

The Diaspora Compromise in Black Diasporic Literature

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Abstract: The quest for a “home” and an “identity” has dominated the Black Diasporic Literature. Home is problematised consequent upon the endless search for identity or roots. There has been either a psychological or a physical quest for a home. And the diaspora who finds himself on the fringes of his diasporic location is eventually haunted by an acute sense of exile, alienation and homelessness. This experience of the African diaspora is at best described as the state of exile, homelessness and a perpetual wandering or endless search for a home and an identity that always ends up in a cultural hybridity or Diaspora Compromise. Maya Angelou’s *All God’s Children Need Traveling Shoes* and Samuel Selvon’s *The Lonely Londoners* are engaged with the motifs of “home, exile and homelessness,” as the consequence of the Diaspora Compromise.

Keywords: Home, Exile, Homelessness, Diaspora, Diasporic Literature.

1. INTRODUCTION

This study has engaged the Black Diasporic Literature in the examination of the narrative of the Historical and Contemporary Diasporic experiences of the African descent and the people of colour away from their homelands where they are subjected to different kinds of harsh treatments and different forms of discriminations. It is also an attempt at analysing the narratives of the search for identity and home, which often results in cultural hybridity as well as the Diaspora Compromise as it affects the lives of the individual character of the African Diasporas involved in the endless search for an identity as well as a place to call a “home”. This study takes on an African-American and a British Diaspora; one was born in the diaspora and the other, African born. Sydoine Moudouma Moudouma (2009:261) postulates that the diaspora concerned here falls broadly into two categories. He notes that Paul Tiyambe Zeleza identifies these two as “historical diaspora” and “contemporary diaspora.” The historical diaspora stands for the “diaspora of enslavement” while the “contemporary diaspora” stands for “the diaspora of colonialism and neo-colonialism” (263). The African Diaspora also includes the Old diaspora created by the Atlantic slave trade as averred by Falola Toyin (2013:2), who are also referred to as Historical Diaspora by other scholars like Harris Joseph, Cohen Robin and others, and the Contemporary Diasporas whom Falola as well referred to as the New diaspora, “transnationalists,” and “recent migrants,” are equally regarded as Contemporary diaspora also by other renowned scholars like Harris and Cohen to mentioned but these two.

The appraisal and the explication of the experiences of the state of Exile, Home and Homelessness of the diaspora- born and the African or Trinidadian born, form the basis of this discourse. The concern of this study is that the Diasporas should not be doubly displaced, nor found living on the fringes of their diasporic host community, but rather become hybridized and compromised by what they cannot change, that is, their identity as mongrels, victims of cultural limbo or mimicry, which is the Diaspora Compromise.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study has employed textual analysis, which comprises an interpretive as well as a comparative approach as its methodology. In this approach the texts are central to the analysis. What Eustace Palmer posits as “life and pattern” as an approach on how works of fiction should be analysed in *Studies on the English Novel* supports the methodology adopted in this paper. The foregoing approach therefore, serves as the parameter for the study of home, exile and homelessness as the product of the diaspora compromise in Maya Angelou’s *All God’s Children Need Travelling Shoes* and Samuel Selvon’s *The Lonely Londoners* and other selected texts for this study.

3. DISCUSSION

Home and Exile

3.1 Maya Angelou’s *All God’s Children Need Travelling Shoes*

It is the interrogation of the experiences of the African Diaspora as deployed by writers like Maya Angelou, Samuel

Selvon, V.S. Naipaul, Alex Haley, Doris Jean Austin, Buchi Emecheta and Michelle Cliff as well as Braithwaite Edward that underscores the explications of the Diaspora Compromise in this study on "Home, Exile and Homelessness."

Maya Angelou as an African Diaspora and a Victim Diaspora is depicted in her *All God Children Need Traveling Shoes* as one who is driven by a sense of disillusionment. As an African-American woman in America, she strives to be both European and Black. This experience Du Bois describes thus:

The tragedy of the African Diaspora is the fact that he is caught between two opposing and strange cultural blocks-African and Euro-American-which constitute what W.E.B. Du Bois calls "double consciousness," or "his striving to be both European and black" for which he is neither (Du Bois, 19.. 14).

Angelou has vividly epitomized the tragedy of the African Diaspora as one who is torn in-between two worlds: the American and the African. She is a victim of Du Bois' "double consciousness" seen trying to be both a European and an African lady. An excerpt from the text under study is illustrative of this dilemma:

She gathered the dangling strings and pulled them tightly together. Her fingers moved quickly over my head. After a few minutes she picked up scissors from a stool and with a few snips, removed the last hanging strings. 'Now look. See yourself, and tell me.' I looked in the mirror and was relieved that I looked like every other Ghanaian woman. My hair was pulled tightly into small neat patches and the triangular designs of tan scalp and black hair was as exact as the design in tweed cloth (Angelou, 1987:41-42).

Oripeloye Henry's notion of home and exile is clearly stated below in a bid to clarify the concept:

Exile conjures a painful separation from one's home. It could be voluntary or involuntary, internal or external but the general markers- trauma and danger- are always accompanying facts. Exile has the capacity of producing fantasies and longings for the homeland in the same way that the diasporic communities are attuned to the homeland through collective memory. While in exile, the ancestral homeland becomes their true home and a place of eventual return; they are also committed to the maintenance of their group consciousness as defined by the bond with the homeland (Oripeloye, 2011:92).

The above passage sums up the experiences of the diaspora, the exiled, homeless and the alienated. The painful forceful separation of Angelou's ancestors and her voluntary separation from America are portrayed in this text. It is obvious also from the text that while in exile in America, Africa or Ghana in this case, becomes the African-American's "true home" where they eventually returned to. Angelou's eventual return to Ghana attests to this fact. "We

had come to Africa from our varying starting places and with myriad motives, gaping with hungers, some more ravenous than others, and we had little tolerance for understanding being ignored. At least we wanted someone to embrace us and maybe congratulate us because we had survived. If they felt the urge, they could thank us for having returned." Angelou's view of home is also expressed in these lines: "We, for I counted myself in that company, felt that we would be the first accepted and once taken in and truly adopted, we would hold the doors open until all black Americans could step over our feet, enter through the hallowed portals and come home at last" (Angelou, 1987:23-24).

In an attempt to further analyse Angelou's novel entitled: *All God's Children Need Traveling Shoes*; a valid question such as this is asked: What challenges confront the African-American and Caribbean Diaspora in their quest for a home in the texts under study? "The visitors looked disapprovingly at us all. The need to believe in Africa's maternal welcome was painfully obvious. They didn't want to know that they had not come home, but had left one familiar place of painful memory for another strange place with none" (Angelou, 1987:44). Home can be a problematized term as seen in these words: "They didn't want to know they had not come home." This statement agrees with Spivak's view in Rath, that home for the people on the margin [is] as 'that which we cannot want... It stands for a safe place, where there is no need to explain oneself to outsiders; it stands for community' (Rath, 2006:1). Home can be deduced from the foregoing lines as "another place of painful memory," where the diaspora is oppressed, segregated against and alienated or exiled; it could mean a strange place where none of the above listed challenges seemingly exist. The African-American and the Caribbean Diasporas find it very difficult to fit into the "two selves" and even the "three selves" as in the case of the Caribbeans who are worse hit by the effects of cultural and identity fragmentations on the Islands as a result of the aftermath of slavery and the middle passage experiences.

