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## *Communists in a Muslim Land: Cultural Debates in Pakistan's Early Years\**

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### **Abstract**

This paper will introduce intellectual debates from Pakistan's early years to show how the country's future culture was being discussed, deliberated and reshaped in these circles at the moment of its own inception as an independent state. By focussing on the communist perspective on Pakistan's independence, it will seek to illuminate some of those historical moments in Pakistan's history that have not received much attention either from historians or from the public. Within this context, the paper will present contesting voices that are critical of one another—particularly regarding the place of Islam in the new state—in order to rethink Pakistan's early history as a period that could have led to a range of possible future historical trajectories.

### **Introduction**

Muslim nationalism, linked as it was to the demand for Pakistan, remained an unsettled question for various Muslim actors and groups in the political landscape of 1940s British India. David Gilmartin's

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pioneering work<sup>1</sup> on Punjab of this period shows how the Muslim League in the 1940s symbolically used the trope of *din* (faith, Islam) to further its own agenda of the Muslim cause, contrasting it to the concept of *dunya* (world) or the secular world of those linked to colonial rule.<sup>2</sup> Yet the League's insistence on faith was at times ambiguous as Jinnah, the Muslim League leader himself, was never entirely considered by the Muslim religious leaders, the Ulama, as a person who possessed the required credentials to lead a Muslim nation.<sup>3</sup> Within this context, Ayesha Jalal, by detailing Jinnah's negotiations for the creation of Pakistan with a range of political actors and constituencies, challenges official Pakistani historiography that represents the creation of Pakistan as the culmination of the historical aspirations of Indian Muslims.<sup>4</sup>

To broaden the above discussion, for this specific paper I take my cue from David Gilmartin's important article in which he critically analyses the emplotment and transformation of the partition events into a 'master narrative' of nationalist historiography.<sup>5</sup> Writing about Punjab in the Partition era (rather than the heartland of *ashraf* politics in the United Provinces), Gilmartin argues that Pakistan's creation was also a partial resolution of the contradiction between the particularisms of Muslim identity linked to locality and place, and the larger construction of Muslim moral community connected to a territorially bounded nation-state. He states that although the Pakistan movement sought to transcend the divisions among Muslims through the symbol of the emergent state and the formation of the moral sovereign, the diversity of people's lives and particularistic cultural experiences remained in perpetual tension to this order.<sup>6</sup> The mistrust shown by the new Pakistani state, wrapped as it was in the ideology of Muslim Nationalism, toward the diverse aspirations of its own people led to an imposition of a meta-narrative of an undivided nation on the populace. A reaction to this political process was the gradual cracking of the constructed ideological edifice of a unified

<sup>1</sup> Gilmartin, David (1988). *Empire and Islam: Punjab and the Making of Pakistan*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 189.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 190.

<sup>4</sup> Jalal, Ayesha (1985). *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, The Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>5</sup> Gilmartin, David (1998). Pakistan and South Asian History: In Search of a Narrative. *Journal of Asian Studies* 57(4): 1068–1095.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 1090–1091.

Muslim moral community. For example, by the mid-1950s the promise of the Muslim Nationalism that led to the creation of Pakistan in 1947 was severely put to the test by regional and nationalistic claims by Pakistan's diverse ethnic groups. Foremost among these was the voice of its Bengali citizens who, as the largest demographic part, claimed their economic and linguistic rights from the overtly centralizing state in Karachi, fourteen hundred miles away from Dhaka.

Such histories, as Shahid Amin in his rendition of a South Asian event of early twentieth century reminds us, are deleted from nationalist master narratives inducing selective national amnesia as these events fit awkwardly into neatly woven patterns.<sup>7</sup> In Pakistani historiography where the major pre-occupation remains the narrative surrounding the creation of Pakistan, many aspects of national life, like the emergence of Bengali nationalism, are given scant attention. A major arena of national amnesia that this paper seeks to address is the absence of any serious work on the nascent Communist Party of Pakistan's relationship with the populace and the state.<sup>8</sup> This paper is part of a larger research project that seeks to critically engage with cultural politics during Pakistan's early years of existence, paying special attention to the Communist Party of Pakistan during its brief period of legal existence after Pakistan gained independence.<sup>9</sup> In pursuing this task the paper will concentrate on literary exchanges between various intellectuals to offer a glimpse beyond the official retelling of Pakistan's history which periodically omits how the young country struggled to create an ideological consensus and to find a cultural basis for its creation and existence.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Amin, Shahid (1995). *Event, Metaphor, Memory: Chauri Chaura 1922-1992*. Berkeley: University of California Press, wherein he describes the The Chauri Chaura incident of February 1922.

<sup>8</sup> However, see Ansari, Khizar, Humanyun (1990). *The Emergence of Socialist Thought Among North Indian Muslims (1917-1947)*. Lahore: Book Traders, for a selective understanding of Muslim progressives and their role in the national movement; Leghari, Iqbal (1979). *The Socialist Movement in Pakistan: An Historical Survey 1940-1974*. Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Laval University, Montreal. This text is to date the only comprehensive attempt at the history of the Left in Pakistan, yet it remains unpublished. Finally also see, Malik, Hafeez (1967). The Marxist Literary Movement in India and Pakistan. *Journal of Asian Studies* 26(4): 649-664, for a detailed discussion on the politics of the Progressive Writer's Movement during Pakistan's first 20 years.

<sup>9</sup> The Communist Party of Pakistan was banned in 1954.

<sup>10</sup> A dominant narrative for the first ten years of its independence is one of failure by the ruling classes to institute a parliamentary government. The Muslim League, the party that led the nation to its independence had, by the mid-1950s, disintegrated into

In order to elaborate on this argument, this paper will partially follow Ranajit Guha's discussion on the relationship of Indian national movement with the Indian masses.<sup>11</sup> Guha borrows the Gramscian concept of hegemony to show the processes through which consensus was built by the Indian nationalist elite leadership. He shows how these leaders needed to harness the intuition and enthusiasm of the people so that order could evolve out of chaos. Guha argues that the subalterns' popular initiatives, autonomy of function, the immediacy in their politics and the spontaneity of their actions, needed to be disciplined by the bourgeois national elite for it to control and hegemonize the national movement. It is within this framework that I seek to provide a cultural and historical analysis of Pakistan's early years to argue that the debates among intellectuals were part of the ongoing attempts to 'tame' and 'harness' particularistic identities of various ethnic and linguistic groups by an emergent cultural leadership and the Pakistani state itself –the tension between the moral sovereign and the diversity of people's experiences.<sup>12</sup>

It is clear that since its creation as the homeland for Indian Muslims the state of Pakistan has been an unstable configuration of shifting alliances and competing ideologies. The discussions, disagreements, apprehensions and conflicts over what should pass as 'authentic' Pakistani culture is a continuing story of various twists and turns. I argue that, as the country became independent under the banner of Muslim nationalism, the question for most intellectuals and State functionaries was what would constitute the cultural norms that would unify the diverse populace and what were the modalities through which this process would come about?

In Pakistan's first decade of existence there were clear camps of intellectuals who had competing claims linked to various ideological positions that impressed upon the state and the populace about the

multiple factions representing different social, economic and regional interest groups. By 1956, when the first constitution of the country was passed, the bureaucracy aligned with the military had effectively sidelined all other political forces and was in control of the state machinery. Another narrative retells the story of Muslim nationalism and its logical continuation in the late 1940's Objective Resolution for an Islamic State, culminating in the Zia era Islamization and the proliferation of Islamist politics. In contrast to these views, the endeavour in this paper is to show those moments that have not received the attention they deserve and those that undermine the teleological assumptions of the above mentioned trajectories.

<sup>11</sup> Guha, Ranajit (1994). 'Discipline and Mobilize', in Partha Chatterjee and Gyanendra Pandey, *Subaltern Studies VII*, Delhi: Oxford University Press.

<sup>12</sup> Gilmartin, Pakistan and South Asian.

legitimacy of one set of ideas over others. One such set of intellectuals were linked with the Communist Party of Pakistan which claimed its lineage from the communist movement in India that besides having a secular (*dunya*) orientation in politics was very active in the anti-colonial struggle. As a continuation of the Communist Party of India the Party had some roots in the workers and peasant movement in the new country, but it is most remembered for its influence on the literary and intellectual debates of the era through its control of the All Pakistan Progressive Writers Association. There were, however, contesting literary voices to that of the progressives. These were not as organized as the Association and consisted of a range of free thinkers, modernist poets and independent-minded intellectuals, in addition to those who sought to link the question of Pakistan with Islamic morals and values. Eventually, many of them became associated with the literary group, Halqa-Arbab-e-Zauq.

In presenting debates on Pakistan's culture along with the uncertainty, confusion and messiness that these entailed, I will specifically concentrate on the works of Sajjad Zaheer, the Communist Party of Pakistan secretary general, Ahmad Nadeem Qasmi, a major Urdu literary figure and also the secretary general of the All Pakistan Progressive Writers Association (and hence aligned with the Communist Party of Pakistan during Pakistan's early years), and Mohammad Hasan Askari, a literary critic and one of the foremost critics of the progressive movement.<sup>13</sup> It should be kept in mind that people like Mohammad Hasan Askari or Sajjad Zaheer had both come from the same cultural tradition of North Indian Urdu-speaking respectable gentry, the *ashraf*. As migrants from the Urdu-speaking belt in India, their strong support for Urdu (either as the language of South Asian Muslims or as the language of communication) placed them in an evolving dialogue with the contested politics within the new country where other ethnic and linguistic groups had begun to challenge Urdu's cultural dominance.

