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BROKERAGE AND POLITICAL SOCIETY IN URBAN PUNJAB: A POST -COLONIAL PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

This article seeks to explore and discuss the complex issues of post-colonial democracy and the role of political brokerage in it. The paper argues that it is highly problematic to explain post-colonial democracy through the prism of western normative theories since the post-colonial state formation and its historical trajectories are entirely different from the history of western state formation. Based on field work in one of the neighbourhoods of Sialkot, Punjab, the article explains that the political broker/mediator plays pivotal role in post-colonial democracies like Pakistan. It explains how a broker negotiates with bureaucracy and government officials on behalf of the common people who do not have an easy access to the government departments by engaging political parties/leaders. The brokers are the key players in democratic process. The arguments does not fit into the normative theoretical grid hence we cannot analytically rely on the normative theorization to explain the post-colonial democracy.

KEYWORDS

Post Colonialism, Democracy, Political Society, Brokerage, Urban Punjab

1. INTRODUCTION

Politics is a comprehensive phenomenon. It is not well understood without paying attention to its fragments. Politics is the sum total of its smaller realities or the political contingencies. Its total existence is incumbent upon its fragments. This is how we can better understand politics, state, democracy and their relationship with its citizens and subjects. Understanding the parts of the whole gives a true insight of the bigger reality. In order to understand politics of the post-colonial states, we may never afford to take into account the small contingencies and the peculiarities of such states that are relatively different form the western theorization of state and democracy. Political mediation, brokerage and informal networks of mediation are seen to be the key features of post-colonial states. It is hard to comprehend the nature of such states, if we ignore such important facets of post-colonial states.

When we get deep into the small realities, the very first lesson we draw is that the western and liberal conception of state cannot be applied as it is, on the postcolonial states, by virtue of their different constituent parts, historical trajectories and nature. Though liberal theory has influenced the politics in postcolonial states but it does not suffice to twig the post-colonial political peculiarities (Witsoe, 2011). It is not the best approach to apply western theorization of democracy without customization of the post-colonial democracies which are entirely different from the liberal approach of democracy and state. If we do so the results are destined to be misleading. It is easily observed when we conduct small ethnographies on democracy and politics of post-colonial states. It uncovers how people experience democracy in their specific vernacular context and everyday practices.

This paper in the preceding pages will discuss a) the patronage literature b) how the political society functions in Pakistan and c) what it informs us about the state-society relations in Urbanizing Pakistani Punjab..

2. POST-COLONIAL DEMOCRACIES; AN OVERVIEW

There have been different ethnographical studies highlighting, how government institutions operate within specific political and cultural locales. Government institutions/departments operate in their own cultural contexts. There have been ethnographies in which government institutions are seen beyond institutional and formal settings. Research also highlights, how these institutions interact with the cultural context and everyday practices (Witsoe, 2011). That is how the post-colonial experience of 'state formation is relatively different from its European counterpart (Witsoe, 2011).

Partha Chatterjees's work (2004) in this regard is a paramount and an important milestone in studying post-colonial democracy and political culture. His very idea of separating the 'civil society' from 'political society' is an overriding conception in postcolonial studies. Though the post-colonial state formed and represented itself by constitutional structures, procedures and the law but the way state interacts with people could only be understood through the everyday practices.

It runs through mediation necessarily the political mediation; he refers it as 'political society' which disputes with the idea of 'civil society'. 'Civil society' as he suggests is elitist in its nature. The political mediation and the 'political society' do not align itself with the conception of 'civil society' and it sometimes seems deviating from its core characteristics. That is how the state operates in its peculiar cultural milieu. In post-colonial countries the masses use the mediation to exercise their freedom. He also refers it as a 'post-colonial govern-mentality' (Chatterjee, 2004). The idea of political society cannot always be viewed as an ideal political arrangement but that's how democracy works in different post-colonial contexts.

Democracy works uniquely different in post-colonial states. It is not best to view democracy with its western conception since it could never give a clearer and deeper understanding of democracy, political process and state. An overwhelming reliance on the western normative theorization is absolutely faulty and defective. Such intellectual biases (Gupta & Sharma, 1995) may also lead to erroneous conclusions on the post-colonial democracies. Such biases may also cause a dearth of research on the real practices (Ito 2017, 51) because the issues are considered already settled and theorized.

