SPACES OF DESCENT: A STUDY OF SUBVERSIVE RELATIONSHIPS AND ATTACHMENTS IN STIGMATIZED HETEROTOPIA

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Thesis Title: Spaces of Descent: A Study of Subversive Relationships and

Attachments in Stigmatized Heterotopia

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Candidate of **Master of Philosophy** at the National University of Modern Languages do hereby declare that the thesis **Spaces of Descent: A Study of Subversive Relationships and Attachments in Stigmatized Heterotopia** submitted by me in partial fulfillment of MPhil degree, is my original work, and has not been submitted or published earlier. I also solemnly declare that it shall not, in future, be submitted by me for obtaining any other degree from this or any other university or institution.

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ABSTRACT

Title: Spaces of Descent: A Study of Subversive Relationships and
Attachments in Stigmatized Heterotopia

This research study delves into the interconnected themes of attachment, heterotopia, and stigmatization in Louise Brown's memoir *Dancing Girls of Lahore*, Elif Shafak's novel *10 Minutes and 38 Seconds in This Strange World*, and the 2022 Indian film *Gangubai Kathiawadi*, directed by Sanjay Leela Bhansali. By utilizing Bowlby's Attachment Theory, Foucault's concept of Heterotopia, and Goffman's Stigmatization, this analysis investigates the profound implications of caregiving experiences on the formation of attachment styles and subsequent interpersonal relationships. It examines how marginalized individuals create "water bonds" stronger than "blood bonds" as mechanisms of resilience, highlighting the intersectionality of oppression and adaptive attachment in navigating stigmatization. Foucault's heterotopia allows us to explore sanctuaries of empowerment where identity is reclaimed through resistance and solidarity. Goffman's stigmatization reveals how societal critique and layers of marginalization shape self-perception and resilience through space and bonding. This study aims to unravel the intricate connections between adult attachment theory, heterotopia, and stigmatization, illuminating their intersections and mutual influences. By analyzing relationships and attachments in red-light districts, this research provides literature students with a new theoretical and conceptual lens. Additionally, examining the heterotopias of stigma can apprise interventions to reduce the negative impacts of stigma within communities. The study also explores how individuals in harsh conditions find the will to survive through co-dependence, potentially paving the way for a better future for silenced and marginalized groups within societal structures.

Keywords: Attachment Theory, Stigmatization, Heterotopia, Secure Attachment, Dismissive-Avoidant, Anxious-Preoccupied, Fearful-Avoidant.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to the resilient individuals whose tales of struggle and strength have illuminated my path. Dedicated to the unseen and unheard voices whose stories deserve to be told. To the curious minds who seek knowledge and the kind hearts who share it. And to all those who strive for understanding, compassion, and justice in a complex world. Your resilience and strength continue to inspire me to contribute to meaningful change through academic inquiry.

For those who dared me to dream and held my hand as I chased it—the gypsy souls, poetic hearts, and storytelling minds!

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In the intricate tapestry of human experiences, the realms of attachment, heterotopia, and stigmatization emerge as interconnected threads weaving through the fabric of social and psychological landscapes. We can analyze the profound implications of caregiving experiences on the formation of attachment styles and subsequent interpersonal relationships, grounded in the foundational principles of adult attachment theory. As we navigate the diverse spaces of our social world, the concept of heterotopia, as articulated by Michel Foucault, beckons us to examine spaces that defy conventional norms, challenging our understanding of identity and societal structures. Concurrently, the lens of stigmatization sheds light on the marginalized corners of society, where individuals or groups face discrimination and prejudice. The present study aims to unravel the intricate connections between adult attachment theory, heterotopia, and stigmatization, seeking to illuminate the complex ways in which these concepts intersect, influence one another, and collectively shape the lived experiences of individuals within the broader context of human relationships and societal dynamics.

In this study, I have analyzed the attachment bonds that are formed in the subversive spaces or heterotopias of descent in South-Asian and Euro-Asian cities. I have adapted the attachment theory, and concept of stigmatization, and amalgamated them with the concept of heterotopia, to study the selected texts using Carey Jewitt's Multimodal Research Method. The primary sources include a memoir, a novel, and a movie, based on the cities of Lahore, Istanbul, and Mumbai, respectively. The texts are based on red-light districts of the society and include characters that are stigmatized and marginalized at large, including, prostitutes, transgenders, and intersex, etc.

Dancing Girls of Lahore written by Louise Brown, is a memoir about the Diamond Market of Lahore where a variety of different people such as imams, cleaners, schoolchildren, cooks, shopkeepers etc. live, yet the heart of the story focuses on the dancers struggling to hold on to their culture. These women are

resourceful, brilliant and have a vivacity to overcome the system that tries time and again to overpower them. The plot includes the story of a prostitute Maha and her children with whom Louise forms an unbreakable bond of compassion and respect. Other characters in the memoir, including a transgender and a sweeper are significant to the study as they give a glimpse of unique attachment bonds. *10 Minutes and 38 Seconds in This Strange World* written by Elif Shafak narrates the tale of a sex-worker Leila and the way she forms different bonds with other stigmatized characters in her vicinity. This band of friends- Leila's chosen family known as the 'water family' have their tales interspersed within the main plot of the novel. The diverse characters share the vulnerability of being unfit into the socially acceptable confines. All of these characters have one thing in common; they are not emotionally close to their blood family. *Gangubai Kathiawadi* is a 2022 Indian film directed by Sanjay Leela Bhansali. The movie is a biopic of Gangubai Kathiawadi. She was an Indian matriarch, social activist, and influential figure in the history of Mumbai. She is best known for her philanthropic activities, which included providing shelter and support to the city's poor and needy, particularly sex workers. She was a strong advocate of women's rights and was instrumental in shaping the city's social and economic landscape. Her biopic depicts the struggles and sacrifices that she had to make for the sake of the women of Kamathipura. She had to make some unlikely bonds and give up on some attachments for their sake.

I have analyzed the bonds of attachment formed among characters and individuals to survive in tough environments and challenging spaces, present in the written texts and screenplay. I have highlighted the 'red-light' areas of the society particularly, which are commonly referred to as, spaces of darkness, downfall, debasement and descent. The relationship between attachment theory and subversive spaces is a complex one, but it can be simplified by analyzing it from the perspective of stigmatization.

Attachment theory, originally developed by John Bowlby to explain the bonds formed between infants and caregivers, has been extended to understand and describe adult relationships. The application of attachment theory to adults focuses on how early attachment experiences continue to influence individuals in their romantic and interpersonal relationships throughout life. The primary researcher responsible for this extension of attachment theory to adults is Mary Ainsworth, Bowlby's collaborator. In

adults, attachment styles are often categorized into four main types; Secure Attachment, Anxious-Preoccupied (or Anxious-Ambivalent) Attachment, Avoidant Attachment, Disorganized Attachment. Adult attachment styles are not fixed and can be influenced by various factors, including life experiences, relationship history, and personal growth. It's important to note that individuals may exhibit different attachment styles in different relationships or situations.

Subversive spaces and heterotopia are concepts that explore alternative, unconventional, or counter-cultural spaces in different contexts, often within the realms of sociology, philosophy, and cultural studies. Subversive spaces refer to environments, locations, or social contexts that challenge or resist dominant cultural, political, or social norms. These spaces may exist within mainstream society but operate in ways that oppose or subvert established ideologies. They can be focal points for like-minded individuals to come together, share ideas, and build communities that challenge the status quo. The concept of heterotopia was introduced by French philosopher Michel Foucault. It refers to spaces or places that exist outside the mainstream, offering alternative, often contradictory, experiences or representations of reality. Heterotopias can be physical or conceptual spaces that challenge conventional understandings of order and meaning. Heterotopias often reflect and challenge societal norms and structures. They may represent transitional or marginal spaces that exist on the fringes of established categories. Both subversive spaces and heterotopias challenge established norms and contribute to a deeper understanding of the complexities of social and cultural structures. They provide alternative spaces for expression, resistance, and the exploration of diverse perspectives. Furthermore, individuals who reside in subversive spaces may be seen as rejecting the values of their primary caregivers and rejecting the attachment bonds they were born with but, these spaces can also provide an opportunity for individuals to explore alternative perspectives and challenge existing structures, which may allow them to 'form' more secure attachments, apart from their caregivers.

Stigmatization refers to the social process by which certain individuals or groups are labelled as deviant or socially discredited, leading to the creation of negative stereotypes, attitudes, and behaviours towards them. Stigma can be attached to various characteristics, including physical or mental health conditions, race, gender, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status. Stigmatization begins with the

assignment of a label to a person or group, often based on perceived differences or deviations from the perceived norm. These labels can be explicit or implicit and may involve stereotypes or preconceived notions. Stigmatization is often accompanied by prejudiced attitudes, which are negative judgments and emotions directed toward individuals or groups based on their perceived differences. Stigmatization can have significant social consequences for individuals or groups, including social isolation, reduced access to resources, diminished opportunities, and negative impacts on mental and physical well-being. Individuals who belong to stigmatized groups may internalize societal prejudices, leading to self-stigmatization. This can result in feelings of shame, low self-esteem, and reluctance to seek help or support. Stigmatization is not solely an individual-level phenomenon; it can also be embedded in societal structures and institutions. Structural stigma refers to societal-level norms, policies, and practices that perpetuate discrimination against stigmatized groups.

While adult attachment theory, heterotopia, and stigmatization are distinct concepts, they can be interconnected in various ways, especially when considering the impact of social dynamics and relationships on individuals within different spaces. Adult attachment styles, shaped by early caregiving experiences, can influence how individuals form and maintain relationships. If an individual has a secure attachment style, they may be more resilient in the face of social stigmatization, seeking support from secure relationships. On the other hand, those with insecure attachment styles might be more vulnerable to the negative effects of stigmatization. Stigmatization experiences can impact attachment styles. For instance, individuals who have experienced social rejection or discrimination may develop insecure attachment styles, affecting their trust in others and their ability to form healthy relationships. Heterotopic spaces, as defined by Foucault, often represent places at the margins of societal norms. These spaces might be inhabited by stigmatized groups, and the very existence of these spaces may contribute to the stigmatization of those who occupy them. Heterotopias can provide alternative narratives and counter-narratives that challenge prevailing societal norms. In doing so, they may challenge stigmatization by offering spaces where different perspectives, identities, or practices are accepted or celebrated. Attachment experiences in early life contribute to the development of identity. Stigmatization, especially in heterotopic spaces, can influence how individuals perceive themselves and others. Stigmatization in heterotopic spaces can

impact individuals' mental health, and their attachment styles may play a role in how they cope with or respond to such experiences. For example, individuals with secure attachment styles may be more resilient in the face of stigma, seeking support from relationships or seeking out alternative spaces that provide acceptance. Consideration of multiple identities (race, gender, sexual orientation, etc.) is crucial. Stigmatization in heterotopic spaces may be influenced by intersecting identities, and attachment theory can help analyze how these intersections impact an individual's experiences and relationships. Understanding the interplay between attachment theory, heterotopia, and stigmatization based on emotional engagement also requires a nuanced exploration of individual experiences, societal structures, and the dynamics of relationships within different spaces. Emotional engagement refers to the emotion's individuals experience during specific activities, ranging from excitement and joy to sadness and anger, driven by person-environment interactions rather than individualistic experiences. In the context of adult attachment theory, emotional engagement is crucial as it highlights how attachment bonds shape emotional responses to environmental stimuli, particularly in subversive spaces like heterotopias. Heterotopias, often marked by exclusion or stigmatization, intensify these emotional dynamics as individuals navigate feelings of acceptance or rejection. This study uses emotional engagement to explore how emotional responses emerge within these stigmatized spaces, emphasizing the role of attachment bonds in moderating emotional well-being amid exclusionary environments. The amalgamation of all these concepts collectively contribute to a comprehensive understanding of how individuals navigate social environments, form relationships, and contend with the impact of stigmatization.

1.1 Thesis Statement

The study analyzes the relationships formed in redlight districts. I have examined how subversive relationships and attachment bonds are constructed in heterotopia or spaces of descent between marginalized and stigmatized individuals, by analyzing the memoir *Dancing Girls of Lahore*, the novel *10 Minutes and 38 Seconds in This Strange World*, and the movie *Gangubai Kathiawadi,* under the lens of conceptual framework based on Bowlby's 'Attachment theory', Goffman's concept of 'Stigmatization', and Foucault's 'Heterotopia'.

1.2 Research Questions

- What kind of 'attachment bonds' are formed between individuals who occupy 'subversive spaces' in the selected texts?
- How different forms of stigma interact and intersect to create unique experiences of exclusion and marginalization for sex-workers in the texts under study?
- How does living in a subversive heterotopia and 'spaces of descent' affect the social and emotional well-being of individuals?

1.3 Significance of the study

The present study is significant as attachment ties are extremely important for stigmatized communities. Attachment bonds more or less, provide a sense of belonging, acceptance, security, and stability, which is often lacking in these communities. Attachment bonds also provide emotional support, which is essential in helping people cope with discrimination and hardship. Similarly, heterotopias of stigma and descent are a unique type of space in which individuals experience stigma and other forms of exclusion due to their identity or status. By understanding the dynamics of these spaces, we can gain a better understanding of how stigma operates in different contexts and how it can be addressed. For the general public, this research sheds light on how stigmatized individuals find resilience and strength through their relationships and attachments, even in challenging environments. For academia, the study deepens our understanding of how stigma functions across different spaces and helps explore ways to mitigate its harmful effects. Internal stakeholders, such as community leaders and policymakers, can use these insights to create interventions that reduce the negative impact of stigma and foster a more supportive, inclusive society based on secure attachments and reinforcements. By exploring how individuals in these harsh conditions co-depend for survival, this research opens doors to more effective support systems for marginalized communities.

1.4 Delimitation

The study is delimited to two written texts; a memoir and a novel, and one visual text; a movie. *Dancing Girls of Lahore* is a memoir written by Louise Brown and published in 2005. *10 Minutes and 38 Seconds in this Strange World,* is a novel written by Elif Shafak and published in 2019. *Gangubai* is an Indian-Hindi movie released in 2022, directed by Sanjay Leela Bhansali and based on the book *Mafia Queens of Mumbai* written by S. Hussain Zaidi.

The study is also delimited to three cities, Lahore (Pakistan), Istanbul (Turkey), and Mumbai (India), and its red-light districts or spaces where prostitution is prevalent. I have studied attachment bonds formed among the institutionalized sex workers as well as individual sex workers.

Dancing Girls of Lahore by Louise Brown: *'Dancing Girls of Lahore: Selling Love and Saving Dreams in Pakistan's Pleasure District'* is a memoir written by Louise Brown. The book provides a compelling and insightful exploration into the lives of women working as dancers and sex workers in the Heera Mandi district of Lahore, Pakistan. Published in 2005, the narrative offers an empathetic perspective on the challenges, aspirations, and complexities faced by the women and transgenders in this marginalized community. Louise Brown, a British anthropologist, delves into the multifaceted aspects of the lives of these women, shedding light on the socio-economic, cultural, and political forces that shape their experiences. The title *Dancing Girls of Lahore* captures the surface perception of the women's profession, but the book goes beyond stereotypes to portray the resilience and humanity of these individuals. The author skillfully navigates through the intricate dance of tradition and modernity, exploring how the women negotiate societal expectations, familial pressures, and economic realities. In addition to its focus on the lives of the dancing girls, the book delves into broader issues such as gender dynamics, economic disparities, and the intersections of different traditions in Pakistan. By offering a detailed and compassionate portrayal, *Dancing Girls of Lahore* contributes to a deeper understanding of the human stories within a context often overshadowed by stereotypes and stigma.

10 Minutes, 38 Seconds in This Strange World by Elif Shafak: *10 Minutes, 38 Seconds in This Strange World* is a novel written by Turkish-British author Elif

Shafak. Published in 2019, the book is a poignant and evocative exploration of life, memory, and human connection. The novel is set in Istanbul and revolves around the character of Tequila Leila, a sex worker, who is murdered and left to die in a dumpster. The title refers to the brief period after Leila's death when her brain continues to function. During these last moments, the narrative delves into Leila's memories, recounting the stories of her life and the people she encountered along the way. Shafak employs a unique narrative structure, using the 10 minutes and 38 seconds to unravel Leila's past, bringing to light the experiences that shaped her. The novel not only serves as a character study of Leila but also explores broader themes such as friendship, love, and societal norms. Through Leila's memories, the reader is introduced to a diverse cast of characters, each with their struggles and triumphs, adding layers to the narrative. Shafak skillfully weaves together the personal and the political, using Leila's story as a lens through which to examine issues of identity, belonging, and the complexities of modern Turkish society. The novel is both a celebration of the human spirit and a commentary on the challenges faced by those on the margins of society. It is a compelling and thought-provoking work that invites readers to reflect on the intricacies of life and the lasting impact of human connections.

Gangubai Kathiawadi: *Gangubai Kathiawadi* is a Bollywood movie directed by Sanjay Leela Bhansali, starring Alia Bhatt as the main lead. The film is based on a chapter from the book *Mafia Queens of Mumbai* by Hussain Zaidi, which delves into the life of Gangubai Kothewali, a powerful and influential woman in the red-light district of Kamathipura in Mumbai. The story revolves around the life of Gangubai, who was sold into prostitution as a young girl and later rose to prominence as a fierce and respected matriarch in Kamathipura. Despite the challenges and adversities, she faced, Gangubai became a prominent and influential figure in the underworld. While the movie is not a direct adaptation of the entire book, it draws on the source material to depict the life of Gangubai Kathiawadi. The film focuses on her resilience, determination, and the impact she had on the social and political landscape of Kamathipura. The film begins with Gangubai's childhood as Ganga. Her life takes a drastic turn when she is sold into prostitution by her lover and separated from her family. The narrative then shifts to Gangubai's life in Kamathipura, where she rises from being a young girl to becoming the influential matriarch of a brothel. She forms

deep bonds with the women in the brothel, acting as a motherly figure and protector. Gangubai's influence extends beyond the red-light district, reaching political circles and the police. As Gangubai becomes more entrenched in the world of Kamathipura, the film explores her relationships with various characters, including her customers, the women in the brothel, and those in positions of power. It delves into the challenges faced by sex workers, the stigma associated with their profession, and the societal dynamics of the time. The film skillfully weaves together elements of drama, emotion, and social commentary offering a compelling narrative that sheds light on the strength, resilience, and vulnerabilities of an extraordinary woman who left an indelible mark on the history of Kamathipura.

1.4.1 Rationale for selecting the texts

The rationale for choosing works from three different genres is that I wanted to extend my study by including diverse attachments and analyzing them. It has allowed me the flexibility of reading and visualizing the varied patterns of relationships that were necessary for my study. Choosing a text from a single genre would have limited my study considerably and I would not have been able to identify the effect of different kinds of relationships formed in subversive spaces of society between individuals who are openly stigmatized and abhorred. If I would have chosen a single genre, it would have constricted my study. I would then be able to study only a single type of relationship and would not have had the leverage of exploring the categories and sub-categories of the theory i.e., Attachment Theory, and the effects of stigmatization in the lives of individuals living in subversive heterotopia. Hence, I had to include texts from different genres to make my study more profound.

1.6 Chapter Breakdown

Chapter 1: Introduction

The introduction of the study includes an overview of the research topic and research questions. It also includes the thesis statement, significance of the research, and the explanation of texts under study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter contains the relevant literature. It highlights the key theories and findings related to the primary texts. Additionally, the literature review identifies the gaps in the existing research area that this study will fill.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The chapter includes the research design, research method, and conceptual framework. The chapter justifies the chosen methodology and explains how it will address the research questions.

Textual Analysis of the study comprises the content analysis and exploration of the delimited texts under the lens of a conceptual framework divided into three chapters;

Chapter 4: Red-Light Realties and Bodies of Stigma

The chapter focuses on the second and third research questions of the study to generate answers by analysis of the texts under study.

Chapter 5: Theory of Attachment

The chapter focuses on the first research question of the study to generate answers by analysis of the texts under study.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

The last chapter of the study summarizes the main findings, discusses their implications, and suggests areas for future research. It provides final reflections on the research process.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

It is important to review the literature in qualitative studies to strengthen the study with previous knowledge and fill the remaining gap with your research. The spaces of discord offer a challenging environment to its individuals. It often results in people residing there looking for secure attachments for survival. The attachments can either form from negative or positive experiences. The literature review of this study bridges the gap between understanding how subversive spaces or places where people live marginalized and stigmatized lives form attachments for survival. Individuals who are abhorred by society at large, such as courtesans and transgenders are often pushed to the peripheries of civilization by other people. These people often have to leave their families behind and lead an isolated life generally. However, to survive and stand resolute in front of the abuse and harassment of the world they choose to depend upon one another. Here the key word is 'choice' because many stigmatized people do not choose to be in a place that makes their identity a stigma but they have a choice of how to manage what fate has bestowed upon them. Hence, the 'water bonds' made in subversive spaces turn out to be thicker than 'blood bonds'. The delimited texts, *Dancing Girls of Lahore, 10 Minutes and 38 Seconds in This Strange World, and Gangubai Kathiawadi* embed diverse yet stigmatized characters who face denunciation from society. They find strength within the bonds they form to survive. Some of the bonds also weaken their resolve yet they tend to provide enough stability for their survival.

2.1 The Role of Attachment Bonds in Subversive Spaces: Insights from Literature and Theory

Bretherton, in her paper explaining the contribution of Bowlby and Ainsworth, gives her interpretation of the attachment theory, she writes that attachment is a behavioural system that is biologically present in every human being. The behavioural system of attachment allows the individual to feel more protected in the presence of the attachment figure (766). Subsequently, the attachment figure is not immune to the feelings of an individual as well, he or she tries to provide a safe space, an environment that caters the sensitivities and proximity-seeking behaviour. Moreover,

the attachment system is not active during infancy only as the initial investigations of Bowlby revealed but continues to operate throughout the lifespan of an individual (Hazan and Shaver 271). Brown in her memoir, meets with stigmatized individuals and forms bonds with them. The individuals vary from children of sex workers to sex workers themselves and transgenders too. Similarly, Leila in Shafak's novel forms 'water-bonds' with several stigmatized characters. Gangubai, being an activist for women's rights helps stigmatized women and along the way forms long-lasting affiliations. Thus, the research will focus on the aspect of child-parent as well as adult relationships.

The vast research on the concept of attachment has not only produced an attachment theory but also led to the development of an attachment model or structure. The psychological framework is known as the 'Internal Working Model' (IWM). (Miljkovitch et al. 492-493). The attachment system is activated based on interaction and the IWM is the manifestation of the long-term bond with an attachment figure. It also describes the negative and positive affective states of the interaction. If the attachment is negatively influencing the resultant feelings will be insecurity, anxiousness, dismissal and disorganization. However, if the attachment is positively affecting the result will be in the form of security. These descriptors and signifiers form the basis of trust in any relation or attachment bond. R. Chris Fraley in *A Brief Overview of Adult Attachment Theory and Research,* briefs about the initial investigations and research that involved adult attachment. Hazan and Shaver developed a questionnaire to measure the individual differences to study the associations between them. The individual differences are studied as attachment styles or patterns (secure, anxious-avoidant, anxious-resistant, and disorganized). Their research revealed that more than 60% of people feel secure in their attachment bonds with positive signifiers and a space that is conducive to a healthy psychological environment. This study will focus on the descriptors, styles and patterns of attachment while analyzing the relationships within the confines of the delimited sources. Situating the bonds and relationships formed in memoirs, novels and movies within the positive and negative interactive patterns will aid in understanding the diversity of attachment bonds.

Brown, and Shafak in their respective works depict the bonds that are made based on survival in subversive spaces. The social stigma and the need for

understanding led to the development of attachment bonds within the memoir and novel. Subsequently, Bowlby's attachment theory pioneered research covering a variety of areas that are related to an individual's relational nurturing. Mate selection, emotional responses to bonds, cognition, dreams, psychopathology, psychoanalysis, and courtship strategies are varied subjects on which researchers applied Bowlby's theory of attachment to extract results.

However, these researches strayed away from the original conceptualization and essence of the theory, because even though attachment styles relate to diverse facets of an individual's life and their relations with others. The primary function of the theory was to understand the promotion of survival. Social- Defense Theory (SDT) is an extension of attachment theory, it posits that attachment systems in humans have evolved to deal with outside threats, and stressors and promote survival. Thus, its basic concept was not only to focus on individual differences in relational motivations, emotion regulation and coping strategies but also on individual differences in attachment that are primarily related to the different strategies humans use when confronted with a threat (Ein-Dor and Hirschberger 223). Ein-Dor and Hirschberger further assert that the response of the individual is integral in the activation of the attachment system. In line with the French saying, *'Il faut de tout pour faire un monde' ('It takes all sorts to make a world')*, social defence theory theorizes that attachment styles offer both advantages and disadvantages. However, the main strength and resilience of human societies often stem out of the combined effects of different characteristics of different people, rather than a single individual. A person can act as a catalyst but the actual work starts from an individual and ends in a community (226). Thus, acknowledging the advantages of secure and insecure attachment patterns, Brown, Shafak and Zaidi lead their characters to come out of the simple notion of categorization of personality as either good or bad. Rather the imperfections that in reality are the diversity of the human race are celebrated and the bonds are strengthened among people who hold to this singular notion.

According to Bowlby, attachment is part of our nature, as there is a biological function attributed to our attachment behaviour. This behaviour is triggered in times of need, as a protective shield, and it provides security to the one being threatened. In times of need or danger, the attachment behaviour results in the threatened person's need to become intimate with some other individual. This dependency is because the

dependent person feels that the other person is better able to cope with the perilous surroundings (Purnell 522). The provision of a secure base or a point of contact is integral for the wellbeing of an individual in times of unrest, or when they are frightened, anxious and hurt. Brown, Leila, and Gangu, the three leading ladies form the secure base for their respective dependents, as they are the centre of protection for all the other characters in the memoir, novel, and movie.

