India: A Wounded Civilization: Self Awareness
"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 only for the sights. I am at once too close and too far."1

A Wounded Civilization begins with the above statement. Being the very first statement of the book, it reflects the author’s mental make-up. Overall, the book tries to analyse the concerns raised in An Area of Darkness. Though, initially, A Wounded Civilization appears similar to Area of Darkness but Wounded Civilization is more analytical in tone in comparison to Area of Darkness. Apart from this, Wounded Civilization is different from Area of Darkness in some other ways also like there was chaos in Area of Darkness but Wounded Civilization is more organised. Naipaul endeavours to find out the answers of the questions that were raised in Area of Darkness through history, literature and politics. Wounded Civilization could be seen as the second stage in the development of Naipaul’s idea of nationhood.
India: A Wounded Civilization is the second book of his "India" trilogy, after An Area of Darkness, and before India: A Million Mutinies Now. It was on his third visit to India, prompted by the Emergency of 1975, that Naipaul came to write this book. There is a third idea in India: A Wounded Civilization, which has proved controversially prophetic. The book was written after a journey occasioned by the crisis in India's political life which resulted in the state of Emergency declared by Indira Gandhi's government. In this text, Naipaul adopts a more analytical approach than before on Indian outlook while recapping and penetrating through the feelings previously aroused in him by this huge and inexplicable country. What he observed on this visit reinforced in him a conviction that India, wounded by many centuries of foreign rule, has not yet found an ideology of regeneration. Reviewers have described it as a work of fierce candour and precision.

It extends the Diaspora of Naipaul. In this book, Naipaul searches, in an organized way, through history, sociology, politics and literature unlike the disordered alteration between approval and denial of India in Area of darkness. Like area of darkness this book too begins with the author and his mental structure. The outlook is defined as a diasporic one.
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Just like Salman Rushdie, Naipaul’s writing sometimes goes very abstract that comprehending them becomes very difficult. Rushdie writes fiction but Naipaul’s this writing isn’t actually a fictional work. Naipaul’s writings are very evident of his candid thoughts and upfront nature. He does seem to be prejudiced by any ideology or any theory. He just speaks out his mind without paying heed to anything. This may be because of the reason that he is not an Indian. Indian authors in general try to view everything through west’s eyes and make same mistakes which people like Nehru made. Nehru who never studied in an Indian school and who never had an Indian classmate often shows his ignorance to India’s nature in his discovery of India time to time. Naipaul doesn’t really go deep into India’s politics. But he does try to analyze Indian behaviour and makes some conclusion that in today’s political scenario will certainly hurt both the secularists as well as right wing Hindu organizations. But to his opinion there is hallow of honesty. His statements hurt but within ourselves. We know that it is the truth. Naipaul says that Indians over the influence of Hinduism developed a mental state to seek no change. No change of rulers, no change of customs. This in some way keeps it vulnerable to more foreign attacks. It is very much understandable that why Naipaul welcomed
the destruction of Babari Mosque when every Indian author was busy portraying as a blot on India’s tolerant image. But his criticism on Hindu civilization is equally harsh but yet very different from the secularists. The basic premise of the book is that the India need to move to future while coming on terms with its past. An excerpt from his book:

“dinner that evening, high up in one of those towers, a journalist touched the subject of identity. ‘Indian’ was a word that was now without meaning, he said. He himself was in his thirties, of the post-Independence generation, no longer knew who he was. He no longer knew the Hindu gods. His grandmother, visiting Khajuraho or some other famous temple, would immediately be in tune with what she saw; she wouldn’t need to be told about the significance of the carvings. He was like a tourist; he saw only an architectural monument. He had lost the key to a whole world of belief and feeling, and was cut off from his past.”

It explained his frenzy. His idea of India was one in which India couldn’t be accommodated. It was an idea of India which, for all its seeming largeness, only answered a personal need: the need, in spite of the mess of India, to be Indian, to belong to an established
country with an established past. And the journalist was insecure. As an Indian he was not yet secure enough to think of Indian identity as something dynamic, something that could incorporate the millions on the move, the corrupters of the cities.

For the journalist, though he was an economist and had travelled, and was professionally concerned with development and change, Indian identity was not something developing or changing but something fixed, an idealization of his own background, the past he felt he had just lost. Identity was related to a set of beliefs and rituals, knowledge of the gods, a code, and an entire civilization. Naipaul has said that the loss of the history intended the loss of that civilization, the loss of a basic idea of India, and hence, the loss to a nationalist-minded man, of a motive for action. It was fraction of the sentiment of futility of which numerous Indians spoke, fraction of the yearning for Gandhian times, when the idea of India was genuine and appeared full of assurance, and the ethical matters clear.

