

The search for utopia in NoViolet Bulawayo's *We Need New Names*

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**The search for utopia in NoViolet Bulawayo's *We Need New Names* (2013)**

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## Dedication

To my father and mother Ladosia Mavezere and Gladys Mavezere and all the maternal and paternal relatives without whom my stay at Midlands State University would have been difficult, may God bless them all.

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**Declaration**

I declare that this dissertation is entirely the student's effort. However, I owe a great debt to the scholars, who I duly and carefully acknowledged.

Student's signature .....Date.....

Gift Mavezere

Supervisor's signature.....Date.....

Dr. H. T. Ngoshi

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## Abstract

This dissertation explores how NoViolet Bulawayo's *We Need New Names* depicts the search for utopia, in relation to migration. It uses the post colonial theory to explain Darling's consciousness in postcolonial Zimbabwe, which she portrays as a degenerate utopia. The theory informs the textual analysis and evaluation of Darling's consciousness as she responds to crises and betrayal associated with her home country. The escape to America becomes a journey during the course of which she hopes to find her perceived land of abundant opportunities. Firstly, however, the study argues that the search for utopia is preceded by the negation of reality. Secondly, it argues that disillusionment is an inevitable phase in the search for utopia. Lastly, it argues that there is no place like home. It concludes that the search for utopia is the alternative way of escaping reality. In addition humans are bound to suffer disillusionment in their search for a better place. Lastly the utopian search for home is futile because everywhere where people live there is misery. This means that as long as there is suffering utopia cannot be achieved.

Key words: Utopia, crisis, migration, disillusionment, search for home, postcolonial Zimbabwe.

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## Chapter One

### Delineating the importance of utopia in migration

#### Introduction

##### Statement of purpose

This research explores the treatment of the Zimbabwean crises in postcolonial literary representation. It analyses how No Violet Bulawayo's *We Need New Names* (2013) mirrors the socio-political and economic crises in the postcolonial epoch in Zimbabwe. For decades international migration has been at the vortex of postcolonial discourse in Africa but the notion of utopia has not been specifically explored in relation to migration. Therefore, this research intends to delineate the significance of utopia in migration.

Adepoju (1998:387) posits that migration includes no less than three real characters: the vagrant, the homeland and the nation of destination. This dissertation explores Darling's consciousness in relation to homeland and the foreign land. In addition, Adepoju (1998:387) postulates that, the major cause for voluntary movement between national borders is caused by the economical matchlessness between and among states. In as much as, I concur with these postulates, I still feel a utopian dimension of the postcolonial discourse where migration is concerned should also be explored.



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## **Summary of the argument**

It is overdue to place the search for utopia at the focal point in postcolonial theory, where international migration is concerned. This research intends to explore the search for utopia in Bulawayo (2013). The corpus of literature on migration is inclined to concluding that economic considerations are of prime significance in the consideration to migrate, in that people migrate to enhance their economic safety (Adepoju, 1998:387). The argument by Adepoju (1998:387) that migration includes no less than three real performers: the nomadic, the nation of source and the nation of terminus, is seminal to this study. However, while in perfect congruence with these postulates, a departure that places Darling under a microscope and investigates the utopian vision that makes her susceptible to migration, particularly why she is easily pushed by her country and drawn by the foreign land will be made in this study.

## **Questions guiding my study**

**The following are the questions guiding my study:**

- i. How important is utopia in migration?
- ii. How does crisis relate to utopia and result in migration?
- iii. How does the theme of disillusionment relate to the search for utopia?
- iv. Is there a place like home?

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## **Aim and Objectives**

### **Aim**

The study aims to explore the search for utopia in No Violet Bulawayo's *We Need New Names*.

### **The study seeks to:**

- i. To delineate the importance of utopia in migration.
- ii. To explore the relationship between crisis and the search for utopia.
- iii. To explore the relationship between the themes of disillusionment and utopia.
- iv. To explore the search for home.

### **Significance of study**

This dissertation contributes to existing theory that pertains to the state of psyche of Zimbabweans in relation to homeland in the post independence period in Zimbabwe. It perceives migration as an outcome and or reaction to the betrayal of Zimbabwean people by the state, as depicted in *We Need New Names*. In particular, the research explores Darling's consciousness as she is torn between homeland and the foreign land in search for "home", better living conditions. Zimbabwean writers have written renditions that represent the state of affairs after colonialism; nevertheless, little research has been carried out to address this element in Zimbabwean literature.

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## **Statement of need or relevance of the study**

It has been rationalised that people leave their country in search for better living conditions. According to Adepoju (1998:387) if this is the situation, then relocation can rightly be seen as a reaction, frequently overstated, to economic motivations emerging generally from disequilibria of nations and regions. Postcolonial literatures on migration are mainly historical, sociological, journalistic and statistical renditions. This research therefore is a complement to the corpus of literature by making a literary analysis of international migration in the novel. Equally important, this research will be a resource for other students in their literature review.

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## Literature review

### Defining utopia

The concept of utopia has become ambiguous, as it has undergone changes as a result of its usage by various scholars. Ashcroft (2012:1) defines utopia as the “irrepressible hope that characterises postcolonial literary writing”. Furthermore, Ashcroft (2012:1) argues that postcolonial utopianism is a utility of hope, meaning that the utopian visions generated by postcolonial writers indicate their irrepressible hope. This view gives the impression that writers deliberately make “utopian visions” in their representation. “Utopian visions” in the novel, I argue, indicate Darling’s hostile attitude towards present reality and her aspirations about the future, as we shall see, in the following chapter.

Lepojarvi (2011:175) posits that utopia presents a faultless society or place such as Darling’s perceived America. He adds that utopia is a place of the good and a ubiquitous topic with no place. We shall see this aspect in Darling as she fails to find the perfect home she desires. In addition, and seminal to this study, Spivak (2012:15) defines utopia based on the root meaning of the word “utopia” that it is a no-place, a good place that we try to approximate. She adds that utopia is “a level playing field.” Spivak (2012:15) in the same vein adds that utopia is “a false promise.” Spivak (2012:15) argues that: “the world is run on the aim to achieve utopia, more or less disingenuously.” This helps this study by confirming that Darling’s search for a perfect place is futile. In contrast, Sargent (2000:8) and Ashcroft (2012:1) understand utopia as a utility of hope. This study subverts this view of utopia while it agrees with Mannheim’s (1936) view cited in Couton and Lopez (2009:94) argues that,

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what defines utopia... is incongruence with reality, and enmity to the defined social demand. This hostility is seen in Bastard who calls his country kaka and says he could not care less and he is bursting out of this “kaka” place.

While it is ingenious for Sargent (2000) and Ashcroft (2012:1) to view utopia as a utility of hope, it is also essential to note that utopia is according to Langdrige (2006: 641) an “unrealisable dream” an escape which cannot be achieved. This is reflected by Darling when she fails to find home in America. Langdrige (2006: 641) argues that “it is unfair to treat utopia as a mere fantasy or escape” he prefers to view utopia like Reocour cited in Langdrige (2006:651) as a “motivational framework for the social imaginary.” Reocour cited in Langdrige (2006:651) is irresolute as he recognises utopia’s pathological role, that is to say, utopia has properties that cause unusually bad conduct regarding correctness which is proved in Darling when what she believes about America turns out to be wrong.

Paul Reocour cited in Langdrige (2006:651) posits that utopia has a positive and a negative pole. This is buttressed by Fachinelli cited in Passerini (2002:15) who asserts that utopico which is Italian is the positive form for utopia (positive pole) in contrast; utopisto which has a tone of impossibility and absurdity is the negative pole of utopia. This negative nuance according to Fachinelli is lost in the English translation. However, Ashcroft (2012:4) imports the nuance of impossibility to the present English translation and suggests that utopia is *Janus* faced that is it has a negative pole (utopias) and the negative pole (utopianism).

