
GLASSES THAT MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

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Abstract : Globally there are lots of literary awards which are considered as the most dignified awards and these awards are bestowed on those who come out with their extraordinary works or incredible quality in his performance, be it a literary work or a movie. These awards are Nobel, Booker, Pulitzer etc. and equivalent to these awards is Oscar award which is given in the field of Movies.

Indians were nominated and short listed several times since these awards have been started. Nearly in every two decades or three, Indians bagged the award, one or the other. But since few years, trends have been changed. The jury of these glorious awards has showered their blessings on the writer or the director who has criticized, satirized and mocked India in their works. There are examples of V.S. Naipaul, Aravind Adiga and Danny Boyle, who have won their Nobel, Booker and Oscar awards respectively.

Works of these writers are desperate attempt to identify with and understand India but they are not successful. Yet the picture of India painted by them is very thought provoking. It cannot be ignored- one has to read through the works. The reader sometimes sadly agrees with them; at times they rise outraged in defending India, and at times they silently accepts the bitter truth. Their works are like a torch that brings to light some dark corners, some frailties and faults of our dear India. Like a good workman the dirt has to be cleared. Introspection is needed here to understand and improve the Indian situation. Their works goads one towards self- analysis and self-improvement. Thus they serve a necessary purpose. By expressing the darkness, they attempt to make us grope for light.

Key words : An Area of Darkness, Quit India, identity crisis, Darkness at dawn, insult and humiliation, modern Mahabharat , The great Indian novel.

Introduction: V. S. Naipaul got his Nobel in 2001 for contribution in literature. It is evident that how he has condemned India in his *An Area of Darkness*, *India: A Wounded Civilization* and *India: A Million Mutinies Now*. Aravind was awarded with Booker in 2008 and in the same year Danny Boyle's *Slumdog* bagged eight Oscars for different categories whereas Shashi Tharoor won commonwealth writers award for his critically acclaimed book *The Great Indian Novel* for mocking world's biggest epic *The Mahabharat*.

Without much trouble, one can draw a few parallels with Danny Boyle's *Slumdog Millionaire* and Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger*, V. S. Naipaul's *An Area of Darkness* and Shashi Tharoor's *The Great Indian Novel*.

Main Content: Naipaul's *An Area of Darkness* is his reputed travelogue on India and it charts out the writer's first hand impression about India. India shocked Naipaul because it challenged his idea of himself. The contradiction between the imagined India of Trinidad and the actual country was too overwhelming to be confronted. The only immediate solution available was that of escape. That is why *An Area of Darkness* begins with 'A Resting Place for the Imagination' and ends in 'Flight'- a metaphoric fleeing away from his reality. Naipaul records the phenomenon of Indian defecation in great detail and this part of *An Area of Darkness* had earned him scathing criticism from India. Naipaul attempts an analysis and defecation is not presented in novels,

stories, films and in documentaries not because of the "prettifying intention" on the part of the people of India but because "Indians do not see these squatters." Naipaul calls it "a collective blindness" that arises out of "the Indian fear of pollution". Naipaul finds India to be a victim of its capacity to endure, of its acceptance of everything in order to maintain a sense of continuity which in reality, is just an illusion. On the other hand, he finds that India survived the colonial experience only on account of its ability to accept its predicament as an unexamined continuity. The contradiction is fatal. It froze India and made it static. None of the conquerors before the coming of the British had forced India into such a sterile state.

The India in its physical reality strictly creates an adverse effect on the man who has come to seek his identity with his roots, but nothing in India seems to him as a part of his personality.

Shashi Tharoor's *The Great Indian Novel* can be categorized in the same lineaments as *The White Tiger* by Aravind Adiga. From the beginning of the novel, Tharoor satirizes Indian politics as well as world's largest epic *The Mahabharat*.

The characters of the novel itself are ironically compared. The blind Dhritrashtra is parodied as Nehru with his stately man, Cambridge education and belief in Fabian Socialism. The portrait of SubhashChandra Bose as 'Pandu the Pale' is an outright caricature which in no way befits a

revolutionary leader of Bose's caliber. The person described as Vidur is no other than Sardar Patel, the Iron Man of India. Likewise, Priyadarshini Indira has been caricatured as Duryodhini who equals to hundred sons of Dhritrashtra. He compared the orgasm point of Pandu – Madri sexual act to the climax of Subhash Chandra Bose's life, which is difficult to say whether it is ridiculous or creditable. It is difficult to understand whether Tharoor is mocking the largest epic Mahabharat or humiliating the sacrifice of Subhash Chandra Bose.

Conclusion : Ultimately in Tharoor's modern Mahabharat "The Great Indian Novel" Duryodhani survived. The credit of having lots adjectives like world's biggest, largest, thickest, adorable epic 'Mahabharat' has now become 'Mock Epic' in the hands of Tharoor. It is difficult to understand what is the gauge of this international committee for different prizes. Whenever a writer mocks satirizes Indian traditional values or their golden past, they are bestowed with most coveted prize of the world.

Naipaul's work is like a torch that brings to light some dark corners, some frailties and faults of our dear India. Like a good workman the dirt has to be cleared. Introspection to understand and improve the Indian situation is required. An Area of Darkness goads one towards self-analysis and self-improvement. Naipaul thus serves a necessary purpose. By expressing the darkness, he attempts to make us grope for light.

The wounds need to be healed. India has to fight. Throwing caution to the winds the writers challenges modern India to face its ugliness. He ruthlessly underlines the inadequacies of the India before his eyes. His love of India makes him sound unkind but one can see that he winces as though the wounds inflicted on India have been inflicted on his soul.

What is required by the intelligentia, his readers is that they diagnose the wounds, study and analyze their depth and width and prescribe a remedy, a cure, and follow the treatment through till the end. The remedy needs to be pursued till all the wounds have been completely cured.

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