



India: A Million Mutinies Now

By V.S. Naipaul

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A New York Times Notable Book

Nobel laureate V. S. Naipaul's impassioned and prescient travelogue of his journeys through his ancestral homeland, with a new preface by the author.

Arising out of Naipaul's lifelong obsession and passion for a country that is at once his and totally alien, *India: A Million Mutinies Now* relates the stories of many of the people he met traveling there more than fifty years ago. He explores how they have been steered by the innumerable frictions present in Indian society—the contradictions and compromises of religious faith, the whim and chaos of random political forces. This book represents Naipaul's last word on his homeland, complementing his two other India travelogues, *An Area of Darkness* and *India: A Wounded Civilization*.

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India: A Million Mutinies Now By V.S. Naipaul Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Trinidadian journalist-novelist Naipaul stresses that much has changed since his 1962 trip to India, which yielded his darkly pessimistic book *India: A Wounded Civilization*. In this kaleidoscopic, layered travelogue, he portrays "a country of a million little mutinies," reeling with "rage and revolt," as percolating ideas of freedom shake loose the old moral ethos rooted in caste and class. Despite what he terms regional, religious and sectarian excesses, Naipaul sees possibilities for regeneration in the new freedoms, yet this skewed essay is fraught with bewilderment and sorrow as he reels off a familiar litany of problems--terrible poverty, shoddy manufactured goods, ugly neo-modern architecture, etc.--and comes to terms with his own past: his ancestors were indentured servants of Indian descent. Most interesting here are the dozens of first-person stories by Indians themselves, ranging from a wealthy young stockbroker to anti-religionists to a publisher of women's magazines. 50,000 first printing; \$50,000 ad/promo; author tour.

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From Library Journal

This book by the Trinidad-born Indian author of *A Turn in the South* (LJ 3/1/89) elicits pity, anger, disgust, and a sense of betrayal at India's development since Independence. It tells of an India gone wrong, filled with economic and political corruption. Violence between conflicting religions and a greedy society obsessed with self-interest has smashed the idealism and hope of Nehru's developing secular India. Unfortunately, Naipaul concentrates on urban life, interviewing business, religious, and mob leaders in Bombay, Madras, Calcutta, and Delhi while ignoring the rural villages where the majority of India's people live. The result is an unfocused work of social-political commentary that is fine for public libraries but adds nothing new to more specialized collections. Previewed in Prepub Alert, LJ 9/15/90-- John F. Riddick, Central Michigan Univ. Lib., Mt. Pleasant

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Review

"An intricate, splendid, and utterly memorable book."

—*The New York Times Book Review*

"Warm, human, rich with a cacophony of Indian voices, *India: A Million Mutinies Now* is about the passions and tragedies of a nation caught between the rush of modernity and the power of tradition. . . . An indispensable book for understanding India at the end of the 20th century."

—*The Washington Post*

"Brilliantly penetrating and shrewd. . . . Each story, evoked by Naipaul's sensitive and nuanced probing, reflects complexities and contradictions and gives us a glimpse, however tiny, of the mosaic totality that comprises India."

—*The Chicago Tribune*

"Beautifully written, intellectually satisfying. . . . Naipaul is a rare combination of born narrator, who brings to life the places and people he encounters."

—*Foreign Affairs*

"Compassionate. . . . Leaves the reader with a powerful sense of [a] people's dedication, perseverance and passion."

—*The New York Times*

“Travel writing, history, novel, lyric—Naipaul’s book partakes of the excellence of every category and fulfills itself in one of the oldest and rarest of forms—prophecy. It bears witness, in unforgettable language, to the best of hopes in the worst of times.”

—*The Christian Science Monitor*

“Naipaul has retired the familiar, infuriating, immobile face of India and painted a fresh one of human spirit and dramatic change.”

—*Time*

“A shifting kaleidoscope of images of a country almost impossible to imagine, but made more comprehensible due to Naipaul’s formidable intelligence and prodigious narrative gifts.”

—*Boston Sunday Herald*

“Naipaul creates his India slowly, through whole life-stories told in the characters’ own voices. . . . The detail is wonderful, built up with impeccable care.”

—*The Economist*

“[Naipaul] has invaluable revealed the brink on which India now stands, the sources of all that rage and all those little mutinies. . . . There is a powerful feeling of change in this book.”

—*Los Angeles Times*

“Compelling, almost hypnotic. . . . A rich, multilayered portrait of a nation we know far too little about in the West. You will feel you have learned much about India, yet you will sense how much more—how very much more—remains to be learned.”

—*Seattle Times*

“Authentic. . . . These narratives record, in human terms, the rich and disturbing diversity of contemporary India. . . . Extraordinary.”

—*Newsday*

“There is a great temptation to quote too much of Naipaul, for in reading the novelist, essayist and travel writer we realize the accuracy of those who consider him one of the finest writers in the language; a man with intense intellectual curiosity, as well as an inherited sympathy for inhabitants of the Third World.”

—*The Oregonian*

“A superb raga of a book, a raga of morning curiosity and evening meditation. . . . This may be [Naipaul’s] most generous work, and his best non-fiction.”

—*The San Diego Union-Tribune*

“An absorbing journey through the mind of India. . . . *Mutinies* will surprise those who have read and ranted at Naipaul’s earlier books on India.”

—*St. Petersburg Times*

“Brilliant.”

—*The Spectator* (London)

“In-depth. . . . Beautifully written, this book gives a personal look at the societal and political forces pushing

for change in the country.”

—*Minneapolis Star Tribune*

“Prescient. . . . Naipaul’s intuitions and indefatigable on-the-spot research were well ahead of the academic reaction. . . . [He is] a writer who will always be read—and not just by academics—for his intelligence and insight and for the clarity and elegance of his style.”

—*The Times Higher Education Supplement*

“One of the most intelligent writers of our time. . . . Naipaul’s word-pictures of India are lyrical, spare, precise and vivid. . . . He succeeds—brilliantly—in integrating India’s individual truths with a larger picture of the country.”

—*The Toronto Star*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

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