Bloch cited in Ashcroft (2012:4) opines that “utopias are pipe dreams” whilst Ashcroft states that utopianism is the stimulating of the present, with the expectation of what is to come. Furthermore, Bloch in Ashcroft (2012:4) makes a distinction between utopianism and

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utopias. He posits that utopianism is a general human trademark though; utopias stand for playful reflections that are pointless and deceiving - a farce of trust. Ashcroft's (2012) doctrines of utopias and utopianism are ambiguous. He seems to refer to utopian projects that are known to have failed in the past as utopias. He seems to be oblivious of the fact that all present utopian projects such as Darling's search for a perfect home are bound to fail, as we shall see in the following chapters.

However, other scholars do not acknowledge the *Janus* faced nature of utopia; rather they appear to view utopias as the plural form of utopia. Couton and Lopez (2009:94) posit that, utopias will always be whimsical planets whose truth is given a false representation of by the unimportant vicinity of simple exaggerations rather than true people, rehearses and establishments. In addition, Couton and Lopez (2009:93) argue that utopia was despised as far-fetched, and risky to individual temperament. This we shall see in Darling when she discovers that America is another "Kaka" country as she is warned by Bastard, that there is a possibility that she will find that America is a kaka place like her own country. (p.14) Passerini (2002:15) opines that utopia is a dissident desire – a cold and lucid view of the society, for example Darling, negates his country as a rag and a place where things have fallen apart and desires what she calls country-countries.

Fredrick Jameson, in Ashcroft (2012:2) asserts that the Utopian thought keeps alive the likelihood of a world qualitatively unique from this one and takes the type of a headstrong refutation of all that is. Talking of Budapest Darling negates paradise which ironically represents Zimbabwe and praises Budapest (America) in the narrative. He says Budapest is qualitatively different from Paradise. (p.4)

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Utopia in this study is the ‘urge to transcend’ ones place in quest for something better to borrow Zygmunt Bauman’s (2003:12) words cited in Lindgren (2010:178). This dissertation explores the search for utopia in Bulawayo (2013). A young girl who resides in a squatter camp namely Paradise all the while grasps at memories of life before and dreaming of escape- a dream that one day comes true but she realises, her new life in America is a far cry from what she imagined.

### **Utopia in migration**

Mangena and Mupondi (2010) discuss the “desire for flight and escape” exemplified by Lucifer who escapes the confining elements of Manyene village. The notion of desire for flight and escape is closely related to the current study in that Darling in Bulawayo (2013) also escapes her home. Mangena and Mupondi (2010) overlook the utopian dimension in the escape of one’s home and search for something better. Therefore, the current research goes further in understanding the utopian thought processes that drive the human being to desire for flight and escape.

Mangena and Mupondi (2010) grapple with identity issues in ‘Everything is Nice Zimbulele’ and ‘Snowflakes in winter’ and *Writing Still* where it is highlighted that Zimbabwean immigrants, work towards becoming part of their host nations through illegal means. Sharma (2013) theorises the identity crisis in Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake* which represents a persistent problem confronted by immigrants as they battle to keep up their personalities while attempting to shake them off in the meantime.

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Mangena and Mupondi (2010) focus on Existential possibilities represented by departure in *Harare North* and individual immigrants who are not enjoying the perceived 'greenness' of the United Kingdom. The idea of the perceived 'greenness' is helpful in this study because it supports the notion of Utopia in that it acknowledges that the greenness is an illusion and deceptive ; it also relates to disillusionment, which is a recurring theme in postcolonial narrative and the dominant notion in *We Need New Names* and has a symbiotic relationship with utopia. However, while giving dire attention to Existential possibilities disillusionment and identity crisis Mangena and Mupondi (2010) give insubstantial attention to the utopian ideas that are replete in postcolonial narratives on migration.

According to Elena Machado Sáez (2005: 17) in his audit of Anglophone Caribbean writing, "The Novel in the British Caribbean," A. J. Seymour looks particularly at the representation of the migrant's return to envision the future trajectory of Caribbean letters. Sáez (2005:18) estimates the postcoloniality, Atlantic issue, and the Migrant Male in the Writings of Caryl Phillips. Seymour as indicated by Sáez (2005:18) mourns the ongoing concept that develops in the books of scholars, for example, V. S. Naipaul, George Lamming, and John Hearne—the negative delineation of the transient male. The male legends like Darling's father who comes back to die, in these works come back to the Caribbean in the wake of having existed in a state of banishment keeping in mind the end goal to take an interest in or instigate political change, just to rise toward the end of their battles as deplorable failures . According Sáez (2005:19)the hyperconsciousness of Phillips' vagrant persona brands him as a pariah to the present. Furthermore, as indicated by Sáez in the Atlantic Sound Phillips (1987) follows the histories of relocation and dislodging inside the geographic space of the Atlantic Ocean



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Sáez adds that Philip's (1987) text is separated into segments that not just understand movement as an rearranging rule behind Phillips' account which interrogates the state of having a place and personality: "Atlantic Crossing," "Leaving Home," "homeward Bound," and "Departure." Furthermore, Phillips follows the courses and recorded stays of the transatlantic slave exchange's legacy, going between Guadeloupe, Liverpool, Accra, Charleston, and Israel. Sáez (2005:19) infers that the idea of group by means of movement, then again, is unequivocally the myth Phillips demystifies in his text. Saez (2005) does not explore the utopian search for home through migration therefore this research demystifies the myth of finding the perfect community via migration in *We Need New Names*.

Mishra (1995:7) theorises the concept of "home" in relation to the diasporic narratives of Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* (1998) and Crusoe. Mishra (1995:7) asserts that for large groups the concept of "home" has been destroyed. Furthermore, Mishra (1995:7) discusses the concept of home in relation to assimilation, race and identity. According to Mishra (2005:7) the damaged home brings up the scars and breaks, and wounds, to the psychic traumas of bodies on the move. In addition, Mishra (2005:7) posits that "home" is the new epistemological rationale of (post) advancement as the state of "living here and having a place somewhere else" starts to influence individuals in an uncommon manner. Dooley (2003:1) theorises alienation and uncertainty in V. S. Naipaul's *Half a life* and J.M. Coetzee's *Youth*. Dooley (2003:1) argues that V. S. Naipaul's fundamental character Willie Chandran in *Half a life* and John in Coetzee's *Youth* are in a steady condition of distance from their emotions. Moreover, Dooley (2003:1) says V. S. Naipaul's awareness of homelessness is the foundation of his entire oeuvre. Leon Gottfried writes in Dooley (2003:1) in a century

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stamped by political change, mass relocation, colonization, transformation ... it is unavoidable that much advanced writing ought done on literature on migration. Furthermore, Gottfried cited in Dooley (2003) posits that the compositions of V.s. Naipaul draw upon an experience so completely focused around layered levels of estrangement and outcast that his works get to be paradigmatic of the entire type, and subsequently of a significant present in twentieth-century life, thought, and workmanship. Dooley (2003) concludes that, alienation and uncertainty is a useful departure where migration and diaspora are concerned.

By and large, the critical works reviewed here give less attention to the search for utopia. This search for utopia is replete in the novel *We Need New Names*, as we shall see in the following chapters. Therefore, this research discusses the search for utopia in novel in relation to migration.

