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**Identity and Displacement in Noviolet Bulawayo's *We
Need New Names***

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and Civilization**

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DECLARATION

We hereby declare that this thesis entitled “**Identity and Displacement in Noviolet Bulawayo’s *We Need New Names***”, is the product of our own research efforts and all the sources we quoted from have been duly acknowledged by means of references.

Signature

Date: 25/09/2023

DEDICATION 1

All thanks and praise to Allah, the most gracious, for giving me strength and courage to carry on this modest work.

I dedicate this work to you...the light of my life, my great Father; the source of my happiness.

I dedicate this work to the apple of my eyes...to the one without whom I would never have succeeded...to my darling Mother who has taught me how joyful to work and how necessary to love what I am doing.

Bourasse Nora

DEDICATION 2

All thanks to my parents for their support and help, and my sisters Leila, Hadjer, and Fatiha may Allah protect them all , also my brothers Omar and Mohamed who are always there for help.

Benaceur Nadia

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All thanks and gratitude go to Allah who gave me strength and patience to achieve this humble work.

A friend before a teacher, for her determination, compassion, patience, sincerity, high morals, respect, hardworking, kindness, tolerance, and sacrifices, we would like to announce and reveal our thanks fullness to our dearest supervisor Ms. Rebbahi Khaula who consumed herself to light my path and who believed and supported me.

My deep indebtedness and gratefulness to the members of the jury Ms. Berkani Omssaad and Mr. Benna Youcef who endorse to devote some of their precious time to review our work.

It stands to reason that we are fully responsible for all deficiencies and mistakes found in this dissertation.

ABSTRACT

This thesis analyses the themes of identity and displacement in Noviolet Bulawayo's *We Need New Names*. Throughout the novel, Bulawayo examines serious issues such as identity, displacement and culture shock. She exposes the experiences that the Zimbabwean young girl immigrant faces in America. This thesis attempts to decipher the impacts of culture shock, identity crisis and displacement on the protagonist and the other Zimbabweans to address their experience with displacement as newcomers. This study is conducted through the implementation of two literary theories: Post colonialism and Ecocriticism to show how protagonist's struggle to cope with the new American society and how this environment affects her identity. Bulawayo draws attention to the fact that migrants could never be able to blend into new culture without the risk of losing their own identities and how displacement and the drastic change of the character's homeland may cause identity crisis. This study finds out how natural elements massively manipulate the human evolution and even affect the human physiology, how the protagonist Darling struggles to negotiate her identity as an immigrant in a foreign country and culture in addition to how the new environment "America" appeared to be challenging as it causes the protagonist's identity crisis and culture shock.

Key Words: Displacement, identity, culture shock, America, We Need New Names.

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

It is widely known that the African continent suffered for decades from the spell of colonization, it was divided among many European powers that could transform it into a big mess and destroyed it in all the fields. The process of colonialism had a harmful effects on the local traditions, beliefs and cultural standards as the natives were forced to adopt the colonizer's way of life and leave their own one. After a very long time of experiencing suffering and a brutal contact with the colonizer, the colonized find themselves unconsciously incorporating aspects of the colonial ways in their original identity and language. During the process of decolonization, Post- colonial masses tried not only to free their grounds but also to free their minds, cultures, identities from the colonial distortion and mess through literary works that aims to quest many post -colonial themes. From 1950s and on the African literature started to receive a great attention and gained a popular ground. Many scholars rushed to conduct several studies and investigations to analyze deeply the most controversial works and themes tackled by African writers about African main issues and themes. Typically, African Literature stands for the set of oral and written works created by African authors in the continent of Africa. It has always been difficult to be defined because of its broad breadth and the fact that its definition doesn't end here as it has always been challenging to be defined.

One of the greatest African literature pioneers is Noviolet Bulawayo who is considered as one of the best contemporary African writers nowadays, she has been

able to amass numerous accolades from renowned authors. *We need new names* is one of her best works as it treats significant themes .The main plot of this book is around the difficult experience that Darling, the main character, goes through.

Noviolet Bulawayo, a young author who was born in Zimbabwe and moved to the United States at the age of 18, is referred to as a "child of two lands" because of her debut book, *We Need New Names*. Living between these two worlds and the actual distance that separates them, gave birth to the novel itself. Bulawayo claims that the picture of a child sitting on top of rubbles she found online, which depicted the devastation caused by Mugabe's regime, served as the inspiration for the book. The events of this novel turn around a young Zimbabwean protagonist, Darling from age ten into her adolescence. She was living in a corrupt town called paradise. In the early chapters, Darling and her friends dreamt if one day they escape their town and look for better future in other lands. Fortunately, Darling had the opportunity to move to Detroit, Michigan with her aunt Fostalina. However, the transition to life in America is much more complicated than Darling could have ever imagined as she suffered being undocumented migrant in addition to the challenges of the new environment and the longing for home. In calling for 'new names', Bulawayo draws attention to the fact that migrants could never be able to blend into new culture without the risk of losing their own identities.

Nowadays, displacement and identity themes catch the attention of authors and critics alike as the immigrants start to voice out their hardships as they moved from their own homes towards new environment. Several studies are conducted about current issues of displacement and identity formation. Catherine A.Evan, in her work "*Embodied Selves/ disembodied subjects: Homing the body in Noviolet Bulawayo's We Need New Names*," argue that displacement is a crucial theme in *We Need New Names*. In her article, she examines how Darling's search for home is tied to her body and the gendered bodies that surround her and gives an intimate picture of how displacement and the search for home manifest themselves in gendered bodies. Then, tells about the

main drawbacks Darling face when she moves to America. Here, the main character finds herself shocked and lost and her journey for defining herself and identity starts. The author sheds light on the contemporary African immigrant's experience and examines the racial discrimination that exists in America, between the Americans and the blacks. Throughout *We Need New Names*, No Violet shows how the main character faces racial discrimination as black African. When she first moves to America, she was shocked by the reality that blacks are victims of racial discrimination in America and exposed to an identity crisis.

In his article “*Politics, Utopia and Disillusionment in No violet Bulawayo's We Need New Names*” , Babacar Diakhate brings to light political disillusionment in Zimbabwe under the regime of president Robert Mugab and stresses on how political disillusionment was the main trigger that pushes towards the search for utopia in relation to migration. Babacar could portray the journey of darling which was one of the victims of Mugabe's Operation Murambatsiva searching for a better life in America and how disillusionment is unavoidable because utopia is associated with disillusionment.

We Need New Names also examines the relationship between man and his environment and the impact to nature on people. The study, which deals with the relationship between man and his nature, is called Ecocriticism .The term Ecocriticism is a compound noun which consists of two terms ecology and criticism and it means the science dealing with the relationship between literature and nature (physical environment). This term can be also be used interchangeably with what is called ‘Green Studies’. Michael P. Branch first introduced the concept of Ecocriticism in the 1970s at the Western Literature Association meeting. The latter explains that the term “

Ecocriticism” was first introduced in "literature and ecology: an experiment in Ecocriticism” 1978 by *William Rucckert*, while the term ‘ecological’ was introduced by the critic *Karl Kroeber*, in his article ‘Home at Grasmere: ecological holiness’ 1974 (Ganaie 2). The ecocriticism theory is used to study literary works by analyzing how individuals in society behave and react to nature and ecological aspects and it also used to examine the human and non-human relationships and attempts to explore the role nature plays in the characters development and self -discovery. Moreover, Identity crisis and disappointment are two direct effects of Ecocriticism. In *Affective Ecocriticism: Emotion, Embodiment, Environment*, Kyle Bladow and Jennifer Ladin explain the relationship between expectation and reality and how the environment shapes the feeling of disappointment. This idea is highly stressed in *We Need New Names*, as the main character Darling experiences disappointment in America where her expectations about that country do not reflect the reality she drew in her mind before she arrives there. In the novel, the protagonist travels from her African home country to a foreign country where she finds herself in a totally different environment. Through using the ecocriticism theory we get to explore her first shock when she gets in contact with her new environment, and how it affects her, and how even nature can contribute in forming one’s identity, in an attempt to further understand the immigrant experience. We also get to discover the side characters’ interesting and diverse views and relations to nature.

