Chapter 1: Introduction

Connecting Concrete and Emotions: Reading Modern City Through Poetry

> *The city is text and as such can be 'read' in a variety of ways to explore the layers of meaning that have been incorporated into its physical and social structure over the decades of its existence.*
>
> - David Thorns, *The Transformation of Cities*

The city has historically been a compelling theme in literature, representing both a tangible environment and a metaphor for the intricacies of contemporary existence. Numerous works portray the urban environment not merely as a backdrop but as a dynamic organism that influences and is influenced by its residents. The city presents a complex landscape for authors and poets to examine topics of identity, alienation, community, and power through its streets, architecture, social dynamics, and psychological effects. The representation of the city in literature entails a complex interaction between its physical architecture and the internal experiences of its inhabitants. Authors have encapsulated the rhythms of urban life via novels, poetry, and stories, portraying the city as a realm of possibility and turmoil, creation, and decay.

Literary depictions of the city are not confined to one perspective but draw from various approaches. Some studies focus on the city's development, examining the tangible effects of urbanization and capitalism, including poverty, segregation, and crime, as explored by scholars like Henri Lefebvre and Edward Soja. Others, inspired by thinkers like Robert Park, Steve Pile and George Simmel, delve into the psychological and behavioural consequences of urban living, exploring how the city shapes the minds and lives of those who dwell within it. In both paths, the city emerges as a central character, its form and function adding layers of meaning to the societal issues it embodies. As such, the city in literature is a powerful lens through which writers have examined the complexities of modernity, allowing them to depict the real and imagined dimensions of urban existence.

The theme of the city in literature became more prominent after the rise of modernism. Modernism not only gave birth to new urban societies but also provided a fresh lens through which to observe and interpret these societies. To grasp the literary representation of the city, it is essential to begin by understanding modernity, modernism, and

the modern in a broad sense, as well as their interconnections. This foundational knowledge is key to unravelling the complex web of city life, modernism, and poetry. The transformation of the urban form and its relationship with modernism opened new ways for writers and poets to engage with the city, making it one of the most fascinating and enduring themes in literature.

1.1 The Concept of Modern, Modernity, and Modernism

The term 'Modernism' is often regarded as highly misleading due to its multiple definitions across various disciplines. Etymologically derived from the word 'modern,' which implies something new or contemporary, the term suggests a distinct rupture with the past or tradition. As Marshall Berman notes, to be modern is "to find ourselves in an environment that promises us adventure, power, joy, growth, transformation of ourselves and the world – and, at the same time, threatens to destroy everything we have, everything we know, everything we are" (15).

Modernism is frequently conflated with modernity, though the two concepts, while related, have fundamental distinctions. Modernity refers to the social and material transformations brought about by industrialization, whereas modernism signifies the cultural and ideological movement that revolutionized art and literature through the introduction of innovative features. As Laura Winkiel points out, modernism is a "notoriously vague and slippery" term, which, despite its varying interpretations, is primarily used to denote a historical period (typically from 1890 to 1940), a form of experimental artistic production, and a profound rethinking of all facets of life, ranging from industrialization and religion to sexuality and interior design (4-5).

The concept of 'modernity' is highly fluid, with its meaning shifting depending on the historical narrative one seeks to construct. Armstrong notes, two primary issues are typically central to its understanding. The first is the historical transformation that began in the early seventeenth century, marked by the emergence of new capitalist structures, changes in social and political relations, and the expansion of technology alongside a scientific worldview. The second is the Enlightenment's development of a discourse focused on rationalization, progress, and autonomy, coupled with the rejection of superstition, to promote the notion of the modern as distinct from inherited traditions (2).

Although the primary concern here is modernist literature, it is essential to introduce the material and intellectual culture that shaped the context in which modernism and modernist literature arose. The sweeping changes that took place during this period were collectively referred to as 'modern' or 'modernity.' Numerous scholars have offered varying definitions and explanations for these terms. For instance, Celia Marshik suggests that "Western thought has long deployed the term "modern" as a way of understanding the break between the present and the past" (3). Winkiel describes modernity as a set of conditions that enable one to be modern, encompassing social, political, economic, cultural, and philosophical dimensions (18). In essence, modernity represents a gradual but radical transformation across all cultural disciplines.

A key question to consider is the specific nature of these changes. Matei Calinescu distinguishes between two forms of modernity: technological and social, and aesthetic modernity, with the latter eventually being labelled as 'modernism' by critics (Whitworth 3). For this discussion, the focus is on modernity in its technological, social, and ideological contexts. Some critics emphasize industrial and technological innovations as central to modernity, while others associate it with the ascendancy of rationality and science, and still others with the growth of the city and the experience of modern urban life. Given the complexity of modernity, it is impossible to attribute it to a single factor, making it necessary to explore each aspect individually.

1.1.1 Historical Context

Modernity can be understood as a historical process marked by transformative events. Jeff Wallace identifies three critical reference points for this process: 1) the transition from feudalism to capitalism, particularly during the Industrial Revolution; 2) the French Revolution of 1789, which introduced new political ideologies; and 3) World War I (1914-18) (16-19). These events are not merely historical milestones but are closely intertwined with the emergence of modernism. The shift from feudalism to capitalism involved not only economic changes but also significant social transformations. The rise of a capitalist economy in the 19th and early 20th centuries accelerated the migration from rural to urban areas. Industrialization, characterized by private industry ownership and a profit-driven economy, brought profound economic and social shifts. One notable moment in the history of capitalism was the advent of "Fordism." The production of the first Model T Ford in 1913 is often regarded as a key symbol of modernism. This marked a transition from a production-

based economy to a consumer-oriented one, giving rise to a new consumer culture. Wallace associates modernism with two key elements of late capitalist culture: mass production and consumerism (98-99).

1.1.2 Industry and Technology

Industry and technology played foundational roles in the process of modernity. Industrialization, which began in the 18th century and continued into the 19th century, represented a shift from an agricultural economy to one based on factory production. The rise of machines and technology revolutionized mass production, leading to a host of new inventions. Particularly during the second Industrial Revolution, there were significant advancements in electrification, transportation, and communication. These developments, in turn, contributed to urbanization, drawing large numbers of immigrants to cities. This influx of people altered living patterns and turned urban centres into hubs of modernist transformation.

Simultaneously, science and technology underwent significant advancements during the second half of the 19th century. Telephone, aviation, and cinematography emerged as major developments in communication and transportation, while inventions such as the X-ray and microscope provided new insights into the human body. These technological advancements, coupled with a decline in Christianity, also led to significant changes in societal attitudes towards sexuality. In the modern era, sexuality became central to individual identity and behaviour. Conversations about sex, contraception, and abortion became more open, with sexual pleasure being viewed as a biological necessity from a scientific perspective (Marshik 50-54).

The transformation of urban life during modernity also spurred the development of new forms of entertainment and pleasure. Nightclubs became popular venues for the urban elite, offering dance music and other forms of entertainment. Women began to enter the public sphere through higher education and employment, playing an important role in cultural and political life. They made significant contributions as writers and artists, though they also experienced the uneven effects of modernity more acutely than their male counterparts.

Consumer culture also evolved dramatically in the early 20th century. New forms of advertising and marketing, such as newspapers, periodicals, and street posters, expanded the

market's reach. The variety of new product options available helped shape personal style and identity. As consumer culture evolved into a fully-fledged culture, stores began to market and sell not just individual products but entire ways of life (Marshik 81). Fashion became a significant marker of modernity, evolving from mere clothing to a means of expressing social status and identity. The mass production of clothing, facilitated by new machines and industries, made fashion more accessible and influential. It became a highly acclaimed symbol of modernity, with people seeking new designs and colours as a means of self-expression, "the subject could "express the self" with fashion, with putting something material on the body..." (Marshik 101).

Cinema also played a central role in reflecting and shaping modernity. It emerged from urban populations and portrayed the struggles and anxieties of modern life, including the sense of anonymity felt in crowds and metropolitan settings. Cinema, as both a reflection and expression of modernity, became a powerful platform for depicting the complexities of modern urban life (Marshik 122).

1.1.3 Science and Rationality

The advancement of technology and the growing emphasis on scientific methodologies significantly influenced human thought, shifting it toward reason and rationality. This rationalist approach undermined the dominance of the Church and religious institutions, as confidence in human knowledge and scientific progress began to replace reliance on divine authority. As a result, the existence of God came into question, and religion and spirituality were redefined in the modern era. Although the Church of England retained its status as the official religion, 19th-century England witnessed a growing accommodation of other faiths and secularism. In this secular age, religion became an 'option,' with unbelief emerging as the 'default option.' However, this did not mean that religion disappeared from modern society; rather, religion adapted to fit contemporary lifestyles. Secularism shifted the locus of faith from institutional religion to the individual.

Key figures of modern thought, such as Charles Darwin, contributed to this transformation. Darwin's theory of natural selection and evolution challenged the traditional view of humans as a divinely ordained species. Similarly, Friedrich Nietzsche's "Madman" metaphorically declared that humanity had "murdered" God, creating a void in the fabric of belief. As Wallace suggests, "modernism can then emerge to fill the void with various claims to a redemptive power" (119). Sigmund Freud further expanded the boundaries of human

thought with his theory of the unconscious mind, revealing the limitations of conscious reasoning. Max Weber characterized modern society as one defined by rationalization and intellectualization, emphasizing the 'disenchantment of the world'—the process by which magical and religious explanations were increasingly replaced by secular and scientific understandings (Marshik 33).

1.1.4 Modernism

Modernism is an artistic and cultural movement that emerged between 1880 and 1939, characterized by a radical break from traditional forms and styles. This movement reflects a dynamic tension between contradictions: it simultaneously rejects and reveres the past, embraces, and fears technology, and celebrates both impersonal and subjective expressions. Spanning literature, visual arts, music, film, design, and architecture, Modernism is fundamentally an exploration of new ways to engage with the complexities of modern life (Armstrong 5, Wallace 1). Its timeline, though varying according to different critics, is typically divided into three phases by modernist scholars: the prehistory of modernism (1890-1910), the 'high' modernist period (1910-1930), and 'late' modernism (1930-1955), which gradually faded as postmodernism began to rise.

Modernism is not a singular movement, but rather a collection of movements in art and literature that experimented with new materials and ideas to capture the essence of the modern world. The earliest effects of modernism were most evident in visual arts through movements such as Impressionism, Expressionism, Cubism, and Surrealism. Modernist artists challenged objective representation, favouring multiple perspectives, and questioning the realism that had dominated art, increasingly viewing it as abstract. Wallace highlights Paul Cézanne's idea that nature should be approached using basic geometric shapes like cylinders, spheres, and cones, with a focus on depth beyond surface appearances. This notion inspired Cubism, which sought to depict the underlying structure of objects rather than their surface characteristics. Cubism's fragmented, abstract representations of objects, while maintaining a sense of realism, embody the tension between abstraction and realism (35). Key features of Cubist art include an emphasis on the two-dimensional flatness of the canvas rather than the illusion of three-dimensional space, and the use of geometrical forms to capture the subject's multiple facets. Pablo Picasso's *Girl with a Mandolin* (1910) exemplifies this style.

Impressionism and Expressionism are other significant movements in visual arts that broke with tradition to explore modern life. Impressionism approaches modernity with an objective lens, rejecting fine detail and using vibrant colours instead of dark shading to depict light and movement. Expressionism, in contrast, is more subjective, portraying the emotional and tragic aspects of human experience through bright, bold colours and thick, distorted brushstrokes. The Avant-garde also played a crucial role in the development of modernism, serving as a radical departure from conventional norms. Movements such as Futurism, Dadaism, and Surrealism are often considered part of this Avant-garde. Futurists, for instance, rejected tradition and celebrated modernity with its focus on industry, technology, and speed, embodying the modernist impulse to redefine artistic expression in an era of rapid change. In his founding manifesto of Italian Futurism, the poet F.T. Marinetti (1876-1944) recommended,

> violence and revolt in the poetry of the new, 'the racer's stride, the mortal leap, the punch and the slap', celebrating the 'new beauty' of mechanized speed as embodied in the racing car, and scandalously glorifying warfare and the destruction of museums, libraries and 'academies of every kind'. (qtd in Wallace 56)

Dadaism, which did not initially originate as a formal movement, was characterized by its rejection of logic and reason, embracing instead a nonsensical and abstract form of expression. Emerging during the early 20th century, Dadaism sought to challenge traditional artistic norms through absurdity and anti-art concepts. Over time, it evolved into Surrealism, an artistic and literary movement that focused on representing the irrationality of the subconscious mind. Surrealism sought to explore and express the unconscious by juxtaposing incongruous images and ideas, often creating dreamlike or fantastical scenes. Surrealists believed that the rational mind constrained creativity and suppressed the imaginative potential of the unconscious. Their aim was to liberate this potential by employing techniques such as automatic writing, which involved writing without conscious control, and dream analysis, to access the deeper layers of the psyche. Through these methods, Surrealist artists and writers attempted to transcend rational thought and tap into a more primal, creative source within the mind, reflecting their fascination with the mysteries of the unconscious and its influence on human behaviour and creativity.

1.2 Modernism and the City

The city is often perceived as the epicentre of modernity, embodying progress, and cultural advancement. In India, the urban environment is similarly regarded as a symbol of progress, representing a sophisticated and developed culture, what Raymond Williams refers to as the "achievement" of human society (1), in contrast to the rural, which is frequently depicted as primitive, backward, and illiterate. The city and modernity have become nearly synonymous, with the transformative forces of modernity being most acutely felt in urban areas. The urban experience is often positioned in opposition to rural life, which is viewed as less advanced and disconnected from the rapid development characteristic of modern societies. As S. Dube argues, the city serves as the primary locus where the initial manifestations of modernity occur, reinforcing its association with progress and the modern condition:

> …the notion of modernity rests on the idea of rupture – of rupturing the past from the present, myth from history, emotion from reason, ritual from rationality, East from West, tradition from modernity and cities from rural settlements. Thus cities not only play an important role in defining modernity but in confirming these ruptures. The ruptures are not simple differences or discontinuities but establish a hierarchy between these distinctions and underlying power relations. Cities as sites of progress and modernity duly confirm these distinctions and hierarchies. Thus, a city articulates and represents the modern and the Western distinct from the rural, traditional and eastern. (De and Nandi 1)

The city, as a break from the past or rural life, provided a distinct contrast between urban and village settings, strengthening the Western image of modernity as synonymous with advancement, whereas rural or traditional life was viewed as underdeveloped or not modern. However, Aparajita De and Rajib Nandi argue for the need to move beyond Western-centric models of urban modernity, advocating instead for an approach that allows for the coexistence of local traditions and cultures with the progress and development of Indian cities (2).

According to Malcolm Bradbury, the literature of experimental Modernism, which emerged in the late 19th century, was largely an art born of cities, particularly those polyglot urban centres that had, for various historical reasons, become hubs of intellectual and cultural exchange. These cities, while often established cultural capitals, also embodied the tensions

and conflicts of modern metropolitan life. They were sites of immense cultural friction and "cultural chaos," concentrating the forces of change that were transforming the world. As centres of migration, they drew people from diverse backgrounds, adding to the complexity of urban life.

The modern metropolis, with its distinct traits of newness and transformation, posed challenges to traditional artistic expression. It was an environment that defied portrayal through conventional forms, resulting in what Bradbury calls as a "crisis of representation" and a necessity for new artistic sensibilities and aesthetic forms capable of portraying the intricacies of modern urban life (Rechniewski 7).

