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Hybridity, Assimilation, and Acculturation in Chinua Achebe's "No Longer at Ease," Jamaica Kincaid's "Lucy," and Tayeb Salih's "Season of the Migration to the North": A comparative Analysis (1).

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ABSTRACT

A The themes of hybridity, assimilation, and acculturation are richly portrayed in the novels of Kincaid, Salih, and Achebe. These three authors explore the intricacies and difficulties people have faced when navigating social and cultural shifts via their tales. These three different but related works—Achebe's No Longer at Ease, Salih's Season of Migration to the North, and Kincaid's Lucy—explore similar issues, illuminating the complexities of cultural identity and the effects of social expectations on people. This chapter compares how these authors portray hybridity, assimilation, and acculturation, pointing out the parallels and discrepancies in their narratives and highlighting the complex nature of these processes. It aims to compare the writers' depiction of the similarities and dissimilarities of adjusting to new cultural contexts by investigating the experiences and conflicts that the characters face. The study will tackle numerous ways that Achebe, Salih, and Kincaid address the concepts of hybridity, assimilation, and acculturation via this comparative examination, thereby advancing knowledge of the human condition in multicultural settings.

The way that Achebe's No Longer at Ease illustrates the idea of hybridity is discussed in this section. The novel follows the life of Obi Okonkwo, a young Nigerian man who returns from studying in England. Through Obi's character, one can observe the clash between his traditional Igbo heritage and the Western influences he encounters. Obi's hybrid identity manifests in his struggles with cultural expectations, corruption, and personal conflicts.

1. Introduction

Achebe explores the Igbo people in Nigeria with the old values of Umuofia as well as the modern Nigeria in Lagos at the threshold of Independence. Obi Okonkwo the grandson of Ogbuefi Okonkwo is a typical product of the modern era that mixes motives and values, a miserable amalgam, the offshoot of a weak and hybrid culture. No Longer at Ease proves that the individual and the society are equally responsible for shaping the patterns of their culture. The culture of the Igbo people is explored with the tribal gathering and the impressive ritual of the clan that had been

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Vol. 02, No. 07, 2024, pp. 1-8
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replaced by a Christian prayer meeting, conducted on the occasion of Nwoye (renamed Isaac) a retired Church of England catechist. It doesn't represent the complete victory of the missionaries.

The people of Umuofia promote Obi for the European power through education to bring them status and refuse. The attention of the clan is shifted from religion to the new open-sesame, education, which is an invaluable asset in the inter-village and inter-tribal rivalries. It projects the struggle of Igbo people to cope with hybrid culture and identity. The influence of colonial power projects the nuances of tribal life and its homogenous culture. Obi, the protagonist is depicted as an exemplary character who is prepared to play a vital role in eradicating social and economic evils that seem to stand in the way of Nigeria of his dreams. But he fails to execute the idea of the modern Nigerian culture. A society-ridden culture with a set of degenerate values is exposed by Achebe that the individual and society are equally responsible for shaping the patterns of existence. Erickson states: "culture is a tool, and a product of human activity that is…learned and transmitted from our elders and also invented (or incrementally transformed) through recurrent improvisation within current situations of practice" (4). As such, culture is a social construction that is passed through generations and is dynamic, changing because of alterations in the context of meaning-making. Dialogic exchanges between persons and groups create it. Indecision and disadvantage plague the alienated Obi. Despite not belonging to Umuofian or Western culture, he confronts Western education, therefore his passionate attachment to his homeland alienates him. Rarely in Nigeria do in-laws beat each other. It shows how Western language, lifestyle, and rationality have taken over.

2. Method

In post-colonial writing, literary scholars describe social patterns and cultural hybridity differently. Communities create social norms through hybridity. Colonial social patterns are handled culturally. People motivated by tradition and modernity generate social hybridity. Failure to develop Nigerian social identity by Obi contributes to cultural disaster. Igbos accepted their lifestyle as administrators. Igbo ignored Western cultural distinctions. For example, Obi's lifestyle. Mr. Green's vehicle insurance comment mocks Igbo hybridity when Mr. Green says it's not my business. In a country where even the educated cannot think ahead, obligation exists. Modernity captured educated people like Obi, triggering Igbo cultural turmoil and hybridity. Europe ruins family and duty in Nigerian society. His money is plenty, but comfort and luxury made him choose the European code over family. It highlights the complex relationship between hybrid culture and African history.

Christianity and Igbo religion clashing demonstrates Nigeria's varied culture. Obi's hesitation in class talking about the incident shows cultural divides. His father labels Kolanuts "heathen" food and opposes offering them to the wooden gods. Christian principles prevent Obi's mother from attending Igbo events. She enjoyed pagan music (102). Isaac Okonkwo calls "heathen" music archaic. Western influence is seen in Igbos wearing Western attire. Everyone was dressed in agbada, or European suit save the guest of honor, who greeted Obi from England in Lagos in his shirtsleeves due to the heat of discussing hybrid Igbo society (25).

Nigerians' hybrid language is analogous. Obi's desire to change reality by breaking cultural and traditional barriers reveals Western impact. Obi supports the idea of Hitler, who opposed the system and the act of Obi to challenge the 'chi' is similar as he says, "What was Hitler to me or I to Hitler? I suppose I felt sorry for him. And I didn't like going into the bush every day to pick palm kernels as our "Win the War Effort" (29). Obi's behavior exemplifies his attempts to empower himself by acting contradictory to the established beliefs and conventions. It is evident from the personal concerns to change the attitudes of the Igbo people and get influenced by the Western culture. The common dilemma of the educated Africans is represented through the acts of Obi, who is puzzled between acceptance and rejection of a life of a hybrid culture in Lagos. He is captivated in such a mode like his grandfather Ogbuefi Okonkwo in Things Fall Apart (1958). The distinction between Obi and Okonkwo is that they faced different phases of culture and identity. But the elder Okonkwo

realizes the potential of his deeds and Obi fails to decide on a definite course of action till he is caught red-handed accepting the bribe.

Customs are found in all the communities of the world. The customs of any society play a pivotal role in shaping the social patterns for the existence of culture. Custom and culture are the inevitable aspects of regulating social life. Customs act as an effective means of social control. They bring people together and develop social relations with them. Both, customs, and culture change from society to society, and also within a society over time. The customs of the Pre-colonial Igbo society have been changed as per the situations of colonialization. The colonial power makes them come out of the superstitious acts and they believe that knowledge is the power, and it brings prosperity to the individual as well as to the clan. Mr. Ikedi informs Obi about the importance of knowledge. In times past,' he told him, “Umuofia would have required you to fight in her wars and bring home human heads. But those were days of darkness from which we have been delivered by the blood of the Lamb of God. Today we send you to bring knowledge”. (8)

Achebe writes, "One of the great gods of Aninta was Udo, who had to be treated as a traitor by the tribe" (23). This goat threatened the expedition by droppings in the church and ruining the catechist's yam and maize crops. Mr. Okonkwo complained to Udo's priest, who was likely a hilarious old man, but the priest said it was free to go. When Obi returns from England to Lagos, he is greeted with tribal ceremonies as he exits his car at Umuofia Progressive Union's first meeting,

Umuofia kwenu!' shouted one old man.

'Ya!' replied everyone in unison.

'Umuofia kwenu!"!

'Ya!"!

'Kwenu!"!

'Ya!"!

'Ife awolu Ogoli azua n'afia,' he said (62).

They switched beer among bottles. One kid adds, “Lagos palm-wine was really no palm-wine at all but water---an infinite dilution” (64). Obi, an educated man, doesn't believe in how society views Osu. His friend Joseph convinces him of the consequences, “You know book, but this is no matter for book. Do you know what an Osu is?” (57). His Christian father forbids him, saying, “Osu is like leprosy in the minds. The inflexibility in the custom of marriage leads the confusion in Obi’s decision and he finds himself in a trap to follow either the modern way or the traditional way of life. (57)

No Longer at Ease is a novel of hybridity, it is a blend of African culture and the influence of Western ideology. The main concern of the novel is to explore the decline of the social values in Nigeria at the threshold of Independence. The issues of identity of the Nigerian Igbo people are visible throughout the novel. People of Umuofia tried to keep themselves united with the changing scenario through the formation of the Umuofia Progressive Union in Lagos. It monitored the values of the Igbo tradition, but to some extent, the failure due to the crisis in ideology and the issues of culture sacked their goals with some unwanted creed in the social malaise.

