

# Worker, Peasant, Dravidian

## Anticaste Marxism in 1970s Punjab, Pakistan

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**ABSTRACT** This article introduces and analyzes the anticaste Marxist politics of the Dehaat Mazdoor Tanzeem (DMT, Agrarian Workers Organization) in 1970s Punjab, Pakistan. The DMT was a suborganization of the Mazdoor Kissan (Workers and Peasants) Party (MKP), a Maoist political party that focused on revolutionary organizing in the Pakistani countryside. The DMT drew on and combined Dravidianist theories of India's past, global Marxism, and regional histories of caste-based dispossession to articulate the rural landless and marginal caste Mussalli community as the revolutionary subject. In doing so, they offered the South Asian left a unique coconstitutive conceptualization of caste and class and transformed Marxism by grounding key global concepts like the peasant and the proletariat in the particular material conditions and *longue durée* of rural Punjab.

**KEYWORDS** caste, Punjab, Marxism, Pakistan, Maoism

Tareekh ka talib ilm hun. Mazloom tabqay ka fard honay ki haisiat se apnay tabqay ka numainda hun. Ye tabqa daravadon ki nasl se hai. Is ki tarjumani mera haq hai. Magar mein ne gayr jaanbadaar insaan ki haisiat se aj se chaar hazaar saal pehlay ki tareekh ka jaiza liya hai. Mera haq hai ke jo mehsoos karun likhoon. Qari ko is se ikhtilaaf ho sakta hai. Kyunke mein ne aik tabqay ki khatir apni raaye ko zyada ehmiat di hai. Lekin aisa koi moorakh nazar nahi aata jis ne asli aur haqaiq par mabni waqiyat likhay hon. In ki tehreeron mein in ki zaati aaraaz jagah jagah nazar aati hain. Tahum mein ne apni nasl ke wastay se baat ki hai magar ghalat bayani nahi ki.

I am a student of history. As someone who belongs to an oppressed class, I speak as a representative of my class. This class is derived from the Dravidian race. I have surveyed the history of the past four thousand years from a nonpartisan perspective—but it is my right to speak for this class. It is my right to write what I feel. The reader may object to this, because I have given importance to a particular class. . . . But what choice did I have, as I did not come across anyone foolish enough to write about actual events

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grounded in truth. Their writings are shot through with their personal motives. This is why I have chosen to speak from the perspective of my race, but I have not said anything that is false.

—Muhammad Ali Sajawal, June 6, 1977<sup>1</sup>

This prefatory note to a political pamphlet titled *Harappa Conference* captures the complex negotiation of caste histories and class consciousness within South Asian Marxism. The small, cyclostyled pamphlet was published by the Dehaat Mazdoor Tanzeem (DMT), which translates to “rural workers organization,” in 1977 in Punjab, Pakistan. The conference brought together left-wing political workers in Punjab, Pakistan, and convened at Harappa, a key archaeological site of the four-thousand-year-old Indus Valley settlements. This pamphlet, published thereafter, articulated the Marxist anticaste agenda of the DMT, who sought to organize the so-called untouchable Mussalli caste in 1970s rural Punjab. Most Mussallis were rural landless workers or *khet mazdoor*, and part of the *kammi* (menial) classes tied to local land-owning elites through feudal ties of patronage and capitalist relations of production.

In the note quoted above, the author addresses us as a racialized subject, affirming and centering knowledge rooted in historical experiences that stem from a Dravidian identity: “It is my right to write *what I feel*. . . . I have chosen to speak from the perspective of my race.”<sup>2</sup> Dravidianist theories of the origins of the Indian caste system drew heavily on the idea of an Aryan invasion to explain the suppression of historical Dravidians who were forced into *shudra* (lower-caste) and *atishudra* (untouchable) status. Although this framework has since been contested and largely discredited by historians of ancient India,<sup>3</sup> this narration of the history of caste as a race war became generalized as political common sense among so-called lower and untouchable communities in colonial India.<sup>4</sup> As subsequent sections of this article will detail, these pan-subcontinental theories of Dravidian history were crucial to the DMT’s intellectual project. At the same time, however, Sajawal also insists on reading this Dravidian history of dispossession through the Marxist vocabulary of “*tabqa*” (class),<sup>5</sup> emphasizing that he is speaking as a “representative of [his] class,” a “class . . . derived from the Dravidian race.” Sajawal combines categories that are typically distinct in Marxist frameworks, yet this juxtaposition of race and class is far from a muddling of concepts. Rather, it speaks to the DMT’s synthesis of Dravidianist theories of history with global Marxism. In pithy prose, the preface sets the stage for a reclamation of Mussalli identity that evokes shame and engenders stigma under upper-caste hegemony, thus recasting a subaltern caste figure as the subject of history.

The DMT was a unit within the Mazdoor Kissan (Workers and Peasants) Party (MKP), a Maoist political party founded in 1968. As part of its insurrectionist pro-

gram, the MKP trained its attention on the countryside to organize among the peasantry and dispossessed rural classes. The creation of the DMT in 1970 was an important step toward this revolutionary program. The party's most iconic struggle was waged far from Punjab in Hashtnagar in northwestern Pakistan, where cadres fought alongside peasants to liberate land from the local overlords.<sup>6</sup> However, a growing body of work has also highlighted the cultural and intellectual experiments inaugurated by Marxist intellectuals in Punjab and the Siraiki Wasaib region,<sup>7</sup> drawing attention to the MKP's reworking of Marxism to address language politics, literary resistance, and popular religion.<sup>8</sup> This article expands this inquiry, analyzing the DMT's elaboration of an anticaste Marxism embedded in the specific histories and local contexts defining postcolonial Pakistan.

As close readings of MKP-affiliated print ephemera reveal, the DMT put forth a theory of class as coconstitutively entwined with caste in 1970s rural Punjab. The party adapted Dravidianism to the Punjabi context to analyze the *longue durée* processes of primitive accumulation and capitalist exploitation that have dispossessed the marginal caste Mussalli. For the DMT, Dravidianism presented an indigenous philosophy of history that could, to draw on Fanon's phrasing, "stretch" global Marxism to address caste oppression in rural Punjab.<sup>9</sup> As this article will detail, the DMT's articulation of the Mussalli as revolutionary subject emphasized their Dravidian origins and historical dispossession in rural Punjab. For the DMT and MKP, the specific history of British-led canal colonization in twentieth-century Punjab followed by the so-called Green Revolutions of the postcolonial developmentalist state deepened what they understood as the historical "Aryan-Dravidian" divide, mapping its caste-class constitution onto the regional antagonism between the *jaangli* (indigenous) and *abadkar* (settler), as well as the landed and landless in rural Punjab. At the same time, the DMT and MKP valued regional tradition and local history as key resources for forging Mussalli cultures of resistance against casteist, landed power in rural Punjab.

