

Conceptualisation of Lahore in Akhtar's *Lahore, I Am Coming* (2017): A Corpus Stylistic Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Urban literature deals with the conceptualisation of a city as characterised in a literary work. In these writings, the city is contested as a social and conceptual challenge. The current study examined the conceptualisation of the city of Lahore in Akhtar's poetic collection Lahore, I Am Coming from the perspective of urban imaginaries utilising a corpus stylistic approach. For this purpose, theorisations related to urban imaginaries based on Cinar and Bender's concept of the collective imagination of a city and Shweta Sur's notion of heterotopic urban spaces were utilised as the theoretical framework. Moreover, the current analysis utilised the corpus techniques of keyword-in-context (KWIC) and concordance analysis to analyse the occurrence of the word Lahore in the selected corpus. This was done in an attempt to trace the conceptualisation of Lahore in the selected text. The findings showed that the collective imagination of Lahore can be mapped around four different kinds of sub-themes i.e. culture, history, the city vibe, and heterotopias. Furthermore, the concordance analysis of KWIC showed that heterotopic sites within Lahore are connected with the urban ecosystem shedding light on environmental degradation and ecological imbalance. The study is particularly useful in highlighting the contemporary Pakistani urban settlements and their portrayal in Pakistani literature. Furthermore, it has provided a new dimension to the fields of urban ecology and ecocriticism by reflecting on ecological imbalance and environmental hazards which are very much connected with the urban landscape of Lahore.

Keywords: city literature; collective imagination; concordance analysis; KWIC Lahore; urban heterotopias

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the concept of urban space has become the centre of interdisciplinary debates within the broader discipline of cultural studies (Verloo & Bertolini, 2020). It draws insights and theorisations from a range of disciplines such as architecture, cultural geography, urban planning, sociology, literary criticism, and social history. Such theorisations help in understanding the complex interaction of various elements of urban space. These elements include buildings, streets, people, and green spaces. It also focusses on the ways that these elements come together to play their role in the conceptualisation and representation of a particular city (Chambers, 2002).

The role of urban theory is to provide a formal definition of a city as well as the diverse mechanisms by which a specific city can be conceptualised, characterised, and represented (Cinar and Bender, 2007). Lynch's (1960) work on urban theory highlights that the city is conceptualised in the minds of its inhabitants in the form of perceived mental images. These images are shaped as a result of everyday experiences and encounters of urban inhabitants with the city spaces.

According to Lindner and Meissner (2020), this phenomenon of looking at the everyday life of the city in terms of tourism, city branding, art and architecture, urban planning, and policy-making through different media and disciplines is broadly studied under the domain of urban imaginaries. In the twentieth century, urban theorists such as Georg Simmel and Walter Benjamin came forward with their works in which they linked urbanism with processes of the human mind. They are regarded as pioneers in the field of urban imaginaries as they paved the way for grounding urban imaginaries as an essential component of urban research (Lindner & Meissner, 2020).

Recent studies in the field of urban imaginaries have explored diverse concepts related to the city (Anand & Tripathi, 2022; Ballard et al., 2017; Watson, 2015). They focussed on the global challenges that cities currently face in today's world. In terms of literature, the realities of city living have readily been depicted in the works of modern novelists such as Dickens and Joyce. Similarly, the poetic works of Thompson and Baudelaire reflect striking urban images related to different phenomena of urban life (Levy, 1978). Keeping this in mind, it becomes pertinent for researchers to explore these diverse concepts related to contemporary urban spaces in the works of literature. In this regard, the current study maintains that Pakistani poetry can be a useful source to analyse urban city life in Pakistan from the perspective of urban imaginaries. This is a lesser-explored area which requires a lot of attention.

The current study examined the conceptualisation of Lahore in Akhtar's poetic collection *Lahore, I Am Coming* (2017), from the perspective of urban imaginaries. This work deals with the poet's sense of personal loss and alienation with an emphasis on the landscape of Lahore. The theoretical framework was based on Cinar and Bender's (2007) concept of the collective imagination of a city and Shweta Sur's (2022) notion of heterotopic urban spaces and their relationship with urban ecology. Furthermore, corpus stylistics was utilised as a methodological approach for this study. Corpus stylistics combines stylistics and corpus linguistics by making use of a variety of different corpus techniques that aid in the analysis of literary texts. This helps to outline a variety of textual features that might go unnoticed while carrying out a conventional stylistic analysis (Fischer-Starcke, 2010; Mahlberg, 2012; March et al., 2023; Murphy, 2015).

The current study aimed at portraying the collective imagination of Lahore in the selected corpus. For this purpose, it utilised the corpus techniques of KWIC and concordance analysis to analyse the occurrence of the word *Lahore* in the selected corpus. This further aids in understanding the conceptualisation of Lahore in this literary text. Moreover, it aimed at unravelling the interrelation between heterotopic sites and urban ecology in the selected text. The study can be helpful in highlighting the portrayal of current Pakistani urban settlements and city spaces and their representation in contemporary Pakistani literature.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study attempted to answer the following questions:

1. How does the concordance analysis of KWIC *Lahore* highlight the collective imagination of the city in terms of the recurrent themes in Akhtar's *Lahore, I Am Coming*?
2. How does it further elucidate the interrelation between heterotopic sites and urban ecology in the selected text?

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section outlines the utility of corpus linguistic techniques for literary analysis by citing studies relevant to the corpus stylistic domain. Moreover, it explores the possibilities concerning the usefulness of urban literature as a category of literary analysis. Relevant studies on the different features of urban literature that are used in literary research such as urbanisation, development, heterotopic spaces, and others have been cited. Finally, previous studies on the selected text have been cited to establish the gap for the present research in the existing body of literature.

