

**SPATIAL LEGIBILITY: A STUDY OF THE
INTERACTION BETWEEN THE SELECTED
CHARACTERS AND KARACHI IN THE
WORKS OF OMAR SHAHID HAMID AND
SAMIRA SHACKLE**

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**Spatial Legibility: A Study of the Interaction Between the
Selected Characters and Karachi in the Works of Omar
Shahid Hamid and Samira Shackle**

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THESIS AND DEFENSE APPROVAL FORM

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ABSTRACT

Title: Spatial Legibility: A Study of the Interaction between the Selected Characters and Karachi in the Works of Omar Shahid Hamid and Samira Shackle.

This study delves into the intricate relationship between imageability and legibility in urban environments, with a particular focus on hyper-mediated cities. It critically examines the concept of phantasmagoria within urban literature, analyzing two significant novels: *The Party Worker* by Omar Shahid Hamid and *Karachi Vice: Life and Death in a Contested City* by Samira Shackle. The primary objective of this research is to comprehend how phantasmagoria affects the legibility of Karachi as an urban space. Through a detailed textual analysis, this study explores the mental representations and perceptions of Karachi's inhabitants as depicted in these fictional narratives, placing emphasis on the city's strategies to desensitize and manipulate the human sensorium. By employing the theoretical perspectives of urban scholars such as Kevin Lynch, Libero Andreotti, and Nadir Lahiji, this research offers a critical analysis of the selected texts, drawing out key insights into the construction of spatio-temporal images of Karachi. The findings of this study contribute to the broader academic discourse on urban legibility, highlighting the significant role of phantasmagoria in shaping and influencing perceptions of urban spaces. Ultimately, this study enhances our understanding of how sensory manipulation and mediated imagery in literature reflect and impact the legibility of urban environments, particularly within the context of Karachi.

Keywords: *imageability, legibility, phantasmagoria, urban spaces, urban literature*

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DEDICATION

This thesis is devoted to the memory of my late grandfather (Baba) who will forever hold a special place in my heart and who filled my cup of love like no one else. It is also devoted to my late grandmother (Nano), whose prayers I feel are still guarding me and who was my biggest supporter. Additionally, I extend this dedication to my mama and papa, expressing gratitude for their support and everything they have done for me.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The urban landscape is an intricate entity enveloping diverse aspects of the city such as its architecture, infrastructure, human experience and social interaction. Urban landscape acts as a canvas for the city to unfold upon, and to mirror its cultural, economic and political aspects. It works to reveal the relationship between elements that shape the identity and character of the city. From landmarks that represent a city's lineage to recent structures that showcase its advancement, the built environment transmits a sense of identity and history in its “well-structured space with distinctive elements” (Kaplan and Kaplan 455).

The urban environment is also a stage for social interaction, where communities interact to forge social relations. It is “widely recognized” and “nurtured” (Cattell, et al. 558). These interactions between urban space and its inhabitants contribute to urban life's identity and foster a sense of shared experience. This concept emphasizes that a city's physical layout must be readily navigated and understood for it to be considered legible. Legible cities can increase efficiency and social interactions, allowing residents to orient themselves within the built environment. The inhabitants use the city's "image to navigate through the city" (Vaez, et al. 1). A city's legibility may also be affected by “phantasmagoria of the city” that alter how urban environments are perceived, comprehended, and experienced (Gunn 271).

To comprehend the dynamics of the urban environment, it is necessary to “comprehend the urban landscape” and how its inhabitants perceive it (Hinchcliffe and Deriu 222) . Hence, the urban studies concept of legibility becomes applicable, as it refers to “the capacity of a space to give clues to the understanding of the system as a whole” and a lucid understanding of the urban environment (Long and Baran 35). It entails how residents’ perception of a city's structure, functionality, and systems to form a mental image of the city. The legibility of a city is the extent to which its inhabitants can comprehend, “navigate and interact with spaces”, which influences their sense of place, social interactions, and urban experience (De Jesus 42).

The concept of legibility can be traced back to urban theorist Kevin Lynch's work. This concept was presented in his 1960 book titled, *The Image of the City*. Lynch

investigated how inhabitants “construct mental images” of the urban environment (De Vito and Bartolomeo 1). According to Lynch, a legible city comprises of five essential components: paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks. Paths are the city's network of roadways, while edges are the urban fabric's physical boundaries and transitions. Districts, on the other hand, are readily identifiable regions due to their shared characteristics. Nodes depict the city's focal locations. Finally, landmarks are distinct and memorable elements of the urban environment. His main argument is that a city's legibility is crucial for its efficient use and the construction of a coherent mental map by its inhabitants.

In the context of urban studies, phantasmagoria refers to “the operations of dream, fantasy and memory” to create the illusory and dreamlike qualities of the urban landscape (Britzolakis 73). Lahiji and Andreotti argue that phantasmagoric qualities in urban spaces can elicit emotions, activate memories, and influence the perceptions and interactions of individuals with the built environment that is “interactive, rather than static” (Beshers and Feiner 416). Lynch's concept of legibility, on the other hand, concentrates on the cognitive visualization and comprehension of the city. It accentuates the lucidity, coherence, and simplicity of comprehension of urban environments, allowing people to navigate and orient themselves within the urban fabric.

The introduction of phantasmagoric elements, such as unconventional architectural forms, artistic interventions, or immersive experiences, can challenge or confound a city's legibility. It may also generate ambiguities, disorientation, or multiple interpretations, thereby adding complexity and subjectivity to the perception and comprehension of the urban environment by individuals. Understanding the impact of phantasmagoria on the legibility of the city contributes to a more nuanced examination of urban experiences and how individuals interact with and interpret their urban surroundings. In the context of urban studies, phantasmagoria refers to the illusory and dreamlike qualities of the urban landscape. Lahiji and Andreotti argue that phantasmagoric qualities in urban spaces can elicit emotions, activate memories, and influence the perceptions and interactions of individuals with the built environment. Lynch's concept of legibility, on the other hand, concentrates on the cognitive visualization and “understanding of the city” (Wessel, et al. 379). It accentuates the

lucidity, coherence, and simplicity of comprehension of urban environments, allowing people to navigate and orient themselves within the urban fabric.

The urban landscape is “a rich tapestry” of constructed forms, infrastructure, and social dynamics that influence the perceptions and experiences of the city (Amin 105). In recent years, it has become increasingly apparent that the sensory aspects and “visual dimension” of the urban environment play a significant role in influencing our understanding of the city (Peraldo 7). The concept of phantasmagoria, which refers to the use of deception, spectacle, and enchantment in architectural design and urban spaces, is one such enthralling phenomenon that has attracted considerable attention. By analyzing the complexities of phantasmagoric interventions and their effects on legibility, this study aims to contribute to a greater comprehension of the connection between the built environment and our perception of the cityscape. Through this investigation, it is intended to cast light on the transformative power of phantasmagoric elements and their implications for augmenting or confronting the legibility of the city.

In *The Architecture of Phantasmagoria: Specters of the City* by Libero Andreotti, the psychological and sociocultural dimensions of urban interactions influenced by phantasmagoria are investigated in depth. Andreotti contends that phantasmagoric elements in the urban environment have a transformative influence, “forever altering the temporal and spatial coordinates of human perception” and the experiences of individuals, thereby influencing their responses and social interactions (Andreotti and Lahiji 13). This research is conducted with the intent to investigate the role phantasmagoria plays in the context of the hyper-mediated city. Specifically, the study focuses on the portrayal of Karachi as depicted in two prominent works of urban literature: *The Party Worker* by Omar Shahid Hamid and *Karachi Vice: Life and Death in a Contested City* by Shackle.

Omar Shahid Hamid, a former police officer turned novelist, has achieved recognition for his realistic portrayal of Karachi in his novels. Karachi is depicted as a city grappling with issues of corruption, violence, and crime in his novels. Through the narrative gaze of his characters, Hamid shows the labyrinthine streets, crowded bazaars, and dilapidated neighbourhoods of Karachi, capturing the tensions and contradictions that exist within its urban fabric.

The Party Worker explores the political landscape of vibrant and diverse Karachi, Pakistan. It depicts the complexities of municipal power relationships, corruption, and the struggles of the common people. This research studies the effect of illusions, deceptive narratives, and manipulations on the legibility of the city because phantasmagoric elements are present. Phantasmagoric interventions in the form of political propaganda, media distortions, and deceptive imagery distort reality, influencing how individuals perceive and navigate urban space.

In addition, Hamid's narrative approach depicts the rugged and visceral nature of Karachi, painting an evocative picture of the city's atmosphere and inhabitants. The incorporation of phantasmagoric elements adds another layer of complexity to the narrative, reflecting the illusions and ghosts that inhabit the urban environment. Through the protagonist's journey, the reader is exposed to the disorienting effects of phantasmagoria on the legibility of the city, emphasizing the difficulty of distinguishing reality from illusion in a tumultuous urban setting.

Likewise, Samira Shackle, a British-Pakistani journalist and author, explores the city of Karachi in her works. *Karachi Vice: Life and Death in a Contested City* offers a gripping account of the city. Samira Shackle's *Karachi Vice: Life and Death in a Contested City* is a thorough examination of Karachi's socio-political landscape that portrays the city as a site of contested narratives and concealed realities. The book begins with a comprehensive examination of Karachi, a city renowned for its complexities, contradictions, and contested identities. Shackle offers a nuanced comprehension of the city's history, politics, and social dynamics, delving into the complexities of power conflicts, ethnic tensions, and socioeconomic disparities. This multidimensional analysis permits a thorough investigation of the legibility of the city and how phantasmagoric influences shape its perception.

The study of the novel reveals the psychological dimensions of urban interactions affected by phantasmagoria. Shackle illustrates the effects of dread, ambiguity, and perception manipulation on the city's residents. The study examines how individuals navigate the complexities of the urban landscape while contending with contradictory narratives and concealed realities, ultimately influencing their perception of the legibility of the city. This study aims to expose the phantasmagoric elements present in Karachi's social fabric, such as false narratives, mythologies, and misrepresentations that obscure the city's legibility.

In addition, Shackle's writing approach brings the city and its inhabitants to life, allowing the reader to experience phantasmagoric influences first-hand. The book provides evocative descriptions of Karachi's streets, communities, and people who live there, elucidating the urban environment and the challenges it poses to legibility.

Shackle examines lives of residents of Karachi from different social backgrounds and brings to limelight the diverse communities living in Karachi, socio-economic disparities, and the challenges they face in navigating the urban environment. By employing a textual analysis methodology, this research aims to study the mental images of the inhabitants as presented in these narratives. Moreover, this analysis seeks to discern the degree to which phantasmagoria adds to the construction of the spatio-temporal image of Karachi.

From the perspective of city literature, Omar Shahid Hamid's *A Party Worker* and Samira Shackle's *Karachi Vice: Life and Death in a Contested City* present diverse views into Karachi's urban fabric via different narrative styles and thematic focuses. Hamid's work depicts Karachi as a metropolis rife with political intrigue and criminal activity, marked by corruption, bloodshed, and power conflicts. This story focuses on the city's dark underbelly, demonstrating how the political and criminal sectors mix, affecting the urban experience. The story, told by characters such as politicians, gangsters, and police officers, depicts the city as a battleground of strife and power, with themes of loyalty, betrayal, and survival mirroring the brutal reality of urban life.

In contrast, Shackle's narrative provides a more personal and varied portrayal of Karachi, emphasizing the city's citizens' resilience and flexibility. By focusing on true stories, the novel depicts the city as a complex and dynamic metropolis formed by its diverse population. Themes of survival, community, and the impact of political and social concerns are essential, emphasizing people's close links to their urban environment. The city's spaces are depicted as lived situations in which personal and community stories emerge, highlighting the social and emotional connections that residents have with their surroundings.

Together, these works add to city literature by providing varied perspectives on Karachi. They present a thorough picture of the city's complexity and the many experiences of its residents, adding to our understanding of Karachi as a vibrant, contentious, and dynamic urban place

In addition, this research seeks to demonstrate the impact of phantasmagoria on the legibility of the city, thereby shedding light on the intricate dynamics between urban representation and perception. By studying the interactions between the selected characters and Karachi, this study focuses on the spatial legibility of the city of Karachi as depicted in the novels. This research explores how the city of Karachi plays a role of phantasmagoria shaping the identities, motivations and struggles of the individuals within these literary works.

This research aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of spatial legibility in literature and its importance in depicting urban environments. Moreover, this study examines the relationship of selected characters with their urban setting and how writers employ spatial legibility to recount the intricacies of Karachi's social fabric. This study also probes into the role that city plays in shaping narratives and sheds light on the nuanced nature of Karachi as a literary landscape.

1.1 Thesis Statement

The literary works *The Party Worker* by Omar Shahid Hamid and *Karachi Vice: Life and Death in the Contested City* by Samira Shackle delve into the urban landscape of Karachi, examining its spatiotemporal dimension and its impact on human perception. These authors skillfully explore how the city serves as a means to desensitize individuals, eventually contributing to the promotion of social control. This research aims to examine the mental images of characters by using Lynch's notion of legibility. It argues that the phantasmagoric aspects present in the hyper-mediated city have a complex influence on the perception and comprehension of the urban scene.

1.2 Research Objectives

- To study the elements that contribute to the subjective nature of spatiotemporal mental representations in urban legibility.
- To evaluate the ways in which phantasmagoria in the novel shapes the city's identity.
- To study the facets that contribute to the legibility of Karachi in selected texts.

1.3 Research Questions

This study will investigate the following research questions:

1. What factors contribute to making spatiotemporal mental images subjective in city legibility?
2. How does phantasmagoria change the way a city's identity is thought of in the selected texts?
3. How does social control through the city affect the legibility of space in the selected texts?

1.4 Significance of the Study

In the context of Karachi and Pakistan's political unrest, this study examines Omar Shahid Hamid and Samira Shackle's urban literature to provide a fresh viewpoint. This study examines Karachi's urban terrain using spatial and temporal images, the material aspects of urban space, and the complex concept of legibility, which goes beyond physical characteristics. Lynch highlights the issue of legibility, a complex and subjective term that is important in urban settings, according to O'Neill (75). This study also examines phantasmagoria, a dynamic impact on human cognition's spatial and temporal features. This research analyses how changing cognitive representations illuminate the gap between objective truth and subjective experience, affecting urban socio-political and cultural fabric.

1.5 Delimitation of the Study

This study focuses on the novels *The Party Worker* and *Karachi Vice: Life and Death in a Contested City*. This research is confined to analyzing spatial legibility in both of the texts. Additionally, it will concentrate on determining the components that contribute to the mental images of the inhabitants. The notion of phantasmagoria presented by Andreotti and Lahiji has been adopted, but it has been narrowed to include just the elements pertinent to the investigation as discussed in the theoretical framework. Thus, the scope of this study is confined to examining the aspects that contribute to a city's "mental image" which adds to "legibility" (Lynch 5).

The primary objective of this research is to examine the domain of architecture within the framework of the hyper-mediated metropolis, which may be seen as a tangible representation of phantasmagoria. It functions as a concrete manifestation of

this transformative phenomenon. Architecture is often regarded as a powerful influence capable of profoundly altering the underlying dynamics of human interactions within urban settings. Moreover, it acknowledges that the concept of phantasmagoria represents a novel stage in the process of reification, when objects seem to be detached from their original context of creation. A comprehensive examination of people's mental representations might enhance our comprehension of the underlying reasons for this dissociation, therefore shedding light on the intricate interplay between perception and reality.

This research addresses the fundamental inquiry of the continued relevance of the notion of legible cities within contemporary urban contexts characterized by hypermediation and constant evolution, and explores the possibility that it may have transformed into a mere illusion. Through a meticulous examination of the existence of phantasmagoria and a thorough investigation into the veracity of mental imagery, this study aims to redefine our comprehension of legibility within the present-day urban environment. By doing so, it provides valuable perspectives on the intricate fabric of modern cities and the diverse array of challenges they pose.

1.6 Organization of the Study

The thesis is organised in the form of six chapters.

In the 'Introduction' chapter, the historical backdrop and theoretical underpinnings of Legibility and Phantasmagoria are presented in brief detail. The chapter additionally underscores the study's research objectives and questions. In addition, it underscores the procedure for collecting and analysing data, with particular attention given to the research methodology, limitations, and delimitations. Additionally, the chapter presents a critical analysis of selected literary works.

In Chapter 2, titled "Review of Related Literature," an analysis of the current body of literature pertaining to Legibility and Phantasmagoria is presented. This chapter focuses on the examination of the selected literature and theories in relation to the concept. The chapter further underscores the gap observed in previous research.

In Chapter 3, titled "Theoretical Perspectives," the concepts of legibility and phantasmagoria are examined in depth. For the purpose of analysing the chosen texts, these theoretical frameworks serve as analytical tools. A detailed examination of the

precise application and utilisation of these concepts in the analytical procedure is provided in the following chapter.

Chapter 4 'Phantasmagoric Manipulation: Unveiling Urban Legibility through Perspectives of Power' delves into the perspective of a high-ranking party employee to scrutinise the manner in which the book unveils the deliberate manipulation of cognitive representations within the urban environment. This chapter explores the complex relationship between perceptions and how they impact the legibility of the urban environment.

Chapter 5, "Constructing Legibility in the Cityscape: A Study of Common Inhabitants' Perspectives," focuses on the scholarly examination of how perception can be manipulated and how the presence of phantasmagoric elements can affect how people collectively understand the urban environment. This analysis is conducted within the context of the novel.

In Chapter 6, entitled 'Conclusion', a succinct synopsis of the research study is presented, with particular emphasis on the main findings of the inquiry. In this chapter, a systematic response is given to the questions that were introduced in Chapter 1, entitled "Introduction." Moreover, it provides recommendations for further inquiry within the chosen academic discipline.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This portion of the research analyses the relevant literature on the topic of the investigation. It outlines the gap that the present research will fill as well as the significance of the effort in reversing ideological deviations in literary works. The goal of this research is to investigate the mental images of Karachi's residents. Literature about cities is growing exponentially, necessitating fresh critique every day. It identifies the gaps in current key knowledge and assists me in filling them with fresh research. The primary objective of the literature review is to conduct a comprehensive analysis and synthesis of the available material, with the aim of enhancing the comprehension of the interactions between characters and the urban environment of Karachi as depicted in the works of these two writers. The objective of this study is to investigate the notion of spatial legibility in the realm of literature and its potential impact on the development of characters and the production of narratives.

2.2 Review of the Literature

I have organized the chapter into the three parts listed below:

1. The first chapter provides a review of the papers and books on legibility that have been examined by different scholars and critics.
2. The second part offers reviews of papers and publications pertaining to phantasmagoria that have been investigated by different theorists and scholars.
3. The third part provides reviews of the selected works.

In order to facilitate organization and systematic evaluation, each text has been examined independently. In contrast, thematic coherence ensures the integration of all components, resulting in a cohesive research that presents a coherent and comprehensive depiction of the reviewed material. It enables the establishment of a coherent framework in following stages of textual analysis.

(I)

In recent years, urban literary studies has grown significantly, with scholars focusing more on the intricate and multidimensional aspect of city life as reflected in literature. Contemporary works, such as Matthew Beaumont's *Nightwalking: A Nocturnal History of London* and Lauren Elkin's *Flâneuse: Women Walk the City in Paris, New York, Tokyo, Venice, and London*, investigate the relationship between urban spaces and the people who use them, focusing on the sensory and experiential aspects of city life. Beaumont's study of nocturnal urban roaming sheds light on the city's hidden elements, whereas Elkin's investigation of female flânerie calls into question established gendered narratives of urban exploration.

Furthermore, Malcolm Miles's anthology *Cities and Literature* contains a collection of critical articles that look at how cities are depicted in various literary genres and historical periods. This collection emphasises the variety of urban experiences, as well as how literature reflects and changes our perceptions of metropolitan environments. In a similar spirit, Gillian Darley's *Excellent Essex: In Praise of England's Most Misunderstood County* provides a nuanced depiction of a specific urban-rural interface, adding to broader conversations on suburban and periurban literature.

These contemporary works demonstrate the changing character of urban literary studies and emphasise the necessity of investigating how literature portrays the dynamic and contested nature of urban settings. By engaging with these modern works, scholars exhibit an understanding of the most recent developments in the area, which enriches their studies of urban representations in literature. This insight is critical for setting their work within a larger academic discourse and contributing to continuing discussions regarding cities' roles in generating literary and cultural narratives.

2.3 Exploring Lynch's Concept of Legibility: A Comprehensive Literature Review

Bakhtiari and Sajadi's research article titled *The Reflection of Urban Identity in Novel: A Case Study of Dublin in James Joyce's Dubliners* explores how James Joyce's *Dubliners* reflects the concept of urban identity. This research is essential because it investigates the impact of “capital”, “habit”, and “field” that are effective in shaping urban identity (Bakhtiari and Sajadi 17). Joyce's portrayal of Dublin as being in disarray

and decay is the main point that Bakhtiari and Sajadi emphasize. Furthermore, the dominant visual element in the text is the color brown. This finding is based on the use of Lynch's theory of legibility and its components in analyzing the text.

The research focuses on the analysis of James Joyce's *Dubliners*, with a particular emphasis on the architectural aspects of the city and its manifestation of British and European influences. The authors believe that "the form of the city reminds London", hence suggesting the presence of architectural legacy inside the city (Bakhtiari and Sajadi 20). The research also emphasizes the predominance of statues depicting notable leaders of the British Empire, such as "Lord Nelson in Sackville Street and the Duke of Wellington in the Phoenix Park", as major visual features in the streets of Dublin. According to Bakhtiari and Sajadi, the inclusion of symbolic subtext within these monarchical personalities played a role in the establishment of imperial power. Additionally, it is emphasized that the residents of Dublin reside in certain localities and traverse thoroughfares adorned with British symbols and monuments.

This study also emphasizes the importance of the visual surroundings in the construction of meaning, as seen through the lens of Lynch's theory of legibility. The symbolism and sculptures observed in the architecture of Dublin in this specific case are intricately associated with the notion of oppression, as highlighted by Bakhtiari and Sajadi who assert that "Dubliners live in the shadow of an odd country that brings them oppression," thereby serving as a manifestation of the city's historical association with British colonialism (Bakhtiari and Sajadi 21). In this scholarly article, Bakhtiari and Sajadi conduct a thorough analysis of the impact that Dublin's physical features and symbolic representations have on the portrayal of the city in James Joyce's *Dubliners*. The writers elucidate the complex historical context that underpins these features, so offering important perspectives on the subject matter. The research highlights the notion that the disorganized and illegible urban landscape reflects a deficiency in both a sense of place and personal identity. This is indicative of the oppressive conditions endured by the inhabitants of Dublin, as evidenced by "illegible image of the city indicates a lack of place and personal identity" (Bakhtiari and Sajadi 21). According to the authors, the absence of a distinct identity in Dublin has resulted in a corresponding absence of identity among the residents of Dublin. Consequently, the significance of Dublin has declined within the context of James Joyce's *Dubliners*, resulting in a collective loss of identity among its inhabitants. The story effectively illustrates the

diminishing significance of Dublin and the consequent degradation of the Dubliners' sense of identity. Bakhtiari and Sajadi assert that Dublin exhibits not only a perception of stagnation and seclusion but also a progression towards deterioration and fragmentation.

Bakhtiari and Sajadi's study contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of Dublin's historical backdrop and the lived realities of its residents through an analysis of the legibility of the city's streets and symbols. This research endeavor has the potential to aid in the contextualization of a correlated subject matter within the paradigm of legibility, therefore offering valuable perspectives on the legibility of other urban areas or historical periods, as well as their profound influence on the identities and lived realities of their residents.

The article *Rethinking Image of the City in the Information Age* by Sarah Abdullah Al-Ghamdi and Dr. Fahad Al-Harigi examines the impact of information and communication technologies (ICTs) on the city's image and "every aspect of human life" (735). The authors posit that Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have the capacity to both augment and lessen the legibility of urban environments. Additionally, they contend that ICTs may engender new modes of experiencing and understanding urban spaces.

The writers begin their discussion by providing an overview of the notion of the urban image, a term first introduced by Kevin Lynch in his seminal work, *The Image of the City*, published in 1960. Lynch posited that the urban image is a cognitive representation and that there is "correlation between the physical representations of the city and the inhabitant that processes the image" to comprehend and traverse their physical environment, asserting its important role in orienting oneself within and comprehending the urban landscape (Al-Hamdi and Al-Harigi 737). The author highlighted five key components that play a crucial role in the establishment of a readable urban environment. These components are pathways, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks.

