This is to certify that the
dissertation entitled

THE PROBLEM OF HOME AND SPACE IN AFRICAN LITERATURE: RECONCILING MULTIPLE BELONGINGS AND UNBELONGINGS IN THE GLOBAL AGE

presented by

Hilary Chala Kowino

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for the

Ph.D. degree in English

Kenneth W. Harrow
Major Professor's Signature

September 4, 2008

Date

THE PROBLEM OF HOME AND SPACE IN AFRICAN LITERATURE: RECONCILING MULTIPLE BELONGINGS AND UNBELONGINGS IN THE GLOBAL AGE

By

Hilary Chala Kowino

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

English

2008

ABSTRACT

THE PROBLEM OF HOME AND SPACE IN AFRICAN LITERATURE: RECONCILING MULTIPLE BELONGINGS AND UNBELONGINGS IN THE GLOBAL AGE

By

Hilary Chala Kowino

Current discussions of the idea of home in contemporary African literature revolve around two opposing positions: the nationalist position (Amilcar Cabral, Ama Ata Aidoo, Ngugi wa Thion'go) that valorizes the past and the postmodernist position (Gilroy, Boyce-Davies, Deleuze) that challenges an earlier anti-colonialist evocation of authentic culture. My dissertation intervenes in this stalemate between nationalists and postmodernists by challenging the exclusiveness with which the nationalist writers have championed authenticity, and avoiding the absoluteness with which postmodernism has argued in favor of migrancy. My project pushes us instead to think of home and space beyond an either/or binary, and questions the unbridled embrace of indeterminate change. This new sensibility that the project is pushing towards recognizes that globalization has changed the parameters and therefore the conception of home.

The nationalist writers' location of home in a fixed time and space is problematic, as it illusively wishes away cultural contact, transnational affiliations, and cross-border belongings. I argue, together with Spivak, that "this staging of origin, too neat and palliative, was not only medicine but a sort of poison as well, *pharmakon.* It was the gift of a European from within a monotheistic culture." Similarly, the notions of motion (Gilroy), migration (Boyce-Davies) or nomadism (Deleuze) that inform postmodernist sensibilities have undertones of elitism and tourism – which undermines the oppressed

movement of slum dwellers, internally displaced people, and the homeless. The dissertation analyzes the idea of home in three historical moments – home at the dawn of national independence movements (1950s and 60s), the postcolonial home (1970-1990s), and the global home (1990s to present) – to show the impact of each period on the same.

At its core, my project is interested in showing that the idea of home is much more complex than current readings allow. To that end: i) it shows that the debate between roots and routes cannot be addressed outside of the gap between culture and politics which makes cultural hybrids look back; ii) it complicates valorizations of the past to show cases of mourning, subversion, and progress, and thus moves beyond claims of atavism; iii) it shifts from reading boundaries and places as fixed to reading them as fluid in order to account for transnational ties; iv) it reads the constant motion of the homeless to escape the law against the constant motion of migration and travel to show how postmodernists' celebration of motion undermines the case of the homeless; v) it shows how issues of gender, sexuality, race, and class have defined home, and deconstructs them to refigure a sense of home without hierarchies. Unless we address these disparities and misconceptions, we shall continue to feel out of place, even when we reside in places we consider home.

For Adeny, Nya Samia, Turumbe, and W.D., who raised me up when I could not reach.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am deeply indebted to a number of teachers, students, authors, artists, friends, relatives, and strangers -- too numerous to mention -- who have supported my journey from the minute I was conceived to the present.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Hilary Chala Kowino
Dissertation Draft

The Problem of Home and Space in African Literature: Reconciling Multiple Belongings and Unbelongings in the Global Age

Introduction

> People have, for many centuries, constructed their sense of belonging, their notions of home, of spiritual and bodily power and freedom, along a continuum of sociospatial attachments. These extend from local valleys and neighborhoods to denser urban sites of encounter and relative anonymity, from national communities tied to a territory to affiliations across borders and oceans. In these diverse contact zones, people sustain critical, non-absolutist strategies for survival and action in a world where space is always and already invaded. (Clifford 367)

> A large component of the identity of that place called home derived precisely from the fact that it had always in one way or another been open; constructed out of movement, communication, social relations which always stretched beyond it. In one sense or another most places have been "meeting places"; even their "original inhabitants" usually came from somewhere else. This does not mean that the past is irrelevant to the identity of place. It simply means that there is no internally produced, essential past. (Massey 170-71)

This dissertation is interested in examining how the narratives of home have been conceptualized in contemporary African literature. Simultaneously moving in multiple directions, it attempts to find the ground for both the nationalist sensibility around the need for home and postmodernist sensibility that challenges the earlier anti-colonialists' evocation of authentic culture. On the one hand, the nationalist position feeds on a binary logic to legitimize what it calls pre-colonial, original, and authentic culture; this project tests the stability of the said binary. On the other hand, the postmodernist position advocates motion and debunks the notions of pre-colonial cultures as essentialized; this project offers more complex readings of the narratives of the past to show why some communities are obliged to assert an essentialized identity, and thus the perils

uncritically debunking the same. The undying need for home cannot be wished away by nomadism (in Deleuze and Guattari's terms); similarly, originality cannot adequately bear the burden of culture. By engaging the nationalist and postmodernist positions, this project utilizes the anxieties and insights that both positions engender. The dissertation's contribution to scholarship lies in its interventionist endeavor to challenge the exclusiveness with which the nationalist writers have championed authenticity, and the absoluteness with which postmodernism has posited the virtues of migrancy. In other words, the argument is not about the nationalist sensibility or postmodernist sensibility, but a newer sensibility that pushes the ways in which we think of identity and home beyond an either/or system of definition. An either/or logic, for example, cannot adequately account for the inextricable ties between Africa and African Diaspora. This newer sensibility involves an understanding of how globalization has changed the parameters and therefore the conception of home. Additionally, my study of slum dwellers and internally displaced persons adds a fresh dimension to the problem of home. This dissertation divides the idea of home into three historical moments – the home at the dawn of independence (1950s and 60s), the postcolonial home (1970-1990s), and global home (1990s to present) – to show how each period impacts the idea of home.

At the dawn of independence, the nationalist writers responded to the colonial narratives which bastardized pre-colonial Africa by reclaiming a pre-colonial space. The nationalist writers packaged this space as original, authentic, and untainted -- and presented it as corrective to the sense of dispossession and

homelessness which characterized the colonial period. The nationalist writers' location of home in the pre-colonial past cannot be understood without contextualization, as time plays a critical role on the conceptions of home. While history offers insights into the nationalist writers' preoccupation with the recovery of the past, it does not spare the writers' positions from contestation. The nationalist writers' claim to an original space in time and place to which the colonized can return falls short of being progressive. In other words, in an attempt to begin anew, African nationalist writers unwittingly locate home "in static time, thereby removing the dangled nature of lived experience and promoting the idea of uncontaminated survival" (Glissant 14). To "negate contact," to use Glissant's words in Caribbean Discourse (1989), in the name of "a single origin" is problematic. But equally problematic is "[p]ostcolonial theory's celebration of hybridity [as] it risks an antiessentialist condescension toward those communities obliged by circumstances to assert, for their very survival, a lost and even irretrievable past" (Shohat 110). For example, the displaced Sudanese refugees may reluctantly embrace hybridity because, as it lulls them into thinking in terms of a rainbow world in which all Sudanese live together, .the government in conjunction with rebels displace them because they consider the refugees as *others*. There is a gap between the theory and praxis of hybridity, and this gap involves the difficulty of accepting difference in everyday life. One, then, has to find a way of locating home that allows for lived experience without compromising the political valency of displaced people. The first chapter hopes to

come to terms with nationalist claims of originality and a return to pre-colonial sites, without losing sight of the gaps that seem to compromise it.

The home after independence, on its part, has to deal with unforeseen transnational identities that cannot be contained in one nation – a sign that national boundaries are not in tandem with national cultures. This cultural overflow across borders challenges what Gilroy calls "the unthinking assumption [by both the colonized and the colonizer] that cultures flow into patterns congruent with the borders of essentially homogeneous nation states" (5). When subjects that the nationalist writers considered pure and homogenous, neatly enclosed within the colonial borders, turn out to be impure or, as Salman Rushdie puts it in relation to India/South Asia, "a bit of this and a bit of that" (394), then there is need to re-examine these considerations. The impurity has implications for the definition of home, compelling us to shift from the nationalist reading of home as "a comfortingly bounded enclosed space, defining an 'other' who is outside" to home, "not as a place but an area, formed out of a particular set of social relations which happen to intersect at the particular location known as 'home'" (Read 102). In addition, the home after independence is faced with post-independence disillusionment brought about by corruption. Being inside the borders does not automatically translate into a sense of belonging, which reminds one of Said's argument, in "Reflection on Exile," that "[b]orders and barriers which enclose us within the safety of familiar territory can also become prisons [...]" (185). Whichever way we look at them, borders have considerable implications for how home is conceived, and, almost always, they mark

extensions rather than endings of home. Here there is a slippage home/homeland and nation. To that end, "no people has been spared the cross-cultural process" (Glissant 140). How do we come to terms with these transnational and cross-border belongings? Chapter Two deploys border theory to show that an understanding of national home through colonial maps and boundaries is limited not only because the boundaries are defective but also because they are more porous than they seem.

The last chapter – the global home – examines how and where to locate home when global affiliations permeate the boundaries between the local and the global, as is the case in Charles Mungoshi's Waiting for the Rain (1975) and Oliver Mtukudzi's Dzoka Uyamwe (2003) . The narratives of home and origin, which for a long time found identity in the local place, have become unstable following the increasing difficulty to draw the line between the local and the global. Arguing that the idea of home cannot be delinked from the world, the dissertation attempts to find a way of "being in the world," a way of embracing our connectedness here and there. Even as it appreciates the global ties that link us, the dissertation questions whose global village this is, especially considering villagers who are kept on the fringes of the village like local Jamaicans in Stephanie Black's Life and Debt and Kibera slum dwellers in Nairobi, Kenya. For these people, who have lost their livelihood to the forces of globalization, belonging to a global village remains hollow and ambivalent. Specifically, in this section, the dissertation examines the current problems with the slums and the question of autochthony as a contribution to the issue of home and

homelessness. It examines the dehumanizing conditions of slums on the one hand, and, on the other, the demolition of slums by a government indifferent to the housing needs of the victims. These two trends – the conditions and demolition -- violate human rights. A case in point is the ongoing (March 29, 2007) demolition of slums in Mombasa, Kenya – with no provision of alternative housing for the victims. According to *The Standard* of March 29, 2007, "Residents of Buxton slums in Mombasa watch helplessly as their houses are demolished by a Municipal Council bulldozer after they were forcibly evicted to pave way for the beautification of the city." We also have an estimated 700,000 Zimbabwean slum dwellers evicted and rendered homeless by their own government in what has become known as Operation Murambatsvina (Restore Order) of May 2005. Why would the government invest money on evictions and demolitions, instead of addressing the socioeconomic circumstances that produce them and their dwellings? Equally disturbing is the case of Kibera slum dwellers in Kenya who have been compelled to invent "flying toilets" to address their lack of, and need for, toilet facilities. The feelings of worthlessness and nonexistence that stem from such disparities continue to harm these slum dwellers, even as they fight back by reasserting their right to relieve themselves of their waste. Their agency lies in their refusal to become waste, which, arguably, is what their material conditions that deny them toilets presume them to be. What is the meaning of home for these slum dwellers who live in wretched conditions without sanitation? Where is home for millions of internally displaced persons or refugees in the Democratic Republic of Congo and in Darfur, Sudan?

What is the relationship between the increasing wave of globalization and the rapid development of slums and internal displacement? For these slum dwellers and internally displaced persons, belonging to their nation, much less the global village, remains problematic as long as the said disjunctions are mainstream. The described dilemma of belonging prompts one to find out the role that slum dwellers and internally displaced people might play in one's thinking about the location of home. Possibly, Martin Heidegger, in Basic Writings (1977), was right when he said, "Homelessness is coming to be the destiny of the world" (219).

This dissertation seeks to negotiate inside and outside, pure and impure; it rejects the viewing of home boundaries as fixed, straight, and natural – preferring to view them as transversal; in Mary N. Layoun's words, in her book Wedded to the Land? Gender, Boundaries, and Nationalism in Crisis (2001), it "refuse[s] singular place of origin and belonging and [chooses] to work through processes of change" (174); it attempts to re-figure home in the wake of ambivalent boundaries; it attempts to tell a story that the African nationalist writers have not told (and to show why the Manichean – Abdul JanMohamed's term -- conception of home by nationalist writers often amounts to paralogism). Challenging the notion of a single, all-inclusive, and stable home valorized by nationalist writers, it attempts to show that home, to borrow Layoun's words, is open to contestation, "'Home' and 'community' are [...] not self-evident and sustaining categories but problematic points of contention and possibility" (98). In other words, the idea of home cannot be explained on the basis of an inside/outside or past/present binary, largely because these markers are imbricated in each other, making the

whole issue much more complex. A serious study of postcolonialism, globalization, class, and gender reveal disparities which undercut the traditional painting of home as singular and concrete. For instance, an attempt to fit migration, voluntary or involuntary, into these paradigms reveals a feeling of exile. This dissertation cautiously pushes for plural belongings, even as it shows a perpetual homelessness. This push is necessitated by the need to account for the "here and there" allegiances that is our life. Looking at the nationalist concept of home as a narrative that belies the notions of oneness and origin that it purports to sell, for example by showing gaps that the narrative of home often ignores lest they reveal the unrealizability of an authentic home, this dissertation re-examines the concepts of origin, past, inside, and unity with an aim of giving them new meanings. Glissant's Poetics of Relation (1997), particularly his argument in favor of "the Poetics of Relation, in which each and every identity is extended through a relationship with the Other" (11), is critical to this re-examination.

One way of addressing the problem of home is by deconstructing the hierarchy that makes some allegiances superior to others. These hierarchies include, but are not limited to, race, ethnicity, class, and gender. Using texts like Bessie Head's A Question of Power, this dissertation seeks to study how gender and race have been used to draw the boundaries of home. How might we create a space that brings ostensibly separate sides together, especially as it becomes clear that the wave on which separateness has ridden is itself mixed?

The African nationalist writers have defined home along essentialist lines, as either the original spaces that Africans occupied prior to colonization or the indigenous and pure pre-colonial cultures. For African nationalist writers, home can only be established by discarding the colonial cultures and retrieving the precolonial cultures, by returning to the originary moment or to the source. African nationalist writers, Simon Gikandi's Maps Of Englishness: Writing Identity in the Culture of Colonialism (1996) observes, "reinvented their [and their characters'] national identities either as a self-willed return to precolonial traditions or as a conscious rejection of an imposed European identity" (194). In fact, they, Gikandi goes on, "insisted on retour as a necessary condition for alternative identities" (194). This insistence not only valuated home (precolonial traditions) and provided the political agency that the moment demanded, it also negated the cultural impact that the empire had on the colonized. In brief, it put a premium on returning to what it saw as the original and uncontaminated home, at the expense of the ineluctable cultural changes that had occurred to the same.

Among the scholars who locate home and African identity in the precolonial space include African nationalist writers like Ayi Kwei Armah, Ama Ata Aidoo, Amilcar Cabral, and Ngugi Wa Thion'go. In different degrees, these nationalist writers, following racist colonial ideologies of authenticity, seek to authenticate African identity by locating it in the nation, the past, the origins. Amilcar Cabral, in his Return to the Source (1974), for example, calls for a return to the pre-colonial culture, which he validates as follows, "With certain exceptions, *the period of colonization* was not long enough, at least in Africa, for

there to be a significant degree of destruction or damage of the most important facets of the culture and traditions of the subject people" (60). Of course, Cabral's claim is debatable. Cabral may be right if he were to argue that the cultural disruption in Portuguese Guinea was not as severe as in other African colonies, but his argument that the period of colonization was not long enough in Africa to cause serious cultural damage underestimates the reality. It is wishful thinking on Cabral's part, as there are so many cases of destruction -- like identity crisis, the Darfur Massacre, the Rwanda Genocide, and the Ethiopia-Somali border conflicts – happening so many years after colonization, which cannot be completely explained outside the same. The negative impacts of colonial policies like assimilation are evident in all the novels discussed here, and yet Cabral evaluates these policies as "complete failure" (60). We shall get into why Cabral makes this debatable point. In a polarized language which had a great vogue during the struggle for political independence, Cabral gives the following polemic for a successful liberation struggle, "The greater the differences between the culture of the dominated people and the culture of their oppressor, the more possible such a victory becomes" (48). It seems then that the farther one is from European influence, the closer one is to *the source*, and vice versa.

One cannot lose sight of the fact that the launch pad for, and, even more, the development of, colonization was sharp, Manichean differences between the colonizer and the colonized. The colonizer strategically constructed and inflated the said differences to justify colonization and its attendant civilizing mission. For example, the colonized people were labeled as too primitive and barbaric to

know what was good for them. A supposedly caring colonizer had to come in and bear the burden of refining the colonized. Meanwhile, the *real* purposes of colonization, which included exploitation of the colony's resources, were ongoing. It is this same weapon of difference that Cabral later recommends for the liberation struggle. As we shall see when we discuss works like Frantz Fanon's "On National Culture" in The Wretched of the Earth (1963), this recommendation, while useful within the context of the liberation, is subject to contestation.

Cabral also argues that "the liberation struggle is, above all, a struggle both for the preservation and survival of the cultural values of the people and for the harmonization and development of these values within a nationalist framework" (48). This is the basis of Ngugi Wa Thion'go's argument about the need to write in indigenous languages. In Decolonizing the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature (1986), Ngugi declares, "This book, *Decolonising the Mind,* is my farewell to English as a vehicle for any of my writings. From now on it is Gikuyu and Kiswahili all the way. However, I hope that through the age old medium of translation I shall be able to continue dialogue with all" (xiv). Ngugi disowns English ostensibly to return to what he considers *colonialism-free* languages. Are indigenous languages impervious to imperial culture and can they be constructed outside the same? To say the least, Gikuyu is daily shaped by inter-ethnic relations between Gikuyu people and their neighbors, not to mention the culture of colonialism. Coterminously, Edward Kamau Brathwaite, in his article, "Nation Language," eruditely shows how the languages of African slaves constantly changed and were changed by the languages of their

oppressors. The languages of these African slaves, Brathwaite profoundly reminds us, had

> to submerge themselves, because officially the conquering peoples – the Spaniards, the English, the French, and the Dutch – insisted that the language of public discourse and conversation, of obedience, command and conception should be English, French, Spanish or Dutch. They did not wish to hear people speaking Ashanti or any of the Congolese languages. So there was a submergence of this imported language. Its status became one of inferiority. Similarly, its speakers were slaves. They were conceived as inferiors – non-human, in fact. But this very submergence served an interesting interculturative purpose, because although people continued to speak English as it was spoken in Elizabethan times through the Romantic and Victorian ages, that English was, nonetheless, still influenced by the underground language, the submerged language that the slaves had brought. And that underground language was itself constantly transforming itself into new forms. It was moving from a purely African form to a form which was African but which was adapted to the new environment and adapted the cultural imperative of the European languages. And it was influencing the way in which the English, French, Dutch, and Spaniards spoke their own language. (309-10)

Similarly, the languages of the colonized and the colonizer influenced each other. So, if one chooses to use indigenous language, it should be with a clear understanding that it is not free of imperial influence, just as imperial languages

are not free of the influence of indigenous African languages. Without necessarily turning the evil of cultural imperialism into an angel, it might help Ngugi and Cabral to consider, at least more than they do, that sometimes "cultural contamination may actually be enriching or strengthening" (Gilroy 97). In other words, nationalist writers' protection of what they perceive as indigenous culture may actually cost us a richer culture that is better suited to survive in the new environment. As we recognize the political capital in Ngugi's position, we also need to stretch it so that it can reach what Brathwaite, like Ngugi, calls "national language," but, which he, unlike Ngugi, insightfully defines as "English and African at the same time" (311). The culture that Cabral and Ngugi strive to preserve here is precolonial/ traditional. Paradoxically, a large portion of that so-called precolonial past, as Terence Ranger's "The Invention of Tradition in Colonial Africa" (1983) has observed, is an invention of colonialism meant to serve the interests of the colonizer. In other words, what nationalist writers perceive as precolonial culture is in many ways colonial, and thus does not amount to the colonized's way of life prior to colonization.

Gayatri Spivak, in her article "Asked to Talk About Myself..." (1992), wisely shows that playing the card of origin has its gains and losses, "[T]his staging of origin, too neat and palliative, was not only medicine but a sort of poison as well, *pharmakon.* It was the gift of a European from within a monotheistic culture" (14-15). It is therefore imperative that one weighs the advantages and disadvantages of staging an origin before doing so. Like Spivak, Paul Gilroy, in his article "It Ain't Where You're From, It's Where You're At..."

(1990/91), traces the colonized's obsession with authenticity to Euro-American policies. In Gilroy's words, "the problematic intellectual heritage of Euro-American modernity still determines the manner in which nationality is understood within black political discourse. In particular, it conditions the continuing aspiration to acquire a supposedly authentic, natural and stable identity" (4). The aforementioned invention (Ranger), gift (Spivak), or aspiration (Gilroy) is based on fixity in order to serve as a marker of difference between the colonizer and the colonized, particularly to portray the colonized as unchanging and inferior. Bhabha's Location of Culture (1994) discusses this "concept of 'fixity' in the ideological construction of otherness" (66-68). To repeat this manufactured and stagnating otherness in the name of returning to our authentic culture is problematic; put differently, Cabral's call for the preservation of African people's values is negated by virtue of the colonially manipulated binary logic on which it is based. In addition, the logic is undercut by the fluidity between the cultures of the colonized and the colonizer. In fact, this fluidity also undercuts Ranger's claim, "the invention of tradition," as it grants Africans some agency in the production of the resultant culture, while also acknowledging that the resultant culture is largely invented. Ranger's claim, however, does not allow for the colonized's contribution in the production of the *invented tradition* as well as the colonizer's culture. The nationalist framework that Cabral recommends is debatable because it accommodates nationalist texts like Ngugi Wa Thion'go's Matigari (1987) but it does not account for the kind of transnational identities and cosmopolitan border crossings we encounter in texts like Nuruddin Farah's Maps

(1999), Bessie Head's A Question of Power (1974), and Kojo Laing's Woman of the Aeroplanes (1998). I am using nationalism here to mean "an assertion of belonging in and to a place, a people, a heritage. It affirms the home created by a community of language, culture, and customs; and, by so doing, it fends off exile, fights to prevent its ravages" (Said, "Reflections," 176). In the postcolonial period, we are faced with the urgent need of simultaneously celebrating and questioning the origins, hoping that the reconciliation of these two opposites produce a critical, if paradoxical, space. Towards that end, this dissertation intends to draw on Edouard Glissant's Poetics of Relation (1997), Spivak's "Asked to Talk About Myself ..." (1992), Simon Gikandi's Maps of Englishness (1996), and Kwame Antony Appiah's In My Father's House: Africa in the Philosophy of Culture (1992).

There are two logics of origins at stake here. The first one, the enlightenment logic, is premised on the notion that it can identify people and that it can present that identity in language. This logic, in keeping with traditional epistemology, sets oppositions on the basis of stable, absolute, clearly defined, and hierarchical meanings. This presupposition by the likes of Hegel that we can identify as a people and place in time is problematic -- as Bhabha, Derrida, Glissant, Amselle, Spivak, and Young have shown in the second logic, to which I turn. According to the second logic, we are only who we are in relation to others, and places are only places in relation to other places – this logic is also known as post-structural, deconstructive, or postcolonial. Set on the premise that oppositions are always already unstable, fluid, and reliant upon one another –

(1999), Bessie Head's A Question of Power (1974), and Kojo Laing's Woman of the Aeroplanes (1998). I am using nationalism here to mean "an assertion of belonging in and to a place, a people, a heritage. It affirms the home created by a community of language, culture, and customs; and, by so doing, it fends off exile, fights to prevent its ravages" (Said, "Reflections," 176). In the postcolonial period, we are faced with the urgent need of simultaneously celebrating and questioning the origins, hoping that the reconciliation of these two opposites produce a critical, if paradoxical, space. Towards that end, this dissertation intends to draw on Edouard Glissant's Poetics of Relation (1997), Spivak's "Asked to Talk About Myself ..." (1992), Simon Gikandi's Maps of Englishness (1996), and Kwame Antony Appiah's In My Father's House: Africa in the Philosophy of Culture (1992).

There are two logics of origins at stake here. The first one, the enlightenment logic, is premised on the notion that it can identify people and that it can present that identity in language. This logic, in keeping with traditional epistemology, sets oppositions on the basis of stable, absolute, clearly defined, and hierarchical meanings. This presupposition by the likes of Hegel that we can identify as a people and place in time is problematic -- as Bhabha, Derrida, Glissant, Amselle, Spivak, and Young have shown in the second logic, to which I turn. According to the second logic, we are only who we are in relation to others, and places are only places in relation to other places – this logic is also known as post-structural, deconstructive, or postcolonial. Set on the premise that oppositions are always already unstable, fluid, and reliant upon one another –

which is the subject of Derrida's Of Grammatology (1997) – the second logic recognizes the connectedness of spaces and language, a recognition which has implications for the idea of home, including the premise of originality which informs it.

The concept of origin cannot be separated from language, which is marked by difference and not identity, mutation and not statis. Since meaning is constituted by the gap, lack, and difference between the present and the past, it is important to consider Emile Beneviste's argument, as explicated by Elizabeth Grosz, that the "I" in the utterance is different from the "I" that produces it.

> On the one hand, we cannot presume an identity between the "I" of the *énoncé* and the "I" of the *énunciation,* even in the case of autobiography: the "I" who speaks cannot be identified with the "I" spoken about. On the other hand, these two terms cannot be definitively separated, for the processes of the production of the utterance are always inscribed in the utterance itself. (Grosz 19)

This dissertation is interested in the second logic of origin, particularly postcolonial perspective, but it goes beyond it by rereading valorizations of the originary moment and giving them complex meanings. For example, it argues that narratives of the past are neither entirely oblivious to the daily transformations of culture nor are they always keen on retrieving the past. Put differently, they are not simply atavistic; they are strategically driven by the hope of a world better than the present and past worlds. In her book Wedded to the Land? (2001), Layoun gives an account of an old Cypriot woman who glorifies

the past in order to better the future, not to retrieve that past. According to this Cypriot woman, "We have to think it [the past] was a better time. We have to say it was a better time. We have to keep telling the younger ones stories about that better time [...]. And maybe it will be that [better time] for them in the future" (qtd. in Layoun 5). This logic is crucial because it departs from the beaten path of fixity. In addition, as Layoun has observed, "It is an effort to hold a space open for something whose precise contours and contents are not known, perhaps cannot be known" (10). So, these narratives are not simply asking us to look for home in the past, as they know, at least in some cases, that there was no such home in the past; they are asking us to work towards the possibility of a better world in the future.

By so doing, the narratives allow us to look at the idea of home as a myth, which Malinowski neatly defines as "a retrospective pattern of moral values, sociological order, and magical belief, the function of which is to strengthen tradition and endow it with a greater value and prestige by tracing it back to a higher, better, more supernatural reality of initial events" (qtd. in Worsley 5). The mythologization of home, contrary to obsessing with *the good old days,* aims at creative and progressive endeavors. As Stuart Hall has astutely observed, "Far from being grounded in mere 'recovery' of the past, which is waiting to be found, and which when found, will secure our sense of ourselves into eternity, identities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past" (236). Hall uses identities here to mean home, and past to mean the source or the originary moment. The point

here is that nationalist writers could be using the past and origins for larger purposes; indeed, as Timothy Brennan, in "The national longing for form," articulates, "the evocation of deep, sacred origins – instead of furthering unquestioning, ritualistic reaffirmations of a people (as in epic) – becomes a contemporary, practical means of *creating* a people" (50). Evidently, rereading the narratives of the past through the above lenses offers new possibilities and complicates the notion of origins.

While nationalist definitions of home have political currency, hence Spivak's phrase "strategic essentializing," and have worked at particular moments in Africa's struggle for national independence, they have not been sustainable over time. There are affiliations across the borders that undercut the notion of purity, and there is a series of pre- and post-colonial migrations which question the originality of *original* places. There are also political, social and economic conditions that create a sense of homelessness in the only home one knows – leading to internal or external displacement.

Women, for example, may not belong to their fathers' or husbands' homes in the same way that the men in their lives do – more than men, women are forever here and there, sometimes nowhere. Interestingly, this simultaneous presence and absence of women, patriarchically designed to deny them complete ownership, inadvertently widens their spaces of operation, and thus grants them twisted freedom. In this era of globalization, nearly everyone and every place is connected. Even the language that we use to define the past is always already mutated, hence Bhabha's observation (in "DissemiNation") that

the supposed boundaries of language and time are ambivalent, "The language of culture and community is poised on the fissures of the present becoming the rhetorical figures of a national past" (294). Further ambivalence is evident in the postmodern age's celebration of dispersion and fragmentation as a way of life. However, these postmodern celebrants are often middle and upper class elites with limited experience of what it actually means to be dispersed or fragmented in *real* life. For example, the poor and homeless immigrants who have been dispersed by socio-economic pressures, like the Sudanese refugees living in refugee camps away from their homes, do not celebrate dispersion and fragmentation in the same way that these postmodern elites do, hence the need to specify what one means by dispersion or fragmentation. Granted, in the wake of fragmented and dislocated bodies, lives, and cultures, the idea of plurality or multiple belonging cannot be dismissed, but it is imperative to put it in context and to show the often neglected problem of unbelonging.

In contrast to the nationalist writers discussed above, Carol Boyce Davies felicitously observes in Black Women, Writing and Identity: Migration of the Subject (1994) that subjectivity "cannot be located and framed in terms of one specific place, but exist/s in myriad places and times, constantly eluding the terms of discussion" (36). Like Boyce Davies, Stuart Hall would argue that home "is not a fixed essence at all, lying unchanged outside history and culture. It is not some universal and transcendental spirit inside us on which history has made no fundamental mark. It is not one-and-for-all. It is not a fixed origin to which we can make some final and absolute return" (237). Hall's caveat, to the effect that we

take note of cultural encounters along the way, is important as we try to locate home. Boyce Davies's position is exemplified by Tayeb Salih's Mustafa Sa'eed in Season of Migration to the North (1970), and Mongo Beti's Medza in Mission to Kala (1958); the two characters' attempts to singularly identify with specific places are haunted by the lurking shadows of other places in their lives. For example, Mustapha's return to the source does not stop him from owning an "English fireplace," "Victorian chairs" (136). As the geographies of Mustapha's worlds intersect, the narrator, in a nationalist tone, questions Mustapha's loyalty to the source, "Was this the action of a man who wanted to turn over a new leaf? I shall bring the whole place down upon his head; I shall set it on fire" (136). Similarly, Medza is pampered on the basis of his European aura, which undercuts his commitment to the source. Paul Gilroy's The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness echoes a more or less similar view in its major claim of "transnational and intercultural" influences that filter into history as a result of movement: "The history of the black Atlantic since then, continually crisscrossed by the movements of black people – not only as commodities but engaged in various struggles towards emancipation, autonomy, and citizenship – provides a means to reexamine the problems of nationality, location, identity, and historical memory" (16). With this statement, Gilroy challenges the notion of absolute identity, as he maps a platform for "a *changing* rather than an unchanging same" (101). The changing same here is Gilroy's idea of Blackness, so his focus is more about race than space. What Davies, Hall, and Gilroy mean is that home is not frozen; it is continually being produced. It is on those premises

that we need to view characters who not only search for and/or return home, but also consistently find a changed home or no home at all. Achebe's Okonkwo meets this fate in Things Fall Apart, hence the narrator's theoretical, even philosophical, underscoring, "Seven years was a long time to be away from one's clan. A man's place was not always there, waiting for him. As soon as he left, someone else rose and filled it. The clan was like a lizard; if it lost its tail it soon grew another" (121). Okonkwo returns with the hope of finding the glorious, if ancient, Umuofia, but he is met with indifferent passiveness. The titles that mattered in Umuofia prior to his exile now have no significance, which preempts his resolution to acquire more titles. In a paradoxical twist, the time of exile that Okonkwo regretted as "seven wasted and weary years" (115) turn out to be more prosperous than the years following his return. He hoped to "return with a flourish , and regain the seven wasted years" in part "by initiating his sons in the *ozo* society" and "by taking the highest title" (121); instead, he loses his first son to Christianity, a loss which accentuates his regret that Enzima was a girl (122). Worse still, he loses his people, and, eventually, his life, to the colonial administration. That said, it is important to note that the notions of motion (Gilroy), migration (Boyce-Davies) or nomadism (Deleuze) featured in this section, and in postmodernist sensibilities, often have an undertone of touristic fervor – which is quite opposite from the oppressed movement of refugees, slum dwellers, and vagabonds. The lives of homeless people, especially in urban areas, are characterized by movement – they are forever aboard public trains or buses, going round and round without alighting, to escape the vagaries of cold

nights or to catch some sleep to create a temporary shelter. If they had (heated) shelter, perhaps they would spend their bus/train fare on a much needed sandwich. A qualification of movement is thus necessary, lest one mistake the constant mobility of vagabonds conditioned by their lack of shelter with the mobility of, say, Gilroy's sailors/explorers who hold respectable jobs.

