

## **Search for Diagnosis: A Study of V.S. Naipaul's *India: A Wounded Civilization***

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### **Abstract**

Sir Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul (1932-2018) holds a very prominent position in the history of the literary world. He has also earned name and fame as the robust voice of the Indian diaspora. He was not only a great novelist but also a towering figure in the field of travel writing. He was an avid traveller who had strong desire to uncover the history of the world in general and India in particular. His writings regarding the Third World societies have triggered unprecedented resentment, chaos and confusion among the scholars and critics. He has very categorically written about the plights, sufferings, pains, alienation, rootlessness, and crisis of existence of the diasporic people. The present paper attempts to study how Naipaul like a pathologist does not leave a chance to go through an analysis of the Indian system and diagnose the various reasons of India's ailments, and dereliction. The paper intends to examine Naipaul's method of diagnosing the cause of India's pain and wounds.

**Keywords:** Civilization; Corruption; History; Poverty; Sanitation.

### **Introduction**

Naipaul has taken more than a decade since his first visit to India to diagnose the root cause of India's ailments. He begins his journey with India's history. He always wanted to uncover the history of India. There was a craving in him to explore the details of Indian history with the help of specific visits, interviews, consulting newspaper reports, creative output of litterateurs, and meeting numerous people from different walks of life. In order to understand India, Naipaul repeatedly furnishes his readers with examples drawn from the chapters of a historical past of strictly thousand years which saw India vanquished by the Islamic plunderers and invaders. He traces the downfall of India from glory to dereliction. His

imagined India seems to be a persona, a tragic protagonist, far better than the average, which has fallen from the great heights of prosperity to adversity. Its suffering is due to the interwoven tragic flaw which expresses itself in various ways and actions practised by the powerful sections of the Indian society. They control the society, with their regressive ways. India happens to be a country, without any goal and proper ideology. Every act reflects inertia of rituals, hypocrisy, double speak, atrocities of casteism and the inherent aversion to change.

Before going to Naipaul's steps of diagnosis to unearth the various ailments, which trouble India like poverty, casteism, corruption, sanitation, double-speak, hypocrisy, and intellectual depletion, one has to take into account his methodology of collecting his data which he as an interpreter of maladies adopts. As he has done in *An Area of Darkness* (1964) earlier, he uses identical tools in *India: A Wounded Civilization* (1977) to interpret the cause of its wound. He has developed a methodology in which he extensively uses visits, newspaper reporting, literature and interviews to understand the socio-political angle, the impact of religion and the oppressive squalor of poverty. With these tools, Naipaul wants to expose the negative pulls of tradition which resist rational, progressive and scientific approach leaving the country often in the protection of the magic and the occult.

Critics and reviewers of V.S. Naipaul's travel writings are largely divided between two camps: his adulators and detractors. Clash of opinions between these two groups of commentators has remained a potential source of controversy around Naipaul's India centered travelogues. The tirade of critics has remained unrelenting on his Indian trilogy. Naipaul has created another situation of uproar with the publication of his second travelogue on India, *India: A Wounded Civilization*. The detractors of Naipaul hold that he has maligned India and his observations and analysis are rough, rude, and rash. He makes off the cuff and sweeping remarks. He is subjective in his approach. Icons like Gandhi and Vinoba Bhave are the great pillars of modern India whose efforts he has analyzed in his subjective manner. The outcome without fail has often become the source of irritation. Here, it becomes necessary to take into account the comments of some of his detractors who say that Naipaul is in the nature of exaggerating the smallest things. A critic like Fawzia Mustafa is also not satisfied with Naipaul's synecdochal way of perceiving the reality of India. Fawzia Mustafa says that:

Naipaul's habits of evaluation still rely upon the historically unreliable synecdochal narrative techniques of reporting random interviews . . . clipping from newspaper accounts . . . local novels . . . political biographies. (133)

The words of a critic like Khunjo Singh also carry a similar echo:

Coming out in 1977 Naipaul's second book on India, *India: A Wounded civilization* is the work of a writer whose mind is made up and who is only out to prove a point. (99)

Even after this deafening uproar and criticism, Naipaul has not played ostrich in the face of negative Indian experiences. He calls a spade a spade. Whatever the limitations of his techniques and methodology may appear to be, one has to acknowledge the fact that Naipaul does not depend upon the received ideas, or the traditional and accepted age-old discourse on India. His perception of India evolves out of an honest effort using on the spot findings which he feels contribute to the making of a country's history which sometimes has a tendency to veer towards a synecdochal interpretations. One is required to take into account the repeated visits which Naipaul has made of India. It underlines a concealed feature which shows his urgency to understand his India better from more than one perspective.

In my study of Naipaul's India centered travelogues, I have found that he has employed both the synecdochal narrative technique and the cyclic rotation method to convey his observations and insights about India's complex social, cultural and historical landscape. Naipaul focuses on specific representative characters to represent the larger Indian society and its complexities. He also describes particular events like the destruction of Babri Masjid in Ayodhya to illustrate the rift between Hindus and Muslim. Naipaul takes up Narayan's novel *Mr Sampath*. He considers Srinivas, the hero of the novel, to be representing the Indian attitude that India is eternal and will survive in spite of its problems and crises. Naipaul feels that Srinivasa's attitude is a typical India attitude. He says ironically:

Only India, with its great past, its civilization, its philosophy And its almost holy poverty, offered this truth; India was the truth. (23)

It is also interesting to see Naipaul's use of various stories and plays by Indian authors like R.K. Narayan, Manohar Malgonkar and U.R. Ananthamurthy to explain the contrast between the structures of past and present.

Vendor of Sweets and Mr. Sampath, Samskara, and The Prince, all serve Naipaul's purpose as paradigms. They come as a support for him to enable him to narrate with a tone of authenticity the point he wants to make. Naipaul keeps on referring to degradation which eats up India in degrees. There is a reference to the story The Princes by Manohar Malgonkar made by Naipaul to underline the habits of withdrawal, denial, confusion of values linked closely with Indianness. He says:

The Prince is opposed to progress. He states the view quite bluntly; and when the British decide to build a dam in territory adjacent to the state, he persuades his aboriginal subjects who live in the area to be affected to vote against the scheme. (61-62)

Naipaul also tries to depict the wretched condition of the Dalit community to a great extent through his interaction with Namdeo Dhasal, the man who had founded the Dalit Panthers in 1974. The growth of the life of Namdeo not only speaks about his life in particular but the struggle of the Dalit community in general. The degradation of life which starts from the day of one's birth in the Dalit community gets a voice in Namdeo's poetry. Himself born in the brothel area, Namdeo captures the language and the content of that life. Naipaul quotes from Namdeo's poetry of assault. He quotes from a translation of a poem by Namdeo called "The Road to the Shrine":

I was born when the sun became weak  
And slowly became extinct  
In the embrace of night.  
I was born on a footpath  
In a rag, I grew like a person who has lost his fuse.  
I ate excrement and grew.  
Give me five paise, give me five paise,  
And I take five curses in return.  
I am on my way to the shrine (112-113)

This abject condition which turns the human life into a non-entity and dirt gets a voice speaking for the entire world of Dalits. Here Naipaul is in fact commenting on the horror of caste prejudice by making an elaborate observation of the mind of Namdeo, his action and personality. A very important observation by Naipaul strikes on as he quotes from Namdeo's

moving line, Water is taught caste prejudices.... And then he goes on to comment:

That idea about water was important to him. He referred it to more than once. It came from his memories of the strict untouchability that prevailed in the village near Poona where he had grown up. The upper castes used the river upstream; the scheduled castes used the river downstream; and the upper castes used the river first. (132)

So through the character of Namdeo, Naipaul documents details on Mahars and Dhor caste. He shows how caste follows a person. Mahars are connected with the disposal of dead bodies and people of Dhor caste are supposed to dispose of dead cattle and run the tanneries. Naipaul throws ample light on the demeaning attitude shown to the Dalits in general.