For a better understanding of post-colonial democracy it is imperative to understand the 'cultural constitution' (Gupta & Sharma, 1995) of those societies. It has to be viewed and analyzed in a background which has shaped the larger political culture of the particular state (Witsoe, 2011). How state is imagined or conceptualized by the people shapes their connection with it (Gupta & Sharma, 1995). Western normative lenses may not be able to give a deeper understanding of the post-colonial democracy. An over reliance on liberal conception of post-colonial democracy also serve as deterrence against the localized and grounded political struggles, movements and processes that definitely do not fit into the liberal conception of civil society and bureaucratic 'morality'. It is because that the post-colonial democracy works in entirely different kinds of state. It has an entirely different historical contexts, processes and trajectories than the western liberal states. Post-colonial democracy cannot be conceptualized through liberal theorization of democracy because it does not suffice to understand the post-colonial 'political realities' (Witsoe, 2011). Chatterjee notes that state in post-colonial context is highly dependent on political mediation which he referred as 'political society' dissimilar to his explanation of 'civil society' (Chatterjee, 2004). It is almost impossible to grasp the contingencies of the post-colonial democracy without acknowledging the cultural context of that particular state, which may also be referred as 'cultural constitution' of state (Gupta & Sharma, 1995). The liberal theorization of democracy at least on paper promises the equality of citizenship but the post-colonial context is entirely different, where democracy and governmental activities take social stratification into account. Those with good knowledge and influence are most likely to get their work done more efficiently (Chatterjee, 2004: Paley, 2002). According to the very idea of civil society contrary to Chatterjee's political society state ought to treat its citizen without any discrimination, whereas, in reality the state bureaucracy does consider individuals' religion, caste, status and class while responding to him/her. The state may not respond marginalized people equally well the way it treats and responds to the privileged.

So those who do not have access to government departments and those who lack the knowledge of their 'rights', they need some kind of mediation, mediation of those who have 'knowledge and influence' (Chatterjee, 2004: Paley, 2002: Barrenschot, 2011) in the government and its departments. Will then the western normative conceptualization of democracy help us understand how democracy may work in such kinds of milieu? It might not! The western oriented scholarship paid less attention to brokerage and mediation (Barrenschot, Hanani & Sambodho, 2018). The role of mediator/broker is quite pivotal in many of the post-colonial democracies such as Pakistan. A political broker serves as an informal connection between state and the masses. This connection breeds from the electoral process and the access to goods and services (Auerbach & Tahchill, 2018). Jaffery Witseo refers him as a person who mediates many peoples 'access to government departments. A broker is a facilitator between the people and the government and he has the skill and knowledge. Through him many people experience the state and democracy and he can better mediate and facilitate the masses' access to the government departments. He bridges the gap between people and state and is well integrated in political system. He is not an office holders yet exercises significant influence in everyday official functioning (Witsoe 2011, 47-49). Broker is also termed as mediator and fixer who use his social capital to help the poorer citizens to access the government institutions (Barrenschot, Hanani & Sambodho, 2018)

Broker serves as an agent and a connection among the people, political society and government's departments. He uses his political agency to access government departments on behalf of the

people who do not have access to bureaucracy. Bureaucracy does not take marginalized people seriously without broker and mediator. Frequent elections help him engage with political society to negotiate his way through the system. The broker uses his influence of political parties to be recognized and accepted in the bureaucracy, since the elective representative can directly influence the function of government practices. The Voters tend to elect people who could get for them the access to government services (Witsoe, 2011). The 'civil society' may consider it a deviation whereas it fits in the very idea of Chatterjee's political society where the politicians are potentially powerful to influence the governments 'every day practices. That is the specificity of post-colonial democracy which does not fit in the civil societies' standard operating procedures.

