



THE LOFTY EYES: A STUDY OF V.S. NAIPAUL'S
POSTCOLONIAL SURVEILLANCE AND TOURISM IN
AMONG THE BELIEVERS: AN ISLAMIC JOURNEY AND
BEYOND BELIEF: ISLAMIC EXCURSIONS AMONG THE
CONVERTED PEOPLES

BY

NURUL 'AIN BINTI ABDULLAH

A dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for
the degree of Master of Human Sciences in
English Literary Studies

Kulliyyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and
Human Sciences
International Islamic University Malaysia

OCTOBER 2017

ABSTRACT

The Nobel laureate V.S. Naipaul (1932 –) has made extensive comments on Muslims and on their religious practices in his two widely circulated travel writings, *Among the Believers: An Islamic Journey* (1981) and *Beyond Belief: Islamic Excursions among the Converted Peoples* (1998). These two works have triggered debates about his representation of Muslims, as it is believed that his treatment of Muslims and Islam evinces his limited perspective. Under the surface of his gentlemanlike ways of listening and retelling the stories of the people he met in the Muslim countries he visited, his tendency to judge and caricature is palpable in these two books. It seems that he visited the four countries—Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia and Pakistan—and wrote the two books only to reinforce his distorted, preconceived notions and ideas about Islam; and his travels are only to find evidences to vindicate his negative notions. Omitting facts that do not suit his tendency to caricature, he fails to provide a balanced and unbiased representation of the countries and the people he encountered. Based on this premises, this study investigates Naipaul's portrayal of Islam and Muslims in the two books mentioned and seeks to differentiate the cultural and individual practices that are put forth as Islamic by Naipaul from normative, actual Islamic values. The author's neo-Orientalist tendencies as well as his strategy of surveillance will be discussed, as his standing as a postcolonial tourist will be assessed.

ملخص البحث

قام الحاصل على جائزة نوبل ب.س. نايبول (١٩٣٢ -) بتعليقات واسعة على المسلمين وممارساتهم الدينية في كتاباته السفر على نطاق واسع، بين المؤمنين: رحلة إسلامية (١٩٨١) وما وراء المعتقد: الرحلات الإسلامية بين الشعوب المحولة (١٩٩٨). وقد أثار هذان العملان مناقشات في تمثيله للمسلمين، إذ يعتقد أن معاملته للمسلمين والإسلام تدل على منظوره المحدود. تحت سطح طرقه النبيلة في الاستماع وإعادة رواية قصص الشعب الذي التقى به في البلدان الإسلامية التي زارها، وميله إلى الحكم و الكاريكاتير الواضح في هذين الكتابين. ويبدو أنه زار البلدان الأربعة - إيران وباكستان وماليزيا وإندونيسيا - وكتب الكتابين فقط لتعزيز مفاهيمه وأفكاره المسبقة المشوهة عن الإسلام؛ وأسفاره لا تجد أدلة تثبت مفاهيمه السلبية. وبغض النظر عن الحقائق التي لا تتناسب مع مهمته، فإنه لا يقدم تمثيلاً متوازناً وغير متحيز للبلدان والشعب الذي واجهه. واستناداً إلى هذا المبنى، فإن هذه الدراسة تبحث في تصوير نايبول للإسلام والمسلمين في الكتابين المذكورين، وتسعى إلى التمييز بين الممارسات الثقافية والفردية التي يتم طرحها من نايبول على أنها إسلامية من القيم الإسلامية الفعلية. وسيتم الكشف عن الاتجاهات الاستشراقية الجديدة للمؤلف فضلاً عن استراتيجيته للمراقبة، كما سيتم تقييمه على أنه سائح ما بعد الاستعمار.

APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that I have supervised and read this study and that in my opinion; it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Master of Human Sciences in English Literary Studies.

.....
Mahmudul Hasan
Supervisor

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Master of Human Sciences in English Literary Studies.

.....
Wan Madiha Ramlan
Examiner

This dissertation was submitted to the Department of English Language and Literature and is accepted as a fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Human Sciences in English Literary Studies.

.....
Mohd. Ridwan Abdul Wahid
Head, Department of English
Language and Literature

This dissertation was submitted to the Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences and is accepted as a fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Human Sciences in English Literary Studies.

.....
Mohammad Abdul Quayum
Dean, Kulliyah of Islamic
Revealed Knowledge and Human
Sciences

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own investigation, except where otherwise stated. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted as a whole for any other degrees at IIUM or other institutions.

