

From Exile to a Global Citizen

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Abstract

In ancient Greek literature and Indian epics, *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*, exile or banishment is depicted as a punishment meted out for sins and crimes committed by humans, whether knowingly or unknowingly. Gradually, from individual/ group punishment, exile evolved into mass exodus resulting from war, conquests and other conflicts. All forms of exiles suffer from the pain and sorrow of leaving behind one's homeland and belongings. Consequently, the literature produced by exiled poets and writers are filled with nostalgia and agonizing memories. However, over the years, other concerns related to their new lives gain prominence in their writings. This paper attempts to trace the journey of exiles from the past to the present and move towards the future in the writings of diasporic writers of different decades. It focuses on the works of V.S. Naipaul, Monica Ali, Zia Haider Rahman and Tarfia Faizullah to discover the newer trends emerging in their texts. V.S. Naipaul's *A House for Mr Biswas* (1961) is the epitome of the diasporic writer's attempt to understand his past in relation to his present. The ownership of a house in the new country is like staking a claim to belong to that country, and Mr. Biswas is desperate to do so. On the other hand, Monica Ali's *Brick Lane*, published at the turn of the century, deals with a husband and wife negotiating the difficulties of belonging to a new society. Zia Haider Rahman and Tarfia Faizullah belong to the next group of diaspora writers, who are second generation immigrants growing up in a new land no longer 'foreign' to them. The protagonist of Rahman's novel in *The Light of What We Know* (2014) successfully confronts problems and complications to 'belong' and 'become' a British citizen. Tarfia Faizullah, a young Bangladeshi-American poet, uses the history of the War of Independence of Bangladesh to align it with other similar universal discourse of genocide. It appears that figuratively, the exiled writer has now arrived at an acceptable point where s/he is flying out as a global citizen. This transformation of diasporic writers from the periphery to the centre as globally read figures has given rise to the concept of transnationalism.

Keywords: exile, journey, diaspora, home, transnational, globalization.

Edward Said begins his *Reflection on Exile* with this sentence "Exile is strangely compelling to think about but terrible to experience" (Said, 2002, p. 173). The two words "compelling" and "terrible" belong to the two ends of a broad spectrum of emotions. One stays away from something "terrible" whereas that person is drawn to something "compelling". Hence how can a single experience, exile, encompass both these opposite feelings? It appears that Said has dug deep into the roots of the concept of exile and discovered the incongruity that lies in its heart—it attracts and it repels at the same time. In historical existence and imaginary creations, exile is present since the earliest recorded periods of world history. In Western literature, exile is present as a punishment, a

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banishment in the works of earliest Greek writers, most notably in *King Oedipus* by Sophocles. In earliest epic writings of Eastern literature, the heroic clan of the Pandavas are exiled twice for long years in the account of *Mahabhrata*, and in *Ramayana* the heroes also experience exile. The importance and significance of exile resides in the primal concept of home and belongingness and its loss; the loss leads to dislocation, isolation, loneliness and alienation with a deep craving to return to the original home. However, at present, the concept of exile has taken on many more shades of meaning and facticity such as mass exodus, abduction and slavery, indentured labour, refugees, migrations—forced/voluntary, expatriation, transnationalism and globalization. Apparently, accepting the condition of banishment, newer generations of exiles have almost stopped looking backward to a lost home and have begun to forge a new identity looking forward to a successful and prosperous future. This essay attempts to examine the reflection of the changing perspectives of exile present in literary texts of different decades from the 1960s to the present. Beginning basically with postcolonial perspectives, the essay travels beyond the boundaries of postcolonial studies to discover the changes undergone by marginalised characters stepping confidently nearer to the centre stage and transforming or evolving into a new identity of a ‘global citizen’.

The writings concerned with exile and migration (voluntary or forced) are usually grouped under the general term of *Diasporic or Migration* literature, which embraces different forms of writings by authors living away from their original homeland for a variety of reasons, such as imperialism, colonialism, climate changes, war and oppression, migrations for better opportunities, and other conflicts. As different as these reasons are, the creative writings of exiled authors change from person to person as well as from time to time.

