The Theme of Exile in V. S. Naipaul's
*Half a Life**

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Abstract

The concept of exile is extensively addressed in the field of literature as well as in different disciplines of the social sciences. Exile is portrayed in a variety of fiction genres and has an essential impact on the works of authors from many historical, cultural, linguistic, and ethnic backgrounds in the field of literary studies. Indian writers who have merged into the mainstream of English literature have also given considerable focus to the theme of exile in their literary works. One of these writers, V. S. Naipaul, as an intellectual who has experienced exile, creatively explores themes of exile, displacement, alienation, identity, homelessness, and rootlessness. Through characters such as Willie Somerset Chandran in *Half a Life* (2001), the author shows how individuals in the Third World try to survive in a complex, multicultural world. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to analyse V. S. Naipaul's protagonist, Willie Chandran Somerset's experience of exile in alien lands, taking into account the views and approaches of significant critics and scholars such as Edward Said, Abraham Maslow, Peter Burke, and Jan Stets. The study also aims to show how exile allows Willie to view issues from various viewpoints and to analyse the conditions of his homelessness and lack of roots from a much wider aspect. As a last remark, the article aims to portray how exile influences the identities of Wiilie and their changes throughout the novel.

Keywords: Exile, Displacement, Naipaul, Half a Life, Willie Somerset Chandran.

V. S. NAIPAUL'UN *YARIM HAYAT* ROMANINDA SÜRGÜN İZLEĞİ

Öz

Sürgün kavramı sosyal bilimlerin farklı disiplinlerinde olduğu gibi edebiyat alanında da yoğun şekilde ele alınmaktadır. Sürgün, edebiyat ve edebi araştırmalar alanında çeşitli kurgu türleri aracılığıyla anlatılır ve farklı tarihsel, dilsel, kültürel ve etnik kökenlerden gelen yazarların yapıtlarında önemli rol oynamaktadır. İngiliz edebiyatının ana akımına karışan Hintli yazarlar da çalışmalarında sürgün izleğine geniş şekilde yer vermektedirler. Bu yazarlardan biri olan V. S. Naipaul daha önce sürgün deneyimini yaşamış entelektüel olarak yapıtlarında sürgün, yerinden edinme, yabancılaşma, kimlik ve köksüzlük gibi temaları yaratıcı bir şekilde ele almaktadır. Yazar, *Half a Life* (Yarım Hayat) (2001) romanında Willie Somerset Chandran gibi kurgusal karakterler

aracığıyla Üçüncü Dünya'daki bireylerin karmaşık, çok kültürlü bir dünyada nasıl hayatta kalmaya çalıştıklarını sergilemektedir. Dolayısıyla bu çalışmanın amacı V. S. Naipaul'un kahramanı Willie Somerset Chandran'ın yabancı topraklardaki sürgün deneyimi Edward Said, Abraham Maslow, Peter Burke ve Jan Stets gibi önemli eleştirmenlerin görüşleri ve yaklaşımları dikkate alınarak incelemeyi esas almaktadır. Çalışma aynı zamanda sürgünün Willie'nin karşılaştığı problemleri farklı açılardan irdelemesini, evsizlik ve köksüzlük durumunu çok daha geniş bir perspektiften keşfetme fırsatını nasıl sunduğunu göstermeyi de amaçlamaktadır. Son olarak bu araştırma, sürgünün Wiilie'nin kimliklerini nasıl etkilediğini ve roman boyunca kimliklerinin değiştiğini göstermeyi amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar sözcükler: Sürgün, Yerinden Edilme, Naipaul, Yarım Hayat, Willie Somerset Chandran.

INTRODUCTION

Exile, as one of the fundamental concepts, has been discussed and examined throughout the history of humankind. The idea of banishment has persisted in its power throughout the ages, starting with the moment God chastised Adam and Eve and drove them out of the Garden of Eden and keeping up to modern times. The impacts and consequences of exile are seen in every aspect of human life. As to its etymological derivation of the notion "exile," it derives from the Latin term "exilium." The root "solum" refers to "ground, land, or soil," while the prefix "ex" means "out." There is another relationship between the terms "exilium" and "salire," which imply "to leap or spring." It also includes inconsistent ideas like suffering, severe separation, and progress (McClennen, 2004, p. 14). The term "exsilium" in ancient Rome referred to a kind of punishment that was the same as death. Furthermore, it was used as a covert means of carrying out a banishment sentence and had a different connotation, such as "forbidding of fire and water" (Agamben, 2007, p. 61). Another important moment is that the deprivation of the person's rights to fire and water, which represent the state and community, was interpreted as an indication that survival inside the country's borders was impossible. Furthermore, the convicted individual lost all legal protections in the country and was prohibited from offering employment or shelter. Due to this, no one in the country had the right to help and defend the convicted person, and, therefore, this person lost all legal rights (Boldor, 2005, pp. 13–14). Along with losing their legal rights, these individuals also lose their social rights and social lives. These people become strangers and aliens in their native countries and in their native surroundings, and moreover, they lose the opportunity to be part of

V. S. Naipaul

social life.

In a similar vein, Isodor of Seville, offered an etymology for the term "exile," in the following way: "Exilium dictum quasi extra solum. Nam exul dicitur qui extra solum est (Exile means, as it were, outside the soil, for one who is outside his soil is said to be an exile)" (cited in Lansing, 2000, p. 362). According to the law system during the time of Isodor of Seville, to be an exile is to have a significant penalty. The person sentenced to this punishment was considered an outlaw. It means that this person, who has the punishment of being an exile, committed one of the most serious crimes and is therefore classified as an outlaw. The sentence of exile also prevents the person from fulfilling his or her existential needs by depriving him of his social rights and alienating him from his family, friends, and community (Lansing, 2000, p. 362). In a similar vein, the Oxford Dictionary defines "exile" as "enforced removal from one's own land according to an edict or sentence; penal expatriation or banishment; the state or condition of penal banishment; enforced residence in some foreign land."(Exile, in OED, section 1 a.)

Paul Tabori, in *The Anatomy of Exile: A Semantic and Historical Study* (1972), discusses the meaning and application of the term "exile" in the pre-Christian era. He states that in that time, this term was frequently used to allude to the term "ostracism." Ostracism was the earliest kind of punishment employed against criminals and was regarded as the worst thing in the world, even worse than death. In his work, Tabori also gives an explanation of the term and describes it as a condemnation:

> Exile is a song that only the singer can hear.
> Exile is an illness that not even death can cure-for how
> Can you rest in a soil that did not nourish you?
> Exile is the warning example to those who still
> Have their homes, who belong
> But will you take heed of the warning? (Tabori, 1972, p. 9).

In this context, the preceding lines clearly display that the author identifies the term "exile" as a disease that cannot be cured. Even death will not save the person from this sickness. The pain of this state can only be comprehended and felt by one who is exiled. Similarly, Witold Gombrowicz (1996), the Polish writer who had to live as an external exile far from his motherland, claims that exile, in fact, is like a cemetery. The writer equates exile with death, which means the final demise of the universe. It seems that the author is indeed right in saying that life turns into a literal cemetery when a person does not feel like they belong in their new surroundings, language, culture, and environment. Death and the cemetery are undoubtedly brought about by unpleasant emotions such as loneliness, isolation from a new social structure and environment, and a sense of being in a small, narrow and boring space.

