Chapter-IV

India: A Million Mutinies
Now: Human Possibilities
India: A Million Mutinies Now is a non-fiction book by V. S. Naipaul published in 1990. It is a travelogue written during the author's sojourn in his ancestral land, India. It was the third of Naipaul's acclaimed Indian trilogy which includes An Area of Darkness and India: A Wounded Civilization. True to his style, the narration is anecdotal, using examples and specificity in its descriptions. This is the third book on India by V.S. Naipaul and certainly the most conciliatory one of the three. His earlier books on India were written when Naipaul himself was much younger and perhaps as a result were more scornful and decisive of India's negatives. But this book shows a certain placid tone and compassion. He writes about the 'rage' of each community and caste and religion in India and perceptively observes that one's own rage and historical injustice suffered is more important than other
Naipaul expresses serious misgivings about Indian attitudes and the Indian way of life. On the other hand, Naipaul notes the economic growth and its associated emancipation of the various peoples of India. The title makes an analogy between the emancipation of millions and the Mutiny of 1857. The book is somewhat optimistic about the country and its people. Independence had come to India like a kind of revolution," V. S. Naipaul says in the introductory chapter of his elegant account of a journey around the world's largest democracy:

"Now there were many revolutions within that revolution. . . . All over India scores of particularities that had been frozen by foreign rule, or by poverty or lack of opportunity or abjectness had begun to flow again."

From winter to spring: it is a comforting image, reassuring, suggestive of natural cycles and an inevitable movement toward warmth and light. The ground thaws, the sap flows, then comes the leaf, the bud, the full flowering of national and individual entitlements, an unstoppable surge toward the glorious fruition promised by the idea of independence. And yet blight intrudes:
"Disruptive, lesser loyalties -- of region, caste, and clan -- now played on the surface of Indian life."²

*India: A Million Mutinies Now* portrays the idea of homecoming for Naipaul. It marks Naipaul’s appearance after a long search amongst the now declining waves of socio-political, cultural inconsistency of India. He observes a million rebellions breaking out in the margins: revolts of castes, of class, and of gender. He perceives these revolts as constructive movements towards the re-establishment of India:

“What the mutinies were also helping to define was the strength of the general intellectual life, and the wholeness and humanism of the values to which all Indians now felt they could appeal. And strange irony-the mutinies were not to be wished away. They were part of the beginning of a new way for many millions, part of Indian’s growth, part of its restoration.”³

Now Mr. Naipaul sees pattern and meaning in the fragmentation. During his latest visit, which began in December 1988, Mr. Naipaul crisscrossed India from Bombay to Calcutta, from Kashmir in the North to Madras in the South. He sought out many of the people he met on his first trip, examining the changes in their
instituting a connection between *An Area of Darkness* and *India: A Million Mutinies Now*. Although having a gap of twenty-seven years in time of writing, both books are commentaries on each other and present precise instances of the Diasporic thoughts invading the writer’s conscience, of which the writer himself is not aware. One can find many stages where Naipaul seemed to have been in the clutch of Diaspora. Following statements reflect the writer’s Diaspora in disguise:

"The India of my fantasy and heart was something lost and irrecoverable. The physical country existed. I could travel to that; I had always wanted to. But on that first journey I was a fearful traveller."⁴

"What I hadn’t understood in 1962, or had taken too much for granted, was the extent to which the country had been remade....restored to itself....."⁵

"In 27 year I had succeeded in making a king of return journey, shedding my Indian nerves, abolishing the darkness that separated me from my ancestral past."⁶

"I had carried in my bones that idea of abjectness and defeat and shame. It was the idea I had taken to India on that slow journey by train and ship in 1962; it was the source of my nerves."⁷
The above statements do not go hand in hand with the Naipaul’s personal insights spread all over An Area of Darkness. These statements reflect the dispute between the attitudes of Naipaul at the time of Area of Darkness and at the time of Wounded Civilization. I would like to quote some examples:

“In a year I had not learned acceptance. I had learned my separateness from India...”

“Ten months later I was to revisit Bombay and to wonder at my hysteria.... It was my eye that had changed.”

