REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

RELATED STUDIES

In the last few decades the concept of ‘themes’ of V.S. Naipaul as well as of Salman Rushdie has emerged as a popular subject for researchers and readers. It evokes the interest of scholars and researchers to explore this branch of knowledge. A number of books, articles and papers have tried to locate the themes of both these writers. The works of many writers like Amitav Ghosh, Bharti Mukherji, Rohinton Mistry and Uma Parmeswarman have been explored and analyzed by many scholars and researchers. Among the proposed writers the works of V.S. Naipaul and Salman Rushdie have been given due attention. Some of Naipaul’s novels have been analyzed in different articles, papers, essays and journals such as ‘Exile’, Alienation and Cultural Tradition: V.S. Naipaul’s ‘Half a Life’ and V.S. Naipaul, a literary Response to the Nobel Laureate’s and The Literature of Indian Diaspora. Now, the following studies will be reviewed in relation to the present study. An evaluated full length study is available ‘The Quest for Identity’ in the works of V.S. Naipaul by Dr. Veen Gupta. She has discussed only the issue of identity. Another book is, ‘V.S. Naipaul: a writer of Indian Diaspora’ edited by Manjeet Inder Singh. It evaluates Naipaul’s novels from various points of views. One another full length study is, ‘The Novel of V. S. Naipaul: Quest for order and identity’ by Rama Devi. An essay – ‘Political Discourse- Theories of Colonialism and Post-Colonialism’ (1997) by Anthony R. Guneratne, Department of English Language and Literature, National University of Singapore evaluates Rushdie’s superimposition of his homeland and it also expresses the central points of Salman Rushdie’s novels from various points of views. A critical paper entitled Rushdie’s language: An Analysis of how Salman Rushdie Destabilizes the Western Bias in English by Agnes Scott – Langeland is full of witty remarks. Another full length critical work on ‘The Heart of Darkness’ by Joseph Conrad is having echoes of African setting is also available.

‘Imaginary Homelands’ (1997) by Salman Rushdie is full of similarly witty observations on other subjects, as well as of careful, insightful and provocative readings of several dozen writers. A study ‘Haroun and the Sea of Stories Study Guide’ by Rushdie contains a biography of Salman Rushdie, literature essays, quiz questions, major themes, characters, and a full summary and
The quest for identity is also focused in Jhumpa Lahiri’s ‘The Namesake’. Another journal ‘Comparative Literature Studies Volume 32’ also focuses the diasporic ambivalence. The journal ‘The international journal of diasporic Chinese study’ focuses on fostering the originality, multiplicity and novelty in the studies of Chinese Diaspora. A full length journal entitled ‘The journal of global Viet Diaspora edited by Long Lee is also available’. The essay ‘To be or Not To be Diasporic discusses notions of nationality, Diaspora and exile as applied to contemporary Indian writers’. The purpose of ‘M/C journal of Diaspora’ by Nicholas Myerberg is to recontextualize the concept of Diaspora. An article entitled ‘Theme of identity crisis in the novels of Salman Rushdie’ by Dr. Ram Sharma highlights the theme of search and identity. A critical work entitled ‘Step Across this line’ by Salman Rushdie give him one of his main themes and beliefs, the value of living home. A book entitled 'the novel of V.S. Naipaul: A study in theme and form’ by Shashi Kamra also highlights the major themes of Naipaul. A critical work ‘Critical perspectives on V.S. Naipaul’ by Robert D. Hammer critically examines the works of Naipaul. An another critical study entitled ‘Contrary Awareness: A critical study of the novels of V.S. Naipaul by K.I. Madhu Sudana critically examines Naipaul’s major themes. The other works which are useful for the present project are – ‘V.S. Naipaul: A critical introduction’ by Landeg White, ‘V.S. Naipaul: A study in expatriate sensibility’ by Sudha Rai and the Humour and Pity: Essays on V.S. Naipaul by Amtava Kumar etc. ‘Magic Seeds’: A passage to India, November 28, 2004, by James Atlas revisits the themes that he has been grappling with over the past five decades. ‘Naipaul’s Compass’, June 08, 2008 by David Rieff expresses how the author meditates on his literary life, in London and far beyond. A latest article is ‘Muslims in India are being misled: Salman Rushdie, March 18, 2012 IANS. Acclaimed writer Salman Rushdie, Author of controversial “The Satanic Verses” as also best sellers like ‘Midnight’s Children’ and “Shame”, denounced ‘Disgraceful vote banks politics” being practiced in the country and said 95 percent of Muslims in India are not interested in violence being done in their name. A full length study, ‘India: A mounded civilization’ by V.S. Naipaul is also available in which he criticizes Indian customs, insignificant religious practices, hypocritical notions and meaningless spiritual ideas. In the beginning Naipaul possessed a romantic view of India in his consciousness. The India of his childhood of Hindu culture of beautiful temples and colourful festivals helped him to build up a dream homeland. He was aware of his ancestral root. He had great notions about India. He once remarked, “the particular Diaspora where my works begin, if I can use this word
for the migration of my ancestors which took place just over a hundred years ago.” (The Times of India, June 21, 1994) Another study, ‘V.S. Naipaul: Critical Essays (Volume III)’ by Mohit K Ray presents Naipaul as one of the literature’s great traveler, and his absorption in to the experience of rootlessness, the alienating effects of colonial past on today’s post colonial people. Naipaul has unseverable emotional bond with India which remains for him an area of pain, ‘an ache for which one has a great tenderness’ yet from he wishes to separate himself. This brief survey of the critical material i.e. books as well as articles reveals that many critics have reflected their interest in the works of both the writers. The area that is chosen for research is still largely unexplored.

