

## **I. *The Suffrage of Elvira* and Post-Colonial Circumstance**

This research focuses on V.S. Naipaul's *The Suffrage of Elvira* (1958), which features a striking conjunction of scatology and political satire using the excremental language to present political and corporate misdeeds in terms of unhealthy digestions. It describes the scene of election in the context of one of the post-colonial Trinidad and Tobago's constituencies called Elvira. In particular, the novel explores the degrading socio-political situation in the previously colonized Caribbean country. Describing the dramatic event of second election held in Elvira, one of the constituencies of Trinidad and Tobago, it highlights corruption, racial discrimination, and hypocrisy as firmly rooted as practice in the society. With the critical insights of postcolonial eyes, this study aims at pointing out worsening economic, political and social progress as people living in postcolonial country, Trinidad and Tobago, could not comprehend and manage the gift of independence. To substantiate the issues, textual analysis, critical views and opinions from the critics concerned on post colonialism like Joshua D. Esty, Gareth Griffiths, Helen Tiffin, Warwick Anderson and the like will be brought in this study very closely as the theoretical ideas.

In the novel *The Suffrage of Elvira*, the novelist makes an attempt to capture a particular moment after the independence of Trinidad and Tobago from the British colony. The elites, the merchants, the workers create unnecessary scandals, engage in verbal disputes, involve in fightings, buying and selling vote for money, spending time in backbiting, doubting every move of people, maintaining hypocrisy and strict racial distance. It makes the job of the leaders like Mr. Surujpat Harbans, Preacher (Nathaniel Anaccitus Thomas) and Teacher Francis and others difficult. The family is disintegrated during the election, people are divided in different poles, they quarrel without specific cause, good looking people turn out to be deceptive, treacherous,

greedy and jealous to each other. In this regard, it is noteworthy to ask why Elvira and people of Elvira turn out to be corrupt and obsessed with the politics.

Indifference of the central government, rampant corruption, inability to comprehend the value of independence, intercultural disharmony, weak economic policy, loose implication of law and order constitutes the excremental vision in the context of post colonial country Trinidad and Tobago.

Basically, the study attempts to explore the failed and flawed socio-political realities in the context of postcolonial Elvira. The postcolonial Elvira has been examined as corrupt, the excrement of the European colonizer's values. Elvira is seen as the place of cultural hybridity and racial hatred in the backdrop of local election. There is the doubt over democracy itself. This project aims to show how V.S. Naipaul evaluates people and their ideological standpoint by observing their performance during election. By sketching the characteristics of the characters like Mr. Surujpat Harbans, Preacher, Baksh, Foam, Lorkhoor and Preacher and so on, this project scrutinizes their immaturity, lack anticipatory capacity, reckless thinking and behavior which transform the multicultural society of Elvira like a hell.

Though the text leaves a spacious room for the postcolonial interpretation, it does not offer comprehensive postcolonial theoretical ground. Therefore, this study merely focuses on V.S. Naipaul's vision of excremental realities depicted in the multiracial and multicultural society of Trinidad and Tobago. It focuses on the corrupt social, political, and cultural practices that are making Elvira poor, underdeveloped, and the resident backwarded.

This research attempts to encompass the issues like mimicry, disowning hybridity to discuss the drawbacks of the postcolonial situation. This research will be a significant contribution in the area of postcolonial study since it is much concerned

with the cause and effect of failure of restructuring socio-political significance in the postcolonial situation of Elviran people. The exploration of underpinning factors affecting the development of strengthening social, political and economic progress, this study contributes to make comprehend their weakness, drawback and backwardness. Moreover, this research also marks on the expression of disillusionment about the lost promises of Elvira's independence.

Naipaul believes in the literary power of realism, although he has downplayed his autobiographical intent, writing, “I try to make my fiction as close to life as possible, leading the reader through deception into my narrative. It’s an illusion” (*The Enigma of Arrival* 12). He embeds repeating themes of dislocation, fear and panic into his work and is known for his laser-sharp depictions of the sights, sounds, people and landscapes that populate rapidly decolonizing countries—what he has called “half-made societies” (14). During a visit to Trinidad in 2007 after a 10-year, self-imposed exile in England, he defined them as “small places with hardly any history to talk of ...which were then left in the world. They are small, their people are not fully educated” (13).

Influenced by such European authors as Joseph Conrad, Charles Dickens, Leo Tolstoy and Marcel Proust, Naipaul has said that great novelists should write about great societies. However, being from Trinidad, he felt unable to fully join them. “I couldn’t share the assumptions of the writers; I didn’t see my world reflected in theirs,” he has written. “My colonial world was more mixed and secondhand, and more restricted” (18). In *A House for Mr. Biswas*, Naipaul creates that world using a sympathetic, often humorous perspective, but quaintly titled chapters like “Pastoral” and “Green Vale” include some of Naipaul’s darkest prose. Critics hailed the book for its complexity and humanity, while others saw it and Naipaul’s other novels as

apologizing for a Western imperialism that, as he portrayed it, dragged a screaming and kicking Trinidad into the modern era.

Naipaul has never shied away from controversy and opinion. He has retained a deep aversion to being labeled Trinidadian, let alone a “Commonwealth” writer—his term for the English literature produced by writers based in former colonies of the British Empire. Fellow Nobel laureate Derek Walcott (a Caribbean poet previously featured in *Babel*) acknowledges Naipaul’s talent but also has denounced his portrayals of the West Indies, and especially his denigration of ethnic groups like blacks and Muslims. Those views, coupled with a reputation for outspokenness and his multiple high-profile awards, have helped give Naipaul’s public persona a colorful mystique.

While Naipaul may be regarded as a subversive master of narrative with legendary confidence in his talents, he has acknowledged the limitations of the fictional world, and his own inability to prevent his stories from becoming part of someone else’s history. One can never escape from the chaos of artistic creation, and Naipaul is acutely aware of that reality. “A writer is in the end not his books, but his myth,” he once said. “And that myth is in the keeping of others” (16).

Naipaul, in his essay “Prologue to an Autobiography” from *Finding the Center*, has written:

Half a writer’s work . . . is the discovery of his subject. And a problem for me was that my life had been varied, full of upheavals and moves: from grandmother’s Hindu house in the country, still close to the rituals and social ways of village India; to Port of Spain, the negro, and G.I. life of its streets, the other, ordered life of my colonial English school, which is called Queen’s Royal College, and then Oxford,

London and the freelancers' room at the BBC. Trying to make a beginning as a writer, I didn't know where to focus. (16)

After two failed attempts at novels and three months before his twenty-third birthday, Naipaul found his start in the childhood memory of a neighbor in Port of Spain. The memory provided the first sentence for *Miguel Street*, which he wrote over six weeks in 1955 in the BBC freelancers' room at the Langham Hotel, where he was working part-time editing and presenting a literary program for the Caribbean Service. The book would not be published until 1959, after the success of *The Mystic Masseur* (1957), which received the John Llewellyn Rhys Memorial Prize and *The Suffrage of Elvira* (1958), which was awarded the Somerset Maugham Award. *A House of Mr. Biswas* was published in 1961, and in 1971 Naipaul received the Booker Prize for *In a Free State*. Four novels have appeared since then: *Guerrillas* (1975), *A Bend in the River* (1979), *The Enigma of Arrival* (1987) and *A Way in the World*. Naipaul received a knighthood in 1990 for his service to literature.

In the early 1960s, Naipaul began writing about his travels. He has written four books on India: *The Middle Passage* (1962), *An Area of Darkness* (1964), *India: A Wounded Civilization* (1977), and *India: A Million Mutinies Now* (1990). *The Return of Eva Peron* and *The Killings in Trinidad* (published in the same volume in 1980) recorded his experiences in Argentina, Trinidad, and the Congo. Indonesia, Iran, Pakistan, and Malaysia are the subject of *Among the Believers: An Islamic Journey* (1981). He returned to those countries in 1995; *Beyond Belief*, an account of those travels, was published this year.

Naipaul's issues and ideas are always highly subtle and complex—which he keeps reminding us, lets us see things only in monochrome—but the language steers clear of obscurity. Indeed Naipaul can be a difficult companion. The humbleness of

his beginnings, the long struggles, the sheer scale of his artistic beginnings clearly have bred in him deep neuroses—at sixty-six, the neurotic circuitry is still buzzing.

Though, Naipaul is highly acclaimed and humanistic fiction writer, he is regarded as biased and orientalist by Islamic scholars like Amin Malik with his portrayal of non-Arab Muslims as “converts”. He writes:

In his second travel book on Islam, *Beyond Belief: Islamic Excursions among the Converted Peoples*, Naipaul revisits the same four Muslim countries that he has covered in *Among the Believers*. . . . With no rational foundation or historical analysis, he makes a hasty generalization that all current non-Arab Muslims—representing about one billion out of a total of 1.2 billion Muslims in the world—should be identified with the suspect term “converted.” All his subsequent travelogue observations are tiresomely tailored toward this initial and unexamined hypothesis: the great masses of non-Arab Muslim peoples are still considered, in Naipaul’s eyes, “converts.” (262)

So, Naipaul is not free from the controversy and bias but his ability to create lively fictional works is unrivaled among the contemporary fiction writers.

The novel *The Suffrage of Elvira* has been viewed from different perspectives after its publication in 1958. Different critics have read the text differently. Selwyn Reginal Cudjoe in his essay "V.S. Naipaul: A Materialist Reading" reads the text as the blending of cultural issues. He comments as, “It is also the post of departure in Naipaul's second book, *The Suffrage of Elvira* in which the examination of the political is more important than that of the social or religious and in which mysticism of feudalism gives way to the pragmatism of capitalism” (30-34). Cudjoe finds the

text having political importance than other issues. Besides, Cudjoe views growing capitalistic influence in the story of *The Suffrage of Elvira*.

Another critic Paul Theroux takes the novel as a comic story composed very genuinely. Commenting Naipaul's style in the novel Paul Theroux states, "His ingenuousness, his avoidance of sarcasm, and his humour- a delight that no essay can do justice to – make him very special among writers there is no one like him writing today . . ." (20-23). Appreciating V.S. Naipaul's craft of writing much comic text, Theroux emphasizes Naipaul's art of writing.

Penelope Mortimer in *Sunday Times* shows the election of Elvira as a risky game. He also indicates immaturity of leadership described in the text. Penelope remarks:

Yet for the candidate, Surujpat Harbans, things could hardly get worse. An arranged marriage had squared Chhtranjan, who had promise to deliver the Hindu vote. . . But what with petrol vouchers for the taxi-drivers, vouchers for the run shop, a loudspeaker can for the unofficial Muslim leader, expenses were rocketing and victory still wasn't certain . . . (25-30)

Mortimer's another expression appreciates Naipaul's art of writing in a balanced way. Mortimer remarks that "V.S. Naipaul's miniature of the West Indian political scene manages to be both delicate and robust, extremely funny and accurately cruel . . . A perfect writer, contained and balanced book" (40-43). In these quoted lines, Naipaul has been admired by Mortimer for the skillful depiction of the West Indian political scene with the mixture of delicacy, humour and accuracy.

Salman Rushdie in an essay "A sad pastoral" finds the novel *The Suffrage of Elvira* as "cutting and unsentimental" (10). Rushdie mentions that "A few years ago,

V.S. Naipaul said that he still thought himself as a comic writer and his highest ambition was to write a comedy . . ." (2). Salman Rushdie further asserts:

Naipaul's three early novels *The Mystic Masseur*, *The Suffrage of Elvira*, and *Miguel Street* belong to his apprentice years. The novels are comedies of Trinidadian manners, and Naipaul uses satire and irony in portraying the Trinidad of "crazy people." Ganesh Ramsumair "the great belcher" whose rise "from laughing-stock to success" with his political poster "A vote for Ganesh is a vote for God," in *The Mystic Masseur*, and Surujpat "Pat" Harbans, in *The Suffrage of Elvira*, with its political theme and setting the Elvira "the smallest, most isolated and most neglected of the nine countries of Trinidad," and the colorful cannery-row-type Caribbean characters in *Miguel Street* all belong to the rootless, homeless, nomadic migrant world of Naipaul. In satirizing them, Naipaul reveals a Dickensian influence on his work.

(1-11)

In Rushdie's evaluation, V.S. Naipaul uncompromisingly portrays the "ordeals" and absurd ties of living in new third world countries.

In this way, V.S. Naipaul's *The Suffrage of Elvira* has been approached from different perspectives. However, it is the most viable to make a study on excremental postcolonialism that explores the failure and flaw of the postcolonial people of the countries like Trinidad and Tobago. Thus, this researcher proposes to make a study of excremental post-colonial vision in the context of Elvira, an ignored and marginalized constituency of Trinidad and Tobago. The main objective of the study will be to show the political chaos, moral degradation, cultural fragmentation, rampant corruption inflicted in postcolonial society of Elvira.



