

CULTURAL IDENTITY LOSS OF THE MAIN CHARACTERS IN
CHINUA ACHEBE'S *THINGS FALL APART* AND V.S. NAIPAUL'S
HALF A LIFE: A POST-COLONIAL ANALYSIS



Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Master of Arts Degree in English
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This study examines factors involved with the embrace of a new dominant culture, firstly resulting in the destruction of the previous culture and traditions of the Ibo people in *Things Fall Apart*, secondly its impact on the cultural identity of Willie, the main character in *Half a Life*, who lived under a British dominated culture. To investigate cultural loss among the Ibo tribesmen, Nietzsche's theory of slave morality was employed as a tool for analysis, while the cultural identity loss of Willie in *Half a Life* was explained by use of Hall's Theory of Diaspora. In addition, Turner and Tajfel's social identity theory was used to investigate Willie's struggle to reconstruct his identity.

From the study it was found that the Ibo tribesmen had altruistic and democratic characteristics, as did the slaves described by Nietzsche, and these two factors were the main causes of the embrace of a new culture which in turn resulted in the loss of their own culture and traditions. The impact of vanishing culture and tradition were clearly illustrated in Willie's sense of loss in *Half a Life*. Born in a displaced homeland, India, where his own culture and tradition had been deconstructed under the dominant imperial culture of Britain, he displayed confusion with his identity, undergoing much suffering and many struggles to reconstruct both his identity and a sense of belonging.

การสูญเสียอัตลักษณ์ทางวัฒนธรรมของตัวละครเอกในนวนิยาย *Things Fall Apart* ของ ชินัว

อาเชเบ และ *Half a Life* ของ วี. เอส. ไนพอล: การวิเคราะห์แนวโพสต์โคโลเนียล



เสนอต่อบัณฑิตวิทยาลัย มหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ เพื่อเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษา
ตามหลักสูตรปริญญาศิลปศาสตรมหาบัณฑิต สาขาวิชาภาษาอังกฤษ

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การวิจัยนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อหาสาเหตุของการยอมรับวัฒนธรรมใหม่โดยชนเผ่าอโอบิในช่วง การล่าอาณานิคมของคนขาวซึ่งส่งผลต่อการล่มสลายของวัฒนธรรมประเพณีดั้งเดิมของตนเองในนวนิยาย *Things Fall Apart* ของ ชินัว อาเซเบ และการสูญสลายทางวัฒนธรรมนี้ได้ส่งผลต่อการสูญเสียอัตลักษณ์ทางวัฒนธรรมของวิลลี ซึ่งเป็นตัวละครเอกในนวนิยาย *Half a Life* ของ วี.เอส. ไนพอล ผู้วิจัยใช้ทฤษฎีจริยศาสตร์แบบทาสของ เฟรดริช นิทเช่ เป็นเครื่องมือในการวิเคราะห์หาสาเหตุของการล่มสลายทางวัฒนธรรมของชนเผ่าอโอบิ และในการศึกษาการสูญเสียอัตลักษณ์ทางวัฒนธรรมของวิลลี ผู้วิจัยได้ใช้ทฤษฎี diaspora ของสจวร์ต ฮอล เป็นเครื่องมือในการอธิบาย นอกจากนี้ผู้วิจัยได้ใช้ทฤษฎีอัตลักษณ์ทางสังคมของ จอห์น เทอร์เนอร์ และ เฮนรี ทาชเฟล ในการอธิบายการต่อสู้ดิ้นรนเพื่อการสร้างอัตลักษณ์

จากการศึกษาพบว่าบุคลิกลักษณะของทาสตามที่นิทเช่ได้เสนอไว้สองลักษณะคือ altruistic และ democratic เป็นปัจจัยที่ส่งผลต่อการยอมรับวัฒนธรรมใหม่และนำมาซึ่งการสูญสลายทางวัฒนธรรมเดิมในท้ายที่สุดของชนเผ่าอโอบิ และผลกระทบของการสูญเสียวัฒนธรรมนี้ได้แสดงให้เห็นอย่างเด่นชัดในความรู้สึกของการสูญเสียอัตลักษณ์ของวิลลีในนวนิยาย *Half a Life* วิลลีซึ่งเกิดและเติบโตในอินเดียภายใต้การปกครองของอังกฤษ ในช่วงของการเปลี่ยนถ่ายจากวัฒนธรรมเก่ามาสู่วัฒนธรรมใหม่รู้สึกสับสนในอัตลักษณ์ของตนและต้องทนทุกข์ต่อสู้ดิ้นรนเพื่อสร้างอัตลักษณ์ของตนเองและความรู้สึกของการเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของสังคม

The thesis titled

“Cultural Identity Loss of the Main Characters in Chinua Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart* and V.S. Naipaul’s *Half a Life: A Post-Colonial Analysis*”

by

Chatuporn Insuwan

has been approved by the Graduate School as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts degree in English of Srinakharinwirot University.

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Chatuporn Insuwan

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Rationale

As the world has narrowed as a result of modern communication technologies, Western culture, and specifically American culture, have been increasingly influential in world society. Diverse peoples are dominated by, bombarded by, these cultures, cultures which on the surface give importance to better living from technological advance. Many people struggle to advance materially while grasping new social norms and values, regarded as the new, civilized, social standards; while their own cultures and traditions are left behind. In exchange for modern trends and new ways of living, the importance of the cultures of their origins is neglected. Due to migrations of all sorts, in today's society, people are also struggling with an identity crisis in which they tend to be far from their own origins, struggling in a world society set by a culture almost entirely dominated by Western, American social values.

In order to remind readers of the importance of one's own culture and traditions, in this study, the researcher examined factors resulting in the embrace of a new culture by an African tribe, the Ibo, in *Things Fall Apart*, and cultural identity loss of an imperial subject in India; Willie in *Half a Life*. The factors under study shed some light on how culture can be destroyed from within. In addition, the impact of the imperial culture was investigated through observation of the main characters of both novels.

In *Things Fall Apart*, Chinua Achebe portrayed the life of a Nigerian tribe, the Ibo, before and during the European invasion. Ibo society before the domination was simple. People earned their living from agriculture, and belief in the power of gods and ancestral spirits were

central to the clan's tight bond of kinship. During the first stage of the white man's invasion, traditional ways of living of the Ibo were gradually transformed by European civilization, together with the imposition of new social norms and values. In *Half a Life*, V.S. Naipaul illustrates the cultural identity loss of his creation, Willie, who lived in India after independence. India was a homeland displaced, where culture and traditions had already been transformed or replaced by a set of norms and values from the British. Willie is made to suffer from a sense of loss, he struggles to find his identity and a sense of belonging.

These two novels have been chosen for this study due to their strong correlation in terms of the factors influencing, and impacts of, colonization. *Things Fall Apart* displays factors of the cultural loss of the Ibo people, while *Half a Life* highlights its impacts on cultural identity loss of post-colonial subjects. Okonkwo, the main character of *Things Fall Apart*, was strictly rooted and adhered to his own culture and tradition, eventually committing suicide to preserve his pride and dignity, his continuity with the old structures of his society. Willie, in *Half a Life*, whose culture had already been deconstructed, was a person in-between with little or no pride in the dignity of his own culture. This lack of sense of belonging, being in-between, is his loss.

In addition to the relationship between the specific factors influencing, and impacts of, colonization in the two countries depicted, these two novels were chosen as they might reflect something on Thai society, in terms of the impact of Western/American culture. Thai society, before the coming of outsiders, was simpler, like it was for the Ibo in *Things Fall Apart*. People earned their living from agriculture and beliefs in the power of the supernatural gave meaning to their lives. With the arrival of Europeans, Chinese, and others, social structures have been influenced, gradually transformed and may even have been changed out of all recognition. Just as Willie in *Half a Life* has no sense of belonging anywhere, Thai people living in society today,

dominated by a new culture, may feel themselves in a state of in-between, in a mixed-up society where people are not able to identify to which culture or origin they belong. Their status rootless, people face, and step further into, a space of loss.

In order to examine the factors underlying the acceptance of a new culture in *Things Fall Apart*, Nietzsche's theory of slave morality was employed as a tool to analyze. The main character's sense of loss in *Half a Life* was investigated by use of Hall's Theory of Diaspora. In addition, Turner and Tajfel's social identity theory was used to examine the main character's struggle to invent his identity.

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine factors leading to the acceptance of a new culture by the Ibo people in *Things Fall Apart*.
2. To investigate impacts of cultural loss on Okonkwo, the main character in *Things Fall Apart*, and Willie, the main character in *Half a Life*.
3. To analyze the cultural loss experienced by Willie in *Half a Life* and how he struggled to construct his identity.

Significance of the Study

This study is intended to help readers understand the factors which cause colonial subjects to embrace a new culture which results in indigenous cultural identity loss. These factors can be employed in the contemporary world where new forms of culture are continuously mixed and reconstructed, challenged by the influential dominance of American/Western culture. Readers, particularly those Thais who live in a society being assimilated and attracted by these

new cultures, might become more aware of the threat to their own culture and try to find measures to prevent such loss.

Scope of the Study

This paper analyzed factors affecting the acceptance of a new dominant culture in *Things Fall Apart*, by Chinua Achebe, and the cultural identity loss of the main character in *Half a Life* by V.S. Naipaul. Nietzsche's theory of slave morality and Hall's Theory of Diaspora were employed, respectively. In addition, to examine the main character's struggle to invent identity in *Half a Life*, Turner and Tajfel's theory of social identity was employed.

Definition of Terms

1. Cultural identity: the identity of subjects which helps to identify the nature of their ethnic group such as values, beliefs, norms, behavior, etc., which anyone in the group belongs to. It also helps people identify their ethnic group and sense of belonging to the place in which they live.
2. Altruistic: a characteristic of slaves as proposed by Nietzsche. Nietzsche explains that the altruistic have prominent characters of selflessness and submissiveness as a mean of protecting themselves from the strong and the powerful others.
3. Democratic: the characteristic of slaves set as their self-defense mechanism. Nietzsche explains that those in the democratic group set equality, dependency, and obedience to protect themselves from the superior.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Historical Background of Western Colonization in Africa

During the nineteenth century many European countries, such as Britain, France, Germany, and Portugal, fought amongst themselves for a share of Africa, a continent abundant in resources useful for their manufacturing industries and overseas trade. Davidson proposed that in 1884-85 after a conference in Berlin, they agreed to invade and share Africa without fighting (5). This agreement came to be termed the partition of Africa, which means “dividing up” or “sharing out”. In that period, even though African people tried to prevent a European invasion, they could not resist the European powers as they were much stronger in technology, especially weapons such as rifles and machine guns.

In their conquest and control of Africa both indirect rule and assimilation were strategies used by most European countries. Collins clarified in *European in Africa* that indirect rule was the policy whereby colonizers ruled other countries through traditional leaders while utilizing native institutions (107). This strategy was effectively employed and operated by the British. It was first implemented in Northern Nigeria where the British controlled the native leaders and traditional authorities. Collins stated in *Problem in the History* that by this strategy the British could maintain good relationships between British officials and native administrators. The chiefs of the native Africans were given freedom and rights to administer their local institutions (151). Consequently, native officers felt they were not directed but rather advised by the British officers to develop local government. British indirect rule was considered a compromise mean of controlling colonies. It was shown to prevent chaos in many districts in Africa as sufficient

numbers of natives felt that they were free enough to manage their business under native rules and rulers.

While indirect rule was effectively used by the British, another approach, assimilation, brought results for the French in conquering Africa. Collins defined assimilation as the direct imposition and centralization of control over the colonies (*Problem in the History* 162). Collins argued that, in terms of culture, French assimilation was a way of making non-European people civilized on the Europeans model (*Problem in the History* 166). In contrast to British indirect rule allowing self-government by natives, French assimilation intended to centralize its authority: “. . . Frenchmen out of Africans, which would also have had the happy effect of tying the overseas area to the metropolis forever” (Albertini & Wirz 362). In this way, people who adopted the French language and culture would be classified as French citizens with certain political rights. They could also work as teachers, clerks, or administrators. Nevertheless, very few Africans could follow that progression, so the vast majority of them were classified as native Africans, foregoing those rights and chances.