Julio Cortazar, in the essay *The Fellowship of Exile* (1994), describes exile as a shock and the "trauma which follows each blow, each wound" (1994, p. 172). He states that everyone who goes into exile loses everything that is associated with their own country, including friends, family, way of life, the smell of the air, and the colour of the sky. Cortazar also argues that exile has a traumatising effect on individuals, especially intellectuals like writers. Due to this traumatic experience, some of the intellectuals who were exiled developed pessimism and thought that being in exile was something worthless and pointless. However, he criticises them and asserts that exile

not only has a negative and pessimistic impact but is also positive and even profitable. Cortozar utters that intellectuals, notably writers, may "profit, to take advantage of these sinister fellowships, to extend and enrich our mental horizons, to focus on realities" (1994, p. 175).

Likewise, Edward Said has identified the exile in a similar manner. On the one hand, he describes the phenomenon of exile as an "unhealable rift forced... between the self and its true home" (2001, p. 173). Said depicts it as a condition of suffering, anguish, and bereavement. Moreover, it suggests profound anguish and sadness about losing one's house, native land, culture, customs, tradition, and even language—all of which together define one's identity and self. On the other hand, Said presents the idea of exile in a positive light, emphasising the creative boost that intellectuals receive from being alone. In other words, he emphasises the factors such as creativity and productivity that exile offers to intellectuals. In addition to this, he lists examples from the well-known figures of the literary world who escaped the Nazis, including Theodor Adorno and Erich Auerbach, whose work reflects their experience of disruption and whose exile positively affected their thinking. Thus, it is evident that Said's perspectives on the exile cover not only the negative sides of it but, at the same time, focus on the positive and even beneficial aspects of it.

It is possible to trace a narrative compatible with Edward Said's views in the writings of Joseph Brodsky. He also makes an accent on both sides of the exile and claims that despite all the unexpected and inexplicable changes in the lives of the exiled individuals, their estrangement in an alien land, and their in all verity tragic destiny, in fact, exile provides them an "opportunity in a great casual chain of things" (Brodsky, 1994, p. 11). Actually, Brodsky is referring to the intellectual exile, or, in other words, the exile of poets, writers, and thinkers, for whom the experience of exile not only has traumatic, destructive, and negative consequences but at the same time can contribute to the creation of literary masterpieces. The cause of this is, notably, the sense of exile that allows writers and thinkers to gain a diverse and wide range of views.

Among those intellectuals who succeed in transforming exile into a productive and creative process is V. S. Naipaul. Through the fictional characters, Naipaul artistically depicts the problems of Third World people who experience deep feelings of homelessness, displacement, unbelonging, and alienation not only in Western countries but also in their own homeland. Due to these issues, they have problems looking for a location they may name 'home' and where they may belong. They are spokesmen for those who are victims of the complicated caste system of the country, colonial oppression, and postcolonial conditions. Furthermore, the writer, in the most comprehensive sense, deals with issues of identity, which are very common in his literary works. He illustrates how these people from the Third World, after many years of living in rejection and disappointment, try to search for an identity.

Thus, it is worth noting that Naipaul's literary character, Willie Somerset Chandran, from the novel *Half a Life* (2001), is the best example of a spokesman for a Third World citizen, who attempts to become a part of a social environment and find a place that he may call 'home'. The novel depicts and explores the wandering exile life of the main character, Willie, who received mixed ancestry and struggles with issues like identity, displacement, and a feeling of belonging to a

specific area, society, and country. Moreover, Naipaul throughout the novel illustrates the identity changes of the character as he moves from one country to another. This study, therefore, aims to explore V. S. Naipaul's *Half a Life* (2001) novel in the context of debates on exile, belonging, and identity, as these three notions have an intimate relationship with each other, and in analysing and exploring one of these concepts, it is essential to examine the others. The reason for this lies in the fact that the lack of one of these concepts signifies the interruption of the other ones. Before providing an analysis of the novel, the theoretical framework relating to exile, belonging, and salient identities will be provided.

1. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This part of the paper will touch upon identity, including multiple identities, or more precisely, salient identities that cooperate with one another under particular circumstances. Additionally, the concepts of salient identities and the process of verifying them, as proposed by Peter Burke and Jan Stets, will be dealt with. Abraham Maslow's ideas regarding the needs of individuals, especially their belongingness needs, will be covered. Lastly, since the major concern of the article is exile, poscolonial scholar Edward Said's thoughts and ideas on exile will be uncovered.

Exile, displacement, unbelonging, and identity are the most significant issues that are explored and studied in the postcolonial world. Colonisation has resulted in the movement of Third World people from known places to unknown places while exploiting the cultural, economic, and social resources of the colonised regions. Due to this, these people have to change the whole way of their lives, and consequently, they face various problems, including adaptation and acculturation, in the new places (Anwar et al., 2020, p. 1). In addition to these problems, especially in the postcolonial period, individuals who are exposed to dislocation and exile face identity issues since each new place to which they have to move influences their salient identities.

The concept of identity is one of the problematic topics, and problematization is tied to its dynamic nature. Actually, it is not stable and static; on the contrary, identity is always in progress. The notion that identity is dependent on a variety of elements, including the environment in which it is formed, is another important realisation. Consequently, the well-known claim or question, "Who is one?" differs from context to context. It relies on measurement characteristics that are employed to define an individual's identity in relation to the diverse social contexts and circumstances they encounter throughout their lifetime (Kroger and Marcia, 2011). Likewise, Grossberg (1996) asserts that, in fact, defining and clarifying identity is not easy since identity is constantly in the process of development and constantly changing. It is perennially relational, incomplete, unstable, and temporary. Rich (2014) comments on the identity process and says that during this process, the person plays a key and active role. This shows how a person's identity is shaped by the various situations or contexts they encounter and the decisions they make, whether deliberate or inadvertent. Indeed, it is crucial to concentrate on identities as well as the purport, definition, or description of identity. The reason is that it is quite difficult to debate about a single identity. Another significant moment is that the notion that each individual possesses many

identities, or typically multiple identities, is the basis for the discussion of identities. Identities are seen as "social constructs–culturally and interactionally defined meanings and expectations—and as aspects of self-processes and structures that represent who or what a person or set of persons is believed to be" (Vryan, 2007, p. 2216).

Multiple identities interact with each other in specific situations, and therefore, they do not work in isolation. According to Burke and Stets (2009), there is an interaction process, and during it, multiple identities may have an opportunity to become active. Vryan (2007), in his works on identities, focuses on three categories of identity. He states that identities of social, communal, or role groups are included in the first set of identities. In this group of identity, the person feels as a member or component of a definite group, which is socially manufactured. He lists a few examples from the first group of identity, such as sex, gender, race, family, nationality, ethnicity, religion, occupation, age, sexual orientation, and voluntary subcultural engagement (2007, p. 2216).

