

DAILY LIFE OPPRESSIONS FACED BY AFGHAN WOMEN IN PAKISTAN AND THE ROLE OF THE STATE

By Symrun Razaque

Submitted to

Central European University

Department of Gender Studies

*In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Erasmus Mundus Master's Degree in
Women's and Gender Studies (GEMMA)*

Main Supervisor: Julia Sachseder (Central European University)

Second Supervisor: Rosario González Arias (University of Oviedo)

Vienna, Austria

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ABSTRACT

The daily life oppressions faced by Afghan refugee women in Pakistan are co-constitutive of intersectional elements like race, gender and coloniality manifested through structural violence. Using in-depth interviews with Afghan refugee women this study looks at the complicity of the state of Pakistan in perpetrating oppression against the refugee groups. This research questions the complicity of the state in perpetrating intersecting elements of violence such as race, gender and coloniality. It asks how these intersecting elements are co-constitutive of structural violence. It looks at the current experiences of Afghan refugee women in the years succeeding the wave of repatriation that began in 2023. The thematic analysis revealed different forms of violence that Afghan refugee women face and negotiate under the modern-nation state of Pakistan. It foregrounds Johan Galtung's theory of Structural Violence and applies a decolonial feminist reading to this seminal work to expose the existing power relations in Pakistan that marginalize and exclude Afghan women from decision-making processes, access to basic facilities and exercise of their fundamental rights.

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I would like to begin by thanking Allah mian for giving me this opportunity and for making sure I finish my thesis on time despite my best efforts not to. I want to extend my gratitude to Julia Sachseder. Without her supervision, this project would've been rudderless and still in the planning phases.

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Last but not least, heartfelt gratitude to Majo Khala without whom my data collection would have been impossible and this thesis would have been shelved as something impossible and overambitious. You are a star.

Declaration

It is hereby stated that this thesis contains only original, previously unpublished work, along with a total word count of 25898 words a) the thesis text only, excluding notes and references, and b) the entire thesis manuscript.

X

Symrun Razaque

DEDICATION

I want to dedicate this thesis to all the women in Pakistan present and past who fight misogyny every single day and it is your efforts that gave me strength, the opportunity and the courage to undertake this journey of which this thesis is a small part. But, more importantly, I dedicate this to my favourite feminists Amal and Mehak, the lights of my life who inspire me to do better and be kinder every day. Thank you for your love and support.

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1. Introduction

The thesis asks what intersections of structures of coloniality, gender and race can explain about structures of violence faced by Afghan refugee women in Pakistan in their daily lives. How would a decolonial feminist perspective provide a deeper understanding of structural violence? What is understood about violence based on the experiences of women in Pakistan? What are the underlying factors and structures that contribute to the violation of human rights? What does it mean to be an Afghan refugee and a woman in this context? How is oppression related to gendered structures How are the lived experiences of Afghan women manifestations of colonial violence as well as agency? What is the role of the state apparatus in this everyday oppression paradigm?

I answer these by placing in context the lived realities of Afghan refugee women in Pakistan. Afghan women in Pakistan are experiencing a distressing and pervasive issue of everyday violence (Krause 2015; Jokela-Pansini 2020; Sarhan 2022; Waslat et al. 2024).

I structure my empirical analysis to operationalize violence in three ways that emerged from the collected data and correspond with the theories used. Firstly, the most recurring form of violence was material violence deeply seated well within Galtung's theory of structural violence and how Afghans are exploited and in disadvantaged terms of labour participation, access to capital and other financial opportunities. Second, is the restrictions on movement as a form of violence including but not limited to securitisation of borders and the violence of surveillance. This analysis embeds itself in the theory of structural violence but borrows from Foucault's surveillance as an integral mechanism of control. Lastly, the third form of violence is the violence inflicted on the physical body also referred to as biopower. This form of violence connects to Galtung's theory's tenet of direct violence and also induces a requirement of a

decolonial feminist reading to use gender as a unit of analysis to understand the gendered manifestations of violence.

It is imperative to investigate the underlying processes and structural factors that contribute to these violations of their human rights. This study aims to identify and understand the reasons, mechanisms, and systemic elements perpetuating the crises of everyday violence and oppression among Afghan women in Pakistan and the role of the state in this perpetration while uncovering practices of agency by Afghan refugee women in these dynamics.

Refugees are met with violence and xenophobia wherever they cross a state border, and this is no different in Pakistan but has additionally extended to coerced repatriation even for those whom the state of Pakistan had formally granted citizenship (Brah 1996; Arif et al. 1997; Anwar et al. 2021; Malik et al. 2020). The resettlement process is stalled due to the temporary nature of the refugee state due to war and conflict in the home country.

This understanding highlights the need for comprehensive and intersectional approaches to address and prevent violence against them. Afghan refugee women encounter gender-based discrimination and violence, which are compounded by the patriarchal norms in both Afghan and Pakistani societies. These norms restrict their access to education, employment, and decision-making, limiting their agency. The racialized identity of Afghan refugees sets them apart in Pakistan. Their distinct ethnicity and nationality result in both subtle and overt forms of discrimination, with Afghan women facing biases that impact their ability to access resources and opportunities (J. Vogel 2013; Pakravan-Charvadeh et al. 2021).

Racial imaginations of a nation refer to the historical racialized notions and stereotypes that have influenced conceptions of nationhood (Gikandi 2002, 595, 598). This means that historical biases and prejudices may shape how the state, society, and authorities perceive these

refugees. Such prejudices can result in discriminatory policies or attitudes that hinder their path to citizenship and full integration into the host society. (Easton-Calabria 2020).

The existing coloniality within structures and state institutions is contributed to by the global political economy, a prominent component of that is international aid which is paternalistic and therefore a colonial remnant (Baker 2015; Musella and Corseri 2021). Prejudice as resentment is a common theme in theorizing the antipathy in heterogenous groups which is to most extent applicable to the case of Afghan refugee women (Baker, 2015).

In the specific context of Afghan refugees in Pakistan despite their prolonged presence, they continue to face exclusion and discrimination based on historical biases and contemporary administrative measures. These challenges create a dissonance between the principles of humanitarianism and the actual experiences of Afghan refugees in Pakistan, who often grapple with a lack of full integration and rights. Addressing these issues requires a nuanced understanding of the historical, legal, and societal factors that perpetuate these challenges and working towards more inclusive and equitable solutions. By viewing violence as an intersectional co-constitutive structure, it is revealed that it is not confined to specific incidents but is deeply intertwined with historical power structures and continues to affect Afghan refugee women long after the initial incidents (Khan 2002).

To uncover the intricate web of power relations, migration, colonial history, and state policies that impact Afghan women's lives in Pakistan. It underscores the significance of considering these intersecting factors to understand the challenges women face and how the state of Pakistan comes to aid or exacerbate them (Bhagwan-Rolls 2011).

In feminist and decolonial scholarship, the state is conceptualized beyond its conventional definition as merely a political entity governing a territory. Rather, it is understood as a complex system of power relations that intersect with gender, race, class, and other axes of

identity. Feminist scholarship emphasizes how the state is inherently patriarchal, often perpetuating gender inequalities and violence against women through its policies and practices (Kim-Puri 2005; Parashar 2018).

1.1. Setting the Stage

Pakistan was a colonial subject but now it uses its porous border to bring in refugees for cheap labour and to benefit from international aid (Baker 2015; Robson 2023).

It offered refuge to Afghans in 1979 after the US-Soviet war in Afghanistan (Sparke 2006). It was in no way a gesture of brotherhood but was pushed by the global powers to open doors to refuge (Khan 2017; Anwar et al. 2021; Masudi et al. 2022).

This was cushioned by the aid that gauzed the bleeding wound of Pakistan's economic crises. After almost 44 years of Pakistan racially, financially, and socially ostracizing and exploiting the Afghan refugees, it is implementing the state policy of voluntary returns which will be determined by those refugees that are without national identification. The forced migration of Afghan refugees, particularly women, to Pakistan due to protracted conflict and instability in Afghanistan has given rise to a complex humanitarian crisis. Among the multifaceted challenges faced by Afghan refugee women, everyday violence emerges as a pervasive and distressing issue (Hourani et al. 2021).

This research project aims to investigate the phenomenon of everyday violence against Afghan refugee women in Pakistan, with a specific focus on how these acts can be understood as racialized and gendered practices deeply rooted in the historical legacy of coloniality, co-constitutive of cultural violence and the role of the state. Secondly, it looks at moments of solidarity and practising agency that Afghan women manage to carve out for themselves. In this study, I contend that the violence against women and girls who are forced migrants is both

enabled and exacerbated by gendered forms of structural and symbolic violence as made permissible by the state.

Gendered violence has been seen as political violence which premises that certain kinds of violence are justifiable because of the underlying reasons. Feminist scholars dismantled this moralising discourse of any type of violence that is gendered can be justifiable. Sexual and domestic violence is an exercise of power reproducing the subjugation of women through patriarchal traditions (Ratele 2015; Mshweshwe 2020).

Following the 1993 Vienna Conference on Human Rights and the 1996 UN Women's Conference in Beijing, which saw VAW increasingly recognized and framed as a human rights violation and a national and international policy priority (Htun & Weldon 2012). During that same period, feminist attention to gendered violence in the context of war, and specifically sexual violence during conflict, strengthened the growing visibility of feminist activism surrounding violence especially in the context of developing economies. As a result, sexual violence as a weapon of war came to be recognized by more international government organizations (IGO) and international non-governmental organizations (INGO), and gender was mainstreamed onto the international peace and security agenda. The predominant conceptions of gendered violence in the 1990s assigned an affixed position of inferiority to women to be rescued by the state and the law, affirming the position of male superiority which takes away from the agency of women (Frazer & Hutchings, 2020).

More than 85% of refugees in the world are hosted by developing countries (De Leo et al. 2022).

The presence of gender norms and perpetuation of gender binaries is co-constitutive of violence against women discourse according to feminist scholars (Frazer & Hutchings 2020).

This perspective recognizes that violence is not isolated to a single act but is deeply rooted in and deployed through systemic historical and structural factors (Confortini 2006; Dilts et al. 2012a). Norms and institutions, such as legal systems, social norms, and cultural practices, can perpetuate violence against women by failing to address their unique challenges and protect their rights adequately. Women often demonstrate resilience and resistance by organizing within their communities, seeking support from NGOs, and advocating for change. This resilience is an exercise of agency under a culture of violence as they actively confront and challenge violence. The experience of displacement can expose women to heightened risks of violence, including sexual and domestic abuse.

A historical analysis by UN Women narrates that since World War II, there has been a slow but significant development in the international awareness of the gendered experiences of warfare, forced migration, and refugee crisis. SGBV outside of the home is virtually always on the rise in conflict environments, and this includes coercive and forced sex for survival as well as rape and multiple perpetrator rape. There are several circumstances in which these types of violence are encountered, such as post-war and conflict settings, refugee nations, and during and after resettlement. The entire scope of sexual and gender-based violence is unknown, while incidences are underreported due to a lack of reporting opportunities, victims' lack of confidence in reporting mechanisms, and survivors' fear of punishment because of the stigma and shame surrounding the practice (UN Women 2013). Additionally, the role of the resettlement state in perpetuating or exacerbating this violence against women goes undocumented.

1.1 a. Scope and Significance

The scope and significance of the study stem from the crucial time for Afghan refugees in Pakistan as they face the threat of displacement once again.

1.1b. Contemporary Relevance

The orchestration of manifested violence of the state apparatus against Afghan refugee women in the contemporary realities of Pakistan's economic and political structures and the structures of violence that are premised on xenophobia and colonial remnants of systemic racism. The conceptualisation of violence beyond the physical is explored by feminist scholars and a decolonial feminist reading of Galtung's theory of violence. The securitization of borders leaves women extremely vulnerable and Pakistan is no exception which is why lived experiences of Afghan women during the waves of displacement are integral to security and human rights discourse (Gossman et al. 2015; Bosworth et al. 2018).

Contemporary methods and strategies are being employed to quickly isolate and disconnect Afghan refugees from the host society. It would not be farfetched to connect political interests to material resource allocation with the flux of aid being diverted to other more pressing conflicts around the world. Pakistan pushed to send back Afghan refugees under the guise of the voluntary returns policy (Khan 2017; Malik et al. 2020). It was invoked for the undocumented refugees without acknowledging the state's complicity in their lack of documentation and then extended its highhandedness to forcing back documented refugees who were and are technically and legally Pakistani citizens (Easton-Calabria 2020).

I argue that the violence against them in their everyday lives as Afghan refugees in Pakistan is to a large extent facilitated by the state, and the intersectional structures of race, gender and coloniality are co-constitutive of violence manifestations of the state of Pakistan. The violence perpetrated against women is more likely to go unchecked if the state protects the majority. In a deeply patriarchal society Afghan women face the brunt of xenophobia towards Afghans, the misogynistic attitudes towards women and as well as the biases against protracted refugees. I

As elaborated by Das, humiliation as ostracization towards men is often directed towards what is considered their possessions, namely women thus this emasculation is manifested as a legitimate form of gendered violence. This has been colonially labelled as heroism to differentiate between types of savagery and as symbols of pacifism to create a legitimate reason for exercising, glorifying and restricting violence (Das 2008, 287).

The imperative is to infer from the Afghan women's experiences and the role of the state of Pakistan to read the colonial legacy of violence. This construction of theories from social actors' language, activities and lived experiences and then deriving categories and themes to understand the nuances of the problem, which in this case is the complicity of the state of Pakistan in gendered violence perpetration in particular sexual violence.

By analysing the culture of violence manifested in accessing land to the production of gendered and racialized violence, the study aims to contribute to understanding the reasons for experiences and the negotiation to exercise agency that Afghan women undergo. The lay understanding and language will contribute to theorising about the reasons behind the social phenomenon and also attempt to uncover the conceptualisation of violence and how it extends in reverse to the colonial subjugation of Pakistan in the past.

1.2. Research Objectives

The research objectives of this project are two-fold, the first is to catalogue the conceptualisation of violence against Afghan refugee women in their daily lives and its connection to colonial structures like race, and gender relations and the role of the state apparatus in this manifestation of violence. Secondly, the objective is to highlight the experience of practising agency under gendered violence as exercised by Afghan women.

1.2a. Overview of the Methods

To achieve the objectives outlined I will be drawing on the in-depth interviews conducted in April and May 2024 in some urban and peri-urban areas of Pakistan that have the highest Afghan population close to the major crossing point of Torkham on the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, corroborated with studies, newspaper articles from an independent newspaper from Afghanistan, and NGO reports. The women were selected based on the main criteria that they had to have been living in Pakistan for longer than five years as that is the legal requirement to apply and obtain citizenship through naturalisation for the State of Pakistan.

At the outset of the interviews, rigorous consent was secured from the respondents and the potential outcomes of the study, nature of the study, and purpose of the study were shared with the interviewees.

The theoretical framework used for analysing the gathered data from in-depth semi-structured interviews with Afghan refugee women in Pakistan is a decolonial feminist reading primarily borrowing from Confortini's intersectional feminist reading of Galtung's theory of structural violence and the decolonial works I combine to this approach are that of Veena Das, Mohanty and Sana Alimia.

Similar to the link between violence and gender, gender relations organize the world into mutually exclusive categories with a subordination relationship that both reflects and reproduces gender order. This is manifested in acts of violence whereas acts of violence generate these gender roles, as well (Krause 2015; Ballestrin 2022).

