Sonakshi Tak
M.A. Research Scholar,
Department of English, Govt.
College Pushkar, Maharshi
Dayanand Saraswati
University, Ajmer, Rajasthan,
India

Dr. Rashmi Bhatnagar
Associate Professor,
Department of English, Govt.
College Pushkar, Maharshi
Dayanand Saraswati
University, Ajmer, Rajasthan,
India

Cultural studies approach of reflections of Shashi Tharoor's the great Indian novel and V. S. Naipaul's an area of darkness

Sonakshi Tak and Dr. Rashmi Bhatnagar

Abstract
India represents a big amalgamation of numerous cultures. Because India is split into racial, liturgical, caste, linguistic, and other groups, the heterogeneity of races, faiths, languages, costumes, rituals, and principles adds to the complexity of its culture. This research investigates the influence of democracy and temporal standards on Indian culture, using Shashi Tharoor's "The Great Indian Novel" and V.S. Naipaul's "An Area of Darkness." However, it tackles the dividing issues that impede national unity. Its purpose is to disclose India's ethos, accomplishment, and the political components that hold the homeland together. It also depicts the government systems that exist in Indian political and cultural life, using Shashi Tharoor's "The Great Indian Novel" as a reference point. V. S. Naipaul's principal mission is to tell the truth, because poets are humanity's unacknowledged legislators. V. S. Naipaul's non-fiction work "An Area of Darkness" presents India's cultures and postcolonial characteristics in a more honest and realistic manner. Nonetheless, it is a nonfiction work that has been extensively investigated, discussed, and critiqued. Shashi Tharoor's "The Great Indian Novel" emphasizes the significance of cultural studies in revealing authoritarian attitudes. It addresses fundamental cultural studies problems such as representation, discussion, identity, and philosophy, all of which have proven valuable in evaluating the book. V. S. Naipaul took the new genre to unparalleled heights and achievements. He is of Indian heritage and is known for his bleak novels set in impoverished nations. He traveled to India multiple times, as did Pearl S. Buck and E. M. Forster. So his portrayal of Indian religion, society, culture, and politics is really genuine. His perspective and concepts are quite similar to present thoughts and visions from both the East and West.

Keywords: Cultural studies, identity, ideology, diversity, cultural growth and hegemony, non-fiction, post-colonial

Introduction
This study is on the cultural studies of the thoughts in Shashi Tharoor's "The Great Indian Novel" and V.S. Naipaul's "An Area of Darkness". Naipaul published several nonfiction books on India, his ancestral home. He visited India multiple times, and what he saw, felt, and experienced inspired the creation of numerous major works on India. They include An Area of Darkness (1964), A Wounded Civilization (1977), and A Million Mutinies Now. All of these works provide a realistic and beautiful representation of modern society, politics, religion, culture, and people. Shashi Tharoor, Naipaul's contemporary, was born on March 9, 1956. He is a versatile Indian thinker and statesman whose nonfiction writings have greatly contributed to our knowledge and appreciation of India's rich culture, history, and present difficulties. With a long career in Foreign Service, diplomacy, and politics, Tharoor has emerged as a powerful literary voice, notably via his intelligent and thought-provoking non-fiction books.

Among his famous nonfiction works, "The Great Indian Novel" (1989) is a masterwork that expertly knits together India's epic tale with its present political history and culture. This enormous piece is a tour de force, drawing connections between characters from Indian epics like the Mahabharata and Ramayana and important people from India's political scene. Tharoor's story brilliantly mixes mythology with modern political satire, providing a unique and incisive look into India's cultural and political fabric. Tharoor's "The Great Indian Novel" reveals not just his storytelling talent, but also a deep awareness of India's rich

Corresponding Author:
Sonakshi Tak
M.A. Research Scholar,
Department of English, Govt.
College Pushkar, Maharshi
Dayanand Saraswati
University, Ajmer, Rajasthan,
India

cultural legacy. He weaves the old and modern together to create a literary tapestry that portrays the Indian nation's intricacies, paradoxes, and undying vitality.