The second category of identity is situational identity. This group of identities is unique to a certain kind of social environment. In any kind of interaction, the person involved should characterise the circumstances and other community members and acknowledge how their decisions and actions are being evaluated. Personal identity is the last type of identity. This kind of identity is the collection of meanings, hopes, and expectances that are unique to an individual and associated with their name, physical characteristics, life story, and biography (Vryan, 2007, p. 2217).

Another significant type of identity is cultural identity. Within their own contexts, cultural identity is one of the main issues of postcolonial, diasporic, migrant, and exile literature. This category of identity mainly centres on dichotomies like self and its opposite other, foreign, alien, or outsider, and exactly adverse native, and the last one, us and its opposite them. It deals with the ways in which an individual's identity is shaped in connection to others, that is, 'the Other,' other social groups, other communities, or other cultures. In this respect, Clarke (2008) affirms that the concept of cultural identity becomes even more distinct and solidified at the moment when people identify with a "cultural Other" (p. 511). According to Stuart Hall (1993), this type of identity, in fact, is influenced by different factors, such as context, setting, location, and the society in which the person lives. Hall shares the same opinion with Burke and Stets regarding multiple identities. He contends that identity is never singular but rather multiple, constructed from a variety of contexts, behaviours, and discourses that are often in opposition to one another and interact (Hall, 1996, p. 4). Likewise, Grossberg also handles multiple identities and claims that individuals have several identities that are perennially contradictory and consist of partial fragments (1996, pp. 89–91).

The point to be noted here is that multiple identities are not equally important. In other words, the importance of each identity varies depending on some factors. That is, some identities may alter based on the events, phases, and transitions that a person experiences in his or her life. Besides, a person may have several different identities in the future as well as the present (Oyserman et al., 2011, p. 117). On the multiple identity issues, some scholars offer a slightly different perspective. For instance, according to Sabine Trepte (2006) and Karina Korostelina

(2007), some identities are more dominant and prominent than others. In the social identity system, dominant identities have the ability to supersede all other fundamental social identities and appear as the most salient, conspicuous, and pertinent dominant identities. In this context, Stets and Burke (2009) state that multiple identities may emerge to act when an individual engages in any interaction. However, there is a significant point that should be taken into consideration. The point is that the activation process of identities may not take place simultaneously; that is, not all identities can undergo the process of activation at the same time. Precisely speaking, different settings or contexts may stimulate the activation process of only some identities, and in this way, it impacts the person's choice of role. For this reason, those identities that are more dominant and salient have the ability to be activated in any circumstances (Stets and Burke, 2009, p. 133). They also argue that the most salient identity may be activated depending on a different social context, and a less salient identity might only take part in a particular context and setting. The people are embedded in comparatively distinct social environments or contexts, where relationships and disputes are closely intertwined. Therefore, individuals possess a mental orientation aimed at a definite social group to which they belong. It is a feeling of belonging, which is a fundamental component of being human (Wang et al., 2014). That is why people, as social creatures, need a feeling of belongingness towards a definite location, group, and society. This need is fundamental to determining who they are. In this regard, Novak (2013) asserts that the construction of a particular sense of identity is influenced by the desire to belong to or be a part of a particular locality, place, culture, community, ethnicity, or social system. For this reason, it would be appropriate to claim that identity, or more precisely, identities, have a connection to the feeling of belongingness.

As a humanistic psychologist, Abraham Maslow works on the needs of a healthy individual and states that every person has a great desire to realise their own capacity and to advance to a state of self-realisation or self-actualization through achieving additional phases. In his studies on the needs of individuals, Maslow (1943) categorises the needs of individuals into basic needs and higher needs. The first category of needs, which are basic needs, includes things like food, housing, security, and social relationships; higher needs include values like goodness, beauty, love, possessions, belongingness, and creativity (Oğuz, 2017). Furthermore, he argues that in order go to the next stage of needs, individuals must meet lower-level needs. At this point, it is necessary to remark on the fact that Maslow does not make an accent on the proportion or percentage of needs satisfied. Thus, he says that the affirmation that if one need of the individual is fulfilled, another need rises does not imply that one need has to be completely satisfied before another shows up (1954, p. 53).

Physiological and safety needs are included in the basic needs category. The first one comprises needs in the form of breathing, eating, drinking, maintaining homeostasis, and having sex. The needs for security and safety come after the physiological needs and are classified as security, dependence, stability, protection, dread, freedom from anxiety and chaos, the requirement for boundaries, order, structure, law, the protector's strength, and others (Maslow, 1954, p. 39). A person's sense of value, significance, and confidence are referred to as their self-

esteem. On the other side, an individual's reputation refers to the respect, dignity, and notoriety they receive from others in their community. According to this perspective, self-esteem demands are an aspiration for force, achievement, sufficiency, dominance, proficiency, confidence before others, liberty, and sovereignty, rather than just a desire for respect, reputation, or status (Feist et al., 2006).

As to the highest needs, self-actualization, love, and belongingness need to take place. In *Motivation and Personality* (1954), Maslow talks about the concept of self-actualization and how this term emerged. He states that organismic theorist Kurt Goldstein originated the concept of self-actualization, which was utilised in a far more restricted and specialised way (Maslow, 1954, p. 46). According to Goldstein (1939), self-actualization or self-realisation is a new trend in the lives of people as well as in the satisfaction of needs. Goldstein argues that this high need means the tendency to realise the individual abilities [of the organism] as much as possible (1939, p. 197). In this context, Maslow states that a person possesses a deep desire to reach self-actualization, wishes to be more and more unique, and also has the ambition to become all that one is capable of becoming (1954, p. 46).

The love and belongingness phase is an important one in the hierarchy of needs. According to Abraham Maslow, one of the most important needs in a person's life is a sense of belonging. Moreover, Maslow (1954) highlights the fact that belongingness is a theme frequently discussed in plays, fiction, memoirs, self-narratives, and poesy (p. 43). According to Hagerty et al. (2002), the need for belonging, which is at the same time a requirement for individuals, is in fact the feeling of one's own participation and inclusion inside a definite mechanism or space that makes one feel like a vital figure within that surrounding or system (p. 794).

Some psychologists contend that in order for a person to feel comfortable in their surroundings, perceive themselves as part of a social group, or find purpose in their life, they should have a strong sense of belonging. According to Maslow (1970), a person's sense of social acceptance and belongingness throughout life are significant values. Moreover, a feeling of belonging might be felt towards any item, neighbourhood, ethnic group, individual, or location. Suertegaray et al. (1992) believe that the interplay between locations and individuals' encounters with the outside world gives rise to a feeling of belonging. However, when the person cannot develop a sense of belonging, they begin to feel lonely, alienated, and exiled. Thus, it would be right to comment that identity, sense of belonging, and exile are linked to each other both directly and indirectly. For this reason, the ideas and thoughts of postcolonial scholar Edward Said on exile are crucial for this article. He deals with this topic from an exile perspective since he is the one who experienced exile. Said approaches exile not only from the negative sides as other postcolonial critics and scholars do but at the same time touch upon the positive sides.

