Chapter – 3
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Naipaul in his interview with the magazine *The Tatler* (2008) remarks about his view on Multiculturalism, as quoted by Hasan Suroor:

Sir Vidia, who himself came here as an immigrant from Trinidad but quickly became a Pucca Sahib - dubbed by bemused fellow immigrants as ‘more British than the British’ - dismisses the idea of multiculturalism as absurd and says that new settlers should do more to integrate with the host society. ‘What do they call it? Multi-cult ... It’s all absurd you know. I think if a man picks himself up and comes to another country he must meet it halfway... He can’t say “I want the country, I want the law and the protection, but I want to live in my own way. It’s wrong.

Before landing in Naipaul’s Multiculturalism, we need to know what multiculturalism in general. The oxford dictionary says that multiculturalism, relates to the made up of several cultural or ethnic groups. Indian English has been accepted as unique style of discourse with its own nuances giving expression to Indian multiculturalism in the works of writers in India or those abroad. Not only how Indian writers, expatriates the third generation writers but also the classical authors wrote and expressed in current critical styles of multiculturalism. Postcolonial discourse is mainly about the location of cultures. In the domain of postcolonial different ethnic groups, based on their different original cultural heritages, have their ethnic, cultural and historical specifications. This newly emergent literary study describes an ongoing process of identity loss and identity recovery for non-westerners in the domain of postcolonial literature, different ethnic groups based on their different original cultural heritages, have their specification, hence the condition of the dislocated and dispossessed is poignant and complicated, because they cannot find a home of their own. The basic response
to such conditions is a search for identity, quest for a home, through self-discovery and self-realization.

The slave colonies of the West Indian islands, exemplify their genre to which many displaced people belong. They have been uprooted from their native land to be transplanted into an alien environment which gives rise to their sense of homelessness, placelessness, alienation, and deracination. Lacking a sense of belonging, they developed an inner urge to construct their subjectivity in order to confirm their own identity. VS. Naipaul himself experienced and repeatedly described in his fiction, this particular urge. Throughout his life he has desired, a place to identify with. From genealogical mining, especially in his homeland (the Caribbean), through the quest of his cultural roots (India), and finally to his place of education (England) - he has attempted to search for his own identity. Being an Indian by ancestry Trinidadian by birth, and an Englishman by education, VS. Naipaul possesses a multicultural background. As a colonial, he has always needed to locate his place in the world through writing. The multiculturalism effect on his life did not only come from his birth, parentage and background, but also through his travels. He travelled, as it was a way to understand oneself, to achieve knowledge. For him travel is not only significance for self-understanding but travel also made unsuspected demands on him as a man and a writer: perhaps that’s why it became a necessary stimulus on him.

In an interview, with Bernard Levin, Naipaul metaphorically explained his concept of multicultural identities. He puts: “I don’t think any of us can claim that we come from one single, enclosed, tribal world. We are little bombarded cells, aren’t we? Many things occur to make us what we are, and we surely live with all the things that make us.” (12)

The concept of multiculturalism, is an association of the terms, hybridity, mimicry, self-identity, imitation, colonized, third space, cultural translation, displaced exile, and all these discourses gets expressed in the forthcoming paragraph. A number of cultural theories
have expounded on the fluid of unstable status of “culture”, or “multi-culture”. Stuart Hall speaks of unfixed identity, James Clifford’s travelling theory, Doreen Massey of identity and place, Homi Bhabha of mimicry, hybridity and third space. All of these ideas can be applied to explain VS. Naipaul’s position. Travel also has a significant effect on one’s concept of place and home. James Clifford speaks of the need to rethink cultures as sites for dwelling and travelling. He sometimes equates ‘travel’ with ‘displacement’. Travellers are comfortable with more than one culture. They are affected by the sites they travel to, travelling and dwelling conjointly affect and help to determine one’s identity. Even if one had a largely mono-ethnic, mono-cultural background, one can be regarded (such as Naipaul) as a citizen of the world as a result of his excessive and constant travelling. Thus culture and identity may be relatively moveable, changeable, unfixed entities. However, Naipaul with a complex and diverse ethnic and, colonial background, needs a special kind of strength and resistance, a special ability to contain and manage his multiplicity of cultural identities.

In post colonial world the concept of identity is linked to a local sense of place and identity, effect of colonialism and globalization. In terms of Doreen Massey’s concept of multiculturalism, which includes the concept of identity and place, tying the traditional sense of place to one’s original roots can offer a stable identity. She explains that places do not have single unique identities, they are full of internal conflicts; conflicts over what its past has been i.e. heritage, and conflict over what should be its present development, conflicts over what could be its future. None of this denies the importance and uniqueness of place.

