

NAJEEB A. JAN

THE METACOLONIAL STATE



Pakistan, Critical Ontology,
the Biopolitical Horizons of Political Islam

7095491
AN

WILEY





The Metacolonial State

5/9/2024
TOM
FAC



PERDANA
LEADERSHIP
FOUNDATION
YAYASAN
KEPIMPINAN
PERDANA

Antipode Book Series

Series Editors: Vinay Gidwani, University of Minnesota, USA, and Sharad Chari, University of California, Berkeley, USA

Like its parent journal, the Antipode Book Series reflects distinctive new developments in radical geography. It publishes books in a variety of formats – from reference books to works of broad explication to titles that develop and extend the scholarly research base – but the commitment is always the same: to contribute to the praxis of a new and more just society.

Published

The Metacolonial State: Pakistan, Critical Ontology, and the Biopolitical Horizons of Political Islam
Najeeb A. Jan

Frontier Assemblages: The Emergent Politics of Resource Frontiers in Asia
Edited by Jason Cons and Michael Eilenberg

Other Geographies: The Influences of Michael Watts
Edited by Sharad Chari, Susanne Freidberg, Vinay Gidwani, Jesse Ribot, and Wendy Wolford

Money and Finance After the Crisis: Critical Thinking for Uncertain Times
Edited by Brett Christophers, Andrew Leyshon and Geoff Mann

Frontier Road: Power, History, and the Everyday State in the Colombian Amazon
Simón Uribe

Enterprising Nature: Economics, Markets and Finance in Global Biodiversity Politics
Jessica Dempsey

Global Displacements: The Making of Uneven Development in the Caribbean
Marion Werner

Banking Across Boundaries: Placing Finance in Capitalism
Brett Christophers

The Down-deep Delight of Democracy
Mark Purcell

Gramsci: Space, Nature, Politics
Edited by Michael Ekers, Gillian Hart, Stefan Kipfer and Alex Loftus

Places of Possibility: Property, Nature and Community Land Ownership
A. Fiona D. Mackenzie

The New Carbon Economy: Constitution, Governance and Contestation
Edited by Peter Newell, Max Boykoff and Emily Boyd

Capitalism and Conservation
Edited by Dan Brockington and Rosaleen Duffy

Spaces of Environmental Justice
Edited by Ryan Holifield, Michael Porter and Gordon Walker

The Point is to Change it: Geographies of Hope and Survival in an Age of Crisis

Edited by Noel Castree, Paul Chatterton, Nik Heynen, Wendy Larner and Melissa W. Wright

Privatization: Property and the Remaking of Nature-Society
Edited by Becky Mansfield

Practising Public Scholarship: Experiences and Possibilities Beyond the Academy
Edited by Katharyne Mitchell

Grounding Globalization: Labour in the Age of Insecurity
Edward Webster, Rob Lambert and Andries Bezuidenhout

Privatization: Property and the Remaking of Nature-Society Relations
Edited by Becky Mansfield

Decolonizing Development: Colonial Power and the Maya
Joel Wainwright

Cities of Whiteness
Wendy S. Shaw

Neoliberalization: States, Networks, Peoples
Edited by Kim England and Kevin Ward

The Dirty Work of Neoliberalism: Cleaners in the Global Economy

Edited by Luis L. M. Aguiar and Andrew Herod

David Harvey: A Critical Reader
Edited by Noel Castree and Derek Gregory

Working the Spaces of Neoliberalism: Activism, Professionalisation and Incorporation
Edited by Nina Laurie and Liz Bondi

Threads of Labour: Garment Industry Supply Chains from the Workers' Perspective
Edited by Angela Hale and Jane Wills

Life's Work: Geographies of Social Reproduction
Edited by Katharyne Mitchell, Sallie A. Marston and Cindi Katz

Redundant Masculinities? Employment Change and White Working Class Youth
Linda McDowell

Spaces of Neoliberalism
Edited by Neil Brenner and Nik Theodore

Space, Place and the New Labour Internationalism
Edited by Peter Waterman and Jane Wills

The Metacolonial State

Pakistan, Critical Ontology, and the Biopolitical Horizons of Political Islam

Najeeb A. Jan



PUSTAKA PERDANA



1013643

WILEY



This edition first published 2019
© 2019 John Wiley & Sons Ltd

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, except as permitted by law. Advice on how to obtain permission to reuse material from this title is available at <http://www.wiley.com/go/permissions>.

The right of Najeeb A. Jan to be identified as the author of this work has been asserted in accordance with law.

Registered Office(s)

John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 111 River Street, Hoboken, NJ 07030, USA
John Wiley & Sons Ltd, The Atrium, Southern Gate, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 8SQ, UK

Editorial Office

9600 Garsington Road, Oxford, OX4 2DQ, UK

For details of our global editorial offices, customer services, and more information about Wiley products visit us at www.wiley.com.

Wiley also publishes its books in a variety of electronic formats and by print-on-demand. Some content that appears in standard print versions of this book may not be available in other formats.

Limit of Liability/Disclaimer of Warranty

While the publisher and authors have used their best efforts in preparing this work, they make no representations or warranties with respect to the accuracy or completeness of the contents of this work and specifically disclaim all warranties, including without limitation any implied warranties of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose. No warranty may be created or extended by sales representatives, written sales materials or promotional statements for this work. The fact that an organization, website, or product is referred to in this work as a citation and/or potential source of further information does not mean that the publisher and authors endorse the information or services the organization, website, or product may provide or recommendations it may make. This work is sold with the understanding that the publisher is not engaged in rendering professional services. The advice and strategies contained herein may not be suitable for your situation. You should consult with a specialist where appropriate. Further, readers should be aware that websites listed in this work may have changed or disappeared between when this work was written and when it is read. Neither the publisher nor authors shall be liable for any loss of profit or any other commercial damages, including but not limited to special, incidental, consequential, or other damages.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication data applied for

9781118979372 (hardback)
9781118979389 (paperback)

Cover Designed by Stuart Allen © Wiley

Set in 10.5/12.5pt Sabon by SPi Global, Pondicherry, India
Printed in Singapore by C.O.S. Printers Pte Ltd

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

320.557095491



To Aneela, for whom no words can capture my unsayable
love and gratitude.



Contents

Series Editors' Preface	ix
Acknowledgements	xi
Introduction: <i>Islamapolis</i> : The Crisis of Islam and the Political in Pakistan	1
1 Critical Ontology: The Biopolitical Apparatus	25
2 The Space of Emergency: The Military, Discipline, and Political Theology	85
3 The Space of Law: 'Ulama, Shari'a, and the Technology of Blasphemy	119
4 The Space of War: Homo Islamicus, Body Politics, and Jihad	165
5 The Space of Exception: Nationalism and Biopolitical Sovereignty	191
Conclusion: The Metacolonial and the Space of Thinking	235
Appendix A	253
Appendix B	255
Glossary	257
References	263
Index	277



Series Editors' Preface

The *Antipode Book Series* explores radical geography 'antipodally,' in opposition, from various margins, limits or borderlands.

