

KUASIA and IR Seminar

Date: 14th May, 2018

Time: 2:30-4 pm

Room: CASE Z 27

Speaker: Prof. Faisal Devji, Oxford University & Visiting Professor at KUASIA

The inheritance of ISIS

While both scholarly and journalistic analyses of Muslim militancy Islam see it emerging out of a longer history of Islam's politicization, I want to argue that exactly the reverse is true, with much of the violence that characterizes contemporary terrorism deriving from the refusal of politics. The destruction of profane Muslim authority in colonial times was matched by efforts to reconceive Islam itself as a form of social self-management by means of divine law, one that reserved sovereignty for God alone. The problem of what came to be called Islamism, then, was how to produce a society without sovereignty. The inheritance of ISIS is one consequence of the failure of this struggle.

Short Biography of Speaker

Faisal Devji is Reader in Modern South Asian History and Fellow of St. Antony's College at the University of Oxford. He is also Fellow of the Royal Historical Society and Institute of Public Knowledge Scholar at New York University. Devji has held positions at the University of Chicago, where he also received his PhD in intellectual history, Yale University, the New School for Social Research and the Graduate Institute in Geneva. He is the author of four books, *Landscapes of the Jihad: Militancy, Morality, Modernity* (2005), *The Terrorist in Search of Humanity: Militant Islam and Global Politics* (2009), *The Impossible Indian: Gandhi and the Temptation of Violence* (2012) and *Muslim Zion: Pakistan as a Political Idea*.