

## **An Analysis of the Failure of Class Politics to Transcend Ethnopolitics in Sindh, Pakistan**

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### **Abstract**

*The question of nations and ethnicity has always been a matter of serious discussion among Marxist circles. Marxist groups are divided on the role of nationalism in the context of a socialist revolution. Several Marxists hold an absolute position, contending that a national struggle is unnecessary for a revolution and that national politics never serve Marxist goals. They believe that Marxism brings people together and unites them beyond borders and national identities. In contrast, some Marxists argue that nationalism is a fundamental and necessary component in class conflict. The left-wing parties of Sindh are influenced by Marxists, who argue that ethno-national politics, rather than class struggle, is the appropriate strategy to challenge oppression and domination in Sindh. These parties hope that ethno-national politics will develop and mature, ultimately uniting the masses against the feudal and capitalist classes. This paper demonstrates that the leftist parties joined mainstream ethno-national parties on the belief that they would use their resources and support to mobilize the masses in Sindh. However, the leftist parties ended up being used by the stronger parties to achieve their goals. Leftist parties eventually synchronized with ethno-national parties without roots in the population and failed to transcend ethno-national politics in Sindh.*

**Keywords:** ethnonationalism, left, politics, Marxism, Sindh.

### **Introduction**

Many political movements have been witnessed in Sindh, such as the *Khilafat* Movement, the *Hur* Movement, the Anti One-Unit Movement, the March 4, 1967 Movement, the Movement against Land Auction, and the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy (MRD). Leftists have been a part of most of these movements. The leftist parties, in the early years of Pakistan's independence, participated in ethno-national politics, with the expectation that these parties would ultimately utilize the ethnic and national issues to rally masses for the fight against feudalism and capitalism. However, we will demonstrate that the socialist parties could not emerge from ethno-politics and remained permanently stuck in it. Even on the ethno-national problems, the leftist parties could not attract substantial numbers of people, since there were larger ethnic parties with significant mass backing and organizational capabilities.

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Pakistani society is multi-ethnic and divided along linguistic lines. The idea of a 'nation' has been contested by several ethnic and religious groups over the decades. The politics of ethnicity hold a significant attraction for West Pakistan's regional leftists and nationalists. In West Pakistan, the issue of language was an essential element in creating an ethnic identity. Within different and competing ethnicities, Punjabis dominate while being the largest section of Pakistan's population. When Quaid Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah declared Urdu as the official language at Dhaka University in 1948, riots erupted in East Pakistan, demanding Bengali to be declared the national language (Jabeen et al., 2020, p. 108).

In Sindh, ethnic tensions between Sindhis and Muhajirs (Muhajirs are Muslim immigrants who migrated from India to Pakistan, after partition in 1947) have grown because of the language dispute. In 1972, under the government of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, riots broke out in Sindh in response to a bill declaring Sindhi to be the province's official language. The announcement of a quota system for Sindhi speakers in the civil service further intensified the ethnic strife between Sindhis and Muhajirs in Sindh. (Tahir, 2010, p. 282). After partition 1947, the ethnic politics in Sindh was centered around the One-Unit Scheme<sup>†</sup>. Understanding that ethnicity has more political appeal than any other grounds, nationalists and leftists formed the NAP<sup>‡</sup> in 1957 in both East and West Pakistan. Since the One-Unit Scheme was considered a highly sensitive issue to smaller ethnicities, the NAP had to challenge it. Khan explains that when Sindh's communists joined the NAP, ethno-nationalism took precedence over socialism. A country where linguistic and ethnic divide was so obvious, and eruption of several ethnic conflicts caused serious riots

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<sup>†</sup>Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), and Baluchistan were independent provinces in West Pakistan prior to the implementation of the One-Unit Scheme. In 1955, the One-Unit Scheme was implemented to combine all provinces into one. As a result of the One-Unit Scheme, the Punjabi ruling elite gained administrative authority and control over the resources of smaller provinces. The merging of four provinces under the One-Unit Scheme was resisted by nationalist and left-wing parties from smaller provinces (Tahir 2010, p. 60,287).