Of course South Asian Muslims as a group were never a monolith and there was much diversity in terms of culture, language and politics. Even among those Muslim intellectuals from North India who did make the journey to Pakistan the issue of the Muslim presence in

<sup>13</sup> Within this broader context, the Mohajirs (literally, refugees who migrated from India) along with the majority Punjabi ethnic group have been the most closely linked with Muslim nationalism and with the demand for making Urdu the Pakistani national language.

India is much more nuanced than is often portrayed. As Pakistan was formed on an ideological platform of Muslim nationalism in South Asia the division of British India itself created deep ambivalence about the continuity of what till then was a shared heritage for many North Indian intellectuals of all religious persuasion. Intellectuals who, in many cases, had known each other due to their writings in Urdu/Hindi and who were developing a shared South Asian literary idiom all of a sudden found themselves on different sides of a political, social and cultural border that was becoming more difficult to cross. Commenting on this dilemma, Sadat Hasan Manto, one of the greatest short-story writers of the period, reflected on his own sense of displacement in these terms:

There is a desire in me to write. But when I sit down to write my thoughts become chaotic. Even after trying, I cannot separate Hindustan from Pakistan and Pakistan from Hindustan. Continuously this question arises in my mind. Will Pakistan's literature be different? If yes, then how? All that was written in undivided Hindustan who will claim that literature, will it now also be divided? Are the basic problems of our people on both sides not the same?<sup>14</sup>

Like Manto, there was much apprehension within various intellectual circles regarding what exactly constituted Pakistani culture and what claims it could make on common pasts. Hence, the endeavour here is to show that whereas during the initial months of Pakistan's independence issues related to infrastructure development, settlement of refugee populations and national security concerning the new state, debates on questions related to the trauma of partition, of Urdu as national language, the history of Muslim nationalism and the pivotal issue of Islam's role in political life also remained at the forefront of intellectual discussions.

In what follows, I will initially provide a brief survey of the Communist Party of India's position on the Muslim question in British India. Subsequently the focus will be on a specific public discussion that Sajjad Zaheer, while he was secretary general of the Communist Party of Pakistan, had with Ahmed Nadeem Qasmi. I will then introduce Askari's work and present debates on culture and history between progressive and liberal intellectuals on Islam, national culture and the interpretation of Muslim history (a discussion that is perhaps still incomplete). In conclusion, an added argument about how a specific

<sup>14</sup> Manto, Saadat Hasan. *Zehmat Meher Darakhshan*. The lines were cited in Hanfi, Shameem, (2008). *Adab Me Insan Dosti ka Tassawar* (The Concept of Humanism in Literature). *Dunyazad* (Karachi), number 21 p. 24.

*ashraf* elite, despite being on either side of the political spectrum, shared a consensus among them on Urdu language and its related cultural norms.

### **Indian Communism and the Muslim question**

In a book of essays published in 1944, Sajjad Zaheer, a major leader of the Communist Party of India and, as mentioned above, later the first secretary general of the Communist Party of Pakistan,<sup>15</sup> argues that the Muslim League's demand for Pakistan was the 'logical expression of the development of political consciousness among the Muslim peoples of India'.<sup>16</sup> Following the Communist Party of India's emerging formulation on the nationalities question,<sup>17</sup> Zaheer asserts that the League's call for Pakistan needed to be understood by the Indian National Congress as the affirmation of the right of each community to determine its own future. In putting this argument forward, Zaheer and the Communist Party of India accepted the demand for Pakistan and saw it as an acceptable resolution of the Muslim question in Indian politics. However, by late 1946 the Communist Party of India (and Zaheer) had started to change its position on the partition of British India. This said, the Party did eventually accept the division in its Calcutta Congress held in March of 1948. In the following sections, the history of this transformation is discussed, eventually focussing on how the communist movement under Zaheer's leadership during Pakistan's early years put forward its own argument on the country's future political and cultural trajectory.

Since the mid-1930s, after an earlier period of supporting radicalized violent politics that brought about severe repression by the British colonial government, the Communist Party of India entered into a phase of united front politics that sought to bring together all anti-imperialist sections of society. The Communist Party, like the Indian National Congress, treated India as a single nation which was engaged collectively in the struggle for independence. The Muslim League, and its demand for dividing India into two nations (Hindu and

<sup>15</sup> See, Zaheer, Sajjad (1944). *A Case of Congress-League Unity*. Bombay: People's Publishing House.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 1.

<sup>17</sup> Adhikari, G. M. (1943). *Pakistan and Indian National Unity*. London: Labour Monthly Publication, pp. 5-32.



Muslim), was condemned as a reactionary communal organization of elite Muslims.<sup>18</sup>

However, by the early 1940s, the Communist Party started to rethink the issue of Muslim separate identity being put forward by the newly invigorated Muslim League under the leadership of Mohammad Ali Jinnah. Its most forceful support of the 'Muslim Question' came in the aftermath of its policy of opposing the Quit India Movement. In a plenary meeting of the Central Committee in September 1942, the Communist Party of India passed a resolution based on a report by G. Adhikari<sup>19</sup> and outlined its position<sup>20</sup> on the thesis on self-determination of different nationalities and the acceptance, in principle at least, of their right to secede from the Indian Union. This was a bold departure from the arguments that the Party itself had adhered to in the past.<sup>21</sup> This position was again echoed in an important document written by P. C. Joshi, General Secretary of the Party. Joshi's paper,<sup>22</sup> published by the party press in 1944, affirmed that Congress was the greatest national organization of the country that had united the various patriotic elements. Yet he also spelled out the Communist Party of India's position on Muslim self-determination and urged the Congress leadership to follow suit. In a polemical vein Joshi chided Congressmen for denying that the Muslim League's leadership was patriotic by arguing:

A belief continues to be held that the League is a communal organization and that Mr. Jinnah is pro-British. But what is the reality? Mr. Jinnah is to the freedom-loving masses what Gandhiji is to the Congress masses. They revere Quaid-Azam as much as Congressmen do the Mahatama. They regard the League as their patriotic organization as we regard the Congress. This is so because Mr. Jinnah has done to the League what Gandhiji did to the Congress in 1919–20—made it into a mass organisation... Mr. Jinnah through the slogan of Pakistan has given expression to the freedom urge of Muslims for absolute independence in their own homelands.

<sup>18</sup> Overstreet, Gene and Marshall Windmiller (1960). *Communism in India*. Berkeley: University of California Press. See pp. 188; also see Zaheer Sajjad (1971). 'Recent Muslim Politics in India and the Problems of National Unity', in S. T. Lonkandawalla, *India and Contemporary Islam*, Simla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, pp. 202–216.

<sup>19</sup> Dr Gangadhar Adhikari, one of the pioneer members of the Communist Party of India, was a member of the Politburo between 1943 and 1951 whilst also serving on the Central Committee during that period.

<sup>20</sup> Overstreet and Windmiller, *Communism in India*, p. 214.

<sup>21</sup> Adhikari, *Pakistan and Indian National Unity*, p. 31.

<sup>22</sup> Joshi, P. C. (1944). *Congress and Communists*. Bombay: People's Publishing House.

We do not expect a Congressman to readily admit all this, but we do not expect him to deny the patriotism of others but try to understand how it expresses itself for them; we do not expect a Congressman to claim the monopoly of patriotism for himself.<sup>23</sup>

The same paper mentioned the Communist proposed amendments to the All India Congress Committee's resolution in its Bombay meetings in 1944. The Communist Party, according to the amendments, stood for the right of self-determination and secession as a democratic right of different nationalities and ethnic groups, including Muslims. Indeed, in following this argument, the Communist Party's manifesto for the 1946 elections demanded immediate independence and transfer of power to not only two governments (India and Pakistan), but to 17 interim 'sovereign' national assemblies that corresponded to different nationalities that had been defined by the party in 1942 and now also included Baluchis as an additional national group.<sup>24</sup> Hence in a matter of less than five years, the Communist Party of India had moved from a position of considering India as a single nation, to a policy of national self-determination in a multi-national India culminating in the right of all nationalities to secede from the union and create their own sovereign states.

Given this change of position the Communist Party of India encouraged its members to work closely with the Muslim League to organize the 1946 elections. This cooperation was most evident in Punjab where the League sought to distance itself from the ruling Unionists and worked hard to gain the rural Muslim vote.<sup>25</sup> Muslim communists such as Danial Latifi, Ataullah Jehanian, and Chaudary Rehmatullah joined the Muslim League and assisted in its contact with

<sup>23</sup> Ibid. pp. 16–17.

<sup>24</sup> Overstreet and Windmiller, *Communism in India*. p. 231.

