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**Cultural Hybridity with Reference to Analysis of Chinua Achebe's Novel "No Longer At Ease"**

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### Abstract :

No Longer At Ease is written by Chinua Achebe. He was the father of African literature. His novel "No Longer At Ease" show the Nigeria's social life and culture. This present paper examine how Achebe describe cultural hybridity appeared in his novel No Longer At Ease. In this paper researcher expore the cultural aspect in the hero's life. Their are different belief about Igbo life and culture. Some critics says that Igbo culture is well present in Achebe's novel. Because of it's rich religious system and their belief towards God's. The hero of the novel and the social background of the novel consists of the Igbo people. Igbo society is the one of the largest ethnic groups in Africa. The protagonist of the novel Obi Okonkwo was passing through the Nigerian colonized culture, tradition and colonial cultural experiences. He was passing through the cultural identity, alienation and social background in his life. This study intends to Bhabha's theory of Cultural hybridity in his notable work "Location of Culture "(1994).The writer tried to show the reader that cultural hybridity appeared in the hero's life and Igbo culture.

**Key words:** Igbo, Culture, religion, ethnic , identity crisis, cultural hybridity, protagonist, tradition

### Introduction :

Chinua Achebe was born on November 16, 1930 in Ogidi, in Nigeria Southern part of Africa. His parents name was Isaish and Janet were devout Christians. He was originally baptized Albert Chinulumogu. But he later rejected his christian name, Albert for his indigenous one Chinua. He studied his early education in English. He was upbringing in multicultural as the inhabitants of Ogidi still lived according to many things of Igbo culture and traditions. He was keen viewer of the changes that took place in his native life, society and culture. Achebe mainly wrote this novel in English. Because of to educate his reader, especially the European about the value of his African culture. One of the example given in the " Heart of Darkness" by Joseph Concord that " Africa as a wild dark and uncivilized continent "(Sickel p. 1).

Achebe was also the post colonial writer. Post colonialism is the historical period that represents the African culture and society. In this term colonialism is described the political, linguistic, and cultural experiences of societies. Which is developing by the European colonial society.

Generally, the present of cultural hybridity in the novel, writer point out that how the colonized people affects the culture of the Igbo society. The hero's of the novel, Obi Okonkwo, who studied in England, he decided to protect his native Igbo culture but unconsciously, he promotes European culture also. He speaks English language to save his own culture. However, he listens to the folk songs and tales of Igbo during his



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stint in England but he better understand when he converted them into English.

The present paper analysis that the protagonist in the novel Obi Okonkwo faces the identity crisis in the novel "No Longer At Ease". He was educated in England and young also. He introduce English language and culture in his society in Nigeria. He think that if he doing this, it will help to transform the social fabric and root out corruption from the country. For that, he postulated replacing the dated system and it's henchmen by the young educated generation, because they are well known about the western values and culture. While he apply his plan, he faces the identity crisis of the west and East and European and Nigerian. In the works of Frantz Fanon " Black Skin White mask (1952).and Jean Rhys "Wide Sargasso Sea"(1966). He sometimes not adjusts to their native culture because of the criticism made by the social cultural norms of the local community. Thus, he has went to one society for another, but he was neither fully accepted nor aware about it.

The novel highlight a split up individual geographically and ideologically, who is neither of west nor east. While living in the Igbo community, he faces between the northern and southern part of the country to protect his identity. If we show northern is a western cum of modern and southern is developing cum traditional. In the novel, Obi is the representative of the western educated youth in Nigeria. Who proposed that only the educated youth can replace the traditional Africa for the traditional part of the country. However ,Obi not take serious at that time old generation of African and Nigerian. Because of their corrupted service in public places and he also request the young students of colleges and universities to rise their voices for their rights. That reason, change came and change the destiny of Nigeria. But now, he faces challenging barriers to bring new reforms in the Igbo society, his efforts worthless the divided identity are there. Obi wants to corruption free society in his native place Ibo.

This present paper examine the post colonial theory especially cultural hybridity with main focus on Bhabha's " The Location Of Culture "(1994). Similarly it takes into equal account the culture of the western and the eastern. In Bhabha's theory he gives concept of two cultures in the context 'liminal' space. He gives equal space to both culture colonizer and the colonised for representing themselves. Following, Bhabha's concept of hybridity, in a multicultural society, in this a third culture grown as a terms of that combines the elemental features of contributing cultures. In the end of results 'in betweenness ' particularly cultural hybridity loses the main roots of cultures.

The present research paper proceeds in a analytical approach. The researcher apply Bhabha's concept



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of hybridity as a theoretical framework for the study.

### Research Question :

The question is rise in researcher mind is as following,

How was the protagonist, Obi Okonkwo and Igbo culture effect by the presence of European colonies?

### Theoretical Perspective :

The term "Postcolonialism " is defined by various writer in various ways. According to Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, she argues : ...subaltern is not Just a classy word for "oppressed", for the other, for somebody who's not getting a piece of the pie... In post colonial terms, everything that has limited or no access to the cultural imperialism is subaltern, a space of difference". According to Loomba "Postcolonialism as the process of a pull out from the rule of colonisers". It is the break down of cultural, political, economical and social control and domination of the European. Ashcraft, Griffith and Tiffen point out that "Postcolonialism deals with the effects of colonialism on cultures and societies "(p. 166).