In its attempt to rewrite home, this dissertation pays attention to what Kenneth Harrow, in Thresholds of Change in African Literature: The Emergence of a Tradition (1994), and R. Radhakrishnan, in Diasporic Mediations: Between Home and Location (1996), have called the problem of the Möbius strip. According to Radhakrishnan, "Part of the postcolonial predicament is its Moebius-strip-like character, whereby categories of 'inside' and 'outside' are in a state of interchangeability" (xxiv). I argue that the problem of home in postcolonial African literature is intricately linked to the increasing difficulty of negotiating the demarcation between inside and outside. Indeed, as Harrow articulates, "Outside the strip one world exists, within there is another, and the line between them is infinitely twisted and decentered" (257). This will become clear in the first chapter when we read Ahmadou Kourouma's Suns of Independence (1981), Cheikh Hamidou Kane's Ambiguous Adventure (1963), and Ama Ata Aidoo's The Dilemma of a Ghost (1965).

Kourouma's Suns of Independence, for example, deploys satire to show the ambivalence around the idea of returning to the source. In the novel, a Malinke known as Ibrahima Kone is buried in the city as opposed to his ancestral land. Of course, "traditional" Malinke view this as a misfortune or decline. To

keen readers, this city burial, this supposed betrayal of roots, is not a total surprise because even the name "Ibrahima" reveals a degree of cultural syncretism. The name is an evidence that Malinke people have been in contact with and embraced Islam, which does not originate from Malinkeland. As a result, Fama "first prays in Arabic, the language consecrated by God" (16) then in Malinke language – this pattern of prayer contradicts the Malinke's hold on their origin. More importantly, it shows that the Malinke people have a new sense of home and history. If they hitherto solely used Malinke as a reference point, they now have to include Arabic and, of course, their sense of home is also influenced by their local neighbors, colonization, independence, and the city. However, the narrator, perhaps in denial of change, does not think highly of city burial. The narrator says, in reference to the deceased's burial in the city, "if we weren't living in the era of independence (the suns of Independence, the Malinke say), no one would have dared bury him far away in foreign soil" (3). One immediately figures out that the nation is simultaneously home and not home, that the city, though within the nation, is a foreign land compared to the deceased's ancestral land. By viewing a section of the nation as a foreign land, the narrator puts pressure on nationalist writers' idea of a united nation. One also deduces that the Malinke live in the city under protest. It is a disgrace, a decline, stemming from post-independence disillusionment. Despite the Manichean language that marks the city as foreign soil, and the ancestral land as home proper, the city burial in itself marks a shift from the tendentious view of the urban home as a temporary place of residence which does not befit the funeral of a Malinke. One's burial

place is almost always regarded as one's home, so the city burial pushes one to look at the city as a new home for people who hitherto regarded it as foreign. In particular, it suggests that Kone had changed, and in so doing changed homes. In fact, despite the foreignness of the city soil, we are told that "the burial was piously performed, and the funeral rite observed with prodigality. Friends, relatives, even mere passers-by deposited gifts and sacrifices which were then divided up and shared out among those present and the great Malinke families of the capital city" (4). The point here is that it is persuasive to consider the city as Ibrahima Kone's home because it allowed for the observation of his funeral rites the same way his ancestral home would have done.

Even as the narrator allows us to witness the foreign soil becoming home in the above scene, she/he contradictorily privileges the *original* (ancestral) home when he says, "the various exceedingly complicated funeral rites for a Malinke blacksmith caste would have been performed in his native village" (4). First, the idea of caste implies class discrimination. The blacksmith caste is accorded preferential treatment, thereby indicating that being a Malinke alone is not enough to give one a complete sense of belonging. The fact that one's caste determines the type of burial one receives shows that home is slippery. Second, how does one reconcile the narrator's revelation that the city burial "was piously performed" and the narrator's suggestion that the city and its people can neither fathom nor perform "the various exceedingly complicated funeral rites" for the deceased? One can either read this as a disclosure of the narrator's reluctance to come to terms with change or the narrator's indication that the city is *almost*,

but *not quite* home. It might well be a lamentation of sorts – in this case a lamentation for a space that is no longer within one's reach, a space that has passed on, just like Ibrahima Kone. The ambivalence and illusiveness of this space, also referred to as "native land," becomes even more prominent when the Malinke people return to it only in death, not in life. "As with every Malinke, once life had fled his remains, his shade rose, spat, dressed and set out on the long journey to its distant native land, there to impart the sad news" (3). The shadow here could be read as Kone's soul/spirit, but it could also be read as an imaginary Kone, as anything but the *real* Kone. So, native land becomes a space for the imaginary.

Whichever reading one adopts, one is still confronted with the questions of authenticity and originality. We are told that Konate was "a Bambara. Yet all his features were those of a Fula" (58). This development undercuts arguments for authenticity. How original is original? What qualifies Togobala (the native village) and not the capital city as an original home, considering, among other factors, that the founder of the Dumbuya dynasty, Souleymane, lived in the north before he settled in Togobala? The text deconstructs the supposed valency of origins by showing us the impossibility of reaching the actual root of the Dumbuya. In addition, by locating the supposedly original Togobala between two kingdoms, the text undercuts its (and by extension Malinke's) claim of purity and stability. Therefore, as Harrow has observed, "The original version of Doumbouya beginnings [...] insists upon the cusp at the outset, on the failure to be able to opt for one side, on the mythical emplacement between two opposing forces. All of

the history of Doumbouya becomes a history of deferred commitment" (264). Harrow's argument that there is a serious difficulty in opting for one side is neatly exemplified in the novel, "[I]n Togobola, everyone publicly proclaims himself a devout Muslim, but everyone privately fears the fetish" (72). One, then, is left wondering how Togobola people reconcile the divide between adhering to the Qur'an (Muslims) and Koma (fetish-worshippers).

It is not only the issues of multiplicity and change that have been missing in the mainstream nationalist writings of home. There is a direct gender dimension to the question which has been largely ignored in the predominant critical discussions. The traditional gendering of space has built walls that have to come down when faced with my argument that home is a space of flux and contingency that cannot be isolated from the world. The oppressed -- women, slaves, the colonized, and many others -- are oppressed on the implicit premise that they do not adequately belong to the world. As a result, oppressed people and mainstream scholars have accepted the tag of outsiders as a tool for liberation. But this tag is problematic because it affirms the very premise, a defective one I must add, on which their oppression was based. Liberation has to be framed on every space's connectedness to every other space – no space stands in isolation.

Where does one locate home in cases where global affiliations problematize the usual location of home within the nation-state alone? Consider, for example, Charles Mungoshi's Waiting for the Rain (1975). Mungoshi's John, who resides in Bulawayo (a city), visits his rural home with a radio, which he

plays to his grandfather. After listening to world news, the grandfather asks, "Where is this all happening?" to which John responds, "All over the world, Sekuru. All over the world" (31). Clearly, the radio, a symbol of mass communication, brings the world (read global culture) to an old man who apparently has not traveled out of the locality. I use "apparently" here because Sekuru's participation in the World War already questions the supposed purity of his identity. In any case, the local (the old man) interacts and is linked with the global (world news on the radio). In addition, Mungoshi's Garabha, the wanderer, through his social relation with the several places and people he wanders to, complicates the subjectivity of his restful/settled relations, whom he visits and plays drums to from time to time. It is even possible that his popular and famous drumming borrows from the several cultures and borderlands he visits, and brings back strands of those cultures to his audience at his birthplace. That way, his audience travels without traveling; this confirms Doreen Massey's observation that "a proportion of the social interrelations will be wider than and go beyond the area being referred to in any particular context as a place" (169). Indeed, it also reminds us of Clifford's reference to traveling cultures, including the band that had been traveling to different cutltural sites for several years, while still performing their culture. When culture is so performative, it is difficult to tell what is real and what is not. In that sense, home is a performance that always changes, even when the performance of the culture of home by people who are not residing at home make it appear as fixed. For example, Indians abroad may only marry Indians and eat Indian food, but the Indians in India may be eating

Chinese food and marrying Nepalese. This tendency leads us to ask why a community, say Indians abroad, assert their essentialized identity more than their counterparts in India. This variance prompts us to query the meaning of home in this interplay between physical residents of a place called home and those who are not residing there. In other words, it allows us to consider that the issue of home is different when regarded from the North as opposed to the South, just as it is different between the rich and the poor. For Clifford, home cannot be separated from traveling. What does traveling or performing do to the notion of home? Through John's radio, Sekuru's participation in the World War, and Garabha's wandering, then, the text undercuts the supposed cultural singularity of the locality. That is, the text collapses the boundaries between *in* and *out* by showing that the former is inextricably linked to the latter, and vice versa. This linkage encourages simultaneous identification with the local and the global or the country and the city, since the two are strands of the same fabric. Moreover, it introduces us to the politics of nomadism.

If the boundaries between the city and the country are collapsed, then what are we to make of Oliver Mtukudzi's song, Dzoka Uyamwe [Return Home]? Mtukudzi seems to insinuate that there is an in (home) and out (the world). The artist appeals to the past and to the rural home as a rejuvenative space for his protagonist who has failed to find gold in the glitter of the urban space. By encouraging the protagonist to return home, the artist casts a shadow of doubt over the supposed progress in the city, thereby nostalgically granting currency and a new lease on life to the traditional past. Still, nostalgia is not merely a

sense of fixity to the past, but also, a revolutionary act that challenges modernity's privileging of the present time by allowing a co-existence of the past, present, and future. By leaving the city, which is more commonly associated with modernity and the present, to return to the rural space linked to tradition, Mtukudzi's protagonist disrupts modernity's sense of time. Here one is reminded of Svetlana Boym's The Future of Nostalgia (2001), particularly the insightful argument that "nostalgia is rebellion against the modern idea of time, the time of history and progress. The nostalgic desires to obliterate history and turn it into private or collective mythology, to revisit time like space, refusing to surrender to the irreversibility of time that plagues the human condition" (xv). This rebellion is significant because it brings to the fore issues of injustice on whose foundation modernity rests, but which, paradoxically, modernity endeavors to erase from our collective memory.

There is, however, another way of reading this urban-rural movement that Mtukudzi evokes. One could look at it as a reflection of Mtukudzi's mourning for the past, as an elusive attempt to hold on to a past that is quickly fading away. In that sense, Mtukudzi and his protagonist are not ready to embrace a worldwide wind of change that not only connects the city and the country to each other, but also to the rest of the world. Of course, the issue is much more complex. That act of mourning keeps a would-have-been eliminated history of Dande alive, thereby countering the city's story. The rural-urban-rural movement of Mtukudzi's protagonist also symbolizes the fragmentation and homelessness that have become our postcolonial condition. Mtukudzi's protagonist simultaneously

belongs everywhere and nowhere. For example, his living condition in the city is a far cry from the city's promise of affluence and prosperity. Like the janitor at Obi's workplace in Achebe's No Longer At Ease and the lower class in Achebe's Anthills of the Savannah (1987), Mtukudzi's protagonist is economically marginalized. It is a question of dispossession.

That said, Mtukudzi's appeal for his protagonist to return to Dande questionably implies that one's belongingness to the home space is always and already given, that one would fit in as soon as one returns. Nothing could be further from the truth, largely because the subject returning and the past he/she is returning to have had several interconnections over time, and these interconnections defy easy reproduction or repression. Moreover, Mtukudzi's appeal fails to recognize that the rural space is not completely removed from the total mess that is the urban space, that the wall that separates *in* and *out* is porous, that the city is in relation and not opposition to Dande. Viewing Dande and the city as two separate places, as in and out, to borrow Massey's words, "is a view of place as bounded, as in various ways a site of an authenticity, as singular, fixed and unproblematic in its identity. It is a conceptualization of space which rests in part on the view of space as statis" (5). Yet, places always stand on contested, fluid, and open grounds. This is the central trope in Harrow's Thresholds of Change in African Literature (1994), in which he insightfully argues that "the Möbius strip of passage must turn in both directions, inward and outward" (256). In fact, the cover of his book tellingly focuses on the threshold of the circumcision hut which is where Camara Laye's Dark Child (1954) places the

key spaces dividing inside and outside, between the boy's male world and his mother's package of food. In brief, places are interconnected.

This collapsing of boundaries between *in* and *out* has monumental impact on our understanding of home. For example, drawing on Amselle, it questions the location of home within the parameters of the nation by showing the link between one people and other people. Therefore, the idea of home, like identity, has to be reformulated in tandem with the ambivalences that characterize the postcolonial moment. Put differently, the nationalist framework on which the idea of home has always been predicated does not adequately account for the cultural overflows, transnational impurities, and ambivalences that characterize the postcolonial era. We have hope in works like B. Kojo Laing's Search Sweet Country (1986) and Woman of the Aeroplanes (1998) which counter the nationalist paradigm by acknowledging cultural impurities that result from the characters' interactions with different places and spaces in the world. Instead of searching for home within the auspices of the national aesthetic as Ngugi Wa Thion'go's Matigari (1987) does through Matigari, for example, Laing's Search Sweet Country uses Allotey to examine "how to burst through the propriety of ancient ways, then boldly sew the bits together again in different patterns" (246). Whereas Matigari is still imprisoned in the past, Allotey envisions "A way of living, a way of thinking, and a way of fortifying myself so that I shall return and attack my village with change" (97). In that respect, Allotey moves towards what Bhabha, in The Location of Culture (1994), has called "the possibility of a cultural hybridity that entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy" (4).

In brief, the postcolonial moment undercuts the nationalists' homogeneous and unified vision of home. But Bhabha's use of the word "difference" demands further attention, lest it give the wrong impression of different, separate items. Bhabha, following Derrida, uses the deconstructive term *différance* to mean a refusal of the metaphysics of presence. Harrow's Thresholds of Change in African Literature (1994) shares that view (12-13, 22, 313). This concept of difference will play a significant role in my attempt to problematize outside and inside.

Locating home remains problematic in part because of traditional readings that are still stuck in the age-old tendency of conceiving home as fixed, past, singular, and distinct – while there is glaring evidence that such readings do not address "the multiplicity of the pathways and trajectories of change" (Mbembe and Nuttall 349). But it is not enough to talk of open spaces without addressing the economic gap that often places the postcolonial subject in the dilemma of, on the one hand, identifying with plural home spaces, in keeping with the subject's affiliation to several worlds, and, on the other hand, negating or being negated by some spaces due to his/her miserable socio-economic and political station. In any case, three points stand out: i) home is multiply inscribed over time, ii) reproducing the past, while noble, is problematic and iii)socio-economic and political circumstances can deny one a sense of belonging to a place, even when one recognizes his/her cultural plurality. Where and how should the postcolonial subject locate home when the singular, distant past does not fully reflect the said subject's subjectivity, and the pluralized present nurtures economic and political

disparities? What happens to the location of home when both the past and the present prove foreign? This dissertation examines "the postcolonial subject's relation to the spaces it claims, occupies, or even negates" (Gikandi 220).

How are we to read, for instance, situations where characters move from rural to urban spaces, and vice versa, only to find that none of those spaces is homely? Globalization has blurred boundaries between what were hitherto considered separate spaces, making it increasingly difficult to discuss them as separate entities. It is therefore tempting to deduce that spaces share interactive relationships, especially in the global age. Indeed, as Bill Ashcroft's Post-Colonial Transformation (2001) has documented, "The *diffusion* of global influence makes the relationship between the local and the global all the more complex, because when we examine local cultures we find the presence of the global within the local to an extent that compels us to be very clear about our concept of the local" (215). In other words, the presence of the global within the local inevitably means that one cannot draw a straight line between the local and the global, that one cannot separate home from the world. For that reason, there is a need to configure a global sense of home, so as to account for the threads of global culture and relations that interweave the fabric that we call home. This configuration is exemplified in the music Mungoshi's Garabha plays; its quality is attributed to its diversity.

What happens to the meaning of home when the boundaries and maps we use to define it prove provisional, as is the case in Nurrudin Farah's Maps (1999)? Farah's Askar, having imbibed nationalist literatures, is determined to

recover his lost pre-colonial past, a determination that is already undercut by his usage of distorted colonial maps and history. The boundaries of Somali, we are told, vary from map to map. As a way of informing Askar about these distortions, Uncle Hilaal, who is a university professor, asks him,

> And did you know that Eduard Kremer, who was the drawer of the 1567 map, introduced numerous distortions, thereby altering our notion of the world and its size, did you? Africa, in Kremer's map, is smaller than Greenland. These maps, which bear in mind the European's prejudices, are the maps we used at school when I was young and, I am afraid to say, are still being reprinted year after year and used in schools in Africa. Arno Peters's map, drawn four hundred years later, gives more accurate proportions of the continents: Europe is smaller, Africa larger. (229)

If the map that Askar carries with him wherever he goes is distorted as we have seen, and if the nationalist cause he upholds is predicated on that very map, then Askar has not only to rethink the nation-form as a structure for configuring home, but also to consider the places beyond the boundaries that he has inherited. Such a consideration points to bell hooks's observation in Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics (1990) – she says, "[H]ome is no longer just one place. It is locations. Home is that place [...] where one discovers new ways of seeing reality, frontiers of difference. One confronts and accepts dispersal and fragmentation as part of the construction of a new world order that reveals more fully where we are ..." (148). So, even hooks accepts a postmodern sense of dispersal, fragmentation and homelessness as positive. While hooks' acceptance

can be understood culturally, it adds to the postmodernist celebration of nomadism at the risk of injuring the cause of poor people who are dispersed by economic hardships like unemployment. The poor in Africa, or the emigrants who are forced to leave or who leave because they dream of a good life possible only with incomes earned abroad have a very different view of fragmentation and dispersal, not to mention millions of refugees in Africa. How many Sudanese refugees, with their homes set on fire by militias and scattered to different directions in search of refuge, would share the rosy postmodernist view of dispersal? Toward this end, this dissertation seeks to investigate not merely the possibility of multiple homes but also the promise and alienness in each of these homes. How might we *confront* and *accept* "dispersal and fragmentation" as hooks suggests, without undermining the cause of dispersed people like the homeless and refugees?

Even as the dissertation pushes for a consideration of the places beyond Askar's boundaries, it is equally interested in finding the places within his boundaries, as they perform a constitutive role to the places beyond them. Bhabha's "DissemiNation: time, narrative, and the margins of the modern nation" (1990) will be useful here. According to this essay, all subjects, particularly postcolonials and migrants, do not quite fit into "the *Heim* of the national culture and its unisonant discourse, but are themselves the marks of a shifting boundary that alienates the frontiers of the modern nation" (315). What, then, does home mean as something different from away from home? Do slums problematize the notion of home differently from the rich neighborhoods? Here one has to show

how affect and class play on the idea of home. Askar fits Bhabha's card of "a shifting boundary," to the extent that he is at once Ethiopian, Somalian, and many other identities resulting from his imperial history. Chinua Achebe's Obi Okonkwo in No Longer at Ease (1960) also fits this card. Obi Okonkwo suffers homelessness in England because of his cultural and geographical displacement. He returns to Nigeria (his place of birth) shortly after independence with the hope of feeling at home, "But the Nigeria he returned to was in many ways different from the picture he had carried in his mind during those four years. There were many things he could no longer *recognize,* and others – like the slums of Lagos – which he was seeing for the first time" (14; my emphasis). One could argue that Obi is in the process of losing the struggle against forgetting, thanks to his education in England. That his inability to recognize the things that he once recognized stems from his colonial education in England becomes clear when one reads Cheikh Hamidou Kane's Ambiguous Adventure (1963). In this sophisticated novel, Kane's the Most Royal Lady says, "The school in which I would place our children will kill in them what today we love and rightly conserve with care. Perhaps the very memory of us will die in them. When they return from the school, there may be those who will not recognize us" (46). Notably, failure to *recognize* one's past and people is a common trope in postcolonial narratives.

Granted, Obi's case, in No Longer at Ease, is not simply a question of memory lapse. For example, the narrator lists slums of Lagos not as some of the many things which Obi could no longer recognize, but as the things he was seeing for the first time. This suggests that the slums developed to the point of

clear visibility during Obi's residence in England, and, in that sense, serves as a commentary on the decline of Nigeria. The juxtaposition of the slums of Lagos with the national home that Obi has returned to is indicative of the way in which the development of slums in Africa not only problematize one's sense of home, but also cast shadows on the promises of modernity. More importantly, Obi Okonkwo's inability to recognize many things he used to recognize before he left for England shows that he is at once an insider and outsider; he cannot recognize many things in Nigeria in part because he is looking at them through the colonizer's eyes. His conflict echoes what W.E.B. Du Bois has famously called "double-consciousness." Obi, largely because of his "mission-house upbringing and European education" now becomes "a stranger in his country" (82) – thereby re-enacting T.S. Eliot's poem "The Journey of the Magi," particularly its ambivalence for returning home. Even so, the novel does not deny the past. In fact, it shows that the past is not dead. This is exemplified in Obi Okonkwo's awkward silence when Clara first tells him that she is an outcast,

> "I am an *osu,*" she wept. Silence. She stopped weeping and quietly disengaged herself from him. Still he said nothing.
>
> "So you see we cannot get married," she said, quite firmly, almost gaily – a terrible kind of gaiety. Only the tears showed she had wept.
>
> "Nonsense!" said Obi. He shouted it almost, as if by shouting it now he could wipe away those seconds of silence, when everything had seemed to stop, waiting in vain for him to speak. (81)

Obi's silence, which serves as a meta-commentary, reveals that our past has a lot of bearing on our present, and thus cannot be easily dismissed or wished away. In fact, the past and memory restage themselves through Obi's telling "silence" and belated "nonsense." How does one deal with a past that has not completely passed, a past that has not completely died?

This study, to use Bruce Robins's words in his introduction of Cosmopolitics: Thinking and Feeling beyond the Nation (1998), is partly necessitated by "how far we remain from mastering the sorts of allegiance, ethics, and action that might go with our complex and multiple belonging" and by Robins's challenge that "this work has to be done" (3). Negotiating and mediating all these attachments (whether real or imagined), this study distances itself from the notion that the past is dead without acknowledging an authentic past. In that sense, home is partly the past, partly the present, partly the future, never completely one or all. To be sure, this should not be taken to mean that the past, present, and future are objects; rather, it should show that they are unstable referents, and that their instability reflects on what home is supposed to be. Like freedom and social justice, home is always work in progress. This project attempts to show, among other things, that the postmodernist sensibility and nationalist sensibility are two extremes – one denies the past and another denies the present, yet the past and present are not fixed entities. The past is built on memory, and constructed like identity. To treat the past as a fixed archive as it is sometimes treated by both the nationalists and postmodernists raises the question of who decides what goes into the archive, how it is interpreted, and for

what purpose. It is only when we understand who decides what is worth remembering that we begin to appreciate how the idea of home is constructed. For that reason, the two sensibilities cannot adequately address the problem of home in a global age. This is an age in which one has to simultaneously call global connections and global inequality in one breath, in order to appreciate the need for, and complexity around, home. The realizability of *this work* inevitably depends on the extent to which we question the conventional assumptions of belonging (that we solely belong to a distant and uncontaminated past, a singular and local place, a national framework, a husband- or fatherland), as much as we question postmodernist postures of multiple affiliations which contradictorily and implicitly silence one of the affiliations – the past. In Jameson's terms, postmodernism is a perpetual present. While Jameson's view may be true of the West, it does not capture the way postmodernism is experienced in Africa. Africa's historical homelessness and dispossession make it difficult for it to jump on the train of the perpetual present; Africa seems to be in search of a catharsis that is deep enough to swallow the countless years of programmed dispossession. It is this search for something that cannot yet be fully defined that forces the majority of African subjects to approach postmodernism with caution, to rethink the blanket embrace of world citizenship, and to consider the cosmopolitan ideal without rejecting the local affiliations. After the fall start of modernism, Africa seeks to put itself in a better position to come to terms with globalization and its discontents, even as it recognizes the inevitability of global connections. Paul Gilroy, in Postcolonial Melancholia (2005), and Kwame

Anthony Appiah, in Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers (2006) discuss this sense of a broader belonging. According to Appiah, this broader belonging demands that we "take minds and hearts formed over the long millennia of living in local troops and equip them with ideas and institutions that will allow us to live together as the global tribe we have become" (xiii). This way, the gap that seems to stand between the source and the diaspora can be bridged. To be sure, the cosmopolitanism I invoke here is not synonymous with universalism; it is a framework that allows for plural belongings without fashioning any particular belonging as *the chosen one,* it is what James Clifford would call "nonuniversalist cosmopolitanism." The new home has to come to terms with our fears and desires, our networks and cocoons, our feelings and conditions, our poverty and wealth.

Chapter One

Understanding Home Through Origins, Roots, and Sources (Home at the Dawn of National Independence)

> "What are we choosing today when we choose an identity, which is different from an echoing or a counter-echoing of Western discourse? Is there a difference between the choice of this counter-echo and the choice of programmed madness. Or are we in the place where we can choose something ex-orbitant?" (Spivak 18).
>
> "What, then, does de-colonisation of culture actually mean: the recuperation of an essential culture that existed before the historical moment of colonization, or the idea of admitting different histories to a complex and syncretic present composed of cross-cultural transfigurations?" (Chambers 74).

This chapter interrogates the validity of origins, roots, and sources, upon which African nationalist writers, including Senghor, Laye, Cabral, Armah, Aidoo, and Ngugi, have premised the idea of home in contemporary African literature. That is, it questions the nationalist writers' implication that there is a stable point out there called our roots, origin, or source, where we can -- and should – return to in order to retrieve our identity and thus home. This study is necessary in the wake of multiple experiences and histories that interweave our cultural spaces, and resist easy categorization. As Simon Gikandi has observed, in Maps Of Englishness: Writing Identity in the Culture of Colonialism (1996), African nationalist writers constructed new national identities based on "a self-willed return to precolonial traditions or as a conscious rejection of an imposed European identity" (194). The nationalist writers' constructions are limited because the so-called precolonial traditions are always already compromised by, among others, the acts of transformation and translation. Robin Cohen, in

Frontiers of Identity (1994), is right in noting that our national identities are formed on the basis of our "interaction with outsiders, strangers, foreigners and aliens – 'the others'. You know who you are, only by knowing who you are not" (1). In that sense, our identities are compromised. The other limit of the nationalist writers' position is that "a conscious rejection of an imposed European identity" does not necessarily eliminate the same identity in the unconscious. Moreover, even concerted efforts towards "a conscious rejection of an imposed European identity" often come to naught. As Gloria Anzaldua has recorded in Borderlands/ La Frontera: The New Mestiza (1987), cultural experiences do fade away easily; "[t]he borders and walls that that are supposed to keep the undesirable ideas out are entrenched habits and patterns of behavior; these habits and patterns are the enemies within" (2213). While I largely agree with Anzaldua, I would like to point out that, contrary to her view, the habits and patterns of behavior do not necessarily have to be our enemies; sometimes they are our friends, especially when they allow us a wider and more critical view of life. The big question, however, lies in what the nationalist writers call a return to precolonial traditions, and Lucky Dube, in solidarity with the nationalist writers, calls "going back to our roots."

First, as James Clifford astutely reminds us in the epigraph, we live in "a world where space is always already invaded" (367). Second, the notion of going back to our roots is not only easier said than done, but also (theoretically) debilitating. Edouard Glissant has rightly noted in Poetics of Relation (1997) that belonging does not solely lie in the root, but also in relation. According to

Glissant, "Most of the nations that gained freedom from colonization have tended to form around an idea of power – the totalitarian drive of a single, unique root – rather than around a fundamental relationship with the Other" (14). This tendency to form a sense of home around a unique root and not around a relationship with the Other stems from the colonized's desire to cut links with the colonizer, as a basis for legitimizing the struggle for freedom. But this legitimacy is anachronistic because it is not any different from the equally problematic attempt by the colonizer to institutionalize a polarized world between the colonizer and colonized. Homi Bhabha, in The Location of Culture (1994), also calls for

> the need to think beyond narratives of originary and initial subjectivities and to focus on those moments or processes that are produced in the articulation of cultural differences. These "in-between" spaces provide the terrain for elaborating strategies of selfhood – singular or communal – that initiate new signs of identity, and innovative sites of collaboration, and contestation, in the act of defining the idea of society itself. (1-2)

While Bhabha's call is timely, his formulation wrongly suggests that narratives of originary and in-between spaces are in opposition. Third, as Spivak's "Asked to Talk About Myself ..." has noted, "The question of origin can dis-able as much as it can en-able" (12). It is a double-edged sword which cuts both sides. For example, the colonized may share a history of dispossession, but they may not necessarily share a common identity, as the unity of the latter is fractured by class, ethnic, religious, gender, and other ideological factors. In this context,

singular pursuit of origin by the colonized does not only the search for their roots, but also takes away attention from structures of inequity, thereby dispossessing them further. It is because of these "enable-disable" characteristics of origin that one has to theorize and contextualize it.

One could argue that it is in order for dispossessed people to be in search of their silenced origins, which continue to haunt the present spaces. However, this search has to be approached differently so as to avoid the promotion of fixity and homogeneity. This different approach lies in the acknowledgement of an endless self-creation as a significant step towards what Fanon, in Black Skin, White Masks (1967), calls "a world of reciprocal recognitions" (218). For example, the colonized's resort to past songs for strength and hope in trying moments of the present keeps the past alive, while also blurring the border between the past and the present. This blurring, brought about by the coming together of the past and the present, allows for ongoing cultural self-(re)creation without undermining the past. In these songs, the past and the present, to borrow Bhabha's words, "develop an interstitial intimacy [...] that questions binary divisions through which such spheres of social experience are often spatially opposed" (13). The past has to restage itself through time; it has to find its way in the mix of the present and the future. If it waits to be excavated, then it might not be of much use. In addition, it is imperative that one searches for one's past with a clear understanding that it would only be a partial reflection of one's identity. As Bhabha puts it, "The recognition that tradition bestows is a partial form of identification. In restaging the past it introduces other, incommensurable cultural

temporalities into the invention of tradition. This process estranges any immediate access to an originary identity" (2). In other words, displacement and enunciative split occurs to the past, causing a ripple on its ostensible stability and unity. To be sure, this does not make the search for one's roots irrelevant; it only opens up space for "enunciative splits" and cultural fluidity. This fluidity, to the extent that it resists easy refuge in cultural dualism, say, of *the civilized* versus *the primitive,* might be the metamorphosis that the dispossessed need to face the future. Put differently, the challenges of tomorrow demand that we shift from viewing the past/root/ origin as unitary to viewing it as ambivalent, and this caveat applies to both the colonizers' claims on homogenous, superior spaces as well as the nationalists' counter-claims on authentic pasts. We need to recognize that there is always a bridge that connects the past and the present, and thus "prevents identities at either end of it from settling into primordial polarities" (Bhabha 4).

Glissant offers more insight on how to deal with our roots. Following Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, Glissant argues for a rhizome as opposed to a root, and for a conception of identity in relation. According to Glissant, the colonizer's claim that his root (read language and culture) is the strongest, and thus the measure of the colonized's profile, is partly responsible for the colonized's attempts to outdo the colonizer by projecting superior roots. "The conquered or visited peoples are thus forced into a long and painful quest after an identity whose first task will be opposition to the denaturing process introduced by the conqueror. A tragic variation of a search for identity" (Glissant 17). Glissant calls

this search tragic because, as it locates the colonized's home in an authentic pre-colonial past, it also limits it by repressing its postcolonial networks. Our sense of home, as Glissant has observed, would be better off when it surpasses this limitation, "allowing each person to be there and elsewhere, rooted and open" (340).

Still, the political and revolutionary gains of the nationalist writings of *origins, returns,* and *roots,* particularly at the dawn of independence, cannot be downplayed. These gains, plus the currency that narratives of return continue to register, suggest that something was and still is amiss in our so-called progress. If the fruits of modernity had been justly distributed, perhaps there would be less quest for the source. The ongoing search for home, to borrow Samira Kowash's words in "The Homeless Body," is "a symptom and a symbol of the failed promises of progress and prosperity" (320). In a similar vein, one cannot, in the name of recognizing the revolutionary purposes of the nationalist writings, ignore their denial of cultural engagements between the colonized and the colonizer. There is no working formula for a complete undoing of our mixture with the cultures and spaces we daily come in contact with. More importantly, it is not clear that a community that rejects difference and otherness grows. How might the idea of home be shaped at the intersection of our multiple experiences; that is, without denying any of our cultural contacts?