Said explains the term exile as "strangely compelling to think about but terrible to experience. It is the unhealable rift forced between a human being and a native place; between the self and its true home; its essential sadness can never be surmounted" (2001, p. 137). According to Said, living in exile keeps a person from feeling at one with their real home and creates an unbreakable bond between them and their native country. The exiled person mentally and

emotionally has breakdowns, and they hold them in their memories and hearts. So it is evident that memory is significant in connecting an exiled person with their past, homeland, kin, relatives, and fellows. According to Pifer (2003), the past has been documented as history, which in turn provides people with a feeling of distinction and identity and keeps them from sinking into the undifferentiated reality of nameless infinity (p. 65). Besides, Said (2001) comments on the universal presence of the exile phenomenon since people all over the world have acclimated to the notion that the modern era is a time of alienation, terror, and estrangement and that it is spiritually isolated and unparented (p. 173).

As a matter of fact, Said's perspective on exile takes into account both the advantages and "beneficial" features of it in addition to its drawbacks. He argues that individuals who are exposed to exile, compared to those who are not, are aware of at least two cultures. These individuals transcend cultural borders to integrate into the host country's culture (Antara, 2016). Another significant moment that is underlined by Said is that those individuals who experience exile analyse issues from or both sides. Apparently, there is a dual perspective that never views anything in isolation—that is, what is happening now and what is left behind (1994, p. 60). He gives examples of famous intellectuals from different cultural backgrounds and argues that, notably, the state of exile boosts their creativity and productivity in alien lands (1994, 2001). To sum up, exile is a universal fate that has befallen people from all over the world. Individuals from various nations, societies, social classes, ethnicities, professions, and cultures may be exiled or have been uprooted. They may become victims of displacement and dislocation. The hero of Naipaul's Willie is the best example of an exile who is a victim of displacement and unbelongingness.

2. EXILE IN V. S. NAIPAUL'S *HALF A LIFE*

Half a Life (2001), one of Naipaul's last literary works, was released a month before his Nobel Prize was announced. It portrays and assesses the difficult life path of the main hero, Willie Somerset Chandran. The protagonist inherited a mixed family with parents from completely different castes in India. Throughout his life, Willie has had various problems, but the most notable ones are related to identity and belonging to a particular location, culture, community, nation, and country. V. S. Naipaul aesthetically describes the protagonist's struggle with questions of identity and belonging in three completely different locations. The country of his birth was India; the country to which he won a scholarship was England; and the last one was the country of his wife Ana, East Africa. He lives as a self-imposed exile who attempts to find the place, which he may call his own nest, to discover salient
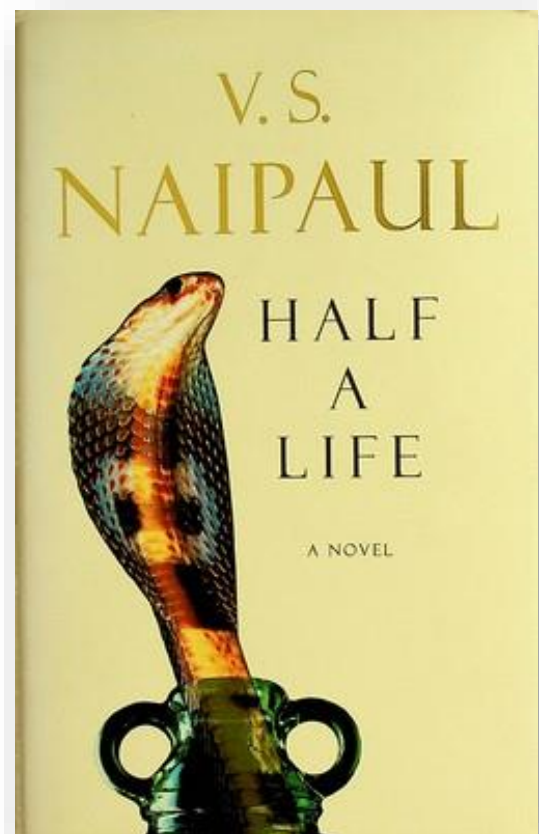
and dominant identities and obtain peak experience. In other words, it seems that the author tries to show, from the beginning to the end of the work, the protagonist's pursuit of self-awareness, stability, fulfilment, completeness, and locating a specific place, which may be his nest or his "home." Actually, *Half a Life,* like the author's other literary works, centres on the life paths of the dislocated people, who are members of the postcolonial world and to whom belonging to a certain place is essential. When these displaced individuals lose this idea, intentionally or inadvertently, they turn into exiles who are never in their proper place, in other words, "out of place" (Said, 2001, p. 180).

Willie Somerset Chandran's life story, in fact, spans three different continents, periods, and generations, whose displacement is narrated via the protagonist's father. He tells his son that the elder generation is "attached to a certain temple" (Naipaul, 2001, p. 7) and creates a thriving society that has never experienced financial difficulties until "the Muslims conquered the land" (2001, p. 7). The protagonist's daddy states that following the Muslim invasion, the community's circumstances shifted, leading to poverty and a loss of support from the people they were serving. Furthermore, he puts forward that the community's situation deteriorates after the British takeover, forcing Willie's grandfather to abandon his land, house, home of worship, and society, which he is no longer a member of.

It would be appropriate to emphasise that Willie's grandpa accepts the fact that his family and relatives are not members of a "home created by a community, language, culture, and customs" (Said, 2001, p. 176). For this reason, the grandfather decides to leave his homeland and go to another unknown place to look for work and protect his relatives and loved ones from starvation. Moving from a native place to an alien one is, in fact, a hazardous, challenging, and hard phase for the temple-attached Brahmin, like the hero's grandpa, because "he was by this time so frightened and lost" (Naipaul, 2001, p. 8). For the first time, the grandpa breaks with the place where he was born and where he belongs in his heart and mind. However, this condition does not stop him from overcoming fear of unfamiliar surroundings and people whom he has never known or seen before. This indicates the fact that the grandpa managed to transform his detriment into a useful, satisfying, and "even enriching motif" (Said, 2001, p. 173). Moreover, in the foreign place, "he was able to get a respectable job as a clerk in the maharaja's palace... learned English and got his diplomas" (Naipaul, 2001, p. 9). Given the protagonist's grandfather's condition, it would not be incorrect to argue that his break from his native country was, in fact, a better and more appropriate course of action. Regarding this, Edward Said (2001) points out that for some individuals, in some situations or cases, detaching from the homeland and going into exile is "better than staying behind or not getting out, but only sometimes" (2001, p. 178).