Generally, Post-colonialism refers to the era after colonialism and post-colonial literature refers to literature of colonized people. Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin in *The Empire Writes Back* sheds light on the main stages of post-colonial literature (post-colonial texts), the effects of colonialism on the colonized people and the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized, they also highlight the main themes

of post-colonial literature including displacement and identity. This book can be very helpful for the analysis of this study since *We Need New Names* discusses the themes of identity, displacement and how the main character struggles to find out her identity as a black African in a foreign country.

The themes of identity and displacement have become the most controversial issues currently as they form attractive subjects for many post-colonial writers all over the world. However, the African novelist, NoViolet Bulawayo, succeeds skillfully to examine them clearly and deeply.

This study aims at investigating the issue of displacement and continuous impacts of displacement including racial discrimination, culture shock, and identity crisis. What is more, throughout the novel, Bulawayo shows how the new environment affects the characters' psyche and contributes in shaping the culture shock that mainly affects the novel's protagonist Darling. In this context, this study is conducted to answer the following questions: How does the drastic change of homeland affect the main characters' psyche and cause identity crisis? What is the relationship between the main characters with their home country VS the host country? What is the relationship between displacement and culture shock? How does the new environment affect the main character's identity?

The analysis of *We Need New Names* will be based on two literary approaches to analyze thoroughly the two mentioned themes. The first one is the post-colonial approach, which is going to help in analyzing Darling's relationship with the new American community and her struggle to maintain her original identity. The second approach is the ecocritical approach which will help in examining the effect of the physical environment on the psyche of the main character.

This study is divided into two main chapters. The first chapter is mainly a theoretical overview to the framework of the study. It consists of two sections. The first section will shed light on some historical facts of African literature encompassing post-colonial literature with a focus on its main pioneers and its popular themes. Additionally, this chapter will also represent the issues of race, identity and displacement in the genre. The second section will inaugurate an itemized overview of both post-colonial theory and ecocritical theory.

The second chapter will be purely analytical. It will analyze the novel *We Need New Names* by NoViolet Bulawayo, by focusing on the issue of displacement and identity as well as focusing on the main character of the novel (Darling) and her struggle with culture shock to keep her original identity.

Furthermore, it will examine the novel from an Ecocritical lens. Hence, there is going to be a great stress on nature and the environment and its effect on the main character.

This study is centralized on the idea of how displacement and the drastic change of the character's homeland can cause in identity crisis as the protagonist was forced to leave her mother country to new host country 'America'. Undoubtedly, No Violet Bulawayo in this novel could successfully depict the issues of displacement and identity and show how the new nature can cause a culture shock.

CHAPTER ONE:

**Anglophone African Literature:
Writing about Identity and
Culture in Post-Colonial
Literature.**

Introduction

This chapter sheds light on some significant stations in the African literature and particularly in that of the post-colonial era. This chapter is divided into three main parts. The first part will give a glimpse about the African literature and the post-colonial literature exploring its roots, themes, and main works. The second section will provide a depiction of the three major issues including race, identity, and displacement in relation to post-colonial African literature. The third section will introduce briefly the two selected theories used to analyze the novel which are ‘post-colonial theory’ and ‘Ecocriticism’.

1. Post-Colonial Literature: An Overview

The origins of the African literature can be traced back to the ancient times beginning from the ancient Egypt through hieroglyphs or pictorial representations of words which were later on evolved into an organized collection of ideas and then forming a literature. Literature is the work of man who lives on his own environment affected by the surrounding circumstances. Hence, To study literature, there should be a clear image about the historical, the social and the political events which may affect the authors at each era. From the 15th century onwards, a large portion of the African continent was colonized by the European world powers: Great Britain, Germany, Italy, France...etc. The colonization of the African literature was of enormous impact on the nature of the African literature and made a crucial shift from the old genres. The era after the decolonization of the continent witnessed the rise of a new kind of literature called the post-colonial literature; the discipline which becomes the most contentious topic to many writers and critics.

Before the appearance of post-colonial literature, commonwealth literature was widely used and served as a tool to describe the literature of the British former colonies. The first idea that springs to the mind about the term Commonwealth Literature is the British Commonwealth of Nations, these nations include sovereign states encompassing the United Kingdom and some of its former colonies.

According to Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, this kind of literature is used to describe the literature of former colonies and dependencies belonging to Britain and not England; this concept started to take place within English studies at the beginning of the 1960s in all of the United States and England. Referring back to post- colonialism, contemporary post- colonial studies serve the intersection of what is known as “colonial discourse theory” or Commonwealth literary studies (44-5).

In fact, It is very challenging to fully define commonwealth literature and trace its origins and development as it seems to be dubious and ambivalent, In the same stream, Denis Fonge Tembong in his work *The Ambiguous Status of Commonwealth Literature: A Critical Consideration*, claims that this term is ambiguous, which has to do with works of English language written in the British former colonies, as well as it encompasses a group of fictional works based on cultural backgrounds. Furthermore, both of “post-colonial literature” and “commonwealth literature” are two terms that may cause major problems and complicate things. However, it is important to define each one independently, this would help to distinguish between the two and keep them as two separate entities because as they seem related to each other, still they carry a difference. Unlike commonwealth literature, post- colonial literature is much more attached to history, i.e. told by its history; for instance, the distinction of African written literature and African oral literature is new. This difference took its right path with the arrival of colonialism, but this does not mean that there was no African literature before the coming of colonialism. Moreover, another principle that distinguishes postcolonial literature from commonwealth literature is the language; in this context, post- colonial literature is either produced in or translated into the English language, while commonwealth literature is written in the English language. Additionally, the concerns of both kinds of literature shape another difference especially in terms of spaces and places, unlike commonwealth literature, post-colonial literature is marked "resistant description. (458-463).

It is true that commonwealth literature vanished with the arrival of post-colonial literature, but no one can deny the fact that commonwealth literature drew the path for the appearance postcolonial literature.

To better understand post-colonial literature, it is highly necessary to point its first seeds. Generally, this type of literature stands for both cultural and political examination of the decolonization of a particular nation that was formerly connected to colonialism. It appeared to challenge the stereotypical views about colonialism and the colonized nations by showing the other side of the story and depict the correct image from the angle of the oppressed people. However, post colonialism is a broad term to define.

According to McLeod in *Beginning Post colonialism*, “the term ‘post colonialism’ is not the same as ‘after colonization’” (33). Rather, ‘post colonialism’ is an attempt at a break from colonial discourse, a “challenge to colonial ways of knowing” (32). Postcolonial theory deals both with texts “produced by writers from countries with a history of colonialism” as well as texts “produced during colonialism.”(33).

Post colonialism can be also defined in simple term as “a set of theoretical approaches which focus on the direct effects and aftermaths of Colonization” (Toronto Conference 2002) Ismail S. Talib defines post-colonial literature as "literature written by colonized and formally colonized people. This should include literature written in various languages and not only in the language of the colonizer" (17). Talib highly emphasizes that this literature is the production of a colonized or previously colonized people. Furthermore, Talib argues that post-colonial literature is written in many languages including the languages of both the colonized and the colonizer. M.A.R Habib in his work *A History of literary criticism* believes that post-colonial literature and criticism have developed during and after the struggle of African, Asian, and Latin American nations, for independence from colonialism during the 1950s. Many works of post colonialism appeared such as Aimé Césaire’s *Discourssur le colonialism*, and Frantz Fanon’s *Black Skin, White Masks*, then *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe in 1958 (738).The main goal of post-colonial literature is to

depict how colonialism and the process of decolonization have affected individuals and nations that was colonized. This can be accomplished by creating new rules and compelling the colonized people to follow them or it can be done by forcing them to adopt the costumes and the rituals of the colonizer and to give up on their own .

The most notable African writers of post-colonial literature include Chinua Achebe, Franz Fanon, Chimamanda Ngozy Adichie, Edward Said, Homi Bhabha . J. M. Coetzee, Salman Rushdie and many other brilliant names. Even though They came from different social origins and geographic regions, they were able to develop the postcolonial theory and produce significant works which played a great role in showing the world the hidden reality of Africa and its populations. *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe is a great example of the post colonial literature , it was written as a reaction to the novel of Joseph Conrad *Heart of Darkness* . In his first novel *Things Fall Apart* in 1958, Achebe tries to capture the first interaction between the Igbo community (the colonized) and the British white men (the colonizer) and the effects of such interaction which shapes the post-colonial literature (Thamarana, 537).