Naipaul has mentioned his notions of the farm workers and labourers of North Bihar and Rajasthan. After independence, for more than two decades, Bihar remained occupied with brutality and poverty which was ‘The cultural Heartland’ of India once. The
people were ignorant; they had a submissive acceptance of suffering and poverty, and because of this there was hardly a room for thoughts of change. When Naipaul visits Rajasthan, he observes two different examples of how development had come to the state. He notices dams and irrigation schemes being worked on to remove their technical faults. In a village, he saw the farmers implementing latest agricultural proficiencies. There was electricity in the village and some other apparent symbols of development. But, the women were still debarred from all this. When the commissioner started one of its important discussions, they departed under their veils.

This book is a difficult read, partly because of the subject matter it deals with and partly because of the profoundness that Naipaul shows which is difficult to be comprehended by a common man. One may not agree to all he says but there is lot that we wish we could have chosen to ignore. Indian nationalism had reminded the Indian past but post-independence development schemes were frontward looking. National pride was directly associated to magnificent past. The magnificence of the present was yet to be erected. The institutions for growth and development were not bringing the desired results as they were the borrowed ones. The past which was so admired was incapable to provide a substitute for
borrowed institutions and this was the crisis of India. Referring to the Emergency Naipaul says:

"The turbulence in India this time hasn’t come from foreign invasion or conquest; it has been generated from within. The crisis of India is not only political or economic. The larger crisis is of a wounded old civilization that has at last become aware of its inadequacies and is without the intellectual means to move ahead."³

Among the three books Naipaul has written on India (An Area of Darkness, A Wounded Civilisation and third, A Million Mutinies Now), A Wounded Civilisation has to be the most scathing of them all. While the other two are travelogues in nature, A Wounded Civilisation is more of a critique - an analysis.

It's really complex to soak up the whole lot he says in one reading because the book is so intellectual in nature, - this most definitely necessitates to be revisited to scrutinize clearly the various points the author raises.

As expected, it's the pessimistic, brutal side of Naipaul one gets to see, divulging India for all that troubles it. Unsurprisingly, he doesn’t give the country the due space.
The book was written after the Emergency (1975) got over and Naipaul makes a influential disagreement about how the country's political collapse is really the least of its concerns. He makes a case for how the Hindi way of life (with its customs, beliefs, myths, mysticism and orthodoxy) prevents the country from ever shedding the burden of its past and idea of the 'self'. He is of the opinion that this has crippled Indians and their academic capacities, leading to them seeing everything from the prism of their own restricted mental scope. The spirit of science and enquiry cannot exist amidst such primitivism, he says.

Naipaul uses his favourite writer R K Narayan's works to investigate into the deep-rooted mental and attitudinal problems from which India itself suffers.

He's critical about some aspects about Gandhism and how its result was the deification of poverty itself. Naipaul is especially critical of avid Gandhian Vinoba Bhave, who he says, created a useless archaic model of Gandhi's legacy.

The crisis of India appears to Naipaul as the starting of the loss of an old equilibrium. Earlier in the chapter he had recognized this equilibrium as being a sheer frontage to conceal a great inequity.
Though Naipaul does not mention it, the disturbance of this equilibrium and the subsequent crisis can only be the starting of a positive development. One more example of the old equilibrium is drawn from literature. R.K. Narayan’s unexamined sense of continuity as being a typically Hindu simplification of reality. V.S. Naipaul seems to have been impressed by R.K. Narayan. Previously, he had read Narayan’s novels as social comedies. Like no one has done never before Naipaul analyses Narayan’s various books to show that even from high level this looked like lightweight ironical comedies about India there is more to it. India, a place where many claim to have found peace, in fact, he says, is by ignoring the actual world. They chose to ignore it because they don’t have the courage to face the truth that it is shattered. Narayan’s work appears to Naipaul more similar to Hindu religious parables.

For everybody living in India, be it the lady who married a foreigner or the prince or the vast majority who lived in villages and in towns. They thought the chain of incidences which occur to them was in accordance of some divine plan which human cannot perceive. India was not to be judged. This ideology stands base to the age-old equilibrium, which Indians visualizes as the evidence of the continuity of India for eternity. In his next chapter, 'The
shattering world', Naipaul attacks this idea. By quoting R.K. Narayan- 'India will go on', he starts and discovers that even in the crisis like emergency, the illusion of the old equilibrium remains unmoved. But, a change was also apparent. Naipaul spots this change in R.K. Narayan’s journey from Mr. Sampath to The vendor of sweets. Sampath was R. K. Narayan’s comedy about a printer in Malgudi. Naipaul explains beautifully how the protagonist’s actions which in reality are assumed to be humorous in the story actually mirror the general approach of Indian people towards the reality.