CORPUS TECHNIQUES FOR LITERARY ANALYSIS

In recent years, there has been an increasing trend to use corpus tools for the analysis of literary texts (Culpeper, 2009; McIntyre & Walker, 2010; Mahlberg et al. 2019). Such corpus research techniques can be quantitative or qualitative. They either support the existing findings obtained through intuition or provide new insights into the literary analysis (Adolphs, 2006; Stubbs, 2005). In this regard, research has been conducted to study authorship attribution (Holmes & Forsyth, 1995), measuring generic differences (Mealand, 1997) and accumulated words and phrases (Rommel, 1994) utilising literary texts as data for analysis.

Moustafa (2022) highlighted that corpus stylistic research focuses on the analysis of word distributions in a literary text to examine specific textual features. These features include those relating to the author, literary text, or any character. It also makes use of a variety of techniques to extract literary meanings using corpora. The most commonly used techniques include frequency lists, keyword in context (KWIC) and concordances, keyness and keyword analysis, collocations, and clusters (Biber, 2011). Studies have been conducted in the domain of corpus stylistics that focus on the use of corpus techniques to analyse literary texts (Culpeper 2009; Mahlberg & McIntyre 2011; Montoro & McIntyre, 2019). Culpeper (2009) carried out a corpus stylistic analysis to study character talk from Shakespeare's play, *Romeo and Juliet*. The keyword analysis was carried out utilising Halliday's (1994) model which also focused on part-of-speech and semantic categories. The findings showed that these categories can play a significant role in corpus stylistic analysis. In this study, they helped in grouping lower frequency words such as (metaphorical) terms emphasising colours for Romeo and plural common nouns for Mercutio which would have otherwise gone unnoticed by keyword analysis. Similarly, Mahlberg and McIntyre (2011) studied the classification of keywords into categories such as text-centred and reader-centred to examine the characterisation, setting, and thematic signals in Ian Fleming's novel *Casino Royale* (1953).

The current study made use of KWIC and concordance analysis for the analysis of the literary text *Lahore, I Am Coming* (2017) by Akhter. Sinclair (1991) defined concordance as the index or all the occurrences of a particular word form, each pertaining to its own textual environment or context. According to Muhsinovna and Aminovich (2022), concordance analysis has been recognised as the most commonly used corpus analytic tool in corpus research. It looks into the list of occurrences of a particular word form in a corpus alongside the context in which that word occurs which is signalled through a certain number of words on either side of the search word. Concordance programmes are also commonly referred to as KWIC (Keywords in Context) (Scott, 2010). They can function as highly effective tools for corpus stylistic analysis as they analyse the examples of a particular word or character in their original textual contexts (Muhsinovna & Aminovich, 2022).

Studies (Mahlberg, 2010; Milojkovic, 2011; Jaafar, 2017) demonstrate the role of concordance analysis in the interpretation of the thematic context of a literary corpus. Foreexample, Milojkovic (2011) carried out a collocation-based study of concordance lines of the words ‘light’, ‘God’, ‘hope’, ‘day’ and ‘night’ from the entire corpus of Larkin’s poetry (1922-1985) to unravel atheism and depression in Larkin’s poetry. A work by Jaafar (2017) studied Harris’ psychological horror novel, *The Silence of the Lambs* (1988), utilising a corpus stylistics approach to highlight the importance of computer-based corpus techniques over intuitive analysis. The analysis focused on examining keywords, key semantic domains, and clusters utilising Mahlberg & McIntyre’s (2011) model. Furthermore, concordance analysis was utilised to examine the association of thematic signal keywords with the context which in turn facilitates the interpretation of meaning. The findings exhibited that in the selected corpus, long n-grams were more significantly tied down to the thematic aspect of the novel by revealing more information about the primary events and plot as compared to short n-grams.

URBAN LITERATURE AS A CATEGORY OF ANALYSIS

Urban literature addresses the conceptualisation of a city and urban experience as portrayed in a work of literature. Urban literature as a category of analysis deals with identifying relationships between cities and the literature produced in and about them. In such literary works, the city is approached as a formal, social and conceptual challenge (Rotella, 2017). Rotella (2017) in his study explored the concepts of urbanisation, development, and dense overlapping of orders through a wide range of 20th-century novels such as Theodore Dreiser’s *Sister Carrie* (1900), Edith Wharton’s *The House of Mirth* (1905), Tom Wolfe’s *The Bonfire of the Vanities* (1987), and others.

The chief characteristic feature of urban literature is that it explores the experiential quality of a city by focussing on the city landscape as portrayed in a particular piece of literature. To achieve this, Levy (1978) points out that the setting of a literary work takes precedence over character and rises at the level of the protagonist. Work by Levy (1978) explored the representation of Paris as an urban city in Baudelaire’s poetry. Furthermore, she also explores two French novels, Raymond’s Queneau’s *Zazi dans le Métro* and Alain Robbe Grillet’s *Project pour une révolution à New York*, to describe the urban elements and kaleidoscopic experiences related to the city in these fictional works.

In the last few years, studies emphasising the role of the city and urban sphere in shaping the urban experiences of city inhabitants through the works of literature have been conducted (Amran & Termizi, 2020; Chernetsova & Maslova, 2019; Khaidzir et al., 2022). For example, a study by Amran & Termizi (2020) explored the urban space of the city of Malaya utilising Elkin’s (2016) concept of ‘flaneuse’ (a female urban wanderer). It studied the novel, *Where the Sunrise is Red* (2018) from the perspective of a female protagonist named May Anderson. The findings uncovered that in the novel, Anderson as a ‘flaneuse’ actively engages with the public sphere of Malaya in the form of various activities. These distinct activities are reflected in the novel in terms of its characterisation, physical setting, and symbols. The study reconstructed the image of Baudelaire’s flaneur by highlighting the importance of public urban spaces for Asian women where they can feel visible and connected.

