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Between the Local and the Global there Lies the Nation: Selected Stories of the 1960s in Lahore

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Abstract

Labour and student activists in Pakistan were part of the global movement of the 1960s with its sense of expanded possibilities. This article explores how this political imagination was expressed in Pakistan, focusing on local stories oriented around Lahore. Using the 1960s as one particular window to look at the aspirations of ordinary people, this essay shows that even though students and workers alike hoped for a change in the status quo, there was no one typical national experience of this decade. Any historical narrative that assumes that there is a Pakistan with one imagination in any decade necessarily imposes erasures in order to construct a neat story of what the 1960s in Pakistan "truly" was. Through newspaper articles and police reports, some everyday stories of that time are selected and used to differentiate the common picture of experiences of the 1960s in Pakistan.

Keywords: Pakistan, 1960s, history, stories, socialism, labour, students, imaginations

Sheikh Muhammad Rashid was born in 1915 in Sheikhupura district in the Punjab. This information, and the vast majority of his life as described in his autobiography *Juhd-e-Musalsil* ("*Continuous Struggle*", Rashid 2011), doesn't seem too relevant to a history that sifts through historical evidence searching for things that touch the already familiar tropes of the nation. Sheikh Muhammad Rashid appears in this narrative at a particular moment: he was the founding member of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), a major political party in Pakistan. As a peasant leader, he would come to be remembered as *Baba-e-Socialism* ("Father of Socialism"). In the late 1960s after the social movement successfully brought an end to the regime of General Muhammad Ayub Khan, the Pakistan People's Party formed the government in what was then West Pakistan.

Perhaps now the first sentence of this introduction appears more relevant. It establishes that Rashid matters because he was connected to ostensibly greater, more political, more important things. It is not a coincidence that in one of the

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obituaries that discusses his life and legacy, his brief association with the Muslim League, the main party that pushed for the demand for a separate state for Muslims in colonial India, is put front and centre (Dawn 2002). It does not matter if his autobiography starts by describing his village and includes accounts of how deeply his revolutionary desires affected his home life. His second wife, Shakeela Khanam Rashid, was already the principal of a college in Lahore when he married her. She would go on to work as an ambassador and as a member of the National Assembly of Pakistan. However, in his autobiography, she seems to be not very relevant. In one of his obituaries she is mentioned only using her first name and in another she is only "his widow" (ibid; Azad 2002). When we focus on Baba-e-Socialism, Shakeela Khanam becomes only visible as a wife and a widow. When we focus on the nation, Sheikh Rashid becomes visible only as crucial to the story of the PPP. In sharp contrast to a narrative that gives agency to political parties and state ideologies, Rashid makes an explicit link between the politics he pursued and his personal life, and the literal translation of one of the subsections of his book is "the deep relation between personal life and political life" (Rashid 2011: 51).

In this essay I argue that the specific forms that political lives took in Pakistan in the 1960s were both local and global. The aspirations Rashid had, for instance, to work with agricultural labour, first working with the Muslim League and then the Azad Pakistan Party, were derived from his personal experiences, his local environment in Punjab and from the expanded imagination of the time. Rashid's story is part of a set of experiences that people shared in the 1960s and that were specific to that decade. The global imagination produced by the Cold War and anti-colonial thought was felt by individuals like Sheikh Rashid in areas across Pakistan.

That it was shared does not mean that it was the same across various accounts, nor does it mean that people in present-day Pakistan can hear the terms used by Sheikh Rashid to describe his ideological predilections, such as "socialist" or "revolutionary", and assume they know what he was talking about. Those terms did not have the same meaning as they do today. Nor did they have the same meaning across Pakistan. Why use them then? Because what they did signify was an openness of the imagination, a belief that coming out on the streets could fundamentally alter the way power operated and worked in Pakistan.

