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## Different Voices and Views of Zimbabwe: A Comparative Analysis of Charles Mungoshi's *Waiting for the Rain* and NoViolet Bulawayo's *We Need New Names*

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Different Voices and Views of Zimbabwe:  
A Comparative Analysis of Charles Mungoshi's *Waiting for the Rain* and  
NoViolet Bulawayo's *We Need New Names*

Senior Project submitted to  
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## Introduction

In the second semester of my junior year, I escaped the infamous “Bard Bubble” and studied abroad in various regions of Botswana, Zimbabwe, and South Africa. When I returned to commence my senior year, it was time to choose a topic worthy of a thesis. During the course of the half a year I spent throughout the Southern African region, I was so transfixed by some of the native works of literature I encountered from one of these countries. While the time I spent living in each of these countries was life changing, to say the least, Zimbabwe is where I experienced a variety of emotions. Despite the political and economic restrictions prevalent in the daily life of Zimbabwean people, my host family treated me as though I was their own blood. Thus when selecting a topic for my project, I opted to focus on the literature from Zimbabwe, specifically literature by black Zimbabwean authors. My core aim in this project is to illuminate the voices that often go unheard, while also adding to my physical experience within the country.

In early research, I came across an article titled, “African Literature in the American University Curriculum” by sociologist Zinta Konrad. In her piece, the scholar conducts a survey in universities across the United States, taking into account, firstly the existence an African Literature curriculum, and if applicable it’s rating the importance expressed for the subject. She mentions that African Literature, which is often attached to the label of “Third World” literature, is a very new area of interest in to a lot of universities in the States (Konrad 268). Over the years the place of African Literature in academic institutions has shifted from being a status of neglect to an “emerging” literary discourse. She writes, “It is often stated, at African literature conferences in particular, that African literature is a “discipline without a home” (Konrad 260). These words failed to sit well with me after having been immersed in the vibrant cultures of

these Southern African countries. This is what made me so sure that I was on the right path in terms of my project's purpose. Konard's observations, for me, revitalized the importance of thoroughly addressing what has, and continues, to constitute "overlooked" literature. In the early stages of this project, Zimbabwean president Robert Mugabe, who had been in office for 37 years, was finally forced to step down after a military coup took place in the country. The contemporary socio-political implications of this occurrence reaffirmed that I had selected a relevant field of inquiry.

In her book, "Teachers, Preachers, Non-Believers: A Social History of Zimbabwe Literature", Flora Veit-Wild suggests that there are three generations of black Zimbabwean writers. The first generation of writers was born in the colonial era, what she denotes as the pioneering figures of Zimbabwean literature. The second generation of writers was those among those born during the forceful wave of industrialization and social change that took place in Zimbabwe during the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Moving forward, the third generation were those who came of age during the liberation war of the 70s (Veit-Wild 7-8). When I began to collect books for this project's corpus, I started with reading *On Trail for My Country*, which is written by first generation writer, Stanlake Samkange. Once I reached the middle of the novel, I realized that I wanted my topic to be less focused on colonial presences in Zimbabwe. The next book I choose was *Waiting for the Rain*, by second-generation author, Charles Mungoshi. Following this, the next book I began to read was *We Need New Names*, which was coincidentally written by a third generation author, NoViolet Bulawayo. I choose to analyze these two books because it was the author's distinctive voices that stood out to me, and also because they were less concerned with colonialism and more based on its aftermath.

Charles Mungoshi's *Waiting for the Rain* was written in 1975, which was five years before the country gain its independence from Britain. This book is written in third person and reflects on rural and traditional life in Rhodesia. NoViolet Bulawayo's 2013 novel *We Need New Names* is written in first person and is based on the childhood of our young narrator Darling. Although these text are written years a part from one another, they do have common theme. Throughout this project, I intend on looking at the themes of gender, religion, and alienation. While through distinctive stylistic and rhetorical devices, and of course in the contextual setting of contemporary Zimbabwe, *We Need New Names*, at its core, deals with the same tensions arising out of Western influences and modernity as seen in *Waiting For The Rain*. In Mungoshi's novel we see the way in which Western influences disrupt traditional spaces, whereas in Bulawayo's text we see the coexistence of these spaces, whilst in dialogue with one another. In this project, it is my aim to understand and critically engage with the nuanced complexities presented within each text, and in turn, identify the overlapping points of resemblances in the central themes of these works.



## Chapter One

Every weekday morning in Harare, I took a *combi* into town and walked a few blocks to catch another going towards the University of Zimbabwe. All the sidewalks in town were bustling with vendors selling, fruits, vegetables, cellular minutes, clothes, and other day-to-day necessities. People sold goods from tables, shopping carts, and even from blankets on the ground. These sidewalks were usually at the helm of women who had created neat piles of fresh produce, such as tomatoes, peppers, onions, maize, and large mounds of peanuts.

One morning, I arrived to town early and decided to wait and ride the next *combi* with my classmate. As I stood on a crowded corner, I noticed a woman perched up in a chair with a bucket of scones by her side. Within just a few minutes, I observed another woman greet her as she stepped off the *combi* carrying a large bag. Out of her bag, the lady pulled out a large blanket and laid it beside the woman's chair. Once she managed to fold the creases out of the blanket, she placed a big bowl and poured a seemingly infinite supply of peanuts into it. Facing the storefront, she took a seat behind the bowl of nuts and began to distribute them into small packages that she would eventually sell in the bustling streets of Harare. Women, who dominated virtually every sidewalk in town, were involved in some way, shape, or form with selling food. It was here where I became aware of space and labor in relation to gender. This chapter will focus the thematic presence of gender in *Waiting for the Rain* and *We Need New Names*. I intend on using the concepts of space and labor as a way of analyzing characters' gender roles. In what spaces do we see men and women, and what forms of labor do they accomplish in these spaces? Exploring gender roles in this way will help us uncover the similarities and differences that exist between characters across these text. These texts highlight the transformation of gender norms

over time. Specifically, due to societal shifts women had to fulfill many occupations that were traditionally male dominated.

The rhetoric of gender roles and expectations in Shona and Ndebele traditions retain a great similitude with one another. These traditions are centered around notions of roles inhabited and carried out within the frameworks of domesticity in the household. Traditionally, families in rural areas live on the same homestead, where members of multiple generations live in houses that are built in close proximity to one another. The status and connectivity of family are of immense importance within the lives of Shona and Ndebele people. Families living in close proximity to one another, as neighbors, is one of myriad customary circumstances that elucidate the ardent sense of collective responsibility all relatives embody in order to support each other. In his article “Modern African Literature and Cultural Identity”, Tanure Ojaide writes, “The African writer has been nurtured in a society in which the sense of community is very strong. A cardinal point for understanding the African view of humankind is the belief that I am, because we are; and since we are, therefore I am” (45). This quote reinforces the idea that one’s individual identity is deeply interconnected to one’s community. It also represents the immense impact and importance of family as a collective support network. Sometimes this support extends beyond the family and into the community. Within the context of family structures, we can analyze different characters and their respective gender roles.

Traditionally, Shona and Ndebele households are headed by men. Men are tacitly endowed with the role of the breadwinner, and as such dictate the major decisions of the household. These patriarchal roles are incarnated by the Old Man and Tongoona in Mungoshi’s novel. In the opening of *Waiting for the Rain*, we are introduced to the Old Man and his drum. In

most African traditions, the activity of drumming is typically dominated by men. It is believed that drums should only be handled by men, who exert all of their labor into playing and crafting. At the start of the second chapter, it is early in the morning and the Old Man is taking a walk around the family's homestead.