Homi Bhabha’s concept of multiculturalism is based on mimicry, hybridity, and the third space. At first ‘mimicry’ was the method by which the British imperial power controlled and dominated the colonized people in the nineteenth century. The British rulers made the colonials imitate the culture and language of the colonizer. Thus the ideology of the colonized was drastically changed and it became, as an inevitably a poor imitation of the
original, which was inferior to that of the colonizer. This effect of multiculturalism, was also seen in the writings of post colonial writers. The post colonial writers began to use mimicry as a counter strategy, writing back to the imperial power and at the same time negotiating their own, position or place with respect to the mother country. To take an example writers like Salman Rushdie and Naipaul used mock and parody to make fun of the masters, and the things that they have been taught. The process of mimicry thus creates a new entity through the difference between self and other. The colonized, always felt to be an alien, and a stranger. They never felt truly at home in any place, therefore all of these homes form for him hybrid identities.

According to Homi Bhabha, such hybridity leads to effective form of subversion. Further Bhaba employs the concept of the ‘third space’ to explicate the concept and the goal of hybridity. He elaborates that third space is a strategy for opening up the possible space of cultural discourse by transcending cultural hegemony and crossing over its historical boundaries. Bhabha says that the key point of multiculturalism is as tied to the initial form given by the host society or dominant culture. He also believes that multiculturalism has the influence of racism. Therefore he tries to look for productive space in the construction of culture as he shows that inspite of alteration, difference or otherness of culture, it has its own unique characteristics and that they are incommensurable. Thus he introduces a notion of cultural translation as a way of negotiation between two cultures. So multiculturalism also has the ingredients of cultural translation, which is passage between the original and the simulacrum. As it is a way of imitating an original which can be simulated, copied, transferred, transformed. Cultural translation opens up the, possibilities of articulating different, even incommensurable cultural practices and priorities. Bhabha further says that so called “Third space’ is thus produced in the process of translation, thus, negotiation, subversion, aggression leads to the formation of new sites. So multiculturalism, establishes a
new site of identity through the process of hybridization. In the genre of multiculturalism cultural and political identity is constructed. A kind of reshuffle is seen in multiculturalism, where we overcome the differences or misunderstanding between cultures and it leads to orientation, which will erase the misrepresentation and mere imagination of a given culture.

Naipaul plays a significant role in the post colonial writings. He goes through a series of life-stages between homelessness and home. His novelistic writings is a process of identity recovery, undergoing a series of transformation. He denies or negates his Caribbean homeland, adopts a stage of mimicry in England, searches for his cultural roots in India, and finally and reconstructs his identity out of his multicultural particularly and uniqueness. His writings can be categorised in four stages. Firstly of placelessness and alienation. Second of colonial predicament. Third of cultural heritage in India and fourthly writings for self definition. Thus Bhabha remarks about Naipaul’s position and says:

…By accepting his homelessness and statelessness, he recreates a new identity in exile. He makes a voice not only for himself but also for other marginalized people. Through writing, he translates his incommensurability to the world and articulates that representation of his cultural particularity. (59)

Truly, V.S. Naipaul belongs to the marginalized people. He intends to make a voice for his ethnic identity from the margin to the center. Apart from it Naipaul’s multiculturalism aspect has to be studied from the viewpoint of his extensive travelling, which gets expressed in his travelogues. He can be regarded as a citizen of the world as a result of his excessive and constant travelling. Thus for him culture and identity can be regarded as a relatively moveable, changeable, unfixed entities. This unfixed entity may lead to the tendency of belonging to nowhere or belonging to everywhere. This multiple identity, state of exile, of belonging to nowhere and yet everywhere, may lead to a period of solitude in life.
Naipaul’s multiculturalism, can be understood from his hybrid identity. Naipaul was educated in the mother country, and England remained his second home. Even Trinidad was an alien land for him because he always felt slightly like a stranger. He could not authentically feel truly at home in any one place, therefore, all of his homes, form his hybrid identities. He as an exiled writer could create his own place through travelling and writing. Let us explore Naipaul’s travel writings to study his views on multiculturalism and his attitudinal revelations.

Naipaul as a writer on the margins, the native Trinidadian, is a part, and yet not a part of the English milieu. He is both included and excluded from it by birth and growth, inheritance and history. Like other colonials, Naipaul was marginalized through the ideology and myths of Englishness, and through other experiences he began to learn to see himself exiled, and thus alienated. Naipaul is a person on the margins by inheritance, and choice. He is a child shuffled from house to house, as the son of an iconoclastic journalist, as an East Indian in a primarily black West Indian society, as a colonial in the English metropolis. The reflection of all these situations is seen in his travelogue, *The Middle Passage* (1962), his first travelogue, where we get his impressions of colonial society in the West Indies and South America. In this travelogue he treats the enduring effect of Caribbean Societies, histories of imperial depredation and depletion and colonial marginality. Further *The Middle Passage* is about clients and consumers who have consumed human beings by turning them to slaves. In this book Naipaul portrays five colonial West Indian and Caribbean societies: Trinidad, British Guiana, Surinam, Martinique and Jamaica. The book alludes primarily to the freighting of slaves between Africa and the America and to the Voyages of Columbus and other explorers. The slaves constituted of the West Indian immigrants.