<sup>25</sup> In Punjab, since the 1920s, there were Ghadar Party influenced peasant and workers groups. The most prominent among them were the Kirti-Kisaan Party (peasant-workers party), the Kisan Sabha and Naujawan Bharat Sabha. Most had a large percentage of Sikh membership and they also dominated the leadership positions, although they were 14 per cent of Punjab's population, in relation to 56 per cent Muslims and 26 per cent Hindu. In the early 1940s two dominant tendencies of left activism, primarily the factions in the Kirti Party in Punjab, had been brought together by the Communist Party of India headquarters in Bombay to constitute the Communist Party of Punjab. However, the Provincial Communist Party in Punjab by 1947 still retained these two dominant groups. These factions were led by Teja Singh Swatantara and Sohan Singh Josh respectively and included prominent Muslim communists like Ferozuddin Mansoor and Fazal Elahi Qurban within its fold.

the peasantry and working class and helped to organize and publicize the League's election programme.<sup>26</sup> The manifesto itself, as Gilmartin suggests, was an attempt to radically transform the relationship between a future state and the masses. It primarily concentrated on rural reform and in a communist-influenced, progressive language the manifesto guaranteed state protection for the peasants against the excesses of feudal power.<sup>27</sup> In Sind, as in Punjab there were some peasant-based organizations that, during the 1940s, had close links with the Communist Party of India. One of them, the Sind Hari Committee under Haidar Bux Jatoi's leadership, was active in certain rural districts, and G. M. Syed, a progressive Muslim League leader, supported its demands for tenancy rights among the Haris (peasants). This close partnership made it possible for the Muslim League to move towards becoming a mass organization in Sind, helping it tremendously in the 1946 elections.<sup>28</sup>

Hence through their alliance with the League, the communists sought to raise consciousness among the Muslim peasantry, an area that they had not had much earlier success in, while the Muslim League itself in the mid-1940s benefited from communist work among the peasantry and strengthened its own secular appeal among a large section of the Muslim masses.

Notwithstanding the progressive manifesto in Punjab or the hard work performed by the communists for the League, the long-term effects of this collaboration did not produce the structural transformation that the communists were pushing for. The weakness of the communist movement in the area itself and the ways in which the Muslim League manipulated the situation in its favour by using the communist connections to create a mass base, but eventually not allowing communist sympathizers any formal position in the party,

<sup>26</sup> Leghari. *The Socialist Movement*, pp. 27–32.

<sup>27</sup> It remains one of the most progressive documents of the Muslim League's pre-independence history. The document asks for state planning of the economy with nationalization of key industries and banks, full employment in the industrial sector with minimum wage guarantees, right to strike and acceptance of collective bargaining agents. In the rural areas, it speaks for the landless peasant and the small landholders and pushes for debt relief and ownership of state land by landless peasants, while arguing for progressive taxation on larger holdings. See Leghari. *The Socialist Movement* p. 28. Also, see Gilmartin, *Empire and Islam*, for detailed discussion.

<sup>28</sup> Leghari, *The Socialist Movement*. p. 30.

inevitably created misgivings towards the League among Communist Party of India members.<sup>29</sup>

However, despite the desire to work for the League, by the mid-1940s, there were other competing and vocal tendencies that shaped the Communist Party of India's outlook on partition of British India and the Muslim League. Where earlier the Party had pushed for the right of secession for all nationalities, by late spring of 1946 it reverted to its earlier position and stressed that the best interests of the Indian people would be served by remaining together in a common union.<sup>30</sup> Still later, in August 1946, the Communist Party of India issued a resolution which, while asserting that the Muslim League represents the bulk of the Muslim Masses, declared that the demand reflected the feudal and Muslim elite interests that sought to compromise with imperialism for a share in administering divided India. Following the position of Rajani Palme Dutt, British communist leader and influential journalist who also served as principal advisor to Indian communist politics,<sup>31</sup> the resolution argued that the masses that support the Indian National Congress are correctly against the division of the country on a religious and undemocratic basis and want a single union.<sup>32</sup>

A move towards a pro-Nehru and pro-Congress stance on national independence may have been the Communist Party of India's tactic to seek a position in the mainstream of Indian Nationalist politics.<sup>33</sup> Although Soviet analysts, as evidenced by articles in the *New Times*

<sup>29</sup> Ibid. Based on interviews with communists who participated in the Punjab movement in the 1940s, Leghari argues that they felt rejected when prominent communist workers in the Muslim League like Ataullah Jehanian were not given party tickets during the 1946 elections. Work with the Muslim League aided some Communist Party of India members to either leave the Party or become more firmly entrenched in Muslim League politics in the post-partition years.

<sup>30</sup> Overstreet and Windmiller, *Communism in India*, p. 239.

<sup>31</sup> Palme Dutt, Rajani (1946). *A New Chapter in Divide and Rule*. Bombay: Peoples Publishing House, p. 13.

<sup>32</sup> See, 1946 August Resolution, in *For the Final Assault: Tasks of the Indian People in the Present Phase of Indian Revolution*. Bombay: People's Publishing House. Reprinted in Documents of the Communist Party of India (1997), Volume 5. pp. 103–127.

<sup>33</sup> These new formulations from the Communist Party of India came at a time of popular upsurge in India during the immediate post-war period (the protests on the Indian National Army Trials, the uprising within the Royal Indian Navy, the Quit Kashmir Movement and the Telegana struggle in the South amongst others). While these multiple events were progressing, the radicalized nature of Indian polity was not under the control of, or was not being directed by, the Party's central leadership, although there were local communist elements involved in all these struggles.

and other Soviet publications,<sup>34</sup> were ambivalent about the Partition plan as unveiled by Mountbatten on 3 June 1947,<sup>35</sup> the Party, with reservations, accepted it as a step forwards and pledged its support to the Nehru government. It was clear that the Party, under the leadership of P. C. Joshi and the intellectual influence of Rajani Palme Dutt, had, by the time of independence, judged the figure of Jawaharlal Nehru as worthy of left-wing support and as the nationalist and progressive leader of the Congress.<sup>36</sup>

The Communist Party of India was critical of both the Congress and the Muslim League for accepting the partition plan.<sup>37</sup> Yet, it was at least clear in the Party's analysis that Congress' 'compromise' on partition was more to retain control of the pre-independence popular upsurge by bargaining with the British, while the Muslim League had been a lackey of the British by forcefully demanding the division of the country on a religious basis and hence weakening the progressive forces of united India. I would emphasize that although the Party finally accepted the creation of Pakistan by arguing for the division of the Party itself, the deep suspicion of the Muslim League's politics and the agony over British India's division was the overwhelming sentiment that was shared by a majority of Party workers of all religions and ethnicities. Pakistan's creation was, according to the Communist Party of India, non-progressive and hence reactionary.<sup>38</sup>

### The Party divided

The pro-Nehru tilt and the pro-Congress line of soft-opposition by the Communist Party of India came under increasing attack just a few months after independence by the left wing of the Party. In December 1947, the Central Committee met in Bombay to prepare for the forthcoming Party Congress to be held in February 1948. The Committee passed a resolution that accused the government

<sup>34</sup> See A. Dyakov (1947). A New British Plan for India, pp. 13–15, *New Times* (13 June), Moscow.

<sup>35</sup> They feared partition along with the retention of Princely states would lead to the Balkanization of Indian territory and indirect British colonial rule would continue. See Dyakov, A New British, pp. 14–15.

<sup>36</sup> See, Note prepared by Sir William Jenkins on P. C. Joshi. FO 317/84237 Public Records Office, UK.

<sup>37</sup> Palme Dutt, *A New Chapter in Divide and Rule*.

<sup>38</sup> See Dyakov, A New British, pp. 14–15.

of India of pandering to Anglo-America imperialism and of being reactionary. Subsequently, from 28th February to 6th of March 1948, 632 delegates assembled in Calcutta for the second congress of the Communist Party of India. The most important task performed during the meeting was the shift towards a more radical political line and a severe critique of the 'reformist' politics of the Party's leadership during most of the 1940s. The Communist Party of India Congress' declarations asserted that the basic aim of the Party in the forthcoming years would be to organize the toiling masses to struggle for anti-imperialist and agrarian revolution so as to establish a people's democratic state led by the working class.<sup>39</sup> In contrast to its earlier decisions, in the final analysis the Party had declared war on the Nehru government. As much as these discussions were the main focus of the Congress, the delegates also took some time to divide the Party into two constitutive parts, the Communist Party of India would confine its working to the boundaries of the Indian Union and the post-August 1947 separated territories of Pakistan would be free to form a different Communist Party.

During the Calcutta Conference, the report on Pakistan was presented by Bhowani Sen.<sup>40</sup> In his speech, Sen asserted that the programme and task for a democratic front for Pakistan was exactly similar to those for India. His Report, however, detailed some differences between the two states that needed to be taken into account to develop a revolutionary strategy. Sen acknowledged that the Communist Party was weak in the areas that were part of Pakistan due to the presence of feudalism and the weakness of the trade union and peasant movements. He also asserted that the Muslim League had an authoritarian hold on the country and along with the strong hold of religion among the Muslim masses the terrain of work for the Communist Party would be more difficult. To overcome these obstacles, therefore, there was an added urgency. Sen argued in his Report to build mass fronts that would bring proletariats, peasants and the urban middle classes on a democratic platform to expose the

<sup>39</sup> See FO 317/84237. Note prepared by Sir William Jenkins on P. C. Joshi. Public Records Office.

<sup>40</sup> Bhowani Sen was a major figure in the Bengal Communist Party, he was re-elected to the Central Committee during the 1948 Congress and was also elected to the Polit Bureau. He was considered to be one of B.T. Ranadive's chief lieutenants.

anti-people policies of the government and its feudal and bourgeois allies.<sup>41</sup>

After the Report on Pakistan was passed by the Party Congress, delegates from Pakistan met separately and convened the first Congress of the Communist Party of Pakistan. It accepted the Report on Pakistan with amendments and elected its first office bearers. Syed Sajjad Zaheer, who was a member of the central committee of the Communist Party of India, was elected general secretary, as he had opted to go to Pakistan. It was also decided that the East Bengal party would continue to be guided by the West Bengal Communist Party and would retain its link to the Communist Party of India. Hence, it was only the West Pakistan Party that would constitute an entirely separate entity.

