Psychological Angst in the Characters
Chapter Three

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Postcolonial literature has tended to become more exploratory and introspective. The emphasis was more on character and motivation than on form and structure. This gave birth to psychological approach which served to bridge the gap between psychology and literature. Of all the critical approaches to literature, psychological approach has been one of the most controversial, the most used or abused and - for many readers - the least appreciated. For all the difficulties involved in its proper application to interpretive analysis, the psychological approach can be fascinating and rewarding. The objective of this approach is threefold: (1) to account briefly for the misunderstanding of psychological criticism; (2) to outline the psychological theory most commonly used as an interpretive tool by modern critics and (3) to show by examples how readers may apply this mode of interpretation to enhance their understanding and appreciation of literature.

A new breed of critics and writers found that insisting a specific extraneous and non-literary functions of literature was diverting the focus of literature from its primary purpose, that is, the aesthetics or literariness of a work of art. These new critics who have primarily based in the United States launched the formalistic approach. Critics like John Crowe Ransom and Rene Welleck insisted on the form asserting the form rendered the meaning or the form was meaning. Their literary interpretations that were grounded in linguistics used techniques like irony, paradox and ambiguity to read a text.
With the advent of Levi Strauss' Structuralism yet another approach gained currency. This new approach termed archetypal approach insisted on the existence of certain patterns or structures or archetypes that underlay direct literature. The famous Canadian critic, Northrop Frye established the canons for this approach in his Archetypes in Literature. The blending of archetypes and looking for patterns have shed new light on the writings of novelists like Jane Austen, Thomas Hardy and William Golding. Close on the heels of this approach followed the psychological approach. In turn, the crucial limitation of the psychological approach is its aesthetic inadequacy, “psychological interpretation can afford many profound clues toward solving a work's thematic and symbolic mysteries, but it can seldom account for the beautiful symmetry of a well-wrought poem or of a fictional masterpiece” (Guerin et al. 125). Though the psychological approach is an excellent tool for reading beneath the lines, the interpretive craftsman must often use other tools, such as the traditional and the formalistic approaches, for a proper rendering of the lines themselves.

In the general sense of the word, there is nothing new about the psychological approach. As early as the fourth century B.C., Aristotle used it in setting forth his classic definition of tragedy as combining the emotions of pity and terror to produce catharsis. By ‘catharsis’ Aristotle meant a purging of emotions which had a cleansing effect in the mind of the reader or the audience. So literature was meant to act as a safety valve or a release system that would relieve the reader of his or her pent up feeling. When William Wordsworth later in his “Preface” defined literature as an overflow of powerful feeling he was just transferring the release from the reader to the writer. Lionel Trilling observed in his Speaking of Literature and Society that psychological approach reveals “hidden human element of human nature and of the relation between the hidden and the visible” (36).
became one of the dominant ideas of the twentieth century. The complete gentleman of the English Renaissance, Sir Philip Sidney, with his statements about the moral effects of poetry, was psychologizing literature, as were such Romantic poets as Coleridge, Wordsworth and Shelley with their theories of the imagination. In this sense, then, virtually every literary critic has been concerned at some time with the psychology of writing or responding to literature.

The foundation of Freud's contribution to modern psychology is his emphasis on the unconscious aspects of the human psyche. A brilliant creative genius, Freud provided convincing evidence, through his many carefully recorded case studies, that most of our actions are motivated by psychological forces over which we have very limited control. He demonstrated that, like the iceberg, the human mind is structured so that its great weight and density lie beneath the surface (below the level of consciousness). Freud categorized the human mind into three compartments: the Id, the Ego and the Super Ego. The Id is the subconscious or the basic instinct or animal instinct that is impulsive. The Ego is the consciousness or the self. The Super Ego is the collective consciousness or the societal norms and values. The Ego mediates between the Id and the Super Ego thereby deciding a person's behaviour and way of life. In New Introductory Lectures on Psycho-analysis, Freud discriminates between the levels of conscious and unconscious mental activity:

The oldest and best meaning of the word 'unconscious' is the descriptive one; we call 'unconscious' any mental process the existence of which we are obligated to assume - because, for instance, we infer it in some way from its effects - but of which we are not directly aware. ...

If we want to be more accurate, we should modify the statement by
saying that we call a process 'unconscious' when we have to assume that it was active at a certain time, although at that time we knew nothing about it. (99-100)

Freud further emphasizes the importance of the unconscious by pointing out that even the "most conscious processes are conscious for only a short period; quite soon they become latent, though they can easily become conscious again" (100). In view of this, Freud defines two kinds of unconsciousness:

One which is transformed into conscious material easily and under conditions which frequently arise, and another in the case of which such a transformation is difficult, can only come about with a considerable expenditure of energy, or may never occur at all. ... We call the unconscious which is only latent, and so can easily become conscious, the 'preconscious,' and keep the name 'unconscious' for the other. (101)

That most of the individual's mental processes are unconscious is Freud's first major premise. The second (which has been rejected by a great many professional psychologists, including some of Freud's own disciples - for instance, Carl Gustav Jung and Alfred Adler) is that all human behavior is motivated ultimately by what we would call sexuality. Freud designates the prime psychic force as libido or sexual energy. His third major premise is that because of the powerful social taboos attached to certain sexual impulses, many of our desires and memories are repressed (that is, actively excluded from conscious awareness). Starting from these three premises, it examines several corollaries of Freudian theory. Principal among these is Freud's assignment of the mental processes to three psychic zones: the Id, the Ego and the Superego. 
The Id is the reservoir of libido, the primary source of all psychic energy. It functions to fulfill the primordial life principle, which Freud considers to be the pleasure principle. Without consciousness or semblance of rational order, the Id is characterized by a tremendous and amorphous vitality. Speaking metaphorically, Freud explains this "obscure inaccessible part of our personality" as "a chaos, a cauldron of seething excitement (with) no organization and no unified will, only an impulsion to obtain satisfaction for the instinctual needs, in accordance with the pleasure principle" (103 - 104). He further stresses that the "laws of logic-above all, the law of contradiction-do not hold for processes of the Id. Contradictory impulses exist side by side without neutralizing each other or drawing apart... Naturally, the Id knows no values, no good and evil, no morality" (104 - 105).

The Id is, in short, the source of all our aggressions and desires. It is lawless, asocial and amoral. Its function is to gratify our instincts for pleasure without regard for social conventions, legal ethics or moral restraint. Unchecked, it would lead us to any lengths — to destruction and even self-destruction — to satisfy its impulses for pleasure. Safety for the self and for others does not lie within the province of the Id; its concern is purely for instinctual gratification, heedless of consequence. For centuries before Freud, this force was recognized in human nature but often attributed to supernatural and external rather than natural and internal forces, the Id as defined by Freud is identical in many respects to the Devil as defined by theologians. There is a certain psychological validity in the old saying that a rambunctious child (whose Id has not yet been brought under control by Ego and Superego) is "full of the devil"(92). It is also now seen in young children (and neurotic adults) certain uncontrolled impulses toward pleasure that often lead to excessive self-indulgence and even to self-injury.
In view of the Id's dangerous potentialities, it is necessary that other psychic agencies protect the individual and society. The first of these regulating agencies, that which protects the individual, is the Ego. This is the rational governing agent of the psyche. Though the Ego lacks the strong vitality of the Id, it regulates the instinctual drives of the Id so that they may be released in non-destructive behavioral patterns. Though a large portion of the Ego is unconscious, the Ego nevertheless comprises what we ordinarily think of as the conscious mind. As Freud points out, "In popular language, we may say that the Ego stands for reason and circumspection, while the Id stands for the untamed passions" (99). Consequently, the Ego serves as intermediary between the world within and the world without.

The other regulating agent, that which primarily functions to protect society, is the Superego. Largely unconscious, the Superego is the moral censoring agency, the repository of conscience and pride. It is, as Freud says in New Introductory Lectures on Psycho-analysis the "representative of all moral restrictions, the advocate of the impulse toward perfection, in short it is as much as we have been able to apprehend psychologically of what people call the 'higher' things in human life" (95). Acting either directly or through the Ego, the Superego serves to repress or inhibit the drives of the Id, to block off and thrust back into the unconscious those impulses toward pleasure that society regards as unacceptable, such as overt aggression, sexual passions and the Oedipal instinct. Parallel to the Oedipus complex is the Electra complex — a subordinated and suppressed unconscious attraction of the daughter towards the father. This complex or mental state derives its name from Electra, the daughter of Agamemnon who was killed by his wife Clytemnestra and was in turn revenged upon by the daughter. Freud attributes the development of the Superego to the parental influence that manifests itself in terms of punishment for what society considers to be
bad behavior and reward for what society considers good behavior. An overactive Superego creates an unconscious sense of guilt. This is the familiar guilt complex and the popular misconception that Freud advocated the relaxing of all moral inhibitions and social restraints. Whereas the Id is dominated by the pleasure principle and the Ego by the reality principle, the Superego is dominated by the morality principle. One might say that the Id would make us devils, that the Superego would have us behave as angels, that is, as creatures of absolute social conformity. It is the Ego that keeps one healthy human beings by maintaining a balance between these two opposing forces. It was this balance that Freud advocated - not a complete removal of inhibiting factors.

The psychological approach to postcolonial writers like Naipaul has such possibilities and opens a new avenue to an understanding of his works. According to Lionel Trilling “the psychological approach is the only systematic account of the human mind as revealed in literature” (34). He further states, “to pass from the rending of a great literary work to a treatise of academic psychology is to pass from one order of perception to another; but the nature of this approach is exactly the stuff upon which a writer has always exercised his art” (35).

