

facilitating academic debate. Its tightness is not to the detriment of subtlety, and the contributors' effort in this respect will be welcomed and appreciated by the readers. The first goal established by the editors in the introduction is, then, fully accomplished. The second one will only be tested in the near future. The quality of the book is nevertheless the best guarantee for success in inspiring further examinations and comparisons. This reviewer can suggest two. One is a comparison over space between 1968 protests in south and east European authoritarian regimes. The other is over time, between protests in the 1960s and today, taking into account the technological jump: then, with new mass communication channels and the improvement of means of transport; now, with the possibilities created by the Internet.

The editors' interest in bringing a better understanding of European protest does not stop with the publication of the book. In fact, there is an additional step. The volume is accompanied by an online teaching and research guide (www.1968ineurope.com), including a comprehensive chronology divided into countries (a fine job delivered by Rolf Werenskjold), additional sources (including online videos available from the website), links to archives and information on conferences on the subject of 1968. These useful initiatives come together with a broader project that Klimke and Scharloth are coordinating along with Kathrin Fahlenbrach: the Marie Curie Conference and Workshop Series "European Protest Movements since the Cold War", which has represented an excellent platform of academic exchange since 2006 and provided high-level instruction to international researchers.

Eduardo Romanos

SHAHEED, ZAFAR A. *The Labour Movement in Pakistan. Organization and Leadership in Karachi in the 1970s*. Oxford University Press, Oxford [etc.] 2007. xiii, 350 pp. £11.99; doi:10.1017/S0020859008003829

Zafar Shaheed's research may be a bit dated (the fieldwork was conducted in the 1970s), yet it remains exceptional in its representation of the lived experience of Karachi's working poor and the marginalized. Its subject matter challenges the prevalent paradigm in Pakistan studies that is cluttered with books on either Islam, the debates surrounding the independence movement, political biographies or the machinations of the post-colonial state. In contrast this noteworthy book refreshingly concentrates on the social history of Karachi, the industrial and commercial hub of the Pakistan and the most ethnically diverse city with a long history of labour politics.

Analysing these processes, Shaheed sensitizes us to the confluence of ethnicity and its relationship to labour and working-class struggles that have historically shaped the political and social growth of the city. This argument has contemporary significance as the text in addition to detailing Karachi's labour struggles in the early 1970s contributes to the understanding of the social development that led to the substantive decline of labour and class based politics and the concurrent emergence of a politics increasingly shaped by issues of ethnic, religious, gendered and sectarian differences in contemporary Pakistan.

There are at least two narrative strands that the book brings together. One is the historical and structural story that is fairly well-known. The author traces the relationship between the state and working-class politics. Zaheer shows how, at independence in 1947, the lack of industrialization in Pakistan was mirrored by the weakness of organized industrial labour and the peasantry. In the early years the state initiated industrial projects that were then transferred to the private sector at bargain prices. On the one hand, the collusion of the bureaucracy and industrialists was manifested in facilitating the finances for expansion of

industrial houses, while on the other this alliance kept the wage rates down and insured industrial peace by brutal suppression of the working class. By the late 1960s, however, the entire structure, built on large inflow of foreign capital, began to weaken. Ayub Khan's (1958–1969) much heralded “decade of development” hence came to an abrupt end when in 1968–1969 students, intellectuals, the urban poor, and the working classes participated in a massive civil disobedience movement. As a result of these disturbances a new military regime came into power with the promise of social and political reform.

Shaheed's book concentrates on these years of labour activism when moribund and underground unions started coming to life. New alliances were made as left-leaning groups and student activists assisted the working-class leadership in reorganizing their trade unions. As much as this period was filled with hope for a more egalitarian future, the state's policy remained geared toward preventing strikes and lockouts so that industrial production would continue unhampered. Legal proceedings in military courts and arrests of labour leaders, workers and other pro-democracy activists persisted unabated along with industrialists receiving virtual freedom to retrench workers.

Parallel to this more structural argument is the second strand in the narrative that focuses on working-class lives in communities and in work spaces. The author narrates how Karachi's post-independence (1947) population increase, due to immigration from India and the subsequent labour migration from northern parts of Pakistan, led to ethnic and social heterogeneity. In immediate-post-independence Pakistan, the Mohajirs (migrants from India, mainly Urdu-speaking), being more educated and having previous experience of industrial labor and urban life, soon became the majority of the rank-and-file industrial workers. They eventually populated the industrial complexes and multinational firms, where working conditions were better. The up-country migrant labourers mostly worked in the textile mills, where working conditions were far worse.