It is expedient to reiterate that the leitmotif of *All God's Children Need Travelling Shoes* is about "Home Coming;" from America to Ghana in Africa. Where Ghana serves as a home to the African-Americans who had returned home; to where for the first time the colour of her skin is seen as something that is normal. Angelou, in her novel recounted the excitements of the homecoming; "We were black Americans in West Africa, where for the first time in our lives the color of our skin was accepted as correct and normal" (Angelou, 1987:1). To Angelou, Ghana or Africa by extension is home, where the Victim Diaspora is unconditionally accepted as a brother or sister.

I arrived at the residency. Bahnti Williamson was waiting. Ooh, Auntie Maya, welcome home.! She smiled, showed a pretty set of small, white teeth, and stretched her arms to me. 'Ooh, Auntie Maya, how we have been anxious to see you. Ooh, Auntie.' She turned her baby-filled belly to the side so that we could embrace, and I felt at home (Angelou, 1987:195).

By this experience Angelou finds a place and a people who do not discriminate against her; but welcome her as a sister or as one of them, and she felt pretty much at home,

perhaps for the first time in her life. And in another occasion there was a paradigm shift to this homecoming experience that made her states that:

I heard ‘American Negro.’ Still the woman’s face showed disbelief. Mr. Adadevo looked at me and said, ‘Sister, she thinks you are someone else. Do you have your American passport with you?’ (Angelou, 1987:223).

They are sure you are descended from those stolen mothers and fathers. That is why they mourn. Not for you but for their lost people. ... Once I had been taken for a Bambara, and cared for by other Africans as they would care for a Bambara woman. Nana’s family of Ahantas claimed me, crediting my resemblance to a relative as proof of my Ahanta background. And here in my last days in Africa, descendants of a pillaged past saw their history in my face and heard their ancestors speak through my voice (ibid:226).

The foregoing episode beyond every shadow of a doubt convince Angelou that she has truly come home, to where she is welcome and accepted; and above all, where she so resembles her slave ancestors that were sold and taken away as slaves to Europe.

The idea of home in Emecheta’s *The New Tribe* as argued by Amos Bivan (2012:27) is beyond the physical home. This fact is depicted when Julia decides to run away from ‘home’ [Liverpool] after discovering that she is pregnant, while Chester, Emecheta’s protagonist also leaves home in search of ‘home’ or his roots in Nigeria. The idea about home or where home is, is very confusing to the African American. At one instance Ghana [Africa] was home: “We have come home,” (Angelou, 1987:19). At another is this expression of disillusionment: “I suspect we’ll all be home soon. Africa was here when we arrived and it’s not going anywhere” (ibid: 213). The idea that home is beyond the physical is captured thus: “Don’t care ain’t got no home” (ibid:121) and “my home is over Jordan” (ibid:227) equally attest to that submission. Angelou who also left home in America in search of home in Africa [Ghana] eventually left Ghana back to America, which she had left by saying that:

If the heart of Africa still remained allusive, my search for it had brought me closer to understanding myself and other human beings. The ache for home lives in all of us, the safe place where we can go as we are and not be questioned. It seemed that I had gotten all Africa had to give me. I had met people and made friends (Angelou, 1987:214). My mind was made up. I would go back to the United States as soon as possible (Angelou:1987:215). I drank with each party, and gave and received generous embraces, but I was not sad departing Ghana (Angelou, 1987:228).

3.1.2 Samuel Selvon’s *The Lonely Londoners*

The Lonely Londoners is a 1956 novel by the Trinidadian author Samuel Selvon. Its publication marked the first

literary work focusing on the poor, working-class blacks in the beat writer tradition following the enactment of the British Nationality Act of 1948. The book details the life of West Indians in Post-World War II London, a city that immigrants consider the “Centre of the world.” [Ramchand, 1997:1] Covering a period of about three years, the novel has no plot in the usual sense of the term. Rather, it follows a limited number of characters of the “Wind rush, generation,” all of them “Coloureds,” through their daily lives in the capital. The various threads of action form a whole through the unifying central character of Trinidadian Moses Aloetta, a veteran émigré who, after more than ten years in London; has not achieved anything of note and worse for him homesickness was increasing as he got older. Every Sunday morning “The boys,” many a recent arrival among them, come together in his rented room to trade stories and inquire after those whom they have not seen for a while. Not surprisingly, their lives mainly consist of work (or looking for a job) and various petty pleasures. Dating young white women is the top of the list, as is hanging around prostitutes (Street prostitution was legal in London until 1959).

The Lonely Londoners presents an analogous picture of the hankering for home of the African- American diaspora as reflected in Angelou’s novel too. It captures the experiences of young Caribbean men who leaved their impoverished West Indian towns to seek jobs and fortunes in Britain only to encounter hostility, loneliness and demeaning jobs because of their race. Moses Aloetta has been living in London for ten years by the time the story begins. He has seen hundreds of his fellow Caribbeans teeming in the old Britain, and is often confronted, with the task of helping many of the first timers to find jobs and settle down. As the story is woven from character to character, we are confronted with the rejection these young men experience from employers because they are black, the difficulties of adjusting to life in the megacity of London, the loneliness that Europe’s reckless life forces them into, the hunger, the hard work with low wages, and the poor conditions under which they live. Strange enough, none of them wants to return home to the Caribbean like the characters in *A Squatter’s Tale* and *Cliff’s No Telephone to Heaven*. Galahad, Harris, Tolroy, Lewis, Bart, Five Big City- All experience difficult times and come face to face with open resentment from the whites, but none would go back. Even Moses who often thinks of returning home, like Boy Savage, in *Cliff’s No Telephone to Heaven* never does.

The Lonely Londoners like *The New Tribe* portrays British immigrants hankering after their homeland; this fact is epitomized by Moses in *The Lonely Londoners*: “When he get to Waterloo he hop off and went in the station, right away in that big station he had a feeling of homesickness that he never felt in the nine- ten years in this country” (Selvon, 1978:4). The aforementioned quotation shows that home to Moses is back in Trinidad or West Indies, which now appeals to him with a very strong passion and he then contemplates returning home.

For the old Waterloo is a place of arrival and departure, is a place where you see people crying goodbye and kissing welcome, and he hardly have time to sit down on a bench before this feeling of nostalgia hit him and he was surprise (4).

As is also the case with Angelou’s *All God’s Children Need Traveling Shoes* and Selvon’s *The Lonely Londoners*,

Emecheta's *Kehinde* and *The New Tribe* show the twist in the rapport of the émigrés and their offspring to life in Africa. And how Africa [Ghana, West Indies or Nigeria] is eventually removed as home and superseded by the mother country as put forward by Sougou. Worthy of note is the paradigm shift in Kehinde's perspective of "home," as captured in the statement: "My dreams about home are confused. I haven't a clear vision of what I'm supposed to be looking for there" (22).