Having been ruled for decades by these two strategies, African countries had both gains and losses. In terms of gains, Africa had more materials and education. With the obligation of 'civilizing' and 'modernizing' African countries, the Europeans brought new farming technologies and also built railroads in order to facilitate the carriage of their goods and unify African territories. The Africans learned new methods of farming and could export a large amount of agricultural goods resulting in economic growth. Moreover, missionaries also built hospitals and brought new medical treatment and new drugs to Africa to fight diseases. Consequently, life expectancy increased and infant mortality rates decreased.

In terms of education, the major purpose for educating Africans was to train natives for the convenience of the administration, which required a literate group of Africans. To this end, Christian missionaries played a very important role in setting up schools and introducing Western concepts. Consequently, African ways of living began to disappear and there emerged a new African elite with a European education (Davidson 29). Many regarded such an education as a privilege and a matter of prestige because of the new opportunities it offered for work in the colonial government. However, the Europeans recognized that education equal to that of their own may lead to a challenge by those literate Africans. Therefore, the education given to the Africans was designed to be inferior to that of the Europeans. Also, in government work, an African could only achieve a junior civil-service grade as the senior grades were reserved for Europeans (Davidson 30).

Although western 'civilization' and economic growth might have been termed advantageous to some Africans, Africa also lost materials - diamonds, gold, and copper. In support of developed transportation in Africa, a vast amount of raw materials were brought to Europe for use in their manufacturing. Goods and products as well as raw materials could be easily carried both inside and outside the region by rail once the Europeans had settled. Moreover, the Africans had to pay taxes and customs duties for construction of railways and make free grants of African land (Shillington 338).

Historical Background to the British Colonization of India

Recognizing it as a large supplier of industrial goods, the British first came to India for economic purposes. Searching new markets they began to trade with India in the 1600s as the East India Company (EIC). After trading, the British began, successfully, to make inroads into

Indian rule for the economic growth of their own country. British rule over India lasted for more than two hundred years, resulting in significant changes to the social structure of India.

Griffith claimed that before British rule, the social structure of India was hierarchical, divided by caste according to Hindu tradition (29). This system divided people into four major classes: Brahmins (priests), Ksatriyas (warriors), Vaisyas (agriculturalists and merchants) and Sudras (servants). There were also subgroups of each caste, members of other religious communities, and the so-called 'untouchables'. This clear division of classes illustrated a division of labor, and was also the main factor indicating social and economic status among Indian people. Occupations a person could pursue were determined by the caste system from birth. The Brahmin and Ksatriya, the two castes standing at the top of the social ranking, possessed the greatest social and economic power in Indian society.

As a result of British rule, there were tremendous changes in the Indian social structure and economy. The caste system became less important in indicating socio-economic status because of Western ideas of progression and individualism. Under British rule, Western ideas of individualism, which supported equality and opportunity for people was imposed on the Indians through British education.

British education was a powerful tool shaping the Indian social structure, and at the same time gradually influenced the use of the caste system. Roy stated that in the first stage of colonization, education was aimed at producing a group of people who could work for the British administration and trading stores (35). A newly educated middle class emerged as a new social group working as agents for British trading firms and as clerks under British administrators. Some of the new elite groups received scholarships and worked worldwide. Enjoying benefits,

they defended British education, as they became aware of equal rights and opportunities to enhance their social and economic status.

However, the new emerging class was few in number compared to the entire Indian population and most Indians were economically exploited. The largest number of Indians were still to be found in rural areas, still poor, forced to migrate to live and work in the cities as a result of industrialization. The British skewed, stunted, or even destroyed the growth of Indian industries and exported handicraft goods produced in rural areas at very low prices to foreign markets (Roy 52). Also, the land-holding system was restructured. Land holdings under the new law enabled a new class close to the British administration to inherit land rather than the warriors or Ksatriyas caste (Roy 53). As the economy was directed by the British, wealth and social power were in the main possessed by them, who stood above the Anglo-Indian administration made from the new middle class elites, while the Indian villagers remained firmly at the bottom.

After India had long been ruled and exploited in this manner, M.K. Gandhi emerged as a new political and spiritual leader (Roy 37). He became a symbol of hope to Indians hoping to unite the country and remove British rule and exploitation. Pandikattu stated that Gandhi's view on European colonization was that the greed of the rulers exploited those seen as inferior and caused violence (22). Colonization was an attempt by a superior state to centralize economic and political power, so that production was only in the hands of those few groups in the ruling class, causing an enormous gap between the rich and the poor. Moreover, he viewed modern civilization developed by the British as exploitation in which the powerful could gain complete advantage over others.

In order to decentralize economic and political power from the British and conquer the violence of colonization, Gandhi opted to use the way of Ahimsa – non-violence - and a

Satyagraha movement - a quest for truth through mass political activity: “Satyagraha is a method aimed at the elimination of violence from society. The intention of Satyagraha is to annihilate the evil only, and not the evil doer. Therefore, we should not use evil means to eliminate evil, otherwise evil will accumulate. Satyagraha can transform a society by gaining the evil doer as an activist of Ahimsa” (Pandikattu 11-12).

Satyagraha was known as an experiment with truth. It was a way of truth and non-violence that people could embrace. His non violent campaign gained the attention of all India and many people advocated it to unify the country. In order to resist British rule in non-violent ways, he began to make the villagers self-sufficient and autonomous (Roy 39). He urged villagers not to buy British industrial goods and demonstrated spinning for self-sufficiency. He also founded a new educational system as a basic need of the rural people. Eventually, in support of the group of new elites, India became independent in 1947, after they had been under British rule for over two hundred years.

Critical Review

Things Fall Apart can be regarded as one of the pre-eminent African novels, which, in opposition to other main stream novels, represents the real lives of Africans during and after the period of colonialism. Egar stated that Achebe opted to use English in his novel as it could carry the African experience to both those of the white and non-white traditions (135). Ogbaa also asserted that *Things Fall Apart* was labeled as a protest novel as it expressed a reaction of the colonized to the colonizers (3). Achebe expressed his opposition to *Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad, who he considered expressed a racist view of Africans, presenting them as non-human. In an article “Achebe, Conrad, and Postcolonial Strain”, Njeng argued that Achebe’s *Things Fall*

Apart was written against Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, Achebe himself admitting it to be seen as a counter discourse (2). In his essay "An Image of Africa" Achebe accused Conrad of being a bloody racist.

As the whites presented their sense of superiority through their culture and civilization, Achebe opposed the same by portraying African natives as neither primitive nor uncivilized (Ogbaa 50). Achebe used the novel as a demonstration that the people of Nigeria, had their own culture and civilization. Not only was the novel a voice for Africans opposing the views of main stream authors, it also depicted the Ibo community in Nigeria, where the author was born in the pre-colonial period: ". . . it is in that sense that *Things Fall Apart* a casebook that makes the point that contemporary Igbo, Nigerian, and African social and political problems derived from the historical past of their societies- a past that was intact before the advent of the white men in Africa" (Ogbaa 1).

Ogbaa stated that the novel reflected Nigeria under British rule accurately. It portrayed British indirect rule, the strategy adopted to conquer the Nigerian people (54). Natives were selected to become warrant chiefs who had authority in supervising other Nigerian natives, under the command of the British. As portrayed in *Things Fall Apart*, those people in government service were those who conveyed the messages passed from the British district commissioners to the tribesmen.

Smuthkochorn stated that the novel did not only reflect the life of Africans in the period of the European invasion, but it was also a good reflection of people in the contemporary world who were lost under the dominating culture: "*Things Fall Apart* is not just a novel about African people and their customs that were banished in favor of a new era of the white domination. It is a nostalgic view of long lost traditions we all have felt but were unable to identify and describe in

words” (118). For Thai people whose culture was once comparable to the Ibo’s before domination of new cultures, *Things Fall Apart* could serve as a reminder of their own culture and traditions.

Having a comparable colonial background as Achebe, V.S. Naipaul, who was born in Trinidad, shared many experiences in colonial societies. Being under the domination of colonial rule, he was similarly inspired to describe the loss of cultural identity in his novels.

Although he did not entirely oppose European mainstream writers as did Achebe, his novels explained the feelings of incompleteness of people who lost their identities due to the impact of colonialism. In his many works, colonial subjects struggle while living in colonial societies because their own cultures are challenged and assimilated by Western ideologies resulting in cultural identity loss. This is clearly the case in *Half a Life*. Naipaul created Willie as the main character, who suffered from loss of cultural identity. Willie, as Naipaul himself, was born in a Brahmin family, had the sense of being in-between and leading a half-existence when living in his homeland, England, as well as the colonial countries in which the novel takes place. He tried to find his real word, but was unable to find even one place he felt a sense of belonging. At the end of the novel, he still could not discover his identity.

There are many critics of Naipaul’s *Half a Life* and his other works. Gourevitch noted that Naipaul’s works were very different from many works in the third world which fought with imperialism, with his aim to portray post-colonial scenes of in-completion (2). Wood hailed *Half a Life* as a book expressing the view of the disadvantaged written by a great author of the colonial and post-colonial dilemma (79). He explained that it was a novel of falsehood, of a child born backward who had to fight for his existence in a half-world. In the article “Naipaul and the Barbarians” Folks noted that Willie represented not those of India, but rather people in a

contemporary world that were not bound to their own societies (254). He viewed Willie as a barbarian who unknowingly pursued a place in the civilized world, equality and justice, regardless of the real conditions (Folks 252).

In summary, these two novels, written by Chinua Achebe and V.S. Naipaul, are contemporary novels used as the writers' tools to describe a colonial world of those living in colonial societies. Their novels, based on their own bitter background as colonial subjects, reflect their thoughts on the colonial world; main stream novels written by European writers view themselves as superior while natives are subordinate. In addition, their novels are used as devices to unite colonized countries, persuading people to maintain an awareness of their own ideas, cultures, and traditions.

Nietzsche's Theory of Slave Morality

In Nietzsche's view, morality can be categorized into that of the master and that of the slave. Nietzsche proposes a clear distinction between master and slave with the term of 'self'. Nietzsche states that the masters are egoistic, have a high value of 'being myself', which is an expression of the strong and the noble: "putting it simply, one might summarize master morality as 'being myself, and getting what I want', with the understanding that what one is and what one wants may be quite refined and noble" (Solomon and Higgins 110).

While the master have will to power and pursue what they want, the slave become selfless and never follow their own mind. Nietzsche describes this kind of morality as altruistic or in-egoistic. The altruistic have the obvious characteristic of selflessness and submissiveness. Nietzsche says it is immoral because it urges humans not to express their needs or desires embedded in their consciousness. It condemns great morality of human life and prevents self-

development and self-enjoyment of human being: “Therefore: the ‘unegoistic,’ sacrificial, imprudent is nothing special – it is common to all urges – they do not think of the advantage of the whole *ego* (*because they do not think!*); they act against our advantage, against the *ego*: and often *for the ego* – innocent in both!” (Morgan 181). Therefore, altruistic is a bad character for Nietzsche because, in his view, every act of human being is driven by egoistic or selfishness. Moral is therefore exactly innate in human mind which expresses personal desire for self-overcoming and development:

For the slave, by contrast, getting what one wants is just too difficult, too unlikely, too impossible. Slaves do not like themselves, so the idea of becoming who you are is not just particularly appealing. Slaves ultimately do not value getting what one wants but, in a preserve yet readily comprehensible sense, *not* getting what one wants. Their virtue lies not in being themselves but in *not* being the other, the master, the privileged, the oppressor. (Solomon & Higgins 110-11)

As the altruistic are selfless and cannot compete with the master, they create a self defense mechanism by turning the virtue of the master as the wrong virtue: “Instead of seeing themselves as failure in the competition for wealth and power, they turned the tables (“revalued”) their values and turned their resentment into self-righteousness” (Solomon 90). Nietzsche calls this feeling resentment. It is the feeling of the weak who show disappointment and humiliation towards injustice after being unfairly treated. It also comprises the desire for revenge, annihilation as much as hatred or anger of the oppressed against the master or the noble values. In Nietzsche’s view, resentment is embedded in mind of those who have poor spirit and regard themselves as the inferior. It is employed by the weak to protect the strong and it is not one’s misfortune but the blame and personal anger on the superior: “A master morality of

nobility is an expression of good, strong character. An ethics of resentment is an expression of bad character” (Solomon & Higgins 115).