“The physique of Europe had melted away...... Men had been diminished and deformed; they begged and whined. Hysteria had been my reaction.... It mattered little through whose eyes I was seeing the East; there had as yet been no time for this type of self-assessment”

“...the reawakening within India of disputes about language, religion, caste and region. India, it seems, will never cease to require the arbitration of a conqueror, this absence of growth and development...only a series of beginnings, no final creation.”

Democracy, after the first exciting flush of its birth struggle, is often fractious, frequently inefficient and unstable, a maelstrom of
disruptive lesser loyalties. Its great strength lies in its willingness to tolerate this messiness in the service of an ideal of fair government. Democracy's toughest test case is India, with its huge population, with more than a dozen major languages and hundreds of dialects, with many faiths and religious traditions in conflict and symbiosis. In *India: A Million Mutinies Now*, V. S. Naipaul is an erudite and sensitive guide at a time when the strain of accommodating the revolutions within the revolution -- the growth of that internalized awareness of the meaning of independence, the sometimes violent clash of competing rights and entitlements, the "million mutinies now" -- is particularly intense.

Voices on all sides tell Mr. Naipaul that "India had changed; it was not the good and stable country it had once been."¹² They maintain that "the great investment in development over three or four decades had led only to this: to 'corruption,' to the 'criminalization of politics.' In seeking to rise, India had undone itself. No one could be sure of anything now; all was fluid."¹³

Some people think the descent into chaos has begun. A journalist for The Indian Express was stabbed outside the Golden Temple by Sikh terrorists, who, Mr. Naipaul said, existed wildly,
going out to kill repeatedly. It's psychosis, it's fanaticism, another journalist cries that it can't really be explained.

Yet Mr. Naipaul sees some pattern in the mutinies: "The idea of freedom has gone everywhere in India. . . . There was in India now what didn't exist 200 years before: a central will, a central intellect, a national idea."\textsuperscript{14} He goes on, "The Indian Union was greater than the sum of its parts; and many of these movements of excess strengthened the Indian state, defining it as the source of law and civility and reasonableness."\textsuperscript{15}

It is apparent that Naipaul has written about something more than India. He has also written about himself in the process. The line of separation between the two subjects that Naipaul, the writer deals with is very thin, Anniah Gowda says that Naipaul is only "writing about himself, not India"\textsuperscript{16}, though it is not agreeable. On the other hand, William Walsh praises Naipaul for his "needle like precision" and "literary acupuncture"\textsuperscript{17} but most of the people do not agree with him. Naipaul's field is a speckled area of the separate working of his double vision (external and internal). \textit{India: A Million Mutinies Now} is a book in which Naipaul has been able to create a pattern out of his double vision. The book strikes a wonderful balance between the
interiority of Naipaul’s experience and the external experiences that he encounters and observes. The book is divided into nine chapters and each chapter is a profusion of characters and voices, which speak for themselves. Arising out of Naipaul’s lifelong obsession and passion for a country that is at once his and totally alien, India: A Million Mutinies Now relates the stories of many of the people he met while travelling.

Lives of eleven people (including a Jain businessman, a Shiv Sena community organizer, etc.) from different walks of life, their folks and associates, their reliability and prejudices covers the first chapter ‘Bombay Theatre’. But before that it records, in Naipaul’s own words, the factors that had governed his reactions to India in 1962. This, in a way, provides an overture to the completely diverse way in which Naipaul records his response in the in the following pages. Papu is a twenty-nine year old Jain stockbroker, a mild mannered and God fearing person who has been doing very well professionally. The pattern of growth is drawn out, he “had made more money in the last five years than his father had made in all his working life”18. He had received formal education, unlike his father. He acknowledged that he was deficient of the killer instinct in
business and had thus moved to those business areas to which he was temperamentally more suited.

He bears phases of anxiety regarding the predicament of the mild race of Jain businessmen in face of aggressive business tactics adopted by others. He was also intensely concerned about social welfare and wanted to dedicate most of his time to it. However, he was also aware that he could invest more money in social welfare by working harder in his profession rather than by working in the slums. Papu had devised his own programme of striking a balance between his job and his devotion to social work. His idea of social work was also very different from that of the older generations of Jains. Instead of building marble temples, he believed in building orphanages and hospitals. He used the latest expertise in his work but was very deeply rooted in his religious belief. Papu is thus presented as a representative of positive growth in the conventional India business world. Through papu, one also gets a glance of the ways of carrying out of other business houses like Tata, Birla etc.