To Michelle Cliff's character Clare, in *No Telephone to Heaven*, her notion of home, exile and her state of homelessness is encapsulated thus: The complexity of the reality... except a fake dread that she belongs nowhere... she moves. Emigrated, long travel, the zoologist would have recorded. She belongs in these hills (Cliff, 91). These lines portray Clare as a wanderer who belongs to nowhere but the hills [Jamaica]. Though a mix race; her being in Europe has not given her a home and an acceptance, a place to fit in. Boy Savage: "Her father call this their adopted country" (91). So the whole notion about home is confusing as seen in the foregoing lines. Kitty, Savage's wife finally concluded that: "When Boy come to his senses he would return to Jamaica and the family would be one again" (Cliff, 97). This declaration was made before she returned to Jamaica; and is consequent upon the fact that the notion about home is very complicated to the bi-racial, Clare, who could not fit into life in Europe having left Jamaica her home.

The concept of home is very tricky and confusing; anywhere seems to be home. When the notion of home is illusive to the Diaspora living on the margin of the exilic location, anywhere then becomes a home. When Esther in *The New Tribe* eventually finds Chester lying in the bed in the Lagos hospital, recovering from severe dehydration and malaria, she called out:

Chester, Chester, you're awake! I've been so worried about you! She said quietly. 'What are you doing here?' Chester whispered. 'How did you know I was here?' 'I'm here to take you home. Jimoh told me where you were, and I came as soon as I could. I've come to take you as soon as you're well enough.' Talking was an effort for Chester, but he said faintly: 'I am home.' Esther was quiet for a moment, then she said firmly: No Chester. Africa is no longer our home. We have stayed away in the market too long, as Nigerians say. Our home is Liverpool!' (Emcheta, 200:144-5).

Contrary to Moses' view of home, Selvon painted another picture of home: "Moses stand up out of the way with his hands in his pocket, not interested in the passengers, only waiting for this fellar Henry to come so he could get back home out of the cold and fog" (Selvon, 1978:6). The next lines support this view of home as juxtaposed to the earlier one: "watching these fat pigeons strut about the park, the idea come to Galahad to snatch one and take it home and roast it" (Selvon, 1978:117). And again the first view of the notion home is brought up again: "Boy, if I was sure that I would get a good job in Trinidad, and I had my passage back home, you think I will stay here?" "Boy, you remember what Christmas does be like back home?" (ibid:128).

Where then is home and where is exile? If home may possibly be located anywhere, then exile too could be located

anywhere. Terhemba Shija's (2006) submission, at this juncture, is very apt. If home is a place of physical torture and deprivation, then the exilic site is not and cannot be expected to be free from such experience. Perhaps this explains why Ojaide expresses his view of home in the following words: "It no longer matters where anyone may choose to live in the world." This assertion is true because, "the hurt at home" with "the pain outside" are almost the same. This state of home, exile and homelessness are compelled by the pull and push factors; in *No Telephone to Heaven*, the cardinal reason for being in exile or homeless is expressed below:

The Savages loaded their possessions in the car that very afternoon and began their journey northward, New York City their destination. Economy had dictated this method of escape... He would put the immediate past behind him. This was a new start in a new world. How could they not be thrilled he assured her by its prospect? (Selvon, 1978:53-54).

The Lonely Londoners is not explicit on why the Caribbeans or the West Indians moved in masse to Britain. Perhaps, like Cliff portrayed in *No Telephone to Heaven*, abject poverty and disillusionment characterize the life style in the Caribbean Islands. The characters see Britain as a land of promise, full of opportunity, and jobs; a land that will make them forget their immediate past of the harsh and cruel life in the Islands. Tanty in the novel succinctly conjectures that "... they say that it have more work in England and better pay" (Selvon, 1978:14). These words reveal that the Islands are rife with unemployment and very little pay. These and other factors could have prompted the Victim or Contemporary Diasporas to relocate to exile. And subsequently, are astride culturally and psychologically and find it very difficult to come to terms with the concept home, nor find it easy to return home hence the term home defies a clear definition to both the Victim and Contemporary Diasporas.

The experience of Moses at the Waterloo as depicted by Selvon revealed a form of exile being experienced by Moses: "and he hardly had time to sit down on a bench before this feeling of nostalgia hit him and he was surprise" (Selvon, 1978:4); this feeling of home- sickness that he never felt in nine- ten years in this country shows his being estranged from his history and the rich culture of the Caribbean people. Therefore, the Waterloo invariably becomes a reminiscence of the estranged history and culture of the West Indies or the Trinidadians that:

They like to see the familiar faces, they like to watch their countrymen coming off the train, and sometimes they might spot somebody they know: 'Aye Watson! What the hell you doing in Bri'n boy? Why you didn't write me you was coming? And they would start big old talk with the travelers, finding out what happening in Trinidad, in Grenada, in Barbados, in Jamaica and Antigua, what is the latest calypso number, if anybody dead, and so on, even asking strangers question they can't answer, like if they know Tanty Simmons who living Labasse in Port of Spain, or a fellar name

Harrison working in the Red House (Selvon, 1978:4).

The foregoing discourse has attempted discussing Exile, Home and Homelessness as the dominant conditions of the Historical Diasporas as well as the Contemporary Diasporas that have rendered them homeless even when they are supposed to be at home with their motherland Africa.

4.1. The Diasporic Hybridity

Salman Rushdie in *Imaginary Homelands* supports the course of cultural hybridity in exile when he says: We are Hindus who have crossed the black water; we are Muslims who eat pork. ... Our identity is at once plural and partial. Sometimes we feel that we straddle two cultures; at other times, that we fall between two stools (15). This statement clearly pictures the state of a plural identity of the Muslim Hindus in Diaspora who are victims of cultural limbo because they are orchestrated from home and are in exile and have no other choice than to compromise their original identity. Oripeloye (2011:92) argues that Salman in the explication of the experiences of exilic condition as an exiled writer has come to terms with the phenomenon of cultural transplantation and cross-pollination as infinite possibilities. This shows that both the Blacks and Whites are hybrid; this is because culture is dynamic, and when two cultures interact there will always be changes and modifications in the two cultures. Barack Obama's assertion about his origin as an African American in Amos (2012:22) confirms this position: "we are sort of a mongrel people... I mean we're all kinds of mixed up," he further reiterates that "[t]hat's actually true of white people as well, but we just know more about it." The foregoing argument shows the helplessness of both the Whites and the Blacks in the face of cultural clash, where no culture remains unadulterated. This experience always results to a state of acculturation, and consequently producing a mongrel or a hybrid of the two: African and Euro- American. Bhabha corroborates this argument by saying that "all forms of culture are continually in a process of hybridity" (2). When people of different cultures interact, all of the cultures involved are affected in one way or the other by producing a new brand of the two that are neither the one nor the other. Hybridity therefore, stems from a mixture of two things, in this case of two cultures: the colonized and the colonizer in intense interactions. In essence cultural interactions at any level between different races bring about the production of a different species that is not completely a replica of the cultures involved in the intense interactions.

