

# A Socio-Cultural Study of Delhi by Khushwant Singh and Twilight in Delhi by Ahmed Ali: A Comparative Analysis

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**Abstract**— The research is designed to explore the similarities and differences in developing socio-cultural discourse about 'Delhi' by two writers of different times, cultures and religions. Framework developed for this research is based initially on the works of two anthropologists cum sociologists Scupin and Erikson. Qualitative methodology is used to explain the derived aspects of culture: material culture and non-material culture. These aspects of culture have been discussed to explain the archaic and human history of the city, being propped up by three standard works on Delhi. (1) *Celebrating Delhi* (2) *City Improbable: writing on Delhi* (3) *The Crisis in the Punjab from the 10<sup>th</sup> of May until the fall of Delhi*. Social aspects of the novels are discussed according to the derived paradigms regarding socio-political and religio-historical aspects. In this comparative study of two novels both the texts are analyzed under the finally coined aspects of culture—'material culture' and 'non material culture'. These two aspects of culture are discussed in the light of cultural theory presented by Faiz (2004).

**Keywords**— Socio political; Religio-historical; Material Culture; Non-Material Culture; Delhi; Turmoil; Oppression; Human behaviour

## INTRODUCTION:

For the present research the selected field is socio-cultural study of Delhi.

This research provides an understanding of the gradual change in the human behaviour as well as the cultural values of the same phenomena (Delhi depicted by a Muslim writer in 1940 and a Sikh writer in 1990).

The Concept of culture and society in relation to literature and anthropology has always been the hot issue for the theorists, sociologists, anthropologists and literary critics. Robert Lowie (1917) said that culture was not something genetic and racial. He is of the view that culture is always an outcome of the human activities and culture is the very source to inculcate specific characteristics in individuals. In his opinion a

few important elements of culture are language, religion, arts and architecture, customs, values, morality, cuisine, tastes, aesthetic norms, family structure, attitude towards one's own self, attitude towards sex, gender and poverty. He describes culture as a thing of 'shreds and patches'. In his view it is a phrase which contains everything. But Kroeber (1952) considers culture super organic. He is of the view that in itself culture becomes a source to keep all the elements together. Infact it gives meaning to all the elements He presents an analogy of a coral reef to explain the meaning of culture. He says as a reef comes into being by several creatures but always stands and exists independently likewise culture is a product of human beings but simultaneously it exists independently of them.

Another theorist Sapir (1956) viewed that there had been as many cultures around the world as there were individuals in a group. And amazingly every individual becomes a representative of his own different views about a specific culture. Therefore this clash of opinion is considered legitimate keeping in view their individuality.

Ruth Benedict (1934) created a middle way in between the approaches of Kroeber(1952) and Sapir(1956) while saying that culture could not solely be the all powerful force in itself otherwise how it could have generated deviants in a particular society. It is only because of the difference of opinion among the individuals about cultural norms which makes a few think those norms as merely the things that can be crossed upon as well.

In twentieth century the anthropologists like Tylor(1947) and White(1975) also presented their theories about culture. They are of the view that culture is an object which needs to be analyzed on scientific basis. They consider anthropology a science which explains human life in general.

They think cultures are different stages in the journey of evolution of human beings as species. They believe in the study of society in terms of its features which are responsible to fulfil certain needs of the natives and these needs are basic to all human beings as a whole. They also give flexibility to their theory while saying that these

needs could be meted out in distinctive ways and they can also be different in accordance with their cultures. This comparative study of cultures is called scientific approach towards culture.

Marx(1848), Erickson(2004), Scupin(2012) and Faiz(2004) did not agree the theory of diffusion. Because they uphold the idea that why only certain traits get diffused from one society to another rather than a complete set of values. They believe in creating a relationship between the material aspects of culture and non material aspects of culture including its social institutions. They divide culture into many types on the basis of their social complexity. They are also in favour of division of societies on the basis of political and economic distinctions.

Emily Durkheim (1893) has given importance to society over individual. In his view social facts include social structures, cultural norms, traditions. Social facts do not hail from any individual. He believes in two types of social facts, material and immaterial but he gives importance to immaterial facts which include morality and collective conscience. In his view, in modern society, individuals are dependent on one another and society is kept intact by a division of labour. He does not altogether reject the influence of individual on society rather he thinks that individuals are also sacred in a modern society. He says individual self is made of two types. One is the outcome of isolated

individual self whereas the other is shaped by society. These two selves might be at constant disharmony with each other but still they remain together and maintain their individuality. This individuality changes with the changes in society.