He goes round every hut, every building, studying carefully the doors for any bloodstains and the grounds for any footmark or anything unusual, and then the bush and weeds round for any tell-tale shadows because this hour the enemy loves to attack, this hour that witches do their last rounds before retiring to their half-dead husbands' beds. This is the hour that sets the course of the new day...And yet his son is asleep! (Mungoshi 4-5)

This scene clarifies the fact that Old Man is the protector of the family. He checks the homestead for any marks to ensure that no one has hurt his family during the night. Spatially, the Old Man is seen outside of the home, which tells us that he has control of the home from the outside. He would immediately know if someone tried to hurt his family because he walks around the perimeter of the house every morning before everyone wakes up. There is a mentioning of witches who do rounds in the village confirming that there are people in the village who do evils things. The narrator says that when these women are done, they go home to their "half-dead husbands' bed" which implies that these men are detached from the evil their wives committed. The Old Man is up doing what he is expected to do as the head of the household, while his son sleeps inside his hut. Tongoono, the second man leading the home after his father, is supposed to be awake completing the same task as his father, instead he is asleep. The Old Man sticks with his traditional routine, but because his sons fails to do so as well, he is disappointed in him and finds him lazy.

Since the Old Man is the eldest in the family, his children and grandchildren are expected to always treat him with respect. He does not provide his input as much as Tongoona does, yet when he does, the family knows that his word is the final say. Tongoona is a father with children so he is seen using his patriarchal powers inside the home more often than the Old Man.

Tongoona has two eldest sons, Lucifer and Gharaba, three younger sons, and his daughter Betty.

Tongoona talks to his son Lucifer about his younger life and how he came to marrying his mother. Tongoona says:

I could have gone on to standard five but I had already met the girl who was going to be your mother. So I left school, went back to Que Que, worked two years there, then left to join the B.S.A Police in Essexvale. I did three years in the Police. By that time your mother was expecting and her parents wanted lobola. I didn't have the money - you see, we weren't paid much in those days. So I decided to leave Rhodesia for South Africa - Cape Town. That was in 1943 - in the middle of Hitler's war. (Mungoshi 74)

Tongoona makes clear to his son that he was once in school, until he met his mother. Then, he was prepared to start a family. As providers of the family, these are the type of sacrifices men are forced to make. Since Raina was expecting before they married, her parents wanted lobola, which he could not afford, so then he was forced to take another job in South Africa during the war. A man is expected to have his life in order before he takes a wife, and Tongoona's actions show us that he worked hard to make this happen for his family. When he finds this woman, like Tongoona found Raina, he is expected to pay the woman's family lobola, which is a bride price. The bride price is usually paid with cattle. Children should come after marriage, but Tongoona tells his son that his mother was expecting before they married and he did not have money so he went to South Africa to work during World War II, which we he calls, "Hitler's war". South Africa has provided many men in within the country and those bordering, with labor

opportunities in factories and mines. There are a lot of men that were pressured to do the same as Tongoona because of poor economic conditions. Through the Old Man and Tongoona character, Mungoshi lays out for us the the roles of men in traditional family settings.

In *We Need Names*, there is a lack of men in Darling's life while she is living in Zimbabwe. Until we meet Darling's father, there are no other men that we see in her family. In saying this, the novel has a very matriarcal focus. Darling has mixed feelings about her father being back. She is frustrated with him for being away for so long in South Africa and never writing or sending her a gift. When her father comes back home she finds that he is terribly ill. She expresses:

“Father come home after many year of forgetting us, of not sending us money, of not loving us, not visiting, not anything us, and parks in the shack, unable to move, unable to talk properly, unable to anything, vomiting and vomiting, Jesus, just vomiting and defecating on himself it smelling like something dead in there, dead and rotting, his body a black, terrible stick; I come in from playing Find bin Laden and he is there” (Bulawayo 91).

Darling's father is too ill to do anything, so he never leaves the home. Darling is forced to give up her time with friends to take care of her father, and she finds this to be unfair. She watches him suffer in bed after having not seen him in such a long time. Later when she reflects on her father's time away, she says, “And later when the pictures and letters and money and clothes and things he had promised didn't come, I tried not to forget him by looking for him in the faces of the Paradise men, in the faces of my friend's father” (Bulawayo 95). Darling's father was absent for so long. This made her look for his face in other men, so she would not forget her father's. Her father was infected with AIDs while in South Africa, and this embarrasses her. She

describes his body as a “terrible stick” which is a sign that the virus has completely attacked his body.

With men having to migrate to urban areas for purposes of labor, women have been left playing the role of provider and head of household. Mungoshi’s novel shows us the early stages of family disintegration in Zimbabwe, whereas in Bulawayo’s text the family already suffered from disintegration. While her father is gone, Darling’s mother still goes to the border to sell fruits and vegetables. Since there is no one besides her Mother at home, when she is away working, Mother of Bones steps in and takes care of her. When they are both gone Darling is responsible for her father’s care. Tradition requires women to be caregivers within the family, and when the man is not present in the home, all the burden falls on women.

Like the women in the streets of Harare and Darling’s mother at the border, women are often seen selling goods for household financial support. Women help men with economic activities like farming as well, but their roles are minimal. Traditionally, mothers and their daughters roles are to maintain cleanliness and comfort within the home. Women should be submissive, obedient, and should never challenge or disagree with their husbands or fathers. Beside her mother, who eventually begins to see another man, there are no women in her Zimbabwe life that we see in relationships with men. When she moves to America with her Aunt Fostalina and Uncle Kojo, that is when we see a male figure active in Darling’s life. Uncle Kojo, who is from Ghana, still has cultural expectations that his wife fulfills her domestic duties around the home. Bulawayo writes:

Uncle Kojo comes home from work and says to Aunt Fostalina, You know me, I actually don’t understand why there is never any hot food in this house, Fostalina. Aunt Fostalina

looks up from squeezing an orange and says, No food in this house, Kojo, really? But I just did groceries yesterday, what do you think that fridge over there is full of, huh, bricks?...When was the last time we actually had a real dinner in this house, heh? You know in my country, wives actually cook hot meals every day for their husbands and children. And not only that, they actually also do laundry and iron and keep the house clean and everything. (Bulawayo 157-158).

Even Uncle Kojo who is from a different African country, is used to women having domestic roles. Aunt Fostalina is so focused on her weight loss progress that she fails at taking care of her family and chores around the home. Aunt Fostalina challenges her husband when she tells him that there are groceries in their fridge. Uncle Kojo calls his wife out because she has fell into the American way of running a household and away from her own tradition.

In *Waiting for the Rain*, both the Old Man and his son Tongoona are like Uncle Kojo, they all expect their women to stick to tradition. In the second chapter, when the Old Man walks around everyone's hut, he notices something.

Going round Mandisa's hut, he feels a little satisfaction that he has been up before her again today. Because once - of twice? - in every moon, she beats him at his own game. But then, there are very few women, young or old, like Old Mandisa. There is the woman who should have been his wife....Too late now. (Mungoshi 4)

Of those few women includes the Old Man's own wife, Old Japi, who is still asleep in her hut. The Old Man finds pleasure in the fact that Old Mandisa "beats him at his own game," which is being awake so early in the morning. The Old Man admires Old Mandisa's early routine because it shows that she is productive unlike his wife who is still asleep during this early hour. Women are expected by their husbands to always be doing domestic work, and women have a clear understanding of the work they should be doing in the home. Old Japi, Old Mandisa, Raina, and Betty are all the female characters in Mungoshi's novel.

Quite often in the text, Tongoona reminds his wife Raina and his daughter Betty of where they should be and what they should be doing around the home. At one point Tongoona's son Lucifer thinks back to his younger years when his father would make comments related to the gender roles of his children.