Beginning by situating the DMT and MKP in their historical context in 1970s Pakistan, I will go on to discuss how the DMT mobilized the archaeological ruin of Harappa as a potent symbol for a revolutionary Mussalli identity. Harappa is the four-thousand-year-old seat of the pre-Vedic Indus Valley civilization, whose origins and history are shrouded in mystery as its language and script remain undeciphered to this day. Next, the article will elaborate and consider how the DMT theorized agrarian class through Dravidianist interpretations of caste and labor in rural Punjab. As communists, the DMT laid claim to an internationalist project of revolutionary transformation along the lines of Marxism-Leninism, even as they emphasized the historical and social specificity of Mussalli experiences of landlessness and dispossession. I will argue that in doing so, the DMT transformed Marxism, inscribing the particularity of Mussalli identity into the universality of class.

In the preface quoted at the outset, Sajawal deploys the North Indian word *nasl* to describe the Dravidian community to which he signals belonging. The choice of word is significant. According to John Thompson Platts's dictionary, the root word *nasl* is related to the act of "begetting" or "bringing forth." Platts lists a number of meanings attached to *nasl* in North Indian languages: *nasl* may refer to "offspring, progeny, lineage, pedigree, genealogy, descendants, descent, relationship, stock, breed, caste, family."<sup>10</sup> Relatedly, the phrase *nasl-dar-nasl*, which can be translated directly as "generation-to-generation," captures yet another use of *nasl* as genealogy. This use often describes practices transmitted in a tradition from one generation to the next within caste-defined, familial communities.<sup>11</sup> Introducing himself as a student of history, and as the "representative" (*numainda*) and interpreter or translator (*tarjuman*) of "a class derived from the Dravidian '*nasl*,'" Sajawal invokes this full range of significations to frame Dravidianism as a historiographical and intellectual tradition. Interpreted thus, *nasl* as biological race is expanded to invoke a Dravidian political community whose historical experience and cultural formations offer a unique perspective on history. Moreover, although the DMT focused its attention on the Mussalli, in the preface, Sajawal studiously avoids both the local specificity of "Mussalli" and the pan-South Asian legibility of *zaat/jati* (caste). Instead, he opts for *nasl*, which is also the word that is most commonly used to reference race in its global understanding. For example, the words for racism in Urdu (*nasl-parasti*) and Hindi (*naslvad*) employ the word as such. The word *nasl* thus shifts the scale of "the Mussalli question," as it were. By deploying the rubric of race via *nasl* rather than *zaat/jati*, Sajawal places caste in a comparative framework with global racial thought. As Shobana Shankar has argued, following independence from European colonization, writing and centering precolonial history became "a common priority" for African and Indian intellectuals, one that found Africans and Indians keenly interested in each other's pasts: "This necessarily meant grappling with caste and race as forms of difference in comparative, coexistent, and contrasting relationships."<sup>12</sup>

Here, Sajawal's comparative move—his imbrication and recasting of a racial rubric—globalizes the DMT's conceptualization of caste, allowing the DMT to make caste legible in 1970s Pakistan, a geography that does not feature in studies of Dravidianism in South Asia. Research on Dravidianism concentrates on India, where the non-Brahman movement has remained a key political force in the region since the 1920s.<sup>13</sup> In Punjab, Pakistan, on the other hand, Dravidianism never emerged as a political affiliation or a widely used category of identification by social movements or communities. This is largely because, as Ghazal Asif has argued, anticaste organizing was increasingly elided with a minority politics overdetermined by the Hindu-Muslim divide of the 1947 Partition in independent Pakistan. Led by the state, caste politics was increasingly folded into the discourse of religious minority,

such that “by 1950, the question of caste was increasingly illegible in Pakistan.”<sup>14</sup> This illegibility of caste in postcolonial Pakistan also explains the polemical tone of Sajawal’s preface, which is consciously addressing a non-Dravidian, non-Mussalli audience of readers who “may object,” who require engagement from a “representative” of the “Dravidian class.”<sup>15</sup> The eliding of caste was generalized within the Pakistani left as well, within whose ranks the politics of caste did not receive the attention it merited. This has indeed been true of the Indian left too. Thus, much like the Dalit Panthers and other anticaste Marxist organizations across the border, the DMT fought to establish caste as a key site for struggle. Moreover, although the DMT’s engagement with Dravidianism represents a marginal position, it also demonstrates the continuing circulation and resonance of Dravidianism in Punjab despite the divides of Partition and the Indo-Pak border.

### **Maoists and Mussallis: A Brief History of the DMT**

The DMT arose out of older organizations like the Anjuman Deendaran (the Deendar Association) and the Anjuman Muslim Sheikhaan (Muslim Sheikh Association), which began organizing Muslim marginal caste workers in rural Punjab during the 1940s. The DMT was founded in 1973 when the Anjuman Muslim Sheikhaan, under Agha Khan Sahotra, merged with the Mazdoor Kissan Party to create a new organization called the Dehaat Mazdoor Tanzeem.<sup>16</sup> The MKP emerged from the Sino-Soviet split, when pro-China communists broke from the National Awami Party (NAP), a left-wing, regional nationalist party with strong bases in Pakistan’s southwestern and northwestern regions of Balochistan and what is now Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa.<sup>17</sup> The NAP had become a stronghold for Pakistani communists after the Communist Party of Pakistan was officially banned in 1954.<sup>18</sup> A poet and intellectual from the Mussalli community, Sahotra went on to become the DMT’s president, playing a crucial role in shaping the party’s anticaste program. Sahotra was careful to stress the DMT’s autonomy and older trajectory in an interview,<sup>19</sup> emphasizing that the organization continued to work independently despite its merger with the MKP.<sup>20</sup> In fact, after the party effectively collapsed in 1977, the DMT continued to operate, eventually morphing into the Bonded Labour Liberation Front (BLLF).<sup>21</sup> The BLLF organized against the oppressive conditions of debt-bondage that trapped primarily Mussalli and other marginal caste subjects in rural Punjab.

Little is known about either the Anjuman Deendaran or Anjuman Muslim Sheikhaan, the older organizations from which the DMT emerged. Sahotra details how these 1940s anticaste association organized among the so-called untouchable landless and urban poor in the region. “Deendar” and “Muslim Sheikh,” like Mussalli, are marginal caste names. Deendar and Muslim Sheikh communities were primarily drawn from so-called untouchable converts who had either embraced

Christianity or become Ad-Dharmi in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. As it became clearer that the partition of Punjab along communal lines was imminent, more and more of these groups converted to Islam, taking on the caste names of Deendar and Muslim Sheikh. Semantically, these caste names signal belonging within a larger Muslim community, while simultaneously marking the stigma that continues to adhere to so-called untouchable converts to Christianity, Islam, and Sikhism. The word *deendar* literally translates to the “one who has faith” or “the one who is pious and observant,” and a *sheikh* is the chief or head of an Arab tribe or a leader. In the context of South Asia, *sheikh* is also a caste name adopted by different Muslim communities. “Muslim Sheikhs” in Punjab, however, are drawn almost exclusively from the so-called untouchable castes. Much like “mazhbi Sikhs” (which translates to “religious Sikhs”), “deendar” and “Muslim Sheikh” became community markers that reproduced the logic of untouchability in a specifically Muslim or Sikh context.