Nurul 'Ain Binti Abdullah

Signature.....

Date

INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA

**DECLARATION OF COPYRIGHT AND AFFIRMATION OF
FAIR USE OF UNPUBLISHED RESEARCH**

**THE LOFTY EYES: A STUDY OF V.S. NAIPAUL'S
POSTCOLONIAL SURVEILLANCE AND TOURISM IN *AMONG
THE BELIEVERS: AN ISLAMIC JOURNEY AND BEYOND
BELIEF: ISLAMIC EXCURSIONS AMONG THE CONVERTED
PEOPLES***

I declare that the copyright holder of this dissertation are jointly owned by the student and IIUM.

Copyright © 2017 Nurul 'Ain Binti Abdullah and International Islamic University Malaysia. All rights reserved.

No part of this unpublished research may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without prior written permission of the copyright holder except as provided below

1. Any material contained in or derived from this unpublished research may be used by others in their writing with due acknowledgement.
2. IIUM or its library will have the right to make and transmit copies (print or electronic) for institutional and academic purposes.
3. The IIUM library will have the right to make, store in a retrieved system and supply copies of this unpublished research if requested by other universities and research libraries.

By signing this form, I acknowledged that I have read and understand the IIUM Intellectual Property Right and Commercialization policy.

Affirmed by Nurul 'Ain Binti Abdullah

.....
Signature

.....
Date

For Abdullah Ridzuan, Zaleha Muhammad and Muhammad Lutfi.

“Doubt thou the stars are fire,

Doubt that the sun doth move.

Doubt truth to be a liar,

But never doubt I love.”

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Alhamdulillah, praise be to Allah for the successful completion of this thesis, and for the blessing of benefitting from the wonderful people I mention below.

I am eternally indebted to my supervisor and inspiration, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Md. Mahmudul Hasan. I remember studying in his class during my undergraduate studies and wanting nothing more than for him not to *ever* call my name in class for his nerve-racking questions for class discussion. Despite my best efforts of keeping a low-profile, he found me, and a few years later, I found my calling in education and scholarship. Before his classes, I never knew literature could be so closely linked with Islam, and through his guidance, I learned to love the relationship of my religion and literature. His dedication in producing works that would benefit the *Ummah*, his motivation and drive inspire and remind me that as a Muslim, I too have to give back to society. Hopefully, this dissertation, completed under his close supervision, will become my initiation towards fulfilling my duties as a student of literature.

Of course, I could not have done this without the blessings, support and understanding of my beloved parents, Abdullah Ridzuan and Zaleha Muhammad. My father, since I was a child, has always emphasised the importance of education, and for that I am immensely grateful to him. I must give special thanks to my mother, who time and time again, understood that I could not cook lunch and dinner, or help much around the house during the months that I spent completing this dissertation. May Allah bless both of you!

I must also give thanks to my siblings, who have supported me in this journey in so many ways. They are like winds to my sails. I would not have advanced in an equal pace had it not been for them.

I would also like to thank the Abolmasoomi family, for letting me invade their home whenever I needed to be near IIUM and for letting me finish all the leftovers of their delicious Iranian dishes.

My special thanks go to Mahya Abolmasoomi, who has been the *dearest* of friends during my ups and downs in the journey of completing this thesis. Her kindness and support are instrumental in my success.

And for Aisyah Bahri too, who understands too much, what this means to me, and to us.

Last but not least, my thanks go to Lutfi Arif, for always, and everything.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	ii
Abstract in Arabic.....	iii
Approval Page	iv
Declaration	v
Copyright	vi
Dedication	vii
Acknowledgements	viii
 CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	 1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Travel Writing	4
1.3 Statement of Problem.....	6
1.4 Research Questions	7
1.5 Research Objectives.....	7
1.6 Significance of the Study	7
1.7 Methods and Procedures	8
1.8 Theoretical Framework	9
1.8.1 Introduction	9
1.8.2 Postcolonial tourism	9
1.8.3 Surveillance	12
1.9 Outline of Chapters	14
 CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	 17
2.1 Literature Review	17
 CHAPTER THREE: NAIPAUL THE NEO-ORIENTALIST: A STUDY OF HIS ORIENTALIST TENDENCIES IN <i>AMONG THE BELIEVERS</i> AND <i>BEYOND BELIEF</i>	 25
3.1 Introduction	25
3.2 Naipaul's Preconceived Ideas of Islam	27
3.3 Connivance with the Notion of Western Supremacy.....	31
3.4 Islam versus the West	38
3.5 Postcolonial Tourism	44
3.6 Conclusion.....	48
 CHAPTER FOUR: RIPPLES TO WAVES: A STUDY OF V.S. NAIPAUL'S REPRESENTATION OF ISLAM AND MUSLIMS IN <i>AMONG THE BELIEVERS</i> AND <i>BEYOND BELIEF</i>	 51
4.1 Introduction	51
4.2 Naipaul's Theory of the Converted	53
4.3 Naipaul's Disregard for Islam as a Complete Way of Life	56
4.4 Naipaul's Misuse of the Term "Islamic"	59
4.5 Caricaturing Muslims.....	62
4.6 Naipaul's Portrayal of Muslim Women	68
4.7 Conclusion.....	72

