

AIPS Travel Grant Final Report

Project Title: Conference presentation

Name: Kaleemullah Lashari

Conference: Annual Conference on South Asia

Location: Madison WI, USA

Dates: Oct. 18-21, 2023

1. **Significance to Pakistan Studies:** The participant, Dr. Kaleemullah Lashari is one of the leading scholars in Pakistan today who is involved in training a new generation of scholars and scientists for studying the archaeology and early to current history of Pakistan. His paper was presented in the session organized by Dr. J. M. Kenoyer, called, "Archaeological and Historical Cultural Heritage Documentation and Preservation in South Asia: Foundational Practices and Innovative Solutions". His paper title was on the "Conservation of Historical Monuments in Pakistan: Example of the Portuguese and Omani Period in Gwadar". The panel was focused on highlighting innovative local solutions to the problems of conservation and community engagement. His paper was focused on a new region of concern, which are colonial and pre-colonial monuments in cities that are undergoing rapid modernization. Gwadar is a port city that has its roots during the Neolithic period (>8000 BC) and was at times controlled by the Omanis, the Portuguese, and most recently is being developed by Chinese companies for the Pakistan Government. Long neglect has led to uncontrolled encroachment and destruction of the important heritage monuments, which are now being protected by the Gwadar Development Authority. In collaboration with various NGOs and local community involvement, a master plan has been developed to clear encroachments, conserve and develop the historical monuments. Small museum displays are being designed to commemorate the historical process of the town along with online information that will be accessible to the wider public. The challenges and insights gained from the long process of planning and community involvement were discussed to illustrate the various strategies needed for this type of work.

2. **Key Outcomes and Deliverables**

One of the most important outcomes of this conference is to network with scholars from the US and other regions in South Asia. This conference also allowed the speaker to engage with international scholars to discuss aspects of conservation and also how to communicate the interpretations of archaeological remains to the general public as well as to the world. He will be collaborating with Prof. J. M. Kenoyer in upcoming excavations at the site of Allahdino, near Karachi from Dec. 17 to Jan 22 and again in the summer of 2024. As part of the project, Dr. Kenoyer will help in the training of junior archaeologists and students from various universities in Pakistan.

Prior to arriving in Madison, Dr. Lashari was able to visit several museums in Chicago, and after the conference he traveled to Washington, DC to see some museums there and meet other colleagues. He also traveled to New York to visit colleagues and museums in that city. Overall his trip was very beneficial to him and to the people who he was able to meet.