

Colonization and Decolonization of the Indian Subcontinent: A Colonial Discourse Analysis of 'A God in Every Stone'

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Received: November 02, 2019

Published Online: December 10, 2020

Abstract

The British Raj in the Indian subcontinent has been a subject of academic and scholarly inquiries. The period has impacted the indigenous culture and political system. Studies have highlighted a plethora of political, military and economic reasons accounting for the establishment and collapse of the British Empire. The study examines how the colonial discourses helped the colonizers in the establishment of British Empire in the Indian subcontinent. The study contends that it is not the military might but the colonial discourses which helped the British Empire take its roots. However, the same discourses also resulted into anticolonial resistance and the final collapse of the British Empire due to its being endlessly split and anxiously repetitive in nature. The study is based on Kamila Shanie's novel "A God in Every Stone" (2014) adds another dimension to the subject. The analysis is developed round Homi K. Bhaba's theory "Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse". The study, unlike the common perception, concludes that it was not military might alone, but the colonial discourses which settled and unsettled the British Raj in the Indian subcontinent.

Keywords: Colonialism, British Raj, Anticolonial Resistance, Colonial Discourses, Freedom Movement, Indian Nationalism, Native Subjects, Power & Discourse.

1. Introduction

In an era when the warfare between states was largely dependent upon manpower, Britain with a population of hardly 31 million kept India colonized in another continent for about 190 years when population of the latter was more than 400 million (Noorani, 2016). The interstate communications were conducted via the uncoordinated sea routes and the postal service was considered as a novel means of communication (Brown & Ainely, 2005). In spite of these physical hurdles and limitations, Britain, a country with a comparatively lesser population, succeeded in keeping India under its political control in a distant continent for such a long period of time, because they did not solely rely on power and military might for maintaining their rule, rather made use of colonial discourses to the optimum to colonize the mind of the natives. Given the role and importance of the discourses in the colonial project, Arthur James Balfour, while addressing the British Parliament on the challenges to the Empire, regards knowledge (discourses) and Power as the two invisible foundations of the imperial authority. The economic and political control, he adds, must be coupled with the idea of 'knowing other

peoples' which will persuade them to know themselves as inferior and subordinate to the European (Said, 1978, as cited in Ashcroft et al., 1995).

Discourse is either a spoken, written word or symbol which is seen from the point of view of the values, tenets and categories which it embodies. It constructs modes of representation and experiences way of looking at the world in accordance with the context within which it is constructed Hawthorn (as cited in Mills, 1997). According to Michel Foucault discourses may be taken "sometimes as the general domain of all meanings, sometimes as an individualizable group of statements, and sometimes as a regulated practice that accounts for a number of statements" (Foucault, 1972, p. 80). Colonial discourses mainly revolve around certain ways and modes of understanding the world, and positioning of both the colonizers and the colonized therein. The colonizers capitalize on the discourses to justify the subservience of the colonized and the superior and distinguished status of the colonizers. The discourses are part and parcel of the project of colonization and are used to inculcate into the natives of the colonies the idea that it is justified to colonize them and they should accept their inferior status in the colonial scheme of things. The British Empire did not rule by military and physical force alone, but by positioning both the colonizers and the colonized in certain stations of identity through these discourses (McLeod, 2010).

The colonizers utilize their language as a medium for the propagation of the discourses. Language is not merely a means of communication; it constructs one's world-view and shapes one's approach. The meanings associated with objects and ideas dictate certain values and thereby influence one's priorities which underpin the idea of superior and inferior, good and bad. Language carries the entire body of culture, values and belief system, social structure and the whole system of relationships to the things around us. The language, therefore, is an inseparable part of the colonial discourses which aids the colonizers in inculcating the idea of their superiority and high order into the colonized (McLeod, 2010; Wa Thiong'o, 1986). The colonial discourses aim at defining the identity of the colonized people in low terms with all possible negative connotations. The discourses force the natives to see themselves 'not as human subject, but an object.' Social status and identity of the colonized is always at the mercy of the colonizers who always define them as 'less than fully-human', and their station of identity and representation are always at the mercy of the colonial discourses. The discourses depict the colonizers as 'civilized, rational and intelligent; the natives remain *Other* to all these qualities. The discourses thus exalt them to a higher social status and the natives are forced into a lower station of identity (Fanon, 1952).