Shashi Tharoor's investigation of Indian culture in "The Great Indian Novel" and Naipaul's "An Area of Darkness" beyond the boundaries of traditional narrative, taking readers on a literary trip that is both intellectually challenging and profoundly anchored in the soul of British colonial India. These books strengthen Naipaul and Tharoor's reputations as thought leaders and cultural ambassadors, and their writings continue to connect with anyone seeking a comprehensive knowledge of India's past, present, and future. Shashi Tharoor's non-fiction writings offer a sophisticated insight of India's postcolonial path. Tharoor dives into the obstacles and possibilities that emerged following independence, focusing on political, economic, and cultural upheavals. His writings exhibit a genuine admiration for India's variety and a desire to investigate the complexities of its social fabric.

Tharoor's opinion is frequently distinguished by optimism and conviction in India's future, although acknowledging the ongoing difficulties of inequality, religious conflicts, and political complications. Tharoor's insightful works challenge readers to confront the intricacies of Indian identity, history, and the continuing process of nation-building. While Naipaul's style is viewed as controversial, his nonfiction works act as a mirror, reflecting the issues of a society in change. Naipaul's writings highlight the paradoxes inside Indian society, as well as the complexity that arise from historical legacies.

Isochronous V.S. Naipaul had his early schooling at Queens' Royal College in Trinidad. During his studies, he was successful in obtaining government scholarships to pursue higher study in England. As a result, he traveled to England to pursue higher studies at University College, Oxford. He had a great desire to write since he was very young. This desire originated from his father, who was also a writer. Naturally, V. S. Naipaul worked as a correspondent for the BBC. He also served as an editor for the British Broadcasting Corporation's 'Caribbean Voices' program. Despite living in England, his heart ached for his homeland, Trinidad. He was highly attached to his roots. During his stay in England, he authored numerous notable works of literature.

The traditions of India must be properly understood. As a consequence, India's pluralism must be systematically evaluated. Shashi Tharoor and V. S. Naipaul portrays India as an ethnic group and a nation, including all of its cultural variety and political structure, as well as an emphasis on the contradictions within Indian society and the complexity that results from historical legacies. Tharoor focuses on India's heterogeneous picture. It also looks into the thoughts that India's varied culture has been firmed over time by pantheism, multiculturalism, multilingualism, vibrant traditions, beliefs, and habits, as well as a republic under the Constitution nation composed of 29 states and 7 territories of union that believes in "unity in diversity". "The Great Indian Novel" by Shashi Tharoor highlights both the privileges and shortcomings of India's diversity.

One distinguishing feature of India is its vast cultural diversity. Ethnicities, faiths, dialects, attire, rituals, immigration, and practices all showed significant variance. As an outcome, Indian accomplishment is depicted in a very diverse and contrasted   manner.

Indian accomplishments with stand categorization singly. Understanding its complexities necessitates a split into ethnic, devotional, caste, language, and local identities. India as a nation was not pioneered on the philosophy of linguistic, religious, or ethnic homogeneity. It is a venue where people are confined together by a common past of struggle to the English Empire, an overwhelming feeling of kinship after the Muslim encroachment and a fundamental legacy of patience for variety. India's identity is determined by its people's will to band together, as well as the democratic political structure that enables them to do so. To decipher Indian culture, one must first recognize the distinctions, discrepancies, and variations, as well as the resemblance, similarities, and connections in Indian society. It is indeed more pivotal to examine its political network, which predates democracy and secularism, and has preserved national unity throughout times of exigency.

Cultural reflections of "The Great Indian Novel"
Shashi Tharoor's "The Great Indian Novel" is a literary masterwork that expertly ties together the tale of India's history with parts from the Indian epic, the Mahabharata. This unusual combination of history, mythology, and fiction creates a fascinating tapestry of cultural perspectives that are worth exploring. Tharoor cleverly compares characters and events from the Mahabharata to historical individuals and happenings in current India. This interaction generates a mythical resonance that not only enhances the story but also serves as a reflection on the persistence of certain characters and conflicts in Indian culture.

Tharoor's work exemplifies ultra-modernist ideas. As an outcome, the narrative is told in poetry as well as prose. It mocks earlier respected factual figures while criticizing the old magnificent works and lores of the Indian emancipation fight. The work informs readers regarding its fictitious origin on a frequent basis, thanks to a self-reflexive narrator, connecting it to the novelties of Metafiction. The storyline is based on the epic Mahabharata. The narrator, Ved Vyas, is 80 years old and dictates his account to his amanuensis, Ganapathi.