The authors then analyze the influence of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) on the five components of Lynch's model. The authors contend that information and communication technologies (ICTs) have the potential to improve the "understanding of the contemporary city image" by offering users a greater wealth

of information pertaining to their immediate surroundings (Al-Hamdi and Al-Harigi 735). For instance, navigation applications have the capability to assist users in orienting themselves within urban environments, while virtual tours provide users with the opportunity to virtually visit various sections of a city, eliminating the need for actual presence. Nevertheless, the authors claim that Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have potentially “undermined physical public spaces of cities” by introducing challenges in discerning the boundaries between physical reality and virtual representations (Al-Hamdi and Al-Harigi 739). One illustrative instance is the use of augmented reality applications, whereby digital information is superimposed over the physical environment, therefore engendering a challenge in discerning the veracity of the perceived reality.

This work is a significant scholarly addition to the existing body of literature exploring the intricate interplay between information and communication technologies (ICTs) and urban environments. The authors provide a comprehensive and succinct analysis of the notion of the urban image, and they examine the possible influence of information and communication technologies (ICTs) on the five components of Lynch's framework. The essay exhibits a strong argumentative structure and extensive referencing, making it a noteworthy scholarly addition to our comprehension of the transformative impact of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) on human perception and engagement with urban environments.

In the article titled, *Remaking the Image: The Changing Legibility and Visibility of Derby's City Center, UK*, Cheshmehzangi investigates the influence of a substantial retail mall on the current perception of the city center. Consequently, the representation of the City Center of Derby has transformed from a unified composite of “individual’s outlook and perception” into a diverse assemblage of distinct public images, each capable of being seen and encountered from varied perspectives (Cheshmehzangi 912). This study suggests that the Westfield Shopping Mall, which seems to function as an isolated metropolitan area, neglects its connections with other sections of the city, resulting in a design that prioritizes rapid visibility. This study employs a combination of quantitative and qualitative questionnaires, with observation serving as the primary method of data collection. Several observations were conducted at various time intervals to examine the concepts of “spatial uses,” “pedestrian flows,” and “spatial-human interactions” (Cheshmehzangi 913). This research demonstrates that despite a

decline in the use of this public space, it continues to exhibit a deliberate arrangement, seasonal social engagements, and aesthetically pleasing architectural facades. There is an increasing trend of individuals allocating a greater amount of their time inside the recently established retail mall or city center, because "shopping mall has become a major or even a sole destination when coming for a visit to the City center," which is located in a less densely populated area of the urban landscape (Cheshmehzangi 914). The relocation of this area, known for its dynamic social atmosphere, has resulted in its placement in an unfamiliar section of the city.

Cheshmehzangi acknowledges that the integration of locational information, representing a cognitive map of the city, and non-locational information, representing a cognitive manual, culminates in the construction of a holistic representation of the urban environment. According to the report, there is a noticeable trend whereby the Market Square is gradually being displaced towards a relatively less developed area of the city due to the increasing amount of time people are spending at the newly established shopping mall and city center. Based on the findings of the study, it has been observed that the presence of uneven "spatial and physical patterns have displaced" legibility and visibility inside the city core (Cheshmehzangi 920). However, one standout finding of her research is that people's interactions with their environments have a significant impact on the mental imagery.

In Nigel Taylor's paper titled *Legibility and Aesthetics in Urban Design*, the author offers valuable insights pertaining to the topic of legibility and aesthetics. The researcher examines the phenomenon of people experiencing confusion between legibility and aesthetics. The author analyzes two fundamental ideas and principles within the field of urban design, namely legibility and aesthetics. Subsequently, the author constructs an argument about the comparative importance of these notions. The paper indicates that the "aesthetic quality of townscapes" has more significance in determining their observable quality, in comparison to the criteria of plain legibility (Taylor 189). Hence, the significance of aesthetics in urban planning surpasses that of legibility. Based on a comprehensive analysis of both notions, Taylor asserts that "aesthetic quality of townscapes is a more important criterion of their perceptible quality than their legibility" (Taylor 201). Hence, aesthetics have assumed a greater degree of importance in the realm of urban design when compared to legibility. The research reveals a noteworthy finding: the perception of legibility in a townscape is

mostly cognitive, whereas the perception of environmental aesthetics is predominantly sensory and emotional, although cognitive factors are not completely disregarded.

Taylor further examines the concept of legibility in townscape analysis and concludes that "legibility by itself is not a sufficient condition for good quality townscape" (Taylor 201). The appreciation of a townscape's clarity of form and structure is attributed to the inherent aesthetic pleasure derived from seeing clarity, as it is pointing out that "clarity is itself aesthetically pleasing to perceive" (Taylor 200). This essay serves to contextualize my study within the existing body of literature on legibility theory as it examines two novels from a readability perspective.

In scholarly work titled *Urban Imagery and the Major Thoroughfare of the Nation: The Legibility of Orchard Road in the Eyes of Singaporeans*, authors Henry Wai-Chung Yeung and Victor R. Savage draw upon Kevin Lynch's renowned theory to examine the legibility of Orchard Road, Singapore's primary roadway, as seen by its residents. The study conducted by Henry Wai-chung Yeung and Victor R. Savage primarily use the concept of an island state, namely Singapore, and places emphasis on its prominent thoroughfare, Orchard Road, in order to underscore "differences in the Orchardscape's legibility among different Singaporeans" (Yeung & Savage 3). In order to achieve this objective, their present study investigates the elements contributing to the comprehensibility of the Orchardscape as seen by individuals in Singapore. The investigation considers both "personal and landscape factors" (Yeung & Savage 3). The primary objective of this study is to examine the physical elements that contribute to the readability of the orchardscape, with a particular emphasis on its morphology and structures, which are responsible for its unique legibility. The researcher employs a comprehensive questionnaire survey and conducts in-depth interviews to elucidate the subject matter. The study uses a systematic approach to gather data pertaining to the objective aspects or tangible characteristics of urban imagery. On the other hand, the in-depth interview centered on eliciting the subjective viewpoints of Singaporeans about the Orchardscape.

The researchers place significant emphasis on the role of age in influencing an individual's unique perception and recognition of various landscape characteristics. Furthermore, the research reveals that Orchardscape exhibits higher legibility among Singaporeans with higher socioeconomic status and superior educational backgrounds. The researchers highlight another noteworthy aspect in their study, which is the equal

significance attributed to “Singaporeans (personal and societal) and the Orchardscape (tangible and intangible)” in influencing the cognitive perception of the Singaporean landscape (Yeung & Savage 20).

The influential contributions made by Kevin Lynch in the field of urban design and wayfinding, namely his theories around the notions of "legibility" and "imageability," have had an enduring influence on the disciplines of urban planning and architecture. The primary objective of Magdalena Zmudzinska-Nowak's work is to reassess the concepts proposed by Lynch, taking into account current urban difficulties and technological breakthroughs. The article explores the vast body of literature pertaining to the contributions and theories put forth by Kevin Lynch. Lynch's concepts, as articulated in his seminal publication *The Image of the City*, have garnered significant attention and engendered much scholarly debate. Academic researchers have undertaken investigations into the theoretical constructs proposed by the individual in question, including pathways, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks. These aspects are considered to be foundational components that play a significant role in shaping "a sense of security, identification, and identity" and the navigational characteristics of urban environments (Zmudzinska-Nowak 37).

The article extends beyond the basic presentation of Lynch's idea in isolation. This study evaluates the current applicability of Lynch's concepts within the framework of modern urban issues. The urban landscape has seen substantial changes since the era of Lynch, primarily because of the emergence and widespread adoption of digital mapping technologies, cellphones, and GPS navigation systems. The study conducted by Zmudzinska-Nowak establishes a connection between Lynch's conceptual framework and contemporary achievements. This connection serves to illustrate the enduring relevance of Lynch's ideas in comprehending and enhancing urban navigation, wayfinding, and the development of easily understandable urban environments. An important aspect of the study is its examination of the applicability of Lynch's views within the context of the digital era. The advent and widespread use of technology have significantly altered individuals' perceptions hence "the concept of legibility assumes the relevance of the spatial message to the comprehension and needs of the recipients—users of space" and interactions with urban environments. Zmudzinska-Nowak's paper explores the possible ramifications of this technological transition on urban architecture and navigation (Zmudzinska-Nowak 36). By engaging in this practice, it initiates

dialogues on the potential integration of Lynch's concepts with digital tools and platforms, therefore empowering urban planners and designers to augment the comprehensibility of cities within the context of digital navigation.

The article *The Legibility and Permeability of Cities: Examining the Role of Spatial Data and Metrics* explores the complex interplay of urban design, geographical data, and the legibility and permeability of cities. This research offers a comprehensive examination of the organization and "perceptions of the city" landscapes, providing valuable insights into the role of legibility and permeability in defining the physical and social aspects of cities (Silavi, et al. 1). This article utilizes Kevin Lynch's notion of "legibility" and Bill Hillier's idea of "permeability". The aforementioned fundamental ideas provide a robust framework for comprehending the manner in which humans traverse and construct urban environments. The authors adeptly situate these notions within the framework of modern urban planning and underscore the significance of geographical data in unraveling the complexities of "legibility and permeability of the urban layout" (Silavi, et al. 2). The study results provide insights into the intricate relationship between readability, permeability, and geographical data. The use of network analysis by the authors in order to measure urban connections offers significant contributions to the understanding of the functional dimensions of cities. The concept of identifying "hotspots" where legibility and permeability intersect provides a fresh and innovative approach to urban planning. This approach highlights specific regions where interventions might be implemented to "enhance the imageability of a given urban element", navigational ease, and accessibility (Silavi, et al. 6). Nevertheless, while the inclusion of quantitative research provides a comprehensive perspective in this study, a more comprehensive qualitative investigation into individuals' experiences which are "relatively subjective and are not closely related to geometric interpretation", will further enrich the holistic comprehension of legibility and permeability (Silavi, et al. 6).

This research forms a substantial addition to the academic discipline of urban studies by emphasizing the crucial significance of spatial data in comprehending the intricate dynamics of legibility and permeability. By integrating the ideas proposed by Lynch and Hillier with current data-driven approaches, this work effectively addresses the disparity between conventional urban theories and contemporary urban planning practices. The prioritization of "hotspots" as actionable regions for change adds a

pragmatic element to the study, presenting urban designers and politicians with concrete insights to enhance urban functioning. This study offers a stimulating investigation of the concepts of urban legibility and permeability, showcasing the efficacy of multidisciplinary research in unravelling the intricate nature of urban environments. The research effectively combines geographical data analysis with fundamental urban theories; however, there is room for improvement in resolving methodological and qualitative constraints to strengthen the reliability of its findings. Nevertheless, this study is a significant addition to the current discourse on urban design and serves as a foundation for future studies on the complex connections between spatial data, readability, and permeability.

The article titled *Searching for Legibility*, authored by Thomas R. Herzog and Olivia L. Leverich, explores the notion of legibility in urban settings, providing insights into its complex aspects and its significance in the field of urban planning. This research offers a captivating examination of the impact of readability on people's navigation and perception of urban environments.

The study utilizes a qualitative methodology, integrating observational research and in-depth interviews to capture the subjective perceptions of people about urban legibility. The authors place significant importance on qualitative data, which allows for a comprehensive examination of subjective views. This approach provides insights into the "two-dimensional picture" of the personal and emotional dimensions of urban navigation (Herzog and Leverich 459). Herzog and Leverich use the scholarly contributions of Kevin Lynch, who introduced the ground breaking notion of legibility, as the theoretical underpinning for their inquiry. The paper successfully contextualizes Lynch's views within current theories of urban planning and design, establishing a pertinent framework for the study's investigation.

Searching for Legibility contributes significantly to the field of urban studies by reinvigorating the discourse on legibility and its contemporary significance within the "integral parts of urban landscaping" (Herzog and Leverich 475). The use of a qualitative methodology in this research study serves as a stinging reminder of the need to incorporate the "fundamental importance about how humans function" from human perspectives into urban planning procedures (Herzog and Leverich 459). This study prioritizes the emotional and personal aspects of legibility, incorporating a humanistic viewpoint into the concept. The aforementioned phenomenon has the capacity to

influence forthcoming urban design strategies that prioritize the well-being of inhabitants.

The article offers a comprehensive analysis of the notion of legibility as it pertains to urban environments. The qualitative methodology used in this work aims to elucidate the experience dimensions of urban navigation, therefore complementing the current quantitative evaluations. The study successfully expands upon the basic work of Lynch. However, a more detailed examination of other perspectives and contextual elements would have enhanced the analysis. However, this study makes a valuable contribution to the continuing discourse on urban design and can provide insights into novel strategies that might improve the clarity and comprehensibility of urban environments for various populations.

The authors of *Remaking the Image: The Changing Legibility and Visibility of Derby's City Center, UK* investigate the shifting dynamics of urban legibility and visibility within the context of Derby's city center. This study offers a comprehensive analysis of how "the process of urban change" might impact the visibility and understanding of a city's core region (Cheshmehzangi 918).

This study utilizes a mixed-methods approach, using cartographic analysis, archival research, and qualitative interviews to comprehensively investigate the changing legibility and visibility of Derby's city center. The availability of several approaches facilitates a thorough investigation of the research topic, including "socio-spatial interaction, pedestrian flow, and users' perception" i.e. both spatial transformations and the viewpoints of urban residents (Cheshmehzangi 910). The authors use a multidisciplinary theoretical framework that incorporates ideas derived from the domains of urban planning, geography, and cultural studies. This framework is utilized to analyze how the "unbalanced spatial and physical patterns have misplaced the city center's legibility and visibility" and the process of urban transformation taking place in the city core of Derby (Cheshmehzangi 920). Lynch's definition of "imageability" offers a robust foundation for understanding the convergence of physical and perceptual changes. The study effectively contextualizes these concepts within the urban environment, highlighting their importance in comprehending urban development and its influence on legibility.

The outcomes of the research shed light on the complex relationship between physical interventions, urban image, and legibility. By conducting a comprehensive examination of cartographic maps, the authors systematically examine the development of the spatial arrangement of the city center and discern changes in its visual significance. The inclusion of qualitative data obtained via interviews with urban inhabitants enhances the analytical framework by providing a more comprehensive understanding of the impacts of these changes since "social environment (as an urban public place) is what is experienced and lived in relation to its visual appearance, physical form, social activity, meaning" encompassing the personal experiences and perspectives of individuals inside the city (Cheshmehzangi 922). The discernment of significant themes, such as the preservation of history and the process of commercialization, enhances the comprehension of the many aspects that influence the legibility of a subject.

However, the research's concentration on a particular case study, namely Derby's city center, restricts its capacity to be applied to other contexts. The inclusion of comparative analysis with other metropolitan environments would provide to a more comprehensive understanding of the variations in legibility dynamics across other settings.

This article significantly contributes to the field of urban studies by offering a comprehensive explanation of the intricate relationship between physical transformations and the legibility of urban landscapes. The use of a mixed-methods methodology enables a thorough understanding of the topic at hand, with particular attention given to the incorporation of spatial arrangements and human viewpoints in the examination. The study results provide insights into the complex dynamics associated with managing the preservation of historical sites with economic pursuits. These findings emphasize the varied decision-making processes that shape the evolution of metropolitan areas.

The article entitled is a valuable contribution to the scholarly discourse around urban transformation and the comprehensibility of urban spaces. The use of a mixed-methods methodology, which is firmly rooted in a multidisciplinary theoretical framework, enhances the overall comprehensiveness of the study. While acknowledging the limitations inherent in focusing on a specific case study, the findings of this research have considerable significance for urban design strategies and policy

decisions aimed "toward reversing decline in cultural quarters of the growing cities and emphasizes on the importance of social life in the urban environments" and reconciling the preservation of historical elements with the contemporary needs of urban environments (Cheshmehzangi 911). This work provides a potential avenue for further exploration into the complex interrelationships between physical alterations, image perception, and the dynamics of legibility in diverse urban settings.

In conclusion, the literature review presented in Section elucidates a prevalent inclination towards employing quantitative approaches in the examination of Lynch's concept of legibility. While these studies contribute significantly to the comprehension of various urban environments, a gap emerges from the absence of the application of Lynch's theoretical framework to novels centred on Karachi. The dearth of literary analyses that scrutinise Karachi's legibility through the lens of Lynch underscores a substantial void in current scholarly discourse. As a result, it is critical that future research endeavours integrate Lynch's foundational ideas with the intricate narrative components observed in novels pertaining to Karachi. By adopting an interdisciplinary framework, this research potentially highlights a deeper understanding of the legibility of the city and uncovers novel correlations between literary representations and urban theories. This approach promotes a more holistic comprehension of the urban landscape of Karachi.

2.4 Exploring Phantasmagoria: The Conceptual Framework of Nadir Lahiji and Andreotti

The research titled *The Arcades in Madrid: Historical and Messianic Vision in Galdós' Fortunata y Jacinta, Miau, and Misericordia*, delves into the literary significance of arcades in the works of Benito Pérez Galdós. This study offers a thorough analysis of the many tasks fulfilled by "architectural repercussions" and architectural structures, extending beyond their practical purpose to include the representation of historical transformation and messianic symbolism (Harkema 4).

The present research employs a comprehensive analysis of three key literary works written by Galdós—*Fortunata y Jacinta*, *Miau*, and *Misericordia*—with the aim of uncovering the thematic importance of arcades. By using methods such as examining character interactions, and dissecting narrative contexts, the author adeptly demonstrates the intricate "relationship between religious tradition and industrial

modernization in nineteenth century," the interaction between architectural spaces, and the underlying socio-political and messianic themes (Harkema 24).

The results of the research shed light on the manner in which arcades depicted in Galdós' tales include several levels of significance that extend beyond their mere physical existence but "transcends the physical and the temporal" (Harkema 83). The author adeptly demonstrates the manner in which arcades transform into dynamic environments that reflect society's transformations, functioning as platforms for encounters that cover historical transitions and messianic themes. The comprehension of Galdós' intricate narrative methods is enriched by the identification of overarching themes, such as urban change and messianic expectation.

The current research article suggests that the representation of the arcades in Madrid in Benito Pérez Galdós' literary works, including *Fortunata y Jacinta*, *Miau*, and *Misericordia*, might be seen as phantasmagoric manifestations. Phantasmagorias include visual occurrences or performances that elicit the impression of "urban reality" via the use of optical illusions or magical presentations (Harkema 21). The arcades, as depicted in the literary works, serve as a metaphor for the misleading concept of progress and wealth that was being disseminated in nineteenth-century Spain. However, the study argues that Galdós's depiction of the arcades also reveals the negative sides of this façade, including the hidden poverty and exploitation.

This study utilizes the theoretical framework of Walter Benjamin, who used the concept of "phantasmagoria" to elucidate how the capitalist spectacle engenders an illusory "Perception of the world" and reality (Harkema 66). Benjamin posited that the phantasmagoria arises as a consequence of the contemporary perception of time and space, whereby these dimensions are progressively commodified and fractured. In Galdós' works, the arcades symbolize the process of commercialization and fragmentation of space. These locations provide venues for individuals to engage in shopping activities, seek entertainment, and find respite from the challenging aspects of their daily existence. Nevertheless, the present study posits that Galdós effectively demonstrates the potential for the arcades to induce feelings of alienation and dehumanization. The experience of isolation and "feelings of alienation experienced in the nineteenth century" may be engendered by these factors, potentially causing individuals to become disconnected from their own selves (Harkema 11).

The thesis finishes by asserting that Galdós's portrayal of the arcades might be seen as a messianic vision. The author demonstrates the potential for the arcades to serve as a "source of hope" and personal salvation, contingent upon individuals' willingness to face the more sinister aspects of the phantasmagoric realm (Harkema 94). This study posits that the novels of Galdós provide a means to envision an alternative future, one that does not rely on the exploitation of individuals for the sake of development and wealth.

This research study makes a significant academic contribution to the analysis of phantasmagoria in literature by conducting a comprehensive evaluation of the many layers of symbolism and meaning concealed inside Galdós' narratives. This study not only underscores the importance of architectural spaces as symbolic entities but also underscores their role in reflecting historical changes and messianic aspirations. The author has created a theoretical framework for the analysis of architectural symbolism that has the promise of inspiring further exploration of similar issues across many literary contexts.

In his academic work, *Illusions Past and Future: The Phantasmagorias and its Specters*, Tom Gunning explores the intricate domain of phantasmagoria, offering a thorough examination of its historical progression and enduring influence on visual culture and entertainment. This study effectively examines the many facets of phantasmagoria, scrutinizing its magnetic allure and its relevance in contemporary society. Gunning's research is based on a thorough examination of historical records, visual resources, and a meticulous exploration of the evolution of the phantasmagoria across different time periods and cultural settings. The author provides readers with a comprehensive historical perspective by using primary sources and analyzing the development of phantasmagoric practices.

This article employs a comprehensive theoretical framework that is firmly rooted in the disciplines of cultural studies, media theory, and the study of visual culture. Gunning adeptly incorporates the concepts of the "uncanny", the fantastical, and the ghostly, establishing a theoretical structure that enables the examination of the phantasmagoria (Gunning 7). This hypothesis shows substantial effectiveness in explaining the enduring fascination with the ghostly and its portrayal in many forms of entertainment. This study examines the historical progression of phantasmagoria, exploring its inception during the late 18th century in Europe. Gunning examines the

development of phantasmagoric activities, tracing their origins to early showmen such as Étienne-Gaspard Robertson, and analyzing their subsequent evolution. The historical tradition initially included the "projection of images by means of a magic lantern" onto surfaces such as screens and mirrors via the use of lanterns and other optical apparatus (Gunning 2). One of the main findings is the enduring fascination of people with spectral phenomena. As to Gunning's analysis, the appeal of phantasmagoria lies in its ability to evoke sensations of the uncanny and the extraordinary, so creating an "unsettling" but captivating experience for viewers (Gunning 14). The ongoing fascination with spectral phenomena has persisted for thousands of years, experiencing several changes within the domain of visual entertainment.

Gunning posits that the notion of phantasmagoria serves as a theoretical construct through which "cultural deception" and ambitions may be analyzed (Gunning 14). Phantasmagoria, situated within its historical context, functioned as a symbolic mechanism for addressing prevailing societal concerns pertaining to death, the metaphysical world, and the perplexing aspects of human existence. In contemporary culture, the exploration and examination of themes related to horror, intrigue, and the distinction between truth and illusion are often undertaken via the use of significant media. The combination of a rigorous methodology, a complete theoretical framework, and noteworthy findings all combine to provide readers with a full understanding of the historical roots and enduring fascination surrounding the phenomena of the spectral. While the primary emphasis of this study is on Western phantasmagoria, it serves as a valuable resource for academics of visual culture. This phenomenon provides valuable insights into the enduring allure of the supernatural in the human psyche and entertainment industry.

The scholarly article entitled *Phantasmagoria and the Architecture of the Contemporary City*, published by Nadir Lahiji, provides a thorough analysis of the intricate interplay between phantasmagoria and the architectural landscape of the modern urban context. This study investigates the relationship between the concept of phantasmagoria, which is intrinsically linked to "spectacle and the underlying economic forces" and illusion, and its expression in the architectural and sensory elements of urban environments (Lahiji 3).

Lahiji's research employs an interdisciplinary approach, including architectural analysis, cultural theory, and philosophical discourse to investigate the complex

relationship between phantasmagoria and the contemporary urban landscape. The author skillfully showcases the presence of phantasmagoric elements in the urban environment by conducting a thorough examination of architectural design, urban planning, and cultural contexts.

Lahiji's research employs an interdisciplinary approach, including architectural analysis, cultural theory, and philosophical discourse to investigate the complex relationship between phantasmagoria - "which makes it ideal for understanding both the causes and the consequences of the hyper-mediated city experience" and the contemporary urban landscape (Lahiji 10). The author showcases the presence of phantasmagoric elements in the urban environment by conducting a thorough examination of architectural design, urban planning, and cultural contexts. Lahiji's study provides a captivating viewpoint on the illusory and surreal characteristics inherent in present-day urban landscapes. The study conducted by the author elucidates the use of architectural and urban design components in the construction of illusory locations and experiences inside urban environments. The author examines the influence of consumerism, surveillance, and digital technology on the modern urban environment, leading to the emergence of settings that challenge "the nature of contemporary perception" the distinction between what is real and what is illusory (Lahiji 5).