Since the slave were powerless, selfless, and resentful towards the master, who have strong sense of self and self-overcoming, the altruistic are submissive under the superior power of the master for survival: “Slaves, to put it politely, are banal and boring. Their demeanor is servile and timid. They protect themselves with humorless, submissive smiles, without character” (Solomon and Higgins 115).

Slave’s characteristic of altruism is the basis of another characteristic of slave. As slaves are selfless and cannot compete with the master to acquire what they want, they create democracy to protect themselves from the strong. Nietzsche calls this kind of morality democratic or “the will to power of the herd” as it is retrieved from the innate instinct of human being as they live in group for the benefit and safety of all (Copleston 101). In other words, it is derived from weakness and fear of people who seek for dependence and equality among their group (Morgan 153). Therefore, Nietzsche notes that three obvious characteristics of the democratic are equality, dependency and obedience.

Equality is embraced by the slaves as the aim to protect the group from the superior. It is invented as the slaves fear that they will be harmed by the superior. Consequently, they rule the group with equality- no one is superior or inferior to others. If any individuals intend to be powerful and superior to others, they are seen as evil. Nietzsche explains the intention of the democratic to create equality as the act of turning the desire of overcoming into evil: “Everything that elevates the individual above the herd, and is a source of fear to the neighbour, is henceforth called, *evil*; the tolerant, unassuming, self-adapting, self-equalizing disposition, the *mediocrity* of desires, attain to moral distinction and honour” (Copleston 102). Consequently, in democratic

society, everyone relinquishes power, condemns instinct, passion and self-reliance for benefit and group welfare: “They foster in the herd a yearning for a green-pasture happiness, a new society offering security and comfort – a life free of risks and dangers. Catering to the masses, these democratic theorists speak incessantly of the “equality of rights”; they sympathize with all who suffer, and they dangle before the people the promises of abolishing all misery” (Zeitlin 39).

Because the slaves relinquish their power and self-reliance, they create a strong state of dependency; they rely on each other when facing outside danger or when they desire to acquire some benefits. They never gain anything of their self-reliance and they are acquainted to doing or contesting for something by group. Therefore, benefits gained are strictly shared by members in democratic group. No one solely possesses all advantages as they are obtained by dependency and reliance of democratic members.

Other than equality and dependency, the slaves are supposed to be obedient to discipline, custom, superstitious power and punishment set to regulate the democratic society (Pearson 134). Nietzsche asserts that in contrast to commanding, the slaves choose to obey. They follow the rule set to regulate the group and assure their safety and comfort. They do not have will to create something anew. If they are in order, they are praised as good citizen: “Obedience has for so long been cultivated in the masses that it has become an innate need. Indeed, the herd-instinct of obedience is inherited most easily, and at the expense of the art of commanding” (Zeitlin 42).

Hall’s Theory of Diaspora

Diaspora is the word derived from Greek, “dia”, which means “through”, and “speirein”, which means “to scatter”. In Webster’s Dictionary, diaspora refers to “dispersion from” (Brah 181). In political science, diaspora means dispersion of people from various places of the world.

It is a social form, which describes movement of people around the world as for many objectives. For example, for political purpose, people were forced to leave their country for slavery as those Africans in colonial period, or for economic purpose as the people who voluntarily moved and settled for their better lives in major developed countries in Australia, North America and Western Europe in forms of labors, specialists, entrepreneurs, or students.

After their movement, as the migrants were far from their homeland or their origin, the term diaspora became relevant to identity such as homing desire of diasporic subjects who felt and question where their home was. While living in the host country, Sheffer proposed that diasporic groups preserved or created identities among their groups in order to state their well-being and continuity of their commitments in host countries, and to acquire support of host countries and homelands (26). In addition, diasporic groups also struggled to maintain and formed identities to feel at home while settling in host countries.

The term diaspora relevant to identity has been later extended and emphasized by Hall. He highlights that diaspora is in form of cultural identity of post-colonial subjects which is continuously constructed and mixed with various cultures, resulting in the sense of loss of diasporic subjects. Hall proposes that diaspora differs from the general term of diaspora used in political science. When diaspora has been raised to the question of post colonial study, it doesn't only mean the movement of people from one country to a country, but in turn concerns cultural identities of post colonial subjects which are constructed from various cultures.

Hall argues that diaspora is originated from European adventure and slave trade in Caribbean which causes migration of people since that time. Under the colonial rule, people are politically forced to migrate from their homelands and from that point, people who have various cultures from different homelands have brought their cultures to the new place where they have

settled. In this new world, where many cultures are continuously mixed and displaced, the new form of diaspora is presented. In his view, diaspora is not just the dispersion and movement of migrants whose identities are related to homelands. Diaspora, in his concept, concerns identities which are continuously transformed and produced to new ones:

The diaspora experience as I intend it here is defined, not by essence or purity, but by the recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity; by a conception of ‘identity, which lives with and through, not despite, difference; by hybridity. Diaspora identities are those which are constantly producing and reproducing themselves anew, through transformation and difference. (“Cultural Identity” 401-2)

In the area in which diasporic subjects have been together under constructed culture, there is a space between new land and the subjects’s homelands which causes the sense of loss and exile of diasporic subjects. Hall himself, once a Jamaican boy living in England for education, used to feel this sense which he later expressed this experience in his book: “Having been prepared by the colonial education, I knew England from the inside. But I’m not and never will be ‘English’. I know both places intimately, but I am not wholly of either place. And that’s exactly the diasporic experience, far away enough to understand the enigma of an always-postponed ‘arrival” (Chen 490).

As those cultures are then mixed and constructed in a new form which originate new cultural identities of diasporic subjects. He defines cultural identity as a matter of ‘becoming’ as well as ‘being’ and it has history. He emphasizes that cultural identity has its history and has past through transformation from the past to the present and the future. Identity in his view concerns the state of becoming rather than being as used in general term: “. . . , actually identities about questions of using the resources of history, language and culture in the process of becoming

rather than being: not 'who we are' or 'where we come from', so much as what we might become, how we have been represented and how that bears on how we might represent ourselves" ("Introduction: Who Needs 'Identity'?" 4).

Hall also proposes that in addition to the sense of loss from constructed culture, the subjects suffer from the feeling of otherness under the dominant culture in host country. He states that the subjects particularly 'the black are challenged and suffer from the sense of loss under the superior culture of the Europeans. They feel inferior and are controlled over ethnic and racial identities. Moreover, they are also marginalized under political and cultural practices set to regulate and govern them. Their new social, economic, political and cultural circumstances created by Europeans have transformed cultural identities of the subjects. Hall states that living under dominant culture of the Europeans, diasporic subjects are positioned as the ones who are just others and have no right to speak ("New Ethnicities" 441). This inevitably leads to the sense of loss of diasporic subjects as it makes them feel the sense of 'otherness' instead of 'ourselves'.

Hall himself has demonstrated his experience when he underwent and witnessed African transformation of culture and identity under the influence of colonization. He stated that as a Jamaican boy he never heard any Jamaicans defining themselves as 'African'. On the contrary, they find themselves just as the sons and daughters of slavery ("Cultural Identity" 398). Although they may define themselves as African, they don't discover their African origin as it has been transformed and constructed into new world as the influence of colonial power.

John Turner and Henri Tajfel's Social Identity Theory

In the new area of cross cultural society in which identities of diasporic subjects are newly constructed and developed, identification or evaluation of an individual which comes to

term with self-concept has been changed. Schwalbe states that as identities are socially constructed, the self-concept of an individual is identified and evaluated by what they are seen and by feedback given by others (686). The self-concept defined by social reflection can be further explained by social identity theory developed by Henri Tajfel and John Turner.

Tajfel states that self-concept of individuals is derived from their feeling and knowledge of their membership of a social group. In a society comprising various groups of people which share different races, classes, genders, attitudes, and beliefs, social categorization is used as a tool that helps individuals define themselves in the society (255). In other words, people in society are defined and define themselves into 'us' and 'them' (Turner 518). According to intergroup behavior, individuals contest to gain positive self-concept by comparing their group with other groups. Individuals will have positive self-concept if they find that their own group have higher status than the outgroup or the targeted group (Turner 528). On the premise that individuals prefer to be members of the superior group, social stereotype, prejudice, and discrimination are placed on the outgroup in order to maintain superior status of the ingroup members

Stereotype is relevant to intergroup behavior as it is employed by the ingroup members to make them feel positive about their memberships of the group. Ibrahim & Williams explain that "Stereotyping involves the inaccurate categorizing of people. Stereotyping ascribes negative characteristics to people on bias of their group membership or other visible characteristics" (3: 1274). Collins argues that it is held by the ingroup members and they make distinction between their group and the outgroup by classifying the outgroup as the inferior in order to have positive self-concept from the superior status of their ingroup membership (3: 1333). In addition, stereotype often concerns with emotion. If individuals of the ingroup have negative feelings

about the outgroup, stereotype tends to develop leading to further misinterpretation and misperception of the traits and reactions of the outgroup in the future relevant to prejudice and discrimination.

Apart from stereotype, prejudice is employed by the ingroup members to assure their superiority. According to Ibrahim and Williams, prejudice is defined as “a performed adverse judgment or opinion that is not grounded in knowledge, or an irrational suspicion or hatred of a particular group, race, or religion” (3: 1274). In other words, it is a negative assessment by individuals of a certain group on the others.

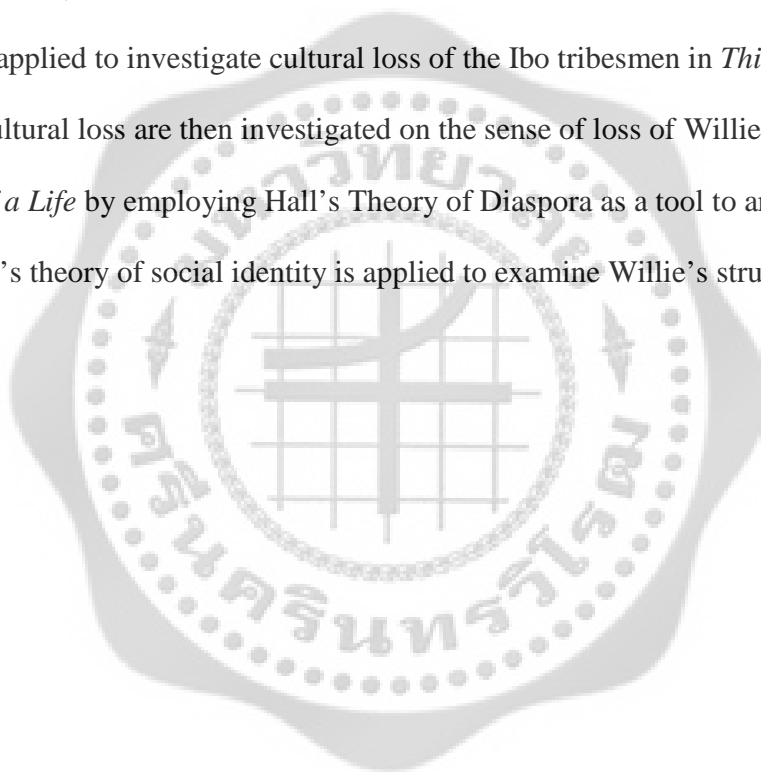
The final term closely related to stereotype and prejudice is discrimination. According to Lim and Okazaki, while stereotype and prejudice concern positive and negative cognition of the ingroup on the outgroup, discrimination is claimed behavior and actions implemented by people in power attempting to prevent a certain group of people to gain advantage or restrict them to acquire equal opportunities regardless of their abilities (3: 1114). Moreover, as explained by Liguélinel, discrimination is normally placed on the other groups having different race, class, and socioeconomic status, etc., causing inequalities in social status, opportunities, political power, economic resources and cultural development (2: 572). However, the apparent forms of discrimination lie on the distinction of race and class. Racism is a form of discriminating people from biological factors, while classism is on the basis of discriminating people from socioeconomic status.