Naipaul's detailed description of the damaged Shiva sculpture functions as a synecdoche for India's fractured cultural heritage. This damaged artwork represents the broader theme of cultural wounding as he says:

The great figures in the panel are mutilated; the carved rock is chipped and cracked and discolored. The damage is not only the result of time and weather and the dampness of the cave. (15)

Naipaul shows the cyclic connectivity of the history with modern times, the events of past making a socio-economic impact on the present and the delineation of certain characters as well. In the chapter "The Shadow of the Guru", the area of personal suffering extends and merges with the larger waves of historical sufferings. Naipaul connects such waves and ripples of the past and present to understand particular socio-political development in the contemporary world. The precarious situation of Kapur Singh's life has been very well outlined following this above method. Naipaul writes for Kapur Singh:

His sufferings linked him to the persecuted warrior gurus of the Mogul time, and their sufferings had led to his present political predicament. (507)

Naipaul uses the scope of his visits to historical places, monuments, ruins to understand the process of decay of Hindu India. Naipaul selects the span of one thousand years of the history of India which comprises the Islamic invasion and rule and also the rule of the Raj, as his starting point.

He seems to take a stand as if before these thousand years the history of India was but too positive and smooth. It must be mentioned here that Naipaul's second visit to India coincided with the Emergency. Naipaul again gets a chance to see a volatile India as he had found this country in his first visit during the Chinese invasion of 1962. Naipaul in an objective manner in both the cases has watched the Indian response to these two crucial situations. While analyzing the political response to these crucial moments, Naipaul identifies the political and military unpreparedness which has ever remained active down the centuries bringing about India's downfall in every sphere. This unpreparedness generated by a sense of withdrawal into a shell of quietude, stands for Indian attitude. Naipaul writes in his 'Foreword' to *India: A Wounded Civilization*:

An inquiry about India – even an inquiry about the Emergency – has quickly to go beyond the political. It has to be an inquiry about Indian attitudes; it has to be an inquiry about the civilization itself, as it is. (xi)

At this point, Naipaul is trying simultaneously to know India in great detail and also his own self which though a part of the 'Indian' remains separated. He says:

It has taken me much time to come to terms with the strangeness of India, to define what separates me from the country; and to understand how far the 'Indian' attitudes of someone like myself, a member of the small and remote community in the New World, have diverged from the attitudes of people to whom India is still whole. (xi)

Naipaul himself provides his readers with clues to understand his mind which keeps on creating an India from his own perspective and hypothesis. What started in his first Indian trilogy got completed in the second India centered travelogue. Whenever Naipaul visited the different places of India, he read literature, interviewed people, and found a terrible lack of dynamism in India to push forward. In *An Area of Darkness*, he goes at length discussing the Indian habit of withdrawal. He says:

The Indians retreat and they genuinely do not see what is obvious. This brings despair, leading to passivity, disenchantment, detachment, and acceptance. (200)

Therefore, Naipaul enlists certain specific points which he deals in great

detail in India: A Wounded Civilization, a process which has started in the earlier book *An Area of Darkness*. The destruction and gruesome picture of the capital city which once upon a time used to be the glorious Hindu kingdom of Vijayanagar and also Mahabalipuram, the representative of Hindu India, captures a large area of discussion. 'Fantasy and Ruins', (AAD) 'An Old Equilibrium' (WC) more or less have to say the same thing. In these chapters, Naipaul looks directly at the old and archaic Indian world having lost all its glory continuing with all its dereliction:

In the South there is the great city of Vijayanagar. In the early sixteenth century it was twenty-four miles round. Today, four hundred years after its total sacking, even its ruins are few and scattered, scarcely noticeable at first against the surrealist brown rock formations of which they seem to form part. The surrounding villages are broken down and dusty; the physique of the people is poor. Then, abruptly, grandeur: the road from Kampli goes straight through some of the old buildings and leads to the main street, very wide, very long, still impressive, a flight of stone steps at one end, the towering gopuram of the temple, alive with sculpture, at the other. The square pillared lower storeys of the stone buildings still stand; in the doorways are carvings of dancers with raised legs. And, inside, the inheritors of his greatness: men women and children, thin as crickets, like lizards among the stones. (218)