It's critical to emphasize the variety of ways in which individuals live their lives despite violence and are not limited to being helpless victims. The subject/object dichotomy diminishes the object's potential for agency, which is never eliminated. Developing an understanding of

violence in post-colonial settings requires a foundational conception of gender and intersectionality with other power structures and this is what this research does in the context of the lived experiences of oppression by Afghan women in Pakistan, the role of the state and their negotiations to practice agency.

2. Historical and Contextual Background

In this chapter, I look at the international treaties ratified by Pakistan to place in context the kind of safeguards that have been pledged by the state to ensure the rights of refugees. Securing fair and long-lasting mechanisms for refugee protection and support continues to be a major issue for any given refugee crisis (Achiume 2017). Due to their lengthy history, 76% of the 3.2 million Afghan refugees and Afghans with other statuses who live in Pakistan are women and children. The environment for protection has grown more precarious in recent years, especially since the repatriation policy implementation from Pakistan (Regional Refugee Response Plan for Afghanistan Situation Summary 2024 2024).

It is important to emphasize the protracted nature of the refugee situation because research as mentioned above connects their lived reality to the global political economy and it makes the resettlement process complicated if not altogether impossible. This section will give historical and contextual background on the protracted refugee situation in Pakistan.

2.1 Protracted Refugee Situation in Pakistan

A protracted refugee situation is defined by the UNHCR as a circumstance where the refugees find themselves in limbo, where their human rights are not fully accessible and suspended, yet their lives are not actively at risk such as in war zones (UNHCR 2004). Additionally, the condition of protraction includes more than 25000 refugees from the same country. This is significant to the context of this study because the protracted nature of the refugee situation contributes to the xenophobic attitudes of the host community (Jamil 2022).

A repatriation process for the refugees for their voluntary returns has been initiated to their home country from the host country which has exacerbated the fragile situation of the refugees in Pakistan.

According to the Wilson Center, a US research think tank links the protraction of refugees to the global political economy and calls it refugee confinement as opposed to a process to promote eventual settlement or repatriation solutions (Robson 2023). UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) and ILO (International Labour Organization) call racism, xenophobia and discrimination as root causes of forced displacement (ILO et al. 2001; UNHCR 2020, 10). This means that the number of refugees from one country in this case Afghanistan has exceeded 25000 individuals and have been staying for more than 5 consecutive years (UNHCR 2004; Amina Khan 2017).

Power relations that are deeply entrenched within Pakistani society, especially towards an ostracised group shape/influence/produce violence against refugees (Fayyaz 2018). These power relations are structured along colonial lines which are co-constitutive of manifestations of race, gender relations and permissible violence, relegating women to subordinate roles and limiting their access to resources, opportunities, and decision-making processes.

Moreover, racialized power dynamics exacerbate the vulnerabilities of certain groups, such as indigenous and marginalized communities, who often face discrimination and dispossession due to historical legacies (Baker 2015; Alcoff 2019).

The complexities surrounding gendered and racialized violence, particularly in the context of migration (Mirza 2015).

This is significant to the context of this study because the protracted nature of the refugee situation contributes to the xenophobic attitudes of the host communities. Protracted refugee situations exacerbate the existing biases within the host community due to their duration. The economic concerns of refugees competing for limited employment and resource opportunities, segregation and isolation occur without any infrastructure of integration over a long period as

is the case of Pakistan, scapegoating refugees for political gain and xenophobic narratives are visible (Malik 2018; Malik, Lyndon, and Yew 2020).

Refugees are met with violence and xenophobia wherever they cross a state border, and this is no different in Pakistan but has additionally extended to coerced repatriation even for those whom the state of Pakistan had formally granted citizenship (“Regional Refugee Response Plan for Afghanistan Situation Summary 2024” 2024).

The Illegal Foreigners Repatriation Plan (IFRP), which aims to repatriate over a million foreigners—mostly Afghans—who do not have appropriate documentation, was approved by Pakistan's National Apex Committee on October 3, 2023. The proposal was announced by Pakistan's Minister of Interior, who also added that unlawful foreign residents in Pakistan had been given a deadline to leave the nation by November 1. There is still fear despite the Pakistani government's assurances that holders of Afghan Citizen Cards (ACC) and Proof of Registration (PoR) Cards will be protected from the beginning of the plan, as well as its exemptions for vulnerable groups and "individual destinies for third countries". 438,361 Afghans have returned to Afghanistan from Pakistan as of December 15th, albeit the number had peaked in early November and has been gradually declining ever since (“Regional Refugee Response Plan for Afghanistan Situation Summary 2024” 2024). Although in legality Pakistan’s citizenship law offers naturalization to anyone born in Pakistan or on Pakistani soil after 1951, this was only practised for Afghan women marrying Pakistani men (Alimia 2022).

Pakistan has been not only a colonial subject but an imperialist border extractivist. It offered refuge to Afghans in 1979 after the Soviet war in Afghanistan(Sparke 2006). It was in no way a gesture of brotherhood but was pushed by the United States to open doors to refuge. It was cushioned by the aid that gauzed the bleeding wound of Pakistan’s economy. It housed cluster

movements from Afghanistan, where an entire village would move and then relocate to Pakistan. Despite this, they were never welcomed as a permanent presence (Alimia 2014; 2022). These clusters were sometimes called ‘mini-Afghanistan or mini-Kabul’ and this created a divide spatially and socially between the refugees and the native populations, discouraging integration possibilities. The experience of Afghans living in Pakistan has been significantly influenced by geopolitics. The Pakistani state embraced an Afghan presence as a means of gaining political clout in Afghanistan over a large portion of the 1970s–1990s. However, since the start of the twenty-first century, the Pakistani government, in conjunction with the UNHCR and other international partners, has advanced an agenda of repatriating Afghan refugees; Afghans are being informed that they are no longer welcome in the country. This is due to the War on Terror (WOT) and the ongoing rivalry with Afghanistan.

In her book *Refugee Cities: How Afghans Changed Urban Pakistan* published in 2010, Sanaa Alimia reconstructs microhistories of Afghan refugees living in Pakistan primarily in the cities of Peshawar and Karachi. She discusses how the shifting geopolitics of the region changed the attitudes that the Afghans faced within Pakistan, what were considered allies against the Soviets were quickly declared terrorists during the WOT (War on Terror) by the US. This shifted the narrative and also greatly impacted the level of insecurity faced by the refugees within Pakistan. She draws heavily on the informal structure of belonging that the Afghans have managed to carve as a sense of identity and belonging despite constant legal hurdles. The Pakistani government promotes informality as a means of managing populations—both citizens and noncitizens—that it cannot or does not always like to interact directly with, especially when it comes to social welfare issues. This points to the reality that international human rights are limited in safeguarding human rights and non-citizens occupy a more vulnerable position within the confines of a nation-state that is not theirs. There is evidence of material, social and emotional investments by the Afghan refugees through informal structures

that regulate their daily lives even if naturalisation as full citizens is a distant dream for most (Alimia 2022).

All vulnerable Afghans who have sought shelter in Pakistan and may face immediate danger if forced to return are being protected by the UN Migration Agency, UNHCR, and UN Refugee Agency, and they are pleading with Pakistan to maintain this protection. The petition was made in response to Pakistan's declaration that it would return Afghan nationals to their homeland. Afghanistan is facing numerous human rights issues, especially concerning women and girls, in addition to a serious humanitarian situation. All those who have been forced to flee the country would be severely impacted by such plans, and they might seriously jeopardize their safety if they ever returned. IOM (International Organization of Migration) and UNHCR recognize the government's responsibility to maintain public safety and security, its need to manage population density on its territory, and its sovereign prerogative over internal affairs. IOM and UNHCR repeat the call for all returns to be voluntary, safe and dignified - without any pressure, to ensure protection for those seeking safety. The forced repatriation of Afghan nationals has the potential to result in severe human rights violations, including the separation of families and the deportation of minors. The resettlement process is stalled due to the temporary nature of the refugee state due to war and conflict in the home country. It is incumbent that a repatriation process for the refugees for their voluntary returns will be initiated to their home country from the host country as soon as security is stabilised (IOM Pakistan 2023; UNHCR REGIONAL BUREAU FOR ASIA AND PACIFIC (RBAP) 2023).

A brief background on the intersections of gender, race and coloniality to frame the context would be necessary to highlight their operationalization through state violence.

2.2. Intersections of Coloniality, Race and Gender

In the case of Pakistan, taking coloniality as a unit of analysis for manifestations of violence involves recognizing the historical and ongoing legacies of colonialism, imperialism, and neocolonialism.

Colonial history has played a significant role in shaping contemporary power structures and racialized hierarchies. Colonial legacies continue to influence the marginalization of certain groups, leading to the perpetuation of violence and oppression. The colonial legacy often includes land dispossession, cultural erasure, and the imposition of norms that exacerbate gender and racial inequalities (Brun and Fabos 2015). The state is a key factor in this complex narrative. State policies and practices can either perpetuate gendered and racialized violence or work to curb it. Feminists highlight the importance of government structures in women's lives and the necessity for more comprehensive theoretical explanations of their function in balancing gender roles. State is broadly defined as administrative and bureaucratic yet coercive processes that structure social relations (Rhode 1994; Ackerly 2010; Kim-Puri 2005; Parashar 2018). This also connects to the state's control of the population by creating and preventing the reproduction of certain groups and polities, described as control over wombs (Verges 2018).

According to Trevor Getz, colonial violence is inherently violent in three ways it is a civilising discourse which means a certain group that is the coloniser is superior based on racist categorisation thus deriving justification to control by the means of violence. Secondly, it was a profit-making entity and thus forced people into labour quite specifically with terrible labour conditions or work that the colonisers themselves would not partake in due to its physically strenuous nature and hazardous conditions. Thirdly, it was premised on cultural violence which ties back to the first point that one group was superior to the other (Getz 1906; Bhabha 1992).

Foregrounding women's experiences of sexual violence to analyse the role of the state can delimit the political relevance of the experiences and also essentialises women as an

undifferentiated category. This also runs the risk of recreating gender stereotypes of inferior women as a homogenous entity to be protected by the state or interchangeably understood as the central government ascribed a masculine role (Frazer and Hutchings 2020).

To better understand the protection environment and movements of Afghan nationals returning to Afghanistan from Pakistan, UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, and IOM, the UN Migration Agency, have compiled their data on the arrest, detention, and deportation of Proof of Registration (PoR) holders, Afghan Citizen Card (ACC) holders, and undocumented Afghan nationals, as well as on the outflows of Afghan nationals at the Torkham and Chaman border crossing points. Pakistan has been the home of millions of Afghan refugees for decades, till January 2022. Several international treaties and conventions comprise the legal framework that governs Pakistan's treatment of refugees.

2.3 International Treaties Ratified by Pakistan

Pakistan has ratified some key charters that moderate the treatment offered to the refugees while acknowledging the prerogative of the state to control movement across its border, security threats even if they may be perceived, and the right to moderate population growth. There is the **1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocols**, some of its provisions are domestically implemented (United Nations 1967).

The 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocols offer crucial directives for safeguarding the rights and protections of refugees. Although Pakistan has not ratified the Convention, its tenets are generally acknowledged in international law. Pakistan has neither enacted national legislation for the protection of refugees nor established procedures to determine the refugee status of individuals seeking international protection within its territory. Pakistan is also not a

party to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees/1967 Protocol. Therefore, the Foreigners Act of 1946's restrictions are applied to such individuals.

Under its mandate (the Statute of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, adopted by the General Assembly Resolution 428 (V) of 14 December 1950) and on behalf of the Government of Pakistan in accordance with the 1993 Cooperation Agreement between the Government of Pakistan and UNHCR, UNHCR determines refugee status in the absence of a national framework for refugee law (UNHCR Pakistan 2024b; Masudi et al. 2022; UNHCR Pakistan 2024a).

These accords imply that Afghan refugees living in Pakistan should be granted specific rights and safeguards. This includes the non-refoulement right, which prohibits being sent against one's will back to Afghanistan. They ought to be able to work and have access to essential services like healthcare and education. In actuality, though, the circumstances facing Afghan migrants in Pakistan can be difficult. Many of them tackle problems like prejudice and restricted access to resources. Furthermore, the 1967 Protocol exempts the Convention from temporal and geographical limitations, so it applies to refugees wherever they may have fled. In general, Pakistan recognizes judgments made by the UNHCR to award refugee status and permits both recognized refugees and asylum-seekers (who are currently going through the process) to stay in Pakistan while a permanent solution is found.

Pakistani government completed the registration of Afghan refugees in the country in February 2007 and provided them with Proof of Registration (PoR) cards, which grant them freedom of movement, a temporary legal stay in Pakistan, and immunity from the Foreigners Act of 1946. Presently, 1.34 million Afghans are in possession of PoR cards. The GOP is now leading the Documentation Verification and Information Verification (DRIVE) initiative, with UNHCR

providing support. New smart PoR cards will be issued to all PoR card holders who were validated during this procedure.

The **1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)** is an important agreement that upholds fundamental human rights. It safeguards rights to a fair trial, freedom from torture and cruel treatment, and freedoms of expression, religion, and assembly. Signatories pledge to protect these rights for everyone living under their authority, without exception. The ICCPR creates procedures for keeping an eye on adherence and gives people the ability to report infractions and seek compensation. As a fundamental component of international human rights law, it seeks to guarantee justice, equality, and dignity for all people everywhere (Office of the Special Adviser on Gender (OSAGI) 2005).

Women's rights and other fundamental freedoms are safeguarded by the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). Its provisions should be advantageous to Afghan refugee women in Pakistan, guaranteeing them impartial and nondiscriminatory treatment. This implies that people need to be able to obtain justice, engage in public and political life, and exercise their right to free speech and movement. In actuality, though, Afghan refugee women in Pakistan frequently struggle with issues including restricted access to jobs, healthcare, and educational opportunities, which makes it difficult for them to fully exercise the rights protected by the ICCPR

Pakistan is also party to the **1984 Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights** which ensures cultural, social and economic rights to all including refugees. The Convention on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (CESCR) of 1984 states that Afghan refugee women living in Pakistan are entitled to basic rights such as unrestricted access to healthcare, education, and employment opportunities. Notwithstanding these protections, socioeconomic

obstacles and cultural norms frequently make it difficult for Afghan refugee women to exercise these rights.

1984 Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT) is in direct contradiction with ongoing repatriation and forceful evictions of Afghan refugees, as it mentions refoulment as one of its postulates. A fundamental safeguard provided by international human rights, refugee, humanitarian, and customary law is the concept of non-refoulement. It forbids states from moving or expelling people from their authority or effective control if there are probable reasons to believe that their return could put them in danger of suffering irreversible harm, such as being persecuted, subjected to torture or other severe human rights violations. The International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (ICPPED) and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT) both expressly forbid refoulement under international human rights law (United Nations Office of the High Commissioner 2019; European Union Agency for Asylum 2023).

Other less binding instruments hold no legal recourse if violated but enact certain global pressure on states to embody through their laws and practices such as **UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement** which recommends protection and guidance for internally displaced people (IDPs) (Lugova et al. 2020).

It's crucial to consider that although these international agreements offer a framework for the management of refugees, Pakistan's domestic laws and policies are ultimately responsible for putting refugees' rights into practice and protecting them.

Specific charters ratified by Pakistan to safeguard women's rights and liberties extend to the refugee populations, such as but not limited to Afghan women in Pakistan. There is the ratified **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women**

(CEDAW), that outlines women's rights and places obligations on the ratified states to take measures to eliminate all forms of violence, to eliminate hurdles in accessing free and fair rights to marriage, family, education, employment, healthcare, and participation in public life. Adopted in 2000, UNSCR 1325 highlights the significance of women's involvement in peacebuilding, conflict resolution, and post-war rebuilding. The **UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325)** acknowledges the unique needs and experiences of women and girls in war and post-conflict contexts and advocates for the protection of these groups from gender-based violence during conflict circumstances. **Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action** adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 is considered a landmark document that Pakistan is a signatory of (Bhagwan-Rolls 2011). It narrates a holistic and comprehensive agenda for mainstreaming gender equality and women's empowerment. It covers critical areas such as women's human rights, education, health, violence against women and women in armed conflict.

