



ZMO-Kolloquium Summer 2011

Thursday, May 26th, 2011, 6 pm

Women, Work and Public Spaces: Conflict and Co-Existence in Karachi's Poor Neighborhoods

Lecture by Dr. Kamran Asdar Ali

Venue:

Zentrum Moderner Orient
Kirchweg 33

14129 Berlin

This lecture focuses on how working class women encounter and negotiate economic uncertainty, social vulnerability and sexually threatening public spaces in contemporary Karachi. The lecture showcases women's everyday experiences with social and physical violence as a microcosm of the city's life in order to explore the possibilities of a future politics for cities like Karachi that are haunted by the possibility of violent eruptions. By concentrating on the everyday practices of the people themselves it proposes a different register to understand cities and their politics. An emergent politics that is not always dependent on an analysis of conflict and friction, rather a politics which is concerned with living with disagreements. Hence Kamran Asdar Ali uses the ethnographic depiction of women's lives to understand the mechanisms through which people despite the presence of endemic personal, social and political violence in Karachi's working class neighborhoods continue to co-exist, share resources and work together.

Prof. Kamran Asdar Ali is associate professor of anthropology, Middle East Studies and Asian Studies at the University of Texas, Austin. He is currently fellow at the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin.

Kamran Asdar Ali is author of "Planning the Family in Egypt: New Bodies, New Selves" (University of Texas Press, 2002) and co-editor (with Martina Rieker) of "Comparing Cities: The Middle East and South Asia" (Oxford University Press, 2009) and Gendering Urban Space in the Middle East, South Asia and Africa (Palgrave 2008). Further he has published several articles on issues of health and gender in Egypt and on Pakistani politics and culture.

Together with Martina Rieker he coordinates the Shehr Network on Comparative Urban Landscapes.

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