Sheikh Rashid only connects his socialism explicitly to Marx and Engels briefly and in snippets. For instance, in 1952 he attended a regional conference in China where he heard lectures on Marxism and felt that they described many of the things he had already seen and felt (Rashid 2011). The feelings that he describes, the political movement and sentiments he became part of, their "distinctive fever and fret", as David Scott puts it, belong to Rashid, his time and his "historical present in a way that it does not – because it cannot –

belong to ours […] a horizon of possible futures that are not, any longer, ours to imagine" (Scott 2004).[1]

It is true that Rashid was a socialist and revolutionary and peasant leader, but it is also not the only truth. There was no *one* historical imagination nor was there one space of experience owned equally by all members who identified as being of the left.[2] He was socialist, but simultaneously was thankful to God for having kept him away from the evils of alcohol. He immersed himself in the Muslim League's politics, but was very critical of the landlords who patronised it. The specificity of this time, the difference between his time and our own in present-day Pakistan, is that these categories were not as oppositional. He could wear all these hats at the same time. The open imagination, the open future of the time is crystallised in this choice – in the ability to make this choice.

The historical imagination of the 1960s was revolutionary across the world, but to assume that there was something unique to the form that it took in Pakistan is to assume that there was a singular Pakistani imagination in the first place. No matter how closely we have read our Benedict Anderson, how truly we believe that the community of the nation is imagined and does not exist beyond the sentiment of commonality created by the things we read and the stories we tell (Anderson 2006) we tend to fall back on describing "Pakistan in year X" (as if there was one) and throw around statements such as "Pakistan was a country made for Muslims" as if the mass exodus of populations in 1947 did not shock anyone at the time. This is the point I want to begin with, that the past, and in this case the 1960s in Pakistan, really was a different country in which people had different ideas of the form their futures would take.

Moving away from the fixity of categories like the nation is possible by focusing on smaller, local stories and highlighting how they were inspired by global movements and ideologies. These local stories draw attention to how the history of Pakistan in the 1960s, when told as one story, is a story of our assumptions more than it is a story of the aspirations, hopes and political actions of people. How can we find such small, local stories? What can they tell us that the more "important" stories of major political parties, of those who have touched official power, of those who are explicitly tied to the nation's manifest tropes, do not?

This essay is an indication of what the answer to that question could be with specific reference to the 1960s. Much of the material that my observations rely on comes from work I have done for a series of projects on labour, and specifically the left, in Pakistan in the last decade. I make references throughout to some of the sources I have accumulated. Specifically, in this essay, to

1 Scott here is talking about C.L.R. James classic, *The Black Jacobins*.

2 I take this idea from Reinhart Koselleck's *Sediments of Time*. It comes across through all his essays, but perhaps most powerfully in the translator's note that describes why they chose to translate a word ("*Zeitschichten*") as "sediments" that could have just as easily translated as "strata". This, they say is because "sediments" captures the idea that "there are multiple historical times present at the same moment, layer upon layer pressed together." (Hoffman / Franzel 2018: xiv).

the progressive newspaper the *Pakistan Times*, to two of my interviews and to National Assembly Debates. However, the main set of sources that this paper relies on are the records of the Special Branch of the Punjab police, and these require a short introduction.

Until recently, this source was closed off to researchers for national security reasons (or so I was told). Every fortnight, the Special Branch of the Punjab police would put together a summary of all the material they had collected. These were accounts of activities of organised workers, of students and – overwhelmingly in the 1950s and 1960s – of communists and those believed to be engaging in seditious activities. These Fortnightly Police Abstracts of Intelligence (henceforth FPAI) are a very detailed resource and I have used them here, but the real gems were to be found in the Daily Situation Reports (henceforth DSR). Several hundred pages per year make them very unwieldy as a source, but by the time I was given access to these documents I had done interviews and archival work, yet – even though I believed I knew what I was looking for – there was much that was unexpected. Here, in this essay, I have compiled just some of the unexpected. I make no attempt to draw a clean conclusion from these stories. However, they do show some very interesting trends. Using these trends as threads I argue that the tapestry of the history of Pakistan that is familiar, that is known, is not the only history we need to pay attention to if we want a better understanding of what mattered to people in the 1960s, what their aspirations were. These stories show that it is problematic to assume that we can reach back and, as Pakistanis, understand what Pakistanis in the 1960s hoped for and dreamed of and thought was possible – only because we think that the past is *our* past.