Bowlby further asserted that the physical environment is also an essential component that contributes to the proliferation of attachment bonds. The human need for belonging has been prevalent since the inception of civilization. Our home is a safe space, that provides safety, comfort and familiarity. The sense of belonging and being part of a community also aids in nurturing a secure base and affects how one deals with loss, stigma and pain reinforcement (Purnell 522) Carter et al., add that social bonds or attachment relationships are formed with the capacity to adapt to challenging spaces and environments. In subversive spaces, bonds of attachment most often provide a safe and stable space to survive, provide a sense of security, reduce anxiety and grow even (85-86). A person who has suffered long periods of isolation, stigma, abuse and anxiety has the most profound sense of the importance of building long-term social attachments, such as Maha and her children in *Dancing Girls of Lahore,* Leila and her water family in *10 Minutes and 38 Seconds in This Strange World,* and Gangu in *Gangubai Kathiawadi.*

2.2 Place Attachment, Place Identity, Stigmatization, and Survival: The Role of Heterotopias in Marginalized Communities

The place holds a significant value in the attachment system as a place of agitation and challenge results in individuals coming closer, confiding in each other and forming long-lasting bonds. Anton and Lawrence, assert that sense of place is influenced by the length of stay and place of residence as well. For instance, long-term inhabitants are most likely to have stronger attachment ties than newly arrived ones but there is a catch. If the individual feels secure even in newly formed bonds, he or she most often confides in the new bonds they make (452-453). The psychological need for survival and emotional security in a social environment is an intrinsic necessity present in every individual that draws them closer to a 'significant place' and to attachment structures and symbols in that place. A sense of place is also related to individuals' past and present experiences concerning place roles and fulfilment of

needs. Psychological needs include place identity and place dependence within an individual. For instance, the marginalized people living in red-light areas of the city as observed in the delimited sources, are pushed to these peripheries where they remain safe as long as they do not venture out of these specific places. They form an individual identity in these particular places yet due to the stigma from outside factors they develop a need for co-dependence.

An example of such a segregation related to place attachment is presented by Peters, in his paper. Susan Smith's work on black residential segregation in Britain talked about the economic deprivation of black areas resulted in the development of strong affiliations within these areas among people who were living in these harsh conditions and bearing them together (666). Peters, asserts that places are created to uphold differences, and even definitions and descriptions of any place often assert how much different is it to another place. These 'geographies of exclusion' not only include excluded stigmatized or marginalized people but owe their development to gender discrimination too (666). Early female feminist work led to exploring how females had been excluded from the demarcation of boundaries. Female geographers protested against that and concluded that inclusive feminist geography includes understanding the lives of people who often have been excluded from the formulation of spaces that even define their existence. In the movie, Gangu is observed as a women right's activist on the part of the sex workers of Kamatipura. She is fighting for the right to live in a place that gives the sex workers of Mumbai a sense of belonging and shelter. In the memoir, we continuously observe Maha trying to fight for her home and her position within the Diamond Market of Lahore. Similarly, Leila's home is a place of solace and identity formation for all the stigmatized characters of Shafak. The analysis of the inclusiveness of the individuals living in the 'geographies of exclusion' is one of the main foci of this research.

Anguelovski explains that in a variety of disciplines such as sociology, planning, geography, and environmental psychology the position of 'place' in cities is a combination of different factors. The place is a site that amalgamates location, locale, and sense of place that involves emotional attachment. The history of emotional connection within the space and the social relations involved in making these linkages produce and reproduce a place through time. It also posits 'place' as a breathing entity that grows, feels, and suffers with the inhabitants living in it. All of

this leads to attachment to a particular place, because of the emotional connection an individual develops with it and the people residing in it. It stems from accumulated life experiences culturally shared by individuals who attribute emotional meaning to the neighbourhoods they inhabit. The place or house does hold relevance to individuals who reside there, but only the connections they develop with other individuals provide them with incentive to turn that house into a home, that is secure, holds memories, provides solace and is a symbol of companionship (213). Due to fragmentation and disruption, the age-old spaces are threatened by demarcation and instability. The residents of places who cherish close-knit community life that is built on solidarity and bonds of mutual support are exempted from urban spaces. They are marginalized and labelled as outsiders, the territorial stigma adds to social stigmas and individuals who are unlike the so-called civilized individuals are forced to leave the centre and live in the peripheries. The loss of place and space is devasting for the identity of any individual (Anguelovski 215). The othered space of the prostitutes, according to Henri Lefebvre's 'Production of Space', has developed a central argument that the spaces of performance include the scenic dimension i.e., 'representation of space corresponding a 'lived' experience of the artists producing a 'representational space'. Through the amalgamation of both the spatial practices and the representation of space in fiction, there is the production of 'representational space'. And, Lefebvre indicates that this 'space of representation' is alive, 'it speaks… it embraces the loci of passion, of action and lived situations' (9). The Diamond Market, Kamatipura, Leila's home, the brothel street of Istanbul, the cemetery of companionless, etc. all hold relevance as places that have memories and are represented as breathing entities. The cities of Mumbai, Lahore, and Istanbul are embodied with layers of history, traditions and reformations by Zaidi, Brown and Shafak respectively.

Gieryn presents image of a chaotic and disorderly picture of the urban space. Most of the literature on ethnic territories has focused on segregated urban neighbourhoods whose physical, social, and cultural deterioration has made it difficult for residents to better their conditions (472). The present study on the backdrop of class differences, hierarchies and segregation investigates the propagation of harmony among people who should have lost the ability to trust one another, but who despite their conditions do not lose hope in humanity.

Similarly, Pattison describes the 'place effect' that aids in tight coupling of the individuals in particular geographies and influences the achievement of community. The face-to-face interaction results in the development of attachment bonds and may be a result of unplanned interactions between residents due to compactly built dwellings rather than widely dispersed ones (10-11). Hence, the red-light areas of Lahore, Mumbai and Istanbul- Hera Mandi, Kamatipur, and Zurafa Street, respectively are packed areas where houses are compactly situated and in one house more than a dozen residents remain together and survive. These one-on-one interactions force them to develop a bond of attachment, it may be negatively or positively influenced. Pattison further asserts that most places that are conducive to forming bonds or attachments are not even designed in many cases but are disordered and if they are to be purified, they will lose the essence of the place (10). These places are also known as heterotopias, they have intrinsic value of being in connection with a wide range of various locales and being alienated from them as well.

Galinsky et al. provide an interesting viewpoint for the formation of attachment bonds in subversive spaces. They propose that one mechanism for the formation of social bonds is 'perspective-taking'. According to them, it is defined as, 'the process of imagining the world from another's vantage point or imagining oneself in another's shoes' (110). This allows the individual to feel empathy for the person suffering, facilitates social coordination and fosters social bonds. When prospective takers see more of themselves in the other and in some cases come to act more like the target, they realize the difficulties the said individual was going through. This sympathy allows them to feel connected to the victim and form an unbreakable bond of attachment, especially in spaces of descent.

Landscape studies emphasized on engagement of people with spaces via their routine activities. Moreover, these routine activities include a major portion of meeting points of interactions that are of multiple, dynamic, fragmented and changing nature. Similarly, if we talk about activities and people associated with them having certain identities we come across the 'stigma group' (Broto et al. 953-954). There are certain spaces within the broader spectrum of places which due to actions performed there are credited as stigmatized places. The individuals living there are labelled with discredited attributes and termed as less desirable than others living within the same spectrum but in a so-called different space. Hence, stigma is used as a perception of a

negative environmental change in a place that can result in the transformation of local identities. Furthermore, there are certain signifiers through which a place is stigmatized and the conception of 'insideness versus outsideness' is born. The insideness is related to people residing in the subversive space and the outsideness is associated with people who remain out of the boundary of that place but are aware of its existence and they are the ones who label the foremost place to be a stigma. But such neighbourhoods also develop strong collective spaces where identity is organized within the social struggle for equality based on their communal strength and unity. Territorial stigmatization also affects the 20th century's class struggle for spatial positioning- a fight to have a place in the city (Ropert and Di Masso 2). Stigma-based social exclusion also targets the people living in these segregated and disadvantaged places who bear the wrath of harassment, abuse and stigma just because of their locality. The most profound injustice is that these practices which promote exclusion are justified for the proper functioning of society.

2.3 Stigma, Marginalization, and the 'Othered' Identity: A Historical, Literary, and Socio-Cultural Examination of Sex Workers and Marginalized Communities

Postcolonial studies mainly gave rise to the conception of 'other'. Said's 'Orientalism', keenly observed the difference that the West implanted more in-depth to present themselves as superior to East/Orient. Hence, the terminologies of; 'us' and 'other' were introduced to categorize majority and minority groups. Taking a step further, Nihad, in his study explained that most commonly the mainstream majority group, 'us', is the one that sets the boundaries, the one in power compartmentalizes the space and place of the 'othered' minority. The process of this othering includes identity negation, discrimination, stigma, and stereotyping (2901). Elif Shafak defines what she considers to be the 'other', saying, "It could be anything; ethnic, sexual, religious minorities, but also anyone pushed to the margin of any social or cultural context. I am interested in hearing that person's voice, and if possible, bringing that voice to the centre of attention" (Nihad 2902). That is mainly the reason that Shafak's writings are embedded with marginalized and othered individuals. She presents them with emotions and voices that want to be heard. She functions to be the voice of the figures who are kept in shadows to come forward with their stories of survival, friendship, and struggle, irrespective of religious, ethnic or cultural inhibitions.

Pain management among the marginalized is the power for survival. The recognition of pain is unsuccessful in individuals even in mainstream space, but the plight of the stigmatized is worse. The marginalized community suffers more from psychological issues, as they are vulnerable without proper education, and means of proper medical assistance. Moreover, these individuals face barriers to pain and health management as they are shunned by the mainstream society and their health is not a matter of concern for the people who are part of the stigma-labelled community (Craig et al. 2). Tomura, in his paper, highlights Ervin Goffman's 'psychology of stigma'. Goffman asserts that individuals are stigmatized because they exhibit undesirable characteristics, that taint, spoil or blemish their identity formation set by the society at large. Hence, they are othered and occupy a space that is related to their social identity only. The stigmatized individual is said to be abnormal, imperfect, defective, and inferior in all the moral and ethical senses to the people who are labourers (53). Prostitutes, genderqueers, and people associated with the red-light areas of society are stigmatized openly but they are mostly underrepresented. Goffman repeatedly used prostitutes as an example of a marginalized being. Yet, researchers only imply that it is due to their profession and once they leave it, the stigmatization stops. However, there is a lack of research on the psychological deterioration of the sex-workers, surviving the onslaught of stigma from people who are more powerful than them. The 'gaslighting' of prostitutes is one of the ways that the stigma labels can hurt the stigmatized individuals. They gaslight them to think that they are as dirty, filthy, evil and disgusting as society presents them to be, and they lose their respect in their own eyes (Tomura 64). Thus, the negative image is the one that remains most vivid in their mind.

Benoit et al. further add social distancing creates a vicious cycle in which the sex workers, in their struggle to escape stigma perpetuate it into their surrounding sphere. The pain of survival, causes people to do extreme things. Hence, the stigma that the sex-workers are burdened with at interpersonal, institutional, and structural levels, is represented in their 'space' (7). Brown, Shafak, and Zaidi, in their works, do depict the negative attachment style as well. The characters while inhaling stigma and abuse from outside, try to manifest it into their community as well.

Faheem and Basharat in their paper allude to the transition of the position that sex workers held in the past and the demotion of their status with time. Initially, the

courtesans used to provide their services exclusively for the upper-class society, providing them with entertainment and companionship in exchange for status, luxuries and power. However, the ever-changing times have been hard on the courtesans and they lost their cultural relevance as well as status in the society (71). With fewer and fewer admirers of classical dance and singing, their image dwindled into becoming a mere product of lustful fantasies and manifestations. Their purpose was only sex provision and they were called ill-reputed names. Literature of every society and culture is replete with the stories of these women, who were labelled as 'fallen women'. Their representation in most works of literature is associated with stigma and social degradation.

The dominant literature of the nineteenth century was put on a pedestal to prove the status of courtesan as derogatory and in the twentieth century, some writers took the initiative to explain the point of view of the sex workers on the other hand. These writers included Manto, Ismat Chughtai, Ruswa etc. The nineteenth-century writers enclosed women in a cage of domestic chains, and the women who ventured to public markets were automatically dark and ignorant of them. Hence, by the twentieth century, the courtesan or 'tawaif' who was the pride of Mughal courts was nothing but a lowly prostitute, commonly known as 'kanjri' in the Indo-Pak region. New ways of communicating and describing the social impact and literary images of the 'Fallen Women' emerged by the third decade of the 20th century. Because of textual and thematic concerns from the cultural mode of fiction, 'Social' as a language of excess encouraged an evaluation and subversion of the cultural construction of sex, class, and gender. During this time, the reference to prostitutes become a benchmark for raising the moral regulation of society. Girls were coerced to follow a set of moral and ethical codes of conduct or they would end up like 'fallen women'.

When talking about stigma, the most primal form of a marginalized group is children of prostitutes or sex workers. Their whole life is based on survival for the meagre necessities and for their right to live. The stigma attached to the profession of prostitutes, in addition to their erratic working hours, difficult working environment, and the 'dual' role of being a parent and the sole earning member of the family categorizes them under inadequate parenting figures. Moreover, there is a constant lack of long-term partners, which consequently means a lack of financial, emotional, and social support. The children lacked proper grooming and education, hence they

spent most of their time in the streets. The females join their mother's profession and the male grow up to be pimps for their mother, sisters and daughters. Few who try to break free from these stigmatized professions are shunned by society at large. Thus, they have no choice but to opt for professions such as becoming musicians, painters or street vendors. Even then they cannot avoid the stigma attached to their lives (Dutt et al. 22). Due to the lack of stable parental figures in the lives of the children of stigmatized individuals, they develop arbitrary attachment needs. To regulate this need, they try to find and bond with unlikely attachment figures. The children of Maha, form an unlikely bond with Brown based on their lack of stable attachment figure. Leila did not have a stable parental figure in her childhood, she compensates for this loss with her water family. Similarly, Gangu seeks bonds that try to fulfil her need to lose an actual family who rejects her when she tries to return.

Doezema represents another image of a prostitute as a 'suffering body' that has been established by Western feminists. The Western feminists name the third-world prostitutes as 'suffering bodies.' The 'body' of the prostitute is commodified and used as several metaphors for many fears, anxieties and relations of domination (18). 'Injured identity', is another conception that has emerged as a result of the politicization of identities such as gender, sexuality or ethnicity. The transformation of the structures of domination is limited to the investment in the history of 'pain'. The 'pain' or 'injury' is the focal point, it is the point from which the resistance or survival of the injured ensues (Doezema 20). 'Injury' or in other words being stigmatized becomes part of the identity of the marginalized without which they feel empty. They start associating their existence with the presence of the stigma and are not liberated by it. Brown in her memoir, has tried to liberate the 'injured' body of sex workers and other marginalized characters by depicting their basic routines and desires. The causal way of showing the life of a sex worker is her way of showing that these women have the same anxieties and fears as any other woman in civilized society. Unlike popular layman's belief, that fallen women have a choice of 'staying' or 'leaving', the reality is contrary. The autonomy of the prostitute is even less than the women confined within their homes. The sex trade is a vicious space for the people residing in it and is only a place to fulfil the desires of the visitors (Karmakar 124). The sex workers have no sexual, financial, and social liberty. Hence, prostitutes are dehumanized and their worth is reduced to market value. In addition to losing the autonomy of their body,

they lose much more. Their children never lead a stable life, they are abused physically and some even die at the hands of their clients, and most often they are not avenged.

Sidhwa in her book talks about the most famous sex den of Indo-Pak, Hera Mandi or Diamond Market. The place was a hub of cultural activity in the Mughal Era, the classical singing and dancing was considered an art. The courtesans held a place of affluence in the Royal court. The courtesans of that time were not only pretty, they had many talents besides the mandatory singing and dancing. They were witty conversationalist and intellectuals who were often invited to elite circles to enchant the nobility with their endeavours in poetry, music, dance and knowledge of cultural productions (74). However, with the inception of British rule, the grandeur of the courtesans of Hira Mandi was lost. The only tell-tale signs of the original patrons of Hera Mandi remained confined to the house of gentry that emerged in Punjab. Many famous singers of India were born in the houses of rajas, nawabs and rich landlords, who wanted to preserve the classical grandeur of Hera Mandi. However, within the market, the situation of the courtesans was reduced to being a sex worker only, instead of being an artist or a performer.

2.4 Exploring Marginalized Narratives Based on the Insights Presented on the Primary Texts of the Study

There is very little research done on the selected primary texts of this research. However, the few domains the texts have been analyzed are mostly related to feminist studies and gender identity. Consequently, one of the research projects on *Dancing Girls of Lahore* comprises of construction of gender identities during the process of translation. Dr Naeem Tariq translated Louise Brown's memoir into Urdu and Shaheen et al. in their study analyzed the use of language in manipulating the social realities by creating a male-oriented view and diminishing the subjectivity of women's representation via language in woman-oriented texts (331). This study will highlight the subjectivity of women too but the gap I am going to fill is by analyzing the relationships the women make in redlight areas, which enabled them to survive in harsh conditions. Similarly, Orchard provides a review of the memoir and posits that Brown has not only provided a descriptive account of a subversive area and social relationships formed there but also provides an overview of the meaningful lives of women and the management of gender, sexuality, class and caste in an otherwise

male-dominated society (3). Yet she fails to account for the depth of attachments of the individuals and the impact of their social surroundings on these relationships. Moreover, my study will highlight the inadequate opportunities for the stigmatized characters to free themselves of their harsh living conditions.

Sarkar and Singh Rai, compare Bhanshali's *Gangubai Kathiawadi* with Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own.* In their study, they analyze that both Woolf and Gangubai encouraged women of their time to speak for their rights and fight for them (379-380). Gangubai fought against subjugation of the women and strived for them to get the creative space to live their lives according to their wishes and desires. My study bridges the gap of how Gangubai became a focus for the subjugated women of Kamathipura to come together and own a place of their own to fight oppression and helplessness by challenging patriarchy and demanding their right to live and respect. Sumarsono and Masofa in their study analyze Huassain Zaidi's *Mafia Queens of Mumbai*, on which Bhanshali's *Gangubai Kathiawadi* is based on. In their study, they shed light on the oppression of women and discrimination and the way Gangu encouraged women to become independent and skilful (166). However, my study will incorporate the 'importance of choice' that Gangubai fortified in the movie. Redlight areas are places which are commonly referred to as places that devoid women of their freedom of choice. However, I will be analyzing the impact of Gangu and her relation with other stigmatized characters in her vicinity in empowering them to make choices about their lives without being afraid of any outside instigation. Ukey et al. describe different kinds of brothels and brothel workers while referring to *Gangubai Kathiawadi*, including the definition of 'prostitution' and 'brothel', which is the exploitation of a person for commercial purposes and a place that is used for sexual exploitation, respectively. In my research, I will amalgamate prostitution and society concerning attachments formed within the redlight areas.

There has been no significant research or study produced on Elis Shafak's novel *10 Minutes and 38 Seconds in This Strange World.* Although, the book reviews in, *The Guardian*, *The New York Times*, and *The Washington Post*, praise the satisfying and intuitive structure of the novel. In *World Literature Today*, Lancaster writes a review of the book and highlights the disparate cultures of Turkey that illuminate the charms and conflicts of the stigmatized community and their experiences to sustain themselves. My research will include the significance of the

'water-bonds' represented in the novel and their role in the sustenance of the characters instead of their 'blood-bonds'.

2.5 Finding and Filling the Gap through this Research Study

The above sources justify the significance of the study yet there is a gap that this research will fulfill. The stigmatized and marginalized spaces that are known to us as subversive spaces as well have been excluded from the general outlook of what consists of a society or community. The people living in these heterotopias are not allowed to intervene in the general conception of a civilized society. Moreover, these individuals face severe discrimination, hate, abuse, harassment and discrimination so much so that they are even threatened with in their places. To overcome these struggles stigmatized individuals often form strong bonds of attachment with one another. These bonds can help provide emotional support and understanding for those who feel isolated and judged by society.

While existing literature has extensively explored Bowlby's Attachment Theory, Foucault's concept of Heterotopia, and Erving Goffman's notion of stigmatization, there remains a significant lack of understanding the unique social dynamics within subversive heterotopias and 'spaces of descent'. The opening in current research lies in the lack of focus on the formation and impact of interpersonal bonds within these subversive spaces. Rationally speaking, there is a scarcity of studies examining how individuals in these environments form strong bonds of attachment with one another as a strategy for emotional support and survival. These relationships, characterized by mutual respect, trust, shared experiences are crucial for providing resilience and enabling stigmatized individuals to navigate the harsh realities of their lives more positively. Understanding these bonds is vital because they represent a significant coping mechanism for those marginalized by society. Despite the extensive theoretical frameworks provided by Attachment Theory, Heterotopia, and Stigmatization, no study has yet emphasized the formation of relationships and bonds within subversive spaces as a critical factor in survival and emotional well-being. This research aims to fill this gap by exploring the nature, strength, and impact of these bonds, thereby contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of social and emotional well-being in marginalized communities.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Approach and Design

The present study was situated in the qualitative paradigm as it seemed to be best suited, considering the exploratory nature of the study. The qualitative analysis is used to assess the research questions in the novel, *Dancing Girls of Lahore*, the memoir *10 Minutes and 38 Seconds in this Strange World,* and the movie *Gangubai Kathiawadi.* The study makes use of a comprehensive analysis of the visual and textual data as a research design. To explore the concept, attitudes, and perceptions about varied attachments; to individuals, and to place. Moreover, for the development of coping strategies to live in subversive spaces; a detailed in-depth analysis was required that could only be done through qualitative research. I will extract and explicate the relevant excerpts from the selected sources to gain insight into the phenomenon under study.

3.1.1 Sampling

For the selection of genre- novel, memoir, and a movie, I have used purposive sampling and criterion sampling. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method that allows researchers to deliberately choose specific works that are most relevant to the research questions. In the context of this research study, purposive sampling ensures that the chosen works, whether a novel, memoir, or movie, best represent the themes, issues, or phenomena under study, such as particular emotional experiences, social conditions, or cultural narratives. Similarly, criterion sampling has been used, because cases and attachment bonds are selected based on specific predetermined criteria or characteristics. Both methods help ensure the literature chosen is directly aligned with the research goals.

3.1.2 Emotional Engagement

Sakr et al., noted we understand engagement with processes as involving social-behavioral, cognitive, and emotional engagement. Emotional Engagement has been theorized as emotions experienced by individuals amid the completion of some

activity. The generated emotions may range from, excitement, and joy to sadness, and anger. The term 'emotion' suggests the existence of an experiential shift and an environmental stimulus that is responsible for the shift (55). Thus, emotions exist because of person-environment interactions more often, rather than an individualistic experience. Emotional engagement is used as a central concept in this study to focus attention on person-environment interactions and how emotional responses unfold through interactions with specific stimuli in the subversive environment.

3.2 Research Method- Multimodality

I will employ Carey Jewitt's 'Multimodality' method to study the delimited sources. Multimodality is an interdisciplinary approach that is concerned with understanding how people communicate and represent meaning and attends systematically to the social interpretation of a range of forms of meaning. Representations or interactions that consist of more than one mode are referred to as a multimodal ensemble, within a multimodal perspective. When several modes are involved in a communicative event, all of these modes combine to realize meaning. Multimodality emphasizes situated action and sets out to interrogate the interrelationship between the social context, the resources available to people within that context for making meaning with, and people's situated choice of resources. Thus, this approach opens up possibilities for recognizing, analyzing, and theorizing the different ways in which people make meaning and the place of resources and context in this process. (Sakr et al. 59-60) Multimodality is mainly a social semiotic approach to communication. Its interpretation can be traced to semiotics, art history, film studies and cultural studies. Jewitt aims to describe and inscribe the amalgamation of social and material resources in shaping semiotic resources. The signifiers such as people, communities and societies and their shared experiences are made into sign-systems that are used for communication and maintain social conventions (Price et al. 251). Hence, multimodality examines the process of meaning-making concerning a multiplicity of modes. It is most commonly known to analyze written texts however with ever changing nature of research analysis methods and diversity in meaning-making and analysis, it also incorporates the analysis of texts in action and interaction i.e., visual text.

Jewitt gives the example of a CD-ROM in his book. He explains that in 1992 a film, *Of Mice and Men,* was made from a novel and the CD-ROM version of the novel, had each chapter open up with a short video. The decision to represent a character multimodally in the form of a video clip gives it more 'potential to mean' than representing a character in a still image and writing. The 'reader' is involved in the task of finding and creating reading paths through the multimodal, multi-directional texts on the screen- a fluidity that is beginning to seep out onto the pages of the printed book (58). The direct voice, movement and visual appearance give more depth to an analysis of the characters, hence the reason I chose *Gangubai*, which is a movie, instead of the book it was based on, *Mafia Queens of Mumbai* written by Mustafa Zaidi. Jewitt further asserts in favour of the analysis of written texts by reading them. Reading a written text on a page is usually a linear event in which the author and illustrator guide the eye in a particular direction which is connected to the reading of a text. Hence, this will aid me in my analysis of written texts, *Dancing Girls of Lahore* and *10 Minutes and 38 Seconds in This Strange World.*

As my study incorporates the analysis of written as well as visual texts, the Multimodal method of research analysis is relevant. In multimodal research analysis, the researcher collects semiotic meaning-making signifiers or data from the records of social and cultural representations such as photographs, videos, observational field notes, films, written texts, narratives etc. The researcher observes the practices and interactions in the environment and the gathered data be it from a visual or written source serves to serve the socially and culturally situated construction of meaning (Jewitt and Leder Mackley 5). In my study, I'll be using a multimodal collection method to gather data from written texts and a visual text, namely, *Dancing Girls of Lahore, 10 Minutes and 38 Seconds in This Strange World,* and *Gangubai Kathiawadi,* respectively. The semiotic tools that are used to examine the print as well as visual texts include scrutiny of, color, framing, focus, and positioning elements. These draw three types of social meanings; Ideational-what the text is about, Interpersonal- relationship between characters, and Textual meaning- how the message is organized (Patridge 173). The multi-model analysis makes use of elaborate tools to form a relation between the meaning of community and its semiotic manifestations. In multi-model analysis, language is one means of

representation and meaning-making. Genre, the category that aids in the making and re-making of the meaning of the text is also significant. Other meanings are also integral and involve the social interaction of formal, and informal meanings about generation or region. Various signs construct an ensemble of modes to shape the intended meaning of the text. Such as; writing tells, image shows, colour frames and highlights, layout and font used for reasons of compositional arrangements (Kress 35-37). The ideational, interpersonal, and textual meanings are used for specific configurations of discourses present in one or more texts.

Following are the steps for a multimodal analysis given by Carey Jewitt, tailored to analyze a novel, memoir, and movie based on the framework of adult attachment theory, heterotopia, and stigmatization:

1. Identify Modes of Communication

Analysis and examination of dialogues, personal recounts, emotional tone, and descriptions in novel, memoir, and movie. Also assessing the visual imagery, body language and sound in the movie.

2. Establish Theoretical Framework

Applying adult attachment theory to explore attachment bonds and emotional dependencies. Defining heterotopia to identify subversive spaces; where characters face exclusion. And investigating stigmatization to understand how stigma influences characters' experiences.

3. Examine Character and Space Interactions

Exploring how characters engage with their environments and each other, through analysis of personal reflections, and focus on interactions depicted in novel, memoir and movie that reveal attachment dynamics based on shared experiences in stigmatizing spaces.

