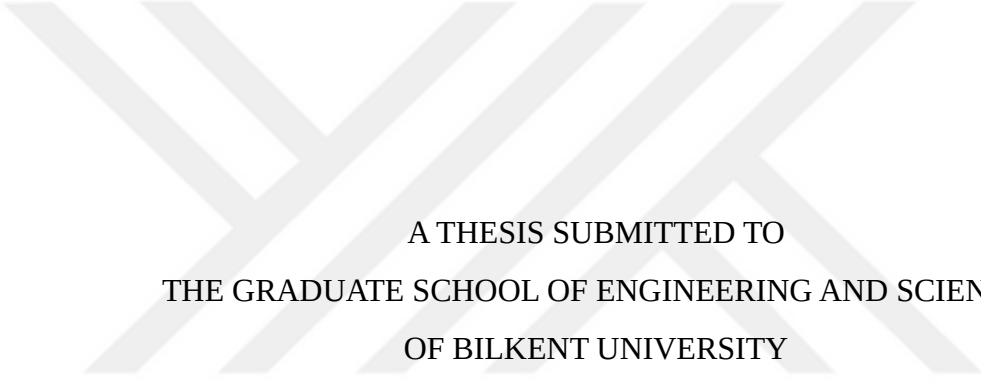


**GENDERED URBAN IMAGINATIONS: LITERARY
REPRESENTATIONS OF LAHORE AND HEERA MANDI**



A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
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BY
MARYAM JAMIL
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To Ammi (in heaven)



GENDERED URBAN IMAGINATIONS: LITERARY REPRESENTATIONS OF LAHORE AND HEERA MANDI

By Maryam Jamil

August 2023

We certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science.

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ABSTRACT

GENDERED URBAN IMAGINATIONS: LITERARY REPRESENTATIONS OF LAHORE AND HEERA MANDI

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August 2023

Lahore is culturally and architecturally one of the wealthiest cities in the South Asian sub-continent. It has seen its days of glory and days of obscurity. From Mughal Emperors to the colonialization of the British to the nationalism of Pakistani leaders, it has witnessed drastic changes in its cultures, architecture, and urban spaces. These changes were due to either religious, political, or social reasons.

This thesis deals with two significant eras in Lahore's history that shaped the cultural identity of the city; Colonial Lahore (1858-1947) and post-colonial Lahore (1970-present). The thesis explores how the urban sphere of Lahore was imagined by different genders in the colonial and post-colonial periods. It scrutinizes the literature, memoirs, and archives of the people experiencing the city at their respective ages. It explores how these experiences varied for gender and whether it was equally an ideal space by respective genders. It also discusses the effects of one of the biggest red-light districts in the sub-continent, *Heera Mandi* (Diamond Market), on the city's urban space and religious culture before and after the independence from the British.

Furthermore, the thesis investigates the interaction between power, patriarchy, and urban development in Lahore's postcolonial modernization attempts. Authors such as Bapsi Sidhwa, Sara Suleri, Louise Brown and Mohsin Hamid's postcolonial fiction give unique insights into minority worries, women and *Khawajasira*'s struggles, and the clash between tradition and modernity as impacted by political events and cultural transformations. The study improves our knowledge of Lahore's gender dynamics and their consequences for urban development by analyzing these representations.

Key Words: colonization, urban imagination, urban history, public sphere, gender, red-light district, Lahore.

ÖZET

CİNSİYETE DAYALI KENT HAYALİYATLARI: LAHOR VE HEERA MANDI'NIN EDEBİ TEMSİLLERİ

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Danışman: Prof. Dr. Bülent Batuman

Ağustos 2023

Lahor, Güney Asya alt kıtasının kültürel ve mimari açıdan en zengin şehirlerinden biridir. Hem görkemli günlerini hem de gölgeleri görmüştür. Babür İmparatorlarından Britanya'nın kolonileştirilmesine, Pakistan liderlerinin milliyetçiliğinden bağımsızlığa kadar, kültürleri, mimarisi ve kentsel mekanları üzerinde büyük değişimler görmüştür. Bu değişiklikler genellikle dini, siyasi veya sosyal nedenlere dayanmaktadır. Bu tez, Lahor'un kültürel kimliğini şekillendiren tarihsel olarak önemli iki dönemi ele almaktadır: Kolonyal Lahor (1858-1947) ve sonrası dönem (1970-günümüz). Tez, Lahor'un kentsel alanının kolonyal ve sonrası dönemlerde farklı cinsiyetler tarafından nasıl hayal edildiğini araştırmaktadır. Şehri deneyimleyen insanların edebiyatını, anılarını ve arşivlerini ilgili dönemlere göre incelemektedir. Bu deneyimlerin cinsiyete göre nasıl farklılaştığını ve ilgili cinsiyetler için eşit bir ideal alan olup olmadığını keşfetmektedir. Ayrıca, Britanya'dan bağımsızlıktan önce ve sonra şehrin kentsel mekanı ve dini kültürü

üzerinde Güney Asya'nın en büyük genelev bölgelerinden biri olan Heera Mandi'nin etkilerini tartışmaktadır.

Ayrıca, tez Lahor'un sömürge sonrası modernleşme çabalarında güç, ataerkillik ve kentsel gelişim arasındaki etkileşimi araştırmaktadır. Bapsi Sidhwa, Sara Suleri, Louise Brown ve Mohsin Hamid gibi yazarların sömürge sonrası kurgusu, azınlık endişeleri, kadın ve Khawajasira'nın mücadeleleri ile siyasi olaylar ve kültürel dönüşümler tarafından etkilenen gelenek ve modernite çatışmasına benzersiz perspektifler sunmaktadır. Bu çalışma, bu temsilleri analiz ederek Lahor'un cinsiyet dinamikleri ve bunların kentsel gelişme üzerindeki etkileri konusundaki bilgilerimizi artırmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: sömürgecilik, kentsel hayal, kentsel tarih, kamusal alan, cinsiyet, genelev bölgesi, Lahor.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

- 1. INTRODUCTION 1
- 1.1. PROBLEM STATEMENT 4
- 1.2. AIM AND SCOPE 5
- 1.3. METHODOLOGY 6
- 1.4. STRUCTURE OF THESIS 9

CHAPTER 2

- 2. LITERATURE REVIEW 11
- 2.1. DECONSTRUCTING SPACE AND GENDER 12
- 2.2. GENDERED SPACE 16
- 2.3. URBAN IMAGINATIONS 20
- 2.4. URBAN SPHERE OF LAHORE 22
- 2.5. COLONIAL URBAN CONTROL IN LAHORE 24
- 2.6. COLONIALISM AND SEXUALITY 29
- 2.7. SEXUALIZED COLONIAL URBAN SPACE 31
- 2.8. POST-COLONIAL URBAN CONTEXT 34
- 2.9. CONCLUSION 40

CHAPTER 3

- 3. URBAN (HIS)TORY OF LAHORE 42
- 3.1. *THE TWO FRIENDS*: CONTRASTING WORLDS, LAHORE'S COLONIAL DIVIDE AND CULTURAL FUSION 47
- 3.2. *KIM*: COLONIAL ENCOUNTERS AND ORIENTALIST STEREOTYPES 54
- 3.3. *AN AMERICAN BRAT*: SHIFTING SOCIAL DYNAMICS: MINORITIES' ANXIETIES AND CHANGING LAHORE 63
- 3.4. *MEATLESS DAYS*: NAVIGATING IDENTITY AND BELONGING IN POST COLONIAL LAHORE 74

- 3.5. *MOTH SMOKE: THE IMPACT OF POLITICAL CRISES AND
NUCLEAR COMPETITION ON 'POST-POST-COLONIAL' LAHORE* 87

CHAPTER 4

4. BEYOND SHADOWS: UNVEILING HEERA MANDI'S GENDERED
IMAGINATIONS 98
- 4.1. *KANJARS OF HEERA MANDI* 101
- 4.2. *SACRED AND PROFANE* 106
- 4.3. *ARTS AND CULTURE CENTER* 112
- 4.4. *URBAN IMAGINATIONS OF KHAWAJASIRAS* 120
- 4.5. *GENTRIFICATION ATTEMPTS* 133

CHAPTER 5

5. CONCLUSION 137

GLOSSARY 143

REFERENCES 145

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 2.1. Colonial Map of Lahore showing Walled city and Civil Station	33
FIGURE 3.1. Map of Lahore (1839)	44
FIGURE 3.2. British Civil Secretariate, Lahore	50
FIGURE 3.3. Mall Road, Lahore (1920)	52
FIGURE 3.4. Anarkali Bazaar, Lahore in 1890s	53
FIGURE 3.5. Zam Zammah, Lahore	56
FIGURE 3.6. Minar-i-Pakistan Park (Previously known as Minto Park)	67
FIGURE 3.7. Lahore Development over the Years	69
FIGURE 3.8. Contemporary Housing Scheme in Lahore	71
FIGURE 3.9. People Socializing while Sitting on <i>Tharras</i> in Walled City Lahore	72
FIGURE 3.10. Architectural Elements in the Houses for Socializing in Walled City Lahore	72
FIGURE 3.11. <i>Baramda</i>	77
FIGURE 3.12. <i>Zenana Khana</i>	79
FIGURE 3.13. Anarkali Tomb	81
FIGURE 3.14. Punjab University, Lahore	81
FIGURE 3.15. Ranjit Singh Tomb, Lahore	83
FIGURE 3.16. Aerial View of Badshahi Mosque, Lahore	84
FIGURE 3.17. Lahore Museum, Lahore	84
FIGURE 3.18. National College of Arts, Lahore	85
FIGURE 3.19. Old vs. New Lahore	93
FIGURE 4.1. Painting of a <i>tawaif</i> of Heera Mandi with Badshahi Mosque in background	107
FIGURE 4.2. “Sheena” by Artist Iqbal Hussain	107
FIGURE 4.3. View of Badshahi Masjid from a nearby Restaurant	108
FIGURE 4.4. Plan of Old Lahore Walled City	109

FIGURE 4.5. View of Androon Lahore from a nearby rooftop looking towards the tomb of Masjid Wazir Khan	110
FIGURE 4.6. A courtesan giving a performance around 1899- Heera Mandi	114
FIGURE 4.7. Tamancha Jan Studio Portrait	115
FIGURE 4.8. Begum Akhtar Singing for Colonial Officials in Heera Mandi	115
FIGURE 4.9. . Iqbal Hussain's mother's house which is now converted to a restaurant in Lahore	118
FIGURE 4.10. British victimizing the Khusras	122
FIGURE 4.11. Few people believe that the hands of Khusras can bless or curse someone with fertility	125
FIGURE 4.12. Eunuch in Mughal Times	126
FIGURE 4.13. A picture taken by Ali Khataw of a Transgender performing in Heera Mandi	132
FIGURE 4.14. <i>Khawajasira</i> performing at a private function in Lahore	133
FIGURE 4.15. Fort Road Food Street, Lahore	135
FIGURE 4.16. Fort Road Food Street, Lahore	135



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

*“Raft in its music, in evening’s hush, the Ravi;
But how it is with this heart, do not ask—
Hearing in these soft cadences a prayer-call,
Seeing all earth God’s precinct, here beside*

*The margins of the onward-flowing waters
Standing I scarcely know where I am standing.
With palsied hand the taverner of heaven
Has brought the cup: red wine stains evening’s skirt;*

*Day’s heading caravan has made haste towards
Extinction: twilight smoulders like hot ash of the sun’s funeral pyre.
In solitude far off, magnificent, those towers stand,
Where the flower of Mughal chivalry lies asleep;*

*A legend of Time’s tyranny is that palace;
A book, the register of days gone by;*

*No mansion, but a melody of silence—
No trees, but an unspeaking parliament.*

*Swiftly across the river's bosom glides
A boat, the oarsman wrestling with the waves,
A skiff light-motioned as a darting glance,
Soon far beyond the eye's carved boundary.*

*So glides the bark of mortal life, in the ocean
Of eternity so born, so vanishing,
Yet never knowing what is death;
For it may disappear from sight, but cannot perish”*

On the Bank of the Ravi -Dr. Allama Iqbal.

Lahore is an eccentric city with an intense character along with charm. The architecture of Lahore is an amalgamation of royal and glorious Mughal architecture, along with the grand buildings of the British *Raj* (rule) and then the recent contemporary buildings. The Mughals left after them some glorious architectural heritage: the mighty Badshahi Masjid, the glorious Shahi Quila, the royal Shalimar Gardens, the mighty tombs of Noor Jahan and Jahangir. The massive buildings of the British *Raj* surround the main mall road in all their glory. The whole city is now developed around the old *Androon* (inner) Lahore (Walled City) and showcases the contemporary architecture scene in the city (Brown, 2005).

Lahore has traditionally served as cultural and social hub of Pakistan. Its landmarks serve as architectural evidence of the city's multiple pasts, making it a realm of crossing

identities that predates imperial India by decades, if not millennia. The city boasts a thriving artistic culture, weakened by the split but still very much present. Lahore is also significant because it serves as a indicator for developments throughout Pakistan, some of which harm the urban poor. Contemporary authors like Bapsi Sidhwa, Mohsin Hamid, Louise Brown, and Sara Suleri connect the origins of this transition to the city's long-standing social, gender, and ethnic divisions worsened by the birth of Pakistan. (Al-wazedi, 2016).

Heera Mandi (Diamond Market) is the heart of Walled City of Lahore. The red-light district is next to Minar-e-Pakistan, a 1960s tower designed to memorialize the 1940 Lahore Declaration. It's also in proximity to Lahore's most renowned structure, the vast Mughal Mosque known as Badshahi Masjid. Shalimar Gardens, Jehangir's Mausoleum and Anarkali Bazaar and are all adjacent Mughal attractions (Al-wazedi, 2016). *Heera Mandi* constitutes a cluster of three to four-story structures discreetly nestled within the northern precincts of Lahore's Walled City. Currently, it stands as one of the largest red-light districts in Pakistan. It is historically, culturally, and architecturally rich and is a significant urban space in Lahore. But cultural and religious reasons make it taboo to discuss these matters in Pakistan.

This thesis will research the gendered urban imaginations and experiences of Lahore city during the colonial and post-colonial times. It will provide a theoretical framework to study the gendered urban history and imaginations of Lahore through a conducted literature review. It will critically analyze the novels written by different authors in colonial and post-colonial periods and draw a picture of the gendered history of the city. Furthermore, it will dive deeply in one of the biggest red-light districts in Pakistan-Heera

Mandi (in Lahore) and study it through different gendered themes that cuts across the periodization.

Lahore has been a topic of literature written by different authors since the 19th Century. However, it has been imagined very differently by each author. Rudyard Kipling, Dina Nath and Pran Nevile are the main authors from the colonial period, while Bapsi Sidhwa, Sara Suleri, Mohsin and Hamid are the main contemporary writers from the post-colonial time period. Each author perceives and imagines the city differently and writes on a different city theme. All these themes will be collectively woven together to define the gendered urban character of Lahore city in this thesis.

1.1. PROBLEM STATEMENT:

The present red-light district of *Heera Mandi*, historically a renowned center of arts and culture in colonial India, played an important role in Lahore's gendered urban imagination throughout the colonial and post-colonial eras. Its existence and impact have had far-reaching effects on the city's lived experiences of gender. Despite its historical and societal significance, extensive academic study is scarce to dig into the delicate link between *Heera Mandi* and Lahore's greater urban fabric, notably its influence on gender dynamics.

Understanding the complexity of urban life, social norms, power dynamics, and gender relations in Lahore requires an understanding of *Heera Mandi*'s multidimensional ramifications in the context of colonial and post-colonial Lahore. By investigating the historical significance of *Heera Mandi* and its subsequent alteration over time, it is

possible to see how this red-light district has impacted and influenced the gendered experiences of people living in and around Lahore.

It also aims to find answers to the questions such as, how did the red-light district affect the gender experiences in the public sphere in Colonial/ Post-Colonial Lahore? What was the significance of the Red-Light district in the collective perception of Colonial Lahore? How can we define the gendered character of urban imagination? How was the image of the red-light district tackled after independence? Is it possible to read the post-colonial modernization attempts in the planning of Lahore from a gender perspective?

Thus, this thesis aims to critically examine *Heera Mandi's* influence on the gendered experiences of *Lahoris* (dwellers of Lahore) during the colonial and post-colonial periods. This research tries to give a thorough understanding of the connection between *Heera Mandi* and the greater social fabric of Lahore by researching primary and secondary sources such as historical documents, literature, and oral histories. By doing so, it intends to add to existing scholarship on gender, urban studies, and Pakistani history while also providing insights that might feed current conversations on gender, sexuality, and urban development.

1.2. AIM AND SCOPE:

This thesis aims to fill the research void in the scholarship of gendered urban imaginations in Lahore, studying literary representations of the controversial red-light district *Heera Mandi*. The research analyzes how changes in the urban imaginations of Lahore over the colonial and post-colonial eras altered gender experiences and urban space inside the city. The thesis specifically tries to investigate the influence of Lahore's

red-light district, *Heera Mandi*, on the city's urban environment and gendered character before and after independence from British colonial authority.

The thesis' scope includes an examination of Lahore's historical and cultural studies and literature, with an emphasis on the particular eras of Colonial Lahore (1858-1947) and Post-colonial Lahore (after 1947). It will dive into the complexity of urban planning, architecture, and the public realm to comprehend the changes that have happened in Lahore's urban fabric through time and how these changes have influenced gender experiences. The study will also look into the perception and significance of *Heera Mandi* in the collective imagination of Colonial Lahore, as well as how the red-light district image was addressed and modified after the country won independence.

Furthermore, the thesis will investigate the gendered nature of urban imagination and its embodiment in the post-colonial planning and development of Lahore. The research intends to give insights into the intricacies of urban development and the intersectionality of gender in constructing urban areas by investigating the gender viewpoint in post-colonial modernization endeavors in Lahore.

1.3. METHODOLOGY:

To establish the cultural and physical context of Lahore, this thesis employs a combination of archival research, critical reading of official and scholarly sources, and literary work analysis. The following is an outline of the research methodology:

1.3.1. Literary Work Analysis:

For analysis, fiction, non-fiction, and poetry on Lahore published by diverse authors who have lived in the city during various eras, are chosen. These literary works are examined

to elicit gendered urban imaginations and to investigate how they reflect the city's spatial dynamics, public realm, and gender experiences.

The first work examined in the colonial context is the novel *The Two Friends: A Descriptive Story of Lahore Life* by the Indian author Dina Nath. This novel is important in analyzing the colonial urban context of Lahore because it depicts the contrasting urban character of Lahore and the social divide between the colonizer and the colonized each with unique cultural, religious, and social patterns and how it affected the gendered urban character of the city. The second novel analyzed is *Kim* by Rudyard Kipling. This piece of fiction is significant in studying the colonial urban imaginations with the eyes of an Englishman.

The post-colonial urban context of Lahore is analyzed by the literary works of Bapsi Sidhwa, Sara Suleri and Mohsin Hamid few of the most significant contemporary authors in Pakistan. *An American Brat* by Bapsi Sidhwa analyzes the shifting social dynamics of Lahore after the independence of Pakistan. The story is about a minority family living in Lahore right after independence. It gives the thesis a perspective of the gendered imaginations of minorities and how they perceived the urban space of Lahore in the changing political situations in Lahore. The second literary work analyzed is a memoir *Meatless Days* by Sara Suleri, this memoir is a compilation of Suleri's own imaginations of the city which investigates the identity and belonging of the dwellers of Lahore after independence. The third novel studied in this section is *Moth Smoke* by Mohsin Hamid. Mohsin Hamid's literature is critical in studying the urban character of Lahore after the 2000s. *Moth Smoke* describes the class divide in the modern Lahore caused by the post-colonial urban planning attempts and the political scenario after Pakistan became the

atomic power. It describes the contradicting urban imaginations of the dwellers of *Androon* Lahore and the dwellers of modern Lahore.

1.3.2. Study of Urban Imaginations of Heera Mandi:

A wide range of literature, novels, fiction, and non-fiction works, are explored to comprehend the influence of *Heera Mandi*, Lahore's controversial red-light district. These sources provide a range of viewpoints on the red-light district, its historical background, people's experiences, and the district's effect on Lahore's gendered urban imaginations. The thesis uses this technique to fully grasp Lahore's historical and cultural backdrop, gendered experiences within its urban space, and the relevance of *Heera Mandi* in creating the city's imaginations. Using archival material and literary works allows for a multifaceted investigation of Lahore's urban growth, planning, and gender dynamics, resulting in a more nuanced knowledge of the research issue.

The main literary works used in this chapter are by Bapsi Sidhwa, Mohsin Hamid, Fouzia Saeed, and Pran Nevile. Sidhwa's *Cracking India*, *City of Sin and Splendour*, and *Pakistani Bride* are very important in studying the gendered character of *Heera Mandi*. Hamid's *Moth Smoke* and *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* describes the gendered character of the district after Zia-ul-Huq's Islamization and gentrification. Saeed's *Taboo!* delves into the lives of the sex workers lives and is critical in studying the imaginations of the dwellers of the region. Nevile's memoirs are important in getting a glimpse into the colonial arts and cultural character of the district.

1.4. STRUCTURE OF THESIS:

This thesis is composed of five chapters. Chapter one is the introduction. It comprises the problem statement of the thesis, research questions, aims and scope, methodology and chapter framework of the thesis.

Chapter two reviews existing literature on gender, space, urban imaginations, colonial urban control, sexuality and colonialism, sexualized spaces, Lahore's urban space, and Lahore's urban imaginations in colonial and post-colonial eras and concludes the existing literature. Due to a lack of literature on gender and space in the Pakistani context, gender and space are explained by the scholarship on Western theorists and urban historians and then related to Pakistani contexts. Similarly, colonial literature is viewed through a lens of the works of Western scholars and then related to the Pakistani context. Furthermore, background information about the historical and cultural aspects of the urban sphere of Lahore and *Heera Mandi* is explained and then related by the theories explained in earlier sections.

Chapter three gives a chronological representation of the urban history of Lahore and the gendered character of the city in colonial and post-colonial eras. It analyzes the literary works of the authors according to the different themes which shaped the gendered urban character of the city in respective eras. The themes are organized in chronological order to make it easier to understand the historical events happening in the city. The major literary works (fiction/non-fiction) used to analyze the urban history of Lahore are *The Two Friends: A Descriptive Story of Lahore Life* by Dina Nath, *Kim* by Rudyard Kipling, *An American Brat* by Bapsi Sidhwa, *Meatless Days* by Sara Suleri and *Moth Smoke* by

Mohsin Hamid. Also, archival material is studied side by side, some of the events to show actual and imaginary.

Chapter four deals with the red-light district in Lahore, *Heera Mandi*. It gives a glimpse of the historical imaginations of the red-light district read through the lens of literary works. Furthermore, it studies *Heera Mandi* as a microcosm of the city and how the collective urban imaginations of the city are shaped by it. Furthermore, it sheds light on the urban imaginations of one of the most prominent populations living and earning in the region- the *Khawajasira* (Transgender) community. The major literary works critically examined to represent the gendered urban imaginations of the area are by Louise Brown, Bapsi Sidhwa and Mohsin Hamid in post-colonial context and the literary works of Pran Neville in the colonial context. Furthermore, archival information has been represented to show the gentrification attempts in the district and to document the new food street that major of the region has been converted into.

Last chapter is the conclusion of the thesis. In this, all the research are concluded, the research questions are answered and whether the hypothesis was proved right or wrong was concluded. Furthermore, the future implementations and scope of this research is also mentioned.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

*“One who has not seen Lahore,
Cannot be said to have been born
I have seen all places; there is not another like thee
For thou wert established by the Creator-Lord Himself
Who Blest thee with Glory
O Ramdaspur, how thickly populated thou art, and weariest
Unparalleled beaut
And whosoever batheth in thy tank, is rid of his Sins”
(A Punjabi Folk Song).*

This literature review aims to set a theoretical framework for the thesis. The first section aims to deconstruct the concepts of space and gender, examine their interconnectedness, and explore the implications for gender experiences and imaginations in the urban sphere. It explores the scholarships of urbanists and historians and then connects it to the Lahore urban context. It provides a lens through which the urban imaginations are looked at

further in the thesis. Furthermore, the relation between colonialism and sexuality and urban spaces is studied through the works of Western scholars.

By exploring the urban sphere of Lahore, with a particular focus on its historical center, the Walled City, and the infamous red-light district of *Heera Mandi*, the review will provide insights into the complex relationship between space, gender, and urban development. It will draw on the works of scholars to comprehensively understand the gendered dynamics of urban spaces, social interactions, urban imaginations, and the presence of sexualized public spaces within Lahore's cultural hub.

2.1. DECONSTRUCTING SPACE AND GENDER:

In the last several decades, social theorists have established gender as a permanent concept for evaluating and problematizing aspects of society, finally reconceptualizing space and its boundaries. The term “sex” is usually understood to refer to a person's anatomy at birth. Gender, on the other hand, is a more comprehensive, socially created system of classifications, personalities, responsibilities, and performances expected of people depending on their sex (UNESCO 2003). Gender is described by Phadke et. Al as “...not something we are but something that we do” (Phadke et al. 2011). Simone de Beauvoir articulated the idea that gender is socially created in the 1960s. According to Don Zimmerman and Candace West gender is an “emergent feature of social situations” (West & Zimmerman, 1991: 14) that is the product of and the cause of social arrangements.

According to queer theory, the binary gender system of two sexes is inextricably linked to the heterosexual framework. These two qualities are dependent on one another and are

represented in spatial arrangements (Frisch, 2002). Spatial arrangements serve as a canvas for the etching of gender and power relations, which are then maintained through encounters. However, it is critical to recognise that gender is not the only category in this complex web of social divisions and inequities; it is intertwined with elements such as race, class, sexuality, religion, and others. Spaces are used to situate oneself within complicated role and identity systems. Different settings provide differing degrees of flexibility for the reexamination, persistence, and antagonism of various identity categories, which are sometimes interrelated or opposed against one another (Binswanger et al., 2009).

Many academics in the subject of urban gender studies use social constructionist ideas, which contend that gender and space are not intrinsically “natural” things but rather the result of social construction. Sociologist Martina Löw (2006) defines spaces as “relational arrangements of living beings and social goods” (Löw, 2006). This implies the twin practices of locating groupings of individuals and things, as well as the need to link perceived or visible items to form spaces. Spaces are described as “processual, relationally ordered systems” (Löw 2006) in this sense. Similarly, as geographer Doreen Massey puts it, places are in a permanent state of “constant construction” (Massey, 2005; 9). According to Löw, the “process of genderizing spaces occurs through the structuring of perceptions” (129), which “results in the selection of specific locations and placement practices that mirror the underlying societal principles (including gender)” (Löw, 2006;129).

Space is frequently conceived of as a medium through which humans live, reflecting a location's social, architectural, and cultural views. Lefebvre defines space as the

communal hub in which interactions are formed (Lefebvre, 1991). This social area is separated into three architectural layers: private, semi-private, and public.

Space is often divided into physical and mental aspects, with social space being identified by Lefebvre (Lefebvre, 1991). According to Lefebvre, urban space centres on the concept of power. He criticises architects' current spatial approach, claiming that a more holistic approach to social space might foster variation and originality. Space is seen in how we place our bodies inside, which assists in the formation of gender; how we are trained to engage with space shapes us as gendered beings (Lefebvre, 1991).

