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# Waste intimacies:

## Caste and the unevenness of life in urban Pakistan

### ABSTRACT

In cities around the world, the removal of waste materials is a critical part of everyday life. Workers, both formal and informal, engage in intimate forms of labor that separate these materials from those who produce them. In Lahore, Pakistan, such waste intimacies are fraught by inequalities, which are discernible in affective, material, and spatial relations stretching across an uneven urban landscape. Waste work in urban Pakistan is a social relationship formed along the lines of caste, class, and religion; both municipal sanitation workers who are Christian and informal waste workers who are Muslim come from low- or noncaste backgrounds. Waste intimacies foreground those forms of work, relationships, and affects that, in distributing waste across individuals and social groups, reproduce a shared though unequal world. [*waste, work, labor, intimacy, caste, Pakistan, South Asia*]

دنیا بھر کے شہروں میں کچرے کی صفائی روزمرہ زندگی کا ضروری حصہ ہے۔ غیر رسمی اور پیشہ ورانہ دونوں قسم کے مزدور کچرے کو اس کے پیدہ کرنے والوں سے علیحدہ کرنے کیلئے بڑی قریبی نوعیت کی محنت کرتے ہیں۔ پاکستان کے شہر لاہور میں کچرے کے گرد بننے والے یہ تعلقات عدم مساوات سے معمور ہیں، جو شہر کے احساساتی، مادی، اور مقامیاتی روابط کے ناموار شہری منظر نامے سے عیاں ہوتی ہے۔ پاکستان کے شہری علاقوں میں کچرے کا کام ایک ایسا سماجی تعلق ہے جس کی تشکیل ذات، طبقاتی، اور مذہبی بنیادوں پر ہوتی ہے۔ میونسپل سینٹری ورکرز جو عموماً عیسائی ہیں اور غیر رسمی کچرہ اٹھانے والے جو کہ مسلمان ہیں، دونوں ہی کا تعلق نچلے یا بے ذات طبقے سے ہے۔ کچرے کی قربت ان روابط، کام کی اقسام، اور احساسات کو متعین کرتی ہے جو افراد اور سماجی گروہوں کے مابین کچرے کی تقسیم کی بنیاد پر ایک سانجھی مگر لامساوی دنیا کی افزائش کرتے ہیں۔ [کچرا، کام، محنت، قربت، ذات، پاکستان، جنوبی ایشیا]

**I**mran Ali is an informal waste worker who, along with relatives of his, collects waste materials from middle-class homes in several localities across Lahore, Pakistan. Late one morning in April 2015, I accompanied Imran Ali and another waste worker into a home where the two had been asked to collect some extra trash on the roof. We climbed three flights of stairs through the home but never saw the family—who remained on the first floor behind closed doors. As they saw us pass by, they asked whether I was with them and who I was exactly. Imran Ali told them, “He’s with us and writing a book.” We walked up a set of steep stairs to the second floor, which was vacant and littered with empty and half-filled soft drink bottles. Its paint was peeling off, and mold was growing on the walls. We then went onto the second-floor terrace and climbed another set of spiral staircases onto the roof, where several bricks were arranged with burned-out candles (*chirāgh*) and bottles of oil scattered about. While the other worker filled a netted sack with construction waste (*malbah*), Imran Ali gathered together empty bottles, crumpled paper, some leaves, and dirt strewn about the roof. We then went back downstairs, but before leaving the house, an older woman asked Imran Ali to wait, calling him son (*putr*) and handing him 200 Pakistani rupees (about US\$2 at the time) for the extra work. Back outside, in front of the house, the two of them stood on the side of the street, where they deposited the materials onto their donkey cart (*gadhā raiḥī*), being sure to put aside what could be sold.

Imran Ali’s work—gathering, carrying, sorting, disassembling, weighing, processing, and exchanging—separates a small fraction of Lahore’s 5,000 tons of daily waste from those who produce it while requiring others, especially waste workers, to grow quite close to those same discarded materials. In Lahore, those who grow close to those materials are sanitation workers employed by the municipality (who are almost entirely Christian) or waste workers from the informal sector (who are largely Muslim). Despite their differing religious affiliations, both groups of workers come from low- or noncaste backgrounds.<sup>1</sup> Separation from and proximity to waste are not simply a matter of physical distance in urban Pakistan; they are

fundamentally social, being entangled with caste-based identities. For instance, Imran Ali claimed his caste was “nau-Muslim Rajput.” Attaching “nau-Muslim” to Rajput, which is considered higher status, Imran Ali asserted descent from a Rajput Hindu lineage that had recently converted to Islam. Another worker, however, refuted his claim. “This is wrong,” he said. “No such people [*qaum*] exist. They are just *musali*.” *Musali* similarly refers to those who converted to Islam but from a noncaste group known as *chūrā*, who are assumed to be “sweepers” and do not claim Rajput lineage. By using the term *musali*, this worker unequivocally relegated Imran Ali to an ascribed low- or noncaste status, then went on to claim, for himself, the higher status of being *khokhar*, which is presumed to be of Rajput lineage. Although this man and Imran Ali shared the same form of work, these exchanges reveal two distinct though related ways of distancing oneself from waste materials and work: one is about physical distance, or being far from, rather than close, to waste, and the other relates to social distance, or being close to waste *simply* by circumstance (i.e., working with it), rather than by birth. Discernible in both our movement through the house that day and the contested claims of these workers are tensions of closeness and distance—among persons, waste, and work. Such tensions, in fact, highlight how caste and inequality have been built into the kind of intimacy that has emerged and shaped urban life in Pakistan.

Waste materials and work are sites for mediating social relationships in urban Pakistan, relationships in which people constantly negotiated intimacy across caste, class, and religious lines. Based on fieldwork conducted in Lahore and other areas of Punjab, this article focuses on the work performed in removing and accumulating waste materials, especially *before* such materials are deposited or reclaimed at landfills (Millar 2018; Reno 2016).<sup>2</sup> This shift in focus allows me to situate waste work “as a social relationship” (Reno 2016, 2) within distributive processes whereby waste materials are made absent for some, just as they are made present for others.<sup>3</sup> In many urban centers in the world today, livelihoods, especially those of “surplus populations” in the Global South, have become increasingly and precariously tied to working with the material excess (i.e., waste) of contemporary capitalism (Chalfin 2019; Fredericks 2018; Millar 2018). The expansion of such livelihoods is connected to the reorganization of social life through a range of distributive processes, one of which is the uneven distribution of waste across the social body. Waste work entails and reproduces hierarchical relations along lines of class, caste, race, and gender—akin to domestic caregiving and sex work (Fortunati 1995; Glenn 1992).<sup>4</sup> This form of work becomes instrumental to how distributive processes engender different intimacies with waste materials, such that particular bodies and persons, according to social inequalities and hierarchies, have varying degrees of proximity (bodily,

social, or moral) to those same materials. Intimacies exist among waste workers, middle-class homes that depend on them for waste disposal services, and waste traders who purchase sorted waste from these workers to sell to others. These waste intimacies reflect and reproduce wider transformations in social orders and hierarchies across urban Pakistan.

