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THE JOURNEY FROM EXILE TOWARDS SELF-ACTUALIZATION: A STUDY OF V. S. NAIPAUL'S *MAGIC SEEDS*¹

ABSTRACT

V. S. Naipaul is one of the most well-known self-imposed exile authors of Indian and Caribbean descent. His literary works, namely novels, are based on real-life individuals, historical figures, and events that have links to the Caribbean, India, Africa, and England. Naipaul, as a self-imposed exile writer, successfully articulated the problems, issues, and obstacles that displaced and exiled individuals from the Third World have encountered in a multicultural environment. The protagonist, Willie Somerset Chandran, a displaced individual of Indian descent, attempts to overcome issues that he encountered during the exile period. Through the protagonist, the author demonstrates how individuals from the Third World experience homelessness and rootness conditions. It reveals that, in fact, this situation did not impede these individuals from proceeding their way towards self-knowledge, self-discovery, creativity, and self-actualization. The purpose of this research is to examine exile experiences, their consequences, and their effects on the self-actualization process of the exiled protagonist, Willie Chandran. It also aims to take a look at the process of becoming familiar with the potential creative talents of the hero. As a last remark, the paper intends to show how exile offers the chance to view and explore issues from different angles.

Keywords: Naipaul, Magic Seeds, Exile, Displacement, Self-actualization.

SÜRGÜN DEN KENDİNİ GERÇEKLEŞTİRMEYE DOĞRU YOLCULUK: V. S. NAIPAUL'UN *BÜYÜLÜ TOHUMLAR ROMANI ÜZERİNE BİR ÇALIŞMA*

ÖZET

Hint Karayipleri kökenli Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul sürgün edebiyatının önemli siması olarak eserlerinde (ağırlıklı olarak romanlarında) Karayipler, Hindistan, Afrika ve İngilteredeki gerçek ve tanınmış kişilere, olaylara ve olgulara yer verme konusunda istikrarlı bir duruşa sahiptir. Sürgün edebiyatı yazarı olarak Naipaul Üçüncü Dünya ülkelerinden yerinden edilmiş insanların çok kültürlü bir dünyada karşılaştıkları sorunları dile getirmenin yollarını başarılı bir şekilde bulmuştur. Yazar ele aldığımız eserinde Hindistan kökenli olan başkahraman Willie Somerset Chandran'ın sürgün döneminde karşılaştığı sorunların üstesinden gelme hikâyesini ele almıştır. Bu şekilde, Naipaul başkarakteri vasıtasıyla Üçüncü Dünya ülkelerindeki bireylerin evsizlik ve köksüzlük koşullarını nasıl deneyimlediklerini ortaya koymaktadır. Yapıtta ortaya çıkan sonuca göre aslında bu durumun onların yaratıcılık, kendini keşfetme ve kendini gerçekleştirme yolunda ilerlemelerine engel olmadığı anlaşılmaktadır. Bu kapsamda mevcut çalışmanın hedefi sürgün deneyimlerini, sonuçlarını ve sürgündeki kahraman Willie Chandran'ın kendini gerçekleştirme sürecine etkilerini incelemektir. Ayrıca, çalışma, başkahramanın potansiyel yaratıcı yeteneklerine aşına olma sürecine de kısaca değinmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Son olarak bu araştırma, sürgünün bireylere farklı açılardan meseleleri anlama ve analiz etme fırsatı sunduğunu da olumlu bir bakış açısı sunmaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Naipaul, Büyülü Tohumlar, Sürgün, Yerinden Edilme, Kendini Gerçekleştirme.

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Introduction

International English-language literature has been replenished with authors from different countries who mainly address themes of identity, belonging, displacement, and exile and contribute to the development of fiction. All of these authors have lived under British administration in their respective nations. Despite the independence of the former colonial countries, writers, authors, poets, and intellectuals from the mentioned countries are forced to continue to live in exile. The reasons that these intellectuals live in exile are different in nature. Some of them are due to authoritarian governments, racial discrimination, ethnic cleansing, or migratory preferences in their home countries. Intellectuals in exile continue to write despite all of these obstacles. For them, producing literary works genuinely entails expressing themselves and the issues that their nation faces.

Among those international intellectuals who experience all types of exile are writers of Indian descent who create their literary works in English and thus became part of mainstream English literature. One of these international intellectuals who rose to fame while living outside his motherland was V. S. Naipaul, who dealt with his sense of displacement and identity through his literary characters. Naipaul's protagonists share similarities with the author, such as facing both geographical and sociocultural challenges of displacement throughout their lives.

It is worth noting that the author's fictional characters, such as Willie Somerset Chandran in *Half a Life* (2001) and *Magic Seeds* (2004), are essentially mouthpieces of the people who have to experience displacement and a sense of exile, and these displaced and exiled people are, in fact, individuals that are constantly looking for a certain location to call 'home'. Furthermore, they are the voice of those displaced individuals who have the desire for self-discovery and self-actualization in a foreign land.