1.3 Literary Modernism

In *Modernism: The Basics* (2017), Laura Winkiel addresses the crisis faced by authors due to the historical upheavals previously discussed. He highlights a crisis in art's capacity to accurately represent reality, which affected both the content and the methods of artistic expression (15). According to Winkiel, these historical changes significantly transformed the 'content' of art:

> This new content concerns aspects of everyday life: the overlooked minutiae of the domestic sphere; the newly visible world of advertising (billboards, handbills, storefront windows and street scenes); intimate physical realities (hygiene, sexuality, defecation and other bodily by-products); uncensored thoughts (including mental illness and socially prohibited actions); new kinds of affect (boredom, anxiety, numbness, disassociation); newly visible subjects (manual laborers, bar maids, prostitutes, criminals, drunkards and revolutionaries) and illicit desires (details of adultery, same-sex relations and promiscuity). (50)

One factor contributing to the crisis in art during the modernist era was the concept of 'autonomy,' which underscores how modernist artists sought to distance themselves from commercial influences. These artists aimed to practice freely, unconstrained by market demands for commercially viable and entertaining content. As Winkiel notes, "Modernism, as a critical and artistic engagement with modernity, begins in the mid-nineteenth century to take form in Baudelaire's refusal to accept the commercialization of art" (41). Artists created their own rules to defy conventional market expectations, leading to the emergence of new

artistic movements that deviated from traditional paths and explored innovative approaches in literature.

This legacy of modernism in painting and architecture extended to literature as well. Literary modernism, influenced by the radical movements in the visual arts, also marked a significant departure from established forms and subjects, experimenting with novel techniques to address contemporary themes. Modernist scholars, recognizing the inadequacy of traditional forms to capture the evolving ideas and experiences of their time, adopted groundbreaking subjects and methods to reflect the cultural, intellectual, and infrastructural upheavals of the modern era. Numerous literary movements, emerging in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, produced transformative ideas and works that constitute the core of modernist literature. Ezra Pound's enduring dictum, "make it new," epitomized the modernist commitment to renovation rather than mere innovation, emphasizing the continuous renewal of artistic expression. Bradshaw and Dettmar notes:

> If the Romantics had sometimes seemed (especially to a neo-Classicist like Eliot) to have fetishized originality, innovation, then modernism would once again pay attention to the important role to be played by renovation. (2)

The demand for a 'new' perspective in literature emerged from contemporary conditions and the knowledge produced under these conditions, leading to the exploration of novel themes. Writers sought innovative ways to represent the human psyche and body, particularly through themes of sex and sexuality, significantly influenced by Freudian concepts of 'pleasure-seeking behaviour' as a fundamental aspect of human nature. The modernist approach challenged Victorian morality and repressive attitudes towards sex, emphasizing the hidden and personal facets of human psychology and individuality. Sexuality and homosexuality were depicted directly or indirectly in literary works, often using metaphors and symbols to confront and question social norms. For example, James Joyce's *Ulysses* includes provocative language surrounding bodily functions and sexual acts, which led to its censorship and banning. Other notable works addressing similar themes include D.H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*. Lawrence defended the use of obscene language as essential to representing the human mind accurately (Bradshaw and Dettmar 149).

The impact of the World Wars deeply influenced modernist literature, shaping themes of violence, destruction, mortality, and the loss of faith. Many writers and poets, having experienced the horrors of war firsthand, reflected these experiences in their work. Rupert Brooke's *The Soldier* is an example of a war sonnet that symbolizes themes of devotion and sacrifice, while poets such as Siegfried Sassoon, David Jones, and Wilfred Owen addressed the trauma of World War I. Both fictional and autobiographical novels explored the profound effects of war trauma.

By the late nineteenth century, modernist writers had moved away from Kantian transcendental ideals, shifting their focus to the "subjective or particular world of meaning and appearances" (Winkiel 43). This transition emphasized the exploration of 'how' language conveys meaning rather than 'what' it refers to. Modernists began to experiment with both form and content to better reflect modern life, leading to the development of new poetic traditions.

Imagism, the first significant movement in early 20th-century poetry, focused on vivid and precise imagery. The movement was initiated by T.E. Hulme's poems, "Autumn" and "A City Sunset" (1909). It was subsequently championed by poets such as Hilda Doolittle, Ezra Pound, F.S. Flint, D.H. Lawrence, Richard Aldington, and William Carlos Williams. Central to the Imagist movement are three key precepts:

1. Direct treatment of the 'thing', whether subjective or objective.
2. To use absolutely no word that did not contribute to the presentation.
3. As regarding rhythm: to compose in the sequence of the musical phrase, not in sequence of a metronome. (qtd in Gillies and Mahood 68)

Ezra Pound defines an 'Image' as "that which presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time" (Winkiel 48). Imagist poets concentrated on creating vivid representations of objects derived from nature or urban settings. Their aim was to evoke clear and precise imagery through carefully chosen language. A notable example of Imagist poetry is Pound's "In a Station of the Metro," which contrasts the natural and urban worlds with its lines: "The apparition of these faces in the crowd; / Petals on a wet, black bough." This two-line poem, structured in the form of a Haiku, uses precise language and metaphor to create a powerful image. Other examples of Imagist poetry include Hilda Doolittle's "Oread" and William Carlos Williams' "The Red Wheelbarrow."

In 1914, Pound shifted his focus to Vorticism, a short-lived movement that emerged in London. Co-founded with Wyndham Lewis, a key figure in Vorticism, the movement was articulated through the magazine *Blast*. Influenced by Cubism and Futurism, Vorticism aimed to capture the dynamic energy of modern life through fragmented forms. Alan Munton describes Vorticist rhetoric as "a late improvisation, an exclamatory prose-poetry about revolutionary art in a machine age, projecting a state of mind never before imagined" (Bradshaw and Dettmar 177).

Dadaism eventually evolved into Surrealism, a literary movement that emerged following the First World War. Surrealism delves into the unconscious mind, exploring the illogical and dream-like aspects of human experience. André Breton's *Surrealist Manifesto,* published in 1924, outlines the principles of this movement. Surrealist writers employed techniques such as automatic writing, where thoughts flow without conscious control, and explored states of sleep and trance to reveal unconscious ideas. The blending of contradictory images, such as day-night and life-death, characterizes Surrealist works. André Breton's *Nadja* (1928) exemplifies Surrealism with its mix of autobiographical elements and fantasy, blurring the boundary between reality and imagination. Similarly, Paul Éluard's poem "Absence" creates a dream-like ambience as the poet fantasizes about a missing person:

Fields pattern of emerald
Bright living surviving
The harvest of the sky over our earth
Feeds my voice I dream and weep
I laugh and dream among the flames
Among the clusters of the sun

And over my body your body spreads
The sheet of its bright mirror. (61)

Expressionism, a German literary movement prominent in the early 20th century, sought to depart from realistic representation by embracing subjective depictions of modern experiences through distorted and exaggerated language. According to Richard Murphy, the city became a symbol of the overwhelming and contradictory aspects of everyday life, leading to what he terms "cognitive overload" due to the excessive and fragmented information encountered. This cognitive saturation fostered a fragmented perception of

reality, manifesting in themes of anxiety, disorientation, alienation, and the "dissociation of the self" (Bradshaw and Dettmar 198-200).

The innovation in content was mirrored by experimentation with form, prompting authors to adopt various experimental techniques and stylistic approaches to capture contemporary sensibilities. One notable technique is stream of consciousness, which presents an unfiltered flow of a character's thoughts, often resulting in a fragmented and non-linear narrative. This method provides readers with direct insight into the character's inner world, revealing their conflicts and desires in real time. This technique is exemplified in modernist works such as James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922) and Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway* (1925). For example, Virginia Woolf's novel *To the Lighthouse* (1927) shows the unbroken flow of thoughts that occurs in the mind of Mrs Ramsay, as she reflects on the fleeting nature of life and the relationships around her during a dinner scene:

> What is the meaning of life? That was all—a simple question; one that tended to close in on one with years, the great revelation had never come. The great revelation perhaps never did come. Instead, there were little daily miracles, illuminations, matches struck unexpectedly in the dark; here was one. (Woolf 249)

Modernists also employed a technique known as intertextuality, which involves referencing other texts or myths to enrich their work. This approach enabled them to infuse their narratives with additional layers of meaning and complexity by drawing upon existing literary and cultural sources. Furthermore, modernist writers frequently utilized nonlinear narrative structures, such as flashbacks and flash-forwards, to build suspense and disrupt conventional storytelling. These techniques not only deepened the narrative but also challenged established notions of authorship and originality, reflecting the modernist preoccupation with creating innovative and multifaceted literary forms.

1.4 Modernism in India

In her essay "Modernism in India" (2012), Supriya Chaudhari elucidates the distinctions among modernity, modernization, and modernism within the Indian context. Modernity denotes the substantial transformations in societal, cultural, and political spheres, which, in India, began with the assimilation of European Enlightenment principles from the eighteenth century onwards. This process profoundly influenced various aspects of Indian society, including governance, education, and cultural norms. On the other hand,

modernization refers to the process by which societies undergo industrialization, urbanization, and other transformative changes that align them with contemporary industrial societies.

The conceptualization of modernity and modernism in India is notably intricate. While modernism as an aesthetic movement arose in response to modernity, its application within the Indian context diverges from Western experiences due to specific socio-political conditions. It is essential to explore the intersection of modernism and modernity within Indian culture, considering the country's diverse cultural landscape. Additionally, the colonial and post-colonial frameworks introduce further dimensions to the understanding of modernism in India. As Geeta Kapoor articulates:

> Modernity is a way of relating the material and cultural worlds in a period of unprecedented change that we call the process of modernization. It is also an ontological quest with its particular forms of reflexivity, its acts of struggle. Modernity takes a precipitate historical form in the postcolonial world, while its praxis produces a cultural dynamic whereby questions of autonomy, identity and authenticity come to the fore. These are desired individually but are sought to be gained in collectivity. Even the tasks of subjectivity, so long as they are unresolved, require acts of allegorical exegesis-often via the nation. (qtd. in Coquereau 84)

Modernity in India emerged because of colonialism, which significantly disrupted traditional cultural practices and was perceived as a burden on Indian traditions. This imposition came through literature and Western values introduced by the colonial regime. The colonial administration implemented structural changes that transformed indigenous ways of seeing, being, and generating value. This shift was marked by a profound revaluation of cultural and aesthetic perspectives, fostering a move from sentimentality to rationality. The impact of colonialism also disrupted traditional economic systems and catalysed unprecedented capitalist accumulation (Zaidi 2). The ensuing tension between native and foreign elements, exacerbated by resistance and the rise of nationalist movements, highlighted the stark contrasts between these opposing forces.

Rabindranath Tagore sought to reconcile the European modernity imposed by colonial rule with India's rich cultural heritage. He envisioned a cultural renaissance that would both preserve traditional values and embrace modern advancements, striving to integrate the best

aspects of both worlds. This unique approach to modernism is particularly evident in Kolkata, the former capital of Bengal, where the convergence of local and global influences, traditional and modern elements, and colonial and Indigenous heritage creates a dynamic and complex modernist identity (Coquereau 84).

In essence, modernity signifies progress and advancement in technology and knowledge, characterized by urbanization, industrialization, capitalism, secularism, and scientific progress. However, the concept of modernity in the Indian context is multifaceted. The Eurocentric notion of modernity, which often implies a total rejection of the past, does not fully capture the diverse nature of Indian modernity. Despite being influenced by colonial forces, Indian modernity is not merely a product of Western modernization but also reflects unique local contexts. As Bhalchandra Nemade aptly puts it, "Modernity is a historical fact, but each culture has its own native modernity, a *desi* modernity" (qtd. in Raveendran 16).

Elise Coquereau defines modernism as a creative movement responding to colonial modernity, particularly in India, where it involves a reimagining of European influences to forge a unique Indian identity (86). Contrary to mere imitation of European models, modernism in this context transcends cultural mimicry and demands autonomy and originality. Tagore critiques what he perceives as Westernization, asserting that true modernism embodies "freedom of mind, not slavery of taste," and represents "independence of thought and action, not tutelage under European schoolmasters" (88). This perspective emphasizes a modernism rooted in the distinct cultural and intellectual traditions of the society, fostering an authentic and independent expression of contemporary spirit. The emergence of modernism in India thus reflects a complex interplay of international influences and indigenous efforts to define a modern identity.

Like modernity, Indian modernism is not a monolithic phenomenon but comprises multiple strands, each emerging at different times within various literary traditions. This diversification in modernism can be attributed to the varied social backgrounds affected by modernity. K. Satchidanandan, in his introduction to *Indian Poetry: Modernism and After* (1998), notes a significant shift in poetic sensibility, reflecting the socio-cultural changes of post-independence India. This shift allowed for a broader range of poetic expressions that addressed the complexities and challenges of modern existence, as traditional forms fragmented to resonate with individual experiences and societal transformations (Chitre 84). The ideological shift post-independence also contributed to this break from tradition.

Gandhian ideals, once central, became less relevant as the focus shifted from rural to urban transformation in the newly independent India. The colonial legacy, marked by loss and trauma, further complicated the cultural identity of Indian citizens.

Contemporary writers, grappling with the aftermath of colonial trauma and new social issues such as poverty and violence, sought to address these realities through their work. The challenge remains for writers to discover innovative literary forms that effectively convey the inner realities and complexities of modern human existence. This transition is evident in the decline of ornate poetic styles like Kavya and Ghazal in favour of prose that emphasizes realism (Zaidi 3). However, this shift varies by language, as exemplified by the continued popularity of Ghazal in Gujarati literature.

Modernity ushered in significant educational and social revolutions in India, driven by educated leaders who profoundly impacted life and literature in the twentieth century. A key contribution of modernist impulses to Indian literature was the development of prose, particularly the novel. The latter part of the nineteenth century witnessed Bankim Chandra's pioneering efforts in novel writing, a period that Umashankar refers to as the Indian Renaissance (Joshi 21). Simultaneously, Parsi theatre companies in Bombay began staging adaptations of Shakespeare's works, which not only inspired native writers to translate and write plays in indigenous languages such as Gujarati and Hindustani but also introduced new poetic forms like sonnets and blank verse. These innovations in themes, meters, and forms were evident across various Indian languages. By 1930, the full range of literary forms had been explored and utilized to their fullest extent at the native level, leading to a period of consolidation and transition in the post-1930 to 1935 era, shows,

> in glaring contrast to the Renaissance period, the signs of modernism, namely, the tendency to divorce itself from the so-called realism and achieve a sort of 'innerness,' a zealous quest for the appropriate form and technique and in particular its search for the right word, the genuinely poetic language. (Joshi 22)

The impact of modernism on literature reveals several distinct aspects. Initially, many first-generation pioneers of modernism in India adopted Western experimental techniques. However, other figures, such as B. S. Mardhekar of Marathi literature, who were well-versed in native traditions, chose not to emulate Western models. Instead, they incorporated references to images and metaphors from indigenous epics. As K. Satchidanandan notes,

“modernism in poetry - a genre with deeper roots in tradition - was not as complete a break with the past as was modernism in fiction, a genre with a shorter history” (viii). This observation holds true for the ghazals of Surat, where poets utilized new themes while preserving traditional forms and imagery. Thus, Indian modernism, like Western modernism, showed itself in a variety of movements, some national and others regional. These movements led to the development of new and experimental poetry, with each regional literature addressing modernity in its own way, tackling issues such as disorder, violence, and the rural-urban divide.

The trauma of colonialism necessitated a redefinition of vernacular literary traditions. While realism played a role in Indian literature, it was often inadequate in capturing the complexities of Indian society. Consequently, modernism emerged not just as a formalist approach but as an artistic response deeply connected to the Indian experience of violence and upheaval, distinguishing itself from the European avant-garde's treatment of similar themes. Prior to the advent of modernism, progressivism had replaced romanticism, shifting focus away from traditional metaphors such as the moon and stars to new subjects like mill chimneys, outcasts, and prostitutes, which provided poetic material (Joshi 23).