TENTATIVE CHAPTER SCHEME

The research has been divided into six chapters. Besides, introduction and conclusion, it contains four other major chapters to observe the comparative technique or to denote the comparison between the major themes of various novels written by two great novelists named V.S. Naipaul and Salman Rushdie.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The first chapter of the project shall attempt to provide an outline of different themes and theories of both the writers, their position as post-colonial contemporary writers, their age, birth, parentage, influences and the literary background that shaped them as the writers with a unique expatriate sensibility. An attempt will be made to present the factors responsible for the
inculcation of the typical diasporic ambivalence in them. In order to look at these issues the six novels namely *The Mystic Messeur*, *The Midnight’s Children*, *The Mimic Men*, *The Satanic Verses*, *A House for Mr. Biswas* and *The Moor’s Last Sigh* have been selected. The definitions and interpretations of the key terms such as post-colonial, colonial, ambivalence and diaspora will be discussed in detail in this chapter.

Chapter 2

**TREATMENT OF MAJOR THEMES**

The second chapter will present the study of early novels showing their major themes. The chapter will contain two novels. It will include Naipaul’s early novel *The Mystic Messeur* (1957) and Salman Rushdie’s *The Midnihgt’s Children* (1981). *The Mystic Messeur* is the testimony of Naipaul’s concern for the displaced people with a drifted consciousness. It is the heart-rending story of a man’s deliberate negation of his origins in his material pursuits. It recounts the reverse tale of the process not of repossession, but of defeat-of how Ganesh Ramsumair, a Brahmin of Indian origin, turns into G.Ramsay Muir-a mimic man. The narrator of *The Mystic Messeur* rightly affirms in his introductory remarks: “I myself believe that the history of Ganesh is, in a way, the history of our times………….” The narrator announces the mock-heroic dimension of the novel’s political fable through this statement.

