986-69, as its death-warrant.

This 'collapse' of the Left in fact has been considered 'a mutation into the new international right.'⁵⁸It is argued here that the Left did not turn into the Right, the secular, anti-imperialist and nationalist nature of the late 1960s protests was in fact part of a dominant move towards the process of decolonization. The failure then of the Left in Pakistan was a later failure of this move to decolonize and emancipate the people from authoritarianism of neocolonial state, allowing those authoritarian structures to ossify and take permanent root in the state. In this vein, Bhutto's use of the rhetoric of socialism, anti-imperialism, and anti-feudalism as well as opposition to the neocolonial military bureaucracy could be framed as producing a narrative of

⁵⁷ Ibid., 64.

⁵⁸ Khan, "The Poverty of Pakistan's Politics (PPP)."

decolonization, that attempted to address the immediate needs of the people, related to the one embraced by the Global New Left. Indeed, the PPP, under Bhutto's leadership, provided a meeting ground for intellectuals, landed elites and the masses considered crucial to producing a national consciousness in post-colonial states.⁵⁹

In conclusion, the early 1960s had seen a renewed effort towards decolonization of places like Algeria and reinvigorated the Global Left. Later in the decade, 1968 brought to a climax many anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist movements, both populist and leftist, across the world including student movements in Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Mexico and Yugoslavia as well as guerrilla movements in Latin America. In many ways, Bhutto, as enigmatic as he was, was a product of his times and had his finger on the pulse of the people. Studying Bhutto's rhetoric and producing an intellectual portrait can provide unique insight into the kind of decolonization narratives revolving around state and society that were in vogue in Pakistan in the 1960s and 1970s.

⁵⁹ The PPP counted in its numbers, leftist intellectuals, students, and former members of the National Awami Party as well as landed elites from Sindh and Punjab. Fanon speaks at length about the role of postcolonial intellectuals in *Wretched of the Earth*. See Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 40.

CHAPTER 3

Bhutto – The People’s Leader

Egomaniac, charismatic leader, inveterate liar, opportunist, brilliant tactician, Westernized reformer, feudal land owner – all of these are terms that have been used to describe Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the leader of the Pakistan People’s Party and executed Prime Minister of Pakistan, in South Asian historiography. Historians and academics focusing on Pakistan,⁶⁰ by and large, have judged him as a contradictory and inconstant leader in the history of the country who was foremost a populist and therefore, lacked a consistent ideology in order to appeal to the largest section of the public.

Intervening in this conversation within the historiography, this discussion seeks to reframe the debate around Bhutto by arguing for an intellectual consistency in his rhetoric. This consistency is deeply rooted in Bhutto’s writings expressed through his emotional nationalism, anti-neocolonialism, Third World unity, Islamic universalism and internationalism. Furthermore, Bhutto’s speeches and writings struck a chord with West Pakistani masses raring to take down Ayub Khan’s military regime and decolonize the postcolonial Pakistani state.

Before we begin to trace this consistency in Bhutto’s rhetoric it is important to address ‘populism’ itself. Populism as a term has had a range of definitions, from

⁶⁰ For example, See Stanley A. Wolpert, *Zulfi Bhutto of Pakistan: His Life and Times* (Oxford University Press, 1993). Shahid Javed Burki, *Pakistan under Bhutto, 1971-1977* (Macmillan, 1988).

classical to minimalist, that have only added to the confusion regarding the characteristics of political movements labeled as such.⁶¹ On one end of the spectrum, Ian Roxborough has argued for a desertion of the term itself as ‘a rather unsatisfactory reference to populism has tended to be substituted for a considered analysis of the varying modalities of working class incorporation into the system.’⁶² In a nutshell, it has been used to blanket mass mobilization political movements often at the cost of the historical singularities of each presentation.

In Bhutto’s case, use of the term populist, however appropriate, can cause one to overlook Bhutto’s intellectual foundations and too easily accepts a lack of consistent thought in his rhetoric. Therefore, this discussion will exercise restraint in using the term in favor of a deeper look at Bhutto’s rhetoric in the 1960s and 1970s. It is important to look beyond and complement discussions on ‘Bhutto the opportunistic politician’ with conversations about ‘Bhutto the man who was a product of his times’. This involves reframing his politics as not just populist but rather as part of a larger move towards decolonization. Such a reframing is arguably justified by his anti-neocolonial narratives and internationalist politics related to the re-assertion of the Third World in the 1960s and 1970s and helps paint a fuller picture of the man and his times.

Indeed, it is his rhetoric that has outlived him – his political actions may have led to his untimely demise but he has lived on in the imaginations of many Pakistanis. It is no coincidence that during Pakistan’s current political crisis, the

⁶¹ Ian Roxborough, “Unity and Diversity in Latin America,” *Journal of Latin American Studies* 16, no. 1 (May 1984): 1-26.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 26.

heir⁶³ to the PPP, Bilawal Zardari Bhutto, along with political observers,⁶⁴ supporters of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaaf chief Imran Khan⁶⁵ and other political players in the field are clamoring to claim Bhutto. This refusal to let Bhutto die (*'Bhutto Zinda Hai!'*) has its roots equally in the ideas and principles of emotional nationalism, Islamic universalism, and internationalism that Bhutto espoused in his writings and rhetoric.⁶⁶ Bhutto's view was part of a multiplicity of voices attempting to carve out paths to decolonizing the Pakistani state in the 1960s – a process that has arguably remained unfinished leaving the nation 'turned towards the past' wanting to 'make whole that which has been smashed' as it is propelled into a future that is not of its wanting.⁶⁷

Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was born in 1928 into one of the most prominent and influential feudal landowning families in Sindh. His father Sir Shahnawaz Bhutto was active in British Indian politics and had a 'reputation of being a spokesman of Sindh in British India.'⁶⁸ He was instrumental in the separation of Sindh from the Bombay Presidency and would later play an active role in the Pakistan movement

⁶³ Bilawal declared 'I am Bhutto' as reported in Salman Masood, "Bhutto's Son Tries to Revive the Pakistan Peoples Party's Fortunes," *The New York Times*, October 19, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/20/world/asia/bhuttos-son-tries-to-revive-the-pakistan-peoples-partys-fortunes.html>.

⁶⁴ Peter Osborne, "The Men behind Imran Khan's Bid to Lead Pakistan," April 19, 2013, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/pakistan/9984507/The-men-behind-Imran-Khans-bid-to-lead-Pakistan.html>.

⁶⁵ "Imran Khan Mein Zulfiqar Bhutto Ki Rooh Nazar Ayi:- Mustafa Qureshi," *PKDebate.com - Pakistani Talk Shows, Pakistani News, Live News*, accessed December 9, 2014, <http://www.pkdebate.com/2014/11/23/imran-khan-me-zulfiqar-bhutto-ki-rooh-nazar-ayi-mustafa-queshi/>.

⁶⁶ By emotional nationalism, I mean a nationalism that is fueled by a view of the nation perpetually under threat

⁶⁷ Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1968), 257.

⁶⁸ Pilo Mody, *Zulfi My Friend* (Thomson Press (India), Publication Division, 1973), 4.

even convincing the Nawab of Junagadh to accede to Pakistan. On the other hand, his mother, Khursheed Begum, was a beautiful Hindu girl of humble origins who converted to Islam before becoming Sir Shahnawaz's second wife. Her humble background and Hindu past hampered her assimilation in the feudalistic Bhutto clan.⁶⁹ Zulfikar Ali Bhutto remained keenly aware of the family's disapproval of his mother solely on the basis of her poor and simple origins. Indeed, this left a deep impression on him. As a result, he became more cognizant of the injustices embedded in the feudal system and espoused a more egalitarian worldview sympathetic to the poor and underprivileged. Bhutto completed his schooling in Bombay and after graduation continued his education abroad as his father had done before him.

In 1947, he started undergraduate studies in political science at the University of Southern California later transferring to the University of California at Berkeley from where he graduated in 1950. Pilo Mody, a close friend of Bhutto's and fellow student at Berkeley, noted that courses on the philosophy of history and international law made a lasting impact on the two young students. During this time, Bhutto imbibed the works of philosophers and political thinkers like Hobbes, Mill, Plato, Machiavelli and Toynbee. Moreover, lectures by the influential Hans Kelsen, founder of the Vienna School of Jurisprudence and International Law, on

⁶⁹ Salman Taseer, *Bhutto - A Political Biography*, 1979, 16, www.bhutto.org; Wolpert, *Zulfi Bhutto of Pakistan*, 23.

international law were of significant importance and gave them both 'solid moorings in democratic thought and practice.'⁷⁰

Apart from studies, Bhutto participated wholeheartedly in campus activities. He was a member of the university's only inter-racial fraternity and was the first Asian to be elected to the twelve-member Students' Union Council at Berkeley lobbying for salary raises for the university employees and 'limited action against discriminatory living groups.'⁷¹ His time in America, apart from providing him with expertise in international law and political science, also made Bhutto keenly aware of the discrimination and racism present in the First World. Despite defeating Axis powers, America was still battling racial prejudice and Jim Crowism within its borders till the 1960s. Being treated like a 'Mex' and 'nigger' due to his dark complexion made Bhutto keenly aware of this discrimination against the darker races.⁷² Moreover, living in America at the time of the Marshall Plan, Truman Doctrine, the post-war reconstruction of Europe and the rise of communism in Eastern Europe drew Bhutto towards the realm of politics and provided fodder for many debates and discussions with other students on these topics.

After graduating from Berkeley in 1950, Bhutto continued his studies in law at Oxford returning to Pakistan in 1953 as a barrister. The 1950s was period of political turmoil in Pakistan as Prime Ministers and ministries were chosen and replaced with baffling ease. Moreover, Pro-Western defense treaties like CENTO and SEATO, that placed Pakistan under undue Western influence, were being hammered

⁷⁰ Mody, *Zulfi My Friend*, 28.

⁷¹ Taseer, *Bhutto - A Political Biography*, 25.

⁷² Wolpert, *Zulfi Bhutto of Pakistan*, 27.

out. Returning home to such an uncertain situation, Bhutto seemed thoroughly westernized in appearance. However, beyond this veneer of Western sensibilities Bhutto's roots and aspirations 'were fixed firmly in his own country.'⁷³ He wanted to use his Western education and expertise in law to help his country and despised the blindly pro-Western attitudes of many fellow Pakistanis who had studied abroad.