During the postcolonial period, the issue of language formed a wide controversy between the African writers and critics about the language of their literary works; where some writers have chosen the local African languages to write their works to reaffirm their own identity and culture, others have preferred the English language (the colonizer's language) to voice out their real identity that was misrepresented in many European works. This language controversy was first appeared in 1962 during the conference of African writers in Kampala(Uganda) when the Nigerian Obi Wali asserted that African literature must be written in African languages. Later on he published his Article *The Dead End of African Literature* where he calls for the use of the African languages .Ngugi WaThiong 'o also calls for the necessity of using the African languages to depict the real image of Africa and its various cultures. Emily Wilson, in *Kenya in Translation: An Interview with Ngugi WaThiong'o*, asks Ngugi about the larger implications of his choice. Ngugi answers in this way: “For me, being in prison writing in an African language was a way saying: ‘Even if you put

me in prison, I will keep on writing in the language which you put me in prison” (WaThiong’o). WaThiong’o here asserts that he is fiercely committed to his people and community .He claims that his action of commitment can be fully legitimated only through the use of indigenous African languages.

African languages are essential for producing authentic African literature and develop an original national culture. According to Ngugi , literature that claims to be truly African must be written in African languages and must be based on the culture that resist to stand against the intruder cultures of the colonizer. Ngugi WaThiong 'oin his work *Decolonizing the Mind* asserts:

As a writer who believes in the utilization of African ideas, African philosophy, and African Folklore and imagery to the fullest extent possible, I'm of the opinion the only way to use them effectively is to translate them almost literary from the African language native to the writer to whatever European language he is using as medium of expression. I have endeavored in my words to keep as close as possible to the vernacular expressions. For, from a word, a group of words, a sentence and even a name in any African language, one can clean the social norms, attitudes and values of a people. (8)

He advocates the idea of decolonizing the mind to make African languages as a medium of thought and expression. In contrast, some African writers like Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Wole Soyinka and Chinwa Achebe consider the use of the colonial language as weapon in their struggle against the colonial powers .Chinua Achebe was convinced that English could well express his Africanity. To put it in his words, “I feel that the English language will be able to carry the weight of my African experience. But it will have to be a new English, still in full communion with its ancestral home but altered to suit its new African surroundings.” (Qtd. in Routledge 433) and in his speech *The African Writer and the English Language*- argues:

Is it right that a man should abandon his mother tongue for someone else's? It looks like a dreadful betrayal and produces a guilty feeling. But for me there is no other choice. I

have been given the language and I intend to use it... I feel that English language will be able to carry the weight of my African experience. But it will have to be a new English, still in full communion with its ancestral home but altered to suit new African surroundings. (348)

Chinua Achebe favors the use of the colonizer's language that enables him to convey his African norms and experiences; he sees it as the best way to show the glory of the African culture.

Generally, post-colonial literature is the study of the political and social impacts of colonialism on the cultures and societies of the colonized nations. Concerning post colonial themes, Ashcroft argues that literature offers one of the most important ways in which the postcolonial period's perceptions are expressed and the day to day realities experienced by colonized peoples have been powerfully encoded and so profoundly influential. More clearly, he explains postcolonial African literature as:

In Postcolonial Literature the label postcolonial demands a shift in focus, away from British literature (literature produced by British writers) to world literature in English. As a result of this shift it was inevitable for the postcolonial novel move from the traditional previous novel style and themes to ways of expressing issues concern Peoples, societies and individuals of the time. (173)

In fact, post colonial works share some common themes and motifs such as 'cultural identity and Racism', 'hybridity', 'diaspora', 'immigration', 'orientalism', 'Mimicry'. Again, many post-colonial writers use such themes in their works to reflect upon the relation between the colonizer and the colonized.

In general, there are some key concepts should be understood in the context of post colonialism. According to Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, anti- colonialism refers to which extent the forms of opposition are expressed to resist any action of colonialism in all of the political, economic, and cultural institutions. This concept then put a strong emphasis on the demand to reject and dismiss the power of colonialism and to rescue the local control (12). Hence,

anti-colonialism is the different resisting movements and struggles against all kinds of colonial rule, like the fight against the British and the French colonial power in Africa. Another significant term is ambivalence which was introduced by Homi Bhabha into the colonial discourse theory.

According to Young R.J.C, ambivalence is a term developed in psychoanalysis to describe a continual fluctuation between wanting one thing and wanting its opposite .It also refers to a simultaneous attraction toward and repulsion from an object, person or action(1995). It is used to describe the outcomes of colonialism and how the colonized imitate and follow the colonizer' example. Orientalism is another term related to post colonialism which was popularized by Edward Said and used to describe the processes by which the 'Orient' was, and still to be constructed in European thinking. One of the most common used terms in post-colonial theory is hybridity, which is a concept used to describe the mixing between the colonizer's culture and the colonized one.

Diaspora is one of the main topics tackled by the postcolonial writers and critics used to describe the voluntary or enforced migration of peoples from their native homelands. Diaspora literature focuses mainly on whether maintaining or changing one's identity, language and culture while residing in a foreign country.

Post-colonial literature, which provides a basis to study the effects of the interaction between the colonizer and the colonized, is a very contentious area of study today, it comes as a reaction against the illegal practices of colonialism. As a result, this genre of writing tackles the controversial issues of those countries which were once colonized, mainly by European countries, and attempts to portray the difficulties and the bad circumstances which the colonized people came through. This study is conducted to cover mainly the African literature published during the post-colonial era which is known as African Post-colonial literature.

2. The representation of identity and displacement in post-colonial African literature

This study examines the themes of displacement and identity in postcolonial African literature. It aims to compare how postcolonial African authors have depicted African society in their literary works both before and after the European domination.

Africans experienced an identity crisis as a result of how colonizers changed their culture, identity, and cultural perceptions. The yokes of Colonialism caused Africans great suffering for a very long time. They started to explore for a means to rebuild their nations after independence. Unfortunately, colonialism has had a huge impact on their history, societies and people. The process of the colonizer worked for transforming and displacing their colonies' beliefs, customs, and traditions. Therefore, Africans are still unsure of their culture and identity even after gaining independence. Through relationships with the culture of the colonizer and encounters with other cultures, their culture evolved into a multicultural one and shaped its characteristics. In fact, cultural contact causes identities to become muddled, creating a new civilization with diverse potentials.

Post colonial studies developed as an respond to address the new cultural products of the colonially affected cultures. In this context, Bill Ashcroft et.all, in *The Empire Writers Back*, argue: “We use the term of 'Post colonialism; however, to cover all the cultures affected by the imperial process form the moment of colonization to the present day”(7).it means that the term "post colonialism" refers to more than just the culture that was created after independence.It could also be interpreted to represent the era of the colonization processes in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. The majority of postcolonial theory's issues center on questions of race, ethnicity, and identity. Conflicting viewpoints have always surfaced in post-colonial works when it comes to identity and race.

2.1.Identity in Postcolonial Literature

2.2. Definition of Identity

If in need to a definition, we check dictionaries first. According to *Oxford English dictionary*1999 (10th edition), identity is defined as “The fact of being who or what a person or thing is (705).But the term becomes a tricky, difficult-to-define when it is used for postcolonial perspective.

Identity encompasses the many relationships people cultivate, such as their identity as a kid, partner, or parent. It involves external traits over which a person has little or no control, such as skin color, race, or socioeconomic level. Identity also involves political opinions, moral attitudes, and religious beliefs, all of which guide the choices and decisions one makes every day. As Kathryn Woodward stated, in the same vein, identity can be determined by contrasts, or more frequently by differences, i.e., by binary oppositions, such as self / other, white / black, master / slave, etc. Identity also improves social interactions because it is reciprocal. She argues that one could experience conflicts between overlapping identities coming from various views, individuals, and communities. She nonetheless continues to state the following: "Identity gives us a location in the world and presents the link between us and the society in which we live . . . it gives us an idea who we are and how we relate to others and to the world in which we live" (1).