<sup>‡</sup> The NAP was founded in 1957 as a combination of several nationalist and communist groups in Pakistan. Several left-wing organizations and groups, such as the Communist Party, the Azad Pakistan Party, and Ganatantri Dal, were older parties than the NAP. The NAP attracted nationalists and socialists from all around Pakistan. The NAP was led by famous figures like, Mian Iftikhar Din, G. M. Syed, Abdul Wali Khan, Ghaus Bux Bizenjo, and Moulana Bashani. The NAP described itself as a socialist democratic party fighting for regional autonomy and democratic reforms (Hamyatuallah , 2015).

over the years. In this purview, it was a big challenge for leftist forces to overcome ethno-national politics aimed to Marxist goals (Khan, 2014, p. 267) . Likewise, Ali argues that the NAP was not a revolutionary party in any sense of term, and while it was right that Communists should work within if for a specific purpose, there was no justification at all for them doing so at cost of building their own independent organisation” (Ali, 1971, p. 82).

Numerous Marxists are divided on the question and role of nationalism in Marxism. Some writers have discussed the transitory status and role of nationalism within Marxism. One group of Marxists argue that nationalism plays no role in the class struggle. For example, Pringle argues that Marxists, including Marx himself, used the term "nation" ambiguously. This ambiguity arises from Marx's limited focus on national struggles, which he regarded as secondary to class struggle (Pringle, 1982, p. 22). Similarly, Szporluk points out that Engels always believed that the proletariat fight was fundamentally humanitarian and anti-nationalist. The class struggle would eliminate distinctions between nations and ethnicities (Szporluk, 1991, p. 44, 45). Connor claims that communists, for Marx, must live above nationalism. (Connor, 1984, p. 6, 7). Amin a Pakistani political researcher argues that nationalism was not Marx's primary concern since Marx's philosophy of struggle was global and international in nature. The international perspective of Marx and Engels culminates in their works; particularly in the Communist Manifesto, where they focus on the solidarity of the working people of all nations. Nationality for Marx and Engels is a peripheral fight, and the struggle of the proletariat is their primary preoccupation (Amin, 1987, p. 41). Saklani contends that Marxism and nationalism are philosophically irreconcilable because nationalism believes that human beings are divided by vertical cleavages, while Marxism divides human beings along economic lines (Saklani, 2009, p. 719).

The Communist Manifesto sees the initial fight of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie in terms of a national struggle. However, Marx and Engels predict that, at the advanced stage of struggle, there would be an all-out war between two exclusive classes (Marx & Engels, 1998, p. 39, 44) Saklani explains that the role of nationalism, while largely ignored in discussions about Marxism in western Europe, is central to Russian Marxism. Russian Marxists view a national struggle as an integral part of the revolution; for example, Vladimir Lenin supported countries' right to self-determination and claimed nationalism to be a transitional stage to internationalism (Saklani, 2009, p. 722). The left-wing parties of Sindh chose nationalism a way to Marxist goals. It is important to understand why the masses in Pakistan are sensitive to ethnic issues and problems and why ethnonational politics take precedence over class politics in Sindh.

### Methodology

This study employs a qualitative and inductive methodology to describe the conflicting trajectories of class politics and ethnonationalist politics within the context of Sindh. The investigation draws upon a range of primary and secondary sources, including books, journal articles, dissertations, newspaper essays, and online resources to comprehensively elucidate the intricacies of the subject matter.

### Research Questions

1. Why does ethnicity or nationality have so much political appeal?
2. Why did class politics melt into ethnonational politics?
3. Why did the left forces fail to overcome ethnic politics in Sindh?

### The Left and The One Unit Scheme

The loss of the Muslim League (ML) in East Pakistan's provincial elections-1954, served as a warning to the ML's leadership in West Pakistan. Punjab's ruling class was alerted by the United Front's decisive victory. A.K Fazul Haq a Bengali politician from the Krishak Sramik Party (KSP) formed the provincial government. Bengali politicians with support from smaller provinces amended the constitution and declared Bengali as a state language on par with Urdu in May 1954. Anticipating similar other actions, the central government introduced the One-Unit Scheme to neutralize the electoral weight of smaller provinces (Jaffrelot, 2015, p. 113).

### East Pakistan Provincial Assembly Elections, 1954

Muslim Parties	Seats	Non-Muslim Parties	Seats
United Front	223	Pakistan National Congress	24
Muslim League	10	Scheduled Castes Federation	27
Khilafat-i-Rabbani Party	01	United Front (minority)	10
Independent	03	Others	11
Total	237	Total	72
Grand Total	309		

(Mustafa, 2010, p. 118).