What made the 1960s in Pakistan a different country was the tenor of the imagination. Workers considered Marxist texts alongside discussions of what Islamic socialism meant in other Muslim countries. Communists and advocates of provincial autonomy met regularly with workers, students and university lecturers in study circles to read these "radical" texts and think about what they meant for their own context. Not all groups who came to these circles shared the same vision or agreed on what socialism meant, but the belief that the status quo could be shaken by collective action was very much in the air.

Most of this essay focuses on the stories of labour and students who were actively mobilising during the 1960s against the backdrop of the movement of 1968–1969 that would emerge on the streets of Pakistan to remove General Muhammad Ayub Khan. This story of expanded imaginations and heady possibilities is interrupted by the last section, which focuses on the war of 1965. That section shows that this story of an expanded imagination is not really an alternative history at all, but a partial one. Far from being complete stories, these stories are told more in the nature of random findings in the archival record of the 1960s. The attempt to capture scattered stories is a deliberate methodo-

logical choice in this article, which is influenced by my reading of Michel-Rolph Trouillot's *Good Day Columbus*, in which he shows how the imposition of a central theme on the historical record is an act of power intended to imbue the object, in this case the nation or the country, with a historical importance that observers at the time may not have given. This version of writing around a central theme then creates other erasures which only the acknowledgement of the "messiness" of the historical record can capture (Trouillot 1990). The stories then are an attempt to decentre the nation and capture (or at least glimpse) the messiness of the imagination of the 1960s.

Workers, students and intellectuals in the 1960s drew on a global repertoire of radical ideas that had been developing since the beginning of the twentieth century, bringing in a mix of Islam, socialism and anti-colonialism to the everyday meaning of a progressive life. Within Pakistan in the 1960s, the results of a survey distributed to university lecturers, religious leaders and others in 1969 indicated that the strongest disagreement between groups was not over religion at all, but centred on the issue of whether or not private property was an inalienable right. In spite of this disagreement, a set of ideas that referenced socialism and was based on some idea of redistribution was gaining popularity at the time (Jawed 1975).

Socialism in the 1960s was about hope, freedom and the coming together of anti-colonial aspirations. The idea that decolonisation and socialism translated into an expanded idea of political possibilities in North India and in the areas that became Pakistan in the twentieth century is not new (Ansari 1990, Ali 2015, Raza 2020), but it is an essential part of the story that explains the expanded political imaginations of students and workers in Pakistan in the 1960s.

The anti-Ayub agitation of the late 1960s

> It is the imagination, in its collective forms, that creates ideas of neighbourhood and nation, of moral economies and unjust rule. (Appadurai 1996: 7)

A social movement emerged in Pakistan between 1968 and 1969 and directed its ire against General Muhammad Ayub Khan, the dictator in power in Pakistan. Accounts of this time paint a picture of a movement drawing people from all over the country united in the struggle to bring down Ayub Khan (Ali 1970a, Jones 2003, Khan 2009). This section will show how the movement against Ayub Khan was, in some ways, not about Ayub Khan at all. It was an imagining of a more equitable future for everyone. At this point, the call for "socialism" captured exactly these demands for redistribution and equality.

The history of the movement itself has generally been dominated by the rise of the Pakistan People's Party, the political party led by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, a

charismatic, personally wealthy politician who firmly held the helm of the movement and told its participants what they wanted to hear; that there would be Islamic socialism in Pakistan, that land would go to the tiller and the factories would be owned by the workers. Just a few years later, Bhutto would end up stabbing his supporters in the back by denying them party tickets and declaring that the strength of the street would be met by the strength of the state (Jones 2003, Ali 2005). Such a narrative gives pride of place to Bhutto. However, focusing on local dynamics can show that the movement, as it spilled out onto the streets, created its own possibilities (Jones 2003).

Labour's global and local imaginings in the 1960s

The strength of labour was part of a longer story of organisation that could be traced back to the development of labour organisations during the inter-war period in India. A trend that could be observed from the 1930s onward was that "labour" became "a useable category of political identification" (Ahuja 2020: 1067, 1112). Attempts were made to depoliticise Indian labour and limit the autonomy of trade unions. These measures were only partially successful because labour itself had become a political term that workers could wield along with labour laws and ideas of welfare, part of labour's expanded horizon of expectations that constituted this time period (Ahuja 2019).

