CHAPTER – I

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V.S. Naipaul is greatly considered as the most significant writer of the contemporary period. As an expatriate writer and controversial critic of the imperialism, V.S. Naipaul enjoys a unique position in the arena of world literature. He has skilfully exhibited a very great craftsmanship in handling the multiplicity of the literary pieces like short stories, essays, autobiography, fiction, travel and journalistic writing. His fictional world reveals a critical gaze on the world and also employs its ethnicity, customs and cultures. He has dexterously described the theme of a quest for identity besides a sense of displacement, alienation, exile, homecoming and enigma of survival of an individual as well as of society in the legacy of colonial and postcolonial era.

He has adroitly delineated the dilemma of the immigrant’s fractured consciousness resulting from transplantation, rootlessness and exploitation through the vision of a visionary. V. S. Naipaul’s fictional writing is based on his extensive travels throughout Africa, Asia, America and the Caribbean. It deals with the eyewitness accounts of his experiences of postcolonial oppression and discrimination and the relation of colonialism to the loss of cultural identity in the Third World Literature. V. S. Naipaul, in India: A Million Mutinies Now (1990) propounds about the complexity of
fortune of being mixed, colonial Indian that is responsible for his ultimate achievement.

"Growing up in far off in Trinidad, I had idea of class or region and none of the supports and cushions of people in India . . . I have developed instead the idea of the kinship of the Indians, the idea of the family of India. And in my attempt to come to terms with history, my criticism, my bewilderment and sorrow, was turned inward, focusing on the civilization and the social organization." ¹

Naipaul’s career is thoroughly made up of his own dutiful, devious and unscrupulous efforts which gave this greatness a chance to shine out.

Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul was born on August 17, 1932 in a small town named Chaguanas in Trinidad, in a family of Indian Brahmin origin. His grandfather had emigrated Trinidad from Benares (Varanasi) in Utter Pradesh (India) as an indentured labourer. His father, Seepersad Naipaul, was a correspondent for the Trinidad Guardian, and also published a collection of short stories describing various themes of entrapment and alienation that also are themes of his son’s fiction. He has ignited V. S. Naipaul in his writing aspirations and advised him not to be sacred of being an artist but use art for art’s sake.
His mother Broptie, the seventh daughter of Capildeo family, married to his father in 1929. The Capildeo were wealthy people with status that they belong big house in Chaguanas called Lion House in which Naipaul was born. His brother Shiva Naipaul, Uncle Neil Bissoondath, and Cousin Vahni Capildeo are also authors. His family migrated to Port of Spain, the capital, when Naipaul was only six years old. He completed his formal education in Tranquility Boys School, 1939-42. He was educated at Queen’s Royal College, Port of Spain, Trinidad, 1943-49. In 1950 he won a scholarship to Oxford and learned in University College, Oxford, 1950-54, and acquired degree B.A. (Honours) in English in 1953. At the graduation level V. S. Naipaul began his career as a freelance writer. During this time Naipaul felt himself rootless and homeless. At Oxford, he was disappointed and tried to commit suicide after a nervous breakdown but fortunately he was saved from the disaster for the gas meter ran out. While at Oxford, Naipaul came in contact with an English woman, Patricia Ann Hale and married her in 1955. He lived with her 41 years until her demise caused by cancer in 1996. Naipaul himself admits that his devotion to his writing and infidelities may have caused Pat’s death. Naipaul often abandoned his wife, while she was working as a school teacher, to travel with a married Anglo-Argentinean woman, Margaret Gooding who had met in 1972 as well as he was regularly visiting prostitutes in London. V. S. Naipaul, two months after Patricia’s death, suddenly ended his affair with Margaret. In 1996, after Hale’s death, Naipaul married Nadira Khannum Alvi, a journalist for the Pakistani
newspaper, The Nation. She was divorced twice before meeting Naipaul. Naipaul has two children from a previous marriage, Maliha Naipaul and Nadir. Patrick French, an unofficial editor for Naipaul has portrayed a tormented and displaced personal life of V. S. Naipaul who struggles for identity in The World Is What It Is: The Authorized Biography of V.S. Naipaul (2008). Even in July 2010, Naipaul was refused a PIO card (Person of Indian Origin) for lack of documentation to prove his Indian origin. The entire world knows and acknowledges Naipaul’s Indian origin but the government cast doubts on him instead of feeling a sense of pride that the grant celebrated Nobel Prize winner writer wanted a PIO card.