Susan Fainsten and Lisa Servon (2005) in the “Introduction” of their book *Gender and Planning: A Reader* draws attention to the relationship between urban planning and gender. Traditional planning practices, they claim, have frequently reinforced gender stereotypes and inequities, resulting in restricted and unequal spatial layouts. Feinstein advocates for a critical assessment of public places to better understand how gendered viewpoints and experiences shape them. Fainstein and Servon also provide a clear explanation of what is meant by gender and how the concepts of gender and sex are different:

“studying a system in which women, men, gays, lesbians, and other trans-gendered are implicated and entwined. ... Gender has to do with the behaviors, expectations, and norms confronting each group in relation to each other. For this reason, it is critical that gender studies include men as subjects along with women” (3).

On the other hand, according to Dolores Hayden, gender, as a simple elaboration of physical difference, is symbolically linked to a wide range of cultural representations, which in turn provide the parameters not only for comprehending the relation between men and women but also for organizing self-experience. Hayden and Gwendolyn Wright

published a review essay, "Architecture and Urban Planning," in *Signs* journal (1976), a turning point for discussing gender and space. As an architect and urban historian, they draw attention to the historical marginalization of women's experiences and demands in the built world. Their essay emphasizes the effect of patriarchal power systems on architectural design, resulting in places that do not appropriately accommodate women's different roles and activities. Hayden is an advocate for more inclusive urban design that takes into account the perspectives of all genders.

Studying it through the perspective of South Asia, space and gender represent a society's power dynamics, and culture represents the power dynamics and culture of a society. Under the continual monitoring of modern South Asian society, females are expected to stay in enclosed places and limit their mobility to required situations rather than enjoyment. They are socialized to accept the repercussions of stepping outside, including harassment and inappropriate behavior by men. Thus, Phadke promotes an image of autonomy when she encourages the reader to envisage city squares, streets, lawns, and alleyways filled with women going about their everyday lives (Phadke et al. 2011). Aside from pointing to the city's public spaces, she proposes a narrative in which women are active parts of the city fabric rather than ghosts drifting from one location to the next.

This study of literature goes into the complex link between gender and location, examining how the two conceptions are socially created and intricately connected. Gender is deconstructed in the writings of numerous researchers, exposing it as a socially generated system of classifications and behaviors rather than a fixed quality based on biological sex. The research emphasizes that places are dynamic and developing outcomes of human interactions and social structures rather than static things. Urban

environments, in particular, are viewed as power sources where spatial practices and encounters shape gendered identities. Traditional urban planning practices have frequently reinforced gender stereotypes and inequality, emphasizing the need for more inclusive methods that consider different genders' unique experiences and demands. Finally, it emphasizes the significance of knowing how space and gender interact to influence our identities and experiences in society, and it invites us to imagine more inclusive and equitable environments for all. We may aim toward more inclusive and empowering settings that allow for the full involvement and expression of varied gender identities by recognizing the intricate interplay of gender and place.

2.2. GENDERED SPACE:

The literature on gendered space studies how spatial arrangements and urban architecture might impact the allocation of resources, opportunities, and experiences depending on gender. The term “gendered space” is explained differently by both Western (Massey, Spain, Hayden, Rendell, and Fainstein) and Eastern scholars (Chatterjee, Phadke, Beebeejaun, and Masood). Studying this gendered space relationship is very important to study the gendered character of the urban space in Lahore and will lay the foundation for the thesis.

Doreen Massey (1994) objected to the concept of space functioning only as a passive background to historical events, a viewpoint widespread in the humanities and social sciences. She emphasized that space is not a solid cage; rather, it is modified by formation processes, making it flexible and, importantly, linked. Relational space comes through the interactions of numerous things, people, concepts, laws, and locations. As a

result, it contains both physical and social or cultural components. We can capture the cultural elements of places using a relational concept of space. Gender is one of these cultural characteristics of space that is crucial to the layout of many social systems. Spaces “are gendered in various ways that vary across cultures and over time” (186). Massey was kicking the ball into the court of the historical sciences, which had been sluggish to join the game.

For a long time, the historical sciences only peripherally recognised the relationships between places and the tangible spatial organisation of societal settings and cultural setups. With the exception of a few isolated works, historians have recently begun to see space via a relational lens rather than just as a passive "container" for events. The "spatial turn," or the incorporation of geographical factors into history, acquired hold relatively late in the twentieth century. Disciplines such as geography, sociology, architectural theory, urban planning, ethnology, and cultural anthropology, on the other hand, had undertaken a systematic investigation of the gendered characteristics of (relational) places far earlier. As a result, a historical study using relational space is required to address gaps in historical research and produce research findings desired by neighboring disciplines (Bondi & Spain, 1992).

The phrase "A woman's place is in the home" has significantly influenced urban design, reflecting a Victorian belief in gender roles. Similarly, "What's a nice girl like you doing in a place like this?" reveals the prevailing attitude towards women in public spaces. These implicit principles of urban planning stem from 19th-century notions of female passivity in the domestic sphere and male aggression in the public world. Notions like these profoundly affect how our spaces are designed (Hayden, 1985). In the Pakistani

context, it demonstrates the mobility issue that women confront in Pakistan. In Pakistan, women's space is always defined by the two axes of *andar* (inside) and *bahar* (outside). This contradiction may be traced back to nationalist movements in pre-partition India, which will be discussed in length in the following sections (Masood, 2017).

The spatially oriented works of Doreen Massey (1994) emphasize the interdependence of place, gender relations, and power dynamics. Gendered experiences, she claims, are intimately rooted in the formation of space. Similarly, Jane Rendell's (2012) feminist architectural theory criticizes traditional architectural techniques for failing to see gender as a fundamental component in constructing space. Rendell provides an alternative framework that embraces feminist viewpoints and recognizes the different realities of people living in cities.

When seeing space through the larger prism of gender, the phrase gendered space becomes another method to critique it (Spain, 1993). Gender inequality exists in space on many public and private levels both public and private; one aspect is nationalism philosophy and the patriarchal regimes that govern it. While the educated and reformed woman is now valued and permitted to enter public spaces, she does so at the expense of monitoring her conduct and body indoors and outside (Chatterjee, 1990; Phadke et al. 2011; Wilson, 2001).

According to Susan Fainstein (2005), recognizing gender as a system that includes both women and men doesn't diminish the importance of men's experiences. It is essential not to view this understanding as a zero-sum game, where progress in one direction leads to losses elsewhere. Instead, adopting a gendered perspective can lead to positive changes

that expand opportunities for everyone, making the overall impact greater rather than redistributing existing resources.

Furthermore, metropolitan surroundings are designed with a "neutral" user in mind, frequently coinciding with the stereotype of an able-bodied guy. This propensity might make access difficult or impossible for people who do not meet the predicted standard. The current study demonstrates, particularly in South Asian civilizations, the constraints put on women to have a "justifiable reason" for stepping into public areas, as well as the numerous hurdles they must overcome in order to use such spaces for leisure reasons (Phadke et al., 2011). As a result, there is a need to de-gender access to urban places, requiring women to transcend the constraints of the domestic domain in order to participate in the city's collective narrative.

The notion of “gendered space” is studied via the writings of several Western and Eastern scholars and theorists, emphasizing the dynamic and relational aspect of space, where interactions of diverse elements contribute to its cultural and social components. The study emphasizes the need for historical sciences to adopt a relational approach to better comprehend gendered settings and bridge research gaps. The influence of past gender roles on urban architecture is visible, reinforcing latent rules that have influenced our physical landscapes. The assessment examines the Pakistani environment and sheds light on women’s mobility constraints, emphasizing the need to un-gender spatial access and promote inclusiveness. This section establishes a strong framework for investigating the gendered nature of urban space in Lahore.

2.3. URBAN IMAGINATIONS:

The concept of ‘urban imagination’ provides a framework to examine the relationship between gendered space and urban environments. It underscores the importance of understanding how urban spaces are imagined, designed, and experienced through a gendered lens. Acknowledging the complexities of gendered space and actively engaging in interdisciplinary approaches can create more inclusive and empowering urban spaces for all individuals. To better understand the urban imaginations of Lahore, the terms “spatial imagination”, “social imaginary,” and “colonial spatial imagination” by Dell Upton, Charles Taylor, and William Glover, respectively, are analyzed.

Dell Upton introduces the concept of “spatial imagination” in his 2008 work, referring to how a specific group constructs an ideal representation of the interplay between physical and social aspects, conceptualizing “interconnections among individuals as a fusion of tangible and intangible attributes” (239). This notion is discernible in a variety of communicative and non-communicative spheres—Upton establishes links between advancements in early-republican urban planning in the United States and advancements in scientific classification, museum exhibit arrangement, merchant accounting procedures, currency standardization, and economic philosophy, among others. However, the spatial imagination does not provide a simple formula for actual social behavior. According to Upton, the spatial imagination's distinguishing trait, the fusion of the concrete and the abstract, “cannot be realized in its entirety in the tangible world because it pertains more to 'shoulds' than 'can-bes' in the context of social and spatial existence” (239).

The use of the urban imagination idea is similar to Charles Taylor's concept of the “social imaginary” (Taylor, 2004: 23). Taylor defines the social imaginary as the way large communities, and possibly entire societies, imagine their communal existence—their interconnections with others, the dynamics that occur between them and their peers, the typical expectations, and the fundamental normative ideas and images that underpin these anticipations (23). Taylor's depiction of the social imaginary, comparable to the spatial imagination, elucidates how “common individuals 'conceive' their societal environment” (Taylor, 2004: 23), and the modes through which this conception manifests in “images, narratives, and folklore” (Taylor, 2004: 23), rather than solely in theoretical constructs.

The concept of Urban Imagination is a useful lens for comprehending the complex link between gendered space and urban surroundings. We can develop more inclusive and empowering urban settings for all citizens by addressing the intricacies of gendered space and using multidisciplinary approaches. Dell Upton's concept of “spatial imagination” emphasizes how various groups anticipate ideal linkages between social and physical events, even if such material-non-material fusion can never be fully realized. Similarly, Charles Taylor's “social imagination” focuses on how cultures collectively perceive their social existence through pictures, myths, and legends. Scholars like Glover offer insight on how historical circumstances, such as the “colonial spatial imagination,” have affected notions of ideal connections within urban environments by investigating these spatial and social imaginations. Understanding and critically interacting with the urban imagination in the future can pave the path for more progressive and equitable urban planning and architecture.

2.4. URBAN SPHERE OF LAHORE:

Lahore, the capital of the Province of Punjab and the region's largest metropolis and major cultural hub, is located near the Indian border. It is one of the country's foremost socially liberal, modern, and cosmopolitan cities and one of the oldest. Lahore's beginnings date back to antiquity; the first reliable text concerning Lahore was published in 982 and has been subject to multiple empires under various names throughout history (Alvi, 2019).

Because of many UNESCO World Heritage Sites, In Pakistan, Lahore is a famous cultural center as well as an important destination for the country's tourism sector. The phrase *Androon Shehr*, which refers to the inner city or Lahore's Walled City, is one of the city's most notable attractions. The Walled City, also known as the Old City, is the historical heart of Lahore and one of the country's oldest lasting communities. Its beginnings may be traced back to the year 1000 CE, and during the mediaeval era, the city was surrounded by strong mud walls. Later, when Lahore was named as their capital during the Mughal Empire, the Mughals not only built the Lahore Fort but also improved its walls (Alvi, 2019).

Lahore's urban form differs from the standard in Pakistan in that it was not planned with geometric accuracy; rather, it took shape in a fragmented fashion, with little *koochas* (lanes) and *galis* (narrow streets) developing in the middle of nearby buildings. The Mughals built the walled city, which was surrounded by thirteen gates that functioned as access points and progressively grew in a round pattern. While there are remnants of pre-Mughal architecture, the city's particular identity was mostly influenced by the Mughals,

Sikhs, and British. The Walled City's structure encourages different spatial configurations, giving abundant chances for urban involvement for all citizens. Interestingly, despite the fact that the *mohallas* (neighborhoods) were named after certain religious or ethnic groups, they were not entirely populated by those designated groups. During the Akbari era, only 9 of Lahore's 26 *guzars* (access lanes) were located within the Walled City, with the rest accommodated by the suburbs that grew surrounding the city's enclosing walls (Glover, 2008).

Lahore's suburbs reached a spread of 5 kilometers during the Jahangir era, whereas the city's breadth now stretches to around 18 kilometers from the Walled City. However, it is worth remembering that the towering city walls were demolished by the British, who also eliminated the majority of the city gates. During Empress Nur Jahan's reign, several garden mansions were built both within and outside the city walls, blending garden living into the city's rapidly developing urban landscape (Glover, 2008).

Today, the beautiful yet convoluted alleyways of the old city are mostly intact. Still, time, encroachment, and illegal restoration activities havoc on the city's ancient fabric, displacing these jewels with lesser reproductions. The Walled City of Lahore Authority (WCLA) is a semi-government organization established in 2011 to protect, plan, develop, manage, and administer the Lahore Walled City and has since worked to preserve and restore it (Alvi, 2019).

In contrast, the new suburban Lahore is physically separated based on economic stratum. There's also been an influx of gated neighborhoods scattered across the city, with the Defence Housing Authority emerging as the most major rival. In contrast to Lahore's

Walled City, these new areas are well-planned, with typically cookie-cutter homes. (Alvi, 2019).

2.5. COLONIAL URBAN CONTROL IN LAHORE:

Lahore arose as a vital urban center in the context of British colonial authority in South Asia, with substantial ramifications for exercising imperial power and urban governance.

This part of the Literature Review analyses the writings of famous historians Indrani Chatterjee, Ann Laura Stoler, Stephen Legg, Ashwini Tambe, and Jessica Hinchy, who have investigated various aspects of British colonial urban governance in Lahore, Pakistan.

The British Raj made considerable modifications to the status of prostitution in India throughout the colonial era. According to Ann Laura Stoler's colonial urban theory, the British colonial strategy resulted in the formation of new "red-light" districts, with prostitutes categorized depending on their clients and religious connections (Stoler, 2009). This was when the Arts and Cultural hub of *Heera Mandi* was converted into a red-light district. The British authorities saw prostitution as a necessary evil, especially regarding military health, creating rules and buffer zones between cantonment sites and prostitutes who failed health examinations (Levine, 2003). Prostitutes are now relocating and dwelling near military stations, further distancing them from the arts and cultural sectors (Shibli, 2010).

According to Philippa Levine (2003), during British colonial authority in India, a new type of brothel or "red-light" district emerged. The arrival of British rule in 1857 significantly altered the status of prostitutes. Prostitution was viewed as an essential but

unwanted component of colonial administration, posing possible dangers to military health (Levine, 2003). Furthermore, prostitutes were divided into specialized groups; some dedicated solely to the pleasure of British soldiers, while others catered to Indian clients. To protect the physical well-being of British military soldiers, the Cantonment Regulations mandated that if a woman refused treatment for an ailment, she be ejected from military settlements. However, these women lived within the cantonment boundaries, posing health risks to the troops. As a result, colonial authorities established a ten-kilometer buffer zone between Cantonment limits and prostitutes who refused screening or tested positive for illnesses. Nonetheless, in towns where local authorities refused military participation, this method proved fruitless (Levine, 2003).

The *Kanjar* community, which was historically involved in entertainment, saw major changes as a result of British colonial policy. Unlike during the Mughal period, when *Kanjar* women engaged in sex business lived within their familial ties, current conditions required them to travel and settle near military bases. Despite their involvement in sex work, these women continued to fulfil duties as mothers, daughters, sisters, and wives within their familial systems, so remaining "respectable women." Their status as migratory laborer, however, effectively reduced them to the identity of sex workers. The emphasis on health rules widened the gap between prostitution and cultural activities; the *tawaiif's* mystique was replaced by medical injections and health inspections (Shibli, 2010).

In *Sexuality, Obscenity, Community: Women, Muslims, and the Hindu Public in Colonial India*, Charu Gupta mentions that, the Hindu nationalist party that sprang from a burgeoning middle class in the 1920s and 1930s was vehemently opposed to sex work.

They regarded *Kanjars*, as well as other sex workers, as well as performers who were not prostitutes, as "bad women." This, according to Gupta, stems from the necessity to express moral "rightness" throughout the anti-colonial fight. Even as they battled the colonizers, the emerging middle class was seen accidentally adopting Victorian ideas. The Hindu nationalist groups approached the struggle against prostitution in two stages. They began by demonizing prostitutes, believing they were the root of all evil. Second, by municipal edict, prostitutes (and the performers connected with them) were ordered to leave particular towns or territories within cities. The rationale was that the number of prostitutes in a town determined its morality. Prostitutes have to be removed from some neighborhoods for *izzatdaar* (respectable) middle-class ladies to dwell there. These regulations impacted both Hindu and Muslim prostitutes. (Gupta, 2002). As the colonial era proceeded, the rise of Hindu nationalist groups added moral and cultural dimensions to the prostitution debate. Charu Gupta's gender theories demonstrate how the Hindu nationalist party condemned sex work and sex workers as "bad women" in order to demonstrate moral "rightness" throughout the anti-colonial battle. This resulted in efforts to remove prostitutes from certain areas, affecting both Hindu and Muslim sex workers (Gupta, 2002).

The post-1857 colonial era, then, represents the beginning of a shift in India's conventional prostitution system. Initially, dance and music were gradually separated from the sex business. The rising demand for sex workers, along with the necessity that these workers relocate to cantonment zones to meet this want, resulted in the breakdown of the family structure that had controlled prostitution. Nonetheless, the effects of this transition were largely muted when, in response to criticism from Hindu nationalist

elements, the colonial authority chose to separate prostitutes and performers from the general population. Because entire families were involved in prostitution and performance, relocations occurred regularly as cohesive groupings (Shibli, 2010).

Kanjar sex workers maintained a certain level of respectability among the middle classes in the setting of family-run brothels, frequently being seen largely as entertainers. Their shift to military encampments, on the other hand, resulted in their dissociation from the familial narrative, and their identity became associated with that of sex workers. This change had an influence on their social contacts; those who were considered "respectable" avoided being connected with prostitutes. Furthermore, this change significantly reduced these women's chances of finding appropriate marriage mates. Notably, as Philippa Levine points out, the British Colonial government undertook a thorough census of prostitutes (Levine, 2003).

Prostitutes were classified based on numerous factors, including their clientele' nationality (British or Indian males), sexual well-being, and religious views. Tier one brothels were visited by British soldiers, whilst tier two brothels were popular with Indian personnel (Levine, 2003). When Muslim women performed sexual services for Hindu men or Hindu women performed sexual services for Muslim men, religious disputes arose. However, there is little indication of conflict resulting from relationships between British males and Muslim women. Notably, the *Shia Kanjars* established a unique group due to their affiliation with the *Shia* faith. It's worth noting that, although being Muslims, *Sunni* and *Shia* conceptions of prostitution differ greatly, as briefly mentioned before (Gupta, 2002).

Following the classification of prostitutes and entertainers as "undesirable women" and jobs, the Hindu Nationalist Party and colonial authorities launched measures to separate them from the broader public. While prostitutes were judged "disreputable," they also housed persons involved in "undesirable" pursuits, such as drug trafficking, and offered safe havens for illegal operations, according to the notion. Similarly, dancers and musicians were stigmatized since it was assumed that their motions and melodies were intrinsically sexual. As a result, *Kanjars*, *Mirasis* (a group linked with musical activities), and other performers were clearly separated from the rest of the urban landscape in order to preserve its "purity" (Shibli, 2010).

It's possible that this new definition of "purity" was adopted with other Victorian ideas. Despite the fact that Hindu nationalists rejected colonial influence and were educated mostly inside British frameworks, it's not unexpected that they unintentionally adopted Victorian conceptions of morality and purity¹. Victorian notions of morality and purity also influenced attitudes toward prostitutes throughout the colonial era. The adoption of ideals of "purity" resulted in the separation of performers such as the *Kanjars* and *Mirasis* from the rest of the city due to the perceived sexually provocative character of their art forms (Shibli, 2010). Similarly, in Lahore's Heera Mandi, Hindu nationalist views and their adoption by Muslim equivalents led in the profession and individuals who practiced it being stigmatized as "evil" (Saeed, 2001).

The Hindu Nationalist Movement's convictions had an impact on society and found resonance even among its Muslim counterparts. As Saeed points out, while modern awareness recognizes the presence of Lahore's Heera Mandi, it nevertheless associates the trade and its practitioners with moral violation. According to Saeed, this viewpoint

considerably contributes to the overlook of Kanjari women's concerns by women's rights organizations and activist groups. These problems include sexual assault, violence, substance misuse, exploitation, the spread of sexually transmitted illnesses, and an increasing risk of HIV/AIDS (Saeed, 2001).

2.6. COLONIALISM AND SEXUALITY:

Liat Kozma's book chapter on "Prostitution and Colonial Relations" emphasizes how sexual imaginations was frequently used to depict colonial relations. The metaphor of colonial "coveting gaze" in Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978; 186-190) was represented by metaphors such as the "virgin African continent". As a result, colonized women became the focus of colonial sexual fantasies and fascination. In some circumstances, they were seen as exotic and hypersexual, yet in others, such as Islamic communities, their sexuality was regarded as oppressive, prompting efforts to "save" them.

In the framework of colonial interactions, wants and sexuality affected colonial policy surrounding prostitution. According to Ann Laura Stoler (2009), to retain imperial reputation, British colonial officials, for example, were not permitted to age in the colonies so that the presence of an old Englishman would not call imperial grandeur into doubt. English and Dutch colonial adolescents were sent to European boarding schools so that attachment for their childhood nannies or yearning for indigenous females could not destroy well-preserved divisions between colonizers and colonized. Interracial partnerships were a subject of official involvement, with policies varying across imperial contexts.

According to Frantz Fanon (2004), colonial connections shaped and directed desire. The access of white men to colonized women has distinct cultural implications than colonized men's yearning for white women. The former was occasionally sponsored by colonial officials, but the latter was fostered by anti-colonial feeling. This longing for the assets of the colonizer evolved into a political ambition to alter power relations.

The image of a "dark-skinned rapist" appeared frequently in fictional literature (for example, in Rudyard Kipling's *Kim*). According to Jenny Sharpe's (1993) study, the Mutiny of 1857 sowed the seeds of hostility and distrust against Indians among British authorities. While no solid proof exists to support the presence of such systematic violence, Sharpe claims that stories tailored to inspire dread have the same effect as a real rape. Essentially, such stories fiercely promote gender norms by demonstrating that women's bodies may be taken for sexual purposes (Sharpe, 1993: 67).

In this colonial worldview, women's sexual preferences were rarely investigated. In colonial discourses, they were thought inconsequential, with the emphasis being placed on white women as victims of "white slavery" or deceit. This study does not address female desire within colonial relations, yet it deserves its own theoretical examination (Kozma, 2017).

The survey of literature on Colonialism and Sexuality throws insight on the persistent role of sexual images and desires in shaping colonial interactions. The depictions of colonized women as exotic or oppressive show how sexual desires and infatuation were connected with colonial power relations. Conceptions of sexuality and race impacted colonial prostitution policy, as authorities strove to protect imperial prestige and maintain divides between colonizers and colonized. According to Frantz Fanon's observations,

colonial relations shaped desire differently for white men and colonized men, with the latter's craving for the colonizer's goods transforming into a political ambition for change. Furthermore, in the context of colonial Lahore, the concept of the “dark-skinned rapist” reinforced prejudices and terror, reinforcing gender roles and power disparities. While colonial discourses frequently overlooked women's sexual desires, Liat Kozma's work emphasizes the significance of deeper theoretical investigation in comprehending female desire within colonial relationships. This portion of the literature review delves into the complicated interplay between colonialism and sexuality, urging greater investigation into the subtle relationships that molded historical, colonial and cultural narratives.

2.7. SEXUALIZED COLONIAL URBAN SPACE:

Prostitution has a largely urban past, and the colonial environment is no exception. In terms of how colonial rulers choose to develop and change urban environments, histories of colonial prostitution are inextricably tied to history of colonial urbanism. Historians of prostitution in colonial nations link prostitution's evolution to the colonial presence's modification of urban environment (Kozma, 2017). In the excerpt below, Fanon (2004) notably illustrated the consequences of colonial ties on how colonizers and colonized saw urban spaces:

“The settler’s town is a strongly built town, all made of stone and steel. It is a brightly lit town; the streets are paved with asphalt, and the garbage cans swallow all the leavings, unseen, unknown, and hardly thought about... The settler’s town is a well-fed town, an easygoing town; its belly is always full of good things. The settler’s town is a town of white people, of foreigners” (Fanon, 2004).

“The town belonging to the colonized people, or at least the native town, the Negro village, the medina, the reservation, is a place of ill fame, peopled by men of evil repute. They are born there, it matters little where or how; they die there, it matters not where, nor how. It is a world without spaciousness; men live there on top of each other, and their huts are built one on top of the other. The native town is a hungry town, starved of bread,

of meat, of shoes, of coal, of light. The native town is a crouching village, a town on its knees, a town wallowing in the mire. It is a town of niggers and dirty Arabs” (Fanon, 2004).

The endeavor of colonial urbanism may be considered as a part of modernization, in which the duty of urban planning was entrusted to professionals who based their approach on ostensibly objective social science concepts. These concepts were later standardized into procedures known as "colonial laboratories." Europe's colonies served as testing grounds for these approaches, which were introduced, examined, adjusted, and polished as needed. Informal zoning practices, as well as de facto segregation and inequities based on class and race, were ingrained in colonial urbanization. Cities were divided along lines that distinguished the respectable from the disreputable, the indigenous from the foreign, and the lower class from the upper-class consumer in the colonial urban context (Kozma, 2017).

In the setting of Lahore, the British organized the development of the Mall Road and Civil Station region outside the city walls. This area was distinguished by massive governmental structures that emulated Britain's majestic architecture (Figure 2.1). The Mall Road and Civil Station were allocated solely for the white population, as Dina Nath proved in his work *The Two Friends: A Descriptive Story of Lahore Life* (1899).

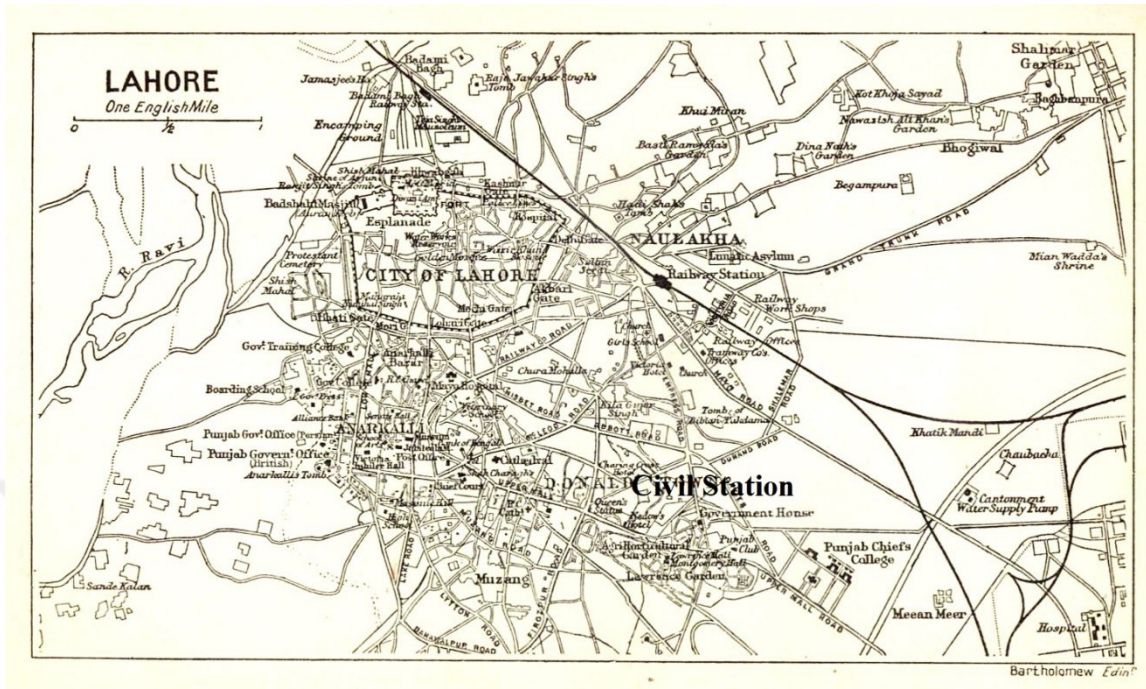


Figure 2.1. Colonial Map of Lahore showing Walled city and Civil Station (Source: Glover, J. William. (2008). *Making Lahore Modern: Constructing And Imagining A Colonial City*. London: University of Minnesota Press Minneapolis London).

