

The Working Series “The Middle East and South Asia in Conversation: Interventions, Control, and Resistance in the 21st Century” invites you to a lecture on:



The Symbiotic Relationship between ‘Counter-Terrorism’ and Neoliberal Development: The Case of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)

Dr. Aasim Sajjad Akhtar
Quaid-e-Azam University, Islamabad

The current epoch is notable for the concentration of powers in the coercive/surveillance apparatuses of the state under the pretext of countering the almost mythical threat of ‘terrorism’. While the dominant trope is one in which ‘Islamism’ poses as the default brand of ‘terror’, a number of post-colonial states instrumentalise the bogeyman of terrorism to discipline long-running ethnic – and, to a lesser extent, class-based – insurgencies.

One such example is the Pakistani state’s war against nationalist rebels in the country’s largest province of Balochistan where a low-intensity insurgency has been ongoing since 2005. The conflict between the Pakistani state and Baloch nationalists has persisted for most of the country’s existence – the present armed uprising is the fifth of its kind since 1948.

In recent times, the state has gained an upper hand in its attempts to crush the nationalist resistance due to the virtual carte blanche that it has received from the Chinese government, following the latter’s announcement of an aid package worth almost US\$50 billion. Under the terms of this package, the Chinese and Pakistani authorities will initiate a series of road and related communications infrastructure projects through a big chunk of Balochistan’s territory as part of a grand development vision that links the interior of China to the under-construction deep-water port of Gwadar on the south-western tip of Balochistan. The so-called China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has been hailed by a wide cross-section of Pakistani opinion-makers as a game-changer in the country’s development.

However, Baloch nationalists – and other political dissidents – view CPEC through a very different lens. In particular China’s quite explicit patronage of the Pakistani military is of substantial concern given that the latter has long impeded the political process in Balochistan, and is currently using unbridled force to quell the insurgency.

The Balochistan case confirms the manner in which post-colonial states and foreign capital are employing the twin discourses of ‘counter-terrorism’ and ‘development’ to eliminate any and all forms of resistance both to neo-liberalism and state power.

**Tuesday, 19 April 2016,
6 - 8 pm**

Location:

Room 315, 3rd floor,
Institut für Asien- und
Afrikawissenschaften (IAAW)
Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin,
Invalidenstr. 118, 10115 Berlin

Organisers:

Dr. Sanaa Alimia, BGS MCS and ZMO;
Sadia Bajwa, IAAW;
Sarah Holz, BGS MCS and IAAW;
Dr. Hanan Toukan, BGS MCS

For more details see the website:
<https://interventionsandresistance.wordpress.com/>



berlin graduate school
muslim cultures and societies



INSTITUT FÜR
ASIEN- UND AFRIKA-
WISSENSCHAFTEN

DAHLEM
RESEARCH
SCHOOL

Center
for Junior
Researchers

