

Abstracts



*An Investigation into Micro-Foundations of Power:
Inter-group Politics in Rawalpindi's Middle-Class
Trader Families*

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This study will aim to explore the politics and evolving dynamics of the middle-class trader families based in Pakistani Punjab to fathom their political subjectivity. The research will elucidate how intragroup politics are maneuvered, why they are important in the specific context and how they become part of the community's distinct culture and identity. In addressing these questions this research aims to delineate political subjectivity of this segment of middle-class in Pakistan. This segment of society however politically remote and secluded may appear but its members are conscious of their political subjectivity. This conjuncture will be reflected by looking at their worldview and standpoints towards the state that will explain the political reality and consciousness of this segment of middleclass. This work will delineate the insularity of this subgroup as they consciously mute themselves in the socio-political realms of the society by becoming seemingly unaffected by systematic changes hence being neutral to (any) progressive social or political changes.

*Electoral Politics in Canal-Irrigated Baluchistan,
Pakistan*

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In this paper, I argue that the kinds of political organization and electoral participation at the village level in the canal-irrigated Baluchistan are based on land, blood, and water relations. I will show through my case studies of big-landlord, small-landlord, and peasant-proprietor villages how all of these factors come together to influence the nature of the political organization and participation of voters in the area. I show that small-landlords and peasant-proprietors employ kinship relations to increase their chances of accessing state resources in contrast to big-landlords who use land relations to coerce their peasants to vote for their candidate. I add to my argument by maintaining that even though kinship and land relations are fundamental to the (non-) existence of political organization at the village level and success of voters in accessing state resources, yet they are not sufficient to explain diverse forms of political participation in all villages. Therefore, I will also focus on water to explain how closeness to the source of water and who one shares it with has an impact on the village and union council level political organization, which subsequently affects the chances of a particular vote block to successfully access state resources.

*Development as Dependency:
Bauxit Mining in Jharkhand*

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This study seeks to examine the practical significance of “development as ideology” in the mineral-bearing regions and how it gets shaped by intra- and inter-class relations. Based on two years of ethnographic fieldwork in a bauxite-rich, flat-topped plateau of Gumla district of Jharkhand state in India, this paper illuminates the evolution of relationship between a mining company and local *adivasi* communities and accompanying negotiations over the last three decades. It illustrates that development in the mining region is operationalized through the use of compensation which meets a dual need: it makes financial resources available to landowners, which, in turn, provides private capital access to natural resources. Compensation, thus, forms the unity of the opposite interests of capital and labor. I argue that the constant struggle between capital and labor ensures the continuity of development which essentially manifests itself in the form of an ever-increasing dependency of the local population on the market alongside the architecture of control and oppression.

*Between Islam and State: Genealogy of Muslim
Subject Formation in South India*

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Muslim engagement with modern Nation-States is a contested terrain in the academic and non-academic discussions, spanning through Islam’s (in-)commensurability with democracy, secularism, modernity, and civil society. Scholars have attempted to analyse the nuances, but most of those studies focus on Muslim-majority countries. Malabar, the swathe in South India, where the local Muslim community established a local Caliphate briefly for five months in 1921, is a potential region to examine some of the critical issues concerning the relationship between Islam and State in a Muslim minority context. The study primarily uses the textual analysis of archival materials, namely the jurisprudential engagements of Muslim scholars during the colonial and post-colonial contexts, to understand the genealogy of Muslim subject formation in South India in relation to the State.