

Chapter - II

Historical Review of Travelogues as a Literary Genre

II.1 Definition and Motives of Travel Writing

Travel goes back in its origin to the beginning of human life, and it seems, no one can exactly trace it. There are many reasons why individuals have travelled within their societies and beyond it. Some travellers may have simply desired to satisfy curiosity about the larger world. Until recent times, however, trade, business dealings, diplomacy, political administration, military campaigns, exile, flight from persecution, migration, pilgrimage, missionary efforts, and the quest for economic or educational opportunities were more common inducements for foreign travel than was mere curiosity. In the 20th century, with the development of increasingly fast, reliable, and inexpensive forms of long-distance transport, mass tourism emerged as a major global promoter of foreign travel. Like travelling, travel literature has also a long and rich history, and for the past three hundred years, travel writing has surfaced as an important subject for the humanities and social sciences. Moreover, it has also provided interesting cultural, historical, religious, philosophical, political, environmental debates, and hence the study of travel writing has become a fruitful enterprise.

Though the popularity of travel writing is gradually increasing, the question that remains difficult to answer is 'What is travel writing?' In *English Travel Writing from Pilgrimages to Postcolonial Explorations*, Barbara Korte defines travel writing as "the interaction of the human subject with the world" (Korte, 2000, 5). She adds that "accounts of travel let us participate in acts of intercultural perception and cultural construction in processes of understanding and misunderstanding" (Korte, 2000, 5). Travel writing is considered a broad genre that constantly changes depending on the cultures, places, and people of the world that the traveller investigates. Such travel writing also known as travelogues usually report the writer's experiences in detail and his/her perception of the explored space.

Travelogues have a narrative nucleus and that may portray a real or a fictional journey that can be psychological or symbolic, and may happen for a number of reasons. Korte notes that travel writing “fuses various modes of presentation in very different proportions; narration is intermingled with description, exposition, and even prescription” (Korte, 2000, 9). Thus, one can say that travel writing is characterized as a hybrid literary form, and its main attraction lies in the heterogeneity of its form and content.

The question that is even more difficult to find out is, ‘How did travel writing start? In his book *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century*, James Clifford says “Travel writing emerged as an increasingly complex range of experiences, practices of crossing and interaction that troubled the localism of many common assumptions about culture” (Clifford, 1997, 3). The travel writer’s main role is to help people understand the world that is foreign to them. Documentation of the traveller’s experiences plays an important role in representing the travelled world authentically. In *Travel Writing: the Self and the World*, Casey Blanton explains that “what travel books are about is the interplay between observers and observed, between a traveller’s own philosophical biases and preconceptions and the tests those ideas and prejudices endure as a result of the journey.” (Blanton, 2002, 5)

Major changes and variations have occurred in the narrative of travel accounts as the motives and purposes of travel have recently shifted from pilgrimage and political exploration to travel for its own sake. In earlier times, travellers would mostly go on pilgrimages to describe their suffering and subsequent blessings. Hence, the pilgrimage was the dominant medieval framework for long-distance, non-utilitarian travel. In England, other travellers carried on trips for historical or scientific explorations. Reports of travel to foreign countries conducted by explorers and scientists served to create a different genre of travel narrative. Explorers paid attention to geographic and ethnographic details by observing and describing the exotic lands. Hence, travel writing has mostly been associated with exploration and colonization. Travellers’ accounts often recorded detailed descriptions of certain places for political

reasons, especially when the purpose was to serve the colonization efforts of powerful empires.

II.2 The Development of Travel Writing

“Writing and travel have always been intimately connected.

The traveler’s tale is as old as fiction itself.” (Hulme, 2000, 2)

In *The Cambridge Companion of Travel Writing*, Peter Hulme and Tim Young give an extensive overview of travel writing from the earliest times on. Even before the *Odyssey*, ancient Egyptian stories of shipwrecked sailors on exotic islands and the biblical Exodus can to some extent be classified as travel writings. Later in the Christian tradition the pilgrimage became a new kind of journey with the pilgrims being the “ancestors of modern tourists: a catering industry grew up to look after them, they followed set routes, and the sites they visited were packaged for them.” (Hulme, 2000, 3)

In later medieval times, apart from the pilgrims, one well known traveller and his stories of faraway lands greatly influenced travel writing was Marco Polo. It was not written by him personally but by a romance writer named Rustichello. These narratives which already included many themes and motifs are often assigned to modern travel writing.