In Hindi literature, modernism began in 1943 with the publication of *Tar Saptak* by Ajneya, who introduced a new experimental approach known as *prayogvad*, diverging from the earlier *pragativad* (progressivism). In Marathi, modernism emerged in 1947 with B. S. Mardhekar’s *Kahi Kavita*.

1.5 Modernism in Gujarati Literature

Modernism in Gujarati literature commenced with the works of Suresh Joshi post-1960. As many critics have noted, Indian literary sensibility has historically been influenced primarily by English models. Over time, however, native authors have sought to infuse their work with indigenous perspectives, evolving through different stages and periods. Chandrakant Topiwala distinguishes between two phases of modernism in Indian literature. The first phase, initiated with English education in the 19th century, marked the beginning of a modern literary tradition in Gujarati literature, led by reformers such as Narmad and Dalpatram. The second phase, which began in the 1960s, represented a more profound shift towards modernism, characterized by figures like Suresh Joshi, Niranjan Bhagat, and

Rajendra Shah, who moved away from Gandhian ideals and embraced new literary sensibilities.

During this latter period, modern Gujarati poetry began to explore a range of themes, including pathos (profound sadness), the perceived meaninglessness of contemporary life, hermeticism (an inclination towards obscure or hidden meanings), private idiosyncrasy (individual eccentricities), and the exploration of the subconscious mind. The poetry of this era was marked by a deep engagement with personal experiences and emotions, often probing the repressed psyche and unconscious mind. A significant concept during this time was the notion of "pure literature" and "pure poetry," emphasizing artistic expression for its own sake, independent of any direct socio-political agenda (Topiwala 92).

This period was characterised by a departure from traditional forms and a penchant for experimentation. Poets like Gulam Mohammad Sheikh, Ravji Patel, and Sitanshu Yashaschandra introduced innovative approaches, incorporating logos and myths into their work. Sitanshu experimented with surrealism and adapted the *Akhyan* form of medieval Gujarati poetry to give it a modern twist. The exposure to modern transformations granted artists greater freedom, leading to successful attempts at integrating lyrical rhythms from folk songs and medieval verse forms. Notably, the Ghazal form was used with a sophisticated and knowledgeable approach. Dileep Jhaveri further highlights feature of post-60s transformation:

> The metropolis continued to exert constant influence. The metropolis respects no socio-cultural hierarchies dominating close-knit rural life. So there was no taboo on subject matter. This freedom tempted some to affect shocking postures. The boldness was boosted by comeraderie of youth. The traditions were treated as objects. This too was another characteristic of metropolis. Several traditional and functional items of everyday rural life become ornamental objects of urban furniture unit, brass lamps, empty earthen jars or bronze nut crackers on the shelves of the side board. (102-103)

Jhaveri identifies three distinct features of modern Gujarati poetry, which offer valuable insights into its development (105). Firstly, modern Gujarati poetry distinguishes itself through a straightforward representation of contemporary human conditions. Unlike earlier poets, such as Niranjan Bhagat, who often exhibited biases or dismissive attitudes, modern poets embrace the complexities of the modern world. Their depictions are marked by

a dispassionate, unbiased approach that reflects a deep understanding of the diverse and intricate realities of their time. This objective portrayal demonstrates an evolved consciousness, free from emotional excess, anger, or sorrow.

The second feature is the modern poet's creative response to contemporary issues. Rather than pursuing superficial socio-economic or political solutions, modern poets explore alternatives by incorporating mythological allusions, as seen in the work of Sitanshu, or by experimenting with language structures, as demonstrated by Labhshankar. This creative exploration diverges from the quest for immediate fixes, allowing poets to avoid the noise of ideological conflicts and commitments. Modern poetry, thus, refrains from advancing specific agendas or viewpoints, focusing instead on innovative approaches to understanding and representing reality.

The third feature involves transcending the immediate contemporary situation to offer an alternative reality. Poems that exemplify this trait, such as those by Sheikh, create spaces that go beyond mere depiction of the present, presenting an alternative vision of existence. This transcendence is viewed as the essence of true freedom within modern poetry. It enables poets to craft new realities that offer liberation from the constraints of their current environment.

Jhaveri also draws a parallel between the transformations in the city and those in poetry, noting that both underwent significant changes post-independence. As cities became more fragmented and expansive, poetry mirrored this evolution by adopting a more relaxed and expansive style. The concept of continuity in poetry gave way to fragmented structures, akin to collages. This shift reflects the influence of visual arts and films on poetry, where reality is not merely mimicked but reimagined (103). The Ghazal form, with its fragmented structure, became particularly popular during this period, offering a modernist technique that resonated with themes of urban fragmentation. Each couplet (*sher*) in a Ghazal stands independently, creating a cohesive whole from disparate fragments and allowing for the expression of diverse emotions, a key element of modernist poetry.

1.6 City: Growth and Development

> *The city is like a human being in its growth. In the beginning its functions are simple; as it passes into adolescence it acquires new needs; when it reaches maturity its life is as diversified as that of the highly developed man*.
>
> - Frederic Howe, *The Modernity and its Problems*

A city is characterized by its large population, diverse educational, health, and financial institutions, extensive infrastructure, and economy predominantly centred on non-agricultural activities. It is regarded as advanced in comparison to rural areas and is often seen as the epitome of civilization (Howe 1). The city is associated with modernity due to its industrial technologies, scientific advancements, commercial developments, and complex social structures. Raymond Williams notes that cities have historically served various roles, including state capitals, administrative centres, religious hubs, market towns, ports, military bases, and industrial centres (1).

The evolution of cities from ancient to modern times reflects significant structural and societal changes. Ancient cities were typically fortified with walls or castles for protection against invasions. Settled agriculture became more prominent than nomadic lifestyles, and cities grew around family, clan, religious, and social affiliations. In ancient times, communities were often bonded by family or religious connections (Howe 9). These cities were frequently located near water bodies for ease of trade, transportation, and agriculture, though this proximity also made them vulnerable to flooding.

By the medieval period, cities experienced a transformation in their economic functions. The 10th century marked the decline of the barter system and the rise of market and commerce, particularly following the municipal awakening in Italy and other regions, which had become well-established by the 13th century. The cities,

> hummed like bees, the streets were still narrow, irregular and unsanitary, but they were teeming with life. Encumbering them were bales, baskets, venders crying their wares, and enormous signs swinging in the wind which sometimes imperilled the safety of passers-by. It was a new civilization bursting into bloom. Splendid monuments arose, attesting the public prosperity, and churches lifted towards heaven their domes, campaniles and spires; glorious belfries which dominated and threatened

> their surroundings awaiting the approaching time when the inimitable town halls, with their brilliant ornamentations of stone, should cause them to be forgotten. The town bell was the public voice of the city as the church was the voice of the soul. The city in the thirteenth century lived, spoke and acted. It was a new factor in society. (qtd in Howe 25)

In the medieval period, cities were typically safeguarded by walls and forts, often surrounded by water-filled moats. As trade expanded, merchants began traveling to distant locations, thereby increasing the prominence of trade within these cities. At the same time, artisans gained wealth and greater autonomy. In Britain during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, cities primarily functioned as centres of trade rather than manufacturing (Elliott and McCrone 59). However, by the time of the French Revolution, cities had experienced a decline in their autonomy and were plagued by corruption. The rapid population growth exacerbated administrative challenges, leading to the breakdown of governance and a lack of essential facilities.

1.6.1 Modern City

Modern cities, characterized by their advanced infrastructure and enhanced facilities, have evolved significantly with increasing population densities. Streets are now illuminated, roads are kept clean, and sewer systems are in place. A sophisticated administrative framework has emerged to oversee various city functions, including building management, water supply, transportation, electricity, and sanitation.

Industries have become the backbone of modern cities, fundamentally transforming their social and economic structures. The promise of economic opportunity has attracted people from rural areas, including women and children, who have become integral to the urban workforce. However, this industrialization has also created a divide between the wealthy owners and the impoverished working class, with the former amassing significant wealth while the latter faces economic hardship. The rising demand for housing and essential services has further strained city administrations, leading to frustration among new urban residents who encounter higher costs for basic amenities such as water, which is often free in rural areas. Consequently, the city, which was once seen as a place of promise, can also become a symbol of disappointment and inequality.

The question arises whether these challenges are inherent to urban life or a byproduct of urbanization. Howe suggests that the root of these issues lies in "the backwardness of political thought and social science and the failure of cooperation to keep pace with the needs of the community" (7-8). This can be further explored through a detailed study of the transformation of cities from their industrial modern state to their current post-modern global status.

Rosemary Wakeman, in *A Modern History of European Cities: 1815 to the Present* (2020), acknowledges that "cities became places of social and cultural innovation because they were independent. They turned into symbols of modernization" (4). The constant transformation characteristic of modern cities has its origins in industrial and scientific advancements. Until the mid-nineteenth century, cities were relatively modest marketplaces with small populations. The latter half of the century, however, witnessed revolutionary technological and socioeconomic changes. Cities, as epicentres of these transformations, both influenced and were influenced by these changes, resulting in the evolution of the metropolis.

The industrial revolution of the nineteenth century was a particularly influential shift, shaping cities economically, physically, and socially. The rise of industries attracted large numbers of migrants from rural areas, leading to the urbanization of cities. People were drawn to these new centres of opportunity and driven away from their homelands by famine, war, and poverty. This migration often resulted from rapid industrialisation and shifting trade patterns, nationally and internationally (Thorns 4).

1.6.2 Society and Problems of Modern City

The city's industrial transformation profoundly modernized every aspect of urban life, including technology, politics, society, architecture, and individual experiences. Social transformation was marked by significant migration from rural to urban centres. This migration was driven by two primary factors: the decline of rural production due to industrial competition and the city's allure as a hub for employment and better opportunities.

The end of traditional rural industries, as they were outpaced by industrial production, prompted many to seek new livelihoods in the cities. Additionally, cities attracted individuals, both men and women, seeking work and improved living conditions. This mass migration created a substantial demand for basic necessities such as housing and employment, leading to the rapid expansion of urban areas.

The growth of industrial cities was notably swift and expansive. Thorns illustrates this with the example of cities like Manchester and Birmingham in England, which experienced dramatic increases in population and industrial activity during the nineteenth century. These cities became symbols of industrial progress, yet also faced significant challenges in accommodating the influx of people and managing the social and infrastructural demands that accompanied rapid urbanization. The transformation of these cities exemplifies the broader impact of industrialization on urban environments, shaping them into modern metropolises characterized by both their advancements and their struggles. David C. Thorns writes;

> In Britain, for example, in 1801 London was the only city of over 100,000 people and this contained 4.7 per cent of the United Kingdom's population. London, at this time, was also the largest city in Europe. By 1901, one hundred years later, there were thirty-five cities of over 100,000 containing 25.9 per cent of the population. The growth occurred most rapidly in the second half of the nineteenth century. (15)

Initially, the urban economy was predicated on trade with neighbouring suburbs, cities, towns, and international markets. However, the advent of industrialization significantly altered this economic landscape, shifting the focus from trade to production and supply. Individuals who had previously relied on agriculture for self-sufficiency began to engage in the provision of services and commodities to rural populations, thereby exchanging these goods for their sustenance and other necessities (Thorns 13).

The transition from an agrarian to an industrial city brought about a profound transformation in social hierarchies. The industrial era introduced a new social structure centred on the owner and working classes. This new hierarchy was characterized by pronounced economic disparities. The capitalist upper class, which controlled the means of production, consolidated its wealth and power through the systematic exploitation of labour. This exploitation perpetuated the upper class's privileges and deepened the socioeconomic divide between the capitalists and the working class.

Industrial expansion brought about significant challenges related to housing and pollution. The rapid growth of the population led to the emergence of a new type of residential accommodation: the tenement. Workers predominantly resided in these cramped and substandard conditions. These tenements proliferated around industrial areas characterized by narrow streets and congested spaces, which lacked adequate sunlight and

were plagued by noise and haze. The dense living conditions exacerbated problems related to water supply and sanitation, resulting in poor drainage and heightened pollution levels that contributed to the spread of infectious diseases. Friedrich Engels observed this phenomenon, noting that "with the blossoming out of manufacture . . . the more madly was the work of building carried on, without reference to the health or comfort of the inhabitants, with sole reference to the highest possible profit, on the principle that no hole is so bad but that some poor creature must take it who can pay for nothing better" (qtd. in Eric Mumford 11).

In response to these issues, the concept of 'urban planning' and 'urbanization' began to evolve, focusing on the architectural and design aspects of cities to address these challenges. Cities such as London and Paris emerged as leaders in modernization, implementing new urban planning strategies. By 1825, London had become the world's largest city, with a population of 1.3 million (Eric Mumford 6). The increased demand for housing prompted the development of new metropolitan patterns. Eric Mumford identifies several elements that began to emerge in nineteenth-century cities, including,

> peripheral garden cemeteries and public landscape parks, and residential commuter suburbs of expensive detached villas, served by regularly scheduled urban stagecoach, horsecar, and commuter railway lines. Yet only rarely did most cities include the first large metropolitan sewer systems, such as the ones designed and built in Hamburg in the 1840s and in London beginning in the late 1850s. (7)

The advancement of urban and industrial development was significantly accelerated by the invention of the steam engine. The need for raw materials, initially transported by horse-drawn vehicles, was eventually met by the advent of railways. By the 1820s, railways had established connections between cities in England and North America, and by the 1850s, they had expanded to various regions, including the Indian subcontinent (Eric Mumford 13). The rapid speed of railway travel acted as a catalyst for urban expansion. The enhanced mobility provided by trains, followed by trams and automobiles in the twentieth century, enabled people to reside beyond city limits, leading to the emergence of suburban areas. This trend was further supported by the 'Fordist' system, which emphasized mass production and mass consumption in the industrial economy of the early twentieth century. New suburban developments were characterized by designs centred around individual family households, promoting privatized consumption and an increased reliance on private motor vehicles rather

than public transport systems, thereby fostering the growth of detached private housing in suburban areas (Thorns 21).

Conversely, industrialization had detrimental effects on health due to pollution. Smoke emissions contributed to severe air pollution, while water waste contaminated water bodies, and solid waste was indiscriminately discarded. The atmosphere in industrial cities became increasingly polluted and intolerable. Wakeman provides a description of a European industrial city that illustrates these adverse conditions:

> Fires and explosions were frequent and conditions in the mills and mines were unhealthy and dangerous. The workers lived in dreary rows of back-to-back redbrick and stone cottages built on speculation. They quickly turned into squalid slums with communal ash privies, open sewers, and primitive water pumps. A haze of brown smoke and coal dust, foul air and the smell of sulphur, slag mounds, fires from the furnaces permeated the atmosphere. Outbreaks of cholera, smallpox, and typhoid swept through poor neighbourhoods with infants and children dying in frightful numbers. (33)

A notable social transformation in modern cities is the emergence of cultural diversity. The convergence of individuals from various ethnic groups, cultures, and religions has fostered a multicultural environment that is embraced and celebrated within urban settings. This cultural exchange extends beyond the city's residents to include tourists, who also act as "agents of cultural transmission" (Wakeman 55). Historical cities have become hubs of adventure and heritage, continually attracting visitors. Urban identity has evolved to encompass community, business, and social clubs, with appearance becoming a significant aspect of identity, particularly among the bourgeoisie, who distinguish themselves through art, fashion, and etiquette. Wealth has become a critical determinant of social and political influence (Wakeman 85). The proliferation of wealth led to the development of new market models and material culture, wherein luxury commodities transitioned into perceived necessities for maintaining social status.