V.S. Naipaul

One of the earlier non-native English writers to capture world interest is V.S Naipaul (17 Aug. 1932 - 11 Aug. 2018). The grandson of indentured labourers who migrated to Trinidad from India in the 19th—century, Naipaul went on to win the Booker prize in 1971 and the Nobel prize for literature in 2001. Naipaul’s second novel, titled *A House for Mr. Biswas* (1961), is a critical, as well as, a sympathetic narration of Mr. Mohun Biswas, whose sole purpose in life appears to be to own a house and live away from his overwhelming in-laws. The possession of a house is a stake in the ground to claim ownership and belonging to a certain place and this is a primary emotion of diaspora writers. After his father’s death, Mr. Biswas himself is a victim of what is now called internal migration, as he is forced to leave his father’s village house and live with his aunt Tara in Pagotes, a small-town city in India. But his father Raghu was an indentured labourer for the sugar-estates, and the Tulsi family, his in-laws, are also descendants of a similar migrant, Pandit Tulsi. As Saha writes, Naipaul’s Mohun Biswas is part of the “examples of individuals who are generations away from their original homeland, India, but their heritage gives them a consciousness of their past” (Saha, 2009, p. 192).

In this novel, the heritage is embodied in the long dead figure of Pandit Tulsi, who arrived from India with an aura of piety and grandeur, which is concretised in the edifice called ‘Hanuman House’. His descendants attempt to carry on his legacy and

consider themselves above the common Indians living all over Trinidad. By being almost forced into marriage with a Tulsi daughter, Mr. Biswas is engulfed into the Tulsi life-style, living in Hanuman House, feeling suffocated and rebelling from the very beginning. However, Mr. Biswas' almost obsessive desire to possess a house of his own springs from his childhood loss of his home, as expressed by Naipaul, at the end of chapter 1 of the novel:

And so Mr. Biswas came to leave the only house to which he had some right. For the next thirty-five years he was to be a wanderer with no place he could call his own, with no family except that which he was to attempt to create out of the engulfing world of the Tulsis. (Naipaul, 2003, p. 38)

This childhood incident of forced migration leaves a deep scar in him which led to his incessant search for his own house in his adult life. He remembers his long-lost village home through flashes of memory throughout his life with no opportunity to recover that place and lives like an exile in his own country which was adopted by his indentured labourer father. He feels displaced, isolated and alienated even in the crowded Hanuman House.

The whole novel is structured like waves of the sea: Mr. Biswas fights and leaves Hanuman House, attempts to build his own house, fails in his attempt, returns to Hanuman House, often rescued by Seth and other Tulsis, and leaves again. Naipaul divides the novel into two parts and each chapter contains a move away from the Tulsis and a going back to the shelter of Hanuman House. This movement can also be regarded as a microcosmic site of the diaspora to return to their original homeland. As the Tulsis attempt to follow the legacy of Pundit Tulsi, life in Hanuman House retains a number of the rituals and practices of older Indian homesteads, such as common cooking, common living space, families living together as 'joint families', children going to school and studying together, etc. Hanuman House exists as a shelter, as a refuge for the families connected with it. When Mr Biswas makes his first attempt at independent living in the Chase, he fails in his shopkeeping, gets into debts and has a case filed against him and is returned to the Hanuman House in a broken down state. Then his attitude towards the House undergoes a change and he feels:

The House was a world, more real than the Chase, and less exposed; everything beyond its gate was foreign and unimportant and could be ignored. He needed such a sanctuary. (Naipaul, 2003, p. 195)

Over the years, Mr. Biswas repeats this pattern and though he fails a number of times, he does not give up his dream. In Green Vale, Mr. Biswas seriously plans and begins to build a house. But on a stormy night, he loses his nerve and with Anand, his son, is rescued and brought back to Hanuman House. He is nursed and slowly brought back to health.