Especially in the sixteenth century, documentation and factual correctness were the highest aim of travel writing as kings and queens and other sponsors requested detailed reports of the journeys of its subjects and discoveries. These reports were the basis for further investments and future settlements and needed to be as accurate as possible. However, there were already books such as Thomas More’s *Utopia* (1516) and Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels* (1726) which were fully fictional travel reports. Richard Hakluyt, geographer and writer, was the first to differentiate fact and fiction in his *The principal navigations, voyages and discoveries of the English nation etc.* (1589), in which he only included eyewitness accounts.

In the eighteenth century the “fictional literature of the age ‘is full of travelling heroes involved in journey plots’, and ‘almost every author of consequence [...]”

produced one overt travel book.’ (Buzard, 2002, 37) James Buzard goes on to claim that “writers seemed to be travelling, in reality or in their imaginations, just about everywhere.” (Buzard, 2002, 37) The most famous and most popular journey among the privileged young Britons of this time was the Grand Tour. Its purpose was the “education of young men of the ruling classes by exposing them to the treasured artifacts and ennobling society of the continent.” (Buzard, 2002, 38) The Tour would last between one to five years and was often undertaken immediately after completing one’s studies. However, it has to be said that any travel writing concerning the tour was mostly private and remained unpublished.

During the Renaissance the focus of travel writing shifted towards observing and describing the strange and unknown. Roy Bridges suggests that during this period:

“travel writing became increasingly identified with the interests and preoccupations of those in European societies who wished to bring the non- European world into a position where it could be influenced, exploited or, in some cases, directly controlled.” (Bridges, 2002, 53)

In contrast to the traditional Grand Tour, philosophers now suggested that the young men leave the predetermined route of the Grand Tour and explore the people of the newly discovered continents. It were the accounts of these young men that philosophers and scientists had to rely on as they were usually not very well travelled themselves. As a result, they supplied the travellers with a large amount of instructions “about how to observe and how to write down their observations and the history of such instructions runs unbroken into the early twentieth century and the foundations of anthropology.” (Hulme, 2002, 4)

The early stages of modern travel writing were already present in seventeenth century travel literature. Hulme and Youngs suggest Thomas Coryate’s *Crudities* (1611) as already containing a combination of extravagance, self-irony and adventure. (Hulme, 2002, 5) Also parody, in combination with forgery, dates back to early works, the best example probably being Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels* (1726).

In Britain especially, after its rise to being a “truly global power”, a constantly rising number of travellers and explorers undertook journey to report on the wider world. Precise, detailed and accurate information was required in regard to economic strategies and planning. People were sent out around the globe and associations were founded to publish new discoveries. (Bridges, 2002, 55)

Apart from the novelists’ fictional travel accounts and the explorers’ factual accounts of the foreign and the unknown, some writers during this period turned towards the known and started to explore and write about their home countries. In a time when travel was still reserved for the privileged, these writers were in search of picturesque and romantic landscapes at home and were the first to define today’s tourist sites.

Dating back to the days of 19th century travel writing is the distinction between the traveller and the tourist. The early travelers saw themselves as some kind of aristocratic figure free to move about and enjoy, as compared to the new figure of the tourist starting to appear with Thomas Cook’s first tour in 1841, when he arranged train tickets and food for 570 temperance campaigners to take them to their rally. At this point in travel writing, boundaries between fact and fiction, between travel narratives and travel novels are starting to blur. Travel accounts of faraway places hardly visited by anyone before were the perfect opportunity for the lone travel writer to add a few invented details here and there to spice up his story. On the other hand, early modern European novelists loved the traveling protagonist, whose adventures were influenced by the factual accounts of travellers. Hulme and Youngs suggest, “Travel writing and the novel, especially in its first-person form, have often shared a focus on the centrality of the self, a concern with empirical detail, and a movement through time and place which is simply sequential,” but despite those similarities “the relationship between the genres remains close and often troubling.” (Hulme, 2002, 7)