In conclusion, all of the definitions and meanings previously provided to identity are an accumulation of things from the past and present. The latter is greatly driven and inspired by historical, geographic, and sociocultural contexts. As a result, it connects people to the social realm and serves as a connecting point between the two. In postcolonial studies and literature, besides that the issue of identity is a major theme. The hybrid culture of postcolonial countries and writers is revealed through examining how postcolonial writers express their cultural identities and that of their people. These authors discuss how postcolonial Diaspora has been impacted by decolonization, hybridity, language and displacement movements. They are making an effort to reimagine their identities or to create new ones. In the examination of Noviolet's works and her thoughts on identity, we will see how she approaches this subject as a postcolonial writer and from a personal standpoint through both her books and interviews, as well as through the manner she investigated this topic through her novels. We'll also try to talk about how Bulawayo understands and tackles the identity issue on a personal level, as well as how she handles the key factors that affect identity such as language, hybridity, geography, and displacement in her writing.

3. Displacement in Post Colonialism

The problem of displacement is mostly addressed in postcolonial literature. As a result of migration, new types of people have emerged, including: "people who are rooted in ideas and memories rather than places, people who were forced to define themselves because they have been defined by others," (Rushdie 124-125). As a result, they struggle to find their place in the world, especially in light of the fact that European colonizers exploited identity as a colonial tactic to make the colonized people forget who they are and therefore make the process of weakening and occupying their territories easier. Displacement is the act of losing one's sense of self, of being cut off from one's culture. Given that the term "displacement" has more than just a geographical meaning, it can either be physical or psychological.

Displacement has emerged as one of the most pressing topics in postcolonial literature as a result of the extensive effects it has on people on a psychological, physical, and cultural level. The topic of displacement is clearly depicted in the writings of postcolonial authors from around the globe. It has a long history and involves a complicated web of relationships between positions of power, the human psyche, and other factors. During the era of European colonialism, especially British colonialism, displacement flourished. The colonial system significantly accelerated the displacement problem. The displacement, which at the time was known as a form of slavery, had a significant impact on Africa. The colonized Africans, who were taken from various locations, were forcibly moved to the Caribbean Islands, North America, and South America as slaves or employees for plantations and other businesses. African people suffered greatly as a result of this physical dislocation, and the psychological effects of this displacement were horrifyingly warped. As a result, the Africans in the Caribbean Islands were changed into local Caribbeans. The African people were profoundly altered as a result of their psychological and physical displacement; they adopted the Caribbean's language, religion, literature, and legal system. Africans experienced intercontinental displacement as well as displacement inside their own countries and cultures.

African indigenous histories, literatures, clans, social mores, languages, religions, and subjectivities were all destroyed by the colonial force. Using colonial weapons like education, language,

religion, as well as literature and political power, this colonial power eradicated every component of African subjectivity. This colonial system produced a hybrid African subject by building towns, providing education at institutions, and establishing administrative centres or offices, European conquerors encouraged the natives to move from one location to another, which caused a significant shift in how humans define themselves and their place in the world.

The colonized people eventually attained their independence and evolved into various nations. Even though the post-independent nations attained their freedom, they were still having trouble overcoming the traumas of the colonial era. The effects of the psychological and physical displacements have persisted into the post-colonial era, and post-colonial writers are depicting these experiences, struggles, and prospects through their works. Both from a personal and a broader national perspective. In their works such as novels, stories, poems, essays, etc., post-colonial writers have tackled and studied this problem of displacement from critical perspectives and predicted its effects. One of such authors, we find Bulawayo who grew up after Zimbabwe gained independence from the U.K. in 1980: she was born on December 10th, 1981 in Tsholotsho. At the age of 18, she left her native country and went to Kalamazoo, Michigan, to live with her aunt and attend college. Moving to the US, she was supposed to follow what the generation of her parents considered a meaningful career and become a lawyer, but there she took her first creative art class at 18, giving voice to her passion for storytelling, which she inherited from her dad and from her whole cultural background. The story "Hitting Budapest" by Bulawayo, which was first published in the November/December 2010 and later turned into the first chapter of *We Need New Names*, won Bulawayo the Caine Prize for African Literature in 2011. Bulawayo is the first black female author from Africa and the first Zimbabwean to have a book nominated for the 2013 Man Booker Prize.

Contrary to popular belief, Bulawayo did not draw inspiration for *We Need New Names* from her own life because she was born and raised in a much more liveable Zimbabwe than Darling and her friends do, and because her situation as a migrant wasn't as dramatic as Darling's. Writing Darling's story was because she felt a need to stay connected to her homeland at a time when she could only observe what was happening there from the outside, via phone calls, blogs, and social media.

4. A Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework will be dedicated to deal with the two literary theories used in this study, the post-colonial theory and the ecocritical theory which will help to examine thoroughly and deeply the themes of identity and displacement since they are the main discussed points of the following chapters.

4.1. Post-colonial theory

Post colonial literature, as previously mentioned, is a set of literary works that were written in those former colonies, particularly those with European influences like Britain, Spain and France. As usual, colonialism left behind lasting effects which touch deeply and badly the core aspects of any community such as identity, race and culture, and even language which formed a source of debate among many writers. These issues and more are the main discussed within the ground of post-colonial theory. Post colonial theory is an approach that deals mainly with literature produced in nations that were previously or currently colonized by other nations. It may also cover literature that was written by the people of the colonized countries that takes colonies or their people as their subject matter. Many theorists define this term differently, the prefix 'post' may refer to 'after' as it may refer to 'before' colonialism. Babatunde E. Adigun comments that the prefix 'post' may not mean 'after' as after-colonial. However, it is more associated with the continuous process, yet stressed by the colonial power as its main interest (2).

Furthermore, Babatunde E. Adigun highly approves that post-colonial theory is not always after colonialism. Thus, it is based on a continuum that is to say it existed and still existing. Postcolonial theory is used to discuss literary works written by authors from nations which have been colonized. It also analyzes the colonized' attitudes toward the coming of the aliens in their lands. Young declares that "postcolonial theory is always concerned with the positive and the negative effects of the mixing of peoples and cultures" (69). The main concern of postcolonial theory is to re-read and re-examine colonial literary works which portrayed the natives with a racist

manner, among the pioneers of this theory are Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, Jacques Derrida, Helen Tiffin and Robert Young.

Postcolonial theory is one of the most discussed theories of the 20th century. It is a school of thoughts that was embraced by writers and theorists of formerly colonial countries to "explore the ways that representations and modes of perception are used as fundamental weapons of colonial power to keep colonized peoples subservient to colonial rule" (McLeod,17).

The term postcolonial refers to the "various cultural effects of colonization" (Ashcroft et al, 168) on those previously colonized nations. These effects continue to be felt because "the inequities of colonial rule have not been erased" (Loomba, 7). As "it has extended its concern into debates concerning multiculturalism, diaspora, racism and ethnicity as the mass migrations in the postwar period by formerly colonized peoples" (Childs and Fowler, 185). It is also "used to cover all the culture affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day." (Bill Ashcroft et al, 2) the theory was, and still is, at the basis of many academic and degree courses.

In the same vein, post colonialism is the investigation of how the colonization has affected on the colonized. The literature produced during the post-colonial period was provoked by intellectuals of postcolonial countries such as: Spivak, Fanon, Edward Said, and Bhabha to shed light on the distortion of reality drawn by the colonial authors.

Nowadays, the post-colonial theory has gained an influential ground in various fields and disciplines encompassing humanities and social sciences. Commonly, many authors and theorists make a link between this theory and the notion of resistance as the postcolonial theory emerged to deconstruct the image of the colonized people created by the discourse of colonial countries.

In the same vein, Robert J.C. Young uncovers, "My argument has been that postcolonial theory has been created from the political insights and experience that were developed in the course of colonial resistance to western rule and cultural dominance, primarily during the course of the anti-colonial struggles of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries" (14).

Generally, the postcolonial theory is usually defined and emphasized by many theorists in terms of struggle and resistance against colonialism that is mostly based on political as well as cultural experiences. In his work *Changing the Story: Postcolonial Studies and Resistance*, David Jefferess believes that resistance represents the critical side of post-colonialism, however, post-colonialism refers to the project of resistance itself, so the two terms complete each other. The idea of colonial power and the idea of resistance is neither political nor economic structures, but cultural structures which portray the violence caused by colonialism (7-12). Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin in their work, *The Post-colonial Studies Reader*, stresses on both representation and resistance. Post-colonial debates came from post-colonial resistance especially post structuralism's intersection with post-colonialism (86).

