

GCLA-Congress Library Research Proposal
Forman Christian College University, Lahore Pakistan
Student-Faculty Collaboration

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Responses to 9/11 and US-Pakistan Relations

General Statement of Research Topic

This project scrutinizes 9/11 as a political and historic event; an event that has significantly impacted US-Pakistan relations and policies and continues to do so. Post 9/11, foreign policies have been revised, travel and customs security tightened, and terrorism bills passed by both countries. Terms such as ‘terrorist’, and ‘extremist’ have developed a strong connection with Muslim identity, and Pakistan is often portrayed as hotbed and breeding ground of fundamentalist Islamic extremism. The impact has extended well beyond the realm of official policy, affecting social attitudes and altering perceptions about Muslims and Pakistanis in the US, and consequent in the rest of the world. The East-West divide has now been heightened with a religious and nationalist tenor – Pakistan verses the rest of the civilized western world.

Analyzing this divide is today one of the key areas of focus of Pak-US diaspora writers who, through their work, provide a commentary on Pak-US relations after 9/11. Identity(Pakistani and/or Muslim) issues emerge as a major concern in fiction, non-fiction commentaries, and other genres of art. While works like *The Clash of Civilizations* convince the reader of an East-West divide, other works such as *Framing Muslims* by Peter Morey and Amina Yaqin discuss how Muslim identity is being stereotyped in cultural discourse as well as the media. Similarly, other writers build up themes of transnationalism, which in turn result in a state of ambivalence (like the protagonist Changez in Mohsin Hamid’s *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*). Other cultural narratives have resulted in a diverging of identities, for instance, the concept of “Talibanization” does not merely refer to a group of armed people specific to the Pak-Afghan region, but this is a term used to describe “regressive and parochial conservatism” (Zaidi, 2010). From this angle, it is not only Pakistan, but the US too which has been challenged by “Talibanization”. Hence, it is evident that religious prejudices along with cultural discourses of ‘othering’ are a challenge for both countries.

Lack of extensive investigation by linking state policies, media responses, cultural representations and government records with fictional/non-fictional writings and artistic representation produced by Pakistani diaspora writers and researchers, public and state in the US, leaves a gap in the comprehension of how the event of 9/11 has impacted US-Pakistan relations. What has not yet been attempted is an effort to view the literary and state narrative through a

single lens, focusing on how the two interweave and act as a dialogue, shaping post 9/11 sensibilities in Pakistan and the US. Thus, literary representations and criticism, along with state narrative and policy discussion will be studied as parallel discourses and as dialogues (Bakhtin, 1990) in this project. During the course of these stages, important sources will be those that allow the team to understand responses to 9/11 at a state as well as public level. One of the objective of this study is to observe various sources, including media, creative writing, personal narratives and images as an alternative space to address the impact of state policies in socio-cultural spheres of individual and national lives. They play upon the curiosity stimulated by political rhetoric that sees the Muslim as irredeemably different but, nonetheless, needing to be decoded if the 'battle for hearts and minds' is to be won' (Peter Morey). This study therefore aims to review media footage, policy documents, personal narratives, government proceedings, produced both in the US and Pakistan along with reviewing fiction/non-fiction produced by Pakistani diaspora writers as a response to post 9/11 policies shaped both in Pakistan and US and how they have impacted the relations between these two countries. Broadly, this project aims to incorporate the experiences and responses of American/Pakistani researchers, media and writers to 9/11 to create a more holistic understanding of the incident and the way it has problematized the state of relations between both the countries.

The study involves a combination of archival research, solitary thinking and textual analysis of both, the fictional/non-fictional texts and selected documents from the library of Congress. Both the texts are proposed to be approached through different strands of analysis so that the research that each member of the faculty-student team undertakes contributes to a broader understanding of the topic. In the proposed project, this will be done applying literary theory, philosophical, historical, political and psychological approaches. As this is student-faculty collaboration, each participant in the project will choose one of these approaches to analyze the selected texts and produce a well thought and coherent piece of discussion based on the topic and contention of this project.

By linking the disciplines of literature, history, political science, international relations and cultural studies, foundational to our methodology is literary-critical analyses of the sources available in the library of Congress. We would extend this method to analyze visual arts, photography, music, personal narratives, prints, drawings related to the footage, artwork, manuscripts, mixed materials related to the event of 9/11 and ekphrastic depictions of truncated maps related to the event. The reading materials involve creative to scholarly works, including historiography.

Project Design and Timeline

The research will be conducted in 3 Phases as follows:

Phase I

This phase will involve reviewing materials that the team will collect from Pakistan and will be based on reviewing media sources, policy documents, personal narratives, cultural images and selected fictional/non-fictional texts thematically focusing on the event of 9/11. The team will read these sources and criticism related to them. The team will then write critical and comprehensive reviews on the sources.