The notion of “waste intimacies” foregrounds how forms of work, social relationships, and affects, in unevenly distributing substances, bodies, and persons, produce attachments to a world that is shared and deeply unequal. In urban Pakistan waste intimacies reproduce separations and distances between persons according to social differences and hierarchies inflected by caste, class, and religion as historical categories. This article’s discussion of the differential proximity of persons to waste materials and their potential pollution harkens back to Mary Douglas’s (2002, 152–56) account of how the body’s porosity makes persons susceptible to defilement—wherein substances enter and leave the body through acts of exchange. This body, for Douglas (2002, 4) as well, is importantly a social one. In older studies of caste (e.g., Marriott 1968; Marriott and Inden 1977), the exchange of food was shown to be one of the means by which polluting substances could be potentially transmitted, requiring that such exchanges be organized by strict regulations that could control the flow of substances across hierarchically arranged castes. Purity was thus maintained by ensuring that substances, which were either polluting themselves or coming from persons whose touch was deemed polluting, were not transmitted across bodies and persons belonging to those different castes. Rather than resuscitating this theoretical framework to analyze caste in urban Pakistan today, I emphasize three central features of waste intimacies: (1) the symbiosis between waste and intimacy in constituting social life, (2) the management of intimacy as unfolding across social groups and between self and other, and (3) intimacy as forged through historical forms of inequality.

### Intimacy and inequality

Waste intimacies are predicated as much on forms of distancing and antagonism as they are on forms of proximity and interdependence. In Pakistan, caste is formulated as something that can be inherited across generations, allowing those who claim to work with waste materials by happenstance to differentiate themselves from those who are presumed to do this work by birth. Such claims, at least partially, are premised on the notion of a freely consenting individual engaging in waste work, rather than the socially constrained person compelled to do so through genealogical inheritance (Povinelli 2006).<sup>5</sup> Relatedly, waste intimacies do not immediately bear on things like sexuality, love, or romance; rather, these intimacies shed light on how those

practices, especially related to different kinds of risk and harm, are organized and interpreted by social and political actors. This is an important point to keep in mind when considering what waste intimacies tell us about intimacy more generally. Take, for instance, someone like Imran Ali, who collects and sorts the waste of middle-class homes: he occupies an intimate relationship with those households, one that is simultaneously socially distanced and oftentimes fraught with antagonism, hostility, and harm. How caste, waste, work, and person have been brought together are instrumental in maintaining and reproducing the inequalities on which these sorts of intimacies and urban life more generally have come to be built.

Intimacy is a projected and condensed social relation that expresses certain interdependencies and ambivalences. The role that historical inequalities play in constituting intimacy has largely been left unexamined.<sup>6</sup> For instance, Lauren Berlant (1998, 282) describes an intimacy that “builds worlds; it creates spaces and usurps places meant for other kinds of relation. Its potential failure to stabilize closeness always haunts its persistent activity, making the very attachments deemed to buttress ‘a life’ seem in a state of constant if latent vulnerability” (see also Berlant 2011). Similarly, Michael Herzfeld (2005, 3) calls attention to what he describes as cultural intimacy, in which certain facets of a “cultural identity” become at once “a source of external embarrassment” and an “assurance of common sociality.”<sup>7</sup> These approaches have prioritized intimacy as a relation of familiarity and closeness rendered unstable because of something external. Yet it becomes evident that intimacies are consistently marked by ambivalences when one considers that intimate relations are suffused with a wide range of affects—from love, care, and sympathy to disgust, shame, and powerlessness (Herzfeld 2005; Kristeva 1982; see also Berlant 2011). In fact, the ambivalences involved in intimacy are key modalities through which actors across the lines of caste, class, and religion relate to the unevenness of life in urban Pakistan. The vision of intimacy presented in this article underscores such ambivalences because they provide insight into the inequalities internal to intimacy’s constitution.

Waste work is a prominent social activity in which persons and bodies potentially come into close proximity, touching the same objects as they move in a sequential way, from the object (i.e., commodity) used up and discarded as a waste product to its collection and exchange, which will remake the object into something of use once again. The social nature of waste work gestures toward two distinct, though intertwined aspects of waste intimacies: they are as much about relations of proximity and distance within and across social groups as they are about the relations individuals have to the self, waste, work, and a world of others. After tracing how urban life has been reorganized in contemporary Pakistan, the article then examines the affective

relations surrounding waste work to demonstrate how these intimacies shape relationships between groups, in which a broad range of affects sustains relationships between persons differentiated based on social hierarchies. The next two sections, respectively, analyze the material relations between waste workers and the middle-class homes from which they collect waste and interactions between junkyard owners and waste workers. These sections distill how, despite enduring associations between waste and caste, these materials are a source of monetary worth that offer at least the prospect for upward mobility, which in turn shapes the relationships that individuals form to their own self, waste materials, work, and others with whom they share a world. The final section turns to how intercaste and interreligious relations in urban Pakistan are reworked in light of violence, conflict, and other forms of antagonism.

### Caste, class, and religion in urban Pakistan

Pakistan was founded as a nation-state for the Muslim minority of the Indian subcontinent. After India and Pakistan achieved independence in 1947, this Muslim minority became Pakistan’s majority, while non-Muslims (Christians, Hindus, and others) became the new country’s religious minorities. Pakistan’s province of Punjab—whose capital is Lahore and where many of the waste workers I spoke to came from—is part of a region that, along with Bengal, was divided between the sovereign nation-states of India and Pakistan. Hindus and Sikhs departed those areas of the Punjab that became part of Pakistan for India, while Muslims left those areas of the Punjab that became part of India for Pakistan. This reworked demographics across the province: in 1941, before partition, the Punjab was about 28 percent Hindu, 13 percent Sikh, and 56 percent Muslim, with the remaining population coming from Christian and other religious communities; by 1951, in parts of Punjab that were now part of Pakistan, the Hindu and Sikh populations fell to less than 1 percent, while the number of Muslims rose to at least 94 percent in each district and Christians became the largest non-Muslim community in the province (Hill et al. 2008, 165).