Postcolonial Studies gain its popularity in the 1970's after the publication of Edward Said's book *Orientalism* (1978). It is the book "which constituted the Orient in the consciousness of the west offers an influential analysis of how the world was constructed in the European mind." (Ashcroft et al, 165). The term Orientalism is derived from the Latin word *__Orient'*. It is first used to refer to the people, works, studies of Asia. Later, in the Postcolonial period, the term took another dimension. The term refers to the study of the Orient by the West. The origins of Orientalism date back to crusades; the religious clash and hostility between Muslims and Christians over the control of the Holy land that began in the seventh century. However, when they didn't succeed to recapture the Holy land, the crusaders opened channels to get to the Middle Eastern world."(Amina Azzouz11-12)

In this regard, Said asserts that the Western image of the East is distorted as it was drawn from the colonialist subjective point of view. Orientalism is based on the idea of how the western perceives the orient. Lutfi Hamadi claims that Said's post-colonialism theory refers to the wrong impression that Western novelists, philosophers, and explorers created, which shows the orient as uncivilized in comparison with the civilized west. Whereas chaos, corruption, and civil wars prove that the impacts of colonialism still exist, from another look, Edward Said views that the European

colonial rule of the East negatively affected the objective texts even those written by well-known Western Orientalists (40). In his work, Edward Said: Orientalism, Mahault Donzé Magnier states that the origins of orientalism can be traced back to the Middle Ages and Renaissance as an interaction with the orient. In the nineteenth century, this literary and artistic term came out, orientalism is more related to themes including 'exoticism', 'sensuality', and 'fantasy' of the orient. Besides, 'orientalism' does not only serve as an approach of representation, it also acts as a way for Europeans to get in touch with a new culture that they did not face before (2). Said argued that knowledge of the East could never be innocent or 'objective' because it was produced by human beings who were necessarily embedded in colonial history and relationships (Loomba, 1998).

What is more significant concerning orientalism is that it comes to put an attitude and a position to define clearly the orient and free it from the western assumptions. Typically, Orientalism is related to those presumptions and unreal images that the West ingrained in the mind of Westerners, these presumptions are built upon the negative views of the west towards the orients which are given unfavorable descriptions like savage, barbaric and uncivilized people. Geoffrey Nash argues that Orientalism is a subjective view of the East. He states that Orientalism is therefore a subjective structure built by the observer 'the West' as a result of its observation of the thing observed - the Orient." (Nash 48-49). But Said's Orientalism is considered by critics and philosophers as a new type of study of Colonialism. According to him, the 'Orient' is represented in the European writings as the 'Other'. This fact helps for expanding of the European hegemony and the formation of European culture (Loomba, 1998). Priyansh Ranjan agrees that the word 'orientalism' of the adjective 'orient' is mainly associated with eastern countries. Moreover, in conformity with Edward Said's view, orientalism depicts much more the countries of the east, it is more about the misrepresentation of the culture of the Eastern countries by the West including the Middle East, Asia, and North Africa. Thus, it refers to the West's depiction of the East (85).

Furthermore, Said attempts to demonstrate how knowledge of the east was utilized to subjugate and control others. In his opinion, all claims held by Europeans regarding non-western

civilizations and peoples were false. The description of the Orient by the Occident was not objective but unfair. In the same context, Said Khan sees that Orientalism is created by the West in order to study the Eastern culture, civilization and religion. So that, the Europeans use it as a justification to control and colonize them and to justify their superiority over them (1). Edward Said also declares: “There is in addition the hegemony of European ideas about the Orient, themselves reiterating European superiority over Oriental backwardness, usually overriding the possibility that a more independent, or more skeptical, thinker might have had different views on the matter” (7). Furthermore, his main idea is that the interest of the European and the American in the Orient is principally political, but this interest is shaped by culture. It is thanks to Edward Said's efforts, he could build binaries and differentiate between his own writings and the Western ones about the Orient. He declares that writing as an Orientalist is quite different from writing about Orientalists, he desires to voice out the orient reality and shatter the silence by writing back to the West who is misrepresenting the Orient. Said argues: I am an oriental writing back at the Orientalists, who for so long have thrived upon our silence. I am also writing to them, as it were, by dismantling the structure of their discipline“ (qtd in Varisco, 8) .Therefore, Said's theory came to challenge and falsify the typical belief on that the contemporary oriental societies could reach that superior level of western civilization only when they embrace and adopt the European life style, beliefs and culture.

Postcolonial theory is a set of studies used to depict and portray the experiences of colonized nations along with colonialism at the end of the twentieth century. Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin In *The Empire Writes Back* argue: “We use the term ‘post-colonial’, however, to cover all the culture affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day. This is because there is a continuity of preoccupations throughout the historical process initiated by European imperial aggression” (2). Therefore, post-colonial literature appeared as a literary theory to portray the literature of colonized nations mainly those colonized by European powers, as well as the literature of writers whose countries were once colonized. Frantz

Fanon, Edward Said, Homi Bhabha and Gayatri Spivak are the pioneers of this theory and their names are often mentioned in postcolonial studies. They made tremendous efforts to reveal the realities hidden by Europeans about their former colonies and their works form the basis on which the theory has emerged.

Postcolonial theory can serve as great strategy to help reading and examining thoroughly post colonial texts talking about issues of race, identity, and displacement. Postcolonial theory can easily analyze this pattern that differentiates between Europeans and others from other races, mainly Africans (since the case study which will be studied in the following two chapters features African protagonists).

5.Ecocriticism

5.1.Introduction

Ecocriticism is one of the youngest revisionist movements, which has swept the humanities over the past few decades. The present world is facing eco-disasters and our environment is now at stake. Only science and technology are not enough to combat the global ecological crisis. We should make change in our attitude to nature. Literature does not float above life, so it has its role to play. For a long time nature was not given due consideration by the literary critics, so ecologically oriented literature pleads for a better understanding of nature in its wider significance. Ecocriticism has developed as a worldwide emergent movement during the last three decades. The scholars are still engaged in developing its nature and scope.

The term ecocriticism was first coined by William Rueckert in his critical writing "Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in" Ecocriticism" in 1978. The word 'eco' comes from the Greek root word 'oikos' which etymologically means household or earth and 'logy' from 'logos' means logical discourse. Together they mean criticism of the house-the environment as represented in literature. According to Rueckert, ecocriticism applies ecology or ecological principles into the study of literature (11). And Lawrence Buell defines ecocriticism as a study of

the relationship between literature and the environment conducted in a spirit of commitment to environmentalist's praxis"(12).Further Eco criticism does not simply mean nature study; it has distinguished itself from conventional nature writing, first by its ethical stand and commitment to the natural world and then by making the connection between the human and the non-human world.

As a critical theory, Eco criticism had some strong positive sides as well as shortcomings in its initial stage. The positive thing was that Eco criticism made attempts to make the environment more central to literary discussions, to reconnect readers with nature, and to downplay the importance of strictly theoretical discourse, 'all in the hopes of combating environmental destruction. These characteristics all point to an energized and fresh new way of approaching literature' (Kate Campbell 17). This fresh new way of approaching literature is important, because it brought readers and scholars from a variety of disciplines 'into conversations on topics such as how attitudes toward nature in a piece of literature could affect readers' attitudes and interactions with their own environments' (Kate Campbell 17). Now, the readers realized the mutual dependency between the human world and the non-human world. But there were also shortcomings in the approaches of the early Eco critics. In the USA, the pioneers of Eco criticism often gave too much emphasis on the private experiences of some specific writers like John Muir, Aldo Leopold, Henry David Thoreau, Joseph Meeker, Leo Marx etc., who mostly regard nature as a sacred place and delineate the places which are not inhabited by people.

