Project Title: Khwaja Sira Activism, Transgender Identities & Transnationality in Pakistan

Abstract:
Khwaja siras or the transgender people of Pakistan have recently been granted citizenship rights. This has coincided with attempts to organize and empower khwaja siras. These efforts are being led by the government, transgender activists and by non-government organizations (NGOs) involved in HIV intervention. This project will focus on the role of NGOs and transnational forces in transgender organizing in Pakistan by assessing the potential impacts of donor interests and the international flow of funding and knowledge on khwaja sira identity and activism. Moreover, it will reveal the complex ground realities where elite NGO and indigenous khwaja sira leaders interact with one another and negotiate both competing and mutual interests. The proposed research will supplement my dissertation fieldwork, which locates the role of culture in khwaja sira activism and reveals the significance of identity politics in khwaja sira organizing. This short term project will shed light on the effects of NGO intervention on khwaja sira identity politics.