Antipode books provide insight 'from elsewhere', across boundaries rarely transgressed, with internationalist ambition and located insight; they diagnose grounded critique emerging from particular contradictory social relations in order to sharpen the stakes and broaden public awareness. An *Antipode* book might revise scholarly debates by pushing at disciplinary boundaries, or by showing what happens to a problem as it moves or changes. It might investigate entanglements of power and struggle in particular sites, but with lessons that travel with surprising echoes elsewhere.

Antipode books will be theoretically bold and empirically rich, written in lively, accessible prose that does not sacrifice clarity at the altar of sophistication. We seek books from within and beyond the discipline of geography that deploy geographical critique in order to understand and transform our fractured world.

Vinay Gidwani
University of Minnesota, USA

Sharad Chari
University of California, Berkeley, USA

Antipode Book Series Editors



Acknowledgements

This book, far too long in the making, remains haunted by a certain incompleteness. However, if my attempts to amplify the resonances of what began as a hint or inkling in the dissertation, find receptive play with any reader, it is only because of the incalculable support, love, encouragement, patience, and intellectual example of colleagues and friends far too numerous to mention here. Without critical financial support from the Social Science Research Council and the American Institute of Pakistan Studies, much of the research in this book would not have been possible. I must begin by thanking my dissertation committee: my co-chairs Juan Cole and Nicholas Dirks, Alexander Knysh and Barbara Metcalf, for their intellectual leadership and scholarly example. There were many other inspiring teachers and guides that shaped my trajectory while at the University of Michigan; Dr. Mustansir Mir for opening the doors to graduate school; Fernando Coronil and Ann Laura Stoler for the *Aftermath of Empire Seminars*; Gyan Pandey and Partha Chatterjee for their critical insights into postcolonialism and South Asian History.

The University of Colorado and the Department of Geography provided me with the space and resources to develop and think. I am indebted to Dennis McGilvary for making my place at Colorado possible. In particular, I must thank my department colleague Tim Oakes for his sincere guidance, support, and mentorship, and to Joe Bryan and Elizabeth Dunn, all of whom were vital to sustaining interdisciplinary conversations. While at the University of Colorado, intellectual exchanges and collaborations with numerous colleagues and graduate students, in particular the participants of the *Biopolitics Reading Group*, helped refine the arguments of this book; a special thanks to John Lewis, Deepti Misri, Michael Ferguson, Anthony Abiragi, Carla Jones, Lisa Brookes, Mason Auger, and Adam Levy. Without Mithi Mukherjee's

incredible engagement and help on the manuscript, the project may have languished much longer. In particular, Mithi's encouragement for the project and her incredible support at a most vital juncture were truly gifts.

I must also thank Asad Ali, Naveeda Khan, and Rob Rozenhal for including me in their AAA panels. Naveeda's *Pakistan Beyond Crisis* workshop at Johns Hopkins was also important in shaping the direction of this work. A special thanks also to David Gilmartin and Kathy Ewing for their support in conferences and workshops.

The central core of the book, however, was shaped by stimulating engagements and conversations at numerous AAG sessions around Geography and Ontology; Joel Wainwright, Josh Barkan, Mikko Joronen, and Stephanie Wakefield ensured the vibrancy and relevance of our discussions on Heidegger. Keith Woodward, Oliver Belcher, Noam Leshem, Anna Secour, and Claudio Minca were also vital comrades. Derek Gregroy and Stuart Eden's work were seminal in inspiring my move from history to geography.

I must also thank my two incredible editors at Wiley's *Antipode Series*, Vinay Gidwani and Sharad Chari: friends, patrons, and exemplary scholars. Without their crucial support, guidance, encouragement, and incredible patience through my interminable delays and hesitations, this book would not have seen the light of day. I am truly humbled and honored to be included in their series. A huge thanks also to the incredible folks at Wiley, and Jacqueline Scott in particular, for her incredible patience and care with this manuscript.

To Nauman Naqvi and Joel Wainwright – both paradigms of resoluteness and intellectual exemplarity – I owe incomparable debts, of love, friendship, and support. Their noumenal and phenomenal traces are everywhere in this book. In particular Joel's careful engagement, feedback, and critique were indispensable.

I would be incredibly remiss if I didn't thank my family whose endearing love and support were absolutely vital: Habib and Yasmin Jan, my wonderful parents, for all that is good in my life and Naveed, Aasma and Sumrah, without whom it would be unimaginable. To Shahida and Iqbal Beg for always being there and Mansoor Ahmed, my other guardian and spiritual father. To Amr and Mishaal, I owe the incalculable; the happiness they bring to my everyday is the vital energy sustaining all my efforts.

And finally to my wife, friend and partner, Aneela Beg Jan. The heart and backbone of my existence, her love and presence sustained me at every turn. She is truly my *le-là*.

Introduction

Islamapolis: *The Crisis of Islam and the Political in Pakistan*

Without doubt, Pakistan is today a deeply troubled space, a nation perpetually caught up in tragic headlines: sectarian killings, suicide bombings, beheadings, drone strikes, endemic corruption. A dense cite of multiple intersecting catastrophes, Pakistan is often written off as a zombie state, neither quite dead nor alive, and permanently “beyond crisis.” *The Metacolonial State* neither contests nor apologizes for this list of veritable indignities; rather it seeks an understanding of the nature of this “beyond.” At its most elemental, this book seeks to understand the virtually permanent state of exception in Pakistan in relation to the question of ontology – the emergency and abandonment of being.

This crisis in Pakistan I argue is not the outcome of Islam’s allegedly resurgent medievalism, or some essential disjuncture with the modern. Nor is this solely the crisis of Pakistan’s imbrication within a “colonial present.” Rather Pakistan’s situation is ineluctably and synchronically bound up with the unfolding of history and the play of modern forms of power. I argue that Pakistan is spectacularly paradigmatic of a broader metaphysics of power and mythical violence afflicting the globe. In part the aim here is to open up a new path of analysis under the sign of a “critical political ontology.” I seek to demonstrate the ethical and political relevance of “critical ontology” for rethinking the historical and spatial complexity of violence and power, and, more broadly, for demonstrating its vital significance for geographic, political, and historical thought. Though interdisciplinary in nature, this approach is primarily rooted in a radical rethinking of concepts otherwise central to human geography: world, space/place, biopower, governmentality, and sovereignty.

