



Allameh Tabataba'i University
Faculty of Persian Literature and Foreign Languages
Department of English Language and Literature

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of Master of Arts (M.A.) in
English Literature

V.S. Naipaul

A Double-edged Glance Towards the Orient

in

The Mimic Men and Among the Believers

Advisor: Dr. Seyed Mohammad Marandi

Reader: Dr. Kamran Ahmadgoli

By:

Parisa Alimohammadi Sarab

September, 2011

Tehran, Iran

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH,

THE MOST MERCIFUL,

THE MOST BENEFICENT



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Parisa Alimohammadi Sarab

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چکیده

الف . موضوع و طرح مسئله (اهمیت موضوع و هدف) : پس از پایان دوره استعمار و استقلال ممالکی که سابقاً مستعمره دول غربی بودند، تلاش مردمان آنها برای اداره‌ی امور کشورشان آغاز شد. غافل از این که سال‌ها استعمار و تاثیرپذیری از فرهنگ و سیستم آموزشی غربی هویت اولیه‌ی آنان را گرفته بود. وی اس ناپیل هم در کتاب میمیک مین با موفقیت بحران هویتی این مردمان و تاثیر شگرف آن در عدم موفقیت آنان در اداره امور کشور را به تصویر می‌کشد. در طی سال‌ها، فکر، اندیشه و حتی مذهب توسط استعمار به این مردمان تحمیل شده است و در نتیجه ایستادن بر روی پایه‌های خود برای آنان به امری ناممکن تبدیل شده است.

چند سال پس از انتشار کتاب میمیک مین، ناپیل طی سفری به خاورمیانه و خاور دور مشاهدات و نظراتش را در باب اعتقادات و اتحاد اهالی مسلمان این کشورها در قالب کتاب امونگ د بلیورز منتشر کرد. ناپیل در این کتاب به اتحادی که در اهالی کتاب میمیک مین فقدان آن در اداره کشور ملموس و رنج‌آور بود خرده گرفته و عقیده دارد این اتحاد و حرکت دسته‌جمعی مانع پیشرفت جامعه شده و باعث می‌شود افراد از هویت شخصی خود باز بمانند. این بار وابستگی افراد به غرب نیست که از نظر او مشکل ساز است، بلکه اعتقاد سرسخت آنان به حفظ سنت‌ها و باورهای مذهبی جامعه خطرناک می‌نماید.

این تحقیق قصد دارد دو کتاب نامبرده را در باب نگرش دوسویه‌ی ناپیل به سوی شرق با توجه به شواهد متنی و نظریات منتقدان و متفکران بررسی کند.

ب. مبانی نظری شامل مرور مختصری از منابع، چارچوب نظری و پرسش‌ها و فرضیه‌ها :

ناپیل به عنوان یکی از اهالی مناطقی که سابقاً تحت استعمار قرار داشتند در کتابهایش هم زیاد به این مساله پرداخته است و با همدردی با اهالی این کشورها، بالاخص اهالی سرزمین پدری‌اش در جزایر کارائیب، موفق شده خود را به عنوان یک نویسنده منتقد استعمار در دنیای غرب معرفی کند. وی در آن دسته از اثرهایش که در جزایر دریای کارائیب می‌گذرد بحران هویت اهالی این جزایر تازه استقلال یافته را ناشی از عدم استقلال فکری و مالی آنها می‌داند. حال آنکه در سفر به خاورمیانه و خاور دور از وابستگی افراد به هویت اسلامی و ملی خود انتقاد کرده و این وابستگی را مانع پیشرفت این ممالک می‌داند. این تحقیق در پی یافتن شواهدی از درون متن برای پشتیبانی از فرضیه اصلی آن است که نگرش دوسویه‌ی ناپیل به سوی شرق می‌باشد.