Naipaul has a queer feeling that the present day Indians do not deserve to hold such great legacies. He contrasts their mediocrity with the grandeur of the bygone civilization. It seems as if Naipaul feels that the creators of the golden age were the common people, everybody from the royal dynasties to the lowest strata of people enjoyed a unified life of aesthetic luxury. He seems to suggest with indignation that in that golden age, there were no rifts and fragmentations; that the common people did not look like crickets and lizards at that time. The apparent grandeur of buildings, he seems to have overlooked, may not always hold a mirror to the plight of the masses.

While dealing with, 'the fantasy of past splendour' of Vijayanagar which is 'accommodated within an acceptance of present squalor', there is also an inherent sense of resentment in Naipaul which seems to have irked him throughout his pursuit of India's historical background. The following comment in the book *India: A Wounded Civilization* is stark and rough:

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Arabia, lucky again, has spread beyond its deserts. And India is again at the periphery of this new Arabian world, as much as it had been in the eighth century, when the new religion of Islam spread in all directions and the Arabs – led; it is said, by a seventeen year old boy – overran the Indian kingdom of Sind. That was only an episode, the historians say. (9)

Here one notes a deep distress in Naipaul's words which carry the anticipations of India's eventual disaster. He continues in the same passage saying:

But Sind is not a part of India today; India has shrunk since that Arab incursion. No civilization was so little equipped to cope with the outside world; no country was so easily raided and plundered, and learned so little from its disasters. Five hundred years after the Arab conquest of Sind, Moslem rule was established in Delhi as the rule of foreigners, people apart; and foreign rule – Moslem for the first five hundred years, British for the last 150 – ended in Delhi only in 1947. (9-10)

There is a concealed feeling evinced by Naipaul's declaration that the wounds were inflicted on India with the arrival of the outsiders. He seems to imagine the presence of an India whose boundaries could remain ever widening and that waves of history did not plunder this land. Naipaul triggers controversies because there is a general acceptance that he is an outsider and he possesses a traveller's vision. It is worthwhile mentioning that travels liberate a person from insularity. Travels bring a freshness of looking at things and objectivity. Two very important examples of highly travelled Indian personalities of the colonial India, Tagore and Swami Vivekananda have shown how strongly and ruthlessly they can critique their Indian perspective because travels made them more patriotic and forward looking. Tagore writes in the vol-6 of *Ravindra Rachnavali*, holding a pointer to the traditional Hindu society:

Our society is a confined society (523)

Commenting on the distortion of casteism, Karma and the religious stereotypes, Tagore has a very penetrating observation to offer in the same volume of the book *Ravindra Rachnavali*:

Presently Brahmin and Shudra are all laying extinct and static, hand - to - toe-tied in a huge pan Indian web. They are neither

doing duties of this world nor are they performing spiritual acts.  
(505)

Another great intellect and activist Vivekananda during the same colonial period makes people conscious of the arrogance of the British rule and its blood thirsty nature. In 1899, he says:

In spite of the centuries of anarchy that reigned during the struggles of the English to conquer, the terrible massacre the English perpetrated in 1857 and 1858, and the still more terrible famines that have become the inevitable consequence of British rule (There never is a famine in a native state) and that take off millions, . . .  
(476 Vol - 8)

The seer in young sanyasi gives a jolt to the country through the lines of the book *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, published in 1984 in which he says:

India is required to be raised at any cost, the poor must be fed, education should be spread, and the evil of priest craft is to be wiped out. There should be no priest craft and no social tyranny except more bread and more opportunities for everybody! (368 Vol - 4)

Naipaul gives a detailed account of the creation of the Vijayanagar kingdom in 1336 and goes to document the events which took place during two hundred years. It was attacked by the Moslem power. It lost because the causes of the downfall had remained ingrained in this Vijayanagar culture:

Vijayanagar had its slave markets, its temple prostitutes. It encouraged the holy practice of suttee, whereby a widow burned herself on the funeral pyre of her husband, to achieve virtue, to secure the honour of her husband's family, and to cleanse that family of the sins of three generations. And Vijayanagar dealt in human sacrifice. (6)

The first thing which Naipaul had encountered in India on his first visit was a terrible combination of physical and mental squalor and laziness. There are also wounds which have their roots in the ancient way of thinking itself. This coexistence of squalor and laziness creates the unhealthiest caucus of poverty, untouchability and a total nonchalance towards the most regressive actions which pull a civilization down. The trend of ratio-

nal thinking, Naipaul says is overshadowed by an intellectual depletion down the centuries. It is almost a vicious cycle that is created by the disregard of 'the unregarded millions'. Naipaul says that they have:

. . . multiplied and now, flooding into the cities, cannot be denied. The illegal hutments in which they live are knocked down; but they rise again, a daily tide wrack on the margin of cities and beside the railway lines and the industrial highways. It was this new nearness of the millions, this unknown India on the move, together with the triviality of Indian thought on most subjects – the intellectual deficiencies of the archaic civilization finally revealed during this Emergency, India stalled, unable to see its way ahead, to absorb and render creative the changes it has at last generated – it was this great uncertainty, this sense of elemental movement from below. . . . (43)

Naipaul's observation of India finds in the neglect of the masses, the root cause of India's suffering. This unregarded million has remained deprived of the basic amenities and culture of education down the centuries. Without any support of the infrastructure they have gone into the depth of poverty and squalor. A huge part of India has therefore become an area of latrine cleaners. They are condemned to clean up the defecation of the more fortunate class. It is a pity that they have been left out like the squalor itself they spent their entire life to clean. Their cumulative presence is perhaps the greatest wound which makes India go limping about.

On the one hand there is this man power going about scattered humiliated and neglected, on the other, the cream of the upper class society, the people who enjoy the advantages of life as their birth right, miserably fail to connect with this larger group. There is no action generated to wipe out poverty. The most complacent gesture here invents and relies on the theory of Karma. There is no action of resistance to counter this superimposed theory of action. Despite the symbolism of Karma and the high-flown metaphor of metaphysics, Naipaul's penetrating rationality understands that India has reached almost a dead end. Its apparent show of tranquility and withdrawal totally neglecting the urgency which is needed to address the situation can not last long. It is brittle.

Naipaul refers to the theory of Karma and places several Indian situations against its context. In the chapter 'An Old Equilibrium', Naipaul has tried to evaluate the Indian mind which unfolds itself in so many ways leading him to its basic philosophy of life. This philosophy has a grand structure

of eternity unchallenged by any demand for change. Naipaul clearly says in his book *India: A Wounded Civilization* that "Theirs is a shallow narcissism; they break just at that point where the Hindu begins: the knowledge of the abyss, the acceptance of distress as the condition of men" (17). There is an acute resentment shown by Naipaul when human life faces only a huge waste and India keeps on resisting change. He says:

Generation followed generation quickly here, men as easily replaceable as their huts of grass and mud and matting. Cruelty no longer had a meaning; it was life itself. Men knew what they were born to. Every man knew his caste, his place; each group lived in its own immemorably defined area; and pariahs, the scavengers, lived at the end of the village. (18)

The situation of inertia is so strong that the unregarded millions have forgotten that they too are human beings and they need a change. Naipaul enters a very pathetic situation when he finds himself stuck in this stagnation. He says:

There was little more that they needed, and I began to see my own ideas of village improvement as fantasies. Nothing beyond food and survival – had as yet become an object of ambition; though one man said, fantastically, that he would like a telephone, to find out about the price of grain in Kotah without having to go there. (20)

Naipaul points out that this attitude of quietism and our retreat into the philosophy of bygone days have become the central feature of Indians life. Naipaul in a very severe manner criticizes Srinivas, who is the hero in one of the novels of R.K. Narayan, for his idle, inactive and negative attitude towards life and says that this attitude of dullness and inaction is there in every Indian. Naipaul further states that Indians are in the nature of evading responsibility.