In the twentieth century most of the America and Africa had been explored and explorers were heading for the poles and the Arctic to bring back travel accounts of hardship, danger and endurance. According to Hulme and Youngs, “polar writing reinforced travel writing’s growth in popularity, already evident in the late nineteenth

century". (Hulme, 2002. Pg-7) Until then, predominantly scientists and explorers had been the ones writing travel accounts. Slowly they were being joined by literary writers who did not put content before form, as their scientist colleagues did, but devoted a lot of time to the art of traveling and the art of writing. (Hulme, 2002, 7)

There was a move ... from the detailed, realist text, often with an overtly didactic or at any rate moral purpose, to a more impressionistic style with the interest focused as much on the travelers' responses or consciousness as their travels.(Carr, 2002, 74)

In the period from 1880 to 1940 a change took place and travel writing emerged "as the more literary and autonomous genre that we understand it to be today." While earlier travel writing had always been a result of a journey for a reason – traders, soldiers, missionaries, scientists to name but a few -, in the twentieth century writing about journeys and traveling became more and more the dominant reason. "They travel in order to write, they travel while writing, because for them, travel is writing". (Carr, 2002, 74)

Carr identifies three stages during this period of travel writing. The first one, roughly from 1880 to 1900 was dominated by the "realist" texts – not to be confused with "realistic" texts – stories about heroic explorers and their adventures in faraway lands. By the time of World War I, travel writing had become less didactic and more subjective, with a shift in focus towards literary texts. The third stage took place in the years between World War I and World War II, when the literary travel book managed to leave the instructive realist texts behind and became the dominant form of travel literature. (Carr, 2002, 75)

In the history of travel writing there has long been a tendency toward either detailed factual writing or entertaining fictional writing, travel writing always leaning towards the extremes. In the course of the last century this separation between fact and fiction has started to vanish and fictional aspects are more and more to be found in travel accounts. Nonetheless, scientific or scholarly travel writing has not

vanished from literature; however its readership has shifted to fellow scientists and academics.

II.3 Travelogues and Cultural Identity

'Culture' and 'identity' are two complex terms that evolved out of human interaction with each other. Identity derives from assumptions of assigning oneself to any particular group or community. Culture, it seems, is a complex set of human actions that makes a particular group different from another. 'Culture' is related to identity as the culture of any community itself is its identity from the rest of the parts of the world. The relation of culture with identity is further explained by Kath Woodward, in *Questioning Identity: Gender, Class, Nation*, thus: "Identity presents the interface between the personal-what is going on inside our heads, how we as individuals feel about who we are-and the social-the societies in which we live and the social, cultural and economic factors shape experience and make it possible for people to take up some identities and render others inaccessible or impossible."(Woodwar., 2000, 18) Travel narratives can be read as documents that blend culture with identity based on the encounter of a foreign place that the writer had.

Travel narratives could be considered as sources that document cross cultural encounter of the writer through which new people and places are better understood through the descriptions of the writer's experiences. Travelling and narrating about one's experiences is done by the travellers, irrespective of the differences that might form 'other' civilizations. This could be seen as a major aspect stressed by Fred Dallmayr, in *Beyond Orientalism*: "Cross-cultural inquiry and exegesis today is no longer the monopoly of Europe or the West; in our century, non-Western voices have increasingly come to infiltrate the "conversation of humankind," thus correcting (at least in part) the monological privilege chastised by Said."(Dallmayr, 2001, 19) Inquiry across cultures is no more a Western prerogative, as seen from this comment. Third world travel narratives that covered all the major continents emphasise that non-Western voices have also become authentic in the present context. Travel narratives describe the culture of a foreign place that the writer had visited based on the beliefs, mannerisms, customs and traditions that the people of that particular place follows

and represent. The 'strange' nature of the people creates an identity for them. It is through travelling that the writer encounters the foreign culture. Travel narration is a mode of cultural representation through which the foreign people and place gains its significance. 'Culture' is a term that has a whole set of meanings enclosed or embedded in it as we have already seen.