The Metacolonial State: Pakistan, Critical Ontology, and the Biopolitical Horizons of Political Islam, First Edition. Najeeb A. Jan.

© 2019 John Wiley & Sons Ltd. Published 2019 by John Wiley & Sons Ltd.



In more concrete terms, *The Metacolonial State* serves as a genealogy of the alliance between the Pakistan Army and orthodox sectarian schools within Sunni Islam. This mullah–military complex, and its subsequent entanglement with regional and global geopolitical forces, has intensified the politicization of Islam worldwide (a phenomenon most commonly associated with groups like the Taliban and al-Qaeda) and radically altered the religio-political equation in Pakistan. As perhaps the first phenomenology of political Islam, the book aims in part to provide visibility to the violent spatial architecture of the multiple, competing, and intersecting forms of local, national, and international sovereignties that destructively play out across the landscape of Pakistan. *The Metacolonial State* serves then as a *genealogy* of the specters that haunt this now almost permanent “space of exception,” a place where the violent logics of security and terrorism embrace to form a single deadly system of mutual legitimation.

Following Agamben, one of my central claims is that ontological inquiry is essential for exposing structures of violence and power which otherwise secretly govern modern ideologies seemingly most distant from one another. Islamism, like secular liberalism, is a system of thought and practice which remains caught up and “embedded in a wider history of metaphysics” of which it remains unaware. Political Islam’s ontic dissonance with the West thus belies a deep underbelly of ontological equivalences and resonances. By exposing, for instance, the metaphysical homology between beheadings and drone strikes, one of the troubling but key conclusions of the book suggests a radical indistinction between Islam and the West.

In its broadest sense *The Metacolonial State* seeks a critical understanding of power and violence at the level of language, ontology, and practice. The work is concerned not just with “Muslim violence” but also with the violence of the globe; exposing the signatures of power undergirding postcolonial life, while refusing to see Pakistan as merely the passive recipient of Western formations of power. Hence in addition to disclosing the ontological commitments undergirding the militarization and securitization of political space in Pakistan, the analysis will also seek to contribute to an understanding of the broader logics of the governmentalization and economization of all spheres of life under neoliberal biopolitical techno-capitalism. In many ways *The Metacolonial State* responds to the challenge that Foucault offered in his essay on Kant and Enlightenment: “to write a critical ontology of ourselves.” With inducements from Stuart Elden’s “Mapping the Present,” *The Metacolonial State* deploys not only a rigorous Agambenian and Foucauldian framework for the historical and political analysis of contemporary Islam and Pakistan, it also locates the problem of violence and power within the cite of a political ontology.

Critical Ontology and the Metacolonial

The task, then, of writing Pakistan's "history of the present" in terms of a critical ontology, constitutes a significant departure from most works on Pakistan and political Islam. The opening chapter, subtitled "The Biopolitical Apparatus," develops and spearheads a path of political and spatial analysis that is rooted in the voluminous work of three major social theorists and leading thinkers of the twentieth century: Martin Heidegger, Michel Foucault, and Giorgio Agamben. The chapter develops and clarifies the significance and meaning of "critical ontology," a term first used by Foucault and which, in its most succinct formulation, I understand as a concern for thinking the relation, the *polemos*, between being and power. Because reality is always already *politicized*, ontology cannot be divorced from the political as such. My contention is that the key to understanding the *obscenity* of political violence is through a disclosure of the ontological apparatus that silently undergird political and cultural practice.

As is well known, the term "critical" resonates with both crisis and critique. In this way the introduction sets up a preliminary comportment towards the *sense* and *space* of the *metacolonial* problem undertaken in this project. While I attempt a tentative development of critical ontology as a cartography or *topology of being-power*, it must be borne in mind that critical ontology is more sensibility than method – an incitement towards a way of thinking. As more of an intuitive and creative endeavor, its measure is *poiēsis* rather than *technē*. Critical ontology does not rest on discovery – of permanent structures, origins, or facts – but on disclosure. Furthermore, critical ontology resists weaponization. In this sense it bears an affinity with the more archaic understanding of "criticism," which signaled forms of inquiry at the limits of knowledge – "about precisely that which can be neither posed nor grasped."¹

The task of this book then is to introduce on the one hand the nature of critique, presupposed by a critical ontology and on the other to provide a brief history of the contemporary crisis of Pakistan in such a way that not only avoids any hint of orientalist exceptionalism but also reminds us, in a concrete and preliminary manner, that the problem space of Pakistan is coincident, politically, historically, and philosophically, with "Western" spatiality and temporality. While this is already the task assigned to postcolonial critique, the opening chapter sets the stage for thinking this problem not at the disjuncture between universality and particularity but paradigmatically, from singularity to singularity. This is the opening "methodological" gambit of the term *metacolonial*.

More significantly, from the perspective of geographical thought, the heart of critical ontology is derived from the rich *topology* of the Event

(*Ereignis*) that is the hallmark of Heidegger's latter oeuvre; hence the question of space and place are front and center in this analysis. Understood through Heidegger's crossing of the ontological difference, I define political ontology as a concern for the event of the political: a path of thinking that seeks to register the political traces of the abandonment of being. As a variant of postfoundational political theory, political ontology engages with the possibility of a proper recognition and encounter with the *ungrounding* and desubjectifying force of the ontological question. Responding to Agamben's somewhat lyrical ontopolitical maxim – that the foundations of violence lie in the violence of foundations – critical ontology, as a thought of and at the abyssal limits of language and thinking, is also a hauntology: an attempt to unmask and disclose the metaphysical ghosts that continue to haunt our current constellation of political nihilism.

Chapter 1 lays out an interpretation of Agamben's thought, which substantially challenges the existing ways in which most social scientists and theorists have appropriated his work. I aim to show how the work of Agamben (and implicitly Foucault) cannot be properly understood without placing his innovative rethinking of power within the horizon of ontology, thereby addressing the serious misunderstandings that have marked the reception of Agamben's philosophy. I do this by drawing out the vital link between ontological thought and the various grammars of power that social scientists have otherwise marshaled from Agamben and Foucault (biopolitics, sovereignty, governmentality, the apparatus, the exception, etc.). In Agamben's corpus these otherwise widely deployed concepts are in fact indebted to a confrontation with the latter Heidegger's thinking of the appropriating event (*Ereignis*). It is this aspect that is routinely ignored or passed over within the social sciences and that in many ways is symptomatic of the very forgetfulness of being that the logic of the ban inaugurates. In short, the task of Chapter 1 is to make the ontological terrain of Agamben's (and more challengingly Foucault's) discourse on power more visible and explicit. I argue that such a realization has both political and ethical consequences for the very subjectivity of academic life and our understanding of responsibility.