On the other hand, Salman Rushdie had established himself as one of the most important writers in contemporary Britain. His second novel, *The Midnight’s Children* was awarded the prestigious Booker prize. Migration-loosing one country, language, culture and finding oneself forced to come to terms with another place, another way of speaking and thinking, another view of reality-is Salman Rushdie’s great theme. So, both these novels will be discussed to present a clear picture of their major themes. The acculturation of the East-Indians is a major theme of the early novels of V.S. Naipaul.

Chapter 3
DIASPORIC CONCERN AND EXPATRIATE SENSIBILITY

In the third chapter two major novels of their next phases are analyzed to underline the shift in novelists’ treatment of diasporic concern and a unique expatriate sensibility. The novels under study in this chapter are:

\textit{The Mimic Men (1967)} and \textit{The Satanic Verses (1988)}

In the novel \textit{The Mimic Men}, Ralph Singh, an exiled colonial minister undergoes the destiny of being a redundant and retired symbol. A creative sense of the self is created through the portrayal of representative mimic men. His experience of the unfulfilled love, social and cultural commitment and politics later culminate in his writing. The contradictory elements like past and present, chaos and security and self and otherness are juxtaposed to reach the desired goals.

Salman Rushdie’s novel \textit{‘The Satanic Verses’} provoked international controversy and he had established himself as one of the most important writers in contemporary Britain. He represented the generation that had to encounter the struggle that resulted from the withdrawal of imperial order and the resultant cultural confusion.

Chapter 4

PARADIGMATIC SHIFT IN THE DOMINANT THEMES

In the fourth chapter, the two major novels of their next phases are will be analyzed to trace the progressive shift in the dominant themes of V.S. Naipaul and Salman Rushdie. In this chapter the novels under discussion are:-
A House for Mr. Biswas (1961) and

The Moor’s Last Sigh (1995)

The novel ‘A House for Mr. Biswas’ is considered to be Naipaul’s masterpiece which describes the story of the search of identity of an Indian Brahmin residing in Trinidad. It is a beautiful and excellently written tragic-comedy. In it the protagonist gives an expression of rootlessness, alienation and having loss of identity to a great extent. This novel primarily deals with two themes, the one being the protagonist’s struggle to establish himself in a hostile environment through the ownership of a house and the other being the decline Hindu culture under the impact of westernization.

Chapter 5

HOMELAND AND THE MYTH OF RETURN

This chapter will primarily focus on the homeland diasporic aspects. For the diaspora, there is always a natural issue of returning to the original land/motherland and this natural desire may well become a perpetual and utopian longing, on the other hand, struck alliance with co-ethnic members in the host-land may lead these people to turn their back on the reality of the country in which now they are living. Contradictory feelings such as loss and gratitude, frustration and hope or joy and sorrow lie at the core of the diasporic position. A significant feature of all diasporic communities is their linkage with their motherland, imaginary or real. Their perceptions of India can also come from their reading of literature or art that is available to them or the views that passed on from their parents and the wider diasporic society. They may reconstruct their own position in the term of great ‘legend’ of Indian society, for example, that the exile or ‘banishment’ of Rama, in which they see their own fate visualized. In more modern times, their vision of India may be refreshed through return visits, travelers’ tales or representation in various forms of media, cinema, cable, television or cyberspace. Naipaul’s first visit to India was full of hopes and speculations as it was supposed to be, in a way, a return of the native, a return to his roots, and a return to homeland. This chapter will discuss all their experience about India.
Chapter 6

CONCLUSION

This chapter of the thesis will be devoted to summing up the various findings of the present project. It will sum up the various themes, like cultural clash, dislocation, alienation, return to homeland and interpretation arrived at in the different chapters of the thesis will thus sketch out what has been attempted to be achieved in the previous chapters and will sum up the conclusion arrived at through the research. It will bring into sharp focus the underlying difference in the themes of both the writers. It will also sum up the reason that way both the writers reject India as their homeland and what is the reason of their rejection. The remarkable traits of each phase of their literary career will be discussed and deliberated upon to highlight the distinction and paradigmatic shift discussed in the study.