The complex interplay between settlers and indigenous people, or the dynamic between the indigenous city and the colonial metropolis that grew around it, demarcated the geography of prostitution inside colonized urban settings. Even in the present day, postcolonial cities have the scars of a divided history. The colonial towns evolved as areas where multiple social and economic systems, often coercively imposed, collided, resulting in social and economic fissures and upheavals. As a result of these upheavals, there was economic uncertainty, which drove women into prostitution. Surprisingly, these processes did not replace traditional methods of controlling and supervising women, but rather enhanced them by combining contemporary, bureaucratic approaches (Wright, 2004).

2.8. POST-COLONIAL URBAN CONTEXT:

Pakistan had a problematic political phase following its independence on August 14, 1947. Mohammad Ali Jinnah, Pakistan's founding figure and first governor-general, died in 1948, shortly after the country was established. Liaquat Ali Khan, the first Prime Minister, died in office too soon in 1951, and successive leaders Khawaja Nazimuddin, Muhammad Ali Bora, and Chaudry Muhammad Ali had very short tenures. Pakistan was formed an Islamic Republic in 1956, with Iskander Mirza serving as the first President. However, martial law was declared only two years later, and General Ayub Khan took the presidency. This period of martial law ended in 1962, with the election of Ayub Khan as President. His term ended when he resigned in 1969 (Ziring, 2005).

We first witness legislative reforms regarding prostitutes under Ayub Khan. In an attempt to eradicate prostitution, the authorities planned to demolish red-light districts and relocate inhabitants (Ziring, 2005). This was comparable to the activities conducted by the Hindu nationalist party outlined above, except that the final aims were different. Although Hindu nationalists attempted to remove the "bad woman," prostitution was nevertheless considered a necessary evil. These efforts, in contrast, hand, aimed to eliminate prostitution completely. Saeed opposes these laws, alleging that the government identified prostitutes as a "problem" yet never investigated their clients (Saeed, 2001). Prostitutes migrated to other sections of the city as red-light neighborhoods in Pakistan were dismantled. Citizens of these other communities, on the other hand, complained about brothels opening near their houses, compelling the government to amend its policy once more. The red-light areas were restored, and the Kanjar community reached an agreement with the government in which its dancers were classed as performance artists.

The High Court ruled that they may perform from 10 p.m. to 1 a.m. Anyone who wasn't a dancer and just provided sexual services, on the other hand, was deemed a criminal (Saeed, 2001).

The Punjab Suppression of Prostitution Ordinance was passed in 1961. This law decree specifies the sanctions that will be enforced on prostitutes, brothel owners, and those who compel women into prostitution. Soliciting was punishable by up to six months in prison and/or a fine of two hundred rupees (equal to \$1). Maintaining a brothel was punishable by up to two years in jail and a fine of one thousand rupees (equal to \$20). Furthermore, the law set penalties for numerous offences such as "living on the earnings of prostitution," "procuration," and "causing, encouraging, or abetting prostitution of a girl under sixteen" (The Punjab Suppression of Prostitution law of 1961). The final of these offences resulted in the heaviest punishment, which included "rigorous imprisonment" for up to three years, a fine of 1,000 rupees, and, if the culprit was male, flogging.

Surprisingly, these rules have stood the test of time and are still part of the Pakistani penal code (Shibli, 2010).

Residents of red-light districts were given increased security during the tenure of Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who served from 1973 to 1977. Bhutto rationalized his initiatives to encourage the arts, including dance and singing. Customers who wished to engage a "dancer" to go to their houses needed to enroll with the police under his administration (Saeed, 2001). In principle, this legislation was intended to protect women from violence and exploitation. However, assessing the success of this offering remains a difficult task in the absence of clear facts. It's possible that the requirement to register with law enforcement discouraged potential customers from engaging in such activities.

Alternatively, a considerable number may have discovered ways to get around these rules. Many women are undeniably opposed to frequent police inspection of their conduct. Assuming the Suppression of Prostitution Ordinance remains operationally binding, what measures would prohibit authorities from charging dancers with prostitution? (Shibli, 2010).

During Zia ul-Haq's military regime, the *Kanjars* faced yet another attack. During Zia's reign, a program of "Islamization" was launched, in which music and dancing were condemned as violating Islamic values. As a result, dancers' working hours were significantly reduced to only two hours every night. Strict police monitoring was established on red-light areas, and women were severely forbidden from dancing after business hours. To better manage these areas, checkpoints were strategically placed, requiring all consumers to register prior to admission (Shibli, 2010). As a result, many clients were put off. As a result, sex workers were forced to arrange off-site interactions with customers.

In addition to these restrictions, Zia's administration enacted the Zina Ordinance, which severely restricted the rights of all Pakistani women. Section six of this law classifies any sort of sexual interaction outside of valid matrimony as Zina, punishable by imprisonment and even stoning (Saeed, 2010). The phrase "sexual intercourse" is commonly used interchangeably with "penetration." The Hudood Ordinance incorporates the Zina Ordinance, a statute now under consideration that has resulted in the wrongful imprisonment of women who were raped and charged of adultery. The Pakistani judiciary is now deliberating on this statute (Shibli, 2010).

An important development happened on December 1, 2006, under the leadership of President Pervez Musharraf, with the passing of The Protection of Women (Criminal Laws Amendment) Act, 2006. The Pakistan Penal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure, the Dissolution of Muslim Marriages Act, the Offence of Zina (Enforcement of Hudood) Ordinance, and the Offence of Qazf (Enforcement of Hadd) Ordinance were all amended as a result of this legislative move. Notably, some portions of this Act are directly related to the subject of this investigation (Shibli, 2010).

Two new provisions were added to the Penal Code: 365B, named "Kidnapping, abducting, or inducing women to compel for marriage, etc," and 367A, titled "Kidnapping or abducting to subject a person to unnatural lust." Both of these clauses provide for sanctions ranging from life imprisonment to fines and potentially the death penalty for violators. Surprisingly, the scope of this statute includes trafficked women, given their common suffering of abduction followed by forced marriage or sale (Imran, 2005).

Women from Afghanistan and Bangladesh have been and continue to be smuggled into Lahore to participate in the sex trade for decades. According to the Coalition Against Women Trafficking, over 200,000 Bengali women were transported into Pakistan over the previous decade for the purposes of prostitution and even enslavement (Pakistan: Trafficking). This phenomenon has significantly altered the societal landscape of Heera Mandi. Previously, *Kanjars* and other ethnic groups were born into prostitution; currently, these tribes share this domain with women who find themselves imprisoned in the position of sex slaves (Shibli, 2010).

This rush of new entrants has increased competition for clients, further altering the structure of the prostitution sector. Previously, brothels were often run by families, with male members acting as pimps. However, the introduction of Afghan and Bangladeshi sex workers has caused changes in the dynamics of these enterprises. Pimps are no longer obligated to invest in the well-being or education of "their girls" at brothels. These ladies are readily dismissed in cases of disease or ageing. The typical training routine has been ineffectual, owing to the fact that the girls are not expected to be loyal to those for whom they work or who claim ownership over them (Shibli, 2010).

Following independence, we see the traditional framework of prostitution continue to diminish. This decline has been linked to the British troops' lack of understanding for Indian classical dance within the colonial framework, as well as the expanding middle class. The post-independence fall, on the other hand, can be attributed to a shift in public attitudes. Brown and Saeed both argue that the attractiveness of traditional dancing has waned in Heera Mandi (Shibli, 2010).

Louise Brown's novel *The Dancing Girls of Lahore* depicts Nena, Maha's daughter and the protagonist, who was schooled in rudimentary classical skills but adeptly blended them with the vigor of Bollywood dance steps, exemplifying this change. Brown emphasizes that the increased availability of Bollywood and Lollywood films on television has contributed to a decrease in demand for live dance performances. Concurrently, the demand for plain sexual services has increased (Brown, 2005).

Establishing causation in this setting is a difficult task since numerous factors contribute to changes in the job dynamics and surroundings of *Kanjar* prostitutes. While declining demand for classical dance is one factor, financial factors also play a role. Because of the

increase in economical sexual services brought about by the flood of trafficked women, *Kanjar* women have become aggressive competitors. Furthermore, concerns such as the shame associated with having a long-term mistress, the risks of developing sexual illnesses, and legal consequences have all impacted the demand environment. The pursuit of customers has caused changes in the familial and cultural components of the prostitution arena. A growing number of women are traveling via brothels for better living conditions (Brown, 2005). An elderly woman of about eighty years tells Louise Brown that:

“In those days it was different. We had high status and were respected. We were trained as singers and dancers and we had to practice for hours every day. We began when we were about seven, and then we started performing when we were fourteen or fifteen. The classical singers had the highest status... only the lowest kind of entertainers went to bed with the men.... It was good in those days, but all that has changed. Nobody bothers with singing and dancing anymore. We were trained for years, but today nobody does that” (Brown, 2005).

According to Brown's perspective, the elderly woman's account portrayed a somewhat idealized image of prostitution during the colonial era. While it's plausible that the deterioration in conditions might have commenced earlier than what the elder recalls, the *Kanjars* perceive the transformation as sudden. They steadfastly hold onto their traditions and the occupation they were born into. However, with the passing of the older generation and the gradual dissolution of family-operated brothels, a substantial portion of their cultural heritage faces the risk of vanishing. Additionally, it's conceivable that the surge of trafficked women, coupled with Zia's drive towards Islamization, has prompted *Kanjar* prostitutes to explore alternative lucrative markets, such as the UAE (Shibli, 2010).

2.9. CONCLUSION:

This literature review provides a theoretical framework for the thesis. There is a vast Western literature on gender, space, colonialism, sexuality, and urban spaces, but a significant void exists in studying it for Lahore. As mentioned above, Lahore has been a very important city for Pakistan in terms of culture, architecture, and urban sphere.

Evidently, the urban sphere in South Asian cities has been designed for only one gender (men). Hence there is a big difference when it comes to the urban imaginations of different genders. Culturally, women in Pakistan are expected to stay *andar* because of the set patriarchal patterns. *Khawajasira*, on the other hand, are also still, expected to be just dancing and begging on the streets after the colonial strategies.

This literature review provides a comprehensive framework starting from the very basis. It helps deconstruct the terms ‘space’ and ‘gender’ and reconstruct them to place them into the realms of Lahore. It thoroughly explains the term ‘urban imagination’ and provides a framework for how it will be used in the thesis. Furthermore, it provides an understanding of the historical significance of Lahore and the red-light district *Heera Mandi*.

The analysis discusses the historic significance of Lahore's Walled City and the change of Heera Mandi from a performing arts center to a red-light area. It explores the complicated interaction of space, culture, and gender, highlighting power relations and social attitudes about women's access to public space. The collapse of *Heera Mandi* through time highlights the problems that marginalized populations experience in metropolitan surroundings, as well as the need of inclusive approaches to urban development.

Overall, this literature review adds to our understanding of the link between space, gender, and urban imaginations. It emphasizes the significance of critically analyzing and opposing current power systems and pushing for inclusive, gender-responsive urban planning and design. By doing so, we can work towards constructing cities that are equal, inclusive, and empowering for all persons, regardless of gender, while also maintaining locations like the Walled City of Lahore's rich cultural legacy.



CHAPTER 3

URBAN (HIS)TORY OF LAHORE

*Heaven kissing spires of Lahore
Where dazzle the lamps four
'Mian Meer' dwells to a side farther
'Shah Jamal' settles at the core
Data's shrine at a corner shines
The lights of Maadhu Laal on the border; more*

(Poem by Tariq Aziz: Translated by Javeria Haq)

This chapter provides the urban history of colonial and post-colonial Lahore(s) as gendered imaginations and representations. The imagined representation's part is analyzed by studying the imaginations of the authors of respective ages who experienced the city. William Glover (2008) mentions the significance of a city being equally imaginative and physical with "Brick and Mortar." Anatol Lieven dramatizes this in relation to Lahore when he writes that it "is a city of the imagination, in a way that bureaucratic Islamabad and dour, impoverished Peshawar cannot be" (268).

Lahore is slightly uphill, approximately one mile from the eastern bank of the river Ravi, at 31°35' North latitude and 74°10' East longitude. Despite being a smaller river than the others that water the Punjab plains, the Ravi is significant and gives the region fertility

and greenery (Gulzar, 2017). The river is featured in many romantic and folk tales of Punjab and has witnessed numerous battles. It is considered to be the lifeblood of Lahore. In Hindu *Shastras* (social laws and conducts to be followed by individuals living in society), the Ravi was called “Iravati,” after the name of Indra's elephant (Talbot, 2006). The first comprehensive history and guidebook of Lahore, perhaps more than any other work, evokes what must have been the imaginary environment of the city in the late 19th century, with its numerous Islamic architectural masterpieces, verdant gardens, and some of the British Empire's finest colonial structures. The work contains 105 full-page illustrations of Lahore's most essential structures and locations and its archaeological heritage. Syad Muhammed Latif (1892), an eminent Indian scholar and jurist, authored the work:

“The river, which makes a very circuitous bend from the East, passes in a semi-circle to the North of Lahore. At one time it flowed by the city walls... The river soon afterwards abandoned its old channel, and has never since returned to it, though an arm of the main stream at present flows at a short distance from the fort” (84).

For a long time, the people of Lahore called this branch of the river “Buddha Ravi,” but it gradually disappeared, disappointing the locals. The Ravi has played a crucial role in shaping Lahore by defining its borders and giving it an ambiguous shape. For centuries, the river flowed past the eastern wall of the Fort (Figure 3.1). During the latter part of the 1990s, a natural shift occurred, leading it to extend into a nearby town known as Shahdara. This expansion not only accommodated the city's growing needs but also reshaped its perimeters. The river's continuous course and its inherent fluidity have significantly contributed to the city's character marked by its fluid boundaries (Gulzar, 2017).

works of numerous authors. It analyses how these narratives depict Lahore as an important postcolonial metropolitan entity, inextricably intertwined with the country and Punjab, and profoundly impacted by its rural Punjabi surrounds (Chambers, 2016).

This chapter is composed of analyzing five novels which are very important when trying to understand the urban (his)story of Lahore. They are separated by different themes each defining the importance of respective eras in shaping the gendered urban imaginations of Lahore.

Colonial Lahore will be explained analyzing the two novels, Dina Nath's *The Two Friends: A Descriptive Story of Lahore Life* (1899) and Rudyard Kipling's *Kim* (1901).

Both of the novels give a perspective of both colonized and the colonizer. Kipling's writing centers on the significant themes of British imperialism and colonialism, *The Two Friends: A Descriptive Story of Lahore Life* represents the urban imaginations of Lahore city in the 1880s. Kipling's novel *Kim* is set in the time period of 1893 to 1898 which was the peak time of British *Raj* in the subcontinent (Metcalf & Metcalf, 2012). It transports us to the heart of Lahore, with its narrow alleys and distinctive aroma of the walled city, but he also takes us beyond the city along the Grand Trunk Road to explore a diverse range of characters. Conversely, Nath's work titled *The Two Friends: A Descriptive Story of Lahore Life* confines its setting exclusively to Lahore. It adeptly integrates both the colonial and walled sections of the city, creating a juxtaposition between its historical and contemporary dimensions. These two authors, through their distinct literary endeavors, provide divergent viewpoints regarding the urban essence of Lahore, and their respective compositions serve as the focal point of examination (Imtiaz, 2011).

Nath and Kipling have taken different approaches to depict Lahore in the novels discussed in this chapter. Nath views Lahore as a space where political, social, cultural, and religious differences and conflicts between significant communities such as Muslims, Hindus, and Sikhs are beginning to emerge. This has led to disintegrating forces penetrating the social and cultural fabric of Lahori society, resulting in contradictions in the relationships between different communities residing in Lahore. In contrast, Kipling focuses on the Great Game¹ between the British and the Russians and views Lahore through an Orientalist lens. However, a unique feature of Kipling's *Kim*, as discovered by the research by Krishnamurth (2002), is the portrayal of Lahore characters as simple beings who simultaneously live, inhabit, and move between two diametrically opposite social setups - the ancient and the modern, the colonial and the colonized.

The lively soul of Lahore emerges vividly in the book's pages as Kim, the key protagonist, takes us on a journey outside the city's limits. We navigate the convoluted pathways of small and poorly lighted *mohallas* via his eyes, immersing ourselves in the ambiance of tight neighborhoods and winding alleyways that burrow deeper into the city's very center (Imtiaz, 2011).

Kipling's representation of Lahore in *Kim* provides a novel and intricate dynamic of interaction. The conflicting relationships between the colonizer and the colonized, created in the furnace of colonial education, characterize this dynamic. This story highlights a

¹1. The Bolshaya Igra, commonly referred to as The Great Game, was a high-stakes rivalry that unfolded between the British and Russian Empires within the expanse of Central Asia. This intense competition commenced during the nineteenth century and persisted until 1907. In the backdrop of this strategic maneuvering lay Britain's fervent ambition to exert its influence over, or potentially control, substantial portions of Central Asia. This calculated endeavor was driven by the overarching goal of safeguarding the cherished "crown jewel" of the British Empire—British India.

fundamental paradox in the relationships of the time, offering a nuanced examination of the influence of colonialism on the city and its citizens.

In short, Kipling's portrayal of Kim as a product of these colonial crossings defines them as a separate breed of people—those who have developed amongst the intersections of competing identities and influences throughout this revolutionary time.

To understand the events better, in this chapter, the post-colonial Nationalist Pakistan after independence (1947) will be divided into three main eras: earlier (1947 to 1960), military (1960-1970), secular (1970-1980), conservative (1980- 1990) and moment (1990-present). The novels three novels chosen for the post-colonial section of this chapter are from secular and conservative eras. These eras hold the most importance in shaping the cultural, social and societal dynamics of Lahore. Many contemporary writers emerged in this era, focusing on the urban imaginations of all classes of Pakistanis. Bapsi Sidhwa, Sara Suleri, and Mohsin Hamid were a few of the notable contemporary writers. While Sidhwa's works dealt with the imaginations of the minority communities and gender experiences within Lahore, Suleri's works dealt more with the imaginations of middle or lower-middle-class families residing in the post-colonial walled city. Hamid's works deal with the side-by-side depiction of the two classes (upper and lower class) living in Lahore simultaneously.

3.1. THE TWO FRIENDS: CONTRASTING WORLDS, LAHORE'S COLONIAL DIVIDE AND CULTURAL FUSION:

In 1899, Nath wrote *The Two Friends: A Descriptive Story of Lahore Life*, a novel that vividly portrays Lahore's burgeoning social, religious, cultural, and intellectual

landscape. The book illustrates Lahore as a cosmopolitan city that had become a melting pot of diverse communities and people, each with unique cultural, religious, and social patterns. The influx of these people in 1880s colonial Lahore resulted in a significant shift in Lahore's demography as the city welcomed many new residents. Nath's novel is a testament to Lahore's transformation into a bustling metropolis characterized by its rich and multifaceted cultural heritage (Imtiaz, 2011).

Nath's novel centers around two Lahori characters, Rama and Nath (the protagonists) both were middle aged Hindu men in colonial Lahore, through whom the reader is introduced to the myriad divisions of life in Lahore during the late 19th century. The novel is replete with diverse signs, symbols, and sounds that capture the essence of the city. Rama and Nath's regular meetings and leisurely walks through the Lawrence Gardens and along the Mall Road to Gol Bagh, the Hyde Park of that era, provide a vivid account of what Lahore was a century ago. The two characters embody the culture of discussion and gossip that thrived in Lahore at the time, with small roadside hotels serving as popular student haunts for literary and cultural discussions. These vibrant discussions centered on various social, political, and religious issues, becoming a hallmark of Lahore's intellectual and literary scene. The tea houses and roadside hotels became the habitats of the city's intellectuals and men of letters, where they spent their evenings immersed in passionate debates and discussions over a hot cup of tea.

The Two Friends very realistically provides a comprehensive and inclusive depiction of the quasi-religious and social institutions of civil society in Lahore at the turn of century. The emergence of a new educated middle class, consisting of professionals, lawyers, traders, merchants, teachers, and doctors, was primarily influenced by colonial rule and

western education, resulting in a new sensitivity and a desire to adapt to the colonial environment. This new class faced a dilemma as they were caught between the colonial situation and the modern wave while also wanting to hold onto their religious beliefs. As a result, a strong desire arose to reform religion to align with the changing circumstances, leading to an unyielding urge for change. As mentioned by Tuteja (1992), they “sought to reform the inherited religious tradition in the light of the new notions of rationality, justice and progress which they had imbibed from western education and which also accorded with their own class aspirations and goals” (5).

Following the British occupation of Punjab in 1849, Lahore was chosen as the province's capital. As a result, a civil secretariat was established to provide an effective administrative structure in the newly acquired regions. Initially, the British reused large structures, mosques, mausoleums, and traditional mansions (*havelis*) from mediaeval Lahore. However, a transition occurred when they gradually began the creation of a new colonial Lahore outside the bounds of the historic walled city. This project included innovative architectural ideas, an intricate network of thoroughfares, learning centers, and the Civil Station, a residential enclave. They may live apart from the bustling city life here (Glover, 2008).



Figure 3.2 British Civil Secretariat (Source: <https://www.facebook.com/lahore.historical/photos/a.262879093836224/688206831303446/?type=3>)

Under British rule, the society of Lahore underwent a significant transformation in terms of social structure and etiquette, leading to a stark contrast between the old and colonial Lahore in terms of physical appearance. Nath's *The Two Friends* provides a vivid depiction of the colonial period, an essential aspect of the city's history. The novel portrays the old city as being surrounded by a tall wall and having narrow, winding streets that were often shrouded in darkness and cold winds. The walled city is also described as having open gutters that emit a foul, damp stench with piles of waste and garbage strewn across the streets (Nath, 1899; 58). The old *mohallas* and quarters of the old city are “poisonous as the deadliest herb yet untested by medical criticism” (58) “and polluted as the dangerous effervescence from a marshy ground” (58). The city does not present a pleasant look:

“Why! With its dirty and dingy streets where sunlight is conspicuous by entire absence, with its baffling and crooked lanes defiant to remembrances of memory, with its ‘bazaars’ where none but men of stout physique and stouter heart can manage way, and lastly enough, not least with the shrew typical ‘Lahori,’ sly of look, cunning by temper and sloth of movement with all these sights Lahore is wonderful ... It has roads whereupon sanitation is totally prohibited, it has gates with entrances guarded by huge masses of filth enough to frighten away every body (provided though he is with the most indifferent nasal organ), it has wretched streets, ruined houses, tottered walls and in fact what not” (Nath, 1899: 112).

The narrative contrasts the Civil Station with the historic city, with the former being a territory inhabited primarily by British citizens. A plethora of government organizations, businesses, clubs, houses, and marketplaces thrive in this area. The Mall Road (depicted in Figure 3.3) connects the pillars of political power, the secretariat, and educational foundations (Glover, 2008). This association gave rise to a group of educated young men who were loyal to the British Raj.

The author is intrigued by the attraction of the Mall Road, which is reserved solely for the use of the European population. Because of its importance as a connection between the English military cantonment and the administrative centres of the British ruling elite, its exclusivity is underlined, and the local community rarely steps along it. In contrast, the historic city has specific areas where people from various socioeconomic and religious backgrounds can congregate (Imtiaz, 2011), such as the famous Anarkali bazaar (shown in Figure 3.4):

“It is a good ‘bazaar’ out and out. The shops are clean and respectable. In the evening time when the student folks give up their studies for a little recreation, it presents an extremely busy aspect. Even the dry-as-dust Lahori yields to the temptation of an evening ramble. Side by side with the spirited Native student, giving vent to his English in a very destructive fashion, may be seen the Herculean rustic who has come to see the metropolis from the adjacent village. There again we see the N.W.P (North West Provinces) man whose tongue runs with a locomotive velocity, so fluently, so hurriedly as to leave the audience in a dilemma whether the speaker was using Latin or his own vernacular. Here and there the red coated, barelegged Highlander soldier from (Lahore’s) cantonment can be seen walking always and invariably in a tipsy but wherewithal a strutting mode.

Amongst this variety of people may also the famous Lahori ‘goonda’ (lit. Scoundrel) with his pick-pocket looks and sullen scowling cut-throat face-a hated bully.” (l 13)



Figure 3.3 Mall Road (1920) as captured by Zaidi's Photographers (Source: <http://lahore.city-history.com/the-mall.html>)

As Imtiaz (2011) underlines, in the late 19th century, the Mall Road and Civil Station were exclusive to the white community, but the Anarkali bazaar offered a different experience.

The bazaar is a diverse and vibrant place where locals, Pathans, rustics, and Lahori vagabonds mix and mingle, providing a unique insight into the culture of Lahore. For a long time, this shape-shifting culture has served as a symbol of the urban landscape.

Eager and filled with young vigour, students from the University of Punjab, the National

College of Arts, and the Government College University bless the bazaar with their presence, starting on exciting expeditions. Aside from that, they serve as stewards of one of Lahore's oldest traditions: gathering at little cafés and tea shops along the Mall Road,

and even on the pedestrian walkways, to engage in lighthearted dialogues (Aziz, 2008).



Figure 3.4 Old street scene of Anarkali Bazaar, Lahore, 1890s (Source: https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anarkali_Bazaar)

Nath also highlights the exclusive nature of the Civil Station by noting the significant number of fearless white community members, young and old, male and female, who roam around the area. Nath's observations include “old folks bent double on account of the ravages of age” (7) and “stout gentlemen superfluously red but often very handsome ... grown-up misses barely on the verge of womanhood but already looking wise and serious.” (114) Montgomery Hall is the hub of the white community, which Nath describes as a “talismanic lodge” surrounded by civilization and excellence.” (115) He unequivocally praises the white community, considering them wise, powerful, and the epitome of beauty. This depicts the colonial imagination of an average *desi* (people from the sub-continent) that white skin is above all (Imtiaz, 2011).

3.2. ***KIM*: COLONIAL ENCOUNTERS AND ORIENTALIST STEREOTYPES:**

The novel *Kim* debuted in 1901, carving out a separate position within the corpus of colonial writing on the Subcontinent during the British Raj era. Rudyard Kipling, a Bombay native with British ancestors, is credited with writing this novel. This work is set in Lahore, the place where Kipling spent the most of his life and drew inspiration for many of his literary masterpieces. The novel provides a lens through which the Western perspective views the fusion of the Empire and the Orient. Kipling's family is distinguished by his parents' English ancestry, despite their professional involvement in Indian territory. According to Bernice M. Murphy (1999), “Kipling's parents considered themselves 'Anglo-Indians' (a term used in the 19th century for people of British origin

living in India).” Kipling's deep understanding of India gained as a journalist for the Lahore-based newspaper, the *Civil and Military Gazette*², is evident in the novel.