Sajjad Zaheer belonged to a very prominent, educated and respected Muslim family from the United Provinces of the Owdh area. His father, Sir Syed Wazir Hasan, was once the Chief Justice in Owdh and his brother, Ali Zaheer, was the first Indian Ambassador to Indonesia after independence.<sup>42</sup> The family was close to the Nehrus and young Sajjad Zaheer, after completing his law degree at Oxford, had joined Jawaharlal Nehru's inner circle in Allahabad in 1936 while Nehru served as the President of the All India Congress Committee. After the Calcutta conference Sajjad Zaheer came to Pakistan as the leader of the nascent party. Zaheer had previously travelled to Pakistan in December 1947 as the Communist Party of India's central committee member to organize the remaining cadres in the newly-formed state, as less than 50 party members had been left in the whole of West Pakistan.<sup>43</sup>

Reports also indicate that during the years 1948–1951, when he managed the Communist Party in Pakistan, Zaheer was extremely critical of even the slightest deviation from Party policy (this of course

<sup>41</sup> See Report on Pakistan, Review of the Second Congress. pp. 757–761. Documents of the Communist Party of India. Vol. 5.

<sup>42</sup> See, Chief Event in Past History of Communist Party of Pakistan. Public Record Office, Do 35/2591. It goes to Zaheer's credit that he never used his family's influence and wealth for his personal gains. Even during moments of extreme financial burdens that the family faced during Zaheer's time in Pakistan and after his return to India in the mid-1950s, he seldom received (or asked for) assistance from his more well-off relatives. A glimpse of this relationship can be gauged from Zaheer's youngest daughter, Noor's memoirs. See Zaheer, Noor (2006). *Mere Hissie Ki Roshnai*, Karachi: Sanjha Publishers.

<sup>43</sup> Chief Event in Past History of Communist Party of Pakistan. Public Record Office, Do 35/2591.

is also the period of the radical turn within the Communist Party of India under B. T. Ranadive's, newly elected general secretary of the Party leadership). Zaheer's attitude towards Pakistan and the Muslim League reflected the radical line of the Communist Party of India which saw the need for the Muslim masses to be made conscious of their nationalistic and historic duty and to be wrenched away from their communally-minded feudal Muslim League leadership. Hence the militancy in his letters to Party comrades was represented often with dictatorial language, giving much importance to the dissemination of Party literature, opposition to the Muslim League leaders (he calls them 'downright scoundrels') and the building of an open political front linked to other progressive forces in the country.<sup>44</sup>

One of these fronts was to re-establish and re-organize the Progressive Writers Association. The Progressive Writers Association was one of the most influential literary movements in the decade that preceded the partition of British India. It was initially formed by a group of Indian students like Mulk Raj Anand and Sajjad Zaheer who were living in England during the 1930s. With annual gatherings, regional meetings and affiliated literary journals the movement attracted writers and intellectuals from almost all Indian languages. Its strength, however, lay among the Urdu-Hindi writers of that era. The first All India conference was held in Lucknow in 1936 and Munshi Prem Chand, one the greatest short story writers and a novelist of Hindi and Urdu, presided over the meeting. From its inception, the Progressive Writers Association was influenced by socialist and Marxist tendencies and soon after his return from Britain in 1935–1936, Sajjad Zaheer himself joined the Communist Party of India. Hence, although the Progressive Writers Association was open to all who broadly agreed with its manifesto—which called for a new literature that addressed progressive ideals and focused on the issues of poverty, deprivation and servitude of the Indian masses—it soon became closely aligned with the Communist Party of India.<sup>45</sup>

The All Pakistan Progressive Writers Association was a continuation of the All India Progressive Writers Association and closely affiliated

<sup>44</sup> Ali, Anwer M. (1952). *The Communist Party of West Pakistan in Action*. Lahore: Criminal Investigation Department, Government of Punjab, Pakistan.

<sup>45</sup> See, Coppola, Carlo (1974). The All India Progressive Writers' Association: The European Phase. In Carlo Coppola. *Marxist Influences and South Asian Literature*, Volume 1. pp. 1–34. Asian Studies Center, South Asia Series Occasional Papers. Michigan State University.



with the newly formed Communist Party of Pakistan and hence influenced by the Communist Party of India's radical line. Zaheer, himself a founding member and past president, was keen to push the role of intelligentsia in society. In his communiqués he asserted the need for writers to have a thorough mastery of Marxist ideology and insisted on study circles so that intellectuals and creative people, especially those linked to the Communist Party of Pakistan, could study the works of Marx, Lenin and Stalin as well as literature coming from the Soviet Union and progressive literature and journals from Europe and Britain. The writers were also encouraged to pen essays, articles and literary criticism for popular consumption to counter bourgeois and 'reactionary' ideologies that were being propagated then by, according to him, state and class enemies.<sup>46</sup>

By the late 1940s, the All Pakistan Progressive Writers Association had started to purge from its ranks those that did not completely tow the new party line. This became more evident after the introduction of the new manifesto which targeted 'non progressive' writers during the first Association conference held in Lahore in November 1949. During this conference the 'non progressive' intellectuals were severely criticized for their perceived political failings, alliance with the state machinery, sexual perversions and lack of social consciousness.<sup>47</sup> The manifesto clearly divided the Pakistani cultural scene into many factions and spoke positively of those intellectuals who raised their voices against the ruling class and struggled against oppression and for independence, peace and socialism. As well as being read at the conference, the manifesto was also published in the foremost literary journal affiliated with the progressives, *Sawera (Dawn)* and proclaimed that the writing of progressive intellectuals was embedded in the spirit of life and in their willingness to move the working class towards action.<sup>48</sup> In opposition to these intellectuals were the undemocratic groups who supported the status quo. The manifesto lumped the various writers: Islamists, nationalists and liberals (supporting 'art for art's sake') into the same basket and painted them as reactionaries. The published manifesto then turned towards those writers who used bourgeois psychology and Freudian parameters to understand society. These authors were rendered perverse, pornographic and decadent for their depiction of life through the lens of sexuality. They not

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> See, Malik, *The Marxist Literary Movement*

<sup>48</sup> Manshoor (Manifesto) (1950), *Sawera* # 7-8, pp. 24-31. Lahore.

only distorted people's experience, the manifesto asserted, but also disrespected love as a pure desire.<sup>49</sup>

### The Party line

In researching the body of work on the social history of the left and Communist movement of Pakistan's early years, it became evident that the arena of culture and intellectual creativity was of immense importance to the nascent party, the Communist Party of Pakistan and to Zaheer himself. Zaheer, an accomplished short-story writer and literary critic, did not produce much literary work during these early years in Pakistan, yet he was constantly writing for the Party newspapers and sending long letters to all Party committees. He also found time to read what was being written in the various literary journals and newspapers and would send individual comments and criticism to friends and foes alike. A person of immense energy, seriousness and dedication to his cause, Zaheer had an exchange of letters with the poet and short story writer Ahmad Nadeem Qasmi on an essay by Qasmi published in a local newspaper. The essay, entitled *Ihtijaj aur Ihtiat* (Protest and Prudence), was published in early 1948 in the Urdu daily, *Imroze*.<sup>50</sup>

After brief formal and courteous sentences of introduction (they had not yet met although were very familiar with each other's work and political stance) as would be expected from a man of his lineage from United Provinces *ashraf*, Zaheer then, in his characteristic polemical and forceful style as a communist leader plunged into a radical critique of Qasmi's essay. He acknowledged Qasmi's attack on the monied

<sup>49</sup> Ibid. It will take a longer article to unpack the puritanical bent in Progressive discourse of this era.

<sup>50</sup> The complete reference of the Imroz article is not available. While researching other documents, I found the translated exchange in Ali, Anwer. *Communist Party*. pp. 311–320. Corroboration of this exchange comes from Ahmad Nadeem Qasmi himself. In a much later article published at Zaheer's death in 1973, Qasmi speaks about corresponding with Zaheer on an identical topic (apparently letters went back and forth at least twice). He suggests that his letters to Zaheer and his to him were confiscated in police searches in 1951 and were evaluated by high officials of the police department. It seems that he may have been right as at least one set of the letters was reproduced in the CID internal documents that I have used to discuss this exchange. See Qasmi, Ahmad Nadeem (1973). Tawana or Ba Sha'ur Adabi Tehreek Ka Rahnuma. *Weekly Hayat*, New Delhi, Sajjad Zaheer Number November 11. Reprinted in, Ahmad, Syed Jaffar (ed.) (2005), *Sajjad Zaheer Shakhshiat Aur Afkar*, Karachi: Maktaba Danial pp. 176–179.

class, but then attacked him for saying that Islam had brought about a social and economic revolution. He claimed: 'History, however, belies that Islam brought about social or economic justice. Even [in] the so called economic justice established by Islam, a group of human beings continued to be exploited and oppressed'.<sup>51</sup> He then proceeded to detail the history of the ancient world from 'primitive' communism to the Greeks and Romans and then to the advent of Islam, arguing that once society was divided into classes its productivity was due to the institution of slavery. Zaheer pointed out that, as Muslim conquests of other lands continued in the early years of Islam's expansion, monarchy was established and questioning of the social order was not tolerated. Islam, according to him, was not able to eradicate the class system and hence it cannot be a complete system as society is always changing. Zaheer, in his exposition against early Islam uses the example of the third Caliph Usman, who he accused of banishing a companion of the prophet, Abuzar Ghaffari, who had egalitarian ideals, and his campaign against the Kharijees, a group that Zaheer linked with class struggle.

