

## Original Paper

# Manifestation of Colonial Subjects in *Twilight in Dehli* and *A Passage to India*

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### Abstract

*The goal of this research is to examine how the colony is portrayed by both the colonizer and the colonized. This paper focuses mainly on the politics of depiction by implementing the insights of postcolonialism. In this context, Twilight in Delhi by Ahmed Ali also deals with the same subject from the view of the colonized, whereas A Passage to India is a narrative of the British colony by its colonizer E. M. Forster. It may be argued that the writers' two depictions of a similar colony represent different political and cultural viewpoints. The two authors' representations of the same colony, one from a colonized civilization and another from that was colonized, consistently reflect their distinctive voices. Additionally, the latest research has incorporated Homi K. Bhabha and Edward Said's analytical works on the depiction in the postcolonial theoretical perspective and explored the problem of cultural representation while using textual analyses. The research has shown that both works' representations of colonial India differ significantly because of the authors' respective cultural roles as colonizer and colonized.*

### Keywords

*post-colonial, colonizers, colonized, imperialism, politics*

## 1. Introduction

The goal of the research is to look into the institutional politics of both colonizers and colonized people. Two key works have been chosen about this: *Twilight in Delhi* by Ahmed Ali (1940) and *A Passage to India* (1924) by E. M. Forster. The study examines how the two texts interact with and conflict with one another when describing the same colonies. The word “colony” derives from the Latin word “colonia”, which indicates settled territory or a farm. It derives from the Latin word *colnus*, which denotes “a farmer or settler in a new land”, which in again comes from the Latin word *colere*, which means “to cultivate or dwell” (Simpson & Weiner, 2018). A colony is a community or a collection of people who leave their homeland to settle and work in a foreign area while still being controlled by it (Onions, 2018). Additionally, Harper Collins describes a colony as a nation that is governed by a strong nation. Said’s explanation of imperialism and colonialism which states that “imperialism” “means the practice”, “the theory”, and “the attitudes of a dominating metropolitan center ruling a distant territory”, is relevant in this context. As a result, gaining whole or partial political authority over a foreign country and its inhabitants is referred to as “colonialism”. Colonialism, which is also virtually usually a result of imperialism, is the establishment of settlers on foreign lands (Collins, 2016).

Therefore, imperialism is a strategy of occupying other countries and their inhabitants to destroy and rob their raw materials and natural resources. Furthermore, colonialism is seen by Ashcroft et al., as an actual manifestation of imperialism. So, colonialism is the possession and management of foreign territory and resources (Loomba, 2015). Postcolonialism, however, focuses on the impacts of colonization on civilizations and territories (Ashcroft et al, 2013). The phrase was first used in the late 1970s to discuss the different cultural consequences of colonialism by literary scholars and archaeologists including Gayatri C. Spivak (1942-), Arnold J. Toynbee (1889-1975), and Cyril Lionel Robert James (1901-1989) (Gruesser, 2007).

The postcolonial narrative addresses issues such as denying the universalist assertions made in Western writings, cultural variety, hybridity, identity, marginalization of the inferior, plurality, imitation, otherness, and the portrayal of other cultures in literary works (Barry, 2002; Tyson, 1950). Moreover, postcolonial critics have expanded the range of personal experiences that can be found in postcolonial writings, including responses to dominant ruler viewpoints of imperial Europe in the fields of history, philosophy, and language, as well as migration, slavery, race, identity, space, and difference.

Along with all of these, “the theoretical practices in speaking and writing by which all these come into being are also part of postcolonial literature” (Griffiths & Tiffin, 2003). Among all the above, “representation can be defined as the system or process by which meanings are produced and exchanged among the members of a culture through the use of language, signs, and images which stands for things” (Hall, 2014).

## 2. Literature Review

A Passage to India (1924) and Twilight in Delhi (1940) were the two main works studied in this research. In each instance, they talk about the politics of depiction as highlighted by “E. M. Forster and Ahmed Ali”. In these publications, the concept of a colony is interpreted and described in terms of representational politics. While Twilight in Delhi portrays India through the eyes of the colonized, A Passage to India portrays India from the viewpoint of the west as a colonial. To demonstrate an authorial voice that represents the authors’ cultural position in the text, this research investigates the politics of representation. For example, the two authors describe the same colony, India, in two different ways that indicate their cultural identities in their writings. Prominent issues in A Passage to India include the rivalry between the English sovereign and the Indian citizen, the juxtaposition of two civilizations, and the representation of India. The colonial culture is represented in this text by “Mrs. Moore, Adela Quest, Cyril Fielding, and Ronny Heaslop”, but the colonized and Muslim cultures are represented by “Dr. Aziz and Hamidullah”. As a result, the depiction in each of these perspectives may be different.

