

# **REIMAGINING PUBLIC SPACES THROUGH CITY LITERATURE OF DELHI: MAPPING THE HISTORY, PRESENT CONCERNS AND FUTURE TRANSFORMATIONS**

**Ph.D. Thesis**

By  
**APSARA BALA**



**DISCIPLINE OF ENGLISH  
INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY INDORE  
NOVEMBER 2025**

# REIMAGINING PUBLIC SPACES THROUGH CITY LITERATURE OF DELHI: MAPPING THE HISTORY, PRESENT CONCERNS AND FUTURE TRANSFORMATIONS

A THESIS

*Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the award of the degree  
of*  
**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

*by*  
**APSARA BALA**



**DISCIPLINE OF ENGLISH  
INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY INDORE  
NOVEMBER 2025**



## INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY INDORE

I hereby certify that the work which is being presented in the thesis entitled **REIMAGINING PUBLIC SPACES THROUGH CITY LITERATURE OF DELHI: MAPPING THE HISTORY, PRESENT CONCERNS AND FUTURE TRANSFORMATIONS** in the partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of **DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY** and submitted in the **SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES, Indian Institute of Technology Indore**, is an authentic record of my own work carried out during the time period from August, 2021 to November, 2025 under the supervision of Prof. Nirmala Menon, Professor, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology, Indore.

The matter presented in this thesis has not been submitted by me for the award of any other degree of this or any other institute.

*Apasara*

(**APSARA BALA**)

-----  
This is to certify that the above statement made by the candidate is correct to the best of my/our knowledge.

*Nirmala*

(**Prof. NIRMALA MENON**)

-----  
**APSARA BALA** has successfully given her Ph.D. Oral Examination held on **12 November 2025**.

*Nirmala*

(**Prof. NIRMALA MENON**)

-----



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Pursuing a degree at an IIT and ultimately completing a PhD has always been a cherished aspiration of mine, shared by my parents, siblings, friends, and partner. However, the journey toward this long-held goal has been fraught with obstacles, challenges, and uncertainties. My passion for research often conflicted with my responsibilities, leading to significant changes in my life. At times, this conflict shook my ability to make decisions. I encountered difficult choices and had to carefully navigate through them.

Then we decided to take on both sets of responsibilities. While this choice may have seemed idealistic to some, it resulted in us shouldering double burdens. Nevertheless, I am grateful that we persevered, fought through the challenges, and ultimately achieved success. The most significant figure in this journey, without whom obtaining this degree from such a prestigious institution would have been impossible, is my supervisor, Prof. Nirmala Menon. She consistently believed in me, even when I struggled to believe in myself. She had an innate ability to understand every situation without requiring further explanation. Her unwavering trust and faith in the process kept us moving forward.

The journey was tough, but it was made possible by the incredible people who offered their support, motivation, and inspiration, often reaching out from afar. I am especially grateful to my lab mates, who were always willing to assist me whenever I needed help. I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to my seniors: Shanmuga, Sonal, Kavin, Justy, Ramesh, Kavitha, Jyothi, Vandana, Aparna, Mushina, Hussain, and Harish. I also want to thank my batchmates: Lalith, Anuradha, Purna, Naveen, Madhusmita, Bittu, Bansi, Sonu, Subhi, and Sugato. Additionally, I am thankful for my juniors, Preetha and Meghna, and I cherish the coffee dates we had together, along with many others who have enriched my experience in ways too numerous to mention.

I am grateful to my parents, Bhabasindhu Bala and Aparna Bala, my sister Priti Bala, as well as my foster parents: Savita Roy, the late Narayan Roy, Abhijeet Roy, Rajib Roy, Sanjib Roy, and Chiranjeet Roy.

I also want to acknowledge my in-laws, Bandhan Indwar and Florencia Indwar. Although not all of them may fully understand what a PhD degree entails, they recognise it as a label earned through a long struggle. It is their love and support that have provided me comfort during difficult times.

I am incredibly thankful to my husband, Suraj Indwar. He has always believed in my dreams, even when they seemed beyond reach. In tough times, he never gave up and consistently inspired and comforted me with his love. With him by my side, challenging tasks felt manageable and achievable. I am also grateful for my wonderful group of friends: Rini, Ankita, Sreyashi, Laboni, Arun, and Debo. Their guidance during difficult moments, along with our spontaneous trips and meet-ups, helped keep me grounded throughout my PhD journey.

Furthermore, I am profoundly grateful to the IIT Indore community and to the dedicated staff members of the academic section, including Tapesh Parihar, Neeraj Kumar, Rahul Srinivas, and my HSS office staff, Kalpana Ma'am, Amit Sir, and Himanshu Sir. I would also like to express my sincere appreciation to all the professors at the School of Humanities and Social Sciences (SHSS) for their invaluable support. I would like to extend my heartfelt appreciation for the support provided by the IIT Indore library, particularly for its remote access facilities. I am also grateful for the financial assistance offered by the UGC-JRF fellowship. Above all, I wish to acknowledge the IIT Indore academic section and UGC policies for granting the essential intermittent breaks that were instrumental in helping me complete this journey. Ultimately, I am thankful to the Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti and the Deputy Commissioner of the Bhopal Region for granting me a No Objection Certificate, which greatly facilitated my ability to pursue research alongside my professional duties and responsibilities.

Above all, I am especially grateful to my PSPC members, Prof. Ruchi Sharma (Head, SHSS) and Prof. Trapti Jain (EE), as well as the external examiners. Their patient and timely evaluations of our research reports, along with their insightful feedback, have significantly contributed to the improvement of our work.

Apsara Bala  
12 November 2025



*To the Divine, Maa, Baba, and Suraj*

*To make public spaces in our cities accessible, safe, and inclusive*



# SYNOPSIS

## Introduction

The ongoing debate surrounding public spaces revolves around several key issues: their historical existence, the meaning attributed to them, the varying expectations from different communities regarding how they perceive these spaces, the influence of material structures on the creation of the public sphere, and the contentious nature of the term ‘public,’ especially given the evidence of various forms of exclusion. Questions arising in this area highlight the compromises, conflicts, and contestations that characterise public space’s inherently ambiguous and fluid nature. Although there are various theories and histories (Arendt 1958; Lefevre 1991; Sennett 1992; Mitchell 1995, 2003) regarding public space and accessibility, our exploration revealed a significant gap in the thorough analysis and reimagining of public spaces within the Indian context. Consequently, this thesis analyses the transformation of public spaces through an architectural lens in urban literature and applies the literary urban studies (Daniel and Queiroz 2013; Gurr 2021; Jason 2022) framework in the analysis. Here, we are more focused on critiquing the aspects of growing privatisation efforts (Boycko 1996) and the top-down approach in urban planning, which displays the postcolonial urbanism (Kalyan 2017; Grubbauer 2019; Myers 2020) aspect of our thesis.

We continue with the discourse of public space by incorporating contemporary perspectives and reorienting the fundamental issues. Public space is no longer just an academic topic confined to scholarly discussion; it is now a central theme in public discourse that affects numerous societal aspects (Don Mitchell, p. 127). With different ‘scales and levels of understanding’ (Relph 1976; Smith and Low 2006) of public space, this field raises multiple concerns across various disciplines. Public spaces are vital to the identity of a city and play a crucial role in society. Urban environments fulfil the social needs that commercial and cultural infrastructures cannot satisfy (Lefebvre, p.

147). Therefore, vibrant public spaces are essential for social interaction and community cohesion (Jacobs, 1961). Mixed-use developments that combine residential, commercial, and recreational areas foster dynamic environments where people can engage meaningfully. Strong community ties are crucial for maintaining vibrant public spaces, as engaged residents contribute to safety and dynamism (Gehl, 2010; Lynch, 1996). Furthermore, well-designed public spaces reflect the city's collective history and culture (Rossi, 1982). Public spaces serve as melting pots for social, cultural, and economic interaction, and must be inclusive and accessible to all. When designed thoughtfully, they can boost economic activities and support environmental functions, influenced by ongoing urbanisation and technological advancements.

This link between public spaces and the urban environment, therefore, becomes vital in city literature too, offering a framework for exploring urban life, social dynamics, and identities (Forty 2000; Tally 2013). In literary works, cities often emerge as dynamic characters that reflect their inhabitants' complexities. This relationship underscores how literature mirrors architecture, engaging with social and political dimensions of space. The multifaceted connection between architecture and literature is deeply rooted in their mutual preoccupation with space and the human experience (Bachelard 1994). Both disciplines delve into how physical spaces shape the lives of individuals and communities while also functioning as potent symbols for broader social and cultural concerns (Lefevre 1991). Through diverse perspectives and methodologies, literature offers valuable insights into the understanding of architecture. Conversely, architecture provides a rich lens through which to interpret and appreciate literature.

Therefore, our research here examines significant aspects of public spaces in connection with the city and the literature. We have considered the literary domain as a significant sphere for architectural inquiry and exploration. Through the literary analysis, the thesis then maps the concept of public space within the Indian context, illustrating its conceptualisation and evolution throughout different periods in the country's history. This thesis thus undertakes an exploration of the

spatial history of public spaces, connecting them with the city literature, adopting the methodology of architectural literary analysis and architectural cartography. It charts the transformation of these dynamic areas within the bustling metropolis of Delhi, a city that embodies the essence of the nation's political philosophy.

### **Public Space and Delhi Literature**

The city of Delhi, in this case, serves as the focal point of this thesis. It is apparent that the portrayal of public spaces in Delhi literature is intricately linked to the city's historical narratives, encompassing both its colonial past and postcolonial present, along with its urban layout and social intricacies (Das and Tripathi 2021). Within the literary context, Delhi's streets, markets, other open spaces, and monuments play a pivotal role as they become focal points for exploring social, political, and cultural identities. Furthermore, authors employ these spaces to delve into the complex interplay between traditional structures and modern transformations, the undeniable effects of colonialism, and the experiences of diverse populations in Delhi. A few public spaces in Delhi, for example, the Raisina Hill area, Chandni Chowk, Connaught Place, and other parts of the old city, serve as symbolic spaces in Delhi literature reflecting the city's changing power structures, from the authority of the Mughals to the Raj of British colonials to the government of modern Indian. These places often connote double-edged emblems of both resistance and assimilation.

In Khushwant Singh's *Delhi: A Novel* (1990), the author vividly portrays how the city's public spaces during the Partition transformed into arenas of violence, mass exodus, and upheaval. Throughout the narrative, the reader journeys through different historical periods, where public spaces serve as poignant symbols of the city's tumultuous political past. Similarly, in Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017), the public space of Jantar Mantar emerges as a powerful backdrop for protests, effectively illustrating the fusion of public space and contemporary political activism in India. In Ahmed Ali's *Twilight in Delhi* (1940), the novel weaves a tale of the city of

Delhi amidst the decline of the majestic Mughal Empire and the ascent of British colonial power. The narrative explores the city's physical, social, and cultural metamorphoses under colonial rule and how the city space and architecture transform in response to the colonial presence. As well as the city faces rapid urbanisation, the literary works observe the transformation and subsequent decay of the older traditional structures taken over by modern urban planning, fulfilling the requirement of an equally modern and massive population. Anita Desai's *In Custody* (1984) provides insight into the impact of modern architecture and skyrocketing urbanisation on the traditional way of life in Delhi, shedding light on the transformation of spaces of cultural exchange and developing social bonding into privatised consumption-ruled areas. Literary works also consider the availability and accessibility of public spaces by diverse populations sharing a city space. In Manju Kapur's novel *Home* (2006), the exploration of gender dynamics and the limited access to public space is portrayed through the constraints imposed on female characters within the patriarchal society of Delhi.

Therefore, Delhi's literature can be examined from multiple architectural perspectives, allowing us to explore its past, analyse its present, and envision its future. The interdisciplinary field of literary urban studies facilitates a nuanced analysis of Delhi literature, enabling a deeper understanding of the city's public spaces. This approach effectively integrates literary studies with urban studies, encompassing disciplines such as history, geography, and urban planning. Our thesis will delve into all these aspects in the thesis chapters, highlighting the crucial role that literary texts play in this analysis. In our exploration of the extensive corpus of Delhi literature, we have primarily concentrated on the architectural details and shifts emphasised within the texts. We acknowledge the vastness of this literature, and our current focus has been restricted to a selected few works that examine the city's architecture. Consequently, we intend to expand our scope by incorporating a wider array of texts in the future development of our thesis.

## **Research Gap, Questions and Hypothesis**

After conducting an extensive literature review, we have recognised the crucial role of accessible public spaces and their significance in the social, economic, and political dimensions of society. However, within the context of our country, there seems to be a notable gap in research dedicated to examining the evolution of public spaces and reimagining architecture in the Indian setting. In light of this, we have identified the following essential research questions for our study:

- Reimagine public spaces in the context of a city's history, address the current concerns, and analyse future transformations. In this study of historical contexts, we hypothesise that the colonial mindset and the insufficient consideration of local context in urban design practices have significantly contributed to the decline and spatial marginalisation of public spaces in the city of Delhi.
- Here, we consider Delhi Literature in exploring the architectural perspectives of the public spaces of the city. And in this way, we include literary analysis in critiquing and rethinking the urban planning of the city.

## **Thesis Aims and Objectives**

In consideration of the above research questions, the thesis aims to adopt an interdisciplinary approach by integrating literature, public space, and architectural discussions to uncover various insights into their intersections. Therefore, the aims and objectives of our thesis are as follows –

1. The thesis examines the strong interrelationship between architecture and literature, conducting an architectural literary analysis of public spaces while applying the theoretical framework of literary urban studies.
2. It analyses the spatial denial of protest sites (public spaces) following the colonial attitude that continues even after independence. In doing so, it visualises the historical

displacement and transformation of accessibility, shifting from the Rajpath, a central space, to the farmers' protests at the city's periphery.

- I. The work also analyses the historical interplay of designation and creation in the city space of Delhi and explores the complex layers of accessibility between real and privatised public spaces.
  - II. It aims to showcase an interrelationship of 3 Ps (public space, protest, and public) and the necessity of 2 Vs (visibility and vicinity) in protest.
3. The thesis seeks to reveal new insights into the city's public spaces, especially the streets and marketplaces, by analysing their literary depictions and understanding their evolving patterns and architecture historically.
- I. The thesis, navigating through the city's past, present, and future, critiques the top-down approach in city planning and highlights the postcolonial urbanism that the city space is going through.
  - II. Following visual ethnography, through urban sketching it captures the different patterns, aesthetics, and subversion in public spaces throughout various parts of Delhi.
  - III. It explores the feasibility and sustainability of master plan predictions, explicitly focusing on public spaces. It emphasises the importance of fostering coexistence and reimagining public spaces within the Indian context.
4. The thesis efforts aim to engage the discussion of private spaces that exist in a binary yet complex interdependency and interrelationship with public spaces.
- I. It examines the transformation of domestic architecture in Delhi over different time periods, highlighting gendered spaces.
  - II. The thesis thus foregrounds a feminist critique of the public/private dichotomy within the domestic

environment and presents a feminist architectural perspective in literature.

- III. This analysis examines the spatial elements through a close reading of the texts and produces narrative-based designs (architectural layouts) of domestic spaces. By following aesthetic morphology and scenario-based design principles, it generates architectural sketches that visualise female spaces across different periods depicted in the texts.
5. This thesis finally presents a step-by-step exploration of various public and private spaces in the city of Delhi, weaving together a narrative of literary descriptions, architectural sketches and maps.
  - I. Through creative writing and digital storytelling, it establishes a creative platform that addresses accessibility concerns related to public spaces.

### **Theoretical Framework**

To realise the above objectives, we have adopted the following theoretical frameworks for our study –

- I. The thesis utilizes the framework of literary urban studies (Jason 2022) to analyse the representation of cities and urban experiences in literature. By emphasizing the mutual influence between literature and the city, this research examines various aspects of public spaces in Delhi, aiming to reimagine them in ways that enhance their accessibility.
- II. The exploration of spatial history within our universe of study highlights how authorities deny access by designating specific protest sites. This exclusion forces protesters to occupy unknown, subaltern (Fraser 2016) public spaces to showcase their collective actions. As a result of this spatial denial and the colonial attitudes of those in power, protesters create their own public spaces.

In doing so, new spaces of resistance emerge, gaining significance away from the officially designated areas. These spaces challenge both the visibility and vicinity of the authorities, which are required in any protest.

- III. This exploration of the historical evolution of public spaces in Delhi reveals the diverse street patterns and market aesthetics found in different parts of the city. These variations suggest the city's development and expansion over various periods, leading to the rise of two distinct cities within the current landscape. An analysis of the master plans highlights a Eurocentric approach to urban planning, characterised by a top-down model that continues to influence future planning efforts. This approach overlooks local context, aesthetics, and community sentiments, illustrating a post-colonial process of urbanisation (Kalyan 2017; Grubbauer 2019; Myers 2020) still affected by colonial legacies and influences.
- IV. In line with our goal of enhancing accessibility in public spaces, we aim to explore private spaces in the city of Delhi. Analysing the evolution of domestic spaces in India and the gendered aspects of accessibility within these environments leads us to examine domestic architecture from a feminist architectural perspective. This approach provides valuable insights that, when combined with our exploration of public spaces, enable us to rethink the city's history, address current concerns, and assess proposed future transformations in this context.

## **Methods and Methodology**

To refine our methodology, our thesis primarily employs architectural literary analysis and architectural cartography. In examining various public spaces across different chapters, we utilise

architectural literary analysis to uncover spatial history and analyse the architectural narratives present in literary works. This literary analysis concurrently examines a range of analogue and digital mapping methodologies within the context of architectural cartography. Additionally, we incorporate literary works from diverse genres, forms, and languages in our analysis. As a result, our methods adopt an interdisciplinary approach, integrating knowledge and techniques from several fields, including Digital Humanities, Literary Studies, and Urban Studies.

Under analogue mapping methods, we have employed the sensory mapping method in our creation of handmade maps in visualising the spatial denial, and the method of urban sketching was followed to capture the diverse street patterns and market aesthetics in the city of Delhi. A close examination of cartographic records or cartographic analysis from the National Archives of India has allowed us to document the transformation of the city over various decades and the emergence of two distinct cities due to colonial influences in the modern era. Also, as our analysis encompasses both private and public spaces in Delhi, later in the thesis, we selected architectural narratives through careful interpretation of texts. We then explored the spatial elements to create narrative-driven designs (architectural layouts) for these domestic spaces.

Within architectural cartography, we have also employed a range of digital tools and mapping methods to enrich our analysis and effectively visualise the outcomes of our thesis. These tools have become a fundamental aspect of our research methodology. Notably, we have utilised applications such as Google Earth Pro, QGIS, and the MAPinr app throughout our work. The open-source software platform QGIS enabled us to take a comprehensive approach to mapping public spaces in the second chapter of our analysis of protest sites as public spaces. By accumulating both qualitative and quantitative data, we gained a clear and detailed understanding of each public space discussed in this chapter. This facilitated an in-depth analysis and discussion of their characteristics and significance within the community.

In the third chapter of our thesis, we utilised MAPinr, an advanced mobile GIS mapping tool, to dynamically collect, analyse, and visualise spatial data during our field visits. The app's functionality allowed us to overlay multiple datasets, which facilitated comparative analyses between different layers of information. This feature helped us identify patterns and trends within the urban landscape more effectively. Finally, the georeferencing technique in Google Earth Pro enables us to conduct a comparative analysis of the historical transformations of public spaces alongside proposed future changes outlined in the city's master plans. This approach allows us to visualise the future materiality of the public spaces we are examining.

In our thesis, this transition from analogue methods to using digital tools is followed in different chapters, demonstrating the challenges faced in the research process and signifying a significant aspect in the field of Digital Humanities, offering new opportunities for “accessibility, creativity, and reproducibility” (Chauhan et al., 2023). Therefore, the handmade sketches and, later, the digital mapping reveal the step-by-step learning process of a first-generation DH scholar in the mapping field. The visualisations have been analysed to manifest the transformations, shifting of public spaces, and the growing lack of accessibility.

In conclusion, the thesis also crafts a narrative encompassing literary analysis along with digital and architectural maps and figures developed throughout the process. Again, through digital storytelling, the thesis addresses important concerns regarding public spaces

### **Overview of Thesis Chapters**

Thus, our thesis will have this dedicated flow (Figure 1) in the coming chapters –

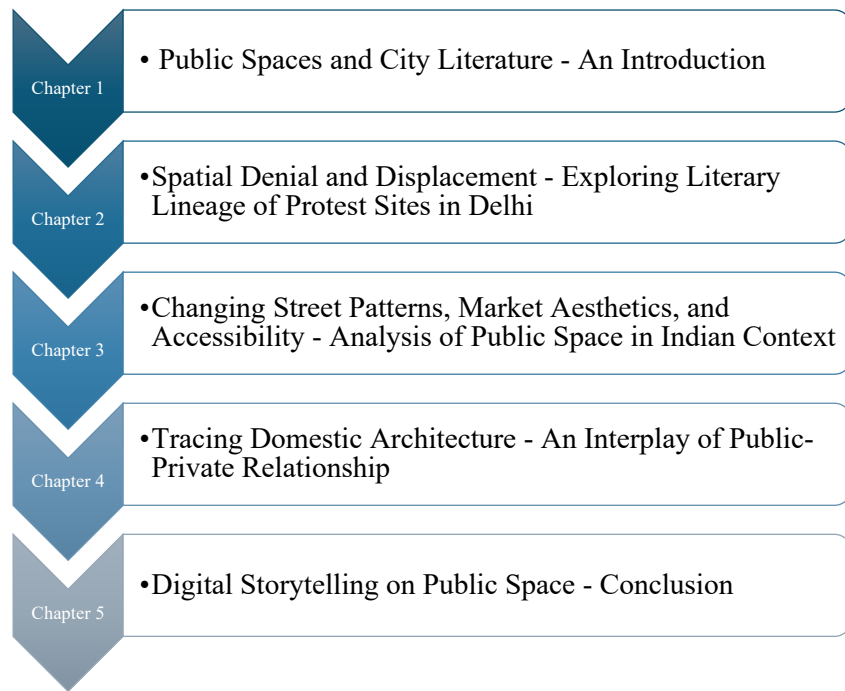


Figure 1 – Thesis Flow Chart

### **Chapter 1: Public Spaces and City Literature - An Introduction**

The introductory chapter of our thesis emphasises how public spaces are essential for a city’s identity and social fabric and fundamental to urban life. When designed inclusively, these spaces foster diverse interactions, boost economic activity, and contribute to community cohesion while adapting to ongoing urbanisation and technological changes. A philosophical view of public space underscores it as a shared resource (Lefevre 1991), a site for collective action (Harvey 2012), and vital for exercising individual rights and community interaction (Foucault 1986).

Due to its multifaceted qualities and inherent conflicts, public space has emerged as a fundamental component of literary imagination, serving both as a reflection and a critique of broader societal dynamics. Literary works frequently depict cities and their public spaces as dynamic characters that embody the complexities and desires of their inhabitants. They delve into the social, cultural, and political dimensions of these spaces, highlighting the strong interrelationship between literature and architecture. In this scenario, since our thesis discusses the city of Delhi, we have conducted a close analysis of literary works

related to Delhi literature. Public spaces in Delhi literature are intricately linked to the city's historical narratives, reflecting both its colonial past and postcolonial present, as well as its urban layout. Streets, markets, and monuments serve as focal points for the exploration of social, political, and cultural identities. Authors delve into the relationship between traditional structures and modern transformations, the legacies of colonialism, and the diverse experiences of Delhi's populace.

In this way, this introductory chapter of our thesis presents a flowchart that outlines the progression of our work. It elaborates on the multidisciplinary approach we have taken to explore the intersections of literature, public space, and architecture. This chapter shows how step-by-step this thesis analyses the colonial attitudes that persist in the spatial denial of protest sites and examines the creation of urban spaces. The chapter also reveals how the thesis investigates accessibility in real versus privatised public spaces influenced by capitalism and consumer culture, highlighting the relationship between public spaces, protest, and communities. Here, a detailed analysis of key public spaces highlights the evolution of architecture, emphasising postcolonial urbanism. At a later stage, focusing on domestic architecture in Old Delhi, this thesis looks at gendered spaces and the trend toward neo-traditionalism that reshapes women's roles in the home.

## **Chapter 2: Spatial Denial and Displacement - Exploring Literary Lineage of Protest Sites in Delhi**

After this introductory chapter, our thesis in this chapter aims to uncover the historical dynamics that have led to the spatial denial of public spaces and protest sites within the city of Delhi. This chapter examines the historical evolution of Delhi, influenced by Mughal rule, British colonialism, and the struggle for independence. It addresses the issue of limited accessibility to public spaces and critiques the practice of designating specific areas for protests, which often amounts to a denial of meaningful engagement. This practice has contributed to the creation of new public spaces in recent times.

In this chapter, we also illustrate the interconnectedness of public space, protest, and people. It shows how these concepts influence each other and transform individuals within these spaces. Above all, we emphasise the themes of denial, designation, and displacement concerning public spaces as protest sites. Again, the rise of privatised public spaces and the decline of real public ones have heightened the demand for inclusivity. This chapter thus explores the connection between designated protest spaces and the emergence of new ones, while also addressing the persistent denial of access to central spaces. Our focus here lies on the role of public spaces in collective actions and the integration of accessibility throughout this process. It examines the attitudes of those in power regarding access and the initiation of architectural changes.

As a part of the methodology, the chapter employs an architectural literary analysis method to explore various spatial perspectives. It also utilises a simultaneous mapping method to illustrate the historical displacement of accessibility. This highlights the transition from Rajpath, a central area, to the farmers' protests occurring at the outskirts of the city due to spatial denial. In this scenario, this chapter analyses protest spaces in Delhi through a multilingual literary lens. Key works include Indira Dangi's *Raptiley Rajpath*, which follows disillusioned author Virat as he returns home to reflect on his experiences in Delhi; Ramchandra Guha's *India After Gandhi*, which depicts a time in the 1990s when dissent was more accessible before protests were pushed to Jantar Mantar; Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*, that explores marginalized individuals at this symbolic site, emphasizing the divide between protests and power. In relation to Shaheen Bagh, *Shaheen Bagh: From Protest to a Movement* by Ziya Us Salem and Uzma Ausaf discusses reclaiming space for inclusivity, and Soumyabrata Choudhury's *Now It's Come to Distances* considers how the pandemic influenced protest narratives of isolation. For the Farmers' Protest, *The Indian Farmers' Protest: The Resistance Collection* by Sir Inder Doel compiles poetry from various voices that address themes of inclusion and shared identity among protesters.

In the latter part of this chapter, to demonstrate how denial operates, this chapter uses handmade maps following the sensory mapping method and digital maps using QGIS to illustrate the concepts of denial, designation, and creation. The analysis and data visualisation, therefore, provide a clear understanding of each protest site, enabling an analysis of their characteristics and significance in the community. Additionally, our investigation into the mapping methods employed in this chapter highlights a crucial aspect of our field of study – Digital Humanities. This chapter discusses the challenges digital humanities scholars face when moving from traditional analogue methods to digital techniques. This transition involves adjusting to new tools, methods, and changes in the academic environment.

### **Chapter 3: Changing Street Patterns, Market Aesthetics, and Accessibility - Analysis of Public Space in Indian Context**

The third chapter after this would further narrow down our focus on two fundamental types of public spaces (streets and markets) in the city of Delhi, showcasing their historical evolution, changing patterns, architecture, and aesthetics. The exploration in this chapter is organised to transition from a comprehensive overview of the city of Delhi to a detailed analysis of its vibrant public spaces. This study aims to showcase the intricate patterns of urban transformation and architecture found in the streets and bustling markets, highlighting their essential roles as two key types of public spaces in the city. It investigates the richness of street life and the dynamic interplay between these areas through the phenomenon of ‘street trading,’ where commerce and social interaction converge in an engaging public realm.

To provide a foundation for this analysis, the chapter examines significant literary works that capture the essence of Delhi, including Khushwant Singh’s *Delhi: A Novel*, which paints a vivid picture of the city’s historical and cultural complexity; Usha Dyal Kumar’s *Phool Waalon ki Sair*, which explores the colourful flower markets and their cultural significance; and R. V. Smith’s *Lingering Charms of Delhi: Myth, Lore and History*, which delves into the city’s rich myths and

historical narratives. In addition to literary analysis, a variety of maps were sourced from diverse locations, such as detailed cartographic records from the National Archives of India and various online resources from the Survey of India and the Delhi Development Authority. These maps serve as vital tools in understanding Delhi's geographical and spatial evolution. Moreover, field visits and visual ethnography enriched the chapter's methodology, allowing for firsthand observation of public spaces. The urban sketching, thus captures the essence of street life and communal interaction in real time. The detailed urban sketching also illustrates the transformations observed in city layouts. These field studies provide a tangible exploration of how literature reflects and influences the dynamic nature of urban environments, highlighting specific changes in street designs, building layouts, and the overall urban experience. Through careful observation and artistic representation, we can gain deeper insights into the intricate relationship between literature and the physical landscape of cities.

The research in this chapter further explores potential transformations that may emerge from the strategic planning efforts detailed in the Master Plans set forth by the Delhi Development Authority (DDA). By taking a holistic approach, the study in this chapter, therefore, systematically traces the evolution of Delhi and its public spaces through three distinct temporal lenses: the past, which encompasses history, architecture, literature, and cartographic records that document the city's development; the present, which focuses on field observations, contemporary literary reflections, and relevant newspaper reports that highlight current urban dynamics; and the future, which anticipates changes through the implementation of ambitious master plans designed to shape the city's continued growth and revitalisation.

The examination of urban evolution underscores the vital role that public spaces play in city life. These areas, with their varied architectural styles, showcase the fascinating contrasts between historical structures and contemporary designs. This analysis also contemplates the future of these public spaces and their potential

transformations. To support this exploration, a thorough evaluation of the city's master plans has been conducted, revealing insights into the planning decisions that have shaped these spaces and their ongoing impact on the community. Through this critical interpretation, we gain a deeper understanding of how public spaces can foster social interaction and enhance urban environments.

#### **Chapter 4: Tracing Domestic Architecture - An Interplay of Public-Private Relationship in the Domestic Worlds of Delhi**

At this stage of our research, we focus on enhancing public access and investigating the evolution of public spaces, while also examining the domestic spaces in the area, which have historically evolved through different periods within the city. This chapter aims to create inclusive public spaces for everyone while also considering the dynamics of private spaces. This fourth chapter of our thesis acknowledges the undeniable relationship between public and private spaces; thus acknowledges a requirement of an equal amount of investigation and analysis into the latter, as in the former. The definition of public space is often presented as the opposite of private space, highlighting a clear distinction between the two. However, this apparent separation oversimplifies the reality; the boundaries between public and private spaces are often blurred, revealing a complex interdependent relationship.

This insight leads us to explore the historical evolution of this relationship in India, which is critical before we examine domestic spaces. Again, the gendered division of access in domestic spaces prompts important questions regarding their classification as private areas. This invites us to examine how accessibility in these environments mirrors public accessibility. Although discussions about gendered domestic spaces have surfaced in historical and sociological studies, this chapter focuses on literary works. This approach is significant because the architecture of a place profoundly influences literature, highlighting the relationship between built environments and narrative representation. This chapter again surfaces how literature both

documents and critiques the architectural spaces we inhabit. The creation of architectural sketches from a close reading of the architectural narratives in the literary texts in this chapter employs narrative-based designs and aesthetic morphology.

This chapter focuses on three significant works of Delhi literature: Ahmed Ali's *Twilight in Delhi*, William Dalrymple's *City of Djinns*, and Manju Kapoor's *Home*. These texts reveal how architectural changes have influenced both private and public spaces throughout the city across different time periods. Ali's *Twilight in Delhi* addresses the cultural losses from the transition from Mughal to colonial architecture, emphasising patriarchal constraints in domestic arrangements. Dalrymple's *City of Djinns* depicts Delhi as a palimpsest, using his rented flat as a symbol of colonial remnants and exploring memory within domestic spaces. Kapoor's *Home* highlights how the layout of the Banwari Lal household enforces gender segregation, illustrating the struggles women face for autonomy within restrictive environments. Together, these works provide valuable insights into the relationship between domestic architecture and gender dynamics in Delhi.

In conclusion, this chapter encourages us to rethink our private domestic spaces, which have evolved historically. Understanding these spaces is essential for city planning, as it highlights the connection between domestic and public environments and the need for equal access for all genders to public spaces. By examining the history of domestic spaces alongside literary texts from an architectural standpoint, we gain insights into their transformation into modern homes. This analysis reveals historical segregations that are important for reimagining urban design and creating more accessible and inclusive public spaces.

## **Chapter 5: Reflecting Public Space Concerns in Creative Writings and Conclusion**

In the conclusion chapter, we synthesise how we accomplished the key objectives set forth in our thesis. We provide a comprehensive analysis of public spaces in the city of Delhi, tracing their historical

evolution, addressing contemporary concerns, and exploring future possibilities and transformations. This chapter also presents a cohesive narrative that highlights the architectural maps, sketches, and literary works analysed throughout our research. By juxtaposing these visualisations with literary insights, we underscore the fundamental aim of our thesis: to acknowledge literature as an essential element of architectural analysis and urban planning, thereby promoting an architectural awareness that is vital for any democratic society.

This chapter features a creative section that includes a selection of children's stories/ short stories written by us. Through these narratives, we seek to explore various perspectives and concerns regarding public spaces. Instead of taking a didactic approach, we aim to subtly highlight these issues, encouraging readers to ponder their implications. Although we have included only a few stories as annexures in this thesis, we aspire to broaden this creative corner in our future endeavours, focusing on a wide range of concerns related to public spaces within the Indian context.

## References

- Arendt, Hannah. (1958). *The Human Condition*. University of Chicago Press.
- Sennett, Richard. (1992). *The Fall of Public Man*. Knopf.
- Alexander, Christopher (1977). *A Pattern Language: Towns, Buildings, Construction*. Oxford University Press.
- Ali, Madanipour (2015). "Social Exclusion and Space". *The City Reader*, edited by Richard T. LeGates and Frederic Stout, 6th ed., Routledge, 237-244.
- Arendt, Hannah (1963). *On Revolution*. Penguin Classics.
- Bachelard, Gaston. (1994). *The Poetics of Space*. Beacon Press.
- Boycko, M., Shleifer, A., & Vishny, R. W. (1996). A theory of privatisation. *The Economic Journal*, 106(435), 309. [doi.org/10.2307/2235248](https://doi.org/10.2307/2235248).
- Calvino, Italo (1974). *Invisible Cities*. Translated by William Weaver, First edition., Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
- Carr, Stephen, et al (1992). *Public Space*. Cambridge University Press.
- Chiesura, Anna (2004). "The Role of Urban Parks for the Sustainable City." *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 68(1):129-138, [doi.org/10.1016/j.landurbplan.2003.08.003](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landurbplan.2003.08.003).
- Das, Chhandita, and Priyanka Tripathi (2021). 'Delhi: New Literatures of the Megacity: Alex Tickell and Ruvani Ranasinha, Eds. Routledge 9(4):23–25, [doi.org/10.1080/2325548X.2021.1960035](https://doi.org/10.1080/2325548X.2021.1960035).
- Dasgupta, Rana (2014). *Capital: The Eruption of Delhi*. Penguin.
- Davis, Mike (1990). *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles*. Verso.
- 'Digital\_Humanities'. MIT Press, [mitpress.mit.edu/9780262528863/digital\\_humanities/](https://mitpress.mit.edu/9780262528863/digital_humanities/).
- Dodd, Maya, et al., editors (2021). *Exploring Digital Humanities in India: Pedagogies, Practices, and Institutional Possibilities. First South Asian edition*. Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group.

- Finch, Jason (2022). *Literary Urban Studies and How to Practice It*. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.
- Forty, A. (2000). *Words and Buildings: A Vocabulary of Modern Architecture*. Thames & Hudson.
- Foucault, Michel (1977). *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Vintage Books.
- Foucault, M. (1986). Of other spaces: Utopias and heterotopias (J. Miskowiec, Trans.). *Diacritics*, 16(1), 22–27. [doi.org/10.2307/464648](https://doi.org/10.2307/464648).
- Gehl, Jan (2010). *Cities for People*. Island Press.
- Gehl, Jan (2011). *Life Between Buildings: Using Public Space*. Island Press.
- Grubbauer, M. (2019). “Postcolonial urbanism across disciplinary boundaries: Modes of (Dis)engagement between urban theory and professional practice”. *The Journal of Architecture*, 24(4), 469–486. [doi.org/10.1080/13602365.2019.1643390](https://doi.org/10.1080/13602365.2019.1643390).
- Gurr, Jens Martin (2021). *Charting Literary Urban Studies: Texts as Models of and for the City*. Routledge, Taylor & Francis group.
- Habermas, Jürgen (1991). *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*. MIT Press.
- Harvey, David. *Rebel Cities: From the Right to the City to the Urban Revolution*. Verso, 2012.
- Jacobs, J. (1961). *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. New York, Random House. Kapur, Manju (2006). *Home*. Random House India.
- Kalyan, R. (2017). *Neo Delhi and the Politics of Postcolonial Urbanism* (1st ed.). Routledge. [doi.org/10.4324/9781315225357](https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315225357).
- Lefebvre, Henri (1991). *The Production of Space*. Blackwell.
- Løvlie, Anders Sundnes (2009). “Poetic augmented reality: Place-bound literature in locative media”, [doi.org/10.1145/1621841.1621847](https://doi.org/10.1145/1621841.1621847).
- Low, Setha, and Neil Smith (2006). *The Politics of Public Space*. Routledge.

- Lynch, Kevin (1996). *The Image of the City*. The MIT Press, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
- Mitchell, Don (1995). "The End of Public Space? People's Park, Definitions of the Public, and Democracy." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 85(1):108–133.
- Mitchell, Don (2003). *The Right to the City: Social Justice and the Fight for Public Space*. Guilford Press.
- Phadke, Shilpa, Sameera Khan, and Shilpa Ranade (2011). *Why Loiter? Women and Risk on Mumbai Streets*. Penguin Books.
- Robinson, J. (2006). *Ordinary Cities: Between Modernity and Development*. Routledge.
- Rossi, A. (1982). *The Architecture of the City*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Roy, Ananya (2003). *City Requiem, Calcutta: Gender and the Politics of Poverty*. University of Minnesota Press.
- Roy, Arundhati (2017). *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*. Penguin Books.
- Rubin, Elihu, and Sharon Zukin (2010). "Naked City: The Death and Life of Authentic Urban Places by Zukin Sharon" *SiteLINES: A Journal of Place*, 6(1):17–19, [www.jstor.org/stable/24884166](http://www.jstor.org/stable/24884166).
- Sartre, Jean-Paul (1993). *Being and Nothingness*. Washington Square Press.
- Schreibman, Susan, Ray Siemens, and John Unsworth, eds (2004). *A Companion to Digital Humanities*. Blackwell Companions to Literature and Culture.
- Sennett, Richard (1977). *The Fall of Public Man*. Alfred A. Knopf.
- Simmel, Georg (2011). *The Philosophy of Money*. Edited by David Frisby, Routledge, [doi.org/10.4324/9780203828298](https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203828298).
- Smith, Neil (1996). *The New Urban Frontier: Gentrification and the Revanchist City*. Routledge.
- Tally, R. T. (2013). *Spatiality*. Routledge.
- Myers, G. (2020). *Rethinking urbanism: Lessons from postcolonialism and the global south* (1st ed.). Bristol University Press. [doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv12fw6wq](https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv12fw6wq).

Valentine, Gill (1990). "Women's Fear and the Design of Public Space." *Built Environment*, 16(4):288–303, [www.jstor.org/stable/23286230](http://www.jstor.org/stable/23286230).

Zuberi, Fahad (2020). "Dissent and the City." Fahad Zuberi.

Zukin, Sharon (1995). "Whose Culture, Whose City", *The Cultures of Cities*. Blackwell.

## LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

### Published Papers

**Bala, A., & Menon, N.** (2025). “Spatial denial and displacement: exploring the literary lineage of protest sites (public spaces)”. *Journal of Urbanism: International Research on Placemaking and Urban Sustainability*, 1–27.

[doi.org/10.1080/17549175.2025.2507318](https://doi.org/10.1080/17549175.2025.2507318). (Published 25th May 2025)

**Bala, A., Justin, J., & Menon, N.** (2024). “Towards Acknowledgement and Accreditation of Digital Labour in Digital Humanities: A Case Study from Emerging Indian Digital Humanities Projects.” *Digital Studies/Le champ numérique* 14(1): 1–34. [doi.org/10.16995/dscn.9952](https://doi.org/10.16995/dscn.9952).

(Published 15th May 2024)

**Apsara Bala, Nirmala Menon,** Exploring Digital Humanities in India Pedagogies Practices and Institutional Possibilities. Maya Dodd and Nidhi Kalra (eds), *Digital Scholarship in the Humanities*, Volume 39, Issue 1, April 2024, Pages 446–447, [doi.org/10.1093/llc/fqad070](https://doi.org/10.1093/llc/fqad070). (Published 13<sup>th</sup> October 2023).

### Papers Under Review

**Bala, A., & Menon, N.** “Tracing Domestic Architecture: An Interplay of Public-Private Relationships in the Domestic Worlds of Delhi”. *Home Cultures: The Journal of Architecture, Design and Domestic Space*, Taylor and Francis.

**Bala, A., & Menon, N.** “Changing Street Patterns, Market Aesthetics, and Accessibility - Analysis of Public Space in Indian Context”. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, Routledge, Taylor and Francis.

## **Achievements**

Presented Poster titled “Spatial Denial and Displacement:

Exploring the Literary Lineage of Protest Sites (Public Spaces)” at Research and Industrial Conclave at IIT Indore (20th - 22nd January 2023) and secured the First Position at Poster Presentation in the ‘other category’.

Delivered a Talk (virtually) as a Guest Speaker at the ADHO SIG

DH Wo-Gem Symposium on “Feminist Interventions: Digital Solidarity and Amplification of Shaheen Bagh Protests” (20h Nov 2024).

Served as a Resource Person for an Institute-Level Teaching

Assistant Orientation Program (TAOP), organised by the Centre for Pedagogy and Curricular Excellence (CPCE) at IIT Indore (9<sup>th</sup> March 2026).

## **Presentations at National and International Conferences**

Presented Paper (Virtual) titled – “Digital Labour in the Field of

Digital Humanities in India – An Enquiry” by Apsara Bala<sup>1</sup> and Jyothi Justin<sup>2</sup> at the Dharthi 2022 Conference on 24 Feb 2022 as part of the panel “Digital Labour and Data Justice in Indian Academia” on the conference theme The Digital Divides: Discontents, Debates and Discussions, 21st -25th Feb 2022.

Presented Poster (Virtual) titled - “Spatial Denial and

Displacement: Exploring the Literary Lineage of Protest Sites” at The 4th Spatial Humanities 2022 Conference held by Ghent Centre for Digital Humanities organised by Ghent Centre for Digital Humanities, Quetelet Center for Quantitative Historical Research and Antwerp Cultural Heritage Sciences in collaboration with the Lancaster

University Digital Humanities Centre and Digital Humanities Lab, Universidade NOVA de Lisboa, 7th - 9th September 2022.

Presented Paper titled “Spatial Denial and Displacement: Exploring the Literary Lineage of Protest Sites (Public Spaces)” at the SHSS Research Symposium 2023, organised by IIT Indore, India, on January 7, 2023. Promoted to present a poster under the same title at the Research and Industrial Conclave at IIT Indore (20th - 22nd January 2023) and have secured the First Position at Poster Presentation in the 'other category'.

Presented paper titled – “Functional Zoning and Habitat Fragmentation to Maintain Urban Organisation: Tracing Colonial Architecture Through Literature in the City of Delhi” by Apsara Bala<sup>1</sup> and Nirmala Menon<sup>2</sup> at ICSSR 4th Young Graduate Meet 2024, organised by IIT Mandi, Himachal Pradesh.

Presented paper titled - “Will Teachers See a Future? Artificial Intelligence and the Anxiety Among Educators in the Country” at the International Conference on “Artificial Intelligence, Educational Communication, and Media Transformations, organised by the Consortium for Educational Communications (CEC), New Delhi, in collaboration with the Educational Multimedia Research Centre (EMRC-EFLU), and the Department of Communication at English and Foreign Language University (EFLU), Hyderabad (28th - 30th Nov, 2024).

Presented paper titled - “Analogue to Minimal Computing: A First-Generation DH Scholar Exploring Literary Lineage and Spatial Denial of Protest Sites in Delhi” at DHARTHI (Digital Humanities Alliance for Research and Teaching Innovations) Conference 2024, organised by IIT Jodhpur (10th-13th Dec 2024).



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>LIST OF FIGURES</i> .....	<i>xxxvii</i>
<i>LIST OF MAPS AND SKETCHES</i> .....	<i>xxxix</i>
<b><i>Chapter 1: Public Spaces and City Literature – An Introduction</i></b> .....	<b><i>1</i></b>
1.1 Public Space and the Connection with the City.....	3
1.2 Public Space in Literature.....	5
1.3 Public Spaces in Delhi Literature .....	7
1.4 Thesis Aims and Objectives.....	10
1.5 Theoretical Framework of the Study .....	14
1.6 Interdisciplinary Methods and Methodology.....	17
1.7 Overview of Thesis Chapters.....	20
1.7.1 Chapter 1 .....	21
1.7.2 Chapter 2.....	22
1.7.3 Chapter 3.....	24
1.7.4 Chapter 4.....	26
1.7.5 Chapter 5.....	28
1.8 The Role of the Digital Humanities Field in This Thesis .....	28
<b><i>Chapter 2: Spatial Denial and Displacement - Exploring Literary Lineage of Protest Sites in Delhi</i></b> .....	<b><i>31</i></b>
2.1 Introduction.....	31
2.2 Chapter Aims, Objectives, and Methodology .....	33
2.3 Space and Protest Interrelationship.....	34
2.4 Description of Literary Texts .....	40
2.5 Protest Sites as Public Spaces.....	44
2.6 Designation and Creation.....	50

2.7 Spatial Denial and Displacement .....	55
2.8 Real and Privatised Public Spaces .....	63
2.9 Mapping the Displacement .....	65
2.10 Challenges of a DH Scholar.....	67
2.11 Maps and Texts in Analysing Spatiality and Temporality of Public Spaces .....	69
2.12 Conclusion .....	71

**Chapter 3: Changing Street Patterns, Market Aesthetics, and**

**Accessibility - Analysis of Public Space in Indian Context .....** 73

3.1 Introduction.....	73
3.2 Historical Evolution of Public Spaces in India .....	75
3.3 Chapter Aims, Objectives, and Methodology .....	78
3.4 Urban Architecture and Its Relationship with Social Order .....	82
3.5 Delhi Through a Literary Lens .....	84
3.6 Historic Transformation of Structures and Forms of Streets Through Literature .....	88
3.7 Street Pattern in Cartographic Records and Through the Lens of Urban Sketching.....	94
3.8 Changing Aesthetics of Markets with the Evolution of the City	99
3.9 Transformation of Markets in Cartographic Records and Through the Lens of Urban Sketching.....	103
3.10 Street-trading – An Intersection of Two Public Spaces .....	107
3.11 Master Plans – Changing Materiality of These Public Spaces in the Future .....	112
3.12 Conclusion .....	116

***Chapter 4: Tracing Domestic Architecture - An Interplay of Public-  
Private Relationship in the Domestic Worlds of Delhi .....*** 119

4.1 Introduction.....	119
4.2 Methods and Methodology .....	122
4.3 The Historical Relationship Between Public and Private Spaces in India .....	124
4.4 Rise of Gendered Domestic Spaces and the Shades of Change .....	128
4.5 Description of Literary Works .....	133
4.6 ‘Zenana’, ‘Harem’, ‘Kotha’ Restricted Access and Limited Possibilities for Women – An analysis of Ali’s <i>Twilight in Delhi</i> and Dalrymple’s <i>City of Djinns</i> .....	136
4.7 Domestic Layout of Colonial Bungalows and Loss of Tradition in the Postcolonial Period: An Analysis of Dalrymple’s <i>City of Djinns</i> .....	146
4.8 Spatial Confinement and Gendered Segregation in the Modern Period .....	151
4.9 Rethinking Public Accessibility Through Private Space .....	158
4.10 Conclusion .....	160

**Chapter 5: Reflecting Public Space Concerns in Creative Writings  
and Conclusion .....** 163

5.1 Introduction.....	163
5.2 Chapter Summaries.....	163
5.3 Achieving Thesis Objectives through Different Chapters .....	166
5.4 Juxtaposition of Narrative and Visualisation .....	168
5.5 Chapter-wise Conclusion .....	175
5.5.1 Conclusion of the Analysis of Spatial Denial and Displacement of Public Spaces.....	175
5.5.2 Conclusion on the Reimagining City Design Considering the Various Patterns and Aesthetics of Public Spaces.....	177

5.5.3 Conclusion on Feminist Architectural Critique of the Evolution of Domestic Spaces .....	178
5.5.4 Conclusion on Creative Storytelling Regarding Concerns in Public Spaces .....	180
5.6 Thesis Conclusion .....	180
5.7 Limitations of Our Thesis .....	181
5.8 Future Possibilities.....	183
5.9 Creative writings and Digital Storytelling .....	184
<i>Annexure A-D</i> .....	189
<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	197

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 – Timeline of the literary texts from Delhi literature taken for analysis in the study .....	10
Figure 2 – Flow Chart on Thesis Methods and Methodology .....	20
Figure 3 – Thesis Flow Chart.....	21
Figure 4 – Flow Chart on the Interrelationship of 3 Ps.....	38
Figure 5 – Flow chart of the protest sites discussed in this study.....	40
Figure 6 – Showing the designation, displacement, and creation of public spaces as protest sites on the cityscape of Delhi.....	67
Figure 7 – A close look at the central space of the city showing the designation and creation of space .....	67
Figure 8 – The rising number of Created Spaces for Protest with the growing designations and displacement of protest sites .....	69
Figure 9 – Narrative of denial through the handmade maps.....	71
Figure 10 – Flow chart on the analysis of the 2 <sup>nd</sup> chapter .....	78
Figure 11 – Flow Chart on the Chapter’s Methodology .....	81
Figure 12 – Analysis of the evolution of public spaces through different time periods .....	81
Figure 13 – Interactive Web map created on the streets observed during the field visit .....	97
Figure 14 – Picture of Mehruli Bazaar taken from Usha Dayal Kumar’s Phool Waalon ki Sair (p. 134).....	101
Figure 15 – Different types of marketplaces visited during field visits .....	105
Figure 16 – Scene from Mehruli Bazaar ‘Hukkawala’ taken from Usha Dayal Kumar’s Phool Waalon ki Sair (p. 119).....	109
Figure 17 – Places for street-trading visited during the field visit.....	110

Figure 18 – Delhi Master Plan 2041 Georeferenced for analysis to see the city’s foreseeable changes .....	113
Figure 19 – Urdu Bazaar marked as a Residential area in the Delhi Master Plan 2041 .....	113
Figure 20 – Master Plan 2001 Georeferenced for Analysis.....	114
Figure 21 – Master Plan 2021 Georeferenced for Analysis.....	114
Figure 22 – The British-built Connaught Place area remains the same through different Master Plans.....	115
Figure 23 – Flow chart on the changes in domestic architecture through different periods .....	133
Figure 24 – A flow chart of the literary texts showcasing domestic architecture of different periods.....	136
Figure 25 – Handmade maps on spatial denial placed alongside the literary descriptions.....	170
Figure 26 – Urban sketches depicting street patterns, market aesthetics, and subversions in street trading throughout various city areas .....	172
Figure 27 – Architectural layouts and sketches derived from architectural narratives illustrate the evolution of domestic architecture across different historical periods .....	174
Figure 28 – Map on Visited Streets created on QGIS.....	194
Figure 29 – Map on Visited Marketplaces created on QGIS .....	195

## LIST OF MAPS AND SKETCHES

Handmade Map 1 – Showing the distance of the Red Fort from the Rajpath Area (earlier Viceroy’s House at the Raisina Hill Area).....	52
Handmade Map 2 – Formerly known as ‘Kingsway’, becoming Rajpath, and the Boat Club, along with the Rajpath welcomes people’s access and expression of dissent .....	57
Handmade Map 3 – The relocation of the protestors from Rajpath to Jantar Mantar in 1993 .....	59
Handmade Map 4 – Further proposal for the displacement of the protestors from Jantar Mantar to Ramleela Maidan by NGT in 2017 .	60
Handmade Map 5 – Creation of space at Shaheen Bagh (2019-20) ....	62
Handmade Map 6 – Due to the denial and displacement, the borders of the Capital become protest sites with the Farmers’ Protests (2020-21) .....	63
Urban Sketch 1 – Street aesthetic of Urdu Bazaar Road in Old Delhi	98
Urban Sketch 2 – Street pattern of Teen Murti Marg in New Delhi ....	98
Urban Sketch 3 – Old Delhi Bazaar Matia Mahal .....	106
Urban Sketch 4 – Market aesthetic of New Delhi Connaught Place .	106
Urban Sketch 5 – Street trading at Old Delhi Shyam Prasad Marg...	111
Urban Sketch 6 – Street trading at New Delhi Bhagwan Das Road..	111
Architectural Sketch 1 – Architectural layout of Mir Nihal’s haveli’s zenana separated from mardana through the vestibule .....	139
Architectural Sketch 2 – Zenana of Mir Nihal’s House imagined through the literary descriptions .....	140

Architectural Sketch 3 – Architectural layout of Kotha imagined based on literary description .....	142
Architectural Sketch 4 – Mushtari Bai’s kotha imagined from the literary descriptions in Ali’s Novel .....	143
Architectural Sketch 5 – Architectural layout of Harem from Dalrymple’s work.....	145
Architectural Sketch 6 – Harem of Mansions imagined from Dalrymple’s literary descriptions.....	146
Architectural Sketch 7 – Architectural layout of Bungalows from colonial Delhi.....	148
Architectural Sketch 8 – Bungalows from colonial Delhi taken from Dalrymple’s literary descriptions.....	149
Architectural Sketch 9 – Architectural Layout of Banwari Lal’s house in the first half of the novel.....	152
Architectural Sketch 10 – Banwari Lal’s house in the first half of the novel is imagined from literary descriptions .....	152
Architectural Sketch 11 – Architectural Layout of Banwari Lal’s house after reconstruction .....	155
Architectural Sketch 12 – Architectural Sketch of Banwari Lal’s house, reconstructed in the second half of the novel, marks a shift in domestic architecture.....	156





## **Chapter – 1**

### **Public Spaces and City Literature – An Introduction**

In discussing public space, the terms ‘public’ and ‘space’ are foundational to the conversation. The way people interact (through their activities, identities, attitudes, tolerance, and acceptance) and the nature of the space itself (including material structure, government policies, and exclusionary designs) significantly contribute to creating the public sphere and shaping urban public experiences. The ongoing debate surrounding public spaces, therefore, revolves around several key issues: their historical existence, the meaning attributed to them (with traditional theories suggesting that public spaces are merely venues for politics), the varying expectations from different communities regarding how they perceive these spaces, the influence of material structures on the creation of the public sphere, and the contentious nature of the term ‘public,’ especially given the evidence of various forms of exclusion. Questions arising in this area highlight the compromises, conflicts, and contestations that characterise public space’s inherently ambiguous and fluid nature. Although there are various theories and histories (Arendt 1958; Lefevre 1991; Sennett 1992; Mitchell 1995, 2003) regarding public space and accessibility, our exploration revealed a significant gap in the thorough analysis and reimagining of public spaces within the Indian context. Consequently, this thesis analyses the transformation of public spaces through an architectural lens in urban literature and applies the literary urban studies (Daniel and Queiroz 2013; Gurr 2021; Jason 2022) framework in the analysis. Here, we are more focused on critiquing the aspects of growing privatisation efforts (Boycko 1996) and the top-down approach in urban planning, which displays the postcolonial urbanism (Kalyan 2017; Grubbauer 2019; Myers 2020) aspect of our thesis.