The power of labour in Pakistan in the 1960s was also rooted in its global importance (the idea that labour and particularly industrial labour would be central in social movements) and in the local specificity of Lahore's development. One of the largest railway workshops in the region was located in the north of Lahore and the numerical and organisational strength of labour based in these workshops meant that they were a force to be reckoned with even in the post-Partition context when labour was much weaker, having lost its all-India networks (Azhar 2019, Asdar 2013). This local specificity of the development of labour power in Lahore took place alongside an idea of historic destiny. As Azhar shows, workers in the railways in Lahore read communist texts and invited communist party members in the 1950s and 1960s to their meetings in the same way that they had invited Khilafat supporters in the 1920s, but retained their own autonomy throughout. In the moment of decolonisation, the workers' belief in their own importance was an important base from which they engaged with national movements.

Across the decolonising world, labour pushed independence movements to include leftist demands such as redistribution on their agenda; this happened within the Indian context as well (Plys 2020: 20).[3] This may not have been

3 This recent book by Kristin Plys has a wider argument that this article is indebted to, about how the ideas exchanged around and within the Indian coffee houses and the autonomous spaces created by labour's actions contributed to a particular ecumene of collective identity that activists were able to draw on long after independence.

successful in bringing about long-term changes in class structure, but it did play a role in how workers imagined their role within the nation. By the 1960s in Pakistan, this older story of mobilisation had a concrete effect on the strength of labour. Specifically, it allowed for the continuity of networks in spite of repression.

The theme of state repression of the communists in Pakistan, beginning with the banning of the Pakistan Communist Party in 1954, is well known and has been explained as part of Cold War politics, the desire of the Pakistani state to get closer to the United States and the specific moment of the signing of military pacts with the US (Levi 1967, Lubna 2010). This should have meant that 1954 spelled the end of progressive politics in Lahore, but in fact the relationships of progressives in Lahore were not just based on membership in the Communist Party. Bonds of friendship and meetings in study circles, coffee houses and union offices continued even after the Communist Party was banned (Malik 2013, Aziz 2008). To give just one concrete example, in November 1965 a group in Lahore publicly demanded that mill managements needed to be held accountable and that peasants displaced in the 1965 war should be compensated. The men who were present at the meeting included Communist Party members (Fazal Elahi Qurban), the head of the Tonga workers union (Sandhi Khan) and a member of one of the railway workers' unions (FPAI 15 November 1965). This shows that in spite of the Communist Party being officially banned, ex-Communist Party members were able to mobilise, combining workers' demands from the informal and formal sectors.

The imagination of workers had come to agree on certain demands, including nationalisation, anti-imperialism and worker protections (Ahmad 1978, Azhar 2019). As Tariq Ali has shown, the participation of workers within this movement further increased "a realization of their own strength" (Ali 1970b: 44), which translated into workers continuing to demand higher wages and mobilise for better working conditions even in the face of subsequent police repression.

Even after workers were violently forced to end their strikes and hand back the factories, there is evidence that they continued to exert a great degree of control in their neighbourhoods up until the 1970s at least. Altaf Baloch, a labour leader in Lahore in the late 1960s for instance, was part of a meeting that took place in December 1970 in which he and members of the left-leaning National Awami Party "explained the significance of [the] red flag" to the workers (FPAI, 31 December 1970: 26), while at another meeting held by railway workers in 1970, the workers criticised the government for not agreeing to hold elections on the basis of class while simultaneously remembering the actions of Nasser and the work he did for the Arab people (FPAI, 15 October 1970). This nod toward Nasser was part of a broader trend of acknowledging international movements at this time. The awareness of what was happening across the world, when not all workers could read, was a product of organising and study circles where stories were exchanged and people explicitly identified

with the global movements of the time. Hussain Naqi, for instance, who was a student in Lahore at the time of the Suez Crisis, described how hundreds of students gathered in Lahore's Nishtar park, alongside railway workers, to protest (interview by author with Hussain Naqi, Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, Lahore, 16 July 2008).

These snippets cannot give us a complete picture. However, they do show us that anti-imperialist movements and socialist ideals resonated with the workers of Lahore before and after the anti-Ayub movement. The mobilisation of labour during the movement and particularly, demands such as the one asking for elections to be held on a class basis, were important indicators showing how socialist ideas were translated into concrete policy recommendations that centred labour.