Forster’s portrayal of India as a colorless land is a result of how the West and Muslims view one another from a religious, racial, and cultural perspective. For example, Forster claims that English men acting as like gods whereas Indians worship their respective gods (Collins, 2016). This demonstrates Forster’s significant cultural impact and his superiority complex towards Indians. The same conflict between the oppressors and the oppressed is also discussed in Twilight in Delhi (1940), along with cultural gaps and a colonial view of India.

Delhi, the colonized city, has more beauty and poetry than other cities. The issue of portrayal thus is a common topic in the two books, however in A Passage to India, the depiction is split between the oppressor and the oppressed. However, it isn’t present in Twilight in Delhi even though Ali left out all the colonizer’s voices.

The critics Banita Parry (1931), Sara Suleri (1953), Brenda Silver (1951), and “Paul B. Armstrong (1949) have not praised the novel’s humanist political perceptions and have scorned its equivocation and limitations” (Parry, 1985). Thus, “Global perspectives have refused the established representation of the relationship between the metropolitan culture and the marginalized in A Passage to India (Forster, 1924). Banita Parry (1931) argues in her essay “The Politics of Representation in A Passage to India” that representation is critical to “followers of mimetic theory in literature”. For proponents of the imitation theory of literature, the goal of empiricism is linked to social criticism, which is realized “when they find the narrative content a true portrayal of India” (Forster, 1924). She believes that ideology is created through depiction, which is not a true and accurate portrayal of reality, but rather urban discourses directed at the periphery. As a result, “A Passage to India” is an example of a colonial rhetoric book that depicts the culture of the city and its dominance over the oppressed (27-28). She also

explains how it is discriminatory and excludes Indians from the “self” to portray India in Western writings as the other.

Forster’s *A Passage to India* uses adjectives like “exotic”, “outcast”, “barbarous”, “unrelated”, “dissimilar”, “anomalous”, “deviant”, “eccentric”, “alien”, “mystery”, “foreign”, “bizarre”, “abnormal”, and “strange” to describe Indians, reflecting a policy of exclusion and discrimination. She says that in Forster’s world, Indian cosmologies are stereotyped and tell the aliens that humans stand in the same circle as monkeys, wasps, vultures, flies, stone, and dirt. Therefore, presenting the globe as “other” provides the politics of depiction that underlie the British Raj’s image in India (Parry, 1931).

The colonized are portrayed by Anglo-Indian authors like E. M. Forster as primitive, dogmatic, Others, and sycophants, while native authors like Ahmed Ali object to “this version of representation and endeavor to exert actual state of affairs” (Forster, 1924). Both writers have demonstrated how native women lack agency and social status, and how gender and illusions are prominent among indigenous. Furthermore, Forster depicts the natives who became hostile to the British due to the cruel and oppressive treatments they endured at the hands of the conquerors, but “Ahmed Ali shows the older generation as anti-British while the young seem attracted towards the English culture”. The novel, “*Twilight in Delhi* explicates the demise of the Mughal Empire, the moral decay of characters, male chauvinism, the Cultural Revolution, and the women as powerless” (Neeta, 2016).

She contends that Ali represents how the British colonial government caused people to lose qualities like identification, socio-cultural values, ethical values, and religious values (Neeta, 2016). The protagonist, Mir Nihal, weeps over the passing of his ancestors’ former glory. The judgment of Asghar’s marriage and his mimicry of English culture demonstrates the decline of cultural values. She also highlights the decline of moral and religious values that occurs when grave diggers demand larger fees from the deceased’s relatives. Asghar acts impolitely with his elders, demonstrating a loss of moral and ethical principles (Neeta, 2016).

### 3. Research Objectives

- To highlight the concepts of postcolonialism in the selected texts.
- To present the political events in the novel.
- To explore the aspects of ‘otherness’.

### 4. Research Question

1) How have E. M. Foster and Ahmed Ali presented the treatment of colonizers with colonized in their novels *A Passage to India* and *Twilight in Delhi* respectively?

## 5. Material and Methods

Because the study is qualitative and non-empirical in form, the researcher suggests using a deductive research approach. Additionally, the researcher hopes to develop a content analysis for the research of the chosen novels, *A Passage to India* by E. M. Forster and *Twilight in Delhi* by Ahmed Ali. Both primary and secondary resources will be used for this objective. To do the research, top academic journals, magazines, and papers' websites that use the keywords "representation", "colony", "otherness or identity", "postcolonial India", and "depiction by the colonizer and the colonized" will be consulted.

