Exploring Contested Historic Landscapes in a GIS Environment

A Study of Lahore, Pakistan

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GEOG 596 A: MGIS CAPSTONE PRESENTATION
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A. Overview
  • Project description and proposed outcome.
  • Conceptual framework – what is contested?

B. Background
  • Timeline of key eras
  • Lahore Timeline

C. Exploring the contested
  • Spatial Imprints: the built environment as a manifestation of conquest and new beginnings
  • Place-names: an analytical tool to navigate what was there …

D. GIS Environment
  • Database development
  • Data collection

E. Some conundrums and possibilities
  • Data classification
  • Visualization
PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project explores how various ‘contested’ sites in Lahore can be mapped and visualized through a layered reading of different data sources in relation to historic points of interest. The objective of the study is to apply Geographic Information System (GIS) methods to record what used to be at a location, what was lost and what came to be over the years.

OUTCOME

A digital gazetteer of Lahore

Core elements of gazetters:
- Place-names
- Geospatial location
- Categories
  + the relationship between named geographic places
  + identification of time frame for places and their characteristics

Fundamental components of digital gazetteers

METHODOLOGY

Maps of Lahore are used as a key data source to identify spaces that have undergone transformation, which are then linked to old photographs, gazetteers, historical and literary accounts, memoirs etc., to describe the extent and nature of change in spatial terms. Integral to the present inquiry is also a documentation of place-names that provide clues to 'missing' places.

PROPOSED TIMELINE

January ’19 – June ’19:

Literature review

Fieldwork (site visits and interviews)

Data collection and conversion into feature layers

Design database

Review database
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK – WHAT IS CONTESTED?

The historic urban landscape as a manifestation of contested narratives.

The realm of the historic footprint between seeming permanence and transience … some examples

TOMB OF ANARKALI

Mughal era: Built in 1615 in the memory of a slave girl who was buried alive

Sikh era: General Ventura’s residence

British era: Residence for clerical staff and office. By 1851, used as a parish church.

Presently: Punjab Archives

TOMB OF KASIM KHAN

Mughal era: (no date / 16th c.). Tomb of a cousin of emperor Akbar

Sikh era: Residence of Khushal Singh

British era: Adapted in 1851 as residence for the governor of the Punjab

Presently: Governor House

BADSHAHI MOSQUE

Mughal era: Built in 1673

Sikh era: Magazine for military stores

British era: Restored as a mosque

Presently: Mosque
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK – WHAT IS CONTESTED?

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HINDU CREMATION GROUND

No date

Presently: Built-up

SITLA MANDIR

No date (entry in Lahore Directory, 1914)

Presently: Boundary exists; occupied

RATTAN CHAND’S TEMPLE

Sikh era: no date

Presently: Does not exist
### TIMELINE OF KEY ERAS (BCE)

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<td>Farming settlements</td>
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<tr>
<td>3000</td>
<td>First signs of urbanization: Mohenjodaro and Harappa</td>
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<td>2600</td>
<td>Multiple urban centres</td>
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<td>1500</td>
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### TIMELINE OF KEY ERAS (CE)

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<td>9th c. – 10th c.</td>
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<td>11th c. – early 16th c.</td>
<td>Sultanate era</td>
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A BRIEF HISTORY OF LAHORE

630: Hiuen Tsang; first historical reference to Lahore

1022: Mahmud of Ghazni seizes and plunders Lahore

630: Late 7th century: First Muslim invasion

1241: Gengiz Khan plunders Lahore

1524: Babur’s soldiers plunder and burn Lahore

1397: Tamerlane captures Lahore

1584: Akbar makes Lahore the capital

1799: Ranjit Singh establishes the Sikh Empire

1849: East India Company annexes Punjab

1947: India and Pakistan become independent states

Primarily Mughal with some additions in the Sikh period
British: East India Company and later the British Raj
Present administrative boundary of Lahore district
KEY INFLUENCES IN LAHORE

Mughal
16th c. – 18th c.

Sikh
1799 - 1849

British
1849 - 1947
EXPLORING THE CONTESTED THROUGH SPATIAL IMPRINTS

City limits during Mughal and Sikh periods
Late 16th c. onwards

Expansion of city limits during British rule
1849 onwards

Current city boundary of Lahore district includes the Walled City and the British period neighbourhoods
1947 onwards
DATA COLLECTION

Walled City and Civil Lines

Internet

1907 survey of the Walled City of Lahore
Municipal archive

British era maps of Lahore

Walled City, Civil Lines and Cantonment

Internet

1940 survey of the Circular Rd
Municipal archive
DATA COLLECTION

Travelogues
Imperial gazetteers
Memoirs
Inventories
History

Old photos available online
Photos of current condition will be taken during fieldwork

British Newspaper Archive
GIS ENVIRONMENT - DATABASE DEVELOPMENT

**Imagery:**
- Old maps
- Historical photos
- Satellite / GE image
- Current photos

**Attributes:**
- Placenames
- Roadnames
- Year
- Period etc.

**Textual references:**
- Travelogues
- Newspapers
- Memoirs
- Reports

**Vector data:**
- Points of interest
- Street network
- Land parcels for large areas

**Hyperlink to online sources such as newspapers, photos etc.**

**POINT**
- Place-names
- Sites

**LINE**
- Street network
- Street names
- Railway line

**POLYGON**
- City limits
- Neighbourhood
- Garden
- Cemetery
- Cremation ground
- Historic structures
- Historic sites
- Water body
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SOME CONUNDRUMS …

• Data collection
  • Vernacular place-names
  • Neither place-names nor corresponding footprints exist (e.g. Rattan Chand Temple)
  • Place-names exist but footprint may or may not be established (e.g. Sitala Temple)
  • Boundary representation
  • Footprint exists but the institution or purpose is relocated elsewhere (e.g. lunatic asylum or central jail)
  • Source material in different languages, for instance, Urdu, not necessarily available online
  • Contextualizing material from online and offline sources
  • Interviews as a source of data
  • Hyperlinking information from other online sources
  • Georeferencing text

• Data organization
  • Feature type
  • Attribute classification
    • Year not always available
    • Multiple place-names and different functions over time (e.g. Anarkali’s Tomb / Residence / Parish Church / Residence / Office / Punjab Archive)

SOME POSSIBILITIES …

• Interactive web map