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## Theoretical Framework

### Postcolonial Theory

The post-colonial theory is appropriate to this research because it discusses issues that pertain to migration. Equally important, it values historicity, especially how it shapes the present consciousness and experiences of a given society. Ashcroft et al (1995:2) posit that post-colonial theory discussion includes migration and argue that postcolonial theory should interrogate lived experiences (history) of a post colonial state. This research is an analysis of lived experiences in a Zimbabwean narrative, *We Need New Names* by Bulawayo (2013), a narrative on out migration. The research explores how the novel represents the search for utopia, which according to Langdrige (2006: 641) is an unrealisable dream furthermore a getaway which is not and cannot be essentially achieved.

According to the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary, “post colonialism” concerns itself with the aftermath of colonial rule, a condition that arises out of political independence. Aidoo (1991) cited in Mongia (1996:2) proffers a clinical definition of postcolonial theory as accounts that expound the dangerous period in peoples’ lives in once colonised states. This dangerous period is represented in No Violet Bulawayo’s *We need new Names*.

According to Tirivangana et al (2013:118) the national interest, which seemed so clear during the struggle for independence has become paradoxical as the postcolonial state broke a promise thus betraying the masses, Tirivangana et al (2013:118)

In the wake of political decolonisation (of which Zimbabwe is just one example), the monarchy has been replaced by other structures of power and new forms of imperialism- the

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independent governments of former colonies, media moguls, multinationals corporations, the Monetary Fund and the World Bank". (Tirivangana et al, 2013:117)

According to Tirivangana et al (2013) it is this ambiguous situation, the perceived renegeing and betrayal that ushered a new dispensation of the postcolonial complexities. Bulawayo (2013) responds to our new worldwide circumstance that requests stories which face up to the undertaking of speaking of the vacillations in the postcolonial circumstance, a circumstance that is more unexpected than we are frequently ready to concede. (Tirivangana et al, 2013:118)

For Gikandi (1992) cited in Tirivangana et al (2013: 120):

...the basic question which recent African has to deal with, but one which we have yet to theorise adequately, is the problematic of power and state. For if one looks at almost any literary text published recently in Africa, the character of power and how it is exercised seems paramount.

The problematic power and state that Tirivangana et al (2013) expounds is represented in the novel as the Darling captures, among other things, paramilitary policemen demolishing their homes, leaving them in squalid conditions of Paradise. In addition, the novel portrays the betrayal of the masses and Zimbabwe as a degenerate utopia. On one hand, it was the utopian unconformity with reality that led to the taking up of arms against the Rhodesian government by the black majority. On the other hand, it is the same utopian resistance of reality that leads to escape. Therefore this research probes the renewed search for utopia in Bulawayo's *We Need New Names*.

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## **Methodology**

The postcolonial theory was used to critique No Violet Bulawayo's *We Need New Names*. The book is set after the symbolic shift in power once predicted by Achebe in his novel *Things Fall Apart* (1958) who quotes W.B. Yeats's poem the second coming the dictum, *Things Fall Apart* ; The centre cannot hold - Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world. And indeed, the one commanding centre of the British Empire –the –crown has not held, it no longer holds the political currency or authority that it once did. In Zimbabwe, the monarchy has been replaced by other structures of power and new forms of imperialism-the independent government of former colony, media moguls, multinational corporations, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. This condition is what many current theorists and critics refer to as postcoloniality (Edwards, 2008:10).

The postcolonial theory was used to explain Darling's consciousness in post colonial Zimbabwe which the narrator portrays as a degenerate utopia. Precisely, post colonial theory was used to evaluate the consciousness of the character in response to crises and betrayal. Amid the degeneration of the utopia the disappointment propels the character and other Zimbabweans to escape in search for better living conditions. This research explores the narrator's conception of and state psyche in relation to homeland in the post independence period, which makes escape the only viable option in *We Need New Names* by Bulawayo (2013)

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### **Conclusion**

By and large, this dissertation makes a postcolonial inquiry into the significance of the notion of utopia where international migration is concerned. Particularly, it seeks to delineate the nexus between the search for utopia and migration.

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## **Chapter Outline**

Chapter One introduces the study by giving the statement of purpose. In addition, it gives the Summary of the argument and its significance as a contribution to knowledge. Moreover, this chapter gives the statement of need or relevance of the study. A Literature review which establishes the relationship of study to the related research and analysis of pertinent research is in this chapter. It reviews of the criticism and scholarly literature on the subject. Furthermore, the theoretical framework is included in the introductory chapter. Lastly, the methodology, describes the analytical, critical, or interpretive methods and the theoretical approaches that were used.

The preceding expository chapter introduced the main focus of the study by delineating the concept of utopia and its relation to migration. Chapter Two focuses on *We Need New Names* by Bulawayo (2013) and it views Utopia as a negation of reality, meanwhile, craving for a qualitatively different world.

The previous chapter is an analysis of the Zimbabwean migrants' consciousness prior to migration. Moreover, it looks at the narrator's conceptualisation of their homeland and the pressures that lead to migration. Chapter Three looks at Bulawayo's (2013) *We Need New Names* in relation to the narrator's consciousness as she discovers, her new life in America is a far cry from what she imagined and this world brings with it dangers of its own.

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The previous chapter analysed the narrator's consciousness in America. Chapter Four explores some of the contradictions in this quotation "There's no place like home" in relation to NoViolet Bulawayo's *We Need New Names*.

Chapter Five will conclude the whole research by presenting findings on the role of the search for utopia in migration in post independent Zimbabwe.



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## **Chapter Two**

### **The negation of all that is and the craving for a qualitatively different world: the migrant's consciousness before departure.**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter explores the narrator's conception of and state of psyche in relation homeland in the post independence period, which makes escape the only viable option in Bulawayo (2013).

#### **Summary**

Bulawayo (2013) narrates about a young girl who escapes from Zimbabwe to America. The protagonist Darling is a ten year old juvenile faced by a frail and vicious world. While in Zimbabwe, Darling and her companions pilfer guavas from Budapest, which symbolises Candy Mountain. Darling and her friends reminisce of life before the paramilitary policemen demolished their homes. Then they were attending school, their families were intact. Anyway Darling has an auntie who resides in America and this builds her hope to leave the country. She escapes to America the famous word of abundance only to find that America is a far cry from what she had imagined and is quickly engulfed by nostalgia for home.

#### **The migrant's consciousness before departure**

The search for Utopia is preceded by the negation of all that is. Bulawayo (2013) the use of vulgar language in the novel shows the characters' disgust towards all that their country is for instance the use of the word "kaka" in the novel. According to Fredrick Jameson, in Ashcroft

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(2012:2) the narrator negates all that her country is or disowns her country and envisions a world that is qualitatively distinct from her own. Talking of Budapest, Darling negates Paradise which ironically represents Zimbabwe and praises Budapest (America) in the narrative, "This place is not like Paradise, it's like being in a different country altogether. A nice country where people who are not like us live" (p.4).

The narrator also negates her identity, "us" (p.4) and her abode while touting the place she wishes to live in. Furthermore, she reveals her constant concern over material possessions and wealth: "Budapest is big, big houses with satellite dishes...neat gravelled yards or trimmed lawns...tall fences...Dura walls...the flowers...big trees heavy with fruit..." (p.4). This is the kind of world that the narrator wishes to live in.