Naipaul giving his impression on the colonial societies, writes that racial tension both in the colonies and in the metropolis are lasting effects of the empire. Racial attitudes can be
traced back to hundreds of years in West Indian history. As Naipaul puts... “The Creole Slaves.. looked upon the newly imported. Africans with Scorn, and sustained in their turn that of the Mulattoes, whose complexion were browner, all were kept at a distance from the intercourse of the whites” (27)

This was the marginality of their existence always at a distance from the centre. Like other colonials, Trinidadians have been forced to sell cheaply and buy dearly, to accept and to imitate. As a colonial people on the margins of empires, Trinidadians have learned to live in ignorance of their own history and in a fantasy. Trinidad was considered as a dot on the map of the world, thus he could never be convinced of the value of reading the history of Trinidad, and his history was buried and no one cared to dig it.

Writing about ‘British Guiana’ Naipaul says that in Guyana, he saw signs of the country, their hundred year slave era, thus the people had developed an attitude to be left alone. Thus here the effect of multiculturalism was different, as it had led to split of identity and isolation from milieu. Colonials believe that they have an identity only in relation to the metropolitan country and thus they think of themselves as marginal and insignificant. The slavery, the plantation system, the immigration of indentured workers, all these exploitation have created on unstable and shaky amalgam of people uncertain of their roots and doubtful of their identity.

Apart from documenting the dirt and squalor of the colonial people, The Middle Passage also records the failure of colonial Trinidadians and West Indians to discover their roots, to find a viable centre for their existence. The most important aspect that comes out of his book is that European colonialism reduces the colonial to an object, an entity devoid of an ‘I’, because colonial subjectivity has been denied, there can only be a hollow colonial mimicry of the European self. In West Indies and Caribbean colonial aspect, of which Naipaul himself is a part, we see that the colonial subject is in conflict of his own identity. He
Shankar portrays an anguished quest for an understanding of the fragmented self. He diagnoses the problems of the marginal man - uncertainty of identity, feeling of inferiority, scorn for one’s culture and society.

Vidiadhar Suraj Prasad Naipaul the native Trinidadian, is a part yet not a part of English milieu. He is both included and excluded from it by birth and growth, inheritance and history. He can be called as an exiled, who was enmeshed in the cultural collision. His dislocation from his root enables him to treat his own alienation as an instance of his quest for identity of colonial and post colonial people. Enmeshed in multiculturalism, he also shows his special interest and concern for India in his ‘Indian Trilogy’, *An Area of Darkness* (1964), *India: A Wounded Civilisation* (1975) and *India: A Million Mutinies Now* (1993).

Though a West Indian, he is actually aware of his roots in India. His vision of India gets projected in his writings. He like a traveller, sails to the land of romance at regular intervals, gets scenes and impressions to go back to write out accounts based on these impressions. In *An Area of Darkness* which is a record of his visit to India, Naipaul’s experience seems to be full of disillusionment, subjective and he seems to lack correlation with Indian psychology. All his reactions, views at this stage, show an attitude of a true Englishman, not a man with Indian background. At a point Naipaul writes: “Indian interpretations of history are almost as painful as the history itself; it is especially painful to see the earlier squalor being repeated today. India seems will never cease to require the arbitrations of a conqueror.” (202)

This bitterness regarding the historical degeneration of India shows his disillusionment. He finds Indian’s lacking in the sense of history. Rather he asserts that Indians have no sense of history at all. They retreat into fantasy and fatalism. Moreover, he ridicules the common Indian belief that in the Vedic period Indians possessed the knowledge of such device such as aircrafts, telephone, atom bomb etc. The claim that the age possessed
the knowledge of highly developed surgery and that every village was a self-governing entity merely shows the pathetic make belief world of the Indians to Naipaul. Also the claim that India was at the brink of industrial breakthrough before the British came to India, seems to astonish Naipaul.

Naipaul writes about the Indian civilization, and overlooks the age old richness of Indian society but concentrates on the trivial things like people defecating on the roads. Thus he writes:

Indian defecates everywhere. They defecate, mostly besides the railway tracks.
But they also defecate on the beaches; they defecate on the hills, they defecate on the river banks, they defecate on the streets, they never look for cover...
These squatting figures... are never spoken of; they are not mentioned in novels or stories... But the truth is that Indians do not see those squatters (70).