In The vendor of sweets, the sweet vendor Jagan is a believer of Gandhi. He was a pious Hindu who has done his bit for the independence of India. But, at the same time he does not pay his sales tax. Jagan does not know the meaning of independence or self-governance. His idea of nation was limited to his idea of Gandhi. He deceives the same government by not paying proper taxes for which, once he desperately undergone police tortures at the time of fighting for independence. Later in his book, Narayan jokes that if Gandhi has asked people to pay their sales tax properly, Jagan would have done so. In this double perception of Jagan, Naipaul observes a decadent idea of Hindu morality. Naipaul’s theory is that the old equilibrium has devastated with the world opening up. For speeding
up the development process, independent India needs a different kind of devotion. India needs to devote in science and industry. Jagan’s idea of his world was restricted and fragile and so it broke. Jagan fled the world in anguish. His renunciation was not the peaceful, composed and self-willed renunciation promoted by Hindu philosophy. He found himself at a point of no return. He fled. This was the final shattering of the old world.

The emergency was also a symbol of the problem of the dismantling of the old world. It was the evidence to the breakdown of the society. Unfortunately, in India it was looked upon as merely a political crisis which it was in the power of Mrs. Gandhi or the opposition to resolve. The newspapers mainly printed the news of raids and arrests of people charged with economic offences. But, the emergency was not endeavouring to set the things right. It exhibited terror but ‘established no new moral frame it held out no promise for a better regulated future. It reinforced, if anything... the need to hide and hoard’⁴. Naipaul draws the disarray of the emergency to the blunders that had followed independence. The dedications of many Jagans who has won India its independence were caused to be aimless after independence. They had no idea of accountability to the state and in the absence of any other ways to incorporate them in

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the progression of growth, they had returned to their old world which was self-absorbed. They thought, like Jagan that the government would do some magic to line up the system without their involvement. They had no idea of what actually the democracy wants them to do as the citizens. The thought was unfamiliar; they thought that as always, 'India would go on'. But when it did not, they were not aware what to do. However, the shattering of the old equilibrium was not to be perceived as unenthusiastic. It was a constructive commencement:

"With independence and growth, chaos and a loss of faith, India was awakening to its distress and the cruelties that had always lain below its apparent stability, its capacity simply for going on. The old equilibrium had gone. But out of this chaos, out of the crumbling of the old Hindu system, and the spirit of rejection, India was learning new ways of seeing and feeling."

The last section of the chapter replicates on the spirit of rejection. Plays of Vijay Tendulkar were observed by Naipaul dealing with this theme. People have become more self-centred with the new prospects of becoming rich, the old values are vanished. The Vultures is about the end of all respects. There is "no pure past, and
religion can provide no retreat"). In the Indian susceptibility, Tendulkar’s plays spot a transform. The hero of Sakharam Binder is a low caste man who works as a binder. The things which stand cherished by the Indian society has rejected by Sakharam. He has abandoned caste, clan, religion and family. He has not married and lives with “other man’s discarded wives, whom he rescues from temples and streets”. He only believes on honesty. Although he was destroyed at the end of the play, was represented as a hero by Tendulkar. Naipaul has illustrated his meeting with Tendulkar. Tendulkar has visited various parts of the country in relation to working on a book on violence in India. In Bihar, he has seen things, which he had never believed existed. But, in his conversation, he explained the beauty of Ganga and did not mention about the tragic sights on the banks of Ganga. This is how first section of the book defines India- as a land repeatedly wounded; now facing a revolt from the very same forces that once held it together.