The use of force and physical coercion was certainly a plank of the colonizers' strategy in the colonial scheme of things, but they simultaneously made use of the colonial discourses to justify their occupation of others people's land and keep them under their political control. But the former would have not been possible without the latter. Colonialism is therefore, "an operation of discourse, and as an operation of discourse it 'interpellates' colonial subjects by incorporating them in a system of representation" (Tiffin & Lawson, 1994, p. 3). Richard (1994) while highlighting the ulterior objectives of the colonial discourses, holds that "the colonial discourses can never be assumed representing truth and reality. These are purposely constructs from the view point of the colonizers, and based on unequal dichotomy and asymmetrical approach." He adds, "The representation of other cultures invariably entails the presentation of self-portrait, in that those people who are observed are overshadowed or eclipsed by the observer" (p. 289). The British Empire rarely displayed its chauvinism

explicitly, rather made use of the discourses to indirectly achieve their ends. The British colonizers made use of wit and reasons and employed history and science to their advantage. The colonial discourses served as a vehicle for the propagation of such ideas in the colonial order of things (Kabbani, 1994).

Said (1978), employs the term Orientalism to refer to the collective colonial discourses in which the West represents the 'Orient', the native of the colonies. Said is of the view that 'Orientalism constructs binary division', between 'Occident' (the west) and the 'Orient' (the other). Both are described in opposition to each other. West is depicted as the seat of knowledge, civility and civilization and Orient is described as the very opposite of these qualities and the centre of ignorance, barbarity violence and lust. Orientalism is a western construct but has intentionally been made suitable for academic projects, for display in museums and colonial offices and for theoretical demonstration in all fields of knowledge. In order to lend countenance to their fabricated constructs of Orientalism and assert their own superiority as a result, they feed philology, history, biology economic and political theories with such ideas. The colonial discourses devalue the past of the colonized people, and consider the era before their arrival as a 'pre-civilized, or a 'historical void'. They are hell bent on the ideological indoctrination that the journey of the natives on the right track of civility began the day the European put their steps on their land. The 'colonialist ideology' (discourses) aims at propagating the idea that history, culture and progress of the natives heralded by the colonizers. Fanon (as cited in Barry, 2002).

Colonialism has always focused on the creation of certain cultural constructs which they could use to their own advantages. On the pretext of 'civilizing mission' they produced discourses which centered around construction of self as 'enlightened', 'rational', and 'superior' and Other as 'inferior', 'inscrutable' and 'deviant'. Such constructs loaded with the colonialist ideology were used to lend legitimacy to the colonial control over the natives of the colonies. The system of education and the English language were used as vehicles for the propagation of such discourses (Pennycook, 1998). Among the three planks of the colonialist strategy of power, viz, divide and rule, education system, and the English laws, the education was used to promote a soft corner for the colonizers among the natives. The education system helped the colonizers create an elite educated class among the natives which served as buffer between the colonial administration and rest of the natives. The education system served as vehicle for the propagation of the colonial discourses (Rahman et al., 2018).

The colonizers made use of military might and physical coercion to take control of the colonies, but could not establish their rule and administrative setup through the use of brute power. In order to firmly take roots in the colonies and smoothly rule the natives they needed soft power. They moulded the opinion of the natives through cultural production, fabricated constructs and ideological indoctrination, called colonial discourses in the postcolonial parlance. The colonial education system and English language were utilized as vehicle for the propagation of these discourses as Thomas Macaulay says that they could not afford to educate the Indian masses but the education was introduced to form a class of the natives which will work as intermediary between the colonial authorities and the natives of the Indian subcontinent. The education must be calculated to produce people who will be Indian by origin and caste but English in approach and manners (Macaulay, 1835). However, the rapport does not last for long and ironically the same discourses turn the natives against the Empire and who finally offer resistance to the colonial rule. The colonial discourses failed due to the colonizers' inability to understand the

sensitivities of the natives, and these fault lines in the discourses resulted into bloodshed and resistance offered by the natives (Kalpakli, 2009). The study ferrets out that why the power alone could not help British establish their rule, and how the colonizers made use of colonial discourses to establish its power in the Indian subcontinent? The study analyses that how the same discourses, ironically, turned the natives against the colonizers who finally challenged the authority of the Empire in Indian subcontinent.

