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DEPICTION OF SOCIO-RELIGIOUS CONFLICTS IN THE WORKS OF V.S. NAIPUAL

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ABSTRACT

This violence is not only physical; it also has an intellectual component. The purpose of this research is to examine the books that illustrate the complex and painful feelings experienced by a certain immigrant population and provide insight into the establishment of a settlement. The analysis was carried out using reliable data and is limited to the post-colonial state of individuals. After the research is finished, the following techniques are used: analysis of secondary and primary sources. Examining the migratory populations and various socioeconomic and religious groupings during the post-colonial division, this research draws attention to the subaltern themes used by Naipaul and Rushdie.

KEYWORDS: Naipaul, India, Socio-Religious, post-colonial state, socioeconomic

INTRODUCTION

One of the most prominent authors of the Diaspora today is V. S. Naipaul. One of the most impressive contemporary authors who writes in English is Vidiadha Surajprasad Naipaul, or V. S. Naipaul. He grew up in India and Trinidad. His great-grandparents were indentured sugarcane workers who had traveled from India to Trinidad. Gurudeva and Other Stories was his father's 1943 publication. He hoped Naipaul would one day become a famous author. Also, a novelist is his sibling, Shiva Naipaul. Fireflies is the title of this piece. Naipaul wrote his first book at the age of eighteen. The publisher, alas, turned it down. However, he never lowered his sights. He made it his mission to make his father's dream a reality. Before he becomes famous, V. S. Naipaul is already a writer. He is now working for BBC as the show's programmer for Caribbean Voices, which airs once a week. In 1957, he produced public relations text for a concrete business, and from 1957 to 1961, he reviewed literature for New Statesman. Since he started working as a writer, he has visited many other nations. He speaks for the uprooted and the homeless. He is among the most important living English novelists writing on post-colonial settings. Both "travel writer" and "immigrant writer" are appropriate labels for his work. With the help of the government of Trinidad, he has been to many other nations to learn about their pasts. Everything he writes is a recounting of his adventures and lessons learnt in the foreign place. Naipaul is a renowned Diasporic writer since his writings often include an exile's perspective. Many of his works deal with weighty topics like the effects of colonialism on communities and individuals, the disorganized state of the third world, the challenge of dealing with one's own identity, and so on. He often wrote about being on the road and away from home, both physically and mentally.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Ariyanto, Komang. (2023). The persistence of tensions between different faith groups is an ongoing cultural and social problem. They cause strife and schisms among people and communities with different ideologies, which is a difficult social phenomenon. There is a lack of unity and peace among Indonesia's religious groups because of these difficulties. So, using a sociology of religion lens, this research intends to investigate the phenomena of social disputes within religious groups. It takes a sociological perspective on religious disputes by using a qualitative methodology based on a literature review to investigate these issues. According to the results, religious believers see interfaith dialogue as a dynamic movement that aims to promote social and associational relationships. As an ongoing social process, the sociology of religion plays a crucial role in moulding religious adherents' tolerance.

Panda, Chandra. (2021). Soul science is religion. Originating in India, it sought to explain the meaning of life and the universe. For ancient Indians, it was a way of life that lead to self-realization. Theological principles provide the bedrock of morality and ethics. For as long as anybody can remember, religion has been central to Indian culture. Depending on the group of persons involved, it took on various shapes. Each of these communities had its own unique set of religious beliefs, customs, and practices, and throughout time, all of these faiths evolved and changed. In India, religion has always been propelled by an innate dynamic power, rather than being static.

Arlen, Baxter. (2023). This academic piece explores the complex dynamics of religious and ethnic tensions in India, a nation well-known for its rich diversity. In addition to discussing the effects on national harmony and stability, this article delves into the economic, social, and political elements that have had a role in escalating these wars. The research examines different disputes, their origins, and possible solutions using an interdisciplinary approach. This essay aims to help readers better understand the difficulties India has in achieving inclusivity in the future by illuminating the nuances of these disputes and the difficulties in sustaining communal peace.

