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INDIA FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF BIRUNI AND V.S. NAIPAUL

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ABSTRACT

This study is based on a comparison of two works on India, one by Biruni, who lived and wrote about India nearly a thousand years ago, and one by V.S. Naipaul, who lived in the twenty-first century. The first work, *Kitâb'ut-Tahkik ma li'l-Hind*, written by Biruni, was written in Arabic in the first quarter of the eleventh century to help Muslims living among Hindus in different regions such as Sindh, Punjab, Kabul and Ghazni. The work was edited by Edward Sachau in the early 1880s and translated into German (1883-1884) and English (1887-1888) under the title *Al-Beruni's India*; both the Arabic edition and the translations were published in the West in those years. An Arabic edition of the book, based on the copy in the Paris National Library, was published in Hyderabad in 1958 with the help of the Indian Ministry of Education. On September 30, 1932, Kıvameddin Burslan translated the work into Turkish, but due to various reasons, it was published only in 2015. Nobel Prize-winning author V.S. Naipaul, on the other hand, has written three travel books on India and in these works, which are based on his travels to the country in 1964, 1977 and 1990, he refers to India as a dark, wounded and rebellious civilization respectively. With the publication of his books, Naipaul, himself of Hindu descent, was severely criticized for his views on India, Indians and non-Western societies and cultures, which went far beyond criticism, and caused intense debates. The most obvious conclusion that emerges from the comparative analysis of the works of both authors is that Biruni, despite being a Muslim, is extremely tolerant and objective in his approach to India, Hindu culture, traditions, and belief system, while Naipaul's approach, on the contrary, is far from tolerance and extremely biased.

Keywords: Biruni, Naipaul, India, Indians, West

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BİRUNİ VE V.S. NAIPAUL'UN PERSPEKTİFİNDEN HİNDİSTAN

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ÖZ

Bu çalışma, Hindistan'a dair biri yaklaşık bin yıl önce yaşamış ve eserini yazmış olan Biruni ile yirmi birinci yüzyılda yaşamış olan V.S. Naipaul'un aynı ülkeye dair eserlerinin karşılaştırılmasına dayanır. Bunlardan Biruni tarafından yazılan *Kitâb 'üt-Tahkîk ma li'l-Hind* adlı ilk eser, XI. yüzyılın ilk çeyreğinde, Sind, Pencap, Kabil ve Gazne gibi farklı bölgelerde Hindularla iç içe yaşayan Müslümanlara yardımcı olmak amacıyla Arapça olarak kaleme alınmıştır. Eser Edward Sachau tarafından 1880'li yılların başında tahkik edilerek, *Al-Beruni's India* adıyla Almanca (1883-1884) ve İngilizceye (1887-1888) çevrilmiş; hem Arapça orijinali hem de çevirileri, daha o yıllarda Batı'da yayımlanmıştır. Kitabın Paris Milli Kütüphanesindeki nüshası esas alınarak hazırlanan bir Arapça baskısı ise, 1958 yılında Hindistan Maarif Bakanlığının yardımlarıyla Haydarabad'da yapılmıştır. 30 Eylül 1932 tarihinde Kıvameddin Burslan tarafından Türkçeye tercüme edilen eser, değişik sebeplerden dolayı ancak 2015 yılında yayımlanmıştır. Nobel ödüllü yazar V.S. Naipaul ise Hindistan'a dair üç gezi kitabı kaleme almış ve 1964, 1977 ve 1990 yıllarında söz konusu ülkeye gerçekleştirdiği seyahatlerini konu alan bu eserlerinde, Hindistan'dan sırasıyla karanlık, yaralı ve asi bir medeniyet olarak söz etmiştir. Kendisi de Hindu asıllı olan Naipaul, kitaplarının yayımlanmasıyla birlikte, Hindistan, Hintliler ve Batılı olmayan toplumlar ve kültürler konusundaki eleştirinin çok ötesine geçen görüşlerinden dolayı kıyasıya eleştirilmiş, yoğun tartışmalara neden olmuştur. Her iki yazarın eserlerinin karşılaştırmalı incelemesinden ortaya çıkan en bariz sonuç, Biruni'nin Müslüman olmasına karşın Hindistan'a, Hindu kültürüne, geleneklerine ve inanç sistemine yaklaşımında son derece hoşgörülü ve objektif olması, öte yandan Hint asıllı olan Naipaul'un yaklaşımının ise tam tersine, hoşgörüden uzak ve son derece taraflı olmasıdır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Biruni, Naipaul, Hindistan, Hintliler, Batı

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1. INTRODUCTION

This essay aims to provide a comparative analysis of Biruni's and Naipaul's attitudes towards India, Indian civilization, highlighting the similarities, differences, and the nuanced perspectives the present regarding India and Indian culture and civilization.

1.1. Historical Perspective

Biruni lived during the 11th century and was a scholar, mathematician, and polymath from Central Asia. He traveled to India during the Islamic Golden Age and engaged in extensive studies of Indian culture, religion, and society. An Iranian scholar who lived from 973 to 1048 CE, Biruni visited India during the 11th century and made significant contributions to various fields, including the study of comparative religion and an extensive and profound exploration about India and its culture. His work titled "India" provides valuable insights into various aspects of Indian society, religion, philosophy, and sciences. In his renowned work, "*Kitab fi Tahqiq ma li-l-Hind*" (Book on the Verification of What Pertains to India), Biruni extensively compared Indian religions, particularly Hinduism and Buddhism, with Islam. While his work provides valuable insights into these religious traditions, it is crucial to analyze his writings through a critical lens to discern any potential value judgments that may have influenced his comparative analysis. Biruni also made significant contributions to various fields of knowledge, including mathematics, astronomy, geography, history, and anthropology. His attitude towards India as a country and its cities was largely shaped by his extensive studies and interactions during his time in the Indian subcontinent.

Kitāb al-Taḥqīq ma li'l-Hind consists of eighty chapters, most of which average four to five pages in length in the Arabic original. These chapters contain detailed information on the basic characteristics of Indian culture, the Hindu belief in God, Hindu beliefs in the visible and invisible realms, sacred texts, the source of religious and civil law, the nature of final salvation and the methods of attaining it, the doctrine of avatara, the caste system and the rules specific to different castes, sacred places and the etiquette of visiting them, sacrifices and penance ceremonies, religious festivals and fasting days, marriage and death practices. In addition, it is possible to find detailed information on almost every aspect of the culture in question, such as Indian literature, geography, astronomy, history and astrology. In short, it can be said that all topics except religious beliefs and thoughts are covered in order to facilitate the understanding of Indian religious and philosophical thought, which is quite different in nature from Islamic beliefs and practices, by Muslims. In his preface to the English translation, E. Sachau admired the well-thought-out geometrical plan of the work and said:

There is not a random sentence in the work, nor an unnecessary prolonged expression. The terms are chosen in accordance with the subject and used in their proper place. Considering its layout and clarity from beginning to end, there is no doubt that the work is the work of a mathematician. The author has tried to verify and understand the narratives of past eras from different sources instead of quoting them as they are, and rejected those which he found contrary to the laws of reason and nature (Sachau, 2011, p.xxv).

Biruni's attitude towards India and Indians in his work can be characterized as one of genuine curiosity, respect, and intellectual engagement. His work therefore, stands as a testament to his profound interest in the religious and cultural landscape of India. In his exploration, he exhibits a scholarly attitude that combines curiosity, respect, and a genuine desire to comprehend the complexities of Indian religion and culture. This response delves into Biruni's observations, analyses, and interactions with Indian religious and cultural practices, shedding light on his academic attitude.

1.2. Intellectual Curiosity

Biruni visited India primarily as a scholar and polymath. He was interested in studying various aspects of Indian culture, including its religion, language, science, and philosophy. Biruni approached the study of Indian religion and culture with a genuine thirst for knowledge. His observations were characterized by meticulousness, as he sought to understand the philosophical underpinnings, rituals, and social dynamics of Indian religious systems. This intellectual curiosity led him to engage in extensive discussions with Indian scholars and meticulous examination of Indian texts, enabling him to provide nuanced insights into Indian religious and cultural practices. Biruni's intellectual curiosity is evident in his comprehensive exploration of Indian religion and culture. He approached his study with meticulousness and a genuine desire to comprehend the intricacies of Indian religious practices. Biruni engaged in extensive dialogues with Indian scholars, such as Brahmins and Jains, to gain deeper insights into their religious systems. This curiosity reflects his commitment to scholarship and his dedication to acquiring knowledge about Indian religious and cultural traditions.

Biruni approached his study of India with a deep sense of intellectual curiosity and open-mindedness. He sought to understand and analyze Indian society, its customs, religious beliefs, and scientific achievements, characterized by a spirit of scientific inquiry and a desire to bridge the cultural divide between Persia and India.

Like a modern philologist, he strongly criticized the manuscript and its tradition. Sometimes he assumed that the text was corrupt and sought the cause of the corruption; he discussed and compared various readings and suggested corrections. He criticized differences between texts, different translations, and complained about the carelessness and ignorance of scribes. He was aware that poorly translated and carelessly copied Indian works soon degenerated to such an extent that an Indian writer would not recognize his work if presented in this form. All these complaints are entirely true, especially with regard to proper names (Biruni, 2004).

When assessing Biruni's work in comparison to that of his predecessors, it is apparent that his contributions represent a significant advancement. His description of Hindu philosophy was likely unparalleled, and his comprehensive system of chronology and astronomy surpassed all previous efforts. Additionally, his inclusion of correspondence from the Puranas and important chapters on literature, etiquette, festivals, actual geography, and historical chronology were likely novel to his readers. He cited Eazi and some Sufi philosophers, whose works he knew well, but gained little insight into India from their writings. By contrasting Hindus and Muslims, he arrived at a major observation that there were significant disparities between the two groups in every aspect.

In addition to being religious, he is also enlightened enough to say that people's ideas and beliefs are diverse and the prosperity of the world depends on the diversity and difference of these beliefs. Biruni's research on the humanities was founded on rigorous principles. Those seeking to contribute to this field must purify their hearts of corrupt beliefs, bad habits, and obsessions. Such spiritual afflictions affect the majority of people, assuming a darkening effect on their capability to perceive truth and reality by blinding their hearts and deafening their ears. Unbecoming of a man of knowledge are bad habits such as fanaticism, the belief in one's superiority over others, the pursuit of evil desires, and the whims of the ego, as well as the love of power and authority. For this reason, acquiring knowledge is not a path for everyone to embark upon. While difficult to attain, it is not impossible. In the pursuit of truth and reality, it is essential to rely on the closest, most authentic, and reliable information available. When undertaking research, it is important to consult established authorities within the relevant field or their works. This ensures that the information obtained is based on the expertise and knowledge of reputable scholars. By following this method, the revealed truths can be accurately determined.