2. Theoretical Framework

The study is conducted under the theoretical framework of Homi K. Bhaba's postcolonial theory 'Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse' (Bhaba, 1994). Bhaba holds that in order to firmly establish their rule and lend legitimacy to their occupation of the foreign lands, the colonizers make use of discourses directed at justifying their conquest. The discourses are calculated to indoctrinate the natives in colonialist ideology of racial and cultural superiority of the colonizers and the natives of the colonies as a population of degenerate types culturally inferior, socially uncivilized, and educationally backward. The basic objectives of these discourses are, as Bhaba (1994) says, "to construe the colonized as a population of degenerate types on the basis of racial origin in order to justify their conquest and to establish a system of administration and instruction" (p. 70). Bhaba argues that this aim of the colonizer is *never fully met* (as cited in McLeod, 2010).

The objectives of the colonizers fail to be materialized due to the *ambivalence* in the discourses. The discourses on the one hand represent the natives as barbaric and strange creatures, whereas try to 'civilize' them by taking them into the western fold on the other. As Bhaba puts, 'colonial discourse produces the colonized as a social reality which is at once an "other" and yet entirely knowable and visible' (pp.70-71). The civilizing drive brings the two communities closer and the distance between them is likely to be diminished. Such a situation sends an alarming signal to the colonizers because they are never ready to accord them an equal status, because doing so will undercut the legitimacy of their occupation of the natives' land. In order to widen the distance, the colonizers make use of stereotypical representation of the natives through *anxious repetition* which are replete with negative connotations. Such discourses then fail to keep the natives stable in a subservient position, rather their *ambivalence* state of identity finally breaks into anticolonial *resistance* and challenge the colonial authority on their land.

3. Research Methodology

The methodology of the study is qualitative approach based on the textual interpretation of the novel with a special focus on the relevant structures, expressions and passages which demonstrate mimicry, anxious repetition, ambivalence and resistance in the interaction between the colonizers and the natives of the Indian subcontinent. The study is qualitative in nature and based on the Kamila Shamsie's *A God in Every Stone* (2014). The analysis is developed round the theoretical framework of Homi K. Bhaba's postcolonial theory 'Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse' (Bhaba, 1994). The analysis is divided into three different stages which the characters undergo during the course of the novel. The characters are analysed during each stage with a special focus on the impact of discourses and their reaction. The first stage analyses that how the colonial discourse is employed by the British colonizers to lend legitimacy to their rule in India and how the natives react to the imperial advances. The second stage shows the underlying purpose of the discourses and the

racial and cultural discrimination couched in the colonial discourses. The last stage analyses the ultimate failure of the discourses and the reaction of the natives to the colonizer in the form of anti-colonial resistance.

4. Discourse, a Catalyst in the Rise and Fall of the Empire

Shamsi's fiction is set in Peshawar during the British Raj immediately before the First World War. The two brothers, Qayyum Gul and Najib Gul, typical natives, are the central characters who are influenced by the colonial discourses, play *mimic men*, function as an intermediary between the colonial masters and the masses, and serves the interest of the Empire in different capacities. As they get closer to the British, instead of acknowledging their services for the Empire and according them a dignified status, the colonial discourses through stereotypical representation starts to relegate them to the lower status of the colonized subjects and widen the gap between the members of the two communities. The discourses fail to push them back into their earlier position of low ranking inferior colonized masses, rather push them into an ambivalent state which finally breaks into a resistance and challenge the colonial rule of British in the Indian subcontinent.