Discrimination has originated tremendous effects on the people who are discriminated, particularly on their mentality. The discriminated members of the inferior-status outgroup will feel the sense of oppression resulting in negative self-concept and low self-esteem in their memberships of the group. Tajfel asserts that because of the feelings of oppression and

inferiority in memberships of the lower-status group which, in other words, individuals do not reach a positive self-concept from their memberships, individuals will (256):

1. leave their lower-status group and attempt to participate the higher-status group.
2. revalue their own lower-status group from negative to positive or make the group distinct in a positive aspect.
3. compare their group with other groups considered to have lower status.

In this research, altruistic and democratic which are characteristics of slaves as described by Nietzsche are applied to investigate cultural loss of the Ibo tribesmen in *Things Fall Apart*. The impacts of cultural loss are then investigated on the sense of loss of Willie, the main character, in *Half a Life* by employing Hall's Theory of Diaspora as a tool to analyze. Finally, Turner and Tajfel's theory of social identity is applied to examine Willie's struggle to invent his identity.



CHAPTER 3

ANALYSIS OF *THINGS FALL APART*

In this chapter the researcher investigated the altruistic and democratic characteristics of the Ibo tribe which led to the embrace of a new culture and its impact on cultural loss when confronting a superior power and the dominant culture of the white men.

The Ibo Social Structure and Factors leading to Embrace of a New Culture

In *Things Fall Apart* Ibo society was depicted as an agricultural community under uncertain and severe conditions of nature, and as a patriarchal community system with beliefs in the supernatural. These were the main factors which nurtured the Ibo's altruistic and democratic characteristics.

In the novel, Achebe portrayed the rudimentary lives of the Ibo tribesmen. They grew yams which were the staple crop of the Ibo people. Yams were daily sustenance and were also good for being stored for a period of scarcity. Yams were therefore regarded as good commodities for the Ibo people; they were sold, shared, and borrowed across the land. Accordingly, the number of yams one could harvest each season was the main indicator of good living.

In growing, only the best soil and climatic conditions could make yams grow well. There needed to be a proper amount of rain and sun. Too much rain or too much sun could damage the yams, and too little rain could make them stop growing. In some years, yams were killed by very high temperatures during a long period of drought. Such poor conditions were described in the book to reveal how cruel nature could be to the Ibo: "It seemed as if the world had gone mad.

The first rains were late, and, when they came, lasted only a brief moment. The blazing sun returned, more fierce than it had ever been known, and scorched all the green that had appeared with the rains. The earth burned like hot coals and roasted all the yams that had been sown” (Achebe 19).

Such harsh weather had a devastating effect on the lives of the Ibo, as they suffered if a large proportion of yams were damaged. In many years, the Ibo ended with tragic lives after yams they had just grown died from relentlessly harsh weather. In the story, one Ibo tribesman despaired so much that he decided to commit suicide: “That year harvest was sad, like a funeral, and many farmers wept as they dug up miserable and rotting yams. One man tied his cloth to a tree branch and hanged himself” (Achebe 20).

Working in the fields was demanding as it took time and great effort to take care of the yams: “For three or four moons it demanded hard work and constant attention from cock-crow till the chickens went back to roost” (Achebe 28-29). In the story, there was a detailed narration of how the Ibo grew yams. This started with cutting the seed-yams into a good size before sowing, as ones too small or too large could not become good yams. After that they cleared the farm and made straight lines of mounds using traditional equipment such as machetes and hoes, and carried baskets full of seed-yams to the field, sowing them on the prepared land. After planting, hard work was still needed because yams were plants that demanded high maintenance. The Ibo farmers had to make little sticks of tree branches to stake around the yam mounds to protect the seedlings from streams of rain and animals. Moreover, they had to keep yams at a good temperature by covering them with sisal leaves to prevent them from the scorching sun.

As yams are plants that demand great effort and care throughout the planting and growing seasons, those responsible for this task must be strong both physically and mentally. As in many

farming cultures, the Ibo men were seen working in the fields and women were responsible for other tasks. This division of responsibilities and obligations had descended from generation to generation leading to distinct roles for men and women: men were farmers, while women took the role of housekeeper. Accordingly, the Ibo men were responsible for growing yams, their staple and cash crop. They worked hard in the field all day long from dawn until dusk, with the hope of harvesting a large number of yams. Achievement for men in Ibo society was evaluated by how much yam they could harvest and store. At the end of the harvest barns full of yams declared their success as good farmers.

In the story, Okonkwo, the main character, was a good example of farming success as he was praised as a great farmer and was a wealthy man at an early age. His large compound with many wives and children demonstrated the achievement of a man in Ibo society very well: “Okonkwo’s prosperity was visible in his household. He had a large compound enclosed by a thick wall of red earth. His own hut, or *obi*, stood immediately behind the only gate in the red walls. Each of his three wives had her own hut, which together formed a half moon behind the *obi*. The barn was built against one end of the red walls, and long stacks of yam stood out prosperously in it.” (Achebe 11)

Since farming was the main responsibility of men, the sons of each and every family were taught to be aware of the man’s task as farmer. They were trained to help their fathers in the fields and learned about yams and the planting process. They were expected to follow their father’s path, being able to raise their own families when they grew up: “Yam stood for manliness, and he who could feed his family on yams from one harvest to another was a very great man indeed” (Achebe 28).

In addition to the role as farmers, men were responsible protecting the clan. In Chapter Six, Achebe depicts a wrestling competition between many tribes of Umuofia. The competition was a good occasion for the men of each village to prove their manliness and maturity, with the winner normally promoted to be the clan warrior. Men would be well trained to wrestle for the competition and those who won the competition would be praised and loved by everyone as they could bring pride and dignity to the clan. In a scene after the competition, Okafo, a young man who won the wrestling match among the nine villages of Umuofia, was celebrated by his cheering supporters and carried back home in praise of his glory as the best wrestler of Umuofia: “Okafo was swept off his feet by his supporters and carried home shoulder high. They sang his praise and the young women clapped their hands” (Achebe 44).

Men had the noticeable, external duties as farmers and clan warriors, both considered important. The women concentrated on household duties - preparing food for their families, cleaning compounds, raising children, and growing plants. These obligations indicated their minor role in Ibo society. Growing yams required hard effort and was a man’s task, so they took a subordinated role, helping their husbands grow other kinds of plants: “His mother and sisters worked hard enough, but they grew women’s crops, like coco-yams, beans and cassava. Yam, the king of crops, was the man’s crop” (Achebe 19).

The women spent most of the day doing household duties and looking after their families. In the story, Okonkwo’s wives exemplify the Ibo women’s tasks of taking care of their families, particularly serving their husbands. In one scene, Okonkwo’s first and second wives prepared food and their daughters served it to Okonkwo: “Okonkwo was sitting on a goatskin already eating his first wife’s meal. Obiageli, who had brought it from her mother’s hut, sat on the floor

waiting for him to finish. Ezinma placed her mother's dish before him and sat with Obiageli" (Achebe 38). This depiction confirms the role of men as superior to women.

Men's roles in Ibo society naturally supported their leadership status which could ensure prosperity and peacefulness for the clan. The social norm that regarded man as superior, a patriarchal norm, was evidently strong in the Ibo society and subsequently became one of the main factors leading to the destruction of the Ibo culture. Patriarchy is a system in which people are ordered by social rank. Those on the highest social rank in Ibo society were evaluated by their seniority and their success in farming and wrestling. The most senior men with most titles were promoted to be at the top of the society, followed by men with fewer titles, then those with few or none.

Nietzsche states that altruism is a clear characteristic of a slave. The altruistic never express personal need and desire for self-overcoming. They are obedient, submissive and rely on the master or the powerful for their survival. The Ibo patriarchy evokes a sense of altruism between the Ibo tribesmen as described by this. In the Ibo society, patriarchy originated from the will to survival of the clan. All clansmen relinquished their power and were obedient to the titled men for their safety and peacefulness. They all submitted to, and obeyed, the group of titled senior men who were regarded as representatives of ancestral spirits and had power and rights to make decisions for the clan when needed.

When there were conflicts, the senior men would put on *egwugwu* or masquerade masks and become judges to decide cases. In Chapter Seven, Achebe depicted the influential and mandatory power of the group of elders whom no one dared to resist, even Okonkwo, who was proud and dignified with two titles. After the group of elders had consulted with one another and

told him that the oracle of the Hills and Cave wanted his adopted son to be killed, he let the clansmen kill his adopted son even though he loved the boy and did not want him to be killed.

In addition to submission to the elders, the Ibo believed in the powers of the supernatural, which were feared and respected for the survival of the clan. As their lives depended on nature, which was unpredictable, they formed a set of beliefs involving gods and ancestral spirits that could protect them and explain why they had to face malevolent nature.

For the Ibo gods were associated directly to natural phenomenon and could yield both suffering and prosperity for the clan. An abundant harvest and fertile land were determined by the will of the gods. In the book, there are several descriptions of sacrifices to gods as a way to beg for protection and wealth. Even Unoka, Okonkwo's father, who was known as a lazy man, made a sacrifice to Aní, the earth goddess before planting: "Every year", he said sadly, "before I put any crop in the earth, I sacrifice a cock to Aní, the owner of all land. It is the law of our father" (Achebe 14).

The Ibo's strong belief in the power of gods was also narrated in their tribal ceremonies. Before the harvest, the Ibo arranged the Feast of the New Yam in order to give thanks to the earth goddess and ancestral spirits, as they believed these powers brought fertility to the land. Showing great respect, new yams were offered to the powers first and then the clan could eat them: "The feast of the New Yams was held every year before the harvest began, to honor the earth goddess and the ancestral spirits of the clan. New yams could not be eaten until some had first been offered to these powers" (Achebe 31).

Apart from gods, the Ibo believed in the power of ancestral spirits to provide ethical and moral guidance. The ancestral spirits were good Ibo men who had pursued their ancestral path in

a past life. When they were alive they had been industrious, working hard in the field, had gained titles, became good elders, and later, in death, good spirits.

Because of their strong belief in the power of both gods and ancestral spirits, nobody resisted nor challenged their powers. The Ibo, with or without titles, as well as ordinary tribesmen, were all submissive to them. If a man challenged the powers, the tribesmen would be punished and suffered damage. In Chapter Four, Achebe portrayed the gods as standing above, a power to which everyone was to submit. In the scene Okonkwo made the other clansmen angry after he beat his wife during the Week of Peace. They believed that it was disrespectful to the earth goddess and she would not bless the clan: "The evil you have done can ruin the whole clan. The earth goddess whom you have insulted may refuse to give us her increase, and we shall all perish" (Achebe 26). The next day, Okonkwo had to come to the shrine of the priest of the earth goddess with an offering to make a sacrifice.

