

T.C.

ISTANBUL YENI YUZYIL UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE DEPARTMENT

ANGLO-AMERICAN LITERATURE AND CREATIVE WRITING

PROGRAMME



HOME AND IDENTITY AS POSTCOLONIAL TROPES IN J. J.

BOLA'S *NO PLACE TO CALL HOME* AND ABDULRAZAK

GURNAH'S *BY THE SEA*

MA THESIS

ALI RIDHA ALI AL-RUFAI

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ISTANBUL, JUNE 2024

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ALI RIDHA ALI AL-RUFAl
21131308007
ORCID NO: 0008-3572-9885

SUPERVISOR
ASST. PROF. DR. UĞUR DILER
JURY MEMBERS
PROF. DR. GÜNSELİ İŞÇİ
ASST. PROF. DR. GÖKÇEN KARA

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ETHICAL STATEMENT

I prepared my project following the thesis writing rules of the Institute of Social Sciences at Istanbul Yeni Yüzyıl University, and I hereby declare that;

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- I have not made any changes to the data used,
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14 / 06/ 2024

ALI RIDHA ALI AL-RUFAI

PREFACE

My words fall short to thank all those whose names appear in this section for their memorable help to make me achieve more progress in my academic life.

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ISTANBUL, JUNE 2024

ALI RIDHA ALI AL-RUFAI

ÖZET

J. J. BOLA’NIN *NO PLACE TO CALL* VE ABDULRAZAK

GURNAH’IN *BY THE SEA* ESERLERİNDE

POSTKOLONYALİZM MECAZLARI OLARAK EV VE KİMLİK

ALI RIDHA ALI AL-RUFAI

ORC-ID: 0008-3572-9885

Bu tez, J.J. Bola’nın *No Place to Call Home* ve Abdurazak Gurnah’ın *By the Sea* adlı eserlerinde sömürge sonrası kavramlar olarak vatan ve kimlik kavramlarını incelemektedir. Bu çalışma, her iki metnin dikkatli bir şekilde analiz edilmesine dayanarak, sömürge sonrası vatan ve kimliğe öznel bir bakış açısıyla önemli ve tartışmalı fikirler ortaya koyduğunu iddia etmektedir. Sömürge sonrası ve sömürge sonrası Edebiyat kavramlarını anlamak için sömürgecilik hakkında net bir anlayışa sahip olmak çok önemlidir. Sömürgecilik, bir ulusun yabancı topraklar üzerindeki kontrol ve otoritesini zorla işgal yoluyla genişletmesi sürecini ifade eder. Bola’nın romanı, şu anda Birleşik Krallık’ta yaşayan Demokratik Kongo Cumhuriyeti’nden genç bir mültecinin yaşadığı vatansız olma ıstırabını ve aidiyet duygusuna duyduğu ihtiyacı dile getirir. Gurnah’ın romanı, İngiltere’de yaşayan Doğu Afrikalı kahramanı için yerinden edilmiş hissetme ve vatan duygusunu kaybetme deneyimini inceler. Anlatı aynı zamanda İngiliz sömürgeciliğinin anavatan hakkındaki fikirlerini de inceler ve eleştirir. Bu tez, Homi Bhabha ve diğer sömürge sonrası yazarlar tarafından önerilen teorik çerçeveleri kullanarak, bu tez edebi eserlerin sömürge sonrası ana yurtlarından koparılmış bireyler için kimlikleri ve konumlarıyla ilgili karmaşık bağlantıları nasıl tasvir ettiğini incelemektedir. Seçilen *No Place to Call Home* ve *By the Sea* romanlarındaki esnek vatan kavramı ve melezleşmiş kimlikler, modern transkültürel yazarlar için güçlü sömürge sonrası temalardır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sömürgecilik sonrası, vatan, kimlik, Deniz Kıyısında, Ev Denecek Yer Yok.

ABSTRACT

HOME AND IDENTITY AS POSTCOLONIAL TROPES IN BOLA'S *NO PLACE TO CALL HOME* AND ABDURAZAK GURNAH'S *BY THE SEA*

ALI RIDHA ALI AL-RUFAI

ORC-ID: 0008-3572-9885

This thesis explores the concepts of home and identity as post-colonial notions in JJ Bola's *No Place to Call Home* and Abdurazak Gurnah's *By the Sea*. This study contends that the post-colonial subject views home and identity as crucial and disputed ideas based on carefully analyzing both texts. To comprehend the concepts of Post-colonialism and Post-colonial Literature, it is crucial to have a clear understanding of colonialism. Colonialism refers to the process by which a nation extends its control and authority over foreign lands via forceful occupation. Bola's novel elicits the anguish of being homeless and the need for a sense of belonging experienced by a young refugee from the Democratic Republic of Congo currently residing in the United Kingdom. Gurnah's novel delves into the experience of feeling displaced and losing one's sense of home for its protagonist from East Africa, who lives in England. At the same time, the narrative also examines and criticizes the British colonial ideas about the homeland. This thesis employs theoretical frameworks proposed by Homi Bhabha and other post-colonial academics to examine how these literary works depict fluid identities and complex connections to location for post-colonial diasporic individuals. The flexible notions of home and hybridized identities in the selected novels *No Place to Call Home* and *By the Sea* are powerful post-colonial themes for modern transcultural authors.

Keywords: Post-colonialism, home, identity, *By the Sea*, *No Place to Call Home*.

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INTRODUCTION

Home and identity are essential concepts that raise questions about immigrants who belong to post-colonial displacement. Immigrants who suffer from post-colonial displacement from their homeland and the complex relationships with destination places are essential aspects. Homi Bhabha argues that the concealed spaces within the dwelling place are sites for the most intricate incursions of history (1994, p. 13). Acceptance of privacy within one's home is also linked to broad cultural and political factors. Post-colonial writers and their characters feel uncertain and lack belonging to the periphery, which Bhabha calls "the unhomely" (1994, p. 13). The term "post-colonial" is formed by combining the prefix "post," which stands for the period after, with the word "colonial," which indicates the era and the process of colonialism (Khairunnisa, 2015, p. 89). "Colonialism" and "colonizers" as two interconnected and inseparable terms that surround the concrete aspects of colonialism and the complex cultural dichotomy between colonizer and colonized (Saif Allah et al., 2020). The interaction between the culture of the colonizer and the culture of the colonized posed a major dilemma for the colonized individuals, who faced the difficult decision of preserving their indigenous heritage or embracing the culture of their colonial rulers. Consequently, a state of confusion and ambiguity regarding their cultural identity emerged.

When the prior colonized people experience post-independence, they continue to struggle to conserve their original culture in facing the challenges of transformation. This struggle leads to hybridity, mimicry, and ambivalence, as explored by Bhabha, to cultural identity formation throughout the colonial period. According to Bhabha's definition, hybridity is the intermingling of cultural elements between the colonizer and the colonized within a "third place" that creates a unique cultural identity (Bhabha, 1994, p. 44). Mimicry refers to adopting and adapting or even copying. It is an exaggeration of copying of language, culture, manners, and ideas (Bhabha, 1994, p.86). Mimicry involves the colonized adopting and adapting the colonizer's culture. However, imitation is not complete, and colonized people are not fully integrated into dominant or superior cultures. Bhabha defines mimicry as an exaggerated mimicking of language, culture, mannerisms, and ideas, resulting in repetition with difference. Mimicry is a response to the spread of stereotypes (Bhabha, 1994, p. 122).

The rejection of colonialism and the quest for uniqueness to declare independence are what define post-colonial times. Furthermore, population shifts and migration from former colonies to the nations that colonized them create new hybrid civilizations that, on the one hand, clash culturally and, on the other, foster hostility between the natives and vagrants. Ashcroft et al. (1989a) argue that “all post-colonial societies are still subject in somehow to plain or inconspicuous types of colonial domination, and independence has not tackled this problem” (p. 2).

Like identity, a sense of belonging is a general concept. It includes an innate need to follow the traditions, speak the language, and be a part of an individual’s religion. It is one of the most significant fallouts from issues that Gurnah and Bola address in their novels since the theme of escape does not always have a happy ending and can negatively affect aspects of human nature, like the sense of belonging. The first issue that new lives encounter is frequently the inability to adapt, the inability to belong, and the inability to personalize since many of their characters have migrated to the colonizer countries. Displaced individuals attempt to internalize their new identities as well as find new ones for themselves. For the colonizer, who is always caught between these two lives, migration is not a new beginning but rather its end: fragmentation. “For all those millions of violently dispossessed refugees produced in this century, there is still some reason to mourn the loss of home and of belonging” (Ghandi, 1998, p. 132). The psychological and physical remnants of these fragmentations may be still evident today. Every soul yearns to possess or have a connection to something; it might be a piece of jewelry, a family, a group of friends, or anything tangible. Humans naturally seek out support and acceptance. Schermerhorn (1970) investigated this ethnic identification emotion. He goes into great length regarding ethnicity, emphasizing the importance of cultural norms and values that contribute to the sense of identity and loyalty to the ethnic group, such as kinship, religious affinities, language, and dialect.

The significance of identification and belonging in literature lies in its ability to reflect the human experience, capturing the complexities and nuances of individual and collective interactions. Literature provides authors with a platform to thoroughly delve into the complexities of human consciousness, investigating the obstacles, contradictions, and triumphs that arise from the quest for self-realization

and the desire for validation. One of the roles of literary works is to allow the readers to understand cultures, characters' life experiences, and, most importantly, the writers' perspectives. Thus, the analysis of the characters and their identities and sense of belonging encourages the readers to consider the connection between the literary works and the world. It can clarify marginalized communities' experiences, uncovering their identities' complexities and the challenges they face in building a sense of belonging. Literature possesses the ability to provoke discussions regarding issues of social justice, inclusivity, and the recognition of distinctive human attributes. Identity and belonging are essential themes in literature since they explore the inherent human desire to understand one's existence and establish meaningful connections with others. Literature enriches our understanding of the human condition, fosters empathy, and provokes thoughtful reflection on our own identities and relationships.

Bola's and Gurnah's novels that are selected for this study delve into metaphors that revolve around the notion of an unfamiliar and uncomfortable home, displacement, and complex identities for individuals from post-colonial backgrounds. This study utilizes Hall's perspective on culture in connection to post-colonial identity, which highlights its non-unified and fragmented character. Said's views of exile related to displacement from one's country will provide further theoretical perspectives. Analyzing *No Place to Call Home* and *By the Sea* will offer a comprehensive insight into how they highlight the intricate nature and impact of home and identity in the post-colonial imagination. Both authors are immigrants residing in England as the focus of this investigation. Gurnah explores several themes: silence, post-trauma, leaving, displacement, remorse, belonging, and shame. Furthermore, in his sixth novel, *By the Sea*, the author also explores the experiences of refugees and asylum seekers through the character of Saleh Omar, who serves as one of the narrators in the story. Departing from the East coast of Africa, he attempts to enter England by assuming the identity of Rajab Shaban Mahmud, a deceased individual from Zanzibar. He is Latif Mahmud's father, the story's second main character, and a university's literary professor. Despite possessing a complete command of the English language, Saleh Omar chooses to keep mute and feign ignorance of English when conversing with the personnel at Gatwick Airport. On the

contrary, Latif Mahmud has achieved mastery of the English language and is also a poet. The destinies of these two characters intersect due to the intervention of adviser Rachel Howard, who reaches out to Latif Mahmud to assist Omar by serving as his interpreter. *By the Sea* explores themes of exile, post-traumatic stress, alienation, language, and identity while also depicting the resilience of Zanzibar in the face of European colonization. Additionally, the novel delves into the tales and cultures of East Africa via the use of flashbacks and recollections from the perspectives of two narrators. Set in media res, the individuals in the narrative reveal their prior experiences while living in England, allowing them to uncover their true selves. The narrative concludes by delving into the family histories of these individuals, specifically focusing on Omar's time in exile by the sea in Britain. Due to their status as an asylum seeker and a refugee, Salih Omar and Latif Mahmud have adverse consequences in their life in England.

However, both novels have similarities. Like Gurnah's, Bola's novel explores belonging, identity, immigration, hope, hopelessness, loss, and love. The story is a captivating narrative of a Congolese family forced to establish a new residence in a foreign country due to upheaval in their native place. Bola skillfully uses language, much like a painter wields their brush, to vividly and eloquently narrate the tale of an immigrant family residing in London. With his exceptional command of the English language, he skillfully portrays the subtleties and difficulties of their experiences and hardships in a foreign land. Regardless of whether the tale takes place in London or Kinshasa, Bola skillfully engrosses the reader in Congolese culture and way of life while also acquainting them with the Congo's legacy, politics, and history. *No Place to Call Home* is an exceptional work of literature crafted by a talented young writer. The novel contains many profound observations about various aspects of modern life, such as authoritarian governance and societal transformation in Africa. It also delves into the experiences of African university students abroad, the challenges faced by African immigrants as they strive to preserve their cultural identity while adapting to life in Europe, and the intricate and occasionally exploitative conduct of evangelical "pastors" as well as the British education system. The novel's exceptional writing captivates the reader, ensuring a delightful and engaging reading experience until the final page. To ensure widespread readership in the Congo and

Francophone Africa, it should be translated into French.

Using post-colonial literary frameworks, this thesis analyses how Abdurazak Gurnah's *By the Sea* and JJ Bola's *No Place to Call Home* depict the formation of home and identity. The study's overarching goal is to deduce why drives immigrants from two different African countries to leave their homelands and make sense of their conduct there.

The thesis exhibits a meticulous structure and offers a unified examination of the chosen novels about post-colonialism. Chapter One of the research is structured into several sections, each providing various definitions and essential concepts of post-colonialism. Post-colonialism's historical and theoretical framework explores these definitions and concepts, explicitly focusing on the primary ideas of home, belonging, identity, and trauma.

In chapter two, *No Place to Call Home*, the postcolonial theory is utilized to analyze the characters. In contrast to the previous novel, the characters in this particular work exhibit a distinct viewpoint regarding their personal growth and development. The novel employs a third-person narrator who provides a detailed and personal portrayal of the lives of the family at its core. Papa and Mami, who have migrated from the Congo and are currently living in London as refugees, are confronted with difficulties in ensuring their existence. At the same time, they await the necessary legal papers to establish their residency in the United Kingdom. Their trip is narrated against the backdrop of political crimes perpetrated by the Marchal's regime, compelling them to flee their homeland and endure a condition of displacement.

In chapter three, *By the Sea*, the characters are used to convey these ideas and concepts. The story explores the people from another viewpoint and uncovers how being perceived as an "outsider" in Western society has transformed the identity of each character. Latif Mahmud has assimilated into British society due to his residence in the country for over three decades, while Saleh Omar might be seen as disoriented and psychologically affected.

Scholars in the modern era still have not settled on a single, comprehensive definition of post-colonialism, and they disagree on many other points as well, such as when the movement began, who counts as post-colonial subjects, and which nations can be “labeled” as post-colonial (Loomba, 2015, pp. 9-12). Nevertheless, according to Loomba, the question of time and space is not crucial, and one should instead view post-colonialism “more flexibly as the contestation of colonial domination and the legacies of colonialism” (p. 16). Additionally, she implies that the white settlers of Australia need to be considered post-colonial subjects due to their “estrangement from Britain (or France). *The Cambridge Introduction to Post-colonial Literatures in English*, edited by C. L. Innes (2007), traces the roots of post-colonial literary studies back to the creative writing boom of the 1950s and 1960s, which occurred at the same time as numerous African, Southeast Asian, and Caribbean states transitioned from colonial to post-colonial status (p.3). In addition, Graham Huggan notes that post-colonial studies’ formalization in the late twentieth century contributed to the growth and vehemence of post-colonial criticism (p.1). As with the concept of post-colonialism, defining post-colonial literature and post-colonial studies is not an easy task. Written between the time of colonization and the current day, works that “emerged in their present form out of the experience of colonization and asserted themselves by foregrounding the tension with the imperial power, and by emphasizing their differences from the assumptions of the imperial center” (p.2) constitute what Ashcroft et al call post-colonial literature. Post-colonial is defined by Elleke Boehmer (2018) as “writing in resistance to empire and its oppressions” (p.89), limiting the scope of this assertion in her article “Post-colonial Aesthetic” (p.90). One of the most prominent themes in post-colonial literature is the connection between the Empire and its colonies, which seems to be one of the literature’s defining features. Bart Moore-Gilbert argues that post-colonial critique relies heavily on this center-periphery contrast and the dynamics between the two. “A more or less separate collection of reading practices” that are mainly concerned with “analysis of cultural forms which mediate, confront or reflect upon...relations of domination and subordination” is what he calls post-colonial critique.

In his 1979 book *Orientalism*, Edward Said notes that “[T]he Orient was practically a European construct” (p.9). No matter how much the West tries, it will never be able to separate itself from the East. In this process of self-discovery that might give rise to a new individual and their incorporation into society, the presence of white people is the one factor that binds the black person. The white man tricks the black people into thinking he is better than them by creating confusion. Said contends that the banished person represents “restlessness, mobility, continuously being disturbed” (1979, p. 53). By highlighting the anguish and several perspectives experienced by exiles, he illuminates Saleh’s outsider viewpoint in *By the Sea* and Bola’s poetic exploration of not belonging. To shed light on post-colonial experiences of displacement, hybridity, and exile, the following chapters will integrate these theoretical frameworks and analyze how the two literary works depict home and identity. Bhabha, Hall, and Said offer alternative theoretical frameworks when considering subjectivity and home in a post-colonial setting. Gurnah’s and Bola’s literature and metaphors of home and self are significant, and their theories support this, “Wherever he travels, the Negro stays a Negro” (Fanon, 1986, p. 173). The change was unavoidable for the indigenous people who were familiar with their difficult environment. In doing so, they became into exactly what they despised looking like.

The novel’s narrative structure and the function of storytelling have been the primary areas of critical attention (Samuelson, 2013), while other commentators have taken Derridean hospitality (Relph, 2015, p. 89) and Edouard Glissant’s *Relation* (Steiner, 2010) as models for coping with social and personal displacement (Helff, 2000). Steiner and Farrier have demonstrated that the core motif of the novel may be its exploration of what Derrida terms ‘hospitality’ (2000) and Levinas’s (1979, p. 194) concept of the infinite face of the Other. To further comprehend Gurnah’s interest in self/other and even object relations, Steiner appropriately refers to Glissant’s idea of “Relation” (2010). Despite the oppressive rhetoric of emerging African nationalisms and the brutal realities of colonialism and imperialism, Gurnah’s narratives “insist on moments of connection, of little voices expressing welcome” (Steiner, 2010, p. 125).

The analysis adds to our knowledge of how influential authors address diaspora and homelessness, making it a valuable addition to the field of post-colonial literary studies. The analysis of Bola's and Gurnha's portrayals of multi-faceted post-colonial subjectivities provides a better understand of how colonialism continues to shape ideas of identity, belonging, and forced migration.