Bhutto was a staunch nationalist and spent his formative years as an avid supporter and follower of Mohammad Ali Jinnah in the struggle for Pakistan. In 1945, he wrote his first letter to Jinnah saying 'Hindus can never and will never unite with us...our destiny is Pakistan, our aim is Pakistan...we are a nation by ourselves...the time will come when I will even sacrifice my life for Pakistan.'⁷⁴ Written when he was just seventeen, this letter displays Bhutto's belief in the independence movement, the two-nation theory and Jinnah's leadership, which had an everlasting impact on him and his rhetoric. The demand for a homeland for Indian Muslims created 'an atmosphere of passionate and fanatical zeal among the Muslims to prove the viability, necessity and inevitability of Pakistan' which stayed with Bhutto throughout his life.⁷⁵

A staunch belief in the two-nation theory and his conviction that Indian leaders 'accepted partition as a matter of bitter expediency, in the hope and expectation that the new State would not be viable' led Bhutto to assume that if Indians 'could forge this power, as they are endeavoring to do by the augmentation of their military forces, they would end partition and reabsorb Pakistan into the

⁷³ Taseer, *Bhutto - A Political Biography*, 29.

⁷⁴ Wolpert, *Zulfi Bhutto of Pakistan*, 24–25.

⁷⁵ Mody, *Zulfi My Friend*, 46.

India of their dreams.’⁷⁶⁷⁷ Moreover, Bhutto’s rhetoric was firmly embedded in the people’s shared affective experience of the two-nation theory, partition and the pending resolution of the Kashmir issue that lent itself particularly well to anti-India rhetoric. Based on this common historical experience, Bhutto would invoke the ‘India threat’, at times conveniently, to silence criticism and appeal to a sense of loyalty to Pakistan at various points during his career.

However, this sense of threatened nationalism within Bhutto also reflected the state of Pakistan itself in the early years after its birth. As Jalal notes, doubts and fears about Pakistan’s ability to survive led to the construction of a narrative for scholarly and general consumption which ‘highlighted the tyranny of the Hindu community in order to justify the creation of Pakistan.’⁷⁸ Thus, the strain towards emotional nationalism, forged on the common experience of Partition, was no accident; it was the result of a close affective association with the freedom movement and the narrative of Pakistan’s threatened state in its early years. The continuation of this narrative in Bhutto’s rhetoric, his struggle to establish Pakistan under India’s shadow, was emblematic of Pakistan itself, a nation born out of trauma struggling to define its identity and ideology especially after the loss of its Eastern Wing.

Jinnah was one of Bhutto’s earliest heroes who would continue to inform Bhutto’s rhetoric in the years to come. From youthful protestations in defense of

⁷⁶ Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, *The Myth of Independence*, 1967, 143, www.bhutto.org.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 144.

⁷⁸ Ayesha Jalal, *The Struggle for Pakistan: A Muslim Homeland and Global Politics* (Harvard University Press, 2014), 52.

Jinnah to evocations of Jinnah and his rhetoric in the late 1960s, an emotional nationalism established on the foundations of a weak state formed the cornerstone for Bhutto's rhetoric.⁷⁹ Other inspirations included Mussolini, Zhou En-Lai, Sukarno, Nasser of Egypt and the Italian 'fathers of the fatherland' - Mazzini, Cavour and Garibaldi.^{80 81} These great personalities influenced Bhutto immensely and provide greater insight into Bhutto and his rhetoric. The chief similarities between these different personages are a strong sense of nationalism, liberation, unification and strengthening of the state as well as the creation of a significant position for their country in the international arena free from influence of greater powers. All these aspects can be found in Bhutto's own rhetoric in his speeches on Pakistan, its economic development as well as the development of its role as an international player and proponent of Afro-Asian unity. However, Napoleon was one of the greatest influences on Bhutto and his idea of a political leader and revolutionary. According to him, 'Napoleon was a giant. There was no man more complete than him. His military brilliancy was only facet of his many-sided genius.'⁸² Bhutto considered Napoleon to be an outstanding scholar and administrator whose Napoleonic Code remained the basic law of several countries.⁸³ In fact, his own assumption of power and the political machinations also had a clear conceptual origin in Napoleon's politics of power.

⁷⁹ In *Myth of Independence*, Bhutto writes on pg152 that 'a weakened Pakistan would embolden India to discriminate further against Indian Muslims. Conversely, a strong Pakistan is their strongest guarantee of protection, since India would hesitate so to provoke an alert, vigorous Pakistan.' This seems to be a continuation of Jinnah's logic for the creation of Pakistan into the post-colonial era.

⁸⁰ Oriana Fallaci, "Zulfikar Ali Bhutto," in *Interview with History* (Houghton Mifflin, 1977), 16, www.bhutto.org.

⁸¹ Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, *The Great Tragedy* (Karachi: Pakistan People's Party, 1971), 86.

⁸² Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, *If I Am Assassinated...* (New Dehli: Vikas Publishing House, 1979), 138.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 224.

Internationalism and bilateralism

As mentioned earlier, Bhutto modeled himself and his rhetoric on the great men mentioned earlier. Regarding Sukarno, Bhutto stated in an interview with Oriana Fallaci in 1972 that both he and Sukarno were 'cut from the same cloth.'⁸⁴ He credited Sukarno, Nasser and other leaders of the Bandung Conference with convincing him of the need for a broad change in Pakistan's foreign policy in 1964.⁸⁵ Up until then, Ayub Khan's regime, against the backdrop of the Cold War, had favored a close association with the United States of America with 'high defense expenditure and low development expenditure.'⁸⁶ Indeed, it was Bhutto, during his tenure as a member of Ayub Khan's cabinet, who orchestrated a historical commencement of bilateral ties with China and Soviet Russia to ease Pakistan away from the prevalent system of American influence.

This was the period when Pakistan had achieved independence but had yet to achieve sovereign equality and complete statehood, according to Bhutto. 'Foreign domination has been replaced by foreign intervention, and the power to make decisions radically affecting the lives of our peoples has been curtailed by the cannons of neo-colonialism.'⁸⁷ As Jones frames it, in the context of the broader historic struggle for equality, the independence achieved by post-colonial states was

⁸⁴ Fallaci, "Zulfikar Ali Bhutto," 16.

⁸⁵ Bhutto, *The Myth of Independence*, 3.

⁸⁶ Jalal, *The Struggle for Pakistan*, 2014, 146.

⁸⁷ Bhutto, *The Myth of Independence*, 9–10.

‘only a half-way house to a more untrammelled state of sovereign equality’⁸⁸ for Bhutto. Within the context of the Cold War and consequent polarization of the world, this foreign intervention was felt even more forcefully.

Foreign intervention had implications similar to dependency theory that stipulates that colonialism and neocolonialism had created unequal economic relations between peripheral underdeveloped states and wealthy ‘core’ countries with resources flowing from the periphery to the core. In this way, global powers were in a position to extract geo-strategic benefits from smaller countries based purely on their own political and economic interests, without any regard for the justness of such actions. To combat this influence as well as to achieve sovereign equality, Bhutto argued for a foreign policy focused on bilateralism and internationalism in his speeches and writings.

During his 1970 electoral campaign, Bhutto addressing the public in Mansehra re-emphasized the need to move away from hegemonic spheres of influence in favor of an internationalist ‘Pakistani system.’⁸⁹ Through his work and political career, he advocated a foreign policy of bilateralism that would protect Pakistan from being exploited by any global power.⁹⁰ Since global powers were motivated by their own interests, being too close to one power would put undue pressure on a smaller state further dividing the global setup. Hence, Bhutto felt uneasy about the close ties between US and Pakistan that had been nurtured by

⁸⁸ Philip Edward Jones, *The Pakistan People’s Party: Rise to Power* (Oxford University Press, 2003), 72.

⁸⁹ Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, *Marching Towards Democracy*, n.d., 65, www.bhutto.org.

⁹⁰ See Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, “Bilateralism: New Directions,” *Pakistan Horizon* 29, no. 4 (December 1, 1976): 3–59.

Ayub Khan. For Bhutto, this strategy had brought Pakistan unduly under American influence⁹¹ on various polarizing world issues as well as cutting off all avenues of cooperation with other communist Global Powers.⁹²

However, Bhutto was cognizant of the fact that ‘the great Powers have indeed [had] a significant role in these continents. But if that role is to be durable and not transitory, it must be one of constructive association and cooperation, such as the sharing of cultural traditions, technical know-how and other knowledge.’⁹³ His position was not one of blind opposition. Instead, Bhutto advocated a meaningful exchange ‘without ideological qualifications’⁹⁴ with global powers considering the increasingly interdependent nature of technology economic progress and world politics. Bhutto’s internationalist approach led to the establishment of an enduring friendship between Pakistan and China as well as the foundation of a relationship with Soviet Russia in the 1960s while balancing US interests too.

Islamic Universalism

Moreover, this internationalist approach opened the door to collaboration with other third world countries which otherwise might have been alienated due to Pakistan’s close association with the US or other Global Powers. An earlier influence for these internationalist tendencies can be found in Mazzini and Garibaldi. Mazzini

⁹¹ Jones, *The Pakistan People’s Party*, 73.

⁹² For a more detailed criticism of Ayub’s pro-US strategy and need for bilaterism see Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, *Pakistan and Alliances*, n.d., www.bhutto.org.

⁹³ Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, *Quest for Peace*, n.d., 16, www.bhutto.org.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 17.

and Garibaldi, instrumental in the unification of Italy, played an important role in the 1867 Congress of the League for Peace and Freedom in Geneva to promote the idea of the 'United States of Europe' in order to ensure freedom and peace among all European countries.⁹⁵ For Mazzini, the unification of Europe was a logical extension of the Italian unification. Similarly, internationalism was, in some ways, an extension of Islamic Universalism and Third World unity that were seen first in Bhutto's 1948 talk on Islamic heritage at University of Southern California.