He remembers it since he was just a little boy: *He is a man, not a woman. Don't spoil him with these female softies.* And that's why mother can only really talk at home freely when there are other people about. And even then, Lucifer doesn't fail to notice a kind of female resentment or malice - just a slight hint of scornful laughter mixed with anxiety and fear, against men - in his mother's voice. He feels his father has been unfairly cruel to her. (Mungoshi 75)

These lines show us that even when Lucifer was young his father made it clear the what the gender roles should be like in his home. Tongoona advises his wife that she should treat her sons like men and not soft like a woman. Lucifer sees that his father has instilled fear in his mother and this saddens him. He realizes that his mother is powerless within their home and his father treats her unkindly. In later lines, Raina interrupts Tongoona and Lucifer's conversation and knocks on the room's door. "That's your mother," Tongoona says, relieved, and shouts almost too cheerfully: "What do you want, Mother of Lucifer? This is the man's room, this. Your place is in the kitchen" (Mungoshi 77). He calls the room that he and his son are in "the man's room", which implies that any space in which a man occupies is a male dominated space and women do not belong. Tongoona tells his wife that she belongs in the kitchen because like most women and who stick to their traditionally roles expects her to stay there and cook for the family's nourishment. Lucifer goes to grab a chair for his mother, but instead directs his wife to sit on the floor. Traditionally, if men and women are in one place together, men are seated in chairs and women are found sitting on the ground. This action is simply and a sign of respect that women



are required to show men when in the same spaces with as one another. It is evident in both text that male characters like Uncle Kojo, the Old Man, and Tongoona all have traditional expectations for the women in their family. Uncle Kojo expects the same things from his wife as Tongoona expects from Raina. Perhaps we see Aunt Fostalina resist traditional gender norms because America is a place where her traditions does not exist. Since female characters in Mungoshi's novel are stuck in these traditional spaces, we see them conforming to their assigned roles.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, by tradition, families are expected to take care of the elders in the the family. Since women control domestic spaces, it becomes their role tend to elders and children. In Mungoshi's text, Old Mandisa, Raina and her daughter Betty are the only characters we see working in the domestic space. Unlike these women, Old Japi is never seen working in the home, instead the women prepare her meals and delivers it to her hut. Old Mandisa dedicates all her time to making her peanut butter and she sometimes helps Raina cook for the family. Peanut butter production is traditionally a popular activity amongst women who live in rural areas. When we first meet her, she is preparing peanut butter, and throughout the novel we continuously see her handling peanuts. Tongoona makes clear that a woman's place is in the kitchen, and that is where we see the women in his family spending much of their time. In his article, "Recipes for Nation-Building", Igor Cusack includes that "recipes are to be shared with the women in the country" (215). Raina and Old Mandisa always makes sure that there is food prepared in the home, and that the men in the family are always feed. Raina explains to her mother that she does not want Lucifer to go overseas. Old Mandisa asks her daughter what was her husband views, and she tells him that his father wants him to go overseas. Her mother

responses to this saying, “Then you are only a woman. You have no mouth let it be as his father” (16). Old Mandisa reminds her daughter that because she is a woman, her word does not mean anything in the situation. Later on the same page, Mungoshi writes, “They shell the nuts in silence. Because there are so many things to be done at home today in preparation for the boy’s coming, Raina is not going to the fields” (16). This goes to show that no matter what may be happening in the family, the women are still expected to stick to their domestic duties.

In Bulawayo’s novel, there are three characters with the name mother, this includes Darling’s own mother, and her neighbors MotherBones and MotherLove. As mentioned, Darling’s mother is never really home because she has to work at the border to make money for the family. When her mother is away, her neighbor Mother of Bones takes care of Darling.

Inside the shack, Mother of Bones has already laid out my good yellow dress, which I wouldn’t dare to sell things so I have with Mother of Bones until she returns. Sometimes Mother comes back after only a few days, sometimes after a week; sometimes she comes back when I don’t even know when she is coming. (Bulawayo 23).

It is here that we are reminded how families are extensive. It is common for older members of the community to take care of children when their parents are either ill or away working. Mother of Bones is not related to Darling, but she still cares for her like she is her own. MotherLove is less involved than Mother of Bones, but we see that she still makes it her job to provide for the families of Paradise and keep watch over their children. In the chapter titled, *Real Change*, all the adults in Paradise go to vote while the children stay behind and wait for their return. When their parents finally return to Paradise, Darling says, “That night, nobody sleeps. We all go to MotherLove’s shack, which is the biggest shack in Paradise; the adults don’t even have to bend inside. What MotherLove does is cook brew in huge metal madramuz by day, and by night

people go to her shack to drink” (Bulawayo 72). MotherLove allows everyone into her shack and they all drink the beer that she is known for brewing. Later in the chapter, MotherLove sings a song to the people, which is something a mother would do to comfort her family. In addition to food, traditionally women are also in charge of brewing beer. Her name is MotherLove, and love is exactly what she provides to the people of Paradise. Very similar to the women in Mungoshi novel, these women are the family’s caregivers, the only difference is that they are extended family member, and not related at all. We never see Darling’s mother doing domestic labor within the home, instead she supports of the home by selling goods at the border.

Darling spends a lot of her time outside playing with friends, and unlike Betty, she has no chores at home. The only time we see Darling in the domestic space is when Mother of Bones tells her to look after her father. In America, she is enrolled in school. Darling says “I know already that this sciences thing that Aunt Fostalina is pushing me to focus on is not for me. Now that I’m almost finished with high school, her thing is to go on and on about how I have to get into medicine or some kind of nursing or whatnot when I start college next year, or if that fails, at least do law” (Bulawayo 276-277). Aunt Fostalina has instilled in Darling the importance of education. She wants Darling to study science or law in college because she believes that is where the money is. It is interesting to see that Darling gets the opportunity to attend school whereas Betty does not. Betty is not enrolled in school; however, her brother Lucifer is. The family expects Betty to get married and start a family of her own. Betty does everything that she is expected to do around the home, but she slightly rebels these expectations. We see this from the lack of respect she gives her grandmother, Old Japi, and also towards the end of the novel when the family finds out that she is with a child. Betty does not have access to school;

however, her brother Lucifer does. Tongoona wants his son to Lucifer to attend school, because he is sure that with an education Lucifer attain a well paid job which will help him support his family. Tongoona treats Lucifer very different than his son Garabha. Like his grandfather, Garabha loves to play the drums. Throughout the novel Garabha is always somewhere away from the home doing his own thing. Lucifer questions his father, if his brother still follows the drum and he responds, “And what else doesn’t he follow? Beer, women, medicine-roots, what-not-else,” Tongoona says and throws a handful of nuts into his mouth to stay the anger he feels welling up in him” (Mungoshi 49). Tongoona is not happy with the way Garabha spends his time because he does not make money playing the drums, so he is unable to help support his family, which is what a man is expected to do.

There are three generations of family members in *Waiting for the Rain*, and it is through space and labor, that we see each character committed to the traditional roles of men and women. Once we get to *We Need New Names*, we see that the family has disintegrated. Darling’s father has no role because he is too ill, and in result, her mother becomes the family breadwinner. Aunt Fostalina fails at being a wife, because she is so distant from her traditional life, and too caught up in the American way. Mother of Bones serves as a mother figure for Darling, while MotherLove is like the mother to everyone in Paradise. These are the only two characters in this novel, who actually do what tradition expects from them as women. Finally, these observations confirm that there is a distant difference between the gender roles of the characters in these two texts, and this is measured by the spaces we see them in and the labor they do. In Mungoshi’s novel, characters exercise their traditional gender roles within the family. In Bulawayo’s more

contemporary text, the family is nuclear, and the roles of men and women are much less traditional.

## Chapter Two

Tradition is the key distinguishing factor that differentiates African novels from other genres. African writers assert their identities into their writing in very unique ways. One way we see authors writing themselves into existence is through spirituality. Although they do so in very different ways, both Mungoshi and Bulawayo show us the way spirituality works within their traditions. In addition, we also get a view of the way in which Christianity is involved in their lives. Mungoshi's pre-colonial novel offers a larger view into the realm of traditional spirituality compared to Bulawayo's text which pays more attention to Christianity. This chapter will pay attention to themes of religion and spirituality in these contrasting novels.