As part of their anticaste organizing, Anjuman Sheikhaan ran a newspaper and also fielded a candidate in the 1951 provincial elections.<sup>22</sup> Their campaign framed their candidate, Muhammad Buksh Sahotra, as a voice for rural marginal caste communities in the early years following independence. Sahotra contested the election against Muslim League’s Mian Mumtaz Daultana, a prominent ruling party politician from a powerful landed family in Punjab. Anjuman Muslim Sheikhaan’s election campaign, albeit unsuccessful, worked to sharpen focus on the class antagonism between the landed and the landless in rural Punjab. Thus, although the Anjuman Muslim Sheikhaan did not explicitly come into being as a labor organization, the rural, semiurban conditions in which it organized against caste discrimination in Punjab propelled it toward a politics that stressed the entanglement of caste oppression and labor exploitation. Their campaign also highlighted the contradictions in the Muslim League’s claim to have forged a Pakistani nation that served as a safe haven for all Indian Muslims.<sup>23</sup> Thus, studies of such movements operating in the early years following Pakistan’s creation can offer a rare and underexplored view into caste-based political organizing in a post-Partition landscape defined by mass-scale displacement.

In addition to the legacy of anticaste associations like the Anjuman Deendaraan and the Anjuman Sheikhaan, the DMT also echoed and extended the politics of the colonial-era Ad-Dharm (“originary faith”) movement. The movement’s founder, Mangoo Ram, rejected upper-caste religion and founded a separate faith for marginal castes in Punjab that drew on popular devotional figures like Ravidass.<sup>24</sup> Ram pointed out how “untouchables—whether professing to be Hindu, Muslim, or Christian . . . remained largely untouchable” for dominant castes, be they Jatt Sikhs or Syed Muslims.<sup>25</sup> In both Sikh and Muslim villages, lower castes still lived in separate areas, could not access the same wells for water, and were

exploited for their labor. MKP founder “Major” Ishaque Muhammad, a key intellectual for the DMT, excavates this history in his three-act play *Mussalli*. *Mussalli* was performed by DMT’s theater troupe, and it portrays the economic and social structures that govern landless and exploited *Mussalli* life in rural Punjab. As Muhammad notes in the play’s preface:

Saaday pindd vich choohreyaan da mahalla vakhra si . . . meinu changi tarha yaad hai ke je kadi koi choohra jajmaan aggay aakarda si te pindd de saray jutt rall ke choohreyaan de saray mahallay utay tunbay chaa ke dhaava bol dainday sann te munh kutaapa chaarhday sann . . . Ainaa hazaraan saalaan vich bahmanaan te ohna de jajmaanaan ne kisi “adharmi” chamar di ghalti di saza kinniyan chamar bastian te ohna vich vassan valay mard zananiyaan te bacheyaan nu agg vich saar ke ditti.

In our village, the Choohra community had a segregated neighborhood. . . . I remember very clearly that if a Choohra ever stood up to the *jajmaan*, the patron castes of the village, the Jatt boys would get together and launch an attack on the entire Choohra neighborhood in retaliation . . . for thousands of years, the Brahmans and their patron castes have continued the practice of punishing entire Chamar settlements for a “mistake” committed by a single *ad-dharmi*.<sup>26</sup>

Thus, although the so-called low castes had freed themselves from Brahmanical Hinduism in Punjab in theory, caste oppression continued to operate. To protest their exclusion and oppression, the Ad-Dharm movement galvanized traditions of anticaste poetry and intellectual production, popularized through the 1930s weekly newspaper *Adi Danka* as well as oral and performative practices. Thus, as early as the 1920s, anticaste radicalism in Punjab had developed print cultures and organizing practices that rejected Brahmanical Hinduism *and* upper-caste Islam and Sikhism in favor of a distinct political identity that emphasized land and labor relations.<sup>27</sup>

The mass popularity and organizational strength enjoyed by communist parties across 1960s Pakistan provided fertile ground for these regional genealogies of anticasteism to engage global Marxism in rural Punjab.<sup>28</sup> In particular, the Maoist ideology of the Mazdoor Kissan Party played a crucial role in galvanizing “insurgent elements in local traditions and epistemologies.”<sup>29</sup> The MKP began organizing during a tumultuous political period in Pakistan’s history during which issues of national culture and identity were being reterritorialized vis-à-vis the post-1972 borders of the nation-state. This period of crisis represented a moment of rupture in narratives of the nation across the political spectrum as statist intellectuals and dissident thinkers alike grappled with the foundational shifts unfolding in the terrain of culture and politics. Against this backdrop, the DMT’s experiments with

Dravidianist theories of caste offered an engagement with the local and the historically specific to reconstruct socialist politics in a reconstituted nation-state.

In the party's vision for organizing in Punjab, the development of rural insurgency had to go hand in hand with a cultural revolution, which itself needed to take direction and inspiration from Punjab's rural culture, from the practices and traditions of its most marginalized populations.<sup>30</sup> For example, Muhammad's play *Mussalli* also explores the intellectual and cultural resources available to the Mussalli for critiquing and ultimately overcoming these oppressive conditions. He writes in the preface to *Mussalli* that "the most important thing for us is that the Mussalli are the custodians of Punjab's popular culture."<sup>31</sup> Muhammad goes on to detail the rich potentialities of "Mussalli rehtal" (Mussalli life-worlds):<sup>32</sup>

Firstly, I thought they were always speaking in a free poetic form, but when needed they could play with words to maintain the flow. Waves of words flowed whatever the topic, ranging from the plough to love affairs. Secondly, the range of this language surprised me, these people who had been kept away from *patshaalas*, *madrassas* and schools and for whom words were kept out of reach. They had a full command of their own language. Sitting in their school I became convinced about the importance of Punjabi.<sup>33</sup>

As this excerpt shows, the MKP expanded a Marxist-inspired language politics, which challenged the colonial and elitist marginalization of regional language by conceptualizing its intersections with caste. The Mussalli's exclusion from institutional sites of education like "*patshaalas*, *madrassas* and schools" through both caste and class position situated them at the center of historical processes of linguistic and cultural dispossession. Yet, at the same time, the Mussalli is also identified as the obvious agent of linguistic and cultural recovery: "They had a *full command* of their *own* language."<sup>34</sup> This reconstructive role is made possible precisely by the Mussalli's marginalization within, and hence, critical distance from, official and dominant knowledge. Thus, the MKP's conceptualization of a Maoist program of cultural revolution in the Punjabi countryside emphasized learning from and elaborating Mussalli perspectives on vernacular language and culture.