The following study will dwell on the literary work *Magic Seeds* (2004), which is the sequel to the novel *Half a Life* (2001), and the protagonist, Willie Somerset Chandran, who is a self-imposed exile of Indian descent, who attempts to get away from the community dominated by the caste system in which he grew up, locate a place that he may call 'home,' and satisfy his needs for self-actualization. The paper will focus on the journey of the hero from exile towards self-actualization and, while experiencing this, how he became familiar with the idea of having creative talent. Thus, the article will explore the exile experiences of the protagonist, their consequences, and their effects on the self-actualization process in the light of Edward Said's notion of exile and Abraham Maslow's ideas on self-actualization needs. Edward Said's thoughts and criticisms on exile, home, and displacement are crucial for this study. He speaks from the perspective of exile, and this will help readers understand how and why people must leave their homeland behind and go on to establish a new 'home' in a foreign land. Moreover, the usage of Edward Said's thoughts on exile throughout the study will show how the main character struggles to understand where his real 'home' is and how he experiences displacement. Besides, it is believed that Abraham Maslow's notion of self-actualization will shed light on the significance of the exploration of the protagonist's life process in seeking his abilities, skills, and talents. According to Maslow, every individual wants to achieve and accomplish everything that he or she is capable of, and he or she needs to implement his or her capacities and skills. Therefore, every healthy person has a strong desire to realise self-actualization or self-fulfilment.

An Indian-English Exile: Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul and His Oeuvre

Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul is a renowned intellectual of Indian origin who experienced self-imposed exile and portrayed it in his many works. In his works, he voices the problems and issues that exiles and displaced people from Third World countries face in a multicultural environment. Naipaul has effectively integrated elements of non-fiction and fiction in order to achieve this objective. The author adeptly amalgamates diverse genres, namely fiction and non-fiction, and presents them in an artistic manner to the readers. In many works, he puts together history, fiction, autobiography, and travel writing; for instance, in *A Free State* (1971), *The Enigma of Arrival* (1987), *A Way in the World* (1994), and others (Zhou, 2015). This makes him a unique and talented artist. It is noteworthy to remark here that the writer's first literary works were created when he began his occupation on the BBC's radio programme *Caribbean Voices*, which aired in the West Indies. There, he worked as a writer, interviewer, and editor. The majority of the works produced at that time dealt with Trinidad and its society, which battled to feel a part of a certain group, location, or culture. A sense of belonging was one of the most pressing issues during that period in society. In fact, it continues to remain relevant today.

The author's early masterpieces, *The Mystic Masseur* (1957), *The Suffrage of Elvira* (1958), and *Miguel Street* (1959), are satirical works that capture the anguish, vibrancy, futility, and hopelessness of exiled and immigrant life in Trinidad, a Caribbean city. The author's other well-known masterpiece, *The Mimic Men*, which was published in 1967, satirically showed the economic power structure of the fictitious island that is located in the West Indies (Patil, 2002). The issues of identity and independence are presented to the readers in the tragicomic story *A House for Mr. Biswas* (1961), where the writer tells the story of an East Indian who belongs to the high caste (Brahmans) and attempts to search for his identity and a sense of belonging. Furthermore, according to King (1993), especially in this literary work, the writer mixes autobiography and fiction and thereby narrates his father's life and his early years in the Caribbean.

Naipaul's *The Middle Passage* (1962) was produced when he had a chance to utilise a scholarship provided by the government of Trinidad to visit the islands, where he criticised the Caribbean and its societies' poor and unfavourable social conditions. Interestingly, after publishing this travelogue, the author is approached to write about India, the ancestral home of his family. The journey of the author to the native lands of his forefathers ended with yet another masterpiece, *An Area of Darkness* (1964). It would not be wrong to note that, thanks to this travelogue, Naipaul grasped the fact that, actually, he has no sense of belonging either to India or to the Caribbean.

In addition to this travelogue, the author produces two more works on India, such as *India: A Wounded Civilization* (1977) and *India: A Million Mutinies Today* (1990). Besides, the writer's literary oeuvre contains two travelogue works regarding Islamic countries, such as *Among the Believers: An Islamic Journey* (1981) and *Beyond Belief: Islamic Excursions* (1998). These masterpieces narrate the details of the travels of the author to Pakistan, Iran, Malaysia, and Indonesia, where he had the opportunity to deal with leaders, scientists, learners, and regular citizens and learn more about these nations.

The author's literary output also involves the most recent novels, such as *Half a Life* (2001) and *Magic Seeds* (2004). These pieces might be classified as exile fictions since the protagonists

serve as the voices of the displaced and exiled, who are actively searching for a specific place to refer to as 'home.'

