

Women Empowerment and Female Architectural Patronage in 17th Century Lahore: A Case Study of Maryam Zamani Masjid

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Abstract- The purpose of the study is to analyze the trend of female architectural patronage of 17th century Lahore within the perspective of women empowerment. The Case Study of Maryam Zamani Masjid has depicted the much empowered image of Maryam Zamani, the patron of Masjid. Her importance in the royal court and as the famous business icon of her time makes her fit into the present definition of women empowerment. It is argued that her appearance as one of the influential women of her time can be successfully fits into the domains of four variables of women empowerment. Theories and models have been applied in order to find out whether it was women empowerment or merely the royal's gesture of respect towards her?

Keywords: Female Architectural Patronage, Medieval times Lahore, Mughal Women, Masjid Maryam Zamani, Women empowerment

1. INTRODUCTION

In the early years of 17th century, Lahore witnessed the construction of a Masjid, which rose to prominence with the title of Masjid Maryam Zamani. Constructed upon the signature style of Mughal Architecture it was one of the most fascinating buildings of Walled City Lahore. Except its architectural beauty, the fact that it had been patronized by a female sparked a new debate, urging contemporary historians to acknowledge its importance.

Contextualizing Women Empowerment

The varying terms of women's empowerment and female architectural patronage in the 17th century India seems contrary in academia. Academic scholarship has looked upon women empowerment as a present phenomenon, that rose to prominence with the emergence of terms like gender equality and female studies in the late 20th century. In the contemporary trend of post-colonial studies, women is being considered as the 'marginalized other' or the subalterns or merely the oppressed factions of society, but hardly there is any work, which emphasizes on the historical legacies, which can help to frame a positive image of the region regarding women's empowerment. The recent literature on gender equality has proposed factors which help to actualize female empowerment. Of the theories explored, four factors seem prevalent, such as socioeconomic development, rising gender-equalitarian attitudes that transform economic development into a cultural development of human development, historical legacies stemming from a society's culture and political traditions and institutional design factor (Amy C Alexander & Christine Welzel. This helps in contextualizing the socio-economic domain of women empowerment which the 17th century Lahore, via the female architectural patronage. The construction of Masjid Maryam Zamani, which was named after the queen of Emperor Akbar then the mother of Emperor Jahangir has instigated a new debate in academia.

Review of Literature

This section is literature review under such themes Women's empowerment, Models of women empowerment, Mughal Women, architectural legacy of Lahore, socio-economic empowerment and female architectural patronage. The emergence of gender studies in academia, a new perspective 'Gender and Equality which was synchronized with empowering women, began to place. In the post-colonial studies, special emphasizes given to women and their miseries. Gender segregation is also the product of this new strain of scholarship. Following Butler's theory which claims it is the repetitive gender based societal practices which create gender difference. This difference ends up in declaring women as the marginalized other, along with the other suppressed segments of society. Gytre Speaking 'Can the Subalterns speak?' questions the representation of women, as they have been denied to present themselves and their problems and have always been represented in the western. Most of these work revolves around the societal constrains which are imposed by patriarchal norms of society. Within the western framework as well as in the regional perspective, society as agency has given much importance in defining the gender based difference. Judith Butler (1990). He argues that is the repetitive practices of societal norms, which shapes gender. According to him the gender segregation shaped by the practices, creates societal imbalance which is not confined to women. There can so many genders, being composed on the Hierarchical practices. There is also plenty of work which lay emphasizes on the solutions or on the factors which can promote gender equality (Inglehart & Norris 2003; Inglehart, Norris, & Wetzal 2002; Inglehart & Welzel 2005; Welzel 2003). Keshab Chandra Mandal (2006), while contextualizing the Indian type of women empowerment, he argues that it is the India's feudal culture which is resultant in making the pace of women empowerment slow. Esther Duflo

(2012) claims that women empowerment and economic development and 'it is prerequisite for society's development (Naila Kabeer). The above literature demonstrates that economic prosperity, social stability and empowerment are defining factors for women's empowerment. The socio economic perspective of women empowerments enters into another course, when it gets a physical shape through architecture.