Similar to Christianity, Shona and Ndebele people believe in God as the creator of life and the Highest Being. The key difference is that they do not actually communicate with God directly, instead they speak to their ancestors, who will speak to God on their behalf. In Shona these ancestors are referred to as *vadzimu* while in Ndebele they are *amadlozi* (culturalatlas.sbs.com). In order to connect with the ancestors, families will reach out to a spirit medium, who will guide them through the process. Families usually call on mediums to help them handle certain matters between their ancestors. It is common that within these African spiritual traditions, ancestors are comparable to deities. There are offerings made to ancestors, and in exchange the ancestors protect their descendants and fulfill requests that will help the people live a good life on Earth. Descendants pray to their ancestors for blessings like rain because these types of matters are what natives are concerned with. Drought can really have a harsh impact on rural lifestyles and to avoid these complications, people continue to honor and respect the ancestors. Without rain they are not able to sustain healthy crops and without a

harvest, they are left hungry and without food. The people rely on the grace of their ancestors to survive.

Regardless of Christian influences, ancestral spirituality is a part of Zimbabwean identity and culture. Their spirituality is what keeps them deeply connected to the land and its tradition. Over the years, many have begun to move farther away from their traditional beliefs. Younger generations have begun to take their traditional spirituality less seriously, believing that it is just the old way of doing things. We see this in both Mungoshi's and Bulawayo's novel, readers are exposed to both Christianity and ancestral spirituality. Mungoshi's earlier novel pays more attention to traditional religion, with a brief mentioning of Christianity. This is the opposite in Bulawayo's more contemporary text where Christianity has a larger presence and there is a small reference to traditional spirituality.

In his article, "Modern African Literature and Cultural Identity," Nigerian scholar Tanure Ojaide explains that Africans are typically spiritually minded people, "the whole psychic atmosphere of African village life is filled with belief in...mystical power" (47). Spirits are a part of traditional life, and the spiritual realm keeps Africans connected to their culture and everything it stands for. Some African traditions pay tribute to both gods and ancestral spirits, while others only pay homage to their ancestors. People believe that spirits have the power to manipulate or respond to events that take place in the natural world. We see that characters in these novels respect the spirits of the dead, and they believe that doing so is what helps keep peace and protection over their lives.

In Bulawayo's chapter, "Darling on the Mountain", Darling goes to church with Mother of Bones. At the start of the chapter, she is taking a cold bath in preparation for church. The first

line reads, “Jesus Christ died on this day, which is why I have to be out here washing with cold water like this” (21). This line confirms for us that they are on their way to attend an Easter service, since that is the day Christians celebrate Jesus’ death. She later explains to Darling that she has to wash because they are all dirty sinners. Darling admits that she does not enjoy going to church. Along with the many reasons she provides to why she doesn't like church, she shares:

Plus, last time I went, that crazy Prophet Revelations Bitchington Mborro shook me until I vomited pink things. I thought I was going to die a real death. Prophet Revelation Bitchington Mborro was trying to get the spirit inside me out: they say I’m possessed because they say my grandfather isn’t properly buried because white people killed him during the war for feeding and hiding terrorists who were trying to get our country back because the white people had stolen it. (Bulawayo 22)

The reason for Darling’s grandfather’s death has to do with conflicts over land in Zimbabwe between whites and Africans. This moment of spirit possession is what connects her to traditional spirituality. Clearly the Prophet sees and feels something that Darling does not. He shakes the girl so intensely that she vomits, and this shows that he is committed to making sure she is free from the possession of spirits. Since her grandfather did not receive a proper burial, the Prophet believes that Darling is possessed with his spirit. This is an example of how ancestor spirits can impact the lives of their living descendants. Since the Prophet is a Christian, he does not promote the possession of any other spirit besides God, which shows us that he does not accept traditional spirituality.

Ojadide writes, “Africans are bound mystically to their land. The land is sacred and dedicated to the ancestors and gods” (49). As mentioned, ancestral spirits have the right to interrupt the lives of their descendants if they are bothered or unhappy. Darling’s grandfather was killed by white people, while protecting his indigenous land, and the Prophet believes that



his spirit is still living in Darling. Christianity was introduced to Zimbabweans by British colonizers and missionaries who saw their religion as a way to civilize the African. Since then, Christianity has maintained a strong presence within these people's lives. In her article, "African Literature and the Traditional Arts: Speaking Art, Molding Theory", Anthonia Kalu reminds us, that "understanding the complementary relationship between ancestral and Africanized Western knowledge bases also facilitates a new reading of the African writer's effort to synthesize a transitional culture" (Kalu 57). This is exactly what Bulawayo does in this chapter. The Prophet Revelation Bitchington Mborro acknowledges the presence of the spirit, but he does not tolerate it, and this makes him a part of that "transitional culture". The Prophet's relationship with Christianity shows that he has made a choice to step away from his culture and join the Western religion movement.

In the same chapter, we continue to see this idea of "traditional culture" at play. Darling and Mother of Bones walk through Paradise, on their way to Sunday morning church service on Fambeki Hill. On the way, they pass the shack of Vodloza, a traditional healer.

When we pass the people standing in line outside Vodloza's shack, Mother of Bones only waves; here she cannot shout because it's a healer's place. A few of the people wave back unsurely, like they don't even want to, looking worn out from sickness or troubles. They are waiting for Vodloza to divine with their ancestors because that's his job. A large white sign says in bold red English words: Vodloza, BESTEST HEALER IN ALL OF THIS PARADISE AND BEYOND WILL PROPER FIX ALL THESE PROBLEMSOME THINGS THAT YOU MAY ENCOUNTER IN YOUR LIFE: BEWITCHNESS, CURSES, BAD LUCK, WHORING SPOUSES, CHILDLESSNESS, POVERTY, JOBLESSNESS, AIDS, MADNESS, SMALL PENISES, EPILEPSY, BAD DREAMS, BAD LUCK WITH GETTING VISAS ESPECIALLY TO USA AND

BRITAIN, NONSENSEFUL, PEOPLE IN YOUR LIFE, THINGS DISAPPEARING IN YOUR HOUSE ETC. ETC. ETC. PLEASE PAYMENT IN FOREX ONLY. (29)

Although Mother of Bones is on her way to church, her decision to wave instead of shouting shows that she still respects the traditional healer's space. On the sign, we see all the problem that Vodlaza claims he can help fix. All these problems are things that even the characters in the novel struggle with. What really stand out is the part that mentions getting visas to the USA and Britain. These are both countries that have bad ties with Zimbabwe; however, people believe that it is in these countries that they will escape poverty and live a better life. The people of Paradise go to see Vodlaza to be connected to with their ancestors. If people are suffering from any of these problems, they are most likely being caused by ancestors who like Darling's grandfather, have not been buried properly, or have simply been wronged. This is why they come to Vodlaza, because as a spirit medium, he will be able to speak to the ancestors and tell the families what they can do to fix these problems. At the end of the sign, he writes that he only accepts payments in foreign exchange (FOREX). This is an important note because at that time, and even today, foreign currencies held more value than the Zimbabwean dollar. Here we see the way in which Vodlaza advertises traditional healing as a business. This moment is significant because similar to church, people go to Vodlaza's shack to have their problems fixed, but still we see Mother of Bones and Darling continue on their way to church. Just like the Prophet, Mother of Bones recognizes traditional spirituality, but she still chooses the Christian faith.