Syarif, Fajar. (2019). The role of religion in making sense of contradictory facts is the subject of this study. Consequently, the ways in which religious ideas and practices may both contribute to the issue and lead to their followers' tyranny is something that has to be clarified. One limitation of this study is that it focuses on religious disputes, which are only considered actual conflicts if they are reported in the media or in academic journals. Additionally, this study endeavours to examine the historical context of societal diversity awareness in an effort to clarify its presence in interfaith interactions. The ways in which religious believers display their faith may impact the dynamics of harmony and strife. When factors of economic and political inequality, on a local, national, and even societal level, become more apparent and entrenched, they will amplify and eventually spark conflicts. This is true even when the constellation is initially reasonable within the community. When people and social organisations are able to sustain relationships that transcend primal barriers, social integration may serve as a means of conflict resolution.

Rumahuru (2019) Students at Pattimura University, State College of Islamic Studies Of Ambon, and the State College of Protestant Christian Studies Ambon participated in extra-campus organisations such as the Islamic Students Association (HMI) and the Indonesian Christian Students' Movement (GMKI). This article seeks to describe student social movements as a response to post-conflict social issues and development in Ambon and Maluku. Qualitative methods including participant observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis were used to gather data for this research. Consequently, the data were analysed qualitatively and presented descriptively, indicating that this research is qualitative. First, the study's researchers discovered that HMI and GMKI cadres constantly work to gain control of campus public spaces by distributing cadres to key positions in the student senate and executive bodies, and even among former students who have become lecturers and hold structural positions on campus, where they can influence policymaking. Additionally, there are certain commonalities between the HMI and GMKI movements' responses to social concerns, particularly those pertaining to religion, local politics, and community development in the aftermath of violence.

Lindgren (2021) More and more academics are pointing to a rise in religiously motivated conflicts as evidence of religion's return in global politics. Research shows that religious disagreements are more likely to escalate into violence, last longer, and be harder to settle via negotiation than secular conflicts. Because they do not provide compelling criteria for distinguishing religious disputes from non-religious ones, their findings are deemed untrustworthy in this article. The classification issue is our primary focus. Which aspects of a dispute,

its cause, or its identity are most strongly associated with religion, and which ones most strongly indicate that they are not? Many studies begin with the contentious premise that religion, in its many manifestations (e.g., Islam and Christianity), is a worldwide phenomenon. Most academics make the assumption, without questioning or providing evidence, that there is a clear separation between religion and secularism. We contend in this paper that religious conflict is an ideologically laden notion and that research into the relationship between religion and conflict serves to uphold the power structures and neoliberal status quo.

THE TRANSITION OF SALMAN RUSHDIE TO COSMOPOLITANISM AFTER POSTMODERNISM AND POSTCOLONIALISM

Salman Rushdie's work has always had a distinct quality: an unwillingness to be pinned down. He works at the crossroads of modernism, postmodernism, and postcolonialism, with the latter two providing the most common interpretive frameworks for the analysis of his works, but as we shall see, his novels have undergone a transformation, becoming less distinctly post colonially postmodern and more cosmopolitan. Although the postmodern elements of Rushdie's fiction are "a product not of textuality or of language alone but of cultural hybridization" (Teverson 61), the modernist elements of his prose can be read as a result of colonialism and cultural displacement (hence the ideas of the unstable nature of truth or the nonexistence of certainty). The "post" in the postcolonial aspects of Rushdie's narratives can be read as either "anti," due to his imaginative retrieval of lost histories and imaginary homelands, his imaginary reconstruction of the past, and an all-pervasive contestation of colonial stereotypes and ideals of purity, or as "beyond," due to the fact that his works go beyond the sabotage of colonial presuppositions to reconstruct postcolonial identity.