Students' global and local imaginings in the 1960s

> Be they in East Pakistan or be they in West Pakistan, they are our own sons and daughters, they are our grand-sons and grand-daughters and when anything happens to them our heart goes in sorrow. (NAPD 1969: 304)
>
> A section of impressionable youth has fallen a victim to the machinations of the Opposition elements and is being exploited by them for ulterior motives. (NAPD 1969: 308)

Turning to the story of students during the movement, it may be possible to discern a rather distinct thread of how the movement of 1968 was told from the students' perspective. Both quotes above are from men who were members of Ayub Khan's cabinet and were part of a National Assembly session discussing the political situation in the country. The first quote is from a speech made by Abdus Sobur Khan, who had previously been involved with peasant movements in what was then East Pakistan, while the second was from Vice-Admiral A.R. Khan, who was from the army, and so it is only logical that they would have different interpretations of 1968. The sentiments expressed in these quotes contrasted starkly with the positions young people themselves were taking.

Crucially, they also contrasted with what politicians had told young people in the time leading up to 1947. For instance, during the Muslim League election campaign, students in the Punjab were actively encouraged to be part of the mobilisation (Talbot 1980: 77). In the 1960s however, Ayub Khan, shortly after coming to power encouraged students to "study seriously" and avoid politics, which he equated to "paths of chaos" (Pakistan Times 1961). This view comes across in other works on student politics in the 1950s and 1960s as well (Bajwa 2015, Ahmed 2000). However, the mood of these young people in the 1960s was not one in which they were about to back down.

In the 1960s students in Pakistan drew on a creative engagement with transnational currents of anti-imperialism and religious identity from the wider student movements that were erupting across the world (Bajwa 2015, Nelson 2011).

In newspapers of this time, pictures of students emerging in large crowds to protest against Indian action in Kashmir could be seen alongside students protesting against the Vietnam War. Reactions to both the global and the local were perfectly compatible in the 1960s. Even before the movement of 1968–1969, student protests in the earlier part of the 1960s in Pakistan were oriented against university ordinances that limited the autonomy of student unions and were intended to curtail student politics (Bajwa 2019).

However not all the student protests that took place in the 1960s were clearly against legislation or against Ayub Khan's dictatorship. These protests were taking place at a time when students were already mobilising in support of Fatima Jinnah, the sister of Quaid-e-Azam, the founder of Pakistan. In the 1965 elections she stood against Muhammad Ayub Khan. Again, this portion of the story of student politics is dominated by this event. This is of course an important part of the story, but this essay is all about getting beyond the imposition of a central theme dominated by the national frame, in this case, by Ayub Khan. How can we go beyond this frame? How can we catch glimpses of the everyday actions of students at this time? In order to describe this section of the article, I will go beyond the FPAI and look directly at the Daily Situation Report (DSR) to get an idea of the forms that student protest took after Fatima Jinnah lost the election in January 1965.

In the months that followed the election of 1965, there were many instances of students mourning the loss of the election. For instance, 200 college students in Khairpur broke the gates of a high school and encouraged the younger students to raise slogans of "Sardar Ayub Murdabad" (DSR, 14 January 1965), but the ones that I want to draw attention to are the ones that are clearly drawing on this imagination of students as powerful and assertive, but channelling this power toward challenging the status quo in their everyday lives. One of the protests that stands out from this time is one undertaken by 400 girls in the Model Town girls' high school in Lahore. It stands out because it indicates how the protests from this time were about more than elections, military rule and protests involving the nation. Crucially it also gives us one small insight into the gendering of involvement in Pakistani social movements in the 1960s.