Alongside these changing demographics, caste in newly independent Pakistan was sidelined in societal and political discourses. In religious terms, caste was viewed as the corrupting, anachronistic influence of Hinduism on Muslim (and Christian) culture. As a putatively egalitarian religion, Islam was presumed to not recognize arbitrary distinctions and the ascriptive status characteristic of caste. Nevertheless, caste practices such as prohibitions against touch and commensality are still prevalent in Pakistan—for example, separate dishes are often kept for domestic workers; waste workers, especially Christian ones, often bring their own dishes to public eateries; and water can be refused if it comes into contact with someone whose touch

is deemed polluting. At the same time, such practices are usually deemed illegitimate and antithetical to Islamic ideals. In a more secular register, Pakistan's most prominent advocate and first governor-general, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, gave a famous speech to the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan in 1947 in which he charted out a liberal framework of caste equality: "We are starting in the days where there is no discrimination, no distinction between one community and another, no discrimination between one caste or creed and another" (Jinnah 1947, 546). Indeed, both secular and Muslim nationalisms in the Indian subcontinent sought to encompass the caste, ethnic, linguistic, and sectarian identities of particular Muslim groups, which has had varying degrees of success (Alavi 1988).

Moreover, between the late 19th and early 20th century, many low- or noncaste Hindu groups in the Punjab converted en masse to Christianity (Harding 2008). This has led Christianity, rather than caste, to become the historical basis for one's social and political identity, and Christian status became synonymous with those from low- or noncaste backgrounds (Walbridge 2012). Additionally, as Christians have faced violence after accusations of blasphemy, greater emphasis has been placed on Christians as a *religious* minority, especially in light of a global human rights discourse on religious freedom and persecution.<sup>8</sup> Though Christianity (and religion more generally) has become a prominent marker for one's social and political identity, the multigenerational legacies of caste remain salient for how wealth, land, and other forms of power were passed down across social groups within the country.

The construction of religion as the encompassing social and political identity in Pakistan has created renewed associations between religion and caste as social life has been reorganized across the country. Recent anthropological work on Pakistan has focused attention on how antagonisms between groups, based on either religious, sectarian, or ethnic divisions, inform and emerge out of everyday life, especially within intimate arenas such as neighborhoods, apartment buildings, and domestic spaces (Khan 2006; Ring 2006; see also Maqsood 2017). While these studies have left caste unaddressed,<sup>9</sup> caste intersects with religion and class to shape intimate social relations, especially when one considers that "caste is about attenuated and graded forms of intimacy" (Thiranagama 2018, 372). The forms of relatedness in urban Pakistan entail both conflict and cohabitation, especially as persons inhabit a world of "potentially hostile" others (Singh 2011, 432; see also Connolly 2009; Hayden 2002). In Lahore, spaces, whether physical or social, are carved out of urban life that allow intimate relationships to flourish, which concomitantly remain rife with tensions along lines of caste, class, and religion. The question then becomes how caste, class, and religion have intersected to reorganize life in Lahore in deeply unequal

ways, later giving shape to a kind of intimacy formed around and through waste materials and work.

Over the past several decades, as urbanization has proceeded across Pakistan, caste as a historical category has been reworked, not only facilitating the continued presence of certain caste groups over others in waste work throughout the country's urban centers but also shaping, in particular, Lahore's changing class and spatial relations. A primary distinction within caste groups in the Punjab has historically been between "agriculturalists" and "nonagriculturalists."<sup>10</sup> Though they did perform agricultural labor, nonagriculturalists lacked control over land and were internally differentiated, engaging in a range of occupations as sweepers, genealogists, barbers, leatherworkers, weavers, and other service providers. In Lahore, sanitation workers employed by the municipality are almost entirely Christian, having converted from a noncaste group (*chūrā*) that was considered a *kammī* group (composed of "village servants") who engaged in "sweeping," and those working in the informal sector predominantly come from *khānah badosh/pakhwās* (nomadic groups) or other *kammī* groups—all of which would be considered low- or noncaste. Moreover, while an older middle class that had coalesced under the colonial regime expanded in the immediate postcolonial moment by virtue of their land ownership, access to education, and state employment, a new middle class has arisen since the 1980s, migrating from smaller towns in the Punjab or residing in older parts of Lahore and finding employment in "significant [numbers] in mid-level positions in the private sector or run[ning] small businesses" (Maqsood 2017, 7).<sup>11</sup> Both sections of Lahore's middle classes are drawn heavily from higher-status Muslim groups who have historically controlled land in the countryside or maintained access to state resources in terms of education, the bureaucracy, and employment.<sup>12</sup>

Discussing similar convergences of caste and class in India, Christopher Fuller (1996, 12) has described the substantialization of identities, in which there has been an "alteration in the normative basis of caste—from purity as an index of hierarchical rank to difference as a marker of separation," which was "*a matter of degree rather than kind*" (emphasis added). In contemporary Pakistan, waste disposal services are organized around shared aspirations of the middle and upper-middle classes, such that more affluent localities have more reliable services. Expanding waste-disposal services, resulting partly from class-based consumption, has opened opportunities for work, wealth, and mobility among waste workers themselves. The uneven distribution of these services has had the subsequent effect of differentiating certain bodies, persons, and spaces as "unclean," "dirty," and "impure," which has a disproportionate impact on those who have limited access to such services or who work with waste materials themselves. These distributive processes also facilitate the transmission of potentially

stigmatizing and threatening substances across bodies and persons. Once again for Mary Douglas (2002), as well as others (Daniel 1984; Marriott 1968; Marriott and Inden 1977), the image of the body as an imagined coherent whole was susceptible to the transmission of substances (or transubstantiation) from the bodies of other persons. The different substances (e.g., animal skins, excrement, etc.) that bodies came into contact with varied according to what kind of work these bodies and persons performed. This is why the transmission of substances shapes how qualities of bodies, persons, and lifestyles are “substantialized” and operate as *asymmetrical markers of difference and separation* between groups differentiated along the lines of caste, class, and religion.

Substantialization reformulates connections between the materiality of waste and the construction of social identities by highlighting the role that waste materials, once disaggregated into their constitutive substances, play in organizing urban life. Waste as a category that references material things is characterized by varying degrees of indeterminacy. Later, the “ideological, symbolic, and social” (Hird 2012, 465) forms through which waste comes to be determined (i.e., known, organized, and managed) remains a source of considerable debate (see, e.g., Alexander and Sanchez 2019). Just as material things come to be determined as waste, they remain, partially at least, disaggregable through their constitutive parts and substances. Substantialization—of waste and identities—allows for tracing how waste materials, through transformation and transmission, link the workings of economies and infrastructures to the constitutive qualities of urban life.