Mr. Patil is a shiv Sena ‘area leader’ His father had worked for forty years in the tool-room of a factory and was so weighed down by family responsibilities that he had no idea of the activities of the
Shiv Sena. Mr Patil was brought up comfortably and this gave him security and an idea of his social concerns. He joined the Shiv Sena and steadily worked for the people in his area. But there was deeply concerned about the deprivation of Maharashtrians brought about by non-Maharashtrians but he had absolutely no sympathy for the Dalit organizations. He believed that they hadn’t suffered much and their activism was mainly political. His antipathy towards Muslims verged on hatred but he had no qualms about exporting man power to Dubai and the Middle East for a living. Although Mr. Patel’s atma-vishwas(self-confidence) was his cherished gift from Ganpati, he was reluctant to recognize the same atma-vishwas in Dalits.

One can find the initial starting of the recognition of ‘self’ in Mr. Patil. His idea of self and self-confidence is messed up and prejudiced but it is a kind of starting. This was missing in his father’s generation when the main concern was the daily necessities of the family. In Mr. Patil’s generation, the concerns had broadened from the personal to the social sphere but this had also brought with it a lot of perplexity usual to societies passing through transform. Among the first eighteen recruits of the Shiv Sena, Mr. Raote had been the one and was now the chairman of the standing committee of the Bombay Corporation. His father had worked as a mechanic in
All India Radio and had educated all his children. Mr. Raote, initially wanted to join the military. But, he couldn’t get into it. He couldn’t do a course in engineering, as his father couldn’t afford the expense. So he took up a job as a clerk in the Corporation while his father worked as a carpenter in a film studio to enable his sister to become a doctor. His marriage was a love-match and thus was chased by more financial loads. He found an opening in furniture work and his designs found favour all over Bombay. From furniture, he moved to the building business and had been doing very well ever since. His devotion to the Sena and its work had sustained all along. In his business, he had worked to accommodate the middle-class Maharashtrian. His front doors always remain open. He was extremely religious and his religion was an extension of his courage and confidence which branched off into his social concerns:

"The worldly man who wanted to be an officer and an engineer, the Sena worker, the devout Hindu: there were three layers to him, making for a chain of belief and action."\textsuperscript{19}

Papu used to feed around five hundred people every Sunday, he worked in Dharavi. But his initiative of service was to assist people help themselves. Charity for the sake of charity had no value.
It was no longer the old Hindu inspiration of charity as an involuntary work to receive heavenly goodwill for oneself. It was now sturdily correlated to social concern.

Anwar is a young man sandwiched between his Muslim faith and its deterioration into violence. He is an educated and sensitive man. He had utter belief in Islam and its idea of brotherhood. He believed that the world could be set right through the teachings of Islam and lack of education was the main cause behind young Muslims falling into crime and violence. He acknowledged the discouraging situation of the crime swamped area where he resides but could not ever think of departing that area for an improved life somewhere else. His notions were not of personal progress but of the progress of the community. The very fact that he had been able to safeguard his sensitivity and his reason in spite of living amidst group fights and murders was a sign of change. Anwar’s grandfather had died at forty, his father was happy to have crossed sixty-four. This too, spoke of the superior life that had come to the people.

