

## Topological Tropology of V.S. Naipaul's Islamic Travelogues and Daniel Pipes' Islamic History: Ahistorical Historicism

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**Abstract:** Nobel laureate V. S. Naipaul's (1932-2018) first Islamic travelogue *Among the Believers: An Islamic Journey* (1981) contains his experience of a visit from August 1979 to February 1980 to the four non-Arab Muslim-majority countries – Iran, Pakistan, Malaysia, and Indonesia. Similarly, his last Islamic travelogue *Beyond Belief: Islamic Excursions among the Converted Peoples* (1998) has a description of another visit to the same countries for five-month in 1995. Concurrently, Daniel Pipes (1949-), an American historian, published his doctoral dissertation, *Slave Soldiers and Islam: The Genesis of a Military System* (1981), which represents Islamic culture as the first instigator of military slavery in the world. Then, he wrote an analysis of modern Islamic history *In the Path of God: Islam and Political Power* (1983), which historicizes Islam as a politically failed force all over the world. These travelogues and history are generically different. But a common topological relationality can be mapped in the anecdotes of Naipaul's travelogues and the historiography of Pipes' history, as they use identical tropological configurations to historicize Islamic cultures. This similar tropological historiography, this article argues, is covertly an offshoot of the contemporary spatiotemporal context in which they were produced. The context was networked by certain ideological implications, ethnocentrism, and some cultural misapprehensions regarding Islamic/Muslim culture, making the historicism of both Naipaul and Pipes seem ahistorical.

## Md. HABIBULLAH

### Topological Tropology of V.S. Naipaul's Islamic Travelogues and Daniel Pipes' Islamic History: Ahistorical Historicism

Because we cannot directly encounter the past [...], we employ a narrative fulfilling a two-fold function, as both a surrogate for the past and as a medium of exchange in our active engagement with it. History is thus a class of literature.

— Alun Munslow, *Deconstructing History*

#### Introduction

Nobel laureate V.S. Naipaul (1932-2018) visited a large part of the world and observed the amazing variety and strangeness of cultural history of different ethnic groups and places. This experience of cultural plurality encouraged him to be a quintessential traveler who seeks out others' voices and stories of various regions, including India, the Caribbean Islands, and some African and Muslim countries. The idea of traveling to certain Muslim countries came to Naipaul on a winter evening during the Iranian Revolution (1979) while he was watching television news in Connecticut, USA (Naipaul, *Among* 12). The television was taking interviews of some Iranians who were staying in the USA at that time. These interviewees were proud of the Iranian Revolution but reflected inconsistency in their behaviors. For example, according to Naipaul, one interviewee seemed to project a sophisticated image of himself, wearing a tweed jacket and using pure Marxist jargon, but he makes odd claims (12). Such inconsistency in the interviewees reminded Naipaul of the revolutionary incidents in Iran as he states: "As interesting to me as the events in Iran were the Iranians in the United States who were interviewed on some of the programmes" (12). Such interest encouraged him to visit some Muslim countries with the aim of exploring how Islam affects the socio-political functioning of these countries (104).

Thus, he first visited Iran which was politically unstable due to the revolution; then he traveled to Pakistan, which was under military dictatorship, and Malaysia, which was experiencing racial tensions; and the last country he visited was Indonesia, that was also under military dictatorship. Although this journey took seven months only, i.e., from August 1979 to February 1980, its experience furnishes the main source of Naipaul's narrative in *Among the Believers: An Islamic Journey* (1981). The travelogue seems to be completely under the spell of the dichotomy between the real life-implementation of Islam and its idealized theory. Consequently, the travelogue creates intrigue among critics regarding the in/authenticity of its narrative. The detractors regard it as an anti-Islamic propaganda while its defenders put Naipaul on a pedestal as an insightful interpreter of suppressed Islamic history and culture.

Like other defenders of the Naipaulian travel narrative, Daniel Pipes (1949- ), an American historian and the president of the Middle East Forum, eulogized Naipaul's travel accounts in *Among the Believers*, with the following words: "An exceptional [excellent] analysis of Islam in politics, written by someone outside the Orientalist traditions, is V.S. Naipaul's account of his travels in 1979-80 in several Muslim countries" (*In the Path* 24). He also wants to offer historical analysis of the interrelationship between Islam and politics and its consequent effects in the world in general, and in the Muslim countries in particular, from the premodern to modern times. Accordingly, Pipes published his doctoral dissertation, *Slave Soldiers and Islam: The Genesis of a Military Slavery* (1981), which proclaims: "Certain features of the political and military order [in premodern times] – military slavery in particular – can be understood only in the light of Islam" (Naipaul, *Slave* 4). Eventually, it tries to characterize Islamic culture as the first instigator of military slavery in the world. Then, he presents a historical analysis of the interconnectivity between Islam and the current political affairs of Muslim countries in *In the Path of God: Islam and Political Power* (1983), which, like *Among the Believers*, states: "This book grew out of an interest in the political role of Islam" (Pipes, *In the Path* 25) in the 1970s. The book also represents a historical analysis of how and why Islam, as a political force, has been failing all over the Muslim countries, just as *Among the Believers* does in terms of the four Muslim-majority countries. Pipes supports and refers to the background of Naipaul's travel in these countries: "Naipaul's curiosity [about Islam] was piqued during the Iranian Revolution when he observed the inconsistencies of Iranians living in the United States trying to explain events in their home country" (*In the Path* 133). Thus, Pipes refers many times to *Among the Believers* to justify his historiographic argument. Such intertextuality encourages me in this article to find out the topological relation between these texts in terms of identical topological configurations used in the texts.