1. HOME AND IDENTITY FROM POST-COLONIAL PERSPECTIVE

1.1. Post-Colonial Theory

The term post-colonialism is rooted in the term colonialism and it is defined by the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED, 2022) as “the policy or practice of acquiring full or partial political control over another country occupying it with settlers and exploiting it economically”. In literary terms, “colonialism” has affected individuals and can tear them apart in so many different ways that it has ultimately ruined ties between families, friends, and tribes. Post-colonialism refers to the process that ends colonialism by granting indigenous people the power and freedom to resist political and cultural imperialism and reclaim their rightful position in society.

Historians first used the word ‘post-colonialism’ to refer to the period following independence, but it now refers to the consequences of colonialism on people and cultures. An era when colonies succeeded in gaining independence from European domination is addressed as the ‘postcolonial’ period. In *The Empire Writes Back*, Bill Ashcroft and colleagues argue, “the experience of colonialism has shaped the lives of more than three-quarters of the people living in the world today” (Ashcroft et al., 1989, p.1). Despite political upheaval and the independence of many former colonies, there were still conflicts and crises in the cultural and economic spheres, and people continued to struggle with questions of identity and culture. According to Marinescu (2007), the term post-colonialism is “defined and redefined after the collapse of the Empire, the continuous movement between margin and center and the interpretation and reinterpretation of common history” (p.90). He also points to the way that ethnic and national identity issues have emerged and have persisted in the gap between the past and present (p.90). Thus, nationalism and multiculturalism are sometimes seen as opposed, with the former as the illness and the latter as the remedy.

Post-colonialism is a notion that might be argued in a broad area of discussion and it remains controversial. It may simply be defined as the “branch of contemporary theory that investigates and develops propositions about the cultural and political impact of European conquest upon colonized societies, and the nature of

those societies' responses" (Ashcroft, 2012, p.6). This terminology also draws a difference between the status of self-determination and colonialism.

According to Charles E. Bressler, the term 'post-colonialism' refers to "a method for criticism that focuses itself with literature produced in English in previously colonized nations" (1999, p.265). Postcolonial studies center on literature from cultures that have been colonized or were formerly colonized, such as those in Australia, New Zealand, Africa, South America, and other regions that were once under the influence of white, male, European political, cultural, and philosophical norms but have since remained independent of them. To the greatest portion, postcolonial investigations disregard literature that reflects either British or American perspectives. Some Marxist critics describe it as 'third-world literature,' while others term it as 'Commonwealth literature' (Giri, 2018, p.33). Postcolonial thinkers study what occurs when two cultures collide and one of them, with its auxiliary ideology, asserts its superiority over the other.

Post-colonialism in another definition might be an approach to studying the features of colonizing an authority in the target country or countries. Thus, post-colonialists work to create new conceptual frameworks for comprehending colonial experiences. They usually examine the creative and hybrid forms of culture resulting from colonialism and emphasize the agency of indigenous people (Liebmann, 2008, p.2). Some postcolonial writers use the term to refer to "all the cultures affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonialization to the present day" (Ashcroft et al., 1989, p.2). In the extremely self-critical world, the term remains controversial and argumentative since the angles for studying the phenomenon are dissimilar

Additionally, postcolonial literature often refers to writing from the personal perspective of authors who were subjects of European nineteenth-century colonialism. Therefore, postcolonial theory is a point of view or several points of view rather than just a chronological description (Waugh, 2006, pp.340-1). Although postcolonial theory has evolved greatly, several fundamental concepts have remained constant since the 1970s, when the theory first began to take shape. However, post-colonialism aims to explore what has been absent from literary analyses by

highlighting the interests of the colonized and the destructive forces of the colonizer's hegemony as forced on the colonized countries. This is because it primarily deals with literature that has been written by authors in colonized countries. Thus, post-colonialism becomes less of a codified school of literary critique and more of a reading approach, similar to deconstruction. According to its approach, it grants legitimacy and existence to 'the Other,' those who have distinguished themselves from the prevailing, colonial culture (Culler, 2003, p.330). Additionally, it seeks to restore the colonized people's position in history so that all readers would appreciate the diversity of cultures and peoples that make up the human race. A postcolonial critic stresses each person's humanity and right to personal freedom, regardless of whether they subscribe to feminism, psychoanalysis, Marxism, or any other theoretical framework.

Critics of post-colonialism point out that many of its most powerful advocates were trained in the West and remain there, making them products of the Western worldview rather than subaltern civilizations. How can someone with such 'Western' perspectives represent marginalized cultures? According to some critics, postcolonial studies still mostly focus on academics and the 'upper classes' in society, and they have little to no impact on actual people living in those locations. Some opponents of the phenomenon contend that if the goal of the movement is to improve and transform the lives of colonized peoples, then those who have been colonized, not Western academics, should implement the reading methods and methodology of the movement (Lewis, 2002, p.351). Also, Bressler (1999) discusses similar issues and believes that some opponents of the matter are against marginalizing the colonized ones through speech that is understood only by the cultural elite. It would mean that post-colonialism aims to strengthen individuals who have been deprived of power, dignity, and self-worth (p.209). These detractors would argue that post-colonialism cannot transform lives and is only radical in its language.

Although certain classic post-colonial locations, like India, remain significant, the approach is growing more and more diversified, encompassing Caribbean, Latin American, and Pacific geographical areas, like most ideas and approaches included under the general title of cultural studies. Post-colonialism has secured its position in literary theory and practice for many years to come by

incorporating a range of ideas and techniques into textual analysis (Hunter & Robinson, 2018, pp.18– 28).

Another main discussion, which might be at the core of post-colonialism, is the term 'Otherness'. The concept of otherness is not without problems or complications. Two key terms to be studied in this theory would be not much more controversial than 'Otherness' and 'loss of identity'. The Western idea of the oriental is based on the Manichean metaphor, which splits the cosmos into mutually exclusive opposites, which states, "The Orient is chaotic, illogical, feminine, and evil if the West is ordered, logical, masculine, and good" (Cozzo, 2016, p.11). On the other hand, there are problems with the notion that one would have to engage in the means of production used by the colonizers, such as publishing, writing, book production, and advertising, to produce literature that helps the colonized reconstruct their identity (Asma, 2015, p.9). These can call for a hybrid system that blends indigenous and Western concepts, or they might call for a centralized economic and cultural framework that is eventually imported from the West.

The concept of hybridity, which is central to post-colonial thought, is denoted by the term 'hybrid'. The term 'integration' may be too orderly to describe the range of stratagems, desperate, crafty, or well-intentioned, by which individuals adapt to the possibilities and demands of more or less repressive or intrusive cultural regulations. It describes the blending or integrating of cultural signs and practices from the colonizing and colonized cultures. It is possible to view the integration and adaptation of cultural practices known as cross-fertilization, which would be repressive and beneficial, nourishing and dynamic. The idea of 'hybridity' is particularly helpful in dispelling the myth that colonized cultures or colonial cultures in general, are monolithic or possess fundamental, unchanging characteristics. (Sinha, 2008, p.4). Assuming that Western art is ideologically structured to convey its facts about itself, the representation of these uneven and sometimes hybrid, polyglot, multivalent cultural places may not resemble representations of bourgeois culture very much.

Based on Bhabha's idea of culture transition in post-colonialism, Stephen Greenblatt and Giles Gunn (1992) in a work titled "Redrawing the Boundaries: The

Transformation of English and American Literary Studies” declare, “Culture as a strategy of survival is both transnational and translational,” (2016, p.11). They continue on the same page that culture is transnational because current postcolonial discourses have their roots in particular histories of cultural displacement, such as the journey away from the civilizing mission, and the difficult accommodations made for Third World migration to the West following World War II. The movement of political and economic refugees both inside and outside of the Third World. Culture is translational because of these spatial histories of displacement and the territorial aspirations of global media technologies, which pose a difficult challenge to the meaning of culture and how it is defined. (p.11). It becomes imperative to differentiate between the social specificity of each of these meaning-producing productions as they circulate as signs within particular contextual locations and social systems of value, and the resemblance and similitude of the symbols across diverse cultural experiences, including literature, art, music, ritual, life, and death.

In postcolonial discourse, hybridity is often used to refer to ‘interaction’ among cultures. As the expression typically suggests ignoring or rejecting the imbalance and unfairness of the power ties it refers to, this usage of the term has drawn a lot of criticism. It has been said that highlighting the revolutionary cultural, linguistic, and political effects on both the colonized and the colonizer, is mimicking assimilationist strategies by ‘whitewashing’ or hiding cultural distinctions. The idea of hybridity also serves as the inspiration for other initiatives that highlight the mutuality of cultures in the colonial and post-colonial processes through manifestations of syncretistic, cultural synergy, and transculturation. The aforementioned idea has faced criticism due to the belief that theories that prioritize mutuality tend to overlook positionality and perpetuate post-colonial dependency. However, nothing about the notion of hybridity suggests that mutuality presupposes the notion of equal commerce, nor that it refutes the imperial process’ hierarchical nature. Still, certain supporters of anti-colonialism and decolonization have realized its contemporary use in colonial discourse theory in this way. It has also been criticized by critics like Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Benita Parry, and Aijaz Ahmad as part of a broader discontent with colonial discourse theory. These criticisms highlight the textualist and idealist foundations of this kind of research and draw

attention to the fact that they ignore particular regional variations. Discourse analysis tends to de-historicize and de-locate cultures from their temporal, spatial, geographical, and linguistic contexts. This can result in an abstract, globalized concept of the text that conceals the particularities that define particular cultural situations. This tendency has been seen in the assertion of a shared post-colonial condition like hybridity.

Robert Young argues that colonial discourse analysis, which couches concepts like hybridity, can be a significant framework for other work because it emphasizes that all perspectives on colonialism share and must deal with a common discursive medium—that of colonialism itself. Yet, the study of the discursive construction of colonialism does not seek to replace or ignore other forms such as historical, geographical, economic, military, or political forms. Colonial discourse analysis may thus view the diverse range of colonial texts as more than just ‘evidence’ or record (Young, 1995, p.163). Young, nevertheless, raises a number of concerns about the term’s careless use. He points out how prevalent the term ‘hybridity’ was in negative narratives about the union of different racial groups in imperial and colonial discourse. Narratives suggested that these hybrids would eventually return to their ‘primitive’ stock unless aggressively and consistently fostered. Thus, hybridity became a component of colonialist rhetoric of racism, especially around the turn of the century.

Young highlights the dangers of using a term steeping in historical racist assumptions, but he also makes it apparent that political concerns about intentional disruptions of homogeneity and unintentional processes of hybrid mixture, or creolization, are not the same as conscious ones. He points out that in Bakhtin’s view, for instance, hybridity is politicized and turned into a conflict that welcomes the subversion and opposition of division and separation. In a conflictual structure that preserves a certain basic, biological vitality and open-mindedness, Bakhtin’s hybridity “sets different points of view against each other” (Young, 1995, pp.21–22). Young acknowledges that hybridity can overthrow ‘the structures of domination in the colonial situation’. Young further explains this point and states;

Bhabha has turned Bakhtin’s deliberate hybridization into an active moment of

challenge and resistance against an oppressive colonial power, stripping the imposed imperialist culture of its own claims to authenticity as well as the political authority it has long held, frequently through violence. (Young, 1995, p. 23).

It might be interpreted that policy would play a significant role in shaping the colonized country's culture and identical values.

Young contends that the discussion of hybridity in modern cultural discourse is inextricably linked to the historical racial categories that gave rise to the concept's distinct racial connotation. Consequently, rather than separating ourselves from it or offering a criticism of it, "deconstructing such essentialist notions of race today we may rather be repeating the fixation on race in past." (Young, 1995, p.27). This is a nuanced and compelling argument against the idea. On the other hand, Young also points out that the phrase denotes a wider emphasis on several twentieth-century fields, such as genetics and physics, over "a twofold logic that defies the norm of logical either-or decisions yet is replicated in science in the division between the contradictory coexisting logics of quantum and classical physics" (1995, p.26). This is one way that the concept of hybridity is similar to what takes place in the structuralism and poststructuralist legacy. It highlights a concern that is characteristic of the twentieth century and its relations within a field rather than an analysis of discrete objects. It also intends to reveal the meaning being the result of these relations rather than something inherent to particular events or objects (Ashcroft et al., 2007, p.110–11). Furthermore, a phrase that is becoming more and more significant in postcolonial theory characterizes the conflicting connection between colonizers and colonized communities. The goal of colonial discourse is never just a simple replication of the colonizer's cultural habits, presumptions, institutions, and ideals when it pushes the colonized subject to 'mimic' the colonizer. Meanwhile, the emergence of 'blurred copy' might be considered potentially dangerous for the colonized community. This is because imitation and ridicule are always close to one another since they might seem to parody the same thing. Therefore, mimicry seeks a weakness in the confidence of colonial rule and an ambiguity in its ability to govern

colonized people's behavior.

The imperial strategy has frequently made mimicry a clear objective. Lord Macaulay in a work titled *Minute to Parliament* (1835) urges the replication of English art and scholarship in India by mocking Oriental education. One may wonder how this imitation was to be accomplished pointing to imperialism's fundamental flaw. Macaulay proposed that "a class of interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern - a class of individuals who are Indian in blood and color, but English in tastes, views, in ethics, and intellect" (Macaulay 1835, as cited in Ashcroft et al., 2007, p.125), ought to share the riches of European learning. However, Macaulay appears to imply that imperial discourse is forced to make the imitation of European learning hybridized and consequences are blurred in function.

The word 'liminality' comes from the Greek word 'limen,' which means 'threshold.' In psychology, this word is specifically used to refer to the boundary that separates the sensate from the subliminal, that is, the point at which a given feeling loses its ability to be perceived. The term 'liminal' is distinguished from the more specific word 'limit,' to which it is linked, by its meaning as an interstitial or in-between place, a threshold area. Furthermore, the liminal's significance for postcolonial theory stems from its ability to characterize a place that is 'in-between' and conducive to cultural change the transcultural area where techniques for developing one's own or a community's sense of self may be developed. This is a place where shifting between various states occurs constantly. The colonized subject, for example, can occupy the transitional area between colonial discourse and the adoption of a new, 'non-colonial' identity (Ashcroft et al., 2007, p.125). However, this kind of identification is always an ongoing process of interaction, contestation, and appropriation rather than just a simple transition from one identity to another.

Bhabha believes that the negative Orientalist stereotype is an ill-defined category that denotes the theoretical boundary of colonial identity and presence. As the exiled or buried 'Other' of the European self, it is inherently dangerous. Furthermore, it results in a potentially destabilizing source of both delight and fear since it symbolizes the conflicting expulsions of colonial fantasy and phobia. According to him;

Stereotyping involves more than just developing an image to serve as the fall guy for unfair discriminatory actions. It is a far more ambiguous work with projections and introjections, metonymic and metaphoric devices, displacement, aggression, guilt, and the division and concealment of “official” and fantastical information.... (Bhabha, 1986, p.169)

Since acknowledging that other peoples are not very different from themselves would undermine the legality of colonialism, colonists must never do so.

Furthermore, Bhabha tells more concerning these concepts in his article named “Of Mimicry and Man” (1994, p.85), where he examines how the consequences of ‘mimicry’ cause the ambivalence of colonized subjects to directly threaten the authority of the colonizers. Bhabha continues “One of the most elusive and efficient tactics of colonial power and knowledge [is imitation]” (p.85). He emphasizes the reality that the British government had to educate native peoples on the English language since they were forced to labor on their behalf in colonial countries like India. These individuals are called ‘mimic men’ because, despite learning the language, they do not appear or be acknowledged as English. Bhabha states: “To be Anglicized is emphatically not to be English,” (1994, p.87). Discontinuity and an ever-changing domain in this in-between realm characterize the present. According to him, the hybrid interplay between many histories and cultures allows for both the negotiation and rewriting of culture. This is known as the ‘in-between space.’ Hence, the area between becomes the productive area; Bhabha refers to this as the ‘Third Space.’

Edward Said is another pioneer in postcolonial thought, aside from Bhabha. Said contends in *Orientalism* (1978), which is often regarded as the foundational book of postcolonial thinking, that there was another facet of colonialism in addition to its physical and economic components. In the definition of the ‘Other,’ Said posits a ‘binary worldview’, in which the universe was split into an us-and-them framework. Said refers to the process of ‘Othering’ the Eastern colonies by the Western metropole, the country of origin of the European colonists, as ‘orientalism.’ The European concept of orientalism characterizes everything associated with the

colonies as being wild, emotional, regressive, helpless, and essentially apart from the (said) Occidental traits of civilized conduct, reasoned reasoning, modernity, and (justifiably) great. The West constituted itself as superior and labeled the East as inferior by a deliberate creation of knowledge. However, more significantly, Said contends that the West cannot exist without the East because of this mutual definition—the West cannot exist without the East and because it shows how the colonizer and colonized are intertwined. He maintains that Orientalism’s lingering impacts still exist and symbolize a part of colonialism that never disappeared. Postcolonial theory aims to highlight and destabilize the legacy of colonialism, the Eurocentric understanding of modernity, progress, civilization, and power which we now live with.

In contrast to numerous concepts in postcolonial discourse and theory that often indicate disengagement from local or metropolitan areas, the notion of ‘exile’ has been used to refer to more than just being forcibly removed from a specific place. In common parlance, exile evokes ideas of single political dissidents transported abroad or vast populations expelled to far-off places, creating diverse Diasporas. In these situations, there is occasionally an assumption that banished people are not the same as casual migrants. Migrants forget their home countries and build new loyalties to the locations where they reside. Exiles nevertheless have a sense of (belonging) to/for their imagined or actual country. Said emphasizes that banishment might be ‘actual’ or ‘metaphoric,’ ‘voluntary’ or ‘involuntary.’ (Said, 1994, p.39) This final argument is significant because it shows that more subtle techniques of coercion can also lead to exile than just physical assault. In *Representations of the Intellectual* (1994), Said argues that exile is inextricably linked to the idea of the intellectual. Since exile becomes a more significant political act to distinguish intellectuals from those who “toe the line” and those who continue to challenge the authorities critically, it is difficult to see how this situation relates to post-colonialism. According to Said (1994), these people are considered “the nay-sayers, the individuals at odds with their society and therefore outsiders and exiles in so far as privileges, power, and honors are concerned” (p.39). Specifically, Said’s portrayal of the concept of exile has given him a means of addressing the tension that was previously discussed. As a Palestinian thinker raised in the West and educated

abroad, he frequently invokes his exile history to support his enunciated stance against the politics and culture of Western imperialism. He sees 'Culture and Imperialism' as an exile's work and in the preface he makes a declaration that essentially encapsulates his perspective on exile.

