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AIPS Short Term Fellowship Report  
Grant Period: August 3<sup>rd</sup> – October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2014  
Location: Lahore and Islamabad

The AIPS short-term fellowship grant enabled me to travel to Pakistan for two months this summer and conduct my dissertation research, which focuses on the Modern Art of Pakistan. More specifically, my research examines the modern trends in Pakistani art beginning in 1947 and the pivotal role of the five founding artists of Lahore Art Circle (LAC) in constructing modernist sensibilities and secular trends in Pakistani art from 1950-1957. LAC, founded in 1952 included artists: Ahmed Pervaiz (1926-1979), Ali Imam (1924-2002), Anwar Jalal Shemza (1928 -1985), Moyene Najmi (1926-1997), and Sheikh Safdar (1924-1983). Since my focus is on the first decade of Pakistani modern art after its independence, it is incredibly difficult to locate any archival material on this era especially in the field of Fine Arts. Locating the actual works of LAC artists, which are mostly in private collections, is the challenging task that I set for myself for the two-month research in Pakistan.

I arrived in Lahore, intending to look at a few libraries for archival material and a few museums for actual works of arts. However, this research trip turned out to be extremely productive in finding and locating much more than I anticipated. I divided my research into three parts:

- a. I conducted a number of semiformal and informal interviews with art critics, friends and immediate family members of LAC artists. This included renowned writers such as Intizar Husain, Kishwar Naheed, Salima Hashmi, Nazish Attaullah, Quddus Mirza, Attiya Najmi, Shahnaz Imam, Anwar Saeed, Dr. Ijaz Anwar, Tanya Suhail, Nadeem Omar Tarar, and Amjad Noon, who were in some way connected and engaged with the members of Lahore Art Circle. These interviews provide insight into the intellectual environment of Lahore Art Circle in the first decade of Pakistan's establishment.
- b. I used social networking to locate the actual works of art in private collections in Lahore and Islamabad. This enabled me to see many works of the specific time period in person and to document them. This segment also included seeing and documenting works in Lahore Museum, Alhamra Arts Council Lahore, and the Pakistan National Collection of Arts Islamabad. Experiencing the works (previously

published in black and white) in person is completely different experience; additionally, it has helped enormously in dating the works of the artists.

- c. I accessed archival material in the following libraries: Punjab Public Library, Lahore Museum Library, Punjab University Library, Government College Library, Dyal Singh Library, Beaconhouse National Library, Alhamra Arts Council library, National College of Arts Archives and National Archive Islamabad. In addition to these libraries, I was fortunate to find supplementary material in private collections.

Besides my own research, I was invited to present and share my work at Punjab University, National College of Arts Lahore and Beaconhouse National University Lahore. This provided me an opportunity to actively engage with and receive feedback from the students. In addition to delivering lectures at various institutions in Pakistan, I contributed a short article on Sheikh Safdar (one of the artist from my research work) in the upcoming monthly publication of Alhamra Arts Council Lahore. I have also volunteer to take up the long-term task of cataloging the permanent collection of Alhamra Arts Council, encompassing about 200 works of art representing more than 95 Pakistani artists.

I am grateful for the AIPS grant and the strong support of its staff in Lahore and Islamabad, which greatly helped me to efficiently work towards my goal of collecting research resources and renewed my ties with various art and education institutes.