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Saintly Tomb Complex as Heterotopias: A Case Study of Roza Shah Burhan (Chiniot)

Abstract

This study investigates the saintly tomb complex of Shah Burhan, located in Chiniot, Punjab, through Michel Foucault's (1986) concept of heterotopia, which offers fresh insights for understanding space. There is a limited application of Foucault's spatial theory beyond the Eurocentric contexts which often overlooks how local cosmologies shape heterotopic experiences. This study investigates as to what extent the heterotopological principles outlined by Foucault reveal what is heterogeneous or unique in the Shah Burhan tomb complex as a living site of ritual, memory and social negotiation. Using ethnographic description of the site and local narratives, this study concludes that the saintly tomb complex of Shah Burhan manifests all six heterotopological principles as outlined by Foucault to explain 'counter spaces.' By situating this case study from South Asia within the global discourses on heterotopias, this study contributes to a plural and contextualized understanding of Foucault's spatial theory and underscores its enduring relevance within contemporary debates on space, culture, and social practices.

Keywords: Heterotopias, Third Space, Foucault, Saintly Tomb Complex, urban spaces, Chiniot.

Introduction:

Michel Foucault introduced the concept of heterotopia (literally: "other spaces") in his essay *Des Espace Autres (Of Other Spaces)*[1] which presents new ways of understanding space. He states that heterotopias exist in all societies as 'spatio-temporal units' and that the functions of these spaces shift over time. He traces the changes in our understanding of space. Reviewing the progress and

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evolution of the history of space, he postulates the arrangement of medieval spaces as a "hierarchical ensemble of places," sacred/profane, urban/rural, supercelestial/celestial/terrestrial. He refers to hierarchical medieval space as "the space of emplacement." Citing examples such as public space/private space, family space/social space, and space of leisure/space of work, he observes how our lives are governed by certain inviolable oppositions that we regard as "simple givens," and which our practices and institutions have not dared to break away from. Foucault explains that contemporary space is not entirely a desacralized space; it is "nurtured by the hidden presence of the sacred."[2] He refers to these heterotopic spaces as placeless places because they are spaces deviating from the norm. He further asserts that we do not live in a homogeneous and empty space; rather, ours is a heterogeneous space, "we are in the epoch of simultaneity: we are in the epoch of juxtaposition, the epoch of the near and far, of the side-by-side, of the dispersed". [3] We are not living in a void, but "inside a set of relations that delineate sites which are irreducible to one another and absolutely not superimposable on each other."[4] These sites have "a curious property of being in relation with all other sites, but in such a way as to suspect, neutralize, or invert the set of relations that they happen to designate, mirror, or reflect." [5] Thus, heterotopias are actualized utopias, having three elements: representation, contestation, and inversion These are places of Otherness, existing in a relationship of difference with other sites.[6] Foucault suggests that societies can be characterized based on the heterotopias they engender. Though he himself did not live long enough to experience a systematic history of spaces and counter-spaces, his work exhibits a strong concern with the spatial arrangements in and through which the 'microphysics of power operates.'[7] His work on space and 'counter space' has contributed to the "spatial turn" in cultural studies. The concept of heterotopias has found broad appeal among scholars of a wide range of academic disciplines and, particularly of urban spatialities to define alternate physical spaces such as parks, shopping malls [8], cemeteries[9], museums, hotels, gardens, and gated communities.[10] It is also used to define abstract places, such as the "rug [being] a sort of garden that can move across space." [11]. Mackenzie Wark have used the analogy of a boat referred to by Foucault as a placeless place to define cyberspace, "particularly when it is a network, linking terminals in different places and times into a unified environment."[12]

While the concept of Heterotopia has been widely applied, it also has its critics. Scholars have criticized the contradictory, ambiguous, and confusing nature of the concept, characteristics that make it challenging to use the concept in empirical studies[13]. Some scholars have pointed out the structuralist assumptions of Foucault and the use of various absolutist phrases that suggest that heterotopias are 'utterly' different from 'all' the others. [14] David Harveywarns against romanticizing these spaces and question the emancipatory and liberatory potential of such areas. Engaging with Foucault and Lefebvre, Farha Ghannam argues that heterotopias are not 'stable entities'; it is the use of a particular space that makes it heterotopic. Ghannam also emphasizes that there are no heterotopias *per se*, but rather heterotopic spaces[15].