The research is qualitative that is designed to explore the developing socio-cultural discourse about 'Delhi' by Khushwant Singh and *Twilight in Delhi* by Ahmed Ali.

A qualitative research suggests to "the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols and description of things" (Berg, 1993, p.3). The qualitative methods allow intimacy and "more equal relationship between the researcher and the researched" (Stanley & Wise, 1990). The study of culture and study of society both are two sides of the same coin that we cannot separate from each other. The Derived aspects of culture: material culture and non-material culture have been used to explain the archaic and human history of the city. Social aspects of the novel are discussed according to the derived paradigms regarding socio-political, religious and historical aspects of the life of imperial city through various times. In order to have a better understanding of the texts context comes first, for the purpose of interpretation of the texts of Ali's *Twilight in Delhi* and Singh's *Delhi*, the researcher goes back to the historical background of the novels to make understand better the socio-cultural conditions in which the

novels were written. The researcher also takes a part of one text and correlate it with that of the other text through comparison and contrast. During the writing process the researcher seeks help from literary texts, critical books, journals and electronic resources.

As far as Ahmed Ali (2007) is concerned, he observes human nature quite minutely and then presents the true human psyche in his lifelong characters. His first novel *Twilight in Delhi* reflects his much resemblance with Victorian writers in expressing his pain, remorse and disappointment on the destruction of old order of life with all its celebrated values and norms and their replacement with the changing trends of society. He laments at the loss of old traditions, customs, manners and modes of behaviour in many of his writings.

Through *Twilight in Delhi* Ali has been successful in bringing West and East on one page. He has created a relationship between two poles apart cultures and brought intellectual and artistic harmony in their ranks. Through *Twilight in Delhi*, Ali wants to show the victory of evil over good in our life. He is of the view that evil always wins despite the presence of God or Christ. The main theme behind this novel is to highlight the helplessness of man before fate.

Like Hardy he wants to show that man is helpless against the heavy odds of life that may befall on him by destiny. When the table turns against us, the wheels of time crush everything

that comes their way, beyond recognition. He claims that Delhi has changed so much at all levels since the composition of this novel that nobody can even recognize its century's old royal status. The devastation of culture and language under the onslaught of so many cultures and languages is an enough proof of the overall destruction of the life of Delhi. The title of the novel is also significant to high light the theme of the novel as the word twilight itself stands for dim light, a light stays on the sky only for a while and nothing can be seen clearly or distinctly in its short lived existence. Likewise this word presents a situation about the life of Delhi in which nothing was clear and everything was yet to be known.

It was basically the twilight of the Muslims of Delhi who suffered this transition from old order of life to a new one. The novel is about the confusion and bewilderment on part of the Muslims at all these changes. This is a story of a nation that once has been apple of world's eye but here comes a time when it is languishing in search of identity. Like the concept of twilight, the confusion of the Muslims is also transitory. There is still a hope that soon they will be able to find out their identity to decide the future course of action under the fast changing society.

Khushwant Singh is considered a leading scholarly figure in the well renowned Indian literary circles. The major themes of his works are based mainly on his personal experiences

and historical events. The capital of India, countryside of Punjab and London all three have left a profound influence on Khushwant. Despite of his frequent visits to abroad, one thing is noticeable that although he has observed the thoughts and behaviour of west so minutely, he remains successful in maintaining his individual Indian self. Another attribute of his style is his neutral analysis of western and Indian life style. He neither got inspired from west nor became critic of that society rather he proves himself as an unsentimental observer of the west. Likewise he has observed Indian life from both its inner and outer angles.

Therefore we find unscrupulous objectivity in his narrations. In his third novel, *Delhi* the story mainly moves around history, romance and sex. The novel narrates Indian history from Mughal Emperor Zahiruddin Babar to the brutal killing of Indra Gandhi. The royal city of Delhi has been presented by Singh with all its historical roads, places and lanes in their true form and features. This novel covers a political history of various ages of subcontinent. The novel shows that how historical events have played a vital role in moulding the personality and minds of Indians to the present day. The last chapter throws light on the central theme of the novel to keep religion away from indulging into politics. Because the British were well aware of the religious sensitivities of the people of subcontinent therefore exploited it to the full which ultimately became a basis of the division of the country.