4. Analyze Multimodal Representations of Emotion and Attachment

Investigation of emotional shifts in character development in novel and memoir, and studying visual and auditory expressions of emotion and attachment in the movie.

5. Synthesize Findings

Explaining how attachment bonds help marginalized individuals cope with stigma. Relating the findings to adult attachment theory and discussing attachment behaviors. Also connecting heterotopia to the emotional dynamics of exclusion and resilience. Additionally, highlighting the effects of stigmatization on attachment formation across the analyzed works.

By following these steps, the research has been effectively conducted by a multimodal analysis to study attachment in subversive spaces among marginalized individuals.

3.3 Conceptual Framework/Theoretical Framework

The conceptual framework of the study is based on the adaptation of attachment theory, the notion of heterotopia, and the social construct of stigmatization by the researcher to develop the intervention by amalgamating these concepts to analyze the delimited sources. Attachment theory is an area of psychology that studies how people form and maintain strong emotional connections with each other. Heterotopia is a concept that was developed by French philosopher Michel Foucault to describe spaces that are outside of everyday life and that exist in a state of betweenness. Heterotopias can be physical places, such as cemeteries and gardens, or they can be more abstract, such as memories or dreams. Attachment theory emphasizes the importance of secure relationships for healthy social and emotional development, and heterotopias can provide a refuge and a space in which individuals can explore their inner worlds. Heterotopias can also provide a secure context in which individuals can form and maintain meaningful connections with others. Stigmatization is the social construct of stereotyping and rejection of humans based on norms. It is a complex process operating on the individual to collective level. There are various levels on which stigma infiltrates society and creates discord. The research creates the intervention by applying the theory of attachment that is embedded in a study in more than one way, i.e., Attachment theory relevant to the analysis of relationships

and Attachment to place. Besides this, Foucault's conception of heterotopia is rooted in the study to explain the process through which 'geographies of exclusion' are formed. The common denominator here is the construct of stigmatization, its prevalence is the cohesive force that amalgamates the framework and creates the bridge between the theoretical paradigms.

3.3.1 Theory of Attachment

According to Goldberg et al., the attachment theory was developed by John Bowlby. He was a British psychoanalyst and he observed the distress caused by the separation of parents on children, especially infants. Mary Ainsworth, an American-Canadian Psychologist added on to Bowlby's theory. They amalgamated the concepts of ethology, cybernetics, information processing, developmental psychology and psychoanalysis to understand their observations and draw conclusions from them (45). Bowlby presented the base and ideas about the concept of attachment between mother and infant and Mary Ainsworth provided a methodology to test his ideas. Ainsworth also contributed with the insight that attachment figures, other than mother even, can provide a secure base for any child to explore the world.

However, the ideas guiding the attachment theory have long since revolutionized. The current speculations on Bowlby's theory of attachment include personality and emotional regulation and the development of all humans in ethological as well as ecological models (Hazan and Shaver 270). According to Bowlby, the attachment structure has an essential question that is the base for all the developmental modes in the said model. The question is whether the attachment figure is accessible and attentive; if the answer is affirmative the person that needs attention feels cherished and secure and consequently, their behaviour reflects as such. However, if the attachment figure is not present in the immediate surroundings, the person might encounter anxiety and their behaviour will reflect dangerous tendencies, leading from anxiety and tantrums to numbness and insensitiveness. Bowlby was principally centred on catering for the nature of the infant and parent or caregiver relationship. However, he believed that the attachment system portrayed experience from 'cradle to the grave'. Hence, after the mid-1980s, researchers started considering the likelihood of attachment processes playing a role in adult

relationships and not only based on intimacy between couples, spouses or family members but also between people who are part of a particular group or class in society.

Hazan and Shaver explained the theory of attachment on the backdrop of romantic relationships initially. Their findings revealed that the secure attachment among adult relations shows fulfilment, trust, better emotional discharge and regulation, and healthier conflict resolution. On the other hand, peers who do not have a secure attachment style lack a progressive relationship. Research has also revealed that secure relationships develop on the availability of self-exposure, empathy, reflective listening, perspective-taking and productive techniques to deal with problems with a calm and constructive demeanour. In other relations, the dominating patterns based on manipulation and coercive systems lead to insecure attachment structures (270-271). Furthermore, Hazan and Shaver, report that the affective bonds created between adult romantic partners are based on the same attachment structure that was developed by Bowlby while investigating parent and infant relationships. Therefore, it is safe to say that almost all attachment bonds are based on more or less the same motivational framework of the attachment system. Some important features that were observed by Hazan and Shaver while investigating the attachment system are as follows; a)When the attachment figure is nearby and is responsive, the environment is deemed safe and secure. b) The people in attachment bonds feel close and intimate either physically, mentally or emotionally. c) The attachment between peers tends to provide a space that is free of judgement and lets the considered part reveal their secrets and hidden intricacies of the mind (271). The investigations of Bowlby, Ainsworth, Hazan and Shaver and the development of the attachment structure had a profound influence on modern research in observing relationships among individuals in different realms of life.

Goldberg et al. in their study provide different attachment styles and patterns. The styles are generally more or less the same for adult attachment and adult-child attachment. However, over time there is a transition in the patterns of attachment. The outside environment has a profound effect on the patterns of attachment, resistance, and stability. The four attachment styles and categories are used by theorists to analyze the tendency of intimation in any relationship. Besides this, it also categorizes the attachment bond of any relationship as either positive or negative.

Secure Attachment- It is the healthiest attachment type. The attachment participants are emotionally available. They are supportive, respectful, and trustworthy. The individuals in this relationship flourish mentally, emotionally, and physically with the aid of the attachment provider.

Anxious-Avoidant Attachment- This attachment style is also termed as dismissive. Individuals with this type of attachment pattern avoid contact with other human beings. They suffer from commitment issues and are not able to form satisfying and mutually productive relationships in the long run. These individuals tend to develop aggressive and anti-social behaviour. They tend to isolate themselves to avoid emotional stress.

Anxious-Resistant Attachment- The style is also named preoccupied attachment. Individuals with this type of attachment style form less secure bonds because they are always second-guessing the intention of the other party. They are paranoid and do not trust the other individual in the relationship. They long for security but develop co-dependent tendencies that push their partner away. Their clingy, demanding, and overprotective behaviour pushes individuals away from them.

Fearful- Avoidant Attachment- Also known as disorganized attachment, is the self-isolation of one's feelings. Adults with this type of attachment tend to get overwhelmed by their feelings and show aggressive, disruptive, and unpredictable behaviour. They are drawn to share their problems with other individuals yet they do not emotionally invest in that relationship (11-13).

Each of these styles should be thought of as a continuum of attachment behaviors, rather than a specific 'type' of person. The reason is, that someone with a secure attachment mainly on occasion displays unpredictable behaviour, and someone with an avoidant style may form a secure bond with another person. Hence, these styles are not used exactly to describe someone's personality but as a way to understand a particular individual's behaviour. Moreover, the relationship is based on two individuals, and they can bring forth more than one attachment style to the table. The present study will apply the theory to explain the compounded and expanded behaviour of individuals who form diverse attachments in unlikely places and challenge the norms of the attachments formed in a civilized society.

3.3.2 Attachment to Place

David Seamon, a professor of Architecture at Kansas State University and trained in geography and environment-based research investigated the concept of place in his paper Physical and Virtual Environments Meanings. The notion of a 'place' is any 'environmental locus in and through which the actions, experiences and meanings' of an individual or community are drawn spatially' (Seamon 203). The place is a multidimensional paradigm that functions to synthesize emotional attachment, cognitive identity development and behavioral dependence of any individual respectively. According to attachment theorists such as Williams, Vaske and Seamon, 'place' regulates the emotional resonance of individuals with their natural environment. Hence, the emotional bonding to meaningful settings and with people residing there is called 'place attachment' (4-5). That is, the individual connects with any spatial setting by developing an emotional and meaningful connection with it.

Proshansky et al. focus on the reasons behind individuals developing emotional bonds to places and with people living there. The place acts as a function of affect regulation object with attachment qualities such as survival, security, goal support, a sense of belonging, self-continuity and generally dependence (61). Therefore, the 'place attachment' has a variable 'place-dependence' which influences 'place identity'. The most significant aspect of place attachment is that it directly relates to the involvement of social relations. Many scholars develop this understanding that the satisfaction of residing in a place, especially if it is a challenging setting is that the attachment to place is proportional to attachment to people- family, friends, community and even culture. (Low and Altman 1-2). Hence, the place attachment becomes a signifier for the meanings and experiences in a setting associated with other people.

3.3.3 Subversive spaces and Michael Foucault's heterotopia

David Sibley, an American ornithologist, explains the social construction of 'outsiders.' Many geographers also focus on the phenomenon that spatial settings are caught up in defining and redefining social groups. Sibley argues that there is "historical continuity in the urge to exclude 'others' and to purify social spaces"

(Peters 666). Such as spaces from which non-conforming groups or people who indulge in activities not suited to the majority are expelled, and kept out of boundaries, both physical and social are said to be pure as they are free from elements that pollute the natural order of things within that group. Yet they are assigned certain parts of communal living, the spaces that are particularly labelled and often deliberately stigmatized to accentuate the otherness of such groups. Tim Cresswell is a British geographer and he posits those places and their demarcation of them result in creating differences and constructing 'us' and 'them. He also adds that these spaces become a link for individuals to show recursive behaviour and the ability to create differences ultimately points them towards taking a strong stance for 'geographies of exclusion' (Peters 666). Hence, marginalized groups are excluded from these places because they are seen as different and divergent.

According to Peters, Sibley also accounts for the way that the city is constructed and how it pushes the marginalized groups to the periphery deeming them to be a disorderly presence. Hence the connection of space with identity is based on different signifiers of differences. Gieryn, in her paper, writes that French Sociologist Pierre Bourdieu says that spaces and places sustain differences and retain the hierarchies by everyday practices of segregation of individuals based on tangible cultural meanings ascribed to them (465). Yet these segregated places provide a sense of solidarity, community and economic advancement to the marginalized groups.

Places especially the subversive spaces that are the site of contest between the rights given to minorities and the rights they deserve, reinforce the hierarchy of extension or deny life chances to groups located in unfavourable spots. However, the place also provides stability and durability to social structures despite the differences and hierarchies due to the provision or sense of security of intangible cultural norms, identities and memories associated with these spaces. Gieryn writes that the two possibilities either engagement or estrangement within urban spaces have been the focus of many sociologists. The reason is that some sociologists believe Urban places to be the sites of diversity, tolerance, sophistication, socialization, public interaction, cosmopolitanism, integration, assimilation, freedom, creativity and the whole community coming together for collective causes. Yet other sociologists have associated urban spaces with anonymity, detachment, loneliness, egoism, privatization, social controls, segregation, withdrawal, parochialism, isolation, fear

seclusion and the last place on earth one can find community on earth (476). Hence, the execution of community with engagement can be built within scattered social groups in different places within the broader urban space. These spaces are explained by Michael Foucault in his analysis of Heterotopias.

There are utopias and dystopias. According to Foucault Utopias are ideal sites and have no relation with the real spaces. On the other hand, dystopias are the total annihilation of society which is not possible as long as the world exists as societies keep on evolving and re-forming. However, there are certain spaces in every culture and society- real places that are said to be the counter-sites, in which all the "other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested and inverted" (Pattison10). These sites are termed as heterotopias. The presence of heterotopias posits the heterogeneity of space over homogeneity. Pattison, in his paper *Sites of Resistance: The Subversive Spaces of Their Eyes Were Watching God*, comments that the establishment of these spatial-political structures directly proposes that no system and structure can be void of subversive activity that ultimately leads to some kind of cultural change (11). Consequently, the heterotopias are termed subversive spaces by some as sites of resistance, challenges to social hegemony and voice for marginalized people.

3.3.4 Stigmatization

The social construct of stereotyping and denunciation of humans based on standards set by one group of people for another is called stigmatization. Erving Goffman, a Canadian Sociologist described 'stigma' as an attribute of any individual who is condemned by their society for having the said attribute. Goffman mostly alluded to organizational stigma, the particular category of organizations that transfers the stigma to a particular group of people or a single individual. The 'impression management' is integral in stigma, in such cases the individuals are at risk of embarrassment. Goffman emphasizes social encounters, the public sphere, where strangers meet. It can either let the stigma grow its roots or it can be a platform for resistance of stigma. Goffman's broad definition of stigma incorporates 'tribal stigmas', e.g., race, ethnicity, and religion, 'physical deformities', e.g., deafness, blindness, and leprosy, and 'blemishes of character',

e.g., homosexuality, addiction, and mental illness (Link and Phelan 376-377). Goffman divides these stigma attributes into three categories; Discredited Stigma, Discreditable Stigma, and Courtesy Stigma. He emphasizes that stigma is a general facet of life that obscures the micro-level interactions.

Stigmatization is a complex process operating on the individual to collective level. There are three types of stigmas that the study will embed in the analysis. The **structural stigma** is based on the lack of access to resources for the marginalized. The stigmatized individuals are abstained from certain environmental conditions, institutional laws, and necessities. The central focus of structural stigma is 'power', those in power feel it is their right to exclude and marginalize those who are different. The **interpersonal stigma** is related to the issues of harassment and violence. The stigmatized individuals face verbal abuse, physical violence, and sexual assault. Goffman described that people with visible stigmas are the ones that are treated adversely. People with physical disabilities, with diverse professional choices, or marred family backgrounds are susceptible to mistreatment and abuse. The **individual stigma** is resultant in the form of insecurity due to discrimination. The stigmatized human being will be affected psychologically, and their basic orientation of life, and their existence is questioned. (White Hughto et al. 222-226). The internalization of stigma impacts the ability of individuals to think properly.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS

Red-Light Realities and Bodies of Stigma

We are in the epoch of simultaneity; we are in the epoch of juxtaposition, the epoch of the near and far, of the side-by-side, of the dispersed.

—Michel Foucault, 1986 (Raine)

4.1 Red-Light Realities: Unveiling the Subversive Heterotopias of Urban Landscape

The examination of the memoir *Dancing Girls of Lahore*, the novel *10 Minutes and 38 Seconds in this Strange World*, and the film *Gangubai Kathiawadi* employs a descriptive qualitative methodology to dissect their representation. Adopting a comparative approach, the researcher delves into the analysis of the selected texts. Primary data for this analysis is derived directly from an exploration of the memoir, novel, and film. Complementary secondary data is sourced from a range of materials, encompassing relevant literature such as journal articles, books, and essays, alongside media and online platforms including web articles, blogs, book and film critiques, and other forms of commentary. The analytical process encompasses an examination of both the primary sources and supporting literature, with an emphasis on sorting and categorizing the represented elements using Carey Jewitt's multimodal analysis framework. Additionally, the application of attachment theory, along with an exploration of heterotopia and the phenomena of stigmatization, constitutes integral components of the current study.

Bowlby's Attachment theory has not only been widely applied to various aspects of human relationships. But to diverse relationships of stigmatized individuals living in subversive heterotopias. The prevalence of bonding that develops due to common suffering is relevant when considering the experiences of these individuals within subversive and segregated spaces, where their identities may be further marginalized. Thus, this extension of attachment theory to unconventional relationships can provide insights into the dynamics of attachment among stigmatized,

marginalized and dehumanized individuals living in subversive heterotopias or spaces of descent. Their common challenges posited by society, their families, and their divided self, pushes them to cling to attachment figures that provide stability.

Furthermore, if we consider the heterotopia as a space of resistance and subversion, it becomes relevant in understanding the dynamics of subversive heterotopia, the stigmatized individuals inhabiting that space and their medium of survival via attachments. The notion of heterotopia as a site of agency aligns with the complexities of navigating stigmatized identities within such spaces, where individuals may seek agency and resistance against prevailing norms. This highlights the potential of attachment theory to incur interventions and support mechanisms for individuals facing stigmatization within such contexts.

4.1.1 Subversive Heterotopia- Introduction

French philosopher Micheal Foucault in his essay, *Des espaces autres (Of Other Spaces)* introduced the concept of 'heterotopia'. Heterotopias are spaces that exist outside the mainstream or dominant social order, serving as sites of difference, deviation, and alternative forms of social organization. These spaces can encompass a wide range of physical, conceptual, or imaginary locations that challenge or subvert established norms and conventions. Jones and Charteris explain heterotopia as did Jorge Luis Borges, an Argentinian philosopher. Borges in his works gave the etymology of the word by explaining that it is a combination of two concepts; 'topos' meaning place and 'heteros' meaning different or another. Foucault used these notions to theorize space and detangle the convictions and experiences shared within these spaces by individuals. They also provide a circumference from the outside, where the inside of the sphere becomes the vantage point to compare and critique. The inside and outside space becomes a contestation site where identities, cultures, relations, and use of power are expounded in traditional and non-traditional ways. The two main types of heterotopias given by Foucault differentiate the spaces for better categorization. The heterotopia of deviation are places for individuals who diverge from the customs of their society, whereas, the heterotopia of crisis are sites that are more commonly known as 'forbidden places', where certain non-traditional activities take place (Jones and Charteris). The heterotopia of crisis and deviation, together can

also be explained as spaces of descent. When discussing heterotopias concerning subversive spaces and spaces of descent, we explore how certain environments or realms disrupt prevailing power structures, ideologies, and disciplinary regimes.

In modern culture, heterotopia of deviance is used to describe deviation and crisis combined, and these include insane asylum, old people's homes, prisons, brothels, cemeteries etc. (Allweil and Kallus 199). The heterotopic sites that are 'othered' and isolated from the predominant spatial structure, thus they have little to no effect on the domineering society. The urban society accommodates the deviant individuals within the subversive spaces that are detached from the urban fabric. The communities that are camouflaged by the public sphere, without proper demarcation of the segregation are public-sphere heterotopias. These spaces are open to the public but the individuals residing there are not welcomed in the contemporary society. Mostly these spaces are deviant because of the activities performed there. But because these spaces reside within the domain of the open-to-all public, and with no permanent physical borders, they have a particular capacity to sustain subversive social codes and possess the ability to affect hegemonic suppression. If we look at the spaces under study, the cities of Lahore, Istanbul, and Mumbai are the sites that inhabit the microcosms or domains that are open to the public, and have no physical boundaries but are bound to certain codes and conducts. These include the 'The Diamond Market' of Lahore, the brothel streets of Istanbul, and 'Kamathipura' of Mumbai. Louise Brown depicts this scene in her memoir by describing the amalgamation of the 'civilized' Lahore and the debased streets of prostitutes' Heera Mandi, "Heera Mandi—the Diamond Market—is a crumbling ghetto of three- and four-storey buildings tucked into the northern corner of the Walled City, right next to one of the greatest forts of Mughal India and its biggest, most perfectly proportioned mosque" (Brown 4.) . It is within the center of the city yet it is a heterotopia, where the rest of the city bustles around it.

Similarly, Shafak in her novel describes the brothel streets of Istanbul, the open-to-public yet segregated spaces that the common man cannot avoid but abhors to pass through as well. It is a dead-end street near the Karaköy port and the Golden Horn, once a thriving commercial and multicultural hub, now houses licensed brothels, "Tequila Leila as she was called at home and work, in that rosewood-coloured house on a cobblestoned cul-de-sac– the street that harboured the oldest

licensed brothels in Istanbul" (Shafak 1). The area retains remnants of its diverse past, including various religious institutions. An iron gate separates the brothel street from the outside world, symbolizing its current state of decline and seclusion. The region of Kamathipura in Mumbai was also in the public domain but was nonetheless segregated. It was beside an all-girls school, and the court wanted to close the Mohalla down, for which Gangubai fought relentlessly.

Knight, in his study, elaborates Foucault's conception of heterotopia further. He emphasizes the presence of heterotopias in every culture and ethnicity in the world, though it can be subject to change with time. He gives the example of the cemetery, which used to be in the centre of the city earlier on but was moved to the outskirts gradually. Moreover, the emergence of animosity among different ethnic groups cohabiting the society led to the development of separate burial grounds for every sect (3). Shafak in her novel demonstrates the burial sites of the unknown that are present in various parts of Turkey, "It was reserved for three types of dead: the unwanted, the unworthy and the unidentified. Almost everyone interred in the Cemetery of the Companionless was, in some way or another, an outcast. Many had been shunned by their family or village or society at large" (Shafak 255-256). Knight, also highlights the divisions that Foucault represented in his paper. Apart from the heterotopias of crisis and deviation that we have discussed above, other subdivisions include, heterotopia of illusion and heterotopia of compensation. Heterotopia of illusion represents a real space but with deception and in doing so exposes the real space more. For instance, the brothel is a space that is the hallmark of artifice and performance needed to satiate the clients but this illusion reveals the true face of the dual-faced society. The clients who mock such illusions are the most frequent customers of its illusory. Consequently, heterotopia of compensation is a space that is meticulously ordered space, it appears perfect. However, the space exposes the disorder in society at large (4). A boarding school or a brothel run by a strict brothel owner is an example of a heterotopia of compensation, where everyone has to adhere to strict and set rules and regulations. In this way, the routine lets the individuals work in synchronization.

In the memoir by Louise Brown, she describes that the old women living in the Diamond Market told her that the red-light district of Lahore was in place long before the British invasion. It was a Shahi (royal) Mohalla during the Mughal era.

There were proper brothels where owners and their disciples were trained courtesans and respected for their art of dancing and singing not like today where they are compared with dirty prostitutes. Thus, the women in their prime days were part of the refined arts of the region, but this illusion was tarnished by reducing them to being mere pleasure providers. Subsequently, Louise also describes the strict way the life of a brothel works where the women have to fulfil the needs of the clients as well as their brothel owners. Maha and her children left their home because she refused to support her mother and her pimp father from her earnings. In the novel, Shafak also explains this depiction of illusion and compensation, "Some of them visibly hated their job; they despised this street of ill repute and anyone who crossed its threshold: women and men alike. Whereas some officers took it as they would any other job, others secretly envied the punters, wishing they could trade places, if only for a few hours" (Shafak 46). In front of the brothel street in Istanbul, policemen took shifts. Shafak explains the illusion they were in of the heterotopia beyond the gates. Consequently, she also describes the warden as the brothel owner where Leila lived, who was cunning and vengeful, she was called 'sweet ma' by clients and prostitutes at the face but was referred to as being bitter behind her back. She was vengeful and remembered every wrong that had been done to her.

Gangu in Kamathipura was under the reign of an even worse brothel owner, who had no regard for the girls working under her as long as they brought in money for her from the clients, "She's got 15 stitches on her stomach and four on her lips. He has broken her limbs too…You're our madam. We are your responsibility. Despite you being here, she's as good as dead" (Kapadia). She deliberately let a client beat Gangu to break her spirit. Some of the prostitutes reprimanded her at the hospital where Gangu was undergoing treatment.

The different cultural, institutional, and discursive spaces are explained by Foucault's heterotopia. The contradiction of these sites not only is a mirror of different stages of life that are distorted and unsettled. Bazin and Naccache, elaborate on this Foucauldian perspective of diverse territories that are either open or closed, transparent or hidden, central or peripheral, isolated or connected. These spaces due to contestation or presentation of alternative orders become hubs of resistance and subversion (2). The characters in the primary texts under study challenge the power struggle in these heterotopias to survive. Their subversion from the persistent norms

in the already challenged society changed their own lives and those around them. Louise Brown formed an unconventional yet strong bond with the prostitutes of Hera Mandi in Lahore. She was their sister irrespective of her being a foreigner literally and figuratively to the depth of their pain as well. Consequently, Leila defies the customs of her society every chance she gets. From befriending boys to leaving her house, and from changing brothels to marrying and then forming friendships that were unheard of in her surroundings. Gangu is perhaps the best example of a power struggle, upheaving the deep-rooted practices and experiments with her new identity as a prostitute to the maximum. She fights for the right to live, and then she fights for the right to have an identity, ultimately asking for respect in a community that was used as a dark contrast to respectable society.

4.1.2 Space of Descent- Red-Light District as Subversive Heterotopia

Heterotopia, when associated with subversion and transformed into spaces of descent, represents environments or contexts that actively challenge dominant social norms, values, and power dynamics. These locations are characterized by resistance, dissent, and counter-cultural expression, often embodying alternative visions of society and modes of collective action. Some of these spaces, like red-light districts or brothels, represent segregated parts of society that form internally unified centres to resist external stigma. Foucault's concept of heterotopia helps elucidate how these spaces disrupt prevailing social hierarchies and spatial orders, offering glimpses of alternative futures and challenging societal boundaries. Spaces of descent, specifically, represent environments or realms where individuals or groups retreat, withdraw, or are pushed through coercion from mainstream society, often as a form of resistance or critique against oppressive forces. These spaces enable reflection, introspection, and the cultivation of alternative modes of existence, fostering personal autonomy, spiritual growth, and existential exploration.

The current study primarily centres on red-light districts viewed through the lens of heterotopias, as these areas exist outside conventional social norms and fulfil distinct socio-cultural roles. By confining activities to specific locales, these districts provide a space where alternative forms of social interaction, intimacy, and sexual expression can thrive without the usual moral and legal constraints. Within these districts, unconventional identities and behaviours regarding sexuality, intimacy, and

gender roles are accommodated, allowing individuals to engage in activities often stigmatized in broader society without fear of judgment. Symbolic representations within red-light districts further emphasize their unique status, signalling to visitors that they are entering a space where alternative norms prevail. The visual aesthetics of these areas contribute to their identity as heterotopic spaces within urban landscapes. Viewing them as heterotopias provides valuable insights into the complex dynamics of power, resistance, and cultural production in urban environments.

If one talks about the most culturally enriched city in Pakistan, Lahore will be at the top of the list. It is the cultural, social and historical hub of Pakistan. The palimpsest city has countless evidences in the form of landmarks that are architectural masterpieces. The space is abuzz with contrasting identities and races that co-exist and pay homage to its diversity. Chambers says, Lahore is a microcosm of Pakistan and gives the example of Anatol Lieven's book *Pakistan: A Hard Country*; there is a section titled, *Lahore: The Historic Capital*. In this, he posits that Lahore is the heart, stomach and backbone of Pakistan (116-117). Lahore offers a unique blend of ancient traditions and modern developments, epitomized by the Walled City, or Androon Lahore, home to historical landmarks like the 16th-century Lahore Fort and the iconic Badshahi Mosque. Hera Mandi, also known as Shahi Mohalla, is a historic red-light district located within the Walled City of Lahore. Historically, Hera Mandi was renowned as a centre for the performing arts, particularly classical music and dance. It was home to courtesans who were highly skilled in various art forms, including classical music, dance, and poetry. Over time, however, Hera Mandi gained notoriety as a red-light district, although efforts have been made to preserve its cultural heritage. Louise Brown gives us the picturesque heterotopic description of Hera Mandi, the Mohalla hides the world of women that comes alive at night, "For women in this part of the city the world is largely nocturnal. They're at home but they're not asleep. They're waiting." (Brown 8-9). Pimps are seen on every corner looking for clients. The women close their shutters for a few minutes to pleasure clients every few minutes. Men who come here are sure of their way because the dimly lit streets are hard to tread even in the daytime.