Naipaul’s view had raised strong and lasting offence, for critics. It is said that he had closed his eyes to the beauty, rich cultural heritage society. Anniah Gowda, remarks, that “Naipaul in his reminiscences, has chosen to shut his eyes to the India which is not defecating” (Naipaul in India’ *The literary Half Yearly*, 163). Taj Mahal the most landmark wonder of not only India, but also of the world, but Naipaul’s comment on this exquisite landmark is really alarming. He puts:

The Taj Mahal is exquisite. Transported slab by slab to the United States and re-erected, it might be wholly admirable. But in India it is a building tastefully without a function; it is only a monument to a woman not of India, who bore a child every year for ... (206)

Naipaul views that the Indian society only pretends to be colonial, for this reason its absurdities are at once apparent and it is the mimicry of an old country which has been without a native aristocracy for a thousand years and has learned to make room for outsiders,
but only at the top. He does not accept the fact that India ever had an aristocracy though we know India has a long history of aristocratic rules right from 1947.

Naipaul makes another observation on Indian personality by relating it to what he calls the ‘underdeveloped’. He mentions that in India caste and class are more than brotherhood; as it is that which defines a person completely. The individual is never on his own, he is always fundamentally a member of his group, with a complex operation, with a complex operation of rules, rituals and taboos. He even points out the fixture of specific hands in India for every activities, i.e. left hand to be used for intimate sexual contact and not right hand. He thinks that relationships are codified, and religion, religious practices, magic and animistic ways of thinking, lock everything into place.

Giving more focus on the Hinduism and its caste system Naipaul writes Hinduism and caste system are inseparable. He says, historically the origin of the caste system has its roots in social constitutes rather than religious injunction. The division of society into four main categories – Brahmans, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Sudras - further divided into thousands of sub- castes, culminated in the establishment of yet another category; the untouchables, who were considered outside the caste system altogether and related to perform the most unpleasant tasks in the community. The rigidness of Indian dharma, and caste system, gets experienced in these lines by Naipaul:

Five years ago, in Delhi, I heard this story, A foreign businessman saw that his untouchable servant was intelligent, and decided to give the young man an education. He did so, and before he left the country, he placed the man in a better job. Some years later, the businessman returned to India. He found that his untouchable was a latrine cleaner again. He had been boycotted by his class breaking away from them; he was barred from the evening smoking group. There was no other group he could join, no woman he could marry. His
solitariness was insupportable and he returned to his duty, his dharma he had learned to obey. (171)

In all these views, Naipaul estimates Indian that is looked at the country of his origin through western glasses, which present numerous unreal shapes when directed at lighted areas. This deprives him of a genuine and real view of Indian life. He at that stage was of the opinion that Indians lack depth and there is no original and powerful thinking in their works. He holds that all the disciplines and skills of India are borrowed. He goes to the extent of thinking that the ideas of the achievement of their civilization which the Indians hold in high regard are in fact given to them by the nineteenth century European scholars. These lines from his travelogue bring out his views: “India by itself could not have rediscovered or assessed its past. Its part was too much with it, was still being lived out in rituals, the laws, the magic, complex instinctive life that muffles responses and buries even the idea of inquiry.” (129)

We see that in An Area of Darkness (1964) which is an account of his first visit to India, Naipaul pours out a total sentiment of disillusionment, which in India: A Wounded Civilization (1977), which is an account of his second visit to India. Naipaul articulates his vision of India more fully and expands many ideas which are already contained embryonically in the earlier book, but this time shows a little understanding. In this book, Naipaul had made up his mind, and only need to prove it. In this book of 175 pages, he speaks of Indian civilization as a “wounded civilization” decayed and dying. Here, when he goes to India, he finds that all the disciplines, skills that India seeks to exercise are borrowed and it is forced, imposed.

Initially when Naipaul talks of Indian history, he thinks that the saddening elements in Indian history is the absence of growth and development. India hasn’t learnt lesson from the history, for Indian’s life goes on. On his second visit Naipaul seems to be concentrated on Hinduism, while remarking on Vijayanagar, he at first remarks it as a mournful
contemplation of Hinduism’s last stand against the Moghuls. He saw, Vijaynagar primarily circumscribed at a fixed point in history in whose ruins and sculptures some aesthetic pleasure could still be found and his later visit he views Vijaynagar as an historic anachronism of little culture or artistic value. He now sees Vijaynagar in the wider context of Indian history as an example of constant Hindu retreat and the intellectual depletion. He pours out his views as such:

It Vijaynagar lasted two hundred years, but during that time it never ceased to be embattled. It was committed from the starts to the preservation of a Hinduism that had already been violated and culturally and artistically it preserved and repeated; it hardly innovated., its ruins today in that unfriendly landscape of rock and boulders of strange shapes, look older then they are, like the ruins of a long superseded civilization. (17)

Naipaul appears irritated by Indian mimicry, and he advises Indians to reach outside their civilization and let others know that they are not at mercy. He further expresses that Hinduism and the caste system are often thought of as inseparable. Historically, the origin of the caste system has its roots in the social constitutes than the religious injunction. Mahatma Gandhi, who worked towards religious tolerance, eradication of untouchability and change in the Hindu attitude, was considered as unsuccessful by Naipaul. He faults Gandhiji for being against untouchability but not against the caste system. Gandhi, focused on the deprived, the untouchable and by doing so he attacked the social evil at its roots. The Government of India too outlawed the practice of untouchability. Special privileges have been constitutionally enshrined to further the educational, economic and social advance of the untouchables. Naipaul on the other hand thinks that first of all the psychology of caste has to be destroyed and if India is to progress, he thinks: “Reserving government jobs for the untouchables helps
nobody. It places responsibility in the hands of the unqualified; and the position of untouchable civil servants, whose reputation always go before them is intolerable.” (80).