Recently, there has been an increased interest among researchers to explore the notion of heterotopic urban spaces through the medium of literature (Knight, 2014; Barba & Richardson, 2019). The term, heterotopia, was coined by Michel Foucault (1966) which first appeared in his book *The Order of Things* (1966). This term is derived from the Greek hetero (“different”, “other”) and

topos (“place”) which refers to a place that is different from any other place. This means that every society possesses its own heterotopias (Gendolavigna, 2021). A study by Barba and Richardson (2019) explored the heterotopic spaces in two fictional stories i.e. Borges’s “The Aleph and Lord Dunsany’s “The Wonderful Window”. These heterotopic spaces signal the sense of loss and bewilderment experienced by the characters in these stories.

RIZWAN AKHTAR’S *LAHORE, I AM COMING*

Only a few studies (Iftikhar, et al. 2021; Saeed & Ahmed, 2019; Saeed, et al., 2021) have been conducted on Akhtar’s *Lahore, I Am Coming* (2017). Saeed, et al. (2021) have explored the use of figurative devices such as simile, metaphor, personification, assonance and others in two of the poems from Akhtar’s (2017) poetic collection i.e. “Love Signs In” and “Love in Times of Load Shedding”. Similarly, Iftikhar, et al. (2021) carried out a corpus-based study to examine the use of metaphor “silence’ in the selected text. For this purpose, Lakoff and Johnson’s (1980) conceptual metaphor theory was utilised as a theoretical framework. The findings revealed that the metaphor of silence signals certain key themes in the text such as love, colonialism and imperialism, and representation of females.

The current study examined the conceptualisation of the city of Lahore utilising a corpus stylistic analysis. It must be emphasised that no prior study has been conducted on the selected text from this particular perspective.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH DESIGN

The last few years have seen an increasing trend in the use of corpus tools and techniques for the interpretation of different literary texts and genres (Biber, 2011; Culpeper 2009; Fischer-Starke, 2010). This use of corpus research methods and techniques for literary analysis is broadly investigated under the umbrella of corpus stylistics. Owing to this, the current study is qualitative in nature. It utilised the corpus stylistic approach as the method of analysis to study the literary themes surrounding the KWIC *Lahore* in the selected corpus comprising Akhtar’s (2017) poetic collection. Muhsinovna and Aminovich (2022) have termed KWIC and concordance analysis as frequently used corpus techniques in corpus research. The KWIC *Lahore* was identified, mapped and interpreted on the basis of specific themes through the analysis of concordance lines in the light of a theoretical framework based on urban imaginaries (see Figure 1).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

CINAR AND BENDER’S (2007) NOTION OF COLLECTIVE IMAGINATION

Within the broader spectrum of the urban theory that defines the city in terms of the relationship between an urban space and the urban experience of the city inhabitants, Cinar and Bender (2007) talk about the concept of collective imagination of an urban space. It refers to the phenomenon in which the city which has its own landscape and material existence is experienced, solidified and continually reproduced in the minds of its inhabitants through a range of various daily practices

associated with that urban space in the form of travels, communicative practices and social encounters among the city dwellers (Cinar and Bender, 2007).

Yazici et al. (2023) in their study assert that the city is imagined in totality as a single space and possesses distinctive features of its own. This distinguishes it from the larger social and physical peripheries. Moreover, imagination works on a collective basis because it is constitutive of social reality in terms of the creation of an urban public culture within a city that is reflected through the daily practices of its inhabitants and serves to weave a sense of connectedness in that urban space (Cinar & Bender, 2007).

According to Cinar and Bender (2007), there exist different tools for building the collective imagination of an urban space. They include popular media, film, art, trade, literature, market relations, or personal networks (see Figure 1). A study by Mah (2011) further highlights that the conceptualisation of a city in terms of the collective imagination of its inhabitants is evoked through different material spaces that exist within the bounds of the geographic space of that city. Such material spaces include monuments, statues, paintings, architecture, libraries, residential projects, urban planning and development, parks, green spaces and others (Cinar & Bender, 2007). In this way, the material space of a city is experienced and reified in the minds of the city dwellers in the form of collective imagination.

SHWETA SUR'S (2022) NOTION OF HETEROTOPIAS IN URBAN SPACES

Sur (2022) has based her conceptualisation of urban heterotopias on Foucault's concept of heterotopia (1984), which is further elaborated by different scholars in the field of urban studies and human geography. According to Foucault (1984), heterotopias are several distinct spaces within a single real place. The city dwellers engage with such heterotopic sites through diverse spatial practices which reflect their way of claiming that heterogeneous urban space. A heterotopic space is defined by Foucault (1984) as an in-between space or a space of otherness that is simultaneously both physical as well as mental and formed at the very founding of society. Urban heterotopias have many contesting layers that derive their meaning in relation to other spaces outside of themselves.

Foucault (1984) terms cultural and natural spots existing in urban space such as libraries, museums, cemeteries, Scandinavian saunas, brothels, wetlands, gardens and colonies as heterotopic sites. Sur (2022) views heterotopic spaces as 'public space heterotopias' allowing the diffusion of people, activities, and ideas. They function as territories within the urban fabric of public spaces which are open to all with no permanent physical borders (see Figure 1).