According to Bhutto, in the struggle to attain sovereign equality, the best way to maintain some semblance of equality was through solidarity. In 1948, Bhutto created a concept of a confederation of Muslim states that would behave in a way similar to the present-day European Union – promoting movement across the countries, cheap travel, fewer visa requirements, close economic cooperation and a loose political alliance. Bhutto considered the formation of a confederation crucial to Pakistan's place in the global arena. This confederation, led by Pakistan, would encompass the Muslim and non-Muslim states of the Middle East, Africa and South Asia which would allow for a flow of technologies to hasten modernization and industrialization. Within this confederation, Pakistan would lead the alliance; Turkey would provide modernization technologies whereas Iran would provide the 'spirit of accommodation' through their culture, history and creative talents.⁹⁶ Most importantly, the joint platform would allow for a more equitable distribution of international balance of power for smaller Muslim states, which were otherwise

⁹⁵ Mark Leier, *Bakunin: The Creative Passion-A Biography* (Seven Stories Press, 2011), 201–202.

⁹⁶ Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, *Thoughts on Some Aspects of Islam*, n.d., 17, www.bhutto.org.

doomed to dependency and neocolonial influences.⁹⁷ He insisted on the necessity of such an arrangement by saying, 'Destiny demands an Islamic association, political reality justifies it, posterity awaits it, and by God we will have it.'⁹⁸

In the first part of this statement, Bhutto seems to be referring to the glory of the Muslim past and the hope to once again have a commanding political presence vis-à-vis the Global Powers. The second part is linked with the legacy of colonialism in Pakistan. Bhutto felt that the partition 'was intended to punish the Muslims for winning self-determination by giving them a weak and emasculated state which would quickly wither away in the non-Marxian sense. It is not difficult to see why India has been strengthened in the belief that an isolated Pakistan would be to her advantage.'⁹⁹ Continuing in this vein, it befitted Pakistan's foreign policy to have a strong internationalist bent aimed at bringing together Muslim nations from all over the world. The confederation Bhutto advocated so passionately as a student found form as the Regional Cooperation for Development (RCD) in 1964 during his tenure as Ayub Khan's Foreign Minister. Mahmud Ali Kasuri, Law Minister in Bhutto's government, identified Bhutto as one of its 'principal architects' at the Fifteenth Ministerial Council Meeting of the RCD in 1972.¹⁰⁰

The events of 1971 took away Pakistan's status as the largest Muslim country of the world. In addition to this, India's involvement in the secession of Bangladesh combined with the disapproval, by Western nations and the communist bloc, of

⁹⁷ Ibid., 12.

⁹⁸ Syed Abdul Quddus, ed., *Politics of Charisma*, 1994, 18, www.bhutto.org.

⁹⁹ Bhutto, *The Myth of Independence*, 145.

¹⁰⁰ J. Henry Korson, *Contemporary Problems of Pakistan* (Brill Archive, 1974), 70.

Pakistan's role in the war made the need for an Islamic universalist platform all the more imperative for Bhutto. Bhutto immediately started looking towards Muslim nations as a source of 'immediate support, more moral and political, than material...Pakistanis had emotional ties to it.'¹⁰¹ He went on tours to the Middle East and Africa to build relationships that had been on the back burner till then. Moreover, the 1973 Oil Crisis and related quadrupling of oil prices, made the reaffirmation of Pakistan's ties with OPEC countries like Saudi Arabia, Iran and Libya all the more pressing for Bhutto. Closer ties with the rich oil-producing Gulf States, Saudi Arabia and Iran were in line with transnational Muslim solidarity that Bhutto promoted. At the same time, such a policy also envisaged material support out of the soaring oil profits these countries were seeing in the 1970s.

Moreover, Pakistan's nuclear development program, begun in the previous decade and for which Bhutto was ready to 'eat grass' in 1966, saw a redoubling of efforts in the 1970s as India conducted its first test in 1974. However, Pakistan's nuclear weapons program, Bhutto's self-confessed 'greatest achievement', was meant as more than a parity-seeking answer to similar developments in India. On a domestic level, the supposedly neck-and-neck race with India to develop nuclear capability was a surefire way of rallying people's support. Moreover, it also represented a 'trump card' that would once again elevate Pakistan's stature, lost after 1971, as the first Muslim country with the bomb and ability to share this knowledge with security-focused Arab states.¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ Rafi Raza, *Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Pakistan, 1967-1977* (Oxford University Press, 1997), 227.

¹⁰² Taseer, *Bhutto - A Political Biography*, 153.

The crowning glory for Bhutto's efforts was seeing his ideas of Islamic universalism take shape at the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Conference at Lahore in 1974 that was attended by nearly all Muslim nations. Bhutto's final address at the conference highlighted the growing ties between Pakistan and Muslim nations by stating that, 'I declare here today that we, the people of Pakistan shall give our blood for the cause of Islam...The people of Pakistan are soldiers of Islam and its armies are the armies of Islam. Whenever any occasion arises the Islamic world will never find us wanting in any future conflict.'¹⁰³ The conference also provided an opportunity to officially recognize Bangladesh and begin a new relationship with the former Eastern wing of Pakistan.

Bhutto continued his focus on Islamic universalism as he tried to revive the Regional Cooperation for Development (RCD) with Turkey and Iran once he became President in December 1971. It is important here to note the continued vital importance of the two countries in Bhutto's 1976 efforts for the RCD vis-à-vis his 1948 talk on Islamic universalism. Promoting the idea of equality and greater power through solidarity in 1948, Bhutto had advocated a confederation of Pakistan, Turkey and Iran that would promote cultural exchange, economic cooperation and a loose political alliance among these Muslim countries. Many years later, Bhutto's words were evocative of these youthful musings as he argued for 'the systematic consolidation and formalization of our joint will to defend our civilizations'¹⁰⁴ through the RCD and urged the two countries to mobilize and

¹⁰³ Raza, *Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Pakistan, 1967-1977*, 228–9.

¹⁰⁴ Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, "RCD: Challenge and Response," *Pakistan Horizon* 29 (Second Quarter 1976): 3–6.

integrate resources. However, despite his best efforts, the RCD would not prove to be a success due to lack of a strong response from Iran and Turkey.

Third World Unity

Although Pakistan's freedom had been gained in 1947, up until the 1960s Pakistan was yet to become economically independent in a substantive manner. As discussed in previous chapters On the economic front, Ayub Khan's regime with its policy of 'betting on the strongest' widened the differences between classes and income disparity had increased in Pakistan.¹⁰⁵ Moreover, the economic exploitation of the colonial era still held back post-colonial states from fully participating in global affairs. As he pointed out during his time as Pakistan's Foreign Minister, 'the division of the world into an affluent North and impoverished South makes for conditions of imbalance and instability.'¹⁰⁶ These sentiments were echoed worldwide as the 1950s and 1960s saw the rise of the Third World project demanding 'political equality on the world level.'¹⁰⁷ Furthermore, national development could not take place in an isolated sphere; the global interdependence increased after 1945 and economies of smaller states were progressively dependent on those of the Global Powers and the quasi-Global Powers. Thus within the capitalist system, smaller postcolonial states continued to remain at a disadvantage with little growth, victim to the economic exploitation of the former colonial and

¹⁰⁵ Jalal, *Democracy and Authoritarianism in South Asia*, 78.

¹⁰⁶ Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, *A South Asian View* (Embassy of Pakistan, Washington D.C., 1964), 10.

¹⁰⁷ Vijay Prashad, *The Darker Nations: A People's History of the Third World* (The New Press, 2008), xvi.

new imperial powers in alliance with post-colonial elites, affecting the masses the most.

In Pakistan's case, Ayub Khan's Decade of Development had created industries and bolstered the economy at the expense of the masses as this largesse remained concentrated in the hands of the industrialists, the proverbial 22 families and post-colonial elites. As a member of Ayub's administration, Bhutto had been part of the Establishment apparatus that had brought very little to the people in terms of economic betterment. He had even supported Ayub Khan's candidacy in the 1966 elections and earlier had been on the committee for the 1962 constitution.¹⁰⁸ However, Bhutto had expressed growing dissatisfaction with Ayub Khan's rule especially with respect to Ayub Khan's reluctance to participate in the 1962 Sino-Indian War, his insufficiently aggressive policy regarding India and undue obsequiousness to the Americans. All these affronts combined to reduce Pakistan's impact on the global arena relegating it to the status of a neo-imperial lackey of Washington. For Bhutto, Pakistan needed to move away from neo-imperial spheres of influence and realign itself with Third World states in order to make a mark internationally.

As mentioned earlier, Bhutto saw Third World unity as an extension and reiteration of the principle of 'securing greater power in the global arena through political and economic solidarity' underlying his Islamic universalism. Despite targeting slightly different, but at times overlapping, audiences both Islamic

¹⁰⁸ Hasan Askari Rizvi, *Pakistan People's Party - The First Phase: 1967-71* (Lahore: Progressive Publishers, 1973), 3.

universalism and Third World unity served the same purpose of leveling the playing field. Thinking in a global mode of the international balance of power, Bhutto looked towards other Third World leaders like Nicolae Ceausescu of Romania and Kim Il Sung among others in his endeavors to build a Third World alliance beyond the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).¹⁰⁹ This approach was mandated by the fact that Pakistan was denied admittance to NAM due to its continued Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) membership.

Increasingly, Bhutto moved towards the development of a new economic world order that could counter the influence of Global Powers as well as reduce foreign intervention and domination. In 1976, Bhutto's ideas found form in his article titled *Third World – New Directions*. He highlighted the overriding significance of the 'achievement of a position of equality in the world economic order.'¹¹⁰ He urged the Third World nations to accommodate differences and realize that without unity 'everyone's interest will inevitably suffer...we in the Third World are united by our common suffering and our common struggle against exploitation. Regardless of our political systems or our external outlook, we have the common mandate to extricate the world's majority from a throttling economic order... This political will cannot find expression except at the highest level of our collective leadership.'¹¹¹ He even called for a summit to include aligned and non-aligned states, to circumvent NAM but this failed to materialize.

¹⁰⁹ Raza, *Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Pakistan, 1967-1977*, 232.

¹¹⁰ Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, *Third World - New Directions*, 1976, 9, www.bhutto.org.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 10.