In his novel, Mungoshi also shows us that people believe ancestral spirits live within their descendants. The older family members have a conversation about Tongoona's son, Garabha. As mentioned in the previous chapter, just like his grandfather the Old Man, Garabha enjoys playing the drums. Tongoona sees his son's hobby as a distraction and waste of time, but his mother Old

Japi sees differently. “Old Japi says: If my husband were dead I would say his spirit sits in that boy. In his young days he would go for days on end without eating anything, playing and drums singing – and the women who followed him” (Mungoshi 49). Garabha’s grandmother understands his deep passion for drums. Old Japi knows that her husband’s spirit will live in Garabha because he loves making music as much as his grandfather. Old Japi’s way of thinking about her husband’s spirit, shows that she associates with traditional spiritual beliefs. People’s bodies experience physical death, and spirits live on to protect, haunt, or simply exist within the souls of their descendants. This perpetuates Ojaide’s argument about how mystical powers play a role in African village life. The biggest takeaway here is that the older characters in both novels credit ancestral spirits.

Tongoona breaks down for his son, the importance of maintaining traditional beliefs. He explains to Lucifer that by tradition, his older brother, Uncle Kuruku should be the leader of the family. “He has separated himself from the family and became a stranger to his own blood. I only assumed responsibility of father while he was away working in town and when he came back he should have taken over his duties but he said no” (Mungoshi 158). Tongoona shares that once his brother returned from town, he wanted nothing to do with the entire family, and this is where he went wrong. He goes on:

The Earth is angry with him. You see all our trouble now? You heard all that we were talking about last night? All these things should have been fixed long ago. But you uncle said in these times of Christianity and the white man such things are no longer done. I even believed him once, I still do believe in the new ways, but they are not enough for our problems which have been always with us even before the white men came with their teaching. So, this something that your uncle doesn’t realize, and for this reason troubles

won't leave this family. It is not any one man's mistake, we all carry the blame of our dead, and it is up to us, the living, to appease the Earth. (Mungoshi 158-159)

We see that Uncle Kuruku was influenced by the what Tongoona calls 'new ways', which are the ways of modernity. Tongoona admits that he does believe in new ways but he acknowledges that his tradition has a greater power. Uncle Kuruku turned his back on his family and tradition. His brother's betrayal has caused all his children to leave home, and caused for the rest of the family to suffer. If Kuruku had followed his traditional path, his family would be in a better situation, instead everything is in disarray. When family members become ancestors, they simultaneously become one with the earth and this bond is what keeps their descendants connected to the land. Tongoona mentions that the Earth is angry with his brother, meaning that the ancestor are the unhappy ones. Just like Tongoona makes clear, it is the family's responsibly to avoid mistakes and maintain peace amongst the ancestors. Kuruku was blinded by the 'new ways', which includes Christianity, but Tongoona makes clear that even Christianity can not save them from the ways of their tradition.

Back to Bulawayo's novel, Darling recalls that when she was about to leave for America, Mother of Bones took her to see Vodloza who instructs her to smoke from a gourd and says, "The ancestors are your angel, they will bear you in America...draw your mighty spears to clear the paths and protect the child from dark spirits on her journey" (Bulawayo 152). Once Darling arrives in the airport, the dogs sniffed her and began barking. Her Aunt asks her if she has any weapons and she reveals the spear from Vodloza. Aunt Fostalina ask, "What is this crap?" and she took it off and threw it in the bin. Now I have no weapon to fight evil with in America" (Bulawayo 152). Vodloza gives Darling the spear, so that she will protect herself from "dark spirits" in America. This is also a way for Darling to stay connected to her traditional roots. Aunt

Fostalina, who is from the same place as Darling, calls the spear “crap” and throws it away, showing that she does not accept her native spiritual traditions, and she has been completely withdrawn from it in America. At this very instant in the airport, Darling too becomes disassociated with her traditional spiritual practices.

The night before Lucifer leaves for his travels, the family is gathered by the fire, and are joined by Matandangoma, who like Vodlaza in Bulawayo’s novel, is a spirit medium. The family invited Matandangoma to inform them of what is happening with their ancestors. It is important to do this before Lucifer goes away, so his family knows that he will be safe and protected during his journey. If he goes away without consulting the spirit medium, Lucifer or his family may face danger. We see this similar thing happen in Bulawayo’s novel when Mother of Bones takes Darling to see Vodloza before she leaves to America with her Aunt.

Matandangoma discovers that there is an unhappy ancestor amongst the family, and if there is nothing done to appease this ancestor, Lucifer will encounter danger on his trip. She informs the family that a wronged ancestor is a the worst enemy (Mungoshi 138). Makiwa is Old Japi’s first born son who left home against his mother’s wishes and he was killed by a white man that he worked for. The family admit to the medium that Makiwa may be upset because the family was just too poor to have him sent home and buried with his family. She tells the family that Makiwa feels as though he has been forgotten, then suddenly Lucifer is possessed with Makiwa’s spirit. Mungoshi describes:

Something like weight of a mountain catches in Lucifer’s throat. Blood spots cloud his vision and sweat breaks out all his body. A howl rises from the pit of his belly to find the way blocked in his chest. Tired, he loses control of his limbs which begin to tell their own story. No one says anything. (Mungoshi 139)

The family watches Makiwa's spirit manifest through Lucifer's body. They all seem to know what is happening so no one erupts in a panic, they just watch. Makiwa wanted to pass down his name and was not able to because of his death. Matandangoma says that "the Traveler", who is Lucifer, should take on Makiwa's name. As tradition foreshadows, something needs to be done to make Makiwa happy, or bad things will continue to happen to members of the family. Lucifer remains calm, while his family takes the news seriously. Since Makiwa is an ancestor on Lucifer's mother side, Lucifer and his mother will need to take medicine to correct the problem. Matandangoma explains that the purpose of the medicine is to protect and cleanse the soul of the people who are being targeted by the spirit.

Throughout most of the novel Lucifer is quiet and wants to leave home and go on his trip overseas. The elders are the ones who are worried about the boy's safety. They know how important it is to call in a medium because they understand the importance of their traditions, whereas Lucifer does not. The medium also shares with the family that it is important that no one knows about the ancestral troubles that the family is having. There are even people in the village that want to cause harm to the family. Ancestors like Makiwa have already and will again try to send people into the family's home. Lucifer's father goes in the house to check on his son, and help him with his bags. While his father is in the room, he finds Lucifer's medicine away from his bags and in the corner of the room. Tongoona is upset with his son, and he expresses to him the importance of taking the medicine with him, but his son refuses. Lucifer says that he will not take the medicine because it will be taken away from him at the country's border. Tongoona physically attacks his son out of frustration, and then Lucifer destroys the medicine and tells his

father that he will not take it at all. This is a very dangerous decision that Lucifer is making because it will impact his entire family's safety.

Tongoona runs to tell his wife what has happened, and Raina does not receive the news well. She immediately runs out to see what is happening with her son. She realizes that she can not speak the way she wants in front of all the strangers so she asks Lucifer to come in the house and eat. Although he originally turns down his mother's offer, he is eventually pressured to accept. The family all enter the home and gather in the kitchen.

A short pause, then in a subdued voice, Raina says: 'You must not leave these medicines. You only think you don't need them because you are still among your own people. But you will be living among strangers from now on. You must be prepared and be protected. We have paid Matandangoma a goat for all these medicines. They are not just useless baggage as you think. (Mungoshi 174).

Raina wants Lucifer to take the medicine to protect her family from her brother Makiwa. She tells Lucifer how important this is and how the family invested in the medicine for all their protection. In the end, we see that Lucifer continues to defy his tradition and follow his own path, just like Uncle Kuruku decided to do. The priest takes him out of his traditional space, and into a more modern space where Christianity holds the most value. Lucifer's refusal to take the medicine with him is similar to the scene where Aunt Fostalina throws away Darling's traditional medicine.