Exile Experience in V. S. Naipaul's *Magic Seeds*

Magis Seeds (2004) is a continuation of *Half a Life* (2001), which was published following a three-year interval. The narrative of the novel commences from the point where its predecessor concluded. Through his main character, Naipaul allows his readers to understand the cultures of the different countries (India, Africa, England, and Germany) and the lives of the displaced individuals there. The main character, Willie Somerset Chandran, is again introduced to the readers, no longer young but already middle-aged. During this long period of time, Willie has lived the life of a wandering exile who spent his productive, efficient, energetic, and early years straying across continents without finding a proper place for himself. Following this protracted and gloomy time, Willie Chandran makes the decision to change his course and proceed in that way because staying put would be extremely difficult and bad for him. Willie begins a 'new page' in his life by visiting his family member, his sister Sarojini, who got married to German, left India, and resides in Berlin.

His life in Germany is a "great refreshment... a new kind of protected life" (Naipaul, 2004, p. 5). In other words, Willie's life is without any cares, worries, fears, limitations, or restrictions; that is, absolutely carefree, like the lives of the tourists or travellers, who merely appreciate the positive aspects of the visited countries that they sojourn in. Willie's carefree tourist life is interrupted by a visa problem. Sarojini informs him that it is not possible to extend his visa again, which means that he is obliged to leave Germany prior to the visa's expiration. However, this condition might drag him into even more uncertainty and once again lead him to an aimless, wandering exile life. Willie Chandran's condition is similar to that expressed by Said in *Reflections on Exile*, where he clarifies that as soon as a person becomes inured to the exile, its unsettling power flares up again (2001, p. 186).

Once more, Willie Chandran is faced with the choice of living as a nomadic exile who travels from continent to continent without knowing where to settle down or starting a 'new life' with clear ambitions. In fact, this situation is not so unfamiliar to him since he has encountered identical issues while in London. Willie could not remain in the same place any longer, so he had to choose what to do or where to go. He is extremely young at the time, and he is dealing with a variety of problems in a foreign country, the most evident of which is the issue of belonging. In an attempt to get over it, he marries a girl from Africa, Ana, and leaves London for Africa. In the homeland of his wife, Willie spends eighteen years like an exile who does not have any career, aims, ambitions, or accomplishments. Interestingly, even though in London Willie's salient identity is that of a writer, in Africa this identity becomes less prominent.

Eighteen years have passed since then, and now in Germany, next to his sister, Willie is again forced to make a choice. Once more, he is unsure what to do or what choice would be right for him. And this is clearly expressed in the episode where he admits to Sarojini about his indecisiveness. "I don't see what I can do. I don't know where I can go [...] What could I have done in India? What could I have done in England in 1957 or 1958? Or in Africa? ... I was always someone on the outside" (Naipaul, 2004, pp. 5-6). It is highly probable that Willie is sharing his soul with a blood relative for the first time in his life. Given their shared background, Sarojini is

the only person who could truly comprehend him. She is aware of his early years in India, when he experienced social isolation, even from his parents and friends. Willie is just out of place in his own native land. In this context, Said says that the world of an exiled person is full of displacement and dislocation. Those people who do not face exile belong to their home and surroundings; however, exiled ones are always out of place (2001, p. 180). Sarojini is aware of his frequent movement and displacement; although she does not live with him at that time, she is aware of his meaningless life. He does not know himself as well as she does. *“No one in the world understood him so well. She understood every corner of his fantasies; she understood everything of his life in England and Africa”* (Naipaul, 2004, p. 11).

He conceals his thoughts, ideas, feelings, and everything related to them, and Sarojini is aware of this behaviour. For this reason, she demands from him that he stop having a negative and pessimistic outlook on his life and wishes him to take action and accomplish goals in *“real places with real people”* (Naipaul, 2004, p. 19). Sarojini wants Willie to make plans for his pointless and aimless existence. Her wish actually aligns with the beliefs and ideas of Edward Said, who maintains that exiled individuals, particularly intellectuals, *“need to reconstitute their broken lives”* (2001, p. 177). She anticipates that her brother will reconstruct his life in real places and with real people.

Chaturvervedi (2013) affirms that Willie’s sisters’ emphasis on real people and real places points out the existential concerns of those people who come across rootlessness and homelessness (p. 3). It would be appropriate to highlight that, notably, those from the Third World, like Naipaul’s protagonist Willie Somerset, do not easily emerge from different states such as exile, alienation, homelessness, or rootlessness. This indicates that Willie’s sister is aware of this situation, and therefore, she wishes to encourage Willie to leave behind *“the colonial psychosis, the caste psychosis”* (Naipaul, 2004, p. 6), which she believes he adopted from his Brahmin father. In fact, Sarojini dreams of her brother becoming a man like Gandhi, the renowned political leader who used peaceful resistance to win his country’s freedom from the British.

Willie’s sister compares the life of his brother to Gandhi’s and states that Willie and Gandhi, to some extent, have common characteristics, and for this reason, she asks, *“Don’t you feel you can see yourself a little bit in that young Gandhi?”* (Naipaul, 2004, p. 20). It is significant to note that, in fact, Gandhi, like Somerset Chandran, leaves his native country *“England to study law”* (2004, p. 20). Later, he visits South Africa, where he stays for twenty years. What is important in Gandhi’s political activist life is that he launches his revolution when he is approximately forty-six years old. And what he attempts to do is fight against injustices and inequalities in India.