Furthermore, he clarifies that he can better comprehend them since, as an Arab residing in the West and states, he "belongs to both sides of the imperial divide" (Said, 1994, pp. xxvi, xxvii). Said's writings are almost animated by the idea of exile, except for two of his articles namely "Reflections on Exile" (2003a) and "Criticism and Exile". Other collections of essays such as "The Text, the World, and the Critic" (1975) deal with the issue more directly and the pieces provide a philosophy of exile that permits critique to be both involved with and apart from its actual circumstances. Said's goal in "Reflections on Exile" is to analyze an idealized or heroic interpretation of exile. Thus, he starts by making a distinction between the exile of nineteenth-century artists and that of twentieth-century postcolonial people. He declares:

However, the key distinction between the exiles of the past and those of the present is scale: our era, with its contemporary conflict, imperialism, and the quasi-theological goals of totalitarian governments, is in fact the age of the refugee, the displaced person, and mass migration. (Said, 2003a, p.174)

He contends that the extent of twentieth-century postcolonial exile distinguishes it from the experiences of nineteenth-century romantics and Euro-American modernist artists, who aimed to achieve a tenuous separation from their native cultures through the displacement of exile or expatriation. According to him, exile therefore cannot be used to further ideas of humanism (Said, 2003a, p.174). It surpasses the attempts of those who would try to usurp it for moral reasons due to its historical nature. Setting aside Joyce and Nabokov [authors who, according to Said, idealized their particular experiences of exile], one may need to consider the innumerable multitudes for whom UN agencies have been established to comprehend exile (Said, 2003a, p.175).

According to Said, being in exile is characterized by profound emotions of

isolation and dislocation that call for inventive survival techniques, which can lead to the fetishization of exile or a desire to blend in with the culture of a new place. Thus, adopting an ethical stance that opposes assimilation without discounting the prospect of a positive human community is the fundamental issue of exile. Said thinks this is a useful vantage point for having a critical perspective on the world. To highlight the inevitable bonds that exiles are forced to endure, he insists on highlighting the existential and historical anguish of exile. To avoid being too politicized, he prefers the term ‘exile,’ which has its roots in the ancient practice of banishment and connotes a sense of seclusion and spirituality, to the term ‘refugee,’ which emphasizes the individual experience of displacement (Said, 2003a). He declares:

Therefore, I must speak about exile as a substitute for the mass institutions that rule modern life rather than as a luxury. After all, being exiled is not something you choose—you are either born into it or it happens to you. There are things to learn, nevertheless, as long as the exile doesn’t choose to heal from the sidelines. First and foremost, he or she has to develop a conscientious subjectivity—not an indulgent or sulky one. (p.184)

Such meticulous subjectivity can only be developed because of the plurality of vision that exiles are granted by their understanding of many cultures, not by the fetish of exile that rejects the human community or the mindless acceptance of cultural norms (Said, 2003a, p.186). The focus of Said’s work on the intellectual and critique is the conscientious subjectivity of exile; exile as an option rather than a privilege.

In *Representations of the Intellectual* (1994), Said goes back to his idea of exile to explain why an intellectual needs critical distance. Instead of being a physical state of exile, intellectual exile is a metaphorical state of mind that keeps the intellectual from growing too used to any institutional setting or ideology. He states;

In this metaphysical meaning, intellectual exile is characterized by restlessness, mobility, a persistent sensation of unease, and the ability to disturb others. Sadly,

you will never be able to settle into or become at ease with your new house or circumstances. You, the would-be exilic intellectual, cannot return to a previous, maybe more stable state of being at home. (Said, 1994, p.53)

One may interpret that Said explains how people may not feel at home while moving to another place and feel themselves in exile.

The term 'Orientalism' refers to 'the Orient', which has been viewed, explored, and, in a way, 'invented' by Europe and the West. In a literary context, it refers to Western debate on all facets of the East, including literary, sociological, and other areas, to which the East has no counterarguments. The conversation as a whole creates a 'textual universe'. It describes and analyzes how the occident looks at the East, referring to the attitudes of the West toward the East. Foucault's efforts to draw links between the exercise of power and the creation of knowledge had an impact on Said's critique. One may see how the establishments that govern our day-to-day activities. His main claim is that the study of the Orient, or Orientalism, was ultimately a political interpretation of reality, with a framework that favored a dichotomy between the known (Europe) and the unknown (Orient). According to Said, orientalism creates binary oppositions between the Orient and the Occident, where the Orient is everything that the Occident is not. These kinds of structures and forms regarding the Orient are discussed. Orientalism might be an illusion of the West. The opinions held by the West regarding the Orient are frequently the product of Western thoughts and fancies rather than actual events that occur in Eastern countries and Orientalism produces an artificial construct. (Güven, 2019, pp. 419-21). It functions as a venue for the dissemination of ideas and hypotheses on the Orient as information.

Furthermore, Fanon is a significant player in the post-colonialist movement. He received his education in Martinique and France after being born in the French Antilles in 1925. The racism he encountered while working for and receiving his education from the French had a profound impact on him. In 1954, he left his position as the director of the psychiatric department at the Blida-Joinville Hospital in Algeria to fight alongside the rebels against the French occupation of their

homeland. Inspired by modern poets and philosophers like Aime Cesaire and Jean-Paul Sartre, Fanon wrote extensively and passionately about the harm that millions of people endured because of French colonialism. *Black Skin, White Masks* (1986) and *The Wretched of the Earth* (1963) are two of Fanon's most controversial works. The mechanics of colonialism and its impact on the people it entrapped are fiercely discussed in the novels. Using his background as a psychotherapist, he focuses on the psychological ramifications of colonialism in *Black Skin, White Masks*. Fanon examined the costs associated with living in a society where one's skin tone causes them to be perceived as abnormal, strange, and the source of mockery in an uplifting yet upsetting story. In a work named "The Fact of Blackness," he describes how it made him feel when white strangers in France gave him names such as 'dirty nigger!' or 'look, a Negro!' because of his race that all were disparaging to him. In this regard Fanon states;

That day, I distanced myself from my own existence and turned into an object, utterly disoriented and unable to be abroad to the other, the white guy, who mercilessly imprisoned me. What more could it be for me than an excision, an amputation, a hemorrhage that splattered black blood all over my body? However, this thematization and rewrite were not what I wanted. Being a man among men was all I desired. I wanted to enter a universe that was ours at an early age and contribute to its construction. (Fanon, 1986, pp.112-3)

The author represents how one becomes a stranger among others and feels like an object in his relationship with them. People in positions of authority adversely define Fanon's identity. He is forced to see himself not as a human subject with his desires and needs but as an object, a peculiarity at the mercy of a group that views him as inferior, less than completely human, and left to the mercy of their definitions and representations. The visual image of his amputation does a good job of illustrating how severe this 'revision' of his identity is (McLeod, 2000, p.20).

Fanon believes that his subjectivity has been reduced, his rights infringed, and he is imprisoned by this perspective. The French create his identity for him, and in doing so, they inflict a brutality that fractures his core sense of self. One should never undervalue the power of identifying and describing something. Power and

language have a deep-rooted and essential link. The ramifications of identity construction for the colonized subject, who is compelled to internalize the self as an 'Other' are explained in the work named *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952). In this work, colonial people are shown as being destined to have a painful sense of their inferiority. Seeking to escape from such pain by adhering to the 'civilized' ideas of the French 'motherland' is one way to cope with it.

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak is a prominent critic with ties to Marxism, Deconstruction, Feminism, and Post-colonialism. She was a translator and a disciple of Derrida. She wrote the introduction to Derrida's *Of Grammatology* (2016) in translation. Rather than pointing out mistakes, she is more interested in seeing the construction of truth. The idea of the subaltern is central to Spivak's theory. In the military, the phrase 'subaltern' refers to someone 'of lower rank.' She took this phrase from Antonio Gramsci, an Italian Marxist. The first political historiography changed the voice of the subaltern groups represented in her work titled *Can the Subaltern Speak* (Spivak, 2023).

Spivak highlights the irony that via speaking up against unfair dominance and injustice, the subalterns have come to recognize their rights. She criticizes the harm inflicted against non-Europeans, women, and women in the Third World. Her goal is to provide a voice to the voiceless or mute subalterns. Her concentration is on conjectures around widow sacrifice. She makes an effort to bring back the female writers who have been marginalized by their male counterparts. She looks at the double colonization of women (Black and Dalit women). She criticizes Western ideas that are Eurocentric. According to her, knowledge is never neutral; rather, there might and economic interests of the West constantly shape it. According to her, knowledge is exported from the West to the Third World just like any other good or service. Western academics have consistently portrayed themselves as objective, as has their understanding of Eastern civilizations. When producing data about the third world, the economic and political objectives of the West are always in mind. However, Spivak attacks some critics of Foucault, charging them with collaboration with imperialism and capitalism. To challenge the way that third-world (subaltern) writers in the West have portrayed them in scholarly discourse, Spivak teams up with Said (Ambesange, 2016, p.48). Her idea might be realized well while studying the

role of Arabs in Albert Camus' *The Outsider*, or Caliban in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*.

By using Spivak's concept of 'Worlding', she disproves the notion that we may reconstruct a precolonial history. Because colonialism altered the pre-colonial past, there is no 'pure' precolonial history to be recovered, making nostalgia for lost origins, roots, and local culture a faulty endeavor. All we can do is try to comprehend how the 'Third World' is 'worlding.' The act of 'persuading' the native people to embrace the European interpretation of reality to comprehend their social environment is known as 'worlding' (Ambesange, 2016, p.49). Therefore, in her opinion, the rejection of the Third World's 'worlding' enables Westerners to ignore the connections between the West, imperialism, globalization, and the circumstances facing independent contractors. It distances the Third World from the West and either downplays or ignores colonialism, placing it far enough in the past to provide the impression that it is now history. Furthermore, it supports the triumphalism and ethnocentrism of the West.

Bhabha assumes that naturalized myths about racial or socioeconomic origins frequently cast doubt on the viability of a nation. Attesting to such myths might be a crucial part of the royal process, and as a result, a significant part of a lot of regal literature and even postcolonial writing. Bhabha is a widely acknowledged scholar in the field of social critiques and post-expansionist theories related to imperialism. Foucault, Edward W. Said, Jacques Derrida, Lacan, and Sartre have a significant influence on his research on mistreatments, traumatic provincial feelings, and the impact of other intense variables that provide various cultures, professions of faith, tendencies, and advancements. Bhabha examines the confusion and emptiness that resistance causes in the minds of authors who supported colonialism, like Rudyard Kipling, E. M. Forster, and Rider Haggard. Bhabha's contributions to postcolonial theory are influenced by post-structuralism to a large extent. Jacques Derrida and deconstruction, Jacques Lacan and Lacanian analysis, and Michel Foucault's concept of discursively are among the most notable influences of Bhabha. A conversation with W. J. T. Mitchell in 1995 also revealed to Bhabha that Said is the author who has had the biggest influence on him. Said has mostly relied on Bhabha's methods in the sociologies and altered them to address understanding concepts of space, activity,

and representation.

Thus, post-colonialism may be defined as a ‘critical analysis of the interaction between colonizers and colonized’, starting with the early stages of exploration and colonization. Derrida’s ‘deconstruction’ of post-colonialism draws on Foucault’s concept of ‘discourse’, Gramsci’s concept of ‘hegemony’, and other ideas to examine the function of texts, and literary works in the colonial project. It looks at how these texts portray the colonized effeminate as inferior and the colonizers masculine as superior. To be fair, Said has addressed some of the criticism constructively aimed at him. His works *Orientalism Reconsidered* (1985) and *Culture and Imperialism* (1993) discuss resistance to Orientalism, which he has examined in detail in recent years. It would be incorrect to assume, then, that simply because Said avoids the latter area, he automatically implies that imperialist discourse is widespread. According to Foucault’s research, resistance and dominance are inseparable. Gayatri Spivak has criticized Foucault for failing to consider colonialism’s growth as a characteristic of European civil society. She discusses how it could have affected the power structure and knowledge system of the contemporary European state. Briefly, we thus cannot undervalue Said’s contribution to literary studies. He made it possible for other critics to investigate their views, including Spivak and Bhabha. His work *Orientalism* acted as a memorial for postcolonial scholarship.

1.2. Post-Colonialism and Identity

Identity is the most controversial subject in post-colonial literature and history, and it is also the most important since it is a problem that all post-colonial nations face. The atmosphere of the post-colonial era and the challenging circumstances that recently freed nations and countries faced in their quest and creation of self-identity were the reasons why the crisis lingered under the surface. According to Mercer (1990, p. 43), identity only becomes an issue when it is in crisis, i.e., when uncertainty and skepticism substitute what is seen to be fixed, cohesive, and solid. The problem was sparked by the fact that identity is not as black-and-white as one may think, which made it a phenomenon. The decolonization and liberation of colonial-ruled nations after World War II marked a significant movement toward rebuilding society and personal identities. Decolonization was also

being pushed on many fronts, including politics, the arts, business, and culture. Individuals desired to take back the identities that colonization had taken from them. In the words of Edward Said, nationalism is a historical truth that initiated and intensified opposition to Western authority across the non-European world. Nationalism is the restoration of the people, the declaration of identity, and the creation of fresh ways of life as an organized political power (Said, 1993, p. 218). According to the Oxford English Dictionary, identity is the fact of being who or what a person or thing is; nevertheless, in a post-colonial setting, identity is a complicated notion that is challenging to define. According to post-colonial theory, the ability to identify oneself, a group, or a country is closely associated with the “other,” indicating that those who identify as “us” also acknowledge the presence of the “other.” In the post-colonial era, “both identity and difference, so that every other, each distinct than and excluded by is dialectically generated that incorporates the principles and meaning of the colonizing culture even though it disregards its power to define” (Sinha, 2008, p. 4), are characteristics that help identify oneself despite being dual.

Additionally, during that period, this binary link of otherness established hierarchical status and a sort of identity dislocation. In post-colonial governments, creating a national identity “is thought to be never fixed and is very dynamic based on environment and culture, due to transfer and sovereignty that results into a confusion in identity” (Chan, 2013, p. i). Since the concept of identity is not stable and fixed, as Hall affirms, it arises as a kind of unsettled space or an unanswered question in that space between several intersecting discourses (Hall, 1989, p. 10). Furthermore, the legacy of colonialism had a complex influence, with various regions feeling its impacts in different ways, leading to variations in the ways that identity was a problem. Individual and communal identities might have different physical and psychological traits. Diverse nations, civilizations, and populations posed various challenges to decolonization. Thus, identity is “not just imposed. In addition, it is voluntarily selected, albeit within specific societal restrictions. There is opposition to prevailing depictions of “others.” There is agency inside dominance hierarchies. For example, the contentious and connected processes of colonialism, enslavement, and migration are at the heart of the identity problem in the Caribbean

area. The history of colonial tyranny, exploitation, and marginalization is still present in Caribbean society.” (Guruprasad, 2014, p. 27). Additionally, in Africa, According to Bonnici, British colonialism “took different forms and native peoples reacted differently to it” (Bonnici, 2004, p. 6). Moreover, the identity crisis and other intractable issues were exacerbated by the chaos colonists left behind when they established different kinds of governance in various locations, especially in Africa.

Identity, or a specific identity crisis that gives rise to anti-essentialist conceptions of a subject and diverse identity perspectives, is one of the central themes of post-colonial theory. A brief overview of identity evolution from the modern era to the hybridity of post-colonial subjects is given in this article. The historical occurrence of the monolithic identity paradigm, which was strongly built against its Other, is associated with the years after the French Revolution and extending into the 1960s and 1970s. Since then, there has been a paradigm shift and the development of new identity formation processes; as a result, multiculturalism and diverse identities have gained traction, particularly since the 1990s, when political correctness has been increasingly important. Identity must conceptually be problematized to extract its essence from the idea of diversity. According to Hegel and Sartre, the idea of the Other is foreign and unfamiliar to dominating subjectivity. Therefore, theorists must address the viability of the identity-difference opposition in addition to a variety of determinants (sexual, racial, class, and gender) and contend that the formation of identity ultimately comes down to power and is dependent on the roles, rights, procedures, positions, and opportunities that the subject entails. The plurality of identity results from emphasizing the stark binary oppositions between our identities and those of others, which some theorists reject as exclusive. This plurality of identities does not imply that identity has ended or that it is no longer ultimately fluid, nor even that identity is something Derrida described as still to come (*à-venir*). As identity is an “infinite movement” (Ashcroft et al., 2004, p. 189), it concerns moderate constructivism in constructing identities.

Ideology, conventional ways of thinking, and personal behavior are the foundations of individual identity. For instance, a person’s values, sense of self, and political ideas are derived from a particular religious tradition, and they identify with other individuals with similar beliefs. While moral or cultural norms are chosen and

adopted, secular identity is entirely rational and frequently transforms into an iconic identity, such as that of an English gentleman. These conventional identities seem to impose passive acceptance of rules and norms while permitting a limited range of independent activity. These days, identification is increasingly seen as an active process in which individuals can select their beliefs and conceptions; personal autonomy and culturally prescribed identity models should not be combined. There is an ongoing discussion on the definition of identity crisis. “Identity” is a term with multiple interpretations. In sociology and psychology, an identity is an individual’s subjective sense of self and how they show their distinctiveness or connection. This encompasses both cultural and national identities. The term identity comes from the Latin word *identitas*, which bears the suffix *-tatis*, meaning the same. Thus, an individual’s identity may be defined as the unique attributes that make them stand out from the crowd or as a social group. Dombrovskis (2016) argues that “identities emerge under the influence of the surrounding environment” (p. 308). An identity is said to be experiencing an identity crisis when it cannot achieve ego identity. Identity crises arise when a personality attribute is questioned. This challenge may be related to nationality, sexual orientation, religion, or worldview. Erikson (1998) defined identity as the unconscious process that connects an individual’s several personalities to form a unified entity and establishes links with the external world. According to Erikson, an identity crisis occurs when a person experiences anxiety and insecurity, which causes them to become ignorant of and confused about their responsibilities in the present and the future.

Numerous writers from the post-colonial era have gained recognition as canonical literary centers, resulting in their displacement and forced coexistence of other cultures and influences. They have created a quest for origins, roots, myths, and ancestors since their cultural identity is fulfilled by historical, racial, and metaphysical variety. Historical events have been pieced together in their literature using myth, collage, and recollections. The post-colonial authors sought home, belonging, and spiritual possession of a landscape they were or perhaps dreamed they were. Finding a home in the writing process, which serves as a kind of self-determination, helps people overcome the challenges posed by forging new roots. Their writing shapes their identity (Ramone, 2017, p. 184). However, an identity

crisis makes it difficult for a person to handle their social problems, and as a result, they suffer. They also have trouble controlling their problems and finding time to focus on their daily responsibilities. They struggle to figure out who they are since they are confused about their problems. According to Fadhila (2015), identity crises happen when a person starts questioning their identity, purpose, or place in life. The turning point in an identity crisis is when someone experiences a sudden upheaval in their social life, starts to feel pressured by their peers, and has to fulfill social duties. During this developmental period, people face obstacles that prevent them from developing a strong sense of self. According to Erikson (2014), an unresolved crisis of this nature “leaves individuals struggling to “discover themselves” (Erikson, 2014, p. 109). They have no idea who they are, where they fit, or their objectives. They are not able to decide on the future with certainty.