Bulawayo (2013) portrays Zimbabwe as a degenerate Utopia. Moreover, the book is written against the background of the last thirty years perceived in this book as an era where the masses were betrayed. The betrayal is expressed in the story "How they appeared." The narrator captures what the victims of the Murambatsvina say when their houses were demolished by the paramilitary police: they express disappointment, as they realise that though they fought for Zimbabwe's liberation, yet, nothing has really changed. It is ironic that, in the colonial era, it was the whites who drove them from their land and put them in the reserves, yet the government does the same to them in the postcolonial era. (p.75)

One victim feels the white people are worse off than blacks, he says, "white people came to steal our land and made us paupers in our country" (p.75) the other victim feels the black regime is worse or has done the same, since they are still paupers: "What, but aren't you a pauper now? Aren't these black people evil for bulldozing your home and leaving you with

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nothing now?" (p.75)

The consciousness of the street children is a mirror of the consciousness of the masses, and their poverty is an indictment of those who failed to create a better world for them. The masses now feel their hope lies in leaving Zimbabwe their home for foreign lands; hence they embark on a new journey to utopia. The journey to Utopia begins with the negation of one's country as preparation or justification to leave their country. This validates Fredrick Jameson, assertion in Ashcroft (2012:2) that the Utopian thought keeps alive the likelihood of a world qualitatively unique from this one and takes the type of an unshakable refutation of all that is. Before departure, Darling tells of Zimbabwe with all its ills that lead to the departure of the masses and her own departure.

The chapter "Hitting Budapest" opens with an allegoric axiom: "We are on our way to Budapest" (p.1). On one hand the axiom may be interpreted to mean Darling and her friends are on their way to Budapest. On the other hand, it may mean humanity is on its way to Budapest. Budapest here represents a land of vast opportunities represented by the guava fruit. The narrator says: "there are guavas to steal in Budapest, and right now I'd rather die for guavas."(p.1). Guavas represent candy and Budapest represents Candy Mountain: "We didn't eat this morning and my stomach feels like somebody just took a shovel and dug out everything out."(p.1)The decipherable hunger stands for the Zimbabwean crisis. So it is Darling's desire together with her friends to pacify hunger that compels them to escape Paradise for Budapest. The escape from Paradise to Budapest foreshadows the movement from Zimbabwe to America in search of better opportunities.

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Darling and her friends because of abject poverty and the search for food have become organised thieves. She says it was Bastard who decided that they pick a street and stay on it until they have gone through all the houses. Then go to the next. This is so they do not confuse where they have been with where they are going, this way they can be better thieves. When they are passing Chimurenga Street they encounter an English woman, who comes out of one of the houses, the first thing they see is that she has food, "The first thing we see is that she is eating something" (p.5). Darling goes on to describe what the woman is eating as she eats it graphically. She says she can tell from the line thingies at the side of her neck and the way she smacks her huge lips that whatever she is consuming tastes decent. It is flat, and the outer part is crusty. The top is creamish and looks fluffy and soft and there are coin-like things on it, a deep pink, the color of burn wounds. I also see sprinkles of red and green and yellow, and finally the brown that look like pimples. (p.6)

Chipo cannot control herself as she embarrassingly points at the food in a revealing manner, "Chipo...keeps jabbing at the air in a way that says *What's that?*" (p.6). The children are tormented by their craving for food, this is worsened when the woman throws away the food, Darling express her disappointment at the heartless gesture: "but we are busy looking at the thing that flew in the air before hitting the ground like a dead bird." Darling says they have never seen anyone throw food away even if it was a thing. In addition the narrator says Chipo looks like she wants to run after it and pick it up. This shows the children's craving for food which is also dramatically articulated by Darling who when the woman finishes chewing and swallows, she swallows too, "I swallow with her, my throat tingling."(p.7)

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When Godknows hears the woman saying she is from London, he claims to know London, sarcastically; he simply means he ate some sweets from there when his uncle sent when he first got there a long time ago, and that to him means he knows London. The narrator sensationalises it by saying Godknows: “looks up at the sky like maybe he wants a plane to appear with sweets from his uncle.” (p.8). The minds of the street urchins are a reflection of the adults in their society which are clogged by the desire for food.

Darling shows her keenness to transcend Paradise and live in Budapest, a real place; “If I lived in Budapest I would wash my body and comb my hair nicely to show I was a real person living in a real place” (p.8) this shows her negation of Paradise which implies it is not a real place with real people. In addition she glorifies the woman and treats her as a larger than life figure, “her smooth skin ... doesn't even have a scar to show she is a living person” (p.8-9)

The narrator is disappointed as she shows that she has lost touch with the world of food. At the mention of cheese when the woman photographing them asks them to say cheese, she says: “Myself, I don't really say, because I am busy trying to remember what “cheese” means exactly and I cannot remember.” While being photographed, Stina gets bored and walks away and the rest of the children follow. From a distance starting with Bastard they shout insults at the woman, Darling cannot help revealing her true anger, “I remember the thing, and that she threw it away without even asking us if we wanted it” (p.10)

Bastard projects the future by saying, when he and her friends grow up they will stop stealing guavas and move on to bigger things inside the houses. At this Darling says she is not worried about it because when that time comes, she will not be there, “I'll be living in

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America with Aunt Fostalina.” She adds that she will be “eating real food and doing better things than stealing. But for now, the guavas” (p.10). Darling cannot help succumbing to her desire for the material world as she takes her time to describe a beautiful house that catches her attention in Robert Street: “a huge white house that looms like a mountain, the house has big windows and sparkling things all over, and a red swimming pool at the front, empty chairs all around it” (p.10). She further says, “Everything looks really pretty, but I think it’s the kind of pretty to look at and admire and say, oh that’s pretty, not a pretty to live in.”(p.10)

On their way back to Paradise the children walk as if Budapest is theirs too, “we just walk nicely like Budapest is now our country too.” To show their desire for a better world Sbho says, one day she will live in Budapest in a house just like the one she points at: “ She points to the big blue house with the long row of steps, flowers all around it...Sbho’s voice sounds like she is not playing, like she knows what she is talking about.” When the narrator asks her how she is going to do it she says: “I just know it” at this Bastard comments, “she is going to do it in her dreams,” in addition, he throws a guava at the Dura wall of Sbho’s house” (p.11).Sbho becomes so angry as if she owns the house, Bastard throws a guava: “I said, why did you do that? Sbho’s voice has coals in it, like maybe she will do something to Bastard. Sbho expresses her care towards the house, “why don’t you pick another that I don’t care about.”(p.12)

Directed at Sbho Bastard says: “Budapest is not a kaka toilet for anybody to just walk in, it’s not like Paradise”. (p.12) Sbho says she will marry a man from Budapest, “He’ll take me away from Paradise, away from the shacks and Heavenway and Fambeki and everything else”. (p.12) Bastard further says: “Well, I don’t care, I’m blazing out of this country myself.

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Then I'll make lots of money and come back and get a house in this very Budapest. Or even better, many houses: one in Budapest, one in Los Angeles, one in Paris. Wherever I feel like” (p.13)

The narrator describes her predicament in post colonial Zimbabwe. Through Stina we get to know that Darling and her friends are not attending school. Darling says the teachers have left for better opportunities in other countries, “I do not go to school anymore because all teachers left to teach over in South Africa and Botswana and them, where there is better money...” (p.30). This comes to the fore when Stina warns Bastard that he will not make any money without education. Darling again says she is going to America, and Bastard who seems to be the writers' voice warns her about leaving.

The children's longing for food is revealed in the incident of the woman who committed suicide. It is important to note that, Bulawayo (2013) exposes the juveniles to death and horror represented by the dead woman. This shows the extent of horror and crisis associated with the narrator's homeland. The children are portrayed as sadistic or rather they seem used to horror to the extent that Bastard comes up with a brilliant idea of taking the dead woman's shoes, sell them and buy bread:

“If we can get them then we can sell them and buy a loaf or maybe even one and a half.”(p.18)

Thrilled by the idea of bread they all turn and follow Bastard back into the bush, “the dizzying smell of Lobels bread all around us now.” (p.18). This incident reveals how poverty and the search for food has turned even the children to be sadistic as they only think of food

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and money when they should be horrified by death.