3. INTRODUCING THE CONTEXT

I will explain the role of broker in Pakistani democracy and his centrality in a 'patronage democracy' (Chandra, 2004). In my ethnography the broker is quite dynamic; he uses political parties and his political influence strategically to get his way through bureaucracy and government departments. His allegiance to political parties is lenient and flexible. He keeps on changing parties and has nexus with multiple political actors. He with the help of political society gets the work of his people done. Unlike slums in Bengal (Chatterjee, 2004) the demands and works of his people are not that extra-legal but the kind of bureaucracy and the government structures do not allow them get their work done without mediation which the broker provides them. Election is very crucial in this entire process; it knits them with each other.

It's an ethnography of 'Gujjar Nagar' .one of an urban neighborhoods of Sialkot, Punjab. Almost all of them belong to Gujjar quom. They are well connected with each other, residents and also embedded within the networks of familiarity extended outside the neighborhood. The neighborhood is highly political and people sit together on tea stalls and discuss local or national politics. I heard someone commenting that in rest of the areas of Sialkot, people are political only during the elections but in Gujjar Nagar election season is always on. They desperately wait for elections and keep planning and discussing elections especially the local bodies' elections. The groupings also exist that are normally revolved around political parties. During elections there is a festivity everywhere and people enjoy a lot during the election days. There are frequent drum beats and Bhangras (Traditional Dance) on political songs during election campaigns. There is a group led by Neiamat Gujjar in the same neighborhood. People mostly vote whoever, Neiamat Gujjar would support who is a political activist cum broker. He serves as a link between people and bureaucracy/officials. He has connections with almost all major political parties and asks his voters to cast vote for a particular party or an individual. The people vote for him even though he keeps on changing parties. In response he gets their work done, which is usually not easy for people to accomplish on their own.

He also has an access inside different governmental departments i.e. identity cards offices, passports offices, schools, health department, hospitals and 'Kacheri' (local courts and the chambers of the lawyers).He even has an access in private business companies where he gets the work of his supporters done. He gets his work done from the private organizations like hospitals, schools, factories through his political connections. The kind of work he gets for his people are normally legal and genuine but if people try themselves it would take a lot of time and involve red-tapism. So in order to avoid the pain they 'delegate' their work to Paen (elder brother) the popular

name of Neiamat Gujjar. They give him certain amount as well and he gets their work completed for them. That's how they conceptualize bureaucracy, politics, democracy and elections.

In response they offer their political support to Paen. He further offers political support to different political parties for his smooth sailing in bureaucracy. One of his supporters responded that it's better to give him an amount as if they visit government departments themselves, it would take money as well as a lot of time and there are less chance that they would get a positive response. It is also cost-effective. Remember! Neiamat Gujjaris too busy in peoples' work, does not have any other source of income, the people pay him for his work (See Witsoe, 2011). Traditionally, he was the worker of a political party but later he changed his strategy because he had to get his voters intact which were not possible otherwise. In last few years he had asked his voters to vote for Pakistan Muslim League (N) (PML N), Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) a religio-political party and Pakistan Tehreek Insaaf (PTI). He always happened to be successful in securing considerable votes for the concerned parties and candidates. The most interesting example was the case of JI. JI has never secured even a single vote from the area but he happened to be successful for getting more than three hundred votes in his areas which was considerable number. People didn't bother the parties, they responded that they would vote who Paen would ask them to do. There is little room left for ideology, macro politics, and political affiliation when it comes to everyday work and practices. Their work is the prime motive (Barrenschot, 2011).

4. BROKERAGE AND POLITICAL SOCIETY: AN ETHNOGRAPHY

A forty five years old lady did not have an Identity Card. When she visited there the concerned department they asked her to produce the old Identity Card which she did not have. She didn't know what to do. She neither had an idea how to proceed nor did the concerned officials guided her properly on the issue. There must have been a procedure and it was the duty of the officials to guide her properly since it was her right as a citizen of the state. She talked to Neiamat who promised to fix the issue for her. The next day she went to the concerned department along with Neiamat Gujjar and the government officials' attitude was quite different and encouraging. She was treated differently because she visited the office with Neiamat, a broker, a mediator. Neiamat Gujjar already knew the procedure to get the identity cards in such cases. She, with the help of Neiamat Gujjar completed the procedures. Her application was submitted and the card was in her hand within few days. It seemed almost impossible for her to get the card which turned possible with the help of Neiamat Gujjar. When I asked Neiamat Gujjar for this particular case, he responded in his typical style as it was not a big deal for him (*Aye te koi gal e nai*) and he did it through proper legal procedure which the lady was not well acquainted.