CHAPTER FIVE CONCLUSION	74
5.1 Conclusion.....	74
BIBLIOGRAPHY	81

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul (1932—), better known as V. S. Naipaul, is a Trinidadian-born British writer. After studying at Queen's Royal College in Trinidad he received a scholarship to study at University College, the University of Oxford. Naipaul's writings have received numerous awards and recognitions. For example, *The Mystic Masseur* (1957) won the John Llewellyn Rhys Prize (1958), *Miguel Street* (1959) won the Somerset Maugham Award, and his first acclaimed novel, *A House for Mr. Biswas* (1961), which is based on his father's life in Trinidad, was listed among the 100 best English-language novels of the twentieth century by the Modern Library in 1998. He also won the Hawthornden Prize for his *Mr. Stone and the Knights Companion* (1963). As Naipaul established his status as an acclaimed author, he began exploring more political themes about colonial and postcolonial societies' struggles for decolonization as reflected in his writings such as *The Mimic Men* (1967), which won the 1968 WH Smith Literary Award and *In a Free State* (1971), the 1971 Booker Prize for Fiction.

Besides fiction, Naipaul has also written a number of travel writings such as *India: An Area of Darkness* (1964), *India: A Wounded Civilization* (1977), *India: A Million Mutinies Now* (1990) and others. His two controversial non-fiction travel writings about Islamic societies, *Among the Believers: An Islamic Journey* (1981) and *Beyond Belief: Islamic Excursions among the Converted Peoples* (1998) are among his best-selling works, and after the publication of the former he was awarded the

Jerusalem Prize for the Freedom of the Individual in Society. Naipaul's *Among the Believers* and *Beyond Belief*, which are the primary texts of this thesis, both sparked criticisms and, at the same time, apparently solidified his authority in postcolonial discourse, especially after he was knighted in 1989. Eventually, he won the David Cohen British Literature Prize in 1993 and then became a Nobel laureate in literature in 2001.

Among the Believers and *Beyond Belief* are Naipaul's travelogues which present his accounts of several Muslim countries including Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia and Pakistan. His many favourable critical receptions have caused his work about the Muslim world to gain increasing influence in mainstream Western culture. Meddour (2004, p.58) however, comments that "in contrast to this impressive resume, critics beyond the periphery of mainstream Western culture have referred to him as a man 'incapable of restraining his loathing for the Islamic world and its people'."

These works have triggered debates about his representation of Muslims, as it is believed that his treatment of Muslims and Islam smacks of his limited perspective. Under the surface of his gentlemanlike ways of listening and recounting the stories of the people he met in the Muslim countries he visited and his quiet sympathy for those individuals, in *Among the Believers* and *Beyond Belief* his tendency to judge and caricature is palpable (Ahmad, 2000; Nixon, 2003). Despite his erroneous depiction of Islam and Muslims in the two books selected for this thesis, Naipaul is indeed a writer with artistic mastery. His talents as a writer are celebrated by critics. Mir (2014, p.145) elaborates that "even those who feel enraged by Naipaul's statements about Africa, [the] Indian subcontinent and [the] Islamic world do accept and give him due credit for his qualities and characteristics as a writer of prose." The Swedish Academy acclaimed Naipaul for his detailed description and examination and explained that the

Nobel Prize for Literature was given to him strictly for his artistic and literary merits (Gabriel, 2001). However, his provocatively derogatory representation of the third world, especially Muslim countries, has triggered many critics and academicians such as Derek Walcott, Nissim Ezekiel, Edward Said, William Dalrymple and Ejaz Ahmad to comment on the blunt truth of the actual reason he was awarded the Nobel Prize (Mir, 2014, p.145).