Sur (2022) has come up with an ecological dimension to Foucault's (1984) concept of heterotopia by linking urban heterotopias with urban ecology. It deals with heterotopias within human settlements as part of the urban ecosystem. It has provided a new dimension to the field of ecocriticism by reflecting ecological imbalance and its damaging effects in the form of climate change, environmental degradation, and environmental hazards connected with urban planning and development which are very much connected with the city landscape and urban heterotopias. It also advocates for the restoration of ecological spaces to combat the menace of an environmental crisis. Furthermore, Sur (2022) has based her theorisation on the critical analysis of different South Asian literary texts that promote environmental and ecological consciousness. She has studied urban heterotopias as part of the urban ecosystem to shed light on fictional writings that promote the greening of South Asian regions.

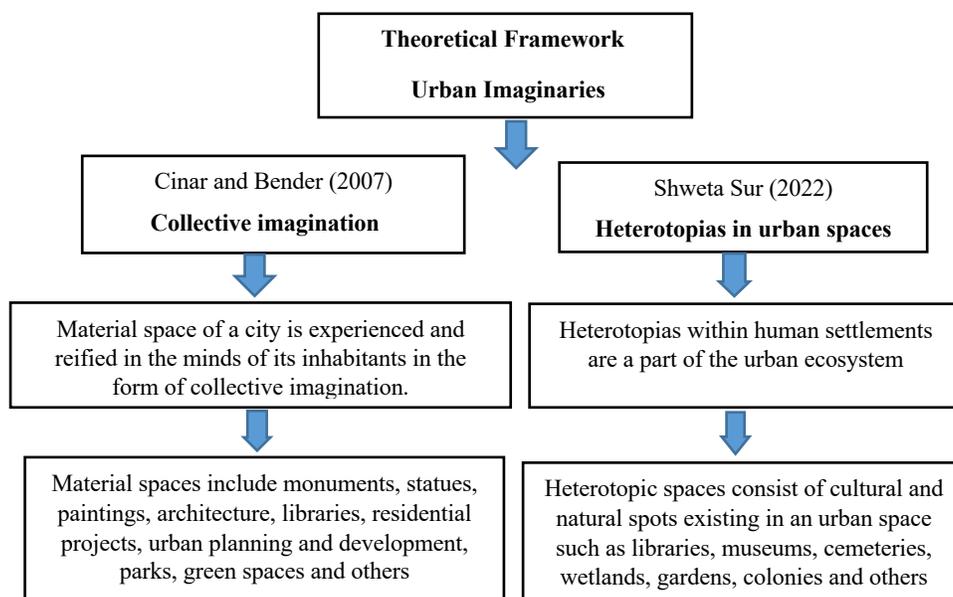


FIGURE 1. Theoretical framework based on urban imaginaries

THE CORPUS

The corpus construction for the present study involved several steps. The contemporary Pakistani poetic work *Lahore, I Am Coming* (Akhtar, 2017) was selected for the current study. This poetic collection was specifically selected because it was electronically available without any copyright restrictions. Moreover, it revolves around the different aspects of urban life surrounding the city of Lahore which is the focus of the current study. The text was downloaded from an online source in electronic format. A corpus of 185 poems was created and cleaned comprising 6,539 word types and 25,289 word tokens. Cleaned files were saved in .txt format in a folder to be used in the corpus analysis software tool Antconc 3.5.7 (Anthony, 2018).

DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURE

With the help of the software Antconc 3.5.7 (Anthony, 2018), the wordlist was developed which helped in exploring the frequently occurring content words from the corpus under study. Wordlists aid in identifying different themes (Zahra and Abbas, 2020) and determining the main focus of the corpus (Baker, 2006). Keeping this in mind, for the analysis of the selected corpus, The KWIC *Lahore* was chosen from the wordlist with 57 concordance hits in a total of 185 text files (poems) as shown in Figure 2. The reason for its selection was that in the wordlist that was generated, it was found to be a frequently occurring content word that was also related to the representation of city space. Furthermore, the word *Lahore* also appears in the title of the text under study.

Afterwards, in the light of the theoretical framework, the various themes referring to urban imaginaries that are associated with KWIC *Lahore* were identified, mapped, and analysed through the manual analysis of concordance lines.

The concordance analysis was carried out by looking at the left and right collocates of the node word *Lahore* (see Figure 2). The concordance list of the KWIC *Lahore* was generated by limiting the 'search window size' to 80 characters and 10 words on both sides of the node word. This was done to extract a broader meaning surrounding the KWIC in each instance. However, it

must be noted that for the analysis of concordance lines, the tool of file view was also used to get an in-depth understanding and identification of themes associated with KWIC *Lahore*. It is worth mentioning that the concordance analysis of KWIC *Lahore* revealed various themes related to the city space of Lahore. Nonetheless, due to the limited scope of the study, the current analysis only focused on the following: culture, history, the city vibe, and heterotopias.