Travelling is a deliberate endeavor of the writer to encounter the foreign culture and to generate meanings out of it. The purpose behind the study of the encounter of culture in travel narratives could be understood through the varied areas of interest that the study of culture itself has, as clearly defined in *Culture and Imperialism*, by Edward Said:

As I use the word, 'culture' means two things in particular. First of all it means all those practices, like the arts of description, communication and representation, that have relative autonomy from the economic, social, and political realms and that often exist in aesthetic forms, one of whose principal aims is pleasure. Included, of course are both the popular stock of lore about distant parts of the world and specialized knowledge available in such learned disciplines as ethnography, historiography, philology, sociology, and literary history. (Said, 1993, 13)

From this comment, it could be seen that travel narratives could also be used for the study of culture as they deal with the social and aesthetic peculiarities of the foreign land and people. In the process of representing a foreign culture, travel writing poses many questions regarding the 'factual' nature of narration. Mary Baine Campbell, travel critic, explains this:

As a kind of writing, 'travel writing' provokes certain kind of essential literary questions and formulations. Most interesting here are works of literary criticism that find themselves directly facing issues of power, knowledge, and identity as a

consequence of the very nature of the formal matters raised. Formal issues that have been fully explored with relation to travel writing in recent decades include the nature and function of the stereotype, lexical matters such as the hidden etymologies. . .the subjective presence of the authors in texts of knowledge, truth value in narrative writing, the independent or hard-wired shape of narrative itself, the rhetorical nature of 'fact', 'identification' in reading (with its consequences in social and political life), the representation of time, inter-cultural 'translation', and the function of metaphor and other figures.(Campbell, 2002, 263)

Critics are addressing all these formal issues in travel narration at present. 'Identity' of the encountered people and place and the identity of the traveller is a major issue that has to be addressed in any travel narration. This would also be one of the prime areas of focus in this research. In the process of defining oneself or representing one's identity, the easiest way to distinguish or differentiate a community from another is to use the terms 'self' and 'other'. 'Self' and 'other' are the terms that are defined elaborately by critics including Edward Said. In analyzing cultural identity in travel narrative scenario 'self' and 'other' are used by me to distance the writer traveller from the foreign land by assigning 'self' to the writer and 'other' to the 'foreign' land that he had visited.

What is identity? Is there a difference between the personal identity and the identity of belonging to a nation and civilization? What is personal identity? Does personal identity or national identity play an important part in travel narrating? What is the writer's 'self'? What is the 'other' that the writer focuses on? Is identity a construction of the writer? What is the significance of identity in this study? Is identity in any way related to travel narrative and cultural encounter?

The traveller usually does have his/her own notions of personal identity. The writer's individual 'self' will be always on the move with certain motives. Most of the travels are meant to fulfill the writer's personal interests or needs. It is when these

needs are not met with that the writer often ends up with hatred for the people. Preconceived notion about a place and people is often the reason for this disappointment.

The transformation of 'self' into an individual identity is a long process that is involved during travelling and documentation. The boundaries that are created in defining the cultural identity of the writer in the travel narratives are elastic in nature as it could be extended as well as reduced according to the traveller's wish. The writer's 'self' could associate with any place that draws his/her attention. 'Self' is described in *Deciphering Culture*, by Gillan Swanson, thus:

The spaces of private life-constituted in relation to home, family and personal bonds- functioned as a refuge from the public world, maintaining the boundaries of individual 'nature'. Thus, the notion of the subjective self-and its translation into individual 'identity' or 'character'-became associated in the nineteenth century with intimate realms of activity. (Swanson, 2000, 78)

Thus notions of 'self' define the individual and public space shared by the traveller. The notions of 'self' is not limited to the state of mind of the traveller. It is defined by the political, social, cultural and economic spheres in which the traveller live. 'Self' is further defined by Gillan Swanson that would enable in the clearer understanding of the travel narratives. She remarks:

Even the definition of the most intimate realms of the self takes place through the regulation of customs and manners, and, just as behavior is shaped by its harnessing to a socially legible, communicable, system, so too are ways of feeling made habitual and depend upon those established 'ways of being' that are offered within specific social environments. The differences between such environments have long been the subject of representations of various sorts. They were of particular interest in that period I am identifying as that which

consolidated distinctions between public and private, and the sense of an inner and personal realm of individuality formed in the intimate, everyday habits of self fashioning. (Swanson, 2000, 84)

This remark by Gillan Swanson broadens the understanding of 'culture', 'identity', 'self', and 'other'. Thus cultural encounter and travel narratives could be studied, taking into account the various binaries; public and private space, individual and collective sense, self/other notions, strange/foreign, people/place, and so on. Clear notions about all these binaries would make the study of travel narratives interesting as well as informative to the readers where by peripheral view points of the writer would attain significance in viewing a foreign culture. This dissertation attempts to analyze cultural documentation, motives of the writer and the conscious construction of cultural identity by the writer in the upcoming chapters.

