

“Contested Spaces, Competing Narratives: Towards Human Rights & Democracy in Pakistan”

Updated March 6, 2007

Seminar:

**"Contested Spaces, Competing Narratives:  
Towards Human Rights and Democracy in Pakistan"  
April 6-7, 2007, Tufts & Harvard University**

**Sponsors:**

- South Asia Initiative, Harvard University
- Center for South Asian and Indian Studies, Tufts University
- Carr Center for Human Rights Policy, Kennedy School of Government
- Islamic Legal Studies Program, Harvard Law School
- International Relations Department, Boston University
- Women's Studies Center, Boston University
- Syed Mohammad Jafri Foundation, Boston

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**Concept note:** This seminar focuses on the struggle for human rights and democracy in Pakistan, bringing together diverse perspectives on the struggle for democratic spaces in the face of increasing militarization and militancy. ‘Disappearances’, air-strikes, and attacks on journalists, gender violence and increase in ‘religious’ extremism counter unprecedented media, cultural, social and economic freedoms. What are the broader implications of these trends for Pakistan, South Asia and beyond? What is the role of the media, and the impact of US foreign policy? What are the positive trends and how can they be strengthened?

**Event format:** A keynote speech will set the conference agenda on Friday evening, following by brief presentations and roundtable discussion and question and answer sessions on Saturday. The event is open to the public and will engage students as well as the expatriate community that since 9/11 has been increasingly engaged in democratic politics in the US as well as ‘back home’ in Pakistan. The seminar proceedings will be made available as resource materials for future work on the area and for policy makers.

## Agenda

### Inauguration, keynote speech, discussion.

**Friday, April 6: 5.30-7.15 pm**

**Venue: tba (CGIS Harvard or Tufts)**

5.00 pm	Coffee & tea available
5.20	Welcome & introduction
5.30-6.00	<b>Keynote: Ayesha Jalal: ‘Contested Spaces, Competing Narratives: Towards Human Rights and Democracy in Pakistan’</b>
6.00-7:15	Discussion (Moderator: <b>Jackie Bhabha</b> )

### Roundtable seminar

**Saturday, April 7 - 10.00 am–4.00 pm**

Belfer Case Study Room (S-20), Center for Government and International Studies  
(CGIS-South), 1730 Cambridge Street, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA 02138)

9.45 am	Coffee and muffins available
10:00	Welcome; introduction to seminar
<b>10.15-11.45</b>	<b><u>Session I: Contesting the ideological/military model</u></b> Moderator: <b>Hasan Askari Rizvi</b>
10.15-10.55 <b>Presentations</b>	<b>Kamran Ali Asdar:</b> Secular vs religious nationalism <b>Humaira Rahman:</b> Nationalist identity vs unionist state <b>Christopher Candland:</b> Labor unions and the military <b>Saadia Toor:</b> Progressive politics in the post-Zia years
10.55-11.30	Discussion and Q&A
<b>11.30-12.45</b>	<b><u>Session II: Religion, politics and NGOs</u></b> Moderator: <b>Adil Najam</b>
11.00-12.00 <b>Presentations</b>	<b>Andy McCord:</b> Suppression of left/labor politics <b>Asif Alam:</b> The diaspora, entrepreneurs and professionals <b>Shahla Haeri:</b> Contradictions of women’s empowerment
12.00-12.45	Discussion and Q&A
12.45-01.00	Documentary: <u>Mukhtiar Mai: The Struggle For Justice</u> , duration 10 min, dir. Beena Sarwar, Pakistan, 2006
01.00-2.00	Lunch break
<b>02.00-3.15</b>	<b><u>Session III: Building democratic spaces</u></b> Moderator: <b>Ayesha Jalal</b>
02.00-02.30 <b>Presentations</b>	<b>Ethan Casey:</b> The media and the new public debates <b>Hamid Kizilbash:</b> The education revolution <b>Beena Sarwar:</b> Peace activism in nuclear South Asia
02:30-03.15	Discussion and Q&A

03:15-4:00	<b>Concluding session:</b> <b>Khaled Ahmad:</b> <b>Pakistan’s Challenges: Implications for South Asia and Beyond</b> Moderator: <b>Sugata Bose</b>
03:30-4:00	Discussion, closing remarks and thanks
04:00 pm	Coffee

