Beyond kinship and tribe

New forms of solidarity and interest representation in Nangarhar Province (Afghanistan)

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Afghanistan has often been described as a pre-modern or inward-looking society with strong tribal structures and a traditional mode of organization and leadership based on institutions like kinship, Jirga, Khan, and Malik. Features of traditional organization and leadership have been discussed by different scholars as the most important sources for solidarity, justice, and interest representation. Taking the example of two informal settlements in Nangarhar province, this presentation will argue that kinship has come to be replaced by other forms of solidarity mechanisms. They are evident, for example, in newly formed interest representation bodies (shura) and practices which suggest that traditional modes of organization and interest representation do not work in all contexts.

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