The students went on strike in the middle of January 1965, initially demanding that their headmistress should be allowed to return to work (DSR 15 January 1965). Quite clearly, the students felt that their headmistress was being punished, and they had reason to believe this as she was not the only teacher who had her posting changed right after the election. The girls marched to the Model Town Society where they met the military official, a retired Brigadier who handled matters such as postings, and were told that the headmistress had not been removed but had applied for ten months' leave and would be back after that time. It was clear that the Brigadier thought the matter was resolved. However, as the girls were leaving, the police report states, some of them became

"unruly [and] pelted stones on the Society's buildings, smashing some window panes" (ibid.). Shortly after this incident, these girls further expanded their demands. In response to the Brigadier's insistence that their headmistress had willingly applied for leave, the students' list of demands included that she not be granted the leave she had applied for. They also demanded that a cafeteria be opened in the school, old furniture be replaced and electric fans be installed (DSR 16 January 1965). Sporadic mentions of their protest between the 16th and the 21st of January show that the students kept their strike going. The last mention of this protest is on 21 January, when the report simply states that the students of the girls' high school were intent on continuing their strike and that a "reconciliation meeting held between the Model Town society and the girls' parents did not prove fruitful" (DSR 21 January 1965).

My reading of this incident and what followed is influenced by recent events in Pakistan that have exposed the actions of complicit administrations in repressing the grievances of students, particularly young women. This is important to note because if "history is always – to some extent – about oneself" (Trouillot 1990: 19) I may be guilty of reading into this archival record a similar sort of dynamic to the one we are seeing in present-day Pakistan, where the MeToo movement has empowered young women to say things and be taken more seriously than they have been in decades. Nonetheless, I cannot help but feel that the rage expressed by the Model Town high school students was a protest against the dismissive attitude of authority figures and an attempt to claim space that had been denied to them previously. It cannot be a coincidence that out of all the protests mentioned over the massive volume of reports on 1965, this appears to be the only student protest where parents were called in. I am arguing here that the expanded possibilities of the 1960s allowed for things like 400 female students in a girls' school to go on strike to press for a diverse array of demands. The focus on Ayub Khan and elections misses out on these aspects of the local that show us that the political protests of students in the 1960s translated into challenges to the status quo in a multiplicity of ways.

The police reports also show that far from the Vice-Admiral's contention at the beginning of this section that young people were being manipulated, young people actually appear to be trying to stand up for each other's rights and to report on matters that affected all of them. For instance, in a meeting of the Sindh University Students in Hyderabad, their speeches included a warning to the Principal of the Government Girls' College, who had been reportedly ignoring her students' demands (DSR, 1 February 1965). Therefore, by the time the movement against Ayub Khan emerges at the end of 1968, students already had networks that they could call on.

In the late 1960s students and workers took to the streets in Pakistan's major cities as other students did across the world. Pakistani students who were studying abroad were part of these global protests as well. Pakistani students from

the 1960s whom I have spoken to over the years took part in student protests in London, Cambridge and Paris. Hearing their accounts was not very different from reading Sheila Rowbotham's classic, *Promise of a Dream: Remembering the Sixties* (2001). There was the same sense of wonder, a coming of age at a time when norms – historical and sexual – were all changing, but nonetheless there was a strong awareness of difference. In Rowbotham's classic, the moment of a violent encounter with an Algerian man in Paris was one way in which her story encountered difference. There was no resolution to that encounter, but the feeling of all being one and yet not, was left hanging in the air. Gender, race and class divided students' experience of protest and their position within it. It is no surprise then that some of these students chose to come back to Pakistan to be part of what they saw as "their" struggle.

In this respect, one of the interviews that will always stand out for me was with Asad Rahman, who has since passed away. He was interviewed multiple times and the complete story of his political activities is evident in most of them (Akbar 2011: 267–299). Rahman and his friends ended up returning from London, where they were studying, to help the Marri tribe in the Balochistan province of Pakistan wage a guerrilla war against the Pakistani state. By his own account, one of the things that they struggled with was that they did not speak the same language as the Baloch. It had to be learned. On what basis then were Pakistanis one people? On this basis: Rahman and his friends would spend years learning the language and being part of a struggle that, on the surface, had nothing to do with them. This was one of the most important impacts of the long 1960s in Pakistan: it created community out of nothing, a sense that you were dreaming of the same future of radical possibilities. Here, I want to argue, is one of the central points that affected young people in particular in Pakistan in the 1960s. Their leftist and socialist beliefs were perfectly compatible with being Pakistani, not because this socialism lacked form, but because the idea of what Pakistan could be was very much open. Their desire for regional autonomy was Pakistani. Far from being seditious, it was a different understanding of what Pakistan could be.