So, when it comes to the grandpa, the abandonment of his native place and society creates a set of conditions that provide him with marvellous and wonderful opportunities. To illustrate, in a short period of time, he has a chance to hold one of the significant positions, like the position of Maharaja's secretary. The grandpa was one of the "maharaja's secretaries," whom city dwellers "treated like little gods" (Naipaul, 2001, p. 9). Due to grandpa's position, the main character's father holds the position in the Maharaja's Land Tax Department. It is interesting that, in spite of

the fact that Willie's father failed his university exams and, what is more, despite his lack of academic performance, he manages to maintain his job at the department and receives a degree thanks to the influence of his future father-in-law. Regarding this, it is essential to mention that the author of the novel deeply criticises the caste system in India. Naipaul shows his readers that those people who belong to the upper caste, like Brahmins, may hold the position and power they want just by being a part of the caste without having the necessary education, knowledge, and experience.

Naipaul is against untouchability, privacy, and the caste system in India, which puts a lot of liability on unskilled people, creating diverse problems and degrading communities in India (Pandey, 2013, pp. 17, 18). This is clearly shown in the episode where the protagonist's father, despite his unqualified, unsuitable, and nonskilled experience, kept working in the Maharaja's Tax Department until his previous fiancé's father found out that he was married to a woman from a lower caste. Moreover, Willie's father's marriage is not a love marriage. He marries the girl from the lower caste for the benefit of sacrifice, and he believes that he has committed "the only noble thing" (Naipaul, 2001, p. 12) by marrying a girl from the "backwards" and thus "sacrificed himself" (Naipaul, 2001, p. 11). Years later, he realises that this marriage actually brings nothing but unhappiness. He starts to feel bad about his union with a woman of a lesser caste and contrasts his humiliation with the castes and his parent's disgrace. For the first time in his life, his father shares his actual feelings with Willie while admitting to him his shame about his wife: "I grew everyday more ashamed of her. I was as ashamed of her as much as my father and mother and the principal, and people of our sort generally, were ashamed of me. This shame was always with me… I courted it, and lost myself in it" (Naipaul, 2001, p. 32).

After hearing his father's confessions regarding bygones and his unhappy wedding union, Willie grows to "despise his father" (Naipaul, 2001, p. 36). Interestingly, on the other side, Willie Chandran grows increasingly fond of his "backward" mother. Moreover, he accepts her decisions without contesting, changing, or meddling because he holds in estimation her choices. Willie's unwavering love for his less-caste mother can be connected with the ideas of Abraham Maslow on love knowledge, which he discusses in *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature* (1971). According to Maslow (1971), people are less likely to intervene, exert control, alter, change, or develop if they are deeply in love, enthralled, or really engaged (p. 17). For this reason, he does not attempt to change the decisions of his mother and consents to all her directives and instructions. Besides, it is possible to see how Willie's salient identity as a son gradually gains its salience since, as it is evident below, he accepts all his mother's decisions and instructions without question.

Owing to their father, Willie and Sarojini have the option to attend any local school, but they would much rather attend a Canadian missionary school. Their backward mother deems this school appropriate for her children since, at the time, she also got her education there. In the missionary school, most of the children belong to the lower castes, and because of this, they cannot attend local schools, where kids from the upper caste take education. One might think that perhaps, due to the numerous issues Willie's mother had as a child, she sent her kids to a missionary school. The mother's desire to shield her kids from feeling inadequate and inferior to

their peers is arguably the most important consideration in her school choice. What is more, it is possible that she desires for her children to be able to satisfy their need for belonging and to feel like they belong in this society.

As it is well known, humans are social beings who need to form social bonds with other individuals and have a feeling of belonging in order to survive in this world. Maslow (1954), in his studies on the needs of healthy people, focuses on one of the high needs, which is belongingness. According to him, this category of needs is a basic human motive force, and in order to satisfy it, people desire to be a part of a social structure or be members of it. Furthermore, he also makes an important point and states that to fulfil this type of need, individuals may be a part of a definite community, group, or social structure. Besides, they may also satisfy it through certain objects or places (1954, p. 162). From this explanation, it can be inferred that Willie does not feel like he belongs to India in terms of language, culture, or religion. In fact, everything that is linked to his home is entirely alien to him. In his own 'home,' surrounded by his own community, he feels like an outcast and an exile. Perhaps Willie's situation appears to be similar to that of people who experience exile and alienation. In this respect, Said quotes from Theodor Adorno's work *Minima Moralia*: "It is part of morality not to be at home in one's home" (2001, p. 184). The protagonist attempts to become more familiar with Canadian culture and the English language, most likely in an effort to overcome a sense of belonging. He is enthralled with their culture and the language at a missionary school; as a result, he begins to study the language completely and "began too long to go to Canada, where his teachers came from. He even began to think he might adopt their religion and become like them and travel the world teaching" (Naipaul, 2001, p. 38). Willie's slow move from his Indian identity towards his Canadian identity might give the reader the impression that Willie is on the way to his new salient identity. Thus, this brings to mind the idea that identities are fluid and changing (Burke and Stets, 2009, p. 176). Besides, it also shows that it is a sign of the loss of belonging to Indians and India, even if only slightly.

Hence, it shows that the protagonist feels closer to Canadians than his own Indian community and attempts to fulfill a sense of belonging to Canadians. When he writes about his vacation for an English school assignment, it is made very evident in the episode. Willie identifies as a Canadian who enjoys wonderful beach vacations with his parents, referring to them as 'Pop' and 'Mom.' The missionary school provides Willie with American comic books, from which he gets all the facts he needs for his composition assignment. He is effective in fusing "the local details, like the holiday clothes and the holiday sweets" (Naipaul, 2001, p. 39) with elements of the foreign culture. He gets the best grade on his written essay. At this point, it's important to emphasise how Willie's identity as a writer is shaped by his experiences producing essays and receiving awards from Canadian teachers, having classmates listen to him with enthusiasm and appreciation, and experiencing "pleased and proud" (Naipaul, 2001, p. 39) from his mother side. It is significant to note that people need approval and verification of their identities, and this situation is especially evident in Willie's identity change. His Canadian teachers and his backward mother directly and indirectly approve of Willie's salient identity. The approval and verification of Willie's new identity by his surroundings is called the verification process. Burke and Stets (2009),

in their study on identities, talk about the verification process, and they state that people search for approval of different identities by negotiating them with their social surroundings.

It is believed that at this moment, the protagonist's identity as a prospective writer starts to invoke salience, or, in other words, begins to come into focus. Willie's other identities, like becoming a pupil in a Canadian school or being the child of Brahmin and Shudra caste parents, progressively begin to give up salience. According to Burke and Stets (2009), salient identity may have a higher percentage of activation within a variety of contexts and situations (p. 46). From this vantage point, it is possible to argue that the main hero's salient or distinctive identity as a writer develops and is inspired by the supportive atmosphere of the Canadian missionary school as well as his achievement in writing essays. However, there is one caveat: the only person who has a negative attitude towards junior Chandran's storywriting is senior Chandran. According to senior Chandran, his son's "mind is diseased" (Naipaul, 2001, p. 47) and that he scorns his mother and father, and moreover, he has also "turned against himself" (2001, p. 47).