The exposition of a critical ontology in the work of Heidegger, Agamben, and Foucault sets the stage for a political and ethical cartography that is then subsequently mapped on to the political space of Pakistan. The remainder of the book does not, however, merely "apply" the theoretical framework of critical ontology to the study and interpretation of the problem of violence and militarism in Pakistan, but also seeks to show something of the reverse; namely that the various forms of religio-political and state violence – expressed in the brutal deployment of blasphemy laws, the routine declarations of martial law, and the use

of drones against “militants” in the FATA region – disclose an underlying ontological signature. This is the structure that is in play in what Agamben identifies through the archaeological paradigm of the camp: a permanent and intensified space of sovereign exception. The disclosure of the political emergency in Pakistan hence alerts us to a fundamental ontological crisis that penetrates not only the political but also the very process of subject formation under neoliberal techno-capitalist regimes. It is, however, to the very pain of the political, a pain that alerts us to an ontological trauma, that our ethical sensibilities and political action must turn. In short, it is only through our *sense* of the political that ontology gains significance.

The term “metacolonial” is, in brief, a neologism intended to capture succinctly the way in which political discourses and practices are “colonized” by an underlying metaphysics of power and its accompanying political theologies. Through the term *metacolonial*, intended not as a critique but as an ontological supplement to postcolonial theory, Islamic modernities are brought face to face with the metaphysical ghosts haunting our global, biopolitical, capitalist present. With the philosophical groundwork laid out in Chapter 1, the biopolitical – which continues to resonate as a critical concept in the ongoing work of geographers and social theorists – is now redefined as “power over the singularity of life.” The threshold is thus concerned with laying out the preliminary stakes for thinking biopolitics in an explicitly ontological register.

To reiterate, the metacolonial, in its simplest formulation, refers to the colonization of life by metaphysics (ontotheology): the colonization of life by power. It is a cartography of the shadows cast by power over being, a shadow that is paradoxically the destining of being itself. It is an exposure and critique of power as it plays out in what Foucault called, in opposition to demonstrative truth, the truth-event. For Heidegger the truth-event, the play of being, was eventually to be understood (experienced) primarily in terms of the event of withdrawal, “an originary erasure that leaves traces (beings) in its wake.”² One of Heidegger’s major contentions was that the question of being is one before which both humanity, in its existential capacity, and philosophy, in its tendency towards rational systematicity and explanation, tend to flee. This is because the question of being is ultimately a destabilizing question that dissolves every ground and certitude. However, for Heidegger, raising the question of being was vital, despite the pervasive and dominant attitude of the oblivion, even among his best students (Levinas, and even perhaps Derrida): “The very fact that we already live in an understanding of Being and that the meaning of Being is still veiled in darkness proves that it is necessary in principle to raise this question again.”³ The metacolonial

places the questioning of being at the heart of its critical enterprise and takes seriously the effects of the sway of being on both history and politics and the constitution of one's own subjectivity. The *questioning* is above all not a matter of specific propositions and answers, but a matter of opening up a path of transformative experience; one has to be seized if not shaken by the question.

Along this path, truth and untruth, like the difference between being and beings, are not simply opposed but in a state of play, struggle, and strife (*polemos*), a state of fundamental imbrication. This we have already identified as the crossing of the ontological difference. Foucault's history of the present can be seen as a history of this original strife between truth and untruth as it plays out in history, where history is itself an echo of the struggle of truth and untruth, the originary *polemos* and event of being (*Ereignis*). *Ereignis* can be thought as "the event of an erasure and a withdrawing, constitutive of presence and history as such, the unfolding of truth as that which turns away from presence within presence."⁴ It is not Europe or the West then that is technological, but history itself.⁵ *Gestell*, Heidegger's term for the essence of modern technology, is itself "a configuration of truth ... a sending of being, [which] signals the most extreme concealing of the essence of truth as un-concealment."⁶ *Gestell* is essentially an onto-historical rather than Western phenomenon. This point lies at the heart of the metacolonial's departure from the postcolonial. The metacolonial signifies the colonization of man, not by Europe, but by history itself. The history of Islam is today, like the history of the West, simply coincident with the structure of exception and the ban of being. This metaphysics, *this state of exception, now invests all structures of power, and is thus the originary source of the imperial, metacolonial, condition*. The topology of exception, and its technologization, is the presence that haunts Islamic as much as Western modernity. Through the term metacolonial then, Islamic modernity is brought face to face with the ghosts of metaphysics, haunting its technological, biopolitical present. In this way metaphysics is *not* simply what Derrida called a "white mythology."⁷ It is the abandonment of being that is the structural phenomenon and event that gives rise to the forgetfulness of being, an event that coincides with the history of our present – an event that coincides and has its roots in the essence of truth itself.

The task of the metacolonial is thus to expose and fully understand, as preparatory to the development of ethical practices of resistance⁸ (*askēsis*), the ways in which our lives are governed – managed, ordered, and disposed – within the various disciplinary, normative, neoliberal, and biopolitical regimes of power. The task of the metacolonial is to bring to light the ontological frames that are implicit in the course of our everyday, global, political life. As a critical ontology, the metacolonial

is interested not in truth, but instead a politics of truth (regimes and powers of truth) and knowledge-power, so long as power is understood in its ontological, enunciative function.

The book proceeds to chart the imbricated spaces of exception engendered by the military and the ‘ulama: the spaces of war (*jihad*) and law (*shari’a*) as they intersect with the core logics of biopolitical security inaugurated by the Pakistan movement. Effectively this book serves as a strident interrogation of all three sacred cows in Pakistani society: the religious establishment and blasphemy laws, the powerfully embedded military and secret intelligence apparatus, and the very ideology of Muslim nationalism expressed through the writings of its *spiritus animus* Dr. Allama Muhammad Iqbal and the “secular” constitutional lawyer Mohammed Ali Jinnah. The primary charge of the book is to demonstrate that the political cartography of Pakistan, and by extension the political practices of the Deoband ‘ulama, have been increasingly permeated by a sovereign biopolitical impetus. The resulting indistinctions between dictatorship and democracy, between “secular” and “religious” forces in Pakistan, disclose the nature of a historical ontology that is exemplified by the *biopoliticization of Islam*. I argue that Pakistan is itself revelatory of a broader ontological crisis enveloping the globe.