Postcolonial writers depict the consequences of colonialism on native populations. Identification disruption, which can lead to an identity crisis, is one of the significant repercussions of colonialism on the colonized. Identity crisis is a critical issue that presents significant problems regarding race, gender, ethnicity, and, most importantly, identity and culture in post-colonial literature. Postcolonial societies are characterized by a blend of alienation and assimilation. As a consequence, one’s identity is no longer fixed and stable. People from third-world countries suffer the most because identities are constantly shifting. Once liberated from colonialism, decolonized countries face the problem of self-determination. When identity is questioned, the issue becomes vital. Put another way, ambiguity arises when identity is not clear-cut and constant, which might cause a crisis. As per Mercer (1990), “identity only becomes an issue when it is in crisis, when something believed to be fixed, logical, and stable is displaced by the experience of skepticism and doubt” (p.43). Due to cultural differences, the issue of identification arose. In their *Narrative and Identity* (2001), Jens Brockmeier and Donal Carbaugh note that the ideas surrounding identity cover a broad spectrum of philosophical topics examined from theoretical perspectives and academic fields. Pieterse contends that due to colonialism’s effect, the identity question became a central theme in literature and everyday life. When imperial identities were decentred during World War II, “the question of the Other” emerged as a crucial subject throughout the

decolonization period (Pieterse, 2002, p. 22). Identity appears as an unsettling void or unanswered question in the relation between the self and the other, between several overlapping discourses.

A third area that exists “in between the categorization of identity” is also covered by Bhabha. To Bhabha (1993), “this interstitial passage between fixed identifications opens up the prospect of a cultural hybridity that engages distinction without a presumptive or enforced hierarchy” (p. 4). In *Caribbean Discourse: Selected Essays*, Glissant, on the other hand, highlights the idea of a dynamic identity through his rhizomatic theory of culture. Identity construction is an ongoing process that culminates in a fractalizing, unexpected hybrid (Gyssels, 2001). Moreover, Angela Bruning (2006) sees that “a striking connection exists between Anglophone and Francophone Caribbean portrayals of problems related to migration, cultural identity, and the uncovering of Caribbean history” (p. 11). This means that theories about francophone colonies can be used to understand how both relate to each other regarding representation and cultural identity.

1.3. Post-Colonialism and Home

Ever since the dawn of humanity, the term “home” has primarily denoted the actual existence of a location that provides solace, protection, stability, and the assurance of life. It arouses specific sensations and feelings because it gives people a place to express themselves, raise a family, make memories, and feel deeply connected to that region. Here, ‘home’ refers to a private location where a person embarks on their teleological adventure. It may also allude to a more expansive domain where an individual resides, such as a village, town, country, circle, or assemblage of kin and acquaintances. Generally speaking, ‘home’ refers to a place of one’s own, safety, privacy, uniqueness, self-identity, calm, and, most importantly, shelter. In addition, it is a sacred location where people may come together and feel the love of their families, as well as a place where one can be alone and discover clarity and tranquility by accepting one’s existence and actions (Zumara, 2017, pp. 9-10).

A post-colonial ‘home’ is not a private, personal space but is “expanded” and linked to the public sphere. Consequently, “home” now refers to a group of locations

that collectively create a more expansive concept that gives birth to a psychological sense of identity inside a nation, a place of origin, or just the house itself. “The Politics of Home: Post-colonial Relocations and Twentieth-century Fiction,” by Rosemary Marangoly, is cited by George as having it. George looks at the idea of home in twentieth-century English literature from colonial to post-colonial periods. As George states, our understanding of “home” is shaped by the interplay between being included and excluded (George, 1999, p. 2). According to George, colonization happens when the colonizers take over the colonized people’s ideas and every other part of their existence. As a result, via acts of oppression, exploitation, ideology, religious teaching, and other methods, the colonized people are kept out of their territory—not just geographically but mentally as well. The colonized people became “outsiders” in their own country since they had nothing left to call their own. According to George, every person’s definition of “home” is shaped by their background. Thus, in a post-colonial context, “home” may become a weird and unhomely place when isolated from society’s norms or a potentially effective site of resistance against the conquerors.

In conclusion, writing presented after a nation, or several countries, acquired independence is known as post-colonial literature. Postcolonial authors saw themselves as being apart from colonial forces. They now own a distinct identity. Post-colonial writers wanted to be accepted for who they were, different from the conquerors. Writers’ concerns in post-colonial literature and ideas are fundamentally centered on the query of identity and culture. Examining post-colonial literature necessitates talking about how colonialism affected the indigenous people or the decolonized. The present study’s main objective is to investigate how colonization affected indigenous people. Post-colonial writers also portray the consequences of colonialism on Native Americans. Identification disruption, which can lead to an identity crisis, is one of the major repercussions of colonialism on the colonized. Identity crisis is a critical issue that presents significant problems regarding gender, ethnicity, race, identity, and culture in post-colonial literature. A blend of alienation and assimilation characterizes post-colonial nations. As a result, identity is becoming unchanging and steady. People from third-world countries endure the most significant suffering because identities are constantly shifting. Once liberated from

colonialism, decolonized countries face the issue of self-determination. When identity is questioned, the problem becomes vital. Put another way, ambiguity replaces identity and home when they are not definite and safe, which might result in a crisis.



2. J. J. BOLA'S *NO PLACE TO CALL HOME*: POST-COLONIAL PERSPECTIVE

J.J. Bola's novel, *No Place to Call Home* (2017), tackles the themes of refugees in a strange land. Bola examines language barriers, community dynamics, and parent-child connections while focusing on the relationship between the father and his two children. The novel discusses the expectations that burden first-generation African refugees, the religious influences on them, and the cultural norms. Specifically, the concept of home lies at the heart of this novel. In *No Place to Call Home*, the characters pursue a sense of belonging in the middle of external forces that dictate their life. The novel is told through a third-person narrator who intimately describes the lives of the family at its center. Coming from the Congo and now residing in London as refugees, Papa and Mami face the challenges of survival while waiting for the legal documentation that will secure their residence in the UK. Their journey is told with the background of political atrocities under the rule of the Marchal, which forces them to leave their country and be in a state of displacement. The family that consists of Papa, Mami, Jean, and Marie is the main unit that the narrative focuses on. They become refugees in England after departing the capital of Congo, Kinshasa. They have hopes for creating a better life in London. While the novel centers on Papa and Mami's story and Jean's endeavor to assimilate into his new school. Jean befriends James who is a rebellious young boy whose parents neglect him. Initially, Jean admires James's audacity and looks up to him. However, their camaraderie is strained when Jean decides to prioritize his academic pursuits over the allure of a carefree lifestyle. Despite the trials they face, the bond between the two boys endures, reflecting the resilience of their connection. The novel sketches the broader socio-political landscape that shapes the refugee experience. Bola examines the systemic injustices confronting refugees, from the legal status of their existence to the pervasive discrimination and xenophobia they encounter.

In the years 2007-2011, the UK assured the protection and inclusion of over 16,000 immigrants and refugees. Despite this, refugees often have a negative portrayal in the media that is characterized by xenophobia and misconceptions. The fear of "others" taking over jobs and habitations permeates the rhetoric around

refugees (Travis, 2011, no p.). Such discourse overshadows the realities of political turmoil and humanitarian crises that drive people to flee their homelands. It is significant to portray the voices of the oppressed, as in Bola's novel, rather than perpetuate narratives of privilege. After all, a refugee is someone compelled to leave their country to escape war, persecution, or natural disasters. This underscores their human need for understanding and empathy throughout their journey of adaptation.

2.1. Homelessness and Unbelonging in *No Place to Call Home*

Feelings of sadness and yearning often accompany the absence of a connection. When that bond is severed due to displacement from one's home, it evokes a poignant emotion known as "nostalgia." This term, originating from the Greek words "nostos," signifying a return home, and "algos," denoting 'pain,' was once prevalent among physicians centuries ago. In an era when travel was arduous compared to modern times, physicians identified "nostalgia" as a grave condition that endangered the lives of those separated from their homeland. It was understood as more than mere sentimentality; rather, it was recognized as a debilitating affliction, capable of profoundly impacting an individual's physical and mental well-being. The recognition of nostalgia today as a serious emotional condition highlights the profound significance of home and the deep-rooted human longing for connection to one's place of origin (Fullilove, 1996, p. 64).

The novel states that "when Mami and Papa first arrive in the UK, they did not know anyone but the government officials who interrogated them and they were not the kind of people you would invite around for tea" (Bola, 2017, p. 39). The family had to integrate themselves among the locals but that was not easy, and a sense of isolation always lingered around them. However, that changes when Mami met Tonton and brought him home. He was another refugee who seeks a sense of belongingness among his people. When Tonton unexpectedly appeared, his arrival shrouded in mystery regarding his origins and timing, he introduced a fresh sense of familiarity to their lives. They affectionately dubbed him Tonton, adhering to an unspoken tradition; any male companion of a married woman automatically assumed the role of a familial male figure. After all, it begged the question: why would a married woman maintain a friendship with an unmarried man who wasn't her spouse or clergy? Tonton was the thread that links them to their homeland.

No Place to Call Home goes through the hidden and often overlooked journey of refugees whose narratives remain largely misunderstood. Through the lens of Bola, who himself originates in Kinshasa, the novel unveils the story of Congolese people escaping political turmoil under the dictatorship of Le Marchal, seeking refuge in London. With firsthand experience as a Congolese-born refugee himself, Bola fills the narrative with both grace and pain. For instance, the joy and merrymaking that surrounds Tonton makes the reader wonder about his story or what might have brought him to England until the novel clarifies his story later. The refugees who are forced out of their lands can be seen to live in a state of unhomeliness. This is described by Homi Bhabha as a state where the individual is living in an unhomely environment where they cannot create a feeling of belonging. He states that:

Whether we refer to ideas of identity and belonging to a particular culture or the materiality of the home, the feeling of warmth and comfort that is provided by having one's own space and place is something one has 'earned' through ongoing engagement with home-making. the unhomely is a place where the dominant order is challenged. 'It's a negotiation of powers of cultural difference in a range of historical conditions and social contradictions.' (Bhabha, 1994, p. 142).

The unhomely is a place that makes people lose the familiarity and care of their home. They cannot extend their memories or act their true personality in it. The unhomely place can be created anywhere even in one's land when its authorities become oppressive and threatening to one's own identity.

Tonton says that to many people, the news about the dictator Le Marchal was something distant and unimportant, but not to him. He states that they killed his wife and his little daughters who were left to bleed before him. "Tonton reached into his wallet and pulled out a picture of a beautiful smiling woman, and two young girls as radiant as a tropical summer, and showed it to Papa" (Bola, 2017, p. 156). Tonton's revelation about the dictator Le Marchal resonates deeply with him, contrasting the indifference that many others display towards such distant political affairs. He

recounts the devastating loss of his wife and daughters, their lives brutally snatched away before his eyes, their innocence destroyed by violence. As he shares this painful chapter of his life with Papa, Tonton says tearfully:

“I have only one question. Why?” Tonton spoke. “Why take them and leave me? They made me watch everything Everything!” He burst out into tears greater than before, “and every day I ask why? Every day, I have no answers (Bola, 2017, p. 156).

The figure of Marchal is used in the novel as a replacement for the long line of oppressors that loomed over Congo. The horrors experienced by Tonton are not confined to him as it is something experienced by most refugees who fled the country during the role of Sese Seko in the 1990s.

Gathered around the dinner table, the family shares their first meal in a foreign land. In their new home, in the middle of the unfamiliarity of a foreign country, city, and lifestyle, this simple act of dinner serves as a celebration of their collective journey. They have traveled “from security to uncertainty, status, and identity to fingerprints, signatures and profile photos in front of a stone-cold wall, fluency to heavy accent, the norm to other, to finding peace, away from the conflict they carried deep inside of them” (Bola, 2017, p. 7). Yet amid this turmoil, they seek solace, striving to find peace amidst the turmoil that resides deep within them. A human’s need to belong is innate and they constantly try to fulfill it. The troubling journey begins with the financial needs that cause the family to seek more than one job to cover the expenses. Papa acts responsibly and carries the financial burden:

He worked first as a cleaner. Five mornings a week he would leave the house, before the sun would break the skies, to clean the offices of a company where he was rendered invisible. Most of the tired faces standing beside him, shivering in the cold of the bus stop in the morning, told a story of a journey; a longing and searching for hope of a better life (Bola, 2017, p. 7).

Papa's departure of his house to clean the offices sheds light on both his physical displacement and metaphorical homelessness. He is lost, he lacks the sense of belonging to a true home in his new country of refuge and even within himself. Papa is uprooted from his land of origin and struggles to find a place where he truly belongs reflecting a postcolonial experience of unhomeliness and unbelonging. In addition, Papa's sense of being "rendered invisible" symbolizes the marginalization experienced by refugees in the postcolonial context. Although he has a job and contributes to serving society, he is relegated to the fringe of society, invisible and unheard. The portrayal of "tired faces" at the bus stop conveys a collective sense of displacement. Each face tells its unique quest for a better life in a land of former colonial power. Despite the coldness of the weather, which symbolizes the hardship of the colonialism and trauma of displacement, refugees strive for a place to call home.

Papa finds himself grappling with his new life. Despite his relentless efforts and work, he is met with a lack of respect and mistreatment. Reflecting on a disappointing encounter at the Home Office, Papa expresses his disillusionment with the system, remarking on the lack of empathy displayed by its representatives. His weary sighs hint at the bureaucracy that often feels indifferent to the struggles of refugees. As he recounts the incident to Mami, his exhaustion is palpable, his mind seemingly drained from the constant uphill battle for recognition and dignity.

"Nothing happened. It was just an appointment at the Home Office, those people have no soul," he sighed deeply, indicating mental exhaustion as if his mind was out of breath, "and on the way back, there was a go on the train,..." (Bola, 2017, p. 25)

In the face of hardship, Mami offers reassurance, a beacon of strength and support to Papa amid the fear that permeates their existence.

The book cover of *No Place to Call Home* captures the essence of seeking refuge. The cover portrays a river flowing across the borders of countries: The Democratic Republic of Congo, Belgium, and Britain. Central to the narrative is the family's need to find a place they can call home. Could it be Kinshasa, the city of

their birth? Kinshasa emerges as a vibrant tapestry of cultural diversity. Women dress in colorful clothes while serving the family home, while men assume positions of authority, fiercely protecting their families. However, this stability is overshadowed by the political violence under Le Marché's regime, casting a dark shadow over the streets of Congo. However, Congolese people long for their land after departing; they want to recreate the friendly sense of familiarity they have there. Thus, they gather in churches or around each other's houses, "[g]oing to church was an act of returning home. It was a miracle how the collective religious experience of attending church could close the gap of the thousands of miles it would take to make that journey" (Bola, 2017, p.99). Their longing for home results in their search for an alternative that reunites them with their friends and their sense of culture.

According to Van Tilburg and Vingerhoets (1997), establishing a nurturing environment is essential for individuals to pursue a healthy life. Environments categorized as friendly for refugees promote expanding their consciousness, creativity, and productivity. Conversely, harmful surroundings present dangers to both health and survival. The concept of homesickness is intricately linked to this topic, emphasizing the importance of understanding the factors that either encourage or impede such emotions. Homesickness not only presents challenges in adapting to new environments, as seen among migrants and refugees but extends beyond to hinder the process of reintegrating into one's homeland. This longing for home, coupled with nostalgia for old friends and family connections, can lead to significant psychological distress (pp. 2-3). A big part of constituting the sense of culture inside the individual is the language. Refugees struggle with the new languages around them and yearn to express themselves in their original language. The novel makes it clear that uniting in the church makes them hear the word of God in the same language they know:

People did not only come to hear the word of God; they came to hear the word of their God. Their God spoke Lingala, their language, with their vivacity, energy, and passion; their words danced and moved in the same way they did, words and a language they had to hide. (...) Moreover, if God is here, in the church, and has

made this journey with them, then maybe God also knows what it means to be a refugee (Bola, 2017, p. 99).

Language often holds excellent significance within cultural dynamics. Each language encompasses a distinct way of constructing and articulating meaning and interpreting and contextualizing situations. These linguistic means extend beyond spoken words to include codes, signs, and gestures that convey shared understandings among people living in the same environment (Antonisch, 2010, p. 648).

The novel shows that the family's journey from home to exile has taken many shapes, especially Mami. The story of Papa shows that one can become a refugee even in one's land. Papa has had an instant infatuation with Mami upon first sight in Kinshasa. However, his path diverges when his father, Koko Patrice, insists he pursue studies in Brussels. He experienced a feeling of detachment among people who do not speak his tongue and do not share any common grounds with him: "He was the only Congolese person, the only Black person, in his classes of math-physics-biology-chemistry at the Ecole Polytechnique de Brussels" (Bola, 2017, p. 87). Again, the issue of language as an essential means of belonging is tackled in the novel as Papa faces difficulty in speaking like his classmates: "Conscious of the fact his French sounded different to the others; not better, not worse, just different, he rarely spoke. He was invisible for most of the classes" (Bola, 2017, p. 87). Papa can never use the word 'home' to describe Brussels or London; he only uses it to refer to Kinshasa, the capital of Congo. Throughout the novel, he shows great attachment to his home of origin, which he fears now because of the dictator there.

Despite his separation from Mami, fate reunites them years later, reigniting their romance. When Mami becomes pregnant and faces rejection from her father, Papa boldly returns from Brussels to support her. Together, they muster the resources for Papa to resume his studies. In contrast, another father's determination to shield his family leads to a collective flight for refuge. Koko ya Mobali, the father of Mami, epitomizes authoritarianism, erecting a fortress-like perimeter around his family, detached from the outside world. A stern military figure, his authority brooks no familial bonds, as shown when he disowns his daughter, Mami. Mami finds herself cast out by her father's anger and obliged to dissent her siblings Marthe, Monique,

and the young Micheline and Marie. Mami's father leaves her alone in the dangerous streets of Congo. Her experience with unbelonging and detachment begins from that moment and not simply from when she travels to London.

According to Spivak, women in third-world countries are oppressed and silenced even more than men. She states, "The ideological construction of gender keeps the male dominant" (Spivak, 1998, p. 28). Mmai's experience with pain and homelessness shows that women in post-colonial lands have to deal with two oppressing forces: colonialism and patriarchy.

2.2. Identity and Belonging in Exile

The title of the novel *No Place to Call Home* reflects the themes of belonging, home, and estrangement. For the Ntanga family, their Congolese home is not a mere physical space as it contains all their memories and past experiences. They find comfort and strength in each other's presence whenever hardships come. This sense of emotional belonging is not confined to familial bonds. It extends to the broader Congolese community in London, exemplified by Tonton's role in offering assistance and company to the family and their friends.