Commenting on the post-colonial discourse, Shija (2006:211) has earlier postulated that "the continual fluctuation between desiring one thing as well as desiring its opposite or binary opposites that are structurally related to each other is described as ambivalence." It is this hankering for home and exile that makes the immigrant to become ambivalent, and consequently results in the Diaspora compromise having been hybridized. This hankering after is acutely prompted by identity crisis or exile. Identity as intoned by Du Bois in Emenyi Abang is a fundamental issue for the African- American people as well as the Caribbean people because their greatest challenge is to merge the "two-selves" that is, African and American or Caribbean and British identity into a functional personality in the United States or Europe. Du Bois calls this tension, "double consciousness" (Abang, 110). The inability of the diaspora to

fit into the "two-selves" thereby, becoming a functional personality in the exilic location is his greatest challenge that often results in a hybridized and compromised Diaspora. The foregoing experience therefore, is what Whitla (2010:2) glibly summarises in the following words: "When the boundaries of nations are re-drawn after conquest, the question of living on the margin is crucial for survival and for determining origins. When people are scattered, the supposed original unity is broken up into dispersion, a diaspora."

Angelou's novel as well as Selvon's, depicts the theme of hybridity which sometimes is referred to as acculturation or syncretism. Jatau (2005:43) views acculturation as the dominant influence of a foreign culture in contemporary positional societies. The pervading influence of Anglo-American culture on the lives of African Americans in the process of assimilation registers this notion of acculturation in postcolonial discourse. Postcolonial discourses have continued to engage and interrogate the effects of the Anglo-American culture on the African Americans as well as the Caribbeans as depicted in Angelou's and Selvon's novels respectively. To Dobie (2009:210), the interaction of cultures creates blended ones, mixtures of the native and colonial, a process called hybridity or syncretism characterized by tensions and change; this process is dynamic, interactive, and creative. This assertion supports the ongoing argument that no culture is pure, static and unaffected where two or more cultures interfaced. The attempt at the textual explications on hybridity in this study finds its bearing from the above hypothesis that interaction between cultures produces mongrels, or a hybrid of the White and Black cultures.

As illustrated in the next statement, the Victim or Contemporary Diaspora still holds tightly to both the values of their motherland and mother country. This is consequent upon their state of unhomeliness which Bhabha argues "is the sense of being culturally displaced, of being caught between two cultures and yet "at home" in neither of them. It is felt by those who lack a clearly defined cultural identity (cited from Dobie, 217); where the Diasporas try to be Euro-American and Africans at the same time in their dress code and every other aspect of their life styles, as Angelou's text will buttress:

I looked in the mirror and was relieved that I looked like every other Ghanaian woman. My hair was pulled tightly into small neat patches and the triangular designs of tan scalp and black hair was as exact as the design in tweed cloth (Angelou, 1987:42). I had put on just learned airs along with my African cloth, pretending to an exotic foreign poise I had not earned nor directly inherited (ibid:191).

The above excerpts show the Victim Diaspora who is an African American trying to look like one of the Ghanaians in her appearance while at the same time remains an American Negro. Selvon's characters in *The Lonely Londoners* who happen to be the Contemporary Diasporas are not different from their Victim Diaspora as depicted above. King Aribisala in the same vein asserts that:

In the case of the West Indian, the heritage of ancestral enslavement engendered significant cultural dislocation and self alienation. Cut off from his known tradition, customs and values, the West

Indian was left in a cultural limbo, caught in a proverbial middle passage between African culture he lost, and the European one he had yet to gain (Selvon, 1978:40).

Harris' estrangement from his West Indian folks during the fete he organized and his inability to gain the European culture [girls he took to the fete] has shown him as a West Indian left in a cultural limbo; not fully with the white girls and not completely with his people because one of the folks, old Five that he referred to as: "You boys always make a disgrace of yourselves, and make me ashamed of myself" (ibid: 111), is seen dancing with Harris' girl. As a result of his inability to be both [West Indian and European], as the next statement presents it, and "now he vex that Five dancing with one of his girls" (ibid: 111) expresses his frustration to Moses: "Well, I don't like it," Harris say. "The next time I have a fete, attendance will be by invitation only (111). So Harris is not with the girls nor is he with his West Indian folks; this act itself is yet another kind of exile from one's race.

The entire foregoing illustrations are direct consequences of the mimicry suffered by the West Indians given their state of cultural dislocation and alienation as the next excerpt will be illustrative of. Mimicry is an imitation of dress, language, behavior, even gestures- instead of resistance. In *Black Skin, White Masks*, published in 1952, Frantz Fanon, a psychiatrist, reasoned that the inferiority complex created in black people who have accepted the culture of another country as their own will cause them to imitate the codes of their colonizers. As the colonizer both wants and fears that the colonized will be like him because the imitation honors and, at the same time, undermines the "authoritative discourse" of colonialism (Dobie, 2009:209); Angelou's protagonist in *All God's Children Need Traveling Shoes* equally captures this state of the mimicry of the Victim Diaspora. Selvon's Harris aptly portrays this state of mimicry in their bid to imitate the colonizer's dress or behaviour in the following lines:

Harris is a fellar who like to play ladedda, and he like English customs and thing, he and he does be polite and say thank you and he does get up in the bus and the tube to let woman sit down, which is a thing Englishman don't do. And when he dress, you think he is some Englishman going to work in the city, bowler and umbrella, and briefcase tug under his arm, with *The Times* fold up in the pocket so the name would show, and he walking upright like if is he alone who live in the world. Only thing, Harris face black (Selvon, 1978:103).

Consequent upon the mixture of identity and culture, Angelou allows Africanness to enter her through the eating of the African kinds of food; she is also involved in the making of African hair style and in the wearing of African clothes as will be shown below as was also illustrated above: "Come, we will eat foo foo and garden eggs" (Angelou, 1987:50) as invited by T. D. Bafoo; she also ate groundnut stew, garden egg stew, hot pepper soup, kenke, kotome, dukuno, etc (ibid:114). "I spent the afternoon eating with my fingers..." (ibid: 51), Angelou intones in her desire to Africanize her Americanness in Ghana, which is another form of mimicry of the African American. At another

instance Angelou joined the Ghanaians in "the annual harvest ritual" (ibid: 66) as chronicled below:

A flutter of white billowed over that excited scene. Thousands of handkerchiefs waving from thousands of black hands tore away my last reserve. I started bouncing with the entranced Ghanaians, my handkerchief high above my head, I waved and jumped and screamed, 'Nana- nana, nana- nana, nana- nana,' (ibid: 68).

She had to adopt the Ghanaians way of dressing as already depicted above on pages 42 and 191 respectively. Angelou's absorption of the diverse elements of Africanness constructs her as a product of hybridity, which Lavie and Swedenburg defined as: a construct with the hegemonic power relation built into its process of constant [sic] fragmented articulation. One minority can form alliances with another, based on experiences its heterogeneous membership partially shares, each in his or her fragmented identity, without trying to force all fragments to cohere into a seamless narrative before approaching another minority (10). Though she embraces the African identity and culture, Angelou still holds tight to her American identity and the culture in Ghana:

'I said, I'm pleased to meet you all.' Adae turned to her siblings and said knowingly, 'That's the way American Negroes speak. They say "you all."' She faced me again, while her brothers and small sisters examined me with obvious curiosity. Adae said, 'I'm pleased to meet you, Maya. Very pleased.' Keeping my voice low, I said, 'As you have noticed, I am an American Negro, and among my people children do not call their elders by their first names. A fifteen- year- old girl [Adae was 15] would call me Mrs. Angelou, or if she liked me and I agreed she would address me as Auntie Maya (Angelou, 1987:129).