The novel explores India's pre- and post-independence histories. It begins with Gandhi's moral politics and concludes with the degradation of his political successors. Tharoor weaves together legendary stories and factual figures to represent the facts of Indian cultural life and the layout of the Indian nation. In a conversation with Geeta Pandey (BBC News, October 16, 2014), he explains why he picked the Mahabharata as inspiration for his work. Tharoor concede that he modeled his work on the epic tale of the Mahabharata because he considered it as a secular story with fascinating characters that showed human blotches like wrath, envy, greed, and dishonesty. Tharoor tells a fictional account about the carnage in the Bagh of Jallianwala. The Bibighar Gardens massacre refers to the catastrophe that occurred in Kanpur during the Indian mutiny of 1857. In Kanpur, workers and civilians were captured and slaughtered, including Britishers, women, and helpless children. The Jallianwala Bagh carnage killed numerous innocent Indian gents, ladies, and children. Tharoor believes that violence against innocent people, regardless of color, is horrible.

Tharoor agrees with the postmodernist idea that history silences the voices of the persecuted. History is typically a metanarrative that chronicles significant events in the

existence of leaders who rose to power at a specific point in history. Facts are portrayed as if it were a play on stage, with the activities of a single hero spotlighted while the efforts of others believed to be deprived are overlooked. In his portrayal of India's freedom struggle, Tharoor stresses this historical fact. His storyteller confessed.

"So it is, Ganapathi, that in this memoir we light up one corner of our collective past at a time, focus on one man's acts, one village's passions, one colonel's duty, but all the while life is continuing on elsewhere, Ganapathi: while the guns ring out in the Bibighar Gardens, babies are being born, nationalists are being put into prison, spouses are quarreling with wives, petitions are being filed in courtrooms, stones are being tossed at cops, and devoted young". (Tharoor, Great Indian Novel, 109-110).

The story is rich in cultural symbolism, from the usage of characters like Bhima and Yudhishthira to symbolize historical people to the Mahabharata's symbolic importance as a mirror reflecting India's complex social and political environment. Tharoor uses these symbols to express deeper meanings and insights on Indian cultural values. He uses the Mahabharata as an allegorical framework to understand and comment on different periods of Indian history, such as the liberation movement, the post-independence era, and political changes. This historical allegory offers viewers a unique perspective on the complexity of India's path.

The novel's use of many languages and dialects highlights India's linguistic and cultural diversity. Tharoor smoothly combines many languages, representing India's diverse character. This language diversity serves as a microcosm of the larger cultural environment, highlighting the concept of unity through difference. Tharoor's characters and events, inspired by the Mahabharata, provide a gripping social commentary on caste, communalism, corruption, and power dynamics. The novel's cultural observations reflect modern Indian culture, asking readers to consider recurring issues and complexity.

The Mahabharata, with its wide cast of people and intellectual discourses, serves as a symbol for India's religious plurality. Tharoor's use of this epic enables him to investigate and praise the coexistence of many religious faiths within the Indian cultural context. Tharoor uses sarcasm and humor to criticize various elements of Indian culture and politics. This humorous tone, which is frequently evident in character discussions and interactions, provides another dimension to the novel's cultural observations, encouraging readers to engage critically with the story.

Cultural aspects of an area of darkness

Naipaul's travels to India are described in the work "Area of Darkness." He went north to Kashmir, east to Calcutta, and south to Chennai. In these numerous locations, he encountered and engaged with several individuals. His assessments of India's norms, rituals, ceremonies, and culture were severe and negative. His observations are also quite objective and unbiased. The traveling writer had been dreaming about India since he was a youngster and was enamored by his ancestral motherland. However, when he arrived in India, he discovered a significant contradiction between his description of India's gloom and the country's reality.

Unfortunately, everything he had imagined about the Indian people, culture, and civilization did not come true. Naipaul says:

"To me as a youngster, the India that had generated so many of the people and things around me was featureless, and I saw the time of transference as a period of darkness, darkness that stretched to the land, much like darkness surrounds a hut in the evening, though there is still light for a little distance surrounding the hut. In both time and place, my experience was centered on light. Even today, though time has broadened, distance has narrowed, and I have gone lucidly over that territory that was formerly the area of darkness for me, something and darkness remain, in those attitudes, those ways of thinking and perceiving". (An Area of Darkness, 30).