The next section, ‘A new claim on land’ traces the movement in the middle and lower middle classes of India. This section comprises of two chapters that depicts the migration of villagers to the metro cities and the formation of a new working class.
‘The skyscrapers and the chawls’ sketches a disparity between the advancement of industrialized Bombay and the disagreement of un-accommodated workforce that makes its industries run. The industries needed the labourers but there was a problem of accommodation. Therefore, the workers who came from villages were forced to sleep on the pavements at night. Naipaul says, that the poor are needed as hands, as labour. But, the city was not built to accommodate them. Chawls were originally made to accommodate the workers in the numerous textile mills of Bombay. Although, the chawl life was very constricting, owning a chawl was very difficult for the poor classes of the workers. These people made their own colonies- squatters’ settlements. Over the years, there settlements had transformed into more organized residential areas and they had attached themselves to the army, Shiv Sena named after the Maratha leader Shivaji. Naipaul notices a kind of movement here. Naipaul after seeing the chawls, the shanties and slums of the city and writes about the order and small benefits that the organization of the nascent Shiv Sena has brought to the sanitation and, marginally, to the health and well-being of these filthy and neglected warrens overpopulated by the influx of villagers into the city.
The Shiv Sena has its own political complications. The Shiv Sena, a novel political movement, restricted to Maharashtra, has hit upon the idea of organizing this neglected, all too visible mass of the cities—these people who have been driven by destitution to the metropolis and haven’t the attributes which will municipalize them. They may even be a majority in the city, but they are non-people in its civic life. The Sena sets out to organize and win them. “But this is an easy, imported word,” says Naipaul:

“The middle-class leadership of the Sena might talk of martial glory and dream of political power. But at this lower and more desperate level the Sena had become something else: a yearning for community, an ideal of self-help, men rejecting rejection.”

Naipaul mentions that the Sena army was xenophobic. They thought Maharashtra was only for Marathis. The Sena’s methods of disciplining and drilling are not far removed from those of popular militant movement in Europe with mystical philosophies and nascent grudges substituted for ideology. Their leader has been known to express an admiration for Hitler. The Sena are labeled ‘fascist’ by the liberals and the left. Shiv Sena was very popular among the
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masses, due to which it had acquired tremendous power. Naipaul says:

"the Sena is a great contracting out, not from India but from a Hindu system, which, in the conditions of today, in the conditions of industrial Bombay, has at last been felt to be inadequate. It is in part a reworking of the Hindu system. Men do not accept chaos; they ceaselessly seek to remake their world; they reach out for such ideas as are accessible and fit their need."10

The Sena has constructed a very vast foundation because it associated itself with the cause of the enormous masses of the urban poor, which got multiplied continuously. Naipaul observed that the actual movement was taking place at the bottom level but, the major movement in Bombay seemed to be urbanization. The aspects of this bottom level movement were immense because it had begun to give the people an idea of themselves. Naipaul says:

"Identity was what the young men of the Sena were reaching out to, with the simplicities of their politics and their hero figures (the seventeenth-century Shivaji, warrior chieftain turned to war god, the twentieth-century Dr Ambedkar, untouchable now only in his sanctity. For the Sena man, and the people they led, the
world was new; they saw themselves at the beginning of things: unaccommodated men making a claim on their land for the first time, and out of chaos evolving their own philosophy of community and self-help.”¹¹

Later, in the section, Naipaul describes the attempts of different people to get away from the domination. The communities of Dacoits in central and North-western India wanted to free themselves from the domination of the traditional power. Another example of the escape from domination was the Naxalbari movement in Bengal and Andhra. Naipaul entitles it a tragic attempt at a revolution. The catastrophe of the Naxalbari movement was that it could not explain its ideology to a people so used to respecting a Master and used for centuries to the idea of karma. The ideology unavoidably deteriorated into the idea of the enemy and was lost:

“Naxalism was an intellectual tragedy, a tragedy of idealism, ignorance and mimicry: middle-class India, after the Gandhian upheaval, incapable of generating ideas and institutions of its own, needing constantly in the modern world to be inducted into the art, science, and ideas of other civilizations, not always understanding the consequences, and this time
borrowing something deadly, somebody else's idea of revolution."12

Naipaul visits a village where he meets Sarpanch and Patel. By the meeting, Naipaul finds the reason of inequality in the development of country. Patel was a landowner and a traditional symbol of power to the villagers. Sarpanch should have been the head of the village by virtue of his position. But, the actual master was Patel, he owned the village. Nothing has changed post independence; the traditional loyalty of the villagers towards Patel was unmoved. Patel's house was the only one which possessed all the amenities "Electric light, ready water, an out house: the Patel was the only man in the village to possess them all"13. He was the owner of land as well as the workforce who work on his land. Villagers were submissive to the reality that what was for the Patel couldn't be for them. Patel does not oppose the cooperative projects such as irrigation scheme, he believed in growth and development. Villagers were highly obliged to his charitable nature. Explaining more about the Patel, Naipaul says:

"It was necessary to be in the village, to see the Patel and his attendants, to understand the nature of power of that simple man, to see how easily such a man could, if
he wished, frustrate the talk from Delhi about minimum wages, the abolition of untouchability, the abolition of rural indebtedness. How could the laws be enforced? Who would be the policeman in this village?"\(^{14}\)