In the novel, a central theme revolves around the pursuit of identity in the middle of displacement. Characters deal with preserving their sense of self in a foreign land while facing the realities of their refugee existence. Jean is the focal point here that embodies this struggle. He lives in the clash between his Congolese roots and the strange British environment around him. He faces a constant mispronunciation of his name and cultural differences that set him apart from his peers. However, Jean begins to realize his own identity in the middle of those cultural clashes. Jean Ntanga becomes the character through which the idea of assimilating into British culture is discussed.

In England, parents face the challenge of preserving their heritage and maintaining the same type of upbringing for their children. Papa does not want his family to relinquish their roots while adapting to the new country: "Congo...!" Papa would boldly remind the children where they were from as if they faced impending amnesia. He would say it is Congo and not Zaire, because "Zaire was not the name our ancestors gave" (Bola, 2017, p. 5). Papa serves as the guardian of his family's

heritage, tirelessly reminding them of their roots in Congo amidst the challenges of their new life in England.

Papa's steadfast commitment to preserving their cultural identity is shown through his telling tales of the ancestors to his children, creating an atmosphere of tradition and history that connects them to their homeland. Through these stories, Papa instills in his children a sense of pride and resilience, imparting valuable lessons drawn from the bravery of village chiefs, the warriors, and the resilience of medieval kingdoms. Jean, in particular, finds solace in these narratives, finding them both entertaining and enlightening. One story, in particular, captures his imagination: the tale of the young village prince, Mbikudi, who defied all odds to protect his people by building a wall. The villagers' initial skepticism gives way to admiration as they witness his hard work:

He sat them down and told grand stories of village chiefs, brave warriors in battle, medieval kingdoms, and royalty. Jean found them entertaining when he was younger. Particularly the story of the young village prince, Mbikudi, who, after his village was attacked and devastated by a surprise war, single-handedly built a perimeter wall to defend and protect his people by laying one rock down every day around the outside. The villagers looked at the small princely boy as if he had thrown his senses into the river and given up his mind to be eaten by the night wolves (Bola, 2017, p. 5).

The story of Mbikudi's wall resembles what Papa does in guarding his family's identity by isolating them from anything that damages their sense of belonging to Congo. Through Papa's storytelling, Jean and his sister are taken to a distant land and reminded of the strength within their heritage. In a life marked by displacement and uncertainty, Papa's stories serve as an inspiration to embrace the legacy of the past.

In the early stages of his journey to adapt to his new environment, Jean finds himself forming a friendship with James, an English boy at his school. As Jean goes through the unfamiliar territory of his school and surroundings, his bond with James evolves into a friendship marked by mutual influence. Initially, Jean's efforts to integrate involve a process of emulation, as he observes and adopts aspects of

James's behavior and mannerisms. This mimicry serves as a mechanism for Jean to understand social interactions with greater confidence, allowing him to assert himself and capture the attention of his peers with his stories. Meanwhile, James assumes the role of a supportive companion as Jean takes center stage. Through their friendship, Jean not only gains a sense of belonging but also learns adaptability and resilience in the face of cultural differences. As he and James grow closer, their bond becomes a testament to the power of friendship:

JEAN AND JAMES BECAME MORE LIKE each other during the first few months of school; it was a mimicry. Jean now started to fit in a lot more; he had the confidence to capture the boys' attention through stories and witty anecdotes, while James occasionally played the sidekick (Bola, 2017, p. 26).

Jean has fostered a feeling of fear and attachment to his family which troubles his attempts to assimilate to the English boys. He forms a friendship with James who seems to be a calm and understanding boy in an attempt to capture the essence of what it means to be English. However, his attempts lead him to a dead-end and make his identity crisis wider because there is a conflict between his desire to belong to English society and his loyalty to African roots. He tries to impress James by helping him to steal a bunch of candies from the shop. When the attempt fails, the two boys run until they lose their breath and go separate ways. "Jean walked home with the slow, heavy steps of a condemned man going to meet his fate. He was certain Mami and Papa would know, he was not sure how, but he knew they would know" (Bola, 2017, p. 30). As an African boy, Jean is expected to commit to his parents' rules. He is not allowed to break his promises to them or act recklessly; at the same time, he wants to identify with his school friends and be one with them. He integrates a fear that torments him between life inside and outside the house. His feeling of fear comes from his father's saying, "The ears hear what the eyes do not see," he continually repeats these words to himself to remember that he is always watched (p. 30).

During one of Jean's visits to James, he finds the truth about his seemingly strong friend. He realizes that beneath fierceness lies a lost, troubled soul. James is

seriously burdened by the brutality of his alcoholic father. He teeters on the balcony edge with despair as he dangles his feet in exhaustion. Jean fears the possibility of James surrendering to despair and letting himself fall. But then, without warning, he descends from the precarious edge and goes back. Jean finds himself more attached to his friend, who is troubled with difficult family issues. Jean writes once that the cruelty and lack of commitment are not part of himself or other oppressed people like the refugees and his friend; they are acquired qualities that life force on them:

We are not born fighting; we are not born hating; these are placed upon us by the conditions of this world. A softer nature, more beautiful, more whole, rests deep in the center of us all from which we emerge. But once we leave, we never return to there (Bola, 2017, p. 283).

Jean is in a constant fight against his surroundings. Jean, pronounced John, always explains to people how to read his name correctly, specifically the teachers who dismiss such strange pronunciation. He has to deal with languages like Lingala, French, and English. Jean seems to battle with the weight of parental expectations from him, especially from his father, who wants him to be a dutiful son. At the same time, he creates a friendship with James, who is deemed a ‘bad boy,’ and grapples with the sibling rivalry with his young sister Marie. All these troubles make him need something to clarify his ideas, which is a surprising gift in school: “It’s a diary.” Mr. David replied and handed it over. Jean held the diary and flipped it around, looking at it from every angle, with a face of confusion and fascination” (Bola, 2017, p. 34). This is the first time someone has given Jean a gift outside of his birthday, which makes it more touching to him.

The diary symbolizes a sanctuary, a space where Jean can unburden his mind, pouring his thoughts and emotions onto its pages. In an environment where his voice may often feel unheard or misunderstood, the diary becomes a silent confidant, offering him a sense of self-expression. Through writing, Jean can tackle his identity crisis and articulate his struggles. He wants to use it to create moments of clarity in the middle of his chaotic reality. In essence, the diary serves as a guide in Jean’s journey towards self-discovery and resilience. What makes it more fascinating is that

it is well-made and beautifully decorated:

It was made out of brown leather, a deep brown, resembling the rich soil of the earth after rain. Bound by ropes, the pages were a beige-cream color, but not paper, more so a canvas, as if whoever was going to write in it was expected to create art. It did not look store-bought; rather, it looked as though it had been crafted by an old man with hands able to feel your soul and eyes, which had seen all the beauty of the world held in a single moment (Bola, 2017, p. 34).

Jean's experiences are set against his father's memories and attempts at assimilation in Brussels when he was a student. When Papa was a student, he realized that pursuing language proficiency was solely for academic or practical purposes, such as appreciating literature or fulfilling job requirements. For a refugee, learning a language serves the deep purpose of inclusion and understanding. The novel shows the transformative power of language, emphasizing how it enables individuals to comprehend the hate and prejudice directed towards them: "Why learn the language? Is it to enjoy the poetry of Chaucer or Keats? Most who speak the language do not even read it. (...) Or is it to be included? So you can clearly understand the hate and prejudice fashioned against you?" (Bola, 2017, p. 47). Learning a language broadens one's communication ability and exposes one to societal dynamics, making discrimination difficult through words and expressions. As a young boy in England, Jean faces less trouble acquiring the language than his young father in Brussels.

Brussels, where Papa was sent to study, is personified as a contrast to the vibrant energy of Kinshasa. To Papa, Brussels is a comforting presence, akin to a supportive friend accompanying someone to a party and leaving him. It is not home, and England is not home either. This differs from how Jean feels about England as he tries to integrate himself into London. Papa's comparison of Brussels to a party friend captures the sense of displacement he experiences as he experiences unfamiliarity with a foreign city. Papa's anticipation of returning home for summers underscores his yearning for familiarity amidst the unfamiliarity of Brussels, "Papa

was already looking forward to going back home for the summers. (...) His position [among the students] was unclear” (Bola, 2017, p. 87). Throughout his life, Papa felt a sense of detachment in every place he inhabited except Kinshasa. His struggles reflect what Frantz Fanon describes as a state of rejection for black people who try to adapt: “Being a man among men was all I desired. I wanted to enter a universe that was ours at an early age and contribute to its construction” (Fanon, 1986, pp. 112-3). The adaptation process cannot be fulfilled without the surrounding environment’s welcoming attitude.

Papa struggles to acclimate to his foreign surroundings’ cultural and social intricacies. Despite his proficiency in the language, Papa grapples with the alienation and discrimination he faces, symbolized by incidents like being accused of theft or subjected to racist treatment. His retreat into solitude reflects a coping mechanism, seeking solace in his room and the companionship of books amid the pains of assimilation. Through Papa’s experiences, the novel highlights the effects of cultural displacement and the resilience required to grapple with unfamiliar lands or cultures:

On days when he could not tolerate being stared at, followed around in the local supermarket, accused of stealing, having a banana skin thrown at him, or being spoken to really, really slowly (the thing he hated the most), he would choose to spend his days alone, in his room, surrounded by books, reading (Bola, 2017, p. 89).

The essence of spatial belonging and identity is crucial for a healthy existence. Significant experiences are linked to environmental settings and personal interactions within space. It stems from the intersection of spatial memory, mental imagery, the context of ongoing activities, and the subconscious spatial dimensions of one’s ideals and aspirations. Within the framework of place identity, locations become intertwined with the individual’s sense of self, serving as an element in shaping their identity. This integration of place into identity is essential in identity formation, as it creates a connection between individuals and their surroundings, influencing how they perceive their relation to the world around them (Fullilove, 1996, pp. 71-72).

In *No Place to Call Home*, Papa deals with a second phase of unbelonging as a refugee with his family in London. He has to grapple with the indignity and disrespect in his workplace, which he struggles to adapt to. He calls Mami from the office during his lunch break when his supervisor, Steve, begins yelling at him. Despite the humiliation, Papa immediately turns to his family and their need for his job. His selflessness in prioritizing their well-being over his pride is evident as he calmly responds to the situation. The exchange between Papa and Mami later that evening reveals the depth of their bond and the sacrifices he willingly makes for them:

A volcano of rage erupted in Papa's heart, but he let the anger spill and settle once he thought of his family, wife, children, and loved ones back home. "Sometimes you have to add up your life," he told Mami (...) His philosophy: in the face of danger, be sure to evaluate your entire life and make the decision best for you and everyone around you (Bola, 2017, p. 10).

Their love, depicted as a river flowing back into itself, sustains them through hardship and uncertainty. Mami and the family create a place of belonging for Papa in contrast to his exile environment. Ultimately, Papa's behavior represents the sacrifices made by refugees in pursuit of a better life for themselves and their families.

The bond between Papa and Mami transcends affection; it embodies a delicate balance of sacrifices and patience. Mami's open-heartedness goes beyond their immediate family, welcoming visitors like Tonton and Madeline's family into their home with warmth and grace. Their attempts to stay around other Congolese people and help them to adapt are part of their attempt to create a home inside homelessness. However, the uncertainty of their circumstances leaves them pondering how long this stability can endure (Mugabi, 2017).

When Papa finds out about Jean's lousy behavior and absence from school, he gives him a tense talk with a sense of frustration. Speaking in English, symbolizing his struggle to communicate his concerns effectively, Papa emphasizes the sacrifices made by the family for Jean's future. His intense tone shows the

gravity of their life in England as he expresses the importance of education in their journey. Papa fears Jean's straying from the path of academic success, and he threatens to send him back. This highlights the immense pressure and expectations placed on Jean's shoulders. Moreover, Papa's reference to his occupation as a cleaner and Jean's association with an English boy hint at real tensions concerning social status and cultural assimilation within their immigrant community:

We did not come to this country so you can play sports or be stupid in school!
(...) "We came to this country so you can get an education! (...) Is it because I am a cleaner you think your father is stupid- Hein? Is it because you run around with the English boy?" (Bola, 2017, p. 63).

This emotionally charged exchange shows the complexities of familial expectations, cultural identity, and the pursuit of education. They reveal the pressure and humiliation that Papa has to go through as a refugee who is not respected or welcomed. However, he feels his sacrifices are in vain if his son does not reflect on behaving well and studying.

The phenomenon of encountering cultural transitions is equal to being in a state of alienation. Papa's isolation and feeling of solitude everywhere outside his own house make him strict, nervous, and incapable of integrating himself. According to Van Tilborg and Vingerhoets (1997), some symptoms appear in individuals undergoing cultural dislocation, including powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, self and social estrangement, and social isolation. Moreover, a sustained sense of anxiety often pervades, disrupting typical behavioral patterns (p. 19). The feeling of being lost in this big land creates estrangement between Papa and the English people while drawing him and Mami to other Congolese members of the church.

For Papa and Mami, the experience of going to church is surreal. Papa does not admire organized religion, except for significant occasions when he was home in Congo, he never liked visiting the church. This stands in stark contrast to his and Mami's visits to the church. His discomfort is shown as he deals with religious customs and practices. However, their commitment to the church shows their need

for cultural adaptation and the search for belonging in the middle of exile. The description of the church paints a picture of the bare hall, decorated only with worn wooden chairs and plain beige walls. It is devoid of the embellishments often found in traditional churches. Despite its simplicity, the church serves as a focal point for the congregation, where a passionate preacher delivers his sermon in Lingala, “[he] spoke in Lingala with a passion and vigor to the single-hand claps of the few people in the bare and empty hall” (Bola, 2017, p. 48). The simplicity of the place reflects a real need among these people to gather and recreate the familiarity of their culture again.

Bola delves into the journeys of Papa and Jean, skillfully juxtaposing Jean’s experiences at school in the UK with Papa’s adaptation to *École Polytechnique* in Brussels. Despite their age difference, both father and son face similar difficulties. Through their narratives, Bola explores African societal expectations for men and women. Characters like Tonton, the irresponsible womanizer, Pastor Kaddi, the deceitful evangelical priest, and Koko Patrice, Papa’s manipulative father, alongside Koko Mobali, Mami’s authoritative father, serve as foils, showing the diverse manifestations of societal roles taken by men, especially family men.

The family tries settling into British society while preserving their cultural heritage. They encounter Tonton, a charismatic but troubled womanizer with a tendency for alcohol and revelry. Despite Papa’s initial reluctance to take Tonton, he gives up because Tonton has lost his job and seeks a place to stay. Through his affiliation with the congregation at the church, Tonton provides the family with a sense of familiarity and belonging in their new surroundings. He helps them to be brought to the middle of Congolese connections in Britain. “In the church, Tonton seemed to know the people present by the subtle head nods of acknowledgments they gave as he walked in late halfway through mass” (Bola, 2017, p. 46). Gradually, the family finds a way to stability, yet their fragile relief can be shattered at any moment. They do not have the documents that ensure their status and guarantee their future in England. Their need for assurance surpasses their need for belonging and forms a real obstacle in their way to integration.

Once Mami has managed to find solace and friendship among the Congo

people in London, she is shocked by the news she fears most. One of her fellow friends, Patricia, was deported from the country and sent back to Congo. There is no explanation and no reason behind the deportation, she received a notice that states she must leave the country. The feeling of loss and homelessness once again hit the family. Mami realizes that if a good friend and citizen are deported for no cause, then they must be able to deport Mami and the rest of them for no reason also:

After the church service was over, she looked around but did not see Patricia catch up, as they usually do, so Mami quickly made her way home with Jean and Marie, avoiding the extra time people would stay behind for socializing, food, and, more often than not, more gossip. She did not want to hear any of it, not today. She did not want to fear the worst, so she left (Bola, 2017, p. 147).

The sense of belonging resonates deeply within this narrative, reflecting on the pains of politically displaced individuals. While the notion of refuge-seeking creates a sense of alternative home and new life, the reality is far harsher. Refugees have to bear a strong sense of displacement and alienation as they are forced to flee their homes, families, and identities. Mami is constantly confronted with the stark reminder of her lack of belonging in their new environment. She has to face the harsh truth that this place is not hers, a reality they often try to suppress.

Among the church members was Mama Nana, an older woman who had been in the country for many years. Unlike others, she walked with a cane, and her back was hunched over, bearing the weight of a lifetime's struggles. When Mami spoke to her, she noticed that Mama Nana did not speak French or English. Instead, she responded in Lingala, her native language. It was not because she lacked education, but rather a deliberate choice to stay truthful to her origin.

She would reply to your bonjour with more na yo, and neither did she speak English; she would similarly reply to hello with sango boni; she refused to speak either language, saying they did not belong to her, and or she it. Not because of her lack of education, it was an act of resistance way to fight back (Bola, 2017, p.

47).

When people urged her to learn, she stood firm, seeing it as resistance against societal pressures. She would reply, firmly stating her stance, refusing to give in to expectations. Bola's masterful use of language captures the essence of love and communal resilience amidst the uncertainty. While he labels his novel a tale of love, loss, and belonging, it equally serves as a narrative of societal awakening. *No Place to Call Home* provides a way through which readers can view the suffering of refugees, giving dialogue about the unjust exile they endure. This lady, along with Mami and Papa continue to live in a state of pressure between their past and present.

As Mami and Papa face different challenges to survive, Jean's struggle unfolds within the realm of his school and education. Coming to a new environment, he grapples with the necessity of creating a social circle that fosters rather than hinders his academic journey. Even though he becomes neglectful at the beginning, he realizes the significance of education which becomes evident after his father's confrontation. Papa tells him that they cannot afford to do anything bad because they can be easily deported. Jean's disputes with his father reflect the socio-educational demands imposed on immigrants and refugees to earn themselves respect and acceptance.

Papa and Mami's refugee experiences change their parenting approach, resulting in tension between tradition and assimilation. When his father becomes angry and exhausted with him, he proceeds to beat him with the belt, "the whip of the belt came thundering down on Jean's body, blow after blow after blow. Jean felt sharp surges of electricity with each blow until he was numb" (Bola, 2017, p. 64). This type of punishment is seriously prohibited in England. Papa shows a type of treatment to his son that sharply differs from what he should be doing to find acceptance in this country. The punishment and pain experienced by Jean complicate his relationship with his father further instead of fixing it. He has to fully obey him now or similar punishments might be inflicted on him.