Both novels shed light on the importance of ancestral spirits. All the characters in Mungoshi's text show their respect to traditional spirituality; however, Lucifer is the only one who struggles with this. Despite what his family tells him, we see that Lucifer has less faith in his own traditional spirituality, instead following the Christian way. In Bulawayo's novel, we see

that *Mother of Bones* utilizes traditional spirituality, while being a Christian. On the contrary, Aunt Fostalina completely denies traditional spirituality. Both novels emphasize the juxtaposition between the preservation of sacred tradition and the welcoming of new rituals and practices.



## Chapter Three

When tradition and modernity are at odds, the clash creates a middle space where one experiences or expresses alienation. This chapter will explore the ways in which characters in *Waiting for the Rain* and *We Need New Names*, fall into this central void of being estranged from one's community and its customs. Tradition is manifested in the rural lands these Africans come from and the artifacts unique to their homes. British intruders disrupted these traditional spaces with Western influences causing characters to be disengaged with their cultural identities. In these novels, we see that the older generations maintain traditional practices, while the younger generations assimilate into modernity. This examination will illustrate the complicated relationships characters develop as a result of these conflicting worlds. I intend on highlighting the similar instances of alienation in these nationalist novels.

Before delving into these thematic examples, it is necessary to understand the settings in which these novels take place. This analysis is relevant to comprehending the characters' experiences of alienation from their indigenous lands. *Waiting for the Rain* begins with flowing gossip in the small village about Lucifer, who is returning home from school and plans on travelling overseas. His family struggles to understand his decisions, and this is the source of the story's central conflict. When describing his home's location, Lucifer says, "Not until you cross Chambara River into the old village with roofless huts and gaping doorways and the smell of dog-shit and burnt rags are you home...the inevitable stray dog – all ribs and the fur worn down to the sore skin – rummaging for something to eat among the ruins" (Mungoshi 40). The juxtaposition of the "roofless huts" and the emblematic image of the hungry creature hunting for food in the trash, display the lack of infrastructure and poverty that exist in the village. In the

village, people's lifestyles are simple because they can only buy the bare necessities. Lucifer's sarcastic use of words such as "inevitable" to describe the stray, or blunt terms such as "dog-shit," provides readers with a glimpse of the negative emotions Lucifer has towards his home.

Traveling back, Lucifer is on a bus, where he looks out the window familiarizing himself with the place that he has been separated from for some time. Mungoshi writes, "And the first disagreeable thing Lucifer sees in his home country, after an absence of two years, is an ox-drawn cart on the western skyline, barely moving, and the sound of wailing" (40). Lucifer is displeased by the view outside his window. The "ox-drawn cart" is traditional technology of farming and the signature of pastoral life. The portrait of the cart on the "western skyline, barely moving" represents the infinite spatial features and stillness that compose the rural landscape. Lucifer has been physically away from his home pursuing an education, but instead of finding joy in the scenic views of home, it causes him discomfort. In this same passage, he sees familiar faces at the bus stop, but he fails to recall the names of these people, and this makes him feel uneasy. The narrator quotes, "He lowers his head so that if anyone below should raise their heads, they won't see him" (Mungoshi 40). He intentionally hides his face from these forgotten people while silently wishing to be in a faraway place. While he is away at school, he has become disengaged from both the land and its people. Through Lucifer's undesirable tone and behavior, he expresses alienation from the rural lands in which he was born. His exposure to Western reality has changed his attitude towards home, causing him to become a stranger within his own country and to his family.

In *We Need New Names*, protagonist Darling grows up in Zimbabwe and has dreams of one day moving to America with her Aunt Fostalina. Once Darling is a teenager, she goes to live with her aunt, escaping the hard times back in her home. Bulawayo's text opens with Darling and her friends picking guavas in Budapest, which is a neighborhood situated outside of her village.

This place is not like Paradise, it's like being in a different country altogether... Budapest is big, big houses with satellite dishes on the roofs and neat graveled yards or trimmed lawns, and the tall fences and the Durawall and the flowers and the big trees heavy with fruit that's waiting for us since nobody around here seems to know what to do with it.

(Bulawayo 6)

Right away, Darling makes clear that Budapest is nothing like Paradise. She mentions the "big houses", "neat graveled yards", and "tall fences", as all things that makes Budapest feel foreign compared to her small village. The racial inequalities that stem from colonial rule in Zimbabwe, resulted in Africans being evicted of their land and forced to live in crowded rural slums, while whites were rewarded with quality property. Unlike the poor Africans who inhabit the villages that Lucifer and Darling are from, the whites in Budapest are wealthy and have bonuses such as "satellite dishes" and "Durawall". There is irony in the name "Paradise", because instead of a beautiful, heaven-like place, it is a small shantytown where children like Darling and her friends often experience hunger. Darling grows up in a village identical to Lucifer's; however, with access to a place like Budapest, she is able to see a different way of life than the one she lives in Paradise. In saying this, Darling gets what it feels like to be a visitor in her own country.

Not until Darling goes to America is where she really experiences alienation from Paradise. At this point of the novel, she is traveling in the car with her Aunt Fostalina, Uncle

Kojo, and her cousin TK, on their way to a wedding. Like any bored child would do to past time on a road trip, Darling gazes out the window and remarks:

We've long left the houses and store behind, now we're just driving between stretches and stretches of maize fields, which make me keep expecting to see hoers bent double, tilling: boys walking in front of ox-drawn plows, leading the oxen, the sounds of their whistles and cracking whips in the air, hoes hitting the earth, voices of women urging one another with song. 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. (Bulawayo 166)

Maize is one of the Zimbabwe's staple foods, so having been raised there, the widespread fields are a common sight for young Darling. As Darling looks out the window and into the maize fields along the road, she imagines that she will see "hoers", "ox-drawn plows", hear sounds of the "hoe hitting the earth, and boys and women laboring in the fields, all of which are accustom in such a setting back in her rural home. She mentions that she consistently has moments like this, where "familiar things from back home" appear like out of nowhere. The presence of the word "ghost" demonstrates that home has become a piece of the past, a memory that she will always live with. The one thing that sets a part Lucifer's and Darling's relationship to their indigenous lands, is how they feel about home. When Lucifer returns, he is overwhelmed with the feeling of "not belonging", while on the other hand, Darling's searches for remanences of home in America, has her "longing" for the place she knows best.

In the chapter, titled 'How They Left,' Darling speaks about "the children of the land leaving in droves". She declares:

Those with ambitions are crossing borders...When things fall apart, the children of the land scurry and scatter like birds escaping a burning sky. They flee their own wretched land so their hunger may be pacified in foreign lands...Leaving their mothers and fathers

and children behind, leaving their umbilical cords underneath the soil, leaving the bones of their ancestors in the earth, leaving everything that makes them who and what they are, leaving because it is no longer possible to stay. (Bulawayo 147-148)

In “Modern African Literature and Cultural Identity,” Nigerian scholar Tanure Ojaide argues that in modern African texts, land often relates to the traditional atmosphere. He specifically points to how in West African and South African writing, there is a movement from rural to urban areas, and this shift causes a sense of “alienation” in characters. He says that “Africans are mystically bound” to their birthlands (49). We see this in action when Darling leaves home to fulfill the “hunger” that she lives with in Paradise, hoping for it to be “pacified” in the foreign lands of America. The “umbilical cords” buried in the soil, and ancestor’s “bones” resting in the earth indicate that the children are physically and spiritually connected to their land. Children like Lucifer and Darling fled like “birds escaping a burning sky” in search of new opportunities and a better life elsewhere. Once they leave, we see Darling and Lucifer become alienated from their native lands. It is evident that in both Lucifer and Darling’s case, alienation is the outcome of being physical dislocated from their indigenous lands.