4.1. Settling the Empire; Colonizing the Mind through the Discourse of Civility

The colonial discourses on the one hand would highlight the 'backwardness' and 'uncivility' of natives, whereas encourage them to conform to the English standard of civility by learning English language, conforming to their cultural values and social ways on the other. The class of natives who were involved in mimicry, is termed as *mimic men* by Bhaba (1994), and *native elites* by Fanon (1952). Qayyum Gul mimics the British, learns their language, conform to their cultural values and make sacrifices for the Empire. During the First World War he is sent to France to fight on behalf of the Empire, during the war he loses one of his eyes and is admitted to hospital in Brighton. Even on bed at the hospital he does not cease mimicry, learns English from the nurses, tries to get his grammar polished and inquires about the usage of the various artefacts around him. Gul is immersed in learning the ways to play English, while looking at the light of the chandelier above his bed, he compares it with the Emperor whose mercy equally falls on both English and Indians. He showers praise on the Emperor for his generosity, and even concludes that no Indian ruler can do this much for his subjects, "what nawab or maharaja would do as much?" (Shamsie, 2014, p. 54).

Gul is spellbound by the colonial discourses and openly exalts the superiority of British, praise their race, culture and political system in comparison to that of his own (Indian). The ultimate impact of the discourses is now obvious in his thoughts and approach, i.e taking an underestimate view of his own people, culture, social and political system and idealising that of the British.

But he knew that this one chandelier had more grandeur than all of Peshwar... he repeats this to one of the doctors and thereafter he was called upon whenever there were important visitors to explain that when he looked at the chandelier he gazed upon the glory of the king (Shamsie, 2014, p.54).

The primary rationale behind the colonial discourses is to colonize the mind of the natives by indoctrinating them in the ideology of cultural and racial superiority of the colonizers and thereby making them inferior and obedient subjects, who are used to the advantages of the

Empire to the optimum level (Fanon, 1964; Said, 1978; Wa' Thiango, 1986). The same impact of the discourses is obvious in Gul's mindset and his approach when it comes to the comparison between the indegnoius values, social, cultural and political system with that of the British. The younger brother Najib Gul instead of going to mulvi for lessons in Koran, visits English lady Vivian Rose for learning English, and mimics English ways from Mr. Dickens on the sly. He holds Mr.Dickens in high esteem in comparison to the mulvi who is sent to by his parents, he even considers the lessons with mulvi as boring and unsatisfactory (p.87). Gul's mimicry continues, and he serves as a gudie to the lady and Englishmen in their venture of archeological excavations in Peshawar and its surroundings.

The colonizrs' efforts of teaching Gul is not a sincere effort, rather a bid to use him as an intermediary and guide between the British and rest of the natives, as Bhaba (1994) says, "The objective of the colonial discourse is to construe the colonized as a population of denegreate types on the basis of racial origin, in ordr to justify conquest and establish systems of adminstration and instruction" (p.70). The mimic men are raised to assist the whites in the adminstration of the colonies, which is the underlying movtive of the colonial discourses. It is therefore, when Remmick finds Rose teaching Najib Gul, he makes an ironic comment, "I hear you have found yourself a civilizing mission" (Shamsie, 2014, p. 90). Gul simultaneously receives his degree in history from the Islamia college and proudly keeps serving the Empire in various capacities at the Taxila and Peshawar Musemu. Gul's mimicry of the English ways and cultural practices continues, he receives degree in the colonial system of educatoin which according to Maculary (1835) is meant to educate the natives (mimic men) who will then serve the interst of the Empire, and the ulterior objectives of the discourses is to acknowledge British superiority and their right to govern the colonies. The attitude of the the two brothers reflects the working of the colonial discoruses in terms of their minds being colonized, and a soft corner among the natives for their colonial masters is created, which according to Macleod (2010) is the rationale behind the discourses.