Jean falls into an internal conflict where he is torn between his parents' expectations and his aspirations. He wants the same liberty in life that other English children have yet he cannot have it because he is a refugee, and his family is under

constant checking. This creates a generational gap within the family as they try to balance their relationships while managing to adapt. Families from similar backgrounds often emphasize the importance of educational excellence for their children, not only for personal fulfillment or career prospects but as a tangible symbol of the sacrifices made during displacement. As a child of immigrant parents, Bola's narrative resonates deeply with the people who relentlessly try to excel academically. *No Place to Call Home* offers a universal exploration of the significance of cultural heritage and familial bonds to foster a sense of connection among members of the same family even when they are thrown into chaos.

Jean, like his parents, creates a world of solace amid exile and misunderstanding. Being punished by his father and friendless he thinks of his grandfather and the bond he had with him. He gravitated a strong attachment to his grandfather, Koko Patrice, the one person with whom he felt completely understood. Unlike others who spoke to him, Koko Patrice engaged with him, speaking to him directly, without imposing expectations or criticism. Their interactions continue in Jean's head despite the distant time and place. However, when Koko Patrice passed away without explanation, Jean felt a profound loss, as if he lost the only person who made him feel that he belongs, "he simply spoke to him, told him about himself, and made him feel as though he was always there for him (...) Jean did not feel he had to be a different person, he just had to be" (Bola, 2017, p. 36). After his grandfather's death, the world seemed devoid of sense. The memory of his grandfather rang in his head as he isolated himself from the crowds, both at school and home. Said refers to this state of intellectual exile when he says "You will never be able to settle into or become at ease with your new house or circumstances. You, the would-be exilic intellectual, cannot return to a previous, maybe more stable state of being at home" (Said, 1994, p. 53). This is something that Jean discovers in his long journey of adaptation and change.

Jean immersed himself in the pages of George Orwell's 1984, a treasured novel of fear and control that resembled where he lives. Reading English literature while remembering his home stories is paralleled by his attempts to balance his family's norms with the outside life. The novel transported him beyond his direct reality. Books like these are his sanctuary, not only giving answers but igniting a

hunger for exploring and thinking. He writes in his diary:

So, you hide, you hide in someone else's language; you hide in someone else's clothes, hoping the fight never finds you. No one tells you this. So, by the time it begins, you are already losing, there is nothing quite like being in a fight you aren't prepared for; one you are not even sure you are in. No one asks for this (Bola, 2017, p. 283).

Refugees remain a marginalized community throughout the novel. Bola disrupts these perceptions through the narration of contrasting worlds: one inhabited by refugees, their legal status uncertain, and the other by those who have the security of legal documentation. Jean's startling revelation of his refugee status exposes the harsh reality that displacement can bring upon the displaced. He writes in his diary, "[n]o one asks to be told you are not enough, no one wants to be forced out, you only do when you can no longer fit in but what if you never have?" (Bola, 2017, p. 283). It's the ending chapters of the book that truly move readers. Bola portrays scenes of escape, exposing the harrowing journey of Mami and Papa as they flee Congo in search of sanctuary—a sacrifice unforeseen yet vital for their survival.

Papa's anxiety when encountering transport inspectors or police officers at his doorstep shows the pervasive fear of living undocumented in a foreign land. The symbolism of authority embodied by these figures is a reminder of their legal status. The family's decision to withhold the truth about their refugee status from their children, Jean and Marie, reflects the heavy burden of uncertainty. However, all the fear and care did not save the family in the end. Papa's deliberate avoidance of brown envelopes does not help him as he is finally faced with his worst fears. A decision to deport him came and hit the family around the time when they all started to settle down. The sadness and pain of the family took another turn as they are about to move from the challenges of adapting to the challenge of dispersing. Jean reflects on this in his diaries:

If you are lucky, you will never have to remember home through your mother's tears or the rage in your father's voice when it shakes. Home will be somewhere

you run to, never away from. It will never chase you away; a rabid dog hot on your heels with teeth like a shark, teeth so sharp you can already feel it cutting into you (Bola, 2017, p. 285).

The emotional writing of Jean about his father's departure vividly shows the trauma experienced by families after their separation and the loss of their homeland. He sees home through his mother's tears and his father's anger. The comparison of home to a place of safety and refuge, somewhere to run to rather than away from, emphasizes the impact of being uprooted and displaced. The novel captures the psychological and emotional burden of forced displacement. *No Place to Call Home* tackles questions of identity and the yearning for belonging. Through its main characters' struggles, the novel raises awareness about the struggles of refugees and the universal human longing for a sense of rootedness. Bola underscores the importance of compassion, solidarity, and resilience with the oppressed, especially those who are forced to leave their homes and live in displacement.

3. POST-COLONIAL STUDY OF ABDULRAZAK GURNAH'S NOVEL *BY THE SEA*

Abdulrazak Gurnah's novel *By the Sea* has a complex and intricate storyline that delves into the concepts of identity, memory, migration, and the influence of colonialism on human experiences. A fascinating and reflective novel, Gurnah's stories are brilliant and written in a poetic style. Zanzibar is an island off the East African coast where the novel takes place in the post-colonial period. As he nears middle age, the protagonist, Saleh Omar, recalls the experiences that have molded his identity. Via Saleh's reflections and memories, Gurnah explores the complexity of cultural and personal identity. This history shapes how Saleh views himself and his role in the world. Among *By the Sea*'s many themes is examining how colonization shaped people and places. Because Saleh's dad was a servant to a British colonial official, the family tree is deeply intertwined with this history of colonization. Gurnah delves into the motives for migration, the difficulties migrants encounter, and the displacement that comes with leaving one's home. Throughout the world, people are migrating in search of a brighter future, and this theme reflects that. In this light, this research aims to use a post-colonial lens to analyze Abdulrazak Gurnah's *By the Sea* (2001) and the lives and histories of its two protagonists. The identity crisis, one of the most pressing concerns of the postwar era, will be explained through the concepts of mimicry and belonging, first introduced, and explored by Frantz Fanon in *Black Skin, White Masks* (1967) and Homi K. Bhabha in *The Location of Culture* (1994). The contact between colonizers and colonized leads to tensions and inequities, which Gurnah emphasizes in Fanon and Bhabha as a result of British imperialism's legacy.

3.1. The Presentation of Identity Crisis in *By the Sea*

Identity is primarily discussed in terms of the relationship between self and others, and the instability that exists within the space between different identities. As Stuart Hall observes that "character develops as a sort of troubled space or an indecisive inquiry in that space, between various meeting talks" (1989, p. 10). Scholars have achieved a significant objective: to elucidate the postcolonial identity problem by highlighting its position as a fundamental element of the complexity that

emerged following colonization. Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin (1989) assert that the exploration of identity is a “noteworthy part of postcolonial literature, in which it manages place and displacement. Inside of this specific postcolonial crisis of identity, the worry emerges with the improvement or recuperation of a powerful relationship recognizing the middle of self and place” (p. 8). Thus, scholars have become interested in inspecting, researching, explaining, and presenting contentions about this significant issue.

Gurnah pens a text that revolves around prominent concepts of identity, and its interrelated concepts of migration, and departure. Unlike colonial domination, the postcolonial condition presents immigration not from the colonizer to the colonised but vice-versa. Therefore, the immigration from the previously colonised to the colonizer will be read in a double-dimensional perspective. On the one hand, there is Gurnah’s *By the Sea* where a double-narration is embedded into the narrative in order to reverse the perspective of the reader each time the story is narrated by the other in a new home in United Kingdom. *By the Sea*, set in Zanzibar, England, and former East Germany, the voices of Saleh Omar and Latif Mahmud tell the tale of two families. Both individuals came to the United Kingdom at separate instances and with distinct motivations. Saleh fled Zanzibar at the age of 65 to evade incarceration and torment, while Latif arrived in England via Germany to pursue a dental profession. However, their lives intersect on several levels, and their meeting results in a reevaluation of the pasts of both individuals. Both individuals grew up in the same hamlet, and their families engaged in prolonged disputes over each other’s belongings. The fear of being persecuted by Latif’s mother and the unstable post-independence environment are factors that lead to Saleh’s choice to seek refuge in another country.

Colonialism and the violent transition to a new government in Zanzibar constitute part of the story’s background. The novel uses details of financial corruption, adultery, and squealing as examples of the despair and degeneration of the post-colonial nation in its first decade of independence. In 2001, Gurnah stated that amid the 1964 riots, “thousands were slaughtered, whole communities were expelled, and many hundreds imprisoned. In the shambles and persecutions that followed, a vindictive terror ruled our lives” (Gurnah, 2001, n.d) - according to him,

these years of horror occurred because of imperial governance, which nuanced people's thinking. Colonial education sought to eradicate indigenous culture to propagate European principles and perspectives. Saleh recounts how the books in the school library were carefully selected for use and seen as the result of Europe's intellectual achievements. British colonial control centered its education around European poetry, theatre, and books. "Under colonialism, older forms of education were either declared obsolete or marginalized, ancient belief systems were labeled barbaric and suppressed, and the only political systems that survived were those that cohered with European theories about governance and tradition." (Gikandi & Mwangi, 2007, p. 43)

Bhabha (1994) argues that "the fusion of features from the colonizer and the colonized will create a new hybrid identity. This new identity will pose a danger and question the authority and legitimacy of any original identity" (p. 109). Due to the blending of power dynamics and cultural influences, the primary characters, Saleh and Latif, acquire hybrid identities encompassing the traits of the colonizer and the colonized. Their behavior, personal characteristics, and understanding display a sense of uncertainty, but they subsequently reconcile their dual identity via storytelling inside the all-encompassing Third Space they have created. Saleh's cultural hybridity is influenced by the hybrid nature of cultural spaces, which is evident in all aspects of his life. Initially, as a student at school, Saleh is exposed to British education, which highlights the lack of progress in his own local culture. Under the influence of this schooling, he rejects his own culture, which has been marginalized, and displays a profound appreciation for the sophisticated Western society. As Saleh ages and establishes his own furniture company, he actively seeks out literature from various sources to gain information about the world and overcome the naivety of his homeland.

Nevertheless, Saleh does not wholly forsake his mother's culture throughout his life and remains unassimilated into Western civilization. He continues to engage in prayer and occasionally utilizes the Swahili language. While appreciating the progress of the colonizer's society, he is also aware of their hypocrisy, arrogance, and evil actions, which are the underlying causes of the misery experienced by East Africans. The ambiguity of identification is often ascribed to the mixed nature of

power zones. Saleh finds himself in a difficult situation, torn between the oppressive authorities of his nation after gaining freedom and the marginalization he faces from the superior white groups in Britain, where he currently resides as a refugee. The British government is suppressing Saleh's business in Zanzibar. Despite gaining independence, he has not yet been acknowledged as a citizen by the new governing body because individuals of Asian and Arab heritage from East Africa are not considered sufficiently "African" (Joseph, 1999, p. 5). When faced with the threat of prosecution by the local authorities, he readily flees and seeks shelter in Britain. Saleh is optimistic about Britain and aspires to begin a fresh existence with a new persona. Upon his arrival at the British airport, Saleh is denied entry by the gatekeeper, Kevin Edlman, who asserts that Saleh does not belong to the larger European community and holds different religious beliefs. Consequently, Saleh's case is a state of confusion or uncertainty about one's sense of self or personal identity. Upon being granted sanctuary in Britain, Saleh continues to experience distress due to the mockery and prejudice exhibited by others around him. Saleh experiences an identity problem due to the conflicting nature of cultural places and power spaces.

In Zanzibar, Saleh engages in business dealings with British people and asserts that he gains valuable knowledge from them. He is enthusiastic about reading British literature to expand his understanding of the diverse globe. Nevertheless, he faces rejection and fails to assimilate into the British community due to his perceived racial inferiority. In addition, he maintains ongoing relationships with the residents and has a deep regard for the traditional culture. However, the locals strongly disdain and actively isolate him due to their perception of him as a "colonial stooge" (Gurnad, 2001, p. 156). Confronted with the risk of prosecution by the local Zanzibar authorities, Saleh escapes to Britain seeking asylum. However, his subsequent existence in Britain as a refugee revolves around reconciling with his perceived inferior African identity and grappling with assimilating into English society, mainly owing to the exclusion he experiences from the British people. Saleh's experience in Britain illustrates the predicament faced by marginalized individuals who are caught between the need to conform and the tendency to emphasize cultural distinctions (Ocita, 2017, p. 305). Due to his inability to address racial prejudice and reject the

impact of the colonizer's culture, he is rejected by both opposing factions. Therefore, he is fated to become a hybrid to navigate his uncertain identity. Latif, the second primary protagonist, resides in Britain as a hybrid.

The influence of Western norms of self-indulgence on his parents has resulted in a deficiency of parental affection during his upbringing. The character of Merchant Hussein becomes a prominent and intrusive part of the story. As a person not part of the family, he entices Latif's brother to go away with him, resulting in losing the Latif family's possessions and even disgracing the family. Consequently, because of his intense dislike for his homeland, Latif departs from Zanzibar and relocates to East Germany and, subsequently, to Britain. Although Latif is an English Literature professor, he is nonetheless subject to the influence of discourse power. Latif was referred to as "a grinning blackamoor" while walking in the street. Upon consulting the Oxford Dictionary, he discovers several derogatory terms related to blackness, which leaves him feeling contemptible and discouraged (Gurnad, 2001, p. 72).

Furthermore, Latif suffers from the torment of his unresolved cultural identity. With a residency of more than three decades in London, Latif has acquired extensive knowledge of the English language and English literature. However, he asserts a solid aversion to poetry. Additionally, he expresses his fear of facing criticism from native individuals due to his English identity, as he feels disconnected and no longer valid to himself, but rather a deceitful imitation of himself, a manipulated puppet. He possesses knowledge of Swahili and his cultural heritage, but he must conceal these aspects of his identity and communicate mainly in English.

I am a grinning blackamoor. You are a grinning blackamoor. He is a grinning blackamoor. She is a grinning blackamoor. We are grinning blackamoors. They are grinning blackamoors. It's not clear about that a, why it has survived in blackamoor when it has been dropped in other black combinations (Gurnah, 2001, p.76).

Latif was indeed a man of literature. Throughout the story, he frequently

referenced Shakespeare and other notable English authors. Latif is also experiencing an existential crisis, enduring anguish and suffering. His compromised identity is initially evident when he is referred to as a 'blackamoor'. While walking to work, Latif encounters an old man who appears to be a well-dressed English gentleman. The man refers to Latif as a 'grinning blackamoor'. It incites Latif so much that, upon arriving at his office, he looks up the origin of the phrase. Latif is upset by the dictionary entries linked to the prefix 'black' because he believes that anything associated with black is negative, feeble, or unpleasant. The word shocks the core of Latif instantly though it is not a new thing for him to be humiliated this way "It made me feel hated, suddenly weak with a kind of terror at such associations. This is the house I live in, I thought, a language which barks and scorns at me behind every third corner" (Gurnah, 2001, p.72). He even looks up further and is left overwhelmed by the fact that, the word has been in existence since 1501, as have many other writers like Sidney, Shakespeare, Pepys, and others. It provides him some relief to know that, regardless of its bad connotations, the concept has been present for a long time and has not been forgotten. For generations, the word has confidently conveyed its meaning without degradation. As he strives to integrate into London society, he is culpable of forsaking his native identity (Zhu, 2022, p. 64). Bhabha challenges the dichotomy between complete assimilation into the colonizer's culture and rigid adherence to the native culture, emphasizing instead the complex and contradictory process of division and hybridity. Being hybrids, Saleh and Latif experience a feeling of loss due to the ambiguity of their English and African identities.

Gurnah's novel fits "for his uncompromising and compassionate penetration of the effects of colonialism and the fate of the refugee in the gulf between cultures and continents" (Farooqi & Jamil, 2022, p. 1039). Nearly every character in Gurnah's novel becomes silent or loses their voice due to colonialism's aftereffects in Zanzibari society. In post-colonial literature, characters often choose to remain silent to protect themselves, conceal their identity, or avoid discussing the root causes of migration. One of its many interpretations in post-colonial theory is that the protagonists and antagonists go mute to hide their identities and, therefore, escape the toxic effects of racism and discrimination. Secondly, the locals feel disconnected from society because their voices do not blend in with the dominant voice of the

period (Zubeidah Zachariah, 2016). Gurnah depicts the brutal reality of oppressed people whose voices are marginalized and ignored in the dominant colonial narrative. To escape the fear inflicted upon them by their abusers, many victims, like Latif, who proclaimed, “I wanted to get away, to see the great world,” decide to leave the country (Gurnah, 2001, p. 120). He felt like everyone, imprisoned in his own country, “We all wanted to be in the land of Coca-Cola and blue jeans, even if it was not just for those refined pleasures that we wanted to be there” (Gurnah, 2001, p. 119). When people flee their home countries for economic opportunity, political stability, and a better quality of life, they often mistakenly believe that industrialized nations like the US and Europe offer all three.

These countries are still undergoing significant problems and serious issues regarding the fate of refugees and immigrants, and these instances can be analyzed even today, such as Syrian immigrants who leave their homes due to political, religious, and geographical reasons. People go through the same thing and are forcibly removed from their homes in the colonial paradigm as a result of political and economic conflicts. As part of their journey towards healing, these migrants gradually share their insights, stories, and observations through writing or oral expression. Indeed, Gurnah, who is well-versed in the plight of immigrants, describes how people cope with the challenges of migration and asylum-seeking due to post-colonialism in his sixth novel, *By the Sea*. In contrast, many works center on the immigrant experience, including their struggles, crises, and adaptability to their new home. A British character in the novel called Mick provides the most illuminating example of this in the following words:

Now foreigners are everywhere, with all these terrible things happening in their countries. It did not use to be like this. I do not know the rights and wrongs of it, but we cannot just turn them away, can we? We cannot just say go back to your horrible country and get hurt; we are too busy with our own lives. If we can help them, I think we should. Be tolerant. I cannot understand these people who demonstrate in the streets saying whatever about asylum-seekers. Moreover, these National Front marches, I cannot bear those fascists. It did not use to be like that.

There were so many in the country, but what can we do? We cannot return them to those horrible places (Gurnah, 2001, pp. 54-55).

Mick refers to how hybrid communities come into existence. He ascribes the waves of immigrants the world witnesses to political instability, economic hardship, and civil violence. Although he shows sympathy and understanding towards immigrants, the immigrants straddle the line between their native culture and the culture of their new home. Since the number of immigrants continues to rise, this quote demonstrates that most Europeans know they live in a country with a significant immigrant population. Saleh Omar travels to England from his village of Zanzibar at age 65. He uses the passport of an older man named Rajab Shaaban to become an asylum seeker from his home. Kevin Edelman, an immigrant from Europe who works at the airport, already shows bigotry towards Omar because of his African cultural background. Omar says,

I am a refugee, an asylum-seeker. These are not simple words, even if the habit of hearing them makes them seem so. I arrived at Gatwick Airport in the late afternoon of 23 November last year. It is a familiar minor climax in our stories, leaving what we know and arriving in strange places, carrying little bits of jumbled luggage and suppressing secret and garbled ambitions (Gurnah, 2001, p. 4).