From this discussion of Bhutto's Third World Project two things are obvious. Firstly, this highlighted Bhutto's growing ambitions for not just Pakistan but for himself as an international leader. In 1976, he was already co-Chairman of the Organization of Islamic Conference, heading a covert nuclear program and had been elected the Chairman of the Group of 77, 'the largest intergovernmental organization of developing countries in the United Nations, which provides the means for the countries of the South to articulate and promote their collective economic interests and enhance their joint negotiating capacity on all major international economic issues within the United Nations system.'¹¹² Secondly, Bhutto framed the challenge of the Third World nations as he called for 'redistribution of economic power' between the developed and the underdeveloped but at the same time denied any class dimension to it by saying that he did not call for a 'global class war.'¹¹³ Thus, the Third World project, though partly self-serving and self-promotional, was aimed at righting the prevailing power imbalance in favor of neocolonial capitalist powers and promoting Third World economic interests and negotiating power.

Anti-neocolonialism and Islamic Socialism

As discussed in an earlier chapter, the late 1950s and early 1960s had been marked by rejection of modernization theory and capitalism by many in the Global

¹¹² "About the Group of 77," accessed December 6, 2014, <http://www.g77.org/doc/>.

¹¹³ Bhutto, *Third World - New Directions*, 10.

South.¹¹⁴ The Third World project discussed above was complemented by a turn towards the Left in the 1960s, specifically socialism that was part of a broader global attempt to ameliorate the conditions of the masses and eliminate foreign influences. Indeed, the 1960s saw a renewed effort towards decolonization and reinvigorated the Global Left as student protests and guerrilla movements lit up the Global South.

In Pakistan, Ayub Khan's regime with its economic policy of 'betting on the strongest', promoted by the Harvard Advisory Group, widened the differences between classes and income disparity had increased in Pakistan.¹¹⁵ The time was ripe for Leftist parties like the National Awami Party to swoop in. However as Atiya Khan argues, Pakistan's Left 'lacked the confidence to use political language to speak to the masses directly.'¹¹⁶ More specifically, they lacked a political leader who could move the masses like Bhutto.

As mentioned earlier, Bhutto had been from the start against foreign intervention and economic exploitation of Pakistan. He was critical of the development policies of Ayub Khan's era and felt uneasy about the close US-Pakistan ties that had been nurtured by Ayub Khan and brought Pakistan unduly under American influence. However, at the same time, he did not espouse the traditional socialist ideas of the Pakistani Left. Thus, a disgruntled and popular Bhutto, having recently quit Ayub Khan's government, found willing collaborators from among the Left despite not being a socialist through and through. More

¹¹⁴ Jalal, *The Struggle for Pakistan*, 2014, 182.

¹¹⁵ Jalal, *Democracy and Authoritarianism in South Asia*, 78.

¹¹⁶ Atiya Khan, "Pakistan and the Left" (South Asia Institute, Harvard University, November 7, 2014).

importantly, by the late 1960s a fractured and factionalized NAP left many disillusioned who later found a voice in the Pakistan Peoples Party and a reinvigorated Awami League.

However, this does not imply that Bhutto had no individual inclination towards socialism. Among his most cherished possessions, were a five-volume biography of Napoleon and an inexpensive pamphlet gifted to him by his father, Sir Shah Nawaz Bhutto. That pamphlet was on socialism and taught him the 'politics of poverty.'¹¹⁷ The call to action remained emblazoned on his heart as he recounted the words from his prison cell in 1978 – 'Workers of the world unite. You have nothing to lose but your chains. You have the world to win!'¹¹⁸

Still, what separated Bhutto from the Leftists was the fact that his vision of socialism was interlinked with that of Islamic universalism. Moreover, Bhutto did not have the same single-minded teleological emphasis on linear narratives of progress venerating working class struggles at the expense of the multiplicity of social experiences in Pakistan as the Left was wont to doing. Furthermore, by advocating socialism in conjunction with Islamic universalism Bhutto avoided the pitfall of losing connection with, and alienating the PPP from, the historical and cultural roots of South Asian Muslims. This move was crucial to addressing critiques like Hasan Askari's criticism of the Muslim communists' sole focus on progressivism at the cost of independent thinking and their South Asian heritage mentioned in Chapter 2.

¹¹⁷ Bhutto, *If I Am Assassinated...*, 224.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

As early as 1948, Bhutto spoke at length about Islamic heritage, Islamic universalism and socialism as the key for the progress of Islamic countries around the world at the University of Southern California. He argued that modern technology and accommodativeness would 'have to be mingled with the spiritual values, the maxims of democracy with those of socialism'¹¹⁹ to return Muslims to their former 'glory' and pinnacle of progress. Thus, the marriage between Islam and socialism, in the economic sense, was a long-standing one for Bhutto.¹²⁰

Through his articles and speeches, Bhutto provided an alternate Islamic political paradigm for Pakistan (Islamic socialism) and advocated for a foreign policy of bilateralism that would protect Pakistan from being exploited by any Global Power. His socialism was not of the revolutionary/radical nature being more of the Fabian kind that believed in gradual change and reforms over time. However, this did not deter Bhutto or Leftist intellectuals from joining hands to create the Pakistan People's Party. So it was that Bhutto 'correctly gauging trends...pieced together an alliance with members of the political left'¹²¹ including J. A. Rahim and Mubashir Hasan despite having been part of Ayub Khan's capitalist regime and a member of the landed elite. By doing so, Bhutto gave a voice to the masses for the first time in the electoral arena.

Moreover, Bhutto brought the common people of Pakistan into focus. He presented the PPP as a vessel to serve 'the poor masses [that] have been with us every-where. The laborers...the peasants...the students are our supporters because

¹¹⁹ Quddus, *Politics of Charisma*, 17.

¹²⁰ Mody, *Zulfi My Friend*, 32.

¹²¹ Jalal, *Democracy and Authoritarianism in South Asia*, 78.

we have to plead their cause.¹²² The concept of '*musawat*' or Islamic Socialism that Bhutto promoted was based on an amorphous ideology meant to protect and promote the rights of the masses creating a community of citizens. Rafi Raza noted in his book, *Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Pakistan: 1967-1977*, that Bhutto did not mention socialism at all during the inaugural sessions of PPP despite forming alliances with ardent socialists. Instead, Bhutto spoke of 'a classless society such as has been conceived in the Faith of Islam.'¹²³ In later speeches, Bhutto would refer to *musawat* to discuss the socialist economic changes he advocated. However, dismissing Bhutto as merely opportunistic in his support of socialists might be precipitous.

During the 1970s, Bhutto reiterated his vision of a union between Socialism and Islam in speeches to the Islamic Summit in Lahore and the International Congress on Seerat in Rawalpindi. In numerous speeches, he even invoked the Quaid of the nation in support of socialism saying that Jinnah was 'on record as having recommended a socialist system for Pakistan.'¹²⁴ More interestingly, in the same breath Bhutto also suggested that Muhammad Iqbal, Poet of the East, also described 'this system as the best means of bringing about prosperity.'¹²⁵ This aspect is crucial in defining the cornerstone of Bhutto's thought.

Though Bhutto was prone to stretching the truth and making grand claims during his speeches this supposed endorsement from Iqbal strikes a chord, despite the obvious differences between him and Iqbal. Indeed, there is a long history of

¹²² Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, "We Shall Not Be Cowed - Speech at a Public Meeting at Mirpur Khas, February 18, 1968," in *Awakening the People - A Collection of Articles, Statements and Speeches 1966 - 1969*, n.d., 79, www.bhutto.org.

¹²³ Raza, *Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Pakistan, 1967-1977*, 7.

¹²⁴ Bhutto, "We Shall Not Be Cowed - Speech at a Public Meeting at Mirpur Khas, February 18, 1968," 74.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

Indian Muslim thought on these themes including Ubaidullah Sindhi, Hifz al Rahman Seoharwi, Ghulam Ahmed Parvez and Iqbal among others.¹²⁶ Like Iqbal, Bhutto, in his intellectual endeavors, was reacting to capitalist Christianate universalism that dominated the arenas of global politics and economy.

Similarly, both tried to present an alternative Islamic paradigm. Iqbal was working in the context of colonial India, where Indian Muslims had been granted representation but without substantive citizenship rights. Bhutto was writing and making speeches at a time when the progress of third world countries was stymied by the big neo-colonial capitalist countries within the frame of capitalist modernization, as elaborated by the dependency theory, even as the memory of the colonial yoke had not yet faded away.

In short, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was not just a popular leader, great orator and a practiced politician with a knack for perfect timing. His speeches and writings were part of a decolonizing narrative that laid the foundation for an alternate political paradigm, to neo-colonial capitalist Christianate universalism, defined by principles of internationalism, Third World unity, Islamic Socialism and emotional nationalism that found resonance in the hearts and minds of Pakistanis from all walks of life. His rise and fall were inextricably linked with his propagation and ineffective execution of his decolonization narrative, and Islamic socialism, as they are with political reasons and his hunger for power.

¹²⁶ For a more detailed discussion of Islamic Socialism see Khizar Humayun Ansari, *The Emergence of Socialist Thought Among North Indian Muslims, 1917-1947* (Book Traders, 1990). "The Sources and Meaning of Islamic Socialism," in *Religion and Political Modernization* (New Haven, 1974), 243–58. Nadeem Paracha, "Islamic Socialism: A History from Left to Right," Newspaper, (February 21, 2013), <http://www.dawn.com/2013/02/21/islamic-socialism-a-history-from-left-to-right/>.

Bhutto's politics

Much ink has been spilled on discussions and critiques of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's rise to power and tenure as leader of Pakistan. Even more ink, though, has been spilled on Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the feudal lord, the politician and the populist. He has proven to be an elusive subject; a study in contradictions considered in equal measures 'the boon of Pakistan' as well as 'a despotic dictator'.¹²⁷ However, there is no doubt that these multiple, and often clashing, identities resided within Bhutto in seemingly perfect cohesion.

