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### **AIPS Short-term Fellowship Final Narrative Report**

*A Space & Time for Storytelling: Reconfigurations of Spatial & Temporal Experience in the Work of Intizar Husain*

My AIPS proposal sought to examine the intersection of storytelling and critical memory in the work of the Urdu short story writer Intizar Husain (b. 1925) by locating the literary influences that have shaped his work and the post-Partition Urdu literary culture of which he has been an integral part. The AIPS short-term fellowship enabled me to travel to Lahore, Pakistan this summer where the now elderly Husain has lived for over six decades. The time I spent in Lahore as an AIPS fellow was extremely productive and the findings of my research have been definitive in helping me shape my dissertation project which will offer a comparative study of the representations of space and time in the Urdu short stories of Intizar Husain and the Arabic short stories of the Palestinian author Ghassan Kanafani.

I was fortunate enough to conduct detailed interviews with the writer Intizar Husain along with several of his colleagues, including critics such as Mohammad Salim-ur-Rahman and Dr. Asif Farrukhi, as well as his close friends such as the writers Masood Asher and Zahid Dar. My meetings with these writers who are not just Husain's close friends but also prominent literary figures in their own right enabled me to get a sense of Husain's personality as well as to probe his somewhat reclusive writerly persona and trace the many literary influences that have shaped his writing over the years.

The logistical support provided by the fellowship also allowed me to examine the archives of prominent Urdu literary journals such as *Adab-e-Lateef*, *Savera* and *Naqoosh* located at the historic Punjab Public Library and the Dyal Singh Library in Lahore. I was able to collect Husain's editorials from his tenure as editor of *Adab-e-Lateef* in the early 1960s as well as other uncollected pieces such as debates between Husain and his contemporaries that appeared in these periodicals during the 1960s, 1970s & 1980s including reviews and responses to his work by other prominent Urdu literary figures. I was also able to conduct an interview with Husain's publishers, Sang-e-Meel Publications, as well as other noted publishers based in Lahore. Even more importantly, spending two months in Lahore enabled me to observe first hand of Urdu literary gatherings, including the proceedings of the Halaqa-e-Arbab-e-Zauq (Circle of Arbiters of Taste), which is the longest-running forum for both emerging and established Urdu writers in Pakistan. I was also able to meet with the current and former secretaries of the Halaqa as well as other contemporary writers and critics associated with the Halaqa. Perhaps the most enlightening aspect of this part of my trip was the chance to watch Husain

himself in action in the Urdu literary circuit, as he presided over a meeting of the Writers' Forum.

I am extremely grateful to the American Institute of Pakistan Studies for generously funding my research in Pakistan.