Some of the texts that will be analyzed are fictional and non-fictional works written by Pakistani diaspora writers. The issue of Pakistani identity within a larger realm of Muslim identity is explored through these sources and creative links between the works of Kamila Shamsie, Mohsin Hamid and Salman Ahmed and the coalescing of NY with their hometowns of Lahore or Karachi is what we try to explore. These works include:

- *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, Mohsin Hamid, 2007.
- *Burnt Shadows*, Kamila Shamsie, 2009.
- *The Domestic Crusaders*, Wajahat Ali, 2011.
- *Home Boy*, H. M. Naqvi, 2009.
- *Framing Muslims: Stereotyping & Representation after 9/11*, Peter Morey & Amina Yaqin, 2011.
- *Rock n' Roll Jihad: A Muslim Rock Star's Revolution*, Salman Ahmad, 2010.

Films

KhudakeLiye (For the Sake of God)

- Newspaper articles written in national English newspapers like *Dawn* and *The Friday Times*.

Phase II

This phase comprises of research in the Library of Congress. Policy documents are a vital component during this stage of our research, as we intend to study the remaining of our sources (fiction/non-fiction/cultural responses) as different ways of engaging in a dialogue with policy. These documents are either unavailable or very difficult to retrieve in Pakistan. We also wish to analyse further responses to 9/11 produced in the US. Some of the sources we wish to utilize from the library archives are:

- Relevant books:
 - *The Unexpected Patriot*: how an ordinary American mother is bringing terrorists to justice.
 - *Pakistan's Islamic Frontier*: Islamic Politics and U.S. Policy in Pakistan's North-West Frontier.

- *The Patriot Act*, other post-9/11 enforcement powers, and the impact on California's Muslim Communities.
- *Muslim American Women on Campus*: undergraduate social life and identity.
- Legislation and Policy Documents:
 - H.R.10 - 108th Congress (2003-2004) - 9/11 Recommendations Implementation Act.
 - S.3665 - 111th Congress (2009-2010) - Pakistani-American Enterprise Fund Act.
 - H.R.1 - 110th Congress (2007-2008) - Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007.
 - H.R.5040 - 108th Congress (2003-2004) - 9/11 Commission Report Implementation Act of 2004.
 - Pakistan Amendment to Anti-Terrorism Laws.
- Film, Photo, Print and Audio:
 - Pakistan's Strategic Culture & U.S.-Pakistan Relations Webcast (Library of Congress).
 - *A Burning Hate*: 6 drawings
 - Interview with LumirDostal, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, October 9, 2001
- Other sources:
 - 9/11 Public Discourse Project.
 - *Combating Terrorism*: the 9/11 Commission recommendations and the national strategies.

Phase III

This phase involves consolidation of research data back home. The team will continue to communicate with the Library of Congress staff and online resources to continue their research over their next semester. After their return, team members will again review the data they have compiled until mid-September, 2014. At this point they will be writing their final paper, keeping in touch with Library of Congress staff for further guidance and access to available online resources. Team supervisor and faculty member and students in this team will contribute to produce a final paper representing the research undertaken, the preliminary findings reached, and provisional conclusions drawn. Each paper would be presented in a publication style proposed by GLCA. As required by GLCA, each team member will give online presentation or YouTube recordings of twenty to thirty minutes outlining the subject of his or her own research. Research insights will also be shared via student and academic journals published on campus, and in higher level classes for both Literature, and Political Science. The team will share individual summaries of their experiences and the work they have done through seminars on campus, as well as over the internet. The department of English at Forman Christian College will also arrange for a connect course focusing on this theme and collaborate with another GLCA college.

Anticipated Outcomes

The most rewarding result that we hope to extract out of this exercise is a deeper conceptual clarity about responses to 9/11 and how the event has impacted US-Pakistan relations. As mentioned previously, and quite often, through recent events the relationship between our two countries has undergone drastic changes. While contemporary Pakistani literature is nearly always reflective of this change, it is essential to inculcate the ideas it propagates productively so that it can lead to a better understanding: Many Pakistanis may view America as a hostile country, and many Americans may harbor not-so-kind feelings for the Pakistanis. We believe that through our research, we may be able to discover a new way of understanding the socio-political and cultural issues that broaden the gulf, and hope and aim that such an analysis will allow people to view their surroundings with a clearer, more enhanced perspective so that ultimately, problematic concerns such as identity, or religious faith will not arise with the same unyielding intensity. Furthermore, as most of our team is from the English department at FCCU, we aspire to raise the bar of importance for our subject and propose that blending literature with policy can also be one way of studying social, political and cultural issues.

Student Collaborative Researchers

The research team comprises of students adept in varying disciplines, allowing for a broader understanding and analysis of the sources through literary theory, philosophy, history, psychology, and political theory. Each participant will choose one or more of these approaches and conduct their research from its particular viewpoint, amalgamating their knowledge with the rest of the team for the final review and compilation.

Tooba Fatima

Senior year; majors: English Literature and Psychology

When Dr. Nukhbah told us about the opportunity of research at the Library of Congress, I was excited beyond belief. It opened the possibility of working with two things I love and enjoy greatly: research, and libraries! With majors in both Psychology and Literature, I have explored research in both disciplines through my courses. I have also greatly enjoyed the challenge of rigorous research my professors have always presented.