Naipaul has time and again underlined that Indians remain nonchalant. They do not bother about their soil. They remain inconsiderate towards others. They take refuge in the past glory. Everything has become ritualistic. Naipaul goes to the extent of criticizing Hinduism. He states:

Where ritual regulates the will and so much of behaviour is ceremonial, all gestures are important. One gesture of rebellion, as Narayan seems to suggest, brings others in its train, and very

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quickly they add up to a rejection of the piety and reverences that held the society together, a rejection of Karma. Such a fragile world, where rebellion is so easy, a mere abandoning of ritual! It is as though the Hindu equilibrium required a world as small and as restricting as that of Narayan's early novels, where men could never grow, talked much and did little, and were fundamentally obedient, content to be ruled in all things by others. As soon as that world expands, it shatters. (32)

Naipaul finds that the people, who had fought for independence, had some beautiful ideas, thoughts and targets in their minds. But after achieving the goal for which the martyrs laid their lives, degeneration checked in. He says that those who were at the helm of affairs after the war of independence are responsible for the sad and poor condition of India. He further says:

Abundance of Jagans with no responsibility and no idea of the business, only money-making but always considered pure and pious. Now people like Jagans had begun to be rejected, and India was discovering that it had ceased to be Gandhian... Now of Gandhianism there remained only the emblems of the energy; and the energy had turned malignant. India needed a new code, but it had none. (36)

In this context one can quote from Namrata Rathore Mahanta:

Naipaul's thesis is that the old equilibrium has shattered with the world opening up (entry of Jagan's son with his foreign girlfriend). Independent India calls for a different kind of devotion in order to bring about progress. The old pastoral world cannot be re-established. Jagan's world and ideologies could only spell more Emergencies for India. India needed to invest in science and industry. (51-52)

Naipaul's expectation of a change in the Indian society is encouraged by Vijay Tendulkar's perception in *The Vultures* (1961). In the section 'The Shattering World', Naipaul writes:

Tendulkar's India is clearly the same country as Narayan's. But it is a country to which change has come. The world has opened out, and men have become more various and individualistic; the will rages. Sensibility has been modified. India is less mysterious:

Tendulkar's discoveries are like those that might be made elsewhere. (39)

A nagging point on which Naipaul has dwelt from the days of his first travelogue *An Area of Darkness* is that of corruption. In *An Area of Darkness*, in the chapter, 'The Medieval City', he analyses the complacency with which corruption is embraced in India. He writes:

No disgrace attaches to this. The Kashmiri tailor spoke with envious admiration of his patwari friend, a surveyor . . . who in one day might collect as much as a hundred rupees; a lorry driver had a similar admiration for a traffic inspector he knew who received monthly protection money from various lorry – drivers. From time to time there was an outburst in the press and in Parliament about corruption, and here and there frenzied action might instantly be taken . . . an architect in Delhi told me that even such token attempts to 'stamp out' corruption could be demoralizing and dangerous: the system was necessary and in India it was the only system that could work. (143)

In the seventies, Naipaul finds this wound of corruption, having spread its deep roots in the Indian society. He finds it to have grown into huge dimensions leading India to a moral chaos. India faced a state of 'break-down'. Naipaul's insightful comment on corruption is remarkable. He says:

The corruption of which the opposition spoke and indiscipline of which the rulers spoke were both aspects of a moral chaos, and this could be traced back to the beginning, to Independence. (35)