Drawing on Ahmadou Kourouma's Suns of Independence (1981), Cheikh Hamidou Kane's Ambiguous Adventure (1963), and Ama Ata Aidoo's The Dilemma of a Ghost (1965), the chapter argues that the premises of origins,

roots, and sources upon which the nationalist writers have located home are at once relevant and irrelevant. The relevance becomes clear when we view the call for roots as a performance, as a myth, with political goals. The impertinence stems from, among other reasons, the daily process of cultural translation which undercuts the notion of an originary moment by allowing for multiple affiliations. That these sources which seem irrelevant now were relevant in the 1950s points to the impact of time and space in culture. The idea of home cannot be fixed to a distant, single, and pure place in the past – as every place is interconnected and dynamic. Therefore, as Iain Chambers reminds us in Migrancy, Culture, Identity (1994), there is a need to

> conceive of dwelling as a mobile habitat, as a mode of inhabiting time and space not as though they were fixed and closed structures, but as providing the critical provocation of an opening whose questioning presence reverberates in the movement of the languages that constitute our sense of identity, place and belonging. There is no one place, language or tradition that claim this role. (4)

Even so, the chapter distances itself from branding all originary narratives as atavistic, preferring to show ways in which some originary narratives that seem only to valorize the past instead challenge and go beyond it.

Setting the tone for African nationalist writers' idea of a new home and nation at the dawn of independence, Cabral, in Return to the Source (1974), argues for a strategic return to precolonial cultures. According to Cabral, the colonized stand better chances of freedom when they maintain differences

between them and the colonizer (48). Cabral's concern, then, is a political strategy for freedom. He is arguing more on a political than cultural platform. Looked at that way, it is easier to understand why Cabral continues the colonial tune that depicts the colonized and colonizer as cultural opposites, without adequately acknowledging the impact of many years of contact between the two parties. Postcolonial writers like Gikandi, however, have shown that the colonizer and the colonized significantly influenced each other. In contrast, referring to the difference between human beings, who have a spiritual base, and material objects, Kane's Samba Diallo, in Ambiguous Adventure, suggests, "If we do not wake the West to the difference which separates us from the object, we shall be worth no more than it is, and we shall never master it" (154). Granted, difference can be, and is here, invented to serve political ends. But at what cost?

The nationalist insistence on *returning to the source,* however, is not always strategic. At times it is motivated by fear of "the new world." Newness is associated with doom, loss, and misgivings. This becomes evident when the Chief of the Diallobé, in Kane's Ambiguous Adventure, imagines Samba Diallo as his successor, "He [Samba Diallo] would have kept the movement of the Diallobé within the confines of the narrow track that winds between their past and those new fields where they want to pasture and gambol and be lost" (121). New fields here symbolize western culture while loss in this context means derailment from the path of God, which passes death. But there is more to this quotation than the linkage of newness with loss. It also spells the challenge of negotiating the line between the past and the new fields, by suggesting that only Samba Diallo is

qualified enough for the arduous task of keeping the Diallobé from *straying* to the new fields. The irony lies in using Samba Diallo who has pastured in new fields to prevent the Diallobé from pasturing in new fields. That the task can only be satisfactorily performed by Samba Diallo, who, tellingly, has already embraced Western education, shows that the Diallobé have lost the war of resisting newness. This loss significantly intensifies the Diallobé's crisis of belonging. The key word "intensify" is used here to show that the Diallobé's crisis of belonging begins long before their contact with the West. For example, there are structures of slavery and monarchy within the Diallobé which pose questions about the fundamentals of belonging to the Diallobé nation. While the Chief of the Diallobé seeks a successor who would uphold the past and consequently save the Diallobé from doom, Kane's the Most Royal Lady advocates new leadership. She is pleased that the young man about to replace the teacher:

> He has not, he never will have, that preference of the old man for traditional values, even those that are condemned and moribund, over the triumphant values that are assailing us. This young man is bold. He is not paralysed by the sense of what is sacred. He has no feeling for background. He will know better than anyone else how to welcome the new world. (121)

In the above statement the Royal Lady not only displays qualities of the young man about to replace the teacher, but she also critiques the old order's fixed hold on the past cultural values, including outdated and irrelevant ones. For the Royal lady, the location of home is not in "condemned and moribund" values, but in "the

new world." The problem with the Royal Lady's vision is that it is as uncritically fixed on the new world as the teacher's is uncritically fixed on the past. By occupying two extremes of new and old, the teacher and the Royal Lady fail to find a suitable location of home for the Diallobé. An accommodative location might seek to be an intersection of the old and new world, what Anzaldua refers to as "the juncture of culture" (ix).

A consideration of Cabral's arguments and the context in which they are made is necessary. In Return to the Source (1973), which I will discuss here in detail, Cabral is acknowledged by Africa Information Service as one of the nationalists who "return[ed] to the source of their own being" and thus "reaffirmed the right of their people to take their own place in history" (9). This acknowledgement already spells a need for the restoration of the colonized's place and history. Cabral is also remembered by the people of Portuguese Guinea as "a leader who helped them regain their identity and who was otherwise instrumental in the initial stages of the long and difficult process of national liberation" (9). This dissertation is interested in the identity that Cabral helped the people of Portuguese Guinea regain, as it is pertinent to the idea of home. This notion of Cabral helping his people regain their identity confirms Glissant's argument that the nationalist identities were formed around "a single, unique root" (14). But the big question is what motivated this drive for a distinct identity. First, Cabral's people "were told [by the Portuguese] to disdain everything African and to revere everything European. However, even if they adopted these attitudes they were never really accepted by their masters" (10).

Cabral, therefore, drew a political plan for fighting what he called "the shameful Portuguese colonial domination" (11). Cabral understood that foreign domination "can be maintained only by the permanent, organized repression of the cultural life of the people concerned" (39). So, as early as 1970 when he delivered "National Liberation and Culture," Cabral was aware of the critical role that culture play(ed) not only in foreign domination, but also in national liberation. According to him, "it is generally within the culture that we find the seed of opposition, which leads to the structuring and development of the liberation movement" (43).

The idea of home had to be located in culture because, according to Cabral, "with a strong indigenous cultural life, foreign domination cannot be sure of its perpetuation" (39-40). To ensure this indigenous cultural life, Cabral called for "cultural resistance" to "take on new forms (political, economic, armed) in order fully to contest foreign domination" (40). Cabral and his people "agreed to make great sacrifices [...] to recover our liberty and human dignity, whatever the path to be followed" (18). It is instructive that Cabral approved any path "to win the liberation of their homeland" (31). It is in this approval that we have to understand the concept of returning to the source, with its shortcomings. Interestingly, even as Cabral championed a return to the source, he also understood the dynamism of culture. In his words,

> culture is always in the life of a society (open or closed), the more or less conscious result of the economic and political activities of that society, the more or less dynamic expression of the kinds of relationships which

> prevail in that society, on the one hand between man (considered individually or collectively) and nature, and, on the other hand, among individuals, groups of individuals, social strata or classes. (41)

He frames this in Marxist terms (man versus nature), which is based on the notions of the dialectic, contradiction, struggle. In this case, he is not arguing for a static notion of culture. One, then, has to reconcile the paradox of fixity and dynamism inherent in Cabral's arguments. Cabral gives a hint on how to address the contradiction in his proposal for a culture that at once reflects the society as it is (following the consequences of economic and political realities of the moment) and the society as it was (prior to foreign domination). To get out of this conundrum, Cabral urges us to look at culture as "the ideological or idealist plane of the physical and historical reality of the society that is dominated or to be dominated" (41). It is this political, Marxist, angle that one needs in order to understand Cabral's deployment of culture. For Cabral, culture is not simply a product of our way(s) of life but also a producer of the same. We see the dialectic at work when he says, "Culture is simultaneously the fruit of a people's history and *a determinant of history*, by the positive or negative influence which it exerts on the evolution of relationships between man and his environment, among men or groups of men within a society, as well as among different societies" (41; my emphasis). Cabral's call for returning to the source has more to do with culture as a determinant of history than culture as a fruit of history. His *source* or national home thus involves creation and growth. It is not some distant past that is resistant to change, as Cabral recognizes that "no culture is a perfect, finished

whole. Culture, like history, is an expanding and developing phenomenon" (50). In fact, Cabral uncharacteristically encourages the adoption of positive cultural values from the oppressor, a move which complicates *the source* that he wants his people to return to. As he argues,

> A people who free themselves from foreign domination will be free culturally only if, without complexes and *without underestimating the importance of positive accretions from the oppressor and other cultures*, they return to the upward paths of their own culture, which is nourished by the living reality of its environment, and which negates both harmful influences and any kind of subjection to foreign culture. (43; my emphasis)

Again, this is dialectical. Cabral's *source* does not only allow for positive aspects of other cultures. It also allows for a return to "the upward paths of their own culture," which means the positive aspects of the indigenous culture. Clearly, Cabral is aware that there are *downward paths* within the precolonial culture which are not worth returning to because they are not progressive. This *source* or space that Cabral wants his people to return to has to come to terms with the challenges of the moment – "nourished by the living reality of its environment" (43). This *source,* then, is not frozen in time. It changes in line with the environment of the time. It might have pre-colonial and colonial elements in it, but it is neither pre-colonial nor colonial. It is a simultaneous accretion to, and subtraction from, the pre-colonial past – courtesy of its own life/dynamism and the other cultures it comes in contact with.

Cabral's position that "the national liberation rests in the inalienable right of every people to have their own history" (43) is persuasive. However, it remains at the level of ideology because the histories of the colonizer and the colonized have mixed so much that it is not easy to talk about one without the other. What are the configurations of Cabral's people's own history? How is it different from the other histories? To address this question, one has to consider that Cabral uses history and culture almost interchangeably. Advocating the restoration of African culture, which he views as "the beginning of a new era in the history of the continent," (49) Cabral gives the impression that the said culture is easily attainable, it is simply there. According to him,

> African culture survived all the storms [of colonialism], taking refuge in the villages, in the forests and in the spirit of the generations who were victims of colonialisms. Like the seed which long awaits conditions favorable to germination in order to assure the survival of the species and its development, the culture of African peoples flourishes again today, across the continent, in struggles for national liberation. (49)

What becomes evident here is that a dialectical reading of Cabral leads to a very different framing. In the absence of that dialectical reading, one is tempted to contest Cabral's claim that African culture survived all the storms of colonization. The storm of colonization did not spare villages. And Cabral knows this. It is possible that Cabral deploys hubris here to inspire and assure his people that their culture is still intact, while knowing very well that that is not the case. In fact, his analogy of the seed that awaits conditions favorable to germination works

against him because such a seed is already affected and shaped by the hostile climate that delayed its germination. So, even when it finally germinates, it cannot claim that it survived all the hostility.

Cabral's argument is further compromised by his attempt to undermine the influence of colonial culture on the colonized. "[T]he area of *cultural influence* is usually restricted to coastal strips and to a few limited parts in the interior. Outside the boundaries of the capital and other urban centers, the influence of the colonial power's culture is almost nil" (Cabral 60). Cabral does not stop there, "It can thus be seen that the masses in the rural areas, like a large section of the urban population, say, in all, over 99% of the indigenous population are untouched or almost untouched by the culture of the colonial power" (60). The problem with these two positions is that they constitute a view of place and culture as stable and bounded. Cultural influence cannot be locked within the place where the colonizer lived, considering that people moved and mixed. Furthermore, to claim that the indigenous population were "untouched or almost untouched" is questionable if we consider that the colonial policies seriously affected the interior regions. A cursory glance at V.Y. Mudimbe's The Invention of Africa: Gnosis, Philosophy, and the Order of Knowledge (1988), for example, shows a colonization of Africans' land and minds to an extent that challenges Cabral's assertion. Why, then, does Cabral take such a debatable view. Cabral, like his fellow nationalist writers, had one primary goal – to authenticate the precolonial culture, to validate the *source.* By arguing that "[precolonial] culture took refuge in the villages, in the forests, and in the spirit of the victims of

domination," (61) Cabral apparently provides the rationale for *return to the source.* His strategy here is to show that pre-colonial culture is not only existent, but also unscathed after colonization. It is a position that Cabral himself contradicts when he argues that culture, space, and time are closely related, "The coordinates of culture, like those of any developing phenomenon, vary in space and time, whether they be material (physical) or human (biological and social)" (51).

Cabral also explains the concept, *return to the source,* in terms of the indigenous petite bourgeoisie or native elites who turn to the native masses following increased isolation and marginalization by the bourgeoisie. By so doing, they "question their marginal status, and [work] to re-discover an identity" (62). His explanation is worth quoting,

> But the "return to the source" is not and cannot in itself be an *act of struggle* against foreign domination (colonialist and racist) and it no longer necessarily means a return to traditions. It is the denial, by the petite bourgeoisie, of the pretended supremacy of the culture of the dominant power over that of the dominated people with which it must identify itself. (63)

This is a new development in Cabral's thinking. With some difficulty, Cabral shifts from looking at *return to the source* as a return to the indigenous cultural values of the masses to looking at it as a denial of the supposed supremacy the colonizer's culture. The denial is a dialectical negative, which leads one to question whether the "source" is the dialectical thesis, and if he is suggesting a

process that produces the synthesis. Of course, the fact that the petite bourgeoisie are partly formed by colonial culture already compromises their denial. One would even add that if their denial is the definition of *a return to the source* then that return is equally compromised. Still, Cabral's shift brings about a more complex understanding of *return to the source* than the previous one. For example, it recognizes that a *return to the source* "is a slow process, broken up and uneven, whose development depends on the degree of acculturation of each individual, of the material circumstances of his life, on the forming of his ideas and on his experiences as a social being" (Cabral 63). This is an important recognition because it departs from the nationalist assumption that the masses are always one and the same, even as it stresses on cultural identification with the masses. "So, 'the return to the source' is of no historical importance unless it brings not only real involvement in the struggle for independence, but also complete and absolute identification with the hopes of the mass of the people, who contest not only the foreign culture but also the foreign domination as a whole" (Cabral 63). Arguably, this point is a populist qualification of the idea – "return to the source." Nevertheless, Cabral's canonization of independence here is premature, considering the despotism and disillusionments that followed independence. Korouma's *Suns of Independence* is a demonstration that the joy of independence in some African countries was almost immediately replaced with sorrow. For example, "The president and the single party launched a wave of repression" (109). It was, therefore, not uncommon to find opposition politicians strategizing for a second liberation. At this point, it is necessary that we look at

how characters who *return to the source* like Ama Ata Aidoo's Eulalie, in The Dilemma of a Ghost fit Cabral's definition.

Aidoo's play is based on two major characters: Ato, a Ghanaian, and Eulalie, and African American. Both of them are university students in America. They meet at the university and develop an intimate relationship which leads to their marriage. The play starts off with a conflict between the old and new. We are told, "The action takes place in the courtyard of the newest wing of the Odumna Clan house. It is enclosed on the right by a wall of the old building and both at the centre and on the left by the walls of the new wing. At the right-hand corner a door links the courtyard of the old house" (5). It becomes evident, therefore, that the play is in part concerned with the relationship between time (past and present) and home space. The play uses the newest wing of the house to symbolize new developments in the history of the clan, and how these developments re-define and extend the home space. In the play it is fashionable to embrace modernity; as such, the horn blower sings with pride, "We are moving forward, forward, forward..." (8). The new wing of the house is part of this forward movement. But we encounter problems right away. This forward movement is exclusionary because it leaves out almost all the residents, "[I]t is expected that they [members of Odumna clan house] should *reserve the new addition to the house for the exclusive use of the One Scholar*. Not that they expect him to make his home there. No...he will certainly have to live and work in the city when he arrives from the white man's land" (8; my emphasis). Many questions arise at this point. Why is the new wing of the house exclusively

reserved for Ato? One reads a divided home. The rest of the family rejects newness by not sharing the new house, and Ato rejects his past by not demanding to share the old wings of the home. But the issue is much more complex. Even though Ato does not live in the rural area, "they all expect him to come down, now and then, at the weekend and festive occasions like Christmas. And certainly, he must come home for blessings when the new yam has been harvested and Stools are sprinkled" (8). One is compelled to think that Ato does not fully identify with the rural home. Home for Ato has become a contested space. Is home the city where Ato lives everyday, or the rural area where he comes at least once a year to attend the new yam blessings? That the Odumna clan house is no longer a home to Ato in the way it was is evident in the fact that it is a space he visits because he is expected to do so. It does not come naturally to him as the city does. It is possible, therefore, that the new wing is not new enough for Ato. What his parents perceived as a half-way home, bridging his world and theirs, effectively becomes an abandoned home. One of the lessons one learns from Ato's location of home in the city is that travel widens one's cultural bearings, and thus shifts one's understanding of home. Little wonder Ato believes that his love his wife, not his family's love for her, is "what matters" (10). Ato registers his distance from the rural home when he tells his prospective wife, Eulalie, about where they would live, "There are no palms where we will live[...].Unless of course if I take you to see my folks at home. There are real palm trees there" (9). Ato seems to view the rural home more as his parents' home than his home, and his going there is a matter of *if* as opposed to *when*.

Ato's usage of "if" casts doubts on the givenness of his family ties and originality. Indeed, his stance here deconstructs the idea of return to the source. It as though his return stops at the outskirts of the source (in the city); it is a journey that cannot be completed, contrary to the gospel of the *returnists.*

If we look at home in terms of family and community, then we can see that home is divided at many levels. First, the forces that plucked Eulalie's grandparents from Africa into slavery not only delinked them from their ancestral home but also destroyed the homes they left behind. Their labor which was meant to build their ancestral home was now serving the slave master's interests. Walter Rodney's How Europe Underdeveloped Africa (1972) is relevant here because it talks about the relationship between labor exploitation and underdevelopment. Second, the system of modernity in place during Ato's time demands that he goes to the West to acquire Western education so as to be relevant in the new dispensation. If his departure was not bad enough for the cohesiveness of the family, his settlement in the city when he returns is. The alienation that afflicts Aidoo's characters must be understood as systematic rather than isolated/individual homelessness.

When we meet Eulalie, we learn that her university degree has not granted her the happiness she expected (8). We also learn that she is an orphan when she asks Ato, "Could I even point to you a beggar in the streets as my father or mother? Ato, can't your Ma be sort of my Ma too?" (9). Finally, Ato tells us "her grandfathers and grandmothers were slaves" (18). Eulalie's return and her Afro-centrism represent a form of Black Diaspora politics. The three

instances above provide a subtext for Eulalie's homelessness. Eulalie pursued her university degree on the understanding that it would grant her happiness as it did her fellow Americans. However, upon her graduation, she realizes that her case is different. What Eulalie is alluding to here is that she has been treated differently because she is different from most Americans; that is, a university degree has not worked for her because she is black, poor, and parentless (24). Her loneliness stems not only from her parents' death, but also from her society's unwillingness (not even a beggar wants to be a parent figure for her) to give her parental care. And a society that does not care about an orphan, one is tempted to think, would not care about the conditions that made her/him an orphan. When viewed from that angle then the fact that Eulalie has no relatives comes across as a commentary on her society's calculated destruction of family unit. Eulalie's rhetorical question to her mum concurs: "There was no one left was there? And how can one make a family out of Harlem?" (24). If Harlem is not congenial for raising a family, then African Americans, to whom Harlem is home far away from home, are doomed. Eulalie adds, "Ma, I've come to the very source. I've come to Africa and I hope that where'er you are, you sort of know and approve" (24). It is her alienation in America that drives her away, lest she perish prematurely like her parents. But the issue becomes more complex when we read Eulalie as a decoy of the Biblical Ruth. Echoing the Biblical Ruth's plea to Naomi, Eulalie asks Ato, "Ato, can't your Ma be sort of my Ma too? And your Pa mine? And your gods my gods? Shall I die where you will die?" (9). Eulalie's pledge here draws on Ruth's declaration to Naomi, "Thy people shall be my people, Thy god shall

be my god, Whither thou diest, I will die, and there I will be buried" (Ruth 1:17). Ironically, as soon as she arrives in Ato's home, Eulalie falls short of her *Ruthian* pledge. For example, she refuses to make Ato's food her food when she discards the food that Ato's mother gives her (31-32). What is food to Ato and Ato's people, to Eulalie, only amounts to "horrid creatures" (32). In addition, instead of embracing the rituals that Ato's people perform in order to bless the home, she reduces them to "a blasted mess" (41) of "savage customs and standards" (47), to a "rotten land" (48). The irony is that Eulalie uses the American culture, which she strived to escape, to measure other cultures.

Eulalie also drinks coca-cola, saying, "I was only feeling a little homesick and I drank it for sentimental reasons. I could have had a much cooler, sweeter and more nourishing substitute in coconuts, couldn't I?" (26). Here, again, Eulalie fails to meet her *Ruthian* declaration. She is homesick not for Ato's home, but her home in America. The point here is that Eulalie finds the task of making Ato's home her home much more complex than she anticipated. One could persuasively argue that the Biblical Ruth does a much better job of living up to the *Ruthian* pledge than Eulalie – Ruth embraces Naomi's people while Eulalie calls Ato's people "goddam people" who are "[m]ore savage than dinosaurs" (47).

When Ato uses his people's culture to put pressure on her, she vexingly asks Ato, "Who married me, you or your goddam people?" (47). Eulalie's question departs from her Ruthian pledge, and demonstrates not only that she never studied the cultural constitution of *the source* before returning, but that the ideal of a return to Africa is more difficult than the reality. In that sense, the text

parodies the Afro-centrism of African Americans. If she had done so, she would have known that she was not only marrying Ato, but also Ato's people, as this is one of the basic articles of Ato's world. In any case, Ruth and Eulalie make the new places they move to more tolerant of diversity, as they undergo transformation in adjustment. Ruth is a Moabite while her mother-in-law, Naomi, is an Israelite. The two sides (Moabites and Israelites/Bethlehemians) are enemies.

Eulalie's problem of belonging becomes clearer when she tells Ato, "To belong to somewhere again...Sure, this must be bliss" (9). Eulalie implies here that she does not belong anywhere, certainly not to America. Eulalie's implied unbelonging to America requires analysis. The word "again" suggests that Eulalie once belonged somewhere. She is metaphorically referring to the collective belongingness of African Americans to Africa, to the fact that African Americans belonged to Africa before the historic slave trade. Politically, Eulalie's claim is strategic. But, culturally and socially, it is difficult to view Eulalie's belonging to Africa as wholly synonymous to the belonging (to Africa) of the very ancestors who were uprooted. Nevertheless, Eulalie decides to *return to the source* together with Ato in an attempt to find this elusive happiness, to find a home. But the fact that she is neither grounded in America nor Africa complicates her relocation. Born in America, Eulalie does not know Africa, except through stereotypes (25). And even if she were one of the uprooted slaves from Africa, her possible return would not necessarily be "bliss" as she assumes. Upon her *return,* Eulalie finds out that *the source* is much more challenging than her

romanticized view comprising "The palm trees, the azure sea, the sun and the golden beaches" (9). As soon as she arrives in Africa, she realizes that she has a lot of adjustments to make. That she is American first, then African second, becomes clear when warm coca-cola (read America) wins over "a much cooler, sweeter and more nourishing substitute in coconuts [read Africa]" (24). Eulalie's homesickness for America undermines her attempts to abandon it.

Aidoo's play, one could argue, uses Eulalie to echo Marcus Garvey's "Return to Africa" call. Eulalie's presence in America and her identity as an African American dates back to the seventeenth through the nineteenth century when Africans were shipped out of the continent through the Middle Passage into the New World in the name of slave trade. There have been enormous cultural transformations both in the Continent and in the Diaspora within that period. It is on that premise that Paul Gilroy, in The Black Atlantic (1993), bases his argument that the Diasporic Africans share neither a similar history nor experience with the Continental Africans (23-24). Gilroy's main concern is that the similarity claims misleadingly translate to the homogenization of the differences between the two groups. Indeed, as long as culture is lived and experienced, one cannot intelligently argue that Eulalie (African Americans) and Ato (Africans) share a common culture. But even before Gilroy's book, Aidoo had documented the cultural differences; for example she exposes a clash of values to underscore "the differences between [Eulalie's] people and [Ato's]" (9). But some of the Diasporic Africans who seek to *return to the source* are already aware that they do not share a common experience with Continental Africans.

Homeland and belongingness need not, and should not, be solely linked to geographical locations. How then can we explain their quest to return to "the source?"

One way is through a proverb, "a toad does not run in the daytime unless something is after its life" (Achebe 138). Aidoo's Eulalie is a university graduate; we therefore expect her to secure *a good job* and to lead *a good life.* But, as she reveals in a rhetorical question, this is not the case: "Why should I have supposed that mere graduation is a passport to happiness?" (8). As a result of slavery and its legacies, Eulalie leads a fragmented life without a family. So, Eulalie's return is an attempt to fill a missing link (family), for as John Durham Peters has so convincingly argued, "The shock, disruption, or loss accompanying exile together with the distance from the home's mundane realities, can invite the project of restoring the 'original' – the original home, the original state of being. Idealization often goes with mourning" (19). The play does not tell us what exactly happened to Eulalie's parents – they could have been succumbed to the very system that Eulalie is trying to run away from. The point is that Eulalie and, by extension, Diasporic Africans, would not be so determined to return to the source if American state ideological apparatuses had fully accommodated them. If African Americans and other minorities are *looking back*, it is partly because the state apparatus "feeds at a prissy distance on the wild glamour of minorities while neither alleviating their hardships nor recognizing their autonomy. People of color thus have real reasons for suspecting a whiteness that joins – and effaces, all colors" (Peters 35). Indeed, "[v]ery often it is when we feel deeply dissatisfied

with marketplace pluralism and its unwillingness to confront and correct the injustices of dominant racism that we turn our diasporan gaze back to the home country. Often, the gaze is uncritical and nostalgic [...] half-truths, stereotypes, so-called traditions, rituals, and so-forth" (Radhakrishman 128). Aidoo's return, therefore, can be read as a search for belonging.

It is, admittedly, hopelessness and the thought that slavery is still alive except in a subtle form, that makes some Diasporic Africans "look back, even at the risk of being mutated into pillars of salt" (Rushdie 10). Eulalie's mutation, for instance, is marked by her frustration in Ghana. Writing on the same issue of diaspora, but addressing the Caribbean people, Hall makes a long statement that in my opinion applies to all Diasporic Africans:

> Black, brown, mulatto, white – all must look *Présence Africaine* in the face, speak its name. But whether it is, in this sense an *origin* of our identities, unchanged by four hundred years of displacement, dismemberment, transportation, to which we could in any final or literal sense return, is more open to doubt. The original "Africa" is no longer there. It too has been transformed. History is, in that sense, irreversible. We must not collude with the West which, precisely, normalizes and appropriates Africa by freezing it into some timeless zone of the primitive, unchanging past. Africa must at last be reckoned with by Caribbean [African American] people, but it cannot in any simple sense be recovered. (241)

Hall's argument that Diasporic Africans ought to accept the *Africanness* and *exileness* in them is persuasive. A return to pre-slavery Africa would be atavistic.

But Hall fails to give a better alternative – the fact that Diasporic Africans cannot return does not mean that they are at home. One needs to go beyond stating where people cannot go, because the problem of the diaspora is not so much a place to return to, but a place and space to belong to. Echoing Hall, Caren Kaplan reminds us that people in the diaspora have "no possibility of staying at home in the conventional sense – that is, the world has changed to the point that those domestic, national, or marked spaces no longer exist" (7). Kaplan is right in observing that "marked spaces no longer exist" but she does not address the imaginary or the discourse of origins that operates regardless of the changes she talks about. She also does not give an alternative space in which racial others of the world like Eulalie can have a sense of belonging. Undoubtedly, cultural identity and belonging are more problematic than they seem.

Worth noting is the question of hierarchy. By placing a premium on returning to "the source," Eulalie unwittingly reinforces the general misconception that Africa (homeland) is superior to diaspora (America). She says, "Ma, I've come to the very source. I've come to Africa and I hope that where'er you are, you sort of know and approve" (24). Like The Dilemma of a Ghost, Lorraine Hansberry's A Raisin in the Sun draws on Garvey's political clarion, "Back to Africa." Beneatha's relationship with Joseph Asegai, like Eulalie and Ato's, is partly motivated by Beneatha's search for African identity. Asegai is a Nigerian (African), so Beneatha sees him as a gateway to African heritage. Not even the knowledge that she is studying to be a medical doctor – a well paying and respected profession – can appease her. It is this notion that the Diasporic

Africans' home is in Africa that makes many of them associate their sense of belonging with Africa without critically assessing other factors that affect one's belonging. Braziel and Mannur rightly view "belonging as a process always in change and always mediated by issues of class, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality" (14). For example, The Dilemma of a Ghost has two classes – the rich/ upper class which consists of those who "have arrived" and the poor/ lower class which is made up of those who "have not arrived." In the words of Esi to Ato: "My knees are callous with bending before the rich…How my friends must be laughing behind me now. 'After all the fuss, she is poorer than ever before'" (35). The existence of these two classes – the poor and the rich – means that one could belong or not belong depending on one's class. The same is true of gender and race. For instance, "Eulalie is objectified and her identity is gendered, racialized, and contested as an 'other'" (Eke 76). In the play the second woman refers to her as "Black-white woman" (22). Note Esi's speech to her son when Eulalie throws away the snails: "Do you not know how to eat them now? What kind of man are you growing into? Are your wife's taboos yours? *Rather your taboos should be hers*" (33; my emphasis). This could be read as gender inequality or patriarchal tyranny, affirmed and perpetuated by women, but it could also be read as the norm or culture of Ato's people. Still on gender inequality, Ato gives the men chairs while the women sit on the ground (42). Interestingly, the women have internalized the inequality so much that when Ato later gives Eulalie his chair and offers to sit on the ground, the women condemn him (43). That women have internalized their oppression is also evident in Nana's utterance when Eulalie

leaves the gathering of men and women: "I have not heard the like of this before. Is the woman for whom *stalwart men* have assembled herself leaving the place of assembly?" (43; my emphasis). Why, one is tempted to ask, doesn't Nana acknowledge the women's presence in this summit? The issue of belonging, as we have seen, becomes more problematic when stretched along the lines of gender, class, and sexuality.

In an attempt to configure a plausible home for characters like Eulalie, Peters considers nomadism. According to Peters, "Nomadism [...] denies the dream of a homeland, with the result that home, being portable, is available everywhere" (31). Nomads laudably don't subscribe to the notion of a fixed home, a position that would perhaps solve the diasporic people's endless desire to return home. Defying settlement, the proponents of nomadism like Deleuze readily embrace change. But nomadism does not simply refer to people in motion. As Braidotti would say, "It is the subversion of set conventions that defines the nomadic state, not the literal act of traveling" (Peters 33). That said, nomadism does not adequately address the crisis of diasporic identity, especially among African Americans. One needs to recognize that there is a world of difference between being forced into exile and going to exile voluntarily. The African Americans like Eulalie "did not choose to lose their homes and homelands; mourning is not their fault but a fate" (Peters 34). Moreover, and perhaps more importantly, as Bourgeot argues, "[t]hough nomadism may inspire theorists, actual nomads arouse disdain and disgust from nation-states and their citizens" (qtd. in Peters 36). Nomads generally live in miserable conditions, and,

thanks to racism and bigotry, are associated with backwardness. We risk undermining their political struggles for change when we romanticize nomadism. Looked at in that context, we ought to declare where we stand before we celebrate nomadism, even if it is only a metaphor. Even so, one must still recall that Diasporic peoples and *original* homelands "are not naturally and organically connected" (Boyarin and Boyarin 723).

In the words of Karen Chapman, "The American Black has been removed from Africa for a long time. Contrary to what many romantically inclined Garveyites would like to believe, to return to the 'source' is a much more difficult task than its fascination may suggest, for it would mean returning to a culture never experienced" (30). Sharing a similar view, but in a different context, Kenneth Harrow rightly argues that diasporic return to the source can be "realized only as a dream, as [...] fantasy, in the spaces outside of harsh reality and its dilemmas" (172). Paradoxically, it is precisely these dreams and fantasies that feed the actions of individuals and even the political movements of return. In other words, it might be delusive to think that Diasporic Africans' identity is lying somewhere in Africa, waiting to be embraced; however, that does not stop the dreams. In brief, even though we can never feel at home anywhere, it is imperative to negotiate identity and home wherever we are, and to recognize that they are bound to undergo constant change with time and with new situations and experiences (given their fluidity). Glissant makes a similar point, as we have seen in the introduction.

As Hall so persuasively argues in a different context, homelands are "are subject to the continuous 'play' of history, culture, and power" (236).

To understand the complexity of this notion of *return to the source,* one has to follow the conversation between the old man, Medouze, and the little boy, Jose, in Euzhan Palcy's film, Sugar Cane Alley (1983). The film is set in the Martinique of 1930s, and depicts the lives of "former" slaves and their descendants who work on sugar cane plantations. They live in shacks, and live on "pig tails." In other words, poverty is their daily bread. When Palcy's Jose asks Medouze to take him with him when he returns to Africa, the old man wisely educates him on what returning to Africa entails. Calling Africa his "dad's country," Medouze explains to Jose thus,

> Alas, my child ...
>
> Medouze will never go to Africa
>
> Medouze has no one left in Africa
>
> When I will be dead...
>
> When my old body is buried...
>
> then I'll go to Africa
>
> But I can't take you along.
>
> We'll all go to Africa one day.