Public spaces should be accessible to everyone, promoting safety and inclusivity (Alexander, 1977). However, increasing privatisation and gentrification limit access for marginalised communities (Mitchell,

2003; Smith, 2003), while surveillance can hinder free movement (Davis, 1990). Although regulations are necessary for management, they can obscure exclusionary practices and lead to conflict. Privatisation creates barriers that result in gated communities and parks that exclude lower-income groups (Boycko, 1996; Low and Smith, 2006) and displace original residents (Rubin, 2010). Designs often prioritise male preferences, making public spaces unsafe for women and non-binary individuals (Phadke et al., 2011). The threat of harassment further discourages women from participating in public life (Gill, 1990). Increased surveillance disproportionately affects marginalised groups, leading to further exclusion (Foucault, 1977). Thus, achieving truly inclusive public spaces requires significant reforms in design, management, and social policies. Urban planners must create environments that serve all city residents (Ali, 2015; Carr, 1992). Public space is multifaceted and serves as a platform for interaction and the exercise of rights. The discourse, therefore, calls for reimagining these areas to enhance inclusivity and promote social justice, ensuring they meet the diverse needs of all individuals.

Jürgen Habermas (1991) and Jean-Paul Sartre (1993) emphasise the importance of public spaces in exercising social skills and addressing societal differences. Henri Lefebvre advocates for “the right to the city,” viewing public spaces as shared resources, while David Harvey and Michel Foucault discuss their roles in collective action and control. Here, in contrast to physical public spaces, the public sphere serves as a metaphorical or virtual arena where public opinion can be actively shaped and moulded. This dynamic environment fosters constructive discourse and interaction, enabling the development and refinement of diverse viewpoints within society. Such engagement is essential for fostering a more inclusive and informed public dialogue. Public spaces, in this way, are intended to be inclusive and accessible to all individuals; however, they often reveal underlying patterns of exclusion that highlight the systemic inequalities prevalent in society. Still, public spaces are crucial for urban life, acting as centres for social interaction, political expression, and cultural activities. They shape communities and

support local economies while contributing to environmental sustainability. However, maintaining the balance between their social and political functions is often challenging. Capitalist forces tend to prioritise privatised public spaces over genuine community engagement, distracting from social issues. As challenges like inequality and neglect persist, these spaces risk becoming mere illusions of vibrant urban life.

Therefore, we can continue this discourse by incorporating contemporary perspectives by reorienting the fundamental issues. Public space is no longer just an academic topic confined to scholarly discussion; it is now a central theme in public discourse that affects numerous societal aspects (Don Mitchell, p. 127). With different ‘scales and levels of understanding’ (Relph 1976; Smith and Low 2006) of public space, this field raises multiple concerns across various disciplines. This study thus, begins with a comprehensive literature review that examines significant aspects of public spaces in connection with the city and the literature. It then maps the concept of public space within the Indian context, illustrating its conceptualisation and evolution throughout different periods in the country’s history. This thesis therefore, as a whole, undertakes an exploration of public spaces, connecting them with the city literature. It charts the transformation of these dynamic areas within the bustling metropolis of Delhi, a city that embodies the essence of the nation’s political philosophy.

### **1.1 Public Space and the Connection with the City**

Public spaces play a crucial role in society and bear the city’s identity. By establishing a connection between public space and the city, Henri Lefebvre (1991) mentions in his writings the need for a city as one of the social needs of humans, which satisfies those needs that cannot be met by ‘commercial and cultural infrastructures’ (Lefebvre, p. 147). Lefebvre’s ideas understand the ‘need of the city and urban life’ (Lefebvre p. 148) and propose a move away from old structures, forms, and relations to form a new humanism, where a new city needs to be formed. Identity works in both directions between the city and its residents,

where the city identifies the residents, and the residents identify the city. Finally, by right to the city, Lefevre means a city which would have 'qualified spaces', where both art and science would be adopted in city building, and both theoretical and practical aspects would co-exist, representing 'maximum of utopianism...unite with the optimum of realism' (Lefevre p. 157). Therefore, the importance of vibrant public spaces within urban environments is undeniable (Jacobs 1961). In an urban set-up, mixed-use developments are advocated, where residential, commercial, and recreational areas coexist harmoniously. Jacobs broadened the definition of a healthy public space to include shopkeepers and street vendors, challenging the Eurocentric models that typically categorise areas by class. This advocacy focused on designing shorter city blocks and more complex street layouts to enhance walkability and encourage meaningful interactions among pedestrians. This approach, thus, sought to create additional intersections and pathways, promoting exploration and a diverse range of activities within the urban landscape. Furthermore, the vital role of social networks and community connections is emphasised in sustaining the vibrancy of public spaces. A robust social capital, characterised by strong ties and mutual support among neighbours, is essential for ensuring the safety and dynamism of urban areas. It is when residents are engaged and closely bonded within their communities, public spaces flourish, fostering a sense of vitality and cohesion throughout the city. Pedestrian activities also play a vital role in fostering vibrant public spaces (Gehl 2010; Lynch 1996). Deepening the connection between public spaces and the urban environment, these spaces enable individuals to construct mental images of the city. The city's architecture is instrumental in this process, as it reflects the collective history and culture of the area (Rossi, 1982).

In this way, while a range of works emphasises the strong interrelationship between the two, some writings deal with its decline and, thus, consequent effects on the city's identity. Public spaces are integral to the fabric of a city as they significantly contribute to defining its character and enhancing its connectivity. These areas serve as melting

pots where a city's social, cultural, and economic aspects converge, providing a vibrant platform for diverse interactions and the pulsating essence of urban life. Whether it is the tranquillity of parks, the bustling energy of plazas, the rhythmic flow of streets, or the dynamic atmosphere of squares, each plays a pivotal role in facilitating and nurturing social interactions, fostering a profound sense of community and inclusion. A well-designed public space is thoughtfully crafted to be inclusive and accessible to all, irrespective of socio-economic status, physical ability, or background, ensuring that everyone can actively participate in and benefit from the richness of urban life. If designed appropriately, these spaces can serve as physical connectors, boost economic activities, and determine environmental functions. Thus, while playing as an independent variable in such scenarios, it can also become dependent on continuous urbanisation and technological interventions.

## **1.2 Public Space in Literature**

This inherent connection between public spaces and urban environment marks them integral to city literature too, providing a rich tapestry to explore the nuances of urban life and wrapping inside it the intricacies of social life, power dynamics, and identities. Within literary works, cities and their public spaces are vividly depicted as dynamic characters, serving as poignant reflections of their inhabitants' complexities, tassels, and inclinations. The literary texts seep into the social, cultural, and political aspects of the space. This interrelationship and interdependency are widely recognised as having a favourable theoretical background. Literature represents what architecture constructs physically. The interplay between literature, space, and architecture is often critiqued (Lefevre 1974). It examines how literature creates imagined spaces, mirroring the process of physical space creation by architects. Lefebvre emphatically emphasises that the notion of 'space' is produced socially and remains intertwined with numerous other abstract structures.

Michel Foucault's concept of 'heterotopias' (1967) weaves together the realms of architecture and literature through spaces that embody otherness or unconventionality. In literature, heterotopias are vividly depicted as places that boldly defy conventional spatialities. These spaces serve as powerful symbols, capturing the profound tension between order and chaos in both disciplines. Even the urban architecture of skyscrapers and bridges shapes the perceptions of modernity that hinder social engagements, contributing to the alienation of individuals (Simmel 2011). This influence is frequently reflected in literary works that explore the complex themes of modernism and existentialism.

In his 1962 work *The Open Work*, Umberto Eco draws a compelling comparison between literature and architecture, proposing that both can be considered 'open works' due to the active involvement of the reader or viewer in interpreting the processes. Eco delves into the relationship between a novel's structure and a building's design, asserting that both serve as guiding forces that shape the users' navigation and comprehension of the respective space – "Here again, literature would express our relationship to the object of our knowledge, and our concern with the form we have given the world, or the form we have failed to give it, and would try to provide our imagination with schemes without which we might not be able to understand a large part of our technical and scientific activity—which would then really become alien to us, and assume control over our lives" (p. 157).

The shortcomings of modern urban planning are also critiqued while eloquently celebrating the tapestry of city life (Jacob 1961). Literature reflects the spatial dynamics and rhythms of real urban environments through vivid prose. Jacobs' profound insights into the organic nature of cities have indelibly shaped the landscape of urban planning and the vivid portrayals of cities in literature. "In architecture as in literature and the drama, it is the richness of human variation that gives vitality and colour to the human setting..." (p. 229). Again, Italo Calvino's *Imagined Cities* portray the two-faced characters of cities that are not merely physical spaces but serve as a backdrop for our imagination and memories within the space (Calvino 1974). In the

novel, the reader gets challenged by the opposition and relationship between the real and perceived spaces. In *Invisible Cities*, Calvino's deliberate structure emulates the architecture of a bustling metropolis. The novel's layout, comprised of succinct vignettes, effectively captures the feeling of meandering through a city, transitioning seamlessly from one space to another.

In this way, the multifaceted connection between architecture and literature is deeply rooted in their mutual preoccupation with space and the human experience. Both disciplines explore how physical spaces influence the lives of individuals and communities, while also serving as potent symbols for broader social and cultural concerns. Through diverse perspectives and methodologies, literature offers valuable insights into the understanding of architecture. Conversely, architecture provides a rich lens through which to interpret and appreciate literature.

### **1.3 Public Spaces in Delhi Literature**

The city of Delhi serves as the focal point of this thesis. It is apparent that the portrayal of public spaces in Delhi literature is intricately linked to the city's historical narratives, encompassing both its colonial past and postcolonial present, along with its urban layout and social intricacies. Within the literary context, Delhi's streets, markets, other open spaces, and monuments play a pivotal role as they become focal points for exploring social, political, and cultural identities. Furthermore, authors employ these spaces to delve into the complex interplay between traditional structures and modern transformations, the undeniable effects of colonialism, and the experiences of diverse populations in Delhi. A few public spaces in Delhi, for example, the Raisina Hill area, Chandni Chowk, Connaught Place, and other parts of the old city, serve as symbolic spaces in Delhi literature reflecting the city's changing power structures, from the authority of Mughals to the Raj of British colonials to the government of modern India. These places often connote double-edged emblems of both resistance and assimilation.

In Khushwant Singh's *Delhi: A Novel* (1990), the author vividly portrays how the city's public spaces during the Partition transformed into arenas of violence, mass exodus, and upheaval. Throughout the narrative, the reader journeys through different historical periods, where public spaces serve as poignant symbols of the city's tumultuous political past. Similarly, in Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017), the public space of Jantar Mantar emerges as a powerful backdrop for protests, effectively illustrating the fusion of public space and contemporary political activism in India. In her depiction of Jantar Mantar, Roy offers a critique of the diminishing spaces for dissent in modern India. By shedding light on this particular site, she underscores the palpable tension between the state's unchecked power and its citizens' fundamental civil liberties. The encroachment on traditionally revered spaces, such as Jantar Mantar, which have long been regarded as bastions of free expression, serves as a powerful metaphor for the alarming rise of authoritarianism. "It was Jantar Mantar again, where the endless wars played out, with placards and slogans that said everything and nothing." (Roy 2017). In Delhi literature, public spaces are often depicted as locations where the influence of colonial power structures persists into the postcolonial era. This portrayal highlights the intricate interplay between acts of 'resistance' (Roy 2003) and assimilation processes within these spaces.

In Ahmed Ali's *Twilight in Delhi* (1940), the novel weaves a tale of Delhi amidst the decline of the majestic Mughal Empire and the rise of British colonial power. The narrative artfully explores the city's physical, social, and cultural metamorphoses under colonial rule, as well as how the city's space and architecture transform in response to the colonial presence. The novel also portrays the impact of the colonial administration on the urban fabric of Delhi. It details the imposition of new forms of governance and control, which led to the gradual replacement of traditional Mughal-era architecture and city planning with a Eurocentric mindset and infrastructure accordingly. This transformation served as a stark symbol of the colonial power's

supremacy over the native structures, disturbing the city's historical continuity and cutting its inhabitants' ties to their rich cultural past.

As the city faces rapid urbanisation, literary works observe the transformation and subsequent decay of older traditional structures taken over by modern urban planning, fulfilling the requirement of an equally modern and massive population. Anita Desai's *In Custody* (1984) offers insight into the impact of modern architecture and skyrocketing urbanisation on the traditional way of life in Delhi, shedding light on the transformation of spaces of cultural exchange and developing social bonding into privatised consumption-ruled areas. Similarly, Rana Dasgupta's *Capital: The Eruption of Delhi* (2014) provides an in-depth analysis of postcolonial urbanism by focusing on contemporary Delhi. It looks into the changes the city has undergone as a result of liberalisation, globalisation, and, nevertheless, colonialism. Dasgupta's work examines how the colonial legacy continues to influence and shape the multivarious fabric of the postcolonial city.

Literary works also consider the availability and accessibility of public spaces by diverse populations sharing a city space. In Manju Kapur's novel *Home* (2006), the exploration of gender dynamics and the limited access to public space is portrayed through the constraints imposed on female characters within the patriarchal society of Delhi. The narrative delves into the lives of a middle-class family, illustrating how societal expectations pose formidable barriers that regulate and constrict women's mobility and active participation in public spaces. "What are you doing outside in the sun? Who will marry you if you are so dark? Go inside, don't stand on the street like that." (Kapur 2006). Here, the protagonist Nisha's freedom to navigate public spaces is constrained by the weight of societal judgments on her physical appearance and prospects for marriage in the future, vividly exemplifying the societal restrictions that confine women to the private sphere.

Therefore, Delhi's literature can be examined from multiple architectural perspectives, allowing us to explore its past, analyse its present, and envision its future. Our thesis will examine these aspects in

the subsequent chapters, highlighting the crucial role that literary texts play in this analysis. As a result, this thesis has carefully selected a diverse array of literary texts, detailed in Figure 1, to explore the various perspectives on public space. Each chapter will delve into these texts, examining how they reflect and critique the complexities of public spaces, societal interactions, and cultural significance. Through the analysis, the aim is to highlight the varied ways in which public space is understood and represented in literature.

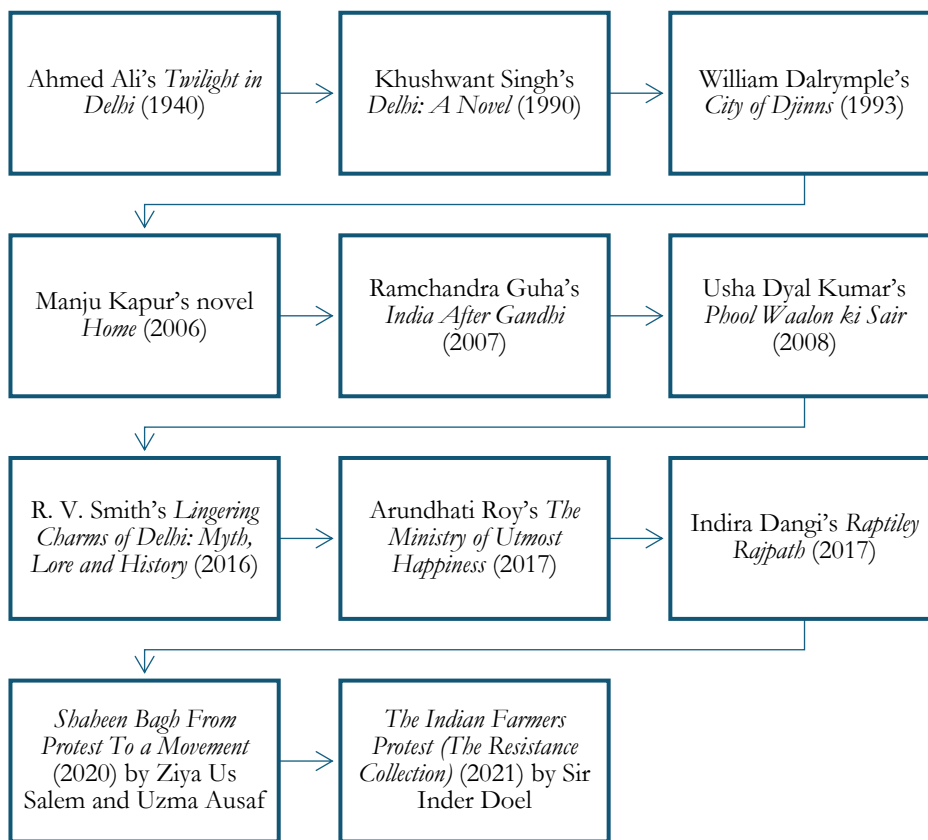


Figure 1 – Timeline of the literary texts from Delhi literature taken for analysis in the study

#### 1.4 Thesis Aims and Objectives

After conducting this extensive literature review, we have recognised the crucial role of accessible public spaces and their

significance in the social, economic, and political dimensions of society. However, within the context of our country, a notable gap exists in research dedicated to examining the evolution of public spaces and reimagining architecture in the Indian setting. This gap led us to ask several research questions: Can we conduct a thorough analysis of public spaces through literature, placing them in their historical contexts to address issues of accessibility? And following the methodology of literary analysis, can we assess their current issues and map their future transformations? In this study of historical contexts, we hypothesise that the colonial mindset and the insufficient consideration of local context in urban design practices have significantly contributed to the decline and spatial marginalisation of public spaces in the city of Delhi. Here, we consider Delhi Literature in exploring the architectural perspectives of the city's public spaces. In this way, we incorporate literary analysis into critiquing and rethinking the urban planning of the city.

Therefore, the thesis aims to adopt an interdisciplinary approach by integrating literature, public space, and architectural discussions to uncover various insights into their intersections. The discussion highlights the ongoing spatial denial of protest sites in public spaces, stemming from a colonial mindset that persists even after independence. Our work also aims to analyse how spaces in urban areas are designated and created within this context. We will explore the complex layers of accessibility between the real public spaces and those that are increasingly privatised, a trend that has emerged alongside the rise of capitalism, neoliberalism, and consumer culture in major cities.

In this regard, we aim to explore the interrelationship among the variables of public space, protest, and the people who inhabit these spaces. At a later stage, a specific understanding of the key types of public spaces in the universe of our study would aim to surface the history of evolution and the transformation of architecture through different periods. Here, our work navigating through the city's past, present, and future highlights postcolonial urbanism (Roy 2003), which reveals that the city space is undergoing change. We observe the rapid decline and near decay of traditional structures, creating more room for

modern Eurocentric architecture and urban planning. Therefore, to ensure the availability, accessibility, and reachability of public spaces, which are the ultimate objectives of our study, our efforts will also engage with the discussion of private spaces. These spaces exist in a complex interdependency and relationship with public spaces. At this stage, our thesis examines the transformation of domestic architecture in Delhi over various time periods, with a focus on gendered spaces. We will investigate how the architecture of domestic spaces in the city reflects changing gender roles, noting an increasing trend toward neo-traditionalism that reemphasises women’s roles within the private space of the home (Phadke, 2011).

In consideration of the above discussion, the chapter-wise aims and objectives of our thesis are as follows –

1. The thesis examines the strong interrelationship between architecture and literature, conducting an architectural literary analysis of public spaces while applying the theoretical framework of literary urban studies.
2. It analyses the spatial denial of protest sites (public spaces) following the colonial attitude that continues even after independence. In doing so, it visualises the historical displacement and transformation of accessibility, shifting from the Rajpath, a central space, to the farmers’ protests at the city’s periphery.
I. The work also analyses the historical interplay of designation and creation in the city space of Delhi and explores the complex layers of accessibility between real and privatised public spaces.
II. It aims to showcase an interrelationship of 3 Ps (public space, protest, and public) and the necessity of 2 Vs (visibility and vicinity) in protest.
3. The thesis seeks to reveal new insights into the city’s public spaces, especially the streets and marketplaces, by analysing

<p>their literary depictions and understanding their evolving patterns and architecture historically.</p>
<p>I. The thesis, navigating through the city’s past, present, and future, critiques the top-down approach in city planning and highlights the postcolonial urbanism that the city space is going through.</p>
<p>II. Following visual ethnography, through urban sketching it captures the different patterns, aesthetics, and subversion in public spaces throughout various parts of Delhi.</p>
<p>III. It explores the feasibility and sustainability of master plan predictions, explicitly focusing on public spaces. It emphasises the importance of fostering coexistence and reimagining public spaces within the Indian context.</p>
<p>4. The thesis efforts aim to engage the discussion of private spaces that exist in a binary yet complex interdependency and interrelationship with public spaces.</p>
<p>I. It examines the transformation of domestic architecture in Delhi over different time periods, highlighting gendered spaces.</p>
<p>II. The thesis thus foregrounds a feminist critique of the public/private dichotomy within the domestic environment and presents a feminist architectural perspective in literature.</p>
<p>III. This analysis examines the spatial elements through a close reading of the texts and produces narrative-based designs (architectural layouts) of domestic spaces. By following aesthetic morphology and scenario-based design principles, it generates architectural sketches that visualise female spaces across different periods depicted in the texts.</p>

5. This thesis finally presents a step-by-step exploration of various public and private spaces in the city of Delhi, weaving together a narrative of literary descriptions, architectural sketches and maps.

I. Through creative writing and digital storytelling, it establishes a creative platform that addresses accessibility concerns related to public spaces.

### **1.5 Theoretical Framework of the Study**

To fulfil the objectives outlined in this thesis, we have initially adopted the framework of literary urban studies, as proposed by Jason (2022), to conduct a thorough analysis of the representation of cities and urban experiences in literature. This interdisciplinary field arose in conjunction with the ‘spatial turn’ in the humanities, a movement that emphasises the importance of spatiality in understanding cultural texts. By examining literary works that portray urban landscapes, we can uncover the rich and varied spatial identities that cities possess.

Literature transcends the mere portrayal of urban settings; it plays a crucial role in generating meanings and interpretations that shape our understanding of these environments. Engaging with literary texts that reflect urban life allows us to explore the complex emotions, navigational strategies, and challenges faced by individuals in the context of modern urbanity. Both the city and the written word act as arenas of encounter filled with layers of meaning and dynamic interactions.

In this context, literary urban studies examines the mechanisms by which cities shape their own identities and are subsequently represented through literary narratives. Our research aims to highlight the reciprocal influence of literature and urban spaces, with a specific focus on public spaces within Delhi. By examining the diverse public spaces through the lens of literary representations in different chapters, we strive to reimagine these areas in ways that not only enhance their accessibility but also enrich the lived experiences of the people who

interact with them. This exploration seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of how urban environments can be both celebrated and transformed through the power of literature.

In this connection, firstly, the study of spatial history within our research context emphasises how authorities deliberately restrict access to specific protest sites, effectively controlling the spaces where dissent can occur. This intentional exclusion compels protesters to seek out unfamiliar and subaltern public spaces (Fraser 2016) that may not be recognised as traditional venues for demonstration. In these subaltern areas, they perform acts of collective resistance, showcasing their demands and voices where they might otherwise be silenced. As a consequence of this systematic spatial denial, combined with the colonial attitudes of those in power, protesters take it upon themselves to create their own public spaces. Therefore, by employing this theoretical framework of subaltern public spaces, we showcase how these newly established areas of resistance gain significance beyond the officially sanctioned locations, becoming vibrant centres for activism and solidarity. Such spaces are not merely physical locations; they represent a reclaiming of autonomy and identity. By occupying these alternative sites, protesters effectively challenge the visibility and vicinity that authorities rely on to control dissent. The emergence of these unofficial public spaces becomes crucial in the broader context of protest, as they allow for creative expressions of resistance and foster community engagement far removed from the watchful eyes of those in power.

This exploration of the historical evolution of public spaces in Delhi reveals the diverse street patterns and market aesthetics found in different parts of the city. These variations suggest the city's development and expansion over various periods, leading to the rise of two distinct cities within the current landscape. An analysis of the master plans highlights a Eurocentric approach to urban planning, characterised by a top-down model that continues to influence future planning efforts. This approach overlooks local context, aesthetics, and community sentiments, illustrating a post-colonial process of urbanisation (Kalyan

2017; Grubbauer 2019; Myers 2020) still affected by colonial legacies and influences. It's a historically layered process where colonial urban structures, spatial hierarchies, and planning ideologies continue to influence how the post-colonial city functions and is imagined. In this analysis, our thesis proposes a look back at our local contexts within the city for effective and contextual city planning in promoting accessibility and facilitating community interaction.

In this process, this in-depth exploration of the historical evolution of public spaces in Delhi uncovers the varied street layouts as well as the distinct market aesthetics that characterise different neighbourhoods within the city. These differences not only reflect the unique identities of each area but also tell a broader story of the city's development and expansion across various historical periods. This growth has led to the emergence of two distinct urban entities, each shaped by its own unique historical narrative and cultural influences. In doing so, an examination of the city's master plans reveals a predominant Eurocentric approach to urban planning. This approach is marked by a hierarchical, top-down model that often prioritises overarching design principles over the nuanced needs of local communities. Consequently, such planning practices tend to disregard the rich local context, aesthetic values, and the sentiments of the residents who inhabit these spaces. This oversight highlights a post-colonial process of urbanisation (Kalyan 2017; Grubbauer 2019; Myers 2020) that continues to bear the marks of colonial legacies and influences.

The urban landscape of Delhi is thus a tapestry of historical layers, where remnants of colonial urban structures and planning ideologies are intertwined with the contemporary fabric of the city. These enduring influences shape not only how the post-colonial city operates but also how it is envisioned by its inhabitants. In light of these observations, our thesis advocates for a renewed focus on the local contexts of Delhi. By doing so, we aim to inform more effective and contextually relevant city planning that enhances accessibility for all citizens and fosters community interactions, creating vibrant public

spaces that reflect the diversity and dynamism of Delhi's rich cultural heritage.

In our pursuit to improve accessibility in public spaces, we also intend to explore the intricacies of private spaces in the city of Delhi. Analysing the evolution of domestic spaces in India and the gendered aspects of accessibility within these environments leads us to examine domestic architecture from a feminist architectural perspective (Jacob, 1961; Hayden, 1981; Phadke, 2011). It is essential to recognise that architecture operates on a spectrum that is far from neutral; rather, the built environment serves as a mirror that reflects and reinforces societal hierarchies, including gender dynamics. Every design choice, from the layout of a home to the use of materials, conveys messages about who holds power and who gets to inhabit and influence these spaces. A feminist architectural perspective critically examines the longstanding, male-dominated foundations upon which traditional architecture is built. This includes questioning the identities of those who design and construct our spaces, the occupants of these environments, and the experiences of individuals that are either celebrated or obscured within these contexts.

Therefore, by employing this feminist lens, we gain valuable insights that enrich our understanding of not just private spaces but also public ones. This holistic approach in our thesis enables us to reevaluate the historical narratives of the city, address contemporary challenges, and thoughtfully assess potential future transformations to create environments that are inclusive and accessible for everyone.

## **1.6 Interdisciplinary Methods and Methodology**

To refine our methodology, our thesis primarily employs architectural literary analysis and architectural cartography. In examining various public spaces across different chapters, we utilise architectural literary analysis to uncover spatial history and analyse the architectural narratives present in literary works. This literary analysis concurrently examines a range of analogue and digital mapping

methodologies within the context of architectural cartography. Additionally, we incorporate literary works from diverse genres, forms, and languages in our analysis. As a result, our methods adopt a multidisciplinary approach, integrating knowledge and techniques from several fields, including Digital Humanities, Literary Studies, and Urban Studies.

Under analogue mapping methods, we have employed the sensory mapping method in our creation of handmade maps in visualising the spatial denial, and the method of urban sketching was followed to capture the diverse street patterns and market aesthetics in the city of Delhi. A close examination of cartographic records or cartographic analysis from the National Archives of India has allowed us to document the transformation of the city over various decades and the emergence of two distinct cities due to colonial influences in the modern era. Also, as our analysis encompasses both private and public spaces in Delhi, later in the thesis, we selected architectural narratives through careful interpretation of texts. We then explored the spatial elements to create narrative-driven designs (architectural layouts) for these domestic spaces.

Within architectural cartography, we have also employed a range of digital tools and mapping methods to enrich our analysis and effectively visualise the outcomes of our thesis. These tools have become a fundamental aspect of our research methodology. Notably, we have utilised applications such as Google Earth Pro, QGIS, and the MAPinr app throughout our work. The open-source software platform QGIS enabled us to take a comprehensive approach to mapping public spaces in the second chapter of our analysis of protest sites as public spaces. By accumulating both qualitative and quantitative data, we gained a clear and detailed understanding of each public space discussed in this chapter. This facilitated an in-depth analysis and discussion of their characteristics and significance within the community.

In the third chapter of our thesis, we utilised MAPinr, an advanced mobile GIS mapping tool, to dynamically collect, analyse, and visualise spatial data during our field visits. The app's functionality

allowed us to overlay multiple datasets, which facilitated comparative analyses between different layers of information. This feature helped us identify patterns and trends within the urban landscape more effectively. Finally, the georeferencing technique in Google Earth Pro enables us to conduct a comparative analysis of the historical transformations of public spaces alongside proposed future changes outlined in the city's master plans. This approach allows us to visualise the future materiality of the public spaces we are examining.

In our thesis, this transition from analogue methods to using digital tools is followed in different chapters, demonstrating the challenges faced in the research process and signifying a significant aspect in the field of Digital Humanities, offering new opportunities for “accessibility, creativity, and reproducibility” (Chauhan et al., 2023). Therefore, the handmade sketches and, later, the digital mapping reveal the step-by-step learning process of a first-generation DH scholar in the mapping field. The visualisations have been analysed to manifest the transformations, shifting of public spaces, and the growing lack of accessibility.

In conclusion, the thesis also crafts a narrative encompassing literary analysis along with digital and architectural maps and figures developed throughout the process. Again, through digital storytelling, the thesis addresses important concerns regarding public spaces

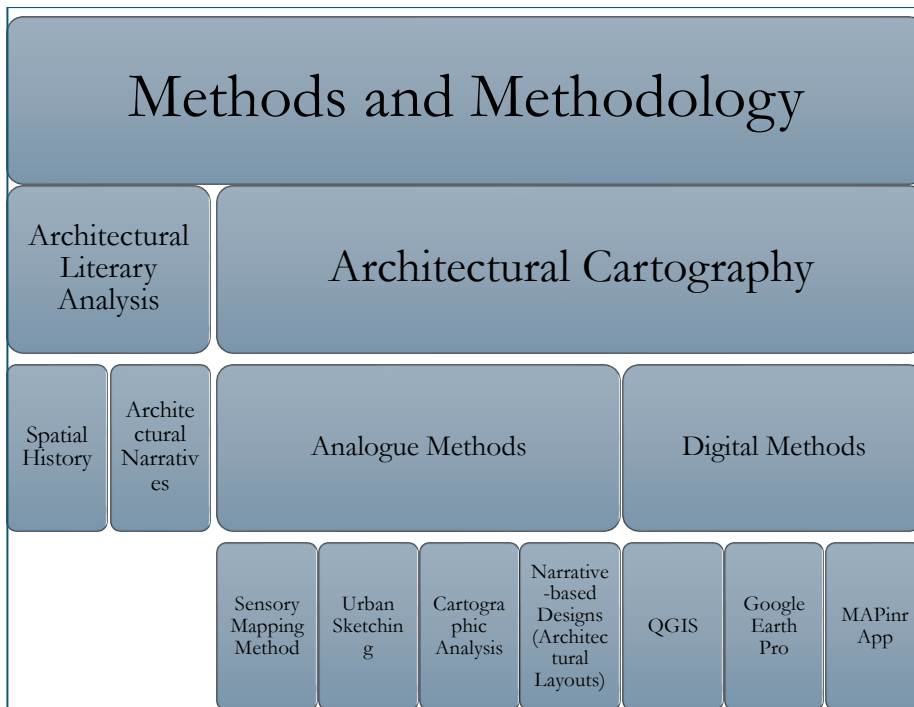


Figure 2 – Flow Chart on Thesis Methods and Methodology

### 1.7 Overview of Thesis Chapters

Following the exploration of various public space characteristics, functions, potentials, and possibilities, we have found this valuable relationship between architecture and literature. However, these three variables of public space, architecture, and literature will be the three crucial pillars of our thesis; the complex contours of this connection will provide various insights through our writing.

Thus, our thesis will have this dedicated flow (Figure 1) in the coming chapters –

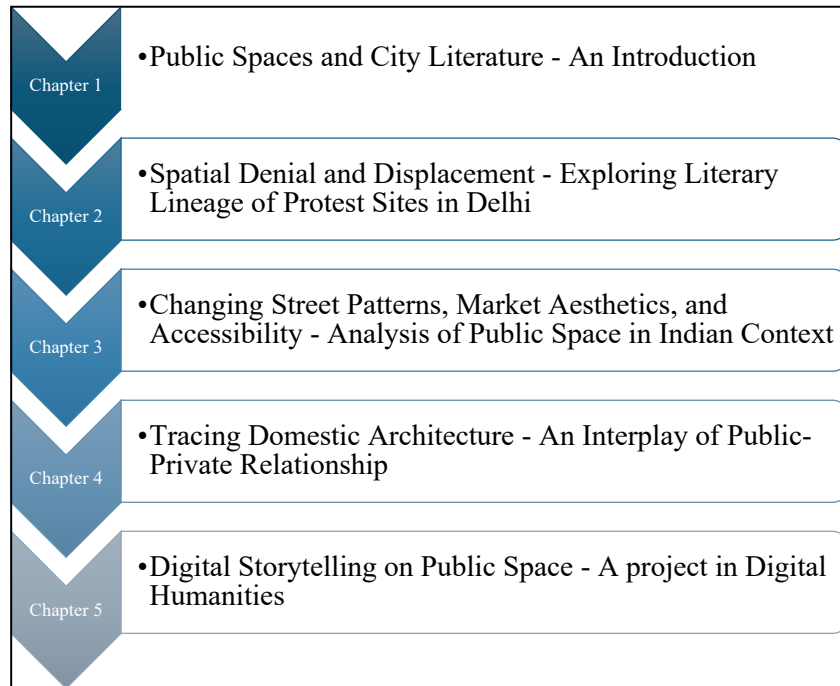


Figure 3 – Thesis Flow Chart

### 1.7.1 Chapter 1: Public Spaces and City Literature - An Introduction

The introductory chapter of our thesis emphasises how public spaces are essential for a city’s identity and social fabric and fundamental to urban life. When designed inclusively, these spaces foster diverse interactions, boost economic activity, and contribute to community cohesion while adapting to ongoing urbanisation and technological changes. A philosophical view of public space underscores it as a shared resource (Lefevre 1991), a site for collective action (Harvey 2012), and vital for exercising individual rights and community interaction (Foucault 1986).

Due to its multifaceted qualities and inherent conflicts, public space has emerged as a fundamental component of literary imagination, serving both as a reflection and a critique of broader societal dynamics. Literary works frequently depict cities and their public spaces as dynamic characters that embody the complexities and desires of their inhabitants. They delve into the social, cultural, and political dimensions

of these spaces, highlighting the strong interrelationship between literature and architecture. In this scenario, since our thesis discusses the city of Delhi, we have conducted a close analysis of literary works related to Delhi literature. Public spaces in Delhi literature are intricately linked to the city's historical narratives, reflecting both its colonial past and postcolonial present, as well as its urban layout. Streets, markets, and monuments serve as focal points for the exploration of social, political, and cultural identities. Authors delve into the relationship between traditional structures and modern transformations, the legacies of colonialism, and the diverse experiences of Delhi's populace.

In this way, this introductory chapter of our thesis presents a flowchart that outlines the progression of our work. It elaborates on the multidisciplinary approach we have taken to explore the intersections of literature, public space, and architecture. This chapter demonstrates how this thesis analyses the colonial attitudes that persist in the spatial denial of protest sites and examines the creation of urban spaces in a step-by-step manner. The chapter also reveals how the thesis investigates accessibility in real versus privatised public spaces influenced by capitalism and consumer culture, highlighting the relationship between public spaces, protest, and communities. Here, a detailed analysis of key public spaces highlights the evolution of architecture, emphasising postcolonial urbanism. At a later stage, focusing on domestic architecture in Old Delhi, this thesis looks at gendered spaces and the trend toward neo-traditionalism that reshapes women's roles in the home.

### **1.7.2 Chapter 2: Spatial Denial and Displacement - Exploring Literary Lineage of Protest Sites in Delhi**

After this introductory chapter, our thesis in this chapter aims to uncover the historical dynamics that have led to the spatial denial of public spaces and protest sites within the city of Delhi. This chapter examines the historical evolution of Delhi, influenced by Mughal rule,

British colonialism, and the struggle for independence. It addresses the issue of limited accessibility to public spaces and critiques the practice of designating specific areas for protests, which often amounts to a denial of meaningful engagement. This practice has contributed to the creation of new public spaces in recent times.

In this chapter, we also illustrate the interconnectedness of public space, protest, and people. It shows how these concepts influence each other and transform individuals within these spaces. Above all, we emphasise the themes of denial, designation, and displacement concerning public spaces as protest sites. Again, the rise of privatised public spaces and the decline of real public ones have heightened the demand for inclusivity. This chapter thus explores the connection between designated protest spaces and the emergence of new ones, while also addressing the persistent denial of access to central spaces. Our focus here lies on the role of public spaces in collective actions and the integration of accessibility throughout this process. It examines the attitudes of those in power regarding access and the initiation of architectural changes.

As a part of the methodology, the chapter employs an architectural literary analysis method to explore various spatial perspectives. It also utilises a simultaneous mapping method to illustrate the historical displacement of accessibility. This highlights the transition from Rajpath, a central area, to the farmers' protests occurring at the outskirts of the city due to spatial denial. In this scenario, this chapter analyses protest spaces in Delhi through a multilingual literary lens. Key works include Indira Dangi's *Raptiley Rajpath*, which follows disillusioned author Virat as he returns home to reflect on his experiences in Delhi; Ramchandra Guha's *India After Gandhi*, which depicts a time in the 1990s when dissent was more accessible before protests were pushed to Jantar Mantar; Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*, that explores marginalized individuals at this symbolic site, emphasizing the divide between protests and power. In relation to Shaheen Bagh, *Shaheen Bagh: From Protest to a Movement* by Ziya Us Salem and Uzma Ausaf discusses reclaiming space for

inclusivity, and Soumyabrata Choudhury's *Now It's Come to Distances* considers how the pandemic influenced protest narratives of isolation. For the Farmers' Protest, *The Indian Farmers' Protest: The Resistance Collection* by Sir Inder Doel compiles poetry from various voices that address themes of inclusion and shared identity among protesters.

In the latter part of this chapter, to demonstrate how denial operates, this chapter uses handmade maps following the sensory mapping method and digital maps using QGIS to illustrate the concepts of denial, designation, and creation. The analysis and data visualisation, therefore, provide a clear understanding of each protest site, enabling an analysis of their characteristics and significance in the community. Additionally, our investigation into the mapping methods employed in this chapter highlights a crucial aspect of our field of study – Digital Humanities. This chapter discusses the challenges digital humanities scholars face when moving from traditional analogue methods to digital techniques. This transition involves adjusting to new tools, methods, and changes in the academic environment.

### **1.7.3 Chapter 3: Changing Street Patterns, Market Aesthetics, and Accessibility - Analysis of Public Space in Indian Context**

The third chapter after this would further narrow down our focus on two fundamental types of public spaces (streets and markets) in the city of Delhi, showcasing their historical evolution, changing patterns, architecture, and aesthetics. The exploration in this chapter is organised to transition from a comprehensive overview of the city of Delhi to a detailed analysis of its vibrant public spaces. This study aims to showcase the intricate patterns of urban transformation and architecture found in the streets and bustling markets, highlighting their essential roles as two key types of public spaces in the city. It investigates the richness of street life and the dynamic interplay between these areas through the phenomenon of 'street trading,' where commerce and social interaction converge in an engaging public realm.

To provide a foundation for this analysis, the chapter examines significant literary works that capture the essence of Delhi, including Khushwant Singh's *Delhi: A Novel*, which paints a vivid picture of the city's historical and cultural complexity; Usha Dyal Kumar's *Phool Waalon ki Sair*, which explores the colourful flower markets and their cultural significance; and R. V. Smith's *Lingering Charms of Delhi: Myth, Lore and History*, which delves into the city's rich myths and historical narratives. In addition to literary analysis, a variety of maps were sourced from diverse locations, such as detailed cartographic records from the National Archives of India and various online resources from the Survey of India and the Delhi Development Authority. These maps serve as vital tools in understanding Delhi's geographical and spatial evolution. Moreover, field visits and visual ethnography enriched the chapter's methodology, allowing for firsthand observation of public spaces. The urban sketching, thus captures the essence of street life and communal interaction in real time. The detailed urban sketching also illustrates the transformations observed in city layouts. These field studies provide a tangible exploration of how literature reflects and influences the dynamic nature of urban environments, highlighting specific changes in street designs, building layouts, and the overall urban experience. Through careful observation and artistic representation, we can gain deeper insights into the intricate relationship between literature and the physical landscape of cities.

The research in this chapter further explores potential transformations that may emerge from the strategic planning efforts detailed in the Master Plans set forth by the Delhi Development Authority (DDA). By taking a holistic approach, the study in this chapter, therefore, systematically traces the evolution of Delhi and its public spaces through three distinct temporal lenses: the past, which encompasses history, architecture, literature, and cartographic records that document the city's development; the present, which focuses on field observations, contemporary literary reflections, and relevant newspaper reports that highlight current urban dynamics; and the future, which anticipates changes through the implementation of ambitious

master plans designed to shape the city's continued growth and revitalisation.

The examination of urban evolution underscores the vital role that public spaces play in city life. These areas, with their varied architectural styles, showcase the fascinating contrasts between historical structures and contemporary designs. This analysis also contemplates the future of these public spaces and their potential transformations. To support this exploration, a thorough evaluation of the city's master plans has been conducted, revealing insights into the planning decisions that have shaped these spaces and their ongoing impact on the community. Through this critical interpretation, we gain a deeper understanding of how public spaces can foster social interaction and enhance urban environments.

#### **1.7.4 Chapter 4: Tracing Domestic Architecture - An Interplay of Public-Private Relationship in the Domestic Worlds of Delhi**

At this stage of our research, we focus on enhancing public access and investigating the evolution of public spaces, while also examining the domestic spaces in the area, which have historically represented evolved through different periods within the city. This chapter aims to create inclusive public spaces for everyone while also considering the dynamics of private spaces. This fourth chapter of our thesis acknowledges the undeniable relationship between public and private spaces; thus acknowledges a requirement of an equal amount of investigation and analysis into the latter, as in the former. The definition of public space is often presented as the opposite of private space, highlighting a clear distinction between the two. However, this apparent separation oversimplifies the reality; the boundaries between public and private spaces are often blurred, revealing a complex interdependent relationship.

This insight leads us to explore the historical evolution of this relationship in India, which is critical before we examine domestic

spaces. Again, the gendered division of access in domestic spaces prompts important questions regarding their classification as private areas. This invites us to examine how accessibility in these environments mirrors public accessibility. Although discussions about gendered domestic spaces have surfaced in historical and sociological studies, this chapter focuses on literary works. This approach is significant because the architecture of a place profoundly influences literature, highlighting the relationship between built environments and narrative representation. This chapter again surfaces how literature both documents and critiques the architectural spaces we inhabit. Creation of architectural sketches from a close reading of architectural narratives of the literary texts in this chapter employs narrative-based designs and aesthetic morphology.

This chapter focuses on three significant works of Delhi literature: Ahmed Ali's *Twilight in Delhi*, William Dalrymple's *City of Djinns*, and Manju Kapoor's *Home*. These texts reveal how architectural changes have influenced both private and public spaces throughout the city across different time periods. Ali's *Twilight in Delhi* addresses the cultural losses from the transition from Mughal to colonial architecture, emphasising patriarchal constraints in domestic arrangements. Dalrymple's *City of Djinns* depicts Delhi as a palimpsest, using his rented flat as a symbol of colonial remnants and exploring memory within domestic spaces. Kapoor's *Home* highlights how the layout of the Banwari Lal household enforces gender segregation, illustrating the struggles women face for autonomy within restrictive environments. Together, these works provide valuable insights into the relationship between domestic architecture and gender dynamics in Delhi.

In conclusion, this chapter encourages us to rethink our private domestic spaces, which have evolved historically. Understanding these spaces is essential for city planning, as it highlights the connection between domestic and public environments and the need for equal access for all genders to public spaces. By examining the history of domestic spaces alongside literary texts from an architectural standpoint, we gain insights into their transformation into modern

homes. This analysis reveals historical segregations that are important for reimagining urban design and creating more accessible and inclusive public spaces.

### **1.7.5 Chapter 5: Reflecting Public Space Concerns in Creative Writings and Conclusion**

In the conclusion chapter, we synthesise how we accomplished the key objectives set forth in our thesis. We provide a comprehensive analysis of public spaces in the city of Delhi, tracing their historical evolution, addressing contemporary concerns, and exploring future possibilities and transformations. This chapter also presents a cohesive narrative that highlights the architectural maps, sketches, and literary works analysed throughout our research. By juxtaposing these visualisations with literary insights, we underscore the fundamental aim of our thesis: to acknowledge literature as an essential element of architectural analysis and urban planning, thereby promoting an architectural awareness that is vital for any democratic society.

This chapter features a creative section that includes a selection of children's stories/ short stories written by us. Through these narratives, we seek to explore various perspectives and concerns regarding public spaces. Instead of taking a didactic approach, we aim to subtly highlight these issues, encouraging readers to ponder their implications. Although we have included only a few stories as annexures in this thesis, we aspire to broaden this creative corner in our future endeavours, focusing on a wide range of concerns related to public spaces within the Indian context.

### **1.8 The Role of the Digital Humanities Field in This Thesis**

The digital humanities is a fascinating and dynamic interdisciplinary field that seamlessly integrates traditional humanities disciplines with cutting-edge digital technologies and computational methods. This innovative approach involves harnessing the power of

digital tools to meticulously analyse, interpret, and present humanities data. Doing so unlocks fresh perspectives and interactive ways of engaging with cultural assets and scholarly works, thus enriching our understanding of human culture and history. *A Companion to Digital Humanities* (2004) is an extensive collection that encompasses a wide range of essays covering various facets of digital humanities, including text encoding and safeguarding cultural heritage. *Digital Humanities* (MIT Press, 2012) defines Digital Humanities (DH) as a multidisciplinary field that merges the humanities with technology and public engagement. It presents DH as a collection of evolving practices that transform the production, sharing, and critique of knowledge in the digital age. Again, the edited volume *Exploring Digital Humanities in India: Pedagogies, Practices, and Institutional Possibilities* (2020) by Maya Dodd and Nidhi Kalra examines how digital tools have transformed teaching, research, and institutional cultures in India's humanities and social sciences. Covering fields such as history, literature, media studies, and LGBTQ archives, the book showcases how digital humanities integrates diverse disciplines and transcends traditional academic boundaries. It illustrates how digital tools empower researchers to employ innovative methods of inquiry. Above all, the beauty of the discipline lies in allocating various new initiatives that can be cross-disciplinary or merge multi-disciplinary interests.

In this way, our thesis significantly advances the rapidly evolving field of literary urban studies by blending together the disciplines of architecture, literature, and social issues through the application of contextual computational tools. By harnessing technology in literary analysis, we aim to enhance visualisation techniques that present data in a more accessible manner, cultivate critical thinking skills that enable nuanced analysis, and facilitate immersive learning experiences that engage the audience deeply. Throughout the chapters of our thesis, we conduct a thorough literary analysis while utilising digital tools to examine public spaces in our city of study. This multifaceted investigation explores various dimensions, including historical context, cultural significance, and social dynamics, all with

the objective of enhancing accessibility and inclusivity in urban design. By rethinking and contextualising the design of our city, we aim to create environments that better serve the diverse populations that inhabit them.

This innovative, multidimensional approach not only broadens our understanding of the relationships among these interconnected disciplines but also fosters fresh perspectives that challenge conventional boundaries. Ultimately, we encourage a more holistic exploration of the subject matter, paving the way for future research and practical applications in urban development.

## Chapter 2

### Spatial Denial and Displacement: Exploring Literary Lineage of Protest Sites (Public Spaces)

#### 2.1 Introduction

A space can become public in many ways. This can include everything from simple walks to ‘loitering’ (Phadke 2011) and even occupations for protests. A public space is intended to accommodate people while disregarding any forms of hierarchy in society, such as class, caste, and gender. Therefore, the transition from a ‘place’ to a ‘space’ is achieved through people’s claims and their access to rights. While Shilpa Phadke’s book, *Why Loiter?* talks about this claiming and availing right to the city through loitering; this chapter of our thesis includes a discussion over occupation movements as a medium for this claiming, which essentially takes place in public spaces. The growing interest in protest research has explored various aspects of collective action – social, cultural, political – yet the physical ‘space’ where these manifestations occur has received little attention. In recent times, the growing hostility and colonial attitude towards protests, coupled with the rhetoric of disruption, have affected the evolvability of the protest phenomenon. Therefore, this chapter of our thesis shows instances of denial, designation, and displacement from the central space of India. Accompanying an interdisciplinary approach, the research efforts in this chapter have involved discussion on protest, public space, people, literature, and architecture. Thus, with the exploration of the spatial intricacies of protest, it analyses the spatial denial, the designation, and the creation of space for protest in the city of Delhi over a historical timeline. Above all, this work focuses on ensuring the availability, accessibility, and reachability of public spaces to promote the inclusion of all members of society.

Accessibility of various public spaces is crucial when envisioning an urban environment within a city. Phadke, at the end of

her book, urges the readers to imagine an ‘altered city’ through various modes of access to public spaces and includes occupation in the series: “...imagine street corners taken over by older women reflecting on the state of the world. Imagine maidans occupied by women workers planning their next strike for a raise in minimum wages...If one can imagine all of this, one can imagine a radically altered city”. In this context, Henry Lefebvre emphasises the interrelationship between public space and protest, stating, ‘Spaces, like people, have features and when historical events get attached to the place, they become alive along with their citizens standing for their constitutional rights’ (Lefebvre, 1991). Tali Hatuka also supports the importance of this relationship in his book *The Design of Protest: Choreographing Political Demonstrations in Public Space* (2018). He highlights how protests and occupying movements serve to ensure that those in power are held accountable and challenged.

Thus, the right to protest is exercised to foster negotiation between the people and their elected representatives. Society nurtures a distance of various sorts to secure safety and stability. These distances, reinforced by regulations and socio-cultural norms, create hierarchies, and maintaining these hierarchies is perceived to be the key to achieving social order. Hatuka argued that this perception of stability is merely an illusion, masking suppressed aggression towards established hierarchies. Therefore, the right to protest is an imperative necessity in a democratic social order, requiring that protesters not passively accept the existing social order but challenge the systemic inequalities within it. Citizens utilise space to bridge distances and form new coalitions or political agendas within society.