Willie is genuinely taken aback by his sister’s familiarity with a political figure such as Gandhi and inquires inquisitively about her in-depth understanding of the matters pertaining to him and his famous revolution. From Sarojini’s speech, Willie learns that his sister’s deep knowledge of Gandhi happens with the encouragement of her husband, Wolf, who, in fact, recommends Sarojini peruse a written work that depicts *“Mahatma’s autobiography”* (Naipaul, 2004, p. 20). It includes information about Gandhi as well as all Indian citizens since *“every man of the country might see himself”* (2004, p. 20) in this work. Willie is affected by Sarojini’s profound understanding of Gandhi and his ideas and philosophy. He is hesitant at first, but as his curiosity grows, he eventually decides to read the piece of work that his sister insists on for him. After commencing the reading of the autobiography, Willie experiences a peculiar occurrence.

Mahatma's autobiography, in fact, takes him back to his past, in which he has lived a wandering exile life. Willie finds himself "reconsidering his life in India and London, reconsidering Africa and his marriage" (2004, p. 24). He starts to perceive displaced life, nomadism, and being out of place everywhere more maturely. At that moment, he becomes aware that his perspective regarding his life has changed, and this happened thanks to the book on Ghandi and his life.

Willie's wandering and uprooted existence exposes his disconnection from certain locations, individuals, or possessions. It reveals that he does not feel like he belongs to any particular groups of people, places, or things. Willie Chandran's unfulfilled need for belonging somewhere or to someone has a profound impact on him, making him think that his turbulent life differs greatly from the lives of people he has become familiar with from his early years to maturity. It would not be wrong to compare Willie's life with a special calendar that has different seasons on it. His nomadic, displaced, and exiled life shifts, as Edward Said asserts, "according to a different calendar and is less seasonal" (2001, p. 149). According to Said (2001), an exile's life is distinct from that of other members of society and follows the three seasons of the natural world. He claims that the lives of individuals in their homeland are like a natural event; however, life in exile is an uncommon phenomenon that takes place outside of the seasonal calendar (2001, p. 149). Therefore, Willie's life is identical to the lives of those who experience exile. It does not follow a certain seasonal calendar since one of the seasons is absent.

After a conversation with the sister and perusing *Gandhi's autobiography*, Willie Somerset Chandran starts to believe that in this place, in Berlin, it is "a time of reconciliation and revelation" (Rao, 2013, p. 20). The time has come to decide how to resolve issues of belonging, since these are the causes of rootlessness and homelessness. Willie believes he must carve out a place for himself in this world that he can refer to as 'home.' In order to realise it, he wants "to start without any stories" (Naipaul, 2004, p. 27) and simply be Willie in order "to make a clean start" (2004, p. 27). Willie Somerset Chandran's choice to begin over essentially demonstrates his capacity to view and understand his life in exile from two angles or perspectives. On the one hand, after several years, Willie accepts his purposelessness, wandering, displacement, and unfulfilled sexual life in the following way:

Twenty years ago I wouldn't have seen what I am seeing now. I am seeing what I see because I have made myself another person. I cannot make myself that old person again. But I must go back to that old way of seeing... I saw quite clearly some time ago that it was a simple world, where people had been simplified. I must not go back on that vision (Naipaul, 2004, p. 30).

On the other hand, as the lines that follow make abundantly evident, in order to search out an authentic path to self-discovery, the protagonist needs to return to his prior perspectives. Besides, Willie needs to think over what was left in his past years, during his time in England, India, and East Africa, and what he has now in Germany. Regarding this, Said, in his studies on intellectual exiles, states that exile does not contain only negative elements like melancholia, alienation, estrangement, or trauma, but at the same time it presents a chance to develop a dual perspective. In other words, according to his thoughts, the person who faces exile might acquire a dual viewpoint that allows him to comprehend both what has been left behind and what is happening at the moment. This double perspective never views anything in a vacuum or in isolation (1994, p. 60).

By relying on the Saidian perspective of exile, it is understood that the protagonist attempts to analyse what he left behind when he resided with his family members in his native land, India, who were entirely distinct castes and who not only loved and cared for each other but also despised and detested each other. Another significant moment is that when he analyses his past, he touches upon his life in London. There, he understands his weaknesses related to his shyness, intimacy, and sexuality and charges his cultural and familial heritage, which is linked with Indian casteism. In a gradual way, he becomes aware that, due to casteism in their mother country, Indians cannot educate or gain knowledge about intimate issues like sexuality while celibate.