The rights of Afghan refugee women are significantly protected by Pakistani internal laws and policies in addition to these international charters and accords. Laws pertaining to immigration, asylum, gender-based violence, education, healthcare, and employment are a few examples of these. Assuring Afghan refugee women's rights and well-being in Pakistan requires working to enact and uphold these laws as well as provide opportunities and support services.

The applicability of national and domestic laws to Afghan refugees and then further Afghan refugee women varies on a case-to-case basis depending on when the refugee arrived, whether are they eligible for the naturalisation process, have offspring that are Pakistani citizens by birth and additional factors that impact citizenship. A summary of some of these domestic and national legislations applicable to Afghan refugees. According to the research by Sanaa Alimia,

not all of them are to ensure the safety, protection and for ensuring safeguarding of human rights but more to create divisions based on state lines (Alimia 2022).

The Foreigners Act of 1946 governs the admission, departure, and stay of foreign nationals, including refugees, in Pakistan. The 1951 Pakistan Citizenship Act: The procedure for obtaining Pakistani citizenship is outlined in this statute. It could contain clauses that apply to refugees applying for naturalization. The Registration of Foreigners Act, 1939: This legislation addresses foreign nationals' registration in Pakistan. Pakistani passport issuing and control are governed by the Passport Act, of 1974.

The 2002 law known as the National Identity Card for Overseas Pakistanis and Foreigners Act addresses the issue of identity cards for foreign nationals living in Pakistan. The Immigration Legislation of 1979: This legislation regulates foreigners' entrance, residence, and expulsion in Pakistan (Masudi et al. 2022; United Nations 1967; UNHCR Pakistan 2024a).

The evidence provided demonstrates the intricate relationship between colonialism, violence, and the various forms of oppression that Afghan refugees in Pakistan have to deal with. Pakistan's historical involvement in housing Afghan refugees since the Soviet-Afghan War, is driven more by outside pressures than by true solidarity, is an example of how colonial legacies and geopolitical interests have shaped the country's approach to refugee management (Sparke, 2006; Alimia, 2014; 2022). This relationship has exacerbated xenophobic sentiments and sustained violence against refugees, especially against women and children, which has led to a protracted refugee crisis (Achiume 2017; Malik 2018; Malik et al. 2020). A continuum of violence against Afghan refugees is also highlighted by Pakistan's policies and practices, including the recent implementation of the Illegal Foreigners Repatriation Plan (IFRP), which ranges from coerced repatriation to denial of citizenship rights (UNHCR REGIONAL

BUREAU FOR ASIA AND PACIFIC (RBAP), 2023). International standards like non-refoulment, which are included in the mentioned and ratified by Pakistan agreements are broken by these acts. Even though Pakistan has ratified international accords, refugees are nonetheless at risk of discrimination and exploitation due to a lack of comprehensive domestic law (UNHCR Pakistan, 2024b).

2.2 Conclusion

This chapter showed how patriarchal norms exacerbate the marginalization of Afghan refugee women, whose gendered experiences of violence highlight the interconnectedness of oppression (Alimia, 2022). Systemic impediments continue to impede women's access to opportunities and critical services, even despite the theoretical protection of their rights provided by international agreements such as the CEDAW and the ICCPR (Office of the Special Adviser on Gender (OSAGI), 2005). Although women's empowerment and gender equality are further emphasized in the Beijing Declaration and UNSCR 1325, Afghan refugee women still face numerous obstacles in Pakistan (UNHCR Pakistan, 2024a; Bhagwan-Rolls 2011).

The situation of Afghan refugees in Pakistan is essentially a symbol of the lasting effects of colonialism as well as the ongoing cycle of violence that is sustained by governmental regulations, geopolitical concerns, and interlocking oppressive structures.

3. Literature Review

This chapter critically reviews existing scholarship on what has already been said about the Afghan women's refugee experience in Pakistan. I will specifically use the body of literature already produced by decolonial feminists in international relations and gender studies (Groulx 2007; Confortini 2006; Ballestrin 2022; Wibben 2020).

I look at the existing literature on gendered violence against women and refugees, the concept of state in feminist scholarship and contextual introduction to the political situation of Afghan refugee women in Pakistan. For this purpose, it will be guided by the following questions: What has been documented and under what paradigms is it studied? How is violence conceptualised and how does it connect to coloniality, race and gender within the existing body of literature?

This section is structured in a way that each topic builds the foundation for the next one. I explain what the feminist scholarship on the role of the modern nation-state is and then use this as a stepping stone to explain the role of masculinity and its use in the construction of the modern nation-state as argued by Das and then how it legitimises violence against certain groups by certain groups.

1. State of the Art

I begin by establishing the role of legitimate violence in the modern nation-state and how it can lead to ostracization and violence against certain groups. Veena Das explains the nation-state and its use of power as a strongly masculine construct.

Focusing on the everyday lives of people in post-colonial settings Das argues that state violence exists in daily life interactions between citizens and state agents. It is not limited or

restricted to extraordinary incidents of violence, or solely spectacular occurrences but occurs in small pervasive everyday interactions (Das 2008).

3.1 a. Modern Nation-State and Gendered Violence

Das argues that the modern nation-state claims legitimacy to violence because enduring peace is established through its agency(s). On the contrary, there is evidence to believe that heinous cruelty is perpetrated against groups and individuals that threaten this perceived notion of sovereignty and security of the nation-state (ibid, 285). This can be viewed as a protection of procedures as opposed to procedures protecting people. Pakistan uses this legitimacy of violence under the guise of protection to perpetrate oppression on groups it considers inferior or aliens (Arif et al. 1997; Waslat et al. 2024).

The populations that are considered outside the defined boundaries of a certain type of citizens are usually seen as a threat which results in atrocious violence against them unfortunately migrants and refugees the world over face this scrutiny and violence and Pakistan is not an exception. Das asserts that closely examining the daily lives of individuals can reveal how state and state violence permeates into the intimate aspects such as the home, community, and even interpersonal interactions. The state tries to stave off a certain kind of uncertainty associated with foreign bodies through the practice of power regulation of reproduction, death, and sex through its institutions.

This gendered belonging according to Veena Das is not a question of biopolitics purely but the definition of the modern nation-state as masculine where bodies and individuals categorised as men should be ready to take up arms and sacrifice their life, in its literal sense for the nation-state and for individuals and bodies deemed necessary for reproduction and women this right to regulate is seen rightly belonging to the state (Das 1996; 2008). It is also a type of

racialisation based on social hierarchies in contrast to the biological understanding of this categorisation a leftover of the colonial legacy (Verges 2018).

It is important to explore this gendered belonging as a way for nation-states to practice this as legitimate violence that invades the most private of spaces and decisions for individuals and seeks to govern their daily lives in exchange for authority to maintain peace. This regulation is a permissible form of violence, such as forced birth control (Isoke 2015).

To concretely exemplify how state policies create space for gendered violence and later I elaborate on how this is happening for Afghan women in Pakistan.

3.1b. Securitisation of Borders and Gendered Violence

Studies conducted periodically over the last couple of decades with Afghan refugee women in Pakistan point to a prevalence of domestic and intimate partner violence among them (Hyder et al. 2007; J. Vogel 2013; Khan 2002). Refugees grapple with domestic violence more than other populations due to lack of employment opportunities, overcrowding in refugee camps and other environmental stressors. Human Rights Watch reveals that an additional factor is that women in refugee settings are less likely to report because of cultural barriers where it is appropriate for the husband to discipline the wife with the use of force and violence an additional lack of supportive infrastructure to report intimate partner violence and seek recourse and help (Human Rights Watch (Organisation) & Samya 1999).

There is evidence that points to intimate partner violence stemming from the securitisation of borders (Lopes Heimer 2023). The choreography of interpersonal relationships of the women with their in-laws and partners requires exploration to extrapolate on these dynamics, their relationship to violence and its connection with bigger systemic and societal structures. To

retain a sense of power and control that might be missing because of poverty and the resultant stress men may resort to the use of violence towards their families (Hyder et al. 2007).

For the past 20 years it has been documented that domestic violence is not only under-reported in Pakistan but also very difficult to report as it is seen as a family matter, the patriarchal system does not consider its state's jurisdiction to interfere with such a crime if perceived as a crime in the first place. The first national bill against domestic violence was passed in 2012 and even that was only for the federal capital the provincial bills were individually tabled one of which was tabled as late as 2021, and still, some regions are outside the jurisdiction of these bills (Ministry of Justice Law and Human Rights and Government of Pakistan 2012; Shahid 2017). There is also a need to sensitively address and question the acceptability of women for some level of violence towards them particularly physical violence from intimate partners as justified or even as necessary (Hyder et al. 2007).

This suggests that some incidences of violence would go unreported and to some extent unacknowledged on the part of women if there is an understanding of its legitimacy as acceptable then this negotiation of patriarchy on the part of Afghan women is in a way assertion of their agency while it is also the manifestation of patriarchal violence that could potentially be structural. Violence is socio-spatial, and it imposes a certain universe of symbolic meaning onto its victims (Ghyka 2015, 2; Mustafa et al. 2019, 56). The space is also integral in perpetrating violence of surveillance as extrapolated further.

Feminists argue that physical space is an important factor in how violence is conceptualised and understood (Kent-Stoll 2020; Verghese and Matthews 2021) which is why Pakistan as a host country and a currently displacing body plays an active or even a directly violent role. This imposition is understood as structural where realities intersect to constitute the social

conditions to cause it and also violence reproduces these certain social conditions of race, gender relations and coloniality (Getz 1906; Heath 2016).

The agency albeit supremely limited to choosing from either type of violence as manifested racialisation, daily oppression and the repressive state apparatus of Pakistan is sometimes an active choice of lesser evil than going to Afghanistan during the waves of displacement (Hussain 2023; Frough & Mehran 2024).

There is a difference in interpretation of the term oppression as understood by Afghan women in Pakistan, research shows that it ranges from emotional distress due to interpersonal issues at the minimum level and goes as extreme as murder (Ayesha Khan 2002; Hyder, Noor, and Tsui 2007b; Jamil 2022). This interpretation and the impact of its subsequent manifestations are a decisive factor in displacement and co-constitutive of agency on the part of Afghan refugee women in terms of combatting violence.

This understanding extends to the lives most refugees have escaped from or as Warsan Shire says

“...home is the mouth of a shark...” (Shire 2015).

I return to the argument of systemic exclusion in daily interactions and othering of groups that threaten the perceived sanctity and security of the nation-state. These exclusionary policies are some examples of how these residual colonial constructs of racialisation and gendered forms of violence still permeate daily life interactions of the refugee community and the women in Pakistan.

3.1 c. Situation of Oppression against Afghan Women Regionally and Globally

Afghan women have had to deal with the physical and emotional turbulence associated with navigating global and regional political contexts, displacement and the changing realities and its associated risks, writes Saba Gul Khattak who has worked with Afghan women for 26 years (Khattak 2007).

Afghan women have never been part of the decision-making that involved the construction of their everyday lives, the establishment and closure of refugee camps is to the whim of unseen forces of global politics, the 2002 change in status from Afghan Refugees to displaced persons as it was decided that Afghan people face no danger anymore in returning to Afghanistan and the consequent repercussions of this decision by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (ibid, 576).

Without any improvement in their material circumstances or communication about resettlement plans, they were suddenly regionally unwanted and almost all forms of aid were pulled out. Pakistan started a deregistration process for the refugees almost instantaneously. The already existing sentiment that refugees are a burden on the economy and take away opportunities from locals, was fuel to this fire as to why are they simply not going back now that it is safe (Khattak 2007; Rostami-Povey 2007; Fayyaz 2018).

A registration process to determine who is a refugee and who is an economic process was initiated, it is imperative to note that Afghanistan had been in a state of active war for the 26 years preceding this decision in 2002. Conditions of abject poverty did not classify them as refugees anymore, they were economic migrants and not ‘deserving’ of any refugee aid.

3.2 Literature Gap

The gap in the literature that I try to address with my research is to fill the dearth of data on the Afghan refugee women's experience of daily life oppression. To connect it with existing decolonial and feminist literature and the theory of structural to complicate the phenomenon and uncover the practice of agency by these women in their inescapable refugee context. There is very limited literature on the Afghan refugee women experience from within Pakistan, despite a protracted refugee situation for more than 3 decades (Amina Khan 2017). A population that goes undocumented is also subject to the erasure of their experiences or homogenised as a singular entity. To combat this narrative, I offer a decolonial and feminist reading of Galtung's theory of violence. The existing gap is that oppressed people in postcolonial settings are seen as monolithic entities victims of systems and not the practice of agency by marginalised women under oppressive daily life interactions within systems of structural violence.

It has only been read from a feminist perspective. I bring Veena Das's and Mohanty's decolonial lens to this theory and with the help of this try to understand the relationship between the daily life oppressions faced by Afghan women in Pakistan and the role of the state. Literature produced from within Pakistan imposes a view of benevolence on the part of refugees towards Pakistan and presents the state as a blameless entity in incidences of violence (M. A. Khan 2014; Atullah and Ayub 2022; Aziz et al. 2022). I challenge this notion through my hypothesis that proposes the complicity of the state.

Galtung's theory has not been analysed in a decolonial feminist perspective, it has had rigorous gender analysis to explain structural violence as co-constitutive of gender relations. But it treats women as a monolithic entity and paints them with a universality that is paternalistic and

inclusive. This denies the experiences of colonial subjects and developing economies with heterogeneous populations and diverse cultures.

Moreover, I apply this decolonial feminist reading of Galtung's work to the context of Afghan refugee women in Pakistan which has not been done so far.

3.2 a. Contribution to Existing Scholarship

The literature from Pakistan on the Afghan women's experience has been published primarily in statistics and endorsed by the state. I look at the role of the state as a complicit actor in facilitating violence against Afghan refugee women. Additionally, I contribute to the discourse by connecting the colonial power relations that co-constitute the structures of violence to intersectional elements like race and gender.

Coloniality refers to the enduring structures of power and domination that persist even after formal colonial rule ends (Getz 1906; Empire and Stoddart 1988; Kent-Stoll 2020). Afghan refugee women in Pakistan are situated at the intersection of multiple forms of oppression, including colonial and neocolonial dynamics, which shape their experiences of violence and marginalization.

Considering coloniality can explain how the state of Pakistan is influenced by colonial legacies and neoliberal agendas, which play a central role in perpetuating violence against Afghan refugee women. This violence is not merely a result of individual actions but is embedded within broader structures of power that prioritize the interests of the state and dominant groups while marginalizing and subjugating marginalized populations (Das 1996; Parashar 2018).

Thus, a decolonial feminist analysis highlights the importance of challenging these power structures and advocating for the rights and autonomy of Afghan refugee women within Pakistan.

3.3 Methodology

The depth and scope of the project require an in-depth qualitative study. I conducted 15 interviews in total with Afghan refugee women. The in-depth interviews were semi-structured and conducted in person in the locality of the respondents and places that they frequented as per their request. The number of respondents was not pre-decided but came about after a saturation point was reached and no new information was coming forth.