The Cold War (1947-1991) was over as the communist Soviet Union collapsed in 1991. As a result, Western politicians felt a psychological "threat vacuum" (Esposito 2) to forge the post-Cold War world order. Such opponentlessness instigated Western political thought to construct a new global enemy; this enemy might be Muslims who "number about 832 million strong and make up roughly one-fifth of mankind" and "control most of the oil" and "the globe's most strategic areas" (Pipes, *In the Path* 4). The media, (non-)fictions, and historiography aggravated this construct. Michael E. Salla argues: "The end of the Cold War and the collapse of the USSR[...] led to claims that the spread of political Islam marks the onset of a new cold war where the West's liberal democratic norms are pitted against the religious revivalist norms of political Islam" (729). Given this putative genesis of the new cold war between political Islam and the West, Naipaul revisited Iran, Malaysia, Pakistan, and Indonesia for five months in 1995 in order to scrutinize the effects of this conversion. This experience is portrayed in the last Islamic travelogue *Beyond Belief: Islamic Excursions Among Converted Peoples* (1998).

The last travelogue, like the first one, created controversy among the critics regarding its un/trustworthy interpretation of Islamic cultures and Muslims. However, Pipes expressed support for the last travelogue, in his article "Beyond Belief: V. S. Naipaul" (1998). In this article, Pipes first reiterates his praise for the first travelogue *Among the Believers*: "His [Naipaul's] reports from Iran, Pakistan, Malaysia, and Indonesia had a quirky but brilliant quality" ("Beyond" 1). Then, regarding Naipaul's *Beyond Belief*, Pipes argues: "His travels this time dwell less on internal contradictions and more on the widespread feeling that things have gone amiss" (1). Moreover, referring to Naipaulian assumption about the substitution of the Soviet Union with the Muslim world and particularly with Iran in the post-Cold War period, Pipes agrees: "Like residents of the Soviet Union in the 1980s, too, this is a people [Iranian Muslims] worn out by their history and their current misery" (1). The cause of such textual mediation between Naipaul and Pipes can be interpreted by Hayden White's "theory of the historical work", elaborated in his *Metahistory* (1973).

White writes: "I begin by distinguishing among the following levels of conceptualization in the historical work: (1) chronicle, (2) story, (3) mode of emplotment, (4) mode of argument, and (5) mode of ideological implication" (*Metahistory* 5). In other words, historians first chronicle the past events in the temporal order from the historical sources and the historical field; then, selecting some events, they organize them into a story so that it has a discernible beginning, middle, and end; and finally, they transform it into the historical work by providing a distinctive shape to the story through emplotment, appropriating the historical accounts through formal argument, and prescribing ethical, moral and political suggestions through ideological implications. The first two stages – chronicle and story – have direct contact with the "unprocessed historical record" and, thus, can be considered the exterior articulations of the historical work. On the other hand, emplotment, argument, and ideological implication together constitute the final stage as they are complementary "modes of explanation" or "explanatory strategies" and exclusively belong to the interior articulations. These modes of explanation are determined by some ontological presuppositions at a "deep level" (White, *Metahistory* 157) in the historian's mind. The use of these prefigured suppositions in historiography is generally known as tropology.

A unit of tropology is called trope which is a rhetorical figure to ornament oratory or writing. The number and definition of these tropes are different across disciplines. This article follows Hayden White's fourfold tropology and definition – "metaphor" that identifies similarity and difference, "metonymy" that locates cause-effect relationship, "synecdoche" that figures out essentialization and generalization, and "irony" that presupposes an awareness of the distinction between true and false and accordingly offers the possibility of presenting a lie as truth (*Metahistory* x). These tropes are also called "the deep structural forms of the historical imagination" (Paul 7) that are cornerstones on which the modes of explanation re/constitute historical events in such a way that these events seem familiar, real, and true to their readers. These tropes, Hayden White argues, are influenced by the "historiographical/historical consciousness" that is "men's relationship with their worlds, social and natural" ("Tropics" 199) conditions, in which the historians live. Accordingly, the tropological historiography of both Naipaul and Pipes seems to be fashioned by the identical spatiotemporal context in which they live and a topological relationality between their historiography is logically conjectured. Topology is the science of mapping any relationality and is used in various fields including the mathematics of continuous spaces, the philosophy of space, graph theory, and the study of commonplace rhetoric. But "a literary topology is one concerned above all else with textual relationality" (Piper 378). In other words, topology means mapping textual relationality among the characters within a text or between texts from the lexical molecules of any word to the metanalytical configurations of publication, genre, and so on. "Topologies can also be important tools for thinking about historical knowledge" (Piper 386) as topologies can map

tropes, terms, patterns, and structure within different historiography and, then, suggest affinities within them. In this sense, this article coins the term "Topological Tropology," defined below.