The afore stated example portrays Angelou's state of mimicry, and one who is also a limbo, a victim of cultural dislocation and self alienation in her craving to find her root in Ghana. The next lines are yet another illustration of Angelou's state of hybridity; Africa and America as she argues:

Admittedly, my ancestors had come from Africa, but I was my own person from St. Louis, Arkansas and California, a member of a group which had successfully held a large and hostile nation at bay. Anyway, I had been minding my own business in my own house. I hadn't asked to come to pay homage to anybody. I walked past the tree over slippery mats and into the light. 'Nana? I am Maya Angelou, you sent for me (Angelou, 1987:120).

Angelou discovers that she will never be a genuine African, but a cultural limbo who tries to mimic the African culture. This is what underscores the compromise, when the Victim or Contemporary diaspora accepts that he or she cannot be a genuine Africa or a pure America or Briton, but a hybrid or a mongrel. The "hand" remains the "hand," the "head" remains the "head," just as the "eyes," "nose" or "mouth" and other parts are unique and indispensable of the

other parts of the entire body. This is where the Biblical Metaphor comes into play, when every race accepts its uniqueness without any form of conformity or uniformity. In the above excerpt, Angelou badly suffers from a cultural and language barrier as contained above and even in her interactions with the average Ghanaians. One can also argue that there is an injecting of the Blame Theory in the above quotation as it is also with *The Lonely Londoners* where the victim of cultural or racial chauvinism is blamed for his involvement in whatever happens to him in the location where he suffers the chauvinistic act. Here we can see Angelou putting the blame on the invitation given to her by Chief Nana: "Anyway, I had been minding my own business in my own house. I hadn't asked to come to pay homage to anybody" (Angelou, 1987:120). One can conjecture that Angelou could as well assert that after all, she didn't ask anybody to invite the African Americans to return to Ghana as it did happen during Nkrumah's regime. In Selvon's texts, Galahad is equally seen blaming his skin pigmentation for the racial discrimination he suffers in London:

And Galahad watch the colour of his hand, and talk to it, saying, 'Colour, is you that causing all this, you know. Why the hell you can't be white? You know is you that cause a lot of misery in the world. Is not me, you know, is you! I ain't do anything to infuriate the people and them, is you! Look at you, you so black and innocent, and this time so you causing misery all over the world!' (Selvon, 1978:77).

Ryan describes victim blaming as an ideology used to justify racism and social injustice against black people in the United States on page 51. The racists will always want to put the blame on the victims by blaming them for migrating to the mother country for whatever reason. Often times they forget that the oppressed are either victim of the pull or push factors, voluntary or forceful migration to the host community in Europe or America. There is often the shifting of blames by either the Victim or Contemporary Diasporas as the case of Angelou will support this position: "I blamed the entire continent and history for my malaise when the real reason was more pointedly specific and as personal as a migraine" (Angelou, 1987:163); Angelou heaps the blame on the entire continent and history, while Harris puts it on the colour [black] as being their predicaments for the racism they suffer in exile. Angelou gives a broader perspective by saying that "... the real reason was more pointedly specific and as personal as a migraine." After all, either of the victims is at liberty not to have traveled to the diasporic location where they are being segregated upon; though Angelou is a Victim Diaspora whose ancestors were forcefully uprooted from Africa, she was not forced to accept Nkrumah's invitation to return to Ghana in the first instance. Therefore, she shouldn't blame anybody for whatever unwelcome reception she might have received in Ghana, just as Selvon's characters who migrated voluntarily to Europe won't also have reasons to complain because they deserve what they get by relocating to Europe.

One can also conjecture that Selvon characters' ambivalence might be as a result of their state of disillusionment with both the motherland and the mother country. Migrating to Britain by the Caribbean migrants as suggested by Amos Bivan and Cheto Nanyam (2015:5) has not really changed the lot of the Caribbeans positively.

Moses complains of a leaking roof: "The houses around here are old and grey and weather beaten, walls cracking like the days of Pompeii, it ain't have no hot water, and in the whole street that Tolroy and them living in, none of the houses have bath. ... The street does be always dirty except if rain fall (Selvon, 1978:59-60). The foregoing expression shows the deplorable living situations of the Victim or Indenture Diaspora in their host community. Lack of decent accommodation and the inability of their white landlords to lease out their apartments to Blacks or the Colored as Galahad experienced above.

4.1.2 The Diasporic Ambivalence: A Paranomic View

Sougou (2002:13) firmly affirms that: The African Caribbean and African immigrants imagine or strive to preserve an identity with Africa, endeavoring likewise to keep alive the ties with the motherland and to come to terms with ambivalence. The above supposition justifies the discussion on the diasporic ambivalence in this study. The African Caribbean Diaspora and the African American Diaspora often struggle to keep ties with both the motherland and the mother country. Sougou further argues that "their turning to their homelands symbolically proves cathartic sometimes in the face of ostracism and other trials suffered in the mother country" (ibid:13). A very vivid description of a state of ambivalence in Cliff's *No Telephone to Heaven* is summarized in the following dialogue between Boy Savage and his daughter Clare: "Girl, do you want to labour forever as an outsider?" Clare's father asked her. "I don't know, Daddy" was her reply to the question for her quest for an identity in Europe. Her prompt response reveals her state of ambivalence in Europe having left Jamaica to find a place to belong. In Savage's intent to free his daughter Clare from her state of ambivalence, he further said that: "You are too much like your mother for your own good. You are an American now" (Selvon, 1978:109).

Another instance of the diasporic ambivalence is found in the next lines when Kitty, Boy Savage's wife finds it difficult to express her mind to the other white ladies as a black woman in the pool of white women, as Angelou puts it: "She wanted to tell the women what had prevailed, who she really was, but could not, and held back" (Cliff,77).

Emecheta's protagonist in *Kehinde* who has been living in London for eighteen years now, still regards Nigeria as her irrevocable home where she really belongs when she contemplates returning home: "Moreover, Nigeria was her country too. She could not have changed that much!" (Emecheta, 1994:47). The above episodes clearly show that Kehinde still clings to her Nigerian home and intends to return home as a been-to madam, even though her dreams about home [Nigeria] are confused. This state of ambivalence is also experienced by Michelle Cliff's characters in *No Telephone to Heaven* as illustrated above. Kehinde's ambivalence is further depicted in the next quotation as one who is no longer at home with her home [Nigeria]. In her home she is still feeling homesick; this sense of ambivalence reduces her to a ghost; and one who does not belong or fit into the picture at home:

Her eyes misted. She thought of Christmas shopping, which always used to annoy her, and longed for a brisk walk to Harrods, or Marks and Spencer's or Selfridges, just looking and buying little. She even felt

nostalgia for the wet stinking body-smell of the underground. She took hold of herself. Surely it was foolish to pine for a country where she should always be made to feel unwelcome. But her home coming had been nothing like the way she had dreamed of it... Africa of her dreams had been one of parties and endless celebrations, in which she, too would enjoy the status and respect of a been-to instead, she found herself once more relegated to the margins (Angelou, 1987:96-7).