پ. روش تحقیق شامل تعریف مفاهیم، روش تحقیق، جامعه مورد تحقیق، نمونه گیری و روش‌های نمونه گیری، ابزار اندازه‌گیری، نحوه اجرای آن، شیوه گردآوری و تجزیه و تحلیل داده‌ها: روش تحقیق به صورت کتابخانه ای بود. ابتدا تئوری‌های شرق شناسی استخراج شده و سپس متن دو اثر نامبرده با استفاده از داده‌های جمع آوری شده از کتاب‌ها و مقالات تحلیل شده است. به دلیل ماهیت کتابخانه‌ای تحقیق، جامعه مورد تحقیق، نمونه گیری، روش‌های نمونه گیری، و ابزار اندازه گیری برای آن تعریف نشده اند.

ت. یافته‌های تحقیق: ناپیل علیرغم محبوبیت و جایگاه ویژه‌ای که به عنوان یک آگاه به امور شرق و مسائل خاورمیانه در محافل امروزی غربی برای خود کسب کرده است، در حقیقت پا در مسیر شرق‌شناسان کلاسیک غربی می‌گذارد که تنها با تکیه بر منابع و داده‌های دست‌چندم به تحلیل مسائل شرق می‌پردازند و در گزارش وقایع بی‌طرف عمل نمی‌کنند. این غرض‌ورزی در گزارش مسائل کشورهای مسلمان، به هنگام گزارش احوال اهالی با اصالت هندی جای خود را به همدردی و دلسوزی می‌دهد که نشان می‌دهد ناپیل خود به عنوان محصولی از سیستم فکری و آموزش غربی نمی‌تواند به صورت مستقل در این مسائل ابراز عقیده کند.

ث. نتیجه گیری و پیشنهادات: پس از آنکه ناپیل در سال 2001 برنده‌ی جایزه‌ی نوبل در ادبیات شد، افراد بیشتری به صف منتقدین و پیروان وی پیوستند و نویسندگان بسیاری به توصیف ناعادلانه‌ی ناپیل از دنیای شرق و کشورهای اسلامی که در سال 1979 به آنها سفر کرد پرداختند. لیکن تحقیقی در باب نگرش دوسویه‌ی وی به کشورهای هندی که به آنها سفر می‌کند ثبت نشده است. به دلیل کثرت آثار وی و گستردگی جغرافیایی سفرهایش، جای تحقیقات بیشتر در این زمینه خالی است.

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Jo

Mom

&

Dad

Abstract

The independence of most colonized states in the world by the 1960's brought with itself a new brand in literature. The post-colonial literature emerged after years of anticipation and according to Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin in the 'Empire Writes Back' it was the product of various evolving stages of writing throughout the years.

The first texts produced in the colonies were usually by the representatives of the imperial power. These works provided the reader with descriptions from the landscape, culture, customs and language, but being in service of the imperial power they would never dare deviating from it or neglecting its interests in any form whatsoever.

The Second group of texts was those usually produced by educated upper class natives under direct observation of the imperial power (5). Being under close surveillance, these writers would never dare to fully explore their anti-imperial intentions (6). It was with the gained independence in the sixties that the writers finally felt free to explore the grounds previously forbidden. The changes started to emerge and writers chose to replace the language and text (6) with notions more native and compassionate to the centuries of hardship caused by the Western domination.

Among these writers was V.S. Naipaul, a native of Trinidad with Indian ancestry who moved to England upon earning a scholarship from Oxford University. He was among the very first to approach post-colonial literature in its new liberalized form and by depicting the various mishaps and hardships of those living under foreign rule, gained a reputation as a defender of the colonized. Though he does seem sympathetic of the colonized Orientals he depicts in various works; his reaction is rather controversial when it comes to those easterners depicted in his travel writings. The sympathetic writer of the oppressed looks at the converted countries as remainders of the medieval age who are giving ground to faith instead of logic by choosing Islamic rule and are therefore bound to be doomed.

After a closer look upon Orientalism theories and its pioneers, this study will closely examine Naipaul's double-edged glance towards the eastern world which had led many to call him an Orientalised Oriental. This shall be pursued in two of his works, 'The Mimic Men' and 'Among Believers'.