The approach is also reciprocal and the effect of psychology has been no greater than the effect of literature upon psychology. ‘Angst’ is a key term in psychological study of characters, especially diasporic characters because these characters are always in a state of suspension and rootlessness. The nearest synonym is anxiety, though it does not capture the full meaning of the word. There are typical feelings of dread and frustration in a fluctuating balance. Many people using angst as a search word are trying to capture a state of being they experience. Perhaps there is a perception of
something lacking in their existence and most English words do not capture the essence of their thoughts adequately.

The existential philosophers address the word ‘angst’, which is actually a German word for ‘anxiety’. The philosophical use of the term was coined by Soren Kierkegaard to denote a state of anguish as the feeling of responsibility or burden of freedom. Subsequently the term was extended to refer to a dread arising from a lack of purpose, meaning or concern in the universe. This dread of being overwhelmed leads to an attempt to impose one's values and meanings on an inherently absurd universe. There is a constant dialectical tension between the man searching for meaning and the universe that is conceived as mute and uncaring. From Kierkegaard the term has been expanded to cover postcolonial characters.

Character analysis becomes essential in any critique of fiction. This particular process is used, as a yardstick to measure the writings of the novels of Naipaul. Naipaul lays bare the characters with great skill either through direct disclosures or through meaningful exposures, gestures, speeches or interactions. Naipaul's characters are so sketched that they harmonize with the setting of Trinidad, the main locale in most of his novels. Naipaul's writings are diasporic and hence postcolonial. However his diasporic feature came to the fore much before postmodernism and its off school postcolonialism became a byword. As M.L. Pandit says:

It was a society of the South Asian immigrants, who went to the West Indies in the nineteenth century as indentured labourers to replace the Africans, who became free after the abolition of slavery. Some of these poor labourers, taken away from the remote village of Utter Pradesh and Bihar in India, were put to work in the sugarcane farms of Trinidad.
Attracted by the incentives of better wages and avenues in another part of the British Empire, they willingly forsook their homes and hearts, kith and kin, to explore the possibilities of success in an alien land. (123)

The characters lead a haphazard existence without well-understood and meaningful principles. They are not elites, as most of them come from the lower rungs of society. They accept life easily and casually. They are unorthodox except for a few in matters of religion and politics. They are often dishonest and unreliable, though they do not repent when they are unmasked. They suffer from traces of gullibility, disorder, decay and emptiness, they are disturbed creatures. The heroes of Naipaul come to terms with the prevailing conditions of affliction and frustration.

To Naipaul, creation is perception, judgement or resolution and a recollection in tranquility through the characters. In the cases of Biswas in *A House for Mr Biswas* and Ralph Singh in *The Mimic Men* the act of writing completes the depiction of them and makes them whole. Naipaul creates a sign-painter and journalist in Biswas and a politician and writer in Ralph. But none of his heroes continue as writers for long. Biswas's writing ends once his house has been bought, Ralph Singh is not a success as a writer. In this, they reveal an organic unity with their communities which have no noble ideals to pursue. Naipaul singles out some prominent features of characters and caricatures then as the story progresses.

Naipaul's characters like Biswas and Ralph Singh are all generally silhouettes, stripped of their individuality. They are simply shunted between inaction and opportunity. They are left in confusion in Trinidad's social and political structure. They are caught up in a web from which they find it very difficult to extricate themselves. Among them, Biswas is a unique creature in English fiction.
The depiction of Biswas is a little different from other characters. It is very absorbing and invites one's attention from the beginning. He is bitter, alienated, sensitive, moody, tragic and comic at the same time. It is this complexity that becomes an interesting personality. His life turns out to be greater than some of his mundane parts. He matters little in the Hanuman House, which is the empire of Tulsi, his mother-in-law. He is swindled and repeatedly defeated by society. Naipaul does not grant any designation to Biswas, though he portrays him as a major figure. Naipaul is keen on presenting even the minute details such as Biswas' sight, sound and smell.

Biswas, a popular journalist and writer of highly personal short stories, concentrates upon the nuances of lettering. He becomes a sign-painter and establishes himself as a Journalist in Trinidad's society. Biswas spends thirty five years of his forty six years in rebellion and he is in quest of a fixed symbol that will restore order. Though born and brought up in a Hindu family, he does not read the Bhagawat Gita. Instead, he reads Marcus Aurelius, Samuel Smiles and the English Horatio Algerus. The rebellious spirit in him is obvious even as a student of Pundit Jairam. He rebels against the Pundit and this leads to his ouster. To him Hindu ceremonies, Pundits and idol worship are a waste of time. According to Robert Hamner, "Biswas is like an absurd man of Camus. The absurd is born of this confrontation between the human need and unreasonable silence of the world" (226). The absurd man is drawn to rebellion and conquest because they bring out humanity's fullest potential. People engaged in political revolt are exclusively focused on the needs and dignity of human life and on the relationships that exist between people. They have clearly defined purposes and goals and this makes them fully aware of themselves and of their capabilities. In rebellion, people cease to be complacent and ineffectual. They become aware of the enormous impact that they can make on the world. In that sense, the rebel,
or conqueror, is attractive not because he overcomes any external opponent but because, in a sense, he overcomes himself in realizing his full potential. He feels within him his longing for happiness and reason.

Biswa’s married life is marked by no trace of tenderness but by twisted love, a wounded kind of feeling, privation and punishment. To him, children are a menace. Biswas’s wife Shama and Biswas disappear into a world of contradiction. Further, Biswas has been portrayed as a wife-beaver, a sensitive journalist, an opportunist, a conniver, a ritual observing religious cynic and a possessive man with a ferocious temper but at the same time a faithful married man. To him, sex is not a need or a burden. He lacks ambition and his career is marked by a series of disasters. He always blames others for his condition. He can be called a West Indian Hindu. William T. Stafford finds Biswas as a prisoner of his own passage and a person of restless quest from Naipaul’s version:

Biswa is not simply a prisoner of the Tulsi’s or of any particular factor in his society. Rather, he is the prisoner of his own passage or earth. His story is largely an Odyssey of restless questing, where the shifting locales (Pagotes, Arwacas, the chase, Greenvale, Shorthills, Sikkim Street) are metaphors for soul states ... Naipaul’s compassionate version of the being condemned to wander the world (...). (492)

Biswa grows up with little attachment to the Hindu way of life. When sent to train as a Pandit at Jairam’s he performs the rituals without feeling and “sat without religious fervour before the elaborate Shrine” (HMB 53). The Hindu rituals have not only become strange but disagreeable and incomprehensible, “He copied out Sanskrit verses he couldn’t understand ...” (52). In Hanuman House the Hindu duties were seen
unsightly and the Hindu books ungainly. Naipaul, with a deep understanding of the predicament of those with a divided cultural heritage, shows that Biswas’s attitude to his past is ambiguous. His roots are in the Hindu culture, it is infused in his blood. In Hanuman House he is considered a rebel and an atheist, but it is he who keeps mocking at the Tulsis for their Roman Catholic affinities. In Green Vale, at a time of deep distress he seeks solace in making elaborate tags full of religious sentiments. When discovered by the Tulsis these placards “were considered to be beautiful; though the sentiments, from a man long thought to be an atheist, caused some astonishment” (299). During the storm he falls back on the chanting of the names of Hindu deities – “Rama Rama Sita Rama” – telling Anand to do the same (301). When his first child is to be born he thinks up a long and assertively Hindu name: “Krishnan – Dhar Haripratap Gokulnath Damodar Biswas” (254).

In the meanwhile, all around him, things are changing. Bhandat, his aunt Tara’s brother-in-law, takes a mistress of another race and after his wife’s death goes to live with her in Port of Spain. Bhandat’s eldest son too was having an affair with a woman of mixed Negro-Spanish blood and was the proud father of an illegitimate child. The Tulsis enthusiastically celebrate Christmas as an exclusively family festival. The elder Tulsi son not only goes to a Roman Catholic college but also wears a crucifix. Year later, an old and cantankerous Mrs Tulsi yields even further “She sent Sushila to burn candles in the Roman Catholic church; she put a crucifix in her room; and she had Pundit Tulsi’s grave cleaned for All Saint’s Day” (HMB 522).

Naipaul’s own attitude to these changes is ambivalent. He knows they are inevitable, even necessary. At the time, he also regrets the passing away of an ancient way of life. Biswas comes to a gradual appreciation of what he had blindly discarded
earlier – even his attitude to Hanuman House changes. When Savi is born, Biswas watches Shama displaying an extraordinary gentleness through her work-torn hands-rubbing the baby with coconut oil and exercising its limbs exactly as Mr Biswas’s had been by Bipti. This passage conveys a deeply nostalgic feeling for the ancient traditions that constitute the Hindu way of life – “Possibly the ritual had been evolved a thousand years before”, thinks Mr Biswas (HMB 169). This nostalgia is not more than a longing for a lost past but a search for one’s roots.