Prime Minister Muhammad Ali Bogra addressed the country through radio, announcing that his cabinet had combined all of West Pakistan's provinces into One-Unit, making East and West Pakistan two equal

provinces (ul Hassan & Gul, 2018). The government implemented the One-Unit Scheme, which resulted in the division of the country into East and West Pakistan, on October 14, 1955. As a result, Sindh, Baluchistan, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) would no longer have separate Provincial Assemblies and would instead come under the command of the Punjab province.

Sindh's nationalists and leftists challenged the move of the One-Unit Scheme, before its introduction in 1955. The nationalist and leftist organizations, such as Sindh Awami Mahaz (SAM) and the Sindh Hari Committee (SHC), organized protests against the One-Unit Move. On August 22, 1954, many parties gathered in Nawab Shah to mobilize the masses, attracting students, workers, and SHC members. The 'Sindh Day' was observed as a protest by the SHC and the SAM (Tahir, 2010, p. 347,348). The SAM and the SHC took charge of the situation and rallied the protesters of other provinces and formed the Anti One Unit Forum (AOUF) The AOUF merged six minor parties, including the SAM, the SHC, the Ustaman Gal of Kalat, the Wrore Pakhtun, the Khudai Khidmatgar, and the Azad Pakistan Party of West Pakistan (Mushtaq, 2015, p. 216).

These six parties, in which leftists had larger representation were poorly organized and badly funded and had no support of the masses. Leftist groups sought shelter inside the AOUF and took support from bigger parties such as the Pakistan National Party (PNP) and the (NAP). The One-Unit issue was then addressed via the NAP platform. Leftist groups hoped that the One-Unit politics would help them mobilize masses in Sindh. Nationalists and communists took a strong stand against the idea of bringing smaller ethnicities under the control of Punjab. The One-Unit Scheme allowed Punjab to have administrative power over other provinces, in relation to their resources and finances. Sindh's leadership envisioned a state deprived of its natural resources, income, and job opportunities. Palijo argues that exploitation in Pakistan has ethnic roots. Therefore, a class struggle would not be viable or successful in Sindh. Since Punjab's elite are seen as an exploitative class, why would the leftist parties not side with the weak ethno-national groups and parties against the strong ones? Marxism was thought to be, after all, a struggle against any oppression and exploitation (Palijo,2007, p. 205,206).

#### *The left and the NAP*

A presidential form of government under a new constitution was introduced in 1962. Ayub Khan established his political party, the Pakistan Muslim League (PML-Convention), and lifted the ban on political parties. When Ayub Khan lifted the ban in 1962, the ML was defunct. Two prominent ML leaders, notably Mumtaz Daultana and Sardar Abdul Qayyum, formed the Pakistan Muslim League (PML-Council) (Nadeem, 2017). On the other hand, the NAP revived its

campaigns for the restoration of provincial autonomy and the abolition of the One-Unit Scheme. The Communist Party of Pakistan (CPP) and its subordinate groups, the Karachi Committee (KC), were organized under Sobho Gianchandani and Sharaf Ali. In October 1964, the Hyderabad Students Federation (HSF) was established with nationalist and communist students; Jam Saqi and Yusuf Leghari<sup>§</sup> were the main leaders of the HSF. The HSF organized several demonstrations against Ayub Khan. In 1966, the HSF conducted an annual conference in Hyderabad, and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was invited as a Chief Guest. The demands included the dissolution of the One-Unit Scheme and the recognition of Sindhi as an official language in Sindh (Tahir, 2010, p. 523,524). Under the One-Unit Scheme, the University of Karachi did not allow Sindhi language to be used as a medium of response in examinations. Only Urdu and English were given official status in West Pakistan, and Bengali in East Pakistan. The NSF,<sup>\*\*</sup> which served as the KC chapter, criticized Karachi University's decision. Even Urdu speakers who were members of the NAP protested against the discriminatory treatment (Tahir, 2010, p. 393,469). The NSF was headed by leftists who took a position along ethnic line. The NAP demanded the re-evaluation of educational policy regarding concerns expressed by various ethnicities (Hamayatullah 2015, 152). Thus, leftists were side-stepped due to this alliance with different ideologies. NAP and other parties will exploit Pakistani communists without benefiting them. Most importantly, it does not allow the communists to build an autonomous foundation and renders them dependent on non-communist leaders for the future (Franda, 1970, p. 601).