Naipaul does not only seem to have a problem with Muslims but also with colonised societies as a whole. He summarises third world countries as “half-made societies that seemed doomed to remain half-made” (Hamner, 1990, p.194). Given Naipaul’s background, much of what he says can be explained from where he comes from. Fanon’s *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952) would give adequate introduction to the psychological understanding of ‘native informants’ like Naipaul and their subconscious tendency to identify with the dominant cultures and distance themselves from their native cultural and religious traditions.

Among the Believers and *Beyond Belief* are arguably written with the slant of Islamophobia as well as Eurocentric viewpoints, which would serve as a misleading source in learning about Islam and Muslims. Despite that, unfortunately, the two books are accepted as valid sources and the author, as an authority on the subject. This thesis does not aim to discredit Naipaul’s prominence as a writer. It attempts to offer an objective critique of his ‘license to lie’ as manifested in his treatment of Islam and Muslims. Based on the above premises, this study investigates his portrayal of the religion and its adherents in *Among the Believers* and *Beyond Belief* in light of postcolonial tourism and surveillance, and seeks to discover how his role as a postcolonial tourist and a neo-Orientalist shape his representation of Islam and Muslims. The disquieting fictional representations of the religion and its believers by

the illustrious author will be scrutinised and the reception of such representations, deliberated.

1.2 TRAVEL WRITING

Closely linked to colonialism and exploration, travel writing has a longer history compared to the relatively new genre of the novel, and dates back to the late Renaissance to the early Enlightenment periods. Early accounts of discovery or exploration such as Walter Raleigh's *El Dorado Expedition* (1595) and Marco Polo's *The Description of the World* (1276-1291) usually written in documents, are actually critiques of the explored lands. Although generally thought of as an objective form of narration, travel writings in earlier times served the objective of disseminating hegemonic ideologies such as colonialism and Eurocentrism. As Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin (1998, p.89) put it: "Travel and exploration in the period was seen as strictly and unashamedly commercial and exploitative in purpose" (1998, p.89). Said, in *Orientalism* (1978), explores travel narratives that promoted colonial policies and practices. According to Said, the combination of facts and fictions that travel writings employ meant that they are the best tools to propagate the Orient/Occident dichotomy, placing the Europe "firmly in the privileged center as main observer ... its sense of cultural strength was fortified" (Said, 1978, p.117). Travel writing helped the creation of colonies and espoused ethnocentric perspectives (Said, 1978, p.117).

Narratives of travel from the classical times such as Homer's *Odyssey* had come to contour literary journeys for approximately three thousand years (Youngs, 2013, p.20). Marco Polo and Mandeville are two famous travel writers from the European world. According to Youngs (2013), the former is responsible for creating the image of Asia for European minds, with his account which "often disparages

Muslims” and portrays dark skinned people negatively but lighter skinned people positively (Youngs, 2013, p.26). The tradition continues in the 1300s, the great age of pilgrimage, with works such as Chaucer’s *The Canterbury Tales* (1478) and Breydenbach’s *Peregrinatio in Terram Sanctam* (1484) (Youngs, 2013, p.24). Columbus’s (1450-1506) *Journal of the First Voyage*, Richard Hakluyt’s *The Principall Navigations, Voiages and Discoveries of the English Nation* (1589) and Edward Terry’s *A Voyage to East-India* (1655) are among the later travel books.

Travel writing then underwent a sharp change in the age of Enlightenment. This change produced a heightened confidence and feeling of self-importance in European civilisation, and these are reflected in writings about “the rest of the world and Europe” such as in Boswell’s *Boswell on the Grand Tour: Germany and Switzerland* (1764) and Smollet’s *Travels through France and Italy* (1766) (Zilcosky, 2008, p.11). The unprecedented expeditions of global travel beyond Europe are described in, among others, Bougainville’s, Humboldt’s and Cook’s writings, where exotic lands and peoples “became objectified as European knowledge” (Zilcosky, 2008, p.11). In the context of colonialism, “empires create in the imperial center of power an obsessive need to present and represent its peripheries and its others continually to itself. It becomes dependent on its others to know itself” (Pratt, 1992, p.4). Travel writing and books are thus deeply organized to serve that need.