Secondly he wants to bring his readers home about the want of the capable and just rulers for India since ages that how since times immemorial we have been suffering at the hands of incapable rulers.

### **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY:**

Features of a society or culture cannot be fully understood without paying detailed attention to the background circumstances of Subcontinent. As it is particularly true about Delhi which underwent a long series of turmoil and trials, and ultimately the present Delhi is not the Delhi of bygone days.

Jalal (2007) said that the true character of Delhi was based on the central activities of Fort, Chandani Chowk and a crowd which assembled daily at Jamma Masjid. She further says that there has been a tradition to visit Jamna bridge once a week besides a flower festival which was held every year at a grand scale. But she expresses remorse at the loss of these five most important things from the culture of Delhi, as they are nonexistent in our times.

Ali (2007) summarized the situation of Delhi with these words: "The story of my immediate ancestors held the key to a treasure, trove of mysteries. My grandmother was five and my Grandfather eleven when the Ghadar of 1857, the blind persecution and massacres of the citizens of Delhi, took place" (p. xiv).

M. Dayal (2010) endorsed Ali by saying: "No account of history of Delhi could be completed without a detailed examination of the 'mutiny' or the 'war of independence' of 1857" (p. xii). She says that the Muslims considered this war a jihad and on the other hand the Hindus dubbed it a war to rescue their religion. Whereas the English rulers were urging their men to fight this war as a religious duty to spread Christianity across every nook and corner of India, to tell the people that there is only one God for all. But it is a historical fact that Christianity spread across India at the cost of merciless killings, violent chaos and untold bloodshed.

Erikson (2004) described that place names were where 'history and geography intersect' ....the 'Kots' and 'Sarais', the 'purs' and 'paharis' ,contained the true romance of Delhi's past.He further observes: "Place names have a meaning in the language and in the local history and are part of the cultural fabric of the city" (p. x).

Bond (2003) has described the life of Delhi in his Travelogue cum memoir novel *Delhi Is Not So Far* in terms of new colonialism and capitalist society that are responsible for the non developing conditions of the topography of Delhi as well as her deteriorating system of education. He himself writes in the introduction of the same novel that he wants to be like his characters "Sometimes it's better to be a barber like Deep Chand or a rickshaw-puller like Pitamber than a degree holder without a job" (p. x).

If we talk about the plan of constructing New Delhi, we find the writing of Sheela Bajaj 'The Building of New Delhi' included in *City Improbably Writings on Delhi* (2010) by Khushwant Singh. She talks about King George V who announced the building of New Delhi in 1911. She is of the view that it was the magnificent ceremony of coronation of Durbar in Delhi ever held in her historical status. She writes that British Government and their loyal Indian rajas left no stone unturned to arrange such a dazzling spectacle of this ceremony for everyone that not any naked mortal eye has ever behold in the history of the world.

Vidya Rao in her article 'The Dilli Gharana' included in *Celebrating Delhi* (2010) by M. Dayal has thrown light on various 'Dilli Gharanas' (Delhi Families) popular as families of musicians. The members of these families are linked by ties of blood. These families have many disciples as well who are certainly unrelated to the core of 'Gharana' (Family) by blood but they become part of the concerned family due to their musical expertise. Vidya is of the view that the ties between 'ustad' (Teacher) and his 'shagird' (Student) in these 'Gharanas' are as strong as those of between parent and child.

Tikait (2009) has described Khushwant Singh's *Delhi* as an epic journey. A journey in which he reveals a long range of characters with their specific dispositions, historical facts, socio-

political issues and religio-cultural upheavals. The story revolves around the protagonist Mr. Singh and his beloved Bhagmati who is an eunuch. He further hints towards the religious layer of the novel while quoting the text: "Everybody believed that an avatar would soon come to save to people. This is a typical Hindu belief that when Kalyug reaches a climax God would send a savior" (Singh, 1990, p. 32).

#### ANALYSIS:

#### SOCIO-CULTURAL LIFE OF DELHI:

Through the analysis of the work by both the novelists it can be said that Ali (1940) and Singh (1990) have painted a picture of socio-cultural life of Delhi in their own manner. They share many similarities as well as dissimilarities in their way of description. But the main objective of both is to paint the true colours of socio-cultural of Delhi from centuries to present time. They have shown impartial attitude to describe the details about the glory and grandeur of Delhi during the bygone days and her condition at the present time. They want to show the world that Delhi has always been a place of constant attraction, admiration and temptation for all the rulers from past as well as of the present across the world for her rich soil in all respects. This city must be called a romance of both the writers keeping in view their passion and zeal for describing their association with the city and her culture.