Bhutto's interview with journalist Oriana Fallaci in 1972 shows how he perceived the contradictions within – the uneven move towards socialism, increasing authoritarianism and accumulation of power. Bhutto described his approach to governing the country in the interview saying that, 'I must proceed with patience, by reforms, measures that will gradually lead to socialism— nationalizing when possible, refraining from it when necessary... Besides, even Lenin, in the beginning, stooped to compromises.'¹²⁸ This interview highlighted his reluctance to become a dictator but foreshadowed his increasingly authoritarian style as he explained to Fallaci, 'I don't want to become a dictator...but so far I can say that I'll have to be very tough, even authoritarian'¹²⁹ to bring change in Pakistan. Moreover, a look at his political and intellectual influences (Sukarno, Zhou En-Lai, Napoleon

¹²⁷ Pervez Musharraf, *In the Line of Fire: A Memoir* (Simon and Schuster, 2006), 58.

¹²⁸ Fallaci, "Zulfikar Ali Bhutto," 16.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

Bonaparte and Gamal Abdel Nasser) also put his authoritarian leadership style in better context.

Bhutto's almost disciplinarian-like leadership style can be understood partially in conjunction with the 'pedagogical style of developmental politics' favored by some Third World leaders like Sukarno and Nasser who influenced Bhutto's politics and leadership.¹³⁰ Moreover, Pakistan's existing centralized bureaucratic-military authoritarianism and 'guided' democracy provided Bhutto the ease to willfully 'steer' the nation gradually towards socialism. Perhaps, this was the real tragedy of Pakistan that Bhutto chose to accelerate the naturalization of an authoritarian state form despite being given the opportunity to change the Pakistani state's 'neocolonial' nature by popular mandate in 1971. The rhetoric and political expertise that brought Bhutto his political command, during a dominant move towards decolonization by the masses in the 1960s, failed to make the Pakistani state the subject of popular narratives. Moreover, Bhutto failed to bring the people in closer contact with the ruling elite. His ultimate political failure in the late 1970s allowed the neocolonial authoritarian state form itself to continue, cursed to remain the antagonist in the Pakistani people's imaginary until present day.

Moreover, his comments on the politician's motive are emblematic and foretold of his tendency in later years to have as much control and power as possible, even at the expense of weakening democracy and institutions. He said, 'you go into it [politics] to take power in your hands and *keep it*. Anyone who says the

¹³⁰ Chakrabarty, "The Legacies of Bandung," 53-55.

opposite is a liar.¹³¹ (Emphasis mine) At the end of the day, it was 'Pakistan's loss that Bhutto couldn't give himself the opportunity'¹³² to transform Pakistan into a country with strong institutions in his quest to maintain power.

Thus, looking beyond conventional historiographical narratives emphasizing Bhutto's opportunism and populism can help remember that Bhutto too was a product of that time and emblematic of it. He represented the anti-imperialist, anti-authoritarian demands of the masses for an egalitarian society free from foreign influences through his rhetoric of internationalism, anti-neocolonialism, Third World unity, Islamic universalism and socialism. He was an important voice in the dominant, if unsuccessful, move towards the Pakistani state's decolonization in the 1960s and 1970s. Even as the politics of expediency led him to disregard his own ideas in favor of practicality, Bhutto continued to espouse his ideas. Therein, rests the singularity of Bhutto and his enduring legacy. It is important to note here how the main ideas discussed were instrumental in the practical achievements that have allowed Bhutto to live beyond his death such as the nuclear program (emotional nationalism), the OIC Conference (Islamic Universalism) and relations with China (Internationalism and bilateralism).

'The way they [Zia-ul-Haq and collaborators] did it... [Zulfikar Ali Bhutto] is going to grow into a legend that will someday backfire'¹³³ - this excerpt from Sani Hussain Panhwar's compilation of news articles on Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's execution

¹³¹ Fallaci, "Zulfikar Ali Bhutto," 16.

¹³² Bernard Weinraub, "Bhutto: A Tragic Figure Overwhelmed by His Ambitions; News Analysis," *The New York Times*, April 5, 1979.

¹³³ Sani Hussain Panhwar, "CIA Sent Bhutto to the Gallows," accessed October 22, 2014, http://sixhour.com/cia_sent%20bhutto_to_the_gallows.htm.

holds some truth, even if his other claims with regards to Bhutto's trial and execution are more difficult to substantiate. Yet, Bhutto's claim to posthumous mythologizing is not solely on the basis of the drama, worthy of Shakespearean portrayal, which unfolded in the late 1970s Pakistan.

His intellectual legacy has gone hand in hand with his political history in making him the *Quaid-e-Awam* who still commands the hearts of many in Pakistan. His ideas still strike a chord with the poor, the laborers and rural Sindhis who are yet to receive the rights and benefits from the state. Regardless of his own failure to produce effective change, he remains adored as the leader who 'belonged to the people;' who would shout at rallies, 'You have created me. My bond with you must always remain.'¹³⁴ Jalib captured the essence of Bhutto's enduring legacy impeccably in the following tribute to the Quaid-e-Awam,

His magic has not been broken
 His blood has become a slogan
 It has been proved that
 He commanded the heartbeats
 As he fought the likes of himself
 While loving the likes of us

¹³⁴ Weinraub, "Bhutto."

CHAPTER 4

Habib Jalib – The Poet of the People

‘There was this bard at the court of a king. The king fancied himself a poet. He recited a pathetic little verse and asked the bard to comment upon it. The bard said it was awful. The king condemned him to the dungeons for a year. Next year, he had the bard hauled up again. The king recited the same poem. The bard told him again that it was awful and was sent off for another year. The following year, the bard was brought to the king and before he could go through the whole exercise again, the bard asked to be sent back to the dungeons. In a nutshell, that’s the story of my life. I have never been able to give a bad thing a good name.’

- Habib Jalib in conversation with Jugnu Mohsin,
Publisher of *The Friday Times*¹³⁵

Thus spoke Habib Jalib about his lived reality, especially with reference to his vocal criticism of political leaders and the resulting frequent stays in prison through 1960s to 1980s. This parable Jalib recounts indicates the nature of the Pakistani state, which though changed in name from colony to independent state remained caught in the same form of autocratic colonial rule. Since independence, many intellectuals had harnessed Marxian ‘weapons of criticism’ against neocolonialism and the tyranny of postcolonial elites within the state.¹³⁶ In this time period, voices from both ends of the political spectrum, the Left and the Right, as well as the

¹³⁵ Quoted in Jugnu Mohsin, “Habib Jalib: An Archetypical Lahori,” in *City of Sin and Splendour: Writings on Lahore* (Penguin Books India, 2005), 282.

¹³⁶ Said, *Orientalism*. Said, “Third World Intellectuals and Metropolitan Culture.” Said, “Intellectuals in the Post-Colonial World.”

religious and the secular tried to define this new country with debates around the culture and nature of the state.

However, as Ayub Khan's star rose more voices were silenced forcefully or co-opted. The ban on APPWA and political parties left few avenues for expression and dissension. Many novelists and poets turned away from current affairs and politics to avoid persecution in the late 1950s and 1960s. Thus, Jalib, born Habib Ahmed, occupies a unique position among the many greats of prose and poetry of the era in Pakistan, as he was the rare bard who was also an active participant in the restricted political milieu of the time. In many ways, he embodied the Apollonian and Dionysian aspects of Nietzsche's ancient Greece as he brought together rationality and artistry to produce an insightful narrative of suffering and tragedy that exemplified the woebegone experience of the Pakistani masses. Indeed, the anthology of Jalib's work could be considered a poetic recounting of the Pakistani nation's history such is his intuitive connection to, and observation of, the people and their suffering.

In the narrative we are building here, while Bhutto's rhetoric portrays the global linkages and implications of the turn towards decolonization Jalib's poetry most closely expresses the local and personal affective struggle of the people, the society, to decolonize and attain selfhood. To this end, we will discuss some of Jalib's most recognized poems, *Dastoor* (System), *Musheer* (Advisor), and *Pakistan ka matlab kiya* (What does Pakistan mean), to elaborate our discussion on the decolonization instinct that came to the fore in 1960s and 1970s. Moreover, this

discussion also provides a counterpoint to Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party by bringing Jalib's National Awami Party into the conversation.

Jalib was born in 1928 to a respected but poor family in Mian Afghanan, a small village in the Hoshiarpur district of Punjab. He grew up in a loving and peaceful atmosphere where Hindus and Muslims celebrated religious holidays like Holi and Eid together with great pomp. His father, a modest shoemaker, instilled a love for education and literature in Jalib from an early age. Jalib also got an early education in storytelling from his father who was considered an accomplished storyteller in the village. His experiences of poverty left a deep mark on him. Even in his dotage he could not forget the elaborately named *chiri mewa*, a salt and water mixture, he had to eat with his bread as a child.¹³⁷ Having himself experienced thirst, hunger and want so keenly, Jalib developed a lifelong hatred for poverty and those who reduced others to this state of neediness. Indeed, this extreme dislike was reflected in his poetry.

Jalib studied in his village till seventh grade and then moved to Delhi with his older brother, who was also a poet, to continue his schooling. Once there, he spent most of his time in the company of poets at symposiums listening to many great poets of the era in Delhi. This experience served to strengthen his conviction to become a poet himself. However, Partition forced Jalib and his family to relocate to Pakistan and they arrived in Karachi by train on 14th August 1947. In Karachi, Jalib cut short his education and found employment at the newspaper, Daily *Imroz*, as a

¹³⁷ Habib Jalib, *Jalib Biti* (Lahore: Ahmed Publications, 2009), 21.

proofreader to make ends meet. Instead his education continued in the Karachi streets, teahouses and symposiums where he observed the conditions of the common man and the injustices of the Pakistani state.

The hopes of welfare and democracy that had been attached to the idea of Pakistan were dashed one by one after independence. In his own words, Jalib realized that, 'the elites were not going to solve our problems and their thinking could not take us to our goals' of egalitarianism and democracy.¹³⁸The people had to take their destiny into their own hands. Inspired to create change, he spent his days in discussion with older college students gaining information about politics, economics, Marxism and socialism. Jalib also acquired knowledge and training from the works of progressive intellectuals. Apart from students and progressives, Jalib's intellectual influences included the leftist publisher Mian Iftikharuddin, who owned *Imroz*, and peasant rights activist Hyder Bux Jatoi. These influences imbued Jalib with a sense of purpose and a duty to struggle against the tyranny of autocratic regimes both through his verse and his activism.