### Affective relations of waste work

In urban Pakistan, waste work is organized through liberal distinctions of public and private while simultaneously being sustained by a normative sociality, in which caste, converging with class and religion, remains central to social life. Households, for this reason, become exceptionally rife with anxieties about interactions across the lines of caste, class, and religion (Ring 2006; Zulfiqar 2018; see also Dickey 2000; Frøystad 2003). The boundary between the house as a private, inner space and its outside as a public, outer one is elementary to liberal imaginations of intimacy—naturalizing the home as a site of affection, love, and care among biologically related kin (Povinelli 2006; see also Beall 2006; Chakrabarty 1991; Kaviraj 1997). These distinctions—public/private, inside/outside, inner/outer—partly structure work in Lahore’s waste infrastructures in specific ways. The responsibility for the “sweeping and cleanliness of public streets” constitutes the governmental work (*sarkāri kām*) of municipal sanitation workers; thus, much of their work includes collecting and gathering waste from “public” spaces, such as streets and empty plots of land. Concur-

rently, these workers also engage in their own “private work” (*private kām*) during the course of their official workday by collecting waste from “private” spaces (e.g., households and shops), for which they collect a minimal service fee. On the other hand, informal waste workers collect waste from similarly “private” spaces, for which they are paid in cash for their services and receive everyday items of use (flour, rice, clothing) while also selling valuables sorted out of the collected waste. While distinctions organize this form of work and relations of exchange, they also have a fuzziness about them, which makes vulnerable the boundary between the household and its outside. This boundary operates as a permeable threshold of intimacy, in which substances, bodies, and persons move in between and across as waste materials are taken away and disposed of. Because intimacy must be constantly managed, this movement of substances, bodies, and persons across boundaries—of spaces, caste, class, and religion—both threatens and affirms affective relations across them. Moreover, waste workers’ presumed low- or noncaste backgrounds open possibilities for intimacy across these thresholds.

For instance, in the opening vignette above, our movement through the middle-class home that day was highly circumscribed, as was the intimacy afforded to us. The space through which we moved was carved out of the household as internally differentiated, in physical and affective terms. Along the way, we crossed a threshold of intimacy, walking through stairs, corridors, and common spaces, but there were other, more intimate areas closed off to us, ones that we could not access. Traversing the passage open to us, I felt there was a violation going on. But that feeling was a recognition less of a violation and more of a passage into a more intense order of intimacy, the result of which was waste work being performed and social relationships being enacted. Similarly, when I did not accompany him, Imran Ali, even though doors were left open for him and he went about unquestioned, worked within delimited passages, being kept within an intimate but separate space within the home.

When I asked Imran Ali that day whether he felt any discomfort, he stressed,

I’ve been working in these households since I could walk. Then I’d come here with my older sister before she got married. We’d work this neighborhood together. These households have complete trust in us. They leave the door open for me, and I go in and out with no one asking any questions. They treat me like their son.

This is why, according to him, he could easily demand of other domestic workers or children, “Go ask for something to eat for me,” and why he was given cooking items, old clothing, and bedsheets, and even leftover food from a few nights earlier. Imran Ali, like many other workers, is



**Figure 1.** A neighborhood in Lahore, Pakistan, where waste workers collect refuse, August 2015. (Waqas H. Butt) [This figure appears in color in the online issue]

indeed given all kinds of items, and that giving was spoken of, by both him and the households that gave, as sympathetic acts of love and care (*pyār-maḥabbat*). Imran Ali's use of fictive kinship—being treated like a son—highlights the custodianship implicit in control over a child as one who cannot provide for one's self and thus must be cared for by others. These everyday acts of giving are thus not reciprocal exchanges among equals. As with food exchanges, these exchanges were organized such that low- or noncaste groups could receive food from higher-caste groups but not give to those same groups (Marriott 1968; Marriott and Inden 1977). Similarly, higher-caste groups gave and received only from the same or equivalent castes and only gave to but did not take from lower-caste groups. Reciprocal exchanges happened among those of the same or equivalent castes, while nonreciprocal exchanges occurred among those of different or unequal castes. Reciprocity (or lack thereof) was a means for organizing caste hierarchy.

Unidirectional giving demonstrates that acts of love and care enact affective relationships among intimates who are not considered equals. And while the municipality regularly deployed the phrase “Cleanliness fulfills half of one's

faith,” to emphasize that waste workers provide a religiously invaluable service to the city, workers themselves emphasized that they are not accorded the necessary value (*qadr*), importance (*ahmiyat*), or respect (*'izzat*). Christian sanitation workers also repeatedly emphasized that residents, especially Muslim ones, have nothing but hate (*nafrat*) for them. One resident, commenting about a waste worker in his neighborhood, spoke of the shame (*sharam*) he feels when arguing over uncollected waste with such “a poor [*marā*] person.” It was the presumed “lowliness” of workers that caused this resident such shame about the relation they both found themselves in. That shame, not to mention unidirectional acts of love and care, affectively binds intimates, thereby maintaining hierarchical social relations among them.

### Material relations of waste work

In the early 1990s, Manzoor arrived in Lahore at the age of 20 with his immediate kin. Soon thereafter, they started collecting waste from two localities known as Township and Shadman (see Figure 1). These localities are closer to the center of the city, consist of two- or three-story



**Figure 2.** The settlement of *jhuggān* (huts), Lahore, Pakistan, where some waste workers reside, June 2015. (Waqas H. Butt) [This figure appears in color in the online issue]

residential structures, are made up of mainly middle- and upper-middle-class households, and have regular municipal services and amenities. The valuables removed by Manzoor and his kin from households in these localities are brought back and stored in the cluster of five *jhuggān* (huts) that compose their household, which is in a settlement of *jhuggān* on the city's peripheries near an area known as Thokar Niaz Baig (see Figure 2). While homes in this settlement are separated by mud paths littered with paper and plastic trash brought back from wealthier parts of the city, several piles of waste are also scattered about Manzoor's home. These piles are rigorously sorted before being sold to *kabārīān* (junkyard owners) and *bīopārīān* (middlemen), who are located nearby or regularly visit these settlements.