Nadir Lahiji's research posits that the phantasmagoria might be seen as a symbolic manifestation of the contemporary urban landscape. The urban environment is distinguished by constant change and unpredictability, where the new visual depictions and experiences constantly overwhelm "the contemporary human sensorium" (Lahiji 2). The specific geographical area under consideration has the capacity to provide both excitement and prospects, while also carrying the possibility of seclusion and "centered on shock" (Lahiji 6). Lahiji critically analyzes the many expressions of the phantasmagoria as seen in the contemporary architectural milieu of metropolitan settings. The author also explores the ways in which the urban environment is being impacted by digital technology in form of "sensorial overload of "new" digital media technology and all its resultant urban stimuli" resulting in new forms of virtual reality and augmented reality (Lahiji 6). Lahiji's research posits that the phantasmagoria has a substantial impact on the formation of our perspective about the contemporary urban landscape. The phenomena being examined have the capacity to

evoke both satisfaction and discomfort, thereby giving rise to cognitive dissonance that stimulates a reassessment of our understanding of human life.

This is a valuable contribution to the academic discipline of urban studies by providing insights on the presence of phantasmagoric elements within the contemporary urban environment. This research highlights the evolution of architectural and urban design processes, which now include the integration of spectacle, illusion, and surveillance components. Furthermore, these advancements prompt crucial inquiries about the influence of these transformations on the human perception and interaction inside urban environments.

Maria Kaika and Erik Swyngedouw's *Fetishizing the Modern City: The Phantasmagoria of Urban Technological Networks*, examines the intricate relationship between urban technology networks and phantasmagoria. This study examines how technologically advanced cities create enticing "social relations and power mechanisms", connection, and development. Kaika and Swyngedouw's analysis illuminates urban technology networks' ethereal and deceptive qualities. The scientists found that networks, which are generally praised for improving efficiency and connectivity, may also create feelings of control and domination. The authors analyze how "urban fabric and the technological networks" discussions over glorify urban growth and stifle alternative urban conceptualizations (Kaika and Swyngedouw 120). The book *Fetishizing the Modern City: The Phantasmagoria of Urban Technological Networks* enriches urban studies by revealing "the phantasmagoric character of the commodity" and modern cities (Kaika and Swyngedouw 121). This study critiques prevailing narratives on technology progress and governance, encouraging a serious investigation of urban technological networks' excessive reverence. This remark emphasizes the socio-political implications of urban technological growth.

Flâneur, Phantasmagoria, and Existence in Modern Cities: An Analysis of Benjamin and Sartre engages in a captivating exploration of the interrelated concepts of the flâneur, phantasmagoria, and existence within the present-day urban setting. This study investigates the perspectives of renowned philosophers Walter Benjamin and Jean-Paul Sartre on the urban environment and its influence on human existence. The study employs a comprehensive theoretical framework that is rooted in "the existential enigma of modern cities", urban studies, and literary analysis (Kanci and Tarcan 527). The authors skillfully use the existential philosophies of Benjamin and Sartre, together

with the concepts of the flâneur and phantasmagoria, to shed light on "the complexity and ontological composition that the cities produce" and the varied elements of existence in the modern urban setting (Kanci and Tarcan 527). The use of this theoretical framework allows the authors to investigate the intricate interplay between individual cognition and the urban environment. This research offers valuable insights into the philosophical investigations surrounding the notions of the flâneur, phantasmagoria, and existence as shown in the literary works of Benjamin and Sartre. The authors' study examines the various viewpoints put forth by these two philosophers regarding the idea of modernity in relation to urban settings.

One of the key findings is the investigation of the flâneur's function as a detached observer of city life, together with their encounters with phantasmagorical events that blur the boundaries between reality and illusion. The authors claim that both Benjamin and Sartre acknowledge the existential perplexity that might arise while navigating the modern urban landscape.

The study conducted by the authors on the existential implications of phantasmagoric encounters within an urban setting has yielded an additional significant finding. The authors argue that these encounters provide a challenge to existing notions of personal identity and objective reality, hence stimulating investigations into "how modernity infiltrates into cities" and the authenticity of urban existence (Kanci and Tarcan 527).

Fetishizing the Modern City: The Phantasmagoria of Urban Technological Networks undertakes a thought-provoking examination of the intricate relationship between contemporary urban life and the concept of phantasmagoria. This study investigates how modern metropolitan areas, driven by advancements in technology and infrastructure, "occult social relations and power mechanisms" and generate compelling notions of power, connection, and advancement (Kaika and Swyngedouw 121). The research highlights the prevalence of conceptions of authority and interconnection in modern metropolitan environments, which are often influenced by advancements in technology. These illusions contribute to the idea held by urban inhabitants that they possess a substantial degree of proficiency in handling the complexities of urban living. This perception has the capacity to evoke a sense of comfort and confidence in the urban environment. The research also elucidates how perceptions of control and connectivity may obscure the underlying power dynamics

and inequalities that are inherent in urban development. The present research posits that while metropolitan areas may provide the impression of smooth connections and efficient administration, there often exist concealed disparities in the distribution of resources and availability of urban services. The discourse around urban technology networks has the capacity to reinforce the idealized portrayal of "technological advancement" and urban progress (Kaika and Swyngedouw 124). This research suggests that the discourse around efficiency, connection, and development may possibly underestimate the potential ramifications and challenges related to these enhancements. Moreover, this situation highlights the capacity of these networks to facilitate surveillance techniques, hence raising concerns over the safeguarding of individual privacy and data security.

The existing literature does not adequately explore the implications of Nadir Lahiji's concept of phantasmagoria on the legibility of cities and urban perception. While the existing corpus of literature provides the foundation for understanding Lahiji's theoretical framework, there is an apparent dearth of scholarly investigations that specifically scrutinise the interplay between Phantasmagoria and the legibility of urban environments, in addition to its impact on the perception of cities. By conducting a systematic analysis of the effects of Lahiji's Phantasmagoria on the legibility of urban areas, this study aims to bridge this gap. A comprehensive understanding of the correlation between theory and the urban environment will be strengthened. The goal of this analysis is to fill a gap in the current academic conversation by giving important new insights on how Lahiji's theory can be used and how it affects how people understand and experience urban environments.

2.5 Exploring Literature on *The Party Worker*

The review, *The Party Worker': A Dark Book that Doesn't Cross into Cynicism* by Shazaf Fatima Haider, highlights that the political environment in Pakistan often demonstrates a convergence of factors that have a resemblance to "a mix between thriller, tragedy, and absurdity" (Haider). The review highlights the author's use of their own experience as a counter-terrorism police officer, Omar Shahid Hamid, to infuse the narrative with a deep comprehension of the political landscape in Karachi. The combination of truthfulness and falsehood gives rise to an engaging and authentic story experience. The review presents a comparative analysis of the structural components found in the book under discussion and those seen in the television series "Game of

Thrones" (Haider). The use of chapter divides, whereby each chapter is titled with the name of a separate person, facilitates readers in obtaining varied perspectives and differing vantage points in their pursuit of truth. Moreover, this particular element of the book presents a unique challenge in identifying the characters to support or criticize, adding to the complexity of the narrative. The critic commends the author's skill in crafting deeply realized characters. The characters shown in this representation demonstrate their shortcomings, ethical dilemmas, and vulnerabilities, making them relatable and engrossing. The nuanced portrayal of the characters contributes to the overall depth and complexity of the narrative. Despite the melancholy themes present, the study notes the work's adept use of black humour, mitigating the potential for slipping into cynicism. The novel is skillfully "underpinned by black humour that doesn't, thankfully, cross into cynicism" and incorporates comedic aspects throughout the text, particularly at moments marked by moral corruption and deceit, thereby maintaining a sense of enjoyment (Haider). The review provides a comprehensive evaluation of the portrayal of female characters in the piece, asserting that their characterization lacks verisimilitude. The review praises the thorough representations of the "detailed descriptions of the social, geographical, criminal, and political" aspects that constitute the basis of urban life (Haider). The literary work portrays a societal setting that is marked by widespread corruption, necessitating individuals to possess ingenuity and astuteness to maneuver through challenging situations. This contrasts with a simplistic division between moral righteousness and malevolence.

The review emphasizes that *The Party Worker* might be considered "a spin-off, though not a sequel, of his very first novel", *The Prisoner*, since it features the reappearance of several prominent characters from the prior story (Haider). The review provides an analysis of the primary subject matter of *The Party Worker*, which mostly revolves around the fictional political entity referred to as the United Front Party (UFP). The study explores the UFP's development, undertakings, and occurrences of unfairness. Furthermore, the narrative recognizes the involvement of supplementary characters that were established in the previous book. It explores the development, activities, and instances of injustice within this group. Furthermore, the narrative alludes to the involvement of other characters who were introduced in the previous book. This review offers a comparative examination of the literary works *The Party Worker* and *The Prisoner*, with a particular focus on highlighting the former's inclination towards a more

egalitarian perspective "lending a voice to the thoughts and sentiments of evildoers"(Haider). The narrative perspective is used to accomplish this, including four separate protagonists, including ones with malicious motives. The narrative emphasizes the setting of the story on Karachi, exploring the city's resilience and its underlying political dynamics. The novel delves into several topics such as the concentration of political power, criminal syndicates, and ethically flawed persons aspiring for positions of influence. The review emphasizes the use of comedic elements and "unexpected humorous punchlines" within the work, despite its profound thematic content, and praises the author's discerning choice of character appellations, which contribute to the overall narrative. The evaluation underscores the intentional use of Urdu terminology in the story, devoid of italics or clarifications, so augmenting the book's verisimilitude and perhaps catering to a distinct regional readership. The following section of the essay underscores the unique stylistic and thematic qualities shown in *The Party Worker*, so positioning it as a noteworthy work of literature.

Sudarshan named his review of *The Party Worker* "*Crimes and Misdemeanors*". He argues that this book is not a crime thriller since "crime thrillers are often considered escapist literature, but a book like *The Party Worker* shows us how the opposite can hold true as well" (Aditya Sudarshan). In spite of their exile in New York City, United Front Party hitmen Pichkari and Haider still hold sway over Karachi from their safe havens on the East Coast. This opens the tale with the Don trying to assassinate his right-hand man in the Museum of Natural History in Manhattan. An old man and a young woman, both of whom have lost children or brothers, are considering how they may get revenge. Unfortunately for Asad, he lacks the will to go on with his life despite his difficult circumstances. The mystery of how and by whom the Don would be destroyed is what, according to Sudarshan, keeps us turning the pages. After pulling the reader in, *The Party Worker* rapidly moves to an unexpected and masterfully written finale, in which all of the important characters fulfil their obligations. The narrative's ending, while suitable, is annoying as it leaves the plot unfinished but unified. Due to Asad's mental instability contrasted with Russo's isolation, it is hard to identify an acceptable countervailing force to the Don. But even so, *The Party Worker* is beautiful and insightful when read as a tragic story rather than an action thriller. The critic says, "*The Party Worker* is excellent and encouraging" (Aditya Sudarshan).

Alam describes "*The Party Worker*" as "rich in diversity of characters and is multi-layered" in his review (Imteyaz Alam). The underworld, businesspeople, journalists, police, intelligence organizations, politicians, and clerics are all mentioned in the narrative. Shias, Sunnis, Parsis, Baloch, and Taliban are all fighting and cooperating. "Omar has skillfully woven the diverse characters together and conjured up a brilliant story" He continues (Imteyaz Alam). Due to the range of organizations engaging in crime, the world of crime becomes murkier. The author exposes the city's seedy underbelly, as youngsters are depicted playing with "human skulls" (Imteyaz Alam). The gunshot may come from a longstanding friend, and the adversary could attack you at any moment and in any location. Betrayal is punishable by death, which eliminates the whole family. There is no departure from the criminal world. "As the author is a serving police officer, his portrayal of characters and the narration of crime story is realistic" (Imteyaz Alam). The author's knowledge of colloquial is astounding. The vocabulary and diction of New York officers are substantially different from those of Karachi characters. He writes, "The author's familiarity with Karachi is quite evident in the story and the depiction of places" (Imteyaz Alam).

Zia asserts in his review of "*The Party Worker*" that Karachi "is treated much like a cake, up for the taking." And, as heartbreaking as it may seem, if you're from Karachi, "you know it to be true." (Samar F. Zia). The book's core is formed by political strongholds, honorable gangsters, and striving unscrupulous villains, the spiral from which the plot emerges. Additionally, "*The Party Worker* unquestionably borrows from fact, but is masterfully cloaked in fiction." (Samar F. Zia).

2.6 Exploring Literature on Karachi Vice: Life and Death in a Contested City

According to Melville House, *Karachi Vice: Life and Death in a Contested City* is a compilation of narrative portraits of the city's beleaguered residents, who are now suffering through "one of the most violent outbreaks" since the 1990s (Nidhi Srinivas). The author's family emigrated from Pakistan to the UK in the 1970s before she was born. Shackle illustrates the struggles of the countless "disparate groups competing for physical space, jobs, and basic services such as health care and sanitation" (Nidhi Srinivas). The book interweaves Pakistani history, covering the Taliban's rise and the

city's dizzying array of political parties, riots, natural disasters, and sectarian killings throughout the previous decade (Nidhi Srinivas).

The preceding review of the literature reveals that while the work on both novels has been sparse, the theory has been applied quantitatively and qualitatively multiple times. Additionally, to engage the observer's cognitive process in assessing the readability of the city. This study seeks to bridge that gap and underlines the crucial significance of evaluating the varied mental images of individuals belonging to distinct groups of the same city. The goal of this research is to evaluate these mental representations and the intelligibility of Karachi as represented in contemporary Pakistani literature.

2.7 Finding and Filling the Gap through this Research Study

The present study seeks to address a notable gap in the existing academic literature by analyzing the urban fiction works authored by *Omar Shahid Hamid* and *Samira Shackle*. These literary works provide a unique viewpoint for analysing the intricate geographical and temporal dimensions of Karachi, along with its purposeful use in desensitising human sensory perception to further broader objectives of social control. This research investigates the cognitive representations formed by the characters in these stories, using Kevin Lynch's concept of legibility as a core analytical framework.

This study aims to identify a significant gap in the existing body of scholarly research. Although there has been little research conducted on the chosen books, this study utilises theoretical notions that have been utilised in both quantitative and qualitative analysis in many settings. The inclusion of lesser-explored literary works with comprehensive theoretical frameworks serves to emphasise the importance of our study. In addition, our research highlights the crucial need to investigate the varied cognitive perceptions held by people from different socioeconomic classes within a shared metropolitan environment, an aspect that has hitherto been given less academic consideration.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Methodology

This thesis examines the concept of phantasmagoria as articulated by Libero Andreotti and Nadir Lahiji, as well as Lynch's theory of legibility, in the context of two novels set in Karachi. These novels focus predominantly on the metropolis of Karachi, exploring its historical context, political topography, and inhabitants' lives. However, the characters in the novels have distinct experiences and perspectives as a result of their interactions with the city. In addition, the novel illuminates the complex political climate of Karachi, highlighting the obstacles, corruption, and violence that frequently characterize the city's political realm. With this perspective in mind, the research employs a qualitative methodology, incorporating a variety of theoretical frameworks to analyse the literary text and identify the generated phantasmagoria, as well as its impact on the lived experiences of the city's inhabitants. The qualitative methodology, as accentuated by Sibghatullah Khan in his thesis titled *Between Homes and Hosts: Life Narratives of South and Southeast Asian Diasporic Academic Women in America*, is the most fitting approach to conduct this research because it provides “the venue to understand human nature from the researcher’s point of view or that of the researched” (Khan 181). Undertaking multifarious viewpoints and integrating them into the analysis makes it possible for the researcher to draw conclusions. In this research, the study of *Karachi Vice: Life and Death in a Divided City* and *The Party Worker* is undertaken through the lens of legibility and phantasmagoria; thus, the work is qualitative.

The qualitative approach grants the researcher the freedom to interpret, but it is not a subjective interpretation shaped by personal inclination; rather, it is a reflective medium that gives the researcher a venue to engage with different ideas rather than inferring them. Consequently, a mindful analysis that illuminates any potential bias will be conducted. The existing literature is carefully read and examined to avoid any semblance of "vague subjectivism" as forewarned by Belsey (Belsey in Griffins 162). Taking this into account, this research follows a qualitative and reflexive approach. The following section identifies the most appropriate method to go with the methodology utilised in the thesis.

3.1.1 Research Method

The research methodology serves as a structure that guides the methodical analysis as demonstrated in the preceding section. Contrariwise, research methods are the techniques and tools that are incorporated by the researcher to conduct the research. Research methods pertain to how research is conducted as pointed out by Gabrielle Griffin. The research method is selected keeping in mind the research being undertaken. The current research is based on the analysis of literary works hence, it employs textual analysis as the best-suited research method.

Belsey argues that textual analysis is "indispensable to research," as it provides researcher with the venue to incorporate subjectivity by utilizing various theoretical framework for a comprehensive study on texts (Griffins 157). Textual analysis is an essential tool when it comes to cultural and literary criticism to interpret texts from various perspectives. It helps provide insightful interpretations based on established theoretical framework. Consequently, the core objective of my research does not revolves around personal perspective As Belsey notes that textual analysis is about analyzing "the details without introducing any additional presuppositions" (163). Hence, this research primarily focuses on thorough examination of the literature to probe into questions stated in the beginning of the thesis.

3.2 Theoretical Perspective

A theoretical framework that consists of two fundamental theoretical constructs with some overlap in importance and relevance serves as the study's guiding principles. The original idea concerns the legibility of the urban environment; as demonstrated in the selected texts, this legibility depends on residents' capacity to develop a clear and well-organized mental image of the metropolis. The formation of the city's image is realized through dynamic participation and interaction with the urban surroundings. Lynch presents a significant viewpoint regarding this issue, wherein he emphasizes the concept of Legibility. This concept pertains to the ability of residents to construct a cohesive and structured cognitive framework derived from their interactions with different aspects of the urban environment. Moreover, the incorporation of a supplementary concept allows for an investigation into its implications for the phenomenon of legibility, as well as its capacity to alter residents' perceptual comprehension of the urban environment. The examination of how this particular

concept shapes and impacts the overall legibility of the urban landscape is crucial in order to contribute to a comprehensive understanding of residents' cognitive mapping and navigation within urban environments.

The selected characters portrayed in the selected literary works develop cognitive depictions of Karachi by interpreting their personal encounters and lived realities. The individual's personal involvement with the urban environment significantly shapes their cognitive interpretation of its complex characteristics. The subsequent chapters will undertake a thorough analysis of the complex dynamics between these characters, their cognitive representations of the urban environment, and the various elements that influence the development and modification of their perspectives. The objective of this study is to investigate the correlation between personal experiences and urban spaces, with a focus on understanding the intricate mechanisms that influence individuals' cognitive and emotional bonds with the city of Karachi. The theoretical framework utilized in this study has been thoroughly elucidated, structured according to the following sections:

3.2.1 Theoretical Framework: A Comprehensive Exploration of the Legibility Theory

The Legibility Theory, as posited by Kevin Lynch, delves into the cognitive mechanisms underlying individuals' perception and navigation of urban landscapes. Lynch's scholarly contributions, predominantly expounded in his seminal publication titled *The Image of the City*, furnish a theoretical structure aimed at comprehending the cognitive processes through which individuals construct and arrange their perceptions of urban environments. The origins of Lynch's Legibility Theory can be attributed to the discipline of environmental psychology, which aimed to understand the intricate “relationships between people and their physical surroundings” (Canter 665). Lynch's scholarly contributions have made substantial strides in enhancing the comprehension of the cognitive processes through which individuals perceive and mentally construct urban environments.

Legibility Theory, at its fundamental essence, asserts that the legibility of a city pertains to the level of “ease with which its parts can be recognized and can be organized into a coherent pattern” and individuals are able to perceive and comprehend its spatial arrangement (Lynch 5). Lynch asserts that the legibility of a place is not

exclusively determined by its “physical attributes”, but is also shaped by the subjective experiences, memories, and cognitive processes of individuals (Lynch 6). Lynch argues that the legibility of a city is contingent upon the capacity of its residents to construct coherent and organized cognitive representations of the urban environment. Lynch (1960) delineates five fundamental components that play a pivotal role in enhancing the comprehensibility of an urban environment: paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks. Paths are the primary routes that individuals utilize for transportation within urban areas. Edges are visual representations of boundaries or transitional zones that delineate distinct areas. Districts are discrete divisions within an urban area that exhibit a distinct character or serve a specific purpose. Nodes are symbolic representations of important areas where intersections or concentrations occur, such as plazas or junctions. Landmarks are prominent and easily identifiable features that facilitate the process of navigation and orientation.

Lynch places significant emphasis on the influence of individual experiences and cognitive mapping in determining the perceptibility and legibility of urban spaces. The author posits that individuals engage in the cognitive process of constructing mental representations known as cognitive maps, which serve to encapsulate their spatial knowledge which “play a role in the comprehension of an urban layout” and the interconnections within the urban environment (Hillier 20). Cognitive maps play a fundamental role in guiding individuals' navigation and decision-making processes within urban environments.

The formation of a mental image or cognitive map is considered a fundamental principle in legibility theory. According to Lynch, individuals form cognitive depictions of urban environments by drawing upon their own perceptions and personal encounters which is “a constant interacting process” (Lynch 6). The mental representations of visual imagery play a crucial role in establishing an internalized cognitive structure that facilitates comprehension and navigation within the urban environment. Spatial cognition refers to the cognitive processes involved in perceiving, understanding, and utilizing spatial relationships, landmarks, paths, and nodes. This cognitive process is “is the product both of immediate sensation and of the memory of past experience” which enables individuals to navigate their surroundings efficiently and maintain a sense of direction (Lynch 5).

The theory of legibility places significant emphasis on the crucial role played by a meticulously organized urban setting. The presence of a well-defined spatial arrangement, characterized by easily discernible pathways and recognizable landmarks, serves to improve individuals' capacity to construct a cohesive cognitive representation of the urban environment. The presence of a well-organized urban layout promotes a sense of predictability and it is “used to interpret information and to guide action”, thereby lessening the cognitive burden associated with navigating unfamiliar or intricate surroundings (Lynch 5).

The construction and perception of one's mental image are personal endeavours. Lynch highlights that "each individual creates and bears his own image," since the comprehensibility of a particular location is significantly shaped by individual encounters and experiences within the urban environment (Lynch 7). The mental representations of individuals are influenced by their direct engagement with “their surroundings and extract structure”, including their movement patterns and encounters with various elements within the cityscape (Lynch 43). These experiences contribute to the formation of an individual's comprehension of the urban configuration, prominent features, and interconnections among various regions within the city.

Furthermore, the legibility theory acknowledges the significance of perception and orientation in the context of the urban environment. The presence of a perceptible and navigable environment has been found to positively impact individuals' sense of direction, mitigate feelings of disorientation, and enhance their overall perception of the urban environment. Factors that enhance legibility in urban environments, including unobstructed lines of sight, prominent points of reference, and interconnected pathways, play a significant role in individuals' capacity to navigate and cognitively structure the urban landscape.

Lynch's conceptual framework posits a strong correlation between legibility and the development of mental imagery “soaked in memories and meanings” and cognitive mapping (Lynch 1). Through the examination of literary works depicting urban environments, it is possible to discern the manner in which characters shape their individual cognitive representations by drawing upon their unique encounters and engagements which are within the cityscape. This analysis aims to elucidate the various factors that contribute to the legibility of the urban environment as perceived by the characters.

Textual analysis facilitates a comprehensive examination of how authors portray the diverse components that Lynch has identified as essential for comprehensibility, namely paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks. The presence and significance of these elements within the narrative can be discerned through the encounters and descriptions of the characters. As an illustration, the representation of paths can be observed in the delineation of specific routes undertaken by characters. Edges, on the other hand, are “boundaries between two phases” that manifest in the transitions occurring between various urban areas. Districts are portrayed through the depiction of distinct sections or neighbourhoods, while nodes materialize as significant meeting points (Lynch 41). Lastly, landmarks are described as recognizable and notable features.