Even though the Ibo had a strong sense of altruism to the power of the supernatural, as well as to the titled senior men in their social hierarchy, democracy, another characteristic of slaves as proposed by Nietzsche, might be seen in them. For the benefits of safety, and the welfare of the group, the democratic relinquish individual desire. They set equality, dependency, and obedience as values in the group. The democratic nature, in which everyone is equal, dependent on one another, and obedient, can be seen in Achebe's depiction of Ibo society.

In Ibo society equality had been preserved among the clan. No individual had mandatory power. Even though they were regarded as the most powerful group of people, the group of elders who represented the ancestral spirits did not come to be a member of the group by their own right or power; they were all promoted by the clan from their success. Besides, even though the group of elders seemed to have absolute power, before making a judgment, they had to

consult each other in order to maintain the benefits and peacefulness of the clan. The consultation of the elders revealed that judgment was not mandated by an individual but that everyone had a right to share power in justice.

In addition to equality, a state of dependency can also be seen in the Ibo's democratic character. As they struggled with the severe conditions of nature, they lived as a community in order to help one another in their farming. For their survival, they shared fundamental resources needed for farming such as crops and some other kinds of plants, as well as some parts of farming land. In Chapter Fourteen, with Okonkwo in exile for seven years from his motherland, he was given a parcel of land to grow yams until he returned home. In addition, he had been helped with his farming by his friend, Obierika, who sold yams for Okonkwo and gave some of his seed-yams to share croppers. He did this until Okonkwo returned to his homeland: "This is the money from your yams," he said. "I sold the big ones as soon as you left. Later on I sold some of the seed yams and gave out others to share croppers" (Achebe 123).

Ibo tribesmen strictly obeyed the tribal rules. This is the democratic character of obedience. In Chapter Thirteen, although Okonkwo was a great warrior and farmer and earned high respect from others, he was ready to accept the rules and morals of Ibo society. He strictly obeyed people of higher status such as the senior men, and also submitted to the power of the gods and ancestral spirits, which all clansmen respected: ". . . Okonkwo kept the wooden symbols of his personal god and of his ancestral spirits. He worshiped them with sacrifices of kola nut, food and palm-wine, and offered prayers to them on behalf of himself, his wives and eight children" (Achebe 11). After the accidental murder of a son of Ezeudu, an elder of a village, he readily accepted the punishment for his crime. He was to be ostracized for seven years to keep the peace of the clan as his killing was regarded as a crime against the earth goddess:

“The only course open to Okonkwo was to flee from the clan. It was a crime against the earth goddess to kill a clansman, and a man who committed it must flee from the land” (Achebe 110).

As the Ibo had a strong sense of democracy in which everyone was equal and relied on each other, they were keen to negotiate rather than to fight. In the story, before a tribal war, the Ibo would always give the opportunity to the other to avoid violence by negotiating before choosing to fight. In a scene before a war was declared, after a woman in Umuofia tribe was killed by someone from the village of Mbaino, Okonkwo asked the Mbaino villagers to give him a virgin girl and a boy as a sacrifice; otherwise they would be at war. The two sides reached the compromise and Okonkwo returned home with a virgin girl and a boy: “And so the neighboring clans who naturally knew of these things feared Umuofia, and would not go to war against it without first trying a peaceful settlement” (Achebe 9). Furthermore, in a trial before the case was judged, there was negotiation before punishment. In Chapter Ten, a man was excused of beating his wife, and his wife was taken back home by her brothers. Before the case was decided by the elders, both sides had an equal chance to make their excuses. Finally, the elders decided the case in a compromise way telling the man to beg his wife to go back home and asked him not to beat her again: ““Go to your in-laws with a pot of wine and beg your wife to return to you. It is not bravery when a man fights with a woman”” (Achebe 82).

All in all, looking at the Ibo social structure, its patriarchal system and beliefs in the supernatural were the two main factors which could explain their tight bond of kinship. In the story, Okonkwo was obviously a representative of a new generation who could sustain tribal norms and values. At an early age, he began to pursue the path the Ibo ancestors had settled, determining to be a member of the Ibo’s respected group of elders and later a good ancestral spirit after his death. In order to follow that path, he tried to prove he was the clan’s greatest

warrior and also the successful and wealthy farmer. When he was very young, he became one of the very few Ibos who had acquired two titles by his success on farming and wrestling: “He was a wealthy farmer and had two barns full of yams, and had just married his third wife. To crown it all he had taken two titles and had shown incredible prowess in two inter-tribal wars. And so although Okonkwo was still young, he was already one of the greatest man of his time” (Achebe 5). As a clan hero, Okonkwo had a strong passion for the culture and tradition of his clan and wished to see them transferred to the next generation. In particular he stood as a good role model for men. Like him, a man must be a successful farmer and a great warrior. He wanted Nwoye, his own son, who represents next generation, to be like him: “He wanted Nwoye to grow into a tough young man capable of ruling his father’s household when he was dead and gone to join the ancestors. He wanted him to be a prosperous man, having enough in his barn to feed the ancestors with regular sacrifices” (Achebe 45).

Destruction of Culture and Tradition of the Ibo Tribesmen

Okonkwo’s exile for seven years had a huge effect on the loss of culture and tradition of the Ibo tribe when the 'white men' came. As the Ibo were tribesmen nurtured to be obedient and respectful to higher-status people and the power of the supernatural, none of the clansmen fought when outsiders came to the village. The altruism and democracy entrenched in the Ibo’s consciousness caused their cultural loss. The destruction of their culture can be seen in three stages: their welcome at the appearance of the white men, the assimilation of a new culture, and finally total submission to it. The first appearance of the white men instigated excitement and curiosity among the Ibo. Assimilation of social norms and values and a new belief in

Christianity resulted in gradual change in the Ibo social structure. Finally, the powerful force of the white men led to a total submission of all Ibo tribesmen.

Initially the outsider's arrival was welcomed as the Ibo were a democratic group of people who were acquainted with negotiation rather than fighting, and never killed a man unless negotiation was tried. This is exemplified in Chapter One, before a tribal war, in which it was clearly illustrated that the Ibo were a group who never fought first; rather, they tried to find a peaceful resolution instead: "And so the neighboring clans who naturally knew of these things feared Umuofia, and would not go to war against it without first trying a peaceful settlement. And in fairness to Umuofia it should be recorded that it never went to war unless its case was clear . . ." (Achebe 9). This is why Uchendu, an elder of the village, had complained after the decision to kill a white man by some tribesmen from Abame, an Ibo village. This demonstrated the true nature of the Ibo, who tried to preserve the relationship of the clan by introducing negotiation when there was a potential for conflict - the Ibo had been taught always to try for negotiation before fighting, so the decision to kill the white man was foolish.

As it was one of the Ibo's strongly democratic characteristics, they did not kill newcomers as long as they did not harm the clan; they were merely excited and curious at the appearance of the white men. With totally distinct physical appearance and language, the white men were certainly a group of strangers the Ibo had never seen in neighboring clans and they wanted to know who they were and why they had come: "The arrival of the missionaries had caused a considerable stir in the village of Mbanta. There were six of them and one was a white man . Every man and woman came out to see the white man" (Achebe 125). Not only were the Ibo curious of the coming of a white man, but they were also excited by their powerful weapons. The guns able to kill people in the village of Abame in a very short time were seen as magical

like the power of the supernatural in their own beliefs: “They must have used a powerful medicine to make themselves invisible until the market was full. And they began to shoot. Everybody was killed, . . .” (Achebe 121).

Apart from the nature of the Ibo which tried to avoid confrontation and negotiate, the white men could stay in the village because of the Ibo’s submissive character. They believed that the power of the gods would protect the clan, and were certain that their own gods and elders were powerful enough to protect them from a group of people they had not seen before. When they were asked for a piece of land to build a Christian church, they gave the white men an area of evil forest with the hope that the power of the spirits living in that area would kill them: “Let us give them a portion of the Evil Forest. They boast about victory over death. Let us give them a real battlefield in which to show their victory.’ They laughed and agreed, and sent for the missionaries, . . .” (Achebe 129-30).

After successful settlement, the Ibo were gradually assimilated into new Christian's social norms and values resulting in changes to their social structure. After the white men were allowed to live in the village, they tried to spread their own ideas - 'civilization' - and also their own beliefs in Christianity. The new religion of Christianity soon was believed to have a magical power protecting the white men from unknown power. The Ibo were amazed to see that the white men did not die after building Christian church in the evil forest, which was in stark contrast to their belief that the spirits would kill people living on that part of land: “The inhabitants of Mbanta expected them all to be dead within four days. The first day passed and the second and third and fourth, and none of them died. Everyone was puzzled” (Achebe 130). The magical powers of the belief were continuously performed. They proved that outcasts were still alive after they had their hair shaved, which opposed the belief that they would die if their hair

were cut or shaved. Also, they did not die after they protected the new-born twins from being killed according to the Ibo's belief that twins had to be killed to protect the clan from damage. The belief in gods which was a major part of the Ibo's social structure was replaced by the new belief in Christianity: "The Christian had grown in number and were now a small community of men, women and children, self-assured and confident" (Achebe 140).

The new belief assimilated as a major part of the Ibo's way of living created a good result in the European's attempts to rule the clan. In addition, the white men tried to demonstrate that they wanted to protect the clan from other tribes. In Chapter Twenty-One, Achebe illustrated Mr. Brown's scheme to convince the clan that they were being protected by him: "He said that the leaders of the land in the future would be men and women who learned to read and write. If Umuofia failed to send her children to the school, strangers would come from other places to rule them" (Achebe 156).

Mr. Brown had caught them on the horns of a dilemma he himself had created by his arrival. New social norms and values imposed in the Ibo's consciousness resulted in deconstruction of their social structure. "Mr. Brown's mission grew from strength to strength, and because of its link with the new administration it earned a new social prestige" (Achebe 156). Instead of working in the fields all day long as they did in the past, the Ibo at different ages went to school to earn new social prestige: "They were not all young, these people who came to learn. Some of them were thirty years old or more. They worked on the farms in the morning and went to school in the afternoon" (Achebe 156). Besides, instead of struggling to gain titles following the path of their ancestors, the Ibo absorbed new ideas of progression and joined the new social ranks. After studying at school, some were court clerks, court messengers, or teachers: "Mr. Brown's school produced quick results. A few months in it were enough to make

one a court messenger or even a court clerk. Those who stayed longer became teachers; and from Umuofia laborers went forth into the Lord's vineyard" (Achebe 156).

In the final stage, the powerful force of the white men resulted in the total submission of the Ibo. Their strong force was used to overcome the clan's elders and warriors. While almost all of the Ibo were unknowingly enslaved by the new materials and the new belief, the group of elders discerned that their own culture and tradition were going to be completely destroyed by the new culture. The elders were awake to the fact that they had to fight after they knew that the gods they had been respected were being challenged by some clansmen after they were convinced by the new belief: "... on one occasion the missionaries had tried to overstep the bounds. Three converts had gone into the village and boasted openly that all the gods were dead . . ." (Achebe 135).

However, it was too late for them as the clan were already submissive to the new social ranks, as Okonkwo was told by his friend: "'It was too late,' said Obierika sadly. 'our own men and our sons have joined the ranks of the stranger. They have joined his religion and they help to uphold his government'" (Achebe 151). Only the group of elders and the clan's warriors were aware of preserving the own culture and tradition and resisted the invasion of the white men. Finally, with more powerful forces, the white men could overcome the elders and the clan's warriors. Following the clan's profoundly altruistic character, after the powerful group of people to whom they had long been submissive were defeated, the white men became the most powerful group of people standing at the top of the Ibo's social rank: "The clan was like a lizard; if it lost its tail it soon grew another" (Achebe 147).

In conclusion, the destruction of the culture and traditions of the Ibo resulted from the Ibo's democratic and altruistic characteristics. Their democratic character allowed the white's

settlement in the Ibo land and opened the chance for the white men to impose new social norms and values. Their altruistic character made the Ibo submissive to the new group of people both mentally and physically; the white men were believed to be the more powerful group of people who could bring benefits and protect the clans like their own gods.