Mr. Ghate was also a Sena official. His father had been a millworker and his family had never owned a book till he went to college. In comparison to Mr. Patil and Mr. Raote, Mr. Ghate was
not at all religious. Although he could manage to pay for better accommodation, he continued to subsist in chawl because both he and his wife were familiar with the chawl life. His wife had had serious problems dealing with the isolation of the staff quarters. Absence of civic sena was the most complicated problem and he thought that one had to begin with the children to resolve this malady among the chawl. Mr. Ghate had progressed much in contrast to his mill-worker father. This advancement had given him new thoughts, about himself and about other. These thoughts were sometimes in disagreement with each other but Mr. Ghate carried on, secured by Sena pride. On the other side of Sena control was the criminal world of Bombay. The businessmen and politicians employed professional criminals to get their work done:

"to deter political defection, to encourage political donations; to enforce payment of a debt, to compel adherence to an unwritten 'black-money' contract."²⁰

These people were thrown out of the mainstream as they become criminal and now there was no anticipation of return. Here too, the religious belief had somehow continued to exist. How they clarified their actions in the light of their profound devotion in religion was a paradox. Living in the shadow of death, cut off from
society, these people held on to whatever faith their deities inspired in them despite knowing that they were destined, Naipaul mentions:

"The gangster at the top...the dons...could be courted by political parties and film people....But the men below, the men in the middle...were doomed."\textsuperscript{21}

Religion had an exceptional place in a society that was passing through the stress and strain of change and \textit{pujaris} were much in demand. In Bombay, with its inconsistencies and its partitions of belief, the \textit{pujaris} were as much in demand as the Sena men.

The ‘Electric pujari’ personalized religious ceremonies and offered recorded \textit{pujas} on tape; the other \textit{pujari} who has been dealt in detail in the text was satisfied with whatever he earned and conducted \textit{pujas} in the conventional way. This variety appealed to the people of Bombay for whom the very concept of religion and \textit{puja} was undergoing change. Nandini worked as a journalist and did not believe in ceremonial \textit{puja}, but the \textit{pujari} was called by her family on auspicious occasions. The \textit{pujari} had much more snug life in Bombay than what he could have had in his native village.

Namdeo Dhasal and his wife Mallika signify another layer of society where there has been substantial movement. Namdeo Dhasal was the founder of the Dalit Panthers and was also know for the
poetry that he wrote. His political career has seen many ups and downs but he was not much bothered about that. Initially, his political failure had caused him to fall ill but he recovered. His wife Mallika was the daughter of communist folk singers. Her mother was a high caste Hindu and father a Muslim. Mallika and Namdeo’s marriage was a marriage of the minds which weakened on ground realities. The result was Mallika’s autobiography, I Want to Destroy Myself. Namdeo had come a long way from being an outcaste Dalit in his native village. He drew motivation from Ambedkar and thus formed an identity for himself and for other. He worked for the prostitutes and other oppressed classes of people. He had himself lived through much oppression as a young Mahar cast boy in his village, as a taxi driver in Bombay, and as a resident of the ‘Dhor slum.’ Consequently he was full of rage. It was his introduction to Ambedkar’s movement that made him channelize his anger into a positive political force.

Another story was of Subroto, he migrated from Calcutta to Bombay. He was adapted to his work in the art department of an advertising agency. His friend, the film writer, had not been so lucky. His story was a story of defeat. He could not work according to the current demands of the film directors. His devotion to his art
made him pay a very heavy price. He not only lost his work, but lost out on goodwill as well. He continued with whatever screen-writing he was offered and kept on drifting back to Calcutta, he says:

"Calcutta is where I studied on drifting back. It’s my home town, mentally. It’s where I feel comfortable. That’s where I feel things are happening all the time, and that’s where I acquired the ambition of being a film writer."  

This affirmation of the self was the starting of the taking apart of old prejudices that requisites some men to be lower than others. It was a technique of development for thousands of marginalized people. With the coming of education and equal job prospects a starting had been made, but it was a political movement like Namdeo’s that gave people an identity in which they could feel comfortable, and even proud of. The first section ‘Bombay Theatre’ ends with Namdeo’s story. Naipaul has presented a cross-section of life in metropolitan Bombay. Each nook and corner, each one roomed chawl is closely observed. The chapter represents a metropolis going through great change. The movement shows in occasional ruptures of the social fabric and in the somewhat paradoxical values of people.
‘The Secretary’s Tale’ is the story of Rajan, his father and his grandfather. This story portrays how people’s idea of themselves changes as the time passes. Rajan’s grandfather was an insignificant official in one of the law courts near Tanjore. He got into a fight with a British officer and had no option but to leave. He comes to Calcutta with his family. There he gives his son training for becoming a stenographer. The stenographer son grows to great heights and lived in style. In the 1946, Hindu-Muslim riots in Calcutta he lost everything. Young Rajan was brought up by his step-sister. He too began his career as a typist but struggled all along for a more creative job. After a number of jobs with a variety of firms in diverse competences, Rajan too became a secretary with a firm in Bombay. He felt he had a lot more talent and creativity that could have been put to better use but he lived with a sense of fulfilment at having been able to take care of all his responsibilities:

“I haven’t risen beyond what my father and grandfather could rise to, at the beginning of the century. The only consolation is that, even as secretary, I am not as badly off as most other secretaries are. And perhaps, even, I no longer believe I am just a secretary.”

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Another chapter ‘Breaking Out’ examines the levels of change that had come to the southern parts of India over a period of three generations. It initializes with remarks on Goa; its Portuguese past had almost removed the old India. With the Portuguese takeover of Goa, the occupation of Vijaynagar and the increase in Mughal power in the North, Hindu India had very thin prospects of continued existence. But, Hindu India stays alive:

"Through all the twists and turns of history, through all the imperial venturing in this part of the world, which that Portuguese arrival in India portended, and finally through the unlikely British presence in India, a Hindu India had grown again, more complete and unified than any India in than past."\textsuperscript{24}

The chapter ‘Breaking out’ is all about how the old Hindu-Brahmin India stayed alive and transformed itself into a representative of development and growth in new India. Deviah, who was a science reporter for a newspaper goes on a pilgrimage to the shrine of Ayappa every year. He was also familiar with the story of Ayappa and the mythical aspects it contained.

Dr. Srinivasan, chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission hails from a family consisting of priests. His grandfather had been a
Purohit and was only a matriculate. He wanted his son to pass the university examination and so the son went to the university. However, he was learning Sanskrit lessons at home and the son was taught all the religious rituals. In 1925, the son, Dr. Srinivasan's father, joined the education department and became a teacher. The new education and the Brahmin training dwell together in him. These were the forces that created Dr. Srinivasan. Naipaul sees this as king of continuity of old learning:

"The old Hindu-Sanskrit learning—which a late 18th century scholar-administrator like Sir William Jones had seen as archaic...that old learning had, 200 year later, in the most roundabout way, seeded the new."\(^{25}\)

Another scientist Subramaniam hailed from alike Hindu-Brahmin backdrop. His grandfather believed that awareness of English was indispensable. He could not study in English medium but he sent his son to an English medium school. This son went to the university and later worked with a leading scientist of those times. With knowledge of modern science, there occurred a change in sensibility. There was a conflict between science and the rituals he practised at home. He rejected cast prejudices and rituals. The concept of puja also changed. He started writing books on science in
the local language. Subramaniam could look at a century of change within his family in a very analytical manner. He saw the predominance of Brahmins on the India science scene as a development of history and although he recognized the old Hindu Brahmin tradition of quest of Knowledge for this development, he was also aware that Brahmins were responsible still for many things on our social landscape.

Another person who got place in the book was Pravas who hailed from a priestly family of the east. His grandfather was a priest, his father had retired as a government clerk. His grandfather had lived in a secure world as purohit to a royal family; his religion was his profession. For Pravas’s father the security of the old world was replaced. His job with the government gave him his source of revenue. The puja, the rituals and the chanting of mantras became a part of his personal world. He read religious text and tried to understand them. He also read modern philosophical works in English, Devnagri and Bengali. He had received the Gandhian philosophy. All this changed him. His attitude towards rituals, food and dress-related rules changed. In his son, pravas, these were further modified:
“I have made one more level of transformation than my father did from his father’s time. I am more liberal in outlook than my father. I’ve probably become more questioning.... My father got a part of what his father had, and I have only a part of the rituals my father had.”

Then there is Kala’s story. She did the publicity for a big organization. She was a single girl in her twenties. Her grandfather had started from nothing and had gone on to become an administrator in a princely-state. Her mother studied up to class ten and was married. This marriage deformed her life and neither she nor her parents could do anything about it. That is why she brought up Kala to be financially independent. Thus idea and ideologies changed over a period of three generations and the potential that was reflected in Kala’s mother came to be acknowledged and valued in Kala.