Similarly, Naipaul also finds that at the core of the Indian predicament is the Hinduism itself. According to him Hinduism leaves men prepared for defeat and withdrawal rather than independence and action. Encouraging withdrawal from the physical and social world, Hinduism inhibits development of the individual and produces indifference to social ills; above all Hinduism’s great flaw is that it envisages no idea of a contract between man and man. Naipaul also sees Hindu Dharma as creative or crippling according to the state of the civilization and the quality of insight of Hinduism adherent. These lines illustrate Naipaul’s views more closely.

...the right way which all men must follow according to their natures? At its noblest it combines self fulfillment and truth to the self with the ideas of action as duty, action as its own spiritual reward... it touches the high ideals of other civilization..., but dharma can also be used to reconcile men to servitude and make them find in paralyzing obedience the highest spiritual good. (169)

Naipaul’s turmoil about India is clearly brought out in these lines: “India is for me a difficult country. It isn’t my home and cannot be my home; and yet I cannot reject it or be indifferent to it; I cannot travel for only the sights. I am at once too close and too far.” (8)

This is the true Naipaul, as when we approach Naipaul’s book about India, we see his misinterpretation, disillusionment. Actually we in India sing the glories of our nation, refusing to see our shortcomings. Naipaul basically an outsider, had rudely raised an accusing finger, but in hearts of hearts, being having his ancestral connection with India, shows understanding, as well as modulated attitudes in his later book India; A Million Mutinies Now.
At first visit to India, it was his inability to fit make him see himself as a person utterly displaced, later his return to India again and again, his minute and detailed study of the Indian landscape and its people speaks of an obsession and commitment and as a result his latest book on India becomes a celebration and a positive assessment of the confusion and cultural variety represented by India. In this book Naipaul virtually gives an account of the Indian response to its own history. On the whole, all the characters interviewed and described display a development and a consciousness of their history, a willingness to adapt and change, an ability to analyze their own past critically.

Naipaul has projected through his characters, a large vision of India, an India with a human association rather than a clannish, caste based obligation, an India which will utilize all the bravery and the skills of its people towards building a better nation. Here he admits that his return to India after 27 years had been different from his visit in 1962. He had now shed what he calls his ‘Indian nerves’ abolishing the darkness that separated him from his ancestral past. Now Naipaul thinks that India after the dark eyes of invasion, vandalism and wars, freedom movement is now heading to a kind of liberation. It had awakened people to a knowledge of who they are and what they are themselves and this liberation of spirit has taken the form of rage and revolt. So India is now a land of a million little mutinies. These mutinies become necessary stepping stone towards India’s growth and its restoration. Naipaul describes in this book is the direction from which the winds of change blow.

He specifically mentions the dalits celebrating Dr. Ambedkar’s birthday in Bombay. Now with his changed view, he puts that the alienated selections of society forming themselves into groups speaks of an awareness that derives strength. Similarly Mr. Patel the middle class Hindu, derives his confidence from the worship of deity Ganesh. Anwar derives his strength from his Islamic faith. Naipaul’s tour of Bombay brings him into contact with every cross section of that city. Papu the stock broker, Mr. Patel the Shiv Sena area leader,
Anwar the young Muslim, the Hindu Gangster, the Dalit poet Namdeo and his wife Mallika. They all think well of the groups to which they belong and yet are analytical. Each member of society believes in his own religion and brotherhood Bombay is a city of many faiths, races and conflicts. The city with its squalor and opportunity produces a variety of effects on its citizen.