The utilization of textual analysis allows for an exploration of the correlation between individual experiences and the comprehensibility of the urban environment as depicted in the narrative. Authors frequently offer valuable perspectives on how characters' interactions, memories, and emotions influence their perception and comprehension of the urban environment. Through a comprehensive examination of these textual depictions, it becomes possible to delve into the subjective aspects of legibility. This includes investigating the level of familiarity that characters possess with specific regions within the city, their sense of belonging to these areas, the strategies they employ for navigation, and the cognitive maps they construct as a result of their lived experiences.

At the core of Lynch's theoretical framework lies the notion of a mental representation known as ““mental maps” (30). The author posits that individuals construct cognitive depictions of urban environments through the lens of their own perceptions and personal encounters. These cognitive frameworks, in the form of mental images, play a crucial role in facilitating navigation, wayfinding, and enhancing the overall comprehension of the urban environment. The generation of these cognitive representations is impacted by a multitude of factors, encompassing sensory input, individual encounters, and the spatial configuration of the urban environment and are “capable of continuous further development” (Lynch 6).

Lynch (1960) delineates five essential components that contribute to the legibility and comprehensibility of an urban environment:

- Paths refer to the primary routes or channels that individuals utilize for transportation within urban areas. Linear features and “...the channels along which the observer customarily, occasionally, or potentially moves” such as streets, sidewalks, trails, or other similar elements can be incorporated (Lynch 41). The presence of clearly defined and easily identifiable routes within a city enhances its legibility, facilitating efficient navigation and orientation for individuals.
- Edges refer to the “...boundaries between two phases, linear breaks in continuity” that demarcate distinct areas or districts within an urban setting (Lynch 41). Physical features, such as walls, rivers, or parks, as well as perceptual boundaries that indicate a shift in character or purpose, are examples of boundaries. The presence of distinct boundaries facilitates the differentiation of various sections within the urban landscape and enhances its comprehensibility.
- Districts refer to “the medium-to-large sections of the city, conceived of as having two-dimensional extent...” and specific sections or neighborhoods within a city that exhibit distinct attributes or serve particular purposes (Lynch 41). The identification of these entities can be accomplished by examining their physical characteristics, which may include architectural styles, land use patterns, or cultural attributes. The establishment of clearly delineated districts within a city plays a crucial role in enhancing its comprehensibility, as it fosters a distinct sense of location and aids individuals in mentally organizing the complex urban environment.
- Nodes are symbolic representations of specific locations or “strategic spots in a city into which an observer can enter, and which are the intensive foci to and from which he is travelling” and areas within an urban environment that serve as focal points or areas of convergence (Lynch 41). These locations can encompass plazas, squares, significant intersections, or other areas where multiple pathways intersect. Nodes play a significant role in enhancing the navigability of urban areas by serving as prominent landmarks and reference points. They contribute to the legibility of a city by offering recognizable points of orientation and facilitating decision-making processes.
- Landmarks are “rather simply defined physical objects...typically seen from many angles and distances, over the tops of smaller elements, and used as radial references” which are prominent and easily identifiable elements found within the

urban landscape that leave a lasting impression on individuals (Lynch 46). Physical structures “frequently used clues of identity and even of structure, and seem to be increasingly relied upon as a journey becomes more and more familiar (Lynch 48). encompass a wide range of entities, including monuments, iconic buildings, and distinctive natural features. Landmarks are of utmost importance in enhancing the comprehensibility of a city, as they serve as visual indicators and points of reference that facilitate navigation and orientation.

Lynch argues that the legibility of a city is not exclusively dictated by the objective attributes of its physical elements, but is “capable of continuous further development” also influenced by the subjective perceptions and cognitive processes of individuals (Lynch 48). The perception and cognitive mapping of urban elements are influenced by personal experiences, memories, and cultural factors, which collectively shape individuals' mental images of the city.

Kevin Lynch's work highlights the significance of personal experiences and cognitive mapping in relation to the concept of legibility within urban environments. The perception, navigation, and mental organization of the spatial structure of a city are influenced by personal experiences and cognitive mapping, as inhabitants “have had long associations with some part of his city, and their image is soaked in memories and meanings”, which in turn shape individuals' understanding and interaction with the urban environment (Lynch 48).

The subjective encounters and observations of individuals have a substantial impact on their interpretation and understanding of urban environments. Each individual's experiences and interactions within the urban environment are distinct, leading to a subjective interpretation of the cityscape. The range of experiences encompasses various aspects such as daily routines, notable occurrences, social engagements, and sensory perceptions. For instance, an individual's habitual transportation to and from work or recurrent visits to specific regions within a city contribute to their acquired knowledge and ease in navigating those particular locales. On the other hand, adverse encounters, such as navigating through unsafe neighborhoods or complex intersections, can also influence individuals' perceptions of the urban environment because legibility of a city “seems to depend not only upon the individual but also upon the given city” (Lynch 41).

The concept of cognitive mapping, which is integral to Lynch's theoretical framework, pertains to the cognitive process by which “each individual creates and bears his own image, but there seems to be substantial agreement among members of the same group” (Lynch 7). Individuals construct internalized representations of spatial knowledge and the interconnections within an urban environment. The process entails the development of a cognitive representation which “is used to interpret information and to guide action” or mental visualization that facilitates the act of navigating, orienting oneself, and comprehending the urban environment as a whole (Lynch 5). Cognitive mapping is subject to the influence of personal experiences, sensory input, and the spatial configuration of the urban environment.

Cognitive maps are formed by individuals through the integration of personal experiences and sensory perceptions with the physical characteristics of urban environments. For instance, individuals may cognitively retain knowledge pertaining to notable landmarks, unique architectural elements, or memorable pathways that they have encountered throughout their personal encounters. The mental representations undergo a continuous process of refinement and updating as a result of ongoing interactions with the urban environment.

The inherent subjectivity of personal experiences and cognitive mapping implies that the mental representation and comprehension of urban environments can differ among individuals. Individuals may assign varying degrees of importance to different elements or landmarks based on their unique personal experiences and subjective preferences. Furthermore, it should be noted that cognitive mapping is a dynamic process that undergoes evolution as characters progressively accumulate novel experiences and expand their knowledge pertaining to the urban environment.

The acknowledgement of the inherent subjectivity in individuals' experiences and cognitive representations allows for the customization of urban interventions with the aim of enhancing legibility and optimizing the overall urban experience. This process may entail the deliberate integration of prominent landmarks, the establishment of well-defined routes, the delineation of distinct districts, and the improvement of key points to facilitate effortless navigation and foster a strong sense of location.

The legibility of urban environments is significantly influenced by personal experiences and cognitive mapping. The dynamic relationship among individuals'

experiences, perceptions, and mental representations significantly influences their comprehension, exploration, and involvement within urban environments. The creation of legible, accessible, and meaningful cities for their residents can be facilitated through urban planning and design, taking into account the influence of personal experiences and cognitive mapping.

3.2.2 Theoretical Framework: A Comprehensive Exploration of the concept of Phantasmagoria in Urban Space

The Phantasmagoria Theory, formulated by Lahiji and Andreotti, presents a distinctive viewpoint regarding the interplay among architecture, perception, and the urban encounter. The theoretical framework is influenced by historical conceptions of phantasmagoria, which originally denoted a type of visual spectacle during the 18th and 19th centuries. Lahiji and Andreotti employ the concept within the realm of architecture and urbanism to investigate the ways in which constructed environments can engender a perception of deception, manipulation, and spectacle, thereby influencing the manner in which individuals perceive and engage with "tele-technological-capitalist" society in the urban landscape (Andreotti and Lahiji 10).

The origins of the concept of phantasmagoria can be traced back to the 18th and 19th centuries, when it emerged within the wider cultural and intellectual milieu of that era. Originally, it was linked to a type of visual performance that engrossed spectators by employing projected images and illusions. The neologism "phantasmagoria" was introduced by Étienne-Gaspard Robert, a Belgian inventor, during the latter part of the 18th century, with the intention of characterizing his pioneering magic lantern presentations.

During this particular era, Europe was experiencing substantial societal and cultural changes. The advent of the Industrial Revolution precipitated swift urbanization, notable technological progress, and transformative alterations in social frameworks. The aforementioned alterations had significant implications for individuals' encounters with their constructed surroundings and their conceptions of actuality.

During this particular historical period, there was a notable rise in the popularity of phantasmagoric spectacles as a means of amusement. Frequently, these performances were held within purpose-built venues, featuring the utilization of

projectors, mirrors, and various optical apparatus to produce captivating illusions and ethereal visual representations. The spectators were fully engaged in an environment characterized by otherworldly and spectral manifestations, resulting in a profound combination of astonishment, trepidation, and reverence.

The proliferation of phantasmagoric spectacles signifies an increasing captivation with the realm of the supernatural, the mystical, and the enigmatic. The authors appealed to the prevailing Romantic sentiments of the era, which prioritized the exploration of emotions, imagination, and the concept of the sublime. The purpose of the spectacles was to immerse viewers in a realm characterized by elements of fantasy and the uncanny, thereby creating a state where the distinction between reality and illusion becomes indistinct.

The idea of phantasmagoria challenges conventional notions of architecture as static and inflexible, proposing instead the concept of a "hyper-mediated city," where architecture may facilitate dynamic and ephemeral experiences (Andreotti and Lahiji 25). This inquiry explores the imaginative and perceptual aspects of architecture, challenging the prevailing emphasis on functionality and utility. Through the adoption of a poetic and phenomenological framework, the theory investigates the capacity of architecture to engender an ambiance characterized by enchantment, mystery, and spectacle.

According to the theory, it is argued that architecture has the potential to exhibit a range of phantasmagoric attributes. The aforementioned elements encompass various visual effects, such as the utilization of lighting techniques, projections, and illusions. Additionally, they involve the manipulation of spatial arrangements, materials, and sensory elements. By employing these design strategies, the constructed surroundings possess the capacity to engender imaginative thinking, elicit emotional responses, and facilitate a profound and transformative encounter for the individual.

The theory of phantasmagoria additionally delves into the intricate interplay among architecture, power dynamics, and ideology. The argument posits that the incorporation of phantasmagoric elements in artificial environments can function as tools for persuasion, manipulation, and societal regulation. This is supported by the assertion that digital technology not only fails to reverse the estrangement of the physical senses but also "becomes a means to further anaestheticize it in the interests

of greater social control” (Andreotti and Lahiji 66). Architecture has the potential to serve as a conduit for the transmission and perpetuation of prevailing narratives, ideologies, and cultural values. Through an analysis of the socio-political ramifications associated with phantasmagoric architecture, this theoretical framework elucidates the capacity of spatial manipulation to exert an impact on individuals' cognitive interpretations, “perception and experience” personal affiliations, and societal conduct (Andreotti and Lahiji 72).

Moreover, the theory underscores the intricate relationship between the physical environment and the subjective perceptions of individuals. This statement underscores the significance of the viewer's active involvement in perceiving and deciphering the phantasmagoric attributes inherent in architectural structures. The theory acknowledges that individuals possess unique backgrounds, emotions, and biases that influence “human sensorium” of the built environment, leading to a range of diverse and subjective experiences (Andreotti and Lahiji 66).

The notion of phantasmagoria, in its application to the fields of architecture and urbanism, underwent additional refinement and reinterpretation by modern theorists and practitioners, including Nadir Lahiji and Libero Andreotti. The authors utilized the historical concept and modified it to suit the present-day context, examining how architectural and urban components can elicit comparable phantasmagoric characteristics and influence individuals' perceptions.

The emergence of theoretical discussions pertaining to phantasmagoria in the realms of architecture and urbanism occurred during the latter part of the 20th century and the early years of the 21st century. The aforementioned discussions were shaped by a range of intellectual trends, encompassing phenomenology, postmodernism, and critical theory. The theorists aimed to critique the dominant focus on utilitarianism and logical reasoning within the field of architecture, advocating instead for an approach that prioritizes poetic expression, imaginative thinking, and immersive experiences.

The contemporary discourse surrounding the concept of phantasmagoria emphasizes the capacity of architecture to generate illusions, manipulations, and spectacles that have an impact on individuals' cognitive processes, affective experiences, and behavioral responses. This statement prompts a reconsideration of the constructed physical surroundings as a space that has the potential to undergo

significant changes and provide an engaging experience, wherein the distinction between what is real and what is imagined becomes indistinct.

The interplay and simultaneous use of spatial legibility and phantasmagoria in city literature provide a comprehensive framework for interpreting urban landscapes. Spatial legibility refers to the creation of mental maps, whereas phantasmagoria fills these maps with images and meaning. Together, they create a comprehensive knowledge of how people see and experience the city. Spatial legibility focuses on practical navigation, whereas phantasmagoria emphasises the experiential and emotional aspects of city living. Both are required to fully understand the complexities of city life. Landmarks and nodes, spatial legibility features, act as anchors for memories and identities, while the city's phantasmagoric aspects fill these places with stories and symbols.

In city literature, combining both perspectives allows for a more sophisticated interpretation. Spatial legibility aids understanding of the physical layout and movement of the city, whereas phantasmagoria investigates the emotional and symbolic meanings associated with these locations. Characters' interactions with the city can be examined in terms of how they navigate and comprehend the urban environment (spatial legibility), as well as how they perceive and interpret its illusions and spectacles (phantasmagoria). The narrative form of city literature can reflect both the legible and phantasmagoric features of urban areas, resulting in a multilayered storytelling method that reflects the complexities of urban life. Additionally, merging these ideas allows for the investigation of how different cultures and social groups view and experience the city, bringing insight into issues of accessibility, inclusion, and exclusion.

Finally, combining spatial legibility with phantasmagoria captures both the physical and experiential components of urban environments, providing a thorough knowledge of the complex ways in which cities influence and are shaped by their residents' perceptions and experiences.

CHAPTER 4

PHANTASMAGORIC MANIPULATION: UNVEILING URBAN LEGIBILITY THROUGH PERSPECTIVES OF POWER

Kevin Lynch's concept of legibility provides a useful framework for analyzing *The Party Worker* by Omar Shahid Hamid. When applied to urban environments, Lynch's theoretical framework regarding legibility focuses on the extent to which humans can comprehend and cognitively structure the tangible and spatial characteristics of a city.

The selected novel is set in Karachi, a complex metropolis with various districts, ethnic groups, and a rich history. Lynch's Legibility theory helps readers and researchers understand how people cognitively organize and navigate complicated urban environments. The characters' perception and interpretation of Karachi's geographical and temporal features is crucial to understanding their intents and actions. Karachi is affected by mythical themes in the story. Urban phantasmagoria—"a fantastic illusion, but a necessary one, without which the texture of reality' would disintegrate"—can affect one's mental impression of the city (Andreotti and Lahiji 10). Lynch's legibility notion helps explain how these phantasmagoric components affect Karachi's visibility to the characters. It allows analysis of how these components enhance spatiotemporal mental representations' subjectivity and city identity.

Lynch's theoretical framework offers a comprehensive examination of the characters' perspectives and interactions with Karachi's urban context as depicted in the literary works. This specific perspective offers valuable comprehension of the experiences, decision-making mechanisms, and challenges encountered by individuals within the complex social and political context of metropolitan areas.

Omar Shahid Hamid is the author of *The Party Worker*. The narrative centers on Asad Haider, the main character, who originates from a humble family and gets entangled in the political maneuvers orchestrated by influential figures in Karachi. Asad becomes a member of a political party in a subordinate capacity, and as he ascends the party hierarchy, he becomes progressively ensnared in a complex network including unethical practices, acts of aggression, and ethical quandaries. The story provides

insight into the extensive impact of political parties in Karachi, their contribution to the city's trajectory, and the personal sacrifices made by people such as Asad Haider in their quest for authority and influence.

4.1 Urban Legibility: Unveiling Subjective Spatiotemporal Mental Representations

The Party Worker is set in Karachi, a sprawling metropolis located on the southern coast of Pakistan. This city offers a vibrant and multifaceted backdrop for the events portrayed in the book. This metropolitan area, often referred to as the City of Lights, is the biggest and most populated metropolis in Pakistan, characterized by its vibrant atmosphere, rich cultural heritage, and diverse population. The novel's storyline is tightly connected to the complicated urban landscape of Karachi, serving as a significant factor in shaping the individuals' lives and the broader themes of the tale. The profound historical heritage of Karachi has had a substantial impact on its architectural milieu, social organization, and communal sense of self.

Karachi's exterior conceals a multiplicity of inconsistencies. The area in question is characterised by the coexistence of significant wealth and severe poverty, frequent instances of political power struggles and corruption, and a substantial influx of migrants from various regions of Pakistan in search of better living conditions. The characters in *The Party Worker* explore primarily the complexities and conflicts inherent to urban environments.

The plot unfolds against the backdrop of Karachi's tumultuous political scene, which is characterized by the dominance of powerful political parties, their machinations, and the incessant struggle for control. As they become entangled with the city's political apparatus, the novel's protagonists are drawn into this world, some for idealistic reasons and others for personal benefit. In *The Party Worker*, the protagonists are confronted with the complex urban environment of Karachi, where they face personal obstacles, contend with ethical dilemmas, and endeavour to realise their ambitions. The urban environment presents both obstacles and opportunities, shaping the destinies of individuals in unforeseeable ways.

The novel begins with a violent and mysterious incident. Asad Haider, a United Front Party (UFP) loyalist, is attacked in New York City. The story shifts to a specific time period when Asad Haider had an active role as a member of the party during its

early phases of formation in Karachi. Sadia is intrigued by the photographs of Karachi. This fascination originates from nostalgia, an inherently subjective emotion. People frequently view the past through a sentimental lens when experiencing nostalgia, resulting in subjective mental images of historical urban landscapes. Sadia's fixation on the images suggests that her "emotional connection" to them greatly influences her perception (Soga, et al. 144). The section highlights the chronological disparity between the images depicting a bygone era of a more tranquil Karachi and the present-day urban landscape. The characterization provided by Sadia about the previous state of Karachi as being "older" and "gentler" implies a subjective evaluation (Hamid 36). Sadia's examination of the photographs demonstrates her distinct memory and individual experiences. The city shown in the images underscores its presence only within the recollections of a limited group that encountered it, therefore underscoring the subjective quality of cognitive depictions. The perception and memory of an event might exhibit "significant differences between" different individuals (Park and Rothbart 1056). The text places significant emphasis on the emotional resonance evoked by the photos. Sadia contrasts the initial state of the road seen in the image, described as "spotlessly clean" in the presence of her uncle, with its current state of pollution characterized by the "piles of plastic bags and paper", which are fouling the road (Hamid 36). The presence of emotional juxtaposition enhances the cognitive representation of Karachi, since emotions play a significant "impact on human perception and sensibility" and a crucial role in shaping the individual's perception and recollection of the city's historical and contemporary aspects (Huyssen 21). The individual's perception of the city is essentially subjective, since it is influenced by their emotional lens. Sadia's perception of Karachi's spatiotemporal landscape is influenced by her individual encounters, recollections, and cultural heritage. She perceives the urban environment from the perspective of her own cohort, although she struggles to grasp the portrayal of Karachi as shown in the images. This emphasizes the significance of history in the context of urban legibility. The study of history enables individuals to gain insights into the current state of affairs and envision potential future developments.

The phrase "hard to believe" used by Sadia suggests a condition of cognitive dissonance, reflecting a disparity between Sadia's original expectations and the perceived visual attractiveness of Karachi. The occurrence of "cognitive dissonance" within this particular setting highlights the subjective quality of perception, as it shows

the influence of prior ideas and expectations on individuals' judgements of their urban surroundings (Festinger 93). Moreover, this highlights the fact that the legibility of urban spaces is influenced not only by present-day encounters but also by the presence or absence of historical consciousness. The speaker's statement on the tram service in Karachi, "I was unaware of the existence of a tram service in Karachi," indicates a limited understanding of the city's historical context (Hamid 36). This comment reflects a lack of historical understanding and awareness of the city's changing transit system. This demonstrates how people have the tendency to construct mental representations of the urban environment that are influenced by their present experiences, often overlooking or remaining unconscious of the historical changes that have occurred. "Temporal perception of the urban environment" is a crucial factor in determining the legibility of urban environments (Yang, et al. 128). This legibility may exhibit notable differences throughout generations and even within people of varying ages. The incident also refers to the lack of spatial awareness and investigation by residents who are confined to a certain side of the city. This aspect demonstrates that her mental image of the urban landscape is influenced by her spatial experiences and explorations. Those who venture beyond the urban core may develop a more expansive mental image of the entire metropolitan area, whereas those who remain within certain boundaries have a more limited and localised perspective.

In conjunction with the aforementioned aspects, an examination of Sadia's response to the picturesque location in close proximity to Karachi may be approached from the perspective of cognitive mapping. Cognitive mapping "approximates the public image, which, in different environments, is more or less compelling, more or less embracing" and the cognitive process involved in the creation and use of mental representations that depict the spatial characteristics of the environment (Lynch 46). The formation of these cognitive representations is subject to the effect of several elements, such as individual experiences, recollections, and cultural context. The cognitive map of Karachi for the Sadia is constructed mostly from her subjective encounters and lived experiences inside the metropolis. Her cognitive representation of Karachi is influenced by her understanding of the city's historical context, while lacking personal exposure to the tram service in Karachi.

As the narrative progresses, a new character is added, who has the occupation of a journalist and serves as the main crime reporter for the publication known as "the

Daily Ahsas" (Hamid 48). Ishmael Naich goes Botal Galli with the expectation of obtaining information that might perhaps assist in improving their financial situation by acquiring leads to Baba Dacait. Ishmael Naich pays a visit to Rafiq Seth at Botal Galli. He expresses astonishment at discovering Rafiq Seth's occupation in an "old office", as he believes that someone of Rafiq Seth's stature should be situated in "a modern office block" (Hamid 49). This excerpt offers an implicit observations on the spatial organisation and navigability inside the urban area. The decision made by the character to stay in close proximity to Botal Galli for the purpose of work underscores the importance of spatial proximity and ease of access in "shaping individuals' spatial activity" (Fan and Khattak 98). The level of accessibility in various parts of a city may vary significantly, leading residents to form subjective mental representations based on the geographical connections they have with their employment, social networks, and other services. It also delves further into the temporal dimension by making reference to the Rafiq Seth's prior experiences with theft along Mauripur road. This finding highlights the impact of events on an individual's perception of urban safety. The act of keeping the "old Nokia" mobile phone as a preventative step serves as an illustration of the temporal aspect, shedding light on how past experiences shape present behaviours and perceptions in urban environments (Hamid 50).

According to Rafiq Seth, it is observed that in Karachi, those who display even a little indication of wealth or extravagance may find themselves targeted for criminal activities like abduction or extortion, as he says, "You know Karachi, bhajjan, show a little flash and you get on someone's list for kidnapping or extortion" (Hamid 49). The character's concerns over the incidents of abduction, extortion, and mugging contribute to the formation of their cognitive depiction of the city, highlighting areas that are seen as presenting a greater degree of risk. Mental maps are subjective depictions of metropolitan environments, which are often influenced by personal experiences, anxieties, and perceptions of security. In this particular instance, the cognitive representation of the character is shaped by considerations of security, and this image "has had long associations with some part of his city, and his image is soaked in memories and meanings" which exhibit significant variation across inhabitants and therefore give rise to a range of various spatial and temporal mental representations (Lynch 1)

The depiction of security measures, such as the presence of armed individuals and the deployment of rooftop lookouts, serves to highlight the subjective nature of safety perceptions within the urban setting, as well as the extent of influence wielded by gangs in the Lyari area. These aspects not only contribute to Ishmail's own experience, but also have the capacity to impact the mental representations of urban areas for others, resulting in varied perceptions and cognitive mappings.

Through Ishmael's observation of Baba and the armed men, the individual's gaze helps to emphasise the significance of personal perspective in influencing one's mental representations of space and time. Ishmail starts the journey throughout Karachi with the purpose of seeing Baba, commencing his trip from the "edge of Lyari", specifically in front of the "Kutyana Memon Hospital" (Hamid 78). The spatial reference point is situated in a particular metropolitan setting. The trajectory of the voyage encompasses an intricate spatial route that traverses many neighborhoods, commencing at Khudda Market and extending to Baghdadi police station, ultimately leading into the small alleyways of Kalakot. The aforementioned shifts serve to emphasize the intricate spatial intricacies and fragmented nature of the metropolis, which are characteristic features of phantasmagoric urban settings.

