

Declaration

I hereby declare that this PhD thesis, titled “A Comparative Study of the Representation of City in the Gujarati Ghazals on Surat and Indian English Poems on Mumbai,” is my original work, carried out solely as a requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in English. I was guided and supervised in this research by Prof. Madhurita Choudhary from the Department of English, Faculty of Arts, at The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara. The interpretations and conclusions presented in this thesis are based on my reading and understanding of the materials referred to and have not been previously published in the form of books or articles. All the books, journals, and web sources utilised for this research have been duly cited within the body of the thesis. I have not received any degree or diploma from any university for the thesis that I am now submitting to The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara.

Kashyap Nitin Gajjar

Certificate

This is to certify that this thesis entitled “A Comparative Study of the Representation of City in the Gujarati Ghazals on Surat and Indian English Poems on Mumbai,” is an original research work by Kashyap Nitin Gajjar, conducted under my supervision and guidance. The thesis has been submitted to The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara, for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in English. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the work presented in this thesis has not been previously submitted to this or any other university or examining body for the award of any degree or diploma.

Place:

Date:

Prof. Madhurita Choudhary

Research Guide

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Abstract

Cities are more than mere geographical regions; they represent distinct cultures formed by their history, politics, economy, and society, which in turn influence their inhabitants. As Robert Park aptly stated, a city is more than just a location; it is a state of mind shaped by the experiences. This state of mind has changed dramatically with the rise of modern cities following industrialization. Modernity had a dramatic impact on urban populations, transforming social norms and individual experiences. Initially, city dwellers enthusiastically embraced these changes, captivated by the promise of new prospects. However, many people felt disappointment when their expectations were not satisfied. Along with possibilities, modern cities introduced challenges associated in modern living, such as alienation, detachment, moral crises, issues with identity, and illicit activities.

In response to the implications of modernity, modernism evolved and influenced different art genres, including literature. The spirit of modernism urges poets to develop new techniques and genres to express a wide range of emotions arising from modern experiences that proved unsuitable for conventional forms. Undoubtedly, the city was the epicentre of modernity and modernism, and it became a popular theme among poets. They convey the despair of city life in everyday circumstances.

Modernism takes different forms in India, reflecting the diversity of the country's regional literatures. Indian modernism is a blend of traditional and contemporary layers, rather than a simple replication of its Western counterpart. Each Indian language has unique literary traditions and histories created by its socio-political context which has shaped modernism in a unique way. City and urban sensibility are central themes in modernist literature, reflecting the complexities and experiences of urban life in an era of rapid change and modernization. In India, the city emerged as a significant theme in poetry after independence. The rapid growth of cities and its frequently adverse implications inspired poets to explore the intricacies of urban life in their poetry.

A study of Indian English poetry and Gujarati ghazals demonstrates this distinction. Indian English poets, influenced by modernist approaches, frequently used free verse, innovative forms, and symbolism to explore urban issues, especially in the context of Bombay. Surat-based Gujarati poets, on the other hand, preserved the traditional ghazal-form but infused it with themes reflecting urban sensibilities, subverting its conventional themes.

This comparative study focuses on the historical backgrounds of Surat and Mumbai and how the history of both cities is reflected in the works of modern poets. It also delves into how modernism influenced the literary traditions of Gujarati and Indian English poetry. The study underlines the poets' perceptions of urban life and creative engagement with the genre by examining how the cultures of these cities affected poetic expression.