By reclaiming space that accommodates and empowers people in defiance, occupation challenges spatial inequality and confronts extreme socio-political divides. This act seeks to reduce the gap created by hierarchical divisions to promote equality. It does so by occupying public spaces, increasing visibility, and drawing attention from those in power, as well as those who are unaware or wish to understand the implications of inequality. In this way, visibility and vicinity (2 Vs)

become a pertinent aspect of protest, and the choice of a particular space assures this visibility, ensuring that the voices do not go unheard. ‘The nature and cause of the protests underlined the choice of space’ (Hatuka 2018). The choice of space, in this case, is mainly the space near the power institutions and in the vicinity of people’s attention.

## **2.2 Chapter Aims, Objectives, and Methodology**

Therefore, public spaces, both practical and symbolic, play a crucial role in connecting citizens and have historically been central to social movements and political protests (Habermas 1974; Hatuka 2018). However, there is a growing hostility and a colonial mindset (Seal 1973; Moon 1989) towards protests. This, combined with a disruptive rhetoric that portrays protests as detrimental to public order, has impacted the evolution of these phenomena within urban environments (Nilsen 2010).

In this way, centred in our nation’s capital, Delhi, this chapter provides a historical account of the city’s rise and evolution over decades and centuries under various power structures, including Mughal rule, British colonialism, and the period of independence. It raises questions about the lack of accessibility to public spaces within the city. The chapter also critiques the practice of designating specific spaces for protests, where such designations often serve as a means of denial. This practice paved the way for the creation of new subaltern public spaces (Kampourakis, 2016). In this way, we have highlighted the denial, designation, and displacement of public spaces in Delhi, which had the potential to hold state power accountable and respond to citizens’ demands, but instead has become obsolete (Guha, 2007).

The city of Delhi, as our thesis’s epicentre, highlights the city’s role as the central space carrying the political philosophy of the country. It offers opportunities for visibility and proximity to state power, ensuring accountability during protests. This chapter addresses and analyses the spatial aspect of protests, visualising the denial and designation that have been taking place. This research also examines the availability and shrinking of public spaces, with a focus on the role of

accessible public spaces and governmental interventions. It employs the literary analysis, incorporating ‘place-bound literary experiences’ (Løvlie 2009) to investigate various spatial perspectives. A simultaneous mapping technique is used to visualise the historical displacement and transformation of accessibility, shifting from the Rajpath, a central space, to the farmers’ protests at the city’s periphery due to spatial denial (Zuberi 2020). Above all, this chapter here, emphasises the importance of securing the availability, accessibility, and reachability of public spaces to ensure inclusion for all members of society.

In this way, our research in this chapter tries to unpack various literature and adopt a multilingual and multidisciplinary approach to assess the accessibility of public spaces. The increasing prevalence of privatised public spaces, alongside the declining status of real public ones, has heightened the need for inclusivity. Therefore, the chapter mediates between the role of designated spaces for protest and the creation and emergence of new spaces. It also addresses the swift transformation and steady denial of the central space from the accessibility of ordinary people. Our research endeavour here does not aim to analyse the political agendas behind the protests; instead, it explores the role of public spaces in collective actions and examines how accessibility has been incorporated throughout the process. It investigates the attitudes of those in power regarding access and the initiation of architectural changes. Hence, the methodology employed includes a comprehensive literature review complemented by an analysis of the available literature, followed by visualisations through mapping.

### **2.3 Space and Protest Interrelationship**

In the context of protests, public spaces serve as crucial physical arenas where collective action occurs, playing a transformative role in the societal landscape (Mitchell 1995). As people gather in these spaces, they express their dissent and build a sense of unity, creating a shared collective identity. This interaction affects both the protesters and the

urban environment, imbuing public spaces with important political significance (Lefevre 1991). As a result, protests frequently result in personal and community transformation by creating a platform for marginalised groups, empowering individuals to voice their concerns, and fostering personal and political growth through shared experiences.

In this context, a literature review of the various protests across different countries demonstrates this interrelationship between space and protest. The review also sheds light on the role of government or authorities' interventions in moulding this relationship and highlights changes in the public during this process. Kaveh Ehsani, in his 2014 essay "The Production and Politics of Public Space, Radical Democratic Politics, and Public Space," discusses the decolonisation of public spaces as a means to address unequal socio-economic structures. Political movements advocating for social justice, from Morocco to Iran, have symbolically claimed these public spaces to assert their collective demands. Emphasising the significance of public places, Ehsani highlights the 'spatial dimension of politics' alongside the discursive and institutional aspects. Hypothetically, within the framework of an imagined nation, each country consists of an 'array of socio-economic and cultural differences,' which inevitably leads to various inequalities. Urban public spaces that are politicised enable the negotiation of diversity, allowing individuals to evolve from mere residents to engaged members of the 'public'. Thus, as this enormous potential of public space poses a threat to the ruling positions, efforts are made for subversion, obliteration, curtailment, and often strategic diversion of access. Despite this, public spaces gain their prominence through the collective actions that occur within them. By uniting varied groups of individuals, these spaces act as representations of the need for participatory politics. Consequently, public spaces are often transformed into sites of surveillance, policing, gentrification, and privatisation. Ehsani elaborated on how the public spaces, even in the post-revolution period in Iran (Iran Civil War – 1980-82), faced restrictions in the hems of moral codes of behaviour and 'imposition of specific Islamic codes of public behaviour on both men and women.' The obsession with

limiting and controlling public access and shrinking public spaces is continuously reiterated.

In a similar fashion, the 2011 Israel protest movement is at the centre of Nathan Marom's discussion in "Activating Space: The Spatial Politics of the 2011 Protest Movement" (2013). Marom explores spatial politics and the transformation and extension of protests in public spaces through the concept of 'activising urban public spaces.' This protest movement also addressed socio-spatial inequalities while promoting social justice. The idea of the 'right to the city' is referenced as Marom links the appropriate use of public spaces to the works of Saskia Sassen and Peter Marcuse. Sassen differentiates the role of public spaces from the European tradition of 'ritualised routines.' Meanwhile, Peter Marcuse critiques the common negative perceptions regarding the occupancy of streets. He argues that occupied space should not be viewed as a coveted prize; rather, it is merely a 'terrain' where protests occur. Through Marom's descriptions, the two key ideas that emerge are pertinent to the successive two stages of transformation that a space garners via protest – 'Spaces of politics' and 'politics of space'. The author suggested that the cities, seemingly the centres of capitalism, have an undercurrent that could germinate counterforce and suggest an alternative to the neoliberal agenda.

Again, Ayca Koseoglu's article "Taking Place/ Making Space, The Architecture of Protest in Modern Istanbul" has explored the mutuality that architectural and urban design have with protest. Centred on the 1960 coup d'état of Turkey, in her work, Koseoglu questioned and analysed how 'the agency of protest' had played a significant role 'in the symbolic, formal, and functional transformation of Beyazit and Taksim squares' there. These public spaces played a 'historic urban role' in allowing people to avail their right to the city during the protests and thus transformed in the process. Harvey also highlights the transformative impact of protests such as Occupy Wall Street on urban spaces, turning them into arenas of resistance against neoliberal urbanism (Harvey 2012). He asserts that movements like these of reclaiming public spaces redefine them as communal areas for

democratic engagement while confronting their increasing privatisation and commercialisation.

In this context, Foucauldian theories on power, knowledge, and governmentality provide profound insights into the nature of protests. According to Michel Foucault, power operates through traditional hierarchical structures and permeates various institutions and social relationships. In this context, protest movements are conceptualised as acts of resistance that subvert the mechanisms of governance and surveillance. Foucault's exploration of biopolitics delves into how states regulate and manage populations, and protests actively confront and challenge these mechanisms, often disrupting established power dynamics by critically examining prevailing discourses and carving out spaces for alternative forms of knowledge and resistance. "Liberalism must produce freedom, but this very act entails the establishment of limitations, controls, forms of coercion, obligations relying on threats, etc. Freedom is never anything other... than an actual relation between governors and governed" (Foucault 1978, p. 62). The concept of governmentality encompasses the methods through which governments seek to guide and influence populations, focusing on governance through socio-economic policies rather than applying direct repression. Foucault's analysis sheds light on how liberalism has led to a form of power that governs through the facilitation of freedom, effectively managing people's actions without resorting to forceful actions.

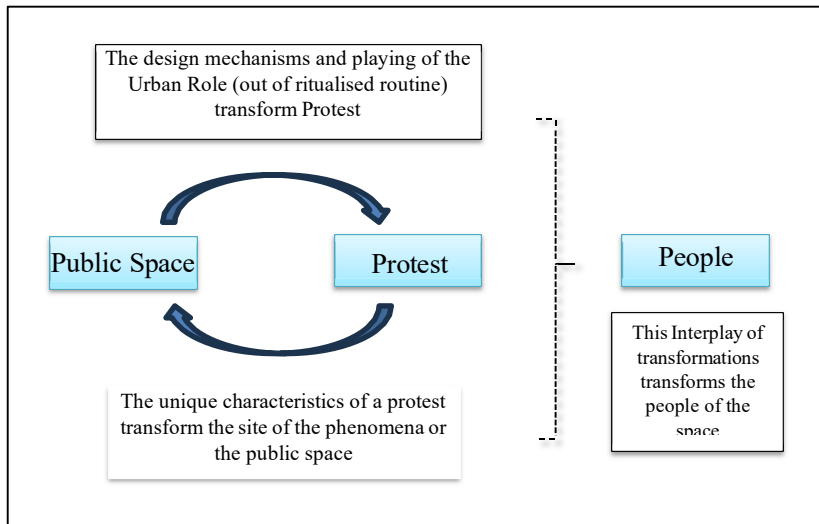


Figure 4 – Flow Chart on the Interrelationship of 3 Ps

In this way, these references reflect the interdependent relation that space and occupying movements share. Thus, this flow chart (Figure 4) stems from our literature review and illustrates the interrelationship among the three aspects of our study: public space, protest, and people. It demonstrates how the concepts of public space and protest influence one another and how this dynamic ultimately transforms the individuals within those spaces. People serve as catalysts, employing various design mechanisms and engaging in urban roles to reshape the nature of the protest. Additionally, a unique protest that accommodates diverse individuals and ensures accessibility enhances and revitalises public space. Our analysis later in this chapter, particularly regarding the protest sites, highlights this interrelationship and interdependency in greater detail.

However, in this complex and multi-layered relationship, this chapter focuses on transformations and shifting of the public spaces for protest in the urban setting of Delhi (Figure 5). This denial of accessibility has historical roots that date back to colonial times. The city of Delhi endured a long period of Mughal rule, which was followed by British colonial dominance until India gained independence in 1947. The central area of the British Capital near Raisina Hill became the focal point of Independent India, with Rashtrapati Bhavan and the Parliament

of India replacing the former Viceroy's palace. Additionally, Kingsway was renamed Rajpath, reflecting its translation into one of India's languages. The central space of Rajpath near Raisina Hill was inaccessible prior to India's independence due to colonial restrictions. As a response, nationalists hoisted the tricolour flag at the Lahori Gate of the Red Fort in 1947. In the post-colonial period, the relationship between representatives, parliament, and the public has experienced various shifts. This dynamic negotiation is continually evolving, influenced by the specific social and political contexts of each decade. The colonial legacy of restricting access persists today, as seen in the designation of spaces for protests, such as Jantar Mantar in 1993 and Ramleela Maidan in 2017, as well as more recent protests like those at Shaheen Bagh in 2019-20 and the Farmers' Protest on the outskirts of the capital in 2021-22. Designation, displacement, and creation followed the spatial denial imposed by various power structures throughout different periods. The word 'denial' here refers to the process of refusal of accessibility by the state power. Whereas 'designation' refers to the sanctioning process of a space as a designated protest site by the authority. Chances are, then, the designated spaces favour the power positions in keeping away the visibility and vicinity of the protesters from the power structures. Furthermore, out of this designation, the phenomenon of 'creation' takes birth. A prolonged process of designations inducing realisations among the protestors leads them to create spaces for occupation. These spaces, thus, earlier unrecognised, come into a new light and recognition through the protests. The details of how this happens are described in the later paragraphs.

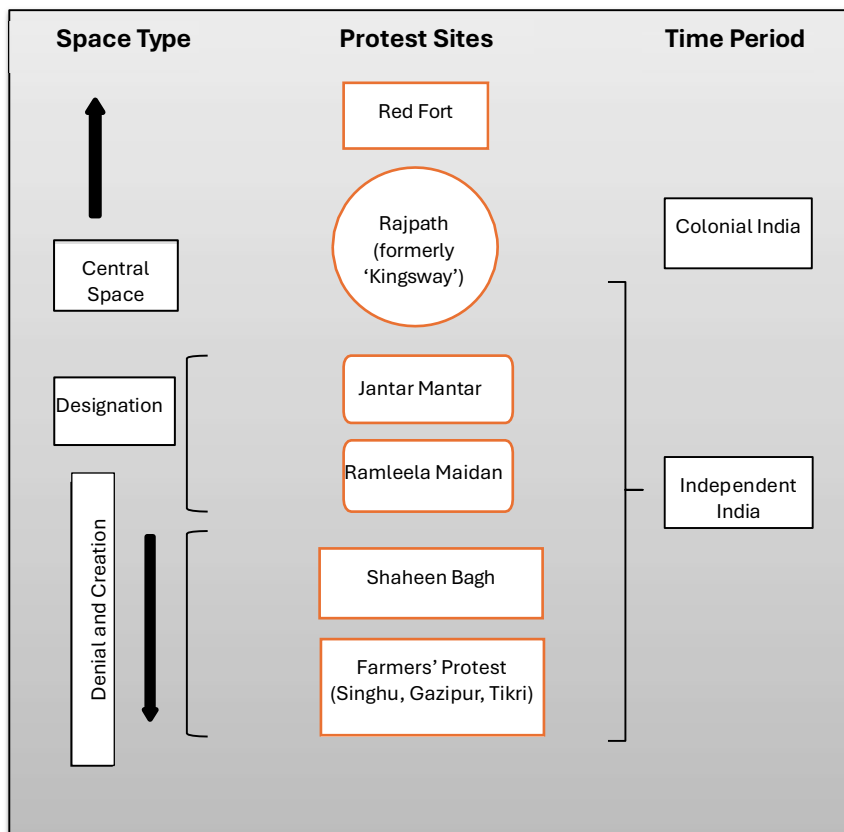


Figure 5 – Flow chart of the protest sites discussed in this study

## 2.4 Description of Literary Texts

A detailed literary analysis of different genres and languages enhances this investigation of the spatial denial of protest sites (public spaces) in Delhi. The chapter adopts a multilingual approach and analyses multiple genres of literature related to protest spaces, encompassing fiction, non-fiction, and the visual arts. A close reading of literature produced during and after the protests provides valuable insights into how these spaces have been perceived, adopted, and claimed for the purposes of protest. Our selection of specific literary texts, based on the diverse protest sites discussed in this chapter, began with an examination of works that describe these sites. We focused on texts that directly or metaphorically address the denial of accessibility. By conducting a close reading of these sections within the texts, we were

able to identify valuable insights relevant to our research. In this way, over the time of conducting the research, the study gradually became multilingual and accommodated multiple genres of literature.

One such literary work analysed in this chapter is *Raptiley Rajpath* (2017) by novelist Indira Dangi. In our examination of literary works that focus on Rajpath, a central and significant thoroughfare in the capital, we identified a notable Hindi novel that merits further exploration. This Hindi fictional narrative follows an author named Virat, who arrives in Delhi hoping to carve out a notable place for himself in the literary world. However, he soon realises that the political complexities of the Capital even infiltrate the literary world. “Yahaan har raasta ek shaktishaalee chakravyooh hai—shaanadaar paaramparik pagadandiyaan, bahut saaree chaalen, par kabhee manjil kee pahachaan nahin hotee.” (“Every path here is a false labyrinth—ornate old avenues, countless turns, yet never leading to any true, self-made destination.”) (Dangi 2017). Disheartened, he leaves Delhi and returns to his hometown, where he begins writing his first novel, *Raptiley Rajpath*. The title of the story holds significant meaning, as the narrative implicitly reflects the inaccessibility and intricate challenges that the city presents to outsiders. In *India After Gandhi* (2007), historian Ramchandra Guha provides a vivid eyewitness account of Rajpath in the 1990s following his move to the city. In the sections after the prologue, he describes a time when people had access to and opportunities for openly expressing dissent – “Notably, on Rajpath, the grounds meant to be empty except on ceremonial days had become a village of tents, each with colourful placards hung outside it.” (Guha p. 7). This was before the government dismantled the encampments, forcing these groups to relocate about a mile away to the northwest, near the Jantar Mantar observatory in Connaught Place (p. 14). In this scenario, Arundhati Roy’s novel *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* looks into the lives of a diverse cast of characters, each grappling with their struggles that parallel the more extensive societal challenges faced by the marginalised and disenfranchised. Many of these individuals converge at Jantar Mantar, a symbolic protest site, where they vocalise their grievances

against societal systemic injustices. Through her narrative, Roy skillfully underscores the significant physical and metaphorical chasm separating Jantar Mantar from the seats of power, emphasising how this divide undermines the efficacy of protests. This is a poignant commentary on the authorities' efforts to quell public dissent and resistance. This is how a close reading and subsequent analysis of these sections of the literary works gives us a vivid view of how the spaces have faced denial, and new spaces for protest arise in the city.

Among the books on Shaheen Bagh, the notable ones, *Shaheen Bagh From Protest To a Movement* (2020) by Ziya Us Salem and Uzma Ausaf, talks about claiming the space of Shaheen Bagh by breaking the shackles of stereotypes and bringing inclusion of access in the space. Indian author and literary critic Ziya Us Salem, in conjunction with freelance journalist Uzma Ausaf, utilises their non-fiction works to highlight the emergence of Shaheen Bagh beyond the city centre. Their writing shows that these new areas arise in response to the exclusion of traditional protest sites as public spaces within the urban landscape. Consequently, this newly recognised location gains significance as an essential venue for protest. Further hinting at the distances that have been created, Soumyabrata Choudhury, in his book *Now It's Come To Distances* (2020), has infused the discourses and the new dictionary of the pandemic with the Shaheen Bagh protest, where the 'isolation' is mandated to 'quarantine' the 'symptoms' of occupation and dissent. Here, the author had experienced these 'distances' closely, and the book came out as a collection of the notes given to his students. Thus, the analysis of this text also becomes essential for understanding Shaheen Bagh as a created site of protest in the pre-COVID-19 era, where a diverse range of individuals came together to voice their opposition to the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA).

Based on the recent Farmers' Protest, *The Indian Farmers Protest (The Resistance Collection)* (2021) by Sir Inder Doel presents an enlightening consolidation of poetic art and has enlisted works highlighting diverse aspects of the protest. The collection carries poetry from the protesters, activists, and many others. In our search for works

that acknowledge space, generate identity, and address denial, one poem by Greta Thunberg deserves mention. ‘Carnival’ depicts the inclusion and identity of oneness that the space conferred upon the protestors. This chapter conducts an analysis of such poetic works found within the literary text to illustrate how protest sites were constructed on the peripheries of the city, thereby accommodating a diverse array of individuals.

Apart from the analysis of these primary texts, this chapter also references several key books: *City of Djinnns*, a travelogue by William Dalrymple (1993), which provides an architectural perspective; *Why Loiter?*, a Mumbai-based book by Shilpa Phadke, Sameera Khan, and Shilpa Ranade (2011), which emphasises the significance of public spaces and incorporates architectural viewpoints along with journalistic arguments; and *City and Protest: Perspectives in Spatial Criticism* by Mamta Mantri (2021), which helps to understand the spatial dimensions of protests. Additionally, insights from conversations with Mr. Fahad Zuberi, an independent scholar and researcher in Architecture and City Studies, are included to support the concerns of this study.

In addition to analysing verbal records, visual cues are also examined to capture the protest and various protest sites. By considering both aspects, this chapter aims for greater inclusivity. Recently, Ram Rehman organised a photography exhibition that showcased the voices of dissent to commemorate the 31<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the death of Safdar Hashmi. This exhibition, held at the Safdar Hashmi Memorial Trust (SAHMAT), served as a catalyst for this exploration. ‘These images are a first-hand account or evidence of how the events unfolded’ (Popli 2020). The literary pieces and visuals are viewed from the perspective of claiming public space and generating identity within it, and examined to discern the sense of denial present in the works. Hence, the timeline expands across different political eras, from the colonial to the modern independent nation, to discuss different public spaces that have played the role of protest sites. The primary limitation in the methodology is that most works on public spaces have focused on the socio-political and economic aspects of protests. However, little attention has been paid to

the physical space where these protests routinely occur. While a few studies have addressed the themes of inclusion and shared identity generated by these spaces, the analysis and awareness of public spaces seem primarily confined to discussions among intellectuals, lacking a significant impact on the literary world.

Our methodology in this chapter, therefore, evolves from literary analysis to include two distinct types of mapping in later sections that detail the step-by-step process of denial. First, the handmade maps of various protest sites reveal the gradual denial of these spaces over different periods. Finally, digital mapping consolidates the overall scenario, providing a holistic visual representation of spatial denial, displacement, and the creation of protest sites.

## **2.5 Protest Sites as Public Spaces**

The spaces discussed in this chapter each have unique stories and have served different purposes. Before independence, the Red Fort rose as a space of resistance with hope for liberation, transfiguring the space from a symbol of Mughal rule. Rajpath, erstwhile ‘Kingsway’, became a part of Independent India and a space for holding high democratic zeal. However, in the following decades, it lost the citizens’ voices and accessibility. As a designated space for protest, Jantar Mantar came into existence in 1993, and Ramleela Maidan falls under the designation of NGT, following the rhetoric of disruption and unhygienic circumstances in 2017. These designations and underlying spatial denial propelled the creation of Shaheen Bagh as a subaltern public space during the anti-CAA protests (2019-20), which later played a ‘model function’ (Marcuse 2011) in sprouting a million Shaheen Baghs across the country. The recent occupation and creation of new public spaces by Farmers at Singhu, Tikri, and Gazipur borders situated on the fringes of the capital have been marked by an extreme form of spatial denial as they were utterly obstructed from their access to the central space. In this scenario, we have discovered that although the literary works analysed in this study do not directly narrate the theme of denial, they

clearly address issues of exclusion and lack of accessibility. By examining these literary works alongside other academic articles, we have traced the denial process, which we aim to document in this chapter.

The Red Fort, built in the middle of the seventeenth century as a symbol of the Mughal reign, has transformed and faced shifts in public perception through different periods. With the fall of prolonged Mughal rule, the British influence increased in the early nineteenth century following the seizure of Delhi. Therefore, it was only a matter of time before the Fort earned new recognition as a space for resistance against the British with the rebellion in 1857. In quick succession, the prompt suppression of revolts transferred the hold of the subcontinent from the trading company (British East India Company) to Queen Victoria as a prime administrative switch. Later, the Fort served as the ‘imperial durbar’ for the British, but ‘the rebellion [of 1857] and its heroes remained in public memory and therefore in the nationalist imagination’ (Sinha). The space rises again into prominence in the dawning years of independence. Netaji’s call for ‘Dilli Chalo’ reinvigorates renewed attention to the Red Fort. The trial and imprisonment of the INA officials within the Fort and the mass campaigns across the country urging their release altered the space from a symbol of the Mughal rule to, in the words of historian Sekhar Bandyopadhyay, the ‘most authentic symbol of British imperial domination’. This led the nation’s first Prime Minister to hoist the tricolour flag of independent India in 1947, for the first time from the ramparts of the Red Fort – and this ritual continues even today. The space was reclaimed and embraced in independent India. Although it was once a centre of the Mughal stronghold, the decision to use this space for resistance against the British was solidified by a ‘latent memory of the suppression of the uprising in 1857’. It is interesting to see how the perception of space changes over time, and revolution inspires this shift in the recognition of space. From a symbolic bastion of the Mughal empire to holding British Imperial Durbars to a prime space for anti-colonial expression, the fort was transmuted to display nationalist fervour following the democratic

establishment of the nation. Sinha pointed out in his article, “It is a site where the past and the present coalesced to mark a newly independent nation’s step towards the future.” However, this transformation and choice of space for nationalists’ occupation was underlined in Guha’s writing as a denial of the central space of the Rajpath. The chapter thus promises to delve deep into the historical origin and look for the transformations in perception from time to time. The spaces have transformed through claiming by the people outside the ‘ritualised routines’; in this case, the claiming is through protest.

To come to our discussion on the next public space, in the first three parts of the ‘Prologue: Unnatural Nation’ from the book *India After Gandhi*, Guha chronicled the history of India starting with the poem of Mirza Asadullah Khan Ghalib, penned at the ‘backdrop of the decline of the Mughal Empire’ to the horrendous Partition and succeeding Independence of the subcontinent. It is only in part IV that the first-person narrative begins. His descriptions recall the 1990s when the flat ground on either side of the Rajpath was a habitual welcoming space for protest. The scenario of protests to which the author was an eyewitness led the author to call the space a ‘village of tents,’ which soon got swept by the government’s horror over such ‘open expression of dissent.’ Rajpath (formerly Kingsway) thus regained the exercise of authority, as its name suggests – “I had to pass through Rajpath (formerly Kingsway), the road whose name and location signal the exercise of state power.” (Guha, p. 7). Their relocation to the vicinity of Jantar Mantar lost the attention of the government. This is pointed out by Guha in his work as – “Rajpath was cleared of encroachments, and the lawns were restored to their former glory. But the protesters regrouped and relocated. They now placed themselves a mile to the northwest, next to the Jantar Mantar observatory in Connaught Place.” (Guha p.8).

Thus, the story of Jantar Mantar emerging as a ‘new dissent square’ dates back to 1993. This designation saw ‘no official statement’ but resulted in the imposition of a ban on any convention from the Boat Club (due to the then-ongoing Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid movement sweeping across the religious sentiments of the country and

the preceding farmers' disquiet in 1988 under the leadership of Mahendra Singh Tikait forcing the central government to meet their demands), and thus in search of a space escaping the 'British-era law' Section 144, "... the tree-lined boulevard that connects Tolstoy Road to the Ashoka Road roundabout came to be the only place in New Delhi...the capital got its new dissent square — Jantar Mantar." (Ghosal 2018). The space was being negotiated with the protestors' mindset as ideal for appearing close to the Parliament, and the government sighed in relief in pushing the visibility away from the pristine of the capital to a space small enough to hold any big crowd and suitable for authorial management. Thus, Ghosal writes, "Boat Club, with its view of Janpath, Rajpath, and Parliament, that was the iconic space for resistance", for profiting visibility to the state power. Arundhati Roy's novel *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017) portrays Jantar Mantar as a significant site for protests in Delhi, conveying the government's regulation of public dissent by confining protests to specific areas. The novel employs a variety of narratives to emphasise how the government seeks to restrict activism to particular urban spaces like Jantar Mantar. "Jantar Mantar was where the city sent its malcontents— those who had fallen through the cracks of its unyielding edifice of 'development'. They gathered with their placards, their demands, and their silence. But it was a silence the city had made invisible." (Roy 2017). This serves as a symbol of the limitations imposed on occupation movements. Roy critically examines how both individuals and the phenomena of protests are marginalised in these controlled environments, drawing attention to the politicisation of public spaces and the impact on civil liberties. Nevertheless, the space of Jantar Mantar threatened their power positions and was chaotic to their ears; the space was soon denied and shifted.

However, the protests at Jantar Mantar, though out of sight, have the possibility of not going out of the minds of the power positions. The arrangements for the latter were soon disrupted when the National Green Tribunal (NGT) put a bar on the protestors from accessing the space of Jantar Mantar in 2017 by a change of the site of resistance to Ramleela

Maidan. This makeshift had the possibility of having permanence in the authorities' and residents' growing attitudes against dissent. Besides NGT's cited reasons for the shift, the space of Jantar Mantar being marked as a residential space in the Delhi Master Plan and its status not as an authorised space for protests were agonising for the protestors (The New Leam). The public park of Ramleela Maidan has witnessed many social movements in the history pages of Independent India. But compared to Jantar Mantar, which is only 'Seven minutes and some Lutyens' roundabouts away from the Parliament (Rebbapragada 2017), the Maidan has its presence far away from the centre of power. Ironically, the order to shift the site of resistance came from the NGT (National Green Tribunal) at a time when one of the protests at Jantar Mantar raised voices against the hike in pollution in the city. As the public spaces demand to be claimed, for the protestors, this claim requires visibility and the vicinity of the governing powers (Lefevre 1991; Mitchell 2003; Harvey 2012). Thus, space, in other words, a particular public space, becomes vital for protest.

In this interplay of constant pushing of the protest sites from the centre to the margins, in the meantime, the peripheries of the capital actually turn up as new spaces for resistance. To elaborate, Michel Foucault's concept of 'Heterotopias' here refers to spaces outside the mainstream societal norms, serving as 'counter-sites' or 'spaces of otherness' where individuals or groups can express dissent and engage in activities that challenge established norms. Foucault's theory of Heterotopias provides a framework for understanding how these spaces function as sites of resistance and alternative realities. Again, De Certeau's work *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1984) proposes that individuals, through their daily activities and use of urban space, have the potential to carve out new areas for resistance and subversion within society. In this way, the anti-CAA protests of 2019-20 were named after the space of Shaheen Bagh as it emerged, evolved, and transformed in that area. The protest was initiated by the parliamentary sanction of the discriminatory act of CAA (Citizenship Amendment Act) during the closing months of 2019. It later became one of the most inclusive

occupational movements in the history of modern India. The emergence of women's voices at the centre of the anti-CAA protests can be attributed to their willingness to break free from traditional roles and challenge societal prejudices. They have actively participated in efforts to prevent the government from displacing them from their own spaces. In this claiming of the space for expressing concerns, today's Shaheen Bagh marks a difference from Laurent Gayer and Christophe Jaffrelot's description of the area in Muslims in Indian Cities: Trajectories of Marginalisation (2012) as urban sprawl or extension under gentrification. The space now has a tinge of cosmopolitanism in providing space for people from different occupations from nearby states 'while opening a window of opportunity in the national capital' (Salem and Ausaf 2020).

In recent years, the encampments established on the outskirts of the capital – specifically at Singhu, Tikri, and Gazipur – served as platforms to showcase the protesters' demands (Mishra 2021). Here, we find the failure of technological advancement and virtual hype to negate the cruciality of physical confrontation. Though there is an increasing virtual expansion, the importance of physical space remains the same. The farmers' protests demanding the repeal of the three contentious laws ran along with the ruling party's alleged deviance and the opposition's eyeing opportunities through the protest lanes to get back to their desired political realm. Yet the changing discourses and depreciating labelling hardly shook the protest space held by the farmers. The protests even transcend the physical liminality of the space, infused with undaunted 'power and experiential dimensions'. This physical occupation was also supported and sustained by online social networking handles to militate against unfavourable discourses. This sense of space confers identity and fosters enthusiasm among the participants. The protesters, thus having obstructed entry into the Capital region, developed the borders into 'spaces of resistance', and all the habitable facilities were incorporated to bring in 'a sense of place'.

Finally, this discussion on the interrelationship between space and protest can be further substantiated by the fact that space is occupied

for airing a message of justice and has the potential to disrupt, calling for attention to the causes (Marcuse 2011). The goal of the movement is to fulfil its objectives, not just to occupy a space. The space itself is just a means to achieve these objectives. A focus on liberating space rather than merely occupying it aims to reshape public perception. Liberating a space represents a place of hope that is accessible to everyone.

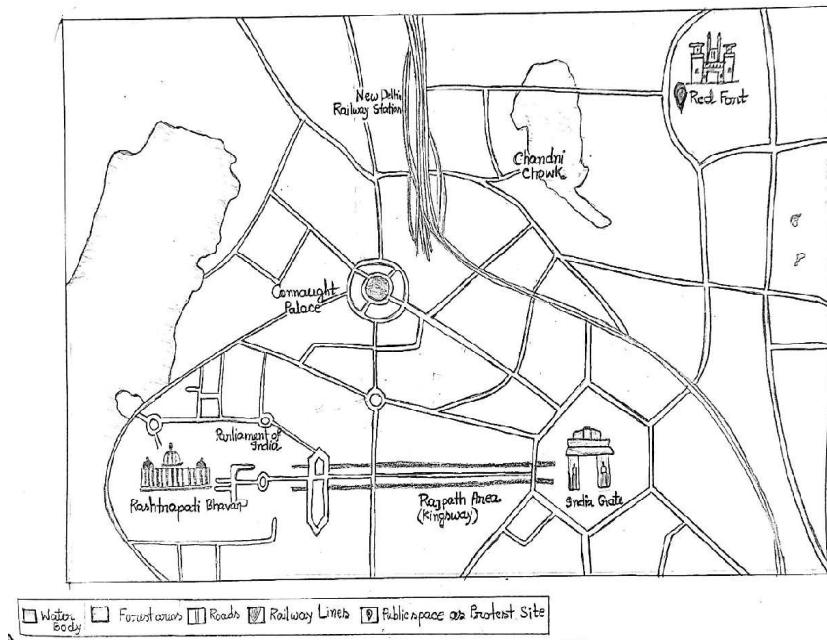
## **2.6 Designation and Creation**

“From the barricades of the French Revolution to the Arab Spring at Tahrir Square, central spaces of the city have been the sites of protest. It is not for nothing that the expression for revolution is “taking to the streets” because by allotting a designated place to protest, the state dictates visibility — it calibrates the degree of being noticed and thereby has the power to vanish the cause from the nation’s eyes and consciousness.” (Zuberi 2020)

After independence, the city saw the first designation of its protest sites at Jantar Mantar. The initial choice of Jantar Mantar as a location appeared suitable because it was relatively close yet not visible from the Parliament. Additionally, the layout of the area made it easier for authorities to control and manage large crowds (Ghosal). Thus, Roy has rightfully pointed out in her work – “They walk past us, but they don’t see us, sitting here on the side of the road, fighting for a better world in this Democracy Zoo... We sit here like caged animals, and the government feeds us useless little pieces of hope through the bars of this iron railing. Not enough to live on, but just enough to prevent us from dying.” (Roy, p. 95). This powerful line from Arundhati Roy’s novel critiques the transformation of Jantar Mantar, a historic site in Delhi known for its rich tradition of public protests. Once a hub for expressions of dissent, it has now become a venue for orchestrated demonstrations where the essence of authentic protest is supplanted by a mere theatrical display. The critique highlights how symbolic performances have taken precedence over the genuine voices of the people, transforming a once-potent space for activism into a controlled stage for the spectacle of

dissent. Jantar Mantar has provided spaces for protestors for several years, so it is crucial to know the strategic designation of the space to yield the government's beneficial purposes. Therefore, further shifting of the site of protest from Jantar Mantar to Ramleela Maidan was initiated by the NGT to close the noise pollution and potential unhygienic situations.

The designation of places for protest, the shrinking of public spaces, and calling upon restrictions land onto monitoring and controlling the designated spaces, granting only permissive accessibility. Mamta Mantri, in her book *City and Protest: Perspectives in Spatial Criticism* (2021), has wittily put the argument within an anticlimactic sentence frame – ‘First Aid Kit, Ambulance, Fire Brigade Services, find space along with water cannons, lathis, protective gear, and other means of curbing protest.’ The excerpt, written against the backdrop of Shaheen Bagh's anti-CAA protest spreading across the country, has marked a historical displacement even after the independence and critiqued designating spaces for protest for pulling up undesirable consequences. In this way, the creation of new spaces emerged. Apart from the popularly known designated spaces, the anti-law dissent flourished full-fledged in a new space of Shaheen Bagh, away from the central space's regulatory intentions. The difficulty in accessing Rajpath prompted nationalists to celebrate Independence at the Red Fort (Figure 4). The legacy of colonialism persists today, as the concept of shared power and ruling on behalf evolved decades after the new constitution. Thus, the implicit denial masquerading as a designation from the central space has led to the creation of new public spaces through protests in recent years.



Handmade Map 1 – Showing the distance of the Red Fort from the Rajpath Area (earlier Viceroy’s House at the Raisina Hill Area)

Creation here refers to a space rising in recognition through the protests. This suggests a space created by citizens to voice their demands, apart from the given urban design. The process indicates denial by the power structures, which are only keen to promote accessibility in terms of consumption powers. The spaces thus created in the urban villages and bordering areas of the capital later inspired the rise and new forms of claiming the public spaces in several other parts of the country, simultaneously making vivid the aspect of denial and shrinking of accessibility by the controlling power positions.

Although the anti-CAA protests of 2019-20 spread across the country, the movement is now primarily associated with Shaheen Bagh, a place symbolising freedom and revolution. Even the name of the protest site of Shaheen Bagh was personified and became a synonym for revolution in Ishrat Khan’s assertion of *Shaheen Bagh Hoon Mai* (I am Shaheen Bagh). In recounting the origins of Shaheen Bagh, Ziya Us Salam, and Uzma Ausaf in their *Shaheen Bagh From a Protest to a Movement* accompanied one of the ‘nazms’ of Urdu poet Muhammad Iqbal from 1935. Foreseeing its enormous potential, his rendition was – “Sitaron se aage jahan aur bhi hain...Tu shaheen hai, parwaz hai kaam

tera, tere samne aasman aur bhi hain.” (52; chapter ‘Why Shaheen Bagh’). Thus, “Other worlds exist beyond the stars – You are an eagle, flight is your vocation, you have other skies stretching out before you” (Allama Iqbal Poetry). This space has become important lately because the people residing there have taken a different stance in protesting. ‘The Men behind the Women,’ ‘Grannies Leading the Way,’ the bonding and display of cooperation, waving off the religious differentiations gave the protest and the space a special recognition. The women at the Bagh almost ‘...stood as a beacon, giving hope to a nation besieged, to a community demonised and a gender always under-appreciated.’ (Salem and Ausaf, p.18).

The creation of new public spaces also occurs in the city’s border areas, influenced by the Farmers’ protests in recent years. The public streets of Singhu, Gazipur, and Tikri border became prominent sites for resistance. The inclusion and identity generation by claiming the space is suggested in the lines –

“A steady stream of cohesive humanity

Leaders, artists, actors, activists

Women, children, old, young

Sikh, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Christian, Jain

Atheists, communists, believers, and sceptics

Passing through inhaling this intoxicating blend of Oneness.” (Deol, p. 26:13-18).

The environment and the claiming of the space have been paralleled as having a ‘carnival.’ Mikhail Bakhtin’s ‘carnavalesque’ theory offers valuable insights into the nature of protests by illustrating how public expressions of dissent can lead to a temporary inversion of societal norms and hierarchies, akin to the atmosphere of a carnival. In the context of protests, established authority is openly questioned, and participants often employ tools to subvert existing power structures. This transformative process turns the protest into a platform where marginalised individuals can freely articulate their perspectives, transcending the constraints of conventional social frameworks, much like the liberating atmosphere of a carnival. By engaging in this

symbolic liberation, those on the fringes of society can disrupt dominant narratives and foster moments of empowerment.

In such a scenario, we can conclude that designated spaces for protest are not favourable for the protesters, as they deny the essential 2 Vs required for effective protest. Also, the fears generated by the designation involve the government's potential exercise of power and the implementation of controlling mechanisms in these spaces. Public spaces serve both practical and symbolic roles, connecting citizens. They have always been central to social movements and political protests (Zalnieriute). However, people's assertions of rights and dissent against the status quo might face obstructions as the continuous surge in the use of surveillance tools threatens suppression. These tools could entail the potential to affect and curtail political protests. The rise of contact tracing apps during COVID-19 has led to concerns about data retention and interception laws, resulting in unauthorised access to metadata and data disclosure (Verfassungsblog). Metadata tracking, if clubbed with thin legislation, can be proved as anti-protest rhetoric in identifying and undermining individuals' anonymity.

Though this tracking does not ensure the revelation of the content of communication, it is valuable in the creation of detailed individualistic digital pictures in drawing links among them. Facial Recognition Technology (FRT) surveillance poses risks for suppressing political protests, particularly with the involvement of private agencies. This exposes the lack of legislation regarding public spaces and gaps in human rights. The government must be accountable for public spaces and the right to protest; otherwise, unregulated police access and surveillance tools can stifle political discourse.

Therefore, designated spaces intended to protect the public and government from disturbances can be strategically selected for policing, allowing for easier governance and control of protests. Thus, a bunch of questions were raised about the possibility of relegating protests to specific spaces. It has been observed that setting dissent aside, while believed to strengthen democracy, has not achieved this goal, as dissent and protest are also vital forms of progress (Hatuka, 2018). Locating the

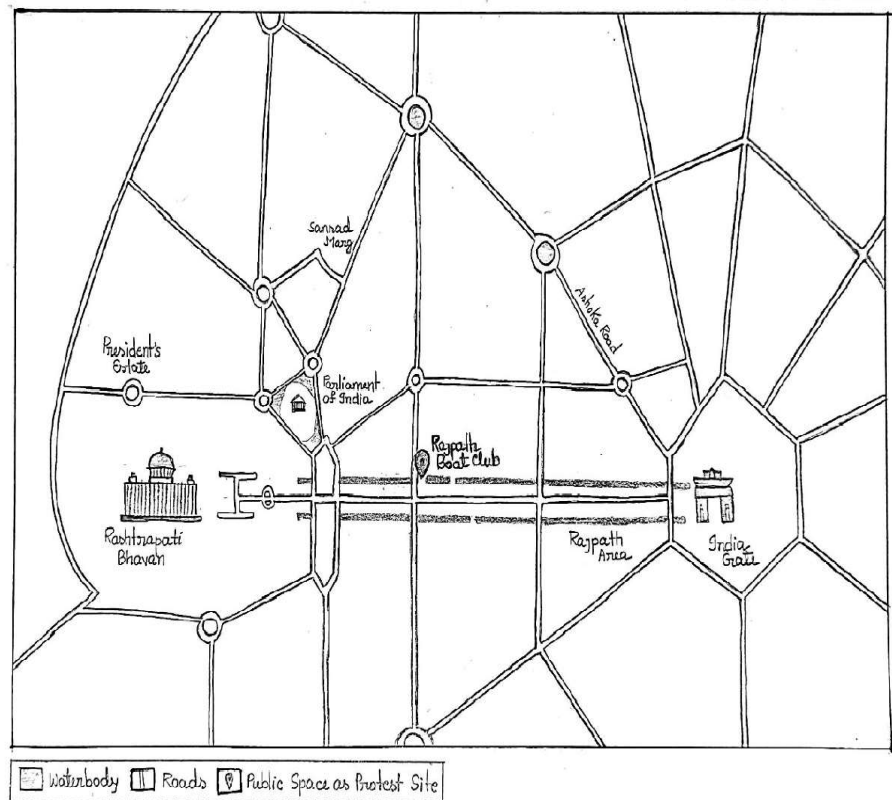
movement in a concrete space and allowing access creates a new community confronting the authorities, amplifying the symbolism of freedom and democracy. Sanctioned spaces of dissent do not possess these features; they function like mute spectators and as neutral containers of activity.

## **2.7 Spatial Denial and Displacement**

The city of Delhi, back in 1911, within specific locational contours around Raisina Hill, served the desired colonial pursuits of the British (Roychowdhury 2021). In the first British-built town in India, Lord Hardinge recognised the political significance of including Indian stakeholders in the city planning process. The plan aimed to connect the new British capital with the historical remnants of the past, fostering coexistence through the construction and naming of roads after both British monarchs and Indian rulers. This approach was described as a remarkable integration of architecture and urban planning by historian William Dalrymple in his book *City of Djinns*, where he referred to it as the “greatest marriage of architecture and urban planning.” However, despite these colonial aspirations to incorporate Indian history, the outcomes fell short of expectations. The inauguration of the new city came across the closer meltdown of colonial rule. The distant voices of nationalist movements alarmed the British, prompting them to prevent any potential gatherings at the intended ceremonial venue of Kingsway and Central Vista (Gupta 1994). This initial instance of restricted access drove the nationalists to occupy the Red Fort and declare Independence from its ramparts. Similarly, today, these spaces are again inaccessible and no longer within reach of protesters. Therefore, this section of our chapter systematically examines the spatial denial resulting from the historical displacement of protest sites, which has subsequently given rise to new sites of dissent in the present context.

Rajpath, considered a centre of our capital, has given space for many expressions of dissent. The archetypal imagination of the city takes us to the picture of India Gate with its’ surroundings in best

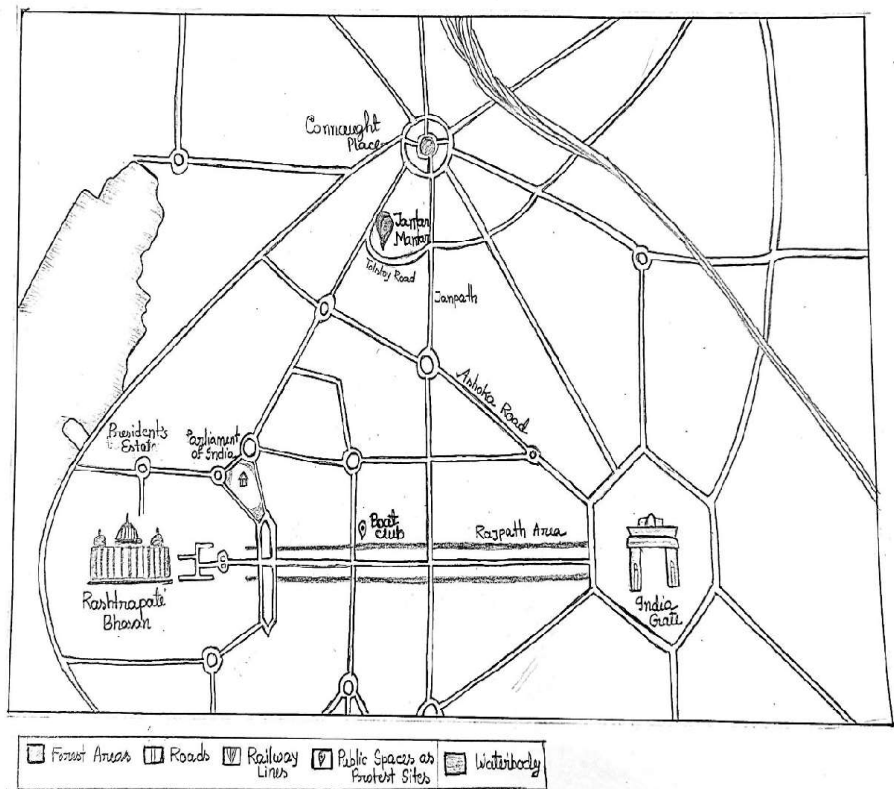
capturing the essence of the city. The space was established during the Delhi Durbar of 1911, a celebration marking the coronation of King George V and Queen Mary as the Emperor and Empress of India. This event also marked the return of the capital to Delhi, the former centre of Mughal power. Even after independence, the country did not hesitate to embrace the colonial capital as a part of its identity (Handmade Map 2). Thus, it is rightfully said – ‘Nowhere is this democratisation of the British-built capital as visible as that in the vast expanse of land on Rajpath, around India Gate.’ (Roychowdhury 2021). With the independence achieved from the shackles of colonial rule, colonial capital was also welcomed in the new Independent India, and the Kingsway was renamed with a translation into the indigenous language, Rajpath. The celebration of Independence Day at the Red Fort symbolises the victory of the nationalist movement. However, to fully integrate the colonial city into the newly independent nation, Republic Day was established to be celebrated at Rajpath. This event also allowed citizens to showcase their democratic spirit throughout the rest of the year. However, it later turns its back on the allocation of dissenters in the space (Guha p. 8). The following handmade map portrays this close vicinity of the space to the power structures of the Capital. But as space was denied in the later years of independence, the voice of the citizens was lost in the designated areas of protest.



Handmade Map 2 – Formerly known as ‘Kingsway’, becoming Rajpath, and the Boat Club, along with the Rajpath welcomes people’s access and expression of dissent

After this, in 1993, the government designated Jantar Mantar as the official site for protests in the city (Mehrotra 2022). The decision came in the wake of a protest led by Tikait and the Bharatiya Kisan Sangh, which voiced concerns about pollution and security at the site. Consequently, legislation was passed to prohibit collective actions at the Boat Club. Rajpath, which had been embraced after a change in its English name and celebrated as a gathering place for all citizens, was quickly viewed as a threat to the government, similar to how nationalists were seen as a threat to British colonial rule. The accessibility of the public in the central space, which had the opportunity to hold the state power accountable and respond to their demands, became obsolete (Guha 2017). Similarly, in *Raptiley Rajpath*, Indira Dangi offers a compelling analysis of Rajpath, portraying it as a site where power is

showcased and controlled. In the novel, the central character undergoes a profound disillusionment while on Rajpath, a symbolic avenue representing power and political drama. As he traverses this grand thoroughfare, he recognises the stark disparity between the ruling class and the general populace, gaining insight into how the splendour of Rajpath masks the marginalisation of ordinary citizens – “Dillee kee chamak mein main jaise dhundhalee parachhaee, har kadam par takaraata hoon kisee chamakadaar sheeshe se, par chehara kabhee saaf nahin dikhata.” Translated as “I feel like a hazy shadow in Delhi’s glare, crashing against every glossy pane, yet never seeing my face clearly.” (Dangi 2017). This introspective journey of the narrator Virat serves as a broader indictment of the co-option of public spaces in India, particularly Rajpath, for political pageantry and suppression. Thus, the displacement of the designated space for protest to Jantar Mantar distanced the visibility of the dissent from those in power (Handmade Map 3).

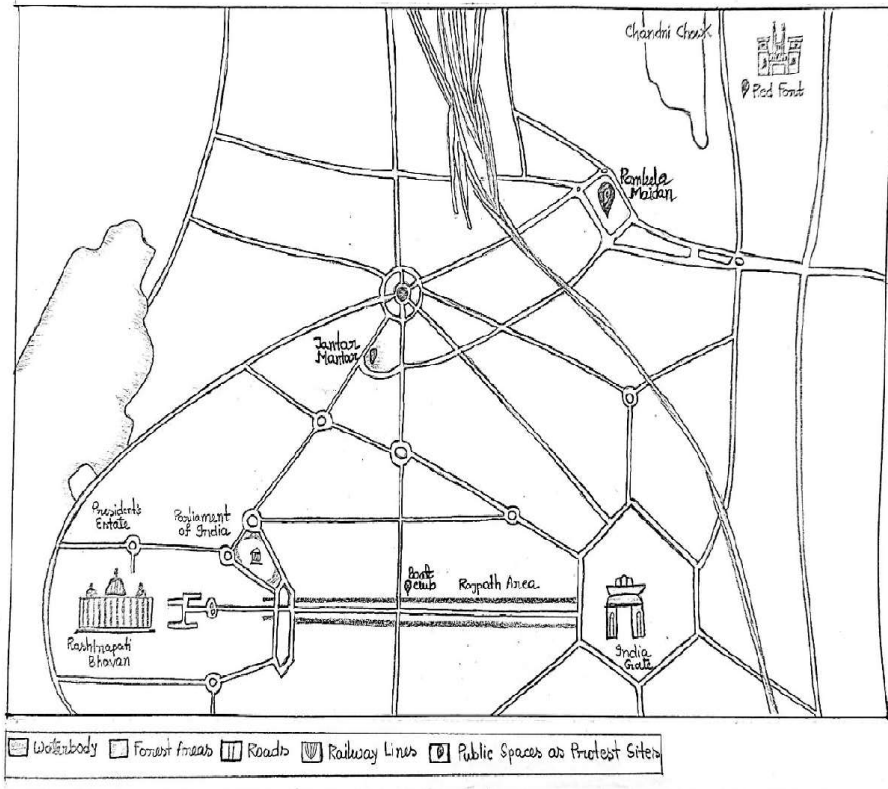


### Handmade Map 3 – The relocation of the protestors from Rajpath to Jantar Mantar in 1993

“Between the lawns of Rajpath and the barricaded borders of Delhi today, we see the city becoming increasingly hostile to dissent. The state wants to keep the protestors out, and the general public accepts the rhetoric of disruption with ease” (Zuberi 2021). The Capital city, behaving like a hostile host for protesters nowadays, again takes us back to Guha’s book, illustrating the lawns of Rajpath in New Delhi as a ‘village of tents.’ This warm welcome for people coming from across the country to air their issues in the central space of the city had become a matter of the past after its consideration as defamatory and subsequent displacement at Jantar Mantar. The removal of tents from central space thus ran due to the colonial attitude of the governance, calling for unquestioned subservience. Since then, the Jantar Mantar has provided space for various protests and, a few years ago, called out following, ironically, the ‘rhetoric of disruption’. ‘Jantar Mantar gave way to a more diluted form of protest, like the government wanted...Protesting voices can, thus, no longer march to the largest governmental bastions in the city and force leaders to heed their voices. Instead, they are expected to stay put and wait for the government to come to them if it ever does.’ (Mehrotra 2022).

