



V.S. Naipaul: A Post Colonial Writer

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Abstract: Naipaul examines and analyses the colonial and Postcolonial periods, historical, cultural, and political backgrounds, Economic problems and psychological conflicts and finally concludes that rifting can be decolonisation itself. He realizes that colonial societies suffer from lack of cultural, historical, and racial homogeneity. The present paper is an attempt to investigate the postcolonial key notions in V. S. Naipaul's works. Post colonialism as a postmodern approach seeks to illustrate the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized. This paper also proposes a brief reflection on the meanings and relevancy of post colonialism as a keyword in contemporary cultural studies.

Keywords: Acquisition, Economic problems, psychological conflicts

Introduction:

The term colonialism denotes acquisition and frost possession by a nation of other territories and their people's. The term took on a more specific meaning in the late 19th century when colonists show it as the expression of the civilization from the West to the uncivilized people of the backward societies. Although freedom from erstwhile colonization has been achieved almost everywhere, except that it has been replaced by neo-colonialism; the policy and practice of a strong nations holding their sway territorially over a weaker nation at its people.

On the other side, the main themes of postcolonial literature divide themselves between experience and legacy of colonialism and the experience of migrancy and exile. According to Hiren Gohain:

Post- Colonialism or rather Post- coloniality, is thus related to the contemporary crisis of Western capitalism, unable to pursue the path of classical imperial exploitation; disturbed and troubled by resistances of and tensions within the third world, and yet driven by its own logic to build

a global economic and cultural order to maintain its hegemony without alienating the exploited and dominated regions of the world.

The term post colonialism has mixed connotations. It has brought about the beginning of colonial power structures and empowering of the marginality, gendered or engendered. It has considerably increased the significance of literary studies and widened the horizons of globalization. While the term sense of place has been defined and used in many different ways by many different people. One definition is that a place comes into existence when humans give meaning to a part of the larger, undifferentiated space. Any time a location is identified or given a name, it is separated from the undefined space that surrounds it. Some places, however, have been given stronger meanings, names or definitions by society than others. These are the places that are said to have a strong Sense of Place.

Naipaul as Post Colonial Novelist:

Naipaul is a gigantic giant who has numerous fictions and non-fiction works in his credit which made him famous overnight. V.S. Naipaul's more



than twenty five of fiction and non-fiction works have won him virtually every conceivable literary award including coveted the Noble Prize in the year 2001. He is undoubtedly one of the most distinguished novelists of the present century. As an author of fiction and nonfiction his works have a special identity of their own and it would be proper to regard him as novelist of ideas. In the special sense of the term it would not be exaggerating to comment that today at 80 with more than half a century devoted to literature, V.S. Naipaul has reached that stage when the focus shift from the story to the story teller. From the very beginning he wanted to relate literature to life. This does not mean that he had a political axe to grind. He remains primarily a great novelist on the sheer strength of his breathy imagination and a mature sense of organisation.

From the perspective of sense of place and post colonial theory V.S. Naipaul's literary output is of great literary value and is highly appreciable. In his fiction there is realistic description of colonial society as well as crisis and ups and downs of post colonial era. V. S. Naipaul's novels represents of postcolonial identity and attempts to relate how his works are replete with the theme of identity as the chief protagonists of all his novels hanker after to find a place for them in the world to assert their identities.

Vidiyadhar Surajprasad (VS) Naipaul, a 'Postcolonial Mandarin' like the sun piercing the prolonged darkness has emerged on the Britain's soil of colonial writing, as 'a prophet' of our 'world-historical moment', and has produced a luminous account of the most compelling literary works, of the last fifty years. He is Britain's the only living Nobel laureate (2001), in literature.

Born in the West Indian Trinidad to a family descended from the East India, educated, married, and mostly resided in England, Naipaul is regarded as a mouthpiece of displacement and rootlessness by the critics and scholars of the field. Speaking in an interview, Naipaul confirms the above idea saying "When I speak about being an exile or a refugee, I am not just using a metaphor, I am speaking literally" (Evans, 1972: 62). It is clear that even after having lived in England for many years, he still, has not had the sense of belonging, as he says: "I still had that nervousness in a new place, that rawness of response, still felt myself to be in the other man's country, felt my strangeness, my solitude" (EOA 1987: 7). He is, as Mohit K. Ray articulates, "an Indian in the West Indies, a West Indian in England, and a nomadic intellectual in a postcolonial world".