However, Kipling’s view of India as best ruled by England, as per Edward Said (1993), is controversial. He argued that Kipling’s *Kim* promoted the negative stereotypes of the Orient and somehow showed the Westerners as being superior to the Orient.

In *Kim*, the protagonist of the book is Kim, who is an Irish orphan. His parents had Irish ancestry. They passed away when he was a baby. He was left in the custody of a half-caste woman who was unconcerned with his wellbeing. Kim's skin coloration became so dark from living under the blazing Indian sun that no one could have imagined he was white. He was able to pose as an Indian despite being White. Without anyone to care for him, Kim begged on the streets of Lahore and performed minor favors to support himself. He is intimately familiar with the walled city and the exotic lives of its inhabitants (Imtiaz, 2011: 102).

The novel’s action commences in a part of Lahore's historical city that the British constructed following their annexation of Punjab in 1849. The setting for the primary character Kim is the Zam-Zamma³, a cannon positioned on a platform along the mall road. This area is surrounded by notable institutions such as the Lahore Museum, the National College of Arts (previously known as the Lahore School of Arts), and the University of Punjab. The Tolenton market and the Town Hall are nearby and serve as

² The Civil and Military Gazette was established in 1872 within British India as a daily journal in English. Its operating span included Lahore, Simla, and Karachi, with occasional simultaneous publishing. The journal continued to be published until its demise in 1963.

³ Zam Zama, also known as Zam-zammah and feared as the 'terror of Northern India,' is an ancient cannon made of brass. It was manufactured in 1762 in Lahore, which is now part of Pakistan, on the command of Ahmad Shah Durrani, the Afghan king. Zam-zammah now sits in Lahore, Pakistan. Kipling (1901) mentions the significance of Zam-zammah: "who hold[s] Zam-Zammah [...] hold[s] the Punjab" (3).

caste woman who was unconcerned with his wellbeing. Kim's skin coloration became so dark from living under the blazing Indian sun that no one could have imagined he was white. He was able to pose as an Indian despite being White. Without anyone to care for him, Kim begged on the streets of Lahore and performed minor favors to support himself. He is intimately familiar with the walled city and the exotic lives of its inhabitants (Imtiaz, 2011: 102).

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“the stealthy prowl through the dark gullies and lanes, the crawl up a water pipe, the sights and sounds of the women's world on the flat roofs and the head-long flight from the housetop to housetop under cover of the hot dark. Then there were holy men, ash-smeared faqeers by their brick shrines under the trees at the riverside, with whom he was familiar greeting them as they returned from begging-tours and, when no one was by, eating from the same dish” (7).

³ Zam Zama, also known as Zam-zammah and feared as the 'terror of Northern India,' is an ancient cannon made of brass. It was manufactured in 1762 in Lahore, which is now part of Pakistan, on the command of Ahmad Shah Durrani, the Afghan king. Zam-zammah now sits in Lahore, Pakistan. Kipiling (1901) mentions the significance of Zam-zammah: "who hold[s] Zam-Zammah [...] hold[s] the Punjab" (3).



Figure 3.5 ZamZamma or Kim's Gun (Source: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_cannon,_then_on_the_grounds_of_the_Lahore_Museum,_th_at_figures_in_the_opening_scene_of_%22Kim%22_\(1901\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_cannon,_then_on_the_grounds_of_the_Lahore_Museum,_th_at_figures_in_the_opening_scene_of_%22Kim%22_(1901).jpg))

Kipling provides an image of a city with narrow, dark, and densely packed streets. The buildings are constructed in such close proximity that they share roofs, blocking the sunlight and creating a humid and malodorous atmosphere. There is no feeling of privacy, and women's lives are freely accessible and widely revealed. The city is mostly populated by beggars, who are holy men who stroll the streets begging all day. The nights are dangerous since thefts are common. Animals freely walk the streets alongside the beggars, behaving with the courage and audacity of a conqueror, snatching and plundering people of their goods, "You have as much grace as the holy bull of Shiv." He's already eaten the finest of a basket of onions this morning, and I need to replenish your dish. "There he is again" (17).

According to Kim's perspective, within Lahore's walled city, one can come across beggars roaming freely along what he describes as “congested and teeming alleyways” (64). He takes note of the diverse segments of *faqees* (devotees of Sufi saints) and their adherents, who sport unique attire. A number of these *faqees* adhere to a fixed timetable, traversing from one street to another during the morning and evening hours, knocking on household doors to request charitable donations. Each individual *faqeer* or beggar possesses their own distinct method of seeking alms; some engage in singing sacred verses or traditional Urdu poetry such as ghazals. In contrast, there are those who sing *bhajans* (spiritual hymns in Hinduism), imparting blessings upon individuals in the hope of receiving alms (Imtiaz, 2011).

According to Kipling, Lahore in the late 19th and early 20th centuries was a city of paradoxes. The beggars, vagabonds, poor locals, emerging commercial class, Englishmen, and others all inhabited the city, creating a unique culture (Glover, 2008). In the novel, the walled city is filled with noise as beggars - both the poor and professional - clamor, sing for alms, and conduct their business alongside traders, shopkeepers, and customers who are involved in loud bargaining. In contrast, modern Lahore is calm and quiet, with spacious roads and footpaths for pedestrians. The buildings along Mall Road reflect modern trends in architecture and design. Teshoo lama (spiritual leader in Tibetan Buddhism) was the character of the novel who was Tibetan and was only traveling through the country for religious reasons. This contrast between ancient and modern Lahore is striking to the lama when he visits the city.

At the time when Kipling wrote *Kim*, the relationship between the British and the Indian people had shifted, marking a significant moment in his career (Imtiaz, 2011). After three

hundred years of British domination in India, the signs of unrest were becoming more apparent, eventually leading to decolonization and independence (Suleri, 1984). This marked the beginning of an amorphous relationship between the colonizer and the colonized. In his book, *Culture and Imperialism*, Edward Said (1993) describes how the events unfolding in the Sub-continent were shaping the nature of this relationship between the ruler and the ruled:

“In both Indian and British history, the Mutiny was a clear demarcation... We can say that to the British, who brutally and severely put the Mutiny down, all their actions were retaliatory; the mutineers murdered Europeans, they said, and such actions proved, as if proof were necessary, that Indians deserved subjugation by the higher civilization of European Britain; after 1857 the East India Company was replaced by the much more formal Government of India” (177).

Jenny Sharpe (1993), a postcolonial scholar, suggests that the Mutiny of 1857 caused a shift in the attitude of British officials towards Indians, leading to suspicion and hatred. The emergence of the native rapist figure in fiction after the Mutiny shows how the relationship between colonizer and colonized had deteriorated and sexualized. Reports, memoirs, and fictional narratives of the time reveal that the British administration was left without a script on which to rely. Sharpe demonstrates what she refers to as "the truth effects" of tales about the assault and mutilation of white women. Even though there was no evidence of systematic violence of this nature, she argues that “fear-provoking stories have the same effect as an actual rape, which is to say they violently reproduce gender roles in the demonstration that women's bodies can be sexually appropriated.” (1993; 67). Sharpe discusses how these rape tales enabled a rattled British administration to consolidate its authority and portray itself as part of a civilizing mission. Thus “a crisis in British authority is managed through the circulation of the violated bodies of English women as a sign for the violation of colonialism.” (1993; 40). Similarly, Ania Loomba,

argues that the prospect of native rebellion generates a very different colonial stereotype, depicting the colonized as a (typically dark-skinned) rapist who comes to ravish white women who represent European culture. This preconception inverts the trope of colonialism as rape and, it could be argued, shifts the colonial encounter's violence from the colonizer to the colonized. The figure of the 'black' rapist is ubiquitous enough to be viewed as a necessary/permanent element of the colonial landscape. It is interpreted as a native reaction to imperial rape, a pathology of darker races, or even a European attempt to rationalize colonial guilt. Fear-provoking stories of the native rapist violently reproduced gender roles and led to the consolidation of British authority under the guise of a "civilizing mission." The circulation of violated bodies of English women became a sign of colonialism's violation (Loomba, 1998).

Kipling's *Kim* is often cited as a work that respects Indian religions. According to Noel Annan (1960), "Kipling...implied that the Indians were as superior to the British in matters of religion as the British were to them in material power." (483). Evidently, the book does not depict the priests as selfless and devoted missionaries. Kim insults Reverend Bennett, and Father Victor and Reverend Bennett appear less honorable than the lama. Throughout the novel, it is clear that the Lama is the most merciful of the holy men depicted in the scripture. It is noteworthy, however, since "none of the characters hesitate in exploiting his spiritual expedition, transforming it into a facade for an espionage mission. Furthermore, they purposefully hide this knowledge from him" (484). The novel *Kim* effectively shows white people's ascent and hegemony over the surrounding population. Surprisingly, even the Lama, a renowned person, is forced to rely on a white gentleman, the curator of the Lahore Museum, and then on Kim, in his quest

for enlightenment: “An Englishman, his beard snowy, had his gaze fixed on the Lama” (11), and subsequently guides him to the museum’s central chamber. Filled with wonder, the Lama gapes out of the window in admiration at the expanse of the Buddhist realm. The curator initiates the exposition with depictions of the Christian faith, underscoring Christianity’s supremacy over traditional belief systems:

“Here was the devout Asita, the pendant of Simeon in the Christian story, holding the Holy Child on his knee in the legend of the cousin Devadatta. Here was the wicked woman who accused the master of impurity, all confounded; here was the teaching in the Deer-park; the miracle that stunned the fire-worshippers; here was the Bodhisat in royal state as a prince; the miraculous birth; the death at Kusinagara, where the weak disciple fainted; while there were almost countless repetitions of the meditation under the Bodhi tree; and the adoration of the alms bowl was everywhere.” (12)

In terms of the religious character of the city, the museum in *Kim* therefore appears as a tiny Lahore. The museum has the symbols and emblems of numerous religions that the Lahoris held.

In *Kim*, Kipling’s Orientalist views are highlighted. According to Edward Said (1993), Orientalism is a Western strategy to dominate and control the Orient, projecting its inhabitants as unchanging and static. This can be seen in the stereotypical representations of Indians in the novel, who are portrayed as having no proper sense of time and as being eternally untruthful. These representations have become unassailable stereotypes that have crept into colonial literature (Said, 1993: 40). Interestingly, Kipling also portrays the main character, Kim, as being corrupted by this “Indian disease” of lying like an Oriental. According to Said (1993), the Orient is conceived as:

“wanting accuracy, which easily degenerates into untruthfulness... His explanation will generally be lengthy, and wanting in lucidity He will probably contradict himself half-a-dozen times before he has finished his story. He will often breakdown under the mildest process of cross-examination... The Oriental is irrational, depraved (fallen), childlike, ‘different’” (40).

Kim emphasizes the image of “*Gora* (white people) or *Sahib* (sir)” as the dominant figure. Kim assesses people based on whether they are *Sahibs* or not, judging them by their attire, Urdu accent, and English intonation. Despite being white, Kim is poor and of Irish descent, with his mother having worked as a nursemaid and married an Irish regiment's young colored-sergeant. To become a true *Sahib*, Kim needs to be educated and reformed to remove his Indianness. The white man is portrayed as possessing all the qualities of a gentleman, such as being truthful, civilized, honest, and a natural leader. Consequently, Kim is sent to the finest institution in India to learn “all the wisdom of the sahibs” (218).

In *Kim*, Kipling provides a comprehensive and vivid depiction of the diverse races, castes, and communities of the Indian people. He intricately describes their distinct physical features, behaviors, traditions, and dialects. The portrayal of Indian life on the Grand Trunk Road is particularly remarkable:

“All castes and kinds of men move here. Look Brahmins and chumars, bankers and tinkers, barbers and bunnyas, pilgrims and potter--all the world going and coming... And truly the Grand Trunk Road is a wonderful spectacle... such a river of life as nowhere else exists in the world” (60).

The theme of the Great Game is prevalent in *Kim*, and the novel's world is mainly inhabited by men, emphasizing masculinity, power, and adventure. Women are portrayed as insignificant and are often seen as obstacles in the way of achieving victory in the Great Game (Sharpe, 1993). Within the novel, the central male figures encompass personalities like the Lama, Mahbub Ali, the horse-dealing Pathan, Lurgan Sahib, the esteemed Babu, and the elderly Indian soldier. In contrast, female characters hold lesser significance, often being depicted as unappealing or relegated to inferior roles. The story paints a portrait of a masculine realm defined by commerce, exploration, daring

escapades, and hidden motives. Within this context, participation in the Great Game, as noted by Imtiaz (2011), is primarily reserved for men.

As per Hashim's observations in 1980, the British colonial presence had a disruptive effect on the cultural fabric of the dominant population in Punjab. The British authorities branded the history, traditions, and social practices of these people as outdated and obstacles to progress, leading to their marginalization and identification as outsiders. This resulted in the introduction of new social norms that gave rise to a hierarchy and differentiation in human relationships. In their endeavor to exert control over Punjab's cultural landscape, the British selectively endorsed and supported a specific segment of the populace. Consequently, a significant portion of the urban class adopted the colonizers' mindset, positioning themselves as culturally superior. This elite group's social and economic privileges were increased, further consolidating their social prestige. This strategy of dividing and weakening the culture led to the fragmentation of the people.

According to the French-Tunisian writer Albert Memmi (1991), the colonizer intentionally obscures and twists the history of the colonized people, leading them to believe that their history is nothing more than a collection of falsehoods and barbaric customs. As a result of colonization, the natives become detached and estranged from their history. Suhas Chakravarty (1989), mentions that in Lahore, the objective of colonial education was to suppress the local culture and establish the cultural dominance of the colonizer. The ultimate goal was to create a population that would submit to British rule, a type of people referred to as the shapeless residents of Lahore and India in general. The city was also a site of conflict and division among its communities, causing them to drift apart. Another noteworthy occurrence was the fusion of religion and politics, which

created a distinct environment where religion was granted autonomy in shaping political and social culture. This heightened awareness of their distinctiveness and identity made all the significant communities more conscious of their individuality (Imtiaz 2011: 127).

3.3. AN AMERICAN BRAT: SHIFTING SOCIAL DYNAMICS: MINORITIES' ANXIETIES AND CHANGING LAHORE:

The secular Lahore (1970-1980) were very stressful times for Pakistan and its politics. With incoming Pak-Bengal war⁴. With Zia coming in power, Pakistan's minorities and marginalized groups felt threatened as religious forces under military rule started controlling politics and authority in the country. Minorities voiced their concerns about survival in a community that had quietly begun an Islamization campaign. Religion had emerged as the most potent factor shaping popular culture, politics, society, and other societal activities (Ahmed, Ahmad, & Ahmad, 1973).

Bapsi Sidhwa's 1993 novel *An American Brat* describes the worries of a Parsee family who resided in Lahore in the early 1980s. The Parsee community, which has been upended and disturbed by the change in the regime, is the author's primary focus. A series of things happened that gave the Parsee community cause for worry and made them think about the prospects of their younger generation, which was becoming more and more impacted by the changes in Pakistani society. The Parsee parents watched as their children broke out of their societal norms while still standing there, shocked and shaken.

An American Brat explores the anxieties and concerns of a particular Parsee household.

Zareen Ginwalla, a Parsee and the mother of a young Parsee daughter named Feroza is

⁴ Pak-Bengal war (also known as Bangladesh Liberation War) was fought between Pakistan and Bangladesh in 1971 and that is how Bangladesh got independence from Pakistan and became a sovereign state.

horrified by the change in Pakistan's political landscape after learning that Feroza has shown herself to be weak and susceptible to the new influences and tendencies brought on by the new regime's policies that place a strong emphasis on Islamization:

“In the car she said: ‘Mummy, please don’t come to school dressed like that.’ She objected to my sleeveless sari-blouse! Really, this narrow-minded attitude touted by General Zia is infecting her, too. I told her: ‘Look, we’re Parsee, everybody knows we dress differently,’” (10)

As the mother “wishes to protect her from the conservative influence of the Islamic fundamentalism sweeping the county during the military dictatorship of General Zia-ul-Haq”, (289) Zareen makes the decision to rescue her child from what she perceives as a traditional and outdated society. She sends the child to America, a country symbolizing aspirations, independence, and freedom, providing them with a respite (Imtiaz, 2011).

Amid the military administration, the Parsee community faced significant uncertainty, similar to other minority groups. The emerging government was rapidly embracing a forceful agenda of Islamic influence in Pakistan. The young of the Parsee community started to show the effects of the new armed government's policies. The Parsee females, especially, had become more reserved and diminished their enthusiasm for outdoor activities. They were evolving into introverts who were less outgoing and more conservative (Hashim 1980). The Parsee mothers appeared upset due to their girls' new tendencies and fashions. In *An American Brat*, Feroza's mother, Zareen Ginwalla, expresses one such worry: “I am apprehensive about Feroza.” (9). And her daughter's retreat into what she terms backward conduct, which was not just unacceptable and unjustified but also uncalled for, shocked and horrified her. The new environment and culture, with its stress on austerity and simplicity, had infected Feroza. “This narrow-minded attitude touted by General Zia is infecting her, too,” (10) Zareen said. General Zia

was giving lessons on his version of Islam to the citizens of Pakistan, much like a schoolmaster whom the students dreaded more than they adored and admired. Because of this, the minorities started to feel more and more cut off from the society at large. They experienced a sort of pressure to adopt cultural practices that they believed ran counter to their long-standing cultural patterns. Their gathering aimed to explore ways of safeguarding and upholding their cultural and religious distinctiveness. Their motivation stemmed from the worry that their cultural identity might erode in the near future, causing them to assimilate into a culture that feels foreign: “What I could do in ‘59 and ‘60, my daughter can't do in 1978.” (11). Zareen also understood that Zia’s rule had halted the advancement they were making and had caused the entire society to regress: “Could you imagine Feroza cycling to school now? She would be a freak! Those *ghundas* (goons) would make vulgar noises and bump into her, and the *mullahs* (Islamic Preachers) would tell her to cover her head. Instead of moving forward, we are moving backward” (11).

Before and after Pakistan's creation, Lahore was consistently at the center of every political activity. The fact that the *zinda-dilan-e-Lahore* (open-hearted people of Lahore) enthusiastically engage in political gatherings and that even their everyday conversations are tinged with politics is a defining characteristic of Lahori culture and attitude (Aziz 2008). Lahore has hosted numerous large-scale public gatherings in locations like the Mochi *Darwaza* (gate), a green space surrounding the well-known Mochi Gate, and Minto Park, currently referred to as the Minar-e- Pakistan Park (Figure 3.6), which was the location where the Lahore Resolution, which was adopted at an essential conference of the All-India Muslim League in 1940 and ultimately led to the creation of Pakistan,

was discussed. In 1977, Zulfikar Ali Butto's government was overthrown, politics and religion were merged, and martial law was imposed. These events led to the creation of a distinctive culture that impacted every part of Pakistani society. They were perplexed when they realized that their region was being governed concurrently by martial law, state law, and Islamic law. As a result, the *Lahoris*, especially the minorities, were highly active in their political talks (Gulzar, 2017). In *An American Brat*, even at the social gatherings, politics were being discussed:

“Their guests wrangled about Bhutto's deeds and misdeeds during his prime ministership the Islamization of state institutions by General Zia, and which way the verdict in the Bhutto trial for the murder of a political rival would go. The arguments turned into acrimonious screeching sessions as the trial progressed. Every so often one of the guests would bang on the table and loudly proclaim, “I’ll never eat in this house again!” and promptly turn up the next evening.” (20-21)



Figure 3.6 Minar-i-Pakistan Park (Previously known as Minto Park) (Source: <https://architecturalanatomyblog.wordpress.com/2017/06/24/minar-e-pakistan-an-architecture-marvel-and-symbol-of-freedom/>)

To ensure that no law is passed and put into effect that is incompatible with Islamic tenets, *Sharia* (Islamic law) courts were established in May 1980 the highest courts and subsequently replaced by a Federal Shariah court. The Islamic University and Islamic Ideology Council were also established to speed up the process of Islamization. Implementing the *zakat* (an annual tax that every Muslim must pay the poor), usher, workplace prayer breaks, and *Hudood* (bounds) ordinances through presidential ordinances all aimed to transform Pakistan into an Islamic nation (Munir, 2008). During 1983, every part of the nation saw the establishment of religious *madrassas* (Islamic schools), the Islamization of the school and college syllabuses, and the transformation of Lahore. Even though the new development plans were implemented immediately following the split in 1947, growth in housing projects began to accelerate in the 1980s. The Lahore Improvement Trust, founded in 1936, was tasked with planning new housing and domestic developments and reconstructing the old, destroyed Lahore in 1984. It diligently and professionally set about renovating old, decaying buildings while developing a comprehensive plan for constructing new communities in Lahore. The upper and wealthy class of Lahore quickly moved into Gulberg and the cantonment areas. Additionally, it steadily rose to prominence as a hub for commerce, leading to the construction of some modern shopping centers and markets. There were other schemes for Lahore's middle and lower middle classes (Talbot, 2006).

In the neighborhoods of Misri Shah and ShadBagh, additional housing schemes were available to house the migrants. In addition to these housing initiatives, some unplanned and planned private housing projects, villages, and societies caused a shift in Lahore's cultural landscape. Until 1985, an emerging cultural milieu in Lahore took shape within

affluent districts such as Gulberg, the extension of Gulberg, namely Gulberg II, Gulberg III, among others, as well as in Model Town. This transformation included the addition of new blocks to the existing neighborhoods and the development of Cantonment. This progression was followed by the establishment of the Defense Housing Agency, marked by its numerous phases (Talbot, 2006) (Figure 3.7).

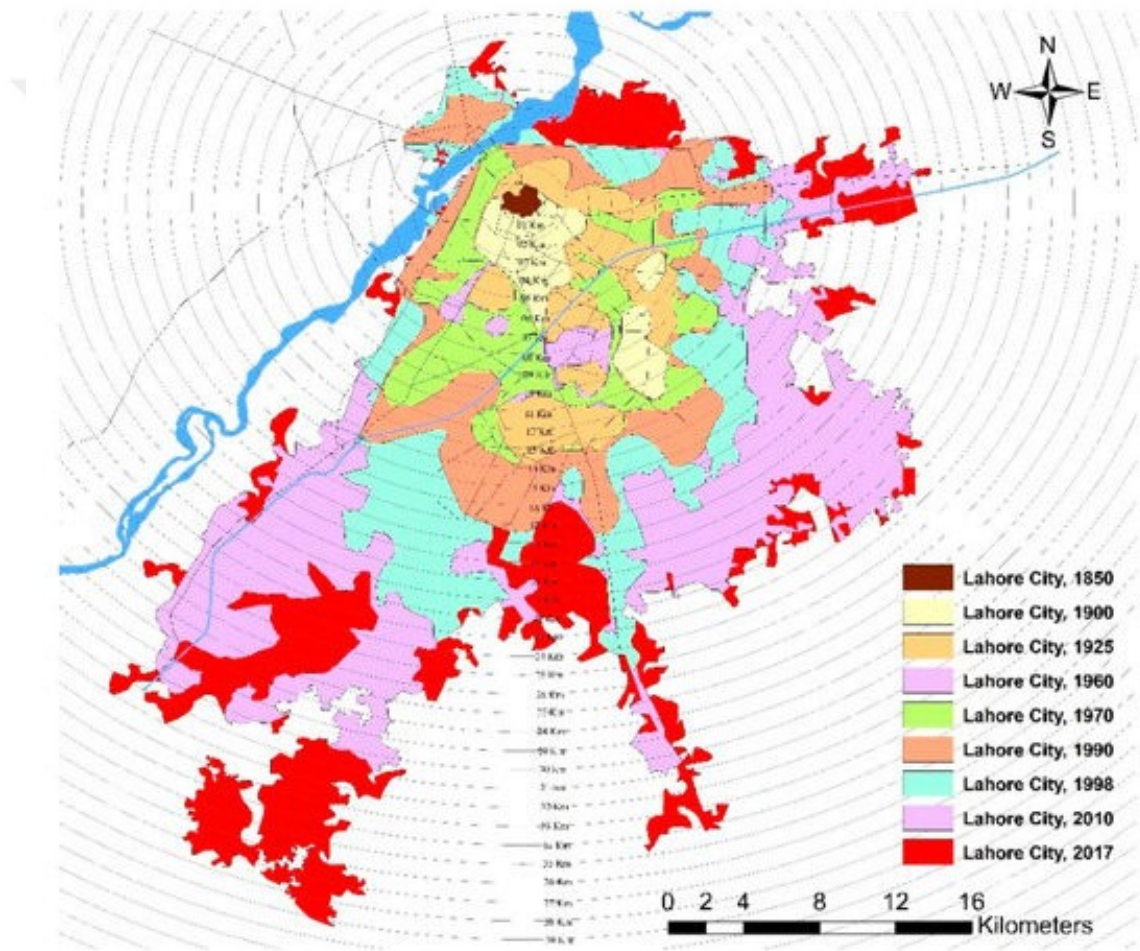


Figure 3.7 Lahore Development over the Years. Rendered by: Nadeem, M.; Aziz, A.; Al-Rashid, M.A.; Tesoriere, G.; Asim, M.; Campisi, T (2021) (Source: <https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/13/9/5257>)

In the 1985, as a result of the industries and other productive organizations that the Bhutto government had nationalized being returned to their owners, the nation saw increased business activity. Such regulations were put in place to support independent

business owners. The city was filled with fresh construction. Luxurious homes were visible in new neighborhoods with broad, open streets. Large shopping malls were stocked with imported products. Religious scholars favored such new and wealthy neighborhoods for the construction of mosques and *madrassas*. The role of religious organizations, *mullahs* has grown significantly as the Islamization process has received more attention (Talbot, 2006). In these areas, newly constructed mosques were equipped with modern conveniences, such as air conditioning, carpeting, and winter room heaters. The imposing minarets, adorned with state-of-the-art stereo systems, and the bulb-shaped domes made of white and green marble, contributed a unique sense of magnificence and sanctity to the religious edifice:

“Suddenly an indefinable noise stopped their breaths. Almost at once they realized that The rket mosque's stereo system was being tested. The air was blasted ba gh. And when the assistant maulvi cleared his throat in a loud “ahun-haam!” with impressive squelchy undertones, the feat was broadcast from the eight most powerful stereo amplifiers in Lahore, mounted right on top of the mosque's minaret.” (Sidhwa, 1993: 45)

Ahmad Salim (2006) describes social change in essay “The Other Lahore,” According to him, 1970s Lahore was advancing in every way. *Tongas* (horse-pulled carts) got replaced by Toyotas. A new Lahore emerged in terms of style and architecture. More space was available for building big lavish houses and for new constructions. With the construction of big and spacious homes people found themselves alienated and isolated from one another (Figure 3.8). A considerable distance between both worlds, the inhabitants of the old city and the inhabitants of a new city, an unknown and unseen barrier has been raised (Salim 2006). Nevertheless, they had their ways to pass their leisure time; the people in the new city preferred going to fancy hotels and restaurants, while the people in the walled city, still preferred their old socio-cultural patterns. The community in old Lahore

was still a very much close knitted community. They would still celebrate all the festivals together and in the evenings, they would sit together on *tharras* (raised platforms in front of houses or buildings) (Figure 3.9, 3.10) and would gossip and talk about ongoing politics, sports and other societal issues (Nevile, 1993). This type of social intercourse has given them a sense of strong solidarity. The women usually would observe *pardah* (face veil). And they seldom preferred to leave home. Even the most educated ones, would hardly dream of financial independence. The cultural and societal norms have taught them that she will always be dependent on a *mahram* man even if she is educated. And if she dared dream to be independent, she was considered a *badchalan* (disobeying) woman (Salim 2006).