It is important to analyze Medouze's subtlety here: I'll never go to Africa, I'll go to Africa when I am dead, and we'll all go to Africa one day. What exactly does Medouze mean? Medouze tells Jose that he would never return to Africa except in death, meaning that he would only *return to the source* in spirit. He realizes

that his return in life is not practical without dismissing the concept of return. This education is critical and timely. It is an education that Aidoo's Eulalie could learn from. Palcy does not in anyway suggest that Medouze has a happy home in Martinique. In fact, what Medouze calls home is nothing but a Black Shack, an equivalent of slums, where black sugarcane plantation workers are forced to live by the oppressive socio-economic conditions. Even though slavery has formally ended, Medouze says, "Nothing has changed, son. The whites own all the land. The law forbids their beating us, but it doesn't force them to pay us a decent wage." This, of course, is well before workers' unions and labor organizations. His bed is a hard pile of bamboo. His body reveals penury and hardship. While his younger life was reduced to slavery, his old age involves servitude. He has to work the plantations for wages that can only buy alcohol to help him sleep through the hard-labor and age related aches. He has no family because all his family were scattered by "The white men [who] hunted us. They caught us with lassos. Then...They took us to the edge of the big water. One day we were unloaded here. We were sold to cut cane for the whites." Why, then, does Medouze, who has a much closer relationship with Africa, and a vivid memory of the capture and subsequent enslavement across the Atlantic, reject a physical *return to the source?* What are we to make of his position? And what are we to make of this charcter who actually provides a historical link to Africa for Jose? Medouze recognizes that Africa is not spared from the oppressive forces that have subjected him to servitude.

Kane's Ambivalent Adventure (1963), like its title, is more ambivalent than Aidoo's The Dilemma of a Ghost . It is set in the period of new independence, and explores the challenges arising from locating the source in the shadow of empire. It shows that Samba Diallo's exposure to western culture has cost him his faith and spirituality, which is why he no longer wants to pray. The novel seems to echo a common belief towards the end of the nineteenth century that "western material progress had amounted to spiritual and artistic decadence" (Snead 236). At the same time, the novel presents the Most Royal Lady's case positively, implying that there is another way of locating home – beyond the source. To that end, the novel is a dialogue about whether to return to the source or form an alternative community beyond the source. For example, Samba Diallo completely refuses to pray upon his return, a refusal which leads the fool to kill him. His refusal to pray and to reach the teacher's grave, symbolically suggests that his *return to the source* is incomplete. Of course, one could argue that his death is in keeping with *return to the source,* that a seed must die in order to bring new life. But that argument is debatable because if it were the case, then Samba Diallo's spiritual death in France would have sufficed. It seems here that a narrative of *return* has burst its seams, thus indicating the difficulty, even impossibility, of a complete return.

Aidoo's *source* also ruptures, even if to a lesser degree. At the time of Ato's return, *the source* is a shadow of its past. According to the Second Woman, "[T]hose days are over When it was expedient for two deer To walk together, Since anyone can see and remove The beam in his eye with a mirror" (22). By

shifting from a community in which people care for one another to an individualistic arena in which everyone is for herself/himself, *the source* yields to the forces that made Eulalie leave America. What, then, is the point of returning? On a similar note, women without children are not at home (23). That is, to be barren in this space is a misfortune.

The questions of race weaves through the three major narratives discussed here. Note, for example, the racial tension in Eulalie's "conversation" with her late mum,

> And I had it all, Ma, even graduation. "You'll be swank enough to look a white trash in the eye and tell him to go to hell." Ma, ain't I telling the whole of the States to go swing! Congress, Jew and white trash, from Manhattan to Harlem... "Sugar, don't let them do you in." Ma, I didn't. "Sugar, don't sort of curse me and your Pa every morning you look your face in the mirror and see yourself black. Kill the sort of dreams silly girls that they are going to wake up one morning and find their skins milk white and their hairs soft blonde like the Hollywood tarts. Sugar, the dear God made you just that black and you canna do nothing about it." Ma, it was hard not to dream but I tried...only I wish you were not dead...I wish you were right here, not even in the States, but here in this country where there will be no washing for you no more and where.... (24)

Eulalie makes it clear that she is disappointed with the white American state apparatus, led by the Congress. She says that her mum's hands are "chapped with washing to keep [her] in college" (24). The dreams reveal that blacks are

under media pressure to conform to white/ Hollywood beauty standards. The black girls' daily dreams for white skins and blonde hair remind us of Derek Walcott's Dream on Monkey Mountain (1971), especially the part where Walcott's Moustique says, "And that is what they teach me since I small. To be black like coal, and dream of milk. To love God, and obey the white man" (290). Milk, in this play, symbolizes whiteness. So, Moustique, like many blacks growing up in the colonial system, is trained to yearn for that which he cannot be, right from his childhood.

Walcott's Dream on Monkey Mountain examines the problem of locating home among Afro-Caribbeans; that is, it plays out a conflict between returning to Africa and remaining in the West Indies. The ambivalent and multi-layered play employs both dream and parody to demonstrate the agony of being what Patrick Colm Hogan, in Colonialism and Cultural Identity (2000), calls a "white in self-perception and black in self-image" (48). It is predicated on an ambiguous dream, a dream that simultaneously passes as a vision and as an illusion. Walcott warns us that the dream is "illogical, derivative, contradictory" (208). And, one may add, destructive and unattainable. Yet, the characters need these dreams to navigate a Caribbean world defined by the black and white tropes, a world that constantly marginalizes them, a world that they perpetuate by internalizing the dehumanizing labels they are given. As Hogan elaborates, "[T]here is dissociation in virtually all the characters, dissociation that results from the denigratory identities projected onto Afro-Caribbeans by colonialist racism, identities partially accepted by those men and women themselves" (46). One

example of such dissociation is seen in Makak's self-hatred. He hates his visual image the same way the colonizer hates it; Lacan would say that he sees himself as others (the colonizer) see him. Nowhere is this Lacanian self-hatred more conspicuously seen than in Makak's confession: "Not a pool of cold water, when I must drink, / I stir my hands first, to break up my image" (226). While one could read his action of stirring the water to break his image as a symbol of his fragmented mind, it especially reveals his determination to avoid coming face to face with his image (which he perceives as ugly). He is clearly denying himself. That reading is reinforced by his revelation, "Is thirty years now I have look in no mirror" (226). Makak avoids the mirror because he has wrongly subscribed to the notion that he is ugly. He cannot stand what he sees when he looks at the mirror. There is much more to the image question. Makak apprises Corporal Lestrade, "Sir, I am sixty years old. I have live all my life/ Like a wild beast in hiding. Without child, without wife" (226). One's child is essentially one's image, and, since Makak is already ashamed of his image, he does not want a child. Both the wife and child would act as mirrors (he will see himself in them), which he has avoided all his life. He hides because he does not fit into the norm. In order to avoid further humiliation, Makak and his fellow Afro-Caribbeans try to become white.

Upon realizing that the goal of becoming white is unattainable, they begin to search for blackness through reactionary nativism/ reverse racism and the original moment or source. Walcott's "What the Twilight Says: An Overture" notes the process: "Once we have lost our wish to be white we develop a longing to

become black, and those two may be different, but are still careers" (20). Even the retrieval of the *original moment,* which the characters in the play, led by Makak, attempt to do is ultimately futile for several reasons, one of which is the realization that their ancestry is multi-rooted. If Makak fails in his bid to liberate his people, it is because, as Cornel West says in a different context, his dream "remained captive to the supremacy game – a game mastered by the white racists he opposed and imitated with his black supremacy doctrine" (142). In a similar vein, as Fanon would say, "the assertion of pure, essential blackness is a reaction, still imprisoned within the dualism [Manicheanism] of colonial discourse. With the destruction of the myth of white superiority, the need for that reaction disappears as well" (Breslin 130).

Following his dream and experiences, Makak realizes that any meaningful liberation must recognize that the two races (whites and blacks) are intricately tied together, they are not Manichean in relationship: "I wanted to leave this world. But if the moon is earth's friend, eh, Tigre, how can we leave the earth" (304). In other words, Walcott is challenging the colonized to acknowledge their *Africanness* as well as their *Caribbeanness,* hence hybridity. He illuminates his position in his paper, "Necessity of Negritude."

> For us, whose tribal memories have died, and who have begun again in a New World, Negritude offers an assertion of pride, but not of our complete identity, since that is mixed and shared by other races, whose writers are East Indian, white, mixed, whose best painters are Chinese, and in whom the process of racial assimilation goes on with every other marriage. (23)

"For Walcott," argues Paula Burnett, "the task is to demonstrate the incorporation of multiple traditions in the Caribbean location, mythified as the site of hybridity" (35). Granted, hybridity is the pragmatic way forward. After all, as Werbner and Modood put it, "cultures evolve historically through unreflective borrowings, mimetic appropriations, exchanges and inventions. There is no culture in and of itself" (4-5). That previously opposing camps (whiteness and blackness) can question their supposed purity and coexist in the subject is encouraging.

Walcott expects his characters to move from "the *expressive,* with its rigid claims and oftentimes unexamined ethnocentric biases" to "the *performative,* a self-critical model that conceives identity as open, interculturally negotiable, and always in the making – a process" (Olaniyan, Scars 4). Walcott's objective in this play, to borrow from West, is to make his characters "affirm themselves as human beings, no longer viewing their bodies, minds and souls through white lenses, and believing themselves capable of taking control of their own destinies" (136). That is why his main character, "Makak (monkey) begins as the exemplary victim of the colonial hegemonic discourse, living fully his constitution – his subjection, as 'black, ugly, poor [and so] worse than nothing' (237), then gradually negotiating his way towards self-definition" (Olaniyan, "Corporeal" 156). Olaniyan's observation is echoed by Brown, who rightly says that the Makak we see at the end of the play marks "a new Black self-definition" (20). Like Makak, the colonized in West Indies ought to accept that they are Afro-Caribbeans, and that their home is the West Indies. If Walcott's Makak realizes the need to find

home in the diaspora, Aidoo's Eulalie does not. How, then, does Kourouma's text configure home?

Kourouma's The Suns of Independence ironically, even satirically, valorizes *the source,* which it refers to as the native village. The irony in part lies in the text's location in the city while it emphasizes the need for a Malinke to live in the native village. Note, for example, Balla's advice to Fama, "[N]ever stay away long from your ancestors' graves; only in Togobola will a Dumbuya, a descendant of Suleyman, grow, prosper, flower and bear fruit" (102). The text privileges the native village as a site for burying a Malinke, and provides consolations/compensations when the burial takes place elsewhere. For example, after painting Kone's burial in the city as a setback, it assures us that his soul would return to the native village. The narrator says, "Then the shade took its leave forever, and walked back to the Malinke homeland, there to bring joy to a mother through reincarnation as a Malinke infant" (4). From a spiritual angle, Kone's soul is more important than his body. As such, the resting place of the soul (which is the native village) is more important than the resting place of the body (in this case the city). The soul's return to the native village therefore compensates for the burial of a Malinke in the city. The narrator also uses the concept of soul and reincarnation to defy death; the forces of death may conquer Kone, but they cannot conquer his "shade" or soul. Kone's death is further compensated when, courtesy of reincarnation, Kone's soul takes a new life in a Malinke infant back in the native village. That way, Kone is not only back to life, but also back to the native village. This double return affirms the resilience of

one's past and history, as it reveals the difficulty of retrieving the *original.* The text uses this scene to show the givenness of *return to the source,* even in cases when one is buried in the city.

How do the Malinke in the city relate to their space? First, the Malinke in the city are economically marginalized. They trace their penury to independence; their "trading activities were ruined by Independence (and God alone knows how many old traders ruined by Independence there are in the capital city!) all 'work' the burials and funeral rites" (4). Second, racial segregation policies in place mean that Malinkes can only live in a poor part of town known as "the African quarter" while whites live in the city proper, also known as "the white men's town" (5). The narrator does not hesitate to remind us of the difference between the two quarters, "The African quarter dwindled in the distance and was lost amidst dark clumps of trees; the European quarter, still faint in the distance, shone with street-lamps" (29). Darkness and light are metaphorically used to show that the European quarter was affluent while the African quarter was poor. This disparity makes it difficult for Africans to fully embrace some aspects of the city, including their neighborhoods. Third, the labor relations undermine attempts to locate home in the city, thus making Africans look back. Making a case for *return to the source,* the narrator says, "The African is in Hell! The buildings, bridges and roads over there, all built by African hands, were lived in by Europeans and belonged to them. Independence couldn't do a thing about it! Everywhere, under every sun, on every soil, Africans hold the beast's feet, while the Whites carve it up and wolf down the meat and fat. Was it not Hell to toil in the shadows for

others?" (11). The exploitation of Africans' labor partly explains why Africans yearn to return home. The novel shows a steady decline in the city, a decline which threatens the Malinke's dignity and humanity. Fama is a case in point, "He, Fama, born to gold, food in plenty, honour and women! Bred to prefer one gold to another, to choose between many dishes, to bed his favourite of a hundred wives. What was he now? A scavenger...A hyena in a hurry" (5). Of course, one reads not only the good old days, but also exploitation of women and resources. Women are depicted as Fama's property, who have to outdo each other in order to win Fama's favor. One also has to question the cost of what appears to be an excessive royal life. Whose labor makes it possible for the prince to have excess gold? What are the working conditions of the miners? Do these miners miss the old good days as much as the prince does? From a labor relations point of view, the excess in gold and dishes suggests that there are workers who do the work, but do not benefit from the same. To understand the connection between what is amiss in the city and the characters' homelessness, one has to study the novel more closely. One example stands out,

> Filthy city, sticky with rain, rotten with rain! Ah! The longing for Fama's native land: its deep distant sky, its soil arid but firm, its ever-dry days. Oh! Horodugu, you were what this city lacked, and everything that had given Fama the happy childhood of a prince, that too was lacking (sun, honour and gold): when at rising the slave grooms brought the horse for the morning parade, when at second prayer the praise-singers sang the everlasting power of the Dumbuya, and afterwards the marabouts recited

the Koran and taught alms-giving and mercy. Who then could have thought he would come to be hurrying from one ceremony to the next, a beggar?" (12)

The native land is located in a healthier environment than the city, hence the allure. But by looking back, the *returnists* also approve a system that kept slaves for their own interests. How, then, can one imagine returning to a space that does not enable everyone to experience a sense of home and belonging? While we celebrate the notion of home, we need to pay attention to the homelessness of the slave grooms.

A sense of home escapes Kourouma's characters partly because of their obsession with legitimacy, hierarchy, totems, and ethnicity. If one is not othered on the basis of her/his caste, she/he is othered on the basis of his legitimacy and/or ethnicity (6). References like "a proper Malinke" (7), "a legitimate son" (36), "a true Dumbuya" (56), "authentic descendants of great chiefs" (9) abound. Even praise-singers are ranked, "The real praise-singers, the last of the true caste of praise singers, were buried with Samory's great war captains" (9). These divisions – based on authenticity, legitimacy, hierarchy, totems, and ethnicity – undermine any attempt to build a collective sense of home.

Kourouma's characters also find it difficult to feel at home after independence. Their post-independence disillusionment stems from the dysfunctions of their independent nation, which in turn undermine the nation's progress. The narrator says, "The streets had no gutters, because there again Independence had played false, they never dug the gutters they promised and

they never will; water will swamp the streets as always, and colonized or independent, the Africans will keep on wading through them until such times as God unpeels the curse struck fast in their black backsides" (16). By failing to build gutters, the government undermines the social stability of its citizens. If the city is bad, the native village is worse. Following supposed independence and socialism, the native village becomes a hub of oppression and exploitation, as evident in the cases of Jakite, Jakite's father, and Konate (57-58). It is instructive that Fama is returning to the native village, while Jakite and Konate are fleeing from it. It is equally telling Salimata runs away from the native village to the city in order to escape patriarchal oppression (30). Her oppression and subsequent flight problematize the depiction of *the source* as paradise, as a place to return to, as home. Indeed, the fact that Salimata finds home in the city, and not the native village, suggests that men and women have different relationships with *the source*. Of course, Salimata does not entirely escape from patriarchal domination in the city. Neither the native village nor the city provides Salimata with a real home; the city is just a lesser devil. Home is more or less elusive to Fama, as he cannot easily decide between living in the native village and the city. The fact that "Fama had not yet decided" (56) shows that the decision is not obvious; none of the places is completely hospitable. Fama gives the impression that he has more to lose by living in the city (including Salimata, all his friends, all the ceremonies and palavers), an impression which strengthens the city's budding status as a home. Fama's natural belonging to his native village is again questioned when

the customs office at the border refers to Fama as a foreigner, and thus demands that he produces an identity card before he is allowed to enter (69).

Fama finds his native village quite different from the picture he had in his mind, "Of the Togobola of his childhood, the Togobola he bore in his heart, there was nothing left, not even the whiff of a fart. All the same, in twenty years the world hadn't turned upside-down. But this was what remained. Here and there one or two tumbledown sun-baked huts, isolated like anthills on a plain" (70). As we see the danger of having a fixed notion of home and origin, we also see a past that has refused to die. This death-defying past is also evident in a landmark, "the baobab in the marketplace," that Fama recognized (70-71).

Following his release from prison, Fama insists on *returning to the source.* Bakary's persuasions, mixed with selfish interests and pragmatism, do not sway him. One may question Bakary's motivation, but not his logic when he asks Bakary, "What will you do in Togobala? The chiefdom is dead. Togobala is finished, it's a ruined village" (126). Considering Fama's inability to meet the financial demands of his fellow villagers during his last visit, one could argue that Bakary is largely right when he warns that Fama would "die of poverty" if he returned to Togobala (127). Bakary's drawing of the source demands attention, as it challenges notions of a happy home in the native village. Even so, it would be inaccurate to reduce Fama's return to a search for happiness. The power and pull of *the source* lie in the very fact that one wants to die there, to end his/her journey there. Fama is no exception. The narrator says, "As paradoxical as it may seem, Fama was going to Horodugu in order to die as soon as possible. It

had been predicted, centuries before the suns of independence, that Fama was to die near the graves of his ancestors [...]" (128). Fama's journey is, of course, interrupted at the border that ushers him into Horodugu, "The border was shut until further notice, in both directions; all traffic was suspended for the moment" (131). To exacerbate the situation, Fama does not have his identity card, yet, "No one could pass without papers" (131). It is telling that Fama has to ask for permission to enter his native village. As a result of colonialism, borders have been used to create countries where there were none, and people who took the belonging to the source for granted are now considered strangers. Out of frustration Fama asks, "Did a Dumbuya, a real one, father Dumbuya, mother Dumbuya, need permission from all the bastard sons of dogs and slaves to go to Togobala? Of course not" (132). In a twist of irony, people who should seek Fama's permission to get into Togobala turn out to be the people who demand Fama's papers before they can permit him to enter. Indeed, things have fallen apart. Even the sacred crocodile, that is treated like a god by the Dumbuya, does not recognize the last Dumbuya; "he had been mortally wounded by the crocodile" (134). So, after all his effort, Fama can only *return to the source* as a cadaver, "Fama had finished, was finished" (136).

Chapter Two

Understanding Home Through National and Transnational Borders (Home After Independence and During Post-Independence Disillusionment)

> "How does one inscribe oneself between here and there?" (Gikandi 203).
>
> Nationhood – the very definition of citizenship – is constantly being demarcated and redemarcated in response to exiles, refugees, *Gastarbeiter,* immigrants, migrations, the displaced, the fleeing, and the besieged. The anxiety of belonging is entombed within the central metaphors in the discourse of globalism, transnationalism, nationalism, the break-up of federations, the rescheduling of alliances, and the fictions of sovereignty. Yet these figurations of nationhood and identity are frequently as raced themselves as the originating racial house that defined them. When they are not raced, they are, as I mentioned earlier, imaginary landscape, never inscape; Utopia, never home. (Morrison 10-11)

The national maps, borders, and boundaries in Africa cannot be understood outside of the European Empires that drew them. Following the partition of Africa at the Berlin Conference in 1885, the colonial enterprise used maps to construct an epistemology of closed geographies and monolithic cultures. This colonial ideology of closed spaces was later inherited and used by African nationalists to perceive a sense of home or national community. Any serious attempt to locate home in African culture, therefore, has to address the cultural economy of borders and maps. In particular, it has to challenge the colonial and nationalist assumption that spaces are isolated from one another, and attempt to find alternative methods of defining geographical, national, and gender borders. This chapter seeks to show that the conventional usage of colonial boundaries by both European colonizers and African nationalists has legitimated exclusiveness and blurred inextricable intercultural links across

borders. To borrow Graham Huggan's words in "Decolonizing the Map" (1995), the chapter articulates "a resistance to the notion of cartographic enclosure and to the imposed cultural limits that notion implies" (408). The use of boundaries to separate imaginary outsiders from insiders has led to conflictive identities and oppressive power relations, with significant implications on the idea of home. These repellant cartographic legacies, designed by the empire and retained by the nationalists, are responsible for the construction of homogenous and dominant cultures. The traditional readings of geographical and gender boundaries as fixed engender misleading notions of cultural impermeability, hence the need for revision. Contrary to the conventional position, the cultures beyond our boundaries, far from being *other,* inform and are informed by our own cultures. Similarly, the colonial borders and maps, rather than designating endings, designate beginnings of intersections and networks. To the extent that these borders and maps allow for cultural exchanges and encounters across them, they challenge colonial attempts to use them as impenetrable dividers, and, by extension, re-define understandings of home based on such usage. At its core, this chapter attempts to locate home between here and there.

Drawing on complex identities formed across boundaries, the chapter challenges the monolithic, nationalist identities based on colonial maps and boundaries. To that end, it "indicates a shift of emphasis away from the desire of homogeneity towards acceptance of diversity reflected in the interpretation of the map, not as a means of spatial containment or systematic organization, but as a medium of spatial perception which allows for the reformulation of links both

within and between cultures" (Huggan 408). This shift is critical in the wake of ethnic clashes, for example the Rwanda genocide, which continue to afflict Africa. It involves understanding that the conventional epistemology about maps, now policed by nationalists, is a brainchild of empire designed to suppress diversity. In other words, the colonial maps stem from the principle of divide and rule. Empire produces fractures and reinforces ethnic divisions. The new cartographic discourse has to open space for "flexible cross-cultural patterns [which] not only counteract the monolithic conventions of the West but revision the map itself as the expression of a shifting ground between alternative metaphors rather than as the approximate representation of a 'literal truth'" ((Huggan 409). One way of rethinking conventional cartographic epistemology which stages isolated and unified spaces is by looking at a map as a rhizome with "multiple entryways" (Deleuze and Guattari 14). This perspective allows for the argument that spaces are always open, and thus connected to other spaces, which in turn challenges the notion of isolated spaces and homogenous cultures passed on by the colonizer. Focusing on Nuruddin Farah's *Maps* (1999) and Bessie Head's *A Question of Power* (1974), this chapter argues, together with Svetlana Boym, in *The Future of Nostalgia* (2001, that "Space [read home] is expandable into many dimensions; one has more and more homes in the span of one's life, real and virtual; one criss-crosses more borders" (351). It attempts to negotiate transnational identity within a narrow framework of national identity, and to address issues of gender, class, race, and sexuality that underline the texts. Equally important, this chapter uses racism, patriarchal tyranny, and

internal displacement to show that being inside the border does not necessarily guarantee belonging.

As Henry A. Giroux, in his article "Pedagogy and the Politics of Postmodernism" (1991), has pointed out, a "border signals in the metaphorical and literal sense how power is inscribed differently on the body, culture, history, space, land, and psyche" (51). The key word here is power. The borders are organized around the idea of power. The colonial enterprise used borders/ maps to establish the colonial policy of divide and rule, and to declare their domination of the conquered spaces. Similarly, African nationalists used borders to draw the parameters of the nation, to fend off outsiders. In both cases, borders were defined as markers of bounded spaces; culture ended at the borderline. The critical role border plays in the function and sustenance of power suggests that the conventional reading of boundaries is strategic, if flawed. Farah's *Maps* deconstructs conventional borders, and thus addresses the political and cultural chasms they engender. The novel is interested in engaging with the other, in crossing physical, cultural, and national borders. To the extent that it decolonizes and *denationalizes* maps, the novel opens a space for cultural diversity and heterogeneity. To be sure, Farah destabilizes tradition and cultural absoluteness upon which borders are grounded, and, by so doing, pushes the nation to allow for transnational subjectivities.

While nationalism was fashionable in the era of national movements of liberation, transnationalism is having a great vogue in this era of anti-national currents. The idea of the nation has proved restrictive, even oppressive, thus

contradicting the notion of freedom that it was founded on. To be sure, this limitation is not germane to a particular period; it has always been inherent in the very idea of national borders. National borders function on the premise of insiders and outsiders; to be an insider finds value in perceived safety and protection from the dangerous, often imaginary, outsiders. Interestingly, this very need for outsiders to give definition to insiders already undercuts the binary logic of borders. In fact, Farah uses Askar to show that there is really no outside; Askar has ambivalent allegiances, none of which is totalizing, to both Somalia and Ethiopia. Such cases of transnational identities, a simultaneous belonging to this nation and that nation, compel one to consider a more flexible conception of borders and identities. In some cases, being inside the borders does not guarantee the promise of nationhood, thereby bringing to the fore the question of statelessness. It is this sense of homelessness that lead to displacement and migration across national demarcations, which further complicate one's bearings of home. Farah's *Maps* puts national borders to task by presenting transnational characters whose identities belong here and there. When national borders that hitherto acted as coordinates for national identity fail to accommodate these multiple identities in the postcolonial moment, they beg us to rethink them.

As Mary N. Layoun has noted in *Wedded to the Land?: Gender, Boundaries, and Nationalism in Crisis* (2001), more attention needs to be paid to "the gendered construction of the national citizen – and by extension, of the non-citizen – and of his or her sexuality" (14). The gender boundaries are instrumental in the constitution of the nation because they serve the nation's

unfailing need for a common enemy, for *the other*. Indeed, "The very basic rhetorical and organizational principles of the nation are tropes for and expressions of gendered power" (Layoun 14). This is evident in *Maps* when Hilaal tells Askar what it would take for Misra to acquire Somali citizenship: "What she might need is a couple of *male witnesses* to take an oath that they've known her all her life and that she is a Somali, etc., etc.; no more. And all they have to do is sign an affidavit, that is all" (175; my emphasis). That only males can serve as witnesses speaks to the larger boundaries of gender that have been systematized into official policy. Karin, for instance, is a Somali, a senior citizen, and a wife of a Somali freedom fighter who has known Misra for several years, but her gender disqualifies her from serving as a witness. Misra's citizenship hurdles also speak to the condition of migrants and exiles all over the world. They are good enough to provide cheap or free labor, as Misra does when she raises Askar, but they are not good enough for citizenship. Unless these national boundaries of inside and outside are blurred, (im)migrants like Misra will either remain suspended in statelessness or be murdered by the so-called insiders. Paradoxically, while Somali women are not allowed to serve as witnesses for Somali citizenship applicants, they are required to reproduce the nation, as a form of labor.

In a similar fashion, the Somali nationalists promote literatures which equate Somalia with "a beautiful woman" (102) without seeming to reconcile the gap between the sacred position of the national symbol vis-à-vis the disempowered position of women on the national space. Of course, women are

not entirely powerless, as there are subversive moments when they contest patriarchal tyranny. We see this when Misra resists her foster-father's violations: "So, the man the little girl thought of and addressed as 'Father' for ten years of her life, overnight became a man to her, *a man who insisted he make love to her and that she call him 'husband'*. In the end, the conflicting loyalties alienated her, primarily from her self. And she murdered him during an excessive orgy of copulation" (72; my emphasis). The insistence amounts to rape under the guise of marriage, and it is enabled by the patriarchal society that normalizes it. The man's insistence assumes that Misra is passive, powerless and helpless, an assumption which perpetuates gender inequality. By murdering her father-turned-husband, Misra registers a sense of agency; she shatters the conventional boundaries that typify women as powerless and men as powerful. However, even as we note Misra's heroic act and its renegotiation of gender boundaries, we are left wondering whether murder/violence is a productive way of addressing patriarchal oppression. Of course, one could also read Misra's outrageous act as an act of desperation, of the helpless.

Following her settlement in the Ogaden, Misra is raped by "a dozen young men" (194). This particular rape has a larger meaning, as it exploits the image of a woman as a symbol of the nation. The rapists are zealous Somali nationalists, actively participating in what they call the Western Somali Liberation. One could therefore view their act of rape as a foreign invasion of Ethiopia played out on Misra's body. In this sense, as Layoun would argue, "purity is sovereignty, rape is the violation of sovereignty, and consummation is possession of pure and

sovereign land" (18). It is indicative that the Somali nationalists label Misra as a traitor before they rape her; this way, they can explain away their violation of Misra's dignity and rights, a violation which should have no room in any nation, as an act of national defense committed by baboons: "The baboons, said the poet among them (and one of them was a poet), smelt the beast in her and went for it; the baboons smelt her traitor's identity underneath the human skin and went for it again and again. Thank God, we were there to save her body since, as a traitor, she had ransomed her soul" (195). Misra is essentially reduced to a beast, no longer a human being; Somali nationalists' exploitation of Misra makes it difficult for a reader to tell where colonization ends and national independence begins. One could also read the Somali nationalists' sexual violation of Misra as a twisted violation of Somalia, considering that Misra is in part Somali. Given such a gendered dimension of power which heavily favors men over women, it is not surprising to learn that Askar prefers being sick to being a woman (111). The Ogaden residents are ethnically diverse, neither this nor that, products of borderlands; however, they fall into an either/or paradigm with its unsettling implications. These border negotiations express the need for better ways of coming to terms with our differences.

In an influential reading of *Maps* entitled *Beyond Empire and Nation* (2004), Francis Ngaboh-Smart observes that the novel "draw[s] our attention not only to the difficulty of positing identity based on primordial values, but also to the relationship between self and state, individual and collective responsibility, and the construction of alternative forms of identification" (5). The ambivalent

relationship between self and state, I argue, is an extension to the problem of locating home. Set in Somalia, Farah's *Maps* challenges the national framework by creating a major character, Askar, who is tied to several nations and no nation. That is, Askar's biological mother, Arla, who is Somali, dies immediately after his birth, leaving an Ethiopian (Oromo) woman, Misra, to become Askar's surrogate mother. In time, Misra, whose name means "Egypt" in Arabic and Hebrew, and Askar become a part of each other: "Parts of [his] body mingled well with hers" (62). This mingling of Ethiopia and Somalia is emblematic of Farah's attempt to create a space for transnational subjectivities. In Askar's words, "I seem to have remained a mere extension of Misra's body for years – you saw me when you set your eyes on her. I was part of the shadow she cast – in a sense, I was her extended self" (78). This metamorphosis undercuts Askar's fervent claim for a pure Somali national identity, and, in so doing, evinces the fluidity of identities and borders. The narrator does not simply say that the two bodies "mingled," but that they "mingled well." If we view these bodies as symbols of Ethiopia and Somalia, then the fact that they mingled well questions the rationale for the current conflict in the Oromo and the Ogaden, as much as it questions the ostensible impermeability of the colonially imposed boundaries that divide the two nations. The Oromo region has sought independence and the conflict continues to this day. The narrator's questioning of the colonial boundaries that view Ethiopia and Somalia as irredeemably detached in turn revises the traditional function of borders.

The mingling of the two bodies reveals something else, and that is the difficulty of recovering a Somali nation-state that is not contaminated by the history of empire. Askar is a microcosm of this contamination. For instance, Askar has a national identity card which indicates that his nationality is Somali. According to Uncle Hilaal, a Somali is "a man, woman or child whose mother tongue is Somali. Here, mother tongue is important, very important. Not what one looks like" (174). It is telling that Uncle Hilaal gives a caveat against the use of "what one looks like" as a marker of Somali identity. It is telling because it not only shows that the act of drawing borders on the basis of one's physical features is inadequate, but it also implies that the said features have been traditionally, if problematically, used to draw borders. The narrator's caveat is persuasive, but the narrator's recommendation of a Somali mother tongue as an indicator of Somali identity is debatable. We shall address this question of national belonging through language momentarily. Uncle Hilaal also adds, "The Somali are a homogeneous people; they are homogeneous culturally speaking and speak the same language wherever they may be found" (174). Uncle Hilaal's definition brings forth many questions. According to Uncle Hilaal, Askar is Somali, and Somalis are homogenous. However, Askar's cultural and linguistic ties to Somali and Amharic make him more than Somali, and this excess challenges the notion that Somalis are homogenous.