Despite its controversial reputation, Hera Mandi remains a significant cultural landmark in Lahore, attracting tourists interested in its history and architecture. If we only look at Hera Mandi, Chambers says, we can call it the microcosm of the whole

of Lahore. The Mohalla is known by many names but none can deny that it is one of the oldest flesh markets of the Sub-continent where prostitution and the performing arts are linked in a complex web of human relations yet the inhabitants are the most stigmatized and least understood by their fellow Lahoris.

To look at Lahore from the lens of space that is affected by the social happenings in it, we can see, Edward W. Soja's *Postmodern Geographies* (1989). Soja delves into the notion that while space is inherently given, it is also shaped by social constructs and imaginative interpretations. Soja contends that urban space is malleable, shaped by social forces and individual experiences, involving constant translation and transformation. Furthermore, Soja emphasizes the role of imagination in shaping our understanding of space, echoing Fredric Jameson's concept of 'cognitive mapping', which highlights the collective construction of mental representations of cities. Jameson underscores the influence of cultural biases on these mental maps, suggesting that they may not always accurately reflect reality. This perspective aligns with William Glover's assertion that cities, including Lahore, are products of both physical construction and imaginative projection. Anatol Lieven further emphasizes Lahore's status as a city of the imagination, distinct from more bureaucratic or impoverished urban centres (Chambers 122-124). The malleability of Hera Mandi over time can be glimpsed through the house of Iqbal Hussain, son of a former prostitute- child of the Mandi. His house is perhaps the segregation from the descent and ascent, he is part of both worlds and so is his house. He cannot completely tear himself from the Mohalla, and he cannot claim to be part of it as well. In the beginning, Louise used to live in his house and experience the Lahore and Lahori of both ends, the 'so-called civilized' people and the inhabitants of the Mandi. Iqbal taught Louise much about the women of Hera Mandi. Her room in his house had a window that opened into the courtyard in the Mandi and gave her a first-hand glimpse of life in Mohalla, "There's something exciting and illicit about coming here, something that makes respectable Pakistani pulses race…after their meal, peep into the courtyard—into the dangerous scandal that is Heera Mandi" (Brown 4-5). Iqbal runs a restaurant on the ground floor where respectable Pakistanis come to eat and also to get a glimpse of the Hera Mandi. The liminality of his home is also a microcosm of the Hera Mandi behind his house. It is an amalgamation of the

centuries-old pleasure district still embedded in the same trade but with time its loss of the tradition of the arts and dancing it was famous for in the beginning,

Mumbai, formerly known as Bombay, is the financial, commercial, and entertainment capital of India. It is a bustling metropolis located on the west coast of India, in the state of Maharashtra. Mumbai is one of the most populous cities globally, characterized by its diverse culture, rich history, and dynamic energy. The city is a vibrant tapestry of contrasts, where towering skyscrapers stand alongside sprawling slums, and ancient temples share space with modern shopping malls. One of Mumbai's most famous and notorious neighbourhoods is Kamathipura. Situated in the heart of the city, Kamathipura is one of the oldest and largest red-light districts in Asia. Historically, Kamathipura has been a hub for sex work and related activities, dating back to the late 18th century. The streets of Kamathipura are lined with narrow alleys and dilapidated buildings, many of which serve as brothels or residential quarters for sex workers and their families. The area is known for its vibrant yet chaotic atmosphere, with crowded lanes teeming with people, bustling markets, and the constant hum of activity. Despite its reputation as a red-light district, Kamathipura is also home to a diverse community of residents, including migrant workers, street vendors, and families living in poverty. The neighbourhood has its own unique culture and identity, shaped by the experiences of its inhabitants and the challenges they face. Campbell writes that Mumbai's Kamathipura is the oldest red-light district in the Indian subcontinent. Brothels typically exhibited a characteristic feature of being completely concealed at street level, contrasting with the openness of surrounding structures. These buildings often appeared neglected, with bedding hanging out of windows above street level, hinting at recent activities within. Such observations made it relatively easy to discern the nature of these establishments and their occupants. Nonetheless, Kamathipura being the oldest and most well-known red-light district in Asia, is also a vibrant and complex community with its own culture, traditions, and social dynamics. It is the perfect example of a subversive heterotopia. The people who enter it for trade willingly or unwillingly, especially the women have no choice but to stay there. They become social pariahs. "I was branded as one of the whores of Kamathipura. How could I go back home? The brothel was my new home, and, I was a prostitute" (Kapadia). Gangu also becomes a pariah when she is sold to this space of descent and degradation.

In *Gangubai Kathiawadi,* Kamathipura serves as the central setting for the story. Sharma writes in her blog that the director of the movie Sanjay Leela Bhansali lived near Kamathipura, thus he was sensitive to the plights of the sex workers in the area who were close enough to the public domain that they could be pitied and looked upon, and far enough that they were never welcomed into the unstigmatized society of Mumbai. In the context of the movie, Kamathipura is depicted as a bustling, chaotic, and colourful place, filled with brothels, narrow alleys, dimly lit streets, and a diverse array of characters. It's a world where the boundaries between legality and illegality blur, and where power dynamics are constantly shifting. The brothel where Gangu was sold is a place with a dilapidated structure with dark, musty and dirty rooms filled to the brim with girls. The same is the case with other brothels in the area. The brothel owner had no regard for the hygiene of the girls or customers, she only made them look pretty at night to increase their face value. The streets depicted in the movie are filled with every kind and age of men willing to spend the night with any and every kind of woman to satiate his lust. The space inside the brothel is as dark as the whole heterotopia. The brothel owners are ruthless, more so than the customers who come to buy the girls at night. The lighting in the film makes Kamathipura seem more dark, twisty and dingy place. It almost looks like a cage where one enters to never leave it, as they are labelled and segregated from mainstream society. As Gangu says in the movie, "Once you enter Kamathipura, there's no going back … I haven't stepped out of Kamathipura in 15 years!" (Kapadia). Overall, Kamathipura serves as more than just a backdrop in the movie-it's almost a character in itself, shaping the lives and destinies of all who inhabit it. However, it was Gangu who bent Kamathipura to her will to fill the role of a matriarch for the women residing there. She became the very life of the place, where Gangu and Kamathipura exist together. She became the Mafia Queen of Kamathipura with help of Rahimlal, and she fought for the insemination of the outside world into their microcosm, after registering her girls to the school beside the Mohalla and letting everyone know the importance of Kamathipura and its women in her speech in Azad Maidan, "If there was no Kamathipura... this city would turn into a jungle! Our children will get the right to education and we will get our right to live in society with dignity" (Kapadia). Without Kamathipura, the women would be raped in the city and families torn apart.

Apart from the other two primary texts, Shafak in her novel has represented Istanbul as a microcosm of the whole Turkey. It is a macro heterotopia with micro heterotopic spaces within. Different parts of Istanbul represent varied stories and blend of emotions. Istanbul, the largest city in Turkey, is a mesmerizing blend of cultures, history, and modernity. Straddling two continents, Europe and Asia, across the Bosporus Strait, Istanbul is a city with a rich and diverse heritage that spans millennia. Amidst the hustle and bustle of Istanbul, there are also darker corners that reflect the complexities of urban life. One such area is Zürafa Street, historically known for its brothels and red-light district. While prostitution is illegal in Turkey, Zürafa Street has long been infamous for its clandestine activities, drawing in both locals and tourists seeking illicit pleasures. Istanbul remains a city of contrasts, where ancient traditions coexist with contemporary lifestyles, and where every street corner tells a story of its own. In the novel, Brothel Street serves as a significant setting where much of Leila's story unfolds. The brothels along the street are not just places of physical pleasure but also serve as havens for the outcasts of society, including prostitutes, transgender individuals, and other marginalized groups. The street itself is described as a vibrant and chaotic place, bustling with activity day and night. It's a place where different cultures, backgrounds, and stories intersect, reflecting the diversity of Istanbul itself. Through the lens of Tequila Leila, the reader gets a glimpse into Brothel Street. "Tequila Leila as she was called at home and work, in that rosewood-colored house on a cobblestoned cul-de-sac down by the wharf, nestled between a church and a synagogue, among lamp shops and kebab shops – the street that harboured the oldest licensed brothels in Istanbul" (Shafak 1). It was once a bustling commercial and multicultural area, it had transformed into a hub for illicit transactions, overshadowing its rich historical remnants like the Armenian school, Greek church, and various other religious and cultural landmarks.

Tahaoglu documents the red-light district on Zürafa Street has been operating since the late 19th century, making it one of the oldest establishments of its kind in the nation. Leila worked in the oldest brothel on that street. Leila in the novel narrates that the brothel she worked in was part of these establishments, "This being one of the fourteen brothels lined up along the same cul-de-sac, the clients had plenty of options" (Shafak 50). It was a world that was hidden. A place everyone could visit and yet no one mentioned in their conversations. Just like the nest that was on the

window of Leila's room in the brothel, "Under the eaves, right outside Leila's window, dangled an empty wasps' nest – round, papery, mysterious. A hidden universe" (Shafak 46). Such was the condition of Leila's own life, she desperately wanted to break free and transcend the boundary of her dreary life.

The sharp contrast between both the outside world and the inside of the brothel can be understood by Shafak explaining the way labourers below the window of prostitutes felt, "The other men opened the windows and craned their necks, trying to spy on the whores, the dust that covered them from head to toe gave them wrinkles…made them look not so much like old men as like spectres stuck between two worlds" (Shafak 53). Dark spaces are often categorized as heterotopia of illusion mostly because they create the image of mystery in the minds of the people who are from the outside and the desire to unwind the darkness to glimpse inside. Yet they never openly subject themselves to the task at hand. Men are the primary spectators and dominant beings who label the dark parts of society and are often the ones whose blood starts boiling at the site of the creatures within the spaces they segregate themselves.

Other important landmarks of Istanbul that are the setting of Shafak's novel include Hairy Kafka Street and the Cemetery of Companionless. Hairy Kafka Street, also known as 'Tüylü Kafka Sokağı' in Turkish, derives its name from the renowned Czech writer Franz Kafka, renowned for his surreal and existential literature. Hairy Kafka Street is a narrow and winding passage, flanked by eclectic buildings adorned with colorful graffiti and street art. "Hairy Kafka Street ran down between dilapidated buildings and small, dingy shops specializing in lighting fixtures" (Shafak 200). The street is one of the key settings in the novel. The street is described as a place filled with misfits, outcasts, and marginalized individuals. Leila and D/Ali rent an apartment there after their marriage. The apartment becomes a safe space for them, until D/Ali's death. It was the first place, Leila truly felt she belonged and that gave her a sense of identity. The setting reflects Shafak's larger exploration of social issues and the search for belonging in a diverse and often unforgiving urban landscape,

> In the mornings, as Leila, would inhale the smells of the neighbourhood, each day a different combination and life would feel unusually sweet, heaven-sent. They would look at Istanbul with curious eyes, as if they were not part of it, as if they were alone in the world (Shafak 163).

After that, it becomes a sort of headquarters for Leila and her group of friends. It became their little piece in the world that they could breathe without any judgement and discrimination. "And for a brief moment, it felt as if they were in Leila's flat on Hairy Kafka Street, all six of them, chatting and teasing each other, their voices tinkling like glass chimes" (Shafak 255). Here the characters found solace and camaraderie despite their troubled pasts and present circumstances. As Leila, navigates the streets of Istanbul in the aftermath of her death, Hairy Kafka Street serves as a backdrop for her memories and reflections on life, identity, and belonging. Through vivid descriptions and rich imagery, Shafak brings Hairy Kafka Street to life, capturing its sights, sounds, and smells, as well as its unique atmosphere and energy. The street becomes more than just a physical location; it becomes a symbol of the city itself, with all its contradictions, complexities, and beauty. Hairy Kafka Street becomes a symbol of both sanctuary and struggle for Leila and her friends. It's a place where they find acceptance and solidarity among each other, but also where they confront the harsh realities of discrimination and violence of the world outside.

Another important landmark in the novel is a place shrouded in solitude and solemnity; the Cemetery of the Companionless, or 'Mezar-ı Çürüğü' in Turkish. The Cemetery of the Companionless is a somber expanse of graves, stretching out beneath the shadow of ancient cypress trees. Here, rows upon rows of tombstones stand in silent tribute to those who have departed this world without the companionship of family or loved ones to accompany them in their final journey. "Almost everyone interred in the Cemetery of the Companionless was, in some way or another, an outcast…The undesirables. Social pariahs. Cultural lepers" (Shafak 249). Despite its melancholy ambience, the Cemetery of the Companionless serves as a sanctuary for those who have been forgotten or overlooked by society. In the novel, Leila is buried here after her family refuses to accept her dead body. She is buried there without a name, just a number as if her life held no regard. A vibrant and full-of-life woman who changed the lives of countless individuals around her, laid there to be forgotten. "Like all the unclaimed dead, she, too, would be consigned to the Cemetery of the Companionless. She would be buried the way all the undesirables were – silently and swiftly. She would become yet another number in the Cemetery of the Companionless" (Shafak 186). This is yet another discrimination against marginalized people. Foucault in his essay gave a cemetery as an example of a heterotopia.

Cemetery of Companionless is one such place. The burial site is a world where the stigma doesn't leave the dead behind. The hierarchies exist past death and create yet another community of dead who have ranks.

The rebellion to fight the oppression and suppression within the subversive society in the novel is taken up by the individuals that Leila inspired in her life. She had collected a bunch of people apart from memories through her daily ordeal in Istanbul. These friends traipsed the boundary of the subversive heterotopia to bring their marginalized friend back from the place where she would be forgotten. "How can a person who has built wonderful friendships all her life be buried in the Cemetery of the Companionless? How can that be her address for eternity? It's unfair!" (Shafak273). It wasn't fair that they had buried Leila in the Cemetery of the Companionless when she had lifelong, loyal, loving friends. She might not have had much else, but she certainly had this. Bonds formed within these spaces contribute to individuals' resilience and capacity for resistance against oppressive systems. By fostering collective agency and empowerment, attachments enable individuals to challenge injustice and withstand persecution. Through solidarity and mutual aid, individuals pool resources to confront shared struggles and advance collective goals, fostering a spirit of determination

Carey Jewitt's multimodality method, which emphasizes the interplay of ideational, interpersonal, and textual approaches, offers a nuanced framework for analyzing the written texts *Dancing Girls of Lahore* by Louise Brown and *10 Minutes and 38 Seconds in This Strange World* by Elif Shafak, alongside the visual text *Gangubai Kathiawadi*, directed by Sanjay Leela Bhansali. Through the ideational lens, these narratives delve into the lives of marginalized women in subversive heterotopias—spaces that challenge societal norms while existing within them. For instance, Brown's portrayal of Lahore's Heera Mandi and Shafak's depiction of Istanbul's brothels unravel the socio-political structures shaping the characters' lived realities, mirroring the complex resistance to patriarchal oppression seen in Gangubai's rise to power within the confined heterotopic space of Mumbai's red-light district. From the interpersonal perspective, these works evoke empathy by humanizing the women whose lives are often reduced to stereotypes, highlighting their agency, resilience, and emotional depth in forging solidarity within their communities. Lastly, through the textual approach, the interplay of linguistic and

cinematic modalities reinforces themes of defiance and empowerment: Brown and Shafak's evocative prose resonates with Bhansali's rich visual symbolism, which transforms the brothel into a site of reimagined identity and power. Together, these texts construct subversive heterotopias as spaces where marginalized women navigate, resist, and redefine societal expectations.

Institutionalized Versus Independent Sex Work in Heterotopias

Institutionalized prostitution, often found in brothels, and independent sex work represent two distinct paradigms of the sex trade, differing in autonomy, social interactions, and the broader implications of stigma and societal perception. The difference between institutionalized prostitution, as seen in brothels, and independent sex work lies primarily in the structural and socio-economic dynamics that define these two forms of sex work. Institutionalized prostitution, like that found in brothels, is typically characterized by a system of regulation and control, often involving intermediaries such as brothel owners or managers who oversee the operations and take a share of the earnings. This system often imposes restrictions on the autonomy of the workers, who may have limited control over their clients, working conditions, and income distribution. On the other hand, independent sex work offers a higher degree of personal agency, where individuals engage directly with clients, set their terms, and retain full earnings. However, independent sex workers often face greater risks due to the lack of institutional support or protective mechanisms that some brothels might provide, such as security against exploitation by clients or external threats. Both forms are deeply entrenched in societal stigmatization, but the levels and types of stigmas may vary depending on the cultural and legal contexts.

In the context of subversive heterotopias as explored in *Dancing Girls of Lahore* by Louise Brown, *10 Minutes and 38 Seconds in This Strange World* by Elif Shafak, and *Gangubai Kathiawadi* directed by Sanjay Leela Bhansali, these distinctions become more profound. These works highlight how both institutionalized and independent setups influence the interpersonal dynamics, attachment bonds, and survival strategies of sex workers. For example, in *Dancing Girls of Lahore*, the brothel environment in Lahore's Heera Mandi fosters a network of dependency among sex workers, children, and clients, where attachments are often forged out of necessity and survival. The memoir portrays Maha's struggles to maintain her familial

and social ties within this institutionalized system, where societal stigmas exacerbate her vulnerability and emotional distress.

In *10 Minutes and 38 Seconds in This Strange World*, Leila, as an independent sex worker, forms her "water family" outside the rigid institutional framework. This chosen family becomes her primary source of emotional support, illustrating the significant role of alternative attachments in coping with societal alienation. The autonomy Leila experiences in her work allows her to navigate stigmatization differently, but it also isolates her from traditional support structures, placing greater importance on her bonds with fellow outcasts.

Gangubai Kathiawadi delves into the brothel system of Mumbai's Kamathipura, showing how institutionalized prostitution can evolve into a form of community where women find resilience and solidarity. Gangubai's leadership transforms the brothel into a quasi-safe space where sex workers collectively challenge societal norms and advocate for their rights. This depiction underscores the dual nature of institutionalized prostitution as both oppressive and a potential source of empowerment through communal bonds.

The juxtaposition of these two forms of sex work highlights the fluidity of attachment bonds and survival mechanisms in stigmatized heterotopias. Institutionalized settings often foster hierarchical and transactional relationships, while independent sex work allows for more egalitarian bonds but with heightened isolation and vulnerability. Both settings, however, reveal the overarching impact of stigma and the necessity of forming attachments as a means of survival in these marginalized spaces.

4.1.3 Attachment to Place

David Seamon gave the concept of a 'place' being an "environmental locus in and through which the actions, experiences and meanings of an individual or community are drawn spatially" (Seamon 203). One of the reasons individuals develop emotional bonds with places is because of people living there. The place that provides attachment qualities of survival, security, and a sense of belonging becomes

a locus for individuals to depend on (Proshansky et al. 61). Thus, attachment to place refers to the emotional bond or connection individuals feel towards a particular location. This attachment can stem from various factors such as personal experiences, memories, or a sense of belonging.

Louise Brown visited and stayed in the Hera Mandi of Lahore over a period of four and a half years. She developed an attachment to the vibrant Mohalla with its array of different characters. With time, she became entrenched in the intricacies of families and people living in the Mohalla. Maha, her children, and her house is a safe abode for Louise in Pakistan. She lives in two different worlds and the pull of the other calls her when she is in one. At her home in Birmingham, she is a university professor with children and a normal life. Yet she cannot detach herself from the Mohalla. "Heera Mandi has never looked more lovely. When we open the door to Maha's house, it feels like home. I'm pleased to be back" (Brown 120). She imagines herself on the rooftop of Iqbal's house, walking in the streets beside Tasneem, visiting Tariq sweeper, or lying with Maha and her family in her room and discussing Adnan. Her fondness for the people of Mohalla led to her attachment to a dark place that is abhorred by the general public.

Louise became so deeply involved in the lives of Maha, Tasneem, and the other prostitutes that instead of them being the focus of her research, she could not help but mould the characters that were real than life itself into a story. From being an objective observer, she became a participant in the world of the Mohalla. Her attachment to the Hera Mandi could not let her walk away from it with mere objective reports without losing her sense of integrity and worth. Although attachment to a place within a subversive heterotopia can be intricate, individuals often develop a profound sense of connection not just to the physical environment but also to the people and relationships that define it. This attachment is often deeply intertwined with the relationships and interactions individuals have within the space, contributing to a sense of community, shared identity, and emotional support. The camaraderie and sense of belonging within these communities foster deep emotional connections, strengthening attachment to the place.

Attachment to a place typically arises from a fundamental need for belonging. Humans naturally seek connections with their surroundings, aiming to establish a sense of home or rootedness. Within a community or space, individuals form

relationships and shared experiences that bolster their sense of belonging, including feelings of acceptance, understanding, and shared identity. This emotional security and fulfilment further solidify attachment to the place, making it both a physical and emotional anchor for individuals. Maha always felt secure in Hera Mandi, because whenever she went outside the mandi to customers she was treated worse than humans. Nisha told Louise that her father beat Maha. "After some practice, he developed such a talent for do-it-yourself abortion that perhaps Maha was relieved when he abandoned them and they had to find their way home to the comparative safety of Heera Mandi" (Brown 26). He used to pimp her out to clients and when she became pregnant, he would beat her and thus Hera Mandi was a haven for Maha and her children. They could be themselves within the Mohalla.

Leila in Shafak's novel since birth was in existential crisis. She felt out of place in her own home, with two mothers. The one who brought her up and her biological mother, whom she referred to as Auntie. No one understood her there, and with time she became detached from the people who were her blood relations. thus, she developed a fantasy for Istanbul. "In truth, there was no Istanbul. There were multiple Istanbuls – struggling, competing, clashing, each perceiving that, in the end, only one could survive" (Shafak 202). It was a place of magic and opportunities for her, a place to reaffirm her identity. Though, coming here she had to strive to find a place to belong. The brothel where she served as a sex worker, on the brothel street was a place where she worked and survived through the pain. Yet it was not a place, that she could call her home. Perhaps the only place that truly felt like home to her was the apartment on Hairy Kafka Street- a home that she made with D/Ali and later on she accepted her friends into it. After the death of D/Ali, despite the high rent Leila refused to abandon the apartment. It was the first place on earth that she felt an association with. The flat was filled to the brim with memories of D/Ali's laughter, it comforted her. "It had been the wisest thing for the five of them to start living together in Leila's flat and share the costs. They were more vulnerable on their own; together, they were stronger" (Shafak 306). After Leila's death, the apartment served as a museum of memory for Leila's friends. It was a space that they felt protected, understood, and their own,

For many individuals, places hold spiritual significance, whether as natural landscapes, sacred sites, or spaces infused with cultural or religious meaning. Spiritual

attachment involves a profound connection beyond the physical realm, often evoking feelings of reverence, awe, or transcendence. Individuals perceive these places as conduits for spiritual experiences or connections with the divine, reinforced by rituals, practices, or traditions that deepen the spiritual bond between individuals and the place. Louise in her memoir mentions the deep devout attachment of prostitutes to the shrine Lal Shahbaz Qalandar in Sewan Sharif, and Hazarat Data Ganj Baksh in Lahore. She witnessed firsthand the way crowds celebrated their *urs* like a mob. Maha took her to Sewan Sharif to pray for her future. The deep reverence of the people who are stigmatized and shunned from mainstream form attachments to places that have spiritual or religious significance. Often in times of need, we turn to some higher deity to solve our problems for us. Thus, the inadequacies of the personal lives of the prostitutes or people associated with the Mohalla pushed them to celebrate and ask for help from the spaces they feel will connect them to God. This also leads them to celebrate the religious events with zeal as well. Most sex workers in the Mohalla are Shia, thus during the month of Moharam, they abstain from sexual activities and celebrate Ashura with reverence often going overboard in their display of devotion with loud wailing and physical pain by lashing themselves. Gangu in the movie, also celebrates Navartari by closing the business down for the day in Kamathipura. "Goddess Amba of Arasur. The Goddess of Pawagarh/ O Goddess of Power, come and bless us. As we play garba together" (Kapadia). She wanted to awaken the spirit of her Goddess by doing the traditional dance of *garba* and rejoicing in the festivities,

Leila wanted to be free as well as belong. Her existence and then her death both were marked by crisis. Her spirit remained even after her body had given up on her, and during this time her group of friends kept finding ways to handle her body and give it a proper burial. Leila's attachment to Istanbul was such that she did not properly belong to a single part of the place. Her depth of attachment to the city led her to imagine her spirit being free to roam the city without constraint after death. Thus, she wanted to go to the sea- the Bosphorus, which circles the city of Istanbul. She was released to the sea by her friends after her death. Her spirit was uplifted and free at last to roam the city in the free waters without any labels, and the pain of enduring the harsh realities of life. She finally belonged to the whole of Istanbul after her death and claimed her place.

In certain circumstances, attachment to a place can be crucial for survival, particularly in communities or environments with limited access to resources, shelter, or safety. Disruption or displacement from such places can pose significant challenges to survival and well-being, highlighting the pragmatic and practical nature of this form of the complex interplay of personal history, societal circumstances, and emotional connections. Gangu, like many others in Kamathipura, was sold to one of the brothels on the street. This mere fact should have been enough for her to hate the place. However, Gangu was strong and an empath as well. The empathy for the women around her became her strength, she fought for them and the place they now call home. Gangu formed deep emotional bonds with the people in Kamathipura, and despite its societal stigma, the place fosters a strong sense of community among its residents. For many individuals like Gangu, Kamathipura is not just a place of residence but also a means of survival and livelihood. For Gangubai, Kamathipura was not just a place of residence, it was a space where she could assert her identity and exercise agency. Despite the social stigma attached to her profession, Gangubai carved out a position of power and respect within the confines of Kamathipura. Kamathipura provided Gangubai with a sense of community and support that she could not have found elsewhere. As a madam, she formed close relationships with the women working under her, offering them protection, guidance, and solidarity. Gangubai's attachment to Kamathipura could be rooted in the bonds of sisterhood and camaraderie that she shared with the residents of the red-light district. "Gangubai is one such star whose photograph has stayed on the walls of Kamathipura for the last 50 years! Her destiny was filled with sorrow, but she smiled her way through life. Wanted to be a movie star but her life played out like a grand movie!" (Kapadia). Despite its marginalized status, Kamathipura was a home for Gangubai. It was where she felt a sense of belonging and acceptance, surrounded by people who understood and accepted her for who she was, as they went through the same unfortunate events in their lives as her.