Figure 3.8 Example of Contemporary Housing Schemes in Lahore with Cookie-Cutter Houses (Source: <https://www.ilaan.com/blog/ideal-places-to-live-in-lahore>)



Figure 3.9 People Socializing while Sitting on Tharras in Walled City Lahore (Source: https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Revival-of-social-life-WCLA-Sustainable-Development-of-Walled-City-Lahore-Project-19_fig18_326299625)



Figure 3.10 Architectural Elements in the Houses for Socializing in Walled City Lahore (Source: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2013/10/28/in-lahore-improving-livelihoods-and-preserving-heritage-go-hand-in-hand>)

The Ginwalls' send-off celebration for their daughter to move to America was an all-
Parsee affair, though some Muslim friends also attended. Murree beer, 7-Up shandies,

sherbet, and various other customary beverages that were not as popular in these regions were served to the guests. It was a brand-new Lahore that erupted about ten kilometers outside the old fortified city. The difference between people who lived in the walled city versus those who reside in modern locales was not primarily due to distance; instead, it was due to issues with thinking and mindset (Salim, 2006). Ironically, those who became wealthy abandoned their houses in the old city and moved into Lahore's new neighborhoods. They started to compromise their long-standing customs and traditions in the old city to adapt to the new surroundings and trends. Nevertheless, the more aging population clung to the old customs. Conflicts arose between the older and younger generations in the same home (Salim, 2006). Because of this, when Zareen emphasized the idea that Feroza should be sent to America, Kutlibai, Zareen's mother, vehemently and categorically disagreed, claiming that Feroza was too young to be there: "The *there* was pregnant with unspeakable knowledge of the sexual license allowed American girls and the perils of drink and drugs. Compounding the danger were vivid images of rapists looming in dark alleys to entice, molest and murder young girls." (30). Zareen is further called into doubt by the accusation that she has neglected her motherly responsibilities. She kept herself occupied by attending events, participating in group meetings, and getting involved in politics (Imtiaz, 2011: 223).

Women in 1970s Lahore were extremely passionate about their own independence and liberties. With Bhutto in charge, they gained self-assurance and recognized an opening to make their voices heard in all spheres of society. As a result, Bhutto turned into their idol, so when he was deposed, they were extremely upset and took the initiative in the protests in his favor (Ahmad & Rafiq, 2016). The rise of the so-called capitalist elite, governed by

the generals in power, led to a decline in moral standards because capitalism lacked human principles. Lahore thus exhibits an essential aspect of a political, social, economic, religious, and moral character from 1977 to 2000 (Ahmad & Rafiq, 2016). Women's struggles were multiplied due to the rising religious implications. Sara Suleri's *Meatless Days* is one of the books which perfectly illustrates women's struggles and the concept of gendered experiences in the modern Lahore.

3.4. MEATLESS DAYS: NAVIGATING IDENTITY AND BELONGING IN POST-COLONIAL LAHORE:

Sara Suleri's memoir *Meatless Days* (1989) is a fine synthesis of peaceful memories from private and public history. Suleri intricately combines the tumultuous history surrounding Pakistan's independence with her personal and intimate recollections. These memories encompass her Welsh mother, her notable Pakistani father Z.A. Suleri, a prominent political journalist, her determined grandmother Dadi, her five siblings, and her own journey to the Western world. Within this skillfully crafted memoir of life in postcolonial Pakistan, she delves into the evolution of Lahore's society during the 1970s and 1980s, the political landscape, the cultural ambiance, and the swiftly transforming social fabric of Pakistan's central city. Alongside this, she offers insights into her experiences within her household, her time in college, and her involvement with the Caravan theatre (Imtiaz, 2011).

Meatless Days, which Suleri refers to as alternate history, weaves together Pakistan's personal and national events. Therefore, the book's framework is constructed so that the upsetting private events come right after the public ones. According to Suleri, *Meatless*

Days is a “new kind of historical literature in which I make no openings at all. I will use the names and the locations without pausing to explain them.” (Interview, December 1990 qtd. in Lee).

The awful incidents (post-partition) in Lahore, the book’s setting, give the city a tragic character, which is a thrilling aspect of the story. She was not one of those who raised banners on August 14 (Independence Day of Pakistan) and celebrated against the background of people fleeing and burning towns. She remembered her *Dadi* (paternal grandmother), who had an ardent love for God and food. She would only mention that period by cryptically glancing over the side of her Quran and saying, “And I was also burned.” (2). Dadi stealthily entered the kitchen one awful night as she was making *chai* (tea) caught fire and “went up in a little ball of fire.” (10). Compared to the fire that consumed Lahore, the fire in the kitchen was less intense. On the brink of the subcontinent’s division, Lahore blazed for several days. Cumin and camphor reeked throughout the entire metropolis.

The many facets of Lahore are well-expressed by Suleri in *Meatless Days*. It has been skillfully described how eager and enthusiastic the citizens of Lahore are on the brink of religious celebrations like Eid and how they welcome the sacred month of Ramadan. Seeing the moon during Ramadan and Eid was a unique event for the people. To find the new moon, everyone would assemble on the rooftops of their homes just before dusk and the *azan* (call of prayer) of the *Maghrib* prayer. The announcement of the new moon's appearance would be made through the resounding chants of *Allah o Akbar* (Allah is Great). “On the scheduled evenings, we would eagerly search the fading light for that potential sliver, causing both the city and its inhabitants to tremble with anticipation,

hoping to catch a glimpse of that slender moon marking the start of Ramzan, a celestial event of historical significance” (29). The entire city of Lahore would adopt a bustling and enthusiastic atmosphere: “Lahore would come alive with activity! Its minarets would hum, and its civic institutions would dust off their old air-raid sirens to make sure the city was unmistakably informed: the moon had been sighted, and the fasting had commenced” (30).

Like the seasons, Lahore undergoes character and attitude shifts. The city can become unbearably humid in the summer, making life unpleasant. Lahore's cruelest month is June. In the afternoon, no one is on the roadways, and the neighborhoods are empty. Every living thing is looking for refuge and cover. As was customary in the past, people sprayed water on the rooftops after the sun had set to lessen the severity of the heat. After that exercise, they would bring their mattresses to the *baramda* (balcony) (Figure 3.11) for a comfortable slumber and some conversation. Due to the need for designated community places, Lahoris would do these small activities to socialize. Women especially liked to use these spaces inside the *char diwari* (four walls) of their homes to socialize without going outside (Lari, 2003).



Figure 3.11 Baramda (Source: Alvi, Yusra (2019). *Neogtiating the City: Women in Urban Spaces in Pakistan*. Masters Thesis)

Suleri portrays Lahore as a scene where both domestic and public disasters coincide: “I saw my mother's grave and then came back to America...my father called from London and mentioned that Dadi was dead. It happened the same week that Bhutto was finally and inevitably hanged, and that public and historical dying consumed our imaginations” (17). In actuality, Lahore had watched Bhutto's ascent to political power, and the city's residents gave him unmatched support and served as his safeguard in the world of politics and power. The same metropolis was essential to his demise. One of his political opponents, Muhammad Ahmad Kasuri, was assassinated in this location in the affluent area of Shahdman, Lahore. Bhutto, Pakistan's then-prime minister and one of the most prominent leaders in the nation's history was mentioned in the FIR filed against the murderers falsely by Army Chief Zia-ul-Haq and was given the death penalty (Ahmad & Rafiq, 2016).

In the 1970s, colonialism still had its impact on Lahore. The thinking that white skin is superior to brown skin was deep-rooted by the century of imperialism. Educational establishment found during the zenith of the British Raj, like Aitchison College, Forman Christian College, and Kinnaird College, persisted in educating individuals keen on pursuing paths in authority and politics, even after the nation achieved independence in 1947. These institutions were originally founded to cultivate a group that possessed distinctly Indian appearances yet embraced English manners (Ahmad & Rafiq, 2016). The cultures of these imperial organizations were distinct. They created boys who proudly maintained British heritage in different spheres of life throughout Pakistan following its freedom. They were deeply rooted in the colonial past of the Sub-Continent. Alumni of Aitchison and Forman Christian College nurtured ambitions of influencing the nation's course by engaging in politics. Simultaneously, graduates from Government College Lahore aspired to join Pakistan's civil elite, contributing to the bureaucratic framework established during the colonial era. At Kinnaird College for Women, which "symbolized a mystical space housing a few hundred marriageable women, enclosed in architecture that evoked memories of the *Zenana khana* from earlier times (Figure 3.12) – a series of rooms accessible only to women" (Suleri, 1984: 47), these graduates would embark on a quest to find their life partners.

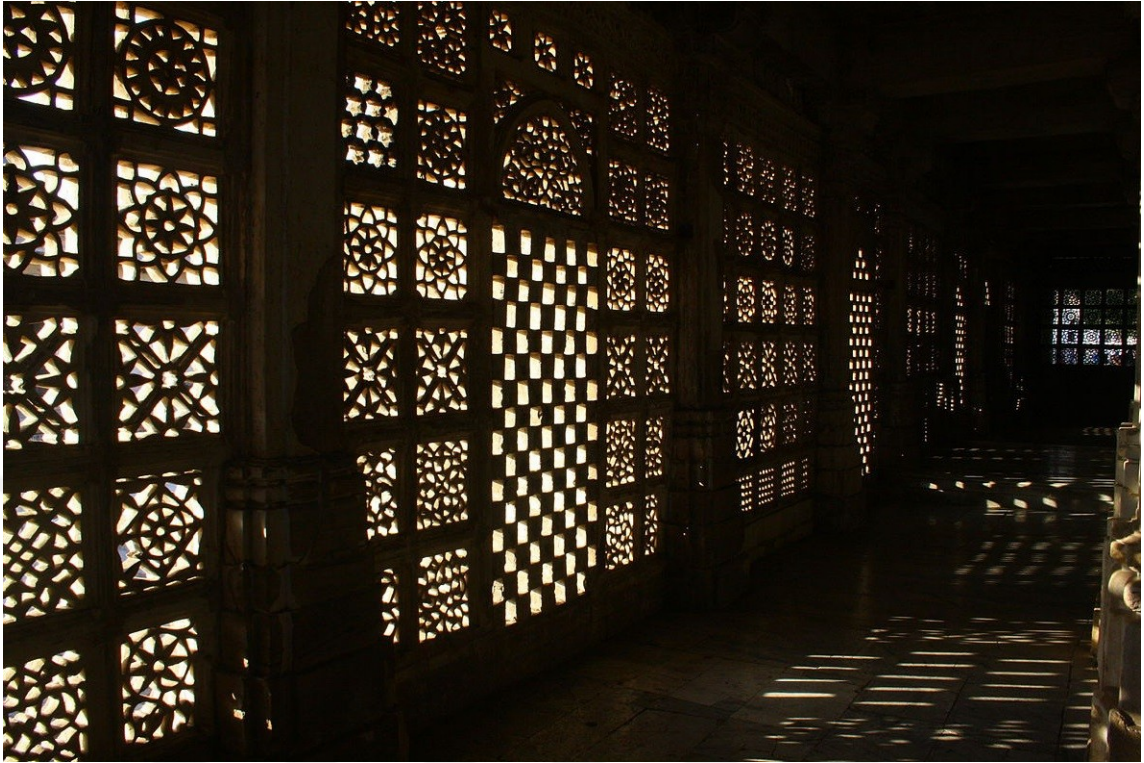


Figure 3.12 Zenana Khana (Source: Alvi, Yusra (2019). *Neogtiating the City: Women in Urban Spaces in Pakistan. Masters Thesis*).

Although a Kinnaird graduate girl was a highly coveted treasure to acquire for marriage for the young men of Lahore, the girls inside the college had distinct emotions. They would yearn for independence outside of the academic environment because they would feel imprisoned and suffocated inside the verandas and red brick walls. The building, just a few meters from the college, appeared to be another jail or psychiatric hospital due to its archways, verandas, and fenced gardens with massive iron gates:

“...were intended by college rule never to be entered by a man, other than at best by a father or at worst a sweeper. Rumor had it, however, that certain hair rising challenges had been met by the bravest and most depraved of the boarders, who then had entertained all kinds of nocturnal possibilities” (Suleri 1984: 48).

Lahore, in terms of architecture, continued to be a Mughal and British metropolis in the 1970s. It still had a connection to its history. Old buildings with bulb-like spires, minarets, and Victorian arches continued to fascinate *Lahoris* (dwellers of Lahore) and

served as a living reminder of the city's illustrious past. Lahore had grown and changed beyond recognition, but Anarkali's mausoleum (Figure 3.13), the final resting place of Mughal romanticism, was one of its romantic remnants. With its Gothic and Victorian design, small domes, and excellent blending of all these architectural styles, the Punjab University (Figure 3.14), a prestigious school in the Sub-continent, is a beautiful site (Glover 2008). The museum situated opposite the university serves as an ongoing reminder of the serenity and charm that once characterized Lahore. This relic of colonial authority stands alongside a substantial cannon positioned in its vicinity:

“I liked the old campus of the university where my mother taught. It’s crazy commingling of Victorian with the kind of architecture the Victorian thought we Indians liked was pleasing to me, with its curious lioned-coloured stone and vast aging interiors. Those massive domes and courtyards sit opposite the red museum and the court, just at the point the Mall is about trail off toward the Ravi River, making the transition from British Lahore to Mughal Lahore. The university intersects the two, looking out at Kim's Gun and the museum where Kipling’s father worked, turning its back on the intricacies of the Anarkali bazaar, named after the dancing girl that Jahangir is fabled to have loved. She was bricked alive into her grave as punishment for having solicited a prince’s love, but at least it was not a lonely grave, lying at the heart of the getting and spending of Lahore's busiest bazaar” (Suleri 1984; 152).



Figure 3.13 Anarkali Tomb (Source: <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2120724/tomb-anarkali-symbol-resilience-love>)

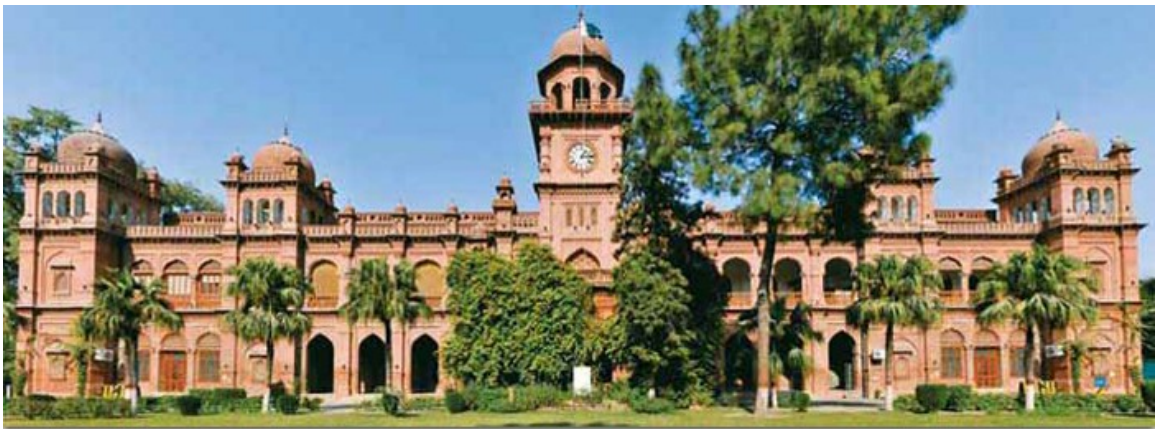


Figure 3.14 Punjab University Campus (Source: <http://pu.edu.pk/page>)

Mustakori, a close companion and fellow student of *Meatless Days* author Sara Suleri, sees Lahore. She is from East Africa and goes by the name Mustakori among her acquaintances. She had previously lived in Dublin before traveling to Pakistan. She was accepted to Kinnaird College in Lahore. She learned that Lahore was an average post-

colonial metropolis full of countless minor annoyances and inconveniences because she was a post-colonial subject. She had an impression of Lahore as congested with unpaved streets, disorderly and angry people, chaotic traffic, encroachment, exposed sewers, and drainage, a breakdown in the electrical and telecommunications systems, and beggars swarming about, which was the typical perception of the Brits for the Indian subcontinent:

“Learning to understand the geographic spread of Lahore, to take for granted its ravishing symmetry. She found that as a town it was demanding, collecting frequent tolls on the average traveler’s appreciation of perversity. Tiny annoyance—electrical breakdowns, open drains, beggars in the streets like locusts—she had expected, and they did not bother her. What puzzled her was the city’s habit of behaving like a mirage, its Cheshire cat ability to disappear” (54).

The Badshahi Mosque, close to the Mughal Fort, draws travelers to Lahore as they approach the city on the Grand Trunk Road after crossing the Ravi River. Even though Ranjit Singh's mausoleum is a small and unimpressive building in contrast to its nearby Mughal structures, it gives the city a new perspective (Aijazuddin, 1991). It is located beneath the shade of the massive Mughal Fort and next to the magnificent Mughal Mosque (Figure 3.15). Minto Park, a monument to the British *Raj*, is in front of these buildings. The Minar-e-Pakistan, a representation of the realization of the Muslims of the Sub-continent's goal of a sovereign nation named Pakistan, is located in the center of that park. As a result, three different cultures collide in a small area to form the nebulous metropolis of Lahore (Figure 3.16). It is also the meeting point of the old and the new, which mingle and entwine, making it impossible to distinguish between their parts and constituents. After that, the city loses its ability to stand out and be distinguished due to the absence of towers. The city reappears as you move closer to the Govt. College on the Lower Mall, with structures from the British *Raj* like the Museum, National College of

Arts, and Punjab University still standing (Figure 3.17, 3.18). These buildings exhibit a fusion between Gothic architectural elements and the indigenous style of constructing structures (Imtiaz, 2011).



Figure 3.15 Ranjit Singh Tomb at the Northeast side of Badshahi Mosque (Source: <http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/onlineex/apac/photocoll/r/019pho0000050s2u00010000.html>)



Figure 3.16 Aerial View of Badshahi Mosque, Minar-i-Pakistan and Ranjit Singh tomb



Figure 3.17 Lahore Museum (Source: <https://nca.edu.pk/>)



Figure 3.18 National College of Arts (Source: <https://m.nca.edu.pk/admissions-statistics.php>)

According to Heitzman and Worden, Lahore gradually shifted to a new plan following Pakistan's freedom in 1947. Lahore's speed of life was gradually accelerating, and in the 1960s and 1970s, the city started to take on the characteristics of a modern metropolis. The new communities with cutting-edge amenities supported its growth. Commercial plazas were built, and new roadways were built. New building ideas captured people's imaginations (Heitzman & Worden, 1996). This occurred about ten kilometers from the old city, attracting travelers and tourists. The labyrinthine narrow streets of the walled city are crowded and convoluted. The remnants of its history and the decaying structures, reminiscent of a bygone era of grandeur and magnificence, held a greater allure compared to what was labeled as contemporary architecture in the prosperous zones of Lahore. The venerable city, the authentic Lahore, embraced newcomers with open arms, exuding a welcoming charm and captivating allure. This ambiance captivated outsiders, intensifying

the anticipation of those making their way to the city beyond the river Ravi (Heitzman & Worden, 1996).

Suleri's disappointment stems from her failure to comprehend the contradiction, which is the real essence and character of Lahore. To comprehend or find it, one must be acquainted with Lahore's plethora of inconsistencies, paradoxes, extremes, parallels, and dissimilarities. Even today, Lahore is a stunning fusion of the ancient and modern worlds. Even the old city contained within Lahore's thirteen walls has been invaded by modernism. A significant shift in the way of life and common perception of the Lahoris has been brought about by new architectural designs that place a strong focus on façades supported by enormous concrete columns and the utilization of colored glass in place of conventional arches constructed from tiles set in mortar and lime, and jack arched roofs. But the prevailing characteristics of old Lahore are the ancient practices and rituals. contemporary styles are most prevalent in upscale and modern neighborhoods like Defense Housing Societies, Baharia Town Housing Societies, etc (Salim, 2006).

Moth Smoke (2000) by Mohsin Hamid offers an authentic portrayal of life in both traditional and contemporary Lahore during the 1990s. The novel intricately combines contradictions, paradoxes, similarities, and disparities to create a tapestry of existence that is simultaneously distinct yet familiar, recognizable yet unfamiliar, peculiar, remarkable, and astonishing.

3.5. *MOTH SMOKE: THE IMPACT OF POLITICAL CRISES AND NUCLEAR COMPETITION ON ‘POST-POST-COLONIAL’ LAHORE:*

The setting of Mohsin Hamid’s *Moth Smoke* (2000) is the unfortunate 1990s when Pakistan was devastated by a never-ending series of political, economic, and societal crises. It was also a period of atomic competition with India, its most outstanding adversary, who had already conducted an atomic test, proving its superiority in developing deadly nuclear weapons as Pakistan had not yet conducted an atomic test of its own. The ancient metropolis of Lahore serves as the backdrop for the book’s action. Mohsin Hamid has hinted at continuity and somewhat implicitly traced the conflict between these two back to the Mughal era by selecting the names of his central characters from Mughal history, Darashikoh, and Aurangzeb.

A historical event from the Mughal era is used to open the book. On his deathbed, Shah Jahan, the ill, worn-out, and anxious Mughal Emperor, visits a Sufi to determine which of his boys will succeed to the Peacock crown (Imtiaz, 2011). After learning that Aurangzeb would follow him, he commanded to build his wife's tomb as soon as feasible. He was buried in the same mausoleum when he passed away after serving an eight-year sentence in the imperial fort. Therefore, the undercurrent competition between Darashikoh and Aurengzab, who are otherwise two pals, is the main subject of *Moth Smoke* (Imtiaz 2011). Their lives are entirely different despite living and moving around in the identical metropolis of Lahore. The author has painted a vivid and comprehensive portrait of everyday life in Lahore. On one side, marginalized rickshaw drivers, vagabonds, beggars,

and drug addicts exist within their separate realm. On the opposite spectrum, affluent business magnates, unscrupulous officials, landowners, politicians, and representatives of the emerging business elite strive to construct lavish residences and extend their commercial dominions, showcasing the most striking divergence between poverty and affluence. As mentioned by Hamid in an interview with Dawn newspaper (2001):

“I certainly think there is a post-post-colonial generation. I’m sure a lot of voices you’re seeing coming out now are people who never had a colonial experience. We don’t place a burden of guilt on someone who’s no longer there. So it’s like, what are we doing with where we come from, and how can we address issues here. It’s our fault if things aren’t going well. That’s a very different stance than a lot of what’s come before. Also, people are writing about the subcontinent with eyes that are not meant to be seeing for someone who doesn’t live there, people who are not exoticizing where they come from. I try not to mention the minaret, because when I’m in Lahore, I don’t notice it. The basic humanity is not different from place to place.”

Hamid names the 1990s globalized Lahore as the “post-post-colonial” era. Hamid wants to separate colonialism/postcolonialism from globalization completely. This makes the post-post-colonial era the same as globalization, which is seen as a modern concept starting after colonialism (Jay, 2005). Lahore is depicted in the book *Moth Smoke* as a place where the wealthy and the impoverished, two opposing groups, coexist in their separate areas. The impoverished and low middle class in the old city and nearby colonies and towns, while the wealthy in their strongholds, well-guarded by barbed wire, their watchdogs, and security officers. Their worlds are distinct, separated from one another, and they sincerely adhere to the non-interference in one another's matters policy. Their environments are small, with obvious signs of seclusion and restriction. They are divided not only by the surroundings but also by the horizon. Traveling from the old Lahore to the new Lahore of the upper class causes one to notice the difference and shift (Jay, 2005).

The author has presented a vivid and all-encompassing portrayal of life in Lahore. This includes the existence of underprivileged rickshaw drivers, vagabonds, beggars, and individuals struggling with drug addiction, leading their separate lives. Simultaneously, there exists a contrast with business magnates, dishonest government officials, landowners, politicians, and the emerging mercantile class who are engrossed in constructing opulent residences and broadening their commercial enterprises. This stark juxtaposition between poverty and wealth is depicted with utmost clarity (Imtiaz, 2011).

Moth Smoke (2000) depicts Lahore in the 1990s as a space connected with all types of crime, including daylight robbery, murder, drugs, narcotics smuggling, adultery, and so on. The book's recurring picture is one of decadence and the erosion of social and moral norms. In Lahore's social fabric, there exists a significant and widening gap between the wealthy and the impoverished. The unrestricted influx of drug money, financial corruption, and white-collar misconduct have given rise to an exceedingly affluent class that monopolizes and misuses the nation's resources. This has led to the emergence of a new societal ethos often referred to as the Pajero and Kalashnikov culture. The nightscape of Lahore would resonate with the sound of gunshots during events like weddings or the birth of male children, often meant to intimidate neighbors, or even on festivals like *Basant* (the kite-flying festival). This reckless behavior demonstrates a disregard for the potential harm inflicted on human lives. An unintentional casualty might be an innocent individual standing on their rooftop or a passerby inadvertently caught amidst a clash between rival factions:

“She may have heard the repeating coughing of a Kalashnikov being fired into the sky. But even if she did, she probably thought nothing of it: there were two weddings in the neighborhood that night, so the celebratory sound of automatic gunfire was only to be

expected. Of course, the bullets might not have come from those weddings. Someone might have fired a Kalashnikov in the air to announce a victory in a kite fight, a job promotion or the birth of a child. A young man may have fired just to fire, or to let the neighborhood know that his was not the house to be robbed.” (108)

During summer in Lahore, individuals opt to rest on their rooftops due to the cooler nighttime temperatures. After enduring a scorching day, they look forward to a peaceful night's sleep. Extended power outages during the night could further drive fatigued individuals to slumber outdoors, beneath the stars, even though they may not realize that this could potentially be their final rest before succumbing to eternal sleep in their graves:

“Indeed, it is possible that only the one bullet was fired that night, for only one was found in the morning. It pierced Darashikoh’s mother’s throat from above, passed through the charpoy, and rolled, spent, to the edge of the roof... She bled to death in silence over the course of some minutes, unable to get up or to make a sound. The pool of her blood was already dry when the lightning sky roused Darashikoh from his sleep.” (108)

On the one hand, it shattered the city’s serenity; on the other, it turned them psychological and neurotic. “I imagine Lahore as a city with bullets streaking into the air, traces like fireworks, bright lines soaring into the night, slowing, falling back on themselves, a pavilion collapsing, the last dance of a fire before its fuel is consumed,” said one Lahori (108).

The novel *Moth Smoke* presents Lahore as a landscape divided into two contrasting segments: the affluent and the impoverished, each inhabiting their distinct domains. The well-off population resides within their well-protected fortresses, shielded by barbed wire, vigilant watchdogs, and security personnel. On the other hand, the less fortunate populate the walled city, adjacent neighborhoods, and towns. These realms are distinctly separate, existing in isolation, with a strict adherence to non-interference in each other's matters. Their boundaries are clearly marked, reflecting their sense of detachment and enclosure. This separation is evident not only in the physical landscape but also in the

skyline. Transitioning from old Lahore to the privileged sector of new Lahore brings forth a palpable change and contrast (Imtiaz, 2011).