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Interestingly, the protagonist's father believes the perpetrators of the situation are the teachers from the school who approve of his son's writings, essays, and stories, as well as his imaginary world. Initially, the elder Chandran believes that to "keep a vow of silence" and follow "the mahatma and ignore it" (Naipaul, 2001, p. 46) are the best courses of action in this case. However, subsequently, the father comes to the conclusion that he should send Willie to another place. This place must be distant from their homeland. "When he was twenty, Willie Chandran, the mission-school student who had not completed his education... with very little idea of what lay outside... went to London" (2001, p. 49). In this way, the protagonist shares the same fate as his creator; he is forced to leave his country, home, and family behind and go to London with the scholar he has won. Actually, the readers may detect that the protagonist's wandering life, which is like that of an external exile, starts when he lands in the United Kingdom.

For the young protagonist, London is a city full of surprises, where he comes across people from different nationalities, ethnicities, and cultures. The city is full of immigrants, refugees, and displaced ones like Willie, whose motives for going into exile are a variety of things, including war, oppressive political regimes, caste systems, totalitarian governments, instability in the area of policy, or financial troubles. All these displaced people are exiles of the modern, contemporary epoch, whom Said discusses in his works on exile and particularly in *Reflections on Exile and Other*

Literary and Cultural Essays (2001). In his work, he makes comparisons between the ancient and modern eras and asserts that

> "in other ages, exiles had similar cross-cultural and transnational visions, suffered the same frustrations and miseries, and performed the same elucidating and critical tasks, but there is a difference between earlier and present-day exile, which is their scale: our age—with its modern warfare, imperialism, and the quasi-theological ambitions of totalitarian rulers—is indeed the age of the refugee, the displaced person, and mass immigration" (2001, p. 174).

Based on this clarification, one can infer that the protagonist and those exiled and dislocated individuals he meets in London are contemporary exiles, with lives that are not whole or incomplete but rather half-lived. They are victims of oppression, colonialism, imperialism, and dominant ruling systems. Moreover, these modern exiles are products of racism and cultural deprivation.

According to Ashok (2016), those people live lives that are unsuccessful in every aspect, including self-realisation and self-discovery; as a result, they still live "half-discovered, half-realised, and half-lived" (p. 369) lives. Percy Cato, a Jamaican friend of the main character, is one of the individuals that the readers encounter. Interesting is that Percy's and Willie's backgrounds are, in some sense, similar. Both of them have mixed parentage. Similar parentage backgrounds unify them at the same point. This new friend of Willie "appeared to have no proper place in the world and could be both Negro and not Negro in his ways" (Naipaul, 2001, p. 59). As a matter of fact, Percy Cato attempts to hide his background and past from his friend, Willie, for which he feels guilty and embarrassed. Therefore, Percy begins to make up stories relating to his relatives, family, friends, and past life, which the protagonist undoubtedly does not think much of believing. The main character's lack of faith in his friend, Percy, is obviously shown in the part below:

> Willie asked Percy in the common room, "What did your father do in the Panama Canal? "He was a clerk. You know those people over there. They can't read and write at all." Willie thought, "He's lying. That's a foolish story. His father went there as a labourer. He would have been in one of the gangs, holding his pickaxe before him on the ground, like the others and looking obediently at the photographer" (Naipaul, 2001, p. 59).

Essentially, the protagonist criticises his friend Percy for telling lies; however, there is an inresting fact: Willlie too lies about his Indian mixed-caste family and his past. It is possible to see that Willie chooses to state that one of his parents, his mother, abides by "an ancient Christian community" (Naipaul, 2001, p. 58), and the other one is a member of the highest caste in India, Brahmins. Besides, he argues that his grandfather was a courtier. This presents the fact that the lies invented by the protagonist grant him "a feeling of power" (2001, p. 58) in a foreign land, in London, where he is feeling lost and exiled. Moreover, he feels like he knows nothing at all, and he has "to re-learn everything that he knew" (Naipaul, 2001, p. 56).

It appears that the writer wishes to convey that individuals from the postcolonial world—like Percy and Willie—are distinct from those who reside in Western nations. They have a sense of alienation or even orphanhood in these countries, feeling as though they are ignorant and must acquire all knowledge from Western culture; their orphan status is likely connected to Said's thoughts on exile. He argues that "no matter how well they may do, exiles are always eccentrics who feel their difference... as a kind of orphanhood" (2001, p. 182). From this point of view, one can infer that the protagonist, as an exile who feels orphaned to the core and abandoned by his

close surroundings and native land, has to deal with this circumstance all of his life. Perhaps, to be able to avoid feeling abandoned or embarrassed, he selects a way that he thinks is right. Thus, he fabricates his background and past "as he wished […] remake himself and his past and his ancestry" (Naipaul, 2001, p. 57).

Invented self-denial narratives of the protagonist related to his family and home, in fact, help him to "write his own revolution" (Naipaul, 2001, p. 57). In other words, thanks to his imagination, individuals like his parents, who are members of two entirely different castes, are able to tie their relationship with marriage, raise kids, and maintain a carefree and contented existence in their homeland, India. However, it is an undeniable fact nonetheless that the country's caste structure dictates that a member of a higher caste, such as the Brahmins, is not permitted to wed a member of a lower caste, such as the Shudra, and that their union is also not supported by the caste's family, relatives, or authorities. Regarding this, Borbor (2015) states that the author wants to sensitise those who read this literary work to the fact that India has a different, dynamic, and complicated social structure, which is apparently demonstrated in the novel. Moreover, another essential moment is that Naipaul draws attention to the inter-caste dispute and the protection of Indian traditions and customs regarding their castes (p. 117). For this reason, one can infer that people like the protagonist are afflicted by a conflict between different castes that has a significant impact on families and their members, in addition to the political, social, and cultural spheres of the nation. Hence, Willie is a victim of Indian casteism.

To be a child of parents from different castes who hate and are not in love with one another, Willie loses his serenity, contentment, and, above all, his sense of inclusion or belonging—especially to his parents, sister, and home. For this reason, the protagonist perceives that he must leave his home, family, culture, customs, traditions, and India. All these matters, in fact, hurt Willie since they prevent him from self-realising his dream of becoming a writer. According to Said, "What has been left behind may either be mourned or it can be used to provide a different set of lenses" (2001, p. xxxv). At this point, instead of mourning what he has left behind, the protagonist chooses to seek the path towards self-actualization. Correspondingly, it is clear that by pursuing his dream of being a writer, Willie attains his zenith and fulfills self-actualization needs. In this respect, Abraham Maslow, in his work *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature* (1971), talks about notable behaviours that stimulate self-actualization needs, namely concentration, growth, honesty, prudence, self-awareness, self-development, and peak experiences.

In addition, he also states that in the ongoing process of self-actualization, individuals attain a heightened consciousness of their surroundings and happenings (1971, p. 45). Willie's demonstration of his heightened consciousness of his desire to be a writer happens at the moment of his meeting with the lawyer. And this situation is related to the fact clarified above by Maslow. The lawyer's embarrassment makes Willie consider his aims, which compels him to attain his highest awareness. The readers may notice it exactly at the moment of the conversation when he acknowledges that he undoubtedly "wants to write" (Naipaul, 2001, p. 78). Willie's clearly expressed desire to become a writer shows his attempt to transform his exiled and negative life in

an alien land into "a potent, even enriching motif" (Said, 2001, p. 173), which in turn might offer the protagonist new and important viewpoints and constructive tasks.

