



SEARCH FOR SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS IN V.S. NAIPAUL'S A HOUSE FOR MR. BISWAS

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ABSTRACT

V.S.Naipaul is, beyond doubt, a great master of fiction and literary device, a craftsman of style and imagery. His art consists in reducing complexities to simple images and creating original descriptions that are pregnant with suggestive possibilities. The author tries constantly to understand human condition. He appears to be worried about man's inclination towards lying and self-deception in his works. In all his writings Naipaul has focused on individuals attempting to escape fate. For Naipaul, fate belongs to a world of magic, myth and ritual where only the past exists but not history. According to him, it is history that provides a sense of wholeness and belonging to both people and nation. Many of Naipaul's fictional figures are at the mercy of social and political forces and also their own personal compulsions. They remain 'unhoused' in themselves and are, therefore, located on the borderlines of fixed and shifting identities, living half-lives prescribed by the colonial and postcolonial experience.

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Naipaul always wishes to be in a state of homelessness that provides him more opportunities and amenities for 'exploration.' This is in fact a predicament of a diasporic writer. His characters represent a world not moved by love but dominated by greed, conflict and futility. It is easy to recognize that the miseries and sufferings faced by Naipaul's protagonists have natural conformity with the experiences of people all over the world, living in an alien land dominated by a colonized society. Naipaul's works show the natural process of a man's life, which is the fusion of both happiness and sorrow, rough and sublime. His world is the world of the helpless nomadic migrants making an escape route from Africa or India to the West Indies, then to England and back again. One observes that even after three hundred long years, there is no society and no system of values in which these characters can take root. It is against such an indistinct and dissolving background that they try to seize upon something to give them permanence so as to arrest the flux in their lives.

Autobiography, thus, provides the raw material for all of Naipaul's novels. This paper attempts to analyze the minds of Naipaul's characters especially in **A House For Mr. Biswas** who bears a close resemblance to his creator. It is **A House for Mr. Biswas**, his magnum opus that has given him name and fame indisputably. The novel deals primarily with the protagonist's struggle to establish himself in a hostile environment through the ownership of a house and also with the decline of Hindu culture under the impact of Westernization.

Naipaul makes no attempt to present Mr. Biswas as a conventional heroic figure. In fact, it becomes apparent that the protagonist partakes many of the traits of an existential hero. As one accompanies Biswas in the journey of his life, one realizes that Biswas is at odds with the world around him. He is like