## 6. Analysis and Results

"The interaction between English and Indian natives during the colonial era when Great Britain reigned over India is the subject of E. M. Forster's *A Passage to India*. The setting for the novel is a fictional city called Chandrapore, which is situated close to the Marabar caves along the Ganges River. The protagonist of the novel, "Dr. Aziz, is a Muslim doctor in the city and a widower". Adela accuses him of trying to commit sexual violence at the Marabar Caves. Adela admits during Aziz's court case that she made a mistake in accusing him and that he is blameless. A race conflict breaks out between the oppressors and the oppressed because of her confession. While the native man tries to defend himself, the other hand, English community calls for Dr. Aziz to get a harsh punishment. Aziz is shown as lascivious and wanton and views women as sex objects. Additionally, Ahmed Ali's *Twilight in Delhi* focuses on "India's changing social, political, and cultural image" and paints a vivid picture of Indian Muslims during the colonial era. The story revolves around a wealthy Muslim businessman named "Mir Nihal and his family as changes do occur in their personal lives and in Indian culture". Asghar, Mir Nihal's son, deals with marital problems as well as the effects of his country's new colonial identity. Unlike Dr. Aziz, Mir Nihal is a popular figure who detests the British since they ruled India against the Indians' wishes. The way that Forster and Ali interpret India is essentialist because they both manage to capture its synecdochical essence.

### 6.1 *A Passage to India*

The work is a masterpiece of the colonial era that provides insight into the many happenings in British India. Through his depiction of the colony's inhabitants, structures, locations, and rivers, Edward Morgan Forster illustrates the colony. He divided the book into three parts, i.e., "Mosque, Caves, and Temple".

"To begin with part-I of the novel, Mosque, he opens the novel with the description of an imaginary city of Chandrapore". Forster mentioned the city as. "Except for the Marabar Caves- and they are twenty miles off- the city of Chandrapore presents nothing extraordinary. Edged rather than washed by the river Ganges, it trails for a couple of miles along the bank,

scarcely distinguishable from the rubbish it deposits so freely” (Forster, 1924).

It is an unattractive city located close to the Ganges. There are no riverside bathing steps since the locals do not regard the river as holy. The only waste is thrown in the river. The city is small and unappealing. Its streets, market stalls, and temples are unattractive. Indian natives are pictured as mud-moving. Except for the Marabar Caves, which are located 20 miles outside of Chandrapore, nothing in the city offers anything special. By illustrating the attitudes of the colonists toward the colonized, Forster also creates the impression that his race is superior to the locals. Adela Quested, for instance, is particularly interested in seeing the natives because she perceives them as being different. The other women in the club are shocked by her willingness to see the Indians. Because she served in an Indian state, Miss Derek claims that she has extensive experience dealing with Indians and that it is best to keep away from them at all costs. Miss Derek’s perspective demonstrates Forster’s portrayal of oppressors as superior to oppressed people.

In *A Passage to India*, the writer of the novel represents a mosque in a very noteworthy manner. The portrayal of a mosque has its value. The courtyard is located after the gate of the mosque. There is a gap between the gate and the exact place of prayer. Pure and clear water is provided to the prayer keepers just for the sake of ablution. Some parts of the courtyard are broken. There is only one light in the mosque which blows in both the interior and exterior parts of it, while some areas of the mosque are covered with a layer of darkness. The most prominent character of the novel, Aziz, finds peace and comfort there. The main aim of the writer is to portray the value of colonization. Colonizers were not giving respect to the colonized and they were not attached to their places.

In this novel, India is shown as a land of animals, more specifically leopards and snakes. Where it is difficult to go out at night for fear of being bitten by a snake. It can clearly show in the novel when Mrs. Moore goes to keep praying for a few days as a sojourn, then Aziz asks her if it is very dangerous for her to go out in the dark of night. He claims that if anything bites you, there is a possibility of your sudden death. “For example, a six-spot battle, he continued. You pick it up, it bites, you die” (Forster, 45). However, it shows that this place is full of danger and brutality in India.

The novelist also shows the condition of the house of the prominent character named Aziz. That one time, the reader can get the idea of the writer when the other character Fielding wants to ask about their health of Aziz. He goes to his house there. He feels awkward just because of the disgusting condition of his room. The room is described in the novel as: “What a room! What a meeting! Squalor and ugly talk, the floor strewn with fragments of cane and nuts, and spotted with ink, the pictures crooked upon dirty walls, no punkah! He hadn’t meant to live like this or among these third-rate people” (Forster, 1924). This is also cited by the writer to show the position or condition of colonized in India.