The protagonist shares his writings with lawyer Roger to receive criticism and suggestions regarding the narrative's setting, style, and language. Based on the lawyer's critiques and suggestions, Willie starts to gather material to publish his tales every week. Willie prioritises watching "*High Sierra with Humphrey Boga*rt" (Naipaul, 2001, p. 81) and "*The Childhood of Maxim Gorky* three times in one week" (2001, p. 84) films. He grasps that all these films and characters deeply inspire him. Thanks to them, he begins produce easily his new narratives. Furthermore, after a while, Willie decides to work on the narratives to print out as a complete work. In this case, it is essential to highlight the fact that by producing more narratives and assembling them into an extensive book, the protagonist may both fulfill self-actualization and belongingness needs. It is clear in the dialogue between lawyer Roger and Willie Chandran, where Willie states that he does not "want to lose... Roger's friendship" (2001, p. 78). After all, it is in an alien land that a sense of belonging becomes the most pronounced need in Willie's life, and therefore, having met Roger, he does not want to lose his friendship, support, and help. According to Abraham Maslow (1954), one of the fundamental human motives and impulses for healthy individuals is to be a member of the social structure (p. 162).

The protagonist faces the challenges of belonging not only in his native country, India, but also in London. His need to fit in with a particular social structure and his lack of love and belonging drive him to have intimate relationships with whores or his friends' lovers. So in order to satisfy this category of needs, the protagonist even becomes disloyal to his friends by having sexual relations with their girlfriends. At this point, it is obvious that, without realising it himself, the main character has paved the way for the fame and importance of his identity as a lover. It is also quite interesting and ambiguous that in the case of the lover identity, Willie does not need to approve this identity, and moreover, he does not negotiate it with other people around him. The reason for this most probably lies in the fact that in that moment in alien land, for an exile like Willie, the sense of belonging takes priority over other issues. Therefore, without any shame or sense of betrayal, he has sexual relations with girlfriends of his friends. To illustrate, Willie enters into an intimate relationship with Perdita, who is Roger's girlfriend, and June, the girlfriend of his close friend in London, Percy; but all the women with whom he makes love want him to "fuck like an Englishman" (Naipaul, 2001, p. 113). However, there is a significant point: Willie is not an Englishman. So there is one nuance: Willie was born and grew up in India, and he belongs to Indian culture. In this culture, "there is no seduction," "all marriages are arranged," and, what is more, "there is no art of sex" (2001, p. 110). For this reason, he accuses his father and Indian culture of failing to teach him the art of seduction and sex. In this regard, Santwana Haldar (2002) argues that the writer, through his protagonist, in fact, criticises sexuality-related concerns, which are frowned upon in Indian culture and society. In other words, sex-related issues are taboo topics in India and Indian society, and therefore, parents feel that there is no need to explain such issues to their offspring. Furthermore, Haldar (2002) claims that taboos around sexuality prevent Indians from claiming their uniqueness and individuality (p. 233).

Because of his uneducated sexual background, Willie feels lost, apathetic, and incomplete in every sexual connection. Willie's sexual inadequacy and incompetence are evident from his intimate partners' discontent with their sexual encounters. It is apt to argue that, in fact, the protagonist desires sex with women in order to fulfill his sense of belonging and affection. However, it is an undeniable fact that women with whom Willie has a sexual relationship do not love him. The only thing they wish from him is intimacy and sexual satisfaction. On this issue, Maslow affirms that people, as social beings, desire to fulfil their high needs, such as love. But there is a crucial moment: this is entirely possible through a reciprocal process involving "both giving and receiving love" (1954, p. 45). Consequently, being a mixed-parent migrant from India, Willie does not participate in this reciprocal process since he does not love these women and they do not love him back. Being among them causes him to feel "ashamed and frightened" (Naipaul, 2001, p. 111), and he confesses to them and to himself that this is all due to his cultural and familial upbringing. Willie perceives himself inferior compared to these women, for whom he is an ordinary man from the Third World, who are unable to "satisfy the woman" (2001, p. 66) and who lack sexual education due to "arranged marriages" (2001, p. 66). Another important point is that neither Willie's stories nor his sexual desire are valued by them. That is, for these ladies, satisfying sexual needs takes precedence over Willie's creative endeavours and creativity.

Parallel to this, Willie's sister, Sarojini, also does not accept her brother as a writer. This is clearly seen in the episode when Sarojini visits her brother for a couple days. Two siblings discuss Willie's college education, degrees and certificates, and upcoming plans. Moreover, Willie tells his sister that he is writing his short stories, compiling them into an extensive book, and even sending them for publication. But Sarojini does not see it that way and says cynically, "That's complete nonsense. No one here or anywhere else will want to read your book" (Naipaul, 2001, p. 109). It is obvious that Sarojini underestimates Willie and does not believe that he is capable of producing notable literary works. Willie's single admirer is Ana, "a girl or young woman from an African country...was doing some kind of course in London" (2001, p. 116). She is the only one who finds Willie's writing style inspiring. After meeting Ana, Willie begins to see himself as a whole and complete man because, up until then, no one, including his sister, Sarojini, had ever seen him for who he really is. For Perdita, June, and other prostitutes, Willie is just an exile, a stranger,
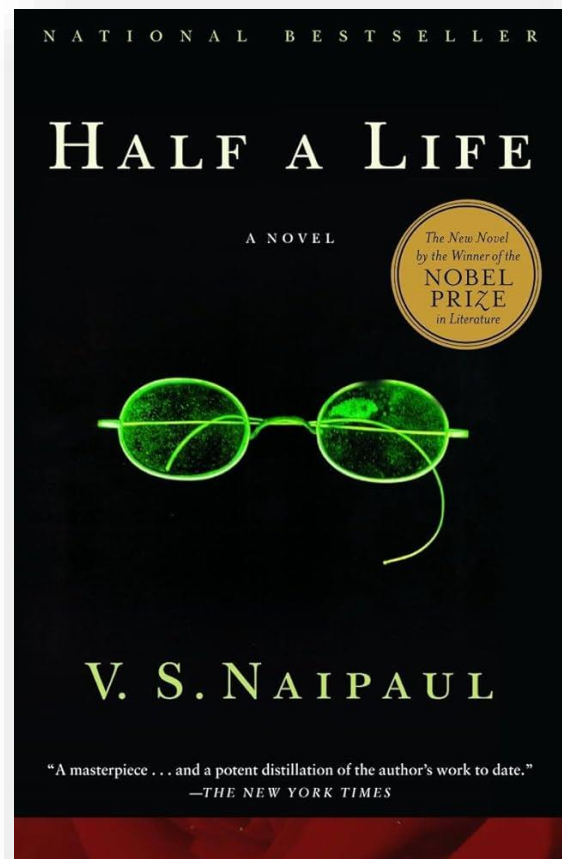
an outcast, and an Indian man who has "mixed inheritance" (2001, p. 117); in other words, someone who stands in stark contrast to them and who is in "the state of never being fully adjusted, always feeling outside the chatty, familiar world inhabited by natives" (Said, 1994, p. 53).