He travelled extensively across India, visiting various cities and documenting their characteristics, geography, and customs. Biruni displayed a keen interest in understanding the urban landscape and the social dynamics of Indian cities. He described their layouts, architecture, governance systems, and economic activities through his keen observational skills. He meticulously observed the customs, rituals, languages, and social structures of the people he encountered during his travels in India. His firsthand observations provided him with valuable insights into various aspects of Indian life. His observations were based on careful study and empirical evidence, providing valuable insights into the urban life of medieval India. Biruni's work reflected a scientific mindset. He emphasized the importance of empirical evidence, logical reasoning, and systematic analysis based on mathematical calculations, astronomical observations, and comparative methodologies to study various phenomena, such as the measurement of the Earth and the determination of the latitude and longitude of different locations.

1.3. Respect for Indian Civilization

Biruni held a deep fascination and admiration for India's rich cultural heritage, intellectual traditions, and diverse society. He recognized India as a land of great learning and made extensive efforts to study and document its language, religion, customs, and sciences. Biruni's scholarly work was marked by a genuine curiosity and respect for Indian culture. Throughout his work, Biruni demonstrated a deep respect for Indian civilization. He recognized the richness and complexity of Indian religious traditions, acknowledging their historical significance and influence. Biruni's respectful approach allowed him to present Indian religion and culture objectively, avoiding judgment or ethnocentric biases. This scholarly attitude contributed to a comprehensive understanding of Indian society, highlighting its contributions to human civilization. Biruni displayed a respectful attitude toward Indian religion and culture throughout his work. He recognized the significance and complexity of Indian religious practices, avoiding ethnocentric biases or attempts to impose his own worldview. First of all, Biruni cared very much about the Hindus, and although he was aware of how contrary their beliefs were to his own religion, Islam, he cared about their beliefs as much as he cared about the beliefs of a Muslim. According to Biruni, Hindus were good mathematicians, astronomers, and excellent philosophers. However, he believes that he is superior to them.

Hindus and their world of thought were very interesting for Biruni. Therefore, he endeavored to study everything related to the Hindus with great devotion. He clearly points out the faults of the Hindus, but also gives due credit to their achievements. Speaking of the majestic temples on the banks of sacred rivers, Biruni asserts that if any place is ascribed sacredness, the Hindus have built pools (ponds) there and they enter those pools to bathe. Making

them has become an art for them. If Muslim people saw these ponds, they would be astonished. They would not even be able to describe them, let alone build them.

Biruni acknowledged the historical and philosophical depth of Indian traditions, respecting their unique contributions to human civilization. His respectful engagement fostered a genuine understanding and appreciation of Indian religion and culture. While Biruni acknowledged cultural differences and occasionally offered critical observations, his overall approach was marked by respect for Indian civilization. He recognized the richness and complexity of Indian society, and he sought to comprehend it through meticulous observations, discussions with scholars, and the study of Indian texts. Biruni sought to gain a comprehensive understanding of Indian religions within their cultural and historical contexts. He learned Sanskrit, studied religious texts, and engaged with Indian scholars to gain insights into the religious attitudes and practices of the Indian people. His writings reflect a genuine effort to grasp the nuances of Indian religious traditions. Biruni also showed interest in Indian philosophy. According to him, ancient Greek and Indian philosophers had similar ideas about the nature of reality and their ideas overlapped on many issues. Moreover, the unifying point of all philosophers was pure monotheism, and everyone worshipped the omnipotent God. However, this changed over time, resulting in the emergence of different religions, schools of philosophy and idol worship. According to Biruni, the reason for idol worship was the desire to remember the deceased and console those left behind. Idol worship developed on this basis and settled in societies as a mistake.

He does not hide anything that he thinks is wrong or impractical. However, he duly appreciates their intellectual achievements. Whenever he encounters a different situation, both in his scholarly and practical life, he never hesitates to put it before his readers with warm words of affirmation. Biruni makes comparisons from time to time: He compares the superiority of Islam over Brahmanism, the caste system with the electoral system of representation, the Islamic understanding of marriage and its corrupt form in India, the cleanliness and upbringing of Muslims with the unclean behavior of Hindus. Biruni is independent, clear and decisive in his thoughts on religion and philosophy. He hates half-truths, incomplete facts, veiled words and indecisive actions. He stands out everywhere as a defender of his faith with great courage. He maintains the same attitude in politics as in religion and philosophy.

While Biruni extensively studied Hindu religious beliefs, metaphysical views, cosmological doctrines, literary traditions, mythical heritages, and artistic inheritances, the exact categorization system he used is not mentioned. It is possible that he may have categorized them based on caste divisions, as he mentions the four major castes in Hindu society: brahmana (brahmins), kshatria (warriors and rulers), vaisya (farmers, merchants, artisans), and sudra (laborers). However, without further information from the texts, it is difficult to provide a more specific answer.

In the Middle Ages, when Biruni lived, Islamic civilisation had just completed its 'golden age'. This period was characterised intellectually by the emergence of a rich scientific literature and sociopolitically by frequent contact with other cultures. Depending on their intellectual and sociocultural origins, and perhaps also on the political climate in the regions of their time, Biruni's study of Hindu religious practices differs in some respects from that of his contemporaries and is similar in others due to especially his mastering of several fields of knowledge and intercultural studies. A handful of his academic writings were in Persian, but most were in Arabic. The following example is noteworthy in showing the importance Biruni attached to his own understanding of truth and scientific freedom as a scientist. Although he was part of Mahmud of Ghazni's mission to India, as a scientist he had his own view of Hindustan. For Mahmud, as Sachau (2011) notes: "Hindus were infidels who would be sent to hell as soon as they refused to be plundered", while for Biruni "Hindus were excellent philosophers, good mathematicians, and astronomers" (p. Vol. 1, xvii). It seems that his interest in studying their religious traditions could not be separated from his role as a geographer, astronomer, astrologer and historian who sought to understand the natural/physical geography, cultural and historical dimensions of Hind. Thus, the *Kitab al-Hind* provides a comprehensive description of Indian culture, including its scholars' scientific knowledge of cosmology and astronomy.

Biruni provides a more thorough justification of his methodological approach. In order for observers, and Muslim readers in particular, to comprehend Indian culture and its people's religious life, he offers five essential components: the main Indian language's (Sanskrit) features, the country's most influential religious writings, Indian religious attitudes, customs, religious types, and the attitudes of Hindus toward others. Regarding his intention as a Muslim to study the Hindu belief system, he justly remarks that He had written a book on the doctrines of the Hindus, refraining from making any baseless accusations against them. He also believed it was not contradictory to his Muslim obligations to cite their teachings in full whenever he deemed it helpful in explaining a topic. If the contents of these quotes happen to be pagan, and the followers of the truth, meaning the Muslims, object to them, one can only state that these are the beliefs of the Hindus and that they are best equipped to defend them. (Biruni, 2004, p.4)

Regarding Biruni's comparative method when studying Hind, he will place, before the reader the theories of the Hindus exactly as they are, and where there are similar theories among the Greeks, or in the teaching of the Christian sects, or the Sufis, as for example in the matter of transmigration of souls, or pantheistic doctrines of the unity of God with his creatures, he will accurately report their theories also for comparison. "We Muslims," Biruni (2004) states, "stand entirely on the other side of the question, considering all men as equal, except in piety (taqwa)" (Sachau, tr., 1911, 1:100).

Towards the end of his career, Biruni authored over 180 books covering twenty diverse subject areas, spanning astronomy, mathematics, geography, chronology, mechanics, medicine, mineralogy, history, literature, religion and philosophy. His research on India is widely regarded as one of the most precise and definitive accounts of Hindu culture during that era. Even today, Biruni's writings on India provide significant insight into ancient Hindu culture and the scientific and artistic achievements of the Indus civilization. His works remain a vital resource for scholars studying India's rich cultural history. Biruni spent 13 years touring India during the early 11th century AD, during which he translated 27 Sanskrit classical works into Arabic, having studied Sanskrit himself. Biruni's texts provide valuable information on Indian conditions during the period between Hieun Tsang's visit to India in the 7th century and the writings of Ain-e-Akbari in 1590 AD. He includes an account of Hindu numerals. (Sam & Sharma, 2012).

He tries to understand these differences both through the history of India and the national and individual characteristics of Hindus (Biruni, 2004, i. 17). One of his interesting observations is that everything in India is the opposite of what it is in Islam: "If one of their customs resembles ours, it means the opposite" (Biruni, 2004, i. 179). For many of his readers, India seems to be a land of wonders and oddities. Therefore, in order to show that there are other nations that adopt similar concepts, he compares the Hindu faith with Greek philosophy, especially Plato, and tries to explain Hindu concepts with those of the Greeks in order to bring them closer to his readers' understanding.

Biruni emphasizes at the beginning of his book that the basic principle is to avoid lying and to adopt a motto of truth. There are various reasons and types of lying: Love or hatred for a person or society, ignorance, and nationalistic concerns such as imitation. Biruni states that the truth must be defended at all costs. The starting point is primarily religious sects. It equally includes the teachings of other religions, provided they are in accordance with the provisions of Islam. It recalls a similar commandment of the Bible. Like justice and courage, truthfulness is a virtue that springs from beauty itself, and speaking the truth in defiance of death is the greatest courage.

Biruni methodologically uses written sources instead of relying only on hearsay. This provides both an objective evaluation and a scientific basis for his writings. In the second chapter, where he discusses the belief in God among the Indians, he gives more detailed examples of their belief in God with His names and attributes by explaining their understanding of God in a book called Patanjali, a book based on a question-and-answer dialog between a student and his teacher. In addition, at the beginning of the topic, he identifies the attitude of the intellectual who prefers the research-based method to his own method and the attitude of those who are content with what they only hear and do not want to investigate the details.

1.4. Analytical and Comparative Approach

Biruni was extremely meticulous and successful in his research. He based his reports either on written sources or witnesses. As a historian, Biruni examined historical events objectively and drew attention to causality and similarity. He checked the chronology of events according to chronological principles and determined whether the news could be true or not. His chronological tables and the information he provided are very important.