### **Topological Tropology**

Topological tropology is a mapped multidimensional relationality between and among the literary, historical, or the literary-historical texts on the basis of tropes used in these texts. It is like the navigated edges and nodes of a historical graph that draws the historiography of different authors into a relational universe. It is one of the results of interpreting any text from the plural point of view rather than a centralized single point of view, that offers to the readers a new insight into the invisible communicative interconnection between the authors and the spatiotemporal context in which they live. Accordingly, when the tropes of Naipaul's anecdotal historiography and Pipes' historiography are mapped, a relationality between their tropological historiography concerning Islamic culture can be figured out. This mapped relationality of tropes can be called topological tropology that is one of the consequences of identical politico-cultural influence on both Naipaul and Pipes. This politico-cultural context was networked by certain ideological implications, ethnocentrism, and some cultural prejudices concerning Islamic culture, that influenced Naipaul's anecdote and Pipes' historiography to such a high degree, that their historicism seems ahistorical.

### **Ahistorical Historicism**

Ahistoricism refers to a lack of concern for historical context, historiographic strategies for the historical reality, and plurality of historical voices and sources for the historical inquiry. David Pepper states: "It [ahistoricism] can also describe a person's failure to frame an argument or issue in a historical context or to disregard historical fact or implication" (143). Accordingly, "ahistorical historicism" implies the interpretation of historical persons, nations or events in historically distorted, twisted, and thus, inaccurate way while it purports to be authentic and objective in its representation. It is often attributed to many (Neo-)Orientalists who are engaged in misrepresenting the history of Muslim societies. Ali Behdad and Juliet Williams define it as "the selective, myopic, and misleading historical contextualization of complex facets of Muslim societies" (*Globalizing* 289). Similarly, Hossein Nazari calls it a "simplistic historicization" of Muslim society, that "often end[s] up distorting the historical facticity of intricate sociopolitical phenomena by reducing them to stereotypical snippets of reality" (275). Thus, ahistorical historicism is a form of dehistoricized historiography, rhetorical version of historical reality, historicized fictional elements, and politico-culturally biased historicization although it seems historically sound. Such ahistorical elements of Naipaul's travelogues and Pipes' history become obvious in two generic approaches – "historiographic metafiction" as coined by Linda Hutcheon (105) and rhetorical historiography.

### **Historiographic Metafiction**

Topological tropology demonstrates ways of visualizing a latent presence of one text's tropes in another text. Accordingly, it illustrates that many tropes of Naipaul's travelogues become identical with that of Pipes' history in terms of fictional sources. In this sense, these travelogues and history may be considered historiographic metafiction.

Historiographic metafiction is a postmodern form of fiction that combines the literary quality of fiction and the discursive elements of history. Such mixture makes the fiction so dependent on the discourse of history that Monika Fludernik calls it "historical metafiction" (81). In view of this definition, Naipaulian travelogues seem to be historiographic metafiction as these texts cover fictional elements as per their generic scope. Thomas Swick claims: "[Travelogue] incorporates the characters and plot line of a novel, the descriptive power of poetry, the substance of a history lesson, the discursiveness of an essay, and the – often inadvertent – self-revelation of a memoir" (qtd. in Ozola 2). Accordingly, in order to substantiate his historiography as regards the first Muslim invasion of India by Muhammad bin Qasim, Naipaul, in the chapter "Killing History" of *Among the Believers* (131-140), refers to *Chachnama*. This is a Persian text written five hundred years after the conquest of Sind by Muslim rulers and stays at the generic crossroads of history and fiction. Based on this text, Naipaul claims that although the Brahmin of Debal asked Bin Qasim for mercy, he did not pay heed as "Hijab has issued precise instructions for this first victory: the residents of Debal are not to be spared. The Arab army has to slaughter for three days: this is what Bin Qasim tells the people of Debal" (*Among* 138). This fact Naipaul highlights while he does not mention another chronicle of *Chachnama* that Bin Qasim invaded Sind in order to release Muslim women who were held captive in a captured ship. This reason for the invasion of Bin Qasim is also reiterated by T.N. Madan in his *Modern Myths, Locked Minds* (2009).



Thus, crossing the generic border, these travelogues use anecdotal historiography and fictional elements in a way that the line between travelogue, history, and fiction is blurred. Fictional and historical elements are transposed in these travelogues by dint of tropological configurations that make the travel narrative seem like historiographic metafiction. Like these travelogues, Norman Mailer's (1923-2007) non-fictional novel *The Armies of the Night* (1968) contains both fictional and historical elements and, accordingly, is subtitled *History as Novel/The Novel as History*. That is why, Linda Hutcheon regards this Mailer's non-fiction as historiographic metafiction (117). Thus, this article regards the Naipaulian travelogues, even though they are non-fictional works, as historiographic metafictions.

Pipes' texts can also be considered fiction although these texts are generically known as history. Paul Veyne argues that the past events are transformed into the historical work by dint of "a prior conceptualization, necessarily eliminating, restructuring and reconstituting events" (71). So, "history is continuously demystified in postmodern fiction, action whose purpose is to argue that history is nothing but fiction, subject to constant reviewing, correcting, revision, and victim of falsification and misunderstanding" (Chirobocea 200). Accordingly, Pipes's historical writing can be construed as fiction. For instance, he, like Naipaul, refers to *Chachnama* to historicize the Islamic use of slave soldiers while Muhammad bin Qasim was invading India. He writes: "On an expedition to the east, an Arabian commander had three brave slaves with him, one of whom he retained to bear his arms, and the other two he appointed as officers in the army, each being made the leader of 500 men" (*Slave* 116). But *Chachnama* is a controversial text as it is often used to perpetuate the myth of Hindu-Muslim historic inimical relationship in India. Accordingly, Meena Kandasamy considers it to be "more unbelievable than even a devilish fairytale." Thus, Pipes' historiography sometimes mixes fictional elements with history.