Darling's longing for a better life is captured when they come across a beautiful car she is hopeful that if she gets to America she will be able to own a beautiful car, she is hopeful that when she goes to America she will drive a "Lamborghini reventou" (p.111) which she says is waiting for her. However, she is later disappointed as we shall see in the next chapter. Bloch's cited in Ashcroft (2012:4) views of utopia as energetic deliberations and a satire of trust which is revealed by Darling as she hopes for an easy going life in America. Even her friends label her as a clown for dreaming as such Godknows says, "Let's just look for guavas and leave this clown alone" (p.111)

Darling also captures Mother of Bones' disappointment in her money that turned out to be useless over night when the country changed its currency. She has lots of it but it is useless. This in a huge way reveals the pain associated with Zimbabwe's economic meltdown that saw the dolarisation of the Zimbabwean economy. Distraught she does not understand why this money is deemed useless and wonders where she will get the current currency when she is economically paralysed like this. Mother of Bones says: "And the American money they are talking about just where do they think I'll get it do they think I will defecate it" (p.24). Mother of Bones' disappointment is made vivid by her use of vulgar language. She seeks refuge in the church which Darling abhors and feels is a waste of time. This shows Darling's hypocrisy as she feigns to castigate Mother of Bones' escapist mentality, when she is nursing her own thoughts of escape. In addition, Darling says Mother of Bones is breaking and bleeding for her loss of money, "You can see the pain on her face now, like something inside her is breaking and bleeding." (p.25)



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On her way to church with Mother of Bones she describes the squalid conditions that they live in, “we pass tiny shake after tiny shake crammed together like hot loaves of bread” (p.26). She is not wearing any shoes because they are small, and the made in China ones also fell apart. There are broken bottles piles of junk, faeces and waste. In addition, Darling says, “the sun is already frying the shacks; I feel it over my body, roasting me, like.” (p.26) Mother of Bones also “wears mismatched shoes, a flat green shoe and red tennis shoe with a white lace, but it doesn't mean she is crazy.” (p.26)

The narrator captures that the health services have collapsed, which makes people to be vulnerable to exploitation by the false prophets. Prophet Revelations Bitchington Mboro takes advantage of the collapse of the health services in Zimbabwe. This is a negative portrait of Zimbabwe that leads or justifies escape. People represented by Messenger, in the novel, are also clamouring for change, they are hopeful that this change is certain, “God is listening because the change everybody's been crying for is finally here,” (p.29) but their hope is soon assaulted by their leaders. This is represented by the prophet who they do not punish for raping possessed women, but praises him for exorcising them. This rape or assault represents what the Zimbabwean leaders are doing to the masses while the masses celebrate them as God given leaders.

As Passerini (2002:15) opines that utopia is a dissident desire – a cold and lucid view of the society, Darling says about Zimbabwe in the chapter “Country- Game”:

They are not country-countries, but at least life is better than here. Nobody wants to be rags of countries like Congo, like Somalia, like Iraq ,like Sudan, like Haiti ,like Sri

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Lanka, and not even this one we live in who wants to be a terrible place of hunger and things falling apart?(p.49)

According to Langdridge (2006: 641) Utopia is an “unrealisable dream and escape which is not and cannot be achieved.” This is reflected by Darling when she says people transcend their wretched place in order to pacify their hunger in foreign lands. The narrator associates the crisis with the burning sky this justifies her intentions to leave the country for America. However, the narrator underlines the fact that foreign lands a strange destinations an aspect that will be discussed in the following chapters:

When things fall apart, the children of the land scurry and scatter like birds escaping the burning sky. They flee their own wretched land so their hunger may be pacified in foreign lands, their tears wiped away in strange lands, their wounds bandaged in faraway lands, their blistered prayers muttered in the darkness of queer lands (p.145-146)

Darling also alludes to the fact that the Zimbabwean crisis is felt by people from all walks of life. Her father is a university graduate who when things turned sour went to South Africa in search for greener pastures. Speaking of her father Darling says her father went to South Africa he works in a foreign land but he never writes never sends them money, never nothing. It makes her angry thinking about him so most of the time she just pretends he does not exist it is better this way (p.23) the child narrator captures family disintegration especially how it contributes to the narrator's predicament. Her cousin Makhosi also left for Madante to “dig for diamonds, when they were first discovered and everybody was flocking there” (p.23). The narrator says “when Makhosi came back, his hands were like decaying logs.”(p.23)

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Furthermore she says, he told them about Madante between bad bouts of raw, painful coughs, how when he was under the earth he forgot everything. When he saw that internal migration did not yield he too like her father went to South Africa.

### **Conclusion**

By and large, the use of vulgar in the novel shows the characters' disgust towards all that their country is. The shanty town is named Paradise ironically to reveal the desire for a better country or life. The country's crises and their hope for a better country lead to their escape to try a new life. The parody lies in the fact that the narrator chooses to amuse herself with fantastic dreams to the point of believing that they can be realised. Chapter Three will look at Bulawayo's (2013) *We Need New Names* in relation to the narrator's consciousness as she discovers, her new life in America is a far cry from what she imagined and this world brings with it dangers of its own.

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## **Chapter Three**

### **Disillusionment and betrayal: the migrant's consciousness in foreign land**

The previous chapter was an analysis of the Zimbabwean migrant's consciousness prior to migration. Moreover, the chapter looked at the narrator's conceptualisation of their homeland and the pressures that lead to migration. This chapter attempts to look at Bulawayo's (2013) *We Need New Names* in relation to the narrator's consciousness as she discovers her new life in America is a far cry from what she imagined. In as much as America offers various opportunities to the migrants, this world brings with it dangers of its own. By and large, this chapter attempts to connect the search for utopia and disillusionment. It will also try to demystify the view of foreign lands as all glorious and perfect destinations.

The search for Utopia has a symbiotic relationship with disillusionment, in that utopia according to Langdrige (2006:641) is an unrealisable dream - a departure which is not and cannot be basically figured it out. In addition, Couton and Lopez (2009: 94) that utopia was castigated as fanciful, and perilous to individual temperament. Darling dreams of or has a false impression of America, which she is forced to part with when she is brought down to earth, and faces reality this shows how dangerous utopian ideas can be to humans. The narrator has a glorious perfect portrait of America, which she calls, "My America." When she discovers that America is not as glorious as she thought, Darling says, "...this place doesn't look like my America, doesn't even look real."(p.148)

America's weather conditions are strange and hostile to the narrator. The author uses snow and cold to symbolise the dreariness experienced by the narrator in America. Snow

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symbolises cultural erosion, racism and all the factors that retard her progress in America. Darling's new home is cold. She says there is snow everywhere, "...snow on the leafless trees, snow on the cars, snow on the roads, snow on the yards, snow on the roofs...snow covering everything like sand". (p.148). The narrator portrays America as a world that is not conducive for human life. The author says snow is a greedy monster that has swallowed everything. Snow here represents America and its coldness. Furthermore she says: "coldness that makes like it wants to kill you, like it's telling you, with its snow that you should go back where you come from". (p.148) She says the country has no sun and it is cold and dreary, "it like we are in a terrible story, like we are in the crazy parts of the Bible, there God is busy punishing people for their sins and making them miserable with all the weather."(p.151)

The narrator misses her friends and the general order of things is strange to her. She does not see men enjoying draught on their usual spot under the jacaranda tree, which is a spectacle she enjoyed back home. Her friends will not be calling her off to Budapest and she remarks that, "some things only happen in my country, and this here is not my country, I don't know whose it is" (p.147). TK, Darling's cousin says, "This is America, yo, you won't see none of that African shit up in this Motherfucker" (p.147). It seems Darling would want to have both the new and old home at once which is not possible.