Architecture has always been the defining factor to the society and state as well. It is sum total of the cultural trait, dogmatic affiliations and economic wellbeing. Academic Scholarship has imposed much stress on making a link between gender equality or women empowerment with architecture. Grece Earny (2012) argues that the way buildings are constructed they actually simultaneously are creating gender as well. While turning towards the Mughal Empire and its architecture, the feature which seems prevalent is the dedication to build architecture marvels, no matter how much investment is required. As much of the work on the Mughal rule is dealt with depicting the beautiful monuments. Though much of the have been done of the Mughal harem and the royal Ladies of Mughal. The court Historians of Akbar, called the Harem as 'Sabistan-e-Iqbal, which assures its importance in royal court. The daily life style of Mughal ladies, their short biographies, importantly their influence in the royal court have been penned down many historians (Kurana Sharma, Rekha Mishra, Ruby Lal and EB Fendly). Pushpa Parsad goes on to analyze the property right which were given Mughal women. It depicts their decision making power and their strong personalities in the different spheres of life. Ira Makhoty 's Daughters of the Son (2016) is the true depiction to the fact that they had been the king makers, the business icons and political influential. Ruskhsna Iftikhar have also attempted to affiliate power, authority and choice with the Mughal ladies. She argues that the role of Mughal Women in the political affairs of royal court indicates the start of destroying the patriarchy upon which the western proto feminism constructed itself. The present work is the continuation of this trend, but it breaks down it in the architectural patronage, while analyzing it within the models and theories of women empowerment. Ghulam Nabi Khan have also provided a case study on Masjid Maryam Zmani, but he did not examine it within the perspective of women empowerment. Her importance to the regime and her economic activities have also been E.B. Findly. He provides a case study of Rahmi, her ship which was paraded by Portuguese. His work demonstrates her importance as the successful business woman of her time and her political importance. The present work is the continuation of this trend, but it breaks down it in the architectural patronage, while analyzing it within the models and theories of women empowerment.

1.1) Women Empowerment

Faitira Manuere attempts to the trace the origin of the term 'Women Empowerment' by proving a review of literature. The concepts of power, agency, resources and achievements are prerequisite for analyzing the state of women empowerment. (Naila Kabeer, Faitira Manuere). Before diving into these concepts there is a need to understand what does it mean by women empowerment. Paulo Freire (1921–1997) was a proponent of the "Pedagogy of the Oppressed" theory. Freire (1974) maintains that normally in every society, there are two forces: 'the oppressor' and 'the oppressed'. So according Freire (1974), it is a teacher's

responsibility to make students aware of societal injustice so that they might build the tools for their own liberation. The origins of the concept of the empowerment in the Black Power empowerment, Freudian psychology, feminism, Ganddhism, and theology, among others (Simon, 1994; Cornwall a Brock, 2005). Whitmore (1998:13), explains the empowerment is "an interactive process by which people undergo personal and social changes, allowing them to take action to wield influence over the organizations and institutions that impact on their lives and on the communities." Moreover, People develop the social, economic, and political strength to free themselves from societal injustices through the process of empowerment (Wallerstein, 992). Further, it may be explain that the people, organizations, and communities are empowered when they have the maximum control over the issues that impact them (Rappaport 1987; Zimmerman, 1995). So he idea of empowerment cannot be reduced to a single statement or definition. It must be comprehended in perspective of the individual requirements of those who want empowerment (Kabeer, 2005). The concept of women empowerment is now explained. Empowerment of women is the transition of women from a position of oppression to one in which the oppressor and the oppressed are socially, politically, and economically equal (Chattopadhyay 2005). When the term empowerment is contextualized in terms of the social, educational, economic, political, and psychological empowerment of women, it is easier to understand. Adding to this women's social empowerment eliminates the gender disparities that are present in society between men and women (Srivstav, 2001; Mira Shivaa, 2001)

Empowerment of women is a state in which women have the chance to participate fully in social, political, and economic realms (Sushama, 1998). Creating an environment in which women are authorized to execute the government programs and organizational policies that influence their lives is necessary to empower women (Chattopadhyay, 2005; Aspy and Sandhu, 1999; Patricia et al, 2003). Increasing women's educational resources so that they can make any meaningful options for themselves and their family is a simple definition of women's empowerment (Pathak2003). The women economic empowerment describes the process of granting women the ability to become "breadwinners" in order to be self-sufficient, generate income from projects, and fight poverty. Political empowerment of women is the advancement of women's political interests (Pam Rajput, 2001; Tiwari, 2001). Defining the Psychological aspect of empowerment of women refers to the manner by which women enhance their motivation, morale and self-interests in order to become more participating in the programs on national level such as especially the education, health difficulties, politics, agricultural issues, and the programs entails the developmental aspects (Pam Rajput, 2001; Tiwari, 2001)

1.2) Models and Theories of Women Empowerment

Different theories and models have been proposed by scholars in order to better define the terms of women empowerment. There are many components which as a whole make up appropriate environment for women empowerment. Naila Kaber in her work proposes that it is power, which she defines as the ability to make decisions, actually are the prerequisite for female empowerment. While demarcating

between empowered and disempowered she defines decision making power as the prime component of empowerment. Further she proposes a three dimensional model to illustrate empowerment. It consists of resources, agency and achievements.