Despite criticisms, 'heterotopia' continues expanding into new domains such as border studies, ecological studies, virtual spaces, and globalization. In this paper, we utilize this concept to define the saintly tomb complex of Shah Burhan

as a heterotopic space, located in Chiniot city in Punjab. Since there are no prior studies using a Foucauldian notion of heterotopic space to analyze this space, this ethnographic study will assist scholars in the fields of urban spaces and saintly/sacred spaces in Pakistan.

To study the saintly tomb complex of Shah Burhan, this ethnographic study utilizes both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data were collected by visiting the tomb complex multiple times, taking photographs, and interviewing the local residents. The interviews were recorded and later transcribed, with the participants' consent. To ensure anonymity and adhere to ethical requirements, the participants' names, except those who agreed to provide their full names, have been anonymized. Two of the authors hail from the neighborhood and are familiar with many cultural notions and customs, which has facilitated access to the local community for interviews and research-related activities.

Principles of Heterotopia

Foucault posits six principles of heterotopias to establish a systemic description, or what he calls a heteropology, of these other spaces.

The first principle is that all cultures produce heterotopias: heterotopias are constants in every human group. However, there is no universal form of heterotopias. He classifies them into two main categories. There are, he says, heterotopias of crisis: privileged, sacred, or forbidden spaces reserved for individuals who are in a state of crisis with respect to society: adolescents, the elderly, pregnant women, and menstruating women, whose manifestation of the crisis is supposed to take place elsewhere. In contemporary societies, these crisis heterotopias are persistently disappearing, but we still have a few remnants: boarding schools, military camps, and honeymoon hotels and trips are places of this 'nowhere.' In our contemporary epoch, these heterotopias of crisis are being replaced by heterotopias of deviance: sites reserved for those whose behavior is considered deviant from the norms. Examples of these places include retirement homes, psychiatric clinics, hospitals, and prisons. While the principle of segregation and exclusion operates in heterotopias of crisis, the heterotopias of deviance are modeled on the principle of spatial control and confinement. [16]

The second principle of heterotopias is that their functions change over time. They are active and dynamic spaces. All heterotopias remain vibrant by updating and enhancing their capacities. Foucault provides the example of cemeteries and the significant transformations this space has undergone. Until the end of the 18th century, cemeteries were located at the heart of the city, next to the church, featuring a hierarchy of tombs. In modern "atheist" civilization, Western culture has developed a cult of the dead, and cemeteries are now situated on the outskirts of cities. This shift partly reflects the loss of belief in resurrection and the immortality of the soul. With the individualization of death, the deceased body receives much attention, as it is the sole trace of an individual's existence in the world and language. Death, no longer solely an affair supervised by God, has come to be associated with illness. Dead bodies are regarded as sources of contagion for the living, as a means of propagating death; and thus, cemeteries are positioned outside the realms and norms of public life, becoming "the other city."

The third principle states: Heterotopias arrange multiple incompatible spaces together. Unlike the homogenous space of utopias, which divides between "who's in and who's out," heterotopia is a heterogeneous space of managed "otherness" and "oppositions." Heterotopias can juxtapose several spaces, sites, or objects that are capable of existing in one real place. Foucault cites the theater, cinema, and oriental garden as examples of these contradictory sites.

The fourth principle: Heterotopias are linked to "slices in time," and they open up onto what Foucault calls 'heterochronies.' They operate at full capacity based on their ability to disrupt the normal, traditional experience of time. A cemetery, he says, is thus a highly heterotopic space as it begins with a strange heterochrony: the end of life with quasi eternity.

The two significant types of heterochronies Foucault describes are: Heterochronic constants, or heterotopias of accumulation, and heterochronic variables linked to time as fleeting, transitory, and precarious. In heterotopias of accumulation, time never stops building up, such as in libraries and museums. They enclose in one place all epochs and all times in an immobile setting. On the contrary, heterotopias of festivity are strictly temporal *(chroniques).* Fairgrounds and holiday villages are examples of sites that enact pleasure through their perceptions of precarity, not permanence. Toprak & Alper argue that it can be assumed that heterotopic spaces create a bridge between time and space; they reflect continuity and iteration, depicting historical and present times simultaneously[17].