He injects irony into various Hindu traditions. His attitude appears to be that of an unbeliever or iconoclast. He throws sarcasm at thread ritual, which to Naipaul is a 'drama,' yet as a Brahmin hiding within him, he cannot approve of alterations in a traditional cult. With such a dual personality, he attempts to investigate India in 1962 but fails to offer a whole image of India at the time. In reality, his travel to India coincided with the same transitional time. As a result, he was unable to offer an accurate picture of India or discover the truth about India. Perhaps this is why, at the conclusion of the book, he feels unable to truly portray the spirit of India. He says:

"After defining my experience of India in relation to my homelessness, I realized how much I had been denying India in the last year, forming the foundation of my thoughts and feelings. And already, in a world where illusion could only be an idea rather than something felt in the bones, it was slippery, never fully articulated and captured again'. (An Area of Darkness, 114).

In both concept and method, "An Area of Darkness" is very similar to Joseph Conrad's classic work "Heart of Darkness." Conrad's story paints a realistic image of the Congo

Basin jungle, depicting everything as uncivilized, wild, and gloomy. Because of their blackness, they are consistently portrayed as exploited and dominated over by colonists. In the guise of reformation and growth, colonists deprive the uneducated tribals of valuable natural resources, causing their country to thrive. Similar to "An Area of Darkness," Naipaul depicts an uncivilized, primitive, and gloomy place, such as India. In other words, this novel reflects his ravenous need for identity and belonging. The book's final paragraph depicts Naipaul's anguish and suffering on his journey to his ancestral homeland:

"The Hindu claims that the world is an illusion. We talk about despair, but actual despair is too profound to formulate. It wasn't until I compared my experience of India to my own homelessness that I realized how near I had been to the entire Indian egestion in the previous year, how much it had formed the foundation of my thought and feelings. And now, with this understanding, in a world where illusion could only be a notion rather than a physical sensation, it was sliding away from me. I thought it was something real that I could never fully articulate or capture again". (An Area of Darkness, 266).

Conclusion

The cultural studies technique used to examine the observations in Shashi Tharoor's "The Great Indian Novel"

and V.S. Naipaul's "An Area of Darkness" has provided a nuanced examination of the varied cultural fabric that characterizes India's postcolonial identity. We dug into the complexities of historical tales, socio-cultural circumstances, and the writers' opinions on India's path by thoroughly analyzing these literary masterpieces.

Shashi Tharoor's literary masterwork brilliantly intertwines history, mythology, and fiction, producing a complex tale that embodies India's cultural identity. Tharoor uses the Mahabharata as a strong metaphorical framework to remark on many stages of Indian history while also providing insights into the country's linguistic plurality, religious pluralism, and current issues. The cultural observations in "The Great Indian Novel" act as a mirror for Indian society, urging readers to consider the intricacies and timeless themes woven throughout the country's cultural fabric. On the other side, V.S. Naipaul's critical assessment of postcolonial India, represented in "An Area of Darkness," provides a sharp and sometimes confrontational perspective. Naipaul addresses issues of cultural disarray, the impact of colonialism, and the ambiguities of identity, giving light on India's post-independence difficulties. His thoughts, profoundly anchored in historical context, offer a unique perspective on the scars inflicted on India's cultural and social fabric.

As the research examines the writings of these two significant authors, it becomes clear that their contributions complement one another, providing a comprehensive understanding of India's cultural environment. Tharoor's optimism and celebration of resistance in the face of historical injustices resonates with Naipaul's critical analysis of postcolonial complications. Together, they help to provide a full knowledge of India's history, successes, and problems. This cultural studies method stresses the importance of literature as a potent tool for reflecting and developing communal identity. Tharoor and Naipaul, using different perspectives, allow readers to explore the many layers of India's cultural identity. The narratives offered in these works go beyond simple storytelling; they become containers for significant insights on the nation's past, present, and future.

In essence, the cultural studies method reveals the variety and diversity reflected in Shashi Tharoor's and V.S. Naipaul's writings. It allows readers to explore the intricate interaction of history, culture, and identity, generating a greater respect for India's rich postcolonial tale. The cultural journey of India unfolds through the prism of these literary masterpieces, prompting more investigation and thought.

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