The protests at later designated spaces were further chained by allowing only scheduled protesting hours. Protests at Jantar Mantar thus lost the same visibility and accountability and faced restrictive mobility. In this way, the distancing point that started in 1988 continues even today with an ever-increasing socio-spatial inequality. Places designated by authority serve only the power interests and diminish the visibility and accountability of protests. Protesters are thus still a threat, regardless of who holds the power position. So, the far, the better they are for the powerholders. The following depiction (Handmade Map 4), therefore, showcases the increasing distance of the later designated space of Rameela Maidan, far away from the centre of the city and, thus, further

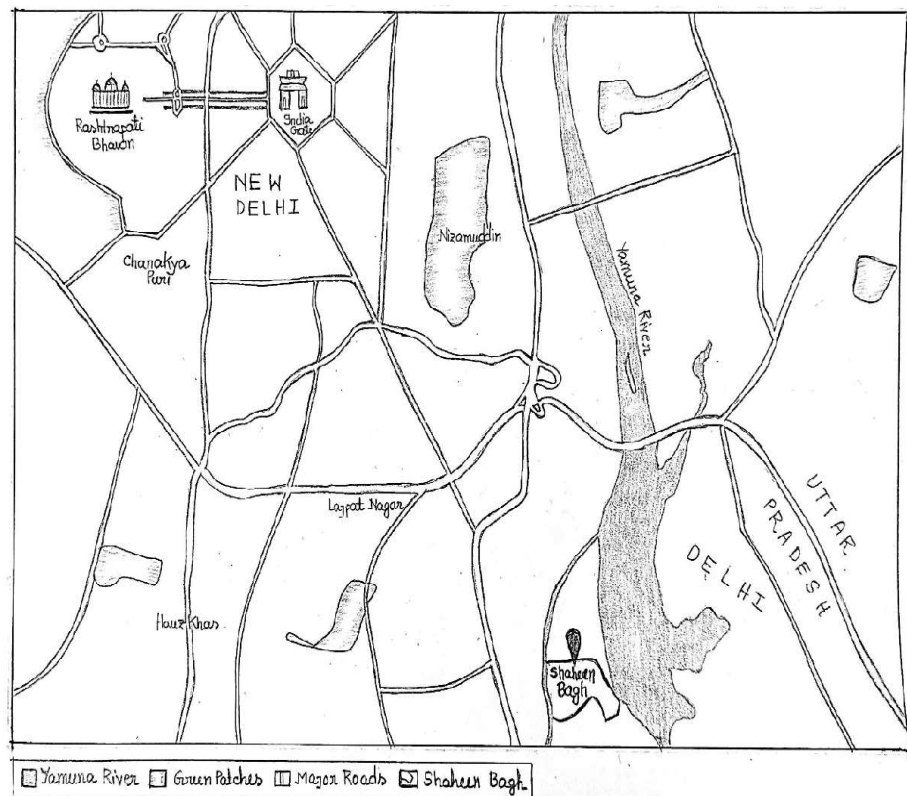
losing the 2 Vs required for protesters. Thus, the following map illustrates the later designation of the protest site from Jantar Mantar to Ramleela Maidan, indicating a greater distance from the city's centre.



Handmade Map 4 – Further proposal for the displacement of the protesters from Jantar Mantar to Ramleela Maidan by NGT in 2017

The designations and implicit denial led to opportunities for accessing subaltern public spaces and the creation of new spaces through occupation and claiming. During a conversation with Mr. Zuberi, he highlighted an important point: “Shaheen is a subaltern public space located in the urban villages of the capital. There is a denial present in the protesters’ choice of this space, rather than opting to claim or march toward a Central space.” The subaltern counterpublics (Fraser 2016) were seen claiming a space that the majority of residents from the Capital had completely been unaware of (Salem and Ausaf 2020). That is why the space is subaltern, unrecognised, and inhabited by people

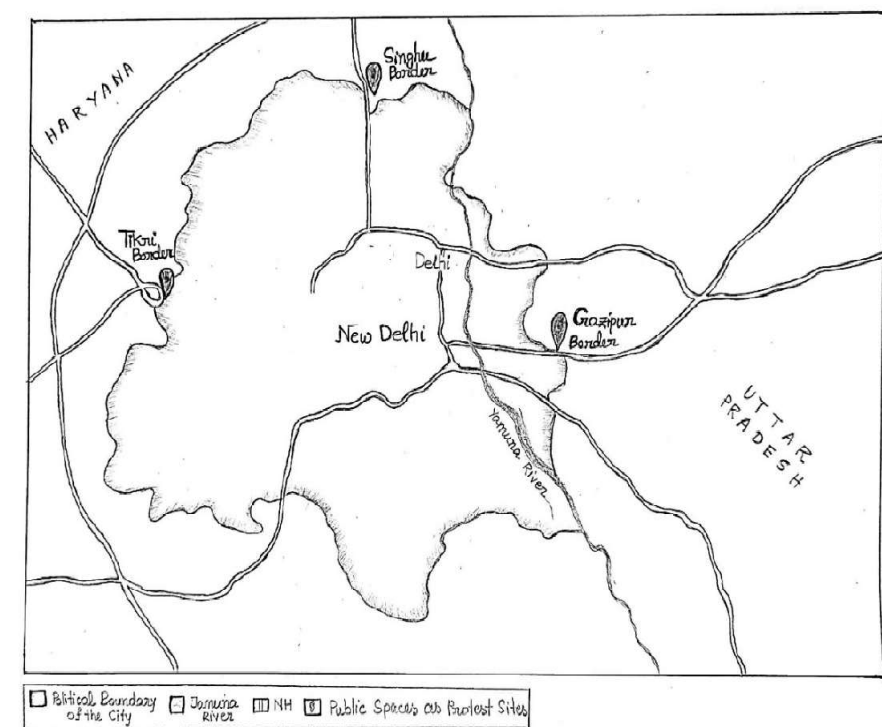
who are socioeconomically and politically excluded from the Capital. Therefore, rising against a discourse and a law, and the stereotypical confines of the society ‘where women’s domestic responsibilities overshadowed any other potential they may have in their inner reservoirs’ (Salem and Ausaf 2020), the women claimed the public spaces that were in their vicinity. They set an example and inspiration for others. The space emerged as a response to all forms of boundaries, becoming a platform for expressing and sharing diverse viewpoints. It successfully provided equal visibility and ensured the thoughtful inclusion of individuals from all demographics and age groups. Shaheen Bagh protestors, thus, denied and displaced, interestingly availed visibility though they had resolved to stay away from ‘the citadel of Indian politics’ (Zuberi). Therefore, the equation of visibility, closely tied to the vicinity, was changed. The space of Sheen Bagh, though far away from the centre of the city (Handmade Map 5), rises to recognition as a created space through protest. This handmade map illustrates the distance of the subaltern, created space from the city centre.



## Handmade Map 5 – Creation of space at Shaheen Bagh (2019-20)

Given that visibility and vicinity are inherently interconnected elements that can bolster the impact of protests, it is important to note that their relationship is not static. Protest movements have the ability to modify the dynamics between visibility and vicinity to effectively achieve their objectives by employing innovative and adaptable strategies. These strategies may involve the utilisation of digital tools, identification of symbolic locations, establishment of decentralised networks, adoption of hybrid approaches, and an acute awareness of the surrounding context. Through a comprehensive understanding and manipulation of these factors, activists can optimise their influence, navigate challenges posed by repression, and sustain momentum in a variety of environments.

However, this displacement persisted without limits, reaching an extreme where farmers were not even allowed to enter the city. The denial of space went to the extreme, obstructing farmers from even entering the capital and thus creating new places of recognition at the city's fringes – Sighu, Tikri, and Gazipur (Handmade Map 6). Slowly, the people's claim in the central space was removed and naturalised.



Handmade Map 6 – Due to the denial and displacement, the borders of the Capital become protest sites with the Farmers’ Protests (2020-21)

This reflects a colonial attitude that paradoxically believes the idea of protest/dissent has been brought from the West. A particular space for protest becomes important for availing visibility and making the voices of claims heard. But the central space’s unacceptance laid bare the binary of government and citizens.

This discussion gradually shifts to the changing protest sites in relation to the Master Plan for Delhi. The Delhi Master Plan 2041, created for urban development following the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi Amendment Act (GNCTD) of 2021, has faced criticism for adopting an outdated top-down approach reminiscent of traditional UK models. This has raised concerns about its effectiveness in shaping a future plan for the capital. The changing times require a new approach to address gaps in previous plans.

However, strengthening the existing authoritarian methods in urban development promotes imposition rather than involvement. The word ‘Master’ thus holds irony for inefficacy in excluding people from the city-making; a plan to be materialised in the coming decades. A retreat in urban planning has been claimed due to the development plan induced by the GNCTD, which disregards local opinions and accessibility.

## **2.8 Real and Privatised Public Spaces**

The conversation about public spaces and accessibility would be incomplete without addressing the recent rise of privatised public spaces in urban environments. These spaces often promise safety and create an ‘illusion of access’ (Phadke 2006), but they primarily serve a specific class or section of society. As this overgrowing presence of privatised public spaces frequently engulfs real public spaces, a probe is important

into the question of accessibility, asking whether they grant the same amount of access. The former's increased reputation in urban areas as 'new public spaces in the city' (Phadke 2006) is beguiling in offering publicness.

Furthermore, the privatised public spaces majorly furnish a paid form of access within a frame of scheduled hours, provide restrictive social interaction, and deny 'undesirable populations' (Németh and Schmidt). In this way, these spaces are more vulnerable to calling upon monitoring and controlling mechanisms. This suggests that a type of 'spatial control' operates under the guise of promoting usage and accessibility. This manipulation can create environments that, while appearing inviting, ultimately restrict genuine public engagement. Therefore, it is crucial that we take immediate action to identify these spaces. We must distinguish them from real public spaces that foster open interaction and inclusivity. By doing so, we can ensure that public spaces remain authentic and serve their intended purpose of being accessible and welcoming to all individuals.

This criticism of privatised public spaces also necessitates an explanation for their increasing establishment. Capitalistic pursuits and rising consumerism, combined with a neoliberal agenda that constantly emphasises productivity, are fundamentally opposed to loitering and collective actions in occupation movements. As a result, these privatised spaces hold significant potential to become the 'Vanguard of deregulation' (Mattelart). As commented by Prof. Talib, cited in Salem and Ausaf's book *Shaheen Bagh From Protest to a Movement* - "Sociologically speaking, humanity needs a threshold of relative deprivation to produce the extra sociality that is usually missing in areas where the majority may be characterised by high achievers. Perforce, individuals, groups, and institutions heavily integrated in the serious productive frame of society are also depleted of creative resources to foster active citizenry." This study discusses occupation movements that typically occur in public spaces, highlighting a distinction between two types of these spaces. Privatised public spaces, which allow only controlled use and access, cannot effectively host protests aimed at

holding the government accountable. Therefore, privatised public spaces could not be supported as metonyms of real public spaces.

## **2.9 Mapping the Displacement**

This research explores the spatial dimensions of protest while aiming to raise awareness about the accessibility of public spaces. It highlights the transformations of spaces designated for dissent, tracing a path from the Red Fort during the pre-independence era to the Rajpath Boat Club after independence, then to Jantar Mantar in 1993, and finally to Ramleela Maidan in 2017. Recently, the city has witnessed the occupation of subaltern public spaces and even areas on the borders, with participants remarkably gaining visibility through their unique approaches to accessing these spaces. These locations are emerging from obscurity, coming into the spotlight, and providing a safe environment for women.

To visualise the process of denial, the handmade maps presented in the previous section utilised sensory mapping and Google Maps to illustrate denial, designation, and creation. This exploration targeted unconventional public spaces. Sensory mapping refers to a method of mapping based on the sensory experiences gathered from visiting a particular location. Early-stage architects often create these types of sketches to brainstorm alternative architectural solutions. In addition to sensory mapping, the sketches incorporated Google Maps; however, they did not adhere to the exact latitudinal and longitudinal scale. Only major roads were depicted, while details were concentrated in specific focus areas. This mapping aimed to provide a preliminary view of the denial discussed in this study. The series of depictions range from microscopic to telescopic, with the frame expanding to include more components as the scope increases.

Urban planners can use sensory maps to understand the diverse experiences and needs of various populations. This understanding enables them to design public spaces that accommodate a wide range of individuals. By incorporating these lived, sensory experiences into the

design process, planners can ensure that urban environments function effectively while also enhancing the well-being, social connectivity, and accessibility of the community. This approach is essential for creating vibrant, adaptable cities that prioritise the needs of their residents.

The second part of the mapping method involved the use of Quantum GIS (QGIS), which is an open-source software platform known for its user-friendly interface and robust capabilities in visualising and analysing geospatial data. This tool allowed for a comprehensive approach to mapping public spaces (Figure 6). In this phase, all relevant qualitative information, such as the names and types of public spaces, was gathered alongside quantitative data, including precise latitude and longitude coordinates. This accumulated data provides a clear, detailed understanding of each public space described in this chapter (Figure 7), facilitating an analysis and discussion of their characteristics and significance within the community.

#### Spatial Denial and Displacement

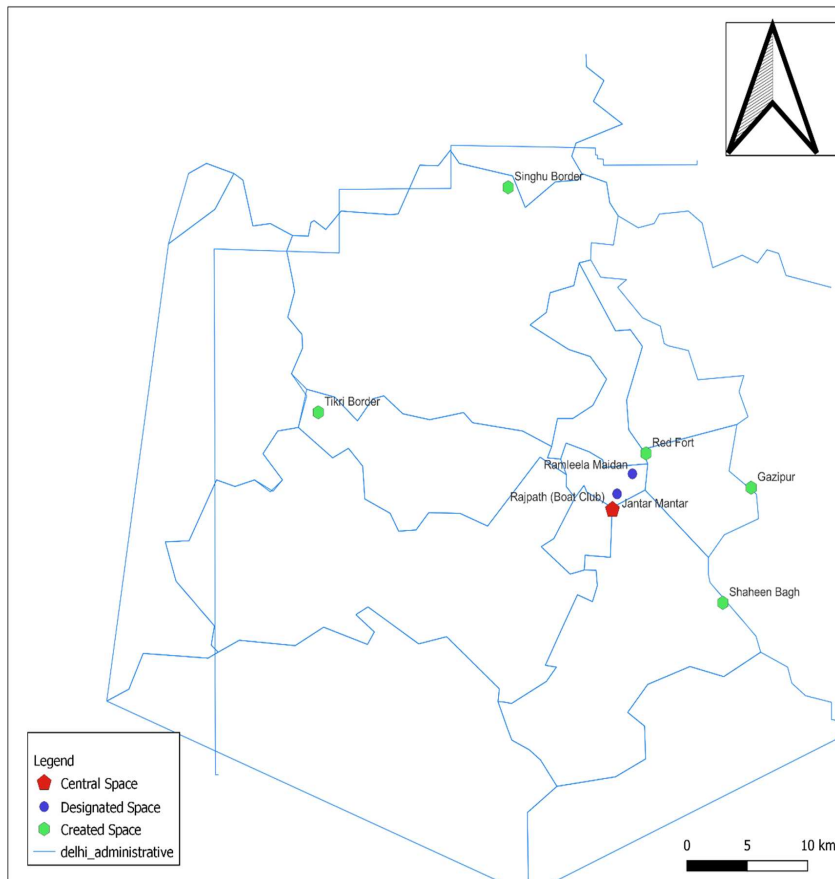


Figure 6 – Showing the designation, displacement, and creation of public spaces as protest sites on the cityscape of Delhi

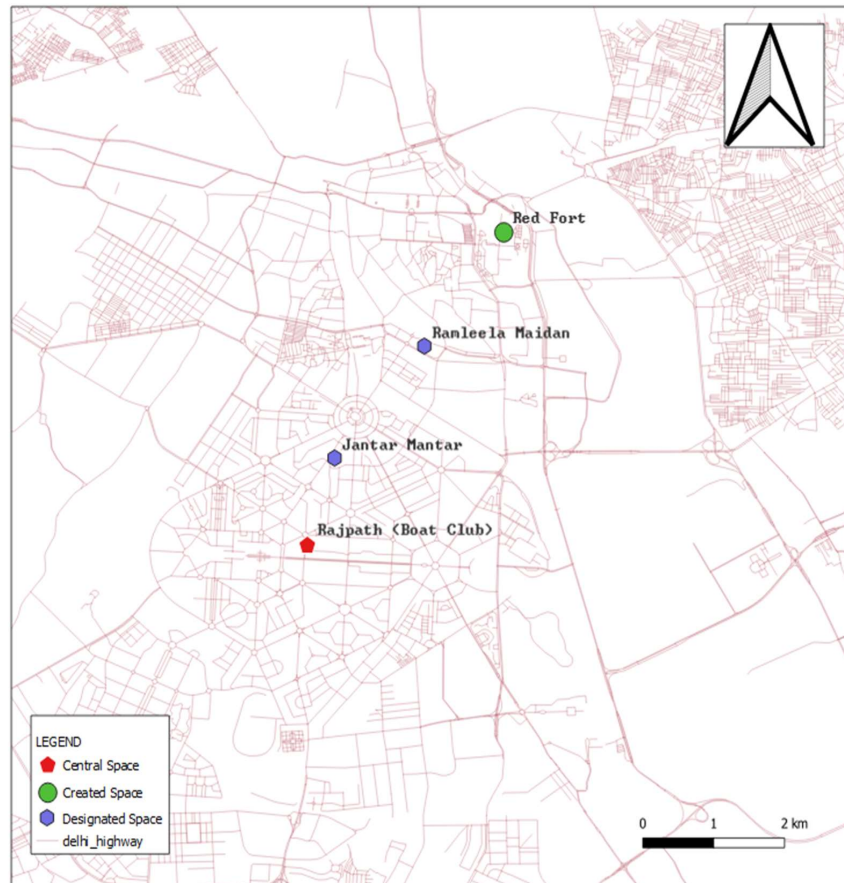


Figure 7 – A close look at the central space of the city showing the designation and creation of space

## 2.10 Challenges of a DH Scholar

This methodology highlights the challenges and learning curve involved in transitioning from analogue practices, such as textual analysis, handmade maps created through sensory mapping, and Google Maps, to minimal computing, specifically using QGIS for visualisation. This shift presents an opportunity for enhanced accessibility, creativity, and reproducibility (Chauhan et al., 2023). Overall, the handmade

sketches and subsequent digital maps illustrate the step-by-step learning journey of a first-generation Digital Humanities scholar in the mapping field. The visualisations have been analysed to reveal transformations in public space and the increasing lack of accessibility.

The process of a digital humanities scholar transitioning from traditional, analogue techniques to digital methodologies is a multifaceted journey that involves navigating changes in tools, methods, and the academic environment (Svensson 2010). This transition signifies a shift in research practices and presents broader challenges related to technological adaptation, particularly in the absence of adequate infrastructure to facilitate digital scholarship. In this way, the research here glides from following analogue practices of closely reading literary texts and preparing handmade maps to the utilisation of GIS to capture the historical changes. Also, other data visualisation techniques, like creating graphs and timelines, helped in showing relationships among variables and trends.

Thus, this process of transitioning from traditional to digital in the field of digital humanities can be quite arduous, especially when confronted with a lack of technological infrastructure. Despite facing obstacles such as limited resources, technical barriers, and resistance from academic institutions, numerous scholars manage to overcome these challenges through perseverance, adaptability, and innovative thinking. They often find ways to make the most of the available tools, establish collaborative networks, and conduct research that has a meaningful impact, ultimately contributing to the digital transformation of the humanities. The analysis based on the mapping methodologies highlights the growing trend of created spaces for protests in recent times. This trend (Figure 8) reflects the decreasing accessibility and overwhelming authoritative structures that limit public access.

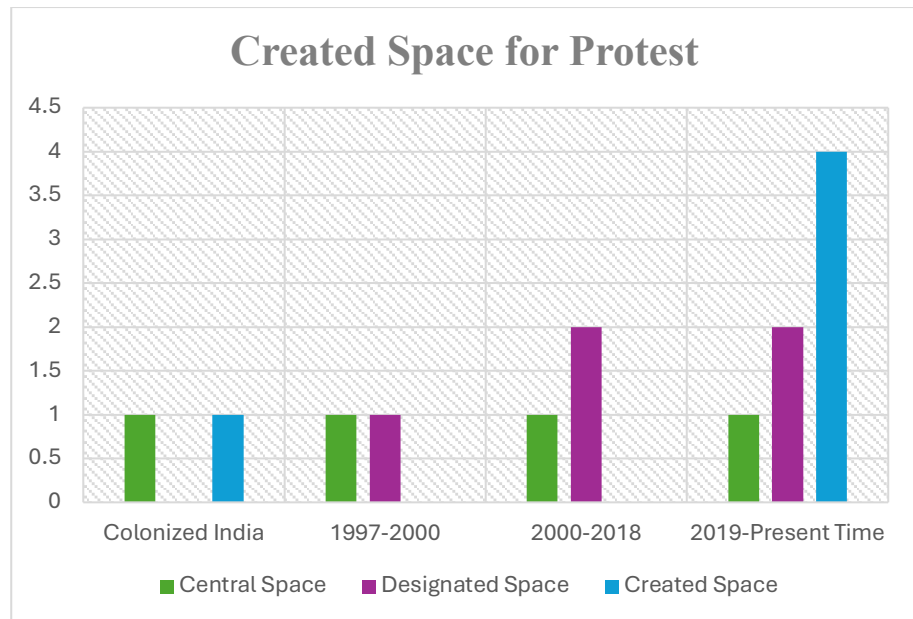


Figure 8 – The rising number of Created Spaces for Protest with the growing designations and displacement of protest sites

## 2.11 Maps and Texts in Analysing Spatiality and Temporality of Public Spaces

Maps and texts in analysing the spatiality and temporality of public spaces promote an interdisciplinary approach to understanding the complexities of public spaces and how they evolve in meaning and function over time and across diverse geographical contexts. In this chapter, we delve into a rich array of literary texts, including city literature, protest literature, and insightful media reports. These sources allow us to capture the multifaceted subjective experiences, intricate narratives, and often contentious debates that are closely tied to specific locations. On the other hand, through the lens of spatial data, we examine physical elements such as urban layouts, geographical boundaries, patterns of circulation, land usage, and zoning regulations. This data provides a visual representation of how urban environments have changed in terms of accessibility and functionality over time. However, alongside this quantitative analysis, our exploration of literary texts adds a vital layer of depth and richness. By drawing connections between the narrative-driven experiences presented in literature and the

spatial realities illustrated in maps, we gain a more holistic understanding of public spaces and the profound ways they are interwoven with human stories and societal dynamics.

This chapter, therefore, uniquely offers a comprehensive examination of how literature and maps collaboratively depict the longstanding spatial denial of protest sites in Delhi. Through a detailed analysis of literary texts that centre on these protest locations, we uncover significant evidence illustrating the ongoing process of denial that has affected these spaces over the years. In addition to literary analysis, we employ handmade maps developed through sensory mapping techniques that vividly represent the various stages of this denial process. These maps not only highlight the physical geography of the protest sites but also reflect the emotional and sensory experiences associated with them.

When we synthesise these handmade maps, they form a sequential narrative that articulates the systematic denial faced by these protest sites (as illustrated in Figure 9). This visual narrative has been digitised and integrated into QGIS, allowing for enhanced analysis and accessibility, thus transforming our understanding of the spatial dynamics at play in the city of Delhi.

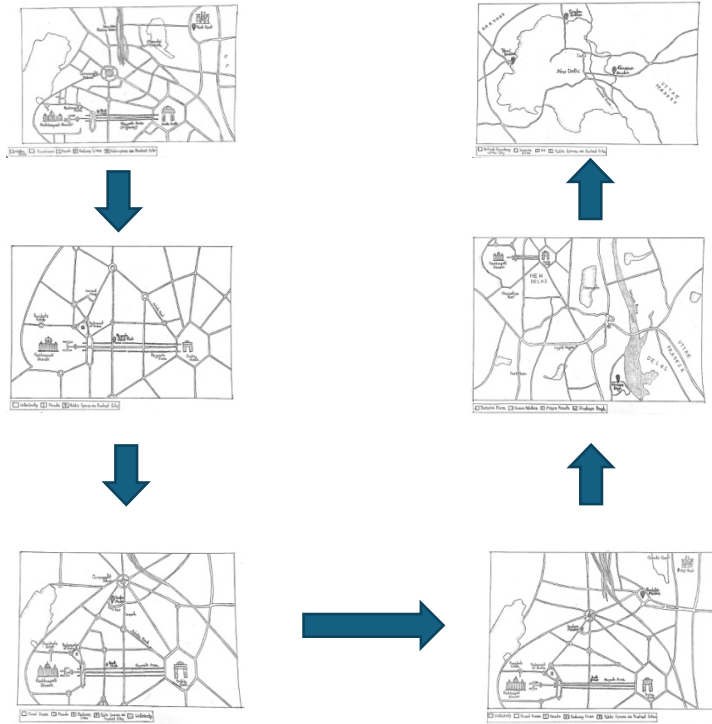


Figure 9 – Narrative of denial through the handmade maps

## 2.12 Conclusion

To conclude this chapter, we can say that the protest sites detailed in this chapter are fundamentally public spaces, and the protests that have occurred at various times represent an assertion of those public spaces. The denial of access, through various means, and the resulting displacement have significantly reduced the public’s ability to engage with these spaces. This historical process, as illustrated in the city of Delhi, reflects the state of public spaces in many other urban areas across the country. Ultimately, this research aims to explore these issues further.

The literature review has presented various perspectives from different authors who assess the role of space in specific protests. Some authors highlight the significance of the protests, while others discuss public space monitoring and acknowledge opposing viewpoints. Throughout this process, we have aimed to integrate these arguments while developing our own perspective. This analysis of protests, particularly in the context of public space where these events typically

occur, incorporates discussions about protests, public space, people, literature, and architecture. This chapter has consistently addressed the significance of public spaces and the need for their preservation while highlighting their decline and shrinking availability. Special emphasis has been placed on theories related to the creation of these spaces, as they are central to the chapter's focus. With the rise of consumer culture, privatisation, and neoliberal agendas shaping urban design, the public is often viewed merely as potential consumers. In this context, the protesters find their voices exercised in the created spaces.

The chapter consists of a two-part analysis: the first part theorises the concept of public space, while the second part visualises the displacement that has occurred over the years and decades. The research here aims to examine protests from various spatial perspectives to address a specific research gap. Articles and texts related to different protest sites, both within and outside the country, are considered in this discussion. Above all, all the viewpoints and various angles of viewing the phenomena have been incorporated to study Delhi's protests and public spaces within a specific temporal scope. Moreover, while talking about public spaces and their importance, the research also makes an effort to touch upon the architecture and the perspective of urban development. Public space is generally linked with city design and urban planning. Architecture can be driven towards facilitation or, conversely, be developed, albeit at the expense of accessibility. The rhetoric of protection and security, disruption, and polluted surroundings is used to put a check on the people's right to the city.

The chapter initially suggests that the colonial mindset, which sidelined protests in favour of various engagement strategies, persists today. However, it later reveals that inequality remains a constant issue, regardless of who holds power. This difference in positions creates a power hierarchy, reinforcing a spatial divide. In this context, the free movement and accessibility of individuals are viewed as threats to state power.

## **Chapter 3**

# **Changing Street Patterns, Market Aesthetics, and Accessibility: Analysis of Public Spaces in the Indian Context**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The concept of public space has been extensively explored, including discussions about its significance, functions, and architectural design. However, a single research study cannot address the diversity of public spaces, the construction of the public sphere, instances of exclusion, and the decline of public spaces. Each type of public space possesses unique characteristics and distinct improvement strategies. Therefore, following the spatial denial shown in the previous chapter, this chapter focuses on two key types of public spaces in urban settings: streets and marketplaces. It analyses the social and economic functions generated by these spaces. The chapter examines how the material qualities, patterns, and aesthetics of streets and marketplaces have evolved as the city of Delhi has developed over different historical periods. With its rich history of rulers, shifts in governance, and changing architectural styles, this chapter explores various streets and marketplaces of Delhi. This chapter, therefore, first explores the roles of these spaces in functioning as public areas and details the varying architectural patterns that influence their development in the city. In doing so, it challenges the overarching Eurocentric perspectives on the conceptualisation of public spaces. This chapter, in this way, examines the historical evolution of architectural changes in Delhi, and follows postcolonial urbanism (Chatterjee 2004; Bhan 2016) in critiquing the top-down approach in future planning models that overlook contextual practices and needs.

Eurocentric urban design in India refers to the profound historical and continuing impact of Western architectural and planning ideals on the evolution of Indian cities. This dominance frequently

marginalises indigenous spatial practices, rich cultural contexts, and the diverse social needs of local communities. The hallmark features of this urban design are strikingly evident in the imposition of top-down planning that often leads to disconnections between planners and the realities of everyday life. Zoning and segregation create stark divisions, fragmenting neighbourhoods and disrupting social cohesion. Furthermore, aesthetic formalism prioritises style over substance, yielding visually appealing but functionally inadequate spaces. Moreover, this approach neglects informal practices, often the heartbeat of urban life, and disregards the organic, adaptive responses of communities to their environments. This design philosophy promotes an imposed sense of modernity that can feel alien and dissonant within India's heritage. Thus, the legacy of Eurocentric urbanism continues to shape Indian cities, raising critical questions about identity, community, and belonging (Roy 2005; Anjaria 2006; Chakrabarty 2008; Mehrotra 2011).

Therefore, in this chapter, we aim to showcase the historical evolution of public spaces, particularly streets, marketplaces, and their intersection in street trading in the city, through a combination of literary analysis, historical map exploration, field visits, and urban sketching. This diverse approach enables us to trace the city's transformation step by step over different periods and to highlight the current distinctions between the two parts of the city. Our analysis also emphasises the ongoing urbanisation that is expanding the city's borders. Through this, our objective in this chapter is to present an overview of public spaces in the context of the city of Delhi, a city that has undergone various changes and challenges over time. Consequently, we follow postcolonial urbanism in examining the DDA master plans and critique their effectiveness in envisioning the city's future, as they have failed to adequately consider the design principles rooted in the city's complex historical evolution.

### 3.2 Historical Evolution of Public Spaces in India

The concept of public space in India has undergone a remarkable evolution, shaped by historical, economic, and socio-political changes. From the gathering places of ancient civilisations, where communities bonded over cultural practices and marketplace exchanges, to the imposing colonial structures that redefined urban landscapes, each era has left its mark. In ancient India, urban spaces held architectural and religious significance, and cities were designed to reflect their social and ritualistic functions (Smith 2024). Again, the historical origins of gardens in ancient India highlight their role as public spaces for social and cultural gatherings (Kapadia 2021). During the colonial period, India underwent major changes in its public spaces. These changes were shaped by British urban planning, social and political factors, as well as cultural dialogues. For example, the role of religion in early modern South India offers valuable insights that can enhance our understanding of secularisation beyond traditional Eurocentric design models, which often overlook the region's unique historical context. The concept of 'space' emerges as a vital medium for the public sharing and discussion of religious meanings among diverse castes, languages, and religious communities. The 'Sacred Games of Śiva' in the city of Madurai serve as a compelling example of how religious narratives can significantly enrich public life and shape urban identity during periods of transformation (Fisher 2018). Again, the history of neighbourhoods or 'para' in colonial Calcutta looks at how these unique areas developed in the city during colonial times (Sengupta 2018). These spatial entities serve as vital platforms for nurturing and negotiating community identities within the urban landscape. Paras act as liminal spaces that effectively connect the private and public spheres, playing an essential role in shaping the social and cultural fabric of the city even today. Understanding the processes that led to the development of paras offers valuable insights into the dynamic relationship between spatial organisation in colonial Calcutta. Again, the post-independence period marked the beginning of numerous urban planning initiatives focused

on creating inclusive public spaces that embodied the aspirations of a new nation. In more recent years, the emergence of neoliberal policies has complicated this landscape, adding new dynamics and challenges as urban spaces become increasingly commercialised. Together, these factors create a complex narrative that shapes our understanding of public spaces in contemporary India.

These transitions across various historical periods illustrate the evolving nature of public spaces in India. These spaces possess a distinctive identity, reflecting the influences of diverse ruling authorities over time. Together, they offer a comprehensive understanding of what defines public space in contemporary India. Delhi, in particular, exemplifies the nation's vigour, showcasing the legacies of different rulers throughout its history. Consequently, the public spaces within the city encapsulate this evolution, with each area presenting unique characteristics shaped by its historical context. However, the prevalence of Eurocentric models often diminishes this native, contextual architecture, imposing a framework that reveals the enduring effects of colonialism on the city.

In this modern era, cities largely adopt Eurocentric architectural models, which sideline the integration of local history, culture, and practices. Therefore, the subversion of these architectural designs in India's public spaces involves incorporating native cultural components, traditional practices, and local needs. This approach alters the original intent of these designs in Indian cities, creating environments that cater to the specific requirements of their inhabitants.

The traditional role of streets in India is to offer essential public spaces for social interaction, cultural festivities, and community gatherings. The spatial and social dynamics that shape street experiences and culture manifest at various levels. However, the Eurocentric urban approaches tend to prioritise vehicular traffic flow and standardised aesthetics, which can diminish the traditional social functions of Indian streets (Mandhan, 2014). Such approaches often neglect the vibrant street life, informal and unstructured economies, and diverse socio-political activities that are integral to the fabric of Indian urban

environments. Therefore, urban spaces are continually shaped and transformed in response to a variety of contemporary developments, the aspirations of local communities, and diverse architectural influences (Raj, 2023). This evolution reflects a shift away from Eurocentric designs, allowing for a more inclusive approach that celebrates and incorporates the local population's unique identities and cultural narratives. By embracing elements that resonate with the community, urban environments can foster residents' sense of belonging and pride while promoting diversity and sustainability. Also, transitional spaces in Indian architecture, including courtyards and verandas, play a vital role in bridging the gap between public and private areas (Sadanand, 2020). They enhance the overall functionality and aesthetic appeal of a building, promoting a harmonious flow between differing environments. These indigenous architectural features not only improve the experience of space but also challenge traditional Eurocentric design principles. By ordering human connection and responsiveness to the local climate, they reflect a deep understanding of the environment and community that contrasts sharply with more rigid, individualistic designs.

As a result, the development of public spaces in India has followed a distinctive path when compared to those in Western countries. This divergence is significantly influenced by India's diverse cultural traditions, numerous social structures, and complex historical experiences. For instance, while many Western public spaces are designed primarily for recreation and leisure, Indian public areas often serve as hubs for gatherings, interaction, and cultural expression. In cities like Delhi and Mumbai, bustling markets, colourful festivals, and open-air gatherings reflect the country's dynamic social fabric, showcasing how history and culture shape these communal environments. Therefore, the relevance of Western public space theories in Eastern cities is frequently challenged. Western models, with their emphasis on carefully designed and structured environments, starkly contrast with the multifaceted nature of Indian public spaces (Panjaitan 2020).

This chapter, thus, guided by this background and literature review, will follow a specific flow (see Figure 10). It begins with an exploration of the historical development and evolution of public spaces in India, highlighting the distinct differences from the developmental path taken in the West. Next, the chapter examines how colonial influences have significantly impacted the stricter separation between public and private life. Following this analysis, the focus shifts to the post-independence period, where the design principles in India, particularly in Delhi, as relevant to this thesis, reflect Eurocentric urban theories. This exploration presents a postcolonial perspective on urbanism. Finally, the chapter assesses potential future transformations in the urban landscape through a visualisation and analysis of the DDA Master Plan.

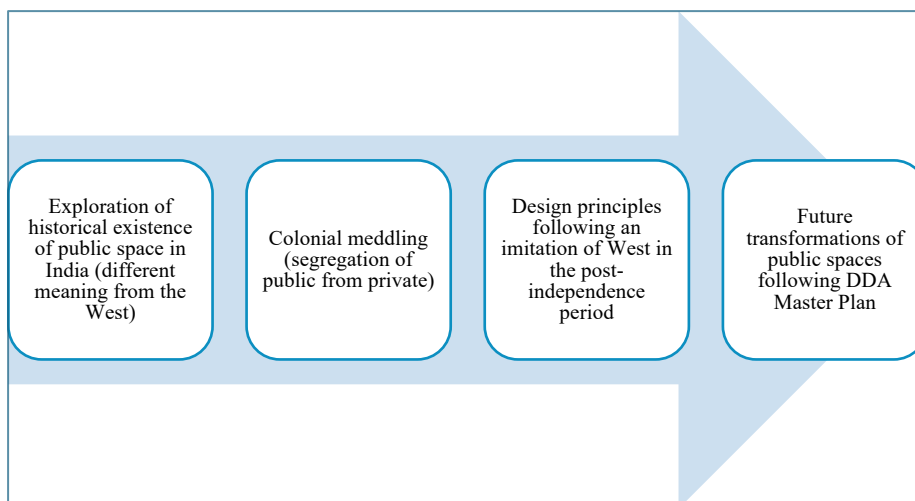


Figure 10 – Flow chart on the analysis of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Chapter

### 3.3 Chapter Aims, Objectives, and Methodology

Thus, we see that the Eurocentric bourgeoisie's notion of imagining an open space for leisure and recreational activities as public space does not follow in this country, which has a colonial past and a history of diverse rulers. The notion of public space is viewed here as closely aligned with private space, where private activities extend into public space and installed infrastructures, often imitating Western

models, are subverted for livelihood generation (Anjaria 2006). Therefore, it is essential to examine how the concept of public spaces has evolved from the pre-colonial period to the present day. This involves understanding the changes that have occurred and assessing the ongoing impact of colonialism, which continues to influence contemporary society. In the previous chapter, the transformations exhibited spatial denial; however, in this chapter, tracing the transformations reveals a colonial past and the evolution of public space in India across different periods.

In this chapter, we aim to explore the transformation, displacement, and perceived decline of public spaces. We recognise that public spaces, such as parks, streets, and squares, have diverse characteristics, each requiring a specific approach to enhance inclusion and accessibility. Since the scope of this chapter does not allow for an extensive examination of all these spaces, we will focus specifically on streets and marketplaces as two key public areas within an urban environment. These two public spaces form the key aspects of any urban landscape. They are fundamental in the residents' lives and are frequented on a daily basis. Streets fulfil an essential social function, whereas marketplaces primarily serve economic purposes. Moreover, street trading represents a convergence of these two elements, integrating social and economic activities in the daily lives of residents. We continue to focus on Delhi, the capital city of India, which has a rich history influenced by various rulers before it became the nation's capital. The chapter spans a temporal scope from the late 19th century to future urban planning efforts. This timeframe offers valuable opportunities to analyse the spatial transformations within Delhi's landscape, examining how the city has evolved into what it is today and the direction it is heading. Delhi reflects the country's historical journey, having experienced shifts in power dynamics and numerous changes throughout its existence.

This chapter, therefore, aims to uncover new insights into the city's public spaces, particularly the streets and marketplaces, by examining their literary descriptions and understanding how they have

emerged and transformed over time. The exploration follows a dedicated flow, moving from the city to descriptions of its public spaces. The goal is to illustrate the evolving patterns and architecture of streets and markets, highlighting two key types of public spaces. This analysis will focus on street life and marketplaces, and the intersection of these two public spaces, particularly in relation to street trading.

The literary works that have been analysed in this chapter are – Usha Dyal Kumar’s *Phool Waalon ki Sair* (2008), Khushwant Singh’s *Delhi: A Novel* (1990), and R. V. Smith’s *Lingering Charms of Delhi: Myth, Lore and History* (2016). The reason for selecting these three specific literary works from the shelves of Delhi Literature is as follows: Usha Dayal’s work portrays Delhi during the pre-colonial era. Khushwant Singh’s novel showcases the city through the lens of colonial changes and the post-independence period. Lastly, Smith’s writing uncovers many lesser-known stories of the city, reflecting its transformations across various time periods.

Also, this chapter employs a variety of methodologies (Figure 11) to achieve its objectives, including different types of maps sourced from various origins, such as cartographic records from the National Archives of India, online maps from the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) website, and field visits that involve observing public spaces and urban sketching. Our examination of historical cartographic records from the National Archives also explores the idea that, while maps may seem objective, they are influenced by power dynamics. Maps are inherently based on specific methodologies that originate from colonial practices and perspectives. These underlying assumptions often influence how geographical information is represented and interpreted, reflecting the historical contexts in which the maps were created. Therefore, our analysis of these cartographic records complements our study of primary literary texts, as we investigate the evolution of street patterns, market aesthetics, and street trading in the city of Delhi, which is the focus of this chapter in our thesis.

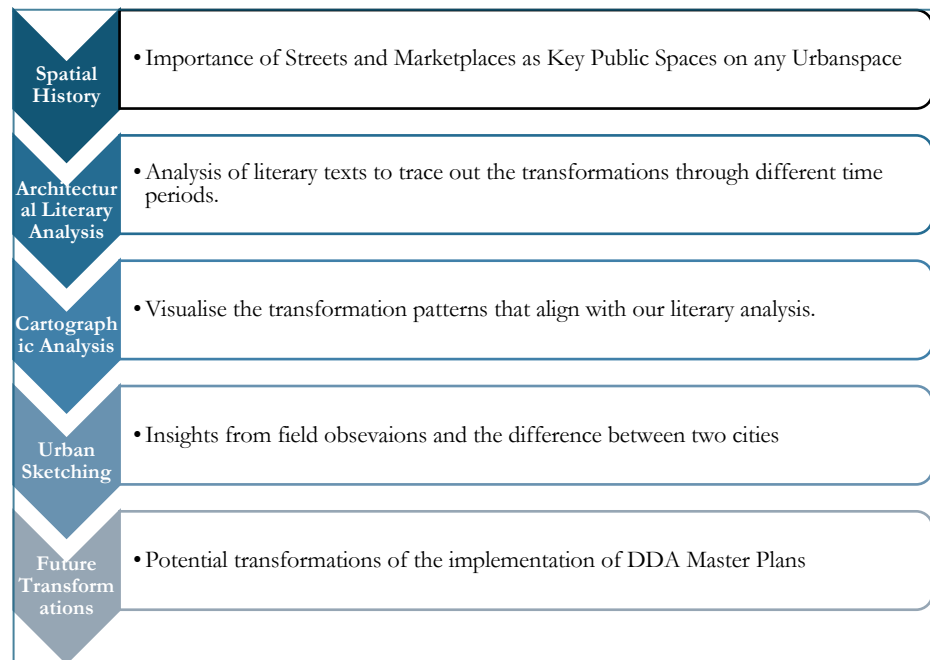


Figure 11 – Flow Chart on the Chapter’s Methodology

The chapter also analyses potential transformations that may occur as a result of planning strategies and Master Plans developed by the DDA. In doing so, it traces the evolution of the city and its public spaces through three perspectives: the past, present, and the future, proposing a holistic picture in this chapter (Figure 12).

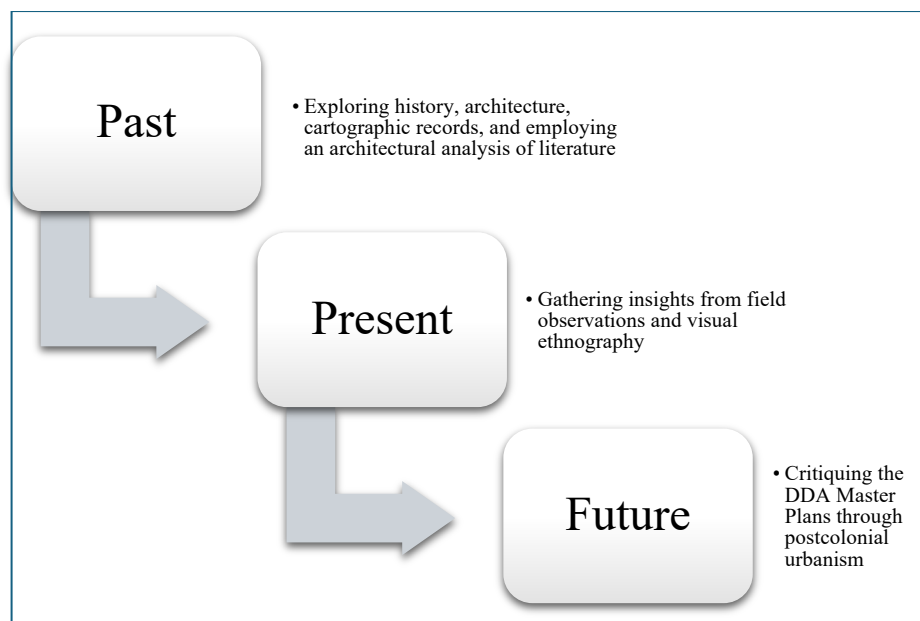


Figure 12 – Analysis of the evolution of public spaces through different time periods

### **3.4 Urban Architecture and Its Relationship with Social Order**

The aim of this chapter is to analyse how architectural interventions across different eras have changed the materiality of public spaces and, in turn, influenced various aspects of residents' lives. Therefore, understanding the relationship between architecture and society is crucial for initiating this discussion. Architects and their designs shape the city's structure, reflecting and refracting society's social, political, and economic evolution. J. Garner provides a comprehensive overview of the 'company towns' that developed during the early phases of the Industrial Age. In these towns, the architecture was deliberately designed to influence the social structure of the labourers living and working in those environments (Garner, p. 2-5, 1992). The distance between architects and ordinary people, combined with a top-down approach in planning and city development, creates conflicts. The top-down planning approach frequently denies the valuable input of community members, which can lead to the creation of spaces that do not effectively address local residents' unique needs and preferences. This disconnect often results in environments that lack relevance and usability for those who live and work in the vicinity. In response to this challenge, a growing movement is advocating for a participatory planning process. This approach emphasises collaboration and engagement, ensuring that the goals of institutions align with the aspirations and desires of the community (Sabatier 2008; Semeraro 2020). Thus, Henry Lefevre has stated in his *Writings on Cities* – "Architects seem to have established and dogmatized an ensemble of significations, as such poorly developed and variously labelled as 'function', 'form', 'structure', or rather, functionalism, formalism, structuralism." (Lefevre 1996, p. 152). The architectural plan for urban growth should be particularly sensitive to environmental, sociocultural, and economic aspects of design. It should aim to preserve values, integrate hierarchies, and create a plan that is sustainable for the environment. Most urban redevelopment plans tend to feel like

impositions rather than efforts to create a ‘resilient society’ (Raje 2020, p. 4). Therefore, architecture and planning that originate from a top-down approach must involve all members of the community, as these decisions directly influence and even reshape the social structure.

Urban transformation is necessary to upgrade the built-up structures and ease the facilities, but these efforts often run at the exclusion of others, creating extremely privatised sectors and gated communities. Thus, an alternative redevelopment plan is needed in every sector that ‘integrate[s] natural infrastructure with urban growth’ (Raje p. 1) as the existing ones look for the accommodation of the population to the greatest extent possible and endorse capitalist interest rather than promoting sustainability as it promises. The rising capitalist interests only widen society’s hierarchical order and socio-spatial inequalities. The implementation of ‘global city’ models frequently fails to take into account the unique socio-economic conditions faced by local communities (Ahrar 2025). This oversight can lead to urban environments that do not effectively meet the needs of all residents, often exacerbating issues of inequality and exclusion. The conventional master plans that are primarily focused on land use tend to be rigid and outdated, lacking the necessary flexibility to adapt to the dynamic nature of urban growth. Consequently, these plans often overlook the crucial sectors, which results in a disconnect between the proposed developments and the actual needs and aspirations of the local communities they are meant to serve (Idiculla 2023). To enhance collaboration and ensure that community voices are heard, it’s important to find a balance between procedural requirements and meaningful engagement (Sanga 2021).

Shilpa Ranade’s writing segment on “Teaching Gender, Framing Architecture” primarily focuses on course planning aimed at ‘expanding the worldview of young architects’ (Ranade et al., p. 3). This demonstrates a commitment to helping students understand the interplay between space, gender, and power in built environments. It emphasises the need for initiatives that incorporate socio-cultural concerns into architectural education. The writing prompt, which encourages students

to investigate ‘the power inherent in built spaces,’ along with an exercise for urban planning students, illustrates the idea that space is ‘more complex and nuanced’ than merely a physical entity. The challenges in urban planning highlight a crucial opportunity to transform the existing framework of planning education (Mahadevi and Joshi 2009). Presently, this framework tends to emphasise technical skills, often leaving room for vital conversations about social justice and inclusivity. As a consequence, aspiring planners may find themselves ill-prepared to tackle the needs of diverse urban communities. To cultivate a more effective and responsive planning profession, it’s essential to enrich the curriculum with multidisciplinary perspectives that reflect the complexities of modern urban life. By weaving in principles of participatory planning, future planners can learn to engage directly with the communities they serve, fostering collaboration and mutual understanding. Equipping these emerging professionals with the tools to navigate the intricate socio-political landscape of urban development will not only enhance their effectiveness but will also empower them to craft vibrant, inclusive, and equitable urban spaces that resonate with the voices of all citizens. This proactive approach can ignite a transformative change in how our cities evolve, ensuring they are designed for everyone.

### **3.5 Delhi Through a Literary Lens**

In this way, this chapter incorporates an architectural literary analysis where it explores insights into the city’s public spaces by analysing their literary depictions and tracing gradual transformations. Khushwant Singh’s writing on Delhi evokes a sense of nostalgia for the past – the city that once thrived and now mourns its losses with the advent of modernisation. Throughout history, Delhi has been shaped by various rulers and communities, each leaving its mark through associations, praise, scorn, and vivid descriptions of the city. The city has witnessed passion, love, and numerous devastations at the hands of foreign conquerors, colonial powers, and even its own citizens. Delhi’s

narrative also includes migration, displacement, rebuilding, and development. There is a palpable sense of regret for the infinite possibilities and diversity that the city possessed in a time before modernity and rampant violence, when it was a vibrant cultural hub. As Singh poignantly asserts, “No matter how a city can be rebuilt and repopulated, no power on earth can restore a heart that has been shattered” (Singh 2017, p. 220). Once considered the “mistress of every conqueror” (Singh 2001, p. xi), Delhi is now viewed primarily for its practical benefits, as modern aspirations often focus solely on utility (Mittal 2017; Pani 2020). Mittal describes the city’s transformation, noting that it has changed “beyond recognition, making it challenging to navigate its polluted and congested roads” (Mittal, p. 62).

In Khushwant Singh’s *Delhi: A Novel*, the author makes plenty of references to the beloved Bhagmati in his descriptions of the city of Delhi. The author’s unending desire to know Bhagmati, whom he mentions as ‘strange’ and ‘plainest creature’ (Singh p. 30), is explored as he wonders. Delhi is also a city like others, but exploring its hidden treasures is of immense pleasure. The city cannot charm one at first sight – it may look ugly and unwanted at first; still, one cannot help but fall under its charms and feel the urge to look and go back again and again. The pockmarks on Bhagmati's face again resemble the exploitation of the city under different power structures – yet they behold an unknown beauty and immense power. Also, in comparing beloved Bhagmati with Delhi, the author shows that Bhagmati, having both male and female characteristics, breaks the barriers and limitations of the two genders and emerges as more powerful. Bhagmati thus remains no more a deviant but has been able to give pleasure to everyone; not ugly looking, but has the resources to cater to both genders. The descriptions, therefore, no longer support the rationale of Bhagmati having a lack but empower her and give an unconscious push for acceptance, letting the readers be charmed by her astonishing capabilities. The author’s being enticed by Bhagmati is very hard to look over, but at the same time, we realise that Bhagmati and the city are not separate and in a metonymic substitution. The contestations over space (Delhi) and the body (Bhagmati) recur

throughout alternative chapters in the novel. Thus, in the narrative, although Baghmati's unique characteristics overshadow her stereotypical identity, the focus is more on the city and its references to public spaces, marketplaces, and the countryside. "As I have said before, I have two passions in my life: my city, Delhi, and Bhagmati. They have two things in common: they are lots of fun. And they are sterile." (Singh 2017). The remark is indicative of a lack and, at the same time, uniqueness. The city and Bhagmati cannot be reproduced. In this novel, which centres on an individual's memory, the concept of space is emphasised in the exploration of the self. The city's structure and layout are depicted through various conflicts, highlighting how the city has been built and destroyed over different decades and centuries. The city becomes the main focus, and numerous changes are reflected in the author's intricate descriptions.

Again, Usha Dayal Kumar's *Phool Waalon Ki Sair* is a noteworthy contribution to Delhi's literary and cultural fabric. This compelling book offers a detailed historical and cultural account of the celebrated festival, which stands as a significant symbol of religious harmony within the city. Its importance in the context of Delhi literature can be appreciated through various dimensions. Kumar's work comprehensively chronicles the evolution and recent revival of the 'Phool Waalon Ki Sair' festival, emphasising its role in fostering unity and inclusivity. By contextualising the festival within Delhi's socio-political landscape, from the Mughal era to modern times, the book serves as a valuable historical resource that enhances our appreciation of the city's rich cultural heritage. It illustrates how Delhi's historic bazaars, such as Chandni Chowk and the markets of Mehrauli, function as vital gathering places that bring together individuals from various communities, promoting understanding and cooperation. Thus, Kumar describes in his book – "Mehrauli has been the seat of several empires before the Mughals and its bazaar lanes, filled with pan shops, halwais, fortune tellers, and floral vendors, became spaces where people of all communities gathered in joy and celebration." (Kumar, pp. 119–127).

Throughout Delhi's history, marketplaces have acted as informal political and social discourse venues. This book highlights how these markets have long served as sites of negotiation and resistance, enabling ordinary people to voice their concerns and engage in civic discussions. The traditions of public speaking, storytelling, and cultural performances prevalent in these marketplaces further enhance their significance as dynamic public spaces that transcend mere economic exchange. The book thoughtfully explores the difficulties traditional markets encounter amid the rapid urbanisation and modernisation processes. As commercial interests grow and urban landscapes transform, many historic marketplaces, once bustling centres of cultural exchange, find themselves under significant threat. This transformation has the potential to disrupt the rich cultural traditions that these markets have long supported. Kumar's narrative passionately argues for the preservation of these vital spaces, emphasising their importance as integral threads woven into Delhi's urban identity. He emphasises the distinct character and community connections that these marketplaces create, making a strong case for their preservation amidst ongoing development. Therefore, *Phool Waalon Ki Sair* stands as a significant contribution to Delhi's literary heritage, much like the seminal works of William Dalrymple in the *City of Djinns* and the impactful writings of Khushwant Singh. This text distinctly captures the city's rich history through the lens of a particular festival, asserting that cultural celebrations are integral to understanding Delhi's identity. It skilfully interweaves historical narratives, captivating folklore, and incisive modern reflections, compelling readers to recognise the deeper connections between past and present. By immersing itself in the lively atmosphere of colourful flower processions and traditional rituals, this work decisively offers a profound literary experience that transcends mere historical documentation and elevates the cultural discourse surrounding Delhi.