In Pakistan in the 1960s change was believed to be possible. When students supported Fatima Jinnah in the election, when they protested against the Vietnam War, they were doing so at a time when workers and labour particularly could bring out thousands onto the street. This was to a large extent because of the presence of the large Mughalpura workshops in Lahore, but it was also because of the industrial development that had taken place under Ayub Khan's regime, building an entire new industrial settlement in the south of Lahore in Kot Lakhpat. The presence in protests of these workers, who were also demanding the nationalisation of industry and an end to imperialism alongside more specific demands like adjustment of wage rates, meant that their interests and those of the students allied at crucial points.

This is not, however, a neat narrative of alliances between progressive coalitions. As the war of 1965 showed, there were instances of hyper-nationalism shown by the same groups that this essay has been describing as "revolutionary". The celebration of war and the desire for a nationalist triumph foreshadowed what would happen in 1971. The moment of the heady 1960s in Pakistan then, expressed in the successful overthrow of General Muhammad Ayub Khan, ended up becoming just that: a moment.

"Pakistani" representations of the 1965 war

The India-Pakistan war of 1965 was a short and geographically limited war. The short time in which the war was fought, and the way in which it tends to be told as a story of two countries in conflict, misses out on the way in which this international event had divergent local consequences. The 1965 war was experienced differently in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) and in West Pakistan, particularly Punjab, where a barrage of nationalist propaganda constantly stressed the immediacy of the war. In interviews, in writings on the student movement and in fiction of this time period the sense comes across very explicitly that many people from Lahore would have gone and joined the army if they could (Butt 2000: 14, Haq 2000: 116, Suleri 1989: 120).

Pictures from newspapers of the time convey a sense of what it must have felt like to be in Lahore during 1965, but the images of bombed buildings and houses photographed from a distance tell a visual story that also conceals what existed before the moment in which the picture took place. Following Caren Kaplan, what is "unseen" in these distanced images of the effects of the war? At one point Kaplan in *Aerial Aftermaths* (2018) focuses on the image of the destroyed World Trade Centre after 9/11. Drawing on the conversations of architectural historians and planners she argues that nationalist sentiment gave a meaning to these images that rendered invisible the pre-histories of these spaces, histories such as those of diverse neighbourhoods and the people displaced by megascale construction (ibid.: 17). Similarly, the images of 1965 in the *Pakistan Times* strongly convey this sense of being under siege. What if we were to try and find images of not one Pakistan, but two? Looking through the stories in hindsight, was there a difference in the way that the former West and East Pakistan and their associated concerns were represented?

A series of three images that appeared on the front pages of the *Pakistan Times* within one week of one another capture the difference in the imagining of West and East Pakistan during the war quite starkly. The first was of a large protest meeting held outside Mochi Gate in Lahore in 1965 to protest the arrest of the Kashmiri politician, Sheikh Abdullah (Pakistan Times 1965a).

The discussions on Kashmir, which drew hundreds out onto the street in 1965, contrasted quite sharply with the second image, printed just a few days later, of houses destroyed when a cyclone hit East Pakistan (Pakistan Times 1965b). Right under this picture there was a news article containing details of a protest meeting that was planned for the 17th of May in Lahore. The meeting was to continue protesting the arrest of Sheikh Abdullah, almost as if news of the cyclone and of thousands being killed was reaching West Pakistan from a distant, disconnected place. The third and final picture was of this second protest meeting. It appeared on the front page of the Pakistan Times on the 18th of May and once again featured a large crowd of people (Pakistan Times 1965d). The article covering the protest, placed right next to the picture on the front page, told the reader that "thousands of people belonging to all shades of opinion participated enthusiastically in the Protest Day" (Pakistan Times 1965e). One day before this, the news reports had indicated that the cyclone that hit East Pakistan had been so severe that parts of what is now Bangladesh were still completely cut off (Pakistan Times 1965c).