The aforementioned event includes temporal aspects by providing a description of the journey taking place "just after noon on a sweltering April day in Karachi heat and humidity". The inclusion of this temporal indicator adds an additional dimension of temporality to the story, underscoring the dynamic and always-changing character of the urban setting. The concept of phantasmagoria is characterized by the ever-changing nature of the city's identity, and the excerpt well portrays this dynamic temporality.

The complex and multidimensional character of Karachi's identity is heavily shaped by cultural aspects. The depiction of street sellers in "Khadda Market" involved in the illegal activities of "selling stolen mobile phones" and counterfeit football jerseys evokes a deep understanding of the complex and diverse aspects of cultural dynamics (Hamid 78). The placement of these activities in the context of urban life assists to emphasise the many cultural factors that contribute to the city's identity.

The narrative progresses as Ishmael attempts to persuade Baba of his superiority over other political leaders. The statement underscores the huge social and economic

disparities that exist within the city of Karachi. Ishmael talks about the inequalities that exist between those residing in affluent areas such as Defence, Clifton, or Islamabad, often known as "drawing-room leaders" in Pakistan, and those who reside in socioeconomically deprived urban neighborhoods (Hamid 79). The presence of these differentiations, which are shaped by societal standing and advantages, gives rise to the development of separate cognitive frameworks for spatial and temporal concepts. The affluent demographic has a tendency towards disconnection from the everyday urban environment since their interactions mostly take place inside the safe high-walled houses (Hamid 79). This starkly contrasts with the experiences of those living in less privileged localities. The aforementioned division contributes to the formation of a subjective comprehension of the urban environment, since residents in these distinct areas hold distinct experiences and viewpoints about the spatial and temporal dimensions of the city. The character known as "Don," who was born in Karachi but has gained considerable professional experience in New York, contributes an international outlook to the story. This statement emphasizes the possibility that individuals with global perspectives and international experience may have unique cognitive representations of urban environments. The olfactory perception of "a ganda nala" is a sensory component that may have been present during the Don's personal encounters, although it has since been forgotten (Hamid 79). The influence of transnational perspectives on individuals' perceptions of the city's temporal dimensions and the subsequent transformations that have transpired during their absence is substantial.

The mention of the "Defence Clifton wallahs" expressing concern about the individual who can connect these two domains highlights the impact of fear in molding understandings and mental representations of the urban landscape (Hamid 79). The introduction of novel or unfamiliar zones within an urban environment significantly impacts an individual's cognitive mapping. The existence of this fear introduces a further emotional and psychological aspect to the understanding of the spatial and temporal dynamics of the city.

The office of the Chief of Special Branch is optimally located on the sixth floor of the Police Chief Office. The arrangement of space highlights the intricate architectural design and the technology used to control entry inside the urban setting. To access the sixth level, users must provide an identity card at each floor, so illustrating

the hierarchical attributes inherent in the spatial organization of the city. The speaker's display of frustration at the need to provide their identity card highlights the underlying tension between the notions of inclusivity and exclusivity in metropolitan settings. Hence, the influence of spatial hierarchy on individuals' navigation and perception of urban spaces plays a significant role in shaping the subjective cognitive representation of Karachi.

The design of the office owned by the Special Branch has a crucial role in shaping the subjective cognitive representation of Karachi. The urban environment showcases the intended architectural elements, as seen by the stark juxtaposition between the serene ambiance of the sixth floor and the vibrant hustle and bustle observed on the lower floors. This juxtaposition helps to underscore the underlying purpose of offering separate sensory experiences. The architectural designs of Karachi have a substantial influence on the city's identity, hence contributing to the formation of unique ambiances and cadences. The inhabitants of the urban environment are subjected to a multitude of sensory inputs, hence amplifying the subjective nature of their perceptions pertaining to space and time.

Baba, accompanied by Ishmael, engages in a meeting with Brigadier Fazli to deliberate over matters of a political nature. The meeting starts with a notable political negotiation, as Brigadier Fazli establishes communication with the protagonist with the intention of coordinating a rendezvous with the Don. This exchange highlights the complex power dynamics within the urban setting. The mention of engaging in discussions over the political direction of the Party and the military's desire to counter the growing influence of religious leaders inside the urban core reflects Karachi's position as a disputed space for several political groups. The city's political condition is characterised by a subjective perspective, as shown by the divergent perspectives of people, exemplified by Imam's cautious approach as "Imam wanted to have nothing to do with the military" and Aleem's cautiousness (Hamid 95). The statement mentioned above highlights the significance of power dynamics in shaping the understanding of urban environments. It sheds light on the intricate interrelationships and conflicts that play a role in shaping the character of a city.

The chapter also delves into the domain of security and its transformative impact on urban landscapes. The juxtaposition of Guddu's recollection of the previously relaxed security protocols at the Corps headquarters with the current state marked by

heightened security measures such as suicide bombers, snipers, and tank traps, highlights the fluid and ever-evolving nature of Karachi. The previously noted transformation in urban security “There was no barbed wire, or snipers or tank traps. They used to have just a couple of sentries on duty.” elicits a sense of nostalgia and confusion, highlighting the ever shifting and unpredictable character of urban environments (Hamid 95). This remark emphasises the impact of security dynamics on the development of subjective cognitive representations along a temporal continuum. The depiction of Brigadier Fazli's office as a daunting and intimidating setting, deliberately designed to convey a certain message, offers valuable insights on the importance of symbolic urban architecture and its impact on the formation of power dynamics. The objective of the spatial design and seating arrangement is to establish a power dynamic that consistently positions the brigadier in a prominent role.

Asad Haider, along with his running mate Don, emerged as the winners in the electoral contest conducted in Karachi. The level of interaction they maintained with the local community is indicative of the strong connection they established with the city's inhabitants. This elucidates a notable political event that transforms the city's identity via the interaction of geographical and temporal factors. The event's notable success, characterised as "a success beyond our wildest dreams," leads to a significant increase in membership requests and donations from a diverse range of individuals (Hamid 98). The mention of "people sent whatever they could" indicates the collective involvement and contributions made by individuals from many socio-economic backgrounds, reflecting the geographical diversity of Karachi's population (Hamid 98).

The temporal aspect of the passage has a commensurate impact on the development of Karachi's metropolitan identity. The reference to the successful election campaign coordinated by Imam underscores the significant impact of temporal advancement. As the campaign progresses, the temporal dimension of the city undergoes a notable change, marked by endeavours to include those who are voting for the first time and build committees that are representative of numerous groups. The phenomenon of temporal metamorphosis seen in urban settings symbolises the ever-changing and adaptable nature of urban life, in which the essence of a city is continuously shaped by the passage of time.

During the first encounter between the Community Manager (CM) and the Don at his mansion, a logistical predicament arises when the CM's Mercedes vehicle has

difficulties in manoeuvring into the narrow alleyway. As a result, the construction manager (CM) is obligated to remain stationary on the primary thoroughfare, prompting a formal appeal for the Don to assemble at said site. This excerpt elucidates the complex characteristics of spatial navigation within the urban landscape of Karachi. The reference to the Chief Minister's oversized Mercedes encountering difficulty navigating the narrow alley leading to the Don's mansion unveils a noteworthy aspect of the city's distinctiveness. Karachi, akin to several urban regions, has a diverse array of spatial arrangements, including intricate and complex alleys juxtaposed with broad thoroughfares. The spatial intricacy of the city is a defining attribute that has a substantial influence on its urban comprehensibility. Nevertheless, this multifaceted environment poses significant challenges for individuals and governing bodies alike as they strive to negotiate its complexities.

The endeavour of Aleem and the Don to engage in negotiations with the CM regarding the means to access the main road highlights the inherent social and power dynamics of the spatial navigation process. This particular occurrence exemplifies the fluid and individualistic attributes of urban interactions, wherein individuals endeavour to adapt and manoeuvre within the constraints imposed by their social standing and relationships. This provides support for the idea that urban legibility is not exclusively determined by physical structures, but is rather co-constructed by individuals and their social positions within the city.

Chaaku, first involved in small instances of “extortion of builders, and then, in a natural progression, to land-grabbing”, as he transforms into a notable individual engaged in land acquisition while gaining affiliations with the Taliban (Hamid 113). The previously described development serves as a representation of the ever-changing power dynamics in Karachi, where the acquisition of territorial control plays a pivotal role. The journey embarked upon by Chaaku serves as a full portrayal of the urban environment's essence, typified by its dynamic power dynamics and the adaptability of individuals to succeed and gain influence. The perception of spatial and temporal characteristics inside the city of Karachi is shaped by the progression of individuals, hence emphasizing the fluidity of power relations. The statement underscores the significance of economic desires as a driving force behind the manipulation of Karachi's urban environment. The urban environment is shown as a theatrical stage where commercial activities dominate, and individuals like Chaaku strive to expand their

businesses for personal gain. The manipulation of spatial and temporal dynamics, leading to the transformation of the urban environment, is primarily influenced by economic factors. The aforementioned feature underscores Karachi's status as a metropolis whereby economic activities have a substantial influence on the formation of subjective impressions about the urban environment. The capacity of a person to deter law enforcement and police stations from interrogating their authority highlights the city's distinctiveness as a place where the concept of security influences perceptions of its spatial and temporal aspects.

So the minute a builder got approval from the municipal government for a new project, I would find out through my contacts and pass this information on to him, for a small consultancy fee. Chaaku would then present his demands to the unfortunate builder (Hamid 113).

The character of Karachi is intricately linked to the intricate interplay between criminal groups, security protocols, and purposeful law enforcement deficiencies in some areas. These elements contribute to the complexity of legibility of the city. This also shows the importance of power and territorial authority in influencing the development of mental images related to spatial and temporal dimensions. Chaaku's acts, such as strategically exhibiting Taliban flags in regions under his control, might be seen as symbolic representations of his territorial supremacy inside certain urban districts. Karachi is shown as a heterogeneous amalgamation of regions administered by several governing bodies, each exhibiting distinct expressions of power. The establishment of the urban identity is fostered via a complex arrangement of many zones, each characterised by their own flags and various systems of administration.

The Legibility of Karachi by portraying it as a complex urban setting where various factors such as shifting power dynamics, economic motivations, security issues, and territorial control have a substantial influence on the subjective perceptions of space and time among its residents. The examination of the relationship between place identity and temporal representations is easily distinguishable. Soldier Bazaar is renowned for its substantial cultural heritage and historical significance, as seen by the enduring presence of London Bakers. The enduring existence of this establishment, which has persisted for nearly eight decades, serves as evidence of the deep emotional connection that residents have formed with the surrounding neighbourhood. "His grandfather had come up with the name at a time when any business with the word

London in it instantly became more active to customers". Furthermore, it demonstrates the significance of spatiotemporal dynamics in shaping the intelligibility of the urban environment. The portrayal of shops warily raising their shutters and engaging in business covertly as a result of political instability exemplifies the intricate interplay between temporal and spatial dimensions. The enduring presence of olfactory recollections, such as the lingering aroma of freshly made bread, even in the absence of visual stimuli, serves as a testament to the tenacity of sensory memories within the urban environment. As it is mentioned, "Even downed shutters cannot stop the smell of freshly baked bread from wafting outside."

Soldier Bazaar's experienced bakery proprietor Byram braves the turbulent streets to retain his shop. Political turmoil makes companies wary as nighttime comes. Increased rivalry and extortion threats have hurt Byram's bakery's catering business culture. Due to urban unrest, the motorist is reminded of prior antagonism and the Lyari district's influence, making them more cautious. A shooter interrupts the protagonist's trip, creating an unsettling mood amid the dark, powerless streets. It shows fear and vulnerability about the Party's effect on public places, including incidents of setting cars on fire and the dangerous presence of people stealing cars and other things at night. This finding shows how violent events in cities can mess up the normal flow of time and space. As the narrator says, "The Party has had its men on the streets throughout the day, stopping cars on the road and burning them, just to further reinforce the perception of an absolute shutdown" (Lynch 130). The adversarial exchange between the main character and the individual who approaches his vehicle symbolises the connection between urban governance and the populace. The man's role as a representative of authority within the municipality, tasked with executing the Party's strike directive, has an impact on the manner in which inhabitants perceive and encounter their surroundings.

4.2 Phantasmagoria's Influence: Unveiling the Impact on the City's Identity

The concept of phantasmagoria, as articulated by Nadir Lahiji and Anderotti, has a significant degree of complexity and incorporates several aspects. Lyari is a geographically defined region characterized by a juxtaposition of divergent elements, including instances of violence, encounters with poverty and resilience, and the

simultaneous presence of traditional and modern aspects. The formation of this phantasmagoria is influenced by several variables, including the extensive historical context of marginalization inside the city, its geographical positioning, and the presence of a heterogeneous populace. The display of brutality shown in the Lyari phantasmagoria has significant significance. The urban area of Lyari in Pakistan has constantly shown a notable inclination towards violence, marked by heightened rates of homicide and widespread involvement in gang-related pursuits. The high incidence of violence within the urban setting is sometimes attributed to the socio-economic hardship and marginalization experienced by its inhabitants, coupled with the ready accessibility to guns. However, the high occurrence of violence in Lyari might be traced to its complex historical context, which is typified by ethnic and sectarian conflicts.

The discourse among the characters makes indirect references to the complex and ever-changing attributes of Lyari. The need of demonstrating fortitude, symbolically referred to as "growing balls," to navigate the urban environment of Lyari underscores the intrinsic challenges posed by this specific locale (Hamid 77). This notion aligns with the portrayal of cities as phantasmagoric, typified by inherent attributes of "spatial and social uncertainties", ambiguity, and dynamism (Edensor 330). The concept of phantasmagoria often thrives via the dynamic interplay of competing elements within urban environments.

Ishmail engages in a telephonic chat with Jameel Jheenga, the subordinate of Baba Dacait, which serves to demonstrate some aspects. There are sociopolitical connotations associated with the statement that "Even if they did want to get to Baba through you, they would still have to come in to Lyari to arrest him. And for that they need to grow balls" (Hamid 77). The process of apprehending an individual in the Lyari area implies a clash between governmental jurisdiction and community residents, which may include power dynamics, societal frictions, and diverse viewpoints. The dynamic interaction among many forces, each possessing its own perspective on the urban landscape, reflects the intricate nature of urban existence as conceptualised within the framework of phantasmagoria.

The novel introduces Baba, the son of Badal Boxer because he was the "most feared badmaash of lyari", and emphasizes his importance in Lyari's history (Hamid 80). Ishmail contemplates Baba's troubled upbringing and connection to the nearby Chaiwallah hotel. Sitting at the hotel, he realizes that kids were playing with a human

head instead of a ball, which is unsettling. This incident draws attention to Lyari's dark society. The narrative demonstrates a nuanced temporal organisation by interchanging between Baba's first experiences seeing matches at the chaiwallah hotel “matches at the chaiwallah hotel downstairs after his father’s death and difficult situation” and the present period, in which Baba occupies the position of a monetary supporter for prospective football players (Hamid 81). In this particular setting, the interplay of time gives rise to a phenomenon known as “temporal phantasmagoria”, when the past and present coexist and exert reciprocal influence (ERDAL 41). This assertion highlights the importance of the evolution of urban identities through time, which is shaped by the dynamic interplay between historical narratives and the contemporary urban landscape. The passage illustrates the cognitive mapping of the character Ishmail, who first has difficulty in accepting the disconcerting reality of the "ball" (Hamid 81). This specific occurrence of awareness underscores the potential for deception within the urban environment, whereby what seems to be ordinary and routine may in fact conceal unsettling and alarming truths. This remark underscores the influence of phantasmagoria on the legibility of urban settings, since it incorporates aspects of deception and disorientation.

The story presents a detailed account of the precise geographical placement of the office of the head of Special Branch, situated on the sixth floor of the Police Head Office. The book describes how tough it is to get into the sixth-floor office of the head of the Special Branch, which is part of the Police Head Office and has tight security. It's meant to be quiet and separate on this floor. The Special Branch is the top spy force for the local government. Its roots go back to the British Raj. It's only for people who have been called, not for people who want to vent. The spatial arrangement of this specific office space, characterised by its physical isolation from the surrounding areas of the building and the stark contrast in sound levels between the tranquilly inside and the bustling activity on the lower floors, presents a spatial phenomenon that can be referred to as a phantasmagoria. The juxtaposition of spatial isolation and the lack of sound inside the building generates a remarkable contrast, so engendering a surreal ambiance. “The silence here is in complete contrast to the hustle and bustle of the floors below, but this is supposed to be by design” (Lynch 88). This discovery underscores the ability of some metropolitan places to hold a transcending atmosphere, hence emphasising the multifaceted nature of urban identity. The introduction of restricted

entry fosters a perception of phantasmagoria inside the urban setting. The previously described phenomena gives rise to an impression of exclusivity and secrecy that might influence the understanding and memory of the urban environment. The aforementioned assertion suggests that the urban setting has hidden and exclusive layers that are enigmatic and challenging for the general populace to grasp.

The passage introduces Brigadier Fazli, a military official, who seeks to schedule a meeting with the Don to discuss the Party's political direction. The manifestation of phantasmagoria becomes apparent via the complicated power relations seen within the urban landscape of Karachi. Byram says, "The maulvis were getting too big for their boots and the faujis wanted to cut them down to size, using us" (Hamid 97). The military's aim to reduce the influence of religious leaders, referred to as maulvis, and the Party's participation in this effort create a peculiar atmosphere in which political objectives and alliances often exceed conventional boundaries. The quote provided encapsulates the enigmatic nature of power and its impact on urban character, particularly emphasising the profound consequences that develop when the military becomes aware inside the country.

The depiction of Brigadier Fazli's office, which has been intentionally constructed to evoke terror and subjugate visitors, offers valuable insights into the symbolic urban planning that shapes perceptions of power and control. The arrangement of chairs in a spatial layout that emphasises the brigadier's dominance helps to provide a distinct feeling of power and hierarchical organisation. The use of this symbolic motif functions to enhance the surreal and illusory attributes of the urban environment, in which the arrangement of physical spaces and architectural choices emphasise the dominant structures of power.

As the political party gained power and influence in the metropolitan region, the Don planned the inaugural jalsa at Nishtar Park to boost its significance. The jalsa has a mesmerizing and surreal characteristic that becomes evident from its very beginning. The resolute will of the Don to orchestrate a lavish public celebration, colloquially known as a "coming-out party something that would make everyone sit up and take notice of the Party" serves as a prime illustration of the remarkable and embellished significance attributed to this moment in the collective memory of the city's residents (Hamid 97). This event disrupts the typical and repetitive aspects of urban existence, prompting folks to "become vigilant and direct their attention towards the party"

(Hamid 97). The concept of "phantasmagoria," as articulated by Nadir Lahiji, refers to the occurrence in which a city experiences a temporary transformation of its identity, and "means to further anaestheticize it in the interests of greater social control" typified by a mesmerizing exhibition of spectacle and wonder (Andreotti and Lahiji 66). The jalsa, functioning as an enduring commemoration, demonstrates the city's resilience and intrinsic nature, demonstrating the enduring influence of illusions on a city's collective identity. This incident exemplifies how a one event may transform the essential character of a sprawling metropolis, rejuvenating its collective consciousness and vibrancy.

Mian Mithu seeks Ismail's assistance to address the issue of Baba Dacait's control over Lyari. He proposes that Baba Dacait "has become a major irritant for the Party and for the city. He believes he is above the law" and luring Baba Dacait out of Lyari, possibly through an interview with a trusted journalist, to resolve the problem (Hamid 109). The above remark concisely encapsulates the inherent essence of political power dynamics within the context of Karachi. The act of prioritising the capture of Baba Dacait, a significant figure in the power dynamics of the city, may be seen as a representation of phantasmagorias that shape the character of Karachi. The complex contrivance created by Mian Mithu serves as a prime example of the importance of deception and strategic manoeuvre within the urban identity of the city, hinting at the delicate balance between authority and opposition. The city's varied and complex terrain, marked by power relations, is further accentuated by the existence of manipulation and political deceit.

Ishmail, a journalist, assumes a prominent role in shaping public opinion and thus shaping the ethos of the urban community. The proposal to encourage Baba Dacait's emergence by using the existing rapport between the journalist and the individual underscores the importance of media in influencing urban perceptions. The existence of this phantasmagoric element suggests that the city's identity may be influenced and sometimes distorted via the manipulation of media and the control of public perception, a tactic often used by political entities. The media's ability to influence and interpret the perception of reality in urban settings contributes to the understanding of the complex nature of Karachi's identity.

Ishmael and Jheenga met at Botal Galli, near Rafiq Rangoonwala's business. They went to Baba's guarded home in Afshani Galli, which was lit up beautifully.

Large artwork and inscriptions praising Baba lined the walls, while a screen showed a football World Cup match with Baba in attendance.

Painters had painted huge murals on the house walls, paying tribute to Baba. One of the paintings, the largest one, depicted him wearing the traditional robes and turban of a Baloch sardar, holding up an AK-47 in one hand (Hamid 115).

It created a vibrant and visually appealing atmosphere. This paragraph provides a persuasive portrayal of phantasmagoria as a conceptual framework that shapes the essence of Karachi, doing this by transforming an ordinary street into an opulent and fantastical domain. The concept of phantasmagoria, as articulated by Nadir Lahiji and Anderotti, concerns the production of illusory or inventive visual depictions that exert control over the “perception and experience” of reality (Andreotti and Lahiji 66). The representation of a humble street in Lyari, namely Afshani Galli, is transformed via the incorporation of decorations, symbols, and a shared perspective. This incident highlights a striking contrast between the ordinary features of Afshani Galli, such as its “narrow, with barely enough space for a single car to pass through, and ramshackle two- or three- storey houses closely packed together”, and the luxurious decorations that have been integrated into the street (Hamid 115). The use of fairy lights, a significant power source, and the consistent supply of energy not only creates a noticeable contrast with the street's original appearance, but also enhances its transformation into a vibrant and visually engaging setting. The existence of these prominent anomalies plays a vital role in shaping a phantasmagoric identity for the urban centre.

This highlights the heightened prevalence of security measures in public spaces. The presence of highly armed guards as Ishmael notices “There were more sheedis on the rooftops, manning morchas with light machine guns and rocket-propelled grenades” and , the implementation of body searches, and the deployment of rooftop lookouts all contribute to the perception of enhanced security, but this may not necessarily align with the objective level of danger (Hamid 115). The hyperbole used not only skews the sense of street safety but also underscores the magnitude of influence and authority wielded by the individual referred to as Baba Dacait inside the locality.

Additionally, the incorporation of symbolic motifs within Afshani Galli contributes to amplifying its phantasmagorical essence. The murals, slogans, and

symbols displayed on the walls have the purpose of glorifying Baba as a heroic figure and drawing connections between him and an F-16 fighter aircraft. The symbols stated above hold a significance that surpasses their ornamental purpose, as they contribute to the elevation of Baba's character to an almost legendary position. The representation depicted in this portrayal goes beyond the conventional boundaries of a standard leader, producing a sense of grandeur and power. The passage exemplifies the communal imagination of the individuals inside society. This statement underscores the collective encounter of observing a FIFA World Cup football match on a large-scale television display measuring ten feet in height, situated within a public thoroughfare. The inclusion of an audience and Baba's attire, namely a counterfeit Barcelona shirt, serves to exemplify a collective sense of cohesion, celebration, and communal identification.

The detailed portrayal of the operation including targeted assassination, the procedure for choosing the squad responsible for the Malir ward, and the specific path followed by the intended victim provide valuable understanding of the intricate and clandestine activities inside the urban area. The complexity discussed in this passage relates to the occurrence of phantasmagoria inside urban settings, where hidden processes and urban functionality converge. The statement alludes to a covert operation with the objective of removing a prominent man, hence adding a disquieting and ominous aspect to the urban setting of Karachi. The clandestine nature of the undertaking amplifies the concept of phantasmagoria, since the urban identity incorporates hidden and sometimes unsettling narratives. Upon the receipt of the order, a tremendous feeling of fulfilment and happiness was experienced. This situation may be compared to the act of concurrently achieving two goals. "So when the order came, I was very happy. It would be like killing two birds with one stone" (Hamid 171).