Attachment to place intersects with belonging, spiritual connection, and survival in complex ways, reflecting the multifaceted nature of human relationships with their environments. Whether rooted in shared experiences, spiritual significance, or practical necessity, attachment to a place profoundly shapes individual and collective identities, experiences, and well-being. However, it's important to

acknowledge that attachment to a subversive heterotopia can be multifaceted and may evolve. Individuals may grapple with conflicting emotions, particularly if relationships within the space change or if the community undergoes shifts in ideology or structure. External factors such as societal pressures or legal challenges can also influence the stability and sustainability of these spaces. Overall, attachment to place within subversive heterotopias reflects the intricate interplay between personal connections, alternative lifestyles, and the quest for belonging and authenticity outside mainstream society.

Stigmatization, attachment bonds, and the concept of heterotopia intersect powerfully in the context of red-light areas, which are marginalized and socially constructed as "other" spaces. These areas are marked by societal stigmatization, branding their inhabitants as deviant or immoral, which reinforces exclusion and diminishes opportunities for integration. Despite this stigma, attachment bonds; whether familial, romantic, or communal, form as a means of emotional survival and resilience among individuals within these spaces, offering a sense of belonging in an otherwise alienating environment. Foucault's concept of heterotopia frames red-light areas as liminal spaces that challenge normative societal structures, simultaneously existing as zones of transgression and refuge. These spaces juxtapose societal rejection with internal solidarity, reflecting a complex interplay of marginalization, human connection, and alternative social realities.

4.2 Bodies of Stigma: Lives Bound by Social Exclusion

The texts that depict the violence perpetuated through stigma are known as 'stigma texts.' Moreover, the texts that were not accepted by the general public due to their real and uncamouflaged depiction of society are also part of this category. The French critic Helene Cixous says that literature is scarred because it documents and in doing so recreates wounds by tracing its roots and seeds.

The present study focuses on the lives of the individuals who face stigma due to their professional preferences, their physical disabilities or them belonging to a non-conforming gender. Maha, Tasneem, Leila, Nalan, Zaynab, Gangu, Humeyra, and Kamli are the women and trans-women in the texts that face discrimination because they belong to a subversive heterotopia, i.e. a red-light district or a brothel.

Carey Jewitt's multimodality method offers a comprehensive framework for analyzing various texts, when applied to the study of *Dancing Girls of Lahore*, *10 Minutes and 38 Seconds in This Strange World*, and *Gangubai Kathiawadi* this approach allows for a deep exploration of stigmatization in the narratives. The texts engage with the lived experiences of marginalized individuals, particularly women in oppressive socio-cultural contexts. the textual organization of these narratives, whether through Brown's journalistic approach, Shafak's fragmented narrative structure, or Bhansali's cinematic techniques, reflects the characters' inner worlds while simultaneously commenting on their social environments. These texts reveal how stigmatization shapes the identities and realities of those marginalized by society, highlighting the intersection of gender, class, and societal perception.

Waheed discusses one of the most stigmatized individuals in South-Asian and Euro-Asian countries is the courtesan or a prostitute. The concubine, the epitome of both threat and allure, was a focal figure in the ethical talks of the Muslim 'respectable' classes of colonial North India (986). The concubine was a public woman and has long been a target of moral regulation. Apart from invoking the aesthetics of a society, she triggers the ethical and moral domains. The fallen women or 'tawaifs' or courtesans were removed from the central and urban spaces, in the early 20th century. The places that were inhabited by these fallen women were subjected to changing moral values (Waheed, 1020).The places got more and more segregated from the centre. The association with the courtesans was seen as a Muslim descent into darkness and corruption.

Chambers describes one of the segregated sites that is the setting of our memoir under study *Dancing Girls of Lahore*. Beside the Badshahi Masjid in Lahore, is present the red-light district of Heera Mandi or Diamond Market. The place is the hub of explicit sexual activity and is visited by every kind of client, who has the means to buy the flesh sold in the market. The clientele includes; powerful, wealthy, religiously orthodox, middle-class, criminals, politicians, etc. However, the people residing in the market are the outcasts and are treated disgracefully by the same clientele outside the market and visiting hours. Claudine Le Tournier d'Ison in her book *Hera Mandi*, represents this scenario appropriately. She depicts the street of the diamond market as a miraculous court that has all types of people loitering around; handicaps, beggars, drug addicts and then there are the stigmatized residents; pimps,

prostitutes (especially belonging to the Shia sect.), dealers, Christians who have no means to survive apart from becoming part of the cleaning and sweeping crew. After that comes the bourgeoise who are the only people entering it from outside to go out as well at the end of the exciting adventure (114-115). Louise Brown remarks on Hera Mandi being the playground of the rich, liberal and every other class who mock the market in daylight but cannot help but act upon the fantasy of visiting it at night for excitement, "There's something exciting and illicit about coming here, something that makes respectable Pakistani pulses race" (Brown 6). Thus, the carnival of intermixed races, castes and moral scales is the signature of the subversive heterotopia of Hera Mandi.

Karmakar, while defining prostitution refers to it as the 'oldest profession'. It involves the exchange like in any business of trade; the exchanges are of sexual services for money. On the other hand, it is perhaps the most stigmatized and frowned upon profession or line of work for women and now even men to engross. The women associated with this profession are abhorred and do not have any prospects by society's standards. These women exist on the periphery of society and are seen as consumable commodities only (111-112). MacKinnon, in *Feminism Unmodified: Discourses on Law and Life* (1987), gives her opinion in this context, "Women's sexuality is, socially, a thing to be stolen, sold, bought, bartered, or exchanged by others [those others being males]. Women never own or possess it" (Karmakar 116). Thus, the women are subjected to absolute humiliation in terms of professional regard and become puppets of patriarchal male privilege as well.

Hence, women, especially young girls are more vulnerable to being targeted by traffickers and thrown into the system of prostitution. Most women who are part of this subjugated society are not there by choice. They are victims of abuse, rape culture, economic conditions, migration, and human trafficking. Foucault explains the phenomenon of making 'docile bodies' in *Discipline and Punishment (1995)*. He posits that disciplinary measures are taken to shape subjects. The primary medium is, shaping the bodies, by torture and pressing them to their limit and endurance, so they become docile (138). If prostitutes do not want to be there and are stigmatized for being in the profession as well so, why is it impossible to stop prostitution completely? If the authorities decide to punish not only those who take part in human trafficking but also those who go to brothels as customers it is a violation of human

rights to force women into this so-called profession (Karmakar. 116-118). Thus, the abolition of prostitution needs to be the course of action instead of stigmatizing the individuals who are associated with the profession. Women in any place, anywhere in the world have the intrinsic desire to be protected. No woman willingly or by consent goes on to sell their flesh, especially when they are treated as the monsters who harm society at large instead of being seen as victims of the dominant male culture.

The stigmatization is not limited to 'coming from outside', but is present within the markets as well. Ageing is the bane of prostitutes, as they are desired because of their looks foremostly. Ageing prostitutes are judged by customers and thus lose their prominence. The hierarchy of the district pushes the aged women to the last step, which they started earlier in their careers. Even with the disposition the women face, the woman who is high on the stairway is in much better condition than the one at the bottom. This is one more example of their objectification and their dependency on the male gaze for the value of their existence. Apart from that the brothel owners or the gurus of 'Khusra Houses' abuse the girls and transgenders under their care. They use their bodies for money so that their old life can be spent without poverty, in doing so they have no regard for the physical, emotional and mental health of their disciples.

Banerjee, in her blog post, describes the dilapidated conditions of Kamathipura-the red-light district of Mumbai, India. She writes that there is a sharp disparity between the demand for exotic and foreign prostitutes and the locals. The white sex workers have better access to the necessities of life while the Indians have to suffer to even fulfil medical provisions with homemade remedies. Besides, the women live in worse conditions than a sewer hole. The quarters seem like cages, where the pimps or more commonly known as 'madams/bais' abuse women constantly. Some women were even beaten to death. Most of the women there have been sold off by the male members of the family they belong to. Gangu was sold by her lover, Ramnik to Sheela Masi for 1000 Rs. She was broken down by starvation and torture to sell her body. Her spirit is further crushed when a client beats her brutally and Sheela Masi does nothing to save her.

Similarly, Campbell in his travelogue website, gives a brief overview of Kamathipura and the predicament of women who live there. He writes that the women of Kamathipura are not there by choice. The reason is the commodification of these individuals, they are the victims of human trafficking. The girls brought here are

abhorred by society at large. Campbell himself felt unsafe in the premises of so many brothels and the pimps on the hunt to catch the next big fish and to subject another innocent girl to subjugation. The girls brought here are broken down so they don't run away. They are subjected to inhumane torture; they are raped by 20 to 30 men in a single night sometimes, and sometimes the brothel owner is not even concerned if the girl dies from severe sexual torture, as there is always another girl to replace the previous one. The girls who try to escape are caught by a network of watchers who even have links to the Police, and the girls are severely and publicly punished. The young girls are preferable in the business and once the girls are used and abused enough, they are thrown out in the streets. The outside world is not better than the inside of the brothel. These homeless girls are now the fallen women of society, who are intensely stigmatized and bear no honour. The families who had sold them initially for money, do not accept them.

Tahaoglu, in her blog post, describes the plight of prostitutes inhabiting the brothel street of Istanbul. She documents the problems the sex workers faced after a decision was taken to close down the brothels on Zurafa Street and transform the place into a cultural and art hub. A group of sex workers gathered at the entrance of Zurafa Street, Istanbul's oldest red-light district, to voice their opposition to the closure of six brothels in the area. They told Tahaoglu that they refuse to put themselves at risk by working on the streets without proper documentation. Zürafa Street, renowned as Istanbul's most prominent red-light district, is home to 15 brothels, with two already shut down and four facing temporary closure. The sex workers further described that initially, they were directed to avoid street solicitation, but now they're pushing them back onto the streets by shutting down their workplaces. They lamented that many workers have families to support financially.

Kılıç highlighted the violence faced by many undocumented workers, with some brutally murdered by customers. She suggested that while brothels may not be ideal workplaces, they provide shelter for hundreds of vulnerable women who would otherwise be unprotected on the streets. Sussman writes in the 1980s, Mathilde Manukyan, an Armenian brothel owner, managed a network of six brothels alongside substantial real estate assets. Filiz Kargal, 35, recounts being sold to Manukyan for a substantial sum at 13 years old, describing Manukyan's ruthless business operations and the constant coercion of women to sign debt documents. Suzan, 50, shares her

journey from a teenage bride to a full-time sex worker, struggling to support her seven children. Suzan plans to leave the industry once her youngest child completes college. Leila and her friends ran away from home due to numerous reasons and were exploited by people. They were sold to brothels or coerced into choosing this profession as a last resort. Their lives in brothels were a nightmare. They were abused and humiliated beyond measure. Leila lived with a brothel owner who was called 'bitter' behind her back. During her tenure there, Leila was subjected to an acid attack by a client.

4.2.1 Categories of Stigmatization

Erving Goffman, a sociologist renowned for his work on social interaction and symbolic interactionism, delineated three categories of stigmatization in his seminal work *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity (1963).* These categories provide insights into how individuals perceive, manage, and respond to stigma in social contexts. Clair, in his study published in *Core Concepts in Sociology*, described these categories.

Discredited Stigma

Discredited stigma refers to a condition or attribute that is immediately evident or known to others, thus causing the stigmatized individual to face overt discrimination or prejudice. This type of stigma arises when the stigmatizing attribute is visible or easily identifiable, leading to negative reactions and social exclusion.

Louise Brown in her memoir *Dancing Girls of* Lahore, introduces the character of Tasneem, who was an intersex. She is a stigmatized character and faces prejudice. Louise elaborates that in South-Asian communities, gender disparity is common. "There was no space for them, they felt wrong and out of place, and they shamed their parents. (Brown 51). The individuals who are recognized as gender-queer face discrimination by the general public. They are not accepted by their own families and are left on the streets. Many were coerced out of their homes, and others escaped. Most were sexually abused as children and many sold.

Similarly, Nalan, Zaynab, and Humerya in Shafak's novel *10 Minutes and 38 Seconds in This Strange World*, face the most apparent stigma because of their physical disparity. Nalan is a transgender and underwent treatment to change her

gender from male to female, whereas Zaynab suffers from height dysmorphia. Humeyra is an overweight woman, and by the standards of society, she does not fit into the definition of a perfect and proportionate woman.

Nalan was born Osman, but always felt an inclination towards the opposite gender, thus when she was discovered to have painted her toenails, she became the target of bullies, "Osman is a sissy pants! Once you had earned that label you might as well have walked into the classroom each morning with a bull's eye painted on your forehead" (Shafak 59). Nalan always knew she was different, and after finally gathering courage and undergoing various gender transformation surgeries, she felt like she belonged in the body she was born into at birth. However, she was intrusive enough to know that this would not be without any compensation. She was ready to become the target of a new wave of stigma. "It kills me, this hypocrisy… Let's face it, I'm a magnet for hatred" (Shafak245). People abhorred her for who she was initially, and now for who she had become. The religious cult members rallied against people like her in Istanbul and claimed they were going straight to hell.

Humeyra was not always obese; she had a dream of becoming a film star. However, she could never get her fame. She sang in X-rated bars, had a failed marriage under her belt, and was a foreigner on top of everything. It was natural for her to go down the lane of depression, thus the drugs and medications she took to counter had adverse effects on her health. "In both cases, society blamed the sufferer…People with any other illness received at least a degree of sympathy and moral support. Not the obese or the depressed" (Shafak 212). She believed depression and being overweight were equal on the radar for bullies to tease her.,

Zaynab was an Arab woman who belonged to a village where dwarfism was common. She was the only one among her siblings who inherited this condition. Earlier in her life, she became a puppet for people, an intriguing figure who was photographed and looked at as a form of entertainment. She was so small, she had to wear children's clothes, besides this her arms were disproportionate, she had fat and stubby fingers, a broad forehead, a cleft palate, a non-existent neck, and wide grey eyes that were too big for her face. Thus, it was no surprise she was the target of society's ridicule. Many believed she was a product of sin and needed to be punished. "Dwarf, Pygmy or Thumbling – she had been called such names and worse." (Shafak

125). She added 122 to her name and became Zaynab 122, it was a reference to her height because she was fed by telling people off about commenting on it.

Goffman suggests that individuals with discredited stigmas often engage in various strategies to manage their spoiled identity, such as concealing or downplaying their stigmatizing attribute, seeking social support from similar others, or actively challenging stigmatizing stereotypes and prejudices. Raziabai in *Gangubai Kathiawadi,* is an intersex character who fights Gangu for the role of president of Kamathipura. Outside the Mohalla, she is a product of mockery and disdain. However, with her strength of character, and a mean streak, she made a name for herself inside the Mohalla. "You see these hands? When I clap with these hands, I can crush my enemy's skull between them… No one can clap as thunderously as I do. I am neither a man nor woman, but more than enough for the likes of you!" (Kapadia). Raziabai was feared because she carried the strength of the opposite gender with the mannerisms of the other. Raziabai, just like Nalan took the insults and the contempt from society and turned it around, to let the people who stigmatized her witness that she is unbeatable.

Discreditable Stigma

Discreditable stigma refers to a condition or attribute that is concealable or not immediately apparent to others, allowing the stigmatized individual to potentially pass as 'normal' or unmarked in social interactions. This type of stigma involves the fear of being found out or exposed, leading to strategies of identity management and impression management. Individuals with discreditable stigmas often face the dilemma of whether to disclose their stigmatizing attribute or conceal it to avoid potential social repercussions**.**

Iqbal Hussain is a real person who still lives on the outskirts of Hera Mandi in Lahore. He gives the first introduction of the Mohalla to Louise when she rents a room at his house overlooking a brothel house on one side and lying in the shadow of Badshahi Mosque on the other side. Iqbal opened a restaurant in his house, he is a professor, and a painter as well. "He is the son of a courtesan…growing up in this house that lies in the shadow of the mosque and an even longer shadow of social stigma" (Brown 5). He knows from first-hand experience the stigma that the children of Mohalla have to face. For this reason, he tries to help them by filling out their forms and providing aid whenever he can, "To the people who live beyond the

Mohalla, he will always be the tough, streetwise son of a courtesan who grew up in a brothel but he's still recognized in a way that the rest of Heera Mandi never will be" (Brown 155). In the mainstream social circle, Iqbal is always afraid of facing backlash once people find out his identity. He yearns for to be free from the stigma of this place and have a chance to gain a new life, but it seems unlikely. Even if it happens, Iqbal might find some peace, but the powerful voice in his paintings will be silenced. When he paints, it's from a sad and grief-stricken heart,

Goffman highlights the complex negotiation of identity that individuals with discreditable stigmas engage in, balancing the desire for social acceptance with the fear of rejection or discrimination. Strategies of identity management may involve selective disclosure, passing as 'normal', or seeking acceptance within supportive social networks that are accepting of their stigmatized identity. Sinan is a complicated character of Shafak. He is an unusual man by the standards of society. He is emotional and sensitive, and according to the norms of society. Men are supposed to be tough and decision-makers. He was a single child of a single and independent mother, another figure who was a pariah in a male-dominant society. "Consequently, the mother and son lived on the edge of society, tolerated, though never quite accepted" (Shafak 69). Sinan, the first friend of Leila; was always there for her and followed her to Istanbul after she departed from Van. He had no friends except Leila, as most of her peers avoided him due to his calm personality for a boy. He was surrounded by dominant personalities, among them he withdrew and remained stoic for which he became a stigma for society.

Courtesy Stigma

Courtesy stigma, also known as associative stigma or secondary stigma, refers to the social stigma experienced by individuals who are closely associated with someone who possesses a stigmatizing attribute or condition. This type of stigma stems from the perceived contamination or devaluation of the stigmatized individual's social network or community. These individuals may experience social ostracism, discrimination, or stereotyping by association with the stigmatized individual.

Louise Brown faces the courtesy stigma during her stay in Lahore due to her association with prostitutes and other marginalized characters. She narrates an incident when she visited the shrine of Lal Shahbaz Qalandar and some of the devotees harassed her as she visited and stayed with Maha and other prostitutes. They

forced her to walk in rubbish and blocked her path in the streets, going as far as calling her 'Kanjri', and throwing stones at her, "A foreign woman on the streets— even a veiled one— is an affront to many Pakistani men who come to Heera Mandi" (Brown 38). Louise has to maintain an air of her foreignness, to not be assimilated into the Mohalla too much, for fear of becoming prey to men. The women outside are subjected to violence, but they can still raise their voices against it or show resistance. However, the women of mandi are considered fair play, as they are prejudiced and implied to not have any rights but to only be objects that are used and discarded whenever the men want to. Louise by association and her extended stay in the mandi was becoming the target of such men, who considered her a prey.

Children of Mohalla, are doubly stigmatized individuals. They are born in a society that is segregated and subversive, and they are not accepted in mainstream society even if they want no part in their mother or father's profession. Maha's children and the children of other prostitutes have little to no opportunity to change their living conditions due to stigma and discrimination. Mutazar and Sofiya, children of Adnan are shown no love, care, or compassion by their grandmother and aunt upon seeing them due to their mother. They are shown contempt and disdain for even being born in the first place. Nisha and Nena, the eldest daughters of Maha, do not have the sensuality of their mother but their fate is sealed at birth. "The daughter of a dancing girl always becomes a dancing girl. They pass the occupation and the stigma from one generation to the next like a segment of DNA" (Brown 18). Male children of sex workers are no better, and in some cases, they face more severe denunciation from society. The girls born in the Mohalla know from birth they will have to fill in their mother's shoes. However, the boys' face the challenge of association, they cannot go outside of the Mohalla to earn a living or even education as they carry the remnants of being born in a place that is filthy for the public. "Few employers want to hire workers from the wrong side of the city walls, and universities and colleges hold the people of Heera Mandi in contempt as if they were stupid as well as poor and unlucky" (Brown 175). Hasan was a son of a prostitute and was illiterate. He was poor financially and belonged to the even poorer part of the city so nobody would hire him for employment. The only available prospect for boys born in Mohalla is to become pimps for their mothers, sisters, and daughters, or to become drug suppliers,

D/Ali and Sinan were both afflicted by the courtesy stigma. D/Ali had his fair share of experience with enduring mockery of his peers due to him being an immigrant and then later turning into a revolutionary. He married Leila, a prostitute. And then made a home with her, this was enough to put him on the unacceptable radar of society. Similarly, Sinan had suffered through enough stigma in his lifetime due to him being the total opposite of the men who were admired in society for their toughness and strength. He was sensitive, kind, and demure. "After being shot while pushing the dead body of a prostitute off the Bosphorus Bridge, accompanied by dubious friends…Within the same week, he had lost his job, his marriage, his house" (Shafak 305). Previously, led a double life, one with his wife and the other with his water family, who were all a bunch of misfits in society. He hid this part of his life from the one that he represented in society in the day. Yet he suffered through repercussions for choosing his stigmatized friends in the end.

Goffman underscores the interconnectedness of social identities and the ripple effects of stigma within social networks. Individuals affected by courtesy stigma may face challenges in maintaining their social relationships, navigating stigma-related stressors, and advocating for the rights and dignity of their stigmatized loved ones. Rahim Lal is a mafia don in *Gangubai Kathiawadi,* yet initially, he feared his association with Gangu. Upon seeing her in public, he asked his men to escort her to his home as he did not want to be seen with her in public. Most of his dealings with Gangu happened in private. He feared that by associating with Gangu, his business and his name would be affected. The same is the case with Fezi Bhai, the reporter, initially he faced this fear as well. However, after observing the strength of Gangubai's character he aided her to save her home and make an identity in the notorious neighborhood of Mumbai. The children of Kamathipura were discriminated against and marginalized due to their association with the Mohalla and with their mothers. "She's old enough to marry. I'll either get her married or kill her. I won't let her be a prostitute" (Kapadia). Kusum tries to save her daughter from the same fate as her own by caging her and drugging her. Gangu takes Roshni's proposal for her lover Afshan, yet the girl of 15, faces disdain as she is the daughter of a prostitute. "Dear, how can a prostitute be our daughter-in-law…Her mother is a prostitute but the girl isn't. Roshni is just 15, innocent, untouched and single" (Kapadia). Gangu tries to

make the family of Afshan understand that Roshni is untouched and a virgin, only after that and a hefty amount of gold do they agree to the marriage.

Goffman's three categories of stigmatization provide a nuanced framework for understanding the multifaceted nature of stigma, its impact on identity, and the strategies individuals employ to manage and cope with stigma in various social contexts.

4.2.2 Stigma and its forms

Subsequently, stigma, in its various forms, can permeate different levels of society, from individual attitudes and beliefs to interpersonal interactions, and broader social structures. Understanding the nuances of individual stigma, interpersonal stigma, and structural stigma is crucial for comprehensively addressing the complex dynamics of stigmatization.

Individual Stigma

Individual stigma refers to the internalized beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions that individuals hold about themselves or others based on certain characteristics, traits, or identities. It involves the personal experience of feeling devalued, marginalized, or discriminated against due to stigmatized attributes. Individuals experiencing individual stigma may internalize negative societal stereotypes or prejudices associated with their identity, leading to feelings of shame, self-doubt, or low self-esteem. (Hatzenbuehler, 2). All the marginalized and stigmatized characters living in the subversive heterotopia undergo individual stigma. Their sense of worth is diminished as they suffer from constant discrimination and abuse at the hands of others. They face identity and existential crises. The lives of sex workers are dependent upon caring for their bodies. The more arousing they appear, the better chances they have to attract customers. Thus, most women enter the circle of self-doubt about the way they look. With growing age, their self-esteem becomes lower and lower. Maha seeks companionship, especially from her current husband; Adnan. His lack of attention causes her to doubt her beauty and lowers her confidence in her ability to entice men to bed. She spirals into depression and starts using drugs to cope with her financial situation as well as her lack of compassion in her life. The sex workers entertain 10 to 15 clients in a night sometimes, yet they are the loneliest category of women. As they know, no man who enters the den of a courtesan for pleasure is going to stay there for long, "I say that the men have come here for

pleasure and that, after the pleasure, they will forget all about the place and the women they've loved" (Brown 44). This lack of concern in the hands of those who use and abuse these women who give birth to their children and rear them up to be abused in turn makes them bitter and angry over time. "She [Maha] thinks there's something especially bad about this Mohalla" (Brown, 44). They start looking at their surroundings with disdain and lack of empathy for their selves.

Interpersonal Stigma

Interpersonal stigma refers to the negative attitudes, behaviours, or discriminatory actions that individuals encounter from others in their social interactions and relationships. It involves the manifestation of stigma through interpersonal exchanges, communication, and social dynamics. Individuals experiencing interpersonal stigma may face overt acts of discrimination, prejudice, or social rejection from family members, friends, colleagues, or strangers based on stigmatized attributes. Interpersonal stigma can contribute to social exclusion, relational strain, and diminished social support networks (Hatzenbuehler, 2). Leila and her group of friends; Nalan, Jameelah, Sinan, Zaynab, and Humeyra, have all faced interpersonal stigma at some points in their lives. Their lives are marked by marginalization and stigmatization. Leila's body was rejected by her parents after her death because she was a sex worker for, she was buried in the Cemetery of Companionless, without any name, only a number to be forgotten with time. Nalan faced the discrimination of her peers and family because she was born Osman and transformed into Nalan over time. She was most sensitive to Leila being buried in the Cemetery of Companionless as well because most of her trans peers had been buried there without any names, "Insulted by passers-by, arbitrarily arrested by police, abused by clients, she suffered one humiliation after another" (Shafak 238). The most direct mockery was made of Zaynab 122 due to her height and body dysmorphia. She was ridiculed and reduced to less than a human being. "What did they know about being a little person, clinging with your fingers to the edge of society?" (Shafak 130). Humeyra was an unsuccessful singer and an unsuccessful wife. She ran away from home and after coming to Istanbul and leading half of her life in fear that her husband would come to murder her or force her to commit suicide, she became obese and depressive- a combination that led her to become a pariah in the eyes of normal society. Sinan was the son of a single and independent mother, if that was not enough

to get him on the hit list of society, he was a demure and delicate man in a society that runs on male dominancy.