No matter how he treats the English, Omar will never stop being an asylum seeker. Nevertheless, a linguistic barrier arises between Omar and the British individuals when he is instructed to refrain from using English upon his arrival in England. Everything changes for every character in the novel because of this advice to Omar. It is true that Omar's advisor, Rachel Howard, is an English citizen. To have Latif Mahmud, a poet and English professor at the university, translate Omar's works from Kiswahili to English, Howard contacts Mahmud. From Omar's arrival at Gatwick Airport in England to his meeting with Latif Mahmud, Gurnah uses storytelling to illustrate each character's prior traumas, exile, displacement, alienation, and crises. It may be said that the narrative storytelling technique is the

most essential part of the novel because it forms the entire plot and gives rise to the characters' traumas, feelings of alienation, and distinct identities. Furthermore, revealing hidden truths is also aided by the emergence of the identity crisis and the language problem during the narrative. For these reasons, this study section is subtitled into two parts, one for each character's identity crisis and the other for their language usage and non-usage issues. The first subtitle of this chapter examines narrative and trauma to comprehend the causes of these crises. At last, writers use these fictional and representational characters to talk about identity and language to comprehend asylum-seeker and immigrant mentalities.

Given this background, the story opens with Rachel Howard's card to Omar Saleh, setting up their encounter. Still, Rajab Shaaban Mahmud is shown at Gatwick Airport in the following pages, with his suitcase in tow, trying to figure out how to get into England. Subsequently, it becomes clear via narration that this assumed name is only a mask. His true identity is Saleh Omar, a friend of his translator, Latif Mahmud, and not Rajab Shaaban Mahmud. In fact, on the novel's first page, Omar says:

Coming to live here has shut one narrow door and opened another into a widening concourse. In the darkness, I lose a sense of space, and in this nowhere, I feel myself more solidly and hear the play of voices more clearly, as if they were happening for the first time. Sometimes I hear music in the distance, played in the open and coming to me as a muted whisper. I long for a night each arid day, even though I dread the darkness, its limitless chambers, and shifting shadows. Sometimes, I think living in the wreckage and confusion of crumbling houses is my fate (Gurnah, 2001, p. 1).

The novel's complex structure reveals that the events are not recounted sequentially; readers can concentrate on the present as the narrative repeatedly revisits the past. A possible interpretation of Gurnah's writing style is *in medias res*,

which means in the middle of the story, it adds tension, complexity, and character development by drawing the reader in and out of the story as it unfolds. This further aids the reader in immersing themselves in the novel. On the one hand, Gurnah's use of this technique adds complexity to his novel for readers, and on the other, it highlights the nuances of each character's recollections. Conversely, Gurnah establishes a bridge between his characters and the coasts of England and Africa. The story's central focus on character traits and identities reveals how the novel's storytelling uses translation to set the scene for the two narrators' past and present experiences. This translation of "their past in East Africa into the present in England" (Steiner, 2010, p. 302) exhibits their previous traumas and painful experiences" enables them to form a relationship that transcends the binary of victim and perpetrator" (Steiner, 2010, p. 302). These lines demonstrate the crucial importance that narrative plays for each character. Indeed, via narrative, they can bridge the gap between Saleh Omar and Latif Mahmud, fill in the blanks of previously unspoken events, and get answers to many issues. For Omar, who cannot communicate with anybody else because he refuses to speak English, meeting with Mahmud is mostly about obtaining a translation. Regardless, this encounter goes in several directions and gives each individual a chance to talk about their secrets, family problems, and painful experiences from their past. The truths regarding the invalid passport are revealed at the story's beginning.

During the story, Saleh Omar, whose real name is Rajab Shaaban Mahmud, admits that he was able to enter England with the help of the passport he found on the body of Shaaban, a guy from Zanzibar. However, Latif Mahmud cracks and sets his role as a translator to one side to listen to Omar, who reveals that the name he uses to leave belongs to his father. Latif Mahmud and Saleh Omar reminisce about their pasts in the following days. An account from Saleh Omar's past reveals that he and Hussein, a Persian trader, were partners in a furniture business in Zanzibar when Omar borrowed money from Hussein. Omar was in his 30s at the time. The fact that Hussein took out a loan from Rajab Shaaban Mahmud and then gave it to Saleh Omar is something else that comes to light later on. Maryam, who is Mahmud's aunt, eventually becomes the owner of the house. However, after Nasser Abdallah's, Bi Maryam no longer lives there. She remarries Saleh Omar's father, and he inherits the

house and all its titles. After Rajab Shaaban Mahmud passes away, Omar takes over the family home. Despite his rightful ownership, Latif Mahmud believes, during the novel, that Saleh Omar is a liar who repeatedly lied to his family, causing them much suffering. Since these memories were hidden until now, each character's future is shaped by what they remember. For example, the family relationship that accompanied Latif Mahmud's 30-year-old arrival in England was draining. The animosity among Mahmud's family compels him to flee and eventually settle in England. From what we gather from the characters' recollections, they have all had to overcome obstacles, both in England and back home in Zanzibar.

On the other hand, due to the reasons mentioned above, characters are also intensely traumatized for various reasons. However, the specifics of the phrase should be provided initially to comprehend and investigate their traumas. Trauma has its roots in Greece and encompasses a wide range of disciplines, including but not limited to history, law, sociology, psychiatry, literature, and psychology. Maybe there is no single interpretation and many possible explanations due to all these variables. Wound, sore, hurt, and injury are other terms you use when looking up trauma in the dictionary. The word trauma is associated with pain, whether it is physical, mental, or a combination of the two. A person's awareness of the pain diminishes after they recover from a devastating accident since, in most cases, it is only upon reflection that the full extent of the anguish becomes apparent. You cannot be conscious of the problem since, unlike the common cold or headache, it does not have a single cause; instead, it develops over time due to accumulated suffering. Individuals exhibit varied responses both during and following their traumatic experiences. Eventually, some triumph over it, rise above it and become stronger. Unfortunately, some individuals never make themselves out of their depths; some even have physical and psychiatric disorders.

3.2. The Problem of Home and Belonging in *By the Sea*

Ethnic cleansing, drought, natural disasters, starvation, and other calamities caused some of the colonized people to flee, while others were sent in search of government jobs or other economic possibilities. However, many managed to escape the conflict within their homelands. Individuals migrate for many different reasons,

but ultimately, they all want the same thing: to be accessible to be themselves. Beyond that, it is essential to remember that these individuals brought development to the countries where they settled ““We created this land’; he is the unceasing cause: ‘If we leave, all is lost, and the country will go back to the Middle Ages.” (Fanon, 1963, p.40) supports this thought, although for the Europeans it is disregarded. Europe did not embrace and welcome them with open arms despite their best attempts to assist Europeans in building a stronger nation economically, politically, and in the arts, music, and sports. Even though their achievements were seen and praised, they are nevertheless considered “others” by the West due to their failures.

Saleh, the main character, embodies a profound feeling of being uprooted and not fitting in while living in England due to his forced absence from his homeland. A frequent element in the text is using images and metaphors to convey a feeling of unfamiliarity and loneliness within the house. Simon Lewis, a reviewer, notes that Gurnah employs. The author employed the recurring motif of inhabiting a vast, deteriorated hotel exile (Lewis, 2010, p. 722). The flat exemplifies the notion of the unhomely, functioning as a transitory dwelling that sharply juxtaposes the cozy ambiance of an authentic home. Upon reaching the destination, Saleh was struck by the desolation of the place, which was marked by a “deep feeling of emptiness and quiet” (Gurnah, 2001, p. 37). The cold and barren hotel, inhabited by unknown persons, exemplifies Bhabha’s concept of the eerie atmosphere.

Both immigrants and those who voluntarily leave their own country face this otherization as their central crisis. To be more specific, Asians in the United States, Jews in Europe, and Africans in Africa are all considered second-class citizens. They are the “other” because people see them as frail and of lower socioeconomic status. This kind of prejudice is very much alive and well, despite popular belief to the contrary, and it is a racist act. The following quote will summarize Franz Fanon’s discussion of these points in his extensive work *Black Skin, White Mask*, which includes references to the Bible and other sources that glorify white supremacy: According to biblical prophecy, racial segregation will persist in the hereafter, just as it does on earth. Among the numerous references to Our Father in the New Testament, a special place will be reserved for African Americans accepted into

God's kingdom. '...We are the chosen people – look at the color of our skin. The others are black or yellow because of their sins' (Fanon, 1967, p.30). As mentioned earlier, the quote addresses black society's attitude towards whites in particular. Consequently, white supremacist prejudice against black people does exist in the real world. However, this will carry over into the next life, and not even Heaven will welcome black people without asking why; they are immoral just by being born into this world, regardless of their religious beliefs or skin color.

As a result of their inferior mentality, immigrants experience an identity crisis. This is true not only for black people, who experience racism at a higher rate than any other race, but also for Asians, Hispanics, and people of any non-European ethnicity. People feel like outsiders; they are not fully integrated into the English, French, or American communities and do not feel like citizens of their native country. Immigrants, asylum seekers, and settlers undergo psychological, physiological, linguistic, and cultural assimilation. To blend in, they speak the language, dress like Westerners instead of locals, and even eat and act like the locals. All these factors impact the settler's sense of self because of their confusion about their place in the world and identity. Their desire for self-discovery, prompted by these inquiries, may lead to a genuine homecoming and the development of an immigrant identity.

Furthermore, the novel features characters from all different countries who come to England to start a new life, as at the beginning of the novel. The main example is Kevin Edelman, an employee at Gatwick Airport and the son of Romanian immigrants who represent a second generation of immigrants. However, unlike African immigrants, he and his family are not shunned by English culture because he is European. He tells Saleh about his story:

My parents are refugees from Romania [...] I understand the struggles of being an alien and destitute because these were my own experiences when they arrived, and I also know the benefits. However, my folks are from Europe; they deserve, after all [...]. We do not want you here because you do not belong, you do not appreciate our values, and you have not contributed to them through the years. We

will humiliate you, make your life difficult, and maybe even physically harm you (Gurnah, 2001, p. 12).

As this quotation shows, Europeans are subject to double standards, while non-Europeans, for them, are solely “others.” Because Edelman’s parents are from Romania, they are considered a European family and are warmly welcomed in many European nations. In the colonizer’s view, Saleh is dangerous, untrustworthy, and, most significantly, useless. This is something that Saleh is cognizant of and confronts even before he reaches England. Moreover, he never feels at home in this “strange land” (Gurnah, 2001, p.195). His stay there proves this aspect with the words he has been told: “Without English, you are even more a stranger, a refugee, I suppose, more convincing [...] You are just a condition, without even a story” (Gurnah, 2001, p. 143). Mustapha Kharoua has demonstrated the last case. He says his flat in England refers to his imprisonment (Kharoua, 2016, p. 132). Even on the novel’s first pages, the description of his house is given. A lonely man named Saleh lives in a cramped flat in a beach town in England. He does not even have a phone. That is why, although not quite the same, his existence in England is comparable to that in Zanzibar.

However, despite being fluent in English to the point that he composes poetry in English instead of his native Kiswahili, Latif Mahmud—Saleh Omar’s translator—also possesses a diasporic identity. Although Latif Mahmud does not seek asylum as Saleh Omar did, he does leave his native Bangladesh for England in search of a better life and a sanctuary from his troubled family history. While Saleh is also seeking tranquility, which can be understood in his words as:

I could see that he would not, after all, be putting me back on the plane to where I had come from, that other place where the oppressed manage to survive. For that, I was relieved. ‘Mr. Shaaban, why do you want to do this, a man of your age?’ he said, sitting down clumsily, looking sad and furrowed with concern, then leaning against the back of the chair and slowly working his shoulders. ‘How much danger is your life really in? Do you realize what you are doing? Whoever

persuaded you to do this is not doing you any favors, let me tell you that. You do not even speak the language, and you probably never will. It is rare for older adults to learn a new language (Gurnah, 2001, p. 11).

There are several reasons why Latif is exploring his educational alternatives. He begins his academic career in East Germany, then explores West Germany and Dresden on his way to England. However, Latif's identity crisis is unlike Saleh Omar's, and maybe Latif's is less severe. In comparison to Latif Mahmud, the other narrator, Omar, who presents himself to the British people as an asylum seeker, is arguably the most estranged and dislocated character. Their journeys in England intersect, and they endure similar trials, even though they left their home countries for distinct reasons. Since their leaving marks the beginning of their identity crisis and reveals their inferiority complex, it is a significant event. For example, at the very beginning of the novel, Saleh Omar says:

Sometimes, I think living in the wreckage and confusion of crumbling houses is my fate. It is not easy to precisely know how things became as they have, to say with some assurance that it was this and then led to that and the other, and now here we are. The moments slip through my fingers. Even as I recount them to myself, I can hear echoes of what I am suppressing, of something I have forgotten to remember, making the telling tricky when I do not wish it to be (Gurnah, 2001, p. 1).

Given that his sole objective was to leave Zanzibar and reside in England regardless of what, this indicates that he is content with his present situation. Inadequacy or the Europeans' treatment could be the root cause of such issues. Interactions between Saleh Omar and Kevin Edelman, a second-generation immigrant from Romania at the airport suggest that this sentiment might have internal and external causes. For instance, Omar says, "his manner made feel that I was a tiresome and stupid prisoner he was interrogating, who had just momentarily frustrated him in some petty word-play [...] I felt again that I was a tiresome

nuisance, causing reasonable people needless trouble and inconvenience” (Gurnah, 2001, p. 12). However, Omar assumes the persona of Rajab Shaaban Mahmud to gain entry to England using an invalid passport. Maybe this prompted him to question his identity. Omar uncovered the belongings of a deceased Zanzibari man named Rajab Shaaban Mahmud by complete chance. Omar possesses the name of a dead man, and he says, “It is so different here that it seems as if one life has ended, and I am now living another one. So perhaps I should say of myself that once I lived another life elsewhere, but now it is over” (Gurnah, 2001, p. 2). It suggests to the reader that Mahmud is physically alive but emotionally dead because of the anguish and misery he has endured in his past, which leads him to seek solace in distance from his life in Zanzibar. At the same time, Omar uses his information to gain entry to England.

Storytelling sessions expose facts, lies, and sufferings, as said in the previous subtitle, and hence shape the novel. During the story, they mostly talk about a house that belonged to Rajab Shaaban Mahmud, Latif’s dad. After Rajab’s father married Mahmud’s aunt, Saleh Omar owned the house. House owners come and go; Rajab was the first, then his aunt Bi Maryam (following the death of Nasser Abdallah), and finally, Saleh Omar’s father (due to his marriage to Bi Maryam). Finally, after his father passed away, Saleh Omar became a legal successor; “Saleh Omar, a furniture maker who was a distant and estranged relative, and to whom the house now belonged” (Gurnah, 2001, p. 97). One interpretation of the home theme in Latif and Saleh’s reminiscences is that it represents the quest for an eventual return to one’s home, given that their stories center on the displacement and missing information on the house. In the novel’s earlier chapters, Saleh Omar conveys a widespread appreciation for the English and their culture within Tanzanian society. He says:

I think we also secretly admired the British for their audacity in being there, such a long way from home, calling the shots with such an appearance of assurance, and for knowing so much about how to do the things that mattered: curing diseases, flying airplanes, making movies [...] In their books, I read unflattering accounts of my history, and because they were unflattering, they seemed more

accurate than the stories we told ourselves (Gurnah, 2001, pp. 17-18).

It is simpler to embrace a foreign land as one's own because of the adoration for the West, according to this quote and Omar's ideas on British society, culture, and nation in general. Instead of expressing his admiration in a more targeted manner, Omar employs the pronoun "we," encompassing not only the entire Zanzibari civilization but also all of the world's nations and continents. Still, Omar's identity is shaken by his homelessness, dissatisfaction with England, and yearning for a place to call his own. Omar feels lost and powerless due to all these conditions. For all immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers, "home" is a metaphor for the place they desire to call their own. Saleh Omar's possession of a fake identity also has a symbolic meaning; "his newly-chosen last name thus marks, through its deeper religious implications, the beginning of his new life" (Helff, 2009, p. 73). Proper, Omar has sought refuge from his Zanzibari background by obtaining entry to England under the false name of Rajab Shaaban Mahmud, a man who has since passed away. Even though he enters England under the false impression that they will welcome him, Omar may be beginning his journey of separation from England at this point. This detail of the symbol is given below, and Gurnah explains it in the words of Omar:

My name is Rajab Shaaban. It is not my real name, but a name I borrowed for the occasion of this life-saving trip. It belonged to someone I knew for many years. Shaaban is also the name of the eighth month of the year, the month of division, when the destinies of the coming year are fixed, and the sins of the truly penitent are absolved. It precedes the month of Ramadhan, the month of the great heat, the month of fasting. Rajab is the month that precedes both the seventh month and the revered month (Gurnah, 2001, p. 41).

The preceding quote demonstrates that Omar continued to use Shaaban's name after he left and while he was in England, in addition to the religious significance of his name. The name of a deceased man could also mean Omar's symbolic demise, as he murders Saleh Omar by taking on another person's name. His

inability to settle on a single identity is symbolized by the many guises he has worn over the years. Also, worth noting is the widespread practice of pronouncing the names of foreigners, which persists to this day. Africans have names that sound very different from the rest of the Western world, and some Westerners, particularly Europeans, find them funny. They either intentionally mispronounce it or do not understand the difference in pronunciation due to linguistic barriers. One possible reading of this is that Westerners do not or are unable to accept people from different backgrounds. Saleh Omar takes the name of a dead man, Shaaban, as a metaphor for his suicide, but as he loses contact with the name, it likewise becomes obscure and lost. For instance, Rachel, Omar's British advisor, is very different from an older woman named Celia. Celia hosts asylum-seekers and refugees; therefore, she mixes with people like Omar. However, her conduct is quite different from Rachel's.

Saleh Omar, who stays at Celia's property, which looks like a hotel but is not, is Celia's responsibility. Even though he rarely leaves his room, Celia tries to converse with Omar whenever they cross paths. However, similar to the numerous Westerners, she also fails to pronounce his name and, as a result, he gives him the nickname "Mr. Showboat" (Gurnah, 2001, p.58); moreover, she says, "It is just my way of remembering your name. I hope you will not be offended" (Gurnah, 2001, p. 58). This quote demonstrates that she is cognizant that giving someone such a moniker is hurtful, rude, and demeaning, but she does it. She shares this with Rachel and says, "he mopes a bit at times [...] However, I think that is because he does not understand everything we say. Do you, Mr. Showboat? That is what I call him. It's our nickname for him. He does not mind, I have asked him" (Gurnah, 2001, p. 62). Despite the widespread belief in England that Omar was illiterate until he met with Latif Mahmud, Celia claims to have spoken with Omar and is okay with him being called by this nickname. In sum, these factors contribute to Saleh's trauma, which manifests as an identity crisis and feelings of estrangement. The novel's language, however, is multi-faceted and plays a significant part. For the sake of comprehension, it is essential to be aware that language is the most fundamental means by which humans communicate with one another; via it, we have long been able to share our joys and sorrows, our experiences, our memories, and the stories surrounding them. The listeners or readers of the story feel closer to the storyteller or

speaker when this happens. The invention of the printing press allowed individuals to put their ideas down on paper instead of just speaking them out loud. Eventually, this practice evolved into writing. This further demonstrates the universal requirement of sharing one's story and emotional state. Education and language are profoundly impacted by the formerly colonized nations' cultural, political, and artistic shifts.