“There are two social classes in Pakistan, “... The first group, large and sweaty, contains those referred to as the masses. The second group is much smaller, but its members exercise vastly greater controls over their immediate environment and are collectively termed the elite. The distinction between members of these two groups is made on the basis of control of an important resource: air- conditioning. You see, the elite have managed to re-create for themselves the living standards of say, Sweden, without leaving the dusty plains of the Subcontinent. They’re a mixed lot-Punjabis and Pathans, Sindhis and Baluchis, smugglers, mullahs, soldiers, industrialists-united by their residence in an artificially cooled world. They wake up in air-conditioned houses, drive air-conditioned cars to air-conditioned offices, grab lunch in air-conditioned restaurants (right of admission reserved), and at the end of the day go home to their airconditioned lounges to relax in front of their wide- screen TVs. And if they should think about the rest of the people, the great uncooled, and become uneasy as they lie under their blankets in the middle of the summer, there is always prayer, five times a day, which they hope will gain them admittance to an air-conditioned heaven, or, at the very least, along, cool drink during a fiery day in hell.” (103)

The corrupt began to build their massive mansions outside of the central city to isolate themselves from society, establish a kind of iron curtain, and establish their refuge.

Shopping centers, restaurants, hospitals, educational facilities, recreation areas, and other conveniences were built on the fly localities to meet the needs of the residents and remove the need for them to exert effort to journey to the old city. Entry rights are limited: “Ozi and Mumtaz show their invitation to a private security guard, and he lets them drive. He stops me. “Invitation?” “I am with them,” I say. ‘Sorry, sir.’ He isn’t apologizing. He’s telling me I can’t go in” (Hamid, 2000:80).

“Tonight’s venue is a mansion with marble floors and twenty-foot ceilings. It is a world of privacy, high social station, wealth and its vivid and open display, a world built on the foundation of black money, money earned through commissions in the business of all kinds, drugs, and prostitution. The rumor that the proprietor earned his money as a smuggler is probably accurate, but it’s also possible that it’s social justice for his recent rise to wealth” (26).

The contrast between the old city and the upscale districts is striking. In the former, the streets remain unpaved, with open drains running down the middle, roads narrow and occasionally damaged, unruly vehicles causing commotion, pedestrians navigating through chaotic intersections, a web of electrical, telephone, and cable wires hanging haphazardly, and buildings exhibiting disarray. On the other hand, the landscape of new Lahore stands apart, meticulously developed and organized according to town planning regulations and guidelines. Wide streets with boulevards and greenery on either side characterize this area (Jay, 2005). The new Lahore boasts all the modern city amenities, with minimal signs of encroachment, expansive mall plazas, civic centers, large shopping complexes stocked with foreign products, sleek luxury cars, opulent residences constructed in the latest architectural trends, as well as restaurants like McDonald's and KFC, and high-priced educational institutions. This transformation has fostered the emergence of a distinct class comprising entrepreneurs, career-oriented individuals, and

aspiring leaders and bureaucrats (Figure 3.19).

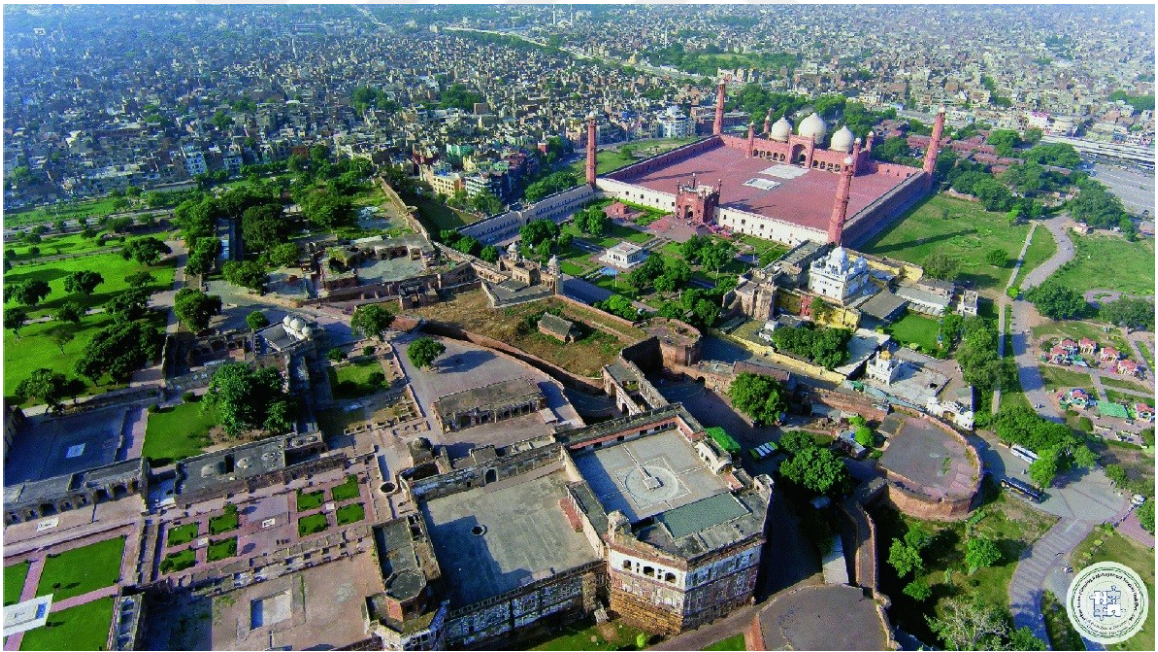


Figure 3.19 Old Vs. New Lahore (Source: : Alvi, Yusra (2019). Neogtiating the City: Women in Urban Spaces in Pakistan. Masters Thesis).

In stark contrast to this lifestyle, life within the older sectors of Lahore adheres to the traditional patterns of social interaction. Family members gather together for meals, be it lunch or dinner. As described in the novel, “The family lunches always take place at Fatty Chacha's residence. My own house is modest, but my uncle's is even smaller. He lacks

luxuries like a satellite dish, possesses just one car, and has three children. His wife is so quiet that Dadi, who lives with them, playfully refers to her as 'the philosopher'" (54).

The pace of life in these areas tends to be slower, and the inhabitants find contentment in their current circumstances. People display kind-heartedness, generosity, and a willingness to assist their less fortunate relatives (Imtiaz, 2011).

Moth Smoke (2000) describe the increasing anxieties of Lahoris. India detonated and tested the nuclear device in the autumn of 1998, and as time passed, pressure grew on Pakistan to respond appropriately. The anxiety was intense, and the mood was charged because the conflict with India has historically been an emotional problem. Lahore being a frontier city and having witnessed the most horrific acts and mayhem during the days of division, the Lahoris were keen and emotionally anticipating the choice of their country. They had left beneath the large-scale catastrophe and devastation of all types of life that a nuclear conflict could cause in the emotionally charged situation and intensity of the nuclear issue. They were ignorant of the repercussions and the global reaction to such a decision, especially the United States and their ilk, who were hell-bent on preventing Pakistan from getting nuclear at any cost. Pakistan eventually tested its nuclear weapon and has had to endure the weight of international criticism. Its economy, which had been in disarray, began to show fractures, and a complete breakdown was inevitable. Murad Badsha adds a hilarious and weird twist to the nuclear crisis. However, their discussion about the nuclear issue and the reason for possessing a nuclear bomb continues:

"The Christians have a bomb. The Jews have a bomb. The Hindus have a bomb." "The Buddhists have a bomb," interjected sweaty nose. "Right, continues the Sindhi cap. "Everyone has a bomb, And now the Muslims have a bomb. Why should we be the only ones without it?" "And when prices go up, and schools shut down, and hospitals run out

of medicine, then?” “Then we'll work twice as hard and eat half as much.” “We'll eat grass,” says sweaty nose, quoting from one of the Prime Minister's speeches.” (134)

Murad Badsha paints a bleak image of the repercussions of the atomic detonation on May 28, 1998, in the Chaghi Mountains of Baluchistan. It had an impact on Pakistan's economy. The authorities had to take stringent steps to keep the economy from collapsing completely: “Nothing. My job hunt isn't going particularly well. It isn't going at all, actually. The economy is completely dead right now, with the rupee skyrocketing on the black market and bank accounts frozen” (Hamid, 2000: 166).

As a result, Lahore's cultural and social idiom acquired a new depth. The locals of Lahore added new terms to their vocabulary, and their language evolved to include new words. They started communicating their everyday experiences by combining words from science and technology with words from their unique colloquial usage. To create and adapt new ‘atomic words,’ the Lahoris gave their language a new motion and twist. Words like ‘atom,’ ‘atomic energy,’ ‘atomic war,’ ‘atomic weapon,’ and so on were commonly used by the illiterate, laborers, *tongawalas* (tonga riders), *rickshawalas* (rickshaw drivers), and even beggars. Some neon signs and billboards would shine and glitter with images and symbols of rockets, explosives, and jet aircraft. To honor the momentous event, a model of the Chaghi Range and a rocket were built on an empty tract near the Lahore Train Station. It symbolized a fresh epoch, a pivotal moment in their history. It signaled the commencement of an era characterized by potency and growth, where parity with other nations was achievable. This also marked the conclusion of India's apprehension and distress that Lahore's potential destruction could transpire without its own devastation. The entire city radiated assurance, if not a sense of pride.

The fervor among the residents of Lahore was so immense that they had even ventured to confront their longtime adversary, India, to settle longstanding grievances.

This chapter is a literary representation of the gendered urban history of Lahore in colonial and post-colonial periods. It analyzes five novels chronologically from different eras and shows how different characters of the novels perceived the urban sphere of Lahore.

The first novel analyzed in this chapter is *The Two Friends* by Dina Nath. Nath was a Hindu and he paints a picture of colonial Lahore of 1880s through his characters Rama and Nath. This novel beautifully captures the colonial spirit of the 19th century Lahore. It shows the two contrasting worlds in Lahore: the old city rich with Mughal cultural heritage and the civil station area with the majority of British people. The novel not only depicts the city's rich social, religious, and intellectual life, but it also shows the complexity of colonial impact on Lahore's society. Nath's portrayal of Lahore's evolution into a cosmopolitan metropolis is an important historical and cultural document, honoring the city's distinct character and continuing vitality. The novel *Kim* by Rudyard Kipling offers a unique view into British Raj colonial literature of the Subcontinent, showing the Empire and the Orient through the eyes of a Westerner. Set in Lahore in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the novel wonderfully evokes the city's ambiguities and complexity. The rich picture of the city's many communities, traditions, and social life reflects Kipling's intimate grasp of India. The work, however, exhibits Kipling's Orientalist viewpoints, presenting Indians as unchanging and stagnant, perpetuating prejudices and supporting the sense of Western supremacy over the Orient.

Furthermore, The novel *An American Brat* by Bapsi Sidhwa depicts the concerns of a Parsee family in the face of a shifting political scene in 1970s post-colonial Lahore. Zareen, the Parsee mother, is concerned about her daughter Feroza's future in a culture that is becoming more religious and conservative. The story illustrates minorities' fears and concerns as Pakistan underwent a metamorphosis during Zia's administration, mixing politics and religion. The depiction of Lahore during this time period also demonstrates the establishment of a separate culture, with wealthy neighborhoods embracing modernity while the ancient city adhered to traditional practices. Women wanted increased freedom and voice throughout these developments, but they also faced obstacles as religious overtones became more intense. The second work analyzed for the post-colonial era is *Meatless Days* by Sara Suleri. It deftly ties together personal and national events in postcolonial Pakistan, notably Lahore, throughout the 1970s and 1980s. She portrays the spirit of Lahore, a city of opposites where calm recollections coexist with tragic historical events, in her poignant writings. Suleri's depiction of Lahore depicts the city's diverse cultural milieu, political climate, and altering socioeconomic systems. The memoir reveals the intricacies and tragedies that have created the city's identity via a fascinating interplay of public and private events. Suleri's rich descriptions give a vivid image of Lahore's history and present, from the enthralling displays of religious festivities to the oppressive heat of June. Finally, *Moth Smoke* by Mohsin Hamid is a riveting depiction of Lahore during the turbulent 1990s, an era marked by political, economic, and sociological upheavals in Pakistan. The story digs into the wide separation between the affluent and poor, stressing the striking disparities in their lives and living situations against the backdrop of Lahore's old metropolis. The city's transition during

this time period is vividly represented, with the creation of posh suburbs and a new upper class, while old Lahore retains its historical roots. The story reflects the Lahoris' fears and feelings amid a period of nuclear competition with India, as Pakistan wrestles with the choice to perform its own nuclear test.



CHAPTER 4

BEYOND SHADOWS: UNVEILING HEERA MANDI'S GENDERED IMAGINATIONS

In the city of Lahore, how many gates and how many walls?

Which wells have sweet water, and which of them have salty?

How many are the narrow lanes, and how many wide roads?

Tell me, O wanderer, how many women are married and how many spinsters in the city of Lahore?

He said, "In the city of Lahore, there are millions of gates and millions of walls,

The wells from which Sohni drank water are sweet, others are salty,

The ones who tread the path of Sassi, are wide roads, others are narrow,

Those who find their Ranjha, they are married, while others remain spinsters."

-Punjabi folk poem by Baba Bulleh Shah.

Heera Mandi holds great significance in shaping the gendered imaginations in the urban sphere of Lahore. It is situated in the heart of the walled city of Lahore and surrounded by the wonders of Mughal architecture. It also holds great importance in the arts and cultural scene of Lahore. Many significant artists, musicians, and actors have been emerged from here. The first section of the chapter deals with imaginations of the *Kanjar* caste living in Heera Mandi. It is studied through analyzing the novel *The Dancing Girls of Lahore* by Louise Brown (2005).

Shahi Mohalla in the walled Lahore city was indeed the subcontinent's musical and cultural center during the Mughal Empire (1524-1752). Individuals would travel there to learn to dance, play music, and practice ethics. Mughal rulers often send their *Kaneez* (Maid) to educate their music and dance their subjects. The region was built as a residence for the Mughal Emperors. The *tawaifs* (courtesans), the Royal entertainers, settled in the region. The *tawaifs* used to perform *mujra* (classical dance) and made contributions to Indian dance music and theater (d'Ison, 2006).

After the invasion of Afghan monarch Ahmad Shah Abdali in the 18th century, the region became a brothel for the first time. In 1799, Sikh Emperor Maharaja Ranjit Singh captured Lahore, restoring Mughal traditions and transforming the city into an art and cultural hub (d'Ison, 2006).

A few decades later, General-turned-Prime Minister Hira Singh Dogra felt the need to convert it into a *bazaar* (open market). He named it 'Hira Singh Di Mandi' (market of Hira Singh), which originated from *Heera Mandi*, which translates to 'Diamond Market.' Most believe *Heera* refers to the area's women (d'Ison, 2006).

Heera Mandi has converted into a brothel again after the East India Company came to Lahore. The sophisticated *Mujras* were no longer continued, but it was then converted to a hub for prostitution to satisfy the British soldiers (d'Ison, 2006). Despite the cult of prostitution spreading in the area, *Heera Mandi* remained a hub for arts and culture. The only difference was that this time the patrons of the *tawaifs* were not the emperors but the men from wealthy families in the city. Heera Mandi gave birth to one of the most talented artists in the country, like Noor Jehan, Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, and many others (Gazdar, 1997).

Heera Mandi, Lahore's red-light area, holds a significant role in the cultural imagination. It is situated within the historic walled city, bordered by the grand Mughal-built Lahore Fort and the famous Badshahi Mosque. While its current dancers are less focused on the aristocratic philosophy of the performance arts associated with its inception, the *Heera Mandi* remains a prostitution place (Brown, 2007). As per Louise Brown, even though the outward appearance of the dancers has evolved over time, the underlying principle of exchanging social, economic, and sexual capital that underpins the dancing remains consistent. "Affluent individuals purchase a culturally modified form of prostitution" (Brown, 2006), portraying Heera Mandi as a blended setting that fuses elements from both ancient and contemporary eras. This blend is also evident in its diverse demographic composition. The location accommodates within its confines both those marginalized by urban society and affluent men who seek their services (Chambers, 2016).

While the last chapter was chronological and went through the main periods of Lahore city to better understand the gendered urban historical events in Lahore and how it unfolded the urban imaginations of the city, this chapter deals with the gendered themes that cut through the periodization in the context of the infamous red-light district Heera Mandi. The themes discussed in this chapter are the racial and caste systems within Heera Mandi, the existence of the sacred and the profane, urban imaginations of the *Khawajasira* community living in Heera Mandi and the gentrification attempts.

4.1. KANJARS OF HEERA MANDI:

Originally a Hindu group, the *Kanjars* saw a portion of their members adopt Sikh and Muslim faiths. Their renowned market thrived due to the presence of *Kanjars* from Lucknow and various parts of northern India. Following the partition in 1947, a significant number of them migrated to Lahore (Dayal, 2020). *Kanjars* are known for their profession as folk/classical musicians, singers and dancers. Due to the stigma in Pakistan attached to the profession of music and dance being “against the religion of Islam”, “Kanjari” is usually used as a curse word meaning a person being of low morale or character (Saeed, 2001). According to Fouzia Saeed in her novel *Taboo! The Hidden Culture of the Red-Light Area* (2001): “A Kanjari hears the music of *tabla* and *ghungroo* from the day of her birth and must begin her formal education before her non-Kanjari friends start going to school.” (61)

In the Colonial period, *Kanjars* were declared “untouchables” by the colonial authorities. Colonial authorities linked the community to beggars, prostitutes and thieves (Hinchy, 2020). They were listed under the Criminal Tribes Act, 1871⁵, as a tribe “addicted to the systematic commission of non-bailable offenses.” (Hunter, 1881: 367). Due to this marginalization, most of the *Kanjari* community was forced to move to the red-light districts like Heera Mandi.

Louise Brown's book *The Dancing Girls of Lahore* (2005) offers a meticulously crafted and perceptive narrative that delves into the experiences of numerous Pakistani *kanjars* residing in Heera Mandi during the early 2000s (a period coinciding with Pakistan's

⁵ The enactment of the Criminal Tribes Act (CTA) in 1871 aimed to redistribute and confine criminalized groups based on family connections. Family bonds became a pivotal arena of conflict and negotiation between the criminalized populace and the colonial government, often involving collaboration or, at the very least, temporarily aligned interests (Hinchy, 2020).

nuclear testing). The book portrays how these individuals navigate the influence of evolving socioeconomic and political circumstances that are reshaping the longstanding system of prostitution, which has been integral to their lives for generations:

“The Indo-Pakistan tension is rippling though Heera Mandi in a disturbing way: all the Indian television channels have been blocked. Among the things likely to motivate the women of Heera Mandi to action are religious events and, now, the absence of Indian television.” (242).

“She says business is down these days, and I ask why. “It’s because of the war,” she explains and I’m confused. “Don’t you know anything?” Shela says in surprise. “There’s a big war between India and Pakistan. All the men have gone to fight.” (242)

The Dancing Girls of Lahore (2005) acts almost as a dual biography of Heera Mandi and the important individuals living there who let Brown into their life, despite its positioning as a history of the transformation and extinction of an era. It digs into the lives of the various women, men, and children that comprise red-light district. The novel provides insight into the diverse and complicated personal and geographic terrains:

“Two stigmatized communities live side by side in Heera Mandi: the prostitutes and the drug users. The addicts gravitate toward Heera Mandi because no one is going to get annoyed with them for lowering the tone of the area. Most of the addicts are from out of town. They began as unskilled laborers living in hostels or sharing small rooms, earning a pitiful living. Many must have been sad, isolated boys and men a long way from their homes. They still had enough money, though, to pay for some good times, and they bought drugs and enjoyed themselves with local women. They took hashish, and then heroin, until the addictions took over and they ended up on the streets, sleeping by the masjid or in the gardens or wherever they collapsed.” (208)

Brown (2005) also represents Heera Mandi as humorous and often colorful slices of life that make up daily life within the walls of Lahore's ancient pleasure district:

“Heera Mandi has never looked more lovely. When we open the door to Maha’s house, we may be greeted by a truly foul smell from the toilet and a dozen startled rats who have settled in during our absence, but it feels like home. It’s four in the morning and the popcorn seller is still doing his rounds in the courtyard. Mushtaq, the big pimp, is sitting in his house surrounded by his friends while he polishes and plays with his revolvers. Adnan has returned to his wife, the children are asleep, and I’m pleased to be back.” (120).

The novel presents readers to a wide range of women and men (including *Khawajasiras*).

The novel's protagonist is Maha. Tariq the cleaner, the freshly arrived Bangladeshi peasants, and Iqbal the painter, are also a few of the main characters. The novel focuses on Maha's struggles as she tries to feed her family through a prostitution system increasingly governed by elements outside her control:

“In her days of earning lakhs of rupees Maha fed the poor and the entire area with a regal munificence. It is still remembered. How things have changed. Maha can barely afford to feed her children now that she is 35 and fat and her husband doesn't call. This gives many women satisfaction: they talk about it in lowered voices, professing a concern I don't think they feel.” (161).

The central character, Maha, in the story is portrayed as a resilient yet intricate and susceptible woman. Her experiences mirror the impact of modernity on reshaping the circumstances and societal standing of the *kanjar* community. Maha's journey encompasses various challenges, including her fight for economic stability, the complexities of her relationship with her "husband," battles with addiction, and the confining reality of her life as an aging sex worker within a system that has lost its former significance. This portrayal is highlighted in Brown's work (2005):

“Maha is upset, ranting about insults and dissolving into tears. Adnan hasn't called for a week, so this afternoon, she went to his house in Mony Road to ask for money to pay the rent and feed the children. One of the servants took the message to him while she waited outside in the rickshaw.” (174).

In her work published in 2005, Brown establishes links between various factors that are jointly influencing the transformation of conventional prostitution practices in this environment. These factors include the decline of established forms of sponsorship, the emergence of alternative entertainment avenues like cinema, Internet pornography, and

foreign dance tours, as well as the altering dynamics of global economic markets, with a particular focus on the Persian Gulf⁶ (Brown, 2005).

In the novel, Brown provides an elaborate depiction of key elements concerning society, social structures, and interpersonal connections within Heera Mandi. Notably, her culturally nuanced portrayal of gender serves as a particularly powerful method for comprehending the perspectives and perceptions of the residents (Brown, 2005). Brown begins by discussing the kinds of prostitution and religious slavery that existed before (and still exist in certain locations) the present *kanjar* system(s), such as the Hindu-based devadasi tradition, nautch or dancing girls, and the *tawaif* or courtesan:

“Three thousand years ago religious prostitution flourished in Hindu temples throughout the subcontinent. Pubescent girls were married to gods and dedicated to temples where they performed ritual dances. The temples provided land grants to support the performers, but many women also had to supplement their income by selling sex. In time their daughters, too, were dedicated to the deity and so the cycle was perpetuated. This is not an archaic practice: its legacy continues even today in the devadasi tradition of India.” (27)

The core of these phenomena lies in the regulation of gender, sexuality, class, and caste, along with the inequalities inherent in predominantly male-dominated societies. These dynamics are extensively manifested through the perpetuation of successive generations of women destined to be sex workers. This central theme is what unites the arduous yet deeply significant existences of women in Heera Mandi today. Importantly, this is a challenge that Brown (2005) grapples with:

"...Nena is thrilled--and I'm confused," Maha says of one of her daughters' admission into the trade. I assumed I was coming to Heera Mandi to chronicle a horrific trade, but Nena isn't being pulled into prostitution: at 14, she's enthusiastic about her family's business" (214).

⁶ In the early 2000s, the transport of sex worker girls through Iran en route to other Persian Gulf states for sexual exploitation reportedly increased ("Iran:", n.d.)

According to Brown (2005), her acceptance illustrates the challenging stance that prostitution holds within this context, along with the starkly imbalanced dynamics of gender that persistently characterize it. This remains true even in the perspective of a woman who possesses a comprehensive understanding of these subjects. It also connects to the limited choices that women face during this economic era, a period where most women grapple with contradictory sentiments and incentives concerning prostitution and the actions required to support their families. Furthermore, according to Brown (2005), Heera Mandi is the only place in Pakistan where gender binaries are broken down. The traditional gender roles are being reversed. They rejoice the birth of a girl, women are the earning hand in their families: "Giving birth to a girl was like producing your own personal pension plan because a daughter's youth and beauty sustained her family." (18). In her final portrayal of Maha, as discussed by Brown (2005), she admires Maha's resolute commitment to love, a pursuit that Brown deems improbable in a culture where women are labeled as mere "playthings" (285), implying that love cannot endure. However, the book itself reveals numerous instances where women are portrayed as far more multifaceted than mere playthings, which renders this characterization somewhat unsuitable. Similarly, Brown's assertion that love can never have a lasting presence within this specific community becomes questionable due to her personal experience – she openly discusses her own divorce. Additionally, there are instances in the narrative where the author dismisses certain practices and beliefs prevalent in Heera Mandi. For instance, she describes Maha's belief in black magic as "idiocy" (225) and refers to the notion that defloration symbolizes the opening of virgins upon entering the trade as a "stupid myth" (228). Although these might be isolated instances, the underlying neo-colonial judgments

within these descriptions suggest potential discrepancies in cross-cultural interpretations. Given the intricate emotional and political landscape of her investigation, these judgments might not consistently align with broader intercultural perspectives.

4.2. SACRED AND PROFANE:

Surrounded by the grand Mughal buildings, Heera Mandi is situated in the heart of Walled city. Located right under the shadow of the grand Badshahi mosque, it proves to be a site of controversy. Glover (2008: xiv) describes how a "modern city is a place both of danger and promise, of both unprecedented human depravity and the highest of cultural attainments". The title of Sidhwa's subsequent work, *City of Sin and Splendour* (2005), likewise addresses this conundrum. The Heera Mandi is located within the walled city, just beneath the shadow of the world's largest mosque: the irony is not lost on anybody (Figure 4.3). The sacred and profane are intertwined in a connection that juxtaposes a mosque—a religious symbol—with a location that contains the most debased of human occupations. It is a city inside a city whose influence has expanded beyond its borders (Sidhwa, 2005). Iqbal Hussain- a famous artist in Pakistan, was the son of a courtesan. His paintings depict the real and imaginary lives of the workers of Heera Mandi (Figure 4.1, 4.2). In a review of Hussain's work, Salwat Ali writes:

“Realizing the gravity of the divide between the inhabitants of Heera Mandi and the so-called civilized society, his canvases capture the anomaly from many aspects. The withdrawn, blank faces, brazenly inviting but with unreal postures, tired morning-after looks, the mosque in the distance indicating the role of religion in the lives of the women, and the tacky décor of the boudoirs, all articulate a culture within a culture. But it is the figures spread across the beds, young girls with pregnant bellies or splayed legs...adopt a moralizing tone; rather, he paints it all very nonchalantly, letting the viewer think for himself.”