Structural Stigma

Structural stigma refers to the systemic, institutionalized forms of stigma embedded within social, economic, and political structures that perpetuate inequalities and discrimination against stigmatized groups or communities. It involves the enactment of discriminatory policies, practices, or cultural norms that disadvantage or marginalize certain populations. Structural stigma operates at a broader societal level, influencing access to resources, opportunities, and social privileges based on stigmatized identities. It can be reinforced through institutional policies, media representations, legal frameworks, and social norms that perpetuate inequalities and reinforce negative stereotypes (Hatzenbuehler 2). The women sex workers in *Gangubai Kathiawadi* face the structural impact of stigma, especially when they fight for their right to stay in Kamathipura- their home. The school besides the Mohalla, files a case against the women that they negatively impact the minds of their students and want to uproot them. The lack of understanding on behalf of society of the plights of women who entertain them by sacrificing their sense of worth and honour. The women who save their homes by destroying their own. The women who work tirelessly are drained physically, emotionally as well as mentally all the time. The women whose offspring's never have the same opportunities as other children. The women who cannot enjoy a day off, without being leered at and cat-called. These women only want the right to live in their own homes and better opportunities for their children so they do not have to enter the disreputable profession of their mothers. Yet they are denied this basic right, not a privilege. "No matter who turns up at our doorstep, we don't judge them…When we don't discriminate among people... Why do you discriminate against us? Why are we excluded from your society?" (Kapadia). Society condemns sex workers, trans individuals, and people associated with them yet they never give the chance to individuals who want to come out of these places and wash the filth of stigma to change their lives for the better. The same society keeps on pushing them back, and keeps on condemning them for remaining there- this is the hypocrisy of the society that Gangu and the other sex workers live in, they never judge their clients though, men from the 'civilized' neighbourhood visit them and the women are branded as ill-reputed.

The three forms of stigma; individual, interpersonal, and structural are interconnected and mutually reinforcing, contributing to the perpetuation of social inequalities and the marginalization of stigmatized individuals and communities.

In the intersection of stigmatization, heterotopia, and attachment theory, marginalized individuals demonstrate remarkable resilience by forging "water bonds" that transcend the limitations of traditional blood ties, offering solidarity in the face of systemic exclusion. These surrogate families, exemplified by Leila in *10 Minutes and 38 Seconds in This Strange World*, Maha in *Dancing Girls of Lahore*, and Gangu in *Gangubai Kathiawadi,* become essential mechanisms for coping with societal stigma, providing emotional support and stability. Heterotopias function as sanctuaries where individuals reclaim agency and dignity, reshaping their identities beyond the societal shame imposed on them. Stigmatization, while deeply shaping self-perception, also acts as a crucible for adaptive attachment behaviors, fostering resilient relationships that counter societal rejection. Together, these narratives critique exclusionary social structures while celebrating the transformative potential of solidarity within heterotopias, where marginalized individuals find empowerment and redefine their identities.

CHAPTER 5

ATTACHMENT IN THE SHADOWS: RESILIENCE IN SPACES OF EXCLUSION

Attachment behaviour encompasses any actions that lead a person to seek or maintain proximity to a specific, usually perceived as stronger or wiser, individual. While most prominent in early childhood, this behaviour is believed to persist throughout a person's life. As individuals age, the frequency and intensity of these behaviours typically decrease, but they remain integral aspects of human behaviour. In adulthood, they resurface notably during times of distress, illness, or fear (Bowlby 203). Attachment research initially focused on how children develop a sense of security in their relationships with primary caregivers. According to Bowlby, humans possess an innate but adaptable motivational system designed to promote safety by encouraging proximity-seeking behaviours towards attachment figures, especially in response to threats. This theory has been expanded to encompass relationships across the lifespan. Scholars generally agree that the attachment system operates along two main dimensions: anxiety and avoidance. Fraley and Shaver (2000) suggest that during times of relationship strain, the avoidance dimension influences individuals' strategies for managing their attachment needs, while the anxiety dimension predicts their emotional responses. Consequently, these components of the attachment system manifest differently in social interactions. Individuals with high avoidance tend to expect others to be unresponsive and rejective, often reacting to conflict with blame, detachment, and withdrawal. Conversely, those with low avoidance anticipate responsiveness from others and are more inclined to respond to conflict with communication, empathy, and seeking support (Burnette et al. 276-277). Cherry, while describing 'Adult Attachment Theory' posits in her web article that Bowlby and Ainsworth have provided ample groundwork for individuals to understand the depth of emotional bonds formed between living beings. However, the theory initially took early experiences with caregivers as an example to explain the relationships. But with time, psychologists and theorists have extended the theory to accommodate all kinds of relationships. Adult Attachment Theory typically categorizes individuals into four

attachment styles: secure, anxious-preoccupied, dismissive-avoidant, and fearful-avoidant (also known as disorganized).

The present study focuses on attachments formed within the subversive heterotopia, i.e., red-light district or brothel. It also includes bonds that develop based on survival between marginalized individuals to deal with the stigmatization they face daily in society. The primary marginalized individuals in the selected texts include sex workers; prostitutes, intersex, and trans individuals. Besides this, people who are physically, mentally, and emotionally challenged are also the focus of the study. Individuals who are deviant, and do not fit the general definition or norms of society for their particular gender are highlighted. The research aims to categorize the bonds formed between all these individuals who suffer from the common plight of being born in the wrong place, being born with a disability, or choosing to lead their lives in spaces of descent and degradation that are abhorred by the general public. *Dancing Girls of Lahore* by Louise Brown, *10 Minutes and 38 Seconds in this Strange World* by Elif Shafak, and *Gangubai Kathiawadi* directed by Sanjay Leela Bhansali, provides a rich tapestry of interpersonal relationships and attachments among the inhabitants of the red-light district of Lahore known as Heera Mandi.

Carey Jewitt's multimodality method provides semiotic resources like color, framing, focus, and positioning that construct meaning in both print and visual texts. Ideationally, all three works explore the lives of women navigating marginalization within patriarchal societies. In Brown's text, the vivid descriptions of Lahore's Heera Mandi reflect the socio-economic dynamics of the red-light district, while Shafak's narrative employs fragmented memories to symbolize resilience and trauma. In Bhansali's film, the strategic use of high-contrast color palettes and ornate sets evoke both the oppression and empowerment of the protagonist, Gangubai. Interpersonally, the texts establish relationships between characters through nuanced dialogues and gestures, emphasizing themes of loss, longing, and emotional dependence. The framing in Bhansali's film; close-ups and wide-angle shots, mirrors the intimacy and isolation experienced by Gangu. Textually, each medium organizes its narrative to reflect a sense of fragmented yet cohesive storytelling. Bowlby's attachment theory aligns with these works, as they underscore how early relationships and emotional bonds influence the characters' sense of identity and connection. For instance, the absence of nurturing bonds in these narratives often leads to vulnerability, while

surrogate relationships act as anchors of strength amidst adversity. Together, these texts highlight the semiotic interplay between form and content in shaping social meanings and human experiences.

Secure Attachment

Louise and Tariq

Louise and Tasneem

Leila and her Water family
(Nalan, Zaynab, Jameelah,
Humeyra)

Gangubai and Kamli

Gangubai and Rahim Lala

**Anxious-Preoccupied
Attachment**

Louise and Maha

Maha and her children
(Nisha, Nena, Mutazar,
Sofiya)

Louise and Ariba

Leila and D/Ali

Gangubai and women of
Kamathipura

**Attachment
Styles**

**Dismissive-Avoidant
Attachment**

Ariba and Maha

Leila and Suzan-Adoptive
Mother

Gangubai and Sheela Masi

**Fearful-Avoidant
(Disorganized)
Attachment**

Maha and Adnan

Leila and Auntie Binnaz-
Biological Mother

Leila and Haroun-Father

Gangubai and Afshan

Figure 1: The above radical shows the attachment styles explored in the texts under study at a glimpse.

Following is the comprehensive analysis of the attachment styles with evidence from the selected texts;

5.1 Secure Attachment

The caregivers who form secure attachments are consistently responsive to the needs of the attachment figure. Koshy states that individuals who form secure attachments generally have a positive outlook on life, of their selves and the relationships they form. They are better at communicating their needs to the opposite party. Besides this, there is a balance of independence and dependency. Thus, there is a connection between the individuals but there is autonomy of choice without any coercion. Secure attachment is considered the most adaptive and healthy attachment style according to Adult Attachment Theory. It forms the foundation for stable and satisfying relationships throughout life. It provides a stable foundation for individuals to navigate the complexities of human connection with confidence, trust, and resilience.

5.1.1 Louise and Tariq

In *Dancing Girls of Lahore,* written by Louise Brown, Tariq Sweeper, a young man from a low-income background, develops a secure attachment to Louise Brown. Despite their differing backgrounds and social statuses, Louise treats Tariq with respect and empathy, which helps foster a sense of security and trust in their interactions. Secure attachment is fostered when individuals feel comfortable with emotional closeness, as they can rely on others and seek support when needed. Tariq is discriminated against because of his status as a sweeper and him being a Christian in a Muslim-dominated society. Tariq feels Louise being a Christian herself can understand him. He can be his true self in front of Louise without fear of judgement. Louise's genuine interest in Tariq's life and experiences helps him feel valued and understood. She becomes a haven for Tariq amidst the challenges he faces in his environment. "Tariq calls me 'sister' … the dignity of Tariq and his family… stems not from their religion but from the fact that they are the only people I know in Heera Mandi who are not caught in the soul-consuming web of the business" (Brown 76-78). In the volatile and often dangerous world of the red-light district, Louise's presence offers Tariq a sense of safety and security. Their relationship transcends

societal barriers and offers Tariq a sense of belonging, trust, and emotional support amid the challenges he faces in the red-light district. This is perhaps the most innocent and simple attachment that Louise formed within the Mohalla.

5.1.2 Louise and Tasneem

Tasneem, a transgender woman known as a 'khusra' in Pakistani society, forms a secure attachment with Louise Brown. Louise accepts Tasneem for who she is, and respects her identity and treats her with dignity and respect. In secure attachments, the individuals trust each other and feel secure in their relationships. This means they are more prone to sharing their secrets with the attachment figure. Tasneem trusts Louise and opens up to her about her life, experiences, and struggles as a khusra in Lahore. "But I want you to have one. Then we can be sisters. You gave me a suit in the hot weather, remember?" (Brown 127). Louise provides emotional support to Tasneem, offering a sympathetic ear and validating her experiences. She supports her through the emotional turmoil of living in a stigmatized khusra house with an abusive guru. Moreover, Tasneem is raped and physically harassed by her lover, who shaves her head- the pride of any khusra, and through all this agony, Louise is the only person who is empathetic to the plight of Tasneem. "He kisses and hugs me, reminding me that I'm always his sister. Then he's gone, running and skipping between the rickshaws, waving, smiling, and crying at the same time" (Brown 219). Through their interactions and conversations, Louise and Tasneem develop a deep understanding of each other's lives and experiences. Louise immerses herself in Tasneem's world, spending time with her in the red-light district and participating in khusra gatherings and events.

5.1.3 Leila and her 'water-family'

Secure attachment established in childhood tends to persist into adulthood, but it can also be cultivated later in life through positive relationship experiences and therapeutic interventions. Leila's attachment to her childhood figures; and parents has been at best arbitrary. Thus, she found 'her people', the ones she can trust completely and who make sense of the world she is coerced into. They help her to survive and

endure the many trials of life. Securely attached individuals are more resilient in the face of challenges and setbacks.

Leila and Nalan: Leila- a prostitute, and Nalan- a trans woman, form a secure attachment despite their marginalized status in society. Leila and Nalan accept each other fully for who they are, without judgment or prejudice. They understand the struggles and challenges each faces due to societal stigma and discrimination. Nalan respects Leila's profession as a prostitute, acknowledging it as part of who she is, while Leila accepts Nalan's gender identity as a trans woman without question. Leila is there to listen to Nalan's concerns and fears about her identity, and Nalan supports Leila through her traumatic past and the challenges she faces as a sex worker. Their emotional connection serves as a source of strength for both, helping them cope with the hardships they encounter. "Spirited and spunky, ferocious to her enemies, loyal to her dearest: Nostalgia Nalan – Leila's bravest friend" (Shafak 57). Despite their different backgrounds, they both understand what it means to be marginalized by society, which deepens their bond and strengthens their attachment. They demonstrate reliability and consistency in their relationship, whether it's a moment of crisis or simply to share a laugh, they know they can count on each other. Their consistent presence in each other's lives, from the time that Leila saw Nalan as Osman from the window of her brothel and loved his innocent smile, to the time they spent in jail chatting endlessly, when Nalan had become a woman, their relationship fosters a sense of security and stability, even amid the chaos and uncertainty of their surroundings. Leila and Nalan's attachment is rooted in unconditional love and acceptance, "Nostalgia Nalan believed there were two kinds of families in this world: relatives formed the blood family; and friends, the water family… Leila had friends. Lifelong, loyal, loving friends. She might not have had much else, but this she surely had" (Shafak 199-200). They care deeply for each other, willing to go to great lengths to ensure each other's well-being and happiness. Their love transcends societal norms and expectations, offering a glimpse of hope and warmth in a world that often feels cold and unforgiving. Nalan, the strongest among all of Leila's friends broke apart at her death.

Leila and Humeyra: Leila and Humeyra's attachment is much like Nalan and Leila's relationship. Their attachment stems out of mutual understating of their past traumas and their current stigmatized lives. Humeyra was an immigrant in Istanbul

who had left her abusive husband and his family behind to start her life anew. She suffered in the city of Istanbul and had to survive on morsels. She was afraid of becoming a victim of honour killing as her husband came to look out for her. And through it all, she stood resolute because of Leila's support and friendship.

> They supported each other with the kind of loyalty that only those with few to rely on could muster. She assured her friend that she was one of the lucky ones, the resilient ones…like the cat they had saved together that fortuitous night, she was, despite all the odds stacked against her, destined to survive (Shafak 159-160).

Together they had saved a dying cat and Leila believed like her, Humeyra would always triumph over adversities in her life. Humeyra was bullied and mocked for her sense of fashion, her obesity, and her depression, yet these things never stopped Leila from showing her support for her.

Leila and Jameelah: In Elif Shafak's *10 Minutes and 38 Seconds in this Strange World,* the connection between Leila, a prostitute in Istanbul, and Jameelah, a trafficked prostitute from Africa, illustrates a secure attachment forged through shared experiences and mutual support. Despite their diverse backgrounds, Leila and Jameelah develop a profound bond grounded in empathy and understanding. Leila provides Jameelah with comfort and guidance, helping her navigate the challenges of life in the red-light district, after learning that Jameelah was trafficked like her and sold in the streets. Their relationship is marked by trust, acceptance, and unwavering loyalty, showcasing the resilience of the human spirit in adversity, the reason being they share the trauma of sexual exploitation. Through this connection, Leila and Jameelah found strength and solace, transcending the limitations imposed by their circumstances. Jameelah was a perceptive woman who was loved once, and knew the importance of a loving family yet after her mother's death she never found peace. Until she met Leila and her band of friends. She judged people's aura and only after deep insight she gave someone the chance to trust her, she found the soul of Leila in shades of purple, which often translates into 'trust, respect, and peace'. "I have a hunch you've been awake the whole time, feeling miserable and missing Leila" (Shafak 240). She became seriously ill after Leila's death due to her misery.

Leila and Zaynab: Zaynab is a kindred spirit who understands what it means to be marginalized and misunderstood. She suffers from dwarfism and aided prostitutes in the brothel home. She met Leila there and befriended her. Both Leila and Zaynab found refuge from the harsh realities of the world outside, forming a bond that transcends societal norms and expectations. Through their secure attachment, Leila and Zaynab offer each other the understanding and support needed to navigate life's challenges with resilience and dignity. Zaynab was a fortune-teller, and looked at tea leaves for people she favoured, she brewed tea for Leila twice a day. Leila believed Zaynab never had any bad sentiments for anyone, though she has been ridiculed all her life. Zaynab believed in Leila when she was swimming in the depths of self-doubt. "Zaynab122, the diviner, the optimist, the believer; for whom the word 'faith' was synonymous with the word 'love' and for whom God, therefore, could only be Beloved" (Shafak 128). It was her strength in the dream of Leila leaving the brothel in a wedding gown, and she did so in the end. She was devasted at the death of Leila and offered to do proper rituals for her soul to reach the heavens. Leila discussed the circumstances of her death with her thus she took the initiative in telling the band of friends that Leila wanted her body to go to the sea.

5.1.4 Gangu and Kamli

In *Gangubai Kathiawadi*, the bond between Gangu and Kamli exemplifies a secure attachment marked by loyalty, trust, and unwavering support. Gangu gave her gold earrings to her, she was always a giver, a quality that attracted people towards her. Similarly, Kamli fought with their brothel owner after Gangu was mercilessly beaten by a client on her watch. Gangu shares a deep and enduring connection with Kamli. She is Gangu's most trusted ally in the brothel, her confidante, and her right-hand woman after she becomes *bai*. Despite the challenging circumstances of their lives in the red-light district of Kamathipura, Kamli's unwavering loyalty to Gangubai is evident in her constant support and willingness to stand by her side, even in the face of danger. Likewise, Gangu's trust in Kamli is unshakeable, knowing that she can always rely on her for guidance and protection. Their secure attachment serves as a source of comfort and resilience in a world marked by uncertainty and hardship, illustrating the enduring power of friendship and solidarity amidst misfortune. "Who asked you to sacrifice your happiness for us? Doesn't it hurt? … My friend, Kamli, is

very sick. Pray for her speedy recovery … You're the only friend I have. Best friend" (Kapadia). Gangu's strength of character makes her a force of nature to be reckoned with, as does Kamli's; both women share in their strength- the taste of pain that hardened them over time. Kamli died in childbirth, and Gangu decided to raise the girl as her own. She swore to protect Pammi at all costs, she even closed the brothel in honour of Kamli for a few days.

5.1.5 Gangu and Rahim Lal

Gangu shares a deep and secure attachment with Rahim Lal bhai, he is her protector. Rahim Lal, a seasoned figure in the underworld of Kamathipura, takes Gangu under his wing when she is young, guiding her through the complexities of life in the red-light district. Gangu goes to him for help, as one of his men physically tortures Gangu to the extent that she can never give birth. Rahim Lal, the mafia don of Mumbai, beats the man in front of a large public to make an example out of him. Rahim Lal bhai not only provides Gangu with protection and support but also imparts valuable life lessons and skills, helping her navigate the challenges of her subversive environment. He is the helping hand in making Gangubai, the mafia queen of Mumbai, making Gangu partner in his business, aiding her in becoming the president of Kamathipura, as well as gifting her a new car. "Accept it as a gift from your brother…I took care of everything, Rahim Bhai. I'm your sister, you've taught me well" (Kapadia). Gangu, in turn, looks up to Rahim Lal with respect and sees him as her true brother. Their relationship is characterized by unwavering loyalty and emotional connection, offering Gangu a sense of security, a means to survive, and belonging in a world often marked by uncertainty and danger. He makes Gangu partner in his business, aiding her in becoming the president of Kamathipura. He also fought for her to keep her home- Kamathipura, when the court threatened to evacuate the premises.

5.2 Anxious-Preoccupied Attachment

The emotional need that is inconsistently met by the caregiver leads to the development of anxious-preoccupied attachment. These individuals as adults are

anxious about the availability of their attachment figures and are preoccupied with fear of abandonment at any point in their life. This fight between anxiousness and preoccupation leads them to develop a clingy and overly dependent personality. Koshy writes about this type of attachment and that individuals with anxious-preoccupied attachment are always in need of reassurance and approval of their attachment figures. Due to this they always try to please the other party for fear of rejection and desertion. By acknowledging and comprehending their attachment style, individuals exhibiting anxious-preoccupied attachment can initiate efforts toward establishing healthier and more satisfying relationships founded upon trust, mutual respect, and emotional security.

5.2.1 Maha and Louise

In the memoir, *Dancing Girls of Lahore,* the bond with Maha is perhaps the most significant and apparent in Louise Brown's memoir. Maha and her family become the second family for Louise in Pakistan. She became assimilated into their lives effortlessly. Individuals in anxious-preoccupied attachment fear abandonment or rejection. They crave intimacy and may become overly dependent on their partner. Maha attached herself to Louise because of her insecurities that were formed due to her traumatic life. The life of a prostitute is full of loneliness and transitory relationships. Thus, to overcome the loneliness in her life and to have a person on whom Maha can depend emotionally, she formed an unbreakable bond with Louise. Louise became Maha's sister and an aunt to her children. The relationship between Maha and Louise seems to be a secure attachment, but upon closer inspection, the self-doubt and uncertainty of relationships in Maha's life makes her more insecure about her bond with Louise. Their bond is ambivalent, hanging between a secure and insecure relationship. The individuals in this kind of relationship are often clingy, jealous, and possessive because they fear the loss of their loved one. Maha does not want Louise to form a relationship with other women of the Mohalla, she wants a person, she can fully depend on, emotionally and mentally, "My loyalty must lie with her completely: friendship is available in limited quantity and can't be shared" (Brown 173). Louise cares for her beyond the conventional norms of an observer and a researcher overlooking aspects of Hera Mandi. She accepts that Maha is her sister and friend, just like Maha claims. The biggest evidence of her loyalty to Maha was

when Louise cleaned Maha's dirty and clogged washroom. "My Louise, she gasps. My sister is doing sweepers' work" (Brown 212). However, there are times that Louise finds it difficult to be at par with the larger-than-life personality of Maha. Hence, their attachment tilts between preoccupation with the fear of abandonment and anxiousness to do something to keep the attachment figure close.

In this attachment style, individuals are always overanalyzing their interactions with their partner and due to this they experience intense emotional highs and lows, especially reacting strongly to perceived threats to their relationship with the attachment figure. The individual struggles with boundaries and finds it difficult to maintain them. According to Louise, Maha's soul swings between a variety of emotions; rage, joy, cruelty and gentle compassion. Thus, to detox herself from the negativity of Maha's life, Louise takes a reprise somewhere else. "I feel incapable of dealing with all of Maha's problems as well as my own. Increasingly, I'm out of my depth and sometimes I have to walk away" (Brown 181). This slight lack of security in their relationship arises from a deep-rooted trauma that Maha has suffered since childhood. None of her relations be it blood or otherwise had a strong and stable base. Her parents only saw her as a potential money-making machine and her husbands were her customers only. "When the children go to sleep, I'm alone. My heart is alone. Those men are frauds. You are the only person who hasn't given me up. Promise you won't give me up—not until we die." (Brown 67-68). She laments about the problems in her relationship with Adnan, but she knows inside that it is a doomed bond to begin with. Men don't come to the Mohalla to make a happy house with the women living there. Thus, Maha feels that Louise is her only confidant on whom she can truly depend.

5.2.2 Maha and her children (Nisha, Nena, Mutazar and Sofiya)

Individuals in anxious-preoccupied attachment tend to have low self-esteem and seek validation from others. They are always anxious about their relationship; thus, they face uncertainty, and insecurity, and have low self-esteem. Most of the relationships in Maha's life are ambivalent. She dangles between being anxious about her relationships and staying preoccupied with the thought of abandonment. Maha's

relationship with her children is complex and layered, influenced by the circumstances of their lives and the environment they inhabit.

Nisha and Nena are the daughters from Maha's first marriage with a Sayed. She left two sons with him. The Sayed did not want the daughters, because they would have been expensive to marry because of their stigmatized mother. The two youngest children; Mutazar and Sofiya are children of Maha's current husband, Adnan. That is why they have the lion's share of Adnan's attention and love. Mutazar, the only son is spoiled, which is in line with the cultural influence of the environment and because he is the son of Adnan. Nisha and Nena, are not fed properly, neither have any decent clothes to wear but they still are far better off than their younger sister, Ariba. Maha's relationship with her children is fraught with the challenges of their environment. She loves them and wants the best for them, but her profession and the societal stigma attached to it complicate their bonds. Each child reacts differently to their upbringing, leading to various levels of closeness and conflict in their relationships with Maha.

Nisha is Maha's eldest daughter. She has been brought up in the brothel environment and is expected to follow in her mother's footsteps. Maha hopes for Nisha's success as a dancer and courtesan, but their relationship is strained due to the expectations placed on Nisha, she dreams of a world outside the Mohalla. She suffers from TB in her bones and is mostly ill. She confesses to Louise that she does not want to get better because she does not want to become a prostitute like her mother. "She wants to be a collection of deformed bones that no man will buy…she fears being a woman. Nisha doesn't want to be desired. She'd rather take her chance on dying" (Brown 109). Adnan does not pay for her medicine, and Maha is only concerned with what Adnan thinks. Nisha's relationship with her mother is complicated, as she struggles to balance her desire for independence with her loyalty to her family.

Nena the second eldest daughter of Maha has the lusciousness, and allure of a proper dancing girl. She embraces the life of Mohalla. She has seen her mother entertain men throughout her life and learned the tricks of the trade. She is giddy with the prospect of entertaining clients or going to Dubai. She is interested in the shiny things brought for her by her suitors; in this aspect, she is like her mother. They both share the same charm, and beauty to excite the customers and are only interested in the naturalistic pursuits trading their body will bring forth. There is an underlying bond between Nena and Maha, rooted in shared resilience and determination.

Mutazar is Maha's son, and Sofiya is Maha's youngest daughter. Like Mutazar, she is not directly involved in the family business. Their relationship with Maha is perhaps the least explored in the novel, but it's implied that they are shielded from the harsh realities of their life to some extent, because of Adnan's presence in their lives. "Mutazar is Adnan's son and Nisha is someone else's child… The children she had with Adnan are valued because they tie him to her" (Brown 22-23). Maha does not see the illness of her Nisha, or the rape of Ariba, because she is preoccupied with Adnan. Her life revolves around keeping Adnan gratified. This is the only topic of conversation she delves in freely. "Maha has missed the unmissable because she doesn't even see her children when they are standing right in front of her" (Brown 136). Maha is aware of the transitory relationships formed in the Mohalla thus she is always anxious about the time-limit of Adnan's stay in the Mohalla. His presence is arbitrary, but he still supports his two children by paying meagerly. This is the only reason, Maha's most attention is on Mutazar and Sofiya.

The individuals feel at a loss without emotional validation in anxious-preoccupied attachment. Due to the consistent need of the individuals for reassurance, misinterpretation of cues is normal. This leads to high emotional reactivity and subsequently more conflicts. One reason for Maha's unpredictable relationship with her children is her medicine addiction. Her daughters who were supposed to save her from a poor life, do not carry the charm that she had in her days of selling her body. Her present husband remains absent from their life most of the time. and the only daughter who earns some money by selling her body is considered cheap because it is not the way a respected sex worker trades her body. Maha waits for a man to arrive, bringing both companionship and the money necessary to support her family. These are things she cannot acquire without resorting to selling sex. Taking her medication provides a brief respite from her worries, but then she is confronted once more by the reality of her unhappy family, absent husband, and financial difficulties. "She sleeps as Mutazar and Sofiya run wild and out of control; as Ariba, caked in filth, hangs about the streets; as Nisha quietly fades into the background; and as Nena cleans and watches her mother for signs of life or death" (Brown 180). Maha attempts to regain control, but her temper flares, tensions rise, and she turns to opening the medicine and counting out sleeping pills. However, it's always insufficient, never the answer, because when she awakens, nothing has changed.