In the late 1950s, Jalib joined Hyder Bux Jatoi's Sindh Hari (Peasants) Movement and was arrested in 1959 for his participation. Jalib began his formal political career when he joined Progressive Papers owner Mian Iftikharurrdin's Azad Pakistan Party in the late 1950s shortly before Ayub Khan placed a ban on all political parties. Once the ban was lifted in 1962, Jalib became a prominent member of the central committee of the leftist National Awami Party with committed leftist

¹³⁸ Ibid., 39.

politicians like Maulana Bhashani, Mahmud Ali Qasuri, Wali Khan and Mian Iftikharuddin. He was united with these leftists by a common agenda, 'our struggle was for democracy, freedom, prosperity and against imperialism.'¹³⁹ Foremost, for Jalib, 'these men were nationalist and anti-imperialists; they were democratic and progressive.'

As mentioned earlier, the revival of NAP had been a crucial break from the Left ideology as embodied by the CCP. The NAP moved closer to a political agenda centered on nationalism. This break has been framed as symptomatic of the Left's failures after World War II. However, it can be reframed as part of a dominant effort in 1960s towards decolonization without the earlier persistent focus, discussed in Chapter 1, on conquering social processes, historical determinism and division of society that created an obstruction to the process of decolonization. Habib Jalib, as a prominent member of the literati and the National Awami Party, was instrumental in leading the charge towards repossessing the state and decolonizing the nation.

As the Constitution of Pakistan of 1962 came into effect in June of that year, it spelled the end of popular politics and democratic freedom. The Basic Democracies system, enforced as an order in 1959 and enshrined in the 1962 Constitution, imagined a five-tier local government system beginning with village-level Union councils to top tier Provincial Development Councils. It reduced Pakistan's voting population to just 80,000 councilmen. Ayub Khan's Basic Democracies implied and indeed exemplified a 'simplified democracy' for a nation not yet 'matured' and thus

¹³⁹ Ibid., 47.

incapable of determining its own fate. The rhetoric employed in the system's defense used familiar tropes of the illiterate masses, emotional urban groups and crafty exploitative local politicians that were de facto during colonial times. Thus, Ayub Khan utilized a version of the paternalistic civilizing mission narrative favored by colonial masters to construct a farcical system of representation where 'political participation at a limited local level' was permitted to the people.¹⁴⁰ This democratic process, without substantive change to an autocratic government, drawing its main backing from the civil service and the army also helped circumvent any disapproval from Ayub Khan's Western 'friends not, masters'.¹⁴¹

Faced with this, Jalib attempted to bring to light this untenable position of the state and its 'system' through his epic poem titled *Dastoor* (the system). At the time of the poem's inception, most avenues of public criticism had been suppressed through Ayub Khan's press advice and a Press and Publications Ordinance. Jalib himself noted that apart from him, Justice M. R. Kayani, the Chief Justice of Pakistan, was one of the few who were vocal in their criticism of the ruling cadre during that period.¹⁴² Even as many were silenced, Justice M. R. Kayani 'continued to make marshal law the target of satire and humor within the serious walls of the high court.'¹⁴³ Jalib's own work inhabited the imagination of the common man; his

¹⁴⁰ Khalid B. Sayeed, "Pakistan's Basic Democracy," *Middle East Journal* 15, no. 3 (July 1, 1961): 249.

¹⁴¹ This is a play on Ayub Khan's biography titled 'Friends, not Masters' implying the neocolonial relations powerful Western democracies had with Pakistan during Ayub Khan's time

¹⁴² M R Kayani was also part of the Munir Commission, which had been tasked with investigating the 1953 Anti-Ahmadi disturbances. For his criticisms on Ayub Khan's regime delivered in a humorous tone see Malik Rustam Kayani, *The Whole Truth* (Pakistan Writers' Co-operative Society, 1988). Malik Rustam Kayani, *Some More Truth* (Pakistan Writer's Co-operative Society, 1977). Malik Rustam Kayani, *A Judge May Laugh and Even Cry* (Pakistan Writers' Co-operative Society, 1970).

¹⁴³ Jalib, *Jalib Biti*, 48–9.

criticisms and witticisms were echoed in bazaars, coffeehouses and streets occupying a key place within the imaginary of the people. The poem discussed below, was first recited at a poetic symposium in Murree and received such an overwhelming response from the public that Jalib was banned from entering the scenic hill-station by the government for the next ten years.¹⁴⁴ The verses, recited rhythmically, were aimed at 'bleeding the elite' and are as follows,

That light that only shines in palaces
 Burns up the joys of the people in shadows
 Derives its strength from others' weaknesses
 That kind of system, like dawn without light
 I refuse to acknowledge, I refuse to accept

I am not afraid of execution
 Tell the world that I am the martyr
 How can you frighten me with prison-walk?
 This overhanging doom, this night of ignorance
 I refuse to acknowledge, I refuse to accept

'Flowers are budding on the branches', that's what you say
 'Every cup overflows', that's what you say!
 'Wounds are healing themselves', that's what you say!
 These barefaced lies, this insult to the intelligence
 I refuse to acknowledge, I refuse to accept

For centuries you all have stolen our piece of mind
 But your power over us is coming to an end
 Why do you pretend you can cure pain?

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 51.

Even if some claim that you have cured them
I refuse to acknowledge, I refuse to accept¹⁴⁵

Dastoor begins with a mention of 'light' and darkness. The reference to light here is evocative of the false dawn of independence, marred by the trauma of Partition that Faiz Ahmed Faiz lamented in his poem *Subah-e-Azaadi* (The Morning of Freedom). The interplay of light and shadows, the vision of a 'dawn without light' represent here the hollowness of the freedom independence had brought to the people. The lack of substantive freedoms and democratic rights represented by Ayub Khan's 1962 Constitution and Basic Democracies system was incisively captured as a *dastoor* that 'derives its strength from others' weaknesses.' Jalib spoke with the voice of a people fully conscious now of the stillborn nature of their liberation. The first few decades after Pakistan's inception had seen a celebration of independence, even as the nexus of postcolonial elite and military bureaucracy continued to compromise the terms of its freedom.

Jalib linked his searing indictment of the incomplete nature of post-coloniality with Pakistan's colonial legacy in the last stanza, 'For centuries you all have stolen our piece of mind.' The piece of mind, insult to the intelligence, and pain, mentioned at various points, all represent the different ways in which the Pakistani people had been infantilized and marginalized by those in power. The centuries, Jalib refers to suggest an important continuity between the colonial and postcolonial

¹⁴⁵ *Habib Jalib: Poetry Recital (1988)*, 2012,
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DLnzFjyk7G8&feature=youtube_gdata_player.

state in terms of the narratives of development and progress employed by elites to justify paternalistic authoritarianism. Such narratives allowed those in power to withhold democracy indefinitely while extolling the virtues of 'guided' rule and fruits of 'basic' democracy. These misrepresentations of the social, economic and political conditions of the people are brought to attention when Jalib refers to the flowers budding on the branches, every cup overflowing and wounds healing themselves in the second stanza. The ending however is hopeful and highlights the growing restlessness of the people asserting that 'your (Ayub Khan's) power over us is coming to an end.' *Dastoor* was a clarion call to arms and set the stage for an imminent confrontation between the Pakistani people, rejecting and refusing to acknowledge the neocolonial Pakistani state as their own, and the postcolonial elite.

Even so, it is important to note here that even as Jalib made the state's system and form the subject of his ire; the nation-state itself was not the antagonist. Moreover, bringing the state '*dastoor*' into discussion implies that the state form was not fully naturalized by 1960s and that the door lay open to reimagining the nature of the Pakistani postcolonial nation-state. The decolonizing narratives were also aimed at re-envisioning the way society functioned at the time and the supremacy of the dominant classes. The sheer tremendousness of the nation's response to Jalib's call made him a frequent guest of the government, arrested nearly twenty times over three decades, on trumped up charges. Jalib's refusal to be cowed down was emblematic of the increasing intractability and radicalization of the masses as Ayub Khan's Decade of Development came to an end. He captures the

absurdity of the Establishment's targeted arrests in a chapter titled, *Khilona lagi hathkadi* (Handcuffs seemed toy-like), in his autobiography *Jalib Biti*.

In this chapter, Jalib speaks of his arrest at a Y.M.C.A. event held to celebrate the legacy of Hameed Nizami, an eminent literary figure and journalist. In this incident, Jalib was detained and questioned by the police for reciting a poem from his banned anthology of poems, titled *Sar-e-Maqtal*, at the Y.M.C.A. event. When he got a moment, Jalib tried to speak in code to his friend Tufail Pervaiz Mohtaram so that Mohtaram could warn Jalib's family. However, the inspector caught on to Jalib's secret communication and proceeded to search Jalib's house. Luckily, Jalib's wife managed to move copies of *Sar-e-Maqtal* to a nearby house before the police's arrival. Thus, the police turned the whole house upside down searching in vain for the copies. Throughout this ordeal, Jalib stood in handcuffs watching the police search every nook and cranny of his tiny home. His daughter, then barely more than a year old, began to innocently play with the handcuffs that held her father captive. Upon seeing this, the embarrassed policeman in charge of the investigation hastened to take off the unnecessary handcuffs. Nevertheless, Jalib was jailed on trumped up charges and spent many days in prison despite a lack of evidence confirming his guilt.

Even when faced with a mockery of law and justice, Jalib was able to make light of his persecution by the Establishment's with this verse,

Perhaps she thought handcuffs a toy
My daughter upon seeing me laughed

That laughter for me was a foretelling of the coming dawn
 That laughter gave me so much strength
 A tremendous support to life I was given
 The indication of a bright tomorrow I was given¹⁴⁶

Although touching on this moving incident involving his daughter, the verse above is also symbolic the redoubtable opposition and optimism that was building up against Ayub Khan's authoritarian regime despite the heavy crackdown on labor unionization, popular protest and political activities by the former. It paralleled the dominant move towards decolonization and selfhood that swept the postcolonial Third World in 1960s and 1970s. The global turn towards the Left had been the result of a concerted effort to correct the prevailing power imbalance in favor of neocolonial capitalist powers as well as to move beyond colonial legacies. Jalib was drawn to a socialist paradigm that promised egalitarian and democratic rule from an early stage in his career. Apart from his association with Mian Iftikharuddin's Azad Pakistan Party and NAP, he took part in the Sindh Hari (Peasants) Movement led by Hyder Bux Jatoi and was arrested in 1959 for his participation. He was also arrested after broadcasting a verse critical of Ayub Khan's nascent dictatorship in a poetic symposium broadcast country-wide through Radio Pakistan.¹⁴⁷ Thereafter, the Establishment banned Jalib from taking part in publically broadcast programs.