In the political vocabulary of the DMT, the identification of Mussalli was given precedence over Deendar and Muslim Sheikh. This was not an arbitrary choice. As Muhammad points out, the DMT's choice to organize around the category of Mussalli was questioned by local members of the social group,<sup>35</sup> many of whom pointed out that the community had long ago adopted Muslim Sheikh as their preferred caste name. For them, Mussalli was a derogatory identification attached to the feudal, upper-caste rural order that subjected them to exploitation. However, as far as the DMT was concerned, "Muslim Sheikh" operated as little more than a palliative for papering over the oppressions of caste in Punjab.<sup>36</sup> Much like Ambedkar's rejec-

tion of Gandhi's patronizing christening of Dalits as "Harijan" (children of God), DMT intellectuals sought to reclaim Mussalli as a positive political identity, rejecting the pseudo-assimilation to Islam suggested by "Muslim Sheikh." Instead, they worked to transform the abjection associated with Mussalli origins into a revolutionary identity.

As Shozab Raza has argued, through engagements such as these, the MKP "energized several of its peasant revolutionaries to conjugate—that is, to further the universalist project of *mazdur kisan raj* [worker-peasant rule] by both connecting and transforming ideational elements within their own . . . specific contexts."<sup>37</sup> Raza shows how MKP-affiliated peasant revolutionaries engaged in the contexts of tribe and nation, specifically that of Balochiyat and Siraiki nationalism, to connect them with Marxism and to transform their parameters to transcend any particularism that could threaten the universalism of "worker-peasant rule."<sup>38</sup> Raza's framework offers a fruitful opening for thinking about the interface between global Marxism and regional traditions in the context of the MKP's organizing in southern Punjab. However, his claim that "owing to its Maoist inheritance, the party . . . encouraged the peasants it recruited to engage with their local traditions anew" risks reducing regional engagements with Marxism to 1970s MKP-led initiatives.<sup>39</sup> In fact, intellectual and political practices of forging what Raza refers to as a "locally legible communism" have a longer history in the region.<sup>40</sup> Long before the MKP's formation, the anticolonial internationalism and peasant radicalism of the Ghadar movement and the Kirti Kissan Party<sup>41</sup> in pre-Partition Punjab transformed Marxism from "a foreign, Western import" by connecting it with regional cultural and devotional traditions of political resistance.<sup>42</sup> For instance, Ad-Dharm founder Mangoo Ram was also a Ghadarite revolutionary who combined anticaste organizing with transnational anticolonial and communist-inspired politics for the liberation of India. Moreover, as the DMT's engagement with Dravidianism shows, the MKP mobilized an eclectic range of political concepts that drew on Maoism *alongside* pan-subcontinental theories of anticasteism to address the specific conditions of rural Punjab.

### **Building Mussalli Consciousness: Harappa as Anticaste Revolutionary Emblem**

Barre sagheer ke aj ke khet mazdoor (qadeem daravad) jin ko brahmin ne shudra, musalmanon ne mussalli, sikhon ne mazhbi, harijan aur achool banaya. daravad ki aal aulaad hain.

All the rural workers (historical Dravidians) in the Indian subcontinent today who were declared Shudra by the Brahman, Mussalli by the Muslims, "Eesae" by the English, Mazhbi by the Sikhs, and Harijan and Achool . . . are all descendants of Dravidians.<sup>43</sup>

Aao, harappay ke wariso . . . aagay barho. ham mehnat ke liay mashoor hain. lekin doosron ke liay mehnat karte rahay hain. aao aj apne liay mehnat karain.

Come, o heirs of Harappa! Forge ahead! We are known for our hard work. But we have been toiling for others. Come, let us work for ourselves today.<sup>44</sup>

The DMT drew on the anticaste concepts and narratives that cohered around Dravidianism to articulate a distinct identity and political history for the marginal caste landless worker in Punjab. The DMT's "Harappa Conference" pamphlet and other writing by the movement reproduce Dravidianist theories of the Indian past, narrating how the pre-Vedic settlement of Harappa, located in present-day central Punjab, Pakistan, was the site of an illustrious and prosperous Dravidian civilization that was decimated by the Aryans. This corpus details how Dravidians were "barred from entering human settlements," "denied sustenance," forced into "polluting tasks," "subjected to caste discrimination," and dispossessed of their land by Aryans and successive invading groups.<sup>45</sup> The DMT traces this theory of history to the Mussalli in the present, identifying them as the "heirs of Harappa," the "descendants of Dravidians" who must organize to reclaim their stolen land and labor in contemporary Pakistan. As the second quotation above shows, Harappa served as an important coordinate for spatializing these Dravidian pasts within the geography of contemporary Pakistan.

The site of Harappa, located smack in the center of present-day Punjab, Pakistan, is a Bronze Age archaeological site. Studies of ancient India suggest that the Harappan settlement emerged circa 2500 BCE along the Indus River and most likely stretched over a large expanse of North India, sprawling areas that constitute present-day Sindh, Gujrat, Punjab, and Haryana. Research and popular writing on the Harappans have highlighted the marked sophistication of their tools, artwork, drainage systems, trading practices, and belief systems, yet much more remains to be discovered as the possible script associated with Harappan artifacts has still not been deciphered. In postcolonial Pakistan, where dominant nationalist accounts emphasize the North Indian Islamic past, the Harappan site faces official neglect and national irrelevance. Although the state of government-led preservation of heritage sites is poor across the board, sites like Harappa, along with Hindu and Jain temples, Sikh gurdwaras, and Buddhist stupas, rank far below Mughal sites and historic mosques in terms of preservation priority. Meanwhile, contemporary monuments to the Pakistan movement and the nation's "founding fathers" stand in gaudy display of the nation's purported modernization and development. As pre-Islamic and pre-Vedic settlements, Harappa and other Indus Valley archaeological sites like Mohenjo-daro elude the neat communal division of the subcontinent's past along the Hindu/Muslim binary that structures dominant accounts of

the nation in South Asia. Harappa's unsettling and unresolved relationship to state narratives in both India and Pakistan thus presented a potent site for the DMT's excavation of a forgotten and repressed Mussalli past.