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Chapter I

Introduction and Review of the Related Literature

1.1. Introduction

The first half of the twentieth century witnessed the independence of many colonized states from dominating Imperial powers. Happy at the hardly gained independence and full of hopes for the future, the inhabitants of these states were suddenly struck by a new blow. A whole new set of problems emerged; the biggest of which being their lack in originality and identity. They had all been brought up as children of the empire, attending western schooling and acquiring western tastes. Once on their own, they realized that the only method of ruling they ever knew was the western one (king 71) and considering their long fight for freedom to practice their own desired rules, this turned out to be dreadfully disappointing. In *The Mimic Men*, Naipaul successfully depicts this disillusionment present in every moment of the post-colonial individual's life. Various ethnical groups are clashing and the absence of unity is highly sensible in purpose and in ideas (King 72). On the other hand In *Among the Believers*, to the utmost astonishment of his readers and critics, Mr. Naipaul picks on the same unity in purpose and ideas he had declared missing in the post-colonial world of the Caribbean. Here this unity is depicted as a threat upon the individuality of the people. Here, paradoxically, the people's dependence on the west and its rules are not what seem to be void, but the people's strong hold to tradition and

religion convey no meaning for Naipaul and are therefore condemned. It is this double-edged glance and paradoxical set of ideas in the two mentioned works that this study aims to discover. Ideas by various critics and references shall be examined throughout the study; yet a greater emphasis shall be placed on the reviews and articles by Edward Said.

1.2. Review of Literature

As other acclaimed writers, Naipaul too has his line of admirers and critiques. Those praising him make it clear that it's because of the alleged objectivity he employs in only reporting what he sees in his books. Among them Bruce King claims that Naipaul doesn't take sides, rather he observes what happens (195). King goes further on to claim that the reasons for disagreement between Naipaul and other intellectuals are all due to political divisions (194). According to King, Said and many others attack Naipaul because he doesn't see the world in a way they do (196). Said on the other hand in his *Reflections on Exile and other Essays* expresses his dissatisfaction on the ground that Naipaul's work is in a way considered as a reliable sourcebook for the countries he has traveled to and the readers are easily tempted to believe Naipaul's observations as mere facts.

Ziauddin Sardar, another critic of Naipaul's orientalised glance towards the Eastern believers goes as far as placing him under a heading

of 'Brown Sahib or Orientalized Oriental'(85). Sardar extracts various examples from 'Among the Believers' and takes on his argument by pointing out the faults and misleading information provided by Naipaul to prove him prejudiced and ignorant.

In the *Empire Writes Back*, Bill Ashcroft and his colleagues also notice the fact that Naipaul "is paradoxically drawn to the center even though he sees it constructing the "periphery" as an area of nothingness"(89).

Meanwhile scholars such as Lilian Feder have taken the time to review and scrutinize Naipaul's critics closely and have reached the conclusion that Naipaul's own statements about his childhood and the autobiographical nature in many of his works have played a misleading role and provided false evidence for those who insist he is trying to be British (King 199).

As a follower of Said, Rob Nixon, the controversial author of 'London Calling V.S. Naipaul-Postcolonial Mandarin' also express his dissatisfaction that narrow minded and dismissive writers like Naipaul, should be considered as authorities on the Third world (199).

Yet even defenders of Naipaul admit that specially his early travel books can appear to be written by someone who feels superior to the rest (King 202) and that he is in a sense, like the nineteenth century novelists,

interested in depicting a whole culture and society through the words of a mere sample often unfit to be exemplified.

Many believe that his books often raise a series of deep and vexing questions and leave the reader with a series of question marks and unanswered questions (Donadio 3). After detailed scrutiny of his works, Edward Said takes the liberty call Naipaul's writings intellectual Catastrophes and condemns him for his ever racist remarks.

Chapter II

Definition of Key Terms and Theories