It seemed as it was one of the easiest tasks for him since he got it through easily. He is known as one of the 'banda' (man) of a local politician who was also an elected representative (member of the parliament) of a ruling party. He told me that in the beginning he always needed the reference of that politician but latter developed a reputation of being a representative of that legislator. He also explained that it was the responsibility of the government personnel to guide the common people on such issues but they did not do until someone goes with the people (*koi banda naal na jawe*). The 'someone' means, a politically connected person may it be a broker or an elected representative. He also boasted that this was the way to get the work through (*kam inj e hundy ney faer*). The lady also said that she along with her family would always vote whom Neiamat Gujjar

would ask them to do. She said, “He was our party; he was our leader because he helped us in our official works” (Naimat e sadi party ay. Aye e sada leader aye, aye sady kam krda aye). “We do not face issues because of him”, she emphasized again. It was a right of a woman but the government officials did not respond her properly as per the rights on the papers (See Chatterjee 2004: Martin, 2013). Bureaucracy did not work according to the bureaucratic morality and rational as written in the papers. Quite contrary to Weberian rationality bureaucracy sees different people differently, behaves differently. It functions through highly personalized structure and which is permeable (Akhter, 2017). Unlike the normative theory explains, it does see the status of an individual.

Though the liberal democracies promised equality of citizenship, but the ethnographies revealed that inequalities do play out when it comes to everyday practices of state (Paley, 2002). That is what I observed in this case where the woman who was supposed to be treated equal by the government officials whereas she was denied equal treatment until she was accompanied with a broker. The same work was done efficiently through the mediation of a politically well-connected broker. He did it through one of legislators of PML (N) the ruling party. He supported him in elections as a response of his support. That’s where the political society plays its role, quite differently from ‘civil society’. In response the lady would extend her and her families’ support in elections to Neiamat Gujjar who will surely get the votes casted for the same legislator. The connection is not that complex.

One of the voters of Neiamat Gujjar, Zahid Hussain told me that his father was seriously sick, he took him to hospital but the doctors and the staff neither examined him properly nor let him know if there was anything serious about his health. They simply did not bother him. He called Neiamat Gujjar, who reached hospital in few minutes. He took Zahid along with him and reached the office of Medical Superintendent (MS) of the hospital. He introduced himself as a personal secretary of one of the legislator of the ruling party PML (N). The legislator had already talked to the MS on phone to favor to Neiamat Gujjar. The MS warmly welcomed both of them and even offered tea. Zahid told me that he was dazed to see the response of both doctors and staff later. He said that he felt as he was in a private hospital. Zahid’s father was properly examined and admitted to the ward where he was given special care. The care he was offered after he was referred by Neiamat Gujjar was entirely different from the previous treatments. That’s where the political mediation changed the situation for the patient and his family. Zahid and his family were extremely thankful to Neiamat Gujjar. One of the ways to thank him was to vote for him and that they obliged for that courtesy.

Zahid asked me why he should not have voted for him the person who came to his help when he was in extremely difficult situation. Neiamat used his political connection to get the special care for Zahid’s father which they deserved. It was his fundamental right as a citizen of state which was denied until a broker came to mediate. He ultimately would get votes of that family for the legislator of the party who approached MS to offer them special favor. They would vote for him, would send their male members in political processions and demonstrations along with Neiamat. They are his real strength as he once boasted (Aiho e log mera sarmaya ne). Though the proper care and treatment was the fundamental right of Zahid and the hospital staff was responsible to treat them on merit according to the weberian rationality but he was denied until the political society came to intervene. The government officials did see the status of the Zahid and Neiamat Gujjar and responded accordingly. That’s how the bureaucracy and government departments generally behave.