The novelist is so much focused on Mr. Biswas, that the novel sometimes reads like a first-person narrative. However, within the story line in bits and pieces, Naipaul weaves the condition of the Indian diaspora working in the Caribbean. While returning to Hanuman House from The Chase for the last time, Mr. Biswas observes a group of old men sitting on the ground, smoking *cheelums* and Naipaul reflects on their situation:

It was the time of day for which they lived. They could not speak English and were not interested in the land where they lived; it was a place where they had come for a short time and stayed longer than they expected. They continually talked of going back to India; but when the opportunity came, many refused, afraid of the unknown, afraid to leave the familiar temporariness. And every evening they came to the arcade of the solid friendly house, smoked, told stories and continued to talk of India. (Naipaul, 2003, p. 20)

This is a typical picture of a migrant diaspora community, particularly of the first generation, where they never feel at home in a new place. They learn only as much of the language as will help them get a job; they continually hanker for home; but if they get an opportunity, few of them choose to go back to their homeland. Therefore, they continue their existence in a present over which hangs the ghost of a place long left behind.

A change in the fortune of Mr. Biswas occurs in the second part of the novel as he leaves Hanuman House stealthily hiding from the inmates. He decides to seek the help of his sister Dehuti, who had married a lower caste man and had left the family. Mr. Biswas is welcomed warmly by Ramchand, who works in a mental asylum and offers Mr. Biswas a job with him. Mr. Biswas humbly refuses him. As he roams around, he suddenly enters a newspaper office and finds a job as a reporter with the *Trinidad Sentinel*. He continues this job for the rest of his life except for a break of a few years. It is through his job as a worker that Naipaul depicts the life of the common people of Trinidad. There were people from many races and ethnicities, besides the Indians, who lived as marginalised outsiders in the city. Naipaul uses the outdated label of 'Negroes' to refer to Africans and these people seem to do a lot of work with little pay. The editor of the newspaper was an Englishman called Mr. Burnett, with whom Mr. Biswas gets into a strange affectionate bond. Later, Mr. Burnett is sacked as a new regime takes over the newspaper, but Mr. Biswas continues working for the paper.

World War II raging all around is mentioned through brief interjections by the novelist as in the chapter titled 'The New Regime': "The war was beginning to have its effects. Prices were rising everywhere" (Naipaul, 2003, p. 397). Another indication of the war is Seth's business of rentals of his lorry for the movement of the army and its equipment. But Naipaul does not make any comment or give an analysis of the war. It seems, he deliberately keeps his eyes looking inward into Trinidad without worrying over what was happening outside.

When the Tulsi family moves into Shorthills located at the north-east part of Spain, they come across a mixed race of villagers: "They were an attractive mixture of French and Spanish and Negro and, though they lived so near to port-of Spain, formed a closed, distinctive community" (Naipaul, 2003, p. 422).

Even their language was different as they spoke "French patois" (Naipaul, 2003, p. 422) among themselves. It is easy to understand that although these migrants were also marginalised like the Indians, they did not connect with each other but remained separate diasporic groups. There was no acceptable contact zone for them to mingle and share their common experiences.

Mr. Biswas attempts to build another house on the land in Shorthills and succeeds for a brief time. He brings his mother Bipti to live with him and for the first-time, he sees her as a person. Unfortunately, this house also burns down. As the fire

spreads, the Tulsi family is awakened and they come *en masse* to save the family: so, Mr. Biswas has no option but to return to the Tulsi house in Port of Spain.

Another consequence of colonialism is presented by Naipaul in a slightly satirical manner. After Owad goes to England to study medicine, a realization occurs among the Tulsis; they suddenly realise the importance of education as the 'only protection' in a world where people were becoming more self-dependent, and the Tulsis' position as an overarching refuge was declining. Thus, children in groups started coming to the house in Port of Spain to sit for entrance exams to better schools of the city. The phenomena affects the family of Mr. Biswas also: Anand sits for an 'exhibition exam' and wins a scholarship to study, while his outwardly capable cousin Vidiadhar fails to do so. Anand's scholarly success brings a transformation in Mr. Biswas's attitude towards his children and his own life. Slowly, he begins to regard his children, particularly Anand, as his future. He sank into a kind of lethargic despair and accepted his life spent in two rooms of the Tulsi house as his fate: "He had lost the vision of the house" (Naipaul, 2003, p. 523).