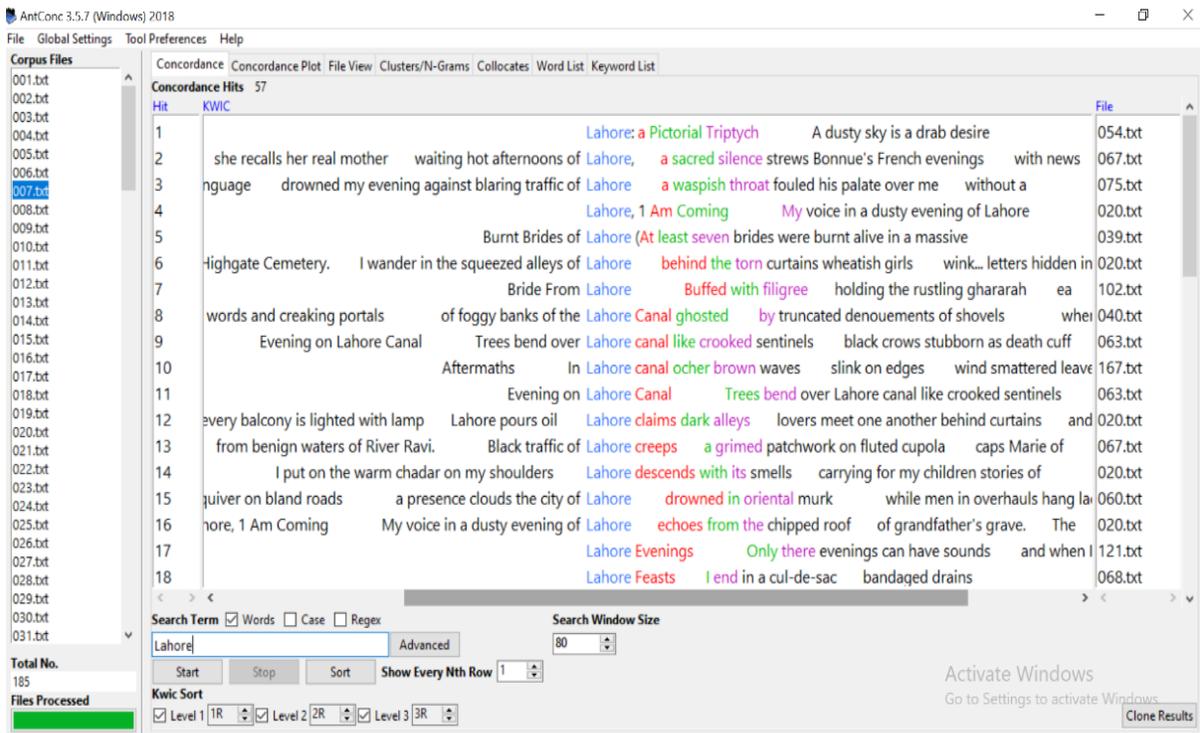


FIGURE 2. Concordance list of KWIC *Lahore* in AntConc 3.5.7

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The thematic investigation of the KWIC *Lahore* in *Lahore, I Am Coming* (2017) was carried out utilising a theoretical framework based on urban imaginaries. Iftikhar et al. (2021) also utilised corpus tools to analyse the text *Lahore, I Am Coming* (2017) in which they carried out a concordance analysis to analyse the KWIC *silence* using Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) conceptual metaphor theory. Owing to the frequent use of corpus tools such as KWIC and concordance analysis in corpus research (Muhsinova and Aminovich (2022), they are also useful tools for corpus stylistic analysis of a literary text (Biber, 2011).

Utilising the perspective of urban imaginaries, the current analysis centres on the fictional representation of Lahore city as an indicative of contemporary Pakistani urban settlements. The poems in the aforementioned poetic collection, possessing the KWIC *Lahore* deal with the below-discussed significant themes that were mapped out through the concordance analysis of the node word *Lahore*.

COLLECTIVE IMAGINATION OF THE CITY LAHORE

Cities are imagined, realized and lived in the form of collective experiences of the city inhabitants. This conceptualisation of the city in the minds of city inhabitants happens on a collective basis which is termed according to Cinar and Bender (2007) as the collective imagination of that city. It happens in terms of day to day exchange of city dwellers with different material spaces within geographic perimeters of that city (Mah, 2011).

According to Mahlberg (2010), following the corpus stylistic approach, concordance analysis as a corpus tool helps in the interpretation of the thematic context of a literary corpus. Based on the concordance analysis of KWIC *Lahore* in the selected text, the collective imagination of the city of Lahore as a present-day Pakistani urban city can be mapped around four different kinds of sub-themes i.e. culture, history, the city vibe and heterotopias.

CULTURE

The analysis of concordance lines shows that the KWIC *Lahore* refers to the customs followed by the inhabitants of Lahore which are deeply ingrained in the centuries-long traditional practices of its people. Every city has its own culture that is reflected in the daily practices of the city inhabitants and reified in the collective imagination (Cinar & Bender, 2007). As shown in Figure 3, the concordance lines 7, 18, and 48 indicate Lahore's rich cultural heritage in terms of the customs of weddings and feasting. For example, in line 7, the right collocate of the KWIC *Lahore* signifies the culture of Lahore by referring to the Lahori bride wearing a traditional dress called "gharara" and embellished jewellery of gold and silver for her wedding day. Similarly, in line 48, the right collocate of the KWIC *Lahore* is "marathon of winter-weddings" which depicts the Lahori tradition of frequent weddings in the winter season. It further portrays the social practices of the dwellers of Lahore that are preserved over time.

Furthermore, the analysis of concordance lines also shows that the poet has tried to shed light on the aspects of Lahore's rich cultural heritage that are now lost. This is established in the concordance lines 19-22 (see Figure 3). In these lines, the KWIC *Lahore* points out the debilitated condition of the Lahore Fort. The Lahore Fort also commonly known as Shahi Qila was rebuilt by the Mughals in the 17TH century to mark the might and splendour of the Mughal Empire. It can be seen in line 19, that the right collocate of KWIC is "on chipped merlons and furbished bastions" which highlights that the poet is drawing parallels between the poor condition of the Lahore Fort and the lost cultural heritage and splendour associated with the Mughal Empire.

The above concordance analysis shows that the poet as an inhabitant of Lahore feels very much connected with the traditions and cultural practices of his city. This deep sense of connection with the city's culture also sheds light on the collective imagination of the inhabitants of Lahore.