Biruni adopted an objective and scholarly approach to his study of India. He immersed himself in the local culture, learned Sanskrit, and engaged with Indian scholars to gain a deeper understanding of the country. Biruni adopted a scholarly and scientific approach to his study of India. He conducted meticulous research, learned Sanskrit, and engaged with Indian scholars to gather information about various aspects of Indian civilization, including religion, philosophy, mathematics, and astronomy. Biruni's analysis of Indian religion and culture was characterized by an objective and analytical perspective. He sought to decipher the underlying principles, symbolism, and rituals of Indian religious systems, striving to unveil their philosophical foundations. This approach allowed him to identify similarities and differences between Indian religions and those known in the Islamic world. By providing a comparative analysis, Biruni offered a valuable scholarly perspective on the intricacies of Indian religious practices. Biruni's approach included comparative analysis between Indian religious systems and those known in the Islamic world. He sought to identify similarities and differences, highlighting shared philosophical concepts and religious practices. His comparative methodology aimed to bridge the gap between civilizations and facilitate cross-cultural dialogue. By undertaking such analysis, Biruni contributed to a deeper understanding of Indian religion and its relationship with other religious traditions.

1.5. Objectivity/Subjectivity

Biruni aimed to be an objective scholar, striving to present an accurate and comprehensive account of India. Biruni employed an ethnographic approach in his studies of India. He sought to understand the beliefs, practices, and customs of the people he encountered, taking care to avoid imposing his own cultural biases. This approach allowed him to present a nuanced and objective account of Indian society. His work demonstrated a genuine interest in comprehending the complexities of Indian religions.

Tahkik is not a polemical book. Therefore, the teachings and practices of the Hindus, which are considered to be false, are not deliberately opposed, and no counter-arguments are put forward. The book is nothing more than a plain historical record of events. It presents the beliefs of the Hindus as they are and, where necessary, points out the similarities between them and Islamic and Greek thought. It is a work written ten centuries ago, but still in many respects exemplary for today's researchers of culture and religion.

The first chapter deals with Indian culture in general and points out that there are certain criteria for understanding between people and societies. These are close contact, communication and interaction. In the absence or interruption of this communication and interaction, it is inevitable that individuals and societies will become alienated from each other. Stating that there is no close relationship between our culture and Indian culture, Biruni lists the reasons for this and underlines the specific difficulty and foreignness of the Indian language / Sanskrit. Differences in vocabulary and sentences, oral and written expression, pronunciation, and the differences between the language spoken among the people and high Sanskrit are among the reasons for this difficulty.

The second reason for the difference is religious differences and beliefs, and the fact that Indians consider people other than themselves to be *mlechchha*, that is, filth and excrement, and do not find it appropriate to sit with them or marry them. In short, they do not accept other people.

The third reason for the difference is that their customs and traditions are different from ours. They attribute our clothes to the devil. Biruni states that there are such prejudices in every nation, but he argues that Indians are ahead of other nations in this regard.

According to Biruni, who drew attention to Shamanism (Buddhism) as another difference, the conquest of India by the Turks led to hatred, hatred and enmity against Muslims. In addition to this, there are other differences. Indians think that there is no science and science, no homeland in other places other than themselves. They envy knowledge from others. They can overcome this prejudice only if they go to other countries. As far as we read in the book, Biruni, with his knowledge, effort and behavior, makes himself accepted and respected by them in a short time.

Biruni, who also includes the problems he encountered while continuing his research in India, records the following:

Despite his love and zeal, he encountered great difficulties in doing his research. Although he is willing to go through all kinds of trouble to collect Sanskrit sources in the remotest places, to copy what I have not been able to obtain, to read and learn from those who know them, he often finds no one. How many researchers have the opportunities I have had to study this subject? He admits that only by the grace of Allah has this been granted to very few. But he himself was not fortunate enough in this regard and did not have the freedom of action in what he did. He also did not have the opportunity to work as much as he would have liked. Nevertheless, he thanks Allah for giving me the strength to achieve the goal. According to Sachau, whatever the Muslim interest in Indian literature and India, such literature never took deep root; after Biruni's death in 1048, there was no more original work in this field and even Al Bruni was left quite alone. He lists the difficulties that hindered his work on India, saying: "Although I love the subject, I find it rather lonely in my own time" (Schau, 2011, I. 24). And we certainly do not know any Hindologists like him before or after him. His works, on the other hand, were not attempted even after a thousand years. Instead of blindly accepting the traditions of ancient times, he tries to understand and criticize them; he rejects everything that is contrary to the laws of nature and reason (Biruni, 2004, i. 400).

Biruni often compares the Indians with the Greeks. These two peoples, who are not very different from each other in their false ideas, are similar in this respect in the matter of truth: Although both have people who search for the truth, Greek philosophers are more advanced in this regard. Again, while the Greeks record knowledge in writing, the Indians rely on oral traditions. In addition, the Greeks had philosophers who did not believe in superstition and made scientific discoveries. One of them, Socrates, was executed by the decision of eleven out of twelve judges because he did not accept the stars as God.

In India, among the ignorant people, all these ideas are mixed with prejudices, traditions and superstitions, and their religion is closed to all kinds of objections. Moreover, imitation is rampant among them. They are yet incapable of using scientific methods. Biruni, as he regards himself a mere transmitter, he would not criticize them

unless he had to. As can be seen, the author's first and foremost aim is to reveal the truth, and for this purpose, to act objectively towards India in all its aspects.

Sachau (2011) praised Biruni's honesty, his striving for truth, and his determination to continue his research despite his advanced age:

He is a stern judge both of himself and of others. He is completely sincere himself, and sincerity is what he demands from others. When he cannot fully penetrate a subject, he either asks the reader's forgiveness for his ignorance or promises the reader that he will continue his work, even though he is a man of fifty-eight, and he considers it a moral responsibility to announce the result of his research to the public, and in a timely manner. He always draws the boundaries of his knowledge sharply and, guided by the principle that 'the best should not be the enemy of the better', he passes on what little he knows, even if it is only a spark of the Hindu system of measurement. He feared not to live long enough to finish the work in question (pp. 6-9)

The author hates the way Indians use long sentences, unnecessarily prolonging a topic instead of explaining it in a few words, which he thinks condemns those who want to learn the Indian language to failure and disappointment.

It does not contain a sense of fanaticism typical of missionaries seeking to convert Hindus. He only tries to define Hinduism without identifying himself with it. He takes care to inform the reader that the Hindus are responsible for the sordid details, not him.

For those who live in a peaceful relationship with them and want to get an idea of their ways and world of thought, this book provides a suitable introduction to Hindus. His aim, as the author reiterates at the end of the book, is to provide the necessary information and education to those who wish to learn about the religion, science, literature and civilization of the Hindus (Biruni, 2004, ii. 246).

1.6. Contributions to Knowledge

Biruni's academic engagement with Indian religion and culture resulted in significant contributions to the broader scholarly discourse. His study of Indian mathematics, astronomy, medicine, and linguistics helped bridge the gap between Persia and India, facilitating the exchange of knowledge between the two civilizations. By introducing concepts such as the decimal system and zero to the Islamic world, Biruni enriched the academic landscape and facilitated cross-cultural dialogue. Biruni's scholarly contributions regarding Indian religion and culture were significant. His work on Indian mathematics, astronomy, medicine, and linguistics expanded the intellectual horizons of the Islamic world. For example, his study of Indian mathematics introduced the decimal system and zero, revolutionizing mathematical thinking in the Islamic civilization. These contributions demonstrate Biruni's dedication to fostering knowledge exchange between Persia and India, thereby enriching the academic landscape. Biruni admired the intellectual and scientific achievements of India. He made significant contributions to the fields of mathematics, astronomy, and astrology. He studied Indian mathematics, particularly the decimal system and the concept of zero, which he introduced to the Islamic world. Biruni's admiration for Indian knowledge systems is evident in his work, where he discusses various Indian sciences, such as astronomy, mathematics, medicine, and linguistics, with great interest.

Biruni's works, including his notable book "Kitab al-Hind" (The Book of India), made significant contributions to the understanding of Indian culture and civilization. His writings continue to be studied and referenced by scholars today. Biruni's appreciation for India's cultural richness, and a commitment to understanding and documenting its diverse aspects is of great significance. His works continue to be valuable sources for studying the history and culture of medieval India as well.

2. NAIPAUL AND INDIA

In the 1880s, Naipaul's Brahmin grandparents migrated from the impoverished Ganges plain to Trinidad as indentured laborers in the sugar plantations. Naipaul was born on the island in 1932 and was the son of a journalist who freed himself from dependence on agriculture and land, rising to the lower middle class and later becoming an inspiration for the hero of *A House for Mr. Biswas* (1961). Raised in a biracial and culturally diverse background, at 18 years old, Naipaul was awarded a government scholarship that enabled him to study at Oxford University College. While there, he assimilated into English culture, although not entirely. He pursued a career in writing and travel, authoring eleven novels and various other works, including travel writings and critiques, from 1957 to his passing in 2018.

In his first two books on India, Naipaul, like most writers, set out to describe, observe, and interpret India from his personal life. In *India: A Million Rebels* and *A Turn in the South* (1989), after his intensely subjective books, he gave more space to interviews with people he had met and presented them in their own language.

Growing up in Trinidad, Naipaul gained insight into his ancestral homeland through his extended family and physical mementos. However, he considered India to be an "area of darkness." In a letter addressed to his sister Kamla, who was studying at university in India, Naipaul hinted at the criticism he would later level at India: "I intend to write a book about those dreadful people [Indians] and their miserable country, exposing their abhorrent characteristics." (Ronojoy, 2018, p. 2).