As if to underscore his rootlessness, Biswas is born not under his father’s roof, but in a house that is his mother’s temporary refuge from her husband’s ill-treatment. Then at the age of six he has to leave “the only house to which he had some right. For the next thirty-five years he was to be a wanderer with no place he could call his own, with no family except that which he was to attempt to create out of the engulfing world of the Tulsis” (HMB 40). Mother and son find refuge in one room of a mud hut in the back trace of Tara’s house. After a few years of schooling he is packed off to live with Jairam to be trained as a Pundit and comes back from there in disgrace and is shunted off again to live with Bhandat at the rum shop. Accused of the theft of a dollar by the drunken Bhandat and cruelly beaten with a belt, he once again returns to Bipti’s room in the hut and cries out to her, “Why do you keep on sending me to stay with other people?” (65)

Throughout his life Biswas tries to assert his identity which he feels as though he has lost in the family of Tulsis, mainly because of the old lady’s dominance. After marriage, when Biswas is asked to give up sign-painting by Govind, “he replies, give up sign painting? And my independence No, boy, my motto is: Paddle your own canoe” (HMB 107). Sign-painting is a way of preserving his independence and identity. He
himself is not aware of his ambivalent position in the society. He tells his son "I am just somebody. Nobody at all. I am just a man, you know" (269). He has the misfortune of living in a derelict society which offers very little possibilities to one. He is a misfit in the situation. Once his marriage is settled, he fights with his in-laws, loses control over his children and denotes himself of absurdities like growing his nails and squeezing his face. This is symbolic of a futile rebellion against the Tulsis. He is exposed to a series of misfortunes such as violent episodes at Green Vale, his lack of communication with his son Anand, the strike-threats of his field workers, the brutal killing of his dog, vain efforts at building his first house and its destruction and finally, his nervous breakdown.

In Biswas's the journalist there is always a longing for freedom and his intention is to move away into his own house and exist there entirely on his own terms. Biswas is highly reflective, reading and dreaming, attracted by morbid stories. As a reporter, he is admired and respected. He is imaginative and philosophical and his controlled romance with his literary fantasies has no correlation to the uncontrolled chaos of his life outside. In Pundit Jairam’s house he is punished for stealing a banana, though he is not ready to accept his guilt. In a moment of frustration, he flings his excrement on the Oleandu tree, sacred to the Hindus. In Ajodha's rum shop, he avenges himself by spitting in the rum bottles everyday. He doesn't give importance to his dress in Hanuman House. He whistles like a clown. There is no proportion or colour in his sign-paintings. They look grave and unenthusiastic. In the cricket match, he becomes an object of mockery. He tries to take refuge in exhibitionism, but this refuses to give him back his self-image. Instead, he sees the caricature of his own being transformed from a buffoon to a mad man. Spitting, abusing the Tulsis, slapping his wife Shama and striking Anand are consequences of his intemperate passions, transformed from a buffoon to a sub-human. The world he inhabits is a world where caste, religion and
custom prescribe duties and responsibilities. He is forced to become part of Tulsis. He feels totally neglected and finds no choice. His rebellion is only trivial. According to Morris K. Robert, Biswas has been depicted as, "flogged, duped, thwarted, cheated, maligned, robbed, humiliated, frustrated, disappointed and frightened, he charts the small odyssey of a life that is continually confronting and surmounting waste and exhaustion" (23-24).

Biswas is obscure even in his death. The Sentinel, the newspaper reports the death of Biswas as that of a roving reporter, not as he wished as "JOURNALIST DIES SUDDENLY", a statement cruelly impersonal and blunt (HMB 622). Kenneth Ramchand puts it like this:

Mr Biswas is an Indian who marries into an Indian enclave in Trinidad between the wars: he recognizes the blinkered isolation of this world from the outside, and he senses its imminent dissolution. He spends most of his life trying to escape its embrace, only to find that the future, the colonial society upon which he wishes to make his mark, is an yet uncreated. Mr Biswas struggles between the tepid chaos of a decaying culture and the void of a colonial society. (192)

Naipaul also writes about the people of Arwasas. They are passive, nostalgic and they dream of returning to India. Every evening, they assemble and tell stories about India. It is even hinted that they are tempted to indulge in their nostalgic recollections only under the influence of ganja. The other important characters who indulge in mild fantasy are W.C. Juttle who believes that he is a saint. Deschamps imagines himself to be a sex king in an alien land. The Hindu rituals are another fantasy for most of the Tulsi families disintegrate through intermarriages, greed, corruption, the
American influx and University education. This created a cultural change in the family. Biswas feels alienated in every house that he occupies. When he finally acquires a house at Sikkim Street, it bridges the gap between expectation and achievement. The house is a symbol of freedom, personal independence, pride, dignity and the redemption of all past trials. In the novel, houses stand for stability and refuge from the shapeless outer world, but Hanuman House is like an alien white fortress, a prison where Biswas feels trapped. His 'ego' demands salvation from such a prison. In this novel, people are being depicted as being poor and culturally deprived. Good professions are out of their reach. Bribing and trickery are practiced by a few. Women are slaves to child-rearing and household chores. Their occupations include seasonal field work, garbage collection and carpentry. The more fortunate ones run small shops. As in other novels of Naipaul, the minor characters, though large in number, mainly contribute to the development of the main character, Biswas. He dominates the whole novel from the beginning to the very end.

Naipaul's *The Mimic Men* marks a significant phase in fictional career. The novel gives the clearest expression to the various philosophies that are embodied in Naipaul’s novels, namely the escape into the Third World of fantasy on being poverty-stricken and isolated on the environs of power and the sprouting up of various political and religious movements that offer a sense of empty excitement ending up in disorder or schizophrenia — a split in the personality and a fragmentation of identities and affiliations. The novel according to N. Ramadevi, talks about, “politics dominated by appeals to race and colour, the absence of real power, myths, culture or competence which have resulted in a tendency to mimic, and a feeling of homelessness and identity crisis” (69). In this novel, the first generation of freed East Indians, bereft of culture,
float aimlessly in shifting social relations. Again in this novel, the characters are fragmented and uncertain of their position within the society.

Fantasy is almost a common trait of all characters in this novel. They simply mimic and pretend to be other than what they really are. They become folk heroes mainly because they are depicted as son, husband, student, business man, politician and diplomat, striving hard to be someone. Ralph Singh lives secure in the inaction imposed upon him from a middle class London hotel room. He starts his career in a London hotel room. He starts his career as a writer. To him, a writing career is a process of life that reconciles him to his lost heritage. He realizes this only when the disintegration process sets in. He finds security only in the Hindu background. He achieves political success through his Hindu reputation. Like Ganesh, he has been depicted as a charlatan, the son of Gurudeva, a rebel. His faith in Hinduism is not strong enough to be a model to others. When the question of sacrifice arises, he simply revolts and questions the authenticity of the Hindu rituals. Moreover he has confused notions of the four-fold division of life prescribed by the Aryan ancestors. He never follows the four stages of Hinduism. As a student, he has been a dandy. As a politician, he has no involvement with the people. As a householder, he has failed to take any roots. He has close affinities with Ganesh. In short John Theime describes him as a Hindu Castaway. In his statement,

Singh’s life has become, like Garbage’s Struggling Cheese, something to be caught, dissected, and devoured ... withdrawal ... leaves him as much a Hindu Castaway as ever. Neither his physical nor his mental journeying has brought him any real fulfilment. (517 – 518)
Phrases such as "Do not misunderstand..." (TMM 47), "But observe..." (43), "Understand the language I use..." (30), "Let me explain" (29), "Consider....See then..." (226), amply illustrate the academic demonstrativeness of the style; the emotional reticence can be gauged from the fact that after a detailed description of his marriage it comes as a revelation to the reader when on the very last page of the book he refers to his "aching love for Sandra" (301).

The contemplative, ruminative form gives to Ralph Singh's memoirs a wide-ranging inclusiveness of themes, the violation inflicted by the colonial educational system, the taint of the slave past, the loneliness of the big city, the futility of chasing ideal landscapes, racial wounds and fantasies, the trauma of placelessness, politics and power and the far-reaching consequences of childhood experiences - all these are held together by the embracing theme of the reconstruction of an individual life and the attempt to understand the hidden workings of personality. Chronological sequence is discarded as Ralph Singh seizes each episode as brought up by memory and examines it in the context of his present situation - thus keeping the act of composition constantly.

*The Mimic Men* is a return to the world of the first four novels - but with a difference. While the first four novels are all Trinidad based, in *The Mimic Men* Naipaul makes his fictitious island, Isabella, a representative Caribbean island. He also makes his narrator-hero stress the point that what happens on this island is not only characteristic of the West Indies but also of other colonies in other parts of the world. As Ralph Singh says, "It has happened in twenty places, twenty countries, islands, colonies, territories..."(230).
England had been presented as the ultimate dream of fulfilment of the Trinidadians who felt their world to be incomplete, unreal and denying of opportunity. The narrator of the *A House for Mr Biswas* managed to escape to this haven. The stories were, however, not carried beyond this point and we were not told how they fared in the Promised Land. At the end of *A House for Mr Biswas*, Anand, Naipaul's alter ego, had left Trinidad for England and signs of the neurosis which threatens to overwhelm Ralph Singh are apparent in Anand's letter to Mr Biswas, "They (the letters) were gloomy, self-pitying; then they were tinged with a hysteria..." (586). *The Mimic Men* takes over from here, answering the question, what happens after *Escape*?

Ralph Singh comes from his Caribbean island to England with the usual expectations of the people from his region. Refusing to consider the island of his birth as his home, looking on himself as marooned on this island, soon to be rescued - he comes to England seeking fulfilment completion, a sense of belonging to a well-established order. He finds only a greater isolation, a more acute sense of being adrift, of being shipwrecked. Sexual promiscuity and role playing are his ways of fighting the overwhelming sense of lostness, the shock of disillusionment. On the verge of a breakdown he marries a London girl in a desperate bid for reassurance. She seems to him strong and secure, full of certainties.

He returns to the island he had thought never to see again with his English wife as a talisman against his former fears of his native place. He is absorbed in his own emotional and psychological needs that he fails to see that Sandra, his wife, has turned to him out of a similar need. She had wanted to escape a future of drab ordinariness through him. In Isabella she needs his support and guidance but he fails to see her need.
Ralph Singh's mother rejects Sandra. He had neither informed his mother of his marriage nor prepared Sandra for the hostile reception which takes her by surprise. Ralph Singh knows it is purely ritualistic but Sandra has no way of knowing this. From this unfortunate start the marriage never really recovers.