I asked them about the relative invisibility that is experienced by them in relation to the state of Pakistan. How do they relate the violence they see, to oppressive behaviours, discourses, and institutions to make sense of it? The implicit and explicit ways the state tries to deny their presence or even erase it. The implications of rethinking the role of the state and its potential contribution to violence against this specific demographic.

3.3a. Field of Research

A multisited approach to data collection as opposed to living near or with the respondents as is done in traditional ethnographic studies was opted for (Alimia 2022, 13). One, some of the women I interviewed were from low-income backgrounds and in one case no income. The main earners of the household worked as daily wage labourers, scavengers, micro-entrepreneurs, or handicraft artisans. This meant very mobile jobs and also seasonal living situations. They would move to parts of the cities and altogether different cities based on a rise in demands of certain seasonal labour. They would move to northern areas such as Murree, and Nathia Gali closer to Islamabad in the summertime because that was peak tourist season, and this resulted in short-term employment. The interviews were loosely structured to allow the women to speak about their experiences in their own words. The interviews with women lasted anywhere from 30 minutes to 1 hour. The interviews were conducted in person by the researcher (myself) after undergoing prior training and undertaking a pilot interview. A module

on conducting qualitative interviews as part of my previous degrees and a session on cultural sensitivity and community engagement was given by the head of the gynaecology department of Khyber Medical Hospital, Pakistan. She had more than 22 years of experience working with Afghan refugee women and also as a first responder in medical emergencies.

The respondents only mostly spoke Dari or Pushto both of which I am not a fluent speaker of but could speak some Urdu. The interpreter and translator spoke all of these languages making it easy to converse. The interpreter was a respondent themselves and a family member or friend of other respondents, which is where the snowballing effect was put into place.

Translating and interpreting gave me certain freedoms but also had some limitations, as the questions were coming from the interpreter and translator who a family member was usually it quickly established rapport. Also, it gave me unhindered access to observe the body language the silences and pauses or incidences when the respondent would get nervous or excited. This gave me insight into what value they associated with what. To exemplify the tone of pride and slight smile almost all respondents would do when they would mention their ages revealed to me a different understanding and emotions associated with ageing. Upon asking for clarification, I was informed that it was a matter of pride to age, be a grandmother or be the oldest in the group and it allowed them certain authority as well as access to male-only spaces and domains due to their age. Limitations were that certain responses had to be repeated and some questions had to be repeated and then rephrased a few times for clarification which ran the risk of losing its essence and also the risk of becoming leading questions. The respondents would try to guess at answers that they assumed I wanted to hear as opposed to recounting real experiences. It had to be emphasized repeatedly that I was genuinely curious and then they would recount their experiences which was time-consuming.

3.3b. Criteria for Selection of Respondents

Fifteen in-depth interviews were conducted with purposive snowball sampling. The main criteria of selection were that the identified women were of Afghani origin and had lived for longer than five years in Pakistan as that is the minimum required number of years to apply for and obtain citizenship of Pakistan through naturalization according to Pakistani law (UNHCR 2020). The number of interviews was not pre-determined, and the plan was to continue till the data started repeating itself and saturation occurred in terms of information.

Most of the respondents were married but some were unmarried. This distinction was not intentional, but it was necessary to include both groups i.e. married and unmarried women to get a more holistic picture of the living situations and the extent of roles that these women were part of and fulfilled in the community. A big element of this research is linked with gender roles as a unit of analysis, and these are socially different based on marital status hence the intentional inclusion of both groups.

Their social responsibility as mothers and wives proved insightful in highlighting the challenges they faced. Women in Pakistan culturally hold more social responsibility in association with men and in incidences of violence such as the men usually sole earners getting arrested because of citizenship issues women have to step into the more ascribed as masculine roles such as dealing with the bureaucracy, earning a livelihood and for this reason, majority of the respondents were married and with offspring.

The research revealed the micropolitics of interactions as a mother-in-law and mother with law enforcement and the disadvantages of being a wife as an unregistered refugee. It is also important that marrying a Pakistani man is also the quickest way to ensure Pakistani citizenship. This is not possible if an Afghani man marries a Pakistani woman. Same-sex marriage is not legal in Pakistan.

It was necessary to establish consent and verbal consent was secured months in advance by communicating the project, the details about its use, copyrights, and privacy and ethical concerns were addressed. This was communicated at the time and also in advance at the time of identifying respondents.

The interviews had a very warm atmosphere and were usually taken over a cup of tea or juice and samosas. They had group settings, and the respondents were talking to each other corroborating information and using each other's experiences as cues and points of departure which gave it a very conversational and friendly atmosphere. They would share wins, lament losses and laugh at altercations especially ones involving outsmarting the system.

3.4 Ethical Considerations

It was necessary to establish consent and verbal consent was secured months in advance by communicating the project, the details about its use, copyrights and privacy and ethical concerns were addressed. This was communicated at the time as well in person in a manner and language understood by the respondents. The main consideration was the safety of the respondents, and their comfort in volunteering and answering the questions. Only women who volunteered without the presence of the researchers to not influence or pressure them were requested to schedule interviews. Possible outcomes of the research were shared well in advance before the women decided if they wanted to participate in the interview process. The risk is posed if there are non-male members involved as that is culturally inappropriate but as the researcher and interpreter were all females this risk was eliminated. The topic is sensitive yet documenting past events, which is also appropriate for women to discuss such subjects amongst women. Primary security concern comes from intermingling of what is considered as the opposite sex, non-family members of the opposite sex are not supposed to interact freely under any circumstance. This risk was eliminated as the researcher (myself) and interpreter

when required for Dari and Pushto languages were all women and also usually members of the respondents' family. This familiar environment was an additional precaution taken to ensure safety. The absence of men ensures safety for the participants and the respondents. The private setting of the guest house and the homes of the respondents also add a layer of safety. The public nature of the hospital garden added additional anonymity to the situation which contributes to the element of safety.

3.5a. Mitigating the Risks

To mitigate the risk of re-traumatization shorter conversations were scheduled over a couple of days, to establish safety and familiarity and sense of routine spaces that they visit as leisure spaces were used such as public parks, and their homes where I was invited after I had shared the details of the interviews and explained its purpose and the empty rooms of the gynaecology wards in a public hospital (this was a preference among many women). They were asked to identify potential triggers (such as the sight of law enforcement officials or specific types of vehicles in which they had travelled to come to Pakistan), and they were intermittently informed that they did not have to answer a question if they were uncomfortable or hesitated, consent was flexible, and respondents could freely refuse to answer at the moment if they did not feel like it. A slow relaxed pace was ensured to keep the interview more conversational and less interrogative. A trauma psychologist had been informed before the interviews that their services might be needed should the need arise. They were also present during the time of taking consent to ensure the respondents' safety and comfort. They also checked in after each interview and ensured the respondent was well. The research project was framed under a neutral title and introduced as such. A well-established connection with immediate medical, and psycho-social support was available for the respondents if they so choose.

To mitigate the risk of security concerns, for myself and the respondents places that were women only were picked as free mixing of opposite genders is considered inappropriate and in violation of social norms.

Openness and frankness on the part of the respondents were ensured by assuring them of the confidentiality and privacy of the data collection. It was also ensured by keeping the data collection conversational, exchange of anecdotes among the respondents was also common. They often would revert to asking questions from the researcher (me) about her experiences as a non-Afghan or Punjabi woman. They expressed curiosity about how documenting their daily life oppression could be academic for anyone.

Interviews were conducted outside of the home to ensure the safety and privacy of the interviewees. Gynaecology wards and the waiting rooms in there are often treated as community spaces strictly limited to women which provide a safe space which the women are familiar with and visit frequently.

A rapport based on mutual respect was established. Honesty was ensured towards the respondents on the part of the researcher.

3.4b. Positionality

Reflecting on my positionality, I was approaching this thesis research from a place of privilege and comfort. I am a full citizen of Pakistan, Punjabi and from an upper-middle-class background. I have obtained higher education which is not a possibility for the majority of the population. My financial and social standing in the context of me protects me from the issues that refugees and people with financially challenging circumstances face. This social position meant I had to be very careful with how I phrased my questions and clarify multiple times that I was not presenting or promising any employment opportunities or that I was not a government

official. The most common assumption was that I was with the national population census department which they were used to asking similar questions. Additionally, this social position allowed me access to female-only places and access to the doctors in a way patients do not because they have to follow the OPD (outpatient department) protocols which I could bypass.

3.4c. Data Analysis

The collected data was in the form of post-interview notes, audio files and written notes during the interview. The interviews were first transcribed and then translated using the software called Tactiq. The translated notes were then manually coded as the NVivo software could not get most cultural references and words in Urdu that have no literal translation and lose essence but are critical for analysis. The codes were then put in a document and material was assigned to each and then used to elaborate and explain points. The codes broadly define the main three categories and the subheadings within analytical chapters. The names of the interviewees were not recorded in written or audio format. They were recorded as Interviewees I1, I2 and so on for anonymity and safety, in the chronological order in which the interviews were conducted. The data recorded and saved was not and will not be uploaded to any drive or cloud service and will not be shared over any medium via the internet.

The data was corroborated with other data to substantiate the information from the interviews. For corroboration NGO reports, newspaper articles and other policy documents will be recorded.

The theoretical framework used will be a decolonial feminist reading of Johan Galtung's Theory of Violence and how the conceptualisation of violence as a colonial remnant that

intersects with race and gender relations can shed light on the daily life oppressions faced by Afghan refugee women in Pakistan.

3.4d. Limitations

I will not be using all the themes that came up but focusing on only the most recurring ones to which the respondents ascribed the most meaning and significance. For example, the theme of linguistic violence or verbal harassment came up but discussing that under the domain of gendered language would have been beyond the scope of this thesis. Linguistic violence is co-constitutive of cultural violence but on its own is an instrument to perpetuate certain prejudices and it is a domain where gender and language intersect. It is often systematically related to other aspects of culture such as gender roles, desirable moral order and the nature of power and persons (Cameron 2014, 285).

Another limitation is that this thesis could not diversify the field of research, the respondents selected were from two main cities Peshawar and Islamabad. This was due to financial constraints and the qualitative nature of the study where the data set is large in its depth but not numerically.

Another limitation of the study is that I do not critique the theoretical work I am using, I accept its explanation and build on it from there. I do not question or research the methods employed by the theorist. I take what it offers i.e. the Theory of Structural Violence by Galtung and then build on it, using the works of feminists like Confortini and decolonial feminists like Veena Das and Mohanty.

Finally, a limit of an overarching theory is that it minimises the role of micropolitics and the on-ground lived realities of the respondents.

3.5 Theoretical Framework

This chapter develops a theoretical framework to analyse the structures and situations of violence that are faced by Afghan women in Pakistan in their daily lives and the role of the state within this nexus.

To look at this I structure my theoretical framework on these questions:

How can a decolonial feminist reading of Galtung's Theory of Structural Violence expose the intersections of race, gender and coloniality to explain the daily life oppressions faced by Afghan refugee women in Pakistan? How can this analysis highlight the state's complicity in everyday violence against Afghan refugee women in Pakistan?

To answer these questions, I borrow from the works of multiple feminists. A decolonial feminist perspective of violence provides a deeper understanding of the connections of patriarchal structures to violence (Cockburn 2004; Das 2008; Confortini 2006; Shaw 2017). The chapter uses feminist and decolonial literature to show how gendered social structures support Afghan women's continued marginalization and subjugation. This thorough examination emphasizes how intricately linked gender, violence, and colonial legacies are in the production of violence against Afghan refugee women in Pakistan.

This examination is presented through the conceptualisation of violence obtained from the empirical data and supported by the theoretical framework. I operationalize violence in three ways that emerged from the collected data and correspond with the theories used. Firstly, the most recurring form of violence was material violence deeply seated well within Galtung's theory of structural violence and how Afghans are exploited and in disadvantaged terms of labour participation, access to capital and other financial opportunities. Second, is the restrictions on movement as a form of violence including but not limited to securitisation of

borders and the violence of surveillance. This analysis embeds itself in the theory of structural violence but borrows from Foucault's surveillance as an integral mechanism of control. Lastly, the third form of violence is the violence inflicted on the physical body also referred to as biopower. This form of violence connects to Galtung's theory's tenet of direct violence and also induces a requirement of a decolonial feminist reading to use gender as a unit of analysis to understand the gendered manifestations of violence.

Feminists expand on the understanding of violence to encompass gender as a unit of analysis and violence as beyond a static entity to violence as a fluid process. A pervasive regulatory system of control is how Foucault defines power and an integral manifestation of this is violence (Confortini 2006).

Gender relations organise the roles in society into mutually exclusive and dichotomous categories which have a relationship of subordination which reflects and reproduces gender order much like the relationship of violence with gender (ibid, 333). It is important to stress the multiplicity of ways through which people live their lives despite violence and are not reduced to being passive victims only (Groulx 2007; Jäger and Rohwer 2009; Lari 2011). The subject/object distinction takes away from the said object's chance at an agency which is never completely null.

I would like to present the conceptualisation of the state to place in context its role in the perpetration of violence against certain groups.

Feminists like Das argue that the modern nation-state is inherently gendered, and its use and manifestations of power are decidedly masculine (Das 2008). State reflects and perpetuates gender relations, and this bias permeates its policies, structures and how it governs its citizens.

Additionally, focusing on an isolated centric hub where state power is consolidated oversimplifies the role of global political and economic influences and inadvertently minimises the role of colonialism within the existing post-colonial state (Haney 2000; Temperley 2013).

3.6a. Johan Galtung's Theory of Structural Violence

I take Johan Galtung's theory as a point of departure to complicate the phenomenon of everyday violence faced by Afghan women in Pakistan and the role of the state because it articulates almost all types of violence within itself, such as direct, cultural, and structural. I will combine feminist analysis with Galtung's theory as proposed by Catia C. Confortini and connect it to Veena Das's and Mohanty's work on decoloniality. It enriches the theory by bringing in gender as an intersectional reality that impacts, reproduces, and coexists within the paradigm of violence (Confortini 2006). Thinking and language that are confined to the binary understanding of the world order reproduce gendered types of violence. The production of gender identities from violence and the production of violence from gender identities.

Galtung's theory states that personal, direct violence is only one of the three types of ways violence manifests, there are two more types which are more subtle but in no way less damaging such as structural or indirect and cultural violence (Galtung 1990; Confortini 2006; Dilts et al. 2012). According to Galtung violence has to be eliminated at all levels of society but this disregards the role of gender in the social construction of violence when the attitude of violence is deeply ingrained in the society and accepted somewhat as natural or necessary. This is important to establish the permissibility of violence as a precursor to establish peace by the state and that extends using it to ostracise and marginalise perceived threats.

Referring back to the point made by the 2006 study discussed above, most Afghan women who were interviewed were of the view that some violence directed towards the wives from their husbands was natural and to some extent necessary (Hyder et al. 2007).

Galtung's theory does not address the natural inclination of the society towards violence or violent tendencies which is more of a structural issue upheld by gender relations. It is important to highlight the role of negative violence (direct) and positive violence (presence of social justice). The presence of the former directed at refugee women is seen in incidences of intimate partner violence and the latter can be seen in the policies set up to other one group of people against the other under the pretext of perceived national security (Das 2008; Lopes Heimer 2023). As is the case of Pakistan, a different set of rules altogether governs and regulates the refugees coming into and residing in Pakistan.

A feminist reading of Galtung's work can highlight ways legitimization of violence is connected to and constructed while also constructing gender relations.