The work proceeds under the assumption that ontology is not simply a series of philosophical propositions about reality that one can choose to maintain. In Agamben’s work ontology is no longer thought in terms of some *a priori* Kantian transcendental. Rather ontology always presupposes an already politicized and historicized conception of reality, a representational world picture, a *savoir*, of what *is*. A metaphysics is as such always already at play in our everyday ways of thought, our political practices, cultural discourse, and of course our violent productivist comportment to the world. Though ontology can easily devolve into the mere abstractions of “first philosophy” divorced from the materiality of the world, in critical ontological thought, something more immanent, visceral, political, and essentially historical is at stake. However, political ontology is neither the structuralist pursuit of some essentialized and universal social/psychological substrate, nor can it be linearly weaponized in the service of political resistance.

Rethinking the Political

One could argue that the opening philosophical excursus on critical ontology would be best left to another work. However, my deepest conviction is that by separating the philosophical/ontological from the historical/political I would be inscribing within the very material form of

writing/publishing, the same ontological difference that this work seeks to erase. This is on the one hand in keeping with the sensibilities of Heidegger after his turn (*Kehre*) from fundamental ontology towards being-historical thinking, but also because in addition to social theorists, my primary hope is that this book will appeal to academics and social scientists concerned with the immediate problem of political violence. My goal, in addition to an exposition of political ontology, is, to borrow Josh Barkan's phrase, to "wrench Heidegger from his Alpine seclusion" and force him to confront the complex spatiality of our postcolonial present, and in doing so open up the relevance for thinking the metacolonial. On my reading, this strategy is already evidenced in Agamben's work. Ontology resides, however, not in analytic propositions but in the very bloody sinews of tortured bodies, in the charred wreckage of suicide bombings, in fear and trembling in the face of our ineluctable temporality, and in the very fragility of life. To reiterate the Nietzschean thesis: "Being – we have no other way of imagining it apart from 'living'." It is the wound of the political and the passions of hate that form the substance of an experience of abandonment. We have traditionally responded to this pain with foundational formulations (peace-Islam, freedom-liberalism, human rights) that have not only proven ineffective but have also quickly become indistinct from the very forms of action they seek to banish. In this way a phenomenology of Pakistan discloses, ontologically, and with exemplarity, the very *failure of peoples* that is otherwise obscured in the hope of progress and Western humanism. The crisis of the land of the pure ("*Pak-istan*") is thus at the same time the very crisis of the globally hegemonic Western conceptions of value and purity. Critical ontology moves us to ponder the nature of the separation of being and acting, the disjuncture between ethics and politics which, to paraphrase Jean-Luc Nancy, so viscerally marks our "time of abandonment." The problem of politics, the problem of Pakistan, then is not merely political, it is ontological, and yet we cannot glimpse this other than through the specificity and urgency of a particular place, in this and that event. The problem in some ways with conventional social science critique is not that it is often disinterested and ontic but that it is *merely* ontic. The metacolonial is ontological in as much as it is not *merely* ontic.

The Metacolonial State therefore addresses one of the crucial challenges before scholarship of the postcolonial world; writing and thinking its very contemporaneity – the fact that it belongs to modernity and speaks to it. An analysis of the trauma of Pakistan, and the postcolonial more broadly, reveals *the* most significant things about the world of today. Pakistan is therefore an indispensable site for reflection on the nature of the precarious present and the terrifying futures of our global modernity.

The Islamapolis

If politics today seems to be going through a protracted eclipse and appears in a subaltern position with respect to religion, economics, and even the law, that is so because, to the extent to which *it has been losing sight of its own ontological status*, it has failed to confront the transformations that gradually have emptied out its categories and concepts.

—Agamben⁹

Each chapter that follows describes a facet of the Islamapolis, the political space of each configuration or *dispositif*, that bears on the life world of Pakistan. Throughout the work I deploy the syntagm “*Islamapolis*,” a configuration with multiple but interrelated significations, which unfold along several interconnected registers. *Islamapolis* can be seen as a short hand that encapsulates the metacolonial ethos, and in this way the entire book’s thesis. On the one hand it loosely translates “Islam-abad”, where *abad* and *abadi* refer to settlement and population. In this sense *Islam-a-polis* is simply the “city of Islam,” the nation of an Islamic *bios* (population). Along another register, that of process, *Islamapolis* names Islam’s discursive articulation and material imbrication within systems of modern power: its encounter and folding within ‘the political’ – the space of the *polis*. What is critical, however, is the way in which, through this encounter, it becomes *apolis* – homeless, uncanny. *Islamapolis* also signifies the ways in which contemporary articulations of Islam are subsequently infected by the onto-logic of sovereign power. *Islamapolis* thus marks the biopoliticization of Islam: the mechanisms, technologies, and strategies by which power over life manifests itself in Muslim discourses, practices, and politics. The *Islamapolis* is thus an exemplary metacolonial apparatus, a space that signals the simultaneous hollowing and hallowing of Islam. The attempt in this work is to offer a cartography of the *Islamapolis*.

In his reflections on terrorism, philosopher Jean Baudrillard offered these prescient remarks: “[If] Islam dominated the world, terrorism would rise against Islam, for it is the very world, the globe itself, which resists globalization.”¹⁰ Numerous events could be called to witness, but the events of October 21, 2009 are particularly revealing. At around 3:00 p.m., the usually calm and contemplative atmosphere of Islamabad’s International *Islamic* University (IIUI) was shattered by a double suicide bombing that killed six people, including three young *hijab* clad girls. Dozens of other victims were severely injured in the blasts, one of which was detonated at the women’s cafeteria and the other outside the office of the Chairman of the Department of Islamic Law (Shari’a). Baudrillard’s formulation echoes resoundingly in these bombings, an

event that is indeed paradigmatic of the war between Islamist forces and an Islamic state.

This “homeland” for the Muslims of British India is increasingly producing both real and imagined states of homelessness for its beleaguered citizens.¹¹ This work will argue that a more rigorous conceptual and historical understanding of the structure of violence is needed if we are to begin to make sense of what has confounded local analysts and the public alike. The aim of this book, in its most prosaic terms, is in part to provide visibility to the space of the political where the violent contests between local, national, international, and trans-national sovereign forces are playing themselves out. It is in many ways a preliminary history, or *gene-alogy* of specters that haunt this now almost permanent “space of exception.” Even as I write, this space of exception threatens to take on a permanent localization in Pakistan, in a way that has already consumed Afghanistan. In Pakistan today security and terrorism have become a single deadly system in which they legitimate and justify each other’s mode of being. In the desperate cycle of state terror and insurrectionary terrorism that has gripped Pakistan, and indeed the world, we need more than ever to understand the complexities of “power” and “violence,”¹² in both their repressive, revolutionary, resistant, and fetishistic forms. This self-consciously interdisciplinary project – part history, ethnography, geography, philosophy, always critical – is both solicited by and responds to this crisis.