Concordance	Concordance Plot	File View	Clusters/N-Grams	Collocates	Word List	Keyword List
Concordance Hits 7						
Hit	KWIC					
7				Bride From Lahore	Buffed with filigree	holding the rustling ghararah ea
18				Lahore Feasts	I end in a cul-de-sac	bandaged drains
19				The Lahore Fort	On chipped merlons and	furbished bastions
20	Abbey in London	is like the torn dream from The	Lahore Fort...	pigeons coded during call for prayers	and more fortunate	
21	nd white floors	That remind me of an oasis.	The Lahore Fort	shaped into the rolling tears,	poised on staggering imaginatic	
22	e darkness founded	a school of thought behind The	Lahore Fort	sulking mothers fed babies	courtesans meddled with strings	
48				Winter-weddings of Lahore	The city runs a marathon of winter-weddings	a relay

FIGURE 3. Concordance lines referring to culture

HISTORY

The analysis of concordance lines shows that the KWIC *Lahore* signifies the rich history of Lahore which dates back to thousands of years. This has been highlighted in the concordance lines 23, 28, 29, and 36 (see Figure 4). Over the years, Lahore has been under the rule of Hindus, Buddhists, Greeks, Mughals, Marathas, Afghans, Sikhs, and the British. Due to its rich historical roots, it is regarded as the cultural capital and the heart of modern-day Pakistan. For example, in line 23, the left collocate of KWIC *Lahore* is “exaggerated hoardings encroach upon the footnotes of history” which indicates the urban development of the city in terms of billboards and hoardings that stand in contrast to the thousands of years old historical existence of the city. Similarly, in line 36, the left collocate of KWIC *Lahore* is “l’amour entre Bonnue et le general Allard” which refers to the tomb of French Army officer General Jean Francois Allard located in old Anarkali Lahore. He was a French soldier and adventurer born in Saint Tropez, France. In 1820, Allard came to Punjab to join the service of the ruler Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Here, again the rich historical roots of the city have been evoked.

Furthermore, the analysis of concordance lines also shows that the poet refers to the colonial past of the city. This is presented in the concordance lines 15, 24, and 56 (see Figure 4). For example, in line 15, it can be seen through the left and right collocates of the KWIC *Lahore*. The left collocate is “a presence clouds the city” which alludes to the colonial presence that still haunts and hovers over the post-colonized Lahore. The right collocate is “drowned in oriental murk” which further intensifies the same idea. The use of the word “oriental” is significant here as it is a Euro-centric term which was used by the colonizers for the people of the East in order to exercise their superiority over them. Furthermore, in line 56, the right collocate of the node word *Lahore* is “but Kipling, the son of her majesty covered” which refers to a renowned orientalist named Rudyard Kipling. He was an English writer and journalist born in British India. His works of fiction were about the British soldiers in India. The right collocate is “with all the might of a scholar” which further refers to Kipling’s writings about the British rule in India.

The above concordance analysis shows that the poet as an inhabitant of Lahore is paying homage to the rich historical past of the city. It also shows that this reverence for Lahore’s past is deeply ingrained in the collective imagination of its inhabitants.

Concordance	Concordance Plot	File View	Clusters/N-Grams	Collocates	Word List	Keyword List
Concordance Hits 7						
Hit	KWIC					
15	quiver on bland roads a presence clouds the city of Lahore drowned in oriental murk while men in over					
23	exaggerated hoardings encroach upon the footnotes of history... Lahore I am in love with you How have you subdued					
24	From Empire's Days in Lahore In colonial days the Mall Road was laid for d					
28	I am a box stuffed with compromises I am yours, Lahore let me take an autograph from time before I clai					
29	ered like smiles behind broken walls, smashed iron railings Lahore lost her company I don't know her\97of					
36	l'amour entre Bonnie et le general Allard; Lahore's French Connection Throwing out her dharm					
56	mystic resistance but Kipling, the son of her majesty covered Lahore with all the might of a scholar rooted in Vict					

FIGURE 4. Concordance lines referring to history

THE CITY VIBE

Every city has its own vibe that is fully recognised and realized by the city dwellers in the form of collective imagination and experienced through their active engagement with different sites that exist within the bounds of that city (Cinar & Bender, 2007). The analysis of concordance lines shows that the KWIC *Lahore* exhibits the distinct city vibe of Lahore that is portrayed by the author in the selected text (see Figure 5). For example, the concordance lines 2 and 55 refer to the warm climate of the city that is highlighted through left/ right collocates of node word *Lahore* such as “hot afternoons” and “sun bakes the birds”. Similarly, the concordance lines 14, 17, and 25 describe the smells “*Lahore* descends with its smells”, the sounds “only there evenings can have sounds” and the onset of winter “smothering gales of late November” in Lahore respectively.

The analysis of concordance lines also brings to light the author’s emphasis on the growing issue of pollution in Lahore which has become a major environmental concern over the last decade. This issue is actively perceived by the city inhabitants as they have to experience and deal with it in their daily lives. For example, the left/right collocate in the concordance lines 16, 25, and 35 indicate that the KWIC *Lahore* refers to a dusty and polluted vibe of the city such as “the dusty evening of *Lahore*”, “*Lahore* in treaty with perennial dust” and “*Lahore’s* dust-brown evenings” respectively.

Finally, the experience of being a Lahorite and feeling the city vibe as someone who belongs to Lahore has been expressed in the concordance lines 33, 34, and 47 (see Figure 5). For example, in the concordance line 33, it can be seen that the left and right collocates of the node word “I return to *Lahore* riding on a tonga” narrate about the poet’s return to the city of his birth and his deep sense of connection to it. Similarly, the concordance line 47, where the right collocate of node word *Lahore* is “the city is still mine” also indicates that the poet still feels the same connection with Lahore even after living away in a different city and coming back to it after a long time.

These findings can be linked to Anand and Tripathi’s (2022) study on Amitava Kumar’s fiction. It explores Bachelard’s (1968) notion of “topoanalysis” by presenting the city as ‘home’. The findings show that Kumar being a diasporic writer tries to preserve the memories of his past through his fiction that revolves around his home-town Patna in India. It also sheds light on the notion that when writing about the past memories associated with a city space (home), the present realities related to it cannot be ignored. In the same way, Akhtar (2017) presents the past and present of his city of birth Lahore in the manner that both are inseparable.