The interplay of population growth, production and market expansion, political changes, and evolving social structures has collectively contributed to the formation of modern metropolises. Effective urban planning and administrative oversight are crucial to managing these dynamics. Urban planning, essential to the function of modern cities,

emerged in response to the destruction of historic buildings in the name of progress. New boulevards, railways, and buildings replaced older structures, reflecting a modern urban philosophy grounded in utilitarianism and the cult of progress. This approach aimed to create cities that epitomized "modern life" (Wakeman 108). Administration was established to enhance city functions, with improvements in public health, sanitation, water supply, jurisdiction, planning, and beautification.

Despite these advancements, new facilities and developments had their repercussions, both physical and social. The growth of cities exacerbated segregation between the upper and lower classes, with affluent areas becoming concentrated in the city centre while working-class and poor communities were relegated to the peripheries. These marginalized groups were often confined to inadequate living conditions, facing health and hygiene issues. However, by the late nineteenth century, reforms provided multi-storied tenements with shared toilets and water facilities for the working class.

The disparity between the prosperous and the impoverished was further accentuated by societal portrayals that depicted the upper class as noble and sophisticated, while the lower class was viewed as brutal and immoral. This social and spatial division contributed to a rise in aggression and criminal activity among the working class. The lack of interaction between classes reinforced negative stereotypes, creating a perception of the working class as savage. This atmosphere of insecurity, particularly among middle-class women, was reflected in a surge of crime stories reported in newspapers and depicted in novels. As Wakeman illustrates:

> In London, cheaply printed "penny dreadfuls" and "penny gaffs" proliferated. They were rip-roaring tales of unspeakable crimes in the shadowy margins of the city. The public could not get enough of the lurid reports about the savage underclasses. Attacks at night, bloodshed, and murders were embellished in the press in gory detail. Sexual fantasies abounded about the violent underworld of prostitution. The female prostitute came to represent all that was transgressive and corrupt about the modern city. Wicked, sensual, and unruly, the prostitute embodied all the dangers lurking in the public spaces of the city. (144)

1.6.3 Postmodern City

The concept of the postmodern city signifies a profound transformation in urban development, marked by new social, economic, and spatial dynamics. This shift represents a departure from the industrial and modernist paradigms of city planning, reflecting the complexities of a globalized, media-saturated world. The transition from industrial urban centres of the modern era to post-industrial 'corporate' cities became particularly pronounced in the late twentieth century.

Postmodern cities are characterized by the technologies and practices associated with post-industrial capitalism, with a significant emphasis on information and communication technologies. The emergence of new forms of wealth generation, as Thorns articulates,

> has led to the restructuring of the spatial structures, within the former industrial and administrative cities. Manufacturing has declined as the key engine of growth to be replaced by a new set of activities more centred on information and leisure, recreation and tourism. Consumption landscapes have become the new focus of much of western scholarship. Consumerism is seen as one of the driving forces of economic, political and social life. (69)

The postmodern city emphasizes spaces of consumption, such as shopping malls, megastores, theme parks, and entertainment zones, which have become central to urban life. This shift reflects a broader transition from production-based to consumption-based economies. These spaces are designed to offer experiences beyond mere shopping, aligning with a cultural shift towards consumerism. As Thorns notes, "it is not just about buying things; it is also about entertainment and leisure activity" (133). Shopping malls have emerged as significant social and cultural centres, integrating diverse retail options with amenities like food courts, multiplexes, and game zones, consolidating the market experience under one roof.

Globalization has profoundly impacted postmodern cities, enhanced connectivity and facilitating cultural exchanges. Cities have evolved into nodes within a global network, with the movement of capital, people, and information shaping their development. This interconnectedness fosters a cosmopolitan urban culture but also exacerbates inequalities and segregation, as wealth becomes concentrated in specific areas while others decline. Urban areas reflect cultural pluralism, becoming melting pots of diverse cultures, ethnicities, and

lifestyles. While this diversity is celebrated, it also presents challenges for social cohesion and integration.

Economic restructuring and globalization have led to increased social and spatial polarization. Affluent neighbourhoods often coexist with impoverished ones, resulting in a dual city phenomenon. Gated communities and luxury developments symbolize the prosperity of one segment, while marginalized communities face disinvestment and neglect. Thorns identifies two distinct lifestyles in postmodern cities: 1) the Yuppie (Young Urban Professional), characterized by individualistic lifestyles centred around conspicuous consumption, and 2) the Underclass, composed of welfare beneficiaries, unemployed individuals, and the homeless, facing significant economic and social challenges. The disparities between these groups have led to increased tensions, crime, and urban violence, prompting heightened use of surveillance and security measures. The most pronounced manifestation of this trend is the development of guarded and gated residential areas, where enhanced security measures provide residents with a sense of safety and exclusivity (Thorns 74).

The postmodern city has also seen a significant shift in the way of life and culture of urban dwellers. Social life now centres more around individual preferences and personal experiences, contrasting sharply with the uniformity of the mass consumption suburban landscape of the past. This change highlights a move away from a one-size-fits-all approach to living, embracing diversity and personalization in lifestyle choices. Housing styles in postmodern cities have become more varied, reflecting the unique tastes and preferences of individuals. This variety is part of a broader trend of urban gentrification, where neighbourhoods are revitalized and transformed by the influx of more affluent residents, leading to building renovations, increased property values, and changes in the neighbourhood's character (Thorns 74). The rise of information technology has also enabled more work-from-home arrangements, emphasizing technology and automation. Homes are now often equipped with surveillance cameras, and residential areas are frequently designed with boundaries and security measures.

Postmodernism signifies a shift from macro-level to micro-level analysis of urban life. Traditional analyses, prevalent towards the end of the twentieth century, focused on broad economic, political, and social structures, often overlooking the role of social agency and the subjective meanings attached to urban experiences. Poststructuralist and postmodernist

critiques have re-emphasized the importance of micro-level analysis, which explores everyday life and individual experiences within the city.

1.6.4 City in India

Pre-modern Indian cities were primarily centres of political power, with significant religious or ceremonial roles. These cities, such as Varanasi, Pataliputra, Ujjain, and Thanjavur, thrived with rich heritage, bustling marketplaces, and active trade centres. In contrast to Western cities, which evolved through diverse historical influences, the development of modern cities in India was heavily shaped by colonialism. According to Eric Mumford, many of the world's megacities, including major Indian cities, were either founded or expanded during the height of European colonialism. Notable examples include Chennai (formerly Madras, established in 1639), Mumbai (formerly Bombay, founded in 1665), and Kolkata (formerly Calcutta, founded in 1690 and serving as the capital of British India until 1912) (6). Colonizers introduced the concept of planned cities, establishing trade, administrative, and institutional frameworks wherever they settled. Significant investments were made in infrastructure in cities like Kolkata, Mumbai, Chennai, and Delhi, including residential areas, transportation systems, and communication networks.

Post-independence, these urban centres evolved into major sites for industry and political activity, becoming focal points of economic growth and attracting labour from rural areas. The development of modern technologies and facilities brought about substantial transformations in infrastructure, administration, societal structures, and economic practices.

In the twenty-first century, the focus has shifted from industrial cities to hubs of information technology. Cities such as Bengaluru and Hyderabad have emerged as prominent IT centres, generating numerous job opportunities. Modern cities are not merely residential but also entertainment centres, featuring luxurious high-rise buildings, shopping malls, and entertainment complexes. There is also a heightened emphasis on security and surveillance to ensure safety and exclusivity within these urban environments.

1.7 City in Literature

The city as we know it, the soft city of illusion, myth, aspiration, nightmare, is as real, maybe more real, than the hard city one can locate on maps in statistics, in monographs on urban sociology and demography and architecture.

- Jonathan Raban, *Soft City*

Moving elements in a city, and in particular the people and their activities, are as important as the stationary physical parts. We are not simply observers of this spectacle, but are a part of it, on the stage with the other participants.

- Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City*

The statement by Kevin Lynch encapsulates the core of this study, highlighting that urban design significantly influences both the physical environment and the psychological and social experiences of city inhabitants. Cities are experienced through all our senses, and our perceptions are shaped by memories and associations. Social interactions and behaviours are pivotal in defining urban life, with a city's uniqueness stemming from the way people live, work, trade, and engage with one another. Thus, a city's vibrancy and expressiveness extend beyond its mere physical appearance.

Urban sociologists have increasingly focused on the social, cultural, political, and economic factors that shape urban environments and govern city life. Particularly since the 1970s, Marxist approaches have critiqued traditional urban sociology by shifting attention to behavioural codes, belief patterns, class structures, and institutional influences on urban development.

In *The City: Patterns of Domination and Conflict* (1982), Brian Elliott and David McCrone explore the evolution of urban governance and power dynamics, tracing the shift from medieval independent urban centres to modern corporate cities. They analyse how historical processes, such as the rise of the modern state and the advent of capitalism, have influenced urban development.

Elliott and McCrone critique structuralist Marxism, which tends to depict human actions as predetermined by social systems. Instead, they advocate for an approach inspired by Max Weber's work, emphasizing the need to understand how people interpret and make sense of their social worlds alongside the material conditions that shape them. They argue for

the importance of studying people's consciousness, thoughts, and motivations to gain insight into urban life.

Their alternative approach views conflict as a fundamental feature of social life, a driver of change, and a crucial area of study for understanding city dynamics. They stress the significance of historical research to comprehend the unique character of each city, the power structures that have shaped it, and the interplay between individual lives and historical forces. This approach underscores the necessity of examining how a city's physical layout, economic structure, and social patterns have evolved over time, asserting that historical class interests, the ambitions of distinct status groups, and economic forces collectively shape a city's current character. Understanding these historical processes is essential for grasping contemporary urban struggles (Elliott and McCrone 20-32).

Robert Park, a prominent sociologist, challenges the reductionist view of the city as a mere physical entity. In his seminal essay, "The City: Suggestions for the Investigation of Human Behaviour in the Urban Environment" (1915) Park conceptualizes the city as a multifaceted mechanism, which he terms a "psychophysical mechanism." This framework encompasses both tangible components such as infrastructure, including street railways and buildings, and intangible aspects, including public opinion and individual desires. Park posits that the city is a dynamic system shaped by the continuous interaction between human actions, aspirations, and the built environment. The physical structure of the city, according to Park, is inseparably linked with its social and ethical dimensions. These elements are in constant mutual influence, resulting in an ever-evolving urban environment. For him, cities embody the customs, traditions, and collective attitudes of their inhabitants, serving as reflections of the broader societal organization. He says:

> The city [...] is something more than a congeries of individual men and of social conveniences – streets, buildings, electric lights, tramways, and telephones, etc.; something more, also, than a mere constellation of institutions and administrative devices – courts, hospitals, schools, police and civil functionaries of various sorts. The city is, rather, a state of mind, a body of customs and traditions, and of the organized attitudes and sentiments that inhere in these customs and are transmitted with this tradition. The city is not, in other words, merely a physical mechanism and an artificial construction. It is involved in the vital processes of the people who compose it; it is a product of nature, and particularly of human nature. (1)

Steve Pile, in his work *The Real Cities: Modernity, Space and the Phantasmagorias of City Life* (2005), investigates the emotional and imaginative dimensions of urban life through the lens of phantasmagorical experiences, including dreams, psychoanalysis, and psychogeography. Pile emphasizes that emotional experience is a crucial yet underexplored factor in shaping urban existence. He uses the concept of phantasmagoria to describe a fluid and dynamic process, a procession of images that appears before the observer's eyes, often evoking ghostly or dream-like qualities. This concept highlights the importance of emotional labour in shaping urban life, while also pointing to the insufficiency of our current understanding of this phenomenon (Pile 3).

The phantasmagorical experience of the city, according to Pile, can be closely examined through observation, much like Baudelaire's *flâneur*, who explores the psychogeography of the city by wandering through it. Walking, Pile argues, becomes a primary spatial practice for engaging with the city's layered histories and emotional landscapes (4). This approach treats the city as a palimpsest, where overlapping histories and emotions are revealed, but with a particular focus on the darker, more haunting aspects of the urban experience—hidden violence, and misdeeds that haunt the streets. By meticulously documenting these observations, Pile contends, one uncovers layers of urban life that may otherwise remain unseen.

Guy Debord's concept of psychogeography further elucidates this relationship between the city and emotional experience. Psychogeography maps the emotional landscape of the urban environment, illustrating how the city shapes human emotions and social behaviours. Central to Debord's theory is the idea that modern city life leads desire into dead-ends, creating an illusion of fulfilment that ultimately fails to satisfy. While urban life may foster unique social behaviours and technological uses, these vary widely across cities and individuals, reflecting the complex interplay between the built environment and the human psyche.

For Walter Benjamin, phantasmagoria serves as a powerful analytical concept for understanding modernity itself. It encapsulates not only the visual experience of the city but also the collective psychological state of its inhabitants, often characterized by distraction and boredom. In applying this concept to urban life, Benjamin argues that modern cities offer a dream-like spectacle where surface appearances blur together, obscuring the underlying

social processes. He views modern city life as inherently phantasmagorical, with its inhabitants moving through it like sleepwalkers, disconnected from their true desires.

Pile, like Benjamin, also sees dreams and urban spaces as intricately linked. He explores various instances where dreams infiltrate the waking life of cities, asserting that dreams and desires are the driving forces behind the lives of urban dwellers. He writes:

> Dreams are part and parcel of the commonplace experience of everyday city life: in shop windows, in cinemas, on television, on bookshelves, in ordinary understandings about what it means to lead a better life, in moral codes about appropriate behaviour, in the ways we learn to see the surface appearance of urban landscapes, and even as something experienced during sleep. Dream phantasmagorias are operative and effective in many different places and under many different circumstances. Indeed, they are almost irrepressible: perhaps this is because dreams tap into secret desires and fears, as Calvino suggests, or maybe because they enable the expression of feelings of yearning and anxiety (that so often are associated with hidden desires and fears), both personal and collective. In this light, it is useful, rather than confusing, that the word 'dream' refers simultaneously to personal (sleeping) and collective (waking) experiences. (35)

Pile draws a parallel between Freud's concept of dreams and the experience of urban life. Just as dreams are shaped by unconscious desires and repressed emotions, the city is similarly influenced by social forces that displace or obscure emotions and power dynamics. In this analogy, desires and anxieties manifest within urban spaces and cultural practices, though often in indirect or symbolic forms, much like how repressed wishes are fulfilled in dreams through disguise and distortion (Pile 48-49). Walter Benjamin extends this dream metaphor to analyse the hidden desires and meanings embedded in the city. Every generation that migrates to the city arrives with its own aspirations, some of which are realized, while for others, they remain unfulfilled dreams.

This tension between the fulfilment and unfulfillment of desire in the urban context serves as fertile ground for scholars, providing a means to articulate their own connections to the city through language and expression. Literary scholars focus on the emotional landscapes, attitudes, and personalities of cities, thereby deepening our understanding of their

complexity and richness. Cities are imbued with emotional qualities and urban imaginaries that contribute to their distinctiveness and shape the lived experiences of their inhabitants.

Modern urban life has generated new identities, solidarities, and meanings, profoundly shaping the experiences of individuals and communities. The cityscape, with its streets, public spaces, and infrastructure, forms the backdrop for dynamic interactions, influencing the production of literature, art, and cinema. The modern city, characterized by rapid technological advancements, economic restructuring, societal conflicts, and administrative disorder, presents unique challenges for writers and architects seeking to capture its essence. The urban environment, with its dynamism, diversity, and complexity, provides a rich tapestry for artistic exploration.

