

AIPS Fellowship Abstract- Walter Hakala

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Urdu as a Critical Foreign Language in South Korea Expanding Pakistan Studies at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies Walter N. Hakala, Asian Studies Program, University at Buffalo Abstract:

In spring 2023, the Department of Hindi at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies will be renamed the Department of Indian and South Asian Studies to reflect the diversity of cultures and growing transnational and interdisciplinary ties between Korea and South Asian educational institutions. The first part of this project entails developing a proposal to the Korean Ministry of Education to fund Urdu as a Critical Foreign Language by creating a comprehensive Urdu-language curriculum, establishing a Korean Society for Pakistan Studies, and designing experiential learning and research opportunities for South Korean students to visit nearby South Asian cultural and religious centers to practice Hindi & Urdu. The second part of this project examines how Korean mosques use different languages and scripts for signs located in outward- and inward-facing spaces. Through collaborations with scholars of Islam and South Asia based in South Korea, this monograph project has the potential to fill major gaps and provide a more complete picture of the social life and linguistic history of Asia's diverse Muslim communities.