

***Gulfee* Gangsterism: Masculinity and Migration in Pakistan**

Abstract: Sahiwal, a small city in Punjab, Pakistan, has been transformed in unexpected ways by the migrations of many of its men to the GCC states (Gulf Corporation Council states— Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates [UAE], Qatar, Bahrain, and Oman—hereafter, the Gulf). The story commonly told about these Gulf migrants [*Gulfees*] is of remittances enabling upward class mobility and of hard labor. Missing from this story is that they experience harsh living conditions, exploitative employment and visa practices, and racism in the Gulf in gendered terms. A man recently returned from Saudi Arabia, told me that the only way for a foreigner to survive there is to be castrated. That male migrant workers experience their subjugation in the Gulf as emasculating gendered oppression has implications for how they enact their status and gender in their hometowns. My project studies three ways *Gulfees* attempt to recover their lost masculinities through hypermasculine activities in Sahiwal: trafficking in what might be loosely called “gangsterism,” organizing and controlling migrant labor, and engaging in real estate politics. Through archival and ethnographic work in Sahiwal and the UAE, I seek to understand the impact these hypermasculine actions have on social life in Sahiwal.