While residing in London, Willie has a goal to finish and publish his own book, and by trying to realise this dream, he comes close to his salient identity, the identity of a writer. In this regard, Peter J. Burke and Jan E. Stets state in their book *Identity Theory* (2009) that a “*salient identity is one that has a higher probability of being activated across different situations*” (2009, p. 46). Although he was extremely certain of the author’s identity, his encounter with Ana altered everything. Willie’s aim to marry her caused the loss of his salient identity. However, this decision laid the foundation for a new salient identity: the identity of husband, which begins to gain salience. In fact, Ana is the only person who admitted Willie as he is. It is worth emphasising the fact that after marrying Ana and moving to Africa, after eighteen years, Willie realises that he has lived his wife’s life, not his own, and more significantly, in Africa, everything belongs to Ana, not to Willie: “*Her house, her land, her friends, nothing that was my own*” (Naipaul, 2004, p. 113). This indicates that again, Willie is forced to keep his life like a wandering exile without aims or a place that he may call ‘home’. Throughout the course of time, he has genuinely experienced a profound desire for a sense of belonging. Throughout his formative years and into his adult life, he experiences a notable absence of a sense of belonging. Ultimately, due to this rationale, he desires to enter into matrimony with Ana. He expresses a desire to establish a genuine familial unit and a home. Probably through this decision, Willie attempted to fulfill his belonging needs to surmount the sentiments of inferiority and isolation he had encountered in London and India. Willie expects to satisfy his belonging needs with Ana, who respects, encourages, and acknowledges him as “*a safe person*” and “*a man from another world*” (Naipaul, 2004, p. 186). In this context, Maslow (1954) asserts in his analyses of needs that for every individual, belonging needs are crucial, and wishes to be part of the social community or structure are one of the basic human drives and motivations (p. 162). In addition to this, Maslow (1987) states that individuals need to fulfill their belonging needs, and in order to realise this, they need to interact with others. Based on the Maslow perspective, it can be appropriate to comment that the writer especially makes an accent on the belongings of the main character. The reason most probably lies in the fact that people like Willie Chandran from the Third World cannot integrate into the social structure and cannot easily be part of it.

Now in Berlin, near his sister, Willie grasps that he has a chance to transform his life and that “*everything that had happened to him was a preparation for what was to come*” (Naipaul, 2004, p. 26). Due to Sarojini’s insistence, Willie makes the decision to leave his pointless life behind and go to the native land of his ancestors to begin “*the wave*” and become “*a true revolutionary*” (2004, p. 24), like political activist Ghandi, whom he becomes aware of through his sister’s speech and the book of his autobiography. Regarding the book, there is an important detail that Naipaul emphasises through Willie’s thoughts. The main character becomes aware that there are differences between Ghandi, whom he knows from his childhood and “*hears about at*

home” (2004, p. 22), and the Ghandi who is described in the book. Notably, after reading the autobiography, Ghandi's ideas, thoughts, philosophy, and movements deeply influenced Willie. Because of this, he ultimately makes the decision to go back to India and struggle against casteism, inequalities, and injustices. So he “refuses to sit on the sidelines nursing a wound” (Said, 2001, p. 184), and with Sarojini's assistance and pressure, he feels that he “must cultivate a scrupulous (not indulgent or sulky) subjectivity” (2001, p. 184).

In addition to this, Willie intends to support the “reform of the political system” (Borbor, 2015, p. 119) of India. As a matter of fact, his choice to go to the native land of his parents to take part in a revolutionary mission signifies that he is going to another world—in other words, to his own world in which India takes a special place (Chaturvedi, 2013, p. 3). Actually, Willie's attitude regarding India, where he was born and raised, is ambivalent. The reason is that, before leaving India for London, he disliked his country of birth, its citizens, or even his father and mother. However, after eighteen years of life in exile, Willie makes the decision to travel to India to fulfill his mission for the benefit of the country. Willie, in fact, has no idea what kind of country awaits him. “Willie saw India again... India began for him in the airport in Frankfurt, in the little pen where passengers for India were assembled. He studied the Indian passengers there [...] He saw India in everything they wore and did” (Naipaul, 2004, p. 29).

The preceding lines display that at the airport in Frankfurt, where Willie catches sight of fellow countrymen, Indians, at that moment he grasps that, in fact, India shows up in front of him even before his flight there. Indian passengers “began to remind him of things he thought he had forgotten and put aside” (Naipaul, 2004, p. 29). Willie experiences some anxiety about India and the Indians during the flight and upon landing at the Indian airport. In a quiet panic, he cannot comprehend where he really belongs. Among the locations of London, East Africa, Berlin, and India, which of these regions serves as his primary place of residence? He is experiencing a feeling of ambivalence: “I thought of the two worlds, and I had a very good idea of the world to which I belonged. But now, really, I wish I could go back a few hours and stand outside the Patrick Hellmann shop in Berlin, or go to the oyster and champagne bar in the KDW” (2004, p. 29). He tries to overcome his feelings of panic and begins to reason with himself. He attempts to convince himself to concentrate on the positive perspectives of the mission, “whose success would be a cultural act of great importance” (Said, 1983, p. 7), and ignore his surroundings or leave room for his uncertainties. It is clearly expressed in the following way: “It's an airport. I must think of it like that. I must think of all that means. [...] This is an airport. It works. It is full of technically accomplished people. That is what I must see” (Naipaul, 2004, pp. 29–30).