It is worth noting that readers play a significant role in shaping travel writings. European audiences or readers developed a sense of what they wanted to hear about the Orient and this steers the direction of travel narratives. “It is not the voice that commands the story, it is the ear” (Calvino, quoted in Phillips, 2013, p.9). Pratt argues that travel writing gave European readers a sense of entitlement and ownership, as well as familiarity with the travelled, occupied, invested in, and eventually colonized

lands (Pratt, 1992, p.3). These narratives are also very well received as they created a sense of excitement, adventure, curiosity and moral enthusiasm regarding European colonialism (Pratt, 1992, p.3). European travel writing, touched by the natural history of enlightenment, produced a global consciousness that is Eurocentred (Pratt, 1992, p.4). This tradition continues with Goethe (1775), Darwin (1839) Mary Shelley (1844), Gertrude Bell (1894, 1907), Mary Lee Settle (1991) and many more. Naipaul is one of the later additions to this long list of European travel writers.

1.3 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Islam is grossly misrepresented in *Among the Believers* and *Beyond Belief*. The caricature of Muslims in the books is palpably intense. However, there seems to be a wide consensus among many Westerners that the two selected texts are valid sources to know about Islam and Muslims. As a result, Naipaul apparently enjoys the status of an authority on Islam despite his erroneous depictions of the religion in the two books. Combing through existing literature and criticism, there appears to be a mixed review of Naipaul's *Among the Believers* and *Beyond Belief*. Among the aspects focused by previous researchers are the political underpinnings, the narration of space and Naipaul's search of identity in his travels as depicted in the two books. Others have emphasised Naipaul's anxieties and rage towards Islam, and some researchers critique the books in general terms. However, to date there are very few researches that focus on the impact and role of postcolonial surveillance and tourism on the representation of Islam and Muslims in travel literature, and there has been little research on the surveillance strategy that Naipaul employs in the books, and on Naipaul's status as a postcolonial tourist. Therefore, this study aims to dissect his depiction of Islam and Muslims in *Among the Believers* and *Beyond Belief* and challenge his

misrepresentation of the religion and of its adherents in light of the postcolonial framework of surveillance and tourism.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This dissertation aims to answer the following questions

1. What is Naipaul's role as a postcolonial tourist and how does he employ surveillance in his travels to Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia and Pakistan?
2. How does postcolonial tourism and surveillance impact the representation of Islam and Muslims in Naipaul's *Among the Believers* and *Beyond Belief*?
3. In what ways does Naipaul as a travel writer carry orientalist's worldviews and Eurocentrism?

1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This study intends to address and achieve the following objectives:

1. To study Naipaul's role as a postcolonial tourist and his strategy of surveillance in *Among the Believers* and *Beyond Belief*.
2. To examine the impacts of postcolonial tourism and surveillance on the representation of Islam and Muslims in the two books.
3. To challenge the misrepresentation of Islam and Muslims in *Among the Believers* and *Beyond Belief*.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This dissertation intends to provide academics and future researchers with an alternative view on Naipaul's representation of Islam and Muslims and attain a

profound understanding of the topic at hand. As mentioned earlier, relatively fewer studies have been conducted on Naipaul's status as a postcolonial tourist and on the surveillance strategy that Naipaul employs in his travel writing. This research will provide a dialogue which sees the somewhat ill-intentioned purposes and effects of Naipaul's travel writing, and criticises his authority in weaving lies about Islam. A more positive and unbiased image of Islam and Muslims will hopefully be painted with the examination of the misrepresentation that stems from Naipaul's postcolonial tourism and surveillance. This research should be a valuable addition to existing works on the representation of Islam in western literature and hopefully propel future researchers into new avenues for understanding Naipaul and into new areas of inquiry of his work.

1.7 METHODS AND PROCEDURES

This dissertation will be conducted in a qualitative research form which requires many literary inquiries through extensive reading. In coming up with the topic and specific area of study, a topic of keen interest of mine, travel literature, is highlighted and a perusal of the books that are in the field uncovered a few issues that I feel need to be seriously addressed. The books selected for this study – *Among the Believers* and *Beyond Belief* – are part of the Western tradition of travel literature, and continue the long standing tradition of Orientalists in using the colonial gaze and lay a heavy emphasis on Eurocentrism. The books will then be studied in light of post-colonial discourse, which fits the time frame of Naipaul's travels to the four countries, and also postcolonial tourism and surveillance which Naipaul employs to represent the countries and the people he met.