II.4 Travel Narratives of V. S. Naipaul

V. S. Naipaul is a Trinidadian born, British novelist with Hindu heritage and an Indo-Trinidadian ethnicity. Naipaul had travelled extensively through India, Africa, Pakistan, Malaysia, America and Iran. Most of the diaspora writers had set to travel in the modern times. Manjit Inder Singh, critic on Naipaul, comments on the increase in travelling by the writers in the modern period, in *V. S. Naipaul*:

The writers too, are involved in this multiplicity of global travelling and they are part of this dislocation of people and cultures. Hence, Naipaul and David Dabydeen writer from the West Indian Diaspora, Bharati Mukherji represents the US Diaspora, Rushdie and Dhondy write from the UK Diaspora, Rohinton Mistry comes from the Canadian Diaspora and so forth. (Singh, 1998, 1)

Naipaul could be seen as a writer who had a dislocated 'culture'. This was mainly due to his Indian and Trinidadian identity. Even then, most of the diasporic writers are in quest of foreign land. Naipaul's nonfictional writings could be seen as often unsentimental explorations of the places that he had visited. The themes of his

writings are alienation and exile as seen from his fictional and non fictional narratives. Naipaul was the product of colonization as seen from his travel narratives. The colonial elements in Naipaul are the product of the writer's personal 'self' identity that his life had contributed to him. Bruce King, a critic, talks about the writer's life in *Modern Novelists V. S. Naipaul*: "He was part of a generation that had to face the problems that resulted from the withdrawal of imperial order and the resulting cultural confusion. Yet his story is perhaps unique in his having started with so little and having come so far." (King, 1993, 1) The 'cultural confusion' that occurred to the writer was a product of his diaspora 'self'. This could be seen as reflected in his Indian trilogy which would be analysed in the subsequent chapters. This comment emphasizes the observation that Naipaul was a product of colonization. Chandra Chatterjee, critic on Naipaul, comments on Naipaul's themes in the travel narration due to the Western cultural influence in him. She remarks in *V. S. Naipaul: An Anthology of Recent Criticism*:

The emphasis is unmistakably on a lost world represented at that time only in unflattering vignettes. It was a lost world which Naipaul recuperated with his writer's imagination. It is this process of discovery, the very act of re-location that Naipaul goes through in his three travel accounts of India. (Panwar, 2007, 96)

Naipaul had the feeling of being cut off from his Indian ancestry and from the 'European culture' to which he belonged. This 'cultural chaos' leads him to a dislocation in his position of being a Western traveller in India and to a 'relocation' of the narrator as an Indian in his travel narratives on India. Naipaul's representation of India its landscape and people will be analyzed in the later part of this research.

Naipaul visited India in 1962. The strangeness that he experienced in India is reflected in his first travel narrative on India i. e. *An Area of Darkness (1964)*. His personal views on Indian politics, tradition, and the life of the people are evidently seen in his travelogues which is known as 'Indian Trilogy'. Naipaul is always obsessed with a sense of India's past as can be seen from his narratives. The technique of conjoining past, present and future of a country makes Naipaul's narrative unique.

Manjit Inder Singh, a critic on Naipaul, comments on the power of Naipaul's narrative contrasting Indian civilization's past and present, in *V. S. Naipaul*:

Naipaul's travel literature, always transparent in its contrasts and contradictions between society, culture, history, religion and their relationship to modernization in the post-imperial phase brings out the most possible illusion and gaffe the people are caught up in. (Singh, 1998, 173)

The obsession that Naipaul had with India's past is mainly due to the importance that the writer had given for the documentation of 'place' in his narrative. Manjit Inder Singh, comments on Naipaul's relation with the 'place' in his narratives. He states:

The psycho-somatic attributes of the 'place' that have gone into his and his works peculiar identity-individual and literary. Naipaul's interviews themselves form a sizable corpus of his confessions and reservations of his disgust, rage and traumata connected with issues and experiences ranging from individual crises, the history of imperialism, politics, race, multiculturalism, religion, metropolis, literary vacuum, the writer's problems and so forth. . .this is the Naipaul everyone has known for the last three decade or so, the writer as exile, the writer in search of place and mornings, the writer becoming the refracted theatre of the 'worlds' that have produced him. (Singh, 1998, 20)