America offers all types of food and Darling says she would stay in America only for that, as the availability of food does not constitute home on its own. She says in Zimbabwe, "we wouldn't be having enough food, which is why I will stand being in America dealing with the snow" (p.153) in addition, she says, "there are times, though, that no matter how much food I eat, I find the food does nothing for me, like I am hungry for my country and nothing is going

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to fix that.” (p.153) Moreover, the narrator says TK eats a lot of food in one day that she, her mother and Mother of Bones would consume in two to three days back home. But this does not satisfy her as she needs more than food. Given a chance she would construct her own world that has all the dimensions that she imagines the world should have because she desires both countries.

Darling abhors and negates her home country because there is hunger and goes at length to call her own country kaka (faeces). Now in America she abhors the new home too. To the narrator Zimbabwe is not perfect and America is not perfect either. No matter how much food is availed to her she will not be satisfied. The world as a whole is failing to replicate what she imagines the world should be.

Darling has nostalgia for home, she says, “There are always moments like this, where it almost looks like the familiar things from back home will just come out of nowhere, like ghosts” (p.164). America is not familiar to back home and is also not familiar to her America that is the one she imagined. In addition, Darling says, no matter how green the maize looks in the field it is not real: “they call it corn here, and it comes out all wrong, like small sweet, too soft I don’t even bother with it, because eating it is really a disappointing thing, it feels like am insulting my teeth” (p.164) The narrator renders America as a superficial world. This she also shows at the wedding when she is eating: “I nod, put the knife back on my plate, and reach for a glass of coke, which doesn’t even taste real.”(p.184)

The only time Darling enjoys being in America is when her “uncles” and “aunts” visit: “I call them uncles and aunts but we are not related by blood...it’s like the country has become a real family since we are in America, which is not our country.” (p.160-161).The immigrants long

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for foods from back home, as they are not used to American food. The foods that at some point at home symbolised poverty are now the food they long for:

The uncles and aunts bring goat insides and cook ezangaphakati and sadza and mbhida and occasionally they will bring amacimbi, which is my number one favourite relish, umfushwa and the other foods from home, and people descend on the food like they haven't eaten all their life (p.161).

They enjoy the food, as it is captured graphically by the narrator, "they tear off the stshwala with their bare hands, hastily roll and dip it in relish and pause briefly to look at each another before shoving it in their mouths" (p.161). Eating with bare hands symbolise cultural resistance as the migrants resist the use of forks and knives. She adds that they tilt their heads to the side as if the food speaks and they are listening to the taste, and then their faces light up. Darling also adds that when they cook this food Aunt Fostalina forgets she is on a fruit diet.

The migrant after the food also enjoys music. Darling says they play songs by African and Zimbabwean artists like Majaivana, Solomon Skuza, Brenda Fassie and the like. She adds that they dance as she watches, "because it is something to see." This is the kind of life the migrants are familiar with.

In the chapter "Angel" Darling expresses her nostalgia for home: "So I tell Aunt Fostalina that I want to go home and visit for a while, to see how my friends and Mother and Mother of Bones and people and things are." Even if Darling is drinking Capri Sun from a straw it does not suppress her nostalgia and she does not even bother telling how nice Capri Sun beverage

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is. On the contrary when it's time for the guava, it increases her nostalgia. She takes her time to explain how much she enjoys it, speaking of the guava she says:

I look at it like I've never seen a guava before, then hold it under my nose. The smell hits me where it matters, and I feel like my heart and insides are being gently pried open. I shake my head, rub the guava in both hands take a bite, and laugh. (p.186)

Each time she takes a bite of the delicious dizzying fruit she transcends time and place, "each time I take a bite, I leave the house, Kalamazoo, and Michigan, leave the country altogether and find myself back in my paradise, in Budapest?" (p.186)

When she communicates with the friends from home, she does not tell of the ills of America because this will tarnish her America. Darling does not tell of the "bang- bang- bang of gunshots" (p.188) and about a woman who drowned her four children in a bath tub and about poor people living in the streets, holding up signs begging for money and a lot other things. She says she will not tell of it, "...because they embarrassed me, because they made America not feel like My America, the one I always dreamed of back in Paradise" (p.188)

Bulawayo reveals that the migrants are not always honest about their state of affairs in the foreign country when talking with people back home. Darling dreams about a better America while in her home country. The idea of America as a golden land by Darling and the other Zimbabweans owes partly to the social media and the relatives who are abroad who are not honest about the hustles they go through to make ends meet:

Our extended families sent requests and we worked, worked like donkeys, worked like slaves, worked like madmen. When we hesitated, they said, You are in America



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where everybody has money, we see it all on TV, please don't deny us. Madoda, Vakomana, how we worked! (p.245)

This novel provides a window through which to see the life of migrants in America. In the chapter "How they lived" the collective voice says every two weeks they got pay cheques and sent monies back home by Western Union and Money Gram. They bought food and clothes for the families left behind; they paid fees for the little ones. They got messages that said hunger, that said help, that said kunzima, and they sent money: "when we were asked, You guys work so hard, why do y'all work so hard? We smiled." (p.244)

The migrants are not honest to their relatives this is shown in the story "How they lived". When those at home ask to come like what Darling does they are not told the truth about the real state of affairs in America: "And when those at home saw the pictures and wanted to come and see America for themselves, we said, Sure, buyanini, chiuyayi, you are welcome" (p.245)

In dawn's to Darling that in America aunt Fostalina struggles with two jobs in order to make ends meet. In the last chapter "Writing on the wall", Chipso, says to Darling everywhere where people live, there is suffering" (p.285). According to Darling the reason why she is working hard like this is so she can finish paying for the house she just bought for Mother and Mother of Bones in Budapest. The house is beautiful:

I've seen the pictures; it's a nice big house with a pool, just like the other houses we used to hit for a guava ... is even nicer than this one we live in here in America, which

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I find strange because when I was at home I heard that everything in America was better.

In "This Film Contains Some Disturbing Images" the narrator portrays America as a melting pot of cultural values and morality. This is a dimension of America she had never imagined before coming to America. The cyberspace which contains or which is the gateway to pornographic films is at the finger tips of the children. According to Bulawayo America is a land of opportunities but among the opportunities it is a gateway to moral decadence, especially, when the parents are always working and have no time for the family.

Darling turns into a teenager with loose morals because of watching pornographic films. She goes partying dressed skimpily. In the story "Writing on the wall" she narrates an incident when her Uncle Kojo looks at her with drunken eyes that say: "you are actually not going anywhere decent dressed like that. Even her Aunt's morals are in question because she cheats on uncle Kojo in the same house: "Aunt Fostalina is sleeping with that white man" (p.287). The author seems to say America is not a safe haven for raising a family.

In the chapter "Hitting the cross roads" Darling sees her car and she does not hesitate to yell. Her friend Marina is puzzled and thinks something is wrong with her. There and then she is disappointed as it dawns to her that her chances to own such a beautiful car are slim because it is expensive. In her disappointment she says:

The thing is, I don't want to say with my own mouth that if the car costs that much it means I'll never own it, and if I can't own it, does it mean I'm poor, and if so, what is America for then. (p.225)

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The car represents many other things that she may not be able to have. Once again her hope for a better life is shattered.

