

Le CERI

DÉBAT DU 12 MAI 2014



KARACHI: ORDERED DISORDER AND THE STRUGGLE FOR THE CITY

Lundi 12 mai | 17h00

Book launch : [Karachi. Ordered Disorder and the Struggle for the City](#), by Laurent Gayer, London, C. Hurst & Co. (Publishers) Ltd., 2014

CERI Series in Comparative Politics & International Studies

Chair:

Christophe Jaffrelot, CNRS/CERI-Sciences Po, Series Editor

Michael Dwyer, Director, C. Hurst & Co. (Publishers) Ltd.

Participants:

Laurent Gayer, CNRS/CERI-Sciences Po, Author

Tommaso Vitale, CEE-Sciences Po

Marielle Debos, Université Paris X

With a population exceeding twenty million, Karachi is one of world's largest 'megacities'. It is also one of the most violent. Since the mid-1980s, Karachi has endured endemic political conflict and criminal violence, which revolve around control of the city and its resources (votes, land and bhatta—'protection' money). These struggles for the city have become ethnicised. In the process, Karachi, often referred to as a 'Pakistan in miniature', has become increasingly fragmented, socially as well as territorially. Despite this chronic state of urban, political warfare, Karachi remains the cornerstone of the economy of Pakistan. In contrast to the 'chaotic' and 'anarchic' city portrayed in journalistic accounts, there is indeed order of a kind in the city's permanent civil war. Far from being entropic, Karachi's polity is predicated upon relatively stable patterns of domination, rituals of interaction and forms of arbitration, which have made violence manageable for its population—even if this does not exclude a pervasive state of fear, which results from the continuous transformation of violence in the course of its updating. Whether such 'ordered disorder' is viable in the long term remains to be seen, but for now Karachi works despite—and sometimes through—violence

Responsable scientifique : Laurent Gayer, CNRS/CERI-Sciences Po

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