

Tribhuvan University

Cultural Confluence in Naipaul's *Half a Life*

**A Thesis Submitted to the Department of English in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in English**

By

Dhan Bahadur Rai

Department of English

Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus

Kathmandu

February, 2008

Tribhuvan University

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

This thesis titled “Cultural Confluence in Naipaul’s *Half a Life*” submitted to the Department of English, Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus, Tribhuvan University, by Mr. Dhan Bhadur Rai has been approved by the undersigned members of the Thesis Committee.

Members of the Research Committee

Internal Examiner

External Examiner

Head
Department of English
Hriseekesh Upadhyay

Date: -----

Acknowledgements

The present work owes much to the scholarly guidance and encouragement from my teacher, Mr. Krishna K. Bista, Department of English, Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus, Tribhuvan University who provided me the materials which were not available outside. My sincere gratitude goes to him for going through the script in detail and correcting my challenges.

I would like to extend my gratitude to Mr. Hriseekesh Upadhyay, Head Department of English, Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus, for permission to carry out this Thesis work. I am also very much grateful to Mr. Gyan Bahadur Yonjan (Director, CISD) and Mr. Khagendra Prasad Sharma (Registration team leader, UNDP, Katmandu) for their direct and indirect help and suggestions.

I am also indebted to my parents, brothers and sisters who constantly provided me financial support and encouragement throughout this writing.

Mr. Om Prasai and Mr. Tej Bahadur Dahal deserve my heartfelt thanks for their co-operation. I would like to thank Mr. Tara Nath Koirala, Mr. Nagendra Dewan, Mr. Damodar Luitel, Miss Menuka Chamling and other friends for their help.

Finally, I am thankful to Milan Rai and Menuka Chamling from Chamling Computer Service for their fine typing and printing.

Dhan Bahadur Rai

Date, Dec 30, 2007.

Abstract

Cultural Confluence is the central issue in V.S. Naipaul's *Half a Life*. Willie Somerset Chandran, the protagonist of the novel, experiences mixed ideas between his Indian and other cultures. Willie's name itself shows the mixture of the two cultural traditions viz. Western i.e. "Willie Somerset" and eastern i.e. "Chandran". Willie experiences dilemma to adopt any particular cultures so that he is tortured psychologically. In order to fulfill his desire he travels from India to London and Africa but he gets himself a sense of loss, neither he goes to his root culture nor adopts new cultures completely because of his Creole roots, Brahman and untouchable caste. Ultimately, he comes to know that the amalgamation of cultures makes an individual fragmented. Furthermore, the first chapter tries to define the introduction of the Thesis and the writer's background. Similarly, the required theory has been used in order to prove the hypothesis in the second chapter. There are some factors that cause cultural confluence and fragmented in self. The text has been analysed according to the theory in the third chapter that how does Willie face challenges in his life? Willie travels from India to London and Africa in order to search authentic self but he experiences fragmented in self due to the amalgamation of cultures. There is brief description of the whole Thesis in the conclusion.

Contents

	Page Number
Chapter I: General Introduction	1-9
Chapter II: Theoretical Modality	10-29
Cultural Studies	10
Impact of Modernization and Colonization on Culture	13
Cultural Cringe	18
Cultural Dislocation and Migration	21
Consequence of the Intra and Inter Cultural Values	24
Identity Crisis	27
Chapter III: Textual Analysis	30-53
Introduction	30
Cultural Disintegration in <i>Half a Life</i>	30
Willie as an Indian Migrant	40
Willie's Hybrid Mentality	43
Sense of Fragmentation of Willie	51
Chapter IV: Conclusion	54-56
Willie's Fragmented Life	54