Inspired by a tendency of depicting the uninhabited places they often neglected urban, degraded and heavily populated places in their writings. The leading Ecocritics Cheryll Glotfelty, Ursula Heise and Greg Garrard agree on the point that at the early stage Ecocriticism was a local movement and it failed to address the global issues and the social issues. Greg Garrard criticizes this approach saying that 'sustained attention to the idea of place as locale has provided us with no sense of place of the whole Earth in contemporary culture' (178)¹⁴. Ursula Heise expresses much the same view when she says that 'the rise of Eco criticism...was initially facilitated by its foundational investment in local subjects and forms of knowledge, an interest that it shared at the

time with many other fields in American studies, but which subsequently made it more difficult for Ecocritical theory to take the step toward transnationalism" (383). Even Cheryll Glotfelty called Ecocriticism 'a white movement' in her 'Introduction' to *The Ecocriticism Reader*. She urged for the diverse voices within the field of Ecocriticism. The early Ecocritics also failed to address the reasons behind the environmental destruction and climate changes.

5.2. Ecocriticism and Postcolonial Studies

As fields which have similarly been concerned with the ways in which social reality may be changed, in part, through literary and cultural criticism, post colonialism and Ecocriticism have much in common. Both fields emerged at the intersection between humanities concerns and political activism and have hence centrally been concerned with the mooring of the humanities in material and social realities. As a movement of both literature and cultural criticism, postcolonial studies emerged in the wake of the independence movements of former European colonies, especially of British colonies such as India, Africa and the Caribbean. If political independence had been achieved, what was at stake was a translation of this political reality into cultural and literary practice. What followed was an entire movement of the former empire 'writing back' to the center: In Salman Rushdie's (1982, 8) memorable formulation, the newly independent nations set out to re-write their own histories, turning the tables on the erstwhile colonizer who had once set out to dominate them not only economically, but culturally as well. Postcolonial literature and the literary criticism which spelled out its cultural politics can hence be seen as an intervention by cultural production into political and social realities.

Ecocriticism is a theory used to study and analyze literary works. As the subject matter of green studies and the environment becomes more relevant in the latest years, naturally, authors as well as critics start to tackle the topic on their works. Indeed, African writers have consciously depicted the bizarre onslaught and landscaping occupation of our landscape. They have often used their texts as veritable tools in questioning the moral correctness of such selfish act. From the early

writers to the contemporary counterpart, there have been an obvious and consistent frowning at such contempt for our landscape. This is clearly showed in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (representing the first generation writers); Niyi Osundare's *Eye of the Earth* (representing the second generation writers); Helon Habila's *Oil on Water and Yellow* (both writers representing the contemporary writers). Given this schema, one can argue that following the tapestry of history, the essentials of eco-criticism have also been one of the cardinal foci of African literature. A renowned Post-Colonial critic, Franz Fanon, in *The Wretched of the Earth* captures that there is a relationship between the Africans and their landscapes "For a colonized people [as Africa,] the most essential value... is first and foremost the land: the land which will bring them bread and above all, dignity". Without doubt, what Fanon did, in some respect, is to interpret Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*¹⁶. Just as Sone mentions in his text (captured above), there is a spiritual relationship between the African people and their landscape. Hence, the reason why it is held in deep reverence¹⁷. In Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, this spiritual existential reality is aggressively portrayed.

Finally, authors all around the world resort to writing when it comes to important matters like colonialism, which results into the post-colonial theory that plays an immensely important role in African literature as a whole. It tackles different yet pertinent matters like displacement and identity. Similarly, to post-colonial literature, Ecocriticism found its own unique audience of authors and critics who are passionate about green studies and analyzing the environmental elements present in the literary works.

CHAPTER TWO:

**Identity and Displacement in NoViolet
Bulawayo's *We Need New Names***

1. Introduction

This chapter will fly us above the sky of Noviolet Bulawayo, it will take us over the skies of Zimbabwe to show us the tragedies of a people who have signed a contract with death; death by starvation and death by fear, death under military boots and death under the burden of the white regime and the black regime. Therefore, this chapter will shed light on two important and vital aspects, which are displacement and culture shock in NoViolet Bulawayo's *We Need New Names*.

2. About the protagonist

The story, *We Need New Names*, tells the life of a young girl named Darling, first as a 10-year-old in Zimbabwe. The novel begins by following a group of mostly pre-teen children and the group travels to nearby cities to steal guavas from trees to satiate their hunger, the central character Darling and her friends Sbho, Stina, Chipso, Bastard and Godknow. The author gives "a child's-eye view of a world where there death and sickness and the threat of violence in a shanty town misleadingly named Paradise. When eventually Darling travels abroad to live with her aunt who is working in Detroit, Michigan, she discovers the many other struggles and stresses to be faced as an African immigrant to the US, including listening to misconceptions about one's land of birth, having to adapt to a new culture, and the fact that there are so many illegal immigrants in the States over whom the threat of deportation loom. Darlings hope, in fact, is a hope of many people in Zimbabwe, especially as the country is suffering from a violent and oppressive government. Many of Darling's own friends want to leave the country as well, but others don't have Darling's opportunity. Darling's parents lived in a proper brick house once, but police came and bulldozed the neighborhood. Now, Darling and her mother try and get by without the help of her father (who left for South Africa but hasn't been heard from since). When Darling finally arrives in America, she soon finds that it's not the America of her dreams. Her childlike concept of America as the land of

plenty is both true and false; she's able to go without being hungry, yet she also finds that her dreams of living without worry or concern, are indeed just dreams.

3. Effects of displacement on identity

The migrants find themselves in between the place they are in and their home when they move to a new country, they cannot feel sense of home this new land what makes them keep searching for it. Researchers show the close and vital relation between home place and society in building the one's identity, from this they point out that the identity of the displaced people is a mixture between the original and the new one and it never can be pure, when a person is displaced, he loses the context that gives meaning to his thoughts and actions, the story of *we need new names* describes the journey of the protagonist as a person with displaced identity.

Those with nothing are crossing borders. Those with strength are crossing borders. Those with ambition are crossing borders. Those with hopes are crossing borders. Those with loss are crossing borders. Those in pain are crossing borders. Moving, running, emigrating, deserting, walking, quitting, flying, fleeing – to all over, to countries near and far, to countries unheard of, to countries whose names they cannot pronounce. They are leaving in droves. Look at them leaving in droves despite knowing they will be welcomed with restraint in those strange lands because they do not belong, knowing they will have to sit on one buttock because they must not sit comfortably lest they be asked to rise and leave... (Bulawayo 148).

That epigraph above explains the sufferance and challenges that the immigrant will face in the host lands. In his book *writing displacement: home and identity in contemporary post-colonial English fiction*, Akram Al Deek defines displacement as:

Displacement therefore is encompassing, claustrophobic, estranging, ambivalent, multiple, and uprooting. This forces the displaced to cling to history, to hang on to memory; for when one is nostalgic, one remembers; for displacement alienates one from both time and place. And the displaced becomes alienated not only from places but also from himself, thus becoming fragile and disoriented. (25)

According to Akram Al Deek, displacement disperses displaced people, they feel alienated in foreign lands where they build a strong sensation of nostalgia towards their memories so they try ‘to hand on the memory’ (25).

We Need New Names focuses on the experience of displacement of a young Zimbabwean girl Darling Nonkulul ekoNkala who evolves, grows up and even reinvents herself. The story started with the forced dismissal, of the protagonist’s marginalised community from the shantytown of her childhood, by the government after their homes were destroyed. Darling said:

I hear the adults saying, Why, why, why, what have we done, what have we done, what have we done? Then the lorries come carrying the police with those guns and baton sticks and we run and hide inside the houses, but it’s no use hiding because the bulldozers start bulldozing and bulldozing and we are screaming and screaming”. (Bulawayo 65)

This forced displacement leads to the migration of her father to Johannesburg and her own definitive illegal immigration to her America.

The displacement in the story is introduced through the children’s fantasies but undermined by the reality of adult lives; Sbhoo declares; “I’m going to marry a rich man from Budapest. He’ll take me away from Paradise” (Bulawayo 12). Bastard dreams of Johannesburg, “I’m blazing out of this kaka country myself. Then I’ll make lots of money, come back and buy a house in this very Budapest” (Bulawayo 13), While Darling thinks of the immigration to America “my America”.