In the chapter "How they lived" the diaspora obtains an opportunity to proclaim itself. This chapter is a dirge of the migrants. It is no longer Darling's alone but the collective "we". They express bewilderment and the pain of the "illegals" that are locked up in their paradise. They cannot leave to see their relatives. They are toiling the way they never imagined:

And the jobs we worked, Jesus- Jesus- Jesus, the jobs we worked. Low paying jobs. Backbreaking jobs. Jobs that gnawed at the bones of our dignity, devoured the meat, tongued the marrow. We took scalding irons and ironed our pride flat. We cleaned toilets (p.244)

It dawns to the migrants that America is not all rosy as they have to scald their pride. They work in dangerous conditions where they get skin diseases. Moreover some lose their lives or get injured:

Adamou got murdered by that beast of a machine that also ate three fingers of Sudan's left hand. Ecuador fell from forty stories working on a roof and shattered his spine... we got sick but did not go to hospitals, could not go to hospitals. We swallowed every pain like a bitter pill, drank every fear like a love potion, and we worked and worked. (p.244)

The chapter "My America" also shows that America did not offer anything on a silver platter as she imagined. She works hard from the tenth grade: "When I'm not cleaning the toilets am bagging groceries, I'm bent over a big cart like this, sorting out bottles and cans". (p.251) She

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has also scalded her pride and is now brave. She works with beer bottles which come with all sorts of nasty things, blood stains. Pieces of trash, cigarette stubs drowning in stale beer the colour of urine and used condoms: "When I started working here, back in tenth grade, I used to vomit on every shift". (P.253)

### **Conclusion**

This chapter explores the migrant's consciousness in their search for Utopia. The narrator discovers that America is not all rosy, she is disillusioned. This chapter showed that disillusionment and the search for utopia go hand in hand in that disillusionment is an inevitable phase in the search for utopia. The following chapter explores the contradictions in this quotation "There's no place like home" in relation to No Violet Bulawayo's *We Need New Names*.

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## **Chapter Four**

### **Post migration: There is no place like home**

The previous chapter analysed the narrator's consciousness in America as she discovers that America is a far cry from what she imagined, that is America cannot be her ideal home. This chapter goes further to analyse the post migration consciousness. Bulawayo (2013) shows that there is no place like home. The adage "There's no place like home" is ironic, since it implies that home is the most excellent place, the perfect place, everything that another place cannot be. In other words, it means that, one cannot find happiness elsewhere other than home.

On the contrary, the saying may be inflected to mean home is utopia. In other words there is always something wrong with a place that makes it impossible to completely "home". Darling says about America: "...the weather was the worst because there was almost always something wrong with it, either too hot or too cold, the hurricanes and stuff" (p.187). The narrator further says the house they lived in was not even like the ones they had seen on TV when they were little: "it wasn't made of bricks but planks, a house made of planks in America, and when it rained those planks got mold and smelled" (p.187). The narrator shows her inability to accept things as they are. This confirms that utopia is incongruence with reality, as well as unfriendliness to reality, according to Mannheim (1936) cited in Couton and Lopez (2009:94).

According to Langdrige (2006: 641) Utopia it is an unrealisable dream escape which is not and cannot be achieved. Home is a non-existent place of "dreams and desire". Home is

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utopia, a “no-place, a good place that we try to approximate” (Spivak, 2012: 15). The narrator quests for a better “home” located in the utopian past comparing it with “Paradise, with its tin tin tin” (p.191):

Looking at the cloth I'm remembering how beautiful it felt to be in a scene like that, everybody just there together, mingling together, living together, before things fell apart. (p.283)

The narrator is disturbed by family disintegration that she believes is caused by the falling apart of the country. The cloth symbolises the fabric that kept them together as a family living, mingling together with everyone before her father and cousin left and before she leaves for America too.

Darling desires her old home before Paradise. Her idea of home has been “damaged” to borrow Mishra's (1995:7) words. Darling says there are two homes inside her head:

There are two homes inside my head: home before Paradise, and home in Paradise home one and home two. Home one was the best. A real house. Father and Mother having good jobs. Plenty of food to eat. Clothes to wear. Radios blaring every Saturday and everybody dancing because there was nothing to do but party and be happy. And then home two-Paradise, with its tin tin tin. (p.191)

Her Mother's and Aunt Fostalina's and Mother of Bones' picture of home is damaged too. Mother and Aunt Fostalina have three homes in their heads: “home before independence... home after independence... and then the home of things fall apart, which made aunt Fostalina leave and come here” (p.191). Mother of Bones has four homes inside her head,

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...home before white people came to steal the country, and a king ruled; home when the white people came to steal the country and then there was war; home when blacks got our stolen country back after independence; and then the home of now (p.191-192)

The author shows that “the home of now” is damaged and the homes in the past are made to look glorious than the present home. The characters wish to transcend the present home, either to the past or to the present. Since they cannot go to the glorious home in the past they escape to the future in the foreign lands and hope to find “home”.

In the previous chapter it was also established that the narrator escapes her home hoping to find home in the foreign land. Darling fails to find a “home” in America. Though America as a home offers great opportunities, she does not feel at home:

Because we were not in our country, we could not use our own languages, and so when we spoke our voices came out bruised. (p.240)

The narrator when in America feels a nostalgic ache because, like other migrants she is welcomed in America with restraint as she does not belong:

Look at them leaving in droves despite knowing they will be welcomed with restraint in those strange lands because they do not belong, knowing they will have to sit on one buttock because they must not sit comfortably lest they be asked to rise and leave, knowing they will speak in dampened whispers because they must not let their voices drown those of the owners of the land, knowing they will have to walk on their toes because they must not leave footprints on the new earth lest they be mistaken for those who want to claim the land as theirs (p.146).

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While she is in America she nurses the thought of returning to the imagined homeland (Baubock and Faist, 2010). But if she returns will she find “home” in her country of origin, she says: “So I tell aunt Fostalina that I want to go home and visit just for a while, to see how my friends and Mother and Mother of Bones and people and things are”(p.185):

Stina said leaving your country is like dying, and when you come back you are like a lost ghost returning to earth, roaming around with a missing gaze in your eyes. I don't want to be that when I go back to my country but then I don't really know because will Paradise be there when I return? Will Mother of Bones be there when I return? Will Bastard and Godknows and Sbho and Stina and Chipo and all my friends be there when I return? Will guava trees be there when I return? Will Paradise, will everything, be the same when I return? (p.160).

The narrator when talking to Stina shows that upon returning home she may fail to integrate herself into the community of old friends:

One part is yearning for my friends; the other doesn't know how to connect with them anymore, as if they are people I've never met. I feel a little guilty but I brush the feeling away (p.210).

The narrator equates leaving home to dying and equates coming back home to the coming back of a ghost to the living. It is widely known that a ghost has no place in the land of the living; this means that home will not be the same after migration. The damaged home brings up the “scars and fractures, to the blisters and sores, to the psychic traumas of bodies on the move.” (Mishra, 1995:7)



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The narrator in the Chapter "How they left" says the migrants leave everything that makes them who and what they are, leaving because it is no longer possible to stay: "They will never be the same again because you just cannot be the same once you leave who you are, you just cannot be the same" (p.146).

In the Chapter "Hitting Budapest" the narrator shows that no home can offer lasting joy. Even the guava (candy) from Candy Mountain symbolised by Budapest cannot satisfy them without making them pay for it. The narrator says "This is the worst part about guavas; because of all those seeds, you get constipated..." (p.16). She further says:

We just eat a lot of guavas because it's the only way to kill our hunger, and when it comes to defecating, we get in so much pain it becomes an almost impossible task, like you are trying to give birth to a country. (p.16)

Godknows also proves that joy associated with the foreign land is short lived and it turns to be bad in the end "I ate some sweets from there once. They were at first sweet at first, and then they changed to sour in my mouth" (p.8). In addition, even though the narrator praises Budapest, but she then shows that there is no life in Budapest: "But then you don't see anything to show there are real people living there; even the air itself is empty: no delicious food cooking, no odour, no sounds. Just nothing" (p.4).