Concordance	Concordance Plot	File View	Clusters/N-Grams	Collocates	Word List	Keyword List
Concordance Hits 13						
Hit	KWIC					
1	Lahore: a Pictorial Triptych A dusty sky is a drab desire					
2	parents she recalls her real mother waiting hot afternoons of Lahore, a sacred silence strews Bonnie's French evenings w					
14	closed. I put on the warm chadar on my shoulders Lahore descends with its smells carrying for my children stories					
16	Lahore, 1 Am Coming My voice in a dusty evening of Lahore echoes from the chipped roof of grandfather's grave.					
17	Lahore Evenings Only there evenings can have sounds a					
25	pronounce rain smothering gales of late November over Lahore in treaty with perennial dust now the drizzling patch					
30	pegged her seeping heart before meandering through streets of Lahore played bangles and stones kissed pillows in long Mo					
31	brick is chipped And every balcony is lighted with lamp Lahore pours oil Lahore claims dark alleys lovers meet one a					
33	fingers dance to a dervish's manuscript. I return to Lahore riding on a tonga hurled by emaciated horses and					
34	a flood of taste brought bold gestures of love in Lahore's crouching cartography some open lands housed shad					
35	Under House Arrest in 1979 In Lahore's dust-brown evenings guttural slogans died, over bi					
47	Lahore 2009 The city is still mine. I sneaked it from my					
55	the one we have in the droning hot afternoons of Lahore where sun bakes the birds in its eternal ovenx97					

FIGURE 5. Concordance lines referring to the city vibe

HETEROTOPIAS

The different material spaces existing within the confines of a city evoke the collective imagination of its inhabitants (Mah, 2011). Such material spaces are termed as heterotopias. They include monuments, statues, paintings, architecture, libraries, residential projects, parks, green spaces, natural spots, cultural spots, and others. The city inhabitants interact with these heterotopias by engaging in diverse spatial practices that are shaped by the materiality of such heterogeneous urban heterotopic sites (Cinar & Bender, 2007).

The analysis of concordance lines shows that the KWIC *Lahore* refers to the presence of different kinds of heterotopic spaces within the city which the city dwellers actively experience and engage with. This is representative of Lahore as a contemporary Pakistani urban city and includes sites that are a part of nature such as the sky, trees (mulberries and acacias), and birds as well as natural spots such as Lahore Canal, Lahore's river (referring to river Ravi), historical and cultural sites such as shrines, and other sites related to urban setup, planning, and development such as traffic, alleys, and the Mall road.

For example, in the concordance line 6, the left collocate of the node word is "squeezed alleys of *Lahore*" which alludes to the old Lahore also famously known as "Androon Shehr" (see Figure 6). Old Lahore is a cultural and historical hub of the city that is a mix of historic landmarks, the narrowest of side alleys and Havelis (townhouses). Similarly, in the concordance line 39, "VIP movement on *Lahore's* Mall road" the left and right collocates of node word *Lahore* are pointing towards a major heterotopic space i.e. The Mall road of Lahore. It is a major road in Lahore currently named as Shahrah-e-Quaid-e-Azam that is also known as 'The Mall' or 'Mall Road'. The road was laid out during the British Raj on a route leading to the Governor's House, lined on both sides with Mughal shrines. There are many places of historical, cultural, and recreational significance located on the Mall road including the Governor House, the Provincial Assembly of Punjab, Bagh-e-Jinnah (Lawrence Gardens), and others. Hence, the left collocate in the concordance line 39 "VIP movement" further intensifies the idea that Mall Road still holds the same crucial status in present-day Lahore.

These findings can be compared with a study by Khaidzir et al. (2022) which analyses selected poems from a poetic collection *Malchin Testament: Malaysian Poems* (2017). This book contains poems about Kuala Lumpur city by different Malaysian poets. The study analyses these poems in the light of the concept of “psychogeography” which studies an individual’s engagement with a physical space. The findings show that the people, history, architecture, and urban development of the city play a major role in defining Kuala Lumpur as the country’s present-day major metropolitan city. In the same way, the current concordance analysis sheds light on the poet’s connection with the city and his engagement with the culture, history, architecture, and other material spaces (heterotopias) in Lahore.

Concordance	Concordance Plot	File View	Clusters/N-Grams	Collocates	Word List	Keyword List
Concordance Hits 14						
Hit	KWIC					
3	f language	drowned my evening against blaring traffic of	Lahore	a waspish throat	fouled his palate over me	without a
6	in Highgate Cemetery.	I wander in the squeezed alleys of	Lahore	behind the torn	curtains wheatish girls	wink... letters hidde
8	in words and creaking portals	of foggy banks of the	Lahore Canal	ghosted	by truncated denouements of shovels	w
13	l from benign waters of River Ravi.	Black traffic of	Lahore creeps	a grimed	patchwork on fluted cupola	caps Marie of
26	age huddles bodies	rescue vehicles separate them	Lahore is a rubble	of expressions	bridges and tracks run over	
37	Autumn in Lahore	The trees and birds	in Lahore's gardens	lose some leaves	some voices	stamped with
38	tucking tones	of old men killing time near banks	of Lahore's lonely river	hedging Kamran's Bara Dari	whose vaulted	
39		VIP movement on	Lahore's Mall Road	a cavalcade of cars like an infinite		
41	where pigeons wafted all day taking flights	to shrines of	Lahore's saints	who cultivated a mystic resistance	but Kipling, t	
42	bines repeat Persian couplets	their shadows simmer over	Lahore's skyscrapers.	How an elegist submits tears to pages? How		
43	under humid shadows	of mulberries and acacias	while Lahore's trident sun	collaborate	with electricity ditching for hours	s
49	responding to flecked blanket	sagging under the drizzle of	Lahore;	the dripping mulberry	mingles with mute snarling.	The po
50		Autumn in	Lahore	The trees and birds	in Lahore's gardens	lose some
54	ears is still forbidden	in the heat and dust of	Lahore	where hanging around	the gardens	during evenings soli