When Sandra ultimately leaves him, he is a rich man with the reputation of a 'playboy'. Now he is drawn into politics by a former school-friend, Browne, a Negro. What had been mere play-acting becomes serious when their party wins the elections and Browne becomes Prime Minister and Ralph Singh himself is made a Cabinet Minister. But now his nature reasserts itself, he begins to withdraw once more and after failing to bring about a nationalization of the sugar estates and controlling the race riots which break out over this issue, he leaves Isabella and settles down in a suburban London hotel - an exiled ex-politician, at forty, retired from active life or so it seems to him in the first eighteen months of his exile before he begins to write his memoirs.

He had come there as a failed politician. He had opened his memory bank and put his thoughts and experiences in his book. He was not able to concentrate upon his past. He had come into this city as a student, politician and then as a refugee-immigrant, to impose order on his history. He felt incomplete and his notion was that writing was a substitute, which would make a writer whole. Hence he himself became a writer to get release from despair and the "barren cycle of events" (White 180). The process of writing about his life has imposed a pattern on that life - given it a coherence which he had always sought and missed. He has been brought to revise many of his former opinions about his own actions and about many other things. From looking on writers as "incomplete people, to whom writing was a substitute for what it then pleased me to call life" he comes to see that "the recording of a life might become an
extension of that life" (TMM 292-293). He has shed some of his illusions - "I no longer yearn for ideal landscapes and no longer wish to know the god of the city" (300). He feels that he has, through setting his memories in order, achieved a catharsis of a sort, has freed himself from the burden of the past. "...I have cleared the decks, as it were, and prepared myself for fresh action. It will be the action of a free man" (300).

What he has freed himself from is the futile search of the displaced colonial for a homeland and his dreams of escape to some ideal landscape. Like Naipaul himself at the end of his Indian sojourn, Ralph Singh has realized that he carries his alienation within himself, place is irrelevant. He comes to accept his rootlessness, his placelessness as final and this is what makes him a free man - no longer seeking to attach himself to anything outside himself. From being his weakness, his isolation becomes his strength. Like the exiled Adam and Eve, he too, as a permanent exile, has all the world before him.

Naipaul finds a split between the man and the cold, meaningless Universe. However man very soon understands that there is no power transcending him, which can solve his problem for him. As Erich Fromm points out:

Man must accept the responsibility for himself and the fact that only by using his own powers can he give meaning to his life (...) there is no meaning to life except the meaning man gives his life by unfolding of his powers, by living productively (...). (45)

But it is not an easy task. One cannot do it over night. Accordingly, Ralph Kripalsingh has to struggle a lot not only in London but also in his birth place the West Indian island Isabella before he started using his power in the right channel, namely writing like his creator Naipaul.
Ralph Singh dreams of being the leader of Central Asian horsemen and reads about Rajputs and Aryans. "China was the subject of Hok's secret reading" (*TMM* 117). Hok was of mixed Chinese and Negro descent. The pictures of "Joe Louis, Jesse Owens and Haile Selassie" in Browne's house speak of the fantasies of the Negroes (127). None of them are ever going back, nor will they, if they do, find what they think or dream they will find. Like Ralph Singh in London, they will discover only a greater shipwreck.

The Isabella beach is littered with "the trunks of trees washed up by the sea" (*TMM* 133). Ralph Singh writes, "Here lay the tree, fast in the sand which was deep and level around it; impossible now to shift, what once had floated lightly on the waters..." (133). This image suggests not only uprooting but also the impossibility of return. The bitter truth is that all these displaced people can never be at home again in the homelands they dream of. They have been altered by their experiences in the New World and would find themselves aliens in their former homelands.

At the same time, Ralph Singh is very hopeful about an organic, ordered and meaningful society developing out of the mixture of races and creeds, out of groups of people bound neither to each other, nor to the land. It was and would remain a society "fragmented, inorganic, no link between man and the landscape, a society not held together by common interests ..." (*TMM* 246). In such a society people must learn to live with their rootlessness - to accept their placelessness and not corrupt their lives with dreaming of ideal landscapes or run after the chimera of some social set-up in which they can fit in. This is what vitiates the lives of the people of Isabella and places such as Isabella - the people keep holding themselves and their potential in abeyance as
it were for a reality they feel lies elsewhere. They lead their lives in a kind of
temporariness - denying the reality around them.

Another aspect of this denial of reality, this refusal to accept their world and the
finality of their displacement is that they try to model their lives on patterns which not
only deny the reality around them but also violate their private selves. Ralph Singh
gives himself a more impressive set of initial which is an example of the rejection of
reality and an escape into a new identity which is a feature of displacement or diaspora.

This is the central theme of The Mimic Men, embodied with deep feeling in the
central and most impressive part of the book, in which Ralph Singh recalls his
schooldays and his early youth in Isabella upto the time of his departure, on a
scholarship, for London.

Ralph Singh discovers the illusory nature of his (and by implication, of all
colonials like him) dreams of the metropolis. In The Mimic Men the loneliness of the
city and the rootlessness of the men who lived there has been demonstrated. The myth
of a real world elsewhere is shattered in the novel, The Mimic Men. The displaced man
must learn to accept the finality of his displacement. In the London of private
individuals hurrying to their cells, in Sandra who seeks in Ralph Singh the very
reassurance he looks for in her, in the English student who needs the guidance of the
other man's eye - in all these we see men and women and lonely, as unanchored as the
colonial Ralph Singh. Alienation and exile are to be found everywhere. The cause of
man's isolation, restlessness and alienation is not physical or geographical - but
spiritual; it is within him. This realization comes to Ralph Singh cumulatively through
the stages of desolation he experiences, a desolation which is climaxed in an encounter
with a monstrously fat prostitute during a stop-over in Europe. He arrives at an
understanding of the roots of his malaise - "It is a moment that has remained with me. After three years I can call it back at will: that moment of timelessness, horror, solace...
Through poor, hideous flesh to have learned about flesh: through flesh to have gone beyond flesh" (283). The discovery frees him from the restless search for assurance outside himself; calm; although of a negative, empty kind comes to him. He feels that he has freed himself from one cycle of events and prepared himself for fresh action - "the action of a free man" (274).

While *A House for Mr Biswas* was largely based on the facts of his father's life and his own childhood, in *The Mimic Men* it is not the actual details that tally though even here it seems Naipaul was unable to resist repeating some details like Ralph Singh's mother's family being richer, his father's hostility to his wife's family, Ralph Singh's scholarship trip to London and his marriage to an English girl. The founding of Crippleville, the association with the elitist set of Isabella, the rupture of the marriage and the political experience are surely meant to set Ralph Singh apart from his creator.
However, in his sensibility, in certain traits of personality, in his attitudes to certain things Ralph Singh comes indistinguishably close to his creator. The invented circumstantial details, even a distancing irony directed at Ralph Singh at times, makes only for a superficial distinction. Ralph Singh's intellectual and emotional development and the conclusions he draws about himself, his society and human experience in general are exactly those that Naipaul himself has been arriving at through his own experiences - the writing as well as the travelling.

Just as Ralph Singh tries to understand his life through the act of imposing a narrative order on it, Naipaul has always used his work as a means to self-discovery. Naipaul says in “Conrad's Darkness”, "Most imaginative writers discover themselves,
and their world, through their work" (211). Ralph Singh's ultimate position as an exile in London is Naipaul's own. Ralph Singh trying to impose an order on his past is Naipaul analyzing the years of exile and the years spent in search of "home". The loneliness and isolation that drives Ralph Singh to the verge of a nervous breakdown is, in fact, close to Naipaul's own reaction to London as described, for instance, in *An Area of Darkness*, "I came to London- And I was lost. London was not the centre of my world, I had been misled; but there was nowhere else to go..." and he was, he says, "thrown more and more into myself, fighting to keep my balance... All mythical lands faded, and in the big city I was confined to a smaller world than I had ever known" (42).

The last sentence of the passage quoted above can be heard again in Ralph Singh's "My life has never been more physically limited than it has been during these last three years" (*TMM* 274). Ralph Singh too feels lost and in the city, lonely; "... I felt all the magic of the city go away and I had an intimation of the forlornness of the city and of the people who lived in it" (213).

Ralph Singh has an interest in Roman history. His house is "modelled on the house of the Vetii in Pompeii, with a swimming-pool replacing the impluvium" (*TMM* 76). He writes a long essay about the behaviour of Pompey during the Civil War and one of the activities he looks ahead to at the end of his memoirs is the writing of a history of the British Empire.