On the whole this Chapter shows that the search for a perfect home is according to Bloch cited in Ashcroft (2012: 4) a parody of hope and constitutes playful abstractions because: "Well, everywhere where people live, there is suffering" (p.285) in addition, Couton and Lopez (2009: 94) posit that utopias stay whimsical planets whose truth is misrepresented by

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the simple vicinity of insignificant cartoons rather than true people, practices and foundations. The next chapter will conclude this research and consolidate its findings that amount to that the book *We Need New Names* (2013) is a representation that reveal the search for utopia in the postcolonial era in Zimbabwe.

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## **Chapter Five**

### **Conclusion**

This chapter concludes this research by consolidating its findings that amount to that the book *We Need New Names* (2013) represents the search for utopia in the postcolonial era in Zimbabwe.

The research sought to explore how No Violet Bulawayo's *We Need New Names* captures the search for utopia. This dissertation is a postcolonial inquiry of the Zimbabwean migrant's consciousness; hence, it views migration as an outcome and or a reaction to crises and betrayal of Zimbabwean people as depicted by Bulawayo (2013). Moreover, the research intended to explore the search for utopia that is, to explore Darling's consciousness as she is torn between homeland and the foreign land in search of a perfect home.

The study was divided into five chapters of which Chapter One introduced the study by giving the statement of purpose. In addition, it gave the Summary of the argument and its significance as a contribution to knowledge. In this chapter the objectives of study were stated, namely to: delineate the importance of utopia in migration, to explore the relationship between crises and the search for utopia; to explore the relationship between disillusionment and utopia and to explore the search for home in *We Need New Names*. In addition this chapter gave the statement of need and relevance of the study.

In the literature review, the study assessed the key scholars' understanding of utopia; though, it was also established that utopia is an ambiguous phenomenon, the scholars that were reviewed agreed that utopia is a perfect place that cannot be found and the search for utopia is

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futile. To aid this study critical works on migration were reviewed and missing links were established in the migration paradigm. For instance, Mangena and Mupondi (2010) discuss the desire for flight and escape in relation to Lucifer this is closely related to the current study in that Darling also escapes the confining elements of his home. However, the search for utopia is at the fringes of Mangena and Mupondi's (2010) research. So the current study seeks add to the current knowledge by going further in understanding the migration paradigm by exploring the search for utopia in relation to flight and escape an aspect that is peripheral in the study of migration.

Mangena and Mupondi (2010) also concentrate on Zimbabwean immigrants as they work towards becoming part of the host country through illegal means, in their study they overlook the futility of these migrants' search for utopia which is what this study explored in relation to Darling who is also a migrant. However, they come close to theorising in Harare North an aspect of utopia which appears insubstantially in their theory as they discuss immigrants who are not enjoying the perceived "greenness" of the United Kingdom substantially their main focus is on existential crisis. The idea of perceived greenness was helpful in this research as it acknowledges that the greenness is an illusion and deceptive. The idea was also helpful in explaining the theme of disillusionment that was theorised in relation to utopia. It was also established that the theme of disillusionment is recurring in postcolonial narratives and has a symbiotic relationship with utopia as it was established in chapter three that disillusionment is an inevitable phase in the search for utopia.

It was also established in the literature review that Seymour looks particularly at the representation of the migrant's return (Saez, 2005:17). Furthermore, Sáez (2005:18) theorises

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the negative depiction of male migrant's in books of authors, for example, V. S Naipaul, George Lamming and John Hearne which is exemplified by Darling's father who comes to die (Bulawayo, 2013). Sáez (2005) and Seymour cited in Sáez (2005) overlook the futile problematic search of home which was explored in current research in Chapter Four as it was considered by the researcher as the missing link in the migration paradigm.

Furthermore, the theoretical framework is included in the introductory chapter. The study was examined through Postcolonial Theory which according to Ashcroft et al (1995:2) discusses issues that pertain to migration and interrogates lived experiences of a postcolonial state. As this study was based on *We Need New Names* I tried to point out some of the utopian characteristics displayed by the narrator in the novel. In view of what has been said above, study used the methodology of descriptive research since it went through different data related to Bulawayo's fiction, and showed the utopian ideas.

The dissertation first of all sought to delineate the significance of the concept of utopia in the realm of migration. This goal was met in the first chapter. In addition, it explored the relationship between crises and the search for utopia. This was met in Chapter Two which explored the narrator's conception of and state of psyche in relation to homeland in the post independence period, which makes escape the only viable option in *We Need New Names*. Using Fredrick Jameson's view cited in Ashcroft (2012:2) that the Utopian ideas keeps alive the likelihood of a world qualitatively unique from this one and takes the type of a persistent refutation of all that is.

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This chapter showed that the search for utopia is preceded by the negation of all that is. This is seen as the narrator stubbornly negates all that her country is while envisioning a world that is qualitatively distinct from her own. This aspect is captured in Passerini's (2002:15) definition that is a dissident desire—a cold and lucid view of the society. The use of vulgar language in the novel shows the character's disgust towards all that her country is. The shanty town is named Paradise ironically to reveal the desire for a better country or life. It was established that the country's crises and the narrator's hope for a better country leads to her escape to try a new life.

Moreover, this research also sought to explore the relationship between the theme of disillusionment and utopia. The narrator is disappointed in her search for utopia. Thereby confirming Couton and Lopez (2009: 94) that utopia was reviled as illusory, and dangerous to human nature. This was met in Chapter Three which explored Bulawayo's (2013) *We Need New Names* in relation to the narrator's consciousness as she discovers her new life in America is a far cry from what she imagined. It was established in this chapter through the narrator's consciousness that disillusionment is an inevitable phase in the search for utopia as she discovers that America is not as rosy as she imagined. In this case utopia which she refers to as "my America" (p.148) remains fanciful and a mere caricature to borrow Crouton's and Lopez's (2009:93) words.

Lastly this study intended to explore the search for home in the novel *We Need New Names*. This research meant to examine how the search for home is captured in the novel, thereby; answering the question whether there is there a place like home. This objective was met in

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Chapter Four which explored Darling's post migration consciousness by analysing the adage "There is no place like home" in relation to No Violet Bulawayo's *We Need New Names*, a postcolonial rendition of migration. Couton and Lopez (2009: 94) posit that utopias stay whimsical planets whose truth is gave a false representation of by the negligible vicinity of insignificant exaggerations rather than true people, practices and foundations. This was shown in the previous chapter that home is a fanciful place that cannot be realised

Mishra's (1995:7) theory of "home" in relation to diasporic narratives was helpful in this chapter. Moreover, Mishra (1995:7) suggest that for large groups the idea of "home" has been damaged. This concept was helpful in explaining Darling's consciousness of home. In this chapter it was established that the search for a perfect home is according to Bloch cited in Ashcroft (2012:4) a parody of hope and constitutes playful abstractions because Darling's friend Chipu says: "everywhere where people live, there is suffering."(p.285) Darling fails to find the perfect home she desires. The fact that where there are people there is suffering means utopia cannot be achieved.

### **Recommendations**

I recommend that the search for utopia or utopian ideas should be given due attention in literary studies as it characterises most literary representations. It should occupy the centre of literary studies and especially but not limited to migration in literary studies.

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