However, there comes a sudden change in his life when he unexpectedly gets a government job in a new department created as part of post-war development. Mr. Biswas worked on a special feature 'Deserving Destitute' in the *Sentinel*, and interviewed many poverty-stricken people of Port of Spain. The new head of the department, Miss Logie offered him the job of "Community Welfare Officer, at a salary fifty dollars a month higher than the one he was getting from the *Sentinel*" (Naipaul, 2003, p. 524). Mr. Biswas promptly accepts the offer though he finds it hard to believe. It is through this job that many of Mr. Biswas's long held dreams, (going to a sea-side holiday, owning a car, wearing suits, etc.) come true. When he got subsistence and travel allowance in addition to his salary, it "made him feel that he was at last getting at the wealth of the colony" (Naipaul, 2003, p. 536). This is one of the rare instances when Naipaul uses the word 'colony' and shows his awareness of the facticity of the post-colonial condition. Mr. Biswas behaves like a 'mimic man' when he visits the oval cricket ground carrying a round tin of cigarettes and a box of matches. He is also given a gleaming new car "on painless government loan." (Naipaul, 2003, p. 540). However, his good fortune does not last long and as part of the changes occurring on the island, the new department is abolished. Miss Logie returns to her homeland and Mr. Biswas rejoins the *Sentinel*.

With all his lapses and failures, Mr Biswas finally succeeds in getting his own house: he does not build but buys a house. A clerk persuades him to buy a house and at the same time a 'Negro' buys the house built in Shorthills from Mr. Biswas. Moreover, Anand and Savi get scholarships to study abroad and Mr. Biswas's life improves. Later, when he falls sick, not Anand but Savi returns from abroad, gets a good job, learns to drive and starts to take care of the family. She drives Mr. Biswas' car and takes him on excursions. At last, Mr. Biswas sets down roots for his descendants on the land he migrated to under pressure.

Monica Ali

Ali, writing four decades after Naipaul, presents a redefined concept of a migrant's journey and ends her *Brick Lane* with a cry for freedom: "This is England."

She said, “you can do whatever you like” (Ali, 2003, p. 413). England spells freedom, particularly for women from a conservative and restrictive society of Bangladesh. Nazneen, the protagonist of *Brick Lane*, is a forced migrant as she has to travel with a Bangladeshi immigrant to Britain after her marriage. Like Mr. Biswas, she moves from a small village hut to a city not in Bangladesh, but far away across the oceans to live in a country whose people, society and language and culture are absolutely unknown to her. Her husband, Chanu, brings her to a small flat in Tower Hamlet in London, where Bangladeshis, mostly from Sylhet, live. These are mostly illegal immigrants who jumped off ships or came on tourist visas and deliberately absconded, and may spend their entire lives attempting to get legalized.

This is a novel where people from ex-colonies arrive at the heart of the colonial empire in search of a better life. Focusing mainly on the couple Chanu and Nazneen, Monica Ali examines the lives of these men, particularly women, chasing their dreams in England. At the beginning, they cannot forget their small huts and houses left behind and talk of returning home after saving enough money. These are real exiles, like the old men talking about returning to India, sitting in front of the Tulsi shop in Naipaul’s *A House for Mr. Biswas* (2003). Those old men would not return home even if they got the chance, but a difference has been created between Naipaul’s generation of three decades ago and Monica Ali’s the new millennium generation.

By the end of the novel the family is separated and the father Chanu returns home to Bangladesh. But his wife, and the two daughters born and brought up in London, adamantly refuse to go back to a land for which they have very little yearning. For them, England is ‘home’ and they feel perfectly comfortable living in London. Meanwhile, Nazneen learns to speak English and works as a tailor from home with the help of Razia, a Bangladeshi neighbour. However, although Chanu has lived in London for a longer period, he simply cannot accept this place as ‘home’. He feels ignored, alienated and marginalized as he cannot get a proper job even with his university degrees. After trying for a number of jobs, Chanu finally ends up as a taxi-driver.