Naipaul uses a method of writing which depends on a type of cyclic rotation especially in his travelogues. Certain ideas which have been broached by him in *An Area of Darkness* get a wider treatment in the second book *India: A Wounded Civilization* to give the history of India a comprehensive treatment. The more he has tried to go deeper in the pages of Indian history, the more he has become obsessed with the events of invasions and the arrival of the British. His mindset is committed to uphold the glorious past of the Hindu India and exposing through the dereliction of the monuments, the tyranny of the plunderers. *An Area of Darkness* initiates this sort of a discussion which is to take further the thread of his argument in his second travelogue. Similarly Gandhi is another icon who is indispensable for Naipaul to prove his perception of India with a sense

of completion. The name of Gandhi, for Naipaul, is extremely significant because in his personality, Naipaul finds the awakening of India starting in its dark colonial days. Coming from Africa, Gandhi gave India eyes to see herself directly and act. When Gandhi's part of action becomes visible and dominant involving entire India, it becomes his satyagraha the outcome of his ahimsa or non-violence. Here Naipaul thinks Gandhi grows as a mahatma, becomes a towering figure behind which the dynamism with which he came to India got diluted. Again India went back to the traditional Hindu way of life where many types of violence remained concealed and unaddressed.

Naipaul with a great sense of honesty tries to analyse the impact of Gandhi on India and its people. He has a very harsh comment to offer:

India undid him. He became a mahatma. He was to be revered for what he was; his message was irrelevant. (82)

Naipaul refers to Gandhi's latrine cleaning and the spinning wheel which became finally symbolical and ritualistic. India celebrates until today on 2nd October every year a huge show of garbage cleaning and the media reporting of the decimated use of the spinning wheel. But things remained as they were. Gandhi's fight against the exploitation of the Harijans and untouchability cried hoarse at the face of caste-ridden society. Naipaul says:

Sanitation was linked to caste, caste to callousness, inefficiency and a hopelessly divided country, division to weakness, weakness to foreign rule. (75)

It must be mentioned here that Naipaul has put his finger on the sore where the shoe pinches. Naipaul's evaluation of Gandhi to some extent is an ironical exposure and evaluation of the Indian mindset.

The indifference shown to the majority millions can never be good for the health of a country. Tagore's words of warning written in nineteenth century can be quoted here which reveal the danger of the cause of a country's downfall when a handful of people try to enjoy the resources of a country in their closely protected area of life. Tagore says in the vol-6 of the book *Ravindra Rachnavali*:

In the past in Bharat Varsh, Brahmins alone had the right to knowledge and its practice. The high ideal of Brahmanya even-

tually for that reason became lacklustre and distorted. Gradually karma became meaningless, dharma became bookish. . . . Its reason is the gravitational pull of the low is enormous (714)

Naipaul's India: A Wounded Civilization like his previous book follows a pattern of shredding India into fine strips of inquiry. He looks at India through a multiplicity of impressions and creates a central narrative which is formed by his repetitive references to meetings, places visited, books read, Gandhi's life and also the turbulence of Emergency declared by the then Prime Minister Mrs Indira Gandhi. Naipaul searches for the identity of India where Gandhism stands at one end and the stringent measures of controlling Indian people on the other. Ironically two Gandhis stand at two ends forming and deciding the image of India. Naipaul does not say much about the draconian measure of Emergency but he focuses his attention on the Gandhian ways which arouse the masses and let them float in a vacuum as direction remains denied to them.

## Conclusion

So this paper in many ways reveals Naipaul's method of diagnosing the cause of India's pain and wound. This second attempt shows his effort to define India with a greater understanding. Here also Naipaul is busy with Indian history approximately of thousand years. He talks about invasions, plunders and enslavement of India with a more intense understanding, but he puts a greater emphasis on the internal causes which have weakened Indian society since a long past. Naipaul shows from different findings how the inactions of an old equilibrium have generated an India which is shattered. The diagnosis of disease is more focused. He distinctly understands the cause of the malaise of India created by the acute indifference shown to its teeming millions. While diagnosing the cause of India's wounds and pain, Naipaul comes to know that the external attacks, plunders and colonizing are not the only cause of India's debacle. The root cause lies in the stasis of Indian attitude and perception where Nataraj or Shiva has ceased to dance.

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