Naipaul's disdain and apprehension towards India's tangible environment, which he perceives as the "real country" as opposed to an illusory "area of imagination," is a recurring motif in *An Area of Darkness*. In this sense, he isn't unlike other Western observers of India, aside from his superior literary elegance. His pursuit to re-establish a connection with his Indian heritage proved a complete failure. As stated by the speaker, they found nothing in the vivid imagery of India that connected to their personal experience of living in a small town in Trinidad. (Ronojoy, 2018, p. 4). As Menezes puts it, after requesting confirmation on his impressions of India being a struggling nation, filled with mediocre grandiosity and no prospects for the future, he stated, "Presently, Asia is only displaying a basic representation of an extinct culture; Europe is forced into a primitive state due to material conditions; America is a failure. Observing Indian music, it is being amusingly affected by Western music. Indian painting and sculpture are no longer present." That is the image I want you to consider – a country in decline, yet still moving forward on the momentum of its former glory... That is the image I want you to consider – a country in decline, yet still moving forward on the momentum of its former glory... I am intending to write a book about this nation and its people, highlighting their negative attributes. I will thoroughly explore every aspect. That is the image I want you to consider – a country in decline, yet still moving forward on the momentum of its former glory... (2018, para. 4)

In response, during his acceptance speech in Stockholm, Naipaul also rooted his world view firmly in his background, saying "in Trinidad, bright boy though I was, I was surrounded by areas of darkness. School elucidated nothing for me. We looked inwards; we lived out our days; the world outside existed in a kind of darkness; we inquired about nothing". [...] (Naipaul, 2001, para. 29, 30). When he began his career as an author, the topics that had once been shrouded in darkness during his childhood became his focus. These topics included the land, aborigines, the New World, the colony, history, India, the Muslim world, to which he also felt a connection, Africa, and ultimately England, where he pursued his writing. This was what he meant when he asserted that his books were interconnected and that he was the aggregate of his literary works. That is what he intended to convey when he mentioned that his upbringing, the origin and impetus behind his work, was both incredibly straightforward and incredibly intricate.

Zoom into the details of the writer's relationship with India, and a more apt word would be "conflicted" (Menezes, 2018, para. 12) Naipaul held a critical view of his own society, India, which he conveyed through a method of composing short essays in portrait form. His essays aimed to analyze what he observed and illustrate his personal reaction. Naipaul traced his ancestral roots at the age of thirty, and in 1962, he spent a year attempting to establish a concrete sense of identity and dispel the obscurity that obstructed his ancestral past. This endeavour, expertly documented in *An Area of Darkness* (1964), was unsuccessful and left the author in a state of panic, shame, and disgust. Although he faced his emotions, organised his recollections, and established his storytelling style, India prevented him from fully experiencing his reality, with him constantly fretting about being caught and lost among the Indian populace. In 1975, he revisited India and published *India: A Wounded Civilization*, which provoked outcry from the Indian media.

A prominent Trinidadian-born British writer the Trinidadian-British author and Nobel laureate, Naipaul is known for his extensive exploration of the complexities of global societies. Throughout his literary career, Naipaul has examined and critiqued both European civilization and the Third World, offering thought-provoking insights into their respective strengths, flaws, and interactions. V.S. Naipaul, wrote several books that explored India and its people. His attitude towards India and Indians in his works is often considered complex and multifaceted. Naipaul's works often depicted a critical portrayal of postcolonial India. He examined the challenges faced by the country in the aftermath of colonial rule, including issues of corruption, religious tensions, and political instability. His writings sometimes highlighted the disillusionment and cultural disorientation experienced by the Indian society during this period. Naipaul's works often delved into the social realities of India, shedding light on various aspects of Indian life. He explored themes such as poverty, social hierarchies, caste divisions, and the struggles faced by marginalized communities. His writings often presented a stark and sometimes bleak portrayal of these realities. Naipaul's works have been commended for their exploration of power dynamics and the impact of colonialism on individual and collective identity. Supporters argue that his writings shed light on the complexities of postcolonial societies and offer critical perspectives on the legacy of colonial rule (Gupta, 1995).

Naipaul goes further in *Reading and Writing* to categorise the travel books that he knew at that early period of self-struggle as being written by 'metropolitan people' unlike himself, such as 'Huxley, Lawrence, Waugh':

Leavis states the differences between them as, they wrote during the time of empire; regardless of their character at home, they inevitably became semi-imperial during their travels, using chance encounters to shape their metropolitan personalities against a foreign backdrop. His travels, however, were different. As a colonial travelling through New World plantation colonies resembling the one in which he grew up, he did not adopt this semi-imperial attitude. Visiting other semiderelict communities in despoiled land within the romantic setting of the New World allows one to see, from a distance, what one's own community may have resembled. This experience provides a new perspective on one's personal circumstances and a glimpse into the sequence of historical events that have led to them. It is an opportunity to step outside oneself and gain a fresh vision of one's origins, akin to the material of fiction (2002, p.139).

According to Leavis, *A Way in the World* (1994) focuses on an "objective" analysis of displaced individuals, just as V.S. Naipaul's five-book series *In a Free State* (1971) dealt with the same topic. As a travel-observer writer who has turned to fiction, Naipaul's field of expertise lies in objectively examining uprooted people. "A Way in the World" effectively encapsulates Naipaul's writing career thus far since humour has been eschewed. "It could be argued that this work represents the pinnacle of Naipaul's lifelong efforts, as it blends various genres and interests. Through it, Naipaul's personal experiences are fictionalised, including his travels, interactions with others, curiosity about the experiences of particular individuals, perspectives on oppressor and oppressed dynamics, and historical research (Leavis, 2002, p. 142).

"Naipaul's view has been fixed on the horizon, and that he is suffocated by place. His reality is that of an immensely knowledgeable man's who is passing through and looking back in the history of colonial change. While he has been searching for the gulf behind societies, he has been fascinated – obsessed even! – by people congenial to his considerable if sometimes rather supercilious gifts" (Leavis, 2002, p. 148).

V S. Naipaul first visited India, a country he had never seen before but had in mind since childhood in 1962, at the age of twenty-nine. His work gained acclaim in England, but he was far from being a writer of literary reputation yet. On his return after a year in India, he wrote *An Area of Darkness* (1964). The book was a major success. He returned to India in 1975 during the State of Emergency declared by the authoritarian government of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. He traveled extensively after which he published the book, *India: A Wounded Civilization* (1977), his second book on India. Fifteen years later, he set off again with a specific strategy that he felt needed to spend more time with individuals and to know their stories in depth to better understand India. His book, *India: A Million Mutinies Now* (1990), which he penned after this trip, gave a more assertive performance than his first two books, both in terms of the complexity of its themes and the way it deals with them, through portraiture and an extensive series of encounters and lengthy interviews. It would be better if they were defined as queries. Three books written in thirty years, a thousand pages of text, a work that can be described as *India: A Chronicle*. He traveled several times to India after that, always inquisitive, often writing, sometimes speaking, now more of an honored and wreathed guest than an anonymous traveler. His last visit in January 2015 was to Rajasthan to speak at the Jaipur Literary Festival. He was eighty-two years old at the time, in a wheelchair due to health problems.

Early on in the book, the writer restates the two childhood emotions that initially caused him to be drawn towards India, an idea rather than a place. This idea offers both refuge and imprisonment, like a neurosis typical of the colonial mindset. The writer revisits these emotions repeatedly, likening his process to a spider spinning itself into a web: Naipaul was brought up with two ideas of India. The first concept, which he did not want to explore in depth, was related to the country his forefathers came from. They became ambitious due to their migration to the New World, which shattered their long-standing acceptance of the peasant India ways. However, due to the Depression and colonial and agricultural practices in Trinidad, there were limited opportunities for them to progress. Surrounded by poverty and perceiving the world as a type of confinement... India became a place of great fear in his imagination. This fear was like a mental illness, caused by anxiety about their origins. However, a second India existed, balancing the first. This second India was connected to the independence movement, the great names, the civilization, and classical past of India. It was a source of support for them during difficult circumstances. It had become evident that our developed community identity had shifted to a more racial identity within multi-racial Trinidad (Naipaul, 1990, pp.7-8).

During Naipaul's first lengthy trip, he seemed to only encounter unsanitary conditions and stagnation, with the presence of Western ideas echoing hollowly amongst corruption and social hierarchy. Despite the squalor and decay, many Indians possessed elegance and charm, characterized by their elaborate manners. While India may have been producing too many people, it also allowed for unique human growth for many individuals. However, there were also instances where he saw a different side to India. Getting to know Indians afforded a delightful appreciation of people for who they are, with every interaction being an exciting experience (Naipaul, 1990, p.243). The final book is sustained by encounters and adventures. It represents a considerable effort to enable the people of India to speak for themselves - a complete reversal of what he did at the beginning. Initially, he found an echo of his own views everywhere he went, but now he strives to attentively listen to what others say.

If so, it is noteworthy that the author eventually castigated, and so severely, the "wounded old civilization that has at last become aware of its inadequacies (that is some improvement, we note) and is without the intellectual means to move ahead" six years later, despite their earlier commendable stance (Naipaul, 1990, p.18). Due to its immovable religious beliefs and partial assimilation of Western ideologies, India lacks a solid guiding principle, a failure attributed to both Gandhi and India. The populace also lacks an understanding of the state and its underlying principles, including a historical perspective and a shared identity beyond that of the fragile ecumenicism of Hinduism. Despite the injustices committed by British colonialism, there is no trace of a nascent racial consciousness (Naipaul, 1990, pp.168-9). "For Naipaul, the sense of a threatened identity which can only recover itself through a proper relationship with the past implies a larger truth for all former colonials" (Walder, 1992, p.99). Walder also emphasized that feeling more secure in their identity as a postcolonial subject, they aim to alleviate their ongoing neurosis by discovering the restorative forces in their other home. Despite the stresses and strains, these forces have always been present but not always equally visible. His three books set in India depict distinct but interrelated phases of his lifelong struggle with his identity. It is important to acknowledge that this struggle cannot be viewed in isolation, as he also produced numerous fictional and non-fictional memory narratives (Walder, 1992, p.99).

Phillip Langran suggests that Naipaul's early career saw him mainly distancing himself from and energetically satirising the Hindu culture of Trinidad. Later on, he formed a worldview in which the contradictions and inconsistencies of his own displaced community were viewed as indications of a more widespread disorder. The origins of this ailment are multifaceted, arising predominantly from the profound repercussions of colonialism and the resulting clash between an essentially Christian European tradition and numerous non-Christian cultures. However, Naipaul delves into the intricate web of racial, cultural and political ties that constitute the worldwide inheritance of colonialism, thus underscoring the imperative nature of individual accountability and intellectual pursuit (1990, p.132). Naipaul experiences a persistent anxiety about feeling empty. He fears losing his valued individuality by returning to his ancestral land, a central theme in *An Area of Darkness*, and the fear of becoming nothing (Langran, 1990, p.133). Naipaul is unhappy with being labelled a regional writer and further delves into the fear that residing in London and writing about Trinidad for an English audience will result in creative sterility. Naipaul concludes that he needs to travel to escape the limitations of his current profession – "to refresh himself," as he phrases it (Langran, 1990, pp. 133).