The deliberate endeavour to promote urban expansion in the Lyari region is apparent within this framework. The engineers' objective in installing a large screen at Gabol Park is to provide a spectacle that has the capacity to alter "the relationships between people and their physical surroundings" and the spatial and temporal perception of the community members living in the area (Canter 665). The previously described occurrence is consistent with the theoretical framework of phantasmagoria, in which urban landscapes "becomes a means to further anaestheticize it in the interests of greater social control" and are transformed into versatile platforms that accommodate a range of activities and events (Andreotti and Lahiji 66).

The dynamic transformation of Lyari, facilitated by Baba's active engagement, serves as a prime illustration of the intrinsically mutable nature of urban settings. The capability of an order issued by Baba to expeditiously bring about changes in the urban environment underscores the inherent power dynamics inside the city and their potential to swiftly impact its character. "In three days, Lyari got cleaned up" (Hamid 175). The inclusion of armed guards accompanying waste management vehicles, in conjunction with the villagers' practise of depositing their refuse into designated containers, introduces a peculiar and discordant aspect to the narrative. The creative style known as surrealism embodies the phantasmagoric qualities that are inherent in urban settings, where diverse elements coexist in juxtaposition. "Armed boys riding on the trash collection trucks with their weapons" (Hamid 175)

"All the ward members are wearing sunglasses, most are wearing some kind of Party identification... They might as well have all come wearing 'I Heart the Don' T-shirts..." this incident further examines the importance of media networks and oral communication in spreading the concept of a "revolution" (Hamid 175). This discovery highlights the significance of narratives and rumours in shaping the urban identity, aligning with the concept of phantasmagoria. Ward members' attire and behaviour serve to emphasise their shared sense of identity. The confident disposition of the city's residents, fostered by a lengthy history of asserting authority, significantly influences the city's character. By creating the appearance of unity and bolstering the public's perception of the urban landscape, the collective display of loyalty to the Party and the Don contributes to the spectacle's deceptive nature. Diligence between authorised and unauthorised sources of authority is complicated by the coexistence of vehicles bearing official local government licence plates and conspicuously displaying Party emblems. Drawing a connection to the concept of phantasmagoria, the use of both formal and informal elements in this context emphasises the dynamic and complex qualities that are intrinsic to urban landscapes.

In Karachi, political operatives assemble enormous audiences utilising legal and deceptive tactics to give the appearance of support for the candidate's plea and the Party's ability to exert influence and mobilise large numbers of people in pursuit of its goals. Various techniques are used, such as offering incentives or using coercion to encourage citizens to engage in public meetings. This serves the purpose of staging a political spectacle that effectively shapes the collective view and characterisation of

Karachi. The manipulation of public perception described above aligns with the concept of phantasmagoria, in which the urban environment is shaped by the performative aspects of political actions. "No one was better at gathering crowds in this town than the Party... the only thing that mattered was that the powers that be saw large crowds coming to listen to our candidate" (Hamid 225). This offers an overview of the Party's capacity to exert influence and mobilise substantial numbers of individuals in the pursuit of its objectives. A range of strategies are used, including the provision of incentives or the application of force, in order to motivate individuals to participate in public gatherings. The primary objective of this endeavour is to orchestrate a political spectacle that adeptly influences the collective perception and portrayal of Karachi. The aforementioned description of manipulating public perception is consistent with the idea of phantasmagoria, whereby the urban environment is influenced by the performative elements of political acts.

This section delves into the significance of urban graffiti as a method of public communication within the urban landscape of Karachi. Graffiti serves as a means of communication and self-expression, offering a forum for the transmission of political perspectives via succinct, influential, and sometimes clever declarations. Urban graffiti, comparable to a widely available social media platform, has a role in augmenting the unique character of cities and actively shaping the political awareness of the general population, hence contributing to the phenomena sometimes referred to as phantasmagoria. This shows the presence of political symbols and iconography within the urban environment of Karachi, with a particular focus on their visual prominence. The Party's insignia, such as the Don and the aeroplane, are prominently displayed throughout the urban environment in many mediums, including posters, stickers, and painted murals.

Normally you cannot drive or walk for more than three minutes anywhere in this city without being confronted with the image of either the Don or an airplane - the Party's electoral symbol-on poster, or sticker, or as a painted mural. At times, it feels as if the Don's sunglasses-covered eyes are watching your every step in this city (Hamid 227).

The visual manifestation of the Don's gaze, as shown on posters, plays a crucial role in establishing the collective identity of the city and helps to the establishment of a surreal visual milieu that aligns with the concept of phantasmagoria. The paragraph critically

analyses the Party's use of urban spatial alterations as a fundamental element of its political strategy. Through collaborative endeavours, citizens actively participate in the practise of replacing posters with graphic representations of political candidates, so creating a visually compelling spectacle. However, the text also acknowledges that these activities might be seen as a kind of superficiality, so reinforcing the concept of phantasmagoria. Within this particular setting, urban growth often exhibits a tendency to prioritise superficial changes rather than substantial transformations.

4.3 Analyzing the Contributing Facets to the Legibility of Karachi in Selected Texts

The delineation of distinct neighbourhoods or districts is of paramount importance in the field of urban planning and legibility studies, as it serves to better the overall comprehensibility and organisation of a city's structure. The mention of Lyari in the provided text serves to underscore its designation as an officially acknowledged urban locality within the larger metropolitan region of Karachi. The region of Lyari may be regarded as a discrete and identifiable geographic entity that contributes to the overall comprehensibility of the urban landscape of Karachi.

Ishmael arrives at the "Kutyana Memon Hospital" on the outskirts of Lyari to meet Baba (Hamid 78). The journey begins with a precise spatial indication. This geographical reference serves as a pivotal point of reference, delineating a distinct location within an urban environment. Spatial anchors play a crucial role in enhancing comprehension of the urban environment by providing a stable directional reference point.

The use of temporal indicators in this context improves the comprehensibility of the urban environment, as individuals are more capable of creating cognitive representations that accurately depict the dynamic nature of everyday activities inside the cityscape. By understanding the temporal dimension, characters are capable of deciphering the regular patterns of the city, predicting future events, and engaging more deeply with the narrative, thus improving their cognitive mapping of the urban environment.

The narrative portrays Khudda Market as a symbol of the multifaceted metropolitan setting, whereby a multitude of routine behaviors and business transactions take place in an intricate and synchronized fashion. The lively ambiance,

likely characterized by the auditory presence of vendors, the busy nature of trade, and the dialogues among passersby, not only serves to depict the visible manifestation of the marketplace but also enhances the understanding of urban life. The presence of street vendors involved in the trade of illegal mobile phones and counterfeit football jerseys holds significant significance, as it not only provides insights into the economic activities that underpin the urban landscape but also introduces a vital dimension of informality and the informal economy within urban settings. These many features function as cultural markers that enhance the comprehension of the city. Moreover, by examining these specific activities and socio-economic practices, the narrative provides valuable insights into the lived experiences of the inhabitants of Karachi. The market functions as a space where diverse social and economic groups come together, demonstrating the complex and dynamic interplay between cultural norms, socioeconomic conditions, and urban settings. Essentially, it serves as a gateway to interpret the socio-cultural dynamics of the city and the intricate interrelationships among its inhabitants.

Ishmael's perspective of Baba's departure from their insulated social circle and his contrast with the distant Don are shown in their conversation. Baba's unusual position bridges two realms, affecting Defence and Clifton's wealthy districts from the urban context. The narrative shows fundamental aspect of urban legibility, focusing on the socio-economic disparities and spatial divisions that exist within the city of Karachi. The passage elucidates a conspicuous dichotomy between two different groups: the "drawing-room leaders" residing in affluent areas such as Defence and Clifton, and the citizens inhabiting the inner city (Hamid 79). The privileged elite, who dwell in securely fortified houses, occupy a geographically distinct environment that is disconnected from the ordinary realities of urban life. The conversation suggests that baba has a unique position that covers both spheres, emphasizing the complex socio-spatial characteristics of the urban environment.

The inclusion of Baba's genealogy as the descendant of the infamous Badal Boxer offers a contextual framework that is deeply anchored in historical and socio-cultural factors, hence enhancing the narrative. The narrative chronicles Baba's personal history, beginning with his early experiences of spectating matches at the "chaiwallah hotel" and extending to the current day (Hamid 81). The inclusion of the temporal component enhances the cognitive representation of Karachi, as it underscores the

dynamic nature of urban environments and the transformative impact of personal encounters on people's perceptions. The statement elucidates the chronological patterns of the city and the evolution of significant locations.

The dialogue among the characters over Baba's financial interests in the nearby football club and the deformed "ball" highlights the intersection of economic factors and communal dynamics (Hamid 81). The examination of resource allocation and utilisation for collective endeavours, particularly under difficult conditions, serves as an indicator of the economic and social preferences of the community.

The incident reaches its climax with a surprising revelation, as Ishmail has a moment of enlightenment whereby he recognises that the thing being discussed, previously identified as a "ball," is, in fact, a "human head" (Hamid 81). The occurrence of these unforeseen circumstances introduces an element of astonishment and perplexity that disrupts the legibility of the urban setting. This discovery underscores the complexity of urban environments and their potential to generate unexpected and unsettling behaviours, therefore challenging conventional assumptions and cognitive frameworks. This excerpt examines the unpredictable and gloomy aspects of city life, emphasising the idea that seeming legibility may sometimes be deceptive.

The overview of the office of Abdul Ahad Mallick has a key role within the administrative framework of Karachi. The deliberate simplicity of the physical setting, "There are no laminated floors or wood-panelled walls, nothing to denote that the occupant of this office is the third senior-most police officer" creates a noticeable contrast with the opulence seen inside the offices of those in higher-ranking positions (Hamid 89). The architectural difference serves as a representation of the intricate spatial hierarchy inside the city, whereby distinct districts exhibit varying levels of importance and distinction. The excerpt elucidates the legibility of Karachi by illustrating the spatial organisation of power and authority via its portrayal of the unpretentious attributes of Mallick's office.

Mian Mithu Sahib, the media spokesperson for the United Front, exemplifies the influence that the media and public representatives exert in shaping the perception of legibility in urban environments. The protagonist's intentional demeanor and interaction with him provide a clear demonstration of the significant impact that public figures have on shaping public discourse. Through an exploration of the complex

ethical quandaries that urban residents face, it gives a deeper understanding of the city's legibility.

A microcosmic portrayal of Karachi's political landscape offers insights into the intricate power relations inside the urban setting. Mian Mithu says, "Well, Ismail, we need your help, Baba Dacait, as you would have gleaned from today's headlines, has become a major irritant for the Party and for the city" (Hamid 109). The appeal made by Mian Mithu to the protagonist for aid in diverting Baba Dacait's attention from Lyari underscores the complex interplay between many political factors that contribute to the urban fabric of Karachi. The legibility of the urban environment is intricately linked to political maneuvers, whereby each strategic move on the metaphorical chessboard influences the overall character of the city. The narrative adeptly illustrates an intricate correlation between predators and prey, serving as a symbolic representation of the multifaceted dynamics inherent in Karachi. The intended methodologies used by Mian Mithu to manipulate and exert control over his targets may be seen as a manifestation of the power dynamics and strategic alliances that shape the urban environment. Comprehending the intricate and perhaps contradictory urban identity of Karachi is reliant on comprehensively appreciating these processes.

The role of Ismail as a journalist has considerable significance within the framework of this urban narrative. The statement underscores the substantial influence exerted by the media in molding the identity of Karachi. The proposal put up by Mian Mithu to use the preexisting bond between the protagonist and Baba Dacait for political gain underscores the influential role of the media in shaping the populace's perception of the urban environment. Hence, the urban identity of Karachi is intrinsically marked by deceit and manipulation. The character of the city is influenced by intricate power dynamics, whereby each action reflects the city's diverse and multifaceted nature.

The current state of the city, which has been under shutdown for three consecutive days as a result of the murder of Mian Mithu, the party's spokesperson. The presence of social and political unrest affects a city's legibility because it serves as a visible indicator of the underlying tensions, conflicts, and disruptions within the urban environment. The closure of several businesses and institutions in the city acts as a prominent indicator of the current state of disturbance, offering both outsider spectators and residents a quick understanding of the ongoing conflict. The following quote also depicts the economic ramifications resulting from the shutdown.

The transporters claim that more than sixty buses and trucks were burnt by members of the United Front during the strike period. The Chamber of Commerce and Industry has claimed that the strike has caused the economy a loss of ten billion rupees. (Hamid 120)

The finding underscores the difficulties faced by individuals in the general population due to the limited availability of essential commodities such as petrol, dairy milk, ghee, and eggs. The Transporters' Association's "protection from the police and guarantees from the government that its trucks will not be damaged before resuming service" and assurances underscores the economic vulnerabilities within the urban area (Hamid 120). This incident emphasizes the intersection of political instability and its economic ramifications, which is a vital aspect of understanding the legibility of the city.

This incident indirectly discusses the disruption of public services and infrastructure. The prolonged strike has led to a scarcity of public transit and the reported destruction of buses and trucks, underscoring the compromised condition of vital urban services during times of social and political unrest. The disruption indicated above has a notable influence on the everyday schedules of those living in the city, hence improving the city's legibility by highlighting deficiencies in its various systems. The Transporters' Association's plea for protection and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry's assessment of economic losses serve as illustrations of the intricate interplay among various stakeholders in Karachi's metropolitan setting. The complex web of interconnected interests has a significant impact on the legibility of the urban environment, as it reveals the multifaceted nature of the challenges it encounters.

The speaker's group is proficient at extortion via violence and intimidation. A full-scale struggle against Baba's forces in Lyari is limited. This conflict is said to cause massive death and reputation harm. Their urban domination hinges on invincibility. A Lyari loss might empower other factions or invite the Taliban. This incident delves into the intricate urban geopolitical landscape of Karachi and highlights the existence of multiple centers of authority, specifically the "sheedis" led by Baba, the United Front, and the Taliban in various provinces (Hamid 124). The complex web of people occupying diverse roles highlights Karachi's depiction as a metropolis marked by a plethora of distinct and often opposing interests vying for supremacy. It also highlights the unique geographical attributes of Lyari and the associated challenges it poses. The Lyari region is depicted as a geographical area distinguished by the existence of the

sheedis, a community known for their notable attributes of fortitude, readiness, and resolve. The depiction of the "fight for every alley" in Lyari shows the diverse composition of urban landscapes, marked by a multitude of distinct and often difficult-to-reach corners that contribute to the formation of the city's collective identity (Hamid 124). Each neighbourhood and locality exhibits unique characteristics.

This highlights the importance of maintaining power and reputation. The concept that the United Front, as a unified body, is resistant to challenge contributes to enhancing its standing as a powerful and authoritative presence in the urban environment. The enduring struggle to uphold power and control is a recurring theme within the collective consciousness of the city, as various factions strive to create and retain their dominance. It also highlights the potential for a conflict in Lyari that might have a ripple effect in Karachi, as it may embolden other individuals to assert their interests. The intricate balance that defines the identity of a city is exemplified by the interconnectedness of urban dynamics and the potential for escalation.

The description of Katrak Colony as "once owned by Paris, but is now rented out by a small business that makes and packs potato chips on the premises. Most of the original families have moved out of Katrak Colony, going to more tony locations like Clifton or the Parsi colony in Mehmoodabad" (Hamid 227). It offers an introductory overview of the concept of urban transition and demographic shifts, with a particular emphasis on the developmental trajectory of Katrak Colony. The transition from ownership to leasing among small firms serves as a prime example of the changing nature of urban landscapes throughout history.

The phenomenon of indigenous families migrating to wealthy districts like as Clifton and Mehmoodabad serves as a notable illustration of the changing socioeconomic dynamics in Karachi. This paragraph explores the analysis of the emotional connection and shared recollection associated with certain urban locations. Freny's decision to stay at Soldier Bazaar, despite the changes and challenges faced, highlights the significance of individual and cultural attachments to a certain place. "After her death, it became more important to Byram to stay on and preserve her memory in the old house" (Hamid 227)

Byram's decision to preserve her memories by staying at the elderly home highlights the intricate connection between individual emotions and the

understandability of urban environments. The paragraph provides a preliminary exposition on the manifestation of urban violence in the particular context of Soldier Bazaar. The fault line within the urban area is characterized by its function as a delineating border where the intersecting interests of many entities coexist. The religious factions, often referred to as the Party, together with the increasing prominence of Baba Dacat, are seen as significant actors in the region, hence underscoring the intricate nature of the city. The present discourse delves into the notion of power hegemony as it pertains to urban settings. The research highlights the discrepancy between the Party's claimed control over Soldier Bazaar and its actual influence inside Karachi, emphasising that electoral successes do not always equate to practical power. The remark above emphasises the existence of resistance against the Party's dominant control inside the area, so revealing the intricate power dynamics within the urban environment.

"No one can move without the Party knowing of it" references the extensive surveillance and regulatory mechanisms prevalent in the city of Karachi (Hamid 229). The existence of ward attendants who are armed with pickets indicates a notable level of localised jurisdiction. The Party's cognizance of activities taking place in the surrounding area suggests the existence of a surveillance system that augments the city's legibility.

"There hasn't been a robbery in that area in thirty years... So both the police and the Party are lying" (Hamid 290). Both law enforcement agencies and political organisations are actively involved in the propagation of misinformation. This introduces the notion of incongruities within authoritative accounts about crime and security. Through a critical analysis of the claims put out by law enforcement officials and the ruling political party, it becomes evident that there may be instances of information manipulation and the existence of alternative narratives within the urban environment. This phenomena also enhances the complexity of Karachi's legibility.

4.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, the analysis of *The Party Worker*, has demonstrated a thorough exploration of the numerous elements that impact the legibility of Karachi. The investigation into the elements that contribute to the lucidity of the city's portrayal in these texts has revealed a complex interplay among power dynamics, mental image

manipulation, and urban space legibility. The narrative examines how those in positions of power manipulate the mental images of city dwellers through the use of phantasmagoric elements, thereby affecting the city's legibility. The city is portrayed in *The Party Worker* as more than a mere physical environment. This demonstrates the manner in which those in authority manipulate the city, underscoring the intricate relationship between narrative construction, power relations, and the comprehensibility of urban environments. This study emphasises the necessity for continued investigation into the complex interconnections that exist among electrical systems, literature, and the legibility of urban environments. It offers crucial perspectives on the broader sociocultural dimensions of urban environment.

CHAPTER 5

CONSTRUCTING LEGIBILITY IN THE CITYSCAPE: A STUDY OF COMMON INHABITANTS' PERSPECTIVES

Samira Shackle's *Karachi Vice: Life and Death in a Contested City*, is a gripping narrative that explores Karachi's huge urban environment. Shackle's tale exposes the urban environment's numerous complexities, including Legbilty and phantasmagoria. Shackle's novel explores Karachi's elusive essence—the phantasmagoric characteristic that makes it fascinating and intriguing. Shackle critically presents the myriad patterns and narratives that help explain the city but also complicate and obscure it. The author carefully describes Karachi's intricate labyrinth of narrow streets in the old district and its modern skyscrapers, interpreting the social complexity of Karachi. Shackle deciphers the urban environment, exposing its contradicting storylines, making it a living literary creature.

Shackle's novel explore the city's hidden elements as well as its visible ones. Shackle explores Karachi beyond its appearances and into urban dreams and fears in this story. Samira Shackle, a highly regarded British-Pakistani journalist known for her insightful contributions to journalism with a particular emphasis on the South Asian region, is the author of the literary work *Karachi Vice: Life and Death in the Contested City*. The aforementioned book, published in the year 2021, provides a comprehensive analysis of Karachi, the largest and most ethnically diverse city in Pakistan, within the framework of its complex historical backdrop and contemporary challenges. Shackle's novel provides a comprehensive examination of the complex dynamics present in Karachi, a city known for its mixed ethnic makeup, rapid urban expansion, and historical context marked by political instability and episodes of violence. The author undertakes an examination of the experiences of a heterogeneous group of people living in Karachi, including both regular citizens and members of law enforcement. The author provides a comprehensive representation of narratives that together illustrate the city's ability to adapt and recover, the obstacles it encounters, and its aspirations.

5.1 Urban Legibility: Unveiling Subjective Spatiotemporal Mental Representations

The ability to navigate and comprehend urban environments is a fundamental aspect of the human condition. However, it is crucial to acknowledge that this ability is not uniformly distributed across individuals, as people demonstrate varying levels of "development of spatial awareness" and understanding. As a result, this gives rise to individualised perspectives and understandings of urban landscapes (Li and Klippel 482). The subjective nature of "mental representations with spatiotemporal coherence," which are cognitive frameworks that influence our understanding of spatial connections and temporal sequences, becomes particularly evident when analysing urban legibility (Albertazzi, et al. 79). The concept of urban legibility pertains to the level of convenience people experience while "each individual creates and bears his own image," attempting to orient themselves and move through urban areas (Lynch 7). The present research aims to examine the subjective dimensions of mental representations related to geography and time, specifically emphasising the impact of individual experiences and perspectives on the development and organisation of these representations. The current study focuses on Safdar, a resident of Karachi, Pakistan. Safdar's extensive expertise and comprehension of the city provide a striking illustration that underscores the subjective nature of urban intelligibility.

Safdar's profound understanding of Karachi, characterized as an "encyclopedic knowledge of the urban sprawl," stands in stark contrast to the narrator's expressed inability to navigate the city (Shackle 1). This distinction highlights the significant role of individual experiences in shaping spatiotemporal mental representations. Safdar's comprehensive knowledge extends to "every inch" of Karachi, suggesting a deep connection between his cognitive representation and his personal experiences within the urban landscape (Shackle 1). This connection underscores the subjective nature of urban legibility, demonstrating how individuals' unique experiences and interactions with urban environments shape their understanding and ability to navigate these spaces. Safdar has a profound understanding of Karachi, characterised by a comprehensive knowledge of the city's vast metropolitan terrain. This stands in stark contrast to the narrator's recognised difficulty in navigating the urban area (Shackle 1). The aforementioned distinction highlights the significant impact of personal experiences on the development of mental representations that include both spatial and temporal

aspects. Safdar has a comprehensive comprehension that includes the whole of Karachi, indicating a deep connection between his cognitive framework and his personal experiences inside the urban environment. The association indicated above emphasises the subjective nature of urban legibility, demonstrating how individuals' unique experiences and interactions with urban environments impact their understanding and ability to navigate these spaces. The challenges encountered by the narrator while traversing Karachi highlight the subjective nature of urban legibility. Lynch contends that acquiring a substantial quantity of information regarding an urban environment is "a constant interacting process" (Lynch 7). The degree of difficulty that individuals encounter in this process is contingent upon their individual levels of comprehension. This methodology aligns with the notion that the cognitive depictions that people form of their urban environments are shaped by their distinct perspectives, individual encounters, and levels of engagement. Those who have resided in a specific city for an extended period of time, as in the case of Safdar in Karachi, tend to develop more comprehensive and intricate mental representations of the urban environment. Consequently, this enhances their ability to traverse and comprehend the spatial configuration of the urban environment.

The Landhi area in Karachi serves as a prime example of the intrinsically subjective nature of urban legibility. The specific spatial identity of the area evokes a distinctive sensory of inhabitants and a "long associations with some part of his city, and his image is soaked in memories and meanings", and visual experience, characterised by an uneven assemblage of residential buildings and a prominent industrial presence (Lynch 48). In Shackle's work on Karachi, the author highlights the need of subjectivity in understanding urban environments. This is achieved by the use of descriptive language, such as phrases like "low, thorny trees rising from trash heaps" and "unevenly tar-macked roads," which successfully capture the sensory and environmental characteristics of Landhi (Shackle 2). These specific examples demonstrate the impact of individual perceptions and personal experiences on the understanding of certain aspects within a larger metropolitan environment.

The subjectivity of urban legibility is further emphasised by the process Adil underwent and his ensuing voyage back home, with a specific focus on the cultural and visual elements of the Landhi region. Shackle emphasises the unique visual and sensory attributes of the region through the portrayal of "roads lined with slender, prickly trees"

and "vibrantly painted trucks adorned with elaborate patterns" (Shackle 4). This excerpt provides an analysis of how personal experiences and perspectives can shape cognitive representations of urban landscapes. It demonstrates how seemingly mundane features of a particular location can hold considerable importance for individuals who have interacted with them. The practical challenges inherent in urban navigation, particularly in areas like Landhi that are distinguished by complex transit systems and industrial infrastructure, are underscored by Safdar's decision to utilise an ambulance instead of a rickshaw following his surgical procedure. This instance highlights the inherent subjectivity in transportation decision-making, wherein a multitude of factors influence outcomes such as individual experiences, concerns regarding safety, and the accessibility of feasible substitutes. The spatial-temporal cognitive representations of individuals, which are shaped by their "subjective experience of space" and perspectives, are critical for optimising navigation through urban environments and arriving at informed choices regarding transportation (Donald 200).