Moreover the writer from Bengal Subroto, with his optimism and unworthiness, prompts Naipaul to think that India as a mismatch between dreams and setting. It is a land of writers, religious men, social workers, reformer and well-wishers in search of a common cause capable of uplifting the whole nation and allowing them to exercise their noble sentiments of brotherhood and community. Naipaul sojourns owns in the other part of India whether it is South India, Bengal, Punjab or Kashmir, presents to him the same picture. Though there is a resistance to change and an adherence to a prescribed way of living, it is generally giving way to new way of seeing and feeling. These winds of change bring hope with them for the better – men and women opening upto broaden visions of community. These men demonstrate a step by step rising. Thus Naipaul ends the book with following sentiment;

I find solace in both ways of thinking. The historical way shows me that human destiny is above this- our sufferings, our little problems. This idea of human destiny shows me that we are really moving towards a better world, in spite of the trouble and conflagration. The religious way teaches me endurance, reconciliation with the divine plan of which this is a part, but with hope and belief in a better future. (381)

We get some more useful insight into Naipaul’s views about third world, specially Argentina in his publication, *The Return of Eva Peron* (1974-74). In this book, he attempts to link the South American dilemma with that of the Caribbean and the colonial condition. In the essay
in *The Return of Eva Peron* Naipaul extends his vision of loss to include all the people of the Third World who live in “These dark or remote places who for whatever reasons are denied a clear vision of the world” (215)

Naipaul’s *The Return of Eva Peron* (1980) presents three non-fiction novels followed by an article on Conrad’s Darkness. It deals with three countries of three different continents - Trinidad, Argentina and Zaire, which share among themselves their colonial past and good many features of the contemporary age. Naipaul endeavours to explore the darkness a universal phenomenon, on it prevails in common wealth countries. The darkness signifies a number of things like corruption, exploitation of the weak by the powerful and orgy of confrontation, horrors of killings, despair on the part of the people, poverty, unemployment, criminal tendencies and the atmosphere of anarchy. Naipaul suggests that they are self created problems.

It is also unfortunate for them that their leaders do not actually lead them, rather mislead them, and instead of bringing them out of slavery and poverty they push them towards them. They are all self-styled leaders without vision and intellectual sharpness to steer the country towards overall progress. The sufferers are the people of this third world, who live in these dark or remote places, who for whatever reason, are denied a clear vision of the world” (*The Return of Eva Peron*, 215). These people they either torture or are tortured. What happens to them remains suppressed, it is no movement at all. Naipaul beautifully puts the condition of Argentina in his words as such:

*What happens in Argentina is really new, because there is no movement forward; nothing is being resolved. The nation appears to be playing a game with itself; and Argentine political life is like the life of an ant community or an African forest tribe: full of events, full of crises and deaths but life is only cyclic, and the year always ends as it begins.* (100-101)
The uneventful, dark situation of the third world countries, specially Trinidad, Argentina, Zaire can be assigned to the slavery and poverty striken people. Their unscrupulous, power hungry, corrupt leaders. They always engrossed in their own prosperity and exploit the innocence and the helplessness of the simple folk. These are those groups of people who have failed in all other jobs and professions and so have turned to the field of politics. Some of them like Eva Juan Peron and Mobutu achieve key positions in the government without any talent for leading the country. Naipaul in his writings works at different political, social and cultural institution, which provides opportunities to such parasites.

These people, achieve importance partly by ugly means and partly by favors of fate. They are involved in distancing other people from attaining such importance in their lives, because they do not want to share importance with anyone else. They crush those people who challenge them. They approach the common people exploit their appetite for their roots, identity and prosperity. We get the reference of Micheal de Freitus and the innocence of his followers in Trinidad. He traces Micheal’s career in England as a black leader, then his arrival in Trinidad and his turning into a popular mob leader. He is the master mind behind the murder and is eventually asserted sentenced to death. So Micheal de Freitus, a non-entity migrates from West Indies to London with his family, fails in all profession and becomes a political hero as a leader of the Negroes living in ghettoes. In this work Naipaul messages “freedom does not just mean full knowledge of one’s own individuality but is experienced as a sense of rage against oneself and others, a rage which leads inevitably to anarchy. Naipaul’s journey into the Islamic world has been worked out in Among the Believers and Beyond Belief. In these works he attacks on Islamic cultural and religious practices. On the other hand he gives a strong impression of the unity of Islam and the diversity of Muslim and Muslim cultures. His portrayal of Islam, their way of life, their decency, intelligence, though he feels
that it has little to offer the rest of us as a faith. These travelogues give us an account of his visit to Iran, Pakistan, Malaysia and Indonesia.

Naipaul in this travelogue puts: Islam, neither a country, nor an ideology;

The Islamic world had for some time begun seriously to interfere with the tidy categories of First and Third world encounters, and the advent of the Iranian revolution only consolidated the growing chain between a newly defined east and west. Capitalizing on a timeline that the fast unfolding global events seemed to demand... (148)

He deals his personal encounters with hotel staff, guides, interpreters, and his travels against the backdrop of larger political events. Naipaul stresses on the magnitude of events in Iran, Shia Islam. He attributes the rise of the Shiite faith, to political racial differences in the eight century. He writes about the historical origin of Shia Islam and it provides him with a central reference for Islam’s resurgent function in its challenge to the West