As a result, the city becomes a critical component of both literature and architecture, shaping the themes, narratives, and designs that emerge from creative endeavours. Jonathan Charley notes that by the turn of the twentieth century, the metropolitan experience had become so pervasive within advanced capitalist societies that the creative imaginations of most writers and architects had been almost entirely urbanized (Edwards and Charley 3).

In his seminal work “Metropolis and Mental Life” (1903) George Simmel examines the intricate relationship between intellectualism, money, and social interactions within the urban environment. Simmel provides profound insights into the complexities of city life, particularly its psychological dynamics, offering a framework for understanding how urban spaces shape, and are shaped by, the emotions and experiences of their inhabitants. He argues that the intellectualism characteristic of metropolitan individuals serves as a defensive response to the overwhelming stimuli of the urban milieu. Within the metropolis, money assumes a central role, closely linked with intellectualism; it prioritizes objectivity and rationality over emotional connections. As a result, the modern mind becomes increasingly calculative, with urban life governed by strict adherence to schedules and timetables. This rigid structure, while fostering efficiency, also suppresses spontaneity and emotional expression in favour of rational calculation.

However, city life, with its large and diverse population, also encourages a loosening of social constraints, allowing for greater individual freedom and self-expression. The development of the modern metropolis raises critical questions about how individuals navigate their identity and autonomy amidst the intricate web of social, cultural, and

technological forces that shape contemporary urban life (Simmel 324). The constant bombardment of stimuli, new sights, sounds, and experiences, sets urban living apart from the slower, more predictable rhythms of rural life. The metropolitan individual, therefore, develops a protective mechanism against this incessant stimulation. Rather than responding emotionally, the urban type tends to react in a rational and calculated manner, leading to a heightened consciousness that is less sensitive and more detached from the core of their personality. This reaction underscores the distancing effect that city life has on emotional experiences.

Simmel also explores how the expansion of the metropolis generates a distinctive form of individual freedom. As social bonds loosen in urban environments, individuals gain a sense of liberation that is not merely physical but also psychological, fostering the expression of personal uniqueness. Yet, this freedom comes at a cost. The very detachment that allows for individual autonomy can also engender feelings of isolation and loneliness, even within densely populated cities.

The true magnitude of the metropolis, according to Simmel, extends far beyond its physical boundaries. Like the influence of an individual that surpasses their physical presence, the city's reach extends temporally and spatially beyond its immediate confines. The freedom experienced by urban inhabitants is not solely about the ability to move or act without societal constraints, but also about the expression of one's distinctiveness and singularity. This freedom is manifested in the way individuals affirm their existence through expressions of uniqueness that emerge not from external impositions but from their inner nature (Simmel 335).

For Simmel, freedom, at its core, lies in living according to the laws of one's inner nature. It becomes most tangible when our expressions of individuality set us apart from others. This individuality and irreplaceability, Simmel argues, affirm our existence as autonomous beings, rather than as products of external forces. Thus, the metropolis becomes more than a mere physical space; it is a grand manifestation of human potential and expression, illustrating the complex interplay between individuality, freedom, and the urban environment (Simmel 335).

The city introduces a profound crisis in artistic representation due to its unique characteristics, which challenge traditional art forms and compel artists to explore innovative

methods of expression. Several key themes emerge from this shift. Firstly, the city often serves as a source of inspiration, brimming with movement, colour, and imagery. It is rich in metaphor and narrative potential, providing a vibrant backdrop for artistic emancipation. In this context, the city enables a journey of self-discovery for the artist, culminating in a redefinition of the self within the urban landscape.

Secondly, alienation and detachment are recurring motifs in urban representations. The city is frequently depicted as a rupture from the village, cultural traditions, or close-knit communities, fostering a sense of disconnection or loss. This theme highlights the emotional and social isolation that can accompany urban living, contrasting sharply with the communal bonds of rural life. Thirdly, the city's complexity and anonymity make it an ideal setting for crime, a motif prominently featured in detective fiction, such as the works of Arthur Conan Doyle. The urban detective, epitomized by Sherlock Holmes, embodies rational intelligence navigating the dark and impenetrable cityscape. This motif persists in contemporary portrayals of the urban "private eye," symbolizing the detective's ability to uncover hidden truths within the chaotic urban environment.

The notion that the city can be interpreted as a text adds a new dimension to urban analysis. This perspective enables the exploration of the layers of meaning embedded within the city's physical and social structures over time. It underscores the embodiment of social values within urban spaces, emphasizing how the city reflects and shapes societal norms and attitudes. The concept of the city as text extends to the analysis of urban design and construction, both historical and contemporary, by examining the meanings attached to spaces and buildings by their creators and users.

This textual interpretation reveals that builders, developers, and users often possess divergent understandings of urban spaces, leading to alterations in design that reflect these differing perspectives. Urban spaces are thus viewed as documents containing embedded meanings, which are interpreted in various ways by different stakeholders, including architects, developers, city planners, politicians, users, citizens, and urban analysts. These interpretations are shaped by the social norms, values, and positions of the interpreters within the broader urban power structure, as noted by Thorns (131-132).

The literary history of cities is profoundly interconnected with the evolution of both urban and literary forms. As Burton Pike observes, "since there has been literature, there have

been cities in literature" (3). The exploration of the relationship between urban environments and human behaviour represents one of the key achievements of city literature, encompassing the mapping of social spaces, the depiction of daily life, the mental perceptions of inhabitants, and the imagination of utopias and dystopias. Numerous novels, short stories, and poems have centred on the city as a thematic focal point. Poets have examined the multifaceted representation of the city, a theme that evokes both positive and negative emotions and attachments.

In the West, London has long been a prominent subject among writers and poets, with literary depictions reflecting changing perceptions over time. For example, Dryden's *Annus Mirabilis* (1667) celebrates London's endurance in the face of war and disaster, envisioning the city as a phoenix rising from the ashes of the Great Fire of 1666. Brean Hammond, in his essay "The City in Eighteenth-Century Poetry," contrasts two different poetic treatments of London from the 18th century. Jonathan Swift's *A Description of a City Shower* (1710) offers a satirical portrayal of a London downpour merging with the city's sewage system, using a playful tone and classical allusions to criticize the city's moral decline. In contrast, William Blake's "London" (1794) adopts a darker, more critical stance, depicting the city as a dystopian nightmare shaped by industrialization and social decay. Blake's portrayal of London reveals the harsh realities of poverty, child labour, and social unrest, with possible references to revolutionary movements.

These poems, alongside other works of the period, reveal an evolving literary imagination of the city from the early to the late eighteenth century, demonstrating the complex interplay between urban reality and poetic representation. John Gay's "Trivia, or The Art of Walking the Streets of London" (1716) blends satirical critique with a celebration of the city's diversity, capturing the intricacies of urban life, including its labour conditions and the lives of its marginalized inhabitants. Similarly, Samuel Johnson's "London" (1738) portrays the city as a corrupt and chaotic environment rife with crime. In other cities, literary depictions vary as well; for example, Robert Burns' "Address to Edinburgh" (1786) struggles with conflicting emotions about the city, while Mary Chandler's "A Description of Bath" (1733) offers an early celebration of Bath's history, architecture, and social life.

In the nineteenth century, rapid urbanization during the industrial era had a profound impact on poets, eliciting both admiration and criticism. William Wordsworth, a leading figure of the Romantic Movement, penned several poems about London, examining its

beauty and influence on its inhabitants. His sonnet “Composed Upon Westminster Bridge, September 3, 1802” describes the serene beauty of London as seen from Westminster Bridge in the early morning, presenting a romanticized vision of the city in which man-made and natural beauty coexist harmoniously. In *The Prelude* (Book Seven: *Residence in London*), Wordsworth provides a detailed account of his experiences living in London, offering a vivid contrast to his rural themes, and reflecting on the city’s bustling life and its impact on him. Similarly, Frederick Locker-Lampson’s *London Lyrics* (1904) presents a collection of light hearted and sentimental poems that celebrate London life in the 19th century.

However, not all poets viewed the city favourably. James Thomson’s “City of Dreadful Night” (1874) presents a bleak, nightmarish vision of the city as a symbol of modern existential despair. Thomson’s poem captures the oppressive reality of urban life, offering a poignant reflection on the disillusionment and hopelessness that can arise in modern existence. This dark portrayal of the city continues to resonate with readers who struggle with similar feelings of alienation and despair, serving as a powerful critique of urbanization and its effects on the human condition.

In “Peter Bell the Third” (1839), Percy Bysshe Shelley delivers a sharp satirical critique of societal issues, with a particular focus on the state of London. He draws a grim comparison between the city and Hell, capturing its atmosphere of despair and moral decay. Shelley's biting lines, “Hell is a city much like London --/ A populous and a smoky city;/ There are all sorts of people undone, / And there is little or no fun done; / Small justice shown, and still less pity,” (lines 147-151) underscore his view of London as a crowded, polluted place where suffering and injustice are rampant. Through this satire, Shelley critiques not only the physical conditions of the city but also the broader social failings that contribute to its oppressive environment.

The twentieth century marked a period of profound transformation, characterized by modernism, world wars, and significant advancements across various fields. Poets of this era engaged deeply with themes such as alienation, fragmentation, the disordered nature of urban life, urban decay, and spiritual emptiness—reflecting the complexities of the modern city. One of the most emblematic works is T.S. Eliot’s *The Waste Land* (1922), which poignantly conveys spiritual desolation and the isolation of individuals in the urban environment. In the lines, “A crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many, / I had not thought death had undone so many. / Sighs, short and infrequent, were exhaled, / And each man fixed his eyes before

his feet," (lines 62-65) Eliot illustrates the disconnection and sense of existential emptiness among the masses in the city, portraying urban life as a landscape of despondency and fragmentation.

In contrast to this bleak portrayal, American poets like Carl Sandburg offered more optimistic depictions of urban life. In his poem "Chicago," Sandburg celebrates the vitality and rugged spirit of the city, emphasizing the resilience and determination of its inhabitants. While modernist poets like Eliot focused on the darker, more alienating aspects of city life, others like Sandburg found inspiration in the energy and dynamism of the modern metropolis. This diversity of poetic perspectives reflects the multifaceted nature of twentieth-century urban experiences.

The Poet and the City: A Study in Urban Perspectives (1984) by John Johnston offers a nuanced examination of the poetry of place, specifically exploring the intricate relationship between poets and their perception of the urban environment. Johnston distinguishes between two major traditions of city poetry: the topographical poem and the city poem. This distinction is essential, as while both traditions engage with urban settings, they do so with markedly different motivations and perspectives. The topographical poet approaches the city within a broader framework, considering its natural surroundings, physical features, and historical or cultural significance. Johnston defines city poetry as "poetry (or a poem) directly descriptive of the real physical city as an experiential entity, or poetry descriptive of people whose lives are obviously affected by their experience of that entity" (xvii).

Johnston begins his study with an analysis of the Romantic poets, whose ambivalent relationship with urban life laid the foundation for subsequent literary responses to the city. He then shifts to Victorian poetry, providing a detailed exploration of why urban and industrial themes were often either neglected or minimally addressed by poets of the era. One of the most compelling aspects of Johnston's analysis is his discussion of the "decline of the topographical poem"—a genre that once celebrated the natural landscape but struggled to adapt to the realities of urban expansion and industrial monotony. Johnston argues that the poetic conventions of the time were ill-equipped to grapple with the complexities of urbanization, leading to a literary void that was later filled by poets like Walt Whitman and Charles Baudelaire, whom Johnston regards as the true "city poets" of the 19th century.

In his analysis of modernist poets such as T.S. Eliot and W.H. Auden, Johnston illustrates how these writers broke free from earlier literary conventions, embracing the chaos and fragmentation inherent in urban life. For these modernist poets, the city was not simply a backdrop but a powerful, dynamic force that profoundly influenced both the form and content of their work. Johnston's treatment of Eliot's *The Waste Land*, particularly its portrayal of London, is especially noteworthy. He highlights how Eliot transforms the city into a symbol of both cultural decay and the potential for renewal, embodying the complexities of modern urban existence.

1.8 Ghazal: Poetry from Persia to India

Among the various literary genres, poetry maintains a uniquely intimate relationship with human emotions. It serves as a medium for the expression of intense feelings, encompassing themes of love, pain, loss, and pleasure. Different poetic forms, such as the lyric, ode, and sonnet, each possess their own significance and functions in addressing specific themes. Among these, the ghazal stands out as a distinct poetic form, celebrated for its unique structure and thematic focus. Widely popular in South Asian literature, the ghazal has also found its way into English literature, particularly noted for its romantic and often erotic themes.

Persian poets have offered various interpretations of the ghazal. One common definition is that it represents "talking with a woman," while another etymology suggests that the word ghazal is derived from the Arabic term *ghazala*, meaning the young offspring of a deer. The metaphor draws on the image of a young deer crying out in pain when struck by an arrow, symbolizing the intense emotional suffering often conveyed in ghazal poetry. At its core, the ghazal is an embodiment of love and pain. Vatavwala aptly describes it as "a goddess of bereavement" (60). Similarly, Upadhyay asserts that "there is no space for logic in the feelings expressed by ghazal; it is directly related to the emotions of the heart—pain, sympathy, affection" (28).

1.8.1 History of Ghazal

Though not originally developed in Arabia, the ghazal finds its roots in Arabic poetry. One of the most popular early forms of Arabic poetry is the *qasida*, a genre traditionally recited by poets to praise leaders, kings, or benefactors from whom they could gain monetary rewards. In this way, the *qasida* is analogous to the English ode.

The *qasida* is one of the sixth-century poetic forms that emerged in pre-Islamic Arabia, encompassing a range of themes such as elegies, laments, satire, and praise for camels or horses. It has been described as "the culmination of a period of poetical experiments" (Gibbs 14). This long narrative form typically incorporates multiple thematic shifts but ultimately converges on self-praise, eulogy, and the panegyric of a patron. To achieve this climax, poets would carefully craft an emotional buildup among their audience through the sequential progression of varied thematic elements. In his analysis of the technical aspects of the *qasida*, Ibn Qutaiba writes:

> the author of a *qasida* must begin by a reference to the forsaken camping-grounds. Next he must lament, and pray his comrades to halt, while he calls up the memory of the dwellers who had departed in search of other encampments and fresh water-springs. Then he begins to touch on love-matters, bewailing the tortures to which his passion puts him, and thus attracting interest and attention to himself. He recounts his hard and toilsome journeying in the Desert, dwells on the lean condition of his steed, which he lauds and describes; and finally, with the object of obtaining those proofs of generosity which were the bard's expected need and sole support, he winds up with a panegyric of the Prince or Governor in whose presence the poem is recited. (Huart 11)

According to Upadhyay, the *qasida* is traditionally divided into four distinct parts: 1) *tashbib* or *nasib*, 2) *gurizgah*, 3) *madah*, and 4) *dua*. The first part, *nasib*, serves as an obligatory prelude to the *qasida*. In this section, the poet addresses a fictitious lover or leader with affection, a practice that can be observed in the *matla*, the opening couplet of a ghazal. The *nasib* functions as an elegiac reminiscence, evoking themes of love and separation. It involves a narrative where the poet reflects on the past, often reminiscing about the days spent with a beloved or the experiences associated with a former encampment. This section aims to "incline the hearts of the poet's hearers towards him and to call out their rapt attention" (Gibb 16).

