

Contesting global sites of power and knowledge production: What does it mean to be ‘critical’ when studying ‘terrorism’ in the modern-colonial world?

Call for Papers

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Workshop abstract

Terrorism continues to dominate headlines and is internationally recognised as one of the main threats to global peace and security in the 21st century. Keeping with the conference’s theme of interrogating the important sites of peace, conflict, and contestation in International Relations, this workshop brings together scholars who seek to interrogate and contest current modes of knowledge production which continue to produce harmful, colonial, and biased scholarship on ‘terrorism’. Amidst a current, global and academic, decolonial turn, the question of how to study concepts, such as terrorism, which are deeply embedded and entrenched in racial, gendered, and colonial structures, becomes all the more important and urgent. This workshop reflects on what it means to be ‘critical’ when we study ‘terrorism’ in the modern-colonial world.

Recent scholarship published in journals dedicated to the critical study of categories like ‘terrorism’ have been criticised for their perpetuation of colonial tropes, Islamophobia, and weak evidential grounding. This has brought to light concerns regarding the mainstreaming of critical approaches. In addition, recent calls for the ‘decolonisation’ of IR as a discipline open up the crucial debate and question of co-optation, mainstreaming, and diluting of critical and anti-colonial approaches more generally.

With this in mind, this workshop is geared at tackling the theoretical disappointments when it comes to the coloniality present at the heart of disciplines related to International Studies. It seeks to open up reflection on the increased interest in ‘decolonial’ approaches as well as ‘critical’ approaches when discussing ‘terrorism’. It further reflects on the positionality of scholars involved in and invested in critical approaches, and radical challenges to dominant modes of knowledge production of ‘terrorism’. It further reflects on the pressure within disciplines of IR to demonstrate ‘impact’ and engage with practitioners which in the case of critical scholars of ‘terrorism’ risks undermining the potential of criticality in terrorism research.

This workshop welcomes contributions which address – but are not limited to – the following questions:

- How can we contest global sites of power and knowledge production with regards to ‘terrorism’?
- Can we and should we ‘decolonise’ Terrorism Studies and related disciplines?
- How do we navigate ‘decolonial moves’ which perpetuate coloniality?
- What is the influence of P/CVE discourses in academia amidst the rush for ‘impact’? Can Criticality survive the perils of the Neoliberal Academy?
- How do we navigate questions of positionality and locality when researching ‘terrorism’?
- What is the future of a critical approach to studying terrorism?

We invite contributions from across disciplines that respond to the questions above, and that broadly aim to address what it means to be ‘critical’ when studying ‘terrorism’ in the modern-colonial world. The workshop will be designed in an interactive format, where participants will engage in collaborative discussion on their papers. Abstracts can be submitted via the [EISA website](#) until 5 February 2023.