Misra, who has served as Askar's mother and taught him both Amharic and Somali (179), is not a native speaker of Somali, and her own mother tongue is Amharic. As a result, Askar's Somali language is so heavily influenced by

Amharic that he cannot even pronounce some Somali letters. "For years, he had had enormous difficulties pronouncing his Somali gutturals correctly, since he learnt these wrongly from her [Misra]; for years, he mispronounced the first letters of the words in Somali for 'sky' and 'earth'" (56). This, then, serves as a critique of linguistic purity. To be sure, Uncle Hilaal's use of Somali mother tongue as a determinant of Somali national identity inadvertently challenges Askar's claim to Somali identity. Askar's speech signifies a crossing of linguistic borders and undercuts his Somaliness. Paradoxically, the history of Empire that denies Askar a pure Somali identity is the very history that created the notion of a distinct Somali. Askar's suspension in limbo must therefore be understood within the history of Empire.

One could test Uncle Hilaal's recommendation of mother tongue further by looking at Misra's multiple (un)belongings. "[A] sense of difference or distinctness," James Clifford's *The Predicament of Culture* (1988) reminds us, "can never be located solely in the continuity of a culture or tradition. Identity is conjunctural, not essential" (11). Perhaps this explains why Misra "no longer spoke or understood the language of the area of Ethiopia in which she was born" (99). This quotation begs multiple readings. On the one hand, it shows language's mutability, which in turn indicates the futility and narrowness of using language to fix borders. On the other hand, it makes one wonder if Misra's present has to necessarily come at the expense of her past. Of course, the notion that Misra no longer speaks or understands her local Ethiopian language does not negate her allegiance to the same, especially when Askar recalls that

Misra "would lapse into Amharic, her mother tongue" (23). Why does Farah make Askar, a product of multiple cultures and nations, the face of Somalia's nationalists? This is Farah's way of parodying the exclusivity of national borders or enacting Teresa de Lauretis's call, in *Technologies of Gender* (1987), for the consideration of "another perspective – a view from elsewhere" (25). The point here is that Farah uses multiple belongings to challenge the monolithism of the national framework, and to show the need for a transnational framework that accommodates the Ethiopian and Somalian identities of both Askar and Misra.

The idea of the nation as a collective construct becomes clear as one reads Farah's contestation of the foundation, including language and race, on which nationality stands. This is in line with Benedict Anderson's argument, in *Imagined Communities* (1983), to the effect that nations all over the world are built on imagined communities. As a result of this imagination, "even the smallest nation never knows most of their fellow members, meets them, or even hears of them. Yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (15). While Anderson views nationalism as a form of kinship that ties people of different linguistic, religious, and racial identities together (6), he also recognizes that each of this imagined communities "has finite, if elastic, boundaries, beyond which lies other nations" (16). In a similar vein, Ernest Renan, in "What is a Nation?" (1990), argues that nations are built around shared misery and forgetting. In other words, collective amnesia allows a nation to renew itself in the wake of new realities, and thus provide a sense of belonging to its emerging members like Farah's Riyo. In brief, Renan recognizes that the nation has to come to terms with its

daily metamorphosis in relation to its future. One could read Misra's loss of her local language and Askar's forgetting in this light. In a similar context, Zygmunt Bauman, in *Postmordernity and Its Discontents* (1997), talks of "the world in which the art of forgetting is an asset no less, if no more, important than the art of memorizing" (25). Farah attempts to create this world in *Maps* when it shows simultaneous forgetting and remembering in the making of the nation. The difference, however, is that Farah pushes the nation to avoid double-standards; for example, if the nation is able to forget that Aw-Adan is a Qotto, then it can also forget that Misra is Ethiopian. Farah's Askar, a nationalist per excellence, has faulty memory throughout the novel (65-66;73;160). By presenting Askar's memory as unreliable, Farah in essence questions the fixity of national identity in a primordial past, not so much to suggest that the past is totally irrelevant, but to show that there is another way of constructing identity that also recognizes the present and the future. The new Somali identity has to acknowledge the Qotto-Somali (Aw-Adan), British-Somali (Riyo), and Ethiopian-Somali (Misra) identities that are inside it.

Here one is reminded of Bhabha's point in *Location of Culture* (1994) that "the meaning and symbols of culture have no primordial unity or fixity; that even the same signs can be appropriated, translated, rehistoricized and read anew" (37). This is what happens in *Maps.* For example, we are told that Misra "was teaching him [Askar] *his* people's lore and wisdom, and occasionally some Amharic when night fell [...]" (134). I argue that the Somali lore that Misra teaches Askar has already been split by its engagement with and relation to the

Oromo and Amhara (Ethiopian) lores which in part form Misra's identity. In fact, there is an act of translation that occurs when a non-Somali (Misra) teaches a Somali-Ethiopian (Askar) about Somali culture. As a result, Askar cannot claim the mantra of nationalism, which is "the coherence, continuity, and the integrity of (a story of) the nation's past and of the nation's relation to a distinct language, culture, and land. This (story of the) past is cited as legitimation for a demand for autonomy or independence or at, at least, a change in political status of the nation" (Layoun 138). The point here is that nationalism has to move away from a mantra of primordial unity to one that recognizes the ambivalence inherent in cultural formations. The coordinates of this new mantra might be formed around justice for all in order to eradicate elements of corruption and poverty that we see, for example, when Hilaal and Salaado "bribed the technicians at the mortuary to silence them" (252). This way, we would realize "other kinds of social organization, other kinds of community, that exceed or at least do not coincide with the boundaries of the nation and its state" (Layon 138).

Intriguingly, the national ideology whose cause Askar supports includes Askar but excludes Askar's first teacher (Misra). It is paradoxical that Misra, who teaches Askar Somali language, lore and wisdom -- which are in turn used to grant Askar his Somali national identity -- is not accepted as a Somali while Askar is. Misra's abduction, rape, and murder confirms Giroux's argument, in a different context, that "dominant culture creates borders saturated in terror, inequality, and forced exclusions" (62). In another parody of nationalism, Farah shows that Askar who is a part of Misra cannot, due to the exclusiveness of the

nationalist framework, follow Misra back to her motherland because, as Misra tells him, "[I]t's not safe for you. They will kill you, my people will, without asking questions, without wanting to know your name or what our relationship is" (99). Farah uses these cases of national discrimination in both Somalia and Ethiopia to show that the problem of exclusiveness that plagues the Somali nation is not unique to Somalis; rather, it is a structural problem at the foundation of every nation.

Having imbibed nationalist literatures, Askar is determined to recover his lost pre-colonial past, a determination that is already undercut by his usage of colonial maps and history. The boundaries of the Somalia nation state vary from map to map. This variation parodies nationalists who are already dying for boundaries that are not even fixed. To exacerbate the situation, these maps are distorted. Uncle Hilaal, a university professor in Mogadiscio, brings these distortions to Askar's attention,

> And did you know that Eduard Kremer, who was the drawer of the 1567 map, introduced numerous distortions, thereby altering our notion of the world and its size, did you? Africa, in Kremer's map, is smaller than Greenland. These maps, which bear in mind the European's prejudices, are the maps we used at school when I was young and, I am afraid to say, are still being reprinted year after year and used in schools in Africa. Arno Peters's map, drawn four hundred years later, gives more accurate proportions of the continents: Europe is smaller, Africa larger. (229)

As we have seen, the map that Askar carries with him wherever he goes is distorted, and the nationalist cause he is fighting for is predicated on that distorted map. Farah uses these distortions not only to cast doubt on the nation-form as a structure for configuring home, but also to lend credence to his epigraph, "Living begins when you start doubting everything that came before you." Maps fall in this category of things that we need to doubt because they do not neatly enclose a homogenous group of subjects as they claim; instead, they are forever provisional and misrepresentative of the situation on the ground. The tendency of maps to silence cross-cultural influences beyond their borders explains the burden they have to bear in order to survive. What is the purpose of borders and maps? Who draws them? What is it that makes one die or kill in the name of a map that is after all provisional? Obviously, Askar, like his father who died "fighting for the Western Somali Liberation Movement, of which he remained an active member until his last second, brave as the stories narrated about him" (9), has something to learn from the epigraph's appreciation of ambivalence. Farah uses the lesson on cartographic defects and temporariness to show that "the parameters of place, identity, history, and power" (53) change constantly, and thus that it is problematic to perceive them as bounded. Looking at Hilaal's lesson merely as an anti-colonial attack on Empire is not enough, as it is a caveat against the nation-state's obsession with inconsistent colonial borders. It is Farah's way of challenging the credibility of maps on which national wars and identities are located.

The maps of Somalia have been drawn and redrawn by various imperial powers. Ngabo-Smart has neatly documented Somalia's imperial history (2-3). As a result of the various imperial drawings, Somalia, to use Uncle Hilaal's words, is "divided into two British Somalilands (one of them independent and now forming part of the Republic, the other at present known as Kenyan Somaliland); French Somaliland; Italian Somaliland (forming part of the present-day Republic – democratic or not!) and former French Somaliland (now the Republic of Djebouti)" (156). Maps, then, are neither objective nor innocent; they serve competing interests of power and domination. As Hilaal reminds Askar, one has to understand "the political implications as well as the imperialist intentions of the cartographers" (158). The need for this understanding becomes clear in the scramble for the Ogaden. Askar, for example, does not conceal his nationalist desires from his maps: "I began to redraw my map of the Horn of Africa. (In my map, the Ogaden was always an integral part of Somalia.) [...] I had scribbled not 'The Ogaden' but simply 'Western Somalia', thereby in a sense, making The Ogaden lose its specific identity, only to gain one of a generic kind" (227). Evidently, Askar's drawings have nationalist interests in favor of Somalia. His replacement of the Ogaden with Western Somalia has significant implications on the identity and politics of Ethiopia. In the same context, the colonial divisions of Somalia register multiple cultural crossings and divergent imperial policies (Britain, Italy, France). Farah uses these divisions to parody the nationalistic claims for "a united Somalia" (75), a cause which Armadio pursues at the expense of his wife, Karin, and children. We are told that "Armadio was

apparently a member of a cell of the Somali Youth League which was agitating for the reunification of all the Somali-speaking territories" (75). In other words, Amardio dies for a Somali-speaking nation, which was not there even in the precolonial past. But there is much more. These territories have been defined and redefined with time, clearly suggesting the non-fixity of national boundaries, on the one hand, and, on the other, the effectiveness of these national boundaries in policy making.

The narrator gives us a closer observation of the problem of locating home "by situating the story in a frontier culture, the Ogaden, a disputed territory between Somalia and Ethiopia" (Ngaboh-Smart 7). This symbolic borderland location underscores the need to come to terms with being here and there, sometimes neither here nor there. Frontier cultures are known for their diversity, for balancing cultures across the borders. One therefore expects a cosmopolitan approach to the idea of home in such settings. However, as the narrator shows, Somali nationalists perceive culture as pure, not diverse. "Most people they met [Misra and Askar] along the way had their bodies tattooed with their identities: that is name, nationality and address. Some had engraved on their skins the reason why they had become who they were when living and other had printed on their foreheads or backs their national flags or insignia" (43). Significantly, Farah shows that even the national flags that these nationalists print on their foreheads or backs are subject to change over time, "It [Somali flag] has, right in its middle, a five-pointed star and, for each point, a Somali-speaking territory. The former British Somaliland and the former Italian Somali have been recently

joined by the Ogaden" (131). Farah uses the provisionality of maps here to parody the nationalist agenda of closed and fixed identities.

Rhonda Cobham is therefore right when she notes that Farah's novel focuses on "the uncertainties about the integrity of the boundaries that define the nation state, Somalia" (83). By demonstrating these uncertainties, Farah counteracts the nationalist attitude, projected by Uncle Hilaal, that Somalia is "specific," and thus that "you are either a Somali or you aren't" (155). Uncle Hilaal elaborates this specificity in the following terms: "Somalia is unique. It is named after Somalis, who share a common ancestor and who speak the same language – Somali" (155). This definition is obviously exclusive. For example, Misra has lived in Somali for so many years and speaks Somali language. Nonetheless, she is still discriminated against and mapped out by Somali nationalists. "To many members of the community, she [Misra] was but that 'maiden-servant who came from somewhere else, up north' and they treated her despicably, looking down upon her and calling her all sorts of things" (11). While one could use Misra's case to argue that women are victims of cartographic discourse, the novel does not seem interested in portraying Misra solely as a victim. Farah uses Misra to show the role of women in redrawing maps and extending boundaries; "women can be seen in this sense both as *mapbreakers* engaged in the dismantling of a patriarchal system of representation and as *mapmakers* involved in the plotting of new coordinates for the articulation of female knowledge and experience" (Huggan, Territorial 13). Of course, there are risks regarding the idealization of women. Still, Misra's presence, in keeping with the quotation,

serves to wrestle the patriarchal control associated with the map. The question remains, however, regarding what the newly reconfigured map might look like. If women's maps are simply interested in "the articulation of female knowledge and experience" as Huggan implies, then they cannot be the maps of the future because they are still enclosed, this time in favor of women.

Hilaal's traditional definition of a Somali also excludes Askar. Askar is not a perfect fit into the map of Somalia mainly because of his uncertain ancestry and Ethiopian heritage – thanks to Misra. Misra and Askar are more or less cultural and national doubles, so it makes sense to deny or grant both of them Somali citizenship. Misra's treatment like an outsider emphasizes the illusion of citizenship; it is not enough to epitomize the essentials of good citizenship, to speak Somali, to live in Somalia, and to "mother" Somalia (Askar). Farah destabilizes these narrow, Manichean boundaries by constantly revealing "impurities" that the nationalist writers seek to repress. For example, the fluidity of identity is symbolically captured by Aw-Adan's statement to Misra, "You smell of his [Askar's] urine and at times I too smell of it and it upsets me gravely" (12). Aw-Adan has an intimate affair with Misra. He has no body contact with Askar at this stage except through Misra, and yet he smells of Askar's urine. This, then, validates Clifford's argument, in *The Predicament of Culture* (1988), that "one is always, to varying degrees, 'inauthentic': caught between cultures, implicated in others" (11).

As Cobham has rightly argued, Farah's novel "challenges us to resist the reflexive urge to pin down a single version of the African reality as 'true' without

first attempting to take seriously the conflicts, tensions and absences inherent in any narrative of the past and present" (96). It is for this reason that Farah gives Askar "various selves" (63). As Askar puts it in his conversation with Hilaal, "I have a strange feeling that there is *another* in me, one older than I – a woman. I have the conscious feeling of being spoken through, if you know what I mean. I feel as if I have allowed a woman older than I to live inside of me, and I speak not my words, my ideas, but hers. And during the time I'm spoken through, as it were, I am she – not I" (158). This woman, Askar tells us, "has a striking similarity to the half-profiled photograph of the woman you say was my [biological] mother" (158). Askar's case is complicated by the fact that there was never a proper separation between him and his biological mother, so he remains forever attached to her and thus to her unknown subjectivity – this in itself compromises his unbridled claim to pure Somali identity. In any case, Askar's "various selves" allow him to occupy multiple spaces (even though in denial), either simultaneously or successively. By so doing, he embodies and lives out Kenneth W. Harrow's *Less Than One and Double: A Feminist Reading of African Women's Writing*, particularly its argument about multiple subjectivity: "One can occupy multiple subject positions from which an 'I' can address others, and the specific time and place will dictate how those subject positions are produced, how they speak themselves" (6). Farah deploys Askar's multiple selves (63; 70) to direct both his and the reader's attention to the ambivalence that nationalists do not often account for, ambivalence which calls for a revision of the nation as it were. Askar's multiple selves also undercut and ridicule his vow never to

"befriend any Adenese" simply because one of them was caught copulating with a hen. This blanket condemnation is a commentary on the nationalist wars that are fought on the basis of a blanket reading of a whole nation state as an enemy. It is this either/or ideology of the nation that makes Askar train as a guerrilla fighter against Ethiopia, even though it constitutes his identity. His reference to Somalia as "his mother country" (96) is counterintuitive to the extent that his mother is at once Somali and Ethiopian. It is significant that Askar can hardly understand all his multiple selves; his limited knowledge sheds doubt on his claim to understand the entirety of Somalia.

Like Askar, Misra has multiple identities which disrupt the unified identity of the nation. This destabilizing nature of Misra's culture does not work well for any nation, as it were, so the nation marginalizes her. Farah complicates Misra's history by giving her a parentage that cannot be easily categorized. Her mother is Oromo, her father is Amhara, and her cultural heritage is at the intersection of Oromo, Amhara, and the Ogaden. Her problem of belonging begins when her father abandons her at birth simply because she is a girl. By showing the plurality of every individual, Farah succeeds in depicting the danger of homogenizing any person, let alone nation. Misra's history, which is made up of several cultures and languages, is so complex that Misra is described as "real as the border" (133). There is something else that Farah is doing here. That is, the novelist creates characters who negotiate boundaries of gender and nation to show that there is another way of doing things, different from the dominant position. Interestingly, even as the nationalists police boundaries, we see ordinary people criss-crossing

these borders. Aw-Adan, for example, is not a Somali; nevertheless, he has blended with Somalis in the Ogaden so well that people mistake him for a Somali. When the Ogaden war begins, he fights on the side of Somalis. That a Qotto is ready to die and/or kill for a Somali cause is an indication that there is another way of organizing community other than along a homogenous line. If the Somali nation is determined by Somali ethnicity, then what are we to make of Aw-Adan's celebrated participation in a Somali national war, despite the fact that he is not a Somali? This moment not only reveals the contentious space that a nation occupies, but also the silences and fissures behind the façade of homogeneity. Upon Aw-Adan's return from the Ogaden war, he becomes a Somali hero: "He is a legendary figure in the town's history. Bare-handed, he took on three of them [Ethiopians] and killed them. Just like that. As easily as a strong-armed man might behead a hen. They say his faith in the destiny of his people – he wasn't Somali, he was a Qotto, you knew that? – they say that was his strength, gave him confidence" (183). What are we to make of this? What is clear is that Aw-Adan now views Somalis as his people, and this development revises conventional Somali nationality. In other words, Farah is pointing to the gap between the official national policy of Somali homogeneity and the ordinary transnational lives on the ground.

It is not only Aw-Adan who regards Somalis as his people. We see a similar shift in Misra when she says,

> For me, my people are Askar's people; my people are my former husband's people, the people I am most attached to. Those who were

> looking for a traitor and found one in me, rationalize that because I wasn't born one of them, I must be the one who betrayed. Besides, it is easier to suspect the foreigner amongst a community than one's own cousin or brother. But I swear upon Askar's life that I did not inform on the freedom fighters' movements or on their camp of sojourn. (193)

One may contest the gender inequality behind Misra's reference to her husband's people as her people, especially considering that her husband does not view her people in Ethiopia as his people. Our focus' however, is on Misra's ability to cross nationalist boundaries, and thus contest their ostensible fixity. Her Somaliness challenges the nationalists' assumption that a nation cannot be wrong (196) because she becomes a Somali in her own right without meeting the conventional requirements set by Hilaal. The two cases of Misra and Aw-Adan reinforce Robin Cohen's argument, in *Migration and its Enemies* (2006), that the nationalists' obsession with tight border controls is a desperate attempt to frustrate the connections across borders. In his words, "Nationalists have always needed strong frontier controls and stony-faced sentinels because identities are much more fragmented and overlapping than their fantasies or historical reconstructions allow" (Cohen 4). Somali nationalists are averse to boundaries because they feel that they deny Somalis an opportunity to form one nation. For them, "borders deny the Somali people who live on either side of it, yes, such borders deny these people their very existence as a nation" (126). This quotation is open to different readings. First, it shows that the Somali nationalists are still imprisoned to the nationalist obsession with boundaries of inside (Somalis) and

outside (non-Somalis). Second, it shows that the Somali nationalists are against (some) borders; particularly borders that prevent Somalis in Kenya, Ethiopia, Djibouti, and the Ogaden from living together in one space. Obviously, these spaces cannot be reduced to one space; the unity of space is a national myth. One is left wondering how this political ambition is different from the imperialist motivations of cartographers. Even so, the Somali nationalists' call for a space for all Somalis, narrowly defined as it were, is already undermined by the cultural ambivalence that defines nearly all characters. In this postcolonial moment, Farah's characters epitomize overlapping spaces and gaps to an extent that compels a rethinking of the parameters around which the conventional Somali nation has been mapped. One of these characters is Riyo, Askar's girlfriend, who "spoke [English] almost like a native. She had been born in Britain, where her father had done his higher education" (222). Clearly, Riyo's overlapping subjectivity resists easy classification along fixed boundaries of ethnicity and nation. To borrow's Layoun's words in a different context, Riyo's subjectivity is "a reminder of the difficulty of fixing and maintaining ethnic boundaries, a curious yet crucial marker of what was and is. It is equally, if more implicitly, a suggestion of what might be" (42). Indeed, Riyo is a significant part of a what Somalia's future might look like. In an attempt to challenge this perception of boundaries as fixed, Farah makes Misra and Aw-Adan negotiate Qotto/Somali and Ethiopia/Somali borders, and thus suggest alternative possibilities of belonging to the Somali nation-state. Farah also challenges the notion that one unified space for all Somalis would translate into a problem-free nation by showing class

inequalities. As Salaado puts it, "There's a difference between the rich and the poor, even when dead" (254). What this shows is that the oneness of Somalis has more demanding internal threats to deal with, including "hunger, corruption and poverty" (168). As such, it is important for the nation to attend to these cases of post-independence disillusionment largely brought about by a poverty of national leadership, even as it reels from the legacies of empire and rethinks its frames of definition.

Askar's resolve to join the Western Liberation Front in order to liberate the Ogaden is guided by one principle, "If killed when defending his country, he would die a young man at peace with his soul – and therefore a martyr" (57). And "[d]ying for one's country," Benedict Anderson's Imagined Communities (1991) reminds us, "is felt to be something fundamentally pure" (144). The Ogaden region was a site of war between Somalia and Ethiopia -- with external powers like Russia, Cuba, USA, and Egypt taking sides -- in 1977 and 1978. It remains a contested space to date, with Somalia determined to annex the Somali-speaking part of the Ogaden in order to form a Greater Somalia. In the novel, even the fact that the Ogaden is split between Ethiopia and Somalia, and thus culturally gray, does not stop the nationalist fighters like Askar from viewing it as solely Somalia. Uncle Hilaal, in approval, tells Askar, "Somalis went to war in order that the ethnic origin of the people of the Ogaden would match their national identity. That's what gives the Somalis their psychical energy, a type no other African people have, only Somalis" (126). The reader, however, knows that the Ogaden already defies nationalist categorization because it is split, and exists within both

Somalia and Ethiopia. Besides, as Ian Chambers has noted in *Border Dialgoues: Journeys in Postmodernity* (1990), it is important "to recognize that the 'nation' as a heterogenous cultural and linguistic unit is not a closed history, something that has already been achieved, but is an open framework, continually in the making. In starker terms, it means to move out of the mythological tempo of 'tradition' into the more fragmented and open discontinuities of histories" (47). It is for this very reason of continual making of culture that Somalis, contrary to Hilaal's advice, have to find their psychical energy in moments of contingency, and in the transnational landscape that defines their subjectivity, not outside them. By critiquing nationalist assumptions -- for example Askar is involved in the mysterious death of Misra, whom he is a part of, and, by so doing, has murdered a part of himself – Farah opens spaces for cultural diversity. These spaces are compounded by the overflow of refugees from the Ogaden war, whose presence points to a life in exile. The persistent homelessness in the novel -- exemplified by the refugees and Misra's depiction as "a miserable woman, with no child and friends" (7) – enact postcolonial condition of simultaneous home and exile. The co-existence of home and exile in this case is not entirely negative, as it highlights the case for a transnational space like the Ogaden and allows for the conceptualization of home beyond an either/or category.

Farah's attempts to conceive a world whose loyalties transcend the nation, a world in which various nations of humankind and animals can co-exist and be at home becomes clear when he uses Askar to project an open space,

> On the other side of the bank, I could see all sorts of animals and even a child or two and these were living together in total harmony. I couldn't, for the life of me, see how a lion could rub manes with horses without being tempted to tear them savagely apart with his teeth; could not imagine how a group of elderly men were in attentive reverence, listening to a speech being delivered by a young boy of eight; couldn't remember ever seeing (either before or after) how the men of the community paid respectful gallantry to the women upon whose demands and orders they waited. I was visibly delighted. (136)

This is a Sufi Muslim image in Birago Diop's Tales of Amadou Koumba (1988) by Birago Diop. It is also a Judaeo-Christian image; the above scene alludes to, or, rather, draws on the futuristic and harmonious reign of Messiah, documented in the Bible, "The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. Cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together and the lion will eat straw like the ox. The infant will play near the hole of the cobra, and the young child put his hand in the viper's nest. They will neither harm nor destroy" (Isaiah 11:6). It is important to note that Farah collapses boundaries and spaces by bringing together subjects that traditionally stay apart. The message here is that if "a lion could rub manes with horses," then there is no reason why a Somali could not live in peace with an Ethiopian, no reason why men and women cannot cultivate mutual respect, no reason why adults cannot learn from children. It essentially deconstructs hierarchies based on one's gender, nation, age, or

power. It also destabilizes the symbolic order. The prospect of the harmonious co-existence reflected in the quotation brings joy to the narrator. Farah's connection of spaces here serves other purposes as well. It is a symbolic resistance to colonial compartmentalization of space, and to the assumption that identities are closed; in other words, it is Farah's way of celebrating contingency. In a broader sense, Farah shows, as Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guatarri have done in *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987), that maps are open to transformation; they put it thus, "The map is open and connectable in all its dimensions; it is detachable, reversible, susceptible to constant modification" (12). It is because of Farah's commitment to the openness of space that he collapses age and gender boundaries, creating in Askar a subject of multiple subjectivities, "I was once a young man – but I lost my identity. I metamorphosed into an old man in his seventies, then a young woman. I am a septuagenarian wearing the face, and thinking with the brain, of a young woman, although the rest of my body [...] partly belongs to yet a third person, namely a seventeen-year-old youth" (63). The message here is that Farah is determined to fight not only boundaries, but also the hierarchies and misconceptions that accompany them.

While Farah's *Maps* disavows the notion of natural and pure national identity as a way of locating home, Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Matigari* valorizes the nationalist framework that locates home in the pre-colonial past. Ngugi has (in)famously advocated the nationalist position in both his critical works and narratives, even now when it is apparent that such a position is roped in a crisis of sorts. In *Moving the Center*, Ngugi says, "I wrote *Matigari,* novel of return in

the Gikuyu language, and I felt a sense of belonging such as I had felt when in 1978 at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison in Cell No. 16, I had written *Caitaani Mutharabaini (Devil on the Cross)* as an attempt to reconnect myself to the community from which I had been so brutally cut by the neo-colonial regime in Kenya" (106). Arguably, then, like his character Matigari, Ngugi is determined to return to a pre-colonial community as a site of identity. It is paradoxical that Matigari, and by extension, Ngugi, locates his freedom struggle on the platform of the nation-form, which is in itself repressive. The novel narrates the predicament of Matigari who successfully fights against the colonial power of the day and lives to see the dawn of political independence. He emerges from the forest with the hope of finding his place in the new nation, but, instead, he finds a condition of homelessness brought about by neocolonial cultural economy. Matigari's displacement allegorizes the formerly colonized people's attempt to return to estranged spaces, strange lands, which disallow belonging. Matigari cannot even find his people in this new nation, "When he had come out of the forest, he had thought that the task of bringing his family together was going to be an easy one. But now? It was already afternoon, and he had not yet made contact with his own; he did not even know where or how he would begin his search" (26).

Matigari, I argue, cannot find his people because they have undergone transformation. His search is still formulated within the paradigm of national culture that is oblivious of the impact of empire on the local cultures. In a defeatist and desperate rhetoric, but with the optimism that characterize nationalist discourse, Matigari accentuates the plausibility of finding the lost

nation, "My house is my house. I am only after what I have built with my own hands. Tomorrow belongs to me. I invite you [his fellow prisoners] all to my house the day after tomorrow. Come to a feast and celebrate our homecoming!" (64). Of course, we, the readers, know that tomorrow and even the day after tomorrow will belong to neocolonialists and not Matigari; the empire has simply undergone hibernation and modification. The empire is not about to quit the game, and that explains Matigari's homelessness. Before Matigari can think of celebrating a homecoming, he has to modify his resistance to reflect the wisdom of Achebe's Obierika in *Things Fall Apart,* who says, "Our own men and our sons have joined the ranks of the stranger. They have joined his religion and they help to uphold his government. If we should try to drive out the white men in Umuofia we should find it easy. There are only two of them. But what of our own people who are following their way and have been given power?" (124). This modification is partly necessitated by Matigari's persistent and protracted, yet fruitless, nationalist struggle: "I did not begin yesterday. I have seen many things over the years. Just consider, I was there at the time of the Portuguese, at the time of the Arabs, and at the time of the British –" (45).

Eventually Matigari considers an open space; that is, he seeks to advance a nationalist discourse without ignoring issues like race and tribe that undermine its validity. He does this by resigning to God: "He [God] will return on the day when His followers will be able to stand up without worrying about tribe, race or colour, and say in one voice: Our labour produced all the wealth in this land. So from today onwards we refuse to sleep out in the land cold, to walk about in rags,

to go to bed on empty bellies. Let the earth return to those to whom it belongs" (156). But this struggle demands much more than preaching. As Gikandi's "The Politics and Poetics of National Formation: Recent African Writing" in *From Commonwealth to Post-Colonial* (1992), posits, "Writers who still seem to believe that the post-colonial situation is simply the continuation of colonization under the guise of independence, or that the narratives of decolonization can be projected into the post-colonial world, seem to be entrapped in an ideological and narrative cul-de-sac" (379). Ngugi's *Matigari* falls in the above category because it does not account for the ambivalences that inhabit the postcolonial moment. *Matigari* is important as a critique of neocolonialism, as it typifies the colonized people who remain without land, houses, and family (metaphors for home) long after independence. However, it falls short of envisioning the way forward, unless one takes the characters' participation in the burning of the rich people's cars and houses, which would only send the burners to jail without addressing their landlessness, as a revolutionary vision. But this determination for a pre-colonial community, while noble, is, ultimately, futile. Matigari has to accommodate both his past and present; as Caren Kaplan, in *Questions of Travel* (1996) rightly reminds us, "There is not necessarily a preoriginary space in which to stay after modern imperialist expansion" (7). What Kaplan and Gikandi mean here is that the national spaces we inhabit are products of empire, a view that is also shared by Etienne Balibar in *We, the People of Europe?: Reflections on Transnational Citizenship* (2003). It is for this reason that our longings for home have to recognize and work with the history of colonization. That said, Kaplan's point that

there is no precolonial space after empire seems to simplify the nationalist appeal to the past. It is fair to register that some nationalists constantly invent the notion and content of a common past as a strategy for solidarity around the present and future challenges, not because they believe in finding a literal past. Of course, a question still remains on why the nationalist project or rather the new community cannot be built on the complex challenges of the present and future, and on the brighter days ahead.

Maps is a borderland of various subjectivities and cultures; it is a call for a more tolerant community in which borders serve as horizontal intersections of identity. As such, the novel serves a larger emancipatory project than nationalism. For example, it collapses age and gender boundaries to create a subject of multiple subjectivities: "I [Askar] was once a young man – but I lost my identity. I metamorphosed into an old man in his seventies, then a young woman. I am a septuagenarian wearing the face, and thinking with the brain, of a young woman, although the rest of my body [...] partly belongs to yet a third person, namely a seventeen-year-old youth" (63). What is noteworthy here is that Askar makes it difficult for anyone to pigeon-hole his identity by being three characters simultaneously: a septuagenarian, a young woman, and a youth. This instance also reminds one of Bhabha's argument, in *Location of Culture,* that "it is by living on the borderline of history and language, on the limits of race and gender, that we are in a position to translate the differences between them into a kind of solidarity" (170). In other words, a mutual crossing of boundaries and sharing of knowledge is necessary in the process of locating home. Farah creates several

situations that promote a crossing of boundaries in one way or the other. In terms of gender, for example, Farah reverses the gender roles between Hilaal and Salaado (150; 151; 196; 238) in order to deconstruct gender boundaries. In particular, Hilaal and Salaado allow us to see the difficulty, even fallacy, of drawing a line between male and female when Hilaal fails to start the family car and goes back home in a taxi to seek his wife's help. Everything related to a car, from driving to repairing it, is a man's domain in the text; yet, it is Salaado who acts the man as she takes the same taxi to go and get the family car: "'The carburetor is flooded, can you imagine?' she was saying to the taxi driver, 'and they just lock it up and walk away. Useless men'" (238). Instead of looking at this as a moment of emasculation, one could read it as an attempt to unfix gender roles, to show that the gender boundary is a construct that can be overcome.