Implicit in this narrative is the problem of globalization, perhaps the ineluctable and simultaneously enigmatic condition of our time. It goes without saying then that the political space under examination here is immediately global, and its contours cannot simply be folded into the borders of something called “Pakistani” history. Globalization is not merely about the reconfiguration of national powers – the circulation of goods, commodities, images, and capital across territorial boundaries – but also about flows and configurations of power that produce new bodies, affects, desires, associations, and understandings; in short, globalization produces a new “sense of the world.”¹³ The crisis in Pakistan is understood immediately as both a local and trans-local phenomenon, where political space is both material and affective; it touches on the structure of feelings of everyday life.¹⁴ Especially in the wake of 9/11, within the broader global circulation of affect, Islam, with all of its multiple registers, is consumed at a more acute affective and bodily level. Juan Cole’s book *Engaging the Muslim World*¹⁵ recognizes “anxiety” as a central motif that defines the biopolitical interplay between America and the Muslim World. While Cole’s book seeks to deconstruct the singular affective registers of each term, it would be fair to say that the problems of violence and war that confront us in the age of terror must be situated on a level that exceeds politics and history.

The term for this excess, which I will elaborate on shortly, is biopolitical sovereignty. Not only then as Cole argues do we have to confront generalized anxieties mutually reflected in the Islam–West relationship, we must also take into consideration more immanent planes of affect that pervade the landscape of and between Muslim communities and states (Iranian anxieties about Arabs, Jewish anxieties about the Arab, Indian anxieties about Pakistan, vice versa, and so on). My concern here is thus with a series of overlapping and immanent biopolitical and sovereign anxieties. The intensification and multiplication of this series of overlapping anxieties – especially in regions that are more concretely impacted by the decision of imperial policies and the destructive regimes of neoliberal globalization – tend to aggravate and intensify the “state of exception”¹⁶ and the attendant production of what Italian social and political “theorist” Giorgio Agamben calls “bare life.” Bare life is naked life, a life (*zoē*) without value, at once included and excluded from the law. The neologism “*metacolonial*” that I deploy in this work is not meant to displace the postcolonial, but instead seeks to capture a sense of the nihilistic condition that pervades our time.¹⁷

The metacolonial, then, articulates two fundamental theoreticopolitical trajectories from the work of Michel Foucault (1926–1984) and Giorgio Agamben (1942) into a single conceptual space: Foucault’s concern with biopolitics and governmentality and Agamben’s illuminating thesis on sovereign power, bare life, and the state of exception. These two critical vectors are then gathered under the sign of the *metacolonial*, the term that is at the heart of this book’s thesis. The metacolonial is a single term meant to capture the critical thrust of these paradigms, which are now already widely deployed in the social and human sciences.¹⁸ The metacolonial is a sovereign biopolitical space where the state of exception takes on a near-permanent localization. Part of the innovation of this project, its conceit, is to bring these powerful disclosive paradigms to bear on an understanding of political Islam in Pakistan. Political Islam is not by any means monolithic, even in Pakistan, let alone globally, and in this study I have chosen to concentrate on the Pakistani vectors of the Deoband school in large part because of their intimate, though contested, link with the Taliban phenomenon. My primary task then will be to show that the political space of Pakistan, and by extension the political practices of the Deoband ‘ulama, have taken on an increasingly biopolitical character. At its broadest then, this work is conceived as a genealogical history – “a history of the present” – of the crisis of Pakistan. My primary task will be to show how this history is itself a manifestation of the *biopoliticization of Islam*. From within this biopoliticization of Islam we can talk about and make sense of ‘ulama governmentality and the state of violence.

Stated differently, this work is animated principally by a concern to understand the forms of violence that have gathered around the horizons of political Islam. While the Deoband ‘ulama of Pakistan remain the primary thematic subject and focus, they are largely signposts towards a broader attempt to disclose a cartography of the political. That is to say, I am not principally concerned with a specific narrative history of political Islam in Pakistan, but rather am attempting to think this phenomenon in relation to what Foucault called the historico-political *a priori*.¹⁹ One of the more rudimentary contentions that I will make is that the phenomenon of “Islamic/Islamist” violence and terrorism is not a problem of politics or religion as such, but rather a problem of *the political*.²⁰ The aim here is to *problematize* political Islam, to show it up as an apparatus (what Foucault called a *dispositif*).²¹ These problematizations do not constitute a new postgenealogical methodology or analytic, but instead are designed to induce a critical spirit that can at least witness, if not perhaps respond, to the state of exception in which we live. This study therefore revolves around one essential question: how to think the problematic of political Islam (and specifically the Deoband) genealogically and biopolitically. Through this term – the “metacolonial” – Islamic modernities²² are brought face to face with the ghosts of metaphysics haunting our global, technological, biopolitical present. To disclose political Islam as a metacolonial phenomenon is therefore the specific task of this work. It must also be stated upfront that I arrived at the question of ‘ulama biopolitics only after observing, documenting, and thinking about the ways in which Deoband political somatics – its body politics – has increasingly been caught up with the sovereign powers of the state. The Deoband commitment to the *enforcement* of shari‘a, the deployment of blasphemy as a technology of sovereign power, the production of the Ahmadi as heretic and “bare life,” and its valorization of violent *jihad*, are some of the examples that I use to open up a space for a new problematization of political Islam and ‘ulama praxis.

The provisional aim of this metacolonial analysis of political Islam will be to show how the space of the political – which unfolds today as a pure topology of exception – proliferates and intensifies through the alignment (and disaggregation) of sovereign orbits and imperial spaces. This political space, or field of power, can be characterized as a series of nested and overlapping sovereignties within a wider biopolitical matrix. This space can be understood as a grid of intelligibility that provides the conditions of possibility of political practice. Since the metacolonial is characterized above all as a state/space of exception,²³ it will be necessary to highlight the political and *topological* structure of the exception and enunciate its relationship to Foucault’s genealogy of

power and the subject.²⁴ The metacolonial state is therefore a state of biopolitical exception, a state in which the capture of life finds a more or less permanent and stable spatial arrangement.

It should be noted upfront that my attempt here is not to outline a new paradigm for critical thought, but rather to attempt to think the problem of political Islam genealogically and, by extension, biopolitically.²⁵ As specific cartographic exercise whose topology relies extensively on Agamben's innovative account of the structure of the sovereign ban, the metacolonial is both an affect and a zone – a state/space – marked by the intensification of sovereign and biopolitical forms of power. The metacolonial designates this colonization of life by the will to power.²⁶ It is within this complex mapping of power that the practices and possibilities of the both the 'ulama and the army (the mullah–military complex) are to be situated. The metacolonial theory offered here, then, suggests that it is the modernist transformation and politicization of the *ummah* into a quasi-nationalist structure that has enabled the 'ulama to harness the destructive logic of sovereign power. This is the simplest dimension of what I mean by the phrase the *biopoliticization of the Islamic life-world*.