There is another tale of Prakash who came from an agricultural family of Bellary and was a minister in the non-congress state government of Karnataka. He was a lawyer before he joined politics. He spoke of the power that the politicians wielded and the disarray
formed because of the evolution caused by industrialization and the green revolution:

“During this transition period, we are slowly cutting from the moral ethos of our grandfather, and at the same time, we don’t have the westerner’s idea of discipline and social justice. At the moment things are chaotic here.”27

The pundit who worked as mukhthesar for the maharaja of Mysore had his own history. His grandfather worked as a cook in the palace and this grandfather sent him to the Sanskrit College in Mysore city where he studied for twenty year. At the end of his education, he was appointed mukhthesar by the Maharaja. He served the Maharaja even after he misplaced his privy purse. After the death of the Maharaja he took up a job as the manager of marriage hall. He was now no longer the Maharaja’s mukhthesar but a man in his own right:

“Four times a year now he went to the palace, to make offerings to the head of the royal family.... But now he didn’t go as an employee or palace servant. He went as a man in his own right.”28

‘Breaking out’ represents people from diverse walks of life that had come out of the old Hindu world of their parents and
grandparents and were working towards new objective, and strengthening a new idea of selfhood. They were thus escorting into the Indian scene a new growth and development. Working alongside were ‘Little Wars’. These were movements in South India that required to rupture the old ambition. It was a war between South and North, between brahmin and non-brahmin.

The movement in the south had started with Periyar. It had given people an idea of themselves. The DMK victory in the elections was a huge reason of celebration for the Non-Brahmins. Periyar, the man behind the cause was iconized. Breaks occurred even within the DMK as years passed. Periyar, being an agnostic and a rationalist, offered the idea of a world governed by science, free of caste and religion. His war was against caste bigotry and he abandoned everything that shaped caste distinction—be it temples or temple tanks. But his movement was unresponsive to the looting of temple and to the replacement of temple icons by fakes. The chapter reveals an exhaustive account of periyar’s life and beliefs and how these came to be absorbed by his disciples. Entire passages are narrated by Sadanand Menon and the figure of the writer barely shows up. It is through Menon that the reader comes to know how
the periyar movement in the end came to stand for those very things that it had opposed initially:

"The anti-brahmin movement was not a movement of all the non-brahmin castes. It was a movement mainly of the middle castes..... When their government came to power, they became the oppressors."\textsuperscript{29}

However, the periyar movement had touched people in a number of ways. Gopalakrishnan turned into a rationalist at a very young age. At school he was made to recognize his middle cast status that was considered fit only for grazing cattle. Steadily, Gopalakrishnan moved away from religion and gained confidence in Periyar movement and Literature. He commenced business of publication and published school textbooks and books about periyar's movement. The enthusiasm of Palani was stronger in comparison to that of Gopalakrishnan. The origination of this passion has taken place when his brother was yelled at for taking water from a brahmin hotel. This sense of injustice kept building up, and when Palani came across Periyar, he got all his answers. Palani's father was a government clerk but he could become an engineer because of the seats that were reserved for students from non-brahmin castes. He had periyar to thanks for this concession. From a

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weaver to a clerk to an engineer—the story of his family had been one of progress. This was the way in which periyar’s movement had touched so many lives, so many families.

Passion breeds passion. Kakushthan’s passion was to be a pure and perfect brahmin. This passion had come to him at a very late stage in life. As a school going child he had to suffer for his Brahmin dress, for the caste-mark on his forehead and for his churki. He had lengthy and intense debates with his father but he was not approved to implement contemporary manners. He tried to run away, he tried to break away from this brahmin past but in the end he came back. His only passion in life now was to live the pure life of a brahmin. This he had done by starting to make minor and major alterations in the old brahmin lifestyle. That was the way the community could be conserved. The chapter accounts for revolutions and rebellions at personal as well as public level. This turbulence was the way of fresh commencement for the non-brahmin middle castes and the lower castes. It was a great effort to sustain the wholesomeness and stability of the old world for people like Kakusthan and sugar. The effort was mutual; it was amid the old world and the new world. Both worlds changed, both personalized and sustained. Only this time the stability also symbolise a new self
lives and attitudes, at the same time scrutinizing his own memories and changed reactions. He has also sought out the more explosive ‘revolutions within the revolution,’ meeting with individuals who are representatives of the ‘million mutinies’ now fermenting.