Textual mediations between fiction and history become so prevalent in historiographic metafiction that the generic identity of both fiction and history is gradually blurred. Hutcheon observes: "Fiction and history are narratives distinguished by their frames, frames which historiographic metafiction first establishes and then crosses, positing both the generic contracts of fiction and of history" (106). Accordingly, Naipaul's travelogues and Pipes' history are cross-fertilization and even cross-pollination of each other in terms of their corresponding tropology. For example, Naipaul represents a specific kind of rage as the cause of the Iranian Revolution in 1979. For Naipaul, this rage was begotten by both Islam and Iranian national pride when ancient Persia/Iran had forcefully been converted to Islam by Arab imperialism in the early seventh century AD; since then, this rage has survived in Iran (*Among* 3-9). This twisted cause is reflected briefly by Naipaul in the characterization of his first guide, Sadeq, when Naipaul states: "I saw him as a man of simple origins, simply educated, but with a sneering pride, deferential but resentful, not liking himself for what he was doing. He was the kind of man who, without political doctrine, only with resentments, had made the Iranian Revolution" (*Among* 3). Thus, Naipaul's anecdote demonstrates how Islam causes the Iranian Revolution. Such formation of a cause-effect relationship between two entities in historiography is known as metonymy, a tropological configuration.

Similar metonymic comprehension also reflects in the Pipesian understanding of the interconnection between Islam and the Iranian Revolution. He claims that the Iranian Revolution is no way caused by social unrest, economic crisis, political instability and repression, and any charismatic leadership (*In the Path* 5); rather, Islam manipulates this revolution as "Islam, like other religions, inspires impractical acts" (*In the Path* 7).

The cause of this identical tropology in both Naipaulian and Pipesian historiography can be discovered by the new historicism theory as defined by Luis Montrose. Montrose summarizes this theory as "the historicity of texts and the textuality of history" (20). In other words, historians "have no access to a full and authentic past" although enough unprocessed historical record is available at a given time and culture; from this historical record, the historian (re)selects and (re)arranges historical data as per "the cultural specificity, [and] the social embedment" of his/her society; so, the consequent historical work is a partial result of "complex and subtle social processes of preservation and effacement"; nevertheless, it is textually mediated by the next historians (Montrose 20). Accordingly, while composing their texts, both Naipaul and Pipes were influenced by the spatiotemporal context in which "the Western world watched [the Iran hostage crisis in 1979 and subsequent Iranian Revolution] with amazement: Islam seemed capable of unleashing the most extraordinary forces" (Pipes, *In the Path* 9). Such politico-cultural discourse develops dialogic interactions between Naipaul's travelogues and Pipes' history concerning the interrelationship between Islam and the Iranian Revolution. But such dialogic interaction regarding any historical discourse cannot claim any truth according to historiographic metafiction that represents both history and fiction as human discourses and constructs. Such discursive history should be understood by the plurality of reading and interpretation rather than a single fixed one.

Accordingly, alternative narratives regarding the interrelationship between Islam and the Iranian Revolution destabilize the master narrative of both Naipaul and Pipes. As such, Reza Baraheni attributes

this revolution to "the American client regime": in 1953, a democratically elected government under Mohammed Mossadegh was terminated by a CIA sponsored coup that installed the shah regime whose secret police were trained and equipped by the CIA and inhumanely tortured many political prisoners (5). This is also what Noam Chomsky and Edward S. Herman claim in *The Washington Connection and Third World Fascism* (1979). But both Naipaul and Pipes sidestep this history. Even, Naipaul's anecdote praises the Iranian Shah regime with the phrase, "glittering time of Shah" (*Beyond* 242). Thus, Naipaulian travelogues and Pipesian history cannot produce any objective truth rather than a camouflage of truth as historiographic metafiction "derive their force more from verisimilitude than from any objective truth" (Hutcheon 122). Consequently, their historiography seems ahistorical.

The dialogic interactions between fiction and history often become complementary in historiographic metafiction. Linda Hutcheon states: "History and fiction have always been notoriously porous genres, of course" (106). Such porosity results in a mutual overlapping and intertextuality between Naipaul's travelogues and Pipes' historiography. For instance, Naipaul refers to a doctor – a character in an English novel *Foreigner* (1978) written by Nahid Rachlin, an Iranian-American novelist; the doctor represents the cultural features of Iran as he resented and vilified the USA while he was trained in the USA and expected to use its medical equipment (*Among* 14-15). Referring to this Naipaulian fictional doctor, Pipes agrees: "In a novel by an Iranian, he [Naipaul] read about a physician trained in the United States who denounced the 'emptiness' of life there. Yet this doctor looked to the West for the methods and tools of his profession" (*In the Path* 133). This Iranian physician's expectation – using the American technology and despising its civilization – is considered a fault of Islamic civilization by Naipaul who states: "That expectation – of others continuing to create, of the alien, necessary civilization going on – is implicit in the act of renunciation, and is its great flaw" (*Among* 15). Taking it one step further, Pipes regards such duality of Islamic civilization as the conflict between modernization and Islam and as a cause of fundamentalism in Islam. He argues: "Conflict between the Shari'a and modernization encourages some Muslims, the fundamentalists, to believe that they can become modern without Westernizing" (*In the Path* 23). That the two texts echo each other does not ensure the authenticity of information as per the function of historiographic metafiction. Hutcheon suggests: "Historiographic metafiction plays upon the truth and lies of the historical record" (114).