Ralph Singh expresses a disapproval of an attitude which proclaims poverty and a mean background without any sense of shame or disgrace. "To be descended from generations of idlers and failures, an unbroken line of the unimaginative, unenterprising and oppressed, had always seemed to me to be a cause for deep, silent
shame" (TMM 101). It seems to him that a contempt for one's lowly origins was "healthier and more liberal, being more quickening of endeavour..." (121). If one compares these with the sentiments expressed in *What's Wrong with Being a Snob* one sees that Ralph Singh is only echoing Naipaul. The compassion of a Chekhov or a Dickens, Naipaul feels:

comes from a recognition of differences and an abhorrence of it. Dickens was horrified by the low ... We can now ask whether Dickens's attitude - passion, snobbery and fear fully avowed, as it is in the statement, I do not want to be like them - isn't more constructive and in the endless corrupting than the doctrinaire romanticism which is used to fault him. (37)

This is also consistent with Naipaul's attitude to wealth and poverty acknowledged in the Nigel Bingham interview of 1972. Naipaul says "For a long, long time I used to worship people with money, especially people who had made their own money" (306-307). Ralph Singh admires his mother's father immensely:

I had thought of him as ascetic and fair and pious. I thought that these qualities, which I admired, had come to him with that money and success to which I was so devoted; and for a long time... I attributed these qualities to people who had made their money the hard way. (118)

In the same interview Naipaul states; "I passionately wanted to be an adult to be responsible for myself...." and the statement is clearly echoed in Ralph Singh's, "...I longed for nothing so much as to walk in the clear air of adulthood and responsibility..." (TMM 109).
Ralph Singh encounters a woman by the name of Sandra in his student days and marries her. When the relationship between Sandra and Ralph Singh is on the verge of collapse, he happens to meet another women Stella, the daughter of a rich lord and an official emissary of Isabella. The departure of Sandra is a kind of drama in his life. Sandra has an erotic personality not like that of a harlot but that of an actress. She is always fond of cosmetics and paints. She is successful in her sexual drama. Ralph Singh becomes only a captive hero. Her role as sensual temptress causes him to play Ulysses to her Circe and Ralph Singh responds to marriage with flight. In her public displays, Sandra outrages the feminine instincts of Asia and Europe. Ralph Singh does not experience a sexual contact with outsiders. Moreover, “Ralph Singh’s sexual performance show him exulting in the favorite role of a captive hero, Ulysses enthralled by calypso, Bloom captivated by molly” (TMM 243).

None of his sexual relationships any real fulfilment. Even his marriage to Sandra represents a kind of violation for Ralph Singh. Stella functions in two ways. She recreates London for him. Secondly, she directs Ralph Singh through a series of sexual performances. In her hands, he becomes a kind of one – trick pony. When the trick fails, he is summarily rejected. His relationships with women, Leini, Sandra, Wendy, Stella even Isabella result in ennui, disgust and impotence. The release of the Id and its pulses reveals a frustration of the Ego.

Ralph Singh is not fully convincing as ex-politician, exile or land promoter. Ralph Singh’s four – fold division of life is very explicit as student, householder, a man of affairs and a recluse. He no longer yearns for an ideal landscape. To him, politics is only an attempt to impose order on life. Ralph Singh is very impressed by his own ancestry of his native land. He indulges in reveries about his Aryan ancestors, the
magnificent horsemen wandering the Himalayan slopes in search of their lost Chieftain. Ralph Singh even feels that he has been shipwrecked in the island of Isabella, being cut off from the land of his ancestors. Neither religions nor wealth or poverty gives him an identity and a purpose. He longs for an escape from such disorder and flees to London, the city of magical light. It is placed in the words of William Walsh as, “The god of the city is the image of an order, which this classically minded man, brahmin by inheritance, Greek in sympathy and Roman in his scholarly interests is desperately conscious he lacks” (80).

Ralph Singh and Bobby are like Eliot’s Hollow Men, conscious of their decadence emptiness. He lives in a world which appears to him devoid of meaning. But he is about to come to terms with reality only in the last scenes of his story. In the end, he negates all will and desire except to be free. But he finds himself reduced to sterility and impotence.

According to Robert K. Morris:

As D.H. Lawrence wrote more than fifty years ago in Women in Love, this sort of freedom is the substitution of the mechanical principle for the organic purpose, the organic unity, and the subordination of every organic unit to the great mechanical organization. This is the first and finest state of chaos. (67)

The other important minor characters in the novel, are Hok who plays up his nervousness and Cecil who reveals his recklessness and Browne who assumes the stereo type of the Comic Negro to become a radical black leader. The only person in The Mimic Men who has some ideals is the father of Ralph Singh, a poor teacher who breaks away from society to lead an eccentric political-cum-religious movement which
flickers briefly until he dies of a gunshot. Ralph Singh’s father has performed on the religious stage and also rendered his gospel service to the people. To the missionary lady who records his activities in her diary, he looks like an angel flying in the midst of heaven having an extra-ordinary gospel to preach to the people. Ralph’s father, like Beckett’s hero, questions himself. Meaningless laughter and continuous singing are parts of his trait. Lindroth puts Ralph Singh’s father as a person moving from cruelty to absurd. James Lindroth says, “Ralph Singh’s father gradually progresses from the theatre of cruelty, through the theatre of absurd, to a meta-theatre” (527).

Gurudeva’s ‘Aryanness’ is revealed in his kidnapping a horse and sacrificing it. This act symbolically represents his contempt for a class system and his love for his own ethnic independence. In his fantasies, he regrets Isabella’s sea - land. Ralph’s father gains a regulation as a cafe wrecker but becomes later a mystical religious leader.

The subject of migration and the questions regarding identity, rootlessness, cultural difference, assimilation, unconquerable status and futility are dealt within Naipaul’s novels belonging to the later period of his life. The Mimic Men is the best instance of Naipaul’s vision of migration.

The main characters in the fiction of this period are mostly outsiders, expatriates or alien minorities – those who have become uprooted from their origins, travellers without a home to which they can return, minorities at the mercy of others, those stranded by the withdrawal of protecting governments, former enemies brought together by the artificial boundaries of the new nations and those who have come to the capitals of the world without the necessary skills and resources to survive. If in the modern world freedom is dangerous, there are also signs of new empires, new orders - the seemingly innocent Americans confidently travelling abroad, the Chinese travelling
in tightly controlled groups. Naipaul examines the Europeans who come to former colonies seeking careers or personal salvation, the dangers to the Indian diaspora caused by the withdrawal of the Empire that led them abroad, the effect of metropolitan sentimental ‘third-worldism’ on new nations along with the tyrannical governments and civil wars that have resulted from the withdrawal of imperial order.

In In a Free State all the characters in one way or the other escape the constraints of their own culture to live in a free state. They agitate in void without place, purpose or belief. They are incapable of action. But finally, they discover that they belong nowhere. The characters are uncreative, vulnerable, terrified and dependent. They are conscious of their separation from the surroundings in which they find themselves placed. Characters like Bobby and Linda find it difficult to accommodate themselves. They feel alienated in the hostile environment to which their authentic identity is perpetually opposed. Violence might bring hope to them one day but it is a meaningless violence. Paul Theroux describes them as selfish without vision and loyalty,

Bobby and Linda are transplanted suburbanites, much shallower, less intelligent and compassionate than any of Naipaul’s other characters; they are selfish without vision, and there is something bitter in Naipaul’s descriptions of their speech, their clothes and gestures... but they are not half so frank or loyal... They behave in a theatrical self-regarding way. (122)

Bobby has been depicted as a homosexual person and Linda as an errant wife. They squabble, haunted by bad weather and menaced by the Africans. They are aware that they do not belong there. They are conscious of their loss of identity but at the
same time, they exist in South Africa. Bobby also experiences aimless travel which makes life an illusion.

Naipaul's main concern is not with reality as it might appear in a photograph, but as it is perceived by his heroes. He has individualized each of his heroes in his own way. The focus is usually on individuals their hopes, desires, fears and problems of freedom and human nature. These novels are rich in psychology, in awareness of how insecurity is transformed into violence and tyranny. *In a Free State* certainly reminds us of the event portrayed by William Golding in *Lord of Flies* and Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. However, it is actually more like a collection of stories as quoted earlier. For this purpose, it could be recalled that it is having three stories flanked by a prologue and an epilogue on either side. Bobby realizes at the end that he is not free and he does not belong to Africa. He, like any other colonial, is not safe and secure. Santosh is the last Indian to appear in Naipaul's novel. He begins as a pavement dweller in Bombay and becomes a well-paid restaurant cook. He marries a Negro chambermaid who saves him from deportation. To Santosh, freedom is an emptiness, a separation and an estrangement from everything except his body. He gets confused. This sort of freedom violates his life. Dayo, the West Indian, marries a white girl against the wishes of his brother. The narrator's vicarious existence comes to an end and the same is reflected in his confession, "The life is over, I am like a man who is giving up. I have nothing, I will leave with nothing... and for all this time I am the dead man" *(IFS87)*.

In this novel, Naipaul has created characters who are dependent and who exist in a world of illusions. They are the products of white civilization with no independent thought or economic activity, but are parasitical elements. The Africans are described
as barbaric savages and persons without dignity, smelly, extremely stupid and pretending to be civilized.

The vast sprawling empty spaces of Africa, safe adventure and long drives on open roads have opened doors for sexual indulgences as in the case of Bobby and Linda. But it does not give any lasting pleasure to them. The dissatisfaction in sexual pleasure among Naipaul’s characters has been pointed out by Selwyn Cudjoe, “In Naipaul’s work, not one character enjoys a sexually satisfying experience. In fact, each sexual relation is perverted” (193). In fact this is a denial of the Id. It diverts the understanding of Naipaul and satisfies his depiction. The characters of *In a Free State* are dependent and they exist in an underworld.

Naipaul now looks beyond the Caribbean, looks at the world around him and finds that far from being odd or singular in his plight, the colonial as exile mirrors a universal condition in the present-day world. As Gordon Rohlehr puts it, "The colonial man has become an icon of the displaced modern man"(52). The book consists of five distinct and related pieces all of which are about people far from their home country. Naipaul has said that it is ".... a book about journeys, unhappy journeys by people switching countries, switching cultures" (91). Structurally, *In a Free State* is an innovation. Its right to call itself a novel has been questioned - it consists of two short stories and one long story or, novella framed within two diary entries. In one interview with Ian Hamilton, Naipaul has explained the fragmentary structure of the book as being the result of his having become wearied by "the artificial side of making up big narratives..." and deciding to "let the book fall into its component parts." "I shouldn't wish the African story to be published independently of the other parts," he says (194).
However, as it stands, the structure of *In a Free State* emphatically reinforces its theme of a permanently fractured world peopled by homeless migrants - men and women in 'a free state' for whatever individual reason. The title becomes richly suggestive of the various possible meanings of the book. The book is full of transients - of tourists, exiles and expatriates. All of them, including the author in his journal entries, are 'in a free state' in the sense of being unrestricted - free of the restraints imposed by one's native society - and also in the sense of being unanchored and drifting. It also alludes to the newly acquired freedom of some regions - Egypt, Africa and ironically points out that freedom has its own casualties, its victims, too. Such are the Egyptian Greeks thrown out of a free Egypt and the Africans of the King's tribe who become persecuted victims of the President's tribe when their country acquires political freedom. The title story interestingly looks at the familiar situation of exile from an unfamiliar angle - members of the former ruling race, isolated and insecure in a newly independent colony.