The fifth principle: "Heterotopias always presuppose a system of opening and closing that both isolates them and makes them penetrable"[18]. Heterotopias manage entrances and exclusions and are not freely accessible as public spaces. Foucault argues that entry is either compulsory, as in the case of a prison, or individuals must submit to certain rites and purification, such as in Moslem Hammams. He describes that sometimes the openings are simple and pure but may conceal curious exclusions. One may believe they have entered a heterotopic space but are, in fact, excluded. He gives the example of famous bedrooms on farms in South America. One may be invited to the site, served tea, and sleep there for the night but cannot access the private space of the home. In our society, he suggests that motel rooms are examples of heterotopias where one can enter and engage in activities that are not allowed in public spaces.

The sixth principle states that heterotopias have a function in relation to all external and real spaces. Heterotopias operate around two poles. As heterotopias of illusion, their function is to create a space of illusion, to expose all real spaces. He quotes the example of brothels, of which he says we are deprived now. On the contrary, as heterotopias of compensation, their role is to create another real space that is as perfect, well-arranged, and meticulous as ours is messy and jumbled. He gives examples of Puritan colonies.

Chiniot City

Chiniot emerges as an ancient city in historical accounts. The naming of the town, which reflects its origins, has many narratives. Chiniot had historical architectural sites, which included a Badshahi mosque and the tomb complex of

the saint Shah Burhan. Abul Fazl mentions the presence of a brick fort, the remains of which are still evident. Two nobles rising to prominence in the Mughal Empire, Saadullah Khan and Governor of Punjab Hakim Shaikh Ilm- ud- din Ansari during the reign of Emperor Shah Jehan, hailed from Chiniot, and historical accounts refer to their contributions to public works there. The Gazetteer of Jhang District (1883-84), mentioning Chiniot as a subdivision, briefly noted the tomb complex: "There is also a '*khangah*' or sufi lodge / monastery sacred to the memory of Shah Burhan, a saint revered alike by Hindus and Musalmans (Muslims). It has a good market- place attached to it." This reference appears immediately after the mention of the 'badshahi masjid' by Saadullah Khan Thahim (1591-1656), as Grand Vizier and governor under the Mughal emperor Shah Jehan. However, there are no additional details of the saint, tomb architecture, shrine practices, or the neighborhoods surrounding this '*khangah*' in this gazetteer. The Gazetteer mentions repairs of the 'badshahi masjid,' which was seen as decaying in places, but it did not mention the architecture or the condition of the saintly tomb complex.

The mosque and tomb of Chiniot were the material markers of the town in a strict Mughal sense, as Salim Javed Akhtar notes regarding Agra: "The location of these religious structures, both mosques and tombs, thus mark for us the boundaries of the Mughal city. If the mosques are generally located in 'inhabited areas' and busy markets where people could easily go to pray, the tombs and *chatris* [19] marked the outer and peripheral areas of the Mughal town. While Badshahi Masjid was inside the main town, with a bazaar, as later evidenced by the colonial gazetteer of district Jhang, the tomb or Roza Shah Burhan (hereafter RSB) was on the outer limits of the town.

Imperial Saintly Tomb-Complex: RSB is an imperial saintly tomb-complex. 'Roza' is the word in Arabic, Persian and Urdu for tomb. Here Roza Shah Burhan means tomb of Hazrat Shah Burhan-ud-Din, a Sufi saint. He is popularly called Shah Burhan. However, Roza is not the grave (Figure 1) only and exclusively. It has a tomb of the saint (Figure 2), the surrounding bath-fountain pool (Figure 3), two water wells (Figure 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9), hujras (rooms or cells), and three main yards. A fourth yard-like space was converted into a madrassa for the girls of the neighborhoods to teach recitation of the Quran. A mosque (Figure 4) is also part of this complex and is built on a raised platform signifying the original platform for the Mughal structure of a mosque which has been replaced by the present new structure. A small graveyard/ cemetery is also part of this space and adjoins on the south-western side of the tomb (Figure 5). The residential building of the family of the *mujawar* (maintainer/guard) adjoins this graveyard on the other side. Previously there had been a shanty accommodation of the family of *moazzin* [20] of the mosque. However, the family later left after the death of the elderly *moazzin*. All these spaces included, we term this as a tomb-complex rather than just the main building which houses the grave of the Sufi-saint Shah Burhan. Residents on the eastern and northern sides of the RSB are referred to as the proper residents of Shah Burhan, as they are more closely flanked by the mausoleum part of the whole tomb-complex.

