

Lecture Series on Governance and Politics in South Asia Department of Political Science

Special Lecture on

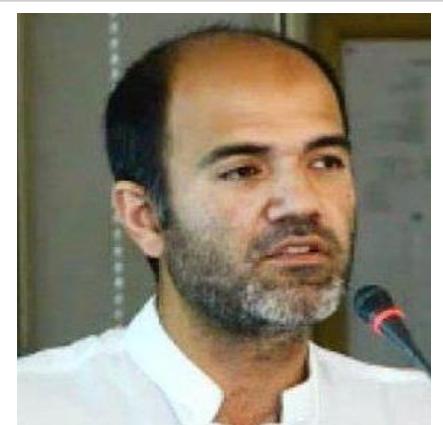
Hamza Alavi's Overdeveloped Legacy

by

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Hamza Alavi's 'overdeveloped state' formulation was the first attempt of its kind to reconfigure Marxist categories to match the empirical realities of the (post) colonial world. Alavi inspired an entire generation of scholars and continues to inform theorisations of state and class power in post-colonial countries today. The Alavian corpus, however, is not without its shortcomings, the most significant of which is the lack of emphasis on the toiling classes, and particularly how a dynamic structure of power, including its ideological pretensions, is legitimated 'from below'. In this presentation I discuss not only the imperative of a political theory that centres the role of the variegated 'middle classes', but also questions of political subjectivity more broadly. In an era of identity politics, the potentialities of the subordinate classes generating the countervailing power need to challenge state and class power can only be realized if we pay sufficient attention to the worldview of the subordinate classes themselves.



Aasim Sajjad Akhtar is Associate Professor of Political Economy at the National Institute of Pakistan Studies, Quaid-i-Azam University. ASA works on diverse subjects such as state theory, informality, colonial history, and social movements. He has published widely in journals such as *Third World Quarterly*, *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, *Journal of Peasant Studies* and *Critical Asian Studies*. He is also the author of three books, most recently *The Politics of Common Sense: State, Society and Culture in Pakistan* (Cambridge, 2018). ASA also writes a syndicated column for Pakistan's newspaper-of-record, the DAWN. Alongside his academic pursuits, ASA has also been closely affiliated with political and social movements in Pakistan for more than two decades.

Date: Monday, 13 December 2021

Time: 14:00 – 16:00, CET

Online: Zoom link, <https://bit.ly/3IuCCVK>

Passcode: 812 5314 7896

Meeting Id: TheoryM21