The children of the land are moving to other countries, while those from older generations are left behind. Before parting Zimbabwe, Darling’s caretaker Mother of Bones says to her, “I don’t know I really don’t know child this could be the last time I see you I don’t know I’ll still be here when you return but what kind of life is this when you are all born to scatter to foreign lands in droves what will the country become a ruin?” (Bulawayo 151). Mother of Bones recognizes that there is something wrong with living in a country where children “scatter to foreign lands in droves”. If all the children flee, there will be no one left for the country to grow, leaving it to disintegrate. When things fall apart at home, children are sent away because there is

hope for the rest of their lives, whereas elders like Mother of Bones are settled into their birthlands and cultural identities. Mother of Bones expresses this certainty when she says, “I’ll still be here”, because she knows that at her age, there is no point in going to start a life elsewhere. The uncertainty she has for Darling’s situation, explains the nervousness that members of the older generation have for the youth and their futures. She is unsure if she will see Darling again, acknowledging that if she begins a life in another country, she may never return home.

Comparable to Mother of Bones, we see that Lucifer’s grandfather, the Old Man, has an anxiety about his grandson going overseas. Lucifer’s cousin, John, believes that going overseas will be good for Lucifer. He convinces the Old Man that the boy will be okay once he leaves, but regardless of John’s assurance, the Old Man struggles grasp the idea.

Old Man raises his eye, surprised: Be he will be involved! When anything happens in this village to anyone, everyone is involved. How can you say he won’t be involved? He will be living with other people in a village like this, won’t he? If the people he is living with go to war with their neighbors how can he not be involved? (Mungoshi 31)

The Old Man has spent his whole life in the small village; thus, it is expected that he assumes other places are the same. Regardless of this, the Old Man presumes that if there are problems wherever Lucifer goes, he will be “involved”, and this worries him. John informs the Old Man that the world is much larger and contains more than just villages. The Old Man is knowledgeable of life within the village, but he is clueless of life outside of these perimeters, and this is ambiguity what causes the fear he has for Lucifer. The apprehensions that Mother of Bones and the Old Man have comes from the isolation they experience when left behind by the children who have left the land in droves.

Characters are in touch with tradition through land, but they are also linked to the foods and objects produced in these cultural spaces. “Oral narrative practice” is a phrase that Anthonia Kalu coins in her piece, *African Literature and the Traditional Arts: Speaking Art, Molding Theory*. Kalu refers to this phrase as, “the synergy between orality, oral performance, the conscious deployment of meaning in African arts and the relationships between those within African societies” (52). Later in the article she says that drums are tools of oral narrative practice, and when they are seen or heard, it is a part of the novel’s application of this practice. This tool is utilized on the first page of Mungoshi’s novel:

This is the Old Man’s drum. But you don’t hear it because you are making so much noise with your cracked little tin toys. If you could only stop and listen, you would hear it. It starts from a nameless, placeless place somewhere in this darkness, and, as you listen, you think it’s only a small sound, but- listen carefully: it has the very rhythm of something disturbing the deep bowels of the earth. You don’t hear it? It is there! Always has been there! Once you hear it fills you up, it shakes you down to the roots, then you realize in a flash that it’s not itself that has been absent but you: it is it that hears you and answers. But you keep on making a din and so when it comes to you, you don’t hear it. But it will come to you – you wait and see. And when it finally comes to you, you will be lost (Mungoshi 1).

The use of the word “you”, is the omniscient narrator addressing readers, presumably those of the younger and less traditional generation. This same group are the ones that are too distracted by the noise of their “cracked tin toys”. When he describes the rhythm produced by the drum, he says that it is “something disturbing the deep bowels of the earth”. Young people hear the noises produced by the drum as “small sounds”, but Mungoshi affirms the magnitude and meaning of the sound when he says, “it fills you up, it shakes you down to the roots”. With this description, he gives the drum a greater power. The relationship to the drum’s sound and the earth, brings us

back to Ojaide's point when he says that Africans are "mystically bound" to the land. This is reinforced when the quote reads, "Always has been there!", meaning drum rhythms are not new to the African: it has always lived within the "nameless, placeless place", which most likely represents an internal place within the African body. The Old Man's drum embodies culture, whereas the "cracked tin toys" signifies modernity, which is what creates a sense of rootlessness in younger generations who admire them. Taking oral narrative practice into consideration, these lines demonstrate that drums represent more than sound; they are what makes African people who they are and distinct to those of other cultures. This detailed metaphor illustrates the differences between the old and young generation.

Kalu suggests that characters can also act as narrative devices. Old Mandisa is a relative of the Old Man, and lives in the hut across from his resident. No matter what is taking place around Old Mandisa, she is always seen cracking or grinding peanuts. "As he approaches the buildings he hears the familiar noise: Old Mandisa preparing peanut butter on the grinding stone." (Mungoshi 6) The sound from the grinding stone is a "familiar noise" for the Old Man, however, if this were a young boy raised in the city, the sound might be unrecognizable. This sound is an echo of tradition, like the wailing Lucifer hears from the bus, the racket that Darling hopes to hear in the maize fields, and the noise that comes from the Old Man's instrument. The laborious process Old Mandisa uses to make peanut butter is a traditional method in which those of the older generation is used to. Due to industrialization, there are now machines that deshell and grind peanuts into the butter we can buy on the shelves, but before these technological advancements, people formed tools from natural material such as the grinding stone. The system



Old Mandisa uses to make her peanut butter, demonstrates her role as a traditional character, who is disconnected from modern consumerism.

In contrast to the Old Man and Old Mandisa, their nephew John moves to town and conforms into a modern lifestyle. One day, John shows up to the Old Man's place because he catches word that Lucifer will be in home before travelling overseas. He brings with him sugar for his grandmother Old Japi, tobacco for the Old Man, and a radio. "The Old Man puts away the tobacco, thinking: Of course, everything made in the towns is best quality with you. Out loud, he says: 'Yes, it smells good'" (Mungoshi 28). Tobacco is a fine crop in Zimbabwe, so the Old Man most likely knows what good tobacco is like, so he is not impressed by the "tobacco from town" John gifts him with. John does not even get a thank you from the Old Man, he just says, "Yes, it smells nice". The Old Man's cynical thought demonstrates how he feels about John's obsession with town. These lines also prove that the Old Man is very much stuck in his traditional way, and he is satisfied with living his life this way. The Old Man literally follows the beat of his own drum, while John chooses to keep up with the contemporary trends in town. Although the Old Man is not struck by the tobacco, he is interested in understanding how the radio functions. "Now he asks, 'I have often wondered – tell me: are there any people in that thing of yours?' It sounds like the biggest joke John has heard in years. He laughs till tears roll down his cheeks. 'No. It's just voices.' 'Voices without people?'" (Mungoshi 29). The Old Man innocently questions if there are people inside the radio and this sends John into a fit of laughter. How could the Old Man understand such technology when the only thing he knows will is his drum? A device such as a radio is an industrialized object, that at the time, was foreign to older generational members like the Old Man. This humors John because for him, it is silly to not

comprehend something as simple as how a radio works. Living in town, John lives a more progressive lifestyle than those who live in the village. This interaction between John and the Old Man, is yet another example of the alienation generations experience from one another.

Darling and her friends are sent by a village elder, to a construction site in Shanghai, to communicate a message to one of the workers. When they arrive to the site, they see a bunch of Chinese men dressed in bright uniforms and the other men who are black dressed in regular clothes. The children walk around the site, wondering what the men are working on, when finally, they ask one of the Chinese workers. “What are you building? A school? Flats? A clinic? Stina says. We build you a big big mall. All nice shops inside, Gucci, Louis Vuitton, Versace, and so on so on. Good mall, big, the Chinese man says, flicking ash off his cigarette and looking up at the building” (Bulawayo 48). Darling’s friend Stina immediately questions the man if they are building a school, flats, or a clinic, which all make sense for a person living in a poor village like Paradise. Instead of any of these places, the worker tells the children that they are building a “good mall” with expensive brand shops, which at this point of the novel we know that no one from Paradise can afford this. The man says, “We build you a big big mall”; however, this mall is not for the children, nor their families, it is for the type of people living in places like Budapest. Here, we see that the children, are alienated from the modern developments in Shanghai, due to the simple fact that they do not have the money to purchases anything from these “nice shops”.