In *The Lingering Charm of Delhi*, R.V. Smith effectively captures the essence of Delhi's streets, characterising them as dynamic entities that embody the city's collective memories. His insightful

descriptions encourage readers to explore these pathways, fostering a deeper understanding of the narratives and traditions and highlighting their significant role in defining Delhi's unique charm. The narrative takes a dive into the stories woven into the narrow alleys and hidden corners of the Walled City. It captures the essence of this unique environment, where the absence of formal historical records does not diminish its significance. Rather, the city's character is brought to life through a treasure trove of local anecdotes and whispered tales. Each turn reveals snapshots of community life, showcasing colourful characters and their lived experiences that collectively form the living history of this space. "One would hear such stories while standing in front of shops or sitting in the galis of the Walled City, where the best paan was sold by Karim and Bundu." (Smith 2016) The echoes of laughter, the scents of street food, and the sounds of bustling markets all contribute to the unique atmosphere, illustrating how personal stories can illuminate our understanding of place and history.

### **3.6 Historic Transformation of Structures and Forms of Streets Through Literature**

The street is malleable, dynamic, a source of multiple perspectives and can account for multiple possibilities – that deny a 'logic-based framework', fixity, and dominant narrative. Like other public spaces, streets are centres for constant changes and the adoption of various roles. However, the soaring violent activities and physical atrocities present the streets of the city as unreliable and expose citizens to unsafe conditions with health risks. Yet, the dwellers long for the city, claiming that its streets are no less than those of other cities. The streets – be they ordinary or streets of importance – provide the first step in accessing the city. The namelessness on the streets forms a commonality – a community with no division, signifying inclusivity.

"The street is located within a cellular structure that suggests a labyrinth, with numerous openings and passages. The flow of bodies and vehicles crisscrosses the street in multi-directional

patterns, veering into courtyards, alleys and cul-de-sacs. The busiest streets, the main arteries of this spatial network, are never merely machines for shopping but the site for numerous activities.” (Edensor 1998)

With its ancient history, the city of Delhi has been a centre of various rulers and exploitations (Kumar 2002). The city has undergone significant transformations, influenced by various ruling powers, including the Tomars, Pratiharas, Chauhans, Turks, Mughals, and the British. This evolution has shaped its structures, growth, and, ultimately, its development into the capital of the present-day country. Throughout history, governance has shifted within the city, from Indraprastha during the times of the Kuru dynasty and the Pandavas to Purana Quila and the Red Fort during the Mughal era, and finally to Raisina Hill during both colonial rule and independent India (Chopra, 1970). This chapter, therefore, focuses on the historical distribution, patterns, and expansion of streets, which significantly contribute to the development of the city’s urban structure. It aims to trace the emergence of these streets and their role as prominent public spaces within the city.

Shahjahanabad was the last of the ‘seven cities’ of Delhi, with Lalkot being the first, followed by Siri, Tughlakabad, Jahanpanah, Firozeshah Kotla, and Purana Qila, all of which were built on the same ground as the ancient, legendary city of Indraprastha (Singh and Mukherjee, 2009). The urban architecture of Shahjahanabad, the invasion by Nadir Shah, and the British establishment of New Delhi in 1911 are vividly illustrated through stories from the Mughal era to the present day. The kuchas, galis, katras, chattas, mohallas, and gates represent significant components of what is now considered the ‘Modern Delhi’ of Shahjahanabad. This architecture fosters a socially cohesive and culturally rich residential environment within the mohallas of the old city (Goodfriend 1982, p. 472). Research by Shu Yamane has examined the transformation of street patterns, variations in neighbourhood blocks, and the locations of water and religious facilities within the urban structure of Old Delhi. His observations reveal a

“blended fabric of Islamic patterns and indigenous patterns of northwest India” (Yamane 2008, p. 223).

In the novel *Delhi*, the author takes the reader on a journey through the city as he pursues his beloved and interacts with various women. The figurative language provides a depiction of the cityscape, allowing readers to experience a virtual tour of Delhi in the 1950s while also reflecting on the era of the Mughals and wandering along the city’s roads. The author’s intricate descriptions enable readers to easily visualise the essence of the places he describes. The narrative frequently shifts between past and present, illustrating the city’s transformation over different decades and centuries – “More roads and roundabouts have had their names changed. The Windsors, Yorks, Cannings and Hardinges have been replaced by the Tilaks, Patels, Azads, and Nehrus.” (Singh 2017, p. 8). Various rulers and their expeditions have shaped the landscape during their reigns, introducing new architectural structures, monuments, and mausoleums. The city has witnessed a great deal, as have its inhabitants. For instance, when the writer returns to Delhi after fifty long years, a tongawala is astonished to hear the name ‘Raisina,’ which had long disappeared from memory (Singh 2017, p. 118). Additionally, in poet Meer’s pursuit of fame, recognition, and love, the author explores the final stages of the Mughal reign in the country. Foreign invasions and the exploitation of fellow countrymen marked this period. As a poignant observation, the author notes, “Delhi was never the same after the Iranians had slain its soul. Kings, noblemen, and their hirelings came like a flock of vultures to peck at its corpse” (Singh 2017, p. 226). The author employs various narrative voices to recount their stories, tracing the history and fate of the city through their perspectives.

Therefore, the old city’s complex layout is characterised by its ‘galis’ – narrow, bustling lanes often lined with shops and stalls – ‘kuchas’, which serve as broader streets or distinct zones filled with unique local flavours, and ‘katras’, inviting gated cul-de-sac marketplaces often alive with the sound of bargaining and community interactions, is fundamental to understanding the socio-cultural

dynamics of Delhi. Singh portrays Delhi's narrow streets as vibrant and chaotic, blending history with daily life, where emperors once walked, and modern residents navigate their routines. Kuchas are not just streets but crucial spaces of Delhi's history. Singh notes that they reflect a subversion of societal barriers, where people coming from all strata live closely together. The *katras* of Delhi, including *Katra Neel* and *Katra Dhoomimal*, serve as a reminder of the city's traditional economy, where merchants thrived and community life flourished. The protagonist in Singh's novel explores these streets, fostering connections with diverse individuals. Each *gali*, *kucha*, and *katra* enriches the urban landscape, contributing unique stories of love, betrayal, and resilience that help preserve the city's heritage.

The seemingly congested appearance of the old city is often misinterpreted as lacking an architectural pattern. However, a closer examination reveals a clear structure within the area, characterised by a hierarchical street layout and residential neighbourhoods that integrate local markets, open spaces, and appropriate structures for water distribution (Singh 2021, p. 3). The old city's *galis* and *kuchas* have been noted for their role in protecting the area from numerous foreign invasions through their architecture. One notable story involves "Naiwara," which is accessed by navigating through narrow, intersecting lanes where two men can barely walk side by side (Smith 2016, p. 69). This densely arranged, semi-private layout allowed the area to evade the widespread destruction known as 'tandav-nritya' that followed Nadir Shah's invasion. In this way, the architectural descriptions, the changes through different time periods, and their critique surface in the literary texts.

The walled city of Shahjahanabad began to undergo significant changes following the 1857 Mutiny, which resulted in the destruction of a considerable portion of the city wall—approximately one-third of the area was affected. This led to the construction of *Nai Sarak* and the development of *Elgin*, *Nicholson*, *Esplande*, *Lothian*, and *Queen's Roads* (Goodfriend 1982, p. 473). In the years that followed, many sections of the city wall and several gates were demolished due to the

increasing colonial influence, the advent of railways, and the city's expansion to the north and west. "In the course of the next 35 years, leading up to the Delhi Durbar of 1911, the British constructed new waterworks, drainage systems, conservancy networks, and many new roads" (Goodfriend 1982, p. 473). The establishment of the Imperial Capital of Delhi under British rule, marked by the shift of the capital in 1911, brought architects Mr. Edwin Lutyens and Mr. Herbert Baker to the forefront. Their design for the new governance centre, which extended from the Red Fort to the Raisina Hill area, transformed the city with the creation of the renowned Lutyens' zones and the Connaught Place area for commercial activities. Extensive planning preceded the final layout, and the selection of Raisina as the centre was a deliberate choice aimed at establishing a city that bore an "imperial stamp," symbolising power over colonial subjects. In this context, the architecture was crafted with special attention to represent Western civilisation in an Eastern setting, solidifying a stronghold in the country. Over time, Lutyens' Delhi emerged as a blend of imperial connections and Indian sentiments, a theme that resonates through his letters to his wife, Emily (Singh and Mukherjee, p. 58). These transformative changes had a significant impact on the entire country and left a lasting impression on literary writers, who imagined and recounted the history of the city.

Khushwant Singh's *Delhi* is a work that intertwines factual information with fictional elements, vividly describing the 'durbar' in 1911, which marked the beginning of the construction of the new capital in the following years. Singh writes, "A city of 40000 tents, called Kingsway Camp, had sprung up on the northern side of the city, stretching over twenty-five square miles from the river Jamna in the east to beyond the Shalimar Gardens in the west" (Singh 2017, p. 318). The narrative continues with the arrival of the architects in April 1912, as they explored nearby areas to find a suitable site. Ultimately, they decided that the best location for the new city would be around the village of Malcha, with the Viceregal Palace and the Secretariats to be constructed on Raisina Hill (Singh 2017, p. 324). This chapter provides

further insights into Lutyens' extended stay in Delhi while building the capital, focusing on how it catered to the needs of the local population. The author aptly describes him as 'a man of vision,' suggesting he was more sympathetic toward the Indians than reinforcing the deep colonial roots (Singh 2017, p. 326).

Therefore, the structure of Shahjahanabad differs significantly from modern architectural concepts that compartmentalise social structures into distinct, non-associable blocks. The indigenous architecture of Old Delhi's cityscape challenges such rigid distinctions, integrating socio-economic needs into a unified framework. This Mughal-influenced architecture also presents a concept of public space that diverges from the Western bourgeois notion. The layout of Old Delhi, adhering to Sharia principles, features kuchas, galis, and katras that form residential blocks called Mohallas. These neighbourhoods also have 'gates,' which likely signify a more private aspect of community life while still being public. This blending of private and public spaces is evident through numerous examples of domestic activities spilling into public streets, fostering a sense of sociability in open public areas. This characteristic is distinctly Indian and stands in stark contrast to the new urban establishment that emerged during colonial rule.

The significance of these gates is highlighted in the literature, particularly in R.V. Smith's comparison of the two Delhi Gates—one located in Daryaganj and the other in Agra – titled "Tale of Two Delhi Gates." The Delhi Gate, located at the entrance of Paharganj, has historically witnessed numerous significant events. The writer emphasises its importance by noting, "The level of significance Shah Jahan attributed to his Delhi Gate can be gauged from the fact that, in addition to naming one of the gates of the Red Fort as Delhi Gate, he ordered this one to be built with even greater grandeur" (Smith 2016, p. 27). Beyond this comparison, Smith's writing explores the differing histories, locations, and architectural styles of these gates.

The city wall and various canals surrounding Shahjahanabad were architecturally significant, particularly in relation to the Yamuna River. This importance is highlighted in Khushwant Singh's novel,

where the character Nihal Singh assists the British in dismantling Mughal rule to avenge their ‘Guru’ (Singh 2017, p. 275). Additionally, Smith’s description illustrates the destruction of the old city and its architecture following the British attack: “The walls of Kashmere Gate are pockmarked from British cannon fire, and the remaining skeletal remains of the Delhi Gate wall still feature the sentry tower established during Shah Alam’s reign in 1804” (Smith 2016, p. 78).

In this way, through an architectural literary analysis, we explore the different street patterns and transformations in their structures and forms through different periods in history. This analysis suggests that in the new establishment, the streets took on a more functional role, serving to delineate different sectors or zones. As the city expanded, it became filled with ‘roads’ connecting various points; however, there was a lack of ‘streets’ that function as prominent public spaces for social interaction. The newly constructed roads in the capital are devoid of the sociability characteristic of the old city structure. Consequently, the new capital, which took its final form in the 1930s, did not sustain colonial rule for long, as India gained independence in the following decades.

### **3.7 Street Pattern in Cartographic Records and Through the Lens of Urban Sketching**

This evidence of changing urban structures and the resulting alterations in street patterns is supported by a comparative analysis of literary works, along with field visits and urban sketching to analyse the present condition. During these field visits, we have utilised cartographic analysis to examine the archival maps of Delhi at the Cartographic Section of the National Archives of India in New Delhi. The detailed depiction of cantonment areas on the maps contributed to their restricted access. Therefore, we examined these maps through multiple visits to the Archives for this study. An analysis reveals a shift in the distribution of roads corresponding to the city’s expansion. This change can be traced from late nineteenth-century Shahjahanabad to the early twentieth century, during which the capital moved under British

rule and new architectural designs were established in the Raisina Hill area. The maps analyzed under the titles “Map showing the districts of Rohtak, Delhi, Gurgaon, and Hisar” (1886), “Delhi Province” (1886), “Cant, City, and Environs of Delhi” (1871), and “Cant, City, Civil Station, and Environs of Delhi” (1893) illustrate a distribution of roads in late nineteenth-century Delhi that is quite different from our current perception of the cityscape. The broader path of the Yamuna River and the lush greenery of the Aravalli Hills framed the Red Fort on the western bank of the river, with broad canals extending around the Old Delhi of Shahjahanabad. To the west of the fort, the rectangular city of Shahjahanabad was encircled by canals, roads, and, most importantly, gates in various directions. The road of Chandni Chowk ran almost directly through the centre of the rectangular city, connecting Lahore Gate in the west to the Red Fort in the east. The gates, which were crucial to the urban structure of modern Delhi at that time, included Calcutta Gate, Nizamuddin Gate, Kela Ghat Gate, Kashmir Gate, Mori Gate, Kabul Gate, Lahore Gate, Furush Khana Gate, Ajmeri Gate, Turkuman Gate, and Delhi Gate. This information is collected from the map titled “Cant, City, Civil Station, and Environs of Delhi” from 1893.

These maps highlight the significance of the city wall in the Shahjahanabad area, which suffered extensive damage during the 1857 mutiny and the subsequent expansion of modern transportation facilities. Later maps, including “Delhi and New Cant” (1913), “Delhi Province” (1915), “Delhi and Surrounding Country 53/H/NW, NE” (1916), “Tourist Map of Delhi” (1927), and “United Provinces and Delhi” (1934), display a gradual star-like distribution of roads centred around Raisina Hill and Connaught Place as part of the construction of New Delhi. Finally, the “Layout Plan of New Delhi” (1934) and the “Delhi Guide Map” (1959) illustrate the city’s growth and diversification, particularly in the western and southern areas of the new establishment and in the developing urban villages.

This examination of the cartographic records accessible within the archives provides crucial evidence that reinforces our exploration of the literary texts detailing the significant transformations and alterations

occurring in this public space. These records provide a historical context and insight into the area's development, enabling us to better understand its evolution over time. By analysing both the cartographic records and the narratives presented in the literature, we can gain a more comprehensive insight into the impact of societal changes on the use and perception of this space.

Continuing with this process, during our recent visit to assess the current condition of the city streets, we developed a series of interactive web maps that play an integral role in our research methodology by offering real-time spatial visualisations. Utilising MAPinr, an advanced mobile GIS mapping tool, we were able to dynamically collect, analyse, and visualise spatial data. The MAPinr app proved valuable as it enabled us to pinpoint exact locations during our field studies, which is especially crucial when working in remote areas or locations with limited connectivity. This capability ensured that we could maintain research continuity and accurately capture data that might otherwise be challenging to obtain. Furthermore, the app's functionality allowed us to overlay multiple datasets, facilitating comparative analyses between different layers of information. This feature helped us identify patterns and trends within the urban landscape more effectively.

As a result of this process, we crafted a comprehensive set of interactive maps highlighting the streets we explored, showcasing the contrasts and developments between the historical and contemporary elements of the city. These maps serve as a visual narrative of our findings, providing valuable insights into the evolution of urban environments.

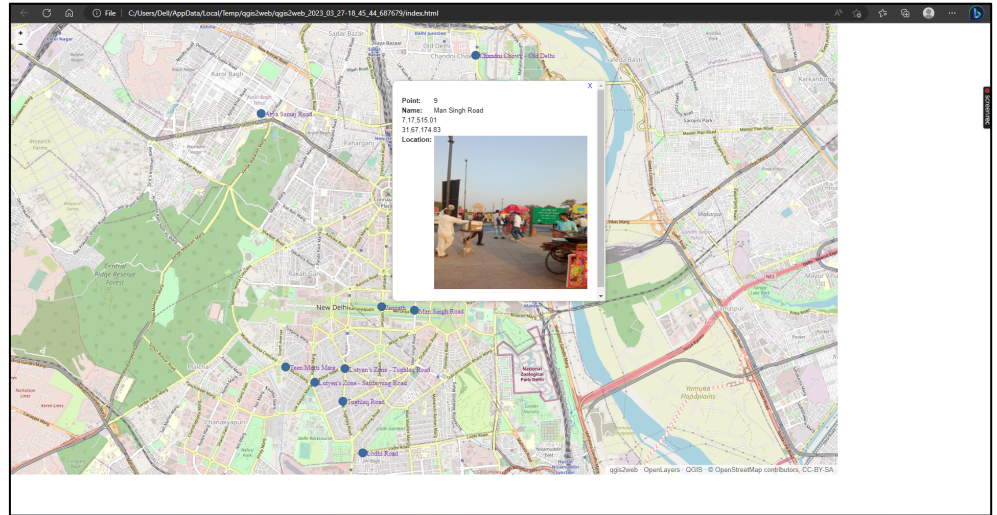
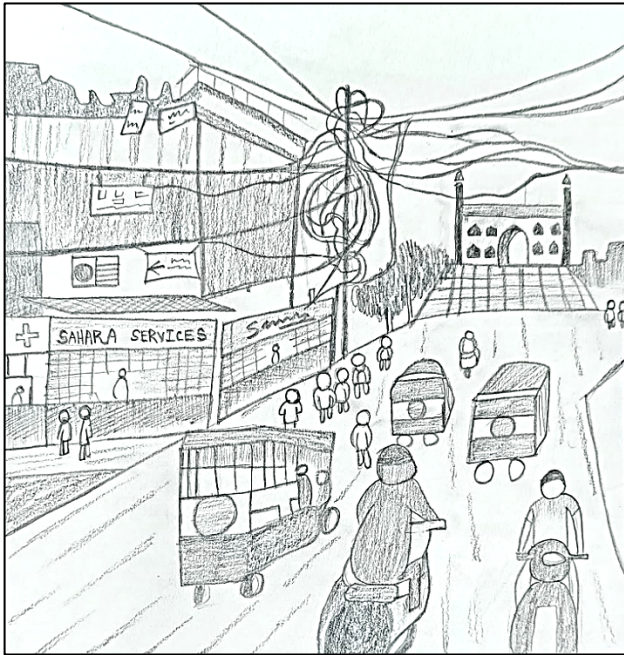
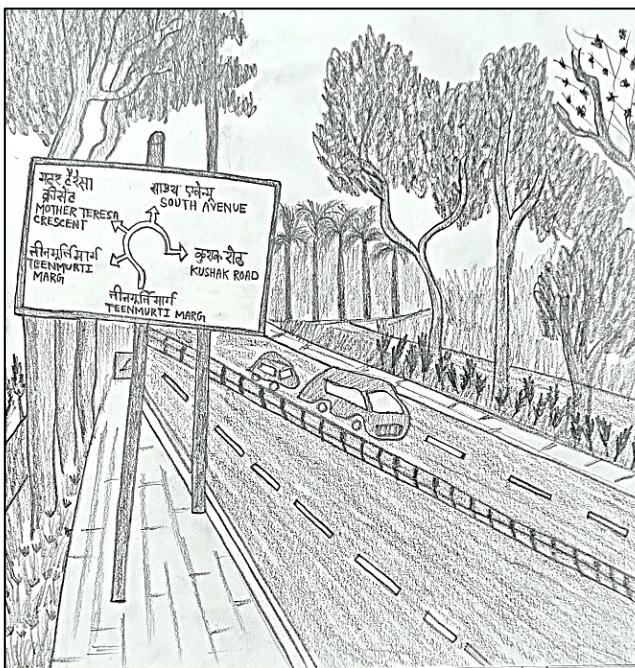


Figure 13 – Interactive Web map created on the streets observed during the field visit

Therefore, while observing and analysing diverse streets across the city, we found a major difference in the aesthetics of the street patterns between the Old City of Shahjanabaad and the new British establishment around Raisina Hill. We closely examined their unique patterns and architectural styles. We observed how the layout and design choices reflected the cultural and historical contexts. To highlight these differences, the study utilised visual ethnography through detailed urban sketching conducted at various times during our visit. This approach allowed us to capture the essence of the streets and visualise the unique characteristics of their patterns and forms. This approach enhanced our understanding and brought the cities' unique atmospheres of public spaces to life through art.



Urban Sketch 1 – Street aesthetic of Urdu Bazaar Road in Old Delhi



Urban Sketch 2 – Street pattern of Teen Murti Marg in New Delhi

The sketches created during the field visit illustrate the architectural differences between the two sections of the city. The first sketch (Urban Sketch 1) captures the chaos and cacophony of the streets in Old Delhi surrounding the prominent Jama Masjid. In contrast, the second sketch (Urban Sketch 2) depicts organised, clean streets with

clear signage and neatly designed footpaths, adequately complemented by greenery on either side. These sketches effectively highlight the contrasting aesthetics of street patterns across different areas of the cityscape, a reflection of historical transformations, expansions under various power structures, and the emergence of new developments.

Shortly after independence, the colonial architecture around Raisina was wholeheartedly embraced as the heart of the newly independent nation. While the architectural unity of the structures remains consistent, the streets have undergone a process of indigenisation, reflected in name changes (for example, from ‘Kingsway’ to ‘Rajpath’). This trend of adapting names continues to this day. In recent years, however, the area has seen the emergence of new buildings to accommodate the rising needs of a country that is now the second most populous peninsula in the world. With independence, the city’s role as the capital has led to an unimaginable expansion of its urban infrastructure. Consequently, the structure of the streets, which serve as the city’s main arteries, has evolved in various ways. Over the past two decades, the introduction of metro facilities has significantly transformed transportation within the city, making it faster, more affordable, and safer (Sadana 2022, p. 10). However, despite the rapid urban development, the city continues to experience daily reports of violent incidents, contributing to a perception of the streets as unsafe. Yet, there is no avoiding these streets, which also serve as vibrant locations for exciting food offerings and attractive trading deals.

### **3.8 Changing Aesthetics of Markets with the Evolution of the City**

Sarojini Naidu’s poem “In the Bazaars of Hyderabad” vividly captures the essence of the Indian market. The bazaar is characterised by chaos, showcasing a wide variety of colours and activities. The wide array of products available for sale makes the bazaar inclusive, inviting everyone to come together and socialise. This diversity and complete heterogeneity contrast sharply with what is typically found in Western markets. This unique combination of elements transforms the bazaar

into a social hub, fostering numerous encounters and serving as a communal gathering space. The sociability of this environment plays a crucial role in generating livelihoods for various formal and informal sectors. The marketplaces thus hold significant value in enhancing and sustaining the city's social fabric. As a result, residents develop a sense of attachment, comfort, and familiarity with their surroundings. This feeling of comfort often stems from their favourite corners of the streets and marketplaces that they frequent.

Delhi's marketplaces, often called bazaars, have undergone transformations throughout the centuries, embodying the city's rich socio-economic and cultural evolution. Originating from traditional markets that flourished during the Mughal era, where artisans displayed exquisite textiles, intricate jewellery, and aromatic spices, these bustling hubs of trade were not just places to shop but also centres of social interaction and cultural exchange. Today, the landscape has evolved dramatically, with contemporary shopping complexes and high-end retail outlets rising alongside historical bazaars like Chandni Chowk and Dilli Haat (Chhabra et al., 2024). These modern developments coexist with the rich heritage of older markets, where narrow lanes still buzz with merchants selling everything from handmade crafts to street food. This blend of the old and new not only highlights the enduring spirit of commerce in Delhi but also reflects the city's ability to adapt and grow while honouring its history (Dhussa 2023).

In Khushwant Singh's novel, the author narrates his various visits to the city, retelling historical details in a fictional manner through multiple narrators. This approach reveals the evolution of the city and the emergence of its diverse marketplaces, which continue to be a unique attraction today. The history of these markets reflects the city's transformation through various eras, mirroring changes in form and aesthetics. The bazaars of Old Delhi, particularly in Shahjahanabad, were integral to the city's architecture, showing the intermingling of residential and commercial sectors within the kuchas, galis, katras, and mohallas structure. One description of such a bazaar can be found in the book *Phool Waalon ki Sair* by Usha Dayal Kumar. The Mehruuli bazaar

emerged in the late 18th century with the return of Prince Mirza Jahangir to Delhi. The subsequent celebrations in the city evolved into a ritual that continued for years. The featured a wide array of products and food items, with bustling activities all around. Kumar writes, “There are heaps of juhi, motia, chameli, gulab, and genda flowers, along with rows of garlands and strings of flowers. Ornaments made of flowers are displayed, and more are being prepared on the spot” (Kumar 2008, p. 119). Additionally, pan shops, fortune tellers accompanied by parrots, and halwais contributed to the bazaar’s attractions. Some narrow lanes with shops in the bazaar are believed to have existed before the Mughal dynasty, as “Mehruli has been the seat of several empires before the Mughals” (Kumar 2008, p. 127). This annual celebration of the ‘Walled City,’ which has been recognised as a symbol of communal harmony, is also reflected in Smith’s literary description (Smith 2016, p. 92).

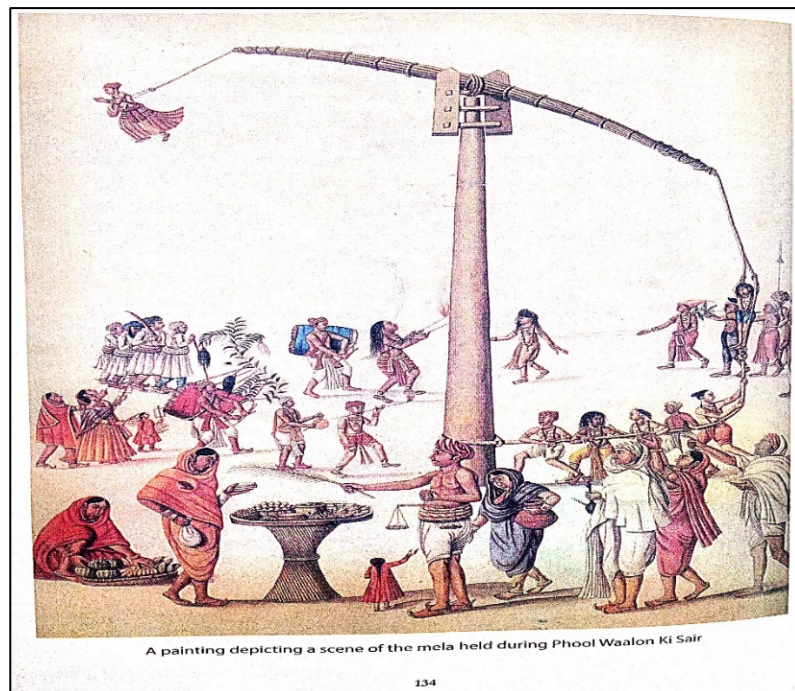


Figure 14 – Picture of Mehruli Bazaar taken from Usha Dayal Kumar’s *Phool Waalon ki Sair* (p. 134)

Again, in Khushwant Singh’s masterful novel *Delhi*, the author elaborates on the city through various eras, spotlighting a multitude of bazaars that have played significant roles in its cultural and commercial life. Among the noteworthy bazaars are Faiz Bazaar (Singh, pp. 110,

302), known for its bustling marketplace; Sadar Bazaar (Singh, pp. 110), famous for its diverse range of goods; Lahori Bazaar (Singh, p. 174), which attracts visitors seeking a taste of its distinctive offerings; Jauhari Bazaar (Singh, p. 176), a hub for jewellery; and Urdu Bazaar (Singh, p. 176), revered for its literary shops. Additionally, Chawri Bazaar (Singh, p. 284), with its shops, specialises in paper products, while Meena Bazaar (Singh, p. 300) invites shoppers with its unique crafts and textiles. Not to be overlooked, Chandni Chowk (Singh, p. 226) stands out as one of the most iconic markets, steeped in history and bustling with life.

The establishment of both Chandni Chowk and Faiz Bazaar dates back to 1656, coinciding with the grand construction of the Jama Masjid, a monument of immense historical significance (Kazmi 2018). Even in contemporary times, these bazaars, along with Chawri Bazaar and Lajpat Rai Market, continue to thrive as major retail centres, drawing both locals and tourists alike with their lively atmosphere and extensive selection of goods. Furthermore, Meena Bazaar, Urdu Bazaar, and the Matia Mahal Chitli Qabar Bazaar complex cater specifically to the Muslim community, offering a curated selection of speciality goods, including traditional garments, religious artefacts, and delectable foods that reflect the rich cultural heritage of the area (Goodfriend 1982, p. 473). Through Singh's descriptions, the reader gains a profound appreciation for the historical significance and enduring vibrancy of these marketplaces within the heart of Delhi.

The heritage walks in the city today highlight the history of thriving markets that represent the living, cultural, and architectural heritage of the area. The city of Shahjahanabad shares many characteristics with other old cities in India, particularly the central placement of the mosque surrounded by bazaars. This layout reflects a socio-economic structure organised in a circular pattern, allowing diverse communities to coexist (Azhar 2018). In the old city, the bazaars are primarily situated along major streets, while secondary streets host smaller bazaars that offer specialised or limited items. The integration of these commercial spaces within residential areas exemplifies a unique

understanding of public space, fulfilling important social functions. Also, the transient markets, affectionately referred to as ‘hafta bazaars,’ have played a crucial role in Delhi’s commerce, operating on designated days at various locations across the city. Traditionally, travelling salesmen would set up their stalls weekly, offering a diverse array of products to local communities. This tradition reflects the spirit of community and thriving entrepreneurship. In this way, the fragrances, aesthetics, and time-honoured traditions found in the narrow lanes and bazaars of the old city evoke a sense of Mughal culture that appears to be preserved as if by a touch of magic (Smith 2016, p. 76).

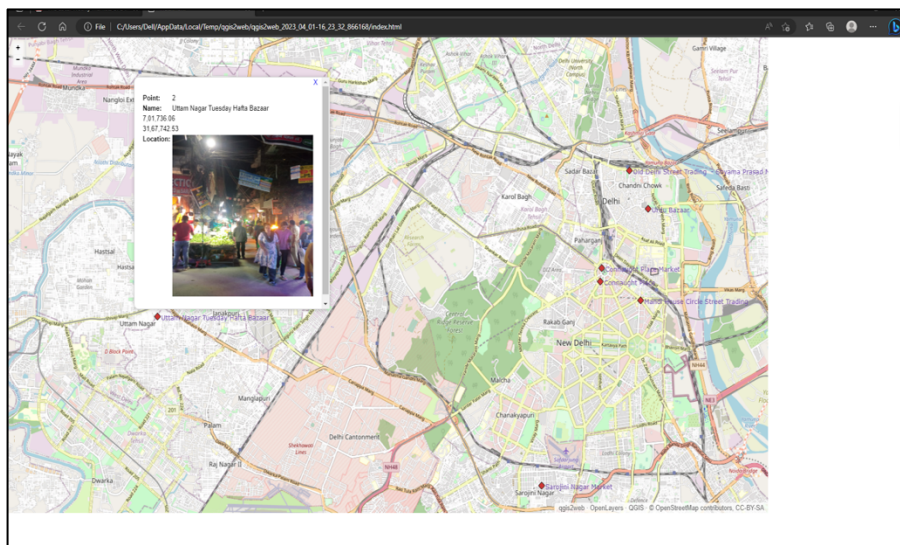
With the creation of the imperial capital of New Delhi, the concept of the bazaar transformed into a more Westernised version, particularly evident in the development of Connaught Place. The architecture of this marketplace was thoughtfully designed to protect patrons from the harsh sun and seasonal rains. Today, Connaught Place is recognised as one of the most upscale shopping destinations, primarily featuring stores from international brands. In this way, this close examination of the various bazaars across both the old and new parts of the city reveals that the trading spaces in the old city continue to be called ‘bazaars,’ while those in the newer developments are referred to as ‘markets.’ Although ‘market’ serves merely as the English translation of the native term, this choice of language shifts the aesthetic and emotional connotations associated with these spaces.

### **3.9 Transformation of Markets in Cartographic Records and Through the Lens of Urban Sketching**

During the field visit to the National Archives in Delhi, examining various maps of the city provided valuable insights into the emergence and role of marketplaces in its growth and architectural development. A comparative study of cartographic records and literary texts, as part of our methodology, substantiates our argument and visualisation of how marketplaces have transformed the cityscape over time. In the National Archives of India, New Delhi, we found the map

titled “Cant, City, Civil Station, and Environs of Delhi,” created in 1893, which reveals the emergence of ‘Chouree Bazaar’ and ‘Chooreewala Bazaar’ in Modern Delhi, specifically in Shahjahanabad. In the 1905 map ‘District Delhi,’ we observe the presence of Firozabad Bazaar. By 1912, a review of maps such as ‘Delhi and Vicinity,’ ‘Delhi and Vicinity Physical Features,’ and ‘Punjab and United Provinces Survey 53/H/2’ (covering Delhi, Gurgaon, and Meerut districts) shows the development of Kamla Market, Sitaram Bazaar, Razaa ka Bazaar, Sadar Bazaar, and others. By this time, Delhi was preparing to establish itself as a colonial capital, marked by new architectural developments.

The ‘Guide Map’ from 1959 provides evidence of the development of markets such as Sarojini Nagar, Khan Market, Market Road, and Gol Market. Additionally, a toposheet obtained from the Survey of India—specifically the Open Series maps (H43X2\_53H2)—highlights the emergence and significance of these markets in the 1970s. This series of maps suggests that the earlier ‘bazaars’ were an integral part of the Shahjahanabad area, while the later markets evolved into purely commercial sectors in the new city. Furthermore, the study includes field visits to various types of markets in the old city and the new establishments, as well as other parts of the capital. This approach helps illustrate the evolving aesthetics of marketplaces in the city through the creation of interactive web maps.



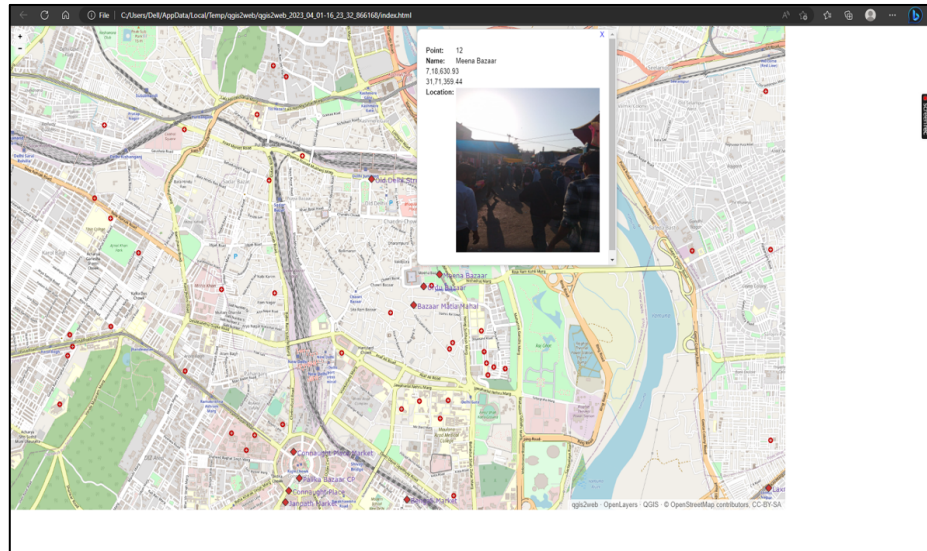
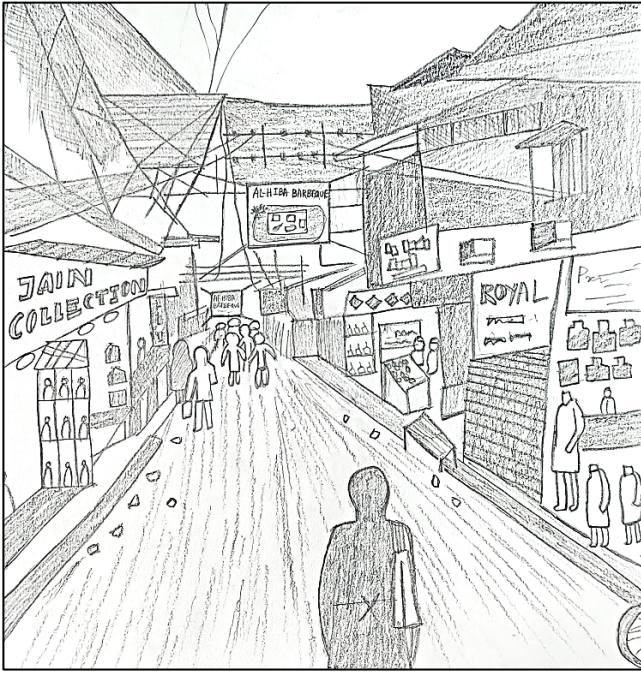


Figure 15 – Different types of marketplaces visited during field visits

The various shifts in the patterns and aesthetics of marketplaces, as observed through literary works and field observations, reveal how their role and value as public spaces have changed over time. Initially, these marketplaces thrived within residential sectors, serving as places that fostered significant sociability. They often functioned as semi-private spaces located in alleys or neighbourhoods within a community. However, their role gradually diminished during the later stages of colonial rule and became predominantly commercial. This impression continues to persist even today.

In this scenario, urban sketching in two parts of the city allows for an analysis of the different aesthetics of the marketplaces. The old city's bazaar features a cacophony of sounds and a blend of residential and commercial areas, while the colonial architecture presents a distinct commercial sector that includes global chains.



Urban Sketch 3 – Old Delhi Bazaar Matia Mahal



Urban Sketch 4 – Market aesthetic of New Delhi Connaught Place

The bustling old city's bazaar, as depicted in Urban Sketch 3, is alive with the sounds of haggling vendors and the aroma of various foods, presenting an eclectic mix of both residential homes and shops. Here, narrow alleyways intertwine with colourful stalls brimming with local produce and crafts and exotic food items on display, creating an

energetic and chaotic atmosphere. In stark contrast, as portrayed in Urban Sketch 4, the colonial establishment showcases elegant architecture defined by its historical significance, where stately buildings house a modern commercial sector. This area features global chain stores, trendy shops, and cafes, offering a curated shopping experience amid the backdrop of colonial-style facades. The juxtaposition of the lively bazaar with the polished, uniform appearance of the colonial sector highlights the diverse cultural fabric of the city.

In line with this, the recent development schemes for enhancing the iconic markets in Delhi aim to ‘boost the city’s economy’, assure growth, and ‘stimulating tourism’, drawing our attention to assessing the future of the marketplaces in the city (DDC Delhi). In recent redevelopment attempts, the transformation of traditional marketplaces and the aestheticisation of these spaces to promote consumerism have been widely criticised. In his writing, Jon Goss presents a more critical approach to creating festival marketplaces as a part of ‘urban revitalisation’. The ideals attempted to achieve ‘authentic urbanisation’ are being investigated. Naturalised commodification and the narrative of nostalgia are in the process of creating illusion and evoking a ‘return’, both historical and geographical (Goss 1996, p. 224). The narrative of nostalgia aims to capture citizens in a bubble of ideal urbanism, thereby barring the discourses of the struggles faced by marginalised communities. In this way, the illusionary narrative seems pleasant and a flagbearer of the right way of urbanism in reconciling with the past, reaping only commercial benefits.

### **3.10 Street-trading – An Intersection of Two Public Spaces**

Street trading in India embodies an intersection and fusion of the social aspect of streets and the commercial activity of marketplaces. It plays a crucial role in shaping urban environments and generating local economies. These street vendors, as ‘invisible entrepreneurs’ (Sekhani 2019), operate in a myriad of settings, from established market areas to hafta bazaars to busy roadsides. In cities like Delhi, they create informal

economies catering to diverse populations, offering diverse items. This vibrant trading scene supports the livelihoods of countless individuals and adds a unique cultural flavour to the urban landscape, reflecting the dynamic essence of city life.

The examination of ‘North-South differences in urban experience’ highlights the relevance of Southern cities’ experiences to ‘Western Urban Theory’ (Bodnar 2015). The distinction in timeframes – specifically, the late urbanisation and transformation of public spaces in the South – becomes evident in Drummond and Donovan’s illustrations of street trading. This phenomenon is visibly regulated in Northern cities, while it flourishes in the South. In Indian streets, it is a space created for diverse activities that blur the lines between public and private, challenging our preconceived notions of ownership (Edensor 1998, p. 3). A pervasive sense of disorder exists as regulations are frequently subverted, denying any aesthetic control. While regulations dominate Western streets, which are steeped in consumer capitalism, Indian streets manage to retain their vibrancy, colour, and richness, celebrating chaos and urban life.

There is a perceptual contrast in how public spaces are utilised: middle-class individuals often see these areas idealistically, while beggars rely on them for their livelihoods (Ranasinghe 2011). The lament over the deterioration of public spaces has led to calls for recovery, which tends to support the middle-class perspective while sidelining the livelihood concerns of lower-income groups. Street trading in India, therefore, challenges the middle-class perception of public space as a place for leisure and highlights the harsh political economy surrounding public space.

In the city of Delhi, the tradition of street trading through hawkers dates back to the return of Prince Mirza Jahangir from exile (Kumar 2016, p. 115). This event was a moment of excitement not only for the royal family but for all the Dilliwalas as well. The celebrations that followed included a grand procession from the Red Fort to the Dargah of Khwaja Qutubuddin Bakhtiar Ka-aki in Mehrauli, providing an opportunity for traders to set up their stalls along the route. This

bustling setup allowed hawkers to impress the Dilliwalas with their popular chaat. Since the time of Shah Jahan, Delhi's hawkers have developed a distinctive style of promoting their goods to attract potential customers (Kumar 2008, p. 117). Following the successful celebrations, the king proclaimed that the festival of 'Phool Waalon ki Sair' would be held annually, further enhancing the trading environment. The presence of hukkawalas became a prominent sight in Mehrauli Bazaar, and over the years, the tradition of hawking flourished in the city.

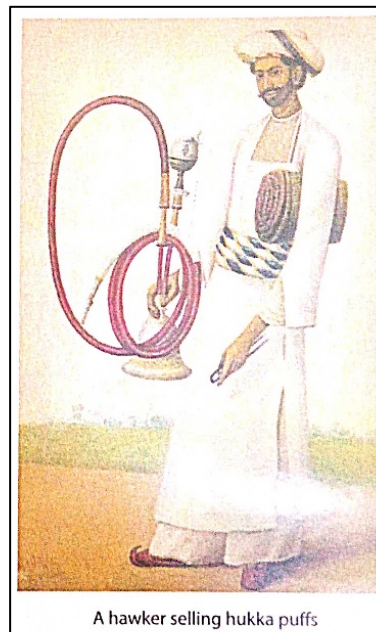


Figure 16 – Scene from Mehruili Bazaar 'Hukkawala' taken from Usha Dayal Kumar's Phool Waalon ki Sair (p. 119)

Even today, this phenomenon is widespread in the streets of Delhi, particularly in its favourite corners. However, Khushwant Singh's depiction of Delhi does not fully capture this popular perception of the city, as it mainly focuses on the lives of well-known personalities. The following web map lists the locations in the city visited to observe the phenomenon of street trading.

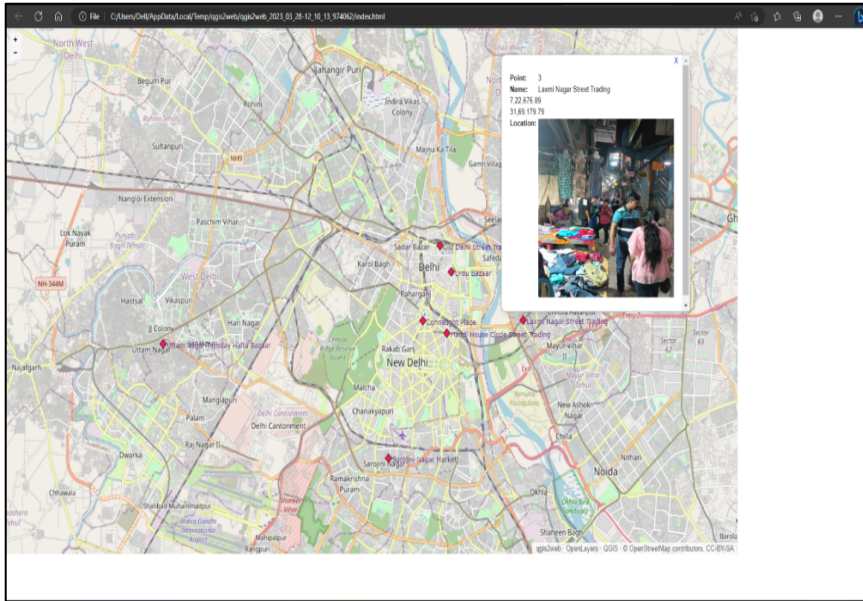
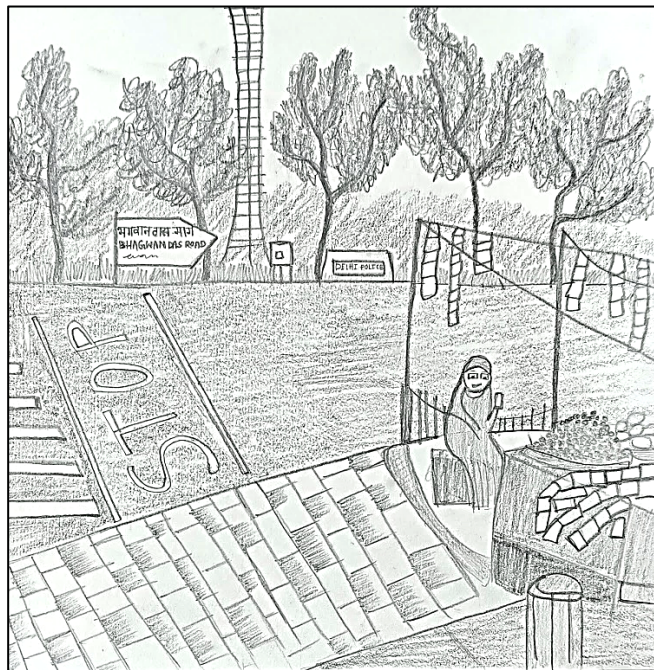


Figure 17 – Places for street-trading visited during the field visit

Currently, street vendors form a significant and largely unregulated part of the informal sector in Delhi while also being a major attraction for visitors. The Street Vendor Act (Protection of Livelihood & Regulation of Street Vending) 2014 includes provisions for regulating and relocating vendors to designated vending zones, known as ‘Tehbazari.’ However, many of these designated areas are often impractical for vendors as they are not situated in locations that attract customers (Pushkarna 2022). While the act aims to issue license cards to vendors for formal auditing, many unregistered squatters continue to occupy the streets and fixed marketplaces, providing vital livelihoods for many. The activities of these vendors can disrupt those who have rented or have permanent rights to their space, posing a challenge to the capitalist dynamics within the city. The following sketches illustrate the impact of this subversion in two different parts of the city.



Urban Sketch 5 – Street trading at Old Delhi Shyam Prasad Marg



Urban Sketch 6 – Street trading at New Delhi Bhagwan Das Road

Street trading in Delhi is fundamentally a form of subversion, as it often arises out of necessity for livelihoods that defy government regulations. This subversion reflects the severe poverty exacerbated by the growing population and lack of employment opportunities in the country. In the urban sketch labelled Urban Sketch 5, street trading is

depicted at Old Delhi's Shyam Prasad Marg, where the violation of rules is evident in areas marked 'No Hawking/No Squatting.' In contrast, the scene illustrated in sketch Urban Sketch 6 shows New Delhi's Bhagwan Das Road, where the subversion of rules is less frequent and occurs in a milder form. This sketch features a woman at a makeshift stall, selling a few items while occupying a non-permissible area of the footpath, thereby disregarding the established regulations.

### **3.11 Master Plans – Changing Materiality of These Public Spaces in the Future**

Therefore, through an analysis of the city's historical evolution via architectural literary analysis and close reading of historical cartographic records, we have gained insights into the current state of its public spaces through field observations. The changing structures and forms of these spaces over time encourage us to consider their future. Thus, analysing the city's master plans becomes a crucial part of our methodology. We have examined the three most recent master plans or land use plans, dated 2001, 2021, and 2041, obtained from the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) website. This chapter, therefore, presents a comprehensive overview of the transformations of public spaces from the past to the present and into the future.

The master plans have only been available as raster images on the website. Therefore, the first step in conducting further analysis to evaluate the potential transformation of the city is to georeference these images. Using the rubber sheeting method, the master plan images are georeferenced and then imported into Google Earth Pro. This allows us to visualise the future materiality of the public spaces being examined. As a part of one of our case studies, we have conducted an analysis of Urdu Bazaar, one of the renowned markets in Old Delhi, which is mentioned in Khushwant Singh's work regarding Nadir Shah's invasion and also visited during our field visit. We overlaid the georeferenced map of the Master Plan 2041 on Google Earth and identified Urdu Bazaar within the yellow-coloured residential zone of the upcoming master plan.

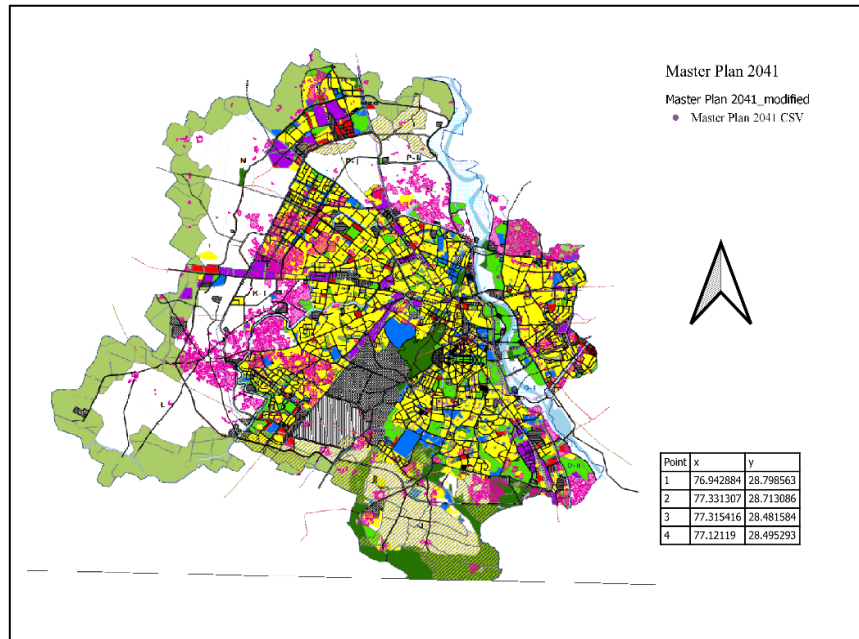


Figure 18 – Delhi Master Plan 2041 Georeferenced for analysis to see the city’s foreseeable changes

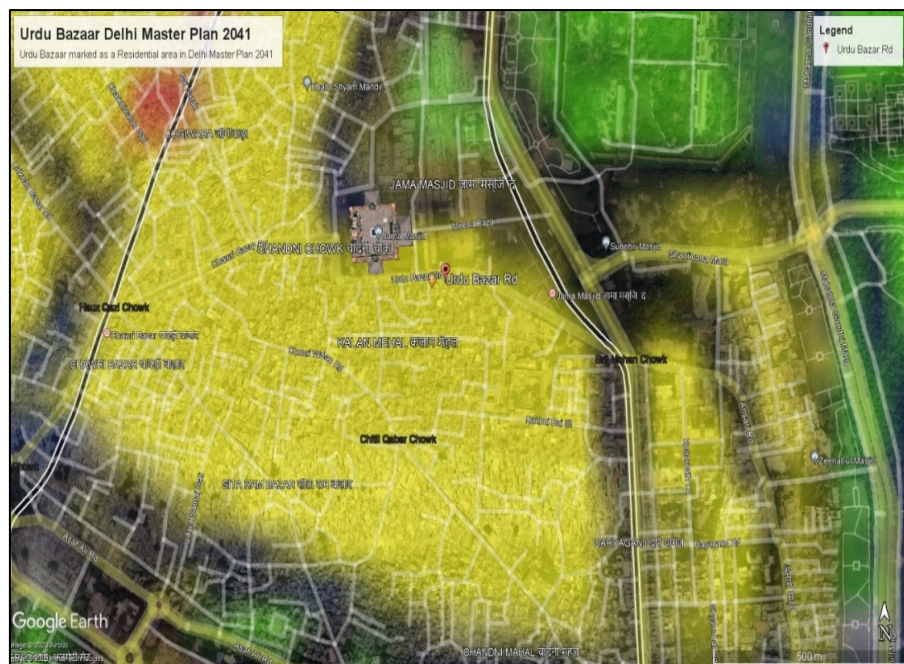


Figure 19 – Urdu Bazaar marked as a Residential area in the Delhi Master Plan 2041

Using the same methodology as in the previous two master plans (2021 and 2001) has yielded similar results, indicating a Eurocentric top-down approach to architectural design. This pattern reflects a

tendency to compartmentalise society into rigidly defined public (commercial) and private (residential) sections, which defies a recognition of the historic evolution of the city’s public spaces through different eras.