Naipaul sees that the shady veils, covering the centuries of violence are being ruptured. Organizations of supremacy are being taken apart. Naipaul discovers Indian in its offices, kitchens, galleries and chawls; in Dalit rebellions and in women’s movements. He now observes constructive movement in the very same scenes that had stunned him into a fury in An Area of Darkness. He sees wounded India’s dark decaying bandages being ragged apart by these mutinous people in the margins. He observes these as empowering symbols and with their coming to the centre, he perceives India on its way to being whole again. This transform in idea spots a great budge from Naipaul’s initial discernment recorded in An Area of Darkness and in India: A Wounded Civilization. It brings into question the aspects that go into the configuration of a writer’s outlook. Naipaul himself describes the process, sometimes in direct sentences and sometimes in his mode of recording facts. This conversation starts with the last chapter in the book, ‘The House on the Lake: A Return to India’ with the definite intention of
among people. It meant an affirmation of their recently attained idea of the self.

‘After the Battle’, the fifth chapter specifically emphasises on eastern India and on Calcutta. Like the British architecture in Calcutta, Chidananda Das Gupta was also a product of British time: ‘a boxwallah’. Chidananda was employed in ITC and had a cosy lifestyle. But he was not comfortable with the two sides of his existence: his status and work at the ITC requisite him to be someone he was not and his craving for intellectual and creative life called for a different king of life. His alliance with Shantiniketan was his life force. At last he left his job at ITC and became a filmmaker and writer. Rabindranath Tagore and Satyajit Ray had predominance in his mental makeup.

Ashok was a South Indian brahmin whose father had established in Calcutta. He was into the marketing business. He had got into this profession with immense intricacy. His generation was passing through a period of transform where old values had to be evaluated against new values. He abandoned the traditional ‘bride-seeing’ and decided on a self-choice marriage. His professional life was an example of renewal on the Indian business sense. The quiet
world of the boxwallah had given make tough demands on people. The marwari businessmen had been gaining a monopoly over the major business houses, while at the other end the Bengalis were content to display their trade unionism and criticize the Marwaris. The Marwari success story in Calcutta had been fuelled by the Bengali mindset:

"...he is indolent, he doesn’t want to work and he must protect his dignity at all costs. He will publicly despise the Marwari trader, but he wouldn’t ho the same job himself."\(^{30}\)

Dipanjan and his wife Arati were teaching in college. During their college days, they had been allied with the Naxalite movement in Calcutta. There was an inter-caste marriage which stirred up much opposition from Arati’s parents. They hailed from families that had had modern education. Arati’s father was a scientist and an IES officer whereas Dipanjan’s father was a Ph.D in biochemistry and a communist. The Naxalite movement had been the passion of Dipanjan’s life and when the movement dissolved, Dipanjan withdrew and started assessing what had gone wrong. The movement which was considered wonderful beginning for millions of rural people had gone off track in the middle. Dipanjan’s stay in
jail for years with other Naxalite inmates, mostly those accused of urban violence including murders disappointed him about the movement. He was unconfined by the Government and he went to London to study Physics. When he returned, he decided to teach in an incomprehensible college and stayed away from his friends from earlier day. The story of Dipanjan and Arati is that of a generation led off target by ideas. It was generation whose ideas for improvement were its downfall. Debu who was working on executive position, had been linked with the Naxalite movement in its initial stages but had later developed ideological dissimilarities with the leadership. He had his own definite idea about the cause behind the malfunction of the movement. Debu had been directly occupied with the commencement of the Naxalite movement and had actually believed in its victory. He had even attempted to advocate Charu Mazumdar’s policy of individual Killing. Later he fell out with Charu Mazumdar and went underground in April 1970. His major apprehension was with the idea of progress in India. He was aggrieved by the intellectual fester and the economic crisis of India, particularly the misery of the poor. He still had faith in the revolution and was certain that a revolution could make the things work. During debu’s lectures on India in America, he had been
asked—"How come you’re starving and begging for food, if you’re so great?" He was badly hurt. This had lead to his union with the radical communist wing. Years after the breakdown of the Naxalite movement, he had not lost faith in revolution:

"The only change— a big change—between then and now is that at that time, in the late 60s, I thought I could be a part of the revolution, and now I know that I shall be a witness to it. A supportive witness. I don’t think the need for revolution has changed."