Figure 1: Grave of Sufi Saint

Figure 2 : Tomb

Figure 3: Ruins of a fountain/pond

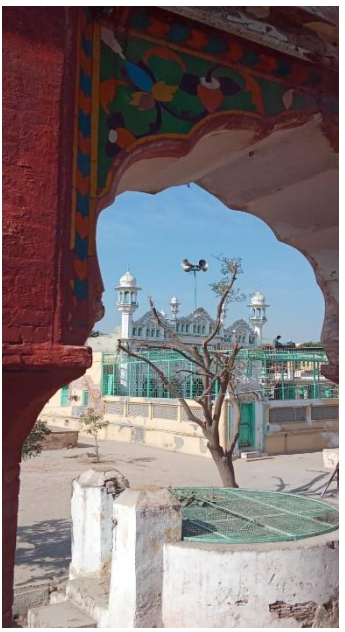

Figure 4: view of the mosque from the tomb

Figure 5: A small graveyard adjacent to RSB

The tomb lacks any documented/written history and even any widely circulated or acclaimed oral history. However, this Sufi saint is revered by different sects among Muslims such as Sunni Barelvis, Shias, and even those Deobandis who have orientation in mystic figures and experiences.

Using Foucault's principles of heterotopias, the following section examines RSB as a heterotopic space.

Tomb Complex as a Heterotopic Space:

Heterotopia of crisis and deviance:

'Heterotopia of crisis' refers to the reserved spaces for members of society who are experiencing a crisis in relation to that society. The categories of people constituting this heterotopia of crisis have diminished to a significant extent. It has increasingly emerged as a heterotopia of deviance- sites reserved for those whose behavior is considered deviant from the norms. As noted by the authors and described by the residents of the Tomb complex over the years, different categories of individuals in crisis- such as retirees, the sick, the mentally ill, the elderly, vagabonds, and the financially broke have made this place their haunt, spending long hours both day and night here. Some have even taken refuge for months, seeking social and psychological solace while also being drawn to mystic practices as a new vocation and identity. The 'broke', both socially and financially, have found a place and comfort here. It has also become a site of escape for men undergoing crises of matrimony and masculinity. Two specific cases can be highlighted: one is Amjad *Mujawar*, and the other is Nasir. Amjad Mujawar was married to his cousin and lived with his parents and siblings in the neighboring vicinity of RSB. However, it soon became apparent that the bride was having an extramarital affair. The matter quickly spread throughout the surrounding neighborhoods, bringing great shame and ill repute to the husband. As the folkloric narrative goes, this event shattered Amjad. He divorced his wife and disappeared for several months. Upon his return, he did not go home; instead, he took refuge in a *hujra* of the tomb complex. Here, he spent several years and even earned some saintly merit, according to popular belief. People would ask him for *'dum'* (insufflation, etc.). However, he largely remained a *malang* (mystic or dervish) and did not engage in this practice as a vocation or mystic practice.

The other case is of Nasir, who returned from Europe after spending more than a decade there. Upon his return, he too married his cousin. On the wedding night, the bride discovered that he was impotent and reported this to the family the next morning. Soon, this news spread across the neighborhood. It was rumored that he had engaged in pre-marital relationships which allegedly undermined his potency. He found his way the very next day to the premises of this fort-complex and spent months there to evade and escape this matrimonial crisis and subsequent shame in the family and society at large. In both cases, masculinity has been, or was considered to be, challenged - socially and physically–and seriously undermined. In such cultural circumstances, it becomes a significant existential challenge to lead a normal life or remain in these neighborhoods. However, such crisis experiences were lived through by these men at the RSB complex enabling their survival and only partial or temporary exit from their social settings.