Safdar's comprehensive portrayal of the urban setting of Landhi, including its historical context, cultural diversity, and ethnic mix, provides a comprehensive understanding of the neighbourhood. The intricate arrangement of the roadway network, reminiscent of a labyrinth (Shackle 8), serves as a visually captivating representation of the high density and intricate nature seen in metropolitan settings. The intricate design and unique characteristics of Landhi are underscored by the evocative depiction of surrounding enterprises, such as "hole-in-the-wall shops" that have a striking similarity to "cement caves" (Shackle 9). This serves as an illustration of how seemingly ordinary enterprises may shape the perception of urban space. Safdar's ability to provide a nuanced and complete analysis showcases his deep understanding of the Landhi area, which has been shaped by his many experiences and interactions within the community.

Safdar and Parveen, two residents of the bustling metropolis, possess intricate cognitive representations of Karachi that illustrate the subjective nature of spatial cognition and its impact on the clarity of the urban environment. While Safdar has a broad and extensive understanding of the city, Parveen's representation is based on her own experience and personal connections inside specific neighborhoods. Parveen's awareness of Lyari's communal life has been shaped by her own experience of transitioning from an outsider to an insider. On the other hand, Safdar has gained a

comprehensive knowledge of Karachi's streets, landmarks, and cultural nuances from his extensive exploration of the city. The contrasting interpretations of urban surroundings by these individuals exemplify how diverse experiences and perspectives influence one's perception of certain locations, highlighting the dynamic and intricate nature of urban legibility.

The dynamic interaction between spatial cognition and human experiences is shown by Parveen's shift from being a bystander to a proactive educator in Lyari, a historically significant district of Karachi. Historic aristocratic buildings coexist with modern, highly populated structures in Lyari's varied urban setting. Lyari's chaotic streets made a strong impact on Parveen since they stood in stark contrast to her used-to, well-organized surroundings. Over time, her involvement in community education programmes altered her outlook, and she came to really appreciate Lyari's unique traits and resilience. During the 1960s, due to a lack of attention from authorities, impromptu street schools arose. This exemplifies the unwavering determination and commitment of Lyari's community towards education, despite encountering adversity. The schools, established among the urban turmoil, exemplify the opportunities and risks inherent in Lyari's environment. Partaking in these street schools provided Parveen with a profound understanding of the community's aspirations, aspirations, and challenges; this deepened her connection with Lyari and influenced her mental image of the locality.

People's perceptions of Karachi's urban neighbourhoods are starkly different as Parveen moves from the bustling Lyari lanes to the expansive Urdu Bazaar. The contrast highlights how subjective it is to comprehend urban settings and how complex the city itself is. In stark contrast to Lyari's cramped and disorganised alleys, Urdu Bazaar had wide avenues and modern architecture. Contrasted with the famous sensory landscape of Lyari, the new setting evoked a sense of spaciousness and structure. Parveen challenges the oversimplified notion of Lyari as a slum by depicting her home "in all overcrowded glory" as a vibrant and densely populated place, emphasising its historical significance, many architectural styles, and vibrant community (Shackle 21). Despite the challenges posed by the high population density and limited resources, Lyari has a unique character and vitality that Parveen came to appreciate. The presence of both "majestic old apartment blocks" and "squat concrete buildings" in Karachi's urban landscape serves as a visual depiction of the city's historical and contemporary coexistence, enhancing the complexity of its urban fabric (Shackle 21). Upon first

observation, Lyari seemed to Parveen as a disorganised and desolate area. However, over time, Parveen developed a deep appreciation for the city's intricate cultural legacy and its extraordinary ability to triumph over challenges.

The narrative undergoes a substantial transformation as Parveen traverses a metropolis that is profoundly impacted by ongoing hostilities. The wider thoroughfares subtly attest to the gravity of the assaults, whereas the narrower alleyways transform into active arenas of conflict. Parveen's personal experiences are pivotal in comprehending the altered perception of the city that ensues as a consequence of violent acts. The author provides a detailed account of the repercussions of post-battle existence, illustrating deserted thoroughfares, closed tea establishments, and an unsettling void that supplants the customary vibrancy of the metropolis (Shackle 38). The linguistic decisions employed, including the expressions "conflict continued to rage" and "streets felt particularly perilous for women," expose the gendered dimensions that underlie the narrator's personal encounter with urban life. This enhances the representation's complexity by incorporating multiple tiers of social analysis (Shackle 38).

Parveen's experiences in Karachi are consistent with theoretical viewpoints on spatial cognition. Piaget's theory of cognitive development posits that humans actively create their own comprehension of the world by "cognitive development, assimilation and accommodation" and by incorporating new information into existing mental structures and accommodating those structures to fit new experiences (Bormanaki and Khoshhal 996). This process is shaped by personal encounters and interactions with the surrounding environment. Similarly, Lynch's idea of mental maps highlights the subjective character of spatial cognition, proposing that people form unique representations of urban landscapes based on their own viewpoints and experiences. Parveen's experiences in Karachi provide persuasive evidence for the subjective nature of mental conceptions about location and time. The transition from being a passive spectator to an active participant in the domains of education and management, the noticeable disparities between the urban regions of Lyari and Urdu Bazaar, and the impact of violence on her interpretation of the city all underscore the importance of personal experiences and perspectives in shaping our understanding of urban environments. Parveen's story highlights that the legibility of urban settings is not fixed, but rather subjective and altered by the individual experiences of city dwellers.

The significance of subjective spatial cognition in relation to urban legibility is demonstrated through the mental representations of Karachi that three city residents—Safdar, Parveen, and Zille—hold. Safdar possesses an extensive knowledge of the city's tremendous urban expansion, whereas Parveen's depiction is significantly influenced by her personal encounters in particular areas. Zille's cognitive image is moulded through his active participation in the city's diverse social and cultural environments. The diverse array of cognitive representations that individuals hold regarding cities underscores the complex and multifaceted character of comprehending urban environments. Urban spaces are profoundly influenced by the perspectives, social-cultural backgrounds, and experiences of its inhabitants.

Zille's experiences in Karachi exemplify the subjective factors that influence the formation of mental representations of space and time. His exploration of the city's many social and geographical landscapes exposes the complex interaction between personal perspectives, societal stories, and physical surroundings in influencing one's comprehension of metropolitan areas.

Upon reaching Sohrab Goth, a densely populated locality notorious for social unrest, Zille's first discomfort and apprehension serve as a poignant reminder of how cultural narratives and preexisting biases significantly influence one's perception of metropolitan settings. These preconceived notions, frequently influenced by societal prejudices and fear-mongering strategies, may significantly hinder the ability to engage with other individuals and completely comprehend their perspectives. Zille acknowledges, "he had heard stories about Sohrab Goth, a neighborhood mostly inhabited by the Pashtun ethnic group, and its bad reputation" (Shackle 47). Zille's decision to actively engage with the challenging reputation of Sohrab Goth highlights the fluid and context-dependent nature of urban perception and understanding. His willingness to critically examine his original prejudices and actively participate in the social and cultural dynamics of the community led to a gradual shift in his viewpoint, demonstrating the dynamic nature of spatial cognition. Zille's transformation is evident from his own declaration: "He found himself drawn into the neighbourhood, intrigued by its vibrant atmosphere and the warmth of its residents" (Shackle 48).

The significant geographical contrast between Kiamari, renowned for its tranquil coastline and mangrove forests, and Lyari, characterised by development and conflict, emphasises the influence of physical environments on cognitive mappings.

Zille's experiences in these contrasting locations highlight the adaptability of spatial cognition in adjusting to different environmental conditions. According to Zille, "it was wrapped around a long coastline of sandy beaches interspersed with mangrove forests" (Shackle 126). The tranquil and calm vibe of this place starkly contrasts with the chaotic and conflict-ridden environment of Lyari, highlighting the substantial impact of physical surrounds on shaping cognitive impressions of metropolitan spaces.

Zille's understanding of Karachi aligns with accepted scholarly paradigms on subjective spatial cognition. Lynch's theory of cognitive mapping emphasises the individual's role in constructing their own mental representations of urban environments, which are shaped by their own experiences, interpretations, and socio-cultural context. Tuan's concept of topophilia delves into "understanding the subjectivity of participants" and the affective connection between individuals and locations, highlighting the subjective dimension of our perception and comprehension of space (Schweitzer, et al. 969). It emphasises the emotional and emotive aspects of human interaction with urban settings.

Zille's encounters in Karachi align with Goffman's concept of stigma, indicating that prevalent societal biases and presumptions may greatly influence people's perceptions and interactions inside urban settings. Upon reaching Sohrab Goth, he experiences initial discomfort due to the adverse social stigma attached to the neighbourhood. This sensation subsequently evokes emotions of apprehension and uncertainty. Zille admits, "he couldn't help feeling a sense of apprehension as he drove into the neighborhood" (Shackle 47).

Zille's understanding of Karachi showcases the subjective components of spatial perception and how they interact with social, cultural, and geographical factors. His experiences demonstrate the dynamic nature of urban legibility, showcasing how individual perspectives, socio-cultural conditions, and physical environments shape our understanding and engagement with cities. Zille's story emphasises the need of recognising and addressing the subjective elements that affect the clarity and understandability of urban settings, particularly in terms of socioeconomic and geographical disparities. By acknowledging the diverse range of urban interactions and the impact of individual perspectives, we may strive to create urban settings that are more inclusive and equitable, fostering meaningful relationships and understanding among diverse individuals.

The analysis of the cognitive representations of Safdar, Parveen, and Zille underscores the subjective nature of our perception of space and time, and the substantial impact it has on our comprehension of urban surroundings. Their stories illustrate the intricate interplay between individual viewpoints, cultural narratives, and physical environments in shaping one's understanding of urban settings. Safdar's complex mental depiction, shaped by his deep comprehension of Karachi's physical layout, highlights the importance of spatial data in navigating urban environments. Parveen's personal experiences inside specific areas, filled with emotional connections, emphasise the affective dimension of our perception and comprehension of place. Zille's transformation in Sohrab Goth, from a state of terror to active engagement, exemplifies the adaptable and context-specific nature of urban perception. The collective experiences of these three people illustrate the dynamic and intricate qualities of urban legibility. Urban environments are constantly changing and shaped by the interactions between people, groups, and the physical environment. The subjective elements of cognitive representations, including spatial and temporal dimensions, have a substantial influence on the organisation of these interactions. Perceptions and interactions with urban environments are influenced by individual experiences, social narratives, and cultural contexts.

Karachi, a vibrant metropolis characterised by diverse cultures, rich historical importance, and complex urban dynamics, has always captivated writers and urban intellectuals. Amidst the intricate and perplexing alleyways, bustling marketplaces, and towering structures of the city, a unique narrative unfolds—a bizarre and mesmerising spectacle that deeply shapes Karachi's identity. This section of the analysis examines the intricate relationship between phantasmagoria and the construction of Karachi's identity as depicted in the novel set in the city.

5.2 Phantasmagoria's Influence: Unveiling the Impact on the City's Identity

Lahji and Andreotti suggest that the term phantasmagoria might be used as a valuable instrument for examining the filtered and illusory qualities of contemporary urban settings. They argue that phantasmagoria, which intentionally blends reality and illusion, spectacle and everyday life, serves as a defining characteristic of modern metropolitan regions, shaping their identities and influencing the experiences of its

citizens. In the context of Karachi, writers use phantasmagoria as a potent literary device to capture the intricate and varied nature of the metropolis. The dense and diverse topography of the urban landscape, along with its rich historical background and diverse populace, provide a perfect setting for inventive and strange narratives. The analysed work exemplifies this literary technique, adeptly constructing a narrative that blurs the distinctions between reality and illusion, thereby expressing the dynamic and uncertain essence of Karachi.

The story's protagonist, Safdar, an ambulance driver, exemplifies the surreal and bizarre aspects of the metropolis. Safdar encounters a diverse array of events on his everyday commute across Karachi, from the mundane problems experienced by ordinary citizens to the enigmatic sights that linger in the city's intricate alleys. The narrative of the book mirrors Safdar's journey across the fantastical landscape of Karachi. The novel's non-linear storyline, fast cuts, and disjointed images capture the chaotic energy of the city and its overwhelming sensory impact. Keeping a solid sense of self and identity is a constant struggle for Safdar in the face of the dynamic urban environment of Karachi. In the beginning, the symbolic passage of Safdar along Muhammad Ali Jinnah Road, which connects Civil Hospital to the headquarters of the Edhi Foundation, serves as an entrance to Karachi's dynamic metropolitan network. Saddar serves as an intriguing exhibition space where "battered colonial buildings" endure a radical metamorphosis, transforming into contemporary hubs of commerce (Shackle 11). Lahiji's proposition asserts that "the fantasy structure that rules over the aesthetic ideology of contemporary architecture, with its glorification of techno-capitalism, is no different from the 'phantasmagoria of civilization'" (14). This connection between architecture and phantasmagoria becomes apparent when examining the adaptive reuse practices employed in these structures. Consequently, these practices symbolize the reciprocal processes of decay and revitalization that characterize the urban landscape of Karachi.

By consciously juxtaposing "brightly printed signs" with the deteriorating colonial structures, Anderotti's notion of urban mirages is effectively introduced (Shackle 11). The previously mentioned transition exemplifies the city's ability to create illusions; in this instance, the vibrant commercial environment of modern Karachi conflicts with the historic exterior, creating a visual imbalance that echoes Lahiji's "architectural phantasmagoria" (20). The Merewether Tower, located in the vicinity

commonly known as "Tower," functions as a captivating and fantastical edifice (Shackle 11). Lahiji's notion of constructing a structure that encapsulates "temporal deterioration" aligns harmoniously with the symbolic significance of dust-coated, silent chimes that function as a reference point amidst the perpetually evolving urban landscape of Karachi (56). As the narrative progresses, Safdar and Chiri Babu navigate the perilous obstacles that stand in the way of their destination, Lyari, a notorious area rife with gang violence. By imposing constraints on Edhi drivers, such as avoiding high-risk regions and adhering to safety guidelines, the inherent dangers involved with this commendable but risky undertaking are emphasised. The aforementioned incident effectively presents a multifaceted and intricate portrayal of the urban landscape, with particular emphasis on the Lyari locality, renowned for its pervasive gang-related activities. The prompt emphasises Chiri Babu's rapid reply and the portrayal of Lyari as a "sprawling slum at the very heart of Karachi," located in the core part of Karachi (Shackle 20).

The amalgamation of these constituent components culminates in the production of a phantasmagoric tapestry that adeptly encapsulates the neglected facets of the urban milieu. With Lyari symbolising the ghostly underbelly of Karachi, the incident where "The body of a drug addict had been discovered near Kaki Ground in Lyari," offers a glimpse into the urban phantasmagoria (Shackle 20). Lyari is shown as a "sprawling slum at the very heart of Karachi" to highlight its vital, yet neglected, role in the character of Karachi's culture and history (Shackle 20). By barring Edhi vehicles from accessing high-risk locations, the blurry difference between genuine threats and bureaucratic constraints is further highlighted in this surreal scenario. Safdar's argument that "it wasn't fair to make patients wait until morning," as a rallying cry for independence in the strange metropolitan setting, challenging long-held norms and adding depth to Karachi's multifaceted identity (Shackle 21). Putting restrictions on Edhi drivers so they can't travel where the danger is creates a phantasmagoric conundrum where the real dangers and the real bounds are hard to tell apart. Safdar's act of pushing bureaucratic limits, as evidenced by his demand on rapid replies, is a significant example of expressing individual autonomy in an unusual urban setting. In the framework of Karachi's disaster narrative management, in navigating this phantasmagoric interplay, the line between reality and fiction blurs. When dualisms are

overcome, it's like looking at the world through a kaleidoscope, and it helps get a deeper understanding of the complex urban landscape.

The trajectory of Siraj's transition from a passive spectator at the Office of the Orangi Pilot Project (OPP) to the establishment of the TTRC has considerable importance within the context of this study. Through Siraj's experiences and efforts, Karachi's metropolitan character is illuminated. Cartography is a phantasmagoric image that defines urban identity beyond physical infrastructure. Siraj's role as a "community architect" fits the social component, whereas Anderotti's concept of a city's ongoing story includes mapping's constraints (Shackle 56). This event depicts how water constraint affects Karachi. It explores how social rituals and irregular water supplies shape the metropolis. Siraj's participation in OPP activities, particularly the meticulous mapping process, offers a lens through which the city of Karachi takes shape. There is a resemblance between the process of concretizing intangible geographical places into tactile architectural designs and Lahiji's theoretical framework of phantasmagoria, "the city as 'fantasy,' the city as 'reality,' political power in the city, economic power," which emphasises the narrative power inherent in visual renderings and representations (98). Phrases like "drawing diagrams of the streets outside" and "mapping out areas of Karachi" emphasise the transformative power of mapping, wherein intangible ideas become tangible and understandable via visual representation (Shackle 56). The narrative smoothly flows from the mapping process to the complicated issues related with water distribution, providing a glimpse into the lived lives of the people of Karachi. This incident, with its sporadic water service, exemplifies Anderotti's interest in the unpredictable qualities of urban setting. The insertion of lines like "taps in every home or office would run dry" and the subsequent mad dash to get water demonstrate the dynamic and unpredictable nature of daily existence, further accentuating the phantasmagoric nature of city (Shackle 56).

Zille spent his formative years in Landhi, a place with deep differences. The phantasmagoria that permeates Lahiji's surroundings is immediately visible as the local populace flits between the Mohajir-inhabited territory dominated by MQM's insignia and the nearby Pashtun enclave. The section highlights "The MQM easily won every election in his part of Landhi," providing evidence of a visible and diverse display of political dominance that has a significant impact on the identity of this urban centre (Shackle 90). The identity of Karachi is marked by a multifaceted interaction of diverse

perspectives and underlying inclinations towards acts of violence. Lahiji's conceptual framework aligns with Zille's acknowledgment of the Mohajir-Pashtun war. Zille says, "when Mohajir-Pashtun violence flared up, Zille and his family avoided even driving through the area" (Shackle 90). In this setting, the function of violence acquires significant importance in defining the distinctive and dynamic character of Karachi.

The urban landscape, typified by violent fights closing whole neighbourhoods, is multidimensional and bizarre. Zille's obsession with crime news is crucial to this study. In "Karachi, where violent clashes regularly shut down whole areas of the city, everyone was obsessed with the crime news in particular" (Shackle 97). Crime news reflects the unpredictability of urban surroundings and helps establish an abstract and ever-changing urban identity.

The notion of maintaining a dual life encapsulates the intrinsic duality inside the identity of Karachi, aligning with the exploration of phantasmagoria by Lahiji and Anderrotti. Zille's duality is shown by his acknowledgment by persons in public settings and social events, representing a city that incorporates both explicit and implicit aspects. Zille has a dichotomous life, "Sometimes he felt as if he was living a double life" whereby he sometimes envisions himself as concurrently occupying two separate lives (Shackle 97). The simultaneous presence of these two facets exemplifies the complex and multifaceted nature of Karachi's identity. This shows the significant impact of the media in moulding the city's identity via the use of phantasmagoric concepts. This highlights the effectiveness of the media as "a useful tool for police who wanted to show they were doing something, and for political parties who wanted to score points off their rivals" (Shackle 97). The media functions as a catalyst in the production of ever-evolving visual depictions, hence contributing to the phantasmagoric quality of Karachi.

The story explores Karachi's Lyari neighborhood's complicated power and socio-political dynamics. The plot concentrates on Uzair, whose posters and PPP membership reveal how politics and crime are intertwined. Lyari is threatened by the PPP and MQM's territorial conflict, despite their national partnership. Locationally, Uzair's residential block near Rehman's former home emphasises the community's complicated relationships and power dynamics. Adding to the peculiar nature of Lyari is the affiliation between Uzair's faction and the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), as well as their involvement as street enforcers. The use of Uzair's image on political posters is

intended to strengthen a visual narrative that establishes a strong connection between local governance and political power. "By contrast, Uzair's face adorned posters all over Lyari, often daubed with the colors of the Pakistan People's Party flag" (Shackle 128). The posters, which are prominently displayed in multiple locations across Lyari, frequently feature the distinctive hues that are emblematic of the Pakistan People's Party flag. The visual depiction not only obscures the distinction between political and criminal authority but also engenders a disconcerting perception of the government within the immediate populace.

The surrealistic quality of Lyari is a result of the PPP and the MQM's collaboration at the national level, while a profound territorial dispute persists between them. The community is currently experiencing cognitive dissonance due to the inherent contradiction between national-level political collaboration and localized confrontations. "The two parties were in coalition together in the national government, but at street level, they were involved in an aggressive turf war" (Shackle 128). The presence of this paradox enhances the phantasmagoric narrative, as the actuality of political alliances stands in stark contrast to the widespread occurrence of street violence. The drug trafficking narrative, the presence of torture facilities, and the frequent conflicts between Uzair's group and the opposing gang commanded by Arshad Pappu all add to the tense atmosphere of Lyari's representation. The prevalence of crime and violence has had a significant impact on the city's identity, creating a complex web of political allegiances and underground economies. As seen by the proliferation of drug sellers and rumors of torture cells, this dynamic muddies the line between law and disorder. "There were drug dealers everywhere, and stories of torture cells circulated. Arshad Pappu ran the main rival gang, and fighting between the groups broke out often" (Shackle 127).

Karachi Vice: Life and Death in a Contested City transcends the realm of fiction, adeptly interweaving intricate narratives that unveil the strange essence of Karachi. The narrative explores the essence of this vibrant but disorderly metropolis, using a well-crafted viewpoint of disjointed sequences and bizarre occurrences.

The diverse and vibrant nature of Karachi has a profound impact on the city's identity and has a huge effect on the lives of its inhabitants. This phenomenon is clearly observable via the stark juxtaposition of wealth and poverty, the clash between tradition and advancement, and the persistent prevalence of hostility. The work adeptly portrays

the dynamic and chaotic nature of the city, a constant state of ever-changing interactions that evoke a sense of bewilderment and discomfort in the reader. This illustrates the volatile and uncertain circumstances that several inhabitants of Karachi encounter often, underscoring the immense influence of the city's strange and constantly shifting attributes on their individual identity.

Cities, being hubs where many cultures, histories, and experiences converge, inherently encapsulate both illusion and reality. The surreal nature of these urban landscapes allows for a meticulous and insightful analysis of their attributes and the encounters of its inhabitants. In essence, *Karachi Vice* goes beyond the boundaries of inventive narrative to provide a riveting exploration of the bizarre and extraordinary elements of a bustling city. The book employs literary techniques to depict the chaos and ambiguity of urban existence, illustrating the significant impact of illusions on the development of individual and collective identities. This insightful portrayal not only elucidates the complexities of Karachi but also provides a crucial viewpoint to understand the ever-evolving and irresistibly compelling nature of cities globally.

5.3 Analyzing the Contributing Facets to the Legibility of Karachi in Selected Text

Karachi, renowned for its intricate thoroughfares, vibrant atmosphere, and glaring socioeconomic disparities, presents a formidable obstacle for individuals aiming to depict its genuine essence. In order to surmount this obstacle, Samira Shackle's *Karachi Vice: Life and Death in a Contested City* adeptly presents a compelling storyline that furnishes a comprehensive understanding of the metropolis from multiple vantage points. This segment analyses the complex correlation between literature and the understanding of urban environments, assessing the various components employed by Shackle to shed light on the intricacies of Karachi.

The narrative starts by subtly acknowledging the narrator's unconventional choice to go into the locales of Karachi that are strongly linked to instances of violence. This deliberate juxtaposition serves to provide insights into the perspectives of those who are compelled to live in an atmosphere characterised by persistent hazards. The current option under consideration is seen as essential in attaining a comprehensive understanding of Pakistan, as it positions Karachi as a microcosm with substantial implications at the national scale.