Willie exhibits a notable level of self-motivation. For the first time in his wandering exile life, he wholeheartedly desires to accomplish the mission. His aim is to struggle against the inequalities and injustices produced by the caste system. Those like Willie, Sarojini, and other immigrant Indians are, in fact, victims not only of British colonialism but also of the caste system in the country. These displaced individuals leave their motherland and come to different countries to find peace, happiness, and a place that they could name as their home and hearth, which is impossible to have in their native lands or even in their own families. Willie and Sarojini are not the exception; many children of Indians have mixed-caste parents. One of the important reasons for leaving the country where they were raised lay in the inter-caste marriages of the parents. Traditionally, individuals from different castes and varnas cannot marry each other; in other words,

officially, there are no prohibitions on inter-caste marriages; however, their own castes or varnas do not accept this type of marriage. So eventually, this type of marriage transforms into unhappy and even despised families. And children from these kinds of families, directly or indirectly, become victims of the system.

This type of marriage causes a lot of problems among couples from different varnas. These marriage unions frequently result in terrible outcomes, such as family separation or honour killings (Halder et al., 2017, p. 31). In addition to destroying family harmony, the challenges this system creates also raise issues for the Indian people as a whole. In this context, Edman, Boynukara, and Gören (2021) assert that the existence of this kind of casteism in India poses some challenges to the formation of a unified front and a collective soul. More importantly, they say, is that India's many languages, customs, and religious beliefs prevent it from making drastic reforms (2021, p. 495). Furthermore, they state that "*Such a case lays the groundwork for the emergence of constant inner conflicts as a major component of the Indian nation.*" (2021, p. 495).

As the preceding lines demonstrate, the author, through his fictional characters, extensively accentuates the internal conflicts of the Indian community posed by the dominance of Indian casteism. In this regard, according to Borbor (2015), India maintains a dynamic and complex social character with its normative traditions of casteism. Owing to the system, there are still problems and conflicts between varnas and castes that are influencing both the whole nation and specific individuals like Willie Chandran and his sister Sarojini (2014, p. 114). That is why Indians like Sarojini attempt to struggle against the deeply entrenched system and realise radical adjustments. These drastic changes can be implemented if those like her brother take action. Sarojini thinks that Willie has the potential to do something good and positive in his wandering exile life and may take part in the revolutionary struggle. For this reason, Sarojini tries to persistently persuade him to participate in the movement. "*He had returned with an idea of action, of truly placing himself in the world*" (Naipaul, 2004, p. 150).

Moreover, as it is understood from the work, Willie is tired of wandering an exiled life without any purposes, actions, or worth. As a matter of fact, Willie Chandran, like other people, wishes to be valued in the eyes of those around him. Therefore, due to his sister's request for the first time, he makes the decision to take one of the most significant steps in his life. Most probably, this decisive step can help him gain value in the eyes of Sarojini, whose attitude towards Willie has become much more significant than it was before. Accordingly, it is possible to deduce that, despite the fact that the exile phenomenon has negative connotations like melancholy, alienation, longing, and yearning, as demonstrated in the life of Willie, it may also contain positive and even beneficial sides, as expressed by Edward Said. Said affirms that those individuals who experience exile "*are at the same time deriving positive things*" (1994, p. 59) from it.

In fact, at forty years old, only in the Middle Ages, Willie becomes aware that his sister is not only a blood relative but, at the same time, a close person to whom he feels a sense of belonging. She is the only one who is familiar with his past and who could understand and support him in any situation. For instance, Willie thinks he has joined Kandapalli's movement, but he discovers that something has gone wrong and that he has joined Kandapalli's adversaries after meeting those who come to guide him. Precisely at this terrible and dangerous moment, Willie intends to "*get a message out to Sarojini*" (Naipaul, 2004, p. 50) to let her know about his situation.

Willie perceives that those he joins in bringing about significant alterations are, in fact, diametrically arguing against Kandapalli and his political perspectives and ideology. According to this revolutionary group, the main powers are weaponry and firearms, and with their help, a revolution in India is conceivable. The sole option available to these individuals is to “*turn the peasants into rebels and, through them, to start the revolution*” (2004, p. 128). Seeing this group of people, Willie realises that he is in the wrong group, which he is supposed to join. Willie Chandran has joined “*the wrong revolution*” (2004, p. 50) and has “*fallen among the wrong people*” (2004, p. 50). Besides, he detects that, with these “*wrong people*” (2004, p. 50), he is, in fact, not “*placid or secure*” (Said, 2001, p. 186). However, it would be a very wrong move to tell them that he is not one of them, and therefore, he decides to behave like he is “*with them*” (Naipaul, 2004, p. 50) because it is his own life at stake. For this reason, Willie starts to move together with these “*absolute maniacs*” (2004, p. 141) to save his own life.