This research will be carried out by bringing useful materials like reviews, criticism, thoughts and opinions of the renowned scholars related to the issues of this project on a close textual analysis. The narrative technique of the characters and the language of *The Suffrage of Elvira* reflect the excremental vision of postcolonial Trinidad and Tobago. In particular, while analyzing and interpreting textual evidences, the most appropriate theoretical concepts will be brought to substantiate the research. While conducting this research, library consultations, internet search and secondary materials collection and guidance from university scholars will be used with credit. Reading the theoretical references, the critics like Joshua D. Esty, Gareth Griffiths, Helen Tiffin, Warwick Anderson and the like. Moreover, this project includes other scholar related to the idea of postcolonial excrementalism concerning the post-colonial Caribbean county Elvira.

The symbolic mobility of excremental images in postcolonial cultures can be also be seen in the work of Achille Mbembe. The vulgar aesthetics that Mbembe ascribes to sub-Saharan African politics derives, he suggests, from "a tendency to excess and disproportion" (2). Where Bakhtinian theory has proposed that obscene language bubbles up from below to challenge official or state discourse, Mbembe suggests that vulgar images, including the excremental, are often deployed by the state as part of its official display of power. This analysis of vulgar images that both represent and resist power suggests the radical ambiguity of scatology. And if excremental imagery serves different rhetorical masters in Mbembe's political discourse, it is perhaps an even more complex and useful resource in the literary languages of postcolonialism.

As both object and symbol, shit has long been read according to psychoanalytic and mythic models. Such readings traditionally focus on experiences

of childhood sexuality and sacred/profane dualisms. Meanwhile, literary readings of postcolonial texts tend to interpret most figures including shit in terms of specific historical and political events. We should synthesize these approaches in order to apprehend the complex symbolic uses of excrement in both private, psychological and public, political registers-and, more importantly, to understand how these two registers intersect in postcolonial writing. In *The Suffrage of Elvira*, Naipaul depicts the excrement of colonialism, cultural disorder, mimicry hybridity, corruption, doubt over the concept of democracy in sarcastic way and thus, professes the excremental vision shared by a large number of post-colonial writers during the period of decolonization in 1950s and '60s.

## II. Excremental Postcolonial Vision in *The Suffrage of Elvira*

This research attempts to analyze V. S. Naipaul's novel *The Suffrage of Elvira* (1958) with an aim of inquire into his portrayal of the bleak, sarcastic, excremental postcolonial vision. The novel describes the humorous circumstances surrounding a local election in one of the districts of Trinidad called Elvira. It is a satire upon the democratic process and the consequences of political change. It also explores the multiculturalism of Trinidad, showing the effects of the election on various ethnic groups, including Muslims, Hindus, and Europeans. To examine the sarcastic and ironical situation during the election and its satire, this research adopts the excremental postcolonial perspective.

Post-colonial excrementalism is a theory which tries to assess the aftermaths of de-colonization. In the novel that is going to be analyzed here, the postcolonial Elvira, a small Caribbean district has been depicted. Elvira is recently decolonized but the people are unable to see any future for their small island after decolonization. It is very sarcastic to see that democracy itself is very doubtful category for the Elviran people. They don't know how to deal with the postcolonial condition where the democracy is taking root. The cultures are in disarray and they are bitterly commented time and again as the cultural admixture in Elvira has created the loss of the cultural uniqueness. Thus, the cultures have become hollow. They carry the identity of the people no more. Characters belonging to different cultures have become familiar with the weaknesses other characters and cultures and the election brings the weaknesses on the surface. The Hindu character Chittaranjan and the Muslim Baksh exchange the bitter racial hatred before the election as we see in the conversation:

‘What is Muslim?’ Chittaranjan asked, his smile frozen, his eyes unshining, his voice low and cutting. ‘Muslim is everything and Muslim is nothing.’ He paused. ‘Even Negro is Muslim.’

[. . .] He put on his hat again, lifted his hat again, lifted his left arm and pinched the loose skin below the wrist. ‘This is pure blood. Every Hindu blood is blood is pure blood nothing mix up with it. Is pure Aryan blood.’

Baksh snorted. ‘All-you is just a pack of kaffir, if you ask me.’

[. . .]

They traded racial insults in rising voice. (114)

The cultural, racial mistrust and the hatred among the Elviran people in the post-colonial condition is one of the remarkable facets that helps to see the cultural chaos and justify the excremental vision in the novel.

Excrement etymologically means feces, a thrown away thing. However, wherever the feces are thrown, the realm becomes polluted as well as odorous. This theory has been amply used to analyze a text while trying to find out how the use of excrement as a cultural trope in a post-humanist era. It places feces as a sign of the both material and symbolic fluid boundaries between human and nonhuman animals, colonizers and natives, men and women, and science and nature. It is believed that there is the relationship between postcolonial and posthumanist theory. In Elvira, the social, cultural and political values are the feces, the feces of the colonizer’s values. The people are facing the social condition in which they feel the indifference and aversion from the colonizer. To write with the awareness of being waste or the excrement of the colonizer ironizing the humans’ chaotic decadence in the post-

colonial situation is called excremental vision. It is shared by many African writers describing the post-colonial African situation.

The term 'Excrementalism' has been used by François Rabelais, Jonathan Swift, James Joyce, and Samuel Beckett, along with V.S. Naipaul. They have furthermore excelled at ridding culture of the odor of feces by writing it into their narratives, by inscribing excrement as word.

The novel, *The Suffrage of Elvira*, is set in Trinidad. It is a description of the comical circumstances surrounding a local election. The ironic portrayal of the local election highlight the postcolonial excrement that has shrouded the Elviran values. There are various characters from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds depicted in the story. The story in short is about Mr. Surajpat Harbans, who is contesting in an election from Elvira, one of the constituencies of Trinidad and Tobago. He comes to the place to win the support of Chittaranjan and Baksh, who are leaders of the Hindu and Muslim groups there, respectively.

The character sketch of the people at Elvira, given by Naipaul is amazing. The other characters in the story are Dhaniram, Mahadeo, Foam, Lorkhoor, Preacher, Ramlogan, Mr. Cuffy, Sebastian, and other minor characters. We can compare the story with the usual tactics and situations prevailing during elections in the rural areas everywhere. But one point to be noted is that each character here is good at heart, though the appearance is deceptive. Going forward we see the election propagandas and tactics, the supporters of the opposing group, the humane gestures and incidents, and finally how Harbans wins over the elections.

The novel is a satiric examination of the consequences of political change in postcolonial condition. Naipaul has never bought that popular romantic vision that has a brave new world rising from the dust of the empire, and the humorous and ironical

proceedings in Elvira betray a deep skepticism of progress. For example, when the candidate for election Harbans hands out bribes, payoffs and presents the way to the Elviran people, he complains that elections are awfully expensive to buy, Dhaniram turns to him to convince him to spend money for the people as it is the true meaning of democracy where the leaders spend money for the people. Hindu pundit Dhaniram says, ‘You must try and feel that you giving to the people. After all, is the meaning of this democracy" (50). Such bribery and trying to buy the votes is the corruption and the mimicry of the influence of the materialistic values of the colonizers which is sarcastically referred as democracy. Tired of spending for the uncertain victory in the election makes Herbans gets frustrated of Elvira as he shouts returning home from Envira, “Elvira! You is a bitch! A bitch! A bitch!” (147).

This instance of swearing and cursing Elvira being tired of its corruption and sarcastic notion of democracy the people are backing there prove the unsettled relation between the people and their country. Unsettled relation between the people of Elvira and newly freed Elvira itself is seen throughout. In the post-colonial state, human excrement becomes a sign of friction in the unsettled relationship between locals and their new free nations. One may expand this discussion by showing how in a third period nonhuman primate feces are implicated in a politics and poetics of excrement, ones that make of waste a privileged sign of fracture in the distinction between human and nonhuman animal. It is useful to read the ascription of excrement to the nonhuman primate in the context of animal theory. This theory posits the inclusion of humans and higher apes in the same broad grouping. Although nonhuman, primate excrement was certainly of scientific interest in the colonial era, recent theories of species provide it with new symbolic importance.

Carnophallogocentrism is the word used by Derrida to describe the legacies of Western humanism and metaphysics, which promotes the eating of nonhuman animals, the phallus as transcendental signifier, and the spoken word as bearer of truth.

Derrida's philosophical concept is very significant because we can understand excremental exchange and consumption as steps in the development of a constitutive relationship between humans, with women as a particular example, and nonhuman animals, with mountain gorillas as a particular example, in a postcolonial and posthumanist moment. Similarly, Warwick Anderson describes how American medical workers in the Philippines in the early twentieth century repeatedly raised the issue of the "promiscuous defecation" (642) of the locals. Outbreaks in army barracks of malaria, cholera, typhoid, and dysentery led public health officials to characterize the closed space of colonizers as consumption and writing, as opposed to the open and dangerous space of the native. He states, "Americans on these occasions are reduced to consumers of food and writers of reports (and all of courses transcend their excreta), while Filipinos, even when 'proven' otherwise, are open, threatening, excreting animals" (651). The Elviran people in the novel are similar to the excreting animals as Anderson describes. The colonial officers who are regarded as showing difference in colonial working style and ethics, are sent to the undeveloped colony like Elvira to face the colonized excreting animals. Teacher Francis has been sent to Elvira to face the excrement generated by colonialism as a punishment. He feels that the Elviran people are unable to understand him properly. He is left by his students like Lorkhoor and Nelly. He fails to convince the people that the democracy in Elvira is going to be a British, colonizer's model of democracy.

Chittaranjan and Ramlogan agree that democracy is degenerate thing, bringing hatred among the people otherwise “Everybody equal”, as Ramlogan’s says. As we see the meeting between Ramlogan and Chittaranjan in the text:

They talked of the degeneracy of the modern age; they agreed that democracy was the stupid thing; then they came to election and to Baksh.

Chittaranjan . . . said, ‘This democracy just make for people like Baksh. Fact, I say it just make for Negro and Muslim. They is two people who never like to make anything for theyself, and the moment you make something they start begging. And if you ain’t give them, they vex.’ (141)

Thus, the democracy and politics for election has been ironized in the novel along with the depiction of racial difference and tensions in postcolonial Trinidadian district Elvira. People don’t understand the value of democracy and election, and just want to take some benefit from the candidate.

Cultural hybridity is the major trait of Elvira and no culture is free from the corrupted colonial influence in their values. To draw the better cultural understanding of Elviran culture the writer gives the cultural account of Elvira as:

Things are crazily mixed up in Elvira. Everybody, Hindus, Muslims and Christians, owned a Bible; the Hindus and Muslims looking on it, if anything, with greater awe. Hindus and Muslims celebrated Christmas and Easter. The spaniards and some of the Negroes celebrated the Hindu festival of lights. Someone had told them that Lakshmi, the goddess of prosperity, was being honoured; they placed small earthen lamps on their money-boxes and waited, as they said



money to breed. Everybody celebrated the Muslim festival of Hosein.

(66)

Two obvious things are depicted here. First, the influence of the colonial culture has made the people ridiculously materialistic as they worship the gods with the hope of money to breed, money is everything for them. Second, the cultures are so hybridized and entangled to each other that it is hard to see their actual traits. They have become elusive.

People's cultural hybridity is seen as the faith of the people in 'obeah' changes the mindset of the people. The very weak and small stray dog ironically named as 'Tiger' brought to home by Baksh's son Herbert is regarded as the curse or obeah. Even after spending large amount of money for votes, Harbans' efforts almost come to naught when the stray dog triggers the voters' superstitions, nearly setting off a panic. The election is ironized, mocked time and again. As Mrs. Baksh remarks: ". . . everybody just washing their foot and jumping in" this "election nonsense" (146) and she continually charges the sweetness of election turning sour as she says to her husband, " This election sweetness sweetens you up Baksh . But see how this sweetness going to turn sour . . ." (82).

Teacher Francis also regards the election as "suffrage nonsense" (85). Thus doubt over the election and democracy process is all over in Elvira. The people feel election is contested only for the personal benefit of the candidate and to vote him is to enable him to draw salary and perks for five year tenure in parliament in Port of Spain.

Whites, the former colonizers are encouraging the Spaniards not to vote misinterpreting the Holy Bible. Even after decolonization, they want to ensure their strong role in most of the business of the district. For it, they haunt the socio-political

life of Elviran people in the name of the religion. Two white women Miss Tall and Miss Short are actively working to convince the people that the politics “is not a divine institution” (69) with the dread they create showing the false prophecies and propaganda hailing the Holy Bible. Thus, the neocolonial manipulation of the minds of gentle, poor and honest people to continue the colonial domination is seen at work in the novel. Miss Tall says about their propaganda, “The magazine my friend is holding shows how the prophecies in the Bible are coming true. Even the troubles of Elvira are in the Bible. Election and all” (69). The intention of British colonizers to block the way of the germinating democracy and maintain dominance and hegemony has been clearly ironized throughout the novel.