The occurrence of the 2014 international airport assault serves as a significant milestone, signifying a pivotal moment that spurred a subsequent response with heightened security measures headed by paramilitary forces. The occurrence in question has the capacity to alter the power dynamics within the urban setting, illustrating the intricate relationship between violence and the reactions of governing bodies. The first portion of the book explores the dynamic nature of conflict, effectively demonstrating how individuals manage to discover "snatches of normality" within the context of dire situations, exemplifying their ability to adapt and persevere (Shackle 1). The residents of Karachi exhibit remarkable resilience as they navigate a complex web of illicit activity, official neglect, and incidents of disproportionate use of force by law enforcement. This underscores the capacity of people to cultivate "networks of humanity and community," highlighting the significance of interpersonal relationships in addressing and alleviating difficulties. The notion of resilience functions as a conceptual framework through which the legibility of Karachi transcends mere accounts of violence, including a narrative of collective strength and determination. The assertion that Karachi serves as a prime example of the leading edge of worldwide urbanization in its most unyielding manifestation expands the narrative beyond a limited perspective. Karachi has symbolic importance with regard to the broader challenges inherent in the global urban environment, hence contributing a social component to the study. The narrator's viewpoint about Karachi subtly prompts reflection on how the metropolis epitomizes the most profound facets of worldwide urbanization.

Safdar's (an ambulance driver) activities offer a thought-provoking perspective on the legibility of the city of Karachi. Safdar's rationale for choosing back alleyways as his preferred pathway to the depot signifies an astute understanding of the complex dynamics inherent in the urban environment. This decision demonstrates an understanding that traversing main thoroughfares subjects individuals to potential dangers and uncertainties. "Safdar either took the back alleys when he walked over to the depot for his shifts, avoiding the main roads where he might be visible to a passing gunman (Shackle 31). The quotation underscores the strategic navigation techniques employed by individuals like Safdar, thereby emphasising the necessity of incorporating hazard awareness into routine activities. This analytical inquiry

underscores the intrinsic correlation that exists among security considerations, legibility of Karachi, spatial cognition, and security concerns.

Parveen's narrative provides insight into how this establishment serves as a vibrant communal space, fostering various cultural activities.

He sold not only paan here, but also snacks and chai, and at all times of day and night blasted out his favourite music, ghazals Urdu poetry set to music, often used in film scores or sung by superstar performers. Sometimes the local hijras-transgender women would gather outside to dance. (Shackle 31)

The amalgamation of paan, snacks, chai, and ghazals, accompanied by the presence of transgender women (hijras) and musical performances by Parveen's brother Nacem, highlights the rich diversity and inclusivity within the community. The late-night gatherings of elderly individuals engaging in storytelling and debates underscore the centrality of oral traditions in Lyari's cultural identity. The analogy that Lyari is constructed "not from bricks and mortar but from stories" encapsulates the profound intertwining of physical and narrative dimensions shaping the urban legibility of this Karachi neighborhood. This shows how Lyari's specific urban legibility is heavily influenced by cultural practises and community interactions.

The MQM's transformation from a promising political body fighting for the rights of the Mohajir population to a territorial authority utilizing armed street patrols helps make Karachi's political dynamics more understandable. The story's events "Young men wielding guns patrolled the streets as if they were running their own parallel state" reflect the emergence of MQM in Orangi Town and Karachi as a whole and their impact on the city's political situation (Shackle 59). Lahiji's concept of phantasmagoria is reflected in the narrative framework, which depicts a transition from an optimistic rhetoric centered on equal rights to a darker reality marked by military control and territorial domination. The historical trajectory of Karachi saw a significant transformation with the implementation of Operation Clean-up (1992), a military-led endeavour aimed at mitigating the prevailing levels of violence. The hypothesis stated by Anderotti on the fluid and unpredictable nature of urban narratives becomes evident after the implementation of the process. The fluctuation in the legibility of urban spaces in Karachi serves as a prime illustration of the dynamic and always evolving nature of the MQM's influence over the course of time.

The prominence of boundaries serves as one manifestation of the borders that separate people of various ethnic origins; this identification of character. The comment "The invisible lines separating people of different ethnicities became more obvious, sometimes physically demarcated on a map" sheds insight on how the MQM has stoked ethnic and political tensions, leading to the creation of artificial barriers between communities (Shackle 60). Ethnicity has a vital role in forming urban regions, and this phenomenon substantially improves the legibility of maps showing Karachi as a metropolis with clear demarcations. The assumption of power by the MQM brought about significant transformations in political mobilisation and involvement. The MQM's adept management of its units in addressing challenges exemplifies the party's heightened involvement in local governance as "Instead, anyone with a complaint had to go to their local MQM unit" (Shackle 60). This transition aligns with Lahiji's phantasmagoria, which holds that the core idea of democratic democracy evolves throughout time into a more centralised and controlled system.

The story explores how monsoons affect metropolitan infrastructure. The lack of proper drainage systems turns roadways into a mix of garbage and wastewater, making city spatial organisation difficult. "At first, the monsoon breaking was a relief, but then the lack of drainage turned the streets to a sludgy soup of rubbish and sewage" (Shackle 112). Power pylons and wires after bad weather show infrastructural vulnerabilities. These weaknesses cause sparking and rupturing, which shows degeneration in electrical pylons and cables like vines across the sky and near to buildings. An in-depth sociospatial examination of Karachi shows considerable socioeconomic gaps, especially around Orangi. Sewage infrastructure and water availability are still lacking in certain locations. They Orangi residents have trouble getting flowing water since they lack proper sewage pipes. "Many parts of Orangi were still without proper sewage lines; most did not have easy access to running water" (Shackle 112). These factors create a socioeconomic gap that affects people's views and interactions with their environment. The description also provides sociocultural insights into how ethnic strife shapes Karachi's comprehensibility.

The narrative emphasizes the considerable geographical disparities present in Kiamari, particularly in comparison to the adjacent region of Lyari. The seaside area of Kiamari demonstrates significant differences when compared to the densely populated and conflict-ridden Lyari. Kiamari has "a long coastline of sandy beaches interspersed

with mangrove forests" (Shackle 127). The significance of the geographical dichotomy is of utmost importance in the formation of cognitive representations of space and time, emphasizing the influence of physical space on cognitive mappings.

The depiction of Kiamari as a socioeconomically deprived area, similar to Lyari, adds a chronological dimension to the narrative. In spite of encountering typical economic challenges, Kiamari is shown as a rather tranquil community, therefore emphasizing the temporal dynamics that shape the experiences of its residents. "Kiamari had problems of its own: it was a low-income area like Lyari, formed a center of the drugs trade" (Shackle 127). The significance of existing urban surroundings in developing cognitive representations is greatly enhanced by the temporal context.

When Parveen leaves Lyari, Karachi, the narrative explores her emotions. According to her, Lyari's aggression is a "geographically contained trauma" that consumes her thoughts. Her old friends, notably Nasir, a former bodybuilder, live far away, so Parveen seldom sees them. By stressing Nasir's family's untimely deaths from criminal activity, the novel shows Lyari brutality. The portrayal of Lyari as a "geographically contained trauma" underscores the notion that the area itself acts as a triggering factor for Parveen's psychological anguish (Shackle 131). The distinctive nature of Lyari is influenced by its physical boundaries, which have had a notable impact on the expression of trauma within the locality as "Lyari was a geographically contained trauma" (Shackle 131). The spatial confinement of Lyari has a significant impact on the legibility of the region, accentuating the distinctiveness of the distressing incidents that transpire inside its confines.

Uzair's engagement in several Lyari problems shed light on Karachi's legibility. When considering regional difficulties like water shortages, Uzair's lack of irony is obvious in his showy possessions, including a pool and water feature. The story follows criminal reporter Zille, who frequents Uzair's home. Zille's many ties to criminal gang leaders demonstrate the interdependence of the news media, gang leaders, and news platforms. This shows how gang leaders utilise television news to shape their image, gain community support, and denigrate rival gangs. By bringing to light the conspicuous discrepancy between public discourse and private situations, the existence of dissonance in Karachi improves the city's legibility. An illustration of this can be seen in Uzair's discourse concerning issues in Lyari, "Uzair would hold forth about issues in Lyari such as water shortages, with no apparent sense of irony about his own

swimming pool and elaborate water feature" (Shackle 144). Zille's frequent visits to Uzair's house, as well as his claimed familiarity with the heads of many criminal groups, are indicative of the symbiotic connection between journalists and gang leaders. This dynamic affects Karachi's legibility since it reveals the reporters' access to key figures in the city's criminal underworld. Zille, "who prided himself on being on first-name terms with the leaders of all the main gangs" (Shackle 144)

A new layer of complexity is added to Karachi by the gang leaders' use of television news to shape public perception and alter narratives. Gang leaders may use the media as a tool to influence public opinion, gain support from the local population, and undermine rival criminal groups. The gangster community has been witnessed making concerted efforts to cultivate relationships with crime reporters.

Gangsters liked to be in touch with crime reporters. They used the TV news to boost their image and curry favor with local residents in the areas they controlled, as well as to score points against rival gangs by blaming them for outbreaks of violence. (Shackle 144).

To improve their standing in the eyes of the public and foster better ties with the people under their control, they turned to television news. It was also used as a tactic to get an edge over other gangs by falsely accusing them of being responsible for acts of violence.

The book's conclusion focuses on Karachi's urban violence, particularly in Lyari. Throughout the book, Orangi terrorist assaults, street clashes, and politically driven killings decrease. Although not abolished, these instances have decreased in frequency. This shows a brief drop in metropolitan violence. The discernible decrease in instances of Lyari street fighting, political killings, and terror attacks indicates a significant shift in the temporal patterns of violence. The recognition of the diverse nature of violence inside Karachi is assisted by the time dimension, which promotes the legibility of the urban environment. "Gradually, the Lyari street battles, the targeted political killings in Orangi, and the terror attacks began to recede" (Shackle 215). The historical context is replete with violent incidents, hence the expressions "pause" and "breathe in between" are used to describe a brief time of calm. This insight furthers legibility of Karachi by illuminating the ways in which daily life is disrupted by violence and showing the few occasions when inhabitants may find some respite. However, for the first time in quite

some time, an opportunity arose to rest for a while and catch one's breath. "But for the first time in years, it was possible to pause and breathe in between" (Shackle 215).

The incident sheds light on the cyclical nature of violence in Karachi, illustrating how conflicts come and go and how they affect people's lives on a daily basis. Seeing Karachi as a dynamic and growing entity, where periods of reprieve intersperse the persistent impediments provided by violence, is made easier by acknowledging a temporary time of peace.

The narrative delves into the exciting street culture of Lyari, Karachi during a period of extreme violence. Despite the abundance of Rangers and the regularity of invasions, this incident describes how certain aspects of traditional life have made a return. Football games, pool competitions, newspaper exchanges, and even hookah smoking and vegetable cutting have all experienced a resurgence as popular street pastimes. However, Parveen investigates the long-term effects of prolonged bouts of violence, including the appropriation and annihilation of communal cohesion by criminal gangs. Motivated by a desire to reinvigorate this essence, Parveen is actively involved in community endeavours, such as the formation of the non-governmental organisation Meherdar and the organisation of the Lyari Literary Festival, both of which strive to highlight the creative qualities of the local inhabitants.

The first depiction of the streets of Lyari as "stripped of life" serves to underscore the profound repercussions of persistent violence on the community fabric of the area. The present discourse on the notable disruption under consideration offers a valuable lens through which to comprehend the legibility of Karachi, elucidating the tangible ramifications of persistent conflict on communal engagements. The resurgence of street culture—exemplified by activities like football games, pool tournaments, and community gatherings—is a testament to the neighbourhood's resilience. "Now, despite the heavy Rangers presence and the frequent raids, it seemed like some of the old ways of life were coming back" (Shackle 226). These cultural expressions are a means of reclaiming public domains despite the implementation of stringent security protocols and regular enforcement operations, thereby exemplifying the resilience of societal components in their ability to adapt and preserve their cultural legacy in challenging circumstances.

Parveen's reflective viewpoint towards the prospective return of street culture is juxtaposed with a discernible apprehension over the enduring consequences of extended episodes of violent violence. "But although the street culture was returning, Parveen was not confident that the damage wrought by years of brutal violence had been undone" (Shackle 226). The primary objective of this critical research is to augment the understanding of Karachi by providing a nuanced appreciation of the intricate and enduring ramifications of previous acts of violence on the social milieu.

In conclusion, this academic analysis offers a thorough comprehension of the numerous elements that contribute to Karachi's legibility. It emphasises the profound connection between historical acts of violence, the tenacity of society, and community initiatives to improve the city's legibility. A comprehensive understanding of the ways in which the sociocultural fabric of Lyari evolves in response to obstacles and proactive endeavours to restore community ties can be obtained through the examination of these facets.

This investigation thoroughly explored the intricate and varied features of *Karachi Vice: Life and Death in a Contested City*, as well as the specific factors that contribute to its legibility. The narrative openly exposes the deep-rooted socioeconomic disparities that are widespread throughout the city. This discussion provided a perceptive analysis of the socioeconomic hierarchy in the city and its impact on human interactions by contrasting the luxurious lives of the rich elite with the hardships faced by the impoverished. This portrayal elucidates the complex dynamics of power, privilege, and inequality that have a substantial impact on the lifestyle of the inhabitants of Karachi. This study highlighted its fragmented nature, overwhelming sensory experiences, historical connections, socioeconomic disparities, and cultural intersections. This involves navigating the city's complex streets and interacting with its many inhabitants. This examination elucidates the complexities of Karachi and underscores the enormous influence that literature can have in unveiling the authentic essence of urban environments and the diverse array of encounters they provide.

5.4 Conclusion

Overall, the comprehensive analysis of *Karachi Vice: Life and Death in a Contested City* has provided valuable insights into the many complex elements that influence the city's legibility. Specifically, *Karachi Vice* exposes the intricate system

by which powerful groups intentionally affect the perceptions of local residents by distorting reality via a series of illusions. The story portrays this manipulation as a tactic to strengthen power, so enhancing the extent to which the city's legitimacy is linked with political plots. In this context, the city goes beyond its physical existence and becomes a tool used by people to modify mental images, thereby greatly affecting how it is understood. This research emphasises the profoundness of literary portrayals in exposing the complex social dynamics of metropolitan settings. Furthermore, it emphasises the need for continuous scholarly research on the correlation between power dynamics, narrative constructs, and the readability of disputed cities like Karachi

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

6.1 Findings

The primary objective of this study was to assess the legibility of Karachi by undertaking a comprehensive analysis of two selected novels that centre on the urban setting. One of these literary works depicts the vantage point of a political party operative, someone with authority and power, while the other narrates the tale through the lens of ordinary urban inhabitants. The following results of this investigation are described below:

After doing a textual analysis of both novels, it was found that they gave opposing perspectives on the city of Karachi, thereby providing a nuanced understanding of its complexity. This study primarily focused on analysing the changing urban environment of Karachi to explore the intricate features of city legibility. The study aimed to unravel the intricate correlation between mental imagery, phantasmagoria, and the legibility of the urban environment by analysing two novels that offer contrasting viewpoints—one from the vantage point of a politically influential party member and the other from the perspectives of residents.

The examination of cognitive representations, shaped by the subjective experiences and viewpoints of *The Party Worker* and inhabitants, revealed a continuous and mutually reinforcing connection with the phantasmagoria in operation. This study demonstrated how the visual and imagined aspects of the city shape the mental pictures held by its citizens, using the theoretical framework proposed by Nadir Lahiji and Anderotti. The metropolitan environment, with its diverse array of pictures, stories, and beliefs, has a surreal element that greatly impacts the mental maps of its residents. The analysis highlighted the vital importance of power dynamics in enabling the transformation of the urban environment. The portrayal depicted those in positions of authority, particularly party officials with political influence, aggressively exploiting the city to achieve their objectives. When seen in this context, the city goes beyond its physical boundaries and becomes a strategic battleground where conflicts for power take place, often changing the perspectives of those with authority and those without.

The primary finding of this research is the intricate relationship between mental images, phantasmagoria, and the legibility of urban surroundings. The ever-changing urban landscape, shaped by the decisions and desires of its inhabitants, highlights the crucial importance of flexible mental frameworks in deciding how well we understand the city. This study improves our understanding of how power dynamics connect with the physical and abstract aspects of the city, and how this affects the lives of its residents. It does so by acknowledging the interdependent link between these components.

6.2 Conclusion

A textual analysis was conducted on the works of Samira Shackle and Omar Shahid Hamid using Lynch's City Legibility theoretical framework and Nadir Lahiji and Anderotti's Phantasmagoria. The study was based on three distinct research questions. A synthesis of the findings is presented in response to the research questions that were previously posed.

The first research question was:

1. What factors contribute to making spatiotemporal mental images subjective in city legibility?

The inquiry comprehensively captured the many facets of the urban environment by juxtaposing the experiences of a political party member with those of ordinary inhabitants. The novel's depiction of power dynamics is presented via the lens of the party worker. This highlighted the authority wielded by political entities in the urban area, resulting in a more comprehensive comprehension of the intricate socio-political milieu. The examination of the factors that influence the individual's subjective mental maps of the legibility of a city in *The Party Worker* by Omar Shahid Hamid has enlightened the intricate interplay of urban dynamics within the narrative. The extensive analysis reveals that the subjective perception of the urban environment is profoundly impacted by a multitude of intricate elements, such as political and social structures, individual experiences, and personal perceptions. The intricate interplay among these constituents serves as a manifestation of the broader socioeconomic terrain, underscoring the intrinsic complexity associated with comprehending the urban milieu.

The characters shown in *The Party Worker* navigate through a metropolis that not only has physical attributes but also has significant ideological and emotional significance. The interplay between political connections, power relations, and institutional structures influences how the characters see the urban environment in the narrative framework. This underscores the intrinsic correlation between political forces and the subjective nature of city legibility; within this framework, the city serves as a conduit for the expression of political ideologies. Furthermore, personal narratives and distinctive experiences play a crucial role in influencing the subjective understanding of the urban environment. The many backgrounds, objectives, and relationships of people converge to provide a multifaceted array of viewpoints, demonstrating that the city is not static but rather a fluid milieu. The novel's portrayal of the subjective nature of city legibility can be attributed to a combination of internal, individual perspectives and external societal structures.

Furthermore, the profound intricacies depicted in *The Party Worker* underscore the manner in which subjective perceptions of a city are impacted by socioeconomic conditions. Distinction in perception among social groups resulted from the existence of distinct landscapes shaped by economic disparities, social class stratification, and subsequent urban fragmentation. The urban environment reflects social inequalities by influencing the manner in which different socioeconomic status individuals navigate and interpret their surroundings.

Through a complex interplay of political, individual, and socioeconomic factors, *The Party Worker* ultimately establishes the subjective nature of city legibility. With a focus on the dynamic and ever-evolving nature of cities as vibrant organisms, this examination of the urban environment provides a variety of perspectives. The analysis highlights the interdependence that exists within contemporary urban environments by serving as a resource for analysing the intricate connections between social systems and individual perceptions of the urban environment.

This research aimed to examine the intricate factors that contribute to the subjective nature of mental representations in relation to the legibility of cities. *Karachi Vice: Life and Death in a Contested City* by Samira Shackle was used to analyse the firsthand accounts of inhabitants of Karachi, such as Parveen and Safdar (an ambulance driver), among others. The book's anecdotes shed light on the subjective nature of mental pictures, offering valuable insights into the many elements that shape

people' varying perspectives as they traverse the complex metropolitan environment of Karachi.

The analysis has discovered many important aspects that contribute to the subjectivity of mental representations in the legibility of cities. First and foremost, it is clear that the socio-economic level of the persons involved had a significant influence. Parveen's firsthand encounters as a labourer with little financial means and Safdar's profession as an ambulance driver provided distinct viewpoints on the urban environment. The varied social positions of these people not only influenced their everyday interactions with the city environment but also moulded their viewpoints, therefore contributing to the subjective character of their mental perceptions.

Moreover, the stories presented in *Karachi Vice* highlighted the impact of external factors like as political events, media representations, and historical changes on the citizens' self-perception. The fluid and dynamic character of mental pictures is influenced by external influences, such as the physical and sociopolitical changes in the urban environment, leading to a perpetual development of these images.

The characters in *Karachi Vice* demonstrate how the subjective perception of city legibility emphasises the need of accepting variety and acknowledging the many viewpoints that exist within urban areas. Understanding the subjective character of mental pictures is crucial for promoting inclusive urban development, especially in the context of continual urban growth and transition.

2. How does phantasmagoria change the way a city's identity is thought of in the selected texts?

Through the examination of two literary works, namely *Karachi Vice: Life and Death in a Contested City* by Samira Shackle and *The Party Worker* by Omar Shahid Hamid, the impact of phantasmagoria on the way cities are seen unveils a multifaceted and intricate connection between this theoretical concept and the people living in urban settings. Applying Nadir Lahiji and Anderotti's concept of phantasmagoria to these novels helps to explain how the mental images of city inhabitants are continually modified, leading to significant changes in their perception of the urban environment.

Samira Shackle's *Karachi Vice: Life and Death in a Contested City* provides a stimulating portrayal of how the citizens of the city experience and interpret the illusions and phantasmagoria that surround them. The analysis delves into the

sociopolitical and economic environments of Karachi in relation to its residents. The research highlights the ever-changing mental representations of the residents, which are constantly altered by external stimuli that create illusions, shape narratives, and control perceptions. In *Karachi Vice: Life and Death in a Contested City*, phantasmagoria is portrayed as a powerful force that manipulates the realities and perceptions of the people, resulting in a complex interplay between what is real and what is an illusion.

The Party Worker, written by Omar Shahid Hamid, portrays events from the perspective of a political party member. It sheds light on how power dynamics are used to alter the urban environment for the benefit of a select few. Phantasmagoria is a conceptual framework that manifests via the manipulation of shared awareness and political belief systems. The novel's study emphasises the significant impact that party workers, as central actors, have on the cognitive perspectives of the city's citizens via the dissemination of biased information, coordination of events, and projection of political narratives. In this context, the city acts as a blank surface for the party worker to creatively manipulate the perception of reality, thus reinforcing the idea that phantasmagoria is used as a tool of authority to control and influence how urban spaces are perceived.

Both novels underscore the profound influence that phantasmagoria has on the mental imagery of individuals who reside in urban areas. Consistently altering the mental representations of city dwellers, phantasmagoria highlights the need for a nuanced understanding of the intricate interplay between perception, authority, and the perpetually shifting physical environment of urban areas.

3. How does social control through the city affect the legibility of space in the selected texts?

This analysis of how social control affects the clarity of urban spaces, as portrayed in Samira Shackle's works *Karachi Vice: Life and Death in a Contested City* and *The Party Worker*, offer insightful perspectives on the complex connection between methods of social control and the mental representations of city dwellers. Through an analysis of the viewpoints of the inhabitants in *Karachi Vice: Life and Death in a Contested City*, it becomes evident that a constantly changing and distorted visual experience significantly influences and modifies these people's mental images of the urban environment, thereby impacting their understanding. The modification

indicated above increases the complexity of understanding and interpreting the urban landscape, hence affecting the legibility of Karachi. *The Party Worker* depicts the events through the lens of party workers, who use their power to assert dominance over the city in order to promote their own interests. The exercise of power creates a distinct layer of illusions that alter the mental perceptions of both the individuals inside the group and the general public. The aforementioned influence, emanating from those in positions of authority, exacerbates the challenges associated with the readability of the city by obscuring the genuine attributes of urban surroundings and rendering them vulnerable to manipulative forces.

The comprehensive phantasmagoric milieu that profoundly affects the cognitive perceptions of urban residents is fundamentally produced by the amalgamation of social control mechanisms, which are utilised by those in positions of authority and power as well as the powerful themselves. Due to the continual modification and alteration of these mental images, which are fundamental to the legibility of the city, it becomes increasingly difficult to perceive and navigate the urban environment. Through an examination of the novels at hand, this study illuminates the intricate relationship between social control, phantasmagoria, and the legibility of the city.

6.3 Recommendations for Future Research

Further exploration of this research topic provides opportunities for subsequent academicians to further investigate. The subsequent suggestions are suggested for additional investigation:

A range of literary theories, such as cognitive mapping and Flanerie, can be utilised to analyse novels that are related to the urban setting of Karachi.

Analogous inquiries can be undertaken by scrutinising various urban literature novels, including Saba Hamid's *Karachi, You're Killing Me*.

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