In contrast to the clan, Okonkwo, the main character, was passionately immersed in the clan's culture and tradition. He was praised as the one who could uphold and protect the tribal norms and values. He was one of the very few men who would fight the new invasion. His absence during his seven year exile was the same as the absence of pride and dignity of the Ibo tribe. Without Okonkwo, no one could uphold the dignity of the clan's traditions when confronted and so was gradually destroyed by the new set of norms and values brought by the white men. Living in a village far from his motherland, Okonkwo could not lead the clan to fight as he used to do. He despaired when the tradition he had been clinging to collapse. As narrated by Achebe in Chapter Seventeen, Okonkwo felt a great wrench at this loss when seeing the new generation, his son, Nwoye, in particular, turned to the new social prestige of the white men: "Supposed when he died all his male children decided to follow Nwoye's steps and abandon their ancestors? Okonkwo felt a cold shudder run through him at the terrible prospects, like the prospect of annihilation" (Achebe 133).

After his return to the village, Okonkwo tried to reclaim his pride and dignity he had lost during his exile in the hope it could unite the clan with his role as a good Ibo man: "He had lost the chance to lead his warlike clan against the new religion, which, he was told, had gained ground. He had lost the years in which he might have taken the highest titles in the clan. But some of these losses were not irreparable. He was determined that his return should be marked by his people" (Achebe 147). His next mission was thus to expel the white strangers from the Ibo

land with physical confrontation, as was custom. However, he was captured and found that the clan had all surrendered to the new social order. He decided to commit suicide.

His decision to commit suicide was not only made by his personal defeat but his great disappointment at the clan's loss of tradition and spirituality. He was conscious that he could no longer rely on the traditions he was firmly rooted in and had been trying to conserve, as they had been completely annihilated. He could not live in the new society. He was without a sense of self and could never be recognized as the clan's hero as he had hoped.



CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF *Half a Life*

After examining the causes of the destruction of the culture and traditions of the Ibo people in *Things Fall Apart*, in this chapter the researcher examined cultural identity loss for Willie, main character in *Half a Life*. While Okonkwo and the other Ibo people in *Things Fall Apart* were confronted with an invasion of culture before their own eyes, with their culture gradually assimilated and destroyed by the end, Willie was born already lost to his own Indian culture, as it had been completely dominated by British culture long before his birth. He was confused and suffered in a world in which belonged nowhere.

His sense of loss can be divided into three parts: social identification, construction of identity, and sense of loss. The investigations of these issues were based on Hall's Theory of Diaspora with Tajfel and Turner's theory of social identity employed as support.

Cultural Identity Loss of the Main Character

According to Hall, cultural identity loss of those subject to diaspora is the result of a lack of sense of belonging to a displaced homeland. In this case, the culture of origin had also been transformed by new sets of norms and values under a colonial power. Subjects felt they were positioned in a space where they could not identify where they really belonged, so they aimed to conform to an identity in order to gain the feeling of fitting in.

Cultural identity loss from diaspora consists of three major processes: social identification, construction of identity, and sense of loss. In the story *Half a Life*, the cultural identity loss of the main character underwent these process; his time in India during a period of

social transformation can be seen as social identification, his determination to construct identity might be apparent during his time in England, and the fullness he had long lost shows final effect in Africa and so on into the future of his 'half-life'.

1. Social Identification

For this process, Tajfel and Turner's theory of social identity can be employed to explain the main character's process of social identification. In this process individuals identify the group they are members of as the 'ingroup' and others as the 'outgroup'. In other words, it is a process of social comparison in which individuals divide people into 'ingroup' and 'outgroup'. Individuals experience positive self-concepts and high self-esteem if they feel the group to which they belong is superior in status; in contrast, they have negative self-concepts and low-self esteem if they feel they are in the lower-status group.

In *Half a Life*, Willie was born in a period of social transformation. During this period, he witnessed a contest between the two cultures of his Indian homeland and British. Under British rule, Indian social structures had been transformed from a hierarchical Hindu society into one in which freedoms and new opportunities were encouraged and imposed on Indians as new social norms and values. The contrast of the two cultures resulted in Willie's negative perception of his Indian culture and positive cognition to the Western culture. He perceived his Indian homeland as the negative 'ingroup' resulting in his low-self esteem but the Western world as the positive 'outgroup'.

Willie's negative self-conception was caused by the feeling of oppression at his inferior status in the Hindu caste system. In Hinduism, the caste system played a crucial role in determining the social and economic status of people. They were distinguished and ranked into classes, and in each class, they were restricted to doing particular kinds of works. Moreover,

those who were born of mixed caste would suffer from social discrimination; they would be branded as backward and restricted in acquiring rights and opportunities. Willie, born of the mixed parentage between a Brahmin standing at the top of society and a low caste woman, had experience the pain of social discrimination; he was categorized as backward and outcast from society. Situated in the lowest class of society, Willie underwent traumatic experiences from the caste system; including studying at a mission school of Christian missionaries because no school of any caste would accept him as a student.

Willy's sufferings from social discrimination in the caste system humiliated his father, who he blamed as the cause of his depressing life. He despised his father and had no pride in his Brahmin status. At mission school, when asked what his father did, he felt ashamed and reluctant to answer that his father was a Brahmin: "But now when the question was put to him Willie found he didn't know what to say about his father's business. He also found he was ashamed" (Naipaul 37).

He expressed his pain and anger toward his parents through his English composition: his caste oppression was expressed in the characters of the king and a beggar-maid. These symbolized his father, a higher status man, and his mother, a lower status woman, respectively. The story ended in tragedy - the king was killed by his son to eliminate his shame and the insults of others. The story demonstrated that he absolutely had no pride in his origins. In his view, caste oppression was the major cause of his suffering.

In contrast to the negative feelings he had toward Indian society, Willie had positive perceptions of Western culture. Going back to Turner & Tajfel, a positive self-concept of individuals derives from being a member of the superior-status group. New freedoms and opportunities given to him at mission school contributed to Willie's positive picture of the

Western world. In this new world he felt relieved to live as it helped him feel like a new person with a new, higher status: “He understood more about the pupils in the school. He understood that to go to the mission school was to be branded, and he began to look at his mother from more and more of a distance. The more successful he became at school - and he was better than his fellows – the greater that distance grew” (Naipaul 39). Willie’s positive perception of the new society of the Westerners was having a great impact on his mind. It was a new world of superior status in which he was fully accepted as a member. It had been kept in his awareness that the freedom in the new world of the Westerners could help him leave his grievous feeling of inferior status in the old world of Indian society. He had learned that as long as he was the best among others, he could gain acceptance as a new person with a new status.

Finding new freedoms and opportunities, Willie was inevitably fascinated by the new culture. His compositions at mission school narrating a Western life style, with parents going to the beach with their children, getting their skin tanned before driving back home, demonstrated how much he was attracted and overwhelmed by the new culture: “All the details of this foreign life – the upstairs house, the children's room – had been taken from American comic books which had been circulating in the mission school. These details had been mixed up with local details, like the holiday clothes and the holiday sweets, some of which Mom and Pop had at one stage out of their own great concern given to half-naked beggars” (Naipaul 40). The couple and the beggars expressed the differences between the two cultures in Willie’s cognition. The couple represented the Westerners who had higher status and better lives. In contrast, the beggars represented the picture of his father as an idle priest keeping silent in the temple as well as his poor background as an Indian living in the society of poor living. Willie wished he had been born

in a Western family having the blissful life of freedom and opportunities the Western world seemed to promise.

Since his positive initial sensation of a new culture, Willie hoped it might help him escape the agonizing experience of his backward status in the old culture. So Willie dreamed of becoming a missionary like his Canadian teacher: “He began to long to go to Canada, where his teachers came from. He even began to think he might adopt their religion and become like them and travel the world teaching” (Naipaul 39). The statement revealed that to go to Canada where his teacher came from was a way to liberate himself from the caste oppression he had been suffering. In his perception, it was the place that could give him opportunity to present himself as one accepted by others as when he was at mission school.

However, despite his dream to go to Canada, Willie later studied in England, the home of influence of Imperial rule in India. Since India had been ruled by the British for ages, some of the British who came to India were journalists or writers. They came to India to investigate the social movement of nationalism and some of them came to collect specific information for their writing. At that time many writers also came to see Willie’s father, who had taken a vow of silence. With the help of a writer who knew his father, Willie received a scholarship to study in England.

With the experience of a low status person of his Indian background under the influence of colonial power, Willie had two distinctive concepts in his mind; they were positive and negative self-concepts. His negative self-concept was of the real life of caste oppression; the positive self-concept was the imagined world he had been craving.

2. Construction of Identity

Willie's struggle to invent identity can be seen in the telling of his time in England. Now it was his real world and he had to strive for high self-esteem. In this process, Turner and Tajfel's social identity theory can be employed to explain Willie's struggle to construct identity. In that theory it is explained that in a society comprising various groups people seek to gain positive self-concepts of their group by identifying the 'outgroup' as inferior. If individuals cannot gain a positive self-concept from membership of one group they either leave for a higher-status group, make their group positively distinct, or compare their group with other, lower-status groups. In the story, the first and third options can be found in Willie's determination to gain positive self-conceptions.

Willie's departure to England itself demonstrated the first strategy to gain a positive self-concept by participating in a higher-status group. Thus, his life in England was apparently the process of constructing identity-getting rid of shame of a negative self-concept and gaining positive self-concept in the new world he wished to feel a part of.

However, the reality of living in the world he imagined to be positive, left Willie alienated by place and new cultural circumstances. In his early days in London, new circumstances of the big city made him feel that he knew very little about the outside world. He found it completely different from what he had imagined: ". . . they assumed that the local sights they were writing about were famous and well understood; and really Willie knew little more of London than the name" (Naipaul 52). The booklets assumed that the readers had a certain degree of knowledge about London sights; in contrast, Willie barely knew about the places in London. He felt that the book he had read when he was in his homeland could not help him know more about the outside world. Apart from the sense of alienation of place, Willie was estranged

by a new culture and education. At college he had to learn everything new such as how to greet people and how to ask for help. Lectures given at the college made him feel confused as a person who had no direction and he did not know how it was important for him: “Willie was living in the college in a daze. The learning he was being given was like the food he was eating, without savour” (Naipaul 58).

The feeling of alienation was the result of his negative self-concept or low self-esteem nurtured in his Indian homeland. The longer he experienced a new life in London, the more shame of his Indian background grew. He thought the lack of knowledge about the outside world was the result of his poor background as a low-caste Indian: “, he was amazed how little he knew of the world around him. He said, ‘This habit of non-seeing I have got from my father’” (Naipaul 54). In Willie’s mind he could not feel independent from the negative self-concept of his Indian background. The picture of his father spending the whole day hiding in the temple doing nothing other than keeping his silence was still embedded in his mind and blamed as the cause of his failure in life. He thought that in his old culture he had never been told or offered to learn about the world that everyone in England seemed to know.

Since he was reminded of his negative self-concept since his very first moments in London, Willie struggled to invent an identity to gain a positive self-concept. Socializing with white men illustrated that, in his perception, they were the high-status group that Willie desired to be accepted into in order to gain a positive self-concept. He perceived that to be a writer writing scripts for radio broadcast and to have his own book published were the ways to be recognized by the English and also to maintain distance from his homeland. When Willie met Roger, a young British lawyer with good manners from the upper classes, He tried to keep a relationship with him and when asked what he really wanted to do in England, he did not hesitate

to say he wanted to be a writer: “Willie had learned to keep a straight face when embarrassing things were said and to walk round the embarrassment. He said, ‘I want to write’” (Naipaul 82). Just as when he was complimented at mission school, he thought of being a writer as a quick way to gain social acceptance in the new world he wished to feel a part of.