Independence does not change much, the inequality between the landowners and landless labourers continued. Although, independence has fetched development, it has spread unequally among the people. India becomes a democratic country but the traditional power continued to dominate the people of the unprivileged classes. Naipaul found that the reason behind migration of people to cities was the domination of traditional power. The people migrating to cities were “fleeing not only from landlessness but also from tyranny, the rule in a thousand villages of men like the Patel and the sarpanch.”\(^{15}\)

The last section named ‘Not ideas, but Obsessions’ comprising four chapters handle the inconsistent ideas. These four chapters stand on a common foundation of the idea of India as a people struggling amidst their ambivalences, as victims of mimicry, as people incapacitated by borrowed institutions for so long that any original action could not be possible. Naipaul starts with Gandhi. He extends the analysis of Gandhi that he had illustrated in *An Area
of *Darkness*. He has demonstrated the interpretation of the successes and failures of Gandhi. He has stirred the civilization from a deep slumber but could not awake it to observe, examine and comprehend itself. He has animated the nation but the people were followers and required a person in charge. Gandhi’s inward looking philosophy kept him going but it could not be helpful to his disciples. Gandhi could not identify what would happen to inward looking people of the nation to whom the outer world mattered only up to that extent to which it affected the inner. Naipaul says, this was Gandhi’s defect of vision. Naipaul spots the starting point of this narrow view in Gandhi’s discriminating ignorance to those exterior occurrences which were not straightly associated to his internal sphere of experience, understanding or growth. Naipaul says:

"Gandhi’s self absorption was part of his strength. Without it he would have done nothing and might even have been destroyed. But with this self-absorption there was, as always, a kind of blindness."\(^{16}\)

The book raised a second storm. Naipaul was again vilified by those who had a vision of India that was independent of its reality. A *Wounded Civilization* goes on to examine and condemn the living
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legacy of Gandhi. After the thousands of books written on Gandhi and Gandhianism, Naipaul is refreshingly brief and insightful. Through all his books Gandhi is mentioned with the deepest of intellectual respect.

Naipaul concludes that the relationship of Indians to their outside world is more similar to a childhood stage when the person sees the world through the mother. In the same way, Indians always turn inwards, looking for the security of a life ordered by society. The individual when left on his own is lost because he has no idea of himself. He can portray himself only through the safety of society with its rituals and regulations. Gandhi ties up this obedient faith in truth and religion and perplexed the British. But, he did not identify how to proceed further. India got independence, the enemy was conquered and the nation settles itself in expectation of a Ramrajya; a rule by ram. The people of the nation had become so dependable that the idea of self-governance did not strike them. They wanted somebody to preside over them. To exemplify the character of the Acharya from U.R. Anantamurti’s novel samskara, Naipaul illustrates the Indian dependence on non-action. The Acharya, a well learned man, had not learned to evaluate situations and providing solutions. He was satisfied in scrutinizing books for answers. He was

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a believer of god and his decisions that he comes to know through the mystical falling of the flower. The acharya is lost by experiencing failure in both the cases. People like the Acharya to lead instinctive lives, crippled by rules they make up a society without a head.

Naipaul was not satisfied in dismissing Gandhi and criticizing the Acharya, if he had done so, readers would found him a laid-back observer who does not know anything about India or Gandhi. But, Naipaul had consciously and heedfully scrutinized that what distinguished Gandhi from the swarming millions that he presided over. Naipaul states:

“But there is an important difference. The Acharya is imprisoned, in his dead civilization; he can only define himself within it. He has not, like Gandhi in England, had to work out his faith and decide where- in the wider world- he stands.”

Unlike the Acharya, Gandhi believed in action. Surrounded in between the disorganized commotion of energies released by him, which he is unable to control no longer, Gandhi in Noakhali realizes that he has nothing to offer except his presence. He comprehends that his attitude was not outfitted to cope with this new twist of

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occurrences. But in contrast to Acharya, Gandhi did not try to find, in submissiveness, escape in non-action. Naipaul writes:

“Noakhali. Sad last pilgrimage; embittered people scatter broken glass on the roads he is to walk he has nothing to offer except his presence, and he knows it. Yet he is heard to say to himself again and again, ‘Kya karun? Kya karun? What shall I do?’ At this terrible moment his thoughts are of action, and he is magnificent.”

