

Final Report

During a month of research in Islamabad and Lahore, I collected materials to complete my dissertation *Finding a Home for Urdu: Islam & Science in Modern South Asia, 1903-1961* and collected materials for future articles on museums and popular history in Pakistan. My dissertation *Finding a Home for Urdu* will make an important contribution to the study of Pakistan by examining the promotion of Urdu as a language of trans-regional connection and popular science in Pakistan within a longer history of Urdu promotion in South Asia, particularly in the colonial-era Deccan and Bengal.

In Islamabad I primarily worked in the Special Collections of Quaid-i-Azam University and the National Language Authority (*Idarah Farouq-e Quomi Zaban*.) Pir Hassamuddin Rashidi, who was a leading Sindhi scholar, donated his personal library to Quaid-i-Azam University. Pir Hassamuddin Rashidi was deeply involved with the Urdu promotional organization the *Anjuman-i Taraqqi-yi Urdu* (Association for the Advancement of Urdu), which is the focus of my dissertation. The *Anjuman* was active across the borders of contemporary Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh with the promotion of Urdu. In the Pir Hassamuddin special collection I found early issues of the *Anjuman's* weekly newspaper *Quomi Zaban* (1948-1958) along with political publications of the *Anjuman* from early post-colonial Karachi. The pages of *Quomi Zaban* revealed ongoing efforts to draw Urdu closer Pakistan's regional languages and to make Urdu more accessible to Sindhi students in the 1940s and early 1950s. These connections between Urdu and Sindhi across the Partition divide are an unexplored aspect of Pakistan's cultural history.

In part, my dissertation examines how the members of the *Anjuman-i Taraqqi-yi Urdu* experimented with Urdu type printing in the early twentieth century. The library of the National Language Authority in Islamabad revealed ongoing efforts to forge *nastaliq*-style Urdu typewriters in Pakistan and discussions of Urdu script 'reform' for Urdu typewriters well into the 1980s. The National Language Authority was an institution established in 1979 to promote Urdu as the national language of Pakistan. In the 1980s the National Language Authority collected information on earlier Urdu type printing projects in Hyderabad and North India and submissions from contemporary Pakistani companies on Urdu type technology. This research illustrates how Urdu type projects in Pakistan drew from older technological efforts in the Deccan and late-colonial North India. It will form a valuable component of my dissertation project or a stand-alone article.

While in Lahore I worked in the rich collections of the Punjab Public Library. There I found the writings of Urdu scholars in early post-colonial Dhaka and Karachi who were associated with the *Anjuman*. This included the writings of Andaleeb Shadani, an Urdu professor and scholar in Dhaka, who documented Dhaka's changing urban society in the 1940s in autobiographical Urdu short stories.

My original project for the AIPS short-term research fellowship was with the Lok Virsa Museum (National Institute of Folk and Traditional Heritage) in Islamabad. Although not the focus of my dissertation, in Islamabad I collected information on the history and exhibits of Lok

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Virsa for a future article on the development of Pakistan's first folk heritage museum in the 1970s and 1980s. This article will make an important contribution to museum studies in Pakistan.