The clash between traditional culture and Christianity made the people alienated from their society. The traditional caste system made the fertile ground for getting people separated from each other in modern Lagos. Obi’s materialistic approach to fulfilling the needs traps him into bribery. He loses his kinship, and relations with society, and is dislocated from culture. He becomes no longer at ease after his disconnection with the Nigerian village. The complexity of the religious codes, ethical values and hybridity in culture is focused on the issues of identity and culture. Finally, it can be argued that a society with a blend of two diversified cultures, ethical values, social patterns, customs

Al-Biruni Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences
https://al-biruni-journal.jo
Vol. 02, No. 07, 2024, pp. 1-8
ISSN 3104-8900

and religious order faces the issues of identity and culture. It is evident from the novel that the issues of identity and culture are visionary among the Nigerian people.

Like No Longer at Ease, Salih's Season of Migration to the North represents hybridity. The novel tells the story of Mustafa Sa'eed, a Sudanese man returning from London to his native village. Mustafa's character embodies a complex hybrid identity, shaped by his experiences in both Sudan and the Western world. It will focus on how Mustafa's hybridity influences his relationships, perceptions of self, and his controversial actions. Examining the intersections of culture, gender, and power it to gain insights into the intricate nature of hybridity in a postcolonial context.

The novel, Season of Migration to the North, commences with a dichotomy between two narrators, namely Mustafa Sa'eed and the narrator, as well as two distinct timelines, namely Sa'eed's past and the narrator's present. Consequently, the events of the novel converge into a hybrid narrative structure. The self-narration of Sa'eed is complicated and disrupted by multiple factors. The primary narrative techniques of the work are intricately linked to the anonymous narrator's introspection and psychological struggles. Critics concur that Mustafa Sa'eed and the narrator exhibit resemblances, with certain individuals characterizing their tumultuous connection as the central theme and framework of the narrative. Patke states that Salih's work focuses on an interstitial element, where the first element is observed through the slow awakening of the second element (84). Patke employs the terms first and second to make allusions to Sa'eed and the narrator. However, his overarching assertion on the novel's inherent commitment to an interstitial element also encompasses subjective realms wherein these characters engage in introspection and evaluate their personal encounters. According to AlHalool, the narrator's encounter with Sa'eed's Freudian uncanny prompts him to recognize his own lack of familiarity (36). Velez employs a phenomenological methodology to observe that Sa'eed's existence significantly disrupts the narrator's connection to their immediate surroundings 'place-sense' and their sense of self, which is influenced by external concepts of culture and nationhood 'place-relation' (192). The narrator seeks to redefine his 'place-relation' and break free from the imperial notions of space, such as mapping, schooling, and communal conceptions of identity, by exploring vast expanses like the desert and river (191).

About, Season of Migration to the North, Geesey provides an extensive analysis of hybridity. In the narrative, Geesey briefly alludes to Bhabha's concept of hybridity and its ramifications for postcolonial studies. However, her primary emphasis lies in the fields of botany and animal genetics as a means to elucidate the concept of hybridity. The observer interprets Sa'eed's proclivity for destruction as indicative of biological hybridity and sterility. Sa'eed has been unable to overcome the adverse consequences of colonial cultural influence and embodies the harmful and reactive outcomes of hybridity (130). Geesey observes that the narrator initially holds the belief, if slightly inaccurately, that his ancestral connection to Wad Hamid will endure despite residing overseas for an extended period. However, his interaction with Sa'eed prompts him to come closer to recognizing his hybrid nature and infertility. Geesey observes that as the narrator grows more conscious of his own infertility, due to the futility of his poetry, his bureaucratic occupation, and his inability to articulate his romantic attraction towards Hosna Bint Mahmoud, Sa'eed also enlightens him on the generative potential of hybridity. The narrator is introduced to the grafted lemon-orange tree by Sa'eed. He posits that, although the real hybrid may or may not possess fertility and fruit production, the process of grafting has the potential to yield a robust tree with dual output (133).

An in-depth analysis of Season of Migration to the North as a sequence of occurrences that reinstates the hybrid subject's autonomy provides a more comprehensive understanding of Salih's intricate depiction of hybridity. In the study of hybridity in the postcolonial globalized world, Bhabha's theory of hybridity posits that individuals are created 'in-between' or 'exceeding' the sum of the parts of difference. This theory is considered both theoretically novel and politically significant. Hybridity is a highly fruitful and dynamic subject matter as it encompasses the production of cultural subjects. Furthermore, the hybrid subject's recognition of the inherent duality presents in all cultural forms and experiences, as suggested by her analysis of the lemon-orange tree, does not

inherently render the hybrid fertile. Rather, it is the phenomenological 'excess' of these forms that confer fertility upon the hybrid. Bhabha's hybrid, characterized by indeterminacy and the absence of cultural dualities, emerges as a result of conflict. Bhabha's cultural hybridity theory posits that culture initiates its predominance at cultural homogeneity boundaries, such as the eastern and western regions (5). The individual's perspective posits that communal form distinctions serve as productive and genuine platforms for the expression of cultural identity. The hybrid protagonists in Season of Migration to the North are prominently visible in the novel's geography due to their dual culture. The narratorial voice's authority and the mystery surrounding Mustafa Sa'eed's extraordinary and intricate life-story serve as formal indications that hybrid has narratives to share due to their active involvement or being subjected to critical examination. According to the narrator, the act of recalling his village evoked a sense of childhood. Observing its own reflection for the initial instance (4). The initiation of the narrator's self-exploration at this particular juncture of the tale serves to establish his hybrid nature.

The nameless narrator is culturally hybrid like Mustapha. After seven years in England, the unidentified narrator returns to Sudan. The nameless narrator's Western education and travels reflect the Western cultural influence on him and his native identity. The anonymous narrator, a product of two cultures and experiences, is a wonderful example of cultural hybridity in Season of Migration to the North. Despite being influenced by cultural contact between England and the Sudan, the nameless narrator first rejects this reality (Geesey 129). Salih's narrative is full of examples of the anonymous narrator's rejection of cultural hybridity and insistence on his and his people's purity. These lines suggest the narrator denies his cultural hybridity:

I heard the cooing of the turtledove, and I looked through the window at the palm tree standing in the courtyard of our house and I knew that all was still well with life. I looked at its strong straight trunk, at its roots that strike down into the ground, at the green branches hanging down loosely over its top, and I experienced a feeling of assurance. I felt not like a storm-swept feather but like that palm tree, a being with a background, with roots, with a purpose. (2)

During his time in England, the narrator seems to reject his hybridity and European culture. The narrator compares the "palm tree" to his "sense of self" to explain this idea. More importantly, the narrator seeks to prove he has a cultural heritage, and belonging, and is not uprooted. To demonstrate his connection to his hometown, "the narrator first takes his fixed role in the village of his ancestors, namely his grandfather's, for granted" (Stampfl 170). However, his feeling of belonging and attempts to reintegrate into his "pays natal" are disrupted by European colonial culture. After researching Mustapha's life, the narrator realizes his hybrid identity. As Geesey states, the initial reluctance of the narrator to recognize the impact of cultural contact between England and Sudan is evident. The narrator's comprehension of cultural contact and contamination between Sudan and its former colonial power is solely derived from the examination of Mustafa Sa'eed's life (129). Geesey's notes reveal the narrator's hybridity. After he explores Mustapha's account and meets him, the narrator's hybridity is revealed. The narrator acknowledges his cultural hybridity at this point since he is "trapped" between two cultures and experiences. In one meeting with Mustapha, the latter makes assertions that go beyond the purity of cultures and identities, disproving the narrator's belief that identity is immutable. Mustapha tells the narrator that "some of the branches of this tree produce lemons, others oranges" while digging around a palm tree (15). Mustapha's statement shows cultural hybridity. Mustapha and the narrator have two cultures, identities, and spaces, like the tree that produces two fruits. Additionally, Mustapha's argument undermines the Western essentialist view of identities as fixed and changeless.