"Naipaul’s Pakistani wife Nadira had approached the Indian high commission in London recently for a PIO card for the author. Nadira, however, was completely taken aback when unfazed mission officials told her that the author could get the card only if he produced documents to prove that his ancestors lived in India or more specifically Gorakhpur in eastern Utter Pradesh where Naipaul’s maternal father is said to have lived."²

Naipaul is now an established writer of repute in post-modern era and has credited more than thirty books until now. Even in his 80s he does not extinguish his exploration. He has won abundant awards and honours for literature during his literary career of about five decades including the John
Llewellyn Rhys Memorial Prize (1958), the Somerset Maugham Award (1960), the Phonex Trust Award (1962), the Howthornden Prize (1964), the W. H. Smith Literary Award (1968), the Arts Council Grant (1969), the Booker Prize (1971). The University of West Indies conferred him The Hon. D. Litt. in 1975. He acquired the Bennett Award in 1980, the Jerusalem Prize in 1983, the Ingersoll Prize 1986, the T. S. Eliot Award in 1986. In 1990, the Queen bestowed a Crown of Knighthood to him and hence he is now Sir V. S. Naipaul. He has achieved the David Cohen British Literature Prize in 1993. Naipaul was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 2001.

The whole gamut of Naipaul’s writing, which has elements of high comedy and tragic pathos, has become closely associated with his individual quest for identity, meaning, home and community despite the alienating effects of colonialism. His fictional world may be conveniently classified into five successive stages. The first phase comprises the period of 1950s which is the period of apprenticeship during which Naipaul explores the life in Trinidad and analyses the postcolonial political panorama on the island. These early fictions are set in Port of Spain and the small villages of Trinidad like Chaguanas where V. S. Naipaul passed his early childhood. Naipaul has published his first fictional creativity in the form of The Mystic Masseur in 1957. In this novel Naipaul describes the career of Ganesh Ramsumair, lived on an imaginative island in Trinidad, who emerges through the chain of failures as a teacher, a writer and a masseur to be a sheer successful politician and then finally a disillusioned Member of the
British Empire i.e. M.B.E. His life is entirely made up of his own toils and struggles as dutiful and devious which give this person a chance of success. He is an embodiment of all the qualities that are indispensable and the most suitable to someone who wants to shine out in the society.

Ganesh Ramsumair of East Indian origin had been an unsuccessful school teacher who struggles to settle his life. During his struggles and wanderings he meets Mr. Stewart who shapes his future and sets him on the track of mysticism. Ganesh visits and eats everyday to his father’s friend’s house, Ramlogan. He marries to his daughter, Leela, who is shy and hates to hear lies. After his marriage Ganesh goes to Fuente Grove and tries to settle by forming a cultural institute there. As a gigantic reader, he produces books and brings an intellectual stimulation and develops a reputation throughout Trinidad. By curing a black child Ganesh acquires recognition as a mystic. Though there is no news of this incident in the newspapers but within two weeks his fame spreads all over the island and thousands throngs to seek his blessings. Ganesh then decides to spread his wings by challenging Pundit Narayan Chandrashekar and takes over The Hindu Organization, then opening his way to elevate for seat in the prestigious Member of the Legislative Assembly i.e. M.B.E. His entire life thus proves to be a search for recognition and identity. The novel opens with the following lines:

“Later he was to be famous and honoured throughout the South Caribbean; he was to be a hero of the people
and after that, a British representative at Lake Success.
But when I met him he was still a struggling masseur, at a
time when masseurs were ten a penny in Trinidad."^{3}

The Suffrage of Elvira, which saw the light of the day in 1958,
displayed mainly an election scenario with a campaign by Trinidadian Hindu
by the name of Mr. Surajpat Harbans, a PWD contractor, the owner of a
quarry and transport service to win election as a candidate from Elvira in
Trinidad and eventually he wins. The novel consists of an intricate and
cultured plot. Harbans contests an election and for controlling the Hindu
votes he appeases Chittaranjan; to bag the Muslim votes he must mollify
Baksh and manage to win away Negro votes from his rival candidate, the
Preacher. The novel employs the basic selfishness and hypocrisy of the
common residents- to the people of Elvira, 'suffrage' means a selfish
opportunity for personal gain. Naipaul depicts:

"They were crazily mixed up in Elvira, everybody,
Hindu, Muslims and Christians owned a Bible... Hindus
and Muslims celebrated Christmas and Easter. The
Spaniards and some of the Negroes celebrated the Hindu
festival of lights"^{4}

With the success of Surajpat, democracy arrived at Elvira. But the
approaching of democracy also brings along with it a realization of the
deficiencies of it. Harbans says that democracy is a strange thing. It makes
the great man poor and the poor man great. Democracy has made him beggar for he is begging for vote. Thus, Naipaul here portrays the problems arising out of the upcoming of democracy to a multi-racial and multi-cultural and multi-religion island.