Ali (1940) has adopted foreign language to describe the glory and grandeur of the royal city to his British masters. His main object is to introduce the rich culture of Delhi with her true colours to his opponents who were of the opinion that this was the land of brutes who needed to be tamed by rode. He has been confined to the presentation of Muslim Culture of Delhi in his work to reflect his views as he thinks the Muslim culture has always been enjoying pre dominating status in all spheres of life since centuries. Singh (1990) has resorted to present the life of Delhi as a saga of history, romance and sex. He has discussed the life of Delhi in the historical perspective. Faiz (2004) said that the arts symbolized the ways of social life in two respects one was ideological and other was material. And these arts become source of identity for a nation and its civilization at all levels.

#### **HISTORY AND MONUMENTS:**

They have talked about the significance of Jama masjid, Red fort, Chandani Chowk and many other buildings which stand as symbols of their material culture. Ali (1940) has also given many other examples of material culture of Delhi in his novel. He throws light on the construction of Taj Mahal and Red Fort of Delhi by Shah Jahan, Khooni Darwaza of Delhi which was called the bloody gate and Old Fort constructed by Feroz Shah Tughlaq. Then there were Tombs of Humayun, Qutub Minar considered symbols of

glory of mighty Hindustan. On the other hand Singh (1990) starts his first chapter with the description of the stinging of the narrator by innumerable bees, this incident becomes a foreteller of brutal and heinous massacre of the people of Delhi by Taimur. This episode also becomes a source to create a link between the upcoming chapter of ' Mussadi Lal' which covers the details about the life span of many influential emperors of Delhi like Ghoris, Balban, Nizamuddin, khilji, Tughlaq and Taimur. Singh (1990) has taken help from historical figures like Bahadur Shah Zafar, Aurangzeb, Mir Taqi Mir, Nizamuddin(R.A), Nadir Shah, Tuglaqs, Lodhis, Mughals and important incidents such as War of Independence 1857, life of converts and assassination of Mahatma Gandhi as well as Indra Gandhi to throw light on the life of Delhi whereas Ali(1940) has taken the examples of a few characters from a Muslim family to bring the fluctuating state of affairs in the royal.Singh (1990) makes us familiar about various popular dishes of Moti Mahal near Delhi Gate. He has also mentioned the names of a few renowned places of Delhi when he takes Baghmati to Lal Kaun a locality belongs to hijads in their culture, Kashmiri Gate, Fatehpuri Mosque, Qazi-Ka-Hauz popular as whores' locality, Ajmeri Gate, Qutub Minar,Quwwat-ul-Islam mosque, Shamsi Talab,Tombs of various emperors of past, Mausoleums of popular personalities of Delhi,temples of Hindus and Jains, idols of Vishnu and Lakshami and above all the ever famous Chandani Chowk. He has painted a



picture of hustle bustle in Chandni Chawk.

Likewise Ali (1940) he has also talked about red fort on the right side of Chandani Chowk and Royal Mosque and Jama Masjid surrounded by various bazaars on the left.

When he talks about Jama Masjid, like Ali (1940) he also acknowledges the great hustle bustle in the premises of Jama masjid during Friday prayer and on eve of Eid because this rush of believers indeed becomes a treat to the eyes of the beholders. Then a famous Urdu bazaar is situated near the Red Fort, this bazaar is occupied by Mohammedans predominantly.

This area has always been popular in the material culture of Delhi for its bookstores, shops of butchers, dyers, sweetmeat-sellers, kite makers and betel-leaf vendors. There is also situated a famous Jauhari Bazaar adjacent to Chandni Chowk. Then there is another bazaar called Dariba populated with silversmiths. All these buildings enjoy unprecedented popularity in the material culture of Delhi. Moreover this area is populated with tongas, hawkers and beggars. And these tongas, hawkers and beggars are considered significant symbols of the material culture of Delhi.

#### **USE OF SYMBOLS AND METAPHORS:**

Singh (1990) resorted to the character of an eunuch to present the exploitation, invasions and possessions of Delhi at the hands of various rulers. She is not solely a satisfying bed-partner for the narrator of the novel but also becomes a

link between various ages of past and present day Delhi.