To shed further light and gain understanding on the subjects, an online search on issues related to the book and of postcolonialism is conducted. An extensive reading of scholarly articles, books, interviews and other secondary materials on the books and Naipaul's related writings, the author himself and the theory in use, postcolonialism, will be undertaken. This study will undergo the traditional method of qualitative research for literature, which is reading first source materials, the selected texts, and secondary sources. Aside from that, as the study leans more towards being journal-based, articles will be retrieved from scholarly databases such as Britannica, JSTOR, Expanded Academic ASAP and others.

1.8 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.8.1 Introduction

In this thesis, while examining the two selected works of by Naipaul—*Among the Believers* and *Beyond Belief*—I will use the theory of cultural postcolonial tourism and surveillance to look at it from a postcolonial perspective. Using this particular theoretical framework will add a new angle and a new voice to existing discussion on Naipaul's works, as well as aid further understanding of the issues in the two texts.

1.8.2 Postcolonial tourism

Literature has been used in times of colonisation as an effort to construe other places and through literature, passages created channels to permeate colonial ideals and ideas. These travellers, through their literature and narrative, consolidate Western ways to view the world, with the West as the center of everything upright and civilised. As an author of travelogues, Naipaul falls under, and contributes to, the long tradition of Orientalist travelers and the writings of the Empire. As a tourist employing

surveillance, Naipaul is a neo-Orientalist, travelling in modern times, carrying the same techniques and chasing the same exoticism in former colonies.

Viewed in light of post-colonialism, tourism or travel can be argued to be the continuation of imperial exploration and an extension of the coloniser's expectation to possess by exploration. Travellers or tourists like Naipaul in contemporary times are coloured by preconceived ideas, stereotypes and expectations in much the same way as early travellers in the colonial era, and these are carried forth in their travels. As Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin (1998, p.90) state: "In effect, the tourist, ostensibly in search of the new, is actually seeking the already known" (1998, p.90). Travel writing about the cultures and societies observed then paves open a window which can allow readers to actually view their own minds rather than the place observed (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 1998, p.90).

As tourism is embedded in postcolonial relationships, it is imperative in the discourse of colonised places. Tourism, with its interaction with geography was an "agency for the consolidation of Empire" (Turner & Ash, 1975, p.58). Geography is an important element in tourism, as in twentieth century colonial times it was a means of imperial control and played a crucial role in founding the representation of non-European in the minds of imperialists. In its scientific methodology, geography functions to "establish and represent stereotypes of race, ethnicity, economy and culture that exist to the present day but which are being critically reevaluated in contemporary geographies of postcolonialism" (Hall & Tucker, 2004, p.7). The geography, environment and nature are shaped by the society that inhabits it through the construction of cultural practices. Writing about nature and a society's environment in one's travel writing is a technique of describing and commenting on its culture. Issues such as representation and identity are central to the nature of

tourism (Hall & Tucker, 2004, p.2). There are many instances in *Among the Believers* and *Beyond Belief* where Naipaul's representations of Islam and Muslims and culture use depictions of nature and his surroundings.

The relationship between colonialism and culture is a complex one, however close. The impacts of colonialism on cultural formation is often neglected or overlooked. Dirks (1995, p.4) contends that the parallel mutualities of colonialism and culture make for a difficult construct of historical narratives of cause and effect. As Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin (1998, p.58) state: "If culture itself, as an object of knowledge and a mode of knowledge about certain objects, was formed in relation to colonial histories, it is all the more difficult to recognize the ways in which specific cultural forms were themselves constituted out of colonial encounters." In the discourse of the colonised, the Orient and their customs, many writers have agreed upon the starting point of descriptions, which is to look at the basic differences and distinctions between the East and the West (Said, 1978, p.5, quoted in Hall & Tucker, 2004, p.8). This in turn ensures the colonised and the Orient to be the Other, and causes them to be viewed in the periphery of this binary representation. This binary and the othering of the Orient is essential in tourism. As Foster (1990), Pratt (1992), Spurr (1993), Hall (1998), Clark (1999) and Glage (2000) contend, accounts of exploration and travel in colonised lands was and still is interlinked with the representation of otherness (cited in Hall & Tucker, 2004). Narratives which document this style of representations gain a wide readership, and this further disseminates the coloniser's views of the colonised culture.