Monica Ali makes a detailed examination of the Bangladeshi diaspora in London, particularly, the lower classes whose poverty-stricken lives have not changed much from what it was back home. This diasporic community remains segregated from the main stream of higher level immigrants and attempts to follow their own path. But even within this not very large group of people, various conflicts exist regarding political, religious and cultural practices and rituals. While the older generation zealously maintain traditional ways of living, the younger generation rebels against them. The young people born here or having arrived as babies, learn the language well and are schooled here. They want to be a part of the bigger world and live life on their own terms. The novel ends on an optimistic note, with Nazneen, her daughters and Razia arriving at a skating rink to do something which always fascinated Nazneen when she watched it on television in the beginning of her life in London.

Monica Ali’s novel, though narrower in focus than the earlier ones, is in a way transitional, providing a link between the older writers of the 1960s and the new writers of the new millennium. It appears that the exile is no longer just sitting down, drowning in nostalgia, but walking forward to blend with the people of the new land. The exiled

learns the language, gets educated, learns skills and fights to get on the way of becoming a global citizen.

Zia Haider Rahman

The Britain that we find in Zia Haider Rahman's debut novel, *In the Light of What we Know* (2014), is centred around England, but an England quite different from that of Monica Ali's. Instead of focusing on the lower and middle classes of Bangladeshi diaspora, Rahman examines the upper classes of England from a different perspective: he uses the lenses of two men born into immigrant families but coming from two opposing countries.

One is Zafar, the child of poor Bangladeshi immigrants and the other, the unnamed narrator of the story, is a rich Pakistani immigrant's son. That Zia Haider is conscious of the exilic conditions of the lives of his two protagonists, is evident from the quotation with which the novel begins: the opening sentences of Edward Said's *Reflections on Exile* (2002), with which this paper was introduced. The lives of Zafar and the narrator move in parallel as well as contrasting lines and they even fall in love with the same upper-class English lady, Emily Hampton-Wyvern. The novel narrates the life-story of Zafar and the narrator through a very complex narrative style, reminding the readers of Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights*.

With both Zafar and Emily working for UN reconstruction agencies in Afghanistan, the novelist gets the opportunity to depict existing relationship between past colonies and colonizers. He shows how the American and British super-powers are still very much involved in the affairs of ex-colonies like Pakistan and Afghanistan. Rahman criticizes the work of the UN agencies as ineffective and concerned with their own self-interest rather than the actual rebuilding and development of countries devastated by wrong policies of the super powers.

Apart from such examinations, the central point of the novel is an analysis of the English society, particularly its structures of power, class and wealth, from the perspective of outsiders. Zafar feels unaccepted because though he studies in Oxford as a brilliant student and speaks impeccable English, his dark physical appearance marks him as a third-world immigrant in a white society. On the other hand, the narrator being born into a wealthy upper-class family from Pakistan, enjoys much more privileges than Zafar, including the ability to possess three passports—American, British, and Pakistani. Wood (2014) characterizes the narrator as “a comfortable global citizen” (Wood, 2014, p. 3). The discriminatory treatment that Zafar suffers, fills him with an anger that he hides under a calm exterior.

When Zafar meets Emily in Oxford, he is first of all impressed by her aristocratic name and then her beauty. When he visits her home, he is struck by its grandeur and wonders if he could ever become a part of all the upper-class trappings. As their relationship develops, Zafar later tells the narrator, “Emily stood for something, she rescued me and condemned me in the same gesture” (Rahman, 2014, p. 477).