In Rushdie's work, one often meets historiographic metafiction, magical realism, carnivalesque subversion via parody, irony, allegory, or a merging of high and low or high and popular culture, all of which have been widely researched as postmodern(ist) and/or postcolonial elements. Genres constantly undermine one another since no one genre could manage such complicated storylines (Khan 138), as well as self-reflexivity and self-questioning, are evident throughout. Through intertextuality and pastiche, Rushdie's fiction rewrites history, reality, and culture, dismantling historical and narrative certainties, while linguistic, stylistic, and generic experimentation probes the text's status and eliminates conventional narrative time and space. In light of these considerations, it becomes clear that Rushdie's book and short stories exist in a form between postmodernism and postcolonialism that is unstable, much like the postmodern and postcolonial, local and global realities they portray.

The narrator in Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* wonders, "Can any narrative stand so much so soon?" since these features persist throughout Rushdie's works, despite the fact that they deconstruct themselves to such an extent. Rushdie's writing has undergone a major change in emphasis (Rushdie 321). As could be expected, his first major works take part in a strongly postcolonial reconstruction of fictional homelands revolving around the establishment of brand-new states. Whereas the stuffy, labyrinthine, "claustrophobic, even paranoid" (Teverson 137) *Midnight's Children* asserts the colorful multiplicity of the Indian country to debunk assumptions of authenticity, purity, and uniformity. The restricted, authoritarian society of post-independence Pakistan is reflected in the style, shape, and structure of "Shame."

Rushdie's gradual shift beyond postcolonial narratives of the nation toward more cosmopolitan fiction is already detectable in *The Satanic Verses*, "without doubt the single most important prototype of the contemporary cosmopolitan novel," with "a multiplicity of differently located narratives telescoped one into the other" (Schoene 28). Although Schoene is correct in assuming that the "attempt at untying and moving beyond imperialism's core-periphery axiomatic" (Schoene 25) is what distinguishes cosmopolitan literature from postcolonial writing, *The Satanic Verses* is not completely dissociated from that axiomatic.

His subsequent global works, such as *The Ground beneath Her Feet* and Fury, expand upon this theme by shifting the global axis from India to England to the Americas. Despite their continuous, although lessening, relationship with postcolonialism, these tales, which interestingly describe the path of Rushdie's life from his boyhood in India, through his schooling and rise to prominence in England, and finally to the United States, appear no less global. They display "the cosmopolitan novel's compositeness" (Schoene 14) by being "episodic yet cohesive" and by using "the montage techniques of contemporary cinema," yet similar characteristics are also prevalent in postcolonial and postmodern literature. To put it another way, despite the growing cosmopolitanism in Rushdie's work, it would be a mistake to think that he has abandoned postmodernism and postcolonialism in favor of cosmopolitanism.

The fact that it is difficult, if not impossible, to determine where postmodern postcolonialism stops and cosmopolitanism starts lends credence to the notion that Rushdie's all-encompassing writing exists between and beyond categories. Rushdie's shift in focus from the domestic to the foreign is emblematic of the shift from a multi-national to a supranational order, and his novels may be seen as contributing to the internationalization of the novel. It is not without reason that n+1 magazine has called Rushdie "the major transitional figure from this earlier era of World Literature, when things were still 'postcolonial,' to the contemporary globalized period." Because of the many cultures and literary traditions, he draws from in his books, he is sometimes described as having a "polyglot literary family tree," making his works truly international.

V.S. NAIPAUL AND INDIA: THE ELUSIVE IDEAL OF SECULAR WRITING

Despite his chauvinistic views, Naipaul's early non-fiction personal interactions with Hinduism portray a somewhat more nuanced image of his connection to Hinduism. Since the line between fiction and autobiography is often nebulous, we could just as easily turn to one of the autobiographical fictions (like *A House for Mr. Biswas*) instead. Many of the plots revolve around life-changing moments like the discovery of literacy, the desire for education, the explosion of print culture, father-son conflicts, and the moment of departure from the marginal society for the metropolitan center. For the sake of clarity, however, it may be best to go with Naipaul's "Prologue to an Autobiography," which was published in 1982. I'll be analyzing how Naipaul's idea of the sentence relates to the topic of religion. Naipaul believes that the phrase is the essence of the writer, the thing that most precisely characterizes him. In light of the Hindu tradition's increasingly pervasive presence in the literary world, I will analyze just a few of well-produced yet illuminating passages in which Naipaul emphasizes this atomic core of writerly endeavor. Naipaul's debut novel, Miguel Street, was written in the early 1950s, and the opening phrase characterizes his circumstances at the time.