As postcolonial philosophy suggests, identities are fragmented, with migration and exile as examples of hybrid identities resulting from colonial dislocation (Loomba 180). Salih's characters' movement, exile, and dislocation have fostered fragmented and mixed identities, resulting in the loss of pure identity and self. As with Mustapha and the narrator, hybridity has caused serious repercussions and conflicts within their 'selves' to the point that they feel alienated, strange, and nonbelonging, which has led to their tragic ends and ongoing search for identity.

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Vol. 02, No. 07, 2024, pp. 1-8
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Similar to No Longer at Ease and Season of Migration to the North, Lucy represents the theme of hybridity. The novel follows the protagonist Lucy, a young woman from the Caribbean who moves to the United States to work as an au pair. Lucy's hybrid identity emerges as she navigates the cultural, racial, and social dynamics of her new environment. It is evident from Lucy's experiences as an immigrant shaped her sense of self, her relationships, and her perceptions of home. Analyzing the challenges and conflicts she faces is to gain insights into the complexities of hybrid identities and the impact of cultural assimilation.

Investigating the impact of maternal figure and the mother-daughter relationship in Lucy is significant as it is closely associated with the protagonist's construction of her hybrid identity in diaspora. As early as the title character sets foot on a foreign land, the United States, she is sure enough that she "must separate herself from [her mother's overwhelming matriarchal hold] if she is to develop her own identity" (Edwards 64). With the image of the dominant mother in mind, it is difficult, if not impossible, for her to form an identity. It takes her great pains to act independently despite her mother's physical absence. No wonder the first moment she arrives in a culturally diverse society like the United States, she is adamant that she has to divest herself of her mother's apron strings, which have tied her too early in her life.

The word 'visitor' itself denotes transience. Working as an au pair is just transient in Lucy's journey towards autonomy and self-fulfilment. This is stressed by Lucy herself who says, "It was at dinner one night not long after I began to live with them that they [i.e., Mariah and Lewis] began to call me the Visitor…as if I were just passing through, just saying one long Hallo, and soon would be saying quick Goodbye!"(13). However, towards the end of the novel the protagonist is no longer known as the 'poor Visitor'; rather, she is now the chastened and independent Lucy, the very subtitle of the last part. The change from "Poor Visitor" to 'Lucy' does suggest the protagonist's growth. It is surprising enough that by the end of the book, Lucy is getting on her feet in the new world. She is no longer awed or threatened by the apparent perfection of lives in the white Western world. And the simple fact of having survived for a time on her own, away from her mother, is empowering" (Simmons 130). She takes steps towards developing herself as early as the very beginning of the last part, whose first opening paragraph runs, "It was January again; the world was thin and pale and cold again; I was making a new beginning again" (133). It is this "new beginning" that inspires Lucy into forming a hybrid identity along with developing her artistry, which takes the form of photography. Fulani is of the view that: A new sense of emotional liberation, and a little money of her own, empowers Lucy to pursue her creative interests. She enrolls in a photography class at night school, and one of her first photographs is of a group of objects that emphasizes her rebellion against Caribbean notions of female shame and the norms and standards of Caribbean femininity that her mother so staunchly upheld. (17) Central to Fulani's argument is that the title character has pursued art as a career in defiance of her mother's wish who wants her to be a nurse. This time, she rebels against her mother by dropping nursing classes and taking photography classes at a nearby university. This way, her photographs can be interpreted as a form of protest against her mother.

Lucy's artistic career empowers her position in her new environment, which has once marginalized her because of her race and gender. Furthermore, it makes her integrate quite easily into society—something that helps her later form her new hybrid identity: Antiguan and American. As it is known, the protagonist's feelings towards home are "very ambivalent", a composite of "love and rejection" (Röpke 16). She has left her home island with its constraints and problems for a foreign land where she seeks independence and the construction of an identity. However, she resists the confines of the homeland and rejects her being subsumed in the new environment, ending up with a hybrid culture amalgamating the heterogeneities of both in one single entity. The way in her constant and persistent search for identity, Lucy realizes that she cannot stick to one culture to the exclusion of the other. This realization marks her maturity or development. Röpke says, Lucy is a hybrid since she is deeply influenced by her Caribbean culture even though she rejects a lot of its values. She has been educated through the British educational system, which was imposed on Antigua as well as on the British colonies, but she despises her British colonizers and struggles

against becoming a reflection of them. She is attracted by the U.S. and although she rejects American values, she is starting to lead a Western life. In the end, she is caught in transition, but she is not lost. She incorporates two or even three different cultures, Caribbean, English and American. Her own identity will develop as a mixture of those different cultures. (13)

Likewise, Lucy's attachment to her homeland is well illustrated at the end of the novel when she buys curtains for the windows of the flat, she shares with Peggy. The curtains are made from calico with colorful flowers drawn on them—something she used to have in the Caribbean, but is considered vulgar in the United States:

The curtains at my windows had loud, showy flowers printed on them; I had chosen this pattern over a calico that the lady in the cloth store had recommended. It did look vulgar in this climate, but it would have been just right in the climate I came from. Through the curtains, I could see that the day was just like the one before gray, the sky shut up tight, the sun locked out. I knew then that even though I would always notice the absence or presence of the sun, even though I would always prefer a sunny day to a day without sun, I would get used to it; I wouldn't make an important decision based on the weather. (144-145)

As illustrated above, she has left a land where the sun always rises for another where the sun is not always present. However, she has adapted herself to this sort of life. This way, the absence and presence of the sun could be used in symbolic terms to signify Lucy's adjustment to her hybrid culture. It has taken Lucy great pains to reach this stage. On her first morning in the United States, she is a little bit surprised by the "pale-yellow sun" contrary to the "bright sun-yellow sun" at home: “That morning, the morning of my first day, the morning that followed my first night, was a sunny morning. It was not the sort of bright sun-yellow making everything curl at the edges, almost in fright, that I was used to, but a pale-yellow sun, as if the sun had grown weak from trying too hard to shine”. (5)

In No Longer at Ease, the novel follows the life of Obi Okonkwo, a young Nigerian man who returns from studying in England. Obi's character embodies the clash between his traditional Igbo heritage and the Western influences he encounters. Obi's hybrid identity has been analyzed to manifest in his struggles with cultural expectations, corruption, and personal conflicts. Furthermore, it explores the consequences of Obi's hybridity on his relationships and his ultimate fate. Whereas the narrative of Season of Migration to the North centers on Mustafa Sa'eed, a Sudanese man traveling back to his hometown from London. Mustafa is a complicated blend whose identity has been influenced by his experiences in Sudan and the West. As a result, Mustafa's hybridity shapes his interactions with others, how he sees himself, and his contentious behavior. Through an analysis of the confluence of culture, gender, and power, we will get a deeper understanding of the complex phenomenon of hybridity within the postcolonial framework. Moreover, the heroine of Lucy is a young Caribbean lady named Lucy who relocates to the US to work as an au pair. As Lucy learns to manage the social, ethnic, and cultural complexities of her new surroundings, her hybrid identity begins to take shape. Lucy's experiences as an immigrant have shaped her relationships, sense of self, and ideas of home. Understanding the difficulties and tensions she encounters will help us better understand the implications of cultural assimilation and the intricacies of hybrid identities.