We have observed that the structures of the old city are misunderstood and disregarded in the development of the new city. Unfortunately, an imitation of Eurocentric design principles is likely to be imposed again in future master plans. For instance, several marketplaces in Old Delhi, such as Urdu Bazaar, are at risk of being transformed into wholly residential zones according to the master plans. In contrast, surprisingly, the commercial areas within the new establishments are expected to maintain their prominence throughout the future master plans.

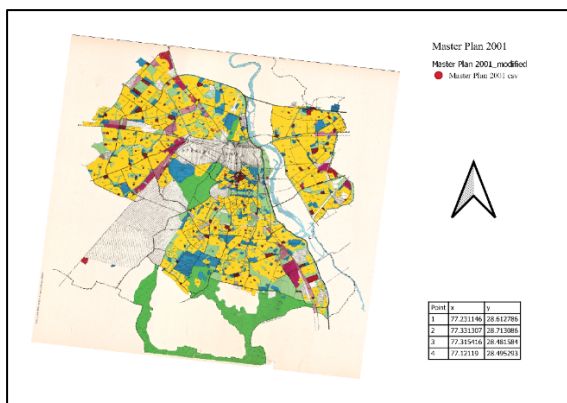


Figure 20 – Master Plan 2001 Georeferenced for Analysis

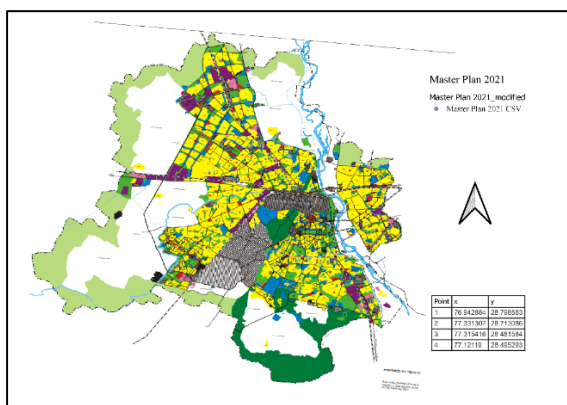


Figure 21 – Master Plan 2021 Georeferenced for Analysis

The layout of master plans raises concerns about the potential loss of intimate structures that foster a sense of belonging among the

city’s residents. Imposing a uniform design across the entire city risks denying and reflects a lack of sensitivity from urban designers toward the city’s evolution through various historical periods. It is this evolution that gives the city its diverse character and distinct flavors in public spaces throughout different areas. A top-down approach to urban planning fails to appreciate the essence of these public spaces, undermining the importance of preserving and respecting the city’s cultural and historical transformations. In this way our analysis reveals that while Urdu Bazaar may lose its vitality in the future master plan, Connaught Place continues to be designated as a commercial zone. This decision seems to uncritically endorse Eurocentric principles and perpetuate colonial legacies, even decades after gaining independence.



Figure 22 – The British-built Connaught Place area remains the same through different Master Plans

This imitation of Eurocentric architecture within the Indian context, along with the resulting subversion of established architectural forms, highlights a need to redefine and expand our understanding of space. This imitation, combined with a top-down approach to city planning, diminishes the vitality that these spaces have to offer. Indian streets are vibrant and diverse, embodying urban chaos filled with a variety of activities. They serve multiple functions, including social

(facilitating identity building and transmission), political (providing a venue for protests and political processions), and economic activities through ‘street trading.’ This trading takes various forms: fixed shops along the street, quasi-permanent weekly markets (often called ‘hafta bazaars’), and mobile vendors or hawkers. In these heterogeneous spaces, pedestrians adopt flexible, improvisational tactics as they navigate and create narratives that challenge the control of urban space, engaging physically and sensorially with their surroundings. However, the Eurocentric model of city planning does not accommodate this dynamic.

This chapter, in this way, explores the feasibility and sustainability of master plan predictions, specifically focusing on public spaces. This perspective goes beyond merely creating green areas or beautifying nostalgic monuments, as well as avoiding the establishment of divisions and gated communities. Instead, it emphasises the importance of fostering coexistence and reimagining public spaces within the Indian context.

### **3.12 Conclusion**

In this chapter, the goal of closely reading literary works is to take an interdisciplinary approach that combines history, architecture, and literature. This analysis provides a unique perspective for understanding literature while also excavating the history of the city. The aim of this course has been to examine the evolution of various street patterns and market aesthetics, particularly focusing on public spaces. In this scenario, the field of Digital Humanities in this scenario offers a blend of diverse methods that extend beyond traditional frameworks, providing new insights (Paul Eve, p. 2). By examining public spaces as sites of protest, in our chapter, we were able to identify a pattern of denial that serves as a foundation for discussing the evolving materiality of public spaces in Delhi. Further exploration in this chapter has allowed the study to investigate the various functions of different types of public spaces, including their social and economic roles. This awareness of

enhancing social interaction arises from the recognition that Delhi is moving away from a nostalgic view of its past glory. The city, which has seen various rulers throughout its history, has undergone significant changes over time. Once the capital of the country, it is now primarily utilised for instrumental purposes, leading to a diminished sense of belonging among its residents. Recently, the rise in violence within the city is believed to stem from this erosion of sociocultural values, a lack of community connection, and an increasing disparity in social structures. Thus, Ar. Richa Raje aptly mentioned – “Prioritising public access over automobiles to resolve the issues of traffic and cars, by creating a dominantly pedestrian environment that furthermore gives primacy to people on vibrant streets...Conserving the public market area and encouraging local craftsmen to work for the city. Integrating hawking and informality, as a positive connection for the place with an Interactive edge between the slum and the proposed new development.” (Raje 2020, p. 4).

This research in this chapter primarily focuses on the evolving material aesthetics and functions of public spaces in the city of Delhi. In doing so, the chapter explores the history, present concerns and also future transformations of the spaces. In conclusion, our analysis of DDA master plans, therefore, highlights the subversions that occur within imposed designs. It also proves a lack of contextualisation of urban design principles in the context of the space. Above all, our chapter poses a significant critique of the Eurocentric design principles surfaced in the form of postcolonial urbanism.



## **Chapter 4**

### **Tracing Domestic Architecture: An Interplay of Public-Private Relationships in the Domestic Worlds of Delhi**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

The discussion and importance of making public space available, accessible, and inclusive have entered various fields of study and successfully established a multi-disciplinary appeal. The definition of this public space, with all its characteristics of openness and inclusion of all kinds of people, separates it from the notions of private space. Public space as an open space invites public participation, accommodates gatherings, and fosters togetherness (Gehl, 2010; Madanipour, 2003; Staeheli et al., 2003). Public spaces also play a crucial role in providing stages for public expression, outrage, and activism (Mitchell 2003). In contrast, a private space is where an individual carries out private/personal rituals and ablutions (Newman 1972). Thus, the notion of outer, open public space distinguishes itself from private, domestic space (Altman 1975). However, this apparent, easy segregation bears some complex contours where the barriers between these spaces are blurred. Also, there is a distinction between the legal definition of public spaces and the way individuals experience them. The legal definition centres on ownership, determining whether a space is categorised as public or private. In contrast, the experiential aspect pertains to accessibility, management, and inclusiveness (Li 2022), reflecting how people engage with and utilise these spaces in their everyday lives.

The historical distinction between public and private spaces reveals that, traditionally, public spaces have been managed by the state and are accessible to everyone. In contrast, private spaces are owned and controlled by individuals or corporations. However, the lines separating these two types of spaces have begun to blur recently. One contributing factor is the rising trend of privatisation in urban environments, where

previously public areas are being acquired or developed by private entities (Jian 2024). This shift can complicate the intentions behind public spaces, as privatised areas often impose restrictions on access and usage, leading to challenges in maintaining their intended public character. This is particularly evident in the development of privately owned public spaces (POPS), where private entities own and manage areas that remain accessible to the public (Peter 2022). Urban planners are increasingly faced with the challenge of ensuring that these hybrid environments genuinely fulfil the needs of the public they are meant to serve. Thus, critical issues such as accessibility, inclusivity, and the enforcement of public norms within privately managed areas are currently under examination.

Therefore, a comprehensive understanding of the city of study at present necessitates considering both public and private spaces, along with the dynamic interactions that occur between them (Madanipour, 2003). The public sphere extends beyond physical public spaces; it serves multiple functions beyond initiating debates and conversations. However, these diverse roles can occasionally conflict with one another. Thus, an effort to make public space inclusive for all runs into the discussion of private spaces as well, since the dynamics of segregation in domestic (private) spaces mirror unequal access in the open public spaces of the city. This blurred barriers and interplay of the two, we have tried to explore in our study within the private space of the domestic space. In the context of gendered private spaces, certain areas of the domestic space acquire the characteristics of a public space, allowing for broader access. In contrast, other parts are further confined within the private domestic space, limiting accessibility to specific members of the household.

Discussing this complex intertwining of private and public boundaries is essential for this research stage, as the domestic environment is directly related to the accessibility of public spaces. Previously, we conducted a comprehensive literature review on the relationship between literature and architecture. As our focus shifted to the city of Delhi, we began mapping the spatial denial and displacement

of public spaces in the urban landscape over time. We identified streets and marketplaces as two key types of public spaces and explored their evolution. A critique of the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) master plans also becomes crucial in this context, as they propose a rigid compartmentalisation of societal structures in city planning. Our analysis reveals that this Eurocentric approach is likely to disrupt the intimate social structures of Old Delhi. In this area, kuchas (narrow lanes), galis (small streets), and katras have coexisted with residential spaces for a long time. Unfortunately, such structures are not found eligible to be included in future master city plans.

Thus, at this stage of our research, as we work to promote initiatives that improve public access while discussing the evolution of public spaces, we also need to examine the domestic spaces within the area. This is important because these domestic spaces historically represented distinct worlds within the city. The domestic spaces in Old Delhi are considered the 'primary units of urban fabric' (Hosagrahar, p. 26). While the grandeur of the Havelis, or mansions, in the Old City has been the focus of various research papers (Hosagrahar 2001; Narayan 2021), this chapter addresses the blurred boundaries and the complex interplay between public and private definitions. It highlights the restricted lives and limited opportunities of women, that has evolved historically in the city. Our study thus traces the transformation of domestic architecture across different time periods in the city of Delhi, highlighting the gendered spaces. In this exploration, we trace the gendered architecture of domestic spaces in the city that continues in the domestic traditions even today with 'an increasing neo-traditionalism that locates women back in the private space of home' (Phadke 2011, p. 10). The chapter thus foregrounds a feminist critique of the public/private dichotomy within the domestic environment and presents a feminist architectural perspective in literature.

## 4.2 Methods and Methodology

The boundaries that separate domestic and public spaces are constantly changing, highlighting their increasingly ambiguous nature and the significant impact this has on urban design and social interactions (Wanka 2017). While architects traditionally view domestic spaces as private, a review of the literature reveals a different perspective (Kostof 1991). The gendered division of access within these spaces raises important questions about whether domestic spaces can truly be classified as private. This prompts us to examine the concept of accessibility in domestic environments and how it reflects public accessibility. To rethink urban design effectively, we must consider all these concerns. Discussions about gendered domestic spaces have emerged in historical research, urban studies, and sociological analyses. However, this chapter employs a methodology grounded in literary works and analyses architecture from a feminist perspective. This approach is significant because the architecture of a place profoundly influences literature, and narratives often reflect the relationship between built environments and literary representation.

This chapter conducts a close examination of how literature documents, reflects, and critiques the architectural spaces we inhabit. As integral members of society, poets and authors often convey a profound sense of place in their works, with certain locations sometimes emerging as central characters in their narratives. In *The Poetics of Space* (1958), Gaston Bachelard explores the psychological and poetic dimensions of architectural environments, arguing that the spaces we inhabit significantly influence our thoughts and emotions, which in turn shape our symbols, imagery, and metaphors. Architecture also plays a crucial role in shaping social values, as noted by Rykert (1976), revealing the connections between urban planning, architecture, and literary expression. Furthermore, Franco Moretti employs a quantitative approach, utilising mapping and computational methods to underscore how literary representations directly impact architectural spaces (Moretti, 2005). The intersection of architecture and literary theories

(Pallasma, 2005) and the parallels found within literature (David, 2009) have enriched various discussions surrounding space. Consequently, the literary works analysed in this study offer a valuable framework for tracing the evolution of domestic architecture and gender accessibility in the designs of our chosen research area. Thus, the texts we have explored from an architectural perspective in this chapter include Ahmed Ali's *Twilight in Delhi*, William Dalrymple's *City of Djinns*, and Manju Kapoor's *Home*. A review of the architectural connections within these literary works reveals the evolution of domestic spaces in Delhi across different time periods, shaping accessibility within both private and public realms throughout the city. In doing so, this chapter first traces the historical evolution of the relationship between public and private spaces in India, followed by an exploration of the rise of gendered spaces within the discourse on domestic spaces.

In the later stages of our analysis, we adopted a methodology that involved creating architectural sketches based on literary descriptions. This approach is rooted in architectural principles, ensuring that each sketch captures the essence of the narrative while adhering to logical circulation patterns and functional coherence. Even when drawing from fictional sources, our goal is to create spaces that feel authentic and plausible. Additionally, the process of creative interpretation has been crucial in addressing any ambiguities in the text. We carefully examined the tone of the narrative, the cultural context, and the spatial symbolism presented in the novel to inform our artistic choices. This allowed us to fill in the gaps left by the author and produce sketches that visualise the described spaces, evoking the emotional and thematic depth inherent in the story.

Architectural sketches become essential tools in literary analysis, as they visually depict the spatial elements described in literature. By converting narrative descriptions into tangible forms, these sketches create the connection between text and the built environment, effectively bridging the gap between abstract literary concepts and concrete architectural elements. These sketches enhance our understanding by revealing underlying structures and analysing spatial

relationships, connecting literary themes to architectural notions such as form and space. They promote creative interpretation, encouraging readers to engage actively with spatial elements. Moreover, architectural sketches serve as critical analysis tools, enabling a deeper examination of how a text portrays space and its symbolic significance. Furthermore, by incorporating sketches into literary analysis, we foster interdisciplinary dialogue between the humanities and design disciplines.

### **4.3 The Historical Relationship Between Public and Private Spaces in India**

In our exploration and analysis of public space accessibility, we have identified a complex and interconnected relationship between these areas. This realisation prompts us to investigate the historical evolution of public space in India, which we consider essential before examining domestic spaces. Our aim is to contextualise the discussion of public space within the Indian setting and to consider how public access can accommodate diverse expressions.

The relationship between public and private spaces in India has undergone significant transformation across various historical epochs. It has been influenced by a blend of cultural norms, diverse religious practices, colonial policies, and the changes brought about by urban modernisation. In the early civilisations of India, such as the Indus Valley, the distinction between public and private spaces was quite fluid. During the Vedic period, ancient cities were characterised by organised layouts featuring separate zones for markets, palaces, and residential areas, demonstrating a structured approach to urban design. This era emphasised integrating traditional architectural principles like Vastu Shastra with modern urban planning to preserve cultural heritage while meeting contemporary needs (Raja 2016). It laid the groundwork for spatial organisation in Indian society, effectively balancing religious, social, and economic functions. During this time, public spaces served communal purposes, while private areas focused on family life and

rituals. This careful organisation of space facilitated a harmonious community life and laid the groundwork for more intricate city planning in subsequent historical periods.

In medieval India, the relationship between religious institutions and urban development was quite complex. In the southern regions, temples served as central hubs for urban settlements, effectively blurring the distinctions between public and private spaces. These temples functioned as religious and vital centres for economic and social activities (Heitzman 1987; Dutta 2024). This integration fostered a unique urban environment where the sacred and secular, as well as public and private, intersected and influenced one another, underscoring the intricate dynamics of urban development during this period. In this traditional layout, the temple was centrally located, serving as a sacred focal point for the community. It included commercial areas, residential sectors, as well as agricultural spaces. This layout not only facilitated daily life but also emphasised the interconnectedness of spiritual, social, and economic activities, with the temple standing as a symbol of the unity of public and private spheres.

Hammams, or traditional bathhouses, served as lively social hubs during the Mughal era. These communal spaces brought together individuals from various backgrounds and facilitated social interaction and exchange of cultures, and promoted bonding among communities. While many hammams were public facilities accessible to all, private hammams could also be found within royal residences and affluent homes. The presence of both public and private hammams highlights the adaptability of these structures to accommodate diverse societal needs. The Delhi Sultanate ushered in significant transformations within India's social and cultural landscape, particularly impacting the distinction and use of public and private spaces (Irfan 2019). The establishment of the Sultanate led to the creation of fortified cities that played crucial roles in governance and trade. These cities were strategically designed with robust walls and fortified structures to enhance security against potential invaders. Inside their walls, bustling markets thrived, showcasing a variety of goods and attracting merchants

from far and wide. These urban hubs featured lively bazaars, inviting merchants, artisans, and traders to convene. Mosques emerged as central public spaces for religious gatherings, while public festivals played an essential role in enhancing societal cohesion. In contrast, the design of private residences was intricately tailored to support the needs of extended families, placing a strong emphasis on privacy and the distinct separation from the bustling public realm. These homes catered to various family functions, allowing for communal living while ensuring personal space. Architecturally, the homes displayed a blend of ornate craftsmanship and functional design, with high walls and carefully positioned entrances that shielded the family's private life from the outside world. The layout typically included courtyards, where family gatherings could take place in a semi-public setting, promoting social interaction without sacrificing the integrity of private life.

However, as Indian society evolved, particularly during the colonial and post-colonial periods, the distinctions between public and private spaces became more pronounced. The arrival of British colonial rule introduced formal regulations and structures that reshaped urban landscapes, often prioritising public spaces like parks and streets while enclosing private domains. This period also saw the emergence of public institutions such as schools and courts that further defined these boundaries. The evolution of the nation's public sphere thus can be traced through colonial experiences and post-colonial struggles. The 'first wave' of the fight for independence against colonisers and the 'second wave' of opposing nativist elites are central to understanding civil society in India. This evolution has been influenced by the rules of various dynasties and two centuries of colonial history. As a result, it followed a path distinct from that of the West due to colonial encounters, which also affected the relationship between public and private spheres. The British colonisers were generally reluctant to intrude upon the private sphere, considering only the general public interests as political and categorising issues related to religion, kinship, and other forms of community identity as apolitical. This approach led to the establishment

of rigid boundaries between the private spheres of the two major religious communities.

In the post-independence period, governance continued to follow this pattern, focusing on public interests while leaving the private sphere untouched. Therefore, we recognise the significant relationship between the private and public spheres. Amir Ali states that “the very idea of institutionalising multiculturalism in the public sphere will involve a renegotiation of the relationship between the two spheres” (Ali, p. 2419) and “one cannot conceive of a democratic public sphere coexisting with an oppressive and undemocratic private sphere” (Ali, p. 2424). Again, the large-scale public works projects in British India commenced in the 1830s, prominently featuring the construction of railways and canals that significantly transformed the country’s physical and economic landscape. These infrastructure developments and novel administrative and legal frameworks (Parekh 2009) served as instruments of colonial governance, enabling the British to exert control and quell dissent. They were integral to consolidating power and shaped the perception of public and private spaces (Ramesh 2020), ultimately influencing urban landscapes throughout India.

The interplay between public and private spaces continues to undergo a dramatic shift in contemporary India. In postcolonial and modern India, the relationship between public and private spaces has been extensively studied compared to other periods. Rapid urbanisation and the rise of gated communities reflect a trend toward increased privatisation, where security and exclusivity redefine what it means to inhabit public space. Simultaneously, there is a growing contestation over access to these public areas as citizens advocate for their rights to gather, protest, and engage in civic life. This ongoing negotiation highlights the complex and evolving dynamics that shape public and private interactions in modern India.

Finally, India’s social structures, including extended families, complex networks of kinship, and profound caste systems, play a vital role in shaping individual identity and societal interactions. This focus on social dynamics has often eclipsed the emergence of a public sphere,

as defined in Western contexts. Investigating how India's distinctive social fabric influences the interplay between private and public spheres unveils the complexities of Indian society and the ongoing negotiation between tradition and modernity (Parekh 2009).

Therefore, this interrelationship underscores the significance of exploring and examining private domestic spaces, as our thesis seeks to address the accessibility of public spaces. These two phenomena are interrelated and mutually dependent, each reflecting the accessibility of the other. Thus, this chapter is essential for fostering a comprehensive understanding of the topic at hand in this thesis.

#### **4.4 Rise of Gendered Domestic Spaces and the Shades of Change**

Gender distinctions significantly influence accessibility within domestic spaces. The availability of public spaces, both in rural and urban areas, is heavily impacted by gender restrictions and stereotypes imposed on women. Therefore, a thorough examination of domestic spaces necessitates an exploration of gendered environments. This section explores the evolution of gendered concepts that have historically shaped domestic architecture in our country. Additionally, it highlights the changes in domestic architecture across various time periods relevant to our study.

Throughout history, Indian society has predominantly confined women to the domestic sphere, which has severely limited their participation in public life. This confinement has had a profound impact on shaping gender dynamics and power relations within the community (Tewari 2024). In ancient and medieval periods, upper-caste women were frequently subjected to seclusion practices intended to control their sexuality and maintain caste purity. Consequently, their access to education and economic opportunities was restricted, further entrenching their roles within the household. During British colonial rule, the perception that educated women could prove to be suitable partners for Westernised men resulted in expanded access to education for women. However, this development primarily served colonial

interests without fundamentally altering the existing patriarchal structures. Later, women's engagement in the Indian independence movement enhanced their visibility in public spaces. Nevertheless, the underlying patriarchal foundations remained largely unchanged despite this increased presence. In recent years, societal attitudes towards women in public spaces have shifted. Nonetheless, women continue to encounter considerable challenges, especially concerning their safety in public areas after dark. In response, they are actively resisting restrictions on their freedom by participating in various forms of protest to assert their right to equality and to reclaim public spaces.

The gendering of space is influenced by cultural and social constructs that link masculinity to public domains and femininity to private spaces (Sacheti 2016). This association has fostered imbalances in power that restrict women's participation in societal development. Although there has been some shift in attitudes over time, women still encounter barriers when trying to access public spaces, often due to concerns about safety and insufficient representation. Nevertheless, many women are actively working to challenge these traditional boundaries, asserting their rights to public areas and advocating for equality and safety in all facets of life.

Traditional Indian architectural principles from Vāstu Śāstra underscore the significance of orientation and proportion in domestic structures (Dhileep 2019). They harmoniously blend design with natural forces to create balanced living spaces, offering guidelines on spatial arrangement, measurements, and geometry guidelines. In Vāstu Śāstra, orientation is thought to affect the well-being of inhabitants, while proportion ensures balance and aesthetic harmony in architectural design. The principles outlined in this ancient science of architecture and spatial planning have often reinforced gender roles by assigning specific areas within structures to different genders. This division affects social interactions and power dynamics (Joseph, 2023).

Early urban settlements in the Indus Valley Civilisation, including Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa, showcased well-planned cities featuring standardised baked brick houses arranged in grid patterns and

equipped with advanced drainage systems. Most homes incorporated courtyards, providing light and ventilation, along with private bathrooms that demonstrated an early understanding of sanitation. These multi-room houses, designed without street-facing windows, ensured privacy and reflected social hierarchies (Mayank 2024). While archaeological evidence is somewhat limited, texts such as the Vedas describe wooden structures and simple layouts. Furthermore, domestic architecture was closely associated with rituals, where sacred fire spaces and east-facing doors were deemed auspicious, highlighting the emergence of social stratification linked to caste roles.

The medieval period witnessed notable transformations in domestic architecture, shaped by the rise of regional kingdoms and the influence of Islamic rulers. In South India, homes were predominantly constructed from stone and timber, while in the Gangetic plains, mud and brick were the primary materials. These houses were generally introverted, designed around courtyards that featured open verandahs. Various social factors of caste, kinship, occupation, etc, significantly influenced the layout of the domestic spaces.

During the reign of the Delhi Sultanate and the Mughal Empire, the principles of Islamic architecture profoundly influenced the design of urban homes. This period saw the emergence of havelis (Borden 2002; Kaiser 2022), grand mansions characterised by their expansive dimensions and intricate layouts. These residences were structured to include distinct areas for different genders: the zenana, which served as the secluded quarters for women, and the mardana, designated for men (Sacheti 2016). This architectural arrangement not only emphasised gender segregation but also reflected the cultural values of modesty and privacy. The use of elegant arches added grandeur to the facades, while jharokhas, ornately designed overhanging balconies, allowed for an open view as well as a retreat from the public gaze, striking a balance between visibility and seclusion. Intricate jaali screens, with their delicate latticework, provided privacy without sacrificing light and airflow.

During British colonial rule, Indian architecture transformed significantly, resulting in a fusion of European styles and local elements known as the Indo-Saracenic style. This blend combined Indian architectural features with neo-classical and Gothic ones, leading to the creation of distinctive structures that reflected both colonial authority and cultural integration. The British influence introduced features such as large verandahs, pitched roofs, and spacious gardens in domestic architecture, which were well-suited to India's tropical climate. In cities like Kolkata and Mumbai, bungalows and townhouses emerged, merging British design principles with Indian materials and craftsmanship. This hybrid style was prevalent in public buildings and residential designs, incorporating domes, arches, and intricate detailing. In the early 20th century, Mumbai became a centre for Art Deco architecture, resulting in the construction of numerous residences that combined modern aesthetics with traditional Indian elements (Gupta 1988). Colonial architecture introduced new spatial norms, prominently featuring bungalow designs that reflected Western ideas of spatial hierarchy and privacy. These homes typically included clear distinctions between public areas, such as drawing rooms and verandas, and private areas, like bedrooms, kitchens, and servant quarters. Indian elite families adapted these layouts to align with and reinforce traditional gender roles, using the arrangement of space to reflect their cultural values and social expectations.

Following India's independence in 1947, there was a deliberate shift from colonial architectural styles to modernism. The emergence of apartment-style housing in urban areas provided women with greater practical freedoms by reducing physical confinement and fostering closer connections with neighbours. However, this modernist approach prioritized functionality over social interaction, resulting in the isolation of women within nuclear family units and limiting their access to extended family support. Additionally, the decline of communal spaces, such as courtyards and terraces, further restricted opportunities for informal social engagement.

Therefore, with this historical evolution of domestic spaces and their architecture in the background, in this chapter, we explore the evolution of domestic architecture in Delhi. Having explored the architecture of public spaces in previous chapters, we now recognise the interrelationship between public and private spaces. This exploration of private spaces is essential for discussing accessibility in public areas in a comprehensive manner. Therefore, the chapter documents a historical evolution of domestic architecture in the country, focusing on the city of Delhi and traces the rise of gendered spaces hindering women's accessibility. Public spaces within domestic environments are often defined by masculine norms, which relegate women to a 'proper place' within the domestic arena (Sethi 2018). The issue of accessibility in private domestic spaces reflects the unequal access women face in broader public spaces throughout the city. Over time, social norms have influenced women's ability to navigate both domestic and public spheres. Historical legacies and sociocultural expectations hinder women's mobility, leaving them in a passive state even amidst urban transformation. This chapter proposes an initiative towards inclusive urban planning that improves infrastructure, enhances public access, and accommodates diverse expressions. To do this, this chapter, therefore, explores the undeniable interrelationship between the two spaces, and in talking about domestic spaces, it explores the gendered divisions within the space.

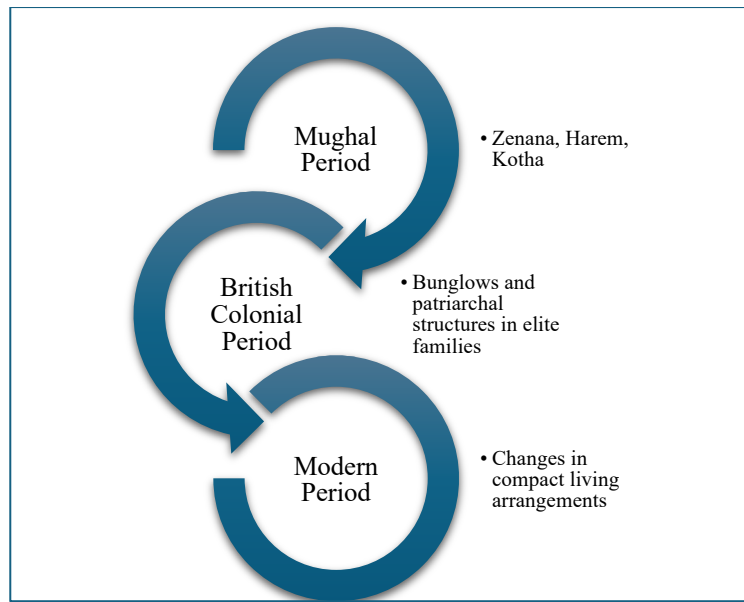


Figure 23 – Flow chart on the changes in domestic architecture through different periods

Therefore, this chapter, as depicted in Figure 23, offers an architectural analysis of domestic spaces through a feminist lens across various historical periods. It investigates areas reserved for women, such as the zenana, harem, and kotha during the Mughal era. The examination then progresses to how these architectural forms evolved during the colonial period, with the emergence of bungalows, and ultimately, how they transformed in the modern era.

#### 4.5 Description of Literary Works

The literary pieces selected for this study are Ahmed Ali's *Twilight in Delhi*, William Dalrymple's *City of Djinn*s, and Manju Kapoor's *Home*. These works are significant contributions to Delhi literature. Although they were written in different eras and belong to various genres, they share a theme of nostalgia and artfully illustrate the city's character through their narratives. These literary works depict domestic environments and reflect on, as well as critique, the gender divisions associated with notions of inaccessibility, assaults, and violence. By representing different time periods and focusing on

domestic spaces, these works provide insightful commentary on architecture, creating complex ideas of public and private realms within the domestic sphere.

Here, Ahmed Ali's work illustrates a transition from Mughal architecture to colonial structures, highlighting the associated conflicts and dilemmas. In contrast, William Dalrymple's writing depicts the post-colonial period, presenting Mughal architecture in a state of disrepair. Manju Kapoor's work reflects a modern move from domestic spaces with courtyards to more compact living arrangements, illustrating the ongoing restrictions that accompany this change. Overall, these texts represent various shifts in domestic structures within the city through literary exploration. The spatial analysis of the literary works highlights different spaces that confine women and demonstrates that, despite significant changes over time, various forms of restriction persist.

Ali's writing presents a vivid view of Old Delhi before the British construction of a new city outside the former city walls. His work lamented the demolition of cultures and the constant hype for adopting Westernisation. The Preface of Ali's book directly criticises the city's planning authority – "The British had only built a new capital outside the city walls. The present rulers have removed the last vestige on which the old culture could have taken its stand..." (Ali 2007). In his writing, the various seasons of Delhi have been beautifully narrated through Asghar and Bilquees's story of love, desire, and fulfilment. The story, set in the backdrop of early twentieth-century Delhi, takes us to the inner courtyards of the domestic worlds through the narrow bylanes, alleys, kuchas, and mohallas of the walled city of Old Delhi. A typical domestic structure in Ali's novel consisted of two divisive parts of the zenana and the mardana connected through a vestibule. Zenana, which represents the domestic arena, stands in contrast with the male-occupied area in colonial Delhi before 1911. The women characters in the novel can be seen negotiating with the limitations and struggling within the constraints of patriarchal structures. The reading thus provides us with a context of how colonialism challenged traditional structures and

moulded them over time through the delineation of domestic architecture.

On the other hand, in the novel *City of Djinns*, William Dalrymple has poured out his experiences of living in Delhi for a year. Dalrymple characterises Delhi as a palimpsest, with each era leaving its architectural mark. His exploration of homes throughout the city reveals his rented flat in a dilapidated colonial building as a metaphor for the waning remnants of British imperialism and the resilience of post-colonial Delhi. He perceives domestic spaces as reservoirs of memory, where they embody tales of loss, survival, and adaptation. In this light, the non-fiction captures domestic architecture not simply as a scenic backdrop but as a vital player in the unfolding historical narrative of Delhi, capturing the emotional essence of the city's past and present through its structures and spaces.

In *City of Djinns*, domestic architecture serves as a vibrant character in its own right. Interviews with families in traditional homes reveal that women frequently occupy zenana-like spaces, which underscores the persistence of gender boundaries. His landowner, Mrs Puri's Raj-era bungalow, exemplifies Anglo-Indian aspirations with its spacious layout, contrasting sharply with the crowded havelis of Old Delhi. This transition toward open spaces reflects Western concepts of private and public areas, still preserving a patriarchal family structure.

Set in the modern era, Manju Kapur's *Home* examines how the layout of the Banwari Lal household enforces gender segregation. This spatial organisation not only reflects but also reinforces societal gender norms, confining women to designated areas and limiting their interactions with the outside world. In this context, the concept of 'home' transcends mere physical structure, symbolising both a sense of belonging and a form of confinement. The architectural constraints within the household significantly impact the women's social interactions and economic independence. Nevertheless, the novel highlights their resilience and yearning for autonomy, using domestic architecture as a lens to critique the societal structures that restrict women and highlight the complex relationship between space and

gender-based power dynamics. As the narrative unfolds, it presents a significant transformation in Banwari Lal’s domestic environment. The existing structures were demolished, paving the way for the construction of new, compact buildings resembling flats.

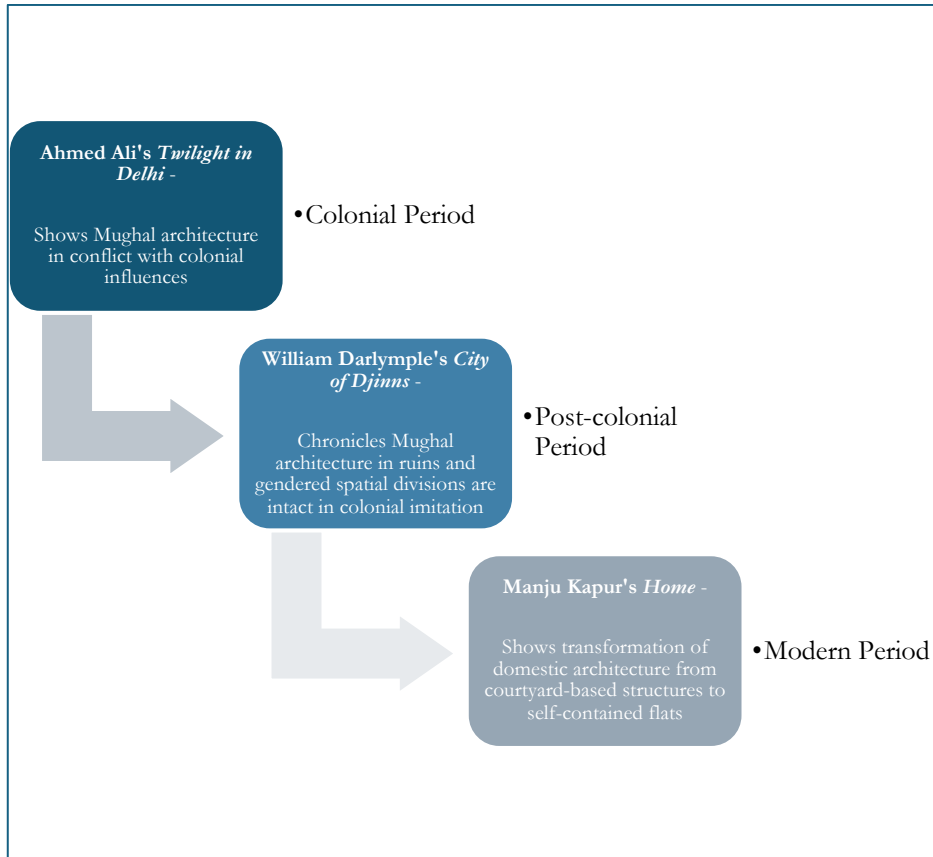


Figure 24 – A flow chart of the literary texts showcasing domestic architecture of different periods

In this way, the texts included in this study illustrate the transformation of domestic architecture (Figure 24) while emphasising the reign of patriarchy and its resultant divisions, which are discussed in later sections of the study.

#### **4.6 ‘Zenana’, ‘Harem’, ‘Kotha’ Restricted Access and Limited Possibilities for Women – An analysis of Ali’s *Twilight in Delhi* and Dalrymple’s *City of Djinns***

Our analysis of the first text thus takes us to the era of Mughal domestic architecture, revealing how these traditions faced challenges

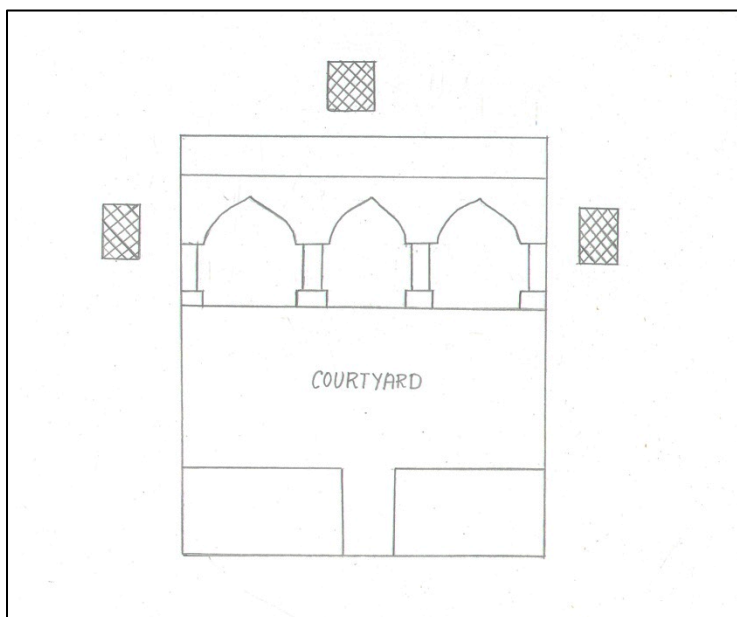
from growing Western influences in the domestic sphere. The text, therefore, foregrounds the gendered access and restricted spaces available to women. A woman's place in a 'zenana', 'harem', or a 'kotha'/private residence provides limited to no access to public spaces. This limitation and barring of women's access shape the city and its public spaces. It develops women in a restricted space where their knowledge is limited, and they lack a voice for rights and pleasure. The zenana, also referred to as the women's quarters, assumes a pivotal role as a symbol of domesticity and confinement within Ahmed Ali's novel. It epitomises the private sphere where women are situated, barred from the male gaze, and subject to entrenched patriarchal control. "In the zenana, things went on with the monotonous sameness of Indian life. No one went out anywhere." (Ali 2007, p. 39). Though a simple description of the zenana, it cruelly uncovers the stagnancy and acute lack of possibilities for women bound in the domestic world. "Mostly life stayed like water in a pond with nothing to break the monotony of its static life." (Ali 2007, p. 39). This resonates with Dalrymple's writing too, where he comments, "Yet inside the walls of the havelis and the lattice screens of the zenana, life goes on as it always did. Births follow upon marriages, love affairs decay, middle age gives way to crumbling senility – but all the time the stories and traditions are passed on." (Dalrymple 1993, p. 59). In Ali's novel, the architecture of the haveli highlights the limitations placed on women. Designed to enforce purdah, these mansions confined women to the zenana, the inner quarters, separate from the men's areas (mardana). High walls and restricted access ensured women's invisibility and limited their movement within the community.

From the very beginning of the novel, in recounting the story of Asghar and Bilqueese, in Ali's writing, the architectural details of Mir Nihal's house and the zenana become clearly evident –

"As you enter the house through the vestibule, you come into an inner courtyard. Right in front is a low kotha, and under it two small rooms. On the left is an arched veranda opening onto a raised platform made of bricks, and behind it a long room. On either side of the veranda

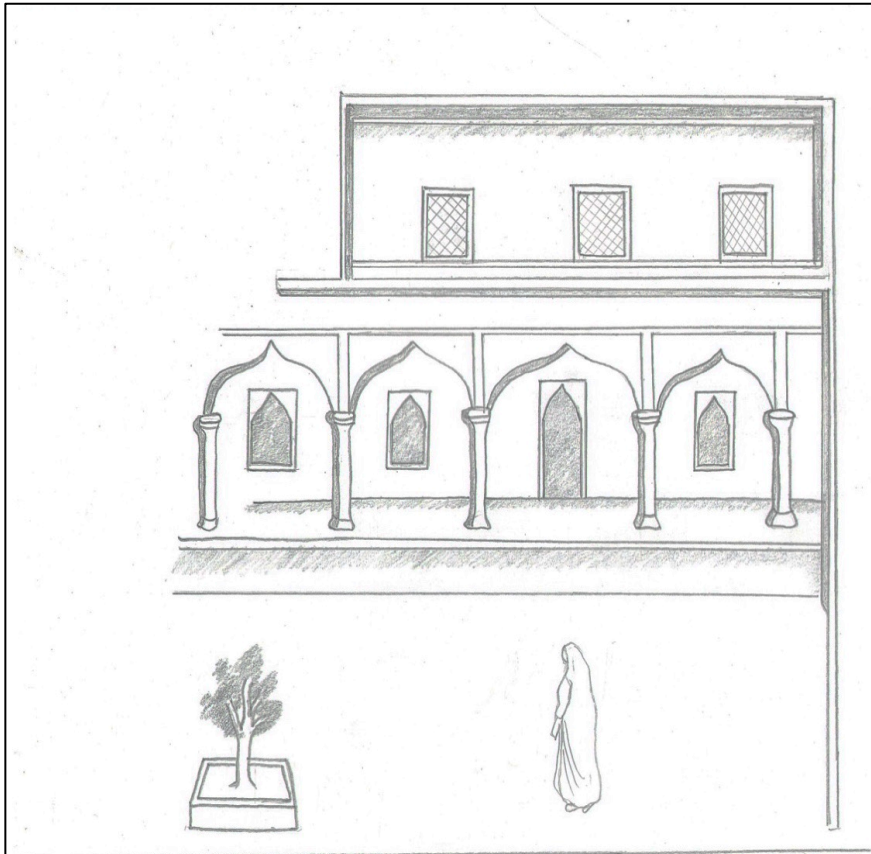
and the platform are small rooms, and by the side of the entrance is the lavatory, a narrow bathroom, then the kitchen, black with smoke. In the centre of the courtyard, an old date palm tree raises its head up towards the sky,...Two earthen dishes hang from it, one full of water, the other of grain for the sparrows and wild pigeons who have built their nests in the cornices of the veranda and in the thick red and white curtains hanging above the arches.” (Ali 2007, p. 6-7)

In Ali’s novel, the passage offers a detailed and immersive description of a traditional haveli-style home, commonly found in India’s and Pakistan’s historic urban centres. This depiction highlights the unique aesthetic and functional aspects of vernacular architecture that serve as a stark contrast to the uniformity of colonial modernist planning. As such, it serves as a significant reference point for understanding the complexities of postcolonial urban studies, reflecting the region’s cultural heritage and social dynamics. Based on the detailed architectural description provided in the novel, we have visualised the architectural layout of Mir Nihal’s zenana (Sketch 1). This architectural design of the zenana serves to isolate it from male external affairs, thereby restricting the activities and interactions of its inhabitants. Ali writes – “The four walls stood high, shutting them all in from the world, protecting them from noise and life” (Ali 2007, p. 41).



### Architectural Sketch 1 – Architectural layout of Mir Nihal’s haveli’s zenana separated from mardana through the vestibule

The zenana, separated from the mardana or male part of the house, connected with a vestibule – this architecture becomes evident in Mir Nihal’s visit to the zenana – “Mir Nihal cleared his throat in the vestibule. As his voice penetrated the house, Begam Waheed sat prim and adjusted her head cloth, and Begum Nihal also covered her head. Begam Jamal mumbled something to herself and went towards the kitchen.” (Ali 2007, p. 61). The vestibule functions as a crucial transitional space that gracefully separates the public realm of the mardana from the private domain of the zenana. Its design is intentional, providing a buffer that prevents abrupt male intrusion into the intimate world of women. When Mir Nihal clears his throat, a deliberate act in itself, it serves as a spatial announcement that resonates through the space, alerting the women to prepare for his arrival. This prompts them to adjust their attire, observe purdah, and discreetly withdraw if needed, embodying the strictures of their environment. The women’s immediate responses reflect the deeply entrenched gender norms that the vestibule reinforces, acting as a guardian of the zenana’s sanctity and upholding the social codes that govern their behaviour. This dynamic interaction highlights the vestibule’s role as a physical barrier and a symbol of the cultural practices that shape their lives. This vestibule in Mir Nihal’s haveli separates the female quarters from the mardana of the house, marking the space as an isolated one, as depicted in Sketch 2, where, following the scenario-based design method, we have presented an architectural sketch of the zenana in Nihal’s haveli.



Architectural Sketch 2 – Zenana of Mir Nihal’s House imagined through the literary descriptions

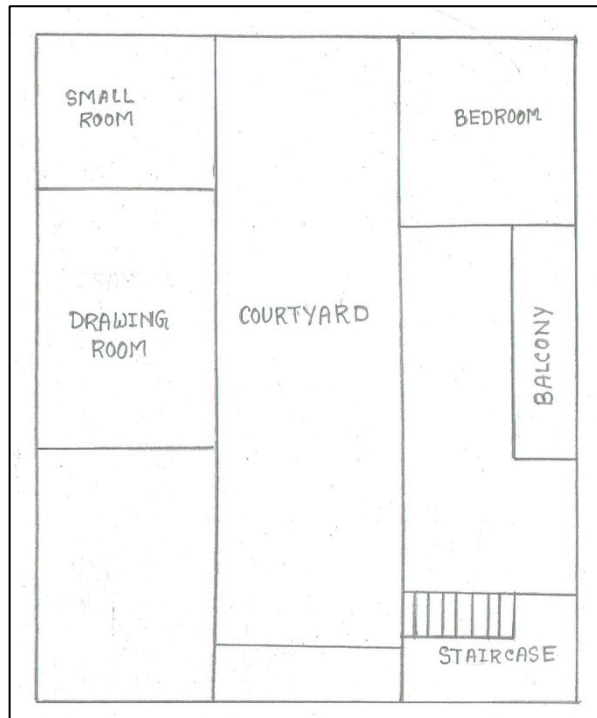
Noteworthy scholarly analyses probe the extent to which this spatial confinement shapes the identities and agency of female characters, particularly the women characters in Mir Nihal’s extended family. This is evident in the story of Bilqueece, who bears the brunt of the blame for not responding appropriately to Asghar’s desired initiatives. The male author and narrator fail to understand Bilqueece simply following the zenana ‘strictures’ (Narayan, p. 43). Bilqueece, a character in *Twilight in Delhi*, is a multi-faceted and intricate portrayal that epitomises the struggles faced by women amid a cultural transformation. Bilqueece, though, failed to reciprocate Asghar’s romantic advancements due to her prolonged confinement in the Zenana, and does not reflect herself as one who does not crave personal ties and familial bonds. However, not only Zenana, but also the growing social transformation brought about by colonial impact, separates her, even from what little she has. Her character undergoes profound internal

conflicts as she grapples with her desires and the societal expectations imposed upon her. Bilqueece is portrayed with remarkable emotional depth, vividly illustrating her sense of isolation and her yearning for connection in the face of a rapidly evolving world. She frequently contemplates the profound impact of colonial influence and modernity on her life, offering a framework for the novel to provide valuable insights into societal transformation.

All these consequently legitimise males' visiting and often keeping 'Bai' at the kothas. The kotha, traditionally known as a place of residence for courtesans in South Asia, serves as a complex and multifaceted environment where women negotiate and express their identities. Whereas 'zenana' is there in the domestic households of the middle class/ the amirs and omrahs, 'kotha' is different from it and broadly classified into two types – the cultured ones living under the favour of rich men (for example, the kotha of the widow of Mir Nihal's brother-in-law, p. 12) and the uncultured ones/ the prostitutes. Within the bounds of societal norms, women in these spaces encounter both opportunities for empowerment and the limitations of societal constraints. In *Twilight in Delhi* by Ahmed Ali, the kotha is depicted as a complex space for women – the space that hides their limitations under the illusion of independence. The kotha is characterised as a semi-public space, distinct from the private zenana. Its design accommodates performances and social gatherings, allowing courtesans to interact with patrons while preserving a degree of separation from the public. This arrangement highlights the courtesans' unique position in society, which is both accessible and restricted.

In Ali's work, the architectural description of the kothas comes through Asghar's visit to Mushtari Bai through the lanes of Chaori Bazar, famous for 'ironware and brassware merchants, second-hand dealers in lace, and prostitutes'. Ali describes the lane as – "On either side of the narrow and noisy streets sat the girls in balconies, ornamented and well dressed, and small lamps or lanterns shed light on their tempting faces." (Ali 2007, p.73). This sheds light on the architectural significance and social functions of kothas, which were instrumental in

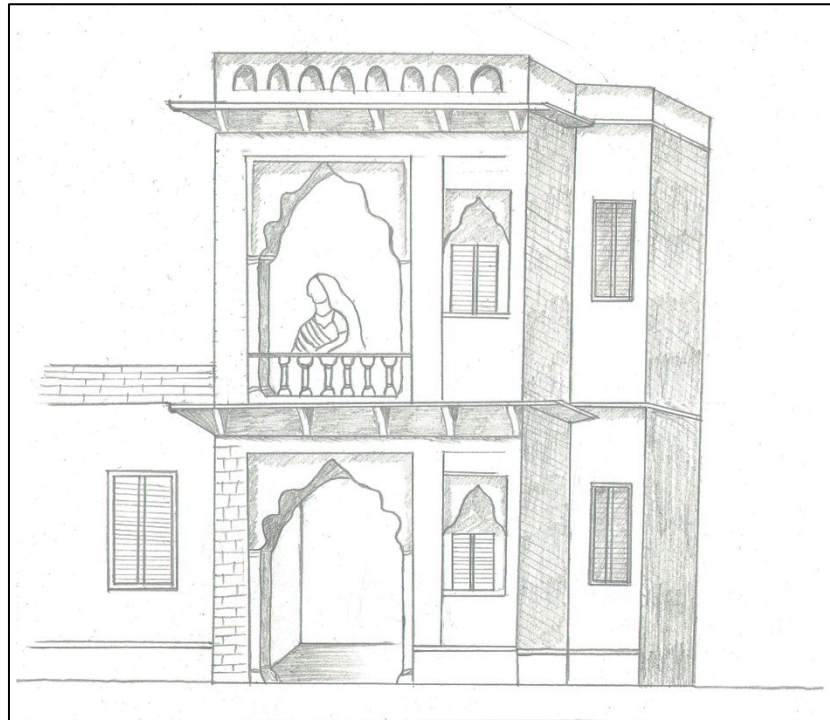
shaping the urban landscape during the Mughal and post-Mughal periods (Sketch 3). These spaces complicate the traditional distinctions between the public and private realms, offering an alternative third space. In this unique environment, the presence of women is carefully curated, regulated, and shaped by their own expressions of identity and empowerment.



Architectural Sketch 3 – Architectural layout of Kotha imagined based on literary description

In Ali’s description, the architecture of Mushtari Bai’s kotha comes to the surface through Asghar’s visit to her place – “As he climbed up the staircase, lighted dimly by an earthen lamp, Asghar thought how he was happy once with Mushtari Bai...As they reached the landing and stepped into the courtyard, Mushtari Bai, who was lying on a bed, got up to receive them.” (Ali 2007, p. 73-74). This observation indicates that the kotha is organised around a central courtyard, a characteristic feature of Indo-Islamic domestic and semi-public architecture. The courtyard serves as a significant open-air space that facilitates various cultural activities, including performances, musical mehfil, and intimate social gatherings. Functioning as both a practical

area and a cultural focal point, the courtyard embodies the architectural principles of the time. The balcony acted as a symbolic stage, where women could showcase themselves to the world below (Sketch 4). It provided a unique vantage point for them to be both observed and admired. This setting enabled an interaction that blended the private and public spheres.