Naipaul's work has been described as an examination of "the clash between belief and unbelief, the unravelling of the British Empire, and the migration of peoples" (Donadio, 2005). Controversial both in terms of his perceptions of postcolonial nations (Said, 1978) and of postcolonial literary criticism (King, 1993), Naipaul, who won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2001, at an earlier point declared the novel dead and postcolonial nations half-baked despite his provocative pronouncements and his readers' criticisms. (the most stringent and extensive critique by Nixon (1992). Naipaul is too important to be marginalised. While major contemporaries have ceased to be productive (Walcott, Ondaatje, Soyinka) Naipaul's voice continues to be heard, his tones new, his perspective flexible enough to apprehend new phenomena in culture and politics, and his critique sufficiently disturbing to merit critical attention. Despite accusations of being a



postcolonial lackey, a reactionary, a racist, and a misogynist, he has survived, and not only because of his elegant prose.

Written in English and rooted in British literary tradition and the West Indies social background, V.S. Naipaul's works are products resulting from cultural Conflicts and Integration. Naipaul's latest publications are *Beyond Belief: Islamic Excursion Among the Converted Peoples* and *Half a Life*, completed respectively in 1998 and 2001. *Half a Life* is based on the author's and his father's experience, tells a story of a British novelist who moves to Africa with his Portuguese wife and his psychological complex of seeking roots.

V.S. Naipaul keeps trying to find an appropriate style to describe colonial and post-colonial societies. With a plain manner and refined structure, his writings are affecting and charming. He resists the experiment in literary forms because he thinks it would destroy the expressive force of literature. He insists that literature should be based on careful observation and incisive reflection. Aesthetic style and profound thoughts have been integrated skilfully in Naipaul's writings. That's why Naipaul is praised by the Swedish Academy in the laudatory speech for Nobel Prize that "Singularly unaffected by literary fashion and models he has shaped and fashioned existing genres into a style of his own, in which the customary distinctions between fiction and non-fiction are of subordinate importance."

Dec.7th 2001, Stockholm, on the grand ceremony of issuing the Nobel Prize in literature, Dr. Horace Engdahl said,

"Sir Vidia! Your life as a writer calls to mind what Alfred Nobel said of himself:

'My homeland is where I work, and I work everywhere.' In Every place, you have remained yourself, faithful to your instinct. Your books trace the outline of an individual quest of unusual dimensions. Like a Nemo piloting a craft of your own design, without representing anyone or anything, you have manifested the independence of literature. I would like to convey to you the warm congratulation of the Swedish Academy as I now request you to receive the Nobel Prize in Literature from the hands of His Majesty the King. "

Naipaul reviewed in his lecture his life journey and his career as a writer, the two inseparable parts of his life. One of his worlds is his homeland Trinidad and the rest of the Third World Countries. The other of his world is England where he was educated and naturalized. The two worlds supply the grand background and subjects for his writings. He said,

"I said I was an intuitive writer. That was so, and that remains so now, when I am nearly at the end. I never had a plan. I followed no system. I worked intuitively. My aim every time was to do a book, to create something that would be easy and interesting to read. At every stage I could only work within my knowledge and sensibility and talent and world view. Those things developed book by book. And I had to do the books I did because there were no books about those subjects to give me what I wanted. I had to clear



up my world, elucidate it, for myself..... I am near the end of my work now. I am glad to have done what I have done, glad creatively to have pushed myself as far as I could go.”

Literary critics all agree that V.S. Naipaul is a true Nobel Prize winner and he has been compared with Ishiguro and Rushdie by mass media. They have been considered as three outstanding writers in postcolonial literature. According to one analyst, Naipaul's novel and travelogue reveal the wounds in the hearts of immigrants who have lost their cultural roots in the postcolonial era. Naipaul is also criticized by mass media about his private life. But an academician of Swedish Academy declared that Nobel prize is supposed to award to literary works not to morality. He said, when literary writings are concerned, V.S. Naipaul, who wrote 26 books among 45 years and won Booker Prize in 1971, David Coen Prize for lifetime achievements in literature, deserves the laurel of the Nobel Prize.

Conclusion

Naipaul examines and analyses the colonial and Postcolonial periods, historical, cultural, and political backgrounds, Economic problems and psychological conflicts and finally concludes that rifting can be decolonisation itself. He realizes that colonial societies suffer from lack of cultural, historical, and racial homogeneity.

Conclusively, it can be said that it is V. S. Naipaul's serendipity and his writing

skills which make him the prominent author across the world. It is worthwhile to reconsider his stance on postcolonial identity while reading his texts. His works, more or less, are nothing but a struggle for self, a fight for right and a voice against suppression and exploitation. He has stashed his legacy inside him and poured it in the form of brilliant works.

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