*Miguel Street*, the first of Naipaul’s book to be written but published in 1959, is a portrait gallery of the inhabitants of an urban slum in Trinidad. It is a collection of short fictitious stories. All the stories take place in a derelict corner of Port of Spain, Trinidad, during Second World War. These stories are told by an unnamed West Indian boy who, grows up, starts to earn his own money and like Naipaul, finally leaves the island to study abroad. Thus, this novel explores that the narrator is desirous to forsake the island to establish his identity. This work of fiction contains a galaxy of colourful character sketches including Bogart, who received his name from the film Casablanca; Man-Man who goes from running for public office to staging his own crucifixion, is a real mystery to the people of Miguel Street; B. Wordsworth who sells his poetry for four cents; Popo the carpenter, who neglects his livelihood to build the thing without name; the dreaded Big-Foot as well as the lovely Mrs. Hereira. Thus through these portraits, Naipaul presents his own world excellently.

*A House For Mr Biswas*, appeared in 1961, often regarded as Naipaul’s masterpiece, which traces the tragi-comic story of Mr. Biswas, the Indian Brahmin living in Trinidad to establish his independence and
identity. The protagonist Mohun Biswas is born in the village of Trinidad at the hour of midnight which is an inauspicious hour in that country. He, along with his mother, goes to his sister Dehuti where he is admitted to the Mission School. He learns a lot of things from Jayaram but unfortunately this relation does not remain a lifelong. He leaves Pundit Jayaram in disappointment and goes to his aunt Tara to find out employment and monetary help. He received the job in rum shop of her husband’s brother but one day he is charged of stealing a dollar. Therefore he turns Mr. Biswas out of his shop. While walking on the main road he came across with his sister Dehuti’s husband Ramchand who escorts and gives him the job of painter. He then falls in love with Sama and marries her. But his married life doesn’t prove to be successful yet Sama delivers a female child, Savi and three years latter a male child, Anand. During Christmas days he presents a doll’s house to Savi. This presentation exposes his inner desire to have a house of his own.

After completing the half house, he goes to live there for relieving depression and tension in Hanumam House. But this does not exist long. In a dark rainy night he receives a mental shock and is carried to the Hanumam House. After treatment and getting job of a newspaper reporter and Community Welfare Officer his life is revitalized. He takes some money from Ajodha to build a house. He now won a house and in a way his long cherished dream is fulfilled. But very soon misfortune knocks at his door that loan begins to multiply and the department also abolished him from the
job. He again begins to suffer from mental depression and he dies at the age of forty six in his own house. In this way Mr. Biswas has been unfortunate from his birth, but all he wants is a house of his own- it is the basis of his existence.

Thus, the first phase of Naipaul’s literary career solved the enigmatic problem faced by him on the threshold of the beginning of his journey as a writer and resulted in the mainstream of the West Indian Literature. It also emerged in him an awareness of the thematic limits of his novels. In spite of his prolonged stay in England and his marriage with an English woman, Patricia Anne Hale, he had remained an outsider there. Due to the fear of sterility the second phase of Naipaul begins with his passages to India and Trinidad for acquiring fresh experiences and for searching his roots and ancestral identity. Naipaul’s second phase started with his return to England and his decision to settle there. The period of the 1960s in Naipaul’s life dedicated to this phase and produced novels like Mr. Stone and Knights Companion, The Mimic Men and A Flag on the Island.

Mr. Stone and Knights Companion (1963), is quintessentially English novel, in which Naipaul has moved from his native West Indies to an English setting. This novel exposes exclusively English characters and largely concerns with the theme of alienation and the protagonist’s quest for renewal in the midst of decay and extinction. The central figure called Mr. Richard Stone is a middle aged man who has achieved little in life and is
now rattled by thoughts of his coming retirement from the post of a librarian in a large commercial firm. The novel begins with winter and Mr. Stone’s house is described as cold, dark and empty place which reflects the gloom fear, loneliness and emptiness of his life.

“The 62 year-old Mr. Stone’s establishment, his ritualistic bachelor existence, his awkwardness in social gatherings, his undemanding and unimaginative office life and his hallucinatory moments in the underground station, are described in some detail to convey this loneliness.”

Although a conformed bachelor, he marries his maid Miss. Millington. Mr. Stone strikes an idea that of the ‘knights companion’, a group of people go in society to investigate cases of pensioners. The Knights Companion thus is Naipaul’s brainchild, fleshed out by Whymper, and is meant to give companionship and a social outlet to the retired people which emphasizes on the quality of human perseverance. In spite of physical suffering and defeat, Mr. Stone rises in the end above his predicament i.e. like Mr. Biswas he owned a house in England.