> Nearly three decades have passed since I penned the first phrase of my first publishable book in a BBC room in London using an antique BBC typewriter and smooth, 'non-rustle' BBC script paper.

By firmly planting himself at the BBC, Naipaul separates himself from his Trinidad roots and positions himself at one of the contemporary media's main epicenters. Take note of how many times he uses the abbreviation in the above sentence: "BBC room" (a secular setting), "BBC typewriter" (a secular piece of equipment, a contemporary piece of technology), and "BBC script paper" (a secular medium). This passage's BBCentrism begs the question: Did the BBC or Naipaul create the novel? With a switch to the declarative, the sentence provides an answer: "...I wrote the first sentence." It's not the first line of his first short story, but it is the first sentence of his first book that was good enough to be published. In reality, the opening phrase of Naipaul's "Prologue to an Autobiography" is more of a prologue to the publishing history of the book than it is to Naipaul's life narrative. Naipaul's transition to a career as a writer is certainly facilitated by the BBC, but the act of writing itself necessitates the author's participation in his or her own past. To become a writer, that lofty thing, I had considered it essential to go," Naipaul adds later in the same essay (the idea is revisited frequently).

Naipaul, despite his protestations to the contrary, clearly places a high value on the Hindu social and religious structure. As Naipaul himself writes, "it was a version of the pundit's vocation" (Naipaul 54), suggesting that his father's initial push toward Pandit was just partial. Writing, as an individual pursuit that still bears the responsibility of representing a group, does have some of the trappings of a secularized priesthood. However, how secular is it? When writing on the Hindu community in Chaguanas, Naipaul's father uses the byline "The Pandit" in his weekly column for the Trinidad Guardian. Throughout his work, Naipaul uses metaphors evoking a spiritual search to depict his father's life and work.

> I had come to believe, from the first tales and snippets of stories my father read to me, before the chaos of the move, that there was justice in the world, the belief that is at the heart of so much human sorrow and passion and corrupts so many lives. The aspiration to become a writer grew out of it. To be a writer like O. Henry and to die while still working on a piece is to win against obscurity. The more dire our living circumstances were in the home on the street, the more steadfast our will to write, our resistance to be extinguished, and our desire to seek justice at some point in the future became.

Naipaul's metaphor of a 'wild religious fervor that hardens in adversity' to describe his ambition to become a writer in the aftermath of his father's failure is not coincidental. Naipaul sees writing as the best way to express his individuality and leave his imprint on the world, but he also sees parallels between the drive to write and strong religious convictions. In this telling, Naipaul's father's failure may be traced back to his inability to

fully renounce his Pandit heritage. Some of the 'Prologue' portions that depict the conflict between his father, a reformer connected with the Arya Samaj, and his orthodox family, are reminiscent of the aforementioned passages from *A House for Mr. Biswas*.

> All the family's experts on Hinduism defended traditionalist principles. No, my dad wasn't. Ten years later, when our Hindu world was crumbling and we were living in Port of Spain, my father would wax poetic in his writings about Indian rural life and Hindu ceremonies. He was a member of, or at least sympathetic to, the Arya Samaj, a reform group that attempted to transform Hinduism into a purely intellectual religion. Contrary to caste, pundits, and animistic ritual, the Arya Samaj opposed all three. It advocated for the education of females and opposed child marriage. (Naipaul 66)

In the end, reformers, like Mr. Biswas in Naipaul's semi-autobiographical book (and Gora in Tagore's novel), had to choose a side. In Tagore's Gora, the protagonist is cast out of his traditional community after learning of his origins, but in Naipaul's father's case, the shame that followed led to his mental collapse. Seepersad Naipaul Sr.'s battle with his own identity is framed by the increasing pressure on him to take part in a goat sacrifice in the Prologue. He takes everything in stride at first, even going so far as to satirize the practice of sacrificing goats in Trinidadian villages as a substitute for vaccinating livestock against paralytic rabies. However, after receiving a threatening letter from concerned relatives, he reluctantly agrees to attend the wedding. He is reluctantly drawn back into the world he had previously rejected by participating in a ceremonial sacrifice.