In Iran, Naipaul’s principal guide and interpreter has socialist leanings and represent, those who viewed the revolution in secular terms. He was fascinated by the stirrings of the Iranian resolution, and in particular by speeches given by exiled clerics calling for the overthrow of the Shah. He believed that the development of Islamic radicalism, and the idea that it might be a serious threat to the world, became a obsession for him. He assumed that as French Patick puts about him: “Islam, with its emphasis on a text written in Arabic and on pilgrimage to holy places in Saudi Arabia, was innately imperialist, requiring its followers to diminish their native culture.” (398)

Naipaul’s interest was less in Islam than in Muslims; in what they thought and did in the countries he visited. He further puts his views about Islam as such:

Islamic revivalism or fundamentalism, as it has developed in the postcolonial era... Each country has a quarrel with the modern world; and my own feeling
Shankar

is that Islam, in these countries, is as much a looking away as a looking back. It is despair, a recognition of intellectual and scientific incapacity. Is it nihilism? Doesn’t this kind of anti-intellectual movement commit these countries to a continuing dependence on the technology and science of the West? (397)

Apart from his views on Islam, Naipaul encounters few women. Each of these encounters he does, reflects random confirmations of an array of these restrictions upon women. *Among the Believers* stands as a sort of personal interlude in Naipaul’s career of discovering the world. In his search for “Islam on display” the people he encounters do not sit easily with the ideas he formulates, leaving him with a less certain view about group identification and ideological allegiances.

*Among The Believers* have aroused a good deal of disapproval in the Muslim civilization. Bernard Lewis stood against Naipaul and expressed that *Among the Believers* was not a work of scholarship. It is the result of close observation by a professional observer of the human predicament. He also puts that Naipaul has a keen eye for the absurdities of human behavior, in Muslim lands as elsewhere.

After *Among the Believers* Naipaul once more wanted to write a reprise of it. In a new global political climate, he returned to Iran, Indonesia, Malaysia and Pakistan to look at the future of Islamist ideology through the fate of countries and personalities, he had encountered in 1979. It took the form of *Beyond Belief*. In this book Naipaul writes:

This is a book about people. It is not a book of opinion. It is a book of stories. These stories were collected during five months of travel in 1995 in four non-Arab Muslim countries - Indonesia, Iran, Pakistan and Malaysia, so there is a content and theme. Islam is in its origins an Arab religion. Everyone who is
not an Arab who is a Muslim is a convert. Islam is not simply a matter of conscience or private belief. It makes great demand. (478)

In this book Naipaul wrote about ritual purification, sacrifice, Islamic martyrs, mujahidin, Taliban issues. He also wrote about the idea that an individual’s devotion to a perceived idea of Islamic teaching might push every other consideration aside and lead him to unconscionable acts. In this text, Naipaul’s perception arose, as before, from the combination of his sharp eyes, and a precisely developed control of his own talent and complete confidence in his ability made him analyse a wider situation. Beyond Belief concentrates on personal stories. He writes about Mr. Jaffrey, Ayatollah Khalkhalli. He writes, Mr. Jaffrey - sitting behind a high standard typewriter at the Tehran Times eating a dish of fried eggs - had fled to Pakistan under suspicion of being an American Spy and died in 1990. He writes about Iran’s sinister hanging judge Ayatollah Khalkhalli, now very small, completely bald, baby-faced without his turban. He writes about Shahbaz, the English Public School educated Pakistani with a tale of his time in a guerrilla fighter in Baluchistan. Naipaul’s peerless eye does not remain closed. He writes about Kentucky Fried Chicken outlet in old Tehran.

Naipaul received various adverse and mixed comments related to Beyond Belief. Michael Ignatieff in New York Times (7 June 1998) wrote: “Beyond Belief was not anti Islamic in any easy way, and it is unfailingly perceptive about how true believers handle the discordance between their dreams of godly life and ungodly reality…”

Anatol Lieven in Financial Times (2 May 1998) writes “The author’s warm sympathy even for many of his Islamist subjects, a sympathy which gives this book its deeply moving quality … his most justifiably bitter criticism of Islam relate to its treatment of women.”

Next Naipaul travelled to Pakistan, and he meets, bureaucrats, military men, lawyers, politicians and editors. He relates us the story of Pakistan’s society through a character Nadira. Nadira’s father, did not look at people as worms, no matter how poor they were, but
wouldn’t let them go to the houses of low grade Kashmiris or Punjabis. He would be shocked that she found happiness with an indentured labourer’s grandson. She suffered a disjointed childhood, jumping between cultures. Learning of proper Urdu was must in the society. It was by Nadira’s view, Naipaul was wonder struck by the merciless society of Pakistan. She writes (*Frontier Post*, 13 February 1993):

… she belongs to a lower middle class family where girls are confined within the walls of the house once they reach puberty... The limited amenities available such as education, medicine, or even choice morsels of food, were always reserved for the men.