Through the three novels No Longer at Ease, Season of Migration to the North, and Lucy, the portrayal demonstrates an awareness of the difficulties, ramifications, and complexity of hybrid identities in postcolonial settings. These works provide insightful perspectives on the complex dynamics of cross-cultural fusion, clashing traditions, and the effects on personal lives. It can be seen how hybridity affects the characters' identities, relationships, and self-perceptions via their experiences. This research emphasizes the importance of hybridity as a motif in postcolonial literature and advances our knowledge of the difficulties of cultural identities in a globalized society. In other words, Season of Migration to the North, Lucy, and No Longer at Ease are three works that depict hybridity. It is evident from the experiences of the characters that hybrid identities within postcolonial contexts have complexity, difficulties, and repercussions. These texts provide insightful

Al-Biruni Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences
https://al-biruni-journal.jo
Vol. 02, No. 07, 2024, pp. 1-8
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perspectives on the complex dynamics of cross-cultural fusion, clashing traditions, and the effects on personal lives.

One of the pivotal themes in the works is that of cultural clash and assimilation. Throughout the novels, it is observed the characters struggle with themselves and are torn between two different worlds. The use of a protagonist who is torn between the remains of an old forgotten culture and a new not yet really assimilated one is not fortuitous in Achebe's No Longer at Ease. A piercing look into the life of the protagonist as depicted in the novel will permit readers to discover Nigeria's upheaval during the 1960 s. Indeed, Obi Okonkwo epitomizes the turmoil of the Nigerian elites in the period just before independence. His life is no more than a nightmare to which Achebe makes allusion right from the very beginning of the story. Obi is a Nigerian young man to whom the members of the Umoufian Progressive Union have paid eight hundred pounds as a loan to be sent to Britain to continue his studies. The encounter between the native culture and the newly acquired one leads to a cultural clash and a problem of identity in the life of this character. Indeed, it is through Obi that Achebe portrays the state of confusion and instability in which the people of the ex-colonized countries found themselves. As Zouiche puts it, in No Longer at Ease he explores the aftermath of this experience or the long-lasting consequences of the breakdown of the traditional African societies. He also analyses the conflicting political, cultural and social forces that determine contemporary Nigerian societies.

Obi's cultural assimilation can be observed through the following extract from the text about him, "It was in England that Nigeria first became more than just name to him." (12). He totally involved in the English lifestyle and he does not think much about his native land and people. But later on, Obi is seen as keen and restless towards his native culture and land. This tendency can be observed in the following extract from the text: "Four years in England had filled Obi with a longing to be back in Umuofia. This feeling was sometimes so strong that he found himself feeling ashamed of studying English for his degree" (38-39). He is an Igbo and his area is under colonial rule. He is sent to England for higher education due to the acceptance of English knowledge and way of life. This approach makes him a mixture of two tendencies: absorption in foreign lifestyle and keenness for the native place and culture. So, there is assimilation and retrieval in the character of Obi. Earlier he went to get a foreign education willingly and now he is dissatisfied with it.

Throughout the novel, Obi is in a continuous struggle being incapable of finding a way in the in-between. On the one hand, he thought What would happen if he stood up and said to him: "Father, I no longer believe in your God?" (57), he does not want to be Christian anymore because he is not convinced of the superiority of the Europeans over his ancestors. As Fanon says, "If Negroes are impervious to the teachings of Christ, this is not at all because they are incapable of assimilating them. To understand something new requires that we make ourselves ready for it, that we prepare ourselves for it" (Fanon 70). Obi's hatred of the Europeans reaches the extent where he thinks to rise and shout to the smooth M.P., who was lecturing to African students, and say "Go away, you are all bloody hypocrites"(57). But on the other hand, when Isaac refuses his marriage with Osu, he says "I don't think it matters. We are Christians." (133)

The main way that Achebe depicts assimilation is via the figure of Obi Okonkwo, who, after studying in England, returns to Nigeria. Obi's embrace of Western dress, manners, and educational values are clear signs of his integration. He struggles to strike a balance between his adopted identity and the traditional Igbo beliefs and practices of his native Nigerian culture. Achebe draws attention to the conflicts and tensions that result from Obi's assimilation, which ultimately causes him to fail and feel cut off from his cultural origins.

In Season of Migration to the North, Mustapha's English proficiency is evident in numerous situations, which accounts for his imitation and resemblance to white individuals. Mamur, a former classmate of Mustapha, showcases his understanding of the language and assimilation of the white man. "Mustapha was the privileged English child, and we held him in high regard and had high expectations for him" (52). The pronunciation of English words resembled that of Arabic, except for

the inability to combine two consonants without a vowel. However, Mustafa Sa'eed demonstrated the ability to articulate sentences in a manner reminiscent of his home language by contorting his mouth and protruding his lips. This would both elicit irritation and evoke admiration. With a mixture of admiration and contempt, he has been referred to as "the black Englishman." (53)

In his description of the “civilizing mission,” Bhabha discusses how colonial authority seeks to have its colonial subjects duplicate the colonizer’s manners, language, and mentality. Ashcroft et al. explain that “colonial discourse encourages the colonized subject to ‘mimic’ the colonizer, by adopting the colonizer’s cultural habits, assumptions, institutions and values” (125). Bhabha defines colonial mimicry as “the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite. Which is to say that the discourse of mimicry is constructed around an ambivalence; in order to be effective, mimicry must continually produce its slippage, its excess, its difference” (86). He identifies a degree of ambivalence that constitutes this colonial discourse, which he names “mimicry”. It is the colonial desire to have the colonized subject only partially similar to the colonizer: “the effect of a flawed colonial mimesis, in which to be Anglicized is emphatically not to be English” (87). Bhabha considers this “flawed mimesis” to be intentional so that the colonized countries continue to be in need of the colonizers’ mission of reforming the Other. In this perspective, Mustafa attempts to violate or transcend this colonial code of becoming similar and yet not quite the same by taking over the complete identity of the Western colonizer itself. His objective is not, as often assumed, to violate the West in some form of retaliation but rather it is an assertive accentuation, a desire to become one of them. To Mustafa, the act of migration is inadequate; it is synonymous with “flawed mimesis” because it implies at best a form of incomplete acceptance for someone who aspires to seamless assimilation.

Migration is for foreigners and Mustafa believed he was going home to the country whose language, culture, and education he had already mastered. The notion of mimicry, in terms of similarities and differences between West and East, colonizer and colonized, pervades the novel. At the novel’s opening, the unnamed narrator tries to answer so many questions asked by his inquisitive village people about the ways of the Western world: “They were surprised when I told them that Europeans were, with minor differences, exactly like them, marrying and bringing up their children in accordance with principles and traditions, that they had good morals and were in general good people ... just like us” (5). The novel sets out to negate the narrator’s assumption that people share the same human experience and condition, an affirmation that the Occident and the Other are almost the same. The narrator himself refers to these early days as those of sheer innocence: “I was happy during those days, like a child that sees its face in the mirror for the first time” (5). The implication is that there is more than the eye can see when it comes to east versus west. The binary opposition, throughout the novel, is not necessarily asserted but rather complicated by the introduction of Mustafa’s character who is neither like the other nor like the English.

Although the character of the unnamed narrator can be considered remarkably similar to Mustafa’s, he is set to be the foil. The opening of the novel sets the tone for the return of a true native who loves his homeland: “The important thing is that I returned with a great yearning for my people in that small village at the bend of the Nile. For seven years I had longed for them, had dreamed of them, and it was an extraordinary moment when I at last found myself standing among them” (3). In effect, from the very beginning, the narrator is introduced to be like them: “I feel a sense of stability ... that I am continuous and integral. No, I am not a stone thrown into the water but seed sown in a field” (6). In contrast, Mustafa Sa’eed is “a man who kept himself to himself and about whom not much was known” (4). This is a man who, stricken by the colonial discourse of mimicry as it translates itself in the emulative learning and practices, has strenuously striven to assimilate himself with the villagers and yet he remains an outsider: “My grandfather ... was very knowledgeable about genealogy ... shook his head and said that he knew nothing about him ... however, he added ... that Mustafa during his whole stay in the village had never done anything which could cause offence, that he regularly attended the mosque for Friday prayers, and that he was ‘always ready to give of his labour and his means in glad times and sad” (7-8). Nevertheless, the

Al-Biruni Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences
https://al-biruni-journal.jo
Vol. 02, No. 07, 2024, pp. 1-8
ISSN 3104-8900

narrator recognizes that Mustafa fails to be completely like the villagers: "His excessive politeness was not lost on me, for the people of our village do not trouble themselves with expressions of courtesy" (8). He even refers to him as a man "of strange combination" (8), and, on another incident, as a man "of a different clay" (12). The Sudanese narrator cannot see Mustafa as one of them, despite Mustafa's sincere attempts to assimilate, which indicates an initial failure on the mimetic level. Mustafa fails precisely because he has Anglicized himself to the point of no return.