In order to bridge this gap, Farah seems to suggest, women would have to rethink their complicity in the perpetuation of gender boundaries. The said complicity is evident in Misra's shock when she visits Hilaal and Salaado: "Misra felt disoriented when she learnt that Hilaal cooked most meals [...] disoriented because she had never been in a home where the man did the woman's job and the woman more or less the man's" (196). Misra's disorientation shows that gender roles are quite entrenched, but it also suggests that the negotiation of boundaries that we see between Hilaal and Salaado is an aberration. While Farah's point of change is clear, especially when he makes Hilaal play "the contradictory roles of 'Mother' to [Askar] and Salaado" (156), his reversal of gender roles is partly subject to debate. One could argue that it simply swaps

men's duties to women and women's duties to men; that is, a serious revision of gender boundaries would require Farah to delink roles from gender, and project a space in which roles are not tied to a particular gender. Not just that -- the values associated with gender must be neutralized. That said, Farah creates many scenes that point towards a fluidity of boundaries. One of these scenes shows a female dog named "Bruder," which is a German word for brother (188). We see "Salaado in Hilaal's jellaba, he in her caftan" (256). Askar says, "I feel as if I have allowed a woman older than I to live inside of me, and I speak not my words, my ideas, but hers. And during the time I'm spoken through, as it were, I am she – not I" (158). It is in keeping with its goal of breaking gender barriers that the novel proudly mentions the Wolof language's interchangeable use of he and she, showing that it has "no indicator of gender" (169). Why is it important for Farah to deconstruct these boundaries?

Farah is interested in addressing the hierarchies and inequalities that traditional boundaries engender. The novel is set in a patriarchal society in which men are superior to women. Uncle Qorrax, for example, is notorious for beating his wives and children. Askar, on the other hand, condescendingly asks Misra if she would return to Ethiopia together with the Ethiopian women and children who are fleeing the Ogaden. In response, "She [Misra] smiled rather mischievously, reminding herself that Askar was not yet eight and that here he was behaving as though he were a man and she a creature of his own invention" (112). Gender inequality has been so normalized in Askar's world that he learns about the power he has as a man over Misra at a very young age and without a father-

figure to learn from. Farah makes him learn that his manliness is dependent on Misra when he is severed from Misra. A few minutes after boarding the lorry to Mogadiscio, he tells Karin that his separation from Misra "feels as though I have no heart which beats, no lungs which breathe and no head which can think lucidly" (127). Farah also introduces Askar to "a girl without a name, without a country" (135) whom he admires. On the one hand, the fact that this girl's lack of national identity does not prevent Askar from liking her promotes alternative ways of self-definition. On the other hand, a celebration of this girl's status romanticizes her condition as a refugee.

Farah's novel contests the institutionalization of authentic and unified tradition by constantly inserting contingent subjectivities. For example, to destabilize the supposed stability of Karin's linguistic tradition, Farah exposes her to other languages: "Then she [Misra] began speaking words belonging to a language group neither Karin nor Askar had ever heard of before and she repeated and repeated the mantras of her invocation" (118). One could look at this as a moment of contingency, a moment of translation, which instantly complicates the listeners' traditions. It may also be an indicator that Misra is unknowable, as her use of a language that is neither Somali nor Amharic complicates her identity further. The same can be said of the identity of the Ogaden children like Askar who enroll in Aw-Adan's Koranic School only to learn much later that "he wasn't Somali, he was a Qotto" (183). It is tempting to argue that Aw-Adan's Qotto identity spills on his students' identity, making it difficult for them to claim a pure Somali identity. For Askar, this has far reaching implications

because it means that both his first teacher, Misra and his second teacher, Aw-Adan are both non-Somalis. These students are also taught Arabic, which further complicates their identity. Additionally, in an attempt to contest the notions of authenticity and tradition, Farah creates in Misra a character who cannot be traced to a single self. This is evident when she is kidnapped from the hospital, and her immediate family consisting of Askar, Hilaal, and Salaado do not even know her real name, let alone her father's name:

> [S]he had entered the country in disguise, under another name. What name was that? The one I knew her by, spelt as Misra or variations of it? Or the one Karin gave me? Even if we wanted, we had no name to report to the police as a "Missing Person", nor did we have one to release to the press. Misra? Massar? Masrat? Massarat? What name can we find you under and where? (242)

Misra takes a different identity from time to time and from place to place; for example, while everyone in Kallafo knew her as Misra, the Ethiopian officer from the same village as Misra called her "Misrat" (185). Askar who has known Misra since his birth does not know a name to report to the police, suggesting that a subject is simultaneously knowable and unknowable.

In Askar's conversation with Karin, we gather the following: "Misra is the Arabic name for 'Egypt' and Somalis prefer it to their own corrupted form 'Massar', which also gives you the Somali word for 'headscarf'. And when I asked Misra what her name meant in her language, I remember her saying that it meant 'foundation', I think 'the foundation of the earth' or something" (185). First, the

quotation shows that Arabic has a significant influence on Somali language, causing Somalis who are otherwise determined to preserve their linguistic purity to adopt some Arabic words; linguistic "corruption" is already taking place, compromising Somali homogeneity. Second, if we take Misra as a foundation of the earth, then the message we get is that the earth cannot be framed on a single tradition as there are always many other, known and unknown, overlapping, even incomplete, traditions. Third, the multiple variations of Misra, which seem to increase with time, show that identity is never over and is never complete at any given time. This corresponds with Chambers' observation, in Border Dialogues, about tradition:

> No single tradition can function as a guarantee of the present, can save us. There are many, constituted by gender, ethnicity, sexuality, race, class, that criss-cross the patterns of our lives. By bringing them into history, into recognition and representation, we appreciate the complexity that can challenge the tyranny on the present of a single, official heritage: that of "being British [Somali]." (46)

Chambers is concerned that a narrowly defined mainstream identity is likely to oppress marginal identities, and to undermine the kind of complexity we see in Farah's characters. Karin, for example, is female; however, when she falls sick, she "give[s] as her name the name of a man" which, according to Askar, is equivalent to "giving as her own an identity which didn't match her real identity" (107). Askar assumes here that there is an authentic and real Karin, an assumption which the text questions by doubling her gender. The point here is

that identity, tradition, and history are always almost but not quite; either something is missing or cropping up in the frame to deny an authentic image. For example, an attempt to frame the priest-doctor/witch-doctor who treats Waliima Sheikh has to deal with the contingency of his being a practicing Muslim as well, and with "the religious and philosophical contradictions surrounding his activities" (212). Similarly, an attempt to frame his patient has to come to terms with both "the woman-as-human" and "the spirit in the woman" (214). Even though the human part of her is a woman, the spiritual part of her is unknown, prompting the priest-doctor to ask her: "Just tell the congregation your name, address and, if possible, your profession. Are you a man, are you a woman or are you a child? Are you human or jinn?" (214). The woman's response, "I am Deeqo Amin" (214), serves as an example of a contingent subjectivity, and contests the notion of a distinct and authentic identity. The same applies to Bessie Head's Elizabeth when she says that she feels "as though I am living with a strange 'other self' I don't know so well" (58).

Bessie Head, like Farah, explores the questions of boundaries, how they are normalized, and how they can be subverted to bring about change. In her autobiographical novel, *A Question of Power*, she uses the tropes of madness and gardening to cross a different set of borders – nationality, race, gender, sexuality, and class. To that end, it reminds us of Gloria Anzaldúa's suggestion, in *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (1987), that we have to be ready to live without borders (195). It is a novel about Elizabeth's search for home in an otherwise hostile world of marginality. To borrow Rob Nixon's words in "Border

Country: Bessie Head's Frontline States," the novel "offers radical insight into the contingencies underlying efforts to secure membership or exclusion from society on grounds of nature or ancestry" (108). Head questions the rationale on which the boundaries of inclusion/exclusion are constructed, and their implications on women. We see a similar questioning of the supposed impermeability of boundaries in Jacques Derrida's "Living On" (1979). Here Derrida recommends "doing away with all boundaries, all framework, all sharp edges" (70). Here, then, is a case for porosity across borders. What seems to be an end is also a beginning, and what seems to be a distinction is also a connection, "No border is guaranteed, inside or out" (Derrida 64). Derrida goes further to contest the assumption of unity in spaces or subjects within conventional boundaries; as he postulates, "the unity of one version can be *encroached* upon by an essential *unfinishedness* that cannot be reduced to an incompleteness or an inadequacy" (84-85). I push Derrida's point further by replacing "can be" with "is always." Head's novel meets the challenge of Susan Stanford Friedman's call, in *Mappings: Feminisms and the Cultural Geographies of Encounter* (1998), for a movement towards "new ways of thinking that negotiate beyond the conventional boundaries between us and them, white and other, First World and Third World, men and women, oppressor and oppressed, fixity and fluidity" (4). As a result of "the symbiotic, syncretist, interactive formations in the borderlands," Friedman argues that "[t]he future of feminism and other progressive movements lies [...] in a turning outward, an embrace of contradiction, dislocation, and change" (4). The mentioned boundaries are fluid, but they are kept impermeable in the interest of

social power; the fixity of these borders plays a significant role in maintaining the status quo whereby power is in, not out. It is because of this relationship between power and boundaries, because power relations and social order feed on and are enabled by conventional boundaries, that Bessie Head insists on the transgression of borders as a gateway to a meaningful change. Her novel not only questions the boundaries of race, gender, sexuality, and class, but also demonstrates a direct relationship between these boundaries and women's marginality.

The novel anticipates "an idealized community in which the bigotries of racism and ethnic nationalism are simultaneously transcended" (Nixon 114). Nixon's use of transcendence here is similar to Bhabha's suggestion, in *The Location of Culture,* that we move beyond the identities we have received; Bhabha's beyond "is neither a new horizon, nor a leaving behind of the past," but a recognition of a point "where space and time cross to produce complex figures of difference and identity, past and present, inside and outside, inclusion and exclusion" (1). On the basis of this anticipation, the novel contests the notion of hegemony as a way of configuring home. The major character, Elizabeth, has no place in Apartheid South Africa because of her mixed race (her mother is white and father black): "In South Africa she had been rigidly classified Coloured. There was no escape from it to the simple joy of being a human being with a personality. There wasn't any escape like that for anyone in South Africa. They were races, not people" (44). This categorization privileges race over gender. In Elizabeth's world, one is either white or black; colored/biracial characters like

Elizabeth are rejected by both whites and blacks. Dan, who is black, calls her inauthentic upon seeing a supposedly proper African with traditional African hair, "I like girls like this with that kind of hair. Your hair is not properly African" (127). Dan fails to register that Elizabeth has a double racial identity that makes it difficult for her to easily fit into a monolithic racial pattern. In a similar context, Medusa, a xenophobic masquerading as a nationalist, warns her to keep off Africa: "Africa is troubled waters, you know. I'm a powerful swimmer in troubled waters. You'll only drown here. You're not linked up to the people. You don't know any African languages" (44). Elizabeth who has been rejected by her white family for being too African is now rejected in Botswana for not being African enough. Of course, one could look at Dan and Medusa as products of Elizabeth's psychosis, but they are also reflections of Elizabeth's society. What happens to the binary of oppressor and oppressed when the oppressed (Dan and Medusa) become oppressors? Suspended in limbo, Elizabeth becomes a victim of two competing worlds of white men and black men. It is in this limbo where she attempts to negotiate a home beyond the paradigms of authenticity and/or inauthenticity. Elizabeth's experience shows the need for a space which can handle multiple cultural intersections.

Like Farah's Askar in Maps, Elizabeth is brought up by a surrogate mother: "They had kept the story of her real mother shrouded in secrecy until she was thirteen. She had loved another woman as her mother, who was also part African, part English, like Elizabeth. She had been paid to care for Elizabeth, but on the death of her husband she resorted to selling beer as a means of

livelihood" (15). Considering that her surrogate mother is also colored, it is not surprising that Elizabeth grows up without suspecting that she is not her mother. When Elizabeth finally joins a mission school, where she becomes a beneficiary and victim of the civilizing mission, the white principal is quick to remind her, "We have a full docket on you. You must be very careful. Your mother was insane. If you're not careful you'll get insane just like your mother. Your mother was a white woman. They had to lock her up, as she was having a child by the stable boy, who was a native" (16). The principal uses the colonial notion of madness to draw boundaries within which to confine Elizabeth. In apartheid South Africa, sexual relationships between white women and black men are not only prohibited by a controversial Immorality Act but considered abnormal. The society denies the plausibility of such relationships because allowing them would (in their view) grant the black men a sense of humanity and normality, which would undermine apartheid. The trope of madness is deployed here to explain away Elizabeth's mother's transgression of racial boundaries (sleeping with a native); in order to maintain the apartheid system's impermeable boundaries, Elizabeth's mother's action has to be labeled as madness. If her act was accepted as a normal activity between two human beings, the very racist structure on which the apartheid system was founded would collapse. The underlying message is that Elizabeth's mother could not have been sexually involved with a native if she was in her right mind, and since rape was not reported it follows that Elizabeth's mother was mad. Elizabeth's mother commits at least two crimes – class (sleeping with a stable boy) and race (sleeping with a native). The other crime might be that she

undercuts the colonial efficacy of calling black men boys; a boy is an emasculating boundary created to show that the colonized men are forever boys as opposed to men, but this boundary becomes difficult to sustain when the stable boy proves himself a man by impregnating Elizabeth's mother. The native's crime is that he forgets his place (Fanon, Black Skin 52). This black and white binary is responsible for the rejection of both Elizabeth and her mother by their families and societies; it serves to institutionalize the fear of rejection in potential border transgressors. Of course, for change to be realized, Elizabeth's mother has to transgress the racial boundary between blacks and whites; her transgression is at once a protest against and a negotiation of this racial divide that does not account for Elizabeth's hybridity. Head could also be using the tropes of madness and rejection to show the price one has to be prepared to pay for crossing boundaries, for going against the norm, for becoming a social critic.

Out of fear that Elizabeth might infect other children with her madness, the principal "lived on the alert for Elizabeth's insanity" (16). A small fight between her and fellow pupils, for example, is enough to invite the principal's order that she be isolated "from the other children for a week" (16). This extraordinary penalty against Elizabeth only helps ostracize her further from the community, "The other children soon noticed something unusual about Elizabeth's isolation periods. They could fight and scratch and bite each other, but if she did likewise she was locked up. They took to kicking at her with deliberate malice as she sat in a corner reading a book. None of the prefects would listen to her side of the story. 'Come on,' they said. 'The principal said you must be locked up'" (16-17).

This endless abuse based on her link to a mother she has never known compels Elizabeth to investigate her origins from her foster mother, from whom she learns that she was rejected by her own family and society because she "did not look white" (17). Her maternal uncle, clearly more preoccupied by a racecourse in Durban and brainwashed by the apartheid system, is eager to dump little Elizabeth to whoever would accept her. His speech to the foster parents is telling: "We want to wash our hands of this business. We want to forget, but the old lady insists on seeing the child. We had to please her. We are going to leave her here and pick her up later" (17).

Paradoxically, the apartheid system's determination to conceal any evidence of white-black relationships, which in large measure informs its decision to have a colored woman raise Elizabeth, also reveals that very evidence. Put differently, the surrogate mother is a product of a white-black relationship. As such, even though locking up Elizabeth's white mother so that she is not seen with a mixed child serves to fix the sexual boundaries between blacks and whites, both Elizabeth and her surrogate mother attest to the porosity of those boundaries, thereby making the whole process of denial counterintuitive.

According to Helen Kapstein, in "'A Peculiar Shuttling Movement': Madness, Passing, and Trespassing in Bessie Head's *A Question of Power*" (2003), the novel "opens a range of transgressive border-crossings, and allows [the protagonist] to shuttle between various identities, genders, sexualities, and nation-states" (71). For example, Elizabeth has an ambivalent gender that resists categorization. Dan tells her, "You haven't got a vagina" (13), and she does not

find it "maddening to be told she hadn't a vagina" (44). Similarly, Dan's sexuality is ambiguous; if he was not going for women, Dan "went for men like mad" (116). Both Dan and Elizabeth have shifting gender and sexual identities throughout the text. The ambivalence deconstructs the boundaries of gender and sexuality, and the power relations they produce. In an attempt to connect with other geographical locations, Elizabeth interacted with people from different national backgrounds: "She spent some time living with Asian families, where she learnt about India and its philosophies, and some time with a German woman from whom she learned about Hitler and the Jews and the Second World War" (18). This worldly exposure grants Elizabeth an international subjectivity beyond South Africa and Botswana, and makes her more receptive to difference than the people in her environment. It appears that Head is commenting on the possibility of world citizenship, which is the subject of Timothy Brennan's At Home in the World: Cosmopolitanism (1997) and Masao Miyoshi's "A Borderless World?: From Colonialism to Transnationalism and the Decline of the Nation-State" (1993). By allowing Elizabeth to build a community outside of the boundaries of South Africa, Head suggests the possibility of life after statelessness. Obviously, her subjectivity becomes more complex as her world expands, which shows that identity is an "ongoing process, politically contested and historically unfinished" (Clifford 9).

It is important that we do not let the need for these connections eclipse the burden of blackness as presented in the novel. According to the narrator, "[Elizabeth] had also lived the back-breaking life of all black people in South

Africa. It was like living with permanent nervous tension, because you did not know why white people there had to go out of their way to hate you or loathe you. They were just born that way, hating people, and a black man or woman was just born to be hated" (19). Frantz Fanon speaks to this nervous tension in Black Skin, White Masks. Everyday occurrences are underlined by race. For example, Elizabeth is sacked from her teaching job on the ground of her insanity (66), but also because her fellow teachers "really disliked her and preferred to have nothing to do with her" (67). As if that were not enough, she is rejected by the English farm manager (71). On her part, Camilla was "a hysterical white woman who never saw black people as people but as objects of permanent idiocy" (76). Although the society is patriarchal, Camilla's race grants her the power to mistreat the male Botswana students at the farm. Race comes first. "She [Camilla] flung information at her [Elizabeth] in such a way as to make it totally incomprehensible and meaningless, subtly demonstrating that to reach her level of education Elizabeth had to be able to grasp the incoherent.... It was really hatred at first sight, but the blue-eyed chattering woman seemed entirely unaware of it" (76). In her assessment of Camilla, Elizabeth tells Birgette, "She takes the inferiority of the black man so much for granted that she thinks nothing of telling us straight to our faces we are stupid and don't know anything. There's so many like her. They don't see the shades and shadows of life on black people's faces" (82).

Bessie Head depicts Elizabeth's husband as abusive and unfaithful (19). When she cannot endure him anymore, she takes an exit permit to Botswana

where she becomes "a stateless person" (18). Interestingly, when Elizabeth takes the seat of power, she still remains imprisoned by patriarchy and binary logic, "She could hurl a thunderbolt like nothing ever seen before and shatter a victim into a thousand fragments: 'Who's running the show around here? I am. Who knows everything around here? I do. Who's wearing the pants in this house? I am.' She seemed to fill all requirements" (43). The pants here is a metaphor for man – which means that she cannot imagine power outside of masculinity.

Without a home in South Africa and Botswana, Elizabeth literally and figuratively enacts bell hooks's words, "at times home is nowhere" (148). In a nationalist tone, Medusa rejects Elizabeth because she is not a citizen of Botswana, "We don't want you here. This is my land. These are my people. We keep our things to ourselves" (38). In "The Pitfalls of National Consciousness," a chapter in The Wretched of the Earth, Frantz Fanon spells out the dangers of nationalism, emphasizing that it was necessary for the birth of post-colonial culture but also cautioning that it would breed exclusive and "othering" tendencies among the members of the new nation once the colonizers were out of the picture. That is to say, the nation was a momentary tool, based on the notion of using the enemy's weapon to fight him/her, which had to be reconfigured once independence was attained to prevent the nation from disintegrating (183). Granted, meaningful progress cannot be established within the framework of the nation because it is inherently divisive. In a similar vein, the novel's narrator says, "The wild-eyed Medusa was expressing the surface reality

of African society. It was shut in and exclusive. It had a strong theme of power-worship running through it, and power people needed small, narrow, shut-in worlds. They never felt secure in the big, wide flexible universe where there were too many cross-currents of opposing thought" (38). This is commentary on the limitations of Africa's nationalism; it invokes cosmopolitanism as an alternative space.

Elizabeth, in keeping with her cosmopolitanism, says, "'I've got my concentration elsewhere,' she said. 'It's on mankind in general, and black people fit in there, not as special freaks and oddities outside the scheme of things, with labels like Black Power or any other rubbish of that kind" (133). In the farm where she works, "There were a thousand such stories to tell of life in Motaben'g, of tentative efforts people of totally foreign backgrounds made to work together and understand each other's humanity; that needed analyzing – intangible, unpraised efforts to establish the brotherhood of man" (158).

Borders are always already fragmented and ambivalent. Instead of maintaining inherited borders, we need to cross them so as to attain what bell hooks calls "a politicization of memory that distinguishes nostalgia, that longing for something to be as once it was, a kind of useless act, from that remembering that serves to illuminate and transform the present" (147). In other words, our reference to the past has more do with illuminating and transforming our idea of home today than reproducing the once-upon-a-time home with its flaws. We cannot feel at home if we remain imprisoned to a supposedly flawless past that is full of flaws; our way forward is to refer to the past with an aim of learning what

worked and what did not work in our construction of home. Without such a reference, we stand the risk of marching backwards.

Chapter Three

Locating Home Between the Local and the Global; The Homeless, Slums, and Movement

The last chapter examines how and where to locate home when global affiliations permeate the boundaries between the local and the global, as is the case in Charles Mungoshi's *Waiting for the Rain* (1975), and Oliver Mtukudzi's *Dzoka Uyamwe* (2003). The narratives of home and origin, which for a long time found identity in the local place, have become unstable following the increasing difficulty to draw the line between the local and the global. Arguing that the idea of home cannot be delinked from the world, the dissertation attempts to find a way of "being in the world," a way of embracing our connectedness to both the local and the global. Even as it appreciates the global ties that link us, the dissertation questions whose global village this is, especially considering villagers who are kept on the fringes of the globe. As Homi K. Bhabha cautions us in *The Location of Culture*, when "we talk of the ever expanding boundaries and territories of the global world , we must not fail to see how our own intimate, indigenous landscapes should be remapped to include those who are its new citizens; or those whose citizenly presence has been annihilated or marginalized" (xxii). He further warns that while celebrating "diasporic communities" we should not neglect "regional movements of people within nation-states" (xxii), and for him these movements have created a vast constituency of people that includes millions of "internally displaced peoples as a result of famines and civil wars" (xxi). In my case, this marginalized group includes local Jamaicans in Stephanie

Black's *Life and Debt* (2001), slum dwellers who suffer constant evictions in Kenya and Zimbabwe, internally displaced persons in the Democratic Republic of Congo and in Darfur, Sudan, and the homeless/street people, all of whom "keep moving" -- a different movement from the one celebrated by many postmodernists -- because they do not have a place to call home. For these people, who have lost their livelihood to the economic forces of the local and the global, a belonging to either the latter or the former remains hollow and ambivalent. This chapter intends to do the following: i) to contest the divide between the local and the global in order to show that the two are connected; ii) to read the movement of slum dwellers and the homeless against the motion celebrated by postmodernists in order to show that an unqualified celebration of movement undermines the condition of slum dwellers and the homeless.

i) The divide between the local and the global

Conventionally, the local and the global are understood to be distinct cultural spaces. While the local is considered as a unitary site, and thus the location of home, the global is regarded as the other. However, in this era of globalization, it has become very difficult to maintain this distinction. There is a sense of the global in the local, and vice versa. Moreover, contrary to conventional assumptions, both the local and the global are actively transforming and being transformed by each other. It is therefore inaccurate to view the local as a passive player, either removed from global influence or waiting to be influenced by the global. Stuart Hall, in "The Local and the Global: Globalization

and Ethnicity" (1997), demonstrates the danger of viewing identities and places as "stable points of reference that were like that in the past, are now and ever shall be, still points in a turning world" (175). In his view, the locality turns with the rest of the world, and "goes through the eye of the needle of the other before it can construct itself" (174). In other words, every place is connected to another place. Hall has also noted globalization's role in "the erosion of the nation-state and the national identities that are associated with it" (177). Indeed, according to him, "different subject-positions are being transformed or produced in the course of the unfolding of the new dialectics of global culture" (173). It is not only Hall who sees a link between the local and the global.

Bill Ashcroft, author of *Post-Colonial Transformation* (2001), has made a similar observation: "The *diffusion* of global influence makes the relationship between the local and the global all the more complex, because when we examine local cultures we find the presence of the global within the local to an extent that compels us to be very clear about our concept of the local" (215). Ashcroft's view that we can no longer look at the local in isolation from the global is persuasive; however, it is compromised by its "top down" approach. That is, it wrongly suggests that the contest between the global and the local is one-way, and that it is only the local on the receiving end. In any case, the presence of the global in the local has implications for our perception of home, one of which is the difficulty of separating home from the world. There is a need to configure a global sense of home, so as to account for the threads of global culture and relations that interweave the fabric that we call home.

In their introduction to *Globalization and Identity: Dialectics of Flow and Closure* (1999), Birgit Meyer and Peter Geschiere call for "an understanding of globalization that not only takes into account the rapid increase in mobility of people, goods, and images, but also the fact that, in many places, flow goes hand in hand with a closure of identities which often used to be much more fuzzy and permeable" (2). In other words, while some people seem open to globalization, others resist it by affirming what they consider as their endangered local identities. This resistance is based on the fear that globalization is cultural imperialism by any other name, and that in time it would consume the local cultures. While this fear is in some ways justified, it does not change the fact that "there are no absolute boundaries unaffected by global flows" (Meyer and Geschiere 5). Nevertheless, the local space is too complex and active to be erased by the global flows. As Henry Lefebvre, in *The Production of Space* (1991), puts it, "We are confronted not by one social space but by many – indeed, by an unlimited multiplicity or uncountable set of social spaces which we refer to generically as 'social space'. No space disappears in the course of growth and development: the *worldwide does not abolish the local"* (86). Nevertheless, globalization has an impact on the local, an impact that affects our understanding of home.

In a similar vein, Arif Dirlik, in "The Global in the Local" (1996), shows the relationship between the local and the global by arguing that the boundaries of the local are open. For him:

> The local [...] is a product of the conjuncture of structures located in the same temporality but with different spatialities, which is what gives rise to the problem of spatiality and, therefore, of the local, in the first place. The conjunctural situation also defines the culture of the local, which is stripped of its reification by daily confrontation between different cultures and appears instead in the nakedness of its everyday practice. (39)

In other words, the local undergoes daily constructions and tensions as it finds its place in a sea of cultures, which in turn makes it difficult to separate it from those other cultures. Dirlik also warns against unbridled idealization of the local because it is "a site both of promise and predicament." Put differently, the local is capable of liberation as much as it is capable of oppression: "In its promise of liberation, localism may also serve to disguise oppression and parochialism" (22). In a similar context, Mike Featherstone, in "Localism, Globalism, and Cultural Identity" (1996), argues that "it is not helpful to regard the global and local as dichotomies separated in space or time; rather, it would seem that the processes of globalization and localization are inextricably bound together in the current phase" (47).

Talking specifically about Latin American presence in the U.S., Richard T. Rodrı´guez argues that when we look at Latino/a studies "what we see are not mutually exclusive Chicano/a and Peurto Rican cultural histories," instead we have a complex social history that grasps "the glocal"- that is, the intertwine function of the global and the local-whose key coordinates are provided by a critical regionalist practice" (183). Rodrı´guez's argument resonates with

Mungoshi's Garabha, a character who resists categorization as either local or global. He is equated with wind, which is a strategic way of indicating his openness.

Mungoshi's *Waiting for the Rain* explores the relationship between the country and the city, between the local and the global, or the glocal, and between Zimbabwe and the Western world -- showing that the boundary that divides them is permeable. Set in Zimbabwe, it uses lack of rain literally and figuratively to explain penury in the worlds of his characters. As a result of drought, a society that chiefly relies on agriculture as an economic activity is faced with famine. The narrator defines "home" as a locality "where the rain comes late, if it does come at all, and the animals simply drop dead and the old folk are abandoned to await the black messiah with a curse on their twisted lips. Home? No, no, no, no" (163). Indeed, there is drought throughout the novel. A conflict between the local and the global first surfaces when the main character, Lucifer, travels from the capital city where he has been residing to his rural home where his parents live. The purpose of his visit is to get his parents' blessings before he travels overseas for higher education. The bus he has boarded stops at Chambara township before it proceeds to his village, and it is here that his embodiment of the conflict becomes evident: "He recognizes familiar faces but they seem much older. He can't fit any names to the faces, they remain just familiar anonymous faces. He is ashamed. He is supposed to know their names but he doesn't. An uneasiness – a feeling of not belonging – assails him" (40). One could read his inability to fit any names as a sense of detachment between the city/the global and the country/the local,

considering the weight of names in relation to identity. However, this detachment is undermined by his recognition of faces. We shall expand on that sense of (dis)connection that allows Lucifer to recognize his villagers.

At the next bus stop, Lucifer encounters another family, and there is something about them that he cannot remember: "[It] makes him uneasy. It sits uncomfortably in him together with other things that he can't name – things that have always haunted him in his home country – making him feel an unwelcome stranger here where he was born and grew up" (41). He finally arrives at his destination and meets his father at the bus stop: "He looks round at the old stony country and wishes he were elsewhere" (42). Lucifer feels homeless in his home country, which is in contrast to the general trend in which people feel homeless in the city or overseas. He promises not to return when he leaves: "Must I live with what I no longer believe in?" (162). Lucifer suggests here that he once believed in his rural home, making us wonder when he shifted and what caused that shift. To understand why Lucifer no longer believes in his rural home, one has to look at his home as a diseased or sick space.

The local space that is Lucifer's village stands out as a site of disease and death, a site burdened with the negative effects of globalization. Nearly all characters are suffering from a range of ailments and facing imminent death. They look emaciated, wasted, doomed, and dying. For example, Tongoona suffers from swollen feet and backache which affect his work and sleep; Old Japi is "half-deaf and half-blind" (6); Old Mandisa feels dead (11); "Lucifer looks sick" (169); Lucifer's mother, Raina, has "a terrible headache" (21); and Kutsvaka's

wife and children have "pains in the chest" (22). When one begins to think deeply about these characters, their diseases, and general fatigue, one begins to see what being at the receiving end of globalization really means. In other words, Lucifer's rural home is an example of the cost the local has to pay in its relationship with the global.

One could read this local space's poverty and death as a commentary on its relationship with the global. Lucifer describes it as "a cluster of termite-eaten huts clinging on the stony slope of a sun-baked hill" (162). This description evokes decline and abandonment. More importantly, it evokes a negative and cancerous consumption. There is always something eating up something in both spaces. The huts are eaten by termites. The characters are eaten by disease. The dead bodies are eaten by vultures. Everyone and everything, including an ant (164), is death-bound. In fact, Lucifer says, "At home, the worms set to work on you on the very day you are conceived" (163). This could be read as taking away protest, but it could also be read as an urgent call for protest because it suggests that both the mother and the unborn baby are endangered. Ordinarily, worms begin to eat one after one's burial, meaning after one's death. However, in this case, the worms do not wait for a subject to be born, to live, and to die; the death-bound-subject, if I can borrow Abdul R. JanMohamed's term, begins to encounter the threat of death on the day it is conceived. This makes more sense when we consider that the fetus of the hunger-stricken characters in the novel would begin to face malnutrition in the womb. This prompts us to join JanMohamed's *The Death-Bound-Subject* (2005), in asking: "What happens to

the 'life' of a subject who is faced with the ubiquitous threat of death, a threat that is constant yet unpredictable? How does that threat permeate the subject's life? (2). In terms of the novel, the movement of both the subjects who stay at home and those who leave home inevitably ends at "The Plain of Skulls" (164) and Lucifer's family have "the feeling that someone is being buried" (166). While a form of agency is lacking among the villagers who seem to passively await their fates, is fair to say that the ' agency lies in the resilience and survival. Tongoona, for example, goes to cultivate his farms even when he is in pain; the fact that he is still there shows a persistent struggle against the threat of death. Still, in the novel, it seems that movement always leads to death, and in the era of globalization, one does not need to leave home in order to move – as the cases of the Old Man and Garabha show. Lucifer's flight from his village could be a manifestation of his feeling that people in his village are death-bound.

One could push that cloud of death that is hanging over the local further by arguing that it is a part of the game. In other words, it is a manifestation of the tension between the local and the global. Even when we argue about open boundaries, we are clearly reminded that the power relations between the local and global are in favor of the global, that the global is largely in control. Once the local subject is death-bound as is the case in Lucifer's village, the global forces use that occasion to explain away any abuse against them. Paul Gilroy neatly captures this tension between the global and the local in *Postcolonial Melancholia* (2005) through a memo written by the former Chief Economist at the

World Bank, Lawrence Summers. In this memo, Summers makes the following case:

> I think the economic logic behind dumping a load of toxic waste in the lowest wage country is impeccable and we should face up to that.... I've always thought that under-populated countries in Africa are vastly UNDER-polluted, their air quality is probably vastly inefficiently low compared to Los Angeles or Mexico City.... The concern over an agent that causes a one in a million change in the odds of prostrate cancer is obviously going to be much higher in a country where people survive to get prostate cancer than in a country where under 5 mortality is about 200 per thousand. (qtd. in Gilroy 10)

Summers bases his logic for depositing toxic wastes from the developed world in Africa on the fact that Africans are already death-bound. One would think that people who are dying belong to the intensive care unit, but Summers believes that they belong to the morgue. It is difficult to separate Summers' logic from the logic of globalization, especially considering how, in the name of free trade, the global's subsidized agricultural produce has pushed local production out of the market. It is therefore tempting to look at the local subject's condition as death-bound as a design of global capital, emblematic of broader power relations between the local and the global.