The function of the space changes over time

RSB also manifests the second principle of heterotopic spaces that their function changes over time. There are two water wells in this tomb complex. It is the water of one of these wells that has long been attributed to bearing healing properties, particularly for skin diseases. People used to visit this place from neighborhoods, nearby villages, and even far-off places seeking a cure from this

water. The water surfaces of both wells have been heavily layered and covered with pages of the Quran, which have become delicate and torn over time. As the Quran is considered the most sacred and revered text, people have long grappled with the challenge of finding appropriate ways to respectfully dispose of such holy items once they become worn, fragile, or damaged. Over time, the physical condition of the pages may render them unsuitable for recitation, risking further deterioration through continued handling. However, there had been no cultural practices or institutional modes to properly part with such sacred texts once they had become damaged, or worn. .However this changed with the mass printing of Quran and its circulation at affordable prices, by popular firms such as Taj Companies and many others. Other factors have also contributed to the rising circulation of the Quran being brought by pilgrims of the Hajj, growing Pakistani labour in the Gulf and Middle Eastern countries, and the spread of madrassas. Moreover, there have also been such notions of local cultural tradition that keeping a Quran at home without making use of that copy, would bring bad luck for the house where it is kept.[21] There has been a practice in the past, among religiously inspired groups/people, of placing tin boxes on walls to store such worn/damaged pages of the sacred text in order to protect it from sacrilege. However, such practices were not widespread. In the neighbourhood under study these two water wells inside the tomb complex of RSB, owing to their sacred connection, provided a space for parting with sacred texts such as Quranic pages. On the one hand, the water wells held holiness due to being part of the tomb complex, and on the other hand, as sites for parting with fragments of sacred Quranic pages, they gained further holiness and sanctity. The water well, originally designed to supply water to the pond on the western front of the tomb, has been blocked many times by layers of pages and *ghilafs.*[22] The other well, however, in the immediate vicinity of the tomb, has continued to function as a source of water for healing purposes. Yet this function was seriously affected by a suicide attempt by a woman: she was unmarried, had long passed the culturally marriageable age. The water well, like a custodian of other fragile, torn, and weak sacred objects, offered her some solace in parting with herself in this holy space. However, her suicide attempt was aborted by the thick layers of paper that kept her safe from drowning. After this episode, an iron cover was placed on the water well (Figures 6 and 9), and a hand pump was installed nearby (Figures 7 and 8). The water from this hand pump is very cold even during the sweltering heat of Punjab's summers. People use this water to wash body parts afflicted with skin diseases, particularly the pilgrims visiting the tomb, petitioning the "*piir*" to intercede before God for their recovery from such ailments. However, residents from nearby neighborhoods have declined to seek such holy favors from the saint and the water well near the tomb, due to the growing influence of conservative , Wahabi Islam which do not subscribe to the practices of Sufism and the availability of better healthcare facilities in the city. Yet overall respect and deeper affiliation still persist, evidenced on various occasions and in everyday practices. The discussion above reveals the changing nature of function of the water well: being used for drinking, healing, and as a means for nurturing life.

Figure 6

Figure: 7

Figure 8

Figure 9

Figure 10

Figure 11

Multiple incompatible spaces together

RSB contains a multitude of incompatible spaces in its tomb complex. One such aspect is the juxtaposition of historical ruins and modern structures. As the Mughal era tomb structure increasingly deteriorates, parts of it are falling into ruin. Many other features, such as red stone windows, sections of the towers on all four sides of the tomb structure, parts of the fountain pool, and various nooks and corners of the tomb complex, are also gradually decaying. Efforts to repair this decay are occasionally undertaken by the local community through donations and

by the Auqaf Department of the Punjab Government, which serves as the official custodian of these ancient tombs. This department collects subscriptions deposited in iron chests placed on the tomb and allocates funds for repairs and organizes events related to the tomb[23] . However, these repair efforts have, at best, provided only cosmetic enhancements to the façade, attempting primarily to halt further deterioration rather than undertake preservation work that aligns with the original architecture and materials used in its construction.