Political brokers did help Zahid access the better facilities provided by the government through his political connections. He had both knowledge and skills to influence the situation (Witsoe, 2012).

In the same neighborhood the residents required a collective public good. They wanted to renew their street which because of wear and tear and presence of pot-holes became difficult to pass. The sewerage system was the real culprit as it has made the street look like a running pond. The residents made a type of representative committee to find a solution to this problem. This committee met many local politicians, administrators and other influential but nothing worked for them. They requested different influential people but in vain. There came elections and Neiamat Gujjar took that as an opportunity to get the street reconstructed. He supported the candidate of PML (N) the ruling party and arranged a corner meeting in the same neighborhood. The candidate of PML (N) promised to reconstruct the street after the election. In the same meeting some of the enthusiastic voters chanted slogan in favor of Neiamat and proclaimed that they would vote on behalf of Neiamat and he devotedly announced in favor of the candidate announcing that it would be his responsibility to get the street constructed. It seems as it was already planned. The people voted the candidate of the PML (N) and he won the election. Soon after his victory he got the amount passed for the street and the construction had started. The very same area has an issue of electrical wires that was also resolved by installing new electric wires with the help of the same political leader. The issues of street and electric wires were resolved within months which they had been trying for years through 'proper channels'. It was their fundamental right as citizens of state and the government should have done it without any mediation as the western normative conception of the state would argue. But it did not happen without the mediation of a broker and involvement of the political society. One of the youngsters explained that they tried their best to get the mentioned work (s) done, they registered complaints, forwarded applications in different offices but nobody was ready to listen to them. That's the common practice of bureaucracy in post-colonial states that it normally uses delay tactic and don't really respond to the poor people (Barenschot, 2011). It was only through Neiamat that took place within days. He emphasized that he was everything for them (Sady waste sb kuch aiho ne). The boy also expressed that they sometimes vote for the party they did not really like, they did it for Paen. This is how people sometimes transcend the party affiliation and political ideologies. They will in general stay concerned about the local issues like sanitation, street, road and clean water etc (Martin, 2013). The local issues seem transcending the broader political issues of ideology or narratives etc (Zaidi, 2018; Barenschot, 2011). This is not the case of the voter alone, this is even true when it comes to traditional politicians who love to remain in power. For them political loyalties and ideologies are something that could be compromised (Rais, 2017). Neiamat is very active in that area, he even mitigates and resolves their family issues along with the tasks in government departments ranging from the treatment in hospitals to school admission for their children and mitigating the issues between two brothers to the issues of divorce settlements.

Though the local leadership of PML (N) was not happy with him because he tactically managed to remain intact with other political parties but he happened to be successful in maintaining the good ties with one of the key leaders of PML (N). He sought his help where required. In his speech, during in an election campaign, he reiterated that he was the key worker of PML (N) and would continue to extend unconditional support to the party. He acknowledged in the presence of higher leadership that he had differences with the local leadership of PML (N). That's why he supported

other parties in different elections. He was in fact his attempt to justify his support for PTI during the local bodies' election and his support for Jamaat-i-Islami in one of the general elections in before the higher leadership of the party.

He did not hesitate to find alternative political parties and get their support for his voters. He supported PTI in one of the local bodies' election. Let me share a story which will better explain how he used his connection with the leadership of PTI to seek help for one of his supporter in a private hospital. Bashir Ahmed had a wonderful story he shared with me and opened up new avenues for research. Once he had got an issue with his eyesight and the doctors recommended him surgery. He was a poor person and only run a tea stall. He shared this issue with Naimat Gujjar. He, by putting his arm on Bashir's shoulder, caressing his hair as a gesture of reassurance, encouraged Bashir and said, 'you would have an operation in a private hospital and you didn't need to stress over the money (Pasiyaan di pareshani ni leni) which was little unexpected for Bashir as the private hospital cost too much for such operations which was not affordable for a poor man like Bashir. Neiamat Gujjar took him to hospital and he was properly examined. The doctors treated him well, allotted him the date for operation which was still unbelievable for Bashir. He visited hospital on the given date and was properly treated and operated. Neiamat Gujjar was also present there who remained forthcoming throughout the process, meeting staff and doctors asking about the conditions of Bashir. Bashir informed me that he did not have to pay even a single penny for the operation which normally cost 50,000 rupees in the same hospital. He asked me why he should have gone to anyone else or any party for help though as Neiamat was always there to support him.