It further argues for hierarchical mutually exclusive categories to violence which are not limited to but include the use of violence to end violence. This construction and somewhat justification of the superior status of violence to other violence based on the rationale of its deployment is greatly owed to gender relations. Additionally, looking at how the understanding of different social realities is deeply gendered and contributes to the production and reproduction of violence. The role of gendered language is extremely important in this nexus as it is a manifestation of circumstances that are unfathomable until they are realised and actualised through language. It is important to discuss racism because a lot of the manifested violence is an enactment of permissible racism which is part of the commonly used language to ostracise the Afghan refugees (Fatimah 2023). Hegemonic masculinity in a society demands that men must be dominant in society and violence is deeply intertwined with the role of constructing

and preserving a certain gender identity (McVittie et al. 2017, 121; Orchowski and Berkowitz 2021, 211). Afghan women bear the burden of this hegemonic masculinity in a patriarchal society exercising violence in a way that other women are targeted not only because of this but also because they are considered the property of the Afghani man (Alimia 2014; 2022; Fatimah 2023).

3.5b. Categorisation of Violence

Galtung elaborates on his concept of violence as a differentiation between personal and structural violence. Using Lopes Heimer's 2023 work used above to exemplify intimate partner violence is personal or direct violence because it has a recipient or subject of the said violent act. Structural violence is violence without a receiving subject and cultural violence is legitimisation of both these types of violence.

"...boundaries between state violence and intimate partner violence become blurred as national borders are not only controlled by state officials but also by abusers at the intimate and embodied scales" (Lopes Heimer 2023, 1379)

In this case, border securitisation by nation-states in the world against illegal immigrants would be the acceptance of these two types of violence thus making it a form of cultural form of violence (Galtung 1990; Confortini 2006; Lopes Heimer 2023). I draw parallels to Lopes Heimer's work where restrictive immigration and asylum policies in the UK directly result in domestic and intimate partner violence. A relationship is established and yet the acceptance of border securitisation despite their resultant violence reflects Galtung's concept of cultural violence.

Additionally, to put border vigilance and surveillance in a theoretical context I will make use of Foucault's concept of surveillance as an integral mechanism of control which also extends

to biopower to regulate and control bodies. To induce a state of fear and self-discipline as a means of control. The fear of being constantly watched and observed is used to keep the people in line is the exercise of power and a certain kind of violence which is enabled directly against certain groups (marginalised and refugees) and the acceptance is the cultural violence the prevalence of this system is structural violence (Foucault 1982a; Confortini 2006). A key element of restriction on movement as a form of violence is a normalisation of this violation as justified or even necessary.

Feminists directly engage with the borders and regulation of migration by states and challenge the UN convention which forms the foundation for border policies, they critique it as constructing a homogenous male liberal refugee and persecuting it. The loud male who champions neoliberal democracy and is escaping the communist regime is considered solely fit for refugee asylum but very few asylum seekers fit this character sketch (Helander and Velásquez 2015).

Most asylum seekers are fleeing war-torn areas, escaping proxy wars of these neoliberal democracies for a chance at improved quality of life and almost always are from some marginalised group. The feminist critique of border securitisation is that the border authorities fail to recognise other types of persecution that refugees are fleeing from in search of improved quality of life (Hernández 2019; Vergès 2022). Border securitisation is a recurring theme that is woven into the lives of many Afghan refugees in Pakistan, it is also one of the major sources of employment to smuggle goods to either side of the borders

For structural violence, violence is integrated into practices of unequal opportunities resource distribution and access to decision-making. It is the legitimisation of an authority that discriminates (Confortini 2006). Galtung does not limit these resources to material possessions but to resources like education and healthcare. A certain impersonal imperative makes the

structural violence inherent to the society in a way that it does not matter if there is a recipient or a direct perpetrator (ibid, 336). It is woven into the fabric of society.

To explain Galtung's typologies of violence they are looked at from two perspectives which are the "kind of harm it produces" and "what human needs it limits" (Galtung 1969; Confortini 2006).

This means that structural violence disrupts accessing and utilising basic material needs and basic human rights including but not limited to the right to privacy, sleep, nutrition, freedom of assembly, right to free trial, freedom of speech and the like. Galtung is quite exhaustive in his list of what is impacted by structural and cultural violence such as non-material needs like friendship, happiness, self-actualisation, etc. There is also latent violence and the threat of violence which is also classified as a type of violence and even acts that are influenced by imminent violence even positive violence would fall under violent behaviour or endorse a kind of structural violence (ibid).

Galtung further builds on this by connecting torture as a method of social and political control which is a product of or sustained by imperialism. In the same vein, I would like to connect Galtung's argument to colonialism. The colonial system disrupted native societies, dismantled an entire system of governance and linguistics, and exploited resources thus introducing a structural form of violence. The remnants of which are not limited to but include othering against another group, racialisation, inequality, and oppression among the formerly colonised people and by the formerly colonised people (Confortini 2006).

Galtung further theorises that violence is not limited to evil actors or individual actions but is a system or a whole interconnected structure pointing towards industrialism and commercialism creating complicated intersections to produce and reproduce environmental exploitation. A decolonial gender analysis of Galtung's theory of violence can show how

gender can contribute to structures of domination in postcolonial subjects and societies (Das 2008). And how they connect to symbolic and non-material systems to provide justification and legitimacy for violence. While Confortini in her feminist reading of Galtung's theory explains it as

“Cultural, structural, and personal violence are the three corners of a violence triangle, which is meant to graphically illustrate that all types of violence breed each other in many ways and that violence reproduces itself across all dimensions” (Confortini 2006, 336).

Galtung extrapolates that cultural violence can be embedded in all non-material aspects of social life and the culture itself namely religion, science, law, etc. which reflects in our earlier discussion of how border securitisation can manifest in personal and direct forms of violence such as intimate partner violence, it can serve as a causal factor for the legitimacy of violence and the effect it produces is permission or space for violence in a cultural consciously or unconsciously (Confortini 2006, 339).

I will next elaborate on Confortini's feminist reading of Galtung's definition of the role of language in constructing and reproducing violence through gender and how gender is constitutive of violence. Language is a tool for cultural violence and to perpetrate civilising discourse which is one of the core tenets of colonial violence (Getz 1906; Hall 2003; Heath 2016). A gendered reading of linguistics is important for this study because a lot of the oppression and racialisation faced by Afghans is verbal humiliation directed towards the constructed Afghan man as the other and manifested through violence against women.

The role of culture in Pakistan is imperative to drive my research forward because that is where the othering against Afghan women is most clearly visible, the acceptance of hate and discrimination, racial terms and roles that are ascribed to them. I will evaluate the sexually inappropriate comments that Afghan women are subjected to, the suggestions of forced

sterilisations to enforce population control are where some of the racial violence is manifested. To do this I will refer to the work by Verges, and her analysis of the French colonial practices of forced sterilisation towards the colonial subjects (Verges 2018). This is how I will bring in the intersections of colonial violence and racialisation and how they connect to cultural violence as co-constitutive of gendered violence. Verges traces the historical roots of forced abortions and forced sterilisations and their connection to racism and subjugation of the colonial subjects, as well as the perpetuation of the notion that women in the Third World produce more children are the cause of poverty and underdevelopment (ibid, 265).

Pakistan is still operating on this mode of understanding and inflicting this form of violence on bodies it considers alien. It is important to emphasise this language is a tangible and practicable tool for culture and also the tool for all forms of discourse. The legal apparatus for Pakistan is severely gendered and othering.

As a tool, culture and language as its constitutive elements used to measure a society's attitude and belief systems. The language that is used in national newspapers, television shows and other media sources is oftentimes blatantly racist as well as discriminatory, going as far as to use derogatory gender stereotypes in the inaugural speech of the newly appointed prime minister of the country (Haider 2013). It is used to promote a certain moral order and a civilising discourse that is nationalistic and patriarchal. This is a manifestation of cultural violence.

Aleezeh Fatima writes for a national newspaper quoting incidences of xenophobia recounted by Afghan refugees and Pakistanis of Afghan origin where they are mocked by comments like how mugging and crime rates have increased since Afghans have started coming into Pakistan. Racial slurs and being treated like an outcast and as an outsider are very common (Fatimah 2023).

An important distinction to note would be that Pakistani state censors media heavily if any published or shared material paints it in an unfavourable light yet it does not consider racist remarks or gender discriminatory language as offences or slights but norms or even as facts which makes this structural as well as cultural violence. According to the IPI Press Freedoms Violations for Pakistan for the year 2022-23 out of the reported incidences of press freedoms among which are target killings of journalists in the field, 54.9% have been committed by state actors including but not limited to law enforcement and other public officials (International Press Institute 2023).

The racist and Islamophobic imagery devised post 9/11 which was to construct the world as viewed by the US has been used against Afghan refugees in a common language for a very long time, the irony of which is not lost. In the media and public debate, derogatory stereotypes about Afghans are growing. Afghans in Pakistan are now perceived more negatively in light of the terrorist Taliban than they were previously when they were revered as valiant mujahideen ('religious fighters') (Zacharias 2003; Alimia 2014). Enactment of violence is produced by this gendered language and its use, whereas this gendered language also reproduces violence. This gendered discourse also serves as a curtain for political decision-making making which in turn has gendered outcomes.

Galtung does not fully weigh on the role of international politics on interpersonal violence but there is research by feminists that points to that seemingly mutually exclusive categories of private and public are blurred especially if analysed from the paradigm of gender-based violence (Surojit M. Gupta 1997; Zacharias 2003; Confortini 2006).

Linking this to imperialism and the colonial construction of the brown native man as effeminate was also gendered violence as feminine is/was considered an inferior category. Mrinalini Sinha extrapolates on this as the manly Englishman and the effeminate Bengali. It showed the

inevitable relationship between gender relations, coloniality and the construction of a governing body or state structure.

This rhetoric of the Afghans as primitive, less masculine and incapable of self-government is perpetrated by the Pakistani society and inextricably the state (Surojit M. Gupta 1997; Fatimah 2023).

The manifestation of violence is fluid, and it changes based on cultural factors with the structures of violence. In the case of direct violence, the recipients also change owing to a change in circumstances. This extends to the concept of international security which is usually the biggest stalwart to safeguarding refugees within the host state. An intersectional lens allows us to see how Galtung's triangle of violence (direct, structural and cultural) is constitutive of gender roles and racial violence, closely intertwined with each other and contributes to the preservation of violence in society. The ostracization of 'other' and lower species, refuge or the immigrant in the case of Pakistan is very reminiscent of the xenophobia faced by British Colonial subjects. It is also similar to what Francoise Verges argues happened before the liberation in Algeria by the French coloniser, in particular focusing on the colonisation of the womb or the regulation deeply associated with the gender role of producing the citizenry or more accurately to limit the production of the unwanted bodies forcefully or what is ascribed inferiority in this social hierarchy (Verges 2018, 263).

Racial discrimination was a process by colonial powers to create categories to control and exploit people. The belief still permeates cultures and societies. It involves the production and then legitimisation of hierarchies based on difference through notions of superiority and inferiority. Racial categories are not fixed, and change based on context and contrary to popular belief are not based on biology. The processes of racialisation are choreographed through state policies and practices that subordinate and marginalise particular groups (Isoke 2015).

Zenzele Isoke talks about securing the dominance of certain groups and how their hegemony and power are established, and reinforced through state apparatus which is manifested in violence through permissible hate (ibid, 357). This connects to the earlier points made by Galtung about the acceptance of the practice of violence as cultural violence and cumulatively against a group as structural violence. It also extrapolates on the conceptualisation of gender, race and coloniality as intersections manifested and co-constituted through cultural and by extension structural violence.

- **Conclusion**

The state's participation in this nexus has been emphasized as this chapter has built a theoretical framework to study the daily violence suffered by Afghan women in Pakistan. It builds on Galtung's theory and incorporates intersectional elements like race, gender and coloniality into the conception of violence, enhancing it with a decolonial feminist viewpoint. This highlights how patriarchal systems sustain violence by exposing the connections between direct, cultural, and structural violence.

4. Analysis Chapter I – Material Forms of Violence

In this chapter, I look at the emerging themes which are broadly divided into three analytical chapters. The emerging themes are broadly three which are economic violence, restriction on movement as a form of violence and violence on the physical body.

The theme mainly discussed in this chapter is material forms of violence and how the violence in play here intersects with elements of race and gender with roots that can be traced to coloniality.

Since they arrived in Pakistan, Afghan refugees have faced various types of oppression in their daily lives which I attempt to analyse with the conducted interviews and to corroborate with the existing data.

The approximately two million illegal Afghans in Pakistan are afraid they will be sent back to unsafe conditions after the country announced in October 2023 that it would remove all unregistered migrants. Pakistan claims the action is required to stop the terrorist organizations operating in its border region from becoming more and more powerful, while the international community advises that it may cause more radicalization (Gossman et al. 2015; United Nations Office of the High Commissioner 2019; Ul Mulk et al. 2020). This fear was reflected in everything my respondents did and said, this ever-looming threat of being sent back to a country that most of them have no recollection or memories of or never have been to.

4.1 Introduction

Shifting attention to those most affected, yet largely etched out of policies, plans, analysis and discussions are women in Pakistan but in particular Afghan refugee women.

In the wider field of gendered belonging, manifestations of violence and the role of the nation-state which is co-constitutive of colonial violence not limited to but including racialisation and ostracization are faced by Afghan women. I look at their experiences of daily life oppression and how the state of Pakistan is complicit in aggravating them.

I asked them about this relative invisibility that is experienced by them in relation to the state of Pakistan. How do they relate the violence they see, to oppressive behaviours, discourses, and institutions to make sense of it? The implicit and explicit ways the state tries to deny their presence or even erase it. The implications of rethinking the role of the state and its potential contribution to violence against this specific demographic. From these conversations, I conceptualize structural violence as a colonial remnant and how it is constitutive of violence in practice and intersects with elements of race and gender.

This chapter analyses the collected data based on the real-life experiences of women impacted by displacement, migration, and life as refugees in Pakistan because it is concerned with empowering women and bringing their suppressed knowledge to light. It will analyse the in-depth interviews conducted with Afghan refugee women over a few months.

Fetrat Mubareka writes that “hopes, anxieties, dreams, concerns and anxieties that inhabitants of a city or country embody cannot be felt quite the same through the screens of laptops and phones” (Fetrat 2020, 04).

This is also what I encountered that the real-life experiences and accounts of everyday life are very different from the media or even academic perspective which is extremely homogenising and reduces indigenous resistance to passive victims of patriarchy and violence associated with displacement. This chapter analyses the type of economic violence faced by Afghan refugees primarily women. It is important to note that Afghan women are not a homogenous group but

are seen as such and as others by the Pakistani population which is further highlighted by the respondents' experience.

Mohanty says that texts from Western feminists have produced the developing world woman as a monolithic entity and reduces her to universally applicable categories of oppression and a victim of the system (Groulx 2007, 3).

She also talks about cross-cultural feminist alliances which I will illuminate at different points in the research that were also a recurring theme.

Afghan refugee women in Pakistan are negotiating with patriarchy in ways big and small to carve out identities, independence, and a modicum of safety for themselves and their communities. To highlight their little wins and fights against a system that is set up to fail them it is important to highlight how the structures put these women at a disadvantage and discourage integration and assimilation into the Pakistani society as a whole.

4.2 Economic exploitation

The economic disparity connects with the material reality of the refugee women in Pakistan. *Hasht e Subh* Daily, an independent non-profit newspaper in Afghanistan while recounting the experience of displacement and her flight to Pakistan, the Afghan women's rights activist Rahila Hassan described Pakistan as a place.

"...women's lives are delicately connected to a thin thread of safety." (Frough et al. 2024, 1)

This thin thread of safety has started to tighten like a noose since October 2023, when Pakistan started enforcing the forced repatriation policy. The lack of safety now becomes coupled with the threat and terror of displacement.