The leftist struggle dealt a serious setback when the NAP splinted into two major factions: the pro-Moscow Abdul Wali Khan group and the pro-Beijing Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani group. The

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<sup>§</sup> Yousuf Leghari was a political activist, a columnist, and a lawyer. During Ayub Khan's military regime, he served as the president of the students' union at the University of Sindh. He was a pivotal player in Sindh's protest on March 4, 1967. He represented Jam Saqi in the Jam Saqi case during Zia's martial law. In the 1990s, he established his own Sindh Democratic Party. He also served as Advocate General of Sindh during the PPP government (Pathan, 2017).

<sup>\*\*</sup> The Democratic Students Federation (DSF) was revived by the National Students Federation (NSF) in 1950. Both belonged to Pakistan's communist party's student wings. The NSF played an important role in the resistance to Ayub Khan's military regime. In 1968, the NSF was extended to Pakistan's colleges and educational institutions. (DAWN, 2008, n.d.)

split of the NAP from 1964-65 significantly weakened the liberal democratic opposition to his regime. More importantly, it eliminated the potential for an independent Marxist opposition to Ayub's rule. Ayub's decision to foster friendly relations with China gave the pro-Peking Maoists within NAP a perfect opportunity to withdraw their opposition. Bhashani's political support of Ayub Khan's policies undermined the leftist struggle (TA, 1973, p. 2089). This episode demonstrates the Bhashani group's contradictory stance. On the one hand, they fought and spoke for the peasants and the socialist revolution. On the other side, they backed Ayub Khan's military rule. The Wali group continued its campaign against the One-Unit Scheme and other national issues. Regardless of the NAP's break-up, there was an outpouring of anger among the populace against Ayub Khan in East and West Pakistan. Numerous mass demonstrations, led primarily by students, took place. The military administration launched a massive crackdown on demonstrators, and several students were killed on November 7, 1968. The political and economic conditions were worsened in West and East Pakistan. On March 25, 1969, Ayub Khan resigned and handed over authority to army Chief General Yahya Khan (Jones & O'Donnell, 2012, p. 84,85).

#### *From NAP to Martial Law*

Although the leftist parties failed to assert their demands through the platform of the NAP, the NAP, nevertheless, created mass mobilization against the administration. The government took strong action against the opposition parties. In protest of the government action, 65 trade unions staged strikes in May and June 1958. Students joined the trade unions and expressed their support for strikes (Tahir, 2010, p. 426,428). The conflict between peasants and landowners supporting the government erupted in rural Sindh in May 1958. The police rounded up local *haris* (peasants), and their families, confiscated their crops, and arrested about 70 people at Lundo village of Sanghar district in Sindh (Ali, 1971, p. 83,84). Several events took place in 1958 that led to more political instability. There was the assassination of Khan Sahib (Khan Abdul Jabbar Khan, a former minister of communication and Chief Minister of West Pakistan, was known as Dr. Khan Sahib), political crisis in East Pakistan, a worker's strike in Karachi, and the demonstration by peasants in rural Sindh. On the other hand, the NAP's continuous protests created an alarming situation for the Pakistani government. Indeed, the NAP's campaigns were not the only reason for the coup. The government was deposed because it intended to abolish the governor general's authority in East Pakistan, as political instability extended across the nation. President Iskandar Mirza declared martial law on October 07, 1958 (Hamayatuallh 2015, p. 118).

Ayub Khan was appointed as Chief Martial Law Administrator, and Supreme Commander of the army. At the same time, Ayub Khan launched a massive crackdown on party members. Between 1958 and 1962, Ayub Khan outlawed all political parties and detained many leaders and workers of the NAP and the (KC), destroying party records in the process. The NAP opposed martial law and the harsh handling of party members by martial law officials; even the NAP's financial accounts were confiscated. Abdul Ghaffar Khan, G. M. Syed, Ishaq Kashmiri, Aziz Ahmad, Abdul Hamid Bhashani, Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din, C. R. Aslam, Arbab Sikandar Khan Khalil, Attaullah Mengal, Muhammad Ishaq, Abdus Samad Achakzai, Agha Abdul Karim of Kalat, Zafarullah Pasni, Mirza Muhammed Ibrahim were all arrested. Along with the NAP, activists of the KC were detained, most notably Hassan Nisar and Tufail Abbas (Hamayatuallh 2015).

