

## Pakistani Women's Labor at the Crossroads of Patriarchy and Capitalism: A Cultural Materialist Perspective

This research explores how cultural representations such as art, literature, print, or digital media may help us understand the precariousness of women's labor at the crossroads of patriarchy and capitalism. The study will consider different cultural specimens from colonial India and Pakistan to understand the complex relationship of cultural representations with the colonial economic legacy and with the ideologies of traditional patriarchy. The complexity of this relationship pertains to the dialectics of the 'base' and 'superstructure' within the Marxist theoretical model of social structure. Drawing on Raymond Williams, the study will approach the base and superstructure as fluid and interactive modalities of society rather than being fixed points of reference and will aim to argue that cultural representations have a complicated and interactive relationship with ideology and the economic base of their time. For this purpose, the study will treat a diverse range of genre and media representations, including novels, magazine pamphlets, short stories, poems, and folk songs in local languages such as Urdu and Pashto, as well as in English from the 19<sup>th</sup> Century India and contemporary Pakistan, not simply as unmediated reflections of women's labor in their respective spatiotemporal contexts but as agents of change within the superstructure to correspond with a certain economic base. Some of the prominent authors whose work the study will include are Nazir Ahmad, Ashraf Thanvi, Saadat Hassan Manto, Ghulam Abbas, Hadi Ruswa, Kamila Shamsie, and Moni Mohsin.