I look at the material aspects of violence and trace its roots to conceptualise the constitutive nature of violence, race and gender roles as colonial entities. The elements of violence stem from and are manifested through the imperialist global political economy.

According to the research by Sanaa Alimia, not all legislation is to ensure the safety, protection and for ensuring safeguarding of human rights but more to create divisions based on state lines (Alimia 2022). I will explain this in more detail with the collected data in the following:

Out of the 15 respondents only one was employed and she said it was out of necessity and she had to face censure in the community because of it. It was because her father had passed away and she had no brother or husband to support her, her younger sister and her mother.

She narrated an event where she had tried to apply for admission to the university for postgraduate and she had to get her documents attested by the HEC (Higher Education Commission) as is mandated by the government for everyone and this procedure involves filling out a form on the institution's website.

The electronic form would not accept her PoR for proof of residence and every time she reached out to the help office they would respond with

¹ “You will have to come to the office. This is not a problem that can be solved over the phone.”

I6

The respondent, I6 said this invitation is only issued if the person is a woman and if she had been a man they would have outright refused. She said this invitation implied sexual undertones.

¹ “Apko daftar ana parega. Ye phone pe hal honay wala masla nai hai” I6
s

She recounted that she had to travel to Islamabad twice where the head office is located, the first time they overscheduled the appointments and cancelled hers and she was informed after she had already reached. This travel would mean taking a leave of absence from her place of work, which meant her pay would be deducted for the day and the additional cost of travelling to a different city. Transportation is not cheap and public transport is completely inaccessible to women in Pakistan. The second time they made her wait for 8 hours before she forced her way into the office where she could overhear the staff talking about how to get rid of her. They refused a few times and then commented how Afghans are using up the resources of the country and limited spots in higher education. She said she had to pay the fee twice without any justification, but she was so frustrated by then that despite knowing that the staff would pocket the extra fee, she wanted the ordeal to be over.

I6 says she was born in Pakistan 29 years ago and her parents migrated 14 years before her birth and still their multiple applications to secure Pakistan citizenship had been rejected. The respondent herself had been denied Pakistani nationality despite being born here.

They had been informed that if they paid high sums of money, they could secure Pakistani citizenship cards unofficially which would considerably make her life easier, but she said her family did not have that kind of money to spare.

Fahd Zulfiqar, an economist with PIDE (Pakistan Institute of Development Economics) in his blog on the higher education institutions in Pakistan comments that HEC is a tightly tailored, centralized colonial entity that is only interested in producing quantity over quality of degreed individuals as opposed to critical thinkers (Zulfiqar 2021).

Processes that are free of cost and for which the Afghan people pay equal and sometimes more taxes are completely inaccessible to them. These created xenophobic disadvantages are

pervasive in the policies but more so in the attitude of the people as demonstrated by the incident narrated above.

Additionally, the employment taken up by Afghan people most prominently in Pakistan are working at the brick kiln which is the only form of bonded labour that still exists in Pakistan, scavenging through trash for metal scraps to sell and lastly collecting paper and cardboard to be sold for recycling and lastly to work graveyard shifts at factories as unregistered workers where they are paid in cash only. This is because these are extremely exploitative and physically strenuous jobs and the desperation of the people who are excluded from the formal labour market are pushed to work them. This is in line with the colonial violence of economic exploitation of human capital (Getz 1906; Heath 2016; Janine Shaw 2017).

4.2a Access to services: housing, infrastructure and education

According to the research by Sanaa Alimia, urban spaces are gentrified with an anti-poor bias where Afghan refugees in the lowest-paying sectors cannot access them (Alimia, 2022, 63).

They are considered the lowest in the social and occupational hierarchies further limiting their choices and access to opportunities in the urban landscape (Malik et al. 2020). The refugees have been subject to harassment, and discrimination and forced to pay bribes to reside legally to the law enforcement agencies (ibid, 45). Quite similar to how certain residential areas were off-limits to the native Bengali population and exclusively for the European colonisers within the sub-continent (Empire and Stoddart 1988; Kent-Stoll 2020).

Afghans are routinely harassed by law enforcement officials when it comes to accessing basic infrastructural needs. Law enforcement threatens their right to residence in the country by confiscating identity documents. Their visa and passport documents are demanded and if refused, male members of the family are held in detention for unlimited periods under the

pretext that all the family members have to come and present their documents and pay bribes to have their family members freed as is recounted by Shakira Aslami, a resident in Pakistan for the in an interview with Al-Jazeera about the routine harassment that the community undergoes ever since the deportations where the law enforcement are a law unto themselves (Hussain 2023).

This type of violence almost always happened in the presence of Afghan men to ridicule them and to show how they could not even protect the privacy of their house and ‘their women’ which is a grave insult and meant to infantilise their authority and an act of emasculation. To make the women present themselves at the police stations is also a way to humiliate the men. Afghan women are instrumentalised as receptacles of violence by their association with the men in their families.

This violence is legitimised, it is not a few rogue officials that routinely harass and discriminate against Afghan refugees and treat them as inferior citizens. The same case has been documented in Sana Alimia’s seminal ethnographic work that spans more than 8 years and multiple cities (Alimia 2022, 131). These acts of violence and discrimination are more pointed and targeted after a person is identified as Afghan from their PoR card as opposed to the CNIC (Citizen National Identity Card) issued to Pakistani citizens.

This extends to not only bribes to law enforcement officials to avoid getting evicted or arrested under false charges but also to access to other judicial and administrative procedures through official channels as well as street harassment by law enforcement towards women which discourages them from stepping out of the house.

According to interviewee I6, she explained the reason for the deep fear that most Afghan women had against law enforcement officials, 3 other women present at the time of the interview nodded in agreement upon her saying this. There is the twofold threat of getting

arrested is, one that prison and police procedures are deeply troubling and misogynist and another threat that Afghans face is that if the charges are anti-state or anti-constitution upon arrest regardless of what the crime or accusation their citizenship is revoked. This is an irreversible process. An additional issue is that if it has been 5 years or less since a person has been granted citizenship and is sentenced to imprisonment, in that case, the citizenship is also revoked. This is to infantilise and mock the masculinity which is vested in the women of the household the mothers, wives and daughters so to be able to summon them is to humiliate the man.

This data was verified with the official information disseminated by the government, Pakistan Citizenship Act 1951 (Government of Pakistan 1951).

The same interviewee commented that this discrimination meant that they could not purchase property or take out house construction loans because the banks refused to recognise their POR (proof of registration cards) or their Afghan Citizen cards.

This process was looked into to verify if the discrimination was at the end of the banking sector which has private entities but reports to the State Bank of Pakistan which is the centralised national body upon further research the circular by the State Bank verifies it and the PoR card only allows for small micro-finance loans limited to agricultural ventures and no avenues for investment (State Bank of Pakistan 2019).

This also meant that Afghan refugees could not purchase property. Afghan men have access to forging ownership documents for properties they have purchased but women do not have access to this capital or black market as they are usually not formally registered and sometimes reside illegally whereas the men are here on work visas.

All of the respondents interviewed confirmed that they did not own any land as they could not legally purchase it and to live indefinitely in rented spaces took a big chunk out of their household incomes. It also put them at the mercy of landlords. Renting living spaces is privatised and has no regulating authority in Pakistan. There are monopolies of rent with a share for law enforcement officials to maintain terror and to avoid eviction during deportation times the landlord is the master. The legal precarity with threats of arrest and detention of Afghan refugees underscores the racialized nature of their marginalization.

4.2b. Access to education

A 2006 study of a refugee camp near the area where this study was conducted revealed that 38% of women in the refugee camp from ages 15 years to 44 years of age had had no formal education ever (Hyder et al. 2007,1538). This situation has not changed much in the years since then for the refugee community, more so for the girls and women. Research conducted from 2019 to 2022 revealed that of the 403 Afghan girls, barely anyone had access to proper infrastructure for education. It also points to the fact that compared to their male counterparts girls are less likely to own devices to access digital literacy infrastructure, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic closure of schools (Barnes et al. 2024).

This discouraging statistic of low access to educational opportunities for Afghan women is supplemented by a press conference in late December 2023 after which it was announced that Afghan students would be allowed to study at medical universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Mardan the two regions with the highest population of Afghan refugees both of which are government universities and as with all government institutions the policies reflect the narrative of the nation-state (Mehmood 2023). This systemic discrimination is the leftover colonial policies in the education system that Pakistan is carrying forward that fail to adequately address

the educational needs of marginalised communities like refugees in Pakistan. Educational institutions are heavily influenced by nationalistic narratives and priorities.

The interviews revealed that except for one respondent who had achieved higher education all of the women that had been interviewed had not gone to any school in Pakistan. 2 of them said they had gone for religious education an older lady till they were of 6 or 7 years of age and after that, they would stay at home and help with house chores till they got married.

I4 said that the biggest hurdle was that there were no all-girls schools in the city she had grown up in and also her mother did not approve of her and her sisters going to school. Her brothers had gone till they were 9 years old and then they had started working to contribute to the household income. She was 49 years old, and she had not sent her daughters to school either. She said if she sent her children to school then people would know how many children she had and cast an evil eye on the strength (numerical) of her family. The lack of safe educational safe spaces is a form of gendered structural violence.

Upon mentioning this to other interviewees, it was revealed that this fear stemmed from the fact that most of the children born to refugees are unregistered and they have one or two children registered and access medical facilities by using the same PoR cards for all their children as it was costly to get each one of them their own PoR. This was also one of the reasons that they all couldn't go to school as they technically had no proof of existence in any of the government records.

A study conducted by the Asian Displacement Solutions Platform to identify barriers to education for Afghan refugees in 2002 revealed that there were no schools for girls to date in the cities of these two women from Buner and Bannu (Atullah et al. 2022, 11). In the same study socioeconomic factors like poverty, lack of girl-specific schools and gender disparity where the largely available educational facilities target boys (ibid,14). Technically, the

refugees can access the government schools in Pakistan, but these socioeconomic barriers hinder access. Strongly reminiscent of the English-only elite schools of British colonial times that Pakistan has still retained.

Research by the RAHA (Refugee Affected and Hosting Areas Programme) program of UNHCR reported an enrolment disparity for the year 2021

“...536 Afghan refugees are enrolled in Pakistani universities – 90 girls and 446 boys...” (Atullah et al. 2022).

The educational facilities are primarily village schools set up by UNHCR within the refugee camps but there is a large deficit of funds and teachers to ensure quality education or to retain enrolments beyond the 6th grade for girls (ibid). This inadequate resource allocation also points to racial prejudices and prioritization of educational resources for boys over girls.

The clear signs of bureaucratic exclusion either by incompetence or intentionally are not revealed in this data and that is a limitation but, in the time, when the world is adapting to digital infrastructure for education, people struggle to access schools in a way that is safe and culturally appropriate.

Lack of education or inaccessibility to educational facilities and opportunities keeps the Afghan refugee women trapped in inescapable cycles of poverty and same economic brackets with the only recourse being to marry a richer man this avenue according to the respondents gave rise to issues like child marriages and sex trafficking because there are almost no other opportunities of earning a livelihood for Afghan refugee women.

4.2c. Access to Basic Utilities

Another recurring theme was the difficulty in accessing reliable sources of fuel, electricity, water and transport.

12 of the 15 respondents were stay-at-home mothers and wives and a big part of their day was spent in indirect labour and caregiving. I4 said that it was a routine occurrence to turn off the electric power from the main switches that are some distance away from the house and then they would be forced to come out of the house to turn it back on or make do without electricity till the male members of the family came back. This was usually done by children or young men in the area who were not of Afghan origin and if an Afghan woman went to turn the electricity back on, they would shout things like

“Go back to your country. This electricity is not for you.” I8

She reported this as more of an annoyance but sometimes when they would get late in paying the bills they would cut the electricity off till the due was paid.

Upon further questioning, she said that this type of street harassment was only directed at women and girls because they were easy to intimidate and never happened on Sundays when the men were at home.

This level of ownership of an amenity and a space from even young children allows for permissible hate that is deeply reminiscent of colonial violence of racialisation. This behaviour is very imperialistic its violent as it was not long ago that certain gentleman’s clubs that still exist in the city were inaccessible to brown-skinned men and exclusively for the use of British colonisers in the subcontinent. It is a vivid reminder of Mrinalini Sinha’s conceptualisation of colonial masculinity (Surojit M. Gupta 1997).

This behaviour is endorsed on the state level but in different ways as resources are scarce. Afghan communities or neighbourhoods with Afghan majority populations are always drawing the shorter end of the stick. Roads in their neighbourhoods were potholed and uncemented, making the access difficult.

One of the respondents commented that her sons go to school and the bus driver charges extra for the short distance from the main road to their house because he says the road is broken and often fills up with rainwater which is time-consuming for him to navigate and is damaging for his vehicle.

I13 commented:

“Then I go wait for my children at the edge of the street and they get dropped off there because we are not paying extra.”

She said they had this problem for everyone in the area and the women would go in groups of twos and fours for safety and company to pick the children.

What had started as a survival strategy quickly turned into a community activity and the respondent commented how she looked forward to her walks with her friends twice a day, now.

4.3. Inequality, disparity in income and labour market

The financial dependency of Afghan women on their male family members needs to be highlighted because although it is common for them to be not involved in direct economic labour that was not the case for most women before they had come to Pakistan. I5 who was the mother of I6 and had migrated at the age of 14 to Pakistan before being displaced had been working as a seamstress's assistant and she had dreams of becoming a fashion designer. She said she had tried to pursue that here, but people were reluctant to let a person who did not

speak their language and had come from a different country into their homes which is how seamstresses take apprentices. She said that she understood the hesitancy of the locals and after a while, she stopped trying. But she said she still stitched her clothes and she even brought out dresses to show them to me.

Another respondent said that although she had never gone to school, she had worked as a nurse's aide and as a non-medical staff member. She was responsible for housekeeping work in the hospital. These avenues did not exist for them in a country where they did not have the requisite social capital or the social network for referrals and also the safety it offered.

The women commented that their overall quality of life had decreased starkly because the labour opportunities available for the men were also the kind of jobs that nobody wanted such as working at brick kilns, selling scraps and leftovers and cardboard and as unskilled labourers with work that involved heavy lifting. The brick kilns almost always have bonded labour contracts which pay little to nothing and the government conveniently chooses to ignore it and the fumes from brick kilns are also extremely hazardous (Rahim 2016). The minimum wage for unskilled workers who work 9 hours a day is 32000 rupees per month since 2022, an Afghan worker at the brick kiln earns a maximum of 26000 rupees per month (Horne 2024).

4.4 Conclusion

Pakistani state exercises powers in ways that perpetuate and reproduce gender relations subjugating Afghan women and the systemic economic violence, which is co-constitutive of permissible hate against, and discrimination which makes lives difficult for them. This violent discourse that operates on intersecting lines of coloniality, gender and race are manifestation of a system that has left its roots despite independence.

5. Analysis Chapter II – Restrictions on Movement and Mobility as a Form of Violence

This chapter looks closely at the displacement and mobility of Afghan women. What it means to be internally displaced and what is meant by the hindrance of mobility. This speaks to the oppression of daily lives and the role of the state in vastly decreasing the quality of life for Afghan women and the perpetuation of the culture of othering. This exclusion and gentrification connect to the role of the state that excludes Afghan refugee women from accessing necessities and exercising their rights.

5.1 Introduction

Afghan women narrated multiple incidences of having restrictions on mobility and regulated movement in cities they resided in, across the border and also within Pakistan. They explain this policing as rules of the society.