For the colonizers, the image of the natives is unholy, unclean and excremental. Warwick Anderson describes the methods by which U.S. colonizers produced an image of Filipino natives as unclean and excremental. Anderson's history of this rhetorical and epidemiological humiliation provides a good point of departure for a study of excremental images in the postcolonial era, when shit begins to operate counter-discursively. In postcolonial writing, shit can bring forth a history of humiliation by showing the failures of development and the inconsistency of colonial discourse and by disrupting linkage of excrement with colonized or non-Western populations. This research thus addresses shit not so much as a material object but as a powerful discursive resource within a new symbolic order. In the scientific laboratory, exemplary of the colonial project, native shit was daubed onto microscope slides and written up in reports. This abstraction of feces was basic to the creation of a border between colonizers and locals. In a bid to demarcate the boundary, he furthers, “the decent, delibidinized, closed space of the modern laboratory had conferred on shit the ‘epistemological clarity’ of just one more specimen among many” (669). By

fouling, observing, and writing up feces as well as by making feces an object of language and of science, Western colonizers developed a discourse of excremental colonialism, which deemed the colonial project as the medical management of the poor and abject. In the novel, the colonizers are unwilling to let the democracy to take root in Elvira rather they want to justify and continue their dominance with propaganda which is the discourse of excremental colonialism.

Naipaul's *The Suffrage of Elvira* is the story about the newly imparted suffrage to the citizens of Elvira. When the colonists left the place, there seemed to occur a tumult, which was fundamental to the election. There are few prominent female characters in the novel who have been touched by excrementalism. Nelly Chitteranjan, for example, is young and dreams of studying in London, while her father wants to marry her off to "a fat yellow boy with big yellow teeth" (84). Nelly is not a tragic heroine, and is resigned to her fate until she is seen in public with a young man, Foam, the elder son of Baksh. This makes her ineligible to marry the rich man's son and she is able to go to the Poly. Ironically, her escape is the result of society's oppressive morality. In the Trinidad world of the novel, the women are often more sensible and down-to-earth than the men. Sometimes they are dangerous seducers, but just as often they are the ones who keep everything going. Sometimes they are victims, but sometimes they sensibly take themselves off when their men grow violent and unreasonable. The principal interest of the novel is in the actions of men, but women are far from unimportant, and they are presented with at least as much sympathy and admiration as the male characters.

The society of women is full of cruelty. They have their troubles, including violence and long periods of separation in its own unconventional way. There is a cinema hall in Elvira, in the place called Caroni. The cinema is the trace of colonial

regime and the remainder after the colonists left, is used by Naipaul in the novel to provide a distorted mirror through which characters try to shape their own identity and, as a result, are duly mocked by the author for their naivety and ignorance.

Lorkhoor in *The Suffrage of Elvira* explicitly alters his appearance as a result of seeing a particular film starring the Mexican actor Pedro Armendariz. Like the movie, *The Suffrage of Elvira*, plays out a similar scenario of personal inadequacy in a tragicomic tone. Chittaranjan fails in his role as both a father and husband and, once again, as a would-be politician who loses much of his money, his daughter and ultimately his political ambitions in a ceaseless round of personal incompetence. The failure in a great deal suggests what we can say the failure of the post-independence scenario. The twin themes of failure as a man and failure as a politician thus touches the excrementalism. In this work, the overall tone is significantly more pessimistic with Harban eventually losing his marriage, his money, his status and his homeland in a narrative of personal helplessness, devoid of hope. Harban's failure as a politician forces him into an ignominious role making him very vulnerable.

*The Suffrage of Elvira* precedes Naipaul's another Novel *The House of Mr. Biswas*, is really lovely piece of work which could be interpreted as a celebration of West Indian life, and as an unheard of elegance and civility from the back of beyond. Except for "dialogue" which is reflective of excremental language, another important aspect is that Bakhtinian concept of "carnival" is present in this book. Of all his works, the 1950s novels are perhaps most touched by the "wit and style" of a unique multicultural society whose predominant symbol is carnival, with its celebration of difference yet community. These novels are touched by the theatricality of the Trinidad carnival, with gaiety, outlandish creativity, masks, inversions. At the same time, though, they show the author's fear of a loss of identity through a carnivalistic

immersion in the folk; they show an exile's distancing of himself from a society that he has left and must now justify having left. Through the masks of double-voicedness and double perspectives, he expresses both his affection for people and things of the colony and his sense of the colony's limitations and imprisonment.

In *The Suffrage of Elvira*, a narratological study starting from the concept of role-playing draws a typology of the characters present in Naipaul's work. The most compelling category of role-playing in Naipaul's canon is the way he has represented the post-colonial chaos in his book *The Suffrage of Elvira*. Chapter two begins by averting the reader about the importance of Chittaranjan, the goldsmith, thus, creating a certain horizon of expectation. This impression is strengthened by the Balzacian presentation of his home, known as the Big House. Naipaul has described the house the following way:

Solid, two-storeyed, concrete, bright with paint and always well looked after construction. That is why, when the Hindu leader comes onto stage, the reader cannot feel but disappointment The commotion brought Chittaranjan to his veranda upstairs. The half-wall hid most of his body, but what Foam and Harban could see looked absurdly small and shrivelled. Spectacles with thin silver rims and thin silver arms emphasized Chittaranjan's diminutiveness. (66)

As already seen, smallness has negative connotations in Naipaul's imagery, being "absurd". It becomes apparent in the sequel to the quote above that it is also closely associated with the idea of infantilism: "The awning of Chittaranjan's shop had been pulled back; the ground had already been combed that afternoon by children; and only two toy anvils set in the concrete terrace remained of the day's workshop" (67). On the other hand, his physical handicap may be compensated by his creative potential.

In that, the Hindu goldsmith resembles the divine artisan Hephaestus, who in spite of his lameness brings forth amazing things.

One of the most shocking images illustrating the mistreatment of the bastard native is to be found in the novel *The Suffrage of Elvira*. The person after whom the district is named was the wife of a planter. According to the legend, she had a Creole illegitimate child that she kills; this is a story which seems to haunt forever Trinidad and its inhabitants. The writer writes:

Herbert knew all about the ghost of the cocoa-house, but ghosts, like the dark, didn't frighten him. The ghost of the cocoa-house was a baby, a baby Miss Elvira herself had had by a negro servant at the time the cocoa-house was being built. The story was that she had buried it in the foundations, under the concrete steps at the back. Many people, many Spaniards in particular, had often heard the baby crying; some even seen it crawling about in the road near the cocoa-house. (116)

Symbolically, the foundation of the house mirrors the foundation of the colony; it is clear that such myths cannot give birth to a proud nation, certain of its origins and destiny. In *The Suffrage of Elvira*, we come across the puppy ironically called Tiger; this appellation, too, belongs to a colonial geography, suggesting other British possessions than Trinidad. Interestingly enough, all three texts deconstruct the picture of a happy childhood as they let the spectre of death, embodied by the killed animals, enter the scene. However, there is seemingly no instance that would label these scenes of play as shameful or trivial. On the contrary, the following games suffer the judgment of the 'adult' eye while creating representations of Trinidad that seem to originate in the colonial discourse of the "child-races", Naipaul undermines the Eurocentric perspective by contradicting the propagandistic metaphor of Empire as a

happy family with the metropolis as a guiding parent and the colonies as grateful children; he replaces it with the metaphor of the neglected colony, of the “little bastard world” in *The Suffrage of Elvira*, in which the region takes its name from a planter’s wife, who killed her illegitimate Creole baby. It is true that the new image is little flattering, as it still infantilizes Trinidad. Foam and Lorkhoor in *The Suffrage of Elvira* use and abuse the knowledge provided by colonial education in order to gain respectability.

Childhood is an important theme in Naipaul’s Trinidadian fictional works also because they are largely autobiographic. As already stated, the conventions of the autobiography of childhood and adolescence requires a certain distance on the part of the adult narrator, who judges the childhood experience as trivial. In fact, critics have argued that Naipaul’s benevolent attitude towards his native island is linked to the child’s perspective, whereas his negative representations come from an anglicized adult point of view. Naipaul himself is affected by the values of colonizers to some extent. He details of the book gives rise to the narratological tension resulting from the double perspective of the child “who sees” and of the adult “who speaks”. It also gives rise to the description of a fluid space changing in size, which demonstrates once again that the image of Trinidad as a miniature world, discussed at the beginning of this part, is not objective since even perception is culturally/discursively constructed. Trinidad has become the excrement of the colonizers as it is engulfed with the stereotype the colonizers make. Colonial attitude that the natives should obey the Holy Bible and discard the election so that no democracy would prevail in Elvira is clearly seen when the white witness Miss tall says the election is “not a divine institution”(69). The natives like Mr. Cuffy are aware about the fact that the

colonizers are playing dirty game behind the veil of the election. It is highlighted in the conversation:

‘This election business,’ Mr. Cuffy said. ‘You in this election business, like everybody else?’

Miss Short curled her thin lips. ‘We have nothing to do with politics.’

‘It’s not a divine institution,’ said Miss Tall, ‘but a man-made evil.

After all, who started the politics you have in Elvira today?’

‘British Government,’ Mr. Cuffy said. He looked puzzled. (69)

The colonial politics in the veil of the dislike of Elvira is visible. Colonial stereotype of Elvira politics as unholy activity is very ironical representation of excremental situation.

The “preacher” motif is very important in the novel *The Suffrage of Elvira*, in which the name of the leader of the black community is precisely Preacher; he is a “visionary,” and a biblical character as indicated in the following description. Naipaul writes about him, “A tall negro with high frizzy hair, long frizzy beard, long white robe; haloed in the light of the headlamps; walking briskly at the edge of the road, stamping his staff, the hem of his robe dancing above sandalled feet” (75).

This symbolic civil war in the novel represents an escalation when compared to the humorous ethnic politics described. The novel presents the electoral competition in County Naparoni, “the smallest, most isolated and most neglected of the nine counties of Trinidad” (7). Here, we find a society split not only along racial lines into Afro-Trinidadians and East Indians but also along religious lines. The three main political organizations are, therefore, the black party led by Preacher, the Hindu party supporting Harbans and Baksh’s Muslim party. The tailor Baksh is depicted in little flattering terms as a betrayer of the East Indian community, who pursues his own



financial interests. Going to ask Baksh to join him, Harbans is deeply impressed by the Muslim leader. The following descriptions shows this:

Baksh frightened him a little. He didn't like the solid square face, the thick eyebrows almost meeting at the bridge of a thick nose, the thick black moustache over thick lips. Especially he didn't like Baksh's bloodshot eyes. They made him look too reckless. (13)

The obsessive repetition of the word 'thick' and such attributes as 'black moustache,' or 'bloodshot eyes' make a bandit out of the Muslim tailor; this stereotypical figure is a cultural construct as Naipaul will later admit in the novel. Naipaul comments about the character of Baksh in his book *A Way in the World*, "I understood at some stage that [Nazaralli Baksh] was a Mohammedan. This didn't at first make him less close; but then, with Indian independence, and the religious partition of the subcontinent, the idea of difference began to attach to him, though I never stopped going to him for my clothes" (13).

Clearly, the excerpt is an example for politics leading to hatred and division. More threatening than a Muslim can only be a black Muslim – Haq from the novel *The Suffrage of Elvira* is described as follows, "a fierce black little man who wore a bristle of white beard and whiskers and whose eyes flashed behind steelrimmed spectacles when he spoke of infidels" (13). Naipaul's suspicion still lasts; thus, in a more recent novel, *A Way in the World*, he mentions the Arab-style black Muslims who wanted to overthrow the Trinidadian government at the beginning of the 1990s. Their rebellion resembled the slave revolts of the past and was to contaminate the blacks living around the capital – for six days looting gangs devastated Port-of-Spain.

In brief, instead of celebrating the ethnic diversity of his native place, Naipaul has a distrust for other communities than the Hindu one; this is obvious not only in

Naipaul's works dealing with Trinidad, but also in his writings on African or Asian subjects.

Despite a ferocious fight against outsiders, the Spaniards lost their "purity" of blood. It is with horror that Singh regards the process of creolization which they undergo; consequently, biased by colonial prejudices, he describes the mulatto villagers as ugly, degenerate people. On the other hand, the passage conveys a positive message (possibly unintended), too: the hunters and the hunted may pass over former disputes and form a new community, as it happened with the Caribs and the blacks.

In the first impression there seems perfect harmony in *Elvira*, a more attentive reading reveals a hierarchy of prestige; hence everybody celebrates the Muslim festival of Hosein, whereas only some celebrate the Hindu festival of lights. It is clear that everybody celebrated Carnival.