> My father, who (unbeknownst to Rodin) had been groomed by his grandmother and mother to be a pandit, is, it might be said, a little to one side. He is a man dressed in white, adorned with hibiscus like the goat, offering sacrificial fire scented with clove to the image of the goddess, to the live goat, to the onlookers, and finally offering the severed goat's head on a brass plate.

Here, Naipaul's dad is being garlanded like a pandit in appreciation of his involvement. Underneath the blankness, however, the aspiring journalist finds himself in a situation somewhat unlike that of the goat, in that he must submit to the will of a higher power. Kali, his patriarchal family structure, or (in a Durkheimian interpretation) both might be seen as the authoritative figure. Not the goat, but his personal sacrifice takes center stage here. To Naipaul, the real tragedy of the situation was his father's inability to assert his right to be contemporary and to identify himself apart from the expectation of the Hindu social order, which led to the humiliation of the barbaric ceremony associated with the murder of the goat. Obviously, the episode is kept completely under wraps within Naipaul's immediate family; it isn't until an American journalist gives Vidia Naipaul a clipping years later that he learns about it. Naipaul uses this event as a focal point in 'Prologue' to highlight how the protagonist is consistently written out of his own story. On one level, Seeparsad Naipaul is discriminated against because he is Hindu despite his protests and his self-conception as an atheist. Also, it is reflected grammatically throughout the work, from the title ('Prologue to an Autobiography') to the protagonist (Naipaul's father takes up the autobiography).

The marginalization of Seeparsad in real life seems to foreshadow that of Naipaul in fiction. That his father "looked in the mirror one day and couldn't see himself" (a phrase Naipaul uses to describe his father's descent into "hysteria") is seen by Naipaul as having occurred as a result of this event. And then he started screaming. If the writer can't maintain his secularism under pressure, he can't succeed as a writer or even as a mentally stable person. How does Naipaul manage to claim a secular image as a writer if his father is at the dislocated heart of his autobiographical narrative? The original message has been significantly altered in both form and substance throughout this delivery. Naipaul notes the transmission of hysteria with the transmission of the vocation as a whole in the following sentence, which implies that the transmission is partial and situational.

> What really amazes me is how, via the calling, he communicated to me, without words, his frenzy from the time when I didn't know him: his dread of extinction. That was a bonus present he gave me. That worry of yours quickly spread to me. It had to do with the concept of a "vocation," in that only by living out one's calling could one overcome their fears.

However, in favor of a career, a publication history, and the stamp of BBC authority, Naipaul often glosses over the rift between his father and himself, erasing or postponing the "fear of extinction" alluded to here. Given his contradictory statements, it's hard to believe that his marginal upbringing didn't contribute to the mania he attributes to both his father and himself. Yet the authoritarian demands of Hindu family life and ritual

are deeply entangled with the pain of social exclusion. Furthermore, the effort to leave the Hindu community and pursue writing is often labeled as a disguised religious calling. Finally, the forced goat sacrifice depicted in the text undermines even this minimal kind of self-determination. This chapter's epigraph comes from Paul de Man's critique of Harold Bloom's Anxiety of Influence. My reading of Naipaul appears to fit neatly into the readerly chain that underlies my usage of De Man (De Man to Bloom to how great authors read each other). Both Naipaul and Bloom portray a world teeming with aspiring authors learning to read and write, each of whom is plagued by the worry that the only tale they have to tell is someone else's. Naipaul's father is both the prototypical secular writer whose tale provides the material for his son's fiction (and autobiography) and the unknowing carrier of the pre-modern bubble of Hindu ritualism, giving the author's family angst a distinctive tint. What's at stake here (as De Man argues with respect to Bloom) is the interaction between reader and text, even if it's easy to focus on the themes of broken paternalism and family psychopathology that may be associated with Naipaul's use of the term hysteria. The reader wants secularism in Naipaul, yet religious authority is required by the text (the precedent). And if the reader-text connection is ambiguous and open to discussion in De Man, then maybe it is the same here. I've been arguing that Naipaul is an interesting case study in the competition between religious influence and secular rejection, or reading against the religious grain.

