

Retaining the ‘critical’ in Critical Terrorism Studies: is it possible?

Wednesday, 21 June 2023 09:00 (1h 30m)

In light of the BISA CST Working Group’s call to discuss the fundamental questions around the identity and practice of Critical Terrorism Studies, this roundtable seeks to question whether we can truly be ‘critical’ when studying ‘terrorism’. The roundtable 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 roundtable is motivated by the recent theoretical disappointments in scholarship in the field, and is geared at starting a deeper conversation around the coloniality present at the heart of the discipline. Recent scholarship published in ‘critical’ journals have been criticised for their perpetuation of colonial tropes, Islamophobia, and weak evidential grounding, which has brought to light concerns regarding the mainstreaming of critical approaches. In addition, calls for the ‘decolonisation’ of the discipline open up the crucial debate and question of co-optation, mainstreaming, and diluting of critical and anti-colonial approaches more generally. In conclusion, this roundtable seeks to reflect on what it truly means to be ‘critical’ when we study ‘terrorism’ in the modern-colonial world.

Membership

Track Classification: Critical Studies on Terrorism Working Group