To show the idea, E.M. Forster portrays different places just to show India as a colony. He considers

this land in a poor or pitiable condition. He wants to draw a picture of India through the depiction of different places. In this novel, Nawab Bahadur picks two characters in a car, Ronny, and Adela. Suddenly, the vehicle was damaged because it hit a tree. At that moment, the writer explains the situation rather than the surrounding: “The car made a burring noise and rushed along a chaussee that ran upon an embankment above melancholy fields. Trees of a poor quality bordered the road; indeed, the whole scene was inferior and suggested that the countryside was too vast to admit [sic] of excellence” (Forster, 1924). This directs the reader to assume the poor, unpleasant, noisy, and melancholic condition of India.

In *A Passage to India*, the writer’s intention and idea are worth giving, for instance, the portrayal of London when Fielding and Aziz exchange conversation in the novel. Aziz says: “I suppose you will visit Miss Quested. If I have time. It will be strange seeing her in Hampstead. What is Hampstead? An artistic and thoughtful little suburb of London-And there she lives in comfort; you will enjoy seeing her...” (Forster, 1924). He artistically shows the real condition of London. The main aim of this representation is to show the political, cultural, and social background.

### *6.2 Twilight in Delhi*

*Twilight in Delhi* is considered the first novel which is written by the famous Pakistani writer named Ahmad Ali. Originally, the publication of this masterpiece in the English language by the “Hogarth Press” (1940). It reveals the Indians as well as India of that time by depicting the social, political, and cultural aspects of that time. In this way, it becomes a historical record presenting the natives and the foreigners along with colonialism. If one needs to know the culture and social life of the Muslims in Delhi, this work would provide them with all the aspects exactly. The depiction of the cultural, social, and religious norms of the subcontinent under imperialism has turned this novel into a historical document. It has been investigated how people use to deal with one another and how they live their lives in that colony. This novel is a beautiful combination of history and literary work due to its historical approach towards the social values of that time. It’s all about the dealings and acts of colonized and colonizers.

In the very first part of *Twilight in Delhi*, the author shows the rise of British people and how they want to let down the values of the natives. He describes: “Like a beaten dog it has curled its tail between its legs and lies lifeless in the night as an acknowledgment of defeat” (Ali, 1940). The title of this work also directs the reader to the main idea of it. The British people were about to rule over there. The most prominent character, Gul Bano, who closely belongs to Bahadur Shah Zafar, appears in the novel while begging on the roads and different streets. She claims: “We are beggars and the farangis are kings” (Ali, 1940). The novelist has shown that colonized were in a very bad condition at the time of twilight. Ahmad Ali deeply spreads light on the social conditions of Delhi through the depiction of various things. The beggars roamed the streets and went to people’s doors to beg with the use of their

melodious voices. They used to describe the sad stories of their lives just to achieve something. Most Indians begged in the streets with the name of Allah. They raised their melodious voices with the Holy name just to have some bread to fulfill their bellies. As it is mentioned in the novel: “Dhum! Qalandar, God will give, Dhum! Qalandar, God alone; Milk and sugar, God will give, Dhum! Qalandar, God alone...” (Ahmad Ali, 1940). This event shows that farangis were on their peak while the natives were going to face more hardships in their lives.

Mir Nihal’s son Asghar is the representative of British culture. He wants to adopt the lifestyle of Britain as he does so. His appearance directs British culture. He used to wear a long coat with open upper two buttons, a red cap on his head, fine oil on his hair, and large black boots. This example has been cited by Ahmad Ali in *Twilight in Delhi* just for the sake of cultural representation. This explains the influence of British people over natives.

In this novel, men spend much of their time pigeon-flying. They were fond of it. They made proper pigeon houses in their houses as well as on the roofs. The pot of water and grain in Mir Nihal’s house was closely associated with pigeons. In this novel, the readers see Mir Nihal indulging in such types of activities. As is stated by Ahmad Ali: “Mir Nihal goes back, opens the door of the pigeon house and putting the lantern inside looks all around” (Ali, 1940). Some other characters of this novel were seen to indulge in kite flying. Asghar and his friend Bari are closely associated with this aspect. They enjoyed spending time kite flying. They had a competition with one another. Here, the word *painch* is used for this purpose. As it is directed in the novel: “The sky was full of kites, black kites and white kites, purple kites and blue.... Bari was flying a zebra-striped kite and it had formed a *painch*\* with another” (Ali, 1940). The writer has portrayed the natives while doing useless activities just to show that they are just puppets of colonizers, and they have nothing to do more than that.

