

The Reconfiguration of Core and Periphery in Ahmed Ali's *Twilight in Delhi* and Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger*

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Abstract

This essay discusses Ahmed Ali's *Twilight in Delhi* published in 1940 and Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger* published in 2008 as two distinct examples of writers from the subcontinent employing specific stylistic devices to respond to particular periods of historical crisis through their fiction. This essay looks at the use of setting, language, intertextuality and other stylistic modes that the narratives adopt to address the historical and socio-cultural crisis that they grapple with at two distinct junctures in the city's and by implication India's history.

In this paper I argue that both authors pick and choose literary and stylistic devices to create an amalgamation of techniques that can meaningfully represent the specific historical crises their works deal with. To contextualize my methodological praxis it is necessary to refer to interpretation of core-periphery relations in Marxist literary critic Benita Parry's reading of world systems theory by Immanuel Wallerstein, Samir Amin and others; Parry uses this reading to understand the aesthetic affinity in peripheral countries due to a similar past experience in colonialism and capitalism, which according to her gives birth to stylistic irregularities in art. Many stylistic irregularities in these novels are examples of both how the meaning and value of core and periphery change over time, whether it be in a nation, or in global geographical dispensation; and how literary and artistic works register these changes and play the complexities of historical modernity into their narrative fabric.

Keywords: core-periphery, stylistic irregularities, novel form, post-independence India.