As Michael Thorpe writes, the five pieces form "a unity with a clear informing design that few story collections have..." (30). The short Prologue mirrors with beautiful economy and precision the world of the three stories that follow. The ship which is the scene of its action is a microcosm of the fragmented world these stories depict. The ship on its journey from Piraeus to Alexander, with its motley cargo of passengers from every part of the world, is a perfect image for this book about journeys, about people far from home and about people who become "casualties of freedom" (20).

While the Prologue sounds the themes to be explored in the three stories, the Epilogue sums up the conclusions to be drawn from them. Homelessness is seen as a
universal feature of the modern world, afflicting all races. The book ends on the sober thought that perhaps, like El Dorado, the unviolated 'Home' never did exist but as a cherished ideal, a dream, a vision of the artist.

Naipaul has deftly caught both the external and the inside view in the description of Santosh's Bombay life. The reader can see the deprivation and the confined, narrow scale of Santosh's life as the domestic of a government official; at the same time he can see how to Santosh himself it is a full, meaningful and almost privileged existence. He feels he has come a long way from his former condition as a man from a village in the hills, working as a porter during the tourist season. That was the hard life, his Bombay life seems nothing short of luxury to Santosh. He is respected, he has a position - as the servant of an important man - and he has his privileges though he sleeps on the pavement, there is a "whole cupboard below the staircase" for his use (IFS 59). A man of the hills, a villager, he has already moved away from his past and his origins by becoming a city man. When he moves to Washington even in his unhappiness he realizes that he has become unfit for the Bombay life too.

Santosh's displacement, it must be noted, has nothing to do with colonialism. Though he comes from a former British colony he has in no way been touched by the alienation that is a legacy of colonialism. That comes with education and Santosh is totally illiterate. In Bombay he unquestioningly accepts his place in a community of pavement sleepers like him. He has no doubts being privileged and lucky to be able to enjoy such a life as this after the harsh life he has known in his native village. His displacement is the result simply of a geographical shift - something that comes with the mobility that has become a part of modern living.
When his companions come to know of his intended journey they warn him, "Do you know what you are doing?" says one (IFS 123). "Will the Americans smoke with you? Will they sit and talk with you in the evening? Will they hold you by the hand and walk with you beside the ocean?" (124) The isolation begins with the aeroplane journey itself. "When the time came I had to climb up to the aircraft with all my bundles. The girl at the top, who was smiling at everybody else, stopped smiling when she saw me. She made me go right to the back of the plane, far from my employer. Most of the seats there were empty, though, and I was able to spread my bundles around and, well, it was comfortable" (124). The story is impressive in its ability to convey the bewildering, frightening, confusing impact of an alien culture and an alien city on Santosh's simple background.

The unfamiliar surroundings, the loneliness, gradually enforce on Santosh a new awareness of himself as a man, as an individual. For the first time he notices his physical appearance and realizes that he is handsome. "Now I found that, without wishing it, I was ceasing to see myself as part of my employer's presence, and beginning... to see him as an outsider ..." (IFS 37). This growing awareness only makes a return to Bombay impossible. "... I knew it wasn't acquired his English entirely in Washington an Indianism like - "I wanted to enjoy but didn't know how to enjoy" is not quite appropriate (38).

Once when an American has hurt his employer by the crude arrogance with which he describes how he acquired a piece of sculpture from an ancient temple by paying the guide two dollars, Santosh sympathizes with him. Later, he realizes that his hurt had been for himself, for being equated with the poor guide rather than for the temple. It is now Santosh who is disappointed with his employer, "I saw that he had
taken the insult only in a personal way, and I was disappointed. I thought he had been thinking of the temple" (IFS 38). The criticism is entirely Naipaulian - Santosh, even with his awareness would be incapable of it.

These minor slips apart, the story leaves one deeply impressed with Naipaul's ability to sympathetically project the trauma of displacement in a character so removed from his range of direct contact. The Bombay life and the nightmarish aeroplane journey are particularly remarkable in their simultaneous fidelity to both the outside and the inside view. Santosh's dazed view of the American city is aptly conveyed by a vague and distant evocation of the physical details. Naipaul says in an interview with Ian Hamilton, "...he actually turns to his advantage a dim undetailed grasp of American locales." (42). Santosh is:

baffled and terrified, groping around in this utterly alien, indifferent city,

we can also hear and see, as a kind of permanent irremediable backdrop
to his kind of isolation the conflagration of racial violence. Seeing America through his eyes, we see it as an element, of menace and destructiveness, rather than as a location. (42)

According to Ian Hamilton, Naipaul has said that it is "the immigrant's view of the capital of the world, the view of a man from another enclosed culture. Rather like my own of London, twenty years ago" (45).

The narrator of "Tell Me Who to Kill" too is an Indian who is from the West Indies. While Santosh had memories of a community life precious even if impoverished - to look back on, this narrator seems to be totally unrelated to anything. He is not even given a name and remains only Dayo's brother. Santosh is cut off from a past that is rich in traditional pieties and he dreams nostalgically of travelling through
villages where "there would have been welcome, water, food, a fire in the night" (IFS 56). The narrator can only wonder about his village as to how it came to be settled at all.

The story takes us back to familiar Naipaul territory - the West Indies and the disorientated Indian community there. The first person narrative in dialect effectively projects the confused state of mind of the protagonist. Unable to understand his situation, seeking to place blame on someone and unable to identify the enemy, he is left only with aimless hate. "My life spoil" runs like a refrain through the story (IFS 75). It repeats all the points already made in all Naipaul's preceding works, fiction and non-fiction, about the effect on the individual of the dissociation between land and people, education and life, reality and borrowed ideals.

As all the other West Indian characters in Naipaul's fiction, Dayo's brother too has this sense that his world is not quite real, that the real world lies elsewhere. Dayo's father represents the stultified Indian - refusing to acknowledge the reality of his transference and seeing merit in his stupefied passivity - doing nothing to improve his lot or that of his children. His brother Stephen is also a familiar figure - adopting a Christian name and acquiring a Christian wife for purely expedient reasons.

Dayo's brother, sensitive but inarticulate, knows there is something wrong with their lives. He is filled with hatred but does not know at whom to direct it. He makes Dayo, his brother, the focus of his hopes as a Stephen makes his only son the focus of his. These boys are as much victims of the situation as those who look to them for salvation. This additional burden of the hopes of others proves too much for both. Stephen's son goes foolish in Canada; Dayo ends up a wreck in London and is in a way saved when his brother's "stifling, protective care is possible for me to return to
Bombay, to the sort of job I had had and the life I had lived. I couldn't easily become part of someone else's presence again" (IFS 41).

Out of sheer desperation he deserts his employer and joins Priya, an Indian running a restaurant. He is materially much better off - a room of his own and a salary more than ten times what his employer was giving him. But "it was worse than being in the apartment, because now the responsibility was mine and mine alone. I had decided to be free, to act for myself" (IFS 47).

Santosh finds his freedom burdensome, he yearns to be able to surrender responsibility. Like Kripalsingh "envying the older clerks in his office" (TMM 188) Santosh envies Priya because he was "like a man to whom life could bring no further surprises" (IFS 53). On the advice of Priya he marries a Negro and so settles down legally in Washington. He lives in three unrelated worlds, "The restaurant is one world, the park and green streets of Washington are another and every evening some of these streets take me to a third" (57).

For him life is drained of all meaning and purpose, "I had begun to accept death not as the end but as the goal" (IFS 51). Nothing around him can provide sustenance for his spirit. "I was once part of the flow, never thinking of myself as a presence.... All that my freedom has brought me is the knowledge that I have a face and have a body, that I must feed this body and clothe this body for a certain number of years. Then it will be over" (58).

These lines of the story seem to echo the two articles The Documentary Heresy and What's Wrong with Being a Snob? Santosh's situation is, to use the words of these articles, that of a man reduced to his bodily needs; anonymous flesh unquickened by spirit, "... and what statement can be made of mere flesh save that it has appetites and
This is what a life cut off from community and meaningful environment becomes. In Bombay he had been part of the flow he had felt at once with all around him. Now he is free but it is a freedom that can lead to nothing. Linked to nothing, related to nothing his is the freedom of aimlessness. As Michael Thorpe comments, Santosh:

ends little better off (except materially) than the 'derelict man' at Coronie. ... He is a deprived man, however imperfect the culture he left. 'One Out of Many' is a bleak confession of alienation from self and life, the roots that nourished him even in an area of darkness. (30)

The story convincingly demonstrates that the price of freedom is loneliness and responsibility. What is not easy to accept is that it reduces Santosh to such a state of dull apathy. As an individual case, of course, one has to accept it - but one certainly balks at conceding a representative status to Santosh's history. His own story shows that the encounter with an alien culture stimulates awareness of himself and a new assessment of those around him. This makes a return to his former life in Bombay impossible. But his newly discovered sense of self is as likely to have led to an awareness of new potential, awakened new drives and new ambitions. A capacity to learn and adapt he does display - it is not long before he extracts a more advantageous pay from Priya. In portraying Santosh's withdrawal, one begins to feel that Naipaul is labouring a point that a man from one culture is - totally lost and adrift in another.