Resources (pre-conditions)

Kabeer describes the resources into knowingly three types i.e. Social, people, and Materials. The Resources provide the capacity to exercise the choice and are the mechanism along which the agency is operated. Moreover, they are achieved by participation in and contribution to social institutions and with the relationships. When societal structures and interactions encourage male authority and embrace gender inequality, women become constrained, compared to men, in their capacities to access resources.

Agency (process)

However, although the access to the resources is an essential precursor to empowerment, it is not the same thing as control over those resources. This happens often in areas where there is a chasm between what is really done and what is required by law, such as with property rights across many countries. For this reason, it is not enough for women only to have access to resources; they must also be able to recognise and make use of them. This is what Kabeer means by "agency" when he says that each individual have the ability to think critically about their lives and make choices that align with their values. Decisiveness is a common metric for assessing this quality. A person's self-perception (i.e., their feeling of self-worth) is the cornerstone of self-determination. Kabeer points up a few variations and subtleties in the context of free will. She differentiates between passive agency (when an action is conducted because there are no other viable possibilities) and active agency (when the action is undertaken on purpose). A second distinction made by Kabeer is between effective agency and transformational agency. Transformative agency allows women to question the limits of traditional gender roles, while effective agency helps women perform such roles more effectively. In order to better examine and react to patriarchal restrictions, women benefit from increased transformative agency.

Achievements (outcomes)

According to Kabeer, success is determined by how much of one's capability one puts into action with their available resources which may be understood as the outcomes. Noting if variations in accomplishment are due to one's capacity to confront inequities, rather than one's personal preference or individual traits, such as sloth, when power is not a problem, is crucial. Empowerment, as defined by the guide, is defined as the expansion of opportunities for participation in society and politics, as well as the acquisition of greater control over one's own resources. Both the individual and the group may experience empowerment. Individually, one gains freedom, strengthens the ability to make decisions for oneself, and broadens one's options. As a group, its members are more able to affect societal changes. However, the focus of this approach is on the individual's capacity for change. This approach proposes that assets, knowledge, will, and ability are valuable in evaluating the results and effects of empowerment initiatives. Comparable to Kabeer's model, although not quite the same. Notably, this approach distinguishes

between Kabeer's assets and knowledge as two distinct resources. Assets are the things one has that may be sold for money or used in other ways to increase one's economic standing. Resources such as money, property, equipment, health, time, information, education, proximity to medical facilities and retail outlets, etc. The acquisition of knowledge equips individuals with the tools necessary for success in life, including methods, instruction, literacy, and the capacity for in-depth analysis. It encourages leadership and helps one or a group seize chances.

In this framework, "will" is the third dimension. Freedom of will is described as "the psychological or emotional capacity to act independently." The similarities to Kabeer's agency are striking, however this framework distinguishes will as a resource. The author continues by asserting that one's will is affected by their fears, self-confidence, values, and view of themselves. Capacity, the fourth pillar of the guide, is defined as "the ability to draw from and use assets, knowledge, decision-making skills, and initiative." The ability to make decisions might aid in putting capacity into action.

Power

Empowerment relies heavily on the acquisition of power. This manual outlines out the various channels via which people and organizations exercise authority. The first is being in a position of authority, which indicates that your control is not absolute. The second is autonomy in decision-making and problem-solving. This points to the fact that this kind of power makes use of assets and expertise. The third is one's power in relation to other people, which includes both social and political influence. Therefore, there is strength in numbers, provided that those numbers have a goal and have the means to congregate. This relates to the capability dimension we covered before. Last but not least, as we've already shown, one's own sense of identity and assertiveness may be a source of strength. It's connected to the ideas of will and capacity since it empowers people to shape their own lives. After reviewing the work of Naila Kaber and the Commission on Women, it is evident that there are several lenses through which to view any given era's condition for women. The architectural field offers another perspective from which to assess women's advancement and inequality.

