

Maira Hayat

Report on AIPS-sponsored research at the British Library, London

My research on the origins of the canal colonies and the specificities of irrigation water distribution in Pakistan's Punjab aims to contribute to scholarship on agriculture in Pakistan. I track how water governance priorities and mechanisms have changed since their inception in the 1870s-1890s, and how 'settlement' then finds echoes in and diverges from real estate activity in the Punjab today. Prior to AIPS-sponsored archival research at the British Library, I completed a year of fieldwork in rural Punjab (village names deliberately withheld). My project aims to tie history and present-day irrigation regimes together to ask questions about the nature of the state, the political, and the meaning and value of progress.

Deliverables:

a) I presented a paper at the Annual Pakistan Workshop at the Lake District, UK in May 2016. The paper was titled, "*We have always wanted to be modern: Notes from Pakistan's Irrigation bureaucracy.*"

b) I am currently working on 2 papers that will be presented at the UW Madison South Asia Annual conference in October '16. This British Library research phase has also allowed me to put together a panel for the Pre-conference Legal Studies workshop, Madison in October '16.

I will also be presenting my work at universities in Pakistan in the academic year, 2016-17.

c) I have received a Starr Lectureship Award from the Anthropology department at the University of Chicago. This allows me to design and teach my own course at UChicago in the winter quarter (January – March 2017). The course I have proposed and that was selected draws heavily upon my research at the British Library on irrigation legislation in colonial-era Punjab. The course is titled, 'Who gets what, when and how: readings on bureaucracy and distribution.'