### **Presenters & moderators**

- **Khaled Ahmed**, senior journalist (Consulting Editor, *Daily Times* and *Friday Times*, Pakistan) currently at the Woodrow Wilson Center in Washington DC, working on "Sectarian Violence in Pakistan and Its Linkages to Iran, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States"
- **Syed Asif Alam**, Reuters (technical account management), cofounded the Association of Pakistani Professionals (<http://aopp.org>) shortly after 9/11 with the objective to engage media in a proactive manner to help create a better understanding about Pakistan.
- **Kamran Ali Asdar**, associate professor of anthropology, Middle East studies and Asian studies at the University of Texas, Austin, TX
- **Jacqueline Bhabha** is Adjunct Lecturer in Public Policy. A graduate of Oxford University, she is the executive director of the University Committee on Human Rights Studies at Harvard University and a lecturer at Harvard Law School. She has been a practicing human rights lawyer in London, and before the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.
- **Sugata Bose** Gardiner Professor of Oceanic History and Affairs and the head of the South Asia Initiative at Harvard University. His main areas of research are modern South Asia and the history of the Indian Ocean region. His many publications include *Modern South Asia: History, Culture, Political Economy* (Routledge, 2004, with Ayesha Jalal).
- **Christopher Candland**, Assistant Professor, Political Science, Wellesley College; teaches courses related to politics, literature and political economy of South Asia; author of several book chapters and articles (details at [http://www.candland.info/.](http://www.candland.info/))
- **Ethan Casey**, journalist, editor, radio show host (<http://www.pakcast.com>); author of *Alive And Well In Pakistan*; Seattle, WA
- Publications, UK, 2003), columnist, *Daily Times*, Lahore, Pakistan.
- **Shahla Haeri**, director of the Women’s Studies Program at Boston University, author of *No Shame for the Sun: Lives of Professional Pakistani Women*
- **Ayesha Jalal**, Professor of History, Tufts University; author of several books including *Democracy and Authoritarianism in South Asia: A Comparative and Historical Perspective* & *The State of Martial Rule: The Origins of Pakistan's Political Economy of Defence*

- **Hamid Kizilbash**, (Ph.D. Duke University), Principal Research Analyst at American Institutes for Research, Washington, D.C; founding member of SAHE, the Society for the Advancement of Education, and former Professor of Political Science at Punjab University
- **Andy McCord**, freelance journalist, poet, Pakistan and South Asia specialist.
- **Saadia Toor**, (PhD, Cornell University) Assistant Professor, Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work, College of Staten Island, NY
- **Adil Najam**, Associate Professor of International Negotiation & Diplomacy, The Fletcher School of Law & Diplomacy, Tufts University
- **Hasan Askari Rizvi**, political analyst, columnist, former professor of political science, Punjab University; 2006-07 Pakistan Studies Scholar at School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS), Johns Hopkins University
- **Humaira Rahman**, director of the World Sindhi Institute (Canada); former architect, teacher, environmental and political activist; pursuing post graduate studies at York University, Toronto.
- **Jamil Rashid**, economist & political science professor, Kingston, Canada
- **Beena Sarwar**, journalist and documentary filmmaker; Fellow, Carr Center for Human Rights Policy, Kennedy School.

### Other roundtable participants:

- **Hassan Abbas**, Research Fellow at the Belfer Center's International Security Program and Managing the Atom Project; author of *Pakistan's Drift into Extremism: Allah, the Army and America's War on Terror*; freelance columnist for various publications
- **Husain Haqqani**, Director, Center for International Relations at Boston University (Department of International Relations), columnist for *The Nation* (Pakistan); author of *Pakistan: Between Mosque and Military*
- **Asim Khwaja**, Associate Professor of Public Policy, KSG; areas of interest include economic development, corporate finance, education, and political economy.
- **Waqas Khwaja**, Associate Professor and Chair, Department of English, Agnes Scott College, poet and writer, who has compiled two anthologies of Pakistani literature, *Mornings in the Wilderness* (1988) and *Short Stories from Pakistan* (1991). Formerly a newspaper columnist and practicing lawyer in Pakistan.
- **Emran Qureshi**, author and freelance journalist, Fellow at the Harvard Labor and Worklife Program, former Fellow at the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy
- **Nasim Yousaf**, independent researcher and author focusing on Pakistan-India studies. His works include two chronologies on the Khaksar Movement and a recently completed manuscript on: “Hidden Facts Behind British India’s Freedom: A Scholarly Look into Allama Mashraqi and Quaid-e-Azam’s Political Conflict.” See [www.allamamashraqi.com](http://www.allamamashraqi.com).
- **Vazira Fazila-Yacoobali Zamindar**, Assistant Professor of History, Brown University, teaching courses related to South Asia; specialising in familial memories, violence and nationhood; completing her manuscript 'On the Border of History: Divided Families and National Order in South Asia' (Columbia University Press)