Too little allowance seems to be made for man's resilience, man's sense of adventure and readiness to learn and the desire to improve one's lot. Loss there certainly is, but there is also gain. Loneliness, it is true, is the price of freedom and awareness but it can be exhilarating and lead to enterprise and adventure.
Certain other problems too remain. Santosh pretends ignorance of many things - yet he uses some terms that cannot be known to a man with his lack of formal education. At one point he refers to Americans as “franks and barbarians” (*IFS* 38). Even if barbarians is used in a general way, what does he know of Franks? Yet after having married a Negro and settled down in Washington he professes ignorance of the how and why of the 'hubshi' or Negro presence in America. The narrator himself remains in London, but lets it be believed at home that he is dead.

The narrator's total disorientation in London is powerfully projected. He lives and works "like a man in blinkers" - a perpetual stranger (*IFS* 60). He envies the local people because "they can see where they are going. Since I came to this country that is something I can't do. I can't see where I am going. I can only wait to see what is going to turn up" (60).

The search for the enemy has, according to Naipaul, been one of the mistakes of the troubled societies of the third world as of individuals like this narrator. Ralph Singh in *The Mimic Men* too is in search of the enemy and thinks he has identified him in the French plutocratic family. But, as this story aims to show, there is no enemy. According to Landeg White:

Dayo's brother "will never know what went wrong or who is to blame... who is the enemy? - is it his family at home, the brother who let him down, the hooligans who ruined his cafe? Is it Stephen or is it the white family into which Dayo is marrying? His recurring dream indicates that action will lead only to his killing the wrong person. (205)

The answer to his question "tell me who to kill?" has already been given in Naipaul's 1970 article "Power?" "But there is no enemy. The enemy is the past, of slavery and
colonial neglect and a society uneducated from top to bottom; the enemy is the smallness of the islands and the absence of resources" (271).

"All my work is really one," Naipaul has said and this tale of and by a frenzied mind too links up with other works (271). Dayo's brother's ruined cafe "becomes a joke-shop and the list of items displayed (IFS 63), is almost identical with that given in Mr. Stone and the Knights Companion which too describes "a similar shop" (26); Dayo's brother's admiration for the rich man in his village once again recalls Naipaul's own avowed childhood attitudes. The "English Louts" who destroy the narrator's shop take us back to the "louts on motorbikes" of What's Wrong with being a Snob? The advertisements in the station yard which "make you feel that everybody here is very happy. ..." (IFS 98) recall the reference in An Area of Darkness to "a culture whose point, going by the advertisements and shop windows, appeared to be home-making, the creation of separate warm cells..." (266). As the narrator remarks, "people living one on top of other ... . Everybody on his shelf, in his little place" (IFS 88). He points out too how "at home, windows are always open and everything get clean in the open air. Here everything is locked up. Even on a bus no breeze does blow" (86). Nearly twelve years earlier Naipaul had written in an article entitled "London", "In a warm country life is conducted out of doors. Windows are open, doors are open... In England everything goes on behind doors" (14).

The story conveys powerfully the intense misery of a mind half-crazed with hatred and despair. The paucity of his background provides scant resources of strength and support. His standards and values are determined by a few half-remembered film scenarios. These and the misspelt names of some actors and the story of Snow White are all he seems to possess by way of culture and traditions. An acute sense of
alienation - of not belonging anywhere - is at the root of his neurosis. In an interview with Adrian Rowe-Evans given after the publication of *In a Free State* Naipaul said:

...One must make a pattern of one's observations, one's daily distress; one's daily knowledge of homelessness, placelessness; one's lack of representation in the world; one's lack of status. These, for me, are not just ideas; when I talk about being an exile or a refugee I'm not just using a metaphor, I'm speaking literally... Because one doesn't have a side, doesn't have a country, doesn't have a community; one is entirely an individual. A person in this position risks going mad; I have seen it happen to others- it is a bizarre and frightening thing, and it is one of the great strands in my own writing. (59)

While the seeds of this particular story are certainly contained in that statement -"a person in this position risks going mad"- one can see that this passage lies at the heart of *In a Free State* linking all the five pieces together (117). In the next story Naipaul studies the effect of such isolation on members of the former ruling race of a colony which is now "a free state."

The title story *In a Free State* hints at its parabolical nature in the very opening lines, "In this country in Africa there was a president and there was also a king" (103). Larger and more inclusive in its scope it gathers into itself the themes of the preceding sections of the book. The incident of cruelty to the tramp in the Prologue is reflected in the beating of Bobby, the isolation and lostness of Santosh is mirrored in that of the Whites in an independent African state and the cry of Dayo's brother - "O God, show me the enemy" - echoes in one's ear as one vainly tries to affix blame or
to decide who the oppressors are and who the victims in this complex parable of modern life are (18).

Bobby the man through whose consciousness we are to see most of the action as an administrative officer in the local government who lives in the territory of the king's people. The country is in a state of revolution, the army which is wholly under the control of the president having started operations against, the king and the people of his tribe. The capital of the state where Bobby has come to attend a seminar is an English-Indian creation in the African wilderness, but most of the Indians have been deported and the English are moving to South Africa. "Everyone in it was far from home" (IFS 104).

Doubly far from home are Bobby and Linda - fellow travellers on the long four hundred mile drive from the capital to the Southern Collectorate where both live. The evening before the drive, Bobby, a homosexual, is humiliated by a young Zulu in a bar. First leading him on, the young man spits on Bobby's face. It is only the first in a series of petty humiliations that come Bobby's way as he drives towards his home in the Collectorate in an atmosphere oppressive with threat and undefined menace. These are skillfully underlined by the reminders of the hunt for the king that accompany their journey - the yak-yak of the helicopter, the road blocks and the soldiers on the move.

The President's men are being helped by the Whites in their hunt for the king. The White men "had liked the king personally. But the president was stronger; the new army was wholly his, of his tribe, and the White men decided that the president was to be supported" (IFS 103). The story of the king first pampered and feted and then abandoned out of political expediency.
Linda is the wife of Martin, an old radio man who had been with the B.B.C. before coming out to Africa. Bobby is giving her a lift back to the collectorate compound. He did not know her very well though he had heard of her reputation as a man-eater. "Bobby had heard appalling stories about Linda. As appalling, he thought ... as the stories she must have heard about him" (IFS111).

The relationship that develops between the two is beautifully done. Bobby is apprehensive, on his guard but before long he is drawn into a togetherness, "His sombreness had gone; it would be hard now for him to reassume it. Already he and Linda had become travellers together, sensitive to the sights, finding conversation in everything" (IFS115).

They work on each other, sometimes falling into the warm companionship that comes from shared responses to the light or the beauty of the countryside. At other times they quarrel and provoke each other to anger and self-revealing statements. Bobby lacks self-confidence and wavers throughout between being warmly confidential or remote and distant. After every spell of a confessional mood he withdraws in regret and embarrassment, feeling that "he had spoken too much; in the morning he would be full of regret; Linda would be another of those people from whom he would have to hide" (IFS162).

Bobby had been as much an outsider in his native home as Dayo's brother in London or Santosh in Washington. He was "queer" and society had no place for him. He has a breakdown which lasts eighteen months and then Denis Marshall brings him to Africa. Bobby is sincere when he says, "Africa saved my life" (IFS 170). He ardently champions the liberal attitudes - the equality of the races. That his liberalism is little more than self-indulgence is clear from the very reason that
makes Africa dear to him - he has come here to escape social censure in his own society and he likes Africa because it provides a safe and easy outlet for his sexual needs. "Africa was for Bobby the empty spaces, the safe adventure of long fatiguing drives on open roads, the other Africans, boys built like men" (109). Bobby likes to believe that he is here "to serve," that he is simply doing a job.

Linda's husband Martin has come to Africa, to salvage a stagnating career. She is frankly prejudiced though she too in the beginning, perhaps for Bobby's benefit, speaks enthusiasticaly of Africa. Bobby is righteously complacent about his own freedom from racial prejudice. According to Angus Calder, he defends Africans against her "cliche'd criticisms with his own liberal cliches..." (483). However, when the overwhelming air of hostility surrounding them during the journey reveals areas of hatred and brutality he had not suspected he is unnerved. But in this disillusioned study of "power and powerlessness," Bobby is careful not to antagonize any African of the President's tribe - the top dogs at present. The only occasion on which he allows himself to lose his temper, is when an African of the king's tribe - already persecuted victims in the present power struggle - who becomes the target of his angry outburst. At the end of the story, Bobby is safely back in the compound, though badly injured from the beating he gets from the soldiers of the President's army. His house-boy Luke, knowing the ways of the President's men, recognizes the source of Bobby's injuries and is amused. Bobby, humiliated, feels he would have to leave. But soon he changes this to "I will have to sack Luke" - Luke too is from the king's tribe (IFS 274).

"Hate, oppression, fear of the oppressed" wrote Ralph Singh in The Mimic Men (5). In a very early article "London", Naipaul had said that he could not easily take to writing about racial discrimination because, among other reasons, "oppressors and
oppressed change so quickly" (14). Throughout In a Free State, how difficult it is to affix blame - how the shifts of power can alter the complexion of things completely. In the Prologue, the English tramp becomes the bait of the Libyans aided by the Austrian Hans and watched with amusement by the other passengers. As a backdrop to Santosh's story we see the Negroes, victims of oppression and discrimination, turning violent and destructive. Dayo's brother is ruined by the "English Louts" and in In a Free State it is most difficult of all to decide who the oppressor is and who the oppressed are.