To mark their political emphasis on Mussalli specificity within a Marxist program for rural revolution, the DMT organized a major conference and mass rally at Harappa, near Sahiwal. The proceedings of this gathering were detailed in the *Harappa Conference* pamphlet in which Sajawal's preface, analyzed at the outset, is followed by an introductory note that reveals how the DMT mobilized Dravidianist interpretations of Harappan history for the political education of Mussalli cadres:

Harappa ke mutaliq tareekh ki kitabon mein buhat kuch kaha gaya hai. Khaas kar is qadeem shehr ke khandaraat se is ki tehzeeb aur tamaddun ka pata chalta hai aur ye bhi ke is ko abaad karne walay daravad thay. jo keh taqreeban aik hazaar saal tak shumaali hindustan par qaabiz rahay. is waqt ye batlaana maqsood hai keh is hazaar saala haakim qaum ke waris kon loag hain . . . ye mussalli (muslim sheikh) . . . is ko shaya karne ka maqсад jahan aam logon ko haqeeqat se roshnas karana hai wahan is daravad nasl ke qabail ko taareekhī haqaiq se bhi aagah karna hai ke ye mussalli (muslim sheikh) aik roshan aur taabnaak maazi ke waris hain. in ko ehsas e kamtari ko chorna chahiye, bahesiat insan ye kisi se kam nahi hain.

A lot has been said about Harappa in the books of history. These books tell us how rich its culture and civilization was, and that its founders were Dravidians. They ruled over North India for about a thousand years. It is pertinent to note at this point who the inheritors of this nation are . . . it is the Mussalli (Muslim Sheikh). . . . The aim behind publishing this [pamphlet] is to enlighten ordinary people about this reality, and to make tribes of this Dravidian race aware of the fact that the Mussalli (Muslim Sheikh) is the inheritor of an illustrious and glowing past. They should shed their feelings of inferiority. As humans, they are no less than anyone else.<sup>46</sup>

The pamphlet is directed toward DMT cadres and strives to develop a historical consciousness that can overcome the Mussalli's "ehsaas e kamtari"—in other words, the feelings of inferiority and shame associated with untouchability. In this account, Harappa is marked as a grand testament to a rich and distinct Mussalli past. As the founders and "creators" (*bananay walay*) of this ancient settlement that predate both Vedic and Islamic cultures in the subcontinent, the Mussalli are presented as the indigenous Dravidian "qaum" (nation) who stand dispossessed on either side of the 1947 border: "ab barre sagheer ke dono mumaalik pak o hind mein tabqaat aur darjaat ke lehaaz se daravad intehaee badtareen maqaam par hain" (Today, Dravidians occupy the worst possible position in terms of class and status in both India and Pakistan).

The forgotten site of Harappa is revived in service of a politics of “Mussalli pride,” in an assertion of Dravidian sovereignty that reclaims their historical ties to the land. Conference proceedings recorded in the pamphlet transcribe dozens of speeches by attendees that proclaim how “Hamain Harappa ko dekh kar aik naee manzil ki taraf chalnaay ka pukhta azm aur irada karne ka sabq mila hai” (The sight of Harappa has solidified our desire and resolve to chart a new future) and how “Aj aasaar e qadeema ko dekh kar hamare liay naya sooraj tulu hua hai” (these ancient ruins have dawned on us like a new sun).<sup>47</sup> Thus, in the DMT’s discourse, Harappa operated as a utopic past that could serve as a blueprint for a revolutionary future. DMT comrades described being overwhelmed with emotions: pride in their Dravidian roots, sorrow at the unbelievable history of suffering of their people, and enthusiasm for Harappa as a new center for organizing future struggle.<sup>48</sup> This emotive dimension of DMT’s Harappan revival demonstrates the importance of affect in forging revolutionary culture, and the role played by regional history and place in grounding collective emotion within political organizing.

This affective dimension and historical reconstruction of Harappa is routed into a Marxist program for socialist transformation by the DMT, anchoring a global conception of revolutionary class consciousness in local conditions. Via Harappa, Mussalli identity is deprovincialized and placed into conversation with global movements and vocabularies of revolutionary transformation. Through performances and speeches by DMT leaders, the Harappa Conference sought to establish a revolutionary comparativism between Harappa and popular movements in Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, and China, yoking “scientific socialism” and “class war” to the DMT’s struggle for landless Mussalli workers in rural Punjab.<sup>49</sup> As one DMT delegate declared at the conference:

Aj haalaat ka rukh badal chuka hai. Daravodon ki naee nasl muslim sheikh ke naujavan apni madad ap ke taabeh khud-etemadi par qaim ho chukay hain. aur inqilab ko amlan laanay ke liay beqarar hain . . . dunya mein zaalim aur mazloom ki jung shuru hai. Ham zaalimon ke khilaaf hain. aur mazloomon ke saathi hain. wo chahay pakistani ho ya falastini, ya europi bila rung o nasl ham mehnatkash mazloom ke saathi hain.

Times have changed. Muslim Sheikhs descended from Dravidians have organized themselves and are relying on no one but themselves. And they are restless to take part in the revolution. . . . The battle between the oppressor and the oppressed rages in the world. We are against the oppressor. We stand with the oppressed. Wherever they may be, in Pakistan or in Palestine, or in Europe, regardless of their color or race. We stand with the oppressed working masses.<sup>50</sup>

Similarly, Harappa is framed as another Vietnam, a connection drawn explicitly by Agha Sahotra in his concluding speech at the conference:

ham harappa ko dekh kar apne upar aur qadeem naslon ke upar honay walay zulm o sitam ka andaaza bhi nahi kar sakte . . . hamain aj tareekh ka ye qarza chukanay ke liay vietnamion se sabq hasil karna chahiye. Jinho ne zulm ke khilaf ho chi minh ki rehnumai mein baghavat ka surkh nishaan buland kiya.

Standing here looking upon the site of Harappa together, we cannot even fathom the depths of oppression we have faced, that our ancestors and previous generations have faced. . . . We must learn from the Vietnamese in our struggle to repay this debt of history, to those who mounted a radiant, glorious rebellion against oppression under their leader, Ho Chi Minh.<sup>51</sup>

Thus, the DMT's political project effectively internationalized an anticaste consciousness grounded in local conditions of labor exploitation and landlessness. In professing connection and solidarity with Palestine, Vietnam, and Europe alike, the organized, politically conscious Mussalli stands at the center of an identity that stretches across race and geography. In place of a top-down Eurocentric Marxism that locates Europe as the origin for ideas of freedom and revolution, an anticaste, locally embedded Marxism is centered as the starting point for a global vision for socialist transformation.

The act of visiting Harappa together as comrades and holding a political meeting at a site symbolic of Dravidian identity allowed the DMT to situate the Mussalli as the revolutionary vanguard of the struggle for socialism in Pakistan. For the DMT, the particularity of caste coconstitutively shaped the purported universality of class, synthesizing Dravidianist histories of dispossession and caste with global Marxism. The site of Harappa in particular came to represent a vision of a forgotten past that could reflect a liberated future for the Mussalli, and indeed for all dispossessed workers everywhere. Moreover, in engaging Dravidianism to theorize caste and class in 1970s Pakistan, the DMT drew conceptual and historical links between Dravidianist theories of Aryan-led dispossession with successive waves of indigenous expropriation under colonial and postcolonial developmentalist regimes in Punjab. As the next section will discuss in detail, Punjab's history of British-led canal colonization was central to this theorization.