While engaging in the guerrilla movement's routine activities, Willie is continuously considering the backgrounds of the movement's participants. However, he “*couldn't assess the backgrounds of the people around him*” (Naipaul, 2004, p. 53). During that time, the only thing Willie could do was “*read the faces and the physiques*” of these “*guerilla fighters*” (2004, p. 53) and come to the conclusion that he is not a real guerilla fighter and probably would not be. It is acknowledged by Willie Somerset Chandran that he is “*among strangers*” (2004, p. 53). Even though he is in his own country, he is surrounded by people who have nothing in common with his character. His realisation that he will never feel a sense of belonging to them is another pivotal moment. Thus, it indicates that Willie finds himself in “*the perilous territory of not-belonging*” (Said, 2001, p. 177).

In this way, Willie Somerset Chandran comes to realise how very different these other revolutionaries are from him. He grasps that guerilla fighters' way of life, preferences, values, and life experiences are contrary to his worldview. Willie is obviously afraid of them; however, he expects not to demonstrate his feelings towards them since his security and safety may be in jeopardy. In this regard, Abraham Maslow, in his work *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature* (1971), explicates the individual's needs and categorises them into two groups, such as basic and higher needs. He explains that during hard circumstances, basic needs like security and safety are essential elements for the individuals' survival; that is to say, “*they need a feeling of protection and safety*” (Maslow, 1971, p. 228). Accordingly, based on the Maslowian perspective, it can be argued that to avoid being slain by these “*absolute maniacs*” (Naipaul, 2004, p. 541), Willie Chandran makes the decision to continue acting with them in all their actions. He tries to move cautiously because even a small error could be fatal. At this dangerous moment, Willie's basic needs of security and safety are becoming more pressing.

While being together with the guerrilla fighters, Willie tries to listen attentively to conversations between members of the movement, especially Raja, Bhoj Narayan, Ramachandra, Keso, and Einstein. Between conversations, he learns the real reasons for taking part in the guerilla movement. It turns out that the reasons for being in this movement are personal. To illustrate, some of them have idealistic views, and their goal is to become revolutionaries; some want to inflict revenge on their rich landowners; and others wish to break out of their monotony and undergo different experiences. What surprised Willie is that most of these guerilla fighters are former students who have had a chance to have a promising future; however, they opt to be members of

the movement. In this context, Diaz De Olarte states that, in spite of the fact that these guerillas attempt to demonstrate themselves as mighty and clever, the writer makes explicit that, in reality, they are not who they seem to be (2018, p. 91). In fact, these individuals are self-centred, conceited, disillusioned, and embittered.

As Willie gets closer to them and gets to know them better, he gets worried and tries to explain the situation to Sarojini every chance he gets. However, informing his sister is harder than he imagined. The reason lies in the fact that they do not have a permanent place of residence. What is also important is that, during the constant movement from one place to another, Willie's sense of belonging is affected. He has had problems with this feeling before, but these constant moves affect him very deeply and negatively. Throughout his tenure in the guerilla movement, Willie has felt homeless in his heart and spirit (Chaturvedi, 2013, p. 3). So the life of a wandering exile with the guerilla movement makes it explicit to him that the only thing he has ever worked on is "*not being at home anywhere, but looking at home*" (Naipaul, 2004, p. 74). This way, it would be right to comment that he grasps the fact that in a "*contingent world, homes are always provisional. Borders and barriers, which enclose us within the safety of familiar territory, can also become prisons and are often defended beyond reason or necessity*" (Said, 2001, p. 185).

After several years of acting with the guerilla fighters, or more accurately, with the killers, Willie Chandran perceives that the mission and purpose for which he left Berlin for India are lost, and he can no longer be together with them. Eventually, he realises that he does not want to support what he believes to be wrong. In this respect, according to Borbor, the protagonist and his sister do not take into account the position and condition of the native land of their ancestors in terms of their cultural and social issues (2015, p. 117). As a matter, Willie Somerset Chandran could comprehend these issues only after joining Kandapalli's enemies, where he really saw that the source of them was the Hindu tradition. Willie thinks that fighting against them is more difficult and complicated than an anti-imperialist war. For this reason, ultimately, Willie decides to surrender to the police in India. A ten-year arrest warrant was issued by the court for involvement in the guerrilla movement.

Willie adjusts to prison life fairly quickly, but even there, there is still a risk to his life, and like anyone facing a challenging circumstance, he also requires "*a feeling of protection and safety*" (Maslow, 1971, p. 228). His sister, Sarojini, is the only one who could provide him with support during this risky and unstable period. Willie seeks her assistance and informs her of the possible danger in his life. Due to the efforts of his sister and lawyer Roger "*under the terms of a special amnesty*" (Naipaul, 2004, p. 168), Willie gets an opportunity to be released from prison and "*become once again bound for London*" (2004, p. 168). The departure of Willie from India to London was not the first; it was his second separation from the 'home' of his family that caused him to think in a different and more adult way than he had when he was younger. Indeed, his second detachment helps Willie grasp his first departure, which took place thirty years ago. These two detachments, in fact, are his external exiles, but they differ from each other. Especially the second exile helps him to understand, evaluate, and analyse problems in a more responsible, realistic, and mature manner. In this case, it would be reasonable to accept that Willie Chandran's second external exile has been turned from negative into a beneficial one. As Said utters, "*the advantage to what in effect is the exile standpoint for an intellectual is that you see things not simply as they are, but as they have come to be that way*" (1994, p. 60).