The narrator has created this character of an eunuch to symbolize his emotional ties with Delhi. Bhagmati stands for the present day devastation of Delhi. On the other hand Ali presents the same phenomena through the character of Mir Nihal. Mir Nihal's character is symbolic of the destruction of old order of life in Delhi. The death of Babban Jan leaves deep impact on his psyche consequently he also left his most favourite hobby of flying pigeons in complete dejection and afterwards Asghar's marriage against his wishes, shatters him completely. All these changes in his life forced him to withdraw from the world to find escape in alchemy and mysticism. At the end he fell paralyzed and became physically and mentally crippled. He saw people suffering around him and he suffered more pain than the others.

As Mir Nihal stands for old order of life which is not ready to give way to the changing conditions of time and eventually becomes crippled to keep pace with the time. He suffered defeat at the hands of new order of life in the form of the character of Asghar. Mir Nihal symbolizes the rigidity and stubbornness of old generation. They remain stick to their old values and traditions which brought them the final catastrophe at all levels. Asghar is a representative of new generation who wants to



change himself according to the exigencies of time.

Scupin & Decorse (2012) said that the material aspects of culture were tools, dressing, shelter, arms and ammunitions and many other new inventions that made the concerned nations able to get adapted to their environment. Whereas non material aspects include values, taboos, norms, beliefs and ideologies. They further add that material culture consists of all the physical objects that a contemporary society produces from the past, such as tools, streets, buildings, homes, toys, automobiles etc. They create a relationship between the 'material' and 'non material culture' by adding values, national symbols, religious symbols, norms, beliefs, folkways and mores in their study. In the light of these views furnished by above mentioned theorists, Singh (1990) has presented the life of Delhi through her history and monuments.

He turns towards history behind the construction of various forts, lanes and familiar names to provide an insight to the readers into the manners and purpose of these rocks, bricks, stones and ghosts of bygone days. He shows a change of time in a few centuries at all levels in this city. He shows change of Gods, change of language, change introduced in cuisine, new spices, new flavours and new aroma of life. He also takes help from arts and crafts to reflect the appearance and disappearance of the changes

occurring during the journey taken through the history.

He shows how the natives of this city in all ages feel the stinks of history and ravages of time while breathing in its surroundings. The pleasures and woes of Delhi in the novel reflect the true character of Delhiwallahs. As Erikson(2004) said that everything that one learnt from society as its member, was called culture. It includes language, religion, values, customs and many other things to make us human. In this regard, it can easily be said that culture unites humanity. It makes the role of culture universal, plural and collective. But simultaneously culture also becomes a source to divide humanity. It makes various groups of people across the world on the basis of differences in their ways of life according to their exclusive social set ups. Therefore culture gives them individual as well as collective identity, different from each other.

#### **PREVAILENCE OF HYBRIDITY:**

Mir Nihal is a representative of the balance and harmony of that society. But when this balance became responsible to create monotony and obstinacy in the society, it came to an end in the face of changing traditions of time, being presented by the character of Asghar. He remains undefeated till the end of the novel which becomes a proof of hybridity in that society that things are still ambiguous but they might be sorted out in times to come. Despite the

fact that Mir Nihal became paralyzed, at the end of the novel his advice to his grandson to struggle to win freedom shows that writer wants us to have faith in future when we will be able to carve out a new way of life, a new harmony at all levels.

### **CASTE RIDDEN SOCIETY:**

Asghar's decision to get marry in a different caste and Mir Nihal's unwillingness to this proposal shows a clash of opinion between old generation and new generation. This also shows that it has been a caste ridden society since ages till our times. Singh (1990) has also hinted towards the same aspect of non-material culture of Delhi in the chapter 'Untouchables'. The character of Jaita Rangreta seems to be a mouth piece of the writer to throw light on another harsh reality of Indian society when he presents him commenting: 'What have we poor untouchables to do with Kings!' I remember my Bapu saying, "They are all the same to us. One goes, another comes. Zulum goes on....My Bapu called every badshah a zalim" (pp. 123,124). As Faiz (2004) has also endorsed these facts about the influence of foreign masters on the culture and society of underdeveloped countries. He is of the view that the progress of culture depends on progress of society and the arts reflect the uplift or deterioration of a society. He further says that imperialism in Asian, African and Latin American countries was not merely the name of political domination rather it robbed these

countries at social and cultural levels as well. In the name of introducing manners, values, arts, technicalities, dignity and enlightenment to these underdeveloped countries, the imperialists destroyed their domestic, feudal and pre-feudal old, progressive and developed structures. These foreign lords kept safe guarding ignorance, superstition and class exploitation and inherited these traits to their local heirs who in turn kept practicing the same exercises after the departure of their masters. Therefore we see a crude imitation of the manners of our foreign rulers in all spheres of life. The promotion of corporate culture in our land, is an outcome of this blind imitation of imperial language, customs, manners, arts and ideologies.