Accordingly, the criticism of both Naipaul and Pipes concerning the Muslims' simultaneous rejection of Western civilization and attraction to Western technology will be a paradoxical truth – neither authentic nor inauthentic – if it is judged by "Dependency Theory" (Ashcroft et al. 67). According to this theory, manifest colonialism accumulated huge capital by exploiting the Muslim countries which can never forget this fact. By using this capital, the West innovated and invented different technologies that have given birth to the modern civilization in the West. By dint of the capital extracted, technology, and modern civilization, the West operates a capitalistic market globally in the post-colonial world. This global capitalism is regarded by Muslims as a weapon of neo-imperialism. But Muslims, as citizens of this current globalized world, cannot avoid the capitalistic open market economy. This fact is represented negatively on the figurative level in both Pipes' historiography and Naipaul's anecdote. But it is positively affirmed on the literal level as Muslims are technologically marginalized and look forward to obtaining Western technology. Such figuration of negating the positive information in historiography, namely irony as a trope, illustrates a tropological relationality between Naipaul's travelogues and Pipes' history.

Such tropological relationality can be mapped due to the identical ideological stance of Naipaul and Pipes, since "every representation of the past has specifiable ideological implications" (White, "Historical Text" 69). These implications work as per "the Foucauldian conjunction of power and knowledge-for readers and history itself as a discipline" (Hutcheon 120) in historiographic metafiction. Accordingly, the historiographic metafictional works of both Naipaul and Pipes are engaged in one kind of representational power-politics that portrays Muslims as the ignorant subaltern. Edward Said comments acridly that both Pipes and Naipaul represent Islam in such an intellectual way as if they knew Islam more than Islam knows itself ("Reconsidered" 90). These omniscient narratives of both Naipaul and Pipes pretend to assist the subaltern Muslims through historical representation, arguing that Muslims have been suffering from the want of self-representation and self-realization. Naipaul claims: "[Muslim]people develop fantasies about who and what they are" (*Beyond* 1). In this regard, Pipes agrees with and refers to H.A.R. Gibb (1895-1971) and Gustave E. von Grunebaum (1909-1972). H.A.R. Gibb stated in 1942: "I have not yet seen a single book written by an Arab of any branch in any Western language" (60). Five years later, Gustave E. von Grunebaum commented: "This statement could be extended to include the non-Arab Muslim and his failure to interpret his culture to both himself and the West" (185). Then Pipes emphasizes: "Another thirty-six years later, this situation has not fundamentally changed" (*In the Path* 25). So, the historiography of both Naipaul and Pipes seems a strategic narrative that works for the power. As a result, their historiography appears ahistorical.

### Rhetorical Historiography

Tropology is one kind of rhetorical strategy as tropes are parts of rhetoric. Rhetoric, in the field of history, generally refers to historiographic techniques of argumentation that provokes the mind of audiences to believe the meaning, understanding, knowledge, and truth that history aims to convey. Accordingly, rhetorical historiography explores how rhetorical tropes determine and manipulate the conceptualizing processes of historiography in the works of both Naipaul and Pipes in order to respond to the potential audiences and politico-cultural agencies.

To historicize the etymology of the phrase "rhetorical historiography," it is worth mentioning that history and rhetoric, as separate disciplines, had started their journey in the hands of Greek in the middle of the fifth century B.C. Gradually, historiography could not influence rhetoric in as varied and extensive a way as rhetoric impacted historiography. This widespread practice of rhetoric in the historiographic process was termed as the "oratorical method" (102) by the first British rhetorician Adam Smith. Rhetoric is regarded as the icing on the cake of history as it ornaments not only the outward form and seamliness of history but also its essential role – conveying knowledge of the past as it was. By rhetoric, Donald Bryant means, "the rationale of the informative and suasive in discourse" (14). Accordingly, rhetorical historiography exposes how and why the persuasive argumentation in historiographic discourse is constructed by any historian and to what extent this argumentation is able to persuade readers. The rhetorical historiography of both Naipaul and Pipes is interpreted here by the three rationales of rhetoric – rhetoric of history, rhetoric of the past, and rhetoric of collective memory – as suggested by Bruce E. Gronbeck (1).