1.3 Women Empowerment and Architectural Patronage

The work considers the three dimensional of Naila Kabeer as the frame work to analyze the Female architectural patronage as a dimension of economic well as socio- political empowerment. The process of empowerment starts with power, she defines as the ability and authority to make decisions for herself. Then the three dimensional approach Resources, Agency and Achievements. All the models presented above demonstrate the fact that women empowerment do have an economic facet, which can help to measure and analyze to what extent the goals of women empowerment have been accomplished and achieved. The most significant component in the above mentioned women's empowerment theories is the economic independence and the women's will to use it as per their own choice. The concept of empowering women through architecture and making of suitable environment for female patronage is another variant of women

empowerment. As architecture speaks more about the society and state policies rather than any other source.

This is supposed to be the alliance of present phenomenon, but historical inquiry reveals that it had been prevalent in distinct periods of past. The first monument built by Mughal woman is the famous Hamuyun Tomb in Delhi. Reportedly it is said that it was supervised by Haji Begum. Then about India Maryam Zamani, a business icon and patron of architecture from India, which somehow falls into core concept of women empowerment given by Naila Kabeer and UN commission on women. The work goes on to find that to what extent, the personality of Maryam Zamani and the Mosques of Maryam can be appropriate to the concepts given by Naila Kabeer and the UN Commission on Women.

2. Maryam Zamani Masjid: A Showcase of Female Architectural Patronage

The Masjid of Maryam Zamani is one of the earliest Masjids which had been established in the early Mughal period and also have a credit of being the very first Masjid, constructed on the name of woman by Mughals in the locality of walled city of Lahore. As per the inscription on the arch of the northern entrance its date of construction goes back to 1614 AD of Jahangir's era. Well the reign of Jahangir is quit important with respect to the construction of Masjids with the name of women. During his period two Masjids with women names were constructed as Maryam Zamani and Dai Lado Masjid, but there is confusion regarding the construction of Dai Lado Masjid. As emperor shah Jahan in his autobiography coded that during the fourth year of his region Mai Lado' performed Haj and a Masjid was also constructed on her name. But the question of its location in Walled city or in the outer Lahore is still under question.

Mystery of Its Name

There is confusion about this title and its attribution because not much have been written about Maryam Zamani neither by modern historians nor by contemporary historians. Abul Fazal, one of the official historians of Mughal court and also the biographer of emperor Akbar records those circumstances which to his matrimonial alliance with a Hindu Princes but again he did not identify her name. In Akbar Nama it is mentioned that she was the daughter to Raja Baharimal and sister of Raja Bhagwan Das. Even the exact date of the marriage is not coded. He tried to relate events of Akbar's visit to Saint Saleem Chishti of 1561 with a ceremony which was held after his arrival in the Mughal Capital. Then in 1569 she gave birth to boy named Jahangir aka Saleem who became the successor of Akbar with the title of Emperor Jahangir. But her name can be traced from the autobiography of her son Jahangir, who mentions her name for more than once. The birthdays of Prince later the emperor of Mughal empire and marriage feast of Prince Pervez were celebrated in her house. Later historians call Maryam Zamani as Portuguese, the resemblance of her name with Marry also raises the question of her religion whether she was Hindu or Christians. A number of authors, especially European historians concludes that she might be the Portuguese wife of Akbar. As we don't have much evidence to prove that whether Maryam Zamani was Hindu, Christian or its was just a title. It might be a posthumous title, as the title of Maryam Makani to emperor's mother, Hamida Bano. It may be

presumed that Akbar might have conferred this title on the queen on the birth of Jahangir but they were sanctified beyond any recognizable human identity. She was not called in any historical text with her real name. Even his in son's auto biography she was pointed out with the same title of Maryam Zamani. However, Jahangir in his autobiography gives an account of information about her death. News came from justifying the death Hazrat Maryam Zamani in 1032 AH. The queen was buried at Sikandarabad. A splendid tomb was erected over the grave of Jahangir. On seeing the economic status of Maryam Zamani, it became quite clear that all the other monuments which are associated to Queen might be built by herself means, under her supervision. S.A. Tirmizi in her book pronounced as Wali Nimat Begum. Some of the buildings still exist as her palace at Fatehpur Sikri, the Masjid, a garden and a Baoli in Byana.³³ Ira Mukhoty in her books, daughters of the sun, described the presence of Maryam Zamani, as differentiating her appearance as a queen mother then as a Business woman. As mother her appearance was under the veil. Her name which is still a mystery for historians as they are quite unable to trace her name and lineage as whether she was Hindu Rajput or a Portuguese.