In Naipaul’s view, Gandhi saw India very objectively. He was aware of the Indian features of contentment, patience and faith on the religion which could be used by him positively. Gandhi’s this technique gave him instant success but he could not anticipate the limitations of the same. He had fished out the people from their corrupt world of caste, class, clan and religion and mentored them towards a goal: independence. Naipaul says Gandhi had a flaw in his outlook he has pulled the people out of their world but did not coach them to look at themselves as individual. Depicting this Naipaul writes:

“When men cannot observe, they don’t have ideas: they have obsessions. When people live instinctive lives,
something like a collective amnesia steadily blurs the past.”\textsuperscript{19}

Gandhi’s lack of forethought left the nation lost because he was the one who actually set the ball rolling. Emergency was the reasonable argue of uncontrolled puzzlement, of ‘individual obsessions’ transforming into ‘political movements’.

In A Wounded Civilization, Naipaul uses the strongest language against the practices of untouchability, a quotation would make a Communist party rabble-rouser proud. And the socio-political dimension of this new movement, the culmination of Indian democratic awakening, is the rise of ‘Hindutva’, a realization after more than 1000 years of subservience, that the ancient way of life which is Hinduism can also be a force for political cohesion. In India the movement of Hindutva is, according to Naipaul a reaction to humiliation suffering and historical imperialism. It doesn’t want to dominate the world. It is an awakening that can stimulate the population as it is into nationhood and that need not, under any tenet of classical Hindu belief turn its energies to suppressing or killing minorities. Awakenings carry criminals in their wake and there are vicious and foolish men who have ridden the wave to gain power

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and to betray the movement through which India stumbles and moves on.

The next chapter 'Synthesis and Mimicry' cross-examines the classic Indian claim that India, over the years, has always productively incorporated varied influences. Naipaul hits on the 'intermediate technology', which was believed to offer a connection between the advanced scientific methods and the conventional agrarian methods employed in India. This 'intermediate technology' had transformed itself into useless experiments binding on illogicality. It was an unnecessary complication of simple agricultural tools which doled out no fruitful function. It was not fusion but an intellectual confusion and that too in an institution that was predestined to put in to the development of the nation.

Amid the arrival of the British, the break with the past was ultimate. Old intelligence, comprehension conventional craftsmanship and architecture become extinct. There was no fusion as such but an absolute incompatible substitution. Naipaul also gave the proofs for that such as climatically ill-suited tourist guesthouse of Jaisalmer, the inconsiderately designed ceiling of the modern airport building in Ahmedabad. The East-west stumble upon that has

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taken place after the arrival of the British was exterior because there was no Indian tradition to receive the new influences. The Indian tradition was the fundamental medium to recognize new influences which was not present and the influences themselves trapped ridiculously. Fusion was concentrated to imitation:

"The Indian past can no longer provide inspiration for the Indian present the West is too dominant, and too varied; and India continues imitative and insecure India, without its own living traditions, has lost the ability to incorporate and adapt; what it borrows it seeks to swallow whole. For all its appearance of cultural continuity, for all the liveliness of its arts of dance, music, and cinema, India is incomplete: a whole creative side has died. It is the price India has had to pay for its British period."\(^{20}\)

Naipaul perceives India operating on borrowed institutions. The press, the education system, the judiciary are all borrowed and become hurdles in the people's insight of themselves and idea of India. The Indian press did not seek to put India 'in touch with itself,' the Indian judicial system designed by the British could not perform the law's constant reassessing, reforming role. The law
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steers clear of the numerous misinterpretations of dharma that are in circulation:

"The law avoids the collision with dharma. Yet it is this dharma that the law must grapple with if the law is to have a dynamic role".21

India necessitates stepping out of its comfort zone of explaining its absurdities and disagreements as fusion. It has to dispose off its imported ideas and principles; it has to ask question and arrive at a comprehension of itself. 'Paradise lost' is an account of people's response to the emergency imposed by Indira Gandhi. It also records the perplexed schedule of the opposition and its even more perplexed line of action. Political barrenness was complete. There was neither self-governance nor Ramrajya. Following Gandhi was only limited to wearing Khadi and long patriotic and emotional speeches.