Most nations became polyglots, and those who could afford to study in English were seen as part of the ruling class. Even within their group, members who do not or cannot afford to take English classes are devalued due to the strength of this divide. In contrast, individuals who speak the colonizer's language fluently are elevated to a higher social status; some have even moved to Europe. It is now known that some of these people abandon their native dialect in favor of the colonizers' languages, which may include Portuguese, English, or French. Additionally, it is amusing that some people write about their experiences, memories, and events in the colonizer's language, even though they are still fluent in their home tongue. Some people mix their native tongue with European words and phrases for various reasons, including but not limited to protesting, proving their existence, remembering their roots, and so on. Throughout this novel, Abdulrazak Gurnah—a Tanzanian-born author who has lived in England for a long time—uses English to talk about his nation and its people. From Saleh Omar's story and his suffering, the linguistic problem in this novel is associated with the characters' identities. Because of his fraudulence, Saleh avoids talking to anyone. He also stays quiet until he meets Latif Mahmud, his translator because he believes no one can understand his original language. The narrator's pain, guilt, and deception are sometimes conveyed through it. Some characters hide things from their history, and readers may find their silence admirable. Feelings of obedience, guilt, shame, fear, or dissent could all be conveyed through it. However, they are all used for different causes; thus, the stories in his novels and the fates of his characters shift. For example, the narrator's shameful silence in *The Last Gift* is praised as eloquent in *Admiring Silence*. Hence, there are various purposes for silence in post-colonial writing. Gurnah, in an interview with Nisha Jones, points out the importance of communication and silence:

When migrants come to Europe, they are diffident about their language if they are

on their own, and they are also diffident about English because they're not sure if they can speak it properly. So, remaining silent is a way of preserving dignity and, at the same time, not putting yourself in harm's way. Silence is ambivalent. It is also powerful and can be far more eloquent (Jones, 2005, p. 39).

Nisha Jones's sources suggest that the locals may suffer from an inferiority complex due to a fear of ridicule and lacking confidence in their abilities. Consequently, these individuals reasoned that keeping quiet would be the best course of action since it would allow them to blend in with Western society more quickly. In the novel, the language problem is silence, and it serves a different purpose because it is not about how Omar feels but about the words he likes to use. He is also aware of the definition of it and the hazard of speaking (Gurnah, 2001, p. 12). He is told to say anything and act like he does not know English, even though everyone is asking him many questions. Anne Ajulu Okungu comments: "Silence serves as a narrative strategy to help narrate the migrant experience, especially through what cannot and has not been expressed verbally" (Okungu, 2016, p. 105). Nevertheless, in this novel's case, Saleh Omar's silence distinguishes him from these subjects. According to Sissy Helff, Gurnah views silence as both a means of communication and a defense mechanism against shame. "in this context, *By the Sea* depicts silence not merely as the refugee's non-ability to communicate in the host's language but as a consciously chosen speech act" (Helff, 2009, p. 72). It is preferred consciously since Omar "plays dumb" (Gurnah, 2001, p.6), except for the terms refugee and asylum seeker when questioned about his travel documents. As these explanations show, silence is just as much a form of expression as words. A linguistic barrier forms due to the misunderstandings caused by his preferences and lies. Because of this, everyone else has difficulty getting in touch with Omar verbally through translation; however, Latif Mahmud is discovered to be Omar's translator, all because of Rachel Howard.

Despite the extensive mention of the storytelling above, it does significantly impact the language aspect of Latif and Saleh's relationship. This is because narratives have a crucial role. Translation occurs, and "it is translation, rather than

the refusal to translate, that affords the characters a life where past and present connect and offer a future” (Steiner, 2010, p. 303) also “English becomes a tool for oppression and coercion, negating the worth and truthfulness of indigenous histories” (Steiner, 2010, p. 317). Translation serves a purpose in the novel, as these quotes demonstrate; it transports Latif and Saleh to their homes and pasts, albeit through their memories. In conclusion, Latif and Saleh, the narrators, after leaving their native Zanzibar for England, are scarred, estranged, and lost. Many Zanzibaris fled to neighboring nations after the island gained independence; two narrators in this book do the same, although for different reasons. To reach England, Saleh Omar uses a counterfeit passport that was once owned by Rajab Shaaban Mahmud, who is now dead. He has instructed him to pretend he is illiterate and unable to communicate in English. It has to be mentioned that Saleh Omar is the most estranged and scarred character, whose own identity is rumbling due to the trauma of leaving his home at the age of 65, feeling lost as a result, and being belittled by some English people, especially Celia. As evidence of his sincere desire to enter England, Saleh listens to what others say, even though he might have spoken his mind and expressed himself independently. Latif Mahmud, the novel’s alternate narrator and the son of the deceased man whose name Omar assumes, steps in to help with the language barrier. Their tale revolves around storytelling; they open up to each other about their previous hurts, silences, and family problems, which helps reveal the hidden realities and strengthens their bond as the days go by. At the outset of their relationship, Latif accuses Saleh of stealing the father of his house, which leads him to blame Saleh. However, it becomes clear over time that Saleh is the rightful owner of the house because his father was married to Rajab Shaaban Mahmud’s aunt. Latif and Saleh’s paths cross in England, where they lead quite different lifestyles, but they are bound together by fate and forged by shared experiences. While there are many factors at play, it is safe to say that the migrant identity and the pains of the past are the primary causes of the characters’ identity crisis. Despite successfully evading their homeland, the emotions of loss and exile remain with each of them.



CONCLUSION

Post-colonialism is a phenomenon that arises from the impact of former European colonies on various aspects of society, including politics, culture, economy, and language. Colonial discourses often describe others through oppositions, such as developed and developing, civilized and barbaric, or mature and immature. Post-colonialism is the reaction against the colonial approach that usually diminishes the previously occupied countries. Post-colonialism emerged in the 1980s with a focus on reclaiming the lost identities of colonized nations. It encompasses literature written by countries gaining independence from colonial rule. This particularly includes those who were under British control. However, post-colonialism involves examining the cultural and political impacts of European conquest on non-European societies and their native people. Post-colonial literature explores themes like marginalization, identity, and migration. It is significant to note that post-colonialism also studies the struggles of assimilation and adaptation into the colonizer's land.

This study utilizes post-colonial theory to understand the impact of colonialism hybridity and living in the unhomely third space for the protagonists of the selected novels. There are critiques of post-colonial theory that question its impact on real communities. Some argue that it serves academic elites and overlooks the perspectives of those directly affected by colonialism. Post-colonialism analyzes colonial effects on society as it encourages a reevaluation of historical narratives. The discourse surrounding identity represents a challenge faced by post-colonial nations. This issue is particularly clear in the novels that have been analyzed. The notion of identity becomes significant when it is in a state of crisis.

The findings of this study are consistent with other post-colonial studies such as “Abdulrazak Gurnah’s *By the Sea: Unbelonging and the Trauma of Imprisonment*” by Mustapha Kharoua (2016) and “A Post-colonial narratological study of silence in Abdulrazak Gurnah’s *Admiring Silence* and *By The Sea*” by Ozlem Arslan (2014). It is found that the unhomeliness and pain that result from displacement happen not only because of the changing of the place but also the unwelcoming atmosphere of the host culture or the host country. Other post-colonial

studies that are done on literature, whether the works of the selected author or other writers, such as Homi Bhabha's *The Location of Culture*, emphasize that it is the place and the roots to which someone is connected that impact their mental health and psychological well-being. In the novel *By the Sea*, the protagonist tries to assimilate to both, the English culture in which he lives and the culture of Zanzibar in which he was born. It is shown that, despite the protagonist's efforts to act and live as an English person, he never manages to be seen as one of the English people, although this is the culture to which he wants to adapt. No one shows a sign of welcoming to his existence. On the other hand, when he attempts to go back to his roots and connect with his people in Zanzibar, the Zanzibari people see him as a stranger and as an English person. So, the novel aligns with other refugee and immigrant narratives, which emphasize the feeling of alienation and foreignness that remain well ingrained in the immigrant's life.

The process of decolonization following World War II marked a significant movement toward the reconstruction of both social and personal identities. Various parts of life including politics, the arts, business, and culture, were affected by decolonization. Individuals sought to reclaim identities that had been lost under colonial rule. Edward Said emphasizes the role of nationalism in challenging Western authority. He views decolonization as a truth that would spread across non-European societies sooner or later. The recognition of one's own identity is dependent on acknowledging the existence of others. This nature of identity and difference contributes to the establishment of hierarchical structures in displacement.

Identity crises can arise within individuals who are relocated to a different dominant country. Immigrants and asylum seekers are uprooted from their own homes to face a different life in exile. This makes them lost and not knowing of their place in the world. Abdulrazak Gurnah's *By the Sea* deals with identity, memory, migration, and the lasting impacts of colonialism. It is set primarily in Zanzibar during the post-colonial period, where the protagonist Saleh Omar reflects on his life experiences as his personal and cultural identity gets shaped by historical events. Identity, loss, and questioning have always been contentious and significant issues. Identity crisis is a term used by post-colonial writers to describe a wide range of issues, including "mimicry" and "sense of belonging." Many arguments have been

made regarding how, during the decolonization process, people were searching for their identity and reality. In the post-colonial era, psychoanalytic explanations such as the person's confusion and mental imbalances were made as the "marginalized" people or the newly independent nations persisted in their quest for identity. The colony internalized the sense of inferiority and developed an identity by turning to imitation to become equal during this time.

The narrative of *By the Sea* revolves around two Zanzibari men who are rocked by the realization of their lost reality in the maelstrom of time, in addition to being a tale of love and treachery. The topic revolves around two men who are struggling to live their lives and have only recently come to terms with the impact of the challenges they faced on their way to England. How can a defenseless man, in whom silence is the only source of comfort, live a long and healthy life in a foreign land? The evolution of identity from the modern era to the hybridity of post-colonial people reflects a shift toward multiculturalism and diverse identities since the 1990s. However, this diversity of identities shows the nature of personal construction that defies control under colonial rule.

The study's conclusion explores the lives and narratives of the two protagonists in Abdulrazak Gurnah's *By the Sea* from a post-colonial standpoint, addressing Frantz Fanon's concept of identity crisis. Throughout the novel, the characters' inner monologues and actions are reflections of the crisis they are going through. The crisis has made it easier to understand the underlying traumas and refugee behaviors. In Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks*, the effects of colonial influence on black or colonized people's awareness are discussed. The terms "mimicry" and "sense of belonging," as used by Bhabha, are used in the analysis to explain the identity crisis brought on by the inferiority of exploited communities. Because of this study, one can observe that Saleh's silence illustrates the concept of identity crisis to the reader as a passive form of resistance.

In addition to being a tale of love and treachery, *By the Sea* also follows the tale of two Zanzibari men who are rocked by the realization that their reality has been lost in the maelstrom of time. the topic is two men who are struggling to live their lives and have only recently come to terms with the impact of the challenges

they faced on their way to England, on their identities, and their pasts haunting them. How can a defenseless man, in whom silence is his only source of comfort, live a long and healthy life in a foreign land? This shows the influence of colonial powers on personal recollection. Through Saleh's narration, Gurnah discusses the cultural identity and the tension between mimicry and the conservation of one's inheritance. The novel also follows Latif Mahmud who deals with his cultural identity as he lives in England like Saleh. Both characters embody hybrid identities with the blending of colonizer and colonized culture.

Within a post-colonial context, *By the Sea* portrays the identity crisis the protagonists face to reconcile their cultural heritage under the pressure of hybridity. Saleh's escaping from oppression by Zanzibari authority and his attempts to seek refuge in England bring to discussion the burdens of displacement and discrimination experienced by refugees throughout their journeys to the host countries.

The protagonists in *By the Sea* also face a colonial educational system that seeks to erase indigenous cultures and impose European values even after the independence of Zanzibar. Saleh's exposure to British schooling leads him to reject his heritage in favor of Western ideals at the beginning. Despite the social exclusion in both Zanzibar and England, Saleh finally restores his roots by resolving his familial disputes with Latif. Latif's story shows the struggles for cultural identity, as he deals with life as a British-educated professor while feeling disconnected from his Swahili heritage. His experiences show the internal conflict faced by those caught in two cultures. The search for identity starts when one cannot determine to which culture, they belong the most. This idea is stressed by post-colonial thinkers like Edward Said who emphasizes that:

Yet just as human beings make their history, they also make their cultures and ethnic identities. No one can deny the persisting continuities of long traditions, sustained habitations, national languages, and cultural geographies, but there seems no reason except fear and prejudice to keep insisting on their separation and distinctiveness as if that was all human life was about (Said, 2012, p. 332).

Throughout the novel, Gurnah emphasizes the importance of storytelling as a means of reclaiming independence. Characters like Saleh and Latif use narrative to confront their traumas and reconcile their hybrid identities, creating a third space where they can find their sense of self. The novel explores the experiences of immigrants and refugees and focuses on themes such as ethnic cleansing, displacement, and the struggle for identity. It shows the diverse motivations behind migration, including seeking economic opportunities or escaping natural disasters. Despite their different backgrounds, migrants share a common desire to find acceptance and be themselves in their new environments.

J.J. Bola's *No Place to Call Home* discusses the experiences of refugees' lives in England. In the novel, the protagonists are both alienated from their homeland and unwelcome in their new residence in London. England is shown in both novels to represent an unhomey space that casts people away and exiles them, although it pretends to be a place of inclusiveness. This way of deconstructing the big image portrayed by the media for England as an inclusive place cannot be done without the perspective of post-colonialism. The post-colonial approach doesn't focus on the voice of the authority and control, rather it focuses on the voice of the marginalized people.

The novel revolves around the concepts of home, identity, and the sense of belonging whether in the motherland or the country of refuge. The novel focuses on the difficulties faced by the immigrants in exile while they wait for legal documentation from British authorities to secure their residence in the UK. The novel is set against the political atrocities in the Congo. The journey of the characters reflects the difficulties facing refugees leaving their homeland. Despite aspirations for a better life in London, they encounter obstacles to integration and establishing a sense of belonging. Throughout the novel, the narrator slowly explores the tragedies and atrocities that faced people in Congo under the regime of the Marshal. The novel makes it clear that these people immigrated only because they had no other option and not because they wanted to change their country of residence. However, they are not met with welcoming people upon their arrival. In his *Location of Culture*, Homi Bhabha (2012) stresses the fact that living or being a descendant of multicultural origin makes people resort to living in a third space that belongs to no specific

identity. In this case, migrants and refugees can create a space that transcends geographical limits and that would be the first step towards international culture:

The theoretical recognition of the split-space of enunciation may open the way to conceptualising an international culture, based not on the exoticism of multiculturalism or the diversity of cultures, but on the inscription and articulation of culture's hybridity. It is the in-between space that carries the burden of the meaning of culture, and by exploring this Third Space, we may elude the politics of polarity and emerge as the others of ourselves (Bhabha, 2012, p. 56).

Jean and his father, Papa, try to assimilate into their new surroundings while preserving their Congolese identity. However, Jean's friendship with his English friend James complicates his quest for identity as he deals with cultural disparities. Their bond shows the importance of family when losing companionship in displacement. Bola emphasizes systematic discrimination faced by refugees in the UK. Despite legal protections, negative portrayals in the media contribute to xenophobia and rejection of refugees. The othering of refugees overshadows the humanitarian crises pushing people to leave their homelands.

The novel explores the concept of "alterity," in which specific factions are marginalized and perceived as inferior by the community. This prejudice endures in supposedly forward-thinking communities, resulting in convictions and customs of isolation. The personas in the story originate from diverse origins. They struggle to establish themselves in British society.

In this novel, language emerges as a significant part of the refugee experience, as refugees deal with learning new languages while preserving their native tongue. Thus, *No Place to Call Home* is a detailed account of the struggles of refugees and their families. Bola captures the issues of identity, belonging, and the pursuit of a home after departing the homeland. Language acts as an obstacle for migrants who encounter challenges in communication and comprehension. Therefore, themes of homelessness and unbelonging fill the storyline as the Ntanga family deals with a yearning for their native land.

Post-colonial writers explore the consequences of colonialism on native populations by depicting the disruption of identity. Colonization creates a sense of alienation that results in unstable and shifting identities in third-world countries after liberation. The portrayal of identity and home in post-colonial literature reflects a quest for origins, roots, and belonging because individuals deal with the issues of the aftermath of colonialism and the sudden freedom of their country. *By the Sea* and *No Place to Call Home* are both set in the UK and both deal with the issues of identity formation and the struggles of adapting to a new culture. However, *By the Sea* tackles the issues of immigration and adaptation for the generations who immigrated to a different country and are torn between the two cultures that they relate to. On the other hand, *No Place to Call Home* depicts refugees who are forced to leave in an attempt to save their lives from dictatorship and military danger. They have no choice but to settle and assimilate in the new land. The characters' biggest struggle in this novel is not how to assimilate but how to present themselves in a way that makes them acceptable and welcome in their new land because they have lost all the ties to their place of origin. These novels show the difference between the experiences of Immigrants and those of refugees even if they were in the same land together.

It is necessary to stress that the study has faced several limitations. First, the novels are limited. This study does not focus on all the novels written by immigrants or about immigrants in England. It rather focuses on samples that can be used to be generalized. These samples prove to be beneficial in the study of immigrants' experience in England as they give voice to those who are not usually heard through the media. The second limitation that the study faces is the number of theories that are used to explain these novels. For instance, it does not include feminist post-colonialism or critical race theory. It rather uses only the post-colonial theory, which focuses on the experience of the colonized versus the colonizer. The third and most important limitation in the study is faced by the researcher about the second novel in the analysis, which is *No Place to Call Home*. This novel is quite recent. It was published in 2017, and it is barely studied by anyone. The contribution of this thesis is that it gives an in-depth analysis of this novel, even though it is not yet presented in academic studies. There were very few newspaper essays that focused on this novel, and almost no article or book that has studied it before.

This study, with its generalizations and limitations, is one step forward for other writers and researchers who want to tackle the post-colonial theory or the selected authors and novels that have been studied here. However, the findings of the study can be enriched and become more relevant by extending them by adding different theoretical perspectives and different literary works, so the findings can be more generalizable. Also, researchers and academics can take the results that are found in this thesis and use them for further research and analysis in the future. Especially concerning immigrants in England, as England has been home to different nationalities, ethnicities, and races throughout the ages.



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