In the carnival, the apparently harmless ethnic competition from *The Suffrage of Elvira* takes radical forms. To describe this state of things, Naipaul uses a metaphor, that of the contest between the different races, as expressed, for example, by the pun of the race of races. Naipaul's fiction is traversed by a feeling of anxiety that Indians will be losers in this ethnic competition, which probably constitutes a further reason for the extremely negative image of Afro-Trinidadians. Trinidad is a liminal space, a borderline between different cultures; its festivals too have a liminal character. They may separate people by reinforcing ethnic (Hindu or African) identities, or on the contrary, may bring people together by allowing them to construct hybrid personalities. The last possibility is unfortunately present only once in Naipaul's Trinidadian fiction.

Writing about postmodern texts, Robert Rawdon Wilson notes their self awareness as well as their openness; the latter quality is manifest in the poststructuralist metaphors of the labyrinth and the network or in devices such as the pun, the riddle, the puzzle and the paradox. In addition to the paradox, the pun is one of Naipaul's favourite figures of speech, occurring in his less experimental works too. Sometimes these puns contribute to the negative portrayal of Trinidadians as the following dialogue between an Indian boy and a leading member of the local African community shows:

The people of Elvira called Mr Cuffy 'Cawfee'. Lorkhoor, a stickler for correctness, called him 'Coffee'. Mr Cuffy preferred 'Cawfee'.

'Heard the latest?'

'Ain't hear nothing,' Mr Cuffy said, looking down at the ruined black boot in his hand.

'Propaganda, Mr Cawfee. Blackmail and blackball.'

Mr. Cuffy regarded Lorkhoor suspiciously; he thought his colour was being mocked. (67-68)

Lorkhoor does not know the effect of the colonial, English language on the black person like Cuffy. If Lorkhoor is less aware of language, the affected one, Mr. Cuffy realizes that English "blackens" him, relegating Africans to the periphery of society, where the evil things reside. However, his response is not a symptom of paranoia; if Lorkhoor's is not a mocking tone, then, the omniscient narrator certainly laughs at Mr. Cuffy, reducing him to the color of his skin. A process of dehumanization takes place, symbolically expressed by means of the "ruined black boot." According to French cultural theorist Barthes, "Language has this property of denying, ignoring,

dissociating reality: [W]hen written, shit does not have an odor” (147). The language used here thus, reduces the subjectivity of the black character Mr. Cawfee.

The mockery of colonizer’s language can be seen throughout the novel. In local dialect, the English words become mockeries. “Fust” (10) for English word “First”, “pussonal” (16) for “personal”, “Coffee”(67) for “Cawfee” are some of the mimic forms of the colonial language. It is the mimicry of postcolonial excrement of the language. Homi K. Bhabha writes about the discourse of mimicry:

[. . .] the discourse of mimicry is constructed around an ambivalence; in order to be effective, mimicry must continuously produce its slippage, its excess, its difference. . . . Mimicry is thus the sign of a double articulation; a complex strategy of reform, regulation and discipline, which appropriates the Other as it visualizes power.

Mimicry is also the sign of the inappropriate, however, a difference or recalcitrance which coheres the dominant strategic function of colonial power, intensifies surveillance, and poses an immanent threat to both ‘normalized’ knowledges and disciplinary powers. (86)

We see the ambivalence to the colonial language and the values in the novel which can effectively be reflected in the mimicry and doubt over the colonial language. Mr. Cuffy in *The Suffrage of Elvira*, is deeply aware of his condition as a man imprisoned by the English language. So, he demands Lorkhoor to pronounce his name as Cawfee instead of Coffee. The pun rather than provoking laughter confirms the undemocratic nature of English, which is structured around black-and-white binaries.

Romantic love, an idea taken from colonial movies, is never a success in Naipaul’s *The Suffrage of Elvira* that is the refusal to the constructed colonial discourse that defines the love. Ironically, the bitter satire pervades the love all over in

the novel. The love inside the family is determined by the achievement the husband makes. First, Mrs. Baksh hates her husband's decision to engage in marriage and is cold to him but when Baksh makes the election economically fruitful getting a job campaign manager for their son Foam, getting a van, a loudspeaker and two thousand dollars from Mr. Harbans, she grows contented later. Dhaniram's wife is bedridden for nearly two decades due to chronic paralysis and his life is like a widower's. His son has left his wife sometime after his marriage and got lost. There is no romance in marriages. The daughter-in-law whom Dhaniram calls *doolahin* is compelled to live a life of a maid of Dhaniram's house caring for the sick mother-in-law and obeying the commands of her father-in-law in her age youthful age of romantic love and so she is compelled to run away with Lorkhoor in the fancy of the romantic love. The love of the people is just for some achievements in their life and gratifying their ego. Foam loves his progress as a rival of Lorkhoor, and always works with envy. Most ironically, people love their candidate Mr. Harbans because he has opened a rum account in Ramlogan's rum-shop to make the people drink and Mahadeo's love for old Negro, Sebastian, is his hope of his possible death before election so that they could win the black folks' votes for Harbans conducting his funeral rites with the financial aid of the Hindu candidate.

To clarify the excremental condition in Elvira, we can examine the lack of development in Elvira. While excrement serves as a sign of failed development in many novels, it also becomes part of a political question whether shit is the residue of colonial underdevelopment or evidence of failed African government. Novelist Armah is the example of this as his novel *The Beautiful Ones* presents the example of failed government of Ghana. Armah's critics believe that *The Beautiful Ones* distorts hatred for its own setting. In fact, the narrator's retreat from the shit-ridden city is not

simply an abstract device but an intuitive rejection of public life in Ghana. His excremental vision leaves Armah open to criticism that he represents a self-degrading view of his society. The similar position of V. S. Naipaul we find in the novel *The Suffrage of Elvira* as he criticizes the African society for its lack of growth, and mocks both the failure of colonial government in Elvira and the corrupted behaviours of the Elviran people.

Like Armah works hard to show the neocolonial and historical dimensions of Ghana's situation, Naipaul also works hard to depict the condition of Elvira with its historicity. He talks of the ghost house of Elvira and the baby of Elvira after whom the name of Elvira was taken. He uses excremental language throughout to describe uneven development as a particular combination of surplus and shortfall produced by the legacies of European imperialism. In *The Beautiful Ones*, the prevailing excremental metaphor operates in tandem with a figurative opposite, "the gleam," which means the allure of consumption, the luxurious sheen cast around Ghana's sheltered elite. Armah's symbolic axis runs from dirty to clean. With the protagonist, a railway clerk, suffering the grotesque life of the impoverished masses and his antagonist, the prosperously corrupt Minister Koomson enjoy the "clean life." However, the protagonist also insists that some of that cleanness has more rottenness in it than the slime at the bottom of a garbage dump. According to Esty:

“Armah's fundamental satiric maneuver is to reverse the apparent assignments of clean and dirty, revealing the perversion of a system in which the ethically besmirched comprador enjoys a perfumed existence while the longsuffering masses wallow in shit” (33).

Allegations of this kind have frequently been directed at V. S. Naipaul who, also writing in the mid-1960s, produced a notoriously graphic description of Indian

defecation in *An Area of Darkness*. Naipaul's descriptions of shit have been taken as part of his much excoriated program of denigrating the third world as dirty and chaotic and of seeing India in particular as a "diseased society". It is worth noting once again the central importance of scatology to postcolonial representations of underdevelopment.

Many of novels by Africans in which the excremental agent is an African male fall under the Esty's theory. Meanwhile, Anderson pointed out that two main groups aimed to include, discipline, and civilize the excreting bodies of Filipinos during the colonial period viz. male public health officers and white women in general. He states, "Americans at all levels of colonial society (but especially women and public health officers) set out to train childlike Filipinos in the correct technique of the body, 'under the watchword of *civilité *, rationalised as hygiene" (668).

Similarly, Riley explains the seemingly clashing role of women as both guardians of private, family domesticity and symbols of public, civic purity in nineteenth-century Europe. Riley places a cultural space, "the Social," wherein women are burdened with the duty of representing the good in society at the same time that they are limited to specific roles as social benefactors namely nurses, teachers, social workers, and philanthropists. To elucidate this, he points out:

One of the peculiarities of "women" in its proximity to the social is a doubled feminization. In so far as the concerns of the social are familial standards— health, education, hygiene, fertility, demography, chastity, and fecundity—and the heart of the family is inexorably the woman, then the woman is also solidly inside of that which has to some degree already been feminized. (50)

According to Riley, in early twentieth-century Europe, the public problem that middle and upper class women were assigned to solve was that of the working-class woman and mother, who made of the family a “site of social pathology” (59). Women assigned to “clean up” these families were in essence the same women who took the notion of the Social to the Philippines and other colonies. When seen through this lens, the work of “public health officers” referred to by Anderson is work that is feminized, just as women are feminized by their nature. Both Western women and health officers were made to serve the function of disciplining the bodies of others and of purifying their excrement. Since the 1960s, female primatologists have participated in transporting the Western space of the Social. This postcolonialist move aims to socialize and naturalize the social mannerism. Haraway who specifically cites the 1970s and early 1980s as a period in which the white woman primatologist materialized as a player in nature/culture discourse. He puts:

Time has been “other” in western primatology. The past, the animal, the female, nature: These are the contested zones in the allochronic discourse of primatology. However, by the middle of the 1970s, that sense of time and place, which had been dependent on western hegemony for its maintenance, showed signs of cracking open to allow a different scientific narrative structure. (288)

As Esty points out, “The toilet . . . is a powerful symbol of technological and developmental superiority—one that has the corollary effect of intensifying, via a newly potent scientific language, the negative valence of shit” (29). An assumption of humanism as a philosophical and political project is that humans and nonhuman animals are inhabitants of separate categories of identity. Humans shared, but disavowed, investment in excrement has played a significant role in grounding that



difference. The border between apes and humans historically is a situated border, one whose disintegration in Western cultural theory accelerated in the 1970s and 1980s, during the same era in which other categories of identity including women and indigenous peoples who fought to gain civil or human rights. At the same time, animal rights activists wished to extend humanity to animals, while early posthumanists questioned the usefulness of ascribing “human” rights to animals. According to Mitchell, “constitutive” nature of the human/nonhuman animal relationship is the figure that is not merely below or beside the human’ but actively constitutive of the human” (xiv).

The female primatologist play a crucial role in an understanding of the ways in which sexism and racism were used as means of denying entrance to the status “human” and to the more recent focus on posthumanism as building a constitutive relation between human and nonhuman animals. This is a cultural turn from a touch across difference to a touch that elicits sameness. Naipaul’s own goals were very clearly entangled in the contradictions of the decades during which he worked. He wished to see humans as distinguishable. In the colonial period, Western scientists, public health officials, and women sought to purify colonial areas of native, human excrement by building toilets, teaching the need to wash hands after using the toilet, and reading excrement on laboratory slides. Subsequently, early indigenous post independence writers in Africa charged Europeans and complicitous Africans with having, so to speak, dirty hands. Following soon upon this moment, white women re-immersed themselves in the colonial landscape, not as promoters of native hygiene but as primatologists working toward a posthumanist future. According to Haraway:

The field organized by and around these mobile, dynamic, productive axes (of nature/culture and sex/gender) is a discursive field; i.e., it is

about language, especially writing and other forms of signification, such as filmmaking and museum display. (289)

For many years, animals and women have been included in narratives in discursive fields, both written and cinematic, of excremental colonialism and postcolonialism, from Adamson and the film, *Born Free* (1966) to publicity for the recent establishment of the Center for Captive Chimpanzee Care in Florida by Carole Noon, by way of Goodall, Fossey, and Galdikas. Fossey's particular merging with the nonhuman animal predicted a twenty-first century realignment of species, one in which waste is no longer marked for purification by a social imperative that relies on a strict opposition of animal and human, scientist and object of study, colonizer and native, man and woman.

We can now say, in the colonial period, excrement was focused on as a waste product to be purified under the controlling gaze of the Western scientist or health official. With postcolonialism, in the 1960s and 1970s, native writers took up the cause of native excrement but by drawing attention to it as a sign of failure, rather than by purifying it and excusing it with the written word. The world continues to stink of colonialism even after independence, they argue. During this time, primatology began to be more and more characterized by work in the field, and Western women played a key role in this work, as an extension of the Social. The beginnings of an animal rights movement was also in the making, a movement that sought, in its simplistic form, to promote the rights of the nonhuman animal along the lines of a "rights of man" approach. In the 1990s, as postcolonial theorists debated the continued usefulness of the category of the postcolonial itself and the seemingly endless possible meanings of the term, a posthumanist approach became more acknowledged. This approach sought not to extend humanity to animals but to pass

beyond the philosophical barrier of the subject—as always already human and only human—to posit a posthuman subjecthood that encompasses humans and nonhuman animals.