Willie then began to present a remade story of his own background: “. . . he spoke of his mother as belonging to an ancient Christian community of the subcontinent, a community as old as Christianity itself. He kept his father as a Brahmin. He made his father’s father a ‘courtier’. So, playing with words, he began to re-make himself” (Naipaul 61). He wanted to be seen as someone from a superior background, not from the colonies under the patronage of the white men. In this way, since he was a person who never had identity in any place he lived, it also demonstrated that Willie did not only want to gain acceptance, but also wanted status equal to the superior Englishman. In every group he tried to join, he wanted to be the best of everyone.

Having left for the higher-status group, Willie also compared himself with people in lower-status group as an attempt to gain a positive self-conception. Willie’s determination to compare himself favorably against lower-status group started with his first social adventure in bohemian society and after his failure to fit in with the high-status group of English society.

At his first settled place in England, Willie began socialization in bohemian society, in Notting Hill, where migrants from all over the world as well as high and low class British people mixed together. It was a place where everyone knew nothing about each other and they all aimed to present themselves as new in any way they wished: “They were still new and exotic; and there were English people- both high and low, with a taste for social adventure, a wish from time to time to break out of England, and people with colonial connections who wished in London to invert the social code of the colonies” (Naipaul 72). In bohemian society, Willie had found a

place in which a group of people were thrown together and where they all were equal and had a freedom to state their existence. Therefore, bohemian society was perceived as a low-status group in Willie's mind and he was not content to be a member of such a group.

Willie started to compare himself with others in order to get rid of a negative self-concept of membership of an inferior-status group. When Willie met Percy Carto, a Jamaican of mixed blood, he tried to uncover his background, but at the same time was curious of his friend. When he knew that Carto was a negro whose father was a laborer in Panama, Willie felt more comfortable to be with him: "Willie had been very careful with what he had told Percy about himself, and it was easier now for him to be with Percy. He felt he stood a rung or two or many rungs above Percy, and . . ." (Naipaul 63). This demonstrates that Willie always wanted to be superior than others in order to get rid of shame of his inferior status in his homeland. When he knew that his friend was the son of a black laborer, Willie felt comfortable with his own sense of superiority.

In addition, this strategy was also used to gain a positive self-concept after he was refused membership of English society. Although Willie seemed to have some success in acquiring a positive self-concept as a certain degree of acceptance received from the white men, Willie later came to realize that such acceptance was only on the surface. He felt he was not truly seen as from a noble background as he had tried to present himself but rather was seen as from a colony under patronage. Despite his great efforts to present himself with a new identity, he felt he could not escape from the image of a low-status Indian. He felt that nobody was interested in the story of his invented background so he could no longer rely on his make-belief world: "It was depressing. The book had a paragraph on a half-page somewhere in the middle. Willie was presented as 'a subversive new voice from the subcontinent'" (Naipaul 122). In the eyes of the

master race, Willie was just accepted as a student from a far country under their support. As a result, Willie was shamed at his attempt to invent a story: “Let me not be reminded of it. I will write no more. This book was not something I should have done, anyway. It was artificial and false” (Naipaul 123).

In the new world in which Willie wished to have his identity located, he could only be an outsider, one who could never gain real acceptance, emphasizing his low-self esteem: “Willie felt left behind and exposed. The savour went out of his London life, and he began to wonder, as he had done at the very beginning, where he was going” (Naipaul 114). In this real world, he was placed in a limited place like Notting Hill, a place of negative perception in his mind where migrants from colonies as well as he lived: “If I get my teaching diploma and decide to stay here and teach it will be a kind of hiding away. And it wouldn’t be nice teaching in a place like Notting Hill. That’s the kind of place they would send me . . .” (Naipaul 117). This well expresses Willie’s state of being in-between. He represents Hall’s diaspora suffering from a sense of loss as he was situated in a limited place under colonial power. He was far from his homeland, but could not find identity in the new world since he was marginalized and located in a certain area of an inferior group of people in the world of a master race.

In confusion, without a place to rely on, Willie retreated from white society and went back to a low-status group to claim his superior status. A sexual relationship with a prostitute in a smelly room was one way to gain superior status: “It was awful for him in the over-heated little room with smells of perfume and urine and perhaps worse.” (Naipaul 120) The prostitute and the smelly room represented the inferior-group. It was the place that he wished to regain new confidence after his failure to gain a positive self-concept in white society.

Another relationship, with Ana, a mixed-blooded girl from Portuguese Africa, also helped him feel relieved from the negative cognition of himself. Although Ana was not regarded as a person from a low-status group like the prostitute, some parts of a letter she had written to him helped him feel admired, understood and gain an acceptance he had never before received: *“I feel I had to write to you because in your stories for the first time I had moments that are like moments in my own life, though the background and material are so different. It does my heart a lot of good to think that out there all these years there was someone thinking and feeling like me”* (Naipaul 124).

Contrary to the harsh criticism received for his book, admiration from Ana made him feel comfortable in a land where he felt otherwise lonely. The words *“... there was someone thinking and feeling like me”* (Naipaul 124) helped Willie feel he was not isolated. At least, he felt there was still someone who he could share his feelings with. He felt that there were others living in the world of in-between like him: *“It was possible that she belonged to a mixed community or stood in some other kind of half-and-half position”* (Naipaul 124). For this reason, with Ana, he no longer felt lonely; he sensed the feeling of belonging and was overwhelmed with shared feeling and sympathy. He felt that when living with Ana, he was in a safe place he could rely on after his existence had been negated in his homeland and in the world of the white men. *“... so in those days, ever since she had agreed to my being with her in Africa, I leaned on Ana”* (Naipaul 141). Therefore, Portuguese Africa, where Ana came from, was the next new place Willie wished to feel at home after his existence was negated in his homeland and in the world of the white men.

3. The Main Character's Sense of Loss

In Africa, Willie's sense of loss is highlighted. As stated by Hall, as long as identities are continuously constructed, subjects will be far from their homeland and they will be lost for as long as they could not recover their origin. Willie's long journey to construct identity expresses well the subjects' sense of loss proposed by Hall. After his attempt and failure to construct identity in the real world of England, his life in Africa illustrates tremendous loss. The feeling of belonging was obscured by his negative cognition in every place he lived. In this, the third place he wished to feel at home, Africa, he could not escape from his negative self-concept. He was now rootless and spent his life aimlessly and wastefully in Africa.

During his journey to Africa, Willie was reminded of his negative cognition expressed through his worry of not being able to feel belonging anywhere. On the ship, Willie was worried about his language abilities: "He wondered whether he would be able to hold on to his own language. He wondered whether he would forget his English, the language of his stories" (Naipaul 132). His worry proves his low-self esteem or negative cognition of himself; it reveals that he was one who was not rooted in any place he lived. He was afraid of forgetting language as the identification of himself and the tool he used to state his existence.

In addition, when in Africa, feeling of alienation was another reminder of his negative self-concept. After his first sight of Africa, he was worried whether he could cope with the new circumstance or could belong in the new country: "He wished he had come to Ana's country in another way. The town was big and splendid, far finer than anything he had imagined, not something he would have associated with Africa. Its grandeur worried him" (Naipaul 133). Had Willie felt a firm root or a strong commitment in the place he used to live, he would not have been so worried whether he could fit in the new country. But on the contrary, similar to his first

day in London, Willie felt estranged by the new circumstance of Africa. Keeping in mind the inferior group of people in India and England, the real world of Africa, large and beautiful, made him feel worried whether he could be a part of a new city or would be able to establish an identity after his failure to do so in the two countries he used to live.

As the negative self-concept resurfaced, Willie felt that he had no value, so he did nothing other than live in the shadow of Ana's success: "Ana had said that the estate needed a man, and I knew, without being told, that my only function was to reinforce Ana's authority with these men. I never tried to do more than that, and the overseers accepted me. I knew that in accepting me they were really respecting Ana's authority" (Naipaul 146). He could not escape from his own negative self-concept that had been dogging his entire life. Even though Ana was ready to have him as her leader, Willie never tried to do things other than as he was appointed. He felt more comfortable to be under Ana's authority, shadowing her power over the men. Therefore, he spent his wasteful life day by day without creating something new and was not recognized except as a friend of Ana from London: "So people couldn't place me and they let me be. I was Ana's London man, as the little housemaid had said" (Naipaul 145).

Negative feelings of his self-conception doubled when he came to the realization that he was in the same group of inferior-status Africans. As in the bohemian society of North London where migrants from all over the world came together and struggled to construct identities, most people in regional Africa were of mixed-blood, trying to have their race and status blended with the Portuguese in order to form new identities closest to those of the master race: ". . . and I was helped in this understanding by my own background – that the world I had entered was only a half-and-half world, that many of the people who were our friends considered themselves, deep down, people of the second rank. They were not fully Portuguese, and that was where their own

ambition lay” (Naipaul 160-1). The second rank people who had African origins desired to be identified with the master race of the Portuguese. Willie was again reminded that he was in the middle land or the world of the inferior, just like bohemian society in which everyone had equal rights and freedom to state their existence under colonial power. He realized that despite his great attempt to escape from a group of inferior status for so long, he still could not liberate himself from being situated in that inferior circumstance.

This new land full of feeling of inferiority, ignorance, and absence of belonging bred from negative cognition of himself worsened his sense of loss. Compared to Ana who had her own place, respected and accepted, Willie felt he was rootless, had nothing, and no certain objective in life. He had been dreaming so long to reach a life while his reality had been passed wastefully: “But now the best part of my life has gone, and I’ve done nothing” (Naipaul 227). These words, spoken to Ana, reflect his submission to the life he had long lost: the life he himself had been purposelessly spending.

Out of his tremendous loss, Willie tried to construct his identity in Ana’s shadow. Another sexual relationship with an African prostitute led by Alvaro, the Correias’ estate manager, expresses his intention once more to construct an identity as the superior in an inferior group of people just as he did in London after his failure to gain real acceptance in society. In Willie’s mind, the prostitute and Alvaro were both the people with lower status, and to be accepted by them both was a way to regain confidence as a superior in the new land in which he was not recognized. In addition, his love affair with Graca, Ana’s friend, also reveals a way to create identity by self discovery. He thought he was on the way to liberate himself from Ana’s shelter where he had been hiding and seen as one disregarded: “. . . and I thought how terrible it would have been if, as could so easily have happened, I had died without knowing this depth of

satisfaction, this other person that I had just discovered within myself. It was worth any price, any consequence” (Naipaul 205).

The briefest moment of confidence guided Willie toward another journey of finding identity. The relationship with Graca helped Willie know that he could have an identity by his own discovery: an identity which was truly of himself and not relying on others, either low or high status. In the story, Willie’s departure to see his sister, Sarojini, in Germany expresses one final intention to create identity. His sister, who had the same race and origin and successful in life despite divorce, was a good example of success for Willie. Therefore, he intended to use his sister as he did Ana, as a pathway to construct his own identity: “Within days of coming to Berlin he had begun to lean on this strength of his sister” (Naipaul 138). The new adventure of constructing had started again; it was the identity which he had relentlessly been pursuing for his whole life, still far out of reach, remaining unanswered.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

In *Things Fall Apart* the Ibo people had strong characteristics of altruism and democracy derived from their traditional ways of living in which people relied on nature and earned their lives from agriculture. Dependency on nature in their agricultural society forged a tolerance toward unknown and uncontrollable powers. They had created leaders who had absolute power for their safety. Therefore, when the white men came to the village, in the Ibo's perception, the white men were seen not as rivals but as the unknown. As violence was not allowed unless peaceful settlement was impossible in their society, the white men were welcomed and allowed to stay.

Comparing this to Thai society in which people's lives also relied on agriculture, Thai people might be found to be altruistic and democratic in the same ways as the Ibo tribesmen. Although Thai people have not been confronted by a European invasion as were the Ibo, they are now being 'invaded' with technologies and many traditions of foreign cultures. In assimilating these new cultures as well as social norms and values Thai people might be seen as comparable to the Ibo in their experience of the second phase of cultural loss.