An example of *nasib* in the *qasida* can be found in the *Mu'allaqah* by the sixth-century Arabic poet Imru' al-Qais, which illustrates the emotional and thematic characteristics typical of this form:

> Stay! let us weep, while memory tries to trace
> The long-lost fair one's sand-girt dwelling place;

Though the rude winds have swept the sandy plain,
Still some faint traces of that spot remain.
My comrades reined their coursers by my side,
And "Yield not, yield not to despair" they cried.
(Tears were my sole reply; yet what avail
Tears shed on sands, or sighs upon the gale?)
"The same thy fortune, and thy tears the same,
When bright Howaira and Rebaba came
To say farewell on Mosel's swelling brow.
And left thee mourning, as thou mornest now! (Clouston 373)

The transformation of *nasib* into the *ghazal* represents a fascinating journey influenced by broader cultural and religious shifts. With the rise of Islam and its subsequent spread beyond Arabia, followers not only disseminated religious values but also carried with them elements of their native cultures, including art, music, and literature. Among these elements was the *qasida*, which travelled through various regions, adapting to new cultural contexts.

Initially reaching Iraq, the *qasida* was embraced by a society known for its industriousness, loyalty, and peace—qualities that began to shape the literature of the region. As a result, themes of loyalty and pride became prominent characteristics of the *qasida*. Subsequently, the *qasida* continued its journey into Iran, a region then under the control of foreign invaders. The Muslim conquest of Iran led to widespread conversion and significant cultural and societal changes. According to Dr. Vinay Waikar and Zarina Sani:

> In Persia, alongside war, there was religious conversion as well as an exchange of culture and customs.… Persian poets were scholars, experienced, worshippers of beauty, graceful, and familiar with every aspect of life. While they certainly accepted the *qasida* but *tasbib* touched their heart, and they created the ghazal, preserving its original essence. (qtd. in Upadhyay 13) (the researcher's trans.)

The *qasida*, having journeyed from its origins in Arabia, evolved into the *ghazal* upon reaching Iran. This transformation is notably marked by the Persian poet Rudaki, who composed the first ghazal in the tenth century. Subsequent poets, such as Hafiz Shirazi and Sheikh Sadi, further developed the form, incorporating themes of philosophy and politics.

Initially, the ghazal retained strong influences from Sufism. However, over time, it began to incorporate new themes and stylistic elements. Notably, the poet Baba Fugani introduced themes of philosophical inquiry, fantasy, and social imbalance into the ghazal. Additionally, the form began to feature specific terminology that became emblematic of its style, including terms such as *sura* (liquor), *saki* (bartender), and *maykhana* (tavern). These changes reflect the evolving nature of the ghazal, as it adapted to new cultural and thematic contexts.

The ghazal is closely associated with spiritualism and Sufism, often embodying themes of divine love and reverence. In Sufi tradition, the ghazal serves as a means of praising both the beloved and God, intending to seek their favour. This suggests that the ghazal operates as a form of intimate, almost secretive communication with the beloved, where love occupies a central role (Vatavwala 14). The form's expression and diction are shaped by *tagazzul*, a product of Sufi thought.

As Upadhyay posits, an understanding of Sufism is essential for comprehending the deeper meaning of the ghazal. Sufism, which is believed to have originated in 3rd-century Arabia prior to the advent of Islam, is a spiritual path focused on divine love. It seeks the Supreme Power through an all-encompassing experience of love. According to Upadhyay, "Sufi saints worship Love, through Love, with Love" (6). For Sufi practitioners, love represents the ultimate truth, permeating the entire cosmos and binding all elements of existence, both living and non-living, together. Thus, Upadhyay concludes that the ghazal functions as a form of worship, a poetic devotion to the sacred power of love.

1.8.2 Ghazal in India

By the late seventh century, following the successful conquest of Iran and the establishment of stable governance, the expansionist ambitions of the invaders extended eastward. In 711 CE, Muhammad bin Qasim's invasion of Sindh marked the beginning of Islamic influence in the Indian subcontinent. Alongside these military campaigns, Sufi saints began entering the western regions of India, gradually introducing their cultural and religious practices. Over time, successive waves of invaders, including Mahmud of Ghazni, the Khiljis, and the Mughals, further entrenched Islamic influence in the region. Under the rule of the Mughal Empire, Sufi saints frequently travelled to India, many eventually settling

permanently. These Sufi figures brought with them their language, culture, and literary traditions, including the ghazal.

Initially, the ghazal was composed exclusively in Persian, which limited its accessibility and popularity in India. However, the poet Amir Khusraw was instrumental in expanding its reach by blending Persian and Braj Bhasha, later termed 'Hindvi' or 'Hindi,' within the structure of the ghazal. By alternating between Persian in the first line of the couplet and Braj in the second, Khusrau created a linguistic hybrid that resonated with a broader audience, thereby facilitating the ghazal's integration into the literary culture of India. For instance:

shabān-e-hijrāñ darāz chuuñ zulf o roz-e-vaslat chuuñ umr-e-kotāh (Persian)

sakhī piyā ko jo maiñ na dekhūñ to kaise kātūñ añdherī ratiyāñ (Hindi)

In addition to Khusrau, other notable poets include Umar Khayyam, Hafiz, and Sheikh Sadi, who each made significant contributions to the development of Persian and Sufi poetry.

Urdu, originally not a distinct language, evolved during the period of Muslim rule in India. As invaders set up camps in northern India and recruited local soldiers, communication between Persian-speaking invaders and Indian recruits necessitated a fusion of languages. This blend of Persian and indigenous Indian dialects gradually developed into what became known as Urdu. After approximately 400 years since Khusro's time, Urdu emerged as a formal language in the 17th century. It represents a confluence of diverse cultures and linguistic traditions, eventually becoming a prominent medium for the ghazal form.

1.8.3 Phases of Ghazal in India

Upadhyay categorizes the evolution of Indian ghazals into distinct phases. The first phase spans from the introduction of the ghazal in India to the era of Ameer Khushro (1253-1325). During this period, ghazals were composed exclusively in Persian, focusing on themes such as love, pleasure, longing, separation, and anticipation.

The second phase, from 1325 to approximately 1575, marks the nascent stage of Urdu as a language. Ghazals began to be composed in Urdu, replacing Persian. The first anthology of Urdu ghazals was published by Sultan Mohammad Quli Qutb Shah of the Deccan. The third phase (1650-1750) centres on the contributions of Vali, often referred to as Vali

Dakhani or Vali Gujarati, who introduced new metaphors to the ghazal form and is credited with writing the first Urdu ghazal.

The fourth phase (1750-1850) is considered the "Golden Era of Shayari," with figures like Meer Taqi Meer and Sauda emerging as major poets. This period also coincides with the decline of the Mughal Empire, leading to the dispersal of poets and the establishment of various schools of poetry. While some decline in the quality of ghazals was noted, marked by vulgarity and mere rhyming, this phase was nonetheless influential. The fifth phase marks the era of poets such as Ghalib and Momin, who revitalized the ghazal with new themes and expressions. This period coincided with the fall of the Mughal Empire and the rise of British rule. Ghazals, once confined to royal courts, now gained popularity among the general populace.

The sixth phase, covering the twentieth century, reflects an era of instability in India due to the independence movement, World War II, and various social changes. The themes of love in ghazals were replaced by nationalism, social reform, and political consciousness, with poets like Jigar Moradabadi and Hasrat Mohani incorporating elements of realism into their work. This period also witnessed the emergence of several prominent female poets. The seventh phase, post-partition, saw the rise of ghazals in the context of India's developing film industry. The combination of poets, musicians, and singers contributed to the mainstream popularity of ghazals, embedding the form deeply into the cultural fabric of India.

1.8.4 Gujarat and Gujarati Ghazal

The relationship between the ghazal and Gujarat extends well before the earliest recorded Gujarati ghazals. Wali Gujarati, a notable poet from Gujarat, composed his ghazals in the Dakhani and Gujari dialects of Urdu, incorporating some Gujarati vocabulary into his work. In addition to Wali Gujarati, other Urdu poets from Gujarat include Buranuddin Janam, 'Shahalam,' Sheikh Bahauddin (Bajan), and Miyan Khub Mohammad Chisty, among others.

The origins of the ghazal in Gujarat are subject to various interpretations. Ratilal 'Anil' posits that the ghazal tradition in Gujarat can be traced back to the practice of *baitbazi* (a form of poetic competition or dialogue), suggesting that "it must be accepted that Ghazal started in Gujarat with the *baitbazi* in play" (qtd. in Vatavwala 21).

Gujarati literature has been profoundly shaped by key figures such as Hemchandracharya and Narsinh Mehta, with significant contributions from later reformists and scholars like Dalpatram and Narmad. Dalpatram's seminal work, *Bhootnibandh* (1849), is recognised as the first essay in Gujarati literature, while Narmad's *Mari Hakikat* (1866) is the first autobiography. Furthermore, Nandshankar Mehta's *Karnaghelo* (1866) is credited as the first Gujarati novel.

The emergence of the Gujarati ghazal as a distinct literary form is attributed to the work of Balashankar Kanthariya (1858–1898). His inaugural ghazal, "Dithi Nahi," was published in March 1887 in his own magazine, *Bhartibhushan*. This ghazal, consisting of fifteen couplets, expresses the poet's longing to see his beloved, whom he had previously encountered only once. Other notable ghazals by Kanthariya include "Gujare Je Shire Tare" and "Jigar No Yaar Judo To Badho Sansar Judo Chhe," reflecting his influences of non-dualism and themes of wisdom, devotion, and aesthetics. Following Kanthariya, significant contributors to the Gujarati ghazal tradition include Manilal Nabhubhai Dwivedi and Sursinhji Takhatsinhji Gohil.

Upadhyay delineates the historical development of the Gujarati ghazal through distinct phases. The first phase, termed the Bal-Kalapi Age (1887-1935), is characterized by the nascent state of Gujarati ghazal, which was still in its formative stages. During this period, many ghazals exhibited various defects, though a few notable poets made significant contributions. These poets include Manishankar Ratnaji Bhatt 'Kant,' Amrut Keshav Nayak, Balashankar Kanthariya, Kalapi, and Manilal. This era also marked a linguistic evolution, as Persian and Urdu vocabulary began to be integrated into Gujarati, alongside the native Gujarati and Sanskrit lexicon. Dr. Chhotubhai Nayak observes, "Poets such as Balashankar, Manilal, Kalapi, Tribhuvan Premshankar, and Sagar incorporated Persian vocabulary, thus enriching and completing the language at the dawn of the modern era" (qtd. in Upadhyay 107). Notably, Sagar's editorial work, *Ghazalistan* (1913), compiled the first collection of Gujarati ghazals, while Manikant endeavoured to broaden the scope of the ghazal form. Amrut Keshav Nayak further contributed by incorporating the Gujarati lexicon into the ghazal.

The second phase, known as the Shayada Age (1935-1955), is recognized as the golden era of Gujarati ghazal, marked by a heightened consciousness in expression and language. During this period, poets began to move away from the rigid adherence to Persian

traditions and sought to address the limitations of previous ghazals. This era was influenced by Gandhian philosophy, which impacted societal and political contexts, including the ghazal. The introduction of Mushaira by the 'Muslim Gujarati Sahitya Mandal,' established in 1931, played a crucial role in promoting the ghazal form. Prominent poets of this era included Saif Palanpui, 'Shunya' Palanpuri, Shayada, Asim Randeri, Amrut 'Ghayal' 'Mariz,' Ratilal Anil, Gani Dahiwala, 'Befam,' Makarand Dave, Harindra Dave, and Bhagawatikumar Sharma.

The third phase, termed the Age of Experiment (1955-1975), emerged in the context of post-independence India, which was undergoing significant social and economic changes driven by industrialization. The traditional rural lifestyle and cultural values began to diminish, giving way to new urban challenges such as pollution, overpopulation, and social alienation. This phase marked a departure from the Persian-Arabic ghazal traditions, introducing innovations in the form. Poets began to write ghazals in pure Gujarati, incorporating new images, themes, and metaphors while maintaining the traditional structure. The experimental ghazal began with Manhar Modi's publication of *Kukado* ghazal in 1955. Despite these advancements, Upadhyay notes, "the characteristics of this age are more tangibly and poignantly reflected in poetry compared to other literary genres" (172). However, this innovation was not fully realized in ghazals. The ghazal continued to be influenced by traditional forms, resulting in a bifurcation into two distinct traditions: one following the Urdu-Persian model and the other evolving alongside contemporary Gujarati poetry. The popularity of the ghazal was notably bolstered by Mushaira, which provided a platform for poets to connect with audiences, although imitation of established poets was a significant drawback, as noted by critics like Mariz:

> *Āgāmī sau gajhalanu panat tha'ī gayu śharū;*
> *khōvā'ī jā'u chhu hu havē vāh vāhmā!* (Upadhyay 178)

(The season of Ghazal has begun its decline; / I am lost now in the whirlwind of applause.) (the researcher's trans)

1.8.5 Modernism and Experiments in Ghazal

Poetry has always been a medium of experimentation, and Gujarati ghazals have followed a long trajectory from tradition to innovation. Poets have accelerated this transformation by introducing new ideas and techniques, driven by the "ongoing thought

process in the mind of a creator" (Vatavwala 13). During the 1960s, the ghazal embraced modernism, undergoing significant changes.

The ideals of the previous generation of poets began to fade, and new poets turned their attention to the discovery of the 'self.' In this shift, poets explored the complexities of existence, offering multiple definitions of the self. The modern human, feeling isolated and standing amid devastating and dreadful circumstances, expresses an inner emptiness. These modern sentiments are conveyed through innovative uses of language, placing traditional concepts in new contexts while simultaneously revealing the poet's internal world.

The evolution of the ghazal was not a sudden development but a gradual process that spanned from 1955 to 1980. During this period, various literary magazines played a crucial role in promoting and publishing new forms of the ghazal, showcasing significant experiments in its structure and style. Notable innovations include Chinu Modi's 'Kshanika ghazal,' Manoj Khanderiya's 'Haiku ghazal,' Nayan Desai and Manharlal Choksi's 'Lok ghazal,' and Shyam Sadhu's ghazals with increasing-decreasing rhymes (Upadhyay 184).

The use of *radif*, or repeated phrases, has been explored at both the beginning and end of each *misra* (line), and variations in *kafiya* (rhyme schemes) have introduced new patterns. Notably, poet 'Ushnas' adapted verses from the Bhagavad Gita into the ghazal format, demonstrating the form's versatility. Additional innovations include the incorporation of various traditional meters, the development of haiku ghazals, and the use of single-word lines. Furthermore, poets have introduced English words and multilingual elements into their ghazals. As Vatavwala observes, the ghazal is no longer merely a medium for romantic expression or to please a beloved; poets have introduced innovations that elevate the form through personal creative processes and exploration of psychic dimensions (70).

The poets of this era sought to break free from the traditional constraints of the ghazal, expanding its possibilities and adapting it to contemporary sensibilities. Conventional motifs such as the *saki* (cupbearer), *sura* (wine), *maykhana* (tavern), and *mashuk* (beloved) were increasingly seen as outdated. The classical Urdu-Persian meters were gradually replaced by native poetics and Sanskrit meters. As a result, the ghazal shifted from being predominantly sentimental to becoming more personal and ideational. Additionally, modern metaphors and imaginative linguistic experiments further enriched the ghazal's expressive potential (Upadhyay 230). Regarding Experiments, Dr Jayant Pathak notes:

Jūnā rūḍha rachanātarīkā'ōthī kavi kaṇṭāḷē chē, thākē chē. Ēka j chīlāmā chālavāthī bhāvamā nē abhivyaktimā ēk gharēḍ bandhā'ī jāy chhē. Ēnē thāy chē kē ēkanī ēka vāt ēkanī ēk rītē – pachhī ē gamē tēṭalī sārī hōya tō paṇa kahēvāthī rachanānī tājap anē tīvratā aḷapā'ī javā jēvu thāy chē. Sabhān jāgr̥at kavi āvī mānōdaśāmā gharēḍamānthī nīkaḷīnē navu karavā pravr̥ut thāya chē. (Upadhyay 180)

(The poet is tired of the old, rigid ways of writing. Writing in the same old mould creates a rut in both their emotions and expression. They feel that saying the same thing in the same way, no matter how good it is, makes the freshness and intensity of the composition fade. A conscious, awakened poet in such a state strives to break free from the mould and create something new.) (the researcher's trans.)

