

Joel Gordon

AIPS Travel Grant – Significance to Pakistan Studies

LUMS/Lahore – Cinema and Transnationalism in Pakistan and South Asia: Regional Histories, September 1-2, 2016

The workshop in general will give impetus to the nascent but growing study of Pakistani cinema. Participants are pursuing research in feature and documentary film, high art and lower brow entertainments, and across linguistic fields (although most here treated Urdu-language cinema). Issues of gender and class, foreign and indigenous, were prominent. Participants/presenters endeavored to incorporate literary roots and to explore how common regional heritages evolved after the imposition of formal state boundaries. My own contribution was an effort to provide a wider comparative lens by exploring key differences and similarities in Middle East film, particularly the Arabic language 'Hollywood' – Egypt.

My purposes were two-fold, to both share ideas and to further my own exposure to regional cinemas that are beyond the traditional borders of the area I have studied and about which I have written. In the long run both aspects will hopefully enrich Pakistan studies. I hope to explore the impact of South Asia, culturally and artistically, upon the Middle East. Concurrently, I hope to provide a different set of lenses for those more directly involved in furthering Pakistan (and wider South Asian) film studies to draw parallels (where relevant) to an adjacent region that shares much historically and socially with Pakistan/South Asia.