Architecture

The Masjid of Maryam Zamani illustrates a transitioning period of construction, including both Mughal and older Pashtun Lodi Dynasty (who governed the area before the Mughals) elements. It occupies a space spanning 135 feet six inches by 127 feet six inches. It was the first mosque with a five-bay front, which became the standard for Mughal mosques. It features two entrances via arched gates with deep recesses on the north and east sides. A descent of the four steps in each gateway goes to the 123-by-83-foot main courtyard, which is accessed by descending stairs. On a 17-foot-wide platform to the east of the entrance lies an enclosure including an octagonal-domed mausoleum and many additional modern tombs. The Masjid's balconies, gateways, side rooms, and embellishments are reminiscent of Mughal architecture. Constructed with unusual brick utilizing lime and chunam of superior grade. The Masjid has Lahore's first five-bay prayer room, which would become characteristic of all subsequent Mughal mosques, including the Wazir Khan Masjid and Badshahi Masjid. The style of centre bay of the Masjid is of the Persian Char Taq and is surrounded by two smaller domes. In lieu of traditional minarets, the building's four corners have square burj topped by cupolas. They reach a height of around 4.5 meters, but are shorter than the apex of the central or main dome. Originally, the Masjid contained total three gateways, but only two remain.

Layout

Ahsan H Nadeem mentioned in his book 'The historical Masjids of Lahore' that the Masjids is a perfect example of Jami Masjid. It is nearly squares in plan measuring about 42 m from north to south and little over 39 m from east to west while rises to a height of 12m. The prayer room of the Masjid is an oblong building spanning 130 feet 6 inches south to north and 34 feet east to west. The hall is split into five bays by three arches, the biggest of which is situated above bay 35. The tallest building atop an 11 feet and 1 inch tall, circular neck. Double dome is comprised of two shells, the outer of which is 3' 6" thick and the inner of which is stucco. On the western side of the outer shell is a tiny arched

aperture. At the four corners of the prayer room are modest, square pavilions with four arched arches and cupolas on octagonal drums. In addition, the Masjid has a courtyard of 128 by 82 feet. A tank for ablution measuring 31 feet 5 inches by 26 feet 3 inches was positioned in the middle of the courtyard. A reinforced cement concrete covering supported by two circular pillars partly envelops the tank on all four sides. The court was likely paved with brick tiles in typical Mughal design, but it has been totally repaved with contemporary brickwork. The many architectural aspects, particularly those of the prayer chamber, are reminiscent of the old Masjids of Delhi and Ajmer.

3. Analyzing the Masjid Maryam Zamani within the paradigms of women Empowerment

It is being the part of debates, at any forum, to find out ways to figure out the nature of women's empowerment in any state and society. Paradigms are framed, with the investigative agenda to declare a society empowered or not. Though it is the reoccurring theme of post-colonial studies, that's why it focuses more on its flaws and the problems, which the women of present are facing. But by acknowledging the female patrons of architecture, it paves a way to rediscover past within the paradigms of women empowerment. The presence of Maryam Zamani Masjid, is an illustration of the fact that being a woman of 17th century India she was capable of placing her name on the architecture she constructed. It is also said that she did not incarnated her name but her son emperor took this initiative. Here it reinforces the core concept of Nail Kaber, which claims that when woman dares to take decision of her own choice, the agency joins her. Here the definition of agency can be the state policy, society or the civic sense which gets infiltrated at her home.

Conclusion:

Women Empowerment came into prominence in the late 20th century depending on the very fact that in the different sections of the world women have been treated differently. Different theories emerged which academia towards the fact that women have been treated a marginalized other, the subalterns and as a gender of inferior rank. UN declared 1975-85 as the decade on women. Commission on women began to held, in order formulate policies to cater the needs of women. It was being for the first time, when then terms like right to make decisions, right of leadership, ability to work were affiliated with women. But in the race of finding out discriminatory flaws in the societies, the legacies of past were neglected which could help scholars to adopt an optimistic approach. It is a fact that the woman of present times is struggling to get the due space which she deserves but it is possible that the woman of past would have been privileged with all the luxuries. By presenting case of Masjid Maryam Zamani, the personality of Maryam Zamani and her socio political and economic status have been presented which accurately fits in the theories of women empowerment, of Naila Kabeer and the of UN Commission on Women.

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