Chandrakant Sheth, taking it forward, writes:

Jē kavi sāchō thavā-rahēvā māṅgē chhē ē ga'ikālanī bhāṣā sāthē tō rahī ja kēm śakē? Jēma sūkṣmatayā kavi pōtē pratikṣhaṇē badalāy chhē. Tēma ēnu samagra jagat paṇ pratikṣhaṇē badalāy chē. Ēnī bhāṣā tō ēnā j ē jagatanī saṅkētika vyavasthā hō'ī, ē jagatanā badalāvā sāthē ēnēy badalatā rahēvānu thāy chhē. (Upadhyay 180)

(A poet who wants to be true and remain so, how can they stay with yesterday's language? Much like the poet who evolves with each passing moment, their entire universe undergoes transformation continuously. Since their language is a symbolic system of that very world, it too must change along with the changes in that world.) (the researcher's trans.)

Consequently, experimentation became imperative post-1955.

1.8.6 City and Urban Sensibility in Ghazal

The city and modernism emerged as intertwined processes, and Gujarati literature was no exception. The city, urban lifestyle, city culture, alienation, and the brutal nature of urban life became prominent themes in Gujarati poetry. These topics were widely explored, and it is rare to find a Gujarati ghazal poet who has not addressed the city in their work (Upadhyay, 247). The relationship between a poet's regional and environmental context is integral to their work, reflecting a deep connection with the petrichor, the rhythm of local dialects, and the vibrant folk life of their environment. Such a connection ensures that the poet's creations embody a rich blend of folk traditions and linguistic nuances (Vatavwala 12).

The exploration of urban sensibility in Gujarati poetry was notably introduced by Niranjan Bhagat in his poem *Pravaldweep* (Coral Island), which addresses Mumbai and critiques the mechanized, emotionless existence of modern urban life. This thematic shift reflects the broader transformation of Indian cities into modern metropolises post-independence.

Though the ghazal traditionally focuses on eight key themes; dignity, inattention, longing, reflections, gardens, lover's dreams, silence/speech, and the questioning of love—the influence of modernism and the evolving dynamics of urban life have inspired poets to explore themes cantered on the city (Asgari et al. 3).

In the context of the ghazal, urban themes often serve as a medium to critique the concrete cityscape, examine human existence within urban environments, and explore the internalized cityscape within individuals. Numerous ghazals have addressed various cities in Gujarat, with some reflecting general urban themes and others focusing on specific locales. This urban dilemma, characterized by a loss of rural roots and an inability to fully connect with the city, raises existential questions about identity and human connection. The poet grapples with whether this disconnection stems from an inability to relate to others or a deliberate choice to remain disengaged. Cities like Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Surat, Bhavnagar, and Rajkot have consistently been at the forefront of this exploration. Jawahar Bakshi's "Aajna manas ni ghazal" (1972) is a notable example of a work that captures the urban sensibility of Mumbai.

Ṭōḷānī śhūnyatā chhu, javā dō kaśu nathī
mārā jīvananō marma chhu, huṁ chhu nē hu nathī

huṁ tō nagaranu ḍhōl chhu dāṇḍī pīṭō manē
khālīpaṇu bījā tō kōī kāmanu nathī. (Upadhyay 247)

(I am emptiness of the crowd, let it be, there is nothing
I am the essence of my life; I exist and I do not

I am the drum of the city, beat me with the stick
Emptiness has no other purpose for anyone) (the researcher's trans.)

Dr Kishor Modi is writing about Surat:

Bimbanē sparśhī śhakātu hōt tō?
Jhāñjhavu yē pī śhakātu hōt tō?

Hu anarthōnā nagaranō chāḍiyō,
dṛśhyanē rōkī śhakātu hōta tō? (Upadhyay 248)

(If I could touch the reflection
What if I could drink the mirage

I am a scarecrow in a city of absurdity
If I could stop the scene?) (the researcher's trans.)

Gunvant Upadhyay penned a piece on Bhavnagar circa 1980. The city is highly accountable, taking each step with careful consideration, while its inhabitants suffocate, submerged in a mix of acceptance and rejection:

Gaṇatarī pramāṇē nagar ē vichārē,
Gagan sahēj bhīnu saḍakanē palādē;

Gaḷāḍūb gātrō gamā-aṇagamānā
Gaḍākū śhahērī asal ghūṅghavāyē! (Upadhyay 248)

Dilip Joshi's poetry from the early 2000s featured Rajkot:

Khūb agharū chhē chhānyaḍō thāvu
pag, pagēru y bhūnsavā lāgē

ēya rōmāñch kāī ōchhō chhē?
Śhahēr gulamōra vāvavā lāgē (Upadhyay 248)

(It is so hard to become a shade
Even footsteps begin to erase

Is not that thrilling enough?
The city begins to plant gulmohars) (the researcher's trans.)

Piyush Chavda's thesis, *Prayogshil Gujarati Ghazal: Eek Abhyas* (Experimental Gujarati Ghazal: A Study) (2013), examines the experimental nature of contemporary ghazals by notable poets, highlighting themes such as death, darkness, emptiness, and urban

sensibility. Through the analysis of various couplets, Chavda emphasizes themes of pain, detachment, loneliness, illusion, and pollution, illustrating the prevalence of urban sensibility in ghazal literature.

Satish Danak describes the city as a "dark city of suffering," while Chinu Modi characterizes it as a "cursed city." Despite the pervasive sense of entrapment and suffering, there remains an underlying optimism about the city. Poets often both critique and celebrate urban spaces. Bhagwatikumar Sharma expresses profound affection for Surat, likening it to paradise, whereas 'Adil' Mansuri feels a deep connection to Ahmedabad. Shyam Sadhu compares the city to a loving child, reflecting an enduring and complex relationship with the urban environment.

Madhurita Choudhary, in her research paper "The City and the Ghazal: Topographical and City Poetry of Surat" (2018), makes a significant contribution by comparing topographical and city poems on Surat by notable Gujarati Ghazal poets from the city. She categorizes these poems into two distinct groups: topographical poetry and city poetry. Choudhary emphasizes the "intimate and personal" character of city poetry, highlighting how it brings the poet into a closer, more personal connection with the urban environment of Surat.

1.9 Indian English Poems

The introduction of English to India began during the colonial period with the establishment of the British East India Company in the 17th century and became firmly entrenched in the 19th century. This gradual adoption of English as a medium of education had a profound impact on Indian literature, particularly shifting the focus from traditional poetic forms to prose as a powerful vehicle for storytelling, intellectual discourse, and social commentary. However, the influence of Western literature on Indian poetry was also substantial.

British poets wrote numerous poems about and set in India, contributing to a diverse body of work. Máire ní Fhlathuin edited *The Poetry of British India, 1780–1905*, which presents a range of poems by writers with firsthand experience of India as well as British-based authors from the 1780s and 90s. This collection highlights the debate on the role and conduct of the British in India (Fhlathuin xi). Sisir Kumar Das identifies two distinct threads in early Indian English literature: one rooted in the Indian experience and tailored for Indian

readers, and another aimed at a Western audience, shaped by a colonial perspective on Indian reality (Das 44).

In the late 18th century, poets began to explore themes of glorification of India and Hindu culture. However, as missionary activities expanded in the 19th century, critical views of Hinduism emerged, often portraying it as inferior to Christianity and highlighting practices such as infanticide and sati. These poems reflect the complex and often contradictory British perceptions of India, showcasing both admiration and criticism. The editorial decisions in collections such as Fhlathuin's provide a broader spectrum of perspectives than was typically available during this period, illustrating the diverse nature of British poetry on India.

The initial phase of Indian English poetry was marked by a romantic sensibility similar to that of British Romantic poets. Indian poets such as Henry Derozio, Michael Madhusudan Dutt, Toru Dutt, Sarojini Naidu, and Sri Aurobindo drew inspiration from the works of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, Keats, and Byron. These Indian poets incorporated the imaginative spirit of British Romanticism into their own work (Sinha et al. 2-3).

Bengal played a crucial role in the development of Indian English poetry, serving as a cultural and intellectual centre. The first phase of Indian English poetry is often associated with Henry Derozio, recognized as India's first national poet. Derozio's poetry, including works like *The Fakeer of Jungheera* (1829), reflects his internationalist politics, opposition to slavery, support for Greek independence, and efforts to affirm his Indian identity. His poems, such as "To India - My Native Land" and "The Harp of India," celebrate Indian heritage and critique its contemporary state.

Following Derozio, poets such as Kashiprasad Ghosh and the Dutt family continued this tradition. Kashiprasad Ghosh, described by M. K. Naik as the first author of pure Indian blood, contributed significantly to Indian English poetry. The Dutt family, including Michael Madhusudan Dutt and Toru Dutt, incorporated Indian myth and legend into their English poetry. Michael Madhusudan Dutt's work, which includes reinterpretations of classical Indian mythology and epic narratives, stands out for its modern sensibility. The *Dutt Family Album* (1870), featuring works by several members of the Dutt family, is an important milestone in Indian English literature, reflecting the cultural and literary aspirations of this notable Bengali family.

The Revolt of 1857 marked a significant turning point in Indian history, fostering a sense of unity and resistance against British colonial rule across diverse regions and communities. This pivotal event profoundly impacted Indian literature, infusing it with a robust nationalist spirit and a renewed focus on the 'mother tongue' and cultural heritage (Dev et al. xx). Key literary figures such as Shri Aurobindo, Rabindranath Tagore, and Sarojini Naidu emerged during this period, each contributing to the literary landscape in unique ways.

Shri Aurobindo, a philosopher and poet, made notable contributions to Indian poetry. His work is distinguished by its profound spiritual depth, innovative use of language, and integration of classical Indian themes with modern sensibilities. Aurobindo's early poetry (1890-1900) was influenced by Romantic and classical traditions, exploring themes of love, sorrow, death, and liberty. His later poetry, written following his return to India, delved into mysticism and spiritual consciousness. His epic, *Savitri*, based on the Indian legend of Savitri and Satyavan, is considered his magnum opus (Naik).

Rabindranath Tagore, renowned for his contributions to Bengali literature, also introduced his poetry to the English-speaking world through translations. Tagore's literary oeuvre spans various genres, demonstrating his versatility and creative prowess. His work extends beyond poetry to include essays, short stories, and plays, reflecting his engagement with both Indian and global literary traditions. Sarojini Naidu, often referred to as the 'Nightingale of India,' significantly impacted Indian English poetry with her lyrical verse, which is characterized by vibrant imagery and themes rooted in Indian life and folklore. Her poetry blends Indian nationalism with the lyrical traditions of English Romanticism. Notable collections of her work include *The Golden Threshold*, *The Broken Wing*, and *The Bird of Time*.

Following India's independence, the country grappled with numerous political and social challenges, including post-partition trauma, urbanization, migration, and social reforms. M.K. Naik observed that these factors influenced the trajectory of Indian literature, as writers engaged with the complexities of a rapidly changing society:

> The post-Independence Indian scene with its curious criss-cross of rapid socio-political changes in a country where tradition still remains a strong force has presented a stimulating spectacle, which has naturally evoked a variety of reactions

from its writers, including nostalgic idealization of the immediate past of the days of the freedom struggle, a strong desire to re-discover one's roots in the ancient Indian ethos as also to examine this ethos afresh in the light of westernization, and satirical comment both on the darker side of the freedom movement and its aftermath and the decline of values in all spheres of life in the present.

In the wake of India's independence, there were notable shifts in the thematic content of poetry, particularly evident after the 1940s. Poets such as Nissim Ezekiel emerged with a deliberate intent to craft a distinctive voice separate from the British literary models. Ezekiel, along with other contemporary poets, contributed to the evolution of Indian poetry in English, gradually establishing a unique and independent literary identity.

Ezekiel's early work, encapsulated in his first five volumes, marked a departure from traditional romanticism. His poetry adopted a "more hardheaded" approach, reflecting a style akin to British poets like Philip Larkin, who also moved away from grand romantic ideals (Patke 247). The title of Ezekiel's first collection, *A Time of Change* (1952), aptly reflects his intent to move beyond past conventions and embrace a new literary direction.

1.9.1 Poetry after Independence

Bruce King observes that Indian English poetry mirrors the processes of modernization in India, encompassing themes of urbanization, industrialization, and national independence. Despite facing criticism, these poets are integral to the fabric of modern Indian culture. Their work, though crafted in English, a language associated with progress and governance, reflects a unique blend of global trends and local traditions, evidencing a process of "Indianization" that adapts English to both Indian and modern sensibilities (3).

Indian English poetry has often been criticized by nationalists and regionalists for not addressing traditional themes pertinent to Indian life. Poets in this genre have endeavoured to assert their legitimacy by producing compelling works in English that engage with Indian experiences. This task has been particularly challenging given their relatively limited exposure to Indian cultural contexts. Many English poets emerged from the middle class, were well-educated, and engaged with Westernized urban culture, often hailing from English-speaking families, or having studied abroad. These factors have influenced their work, reflecting a struggle to reconcile their Indian identity with their modern, urban perspectives (King 2-3). By the 1960s, English poetry in India had begun to gain prominence, with a

notable body of work published in magazines such as *Illustrated Weekly of India* and *Quest*, contributing to the establishment of English as a significant language in modern India.

Modernist poets rejected the Romantic model in favour of a modernist approach, characterized by themes such as alienation, urbanity, an obsessive sense of failure, exile, and experimentation with form and content (Sinha et al. 3). This period saw Indian poetry adapt to various changes, focusing on individual roles within family and society, as seen in the works of Ezekiel and Kamala Das, or exploring experimental forms in the poems of Mehrotra, Kolatkar, Chitre, and Mahapatra, which reflect the shifting socio-political landscape. The poets' concern now shifted to local and immediate concerns. Poets like Ezekiel, Keki Daruwalla, Jussawalla, and Dom Moraes grappled with their sense of identity and alienation, often feeling estranged from mainstream society due to their diverse religious backgrounds. Makarand Paranjape notes, Indian English poets of the period,

> find India an extremely hard place to live in. They have a difficult and, often, unhappy relationship with their country. These poets do not rejoice in the birth of the new nation, nor are they proud of their newly acquired citizenship. Instead, they feel marginalized, cornered, even overwhelmed by the harsh and unpleasant realities of their country - its poverty, filth, decay, hypocrisy, unrest, violence, corruption, and disorderliness. They feel lost and betrayed, unable to trust the life that is offered to them, unable even to relax in their own land. There is a constant tension, an uneasiness, a discomfort which informs their work. (Paranjape 141)

Urban expansion and the complexities of city life emerged as prominent themes in modernist poetry, with notable poets from this era including Shiv Kumar, P. Lal, A. K. Ramanujan, Keki Daruwalla, Dom Moraes, Adil Jussawalla, Gieve Patel, and Eunice de Souza.