Naipaul's dispassionate attitude and his refusal to use his Hindu heritage as a primary resource are evident in his Trinidadian history, *The Loss of El Dorado* (1969). He concentrates on the era preceding the arrival of Indian indentured workers on the island, arguing that Trinidadian culture was largely established in this early era when the Spanish, then British imperial forces, colonized the island. Except for brief mentions in the prologue and epilogue regarding his personal affiliation with Trinidad, Naipaul focuses on arranging historical material into a narrative where his colonial experience is subdued. This contrasts significantly with the strong and personal tone of his previous non-fiction works. Krishan argues that according to Naipaul, individuals in peripheral regions are influenced by intricate histories which they struggle to understand. Due to historical factors, peripheral societies lack the necessary institutions and social practices to fully comprehend the significant upheavals brought about by modernity. The globalizing forms of colonialism and capitalism have diverted the social paths of the precapitalist world's peasant formations. Such groups found themselves enslaved, displaced, indentured, or colonized – in short, violently inducted into modern institutions of production and exchange. These peoples adapted to their new historical circumstances – some even thrived, materially speaking – but they could not reclaim or assert control over their disrupted social trajectories. The institutions and norms of their societies were deranged by modernity (2012, p. 434).

Unlike Biruni who sympathises with Indians and had a profound respect for their culture, religion and traditions, as mentioned above, Naipaul, on the other hand, lacks empathy for the people he writes about, both his own people and his "material." With the acuity and brazenness of an unregenerate double-agent, he mocks, derides, and draws them from within in a brutal, honest manner, yet he does not comprehend them. He lacks the imagination to become them because he lacks an understanding of the racism that governs their civilizations and the racial past that gave rise to it. But if not for his imagination, what is a writer? And what exactly is this imagination that does not transform itself into the opposite? (Sivanandan, 1990). He loses some of his manhood by refusing to accept the historical experience of racism. He is lessened as a man and lessened as a maker. In the end, all that is left is his craft, and it is this craft that unites man and writer. Technically speaking, the synthesis between man and writer is achieved through the writer's craft rather than through the man's inventiveness. The writer is absorbed by the man. Thus, the writing gets better and more truth-like while the thought gets shallower and less honest, potentially leading to a synthesis between writer and subject but not a symbiosis. Man quarrels with the world to become more human, just as the writer quarrels with the man to become a greater writer (Sivanandan, 1990).

In *The Enigma of the Arrival*, Naipaul recounts his attempts to establish his own identity while coping with cultural and geographical dislocation, highlighting the historical paradoxes that accompany this endeavour (Radovic, 2015,

116). Having migrated from India to Trinidad under the British regime, English had become my primary language and I gained a specific type of education. This had to some extent sparked my ambition to write in a particular style and dedicated me to the literary profession I had pursued in England for two decades (Naipaul, 1987, p. 53).

In a 1971 interview Naipaul said: “In writing my first four or five books (including books which perhaps people think of as my big books) I was simply recording my reactions to the world; I hadn't come to any conclusions about it [...] But since then, through my writing, through the effort honestly to respond, I have begun to have ideas about the world. I have begun to analyse” (Naipaul, 1971, pp.56-7). He travelled to India with hopes of finding a culture where he could feel a sense of belonging, having never felt at home in Trinidad or England. However, upon his return, he expressed regret, stating that the journey had shattered his life in two (Radovic, 2015, p.116). His experiences in India are recorded in *An Area of Darkness* (1964), but an article reprinted in *The Overcrowded Barracoon* provides the most succinct account of his reactions as a returned colonial:

A colonial in the double sense of one who had grown up in a Crown colony and one who had been cut off from the metropolis, be it either England or India, I came to India expecting to find metropolitan attitudes. I had imagined that in some ways the largeness of the land would be reflected in the attitudes of the people. I have found [...] the psychology of the cell and the hive (Naipaul, 1972, p. 44).

An Area of Darkness is primarily a personal account of trauma rather than a comprehensive analysis of the social issues that Naipaul observes in India. Nevertheless, the book contains critiques of various aspects of Indian society. Naipaul satirizes the caste system's hierarchical division of labour, the Indian people's lack of a sense of history, and the conflicts between Hindu teachings on cleanliness and the prevalent presence of excrement. Although it may seem that Naipaul is attacking various issues, in reality, almost all of the Hindu shortcomings that he records in *An Area of Darkness* can be attributed to the effects of karma. This doctrine claims that one's destiny in life is determined by their conduct in previous lives. Naipaul perceives it as a crippling and demoralising philosophy that fosters a passive attitude, hindering Western-style self-actualisation and advancement. V.S. Naipaul's travels to India, along with other countries in the Third World, influenced his perspectives on postcolonial societies. He examined the social, cultural, and political complexities of these nations, often offering critical observations. For instance his views on the cleanliness and hygiene in India and his observations about the perceived 'dirtiness' of Indians have been a subject of debate and controversy. It is important to approach this topic with an understanding that Naipaul's views are subjective and represent his own personal observations. Naipaul's works often delved into the social realities of India, shedding light on various aspects of Indian life. He explored themes such as poverty, social hierarchies, caste divisions, and the struggles faced by marginalized communities. His writings often presented a stark and sometimes bleak portrayal of these realities. While Naipaul's works contained critical observations, he also highlighted individual stories and personal journeys within the broader context of India. His characters often grappled with their own aspirations, relationships, and search for meaning amidst the complexities of Indian society. On the other hand, whether Naipaul's frequent use of the term 'barbarian' in relation to Third World countries and peoples, which supposedly summarizes his hatred and contempt for them.

It is one of the expressions that most enrages its critics. Barbarian or barbarism, besides being opposed to 'civilized' or 'civilization', also implies a lack of culture. Another derogatory term Naipaul uses to characterize non-European geographies and societies is 'primitive'. Slightly different from barbarism, primitivism involves having a culture but quarantining this culture as if it were fixed, unchanging. In addition to them, London and other cities would alter. They would stop being primarily national cities and start to resemble modern-day Romas – world cities in the eyes of islanders like me and those who are even further distant from language and culture. All the barbarian peoples of the world would travel to these cities for education, refined goods, manners, and freedom, including the people of the jungle and the desert, the Arabs, the Africans, and the Malay. Besides these pejorative expressions, other expressions he often used included 'irrationality', implying rationality, and 'unreality', opposing a kind of 'reality'. As an example of the use of this expression, in his book *A Turn in the South*, which deals specifically with African-Americans and Caribbean people in South America, he makes the following remarks about Africans. According to Naipaul, although African Americans had more opportunities, there was no easy forward mobility for the mass; they had been through too much; the irrationality of slavery and the years after slavery had made many irrationalities self-destructive and self-destructive. Every day in the news: drugs, crime, street life, 'negative peer pressure' at school [...] drugs, crime, street life, 'negative peer pressure' at school (Naipaul, 1989, p.119).

The aspect of Naipaul's disillusioned travels that causes this feeling is the barbarism and primitiveness, as well as the mimicry and the crisis of existence that he encounters. Although Indians want to be real individuals, communities and build a real world, all their efforts cannot overcome the artificial limits of mimicry. The metaphors of stage, film, puppetry and mimesis recur throughout Naipaul's work because they best express his sense of desolation that he has inherited nothing that he can directly call his own. The colonial mentality ensured that the various manifestations of Britain were echoed around the world and eagerly adopted by many societies.

This policy created a new reality, a derivative and fake culture in which everything was imitation. A way of life already in decline in England was recreated abroad with nothing to nourish it through language and culture.

It was Western colonialism that gave him his first experiences of humiliation and exploitation and sowed in him a sense of upset and anger that continues to hurt. But he also believes in the injustices perpetrated by the forces allied against the West in today's world, and that the West is in fact the part of the world where man is best protected, where humankind is best protected. The talents that are most consistently rewarded, the human life that is most sincerely valued, and the human abilities that are most fully realized are complimented in the West. For women, too, it is in the West that they are most likely to truly enjoy life and the ability to write what they want. Consequently, for Naipaul, Western civilization is what underlies his disdain for the peoples of the Third World, whom he characterizes as "half-societies", giving him the courage and the means to make this description. These qualities he attributes to Western civilization are, for him, the qualities that make it universal.

The quest of happiness is a fundamental component of the attractiveness of many cultures, whether they exist outside or nearby. He thinks it wonderful to consider how far the concept has progressed two centuries later and after the awful events of the first few decades of this century. It is an adaptable concept that works for all males. It suggests a specific form of society and an especially enlightened spirit. I doesn't believe your forefathers could have comprehended as much of what it contains, including the concepts of the person, accountability, free will, intellectual life, vocation, greatness, and achievement. This is an amazing human concept. It can't be reduced to a set number.

Naipaul prioritises language accuracy, both in writing and pronunciation. His advice for future India is to abandon English due to the inevitable loss of nuance in a sensitive society where much official business is conducted in a foreign language. Naipaul acknowledges that English is one of the few imported languages in India – he notes that everyone who conquered India left India a language, English remains a foreign language" (Naipaul, 1964, p.230). While Naipaul's views suggest that India should be an independent, self-sufficient country with its own culture and language, given Britain's belief in the superiority of Western civilization, it is felt that his main concern is the preservation of the English language. Many Indian critics agree that Naipaul constantly focuses on problems and problematic areas and hence closes his eyes to the good, the beautiful and the smooth. In the same way, he closes his ears to people who speak English correctly and beautifully, and listens to those who fail to speak English. Part of the problem is that the India Naipaul sees in the pre-colonial period is just a vast historical darkness. According to Naipaul, it is only in Britain that one can find traces of earlier colonies, which have almost all been eradicated. Chaudri asserts that, with regard to British colonialism in India, it is possible to see, neither in London nor in the country, by looking at the faces, shapes and dress of the people, that there is no trace of British occupation and that there is no foreign rule for its inhabitants. rule spells. In the case of India, even in Delhi, it is easy to see this in any street (1959, p.77).