4.2. Anxious Repetition and Ambivalence; discrimination between the White and Other, West and the Rest

As a consequence of the colonial discourses the mimic men, by speaking the language of the colonizers, conforming to their social ways and cultural practices and assisting them in the adminstrtion of the colonies, want themselves to be accepted on equal terms by the colonizers. However, the colonizers are never ready to treat them equally, becuase doing so will certainly undercut the very legitimacy of colonizing the natives. The colonial discourses come into operation to widen again the distance and project the native as 'Other' derserve to be ruled and 'civilized'. The discoruses, therefore, turn to represent the natives with, "terrifying stereotypes of savagery, cannibalism, lust and anarchy" (Bhaba, 1994, p. 72). Qayyum Gul who was fighting for Empire with a passionate zeal saying, "If a man is to die defending a field, let the field be his field, the land his land, and the people his people" (Shamsie, 2014, p. 56), now having received injuries and lost one of his eyes, is approached by another Indian soldier in the hosptial telling him that the British are sending back the wounded soliders to the battlefied so that the English soldiers visit their homes on holidays.

During the medication when Gul is sympathized by an old nurse, the act is seriously condemned by the authorities and is reacted to as, "tell them a fifty-six years old widow was seen giving signs of favour to Pathan boy. Let the Empire termble at that" (p. 57). The colonial

discourses are obviously in working to widen the distance between the British colonizers and the Indian subjects by taking an extremely mean and degraded view about the natives. The discourses make Gul realize the discriminatory attitude on the part of the Empire for which he is making sacrifice of his life and limbs. The discriminatory attitude continues, duties of the female nurses working in the ward are suspended when a nurse was seen standing besides the bed of Khudad Khan, the first Indian to have received the Victoria Cross, the highest British military award, on account of his services for the Empire (Shamsie, 2014, p. 58). Bhaba (1994), upholds that "To be Anglicized is emphatically not to be English" (p. 87). Despite Gul's mimicry and the subsequent services he renders, and sacrifices he is making for the Empire, he is not accepted on equal terms. As the distance between the two communities is being lessened, the colonial discourses are set to widen the gap again by reminding Gul of his inferior status of a colonized Indian subject.

Upon knowing about Najib Gul's visits to the British and learning from them instead of visiting *mulvi* at the mosque, his mother disapproves of his conduct and prohibits him from visiting them again. Gul continues his visits and surreptitiously, he wears his sister's burqa so that he may not be seen by someone and reported to his mother. In the meanwhile his presence with the English lady is disapproved by other Englishmen, Remmick tells her, "A Pathan is Pathan at any age" (Shamsie, 2014, p. 156). Despite Gul's minor age, his passion for learning and the services he renders to the Empire, his proximity to the English lady is not tolerated by the British on account of his being a colonized subject.

The discourse of colonialism is always pulled into two opposite directions. On the one hand the natives are depicted as strange creatures with bizarre behaviour, uncivilized in nature and outside of the western civilization. The discourses want them to abolish their Otherness through mimicry, but once they enter into the western fold, they are discouraged in order to keep their distance again. As a result mimic men enter into a state of ambivalence, sliding between the two poles of identity: the indigenous and the western (Macleod, 2010). The mimic men, according to Jeyh Sharpe, highlight the contradictions of the colonialism during the British control of the Indian subcontinent (Sharpe, 1989). Qayyum Gul, while walking along with his brother in the street of Storyteller, comes across a storyteller who tells a tale about the local uprising against the Empire, Gul suddenly leaves the scene and tells his brother that he felt shame of himself for being a soldier of the Empire. (Shamsie, 2014, p. 113). The following day when he sees the British battalion marching in unison in the city of Peshwar, Gul describes the scene as, "... the sound of feet marching in unison tore my heart as if they were the footsteps of a beloved walking deliberately away" (p. 116).