Additionally, Mumbai emerged as the new epicentre of modern poetry, supplanting Bengal. Poets associated with Mumbai, known collectively as the "Bombay Poets," often reflected the city's culture in their work. Ezekiel's exploration of everyday urban life captures the essence of city living, making significant contributions to this genre. His poetry, including the poem "A Morning Walk," portrays Mumbai with its multifaceted reality—its slums, noise, and diverse population. Ezekiel finds beauty and meaning in these "mundane" experiences, choosing not to escape reality but to find acceptance within it. His commitment to engaging with the urban world is evident in his poem "Background, Casually," where he

shifts from feeling like an outsider to embracing the dynamic and complex nature of Bombay as a representation of modern urban India (Patke 248):

> Barbaric city sick with slums,
> Deprived of seasons, blessed with rains,
> I have made my commitments now.
> This is one: to stay where I am,
> As others choose to give themselves
> In some remote and backward place,
> My background place is where I am. (Ezekiel 119)

Ezekiel employs humour to critique fewer desirable aspects of Indian society, including regional stereotypes and the challenges of limited English proficiency. His use of free verse, characterized by simple stanzas and a steady rhythm, is marked by clear language and a deliberate avoidance of historical references, mythology, and excessive rhetoric. This stylistic approach emphasizes emotional control, self-deprecation, irony, urban themes, and scepticism, setting a precedent for future Indian poets.

Dom Moraes explores themes of loneliness, identity, and relationships in his poetry. In works such as “A Letter” and “Absence,” Moraes articulates his personal struggles with anxiety and despair, which stem from his quest for a cultural identity. This struggle results in a persistent sense of alienation, a theme that is emblematic of Modernist literature.

Dilip Chitre’s poetry also engages with Modernist themes, including alienation, modernity, urban life, and the erosion of cultural roots. His poem “The Falling of the Banyan Tree” poignantly reflects on the loss of tradition and the consequences of modernization. Similarly, “Father Returning Home” captures the alienation and loneliness inherent in modern metropolitan life, depicting a father “standing among silent commuters” who are emotionally disconnected despite being surrounded by people.

Among the poets who emerged in the 1960s, Kamala Das (1934-2009) is particularly notable for her significant impact. Her poetry is marked by a fierce and unflinching honesty about the challenges faced by women, particularly in a context where traditional norms often impose silence on female voices. Kamala Das is renowned for her exploration of female experience, addressing themes often considered taboo, such as female sexuality and societal expectations. Her work frequently exhibits a flamboyant sensuality, as exemplified in poems

like “The Looking-glass,” where she boldly confronts societal and personal struggles related to identity and gender:

…Gift him all,
Gift him what makes you woman, the scent of
Long hair, the musk of sweat between the breasts,
The warm shock of menstrual blood, and all your
Endless female hungers. … (15)

Arun Kolatkar’s renowned collection *Jejuri* (1976) distinguishes itself by shifting focus from grand mythic narratives to the mundane aspects of daily life. Although the poems acknowledge the mythic origins of gods and demons, Kolatkar’s attention is directed towards the ordinary, such as a passing butterfly, rather than elaborate religious rituals. This work subverts traditional depictions of spirituality by emphasizing a more understated and accessible spirituality, conveyed through the simple details of everyday existence.

Arvind Krishna Mehrotra’s body of work includes several experimental collections, such as *Bharatmata: A Prayer* (1966), *Woodcuts on Paper* (1967), *Pomes/Poemes/Poemas* (1971), *Nine Enclosures* (1976), *Distance in Statute Miles* (1982), *Middle Earth* (1984), and *The Transfiguring Places* (1998). Mehrotra’s poetry often engages with contemporary social and political issues, employing wit and subtlety. For instance, his poems “October” and “House by the Mill” illustrate his talent for providing incisive commentary on contemporary events, such as the Emergency by Indira Gandhi, blending humour with critical observation:

A woman addresses the nation;
    What big ears she has.
The fabulous Red Riding-Hoods
    In gladed wood
Burn flare-ups, but freedom’s too prudent
    To risk its skin.
O house by the mill we’re trapped in. (Mehrotra)

The evolution of modern Indian poetry reveals a notable shift towards a more sceptical and rationalist perspective, diverging from traditional themes of spiritualism and mythology (Patke 260). Keki N. Daruwalla, a poet from the Parsi community, exemplifies this shift by incorporating his experiences as a police officer into his exploration of modern

India's complexities. His work reflects a critical engagement with contemporary issues through a rationalist lens.

Jayant Mahapatra's poetry frequently addressed themes of identity, history, and personal experience. While Mahapatra acknowledges the beauty of life, he does not shy away from confronting its harsher realities. His poem "Hunger," for example, tackles themes of poverty, social injustice, and the desperation that can drive human actions, thereby adding depth and complexity to his exploration of societal issues.

The 21st century has seen the emergence of new poetic voices that address contemporary themes such as terrorism, identity, displacement, feminism, urban life, and personal experience. Notable poets of this era include Meena Alexander, Imtiaz Dharker, Jeet Thayil, Anjum Hasan, and Arundhathi Subramaniam, among others. These poets continue to expand the thematic and stylistic boundaries of Indian English poetry.

1.9.2 City in Indian English Poems

City life has become a prominent theme in modern poetry. Pre-independence poets like Sarojini Naidu have written some poem on city. Naidu's "Imperial Delhi" (1912) captures the city's immortality and resilience. Despite its tumultuous history, Delhi retains its grandeur as an "unbroken symbol of proud histories." Naidu also penned romanticized tributes to Hyderabad, such as "Nightfall in the City of Hyderabad," blending natural and cultural elements into a unified celebration of the city's beauty and heritage. In "In the Bazaars of Hyderabad," Naidu celebrates the vibrant life of Indian bazaars. Written as a dialogue between the poet and vendors, the poem overflows with rich imagery and sensory details, vividly capturing the colours, sounds, and culture of traditional Indian marketplaces. This celebration of local artistry and heritage aligns with the nationalist spirit of her time, highlighting pride in India's crafts and traditions.

In his book *Postcolonial Indian City-Literature: Policy, Politics and Evolution*, Dibyakusum Ray examines the portrayal of Indian cities in literature from Independence to the present. Ray argues that early Indian city literature (1950s-1960s) established "realism" as a dominant style, particularly in urban-centric themes. Cities are depicted through various lenses, including generational conflict, metaphorical anxiety, personal liberation, and social inequalities.

Kamala Das's "Summer in Calcutta" (1965) vividly explores personal themes against the backdrop of Calcutta. Through evocative language and a confessional style, Das delves into issues of love, lust, heartbreak, and identity, offering an intimate view of her inner world and the vibrant environment of Calcutta. Nissim Ezekiel's portrayal of Mumbai is rich in its complexity, capturing the city's vibrancy, chaos, contradictions, and challenges. Ezekiel's poems, such as "Urban," "A Morning Walk," and "Background, Casually," provide a nuanced understanding of Mumbai, reflecting both his personal experiences and broader social and cultural dynamics.

Jayant Mahapatra's poetry, particularly in works like "A Dawn at Puri" and "The Temple Road," portrays the holy city of Puri with profound spiritual and cultural depth. Through vivid imagery and reflective insights, Mahapatra brings Puri to life, depicting it as a place of significant religious heritage and human complexity. His poems offer a nuanced understanding of Puri, highlighting its spiritual importance while exploring its rich cultural tapestry. In contrast, Adil Jussawalla's depiction of urban life in his poem "Approaching Santa Cruz Airport" presents a different facet of city existence. Jussawalla captures the bustling nature of the city and the stark contrasts between wealth and poverty. The city, in Jussawalla's poem, functions as a "surrogate" mother, a place of chaos and opportunity where individuals can attempt to rebuild their lives amidst the disorder. His work reflects the city's role as both a site of challenge and a potential for renewal.

Agha Shahid Ali's collection *The Half-Inch Himalayas* (1987) includes several evocative poems on Delhi provide poignant meditations on the city's layered history, cultural richness, and the tension between its enduring traditions and the transformations brought about by modernity and colonial legacies. In "The Butcher," Ali meditates on the coexistence of beauty and brutality in a bustling lane near Jama Masjid. By referencing Ghalib and Mir's Urdu poetry in the butcher's domain, the poem highlights the intersection of violence and art, illustrating the complexities of human experience.

In "The Fate of the Astrologer Sitting on the Pavement outside the Delhi Railway Station," Ali juxtaposes the astrologer's static presence with the relentless motion of modern urban life. Seated outside the bustling Delhi railway station, a symbol of mobility and transition, the astrologer's cries for attention are drowned in the dust and chaos of industrialization. The metaphor of planets "gathering dust" underscores the diminished relevance of traditional wisdom in an increasingly mechanized and indifferent world. "After

Seeing Kozintsev's King Lear in Delhi" mourns the decay and loss of history and identity, serving as a poignant critique of colonialism. The poem reflects how colonial rule uprooted cultures, leaving behind fractured legacies and a sense of dislocation amidst historical remnants.

1.10 Research Questions and Objectives

Reading a city through modern poetry offers a unique lens to understand the urban experience, capturing a complete interplay between modernism, city, and urban experiences that a poet distils to get the essence of rhythm and emotions. Modern poetry allows the poet to explore the city's soul, revealing the impact of urbanization on the urban experience and modernism in the expression of emotions. By engaging with these poetic representations of each city, i.e. Surat and Mumbai, we gain a richer understanding of the cities, their contradictions, development, and struggles, enhancing both the physical and psychological landscapes of urban spaces as experienced by the poet. In this exploration, this research delves into the question of how Surat and Mumbai developed with time, and how these changes are reflected in respective poetic forms – Surat in Gujarati Ghazal and Mumbai in Indian English poems. The primary research questions guiding this study are: How do the poetic representations of Surat and Mumbai differ in their portrayal of urban life, culture, and social dynamics? What does the juxtaposition of Ghazals from Surat and contemporary poems from Mumbai reveal about the unique and shared experiences of these cities' inhabitants? How do these literary forms reflect the historical, economic, and cultural transformations of Surat and Mumbai? It also investigates the shift in experience and perception of poets with changing generations. Modernity and modernism's impact on the city and its influence on poetry remain at the centre of the research.

The objectives of this study are to explore how the city and modernism shape modernist poetry, focusing on Surat and Mumbai. It aims to understand the concept of modernism in Gujarati and Indian English literature and trace the narratives of these cities as depicted in their respective poetic traditions. By comparing Surat Ghazals and Mumbai poems, the study seeks to analyse how each city is portrayed within these forms, examining the evolution of poetic perspectives, treatment, and language across generations. Furthermore, the research delves into the factors contributing to the differentiation between these genres in their portrayal of urban spaces and investigates how the cultural and literary

traditions of Surat and Mumbai influence their representation in ghazals and Indian English poems.

1.11 Hypothesis

The central argument of this study is that the distinct poetic forms of Ghazal and Indian English poems not only reflect the unique cultural, historical, and socio-economic landscapes of their respective cities but also reveal how modernism and urbanization have differently shaped the literary expressions of these urban spaces. Urbanization and modernity have profoundly altered urban experiences, leading poets to focus on the realities of daily urban life, characterized by frustration, alienation, and disenchantment, thereby inspiring a modernist approach to their writing.

The hypothesis is that while both Surat and Mumbai have undergone significant transformations, their poetic representations diverge in response to their specific urban experiences, with Surat Ghazals maintaining a closer connection to traditional forms and regional influences, and Mumbai poems embracing a more cosmopolitan and contemporary voice. This study posits that these differences are rooted in the cities' historical trajectories, cultural contexts, literary legacy, and the evolving perspectives of their poets, offering valuable insights into the broader relationship between urban environments and literary modernism in India.

1.12 Method and Methodology

The research is conducted using a qualitative approach, focusing on a detailed textual analysis of selected poems. This method involves close reading to examine themes, motifs, and styles, particularly how urban experiences and modernity are reflected in the poetry. The study also incorporates historical and cultural contextualisation to explore the development of Surat and Mumbai, emphasising how urbanisation and modernity have shaped these cities and influenced the poets. Additionally, it investigates the literary traditions of the two cities to understand their impact on the respective poetic forms.

The research employs a comparative analysis to evaluate the themes, forms, styles, expressions, and influences of modernism in the selected poems. An interdisciplinary approach is utilized, integrating a theoretical framework from urban studies to analyse how the transformation of cities influences poetry, drawing on concepts from urban sociology,

cultural geography, and postcolonial urbanism. Furthermore, the study applies theories of literary modernism to understand how the poets engage with themes of alienation, disillusionment, and fragmentation in response to urbanization.

Content analysis and archival methods are employed to collect both primary and secondary data. Content analysis is utilized to systematically examine and interpret selected poems, focusing on the representation of urban experiences, modernity, and the impact of city life on poetic expression. This method allows for a detailed exploration of themes, motifs, and stylistic elements within the texts, providing valuable primary data that directly addresses the research questions. Additionally, archival research is conducted to access original manuscripts, historical documents, and literary collections that offer crucial primary sources, as well as secondary materials such as critical essays, reviews, and previous studies on the poetic traditions of Surat and Mumbai.

The study focuses on Gujarati Ghazals that describe Surat and Indian English poems that depict Mumbai, both written after India's Independence. The selection includes works from various poets, spanning from the post-independence period to the present, regardless of whether the poets are still residing in that city. These poems have been chosen based on their thematic emphasis on the cities, reflecting the poets' engagement with the urban landscapes. In case of Gujarati ghazals, the researcher has translated them where needed.

1.13 Summary of Chapters

The thesis is divided into four chapters, including the introduction. The introductory chapter explores the concept of modernism and its influence on cities and literature. It also traces the history and evolution of the ghazal and Indian English poetry, setting the foundation for the study.

The second chapter focuses on Surat and is divided into three sections: the history of Surat, Surat in literature, and a critical analysis of ghazals about Surat. Poets have composed several works addressing contemporary issues in Surat, such as natural disasters and socio-political events. The ghazal, a popular genre among Surat poets, has been used to express both love and resentment for the city. A detailed analysis reveals how modernity impacts city life, as reflected in themes of alienation, detachment, and existential crisis within the urban landscape. While poets adhered to the traditional ghazal form, they infused it with modern themes.

The third chapter examines Mumbai, formerly known as Bombay, and is also divided into three sections: the history of Mumbai, Mumbai in literature, and an analysis of Indian English poems about Mumbai. Post-independence, Mumbai became a hub of modernity and development, attracting people from across India, cutting across class and caste. Known as the "city of dreams," Mumbai has inspired poets to write boldly about its multifaceted life, covering daily routines, poverty, alienation, unemployment, local trains, and even dogs and beggars.

The fourth chapter provides a comparative analysis of the two cities, their poetic forms, and the depiction of urban life. It examines the historical connections of Surat and Mumbai, the backgrounds of their poets, the representation of city life, and the use of poetic forms and devices. Mumbai poets utilized modern forms, language, and techniques, offering a vivid and multifaceted portrayal of the city, often incorporating specific locales and events. Despite their critiques of urban challenges, they maintained a strong sense of belonging, with poets like Nissim Ezekiel viewing Mumbai as integral to their identity. In contrast, Surat poets adopted a more generalized approach, using traditional ghazal forms and language while avoiding specific details or incidents. This comparative analysis highlights the contrasting methods of portraying urban life in Surat and Mumbai.

The concluding chapter summarizes the thesis's key findings, underscoring the distinct modernist approaches of poets from both cities. While both Surat and Mumbai poets belong to the modernist tradition, their treatment of urban themes differs significantly. Mumbai poets embraced a bold and provocative style, utilizing explicit language, modern imagery, and even offensive expressions to capture the complexities of urban life. Their work reflects a strong connection to the city, demonstrating a sense of belonging. Surat poets, on the other hand, remained rooted in traditional forms and adopted a broader, less specific perspective on city life. These differences illuminate the varied impact of modernism on the literary traditions of Surat and Mumbai.