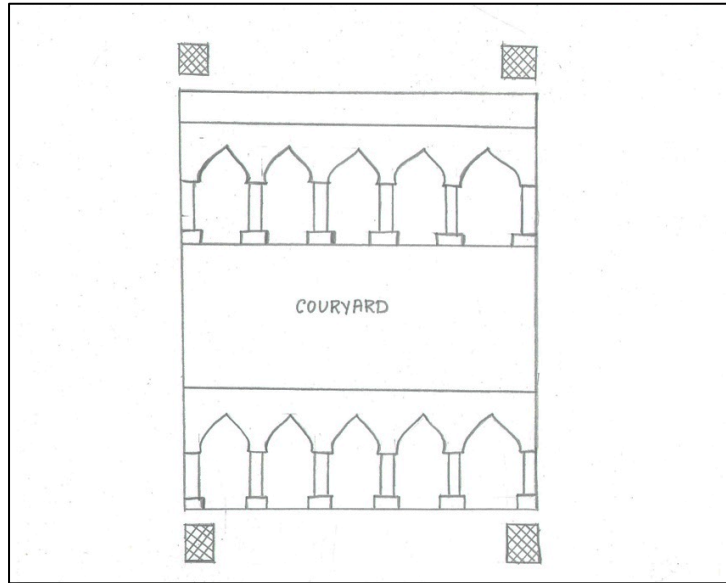


Architectural Sketch 4 – Mushtari Bai’s kotha imagined from the literary descriptions in Ali’s Novel

Women like Mushtari Bai in the Kotha utilise their skills in music, dance, and conversation to achieve a semblance of financial independence; yet, all the while, they confront societal stigma and patriarchal constraints. Mushtari Bai, at the beginning of the novel, is seen losing all affection from Asghar, for whom Bilqueece had charmingly captivated attention. Her life is dependent on Asghar’s fleeting emotions. When Bilqueece’s charms utterly entranced Asghar, he refused to reciprocate Mushtari Bai’s advances. She becomes heartbroken to see this sudden shift and complains through tears, a fate the kotha women are destined to get at the end. Again, Babban Jan’s demise was merely a startling reminder for Mir Nihal of his growing age

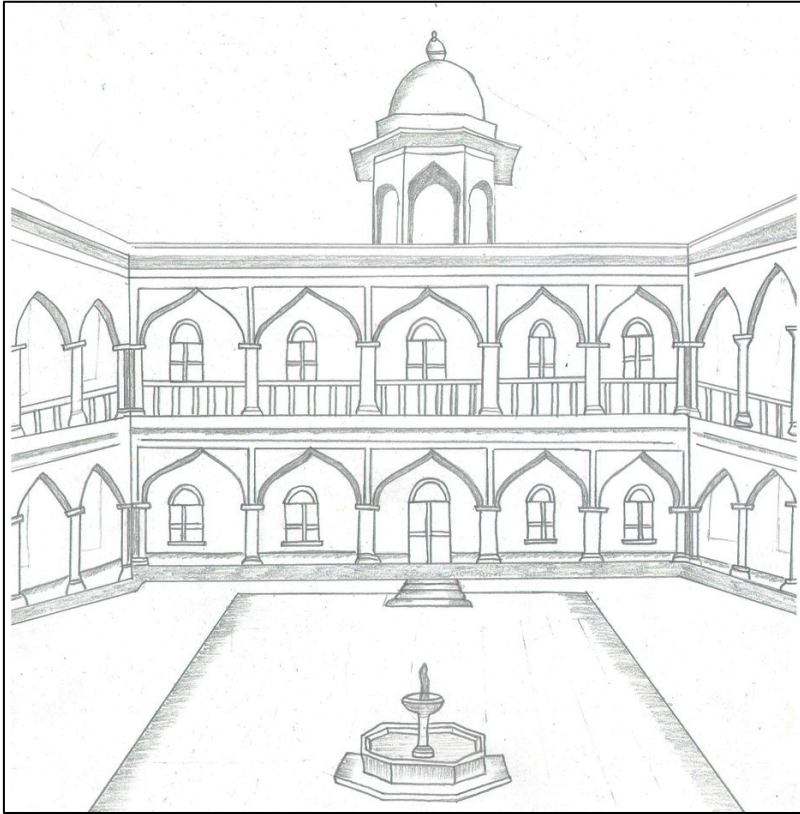
and approaching death. Thus, these kothas, which presented the old, rich traditions of the city in the face of cultural shifts, flagging the end of the Mughal era, had extended connotations for women's accessibility.

Therefore, the three spaces in the heading, although collectively referred to as spaces confined to women, have different connotations. While 'zenana' is associated with the private quarters assigned to women in large havelis in Old Delhi, 'kotha' refers to a private residence exclusively for women, run by and structured to cater to the pleasure of the city's rich male members. The word 'harem', on the other hand, is associated with royalty and indicates a luxurious section of the king's mansions dedicated to his wives (possessions). Although Ali's novel does not mention the harem, in *City of Djinn*s by William Dalrymple, the harem is depicted as a secluded and enigmatic facet of traditional Mughal households, offering a captivating insight into the lives of the women who resided within its confines. Dalrymple explores the historical and cultural intricacies of the harem, revealing its complexities and the nuanced interactions that occur within. The harem emerges as a domain of both influence and constraint, where women wielded significant power in family and political matters, all the while being tethered by strict societal norms and limitations. "The harem was strictly secluded, with high walls and small, latticed windows to prevent anyone from looking in. Inside, life was luxurious but confined, with women spending most of their time indoors, engaged in domestic activities, and occasionally entertaining guests." (Dalrymple 1993). The harem's architecture, including high walls and lattice windows, was specifically designed to prevent outsiders from seeing the women. This design restrained the women's visibility and movement, keeping them confined to the private areas of their homes, as depicted in the architectural layout of Sketch 5.



Architectural Sketch 5 – Architectural layout of Harem from Dalrymple’s work

The book explains that the harem was more than just a physical space; it was also a social and cultural construct. It was a cultural and social institution that enforced seclusion for women. This practice reflected the wider patriarchal norms of society, which aimed to control women’s movements and interactions (Singh 2006). Despite these restrictions, the women in the harem created their own world. They participated in various domestic activities, the arts, and education. However, they still lacked freedom and independence, as they depended on the male members of their households. Dalrymple highlights the contrast between women’s pompous yet limited lives in the harem, where they exert significant influence despite seclusion (Yadav 2021). This exploration of Dalrymple in the literary text helps us to draw an elaborate architectural sketch of the harem based on the architectural layout, as depicted in Sketch 6.



Architectural Sketch 6 – Harem of Mansions imagined from Dalrymple’s literary descriptions

In this way, our exploration of domestic spaces and their architecture in this chapter, through the architectural analysis of two prominent texts of Delhi literature, provides a pen-picture of the zenana, harem, and kotha – prominent spaces for women within the domestic sphere in the Mughal and post-Mughal periods. The analysis of these spaces through literature highlights not only the restricted mobility and confinement of women within certain boundaries but also reflects how these spaces challenge and often blend and blur the public-private distinctions within the domestic setup during that time.

#### **4.7 Domestic Layout of Colonial Bungalows and Loss of Tradition in the Postcolonial Period: An Analysis of Dalrymple’s *City of Djinn*s**

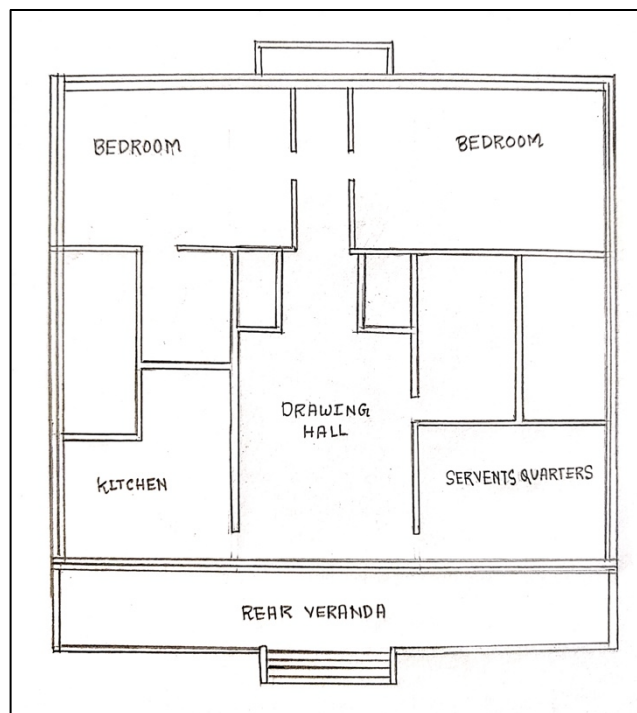
In *City of Djinn*s, William Dalrymple presents a nuanced depiction of Delhi’s architectural evolution, emphasising the transition

from Mughal and colonial domestic designs to post-colonial structures. This compelling non-fiction work intricately intertwines historical narrative, vivid ethnographic observations, and personal anecdotes, inviting readers to navigate the complex and multifaceted identity of Delhi. While Dalrymple does not explicitly frame his analysis within gender or feminist theory, the text subtly references the transformation of domestic architecture in the post-colonial period and the ways these spaces may reflect or reinforce limitations on women's mobility. He highlights the gradual replacement of traditional Mughal havelis and colonial bungalows with modern high-rise buildings. Many historic mansions in the Old City have either been abandoned or repurposed.

Commenting on this architectural change, Dalrymple says – “Although parts of the city still preserved the ways of the Mughal period or even the early Middle Ages, Delhi was nevertheless changing, and changing fast...The most visible change was in the buildings. When I first saw Delhi it was still a low-rise colonial capital, dominated by long avenues of white plaster Lutyens bungalows.” (Dalrymple 1993, p. 23). This shift not only signifies changing residential preferences but also marks a profound transformation in urban development priorities that reshapes the social landscape of domestic life. Historically, structures such as havelis featured segregated spaces, like the zenana, which were designed to restrict and control women's movements within the household. The decline of these traditional designs in favour of more open-plan apartments may suggest a potential increase in visibility and mobility for women. Yet, even as architectural forms evolve, entrenched societal norms and cultural practices linger, continuing to mould women's experiences in the bustling urban environment beyond the mere physicality of space.

Dalrymple in his work offers a clear and insightful look at bungalow architecture and spatial layouts in postcolonial New Delhi – “The house stood looking on to a small square of hot, tropical green; a springy lawn fenced in by a windbreak of champa and ashok trees. The square was the scene for a daily routine of almost Vedic inflexibility.” (Dalrymple 1993, p. 17). This suggests that the bungalow is positioned

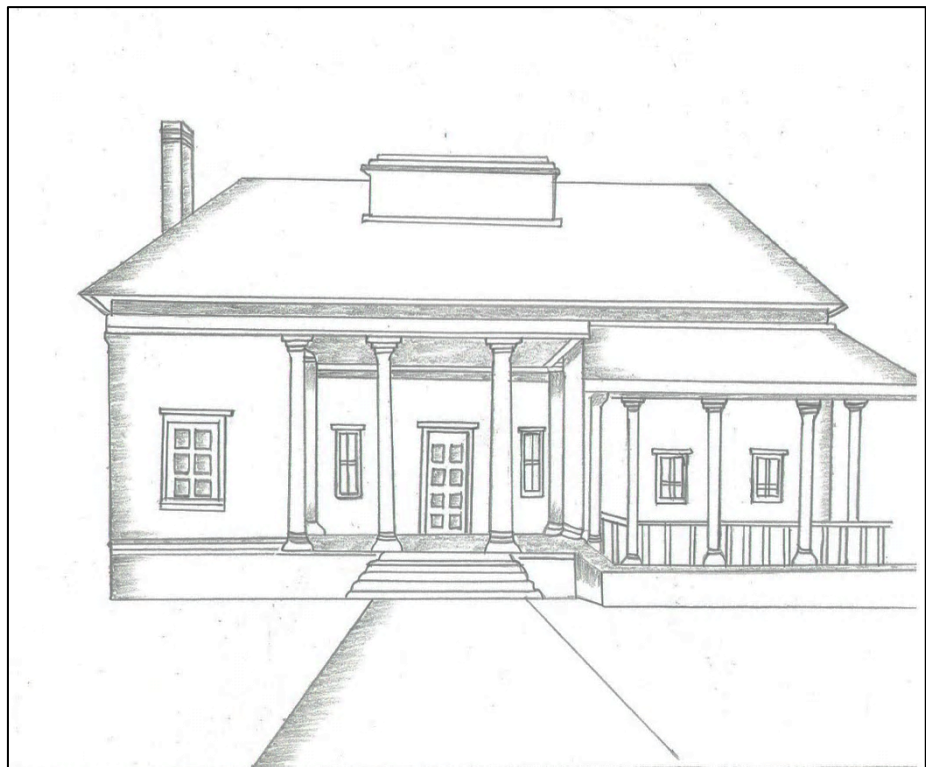
to face a central lawn, reflecting the colonial garden-city model, which emphasises the careful integration of nature for both aesthetic pleasure and functional utility. This layout signifies a ritualisation of space; the garden evolves beyond mere decoration to become a lively stage for social interactions and physical activities, embodying cultural traditions and community connections. This architectural setting thus illustrates a nuanced hybrid postcolonial identity, where British colonial structures have been thoughtfully appropriated by Indians, infused with local customs and practices that resonate with Indian cultural rhythms. The reference to Vedic traditions within this framework highlights a revivalist national identity that seeks to intertwine indigenous values with the legacies of colonial spatial designs, creating a dialogue between history and contemporary life, as depicted in the architectural layout of Sketch 7.



Architectural Sketch 7 – Architectural layout of Bungalows from colonial Delhi

In this way, in the post-colonial period, there was a conscious shift away from colonial and Mughal architectural styles, paving the way for new forms that embodied the nation's aspirations and regional

identities. Following independence, Indian architects sought to develop designs that were attuned to local environments and societal needs, while simultaneously embracing the innovations of modernist principles. This approach, often referred to as Critical Regionalism, emphasised a harmonious blend of traditional materials with contemporary design practices that responded to India's varied climatic conditions (Sketch 8). Architects such as Charles Correa and Balkrishna Doshi exemplified this movement, producing works that were both innovative and deeply rooted in the Indian context, thereby shaping the contemporary architectural landscape of India.



Architectural Sketch 8 – Bungalows from colonial Delhi taken from Dalrymple's literary descriptions

Even after the transformation in architecture, gender-based restrictions persist within domestic spaces. One notable line from the book states: "The sahibs built bungalows with large drawing rooms and detached kitchens, with the memsahibs overseeing the interiors while keeping a distance from the servants." These residences enforced a colonial domestic hierarchy, where the layout clearly delineated gender

roles. The drawing rooms, designed for entertaining male guests, served as public spaces that reflected power and status. In contrast, the kitchens and servant quarters were situated out of sight, reinforcing a sense of privacy and separation (Sketch 7). This architectural strategy not only represented the social dynamics of the colonial era but also found its way into the designs of post-colonial elite housing, perpetuating these gendered divisions in domestic life.

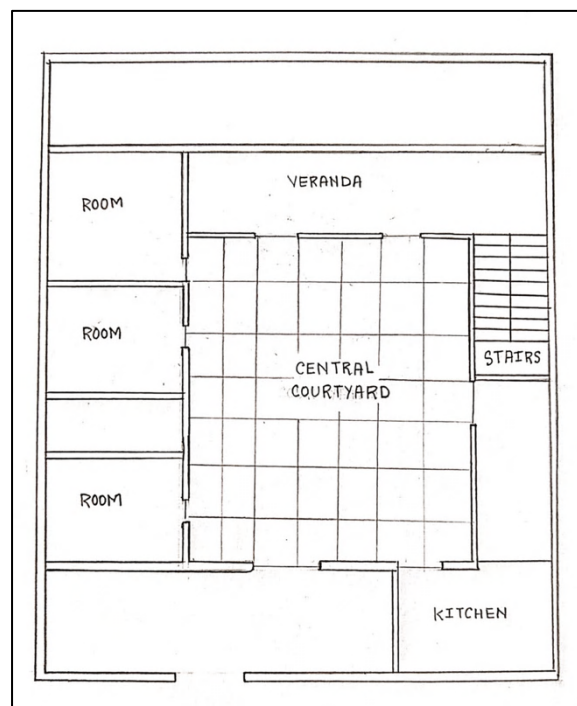
Another observation from the text emphasises that – “The refugee colonies of Lajpat Nagar and Karol Bagh, though modern in layout, often reproduced the same gendered domestic routines – the men outside, the women within.” This trend persisted even in the newly constructed houses that emerged after the partition in 1947. The enduring division of spaces according to gender shows how architectural designs mirrored and reinforced patriarchal norms and expectations, regardless of the modernisation evident in their physical form.

In the latter part of his work, referring to the decay of these bungalows, Dalrymple writes – “Their house had once been quite grand – a rambling half-timbered affair with a wide veranda and cusped Swiss gables. But the Haxbys’ estate had clearly fallen on hard times.” (Dalrymple 1993, p. 86). The description conjures the image of a British-style bungalow adapted to the Indian climate, characterised by its sprawling layout and asymmetrical design, complemented by wooden framing that imparts texture and warmth. This architectural form, relatively uncommon in traditional Indian structures, was introduced during the late colonial period primarily by British civilians and missionaries who aimed to recreate a sense of home in a foreign land. In this context, the bungalow serves as a powerful symbol of a decaying colonial legacy, with its very construction reflecting themes of displacement and nostalgia, marked by the passage of time. In contrast to the intricately designed havelis or flexible kothas of Indian architecture, these bungalows represent an imposed vision of modernity that proves inherently flawed, struggling to retain significance as the influence of colonial power continues to wane. The juxtaposition of this

imported architecture against the Indian landscape highlights the complexities of identity and belonging in a post-colonial world.

#### 4.8 Spatial Confinement and Gendered Segregation in the Modern Period

In Manju Kapur's novel *Home*, the intricacies of domestic architecture take centre stage, reflecting the socio-cultural dynamics that govern family life, particularly in relation to gender roles and hierarchical structures. The layout and design of the Banwari Lal household, with its narrow corridors and partitioned rooms, show us the limitations imposed on its female inhabitants. Kapur comments on this domestic architecture of Banwari Lal's household through Sona's entry into the family as a young bride – "...this house is smaller than mine, thought the young bride, as she surveyed the small paved area between the front door and gate, the angan at the back, with its toilet and kitchen on opposite ends, and the four rooms in between." (Kapur 2006, p. 9), with another 'four rooms on the second storey' (p. 12). This description explores a representative lower-middle-class urban house in post-independence Delhi (Sketch 9).



Architectural Sketch 9 – Architectural Layout of Banwari Lal’s house in the first half of the novel

The structure features a thoughtfully designed compact layout that maximises space efficiency while accommodating the distinct roles often assigned to different genders within the household. The architecture showcases a practical vernacular style that skilfully combines traditional Indian design elements with the necessities of urban living, including effective ventilation and ample natural light. Communal areas, such as a modest courtyard or living space, are intentionally designed to encourage family interactions, fostering a sense of togetherness. In stark contrast to the expansive colonial bungalows and opulent havelis that once symbolised elite living, this evolution in residential architecture underscores the unique challenges and cultural transformations taking place in a rapidly modernising society, as depicted in Sketch 10.



Architectural Sketch 10 – Banwari Lal’s house in the first half of the novel is imagined from literary descriptions

The protagonist, Nisha, in this setting, grapples with the suffocating patriarchal environment that constrains her aspirations and

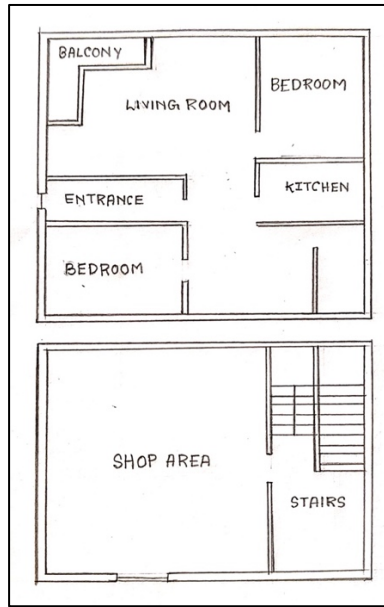
independence. As she moves through the confining spaces of her family home, filled with the weight of tradition and expectation, Nisha's journey unfolds as she seeks to carve out her own identity and reclaim her autonomy amid the stifling confines of domestic life. Highlighting her spatial confinement within the household, Kapur writes - "It is better for girls to remain inside." (p. 51). Nisha's limited access to the street and public playgrounds shows the enduring influence of purdah traditions, which dictate female seclusion and modesty. This restriction is a personal constraint, but rather a reflection of deep-rooted cultural beliefs that have been perpetuated within postcolonial, patriarchal middle-class homes. Also, Kapur critiques the gendered expectations and spatial roles for women in postcolonial middle-class Indian homes. - "...that child was a girl who, despite the overuse of her brains, was only going to get married." (p. 121). The text underscores the restricted perception of female intellect in patriarchal households, where girls receive an education that does not promote independence or civic engagement. Kapur emphasises a troubling incident in which Nisha is molested by her cousin Vicky, revealing how the very structures of privacy can facilitate silence and control.

As the narrative progresses into the 1980s, the Banwari Lal family's home undergoes a significant transformation, mirroring the broader societal shift towards nuclear families and modern living arrangements. Following the death of the family patriarch, Banwari Lal, the once unified household begins to fragment. Kapur thus wittily comments - "The single bathroom upstairs turned into a bone of contention so big that the whole house could not contain it." (p. 167). This architectural evolution signifies not only a physical restructuring but also a metaphorical departure from traditional values and communal living. The conversion into separate flats represents the family's adaptation to contemporary lifestyles, emphasising individual autonomy over collective familial bonds.

In the text, the transformation of domestic architecture in the Banwari Lal family, marked by the shift from traditional courtyard homes to contemporary apartments, serves as a reflection of the

changing roles of women in society. This architectural evolution captures the broader socio-cultural dynamics, transitioning from deeply rooted collectivist, patriarchal norms to increasingly individualistic lifestyles that promise greater personal freedom. The novel opens within the warm, bustling confines of a traditional joint family home located in the Karol Bagh neighbourhood of Delhi. This dwelling, centred around a communal courtyard, is an emblem of the collectivist ethos that defined many Indian households at the turn of the twentieth century. With interconnected rooms, narrow hallways, and shared spaces, the home fosters a sense of togetherness, yet simultaneously, it stifles individual expression. In this tightly knit environment, women like Sona and her daughter Nisha navigate a reality where every movement and choice is scrutinised by family members, who uphold traditional expectations.

A moment of transformation in the architecture and ideology of Indian domestic space is captured through Pyare Lal explaining the plan to Sona – “Arey, I will explain. Look, you are on the first floor. Fourteen hundred square feet we are allowed, but actually, he is giving us 1650. He is a clever man. Rekha’s own chacha, real brother of her own father. See, with a bathroom attached to every bedroom, no inconvenience for anybody.” (p. 171). The transition from a shared residence to individual flats underscores the ongoing urban redevelopment initiatives in Delhi. This new configuration starkly contrasts with earlier representations of the Banwari Lal house, which were characterised by tensions related to space, privacy, and infrastructure. Pyare Lal further explains – “The new house would have four floors plus a basement. The builder would retain two floors and the basement, and offer them two floors along with fifty lakhs in cash. Ten lakhs to each family, and the rest to be put into the shop. They would grow and grow.” (p. 172). The transformation of the original horizontal haveli layout into a four-floor structure, complete with a basement, represents a significant shift in architectural style. This vertical leap is a striking symbol of postcolonial urban densification – the dynamic changes sweeping through Delhi’s middle-class neighbourhoods (Sketch 11).



Architectural Sketch 11 – Architectural Layout of Banwari Lal’s house after reconstruction

However, this architectural design, with its limited private spaces and communal areas, reinforces the belief that women should stay within the domestic sphere. This is evident in the explanation, as Kapur writes – “Here a modern kitchen with place for a fridge. No running to another room every time you want a potato. And see, a little puja room, so you won’t have to sit praying and sweating in the kitchen. On this side there is a veranda that overlooks the park. I know you like fresh air, Bhabhi, you will be able to sit outside in the evening and see all our grandchildren playing. This man is a very clever architect, one who will design beautiful ceilings with flowers in plaster of paris. There will be chandeliers in every room, the floors will be of marble, like the shop, but with Rekha’s uncle all the designing will be done cheap.” (Kapur 2006, p 171-72). This critique within postcolonial feminist literature posits that, despite their contemporary design, modern homes frequently perpetuate patriarchal structures, reinforcing the notion that women’s roles are confined to domestic spaces, albeit in a more aesthetically appealing and open environment.



Architectural Sketch 12 – Architectural Sketch of Banwari Lal’s house, reconstructed in the second half of the novel, marks a shift in domestic architecture

Aspirations and desires often take a backseat to familial obligations, restricting autonomy and self-expression. Thus, as the narrative unfolds, the stark contrast between the traditional homes and the emergence of modern apartments highlights not only a physical transformation but also an evolving consciousness about gender roles and personal freedom within the fabric of contemporary Indian society. Nisha’s journey marks a transformative shift towards modernity in her personal dreams and living circumstances. Her move into a sleek, contemporary apartment, with its open layouts and minimalistic design, marks a significant departure from the confines of her traditional joint family setup. This new living arrangement gives her the space and autonomy to freely develop her identity and ambitions. This evolution in Nisha’s life mirrors the sweeping societal changes occurring in India, particularly in Delhi, where rapid urbanisation and economic development have led to the emergence of nuclear families and modern

apartment complexes. Through the lens of Nisha's experience, Kapur effectively employs the evolution of domestic spaces as a powerful metaphor for the shifting status of women in Indian society. Traditional homes, often laden with patriarchal norms and expectations, represent barriers to self-expression and ambition. In contrast, modern apartments stand as symbols of empowerment, underscoring the potential for women to assert their independence, pursue their passions, and shape their own destinies in a rapidly changing world.

However, the novel explores the notion that physical space alone cannot ensure true freedom for women. The transition from traditional courtyard houses to contemporary self-contained flats signifies a noteworthy shift in domestic architecture. But this architectural evolution does not fully liberate women from the pervasive constraints of patriarchal systems. Nisha's experiences in her new flat highlight that societal attitudes and deeply ingrained norms continue to dictate the boundaries of women's lives, revealing a complex landscape where autonomy remains elusive. The change in living arrangements, while seemingly progressive, merely offers a superficial semblance of liberation. Beneath the surface, gender norms and expectations persist, dictating women's roles and responsibilities. The shift to self-contained flats might reconfigure domestic tasks and spaces, but it fails to fundamentally alter the power dynamics within the household. Betrayed by her love, confined within the home, Nisha cries to break the shackles of her restrictions and looks up to the men of the house to grow and go out.

This transformation, although framed as modern and innovative, ultimately reinforces patriarchal control in more subtle and insidious ways. It serves as a metaphor for the contradictions characterising modern India, where advancements in technology and architecture are juxtaposed against a backdrop of social stagnation, leaving issues of gender justice and equality largely unaddressed. The narrative, therefore, critiques this disconnect, urging readers to recognise that true progress must encompass both structural change and a profound shift in cultural attitudes toward women.

#### **4.9 Rethinking Public Accessibility Through Private Space**

Through an analysis of these three texts from the perspective of domestic architecture, we have charted the historical transformations of domestic spaces within the city, spanning Mughal, colonial, and modern eras. This examination reveals that, despite shifts across different time periods, gendered spatial divisions and a lack of accessibility continue to persist within architectural design. Certain areas of the domestic space operate as public domains, further restricting women within their private environments. Consequently, women find themselves doubly confined within these private spaces. Women experience this dual confinement, trapped within the larger private space of the home and within specific zones that limit their freedom and engagement with the outside world. This enduring challenge reflects a complex interplay of tradition, socio-political context, and architectural design, highlighting the need for a critical re-examination of domestic spaces in fostering gender equality.

In the Mughal structures, female members were confined within their separate domestic structures, creating a world around them from which they were only destined to move to another such world. To substantiate such a scenario, Ali writes – “The world lived and died, things happened, events took place, but all this did not disturb the equanimity of the zenana, which had its world too where the pale and fragile beauties of the hothouse lived secluded from all outside harm, the storms that blow in the world of men. The day dawned, the evening came, and life passed them by.” (Ali 39-40). Domestic spaces are thus shown as having extreme patriarchal dominance and women spatially segregated, confined, and having limited access even within the private domestic spheres. With limited possibilities in these domestic worlds, even thinking about accessing outer public spaces in the city is beyond one’s dreams. Also, “Even within the haveli (mansion), the zenana (women’s quarters) ensures that female and male perspectives, and physicality, are kept firmly divided, leading to increasing frustrations in modernising-but-still-colonial Old Delhi” (Narayan, p. 37)

Contrastingly, the free mobility of men in Mardana gives it an aura of public space for social gatherings. The discussions here expose a hierarchy in society and bonds based on communities, which were common in Old Delhi during that time. “The haveli included a separate public reception area that was primarily a male domain: a place where the older men of the household entertained their visitors and spent most of their time.” (Hosagrahar, p. 32-33). In this way, its role as a public space becomes apparent when characters express their opinions, and ideologies are shaped. While Mardana, in this way, carries the symbol of a bustling public sphere in the urban set-up of Delhi, “the women’s field of operation is relegated primarily to the temporal; while defined by the spatial, they are not permitted to sketch the borders of the spaces they inhabit.” (Narayan). Even after the 1857 uprising, when the grandeur of the royal families was reduced to only one or two courtyard houses, the tradition of gendered spatial segregation continues to be sustained. There has been a transition from horizontal extensions to a vertical expanse of the mansions later after ‘the decline of *rais* families’ (Hosagrahar) in Old Delhi; yet the gendered division in the houses remains intact.

The vestibule plays a dual role in separating the female and male parts of the house, while also serving as a meeting point for them in times of need. Several conversations occur throughout the course of the novel when male members (only if called for or given prior information on arrival) of the house enter the zenana through the vestibule. Nevertheless, the vestibule clubbing these two parts of the house could only allow movement from mardana to zenana; vice versa was not applicable. In Zenana, Begum Waheed listens to Asghar’s heart-wrenching tale of falling in love with Bilqueece and the inability to see his soul survive in any possible way unless he marries her. Begum Nihal is found to be having discussions with Mir Nihal on many crucial issues. Thus, Ali’s work has prominently focused on domestic life, social transformations, and cultural changes in the backdrop of colonialism and growing Western influences. The domestic architecture, social norms, and rituals can be seen shaping the roles and identities of women.

The divisions remained alive even in post-colonial domestic structures, though they imitated the Western traditions of having open spaces. And the restrictions and limitations on women were evident even in modern spaces, as seen in the story of Nisha in *Home*. The design of a home, therefore, mirrors broader societal values. When private spaces are rigid, gendered, or restrictive, they reinforce control mechanisms that are similar to those found in public areas. In spatial theory, thresholds in domestic spaces represent not only physical transitions but also the social permissions required to move from private to public realms. While modern architecture incorporates private entries and self-contained apartments to diminish some physical barriers, it often fails to challenge ingrained social barriers, particularly those related to gender norms.

Therefore, private and public spaces are interconnected, each influencing the other. A restrictive private environment can curtail public interaction, while evolving roles in public spaces can challenge traditional home designs. When domestic spaces reinforce gender roles, public spaces tend to reflect those divisions as well. Thus, examining private spaces sheds light on who public spaces are designed for and who may feel marginalised. The architecture of private realms carries inherent biases. By analysing their evolution, especially in terms of gender, class, or caste, we can more effectively evaluate spatial justice. Additionally, observing changes in private spaces helps us assess whether society is truly becoming more inclusive in its public engagements.

#### **4.10 Conclusion**

In conclusion, this chapter prompts us to reconsider our private domestic spaces, which have historically maintained segregated areas for women despite significant transformations. Understanding the evolution of these spaces is crucial for planning the entire city, as it highlights the interdependence and coexistence of domestic and public environments. Additionally, it underscores the necessity of ensuring

equal access for all genders to public spaces within the city. In this way, by delving into the history of domestic spaces, we gained insights into how they have evolved into modern homes. This analysis was enhanced by examining literary texts from a feminist architectural perspective. Although issues of restricted access and gender inequality are not new, this chapter presents a novel viewpoint on urban design as we continue to explore public spaces. By uncovering architectural patterns within literature, we have identified historical segregations that became essential for rethinking city design in our research, ultimately aiming to create more accessible and inclusive public spaces.

We examine the diminishing prominence of domestic hierarchies compared to earlier periods, attributed to the cubicalisation of modern houses. However, various forms of restrictions on women's mobility continue to exist today. This reflects a notable lack of women asserting their rights in urban settings, which underscores how their access and movement are often severely limited within domestic spaces. This situation compels women to navigate an additional layer of segregation even within their own homes. Our study highlights the significant lack of accessibility for women in a society that confines them to a more private space within the private domestic space.

This research chapter explores architectural patterns through a novel approach that emphasises close reading and analysis of literature, rather than relying on a top-down methodology. The literary works that emerge from society provide insights into the architecture of spaces. In our analysis of literary texts in this chapter, particularly through examining Kapur's work, *Home*, we observe that the author skillfully intertwines temporality and spatiality within the narrative, literally describing the transformation of the architecture as the story progresses. This analysis encapsulates the core of our thesis: a thorough examination of literature to understand spaces. As time passes and people's stories evolve, they are both reflected and refracted in the architecture. In Kapur's story, we witness these dynamics occurring simultaneously. Thus, this analysis underscores our theoretical framework and methodology, which we have applied throughout our discussion.

In this way, by closely examining these texts as part of our discussion on architecture, we aim to adopt a bottom-up approach to document a more comprehensive view of city design. This process, as we have implemented throughout our thesis in exploring both public and private spaces, can incorporate the perspectives of everyday people, contributing to the creation of cities that are inclusive and accessible to all.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Reflecting Public Space Concerns in Creative Writings and Conclusion**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

The discussion of public space in the city of Delhi, as explored through literature, invites us to examine the city's rich history, navigate its current state, and envision future possibilities. Throughout the various chapters of this thesis, following the framework of literary urban studies, we have observed how various literary texts capture, reflect, and reinterpret the details of the transformation of public spaces in different forms. Consequently, our methodology for conducting an architectural literary analysis has enabled us to effectively trace the evolution of the city's public spaces.

This journey of documenting and analysing public spaces in Delhi, informed by its city literature, began with the recognition of a significant gap in the thorough examination and reimagining of public spaces within the Indian context for promoting accessibility in the country's unique context. This gap led us to ask several research questions, and through the process of documentation, we aimed to envision public spaces in India more broadly, removing the influence of the colonial legacy. In this context, our hypothesis centred on identifying a colonial mindset and the neglect of local contexts in urban design policies, which have contributed to the decline of public spaces.

#### **5.2 Chapter Summaries**

In our thesis, we began the introduction chapter with a comprehensive literature review on public spaces, a topic that has cross-disciplinary appeal. We emphasised the undeniable relationship between architecture and literature. This literature review allowed us to develop a methodology for conducting an architectural literary analysis to

explore and analyse public spaces within the context of our study – specifically, the city of Delhi. Additionally, our examination of the depiction of public spaces and architectural details in Delhi literature revealed multiple perspectives that can be uncovered through analysis. This insight encouraged us to use literature as a lens for architectural analysis, placing Delhi literature within the discourse on public spaces. Our aim has been to foster new conversations about these spaces and to reimagine them through the lens of literature. Moreover, this approach enables us to cultivate an architectural awareness among readers through city literature, which has been a core concern and the initial motivation driving this thesis.

The primary objectives of our second chapter have been to locate and analyse the historical displacement and transformation of accessibility in the public spaces of Delhi. In this process, we examine the interrelationship and interdependence of three key variables: protest, public space, and people. We also visualise the necessity of two Vs – visibility and vicinity – when it comes to protest. Furthermore, we analyse how the interplay of designation and creation has contributed to spatial displacement. By exploring the spatial history of public spaces in Delhi and utilising cartography, we illustrate how accessibility has gradually shifted from the centre to the periphery. In contemporary times, people are discovering and occupying subaltern public spaces to gather and engage in public activities. This gradual denial of access, represented through handmade maps as well as digital ones, highlights the spatial exclusion that has been occurring for over a century. It also reflects the colonial attitudes that persist among the authorities in independent India. This situation is explained by the theory of postcolonial urbanism, which reveals that Eurocentric city planning continues to influence urban design in Indian cities. This approach clearly disregards the historical context and the needs of the residents who inhabit these spaces.

After analysing the spatial denial, we have been prompted to focus on two key types of public spaces in our study: streets and marketplaces. These spaces are heavily frequented by the residents of

any city and contribute significantly to its social, political, and economic functions. Additionally, we have examined the unique intersection of these two public spaces through street trading, which thrives in the bustling environments of South Asian countries and is also notable in our study area of Delhi. Our methodology here combines literary analysis with a close reading of cartographic records (cartographic analysis), urban sketching, the creation of interactive maps, and georeferencing techniques to analyse the prominent streets and marketplaces in the city. Through these methods, we traced the historical emergence and evolution of these spaces over time. This analysis highlights differences in architecture between the two cities, clearly demonstrating the influence of various historical periods on urban design.

Furthermore, our study traced the future transformation of these public spaces as outlined in the proposed master plans. We observed a continued adherence to a Eurocentric, top-down approach in urban planning for the future. Our findings suggest that such planning practices are undermining traditional approaches and disregarding local contexts in urban development.

In this process of unveiling the historical evolution of various public spaces, we recognise the necessity of looking into the private spaces too, as these two types of spaces are interlinked and mirror access. A comprehensive review of the literature supports this connection, and this chapter of ours explores the evolution of domestic architecture in India across different periods, tracing the gendered notion of domestic spaces that restricts the lives of women. In this way, our analysis, prompted by the purpose of improving accessibility, takes this turn in analysing the domestic spaces of our study area. Architectural narratives are selected through a close reading of the texts, and the spatial elements are analysed to create narrative-based designs (architectural layouts) of the domestic spaces. Following the aesthetic morphology and scenario-based design, architectural sketches are created to visualise female spaces through different periods as described in the texts. This chapter examines and illustrates the evolution of

domestic architecture and the limitations placed on women throughout different historical periods. Through a feminist architectural critique, the analysis offers valuable insights into rethinking the accessibility of public spaces in the city. This rethinking should begin with an exploration of how domestic spaces have transformed over time.

### **5.3 Achieving Thesis Objectives through Different Chapters**

Consequently, the objectives we outlined in the introduction are achieved across different chapters as we explored the literary texts of Delhi Literature and navigated through various public spaces in the city.

1. We aimed to conduct a thorough review of the literature and architecture, discussing the significance of public spaces in cities while also examining related literature on this subject. Through our analysis, we discovered the established connection between literature and architecture. Based on our findings, we adopted a methodology that involves conducting an architectural literary analysis of selected texts related to Delhi. This enables us to explore different aspects of public space in the city from a literary viewpoint, examining how literature shapes our urban imagination and how cities themselves are perceived, described, and interpreted in literary texts.
2. Our analysis of the spatial denial of protest sites in the city of Delhi focuses on the historical context of these prominent sites and their displacement throughout the colonial and post-independence eras. This examination highlights the interrelationship and interdependence of three key factors: public space, protest, and the public. It also emphasises two vital aspects of public space for a successful protest: the visibility of the protesters and the vicinity to the authorial position. Without these elements, a protest loses its effectiveness.

In our second chapter, we explored these interrelationships among various variables and analysed how the denial of accessibility and the designation of protest sites by authorities have led to spatial denial and displacement in the city of Delhi. As a result of these designations, protestors have opted to create new gathering spaces far away from centres of power, and surprisingly, they have gained visibility in recent decades. Through this interplay of designation and creation, we have highlighted the issue of spatial denial in Delhi's urban landscape. The analyses and visualisations here raise awareness about the shrinking accessibility of public spaces, obstructing democratic expression.

3. In the third chapter, we analysed the various street patterns and market aesthetics throughout the city. This analysis revealed diverse perspectives on the city's past and highlighted present concerns. Our literary and cartographic examination critiques the top-down approach in city planning and emphasises the need to understand the multiple historical contexts that coexist within the urban space. Recognising these layers of historical evolution is essential for successful urban design. Furthermore, our georeferencing analysis looks at future transformations that tend to favour colonial structures over native elements, catering to capitalist interests and contributing to the compartmentalisation of society. As humanities scholars, critiquing the post-colonial urbanism, here we emphasise the sensitivity needed to understand the city and the planning process accordingly.
4. In the fourth chapter, we conduct a literature review that highlights the interconnection between public and private spaces, rather than viewing them as opposing concepts. This perspective encourages us to explore private spaces within the city that reflect the accessibility of public spaces. We

provide a historical overview of domestic structures, and through our analysis of architecture alongside literary analysis, we uncover the gendered nature of these spaces. We analyse the architectural narratives derived from a close reading of selected literary texts. Through narrative-based designs and architectural sketches, we visualise the evolution of domestic architecture while retaining its gendered characteristics. Therefore, our analysis of accessibility and the development of city design should begin with an examination of private spaces in our study area.

#### **5.4 Juxtaposition of Narrative and Visualisation in the Thesis**

In this concluding chapter, we also present a series of visualisations designed to highlight and compare the interactions between the narratives and illustrations explored throughout our thesis. These visual representations feature our handmade maps and detailed sketches placed directly alongside the corresponding literary descriptions, facilitating a clear and engaging comparison. Thus the subsequent visualisations illustrate how we have traced and analysed various literary examples across the chapters. Each map and sketch is purposefully crafted to reflect the distinctive elements of the narratives, capturing the essence of the settings, characters, and themes discussed. This comparative approach allows for a deeper understanding of the connections between the written word and its visual counterparts, emphasising the integral relationship between literature and architecture.

The following visualisations offer an in-depth chapter-wise exploration of narratives drawn from a diverse array of literary texts, each contributing to a nuanced analysis of public spaces. In the second chapter, we analyse a carefully curated collection of literary works that depict protest sites or public spaces, identifying a recurring pattern of denial surrounding the establishment and recognition of these areas as venues for protest. Therefore, based on the literary descriptions that

either reflect or critique the denial or displacement present in the texts, we utilised the sensory mapping method and Google Maps to create a collection of maps for various protest sites discussed as case studies in our chapter. These maps are not merely graphic representations; they are intricately designed to convey the experiences and challenges faced by protestors over the years. Drawing inspiration from the narratives in the literary texts, the maps show the readers the systematic instances of marginalisation and denial that have persisted for decades.

Our handmade maps are subsequently refined through digital mapping techniques, which allow us to gather precise locational information about the protest sites. Ultimately, we have constructed a comprehensive and holistic map showcasing the central protest space and the designated and created areas for protests across various historical periods. This blend of literary analysis and mapping portrays the ongoing struggle for recognition and space within the public sphere.

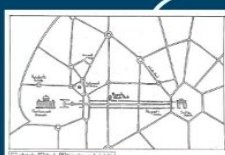
While we primarily aimed to locate literary texts related to the specific protest sites selected for our study, there were instances, such as with the Red Fort and Ramleela Maidan (as shown in Figure 25), where we were unable to find exact literary references. Instead, the narratives surrounding the designation and creation of these protest sites are frequently documented in newspaper reports and other scholarly works, which we have analysed and cited for our research.

## SPATIAL DENIAL AND DISPLACEMENT

### HANDMADE SKETCHES BASED ON THE LITERARY DESCRIPTIONS



Before independence, the Red Fort rose as a space of resistance with hope for liberation, transfiguring the space from a symbol of Mughal rule. The central space of Rajpath near Raisina Hill was inaccessible prior to India's independence due to colonial restrictions.



In the sections after the prologue, Guha describes a time when people had access to and opportunities for openly expressing dissent – “Notably, on Rajpath, the grounds meant to be empty except on ceremonial days had become a village of tents, each with colourful placards hung outside it.” (Guha p. 7).



“Rajpath was cleared of encroachments, and the lawns were restored to their former glory. But the protesters regrouped and relocated. They now placed themselves a mile to the northwest, next to the Jantar Mantar observatory in Connaught Place.” (Guha p.8).  
 “They walk past us, but they don't see us, sitting here on the side of the road, fighting for a better world in this Democracy Zoo... We sit here like caged animals, and the government feeds us useless little pieces of hope through the bars of this iron railing. Not enough to live on, but just enough to prevent us from dying.” (Roy 2017).



The public park of Ramleela Maidan has witnessed many social movements in the history pages of Independent India. But compared to Jantar Mantar, which is only ‘Seven minutes and some Lutyens’ roundabouts away from the Parliament (Rebbapragada 2017), the Maidan has its presence far away from the centre of power.



Shaheen Bagh becomes important because the people residing there have taken a different stance in protesting. “The Men behind the Women,” ‘Grannies Leading the Way,’ the bonding and display of cooperation, waving off the religious differentiations, gave the protest and the space a special recognition. The women at the Bagh almost ‘... stood as a beacon, giving hope to a nation besieged, to a community demoralised and a gender always under-appreciated.’ (Salem and Ausaf, p.18).



The creation and importance of the new spaces of resistance in Singhu, Gazipur, and Tikri is reflected in Sir Inder Deol's *The Resistance Collection* -  
 “A steady stream of cohesive humanity  
 Leaders, artists, actors, activists  
 Women, children, old, young  
 Sikh, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Christian, Jain  
 Atheists, communists, believers, and sceptics  
 Passing through inhaling this intoxicating blend of Oneness.” (Deol, p. 26:13-18).

Figure 25 – Handmade maps on spatial denial placed alongside the literary descriptions

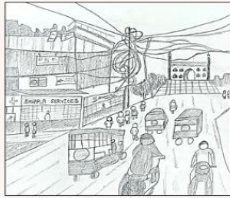
In the third chapter of our thesis, we explore the important social and economic functions of public spaces and trace their evolution. We employed the methodology of urban sketching through visual ethnography to illustrate various street patterns, market aesthetics, and the subversion of these patterns through street trading in different parts of the city.

In Figure 26, our sketches depict two contrasting aspects of the city shaped by their distinct historical developments. The set of pictures on the left showcases the ‘streets’ (kuchas) and ‘bazaars’ in a state of chaos and cacophony, with street trading openly defying no-hawking regulations. Conversely, the sketches on the right illustrate the ‘roads’ and ‘markets’ within the colonial establishment, featuring elegant architecture that reflects its historical significance. Here, stately buildings accommodate a modern commercial sector, while the streets are clean and organised. Subversive forms of street trading are also visible in this area.

Through these detailed sketches, we aim to portray the public spaces in these two distinctly different areas of the city, underscoring the necessity of understanding their unique historical narratives and the challenges they encounter. Such insight is crucial for effective city planning that honours the diverse cultural sensitivities and local contexts that define these spaces.

# Different patterns, aesthetics, and subversion in Delhi's Public Spaces through Urban sketching

## FIELD VISIT - VISUAL ETHNOGRAPHY

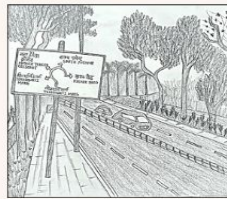


**1A**

The sketch captures the chaos and cacophony of the streets in Old Delhi surrounding the prominent Jama Masjid

**1B**

The sketch depicts organised, clean streets with clear signage and neatly designed footpaths, adequately complemented by greenery on either side



**2A**

In the 2a sketch, is alive with the sounds of haggling vendors and the aroma of varying foods, and presents an eclectic mix of both residential homes and shops. Here, narrow alleyways intertwine with colourful stalls brimming with local produce and crafts and exotic food items on display, creating an energetic and chaotic atmosphere.



**2B**

As portrayed in the 2b sketch, the colonial establishment showcases elegant architecture defined by its historical significance, where stately buildings house a modern commercial sector. This area features global chain stores, trendy shops, and cafes, offering a curated shopping experience amid the backdrop of colonial-style facades.



**3A**

Street trading is depicted at Old Delhi's Shyam Prasad Marg, where the violation of rules is evident in areas marked 'No Hawking/No Squatting.'



**3B**

The scene illustrated in sketch 3b shows New Delhi's Bhagwan Das Road, where the subversion of rules is less frequent and occurs in a milder form. This sketch features a woman at a makeshift stall, selling a few items while occupying a non-permissible area of the footpath, thereby disregarding the established regulations.

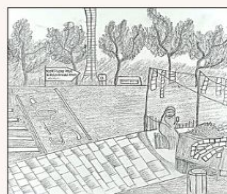


Figure 26 – Urban sketches depicting street patterns, market aesthetics, and subversions in street trading throughout various city areas

In our fourth chapter, we explored the private spaces within our study area, tracing the evolution of domestic architecture across different historical periods. Our analysis reveals that domestic spaces have consistently been gendered throughout history, and we observed that the definitions distinguishing private from public spaces have often been contested and blurred. By examining the architectural narratives presented in literary texts, we created architectural layouts of domestic spaces and developed sketches reflecting their evolution over the decades.

The initial sketches focus on the unique configurations of domestic spaces allocated for women during the Mughal period. In this historical context, we highlight the creation of secluded private areas within the private domestic setting, such as women's quarters or zenanas, that were designed to ensure privacy and facilitate a distinct social sphere. As we progress through time, our sketches evolve to reflect the architectural adaptations seen in colonial bungalows, where elements of European-style design merged with indigenous practices. We then explore the transition to courtyard houses, which offered communal areas that blended private and public interactions, and ultimately examine modern apartments, characterised by open floor plans yet still retaining echoes of historical spatial segregation.

Through this detailed exploration, our analysis underscores not only the historical evolution of these domestic spaces but also the enduring limitations and societal constraints that continue to shape them, emphasising the complexity of the interplay between architecture, gender, and social context.

# Tracing the Evolution of Domestic Architecture through Literary Analysis

## Narrative-based Designs and Sketches of Domestic Spaces

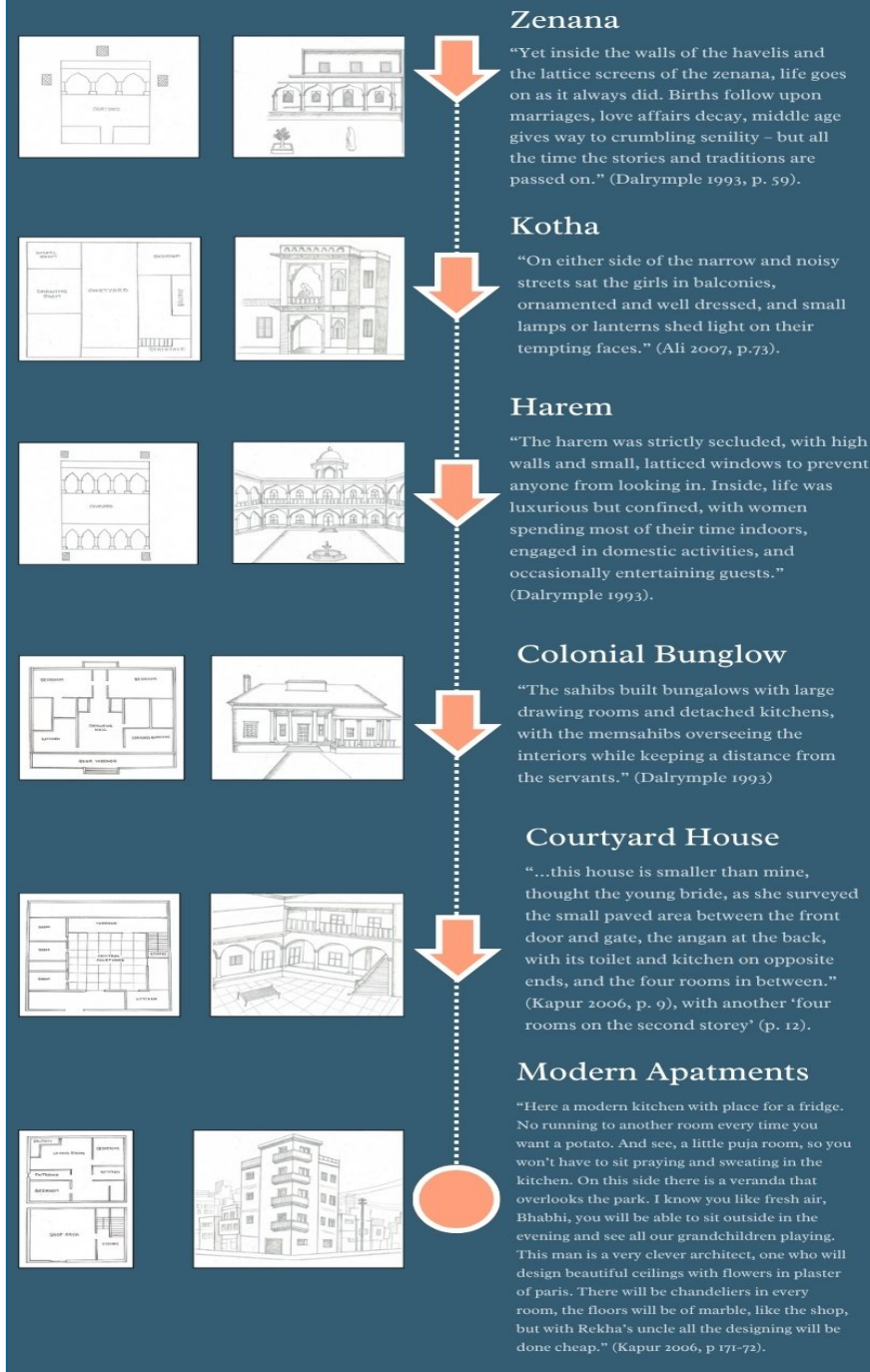


Figure 27 – Architectural layouts and sketches derived from architectural narratives illustrate the evolution of domestic architecture across different historical periods

Through these visualisations, we aim to raise awareness of the architectural perspectives of public spaces and their accessibility as represented in literary works. The texts produced as part of city literature can serve as significant sources for reflecting and refracting the architectural viewpoints of a city. Analysing these literary texts and incorporating their insights into the design frameworks of urban architecture in this way has also supported a bottom-up approach to city planning. This is a key argument that we have followed throughout our thesis, emphasising the need for inclusive and context-specific city design. In this approach, poets and authors express their critical viewpoints through their works, and analysing these works from an architectural perspective facilitates the inclusion of their insights in the city planning process.