FIGURE 6. Concordance lines referring to heterotopic spaces within Lahore

HETEROTOPIC SPACES AND URBAN ECOLOGY

The concordance analysis of KWIC *Lahore* shows that there is an interconnection between urban heterotopic spaces and urban ecology as highlighted by Sur (2022) in her study. It further indicates that environmental degradation, ecological imbalance, pollution, and environmental hazards are connected with Lahore’s urban planning and development. This is reflected through different heterotopic sites within Lahore which include both natural as well as cultural spots (Sur, 2022). It also sheds light on the situation of environmental crisis faced by contemporary Pakistani urban cities. It also emphasises the need to take concrete steps on individual as well as institutional levels to conserve the natural habitat of Lahore and other Pakistani urban settlements in order to combat this crisis.

It can be seen in Figure 6, that the concordance lines 8, 26, and 42 signify the urban construction sites and grey structures around the city that are a main source of increasing levels of air pollution in Lahore. In the concordance line 26, “*Lahore is a rubble of expressions bridges and tracks run over*”, the right collocate of the node word refers to the construction of bridges and tracks all over the city. Here, the use of the word, “rubble,” further points out the debris, construction material, and wreckage surrounding the construction sites all over the city. Similarly,

the concordance line 42 also indicates the construction of buildings by referring to “Lahore’s skyscrapers” which are now taller and have surpassed the rich and long history of the city. In the concordance line 8, “foggy banks of Lahore ghosted by truncated denouements of shovels,” the left and right collocates of the node word signify air pollution caused as a result of urban construction around the city’s famous, “Lahore Canal.” This canal divides the old neighbourhoods of Lahore (on the west side of the Canal) from the posh areas of the privileged (on the east side of the Canal). Flowing between the main highways, the canal also serves as the chief conduit of the city.

Furthermore, in the concordance lines 37 and 54, the analysis of KWIC *Lahore* highlights the city’s gardens as a heterotopic space where heat and dust accumulate. This as a result destroys nature. For example, in the concordance line 37, “The trees and birds in Lahore’s gardens lose some leaves some voices stamped with dust,” the left and right collocate of the node word indicates the increasing levels of pollution within the city. This further reflects an ecological imbalance where the natural habitat is being compromised. Finally, traffic within the city of Lahore can work as a heterotopic site which currently causes dust and pollution in the city. This is highlighted in the concordance lines 3, “blaring traffic” and 13 “black traffic,” respectively (see Figure 6). Studies also emphasise that Lahore is continuously experiencing worsening levels of air quality that results in a thick blanket of smog in the city, particularly in the winter season (Ashraf et al., 2022; Riaz & Hamid, 2018). The major contributors are traffic pollution, crop burning, industrialisation, and city development projects (Ashraf et al., 2022; Riaz & Hamid, 2018).

The above concordance analysis following Sur’s (2022) theorisation of urban heterotopias has presented Lahore as one of the major present-day Pakistani urban cities involved in facing the issue of environmental degradation. The findings of this study can be linked with Rotella’s (2017) work where the issues related to rapid urbanisation, urban planning, and development were explored in literary texts from the modern age. It can be said that through this comparison, such issues persist in the 21st century and that the above concordance analysis sheds light on the impact of these environmental problems on cities from the third world as represented in Akhtar’s (2017) book.

CONCLUSION

In a nutshell, Akhtar being an inhabitant of Lahore has quite brilliantly presented the various aspects of Lahore in his poetic collection, *Lahore, I Am Coming* (2017), which also makes this work a significant piece of urban literature from Pakistan. The major objective of the current study was to explore the conceptualisation of the city of Lahore in the form of the collective imagination of its inhabitants. To achieve this goal, the concordance analysis of the KWIC *Lahore* in the selected work was carried out to trace the various themes that depict the urban experiences of the inhabitants of Lahore and their engagement with various material spaces within the city. The findings revealed that the collective imagination of Lahore can be mapped around four different kinds of sub-themes i.e. culture (in terms of customs/ traditions and lost cultural heritage), history (in terms of rich history and colonial past), the city vibe (in terms of smells, sounds and experiencing the city), and heterotopias. In terms of heterotopias, the different kinds of heterotopic spaces in the selected text include nature such as the sky, trees (mulberries and acacias), and birds as well as natural spots such as Lahore Canal, Lahore’s river (referring to river Ravi), historical and cultural sites such as shrines, and other sites related to urban setup, planning, and development

such as traffic, alleys, and the Mall road. Finally, the concordance analysis of KWIC showed that heterotopic sites within Lahore are connected with the urban ecosystem and this further brought to light the poet's criticism of ecological imbalance created as a result of massive ongoing projects related to urban planning and development and their impact on the city's increasing pollution. The study highlighted that there is a need to take concrete steps in terms of policy-making as well as on a personal level to conserve the natural habitat of Lahore with the hope of mitigating the environmental problems that are on the rise in different parts of the world. The same aspect as highlighted through the present research can also be explored through the works of other Pakistani writers such as novels, poetry, and plays. This may uncover the conceptualisation of different Pakistani cities in terms of collective imagination and urban heterotopias, creating awareness among the general public regarding the growing issues related to the environmental crisis.

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