In the dominant forms of the Western and Islamist imaginary, some singular and unique theology, a civilizational ethos even, is supposed to ground the incommensurable difference between contemporary Islamic formations and the West. Neocons, Orientalists, and Islamists alike assume that the “traditional”²⁷ textual sources of the Muslim life-world, the Qur'an and Hadith, form the deep antechamber for both militant and democratic Islamist politics. Variations of this proposition, which pervade as virtual truisms in public discourses on political Islam, need to be rethought significantly.²⁸ However, *even though Islamic political language trades in the discursive coinage of tradition, the market in which these terms have purchase is today an altogether transformed space*. That is to say, the Muslim world, its “traditional” market, has undergone a series of architectonic shifts, a disruption and transformation of its classical *episteme* to a modern one.²⁹ The terms “biopolitical” and “exception” signal this transformation of Islamic space. Another key element of this book then will be an attempt to interrogate the consequences of this epistemic shift, and I have used the term metacolonial to signal this concern with political Islam *at the level of what Foucault called the épistème*. Unlike the shifts from the classical to the renaissance to the modern *épistème* that Foucault has so admirably elaborated with respect to the West, the modernist shift in large parts of the Muslim world, and certainly South Asia, were accompanied by the colonial violence of a “distant sovereign.”³⁰ It is this colonial difference that can account, in part, for the troubling experience of modernity in large parts

of the Muslim world;³¹ that is to say, on pain of a considerable generalization, that there is no clash between something called modernity and the West on the one hand and something called Islam on the other. Rather the violences and incoherence of political praxis in large parts of the Islamic world result from a disavowal, or misrecognition, of its already modernist, biopolitical ground. As Agamben suggests, the “enigmas” of modern violence can only be solved “on the terrain – biopolitics – on which they were formed.”³² On Agamben’s diagnosis, the inevitable failure of biopolitics leads to the proliferation of an increasingly sovereign rationality. The impossible task, then, is to give an account of the *ruin* of the modernist Muslim subject – *homo Islamicus* – and by extension the ruination of contemporary political Islam.

As is already evident, a plethora of terms – genealogy, governmentality, biopolitics, sovereignty, exception, episteme – are critical to this endeavour. Given that these concepts are often deployed and articulated with a wide degree of differing latitude and even at times at cross purposes, a somewhat lengthy clarification of the way I understand and use these terms is essential for the intelligibility of the project as a whole. To be sure, this is a history *as* genealogy, and it will be important to begin by clarifying the stakes of this articulation. The opening chapter is therefore devoted to a clarification of these terms and highlights the conceptual and political work of disclosure they will perform. The primary labor has been to forge a new *reading* of the crisis, rather than to simply chronicle its historical unfolding.

The Deoband ‘Ulama

One primary concern of this book is with understanding the religio-political³³ nature of the Pakistani Deoband movement and its relationship to the military and nationalism. Within the multiplicity of Islamist practices in Pakistan, the Deoband has emerged as one of the most highly organized and yet remarkably polycentric institutions that claim orthodox religious authority. I am arguing in this work that the Deoband ‘ulama practices have undergone a series of dramatic transformations since 1947. I characterize these transformations primarily in terms of Foucault’s grammars of power – governmentality, sovereignty, discipline, and biopolitics.³⁴ The 1979 Afghan–Soviet war marks a particularly significant threshold in this transformation: an event that led to the intensification of the conscription of ‘ulama power within a broader set of military and geopolitical spaces. Though this new military–mullah complex was a significant turning point, I am arguing that crucial elements of this transformation had been underway since the inception of

the Islamic State in 1947. This transformation, as I shall discuss, has also played itself out in the dramatic shifts within the institutional space of ‘ulama authority: the madrasa. Historically the madrasa within South Asia has been an informal space for the dissemination of a variety of forms of Islamic learning (*‘ilm*).³⁵ By the nineteenth century, however, especially with the emergence of the Deoband, it had become a more formal disciplinary space for the production of “pious” bodies and ‘ulama authority. As the expanding network of Deobandi *madaris* (religious schools) entered or were co-opted by other political arenas, these docile bodies have been increasingly deployed either for various state sponsored projects of “*jihad*”³⁶ or as militant cadres for the Deoband’s own increasingly autonomous yet fractured and internally feuding political movements: the Jam‘iyyat al-‘Ulama-i Islam (Society of Islamic ‘Ulama or JUI) and its various radical sectarian and jihadist offshoots like the *Sipah-i Sahaba* (SSP) and the Taliban. Thus, as a “history of the present” the book pays particular attention to the ruptures, displacements, and transformations of discourses on religion, identity, and politics; transformations that I am suggesting should be understood principally in terms of biopoliticization.

In addition to thinking about the history and politics of this important, and yet remarkably understudied, Islamic organization, what I am aiming for here is the development of a more nuanced and critically receptive framework for the analysis of political space³⁷ in Pakistan, a space that cannot neatly be divided between the secular and the religious. I am also convinced that a mere historical account, a *histoire*³⁸ of the ‘ulama, will fail to take account of the complex simultaneously global and subterranean nature of the political field in which the subjectivities and praxis of the Deoband ‘ulama are forged. For instance, there is without doubt a strong class dimension to the problem of the Taliban today, but it would be too simple to reduce the phenomenon of Islamist violence to the developmentalist failures of the postcolonial elite. As any casual observation of the sociological makeup of the vast majority of *talibs* within the Deoband *dini madaris* network will reveal, they belong very clearly to a subaltern class. The majority of the ‘ulama are themselves indeed subaltern.³⁹ The effective historical marginalization and subalternity of the ‘ulama are undoubtedly key factors in understanding the violent turn of the ‘ulama. There is also little doubt that ways in which General Zia ul-Haq’s “Islamization” decade, coupled with the imbrication of the Pakistan Army and society in the Afghan war, have fundamentally altered the landscape of the political in Pakistan. However, what I am suggesting here is that the phenomenon of political Islam must be seen as intimately bound up with the project of Pakistan itself – with its very metaphysics in fact. It is not a question of attempting