The above examples of consumption relate to Baudrillard's argument about consumer society. The local, according to Lucifer, is a forgotten space where people only return for burial. But not everyone shares Lucifer's reason for

abandoning the local: "He had thought that something would change, something would happen to restore the meaning into the word: Home. When, in the city, people talk of home, he feels his lack and he wants to hide. For them, home is [...] the place to go when they are tired of the city – the city, an alien place that only jingles to the tune of coins. Home is where Father, Mother, Brother and Sister are" (162). What we see here is that the people Lucifer is referring to have a better negotiation of home, which involves the city and the country, the local and the global. Lucifer wants to hide from them because his definition of home is based on either the country or the city, while the other city dwellers view the city and the country as complimentary to each other. Lucifer views space as bounded, not open; this view at once informs and undermines his desire for a "more dynamic, home far away across the seas" (166). Despite Lucifer's rejection of his home, he is not able to sever himself from his past; "he can never seem to completely dig up and cut the roots that plant him in the earth of this dark arid country. In spite of the books. In spite of his knowledge of modern psychology which he has taken to reading so avidly these days. In spite of...in spite of..." (52).

Mungoshi's text does not make mobility an easier option; in fact, it contests mobility. For example, Old Mandisa depicts Garabha's wandering in negative light: "The way he roams the country as if he has no home – who knows what they [the enemies of the family] might have done to him?" (13). Wandering signifies homelessness or haunting, according to Old Mandisa. The car that comes to collect Lucifer has "Engine trouble" (170) which figuratively mars its

mobility. Old Mandisa also quotes a local saying that associates movement with death: "He who dares a long journey is asking death to a fight. We who remain have no power over what may befall him. He is gone, good as dead" (174). As Lucifer prepares to leave his village, he dreams of mobility and its discontents. In other words, the allure of global capital as a site of opportunity might seem promising, and the global may seem to be winning over the local, but both are doomed to death sooner (for the local) or later (for the global). Lucifer's travel takes him through "a dark road with tall cypresses" which "are casting such a shadow that he can hardly see the road" (153). These tall trees symbolize the trappings of globalization that make it difficult to see the end of the tunnel. In this postmodern journey, one is "almost there" but never "there" (153). In the second part of his dream he sees people he recognizes, "They are all faces he has seen before but he cannot give any of them names. He just feels he has seen them before but he wouldn't know what to say if someone asked him where he had seen them. They are all wearing the same expression: stern reproach" (154). It turns out that "these faces belong to his fathers from the beginning of time" (154). The exclusion of Lucifer's mothers in this team is telling, and it raises the question of the women's place among ancestors. Equally telling is the fact that Lucifer's ancestors are stern because they feel that Lucifer's global movement is futile.

The novel allegorically deploys dream to critique movement. We see a positive movement when the ancestors cross the boundaries between the living dead and the living to save Lucifer from peril. However, most movements are

destructive. Kuruku, for example, goes to work in town because globalization has made it difficult for him to find meaningful work in his rural area. But his movement to town disrupts Tradition which says that the he, as the eldest son, should take care of his parents and family (158). In his last dream before he leaves his rural country to go overseas, Lucifer sees a figure who looks like Matandangoma with many alternating faces. This figure tells him about a hunter, Magaba, who was called out by a bird when he was sleeping. The bird sang:

> Come away, Magaba,
> with me, come with me.
> Come with me, Magaba,
> And I will show you
> show you the Big Plain.
> The Big Plain, Magaba –
> the Big Plain of Game.
> Don't delay, Magaba,
> Don't delay. Rise
> and follow me, follow me
> to the Big Plain, Magaba,
> the Big Plain of Game. (155-56)

This song performs the underlying reason for global movement – an opportunity to accumulate wealth or what Baudrillard describes as the limitlessness of our needs and desires vis-à-vis the perpetual flights of the objects of our desires. Magaba is a hunter who only needs one game, but he falls to the trappings of

large consumption in the form of "the Big Plain of Game," meaning an opportunity for him to hunt more game. This marks the beginning of consumerism in the novel. One assumes that with more game comes more left over, more garbage. In this sense, the bird and the Big Plain of Game represent the all-knowing global while the hunter is the local. Magaba resists this bird's persistent call for a long time, but eventually he gives in because, "For many days he had gone out without bringing home any meat. He was hungry, his dogs were hungry" (156). This is a typical situation in many African local spaces, a situation that the imperial powers, now including China, exploit for their own benefit. Magaba's hunger compromises his better judgment, "So he followed the voice of the strange bird that promised him game. He couldn't see the bird itself. He could only hear it, hear it way ahead of him" (156). That he could not see the bird uncannily reminds us of the blurred image of globalization; we can neither see nor define globalization, but we still follow it. More specifically, this scene reminds us of the overseas journey that Lucifer is about to embark on, a journey which has promised him "big game" in the form of better living conditions and the ability to take care of his poor family. It is as though the system that has kept his family in poverty is rewarding him so as to keep the family from rebellion. The word reward is used here sarcastically because the Lucifer we see in the text is already too alienated to help his family, and one could argue that this outcome is a part of the play to keep his family poor.

Magaba's movement goes on and on: "He followed the voice of the strange bird for days and days across many rivers and several mountains,

through thick jungles and dangerous swamps. [...] Then he began to grow weak. The voice went on and on, farther and farther away from him, sweeter than ever before but fading and fading and fading till he couldn't hear it any more" (156). The voice is gone, his dogs are nowhere to be seen, and he is alone. "All alone in the middle of a vast treeless plain. He couldn't tell which way he had come" (156). He lies down, and the vultures are ready to eat his body: "[B]efore his eyes closed forever, he saw that the plain was covered with human skulls and bones. The bird gave one shrill piercing note and he died with that laugh in his head. By the end of the same day ants and vultures and other carnivores had cleaned his bones of its flesh till he was just another heap of bones among others" (156). So, "the Big Plain of Game" that Magaba expected at the beginning of his journey becomes a Big Plain of Death. This is the price of unbridled motion, hence the narrator's caveat, "Beware of the voice of the Strange Bird..." (156). In other words, beware of movement and its promises of big game, beware of globalization. As this terrifying dream ends, Lucifer sees the ancestors he had seen earlier. Strikingly, Lucifer's description of his village is very similar to the vast treeless plain where the strange bird leads him to: "You go for mile after mile in this swelter and not here, not there, not anywhere is there a tree big enough to sit under. And when you look everywhere all you see is the naked white earth criss-crossed by the eternal shadow of the restless vulture" (162). This uncanny similarity suggests that both the local and global are endangered, even death-bound, and that something has to be done to save both of them. In this sense, the text parodies Lucifer's attempt to solve his location in his village, what he

calls "a biological and geographical error" (162), by moving to a different geographical location. Mungoshi is telling us here that moving to a new place can only work temporarily; ultimately, all the spaces are connected, and thus tied to a more or less similar fate. One is reminded here of global warming that every space suffers from, regardless of which space is most responsible for the same.

The discontents of globalization include deforestation. Lucifer laments his village's environmental decline: "When I was a little boy, the bush was a little thicker than it is now, and there were bigger trees than this scrub that remains now. The people have cut down most of the trees for firewood and building material" (161). One of the characteristics of modernity and globalization is massive lumbering, often resulting in climate change. It is not strange to find international lumber companies logging in remote African forests, places that would otherwise not have international interest. Many times people tell the intensity of the global in these areas by how fast a forest is reduced to a scrub. Ironically, while the nation-state allows these agents of globalization to profit from logging in the local forests, it arrests local peasants for cutting down one or two trees. Lucifer observes that the cutting of trees is such that "in five more years this land will be useless, too tired to support any form of life [...] soon people will have to go and find somewhere else to live. Already some of them, those less attached to roots and family and 'our ancestors' are moving out" (162). In other words, the land, like the subjects, faces the threat of death. In the quotation, moving out is not painted positively; moving is associated with over consumption and destruction of resources. The attitude here is that once one destroys the

forest in the Amazon, one can move on to destroy the Congo, without understanding that these spaces are connected. Meanwhile, the destruction and resultant displacement produces Environmental Refugees.

The climax of the conflict between the local and the global comes when Lucifer's parents give him medicine to protect him overseas. They expect him to carry the herbs, but he refuses: "Father, surely you don't expect me to carry those – those things all over the world, do you?" (169). Lucifer's father who has never gone overseas says, "I know what happens out there. You need to be protected" (171-72). For the father, out there is a dangerous zone. The tension between the local and the global is also evident in Lucifer's rejection of the peanut butter locally made by his grandmother, Old Mandisa (179). The text seems to point towards a negotiation of the local and the global when we see Raina, Lucifer's mother, seek the protection of both the ancestors and the God of the Bible: "She makes the sign of the cross and throws some more roots on to the fire" (176). Meanwhile, Lucifer is alienated from both worlds. The local has already failed him, and the global, which he is embarking on is gloomy: "Lucifer looks round. There is *nothing* at the end of the road. The road just stops at the brink of nowhere, on the edge of darkness" (153). The destination of Lucifer's road is overseas, which is supposed to have better opportunities than the local place; however, we are told that there is nothing at the end of the road. What this means is that home is not waiting for Lucifer overseas; home, locally or globally, is a dream deferred -- a dream that has to be worked on constantly. This moment

of darkness shows the elusiveness of home, as it leaves Lucifer with nowhere to call home.

Mungoshi's John, who resides in Bulawayo (a city), visits his rural home with a radio, which he plays to his grandfather. What the old man listens to is a commentary on the dangers of movement: "...search parties have combed the whole area but they haven't been able to trace the bodies of the missing air-crash victims" (30). This air-crash reveals the other side of movement. After listening to world news, the grandfather asks, "Where is this all happening?" to which John responds, "All over the world, Sekuru. All over the world" (31). Clearly, the radio, a symbol of mass communication, brings the world (read global culture) to an old man who apparently has not traveled out of the locality. I use "apparently" here because Sekuru's participation in the liberation struggle against "the first white men who came in our country" (31) already questions the supposed purity of his identity. In any case, the local (the old man) interacts and is linked with the global (world news on the radio). In his book, The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge (1984), Jean-Francois Lyotard sets the stage for the complexity and ambivalence that is our cultural identity when he says

> no self is an island; each exists in a fabric of relations that is now more complex and mobile than ever before. Young or old, man or woman, rich or poor, a person is always located at a post through which various kinds of messages pass. No one, not even the least privileged among us, is ever entirely powerless over the messages that traverse and position him at the post of sender, addressee, or referent. (15)

This means that every subjectivity traverses and is traversed by other subjectivities. Similarly, there is no place that can claim a pure identity. The local is no longer innocent when it is playing global music. Of course, the novel also uses this scene of the radio to show that there are cases when the local resists the global: "He [the old man] doesn't like it – just as he doesn't like most of the things the boy brings from town – useless things to the best of his knowledge – but the boy behaves as if *he* invented them and as if without them life would immediately stop" (29). He also mocks John's assumption that the tobacco is "best quality" simply because it is from the city as opposed to the country: "Of course everything made in the towns is best quality with you [John]" (28). The Old Man allows us to see how the local and global play out in ordinary lives. He subtly resists the notion that the global is better than the local, without hurting John's feelings.

Mungoshi also uses the Old Man's complexity to critique anthropologists' tendency to view place as bounded. Typically, anthropologists who travel from the city to the country, from the global to the local, to do research, with the assumption that the data they get from the local place is uncontaminated. In a similar fashion, John's friends from the city are interested in interviewing the Old Man. John presents his friends' intention to the Old Man: "They would like you to tell them how you fought the white men" (31). The binary logic in this question negates cultural intersections. John's friends' visit and their interest in interviewing the Old Man remind us of the logic of the anthropological visitations that James Clifford records in *Routes and Translation in the Twentieth Century*

(1997): "Villages, inhabited by natives, are bounded sites particularly suitable for intensive visiting by anthropologists. They have long served as habitable, mappable centers for the community and, by extension, the culture" (21). After criticizing both the colonialist characterization of natives as local or confined to a locality, and examining its relationship to anthropology's obsession with outlying villages or the fieldwork, Clifford writes: "Localizations of the anthropologist's objects of study in terms of a 'field' tend to marginalize or erase several blurred boundary areas, historical realities that slip out of the ethnographic frame" (22-23). Clifford views culture and travel through the same lens, but he is quick to give a warning:

> In my current problematic, the goal is not to *replace* the cultural figure "native" with the intercultural figure "traveler." Rather, the task is to focus on concrete mediations of the two, in specific cases of historical tension and relationship.... I am recommending not that we make the margin a new center ("we" are all travelers) but that specific dynamics of dwelling/traveling be understood comparatively. (24)

It is this kind of mediation that the Old Man evokes when he believes that not everything Western has the best quality, but still partakes of the Western things that John brings him.

Garabha, the wanderer, through his social relation with the several places and people he wanders to, complicates the subjectivity of his restful/settled relations, whom he visits and plays drums to from time to time. It is even possible that his popular and famous drumming borrows from the several cultures and

borderlands he visits, and brings back strands of those cultures to his audience at his birthplace. That way, his audience travels without traveling; this confirms Doreen Massey's observation that "a proportion of the social interrelations will be wider than and go beyond the area being referred to in any particular context as a place" (169). Through John's radio, Sekuru's participation in the World War, and Garabha's wandering, then, the text undercuts the supposed cultural singularity of the locality. That is, the text collapses the boundaries between *in* and *out* by showing that the former is inextricably linked to the latter, and vice versa. This linkage encourages simultaneous identification with the local and the global or the country and the city, since the two are strands of the same fabric.

These connections, even tensions, between the local and global are also captured in Oliver Mtukudzi's song, *Dzoka Uyamwe* (2003). Set in Zimbabwe, the song negotiates the conflict between the country and the city, the local and the global. The protagonist sings: "Mandiona kusviba mati kuora [You see my dark skin and think I'm decayed]."

He could be talking to a prospective employer who is judging him by the color of his skin, assuring her/him that he is not decomposing. The impression we get here is that he suffers racial discrimination because of his dark skin. However there is another way of reading this piece. He says: "Ndoenda kwangu vakomana ndavirigwa ini [I am going home, friends, the sun has set on me]." At this point we begin to imagine a subject who has lost his youth in the city due to exhaustion and frustration. As a result, he feels the need to assure himself and others that he still has something left in him; he has not decayed. It is important that he does

not decay because that would reduce him to trash, which would have to be cleaned-up the way the homeless are. It is this fear of being declared homeless or human rubbish and subsequently trashed that makes him emphasize that he has a home to return to if the city does not live up its promise: "Dzoka dande vakomana ndavirigwa ini [Going back to my birthplace, the sun has set on me]." It becomes clear that the protagonist has had a trying time in the city when his mother, acting as the local place, calls him to return to his village for rejuvenation: "Huya zvako gotwe ranguwe dzoka [Come back my youngest child and breastfeed]." One could read this as an uncritical celebration of nature, but it also suggests the importance of a community and family that can intervene and offer support in an increasingly hostile world economy. The country, then, becomes a safe haven from the hostilities of the city. The mother assures him not to be discouraged by people who link his dark skin to decomposition and even death: "Kuora kwemunhu kuri mumoyo, Kusviba kwemunhu kuri mupfungwa [The decay of a person is in the heart, The darkness of a person is in the mind]." In short, the protagonist travels to the city with the hope of negotiating the two spaces. However, his hopes are shattered by a cruel city, which renders his belonging impossible. At that point, the postmodernist notions of motion, dispersal, and belonging nowhere prove inadequate as alternative ways of conceiving home. This validates Aijaz Ahmad's argument, in *In Theory: Nations, Classes, Literature* (1994), to the effect that postmodernism has fallen short of addressing the impasse of belonging; "what postmodernism has done is to validate precisely the pleasures of such unbelonging, which is rehearsed now as

a *utopia,* so that belonging *nowhere* is nevertheless construed as the perennial pleasure of belonging everywhere" (157). Mtukudzi's protagonist's context shows that unbelonging translates not into belonging everywhere, but isolation and nihilism. That said, Mtukudzi's call for his protagonist to return home is equally problematic, as it misleadingly assumes that the country is bounded, and thus safe from the homelessness in the city: "Kukurumura kwandakaita gore riya, Pawakasiyira ndipapo dzoka uyamwe [Since I weaned you, that year, My breasts have been waiting]." Obviously, nothing could be further from the truth; the country is implicated, as will become clear momentarily. However, this call could also be read not through the lens of truth, but through the lens of resistance to the forces of globalization. Here one is reminded of Raymond Williams's *The Country and the City* (1973), particularly its claims that there is more to the rural area than we admit: "Rural England is said to be a thing of the past, and of course the changes are evident. But if we look up from the idea and back at the country we see how much is still present, even in this exceptionally industrialized and urbanized nation" (301). The point here is that the local has to revolt against attempts to erase it from the map of existence.

Mtukudzi seems to insinuate that there is an in (home) and out (the world): "Kwangu vakomana, ndavirigwa ini [My home, friends, the sun has set on me]." It is as though the home he is referring to is not connected to the city. The artist appeals to the past and to the rural home as a rejuvenative space for his protagonist who has failed to find gold in the glitter of the urban space. By encouraging the protagonist to return home, the artist casts a shadow of doubt

over the supposed progress in the city, thereby nostalgically granting currency and a new lease on life to the traditional past. Still, nostalgia conveys not merely a sense of fixity to the past, but also functions as a revolutionary act that challenges modernity's privileging of the present time by allowing a co-existence of the past, present, and future. By leaving the city, which is more commonly associated with modernity and the present, to return to the rural space linked to tradition, Mtukudzi's protagonist disrupts modernity's sense of time. Here one is reminded of Svetlana Boym's *The Future of Nostalgia* (2001), particularly the insightful argument that "nostalgia is rebellion against the modern idea of time, the time of history and progress. The nostalgic desires to obliterate history and turn it into private or collective mythology, to revisit time like space, refusing to surrender to the irreversibility of time that plagues the human condition" (xv). This rebellion is significant because it brings to the fore issues of injustice on whose foundation modernity rests, but which, paradoxically, modernity endeavors to erase from our collective memory.

There is, however, another way of reading this urban-rural movement that Mtukudzi evokes. One could look at it as a reflection of Mtukudzi's mourning for the past, as an elusive attempt to hold on to a past that is quickly fading away: "Ndasuwa dande [I miss my birthplace]." In that sense, Mtukudzi and his protagonist are not ready to embrace a worldwide wind of change that not only connects the city and the country to each other, but also to the rest of the world. Of course, the issue is much more complex. That act of mourning keeps a would-have-been eliminated history of Dande alive, thereby countering the city's story.

The rural-urban-rural movement of Mtukudzi's protagonist also symbolizes the fragmentation and homelessness that have become our postcolonial condition. Mtukudzi's protagonist simultaneously belongs everywhere and nowhere. For example, his living condition in the city is a far cry from the city's promise of affluence and prosperity. Like the janitor at Obi's workplace in Achebe's *No Longer At Ease* and the lower class in Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah* (1987), Mtukudzi's protagonist is economically marginalized. It is a question of dispossession.

That said, Mtukudzi's appeal for his protagonist to return to Dande questionably implies that one's belongingness to the home space is always and already given, that one would fit in as soon as one returns: "Zamu rakamirira iwe dzoka uyamwe [My breasts are waiting for you to come back and begin from where you left]." Nothing could be further from the truth, largely because the subject returning and the past he/she is returning to have had several interconnections over time, and these interconnections defy easy reproduction or repression. Moreover, Mtukudzi's appeal fails to recognize that the rural space is not completely removed from the total mess that is the urban space, that the wall that separates *in* and *out* is porous, that the city is in relation and not opposition to Dande. Viewing Dande and the city as two separate places, as in and out, to borrow Massey's words, "is a view of place as bounded, as in various ways a site of an authenticity, as singular, fixed and unproblematic in its identity. It is a conceptualization of space which rests in part on the view of space as statis" (5). Yet, places always stand on contested, fluid, and open grounds. This is the

central trope in Harrow's *Thresholds of Change in African Literature* (1994), in which he insightfully argues that "the Möbius strip of passage must turn in both directions, inward and outward" (256). In fact, the cover of his book tellingly focuses on the threshold of the circumcision hut which is where Camara Laye's *Dark Child* (1954) places the key spaces dividing inside and outside, between the boy's male world and his mother's package of food. In brief, places are interconnected.

Beyond the façade of "we are living in a small world, with connections everywhere," lies a huge wealth gap between the global and the local. There is a pattern of "global wealth and local poverty [which] articulate a growing contradiction" (Appudarai 630). A sense of global connection is compromised by global inequality, as we see in Mtukudzi's song and in Mungoshi's novel.

ii) The movement of the slum dwellers and the homeless

It is common among postmodernists to celebrate the fact that we now live in what Stuart Hall, in "Political Belonging in a World of Multiple Identities" (2002), has called "a world of constant movement" (25). For instance, in *The Consumer Society: Myth and Reality* (1998), Baudrillard celebrates motion and mobility in terms of the insatiability of our needs and desires and the perpetual flights of the objects of our desire. The postmodern condition or this consumer society is for him the state of "evanescence" and "continual mobility" in which it is increasingly "impossible to define an objective specificity of the need," as if it were a "flight from one signifier to another" (77). Elsewhere, in *Simulacra and Simulation*

(1995), Baudrillard puts this celebration of blind motion in the context of the dissolution of cartographies of Empire. The concepts of empire and imperialism are fast disappearing in mere simulation and abstraction as simulation is "no longer that of a territory, a referential being, or a substance" (1). This abstract world of simulacra, territory or space that once defined empires and its colonies is gradually rotting across the map. Paradoxically, the legacies of empire continue to haunt its subjects, as we see in cases of the homeless, the internally displaced persons, and slum dwellers.

The postmodernist celebration of movement is based on notions of freedom from cultural attachments, sophistication, and cosmopolitanism. When we romanticize movement, we undermine the plight of the homeless/street people and slum dwellers, who daily undergo an agonized movement. The majority of the movers envisioned by postmodernists can vacation in the Caribbean, attend a business meeting in Tokyo, visit friends in London, organize a conference in Sydney, and then return home in New York – all in ten days. They often have a place that they can come back to when they are tired of travel and hotel. As a result, they move with a fall back plan. However, the other movers, especially the homeless/street people, do not have the luxury of homes to return to when they are tired of moving. They have no menus and world cuisines; instead, they eat what they find in garbage cans. They do not have basic things like clean drinking water, let alone water for shower and laundry. Their movement does not fit into the romanticized motion of postmodernists, and it is on this basis that I show the limits of movement.

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, in *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason* (1999) calls this figure of the displaced and homeless "Native Informant," whom she describes as the "moving base" and argues that this base is increasingly facing "annihilation" as it is disappearing both from Eurocentric discourses and what has come to be known as postcolonial discourse. Her aim, she remarks, is to "track the figure of the Native Informant" whose position has been recorded and appropriated by what is traditionally known as the postcolonial subject who either resides in the metropolis of the former empires or among the elites of the former colonies (ix). The other figure of the native informant, whom she also calls the "autochthone and/or subaltern" (xi), either does not move at all [if movement means movement of people from colonies to the metropole as in the case of postcolonial subjects, or vice versa, as in the case of the cosmopolitan tourists and corporate businessmen trekking globe], or is displaced from land, home, and social and economic mobility as to render her completely mobile. That is the reason why Spivak characterizes this constituency as a "moving base," and her own attempt to track this base as the "history of vanishing present." To this end, Spivak and Clifford have some common ground. Whereas her term "Native Informant" is incased in anthropological research in which the native informant is speaking literally to the anthropologist, the homeless that I am invoking is not a typical anthropological subject precisely because he/she does not live in villages or in places that are traditionally considered local. Anthropologists would rather go to the villages, not the cities.

In *Outside in the Teaching Machine* (1993), Spivak critiques both Eurocentric discourses as well as postcolonial complicity:

> As a result of a decade of colonial discourse studies percolating into disciplinary pedagogy and its powerful adjuncts, and of the imbrication of techniques of knowledge with strategies of power, who claims marginality in the larger postcolonial field? What might this have to do with the old scenario of empowering a privileged group or a group susceptible to upward mobility as the authentic inhabitants of the margin? (59)

That is to say that when postcoloniality is defined in relation to mobility, what happens is that that margin gets claimed by people who move, say from the colonies to the metropole, leaving behind those who cannot move, forever locked in the margin without the claim of a margin. To that end, Spivak is critiquing post-colonialism as globalization that forecloses the study of margin, which is literally endless. One could apply Spivak's logic here to the unquestioned celebration of movement by some postmodernists to an extent that makes it difficult for the homeless to identify with it.

This section examines the current problems with the slums and the question of autochthony as a contribution to the issue of home and homelessness. These problems include, but are not limited to, the eviction of slum dwellers in Harare and Mombasa, the constant movement of the slum dwellers and the homeless in order to escape charges of vagrancy, and the living standard of slum dwellers. It reads the movement of slum dwellers and the homeless against the motion celebrated by postmodernists in order to show that

an unqualified celebration of movement undermines the condition of slum dwellers and the homeless. The dehumanizing conditions of slums on the one hand, and, on the other, the demolition of slums in the name of better housing which never benefits the evictees, require urgent attention. These conditions and demolitions do not provide for the housing needs of the evictees, and for that reason they violate human rights. A case in point is the ongoing (March 29, 2007) demolition of slums in Mombasa, Kenya – with no provision of alternative housing for the victims. According to *The Standard* of March 29, 2007, "Residents of Buxton slums in Mombasa watch helplessly as their houses are demolished by a Municipal Council bulldozer after they were forcibly evicted to pave way for the beautification of the city." The question that comes to mind is to whom the city is being beautified, and whose interests are targeted by this beautification. As one begins to think about this question, one sees the hand of globalization in it. The local governments are more interested in becoming a tourists' destination, and thus in attracting capital.

In a related case, on May 19, 2005 and the days after, an estimated 700,000 Zimbabwean slum dwellers were forcefully evicted and rendered homeless by their own government in what has become known as Operation Murambatsvina, which translates into Operation Clean-Up Trash or Operation Restore Order. The trash here refers both to the slum dwellers and the shacks they lived in. The government claimed that these slum spaces were breeding grounds for crime, illegal housing, and AIDS so as to appear as though it was in public interest for these spaces to be cleared. Of course, the timing of this

"Operation Clean-Up Trash," coming just before presidential elections, suggested that the government did not expect "the trash" to vote in their favor. After all, the parliamentary elections had just been held, and "the trash" voted heavily in favor of the opposition. In other words, this was the government's ploy to scuttle opposition strongholds as a way of manipulating future elections. But there was more to it. These slum areas became alternative markets for foreign currency exchange, which wrested away monopoly from the government. In an era of globalization where the flow of money and communication is much faster and difficult to control, the government found it even more difficult to control foreign currency agents who lived in nameless streets. The people that the government had all along negated were now negating the government by running parallel markets which controlled more foreign currency than the government-owned reserve bank. Let us put the Operation Clean-Up Trash in context.

According to Anna Kajumulo Tibaijuka, the UN Special Envoy on Human Settlements Issues in Zimbabwe, in "Report of the Fact-Finding Mission to Zimbabwe to assess the Scope and Impact of Operation Murambatsvina" (2005), the government used Operation Murambatsvina as a tool to "clean-up" its cities. The phrase "clean-up" suggests trash, and leads me to argue that the government "cleaned up" (demolished and evicted) the slums and the slum dwellers because they considered them as trash. According to the report, "It [the Operation] started in the Zimbabwean capital, Harare, and rapidly evolved into a nationwide demolition and eviction campaign carried out by the police and the army" (7). As a result of these demolitions and evictions, approximately 700,000

lost their homes and economic activities, and subsequently became poorer than they were before the Operation. The report's findings fault the government: "Operation Restore Order, while purporting to target illegal dwellings and structures and to clamp down on alleged illicit activities was carried out in an indiscriminate and unjustified manner, with indifference to human suffering, and, in repeated cases, with disregard to several provisions of national and international legal frameworks" (7). In an environment of government-sanctioned "segregation and social exclusion" it becomes difficult for one to feel at home. This report gives an in-depth account of this Operation, including its historical, social, political, and economic contexts.

The Zimbabwean president, Robert Mugabe, however, saw the operation's goal as a campaign to "restore sanity," which is a re-appropriation of the colonial usage of the tropes of sanity and insanity to justify oppression. Zimbabwe's Commissioner of Police viewed this operation as an opportunity "to clean the country of the crawling mass of maggots bent on destroying the economy." We shall momentarily discuss these references to Zimbabwean people by their own government as trash, maggots, garbage. The 2007 Amnesty International Report provides a useful background on Zimbabwe. According to the report, "The situation of thousands of people whose homes were destroyed as part of Operation Murambatsvina (Restore Order) in 2005 continued to worsen, with no effective solution planned by the authorities." To exacerbate the situation, "The government continued to obstruct humanitarian efforts by the UN and by the local and international non-governmental organizations." In other

words, the government did not only fail to provide basic needs like food, water, and medicine to the evictees, but they also prevented organizations that offered to help from doing so. In a BBC article dated May 23, 2007, Amnesty International contests the Zimbabwean government's claim that it had replaced the demolished houses: "By May (2006) one year after the programmes launch, only 3,325 houses have been built, compared to 92,460 housing structures destroyed in Operation Murambatsvina." In a similar context, the Center on Housing Rights and Evictions described Operation Murambatsvina as a state-sanctioned abuse of ordinary citizens whose perpetrators should be tried in the International Court. In light of all these reports, why would the government invest money on evictions and demolitions, instead of addressing the socioeconomic circumstances that produce them and their dwellings? Notably, Amnesty International and BBC reports on this tragedy are also moments of globalization, and they are partly responsible for making those beyond the border aware of the tragedy, which means that we may have to resort to weapons of globalization to fight globalization's excesses.

The demolition to allow "for the beautification of the city" rests on presumptions that slums are garbage. Considering that slums are also sites of globalization, it is in order to theorize the discourse of garbage in relation to globalization. In "Beyond Third Cinema: The Aesthetics of Hybridity" (2003), Robert Stam shows how, "[i]n cinema, an 'aesthetics of garbage' performs a kind of jujitsu by recuperating cinematic waste materials" (35). He also discusses the "ways that dispossessed New World blacks have managed to transmogrify waste

products into art" (35). In other words, something that is not wanted like trash or excess materials can be strategically salvaged for other purposes. The slum dwellers' use of waste materials like iron sheet left over, tin containers, plastic bags, and boxes to build shelter comes to mind. These are people who have been denied opportunities to own houses, but they still survive by building a house out of the waste materials that come with our consumer culture. This practice is at once a mark of agency, resistance and environmental conservation through the recycling of waste materials. In fact, as Stam shows in a case of a person who built his house using garbage, building "'from the city's leftovers,' represents the 'power of poverty.' Garbage thus becomes an ideal medium for those who themselves have been cast off, broken down, who have been 'down in the dumps,' who feel as the blues line had it, 'like a tin can on that old dumping ground'" (42). Well, not an ideal medium, just a medium. What is important here is the idea of the shapeless stone that the builders refused becoming the cornerstone, the idea of what the dominant culture calls useless becoming useful. Equally important is "a strategy of resourcefulness in a situation of scarcity" (42). For example, in Ttsitsi Dangarembga's film, *Everyone's Child,* we see Tamari making table mats out of garbage in an attempt to support her siblings, following her parents' death. While we recognize the slum dwellers' ability to resist homelessness, we must not lose sight of the fact that their use of garbage as a dwelling place has a debilitating effect on their dignity. In fact, we should not push the concept of agency too far, as it can easily distract attention from the conditions that made these slum dwellers homeless in the first place.