The Mimic Men (1967) gives us an account of the politics, dealing with society in the island called Isabella which is situated in the Caribbean. This autobiographical narrative marks an important landmark in the fictional career of Naipaul. The narrator of the novel is the chief protagonist called
Ralph Kripal Singh, a person of Indian origin, who passes his childhood on the island, Isabella, attends school in England, gets married with an English girl, Sandra, and comes back to his homeland where he acquires richness and rides the tide of patriotic fervour to political power. But eventually he is exiled from the island and settles down in London. Ralph Singh is an exiled or rather a withdrawn politician, tired by disillusionment rather than failure, finding an unambiguous expression in the novel:

“It was my hope to give expression to the restlessness, the deep disorder, which the great explorations, the overthrow in three continents of established social organizations, the unnatural bringing together of peoples ... I am too much a victim of that restlessness which was to have been my subject”

Thus, Naipaul presents the predicament of the protagonist to be the same as that of any modern man.

A Flag On The Island (1967) is a book of miniature fiction called novella which contains eleven short stories and is set in the Caribbean island. These stories are categorized into three groups. The first group, including the stories like My Aunt's Gold Teeth, The Raffle, The Mourners, The Heart and The Enemy, is dealt with the childhood experiences in Trinidad which seems to be the extensions of his early fiction. The second category comprises of the two stories like The Greenie and Yellow, The
Perfect Tenants focus basically on English characters in England. The third part included the stories where Naipaul focuses on narrator’s voices like A Christmas Story, narrated by a self-righteous Trinidadian Indian Christian school teacher; The Night Watchman’s Occurrence Book in which tentatively occurs the autobiographical elements; The Baker’s Story tells the success story of the narrator and lastly A Flag On The Island presents an American’s view of the past and present of Caribbean island. Black Baker starts his story with following words:

“Look at me. Black as the Ace of Spades, and ugly to match. Nobody looking at me would believe they looking at one of the richest men in this city of Port -of- Spain.”

In short, the novella employs the commercialization of the island and relates with the lost and borrowed identities.

After writing the novels on the theme of life in Trinidad, Naipaul exhausted the treasure of his memories of early life. In the third phase England became his permanent home since any quest for place outside England was rejected by him and he came to terms with his expatriate status forever. During these years of 1970s Naipaul started frequent travelling to distant countries as important resorts for nourishing his creative imagination which enriched the horizon of his writing career. Therefore, the three volumes of fiction- In a Free State, Guerrillas, A Bend in the River sustain the stream of his earlier fictions but they have now achieved a new
dimension, thematically as well as structurally. The main plot of these novels set in the named and unnamed African countries. In a way the themes of decolonization, postcolonial scenario and quest for identity still continue in his fictional world but he transfers them now to a new environment.

**In A Free State** (1971) is complimented and generalized by means of short stories set in Washington and London but the main substance of the novella is located in an unnamed African country. The fiction comprises a prologue and epilogue which enclose two short stories and a miniature novel i.e. novella. Naipaul here adroitly mingled the genres like short story, travel writing and novella to satisfy the demands of the material and thematic concern. Naipaul, **In A Free State**, portrayed the changing circumstances of the world. This book is an unhappy journey made by the exiles, the expatriates and the tourists coming from the different countries and different cultures that they are experiencing the feelings of rootlessness and homelessness. In the novel we find diverse people as Indians, Africans, Americans, Chinese, Egyptians, Germans, etc. In a way in this book V. S. Naipaul presents the predicament of modern man and his nationality which has lost its meaning and remains unfixed. Therefore the protagonist of this novella considers himself as a citizen of the world.

Naipaul's **Guerrillas** (1975) presents a vivid picture of the violent socio-political unrest and gloomy experiences in the Third World Nations from the view of the expatriates living in the colonial island after its
achievement of freedom. Naipaul exposes the rising of Black Power movement of the imaginary Caribbean island. The novel rotates around three major characters- Jimmy Ahmed, Jane and Roche and their action in the draught-ridden but independently governed Caribbean island. The story centers round a place Thrush Cross Grange, people’s commune which is established by Jimmy Ahmed outside the capital city. He enjoys a reputation as a respectable black leader of the one radical group of a tropical island. Peter Roche, a white South African, and his English mistress Jane come to this place and reside in a new house on the Ridge. The relations of Jane with Roche are now drying up and she is attracted to Jimmy for sexual satisfaction after discovering that Roche is a hollow kind of man. But Jimmy, the black native in the neo-colonial world, is bisexual, having relations with his friend Bryant as well as with Jane, tries to compensate for his basic insecurity by pampering in fantasies about his sexual and political potency that he brings his both current lovers together in a motiveless murder. Although the novel makes frequent references to guerrillas, none of them really exists and the emptiness of the lives of these characters as being a guerrilla is a universal dilemma of the modern world. As Jimmy Ahmed says:

“"When everybody wants to fight, there is nothing to fight for. Everybody wants to fight his own little war, everybody is a guerrilla.""
Naipaul's A Bend In The River (1979) is based on African subcontinent called a francophone African State which portrays the personal relationship of a narrator called Salim, an Indian Muslim, with a large number of other characters like his relationship with Metty, a son of one of the family's slaves; his relationship with Mahesh and Shobha, self-absorbed Indian Couple; with Zabeth, a small merchant cum magician and her son Ferdinand who becomes Commissioner; with Indar; with Nazuruddin, a businessman; with Raymond and his Wife Yvett with whom Salim has sexual affair; his relationship with father Huisman, a benevolent Christian whose knowledge ends in his murder. The title of the novel refers to a town situated on a bend on a river in Africa, far away from the capital city. The narrator Salim who has a small business, becomes a trader in a town on the bend of the river and travel a long way to the heart of the continent accompanied by Metty. This town is built by Europeans. They had visited there in search of gold and silver and stayed there until the end of the colonial rule. The novel traces that how Salim buys a small business and how he establishes in a French-Speaking Central African State. At the end of the novel Salim goes to England. As he travels to England, he describes the mobility, displacement and changing life of himself, as the representative of modern man. He says:

"I was in Africa one day. I was in Europe in next morning. It was more than travelling fast. It was like being in two places at once. I woke up in London with
little bits of Africa on me like the Airport tax ticket …
Both places were real; both places were unreal.”

From the mid of the 1980s, the change rushes over V. S. Naipaul’s writings once again and this is visible in all his writings—both fictional and non-fictional—of this period. The fourth phase of his writing career is marked by a series of books which mix literary genre and are also eminently autobiographical. In this phase Naipaul becomes critical and reveals the inadequacies of such societies which have unconsciously accepted the norms and values of colonizing forces. After his analysis of Trinidad and his observation of other African countries, Naipaul focuses on own self and has arrived at a final statement of reconciliation, happy ending and finding the center. *The Enigma of Arrival* and *A way in the World* are the only novels which belong to this phase.

*The Enigma of Arrival* (1987), a novel in five sections, tries to trace Naipaul’s attempts to forge a voice of his own, his ordeal and evolution as a writer. The first person narrator in *The Enigma of Arrival* closely resembles that of Naipaul himself, with his residence in a village near Salisbury, his childhood days passed in Trinidad, education in England, an emerging career as a writer and the accounts of journey made by him. This work is a fusion of fact, fiction and non-fiction and is a marvelous oscillation between the voice of the narrator and the voice of the author. The novel portrays an individual journey from one place to another, from the newly situated colony
to the ancient English countryside and from one state of mind to another. The arrival of protagonist or narrator in English countryside is the hope of deriving meaning to his long cherished self-esteem and position. But his solitude in the English surrounding haunts his feelings of morbidity, rootlessness and nothingness. He writes about the sources of his different kinds of pain and morbidity:

"In the most unlikely way, at an advanced age, in a foreign country I was to find myself in tune with a landscape in a way that I had never been in Trinidad or India (both sources of different kinds of pain)."\(^{10}\)

Naipaul realizes the smallness of his life when he looks the house and garden of Jack. In such a gruesome situation he finds it difficult to come out of his despondency. But soon miracle happens and his efforts and reflections blossomed with beautiful flowers that his creativity started spreading in all directions: from Trinidadian to African people, South American and Indian to the dark areas of the Third World.

**A Way In The World** (1994), classified as a novel which presents a very confessional and personal account of experience about journey and autobiographical reminiscences of V. S. Naipaul as a literary writer. In an interview in *Times Literary Supplement* by Aamer Hussain, Naipaul was questioned about *A Way In The World* and he answered:
"This book is a way of dealing with all the various strands of the Caribbean or New World background, the place, and all the different stages of learning about it...My story does have connections; they are associations."

V.S. Naipaul diffuses and orients varied ideas and suggestions through this novel. He gives information about Columbus’ discovery of the islands as well as he gives accounts of the origin of the name of the island called Trinidad. Naipaul has artistically mixed together literature and history i.e. technique of narrative and historical perspectives of time and space, drawing examples from Spanish and British Imperial History. There are a lot of autobiographical instances which throw a light on his past life through the protagonist or the narrative voice in the novel. For Naipaul, the entire world is a fictional arena pregnant with characters and stories ready to be experienced and textualized. He illustrates the ethnographic detail of the people as they are pale and black as hair and they exchange food, goods and news among themselves.