The exchange of words implies a world of national difference in which both sides respect themselves. Naipaul wishes that he had well-formed ideas of what he would find and that his prejudices would be confirmed. Naipaul is focused on negativity, at the end of *An Area of Darkness* he describes how "this has become the basis of so much thought and feeling" (Naipaul, 1964, p. 288). Naipaul set out to get to know them better and discover what they could do about their imperial legacy and was moved. He thinks that climate change has shaped the personality, creating two different types of people in England and India, and that there is a constant alienation between east and west.

In his views and observations, Naipaul shows that he has a racist approach when categorizing people. Naipaul's visit to India also sheds light on a lesser known side of him. He admits that he is not an ethnically conspicuous person and is completely averse to being an anonymous face in the crowd. He laments that in India he lost his unity of body and soul. He is ostracized by almost everyone he meets in India, and in the same way he is often ostracized by Indians. A mood of fear and anxiety accompanies him everywhere. Naipaul's prejudice and even hatred of religion, which he often encountered, prevented him from becoming knowledgeable about it, and he could only observe the enthusiasm of others without penetrating deeply into it. In this situation, he approaches his ancestral village, convinced that the visit is pointless: "I had learned my separation from India and was content to be a colony without a past, without ancestors" (Naipaul, 1964, p. 273). He discovers an India that is not as vivid as India, an India that consists of the calendar pictures he remembers from his childhood in Trinidad.

The reader begins to read Naipaul's books with the assurance that Naipaul knows a great deal about India, but although Naipaul refers to some books by name, he does not provide a satisfyingly intimate understanding of the country's literature, art or philosophy. He admits this when discussing the Hindu ceremonies he witnessed as a child in Trinidad. "I was not interested in the images, I never tried to learn their meaning" (Naipaul, 1964, p. 35). Such boredom is not in Naipaul's religion, which he implicitly despises, but certainly in his lack of respect and interest in his subject. Naipaul notes that the Indians have stated that the world is an illusion (Naipaul, 1964, p. 287). Naipaul claims that India is "still looking at its ruins through the eyes of Europe" (Naipaul, 1964, p. 222).

Naipaul's desire to use language in an absolutely rigorous way shows that he is as obsessed with definition as those he condemns, but he does not recognize this paradox. "To define is to begin to distinguish oneself" (Naipaul, 1964, p.51). So every Indian sets out to prove his status morally and socially, with an almost Calvinist eagerness to demonstrate his role, by shaving his beard to indicate the type of caste mark, by specifying the style of his clothes. Appearance has not only become more important than inner reality, it has encompassed it. Naipaul notes that Indians believed that a nation could only develop by being concerned with the form of things and objects.

These forms had not evolved over centuries. They had been completely and suddenly imposed by a foreign conqueror, replacing another set of forms that were once undoubtedly considered equally unalterable and of which no trace remains. Naipaul's approach to India can be summarized as follows: He is particularly devoid of a sense of citizenship and belonging and makes it a matter of conscious choice. His own country is a dark, terrible prison. He often uses the term darkness in the sense of ignorance. He identifies himself with classical India, the scene of the freedom movement.

The Indians, he points out and challenges Gandhi's definition of poverty as a poetic concept, a place that leads to piety and melancholy, a place that has no place for material possessions and a distinctive quality for the uniqueness of India. He describes an Indian, who, according to the caste system, represents the lowest section of society in all respects, with a mood of bewilderment and pity mixed with expressions of how satisfied he is with his life. Yet this was one of those people who were denied the means and opportunity to have all they could live on or more. But these same people are famous for their resourcefulness as businessmen.

India is a place full of paradoxes. For example, the Jains, one of the groups with the strictest principles of life, do not consume meat or eggs, do not wear sewn clothes; they shower every morning and go barefoot to their places of worship. Vegetarianism, as seen in the case of the Jains, is a way of avoiding extremes, even for one's own benefit, a way of staying out of the fray (Naipaul, 1990). The author, who is a guest in the house of a man named Enver, talks to Enver's father and states that he is older than he looks. The host's father confirms this view and affirms that Europeans, unlike themselves, are younger and stronger than they appear. The author argues that Enver and his father are compassionate, but that these qualities do not come from them or their religion, Islam, but are the result of their circumstances. When the author asks Enver's father whether there are robberies in their neighborhood, the answer is that such incidents have become an everyday occurrence (Naipaul, 1990). Apart from these, the general characteristics attributed to Muslims in this conversation are weakness, backwardness, blood feud, gambling and violence (Naipaul, 1990). In Bombay, Enver's co-religionists, the Muslims, recite the Qur'an and pray every day, but there is no shortage of fighting and murder in their community. Enver, who has witnessed 10-12 murders since his childhood, mentions that eighty percent of the people living here carry guns. He says that his co-religionists pray five times a day, but he prays only once a day. Nevertheless, he says that he will never give up Islam and that the most beautiful feature of Islam is brotherhood. He says that helping old people trying to cross the street for free is an example of brotherhood in Islam. When we evaluate Enver's words as a whole, we can understand his adherence to Islam, even though he does not fully fulfill his religious obligations, as an admirable situation on the one hand and an expression of contradiction on the other. The fact that the brotherhood of Islam is not sufficiently reflected in society, and that the use of weapons and the high rate of murder and violence should be both a cause and a consequence of Islamic brotherhood and an atmosphere of trust, is a deficiency and a contradiction in terms of what Anwar says. Therefore, the fact that the author has not used another witness whose actions and statements do not contradict each other strengthens the impression that he has found and made people talk in line with his own fiction and purpose. It does not matter whether the scene is semi-developed or "imitation". Whether it is the societies of the Caribbean, the vast material misery of India, or the countries or societies in Africa where revolutions are taking place, Naipaul always meets them with a cold stare and a condescending attitude (Nixon, 1991, p. 33).

V. S. Naipaul's India essays are significant in the context of cultural and emotional history because they reveal the author's complex relationship with his Indian heritage and the impact of colonialism on Indian culture. Naipaul's essays explore themes related to globalization, marginalization, migration, repatriation, forced displacement, digestion, multiculturalism, and hybridity, which are all relevant to understanding the cultural and emotional past of India. Goel argues that Naipaul's essays reflect a motiveless malignity towards India, which is rooted in his personal experiences and cultural identity.

Naipaul's harsh and pessimistic attitude towards India can be attributed to his personal experiences and cultural identity. Naipaul was born in Trinidad to Indian parents and grew up in a post-colonial society, which shaped his views on identity, culture, and history. Naipaul's essays on India reflect his complex relationship with his Indian heritage and his experiences of displacement and marginalization. He was critical of India's social, political, and cultural systems, and saw the country as a place of darkness and chaos. However, Goel argues that Naipaul's criticism of India is not entirely objective, and reflects a motiveless malignity towards the country. Naipaul's essays reveal his biases and prejudices, and his inability to appreciate the richness and diversity of Indian culture.

It is important to approach Naipaul's views on Indian history with critical engagement and consider them as one perspective among many. Scholars and readers have offered a range of interpretations and critiques of Naipaul's perspectives, emphasizing the need for a multiplicity of voices and narratives in the understanding of India's history. Naipaul offers a critical perspective on Indian nationalism and its impact on society. He questions the ways in which nationalism can be exclusionary, fostering divisions and inhibiting a nuanced understanding of history. Naipaul highlights the dangers of narrow nationalist narratives that simplify complex historical processes.

V.S. Naipaul's views on the history of India can be gleaned from his various works, interviews, and essays. However, it is important to note that Naipaul's perspectives are subjective and have been subject to diverse interpretations. Naipaul discusses the challenges faced by postcolonial societies in reconstructing their identities. He examines how India, as a nation, grapples with the tensions between its historical heritage and the demands of modernity. Naipaul often emphasizes the sense of dislocation, cultural confusion, and the struggle to find a cohesive national identity.

He questions the narratives and myths surrounding Indian history, arguing that they often serve as distortions or simplifications. He calls for a critical examination of historical narratives, challenging popular perceptions and exploring the complexities and contradictions within India's past. Naipaul acknowledges the richness and complexity of Indian civilization, encompassing diverse religions, languages, and cultural traditions. He explores the intricate tapestry of Indian society and the layers of history that shape its present realities. Naipaul's writings often reflect his fascination with the depth and diversity of India's cultural and historical heritage. Yet, he has made critical observations about the sanitation conditions in certain parts of India. He has commented on the lack of proper waste management, open defecation, and the presence of garbage in public spaces. Naipaul's writings highlight the challenges faced by Indian cities and communities in addressing these issues.

Naipaul notes how numerous local peculiarities in India, frozen by foreign rule, poverty, lack of opportunity, or destitution, have started resurfacing. (Naipaul, 1990, p.6). In a characteristic series, these peculiarities remain distinct. The money is converted into the unsightly skyscrapers of Bombay. The unnamed but powerful event beyond human control contributes to the emergence of once-hidden details, such as regional, caste and clan affiliations, diverting attention from the bigger picture of the Indian nation. Naipaul's use of history is ideological as he views the present as a reflection of the past. He attempts to demonstrate that the struggle for freedom in the present is not dissimilar to that of the past, and to substantiate his argument, he presents both social class and religious differences. Similarly to Nixon's opinion of Naipaul's work, he highlights the insincere nature of India's emulation of the West. Nandy cannot condemn Naipaul if, as he bluntly puts it, "All interpretations of India are ultimately autobiographical" (Jabbar, 2006, 107).

When Naipaul's negative views on India are analyzed from a historical perspective, it is seen that the Mongol Emperor Babur, who ruled India for a short time, also shared it. In the Baburname, he denounces the Indians as "lacking of genius, understanding and kindness". Authenticity qualifies as extremely weak in favor of mechanical invention, with no skills or knowledge in design or architecture. However, there is still plenty of gold and money in India. And it states that 680 stonemasons work every day (Bose & Jalal, 1998, pp.36-7). For Naipaul, the first wound of a wounded civilization ought to be attributed to Islam. In Naipaul's belief, Islam violates an already struggling culture.

Naipaul's observations on the cleanliness of India and Indians can be seen as a reflection of the social and infrastructural challenges prevalent in the country. Pollution appears in several forms. Air pollution, environmental pollution, pollution of buildings and dwellings, noise pollution, wind and windstorms, and the piles of garbage that are formed from the garbage that the storm sometimes carries, are among the types of pollution that threaten both health and aesthetic appearance and are among the types of pollution that first catch the eye. As all this implies, and perhaps most importantly, it is necessary to know that not only pollution that "catches the eye" of the writer, but also the eyes and heart of a writer who is conditioned to seek and find pollution are infected with pollution. According to the author, pollution is something that is taken for granted in India, something that is not seen as a threat or even a problem, but only comes to mind when it comes to food and drink.