In his The Location of Culture, Homi Bhabha cites how Sir Edward Cust in 1839 took pride in "the original policy of a conferring on every colony of the British Empire a mimic representation of the British Constitution." He also cites Lord Rosebery's infamous statement of the colonial educational mission as "writ by the finger of the Divine". Bhabha dwells on Macaulay's "Minute on Indian Education" to illustrate the colonial agenda of educating the other as a sign of authority: "We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect" (124). Moreover, Kelly and Altbach observe that education is directed towards absorption: "colonial schools ... sought to extend foreign domination and economic exploitation of the colony" (2). Education, in this sense, was thought to elicit colonial mentality and train children in the western ways to become governmental officials or as Macaulay puts it "interpreters". Being subjected to colonial education, Mustafa had striven since those early days not only to go to school but to become a perfect student he was playing with some boys outside our house when along came a man dressed in uniform riding a horse. He came to a stop above them.

The other boys ran away and I stayed on... 'Do you want to study at a school?' 'What's a school?' I said to him. 'A nice stone building in the middle of a large garden on the banks of the Nile' … 'When you grow up,' the man said, 'and leave school and become an official in the government, you'll wear a hat like this.' 'I'll go to school,' I said to the man (19).

Mustafa expressed his passion for learning English, which he considered to be one of the mysteries he encountered: "I discovered other mysteries, amongst which was the English language. My brain continues on, biting and cutting like the teeth of a plough. Words and sentences formed themselves before me as though they were mathematical equations" (21). As Mustafa confided to the narrator, the readers become conscious of the British assertive influence in guiding his early school years: "After three years the headmaster—who was an Englishman— said to me, 'This country hasn't got the scope for that brain of yours, so take yourself off. Go to Egypt or Lebanon or England'" (21). In Cairo, impressed by his "astonishing fluency" and "intellect" (22), an English couple, Mr. and Mrs. Robinson together with the new headmaster Mr. Stockwell, exercise continuous influence on his upbringing and education, especially Mrs. Robinson: "From her I learnt to love Bach's music, Keats's poetry, and from her I heard for the first time of Mark Twain" (25). A Western boy was already in the making.

Mustafa's constructed character is set from the beginning to be associated with the colonizer rather than with his native soil. His mechanic, uncompassionate relation to his mother implies a similar relation to his motherland. In their Freudian perspective of Mustafa's childhood, John and Tarawneh describe a departure from the child as native to that associated with a colonizer by constructing the oedipal complex in relation to Mrs. Robinson:

Mustafa was born in 1898, the year in which Kitchener reconquered the Sudan and subjugated it to British rule. Consequently, the surrogate mother is closely associated with the surrogate culture of the invaders, a culture that he seeks to revenge himself upon through sexual conquests. "It is this substitute culture that, like a mother, adopts him from his early childhood.... It is this surrogate culture that not only seeks to teach him to say "yes" in its own language but breeds people who appoint themselves as substitute "gods" of the conquered land and its people. More importantly, it is this culture that transmits to him the germ of violence and destructiveness. (John and Tarawneh 332)

However, Mustafa's acceptance of Mrs. Robinson as "a surrogate mother," with its entire assumed heritage, does not necessarily trigger retaliation against the adopted new culture as critics

often assume: "Shaped by this heritage, his destiny evolves in the form of a sexual 'counter-invasion'" (John and Tarawneh 332). Mustafa perceives a germ of violence to be part of the colonial education and identity, which he practises because he wants total assimilation with the newly adopted culture: "I am South that yearns for the North and the ice" (27).

It is worthy noticing here that the verb "yearn" is denotatively ambivalent as it could mean either to have a melancholy desire or to feel pity. The verb that Salih uses in the original Arabic text is 'yahin' which also means 'to crave.' In effect, a more literal translation would be "I am South that craves for the North and the ice," which stresses Mustafa's desire to assertively belong to the Western culture. Mustafa's acts of violence, formulated by his Western-constructed identity, are informed by his acute awareness of imperialistic aggressions as a legitimate component of Western modernity: "In modernity, war was subordinated to international law and thus legalized or, rather, made a legal instrument" (Hardt and Negri 22). These acts of violence are often internalized by critics as a politicized form of nationalistic resistance. However, Salih's technique of delayed character realization, when Mustafa characterizes his life as a self-lie, reveals a deep sense of identity crisis rather than self-reproach for a mission unaccomplished.

At the trial, his lawyer tries to present Mustafa as the victim of the clash of two cultures, and yet Mustafa denies this assumption by asserting that his existence is just a lie: "I should stand up and shout at the court: 'This Mustafa Sa'eed does not exist. He is an illusion, a lie" (28). On another occasion, he also refers to his life as a living lie: "Everything which happened before my meeting her was a premonition; everything I did after I killed her was an apology, not for killing her, but for the lie that was my life" (26). The lie that he assumes to have a defining power is that of trying to become more Western than Westerners. All the women that he dated and killed had failed to see him as one of them: "Mustafa Sa'eed, gentlemen of the jury, is a noble person whose mind was able to absorb Western civilization but it broke his heart" (29). Mustafa has realized that no matter how long or how hard he tries to become like them, he will always be conceived as the Other, the esoteric and the mysterious. When his Professor tells the court that Mustafa is the victim of the clash of civilizations, Mustafa again feels like saying: "This is untrue, a fabrication. It was I who killed them. I am the desert thirst. I am no Othello. I am a lie" (29). His refusal to be seen as another Othello signifies that he is not a noble assimilation of East and West but a contrived version that failed to reinforce itself in the Western hemisphere through mimesis. His violence is, therefore, not driven by a politicized form of resistance but is retaliation against all those who failed to see him as the reformed Other, to accept him as one like them.

Being too Sudanese for the English and too English for the Sudanese, Salih's Mustafa is a man who is caught between two worlds and yet he pursues the act of mimicry aiming for a perfect assimilation. Unlike Conrad's hero's journey into the unknown in The Heart of Darkness, Mustafa's travel to England is that of homecoming. However, like Conrad, Salih's novel is an unequivocal denunciation of the colonial legacy in postcolonial countries: "Both Conrad and Salih expose the perils of colonialism, but while Conrad reserves his strongest condemnation for the greed and theft that attended imperial expansion, Salih questions the entire enterprise. Colonialism is repeatedly described in language that evokes violent infection" (Lalami xiii). Unlike Mustafa whose name pops up every time there is a conversation about the English, the narrator professes how detachment from the English ways has helped him to preserve his native character and, therefore, assumingly becomes immune to the Western infection. The unnamed narrator defines himself in negation to Mustafa's Anglicized image: "I too had lived with them. But I had lived with them superficially, neither loving nor hating them. I used to treasure within me the image of this little village, seeing it wherever I went with the eye of my imagination" (41). In sharp contrast, Mustafa had become more English than the English by being exposed to the politicized part of their Englishness, which is often concealed. Mustafa knows what it means; Salih inscribes it as an imperialistic predisposition that tends to be infectious and inherently part of the constitutional nature of Western identity that Mustafa absorbs to become one of those that Macaulay describes to be "a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect" (Bhabha 124).