Mobeena Shafqat

Junior Year, Majors: Literature and History

When Dr. Nukhbah first approached me with the idea of this project, my initial response was, I think, a rather skeptical one. I wasn't sure what our topic was, the type of information I'd be required to dig up, and since many of us were coming from diverse academic backgrounds, how we'd manage to assimilate together our different viewpoints on a particular topic.

But recently, this has all changed. As I've gotten to know my colleagues, I've discovered all of our interests converge on one single point: We share a mutual passion for literature. In Pakistan, English Literature is a relatively new, but a rising skill which few authors have shown they can

master. Through this project, we hope to raise this literature to a new standard. With Dr. Nukhbah's unending encouragement and guidance, my group members and I have managed to choose and read novels that we believe may help us greatly in our pursuit.

Being both a History and Literature major, I've learned the importance and immense value of research. I've opted for Research Methodology courses previously, and what I've learned is this: Research is difficult, often painful, and a good researcher is meticulous. And yet, at the same time there is no greater joy, than taking something apart, viewing it from a different angle, shedding light on a new perspective, contrasting a piece of work with the criticism its received, to achieve a better understanding and higher conceptual clarity. With this in mind, I am fuelled for this research project, and where once I was skeptical, I am now excited!

M. Mauvia

Junior Year, Majors: Psychology, Philosophy, English Literature.

My profound interest in research pulled me towards this project when Dr. Nukhbah discussed this opportunity. Being a triple major, analyzing a subject or issue by employing all three perspectives individually has always added to my in-depth understanding. The broader understanding of a subject or issue accompanies when I indulge in the process of synthesizing these perspectives to form a whole. I got excited upon finding the philosophy of this project in parallel, where at lower level each team member becomes an agent to the broader understanding; there on the higher level, all three participating teams engage in the synthesis of related topics.

In this project, I am looking forward to critically analyze the responses to 9/11 and US-PAK relations from philosophical and psychological standpoints.

This opportunity will further my understanding of the systematic way of carrying out research. I look forward to contribute productively.

Mrs. BushraJaswal Chief Librarian, Forman Christian College University, Lahore

Bushra Almas Jaswal is an acclaimed expert of library automation and digital libraries, having a knack for leaving a legacy at the strength of her wisdom, innovation and farsightedness. She has also distinguished herself by designing information literacy programmes and innovative library services.

She has been working as the Chief Librarian and Associate Professor at the Forman Christian College (A Chartered University) in Lahore since May 2007.

During this period she is credited to have revived an old and almost dead college library into a vibrant, well-used and state-of-the-art, modern University Library, which is fully automated.

BushraJaswal was the driving force behind the establishment of Information Commons at the Forman Christian College in 2012 to cater to the growing need of the students, faculty and

researchers to access and use the growing volume of information coming in electronic formats, embedded in online databases, websites, blogs, wiki's and the internet, and required availability of ample computers on campus and developing skills to access and use that information effectively. This was first such facility of its kind in Pakistan.

She worked at the United Nations Digital Library, Islamabad, from May 2002 to May 2007. The library was an online searchable repository of all historical publications, documents and reports issued by the UN Agencies in Pakistan.

She established a digitization lab and a high speed network to digitize the printed documents and processed them to add into the digital repository for online publishing.

Earlier she had established the United Nations Common Library to serve 13 UN Agencies in Islamabad, having developed an online catalog and a website containing annotated bibliographies on various social issues in Pakistan.

Dr. Nukhbah Taj Langah, Associate Professor, Forman Christian College University, Lahore

My doctoral thesis focused on Siraiki as an ethno-linguistic identity and the issue of creating new provinces within the federation of Pakistan. I translated and analyzed contemporary Siraiki literature and theorized it as resistance literature being produced as a result of neo-colonialism in Pakistan. My recent publication based on this subject was *Poetry as Resistance: Islam and Ethnicity in Postcolonial Pakistan* (Routledge, 2011).

Besides my ongoing research on Siraiki literature, I also teach South Asian literature and am interested in the recent works by Pakistani diaspora writers. My forthcoming article focuses on 'Post 9/11 'Islamophobia' and the Concern for Muslim Identity in the Works of Contemporary Pakistani Writers' (a publication by Jamia Millia Islamia University, India). I am interested in the process of Islamization and Talibanization within Pakistan and the ways in which it has complicated the concept of Pakistani identity besides creating East-West rift. This project will provide me an opportunity to explore this subject further.

The idea of working with students and encouraging them to learn and experience research interests me and this is one of the reasons why I have encouraged these students to work on this excellent collaborative initiative.

Overall Significance of the Research to the Team

Access to the Library of Congress resources allows the research to become interdisciplinary, synthesizing the political and the literary. Students at Forman Christian College enjoy the unique opportunity to study at the only Liberal Arts College in South Asia. True to the spirit of their education, and almost each of them with majors in more than one discipline, the opportunity to produce research will be multi-disciplinary and of great interest. Living in post 9/11 Pakistan and exposed to diaspora fiction and relevant literary theory, research at the Library of Congress

provides them with the tools to conduct a unique research never attempted before; to explore the narrative of literature as a response to the narrative and policy of the state, which is sure to yield insightful results within both countries.