**Punjabi and Popular Vulgarity: A Critical Analysis of Language and Cinema in Pakistan**

**Abstract:**

This long term ethnographic study of the Punjabi-language cinema industry in Lahore, Pakistan--known colloquially as 'Lollywood'--seeks to use the cinema industry as a lens through which to investigate the relationship between linguistic practices and social issues such as class, ethnicity, gender, vulgarity, and Punjabiyat (‘Punjabi-ness’) in contemporary Pakistani Punjab. This research is particularly unique in the literature on language ideology because although Punjabi is marginalized in some ways by the Pakistani state and cultural apparati, it is the most widely-spoken mother tongue in the country and the most common language in the most economically and politically powerful province. Punjabi cinema, like the Punjabi language, is often characterized as crude, vulgar, and even un-Islamic. I will explore the connections that emerge from the deep and complex relationships between the Punjabi language and the aesthetics, representations, solidarities, and social commentaries found in Punjabi popular cinema. My research creates a starting point for understanding how practices of cinema production are mobilized to negotiate this sociolinguistic landscape. Moreover, this study will be an important contribution to the burgeoning body of ethnographic work on cinema industries.