Against the growing ruin spreading across the tomb complex, there stands a relatively modern structure of a mosque. It is built on a high plinth and platform, matching the height of the fountain pool, though it is much lower than the plinth supporting the main tomb building. The high plinth, where the modern mosque stands, appears to have once supported a mosque that was part of the tomb complex, though it lacks the higher quality infrastructure of the tomb structure itself or the royal mosque (Badshahi Masjid) built during the same period by the Mughals, which still graces the heart of Chiniot. The high plinth or platform of the mosque in the RSB tomb complex seems to be the only original structure from the Mughal-era tomb complex on which this modern mosque is erected. The architecture of the mosque, while imitating Mughal architectural styles, is more aligned with nineteenth-century mosques found in other cities; this is evident in its materials and, above all, in its all-white architecture made with cement and brick. Therefore, the mosque is more recent and modern. Furthermore, there have been ongoing accretions, additions, and embellishments to its structure and architecture. These include modern utilities such as water, electricity (with electric fans, lighting, and water pumps), drainage and sewerage systems, and washrooms (adjoining the Mughal-era water well), as well as marble tiled floors replacing the original brick floors. During decades of heightened sectarian violence targeting congregants at mosques, modern security measures were also added to regulate entry, particularly keeping the mosque closed during the hours between two congregational prayers (fifth Principle of heterotopias having an opening and closing). This provides a glimpse into a landscape featuring incompatible elements– the Mughal-era ruins of the tomb complex juxtaposed against the modern mosque structure built upon them, which itself is expanding through its additions, accretions, and embellishments, as opposed to the tomb complex, which is increasingly facing decay. The presence of both the mosque and the tomb also reflects the juxtaposition of the incompatible spaces of the Sufi *silsilas* (the way of the Sufi) and Deobandi Islam existing in this heterotopic space.

Children playing in the yard near the ruins of a pond, as observed by the authors during repeated visits to the site, illustrate the contrast/juxtapositioning of childish playfulness and the wisdom of the saintly figure lying in the grave inside the tomb. This contrast is also reflected in the stillness of death in the graves and a functioning water pump, a symbolism of continuity and flow within the same compound.

Colonial gazetteer of the Jhang district notes that the saint was revered by both Hindus and Muslims. Though fading in neglect rapidly, the Hindu past is also present in the form of Hindu residences and a '*dharamshala'*, the adjoining neighborhood of the tomb complex. In the past these neighborhoods were home to Hindu communities. After the Partition in 1947, they were occupied by Punjabi

Muslim migrants from India, which led to these residencies and religious sites falling into disuse and disrepair. *The dharamshala,* however, still retains larger parts with identifiable places for oil lamps on its walls. It provides the passage connecting the neighborhoods on both sides, and is still referred to as '*dharam-shaal'* or '*dharam-shala*'. The town of Chiniot is filled with Hindu names of places, structures, and other material markers. Chiniot had some significant Hindu temples, particularly in the downtown area, where a large number of Hindus, many being traders, had lived for a long time. One was the *Sanatan Dharma Mandir,* now called the 'big temple'. The remains of a Pathshala can still be seen by the banks of the Chenab [24]Another aspect of the Hindu past in the tomb complex and its surroundings can be found inside the tomb chamber. The tomb chamber over the grave of the saint remarkably resembles a Hindu temple, being a very narrow and vertical structure, though topped with a distinct dome in the Islamic architectural tradition rather than that of such a temple. Elements of the Hindu past stem from local oral histories and narratives of Hindus who lived there before Independence. One elderly woman resident of the neighborhood shared that there was a proverbial respect not only for the shrine but also for the mosque: she narrated that Hindus in the neighborhood, while leaving in the morning for work, would touch the walls of the mosque as they passed by and would say: "*mai maseeti, bhagi bhari, sada khayal rakheen*" (O' motherly mosque, full of fortunes: look after us). Some migrant families who settled in the Hindu residences of the neighborhood recounted stories of 'finds' of Hindu jewelry and other precious items buried in the walls and foundations of their homes when they were demolished for reconstruction. There were also stories of friendships with, and assistance to, Hindu families with whom local Muslim families had relationships that included 'lain-dain' (neighbourly exchange of goods) or 'wangar-wehar' (reciprocal sharing-dealings) rather than simply 'wapar' (business), during weddings, funerals, births, and times of distress, alongside customary sharing of food. Weddings were major occasions for such deferred reciprocity or economic exchange, with formal accounts recorded as '*bahi-khata'/'vahi-khata'*. The presence of elements from Hindu culture and religion within the tomb complex testifies to the arrangement of incompatible spaces together.