¹⁴⁶ Translation mine. The original Urdu verse (in Jalib, *Jalib Biti*, 80.) is as follows,

Uss ko shayad khilona lagi hathkari
Meri bachchi mujhe dekh kar hans pari
Yeh hans thi seher ki basharat mujhe
Yeh hans de gae kitni taakat mujhe
Kis qadar zindagi ko sahara mila
Ek tabinda kal ka ishara mila

¹⁴⁷ The verse in question is as follows:

Kahin gas ka dhan hae Here, the stench of teargas,

Above all, Jalib was aware of the responsibility and power of intellectuals to be more than, in Fanonian terms, ‘uncritical mouthpieces of the masses’ while remaining aware of their own colonial legacy and its impact. He spent many a day, debating ‘the need for a purpose in literature and an awareness of its usefulness to protect the interests of the nation and to deliver it from imperialism and neocolonial outside agents’ with like-minded writers like Mumtaz Hussain, Ibrahim Jalees, Zahoor Nazar and Ahmed Nadeem Qasmi. Members of the banned APPWA including the legendary poets, Faiz Ahmed Faiz and Josh Malihabadi, inspired Jalib’s advance into poetry and politics.¹⁴⁸ However, unlike the earlier progressives and their classically styled Urdu poetry, Jalib’s verse was rooted deeply in the idiom and language of the millions for whom he wrote. At the same time, Jalib kept Urdu poetry’s tradition of opposing and denouncing injustice and autocratic rulers alive with his numerous lyrical testimonies.

However, counter to Jalib were the many poet and writers who were absorbed within the Pakistani Establishment. Among these Establishment intellectuals, Hafeez Jalandhri, famous for writing the national anthem of Pakistan, was a prominent voice. Jalandhri, an avid participant in the anti-colonial movement, became a trusted advisor to Ayub Khan during the 1960s and even rose to become ‘Director General of Morals in Pakistan Armed Forces.’ In a sense, he typified the Establishment intellectuals who towed the same state narratives of development

Kahin golion ki barish.
Shab-e-ahd-e-kam-nigahi
Tujhe kis tarah sarahein?

There, a hail of bullets.
 In the twilight of such darkness,
 What praises must we sing of You?

¹⁴⁸ Barelvi, *Jalib Jalib*, 103; Jalib, *Jalib Biti*, 241–2.

that provided legitimacy to the autocratic neocolonial rule. During a chance meeting, recounted many times, Jalandhri addressed Jalib and in a patronizing tone said, 'Oi! I am now Ayub's advisor. He wakes me up in the middle of the night, and asks me on the phone, 'what should I do Hafeez? These black coats [poets], these college men are creating big disturbances' to which I reply, Ayub keep your thumb on them...these black coats...this poet who goes around and sings 'I reject, I refuse to acknowledge'...get him under your thumb too!'¹⁴⁹

This episode effectively captures the challenge that Jalib posed to Ayub Khan's rule and the rising opposition to the military ruler. It also provided the inspiration for Jalib's satirical poem, included here, titled *Musheer* (Advisor) that effectively dismantled state narratives and revealed the hypocrisy of the ruling classes and their supporters in the literati,

Your hundred million people
 Are ignorance personified
 Their minds have gone to sleep
 And every ray of hope
 Has been lost in the darkness
 It is completely true
 They are the living dead
 Completely unaware
 A disease of life itself
 And you hold in your hands
 The cure for all their ills

So I said this to him

¹⁴⁹ Barelvi, *Jalib Jalib*, 38.

You are the light of God
Wisdom personified
The nation is with you
And it's only through your grace
That the nation can be saved
You are our morning bright
After you there is only night
The few who dare speak out
Are simply mischief-makers
You should tear out their tongues
And throttle them on sight

So I said this to him

Those proud of their eloquence
Their tongues are silent now
There is calm now in our land
What a difference there is now
Between today and yesterday
People are in prison now
At their very own expense
Great is that man
Who stays at your door
Whoever begs for refuge
Let his sins be forgiven

So I said this to him

China is our friend
We'd give our lives for her
But the system that they have
Let's steer well clear of that
From far off say 'Salaam'
The hundred million asses
Referred to as 'the masses'

Could never become rulers
 Of that there is no doubt
 And my only prayer is this
 That you'll always be our boss
 So I said this to him¹⁵⁰

The narrative told in *Musheer* is one that describes a kind of personality-based rule that had more similarities with the bygone divine right of kings and despotism than the much-vaunted democratic rule the postcolonial elite broadcasted to the masses through state channels. Light and dark are again featured heavily in this poem. However, their meanings are inverted with light representing 'enlightened' and 'guided' rule while darkness symbolized the supposedly 'non-existent' potentials of the masses. The trope of the 'autocratic ruler as savior' is used most effectively to demonstrate the persistence of colonial narratives in building the legitimacy and authority of Ayub Khan's authoritarian rule. Moreover, the self-interested nature of the dominant classes focused on preservation of their own influence is evident from the first four lines in the last stanza (China is our friend...Let's steer well clear of that).

Furthermore, the third stanza and last four lines of the second stanza underscore the state hegemony on public expression that existed at the time. This hegemony was based in the views from the top that the illiterate populace, urban groups and crafty exploitative local politicians would only destabilize and weaken the state if allowed to operate unfettered. Thus, limiting participation in governance

¹⁵⁰ *Habib Jalib.*

was considered a fair bargain because ‘if politicians are removed from positions of power, controversies will cease and civil servants and the army officers will be able to get on with the technical job of governing the country.’¹⁵¹ Consequently, continuing in the colonial tradition, public space was heavily monitored and jealously guarded by the Establishment. Jalib’s own experience with the authorities as well as the ban on political parties was a testament to Ayub Khan’s utilization of the paternalistic civilizing mission narrative favored by colonial masters that is critiqued in *Musheer*.

All of the above and the numerous references to ‘sleeping minds’, ‘living dead’ and ‘hundred million Asses’ within the poem draw a larger symbolic conclusion. Through *Musheer*, Jalib is gesturing towards the elites’ deliberate stalling of the process of decolonization in favor of strengthening colonial bureaucratic authoritarianism, centralized state structures and national development policies blindly following the modernization rhetoric championed by neo-colonial powers as the ‘cure for all their ills’.

It was this deliberate stalling of decolonization and democratic participation that Jalib sought to highlight, undo and undermine through his poetry and political activities. During a public demonstration at Mochi Gate in Lahore Jalib called out Ayub Khan’s bullies, and their attempts to disrupt the gathering of students and residents, saying that, “These men who are creating a storm of dictatorship, misbehavior and incivility, they are not from here...do not let them disrupt the

¹⁵¹ Sayeed, “Pakistan’s Basic Democracy,” 250.

today's gathering.¹⁵² As such, Jalib supported other voices rising against Ayub Khan and his successor Yahya Khan, who took over from the former in 1969. When Bhutto left Ayub Khan's government in 1966, Jalib composed a poem imploring Bhutto to stay in the country despite pressure from above to do otherwise. Speaking on behalf of the people, he wrote

Do not leave your garden in the hands of autumn
Do not leave, your home calls to you¹⁵³

Though Bhutto did leave for a while, upon his return he began an enduring bond of mutual admiration and censure with Jalib. Jalib considered Bhutto a like-minded force and had wanted him to join NAP. Bhutto gave this serious consideration. However, by 1967 the left-wing NAP was split into pro-Soviet and pro-China factions. This internal split as well as the improbability of being inducted right away into a leadership position deterred Bhutto from joining NAP.¹⁵⁴ Instead, he laid the foundations for the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) bringing together a combination of leftists, former NAP members, intellectuals, landed elites and the masses crucial to producing a national consciousness. Jalib, remained steadfast in his devotion to NAP despite similarities in Bhutto and Jalib's political stances. He resisted Bhutto's attempts to bring the him into the PPP's fold, stating that he and his 'progressive and communist friends...had built a very strong party of their own'

¹⁵² Jalib, *Jalib Biti*, 69.

¹⁵³ Translation mine. (Barelvi, *Jalib Jalib*, 101.) The verse in Urdu is as follows:

Dast-e-khizaan main apna chaman chorr kay na jaa
Awaaz de raha hai watan, chorr kay na jaa

¹⁵⁴ Jalib, *Jalib Biti*, 94.

so they did not want to go to PPP.¹⁵⁵ Furthermore, Bhutto's own dubious role in the violent loss of Pakistan's eastern wing only served to strengthen Jalib's resolve.¹⁵⁶

Bhutto, fighting for *roti, kapra aur makaan* (bread, cloth and housing), led the PPP to formation of Pakistan's first democratically elected government, even as the country lost its eastern wing in 1971. Winning on the basis of a discourse that promised an alternate political paradigm to neo-colonial capitalist authoritarianism, Bhutto promised a rebuilding of the Pakistani state. Bhutto's Pakistan was to shed the chains of military bureaucratic authoritarianism opening the path to a more egalitarian state that would protect the rights of the masses. However, as mentioned in the previous chapter, Bhutto's execution of his rhetoric left much to be desired. Despite being given the opportunity bring change, Bhutto chose to hasten the solidification of an authoritarian state form. Even as he attempted to rid Pakistan of international neocolonial influences and to strengthen its position in the global context, he fell short of his promises to the very people who had been vital in bringing him to power.

During Bhutto's tenure, Labor was one of the first sections of society to face his treachery. In 1972, workers at a textile mill in Karachi used the *gherao* tactic to pressurize the management to concede to their demands. The mill's management had refused to pay the overdue worker's wages and its share of the worker's participation fund. Barricaded inside their offices, the management called the police,

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 124.