5.1 a. Checkpoints

The violence of exclusion is a colonial remnant which is glaring in its racist discrimination enacted through politics of allowing passage and entry into social spaces. The state of Pakistan enacts them through checkpoints within cities and on the national borders.

Pakistan has a strong checkpoint culture as a security measure, police check posts are set up on main roads and at entry-exit points. This became exacerbated by the increase in terrorist activities post-2001 in Pakistan but they exponentially grew in areas and cities with high refugee and immigrant populations such as Karachi and Peshawar (Alimia 2022, 131). In theory, these checkpoints are a point of surveillance to ensure security for the citizens (ibid, 131)

The checkpoints are instrumentalized as a tool of violence and their violence is legitimized by a lack of identity cards. These checkpoints are established by the military or the police force. This discrimination that non-ID card holders or PoR card holders face impedes mobility. The ultimate aim of colonizer's law was to maintain and preserve power over the colonized and these contemporary checkpoints are the product of the same by keeping any threat to this power out figuratively and literally and at the very least to discourage participation and access to spaces (Heath 2016)

This practice is commonplace in Pakistan and is a strong remnant of British colonialism, exclusivity as a prerequisite to enter a clique especially recreational clubs has existed in Pakistan for a long time. This social tenet legitimized by the British as cultural power has manifested and retained itself long after independence from British rule (Empire & Stoddart 1988, 650). It is imperative to highlight that this is also an extremely racist practice as a tool for control and to establish authority and superiority through informal means. This became part of the state apparatus and the law enforcement through these checkpoints and their rationale of keeping out the 'unwanted and aliens' (Fatimah 2023).

Respondents narrated that they would take longer and secluded routes as opposed to main roads to avoid checkpoints because having a PoR card would identify them as Afghan which meant a hefty bribe to be allowed to cross the said checkpoints at both entry and exit times, sometimes multiple times in a day. A lack of identification on the person which was common for illegal or unregistered refugees ran a risk of being arrested or temporarily restrained till a male member with identification or money could get them out of the situation.

I6 narrated that she had to change the school for children because the in and out of the check point on the route to the school was accumulating a too high cost with the different timings of classes for the children.

Another point to note was that these checkpoints were strategically set up to maximise economic exploitation close to essential services such as bus stops and hospitals or on roads that did not have alternate routes. Since most Afghan people are employed as daily wagers and live on the outskirts of the main cities these checkpoints were unavoidable. Hayatabad is a suburb of Peshawar city and it is the place of employment for many household earners for the respondents. As almost all respondents were not formally employed or stay-at-home caregivers their fathers and husbands or in some cases brothers worked at the cardboard factories near Hayatabad or the bigger brick kiln in the area. This made crossing these checkpoints at least twice a day a necessity. Respondents said a significant portion of their household income went to this.

A respondent recounted.

² “This way we avoid important tasks because you have to pay money (at the checkpoints) or do all of the tasks together before returning.” I7

She added that it was tedious to wait out the husband’s workday at the hospital where I had met her to conduct the interview and she had brought her daughter-in-law for a gynaecological examination. She said they would wait in the hospital till the end of the workday for the men to return otherwise they would have to pay the bribe at the checkpoints twice and she said she did not have her renewed PoR card which could lead to arrest or even deportation for her. It would be important to note the impact these impediments have on already extremely restricted movement, limited resources and quality of life. Mohanty looks at the micropolitics of context, the subjectivity of the struggle and the relationship it has to the micropolitics of global economic and political systems. Social systems fueled by heterosexism, misogyny and racism

² “Iss tarha phir hum zaroori kaam bhi nai kartay kyunke paisay denay parhtay hain anay janay ya ek he dafa kar ke atay hain.” (I7)

further the hatred against women and make violence justifiable against them (Groulx 2007,7).

These

5.1 b. National borders

Checkpoints and their associated violence within cities are not the extent of the entry-exit politics used by the state to allow in some people and exclude others. This extends to national borders where the checkpoints are mandated by visa and immigration laws but largely subject to the whim of the personnel on duty and also the amount of bribe the crosser can afford. The Torkham border is extremely porous with a huge market of smuggled goods that is in constant in and out flow. This black market is run by Afghans and Pakistanis alike and is not actively discouraged by the State of Pakistan because it is a source of revenue. Heavy informal taxes are levied but those are not acknowledged by the state. The respondents suggested they did not want to name but some parliamentarians, important military officials and politicians in Pakistan were shareholders to the profit from this black market.

This inflow of business suggests that crossing the border from Afghanistan to Pakistan and back should be easy but for citizens on either side it is not the case.

My first respondent said that she had extended family in Afghanistan and due to lack of infrastructure and years of war the closest hospital they visited was in Peshawar, Pakistan for which they would have to obtain visas. She said that sometimes they were granted one-day visas or 3-day visas just for the hospital and fines were levied if they overstayed without a doctor's note. Overstaying often was unavoidable due to limited transport across the border.

This border-related violence is exacerbated by the role it plays in terms of nationality and citizenship. Women can be naturalized citizens if they marry a man of Pakistani origin and to ensure safety in terms of citizenship child marriage became a norm which is already a symptom

of displacement, war in refugee camps and insecure financial futures (Population Council 2021, 38).

Most of the respondents had been married before the age of 16 and for their mothers and other older women in the family, it had been even earlier. UNICEF estimated that 28 % of Afghan women from the ages 15 to 49 years of age were married before 18 years of age (Fore 2021). This precarity and its one solution to marrying the girls to Pakistani citizens bears the burden of violence and a stark power differential. Many respondents asserted that it was the husband's right to discipline the wife and applying this acceptability of the phenomenon of intimate partner violence as a necessary evil of the culture they were part of Afghan women did not interpret domestic violence as violence but if it stemmed from border policing and immigration it was narrated as violence.

It has been explored in many such cases where the woman's status of residence and belonging hinges on that of her intimate partner. Lopes Heimer in her study of bodies as territories extrapolates on the phenomenon where the territorial powers of immigration law are used as means of controlling and intimidating or disciplining women and how that connects to gendered politics and coloniality. The lines between intimate partner violence and state violence become blurry when the national borders are not only controlled state but enacted by abusers within domestic and intimate spaces of the home (Lopes Heimer 2023). There are cases where border violence is weaponized against Afghan women in a continuum. They are not in a position to escape a violent relationship due to the precarious nature of their citizenship. National sovereignty is reasserted by masculine control of the other and is reminiscent of the violence enacted by the Pakistani military during the independence of Bangladesh against Bengali women (Lindsay 2014, 2).

This looming threat of deportation explicitly or implied according to a respondent said felt deeply humiliating and subhuman. She explained it like animals that are carted off to the butchery and out of the herd the ones to be carted are unaware only awaiting this judgement. Displacement in itself and settling into a new country is already emotionally and physically challenging but the added threat of impermanence was described as debilitating. This fear the respondent narrated also kept her inside and afraid to make social bonds for years because she did not want to suffer the loss of friends. The respondent I14 narrated that even though her husband was not violent she was scared that someone would find out that she was not Pakistani and they would steal her away in the dead of the night. She said it was not until years later that somebody explained to her that now that she had been married and become a full citizen with an identity card as opposed to the usual PoR cards that most Afghan refugees had, she could not be evicted. She said it was years after this discovery that she had ventured out on her own to a nearby market for the first time. Upon asking for how long she had been living in Pakistan by that time she said if not more least 25 years. This is the kind of fear that such violence enacted through mobility restrictions arrests most Afghan women. The respondent called herself one of the lucky ones as she had managed to carve out a life here, but thousands lived and died in the limbo of not belonging.

Another respondent, I11 mentioned that they had a family friend who had married one of his daughters to an influential Pakistani man with the promise that he would buy nationalities for the rest of the family members and after many years they had learned that the girl had been trafficked to somewhere out of Pakistan and had escaped and secured asylum for her under desperate conditions and facing violence for many years.

These recounted incidences accumulate to form a picture of how the state borders the modern nation-state itself and how their securitisation indirectly contributes to gendered violence which

has been elaborated by Lopes-Heimer in her study on border securitisation and domestic violence (Lopes Heimer 2023).

5.1c. Gentrification of neighbourhoods

The manifested violence stemming from the colonial concept of racial segregation is not limited to entry and exit points of cities and countries but also to complete areas that are inaccessible to some populations such as refugees, ethnic and religious minorities and people below certain financial status. It is not a formalized system except for the military cantonment areas which are specified and do not allow free movement of civilians within them that are non-military personnel and their families.

The respondents said there are areas that an Afghan cannot simply afford to live in, but they were quick to add that many Pakistanis could also not afford to live in them. But for Afghan people, it was not only a financial barrier but a social and cultural barrier.

This spatial repression requires an in-depth examination of the cultural and political displacement within this residential displacement and its colonial and racial foundations of gentrifying certain groups and classes (Kent-Stoll 2020, 2).

I9, a respondent said that she lived in a refugee camp which was situated on the edge of the city and if you were to go to it only then one could reach it and it was far removed from the city but more so from where the economic and political elite lived. She said it was also very far from the government offices and the provincial assembly building. She said that it was intentional and justified by saying that refugee camps led to higher crime rates in the area. The respondent said she was inclined to agree that stealing was a problem, but she said that the teens responsible could not be blamed as they were seeing such stark income inequality.

Additionally, another respondent added on this gentrification aspect that this very clear divide extended to services and the quality of their provision to the neighbourhoods based on the demographic of the residents. She said during the COVID-19 pandemic the areas with the higher refugee populations had been completely blockaded restricting any movement in and out of the area.

She added another incident that explains this racism against Afghan women is that when they go to shops and markets they are closely watched and even followed around the aisles by salespeople, and they admitted that it felt embarrassing to be viewed as a thief without ever having done anything. One of the respondents added that if they look around a shop for too long or take too long to choose they are asked to leave and told they are not allowed to loiter and are only waiting for an opportunity to steal something.

They explained that this phenomenon of being policed within stores was more common in richer neighbourhoods and less in the ones in areas with low-income and working-class populations.

This gentrification and creation of pockets outside the city for the refugees are similar to the military cantonments that the British establishments in the subcontinent and compounds to keep the local population out (Surojit M. Gupta 1997; Kent-Stoll 2020), in a similar fashion the refugees are contained outside the main city by overt and implicit racist measures.

Foucault's concept of the mechanism of surveillance and its normalisation is the violence perpetrated by the distinctly masculine state that exercises control over certain groups (Foucault 1982a; Das 2008; Parashar 2018).

5.1d. Conclusion

To conclude this chapter and the violence in the form of restricting and prohibiting the movement of Afghan women in Pakistan reads like a systematic situation. If this exclusion were to be drawn it would concentric circles that keep certain populations out and others cocooned within the circles of privilege. This is exactly how colonial racism worked and effectively used formal and informal tools to otherwise. This adds to and constitutes the insecurity and oppression faced by Afghan women in Pakistan.

6. Analysis Chapter III Policing the Body

6.1. Introduction

In this chapter, I look at the physical bodies, and how bodies are differentiated based on their origin and colour, some are categorised as less valuable than others. This theme looks at how some bodies are less valuable, and worthy of dignity based on their race. It contributes to my overall argument that the state is an active agent in facilitating the violence inflicted on the bodies of Afghan women and how they negotiate form community under the intersections of race, gender and coloniality that co-constitute this daily life violence. This also links the surveillance argument extrapolated above to its use for regulating the physical bodies as biopower and to the gendered nature of the manifested state violence.

6.2. Gender-Based Violence

Upon asking the respondents if they knew of anyone queer or non-binary Afghan people and what they may have faced. This was done to ensure anonymity and space to talk about the experiences without having to identify as queer if they did not want to and more so oral history is a strong component in preserving and sharing the daily lives and incidences among women, especially the illiterate ones. To explain the appropriate or academic terms twice translated (for clarification first in Urdu and then Pashto) the explanation they gave of what they understood of queer-identifying, and gender nonbinary people was women that dressed up as men and men that dressed up as men which is commonly understood as intersex individuals in Pakistan.

A respondent elaborated on two incidences she had witnessed, the first was when at the time of the birth of her third son some 20 years ago, she was waiting for her turn to be examined by the doctor and suddenly shouting came from outside the gynaecology ward and a woman had

been trying to enter the ward. The men, mostly those accompanying other patients were trying to stop her from entering the gynaecology ward which is strictly female only. All male staff and attendants alike have to wait outside it.

After much scuffling and shouting a woman had entered with her hair in disarray and her clothes torn, she was clutching her purse to her chest and heaving big breaths. The nurses on duty and in the reception, area had rushed to her aid.

The respondent explained that the woman looked visibly queer as she was taller than most women, showed signs of a scruff with more masculine-looking facial features and had been stopped at the door by these men that she was actually a man and only pretending to be a woman and thus could not go into a place their wives and mothers were in. When she refused to show them her ID card which would have saved her from this violent altercation, they tried to forcibly remove her from the premises to stop her. She said she knew if she had shown them her Afghan PoR card it would have been much worse and if they had called the police on her it would have been much worse than a 10-minute corridor beating.

The respondent recalled this person laughing and saying she was already at the hospital and what is a better place to get a beating.

The intersectional reality of this person's experience with hate and violence cannot be negated in any way. Gender non-binary people are persecuted in Pakistan and often target violence indiscriminately, but it worsens when this categorically intersects with their reality of being Afghan. Galtung looks at this permissible hate as a structure that is constructed of direct incidences of violence and a culture of violence. This behaviour and attitude permeate different segments of society against the Afghan people and gender non-binary people of Afghan origin are at more risk.

This takes us back to Galtung's theory about the combination of direct violence and cultural violence that forms the structural violence apparatus. It is important to see how it is bisected with the reality of colonial subjects perpetrating colonial violence in post-colonial settings like racism and gender discrimination against non-binary people.

This one incident reveals two prongs of colonial violence, one is that the men stopping the person's entry into the gynaecology ward were protesting that inside the ward were their women, sisters and wives thus what they assumed was male and were a threat to what they understand as their possessions, namely women. This heteronormative and dichotomous understanding of possession by the masculine of the feminine within gender roles is distinctly colonial violence.

The second aspect of colonial violence exemplified by this phenomenon is that a person considered alien or different can be subject to violence under any justifiable reason without consequences because it is culturally permissible for the dominant group in this case men and Pakistani citizens to exercise it against the marginalised or ones deemed as others by the state such as the gender non-binary and immigrants or refugees.

This incident highlights a legitimization of violence as prescribed by hegemonic masculinity which manifests itself through gender-based violence. The role of the state and its state actors is antagonistic in the incident recalled by the respondent that the direct violence inflicted on the queer person would have worsened if they would have identified themselves as Afghan and more so if the law enforcement officials had been involved. This portrays an image of hate that is practised through violence by the state actors permeates structures within the society and is not limited to isolated actions of individuals.

I would like to refer to Veena Das's work to amplify the everyday violence that exists in daily interactions between citizens and the state in post-colonial settings. It is not limited to isolated

incidences but permeates the everyday reality. It further amplifies the role of the states in preserving the feminine with the masculine as mandated by the state. The female body is owned by the state and guarded as state property against foreign threats especially those that are perceived masculine and or alien. This gendered order legitimises violence against threats to this social order as facilitated by authorities and actors of the state. The violence under the guise of protection can be directed inward as exacerbated by external conditions.

To retain a sense of control and maintain the prescribed behaviours associated with masculinity as a colonial remnant also upheld by the state violence in practice. It is also important to highlight the paternalistic discourse that is being established under the guise of protection which is the explanation of possession of women as a commodity.