Hetrohcronies:

The grave of the saint Shah Burhan and the presence of the cemetery at the southwestern gate of the tomb complex link the complex to slices in time, representing a heterochrony with an end of life while suggesting a quasi-eternity. In the graveyard of the complex, there are graves of 'Khalifas', the successors of the saint, and of recent custodian-cum-keepers who have cared for the tomb complex. The built environment conveys a sense of longevity concerning the presence of the saint and the idea of saintliness as transcendent and divine, thus invoking permanence. However, the decay and deteriorating condition of its Mughal architecture, constructed by an official of the Mughal state, along with its different parts being renovated with cheap and poor materials after decay, reveal the transitory nature of the structure, the space, and humans.

This space represents both empire and locality in myriad of ways, invoking both elements of permanence and transitoriness. These concepts emerge as spatial metaphors. The Mughal state once embodied a more permanent presence through

its power and vast scale, and it remains marked by material as well as discursive markers, including its architecture and, literature, cultural legacies, and historical invocations in colonial and postcolonial South Asia. Similarly, the locality or residential area of the tomb complex is significant in terms of its permanence and transitoriness. It has witnessed the coming and going of its historic inhabitants. Yet, locality is more stable and present there than its historic inhabitants and their faiths, which circulate through imperial global grids. Thus, it can be surmised that both empire and locality, like other elements in this discussion, are produced and shaped by the interstices of permanence and transitoriness, with their slices and traces simultaneously and even overlappingly existing and thriving into new and distinct genealogical threads and trajectories.

The opening and endings /closings

The tomb complex, as a heterotopic space, has multiple openings and endings; there are various entry points. RSB allows access through several visual openings. Many scholars have explored the effects of visibility and spectacle in imperial architecture[25] The tomb complex was built on a mound (or *tibba*) to keep it visible from a considerable distance to the main old town, its suburbs, and later additions. It likely was historically visible to travelers on long-distance trade routes, such as the Jhang-Lahore route, whether bypassing or approaching the old town for entry, thus acting as a monumental milestone for the recognition of the town itself. These routes passed the town on its southeastern side. It is important to note that the town of Chiniot had natural enclosures and fortifications on its northwestern side, with the Chenab River and adjoining mountains. Erected on a high plinth on a mound, the tomb complex offers viewers a panoramic visual access from all sides. Although such visual access has gradually decreased due to the encroaching residential structures surrounding the tomb complex as the town's population grew rapidly. The tomb complex serves as an open public space, designed to be more inclusive and accommodating, aligning with the spiritual orientation of Sufism rather than a regimen of exclusion and distancing. However, it is likely that some form of fortified wall existed as a material marker of limits, which is central to the spiritual tradition regarding markers of sacred spaces. Different dress and purification codes regulate visitors, albeit these codes are not enforced with physical force; rather, they are adhered to by visitors and have long been a part of cultural practice. One mode of purification is ablution or washing the face, arms, and feet, similar to watering feet before entering Sikh religious sites. Even this requirement has not been strictly observed by pilgrims visiting Sufi shrines and has never served as a restriction against entry. Gates, doors, windows, and similar architectural openings/barriers act as material markers for multiple entries/controls for access into the tomb proper, while the tomb complex remains open from all sides, with no remnants of any external enclosure or fortified wall, even if one had existed previously. The square tomb structure has specific openings/entry points. On the western side of the tomb, there are two main gates, while the eastern side features one small gate, adequate for two persons to pass simultaneously. The structure over the grave of the Sufi saint includes one door and windows made of red stone, characteristic of Mughal architecture. The tomb structure is positioned in the center of the tomb proper, with an open circumference, bounded by walls featuring tall red stone windows that offer an external view. In contrast to the more open, accessible, and inclusive nature of the