In July 2015, right before the onset of the monsoon, I visited Manzoor while he and his extended kin repaired the *jhuggān* that made up their household. The wooden frames of the *jhuggān* had worn away. In repairing them, the eroded pieces of wood were pushed farther down into a crater while fresher pieces were tied to the eroded ones—

this combination of eroded and fresh pillars would stabilize the *jhuggī*. These fresh pillars were prepared from reused wood that had been salvaged or were purchased secondhand. Once the poles of the frame had been prepared, they reused broken bricks, which had been acquired from neighborhood's construction waste or brought from a dealer, to build a slight embankment. Because the *jhuggī* is on a downward slope, Manzoor explained to me, this embankment would prevent rainwater from entering their home. And later that afternoon, their effort would shift to the structure's roof. Pieces of bamboo, being relatively thinner and more flexible, were placed horizontally and vertically to create a skeleton on which the roofing was placed. As some female kin cut pieces of old cloth into strips, which were used to fasten the bamboo pieces into place (see Figure 3), Manzoor's wife explained, "These are old sheets that households gave us." They used several of these bedsheets for the roof, in which layers of cloth were wrapped in clear, plastic lining to prevent water from trickling in. Similarly, in another settlement, waste workers who exclusively collect cardboard waste repurposed those



**Figure 3.** Strips of old cloth fastened to pieces of wood form the structure of a residential *jhuggī* (hut), Lahore, Pakistan, July 2015. (Waqas H. Butt) [This figure appears in color in the online issue]

materials by stapling them together and wrapping them in plastic to construct their roofs.

As they performed these repairs, all the items one expects of a household were on display—several beds (*mañjī*); bedsheets and blankets; pans, dishes, and other crockery; storage containers full of clothing; and any number of valuable items (e.g., family pictures). This display of wealth was unsurprising: Manzoor regularly described waste materials as his *bachat* (profit, remainder, excess) and waste work as his *rizq* (means of subsistence). It was through the worth of waste materials and the work surrounding them that this *jhuggī* was repaired, maintained, and reproduced in a particular way.

The *jhuggī* in which Manzoor resides and the middle-class homes from which he and his kin collect waste are differentiated by construction materials, household commodities, perceived cleanliness, occupation, and wealth, and any number of other asymmetrical markers of difference. Though *appearing* as separate, the quotidian construction and repair of these *jhuggīān*, and all the items that make them up, demonstrate their *actual* dependence on one another. Not only does removing waste ensure

the cleanliness or tidiness of one household, it also facilitates the building, maintenance, and reproduction of another as different in urban Pakistan. The social and spatial differentiation—through households, occupations, and lifestyles of the middle classes and those of waste workers—clarifies how both groups mutually, though unequally, depend on each other. If waste workers receive and take away waste, money, and any number of other things, households receive something else, an intimate space cleansed of dirt, filth, and all kinds of substances—something that then gets attached to the bodies and persons who compose these classes. The organization of public spaces in urban Pakistan along the lines of caste, class, and religion are reflected in more private spaces and forms of life. The affective and material relationships sketched out so far thus extend beyond the shared intimacies between or among groups; they come to permeate intimate aspect of one's own life.

Surrounded by piles of waste, Manzoor, with an odd mix of disgust and humor, caught me off guard when he chuckled and said, "After living in germs for so long, we've become germs ourselves." During that same conversation, Manzoor drew my attention to the flies circling about the



piles of waste and the dirt (*mittī*) and dust (*khāk*) spread about, while describing how the paths between *jhuggiān* turn into a sludge of trash and mud (*kīchar*) during the monsoon. In light of Michael Herzfeld's (2005) suggestion that intimate components of one's life (e.g., home, behaviors, work) can become a source of embarrassment when addressed to an Other, I initially interpreted such statements as being addressed to me as a Pakistani American of a different class and caste background. Yet Manzoor's expression of disgust, tinged with humor, indicates a "psychophysical response of a subject whose virtual wholeness is threatened by holes" (Reno 2016, 40; see also Kristeva 1982; Millar 2018, 56). Since bodies are porous (Douglas 2002), things like germs and substances like mud take on biomoral valences because they can move between bodies and thus shape both one's insides and physical surroundings: Manzoor was prone to mention how his own disposition (*tabī'at*) and that of his progeny (*nasl*) have changed since they migrated to the city, began as waste workers, and took up residence in this settlement of *jhuggiān*. One's own body, as well as that of one's kin, was susceptible to the transmission of substances attached to these materials, which could later have transformative effects on one's own and others' dispositions, behaviors, and status.

Manzoor's narrative reveals an important tension surrounding waste materials and work by bringing into relief how working with waste materials raises concerns around transformations—in materials, bodies, and persons. When mentioning germs as potentially stigmatizing things, Manzoor deployed a register of purity and pollution, making waste into something that attaches to and potentially transforms some bodies and persons, but not others. At the same time, Manzoor repeatedly mentioned those aspects of one's self and status, such as occupation, education, wealth, lifestyles, and behaviors, that would be considered class-based markers of distinction. The possibility of waste materials to transfer monetary worth through work and exchange is difficult to disentangle from their potential to transmit contaminating and polluting substances. Both transformations are possible when working with waste materials, which necessitates constant negotiations and management between one's self and others within a shared social world.

### Maintaining separation and distance

Waste materials and work present contradictory possibilities for transforming one's self and others: one can be stigmatized through these materials, just as much as one can generate wealth through them (Nguyen 2016; see also Millar 2018, 53–59). These contradictory possibilities are most conspicuous for junkyard owners (*kabārīān*) who predominantly trade in, rather than gather, waste materials. After several months of visiting his junkyard, Chaudhary

Billah recounted to me his trajectory from being a waste worker to being a *kabārī*. He began by describing how higher-status groups from the area he was from (Shakargarh) became successful junkyard owners and middlemen because they controlled transportation infrastructure, specifically horse-drawn carts (*tāngah*) used to transport goods such as lentils, rice, and sugar (*jaggery*). This group used its access to transportation to establish a foothold in the informal recycling of paper. When chronicling the success of higher-status groups, Chaudhary Billah mentioned that his own family were *gujjars*, who are traditionally known as pastoralists who tend cattle across North India. In telling me this, he meant to highlight that he lacked access to those resources, which would have eased his trajectory of becoming a *kabārī*. Rather, he entered this line of work through working with the materials themselves.

Settling in an area of Lahore closer to the traditional center of the city (Ichhra) with an estranged brother, Chaudhary Billah first found work transporting iron rods in Badami Bagh—an industrial hub of the city at the time. Near his brother's home was a junkyard owned by a neighbor who would eventually become a good friend. When this friend asked Chaudhary Billah to join him at the junkyard, he refused, telling me, "I had a lot of hate for this work" (*Bhut nafrat thī iss kām se*). Eventually overcoming his discomfort, Chaudhary Billah started sorting and disassembling waste in his friend's junkyard, and after a brief stint in a junkyard elsewhere, he returned to his friend's, where he remained for the next several years. At one point, the two friends opened a factory (*kārkhānah*) that manufactured pellets out of recycled plastics, but the venture failed. He would at times show me a book of carbon-copied receipts of the plastics they had purchased—the name of the plastic, date of purchase, weight, rate, and total value.