### **Theorizing Caste and Class: DMT Readings of Canal Colonization and Dravidian Pasts**

As Neeladri Bhattacharya's masterful study details, the mainstay of the colonial "civilizing" mission became the "reclamation" of the bar regions for agricultural cultivation in Punjab: "In the Canal Colonies, over twenty lakh acres of grazing lands were taken over by the state, pastoralists were expropriated, agricultural

colonies were set up, canals were constructed, and blocks of land were granted to the ‘sturdy peasants’ of Central Punjab.”<sup>52</sup> Thus, Punjab was transformed from a pastoral landscape into a settler agrarian colony that was engineered to serve the revenue and production demands of the empire. Canal colonization expropriated indigenous pastoral and peasant groups, pushing millions off the land. The DMT emphasized this colonial history as formative to the exploitation and dispossession confronting the Mussalli in 1970s Punjab:

Pehle toh ham junglon mein rehtay thay. Bar ke ilaaqay mein. Bar mein toh kisi aik jagah rehna nahi hota. Baarish hui toh doosray ilaaqay mein chalay gaye. Phir jab angrez ayay toh unho ne junglaat kaat kar chakk banaye. Angrez sab logon ko zabardasti chakk mein rehne par majboor karte thay. mussallion ko toh bandh kar latay thay, magar jutton aur doosray logon ko bhi zabardasti chakk mein rehney par majboor karte thay . . . angrez ke anay se pehlay hamara samaaj aur qism ka tha . . . zameen kisi ki malkiat na thi . . . ye jin ko choorha, changad, chamar kehte hain wo sab yahan ke asal bashinday hain.

We used to live in the jungles, in the areas of the “bar.” We did not settle in any one area in the bar. If it rained, we would move elsewhere. But when the British came, they cut down the jungles and created “*chakks*,” new villages. The British forced everyone to live in these *chakks* against their will. Mussallis were physically tied up and carted off . . . but even Jatts and others were forced to live there. . . . Before the British came here, our society was organized very differently. The land did not belong to anyone. . . . These so-called Choohra, Changad, Chamar are the *original inhabitants* [of this land].<sup>53</sup>

Here Sahotra outlines how the itinerant, pastoralist lifestyle of the Mussalli was violently transformed by a colonial project of settlement and capitalist agricultural production. He identifies the caste-defined Mussalli as the “asal bashinday,” or the “real” and “original” and hence indigenous inhabitants of the land. Later in the interview, Sahotra explains that Punjab’s canal colonization “echoed settler histories elsewhere.”<sup>54</sup> In doing so, he draws a conceptual link between the Mussalli’s plight and the dispossession and cultural destruction effected by settler colonialism in territories like the Americas. Similar to Sajawal’s mobilization of global racial thought via *nasl*, as discussed earlier, Sahotra’s insistence on this comparison with “settler histories elsewhere” allows the DMT to synthesize a Dravidianist indigenous claim to land with a Marxist program for the liberation of rural labor.

Moreover, in the excerpted interview quoted above, Sahotra foregrounds the class and caste antagonisms that would emerge in postcanal colonization Punjab between the *abadkar* (settler) and the local, pejoratively termed *jaangli* (savage). The contradiction between the *abadkar* and the *jaangli*, who is in fact “the so-called Choohra, Changad, Chamar,”<sup>55</sup> was central to the DMT’s theorization of class and

caste in postcanal colonization rural Punjab. The DMT argued that national independence had done little to break down the *abadkar-jaangli* divide, regarding the 1947 Partition as a second wave of displacement and resettlement that disproportionately affected the Mussalli and other marginal caste groups. Rather than view the Partition as a necessary transfer of populations to consolidate Pakistani national identity and territory, the DMT argued that even though the Radcliffe Line claimed to have addressed the contradictions of communal identity in the region, it had done little to alleviate the historical dispossession of Mussalli and other *jaangli* communities. Further, the DMT emphasized how, “several generations later, the divide between settlers and local communities continues to stand.”<sup>56</sup> Thus, for the DMT, modern agrarian capitalism had failed to transform the feudal relations of production that reproduced caste difference and trapped the Mussalli in conditions of exploitation and oppression in Punjab. As outlined by Sahotra and his comrades, a Marxist program for political organizing must therefore engage caste as coconstitutive of rural class, centering a cultural politics that can forge a revolutionary consciousness rooted in regional histories particular to the Mussalli.

Alongside this entwining of the histories of modern colonial expropriation with theories of Dravidian dispossession, the DMT also emphasized an analysis of the ways in which postcolonial capitalist development had shifted the relations of production that bound Mussalli labor to conditions of exploitation. In the DMT’s analysis, the 1960s Green Revolution, which furnished the immediate context for the MKP’s mobilization in the countryside, further transformed the caste and class structure of rural landless labor. The “Green Revolution” refers to a spate of agrarian policies introduced by the developmentalist state that led to the deepening of capitalist relations in rural Punjab through increasing mechanization and technological intervention.<sup>57</sup> As the DMT argued, the Green Revolution tightened the grip of rural debt, landlessness, and labor exploitation on the Mussalli. At the same time, it also pushed other middle caste and class groups into landless rural worker status. This move toward depeasantization, and the swelling of the ranks of the rural landless, created the conditions for the DMT to articulate a revolutionary rural politics that centered the Mussalli. Their founding manifesto theorizes and contextualizes this intersection between caste and class in rural Punjab:

Is dauraan ham ne dekha ke hamari dukhon ki kashti mein muslim sheikhon ke ilava doosray loag bhi savaar hain jo sab ke sab socialism ke haami hain . . . ham ne ye bhi socha ke ham jo char hazaar saal se bezaatay chalay aa rahay hain, ab jab ke zaaton walay loag samaaj ki loot maar ki badolat bezaatay ho rahay hain aur hamari tarha khet mazdoor mill mazdoor bann rahay hain, in ko sath na lena apne upar zulm karna hai, apne maazi par thookna hai aur apne mustaqbil ko taareek karna hai.

We [Anjuman Muslim Sheikhaan] realized that Muslim Sheikhs were not traveling alone in this boat of sorrows, there were many others with us who were all proponents of socialism. . . . We also thought about how we have been outcastes for four thousand years, but now, due to the exploitation in our society, even those within the fold of caste are losing their caste and becoming landless workers like us. Not joining ranks with them would be an injustice, both to them and to ourselves. It is like spitting on our past, and casting shadows on our future.<sup>58</sup>

In this Marxist analysis, Sahotra makes reference to the inexorable march of capitalism that accompanied the deepening proletarianization across rural castes, noting that “even those within the fold of caste are losing their caste and becoming landless workers like us.” Here, he echoes Marxist conceptualizations of class that emphasize how capital affects the commodification of labor and distills disparate caste, ethnic, and racial identities into a universal working class. At the same time, his references to Dravidian temporality and history highlight the particularity of Mussalli experience. Sahotra emphasizes the four-thousand-year-old history of Mussalli dispossession and exploitation as a unique historical experience, one that does not allow caste to simply be collapsed into class. Instead, he spells out a vocabulary of solidarity under shared conditions of capitalist exploitation and agrarian dispossession: *they* are becoming like *us*, which is why we must “join ranks.”<sup>59</sup> While his analysis is squarely situated in the contemporary and leveled at modern capitalist agrarian society in 1970s Pakistan, he also has one foot planted firmly in the Mussalli’s ancient origins: “not joining ranks with them would be an injustice . . . *it is like spitting on our past.*”<sup>60</sup> Thus, a Mussalli inheritance of anticaste resistance is combined with contemporary conditions of class war in the DMT’s revolutionary program.

