

AIPS Fellowship

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Aabiya Noman Baqai AIPS Pre-Doctoral Fellowship Abstract February 2023: How do Christian women from informal settlements use the built environment to re-orient Islamabad's claim to a single imagined national identity? I aim to answer this question by engaging in feminist-based participatory ethnography with such women in Pakistan's capital city. States in capital cities use the built environment to homogenize heterogeneous identities and value-systems. Such practices, combined with the intersectional religious, gender and class based disparities faced by religious minorities living in informal settlements exacerbates their exclusion from representation and accessibility to public spaces in Islamabad. To challenge such hegemonic interventions, I aim to highlight the emergent forms of socio-spatial citizenship that Christian women in informal settlements enact on a daily basis. I argue that this process of citizenship is actually an assemblage of bodies, identities and places that can be enacted by all those who reside in a city, whether from a minority or majority group. Such a framework helps us re-orient the way states idealize and monumentalize an imaginary nationalism.