## **5.5 Chapter-wise Conclusion**

After thoroughly examining our discussion, we have compiled a detailed summary of the conclusions we reached for each chapter. An overview of our findings, organised by chapter, highlighting the key insights and implications derived from our analysis, is as follows:

### **5.5.1 Conclusion of the Analysis of Spatial Denial and Displacement of Public Spaces**

At the conclusion of our second chapter on spatial denial of protest sites, we stated that the protest sites detailed in the chapter are fundamentally public spaces, and the protests that have occurred at various times represent an assertion of those public spaces. The denial of access, through various means, and the resulting displacement have significantly reduced the public's ability to engage with these spaces. As illustrated in the city of Delhi, this historical process reflects the state of public spaces in many other urban areas across the country. Ultimately, this research aims to explore these issues further.

The literature review in this chapter presented various perspectives from different authors who assess the role of space in specific protests. Some authors emphasise the significance of the protests, while others discuss the monitoring of public space and acknowledge opposing viewpoints. Throughout this process, we aimed to integrate these arguments as we developed our perspective. This analysis of protests, particularly in the context of public space where these events typically occur, incorporates discussions about protests, public space, people, literature, and architecture. This chapter consistently addresses the significance of public spaces and the need for their preservation while highlighting their decline and shrinking availability. Special emphasis has been placed on theories related to the creation of these spaces, as they are central to the chapter's focus. With the rise of consumer culture, privatisation, and neoliberal agendas shaping urban design, the public is often viewed merely as potential consumers. In this context, the protesters find their voices exercised in the created spaces.

The chapter consisted of a two-part analysis: the first part theorised the concept of public space, while the second part visualised the displacement that has occurred over the years and decades. The research in this second chapter aimed to examine protests from various spatial perspectives to address a specific research gap. Articles and texts related to different protest sites, both within and outside the country, are considered in this discussion. Above all, the various viewpoints and angles of viewing the phenomena have been incorporated to study Delhi's protests and public spaces within a specific temporal scope. Moreover, when discussing public spaces and their importance, the research also attempts to address the architecture and the urban development perspective. Public space is generally linked with city design and urban planning. Architecture can be driven towards facilitation or, conversely, be developed, albeit at the expense of accessibility. The rhetoric of protection and security, disruption, and polluted surroundings is used to curb the people's right to the city.

Thus, the chapter initially suggested that the colonial mindset, which sidelined protests in favour of various engagement strategies, persists today. However, it later reveals that inequality remains a constant issue, regardless of who holds power. This difference in positions creates a power hierarchy, reinforcing a spatial divide. In this context, the free movement and accessibility of individuals are viewed as threats to state power.

### **5.5.2 Conclusion on the Reimagining City Design Considering the Various Patterns and Aesthetics of Public Spaces**

In the third chapter, the goal of closely reading literary works is to adopt an interdisciplinary approach that combines history, architecture, and literature. This analysis provides a unique perspective on understanding literature while also revealing the history of the city. The aim of this course has been to examine the evolution of various street patterns and market aesthetics, with a particular focus on public spaces. By exploring public spaces as sites of protest in the previous chapter, we identified a pattern of denial that serves as a foundation for discussing the evolving materiality of public spaces in Delhi. Further investigation in this chapter allows us to explore the various functions of different types of public spaces, including their social and economic roles. This awareness of enhancing social interaction comes from recognising that Delhi is moving away from a nostalgic view of its past glory. The city, which has experienced various rulers throughout its history, has undergone significant changes over time. Once the capital of the country, it is now primarily utilised for instrumental purposes, leading to a diminished sense of belonging among its residents. Recently, the increase in violence within the city is believed to stem from this erosion of sociocultural values, a lack of community connection, and an increasing disparity in social structures.

This research in our chapter examines the dynamic nature of material aesthetics and the functions of public spaces in Delhi, a city that

embodies a rich history and culture. By examining the development of these spaces over time, we address their historical significance, contemporary challenges, and the potential transformations they may undergo in the future. Our analysis includes a thorough examination of the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) master plans, which frequently impose design frameworks that can overlook the unique qualities of the urban environment. This scrutiny unveils instances of subversion, how the actual use and adaptation of these spaces deviate from the intended designs laid out by planners. Moreover, we highlight a concerning trend: the failure to contextualise urban design principles within the specific cultural, social, and historical fabric of Delhi. This oversight often leads to a disconnection between the designs and the lived realities of the city's residents. Ultimately, our chapter presents a critical perspective on the prevailing Eurocentric design ideologies that have emerged within the framework of postcolonial urbanism, arguing for a more nuanced understanding of urban space that resonates with local contexts and community needs.

### **5.5.3 Conclusion on Feminist Architectural Critique of the Evolution of Domestic Spaces**

In conclusion, this chapter compels us to re-evaluate our understanding of domestic spaces, which have long been characterised by distinct areas designated for women, despite undergoing substantial transformations over time. Recognising the historical evolution of these spaces is essential for effective city planning, as it illustrates the intricate relationship between domestic environments and public spaces. Furthermore, the chapter underscores the urgent need to ensure that all genders have equal access to public spaces within urban areas, promoting inclusivity and equity.

By investigating the historical context of domestic environments, we gain valuable insights into their development into contemporary homes. This exploration is facilitated by analysing

literary texts through a feminist architectural lens, allowing us to uncover the nuanced ways in which these narratives reflect and shape our understanding of space and gender dynamics. While the challenges of restricted access and gender inequality are longstanding issues, this chapter introduces a fresh perspective on urban design, encouraging a deeper investigation into the multifaceted nature of public spaces.

In our analysis, we note a decline in the prominence of domestic hierarchies compared to previous eras, largely due to the increasing cubicalisation of modern housing. However, a troubling persistence of mobility restrictions for women remains evident today. The noticeable absence of women asserting their rights in urban contexts highlights the ongoing limitations on their movement and access, revealing how they often find themselves navigating an additional layer of segregation, even within their own residences. This highlights a significant societal issue in which women are confined to a private realm that is itself embedded within another sphere of privacy.

Thus, this research chapter embarks on an exploration of architectural patterns through an innovative approach that prioritises readings and analyses of literary works, as opposed to relying on traditional top-down methodologies. These literary expressions, which arise from the fabric of society, furnish us with profound insights into the architectural nature of spaces. By examining these texts in conjunction with our architectural discourse, we aim to adopt a bottom-up approach that captures a more holistic view of city design. This inclusive process aims to amplify the voices and experiences of everyday individuals, ultimately fostering the development of urban environments that are accessible, equitable, and inclusive for all community members.

#### **5.5.4 Conclusion on Creative Storytelling Regarding Concerns in Public Spaces**

In the conclusion chapter, we synthesise how we accomplished the key objectives set forth in our thesis. We provide a comprehensive analysis of public spaces in the city of Delhi, tracing their historical evolution, addressing contemporary concerns, and exploring future possibilities and transformations. This chapter also presents a cohesive narrative that highlights the architectural maps, sketches, and literary works analysed throughout our research. By juxtaposing these visualisations with literary insights, we underscore the fundamental aim of our thesis: to acknowledge literature as an essential element of architectural analysis and urban planning, thereby promoting an architectural awareness that is vital for any democratic society.

This chapter features a creative section that includes a selection of children's stories written by us. Through these narratives, we seek to explore various perspectives and concerns regarding public spaces. Instead of taking a didactic approach, we aim to subtly highlight these issues, encouraging readers to ponder their implications. Although we have included only a few stories as annexures in this thesis, we aspire to broaden this creative corner in our future endeavours, focusing on a wide range of concerns related to public spaces within the Indian context.

#### **5.6 Thesis Conclusion**

Our analysis of public spaces and excavation of history through literature in this thesis leads us to the following overall thesis conclusions –

1. The evolution of public spaces in India has followed a unique trajectory compared to that in the West. Therefore, it is crucial to gain a thorough understanding of the history and culture associated with public spaces for effective city planning. Imposing a Eurocentric top-down approach would undermine

the historical context and cultural sensitivities of the local community when envisioning public spaces in India.

2. This brings us to our second conclusion: the uncritical adherence to Eurocentric urban planning in the design and construction of spaces in India reflects a colonial mindset. Consequently, this approach undermines the contextual needs of both the public and the spaces themselves. This colonial mindset, which prioritised various engagement strategies over public spaces, continues to persist today. Moreover, it becomes evident that inequality remains a persistent issue, regardless of who holds power. This disparity creates a power hierarchy that reinforces a spatial divide. In this context, the free movement and accessibility of individuals are perceived as threats to state power.
3. Our exploration of the evolution of public and private spaces – considering their historical development, current state, and future possibilities – will provide guidance for stakeholders and city planners. This insight will encourage them to reconsider design aspects to promote accessibility.
4. This thesis, primarily developed from an architectural standpoint, significantly engages with the ongoing discourse by introducing an innovative framework designed to closely examine, analyse, and deepen the awareness and understanding of architectural concepts and practices. This framework incorporates literary analysis, allowing for an exploration of how literary works can influence the perception of architecture. By integrating narrative elements and thematic structures found in literature, the thesis aims to foster a more profound critique of architectural designs and their implications within cultural and societal contexts.

### **5.7 Limitations of Our Thesis**

In this thesis, we explored the representation of public spaces in literature, analysing how different authors depict and interpret these

environments. Throughout our analysis, we also encountered a few limitations, and these challenges highlighted the need for a more comprehensive approach in future expansions of our work. By addressing these challenges, we aim to provide a deeper understanding of the significance and impact of public spaces on social interactions and community dynamics.

1. Our thesis aimed to adopt an interdisciplinary approach, specifically highlighting the analysis of literature through an architectural lens as a central element of our methodology. As a result, our examination and critique of architectural principles and planning strategies have been conducted solely from a literary perspective, without delving into architectural engineering. Throughout this process, we intended to familiarise and sensitise general readers to the conflicting aspects of architecture and urban planning that significantly influence the lives of residents.
2. Another limitation of our study is that our analysis concentrates on a limited selection of texts drawn from the diverse body of Delhi literature, which provides insights into public spaces. We acknowledge that a plethora of additional literary works exists that could be explored to uncover the architectural significance embedded within these narratives, thereby enhancing the depth and scope of our thesis. By narrowing our focus, we embarked on a micro-level analysis of our chosen texts; however, an expansion of this research could facilitate a comprehensive macro-level analysis of the entire corpus of Delhi literature. This broader investigation could be enhanced by integrating digital tools, allowing for a more thorough examination of themes, patterns, and the overall architectural landscape represented in these literary works.
3. In this thesis, we explored architectural narratives, specifically how they can be represented through various maps and architectural sketches. To accomplish this, we used a range of digital tools, each chosen based on the specific contextual needs

of our research. For example, we employed GIS software to visualise and analyse hidden connections within the geographic data of public spaces, as well as interactive mapping methods to support our analysis during field visits. Looking ahead, we are eager to broaden our selection of digital tools in future projects to enhance our research methodologies and provide deeper insights into the field.

4. Our research focuses on a selection of public spaces in Delhi, a metropolis characterised by its diverse array of public spaces. The multitude of these spaces reflects the rich urban life, each serving distinct functions and communities. While we acknowledge the critical importance of conducting in-depth analyses of these public spaces as individual case studies, such investigations fell outside the boundaries of our current research project. In this thesis, we offer a detailed argument that explores the complexities of displacement, the socio-economic dynamics, and the gendered nature of these spaces. By shedding light on these interconnections, we aim to contribute to a deeper understanding of how public spaces in Delhi are shaped by and, in turn, shape the lives of the individuals who inhabit them.

### **5.8 Future Possibilities**

In light of the conclusions drawn in our thesis and considering the limitations we have discussed previously, we would like to outline the potential avenues for future research in this field. These avenues may include:

1. The creative corner included at the end of our thesis, where we write children's stories and short stories, has the potential to be expanded in the future to address various concerns related to public spaces within the unique context of our country. These stories, which focus on the diverse issues surrounding public spaces in different cities, could enhance our understanding of the

concept of public space in India and help raise awareness on the topic.

2. This study focuses on the city of Delhi and analyses its literature, making it one of the first attempts to explore architectural critique through urban literature. This approach can be applied to various other cities to help reimagine public spaces. By exploring the literature of different cities, we can not only renew interest in literary works related to urban environments but also create awareness of their value.
3. The literature of Delhi city is typically examined on a micro level. However, our future studies aim to conduct a macro-level analysis to explore various spatial elements and architectural narratives, providing deeper and more expansive insights into the field. This macro-level analysis will utilise digital tools to closely read the architectural narratives and trace them within literary texts.
4. The future work aims to utilise appropriate and contextual digital tools for analysing architectural narratives within a substantial body of city literature. In this scenario, new models could be developed and trained to conduct these analyses. This approach would enable macro-level analysis by incorporating a significant amount of data in the form of literary texts related to city literature.
5. Exploring the implications of our findings for public policy or practice can also be a vital area for future work. Evaluating how our research can guide decision-making processes will ensure our contributions have a meaningful impact on society.

## **5.9 Creative writings and Digital Storytelling**

An extended section of our thesis focuses on creative storytelling to address concerns related to public spaces, often articulated in the form of short stories or children's stories. We have included two short stories in the annexes that touch upon some of the issues we have addressed in

our thesis. The stories, titled ‘Schoolgate’ and ‘A Tea Seller’, are original compositions that were inspired by our thesis research. Our goal is to raise awareness about public spaces, their design, and city planning through literature. Following a methodology of analysing literature, we felt compelled to write a few stories of our own to highlight the concerns we discussed. Written in a simple, conversational style, these stories aim to evoke a sense of the importance of public spaces in the minds of our readers.

Here in our first story, two school students engage in a conversation at the school gate. What begins as a casual inquiry about their parents unexpectedly leads to an intriguing discussion about protests and public spaces. This narrative transforms a seemingly ordinary moment into a multi-layered exploration of the relationships among childhood, gender roles, domestic spaces, and the dynamics of public life. Through the innocent yet profound dialogue shared between two young girls, the story uncovers the increasingly blurred lines between various realms, namely, home, school, the street, and the act of protest.

The dialogue between the girls serves as a lens through which we see how the influences of public life reach even those who have yet to actively participate in it, like children. This idea is highlighted by Megha’s reflections on her mother’s attendance at a protest, which juxtaposes two contrasting forms of spatial engagement: the nurturing environment of the home and the energetic, often tumultuous, public arena. This deliberate reversal of expected gender roles challenges the established norms regarding who is allowed to occupy public spaces and under what circumstances they do so.

While the children may lack a full understanding of the term ‘protest,’ their conversation reveals how the implications of political and social issues permeate their daily lives, affecting their experiences in both domestic and educational settings. They grapple with concepts that are beyond their comprehension, yet their queries indicate an awareness of the broader societal context around them.

In essence, “Schoolgate” serves as a quiet but compelling critique of how urban dwellers, especially the young, come to understand the complex nature of the public sphere. This understanding is not forged through grandiose acts of defiance or visible resistance, but rather through simple, everyday acts of waiting, pondering, and establishing a sense of belonging within their environment. The narrative thus creates meaning that invites readers to reflect on the profound impact of these small moments in shaping our perceptions of community and social engagement.

In the second story, two office workers exit their workplace and enter a semi-structured public area, symbolising a refuge from their daily urban routines. Their acts of walking, sitting, and sharing tea represent a small yet meaningful reclaiming of the city’s shared environment. The space, partially fenced with a narrow footpath and an open gym, reflects modern urban developments marketed as beautification or smart city initiatives. It straddles the line between public and private, creating a zone that is accessible but subtly limited by social and infrastructural boundaries. Navya’s reluctance to use the open gym highlights a gendered discomfort in such spaces, raising questions about who city “public” areas are truly designed for and how gender influences accessibility.

The chaiwala here functions as a crucial urban actor, fostering social interaction and warmth. Navya’s suggestion to install fencing for cleanliness and safety conflicts with Prashant’s reminder that it would exclude the tea vendor. This highlights the tension between order and informality in urban governance, where the pursuit of security often overlooks informal economies. In the story, the scattered litter serves as a metaphor for the balance between civic responsibility and state intervention, whereas Prashant’s nostalgia connects his personal memories to the spatial memory. Finally, Navya’s reflections capture the essence of public space as an experience of openness, both physical and emotional.

The story thus shows the everyday politics of urban commons through simple acts of walking, sitting, chatting, and drinking tea,

revealing the complex dynamics of access, gender, informality, and community. Ultimately, it portrays public space as a contested terrain where individual comfort, collective responsibility, and structural exclusion intersect.



## ANNEXURES A-D

### Annexure A

Stories written addressing the public space concerns

#### Story – 1

##### Schoolgate

The screeching sound of bikes and car wheels at the school entry gate as the bell denoting the last period rang. Two children at the gate searching for their parents, caught up in a conversation

**Yashika :** [rolling her eyes from one end to the other, searching for her parent, excitement in her eyes and then turning to Megha] Who's coming today for you?

**Megha :** [happily] My Father. He took a leave from work, and Pa prepared my meal today. He'll soon come to pick me up.

**Yashika :** [slightly confused by the sudden change] Usually, Aunty comes, right? Is she not well?

**Megha :** Today she went to College Square for some protest [said in a way not clear about the proper meaning of the word], she said. She went in the morning. May come late, as she did last evening, too. But Pa was there playing with me and helping me with homework.

**Yashika :** [confused] What is a protest? I don't know its meaning. What is Aunty doing there? Isn't it a road with buses and cars moving every time?

**Megha :** Mama says it's a public space [in a confused manner without proper clarity]. I have difficulty in understanding the meaning, though. She said something bad happened to someone recently. She and Pa didn't tell me everything. She only said [confused again] it is a responsibility to go there. Maybe that is a protest. From then on, Pa has always been there [soft chuckle].

**Yashika :** Yes, something happened. My parents didn't tell me anything either.

**Megha :** Here he is, [happily waved towards her father] Pa!

**Yashika :** [wanting to continue the conversation] Meet you tomorrow then.

**Megha :** Sure. Bye bye!

## Story - 2

### A Tea Seller

Afternoon 05:30, two friends came out of their office. They started chatting and walking along at the end of their day's work and entered an open space in the city.

The space, partially fenced at the roadside and open towards the nearby residential blocks, is marked by a narrow footpath outlining the borders of the space. The footpath is made of bricks, organised in a particular zig-zag manner with gaps between them, where the green grass from the middle of the open field enters freely.

**Prashant:** [walking along the footpath with Navya] Has it been a long day?

**Navya:** [frustratingly] Very. I felt trapped in that cubicle with piles of files around. [A pause, felt the soft afternoon breeze brushing her face and hair gently] This is good. Now, I feel a bit relaxed. Let's sit for a while here.

They both sat down, facing the open gym in front of them, while a group of boys were playing cricket next to the fenced side of the space.

**Prashant:** [looking at the boys playing cricket] Have you seen girls coming here to play, too?

**Navya:** [looked at them, paused] Never really. It's mostly boys. Why? [still recovering from the weariness of her day's work]

**Prashant:** Got reminded of my childhood days. Now, I rarely get any time, not even for the gym. Growing old so soon, ha! [chuckles]

**Navya:** [facing the open gym in the space] That open gym was constructed a couple of months ago. But who has any time to take advantage of it? Also, [looking at the boys playing, hesitatingly] I don't feel like coming here and accessing the open gym.

**Prashant:** [comprehending the hesitant tone, tried to lighten the mood] Okay, forget it. Let's have some tea.

**Navya:** [happily approving the idea] Yes!

**Prashant:** [looking at the chaiwala called] Bhaiya!

The chai vendor, moving with a big steel container and a set of paper cups, quickly came in front of them.

**Navya:** Two cups, please.

The vendor took the order pleasantly and accordingly delivered two full cups of tea. Then took twenty rupees and happily moved towards another call.

Both took mini sips and relaxed.

**Navya:** [suddenly noticing the litter around, people not caring about the space, and the gym of no use, only rusting in its place] Sometimes I really feel this space should be entirely fenced. [frustratingly] Maybe then it will be a safe and clean space.

**Prashant:** [in a lighter tone] But then, what about this chaiwala Bhaiya? If they don't allow him to come and sell tea here. He will lose his customers.

**Navya:** [realising the consequences instantly] That's true.

**Prashant:** Do you think the Government will renovate this space?

**Navya:** [looking at the chaiwala now] Yes, they'll consider it soon based on the new renovation projects in the city. I got it from my company.

[continues after a pause] The litter all around irritates me, but then I recall the birthday celebration of Jyoti Aunty's daughter here, last week.

**Prashant:** [recalling the event] Yes! All were here from the nearby building, and it seemed everyone had a great time that day.

**Navya:** [with a slight smile] Hmm. These celebrations, though seldom, give us opportunities to mingle with others and have conversations. Otherwise, busy life and no one has any time to spare in this city.

[a pause] Therefore, if we fence it completely, all these functions will have to move to the nearby Function hall in a closed space. And we'll miss this open sky.

**Prashant:** Then what should we do? You architects should think more [softly chuckles in a teasing sense].

**Navya:** [understanding the teasing, smiled] Yes. But before that, [looked out and called for the chaiwala again] Bhaiya!

[happily] Two more cups, please.

A happy approval to the re-order from a distance.

## Annexure B

Title of the maps studied at the Cartographic Section of the National Archives of India, New Delhi, during the field visit.

Serial No.	Map Title	Published Year
1.	Map showing the districts Rohtuk, Delhi, Goorgaon, Hissar	1868
3.	Delhi Province	1886
2.	Cant, City, and Environs of Delhi	1871
4.	Cant, City, Civil Station, and Environs of Delhi	1893

5.	District Delhi	1905
6.	Delhi and Vicinity (5 maps on different scales)	1912
7.	Delhi and Vicinity, physical features	1912
8.	Punjab and United Provinces Survey 53/H/2 (Delhi, Gurgaon and Meerut districts)	1912
9.	Delhi and New Cant (2 maps)	1913
10.	Delhi Province	1915
11.	Delhi and surrounding country 53/H/NW, NE	1916
12.	Tourist Map of Delhi	1927
13.	United Provinces and Delhi	1934
14.	Map showing the area on Eastern bank of the Jamna proposed to be annexed to Delhi Province	[not dated]
15.	Imperial Delhi – Index plan of Layout	[not dated]
16.	Layout Plan of New Delhi	1934
17.	Delhi Guide Map	1959

Master Plans collected from the Delhi Development Authority Website

—

SI No.	Map Title
1.	Proposed Land Use Plan 2001
2.	Proposed Land Use Plan 2021
3.	Draft Land Use Plan – Master Plan 2041

## Annexure C

The streets visited during the field trip –

1	Arya Samaj Road
2	Teen Murti Marg
3	Lutyens Zone - Safdarjung Road
4	Lutyens Zone - Tughlaq Road
5	Tughlaq Road
6	Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Road
7	Chandni Chowk - Old Delhi
8	Lodhi Road
9	Man Singh Road
10	Janpath

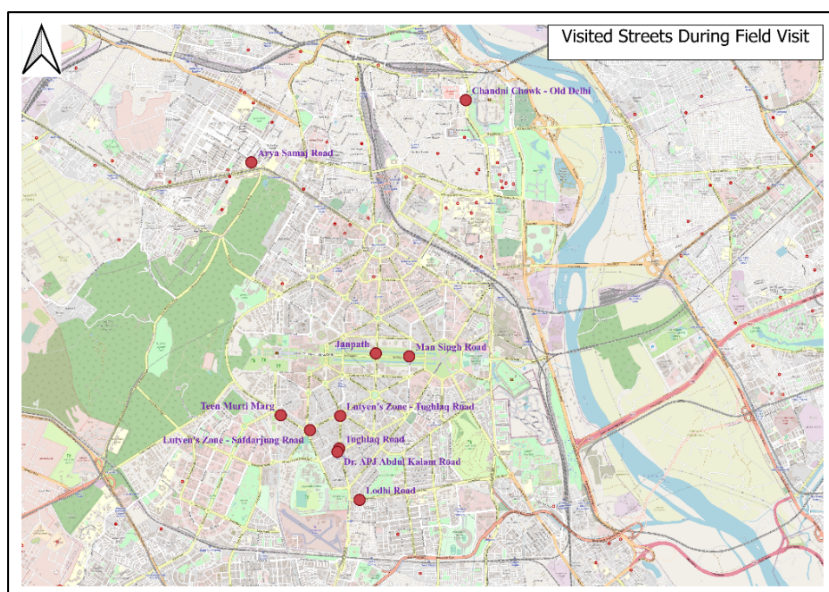


Figure 28 – Map on Visited Streets created on QGIS

The different types of marketplaces visited during the field visit –

1	Old Delhi Street Trading - Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Marg
2	Uttam Nagar Tuesday Hafta Bazaar
3	Laxmi Nagar Street Trading
4	Connaught Place

5	Janpath Market
6	Connaught Place Market
7	Baba Kharak Singh Road Street Trading
8	Uttam Nagar Street Trading
9	Urdu Bazaar
10	Bazaar Matia Mahal
11	Palika Bazaar CP
12	Meena Bazaar
13	Sarojini Nagar Market
14	Mandi House Circle Street Trading
15	Bengali Market

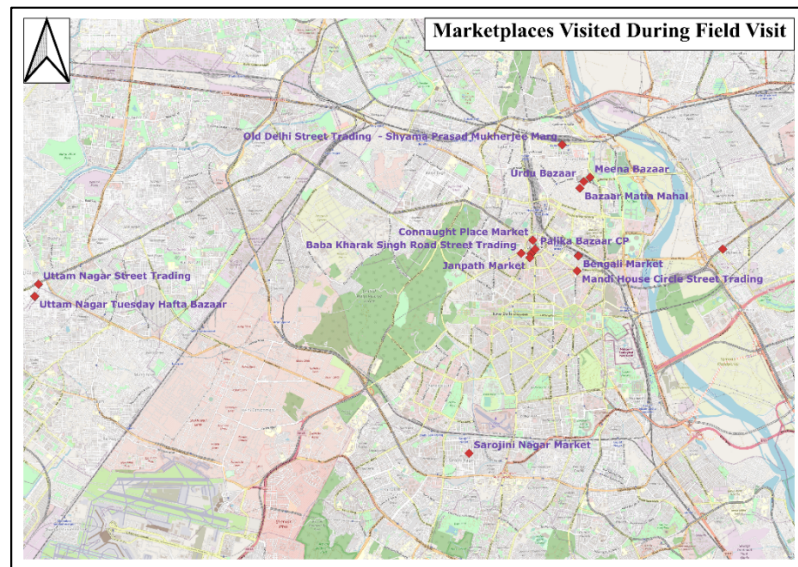


Figure 29 – Map on Visited Marketplaces created on QGIS

#### Annexure D

Locations of urban Sketches from the field trip –

Sketch No.	Location
1a.	Urdu Bazaar Road
1b.	Teen Murti Marg
2a.	Bazaar Matia Mahal
2b.	Connaught Place

3a.	Street trading at Shyam Prasad Marg
3b.	Street trading at Bhagwan Das Road

## REFERENCES

### Primary Sources

- Ali, Ahmed (2007). *Twilight in Delhi*. Rupa & Co.
- Dangi, Indira (2017). *Raptiley Rajpath*. Rajpal Publishing.
- Darlymple, William (1993). *City of Djinns*. Bloomsbury
- Deol, Sir-Inder (2022). *The Indian Farmers Protest (The Resistance Collection): The Largest Protest in Human History 2020 - 2021*. Kindle Edition.
- Guha, Ramachandra (2017). *India After Gandhi: The History of the World's Largest Democracy*. Picador India.
- Kapur, Manju (2006). *Home*. Random House Publishing.
- Kumar, Usha Dayal (2008). *Phool Waalon Ki Sair*. Abhinav Publications.
- Roy, Arundhati (2017). *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*. Penguin Books.
- Singh, Khuswant (2017). *Delhi: A Novel*. Penguin Books.
- Smith, R. V (2016). *Lingering Charm of Delhi: Myth, Lore and History*. Niyogi Books.

### Secondary Sources

- Abraham, Janaki (2017). "Hindu And Muslim Veiling in North India: Beyond the Public/Private Dichotomy". *The Routledge International Handbook to Veils and Veiling*, Routledge.
- Ahrar, Sana (2025). "Top-down Planning Approaches and Urban Reality: The Case of Delhi, India". *SSRN*, [doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.5089631](https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.5089631).
- Alexander, Christopher (1977). *A Pattern Language: Towns, Buildings, Construction*. Oxford University Press.
- Ali, Madanipour (2015). "Social Exclusion and Space". *The City Reader*, edited by Richard T. LeGates and Frederic Stout, 6th ed., Routledge, 237-244.

- Altman, I. (1975). *The environment and social behaviour: Privacy, personal space, territory, and crowding*. Brooks/Cole Publishing Company.
- Anjaria, Jonathan Shapiro (2006). "Street Hawkers and Public Space in Mumbai", 41(21):2140-2146, *Economic and Political Weekly*, doi.org/10.2307/4418270.
- Arendt, Hannah (1958). *The Human Condition*. University of Chicago Press.
- Arendt, Hannah (1963). *On Revolution*. Penguin Classics.
- Azhar, Uzma. "Shahjahanabad: Physical Vis-a-Vis Socio-Cultural Space." Sahapedia, [www.sahapedia.org/shahjahanabad-physical-vis-vis-socio-cultural-space](http://www.sahapedia.org/shahjahanabad-physical-vis-vis-socio-cultural-space).
- Bachelard, Gaston. (1994). *The Poetics of Space*. Beacon Press.
- Bakhtin, Mikhail. *Rabelais and His World*.
- Bhan, Gautam (2016). *In the Public's Interest: Evictions, Citizenship, and Inequality in Contemporary Delhi*. The University of Georgia Press.
- Bodnar, Judit (2015). "Reclaiming Public Space." *Urban Studies* 52:12(2090–104), doi.org/10.1177/0042098015583626.
- Borden, Iain (2002). *Gender Space Architecture: An Interdisciplinary Introduction*. Routledge.
- Boycko, M., Shleifer, A., & Vishny, R. W. (1996). A theory of privatisation. *The Economic Journal*, 106(435), 309. doi.org/10.2307/2235248.
- C. B. Asher & T. R. Metcalf (Eds.), *Perceptions of South Asia's visual past*, (1994): 257-69.
- Calvino, Italo (1974). *Invisible Cities*. Translated by William Weaver, First edition., Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
- Carr, Stephen, et al (1992). *Public Space*. Cambridge University Press.
- Castanyer, Laura Borràs, et al. "Geo-Locative Narratives and e-Lit: A Literary Positioning". ELMCIP (2010).
- Chakrabarty, Dipesh (2008). *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*. Princeton University Press.

- Chatterjee, Partha (2004). *The Politics of the Governed: Reflections on Popular Politics in Most of the World*. Columbia University Press.
- Chhabra, Pankaj, and Simranpreet Kaur (2024). “Crafting Indian Markets: The Art of Blurring The Boundaries of Publicness Case of Delhi”. *ShodhKosh: Journal of Visual and Performing Arts*, 5(1), [doi.org/10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.i1.2024.1030](https://doi.org/10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.i1.2024.1030).
- Chiesura, Anna (2004). “The Role of Urban Parks for the Sustainable City.” *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 68(1):129-138, [doi.org/10.1016/j.landurbplan.2003.08.003](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landurbplan.2003.08.003).
- Chopra, Prabha (1970). *Delhi : History and Places of Interest*. Delhi Administration, *Internet Archive*, [archive.org/details/dli.ministry.11840](https://archive.org/details/dli.ministry.11840).
- Choudhury, Soumyabrata (2020). *Now It's Come to Distances Notes on Shaheen Bagh and Coronavirus, Association and Isolation*. Navayana.
- Das, Chhandita, and Priyanka Tripathi (2021). ‘Delhi: New Literatures of the Megacity: Alex Tickell and Ruvani Ranasinha, Eds. Routledge 9(4):23–25, [doi.org/10.1080/2325548X.2021.1960035](https://doi.org/10.1080/2325548X.2021.1960035).
- Dasgupta, Rana (2014). *Capital: The Eruption of Delhi*. Penguin.
- Davis, Mike (1990). *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles*. Verso.
- De Certeau, Michel (1984). *The Practice of Everyday Life*. University of California Press.
- Dhileep, M., et al (2019). ‘Orientation and Proportion in Indian Traditional Domestic Architecture’. *Interdisciplinary Science Reviews*, 44:1 (97–109), [doi.org/10.1080/03080188.2018.1555076](https://doi.org/10.1080/03080188.2018.1555076).
- Dhussa, R.C. (2023). “Delhi: Evolution of an Urban Region”. In: *Images of Delhi*. Springer, Cham. [doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-28585-1\\_2](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-28585-1_2).

- Dodd, Maya, et al., editors (2021). *Exploring Digital Humanities in India: Pedagogies, Practices, and Institutional Possibilities. First South Asian edition*. Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group.
- Dutta, Ranjeeta (2024). "Settlements, Sacrality, and Urbanity: Querying the "Urban" in Early Medieval South India". *Handbook on Urban History of Early India*, edited by Aloka Parasher Sen, *Springer Nature*, (503–23), [doi.org/10.1007/978-981-97-6230-9\\_25](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-97-6230-9_25).
- Edensor, Tim (1998). 'The Culture of the Indian Street'. *The Image of the Street*, p. 205–21.
- Ehsani, Kaveh. "The Production and Politics of Public Space Radical Democratic Politics and Public Space." *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Cambridge University Press 46.1 (2014):159–62, [doi.org/10.1017/S0020743813001335](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020743813001335).
- Finch, Jason (2022). *Literary Urban Studies and How to Practice It*. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.
- Fisher, Elaine (2018). 'Public Space, Public Canon: Situating Religion at the Dawn of Modernity in South India'. *Modern Asian Studies*, 52:5 (1486–541), Cambridge University Press, [doi.org/10.1017/S0026749X17001044](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0026749X17001044).
- Forty, A. (2000). *Words and Buildings: A Vocabulary of Modern Architecture*. Thames & Hudson.
- Foucault, M. (1986). Of other spaces: Utopias and heterotopias (J. Miskowiec, Trans.). *Diacritics*, 16(1), 22–27. [doi.org/10.2307/464648](https://doi.org/10.2307/464648).
- Foucault, Michel (1977). *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Vintage Books.
- Foucault, Michel (1978). *The Birth of Biopolitics*.
- Foucault, Michel (1986). *Of Other Spaces*, *Diacritics*.
- Garner, John, ed. *The company town: architecture and society in the early industrial age*. Oxford University Press (1992).
- Gehl, J. (2010). *Cities for People*. Washington, DC: Island Press.
- Gehl, Jan (2010). *Cities for People*. Island Press.

- Gehl, Jan (2011). *Life Between Buildings: Using Public Space*. Island Press.
- Ghosal, Aniruddha. “End of a protest: The story of Jantar Mantar as a protest site began in 1993”. *The Indian Express* (2018).
- Goodfriend, Douglas E (1982). “Shahjahanabad - Old Delhi: Tradition and Planned Change.” *Ekistics, JSTOR* 49.297:472–75, [www.jstor.org/stable/43621804](http://www.jstor.org/stable/43621804).
- Goss, Jon (1996). “Disquiet on The Waterfront: Reflections On Nostalgia And Utopia In The Urban Archetypes Of Festival Marketplaces.” *Urban Geography*, 17.3:(221–47), [doi.org/10.2747/0272-3638.17.3.221](http://doi.org/10.2747/0272-3638.17.3.221).
- Grubbauer, M. (2019). “Postcolonial urbanism across disciplinary boundaries: Modes of (Dis)engagement between urban theory and professional practice”. *The Journal of Architecture*, 24(4), 469–486. [doi.org/10.1080/13602365.2019.1643390](http://doi.org/10.1080/13602365.2019.1643390).
- Gupta, Narayani (1988). “The Useful and the Ornamental: Architecture in India in the Last Two Centuries”. *The Indian Economic & Social History Review*, 25:1 (61–77), [doi.org/10.1177/001946468802500103](http://doi.org/10.1177/001946468802500103).
- Gupta, Narayani. “Kingsway to Rajpath: The democratisation of Lutyens’ Central Vista”. In
- Gurr, Jens Martin (2021). *Charting Literary Urban Studies: Texts as Models of and for the City*. Routledge, Taylor & Francis group.
- Habermas, Jürgen (1991). *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*. MIT Press.
- Habermas, Jürgen, et al. “The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article (1964).” *New German Critique*, no. 3 (1974):49–55. JSTOR, [doi.org/10.2307/487737](http://doi.org/10.2307/487737).
- Harvey, David (2012). *Rebel Cities: From the Right to the City to the Urban Revolution*. Verso.

- Hatuka, Tali (2018). *The Design of Protest: Choreographing Political Demonstrations in Public Space*. First edition, University of Texas Press.
- Heitzman, James (1987). 'Temple Urbanism in Medieval South India'. *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 46:4 (791–826), [doi.org/10.2307/2057102](https://doi.org/10.2307/2057102).
- Hosagrahar, Jyoti (2001). "Mansions to Margins: Modernity and the Domestic Landscapes of Historic Delhi", 1847-1910". *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 60:1 (26-45), [jstor.com/stable/991677](https://www.jstor.com/stable/991677).
- Idiculla, Mathew (2023). "The Travails of Urban Planning in India: An Examination of the Planning Law Regime of Bangalore". *The Chinese Journal of Comparative Law*, 11:1, [doi.org/10.1093/cjcl/cxad002](https://doi.org/10.1093/cjcl/cxad002).
- Irfan, Lubna (2019). "Hammams as Public Spaces in Mughal India". *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, 80 (448–60), [jstor.org/stable/27192897](https://www.jstor.org/stable/27192897).
- Jacobs, J. (1961). *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. New York, Random House. Kapur, Manju (2006). *Home*. Random House India.
- Jian, Izzy Yi, et al. (2024). "Navigating between Private and Public: Understanding Publicness of Public Open Spaces in Private Developments in Hong Kong". *Journal of Urban Management*, 13:4 (787–99), [doi.org/10.1016/j.jum.2024.08.003](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jum.2024.08.003).
- Joseph, Ajomy Maria (2023). "Enclosed Spaces: A Deconstructive Feminist Reading of Vāstu Sāstra with Special Reference to Home and Temple Architecture of Kerala". Vol.12 (3&4), 86-105, [iisjoa.org/sites/default/files/iisjoa/October\\_November\\_2023/7th%20Paper.pdf](https://iisjoa.org/sites/default/files/iisjoa/October_November_2023/7th%20Paper.pdf).
- Kaiser, Aysha (2022). "Deconstructing the Feminist Narrative Behind the Haveli". *Brown History*, [brownhistory.substack.com/p/deconstructing-the-feminist-narrative](https://brownhistory.substack.com/p/deconstructing-the-feminist-narrative).

- Kalyan, R. (2017). *Neo Delhi and the Politics of Postcolonial Urbanism* (1st ed.). Routledge. [doi.org/10.4324/9781315225357](https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315225357).
- Kampourakis, Ioannis. "Nancy Fraser: Subaltern Counterpublics." *Critical Legal Thinking* (2016).
- Kapadia, Aparna (2021). 'Gardens in India Have Surprisingly Ancient and Sprawling Roots'. *Scroll*, [scroll.in/article/1012939/gardens-in-india-have-surprisingly-ancient-and-sprawling-roots](https://scroll.in/article/1012939/gardens-in-india-have-surprisingly-ancient-and-sprawling-roots).
- Kazmi, Zehra and Saudamini Jain (2018). "Shahjahanabad: How a Planned City Came Undone." *Hindustan Times*.
- Kumar, Sunil (2002). *The Present in Delhi's Pasts*. Three Essays Press.
- Lefebvre, H., Kofman, E., & Lebas, E. (1996). *Writings on cities*. Blackwell Publ.
- Lefebvre, Henri (1991). *The Production of Space*. Blackwell.
- Li, Juan, et al (2022). "Defining the Ideal Public Space: A Perspective from the Publicness". *Journal of Urban Management*, 11:4 (479–87), [doi.org/10.1016/j.jum.2022.08.005](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jum.2022.08.005).
- Løvlie, Anders Sundnes (2009). "Poetic augmented reality: Place-bound literature in locative media", [doi.org/10.1145/1621841.1621847](https://doi.org/10.1145/1621841.1621847).
- Low, Setha, and Neil Smith (2006). *The Politics of Public Space*. Routledge.
- Lynch, Kevin (1996). *The Image of the City*. The MIT Press, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
- Madanipour, A. (2003). "Public and private spaces of the city." *Urban Studies*, 40:11(2245-56), [dx.doi.org/10.4324/9780203402856](https://dx.doi.org/10.4324/9780203402856).
- Mahadevia, Darshini and Rutul Joshi (2009). *Subversive Urban Development in India: Implications on Planning Education*. CEPT University.
- Mandhan, Sneha (2014). *Designing Indian Streets as Social Public Spaces: Contextual Design and Planning in Bangalore*.

- Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Thesis, [dspace.mit.edu/handle/1721.1/90209](https://dspace.mit.edu/handle/1721.1/90209).
- Mantri, Mamta. *Cities and Protests: Perspectives in Spatial Criticism*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing; Unabridged edition (2021).
- Marcuse, Peter. “The Purpose of the Occupation Movement and the Danger of Fetishizing Space.” CITY (2011).
- Marom, Nathan. “Activising Space: The Spatial Politics of the 2011 Protest Movement in Israel.” *Urban Studies* 50.13 (2013):2826–41, [doi.org/10.1177/0042098013477699](https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098013477699).
- Mattelart, Armand (1991). *Advertising International The privatisation of public space*. Routledge, 83–96.
- Mayank K. Patel and Dr. Amarjeet Kumar (2024). “The Evolution Of Urban Housing Architecture In India: A Historical And Sociological Analysis”, [doi.org/10.5281/ZENODO.14243666](https://doi.org/10.5281/ZENODO.14243666).
- Mehrotra, Neha. “How Jantar Mantar Killed the Spirit of Protest.” Outlook
- Mehrotra, Rahul (2011). *Architecture in India: Since 1990*. Pictor.
- Mishra, Mayank. “The Spatiality of Civil Resistance Movements: Reflecting on India’s Farmer Protests”, Centre for Social Change (2021).
- Mitchell, Don (1995). “The End of Public Space? People’s Park, Definitions of the Public, and Democracy.” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 85(1):108–133.
- Mitchell, Don (2003). *The Right to the City: Social Justice and the Fight for Public Space*. Guilford Press.
- Mittal, Sangeeta (2017). “Khushwant Singh’s Delhi: A Novel: Recollecting And Reclaiming The City.” *Research Journal of English Language and Literature (RJELAL)*, 5.3.
- Moroni, Stefano, and Francesco Chiodelli (2014). “Public Spaces, Private Spaces, and the Right to the City”. *International Journal of E-Planning Research*, 3:1 (51–65), [doi.org/10.4018/ijepr.2014010105](https://doi.org/10.4018/ijepr.2014010105).

- Myers, G. (2020). *Rethinking urbanism: Lessons from postcolonialism and the global south* (1st ed.). Bristol University Press. [doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv12fw6wq](https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv12fw6wq).
- Narayan, Pallavi (2021). "Gender and Domestic Space in Ahmed Ali's and Krishna Sobti's Novels on Old Delhi". *Ideas: Journal Of English Literary Studies*, 1:1 (35-48).
- Németh J, Schmidt S. The Privatization of Public Space: Modeling and Measuring Publicness. *Environment and Planning B: Planning and Design* 38.1 (2011):5-23, doi:10.1068/b36057.
- Newman, O. (1972). *Defensible Space: Crime Prevention Through Urban Design*. New York: Macmillan.
- Pani, Samprati (2020). "Navigating the City: Rituals, Routines and Relationships in the Making of Delhi's Ordinary Streets." *Revista Astragalo*, 1.1:117–34, [doi.org/10.12795/astragalo.2020.i27.09](https://doi.org/10.12795/astragalo.2020.i27.09).
- Panjaitan, Tigor W. S., et al (2020). "Global Homogenization of Public Space?: A Comparison of "Western" and "Eastern" Contexts". *Companion to Public Space*, Routledge.
- Parekh, Bhikhu (2009). "Private and Public Spheres in India". *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy*, 12:2 (313–28), [doi.org/10.1080/13698230902892218](https://doi.org/10.1080/13698230902892218).
- Paul Eve, Martin (2022). *The Digital Humanities and Literary Studies*. Oxford University Press.
- Peter, Jones (2022). "The changing relationship between public and private space". *Town and Country Planning* (202-207).
- Phadke, Shilpa, et al (2011). *Why Loiter? Women and Risk on Mumbai Streets*. Penguin Books.
- Popli, Bhumika. "CAA Stir: Visual Narratives of Dissent." *The New Indian Express* (2020). Lefebvre, Henri (1991). *The Production of Space*. Blackwell.
- Pushkarna, Vijaya (2022). "Delhi Street Vendors: Creating Vending Zones Far from Established Markets Will Not Work." *Citizen*

Matters, [citizenmatters.in/delhi-street-vendors-vending-zones-aap-kejriwal-promise-32318](https://citizenmatters.in/delhi-street-vendors-vending-zones-aap-kejriwal-promise-32318).

- Raj, Mamatha P., and Dakshayini R. Patil (2023). “Semiotics in Architecture of Public Spaces: Contemporary City-Centers; Case of Bangalore, India”. *Journal of Umm Al-Qura University for Engineering and Architecture*, 14:4 (212–25), [doi.org/10.1007/s43995-023-00031-3](https://doi.org/10.1007/s43995-023-00031-3).
- Raja, Suresha (2016). “Glimpses of Ancient Indian Town Planning for Building Modern Heritage Cities”. *Dev Sanskriti Interdisciplinary International Journal*, 7 (07–11), [doi.org/10.36018/dsij.v7i0.71](https://doi.org/10.36018/dsij.v7i0.71).
- Raje, Ar. R. (2020). “Value of landscape design in creating a sustainable urban transformation model for Sarojini Nagar housing community, New Delhi”. *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science*, 588(5), 052045. [doi.org/10.1088/1755-1315/588/5/052045](https://doi.org/10.1088/1755-1315/588/5/052045).
- Ramesh, Aditya, and Vidhya Raveendranathan. “Infrastructure and Public Works in Colonial India: Towards a Conceptual History”. *History Compass*, 18:6, [doi.org/10.1111/hic3.12614](https://doi.org/10.1111/hic3.12614).
- Rebbapragada, Pallavi. “NGT puts curtains on Jantar Mantar as a protest site: Will Ramlila Maidan offer the same spirit of democratic dissent?”. Firstpost (2017).
- Robinson, J. (2006). *Ordinary Cities: Between Modernity and Development*. Routledge. Rossi, A. (1982). *The Architecture of the City*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Roy, Ananya (2003). *City Requiem, Calcutta: Gender and the Politics of Poverty*. University of Minnesota Press.
- Roy, Ananya (2005). “Urban Informality”. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 71.2:(146-58), [www.wiego.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Urban-Informality-Roy.pdf](https://www.wiego.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Urban-Informality-Roy.pdf).
- Roychowdhury, Adrija. “From Kingsway to Rajpath: How Independent India Made a British Imperial City Its Own.” *The Indian Express*, (2021).

- Rubin, Elihu, and Sharon Zukin (2010). "Naked City: The Death and Life of Authentic Urban Places by Zukin Sharon" *SiteLINES: A Journal of Place*, 6(1):17–19, [www.jstor.org/stable/24884166](http://www.jstor.org/stable/24884166).
- Sabatier, Paul A (1986). "Top-Down and Bottom-Up Approaches to Implementation Research: A Critical Analysis and Suggested Synthesis." *Journal of Public Policy* 6.1:(21–48), [doi.org/10.1017/S0143814X00003846](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0143814X00003846).
- Sacheti, Priyanka (2016). "Navigating And Re-Writing the Gendered Space in a Haveli". *Feminism in India*, [feminisminindia.com/2016/09/15/gendered-space-haveli](http://feminisminindia.com/2016/09/15/gendered-space-haveli).
- Sadana, Rashmi (2022). *Metronama: Scenes from Delhi Metro*. Roli Books.
- Sadanand, Anjali, and R. V. Nagarajan (2020). "Transition Spaces in an Indian Context". *Athens Journal Of Architecture*, 6:3 (193–224), [doi.org/10.30958/aja.6-3-1](https://doi.org/10.30958/aja.6-3-1).
- Sanga, Naganika, et al (2021). "Top-down Processes Derail Bottom-up Objectives: A Study in Community Engagement and "Slum-Free City Planning""". *Community Development Journal*, [doi.org/10.1093/cdj/bsab037](https://doi.org/10.1093/cdj/bsab037).
- Sartre, Jean-Paul (1993). *Being and Nothingness*. Washington Square Press.
- Sassen, Saskia. "The Global Street: Making the Political." *Globalizations*, 8.5 (2011):574, [10.1080/14747731.2011.622458](https://doi.org/10.1080/14747731.2011.622458).
- Schreibman, Susan, Ray Siemens, and John Unsworth, eds (2004). *A Companion to Digital Humanities*. Blackwell Companions to Literature and Culture.
- Sekhani, Richa, et al (2019). "Street Vending in Urban "Informal" Markets: Reflections from Case-Studies of Street Vendors in Delhi (India) and Phnom Penh City (Cambodia)". *Cities*, 89:(120–29), [doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2019.01.010](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2019.01.010).
- Semeraro, Teodoro, et al. "A Bottom-Up and Top-Down Participatory Approach to Planning and Designing Local Urban

- Development: Evidence from an Urban University Center”, *Land*, 9:4 (98), [doi.org/10.3390/land9040098](https://doi.org/10.3390/land9040098).
- Sengupta, Kaustubh Mani (2018). “Community and Neighbourhood in a Colonial City: Calcutta’s Para”, *South Asia Research*, 38 (1), [www.academia.edu/35637577/Community\\_and\\_Neighbourhood\\_in\\_a\\_Colonial\\_City\\_Calcutta\\_s\\_Para\\_South\\_Asia\\_Research\\_38\\_1\\_2018](https://www.academia.edu/35637577/Community_and_Neighbourhood_in_a_Colonial_City_Calcutta_s_Para_South_Asia_Research_38_1_2018).
- Sennett, Richard. (1992). *The Fall of Public Man*. Knopf.
- Sethi, Rachna (2018) “Out of place” women: Exploring gendered spatiality in Delhi, *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, 54:3, (398-410), [doi.org/10.1080/17449855.2018.1461983](https://doi.org/10.1080/17449855.2018.1461983).
- Simmel, Georg (2011). *The Philosophy of Money*. Edited by David Frisby, Routledge, [doi.org/10.4324/9780203828298](https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203828298).
- Singh, Anant Pratap and Kamini Singh (2021). “Integrating Traditional Wisdom of Water Resilience in Architecture and Urban Design”. *National Conference on Sustainability in Built Environment 2020*.
- Singh, Khushwant (2001), editor. *City Improbable: An Anthology of Writings on Delhi*. Viking.
- Singh, Malvika and Rudrangshu Mukherjee (2009). *New Delhi: Making of a Capital*. Roli Books.
- Sinha, Amita (2010) “Colonial and Post-Colonial Memorial Parks in Lucknow, India: Shifting Ideologies and Changing Aesthetics”. *Journal of Landscape Architecture*, 5:2 (60–71), [doi.org/10.1080/18626033.2010.9723439](https://doi.org/10.1080/18626033.2010.9723439).
- Sinha, Shashank Shekhar. “How the Red Fort Became the Site for India's Independence Day Celebrations”. *The Wire* (2017).
- Smith, Monica L. (2024). “Urban Spaces and Dilemmas of Perception in the Ancient Indian Subcontinent”. *Religion and Urbanity Online*, edited by Susanne Rau and Jörg Rüpke. Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, [doi.org/10.1515/urbrel.17263315](https://doi.org/10.1515/urbrel.17263315).

- Smith, Neil (1996). *The New Urban Frontier: Gentrification and the Revanchist City*. Routledge.
- Svensson, P. (2010). "The Landscape of Digital Humanities." *Digital Humanities Quarterly*, 4(1).
- Tally, R. T. (2013). *Spatiality*. Routledge.
- Tewari, Preeti, and Prerna Siwach (2024). "Gendering of Space Through Indian History: A Geographical Perspective". *The Oriental Anthropologist: A Bi-Annual International Journal of the Science of Man*, 24:2 (322–35), [doi.org/10.1177/0972558X241277120](https://doi.org/10.1177/0972558X241277120).
- Valentine, Gill (1990). "Women's Fear and the Design of Public Space." *Built Environment*, 16(4):288–303, [www.jstor.org/stable/23286230](http://www.jstor.org/stable/23286230).
- Varghese, P. (2019). *A Study into How the Relationship between Public and Private Spaces in the Built Environment Influence the Social and Cultural Aspects of the Community*, [repository.tudelft.nl/record/uuid:366b004e-e9c1-49b1-acbe-6c77c91f71de](https://repository.tudelft.nl/record/uuid:366b004e-e9c1-49b1-acbe-6c77c91f71de).
- Yamane, Shu, et al (2008). "Space Formation and Transformation of the Urban Tissue of Old Delhi, India." *Journal of Asian Architecture and Building Engineering*, Taylor and Francis, 217–24, [doi.org/10.3130/jaabe.7.217](https://doi.org/10.3130/jaabe.7.217).
- Zalnieriute, Monika. "How Public Space Surveillance is Eroding Political Protests in Australia." *Verfassungsblog* (2021).
- Zuberi, Fahad (2020). "Dissent and the City." Fahad Zuberi.
- Zuberi, Fahad. "Delhi Master Plan: Planning a city by Excluding the people". *The Indian Express* (2022).
- Zuberi, Fahad. "To Pit People's Protest against Infrastructure Is to Diminish Urban Life and Democracy." *The Indian Express* (2020).
- Zukin, Sharon (1995). "Whose Culture, Whose City", *The Cultures of Cities*. Blackwell.