This moment was one in which Chaudhary Billah was transitioning from working with waste materials to trading in them. His closeness to these materials, for which he initially had only "a lot of hate," was starting to dissipate, and his own self-understanding was changing. With an influx of money, the source of which he equivocated about, he said, "I was becoming a wealthy figure [*seṭh*], and all I do now is sit all day" (see Figure 4). Rather than disappear, the hate he previously had for this work has turned into ambivalence: during other conversations, Chaudhary Billah often lamented that he had to do "dirty work," even if it was more profitable than other kinds of business. Chaudhary Billah has not experienced the kind of upward mobility that would propel him into Lahore's middle or upper classes, but becoming a *kabārī* has afforded him the opportunity to generate income out of waste materials from a distance. This same distance then allows Chaudhary Billah to maintain a separation between himself and others who work with waste materials in closer proximity. Here, distancing within intimacy is also constituted through acts of self-distancing.



**Figure 4.** A junkyard owner sits in his junkyard with mostly sorted paper waste in front of him, Lahore, Pakistan, June 2015. (Waqas H. Butt) [This figure appears in color in the online issue]

Though physical distance from working with these materials was growing for Chaudhary Billah, other kinds of proximity were emerging. Throughout this time, Chaudhary Billah shifted from his brother's home to an area in the southwestern edges of Lahore, where these settlements were also being shifted. Since then, for nearly the next two decades, the location of his junkyard would shift along with this settlement: as these settlements are forcibly and repeatedly removed by the municipal government and private housing settlements, they have slowly been pushed to their current location on the city's peripheries, which is a similar trajectory among junkyards that need regular access to waste materials. Not only is Chaudhary Billah's junkyard now situated at the end of a *pakkā* (paved) road that changes into a *kacchā* (unpaved) one that snakes throughout the settlement of *jhuggiān*, he has built a two-story, permanent house in this settlement, located only a few doors down from the space he rents for the junkyard. Though located nearby, Chaudhary Billah's permanent home (*pakkā ghar*) is, materially and socially, differentiated from Manzoor's *jhuggi*, which would usually be described as a "slum" or informal housing (*kacchī ābādī*). Since the early 1990s,

Chaudhary Billah's livelihood, like that of others who supply these materials to industrial and manufacturing units across the country, has become increasingly entangled both with waste materials themselves and those who reside in settlements such as these. As such, junkyards, settlements, factories, and middle- and upper-middle-class homes have formed symbiotic relationships as urbanization has proceeded in Lahore, and it is waste materials and work that link these distinct actors across the urban landscape.

Because of these entanglements—of proximal settlement and shared work—Chaudhary Billah, like many others, regularly commented on the moral qualities and lifestyles of waste workers: sharing stories of women engaging in sex work or the prevalence of drug and alcohol abuse among young men. This commentary was also part of his own self-narration: Chaudhary Billah was emphasizing qualities of character and lifestyles—either one's own or that of others—to thematize a "gradual process of transformation" of the self in relation to waste, work, and a world of others (Millar 2018, 59). The story through which Chaudhary Billah narrated his trajectory into this line of work was not a straightforward one about how he became

a *kabārī*. Rather, it was one that highlights the kinds of distancing at play within forms of intimacy that are fraught by inequalities from the onset. Specifically, Chaudhary Billah distinguished between those who either *temporarily work or only trade in* waste, being of higher status, and those who *actually collect* waste, being expectedly of lower status. That distinction needed to be maintained precisely because it could be cast into doubt: Manzoor repeatedly insinuated that Chaudhary Billah came from another lower-status group known as *telī*, or oil pressers. Manzoor's allegations were meant to be revelatory—Chaudhary Billah, though he claims higher status and has accumulated wealth, is *by birth* no different from the waste workers from whom he distances himself. Regardless, Chaudhary Billah's narration of his own trajectory into this line of work is fraught by ambivalences characteristic of intimacies, in which neither autonomy nor dependence could be fully acknowledged in relation to waste work and others with whom he shares his world.

### Shifting limits

Sharika Thiranagama (2018, 358, 359) has recently described how interethnic and intracaste relations in postwar Jaffna, Sri Lanka, “are forged through *recent histories of violence and struggle*,” which are discernible “through the concrete problems of co-existence (living together with some measure of engagement) and co-presence (living together separately).” The social relations analyzed so far have been intercaste and interclass ones, since these groups share an ethnic background (i.e., Punjabi). Though I have analyzed the kinds of engagements and separations at play across caste and class lines, I have not yet examined the associations between caste and religion and how they have reorganized social relations. Christians in Pakistan, whether engaging in waste work or not, are assumed to have a “lowly” caste background, while Christianity as a confessional community has not made caste irrelevant. Christians in India “identify themselves in terms of caste” (Caplan 1980, 215) in several different ways (see also Mosse 2012). And as Christians have experienced violence, social discrimination, and legal challenges, associations between religion and caste have only sedimented further among them. Such events now saturate collective life in the country, for Muslims and Christians alike, and raise the specter of how violence, conflict, and other kinds of antagonisms act recursively in relation to the waste intimacies described thus far. Next, I discuss associations between caste and religion to highlight two dynamics: first, how intercaste and interreligious relations are being reshaped in urban Pakistan and, second, how events in the country's recent history have delimited the parameters of individual and collective life in Lahore.

Early one morning in a prominent cloth market in the city, the tea seller (*chaiwālā*) arrived to take away empty

mugs that sanitation workers, supervisors, a security guard (*chaukidār*), and myself had used to drink chai. Before returning to his tea stall, however, the *chaiwālā* informed everyone seated there that Christians should bring their own mugs. Later, I returned to ask Arshad, who was the security guard, about this. “You see, they are non-Muslim [*ghair-Muslimi*],” he said. “We don't get along. Before, the *chaiwālā* probably didn't know. Someone must have told him that the security guard who takes the chai away drinks it with Christians.” When I replied that there is no prohibition against eating with Christians in Islam, Arshad recognized my point but added a qualification: “For people of the book [*āhl-e kitāb*], if our heart lets us, sure, but if we don't feel like it, it is acceptable [*wājib*] for us not to eat with them. We do not get along because they are nonbelievers [*ghair-mazhab*] and we are believers.” Sensing my discomfort, he noted that nothing could be done to them by force (*zabardastī*) but remained steadfast that there was a real quarrel over religion—Islamic beliefs and practices need to be upheld and protected from perceived attacks, while love for the Prophet required Muslims not tolerate any insult against his personality and honor.<sup>13</sup> Even here, distinctions between Muslims and Christians as religious communities are organized through practices of commensality, in which idioms of caste hierarchy, purity, and status figure prominently.