Given Sahotra’s emphasis on the universalizing capacity of capital, it may be tempting to read the DMT’s manifesto as a vulgar Marxist argument in which class trumped caste. It would not be surprising to encounter this formulation within the structures of a left party like the MKP, as this kind of class-reductionist view of caste remained the dominant position among the upper-caste leadership of twentieth-century communist parties in India and Pakistan. However, as the DMT’s praxis shows, this position was consistently contested by anticaste communists like Sahotra both within party structures and beyond. Much like the DMT, across the border, the Dalit Panthers presented an intersectional theory of caste and class, arguing that “the problem of Dalits . . . has become a broad problem. . . . He is untouchable . . . but he is also a worker, a landless labourer, and a proletarian. . . . Unless we strengthen this growing revolutionary unity of the many . . . our existence has no future. The dalit must accordingly accept the sections of masses, the other revolutionary forces as part of his own movement.”<sup>61</sup> In striking resonance with the Dalit Panthers, the DMT embraced a universalizing vision for socialist

transformation, even as it asserted the particularities of rural Punjab and centered a caste-defined subject. In doing so, they theorized a coconstitutive relationship between caste and class in a dialectic combining global communist struggle and regional traditions of resistance.

### **Transforming Marxism: Globalizing Caste, Particularizing Class**

The DMT's particular engagement with Dravidianism and Marxism took place in a context marked by charged debates within subcontinental and global communism on the modes of production, decolonization, and class structure in the postcolony. China's successful experiment with a peasant-led project of anti-imperialist communism inspired cadres and fueled internal debate, and across the Global South, Maoism recentered the peasant as the revolutionary subject and the rural as a privileged site for struggle. These movements advanced a polemic against Marxist analyses that insisted on the full development of industrial capitalism as the necessary material conditions in which the true revolutionary subject, the industrial proletariat, could take their place as the vanguard. As Maoist organizations, the DMT and MKP participated in these theoretical debates around the categories of the peasant and the proletarian, challenging Marxisms that privileged Europe in conceptualizing and organizing global revolution. Indeed, certain South Asian left and communist groups were themselves embroiled in espousing this brand of Eurocentric Marxism, which is why it would be inaccurate to refer to this polemic as a tension between "eastern" and "western" Marxisms. In particular, the elision of caste within sections of the South Asian left mirrored what Aimé Césaire described as the patronizing "fraternalism" of the French Communist Party, whose Marxism failed to address the singularity of the struggle against racism.<sup>62</sup> The Dalit Panthers, for instance, called attention to this critical failing in their manifesto, which identifies as friends "revolutionary parties set to break down the caste system *and* class rule [my emphasis]," while indicting "Left parties . . . that have ignored questions of a social revolution . . . [and] have not combined the class struggle with the struggle against untouchability."<sup>63</sup> In this analysis, caste, much like race in many liberal and influential left theories, is rendered as a superstructure, an "added irritant, as it were, to oppress particular subgroups and divide the working class."<sup>64</sup> Anticolonial and Black Marxisms espoused by the likes of Césaire and Cedric Robinson challenged these theorizations, politicizing the link between capitalism and racial domination and arguing that racism and colonialism were, in fact, constitutive of capitalism. Inspired by a similar drive to adapt Marxism as a tool of liberation for the landless Mussalli worker, the DMT offered a two-tiered theoretical and political intervention. First, on a subcontinental scale, they offered South Asian Marxism a unique theorization of caste that combined Dravidianist theories with material histories of modern colonial and postcolonial developmentalist dispos-

session. Second, on a global scale, the DMT joined people of color across contexts in pushing intersectional analyses of class within global Marxism. Thus, the DMT transformed key Marxist concepts, grounding pan-subcontinental and global universals like the Dravidian, the peasant, and the worker in the specific, regional histories of rural Punjab that produce the Mussalli. Centering caste histories and experiences particular to Punjab in a revolutionary program that was simultaneously Marxist, anti-imperialist, and internationalist, the DMT rejected readings of race and caste as narrow particularisms that threatened a universal Marxism.

Moreover, the DMT's politics offer new directions for expanding analyses of caste in Pakistan. The DMT's Dravidian-inspired, Harappa-centered anticasteism authored a counterhistory of the nation as constituted by the margins of caste and class. Elite and statist narratives of the nation have consistently sought to emphasize its Islamic roots, going to the extent of tracing the origins of Pakistan to the eighth-century arrival of Arab invaders in the coastal region of Sindh. In contrast, in the DMT's retelling of Pakistan's national past, the Mussalli was framed as the "original inhabitant" of the land, an indigenous subject whose dispossession was perpetuated across millennia through the structures of caste and colonialism.<sup>65</sup> The DMT's anticaste politics thus challenged the transhistorical myth of the Muslim nation that supposedly achieved its telos with the creation of Pakistan in 1947.

Studies of movements like the DMT can also help chart a path toward comparativist frameworks for caste in South Asia. DMT discourse extricated caste from analyses that singularly link it to Brahmanical Hinduism to place it in conversation with questions of political economy and regional history in a national context where the prevalence of Islam is assumed to have abolished the institution of caste. Although Dravidianism appears as a key strand within Dalit and marginal caste movements in post-1947 India,<sup>66</sup> interpretations and adaptations of the same in Pakistan's Muslim-majority context have remained conspicuous in their absence. Through close readings of the DMT's theory and practice, this article has aimed to challenge the "methodological nationalism" that frames studies of South Asia,<sup>67</sup> while also "reversing the scholarly tendency among South Asianists to make Pakistani cultural production ancillary to a focus on India."<sup>68</sup>

In summary, this article has introduced and analyzed the anticaste politics of the DMT in 1970s Punjab, Pakistan. The DMT's program in Punjab synthesized older, regional histories of anticasteism such as the Ad-Dharm movement, pan-subcontinental Dravidianist thought, and global Marxism. As close readings of DMT literature demonstrate, the convergence between these multiple traditions produced a unique theorization of caste and a regional adaptation of Marxism, such that caste and class were understood as mutually constituted. By centering and reinterpreting Dravidianist theories and colonial-era histories of dispossession and caste oppression, the DMT articulated an alternative revolutionary subject

in Punjab. At the same time, it globalized caste by inserting regional anticasteism into universalist conceptualizations of class. It is my hope that this excavation of an under-studied genealogy of anticasteism in Punjab, Pakistan, can be useful to contemporary movements and progressive political formations in South Asia for engaging revolutionary pasts as they work to build solidarities across state borders and in resistance to the exclusions of caste and class.