The rhetoric of history, as the first rationale, establishes an interrelationship between historical narratives and interpretive arguments (Gronbeck 3). This rhetorical function in historiography is identified by Spengler as *nacheinanderung* or one- after-anotherness and *nebeneinanderung* or relationships between simultaneous events (qtd.in Hexter 19). Broadly speaking, the past cannot be discovered completely as it has to be accessed only through memory, documentary, and iconic traces which are fragmented and scattered. Among these dispersed events, some events are selected on the basis of the interrelationship among them and finally chronicled one after another so that these events seem a collection of stories. This process is called historical narrative. Key to this narrativization is the rhetorical construction of context that makes the interpretive arguments of the past flow naturally from its story. Hayden White argues: "The informing presupposition of contextualism is that events can be explained by being set within the 'context' of their occurrence. Why they occurred as they did is explained by the revelation of the specific relationships, they bore to other events occurring in the circumambient historical space" (*Metahistory* 17). Such contexts are constructed by two rhetorical techniques – bracketing spatiotemporal boundary and setting causal relation between context and events (Gronbeck 3). In other words, any historian frames segments of time and space that are supposed to be interpreted and to be turned into historical discourse; and he makes a particular context that seems necessary and sufficient to understand the events from the past under scrutiny.

This rhetorically constructed context works as a mechanism of coherence for, and a way of looking at, the past in the historical narrative. Kellner argues: "Historical narrative exists to make continuous what is discontinuous; it covers the gaps in time, in action, in documentation, even when it points to them" (55). Naipaul's narrative sometimes misses to cast a context and a consequent sense of denaturalization seems noticeable in his historical arguments. For instance, in his last travelogue, Naipaul seems obsessed with the culture of the converted people who want to reject their past culture after conversion to Islam. He writes: His [the convert's] idea of history alters. He rejects his own[....] The convert has to turn away from everything that is his" (*Beyond* 27). Similarly, at the sight of whole-hearted submission of Indonesian converted people to Islam, Naipaul comments: "Converted peoples have to strip themselves of their past; of converted peoples, nothing is required but the purest faith (if such a thing can be arrived at), Islam, submission" (*Beyond* 72). These converts' willing suspension of the past culture is metaphorically compared by Naipaul to the imperial cultural coercion. He claims: "It [Islam] makes imperial demands" (*Beyond* 27) and "it is the most uncompromising kind of imperialism" (*Beyond* 72). But this metaphor, as a trope, seems less successful in contextualization as the social context of converted Muslims and the historical context of imperialism are not the same at all. Simply speaking, imperialism means a hegemonic persistence and rampant exploitation while Islam, as a religion, demands devotion to Allah from its adherents who do not face any compulsion and enforcement for it. Moreover, not only Islam as a religion but also "all ideologies, whether social, political, economic or religious, are in essence totalizing in their demands from their adherents [....] This is certainly not unique to Islam. It is equally true of fascism, capitalism, and socialism, Hinduism or Zionism" (Bakari



245). Consequently, Naipaul's metaphorical comparison between imperialism and Islam looks ahistorical.

Likewise, Pipes' rhetorical construction of context eludes to create a sense of naturalization in his historiographic arguments. In this vein, Pipes argues that military slavery is one of the most unique phenomena in Muslim political history in which slave soldiers constituted the military and administrative structure (*Slave* xix). Even, sometimes, a slave became the head of the government. This kind of slavery started systematically in the ninth-century Baghdad to meet the demand of armies of the Abbasid Caliphate; then, this system spread to all the successors of the Abbasid dynasty in the Middle East, North Africa, Spain, Iran, India and even Ottoman Empire (Pipes, *Slave* xix). This system, according to him, developed as Muslims had withdrawn their support from the corrupt government and refused to be recruited in the military. Consequently, the Muslim kings were compelled to recruit these slave soldiers (*Slave* 9).

Similar narratives are found in Hodgson's *The Venture of Islam* (1975) and in Patricia Crone's *Slaves on Horses* (1980). But Pipes' narrative is a bit different, as he generalizes it to say that military slavery is an Islamic or Islamicate institution because it is the by-product of non-implementation of the Islamic values and precepts (*Slave* 93). Such generalization in historiography is called synecdoche as a trope. This synecdochic comprehension of Islam as a source of military slavery seems less convincing as the recruiting kings of military slaves were so corrupt and non-Islamic that many Muslims hated these kings. Is it right to argue generally now that the USA, having a Christian President, waged war in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria, and therefore, these wars were the results of the non-implementation of Christian values?

Indeed, military slavery existed in Muslim regimes but it did not stem from Islamic precepts. Rather, "it may be considered an original adaptation of pre-Islamic Soghdian, Sassanian, and Meccan precedents, Arab concepts of clientage, Muslim legal definition of slavery, and the early Islamic-era use of slave and other unfree forces to resolve the military needs of the Abbasid dynasty" (Lapidus 776). C. E. Bosworth also agrees that Military slavery might have been known in the Sasanian period (224 CE–650 CE) when the last Persian lineage of rulers had ruled over much of Western Asia before Islam (508). This spatiotemporal boundary within which military slavery started seems dislocated in Pipes' rhetorical contextualization as it attributes this slavery to Islam.

Rhetoric of the past, that is the second rationale of rhetoric as designed by Bruce E. Gronbeck, appropriates the past for presentist purposes by dint of its genetic and analogical arguments (Gronbeck 5). The genetic argument traces an idea, concept, pattern of activity, or valuative commitment to its originary time and place, and the analogical arguments are made on the basis of comparison between any particular case from the past and the other previously familiar cases (Gronbeck 5). These genetic and analogical arguments are constructed by the rhetorical tropes in order to make the past a useful tool at the present for promising glory or shame and ease or difficulties for the subject historicized.