Kehinde's experience according to Gregory Schneider as cited in Amos Bivan (2012:25) is an instance of cross-cultural displacement, 'a realization that she is neither Britain nor Nigerian' (Emecheta, 1994:25). The following statement also underscored Kehinde's diasporic ambivalence: "No, England no be my country, but I wan go back sha" (ibid:103).

Austin Jean's (1990:26) *Looking for Home* presents yet another strand of the Diasporic ambivalence:

Everybody was moving out the side room with faces showing anger, relief, indifference- but they all came to share Truselle's triumph. She still held Jesse's hand, patting it with her free hand that doubled as a wiper for the stream- tears that contradicted the wide smile on her face. Ollie Mae stood hugged on his other side, her head on his shoulder, occasionally lifting her head to plant a noisome kiss on his cheek.

4.2.1. Maya Angelou's *All God's Children Need Traveling Shoes*

Angelou's novel as observed by Vajime (2012:312) is more of a historical record of the real life of African American called "Revolutionist returnees" who had returned to Ghana in the late fifties and early sixties. It covers the period when the visionary leader Kwame Nkrumah extended a hand of fellowship to all Blacks who were oppressed to migrate to Ghana after he secured its independence in 1957. Many African Americans responded to this clarion call and *All God's Children Need Traveling Shoes* is a representation of their experience as they journeyed back to Africa [Ghana] in search of their roots and acceptance.

The discussion below uncovers the state of ambivalence of especially the Historical Diaspora who were forcefully uprooted from their motherland, Africa, and implanted in Euro-America, their host countries for many centuries of dehumanization, subjugations and alienations suffered by the Victim Diasporas.

Shija's (2006:211) view of ambivalence is that "the continual fluctuation between desiring one thing as well as desiring its opposite or binary opposites that are structurally related to each other is described as ambivalence." It is this hankering for home and exile that results in the immigrants' ambivalence towards the motherland and the mother country. The Victim Diaspora whose effort to find a home and acceptance is often shattered and consequently becomes ambivalent. Angelou's initial hope is that "They just might succeed in their search for the illusive Africa, which secreted itself when approached directly, like a rain forest on a moonless night. Africa might just deliver itself into

their hands because they matched its obliqueness (Angelou, 1987:47). But unfortunately, Africa did not deliver itself into their hands and their search for it becomes illusive, and eventually they become disillusioned and ambivalent as rendered below:

We drank gin and ginger ale when we could afford it, and Club beer when our money was short. We did not discuss the open gutters along the streets of Accra, the shacks of corrugated iron in certain neighborhoods, dirty beaches and voracious mosquitoes. And under no circumstances did we mention our disillusionment at being overlooked by the Ghanaians (Angelou, 1987:19).

The African American finds it hard to even talk about their disillusionment or challenges in Africa [Ghana]; given their state of ambivalence as this fact Angelou laments that:

Homesickness was never mentioned for a white nation so full of hate that it drove its citizens of color to madness, to death or to exile? How to confess even to one's own self, that our eyes, historically customed cars, and brown, black, beige, pink and white-skinned people, often ached for those familiar sights? (Angelou, 1987:132).

This expresses the major challenge of the Victim Diaspora who is doubly displaced. Here is a big challenge of the African- American, like his Caribbean counterpart, to fully identify with their exilic location and home. Their state of ambivalence is resulting from their being doubly displaced by wanting to straddle both worlds, Europe and Africa: "I gave up the keys and all resistance. I was either at home with friends, or I would die wishing that to be so" (ibid:113) as said by Angelou. The above lines glibly presents the tone of ambivalence in the African-American diaspora who has been dislocated, alienated and disillusioned with the real or imaginary home. The notion of the real home might be replaced by the imaginary one that is located somewhere and thereby compounding his state of ambivalence:

I shuddered to think that while we wanted that flag dragged into mud and sullied beyond repair, we also wanted it pristine, its white stripes, summer cloud white. Watching it wave in the breeze of a distance made us nearly choke with emotion. It lifted us up with its promise and broke our hearts with its denial (Angelou, 1987:140).

Though there is nostalgia for America, it is coloured with some bitterness, pains and hatred for its denial of the promises made to the Victim Diasporas and the heartbreak it has caused them. This ambivalence is finally intensified in the following words:

There was much to cry for, much to mourn, but in my heart I felt exalted knowing there was much to celebrate. Although separated from our languages, our families and customs, we had dare to continue to live. We had crossed the unknowable oceans in chains and had written its mystery into 'Deep River, my home is over Jordan.' Through the

centuries of despair and dislocation, we had been creative, because we faced down death by daring to hope (Angelou, 1987:127).

4.2.2. Samuel Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners*

Emecheta's *Gwendolen* as averred by Sougou insistently suggests the need for Africans and African Caribbeans to identify with a place to call a home outside the boundaries of Britain (14). Though the Contemporary Diaspora of the Caribbeans and Africans know that Africa is their root and have no difficulty in accepting this fact, in practical terms, the doubly displaced or dislocated African Caribbean and the African immigrants find it very hard to come to terms with this reality because of their state of ambivalence as depicted in the character of Galahad: 'You know,' Galahad say, 'last year I had a feeling to go back too, but I forget about it. It ain't have no prospects back home, boy' (Selvon, 1978:125).

The dialogue between Galahad and Moses reveals the state of ambivalence in Galahad's inconsistency and difficulty in taking a decision on whether or not to go back home or remain in Britain, which has not even bettered his lot in any significant measure. The next piece from *The Lonely Londoners* also articulates another form of ambivalence; the peak of the ambivalence in *The Lonely Londoners* is when:

The old Moses, standing on the banks of the Thames. Some-times he think he see some sort of profound realization in his life, as if all that happen to him was experience that make him a better man, as if now he could draw apart from any hustling and just sit down and watch other people fight to live. Under the kiff-kiff laughter, behind the ballad and the episode, the what-happening, the summer-is-hearts, he could see a great aimlessness, a great restless, swaying movement that leaving you standing in the same spot. As if a forlorn shadow of doom has fallen on all the spades in the country. As if he could see the black faces bobbing up and down in the millions of white, strained faces, everybody is hustling along the strand, the spades jostling in the crowd, bewildered, hopeless. As if on the surface, things don't look so bad, but when you go down a little, you bounce up a kind of misery and pathos and a frightening- what? He doesn't know the right word, but he has the right feeling in his heart. As if the boys laughing because they afraid to cry, they only laughing because to think too much about everything would be a big calamity- like how he here now, the thoughts so heavy like he unable to move his body (Selvon, 1978:138-139).