A Socio-Political Scenario of India in V. S. Naipaul's "*An Area of Darkness*"

When it comes to V. S. Naipaul and India, things are never rosy. Naipaul is so far removed from India, both in time and location, that he views it as "*an area of the darkness*," a reservoir of memories that merge readily into the most recognizable patterns of romantic myth. Another way he sees it is that India is just too nearby. He never completely committed to the Hindu religion. Naipaul feels both far from India yet inexorably drawn to it due to his lack of familiarity with the country's customs. Naipaul's India is a shadowy, troublesome place. It insists on being known, even if the truth hurts. He is taken aback by what he sees in India (Volchik & Maslyukova 1444–1455). To paraphrase what Suvir Kaul (2003) has said:

> In the beginning of *An Area of Darkness*, he describes his struggle to regain his voice and composure as he seeks to retrieve two bottles of wine from the hands of the customs bureaucracy that managed liquor permits in a Bombay that was then under prohibition. What follows in the travelogue might be seen as Naipaul's efforts to restore his bearings, to "impose" himself in his surroundings, with all its richness of journalism and observation and its lack of spirit and empathy (Mehrotra 2003).

Naipaul's travelogue *An Area of Darkness* is an unsuccessful effort to access a time that can never be revisited. Naipaul insists on returning to the topic of India, despite the fact that it is the location of an impossible return. Through his travel writing, he attempts to put into words that which is impossible. As Naipaul's tired traveler shuttles back and forth between his home and his objective, he finds himself in a transitional state. It is the incomplete chronicle of 'self' that travel writing maps out.

The book's opening scene, set in *An Area of Darkness*, perfectly depicts Naipaul's plight. An intermission known as a Travelers Prelude. Naipaul finds out at customs that the bottles of alcohol he took with him from Alexandria have been confiscated when he arrives at the Bombay ports in the early 1960s, at the height of the country's prohibition regime. When Naipaul (1964) tries to get them from the New Custom House in Bombay, he encounters bureaucratic hurdles.

> "You've got your liquor license, right?"
>
> I presented the official with the signed and dated foolscap document. Do you have permission to travel? I had never heard of this authorization before...Back to the old customs house, I told the cab driver. (Naipaul 1964)

In *an Area of Darkness* is a reflective and semi-autobiographical account of a year in India. Naipaul believed that India which served as the background to his childhood was not the real country but '*an Area of Darkness*'. It was an isolated area that produced his grandfather and many others. They were born in India and but later on left India to work as indentured labourers in different country. In "*an Area of Darkness*", Naipaul portrays the characters of two persons, such as Gold Teeth Nane and Babu. Through these characters, he explains his view of India, which describes him as an alienated man from India in the minds of the people.

In Area of Darkness is a personal and introspective description of the author's time spent in India. According to Naipaul, the India he knew as a youngster was not the actual India but rather "an area of imagination." His grandpa and many others like him were born in the rural region. They were born in India but subsequently moved to another nation to serve as indentured workers.

Naipaul uses the characters of Gold Teeth Nane and Babu in "*an Area of Darkness*" to illustrate the dynamics between two people. The people of India see him as an outsider because of the perspective he presents of India via these fictional characters. India is more represented by its exports than by its citizens. Naipaul thinks that both the items and the people that are made in India are dull and uninteresting (Chakraborty 2019). Even though his grandpa had left India, he had never forgotten Indian culture. When constructing his home in Trinidad, he ignored every colonial-era style he could have discovered. Nothing in the world compelled him to do anything more than his village in India. The immigrants in Trinidad had everything they wanted, making living simple. They adapted to life without cleaners, weavers, dyers, metalworkers, or bedstring-makers. However, stonecutters, cabinetmakers, and shoemakers were all easily accessible (Dhaliwal 2019). The Indian filth horrified Naipaul. Used plates are used to feed animals. The kids passed over a wide variety of treats.