Accordingly, Naipaul's rhetorical historiography seems to elucidate the clash of Islamic culture with democracy or self-government by both genetic and analogical arguments. For example, being asked by Mr. Mirza in Pakistan, Naipaul answers that he wants to explore to what extent Islam is applied to the three branches of Muslim governments – legislative, executive, and judicial (*Among* 113). Accordingly, when he visits Pakistan ruled by Zia-Ul-Haq (1924-1988), he criticizes Islam saying that Islam is full of laws but devoid of any political rules. Accordingly, "only faith seemed to be whole; and in the vacuum only the army could rule [in Pakistan]" (Naipaul, *Among* 118). Similarly, during the Malaysian tour, he argues that "corruption, giving commission under the counter, taking people out, giving them ladies, condoning immoral actions to get contracts" (*Beyond* 392) are frequent practices in politics. Then, in terms of Indonesia, he states: "Islam sanctified rage – rage about the faith, political rage" (*Among* 349). Finally, Naipaul generalizes: "This late-twentieth century Islam appeared to raise political issues[....] [But] it offered only the faith. It offered only the Prophet, who would settle everything – but who had ceased to exist" (*Among* 355). Thus, Naipaul's genetic argument identifies the originary time of Islamic incompatibility with democracy and this originary time and the current time of political failure of Islam are compared by his analogical argument.

The Naipaulian rhetoric regarding Islam's incompatibility with democracy is supported by Pipes. He refers to Naipaul's question to an Indonesian fundamentalist: "Are not you saying Islam has failed[politically]?". In reply, the fundamentalist claims: "No, not Islam. The People. The Muslims" (*In the Path* 136; *Among* 378). Accordingly, Pipes metaphorically matches Muslims to Marxists and emphasizes that the predicament of Muslims resembles that of the Marxists who believe that "the fault must lie with communists, not communism" (*In the Path* 136). Like Naipaul's rhetoric, Pipes' one uses analogical arguments in historiography concerning the political failure of Islam. For example, his chapter "The Islamic Revival: A Survey of Countries" (*In the Path* 203) provides a review of political events in

all the Muslim-majority countries including Afghanistan, Algeria, Bangladesh, Egypt, Guinea, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Libya, Maldives, Pakistan, and Indonesia from the late 1960s to the spring of 1983. He compares this finding with that of Naipaul who generalized earlier: "There were no political rules [in Islam] because the faith was meant to create only believers" (*Among* 107; *In the Path* 129). At last, Pipes generalizes that Islam in the 1970s affected the "electoral politics in democracies such as Turkey, India, Malaysia, and Indonesia[....]Islam [also] heightened domestic tensions in Nigeria, the Sudan, Egypt, Syria, Iraq, and Burma" (*In the Path* 3). Such synecdochic perception of Islam's incompatibility with democracy is nothing new; rather, it is the Western Classical Orientalist claim that Islam, albeit a pervasive faith, cannot establish real democracy or self-government.

Such classical Orientalism is found in the lecture given by Arthur James Balfour, former private secretary to Lord Salisbury and Member of Parliament. Balfour states on 13 June 1910 in the House of Commons regarding the problems of contemporary Egyptian colony: "You may look through the whole history of Orientals in what is called, broadly speaking, the East, and you never find traces of self-government" (qtd. in Said, *Orientalism* 31). In this sense, the historiography of both Naipaul and Pipes can be called "Neo-Orientalism" as they, like Neo-Orientalists, show the "continuity between contemporary and traditional forms of Orientalism" (Behdad and Williams "On Neo-Orientalism"). Thus, by comparing between Classical Orientalism and Neo-Orientalism, the rhetoric of both Naipaul and Pipes makes an analogical argument, the propagandistic claim that Islam in no way overcomes its clash with democracy or self-government.

What is the presentism of the rhetoric of both Naipaul and Pipes in appropriating the past as per the rhetoric of the past designed by Bruce E. Gronbeck? An "Affiliative Reading" as coined by Edward Said (*The World* 174) may give the answer. This reading discovers communicative interconnection between the text and different pragmatic issues such as "status of the author, historical moment, conditions of publication, diffusion, and reception, values drawn upon, values and ideas assumed, a framework of consistently held tacit assumptions, presumed background, and so on" (*The World* 174). Accordingly, the texts of both Naipaul and Pipes are affiliated with the spatiotemporal context in which they live. This context is in a network of propaganda of Neo-Orientalists who "tend to misrepresent important aspects of recent events in the region (Middle East and Muslim countries) while denying the neo-imperialist relation of the United States to the Middle East" (Behdad and Williams "On Neo-Orientalism"). Like the Neo-Orientalists, both Naipaul and Pipes seem to sidestep a causality between the incompatibility of Islam with democracy and the post-colonial situation of Muslim countries. In the post-colonial age, the Muslim countries are suffering from poverty that is one of the overt results of rampant exploitation by manifest colonialism during the colonial period. Consequently, civil war, military coups, religious fanaticism, and chauvinism are common specters in these Muslim countries. Such insurgences are taken as excuses by the USA to operate internal interferences in Muslim countries for establishing so-called democracy. For instance, the Arab Spring in the early 2010s was encouraged implicitly by the USA in particular and the West in general for the so-called democratization process in the Middle Eastern Muslim countries including Libya, Egypt, Syria, Tunisia, Morocco, and Bahrain.