The other example hits on the idea of colonization in *Twilight in Delhi*. The writer explains this concept with the help of an artistic pen and a creative pen. For instance, the “*mardana*” part of their houses is a social aspect of the novel. It is the place where the males sit together for discussion, like Mir Nihal, Habi-buddin, and Kambal Shah talked about the reasons for the Mughals’ destruction outside, in the “*mardana*”. There is also a “*Zanana*” part, where only women gather. This represents the idea of colonization as colonizers consider themselves superior while, on the other hand, colonized inferior. Here, the writer wants to give the idea of superior and inferior with the help of the division of houses.

The “Other” or “Otherness” is also found in the novel. For instance, the natives consider British people as “*firangi*”, even though they call them by the same name, here “*firangis*” are fallen in “Other” or “Otherness”. In the novel, the prominent character, Begham Jamal, remarks: “What would these beaten-with-the- broom farangis do” (Ali, 1940). At this Begum, Nihal claims, “When the Moghal Kings used to go out, rupees and gold mohurs were showered by the handfuls. What will this good-as-dead farangis give? Dust and stones...” (Ali, 1940). The other example of “Otherness” in



Twilight in Delhi is: "Its God's vengeance falling on this good-as-dead farangis, she said. May they be destroyed for what they have done to Hindustan. May God's scourge fall on them" (Ali, 1940). In these examples, the word "firangi" clicks on the theory of "Other" or "Otherness".

Ahmad Ali has beautifully portrayed all the characters in the novel. It gives a realistic touch to the reader. Through different and realistic characterization, the writer made this work more memorable for the readers. There are many examples of this context, for instance, the characters of Mir Nihal, Asghar, Bilquees, Mushtari Bai, and Bari. Mir Nihal is not only a character, but he is a representative of Muslim culture. Through this character, the writer has shown the religious aspect several times. His appearance is considered a prominent example of his religion. He used to wear a Muslim coat, a round cap on his head, and a white beard as he looked like a perfect or true representative of Muslims. Asghar's friend, Bari, was another character in the novel whose appearance has given a hint to the readers about his character as he wore a Muslim shirt in white colour. Muslim women used to wear burqas to go outside. Mir Nihal's son Asghar is the representative of British culture. He wants to adopt the lifestyle of Britain as he does so. His appearance directs British culture. Mushtari Bai was the prominent character of the novel. She was dancing gracefully in Asghar's dream. The other character was Bilquees, a prostitute. Asghar used to visit her and thought that he had fallen in love with her. He says about her: "She is beautiful, Bari, very beautiful. She is graceful as a cypress. Her hair is blacker than the night of separation, and her face is brighter than the hours of love. Her eyes are like narcissi, big and beautiful. There is nectar in their whites and poison in their blacks. Her eyebrows are like two arched bows ready to wound the hearts of men with the arrows of their lashes. Her lips are redder than the blood of lovers, and her teeth look like pearls studded in a row... I tell you she is beautiful" (Ali, 1940). Hence, the writer successfully portrays the perfect and ideal picture of Delhi and the natives as well.

So, Ahmad Ali has realistically portrayed the idea of colonization in Twilight in Delhi. His title gives many ideas about his work to the readers. The word "Twilight" gives several meanings, like confusion, faintness, unclearness, and vagueness, as everything is seen as unclear because it was considered as the time when Mughals were going towards their downfall and White people were going to rule over there. The writer perfectly represents colonized and colonizers or even the influence of colonizers over the natives.

## 7. Conclusion

To sum up, Twilight in Delhi and A Passage to India are considered famous writings by Ahmad Ali and E.M Forster. The main aim of this research is to explain the effects of colonialism on society. It has been clear that in both novels, India is considered inferior (colonized) while, on the other hand, British people are considered superior (colonizers). Moreover, two different authors have shown the effects of colonialism on India in different manners. They have shown this idea by portraying the cultural,

religious, and social life of the natives of India. They explore the idea of colonization with different things. For instance, the condition of society, surroundings, characterization, events, appearance, habits, etc. Both have discussed the same place (India) with two different perceptions. Ahmad Ali has taken Delhi, the capital of India, for this purpose while, on the other hand, E.M. Forster has taken Chanderapore to explore the idea of colonialism. The titles of both novels, *A Passage to India* and *Twilight in Delhi*, also give an idea to the readers about the author's intentions. In *Twilight in Delhi*, the word "Twilight" shows faintness in Delhi because it's all about the decay of culture because of colonization and in *A Passage to India*, the author does not want to explain a journey rather it refers to the transformation in India. Furthermore, if one needs to know the condition of natives after colonization, this work would consider an ideal and perfect reading.

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