In Calcutta during the monsoon, when it rains for seventy-two hours almost continuously, animal carcasses are washed away in the floods, causing the danger of epidemics. Worse still, he tells of brides burned by their families for bringing inadequate dowry. The only thing decent in Kashmir are the trees.

When he returns to India, he gives the impression of being open to new experiences because of his young age, but it is also true that his mind is very confused. As a master of a language bestowed by the empire, Naipaul, though English and European in mentality, is racially and culturally Indian and Third World, and he is always trying to draw attention to his efforts to get rid of this characteristic. He is obsessed with the reality of empire and his observational work makes him unique among contemporary Indian travel and essay writers. Naipaul's departure from Trinidad and his consequent inability to find a spiritual home elsewhere is reflected in almost all his writing, making him skeptical of any commitment to motives that might be misleading. For the author, his travels abroad

were exercises in self-discovery. He wanted to test the realities he encountered against the long-held ideas of the societies he visited. Above all, he complained about the disorder and crowding in India, which he was not much aware of. Disorder is more clearly noticeable in crowds on roads and pedestrian crossings. Crowds can appear anywhere at any time. It is almost impossible to protect oneself from these crowds. Another problem is that these crowds seem to be aimless, almost like a blur. Another problem accompanying the crowds is that Naipaul states that India's situation today is worse than in the past, that it has lost the values and beauty of the past, and that money alone is seen as the most valuable commodity. Far from remembering the bitter experiences of India's past as a British colony, Naipaul characterizes it as a period of freedom. Now corruption, criminalization of politics, is the basis of instability.

His intent may have been to shed light on the disparities, inefficiencies, and socio-economic factors that contribute to poor sanitation conditions, rather than making sweeping generalizations about all Indians. Naipaul's comments about the "dirtiness" of India and Indians have been met with criticism from various quarters. Some argue that his observations were biased and reinforced stereotypes about developing countries. Others contend that his intention was to provoke thought and bring attention to pressing societal issues that need to be addressed. In engaging with Naipaul's views on the cleanliness of India and Indians, it is important to critically examine the context, nuances, and potential biases that may have influenced his observations. It is also essential to consider broader discussions on public health, urban planning, and socio-economic factors that contribute to sanitation challenges in any society.

It is important to consider the context in which Naipaul made his observations. His visits to India were spread over several decades, and his observations may reflect specific moments in time and particular locations. He seems to oversimplify or generalize his views to the entire country or its population.

One of Naipaul's major tendencies was to frequently compare Indian culture and civilization with Western civilization and to demean Indian civilization in the face of European superiority. Naipaul's portrayal of European civilization is multifaceted, reflecting both admiration and criticism. On one hand, he acknowledges the advancements in science, technology, and governance that Europe has achieved. He appreciates the intellectual and cultural achievements of European history, recognizing its contributions to the world. However, Naipaul also delves into the dark underbelly of European civilization, critiquing its colonial legacy, exploitative practices, and the erosion of traditional values. He exposes the hypocrisy and arrogance that he perceives within European societies, challenging the notion of European superiority. Along with tendency Naipaul illustrates the tension between the influence of European civilization and the desire to preserve indigenous traditions in the Third World. He analyzes the impact of colonialism on cultural identities and the subsequent challenges faced by societies striving for modernity while grappling with the complexities of their past.

Naipaul's exploration of the Third World is marked by a blend of empathy and scrutiny. He offers a critical lens through which he examines the challenges faced by postcolonial societies. Naipaul explores the lingering impacts of colonialism, the struggles of identity formation, and the complex dynamics of power and corruption. He highlights the social, political, and economic issues plaguing these societies, shedding light on their limitations and internal contradictions. Naipaul's observations, while often scathing, are not devoid of empathy, as he exposes the complexities and internal struggles within the Third World. One of Naipaul's recurring themes is the clash between European and Third World cultures. He explores the ways in which these cultures interact, sometimes resulting in a clash of values and identities. Despite his critical stance, Naipaul presents nuanced perspectives on both European civilization and the Third World. He acknowledges the strengths and achievements of European civilization while dissecting its shortcomings. Similarly, he recognizes the resilience, creativity, and cultural richness of the Third World even as he dissects its weaknesses. Naipaul's approach transcends simplistic binaries and invites readers to engage with the complexities of both worlds.

V. S. Naipaul's attitude towards European civilization and the Third World is a product of his keen observations, personal experiences, and deep engagement with the complexities of global societies. His exploration of these two spheres is marked by a combination of admiration, critique, empathy, and nuance. Naipaul challenges conventional narratives, exposing the flaws and contradictions within European civilization while acknowledging its contributions. Simultaneously, he delves into the struggles and complexities of the Third World, shedding light on its challenges and cultural resilience. Ultimately, Naipaul's works offer a thought-provoking analysis of these spheres, inviting readers to critically examine the strengths and weaknesses of both European civilization and the Third World.

V. S. Naipaul's views on British colonialism in India are complex and multifaceted. While he has acknowledged certain positive aspects of British rule, particularly in terms of infrastructure development, introduction of modern education, and the spread of certain ideas of governance, it would be inaccurate to say that he outrightly supports British colonialism in India. It is important to note that Naipaul's perspectives have evolved over time, and his writings reflect a nuanced examination of the impacts of colonialism. He recognizes that colonial rule brought about certain advancements and changes in Indian society. He has also highlighted the negative consequences of

British colonialism, particularly in relation to the erosion of traditional Indian culture and values. He examines how the encounter with European civilization disrupted and displaced indigenous traditions, resulting in a loss of cultural confidence and a sense of dislocation.

Exploring the power dynamics inherent in colonialism, he shed light on the exploitation, inequalities, and subjugation faced by the Indian population under British rule. His works delve into the social, economic, and political consequences of colonialism, challenging romanticized notions of empire. Naipaul's writings on British colonialism in India aim to provide a complex historical analysis, going beyond simplistic judgments. He explores the complexities of the colonial encounter, acknowledging the nuances and contradictions within the dynamics of power and resistance. It is crucial to approach Naipaul's views on British colonialism in India with a critical lens, recognizing that his perspectives are subject to interpretation and debate.

India: A Million Mutinies Now is loosely structured, fragmented and rather random, consisting of transitions between short, often harrowing life stories. There are, however, brief anecdotes of Naipaul's Hindu childhood in Trinidad: Memories from long ago, almost from another life; old languages, cultures, ways of thinking and feeling; references to the lack or loss of faith, and later to the fear and uncertainty he felt when leaving the peaceful and sheltered life of the university.

Naipaul's approach was primarily that of a writer and observer. He engaged with people and places during his visits to India, conducting interviews and documenting his impressions and reflections through his literary works. Naipaul's approach to India was marked by a mix of admiration, disillusionment, and critique. While he appreciated certain aspects of Indian civilization, he also criticized its social hierarchies, religious practices, and post-colonial challenges. His writings reflected a complex and nuanced view of the country. Biruni's focus was on the intellectual and cultural aspects of India. He explored various subjects such as religion, philosophy, literature, and science, aiming to understand and appreciate the richness and diversity of Indian civilization. It is important to note that Biruni's work was not entirely devoid of critical observations. He offered comparisons between Indian and Islamic societies, highlighting differences in customs, religious practices, and social structures. However, these observations were made within the broader context of his scholarly exploration and were not indicative of a negative or dismissive attitude towards India or its people.

Biruni's comparative approach involved meticulous observation, empirical data collection, and engagement with diverse sources, including texts, scholars, and practitioners. His methodology displayed a commendable level of objectivity, emphasizing the importance of firsthand investigation and direct interaction with adherents of different faiths. However, despite his attempts at objectivity, Biruni's background as a Muslim scholar and his devotion to Islam likely introduced implicit biases and value judgments into his analysis. Biruni's emphasis on the monotheistic nature of Islam led him to perceive polytheistic aspects within Indian religions as primitive or flawed. While his objective was to describe and understand different beliefs, his implicit preference for monotheism often overshadowed a more nuanced understanding of the polytheistic traditions of India. Biruni occasionally viewed certain rituals of Indian religions as superstitious or irrational due to his Islamic worldview. His understanding of Islamic rituals as rational and grounded in divine guidance might have influenced his perception of Hindu and Buddhist rituals as less rational or inferior. Biruni's work displays a tendency to evaluate the ethical systems of Indian religions based on his Islamic framework, leading to judgments about their relative superiority or inferiority. This perspective may have limited his ability to appreciate the moral teachings and ethical principles of these religions on their own terms. Biruni was committed to cross-referencing information from multiple sources to verify its accuracy. He critically examined different texts, compared accounts, and sought corroboration from knowledgeable individuals. This method ensured that he presented a well-rounded and balanced view of the subjects he studied.

3. COMPARISON OF BIRUNI AND NAIPAUL

It is important to note that while Biruni focused on scholarly exploration and documenting his observations, Naipaul's works were shaped by his experiences as a writer and his personal perspectives. Both figures brought different methodologies and intentions to their engagement with India, reflecting the intellectual and historical contexts in which they lived. Naipaul's works often delved into the social realities of India, shedding light on various aspects of Indian life. He explored themes such as poverty, social hierarchies, caste divisions, and the struggles faced by marginalized communities. His writings often presented a stark and sometimes bleak portrayal of these realities. Naipaul explores the lasting effects of British colonialism on Indian society and culture. He delves into the complex legacy of colonial rule, highlighting the erosion of traditional structures, the disruption of social hierarchies, and the loss of cultural confidence. Naipaul suggests that India's history was deeply influenced by the colonial encounter and its aftermath. Biruni and V.S. Naipaul had different purposes and approaches during their visits to India. Biruni, as a scholar, sought to study and document various aspects of Indian culture objectively. On the other hand, Naipaul, as a writer, aimed to explore his ancestral roots and depict the complexities of Indian society through a critical lens. Both individuals made significant contributions to the understanding of India, albeit

in different ways and during different time periods. Naipaul's views on Indian religions are subjective and can be perceived as biased by some. Critics argue that he sometimes generalizes or critiques certain religious beliefs or practices, which they consider as an imposition of his own biases. However, supporters argue that Naipaul's perspectives are a reflection of his personal observations and experiences rather than a deliberate attempt to be impartial. Naipaul's writings often focus on his own people, his "material" and his own people, but he does not understand them. He cannot understand the racism that structures their societies or the racial history that made them, and therefore, he cannot find the imagination to become them. This lack of understanding diminishes Naipaul as a man and as a creator. Ultimately, Naipaul's craft bridges the gap between man and writer, achieving a synthesis between man and writer rather than a symbiosis.

