

My paper explored how the earthquake of 2005 in Azad Kashmir has been understood in the region by humanitarian workers, faith healers, military psychiatrists and Pakistani state officials. Engaging the question of *shahadat* (meaning martyrdom but also witnessing) in Islam, I interrogated the various regimes – military, liberal humanitarian, psychiatric – of “witnessing” Kashmir and its suffering. I explored how Islam troubles, rather than renders plain, the relationship between Azad Kashmir and Pakistan. Examining how pain and violence are understood in Azad Kashmir helped approach the “boundaries” of South Asian Islam, as well as Pakistan’s relationship to Islam in the region.

The second panel/roundtable examined how these aforementioned multiple regimes of expertise have enabled state-making practices in the region. With scholars from both sides of the Line of Control, we were able to foster a cross-border conversation that aimed to highlight mutual struggles and important differences in governance between India and Pakistan. These lines of inquiry helped examine how militarized humanitarianism is increasingly a feature of modern empire as well as nationhood. In conversation with Nosheen Ali, whose new book has been a major intervention in the field of Pakistan studies, I chaired this panel with the hope that it will help examine why delusion is integral to our understanding of states, and how war-making functions as the foundation of state-making practices in South Asia. Specifically, this conversation with scholars from across the border helped illuminate Pakistan’s role in the region to begin to approach how affective and libidinal investments are foundational to understanding Pakistan’s nationhood.