to isolate some pure Islam and show how it has been corrupted by a series of political events. Nor is it a question of showing how modern political forms and vocabularies (the state, the part, the nation, etc.) have been Islamized. What I am aiming for is something different. I seek to show how the very discursive regime of Islam is now fundamentally political, and how it is now always a discourse of power and subjectivization, even in cases where it declares itself as concerned solely with private, inward, or moral self-improvement. The distinction between Islam as such and the political as such is untenable. Islam is today always already a *bios*. This indistinction between the political (public) and the spiritual (private) does not begin with the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, nor even with the founding of Pakistan. While these events are thresholds of transformation, the historical shadow of biopolitics are longer, while simultaneously being both synchronic and diachronic. I will argue that it is in fact in the thought of ‘Allama Muhammad Iqbal (1877–1938), the spiritual founder of the South Asian Islamic State, that the *poiēsis* of Islam makes its paradigmatic and lethal confrontation with the *polis*, with the political. Iqbal’s work is an expression of this confrontation in which the political triumphs over the ethical (*polis* over *ēthos*). Iqbal does not initiate this confrontation but he gives it its most popularly received and powerful expression. If Pakistan is birthed in Iqbal’s imagination, Islam was laid to rest in his *khayal*.⁴⁰ It is in his poetry that Islam is most poignantly, romantically, and metaphysically linked to the absolute necessity of a modern state, albeit a state that rejects the conventional ethno-racial and linguistic basis for national identity.⁴¹ Pakistan’s history might hence be written as nothing but the disastrous effect of the (impossible) territorialization of Islam⁴² – the transference of divine sovereignty to the state and the subsequent sacralization of the collective Muslim body (*ummah*).

Without a sense of this transformation, the nature of the crisis that envelops Pakistan, if not the globe, will remain hidden as we search in vain for a more descriptive and causal – or what Foucault called “genetic” – explanation.⁴³ The transformation consists in part of a double and simultaneous process: the “statification” (*étatisation*) of Islam and Muslim society, and the “governmentalization” of the Islamic state.⁴⁴ Hence ‘ulama religio-political practices must be situated across a series of complex historical and political horizons. We must in short recognize how ‘ulama practice has been essentially imbricated within the historically variable relations of power and the contingencies of Pakistan’s fractured politics, rather than as an outgrowth or mutation of some static tradition. This approach can in part account for the ways in which Deoband “Islamic” discourses (on nationalism, the state, authority, gender, minorities, citizenship) have shifted over time and space.⁴⁵

It should also be mentioned at the outset that not all political formations under ‘ulama tutelage can be framed within the rubric of “extremism,” “violence,” or “radical Islamism.” Certainly a very large component of the Deoband phenomenon is manifested in the phenomenon of the Tabligh-i Jama‘at, which is a self-consciously “non-political” expression of Islam.⁴⁶ However, this understanding is in keeping with a very narrow and limited definition of politics and the political.⁴⁷ It is of course understandable that it is this militant and “uncivil” dimension of the traditionalist ‘ulama that has garnered most interest, in particular given the centrality of radical Islam in framing neoliberal and neoconservative concerns. Here also an understanding of the radicalization of segments of the ‘ulama, their turn towards violent forms of political activism, and their increasingly militant policing of the boundaries of Islam must also be set within further contextual parameters. The first is the imbrication of Islamist groups within the simultaneously repressive and enabling role of the State. Secondly, given that the Pakistani State, in conjunction with the United States and Saudi Arabia, has consistently attempted to infiltrate, control, and harness orthodox Islamic institutions, due importance must be placed upon the larger structure of empire in making possible domestic economies of violence and power in which certain forms of “indigenous” jihadist violence are valorized and sustained.⁴⁸ These larger geo-political attempts to deploy and manipulate “Islam” and Islamist forces for the legitimization of martial rule and for the waging of proxy wars (Afghanistan and Kashmir) resulted in the artificial political empowerment of groups like the Deoband. Under the catalyst of these state interventions, the otherwise politically marginal communities of Islamic orthodoxy, who were traditionally focused on scholarship, piety, and quiet social reform (*daw‘a* and *tabligh*), have nonetheless transformed themselves into agents of *jihad* and brokers of increased socio-political power.⁴⁹ While the comportment towards state power and, more broadly, governmentality among the ‘ulama cannot solely be read as an effect of empire or the postcolonial state, Cold War cartography certainly fostered the conditions of possibility for the effective transformation of an ‘ulama republic fantasy into a political possibility. A feature supposedly characteristic of fundamentalist or Islamist groups,⁵⁰ namely the desire for state power, can now equally be said to be true of “traditionalist” ‘ulama led Islamist groups. As such the standard typological distinctions of Muslim politics⁵¹ – Islamist/fundamentalist, modernist, traditionalist – have entered a zone of indistinction.⁵² Our analytic gaze must hence take into consideration the material and discursive effects of power of a new kind of colonial/imperial present,⁵³ exercised in the name of a variety of global and universalist legitimating discourses

'An urgent and extraordinary book. Weaving a philosophical analysis of Heidegger, Agamben and Foucault, Jan draws out the implications of their thought for a radical analysis of the ontological politics of Islam and Pakistan. Whether writing about the 'Ulama and Deoband schools, blasphemy laws, the military, beards, or the Bamiyan Buddhas, Jan provokes and challenges our thinking while unearthing the ground on which Pakistan—and our world—are built.'

—Joel Wainwright, Department of Geography, Ohio State University, USA

'In this exceptionally inventive and important book, Jan shows us that the problems besetting political life in Pakistan are part of a more troubling crisis in modern forms of power. Challenging accounts that cordon off "political Islam" from "the West," Jan discloses their fundamental indistinction and thus, through his practice of critical ontology, reorients our understanding of how power and violence are at work in the world.'

—Joshua Barkan, Department of Geography, University of Georgia, USA

The Metacolonial State presents a novel rethinking of the relationship between Islam and the Political. Key to the text is an original argument regarding the "biopoliticization of Islam" and the imperative need for understanding sovereign power and the state of exception in resolutely ontological terms. Through the formulation of a critical ontology of political violence, *The Metacolonial State* endeavors to shed new light on the signatures of power undergirding postcolonial life, while situating Pakistan as a paradigmatic site for reflection on the nature of modernity's precarious present.


The cross-disciplinary approach of Dr. Jan's work is certain to have broad appeal among geographers, historians, anthropologists, postcolonial theorists, and political scientists, among others. At the same time, his explication of critical ontology – with its radical reading of the interlacement of history, power and the event – promises to add a bold new dimension to social science research on Islamism and biopolitics.

NAJEEB A. JAN is Assistant Professor of Human Geography in the Department of Geography of the University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado.

Cover Designed by Stuart Allen © Wiley


www.wiley.com

WILEY

 Also available as an e-book

BORDERS RM146.79

THE METACOLONIAL STATE 38-9



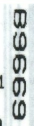
9781118979389 3060653

JAN NAJEEB A. TCJ001

Political Science 4511

M262441 012419 QP B9669

9 781118 979389



PERDANA
LEADERSHIP
FOUNDATION
YAYASAN
KEPIMPINAN
PERDANA