Then, Arshad shifted suddenly:

We don't do any of this. [...] We curse at them when inviting them to sit with us to eat, and they do the same with us. There's no difference remaining between us. We are all mixed up with each other. Sitting together, cursing at each other. If we go toward Adam, then we are one. If we go toward the command of the Prophet [*hukm-e nabī*], we are separate.

This is a recognized difference between commonality of descent and differences of faith. Additionally, unlike the vast majority who hate (*nafrat*) sanitation workers because of their impurity and inability to become pure (*pāk*), Arshad emphasized that he and others who work closely with them have a different view. “We *also* see that they put their hands in filth, open drains, and all kinds of dirty things,” he said. “So then we say, ‘It's OK, man [*yaar*], at least they wash their hands.’ They eat with these same hands, and we sit and eat with them. We eat from their dishes.”

He used this point to tell me a story:

I had a friend, William, and we worked in the same soap factory. I was the only one who ate lunch with him in the canteen. Then I would go to his home, and his mother would give me food in their dishes, and I never said anything. But there were others in their neighborhood who objected by saying, “Why does he come to their home? He's Muslim.” You see, every

neighborhood or people has its own mind-set about how to behave with one another.

Arshad added, “Their elders wouldn’t joke with us, and our elders wouldn’t joke with them either. Then, only 10 percent of Muslims wouldn’t object to sitting with them, while the remaining 90 percent wouldn’t sit with them, keeping a distance.” Arshad’s own account arose out of the shifting associations between caste and religion and subsequent changes in intercaste and interreligious relations. He recognized that the form of relatedness between Muslims and Christians had shifted, and that earlier kinds of distances based on hierarchical caste relations had been rendered less clear. This, however, had not undone separations but given rise to kinds of engagement that reinscribed relations across caste and religious lines, relations that Arshad described as more egalitarian. These changing intercaste and interreligious relations were caught “between hierarchical and egalitarian logics,” producing “hierarchically segmented forms of civility” (Thiranagama 2018, 359). Indeed, before trailing off, Arshad commented, “We say, ‘Forget about it, *yaar*. Allah is the provider. He tells us to treat others such that others will not ridicule either you or your religion.’” This was a call to maintain engagement across caste and religious lines, even if separation was at times necessitated.

Walking away, I came upon Tariq, the sanitation worker who had drunk with us earlier. Seeing me, he said, “You see how they hate us? This is our value here [in Pakistan]. This is why other countries are better than ours.” And then he asked me, “What did you learn?” I recounted Arshad’s words, and Tariq assured me, “Yes, this is exactly how it is. [...] This is a problem of religion, not work. Or this could be about the work too. If we weren’t here, would they do this work, or no? *Yaar*, what are we going to do?” I asked, “Why did you remain silent when we were talking?” Tariq replied, “I don’t even sit then, because there will be a disagreement. What’s the point? It’s better to remain silent. Their thinking won’t change. They are small-minded folk. I told you this before. You must have written it down.” In this moment, Tariq inverted the relationship: though these people think they are above us, they are in reality “small-minded.” Tariq continued, though:

We don’t talk to anyone about religion. Otherwise, there will be a disagreement, and if I say any wrong words, something unexpected will come from those wrong words. You must’ve heard that sometimes a Christian is labeled a blasphemer [*gusstākḥ-e rasūl*], then a case is registered against them, and they are sentenced to death by hanging. This is an Islamic country. They have power in it. We don’t.

Throughout these exchanges, constant slippages are noticeable between religion and caste, person and work,

commonality of descent and differences of faith, and Christian and sanitation worker. These slippages are premised on an association between religion and caste, and this allows for the stigma of waste to travel beyond the space of work itself and attach to “Christian” as a category of person who is non-Muslim. And yet, in Tariq’s use of the phrase “You must have heard,” a reference was made to accusations of blasphemy and ensuing violent events that have repeatedly taken place all over Pakistan, and how such collective events are imbricated with the denial of commensality among those having chai that morning.<sup>14</sup> His inability to object in that moment, because of what could possibly ensue, recognized that events in collective life were being recursively reproduced within everyday interactions, shifting the grounds on which intercaste and interreligious relations are formed. Intimacy undoubtedly “links the instability of individual lives to the trajectories of the collective” (Berlant 1998, 283), but in doing so, it places certain limits on the relations in which many find themselves in urban Pakistan today. The complex set of affects described across this article—from shame, care, and embarrassment to hate, love, and powerlessness—illuminate the changing limits of intercaste and interreligious relations in urban Pakistan, where such relations have become sites of antagonism, conflict, and violence.

### Conclusion: The unevenness of life

Recent scholarship on waste has engaged a series of novel issues related to the precarity of work, politics of waste technologies, and the infrastructural labor of human and nonhuman life (Ahmann 2019; Doherty 2019; O’Hare 2019; see also Alexander and Reno 2014; Chalfin 2014, 2019; Millar 2018). But in the pursuit to discern other possibilities for waste, the symbiosis between waste and social life—a key feature of waste intimacies examined throughout this article—has received little attention. The work performed by low- or noncaste groups in urban Pakistan enacts a “constitutive absence” (Reno 2016, 7), carrying away discarded or exhausted things from certain spaces (e.g., a middle-class household) that are then made present elsewhere (e.g., a *jhuggī*, or dumping ground). The social and spatial differentiation that one sees in Pakistani cities is an historical product of how waste gets distributed and, importantly, *by whom*. The work of low- or noncaste groups distributes waste unevenly across the social body in urban Pakistan, differentiating particular bodies, persons, and spaces along the way. It is not simply that waste materials and work shape social life. Inflected as they are by caste-based norms and codes, extant social identities direct those same distributive processes, one of which is the movement of waste across Lahore’s urbanizing landscape. Waste intimacies highlight the disparate degrees of proximity and distance between waste and persons that later produce the mutuality and

interdependence required for social life. Importantly, these intimacies foreground the symbiotic constitution of waste and social life, such that one can critically reexamine the inequalities, whether in urban Pakistan or elsewhere, undergirding both.

As a social relation, intimacy is a constant source of ambivalence. This ambivalence is usually chalked up to attachments to something else (e.g., unrequited love or a naive vision of the good life), attachments that are problematic yet formative for the self and other. What such renderings of intimacy misrecognize is how ambivalences ensuing from intimacy grow directly out of the very conditions that make intimacy possible. Intimacies across historical moments have been consistently organized around different forms of inequality. Waste intimacies draw our attention to the diverse forms of work, social relations, and affects through which life, both public and private, is made possible and reproduced in uneven ways, while emphasizing the antinomies of autonomy and dependence as they emerge through waste work as a social relationship. By being attentive to those ambivalences, we can begin to discern the inequalities on which intimacy is built and, eventually, the grounds on which we, like many others, come to stand. These grounds, however, are faulty, causing those who stand on them to be unhinged and in constant search of finding their footing in those social relations presumed to anchor them. We could gain much by attuning ourselves to the unevenness of life built on such intimacies—life in which social actors constantly come up against the antinomies of autonomy and dependence while navigating their own sense of self in an unequal world shared with others.