Leftists took to the streets and demanded the release of political prisoners. Hyder Baksh Jatoi, a leader of the SHC, authored numerous booklets like *Injustice to Sindh*, *Let Us Save Pakistan*, *Democracy*, and *Dictatorship in Pakistan*, and *One-Unit and Democracy* (Solangi, 2007, n.d., p. 20). The NAP and the KC resumed their struggle against martial law. The SHC advocated the return of parliamentary democracy, which would benefit the feudal and bourgeoisie classes in Pakistan. We have seen how these classes advanced their interests through sponsorship, pressure, and intimidation. During general elections, peasants often vote for their feudal lords due to their economic dependence, despite the fact that feudal lords dominate governmental institutions. A call for the restoration of democracy under such circumstances is akin to supporting feudalism and capitalism. Marx was skeptical about democracy; he contended that democracy could only function in a socialist state, a society devoid of classes where no one owned the means of production privately (Doveton, 1994, p. 558).

Jatoi's desire for democracy was counterproductive as it would strengthen the feudal lords' hold on power. The leftist fight for democracy has two implications: on the one hand, the demand for democracy is incompatible with Marx's argument that democracy could only flourish in socialist settings; on the other hand, the ultimate benefactor would be the NAP's feudal elite, rather than left-wing parties. Consequently, the left-wing parties became instruments of the ethno-national politics of larger parties namely the NAP and the AOUP in Sindh.

#### *Ethnonational Politics Undercut the Left Politics*

Although there were many factions within the AOUP, each with distinct and competing objectives, the landed class was the most powerful. The peasants were represented by the SHC; it had the lowest



representation in the AOUF. Except the SHC, all leaders of other parties including G.M Syed and Ghulam Mustafa Bhurghari came from feudal background and power politics.

The SHC was doomed to fail because of the feudal class's control over the AOUF. The SHC was an anti-feudal party, but it decided to work with the feudal and nationalist groups for what they deemed larger interests: preventing Sindh from falling under Punjab's dominance. When the AOUF presented its charter of demands to the government, it did not mention any of the SHC's political demands. Despite no presentation of its demands, the SHC still endorsed the charter (Tahir, 2010, p. 363,377). Jatoi explained that the SCH was set up to challenge the feudal system and eradicate class division based on land holding (Jatoi, 2012, p. 34,38). The SHC deviated from its central objectives when it supported Sindh's feudal class against Punjab's landed aristocracy. The SHC expressly agreed on the following resolutions:

- I. To restore the autonomy of provinces.
- II. To constitute the provinces of West Pakistan on a linguistic and cultural basis.
- III. To secure the repeal of the One Unit Scheme.
- IV. To maintain Pakistan as a democratic federal state (Tahir, 2010, p. 376).

Indeed, these four demands were urgent and pressing, and the people of Sindh were attracted to parties that raised these issues. The problem was not that the SHC took part in ethno-national politics, but that it did not press other parties to recognize its own political existence. The party never asserted its demands of returning the land to the tiller and eradicating landlordism at large scale. The SHC always read exploitation in terms of ethnic dominance and never got rid of ethno-national politics. The SHC aligned itself with Sindh's feudal lords against Punjab even while knowing that peasants in Sindh were in a state of servitude and dependency due to the same aristocracy.

In addition, the political position of the SHC was compromised further when it became a part of a larger party, the NAP. The leftist party's goal of ending exploitation was not just contradictory to aligning with the exploitative forces, but it was also unviable because the ethno-national parties were dominated by powerful and landed families. A politically and institutionally weak party could not emerge from under the influence of these powerful groups and emerge unscathed as a party. The SHC had to compromise its radical and Marxist goals.