5.2.3 Ariba and Louise

In *The Dancing Girls of Lahore*, Louise Brown delves into the complex relationship between herself and Ariba, Maha's daughter. Initially, their relationship is one of curiosity and cultural exchange, with Louise fascinated by Ariba's resilience and determination despite her challenging circumstances. Louise initially is annoyed by the girl, because of her dirty demeanour and pick-pocketing. However, after Louise observes the ill-treatment of Maha with Ariba, she feels sorry for the girl. Their relationship takes a turn after Louise starts pealing the layers of Ariba's personality. She is tough and strong, the time she spends out in the Mohalla has hardened her yet she is a child who is love-deprived. She does not miss a chance to make her mother happy and readily accepts her offer of entering into the trade even before her elder sisters because she was raped and no longer of more value to Maha. Louise tries to stop her but not being her mother, she cannot do so much. She does save her from going to a relative's house. "Poor Ariba, if you send her away, she'll be so unhappy she'll become even more badly behaved. She needs you and she needs her sisters. She needs a mother to love her" (Brown 86). Maha wants to send her away for some money but Louise with all her persuasive skills stalls the arrangement.

5.2.4 Gangubai and the women of Kamathipura

In *Gangubai Kathiawadi*, directed by Sanjay Leela Bhansali and based on a chapter of the novel *Mafia Queens of Mumbai* by Hussain Zaidi, Gangubai is depicted as the powerful and influential matriarch of Kamathipura, the red-light district of Mumbai. In anxious-preoccupied attachment, individuals often sacrifice their own needs to meet other people's requirements to maintain intimacy. In the context of Gangubai and the women of Kamathipura, this attachment style is evident in the deep emotional connection they share and the dependence of the women on Gangubai for protection and support. Gangubai serves as both a mother figure and a leader to the women of Kamathipura. She provides them with shelter, security, and a sense of belonging in a society that often marginalizes them. The women look up to Gangubai for guidance and support, seeking her approval and validation in their lives. "The truth is that the 4,000 women in Kamathipura are my family. I live in their hearts"

(Kapadia). However, Gangubai constantly worries about the safety and well-being of the women under her care, often feeling anxious and overwhelmed by the responsibilities she carries. The over-emotional investment into a relationship can create an atmosphere of suffocation and overwhelm the attachment figure. The person might engage in a pattern of seeking reassurance, which provides temporary relief from their anxiety but ultimately sustains the root insecurities. "As long as Gangubai lived, not a single woman in Kamathipura went homeless…Who gave women dignity in an undignified place, and taught them to breathe freely in stifling cages" (Kapadia). Gangubai's attachment to the women is fueled by her fear of losing them or failing to protect them. The relationship between Gangubai and the women of Kamathipura is complex and multifaceted. While Gangubai provides a sense of security and belonging to the women, she also struggles with her anxieties and insecurities.

5.2.5 Leila and D/Ali

In *10 Minutes 38 Seconds in this Strange World* by Elif Shafak, Leila and D/Ali exhibit an anxious-preoccupied attachment style in their relationship. Leila and D/Ali, an immigrant revolutionist, forms a deep emotional bond despite the societal constraints surrounding them. Leila's attachment is marked by an intense fear of abandonment and her struggle with commitment and intimacy. D/Ali becomes Leila's anchor in the chaotic world around her. Despite his reservations that were prevalent due to his diasporic existence and his radical view of life, he provides Leila with the emotional support she craves, albeit inconsistently. Their relationship is characterized by a cycle of intense closeness followed by anxiety-driven behaviours when they are apart. Leila's fear of abandonment and her insecurity about her working conditions often lead her to overanalyze situations and seek reassurance from D/Ali. D/Ali had been displaced from place to place and could not find a home anywhere. For him, home refers to a feeling, not a place and he found that beside Leila. Their attachment style reflects a complex interplay of love, dependence, and fear, illustrating the challenges of forming deep connections in a world filled with uncertainty. "From the very beginning, he treated her as his equal… It was this, more than anything, that put Leila off guard – this unexpected sense of equality. An illusion, surely, but one that she treasured" (Shafak 142). The main strategy to overcome insecurity in this type of attachment is to identify and challenge the negative beliefs of individuals and to

develop more positivity. Besides this, the cultivation of relationships with supportive attachment figures also provides a secure base for emotional growth. The anxiousness that plagued their relationship came from Leila's side. Self-doubt led her to believe that she was not deserving of the attention and love of a pure-hearted person like D/Ali. She was apprehensive of his radical thoughts as well; he talked about equality in a crooked system and she had this feeling that these ideas would be the death of him. She tried to believe in his revolutionary ideas, but she had seen the harsh reality and could never fully trust the world to accept their relationship. Yet she remained quiet for fear of disappointing him, "Sweet though it might have been for years, it was apparent to her now that this relationship would hurt them" (Shafak 152). It did hurt Leila in the end, D/Ali died in a riot taking with him his spontaneous kindness, his hushed movements, his attentive nature, and his eyes that looked at Leila without any reproach but as though she was, and had always been, the centre of the world. He did die for what he believed in but left Leila more lonely and more fearful of listening to her heart.

5.3 Dismissive-Avoidant Attachment

As the name suggests, the caregivers in this type of attachment style are distant and dismissive of the needs of the individuals, especially emotional needs. The most plausible explanation for the development of this kind of relationship is in response to experiences with caregivers or attachment figures who were unavailable emotionally and distant. Dismissive-avoidant attachment is the type of attachment that proliferates the value of independence and self-reliance according to Koshy. Personal space and autonomy are important for them which leads them to not form close emotional bonds. Dismissive-avoidant attachment reflects a defensive strategy for coping with relational needs and vulnerabilities. With self-awareness, introspection, and support, individuals with dismissive-avoidant attachment can work towards forming more secure and satisfying relationships.

5.3.1 Ariba and Maha

In the memoir, *Dancing Girls of Lahore,* Ariba, Maha's third daughter, is portrayed as a quieter and more introverted character. Her relationship with her mother is influenced by the same dynamics of the brothel environment and societal expectations. Maha often pretends she doesn't exist. Ariba is not fair-skinned like her sisters, but she possesses sharp features, though they are hidden behind layers of grime and dirt. Maha brushes her other daughter's hair and cares for them but she is ashamed of Ariba's existence in her life. The reason is, the father of Ariba was not a prominent man like the father of Nisha and Nena and was probably a one-night client, as opposed to Sofiya and Mutazar's father, Adnan. "After all her beatings, the constant, informal exclusion and all the years without affection, Ariba still wants to please her mother" (Brown 198). She is abhorred by her mother for being dark-skinned, for having a less reputable father, for being another unnecessary mouth to feed, and simply for existing. In this type of attachment, individuals downplay the importance of relationships, even if internally they hold any person close to their heart. But to avoid appearing vulnerable, they suppress their emotions. Ariba resembles Maha most, yet she does not want to accept this fact. Perhaps, the reason is Maha can see herself in Ariba. She is just like her mother, often in need of love, companionship, and care from another being. "But Ariba would never have asked. She would never have assumed that she could be given anything. She gets nothing without a fight" (Brown 23-24). Ariba is the most impoverished and deprived child of Maha's family. She would have been happy; had she been treated like a servant even. But her existence holds no importance for Maha and her other children. Due to the avoidant nature of the individuals, they have difficulty expressing emotions or seeking support from others while forming attachments. Ariba often stands on the periphery of the internal working of Maha's house, no one invites her to talk, to eat, or even to play. So, she often spends her time in the Mohalla, learning street tricks and is perhaps the toughest among Maha's children.

5.3.2 Leila and Suzan- Adoptive Mother

Shafak in her novel, *10 Minutes 38 Seconds in This Strange World,* gives a glimpse of several parent-child relationships. The relationship between Leila and

Suzan, her adoptive mother, also illustrates a dismissive-avoidant attachment style. Initially, Leila is raised by Suzan, believing her to be her biological mother, until Binnaz reveals the truth about her parentage. This revelation disrupts Leila's sense of security and trust, leading to an emotionally distant relationship between her and Suzan.

Suzan's inability to bear children of her own plays a significant role in her decision to take in Leila. Her underlying motivations are driven more by societal pressures and the desire to fulfil her role as a wife rather than genuine maternal instincts. The individuals who are prone to develop this kind of relationship struggle to provide emotional support and affection and often end up neglecting the needs of their partners, friends or any familial connection. Despite being raised in the same household, Leila feels a sense of detachment from Suzan, unable to fully connect with her as a mother figure. This detachment becomes more pronounced as Leila grows older and begins to understand the dynamics of her family. She feels a sense of rejection or abandonment upon learning the truth about her parentage, further exacerbating her dismissive-avoidant attachment style. Leila becomes self-reliant and independent, seeking emotional support and validation from other sources. Another integral behavioural change is the lack of understanding of an individual's part of their feelings. They often feel empty and dissatisfied in their relationships which leads to misunderstandings and conflicts as well. Leila tilts between her affections for Binnaz and Suzan. She has to hide her true feelings for both in front of the other. This lack of expression also plays a major role in her not having a bond based on an understanding with her adoptive mother. "Your aunt is sick in the head – just like her mother, so I have heard. It is in their blood. Hereditary madness. They have it in every generation" (Shafak 34). Her mother's apparent distaste for the presence of Auntie in their lives shredded the remaining trust between them. She time and again tried to manipulate Leila into thinking her biological mother was inapt in taking care of her.

5.3.3 Gangubai and Sheela masi

In *Gangubai Kathiawadi,* the relationship between Gangubai and Sheela Masi is characterized by a dismissive-avoidant attachment style, reflecting a complex dynamic between the two characters. Sheela Masi, who buys Gangu from Ramnik and

runs the brothel where Gangu ends up, holds a position of authority over Gangu and other prostitutes within the establishment. The individuals in this type of attachment are uncomfortable with emotional intimacy and may avoid close relationships, that is why they tend to downplay the importance of relationships. From the beginning, there's a clear power imbalance, which sets the tone for their relationship. Sheela Masi exhibits a detached and emotionally distant demeanour towards Gangu. She maintains a professional facade, treating Gangu more like a labourer than a person with feelings and needs. This detachment is evident in her interactions with Gangu, where she often gives orders without much consideration for Gangu's well-being or emotions. However, Sheela Masi's dismissive attitude creates a sense of emotional neglect and rejection for Gangu. She only sees Sheela as a dictator, who forces them to sell their bodies day and night with only regard for the coming money. "I will set a price. Not once, but every bloody time! I've paid through the nose to buy you girls" (Kapadia). Sheela Masi rarely engages with Gangu on a personal level, avoiding any discussions that delve into emotional territory. She bought Gangu illegally and forced her to work for her. This is in stark contrast to when Gangu became a 'Bai' and freed a girl who did not want to work in the brothel and was sold forcefully. "This is Sheela's brothel, and she's the boss here! You have two days to decide and comply. Or else, there are people here who will use force and pay for it too" (Kapadia). As the story progresses, Gangubai's resilience and determination begin to challenge Sheela Masi's fascist behaviour. Gangubai asserts herself and gradually gains confidence, demanding respect and recognition within the brothel, despite Sheela Masi's attitude that was rooted in her emotional barriers. "In the next five years, I'll buy this brothel... and Sheela as well!" (Kapadia). To not lose her throne in this power dynamic, Sheela Masi goes as far as intentionally letting Gangu be beaten up by a client, Pathan. He beat her to an inch of death, and cut her stomach, for which she could never bear children. "She's got 15 stitches on her stomach and four on her lips. He has broken her limbs too. You're our madam. We are your responsibility. Despite you being here, she's as good as dead" (Kapadia). As the individuals in these bonds lack emotional bonding, they struggle to trust others. Sheela had a toxic relationship with all the girls. They were only money-making objects for her.

After Sheela Masi's death, the girls in the brothel made Gangu their 'Bai', they had more faith in her than Sheela Masi. The brothel owner does not sell herself; they

were willing to sacrifice their bodies as long as Gangu was taking care of them. This depicts the contrast in not only the relationship between Sheela Masi and Gangu but also the trust and understanding that Sheela lacked within her brothel.

5.4 Fearful-Avoidant (Disorganized) Attachment

This type of attachment can be an amalgamation of dismissive-avoidant attachment and anxious-preoccupied attachment. The attachment figure in this type of attachment is most likely abusive, unpredictable, or threatening. The child or adult may want to develop a close and intimate relationship with the attachment figure but they fear rejection, and getting hurt. Koshy writes in her web article that human beings are complex. They have conflicting desires for both intimacy and independence. Sometimes the erratic behavior depicted by individuals in relationships is to seek the attention of the attachment figure. This attachment style was first identified by Mary Main and Judith Solomon in the 1980s, building upon John Bowlby's and Mary Ainsworth's earlier work on attachment theory. Disorganized attachment represents a complex interplay of early relational trauma, inconsistent caregiving, and unresolved emotional pain. However, with appropriate therapeutic support, self-awareness, and relational healing, individuals with disorganized attachment can cultivate greater resilience, form healthier relationships, and embark on a journey towards healing and recovery.

5.4.1 Leila and Auntie Binnaz- Biological Mother

In *10 Minutes 38 Seconds in this Strange World* by Elif Shafak, the relationship between Leila and Binnaz, her biological mother, dangles between the dividing line of anxious-preoccupied and dismissive-avoidant attachment style. This attachment style is characterized by the individual's desire for intimacy coupled with fear of rejection or abandonment. The individuals may experience bouts of hot-and-cold behavioural reactions in relationships. They might struggle with trusting others and forming secure attachments. They often experience internal conflict and ambivalence in relationships. From the beginning, Leila's upbringing is marked by a lack of emotional connection with Binnaz, partly due to her deteriorating mental

health, and partly due to her not being strong enough to ask for her rights from her husband or his first wife. When Leila is given to Suzan, Haroun's other wife, she grows up believing Suzan is her true mother. This early separation from Binnaz sets the tone for their relationship, creating a sense of detachment between them. As Leila grows older, her interactions with Binnaz are often marked by a sense of disinterest or indifference. Binnaz, though she knows Leila is her daughter, doesn't show much warmth or affection towards her, as she was preoccupied with her many pregnancies that mostly resulted in miscarriages. This lack of emotional availability from Binnaz reinforces Leila's tendency to keep her distance. Binnaz's revelation of the truth about Leila's parentage further complicates their relationship. Instead of providing a sense of connection or closeness, this revelation only serves to highlight the emotional distance between them. Binnaz's delayed disclosure of Leila's true parentage also raises questions of trust and reliability in their relationship. "Leila had come to understand that feelings of tenderness must always be hidden. This was the only form of affection she had learned from grown-ups, and the teaching would come with dire consequences" (Shafak 44). Disorganized attachment can manifest in emotional instability, with individuals experiencing intense and unpredictable emotional reactions. They may struggle to regulate their emotions, leading to mood swings, anxiety, or depression.

People with disorganized attachments may find it challenging to form secure attachments in relationships. Throughout the novel, Leila struggles with feelings of abandonment and rejection, stemming from her early experiences with her two wives and a strict father. She doesn't actively seek to bridge the emotional gap between them or address Leila's need for closeness. Their relationship is marked by an underlying sense of detachment and unresolved feelings of abandonment, highlighting the complex interplay between past experiences and present interactions. Disorganized attachment often leads to intrusive thoughts and memories related to past traumatic experiences. These intrusive thoughts can disrupt daily functioning and exacerbate feelings of fear, anxiety, or depression. Binnaz struggles with mental illness and addiction, she is unable to provide the emotional support and stability that Leila needs "She couldn't help sensing that something remained unresolved between them, like a muddled message on a poorly transmitted radio wave, strings of words that, though conveyed, could not be formed into anything coherent" (Shafak 42). Binnaz is often

preoccupied with her struggles, leaving Leila to fend for herself emotionally. This lack of maternal nurturing further reinforces Leila's feelings of emotional detachment and alienation.

Binnaz tried to get close to Leila when she had stable episodes briefly. Similarly, Leila also had a soft spot for Auntie in her heart, a strong child-like affection and tenderness- Leila placed Auntie in place of a clumsy and frail child, who needed all the affection and empathy we could give her. Binnaz loved Leila with all her heart but throughout her life, she had been instructed to hide her emotions and feelings for the people she loved. Becoming Haroun's wife, she couldn't show how much she missed her poor family or how she was jealous of Suzan. When Leila was born, she had to give her up. She suffered through all her miscarriages alone and when her son Tarkan died, her remaining mental ability went down the drain.

The individuals in this type of attachment are fearful of abandonment but their desire for closeness leads them to avoid them. This is to ask for reassurance in return for their pushing them away. The reason for this push-and-pull attachment is trauma or abuse suffered in the past, which is a contributing factor in their fear of emotional intimacy. They may also have unresolved feelings related to childhood experiences of abuse, neglect, or inconsistent caregiving. Binnaz is demurred because of her insecure future in her household. She is illiterate and comes from a humble background. "I am the one who gave birth to you. If they find out that I've told you, they'll send me back to the village – or maybe they'll lock me up in a mental hospital, and we'll never see each other again" (Shafak 41). She is reminded again and again of her inferior status in the house and threatened to be sent away if she does not willingly agree with everything her husband and his first wife say. Thus, she had to give away her first daughter, Leila to Suzan as well because of her weak position in the house. And this one instance had debilitated her already fumbling mental health. She could never recover fully after this encounter.

5.4.2 Leila and Haroun-Father

Leila's relationship with her father in *10 Minutes 38 Seconds in this Strange World* reflects a dismissive-avoidant and fearful-avoidant attachment style characterized by emotional distance, neglect, and a sense of abandonment. In fearful-

avoidant attachment patterns exposure to interpersonal violence or abuse within the family environment can have profound effects on attachment development. Children who witness or experience violence may develop disorganized attachment as a survival strategy in response to the unpredictable and threatening nature of their caregiving environment. Caregivers' mental health issues, such as untreated trauma, substance abuse, or personality disorders, can significantly impact attachment development in children. This relationship shapes Leila's understanding of love and connection, highlighting the profound impact of early attachment experiences on one's emotional well-being and sense of self.

Throughout her life, Leila craves her father's attention and approval, but he remains distant and uninvolved. His lack of emotional connection leaves Leila feeling isolated and unfulfilled, contributing to her sense of abandonment. Leila's father was rooting for the birth of a boy since his wife became pregnant, but all he got was a daughter. Initially, he was content with having a daughter to raise, but with time his demeanour changed. He became a religious fanatic and waged a holy war in the life of Leila. She was restricted in the house, with nowhere to go. She was not allowed to watch TV or read magazines, she was taken out of school and made to learn the household chores. Leila's father, or as she called him Baba, did not have an emotional connection with her. Even after having the son of his dreams losing him to severe Down Syndrome, and pinning all his hopes on Leila, he never cared to connect with her based-on love and compassion. "Look at yourself, are you, my daughter? I cannot recognize you anymore. We worked so hard to give you a decent upbringing. I can't believe you behave like a … whore!" (Shafak 102). He was a strict ruler who never believed in her, and tried to mould her into someone she could never become. He blamed Leila for being aggressive and almost hitting her, he blamed her for the shortcomings of his characters and ultimately led Leila to feel guilty as well for the things she had never done.

Loss of a caregiver, separation from primary attachment figures, or other significant losses during childhood can contribute to disorganized attachment. Unresolved grief and loss can further compound feelings of fear, insecurity, and mistrust in relationships. Leila's Baba gave preference to his brother over Leila and her mothers. In front of his brother, he saw nothing and Leila realized that even when she was a teenager. Her uncle assaulted her and made her pregnant. He harassed her

since she was a child, and she could never get the courage to tell anyone because just like Baba, his brother manipulated Leila into believing she was doing something wrong to him instead of the other way round. When she finally disclosed the reason for eating dirt, so that she could have a miscarriage to her Auntie, she was forced to marry the son of the same uncle by her father. "Leila said, in a voice far steadier than she felt, 'How do you manage to see with the eyes of Allah? I've always wondered" (Shafak 108). Perhaps one of the reasons for the loneliness and lack of understanding Leila felt in her house was due to the lies and deceptions. Her father gave her to his first wife to raise as her own and she called her biological mother, Auntie. She could not get close to either of these ladies in a manner that a daughter clings to her mother as her shadow. She was not part of a normal family, her father made sure of that and the decision of her marriage to the son of the same uncle was the last straw that broke her. "But now she understood, with a sinking feeling, that Baba did believe her… Baba knew who was telling the truth and who was lying" (Shafak 109). She felt utterly alone in the house with two mothers and a father, but no one to protect her. She would have married Tarkan, had she known her father did not believe her, but he believed her and was still choosing to side with his brother. She ran away from her house the next day.

5.4.3 Afshan and Gangu

In *Gangubai Kathiawadi*, Gangubai and Afshan's relationship is characterized by a fearful-avoidant attachment style, deeply influenced by their backgrounds and experiences. Gangubai is a resilient and fierce woman who rises from the ashes of her past to become one of the most powerful and respected figures in the underworld of Kamathipura, Mumbai. Afshan is a young man who enters Gangubai's life as a source of potential affection and companionship. Individuals with disorganized attachments may engage in self-destructive behaviours as a way to cope with unresolved trauma or emotional pain. These behaviours can include substance abuse, self-harm, or engaging in unhealthy relationships. Gangubai's fearful-avoidant attachment style is rooted in her tumultuous past. Having endured abandonment and betrayal in her early years, she has developed a strong sense of self-reliance and independence as a defence mechanism. This has made her wary of forming deep emotional connections, leading her to maintain a certain level of distance in her relationships. Despite her caring and

protective nature, Gangubai struggles to fully open up to others emotionally. Afshan, on the other hand, represents a potential challenge to Gangubai's guarded demeanour. He is portrayed as a kind and compassionate individual who genuinely cares for Gangubai and wishes to be a part of her life. However, his efforts to get closer to her are often met with resistance or indifference. The individuals in this type of relationship have a fear of intimacy and difficulty trusting others. It may lead to relationship conflicts, distancing behaviours, or a pattern of entering into turbulent or dysfunctional partnerships, as did Gangu. Gangubai's dismissive tendencies manifest in her reluctance to reciprocate Afshan's affection, keeping him at arm's length emotionally. She shows moments of warmth and kindness towards him, but these are often overshadowed by her need to maintain control and independence. "I've seen many men come and go; this is the first time. I'm meeting a real man" (Kapadia). With Afshan she wanted companionship and not lust. She wanted someone to fill the loneliness of her heart. The way she asks him to caress her on the head gives way to suppressed emotions of her trauma of being sold to the brothel house and then staying strong for so long for the women of Kamathipura. She needs someone to care for her for a change, and not in a sexual way.

Gangubai's fearful behaviour serves as a barrier to forming a deeper connection with Afshan, leaving him feeling frustrated and rejected. Despite Gangubai's reluctance, Afshan continues to show unwavering support and loyalty towards her. He persists in his attempts to break through her emotional barriers, hoping to win her affection and acceptance. However, Gangubai's fear of vulnerability and her deep-seated emotional wounds prevent her from fully embracing Afshan's love. Additionally, she loved the women of Kamathipura more than herself. She sacrificed herself, and all her affections for the women who became the only family she was left with. She marries him off to the daughter of a prostitute, Kusum. She saves the life of a girl whose future otherwise was to become a sex worker like her mother after coming of age and saves Afshan from the stigmatized life of living with a prostitute as well. "That's what I am doing, making your life…For the women of Kamathipura, Gangu is willing to sacrifice 100 Afshans!" (Kapadia). Gangubai and Afshan's interactions highlight the complexities of human relationships and the challenges that arise when individuals with different attachment styles come together.

5.4.4 Maha and Adnan

In *The Dancing Girls of Lahore* by Louise Brown, the relationship between Adnan and Maha is characterized by a fearful-avoidant attachment style. Adnan, a patron of the red-light district, and Maha, a seasoned courtesan, share a connection that is superficial and transactional. Adnan views Maha as an object of desire rather than as a person with feelings and needs. Maha has had her fair share of men, but Adnan was her current husband and did not want her to dance in the kothas. He was her only source of income right now. Their relationship is built on mutual benefit rather than genuine emotional connection, with Adnan seeking physical gratification and Maha seeking financial security and a cure for her loneliness, "Some days Adnan doesn't visit and I've no money,' she complains" (Brown 22). Despite their interactions, there is a palpable emotional distance between them, with Adnan keeping Maha at arm's length emotionally, and with time physically as well. Maha has an inclination that Adnan will leave her after some time. But after Adnan, her chances of finding a decent husband will be almost zero. "Adnan is growing tired of Maha and tired of supporting her and the children" (Brown 14). Adnan abuses Maha, physically, emotionally, verbally, and mentally as well. He has a first wife, Mumtaz at home and Maha is insecure about her presence in her so-called husband's life. Maha often thinks of entering the trade market again but she fears the prospect of losing unloving Adnan and the little security he provides her. Moreover, he does not provide either financial support or medical assistance for Maha's other children except Sofiya and Mutazar. The transition of the attitude change in Adnan's behaviour owes to Maha constantly nagging him for money, her clingy nature, and her deteriorating physical beauty. Now he only comes to smoke hashish and heroin at her house and to run away from both his irksome wives. "Adnan is still the same indifferent or absent husband. At times I pity him: he's not the cruel, vicious client of my imaginings—more a fraught and lackluster man struggling with addiction" (Brown 55-56).

Building secure and supportive relationships with trustworthy individuals can provide a healing context for individuals with disorganized attachments. Forming connections with empathetic and understanding individuals can help counteract feelings of isolation and mistrust. However, Adnan never wanted to build a strong and stable relationship with Maha. She was a means to fulfil his lecherous needs initially, and then to fulfil his drug addiction. Their experiences of inconsistent or abusive

patterns compromised their ability to develop trust and rely on each other for support and comfort.

These attachment styles are not fixed or immutable; they can evolve with new experiences and therapeutic interventions. Understanding one's attachment style can offer insights into relationship patterns and help individuals cultivate healthier, more fulfilling connections. Koshy, while explaining about the communication patterns of different types of attachments states that they influence the individual's way of perceiving things and their reactions to particular situations. The regulation of needs, emotions, and concerns in relationships is different for every attachment style.

In marginalized communities, the concept of "water bonds" often transcends traditional blood ties, as individuals forge deep connections through shared struggles and collective resilience. These surrogate families, depicted in *10 Minutes and 38 Seconds in This Strange World*, *Dancing Girls of Lahore*, and *Gangubai Kathiawadi*, redefine kinship as a form of resistance against societal exclusion. Heterotopias, like Kamathipura, Heera Mandi, and Zurafa Street, serve as sanctuaries where agency and solidarity flourish, enabling individuals to challenge stigma and reclaim their dignity. Stigma, while deeply shaping self-perception and identity, also propels adaptive attachment behaviors that foster resilience, as seen in Maha's relationship with Louise, Leila's relationship with Nalan, Sinan, Humerya, Zaynab, and Jameelah, and Gangubai's relationship with Rahim Lala and Kamli. The intersectionality of oppression, rooted in gender, class, and occupational stigma compounds marginalization but simultaneously necessitates transformative connections that empower emotional survival. Within these heterotopias, marginalized individuals reconstruct their identities, moving beyond victimization to assert agency and self-worth, changing the space into a space of empowerment. These narratives critique systemic injustices while celebrating collective resistance, where solidarity becomes the ultimate tool for reclaiming voice, identity, and dignity.