On the other side, this girl from a mixed upbringing thinks highly of Willie as a writer and feels that there is "someone thinking and feeling like" (Naipaul, 2001, p. 116) her. Thanks to her emotions and ideas, she aids him in "discovering a kind of reciprocity" (Ashok, 2016: 372) with her. Her demeanour, tone, and look stun Willie. Hence, she continues to win his heart every time. Furthermore, the protagonist thinks Ana is the ideal fit for him since his sense of belonging to all people whom he encounters or whom he knows from his childhood has disappeared. As a matter of fact, Ana is someone who approves his salient identity as a writer, and moreover, she indirectly verifies this identity, and by doing this, she, in fact, helps Willie become a strong character, not an inferior one whom other prostitutes or girlfriends of his friends accept.

After growing attached to Ana, Willie finds it difficult to let her go. Therefore, his goal is to marry Ana and move to her homeland, Africa, where she lives. In fact, he has no desire to return to his complicated and miserable life in India. Willie is adamant that Ana's native country, Africa, will serve as his 'home,' as he is unable to have either India or England. This shows that, for the protagonist, the meaning of 'home' has evolved, and he now believes that finding a new 'home' may happen anywhere—not just in India or England. It brings to mind Said's views regarding home, which hold that in a "contingent world, homes are always provisional" (2001, p. 185).

But it does not turn out the way Willie thought. He finds that living in Africa is not what he had anticipated; everything is alien and unfamiliar. Interestingly, he is welcomed as "Ana's London man" (Naipaul, 2001, p. 133) and is not considered an Indian immigrant in Africa, which in turn gives him a sense of superiority among Africans. In fact, in Africa, by becoming Ana's London man, Willie's salient identity as a writer gradually loses its salience, which indicates that Willie's identity is again changing. So the dynamism of identity is clearly seen.

 Actually, he is let down by the unusual characters he encounters on the streets during his first few days at Ana's estate home. Consequently, Willie realises that he is not a part of Africa, African culture, or African community, and what is more important, he is not a part of this home to which he has never belonged. Willie never stops believing that he will leave this location as soon as possible. "I am leaving this place. I'm heading out. I'll stay here for a few nights before figuring out how to leave (Naipaul, 2001, p. 125). His nomadic lifestyle, which is always unsettling, reminisces about Said's ideas on exile. Said states that "Exile ... is restless, movement, constantly being unsettled, and unsettling others. You cannot go back to some earlier and perhaps more stable condition of being at home; and alas, you can never arrive, be at one with your new home or situation" (1994, p. 53). From this perspective, it becomes clear that Ana's home is not accepted as his own, and therefore, Willie starts going out to clubs to see African prostitutes as he grows more and more distant from Ana every day. This is the point at which Willie's salient identity as a lover once more becomes salient, and the identity of a husband loses its salience. As a matter of fact, it shows that the protagonist is again faced with the problem of belonging, as in London. In London, the salience of his lover identity revealed the problems in his sense of belonging. The fact that the

identity of the lover becomes prominent again in Africa is an indication that the sense of belonging comes to the fore again. He is still living in exile in Africa, unable to locate a location he can call 'home.' After eighteen years, he comes to the realisation that, in reality, he, as Willie Somerset Chandran, does not live his life. He chooses to tell Ana what is on his mind and declares, "I am forty-one. I am tired of living your life... the best part of my life is gone, and I've done nothing" (Naipaul, 2001, p. 211). That Ana, too, does not live her own life, astonished him. She meets the same end as Willie. It turns out that Ana is living a half-life like her other fellow citizens. Thus, Willie is able to view and assess his life from a "much wider picture" (Said, 1994, p. 60), including both positive and negative aspects, thanks to his time in London and his subsequent exile in Africa. In this way, exile ensures Willie has:

> …double perspective that never sees things in isolation. Every scene or situation in the new country necessarily draws on its counterpart in the old country. Intellectually this means that an idea or experience is always counterposed with another, therefore making them both appear in a sometimes new and unpredictable light; from that juxtaposition, one gets a better, perhaps even more universal idea of how to think, say, about a human rights issue in one situation by comparison with another (Said, 1994, p. 60).

Based on the preceding lines, it would be right to argue that Willie acquires knowledge that in London, his salient identity is that of a writer; however, in Africa, in Ana's country, people accept him as "Ana's London man" (Naipaul, 2001, p. 152) who visits clubs with servants who are "half-and-half friends" in a "half-and-half world" (Naipaul, 2001, p. 152). His salient identity as a writer and then, after a confession to Ana that he lives her life, not his own, the salient identity of a husband lost their salience. Furthermore, notably in Africa in his middle ages, during his wandering exile, he demonstrated the highest level of self-awareness. He grasps the fact that he might reach self-realisation, and to do this, he has to quit his half-life in a half-and-half world and recover the time he wasted for nothing.

CONCLUSION

V. S. Naipaul, in an artistic manner, depicts the wandering exile life of an Indian Willie Somerset Chandran, who moves from one location to another, hoping to find his own niche that he can call 'home'. His sense of belonging has been a source of hardship for him from early childhood into puberty. Throughout his wandering exile life, Willie feels a lack of belonging to certain places and social structures. Being the offspring of a cruel, loveless, mixed-caste couple, Willie is never able to fully achieve his peak experience—that is, his salient identity as a writer. Furthermore, Willie's salient identities are never stable and always change, so they are constantly shifting and never remain constant. He experiences salient identity changes, especially every time he comes to a new environment and a new location. This indicates that some of Willie's identities gain salience and others lose it. This circumstance demonstrates how identities are dynamic and subject to change at all times.

Another significant finding that is detected in the novel is that Willie's life is surrounded by incompleteness, which is simply identified as 'half-and-half'. Luckily, though it comes too late, the protagonist recognises the fact that he lives a borrowed and adopted 'half-life' and takes the decision to give up on the past and search for an entirely different and new path to meet his high

needs, such as belongingness, and attain peak experience. At this point, it would be appropriate to mention that exactly during the self-imposed exile in Ana's country, Africa, Willie severely analyses his 'half and half' life. The state of exile helps Willie Chandran understand his true state from a different point of view. This point of view gives him the ability to examine problems from several viewpoints and examine his circumstances of homelessness and rootlessness from a far wider perspective. Moreover, in Africa, in a state of external exile, he becomes aware of the fact that he is not alone in living a 'half-life'; there are many people like him who live the same 'half-life'. Despite having lived a 'half-life' for far too long, Willie is eager to use the remaining half of his life to begin a new life, which is an interesting observation. Thus, the ending of the novel provides hope for Willie to gain his salient identity, satisfy his sense of belonging, and quit his wandering exile life.

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