In contrast to the earlier thought where Gul felt ashamed of himself for being a part of the Empire, he here associates himself again with the Empire. In hindsight while analysing the relationship between the British and the natives, Gul says that even the highest military award, the Victoria Cross won by Indian soldier in the war for the Empire could not earn respect for the Indian, so no such relationship is possible between the two communities. Faced with a regiment marching through the valley of Peshawar, Gul while looking at the Indian soldiers in the British army takes pity on them and says that they don't understand the deep disquiet inside their breasts. Gul's ambivalence is obvious in his continued contradictory approaches both to the British and the native people. Having been repelled by British through the discourses of anxious repetition, Gul is now in an uncertain state of identity, he can neither own one form of identity nor altogether discard the other, rather ambivalently sliding between the two polarities

of identity. The ultimate recourse of the disillusioned colonized, who despite their mimicry fail to gain acceptance in the eyes of their colonial masters, is their own roots (Jajja, 2013).

4.3. Loyalty Transforming into Resistance; the Discourse Unsettling the Empire

Bhaba (1994), holds that the ambivalent state of the mimic men in relation to the colonizers puts an unconquerable challenge to the entire structure of the colonialism. The mimic men finally oppose their representation by the colonizers and any such attempt to keep them fixed and confined to the position defined by the whites, is strongly resisted. The colonial authority is challenged, and efforts are made to free the land from their control. Qayyum Gul, the erstwhile mimic men and the loyal subject cum soldier of the Empire, now openly challenges the British on his soil and exhorts his younger brother Najib Gul who is still serving in the museum to follow suit.

Your museums are part of their Civilizing Mission, their White Man's burden, their moral justification for what they have done here. As for the spade they place in your hand, the honours they shower on you, the English are too few and we too many and so they see that it is necessary for there to be a class of Indian who will revere them, feel honoured by them, benefit from their presence and ultimately serve them (Shamsie, 2014, p. 185).

Despite his mimicry, services and even the sacrifice of one of his eyes in line of duty for the Empire, Gul is repelled by British through the discourse of racial discrimination. He has realized the ulterior objectives of the colonial discourses of civilizing mission and need for raising the class of natives (mimic men). He has now set on challenging the Empire and striving for the independence of his own country. He continues, "If our members turn against them to leave, there is no way for them to stay" (p. 185). Gul who was once a loyal and obedient subject of the Empire and would shower praises on Emperor, he would even be called on to praise the crown whenever important guests would visit the hospital, is now out to challenge the presence of British on his soil.

The ultimate realization for mimic men according to Bhaba (1994) is rejection by the whites and their refusal to accept them on equal terms, as he puts, "almost but not quite" (Bhaba, 1994, p. 89). The colonized may speak the language of the colonizers, dress themselves like their colonial masters and behave like them, but are never accepted as such. The mimicry cannot make them equal to the whites, as Bhaba contends, "to be anglicised is epiphetically not to be English" (p. 87). Gul is now mindful of the fact and instructs his brother to get away with the British masters and instead work with him for the freedom movement and for the independence of his own country. Gul tells him that despite his services and mimicry, at the end of the day he will be repelled on the ground of racial discrimination. He continues, "... I fear for you who will one day wake from your illusions and see you are nothing but a subject and yoked Pashtun" (p. 185).

Sharpe (1989), observes that mimic men/colonial subject is a double edged weapon. They help settle the colonial rule and simultaneously unsettle/disturb it as well. Having been disillusioned with his experience of mimicry, Gul has changed his loyalty and is now a leading exponent of the Indian freedom movement. He says, "Gandhi has called for complete independence from the English and Nehru hoisted a flag of free India. My whole body went hot and cold when I

saw it and I thought my heart would burst open” (p. 191). Gul who had once taken arms to defend the British Empire during the First World War, is now up in arms over the authority of the Empire on his land, and nothing can obstruct his way. He trains and convinces his countrymen to participate in the freedom movement against the British Empire and offer resistance to it:

That man came to tell me that they will take my land away if I stand here and speak to you. They think, they can defeat us with threats, but I will endure what loses I must endure for the sake of freedom (p. 200).