These images and the associated newspaper reports give us a glimpse into why the Tashkent declaration, the ceasefire that officially ended both the war in 1965 and the continuing hostilities, would be viewed differently in East and West Pakistan. The ceasefire in West Pakistan, and particularly within Punjab, was viewed with nothing short of horror whereas in the Eastern wing, it was much more likely to be viewed with relief (Khan 1999: 76, 118). This is not the place to go into the details of how the liberation movement in Bangladesh emerged, but it can be argued that the picture of students and workers emerging across East and West Pakistan in November 1968 on one platform demanding the removal of Ayub Khan, misses out on this earlier history of the 1960s. Specifically, the erasure of what was happening in the areas that were called East Pakistan was already taking place in the nationalist imaginary in the 1960s, with the focus on war with India.

Beyond just the images, this is also true of public pronouncements regarding the war of 1965. For instance, those who donated to the war, such as industrialists in Lahore, were celebrated in the *Pakistan Times* (otherwise known for being a progressive paper in Pakistan) and their names were listed along with the amounts they had donated toward the war effort. The same paper also had reports of labour unions asking workers to increase production and keep working in view of the national emergency (Pakistan Times 1965f, Pakistan Times 1965g). Similarly, in 1966, the National Awami Party, in its own Central Working Committee meetings in 1966, gave celebratory statements about the armed forces who "had blazoned a glorious path" (NAP 1966). This is not to say that all progressive groups were supportive of the war effort, but the sentiment definitely existed and, over the short period of the war, became more pronounced.

The fact that individuals, socialist and otherwise, abandoned their struggles against the status quo and the establishment to suddenly declare that they were all in this together, that they were willing to go so far as to join the army in order to protect the country, was partially because the threat felt so immediate. It can be argued that it was this immediacy of the threat that created what can be called an identification effect producing the idea that "we are all in the same boat" (Trouillot 2001: 132). In Lahore quite early on, reports came in of families trying to move out of the city and into the interior to be safe (DSR, 8 September 1965). As the fighting escalated labour leaders went further than just asking for workers to increase production and appealed to workers to donate to the Defence Fund and to "whole heartedly cooperate with the factory owners" (DSR, 15 September 1965). Reports of other incidents can be read between the lines to show how workers were also actively mobilising to support the war effort. In November for instance, a group of workers that included a prominent railway union leader met under an organisation called the "Pakistan Trade Unions Emergency War Committee" (DSR 20 November 1965). Quite clearly such an organisation already existed to allow for unions to mobilise during the war.

For instance, the Combined Opposition Parties (the same group that had supported Fatima Jinnah's election earlier that year) discussed the Kashmir situation in August 1965 and adopted a resolution offering full support to the freedom fighters in Kashmir (DSR, 27 August 1965). The Afro-Asian Solidarity Conference in Lahore, a platform for anti-colonial sentiment, ended up passing a resolution that asked for Pakistan and Afro-Asian nations to support Kashmiri people and their liberation (DSR, 28 August 1965).

Final remarks

The stories covered in this paper show quite clearly that the 1960s were a time of expanded possibilities. Labour and students within localities in Pakistan imagined themselves to be part of wider transnational identities. This did not mean that their identity as "socialist" or as "labour" came to dominate and thereby erase all other aspects of who they were. This is an important point because the construction of history around a clear central theme assumes such a dominance. The history of individuals and everyday lives does not have that kind of clarity. The messiness of history does not mean, as this essay has tried to show, that there was no direction. Labour in the 1960s may have imagined itself as Pakistani, but it clearly tried to imagine a program of redistribution. Students in 1965 may have failed to get Fatima Jinnah elected to power, but they did manage to push against the status quo and against established authority. Finally, the story of the progressive 1960s was also punctured with moments

of violence and nationalist exclusion. During the war, redistribution appeared suddenly less urgent than national security. In this moment the identification of people especially within the Punjab with a narrowly constructed national identity appeared to limit the radical edge that their demands and organisation had exhibited immediately before. The movement of 1968–1969 would still take place in spite of this, but the claim that it was a collective movement that emerged across the country for the same reasons appears less convincing.

There is an important lesson here for those of us who continue to engage with national history even though global histories have increasingly become the discipline's mainstay: namely, that there is value in the attempt to trace the local manifestations of politics and examine how these local contexts provided the experiences and the lens that people used to look outward toward the global. Tracing these stories allows us to use them to push back against the central organising theme of the nation.

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