Darling’s decision to travel to America is her own decision, because she was forced by the circumstances beyond her control, despite this fact, and the outcomes of displacement are serious. As a displaced immigrant, Darling faces many challenges as she lives in Zimbabwe (paradise) her black skin is something natural because all people of her society have, but once she steps outside Zimbabwe, her black skin colour matters because she is in the American white society. The protagonist becomes aware of her skin colour only when she experiences displacement. She said

that she see the hate “from the look, because eyes can talk, that she hates us, not just a little bit but a whole lot” (Bulawayo 124).

This act of displacement makes Darling always refer to the soreness of missing home but glued in the recognition that she can never return home because she has become an illegal immigrant in America (diaspora).

Moreover, displacement refers to both physical displacement and a sense of being socially or culturally out of place. A best example of the cultural displacement is that when Darling attended the wedding of one of the Aunt friends, when darling sees for the first time how they treat mistaken children. She said, “[she] quickly grabs the little brat, [goes] *pha-pha-phaw* with quick slaps and raps his head with [her] knuckles, twice” (Bulawayo 183). This act makes Darling feels that she is not in her homeland.

The displacement fact makes Darling receive a bad treatment from her friends when she first arrives at Washington; she was teased by her colleagues about her name, her accent, her hair and even her clothes in school. She said:

“When you are being teased about something, at first you try to fix it so the teasing can stop but then those crazy kids teased me about everything, even the things I couldn’t change, and it kept going and going so that in the end. I just felt wrong in my skin, in my body, in my clothes, in my language, in my head, everything.” (Bulawayo 165)

Darling starts to assimilate in the America society. She starts acting like the American teenagers, passing time in the mall with friends. The protagonist struggles with integrating into society, especially in her school because her friends there teased her about her African identity with all its dimensions of name, language and culture.

This displacement from Zimbabwe to America affected darling’s identity, therefore, she decided to have the American identity to avoid racism. She started learning how they pronounce word especially when she first heard the word “freak”. She said, “Said it like they wanted to puncture their bottom lips with their teeth when they said the *f* part” (Bulawayo 166). She start

searching about the meaning of the words to have more knowledge about the English language, she said, “there were a lot of American words and things I was still learning” (Bulawayo 166).

This learning process in the diaspora helped in forgetting the African roots systematically and acquire a “diasporic consciousness” (Zhou 186). It is crucial in her new identity formation even though Darling feels pain and nostalgic to paradise and her friends there, she is torn between the two Zimbabwe and America. Darling's feelings is referring to Du Bois' notion of double consciousness, Darling said, “It's hard to explain, this feeling; it's like there's two of me” (Bulawayo 210).

Darling now is confronted with the reality of displacement, she tries balancing between her mother tongue, Ndebele, and English. She said:

“. . . the TV has taught me just how to do it. It's pretty easy; all you have to do is watch Dora the Explorer, The Simpsons, SpongeBob, Scooby-Doo, and then you move on to That's So Raven, Glee, Friends, Golden Girls, and so on, just listening and imitating the accents. . . . I also have my list of American words that I keep under the tongue like talismans, ready to use: pretty good, pain in the ass, for real, awesome, totally, skinny, dude, bizarre, psyched, messed up, like, tripping, motherfucker, clearance, allowance, douche bag, you're welcome, acting up, yikes. (Bulawayo 194)

Darling began to sound American but her friends and family in paradise criticized her harshly when she talked with them through Skype. Her mother said, “He-he-he, so you are trying to sound white now!” (Bulawayo 204); and her friends said, “That stupid accent that you were not even born with, that doesn't even suit you” (Bulawayo 286). Her fluency increased gradually.

Darling said:

“The problem with English is that by the time you get to say the words out loud and have them sound right . . . something strange has happened to you.” (Bulawayo 193)

Darling learns how to fit in the American society but the ache of displacement makes her feel that she is in between and two-ness. She said:

“It’s hard to explain, this feeling; it’s like there’s two of me. One part is yearning for my friends; the other doesn’t know how to connect with them anymore, as if they are people I’ve never met” (Bulawayo 210).

When Darling called Chipo and said: “I know it’s bad, she starts off...what they have done to our country...last week I saw on BBC – to which Chipo responds sharply, you are not the one suffering. You think watching it on BBC means you know what is going on?” (Bulawayo 287).

Darling replies again claiming “it’s [her] country too” (Bulawayo 288). Chipo screamed again and said: Really, it’s your country, are you sure?...Why did you run off to America, Darling Nonkulul ekoNkala, huh? ...If it’s your country, you have to love it to live in it and not leave it...and you have the guts to tell me, in that stupid accent you were not even born with, that doesn’t even suit you, that this is your country? (Bulawayo 288)

Here, Darling realizes that she is no more connected to her home and this displacement just makes her look like one of the Americans, she lost her relative, her friend and her home as well. This fatal breath shows how Darling’s conception of home has become fractured and fragmented.

The novel left many questions behind whether Darling gets new American identity and get ride on the African one considering it as a burden or vice versa. Is she going to continue her life in America or she will just come back to paradise.

4. Culture Shock in We Need New Names

The fact of moving from the mother country to a foreign and outlandish one is not amusing, as it seems to be. Being wasted, disappointed, and confused is what comes first to the person. Many people around the world are struggling throughout the process of changing the mother country because they are exposed to a new culture, traditions, customs and lifestyle. The new milieu proves to be challenging to adapt and assimilate with the new life and people who do not have your culture and race. The challenges that people encounter when they start living in the new milieu can be subsumed under the umbrella term ‘culture shock’.

Kyle Bladow and Jennifer Ladino in their work *Affective Ecocriticism: Emotion, Embodiment, and Environment* identify the feelings associated with culture shock and argue: We feel disappointment before we process it as such; the instant between our affective response and an intellectualized one is fleeting.

Disappointment arrests us; it is both a sensation and a perceptual disruption, an experience that seems to distort regular temporality. Vitrally, it arises from something outside the feeling subject: we are disappointed with something or about something. What does it mean to be disappointed by a landscape? That is, how precisely does this peculiar response to nature come about—and what are its personal and political consequences? (572-3)

In we need new names, Bulawayoseeks to shed light on the experience of culture shock in general and on the disappointment of the protagonist as she arrives to the foreign land and realizes that her expectations cannot be met there, she is fantasized with migrating to the US, calling it by her own term: “My America”, she said:

“When I go to live with aunt Fostalina, that’s the kind of car I’ll drive . . . I just know, because of this feeling in my bones, that the car is waiting for me in America, so I yell, My Lamborghini, Lamborghini, Lamborghini Reventón!” (Bulawayo 111)

Darling experiences culture shock as the transition from her childhood in Zimbabwe to life in the United States. She feels overwhelmed by the stark differences in lifestyles, social norms and cultural expectations. Darling is confronted with unfamiliar technologies, customs and social structure which can be disorienting and isolating for her. Her sense of displacement and longing for her homeland contribute to the emotional impact of culture shock throughout the novel. The story of culture shock starts when Darling and her friends referred to everything in their homeland paradise as “kaka”, because they suffered from hungry, poverty, murder, suicide, disease, etc. After Darling’s departure to America, her real sufferance starts especially when she realizes how Americans have so many misconceptions about paradise. Darling starts getting upset after seeing how America is looking like, she said:

“Then something shifts inside me and I start to feel disappointed, and then angry at our leaders for making it all happen, for ruining everything” (Bulawayo 287).

She started getting shocked, she thinks that America is the promise land but when she arrives in the period of the great recession, her dream was shattered in the strange land. She realizes that she left paradise the uneconomically stable country and lives to another one. She is confronted with strange surroundings that changes entirely her conception of home and identity; she could not redefine herself there. The raining cold climate and snow make Darling feel odd and unwelcomed in America, she said, this here is not my country, I don't know whose it is” (Bulawayo 149).She adds:

“The snow is a “greedy monster like it's telling you, with its snow, that you should go back to where you came from” (Bulawayo 148)

Darling gets shocked because this not her America that she is always dreaming for, she feels disillusionment, she said:

“With all this snow, with the sun not there, with the cold and dreariness, this place doesn't look like my America, doesn't even look real” (Bulawayo 150).