Al-Biruni Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences
https://al-biruni-journal.jo
Vol. 02, No. 07, 2024, pp. 1-8
ISSN 3104-8900

Mustafa makes every effort to sacrifice everything in favour of possessing this intellect: “Mrs. Robinson used to say to me ... ‘Can’t you ever forget your intellect?’” (23). He has striven to become like them; accomplishing that end entails being infected with the germ of violence as an inherent attribute that constitutes the colonizer’s identity. Dislocated from his country of birth, Mustafa’s Western education has fed his newly acquired identity, which he enacted in England. In effect, he travels to England to celebrate what he perceives to be his right to Englishness and not to take vengeance on what he spent a lifetime trying to flawlessly emulate.

Salih explores assimilation through the character of Mustafa Sa'eed, a Sudanese man who returns to his native village after living in England. Mustafa's assimilation is reflected in his fluency in English, his Western education, and his adoption of Western ideologies. However, his assimilation is complex and fraught with conflicts. Mustafa's attempts at assimilation lead to a profound sense of alienation and the loss of his cultural and personal identity. Salih's portrayal highlights the challenges and consequences of assimilation, particularly concerning the collision of cultures and the erasure of one's original identity.

In her novel Lucy, Kincaid depicts assimilation through the experiences of Lucy, a young woman from the Caribbean who moves to the United States to work as an au pair. Lucy undergoes a process of assimilation as she adapts to American culture, language, and customs. However, Kincaid presents a critical perspective on assimilation, emphasizing the loss of one's original cultural identity and the erasure of individuality that can occur in the process. Lucy's assimilation is accompanied by a sense of displacement and a struggle to find a true sense of belonging in her new cultural context.

Nevertheless, on different occasions, Lucy could see that Mariah is a far better maternal figure than her mother. Her many endeavors that "aimed at creating a narrative for Lucy that moves her from foreignness to assimilation" (Majerol 21) in American society are appreciated, though much scorned at first. Once, she insists Lucy accompany her on her picnics: "She wanted me to experience spending the night on a train and waking up to breakfast on the train as it moved through freshly plowed fields" (28). On the journey, Lucy realizes to what extent she is benevolent and kind towards her. Lucy is not that surprised when she notices that people on the train are divided into two groups according to their social class: "People sitting down to eat dinner all looked like Mariah's relatives; the people waiting on them all looked like mine" (32). Although she belongs to the second group, she is surprised enough that she is treated by her white employer differently, since Mariah insists on dealing with her as if she were one of her daughters or a member of her family, not as her au pair who is supposed to wait on her. On a different occasion, Mariah is critical of Peggy, Lucy's Irish-American friend, and finds her a distasteful person once you get to know her a little, but she is sure enough that Lucy should have a friend: "I guess you like Peggy a lot, and, you know, you really should have a friend" (63). In so doing, she plays the maternal figure who is not that intrusive in the lives of her children. It is then that Lucy acknowledges that in such a respect Mariah is far better than her mother: "This is a way in which Mariah was superior to my mother, for my mother would never come to see that perhaps my needs were more important than her wishes" (64-65).

Lucy learns much from Mariah. Everything about an affluent employer impresses her, whom she once describes as "blessed" (27). In Mariah, she finds a good friend. In the spring, Mariah is careful enough to take her impoverished employee with her family members to have a nice time on one of the marvelously beautiful shores of the Great Lakes. Once, Mariah blindfolds Lucy with a handkerchief, and holding her by the hand, walks her to a beautiful thick-flowered spot, the like of which she has never seen before. It turns out that the flowers she has seen are daffodils: "These are daffodils…I'm hoping you'll find them lovely all the same" (29). For Snodgrass, "Mariah's maternal gestures and introduction of Lucy to North American life imply a need for Lucy to echo her preferences and to embrace daffodils as the true herald of spring" (180). She is so kind towards her au pair that she wants to assimilate her into her society, but her problem is that she is under the illusion that all those people close to her love the same things she does. She loves daffodils, but she is ignorant of their implications for her protégé. Therefore, she assumes erroneously that they denote beauty and love for Lucy, too. Whereas daffodils denote the advent of spring and such things as

beauty and glamour of nature, they may signify entirely different things for people of different cultures. They have negative connotations for Lucy, who is from a foreign land and diverse culture: they bring about feelings of "sorrow and bitterness" (30) from the deep past as they are closely associated with the British colonization of her home island. More importantly, they are an emblem of the colonial education that was imposed by the white colonizer on the natives in the Caribbean. What angers and embitters Lucy the most about the daffodil talk is her recollection of a bitter experience from her personal history when the ten-year-old schoolgirl Lucy was asked to learn by heart an English poem about daffodils, presumably Wordsworth's "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud", and recite it in front of parents, teachers and fellow pupils at the school auditorium. Lucy did the task assigned to her perfectly well and, to her amazement, if not dismay, all the attendants stood up and a storm of loud applause then ensued. Little Lucy was sick of the experience and the poem as well, but, out of decorum, she had to wear what she stigmatizes as "two-facedness" to please the attendants:

After I was done, everybody stood up and applauded with an enthusiasm that surprised me, and later they told me how nicely I had pronounced every word, how I had placed just the right amount of special emphasis in places where that was needed, and how proud the poet, now long dead, would have been to hear his words ringing out of my mouth. I was then at the height of my two-facedness: that is, outside I seemed one way, inside I was another; outside false, inside true. And so I made pleasant little noises that showed both modesty and appreciation, but inside I was making a vow to erase from my mind, line by line, every word of that poem. (18)

The novel Lucy is semi-autobiography of Jamaica Kincaid. The protagonist of the novel Lucy moves from British- ruled Caribbean homeland to America to work for a wealthy family. Being a young woman, she longs for love, education and individual freedom but these are denied to her because of acculturation. Lucy is a true representative of the majority of women immigrants who are willing to change or adapt to the culture of the host country for the betterment of their lives. Although Lucy assimilates two different cultures, she remains a typical example of an independent woman. In the words of Jeff Lewis, “Culture is an assemblage of imaginings and meanings that are generated by a given social group” (Lewis 18). The novel Lucy puts forth two different cultures the Caribbean culture where Lucy grew up and the American culture where she had gone as an immigrant woman. However, she has a double identity she struggles with taking on the identity of a Black woman once she has arrived in America. Lucy’s identity is defined by her employers who see her only as a black woman. They call her “Poor visitor, poor visitor” (14) which makes her feel alienated. She comes to work in America as an au pair, a foreign girl employed to look after children and help with housework, for Lewis and Mariah and their four children. They mark her identity as a black woman.

The protagonist Lucy is analyzed by two categories: assimilation and marginalization. Based on the first category of assimilation, Lucy accepts the new culture and rejects her own culture. She does not want to go back to her homeland which gives importance only to the male children. That post-colonized island defines women as, having “a sense of duty to parents; obedience to the law and worship of convention” (133). Her mother or motherland named her Lucy, short for Lucifer” (154), Satan. She dislikes her mother for insisting she live as her mother wants her to, whereas the new culture accepts the woman as she is. Lewis and Mariah are happy to have four daughters. Lucy tries to belong to the white culture rather than to be a part of black culture. For instance, on the journey to Mariah’s childhood home, Lucy observes a few physical differences between herself and the passengers on the train. She thinks “the other people sitting down to eat dinner all looked like Mariah’s relatives; the people waiting on them all looked like mine” (32). Geographically, the Caribbean Island always has a summer season whereas the other parts of the world have all four seasons by which Lucy is impressed. Secondly, on the basis of Berry’s another category of marginalization, rejecting both the heritage and receiving cultures. Lucy is portrayed as the marginalized. She rejects both her native and host cultures and wishes to be free from the cultural bonds. She detaches herself from her own black mother and Mariah, the white mother. She says, “I

Al-Biruni Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences
https://al-biruni-journal.jo
Vol. 02, No. 07, 2024, pp. 1-8
ISSN 3104-8900

am not like my mother. She and I are not alike" (123). She dislikes both cultures where men consider women as sexual objects like her father and Lewis. This novel also has the elements of an epistolary novel in which her mother keeps on sending her letters which are unread and burnt. Lucy's behavior shows her will to live against the acculturation and marginalization of both her native and receiving cultures. Almost all diasporic writers express how they have adapted to their environment and how they have experienced both identification with and alienation from their old and new homelands through their writings. Some well-known diasporic writers such as Toni Morrison, Alice Walker, Jhumba Lahiri, Chitra Banerji, all mainly focus on the struggles and loss of identity in their new culture whereas Jamaica Kincaid sheds light on the ability of an independent immigrant woman through her character Lucy.