Figure 4.1. Painting of a tawaif of Heera Mandi with Badshahi Mosque in background (Source: <https://paintersofpakistan.wordpress.com/2014/04/10/iqbal-hussain/>)



Figure 4.2. "Sheena" by Iqbal Hussain (Source: <https://www.youlinmagazine.com/article/art-review-iqbal-hussain-a-retrospective-at-tanzara-gallery/MTI4OA==>)



Figure 4.3. Badshahi Mosque view from a restaurant at Gentrified area of Heera Mandi (Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Restaurant_in_Lahore_with_a_distant_view_of_Badshahi_Masjid.jpg)

Situated adjacent to the Minar-e-Pakistan, a tower erected in the 1960s to commemorate the 1940 Lahore Resolution (Chambers, 2016), is the red-light district. As previously mentioned, this district is also in close proximity to Lahore's renowned architectural marvel, the grand Mughal Mosque known as Badshahi Masjid. Notable Mughal landmarks such as Anarkali Bazaar, Lahore Fort, and Ranjit Singh's tomb also stand nearby, forming a collective tableau of historical significance (Figure 4.4). Chambers (2016) underscores the district's diverse characteristics and historical background, suggesting that Heera Mandi could be perceived as a microcosm representing the entirety of the city and, by extension, the broader region of Punjab – akin to how Lahore itself can be regarded as a miniature representation of the entire nation. It is noteworthy, however, that only a limited number of individuals in Pakistan are willing to acknowledge Heera

Mandi's role as a significant touchstone for the country, often referred to as the "female street" (Sidhwa, 2008: 60), as highlighted by Fouzia Saeed (2001):

“Identified by various names, it represents one of the oldest flesh markets in the land, where prostitution and the performing arts are linked in a complex web of human relations. Hardly any informed citizen can plead ignorance of the residents of this area, but they are considered the least entitled to be understood by their fellow beings.” (vii)

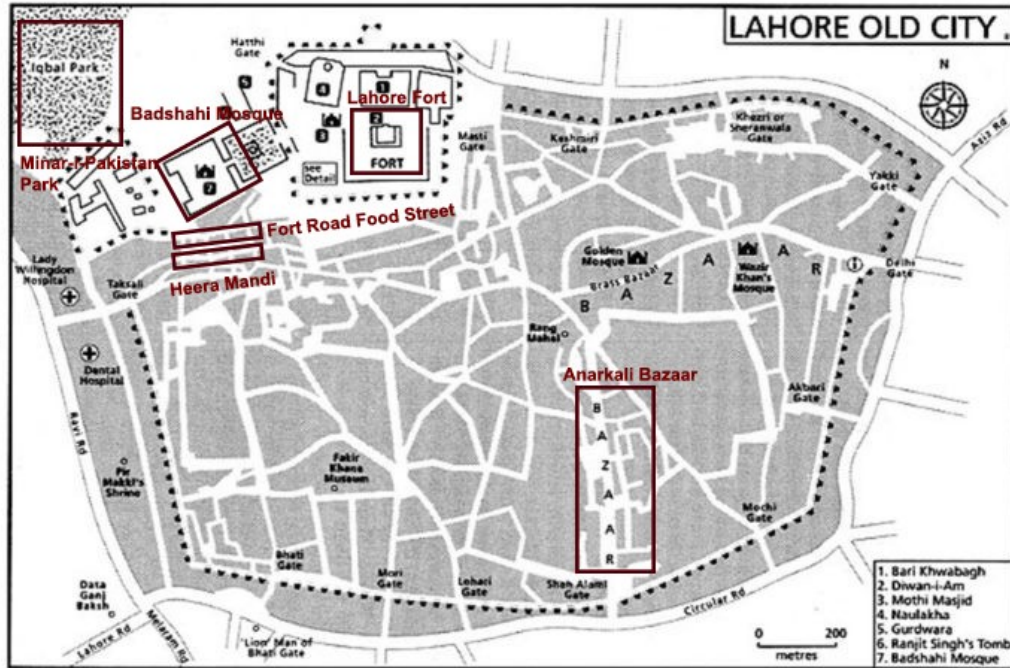


Figure 4.4 Plan of Old Lahore Walled City (Source: <http://walledcitylahore.gop.pk/maps/>)



Figure 4.5. View of Androon Lahore from a nearby rooftop looking towards the tomb of Masjid Wazir Khan (Taken by: Maryam Jamil, Date: 17-11-2022)

Because of its proximity to the adjacent Badshahi Mosque and the professed devoutness exhibited by numerous *Shia* (a branch of Islam) sex workers in the area, conventional dichotomies lose their significance within the red-light district (Chambers 2016). As Naheem Jabbar (2011) asserts, the "self-conscious piety of the women [in Heera Mandi's red-light district] contradicts ideas that they are so generically typical of profanity (woman qua profanity)" (109). By portraying the assorted attributes of the individuals who frequent the distinctly contrasting locales of the red-light district and the mosque, the authors allow for an exploration of the urban/rural dynamic.

Louise Brown in *The Dancing Girls of Lahore* (2005), portrays the Badshahi mosque as a space where no marginalization exists. At multiple instances she has mentioned the mosque being tightly packed at *jumma* prayers and the workers of Heera Mandi stand side by side to other people while praying:

“The last Friday in Ramzan is especially holy and the Badshahi Masjid is packed. A separate, screened section has been set aside for the ladies but it’s long since filled up, and the women are taking their places alongside the men in the quadrangle. I stand at the side with Maha’s children and watch the crowds pour in. I recognize some of the men, and a few of the khusras, all of whom have elected to be in the men’s section and not to fight for a place with the women. They are wearing men’s clothes and have removed their makeup to show their respect. All races, castes, professions praying together, I was fascinated.” (135).

On the other hand, in the novel *This House of Clay and Water* by Faiqa Mansab (2017), when the novel’s protagonist *Khawajasira*, Bhanggi goes to the mosque to offer namaz, he was ridiculed and insulted by the mosque *imam* to leave the place.

Mentions of the mosque also prompt an examination of the pivotal and evolving influence of religion on the post-colonial identity of Lahore. This pertains to the predominant religion, Islam, as well as the less prevalent Zoroastrianism, associated with Sidhwa and the Parsi community she is a part of. In a reflective passage from *An American Brat* (1993), Sidhwa addresses the increasing emphasis on religious aspects among Muslims in Pakistan and the historically open-minded Parsi society, expressing a sense of lamentation:

“These established custodians of the Zoroastrian doctrine were no less rigid and ignorant than the *fundos* in Pakistan. This mindless current of fundamentalism sweeping the world like a plague had spared no religion, not even their microscopic community of 120 thousand.” (306)

In recent times, Heera Mandi has rapidly evolved into a favored social spot for a diverse range of people, including those who are affluent, open-minded, and even those with more conservative inclinations. They are willing to pay premium prices comparable to European rates for items like cappuccinos and curries, all while enjoying a view of the Badshahi Mosque (Hamid, 2000). Brown (2005) astutely remarks, “There’s an exhilarating and forbidden quality to being here” (8), a sensation that even resonates with

the sensibilities of respected members of the Pakistani community. The contrasting figures of the sophisticated, city-dwelling upper-middle-class observer and the vulnerable streetwalker, as well as the juxtaposition of artistic expression and sensuality with strict Deobandi Muslim conservatism, stand in stark opposition (Chambers, 2016). Claudine Le Tournier d'Ison depicted this range using language that might not be deemed politically acceptable, as seen in her novel *Hira Mandi* (2006):

“The street resembled a court of miracles—handicapped beggars, cripples rolling in a ball on the ground, tramps in the last shreds of a shalwar kameez, and emaciated drug addicts [...] within [the] misshapen walls looked like a junkyard for all of society’s most depraved—dealers, prostitutes, pimps and of course, Shi’as, as rejected as the Christians. The only ones who dared enter here were the bourgeois in need of excitement, ready to mix with the riff-raff at the cost of their virtue, politicians who by day proudly brandished the Quran, and by night the bank notes that they showered on the dancers.” (88)

Le Tournier d’Ison, in her work (2006), acknowledges the presence of an almost carnival-like blending in Heera Mandi. This amalgamation involves individuals who are typically categorized as society's sex workers and the individuals who oversee them, along with drug users and those who provide them with drugs. Notably, many of these figures belong to the *Shia* community. Alongside them are individuals who hold positions of prominence in society, including patriarchs, politicians, and those deeply devoted to their faith.

4.3. ARTS AND CULTURE CENTER:

Many great artists have been emerged from Heera Mandi. Pran Nevile, an Indian author, was born in colonial times in Lahore and thus paints a somewhat ideal picture of Heera Mandi in colonial times in his most renowned nonfiction work, *Lahore: A Sentimental Journey* (1993). In one of the book chapters, “The Splendours of Hira Mandi or Tibbi”, he mentions Heera Mandi used to be more than just a place where men would come to get rid of their sexual desires. It used to be where young people used to come to get

inspired, and married people used to come to get relaxed from their day-to-day lives. One prominent notice here is that he mentions, “Married men, bored with their wives and domestic life, sought to experience new delights, intellectual as well as sexual.” (50)

According to Nevile (1993), in colonial Heera Mandi, the courtesan's residence was a cultural center. They managed to captivate the attention of aristocrats, at times even attracting British visitors, with their remarkable accomplishments in the realm of the arts – encompassing music, poetry, and dance. Young men from noble families were educated in social etiquette and refined comportment by these engaging conversationalists. Elderly individuals paid visits to enjoy their engaging companionship. Ensembles comprising singing and dancing women were employed to provide entertainment for *rajas* (princes), *nawabs* (leaders), and affluent landowners. Their participation in weddings was not only seen as a symbol of prestige but also as an auspicious omen. For a considerable duration, the art of music remained primarily confined to the households of Heera Mandi. From this milieu emerged some of India's most celebrated vocalists (see Figure 4.6).

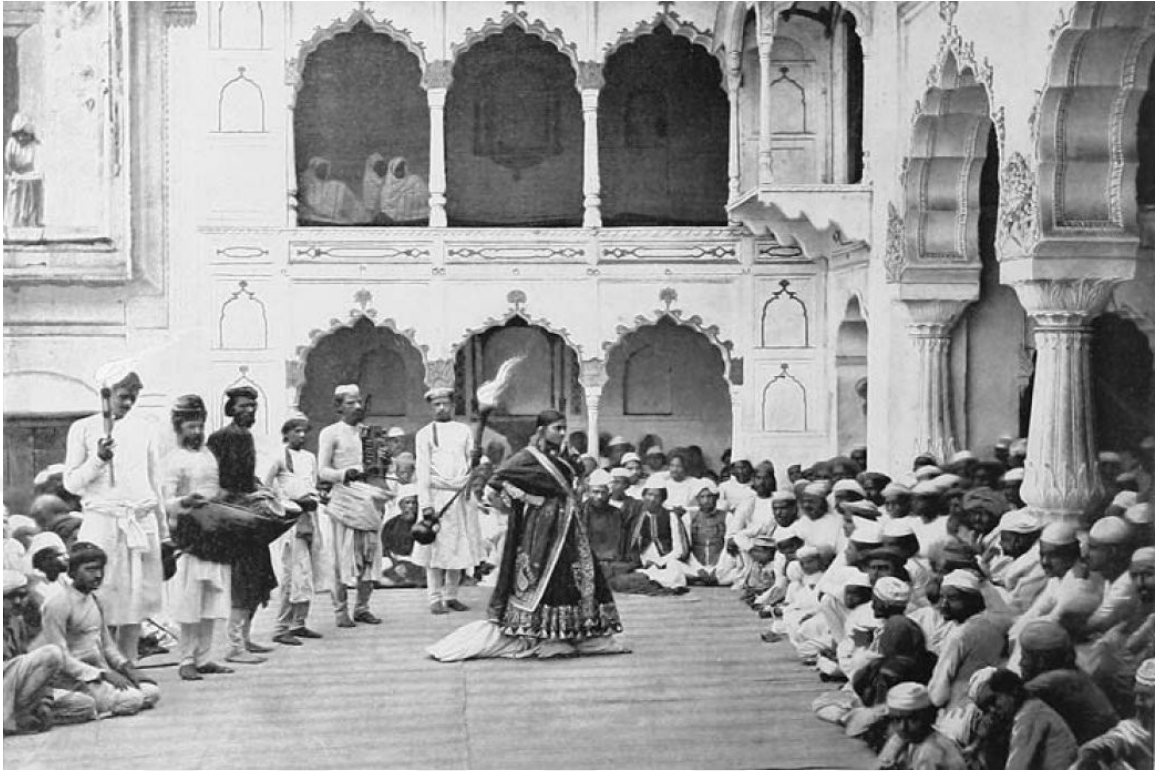


Figure 4.6. A courtesan giving a performance around 1899- Heera Mandi (Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/05/world/asia/pakistan-lahore-dancing-girls.html>)

Nevile (1993) establishes colonial Heera Mandi as a place filled with talent:

“I vividly remember one such gathering where the top gentry and ruling elite of Lahore were present to witness the performance of the famous singing girl, Tamancha Jan. sporting shimmering silks, shining jewels and gold pendants, she enthralled the audience with her lilting ghazals and provocative gestures.” (58) (Figure 4.7, 4.8).

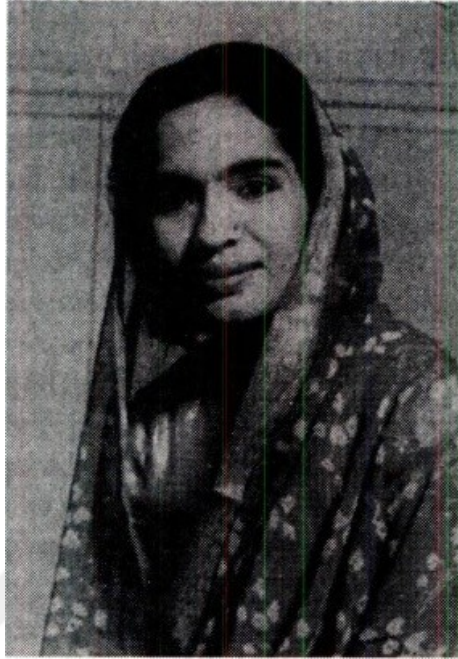


Figure 4.7. Tamacha Jan Studio Portrait (Source: Nevile, Pran (1993) *Lahore: A Sentimental Journey*. New Delhi: Allied Publishers)



Figure 4.8. Begam Akhtar (A famous classical singer of Colonial India) Singing for people in Colonial Heera Mandi (Source: <https://www.peepultree.worldlivehistoryindiastoryplacesheera-mandi>)

In *The Pakistani Bride* (1983), Sidhwa employs symbolism to represent Heera Mandi's post-partition loss of its multicultural essence, personifying the region as a fading yet still alluring and slightly rundown figure. This transformation is also evident in *Cracking India*, where the author notes, "The garden scene has depressingly altered. Muslim

families who added color when scattered among the Hindus and Sikhs, now monopolize the garden, depriving it of color” (249). An extensive segment in *The Pakistani Bride* (1983) discussing Heera Mandi exhibits striking similarities to concepts present in Sidhwa's inaugural work, *The Crow Eaters* (1992). Both narratives portray men chewing betel leaves and giving money, women adorned in flamboyant attire (*churidar pyjamas*, ankle-bells, and heavy makeup) executing dance movements in a "mechanical" manner, accompanied by the harmonium, *sitar* (a folk instrument), and *table* (a folk instrument); and Heera Mandi's narrow streets, decaying wooden structures, trellises, and balconies:

“It was the prime hour for visitors. Mr Allen craned his neck this way and that to ogle the girls on either side of the narrow street. The girls, gaudily dressed and heavily made up, reclined provocatively on silken cushions. The wide doors to their parlours were open to the street. Musicians sat cross-legged before their sitars, harmoniums and tabla-drums, idly tuning their instruments and running up melodious snatches. The heady sound of ankle-bells drifted through the closed doors of girls already engaged.”(Sidhwa, 1992:100)

During the colonial era, Heera Mandi emerged as a hub for scouting potential talents such as actresses, singers, and dancers, coinciding with the rise of the cinema and the burgeoning film industry in Lahore. In the subsequent years, a number of these individuals gained prominence, while others achieved national recognition for their singing and acting abilities.

Following the partition in the late 1940s, a fresh wave of clients emerged in Heera Mandi, comprising contractors, businessmen, and merchants who were amassing significant wealth. These affluent pleasure-seekers introduced a new trend, leading to the dispersion of Heera Mandi's inhabitants to various parts of the city in order to cater to their demands. This burgeoning clientele marked the inception of the call-girl industry (Shaheen, 2016). These women provided entertainment to their patrons in both hotels and private residences. Meanwhile, Heera Mandi continued to flourish.

This prosperity was amplified by the opulent Lalas from neighboring *Amritsar* (A city in Indian Punjab), whose financial capacity outshone even the residents of Lahore and the landed aristocracy of Punjab that had traditionally dominated the social scene. Some landlords from West Punjab held positions in the Legislative Assembly, infusing Heera Mandi with vitality during their stays in Lahore for sessions. However, the *Amritsarias* (people belonging to Amritsar) have now taken precedence. Arriving in Lahore with their Fords, Chevrolets, Pontiacs, and Packards, they would dine luxuriously at top-tier restaurants on the Mall, such as Stifles, Elphinstone, or Standard, before heading straight to Heera Mandi for an evening of entertainment. Their lavish patronage contributed to the district's flourishing allure and left the citizens of Lahore in awe of their extravagance (Chambers, 2016).

Heera Mandi in the 2000s has not remained the arts and cultural center that it once was. French writer Claudine Le Tourneur d'Ison came to Lahore, Heera Mandi with her husband who was a journalist, inspired by the stories of the people, she decided to stay for a month and wrote a book. As outlined in her work from 2006, *Heera Mandi*, the historical red-light district of Lahore, has managed to maintain its presence in the collective imagination through narratives of love, sorrow, and *mujras* (traditional dance performances) after the Pakistani government clamped down on prostitution in the 1970s. In her fictional biography titled *Hira Mandi*, the life tale of Iqbal Husain serves as the foundation, who is the son of a prostitute from Heera Mandi (see Figure 4.9).

Iqbal stands as an artistic outlier in Pakistan, where, as the author notes, “even discussing prostitutes is considered taboo.” The writer further elaborates that Iqbal's interactions with people are somewhat strained, despite the fact that his culinary endeavors have

attracted attention from Lahore and beyond, centered around Hira Mandi. Claudine adds that his restaurant, Cuckoo's Den, located within his mother's former residence (who was a prostitute), has become a must-visit destination for those exploring Lahore (refer to Figure 4.9). The writer mentions that Iqbal fashioned his impressionistic paintings, which focus on figures and landscapes devoid of explicit sexual connotations, drawing



inspiration from the dancing girls of Heera Mandi (Le, 2006).



Figure 4.9. Iqbal Hussain's mother's house which is now converted to a restaurant in Lahore

In *Le Tourneur d'Ison's* 2006 novel, the central character is Shanwaz Nadeem, a depiction inspired by the real-life figure of Iqbal Hussain. Shanwaz's earliest memories of Heera Mandi center around his mother Naseem, a beautiful woman in her twenties. She resides

within a cramped and narrow alley in the historic walled city of Lahore, inhabiting a Mughal-style mansion alongside her aunts, cousins, and her young son of five years. Shanwaz's nights are often interrupted by the sounds of his mother's bedroom on the other side, marked by "cries, moans, and sighs" (119).

Spanning the tumultuous history of Pakistan, Shanwaz's life encompasses events from the partition era to the Bhutto era, the harsh rule of Zia-ul-Haq, incidents of fundamentalist violence, and the period of controversy surrounding "The Satanic Verses" (Le, 2006: 80). Over time, Heera Mandi gradually crumbles around Shanwaz, leaving him with memories of the district's once alluring but forbidden magnificence, along with unfulfilled aspirations. Aging courtesans and bewildered newcomers surround him.

The author notes that the people of Heera Mandi held the hope that the "Bhuttos" would usher in democracy and free them from persecution and police oppression. However, Benazir Bhutto, in the end, failed to bring about positive change for women. As the author elucidates, "I suppose they were disappointed in the end" (Le, 2006: 88).

The Heera Mandi that once belonged to the courtesans has vanished. Le Tourneur d'Ison (2006) notes, "The more attractive dancing girls have relocated to Dubai, where business is thriving, while others have dispersed to various hotels across Lahore" (112). As per the author's account, the government is taking steps to eliminate the "stigmas" associated with Heera Mandi by initiating a historical tourism project. Claudine explains, "The government has decided to convert the four streets of Hira Mandi into a tourist-friendly area adorned with Mughal-style facades, restaurants, and art galleries. Plans are also in

motion to establish a dance school to preserve the tradition of dance. I was in Lahore last August, and the transformation was still in progress...”

According to Brown (2005), most of the big Lollywood (term used for Pakistani film industry) stars have been emerged from Heera Mandi in the early 2000s:

The female stars of the Pakistani film industry have traditionally come from Heera Mandi. Respectable families wouldn't allow their daughters to become actresses because acting, like dancing, was synonymous with prostitution. Many Bollywood actresses had murky pasts, and so did the actresses in Lollywood, the center of the Pakistani movie industry, based in Lahore. Those women dancing, shimmying, and shaking across the screen in the Lollywood films of the second half of the twentieth century were the girls from Heera Mandi, known for their lascivious hip grinding and earthy sensuality. A career in film and television no longer carries quite such scandalous implications, but even today, a large proportion of the country's film and soap stars were born and raised in Heera Mandi. Here in the mohalla it's considered the best path to a better, more respectable life.” (139)

As mentioned earlier in the chapter, there is a stigma attached to the profession of singing, acting and dancing in Pakistan. the *izzatdaar* people do not let their women pursue this kind of profession. On the other hand, according to Brown (2005), the women of Heera Mandi fantasize about the life of a film star because in their perspective, it is the most respectable profession:

“The women of Heera Mandi are alive to this kind of dream: they fantasize about it but they know that only the luckiest women will build a successful career in Lollywood. Nisha, Nena, and Ariba keep well-thumbed film cards of famous actresses in a big box. They know everyone: where they came from, whom they loved, and whom they married. It's a life they aspire to and one that, for Nena, is tantalizingly within reach.” (140)

It is interesting to notice that, the notions that are considered 'sacred' and 'profane' in the outside world are reversed inside Heera Mandi. The 'profane' becomes 'sacred'.

4.4. URBAN IMAGINATIONS OF *KHAWAJASIRAS*:

Khawajasira (umbrella term used in Pakistan for the ‘third-sex’, could include transgenders, intersex, hermaphrodites or eunuchs), *Khawajasiras* in Pakistan are mostly associated with dancing, prostitution, and begging. Conducted by Faris Ahmed Khan in 2014, a research endeavor delves into the prevalence of the third gender and the factors connected with the conventional Pakistani societal context. Within Pakistan, individuals identified as *Khawajasira* are deprived of essential essentials encompassing finances, educational opportunities, healthcare provisions, medical assistance, marriage prospects, societal esteem, protection against sexual abuse, the liberty to engage in political and religious pursuits, residential stability, and, of significant significance, personal security (Jami, 2011).

Khawajasira play a very vital role in shaping the urban context of Lahore. In Mughal times, *Khawajasira* were considered “holy” or “God-like” beings who were pure in many ways. They were given the highest ranks in the palaces. Usually, they were employed to guard the women in the court, which was the highest of the professions (Lal, 2018).

Jessica Hinchy has written about colonial urban control in the aspect of the lives of *Khawajasira* in colonial India. *Khawajasiras* performed and requested *badhaai* (a congratulatory gift) at children’s births, during marriages, and in public places. They reflected a feminine gender identity, for example, by wearing women's attire and described themselves to colonial officials as either castrated or “born that way.”

Khawajasiras were inducted into discipleship lineages that united generations of *gurus* (teachers) and *chelas* (disciples). Following the British judge's verdict of the *Hijra* "extinction" scheme in 1865, the NWP (North West Province, now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) claimed that its goal was to reduce the number of 'eunuchs' and, therefore 'gradually lead

to their extinction'. The province began an anti-‘eunuch campaign with the intention of 'extirpating' or 'exterminating' the *Khawajasira*. The Criminal Tribes Act (CTA) of 1871 formalized this eradication operation. The law's short-term goals included the cultural erasing of Hijras through the eradication of their public presence. The declared long-term goal was to "limit and eventually extinguish the number of Eunuchs." Fortunately, the Hijra community survived these colonial attempts to exterminate them and may now be found throughout India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh (Hinchy, 2019).



Figure 4.10. British victimizing the Khusras (Source: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-48442934/>)

Khawajasiras posed a threat not just to 'public morality,' but also to colonial political power, according to several colonial officials. The anti-Hijra campaign demonstrates the importance of gender expression, sexual behaviors, home arrangements, and personal ties in colonial rule. In fact, these issues were so important to colonial control that British authorities wanted the abolition of the 'immoral' *Khawajasira* society (Hinchy, 2019).

The *Khawajasira* community was deemed a problem population by British administrators in north India because they were perceived as ungovernable in a variety of ways. British writers commonly used imagery of dirt, sickness, infection, and pollution to depict the *Khawajasira* community. The British labelled them as 'habitual sodomites,' dismissing their feminine gender identities in favor of portraying them as 'guys' who were 'addicted' to sex with males. Their seeming sexual practices posed a danger to colonial social order (Chatterjee, 2012).

Furthermore, in the view of the colonizers, *Khawajasira*'s feminine clothes, "begging," songs and dances, laughing, sensual language, and "obscene" activities challenged the order of public space, as well as its "cleanliness." The 'eunuch issue' was also spatial in another way: Their periodic excursions for alms-collection, albeit generally short in distance, undercut colonial ideas of centralized political power by destabilizing political borders and were seen as proof of the crime. This part of the *Khawajasira* stereotype was tied to long-standing links in colonial rhetoric and legislation between peripatetic peoples and crime (Radhakrishna, 2001) Mobile Hijras in particular, were accused of snatching Indian boys and forcefully castrating them (Hinchy, 2019).

The colonial interest with Hijras thus sheds light on how the British saw a governable colonized population. Sedentary social patterns, economic output, sexual interactions, household arrangements, gendered behaviors, and embodiment were all intertwined in colonial attempts to dominate Hijras (Hinchy, 2019).

The depiction and treatment of the *Khawajasiras* under colonial urban administration reveal a complicated and severely discriminatory element of colonial governance. The *Khawajasira* were formerly considered "holy" people during Mughal times, but their

social position changed dramatically during the British administration. The British administration, motivated by moral anger and political fear, undertook a persistent campaign to exterminate the *Khawajasira*, viewing them as a menace to public morals and colonial power. The colonial efforts to remove the *Khawajasira* through legislation, social shame, and territorial control show the intertwining of gender expression, sexual behavior, and personal relationships in the colonial government. Despite the enormous strain, the *Khawajasiras* survived these eradication efforts and continue to exist in South Asia today. Understanding the *Khawajasira*'s historical treatment offers information on the British notion of governable colonized populations and illustrates marginalized groups' resilience in the face of repressive forces in Colonial Lahore.

Throughout history, Hinduism has acknowledged the existence of uncertain sexual identities, evident in its mythology where deities possess both masculine and feminine qualities, sometimes transitioning between genders. The archetype of the *Hijra* (a term used in Hindi as an alternative to *Khawajasira*) embodies an ascetic linked to concepts of goddesses and fertility. They possess the acknowledged ability to bestow blessings or inflict curses. Part of their role involves dancing at homes during occasions like the birth of a male child or a marriage ceremony. Should the *Hijras* be suitably compensated, they offer blessings; however, in cases of insufficient compensation, their response may manifest as curses upon the newborn or the marital union. Even in contemporary India, these perceived supernatural capabilities evoke a mix of fear and mockery.

A similar scenario unfolds in Pakistan: in Lahore, *Khawajasira* spontaneously perform dance routines at weddings, births, and circumcision ceremonies, with the expectation of receiving monetary compensation. This practice mirrors the historical role of *Hijras* in India and highlights the enduring connection between the supernatural and these individuals. This phenomenon, described by Brown (2005), underscores the continued



interplay of ritualistic beliefs and societal dynamics.



Figure 4.11. Few people believe that the hands of Khusras can bless or curse someone with fertility
(Source: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-48442934>)

In Mughal times, They were nicknamed *Khawjasira* (today's eunuchs also wish to be called *Khawjasiras*) and donned male robes and turbans while serving and guarding the

women in the courts (Nanda, 1999). They held important positions, and the principal eunuchs associated with queens had considerable power (Figure 4.11).