Following the classical Marxist argument on the stages of history, Zaheer marked the contemporary period as that of industrialization, capitalism and imperialism. Logically in this teleological schema the next stage would be communism (via socialism). He admonished Qasmi for pushing Islam into the argument as being some middle ground between communism and capitalism. He argued, by bringing in Islam we play into the hands of those who want to divert people's attention from the 'real struggle, the class struggle'. He then rhetorically raised the issue of loyalty towards Pakistan and dismissed the question by asserting that his and the Communist Party of Pakistan's loyalty cannot be to the Pakistan of Muslim League landlords and the vested interests who had sold the country to the British and the enemies of freedom and democracy. Rather, he insisted, his loyalty and the loyalty of every progressive intellectual, should be with the Pakistani masses who are the true inheritors of Indian Muslim culture. He cautioned against the conspiracy of the capitalist and the elite who use religion (Islam), nationality and language to disrupt the unity of the workers and peasants.

Finally, he strongly urged that, for intellectuals, it is not enough to show preference for social change or be sympathetic to the working

<sup>51</sup> Ali, Anwer, *Communist Party* pp. 311–320. Translation in the original.

class cause. Rather, he insisted that people need to join the struggle for a socialist transformation under the leadership of the Communist Party as it is the Party of the vanguard and only by attaching itself to this struggle that intellectuals can realize the development of literature, art and culture. Clearly, at least at this particular juncture of his political and literary career, Zaheer's teleological emphasis on a progressive history was in Benjaminian terms also linked to a history of redemption; a history that sought to conquer social processes through the inevitability of historical determinism and glorified certain working class struggles whilst never probing the creative multiplicity of the other social and cultural experiences.<sup>52</sup>

### The debate continues

Ahmad Nadeem Qasmi, the person who unfortunately was the focus of Zaheer's ire, came from a respectable, but not as influential, household in Punjab. Orphaned at a young age, he managed to get an education and worked for some years in low-paid jobs in Bahawalpur before abandoning everything to lead the unpredictable and economically burdensome life of a professional writer.<sup>53</sup> Qasmi became the first general secretary of the All Pakistan Progressive Writers Association and also editor of *Nuqush*, the foremost Progressive literary journal. He later edited *Imroz* and *The Pakistan Times*.

During the late 1940s, Qasmi, although not a member of the Party, was a dedicated worker on the cultural front and was in agreement with the new All Pakistan Progressive Writers Association manifesto in terms of its criticism of 'non-progressive' writers and intellectuals. Qasmi was, therefore, a fellow traveller, sympathizer and prominent member of the progressive writer's movement at this stage of his long and illustrious career as a man of letters. However, he had somewhat different views than Zaheer on the issue of Islam in political life. In his reply to Zaheer's admonishments, Qasmi graciously acknowledged the receipt of his first communication from Zaheer and assured him that the differences of opinion between them, which there surely were,

<sup>52</sup> I am borrowing here from Benjamin, Walter (1968). *Theses on the History of Philosophy*. In Hannah Arendt, *Illuminations*, New York: Schocken Books, pp. 253–264.

<sup>53</sup> For a short autobiographical sketch, Qasmi, Ahmad Nadeem (1946) 1969. *Jalal-o-Jamal*. Lahore Altahrir Press, second edition.

might be removed if they got to meet one another. However, Qasmi maintained that Islam and communism complement each other and, if they were intelligently interpreted, social justice would be established in the country. He agreed that slavery existed in early Islam, but this was not the true essence of Islam. Qasmi argued that the notion of a just society was abandoned as Islamic polity became wealthy due to the conquests of foreign lands and as monarchy became established. In this process those who opposed anti-democratic regimes were forcefully eliminated. Now the way forward was to reinstitute the practice of 'ijtihād' which should reflect the needs of the majority. In this sense Islam and communism were much closer than had previously been thought. If, Qasmi contended, Islam can help in the eradication of the class system and communism absorbs the spiritual and moral values of Islam then both can serve the same purpose: the betterment of human life. If communism stood for economic welfare, then such a system could only become better if a moral code was also attached to it. Islam, according to Qasmi, provided such a code. He agreed that communism would sound the death knell of official Islam in Pakistan, the Islam of the Central Government of Pakistan, but not of the true Islam that he was talking about. He warned, however, that the communist workers should not criticize the true principles of Islam as this would hinder them from coming closer to the masses. They should rather propagate the similarities and make people see that the moral arguments of Islam and communism are the same. Qasmi agreed with Zaheer in reasserting his loyalty to the Pakistan of the masses, rather than those of the capitalists and the landlords. He affirmed his commitment to collective action and asked Zaheer, despite their differences, to instruct him in matters of future political action.

Qasmi, as mentioned above, had a very different political history and trajectory from Zaheer. His training had not been within the milieu of the Party cadres who had come from India and who had served with the Party leadership during the 1940s. In this regard he was also less influenced by the radical shift in the policies of the Communist Party of India that were directly influencing the more combative and insurrectionary mode of communist politics on both sides of the border. Qasmi was a product of small town Punjab and sought a more organic link with the culture, tradition and beliefs of the people themselves. Within the parameters of such concerns, the issue of Islam was hence understood more as a cultural question that had to be respected if political work was to be accomplished within the masses.

This in particular differentiated the social understanding of people like Qasmi and those who were at the helm of the Communist Party of Pakistan. Many of those who formed the top leadership in the newly constituted party had come from India. Indeed the Party's Political Bureau in late 1948 consisted of Sajjad Zaheer, Sibte Hasan and Ashfaq Baig, all highly educated men from North Indian *ashraf* background. They were sent by the Communist Party of India leadership to take charge of the communist movement in Pakistan, where they had minimum cultural or social understanding of or political experience among the working masses.<sup>54</sup> In a way Qasmi's critique was a broader one that eventually led to many, including Qasmi himself, becoming dissatisfied with the Communist Party of Pakistan's hard line politics (under the direction of the Communist Party of India's militant position). For example, some Punjab-based communists like Fazal Elahi Qurban, and also the Sikh communist Teja Sing Swatantar who had worked for the Muslim League during the 1946 elections, took a strong stand against the central leadership of the Communist Party of India about their change of position on the Pakistan question. The contradictions in the Party position which, although on the one hand sent Zaheer to Pakistan yet on the other considered the Muslim League and its demand for Pakistan as reactionary, were resisted by Qurban and his colleagues in their discussions with Ajoy Ghosh, who was the central Communist Party of India leader in charge for Punjab. When the central party leadership did not pay heed to their arguments, Qurban and Swatantar along with their colleagues decided to form an independent Pakistan Communist Party in June 1947, based on the old thesis of national self determination of the Muslim populace.<sup>55</sup> The Communist Party of Pakistan thus was perceived as insensitive to the historical moment that the partition of British India had provided the Muslims of South Asia with the creation of Pakistan. In its analysis, the Party could only explain this phenomena as a historical mistake and reconcile to it as an interim phase, albeit a way-station, that needed to be passed to arrive at real 'emancipation'. This tendency within the Communist Party of Pakistan eventually led to severe critique from other writers

<sup>54</sup> See Leghari. *Socialist Movement*, pp. 47-73.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.* Zaheer after coming to Pakistan expelled Qurban from the official Communist Party of Pakistan on charges of subordination. Teja Sing Swatantar had by then left for India.

and also became the form in which the state itself labelled the Party as 'anti-state'.

### **The Muslim question, another view**

The above discussion gives a glimpse of how the question of Muslim culture and civilization was being debated even among Leftist circles in the Pakistan of the late 1940s. Qasmi was not alone in his desire to reconcile Islamic history with egalitarian or democratic politics. Many others who were not as closely linked to the progressives also sought to think about the place of Islam in a future polity while distancing themselves from the Muslim League's propaganda machine.

Many 'non-progressive' intellectuals concentrated around the literary group, the Halqa Arbab-e-Zauq. Some had previously been close to the progressives<sup>56</sup> and others, while remaining close to the Halqa, had divergent views, eclectic literary taste and many times severe differences of opinion amongst themselves.<sup>57</sup> My bracketing them here together is not due to the fact that these individuals shared some intellectual or ideological agenda, rather, this group of intellectuals, who were periodically targeted by the progressives, coalesced together due to their appreciation of literature which did not have a 'specific' social and political agenda as that which the progressives pushed forward in alignment with the Communist Party of Pakistan.<sup>58</sup>

Among the non-progressives a major voice that seriously engaged with the question of Muslim culture was Mohammad Hasan Askari, whom Aamir Mufti<sup>59</sup> rightly proclaims as a magisterial intellect, a

<sup>56</sup> For example, Ahmad Ali and M.D. Taseer were founding members of the Progressive Writers Association at its inception in London in the mid-1930s. Akhtar Hussein Raipuri, Saadat Hasan Manto and even Hasan Askari had been close to the Association at one time or another.