Naipaul's use of the concepts 'India' and 'Islam' appears to be vaguely ambiguous, as though they were fully understandable procedures. This confusion stems from his use of dialectical reasoning, which is fundamental for comprehensibility. Nonetheless, Naipaul's individuality lies in his capacity to create 'India' as a relevant generality, and this ability comes under critical examination. Naipaul is deeply influenced by the material aspects of different civilizations, which shapes his diasporic perspective. However, he faces certain limitations resulting from his liminal position. He not only has to present his own experiences to a wider audience, but also ensure that he avoids presenting them as universally applicable to native intellectuals. Ashis Nandy articulates this obligation concisely by stating that the Chaudhris and Naipauls are not just critics of an unavoidable form of self-protection, but also contributors to it. They offer "secondary elaborations" of a culture constructed to impede and deter change.

Consequently, Naipaul's writings are characterized by his self-conscious literary mode of expression, which often involves mocking and deriding his own people. His unique ability to fabricate 'India' as a timely generality and his insistence on convincing his admirers that India resists change is a testament to his ability to create a unique and complex worldview.

In terms of impartiality, Biruni's approach to studying Indian religions is often considered more objective and unbiased. His emphasis on scholarly research, engagement with local scholars, and his intention to provide an accurate account of Indian religions contribute to his perception as a relatively impartial scholar. Naipaul's views, on the other hand, are more subjective and can be influenced by his personal interpretations and reflections, which may be perceived as biased by some readers. It is important to note that Naipaul's portrayal of India and Indians in his books has been a subject of debate and critique. Some have accused him of presenting a one-sided and overly negative view of the country and its people. Others appreciate his ability to capture the complexities and contradictions of Indian society. V.S. Naipaul's writings on India and Indians have sparked diverse interpretations and elicited both praise and criticism. Naipaul's exploration of India has been seen by some as a penetrating examination of the country's social, cultural, and psychological complexities. Supporters argue that his works provide valuable insights into the challenges faced by postcolonial societies and the clash between tradition and modernity (Chaudhuri, 2007). Critics argue that Naipaul's portrayal of postcolonial India is overly negative and lacks a nuanced understanding of the country's achievements and aspirations. They suggest that his works focus on societal problems while overlooking positive aspects of Indian culture, resilience, and progress (Suleri, 1992). Some scholars have accused Naipaul of perpetuating a form of Orientalism, arguing that his writings reinforce Western stereotypes and reinforce a sense of cultural superiority. They contend that his depictions of India and Indians often align with Western preconceptions and reinforce a binary divide between the "civilized" West and the "backward" East (Achebe, 1992). Naipaul's characterizations of Indian individuals and communities have been both praised and criticized. While some applaud his nuanced and multi-dimensional portrayals, others argue that his characters often conform to stereotypical images and lack depth, leading to an incomplete and reductive representation of Indian society (Bakker, 1993).

A Wounded Civilization is V. S. Naipaul's second nonfiction book about India, following *An Area of Darkness: An Experience of India*. There is a thirteen-year gap between the two of them. Both have meaningful and provocative subtitles. While both books are travelogues, the first has more fictional possibilities, while the second has more reporting, sociological, and political content.

"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" (Naipaul, 1977, p. ix).

"In India I know I am a stranger; but in creasingly I understand that my Indian memories, the memories of that India which lived on into my childhood in Trinidad, are like trapdoors into a bottomless past" (Naipaul, 1977, p.xi).

V.S. Naipaul's views on the religions of India can be gleaned from his writings and interviews. However, it's important to note that Naipaul's perspectives are complex and have evolved over time. Here are some key aspects of Naipaul's views on the religions of India. He critically examines the religions of India, including Hinduism and Islam. He delves into the historical, social, and cultural dimensions of these religions, questioning certain beliefs, practices, and societal implications. Naipaul's approach involves probing the complexities and contradictions

within religious traditions. He explores the influence of British colonialism on the religions of India. He examines the ways in which colonial rule and Christian missionary activities shaped the religious landscape and the responses of Indian communities to these external forces. Naipaul often highlights the transformations and conflicts that arose due to these interactions. He portrays the tensions and conflicts between different religious communities in India. He delves into the historical and contemporary instances of religious animosity and violence, particularly between Hindus and Muslims. Naipaul's writings highlight the complexities and challenges of interreligious relations in the Indian context and questions certain aspects of religious belief systems in India. He probes the role of mythology, the relationship between rituals and spirituality, and the influence of superstition. Naipaul's exploration often seeks to go beyond surface-level representations and investigate the deeper underpinnings of religious practices.

Naipaul explores the individual's search for spirituality and meaning within the religious landscape of India. He delves into the personal journeys of characters who grapple with their faith, cultural heritage, and the complexities of religious identity. Naipaul portrays the individual's struggle to reconcile tradition with modernity and the tensions that arise from this quest. It's important to note that Naipaul's views on religion are diverse and have been subject to interpretation and critique. Scholars and readers have engaged with his works to analyze the nuances and complexities of his portrayal of religious beliefs and practices in India.

Naipaul's writings on the Third World depict a nuanced exploration of the challenges faced by postcolonial societies. He delved into themes such as cultural dislocation, the clash between tradition and modernity, and the impact of colonialism on individual and collective identity. His works often highlighted social hierarchies, economic disparities, and the struggles faced by marginalized communities. However, it is important to note that Naipaul's views have been a subject of critique. Some scholars have accused him of perpetuating stereotypes and reinforcing Western biases in his portrayal of the Third World. Others argue that his works provide valuable insights into the complexities and contradictions of postcolonial societies. His views on Indian religions often carried a subjective perspective, influenced by his personal experiences and observations. His works reflect his own encounters and interactions with religious individuals and communities in India. Naipaul's portrayals of religious attitudes may be colored by his individual interpretations and biases.

Naipaul's writings often highlight the tensions, conflicts, and contradictions within Indian religious attitudes. He explores the clash between religious communities and delves into the social and political complexities associated with religious beliefs. His works may present a critical perspective on religious attitudes, emphasizing the challenges and flaws within religious systems. In terms of bias and impartiality, Biruni's approach is generally considered more objective and impartial. He approached his study of Indian religions with a scholarly mindset, aiming to understand and document the religious beliefs and practices without imposing his own judgments or biases. While his writings may contain interpretations influenced by the cultural context of his time, he strived for objectivity in his observations.

On the other hand, V.S. Naipaul's writings on Indian religions carry a more subjective and personal perspective. His portrayals of religious attitudes often reflect his own experiences, opinions, and interpretations. This subjectivity may introduce biases and limitations in his depiction of religious beliefs and practices. Naipaul's works have been both praised for their insights and criticized for potential biases and generalizations. It is important to approach both Biruni's and V.S. Naipaul's views on Indian religions critically, considering their different historical contexts, methodologies, and personal perspectives. Engaging with diverse sources and interpretations can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the religious attitudes of Indian people.

4. CONCLUSION

Biruni's attitude toward Indian religion and culture, as evident in his work "India," exemplifies the characteristics of a dedicated scholar. His intellectual curiosity, respect for Indian civilization, analytical approach, and scholarly contributions highlight the depth and breadth of his engagement. Biruni's work continues to serve as a valuable resource for understanding Indian religion and culture, offering insights that contribute to the broader academic understanding of human history and cross-cultural interactions. Biruni's attitude towards Indian religion and culture, as depicted in his work "India," reflects his intellectual curiosity, respectful engagement, and contributions to knowledge. His meticulous study, respectful approach, and comparative analysis paved the way for a deeper understanding of Indian religious and cultural practices. By acknowledging the significance of Indian traditions and facilitating cross-cultural dialogue, Biruni's work continues to be a valuable resource for scholars exploring the diversity of human civilization. Biruni's comparative analysis of Indian religions and Islam is a valuable contribution to the study of religious traditions. However, it is important to recognize the potential impact of implicit biases and value judgments on his assessments. By acknowledging these influences, scholars can engage in a more nuanced evaluation of his work, fostering a deeper understanding of the complexities of religious comparison. In summary, Biruni and V.S. Naipaul had different purposes and approaches during their visits to India. Biruni, as a scholar, sought to study and document various aspects of Indian culture objectively.

V. S. Naipaul's views, on the other hand, have vexed people for a variety of reasons. Here are a few key factors that contribute to the controversy and debate surrounding his perspectives: Naipaul's writings often included critical portrayals of postcolonial societies, including the Third World. He explored the social, political, and cultural challenges faced by these societies, often highlighting corruption, poverty, religious tensions, and other societal problems. Such critical depictions can be unsettling for those who feel they present an unbalanced or negative view.

Some critics argue that Naipaul's works perpetuate stereotypes about the people and cultures he writes about. They contend that his portrayals may reinforce Western preconceptions and create a distorted image of the societies he examines. This can be particularly vexing for those who value a more nuanced and diverse representation of cultures and identities. Naipaul was known for expressing controversial and provocative opinions in interviews and public appearances. He made statements that were perceived as insensitive or dismissive of certain cultures, religions, or regions. These remarks generated significant backlash and added to the vexation surrounding his views.

Naipaul's works emerged during a period of heightened discourse around postcolonialism, cultural identity, and power dynamics. His perspectives intersected with larger debates and ideologies, leading to intense reactions and debates among scholars, critics, and the general public. Naipaul's own background as a Trinidadian of Indian descent and his experiences of displacement and cultural hybridity influenced his views and writing style. Some argue that his personal background informed his perspectives on postcolonial societies and contributed to both the richness and complexity of his works. However, this personal connection can also lead to heightened expectations and scrutiny.

It is important to note that reactions to Naipaul's views vary greatly, and while some find his perspectives vexing, others appreciate his willingness to critically examine postcolonial societies and highlight their challenges. The controversy surrounding Naipaul's views reflects the complexity of representing diverse cultures and the ongoing dialogue about the responsibilities of writers and the impact of their work.

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ÇALIŞMANIN ETİK İZİNİ

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