



Guest Lecture

Refugee Cities: Afghan Refugees, Undocumented Migrants, and 'Devalued' Citizens in Urban Pakistan.

Talk by Dr. Sanaa Alimia

IAAW, R. 217

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18:00 ct

Abstract:

The future (and/or desired) postcolonial neoliberal city is increasingly imagined through the influence of what is referred to as the ‘Dubai effect’. Pakistan is no exception to this. (Even a cursory glance at the urban landscape of high rise buildings, shopping malls, and chain stores indicates this ‘aspiration’).

However, the ‘global’ imagining of the ‘multinational’ city also includes a darker lived reality of refugees, undocumented migrants, and disenfranchised citizens who, to borrow from Mike Davis form a part of the new ‘wretched of the earth’, marginalised and pushed aside in urban spaces.

In this talk I juxtapose the lives of one of the world’s largest protracted ‘refugee’ displacements in the world – Afghans – with those of Pakistan’s urban poor, and draw out the ways in which Afghans and Pakistanis often live shared realities that step beyond orthodox understandings of refugeedom, citizenship, and belonging in urban spaces. In fact I discuss how urban spaces in Pakistan (and other global South states) moving toward shared ‘denizen’ or ‘underclass’ zones.

About the speaker:

Sanaa Alimia holds a PhD, without corrections, from the Politics and International Studies Department at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London (2013). Sanaa’s research interests involve oral histories of Afghan refugees and urban poor residents in Pakistan. Her work pays attention to Pakistan, Afghanistan, urban politics, refugees, biopolitics, necropolitics, and enumeration mechanisms.