The cultural, social, political disorder is visible throughout Elvira. The disorder in everything in the postcolonial world like Elvira is called shit by the writers. The Hindu boy Lorkhoor is seen campaigning for the Negro candidate, the preacher. The Muslim boy Foam is seen campaigning for Hindu candidate Mr. Harbans. Foam sees political degradation in Lorkhoor, his rival. There is cultural and political disorder in Elvira. Foam sees Lorkhoor with a woman in an evening in the van on which he used to campaign for the preacher. The rivalry between the two people is highlighted as:

Lorkhoor wasn't alone in his van. Foam was sure he had seen a woman with him; he was ducked when he the van passed. He was really a shameless liar, that boy. He said it was a degradation to get mixed up with Elvira politics, yet he was campaigning for Preacher. He said he didn't care for women, that marriage was unnatural, and here he was driving out of Elvira at night with a woman who wasn't anxious to be seen. (87)

The cultural and political disorder and rivalry among the different cultural groups is visible in the novel. Most of the people in Elvira are disordered culturally and they do not have the sense about their cultural values. The cultures have become hybridized, disordered and unreal. It is very significant to examine the term hybridity as Ashcroft et. al. observe in their *Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies*:

Hybridity has frequently been used in post-colonial discourse to mean simply cross-cultural 'exchange'. This use of the term has been widely

criticized, since it usually implies negating and neglecting the imbalance and inequality of the power relations it references. By stressing the transformative cultural linguistic and political impacts on both the colonized and colonizer, it has been regarded as replicating assimilationist policies by masking or 'whitewashing' cultural differences. (119)

The values of the Elviran, ex-colonized people have been largely individualistic. It is due to the impact of European, colonizers values in their cultures. The Hindu and Muslims of Elvira keep the Holy Bible with them and they have the good knowledge about Christianity. Mrs. Baksh uses the Holy Bible to find out who has brought the small, filthy dog to the house. Hindu pundit Dhaniram knows great deal about the Holy Bible as he had studied in a Canadian Mission school. He has been narrated as:

Pundit Dhaniram had been educated at one of the Presbyterian schools of the Canadian Mission where he had been taught hymns and other Christian things. He cherished the training. 'It make me see both sides,' he used to say; and even now, although he was a Hindu priest, he often found himself humming hymns like 'Jesus loves me, yes, I know'. He slapped his thigh and exclaimed, 'Armageddon!' (48)

Two distinct things are notable in the quote above. The first is the colonial discourse that is working to whitewash the cultural values of the Elviran Hindus and the other is the cultural hybridity and disorder in the Hindu people. Such disorders are called as shit by the Excremental post-colonial theorists. They believe that the shit circulates as a crucial sign in this field because it is, as Mary Douglas's famous formulation would have it, a kind of dirt, or "matter out of place" (36). On the one hand, excremental language seeks to debase a rejected (native) population, but, on the other hand, as

Kristeva's analysis of abjection has suggested, what is rejected can also confound. If, in the colonial era, shit often functioned as a sign of the actively denigrated native, it also comes to function, in the decolonization era, as a sign of the actively repudiated ex-colonizer, the alien and unwanted residue of a sometimes violent political expulsion. In this regard, Esty says:

We might begin to account for this shared excremental vision by noting that the literature emerges from a discursive arena saturated by the tropes of what Dain Borges calls "belly politics"; such a reading would seem to be strengthened by Achille Mbembe's recent and widely discussed hypothesis that postcolonial politics (particularly in sub-Saharan Africa) is characterized by an "aesthetics of vulgarity".

However, more searching forms of analysis are required, I think, to explain the remarkable currency and symbolic versatility of excrement in the postcolony-to account for shit's function not just as a naturalistic detail but as a governing trope in postcolonial literature. (23)

He argues that the "shared excremental vision" of these writers reveals the failure of postcolonialism, a failure prompted by its ultimately conflicting insistence on both individualism and nationalism. Native shit is an object that represents the slippery boundary between the corporeal inside and outside. The presence of native or local shit in these writers' texts emphasizes on the divided self of the protagonist as well as the problematic boundary between this figure and the new, post or neo-colonial, state. People of Elvira are concerned with personal benefit during the election and they do not care for the democratic future. More than the nationalistic feeling, the people are obsessed with the immediate process as they have forgotten the future due to the colonial rule in the country.

Esty's analysis points out the duality of texts produced in the 1960s and 1970s by African writers who displaced shit onto either the pro-European mimicking white ex-colonizer or the black African. Esty explains the difference between colonial and postcolonial excrement in the following way:

Hence the prominence in this symbolic field of that primary excremental formula is self/not-self. In times of disillusionment or ambivalence about nationalist excess, postcolonial scatologists are, in a sense, adapting the "matter out of place" formula. Excremental satire, in other words, expresses the partial misconception (or anal birth) of postcolonial nationalism. (47)

Thus as Esty suggests in the postcolonial excremental novels, the bleak vision and observation of everything is out of place lacking in the normal order in postcolonial society are the prominent themes. In the novel *The Suffrage of Elvira*, Naipaul has presented everything out of their places from the very beginning of the novel. Mr. Herbans drives to Elvira from Port of Spain to Elvira for the election campaign as a candidate. His mind itself is out of order as he nearly hits a dog and two white women even though he drives very carefully. He gives the details of disorder in everything in Elvira. Cultural disorder, corruption, racial hatred etc. become the dominant theme in the novel. He is very close to Ghanaian writer, Ayi Kwei Armah in his depiction of the corruption and disorder in postcolonial African society.

In his novel, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, the Ghanaian writer, Ayi Kwei Armah, explored the impact on ordinary Ghanaian people of a crooked, self-interested, and worryingly neocolonial government. The novel concerns an unnamed central character, referred to only as the man, whose anonymity suggests both the government's indifference to the individual lives of Ghanaians as well as the

universality of his story – the man could perhaps be anyone attempting to make an honest living in the new nation mired in corruption. The plot revolves around the man's refusal to accept a bribe – he works as an administrator for the railways and harbour authorities – and the difficulties this creates for him: his wife chastises him at home for refusing to bend the rules to improve their squalid living conditions, and he suffers at work for his honesty. Within the novel, the anti-colonial nationalist leaders are condemned as sycophants of the West deeply out of touch with the people's suffering as Armah notes:

How could they understand that even those who have not been anywhere know that the black man who has spent his life fleeing from himself into whiteness has no power if the white master gives him none? How were these leaders to know that while they were climbing up to shit in their people's faces, their people had seen their arseholes and drawn away in disgusted laughter? (82).

The excremental imagery in this quotation pervades the novel as a whole; it suggests that the postcolonial nation is soiled by the dirt and filth of corruption, dishonesty and treachery, and is as disreputable as the colonial state which preceded it.

## II. Excremental Post-Colonial Vision in *The Suffrage of Elvira*

This research attempts to analyze V. S. Naipaul's novel *The Suffrage of Elvira* (1958) with an aim of inquire into his portrayal of the bleak, sarcastic, excremental post-colonial vision. The novel describes the humorous circumstances surrounding a local election in one of the districts of Trinidad called Elvira. It is a satire upon the democratic process and the consequences of political change. It also explores the multiculturalism of Trinidad, showing the effects of the election on various ethnic groups, including Muslims, Hindus, and Europeans. To examine the sarcastic and ironical situation during the election and its satire, this research adopts the excremental postcolonial perspective.

Post-colonial excrementalism is a theory which tries to assess the aftermaths of de-colonization. In the novel that is going to be analyzed here, the postcolonial Elvira, a small Caribbean district has been depicted. Elvira is recently decolonized but the people are unable to see any future for their small island after decolonization. It is very sarcastic to see that democracy itself is very doubtful category for the Elviran people. They don't know how to deal with the postcolonial condition where the democracy is taking root. The cultures are in disarray and they are bitterly commented time and again as the cultural admixture in Elvira has created the loss of the cultural uniqueness. Thus, the cultures have become hollow. They carry the identity of the people no more. Characters belonging to different cultures have become familiar with the weaknesses other characters and cultures and the election brings the weaknesses on the surface. The Hindu character Chittaranjan and the Muslim Baksh exchange the bitter racial hatred before the election as we see in the conversation:



‘What is Muslim?’ Chittaranjan asked, his smile frozen, his eyes unshining, his voice low and cutting. ‘Muslim is everything and Muslim is nothing.’ He paused. ‘Even Negro is Muslim.’

[. . .] He put on his hat again, lifted his hat again, lifted his left arm and pinched the loose skin below the wrist. ‘This is pure blood. Every Hindu blood is blood is pure blood nothing mix up with it. Is pure Aryan blood.’

Baksh snorted. ‘All-you is just a pack of kaffir, if you ask me.’

[. . .]

They traded racial insults in rising voice. (114)

The cultural, racial mistrust and the hatred among the Elviran people in the post-colonial condition is one of the remarkable facets that helps to see the cultural chaos and justify the excremental vision in the novel.

Excrement etymologically means feces, a thrown away thing. However, wherever the feces are thrown, the realm becomes polluted as well as odorous. This theory has been amply used to analyze a text while trying to find out how the use of excrement as a cultural trope in a post-humanist era. It places feces as a sign of the both material and symbolic fluid boundaries between human and nonhuman animals, colonizers and natives, men and women, and science and nature. It is believed that there is the relationship between postcolonial and posthumanist theory. In Elvira, the social, cultural and political values are the feces, the feces of the colonizer’s values. The people are facing the social condition in which they feel the indifference and aversion from the colonizer. To write with the awareness of being waste or the excrement of the colonizer ironizing the humans’ chaotic decadence in the post-

colonial situation is called excremental vision. It is shared by many African writers describing the post-colonial African situation.

The term 'Excrementalism' has been used by François Rabelais, Jonathan Swift, James Joyce, and Samuel Beckett, along with V.S. Naipaul. They have furthermore excelled at ridding culture of the odor of feces by writing it into their narratives, by inscribing excrement as word.

The novel, *The Suffrage of Elvira*, is set in Trinidad. It is a description of the comical circumstances surrounding a local election. The ironic portrayal of the local election highlight the postcolonial excrement that has shrouded the Elviran values. There are various characters from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds depicted in the story. The story in short is about Mr. Surajpat Harbans, who is contesting in an election from Elvira, one of the constituencies of Trinidad and Tobago. He comes to the place to win the support of Chittaranjan and Baksh, who are leaders of the Hindu and Muslim groups there, respectively.

The character sketch of the people at Elvira, given by Naipaul is amazing. The other characters in the story are Dhaniram, Mahadeo, Foam, Lorkhoor, Preacher, Ramlogan, Mr. Cuffy, Sebastian, and other minor characters. We can compare the story with the usual tactics and situations prevailing during elections in the rural areas everywhere. But one point to be noted is that each character here is good at heart, though the appearance is deceptive. Going forward we see the election propagandas and tactics, the supporters of the opposing group, the humane gestures and incidents, and finally how Harbans wins over the elections.

The novel is a satiric examination of the consequences of political change in postcolonial condition. Naipaul has never bought that popular romantic vision that has a brave new world rising from the dust of the empire, and the humorous and ironical

proceedings in Elvira betray a deep skepticism of progress. For example, when the candidate for election Harbans hands out bribes, payoffs and presents the way to the Elviran people, he complains that elections are awfully expensive to buy, Dhaniram turns to him to convince him to spend money for the people as it is the true meaning of democracy where the leaders spend money for the people. Hindu pundit Dhaniram says, ‘You must try and feel that you giving to the people. After all, is the meaning of this democracy" (50). Such bribery and trying to buy the votes is the corruption and the mimicry of the influence of the materialistic values of the colonizers which is sarcastically referred as democracy. Tired of spending for the uncertain victory in the election makes Herbans gets frustrated of Elvira as he shouts returning home from Envira, “Elvira! You is a bitch! A bitch! A bitch!” (147).

This instance of swearing and cursing Elvira being tired of its corruption and sarcastic notion of democracy the people are backing there prove the unsettled relation between the people and their country. Unsettled relation between the people of Elvira and newly freed Elvira itself is seen throughout. In the post-colonial state, human excrement becomes a sign of friction in the unsettled relationship between locals and their new free nations. One may expand this discussion by showing how in a third period nonhuman primate feces are implicated in a politics and poetics of excrement, ones that make of waste a privileged sign of fracture in the distinction between human and nonhuman animal. It is useful to read the ascription of excrement to the nonhuman primate in the context of animal theory. This theory posits the inclusion of humans and higher apes in the same broad grouping. Although nonhuman, primate excrement was certainly of scientific interest in the colonial era, recent theories of species provide it with new symbolic importance.

Carnophallogocentrism is the word used by Derrida to describe the legacies of Western humanism and metaphysics, which promotes the eating of nonhuman animals, the phallus as transcendental signifier, and the spoken word as bearer of truth.