On the closing of the chapter, Naipaul commented on Calcutta. After the departure of the British Raj, he observes the closing stage of Anglo-Bengali intellectual life. In the poverty of the urban poor he sees Calcutta in state of fester. However, amidst the fester, he sees a ray of hope of renewal in the cinema of Satyajit Ray and in the hopefulness of people like Debu. ‘After the Battle’ is Naipaul’s account of the movement in the Indian society that occurred in the 1960 and 70s.

The sixth chapter ‘The End of the Line’ reflects the reaction of Indian Muslims to the division of India. Naipaul starts with a discussion of Satyajit Ray’s film, he uses the film to comment on the
decadent Muslim power in the nineteenth century and the annexation of Oude, which stalled Muslim India:

"Lucknow was the end of the line for Muslim India...In its historical heart it is like a graveyard from the days of the Nawabs of Oude, full of the ruins of war. The city was shelled and fought over during the Mutiny; afterwards the British preserved the ruins as a memorial and passed them on to independent India."\textsuperscript{33}

Naipaul meets Rashid, who, even after one hundred and thirty year, carries the scar of defeat at the hands of the British. Many Middle-class Muslims had left for Pakistan and all those remained in Lucknow, once known as the essence of Muslim culture, were people who were vulnerable, withdrawn and highly strung. With Rashid, Naipaul walks down the market and finds the practitioners of ancient crafts in a state of decadence. The embroiderers, the silver-foil maker, lived a life of squalor:

"All the jobs here have this soul-destroying quality. They are doing it only because their father did it before them."\textsuperscript{34}

‘Women’s Era’ is the seventh chapter which demonstrates the change that had come to the Indian woman’s idea of herself and the role played by Vishwa Nath. Naipaul’s idea starts with his own
intricacies with Russell's Diary. Through his own example and Rashid's, Naipaul puts down the foundation for individual reactions to literary work. On this foundation he erects the Indian women's reaction to the women's magazines in India. He observes these magazines as being prearranged around the psychological requirements of a changing population. Vishwa Nath, the editor of Women's Era was iconoclast and a conventional man into one. Through Women's Era, Femina, Savvy and Eve's Weekly Naipaul perceives diverse kinds of women, with diverse sets of priorities and values. The paradox of Vishwa Nath's mind was the paradox of a vast majority of Indian women who were just coming into the outside world for the first time. Therefore, Vishwa Nath's become the most popular women's magazine.

'The Shadow of the Guru' is the penultimate chapter. It is the in depth study of the psychology of Sikh revolution in India. Naipaul believes Sikh militancy helped India in the process of awakening:

"To awaken to history was to cease to live instinctively. It was to begin to see oneself and ones group the way the outside world saw one; and it was to know a king of rage.... There had been a general awakening. But everyone awakened first to his own group or
community... every group sought to separate its rage from the rage of others."35

The last chapter is return to India for Naipaul. In this chapter he talks about the psychology behind his first ardent fury in *An Area of Darkness*. Naipaul observes how India has transformed and how his perception had changed over the past twenty-seven years. In those areas where Naipaul previously finds decay of tradition, he now observes innovative beginning. In the confusion of the immediate period after independence, he found a new sense of organization and he saw Indian on the move. He saw the socio-political commotions and the unsuccessful efforts at insurgency as a part of India’s development.

In *India: A Million Mutinies Now*, India is seen through the eyes of its various narrators. As a writer, Naipaul highlights with them and consequently reaches at a resting place for his irresistible diasporic concerns for India. This book evokes his earlier books on India and endeavours to revise his earlier responses.
NOTES AND REFERENCES

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