



Geisteswissenschaftliche Zentren e.V.  
ZMO Kirchweg 33 D-14129 Berlin

## **BORDER ZONES, NATIONALISM & CONFLICT: KASHMIR AND KURDISTAN IN PERSPECTIVE**

One-Day Workshop, 24 February 2012, ZMO

Organizers: Andrea Fischer-Tahir and Antía Mato Bouzas

▲ The Kashmir and Kurdistan conflicts have been largely developed as cases of contested borders between internationally recognised nation states, but also as cases in which influential local actors have articulated their own national aspirations by demanding autonomy or secession from the nation states they are part of. As a result of these competing visions, large scale militarisation and protracted violence have become common features in both regions. These border territories have thus been transformed in areas in which the state has operated under exceptional legal mechanisms to allow extraordinary practises of social control and repression of different forms of dissent, particularly those coming from pro-independence movements. In this process, the border permeability and the crossroads dimension of these areas have been almost totally eroded.

▲ The proposed workshop will compare the Kurdish and the Kashmir conflicts by focussing on the contested nature of these borderlands and its impact on people's lives. Hence, the borderland perspective offers a useful starting point to investigate the role of the state in these "defined peripheries" through the development strategies of political, economic and cultural dependencies, but also to examine the role of local actors and groups who challenge these strategies with a view at establishing self-governing structures. The comparative perspective of the two regions, Kurdistan and Kashmir, makes it possible to shift the discussion from perspectives privileging terms such as "majority"/ "minority" and "nation" and "national identity" within single states to a perspective of region and of penetrable borders.

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Due to the limited number of seats available, participation in the workshop is only by confirmation.

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