In the most empirically grounded sections of the book, the author details how, in the 1960s, jobbers, who as agents of factory owners, recruited men from certain specific districts in North West Frontier Province (NWFP) or Southern Punjab and through economic and social coercion guaranteed a docile and disciplined workforce to specific factory managements. The invigorated labour movement in 1968–1969 sought to organize these workers, who until then had mostly known management-controlled unions (popularly called pocket unions), into supporting more independent trade unions. Shaheed, through a theoretical discussion based on a patron–client relationship paradigm, helps us understand the various forms of trade-union leadership active in this era. There were those aligned with the industrialists; there were the professional trade-union leaders who functioned primarily as middle-men (labour lawyers) between the working masses and the government's sponsored highly bureaucratized system of labor arbitration, and finally there were labour leaders who rose from among the workers themselves. His two excellent case studies ethnographically capture the changing power dynamics of trade-union leadership in the early 1970s and show how the labour movement created shopfloor leaders who were more sincere and organically linked to working-class causes.

In addition to introducing us to workplace realities, Shaheed's text emphasizes that to understand the complexity of working-class lives and politics we need also to pay attention to the communities where workers live. This is methodologically and substantively an important argument, as the author, by following events and the everyday lives of certain working-class actors, clearly demonstrates that much of the militancy and class solidarity that was produced in the late 1960s was due to organizing in these communities. Within this larger context, in an important section of the book, Shaheed helps us understand the specific labour movement that unfolded in the first few months of 1972. The timing of the labour movement coincided with one of the most vulnerable periods in Pakistani history. The division of the country and the overthrow of a dictatorial regime opened up a political space for radical change that was unprecedented in the nation's life. The author argues that during

this movement the working class for the first time shed its narrow economic demands and confronted the state for broader political gains.

The author has a deft and clear writing style which he punctuates with his wry sense of humour. Those who know Urdu will be amused by the pseudonyms he gives to various actors in trade-union politics, names that help describe the personality traits of these characters. Humour aside, the issue of pseudonyms, although justified by the author (an ethical social science practice) as protecting his informants, in this case may not have been the best strategy. As some decades have past, the memory of these events has been erased from public discourse. Having an awareness of who exactly acted in what capacity would have been beneficial for lay readers and academics alike, in order to understand the contribution of specific personalities in confronting the state machinery (or colluding with it). Further obscuring names of working-class informants, political actors, and even the names of factory managers and owners makes it more difficult for a new set of scholars to research that very important moment in Pakistan's history; an era that made imagining other political futures possible, yet remains under-researched to this day.

Finally, despite being attuned to the sociological language of the 1970s, the deterministic and sociological debates on working-class formation and the production of class-consciousness, the text's empirical evidence clearly points toward the splits within the working class itself that were present just beneath the surface. Regardless of the analytical orientation, Shaheed's text hints at the differences based on political affiliation, region, language, and ethnicity that were dividing the working class in this period, even as there were simultaneous efforts to consolidate a united front of working-class rights by some trade union leaders and radical political activists. It would have served some purpose if Shaheed had consulted works by Jacques Ranciere, Joan Scott, or Dipesh Chakrabarty, to name a few academics whose contributions in the 1980s helped theoretically rethink labour history, including the teleological paradigm that the author partly adheres to. This may have been a major undertaking for a person who earns his livelihood outside academia, perhaps further delaying the book's publication.

So, with this caveat, one must admit that the text in hand is a unique contribution not only for those interested in Pakistan's labour movement, but those who are interested in reading an excellent urban ethnography and social history of Karachi. As the author himself suggests, it will open up avenues for future research and hopefully many will take up the challenge.

Kamran Asdar Ali

AUYERO, JAVIER. *Routine Politics and Violence in Argentina. The Gray Zone of State Power.* [Cambridge Studies in Contentious Politics.] Cambridge University Press, Cambridge [etc.] 2007. xviii, 190 pp. £38.00; \$70.00; doi:10.1017/S0020859008003830

In April 2002, then again in mid-2003, I spent some time in Argentina researching that country's mass experimentation with barter.¹ Like many, I had been inspired by the uprisings of December 2001, and the seeming mass repudiation of the doctrinaire prescriptions of the IMF. As De la Rúa was forced to flee the Casa Rosada in a helicopter, it seemed like the fall of the neo-liberal wall – and I was lucky enough to experience the aftermath. I was inspired by what I saw and heard, but I could also taste and feel, almost primevally, a background air of menace in the air. I began to understand that what I had

1. Peter North, *Money and Liberation: The Micropolitics of Alternative Currency Movements* (Minneapolis, MN, 2007), pp. 149–173.