Stam goes further to link "the motif of garbage" with mixed culture in Brazil. As he puts it, "Garbage is hybrid, first of all, as the diasporized, heterotopic site of the promiscuous mingling of rich and poor, center and periphery, the industrial and the artisanal, the domestic and the public, the durable and the transient, the organic and the inorganic, the national and the international, the local and the global" (40). In other words, garbage is a community of strangers, in terms of items from different spaces that would otherwise not mix. While it is possible to read the garbage as a site of syncretism by virtue of bringing different worlds together, it is also possible that dominance and incompatibility may continue in the garbage. If there was always syncretism, as Stam suggests, then the street kids would not rummage through the garbage in search of valuables because everything would be a valuable. The fact they do shows that there is some inequality in garbage. In addition, this notion of syncretism is also undercut by the class of people who search for food in the garbage; instead of a mixture of the rich and the poor congregating near a garbage dump, it is often the latter who do so. In this sense, they bear the burden "of marginality, of being condemned to survive within scarcity, of being the dumping ground for transnational capitalism, of being obliged to recycle the materials of the dominant culture" (42). This one-way recycling has come to define the age of globalization. The garbage is therefore a living testimony of power relations; to know the marginalized in any society, one only needs to look at the garbage dump.

In a related context, Kibera slum dwellers in Kenya have been compelled to invent "flying toilets" to address their lack of, and need for, toilet facilities. The feelings of worthlessness and nonexistence that stem from such disparities continue to harm these slum dwellers, even as they fight back by reasserting their right to relieve themselves of their waste. Their agency lies in their refusal to become waste, which, arguably, is what their material conditions that deny them toilets presume them to be. Of course, that refusal is constantly tested as flying toilets from other places land on their doors. For slum dwellers who live in wretched conditions without sanitation the meaning of home continues to be elusive, just as it is for millions of internally displaced persons or refugees in the Democratic Republic of Congo and in Darfur, Sudan. Equally elusive is the relationship between the increasing wave of globalization and the rapid development of slums and internal displacement. These slum dwellers and internally displaced persons find that belonging to their nation, much less the global village, remains problematic as long as the said disjunctions are mainstream. In the wake of their oppressed belonging, it is tempting to ask what role slum dwellers and internally displaced people might play in one's thinking about the location of home.

Slums are reflections of inequality, poverty, and global market forces, so the question we should ask is how inequality and poverty affect our conception of home. Inequality and poverty create ambivalence and reservation about a place's status as home: "The urban poor are trapped in an informal and 'illegal' world – in slums that are not reflected on maps, where waste is not collected, where taxes

are not paid and where public services are not provided" (UN-Habitat 6). In the absence of legal backing, the slum dwellers cannot even claim the tiny spaces they sleep in: "As illegal or unrecognized residents, many of these slum dwellers have no property rights, nor security of tenure, but instead make whatever arrangements they can in an informal, unregulated and in, some respects, expensive parallel market" (UN Habitat 6). It is partly because of this instability that slum dwellers move from one place to another, but their movement, unlike the postmodernist movement, is oppressed. For example, according to the BBC News published on September 3, 2007, Soweto (South Africa) slum dwellers were in motion, protesting against "what they see as the government's failure to improve living conditions." They had "no water, no electricity, and no sewage provision." Even as they were arrested, they demanded homes and water. In Kisumu (Kenya) the slum dwellers move up and down searching for water; their movement is hampered by poor infrastructure. Kibera (Kenya), one of the largest slums in Africa, lacks sanitation, clean drinking water, and space. According to UN-Habitat, "The major challenges facing cities are urbanization and poverty" (2).It is therefore necessary to include urbanization -- particularly unemployment, rural-urban and international migrations, and urban poverty -- in our discussion of the problem of slum dwellers.

The living conditions of slum dwellers vary from case to case, but it is generally agreed that all slum areas are products of poverty. Many slum dwellers do not have access to basic needs like water and sanitation. The trend is not going to get better unless serious action is taken. United Nations Human

Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), in The Challenge of Slums: Global Report on Human Settlements 2003 (2003), has warned that "Without serious and concerted action on the part of municipal authorities, national governments, civil society actors and the international community the number of slum dwellers is likely to increase in most developing countries" (xxv). This book is a global study of the challenge of slums, especially in the developing world. According to their finding: "In 2001, 924 million people, or 31.6 per cent of the world's urban population, lived in slum. The majority of them were in the developing regions, accounting for 43 per cent of the urban population, in contrast to 6 per cent in more developed regions" (UN-Habitat xxv).

More recently, the UN-Habitat Executive Director, Anna Tibaijuka, estimated that the world population of slum dwellers has reached one billion. Instead of a serious intervention to improve Kibera, for example, business people are making money out of it. That is, travel agencies who used to take tourists to game parks are now taking them to tour Kibera slum. The question that Western tourists are now asked when they return from visiting Kenya is not whether they saw elephants or climbed Mount Kenya, but whether they saw the largest slum in Africa. The idea of slum tours is popular in South Africa, Zambia, Namibia, and Lesotho, making one wonder what tourists find so fascinating about slums and poverty. These tourists' movement to see slums in Africa is worth further studies.

The preparations for the 35th IAAF World Cross Country Championships scheduled for March 24, 2007, saw local authorities ffrom Operation Clean Up Mombasa embark on forced eviction, even though, as UN-Habitat reminds us,

"National approaches to slums, and to informal settlements in particular, have generally shifted from negative policies such as forced eviction, benign neglect and involuntary resettlement, to more positive policies such as self-help and *in situ* upgrading, enabling and rights-based policies" (xxvi). Of course, forced evictions remain an active tool that many governments use when it suits their interests, which is the case in Zimbabwe's rounding up and eviction of more slum dwellers in the second anniversary of the 2005 Operation Drive Out Filth. The main task of the Operation Clean Up Mombasa was to prepare the city for World Cross Country by making Mombasa beautiful; making Mombasa beautiful meant getting rid of "beggars, street children, street families, commercial sex workers and hawkers." Neither the government nor the organization it formed to help clean-up the city considered the input of these beggars they sought to evict, yet: "It has long been recognized that the poor play a key role in the improvement of their own living conditions and that their participation in decision-making is not only a right, thus an end in itself, but it is also instrumental in achieving greater effectiveness in the implementation of public policies" (UN Habitat xxvii). These are very mobile people; they move from one part of the city to another, searching for their daily bread. By arresting them, the authorities show that the often celebrated notion of movement has its limits, especially for the homeless and lower class.

The "cleaning up" of beggars is not unique to Kenya. According to a report by Anita Powell in *Mail and Guardian* of August 29, 2007, Ethiopia moved thousands of homeless people from the capital city to the countryside in order to

prepare the city for the September 2008 millennium celebrations. "Homelessness is a huge problem in Addis Ababa, a city of five million where an estimated 90,000 live on the streets. Beggars are a common sight, with everyone from young children to the elderly seeking money or scarps of food." It is ironical that a nation that can afford a US$1.6 million celebration in one day cannot provide basic shelter for its homeless. In fact, as the homeless in Ethiopia were sent to reservation camps, marking the resurrection of colonialism, non-Ethiopians, including tourists, received red-carpet treatment. In this situation, political, economic, and social station is used to legitimize humanity and citizenship, which not only put the humanity and citizenship of the homeless on trial, but also deny them the temerity to complain about human rights violation. While Ethiopia celebrated the millennium by disowning their homeless, Libya celebrated its 38th anniversary of the September 1 Libyan Revolution by "distributing 100,000 title deeds" to the homeless. Of course, Libya's move has some degree of political propaganda and public relations, but it still shows two countries with two different priorities at this point in time.

I end this chapter by focusing on Sembene Ousmane's film, *Xala* (1974), adapted from his novel with a similar title. The film satirically maps the misappropriation and mismanagement of public resources by the political leadership of an African nation, most likely Senegal, its former colonizers, and "the business world," and how that corruption breeds the homeless, particularly beggars. When the film begins, the French colonizers are handing over power to "the founding fathers" of this African nation who are now in charge of the

Chamber of Commerce and Industry, an allegory for the new nation. Consisting of the president, ministers, and deputy ministers, the Chamber declares independence from France: "We can't turn back. Our struggle for true independence is finished. We must take what is ours...what is our right. We must control our industry ...our commerce...our culture...Take in hand our destiny." However, their resolve to control their destiny is undermined by their immediate shift from the local apparel they dressed in as they took over the Chamber to European suits that their predecessors wore. The President who is leading this new nation to their own destiny is advised by one of the recently dethroned French colonizers, thereby questioning his independence of thought. It becomes clear, then, that the social and economic structure has not changed.

The film closely monitors one of the ministers, El Hadji Abdou Kadar Beye, through whom we evaluate the new political leadership. El Hadji is vexed by the constant presence of beggars outside his office, so he asks the president to clean them up: "For hygiene's sake can't we get rid of these human rubbish?" Human rubbish is a term used to refer to beggars and street children. The president responds by ordering that a patrol car [the army and the police] be sent quickly to round up the beggars and to dump them far away from the city: "Send a patrol car quickly. To get rid of this human rubbish. The beggars! It's bad for tourism." Here the film parodies the president's declaration for independence by having him care about tourists at the expense of the homeless citizens. Of course, it becomes clear as we watch the film that the political elite have more reasons to clean-up these beggars. El Hadji and by extension the political elite

do not want to see these beggars because they act us evidence of the unequal distribution of resources. Like slums, the homeless "are a physical manifestation of urban poverty and intra-city inequality" (UN-Habitat xxvi). By keeping them out of sight, the government ministers can continue to accumulate wealth without guilt. To understand why there are so many beggars in the streets, one has to listen to El Hadji's speech to the cabinet:

> Each one of us is a dirty dog! I repeat, a dirty dog! Probably worse than I. Been in on rice trafficking. As for the drought, we've all diverted goods destined for the needy. The Army, Even the security agents are on our payroll. Democracy...Equality...Justice...are words that we are too low, too greedy to know. And here before us, these very people who listen to me...who know nothing about business...dare shout from the rooftops...about an injustice which we all practice.

The government ministers are involved in economic scandals that institutionalize inequity, and drive ordinary citizens deep into poverty. This confirms the UN-Habitat's observation that the homeless are "the products of failed policies, bad governance, corruption, inappropriate regulation, dysfunctional land markets, unresponsive financial systems and a fundamental lack of political will" (UN-Habitat xxxii). Sembene is reminding us here that the government ministers have produced these beggars that they now seek to clean-up.

When they are not diverting goods meant for the needy, the ministers are importing expensive goods at the expense of the tax-payers. They are so obsessed with Euorope that they have to drink mineral water imported from

there; El Hadji tells his daughter: "It's the drink I prefer." The extravagance of the government is captured in the scene where El Hadji's car is washed with imported water known as Evian, while the beggars have no drinking water as a result of drought and penury. The same bottle of imported water is used as coolant in the minister's car. In fact, El Hadji wants to be French so desperately that he is offended when his daughter talks to him in Wolof: "Rama, Why do you answer in Wolof when I speak to you in French?" Interestingly, El Hadji himself, either because he is undergoing cultural transformation or because he wants to exclude the French advisor from his speech, later requests to address the cabinet in Wolof, a request that the president denies: "[everyone] has to observe the purest Francophone tradition." The satire lies in the fact that these are the very national leaders who undertook to control their precolonial African culture.

It is paradoxical that the physically disabled people who need more convenient means of transport trek from place to place on the scorching sun, while the ministers are driven in luxury cars. Their great trek from the reservation camp where they were dumped by their government to the city is the most painful scene to watch, especially because the film juxtaposes their oppressed movement with the fast moving cars of ministers and tourists. Indeed, this scene demonstrates the difference between the movement of the homeless and the movement celebrated by some postmodernists. One group, the homeless, is moving for survival; another group, the business and political elite are moving for pleasure. Worse still, the ministers have become globetrotters, moving from one overseas country to another. For example, one of them is asked, "Did you

vacation in Spain or Switzerland?" His response that he does not want to see Negroes, though he is a Negro, is indicative of both satire and racial self-hatred: "I can't go to Spain anymore. Everywhere you look there are Negroes." The national leaders who claim that they "kicked out the colonizers and freed the country" now want to see the very colonizers they kicked out, not their fellow Africans. While they travel the world, the taxpayers to whom they promised jobs and better opportunities gradually become homeless.

Consumerism and wealth accumulation become the measure of status, and the banner of socialism that was popular at the dawn of independence gives way to capitalism, making the ministers outdo each other in corruption. El Hadji, for example, uses the proceeds from rice which was meant for the poor, to finance his third wedding and the treatment of his "xala" – the curse of his sexual impotency. The celebration of national independence, like the celebration of El Hadji's wedding, leads to disillusionment because of impotence and incompetence. When the president of the Chamber of Commerce summons an emergency meeting to find out why the members' checks are bouncing, we learn that the economy is not in the new government's control, which is contrary to the promise they made at the beginning of the film: "We are businessmen. We must take over all the businesses...even the banks." El Hadji becomes the scapegoat and he is expelled. Of interest here is what El Hadji tells the Chamber: "We only redistribute leftovers. We are the dirt grubbers of the business world." That is, the developed world, through globalization, has a bigger control of the new nation's

economy. It is, therefore, not surprising that multinational companies like CATA, the truck which ferries the wedding car, are present.

As the end comes closer, it becomes clear that there are imbrications between the local and the global, the city and the country, the rich and the poor, the sheltered and the unsheltered. The local space collapses into the global space, and vice versa, as El Hadji's episode shows. The poverty in the local place is tied to the wealth that allows the businessmen in the Chamber to wash their cars with imported water. More importantly, globalization, like colonization, rewards a few people in positions of power in order to thrive in the local space. It is therefore difficult to find a space in which to isolate the global from the local or poverty from globalization.

Conclusion

I would like to conclude by looking at the relationship between HIV/AIDS and the idea of home in Tsitsi Dangarembga's film, *Everyone's Child.* Produced in 1996, the film tells the tale of four children who struggle to survive following their parents' death. The first two children, Tamari and Itai, assume the responsibility of parenting themselves and their younger siblings. The film exposes the community's abdication of responsibility by showing how these orphans, who are supposed to be everyone's children, as the title suggests, are instead no one's children. In this sense, the film shows the children's homelessness from various angles: their parents' death, their uncle's distance, their community's indifference, and their poverty.

In an attempt to support himself and his siblings, Itai leaves the country for the city. Here he is met with great hostility, as he has no roof over his head and he becomes a target of pedophiles who see him as a cheap sex object. Indeed, as the Internal Displaced Unit has observed, "Being forced to leave one's home creates a particular kind of vulnerability, both physical and psychological. Displaced people are separated from their usual means of livelihood and their traditional means of coping with adversity" (1). Even becoming a street child does not come easy for Itai because the senior street children demand that he earn his way into their club, where earning one's way includes bullying and extortion. When Itai eventually finds a place as a street child, he begins to hustle, under the guidance of a veteran street child. We see him exploited by the older street kids, but he remains resilient in the face of adversity. Itai's life in the slums is

constantly threatened by the threat of imprisonment and death, especially considering that the city authorities associate street children with crime. Itai's life in the urban space is devoid of dignity, and thus is characterized by a sense of homelessness.

Itai's sister, Tamari, who remained in the rural area to take care of her younger siblings, is also a survivor of sexual abuse by a shopkeeper who is much older than she. This shopkeeper takes advantage of her desperation, especially her need to support her siblings. If we look at this shopkeeper as an extension of the community, then.we begin to understand how the community has not only abandoned the orphans, but has also chosen to abuse them. Tamari weaves mats out of the trash she collects from a garbage yard, and tries to sell them so that she can keep her siblings alive. Instead of buying the mats, the community just admires them and sometimes takes them for free. Left with no choice, she succumbs to the pressures of a pedophile who promises her items like clothes which she cannot afford on her own.

The cost of Tamari's exploitation by this shopkeeper becomes clear when the house she shares with her siblings catches fire at night. At the time of this incident Tamari is away, attending to the lust of the shopkeeper. This fire claims the life of Tamari's youngest sibling, and in effect acts as a turning point in the community. It is at this point that it dawns on the community that the little boy would not have died if he were indeed everyone's child. The movie ends with the hope that the community has learned their lesson, and that they would be more responsible in the future.

The idea of home in Africa is therefore threatened by multiple forces. If HIV/AIDS patients feel homeless because of the pain from, and the stigma associated with, the disease, their children suffer homelessness brought about by their parents' demise and lack of moral and material support from the community. As the case of Itai, Tamari, and their siblinds show, it is not enough to have a physical home. It is very easy in this age of slums and street children to forget that not everyone who has a physical home is at home.

The premise and promise of this project was to show that we can no longer understand home in a conventional way, as what constitutes home at any given time is never complete, is always in tension and problematic. In addition, conventional conception of home is challenged by the fact that the idea of home in the age of globalization has undergone significant metamorphosis. An examination of any specific location or space called home reveals what Edward Soja, in *Postmodern Goeographies* (1989), has called "a limitless space of simultaneity and paradox, impossible to describe in less than extraordinary language" (2). In a similar tone, Michel Foucault, in "Of Other Spaces" (1986), makes the following observation:

> The present epoch will perhaps be above all the epoch of space. We are in the epoch of simultaneity: we are in the epoch of space. We are in the epoch of near and far, of the side-by-side, of the dispersed. We are at a moment, I believe, when our experience of the world is less that of a long life developing through time than that of a network that connects points and intersects with its own skein. (22)

The dispersion that Foucault alludes to is evident in the formation of (African) diaspora, which, in Brent Hayes Edwards' terms in *The Practice of Diaspora: Literature, Translation, and the Rise of Black Internationalism* (2003), "necessarily involves a process of linking or connecting across gaps – a practice we might term *articulation"* (11). The sense of connection that Foucault and Edwards comments on is implicitly positive at its core. However, as we have seen with, "the epoch of near and far" produces more mixed results than Foucault envisaged. In addition to yielding the positive attributes of global connections, this epoch also witnesses the burden of these networks, for example, when the importation of sugar in Kenya renders local sugarcane farmers jobless. This way, the quest for better markets on the global stage, while netting huge profits for the global powers, also threatens the local persons at another point with extinction.

The said threat places the locals in a survival mode, and thus underscores the need for what Abdul R. JanMohamed, in *The Death-Bound-Subject* (2005), calls "the will to survive, the will to live in the midst of a culture predicated on the successful production of death-bound-subjects..." (34). A tomato farmer who sees his sugarcane counterpart out of business begins to feel homeless, a feeling which is exacerbated when imported tomatoes, despite transport costs, are cheaper than the locally produced tomatoes. In this sense, instead of viewing this epoch as an opportunity for international network, the said locals view it as a gateway to their own extinction. One has to struggle on a daily basis to have a home and to feel at home.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Achebe, Chinua. Anthills of the Savanna. New York: Doubleday, 1989.

---. No Longer At Ease. New York: Doubleday, 1960.

---. Things Fall Apart. Oxford: Heinemann Educational Publishers, 1958.

Ahmad, Aijaz. In Theory: Nations, Classes, Literature. San Francisco: Analytical Pyschology Club of San Francisco, 1994.

Aidoo, Ama Ata. The Dilemma of a Ghost and Anowa. 1965. Essex: Longman, 1985.

---. Our Sister Killjoy: Or, Reflections from a Black-eyed Squint. New York: NOK, 1979.

Amnesty International Annual Report. 2007.

Amselle, Jean-Loup. Mestizo Logics: Anthropology of Identity in Africa and Elsewhere. Trans. Claudia Royal. Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 1998.

Anderson, Benedict. Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism. London: Verso, 1983.

Anzaldua, Gloria. Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza. San Francisco: Aunt Lute, 1987.

Appadurai, Arjun. "Spectral Housing and Urban Cleansing: Notes on Millennial Mumbai." *Public Culture* 12.3 (2000):627-651

Appiah, Kwame Antony. "The Cosmopolitan Patriot." Cosmopolitics: Thinking and Feeling Beyond the Nation. Ed. Pheng Cheah and Bruce Robbins. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1998.

---. In My Father's House: Africa in the Philosophy of Culture. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1992.

Armah, Ayi Kwei. The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born. Oxford: Heinemann, 1968.

---. Fragments. London: Heinemann, 1974.

---. Two Thousand Seasons. London: Heinemann, 1979.

Ashcroft, Bill. Post-Colonial Transformation. New York: Routledge, 2001.

Balibar, Etienne. We, the People of Europe?: Reflections on Transnational Citizenship. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2003.

Baudrillard, Jean. Simulacra and Simulation. Trans. Sheila Faria Glaser. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 1995.

---. The Consumer Society: Myths and Structures. Trans. Chris Turner. London: Sage, 1998.

Bauman, Zymunt. Postmodernity and Its Discontents. New York: New York UP, 1997.

Beti, Mongo. Mission to Kala. Trans. Peter Green. Oxford: Heinemann, 1958.

Bhabha, Homi. The Location of Culture. London: Routledge, 1994.

---. "DisseminNation: Time, Narrative and the Margins of the Modern Nation." Nation and Narration. Ed. Homi Bhabha. London: Routledge, 1990. 291-322.

Black, Stephanie. Life and Debt. 2001.

Boyce Davies, Carole. Black Women, Writing and Identity: Migrations of the Subject. London: Routledge, 1994.

Boym, Svetlana. The Future of Nostalgia. New York: Basic Books, 2001. Boyarin, Daniel, and Jonathan Boyarin. "Diaspora: Generation and the Ground of Jewish Identity." *Critical Inquiry.* 19 (1993): 693-725.

Braidotti, Rosi. Nomadic Subjects: Embodiment and Sexual Difference in Contemporary and Sexual Difference in Contemporary Feminist Theory. New York: Columbia UP, 1994.

Brathwaite, Edward Kamau. "Nation Language." The Post-Colonial Studies Reader. Ed. Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Heln Tiffin. London: Routledge, 1995. 309-13.

Braziel, Jana Evans, and Anita Mannur, eds. theorizing diaspora. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2003.

Brennan, Timothy. "The national longing for form." Nation and Narration. Ed. Homi Bhabha. London: Routledge, 1990. 44-70.

---. At Home in the World: Cosmopolitanism Now. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1997.

Breslin, Paul. Nobody's Nation. Chicago: The U of Chicago P, 2001. Burnett, Paula. Derek Walcott: Politics and Poetics. Gainesville: UP of Florida, 2000.

Cabral, Amilcar. Return to the Source: Selected Speeches. Ed. Africa Information Service. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1974, c1973.

Chambers, Ian. Border Dialogues: Journeys in Postmodernity. London: Routledge, 1990.

---. Migrancy, Culture, Identity. London: Routledge, 1994.

Clifford, James. Routes: Travel and Translation in the Twentieth Century. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1997.

---. The Predicament of Culture. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1988.

---. "Mixed Feelings." Cosmopolitics: Thinking and Feeling beyond the Nation. Ed. Pheng Cheah and Bruce Robbins. Minneapolis: Minnesota UP, 1998. 362-70.

Cobham, Rhonda. "Boundaries of the Nation: Boundaries of the Self: African Nationalist Fictions and Nuruddin Farah's *Maps*." *Research in African Literatures*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (Summer, 1991), pp. 83-98

Cohen, Robin. Frontiers of Identity. London: Longman, 1994.

---. Migration and its Enemies. Hampshire: Ashgate, 2006.

Dangarembga, Tsitsi. Everyone's Child. Media for Development Trust. 1996.

de Lauretis, Teresa. Technologies of Gender: Essays on Theory, Film, and Fiction. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1987.

---, ed. Feminist Studies/Critical Studies. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1987.

Deleuze, Gilles and Felix Guattari. A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia. Trans. Brian Massumi. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1987.

Derrida, Jacques. Of Grammatology. Trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1997.

---. "Living On." Deconstruction and Criticism. New York: Continuum Publishing, 1979.

Dirlik, Arif. "The Global in the Local." GlobalLocal: Cultural Production and the Transnational Imaginery. Ed. Rob Wilson and Wimal Dissanayake. Durham, NC: Duke UP, 1996. 21-43.

Eade, John, ed. Living the Global City: Globalization as a Local Process. London: Routledge, 1997.

Fanon, Frantz. Black Skin, White Masks. Trans. Charles Lam Markmann. New York: Grove Press, 1967.

---. Toward the African Revolution. Trans. Haakan Chevalier. New York: Grove Press, 1967.

---. The Wretched of the Earth. Trans. Constance Farrington. New York: Grove Press, 1963.

Farah, Nuruddin. Maps. London: Penguin Books, 1999.

Featherstone, Mike. "Localism, Globalism, and Cultural Identity." GlobalLocal: Cultural Production and the Transnational Imaginery. Ed. Rob Wilson and Wimal Dissanayake. Durham, NC: Duke UP, 1996. 46-75.

Friedman, Susan Stanford. Mappings: Feminisms and the Cultural Geographies of Encounter. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1998.

Gates, Henry L., Jr. ed. "Race," Writing, and Difference. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1985.

Gikandi, Simon. Maps of Englishness: Writing Identity in the Culture of Colonialism. New York: Columbia UP, 1996.

---. "The Politics and Poetics of National Formation: Recent African Writing." From Commonwealth to Post-Colonial. Ed. Anna Rutherford. Sydney: Dangaroo Press, 1992. 377-89.

Gilroy, Paul. The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness. Cambridge, MA: Havard UP, 1993.

---. "It Ain't Where You're From, It's Where You're At...: The Dialectics of Diasporic Identification." Third Text 13 (Winter 1991): 3-16.

---. Postcolonial Melancholia. New York: Columbia UP, 2005.

Giroux, Henry A. "Pedagogy and the Politics of Postmodernism." Social Text. Vol. 28 (1991) pp. 51-67.

Glissant, Edouard. Caribbean Discourse: Selected Essays. Trans. J. Michael Dash. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1989.

---. Poetics of Relation. Trans. Betsy Wing. Ann Arbor: The U of Michigan P, 1997.

Grosz, Elizabeth. Space, Time, and Perversion: Essays on the Politics of Bodies. New York: Routledge, 1995.

Hall, Stuart. "Cultural Identity and Diaspora." Theorizing Diaspora: A Reader. Ed. Jana Evans Braziel and Anita Mannur. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2003. 233-46.

---. "The Local and the Global: Globalization and Ethnicity." Dangerous Liasons: Gender, Nation, and Postcolonial Perspectives. Ed. Anne McClintock, Aamir Mufti, and Ella Shohat. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1997.

---. "Political Belonging in a World of Multiple Identities." Conceiving Cosmopolitanism: Theory, Context, and Practice. Ed. Steven Vertovec and Robin Cohen. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2002.

Hansberry, Lorraine. A Raisin in the Sun. Ed. Robert Nemiroff. New York: Penguin Books, 1992.

Harrow, Kenneth W. Thresholds of Change in African Literature: The Emergence of a Tradition. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1994.

---. Less Than One and Double: A Feminist Reading of African Women's Writings. Portsmouth, NH.: Heinemann, 2001.

---. "Of Those Who Went Before." Emerging Perspectives on Ama Ata Aidoo. Ed. Ada Uzoamaka Azodo and Gay Wilentz. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 1999.

Head, Bessie. A Question of Power. Oxford: Heinemann, 1974.

Heidegger, Martin. Basic Writings. New York: Harper and Row, 1977.

Hobsbawm, Eric J. Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1992.

Hogan, Patrick Colm. Colonialism and Cultural Identity: Crisis of Tradition in the Anglophone Literatures of India, Africa, and the Caribbean. Albany: State U of New York P, 2000.

hooks, bell. Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics. Boston, MA: South End Press, 1990.

Huggan, Graham. "Decolonizing the Map." The Postcolonial Reader. Ed. Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin. London: Routledge, 1995. 407-11.

---. Territorial Disputes: Maps and Mapping Strategies in Contemporary Canadian and Australian Fiction. Toronoto: U of Toronoto P, 1994.

Internal Displacement Unit. No Refuge: The Challenge of Internal Displacement. United Nations: New York and Geneva, 2003.

JanMohamed, Abdul R. The Death-Bound-Subject: Richard Wright's Archaeology of Death. Durham: Duke UP, 2005.

Kane, Cheikh Hamidou. Ambiguous Adventure. Trans. Katherine Woods. London: Heinemann, 1963.

Kaplan, Caren. Questions of Travel: Postmodern Discourses of Displacement. Durham, NC: Duke UP, 1996.

Kapstein, Helen. "'A Peculiar Shuttling Movement': Madness, Passing, and Tresspassing in Bessie Head's *A Question of Power.*" Critical Essays on Bessie Head. Ed. Maxine Sample. Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003.

Kourouma, Ahmadou. The Suns of Independence. Trans. Adrian Adams. London: Heinemann, 1981.

Kowash, Samira. "The Homeless Body." *Public Culture* 10.2 (1998): 319-39

Laing, B. Kojo. Search Sweet Country. London: Heinemann, 1986.

---. Woman of the Aeroplanes. New York: William Morrow, 1998.

Laye, Camara. The Dark Child. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1954.

Layoun, Mary N. Wedded to the Land?: Gender, Boundaries, and Nationalism in Crisis. Durham: Duke UP, 2001.

Lefebvre, Henri. The Production of Space. Trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 1991.

Lyotard, Jean-Francois. *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge.* Trans. Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1984.

Massey, Doreen. Space, Place, and Gender. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1994.

Mbembe, Achille and Sarah Nutall. "Writing the World from an African Metropolis." Public Culture 16.3 (Fall 2004) 347-72.

Meyer, Birgit and Peter Geschiere, eds. Globalization and Identity: Dialectics of Flow and Closure. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1999.

Miyoshi, Masao. "A Borderless World?: From Colonialism to Transnationalism and the Decline of the Nation-State." *Critical Inquiry* 19 (Summer 1993): 726-51

Morrison, Toni. "Home." The House That Race Built. Wahneema Lubiano, ed. New York: Pantheon Books, 1997.

Mtukudzi, Oliver. Dzoka Uyamwe [Return Home]. Harare: Putumayo World Music, 1999.

Mudimbe, V.Y. The Invention of Africa. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1988.

Mungoshi, Charles. Waiting for the Rain. Harare: Zimbabwe Publishing House, 1975.

Ngaboh-Smart, Francis. Beyond Empire and Nation: Postnational Arguments in the Fiction of Nuruddin Farah and B. Kojo Laing. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2004.

Nixon, Rob. "Border Country: Bessie Head's Frontline States." *Social Text,* No. 36 (Autumn, 1993), pp. 106-137

peters, john durham. "exile, nomadism, and diaspora: the stakes of mobility in the western canon." home, exile, homeland: film, media, and the politics of place. ed. hamid naficy. new york: routledge, 1999.

Radhakrishnan, R. Diasporic Mediations: Between Home and Locations. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1996.

Renan, Ernest. "What is a Nation?" Nation and Narration. Ed. H.K. Bhabha. London: Routledge, 1990.

Ranger, Terence. "The Invention of Tradition in Colonial Africa." The Invention of Tradition. Ed. Eric Hobsbawn and Terence Ranger. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1983.

Read, Peter. Returning to Nothing. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996.

Robbins, Bruce. "Introduction Part I." Cosmopolitics: Thinking and Feeling beyond the Nation. Ed. Pheng Cheah and Bruce Robbins. Minneapolis: Minnesota UP, 1998. 1-19.

Rodney, Walter. How Europe Underdeveloped Africa. Washington DC: Howard UP, 1981.

Rodrı´guez, Richard T. "Glocal Matters: A Response to José E. Limón." *American Literary History* 20. 1-2 (Spring/Summer 2008):183-186

Rushdie, Salman. Imaginary Homelands: Essays and Criticism 1981-1991. London: Granta Books, 1991.

Said, Edward. "Reflections on Exile." Reflections on Exile and Other Essays. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2000.

Salih, Tayeb. Season of Migration to the North. Portsmouth N.H.: Heinemann, 1970.

Sembène, Ousmane. Xala. 1974.

Shohat, Ella. "Notes on the 'Post-Colonial.'" Social Text 31-32 (1992): 99-113.

Spivak, Gayatri C. "Asked to Talk About Myself ...." Third Text 19 (Summer 1992): 9-18.

---. A Critique of Postcolonial Reason. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1999.

---. Outside in the Teaching Machine. New York: Routledge, 1993.

Stam, Robert. "Beyond Third Cinema: The Aesthetics of Hybridity." Rethinking Third Cinema. Ed. Anthony R. Guneratne and Wimal Dissanayake. New York: Routledge, 2003.

Thiong'o, Ngugi wa. Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature. Oxford: James Currey, 1986.

---. Matigari. Trans. Wangui wa Goro. Oxford: Heinemann, 1989.

---. Moving the Centre: The Struggle for Cultural Freedoms. London: Heinemann, 1993.

Tibaijuka, Anna Kajumulo. "Report of the Fact-Finding Mission to Zimbabwe to assess the Scope and Impact of Operation Murambatsvina." United Nations. July 18, 2005.

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat). The Challenge Of Slums: Global Report on Human Settlements 2003. London: UN-Habitat/Earthscan, 2003.

Walcott, Derek. Dream on Monkey Mountain. In Dream on Monkey Mountain and Other Plays. New York: Noonday Press, 1970.

West, Cornel. Race Matters. New York: Vintage Books, 1993.

Williams, Raymond. The Country and the City. New York: Oxford UP, 1973.

Wilson, Rob and Wimal Dissanayake, eds. GlobalLocal: Cultural Production and the Transnational Imaginery. Durham, NC: Duke UP, 1996.

Worsley, Peter. The Third World. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1964.