<sup>57</sup> While the poets like N. M. Rashid and Miraji were closely aligned with the Halqa, people like Hasan Askari were at times fellow travellers and at others, critics. Another important intellectual figure of this era was M.D. Taseer, who was a founding member of the Progressive Writers' Association, but in the post-independence era became their severe critic. Hasan Askari, an opponent of the progressives, in the late 1940s wrote a scathing critique of Taseer's discussions of Pakistani culture. So, there were various kinds of tensions and alliances within a broad group of scholars who were not formally associated with the All Pakistan Progressive Writers Association. See Askari, Muhammad Hasan. (2000) *Majmu'a* (Collections). Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Press.

<sup>58</sup> It is clear that many among these intellectuals chose to speak for the state but several had other political affiliations; many were vehemently anti-communist.

<sup>59</sup> Mufti, Aamir. (2000). The Aura of Authenticity. *Social Text* 64, 18:3 pp 87-103.

polyglot of staggering erudition. Askari's is an important voice in the history of Urdu criticism. In his youth he had been close to the progressives as they were the dominant literary movement of the time. However, later, Askari along with others like the poet N. M. Rashid and even Miraji, became associated with the modernist movement, or that of the *jadidiyat*. This of course was not a movement in the conventional sense of the term, but a trend in literature that experimented with form through which experience could be channelled.<sup>60</sup>

In the immediate post-independence moment, Askari became one of the major critics of the progressives and derided them for being shallow and derivative. In a series of articles published in October and November 1948, Askari discussed how, after Pakistan's independence, Muslim intellectuals should think about culture and literature in this new land and look ahead towards an unprecedented and uncharted future.<sup>61</sup> A major thrust of his argument in these essays concerned the ways in which the writer/intellectual should understand and represent the material and non-material needs of the populace. This impulse to connect with the masses echoes the argument made by the progressives. However, in a subtle intervention Askari suggested that the mere advocacy of the economic needs of the people was not enough and people also had non-material and spiritual needs. He asserted that, unless the intellectual understands these demands, the masses will not come any closer. This, according to Askari, was the major and primary intellectual task. This spiritual need was linked in Askari's early writings to the creation of the Muslim homeland as a culmination of the Muslim nation's desire for freedom. He forcefully recognized the cumulative aspiration for a space where Muslims could think, live and create freely, devoid of censorship and surveillance and influenced by their own history and cultural heritage. Of course, his attempt to push this agenda, he complained, was being marred by the negative attitude of the Pakistani state against intellectual and creative production through various forms of censorship, propaganda and coercion. Askari argued that only in a society that was based

<sup>60</sup> See Farooqi, Mehr Afshan (2004). Towards a Prose of Ideas: An Introduction to the Critical Thought of Muhammad Hasan Askari. *Annual of Urdu Studies* pp. 175–190.

<sup>61</sup> Specifically see 'Pakistani Hakumat or Adeeb' (October 1948), 'Ta'qseem-e-Hind ke Ba'ad' (October 1948) and 'Pakistani Adeeb' (November 1948) all published in Askari, M. Hasan (2000). *Majmu'a*.



on social justice, economic progress and the defense of individual freedoms could arts and culture flourish.<sup>62</sup>

A major question that he raised was whether Muslims are a separate nation or a part of the larger Indian nation. He is somewhat ambivalent and his partial answer to this question is that Muslims have to create a sense of self-respect and confidence by generating creative work within the parameters of Muslim civilization. Askari's view of Muslim civilization and history, at least at this stage of his career, was based primarily on his reading of the Muslim presence in South Asia. Within this context, he was opposed to how the state was using Islam to subdue politicians and create consent. In contrast to government attempts to ban publications and curtail free speech, he advocated for a creative impulse and a sense of inquiry that would produce a new and creative culture in harmony with Muslim history and spiritual needs. While disagreeing with the government's censorship policies, he also openly attacked the Muslim communists (such as Sajjad Zaheer) who, according to him, negated or distorted the history of Muslim culture and society. In a nuanced paragraph full of irony and dripping with sarcasm<sup>63</sup> he argued that Muslim communists should not forget their own notion of selfhood, their own cultural history and democratic traditions. But, Askari stated, the communists could conceive of the people of Russia (meaning Soviet Union) as having continuous historical claims on their socialist principles, yet Muslim masses, according to the same Muslim communists, could not claim such traditions.<sup>64</sup> He challenged the communists and allied progressives to rethink the Muslim past in South Asia not only through

<sup>62</sup> Although a severe critic of the Progressives and Communists, Askari would also condemn the state for censoring progressive literature or banning journals associated with the All Pakistan Progressive Writers Association. As Intizar Hussain notes in his memoirs Askari maintained it as his right to criticize the Progressives, but was not willing to give the government this right. See Hussain, Intizar (1999), *Chiraghon Ka Duhan*. Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publishers. p. 48.

<sup>63</sup> In this same long paragraph he mentions meeting a prominent communist leader in Lahore. He describes him as a Maulvi (a religious leader, sheikh), who on mentioning the Muslim League became red in the face, his face became contorted and he resembled a man possessed. Sajjad Zaheer among friends was often called Maulana (another form of the same word Maulvi) and this description of the unnamed communist leader may be Askari's 'subtle' description of his meeting with Zaheer. See Askari. *Majmu'a*. p. 1132.

<sup>64</sup> This argument about the Soviet Union was used by other intellectuals who wanted to attack the Progressives and their commitment to the Soviet model. See, Taseer, M. D. (1949). *Ishtakiyat Pasando ka Nazaria –e-Ilm o Adab* (The Socialist Point of View on Learning and Literature). *Weekly Chattan*, 27 June.

the lens of Historical Materialism, but also through a critical and innovative attempt to see democratic and egalitarian practices even in ostensibly hierarchical moments in Muslim history. No culture, or for that matter, literature, he argued, could develop without a connection to its own roots, history and tradition. His main contention was that Muslim communists had lost faith in the ability to think independently and creatively for themselves. In a sharp phrase addressed to Muslim communists he asserted that, in pursuing progressivism, 'we as a people will vanish and only progress will remain'.<sup>65</sup>

However, even a person like Askari, coming from North Indian elite Muslim tradition, and an important voice in the history of Urdu criticism, maintained a very strong link with his pre-partition Indian cultural milieu. At least in the early period after Pakistan's independence, he clearly affirmed that all that he had learned was due to his Hindu teachers and that Urdu was not an exclusively Muslim language. But due to the newly formed Indian state's appropriation of Hindi as its national language (which was, of course, also contested within the Indian Union), Askari asserted that Muslims in Pakistan had to keep Urdu alive. In the late 1940s he remained against the overt Persian and Arabic influence on Urdu and took much pride in the Indianness of the language. His pluralistic and inclusive gestures, toward various South Asian influences on Urdu and related Muslim culture clearly separates him from the more avid proponents of Islamic cultural traditions and their drawing of cultural connections with the Middle East. His assertions, much like the Muslim supporters of the Indian National Congress (Azad and Madani) locate him within the larger South Asian cultural milieu, primarily within the North Indian *ashraf* tradition.

<sup>65</sup> Askari, M. Hasan. 2000. *Majmu'a*. pp. 1132–1133. Such attacks on the Progressives were also based on Askari's understanding of tradition as a key element in the development of new Urdu literature. In an essay on Askari's life and work, Meher Afshan Farooqi shows how the terms progressive (*taraqi*) and modernist/modernity (*jadidiyat*) are not connotatively very far apart. She argues that for the progressive writers the issue of form was not relevant and for most (there were always exceptions like the poet Faiz Ahmed Faiz) the desire was to break from the past, bringing in modern Western concerns to show the decadence and backwardness of Muslim society and relate literature to immediate political concerns. People like Askari wanted to retain a link with the more classical tradition of Urdu literature and then put it into a dialogue with Western influences. Hence the issue of relationship with Muslim history and Muslim past retained an important hold on Askari's formulations. See Farooqi, *Towards a Prose*.

This said, he was interested in establishing Urdu as the major language for South Asian Muslims. As a migrant from the United Provinces, his strong support for Urdu placed him in contrast to the emergent politics within Pakistan where other ethnic and linguistic groups had begun to challenge Urdu's dominance and its links with the culture of the Gangetic Valley. Mohammad Hasan Askari's intellectual trajectory took many twists and turns until his death in 1978. He remained eclectic in his intellectual tastes and by the 1970s had moved politically to a more narrowly defined Islamic oriented political position, perhaps also rejecting his more democratic and inclusive understanding of Muslim culture from a South Asian perspective. There is weight in Aamir Mufti's argument when he proclaims that such a turn helped Askari to conflate language, literature and religious identity, intellectual moves by him and others that enabled Urdu to officially 'prosper' in Pakistan. The process made Urdu shed its 'Indianness' and emerge as the language unique to South Asian Muslims.<sup>66</sup>

### **The Party under attack**

Intellectuals like Askari continued to question the materialist stand of communists like Zaheer. Askari claimed that although the progressives spoke of the people, yet they did not understand popular aspirations. For Askari, the creation of Pakistan was the culmination of the struggle of ordinary South Asian Muslims. Although many lost their lives and homes in the process, people were content that they had finally reached their historical destination. In contrast, he argues that the progressives wrote about the incompleteness of the independence project and how this independence (and partition) was not the logical culmination of the struggle.<sup>67</sup> Although also critical of the Muslim League government, it is clear that Askari was committed to creating a Muslim national culture and sought to shape a future national imaginary that the State could eventually incorporate. This was in sharp contrast to the notion of a future promoted by Zaheer and the

<sup>66</sup> Mufti, *Secular*, p. 95.