Derrida's philosophical concept is very significant because we can understand excremental exchange and consumption as steps in the development of a constitutive relationship between humans, with women as a particular example, and nonhuman animals, with mountain gorillas as a particular example, in a postcolonial and posthumanist moment. Similarly, Warwick Anderson describes how American medical workers in the Philippines in the early twentieth century repeatedly raised the issue of the "promiscuous defecation" (642) of the locals. Outbreaks in army barracks of malaria, cholera, typhoid, and dysentery led public health officials to characterize the closed space of colonizers as consumption and writing, as opposed to the open and dangerous space of the native. He states, "Americans on these occasions are reduced to consumers of food and writers of reports (and all of courses transcend their excreta), while Filipinos, even when 'proven' otherwise, are open, threatening, excreting animals" (651). The Elviran people in the novel are similar to the excreting animals as Anderson describes. The colonial officers who are regarded as showing difference in colonial working style and ethics, are sent to the undeveloped colony like Elvira to face the colonized excreting animals. Teacher Francis has been sent to Elvira to face the excrement generated by colonialism as a punishment. He feels that the Elviran people are unable to understand him properly. He is left by his students like Lorkhoor and Nelly. He fails to convince the people that the democracy in Elvira is going to be a British, colonizer's model of democracy.

Chittaranjan and Ramlogan agree that democracy is degenerate thing, bringing hatred among the people otherwise “Everybody equal”, as Ramlogan’s says. As we see the meeting between Ramlogan and Chittaranjan in the text:

They talked of the degeneracy of the modern age; they agreed that democracy was the stupid thing; then they came to election and to Baksh.

Chittaranjan . . . said, ‘This democracy just make for people like Baksh. Fact, I say it just make for Negro and Muslim. They is two people who never like to make anything for theyself, and the moment you make something they start begging. And if you ain’t give them, they vex.’ (141)

Thus, the democracy and politics for election has been ironized in the novel along with the depiction of racial difference and tensions in postcolonial Trinidadian district Elvira. People don’t understand the value of democracy and election, and just want to take some benefit from the candidate.

Cultural hybridity is the major trait of Elvira and no culture is free from the corrupted colonial influence in their values. To draw the better cultural understanding of Elviran culture the writer gives the cultural account of Elvira as:

Things are crazily mixed up in Elvira. Everybody, Hindus, Muslims and Christians, owned a Bible; the Hindus and Muslims looking on it, if anything, with greater awe. Hindus and Muslims celebrated Christmas and Easter. The spaniards and some of the Negroes celebrated the Hindu festival of lights. Someone had told them that Lakshmi, the goddess of prosperity, was being honoured; they placed small earthen lamps on their money-boxes and waited, as they said

money to breed. Everybody celebrated the Muslim festival of Hosein.

(66)

Two obvious things are depicted here. First, the influence of the colonial culture has made the people ridiculously materialistic as they worship the gods with the hope of money to breed, money is everything for them. Second, the cultures are so hybridized and entangled to each other that it is hard to see their actual traits. They have become elusive.

People's cultural hybridity is seen as the faith of the people in 'obeah' changes the mindset of the people. The very weak and small stray dog ironically named as 'Tiger' brought to home by Baksh's son Herbert is regarded as the curse or obeah. Even after spending large amount of money for votes, Harbans' efforts almost come to naught when the stray dog triggers the voters' superstitions, nearly setting off a panic. The election is ironized, mocked time and again. As Mrs. Baksh remarks: ". . . everybody just washing their foot and jumping in" this "election nonsense" (146) and she continually charges the sweetness of election turning sour as she says to her husband, " This election sweetness sweetens you up Baksh . But see how this sweetness going to turn sour . . ." (82).

Teacher Francis also regards the election as "suffrage nonsense" (85). Thus doubt over the election and democracy process is all over in Elvira. The people feel election is contested only for the personal benefit of the candidate and to vote him is to enable him to draw salary and perks for five year tenure in parliament in Port of Spain.

Whites, the former colonizers are encouraging the Spaniards not to vote misinterpreting the Holy Bible. Even after decolonization, they want to ensure their strong role in most of the business of the district. For it, they haunt the socio-political

life of Elviran people in the name of the religion. Two white women Miss Tall and Miss Short are actively working to convince the people that the politics “is not a divine institution” (69) with the dread they create showing the false prophecies and propaganda hailing the Holy Bible. Thus, the neocolonial manipulation of the minds of gentle, poor and honest people to continue the colonial domination is seen at work in the novel. Miss Tall says about their propaganda, “The magazine my friend is holding shows how the prophecies in the Bible are coming true. Even the troubles of Elvira are in the Bible. Election and all” (69). The intention of British colonizers to block the way of the germinating democracy and maintain dominance and hegemony has been clearly ironized throughout the novel.

For the colonizers, the image of the natives is unholy, unclean and excremental. Warwick Anderson describes the methods by which U.S. colonizers produced an image of Filipino natives as unclean and excremental. Anderson's history of this rhetorical and epidemiological humiliation provides a good point of departure for a study of excremental images in the postcolonial era, when shit begins to operate counter-discursively. In postcolonial writing, shit can bring forth a history of humiliation by showing the failures of development and the inconsistency of colonial discourse and by disrupting linkage of excrement with colonized or non-Western populations. This research thus addresses shit not so much as a material object but as a powerful discursive resource within a new symbolic order. In the scientific laboratory, exemplary of the colonial project, native shit was daubed onto microscope slides and written up in reports. This abstraction of feces was basic to the creation of a border between colonizers and locals. In a bid to demarcate the boundary, he furthers, “the decent, delibidinized, closed space of the modern laboratory had conferred on shit the ‘epistemological clarity’ of just one more specimen among many” (669). By

fouling, observing, and writing up feces as well as by making feces an object of language and of science, Western colonizers developed a discourse of excremental colonialism, which deemed the colonial project as the medical management of the poor and abject. In the novel, the colonizers are unwilling to let the democracy to take root in Elvira rather they want to justify and continue their dominance with propaganda which is the discourse of excremental colonialism.

Naipaul's *The Suffrage of Elvira* is the story about the newly imparted suffrage to the citizens of Elvira. When the colonists left the place, there seemed to occur a tumult, which was fundamental to the election. There are few prominent female characters in the novel who have been touched by excrementalism. Nelly Chitteranjan, for example, is young and dreams of studying in London, while her father wants to marry her off to "a fat yellow boy with big yellow teeth" (84). Nelly is not a tragic heroine, and is resigned to her fate until she is seen in public with a young man, Foam, the elder son of Baksh. This makes her ineligible to marry the rich man's son and she is able to go to the Poly. Ironically, her escape is the result of society's oppressive morality. In the Trinidad world of the novel, the women are often more sensible and down-to-earth than the men. Sometimes they are dangerous seducers, but just as often they are the ones who keep everything going. Sometimes they are victims, but sometimes they sensibly take themselves off when their men grow violent and unreasonable. The principal interest of the novel is in the actions of men, but women are far from unimportant, and they are presented with at least as much sympathy and admiration as the male characters.

The society of women is full of cruelty. They have their troubles, including violence and long periods of separation in its own unconventional way. There is a cinema hall in Elvira, in the place called Caroni. The cinema is the trace of colonial



regime and the remainder after the colonists left, is used by Naipaul in the novel to provide a distorted mirror through which characters try to shape their own identity and, as a result, are duly mocked by the author for their naivety and ignorance.

Lorkhoor in *The Suffrage of Elvira* explicitly alters his appearance as a result of seeing a particular film starring the Mexican actor Pedro Armendariz. Like the movie, *The Suffrage of Elvira*, plays out a similar scenario of personal inadequacy in a tragicomic tone. Chittaranjan fails in his role as both a father and husband and, once again, as a would-be politician who loses much of his money, his daughter and ultimately his political ambitions in a ceaseless round of personal incompetence. The failure in a great deal suggests what we can say the failure of the post-independence scenario. The twin themes of failure as a man and failure as a politician thus touches the excrementalism. In this work, the overall tone is significantly more pessimistic with Harban eventually losing his marriage, his money, his status and his homeland in a narrative of personal helplessness, devoid of hope. Harban's failure as a politician forces him into an ignominious role making him very vulnerable.

*The Suffrage of Elvira* precedes Naipaul's another Novel *The House of Mr. Biswas*, is really lovely piece of work which could be interpreted as a celebration of West Indian life, and as an unheard of elegance and civility from the back of beyond. Except for "dialogue" which is reflective of excremental language, another important aspect is that Bakhtinian concept of "carnival" is present in this book. Of all his works, the 1950s novels are perhaps most touched by the "wit and style" of a unique multicultural society whose predominant symbol is carnival, with its celebration of difference yet community. These novels are touched by the theatricality of the Trinidad carnival, with gaiety, outlandish creativity, masks, inversions. At the same time, though, they show the author's fear of a loss of identity through a carnivalistic

immersion in the folk; they show an exile's distancing of himself from a society that he has left and must now justify having left. Through the masks of double-voicedness and double perspectives, he expresses both his affection for people and things of the colony and his sense of the colony's limitations and imprisonment.

In *The Suffrage of Elvira*, a narratological study starting from the concept of role-playing draws a typology of the characters present in Naipaul's work. The most compelling category of role-playing in Naipaul's canon is the way he has represented the post-colonial chaos in his book *The Suffrage of Elvira*. Chapter two begins by averting the reader about the importance of Chittaranjan, the goldsmith, thus, creating a certain horizon of expectation. This impression is strengthened by the Balzacian presentation of his home, known as the Big House. Naipaul has described the house the following way:

Solid, two-storeyed, concrete, bright with paint and always well looked after construction. That is why, when the Hindu leader comes onto stage, the reader cannot feel but disappointment The commotion brought Chittaranjan to his veranda upstairs. The half-wall hid most of his body, but what Foam and Harban could see looked absurdly small and shrivelled. Spectacles with thin silver rims and thin silver arms emphasized Chittaranjan's diminutiveness. (66)

As already seen, smallness has negative connotations in Naipaul's imagery, being "absurd". It becomes apparent in the sequel to the quote above that it is also closely associated with the idea of infantilism: "The awning of Chittaranjan's shop had been pulled back; the ground had already been combed that afternoon by children; and only two toy anvils set in the concrete terrace remained of the day's workshop" (67). On the other hand, his physical handicap may be compensated by his creative potential.

In that, the Hindu goldsmith resembles the divine artisan Hephaestus, who in spite of his lameness brings forth amazing things.

One of the most shocking images illustrating the mistreatment of the bastard native is to be found in the novel *The Suffrage of Elvira*. The person after whom the district is named was the wife of a planter. According to the legend, she had a Creole illegitimate child that she kills; this is a story which seems to haunt forever Trinidad and its inhabitants. The writer writes:

Herbert knew all about the ghost of the cocoa-house, but ghosts, like the dark, didn't frighten him. The ghost of the cocoa-house was a baby, a baby Miss Elvira herself had had by a negro servant at the time the cocoa-house was being built. The story was that she had buried it in the foundations, under the concrete steps at the back. Many people, many Spaniards in particular, had often heard the baby crying; some even seen it crawling about in the road near the cocoa-house. (116)

Symbolically, the foundation of the house mirrors the foundation of the colony; it is clear that such myths cannot give birth to a proud nation, certain of its origins and destiny. In *The Suffrage of Elvira*, we come across the puppy ironically called Tiger; this appellation, too, belongs to a colonial geography, suggesting other British possessions than Trinidad. Interestingly enough, all three texts deconstruct the picture of a happy childhood as they let the spectre of death, embodied by the killed animals, enter the scene. However, there is seemingly no instance that would label these scenes of play as shameful or trivial. On the contrary, the following games suffer the judgment of the 'adult' eye while creating representations of Trinidad that seem to originate in the colonial discourse of the "child-races", Naipaul undermines the Eurocentric perspective by contradicting the propagandistic metaphor of Empire as a

happy family with the metropolis as a guiding parent and the colonies as grateful children; he replaces it with the metaphor of the neglected colony, of the “little bastard world” in *The Suffrage of Elvira*, in which the region takes its name from a planter’s wife, who killed her illegitimate Creole baby. It is true that the new image is little flattering, as it still infantilizes Trinidad. Foam and Lorkhoor in *The Suffrage of Elvira* use and abuse the knowledge provided by colonial education in order to gain respectability.

Childhood is an important theme in Naipaul’s Trinidadian fictional works also because they are largely autobiographic. As already stated, the conventions of the autobiography of childhood and adolescence requires a certain distance on the part of the adult narrator, who judges the childhood experience as trivial. In fact, critics have argued that Naipaul’s benevolent attitude towards his native island is linked to the child’s perspective, whereas his negative representations come from an anglicized adult point of view. Naipaul himself is affected by the values of colonizers to some extent. He details of the book gives rise to the narratological tension resulting from the double perspective of the child “who sees” and of the adult “who speaks”. It also gives rise to the description of a fluid space changing in size, which demonstrates once again that the image of Trinidad as a miniature world, discussed at the beginning of this part, is not objective since even perception is culturally/discursively constructed. Trinidad has become the excrement of the colonizers as it is engulfed with the stereotype the colonizers make. Colonial attitude that the natives should obey the Holy Bible and discard the election so that no democracy would prevail in Elvira is clearly seen when the white witness Miss tall says the election is “not a divine institution”(69). The natives like Mr. Cuffy are aware about the fact that the

colonizers are playing dirty game behind the veil of the election. It is highlighted in the conversation:

‘This election business,’ Mr. Cuffy said. ‘You in this election business, like everybody else?’