The last chapter titled 'Renaissance or continuity,' is enclosed with uncertainty. Once again it goes back to the Gandhian tales. It scrutinizes the causes of failures of Gandhianism and its distorted account being sustained through a sequence of performances of imitation. Naipaul sees a 'mimic mahatma' in Vinoba Bhave whose deeds had not handed out anything to India. The existing proof of

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the uselessness of such mimicry is Bihar where bhave had acted much of his land-gift walk schemes. Naipaul describes:

"Once, on the march, he said that untouchables did work human beings shouldn't do; for that reason they should be given land, to become tillers." The whole point of Gandhi’s message was lost. Bhave’s life was therefore a caricature of Gandhi without real participation or vision for the causes at hand. For solving problems, Bhave put the reliance only on the marches and fasting. He did not know the sensible motives behind Gandhi’s walks and marches. Gandhi’s marches connected people and conveyed his message at the time when communication was difficult. Bhave’s marches overlooked the core of Gandhi’s marches. The concept of dharma disintegrated. Through years of invasion and domination, it came to be linked with uncertain servitude and enduring anguish. The only means to regain the past magnificence was intellectual growth. The past is just a magnificent concept because with the forgetfulness that pursued each invasion, India lost connection with itself. India has to stop craving about its past which it hardly comprehends. Naipaul mentions:

"While India tries to go back to an idea of its past, it will not possess that past or be enriched by it. The past can
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now be possessed only by inquiry and scholarship, by intellectual rather than spiritual discipline. The past has to be seen to be dead; or the past will kill.”

Naipaul has analyzed the troubles and complications of India. The responses are typical and pursued the same prototype as those that were bring to mind by An Area of Darkness. As mentioned on the starting of the chapter, the viewpoint of the author as diasporic is highlighted and the method of enquiry moves round his insight which is obviously very dissimilar from the ingrained Indian outlook.

Fawzia Mustafa holds that “Naipaul’s habits of evaluation still rely upon the historically unreliable synecdochal narrative techniques of reporting random interviews....clippings from newspaper accounts....local novels....political biographies”. The soundness of the Naipaul’s proofs can be queried on the basis of truth of historical fact. But, the point is not of the truth or soundness of a factual reality or a philosophy. Naipaul was giving an account of modern India and therefore, he was using the current descriptions of facts as raw material for the writing.

The example of current descriptions of facts comprises of the articles in the newspaper, the long speeches of politicians and these
facts can depict the opening between the original idea and the prevalence that it has appear to obtain. To exemplify, Naipaul quotes from The Times of India, a speech by the then prime minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi in which she equates law with dharma and urges people to uphold dharma. Naipaul uses here the present denotation of the expression dharma and not its vedantic unique meaning.

Helga Chaudhary recommended that Naipaul should have named his book “Hindu India: A Wounded Civilization”. The reality of the enforced mass conversions during the Mughal period and the resultant shatter in the society has been easily ignored in the above statement. As of now, Indians whether Hindus, Muslims or Christians, all share a common pain of the shattering. The dissimilarity in the emotional response of the Hindu Indians and Muslim Indians is not accentuated by Naipaul rather he has highlighted the on point of shattering.

Dilip Chitre’s criticism of Naipaul, on the surface, seems to be more dispassionate than that of most Indian critics. The driving force was same when Naipaul records India as well as when Chitre records Naipaul. Chitre objected on Naipaul’s treatment of India as an aesthetic object. Chitre discovers that Naipaul’s “enterprise is not
wholly in the wrong direction; only his methods are questionable and his information too thin.”

But, in contrast he debates the soundness of Naipaul’s ‘enterprise’ by remarking that Naipaul’s breakdown lies in his judgment to endeavour a precise and real depiction of a civilization. Chitre holds:

"Naipaul’s failure, I think, stems from a fallacy more creative writers are prone to commit. They treat nations, civilizations...not as the fictional bodies and myths that they are but as if they had a being of their own...."  

India: A Wounded Civilization is mainly misunderstood in the west so as An Area of Darkness. Naipaul was called for having a very clear insight of the troubles of India. According to Rohler, Naipaul’s satire facilitates him to “to examine his past without any sentimental self-indulgence.”

while William Walsh found Naipaul’s satire to be “the agent of mediation between experience and vision.” Naipaul’s vision is termed diasporic because he brings to India those thoughts of India that he was already familiar with: R.K. Narayan, Gandhi, dharma and karma. This is the reason why India: A Wounded Civilization can neither be akin to Sunil Khilnani’s The idea of India nor like Sashi Tharoor’s India: From midnight to the millennium. Naipaul’s main apprehension is with
people’s idea of themselves, with rural indebtedness, with caste and class obsessions. History appears to Naipaul as lifeless and barren which is incompetent of generating any type of restoration. These characteristics are unswervingly associated to Naipaul’s experience of the Indian society of Trinidad. The people residing there have cut all the connections with their indentured past. They departed to Trinidad because of their landlessness and load of debts due to which they forgot their history. But, there was one thing which they could not forget, the obsession for caste and class. It was their last justification. Therefore, as an associate of Diaspora, Naipaul’s concerns in *India: A Wounded Civilization* are mainly based on his personal and inherited experiences.