<sup>67</sup> Askari. Mussalman Adeeb p. 113 (see footnote 69 in this paper). Askari in his distinctive sarcastic mode here hints at Faiz Ahmed Faiz's famous poem, *Subh-e Azadi* (the Dawn of Independence). In this poem Faiz talks about how this Dawn was not the promised one and the destination was still far. Faiz received criticism from his progressive colleagues and from others for this major poem.

Communist Party of Pakistan, a position that, given Qasmi's response, was also not completely acceptable in progressive intellectual circles either.

Sensing communist ambivalence towards the creation of Pakistan, Askari and others<sup>68</sup> in the 'non-progressive camp' openly questioned their patriotism. Hostility towards the Muslim League pervaded the Communist Party of Pakistan leadership's political position, entrenched as they were within the larger argument of pre-independence nationalist ideals and the radical Party line. In various articles Askari hence accused them of favouring India on the Kashmir question and also for fomenting ethnic division by supporting the demand of the Bengali population for Bangla to be given the place of national language on a par with Urdu.<sup>69</sup>

Sajjad Zaheer was aware of these attacks and argued that the Communist Party of Pakistan's loyalty was not to the Pakistan of Muslim League landlords and their vested interests who, in his opinion, were British lackeys. The progressives constantly argued that their loyalties were with the masses, not with the state. Sardar Jafri<sup>70</sup>, a progressive poet, intellectual and party member, openly took up the challenge and, in turn, accused Askari of instigating a witch-hunt against the communists. According to Jafri people like Askari knew that the progressives would never proclaim their loyalty to the state

<sup>68</sup> Along with Askari, people like Mohammad Din Taseer, an eminent man of letters who was also one of the founders of the Progressive Writers Movement in the 1930s, had by the late 1940s become one of its major opponents. In a trenchant piece published in 1949, Taseer clearly states that although all progressives are not socialists, and all progressives are not traitors, but all socialists are traitors to the cause of Pakistan. This is so, Taseer explains, because their loyalties are with Soviet Union or with India and they seek destruction of the new nation. See Taseer, M. D. (1949). *Adab mai Taraqi Pasandi aur Ishtrakiat* (Progressiveness and Socialist ideas in Literature). *Inquilab*, 28 May.

<sup>69</sup> See Askari, Muhammad Hasan, 2000 (1948). *Mussalman Adeeb aur Mussalman Qom* (Muslim Writers and Muslim Nation). In *Majmu'a* pp. 1111–1119. Lahore: Sang-Meel Press; 2000; *Mussalman aur Tarraqi Pasandi* (Muslims and Progressiveness), in Sheema Majid. *Muqallat Muhammad Hasan Askari*, pp. 58–63. Lahore: Ilm-o-Irfan Publishers. (First Published in weekly *Chattan*, September 1951). In the earlier published paper Askari directly attacked Sajjad Zaheer and quoted from his speech at a literary conference in which Zaheer openly advocated support for India's troops in Kashmir in 1948 to defend the democratic aspirations of the Kashmiri public against foreign aggression (meaning Pakistan); a position that continued to haunt the communists in later years as being anti-Pakistan.

<sup>70</sup> Sardar Jafri had initially moved to Pakistan and then moved back to India.

or the government, therefore it was easy to attack them as traitors so that they could be sent to prison or into exile.<sup>71</sup>

Indeed the Pakistani state may have found its own fodder in the pronouncements by people like Askari (and others) against the Communist Party of Pakistan. Within the first year of its existence the ruling elite of Pakistan became suspicious of any challenge to its authority. The Prime Minister, Liaquat Ali Khan, openly advocated the supremacy of one ruling party and derided those who opposed the Muslim League as traitors and enemy agents.<sup>72</sup> Very soon after its independence Pakistan also became a political stage for cold war politics. British and US intelligence agencies periodically worked closely with the higher echelons of the Pakistani state apparatus to help them in their efforts to curtail the real or imagined communist threat from within or across the border.<sup>73</sup> Public Safety Acts and other draconian measures from the colonial period were reinvigorated and used to arrest and harass party workers and sympathetic trade unionists. Important members of the Communist Party of Pakistan's central committee were periodically jailed and communist publications were routinely banned or confiscated. Even literary journals linked to the Progressive Writers Association, *Sawera*, *Adab e Latif* or *Nuqush*, were constantly asked to stop publication for disseminating anti-state literature. Furthermore, the state started to use Islam as a political weapon to counteract various democratic forces. Islamic doctrine was employed in the media to persuade people against the anti-religious (meaning anti-Islam) and, linked to it, anti-Pakistan political stance of the communists.<sup>74</sup> Public gatherings by communists were occasionally attacked and disrupted by mobs claiming Islamic tendencies or love for Pakistan.

Given these pressures and government surveillance, as secretary general of the Communist Party of Pakistan, Zaheer remained underground throughout his tenure until his arrest in February/March 1951 in connection with the Rawalpindi Conspiracy Case. In February/March 1951, the Pakistan Government brought charges of sedition and of plotting a military coup against certain leaders of

<sup>71</sup> Jafri, Ali Sardar (1957). *Taraqi Pasand Adab (Progressive Literature)*. Aligarh (India): Anjuman Taraqui-e-Urdu, pp. 204–205.

<sup>72</sup> McGrath, Allen (1996). *The Destruction of Pakistan's Democracy*. Karachi: Oxford University Press. pp. 65–68.

<sup>73</sup> See Communist and Communist Activities in Pakistan, 1949 FO 1110/210. Public Record Office, UK.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

its own military<sup>75</sup> and members of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Pakistan, Sajjad Zaheer and Mohammad Ata.<sup>76</sup> The poet and progressive intellectual, Faiz Ahmed Faiz (Faiz was never a card-carrying member of the Communist Party) was also accused of being a co-conspirator and was jailed along with the others. Whether this was a real conspiracy, or the Party was holding a tentative dialogue with some army officers, is a question that still makes rounds in intellectual circles. It is clear, however, that some members of the Communist Party of Pakistan (under Zaheer's advice), perhaps under pressure of becoming ineffective by perpetual government surveillance and attack, had discussions with a group of senior army officers who had grievances with the government, particularly regarding the Kashmir issue. Following the announcement of the conspiracy, there were widespread arrests and blanket clampdown on communist party activities. The entire process crippled the movement and demoralized cadres. The communist movement in Pakistan, nascent as it was, took years to recover from this suppression.<sup>77</sup>

<sup>75</sup> The conspiracy was exposed by the government on the eve of the first post-independence provincial elections in Pakistan (Punjab). Liaquat Ali Khan, the Prime Minister, was touring Punjab and his party was facing a stiff challenge from newly formed parties, the Jinnah Muslim League of Nawab of Mamdot and the Azad Party of Mian Iftikharuddin. There are indications that the announcement of a threat to the country was used as a cynical ploy to consolidate votes by the Muslim League leadership in its own favour. See *Dawn*, 10 March, 1951; and also see Inward Telegram to Commonwealth Relations Office from UK High Commissioner in Pakistan. FO-371-92866 (Public Records Office).

<sup>76</sup> Major General Akbar Khan, Chief of the General Staff of Pakistan Army, was deemed the leader of the coup attempt. His deputy in this alleged conspiracy was Brigadier M.A. Latif, who was a Brigade Commander at Quetta. Mrs Nasim Akbar Khan, daughter of a prominent female Muslim League politician, Begum Shahnawaz, was also accused of being a co-conspirator.

<sup>77</sup> Zaheer spent the next several years in jail and soon after his release in 1955 he went back to India. Tufail Abbas, who later became the secretary general of the Party in the late 1950s, among other criticisms addressed the Rawalpindi Conspiracy Case as a process that showed haste on the part of the leadership (personal interview). He argued that people were in a hurry to bring about the revolution and could not wait for the Party to develop its roots among the masses. Whether this is a serious analysis or not, it does seem that the Communist Party of Pakistan leadership in the early 1950s had decided to keep all options for capturing state power open. Similar views were expressed by Eric Cyprian, member of the Party's central committee at the time of the 'conspiracy', in his interview with Hasan Zaheer in 1995. See Zaheer, Hasan (1998). *The Rawalpindi Conspiracy Case 1951*. Karachi: Oxford University Press, especially Chapter 4. Also see, Inward Telegram to Commonwealth Relations Office from UK High Commissioner in Pakistan. FO-371-92866 (Public Records Office).

### Concluding thoughts

With the Communist Party of Pakistan's inception during the Calcutta Congress in 1948 its leadership positions were primarily held by Mohajirs (migrants from India). These were highly educated men who, in many cases, had university degrees from Europe and possessed previous experience of urban and cosmopolitan life. They arrived in a Pakistan where the majority of the population was rural, the level of industrialization was low and the labour was ethnically diverse and unorganized.<sup>78</sup> Given the Communist Party's (Communist Party of India and then Communist Party of Pakistan) narrative of cultural 'backwardness' among Muslims and the economic underdevelopment of Pakistan, it was obvious by its progressivist and somewhat developmentalist argument, as exemplified by Bhowani Sen's position on Pakistan, that there was much work to be done to educate and organize the citizens of the new land about their historical task towards 'true' liberation. To pursue this task the Communist Party of Pakistan's leadership primarily relied on the universalistic rhetoric of class solidarity and proletarian politics. Yet on the cultural front, rather than being sensitive to the linguistic and cultural diversity of the local population, in most cases the Party advocated the deployment of a 'progressive' culture that had its roots in the literary tradition and cultural sensibilities of a Northern Indian urban and *ashrafi* milieu.