In sum, the Victim Diaspora and the Contemporary Diasporas' ambivalence is occasioned by the lack of home and being in exile that has hitherto rendered them incapable of identifying with the two or three worlds. The diasporic dilemma from the above discourse is systemic as illustrated in Cliff's *No Telephone to Heaven*: "When Boy Savage tries to get Clare enrolled in school in America, for example, they

were told that she will be held back for one year no matter her intelligence because third world country children develop differently from American children. The American system has no place for "bi-racial" students- a student is either black or white" (Cliff,76). Buttressing the above argument, Oyeghe (ny) states the conditions of the Blacks in Baldwin's *The Fire Next Time*, which contains two essays of unequal length, entitled "My Dungeon Shook. Letter to my Nephew on the One Hundreth Anniversary Of the Emancipation" and "Down at the Cross" to his nephew that the living conditions of the black people, their material and social deprivation which had elevated their stigma and emotional torment are conditions that are created by white people who have confined them to the ghettos to perish. Baldwin reiterates this notion by stating the brutal odds against his nephew thus:

You were born where you were born to face the future that you faced because you were black and for no other reason. The limits of your ambition were, thus, expected to be set out with brutal clarity, and in as many ways as possible that you were a worthless human being. You were not expected to aspire to excellence: you were expected to make peace with mediocrity (Baldwin, 21).

Oyeghe (ny:19-20) affirms that the appalling conditions that surround the existence of blacks in the United States are aimed [at] limiting their potentials, since the whites through the instrument of racism have defined with "brutal clarity" the height of the aspirations of black people. And these are people who have been classified by historical stereotypes and racial prejudices as a people without values and are intellectually retarded therefore they are not supposed to aspire to excellence. The inscriptions on the wall of the hotel in Cliff's novel like:

BUDED ON EARTH TO BLOOM IN HEAVEN... RACIAL SELF-RESPECT IS NOT BIGOTRY, in black ink on a white background promised, as if explaining the signpost beside it: YOU ARE IN KLAN Country (Cliff,58).

is deliberately intended to affect the psyche of the Contemporary Diaspora in exile who is seeking for a better life in Euro-America like the Savages, Moses and Galahads. The other kind of Diasporic Dilemma as is reflected in the person of Kitty is the inability of the Diaspora to fit into the mainstream life in the diasporic location(s) as presented in the following statement: "She lived divided, straining to adjust to this place where she seemed to float ..." (ibid:75). The diaspora is not stable or rooted in the mother country where she is implanted; she keeps floating at the surface of the host community where she finds herself.

The Diaspora had to compromise because of the effects of cross-cultural displacement, unhomeliness, cultural limbo and hybridity they suffer; not fully assimilated into the mother country, yet facing rejection and hostility by the motherland which often is the fallout of their living on the fringes of the everyday reality of the Euro-American, West Indian or the African society, therefore, '[developing] their own distinctive cultures which both preserve and often extend and develop their originary [sic] cultures' (qtd in Ashcroft Bill, et al. 70). It is proper to argue that the immigrants and the diaspora born, like the host members of

the diasporic community (the new tribe) all have certain things in common: A desire for something better, or self-fulfillment in life and their inability to achieve that which they crave for. This fact is reflected in the trajectory of the search motif. Maya's protagonist, Selvon's Moses, Napaul's Mr. Biswas, and Emecheta's Chester, like Julia all embark on a journey of self-discovery for a fulfilment in life because of the cultural dislocation or the unhomeliness which eventually leads them to hybridize and consequently compromise what they cannot change sequel to their ambivalent state.

The unending search motif and the difficulty of the emigrants to come to term with the prevailing reality in the diasporic scene, as well as the so called "home" often make them to compromise what they cannot change, their identity, as in the Biblical Metaphor, where the "hand" cannot be the "eye" or the "head," nor can the "hand" does the function of the "eye" or the "head" or "leg." This goes a long way to show the importance of unity in diversity in the human body and by extension, the human race. Where the diasporas in either of the spaces, are still confronted with the state of: dispossession, alienation, disillusionment and the constant quest for an identity as observed from the foregoing discourse, which is the Diaspora Compromise.

The disillusionment encountered by Maya at the end of the journey to Africa results in the Diaspora Compromise; accepting what she can't change, a mongrel, a bigoted citizenship state in America as a victim of history; she and Selvon's Moses, are microcosms of the African-American and Caribbean Diasporas left hankering with no permanent solution to their state of rootlessness, unhomeliness and cultural limbo and as victims of cultural hybridity in the Diaspora.

4.3. The Diaspora Compromise

This thesis interacts with Maya Angelou's *All God's Children Need Travelling Shoes* as of the primary text deemed fit for this study, on home, exile and homelessness" which becomes central to Black Diasporic Literature that leads to the Diaspora Compromise. This work has critically looked at the inability of the diaspora to fully identify with the exilic location as well as their home. There is a seeming vainness and a lack of achievement shown by most of the African- American emigrants in the search motif that they have to resign to because they are doubly displaced. Angelou's quest for a home and security in Africa ends on this note: "I drank with each party, and gave and received generous embraces, but I was not sad departing Ghana. ... This second leave-taking would not be onerous, (Angelou, 1987:228). The disillusionment encountered by her at the end of the journey to Africa results in the Diaspora Compromise; accepting her class and citizenship state in America as a Victim Diaspora which she could not change. The Victim Diaspora here is left hankering with no solution to his state of hybridity in either the motherland or the mother country.

The Diaspora Compromise is the aftermath of the cultural hybridity suffered by both the Victim and Contemporary Diasporas, that is, the consequence of the state of ambivalence also experienced by them. The Diaspora Compromise is as a result of the effects of the cultural limbo or displacement they suffer for being alienated and at the same time straddling both worlds: Euro- American and African.

I introduced myself, but because they had taken such relish in detecting my tribal origin I couldn't tell them that they were wrong. Or, less admirably, at that moment I didn't want to remember that I was an American. For the first time since my arrival, I was very nearly home. Not a Ghanaian, but at least accepted as an African (Angelou, 1987:113).

The next quotation points another state of the Diasporic Compromise encountered by the West Indians in London:

Boy, if I was you, I would save up my money and when you have a little thing put by, hustle back to Trinidad. Who me? No boy. I not going back. Ah, you like Daniel and Five Past Twelve and them other fellars. You know what they say? They say that if they have money they would go all about on the continent, and live big, and they would never leave Brit'n (Selvon, 1978:125).

Britain does not meet the initial expectations of the immigrants as already discussed above, yet the West Indians in London would prefer to suffer in the mother country than to go back to Trinidad where the condition is harsher than what they are passing through in London. John Milton's assertion in Baldeh Foldeh(1990:76) perfectly underscores the Diasporic Compromise depicted in *The Lonely Londoners*: "Better to reign in Hell than to serve in Heaven." In this statement lies the Diaspora Compromise too. That it is better for the Contemporary or Victim Diasporas to suffer hell in exile than to suffer the untold hardships they'd run away from in their motherland Africa or Caribbean as the case might be. The Diaspora Compromise in Emecheta's *Kehinde* is portayed in the lines below:

Inside the narrow hallway, the smell of London terrace house welcomed her like a lost child. Before she could suppress it, a voice inside her sang out, 'Home!' Taiwo, who had not spoken to her since she had gone to Nigeria, was back. Kehinde rebuked the voice: This is not my home.' As she said it, she knew she was deceiving herself, and Taiwo would not let her get away with it. 'We make our own choices as we go along, came the voice. This is yours there's nothing to be ashamed of in that.' (Emecheta, 1994:107-108).