Symbolism in The Selected Texts: Symbols of Resilience and Transformation in Marginalized Spaces

Incorporating symbolism into a study that intertwines stigmatization, attachment theory, and heterotopia provides a nuanced lens to decode complex social

and psychological dynamics. Symbolism offers a rich understanding of how marginalized individuals or groups navigate subversive spaces of heterotopia and the emotional ties or attachment that arise in contexts marked by stigma. It bridges the abstract with the tangible. In analyzing *Dancing Girls of Lahore* by Louise Brown and *10 Minutes and 38 Seconds in This Strange World* by Elif Shafak, alongside the visual text *Gangubai Kathiawadi* directed by Sanjay Leela Bhansali, Jewitt's method is foundational. Color, framing, focus, and positioning elements reveal layers of symbolism critical to understanding themes of stigmatization, attachment, and heterotopia. Incorporating symbolism allows for a nuanced exploration of heterotopia as spaces of both exclusion and resistance, where attachment theory underscores the emotional connections forged amid adversity.

In *Dancing Girls of Lahore,* the red-light district 'Hera Mandi or Diamond Market' itself is a symbol. In literature, diamonds symbolize perfection, wealth and purity. However, to acquire such, people tend to take dark routes. Thus, the place represents a space that is a place of refuge as well as danger for its inhabitants. The place that is marked by stigma and the prostitutes living there are called dirty and filthy is named after something that is a symbol of purity and chastity. Similarly, these women are exploited by the men to acquire them and boast about their dominion over these women. The diamonds in the market have to suffer through loneliness because of this, their bodies are objectified. Yet they can never make an emotional bond with someone from outside the Mohalla freely. Another symbol in the memoir presented by Louise is a mirror. It is mentioned repeatedly and is used by sex workers like Maha and Tasneem. Mirrored walls of the houses in the Mohalla are also mentioned. Mirrors reflect how the girls and women see themselves and how they believe they are seen by others. The reflections in the mirror can symbolize internalized self-worth and identity shaped by their relationships and experiences. Inconsistent or negative attachment experiences can lead to a fragmented or negative self-image. Hair appears as a symbol in the memoir as well. Hair depicts femininity and sensuality. Long and lustrous hair with correct twirling and gestures allows women to seduce clients for more money. However, the most significance long hair holds are in the life of a transgender. Tasneem and the other transgenders in the memoir take pride in their long hair. The longer the hair, the more respect the khusra has within their circle. It provides them with identity and autonomy. However, Tasneem's lover shaves her

head, shaving or cutting off hair can symbolize a loss of identity and autonomy, particularly when it's done without consent or as a form of punishment or control. In Heera Mandi, where sex workers' bodies are often commodified and exploited, forced haircuts may serve as a means of exerting power and asserting dominance over them.

In *10 Minutes and 38 Seconds in This Strange World,* Shafak presents water as the most significant and profound symbol. Water is versatile and fluid, it encapsulates the themes of memory, life and death, connection, freedom, and emotional depth. It serves as a metaphor for Leila's experiences and inner world, highlighting the complexities of her journey and the essence of her character. The flow of Leila's memories in her final moments parallels the fluidity of the water. Her memories cascade in the form of a stream that connects various phases of her life. Similarly, water is associated with the flow of life. She wanted to flow in the water after her death, thus she was thrown over a bridge and returned to the water that brought renewal, redemption, and purification to her soul. The most vital symbolism that Shafak depicts in the novel, is related to Leila's relationships. Her 'water family', the people she bonds with during the most perilous years of her life. Water has an unmatched strength, it blurs boundaries, it connects different bodies, it flows effortlessly, and it can form new identities. Her blood relations had always disappointed her, but the friends that she makes based on love, empathy and understanding make sacrifices just for the proper burial of her body. The water family makes her feel alive and liberated just as her soul felt after her body reached the depths of the Bosphorous river. Apart from water, Shafak uses animal symbolism for different characters in the novel. Leila is associated with pigeons and butterflies. She wanted to be free from the confines of her father's strict parenting and the lies that her family told her. She also wanted to be free of the marginalized life she was forced to live. Pigeons were caged in her home in Van, but when she was plummeting towards the water, she witnessed free pigeons. These free pigeons and butterflies symbolize her freedom from a turbulent life. Besides this, she was symbolized with a blue betta fish, that was released in a stream the day she was born and with whom she was reunited the day her body was thrown in the river. It represents the complete circle of life from her confined beginning to an unrestrained ending. Auntie Binnaz in the novel is associated with a sacrificial ram. She was brought into the life of Leila's father just from childbearing. She was a poor girl, who was mentally unstable and

made to give up her daughter. After that, she suffered from multiple miscarriages and the death of a son, which deteriorated her health completely. She was treated as an illiterate and ignorant woman. All her life is marked by the sacrifices she made for her family. Leila's uncle is associated with mosquitos; both come at night, one to suck the blood of the prey and the other to rape Leila when everyone is sleeping. He was the first person to malign Leila and after that, her life tumbled down instead of becoming better. Jameelah and other prostitutes in the novel are symbolized as horses. Horses needed breaking in to be ridden. Sex workers are threatened, abused, beaten, and imprisoned to break their spirits so that they are ready to be used by the clients without running away. Humeyra is linked to the injured cat that she and Leila save. The cat had to undergo three operations to be saved and had cracked claws and missing teeth. She resembled Humeyra, who was brutally abused by her husband and in-laws and escaped them. She held to life with all her might like the cat and lived on. Nalan is symbolized by a turtle by Shafak. She lived with other trans-women and a pair of turtles in a basement flat. Being a transgender in a society that is overly stigmatized, she has limited mobility like the turtles. However, the turtles at her place were great swimmers. Water provides them strength, just like the water family of Nalan provides her with the will to overcome any trial of life.

In *Gangubai Kathiawadi*, the symbolism of colour is relevant. It encapsulates the complexity of Gangubai's character and journey. The different shades of the white sari, along with hues of different colours represent her purity, strength, mourning, empowerment, transformation, and cultural significance. Through this symbolism, the film portrays Gangubai's resilience and authority, making the white sari an iconic element of her identity and legacy. Initially, the white sari presented to her by other girls in her brothel was a sign of respect and their trust in her. She was made the brothel owner in her youth because of the strength of her character and the sacrifices that she made for the women of Kamathipura. She wears pure white saris that she associates with clouds, moon, smoke, rose, paper, snow, and salt but settles on a swan. The swan white sari depicts her need for flight from her life in the Kamathipura. But she cannot do so, because the lives of many women depend on her. Gangu's white sari also represents the purity of her character and her intentions. The words 'purity, and respect' are unheard of in the red-light districts. However, Gangu shatters this notion by wearing a colour that is associated with chastity. As Gangu's

character evolves, so do the shades of her sari. When she becomes affectionate with the tailor Afshan, there appears a tint of pink hue in her white sari. The pink colour is associated with romance and sexuality. Similarly, when she goes to set the marriage of a girl from her brothel with Afshan, the border of her white sari has a shade of yellow mustard. Yellow is an unstable colour that represents joy yet loyalty. Gangu sacrifices her love for Afshan due to her loyalty to the women of Kamathipura. Similarly, she wears a white sari with a brass colour border, during her speech in Azad Maidan. It symbolizes stability and success. She went there to ask for the rights of the women of Kamathipura, her speech turned their lives for the better. Gangu wears a white sari with a blue border when she goes to admit the little girls of Kamathipura to school. Blue represents wisdom, calmness, and melancholy. Her conversation with the headmaster is the epitome of a wise woman who calmly points out, the basic human charter that allows every child the right to education. When Gangu visits Rahim Lala during the Eid celebration, she wears a sari with a golden border and embroidery, she also wears gold jewellery. The gold colour in literature represents wealth and material gain. Rahim Lala gifts Gangu a new car and makes her a true Mafia Queen by making her a partner in his alcohol business running in Kamathipura. When Gangu becomes the president of Kamathipura, she has a slight red tint to her white sari. At the end of the movie, after meeting with the Prime Minister and advocating for the right of shelter for women, she wears a clear white sari with a deep red border. Red depicts her journey of passion, intensity and strength. Even with the different tints of colours the white of Gangu's sari remains the same. She does not lose the respect she was bestowed with by the women of Kamathipura and fights for them all her life with the purity of her character. The white became her trademark, and a new shade 'Gangu's White'; which embodies her strength of character and her resilience to overcome trials of life.

Adding this symbolism to a study based on stigmatization, attachment theory, and heterotopia deepens the exploration of how marginalized individuals and spaces are shaped by and resist societal constructs. Symbols like Heera Mandi's paradoxical association with diamonds, mirrors reflecting self-perception, and water signifying liberation underscore the complex interplay of identity, trauma, and resilience. They reveal how stigmatized individuals internalize, navigate, or defy societal labels through attachment and social bonds, which are vital to their survival and sense of

self. Similarly, the color symbolism in *Gangubai Kathiawadi* illustrates how individuals reclaim dignity and empowerment in spaces marked by stigma, challenging boundaries of heterotopia and reshaping narratives of purity and respect. These layered symbols offer a profound lens to understand how attachment dynamics manifest in spaces of exclusion and provide a counter-narrative to stigmatization by highlighting resilience, autonomy, and transformation.

DISCUSSION AND INSIGHTS

Triangulation Between Subversive Heterotopia, Attachment Bonds, and Stigmatization

The interconnected variables of subversive heterotopia, attachment bonds, and stigmatization, as explored in the selected texts *Dancing Girls of Lahore*, *10 Minutes and 38 Seconds in This Strange World*, and *Gangubai Kathiawadi*, provide a complex framework for analyzing human relationships in marginalized spaces. It reveals an intricate interplay that shapes individual identities, social dynamics, and survival strategies within marginalized spaces. Triangulating these variables offers a multidimensional understanding of how individuals navigate stigmatized environments while forming bonds that provide survival mechanisms and emotional support. Thus, drawing from the analysis in the thesis, the following discussion explores these intersections and the insights any researcher might derive from this interplay.

Subversive Heterotopia and Attachment Bonds

Subversive heterotopias, as conceptualized by Foucault, are spaces that disrupt societal norms and host marginalized individuals, such as red-light districts in Lahore, Mumbai, and Istanbul. These spaces, while often stigmatized, act as sites of alternative belonging, facilitating the creation of attachment bonds among their inhabitants. The memoir *Dancing Girls of Lahore*, the novel *10 Minutes and 38 Seconds in This Strange World*, and the film *Gangubai Kathiawadi* illustrate how individuals, pushed to societal peripheries, form meaningful relationships within these heterotopic spaces. Attachment bonds in these environments are shaped by both necessity and resilience. Maha's children in *Dancing Girls of Lahore* form emotional connections with Louise Brown, compensating for their lack of stable familial attachments. Similarly, Leila's "water family" in Shafak's novel exemplifies how stigmatized individuals coalesce into supportive networks that transcend blood ties. These bonds serve as lifelines, mitigating the psychological and social toll of exclusion. In *Gangubai Kathiawadi*, Gangubai emerges as a matriarch who fosters collective resilience among sex workers, demonstrating the importance of solidarity in subversive spaces.

Stigmatization and Subversive Spaces

Stigmatization operates as a pervasive force, reinforcing the boundaries of heterotopias and shaping the experiences of those within. Goffman's theory highlights how stigma, whether individual, interpersonal, or structural, isolates marginalized individuals. This isolation is evident in the lives of Maha, Leila, and Gangubai, who navigate societal rejection while creating counter-narratives of strength and belonging. Stigmatized individuals in heterotopias experience a dual dynamic, they are othered by mainstream society but find acceptance and understanding within their marginalized communities. This duality is reflected in Maha's struggle to maintain dignity in Heera Mandi, Leila's resistance against societal disdain in Istanbul, and Gangubai's advocacy for sex workers in Kamathipura. These narratives underscore how stigmatization, while a source of suffering, also fosters resilience and prompts the creation of alternative social networks.

Attachment Bonds and Stigmatization

The interplay between attachment bonds and stigmatization reveals the adaptive strategies marginalized individuals employ to counteract exclusion. Attachment theory emphasizes the role of secure bonds in fostering psychological well-being. However, in stigmatized spaces, these bonds often develop under duress, influenced by shared struggles and mutual dependency. In *Dancing Girls of Lahore*, the bonds between Louise and Maha's children illustrate how external figures can provide stability in tumultuous environments. In *10 Minutes and 38 Seconds in This Strange World*, Leila's chosen family challenges traditional notions of kinship, highlighting the transformative power of attachment in the face of stigma. Similarly, Gangubai's relationships with the women of Kamathipura demonstrate how attachment bonds can galvanize collective resistance against structural discrimination.

Triangulating these variables illuminates the following **insights**:

Co-Dependence as Resistance: Marginalized Individuals Create "Water Bonds" Stronger Than "Blood Bonds"

In the narratives explored, such as *10 Minutes and 38 Seconds in This Strange World*, the concept of "water bonds" challenges traditional familial relationships, offering a radical form of co-dependence. Leila's "water family" embodies the resistance against societal exclusion, where bonds forged by necessity and mutual respect surpass the conventional notion of blood ties. These bonds are a direct response to the stigma and isolation that sex workers, transgenders, and other marginalized individuals face. Leila, a sex worker in Istanbul, forms deep, enduring connections with other outcasts, creating a surrogate family that offers emotional support, protection, and a sense of belonging. Similarly, Maha in *Dancing Girls of Lahore* forms a bond with Louise Brown based on mutual respect and love for each other even though both come from strikingly different backgrounds, have diverse personalities and are poles apart. Subsequently, Gangu in *Gangubai Kathiawadi* forms a bond with the women of Kamathipura and they offer her the support she needed to survive in the harsh environment of the place.

The "water family" exemplifies how marginalized individuals, often shunned by their biological families and society, create alternative familial structures. These bonds become essential to survival, not just physically but emotionally. In Leila's case, her attachment to her water family is crucial in her final moments when she reflects on the significance of these chosen relationships. Likewise, bonds formed by Maha, Louise, and Gangu are forged in adversity, yet become the ultimate act of resistance against the stigmatization of sex workers. They reject the normative family structures dictated by mainstream society and instead embrace a kinship built on shared experiences, mutual care, and the need to survive in an oppressive environment. By prioritizing emotional intimacy over societal norms, these water bonds redefine the concept of family, offering marginalized individuals a form of agency and support that transcends exclusion.

Resilience Through Space and Bonding: Heterotopias as Sanctuaries for Empowerment

The concept of heterotopia, as discussed through the experiences of the characters in *Gangubai Kathiawadi*, serves as both a physical and emotional sanctuary for stigmatized individuals. Heterotopias, spaces that exist outside of the mainstream and challenge societal norms, provide marginalized people with a refuge

where they can reclaim agency, build new identities, and form empowering relationships. In *Gangubai Kathiawadi*, Kamathipura, Mumbai's infamous red-light district, becomes a heterotopia where women, despite being marginalized by mainstream society, can assert their power and autonomy. Gangubai, who rises from being a victim of trafficking to a leader in Kamathipura, exemplifies how heterotopias can transform individuals into agents of change. Her leadership fosters solidarity among the women in the district, enabling them to confront both personal and collective struggles. The heterotopic space of Kamathipura becomes a site for collective empowerment, where women come together to resist the violence and exploitation they face. By asserting control over their environment, Gangubai and the other women in the district challenge the stigma associated with their profession and reclaim their dignity. This form of empowerment is not only about survival but about thriving in the face of adversity, with the bonds they form acting as a catalyst for their resistance.

Stigma as Identity Formation: The Role of Stigmatization in Shaping Self-Perception

Stigmatization is not just an external force but a process that becomes internalized, deeply affecting the way individuals perceive themselves and their relationships with others. In the case of Maha from *Dancing Girls of Lahore*, stigma plays a critical role in shaping both her personal identity and her interactions with others in the red-light district. Maha's life in Heera Mandi, a place steeped in societal shame and marginalization, is shaped by the constant exposure to stigma. The stigma attached to her profession as a sex worker, compounded by her status as a mother, forces Maha to navigate a complex terrain of shame, survival, and social rejection. Despite this, Maha's identity is not solely defined by her stigma. Rather, she forms meaningful connections with others, including Louise Brown, who becomes a surrogate attachment figure for her children. The stigma that she faces does not diminish her ability to form deep emotional bonds; rather, it strengthens her resolve to protect her family and create a sense of belonging in a world that has rejected her. This internalized stigma also highlights the vulnerability of marginalized individuals, particularly when they are continuously exposed to societal rejection. Through Maha's story, the researcher sees how stigma can serve as a defining factor in the lives of

individuals, yet also how it can fuel resilience when confronted within a community of similarly marginalized people.

Intersectionality of Oppression: Layers of Marginalization and the Need for Adaptive Attachment

The narratives in *Gangubai Kathiawadi*, *Dancing Girls of Lahore*, and *10 Minutes and 38 Seconds in This Strange World* emphasize how gender, class, and occupational stigma compound the experiences of oppression for marginalized women. These layers of marginalization are integral to understanding the unique attachment behaviors that emerge in subversive spaces. In all three texts, women occupy roles in stigmatized professions; sex work, dancing, and other marginalized forms of labor, which place them at the intersections of multiple forms of discrimination. The intersectionality of gender, class, and occupation necessitates adaptive attachment behaviors. Women in these spaces are not only coping with the external stigma imposed by society but also navigating the social and emotional complexities that come with being a part of a stigmatized group. For instance, the women in Kamathipura, under Gangubai's leadership, redefine their attachments not only to each other but also to their place in society. The experience of being marginalized because of gender and profession creates a collective consciousness that fosters interdependence, where solidarity becomes a survival mechanism. In *Dancing Girls of Lahore*, the women in Heera Mandi similarly develop adaptive attachment strategies to cope with the compounded effects of poverty, gender, and the dehumanization of their profession. These adaptive behaviors are key to understanding how individuals form relationships that not only provide emotional and physical support but also enable them to challenge the broader societal structures that attempt to marginalize them.

Resilience Through Relationships: Mechanisms for Coping with Stigmatization

In subversive heterotopias, attachment bonds emerge as critical mechanisms for coping with the psychological impacts of stigmatization. These bonds provide individuals with emotional support, stability, and a sense of belonging that are crucial for navigating the challenges of living in stigmatized spaces. The resilience demonstrated by the characters in the studied texts highlights how relationships can

function as protective factors, helping individuals confront societal rejection. For Leila in *10 Minutes and 38 Seconds in This Strange World*, the emotional bonds she forms with her water family serve as a counterbalance to the stigma she experiences as a sex worker. Similarly, in *Dancing Girls of Lahore*, Louise's attachment to Maha and her children provides them with a sense of stability and comfort in the face of their precarious circumstances. These relationships offer more than just survival; they allow the characters to thrive emotionally, challenging the idea that stigmatized individuals are doomed to despair. The resilience fostered through these relationships shows how attachment bonds act as tools for emotional survival, helping individuals transcend the psychological toll of stigmatization.

Reclaiming Identity: The Role of Heterotopias in Identity Reconstruction

Heterotopias provide marginalized individuals with the opportunity to reconstruct their identities outside of the stigmatizing forces of mainstream society. In the case of Gangubai, Kamathipura becomes a site not just for survival but for reclaiming her identity and her sense of agency. Despite being sold into prostitution at a young age, Gangubai's rise to power and her role as a matriarch allow her to redefine what it means to be a woman in a stigmatized profession. She transforms Kamathipura from a space of victimization into one of empowerment, where women can reclaim their identities as strong, independent, and respected individuals. This process of reclaiming identity is also evident in *Dancing Girls of Lahore*, where the women in Heera Mandi resist being defined solely by their roles as sex workers. Through their relationships with each other and with figures like Louise, they find ways to reclaim their dignity and humanity, challenging the reductive labels imposed upon them by society. The heterotopic spaces in these narratives provide crucial opportunities for individuals to redefine their identities, moving beyond the confines of stigma and societal expectations.

Social Critique and Solidarity: Celebrating Collective Resistance

The narratives explored in this study do more than just highlight individual stories of survival; they offer a collective critique of the societal structures that perpetuate stigma and marginalization. Through solidarity, the characters resist these structures, forging strong, supportive communities that challenge the status quo. The

characters' relationships within heterotopic spaces, whether it's Leila's water family or Gangubai's leadership in Kamathipura, underscore the importance of community in resisting social exclusion. By focusing on the solidarity within these subversive spaces, the texts critique the systems of oppression that force individuals into these marginalized roles. They also celebrate the strength that emerges when individuals come together to support each other, showing how solidarity can be a powerful tool for resistance against stigmatization. This collective resistance is not just about survival but about reclaiming dignity, voice, and agency within a society that seeks to silence marginalized individuals.

The triangulation of subversive heterotopia, attachment bonds, and stigmatization highlights the complexities of survival and identity in marginalized spaces. It underscores the complexity of human relationships in marginalized contexts. These spaces, while stigmatized, reveal the capacity for resilience, empathy, and resistance against systemic exclusion. The selected texts collectively argue that while stigma alienates, it also compels the creation of resilient communities bound by shared experiences and mutual support. These findings offer a nuanced understanding of human relationships in stigmatized environments, enriching the discourse on societal inclusion and psychological resilience. By examining these intersections, the study not only deepens the understanding of marginalized experiences but also contributes to a broader discourse on social justice and inclusion.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The textual analysis of the study depicts the complex relationship between individuals and their environments, particularly within subversive heterotopias such as red-light districts and brothels. Heterotopias challenge established norms and provide alternative forms of social organization. These spaces can encompass physical, conceptual, or imaginary locations that serve as sites of difference, deviation, and resistance. By confining activities to specific locales, these districts provide a space where alternative forms of social interaction, intimacy, and sexual expression can thrive without the usual moral and legal constraints. Through an examination of stigma texts; Dancing Girls of Lahore, 10 Minutes and 38 Seconds in This Strange World, and Gangubai Kathiawadi, we have seen how societal stigma can perpetuate violence, discrimination, and marginalization against individuals who are perceived as 'other'. The categories and forms of stigma are interconnected and mutually reinforcing, contributing to the perpetuation of social inequalities and the marginalization of stigmatized individuals and communities. The attachment theory provides a framework for understanding the complex relationships between individuals who are marginalized highlighting the importance of belonging, connection, and survival.

The study answers the first research question, 'What kind of 'attachment bonds' are formed between individuals who occupy 'subversive spaces' in the selected texts?' in chapter 5 of the study. The chapter categorizes variety of attachment bonds formed between likely and unlikely pairs in an environment that does not support durable or long-lasting relationships. Attachments formed within heterotopias or subversive spaces are integral for survival, offering individuals vital support, a sense of belonging, and resilience against societal pressures and oppression. Attachment behaviour encompasses actions that lead individuals to seek or maintain proximity to specific individuals. Different attachment styles, such as secure, anxious-preoccupied, dismissive-avoidant, and fearful-avoidant, can impact relationships. These attachment styles are influenced by early childhood experiences with caregivers and can impact adult relationships. These attachments create supportive networks

where individuals with shared values or experiences come together, providing emotional, practical, and social support.

The research answers the second question in chapter 4, 'How do different forms of stigma interact and intersect to create unique experiences of exclusion and marginalization for sex-workers in the texts under study?' The chapter traces categories and forms of stigmatization from an individual to society level. These tiers highlight the depth of the malice of stigma and its infiltration in the lives of individuals that hinders them to live their life peacefully in any place whatsoever. The study advocates for the abolition of prostitution and the recognition of sex workers as victims of societal norms rather than outcasts. By acknowledging the complexity of human relationships and the intersections of individual, interpersonal, and structural stigma, we can work towards creating a more inclusive and equitable society that values the dignity and humanity of all individuals. Through self-awareness, support, and therapeutic intervention, individuals can work towards forming healthier and more satisfying relationships. Attachment styles can influence our ability to form and maintain connections with others, highlighting the importance of understanding and addressing our attachment patterns for personal growth and improved relationships. Ultimately, these discussions call for a more inclusive and equitable society, one that acknowledges the challenges faced by stigmatized individuals and promotes empathetic understanding rather than marginalization. By understanding and addressing these issues, we can strive towards a more compassionate and supportive environment for all.

The third question is answered in chapter 4 of the study, 'How does living in a subversive heterotopia and 'spaces of descent' affect the social and emotional well-being of individuals?' By explaining the shunning of stigmatized individuals to the periphery of society and closing the doors of opportunities and necessities on them, the chapter amalgamates the subversive space of red-light districts with Foucault's concept of heterotopia. This study suggests that attachment to place can be a double-edged sword, providing a sense of security and community but also trapping individuals in cycles of stigma and marginalization. Living in a subversive heterotopia and 'spaces of descent' affects the social and emotional well-being of individuals because these environments, while providing a refuge from mainstream societal norms, also perpetuate isolation and stigma. However, within these marginalized

spaces, individuals also form strong bonds of mutual support and resilience, which are crucial for emotional survival. These relationships can offer a sense of belonging and community, yet the constant pressure from societal rejection and legal challenges can undermine these supportive networks, creating a complex interplay of support and stress that profoundly impacts their well-being. One of the reasons individuals develop emotional bonds with places is because of people living there. Attachment to a place typically arises from a fundamental need for belonging. Spiritual attachment involves a profound connection beyond the physical realm, often evoking feelings of reverence, awe, or transcendence. Attachment to place intersects with belonging, spiritual connection, and survival in complex ways, reflecting the multifaceted nature of human relationships with their environments. External factors such as societal pressures or legal challenges can also influence the stability and sustainability of these spaces.

Recommendations

The texts under study, *Dancing Girls of Lahore, 10 Minutes and 38 Seconds in This Strange World,* and *Gangubai Kathiawadi*, are contemporary and the social stigma addressed by them is universal. Thus, in different other domains and fields room for more research and exploration is vast by employing the theories in the conceptual framework and the texts in the study. In the domain of Psychology, Sociology, Gender-studies, and Anthropology research can be done to study social and attachment disorders, such as Asperger's Syndrome, Reactive Attachment Disorder (RAD), and Disinhibited Social Engagement Disorder. Different forms of treatment can be explored on how to treat different kinds of attachment disorders, for instance, Attachment-Based Family Therapy (ABFT) and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. The study of the application of attachment theory in other walks of life can be discerned during adoption and fostering, attachment therapies can be employed to understand the personality of children from diverse or harsh backgrounds and provide them with foster inclusive social environment. Addressing stigma and the challenges it posits is significant as well to promote empathy and advocate for the damage done to marginalized individuals in subversive spaces.

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