It needs to be re-emphasized that in contrast to Ahmad Nadeem Qasmi, people like Mohammad Hasan Askari or Sajjad Zaheer, despite their political differences, had both come from the same cultural tradition of North Indian Urdu-speaking, respectable gentry: the *ashraf*. Although accused of favouring the rights of the Bangla language, Zaheer and others in the progressive movement continued to also think of Urdu as a national language that could eventually serve the purpose of a language of communication. It is also important to point out that, unlike others who pushed for Urdu's exclusive right to be the only national language (including Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan), the progressives were against the imposition of one language over the cultural and linguistic diversity of the land. This was an old position that linked them back to the earlier assertion

<sup>78</sup> Pakistan in 1947 had an estimated industrial workforce of about 480,000 within a total population of 75 millions in both wings. See Amjad, Ali. (2001). *Labour Legislation and Trade Unionism in India and Pakistan*. Karachi: Oxford University Press, p. 67.

of national self-determination as proclaimed in the Adhikari report. Yet in putting forward the argument for Urdu as the language of communication the communists, during this period at least, thought that rather than impose Urdu on the population, conditions had to be created that different linguistic groups would by consensus agree to accept it as a common language of interaction among the various provinces. This was indeed a more democratic resolution of the language question, and a partial acknowledgement of cultural diversity within the populace that was taking shape in the Pakistan of the late 1940s.

Yet many progressives were, very much like Askari, also steeped in the cultural traditions of the North Indian Urdu-Hindi belt.<sup>79</sup> They were sympathetic to the idea that eventually people would gravitate towards accepting Urdu not only as the major national language of communication but also of national unity.<sup>80</sup> Their arguments were almost exclusively for Urdu to attain its eventual pivotal place in national culture, not for any other major language.<sup>81</sup> In addition, as much as the Communist Party of Pakistan showed its solidarity with the Bangla question and the linguistic rights of the various people's

<sup>79</sup> This is not to say that the intellectual elite in Pakistan Punjab, where the medium of instruction had been in Urdu since the late nineteenth century, did not itself have an investment in making Urdu the national language.

<sup>80</sup> See Jafri, *Taraqi Pasand*, p. 207. In Pakistan, progressives constantly argued for the supremacy of Urdu in relation to English that had gained currency in government circles in the process sidelining Urdu as the national language Masroor, Hajra (1949). *Tulu*. Nuqush #9, p. 3.

<sup>81</sup> There is not enough space to discuss in detail the ambiguities of the Communist Party of Pakistan's position on the language question; perhaps the leadership was not clear itself. There is a hint, however, in their formulations of how Urdu would eventually acquire a more dominant relationship *vis-a-vis* other language or national groups. Here we are reminded of how the Soviet Union, after a vigorous Nationality Policy in the immediate 1917 period, reflected partially in the Adhikari Report, had by the 1940s started the process of Russification where Russian had become the Soviet lingua franca. All through the post-revolutionary period, Russian language and the Russian territories had remained unmarked and without a particular nationalistic claim as they were considered to be the most culturally advanced, modern and urbanized group and hence beyond nationalistic traces. While other ethnicities, whether Ukrainian or Uzbek, due to their social backwardness needed to be brought forward through the Soviet policy of promoting their languages and national culture. Within this context, more research needs to be conducted on how Urdu and its related cultural forms were considered by the Party to be the unmarked category (the advanced, the urban) of Pakistani cultural politics. For an excellent discussion on the USSR's nationality policy see, Slezkine, Yuri. (1994). The USSR as a Communal Apartment, or How the Socialist State Promoted Ethnic Particularism. *Slavic Review* 53(2): 414-452.



of Pakistan, it remained hostile, at least in this early phase of its existence, towards the emergent nationalist leadership of various linguistic groups, whether Pashtun, Baluch, Sindhi or Bengali. It deemed nationalist leaders as belonging to elite classes and hence did not recognize them as class allies in the struggle for 'real' emancipation.<sup>82</sup> These political tendencies eventually culminated in the 1950s and later in movements for provincial autonomy and language rights against the centralizing state.<sup>83</sup>

Further, discussions with the disaffected military leaders which became the basis of the Rawalpindi Conspiracy Case, howsoever tentative, exposed the political stance of the Communist Party of Pakistan's leadership; a party position that may have thought of relying on the military to bring about social change from above. These discussions could themselves be interpreted as an elitist move by the Communist Party of Pakistan to shortcircuit a future popular revolution. This 'change from above' model was based on the Party's analysis of Pakistan's economic development—at its independence the country had inherited only nine per cent of the total industrial establishment of British India. It showed the Party leadership's understanding of 'Muslim masses', as mentioned above, of being socially backward due to religious influence and susceptible to manipulation by the Muslim League's politics. It may also be a sign of the non-rootedness of the Communist Party of Pakistan's immigrant (*mohajir*, Urdu-speaking) leadership that could not completely link itself with the cultural politics of the masses and commit itself to the task of building a popular movement from below.

To conclude, the arguments presented in this paper were between a group of intellectuals who were looking for answers in class

<sup>82</sup> See note by Eric Cyprian in Ali, Mian Anwer. *The Communist Party of West Pakistan*. pp. 246–249. Eric Cyprian was a senior member of the Party. In an internal Party document he argued that people like Ghaffar Khan or G. M. Syed, who were speaking for provincial rights against the centralizing state structures, were nothing but landlords and representative of the feudal classes who wanted to safeguard their own territorial political power. By the mid-1950s a banned and now underground Communist Party did eventually make alliances with these regional nationalist leaders and had a broader recognition of the nationalities question in Pakistan.

<sup>83</sup> For a somewhat detailed discussion of the Bengali question see Samad, Yunus (1995). *A Nation in Turmoil Nationalism and Ethnicity in Pakistan, 1937–1958*, New Delhi: Sage. Also see, Toor, Saadia (2005). A National Culture for Pakistan: The Political Economy of a Debate. *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* 6(3): 319–340. Baluchistan had also witnessed a growing movement for provincial autonomy and self-determination in the late 1940s and then again in the late 1950s culminating in an all-out insurgency in the early 1970s.

solidarity (as the communists did) or in the moral community of South Asian Muslims (as Askari and others did). Perhaps one appreciates the nuances and hesitations in Qasmi's position more when one realizes that in both instances, in Askari's advocacy of an emergent Muslim culture or Zaheer's push for class transformation (at times from above),<sup>84</sup> there were elements of universalizing discourses that were not always attentive to the multiplicity of social and cultural (linguistic diversity, rural majority) life in the new country. These arguments, although politically at odds with each other did, however, share a structural similarity of being in a relationship of hierarchy with the people of Pakistan themselves. They seem reminiscent of the discussion on jute millworkers in colonial Bengal by Dipesh Chakrabarty where he reads the relationship between the labour leadership and the workers within the then prevalent babu-coolie idiom. He shows how the Bengali left leadership remained entrenched in a paradox where they sought to radicalize the workers yet themselves were situated in a hierarchical relationship with the labouring poor.<sup>85</sup> This perspective is also similar to Ranajit Guha's analysis, as suggested in the introduction, of how an elite leadership sought to tame the particularities of a national populace in colonial India.<sup>86</sup>

Despite similarities, when the communists tried to present their vision of a future (secular) polity in intellectual circles or to the people through their various mass fronts and through trade union work—the communists controlled, Pakistan Trade Union Federation,

<sup>84</sup> This hierarchical distance between the Party leadership and the rank and file continued in Leftist politics. In an earlier paper, Ali, Kamran Asdar (2005). *Strength of the Street Meets the Strength of the State*, *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 37: 83–107, I show that in the 1972 labour movement in Karachi the trade unionists spoke of representing and leading the workers. Not unlike the state, the predominantly urban leadership sought to contain the chaotic potential that they saw in the workers. The majority of the non-Urdu-speaking workers were considered bodies that needed to be tamed and organized. They were seen as newly urban people who had yet to shed their tribal culture steeped in hierarchical social relations. For that matter they may have been conceived as peasants who could not represent themselves but needed to be educated into being a part of the trade union culture of discipline and constraint giving them a distance from their non-egalitarian past towards an egalitarian membership into a democratic process. In this process the trade union leaders, who were mostly Urdu-speaking and had come from India, always retained the onus of educating and guiding.

<sup>85</sup> Chakrabarty, Dipesh (1989). *Rethinking Working Class History*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

<sup>86</sup> Guha, 'Discipline and Mobilize'

Kisan Committee, Sind Hari Committee, Democratic Women's Association, Peace Committee, Democratic Student Federation, and other groups—they were very soon contained through severe persecution and state violence. Ironically, arguments made by people like Askari, who was not a supporter of state-sponsored ideology, were appropriated by the newly emergent Pakistani state as it sought to intimidate and eventually silence the communists. It may also have relied on these arguments to oppose the demands for cultural autonomy of the various peoples of Pakistan by officially promoting the universalized cultural tropes of common language (Urdu) or common religion (Islam) and when both failed, through military intervention<sup>87</sup>. In the final analysis, the historical certainty of the progressives and the cultural generative attempts of intellectuals like Askari notwithstanding, both sides were eager to create a 'new world' on the ashes of the old. How successful both attempts were in the face of the Pakistani state and its own agenda is a story that is still unfolding.

<sup>87</sup> See Gilmartin *Pakistan and South Asian History*, pp. 1090–1091.