Angelou's relocation to America, like Clare going back to Jamaica and Kehinde's return to London sets the platform for her Diaspora Compromise. This is as a result of their dual identity and at the same time, not belonging anywhere. The cultural limbo they suffer as a result of the mimicry they are exposed to makes them to compromise. Their returning to America, London, Caribbean or Africa to settle for anything lesser than their real home makes them resort to the forging of a new identity, which is the Diaspora Compromise.

In the case of Angelou, Selvon, Kehinde and Clare, as observed by Lylyana (2007:135) the search for their own identity produces a totally different character out of their old selves. As they cultivate their two-ness of being African [Ghanaian, Nigerian and Jamaican] and Euro-American [British and American] at the same time, they become free to adjust to what suits their interest best from both cultures.

What they previously reject as foreignness because of their inclination to preserve their African nature, they now embrace as a new learning experiment to help define them. For instance, soon after Angelou's return to America and Kehinde's return to London, Kehinde forms a liaison with her Caribbean tenant and for the first time in her life, 'she could go out to eat with Indian or Chinese man who was not her husband or even Nigerian. As opposed to her previous limited approach to what London offers her, Kehinde now decides to open up and absorb more than she used to allow herself to, while Angelou's return to America is her form of the Diaspora Compromise seen as a kind of absurdity.

In Ghana, Angelou like Chester in Nigeria learns painfully that the kingdom of their dream and their roots never existed, at least not in Africa, just as Moses in London and Clare in London and America also discover that London or America is not home. This experience accords them the tools with which to re-negotiate their diasporic identity. This dual personality or complex personality becomes the scaffold for the Diaspora Compromise in all the texts under study.

From another perspective, Ginny in Emecheta's *The New Tribe* puts it better when she speaks to Julia about their state thus: 'sometimes we just have to accept what we can't change. I had to accept that I couldn't have babies of my own. Then I got you, and you've made me happier than anything.' (Emecheta, 2000:15-16). Angelou also accepts that she can't be an African as much as she can't be an American. Moses on the other hand equally agrees that he can't be a Londoner, but perhaps, a "Lonely Londoner." Kitty discovers this fact early in *No Telephone to Heaven* and she quickly returns to Jamaica, unlike her daughter Clare, who only discovers that much more belatedly. The Diaspora Compromise always starts where and when one comes to the realization that they cannot change their state of being as Black or Coloured, as Victim or Contemporary Diasporas. This reality Winston, in *No Telephone to Heaven* a man of fifty, his hair sparse under the navy chauffeur's cap, came straight to the point, "unnecessary struggle is for fools," he said (Cliff, 61). All shades of Diasporas should accept what they can't change, that is, their identity and stop the unnecessary struggle over what they can't change, when such struggles is for fools.

Chester the doubly displaced British African in *The New Tribe* unequivocally states that 'Nigeria made me grow up quickly. I went there full of illusions, looking for something I expected to find.' Unfortunately, Chester cannot find it as he further asserts: 'No, and I don't think I'll find in Africa either. But, I did find out more about myself, a roundabout sort of way.' (Emecheta, 2000:150). Like Chester, Guy, Angelou's son also grows up quickly in Ghana when he said to his mother: "Don't you think it's time I had a life of my own?" (164). This same discovery was made by Angelou as represented in Roscoe's advice to her:

Be careful, sweet lady. You went to Africa to get something, but remember you did not go empty handed. Don't lose what you had to get something which just may not work. And I have heard, "If it don't fit, don't force it" (Angelou, 1987:193).

The New Tribe presents Chester chasing a futile dream as Esther puts it: may-be the reality of Africa would wake him up make him accept his life as it was' (Emecheta, 2000:115). The foregoing discourse therein underscores the Diaspora Compromise in Emecheta's *The New Tribe*. Accepting life as

'it was' in the case of Chester the protagonist; and accepting 'what we can't change,' in the case of Ginny epitomizes the Diaspora Compromise in Emecheta's fiction: *Kehinde* and *The New Tribe* respectively.

Angelou's protagonist and Selvon's like Emecheta's and Cliff's state of disillusionment and disenchantment with their home eventually leads to the Diaspora Compromise as crafted in their fictions. The hostility of their supposed home repels them. Home is no longer home. It is no longer friendly and accommodating to the returnees or the African Diasporas. Their inability to reconnect with their ancestral roots or tree becomes another reason for the compromise. Hence it is often asked: Where and to whom are the Diasporas returning?

Sougou aptly captures the reasons for the Diaspora Compromise thus: All the novels' main protagonists turn their backs on Africa or West Indies, the site of a traumatic experience, antithetic to commonly held view of home as a place of healing and comfort. The motherland is hostile to Moses, Boy Savage and oppressive to the woman Kehinde as well as the fostered child, Chester, now a grown-up looking for his roots, just like the mother country is to Angelou too. Each narrative "displays an ambivalent consciousness that gradually leads the protagonist to despondency that only running back to the mother country soothes" (Emecheta, 1994:15). The Diaspora had to compromise because of the effects of cross-cultural displacement, not fully assimilated into the mother country, yet facing denial and resentment by the motherland, which resulted in their living on the outer edge of the everyday reality of the African society. Therefore, '[developing] their own distinctive cultures which both preserve and often extend and develop their original cultures' become inevitable. (qtd in Ashcroft Bill, et al. 70).

The immigrants and the diaspora born, like the host members of the diasporic community all have certain things in common: A desire for something better, or self-fulfilment in life and their inability to achieve that which they crave for. This reality is reflected in the course of the search motif. Angelou, like Moses, Chester, Julia, Kehinde, Clare and Orelia embarked on a journey of self-discovery for a fulfilment in life because of the void created in them by the pull and push factors which has eventually led them to the compromise with what they cannot change. The compromise was necessary after the transnational migration, because the desire for something better in Africa, America or London was truncated or better still, remains illusive.

4. CONCLUSION

The conclusion is premised on the fact that, both the push and pull forces, like the socio-economic and political instability and inequality have been majorly responsible for the Diaspora Compromise of both the Historical and Contemporary Diasporas. And that the Diaspora Compromise is consequent upon their state of hybridity occasioned by a sense of ambivalence suffered in an attempt to maintain ties with both the motherland and the mother country, in the face of an acute sense of exile and homelessness, as well as space contestations in the mainstream politics of the Western imperial hegemony. The Diasporas had to compromise because of the effects of their state of cultural limbo and hybridity. This is so because, racism and ethnocentrism are endemic in all human societies, and the African and Caribbean Diaspora, who is either

rootless or severely disadvantaged has no choice but accept what he or she cannot change, their Africanness and dual identity as mongrels of cultural and identity deformation.

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