Miss Short curled her thin lips. ‘We have nothing to do with politics.’

‘It’s not a divine institution,’ said Miss Tall, ‘but a man-made evil.

After all, who started the politics you have in Elvira today?’

‘British Government,’ Mr. Cuffy said. He looked puzzled. (69)

The colonial politics in the veil of the dislike of Elvira is visible. Colonial stereotype of Elvira politics as unholy activity is very ironical representation of excremental situation.

The “preacher” motif is very important in the novel *The Suffrage of Elvira*, in which the name of the leader of the black community is precisely Preacher; he is a “visionary,” and a biblical character as indicated in the following description. Naipaul writes about him, “A tall negro with high frizzy hair, long frizzy beard, long white robe; haloed in the light of the headlamps; walking briskly at the edge of the road, stamping his staff, the hem of his robe dancing above sandalled feet” (75).

This symbolic civil war in the novel represents an escalation when compared to the humorous ethnic politics described. The novel presents the electoral competition in County Naparoni, “the smallest, most isolated and most neglected of the nine counties of Trinidad” (7). Here, we find a society split not only along racial lines into Afro-Trinidadians and East Indians but also along religious lines. The three main political organizations are, therefore, the black party led by Preacher, the Hindu party supporting Harbans and Baksh’s Muslim party. The tailor Baksh is depicted in little flattering terms as a betrayer of the East Indian community, who pursues his own

financial interests. Going to ask Baksh to join him, Harbans is deeply impressed by the Muslim leader. The following descriptions shows this:

Baksh frightened him a little. He didn't like the solid square face, the thick eyebrows almost meeting at the bridge of a thick nose, the thick black moustache over thick lips. Especially he didn't like Baksh's bloodshot eyes. They made him look too reckless. (13)

The obsessive repetition of the word 'thick' and such attributes as 'black moustache,' or 'bloodshot eyes' make a bandit out of the Muslim tailor; this stereotypical figure is a cultural construct as Naipaul will later admit in the novel. Naipaul comments about the character of Baksh in his book *A Way in the World*, "I understood at some stage that [Nazaralli Baksh] was a Mohammedan. This didn't at first make him less close; but then, with Indian independence, and the religious partition of the subcontinent, the idea of difference began to attach to him, though I never stopped going to him for my clothes" (13).

Clearly, the excerpt is an example for politics leading to hatred and division. More threatening than a Muslim can only be a black Muslim – Haq from the novel *The Suffrage of Elvira* is described as follows, "a fierce black little man who wore a bristle of white beard and whiskers and whose eyes flashed behind steelrimmed spectacles when he spoke of infidels" (13). Naipaul's suspicion still lasts; thus, in a more recent novel, *A Way in the World*, he mentions the Arab-style black Muslims who wanted to overthrow the Trinidadian government at the beginning of the 1990s. Their rebellion resembled the slave revolts of the past and was to contaminate the blacks living around the capital – for six days looting gangs devastated Port-of-Spain.

In brief, instead of celebrating the ethnic diversity of his native place, Naipaul has a distrust for other communities than the Hindu one; this is obvious not only in

Naipaul's works dealing with Trinidad, but also in his writings on African or Asian subjects.

Despite a ferocious fight against outsiders, the Spaniards lost their "purity" of blood. It is with horror that Singh regards the process of creolization which they undergo; consequently, biased by colonial prejudices, he describes the mulatto villagers as ugly, degenerate people. On the other hand, the passage conveys a positive message (possibly unintended), too: the hunters and the hunted may pass over former disputes and form a new community, as it happened with the Caribs and the blacks.

In the first impression there seems perfect harmony in *Elvira*, a more attentive reading reveals a hierarchy of prestige; hence everybody celebrates the Muslim festival of Hosein, whereas only some celebrate the Hindu festival of lights. It is clear that everybody celebrated Carnival.

In the carnival, the apparently harmless ethnic competition from *The Suffrage of Elvira* takes radical forms. To describe this state of things, Naipaul uses a metaphor, that of the contest between the different races, as expressed, for example, by the pun of the race of races. Naipaul's fiction is traversed by a feeling of anxiety that Indians will be losers in this ethnic competition, which probably constitutes a further reason for the extremely negative image of Afro-Trinidadians. Trinidad is a liminal space, a borderline between different cultures; its festivals too have a liminal character. They may separate people by reinforcing ethnic (Hindu or African) identities, or on the contrary, may bring people together by allowing them to construct hybrid personalities. The last possibility is unfortunately present only once in Naipaul's Trinidadian fiction.

Writing about postmodern texts, Robert Rawdon Wilson notes their self awareness as well as their openness; the latter quality is manifest in the poststructuralist metaphors of the labyrinth and the network or in devices such as the pun, the riddle, the puzzle and the paradox. In addition to the paradox, the pun is one of Naipaul's favourite figures of speech, occurring in his less experimental works too. Sometimes these puns contribute to the negative portrayal of Trinidadians as the following dialogue between an Indian boy and a leading member of the local African community shows:

The people of Elvira called Mr Cuffy 'Cawfee'. Lorkhoor, a stickler for correctness, called him 'Coffee'. Mr Cuffy preferred 'Cawfee'.

'Heard the latest?'

'Ain't hear nothing,' Mr Cuffy said, looking down at the ruined black boot in his hand.

'Propaganda, Mr Cawfee. Blackmail and blackball.'

Mr. Cuffy regarded Lorkhoor suspiciously; he thought his colour was being mocked. (67-68)

Lorkhoor does not know the effect of the colonial, English language on the black person like Cuffy. If Lorkhoor is less aware of language, the affected one, Mr. Cuffy realizes that English "blackens" him, relegating Africans to the periphery of society, where the evil things reside. However, his response is not a symptom of paranoia; if Lorkhoor's is not a mocking tone, then, the omniscient narrator certainly laughs at Mr. Cuffy, reducing him to the color of his skin. A process of dehumanization takes place, symbolically expressed by means of the "ruined black boot." According to French cultural theorist Barthes, "Language has this property of denying, ignoring,



dissociating reality: [W]hen written, shit does not have an odor” (147). The language used here thus, reduces the subjectivity of the black character Mr. Cawfee.

The mockery of colonizer’s language can be seen throughout the novel. In local dialect, the English words become mockeries. “Fust” (10) for English word “First”, “pussonal” (16) for “personal”, “Coffee”(67) for “Cawfee” are some of the mimic forms of the colonial language. It is the mimicry of postcolonial excrement of the language. Homi K. Bhabha writes about the discourse of mimicry:

[. . .] the discourse of mimicry is constructed around an ambivalence; in order to be effective, mimicry must continuously produce its slippage, its excess, its difference. . . . Mimicry is thus the sign of a double articulation; a complex strategy of reform, regulation and discipline, which appropriates the Other as it visualizes power.

Mimicry is also the sign of the inappropriate, however, a difference or recalcitrance which coheres the dominant strategic function of colonial power, intensifies surveillance, and poses an immanent threat to both ‘normalized’ knowledges and disciplinary powers. (86)

We see the ambivalence to the colonial language and the values in the novel which can effectively be reflected in the mimicry and doubt over the colonial language. Mr. Cuffy in *The Suffrage of Elvira*, is deeply aware of his condition as a man imprisoned by the English language. So, he demands Lorkhoor to pronounce his name as Cawfee instead of Coffee. The pun rather than provoking laughter confirms the undemocratic nature of English, which is structured around black-and-white binaries.

Romantic love, an idea taken from colonial movies, is never a success in Naipaul’s *The Suffrage of Elvira* that is the refusal to the constructed colonial discourse that defines the love. Ironically, the bitter satire pervades the love all over in

the novel. The love inside the family is determined by the achievement the husband makes. First, Mrs. Baksh hates her husband's decision to engage in marriage and is cold to him but when Baksh makes the election economically fruitful getting a job campaign manager for their son Foam, getting a van, a loudspeaker and two thousand dollars from Mr. Harbans, she grows contented later. Dhaniram's wife is bedridden for nearly two decades due to chronic paralysis and his life is like a widower's. His son has left his wife sometime after his marriage and got lost. There is no romance in marriages. The daughter-in-law whom Dhaniram calls *doolahin* is compelled to live a life of a maid of Dhaniram's house caring for the sick mother-in-law and obeying the commands of her father-in-law in her age youthful age of romantic love and so she is compelled to run away with Lorkhoor in the fancy of the romantic love. The love of the people is just for some achievements in their life and gratifying their ego. Foam loves his progress as a rival of Lorkhoor, and always works with envy. Most ironically, people love their candidate Mr. Harbans because he has opened a rum account in Ramlogan's rum-shop to make the people drink and Mahadeo's love for old Negro, Sebastian, is his hope of his possible death before election so that they could win the black folks' votes for Harbans conducting his funeral rites with the financial aid of the Hindu candidate.

To clarify the excremental condition in Elvira, we can examine the lack of development in Elvira. While excrement serves as a sign of failed development in many novels, it also becomes part of a political question whether shit is the residue of colonial underdevelopment or evidence of failed African government. Novelist Armah is the example of this as his novel *The Beautiful Ones* presents the example of failed government of Ghana. Armah's critics believe that *The Beautiful Ones* distorts hatred for its own setting. In fact, the narrator's retreat from the shit-ridden city is not

simply an abstract device but an intuitive rejection of public life in Ghana. His excremental vision leaves Armah open to criticism that he represents a self-degrading view of his society. The similar position of V. S. Naipaul we find in the novel *The Suffrage of Elvira* as he criticizes the African society for its lack of growth, and mocks both the failure of colonial government in Elvira and the corrupted behaviours of the Elviran people.

Like Armah works hard to show the neocolonial and historical dimensions of Ghana's situation, Naipaul also works hard to depict the condition of Elvira with its historicity. He talks of the ghost house of Elvira and the baby of Elvira after whom the name of Elvira was taken. He uses excremental language throughout to describe uneven development as a particular combination of surplus and shortfall produced by the legacies of European imperialism. In *The Beautiful Ones*, the prevailing excremental metaphor operates in tandem with a figurative opposite, "the gleam," which means the allure of consumption, the luxurious sheen cast around Ghana's sheltered elite. Armah's symbolic axis runs from dirty to clean. With the protagonist, a railway clerk, suffering the grotesque life of the impoverished masses and his antagonist, the prosperously corrupt Minister Koomson enjoy the "clean life." However, the protagonist also insists that some of that cleanness has more rottenness in it than the slime at the bottom of a garbage dump. According to Esty:

“Armah's fundamental satiric maneuver is to reverse the apparent assignments of clean and dirty, revealing the perversion of a system in which the ethically besmirched comprador enjoys a perfumed existence while the longsuffering masses wallow in shit” (33).

Allegations of this kind have frequently been directed at V. S. Naipaul who, also writing in the mid-1960s, produced a notoriously graphic description of Indian

defecation in *An Area of Darkness*. Naipaul's descriptions of shit have been taken as part of his much excoriated program of denigrating the third world as dirty and chaotic and of seeing India in particular as a "diseased society". It is worth noting once again the central importance of scatology to postcolonial representations of underdevelopment.

Many of novels by Africans in which the excremental agent is an African male fall under the Esty's theory. Meanwhile, Anderson pointed out that two main groups aimed to include, discipline, and civilize the excreting bodies of Filipinos during the colonial period viz. male public health officers and white women in general. He states, "Americans at all levels of colonial society (but especially women and public health officers) set out to train childlike Filipinos in the correct technique of the body, 'under the watchword of *civilité *, rationalised as hygiene" (668).

Similarly, Riley explains the seemingly clashing role of women as both guardians of private, family domesticity and symbols of public, civic purity in nineteenth-century Europe. Riley places a cultural space, "the Social," wherein women are burdened with the duty of representing the good in society at the same time that they are limited to specific roles as social benefactors namely nurses, teachers, social workers, and philanthropists. To elucidate this, he points out:

One of the peculiarities of "women" in its proximity to the social is a doubled feminization. In so far as the concerns of the social are familial standards— health, education, hygiene, fertility, demography, chastity, and fecundity—and the heart of the family is inexorably the woman, then the woman is also solidly inside of that which has to some degree already been feminized. (50)

According to Riley, in early twentieth-century Europe, the public problem that middle and upper class women were assigned to solve was that of the working-class woman and mother, who made of the family a “site of social pathology” (59). Women assigned to “clean up” these families were in essence the same women who took the notion of the Social to the Philippines and other colonies. When seen through this lens, the work of “public health officers” referred to by Anderson is work that is feminized, just as women are feminized by their nature. Both Western women and health officers were made to serve the function of disciplining the bodies of others and of purifying their excrement. Since the 1960s, female primatologists have participated in transporting the Western space of the Social. This postcolonialist move aims to socialize and naturalize the social mannerism. Haraway who specifically cites the 1970s and early 1980s as a period in which the white woman primatologist materialized as a player in nature/culture discourse. He puts:

Time has been “other” in western primatology. The past, the animal, the female, nature: These are the contested zones in the allochronic discourse of primatology. However, by the middle of the 1970s, that sense of time and place, which had been dependent on western hegemony for its maintenance, showed signs of cracking open to allow a different scientific narrative structure. (288)

As Esty points out, “The toilet . . . is a powerful symbol of technological and developmental superiority—one that has the corollary effect of intensifying, via a newly potent scientific language, the negative valence of shit” (29). An assumption of humanism as a philosophical and political project is that humans and nonhuman animals are inhabitants of separate categories of identity. Humans shared, but disavowed, investment in excrement has played a significant role in grounding that

difference. The border between apes and humans historically is a situated border, one whose disintegration in Western cultural theory accelerated in the 1970s and 1980s, during the same era in which other categories of identity including women and indigenous peoples who fought to gain civil or human rights. At the same time, animal rights activists wished to extend humanity to animals, while early posthumanists questioned the usefulness of ascribing “human” rights to animals. According to Mitchell, “constitutive” nature of the human/nonhuman animal relationship is the figure that is not merely below or beside the human’ but actively constitutive of the human” (xiv).