## Notes

*Acknowledgments.* I first wish to thank waste workers, junkyard owners, residents, and many others for being so forthcoming with their time and sharing their lives with me. This article was greatly enhanced through the Works in Progress group at University of Toronto, especially the insights of Cassandra Hartblay and Naisargi Dave. Incisive feedback was received through presenting these materials in the Department of Anthropology at SUNY-Binghamton, the South Asia Conference at Madison, and the American Anthropological Association meetings in San Jose, specifically comments by Joshua Reno, Sarah Besky, and Sharika Thiranagama. Throughout the drafting of this article, Joseph D. Hankins also provided important comments that helped refine its arguments. The Department of Anthropology at the University of California, San Diego, the Wenner-Gren Foundation, and the American Institute of Pakistan Studies provided research support. Zahid Ali and Abdul Aijaz assisted greatly in composing the Urdu translation of the abstract. Lastly, I would like to thank Stacy Pigg, Michael Hathaway, and the five anonymous reviewers for their detailed and thoughtful feedback.

1. The term *low- or noncaste* refers to groups in Pakistan who were either *shudras* or excluded from the fourfold varna system of caste Hinduism, experienced untouchability and other forms of social stigma, and converted to other religious traditions, such as

Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, or Sikhism. The term *Dalit* currently has limited circulation in contemporary Pakistan, mainly being used by activists working with Dalit groups in Sindh, so I have retained the use of *low- or noncaste* to refer to two groups, *khānah badosh/pakhīwās* (nomads) and some *kammī* (“village servants”)—these latter terms were used by many of my interlocutors. Moreover, the legal category of “scheduled caste” operates in Pakistan, especially in relation to Hindus in the southern province of Sindh.

2. Most of the fieldwork was conducted from January 2014 to August 2015. I conducted semistructured and informal interviews with municipal sanitation workers, informal waste workers, junkyard owners, and middlemen. I also observed waste work in residential and commercial areas and junkyards and shops. I also interviewed municipal departments, NGOs, and individuals such as bureaucrats, lawyers, and architects working on relevant topics.

3. Sophia Stamatopoulou-Robbins (2019) has made a similar point about the distribution of waste in Palestine, which has become saturated with waste as a result of its relative absence in Israel.

4. There has been a proliferation of forms of work, both paid and unpaid, that many consider intimate. These include domestic work, medical care, and sex work, and each is increasingly being commodified and regulated across geographic scales (Boris and Parreñas 2010; Constable 2009; see also Mankekar and Gupta 2016, 2019; Shakuto 2019).

5. Similar tensions between individual choice and genealogical inheritance play themselves out in how marriages, friendships, and other affinities across caste and religious lines have challenged and reworked the normative basis of sociality in South Asia (Das 2010; de Munck 1996; Mody 2008; Orsini 2006; Osella and Osella 1998; Ring 2006).

6. Intimacy emerged as an object of analysis to examine how gendered and racialized relations undergirded colonial and imperial projects. Illustrative in this regard is Ann Stoler’s (2002) work on how racial classifications in the Dutch East Indies were subtended by gendered and sexual practices (e.g., parenting, nursing, domestic labor, and illicit sex).

7. Scholars using other approaches have investigated how intimacy is being reworked under globalization by mass mediation and public culture (e.g., Mazarella 2004; Shryock 2004).

8. “Blasphemy” refers to clauses in the Pakistan Penal Code, which was created by British authorities and amended by the Pakistani state. These clauses pertain to religious offenses, especially regarding the Prophet Muhammad.

9. Since Frederick Barth’s (1960) study of caste in Pakistan, specifically among the Swath Pathans, few scholars have devoted serious attention to the topic. More recent scholarship, however, has started to analyze the perverseness of caste in social life, as well as its relationship to politics in Pakistan’s history (Asif 2020; Gazdar 2007; Hussain 2020).

10. A series of terms, such as *birādarī*, *zāt*, *nasl*, and *qaum*, differentiate groups in terms of occupation, descent, kinship, and status in the Punjab. *Birādarī* links patrilineal descent and “fraternal solidarity,” which unites members of a group across geographies (Alavi 1972; see also Gilmartin 1994); *zāt* “refers to a system of status positions inherited by birth” (Wakil 1972, 40), and it may include many of the traditional features of caste Hinduism; and *qaum* (“people” or “nation”) refers to discrete groups or communities with the addition of occupational specialization (Wakil 1972, 40). Another term not used as often but quite relevant is *nasl* (“progeny,” “lineage,” or “race”; Gazdar 2007, 87).

11. According to Maqsood (2017), the distinction among Indian Muslims of *ashraf* and *ajlaf* significantly affects how and why these middle classes have accessed education, state institutions, and other sources of capital. Though this distinction has been

questioned on historical and sociological grounds (I. Ahmad 1967), Maqsood's assessment remains compelling: these classes largely come from either *ashraf* groups or higher-status *ajlaf* ones that would have control or access to land in the Punjab countryside. More broadly, because scholarship on Pakistan has paid so much attention to class as a category of analysis, it has largely ignored these caste-based dynamics (S. Ahmad 1970; Akhtar 2018; Alavi 1972; Javid 2015; Martin 2015).

12. Landed groups in Pakistan, especially elite ones but all those considered "agriculturalists," have been a powerful force in colonial and postcolonial periods, reproducing their power in and through state institutions, political parties, representative associations, and various kinds of markets (Akhtar 2018; Ali 1988; Gilmartin 1994; Javid 2015). For similar caste and class transformations in India, see Fuller and Narasimhan (2014) and Subramanian (2015).

13. Such themes are prevalent in blasphemy allegations in Pakistan, where statements or actions perceived as attacks on the honor of the Prophet (and Islam and Muslims more generally) elicit shame and must be protected through violent acts of love (Ashraf 2018).

14. Since the late 1980s, "633 Muslims, 494 Ahmadis, 187 Christians and 21 Hindus have been accused under various provisions on offences related to religion" (Amnesty International 2016, 10). Most killings have not been carried out by the Pakistani state—for example, 70 people accused of blasphemy have been lynched—while, as of 2018, 40 people had been sentenced to death or were serving life sentences (HRCP 2019, 120).

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