Leftists hoped that, because of the ethno-national politics in Sindh, their participation in AOUF and NAP would provide them an opportunity to develop their own party at the grassroots level. According to Leghari, they could only form a loose left-wing group within the NAP, lacking the authority to enforce discipline among its

members. The left within the NAP was inevitably weak due to the lack of strong central leadership and political bases in the revolutionary classes of society. Consequently, their political weakness forced them into a subordinate role in the united front with regional feudal leaders, who had strong local support bases (Leghari. 1979, n.d., p. 125). Ali conceded that "it was unfortunate that the CPP could not function successfully as a reformist organization, and doubly sad that there was no organized revolutionary cadre in West Pakistan" (Ali, 1971, p. 43). Both Leghari and Ali argue that it was clear from the start that the left could never emerge from ethno-national politics and become a revolutionary party at some point in the future. Eventually, after a few months of participation, leaders of the leftist parties expressed their reservations about the NAP's policies and its unaccommodating behavior towards smaller parties.

The SHC's collaboration with the feudal class undermined the communist narrative and their capacity to organize masses against feudal exploitation in Sindh. Indeed, why would the people take the anti-feudal stance of the SHC seriously? Because of its partnership with the feudal elite, the SHC was cut off from Sindh's peasantry. There is plenty of literature on the significance of peasantry in Marxism. The question of whether peasants have any role in a socialist struggle was debated by Marxists in general and Soviet Marxists in particular. According to Katz, Marx was convinced that a socialist revolution in a country with a sizable peasant population could not succeed without peasant backing (Katz, 1992, p. 63). More than 80 percent of Sindh's population in the 1950s were rural, and their main source of livelihood was agriculture income. More than 90 percent of the land was owned by a handful of feudal families in Sindh (Prakash, 2012, p. 1079). It shows that peasants were the largest segment of the population in Sindh. The SHC's focus on the rights of the peasantry was a politically wise strategy; however, they botched it up. Marx also believed that peasants could not be as strong as proletariats due to their invariable reliance on feudal lords. Peasants alone cannot bring about political change.

While peasants, in Marx's view, cannot initiate revolutions, they may provide support to revolutionary forces. In Pakistan, however, the revolutionary class did not exist, nor were the peasantry united; rather, they were divided along linguistic lines: Punjabis versus Sindhi peasants. Since Russia was not a capitalist country and had a sizeable peasantry, Lenin emphasizes that the proletariat's primary function was to unite and lead the peasantry. He was convinced that peasants would remain in disarray without leadership from above. Lenin extensively discusses the ways of using peasantry for socialist and revolutionary goals. He claims that peasants lacked the intrinsic proclivity for the socialist revolution that the working class in developed capitalist countries like Britain and France possessed.

Despite the lack of revolutionary spirit in the peasantry, Lenin contends that a revolution could not be successful without their support and role. He highlights the role of the peasantry in 1917, and explains that without the support of the peasants, the Bolsheviks would not have removed the monarchy (Meisner, 1971, p. 9).

It is worth noting that Marxist and Leninist views had significant impact on Sindh's left-wing parties. The SHC and their leadership appealed to Lenin and Marx's views during the anti-One Unit campaigns. Because of the SHC's narrow ethnic appeal, it could not establish a political association with the urban working class in Sindh, which was predominantly made up of non-Sindhis. The leftist parties across provinces could have developed a platform uniting all peasants irrespective of their ethnic identities; however, leftist parties' participation in parochial ethnic politics squandered this opportunity. Because of the rural and urban divide, left-wing parties only managed to rally masses in rural Sindh. Candland explores another dimension of left politics in urban areas. He demonstrates, in Pakistan, major trade union federations are associated with distinct ethnic or linguistic communities. This suggests that the ethnic, linguistic, and religious foundations of social power in the country have constrained the capacity of working-class movements to evolve into a broader national working-class consciousness (Candland, 2007, p. 37).

### Conclusion

The leftist politics of Sindh believed that winning in national politics would be the first step toward establishing a socialist society within the existing circumstances. However, the left-wing parties never advanced to the second stage, failing to transcend ethno-national politics, and squandering numerous opportunities to form a revolutionary party. The CPP's working relationships were more assertive with the working class of the urban centers, while SHC settled its goals around the liberation of the peasantry class of rural Sindh, this led to the rural and urban divide. It was clear from the start that leftist parties in Sindh while working under the AOUF and the NAP, were disconnected from the larger peasant population of Sindh. Leftist politics has gradually declined and has never escaped the influence of ethnicity and ethnonational politics in Sindh. The land of Sindh has remained aligned with ideologies of Islam, mysticism, and ethnonationalism, while leftist and Marxist politics occupy an invisible space within the political and social configuration of Sindh.

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