The rhetoric of the collective memory, as the last rationale, is to bridge the gap between the present and the past by using collective memory (Gronbeck 7). When the current historians find out the need of the present, and accordingly, (re)select and (re)historicize the necessary events from their society's collective memory, it is called the rhetoric of collective memory. This collective memory belongs to a family, group or larger social section that attributes special significance to particular events from the past. It may consist of social and political myths, fairy tales, fables, and what Aristotle calls "reminiscence (*De memoria et reminiscencia*) that is, special events that are imbued with socially charged significance" (qtd. in McKeon 5). Through the evocation of these memories, rhetoric encloses the past and the present in a continuous dialogue, even in a hermeneutic circle in which the present reconstructs the past and, in return, the past guides the present.

Naipaul's rhetoric of collective memory regarding the Hindu-Muslim relationship in India appears to be imbued with ethnocentrically charged significance as "Naipaul's conception of Islam is confined by his Brahmanic bias" (Malak 261). For example, bemoaning what he sees as the devastating power of Islam in Indonesia, Naipaul claims: "Islam had moved on here, to this part of Greater India, after its devastation of India proper, turning the religious-cultural light of the subcontinent, so far as this region concerned, into the light of a dead star" (*Beyond* 31). Similarly, while recollecting the early warring relationship between Hindu and Muslim in India, he writes that the early Muslims in India "were sweeping down from the northwest, looting temples of Hindustan and imposing the faith on the infidels" (*Beyond* 265). Such anecdotes seem to be tinged with ethnocentrism when it is investigated by the postcolonial "interjection" which is "a contrary narrative" against any metanarrative (Ashcroft 101). According to a contrary narrative, if Naipaul's epideictic rhetoric had been true, namely his argument that Muslims had

imposed their faith on the infidels in India, very few of the current Hindu population would have existed in India. If the Muslim rulers, who had dominated most of South Asia during the mid-14th to late-18th centuries, had forcefully converted other religious people to Islam, any power could have hardly thwarted them from doing so. Talal Asad contends: "Muslim empires in the past were more tolerant of a diversity of religions and cultures than Europe was. Hence, even Europe may have something to learn from that history of comparative tolerance" (303). But Naipaul attributes proselytism to Muslim empire regarding the Hindus in India as he seems ethnocentrically sympathetic to the Indian Hindus. Thus Naipaul intermingles historical truth and ethnocentric information quintessentially in the anecdotal historiography of Hindu-Muslim relations in India. Such figuration in the historicization process is known as irony, a trope to offer the possibility of representing a lie as truth .

Naipaul's ethnocentrism, as William Dalrymple argues, is substantiated by his commitment to the Hindutva ideology of *Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh* (RSS) and BJP while delivering a lecture to an election campaign assembly of BJP in 2004. Even when Naipaul was asked about the demolition of the Baburi Mosque by the Sang Parivar, he contends: "Ayodha is a passion. Any passion is to be encouraged. Passion leads to creativity" (Mir 255). So, what happens with Naipaul's narrative is best characterized by Katherine George: "An ethnocentric bias focuses the traveler's attention not so much on what is actually seen but on what he expects to see based on what he has heard in his own culture" (65). Accordingly, a collective memory is reshaped ethnocentrically by Naipaul's rhetoric in order to make it more useful in the present relationship between Hindus and Muslims in India.

Similarly, Pipes' rhetoric of the collective memory concerning the Zionist-Muslim relationship in the Middle East is shaded with ethnocentrism that makes his historiography ahistorical. For instance, his historiography recollects from his own society's collective memory of war between Arab and Israel and states: "[A]ttention to Islam increased after the 1967 Arab-Israeli war and even more after the 1973 conflict" (*In the Path* 8). Then, his historiography blames Islam as an instigator of the conflict between Arabs and Israelis and claims: "Islam helped account for the nature of Arab resistance to Israel's existence" (*In the Path* 3). This historiography also suggests the American or Soviet negotiators' "proposals for solving the Arab-Israeli conflict must consider the special Islamic concern for the control of territory" (Pipes, *In the Path* 3) in the Middle East. But Pipes' whole historiography does not include a single sentence to describe the sufferings of the Palestinian people. Rather, he remarks: "[T]he Palestinians are a miserable people[...] and they deserve to be" (qtd. in "The Truth"). Thus, ethnocentrism reflects in his rhetorical evocation of the collective memory and consequently, such evocative historical memory seems ahistorical.

### Conclusion

Although the Islamic travelogues of Naipaul and the Islamic history of Pipes are generically different from each other, these texts use some identical tropes to historicize Islamic culture and Muslims. When these topological configurations are mapped, a topological relationality between the anecdotal historiography of Naipaul and the historiography of Pipes can be discovered. Such relationality is one of the spatiotemporal influences on both Naipaul and Pipes as they are contemporary authors and live in the same politico-cultural context. This spatiotemporal context was networked by certain ideological stance, ethnocentrism, and some cultural misapprehensions concerning Islamic culture and Muslim, that influenced the historicization of both Naipaul and Pipes so much that it seems ahistorical. Such ahistorical historicism becomes visible in two generic methods – historiographic metafiction and rhetorical historiography – as the historicity of their texts is derived mainly from fictional source and rhetorical baggage.

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