In a manner, Zafar worships Emily and accepts all the negligence, fickleness and aloofness meted out by her without any complaint. It is only much later that Zafar

realized that Emily hurt him and misbehaved and ignored him without ever saying ‘sorry’ to him. After their relationship ends unhappily, Zafar understands the underlying reason for all his unquestioned acceptance of Emily’s whimsical manners:

Emily was England, home, belonging, the untethering of me from a past I did not want, the promise through children of a future that was rooted, bound to something treated altogether better by the world than my mother, the girl who loved me. (Rahman, 2014, p. 477)

In attempts to forget and deny his humble origin, as he climbs higher in the professional scale, Zafar cuts himself away from his family. His family also informs him that Emily will never be allowed into their household, thus creating a confrontational site rather than a contact zone. Although Zafar as well as the narrator breaks many barriers and crosses many borders, Zafar learns a final painful lesson as Alam (2015) points out:

Zafar’s journey in life has brought him to diverse places and in touch with people of all classes, but despite the illusion of fluidity he knows that the globalizing world gives, parochial borderlines are still intact for people like him. (p. 13)

Alam sees Zafar and Rahman as transnational figures travelling throughout the world holding multiple visas and residencies, but it is doubtful whether they achieve the peace and security that they yearn for.

Although Rahman writes almost three decades after Naipaul, there are quite a few echoes from Naipaul’s novels and life in his novel. As Mr. Biswas took his family for their first sea-side holiday in a car with Miss Logie, Zafar’s family also goes to a holiday camp to a sea-side resort, but does not enjoy it like the former does. The narrative itself is as focused as Naipaul’s, on a single protagonist as Wood (2014) points out in his review:

Above all, the novel’s long conversation between Zafar and the narrator comes finally to resemble—surely by authorial design—a single character’s internal dialogue, as if Rahman were dramatizing his own bifurcations: privilege and obscurity, belonging and homelessness, confidence and anxiety. (p. 6)

The anxiety, loneliness, lack of confidence, which Mr. Biswas suffered and which erupted through stomach aches and indigestion and bursts of anger, here leads to suppressed anger and longing in Zafar, and lands him in a mental asylum for some time. Mr Biswas came close to working in a mental asylum but fortunately, he had the sense and courage to refuse the job. The influence of Naipaul on postcolonial writers coming after him cannot be denied at all. Zafar’s long suppressed anger finally erupts and his relationship with Emily ends. Zafar himself remains a wanderer.

Tarfia Faizullah

This paper ends with the discussion of a young Bangladeshi American poet who is not yet as well known as the other writers discussed earlier but is definitely a significant new generation poet. Born of Bangladeshi immigrant parents, she grew up in Midland, Texas and studied in the Virginia Commonwealth University. Tarfia has won many awards since winning the 2009 Cohen Award. She acquired a greater recognition when her sequence of poems “Seam” brought her the Crab Orchard Series in Poetry First Book Award. For Bangladeshis, this award is noteworthy as the poems in “Seam” (2014) are

based on a series of interviews conducted by Tarfia with surviving *Biranganas* on a Fulbright award for research. *Birangana*, meaning ‘war heroines’, was the title given by the Father of our Nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to the women raped by Pakistani soldiers and their helpers during our bloody war of independence against the Pakistani army in 1971. Tarfia may not be considered as an ‘exile’ in the conventional sense, as she was born and raised in America and is an American citizen, but the theme of a search for identity and belongingness runs consistently through her poetry perhaps due to her growing up in migrant communities.

In a number of interviews conducted on her, Tarfia speaks about her identity: “.... I think the notion of identity, the idea of a singular identity is a false idea....if you think of identity as an unfixed thing that is allowed to morph and change” (Hoque, 2014). This remark appears to follow Hall’s idea of identity being a continuous production rather than a fixed idea. Identity is a production “...which is never complete, always in process and always constituted within, not outside...” (Hall, 1990, p. 392).

Tarfia says that she searches for “...a way to be our many multiple selves, simultaneously without being told that’s not ok...” (Hoque, 2014). Tarfia is very much aware of her own multiple selves and spells it out clearly in her interview: “For me personally, it’s a question of how I can be a Bangladeshi American and a Muslim and a woman who grew up in West Texas, and what all of that entails” (Hoque, 2014).