Naipaul has done an in-depth analysis of life in India. He felt grief, astonishment, disillusionment, and anger at what he witnessed. According to Naipaul, not even other Indians considered Indians to be human. All people are egocentric and envious. They themselves did not provide their profession the respect it deserved. They are looking for other employment opportunities rather than preparing their children for their own vocation. Naipaul thinks the Hindu holy text Bhagavath Gita is counterproductive because it has erected a mental barrier that causes people to feel hopeless. Despite his political success, Naipaul claims that Mahatma Gandhi was a failure as a reformer. In India, Gandhi is remembered mostly for his name and is held in high esteem at best. False are those who pay lip service to his statue out of formality but have no real regard for him. As Gandhi gains deity status, his teachings get diluted. However, *An Area of Darkness* is quite good at hiding the signs of its recognitions. Naipaul's *An Area of Darkness* depicts an India that has fallen into a shockingly bad state of disrepair. All of its inhabitants are "degraded" and "stupefied," its faiths are "outdated," and its structures, if they are not already in ruins, "hint at the imminence of their own destruction" (Naipaul 1964; Mittapalli & Hensen 2002). V. S. Naipaul has shown no interest in India at all. He thinks of it as a failing state where nothing but evil and darkness exists. After a year on the road, he still feels estranged from India and has not learnt to accept himself. He takes great pride in being a colonial who has no ties to the past or ancestors. Naipaul chronicles the incredible development of the Indian Railways system in this book. The beauty and serenity of the train ride was amazing. The railroads are the hubs of the community. They show the hopelessness and boundless grief that Naipaul felt for India (Saenko 88-103).

In about two hours, my train would depart, and the coaches were already there. My third-class ticket was already too hot, so I exchanged it for a first-class one and carefully made my way down the dark platforms, dodging dead dogs and men. My compartment door was opened by the conductor, and I got in. I locked the door and covered the windows to block out the barking dogs and the looming figures of the intruders. The lights were kept off. (Naipaul, 1964) I needed to be in the dark.

Naipaul travels to the Dubes hamlet to see his grandfather's relatives. A similar feeling of happiness accompanies him on his first trip there. But when Naipaul returns from the hamlet, he experiences an almost religious revelation. Naipaul's heart sinks as he meets Ramachandra Dube, the current leader of the Dube clan and heir to his grandfather's throne. His first elation quickly fades away (Akhmetyanov 543).

It's a work of fiction called "*An Area of Darkness*" that helps him rationalize his preference for the shadows. Naipaul uses the tropes of travel writing to distance the reader from himself and himself from the text: an emphasis on the superficial, the use of anecdote in place of analysis, and so on. Keeping its readers at arm's length while yet being profoundly intimate is a key to the success of *An Area of Darkness*. *An Area of Darkness* bridges the gap between the autobiographical confession and the journalistic investigation. As a result, in his writing on his travels, he easily switches between introspective and investigative modes (Humbatova & Hajiyev 1704–1728).

CONCLUSION

As he stands alone amid the throng, he fights against the conservative system that is rife with decaying traditions, rituals, and myths. Mr. Biswas struggles to integrate into Western society despite his wish to shed his Hindu background. He is an East Indian. Mr. Biswas is an exile who has spent his life longing for home while still seeking his own identity. He becomes a neurotic figure in this delicate environment as his unrealistic quest for identity leads him into several rejections. Solitude seems to be the last refuge for Naipaul and his characters, who carry the burden of their previous experiences with them wherever they go. The characters' neurotic and schizoid tendencies appear to mirror Mr. Biswas's own, who, due to his upbringing in a constantly shifting environment, was unable to find psychological equilibrium in a foreign area.

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