The fifth phase of Naipaul’s creativity has commenced with the turning of the twenty-first century. By this time he has become an international celebrity with a Diaspora profile in the rapid growing globalization on this earth. After proclaiming India as an area of darkness having no autonomous intellectual life in his travel writing, An Area of
Darkness (1964), Naipaul has made an admirable arrival with India in Half a Life (2001) and its extension Magic Seeds (2004). Half a Life (2001), a semi autobiographical work, is an evaluation of the lives of the people of mixed heritage in the countries called India, England, and Portuguese, Africa and their struggle to establish their identities. According to Naipaul exile is a sense of insecurity and anxiety for living half a life. The story of Half a Life is narrated by three narrators in three sections of the novel-the first part set in India in which a father greatly influences his son’s life by his choices and attitudes; the challenges of launching into a life of writing in the second section set in London; the third part set in Portuguese-Africa in which the narrator portrays the ambivalences of half a life i.e. the life under a colonial regime. They tell the tale of Willie Somerset Chandran, the protagonist, the son of a Brahmin father and a Harijan mother. The frequent use of letters in the text highlights the personal exchanges between the protagonist and the other characters like the writer Somerset Maugham, Willie’s sister Sarojini, the Portuguese-African woman Ana, whom Willie Chandran marries. In a way Naipaul transposes here many autobiographical elements through the protagonist Willie Chandran. Both of them suffer from nausea of cultural plantation. He reiterates and depicts the agony and dilemma of the immigrants in the wilderness of the foreign soil. Willie reflects on his loss of belongingness and the agony of being a non-entity:

“I don’t know where I am. I don’t think I can pick up my way back. I don’t ever want this view to become familiar.
I must not unpack. I must never behave as though I am staying. 

Thus, Half a Life presents the story of a race in search of a familiar face in the mirror of time and space.

Magic Seeds (2004) is the sequel to Half a Life (2001) in which the protagonist Willie Chandran who is always in the search for identity. He allowed one identity after another. After a nomadic life, in his forties, he succumbs to the encouragement of his sister, Sarojini and joins an underground movement in India. The revolutionary campaigns and imprisonment assure him that the revolution had nothing to do with what we are fighting for. When he returns to Britain, where his roaming began, and he becomes alienated from his own history, endures the indignities of a culture but finally he allows him to release his true self. He stopped writing and thought that he was responsible for his awful actions and hence he took the decision of ending such activities. Thus, Magic Seeds brings out the life of revolutionary commander Willie, his eventual arrest and self discovery in the caustic and humorous way. It is full of Naipaul’s exact and ruminative brilliance.

As an immense prolific writer, V. S. Naipaul has shown his great craftsmanship in handling the variety of non-fictional writings like travelogues, history books, essays, book reviews and articles for newspapers and magazines besides fictional pieces. Today, Naipaul stands himself as the
supreme stalwart personality with publishing the popular travelogues like The Middle Passage (1962), India: A Wounded Civilization (1977), Among The Believers (1981), Finding The Center (1984), India: A Million Mutinies Now (1990) etc. V.S. Naipaul is the homeless traveller who claims no country as his own. His feelings of rootlessness and homelessness produce a particular pain and in this panic state of mind he travels from one place to another and his travelogues explore the sense of fidelity to complexities of human life. His travel pieces are the part and parcel of his fictions. He discloses the same creative impression through his travel-books as well as his novels. His non-fictions give an account of close view of his ideas on himself. Louis James rightly quotes the comments of Naipaul in his book Contemporary Novelists (1986)

"I feel that my statement I make about my own work would be misleading ... the readers see what meaning if any, the work is for him. I consider my non-fiction an integral part of my work."

V. S. Naipaul belongs in the category of the travel writers such as David Herbert Lawrence, Graham Greene and V. S. Pritchett. His discursive books expose his expatriate predicament, his alienation and link with India, the condition of contemporary India and the structure of his sensibility shaped by the societies and the culture of India, Africa and West Indies.
The Middle Passage (1962) concerns with the travel experiences of V. S. Naipaul through and over the West Indies and South America. It gives information about the new kind of slavery and the degradation of the people in the five islands—Trinidad, British Guiana, Surinam, Martinique and Jamaica of which Trinidad became an integrity and obsession with Naipaul. He depicts the West Indies as a derelict land and his dislikes regarding the condition of life in the group of islands. Naipaul’s evaluation of Trinidad is not like detached observer but it is deeply rooted into his own unconscious mind. The book portrays an anguished quest for an understanding of the fragmented self. Naipaul has certainly caricatured the culture to comprehend his own exile and his own colonial subjugation of existence as about the problems of a client culture and a client economy. To Naipaul the history of these islands can never be satisfactorily told as nothing was created in the Caribbean:

"It was a Mediterranean which summoned every dark instinct without the complementary impulses towards nobility and beauty of older lands, a Mediterranean where civilization turned Satanic, perverting those it attracted. And if one considers this sea, which the tourist enlivens in his fantastic uniform as a wasteful consumer of men through more than three centuries."
Naipaul's three times travels enabled him to write the famous trinity of Indian travels: An Area of Darkness (1964), India: A Wounded Civilization (1977), India: A Million Mutinies Now (1990). His travelogues written on India depict Naipaul's efforts to comprehend his own past and mitigate his nagging understanding of not being too close to India but not too far from her. An Area of Darkness (1964) is Naipaul's second travelogue about his ethnographic observations of an ancestral land, India, with an imperialistic outlook of an outsider as well as an insider's sensitivity. It is a disgusting but objective narration of the first hand experiences in India by the humiliating compassion that his ancestors had to leave the mother land as indentured labourers. Naipaul had visited India with the intension of discovering India but with the rationalist views of the West he finds faults like malfunctions of the society and Government in India and therefore he calls her an area of darkness. To Naipaul:

"It was a country suspended in time ... the time when the transparence was made as a period of darkness, which also extended to the land, as darkness surrounds a hut at evening though for little way around the hut there is still light. The light was the area of my experience in time and place. And even now though time has widened, though space has contracted and I have travelled lucidly over that area which was to me the area of darkness.""15
India: A Wounded Civilization (1977) is the continuation of rigorous criticism and dialogues of V. S. Naipaul with India. This book established him as a severe critic and an anti India expatriate. He analyses here the present condition of India during emergency and then states his social, economic and political observations for which he uses newspaper reports along with personal and historical analysis. In this narrative Naipaul is seen as a seminal social critic and an exquisite prophet of doom, presenting possible solutions for the problems. He is deeply interested in waking up Indians in a polite tone before it is too late. According to him Indians cannot be enriched with the help of the past ideas and possessions. India can be developed by enquiry and talent, by intellectual rather than spiritual disciplines.

V. S. Naipaul’s India: A Million Mutinies Now (1990) is the projection of his personal life. This travelogue also shares some characteristics with earlier two volumes. It is a revision as well as continuation of approaches realizing his earlier inadequacies. This book also reflects the increasing knowledge of Naipaul about India. He has depicted the changed panorama in post independent India with a very sensitive sight. In his first visit to India, it was an area of darkness to him but in this travelogue that darkness converted into the streaks of a new light i.e. his perspective also turns from the negative to the positive, from pessimism to optimism. He delineates here his meeting and interactions with a large number of Indians from various sectors representing numerous cross
sections of society like the leaders of the Dalit and Shivsena in Bombay. To understand India, he undertakes a whirlwind tour through the prominent cities in India. Through his empirical quest in India, Naipaul arrives at his own optimistic and positive conclusion. He says:

“In India now what didn’t exist ... a central will, a central intellect, a national idea. The Indian union was greater than the sum of its parts—the states were a part of the beginning of a new way for many millions, part of India’s growth, and part of the restoration.”

The Loss of Eldorado: A History (1969) represents the results of Naipaul's diachronic historical perspectives about the West Indies from the time of the discovery of these Caribbean Islands in 1498 to the time of his writing this book. It focuses specially on the specific theme and myth of Eldorado, the South American city of gold. In this historical research-cum-narrative, Naipaul uses British travel reports and early histories. Here he recreates the scenes, characters, and events which shaped the dreams and the nightmares of the Caribbean people. This book is a collection of information about four centuries of the life in the West Indies. It is an instance of scholarly documented piece of writing which exposes Naipaul’s historical perception. In this book Naipaul has justified the dichotomous task of the historian who depicts individuals to illuminate historical process or
historical period, and the role of the novelist who is interested in individual physiology and morality.

The Return Of Eva Peron (1980) contains with Naipaul’s previously published four essays written at different times during 1970s on Michel X and the Black Panthers in Trinidad; an account of Eva Peron’s Argentina; a study of mobilization in Zaire; and a critical essay on Joseph Conrad. The documentary reports centers around the themes of homelessness feelings of insecurity, expatriation and the collision of conventions and the aftermath of modernity. Naipaul applies here the journalistic technique to textualise his travels. He has employed a pithy and factual style for the detailed documentation of these transcripts.

The Overcrowded Barracoon And Other Articles (1972) is a collection of extra ordinarily coherent essays published in various magazines and journals, which consists of four sections- An Unlikely Colonial, India, Looking Westward and Columbus and Crusoe. The harmonious assembly of articles is superbly communicated the account of the small colonies, their cultures their fantasies and their dilemmas. The section first consists of the early period of his life i.e. the theme of his identity. The second part on India shows different aspects concerning India and his efforts to encounter and understand India. The third section synchronizes the essays on Stainback, Norman Mailer and etc. The essays in fourth section contain informative essays on Columbus and his voyages. According to Naipaul there is no fixed
image of a West Indian. The Hindu immigrants do not belong to the West Indies but connect to the calypso because they live there. V. S. Naipaul reveals the hypocrisy of such Hindus who are called by their anglicized nick names and leading perfectly Hindu way of life.

“For among a certain class of Indians usually more prosperous than their fellows, there is a passionate urge... and they live perpetually outraged by the country, which gives them their livelihood.”