Figure 4.12. *Eunuch in Mughal Times* (Source: <https://theprelude.com.pk/2021/05/01/being-transgender-from-mughal-palaces-to-the-streets-in-pakistan-bushra-mahnoor/>)

Since the “Eunuch Extinction” act implemented by the British (detail given in Chapter 2), the *Khawajasira* community is still facing the consequences. The community is still stigmatized and are only adhered to begging and dancing as their livelihood. Most of them take refuge in the places like Heera Mandi, where already a more stigmatized community is living.

In this section, the novel *This House of Clay and Water* by Faiqa Mansab (2017) is used to analyze the urban imaginations of a *Khawajasira* living in Heera Mandi. The chosen work illustrates the difficult lives of the third-sex people in patriarchal Pakistani culture. Bhanggi, the central figure in the story, resides within Heera Mandi and identifies as a *Khawajasira*. Bhanggi's unique identity lies in being intersex, leading to a constant navigation between contrasting realms: the binary notions of male and female, affection

and aversion, existence and demise, and more. The character consistently grapples with concealing emotions of longing and allure. This ongoing struggle entails either enduring the hardships brought about by societal divisions or striving to unearth a sense of self within the intricate social and gender classifications crafted by the prevailing societal group. Nida (a prostitute in the novel) and Bhanggi, the characters of the chosen story, go beyond what is socially and conventionally acceptable in order to find real affection and acceptance. Nonetheless, individuals are forced to go through the process of questioning society. The writer's approach confronts the heterosexual ideals of current Pakistani society by depicting the *Khawajasira* community's marginal and disadvantaged status in society.

The *Khawajasiras* of Heera Mandi are structured into groupings centered around a *guru*, who serves as a mentor. Within this arrangement, each *guru* is responsible for a set of *chelas*, or disciples, who reside with them and are instructed in adhering to the community's regulations. In essence, this structure resembles a substantial familial unit. Every individual is expected to follow the *guru*'s directives and abstain from autonomous actions. The *mohalla*, or neighborhood, features a hierarchical structure of *gurus*, and the highest-ranking *guru* commands a level of respect bordering on veneration.

Across Pakistan, a network of *Khawajasira* houses facilitates swift transitions for young *Khawajasiras* from one house to another. If a *Khawajasira* is expelled from one community, they will not find assistance or support in another. This practice aims to strengthen unity among *khusras*; however, not all *gurus* exhibit benevolence. In Heera Mandi, a number of *gurus* function as brothel managers, extracting finances, labor, and

morale from those under their wing, particularly the youngest and most vulnerable individuals in their care (Brown, 2005).

Mansab (2017) vividly describes Bhanggi's journey from his upbringing as an intersex child to his growth as an adult. His gender identification caused him to lose his position in a strongly heteronormative culture. The disdain and sorrow he experienced throughout his life shaped his personality into that of a stoic. He was brought to Heera Mandi when he was just a teenager and being kicked out of his home. Since then, Heera Mandi has been his home.

Bhanggi runs away from Heera Mandi and takes on the character of a Qalandar in Daata Darbaar⁷, Lahore in order to reconcile his inner issues and, secondly, to be accepted by the people of the community in which he lives. "I found myself exceeding my own limitations by assisting others." "I am reduced to nothing more than a symbol for their purposes" (Mansab, 2017: 65). The Daata Darbaar offers refuge and optimism to individuals who have been marginalized by the mainstream society, including characters like Bhanggi. Bhanggi has endeavored to navigate the blurred lines of gender identity within himself. In assuming the role of Nida's lover, Bhanggi satisfies his longing for a state between manhood and womanhood. The ambiguity of existing as neither exclusively male nor exclusively female, or perhaps both simultaneously, propels Bhanggi into diverse realms of experience. Ultimately, he discovers fulfillment in unexpected corners, such as initiating a romantic relationship with Nida, a connection frowned upon by society due to Bhanggi's intersexuality.

⁷ A Shrine in Lahore

Bhanggi grapples with uncertainty regarding his sense of self, a struggle exacerbated by society's rigid categorization of individuals as either female or male. Upon reaching the age of fifteen, he becomes emotionally drawn to a young woman named Sheila.

However, his visit to her residence late at night leads to his eviction from the *chawl* (a dwelling within Heera Mandi). His reflections on the situation highlight his restricted agency due to his *Hijra* identity: "I lacked the privilege to exercise choice" (Mansab, 2017: 44). He further acknowledges that his continued existence is akin to a daily tribute paid by his community.

Although he desires to align with conventional male gender norms, Bhanggi confronts the stark realization that he will never conform to societal expectations. His introspection about his identity and existence becomes a persistent source of distress. The profound sorrow emanates from the awareness that he can never seamlessly integrate into the fabric of mainstream society. In a poignant exchange, a eunuch remarks to Bhanggi, "You desire the role of a woman, yet your physical form will never embody that of a man" (Mansab, 2017: 39).

Bhanggi is deeply devoted to his faith in God. Despite being subjected to victimization and marginalized by those in his vicinity, he finds solace in his connection with Allah, showcasing his unwavering determination to withstand challenges. "During the darkest of nights, He is my sole source of comfort, my constant companion who listens to my thoughts" (56). In his quest for inner peace, he aspires to pray within the Badshahi Mosque and eventually ventures inside. However, his endeavor ends in disappointment as he is harshly expelled by a *maulvi*. According to the *maulvi*, *Khawajasiras* are perceived

as unclean and afflicted individuals, unfit to enter mosques. This perception is further fueled by the belief that they engage in the socially taboo profession of prostitution:

“You filthy earthlings. You rogue...Get out immediately, Iblis' son...you wicked person with a wicked body. This Hijra pollutes the mosque.” “That's holy ground, you dog,” exclaims the maulvi. You're not even a dog, since a dog has a gender. Look at yourself, the woman's face and the man's body... what's down there, you Hijray?” (57).

Despite being born intersex, Bhanggi becomes a highly convincing figure in Mansab's hands. Under the horror of Pakistani society's heterosexual standard, where there is no space for a gender queer, Bhanggi is abandoned by his family (Nadeem & Javed, 2020).

“They didn't require me. They didn't want the humiliation that comes with being a Hijra.” (Masab, 2017: 69) He is raised by the Hijra community's guru in Heera Mandi, Gulabo, but he also trades Bhanggi for modest favors and concessions from local police officials and shops from the age of eight. “I wasn't more than a commodity, an item to be bartered with few comforts: it's the only livelihood to which I have a right.” (70).

Masab (2017) mentions the strangeness that *Khawajasira* feel from their own bodies when they have been forced to the profession of prostitution. “My body is not mine; it is a shared lustful instrument that seeks manifestation in back alleys,” Bhanggi says. I'm like those voids that no one owns; a humiliating sentiment that has gone unnoticed.” (72) He is obliged to identify with women and dress accordingly. He considers himself a demi-creature, a being who exists somewhere in between. That inner anguish eventually drives him to don a green cloak and beads around his neck and go on a mission to visit Daata Darbar. Similarly, in *The Dancing Girls of Lahore* (2005), the *Khawajasira* character mentions about being obliged to be dressed as a woman:

“I tell them that men who have sex with men in my own country don't have to dress up as women unless they prefer to. The khusras think this is interesting, but they're skeptical.

The man with the lush moustache says that it's not a nice idea. "I like them to be like girls," he adds. Tasneem looks serious. "The customers want us to be pretty. No pretty dress, no pretty face—no money." (48)

Transgender urban imaginations are mostly portrayed in a painful and less favorable way.

Parents mostly abandon their transgender kids at early ages due to the pressure of society.

Khawaja Kutub Amir Khusro was a transgender boy who was sold to Heera Mandi at the age of 11. "My classmates and neighborhood kids used to mock me and call me Khusra [transgender]." "It was like mental torture for me," Khusro added. She had no idea what the term 'Khusra' meant at the moment. Khusro entered the transgender society in her hometown of Sialkot at the age of 11, where she was sold by many gurus. In the age of 12, she ended up in the Heera Mandi in Lahore, where she became a professional dancer - and was molested by many ("Transgender Preacher Defies Dysphoria | the Express Tribune," 2017).

"Every second I spent in Heera Mandi was awful, painful... like a nightmare," she explained. Khusro came into a group of *Tablighi Jamaat* (Society for spreading faith of Islam) who motivated her to join them after spending 12 to 13 years in Heera Mandi. "I was brutally beaten the day I told my guru at Heera Mandi that I was leaving the dance profession and joining the Tablighi Jamaat." "I was bleeding and aching like crazy." ("Transgender Preacher Defies Dysphoria | the Express Tribune," 2017).

When it comes to collective urban imagination of the *Khawajasira*, find Heera Mandi a safe place to practice their dance and music because elsewhere they are not given the freedom. Ali Khataw, a photographer and philanthropist spent a few days in Heera Mandi to photograph and document the lives of people there (Figure 4.12). He mentions that the trans community is talented in their own right, yet society fails to accept and even rejects

them. That is why Heera Mandi is a safe haven for people of the third gender. According to local thinking, the transgender population feels at ease here since they are free to express themselves. They like dancing (even if it is for their clients) because it gives them freedom. Furthermore, they are well compensated for their quick dance moves. Indeed, they are seen to be more elegant than female courtesans.



Figure 4.13. A picture taken by Ali Khataw of a Transgender performing in Heera Mandi (Source: <https://lfi-online.de/ceemes/en/blog/ali-khataw-transgender-in-pakistan-2863.html>)



Figure 4.14.. Khawajasira performing at a private function in Lahore (Source: <https://theprelude.com.pk/2021/05/01/being-transgender-from-mughal-palaces-to-the-streets-in-pakistan-bushra-mahnoor/>)

Similarly, in *The Dancing Girls of Lahore*, Brown (2005) portrays Heera Mandi as a safe haven for some of the *Khawajasiras*:

“A few elaborate and say that they came to Heera Mandi because they could not be themselves in their villages—that there was no space for them, they felt wrong and out of place, and they shamed their parents. Some were forced out of their homes, and others left of their own accord, interpreting their journey to the city and to this life as something good—an escape.” (51)

4.5. GENTRIFICATION ATTEMPTS:

Heera Mandi went through two phases of gentrification attempts. First, was in 2003, prime minister Pervaiz Elahi converted few *kotha* buildings to food street. Louise Brown (2005) visited Lahore after a year gap and was stunned to see the transformation. The displaced workers were offered relocation, but all the promises were in vain:

“I haven’t visited for over a year and Heera Mandi has been transformed during my absence. The local government has set about turning Lahore into a tourist destination: few of the buildings has already been developed into a thriving, modern-day “food street” with open-air restaurants and quaint, upgraded facades on the traditional buildings. Something similar was intended for this part of the inner city until the guardians of

morality objected, insisting that the tourists would gravitate to the brothels after satisfaction at the restaurant tables. Heera Mandi's women are disappointed by the abandonment of the plans, but now at least parts of the mohalla near the Badshahi Masjid look more like a visitor attraction than a shabby ghetto." (259)

"The dingy facades of the buildings have been masked by layers of new paint: soft yellows and creams, dark reds, and occasionally a virulent, sense-jarring blue. The windows, balconies, and shutters have been painted in contrasting colors. At dusk Fort Road is picturesque, veiled in a flattering glow from pretty lighting, and the mosque, the Sikh palace, and the Hazoori Gardens are illuminated by hundreds of spotlights." (260)

On the other hand, Brown explains that the charming 'face-lift' was only given to the fort road. While nothing much has been done to the main Heera Mandi:

"On the side streets nothing much has changed: the potholes and filth remain and the galis are flanked by the same drab walls. The addicts haven't disappeared, but have simply gravitated from the perimeter of the mosque farther into Heera Mandi." (260)

Heera Mandi again caught politicians' attention during the 2010s, and the neighborhood is now the spot for the affluent and famous to eat on the finest specialties of Pakistani cuisine and pay a hefty package for the dish. The new Food Street is the realization of Pakistani Punjab Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif's goal to replace the Food Street established by his predecessor, Pervez Elahi, in Gwalmandi under the presidency of Pervez Musharraf (which was the initial attempt to gentrify Heera Mandi). Fort Road Food Street, a V-shaped branch of the road connecting the Mandi to the Fort, with 27 properties bought for the project. The ancient buildings have been refurbished, painted, and adorned to mimic Mughal architecture from the past, and Pakistani publications indicate that multi-national corporations have focused their economic interests here (Chambers, 2016). "On visiting the Fort Road Food Street, one would expect to be introduced to the true culture and experience of the walled city - the project, however, rarely brings forth that opportunity and instead presents a 'Disneyfied' version of itself to the public," (Figure 35, 36) Maryam Rabi, an architect at the Agha Khan Cultural

Service, Pakistan, working on the walled city of Lahore, writes in a blog for The Dawn. In much of Pakistan, the terms conservation, restoration, and preservation are commonly misunderstood. The Fort Road has received just a cosmetic renovation, with full disrespect for its historic context and cultural worth.”



Figure 4.15. Food Street Lahore (Gentrified Heera Mandi) (Source: <https://visitlahore.com/attractions/food-street-lahore/>)



Figure 4.16. Food Street Lahore (Gentrified Heera Mandi) (Source: <https://www.blizin.com/articles/food-street-lahore-a-nirvana-to-food-junkies>)

Finally, this chapter digs into the gendered issues that pervade the ancient quarter of Heera Mandi inside Lahore's urban sphere. While Heera Mandi is well-known for its infamous reputation as a red-light area, this investigation goes beyond clichés to expose the varied and fascinating world that exists beyond its borders. The race and caste systems of Heera Mandi are inextricably linked to its past, impacting the lives and livelihoods of its residents. The district's juxtaposition of the sacred and profane, set against the majesty of Mughal architecture and religious sites, lends levels of intricacy to its urban imaginations.

The *Khawajasira* community stands out among its various residents, navigating a world that frequently marginalizes and stigmatizes them. We see their lives and tribulations through the perspective of literature and historical narratives, as they strive to question conventional standards and gain acceptance. Furthermore, the impact of gentrification initiatives on Heera Mandi's terrain highlights the contradictions between cultural heritage preservation and urban transformation.

Finally, it is recognized that Heera Mandi's importance in molding Lahore's gendered imaginations is not limited to its reputation. It's a location where history threads intertwine, stories of resistance and perseverance unfold, and gendered identities emerge in a tangle of intricacies. By removing Lahore's gendered curtain, we seek to develop a better understanding of the city's past, present, and diversified ambitions.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This thesis has shown that Lahore is a highly multifaceted space, constituted by history, uneven capitalism, rural and urban continuities and discontinuities, and cultural nostalgia. Notwithstanding these noteworthy features, the city is under researched compared with Indian conurbations (and, to a lesser degree, compared with research into Pakistan's former capital and largest city, Karachi). As a palimpsest of various accreted histories and the nation's artistic and cultural capital, Lahore is Pakistan's heart (and stomach and spine, to recycle Lieven's metaphor).

This examination of the literary representations Lahore's gendered urban history, literature, and gendered experiences gives important insights into the influence of the red-light district, Heera Mandi, colonial and post-colonial Lahore. This study goes deeply into the nuances of Lahore's gender dynamics and gives insight on the connection between the red-light district and the greater urban fabric by researching the literature, urban landscape, and historical backdrop.

Chapter 3 deftly links together literary representations of gendered urban history in Lahore spanning colonial, post-colonial, and contemporary times. We acquire a varied

image of Lahore's growing urban setting and the individuals that traverse it via an examination of many novels from various times.

The voyage through time begins with Dina Nath's *The Two Friends*, which depicts a colorful colonial Lahore of the 1880s. Nath's depiction of the city's conflicting cultures captures the spirit of Mughal legacy with British influence, demonstrating the complexities of colonial impact on society. Continuing the time journey, Rudyard

Kipling's *Kim* unfolds, presenting a Western viewpoint on British Raj colonization.

Lahore appears as a multifaceted tapestry, where cultures collide and identities blend, all as seen through the eyes of an outsider. Kipling's narrative brush strokes capture cultural subtleties, tensions between East and West, and the complicated dance between empire and indigenous, presenting a captivating and nuanced portrayal of Lahore.

An American Brat by Bapsi Sidhwa takes through the labyrinthine tunnels of post-colonial Lahore, where the echoes of history resound and minorities' worries are prominent. Sidhwa's narrative prism refracts the Parsee family's worries and hopes, showing a society in flux under Zia's turbulent rule. Sidhwa's Lahore becomes a furnace for problems of identity, belonging, and the battle for individual agency against the backdrop of shifting politics and growing religion.

Sara Suleri's *Meatless Days* then draws in, skillfully weaving personal biography with Pakistan's national fabric. Lahore's vibrant cultural canvas is shown in rich colors here, expressing the essence of a city that is always in motion. The socio-political landscape and individuals' private emotions collide, allowing us to see the ebb and flow of Lahore's many faces.

Finally, in Mohsin Hamid's *Moth Smoke*, we are taken to Lahore's chaotic 1990s, where the city's socioeconomic fault lines and historical pedigree are highlighted. In the midst of seismic upheavals, Hamid's story reveals the schisms between prosperity and misery, tradition and technology, and portrays a city on the verge of change.

As the investigation progresses, the focus switches to Heera Mandi, an area known for its red-light district. This inquiry, however, goes beyond preconceptions to reveal the unique fabric of lives within. The district's ties to race and caste systems, as well as religious and profane aspects set against Mughal architecture, lend layers to its urban narrative.

Within this complicated context, the *Khawajasira* community stands as a tenacious force, questioning conventional conventions and seeking recognition in the face of marginalization. The difficulties between maintaining cultural heritage and accepting urban evolution are highlighted by gentrification measures.

Heera Mandi emerges not just as a symbol of repute, but also as a crossroads where history threads intersect, stories of perseverance unfold, and nuanced gender identities take shape. Lifting the gendered veil that has shrouded Lahore allows for a better understanding of the city's history, current reality, and diversified ambitions.

Heera Mandi, had a significant impact on gender experiences in Colonial and Post-Colonial Lahore. During the colonial period, the area functioned as a site for the exercise of gendered power relations. The importance of Heera Mandi in shaping the picture of Colonial Lahore cannot be overstated. It was seen as a forbidden yet alluring area, evoking cultural richness and taboo desires. The district's closeness to key cultural and religious sites enhanced its symbolic significance even more. The writings and myths

surrounding Heera Mandi entered the cultural imagination, contributing to the collective consciousness of Lahore and molding the city's identity.

Following independence, many methods were used to combat the image of the red-light district. Novels like Louise Brwon, Bapsi Sidhwa and Mohsin Hamid's offer diverse insights on the shifting dynamics of Heera Mandi. While Pran Nevile's depiction idealizes the district as a cultural center, Bapsi Sidhwa's viewpoint reveals its fall and disintegration over time. Efforts have been made to maintain Heera Mandi's historical significance through gentrification and tourist projects, however there are concerns about the commercialization and "Disneyfication" of its cultural history, raising concerns about the authenticity of Lahore's past.

This research study emphasizes the deep links between the red-light district, gender experiences, and the urban fabric of Lahore. It emphasizes the importance of Heera Mandi in defining gender dynamics throughout the colonial and post-colonial periods, as well as its role in establishing the collective picture of Colonial Lahore. Exploration of literature and urban studies reveals the gendered dimension of Lahore's urban imagination. Following independence, the image of the red-light district has been handled in a variety of ways, with disputes centered on its portrayal and maintenance. Finally, examining post-colonial modernization efforts in Lahore through the lens of gender gives vital insights into the intricacies of Pakistani society and the city's interaction of history, politics, and cultural shifts. Overall, this study adds to a better knowledge of gender dynamics in Lahore, as well as the larger implications for urban growth and cultural heritage preservation.

As established in this thesis, the *Khawajasira* community is very important when it comes to studying the gendered urban imaginations of Lahore. Transgender people, known as *Khusra*, *Hijra*, or *Chakka* in traditional Pakistani society, experience marginalization and prejudice. They are denied basic rights and are frequently connected with stigmatized vocations and activities. Transgender people were honored in ancient Hindu texts and the Mughal courts, according to historical evidence. However, British colonization was a watershed moment that resulted in their marginalization through draconian legislation and social isolation. Transgender people in Pakistan continue to experience difficulties in gaining recognition, obtaining jobs, and integrating into society. The red-light district, provides a safe haven for the *Khawajasira* group, allowing them to express themselves and find some degree of freedom within a society that frequently rejects them. It is critical to challenge preconceptions and societal prejudices against transgender people in Pakistan in order to create a more inclusive and welcoming atmosphere. Understanding the *Khawajasira* community's marginalized and stigmatized experiences leads to a greater understanding of gender dynamics in Pakistani culture and the necessity of encouraging equality, respect, and opportunity for all persons, regardless of gender identification.

Furthermore, the idea of “gendered space” emerges as an important framework for examining the influence of historical gender roles on urban architecture, emphasizing the need for more inclusive planning practices. Furthermore, the concept of “urban imagination” illuminates how society imagines and conceptualizes urban landscapes via cultural and historical lenses. Recognizing these concepts may pave the way for more inclusive and empowering urban settings.

This study offers up various possibilities for future implementations and research. It can broaden the research by undertaking a comparative examination of other cities in the area or around the world that have experienced comparable red-light district dynamics and their influence on gender experiences in the public realm. This comparative method can help to offer a more comprehensive knowledge of the intricacies and similarities/dissimilarities in various urban situations. It can go deeper into the intersections of gender with other parts of Lahore's urban fabric, such as class, religion, and ethnicity. It can concentrate on recording the views and experiences of marginalized populations and individuals within and outside of Lahore's red-light district in order to acquire a more comprehensive picture of the city's gender dynamics. It will investigate the research findings' implications for policymaking and urban development in Lahore. Examine how gender views may be included into urban development plans, with a particular emphasis on providing inclusive and safe public places for women and marginalized populations. Collaboration with urban planners, politicians, and NGOs working on gender issues in Lahore might be part of this. Alternatively, it might look at the prospects for responsible tourism and historical preservation programs in the red-light area. Examine how the district's historical relevance and cultural legacy may be preserved and presented in a way that honors the dignity and agency of its citizens while challenging exploitative myths.

GLOSSARY

<i>Allah o Akbar</i> (اللہ اکبر)	God is one
<i>Amratsaria</i> (امراتسریا)	People Belonging from Amritsar
<i>Androon</i> (اندر)	Inner
<i>Azaan</i> (اذان)	Call for Prayer
<i>Badchalan</i> (بدچلن)	“Bad” woma
<i>Baramda</i> (برامدا)	 Veranda
<i>Bazaar</i> (بزار)	 Open market
<i>Bhajan</i> (بھجن)	Hindu Religious Song
<i>Chaar Diwari</i> (چار دیواری)	Four Walls
<i>Chacha</i> (چچا)	 Paternal Uncle
<i>Chai</i> (چائے)	 Pakistani Tea
<i>Chakka</i> (چھکا)	 Slang used for transgender people
<i>Chamar</i> (چمار)	 Degenerate Class in Hindu Religion
<i>Churidar Pyjama</i> (چوری دار پاجامہ)	Traditional Fancy Trousers
<i>Dadi</i> (دادی)	 Paternal Grandmother
<i>Dadra</i> (دادرہ)	Hindi classical slow vocal music
<i>Dalal</i> (دلال)	Pimp
<i>Darwaza</i> (دروازہ)	 Door/ Gate
<i>Faqeer</i> (فقیر)	Followers of the Sufi saints
<i>Gajra</i> (گجرا)	 Strung flowers
<i>Gali</i> (گلی)	 Narrow street
<i>Gandi</i> (گندی)	 Dirty
<i>Ghazal</i> (غزل)	Classical form of Urdu music
<i>Ghunda</i> (گھونڈا)	Goon
<i>Ghungaroo</i> (گھنگرو)	 Ankle bells worn on ankles or calves
<i>Gora log</i> (گورا لاگ)	White people
<i>Guzar</i> (گزر)	Access lane
<i>Haveli</i> (حویلی)	Mansion
<i>Heera Mandi</i> (ہیرا منڈی)	Diamond Market
<i>Hijra</i> (حجرہ)	 A person who was registered as male at birth but who identifies as female or as neither male nor female.
<i>Hudood</i> (ہودود)	 Limits
<i>Izzatdaar</i> (عزت دار)	Respectable/ honorable
<i>Kaneez</i> (کنیز)	 Maid
<i>Kanjar</i> (کنجر)	A caste belonging to entertainers

<i>Kanjari</i> (کنجری)	Prostitute
<i>Kathak</i> (کتھک)	Hindu classical dance form
<i>Khawajasira</i> (خواجہ سرا)	Transgender people
<i>Khusra</i> (خسرہ)	Eunuch
<i>Koocha</i> (کوچہ)	Lane
<i>Kotha</i> (کوٹھا)	Literally: Rooftop/ Slang: Brothel
<i>Lahori</i> (لاہوری)	Dwellers of Lahore
<i>Madrassa</i> (مدرسہ)	Islamic School
<i>Maghrib</i> (مغرب)	Evening prayer time
<i>Mirasi</i> (میواسی)	Ethnic group who has music as their main profession
<i>Mohalla</i> (محله)	A community
<i>Mujra</i> (مجرا)	Literally: Act of obeying/ Slang: A type of dance to entertain others
<i>Mullah</i> (ملا)	A Muslim learned in Islamic theology and sacred law
<i>Nawab</i> (نواب)	A Muslim nobleman or person of high status
<i>Paak</i> (پاک)	Pure and Holy
<i>Pardah</i> (پردہ)	The seclusion of women from the sight of men or strangers
<i>Pulao</i> (پلاؤ)	Special type of rice made with meat
<i>Raj</i> (راج)	Rule
<i>Raja</i> (راجہ)	Prince
<i>Rickshaw wala</i> (رکشہ والا)	Rickshaw Driver
<i>Sahib</i> (صاحب)	A polite title or form of address for a man
<i>Shalwar</i> (شلوار)	A pair of light, loose, pleated trousers
<i>Sharia</i> (شریعت)	Islamic canonical law based on the teachings of the Quran
<i>Shastra</i> (شاستر)	A work of sacred scripture (in Hinduism)
<i>Shehr</i> (شہر)	City
<i>Shia</i> (شیعہ)	Muslim Sect
<i>Sitar</i> (ستار)	A folk instrument
<i>Sunni</i> (سنی)	Muslim Sect
<i>Tabla</i> (ٹبلہ)	A folk instrument
<i>Tableeghi Jamat</i> (تبلیغی جماعت)	Society for spreading faith
<i>Tawaif</i> (طوائف)	Courtesan
<i>Tharra</i> (تھرا)	Raised platform in front of a building
<i>Thumri</i> (ٹھمری)	A light romantic form of Hindi classical music
<i>Tonga</i> (ٹونگا)	Horse pulled cart
<i>Tonga wala</i> (ٹانگہ والا)	Driver of horse pulled cart
<i>Zakaat</i> (زکوٰۃ)	An annual alms tax or poor rate that each Muslim is expected to pay as a religious duty and that is used for charitable and religious purposes.
<i>Zenana Khana</i> (زنانہ خانہ)	Separate part of a Muslim household reserved just for females
<i>Zina</i> (زنا)	Unlawful sexual relations outside of marriage
<i>Zinda-Dilan-e-Lahore</i> (زندہ دلان لاہور)	Lively people of Lahore
<i>Guru</i> (گرو)	Teacher or Leader
<i>Chela</i> (چیلہ)	Disciple

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