The three writers, Achebe, Salih, and Kincaid, depict assimilation in their respective texts by exploring the challenges, conflicts, and consequences faced by their characters as they navigate the process of assimilating into different cultural contexts. These writers portray assimilation as a complex and multifaceted process and examine the difficulties, disputes, and repercussions that their characters encounter when attempting to reconcile their assimilation into a new society with their adherence to their former cultural identities. In the framework of postcolonial literature, these portrayals illuminate the psychological, social, and cultural ramifications of assimilation.

The themes of assimilation are explored and individuals' experiences adjusting to a new culture are shown in No Longer to Ease, Season of Migration to the North and Lucy. After studying in England, Mustapha, the main character of Season of Migration to the North, returns to Sudan and embarks on an integration trip. He struggles to balance his home Sudanese culture with his experiences in the West. The difficulties of integration are reflected in Mustapha's ambivalence and conflicting emotions. Salih depicts the conflicts between the self and the other, love-hate relationships, and cultural collisions. The difficulties of integration and the eventual disappointment that might result from trying to blend in with a new culture are brought to light by Mustapha's experiences.

Similar to this, the lead character of Lucy, who comes from the Caribbean to America to work as an au pair for an affluent family, is named Lucy. Lucy's battle to balance her cultural identity with the demands placed on her as a black woman in America defines her integration journey. Since her ethnicity is the only thing that defines her, she experiences estrangement and a lack of personal autonomy. Through Lucy's experiences, Kincaid illustrates the difficulties and complexity of assimilation, emphasizing the conflict between the need for individual independence and the urge to fit in with society's expectations.

Assimilation is portrayed by Achebe, Salih, and Kincaid as a complicated and multifaceted process. They examine the tensions, disputes, and identity crises that result from people being torn between their own culture and the culture of the nation they are visiting. The protagonists' integration troubles highlight the challenges of negotiating cultural differences and the effect it has on their sense of self. They provide incisive depictions of assimilation, highlighting the complex process's many facets as well as the psychological and emotional obstacles that those trying to fit into a new society must overcome.

One of the main themes in postcolonial literature is acculturation, which is the process by which people and societies take on the customs and values of a new civilization. The characters of the novels No Longer at Ease, Season of Migration to the North, and Lucy negotiate the complicated mechanics of acculturation, illuminating the difficulties and repercussions of accepting a new cultural identity. This section analyzes and compares how acculturation is portrayed in these three literary works by looking at the experiences of the characters, and the social and political environments in which they live. Analyzing the difficulties and changes the characters encounter as they go through the acculturation process will provide light on the significant effects that cultural assimilation has on an individual's identity, interpersonal relationships, and society at large. The three authors—Achebe, Salih, and Kincaid—depict acculturation in their writings in a variety of

ways, emphasizing the difficulties and complexity people have when adjusting to cultural interactions and shifts.

Obi Okonkwo's experience of acculturation is shown as contradictory and upsetting in Achebe's No Longer at Ease. After living in England for a while, Obi, a Nigerian, returns home with a blend of traditional traditions and Western education. He grapples with the tension between the two cultures and struggles to find his place in society. Obi's attempts to navigate the cultural clash led to internal turmoil and an inability to fully integrate into either culture. Achebe explores the challenges of adapting to a changing society while also grappling with the weight of tradition.

After four years in England, Obi misses his mother and country. When he returns to Nigeria, he has clear goals, where does one begin? with the masses? Educate the masses? He shook his head. Not a chance there. It would take centuries. "A handful of men at the top. Or even one man with vision – an enlightened dictator" (40). Obi's persona evokes the struggle of educated Africans who are torn between accepting and rejecting acculturation. Hearing his mother's nightmares surprises and depresses Obi. He realizes that caste has divided people rather than united them. When forced to choose between Clara and his mother, he loses his affection. Obi's love for Clara and the cultural clash heightens his emotions. Obi's mental anarchy causes disorder, while Okonkwo's emotional instability causes violence. He cannot explain to Clara the obstacles to their marriage, showing his anarchy. Obi mourns his mother yet finds comfort. Obi ignores Umofia Progressive Union's pomposity and vainglory at the welcome meeting. Being sensible, he wears short sleeves to suit the weather instead of European clothes. His speech is elegant more than English words. He prefers his pal Joseph to an expensive hotel. When his mind and intellect are separated, Obi loses his thinking power. Thus, Eliot views Obi as culturally hybrid. Eliot said, "Those who are torn on the born between season and season, time and time, between hour, word and word power and power" (62). Obi understands that his society has fragmented. He says that erasing tradition is pointless since cultures evolve and abandon old traditions and adopt new ones. Obi rejects Clara despite his inability to forget her due to acculturation confusion. "Osu is like leprosy in the minds of our people. I beg you, my son, not to bring the mark of shame and of leprosy into your family". (107)

Despite his father's reprimand, Obi must study the traditional folk stories of his village values. European culture and Christian understanding make him unaware of native social traditions like bride price, clan hatred for Osus, and speaking Igbo, his mother tongue, without hesitation. The colonizer and colonized cultures fight beyond replacing the old with the new. In addition, this confrontation reveals the evil spirit that harms the nation and its citizens. Lagos was built on corruption and bribery. Both value systems are incompatible. Their contradictory systems generate a moral emptiness due to the lack of true cultural force. Because they had a clear set of ideals, one religion to guide them, and one mind to lead them to cultural perfection, Okonkwo's community was peaceful and lovely. First, Obi avoided taking bribes for his job, but his financial predicament compelled him to. He alternates between Western and indigenous cultures. When cultural conflict emerges, people want to survive their own way. Survival or transcendence requires many confrontations. Obi lacks this determination to survive, the most fundamental principle of life. 'Obi's 'reality' is his failure to discover sensible values in his cross-cultural conflict. He no longer felt shame, as a fellow observer calls him "Beast of no Nation". He no longer felt guilt. He too, had dies. Beyond death, there are no ideals and no humbug, only reality" (196). The Nigerian people want to rise by bribing. The Nigerian government was unrelated to us. It was an alien institution, writes Achebe, so people tried to get as much as they could without getting in trouble. Unlike his bush brothers, Obi is educated and chaotic. According to Achebe, "His abortive effort at education and culture through leaving him totally unredeemed and ingenerated had nonetheless done something to him - it had deprived him of his links with his own people whom he no longer even understood and who certainly wanted none of his dissatisfaction or pretensions." (92)

Achebe paints a heartbreaking image of a colonial society divided. Through Obi, Achebe shows the 'sense of alienation', ambiguity of acculturation, and the constant need to adapt or ascend. Awareness may help a hybrid culture and its intercultural practices. Achebe believes self-awareness

Al-Biruni Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences
https://al-biruni-journal.jo
Vol. 02, No. 07, 2024, pp. 1-8
ISSN 3104-8900

comes from experience. This knowledge will help them master change. The theme of acculturation has been depicted in this study to investigate how alienation and acculturation help people rise, whether by adjusting to cultural change or fighting tradition. According to Achebe, indigenous should overcome 'moral inferiority' and anarchy, which hinder higher education.

Like No Longer at Ease, Season of Migration to the North also delves into the complexities of acculturation. The narrator, who has returned to his native Sudan after living in Europe, experiences conflicting emotions and ambivalence towards both African and European cultures. Salih portrays the characters' love-hate relationships, contradictions, and cultural clashes, emphasizing the hybridity and alienation experienced by postcolonial subjects. The novel challenges essentialist views of identities and highlights the diverse nature of individuals within a cultural context.