### **DESTRUCTION OF OLD ORDER OF LIFE:**

Another similarity between their novels is their common repentance over the loss of glory of bygone days of Delhi. They share common liking for the celebrated culture of Delhi and show strong faith in centuries old values of Delhi from her material and non-material culture.

Both writers have thrown light on the leadership crisis of Delhi since ages. Singh (1990) has presented this bitter reality through the chapter 'The Builders'. He writes how the preparations were made to build a city according to the desires of the foreign masters. The city of New Delhi was emerging in accordance with the heinous designs of the British rulers. Likewise Ali (1940) also throws light on the same

phenomena in the description of the coronation ceremony of King George V through which he shows the reality behind taking so much pains to make elaborated preparations for his majesty's visit to the city. They show through their novels that these foreign masters were not at all interested in the welfare of the natives or the construction of a city in accordance with her history and culture rather they wanted to achieve their hidden motives for exercising complete control over the socio-cultural life of Delhi. Through the above mentioned facts it also becomes crystal clear that the colonial powers wanted to give urban look to their imperial designs.

Ali (1940) has written about influenza epidemic of 1919, plague after world war1, Jallianwalla Bagh massacre of 1919, plundering of grave diggers, washers of dead bodies and the people who stole shrouds, pigeon-flying pastime, wedding rituals, public reaction to the first world war, political turmoil of 1920 in his novel.

Through these details he presents various material and non-material cultural aspects of the life of Delhi. Singh(1990) throws light on the past glories of the material culture of Delhi when he tells Lady Hoity-Toity about the presence of Herds of blue bulls, wild pigs within a few miles of the city walls in his childhood. He tells her how the back side area of Rashtrapati Bhavan was filled with the presence of Tigers in the distant past. In his childhood he saw hares,

peacocks, deer and partridges in the parks of Delhi.

But he also tells that these birds and animals are no more found in the surroundings of Delhi at present. He criticizes the foreigners in this regard while telling Lady Hoity-Toity how the bloody foreigners have deprived them of these precious breeds with their shooting habit.

### **ROLE OF PROSTITUTION:**

Like Ali (1940), Singh (1990) also talks about prostitution in his society. Both agree on the influential role of whores in their culture. In this regard Ali (1940) has presented the characters of Mustari Bai and Babban Jan whereas Singh (1990) presents the character of Bhagmati to highlight the practice of going to prostitutes to enjoy the pleasures of life. The difference between their ways of description about this institution is that although they share agreement on the exploitation of this suppressed section of society at the hands of all but Ali (1940) takes the lead in this regard while throwing light on the positive role of prostitutes as well. He tells that it has been a practice since Mughal time period in his material culture that the elite of the society used to send their children to prostitutes to learn manners from them because these ladies were fabulous in carrying themselves with the most appropriate ways. They teach children the best manners of life to be followed. Singh(1990) appears endorsing the idea about the importance of sex in one's life when he shows Mir Taqi Mir

dissatisfied with his wife because she is unable to satisfy his sexual and emotional needs which are best fulfilled either in the company of his beloved or whores or even in Singh's novels in the company of an eunuch as well.

He starts his novel with the arrival of the protagonist of the story at Delhi a city whom the protagonist called his beloved, his first romance after staying abroad for a long time and having in numerous sexual encounters with foreign whores over there. The sexually pervert side of Singh's personality is also projected through the protagonist of his novel when the Sikh protagonist wants to seduce a sixteen years old foreign girl Georgine with these words to convince her to have sex with him, Singh (1990) says: "Girls are more easy to seduce when they are sixteen than when they are a year or two older. At sixteen they are unsure of themselves and grateful for any reassurance you can give them about their looks or brains..." (p. 114).

#### **REVERENCE FOR RELIGIOUS FIGURES:**

Both Ali and Singh have shown great reverence for the shrine of Nizamuddin Auliya(R.A) from their material culture. The tradition of Qawwali singing at the shrine of this great saint has been mentioned by both writers in their texts.