Many years have passed since Willie Somerset Chandran returned to London and views the city in an entirely different way. In fact, London during the 1980s appeared more multicultural than it was in the 1950s when he first came here. What struck him were the busy streets, where it could be difficult to walk at times. Moreover, he notices that in the 1980s, London streets were filled with individuals from many nations, each with their own unique ethnicity and culture. *"There were black people everywhere, and Japanese, and people who looked like Arabs"* (Naipaul, 2004, p. 188). Indeed, London in front of Willie is not that city, in which he *"lived thirty years ago"* (2004, p. 188). One can deduce that not only has this city transformed but also Willie's viewpoints and perspectives on the issues have changed, too.

Interestingly, Willie, who has experienced exile throughout his life, in fact, received several benefits that afforded him *"a sharpened vision"* (Said, 2001, p. xxxv). Because of this vision, he comes to the conclusion that he could live like *"a free man"* and get *"a new strength"* (Naipaul, 2004, p. 187) in any town like London, which has a multicultural area. In this context, Fathima argues that living in London, where multicultural societies can flourish, is the best option for individuals like Naipaul and his protagonist Willie Chandran, in contrast to other nations where unstable, corrupted, and disrupted conditions predominate (2016, p. 13).

Actually, it is possible to see that for a person like Willie Chandran, this kind of choice is not straightforward or effortless. This decision has covered many wandering years of exile and adventures. During this time, gradually, Willie begins to understand the world in which he lives and its pros and cons. He develops into a more self-aware man who understands where he can live, who he belongs to, and how to fully express himself. Eventually he succeeds in comprehending the fact that *"people do the best they can do"* (Naipaul, 2004, p. 220). This expression that is pronounced by mature Willie Somerset Chandran shows his awareness of the potential of individuals, which coincides with Maslow's ideas on self-actualization. In this respect, Maslow in one of his works on motivation and personality of the individuals, argues that every healthy human being has a strong drive to achieve self-actualization or self-fulfillment and has *"the desire to become more and more what one idiosyncratically is, to become everything that one is capable of becoming"* (1954, p. 46).

For this reason, Willie Chandran, after starting to participate in the architecture courses in London, which *"fascinated... attracted him"* (Naipaul, 2004, p. 219), comes to the conclusion that *"all I know is that if I had my time over again, I would have gone in for architecture"* (2004, p. 219). It reveals that although he wasted his earlier years roaming in exile without any ambitions or goals, now, after becoming mature, he has reached the potential for self-discovery, which may open the door for his high satisfaction needs, which are self-actualization needs. Based on this, it can be argued that by demonstrating an interest in architecture, his future salient identity as an architect may gain salience and be activated. Several identities have the potential to activate if the person engages in any interaction. However, not all the identities may be activated. Only definite identities may be activated across different contexts and, therefore, may influence the role choice of the person. That is to say, identities of the individual, which are more salient, are more likely to become active in any given circumstance (Burke & Stets, 2009, p. 133). Taking into account ideas on identity salience, one can deduce that Willie Chandran's former salient identities as writer and husband of Ana, in fact, lost their salience. By attending the architecture courses, which is a new field in the life of Willie, his future salient identity as an architect became the most salient one,

which in turn may provide him with an opportunity to reach a high peak, or, in other words, to reach his self-actualization needs.

Conclusion

V. S. Naipaul is one of the most outstanding self-imposed exile writers, who plays a significant role in narrating events and facts that have connections with countries such as the Caribbean, India, Africa, and England. He articulates the issues that displaced people from the Third World have faced in a multicultural world. He also portrays these displaced people through his characters as victims of not only British colonialism but also of the caste system in the country.

V. S. Naipaul's sequel novel, *Magic Seeds*, is regarded as a novel of exile that focuses on the adventures and experiences of a displaced person of Indian descent, Willie Somerset Chandran, who attempts to find his place in this world and fulfill his mission. Although he joins the guerilla movement, which is entirely opposite to the ideas and philosophy of Kandapalli, and is also in a state of danger and external exile, this condition enabled him to see and analyse issues from different perspectives. Furthermore, the author, through the protagonist, demonstrates how individuals like Willie from the Third World face problems with belonging, homelessness, and rootlessness not only in alien lands but also in the homeland of their ancestors. Another significant moment was accentuated by the issue of self-actualization. Naipaul shows his readers that his protagonist, Willie Chandran, after becoming more mature and after experiencing nomadic life, makes a decision to reside in a multicultural city, London. What is also important is that in this multicultural city, Willie, in his middle age, discovers his potential interest in entirely different areas, like architecture. It reveals that it was a hope for him to continue his journey towards satisfying his self-actualization needs. This condition would probably free him from uncertainty and dissatisfaction and allow him to pursue his goals with eternal bliss. After all, an exiled person like Willie Somerset Chandran obtains perspective that helps him transform the negative and traumatic impact of his condition into something positive. That is, he may satisfy self-actualization through this process.

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