He told that he was our party (Paen e sadi party ne). He stood by them when nobody came to help them, Bashir told me. He asked me, "didn't you see him putting forth efforts for me, how much worried he was for me. He underlined, 'What else do we need then' (Sanu hoor ki chaye da). It was a matter of interest for me how brokerage worked in private sector. The influence of brokerage in government offices and department was quite common and understood but it got me quite curious how political brokerage was influential in private sectors as well. I visited Neimat Gujjar to discuss and inquire how he managed that all. He in his typical style replied that it was on his fingertips (aye te mere kabbhy hath da kam e). I insisted him on explaining me the dynamics of this work and the procedures he followed. He informed me that there were private hospitals funded by the business community of Sialkot. The funds were for the deserving people who were unable to afford the treatments. He talked to one of the city leaders of PTI to take favor for Bashir . He called hospital head to favor Neiamat . He also was not clear whether the leader of PTI personally paid in the case of Bashir or he got the favor on his regular funding for the poor people. But yet that was not the matter of concern for him. He got his work done that was all he needed. Remember! He once supported the PTI in local bodies' election and the local leaders of PTI introduced him to the city leadership of PTI. He utilized that connection for getting free treatment for Bashir. In return Bashir was his die heart supporter and he along with his family would always vote for him. Vote is their power which stimulates Neimat Gujjar to serves them.

One of the most stunning aspects of this ethnography was his support for Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) a religious political party. Despite of the fact that he had no association with the ideological tenets of JI yet he once supported it for political reason since its candidate was well connected in government department and could help Neiamat Gujjar in 'kacheri' where he is quite active. His support for JI was taken as an irrational choice by the people but that was very calculative decision

he took. JI got more than three hundred votes which was a precedent and even staggered JI district leadership. The party has not even secured a single vote from the area throughout the history. Nobody could even think of his an 'irrational' shift. It stunned many people as he decided not to support the mainstream popular parties the PML (N) and the PTI. It was a shock even for his supporters yet they were ready to vote JI for Paen, believing that he must have something good in his mind. Aslam, one of his supporters told me, "We are unable to comprehend why he supported JI but that's not an issue for us (Koi masla e nai) since we are not voting JI, our vote is for Paen". The voters who were not aware of the fundamental ideological tenets of JI but they trusted their Paen. They were not concerned with ideology of JI, they were concerned with their local issues, like sanitation, water, police station etc(Zaidi 2008 : Barendschot 2011). He conducted an impressive rally in the area where the JI candidate addressed and assured to resolve their local issue. Interestingly he did not even discuss the ideological tenets of his party since he knew it would not help enough or it might even turn against him as the people were suspicious of the ideology of the party. Neiamat was also on the stage and delivered an aggressive speech by challenging the local leadership of other parties which bolstered the supporters. The young supporters were dancing on drum beat (Dhool ki Thaap) which was unprecedented in JI's rallies. He motivated the JI leader to promise to serve the voters who dared to swing against the tide. He happened to be successful in securing more than three hundred votes for the JI candidate which even stunned JI city leadership. It was the most impressive result in the constituency for JI and the candidate was quite satisfied. The JI candidate was very impressive and influential in the city and he was a lawyer as well. The decision paid him a lot as in the case of Ramzan Package, support to his voters in establishing small business and JI candidates' day to day support in the Kuthery. JI candidate contested the cases of Neiamats' supporters for free.