The words speak volumes of Gul’s passionate zeal for the independence of his native land, and his strong determination to bear whatsoever consequences it may bring. Bhaba (1994), holds that resistance is an offshoot of the contradictory representation of the natives by the colonial authorities. Gul’s loyalty and sacrifices for the Empire were not acknowledged merely on the ground his race and origin, and the colonial discourses meant to keep him confined to the status of an inferior subject of the Empire, turned him against the Empire and he became an ardent fighter in the freedom movement: “Training, fight, army, these would have been the words that snaked through Qayyum’s orchards” (Shamsie, 2014, p. 198). The freedom movement had called strike on April 23, 1930 across the Indian subcontinent as a part of the Civil Disobedience against the British rule, and the day finally dawned. Gul, before leaving for the spot, speaks his mind to his younger brother:

He dressed quickly, woke up Najib to say he was leaving, cautioning him to look out for trouble during the day, Najib, barely awake, flicked his finger in the direction of his brother’s glass eye as if it were a marble. Good bye, pacifist girl, Goodbye Englishman’s dog. Better to be Englishman’s dog than Englishman’s Indian (p. 203).

“The menace of mimicry is its double vision which is disclosing the ambivalence of colonial discourse also disrupts its authority” (Bhaba, 1994, p. 129). Gul, the mimic man, is participating in the demonstration at the Storyteller street, which turned violent when the British forces opened indiscriminatory firing on the protestors: “Then the firing started, the bayonets followed. Fall back, fall back, Inqilab Zindabad. Bullets and the screams of men and stench of blood but this was not like Vipres, here he (Gul) was fearless” (Shamsie, 2014, p. 207). The firing continues on the freedom fighters and Gul is standing among the protestors who are falling, he chants the slogan ‘Long Live Revolution’ at the top of his voice. He is soon joined by his younger brother Najib Gul who too was a mimic man and serving the British: “Najib Gul’s bloodied bandage and waving it like a flag, joining the crying of Inqilab Zindabad” (p. 290). Both the mimic men, who were once very loyal subjects of the Empire are now seen joining the fight and want the colonial authorities to free the Indian subcontinent.

5. Conclusion

Power in the form of military might and physical coercion helps the colonizers invade a foreign land, but in order to firmly establish their rule and run the administration, they need to colonize the mind of the natives and create a soft corner for the colonizers, as Tiffin & Lawson (1994) observe, which cannot be achieved through coercion. The colonizers resort to various ideological constructs called colonial discourses in the postcolonial parlance, which are loaded

with colonialists' superiority and calculated to lend countenance to the conquest and legitimize their control over the natives (McLeod, 2010; Said, 1978; Wa Thiong'o, 1986). The discourses, however, fail to keep the natives subservient and oppressed permanently due to its being endlessly split, inwardly ambivalent and anxiously repetitive. The natives/ mimic men who are influenced by the discourses turn against the colonizers and thereby offer resistance for the freedom of their own land, Bhaba (1994) contends. Both Qayyum Gul and his younger brother Najib Gul, being influenced by the colonial discourses, mimic the British, learn their language, conform to their social ways and cultural practices, work as mediator between the colonial authorities and the natives and serve them loyally. However, the same discourse of racial superiority turn them against the British and they abandon the services to the Empire, change their loyalties and fight for the freedom of their own land from the British control.

Qayyum who had fought on behalf of the Empire in Vipers in the first world war and had lost one of his eyes, was such an ardent supporter of the Empire that whenever a guest would come, he would be asked to shower praise on the crown, is seen fighting against the Empire and want them to free his country. Similarly, Najib Gul, a more loyal mimic man, abandons his services for Empire, takes off the official uniform and puts on his cultural dress and joins the fight against the British (Shamsie, 2014). The findings confirm that the British made use of colonial discourses to create a soft corner among the natives and settle the administrative setup of the Empire, the objectives they could not achieve through the use of military might and physical coercion. However, being repelled by the same discourse of colonialism, the mimic men offered resistance and challenge the imperial authority over the Indian subcontinent. The findings show that the British Empire capitalized on the discourses to establish its authority in the Indian subcontinent through a class of natives (mimic men) and ironically the same discourse resulted into anticolonial uprising by the same class which ultimately challenged the control of the Empire on their land.

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