It appears that 'Place' gave Naipaul a sense of identity. The problem that Naipaul had in positioning himself in his Indian narratives is mainly due to the conflicting identities that the writer had. Naipaul was interested in indulging in racial, social and political problems of the places that he had visited. This can be seen in his Indian narratives vividly. *India: A Million Mutinies Now* (1990) was written during Naipaul's visit to India, his native land. It is a narrative that deals with the life of the

Indians amidst the social and political chaos that the country faced soon after India attained Independence. The second series of his Indian narrative, *India: A Wounded Civilization*, was published in 1977. This travel narrative was written in the backdrop of the Emergency period 1975-76, declared by the then Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi. Kate Teltscher, remarks on Naipaul's Indian travel narratives, in *The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing*:

An Area of Darkness (1964) recorded the narrator's first impressions of the subcontinent which his grandfather had left as an indentured labourer: a land of abject poverty, dirt, and defecation. The second book, *India: A Wounded Civilization* (1977), was written during the emergency declared by Indira Gandhi in which civil rights were suspended and political opponents imprisoned. For Naipaul, the emergency exposed the inadequacies of Indian civilization and the shortcomings of the intellectual resources. But the India encountered in the final book, *India: A Million Mutinies Now* (1990), is in some respects a country renewed. The poverty which had neurotically haunted the narrator was now diminished, and the country which, according to Naipaul's earlier works, had lacked any sense of a past, was awakening to history and self assertion. This new autonomy was mirrored by a narrative style which allowed individuals to tell their own stories with little apparent meditation. (Telschter, 2002, 194)

Naipaul's aim behind the narrative, as evident from the reading of the work, was to make the Indians aware of the past glory of the country. His inquiry of India was not merely political it was an inquiry into the culture that his ancestors followed through years. This could be seen from his narrative when Naipaul states: "An inquiry about India-even an inquiry about the Emergency-has quickly to go beyond the political. It has to be an inquiry about the civilization itself, as it is."(Naipaul. 1977, 8) Naipaul's non-fictional works were the outcome of his extensive travel between 1960 and 1970.

His non-fictional narrative include *The Middle Passage* (1962), *An Area of Darkness* (1964), *India: A Wounded Civilization* (1977), *The Believers: An Islamic Journey* (1981), *Finding the Centre* (1984), *A Turn in the South* (1989) and *India: A Million Mutinies Now* (1990). *The Middle Passage* is the product of the writer's ten years life, as a self-exile, in England after returning to the Caribbean. Though his travel narratives had been criticized for the unsympathetic portrayal of the third world countries, critics like Bruce King in *Modern Novelists V. S. Naipaul*, comments on Naipaul's capability to present a clear picture of India through his narrative. He remarks: "The travel books are filled with characters, voices, representative documents, places. Naipaul has created an image of our era and its discontents." (King, 1993. 4) Naipaul's narratives gave a distinct and distant vision of India. It is blended with the writer's first person narrative, the comments about the people and also on the present social condition of India through the voice of the characters in Indian literary works.

It seems that Naipaul as a traveler and writer was always obsessed with the themes of exile. Manjit Inder Singh, in *V. S. Naipaul*, comments on the obsession that the writer had with the theme of exile:

Naipaul is still preoccupied with that older theme, almost an obsession in his case; varieties of dislocation, migration, exile, the idea of being unanchored and displaced, the enigma of a decentered and disorienting experience in the explosive and disconcerting realities of the post colonial world anywhere, everywhere. From his earliest comic novels about the multicultural, multiracial and farcical, de intellectualized climate in Trinidad, to his last authentic work of fiction. *A Bend in the River*, the pre occupation with and the glaring presence of the outsider-exile figure in varied shape and experiences hardly needs much corroboration. (Singh,1998, 20)

This comment shows the interest that the writer showed on the themes of dislocation, displacement and exile which he himself felt. Naipaul's travel narratives make the readers feel that he is striving for the development of the third world

countries. His outlook for the development of the countries about which he is writing is seen through his travel narratives. His narratives on the third world countries show the open minded nature of the writer to perceive the culture as he sees it. His narratives highlight the inability to accept the freedom that the Indian's enjoyed. He feels that the people are not aware of the countries past and are living a stagnated life as could be seen from the description of the experiences that the writer had in India. The world that Naipaul views is brutally alive with human activity whether it be India or Trinidad. Naipaul's view of the reality of the world is vivid and his presentation is linked with the history of the place. Naipaul states in *India: A Wounded Civilization*:

India in the late twentieth century still seems so much itself, so rooted in its own civilization, it takes time to understand that its Independence meant more than the going away of the British; that the India to which Independence came was a land of far older defeat; that the purely Indian past died a long time ago. And already, with the Emergence, it is necessary to fight against the chilling sense of a new Indian dissolution. (Naipaul,1977, 8)

India is presented as a land of disillusionment by the writer. Naipaul's writing deals with the cultural confusion in India. His experiences after encountering the culture of India and the feeling of dislocation from the country could be seen in his narrative. Naipaul states in *India: A Wounded Civilization*:

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. My ancestors migrated from the Gangetic plain a hundred years ago; and the Indian community they and others established in Trinidad, on the other side of the world, the community in which I grew up, was more homogeneous than the Indian community Gandhi met in South Africa in 1893 and more isolated from India. (Naipaul,1977, 8)

The 'difficulty' that Naipaul documents in his narrative shows the psychological distancing of the writer from India. The writer feels as a dislocated Indian in West Indies and as a West Indian in England. He suffers from a fractured identity during his visit to India. Manjit Inder Singh, in *V. S. Naipaul*, remarks about this condition of Naipaul: "He was the prophet of historylessness and traditionlessness in the West Indies." (Singh, 1998, 19) Naipaul's personal views on Trinidad are voiced in the historical and political analysis of *The Loss of El Dorado* (1969) and in the India series of travel narratives.

The emancipation of Indians after 1857 mutiny could be seen as a major social situation that falls as the backdrop of the narrative *India: A Million Mutinies Now*. Naipaul represented Indian life and attitudes through this narrative. He could be seen as portraying the economic and political condition of India through his Indian narratives. *India: A Wounded Civilization* deals with the withdrawal of the Indian civilization into itself after the long years of colonization. Naipaul's views on India will be analysed in the upcoming chapters by using *India: A Wounded Civilization* and *India: A Million Mutinies Now*. Special emphasis would be given on the understanding of the cultural encounter, from the writer's point of view, as narrated in *India: A Wounded Civilization*.

II.5 Naipaul- A Travel writer With a Difference

What makes Naipaul different from other travel writers are three formal aspects of his travel writings: 1) the Naipaulian assumptions 2) his narrative authority 3) his travel strategies. All three are important in order to understand Naipaul's personal views of what a writer and his writing should strive for.

Firstly, there is Naipaulian assumption or logistics, a considerably ordered plan that Naipaul employs which leads to eventual text. It is important to understand that actual travel experience with notes is not the final text product, it is only a beginning. The actual text should be produced out of the actual experiential context; it is 'remembered thing', accessed from both writer's memory, and his travel notes and journals. But the actual product of the narrative might have different assumptions,

time-space arrangement might be different, and the narrative will finally evolve into a re-invention of his travel experience. This is applicable to Naipaul's travel writing. His travel narratives, many times, move around different time-space points. And they reflect deeper analysis from his post-travel re-assessments. What Naipaul 'saw' and 'observed' in his travel experience is not totally represented in his travel narratives; it is a very critical selection of a reality that reflects a Naipaulian idea or perspective, a set of assumptions.

Secondly, Naipaul uses a 'narrative authority', a way of convincing his reader of his views and perspectives, a way of giving 'authority' to his travel narrative as an 'objective reality'. He convinces us by: a) giving an eye-witness experience, b) demonstrating an accuracy of observation, c) employing analytical skills, and d) offering us a very readable and pleasing narrative. His travel narratives are not the results of 'cozy tourism'. They are serious undertakings that entail much thought and analysis, hence the eye-witness account gives 'authority' to his writings.

Thirdly, Naipaul employs particular 'travel writing strategies', that is different techniques and approaches have been carefully manipulated: a) journalistic techniques, b) detailed ethnographic reporting including landscape, geographic and human observation c) historical perspectives and style d) autobiographical features and e) philosophical inquiry. Sometimes Naipaul includes one, more than one or all these techniques in his travel writing.

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