Ethnicized Violence and the Postcolonial City

State and Grassroots Processes, Politics, and Outcomes for the Quetta Hazara

Framing & Methodology
- Products of colonialism: Racialized distribution of power and ethnicized political identities
- Ethnicized identities lead to ethnicized violence, which shapes the city for its residents
- Postcolonial urban scholarship focuses on formalities, violence, and crime – not ethnicized violence that may create these conditions
- Qualitative study of the state and people, focusing on the Quetta Hazara who face ethnic and religious violence

Ethnicized violence is a primary determinant of the urban experience, driving both state policy and grassroots organization in postcolonial Quetta

The Postcolonial State
- Administrative, political, and military structures virtually cloned from those of the colony
- Planning “due process” involves rational analysis, scientific involvement at several steps
- Realpolitik of planning involves influence and formalities
- Institutions struggle against one another for power within the system; military gains political and administrative influence amidst heightened insecurity

Grassroots & Insurgencies
- Rallying around death as lived experience – graveyards become public spaces
- Stories of violence and loss to build community solidarities
- Culture of political activism and disruptive protests
- Electoral politics is connected to the construction of the ethno-sectarian Hazara identity
- Competing narratives also shape local activism, fundraising, and community efforts through indirect support or direct control of community “boards” that supervise local organizations

Life as a Hazara
- City of violence: frequent attacks and loss of life
- City of barriers: physical and psychological barriers restrict access to the city outside of Hazara areas
- City of fears: “no-go areas” that include the city’s main “downtown”
- Built form: two Hazara settlements, one “safe route” connecting them
- Marriab: older settlement, densely built along the mountain slope, new construction is vertical and accessible through steps
- Hazara Town: newer settlement, flat, home to many Afghan Hazara refugees
- Both are physically walled with police and paramilitary pickets at entrance points
- Elaborate security arrangements and coordination for simple things like buying groceries

Legend
- Large-scale Suicide Bombings
- “No-Go” Areas
- “Safe Route”
- Cantonment Area
- Hazara Areas
- Government Offices

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