tomb complex and the proper tomb structure, the mosque has traditionally been, and has increasingly become, a restricted, exclusive, and enclosed space. Waris Shah, a Sufi poet of Chisti order narrates how *'Ranjha',* his protagonist in 'Heer Waris Shah', is rebuked and thrown out of the mosque despite his pleas for accommodation. He is depicted as a stranger and deviant, undergoing transformation from a shepherd to a wandering saint. Mosques have a long-standing tradition of priestly authority held by a religious cleric who resents any interference, especially from competitors. However, this image is merely a caricature of the actual controls of the mosque as a communal place, resulting from increasing demands for capital to sustain it, thus highlighting the roles of other custodians and donors. The sole cleric still maintains exclusive religious authority over the mosque and regulates entry to its premises. Historically, mosques have also been kept closed except for communal prayers. One reason for such closures stems from fears of unwanted visitations by impure animals, mainly dogs. This exclusion also applied to various categories of people, including deviant individuals such as addicts, criminals, fugitives, and the mentally handicapped. Women have rarely been encouraged or permitted entry into mosques, although they are not explicitly barred from doing so, with few exceptions. Men also face entry restrictions, especially when deemed unclean, requiring a mandatory purifying bath. A long-standing practice also dictates that mosque doors remain closed between two communal prayers; they are only closed in appearance, as the faithful can request key holders or caretakers for access to pray individually after communal prayers. Amid such detailed exclusionary codes for mosques, there exists a unique element of partial inclusion towards opposing religious/sectarian orientations within the mosque at this tomb complex. Although the cleric holding religious authority and leading communal prayers is Deobandi, and the mosque is identified with this sect, he and his son have consistently allowed Muslims from other sects, mainly Barelvi and Shia, to enter the mosque for their individual prayers. Barelvis often join the Deobandi communal prayers held at this mosque, even though Barelvi mosques exist nearby. It is essential to acknowledge that Barelvis have struggled to maintain mosques identified with their sect as exclusive spaces.

Heterotopia of compensation

In the RSB complex, an annual festival or *Urs* is held on the 12$^{th\ of}$ Ramzan, the ninth month in the lunar Arabic calendar. Ramzan, the month of fasting, is considered sacred in Islamic tradition. The faithful abstain through the day-long practice of fasting from the festivities and abundance associated with food, in order to inculcate the spirit of sacrifice and care for their fellow beings. Earlier, this *Urs* was held only for one day, but it gradually extended to three days. It has been over a decade now since a fourth day was added for exclusive women's participation, as larger crowds each year have made it difficult for women to attend the *Urs* and particularly take advantage of shopping opportunities from the tent-shops arranged temporarily. This also compensates for female-only sites, which are otherwise minimally promoted by many groups in society but are not available when it comes to markets and sites of play/entertainment. Such female-only sites serve both as incentives for those women who have limited access to

mixed-market and entertainment spaces, and as reaffirming sites for gender-separating technologies, in Foucauldian terms, that are promoted in gender-segregated education. However, being less regulated and enclosed, female-only events of *Urs* at the tomb complex allow for greater agency and interactive sociality on a larger scale across three aspects/sites/spaces: the mystic, market, and play sites. This is still very uncommon in other shrine-based festivals in and around Punjab, which start and end with mixed attendance, dominated by an overwhelming male presence. Other cultural and amusement activities during the festival include sports, swings for children, tent-shops, food charity (*niaz*), music and dance, lighting and fireworks, washing of tomb floors, running water wells to operate fountain pools, and more.

As the growing entertainment industry has largely shied away from the main town and instead has popped up in the suburbs of migrants from India on the eastern side of the town, the *Urs/mela* brings elements of entertainment, such as modern sites of sports venues, to this part of the town. Besides introducing modern element of entertainment and related entrepreneurial activity, though temporarily, in this part of the town, the *Urs* at RSB creates a neighborhood of entertainment, pleasure, and communal play, inclusive of women who are otherwise deprived of such playful spaces. Although this production of a neighborhood lasts for no more than a week, it leaves deep compensatory effects and memories. As a largely low-income community engaged mostly in labor-intensive work of carpentry, it provides a leisure or compensatory period from their worn-out, overworked, and overburdened lives.

Conclusion

The study employing the analytical tool of heterotopia establishes the Saintly Tomb Complex of Shah Burhan as a heterotopic space, intricately weaving the sacred and the spatial, the historical and the contemporary. By juxtaposing the sacred and the secular, the temporal and the eternal, as well as compensation and illusion, the tomb transcends its boundaries, its seemingly frozen in time identity, and inverts or resists a simple understanding of the space and identities. It highlights the relevance of Foucault's framework for analyzing the complex socio-cultural spatialities.

Notes and References

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[19] Chatri means canopy
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