This search takes on a great significance in her poems in *Seam* as the Pakistani army repeatedly wanted to break the idea of a Muslim Bengali :

“*Are you*
Muslim or Bangali, they
Asked again and again.
Both, I said, *both—*”

(Seam, 2014)

Tarfia points to a single critical characteristic of modern people, i.e. ‘dissociation’. She feels that people suffer from various degrees of dissociating from the world around us and it is mostly due to the idea given to us that we should be “singular beings” (Hoque, 2014). That Tarfia is not dissociated is proved by the fact that, although she did not live in Bangladesh, the moment she read about the *Biranganas*, in Texas, she decided to personally travel to Bangladesh and discover the reality of these survivors. She tells her interviewer, “If we’re dissociated people, then how can we be responsible to others? How can we be *global citizens* (my italics)?”

By returning to Bangladesh, which cannot be called her ‘homeland’, Tarfia sets up a contact zone by meeting the *Biranganas* to share their experiences. She is moved not by a desire to ‘go home’ but in a way, to connect two distant cultures and races, Bangladeshi and American. She begins *Seam*:

“In west Texas, oil froths
luxurious from hard ground
while across Bangladesh,

bayoneted women stain
pond water blossom....” (Faizullah ,2014)

As can be easily realized, the experiences need not be necessarily the same to join two different worlds, but there must be awareness of the people and events occurring all over the world. In the third poem she writes:

“1971: the entire world unraveling
like thread your mother pulls
and pulls away from the hem of her
dress. In America, the bodies
of men and women march forward in protest, rage candling
their voices—in Vietnam, monks
light themselves on fire....” (Faizullah, 2014)

This connectedness, awareness, sharing, responding and reacting to each other has become much easier through technological developments of today and it has led to positive significances of transnationalism. Writers and artists like Tarfia have shed off the covers of nostalgia and have come forward to demolish the divide of centre and margin and transform the world to create an allied and linked global citizenship. In her second book, *Registers of Illuminated Villages* (2018), she has written a series of poems about 397 eliminated Kurdish Villages in Northern Iraq, where all men were killed and where the widows and orphans are living now. Interspersed with other poems on experiences of loss, grief, sufferings and injustice, the poems are united by a single voice which views everything as her own experiences. In the poem, *Register of Eliminated Villages*, she writes

Somewhere in this insomniac
Night my life is beginning
Without me. In Northern Iraq,
It is high noon,

— — — — —

The scholar in tonight's
Frontline only counted each
town destroyed : three
hundred ninety-seven of them. (Faizullah, 2018)

Tarfia's journey across faraway places like Turkey, Texas, Iraq, Michigan, Bangladesh and other imaginary homelands present the consistent thread of attempts to connect and weave various experiences into a comprehensive global consciousness which refuses to recognize barriers and borders between countries of the world. Her poems written in English have crossed borders also through translation into Bengali, Persian, Chinese Tamil and more, creating a global identity for her.

Thus, this paper attempted to trace a journey of the writers' representations of the exiled identity from the earlier to the present postcolonial works. It appears that the pain of nostalgia and displacement of earlier exiles have transmuted to a new kind of acceptance and have reached out to a globalized world where the technological improvements have led to greater connectivity among people. So, a Naipaul and a Rahman or a Faizullah can sit at home and converse with each other without necessarily making long and arduous journeys halfway across the world to learn about each other. The new generation writers with a postcolonial background can now accept their multiple identities and work towards setting up better contact zones all over the world. Interestingly, Edward Said (2002) ends his essay on 'Exile' with a notion similar to multiple identities which he terms as 'plurality of vision' of exiled people. He writes

Most people are principally aware of one culture, one setting, one home; exiles are aware of at least two, and this plurality of vision gives rise to an awareness of simultaneous dimensions, an awareness that—to borrow a phrase from music—is *contrapuntal*. (Said, 2002, p. 186)

Hence the 'exile' acquires a transnational global identity.

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