Daring thinks that when she goes to America, she will drive the Lamborghini car because she thinks that all American have expensive cars as a symbol of wealth. She said:

When I go live with Aunt Fostalina, that's the kind of car I'll drive...I just know, because of this feeling in my bones, that the car is waiting for me in America, so I yell, My Lamborghini, Lamborghini, Lamborghini, Reventon!” (Bulawayo 113)

When Daring arrives to her America, she is no more dreaming of that car because she realizes that she is very wrong about fulfilling her American dream. She gets shocked because she thought that everyone in America could drive the Lamborghini.

Moreover, the protagonist describes the neighbourhood where she lives with her Aunt is dark and frighten much worse than Zimbabwe, she said:

I left out these things, and a lot more, because they embarrassed me, because they made America not feel like My America, the one that I had always dreamed of back in Paradise” (Bulawayo 190).

Darling is torn between her past paradise and her present America; she does not know what to do.

People are mistreated everywhere; the picture of her America shocks her. She mentions:

“They had long ceased to be providers for us, we were now their parents. Our extended families sent requests and we worked, worked like donkeys, worked like slaves, worked like madmen. When we hesitate, they said, you are in America where everybody has money, we see it all on TV, please don’t deny us.” (Bulawayo 247)

Darling assumes that no one of the immigrants who suffered like slaves in America told their families with the reality, they were lying that is the reason behind having a perfect conception about America. She said, “we went everywhere and took pictures and sent them home showing off a country that would never be ours” (Bulawayo 245).

She tries to change herself to fit there, she starts by changing her accent, she said, “Said it like they wanted to puncture their bottom lips with their teeth when they said the f part” (Bulawayo 166). She added, when she starts looking for words meaning they say, “There were a lot of American words and things I was still learning” (Bulawayo 166).

Furthermore, darling finds herself being torn between two deferent traditions and customs which makes her feel culturally shocked. This is clearly found in the wedding of one of the Aunt friends, when darling sees for the first time how they treat mistaken children. She said, “[she] quickly grabs the little brat, [goes] *pha-pha-pha* with quick slaps and raps his head with [her] knuckles, twice” (Bulawayo 183).while the others kept starring at her as if they feel afraid of her, while other Africans guests, kept reassuring them “not to fear. This is just how we handle unruly children in our culture” (Bulawayo 183)

Darling is susceptible to culture shock because of her boss Eliot daughter who is starving herself to look beautiful for her boyfriend. Darling said:

“Look around you, and you have all these riches that you don’t even need; upstairs, your bed is fit for a king; you go to Cornell, where you can be anything you want; you don’t even have to clean up after yourself because I’m doing it for you. right now; you have a dog whose wardrobe I couldn’t afford; and, what’s more, you’re here, living in your own country of birth, so what exactly is your real problem?” (Bulawayo 270)

Being a citizen in a country, where food is scarce and starving is not a choice but inevitable. Darling said:

The children “ate like pigs, like wolves, like dignitaries” and “ate like vultures, like stray dogs, like monsters” as they ate for all their past hunger, for their parents and brothers and sisters and relatives and friends who were still back there”. And they “uttered their names between mouthfuls, conjured up their hungry faces and chapped lips” and when they “carried” their “dense bodies with the dignity of elephants” in America (Bulawayo 239).

Darling is shocked why people do not eat for the sake of beauty and physical appearance. Even she is eating food, she feels homeless, she mentions; “no matter how much food I eat, I find the food does nothing for me, like I am hungry for my country and nothing is going to fix that” (Bulawayo 153). She added, “Where we are hungry but we are together and we are at home and everything is sweeter

than dessert”(Bulawayo 206). She regrets everything and feels lost there especially the moment when she got a “strange ache in [her] heart when Chipu tells her that Sbho is outside eating a guava” (Bulawayo 209). This means that darling has already realized that she does not belong to this society and this is not her America.

Darling is overwhelmed by feelings of disappointment because her America is not what she was dreaming about. The United States of America is not the new Paradise that she had imagined and this is painful to the young girl Darling.

Another culture shock for Darling was recognizing how there was so much misconception of the Westerners about Africa and Africans. This happens in Dumi’s wedding when the white

woman approaches Darling and asks her to “just say something in your language . . . anything, really” (Bulawayo 174). The woman replied: “Isn’t it beautiful?” (Bulawayo 174); and continued: “Africa is beautiful . . . But isn’t it terrible what’s happening in the Congo? Just awful” (Bulawayo 175). These misconceptions make darling feel inferior. They generalize if Africa was one country.

Darling's adaptation to her new environment is a gradual process marked by resilience and inner strength. While the novel does not provide a straightforward solution to her culture shock, Darling copes and navigates the complexities of her new reality.

5. Conclusion

We Need New Names is among the works that depict the identity of the displaced people. This kind of literary works was relevant at the time after colonialism than ever. The story also shows that each individual is the product of his own environment and society, which is the reason why immigrants get a sense of alienation when they are in a new setting. Natural elements massively manipulate the human evolution and even affect the human physiology of each race.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

In the few recent years, displacement and identity became the most common discussed issues in the African post colonial works as the movement of people between countries increased as a result to political and economic events. This movement severely affects one's identity and lead to other issues like cultural shock and trauma. Along with post colonialism, Eco criticism is also used to show the relationship between the characters and the environment.

As the young Darling goes to US to her aunt dreaming of better life and wishing to live the American dream, she soon realizes that living in US is very different from her fantasies as she starts feeling different. Once she puts her foots on the American lands, she feels how different the Americans recognize her. Although Darling makes great efforts to act as a native American, the feeling of losing her identity starts to sweep over her when she realizes that people are not seeing her as American but just a black girl. This marks the start of Darling's identity crisis as she feels pressured while fitting in the American society and in the process of changing her native identity to cope with the new one.

Each person is the product of his own environment and surroundings. Natural elements can manipulate the human evolution and even affect his own physiology and psychology and what happens with the main character.

Literary works about immigrants and the immigrant experience have been doubling in numbers, mainly because the phenomenon itself is more relevant now than ever. One of these works is the work of Noviolet Bulawayo's *We Need New Names*. A novel that narrates the experience of a young female a Zimbabwean immigrant in America. It tackles serious issues such as displacement, identity and culture shock. The study aims at analysing the novel (*We Need New Names*) on an ecological and postcolonial level. The postcolonial approach to mirrors the situation of the characters living in diaspora and to unveil the suffering experience of the immigrants in the foreign countries and how they lost their identity such as the experience of the protagonist Darling, while Ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between the characters (Darling) and the environment (paradise and America).

Noviolet Bulawayo exposes her literary production *We Need New Names* to unveil the truths about the status of the common people in diaspora and the effects of displacement and culture shock in the formation of the immigrants especially the protagonist of the novel Darling.

Bulawayo illustrates Displacement as the moving from one geographical place to another, whether voluntarily or not, leads into other issues like cultural shock and trauma. like in the case of her protagonist Darling, who is moved from Zimbabwe to America but later on she suffered from a culture shock after all her dreams about America were not real where everything was unusual, harsh, difficult and fake.

Finally, Bulawayo exposes that her protagonist Darling tries so hard to assimilate in the American society by changing herself, which means that the act of displacement affect harshly her identity.

To sum up this novel is one of the best examples that mirrors the immigrants experience in diaspora and how they fight to cope with life there.

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ملخص

تحلل هذه الأطروحة موضوعات الهوية والتهجير في كتاب نحتاج أسماء جديدة للكاتبة نيوفيو ليت، تبحث بولا وايبو عن قضايا خطيرة مثل الهوية والنزوح والصدمة الثقافية. فقامت بفضح التجارب التي تواجهها الفتاة الزيمبابوية المهاجرة في أمريكا. تحاول هذه الأطروحة فك رموز آثار الصدمة الثقافية وأزمة الهوية والنزوح على بطل الرواية والمواطنين الزيمبابويين الآخرين لمعالجة تجربتهم مع النزوح كوافدين جدد. أجريت هذه الدراسة من خلال تطبيق نظريتين أدبيتين، نظرية ما بعد الاستعمار والنظرية البيئية للمساعدة في تحليل صراع البطل للتكيف مع المجتمع الأمريكي الجديد واثربئية على هويتها. وطرق او وسائل الكفاح للحفاظ على هويتها.

الكلمات المفتاحية: النزوح ، الهوية ، الصدمة الثقافية ، أمريكا ، نحتاج إلى أسماء جديدة.