While holding no brief for the atrocities of the colonial past, Naipaul shows the ugliness that the oppressed themselves are capable of when the scales of power are turned. The excesses, the racial persecution, the exploitation of the colonial regime are vividly though indirectly evoked - the Europeans-only hospital which refuses to attend to a sick African woman who dies as a result, dogs brought as watchdogs and trained to attack Africans. In In a Free State, Naipaul conveys a sense of mindless brutality not only against whites, based on resentment - but the even more savage inter-tribal conflict. The Africans are not made out to be more vicious or brutal - it is just that violence and brutality seem to be an inescapable part of living. According to Angus Calder in fact, "the constant imminence of terror" in man's everyday life is one of Naipaul's favourite themes (483). As Alfred Kazin puts it, "What makes Naipaul hurt so much more than other novelists of contemporary exodus is his major image - the tenuousness of man's hold on the earth" (373).

While the other side of the picture is never obscured, the emphasis does fall on the arrogant power drunkenness of those now on top. There is the cultural and intellectual inauthenticity of the new officials - more 'mimic men' like Sammy Kisenyi
in the radio, who, it is said, "doesn't know a microphone from a doorknob" (IFS 139). Sammy Kisenyi reads a paper on broadcasting at the conference. He's lifted whole paragraphs are lifted "from T.S. Eliot, of all people" (218). No one dares say anything, however. The fat and sleek soldiers of the new army arouse little sympathy. It is said that "whenever you see an army lorry you must park off the road until it passes. They run you down for fun" (157). Though these comments come to us from Linda, they are substantiated by the demonstrated behaviour of the army in the story. All this lays Naipaul open to the familiar change of anti-third-world bias, but perhaps Landeg White is right in recognizing a certain degree of courage and honesty in presenting an "account of independent Africa which recognizes minorities and which is not afraid of appearing prejudiced" (200).

"Who the enemy is" had cried the bewildered protagonist of "Tell me who to Kill" (IFS 198). This story shows how complex a problem it is to identify the enemy. In this independent African state the Asians have been deported, deprived of their houses and their businesses. We sympathize. Then we hear of how this wealth had been acquired by the exploitation of the Africans. Bobby says, "They don't sell the Africans a pack of cigarettes. They sell them just one or two cigarettes at a time. They make a fortune out of Africans" (120). Linda's remark shows how the Asians too had been exploited - by the Whites: "A good way of getting something out of them is to say, 'Hello isn't this made in South Africa?' They get so terrified they virtually give you the shop free" (121).

In England Bobby too had been a victim and had suffered a nervous breakdown. Brought to Africa by Denis Marshall, he is "saved" but "Victimizes" Denis when he becomes inconvenient. During the drive itself Linda 'uses' Bobby to
effect - a rendezvous with Carter. She too, however, is not excluded from the comprehensive vision which *In a Free State* sees all human beings as victims at some level. It is Bobby who communicates the sudden sympathy of understanding for Linda. As she ministers to him after he has been beaten by the soldiers Bobby thinks "with sudden passing sorrow for her, for whom so much had also gone wrong: but these are the hands of a nurse" (234).

This story and the book to which it gives its title is Naipaul's fullest and bleakest treatment of the theme of exile. As Derwent May a reviewer puts it, "It's as though the story is trying to squeeze out a perfume called Essence of Alienation..." (78). In evidence is the greater understanding of people, the enlarged sympathy that Naipaul himself has referred in the 1971 interview as a part of greater maturity, a growing up. The tough, disillusioned brutality of the book's analysis of the human situation is accompanied by a comprehensively compassionate vision of helpless man - regardless of colour and nationality caught in situations beyond his control.

It is the probe of the surgeon. The intention is to heal, not to hurt. In an interview, Naipaul says:

I long to find what is good and hopeful and really do hope that by the most brutal sort of analysis one is possibly opening up the situation to some sort of action; an action which is not based on self-deception. (51)

The unflinching honesty of *In a Free State* leaves no room for any manipulated optimism. Oppression calls for "anger and a sense of injustice" but even anger as such prompts the author's action in the Epilogue can alter nothing. The disillusioned traveller wonders whether there ever had been a time when things were different. Had there ever been a time when, as in the vision of the ancient artist of the
tomb, things had been whole and perfect? "It was the special vision of men who knew no other land and saw what they had as rich and complete" (241). The book ends sadly with the thought that, "Perhaps that vision of the land, in which the Nile was only water, a blue-green chevron, had always been a fabrication, a cause for yearning, something for the tomb" (246).

A good novelist compulsively probes the psyches of his characters, hoping thereby to resolve his own dilemmas. According to Naipaul, a physical journey may be undertaken only once but imaginatively a writer travels over the same route again and again but each journey is slightly different from the previous ones. In every journey, he acquires the power of meeting something unknown. It is an achievement in the case of the protagonist to find an actual haven of peace and tranquility in men and their landscapes. Character creation is one way of finding all about one's self. Naipaul has explored his own psyche through his varied characters.

Naipaul as a postcolonial writer deals with characters who are rootless and hence drift. Angst or anxiety is a hallmark of these ambiguous identities. Mr Biswas in *A House for Mr Biswas* suffers from an identity crisis. His longing for a home is a metaphor for Biswas' search for permanence and roots. But all his attempts turn futile - his marriage into the Tulsi's family, his attempts to restore order through his wife Shama and later his son fail to help him assert himself. Biswas is not attached to his religion or his caste; the Tulsis are attached to both Hinduism and Roman Catholicism. Biswas remains obscure even in his death.

*The Mimic Men* as the title suggests, is a novel of shadows. The characters lack real substance. The novel talks about the first generation freed East Indians. Through
free, these people have no identities or affinities. They are uncertain of their positions in society.

Ralph Singh the central character tries desperately to create an identity. He tries many ways, including a change of name from Ranjit Kripalsingh to Ranjit Ralph Kripalsingh. Yet he cannot fit in anywhere. His writing career cannot reconcile him with his Hindu identity. Though he poses as a Hindu, in moments of crisis he abandons this identity – he is a castaway.

Naipaul adopts a fluid, non-linear narrative to suit a fluid drifting identity. This technique effectively depicts the failed life of Ralph Singh. A playboy, a married man who wife has abandoned him, a successful politician, a recluse and finally an inert man pushing his days in a secure hotel room – this is the drifting central character.

All the characters in *In a Free State* live suspended, unrooted lives. They have escaped the constraints of ordered lives but in this process they come to inhabit a no man's land. Characters like Bobby and Linda find themselves in hostile environments. Violence seems to bring an end or security but then the violence too proves meaningless. Bobby and Linda live in a void and in a land of illusions. The novel is filled with non-permanent characters – exiles, tourists, expatriates and the like.

Similarly, Santosh who comes to live in Bombay from a village is an obscure man. Though he is successful, he feels lost in the city. He is cut off from his past that is rich in tradition and falls into an existence that leads him nowhere. Finally for Santosh even his freedom is burdensome. Santosh is in a way Naipaul himself – a diaspora.

Of large and varied body of Naipaul’s ‘literary craft’, the readers, critics and reviewers, - perceptive and appreciative of it- have by and large, focused on various
aspects and themes, such as, the ‘Third World identity’, ‘ethnicity’, ‘racism’, ‘mythology’, ‘postcolonialism’, ‘multiculturalism’, ‘migration’, ‘gender’ and a great many. But, the aspect of ‘Colonial Culture’, in his works has still remained unexplored. Perhaps, no complete and comprehensive work has been done in this segment yet. Thus, a humble but inquisitive effort has been made at length and make a critical approach, to the psychological and cultural forces, to substantiate Naipaul, as an ‘epitome’ of the dominating ‘Colonial Culture’ along with his assimilation and absorption into the colonizers’ frame, with a complete picture of the mind and body under colonialism.

Researchers and authors have explored into Naipaul’s ambivalent feelings about the ‘clan’ set in his literary works at a length of prose as well in an epigrammatic form of sentence and have regarded it—the psychological explanation of his hostility towards mobilization for ‘political change’:

The clan that gave protection and identity, and saved people from the void, was itself a little state, and it could be a hard place, full of politics, full of hatreds and changing alliances and moral denunciations. It was the kind of family Life I had known for much of my childhood: an early introduction to the ways of the world, and to the nature of cruelty. It had given me, as I suspected it had given Kala, a taste for the other kind of life, the solitary or less crowded (Selwyn Cudjoe 5).

Cudjoe attributes to Naipaul’s fundamental, social and cultural values his psychological reactions. Although, Cudjoe constructs from Naipaul’s writings “a psycho-political biography of the man-life, where one had space around oneself” (3).
'Identity' in the terms of, nationality, language, and the rights as a true citizen of the country one habitat and the culture - remains one of the most - urgent, as well as hotly disputed topics, in literary and cultural studies. In the case of Naipaul, especially, when they are viewed with a wider sense, neo-colonial view is not a controversial issue to him, but is paramount to changing people's perceptions. Naipaul as an 'epitome' and 'a front man' of the dominating culture: the 'Colonial culture' and explore the original themes prevalent in his novels and also, examine his advancement from a regional writer to one with more worldwide allure, whose novels are viewed as representing a turning point in his development and effectiveness as a colonial writer.

Postcolonial novels are psychological in their approaches. The psychological approach became popular and gained currency after the traditional moralistic approach was found to be inadequate to deal with the psychological angst that haunt people in diasporic situations. Postcolonial fiction cannot ignore this angst because colonization has led to mixed identities and hybrid consciousness. The present pursuit analyses what is unexplored or unsaid, or less said, by the critics and makes an approach to the psychological and cultural forces, that support the notion of Naipaul's assimilation with the colonial world, with a complete picture of the mind and body under colonialism.