Next in 1989, *A Turn in the South* describes Naipaul’s journey through the deep South of America. In this book, he explores an exquisitely painful subject: race relation in the South United States, and reveals the tragedy of their condition. The volume starts with contacts with African American in New York and a trip to Harlem followed by a preliminary excursion to the home of one of his hosts, Howard in North Carolina. It is here that Naipaul is provided with a scheme that eventually serves as a ground plan for his subsequent investigation. These lines give a peep into the scenario of African Americans, when Howard’s mother reacts:

“Black people there, black people there, white people there. All this side black people, all this side white people, white people, black people, white people.” (10)

Naipaul begins his journey is search of truths about the ‘race issue’ but his real pleasure of the trip is with that other south of order and faith, music and melancholy. He focuses on the white-dominant views of the South. Naipaul receives much of the information about racial identification among his black interviewers with a degree of personal identification.

In *A Turn in the South* (1989) Naipaul describes riding with a black woman through the countryside of North Carolina. Naipaul’s companion Hetty in familiar with the landscape
and its population, and she neatly classifies on the inhabitants for Naipaul’s benefit, and it provides an appropriate starting point for the writer’s exploration of the south east corner of the United States. Though Naipaul’s perspective is that of an outsider, but as the travelogue unfolds, Naipaul’s own colonial background allows him to see what the native southerners fail to notice a culture bound by habits that may be referred to as rituals of passivity. Naipaul in his book further writes, that the southern culture embraces rituals, they totally avoid the reexamining the inequalities of race relations, and the need to agitate for change. A Turn in the South uses carefully constructed irony to castigate American for their racism and southerner, for their passivity. Here he also directs his attention towards the southern states of the United States, so that a small segment of the so-called First world comes under his scrutiny. Naipaul’s narrative moves from North Carolina through Georgia, South Carolina, Florida Alabama, Mississippi and Tennessee before coming to halt - where it began in North Carolina. Some parallel also comes in focus between American South and places of author’s native Trinidad. The economics of both the south and Trinidad once depended upon slave labour and the people of both locales might be represented as engaged in the efforts of cultural recovery from colonial rule.

Naipaul further tells us how the southerners after the Civil war, had to confront the end of slavery and to endure the encroachment of Northern industrialist values. Northern military occupation of the South ensued that many southerners viewed themselves as being a colonized people. That’s why Naipaul quotes Anne Siddons in A Turn in the South and says: “…we are a colonial people … we were a conquered and occupied people, the only people in the United States to be like that.” (40)

Reviews like C. Vann Woodward found Naipaul an especially appropriate observer of southern culture, especially since he had acquired an ethnic neutrality as a Trinidadian with Indian ancestry (7)
Naipaul’s approach to the native people in the book is judgmental. He describes that the inhabitants of southerners were divided as black people and white people, and they were quite unwilling to make meaningful changes to those boundaries. He describes the south and its racial troubles without accusing southerners for their inability or unwillingness to mount effective challenges to established racial code. He sees psychic avoidance and moral passivity in the American South. He does not directly state his views, but the decisions he makes as a writer - the diction, the choice of subject matter, the arrangement of the text - imply a deeply ironic stance. Instead of writing an objective travelogue, Naipaul creates an ironic indictment of the First world’s self-proclaimed superiority. Despite all of its rhetoric democracy and equality, the United States in Naipaul’s books harbours, within its own borders, a deeply divided southern subculture that nurtures and perpetuates racism through rituals of passivity.

As Naipaul pursued his travels, he noticed specific divisions that kept whites and black races socially segregated. In first few pages of the book, he visits his friend Howard’s home town, where there was a small town centre, a small rich white suburb attached to that town, and then outside that a black area. The differences were noticeable. Naipaul’s use of irony and adjective gives it a particular perfection:

The centers in town is small; the white suburb is small and rich; the black area just is ... white suburbs could get by quite well without the black - run city center... the white professional people of Atlanta seem to live in a sort of bubble that protects them from the black people around them. (179)

Naipaul gives sufficient example in his support to bring out the racial discrimination that persists in the Southern America. He also notices the limitation of religious attachment. The religion of the south promotes passive acceptance and the creation of rituals that help to perpetuate passivity. He gives us an example of Danny who believed in Christianity. According to Danny a musician, he believed after accepting Christianity that success no
longer depend on personal achievement but in having the peace and joy of knowing that God loves you. Naipaul found that in southern region blind faith was mindset in the people, who did not believe in personal achievement but faith. He also cites the example of Paula, a woman in North Carolina, who was a devout believer, and she explains to Naipaul that she has had trouble with her husband because, Satan was tempting her with an ex-boyfriend.

Thus Naipaul finds that if religion is identity and identity is religion, then the primary ideals of religion should be visible in other aspect of quotidian life.

Thus the chapter stands Naipaul’s multiculturalism in its diversified forms with reference to his various travelogues. Thus Naipaul himself exclaims to his travelogue “The Great Discovery”.
Works Cited