Naipaul has observed various thoughts, philosophies, plan and systems in *India: A Wounded Civilization* but the only observation that continued to be with him was his idea of the millions....on the move. The contemporary version of Gandhianism and dharma was missing which pulled Naipaul in a state of desolation but he saw revival of optimism in the positive movement of the common people. It helped in materializing the platform for *India: A Million Mutinies Now.*
The individuality crisis and disintegration rooted by the freezing of the Hindu India under Mughal take-over was the major concern for Naipaul. But, it was not limited to *India: A Wounded Civilization* only. He is rationally dedicated to his cause, which is to examine a number of facets of the problems that have condensed India’s once magnificent past to its miserable present. Naipaul’s reaction to the demolition of the Babri Mosque is in sync with the Naipaul’s theory in *India: A Wounded Civilization*. Naipaul believes that the take-over by the invaders was tempted by Hindu India only. He also discovers that this drawing on the Hindu past in the contemporary scenario has showed the way to the creation of a new sense of identity. Naipaul maintains that:

"Individual obsessions coalesce into political movements; and in the last ten years or so these movements of protest have become wilder. Many of these movements look back to the past, which they reinterpret to suit their needs. Some, like the Shiv Sena in Bombay (looking back two and a half centuries to the period of Maratha glory) and the Dravidian movement in the south (seeking to revenge itself, after three thousand years, on the Aryan north), have positive regenerating effects."30
Naipaul pronounced that his observations in *India: A Wounded Civilization* continued to be applicable after the demolition of the Babri Mosque. Naipaul identifies the demolition as an extremely petite component of the huge transformation in the Hindus’ idea of themselves and as an endeavour to reclaim their identity of the pre-Islamic period. He finds in it the commencement of a greater intellectual transformation of India, withstanding the fact that it was reserved out of harm’s way from the hands of the extremists. Naipaul writes:

"The people who say that there was no temple there are missing the point. Babar, you must understand, had contempt for the country he had conquered. And his building that mosque was an act of contempt. In Ayodhya the construction of a mosque on a spot regarded as sacred by the conquered population was meant as an insult to an ancient idea, the idea of Ram which was two or three thousand years old. One needs to understand the passion that took (the kar-sevaks) on top of the domes. The jeans and tee-shirts are superficial. The passion alone is real. You can’t dismiss it. You have to try and harness it. Hitherto in India the thinking has come from the top. What is happening now is different. The movement is from below. What is happening in India is a new, historical awakening. It seems to me that Indians are becoming alive to their history. Romila
Thapar’s book on Indian history is a Marxist attitude which in substance says: there is a higher truth behind the invasions, feudalism and all that. The correct truth is the way the invaders looked at their (own) actions. They were conquering, they were subjugating. And they were in a country where people never understood this. Only now are the people beginning to understand that there has been a great vandalizing of India. Because of the nature of the conquest and the nature of the Hindu society such understanding had eluded Indians before. What is happening in India is a highly creative process. Indian intellectuals, who want to be secure in their liberal beliefs, may not understand what is going on, But every other Indian knows precisely what is happening: deep down he knows that a larger response is emerging even if at times this response appears in his eyes to be threatening. I don’t see the Hindu reaction purely in terms of one fundamentalism pitted against another. The sense of history that the Hindus are now developing is a new thing (To prevent emotions from spilling over and creating fresh tensions), it is not enough to use that fashionable word from Europe: fascism. Rather they should use it for the intellectual transformation of India.”

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Naipaul's remarks could have been proved to be the starting of an intellectual debate on the function of religion in the creation of individual and collective identity in India. But, they were captured by political groups, dispersed out of context, exhibited on banners and deprived of their content. Naipaul says, "you say that India has a secular character, which is historically unsound." Religion is an essential part of every Indian's identity, luckily or unluckily. And this is not a latest development. From the very beginning of the post independence years, Indian election campaigns have been won or lost on the issues as varied as cow slaughter, Muslim personal law and building of temples. The correct time has arrived for Indian intellectuals to recognize the un-secular feature of secular India. Naipaul's stand could have been the commencement of an intellectual brainstorm in India and could have set aside the novel sense of the self from slipping into the hands of extremists. The movement was left aside to be perverted and curved to make suitable to vested political interests. Naipaul's dedication to India terms for lay bare those debates that have so far been enforced under the attire of secularism. The movements disintegrate into fanaticism if the intellectuals do not come into action. Therefore, this necessitates deed from the part of intellectuals.
NOTES AND REFERENCES

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