The domination of the culture and traditions by the conquerors in both Ibo and Indian societies as found in *Things Fall Apart* and *Half a Life* respectively resulted in identity crises for new generations. In *Things Fall Apart*, Okonkwo represented the first generation who was firmly rooted in his own culture but ended tragically in suicide. He felt he could not live in the new culture with which he had never been brought up or which he had never upheld. His suicide thus symbolized the destruction of the culture he felt had been lost. In *Half a Life*, Willie represented

the next generation after Okonkwo. He was born in an Indian society in which the old culture had already been deconstructed. His Brahmin origin, once respected as a caste in high social rank, was no longer so. Willie himself thought his own culture was deteriorating and outdated. For this reason, Willie identified himself with the dominating culture of the conqueror. However, with his low self-esteem in his viewpoint and origin, he felt he was only accepted superficially and was humiliated as a second-rank person in the new culture. Willie was thus a person who was lost both in the world of his origin and in the world of the new culture. He had no sense of pride and dignity in his origins and endlessly pursued a new identity invented by the dominating culture of the conqueror.

According to the review of the factors and impact of cultural loss in the two novels, current generations, not only in Thailand but around the world, are living in a mixed culture. As stated By Hall, as long as identities are poorly constructed, subjects will be far from their origins and feel further sense of loss if their origins are not recovered. Nowadays, people are becoming lost as they go further from their origins. Under the influence of Western culture, they migrate from their agricultural homeland in rural areas for a better living in the big cities. Because of this migration, a greater number of middle-class people suffer in the city with low incomes compared to high living expenses. To state their existence and well-being in the city where people are valued by materials they possess, they cling onto material well-being as the way to gain acceptance. They struggle to afford a great deal of money to consume imported brand-new products and modern technologies. In addition, a large number of the latest innovations and modern technologies are rapidly consumed and get regularly updated. Knowingly or otherwise, the new generation are now trying to find out what they really are and where they are from. From

the study, if people, particularly the new generation, do not have a sense of belonging or feel intimately immersed with the new culture, they will be lost and suffering from identity crisis.

Recommendations for Further Studies

1. As altruistic and democratic qualities were investigated as factors of cultural loss of the Ibo people in *Things Fall Apart*, there should be further investigation to find other factors that can cause cultural loss in other communities.
2. In this study, Willie is a representative of people in a global community who are far from their origin and are struggling in the world being challenged by a new invasion of a dominating culture. Identity crisis of people in world's society should be examined.
3. As Thai society is now being challenged and dominated by Western and American culture, cultural loss and identity crisis of Thai people particularly those of the middle class, should be investigated.
4. Because there are some similarities between Thai and Ibo culture, in which people have been taught and nurtured to be submissive to the power of the supernatural and unknown powers, other characteristics of Thai people that facilitate the domination of new culture should be investigated.
5. As found in *Things Fall Apart* and *Half a Life*, a powerful tool used to dominate people in colonial countries was education, The study of the impact of a Western educational system on societies should be explored.



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Appendix A: Chinua Achebe's Biography and His Important Works

Chinua Achebe was born in Ogidi, Nigeria in 1930. He received his secondary education at Government College in Umuahia, and then was educated at the University College of Ibadan where he studied English, history and theology. While he was a student, he published four series in the University Herald and graduated in 1953. After his graduation, he started his first career as a producer of radio talks, Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation. There in England, his powerful and famous novel, *Things Fall Apart*, was first published. After that, he came back to Nigeria and was appointed Controller of the Eastern Region Stations of the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation.

In 1960, which is the year of Nigerian independence from Britain, *No Longer At Ease* came out which followed the story of Okonkwo's grandson, Obi Okonkwo, who receives education in England and returns to Nigeria to receive a senior position in the civil service. After *No Longer at Ease* was published, Achebe travelled to many regions such as East Africa, USA, Latin America, and Britain before he published the next novel *Arrow of God*, which concerns traditional Ibo life as it is challenged by colonial rules and power led by missionaries and colonial government. In 1966, *A Man of the People* was published. This story narrates corruption in post-colonial society. After *A Man of the People* came out, Achebe had taken up several careers related to university academic such as a Senior Research Fellow at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, a Professor of English at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and the University of Connecticut at Storrs. After two decades without any novel published, Achebe

published his fifth novel, *Anthills of the Savannah*, narrating military dictatorship in an African country.

Apart from novels, Achebe has also written collections of short stories from which he has gained fame such as *Morning Yet on Creation Day* (1975), *Hopes and Impediments* (1988). In his writing career, Achebe has played the important role in African literature. He has published numbers of the work of African writers and has defended the use of English language in African literature as well as defended racism in European writers.

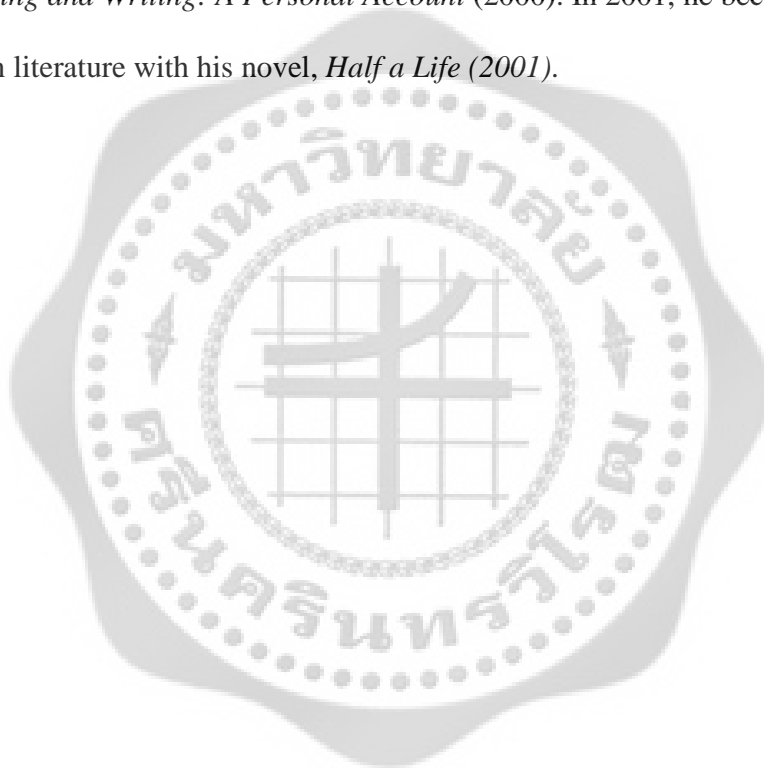


Appendix B: V.S. Naipaul's Biography and His Important Works

Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul was born in Trinidad in 1932. His family were of Brahmin origin. He is the son of Seepersad Naipaul who worked as a correspondent for the Trinidad Guardian and died of a heart attack in 1953. When he was six, his family moved to Port of Spain, so he was educated there at Queen's Royal College and later won a scholarship to Oxford in 1949. He met Patricia Hale while studying there and they married in 1955.

Naipaul's profession as a writer was inspired by his father. He started his career as a freelance writer and became famous as a writer in the mid-1950s. His writings mostly dealt with the cultural confusion of the Third World were influenced by his experiences in the post-colonial world: the West Indies. Naipaul published his first book *Mystic Masseur* (1957) which is about a bright young man who dreams of being a famous writer. He later published a number of books. Some of his great books are *Miguel Street* (1959), *A House for Mr Biswas* (1961), *The Middle Passage* (1962) describing his first visit to the West Indies, *Among the Believers: An Islamic Journey* (1981), etc. In 1967, it came *The Mimic Men*, which is the story of the main character, Ralph Singh, a disillusioned scholarship student in London, who tries to construct his identity while living in exile in London and get rid of his sense of loss and displacement. However, colonialism has taken away his identity, culture, and sense of place. In 1971, Naipaul published *Free State*, which is the story set in a free state of Africa at the time of civil conflict. In 1979, *A Bend in the River*, which is regarded as one of the finest works of Naipaul, was published. It narrates the life of a Muslim Indian merchant, who lives in an isolated town in a newly independent African nation. The place in which he lives can be identified neither European nor Africa reflecting the clash between the tradition of his homeland and the modern world of

colonialism. Naipaul also wrote some of nonfiction based on his experience as a traveler and an observer such as *The Loss of El Dorado* (1969), *India: A Wounded Civilization* (1977), *Among the Believers* (1981) and *Finding the Center* (1984). Since the late 1980s, Naipaul has published numbers of work narrating his Trinidadian culture and his ancestral homeland such as *Turn in the South* (1989), *Munities Now* (1990), *Way in the World: A sequence* (1994), *Beyond Belief: Islamic Excursions Among the Converted People* (1998), and the final work before his Nobel Prize novel, *Reading and Writing: A Personal Account* (2000). In 2001, he became the winner of the Nobel Prize in literature with his novel, *Half a Life* (2001).



Appendix C: Summary of *Things Fall Apart*

Things Fall Apart narrates conflict of the culture of Ibo people living in the village of Umuofia in lower Nigeria and the dominating culture of the white men. Before the European invasion, the Ibo life is simple; they earn their lives on agriculture and beliefs in the unknown power of the supernatural are central to their lives. In the village, Okonkwo, is a representative of a good Ibo man who is strongly rooted with his tribal norms and values. He can prove to be both as a good farmer and a great warrior, and later gain titles as a respect from his success. With his success in both roles, as a warrior he is feared by all neighboring clans and as a farmer he is respected as a wealthy man in the Ibo village.

However, his exile for seven years after his accidental crime has caused a huge impact on cultural loss of the Ibo. The seven year Okokwo has been absent form the village is coincidental with the period of the white men settlement in the Ibo village. In the seven years, the Ibo have been assimilated by civilization and new social norms and values of the white men. Not long after the new civilization is presented, the Ibo's culture and tradition become deteriorating. People earn new social prestige and join the new social rank of the white men; they study at the mission school and work in the white administration as court clerks or court messengers, and a lot of Ibo men convert to the new belief of Christianity.

After Okonkwo's return to the Ibo land, he finds that his own culture and tradition is going to collapse. Therefore, he and the elders agree to fight for their own culture but is defeated by the stronger force of the white men. At the end of the story, after Okonkwo realizes that the Ibo will not fight for their own culture, he decides to commit suicide as he cannot lives in the society dominated by the new culture.

Appendix D: Summary of *Half a Life*

Half a Life is the story of a faceless and non-existent colonial subject. Willie Somerset Chandran, born in India after the period of social deconstruction, has found that his whole life is completely lost. Under the British rule, Willie has no pride of his Brahmin origin and does not belong to the new culture of the British. As a child of mixed parentage, he suffers from the caste oppression in his own culture. However, in the new culture of the British, he feels he is regarded as a person under British patronage. Therefore, his whole life is full of suffering and struggle to find identity and a feeling of belonging.

Willie is a person of diaspora who is far from his origin and is challenged by identity crisis in every place he lives. In England, he tries to construct identity by socializing with the white men. In order to gain acceptance and to get rid of a shame of his own background in the new society, he writes scripts for radio broadcast and writes a book full of the story of his re-make background. Nevertheless, with his low-self esteem, he feels he is still not recognized and is despised as a person of the second rank. As his failure to invent identity in England, he moves to Africa with Ana, a girl of mixed blood from Portuguese Africa. As a rootless person, he again fails to construct identity and a sense of belonging. He feels he is not recognized and spends his life day by day under Ana's success. After sixteen years, he is reminded to find identity of his own in a new place he wishes to belong. He divorces Ana and moves to Germany where his sister is living and where his identity is waiting to be discovered.



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A large, faint watermark seal of Srinakharinwirot University is centered in the background. The seal is circular with a decorative border and contains the university's name in Thai script and English, along with a central emblem.