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#### **Notes**

1. *Harappa Conference*, 3. All translations that appear in this article are mine unless otherwise stated.
2. *Harappa Conference*, 3; my emphasis.
3. For more on the Aryan-Dravidian divide, see Thapar et al., *Which of Us Are Aryans?*
4. Rao, *Caste Question*, 17.
5. *Harappa Conference*, 3.
6. For an extensive study of the Hashtnagar struggle, and the MKP's organizing in northern Pakistan see Ali, *Hashtnagar Peasant Struggle*.
7. The Siraikei Wasaib refers to Siraikei-speaking areas of present southern Punjab where movements have strived to establish a distinct identity and province, separate from northern Punjab. For a study of Siraikei resistance poetry, see Langah, *Poetry as Resistance*.
8. See Raza, "Sufi and the Sickle"; Raza, "Conjugated Universalism"; Kalra and Butt, "If I Speak"; Kalra and Butt, "In One Hand a Pen"; Kazmi, "Marxist Punjabi Movement."
9. Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*, 5.
10. Platts, *Dictionary of Urdu, Classical Hindi, and English*, s.v. "nasl."
11. For example, musicians practicing forms like Indian classical or *qawwali* music articulate their intellectual, poetic, and musical genealogy by referring to *nasl* in this manner.
12. Shankar, "Black as Solidarity."
13. See, for instance, Geetha and Rajaturai, *Towards a Non-Brahmin Millenium*; Pandian, *Brahmin and Non-Brahmin*; Omvedt, *Cultural Revolt in a Colonial Society*.
14. Asif, "Jogendranath Mandal," 134.
15. *Harappa Conference*, 3.
16. *Mazdoor Kissan Party Circular*, "Haq Mussalli," 5. I am grateful to Noaman G. Ali for sharing his copy of this issue of *Mazdoor Kissan Party Circular* with me.
17. For an account of the rise of the National Awami Party in East Pakistan, see Uddin, "Kagmari Festival."
18. For more on the communist movement in Pakistan, see Asdar Ali, *Communism in Pakistan*.

19. Sahotra, "Dharti De Lal." I am grateful to Aamir Riaz for providing a copy of this rare and thought-provoking interview with Agha Khan Sahotra, which was published in *Awami Jamhoori Forum*.
20. Sahotra, "Dharti De Lal," 28.
21. See Nasir and Khan, "Indigenizing Marxism," for an analysis of poetry penned by DMT and Bonded Labour Liberation Front activists.
22. Sahotra, "Dharti De Lal," 31.
23. For more on contestations of the Muslim League's politics and the idea of Pakistan, see Qasmi and Robb, *Muslims against the Muslim League*.
24. For a detailed study of the Ad-Dharm movement, see Juergensmeyer, *Religious Rebels in the Punjab*. For more on Ravidass deras as institutional sites for Dalit assertion in Punjab, see Ram, "Ravidass Deras and Social Protest."
25. Gill, "Limits of Conversion," 9.
26. Muhammad, *Mussalli*, 5-7.
27. Hans, "Dalit Intellectual Poets of Punjab," 189.
28. In a similar move, across the border in Punjab, India, regional traditions of anticasteism synergized with Maoism during the Naxalbari movement. The Naxalbari movement produced two iconic anticaste poets, Lal Singh Dil and Sant Ram Udasi. For a Dravidianist critique of caste similar to the DMT's, see Dil's Punjabi poem "Shakti" ("Power"). For more on Udasi and Dil, see Dil, *Poet of the Revolution*; Udasi, *Jeevan Ate Samuchi Rachna*.
29. Raza, "Conjugated Universalism," 388.
30. Syed, "Punjabi Language." This chapter was originally published in 1970 as a pamphlet titled *Hamlets Will Hum Again*.
31. Muhammad, *Mussalli*, 15.
32. Muhammad, *Mussalli*, 15.
33. Ishaque Muhammad, quoted in Kalra and Butt, "In One Hand a Pen," 544.
34. Ishaque Muhammad, quoted in Kalra and Butt, "In One Hand a Pen," 544.
35. Muhammad, *Mussalli*, 42.
36. Muhammad, *Mussalli*, 24.
37. Raza, "Conjugated Universalism," 337.
38. Raza, "Conjugated Universalism," 337.
39. Raza, "Conjugated Universalism," 338.
40. Raza, "Conjugated Universalism," 338.
41. For more on the Ghadar Party and anticolonial radicalism in Punjab, see Ramnath, *Haj to Utopia*; Raza, *Revolutionary Past*. For a detailed account of the trajectory of communism in Punjab in this period, see Singh, *Communism in Punjab*.
42. Raza, "Conjugated Universalism," 338.
43. *Harappa Conference*, 51.
44. *Harappa Conference*, 20-21.
45. *Mazdoor Kissan Party Circular*, "Haq Mussalli," 5.
46. *Harappa Conference*, 6.
47. *Harappa Conference*, 47.
48. *Harappa Conference*, 58.
49. *Harappa Conference*, 61.
50. *Harappa Conference*, 48.
51. *Harappa Conference*, 62.

52. Bhattacharya, "Pastoralists in a Colonial World," 78. For more on canal colonization in Punjab, see Bhattacharya, *Great Agrarian Conquest*.
53. Sahotra, "Dharti De Lal," 28; my emphasis.
54. Sahotra, "Dharti De Lal," 28.
55. Sahotra, "Dharti De Lal," 28.
56. Muhammad, *Mussalli*, 13.
57. For more on the Green Revolution in Pakistan, see Hussain, "Green Revolution."
58. *Mazdoor Kissan Party Circular*, "Haq Mussalli," 5. For a translated excerpt from this manifesto, see Kazmi, "Mazdoor Kissan Party Circular."
59. *Mazdoor Kissan Party Circular*, "Haq Mussalli," 5.
60. *Mazdoor Kissan Party Circular*, "Haq Mussalli," 5.
61. Dalit Panthers, *Dalit Panthers Manifesto*, 5.
62. Césaire, "Letter to Maurice Thorez," 147.
63. Dalit Panthers, *Dalit Panthers Manifesto*, 7.
64. Kelley, "Why Black Marxism."
65. Sahotra, "Dharti De Lal," 28.
66. See, for instance, Geetha and Rajadurai, *Towards a Non-Brahmin Millennium*.
67. Kalra and Purewal, *Beyond Religion*, 5.
68. Kabir, "Hieroglyphs and Broken Links," 488.

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