6.3. Policing the Bodies

Hyder in his 2007 study connects domestic violence in refugee communities especially Afghans in Pakistan to socioeconomic conditions and the frustrations owed to low quality of life as a contributing factor to domestic violence against Afghan women (Hyder et al. 2007).

An incident shared by one of the respondents was that when she had come for an ultrasound scan at a hospital after the birth of her 7th child the doctor had been extremely aggressive and threatened her.

“If you come back here, I will stitch you up.” I13 ³

This refers to the process of tube tying as a surgical sterilisation process called tubal ligation. The doctor was threatening the respondent to forcefully perform this procedure on her. This incident points to a civilising discourse being established by the doctor who is in the position

³ “Ub dubara yahan ayee tou mai silai kardoongi.” (I13)

of authority towards beings considered ‘inferior’. This is distinctly reminiscent of colonial violence (Mendoza 2016; Gregg 2020).

This process connects to Foucault’s conceptualisation of violence in terms of biopower perpetrated by the surveillant state or entity (Foucault 1982b).

The respondent explained that more than the threat itself it was about the reasons. It is not uncommon in the area and for Pashtun women in general which is an ethnicity culturally closest to Afghans for women to have 8-10 children and the doctor said it in a way that refugees are a burden on the economy with their many children. It was intended to humiliate and discourage. Family planning is part of the national health agenda and policies that extend to refugee populations, but this was violent and derogatory. The respondent said any patient in the room at the time had on average 5 children each but none of them had received such a threat because they were not of Afghan origin.

The doctor was in a place of privilege and power, she also considered the Afghan woman to be the other and less deserving of the limited resources for safe births and neonatal care. This clear suspension or threat to suspension of human rights like bodily autonomy shows a certain tolerance and space for justified violence to discipline the other group or those deemed lesser. A core tenet of necropolitics is that who dies and who lives, who matters and who does not which is under practice as exemplified by this instance (Verghese et al. 2021).

The respondent commented referring to herself that we are the others, and we are not like them that is why they treat us this way. This colonising of fertility has been a settler colonial project to violate and regulate the inherent right to one’s body and also to produce more colonisers and limit the birth of subjects whose numbers are seen as threatening (Gregg 2020).

Another incident that women lamented was that they could secure matches for their daughters to ensure Pakistani citizenship but could not do the same for their sons thus their living situation remained precarious.

An important racist and gender subjugating narrative that is supported by a state is the law that any Pakistani woman marrying a man of any other nationality cannot transfer her nationality to her spouse automatically while a Pakistani man can transfer it to his partner regardless of their nationality (Government of Pakistan 1951). This is because women are state property and any offspring, they have is the property of the Pakistani state as emphasized by Das, this possession is masculine and subjugates the women to a subordinate role and on this logic, they cannot relegate their ‘possession’ to a man that would be considered other (Das 1996).

This would grant them sovereignty from the state, patriarchy and direct ownership of men. This echoes the ‘purity of blood’ promoted at the behest of European men, a purported biological explanation for racist discrimination. This brings out the point that the coloniality of gender and race makes space for the legitimacy of violence and inferior-ization that was once faced is repeated against what is now considered other (Carolyn Sachseder 2023, 87).

It also links back to the past in understanding the present phenomenon, sexual violence as a tool of settler colonialism, and this was the exact phenomenon that was observed during the independence of Bangladesh. The Pakistani military was ordered to impregnate Bengali women as a tool of emasculation. This was to infantilise, humiliate and also stake claim in the most primal sense (Lindsay 2014; Gregg 2020). The law to not be able to pass the Pakistani nationality onto your male partner is premised on the same logic.

6.4a. Sacrificing the body

This led to a conversation about the state and what role the Afghan women could or should perform in the service of Pakistan according to the respondent. She expressed benevolence and gratefulness towards the state for allowing them to stay for as long as it had. She said it had not been ideal but there was nowhere else to go. She said she had always wanted for one of her sons to join the military but none of them had managed to finish high school which was a requirement.

This willingness to offer their most precious resource and eventual source of livelihood that is male offspring in the service of the country that gave them refuge when they had nowhere to go is where their benevolence stems from, explained the respondent. This benevolence can be understood as the practice of agency but also as a conditioning of the cultural violence of the state that asserts dominion over the physical bodies of its citizens and non-citizens. This adds to the phenomenon of protection of masculinity that is exerted by the willingness to sacrifice for the state, especially by its male members. Also, it reflects a desire for acceptance because this is the biggest service that can be offered to the state. The agency that can be read may be limited but is not completely non-existent, the Afghan women negotiate with the daily oppression of the state in multiple ways yet feel some affinity for it.

6.4b. Decisions about the body

Most of the respondents were of the view that they were unanimously assigned an identity and some associated stereotypes with that as soon as it was established that they were of Afghan origin. One of the respondents who worked at a private bank explained that initially it was assumed that she was a prostitute and had seduced her way to working at the bank despite her educational merit. She said she had been threatened by staff members and heckled for months till she had proven that she was not a prostitute, or she had been deemed morally upright which

she said was an automatic dignity ascribed to all male employees and female employees of Pakistani origin. She said she dressed even more modestly to avert these accusations.

Afghan women as mentioned earlier are excluded from most decision-making arenas and even in small decisions like what to wear they are forced to adhere to a stricter set of rules at least up until they can prove themselves.

One of the respondents reported that she felt unsafe in going out on her own. She said there were high incidences of street harassment and catcalling in the area. Upon further conversation, she added that it would be worse to report them and more so if the report came from Afghan refugees against Pakistani citizens or non-Afghan-origin Pakistani citizens. She said they avoided going out as much as they could, alone and endured all the other times. She happily added that she loved to walk in the summer on the street and during the electricity shortfalls when it was pitch dark the girls would sometimes go out to walk undisturbed. This negotiation and space they had created within the daily life oppressions and amidst patriarchal structures of violence is the kind of decolonial feminist solidarity that Mohanty refers to (Groulx 2007).

6.5 Conclusion

The physical body is a site of contestation and control by the state and the system of oppression promulgated through different ways of manifested violence. The decision-making of the body, the right to reproduce, and the right to movement all are regulated in subtle and overt ways. There is also negotiation with the patriarchy and violence within the existing structures that stems not only but also from the solidarity of shared experiences.

7. Discussion and Conclusion

In my thesis, I have aimed to ask what are the daily life oppressions that Afghan women face and how they connect to the post-colonial space and subjects of the state of Pakistan, its role in this violence and the co-constitutive elements like race, gender and coloniality. The power relations that are in play and the structures that form these daily life realities for Afghan women in Pakistan.

The co-constitutive nature of structural violence as an intersectional product and process of elements such as race, gender relations and coloniality. This discussion chapter will look at each of the emerging themes and how they are explained with the help of the theoretical framework used and how the emerging forms of violence connect to coloniality.

It is a homogenising weaponised resentment that has infiltrated society at the base level. The racial hierarchical system in the bureaucracy of Pakistan is a remnant of a colonial legacy. The bureaucracy is designed to be authoritarian, unequal and an instrument of colonial rule (Ziring et al. 1974, 1087). It creates and protects a racist system of operating with immigrants being on the lowest rung in receiving governmental employment opportunities or availing government services.

This is illuminated by the study conducted on the unskilled labour groups in Pakistan. Scavenging through garbage and rubbish dumps for scraps of metal that can be sold is usually one of the lowest-paying jobs (Mahsud et al. 2022).

Marginalised communities of different ethnicities and nationalities are often seen engaging in these to earn a livelihood, in the study by Malik in 2020, he explains that law enforcement is discriminating against these minorities. Police brutality is directly targeted at groups of Afghan refugees or people who visually look Afghan passing; they associate certain audio-visual

markers such as attire, facial features and the accent to their language to discriminate against them or extract bribes (Malik et al. 2020; Ratele 2015; Mahsud et al. 2022).

7.1 Addressing the Gap in the Literature

To get a more nuanced understanding of the on-ground realities of these power dynamics and their manifestations through different forms of violence. A decolonial feminist framework was deployed combining Galtung's theory of structural violence, Mohanty and Das's decolonial feminist approaches to the nation-state and the lived experiences of women in post-colonial settings. I combined the feminist reading of Galtung's theory by Confortini and analysed it using a decolonial perspective to make it more applicable to the context of Afghan women (Confortini 2006; Dilts et al. 2012; Groulx 2007; Das 2008). Galtung's work has not read from a decolonial feminist perspective and that is what I did in the context of the Afghan refugee woman's experience in Pakistan.

Galtung describes forms of violence as direct, cultural and a combination of these as structural. Confortini looks at the missing gender analysis as co-constitutive of structural violence in this theoretical work thus applying a feminist critique to it. Mohanty's analysis of not restricting the women of the developing world as a monolithic entity and the universally applicable categorisation of victims of oppression and state provides a decolonial lens to the lived experiences of Afghan women.

Additionally, the decolonial feminist perspective traces the origin of these violent structures and their manifestations in part to coloniality and its remnants in the post-colonial society such as racism, dichotomous and subjugating gender relations and permissible hate. Veena Das's construction of the masculine nation-state and its hegemony that subjugates and practices

violence under the guise of protecting certain views and groups is used to explain the alienation and discrimination of the refugees by the state of Pakistan, coloniality is also read in this.

This theoretical framework was developed after the codes were acquired through the primary data from in-depth semi-structured interviews of Afghan refugee women in Pakistan. To substantiate the data from the interviews I corroborated it using NGO reports, newspaper articles and policy documents.

I specifically use thematic analysis to investigate the prevalence of structural violence with three distinct forms of violence that are economic violence, biopolitics or violence on the physical body and violence on restriction of movement and mobility. This study exemplifies Mohanty's concept of feminist solidarities beyond victims of the patriarchal state and their wins despite the structural violence which can be scope for more study and recommendations for interventions.

7.2.Colonial Legacies and Gendered Violence: The Intersectional Struggles of Afghan Women Refugees in Pakistan

To summarize, this research investigated the manifestations of violence in the daily lives of Afghan women in Pakistan and how they intersect and are co-constitutive of gender relations, race and coloniality. The findings emerged as three main forms of violence which I categorised into themes, and they echo the coloniality as a common thread. I have analysed these themes in light of the theoretical framework to uncover the complicity of the state of Pakistan in promoting violence against refugee women.

In the preceding chapters I have shown that refugees are ostracised no matter what border they cross and the same has been the case for Afghans coming into Pakistan, the circumstances have

been dire (Brah 1996; Arif et al. 1997; Anwar et al. 2021; Malik et al. 2020). More than 25000 Afghans have sought refuge in Pakistan for more than 3 decades now and this makes their situation one that is protracted. Research reveals that this increased xenophobia from the local population of the host country and makes resettlement and integration more complex (Robson 2023).

I reiterate as established before that the power relations are structured along colonial lines which are co-constitutive of manifestations of gender relations, race and permissible hate and violence. The relegation of women to subordination and the dichotomous divide of gender and heteronormativity is starkly reminiscent of colonial gender roles.

Among other things, racialisation is purportedly based on statistics of an increase in crime rate and a burden on limited national resources to discriminate against Afghan refugees. Institutions of hierarchy are not only created by the state but also legitimated. This othering is done to exclude and prevent the integration of Afghan refugees into Pakistani society. Racialized power dynamics contribute to creating space for the group that is othered, sub-humanised and discriminated against. It allows for a permissible form of hatred towards the minority and marginalised groups especially in the cases of migration (Mirza 2015). This is proven through multiple policies and incidences quoted by the interviewees the most prominent among them is the discouragement and hindrances they face in obtaining citizenship.

Racist underpinnings have influenced the notion of nation and statehood according to Gikandi, which could lend credence to the xenophobic perceptions that frame the state, its use of power and the actions of its authorities towards these refugees (Gikandi 2002; Easton-Calabria 2020).

The role of the state as a violence facilitator and as a complicit actor becomes visible when the racism it perpetuates through its authority-wielding institutions namely the judiciary, bureaucracy and by extension law enforcement is investigated. The bureaucratic set-up in

Pakistan is a literal colonial legacy preserved and practised through legitimised violence that is implicit in some and overt in other ways (Ziring et al. 1974, 1087).

It uses a racialised operating system that excludes immigrants and refugees from competing or acquiring any form of national or provincial authority either by democratic electoral processes or via civil service examination, the prerequisite for both is Pakistani citizenship. Afghan refugees despite fulfilling all legal conditions and financial obligations await their naturalisation to Pakistani citizenship for many years (Government of Pakistan 1951; Alimia 2022).

Additionally, to assess the aspect of economic violence it is imperative to note that most of the Afghan men are bonded labourers at brick kiln or working longer hours at physically strenuous jobs with long hours that the local people have the option to opt out of. The Afghan refugees have systematically been excluded to the point that they are pushed to take up labour that is exploitative and akin to slavery. Women are strictly excluded from the labour market and formal educational attainment opportunities.

7.3. Limitations of the Study

The limitation of theoretical concepts that try to encapsulate multiple political realities is that they sometimes miss the specific nuances of micropolitics in favour of explaining the overarching phenomenon and how they connect transversely and over time. Daily life oppressions faced by Afghan women although similar to the experiences of refugee women all around the world are also different and individual.

This study was primarily focused on two cities Islamabad and Peshawar due to travelling constraints and also because these two cities host the biggest portion of refugee populations coming from Afghanistan, Peshawar because of its proximity to the Torkham border and

Islamabad because it is the capital and has the embassies which act as de facto embassies for Afghanistan (Alimia 2014).

Karachi also has a very large refugee community, but it was beyond the scope of this study to include it in the research area. Limitations of this study also include the limitations of the theoretical framework that has an overarching approach and tries to explain the phenomenon as unified, minimising intersectional realities particular to each individual and the nuances of their experiences or to some extent universal and also the data set is not representative of all refugee experience in Pakistan.

7.4. Collective Struggles Not Collective Stories

The violence that is targeted towards Afghan women is sanctioned by the state and is colonial because it is authoritarian and the state categorises its use of violence as permissible to establish the rule of law akin to the colonisers, it attempts to establish a civilizing discourse on the aliens it considers and treats as inferior as exemplified by various experiences narrated by the Afghan women during interviews. This ‘power over’ and exercise of control through material forms of violence, surveillance and biopower over certain groups is a decidedly masculine conceptualisation of state power as presented by Das and Maharaj (Maharaj 1995; Das 1996). A core characteristic of this type of violence is the gendered manifestations of violence particularly against marginalised groups. The threat faced by Afghan women is twofold, they face xenophobia and a culture of ostracization while facing gendered violence that is prevalent, protected and perpetrated by Pakistan. Race, gender and coloniality as units of analysis bring into the fold of literature the perpetration of colonial violence against colonial subjects by colonial subjects in post-colonial states.

The empirical data provides a foundation to read Galtung’s theory of Structural Violence from a decolonial feminist perspective that highlights the co-constitutive relationship of elements

such as race, gender and coloniality to manifestations of violence by the state. This fits within the gap of missing feminist literature as it exposes the monolithic reading of women's oppression, and the singular lens applied to the experiences of refugees in countries like Pakistan. Mohanty calls these collective struggles but not collective stories and this is what this thesis does in a way to highlight feminist solidarities and communities created and sustained by Afghan refugee women in the daily life oppressions perpetrated by the state of Pakistan.

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Glossary

1. Dari: One of the official languages of Afghanistan, similar to Persian in dialect and script.
2. Punjabi: Ethnicity, a majority in Pakistani.
3. Torkham: Name of the border crossing between Pakistan and Afghanistan close to the city of Peshawar in Pakistan.