The female primatologist play a crucial role in an understanding of the ways in which sexism and racism were used as means of denying entrance to the status “human” and to the more recent focus on posthumanism as building a constitutive relation between human and nonhuman animals. This is a cultural turn from a touch across difference to a touch that elicits sameness. Naipaul’s own goals were very clearly entangled in the contradictions of the decades during which he worked. He wished to see humans as distinguishable. In the colonial period, Western scientists, public health officials, and women sought to purify colonial areas of native, human excrement by building toilets, teaching the need to wash hands after using the toilet, and reading excrement on laboratory slides. Subsequently, early indigenous post independence writers in Africa charged Europeans and complicitous Africans with having, so to speak, dirty hands. Following soon upon this moment, white women re-immersed themselves in the colonial landscape, not as promoters of native hygiene but as primatologists working toward a posthumanist future. According to Haraway:

The field organized by and around these mobile, dynamic, productive axes (of nature/culture and sex/gender) is a discursive field; i.e., it is

about language, especially writing and other forms of signification, such as filmmaking and museum display. (289)

For many years, animals and women have been included in narratives in discursive fields, both written and cinematic, of excremental colonialism and postcolonialism, from Adamson and the film, *Born Free* (1966) to publicity for the recent establishment of the Center for Captive Chimpanzee Care in Florida by Carole Noon, by way of Goodall, Fossey, and Galdikas. Fossey's particular merging with the nonhuman animal predicted a twenty-first century realignment of species, one in which waste is no longer marked for purification by a social imperative that relies on a strict opposition of animal and human, scientist and object of study, colonizer and native, man and woman.

We can now say, in the colonial period, excrement was focused on as a waste product to be purified under the controlling gaze of the Western scientist or health official. With postcolonialism, in the 1960s and 1970s, native writers took up the cause of native excrement but by drawing attention to it as a sign of failure, rather than by purifying it and excusing it with the written word. The world continues to stink of colonialism even after independence, they argue. During this time, primatology began to be more and more characterized by work in the field, and Western women played a key role in this work, as an extension of the Social. The beginnings of an animal rights movement was also in the making, a movement that sought, in its simplistic form, to promote the rights of the nonhuman animal along the lines of a "rights of man" approach. In the 1990s, as postcolonial theorists debated the continued usefulness of the category of the postcolonial itself and the seemingly endless possible meanings of the term, a posthumanist approach became more acknowledged. This approach sought not to extend humanity to animals but to pass

beyond the philosophical barrier of the subject—as always already human and only human—to posit a posthuman subjecthood that encompasses humans and nonhuman animals.

The cultural, social, political disorder is visible throughout Elvira. The disorder in everything in the postcolonial world like Elvira is called shit by the writers. The Hindu boy Lorkhoor is seen campaigning for the Negro candidate, the preacher. The Muslim boy Foam is seen campaigning for Hindu candidate Mr. Harbans. Foam sees political degradation in Lorkhoor, his rival. There is cultural and political disorder in Elvira. Foam sees Lorkhoor with a woman in an evening in the van on which he used to campaign for the preacher. The rivalry between the two people is highlighted as:

Lorkhoor wasn't alone in his van. Foam was sure he had seen a woman with him; he was ducked when he the van passed. He was really a shameless liar, that boy. He said it was a degradation to get mixed up with Elvira politics, yet he was campaigning for Preacher. He said he didn't care for women, that marriage was unnatural, and here he was driving out of Elvira at night with a woman who wasn't anxious to be seen. (87)

The cultural and political disorder and rivalry among the different cultural groups is visible in the novel. Most of the people in Elvira are disordered culturally and they do not have the sense about their cultural values. The cultures have become hybridized, disordered and unreal. It is very significant to examine the term hybridity as Ashcroft et. al. observe in their *Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies*:

Hybridity has frequently been used in post-colonial discourse to mean simply cross-cultural 'exchange'. This use of the term has been widely



criticized, since it usually implies negating and neglecting the imbalance and inequality of the power relations it references. By stressing the transformative cultural linguistic and political impacts on both the colonized and colonizer, it has been regarded as replicating assimilationist policies by masking or 'whitewashing' cultural differences. (119)

The values of the Elviran, ex-colonized people have been largely individualistic. It is due to the impact of European, colonizers values in their cultures. The Hindu and Muslims of Elvira keep the Holy Bible with them and they have the good knowledge about Christianity. Mrs. Baksh uses the Holy Bible to find out who has brought the small, filthy dog to the house. Hindu pundit Dhaniram knows great deal about the Holy Bible as he had studied in a Canadian Mission school. He has been narrated as:

Pundit Dhaniram had been educated at one of the Presbyterian schools of the Canadian Mission where he had been taught hymns and other Christian things. He cherished the training. 'It make me see both sides,' he used to say; and even now, although he was a Hindu priest, he often found himself humming hymns like 'Jesus loves me, yes, I know'. He slapped his thigh and exclaimed, 'Armageddon!' (48)

Two distinct things are notable in the quote above. The first is the colonial discourse that is working to whitewash the cultural values of the Elviran Hindus and the other is the cultural hybridity and disorder in the Hindu people. Such disorders are called as shit by the Excremental post-colonial theorists. They believe that the shit circulates as a crucial sign in this field because it is, as Mary Douglas's famous formulation would have it, a kind of dirt, or "matter out of place" (36). On the one hand, excremental language seeks to debase a rejected (native) population, but, on the other hand, as

Kristeva's analysis of abjection has suggested, what is rejected can also confound. If, in the colonial era, shit often functioned as a sign of the actively denigrated native, it also comes to function, in the decolonization era, as a sign of the actively repudiated ex-colonizer, the alien and unwanted residue of a sometimes violent political expulsion. In this regard, Esty says:

We might begin to account for this shared excremental vision by noting that the literature emerges from a discursive arena saturated by the tropes of what Dain Borges calls "belly politics"; such a reading would seem to be strengthened by Achille Mbembe's recent and widely discussed hypothesis that postcolonial politics (particularly in sub-Saharan Africa) is characterized by an "aesthetics of vulgarity".

However, more searching forms of analysis are required, I think, to explain the remarkable currency and symbolic versatility of excrement in the postcolony-to account for shit's function not just as a naturalistic detail but as a governing trope in postcolonial literature. (23)

He argues that the "shared excremental vision" of these writers reveals the failure of postcolonialism, a failure prompted by its ultimately conflicting insistence on both individualism and nationalism. Native shit is an object that represents the slippery boundary between the corporeal inside and outside. The presence of native or local shit in these writers' texts emphasizes on the divided self of the protagonist as well as the problematic boundary between this figure and the new, post or neo-colonial, state. People of Elvira are concerned with personal benefit during the election and they do not care for the democratic future. More than the nationalistic feeling, the people are obsessed with the immediate process as they have forgotten the future due to the colonial rule in the country.

Esty's analysis points out the duality of texts produced in the 1960s and 1970s by African writers who displaced shit onto either the pro-European mimicking white ex-colonizer or the black African. Esty explains the difference between colonial and postcolonial excrement in the following way:

Hence the prominence in this symbolic field of that primary excremental formula is self/not-self. In times of disillusionment or ambivalence about nationalist excess, postcolonial scatologists are, in a sense, adapting the "matter out of place" formula. Excremental satire, in other words, expresses the partial misconception (or anal birth) of postcolonial nationalism. (47)

Thus as Esty suggests in the postcolonial excremental novels, the bleak vision and observation of everything is out of place lacking in the normal order in postcolonial society are the prominent themes. In the novel *The Suffrage of Elvira*, Naipaul has presented everything out of their places from the very beginning of the novel. Mr. Herbans drives to Elvira from Port of Spain to Elvira for the election campaign as a candidate. His mind itself is out of order as he nearly hits a dog and two white women even though he drives very carefully. He gives the details of disorder in everything in Elvira. Cultural disorder, corruption, racial hatred etc. become the dominant theme in the novel. He is very close to Ghanaian writer, Ayi Kwei Armah in his depiction of the corruption and disorder in postcolonial African society.

In his novel, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, the Ghanaian writer, Ayi Kwei Armah, explored the impact on ordinary Ghanaian people of a crooked, self-interested, and worryingly neocolonial government. The novel concerns an unnamed central character, referred to only as the man, whose anonymity suggests both the government's indifference to the individual lives of Ghanaians as well as the

universality of his story – the man could perhaps be anyone attempting to make an honest living in the new nation mired in corruption. The plot revolves around the man's refusal to accept a bribe – he works as an administrator for the railways and harbour authorities – and the difficulties this creates for him: his wife chastises him at home for refusing to bend the rules to improve their squalid living conditions, and he suffers at work for his honesty. Within the novel, the anti-colonial nationalist leaders are condemned as sycophants of the West deeply out of touch with the people's suffering as Armah notes:

How could they understand that even those who have not been anywhere know that the black man who has spent his life fleeing from himself into whiteness has no power if the white master gives him none? How were these leaders to know that while they were climbing up to shit in their people's faces, their people had seen their arseholes and drawn away in disgusted laughter? (82).

The excremental imagery in this quotation pervades the novel as a whole; it suggests that the postcolonial nation is soiled by the dirt and filth of corruption, dishonesty and treachery, and is as disreputable as the colonial state which preceded it.

## Conclusion

Naipaul's novel *The Suffrage of Elvira* has been examined from the perspective of excremental postcolonial vision in this research. Trinidad was colonized by British colonizers and it is on the verge of democracy during mid 20<sup>th</sup> century as the election is for the democracy is going on. The county Elvira has been depicted with its cultural hybridity, full of mimicry to the excremental postcolonial condition. The people of Elvira are pure-hearted but the politics has sowed the seed of hatred and enmity among them. The people are more interested for the personal benefits during the election period but they are unconcerned about the possible political changes after the election.

The sarcastic scene of election has been satirized by Naipaul in the postcolonial circumstances is observed throughout the novel. The mimicry and doubt over the colonial English language pervades all over the Elviran society. People's subjectivity has been jeopardized due to the colonial excrement, the colonial discourses with the stereotypic representation of Elviran people.

Mr. Surajpat Herbans is in a difficult situation. He is the candidate for the election and is the most favorite among the people. But when he comes to Elvira for campaign, everybody from Elvira has their own personal interests to fulfill with him. Doubt pervades all over and nobody believes others without some degree of doubt. In such pressing situation, the candidate is compelled to open the rum account to get the people drink. Drinking, eating, and other trifle interests overcome the notion of democracy. People bargain and they are seen full of corruption in their motives.

The excessive irony and the mockery of the people and their values full of the illusion, and doubt over everything in the postcolonial world are the doubt of the writer to the colonial values that are left behind during decolonization. The mimic

values that are rampant throughout the Elvira are given expression in the words by the writer which can be termed as excrementalism as the words replace the excrement the colonizers have left behind. When the excrement is given the form of the written words, it will not have the odor. So the bitter irony and the doubt of the people over progress and democracy in the novel is excremental postcolonial narration in the novel.

To describe the election process of Elvira in the novel is to show the rampant valuelessness, rootlessness, corruption in the postcolonial society of Elvira, the word excrementalism is very useful. The word 'excrementalism' has been used by V.S. Naipaul and many other writers as their writing trend. The writers write about the bitter postcolonial situation and its shallowness, with doubt all over the postcolonial values and processes. The writers have excelled at ridding culture of the odor of feces by writing it into their narratives, by inscribing excrement as word. The excrement is visible in most of the aspects of the society, culture, language, politics as people are totally illusioned and they are unable to see further to the future with hope but want the concrete, material benefit now, in present. The Elviran people run only after money, bribery, corruption, drinking etc. as they do not see the future benefit and democracy with hope but they want his personal, material help at the time he is contesting the election.

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