1.8.3 Surveillance

Surveillance is among the most effective and powerful stratagems in imperial dominance. It provides the viewer with an implicit high ground or vantage seat, which entails the power to understand, process and comment on what the viewer sees. Bullock in *Rethinking Muslim Women and the Veil* (2002) explains that in the colonial era, the world is an exhibit for visitors from the European world, or in other words, “museums of other cultures.” It has “taught them the hierarchy of nations, and the knowledge that they, the Europeans, were at the pinnacle of civilization” and provides them with power over the observed (Bullock, 2002, p.4, 12). This allows for the interpellation and objectification of the viewed subject, which is usually the colonised. The viewer adopts a colonial gaze and interprets what is seen according to colonial interest and understanding. Lacan emphasises the importance of the high vantage gaze since identity is achieved by the initial process which is the gaze of the mother in the mirror phase (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 1998, p.155 & 156). The identification, subjection, and objectification of the colonial subject are all sanctioned when this gaze corresponds to the “gaze of the *grande-autre*” (the grand Other). In other words, by this gaze, the identity of the subject is defined and objectified within the identifying system of power relations of the coloniser-colonised. The subject’s powerlessness, inferiority and subalterneity are established through this gaze (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 1998, p.155-156). Naipaul too adopts a similar lofty gaze in observing Muslims in his travels.

To understand the gaze and surveillance, Foucault (1995) promotes the ‘panopticon’, an eighteenth-century prison designed by Jeremy Bentham (1748 – 1832), and describes the profound significance of surveillance. The prison architecture panopticon describes a circular prison design which comprises divisions of individual

cells which can all be observed and guarded from a single point, and this allows for constant surveillance. Although the design was never actualised by Bentham, the concept was taken up by Foucault to describe the implications of power-knowledge in surveillance. According to him, the panopticon “must be understood as a generalisable model of functioning; a way of defining power relations in terms of the everyday life of men (Foucault, 1995, p.205). For the observer, sight equals to power, as the effectiveness of such constant surveillance assumes the observed, or the imprisoned will always conduct themselves as though under surveillance. Sight becomes a trap. For the observed, being in sight puts them in a situation of powerlessness and inferiority (Ashcroft, 1998).

When the observed is established as inferior, away from the center of power held by the observer, they become the ‘Other’. As ‘Othering’ occurs, the observed falls under colonial discourse, and interpreted as well as constructed in a myriad of ways, subjects of colonialism are produced (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 1998, p.156). ‘Othering’ further solidifies the binary of powerful-powerless, master-subject, superior-inferior, coloniser-colonised. In travel writing, the distinction of the observer and observed exists and is emphasised. Writers can construct ‘Others’ in order to confirm their own reality, or as mentioned before, their own preconceived ideas of the ‘Other’. This is due, in part, to Eurocentrism, which has been ingrained and drilled into the consciousness of the West for centuries. Eurocentrism explains “[t]he conscious or unconscious process by which Europe and European cultural assumptions are constructed as, or assumed to be, the normal, the natural or the universal” (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 1998, 84).

In colonialism, this surveillance results in conversion, in which the colonised readily accepts the coloniser’s view, and would produce behaviours that mimics the

coloniser. They will be “more English than the English” (Ashcroft, 1998, p.208) due to the subtle threat of moral and cultural exclusion and disapproval by the people in power. Such conversions, however, will be infused with resistance to imperial power that always wavers and is ambivalent and intermittent because of the exclusion, the existing hierarchy of power and status. Homi Bhabha (1991) argues that the colonised will be “[a]lmost the same but not white: the visibility of mimicry is always produced at the site of interdiction” (Bhabha, 1991, p.128).

Surveillance is a regular feature in travel writing. It became an important method used by European travellers to gain a wide ranging observation. This in turn becomes a representation of knowledge and power over the travelled lands and spaces. The writer always assumes the position at the center, or above the observed, and this causes the interpretation of the observation to fall under and according to the observer’s own system of value (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 1998, p.208). Together with the physical exploration of colonised lands, the construction and representation of other people’s values, customs, beliefs and culture are also taking place, from the viewpoint of the observer. Although they may not adhere to whole truths, the writings of the observer as a figure in authority have a high tendency to be readily and uncontestedly accepted.

1.9 OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS

This dissertation is divided into five chapters.

Chapter One: Introduction: Chapter One includes several paragraphs of introduction and statement of problems. This chapter covers the background of the study, explains the aims and objectives of the study, and informs readers of questions that might be raised from the objectives, in order to aid understanding of the direction