¹⁵⁶ For more details on Bhutto's role in the events of 1971 see Jalal, *The Struggle for Pakistan*, 2014, 142–176.

which in turn tried to disperse the workers using tear gas. When this did not work, the police locked the factory gates confining many protesting workers inside. Word spread and in a few hours nearly five thousand workers from nearby factories encircled the mill demanding the release of their fellow workers. The police opened fire into this crowd killing nearly a dozen workers. In the following days, strikes spread all across the industrial hub and rest of the country to show solidarity with the striking mill-workers. Bhutto's government only partly addressed the workers' demands and refused to condemn officials involved in subduing the strike shocking many of Bhutto's supporters.

Thus, the iconic 1972 workers' protest against unjust industrialists and the resultant display of the state's strength, resulting in ten casualties, was seen as a haunting betrayal of the people's trust.¹⁵⁷ Bhutto failed to make the state a subject of popular narratives despite having been given the opportunity by Pakistanis in 1971. In fact, Bhutto's 1973 operation against secessionists, suspension of democratic processes and dismissal of the NAP-led provincial government in Balochistan further antagonized the people. His later 1975 ban and consequent trial of NAP for abetting secessionist movements in Balochistan and NWFP (the Hyderabad Conspiracy Case) only added to the chargesheet against him.

Once again, state oppression moved Jalib to give speech to the muted. He questioned the efficacy of Bhutto's policies and the unequal distribution of basic

¹⁵⁷ For a more detailed discussion of the 1972 labor strikes see Kamran Asdar Ali, "The Strength of the Street Meets the Strength of the State: The 1972 Labor Struggle in Karachi," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 37, no. 1 (February 1, 2005): 83-107.

rights and benefits between provinces in the following stanza from his poem, *Pakistan ka matlab kya?* (What does Pakistan mean?)

Bread, clothes and medicine
 A little house to live in
 Free education, as may right be seen
 A Muslim, I, too, have always been
 What does Pakistan mean
 There is no God, but God, The Rab-al-alameen

Using Bhutto's election slogan of 'Bread clothes and a house' against him, Jalib pointed to the failings of Bhutto's Pakistan. The major change here from previous poems was the shift from the voice of a nation aspiring to selfhood to an apparent loss of meaning and purpose. Even as Jalib continued to bring to the fore the shortcomings of the independence experienced by the postcolonial nation, the familiar optimistic hope of the coming dawn is replaced with queries and doubts. It was this inability 'to give a bad thing a good name' that would keep Jalib at the forefront of opposition to autocratic rule as he continued to give expression to a people denied substantive freedom and rights by a powerful coterie of bureaucracy and military. Thus, Jalib's vocal opposition to authoritarian rule once again landed him in jail though this time at the behest of his erstwhile 'comrade'.

In retrospect, Habib Ahmed chose his pen name very providentially, *jalib* literally translates to 'attractor' and he stayed true to his name drawing all and sundry, from the lowly sweepers to the wealthy elites, to confront the mockery of

independence made by the ruling neocolonial military bureaucracy. Despite his popularity, Jalib lived an uncertain life without any stable source of livelihood and wellbeing. He went about his life in fits and starts by virtue of his frequent imprisonment. His lived experience exposed as it was to the vagaries and whims of the dominant classes, yet rebounding defiantly from each episode of autocratic rule, is emblematic of the Pakistani nation itself struggling to arrive. Acknowledging the nation's debt to the Poet of the People, poet Qateel Shifai wrote,

He forgot his pains only to suffer for others
 While we sang his poems he was often in prison
 Now he has left us, left us richer
 He who in our time was referred to as Jalib, Jalib!¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁸ The verse in urdu is as follows,
 Apney saarey dard bhula kar, auron ke dukh sehta tha
 Hum jub ghazlain kehtey the, wo aksar jail main rehta tha
 Aakhir kaar chala hee gaya, wo rooth kar hum farzanoun se
 Wo deewana jisko zamana Jalib Jalib kehta tha
 Translation from:

CONCLUSION

The history of the 1960s and 1970s tells the story of a dominant move to decolonize the Pakistani state. It was an attempt by the nation to redress the injustices perpetrated by a nexus of postcolonial elite and military bureaucracy that had compromised the terms of its freedom. Pakistan's first two decades saw a strengthening of colonial bureaucratic authoritarianism, centralized state structures and uncritical acceptance of modernization rhetoric championed by neo-colonial powers. Moreover, the state made strategic and partisan alliances in an increasingly bipolar international context despite formally opposing imperialism and neo-colonialism.

However, there was a concerted effort across the political spectrum in the late 1960s to bring the nation into closer proximity with the state. Students, intellectuals, peasants, industrial labor and leftists participated in a series of disturbances and rebellion that reached a climax in Ayub Khan's removal from power and the rise of the PPP to power in West Pakistan.

Moreover, this attempt was concurrent with the emergence of the new Left in Pakistan and constituted a break from the traditional Left as embodied by the CCP. This new wave of political activism was more localized and nationalistic than earlier Leftist parties' demands for a global class revolution. This thesis argues that instead of seeing the break as a turn towards Soviet-style revolution it is more insightful to

see it as embracing the whole nation, not just the proletariat, to produce a national unity and a social revolution against existing neocolonial institutions and patriarchies.

Furthermore, the decolonization narratives discussed in this thesis addressed the local and global implications of a Manichean Cold War context and the influence of neo-imperialist powers. On a global scale, Third World unity became a cornerstone of the anti-imperialist and anti-neocolonialist struggle of the formerly colonized peoples of the Global South. It was seen as a way to 'level the global playing field' that was skewed in favor of neocolonialist and former colonial powers. Moreover, the Third World project was also framed as a challenge to the economic domination of the capitalist West and called for a redistribution of economic power. On a more local scale, there was a call to end foreign neo-imperial influences on development policies and the economic exploitation of the masses built into the Pakistani state.

Continuing in this vein, the thesis delved more deeply into the discussions and demands of the time through an examination of two leftist voices from different ends of the class spectrum, the aristocratic politician, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, and the plebian poet, Habib Jalib.¹⁵⁹ Zulfikar Ali Bhutto represented the anti-imperialist and anti-authoritarian demands of the masses for an egalitarian society free from foreign influences through his rhetoric of internationalism, anti-neocolonialism, Third World unity, Islamic universalism and socialism. Moreover, Bhutto's

¹⁵⁹ Due to space limitations, leftist agitations in East Pakistan along with the contribution of the Right to decolonization narratives could not be touched upon.

discussions of Islamic socialism highlighted the growing discussions of a different kind of Marxism entwined with Islamic Universalism developed as a response and reaction to a capitalist Christianate universalism that dominated the arenas of global politics and economy.

While Bhutto's rhetoric portrayed the global linkages and implications of the turn towards decolonization, Jalib's poetry most closely expressed the local and personal affective struggle of the people, the society, to decolonize and attain selfhood. Habib Jalib gave expression to a people denied substantive freedom and rights by a powerful coterie of bureaucracy and military through his verse. Jalib's career as a militant poet also emphasized the idea of poetry as a political project and its value as a place of politics and revolution in Pakistan during the 1960s and 1970s. His poems like *Dastoor* and *Musheer* galvanized students, peasants and labor in their struggle against Ayub Khan's regime in the late 1960s.

Riding this wave of anti-Ayub protests, Bhutto formed Pakistan's first democratically elected government in 1971 holding out the promise of *roti, kapra aur makaan* (bread, cloth and housing) for the masses. Despite the chance and support to complete the process of decolonization and bring into existence the history of a Pakistani nation, Bhutto failed to fulfill this promise. Instead, he was instrumental in accelerating the concretion of the state's military bureaucratic structure. His abrupt removal from office by General Zia-ul-Haq created a larger than life myth and veritable political dynasty as Pakistan entered into another decade of military dictatorship.

To this day, Pakistan in a sense remains a state without space for a nation. Unmoored yet longing for the promised 'shore' of Faiz's *Dawn of Independence*, the Pakistani people are a misunderstood nation looking for selfhood and being in a state that is historically built upon the very colonial structures that precluded the possibility of 'becoming' from the colonized.

The Marxist poet and writer, Ibn-e-Insha, captured this absence of meaning in his early 1970s ghazal, *Insha Ji Utho!* (Insha, get up!), that began with these immortal lines,

Insha, get up! Do something; there is no point in setting your heart on this city
What does the beast have to do with tranquility; there is no shelter for the hermit in
the city¹⁶⁰

The poem narrates the story of a broken man who decides to get up and leave, not just the place where he was attending a gathering but the actual city. He

¹⁶⁰ The complete ghazal in Urdu is as follows,
Insha Ji utho ab kuch karo is shehar me ji ko lagana kia
Wehshi ko sakun se kia matlab, jogi ka nagar me thikana kia

Is dil kay warida daman ko dekho to sahi socho to sahi
Jis jholi me so chhed huwe us jholi ka phelana kia

Shab beeti chand bi doob chala zanjeer pari darwaze pe
Kyun dair gaye ghar aye ho sajni se karo ge bahana kia

Phir hijar ki lambi rat mian sanjhok ki to sahi aik ghari
Jo dil me hai lab pe anay do, sharmana kia ghabrana kia

Us roz jo in ko dekha hai ik khwab ka alam lagta hai
Us roz jo unse bat huwe wo bat bi thi afsana kia?

Us husan ke sachay moti ko ham dekh saken par chhu na saken
Jise dekh saken par chhu na saken wo dolat kia wo khazana kia?

Jab shehar ke log na rasta den kyun ban me ja basraam karein?
Diwanon ki si na baat kare tou aur kare diwana kiya?

sees what he needs but is helpless and unable to attain it. After drifting about through the night he reaches home in the early dawn and wondering what excuse he should give to his beloved for his absence. The Pakistani nation's situation has been similar to that of Ibn-e-Insha's broken man moving from one government to the next in search of substantive democracy and representative rule. However, there is still hope amidst this bleakness as the broken man's hopeless sojourn ends on a more promising note at the brink of early dawn. The rising sun heralds the commencement of a new day full of possibilities for relief and liberation after a dark desolation of the night. Thus, like the rising sun, the Pakistani nation too must rise again and rebound defiantly from successive episodes of autocratic rule in order to attain selfhood.

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