Postcolonialism is the theory of non - western countries of the Caribbean, the Middle East, Africa, Asia and Latin America. It deals with the problem, crisis, resistance, cultural issue and promises of decolonization in all over the world. Why it called postcolonial literature because of several common themes based on that reason like feminism, identity crisis, social issues, language issue, culture clash, imperialism, migration and so on.

Generally, hybridity is a phenomenon in post colonial studies. In the beginning of colonisation, neither the coloniser nor the colonised culture can established right way in the present colonial state; it must be the mingling of these two cultures. Bhabha point that while protecting the same line of his argue "in between or interstitial space that gives birth to new signs of identity through the negotiation of differences" (page 1-2). While two culture come in one place it creates a place for new identity. This new identity is neither the part of European nor the Igbo culture. Bhabha theory deals with that it is a hybrid identity of culture. In Africa would be the partially followed the European culture and partially the Igbo culture. They are lived between these two cultures European and Igbo. In addition, that when both the culture mix than new cultural identity comes into existence. It does not highlight the old culture but adopts the new cultural characteristics, it is results in a new hybrid identity.



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### Results and Discussions :

The hero of the novel "No Longer At Ease", Obi Okonkwo embodies with Bhabha's theory of cultural hybridity, because of the mixing of culture for creating 'the third space of enunciation'. In this circumstances, the mixture of both cultures and features are hybrid. Obi's cultural roots is Igbo but at the same time, he is acquire and influence leaving with English language, culture, life style and manners, habitats pattern show him to introduce the same in his society. In addition, the other side; he is equally inclined towards and nearest for his Igbo tradition and social rituals. There fore Obi transform socially hybrid and culturally blended. Consequently, his love for Nigeria and England are in creat conflict with each other, that resulted in a hybrid culture of Obi Okonkwo.

In the novel, protagonist dedicated to his country and makes a strong effort to fight for the rights of the Nigerian citizen against the European. He believed that the young one of educated in his country will break out the corruption from its roots. But, when he was came back from England, he has been very shocked when he sees the situation take place in Nigeria. He made strong decision that he fighting against corruption in Nigeria ,but he has failed to achieve his goal since the cultural values of Igbo tradition. He has been strong to do accurately what he wants to fight against corruption. In between he show the division of culture from his people and society come forward of forget his vision. After that, Obi comes in front of his people and culture. He was confused because of old tradition can hardly last for a long time and new tradition circulate during colonization.

In the novel, the quarrel take place between the old Igbo culture and the new European culture. The writer mention this conflict in some places in the novel. For example, the protagonist like to listen Nigerian folktales,folk song but his father don't like it he was firmly follower of Christan belief. Why he likes Nigerian folklores because it's a root of Nigerian culture and identity. Obi's father believe that Nigerian folk song and tales are an ethnic, and says his wife; Hannah not to teach this traditional things to their children.

In addition, Obi is a young boy. He studied in England and he attracted by the English language and culture. But time change his choice of subject is also changed. When he went to England to study law, after that he reached there influence of English language ,he changed his mind and he start studying English literature. The European culture and western life style attracted him so much. Thus, his personality is also change. In the novel Achebe depicted Obi is dependent on the English language and life style. When he come back to attend his completing graduation ceremony at his home town Umuofia. Occasionally, he listen the songs of the trader on the wagon. At that moment he memories that he has heard this song many times in



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his life before his departure for England. Hence, he completed his graduation in English literature after that he translated of these songs in English to understand him for first time in his life. The writer noted, this event to confirm that Obi, as a representative man in post colonial times. Obi has requirement to understand himself the language of the coloniser. Through this he understand his identity his culture and such a person with a hybrid identity.

Obi believe that old Nigerian are corrupted and they are responsible behind the corruption in Nigeria. In Nigeria bribery is one of the social issue. Obi comment that from the practice of corruption in the Nigerian political party. Corruption, for older Nigerian is a weapon to achieve their social and political rights. When Obi return to Nigeria, a welcome ceremony has been thrown; the vice president of Igbo offer a suborn for Obi's job, and comment that " I would have suggested seeing some of the men be forehand " ( p. 33). In the novel, protagonist argue that, illegal money refers to the lack of education among the old generation in Nigeria and to "uneducated bribe is natural "in Igbo culture (p. 21). In his Ibo's culture bribery is usual to practice, but in England, bribe is taken as a severe crime. Obi learn it there that reason he is also against it.

To conclude, Achebe's remark hybridity as a direct effect on colonialism on the native culture. In the all discussion coming up results as, hybridity is effect on culture, religion, language, after the colonialism. No culture is pure as of their precolonial time. The writer mark that the consequences of the cultural issues of colonization when the European and Ibo cultures touch with each other. Achebe discuss in his novel, the protagonist is leaving for England has been a keen follower of his own culture and religion, but after studying English language and literature from England his perception is changed. Obi was grow up in Nigerian hybrid culture but after colonialism his influence on European culture he follow the life style ,language and habited with the new culture. He faces his cultural identity crisis in the colonial society. Obi is adopted European culture, as his habits because of English influence. His beliefs is also change towards religion and culture. He is so much attracted for European life style, behavior, culture and language. Even though he stand against his own culture, Ibo's tradition, ritual, and practices. He gives less value of his own culture. Bhabha remark that hybrid effect on the native culture and traditions.



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