JI distributes Ramzan Package among the poor during the month of Ramzan and it distributes it through its representatives in the areas. Since there was no formal representative of the party in the area so when the Ramzan Package was dispatched he took the charge of distributing the package. The package was for the poor and marginalized of the society. Neiamat Gujjar identified the poor but his own people for distributing the package. He personally visited the people along with his companion and distributed the packets among the poor. He also informed me that he took some 10,000 rupees for Siddique one of his very poor supporters who purchased a cart 'Reri' and started a small his business. I also confirmed from Siddique who was very happy for the 'generous support' of JI through Paen. Neiamat Gujjar described me the reason of taking an 'irrational' and unpopular decision of supporting JI. He described that his main works were in the Kuthehry and Thana (police station). The JI candidate was an influential lawyer and a political activist. Neiamat Gujjar said that the JI candidate came to help them in different times either in Kuthery or police station (Jamaat da banda sady choty moty kam kar denda e). So the deal was quite rational in this regards which was apparently considered to be an irrational decision. Interestingly people did not even bother the ideology of JI and despite of their differences with the party, people took the local context into account. For them the local issues were more relevant to them and they acted vernacularly.

5. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, post-colonial experience of democracy is different from the western normative theorization of democracy. It is almost impossible to understand democracy and its multi-layered

processes through the lenses of western conception of democracy and democratic processes. Approaching post-colonial democracy through western normative theory will make it complicated to understand the vernacular democratic cultures of post-colonial democracy such as Pakistan and India. It is because the process of state formations, historical trajectories and social structures are uniquely diverse. Democracy does serve the masses but through mediation and patronage. Democracy is 'politics of the governed' (Chatterjee, 2004). The informal structures are extremely important in post-colonial bureaucratic apparatus. Informality perhaps is peculiar to post-colonial government-mentality and mediation/brokerage is one of the key features of informality. The role of brokers is central in Pakistani democracy where broker is well-connected both politically and administratively. The broker through political society help people access the government departments. Elections enable him to bargain and connect with the political society and political leaders. The politicians have the power to influence the day to day function of the governments and they can directly influence the day to day function of the government departments (Witsoe, 2012). This is how the brokers, on behalf of the electoral strengths engage with political society and get the patronage for his people. It best fits in the idea of Chatterjees' political society where the politicians are potentially powerful to influence the governments' every day practices. That is the specificity of the post-colonial democracy which is usually taken as a deviation in western normative framework.

I observed that the common people faced challenges in accessing the government departments. It is difficult and sometimes impossible for them to get their legal and genuine works done through proper procedures laid in the bureaucratic proceedings. They should not have faced the issues in getting their accessing the government departments since it's their rights and the governments officials are supposed to serve them as the rights on the paper suggest. But it is other way around. They most often need influential individuals that are well informed about the government functions and equally skilled enough to get through to help them access in the government departments and facilitate their official works. He may be a corporation councilor, union council chairman, lawyer or a worker of a political party or an independent broker. He the broker has an easy access to the government offices due to his connection with different political parties and leaders since the political leaders can influence the everyday practices of the departments. In this very case the broker gets the works of his voters done tactically by using his connections in different political parties. This perhaps is a very unique case since the broker is not permanently a worker of any political party. He is very much a part of the political process and used his political agency tactically. He was earlier a worker of PML (N) but later he kept changing the parties. When asked about shifting parties he replied "I am concerned with my peoples 'work that does not make any difference how and from where I get these works done. In response the people give me respect, they vote for the parties I asked them to do. They are also concerned with their works that I do. That's the story (Aini ko gal aye) .In all the cases I referred above, he got his work done through different political parties.

I also argued that though the grounded politics is connected with the macro politics but at time the localized or a vernacular politics gets itself disengaged from the macro political issues and the appeals of the political parties. Democracy does pay them but through local networks of patronage and political society. Sometimes, they may not vote the party they like. That's how democracy plays out in the local context. It's not about good and bad, it's how democracy plays out in post-

colonial states. The people do show their concerns for broader political issues but the local dynamics overshadows the mass popular slogans and ideological appeals of the political parties. The local political climate is more pervasive when it comes to electoral choices. They are quite rational in making their electoral choices in their own circle of influence. They are rational in their electoral choices and do seek benefit by organizing themselves and strengthening their 'bargaining positions' (Mohmand, 2019). In my final analysis I would strongly recommend to reconsider the approach towards democracy and the complex democratic processes in post-colonial society. The liberal theorization does not have the answers; the answers lie within those societies.

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