Salih's narrative, like Conrad's, depicts African characters' "mixed feelings through essential dichotomies marking émigrés' lives…love-hate relationships, contradictions between self and other, native-alien clash of cultures, hybridity, alienation, and ultimate disillusionment" (Kumar 1). Salih's Mustapha and narrator demonstrate postcolonial subjects' ambivalence. Salih's characters' connections with each other and European men are ambivalent. To illustrate, consider the following paragraph from the novel's beginning, when the narrator returns from Europe and is asked two questions by his native hamlet. The peasants ask whether Europeans are like them or different. The narrator replied:

I told them [the villagers] that Europeans were, with minor differences, exactly like them, marrying and bringing up their children in accordance with principles and traditions, that they had good morals and were in general good people…just like us they are born and die, and in the journey from the cradle to the grave they dream dreams some of which come true and some of which are frustrated; that they fear the unknown, search for love and seek contentment in wife and child; that some are strong and some are weak…(3)

The passage above dissolves African-European divides. Thus, the narrator's attitude develops as he realizes that the construction of other people's Otherness and exclusion from the community of "selves" is unfounded and typical of essentialist thinking, which has no validity. Africans and Europeans are depicted similarly but slightly differently. This emphasizes the diverse nature of (post) colonial subjects, going beyond the essentialist view of identities as "selves" and "others". Ambivalence and acculturation in Salih's writing dispute the monolithic view of identities and emphasize that self and other identities are compatible. This argument emphasizes how others define the self. The Lacanian mirror image suggests that the self only realizes itself when it meets the other.

In Kincaid's Lucy, the protagonist moves from her Caribbean homeland to America and undergoes the process of acculturation. Lucy longs for love, education, and individual freedom but finds herself constrained by the expectations and stereotypes associated with her identity as a black immigrant woman. The novel explores the challenges faced by immigrants in adopting a new culture while also grappling with their own sense of identity. Kincaid portrays the tensions and struggles of acculturation and the impact of cultural differences on personal growth and self-perception.

Many critics spoke about the problem of adjusting and adapting to the people who leave their homeland which is a prime and prominent problem. Schwartz et al. opine that acculturation refers to changes that take place as a result of contact with culturally dissimilar people, groups, and social influences. Acculturation research generally focuses on immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers, who are assumed to be permanently settled in their new homeland—although these three groups may be quite different from one another. As a result, the terms migrants or international migrants are used to refer to these three groups collectively, but where applicable, we discuss ways in which our hypotheses or propositions differ by type of migrant. (238)

3. Results

According to Perez and Padilla, acculturation is a social process that occurs in a context in which a newcomer and the members of the host culture are in dynamic contact with each other." (25). For instance, Lucy, who is a newcomer to the white culture and Lewis, Mariah and their four children who belong to the host culture mingle together. Especially, Mariah often reminds Lucy more and more about her own mother. Lucy lists the similarities Mariah has with her mother. She says, "Mariah reminded me more and more of the parts of my mother that I loved" and she recalls, "their hands looked like instruments for arranging things beautifully" (59). This social process of mingling shows the amalgamation of two different cultures which is termed acculturation.

The novel Lucy is a semi-autobiography of Jamaica Kincaid. The protagonist of the novel Lucy moves from a British-ruled Caribbean homeland to America to work for a wealthy family. Being a young woman, she longs for love, education and individual freedom but these are denied to her because of acculturation. Lucy is a true representative of the majority of women immigrants who are willing to change or adapt to the culture of the host country for the betterment of their lives. Although Lucy assimilates two different cultures, she remains a typical example of an independent woman. In the words of Lewis, "Culture is an assemblage of imaginings and meanings that are generated by a given social group" (Lewis 18). The novel Lucy puts forth two different cultures the Caribbean culture where Lucy grew up and the American culture where she had gone as an immigrant woman. However, she has a double identity, she struggles with taking on the identity of a Black woman once she has arrived in America. Lucy's identity is defined by her employers who see her only as a black woman. They call her "Poor visitor, poor visitor" (14) which makes her feel alienated. She comes to work in America as an au pair, a foreign girl employed to look after children and help with housework, for Lewis and Mariah and their four children. They mark her identity as a black woman.

Overall, the three writers present acculturation as a complex and multifaceted process, highlighting the challenges, conflicts, and ambiguities individuals face when navigating cultural changes and interactions. They depict the tensions between tradition and modernity, the clash of values, and the impact of societal expectations on individual identity.

Through the figure of Obi Okonkwo, Achebe's No Longer at Ease illustrates the difficulties associated with integration and acculturation. Obi has inner turmoil and battles to fit in as he attempts to balance his traditional Nigerian upbringing with his Western education. Achebe sheds attention on the challenges of adjusting to a changing society by highlighting the conflicts between tradition and modernity.

In order to explore the issue of hybridity, Salih presents people from Season of Migration to the North who have lived in both African and European civilizations. The novel examines the contradictory feelings and ambivalence felt by those torn between these two worlds and questions essentialist conceptions of identity. Salih places a strong emphasis on the intricacies of cross-cultural relationships and the legacy of colonialism on postcolonial issues.

As she relocates from her native Caribbean country to America, the heroine of Kincaid's Lucy goes through the process of assimilation. As a black immigrant lady, Lucy struggles with the expectations and preconceptions attached to her identity, underscoring the difficulties of blending into a new society without losing one's uniqueness. To shed light on the effects of cultural variations on personal development and self-perception, Kincaid depicts the conflicts and hardships of acculturation.

These three authors present assimilation, acculturation, and hybridity as intricate, multidimensional processes. They look at the problems, difficulties, and ambiguities people run across when trying to deal with cultural shifts and interactions. They provide light on the difficulties and nuances of adjusting to new surroundings, providing insights into the nuances of cultural identity and the effects of society's expectations on people.

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Similar to this, Salih's Season of Migration to the North delves into the multifaceted linguistic heritage of Mustafa Sa'eed, who speaks Arabic and English with ease. As the heroine of Kincaid's Lucy, her learning of the language emphasizes her integration into American society and the difficulties she encounters as a non-native speaker. We will learn more about how language shapes hybrid identities by contrasting the writers' approaches to language. Salih's Season of Migration to the North explores the collision of Sudanese and Western cultures through Mustafa's character, highlighting the complexities of cultural assimilation and identity. No Longer at Ease depicts the clash between Nigerian tribal customs and Western influences, reflecting the challenges faced by the protagonist, Obi. In Lucy, Kincaid examines the protagonist's path of cultural adaptation to America as well as her Caribbean ancestry. We'll examine how the characters' connections with others and sense of self are shaped by their culture.

In these works, religion is central to the expression of mixed identities. Achebe examines the clash between Christianity and traditional Igbo beliefs in No Longer at Ease, as Obi struggles with the demands and tensions brought on by these opposing religious influences. To illuminate the nuances of religious hybridity, Salih's Season of Migration to the North explores the points at which Mustafa's life intersects with Islamic and Western ideals. Lucy by Kincaid explores the protagonist's quest for her own spiritual path and her rejection of traditional religious views.

By comparing how language, culture, and religion are portrayed in No Longer at Ease, Season of Migration to the North, and Lucy, one may learn more about the complexity of mixed identities in a postcolonial setting. While culture impacts characters' relationships and sense of self, language is a tool for negotiation and expression. One important way that religion reflects the conflicts and impacts on hybrid identities is through its significance. This analysis gives readers a deeper knowledge of how these elements contribute to the representation of hybridity in these literary works. By doing this, comparative research highlights the complex process of forming an identity in a globalized society. Simply, the novels of Achebe, Salih, and Kincaid examine the concepts of hybridity, assimilation, and acculturation from a postcolonial lens. They portray the nuanced and sometimes contradictory experiences of those stuck between two cultures and navigating the process of adjusting to new surroundings through their characters and stories.

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