#### **CONSENSSES ON THE CAUSES OF DOWNFALL OF MUGHAL EMPIRE:**

They share the same opinion about the down fall of Mughal Empire. Through the analysis of the

time periods of historical figures starting from Hindu king Ashoka to the last Mughal emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar in the novel *Delhi* by Singh (1990) and the analysis given by Habibuddin about the down fall of Mughals in *Twilight in Delhi*, we come to know that both the writers agree upon the general causes of defeat of local masters at the hands of the British. They are agreed upon the lavish spending, sluggish behaviour and immoral activities of the last Mughal emperors to bring them final catastrophe.

#### **INDIAN COMPLEX FOR WHITE SKIN AND WESTERN WAYS OF LIFE:**

They have also thrown light on another aspect of non-material culture of Delhi which is the complex of Indians for white skin and western ways of life. Ali (1940) has shown this complex through the character of Asghar who has adopted western ways of life. He wears western style clothes and shoes. He also decorates his house in western style. Likewise the curiosity on part of Mughal princesses for Alice Adwell to have a meeting with her and the lust of the natives for Alice to make love with her in the novel *Delhi* also throws light on the complex of Indians for the personalities and ways of life of their foreign masters. Then Singh (1990) gives another example of Lady Hoity-Toity. He shows how the Indians offer Limousine, caviar, champagne to a western archaeologist Lady Hoity-Toity. They become euphoric to find a

western soul on their soil. They want to leave no stone unturned to serve her majesty and to win her applaud for them.

#### **LOVE FOR POETRY:**

They have also shown their love for poetry. Poetry has always been considered an important feature of non-material culture of any given society. They have quoted the verses of Mir Taqi Mir and Ghalib in their novels. And their translation of these verses into English also becomes an effort to bring the foreigners home about the unprecedented beauty and effectiveness of Urdu poetry. Singh(1990) does not present Ghalib as among the narrators of his novel but as the contemporary of Bahadur Shah Zafar. But he has made up this deficiency for starting his novel with an epigram furnished by Ghalib: "I asked my soul: What is Delhi?/ She replied: The world is the body and Delhi its life." (Delhi) In the text we find Masuddi Lal uttering poetic verses in praise of the beauty of Muslim women: "A Turk for toughness, for hands that never tire; An Indian for her rounded bosom bursting with milk; A Persian for her tight crotch and her coquetry; An Uzbek to thrash as a lesson for the three" (pp. 51,52). Poetry has been a successful source of presenting the beliefs, values, sentiments and intellectual history of this soil. As far as Ali is concerned, he had also expressed his deep love for Ghalib, Zouq, Mir, Dard and Bahadar Shah Zafar in his text.

#### **ROMANCE FOR WORLD OF NATURE:**

The world of nature also plays a vital role in both novels. Ali (1940) gives individuality to natural objects just like he does in case of human beings. He bestows individual status to the seasons, days and nights of Delhi, its sunsets, dawns, breeze, dusty storms, hot winds, its lanes, gutters, hawks, dogs, cats, flying paper kites, pigeons and the description of changing seasons and beauty of rainy season. This romance on part of Ali for the world of nature gives eternal and living sense of identity to the imperial city. Whereas the change of seasons is also highly symbolic to present the decay of the culture of Delhi with the passage of time. Both the writers have mentioned the beauty of various seasons on their soil. The description of summer and Savaan in both the texts is almost the same. They share almost similar views about the intensity of scorching heat of summer and the beauty of the arrival of Savaan.

They express the beauty of sky after the spell of monsoon rain when it becomes populated with kite flying and shouting of Boo Kata. And then the great hustle bustle in the gardens after the monsoon shower also becomes a real treat to the eyes.

#### **CONCLUSION:**

Thus concluding the discussion I want to sum up with a few lines that both Ali (1940) and Singh (1990) have tried their utmost to present the true colours of socio-cultural life of Delhi.

They have proved themselves fabulous to depict the material and non-material aspects of culture of Delhi in their own respective manner. They have left no stone unturned to show the world that how rich this soil has been in all spheres of life and also the damage which has been caused to her at all levels by the domestic as well as foreign rulers. They have shown their deep sense of pride for all those values and cultural norms

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of Delhi which have been asset of her past glory and remained travelling from generation to generation in face of threatening debasement of the society. Their novels have proved a significant contribution to the world of Indian English fiction writing. And they will be entertained as the master pieces of fiction writing for generations to come.

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