Among The Believers: An Islamic Journey (1981) based on his travel in Pakistan, and other non-Arabian Muslim countries in which Naipaul narrates his understanding of Islam. It is the thought-provoking book which describes the journey of an unbelieving observer among believers. He also narrates the reasons for his choice of this Islamic world. He depicts how he had developed in Trinidad with Muslims. He opines that he was never involved in the religious rituals and also describes his experiences in the joint family life. Naipaul analyses the revolution in Iran in sympathetic way. Within his abode of seven months he travelled to several Islamic countries like Iran, Pakistan, Malaysia and Indonesia. In a way, Among The Believers (1981) becomes the empirical study of Islam through the situations and characters he meets in these countries. He observes that the rise of Islamic fundamental consciousness which is shaping and interfering the global politics. He states:
“The fundamentalists, insecure, with their unhistorical view, feared alien contamination. But fundamentalism offered nothing. It pushed men to an unappeasable faith; it violated the ‘basic’; it could never wall out the rest of the world.”\textsuperscript{18}

\textit{A Turn In The South} (1989) describes the visit of V.S. Naipaul in the direction of South American countries. Naipaul here recapitulates a revision of his old idea about that country and its civilization. He inquires the resistance of the black people in South America and reflects on their sweeping transformation with the white people. The black and white people come from different backgrounds and belong to various classes—politicals, preachers, agitators etc. live here together. By looking this way of life Naipaul also reminds his childhood days when he was growing up in a black and white country. To him South America is a place of voices, passions and hopes of the people who live on the land. He attempts to understand the ugly appearance of slavery in the South America and compares it with the slavery in the British islands like Trinidad and Tobago which was abolished. He highlights:

“A slave is a slave; a master need not think of humiliating or tormenting him. In the hundred years after the end of the slavery, the black man tormented in the South...”\textsuperscript{19}
Naipaul enshrined the moments of the discovery of his self in his autobiographical narrative, *Finding The Center* (1984). He writes in an exhaustive way about the life he spent in Trinidad, his ancestors, the places associated with him during these days and the persons he met. The book contains two narrative pieces—‘Prologue to an Autobiography’ and ‘The Crocodiles of Yamoussoukro’ dealing with the process of his writing i.e. his beginning as a writer. However, *Finding The Center* reveals the creative process of Naipaul as an emerging creative writer. From his existence as a non-entity, he had to grow into a strong entity and *Finding The Center* is a saga of this creative faculty. He stresses the origin of his ambition of writing career is passed on from father to son. In fact the son seems to have fulfilled in an ambitious way, the blasted literary career of his father. The vision of history is a very striking aspect of all the Naipaul’s writing, whether it is fiction or just prose narratives. In *Finding The Center* Naipaul dexterously delineates the chronicle as well as mythical history of the life of Indian community in Chaguanas.

“I grew up with two ideas of history, almost two ideas of time. There was history with dates ... in Chaguanas, in the life of the Indian community, was almost unimaginable. It was a time beyond recall, mythical.”

*Beyond Belief: Islamic Excursions Among The Converted Peoples* (1998) presents Naipaul’s perspectives on Islam and depicts his second visit
in Indonesia, Iran, Pakistan, And Malaysia. Thematically and technically this book is a tag on of his earlier work, *Among The Believers* (1981), about his travel to the same four countries. Naipaul divides this book into four sections – in Indonesia, Iran, Pakistan, And Malaysian postscripts. The prominent theme that occurs throughout these various parts is the emergence of Islamic Third World Countries and its encounter and understanding with modern world and the conversion of people. Naipaul describes:

"It is less of a travel book; the writer is less present, less of an inquirer... a discoverer of people, a finder out of stories. These stories... make their own pattern and define each country and its promptings, and the four sections of the book make a whole."²¹

His explorations about Indonesia related with the impact of Western values on an agricultural country. In the session of Iran, he compares the histories of Iran and India. His observation on Pakistan is significant with some essential insights like the history of the origin of Pakistan with the problems of Mohajirs and Pathans. The fourth session, Malaysian Postscripts gives an account of Islamic missionaries spreading success stories of Islam.

Sir Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul, the Nobel Laureate Indian origin, has an excellent and conspicuous place in the kaleidoscope of the twenty-first century writers. Naipaul has distinctively developed as a direct delineator of the gruesome maladies of the people of the Third World
Nations and his fictional as well as non-fictional world presents a
topographic picture of the immigrant in the wilderness of the modern world
i.e. their disintegration, displacement, exile, loss of values and quest for
identity. These uprooted people, including the author himself, suffer from an
existential despair and their perpetual quest for home. Being an exiled
Diaspora-writer-coming from the indentured Indian community in Trinidad,
Naipaul made England his self proclaimed home at the initial stage of his
career but in the recent years of the present century, when he emerged as a
literary giant, India has emerged as his second home. His novels dexterously
depict the colonial as well as postcolonial conditions of the immigrants with
the perspectives of the marvelous luminary.
REFERENCES

CHAPTER - I