The morning of Lucifer’s departure, all the family members are engaged in their individual task around the house while Lucifer is locked in his room packing for his trip. Not too long after this, a car pulls up to the home and out comes a priest, who has come to pick up

Lucifer. “The white man is wearing very light clothes: a thin black vest with a priest’s round collar, near-white jacket and trouser, an old wide brimmed straw hat on his head and open sandals. He wears no socks. The skin of his nose is peeling off like a sloughing snake’s” (Mungoshi 169). The arrival of the priest, is the first and only instance in which a white character is introduced to this story. The man seems to be wearing typical priest attire, but his near-white jacket and trouser, old wide brimmed straw hat, and open sockless sandals, is what really causes him to stand out. The white jacket and trouser probably keeps him cool like his open sandals, whereas black clothing would just absorb the heat. The hat protects him from the sun, but the narrator still points out the skin that is peeling off his nose, which is most likely caused by sunburn. His sunburned nose is simply a marker that the priest is outsider to the sun infested country.

While Lucifer is inside packing for his travels, the priest remains outside surrounded by villagers who have all come to witness Lucifer’s parting. The priest tries to make jokes with the people, but no one understands him, so instead they all exchange timid smiles between one another. A little girl runs out of the crowd and touches the priest’s trousers “with a dirty little paw”, but she is immediately pulled away by her embarrassed mother (Mungoshi 170). Before the mother has a chance to punish the girl, the priest stops her and shows that he is unbothered by the child’s action, so the mother retreats. Based on the woman’s reaction, it seems as if the people see the Father as a man of importance. Possibly it is the round collar and clean-cut clothing that makes him seem so untouchable.

Mungoshi writes, “The people have now moved a little way from the car. Some are sitting in the sand, some standing in little groups, all looking at the priest who is photographing

Old Mandisa and Old Japi” (Mungoshi 172). Although the people were present for Lucifer, the entire time, their eyes were resting on the white priest. These lines clearly prove, that picking up Lucifer was not the Father’s only intention. Obviously, the man brought a camera because he knew that could capture some aspect of rural living. The priest could have chosen to take a picture of the people in the crowd, children, whoever, but instead he chooses Old Japi and Old Mandisa. Since there is a language barrier between the white Father and the people, he probably took it upon himself to photograph the old women without consent. The priest’s outsider position is reinforced once he uses the camera. The text never explains why the priest photographs these women; however, it can be easily inferred that the photos are going to be for the family, but instead for the viewing of some other outsider.

In the first few pages of Bulawayo’s book, there is a comparable scene that takes place. While the children roam, the neighborhood of Budapest, searching for guavas, they encounter a white woman who summons them from the other side of the street. The women tell the children that she is thirty-three, from London, and that it is her first time visiting her dad’s country. Darling make a few observations of the white woman and she notices a pink camera hanging from her neck. After finishing a slice of pizza, the woman remains behind the bars of her gate and asks the children:

Do you guys mind if I take picture? She says. We don’t answer because we’re not used to adults asking us anything: we just look at the woman, at her fierce hair, at her skirt that sweeps the ground when she walks, at her pretty peeking feet, at her golden Africa, at her large eyes, at her smooth skin that doesn’t even have a scar to show she is living person, at the earring in her nose, at her T-shirt that says Save Dafur. (Bulawayo 11)

Similar to the priest, Darling recalls the woman's appearance in vivid detail. She notes things such as her fierce hair, her pretty feet, large eyes, and her smooth scar-free skin. Alike the priest, there seems to be something flawless about her appearance. Her golden Africa necklace, the ring in her nose, and her Save Dafur T-shirt are all markers of her foreigner identity. Unlike the priest, the woman asks the children for a picture, and since they were not use to questions from adults, they all kept quiet. Despite this being the women's first visit to Zimbabwe, the fact that she has a camera shows that just like the priest, she is interested in capturing some part of life in Africa.

These scenes are significant because they both consist of white characters with whose purposes are parallel. These white characters are concerned with capturing photos of black African subjects. The camera is a symbol of the western gaze that exist in Africa. The device itself is a modern artifact that, in this case, can be found in the hands of the white subject. Throughout history, people have traveled to different sections of Africa to collect visual material that would provide people in other countries with a glance into life on vast continent. There has been a lot of visual evidence, that has been negatively represented certain countries and the people within. What might these white photo takers be trying to capture and for whom? The order in which both these scenes take place is noteworthy and reflective of a larger thought. We meet the white woman in the first chapter of Bulawayo's text, showing that modernity already has a place within this setting. The white priest does not show up until the end of Mungoshi's novel, illustrating the ways in which modern forces such as Christianity, abruptly disrupts these spaces that have been traditional for so long. The insertion of the camera in each of these text, a way for authors to acknowledge the presence of the Western gaze within their society.

In both Mungoshi's and Bulawayo's text, characters are born into traditional lifestyles, and this is deeply embedded in their cultural identities. When these characters are impacted by ways of modernity, they become farther removed from their families and traditional roots. Darling and Lucifer leave home and their ideas of home are reshaped. Older characters like the Old Man and Mother of Bones are only familiar with life in village, so when their children leave home, they become concerned with their safety or if they will ever return. These same older generation characters are connected to their tradition through routines and activities that are exclusive to their African identity; however, because they are so rooted in their ways, modern artifacts and trends are inaccessible to them. Finally, we see that characters are attached to tradition through ancestral spirits, but Christianity and modern expectation pushes characters away from these beliefs. In the end, it is clear that in the war between tradition and modernity, characters in the black Rhodesian narrative and the black Zimbabwean novel experiences alienation. In the following chapters, I will conduct a more thorough analysis of different factors impacting character's experiences in these novels.

## Concluding Remarks

In Mungoshi's novel, we characters engaged with traditional gender roles, while compared to Bulawayo's novel the roles of men and women change, and characters are less dedicated to these tradition gender norms. Traditional spirituality is present in both text, the difference is in the way we see characters treat the matter. Ancestral spirits are heavily involved in *Waiting for the Rain*, but Lucifer is the only character who refuses traditional spirituality and instead choses Christianity. On the other hand, we see that *Mother of Bones* looks to both her traditional religion as well as the western monotheistic religion, Christianity. Finally, we see how in *America*, Aunt Fostalina devalues traditional spirituality. Lastly, we see the way characters in both novels experience alienation from both their land and tradition.

Throughout this conclusion, I wish to explore things that were not covered in this analysis. In a way, both text are novels of resistance. In both books, there are characters who express a want for change in the country's political and economic systems. This challenge for change is what makes them novels of resistance. Bulawayo's title *We Need Names* is also a demand for change. She gives all the characters in her novel, very unique names like Bastard, Bornfree, MotherLove, GodKnows, and others. Just like she did her own name, by using these new names, she creatively suggests that Zimbabweans should get rid of their colonized names are created names of their own. Clearly her use of these new names says something about the way in which she resist colonial influences. This can be connected to the way in which Mungoshi names his main character Lucifer, which is the devil's name. In the end, both these novels demand change and carefully use devices like names to say something that is not explicitly said within the content of the text.

Mungoshi sticks to a much more classic literary form, by using vivid imagery to describe certain details. Bulawayo writes way outside of this frame, and creates a new form for herself. All of the novels lacks punctuation within sentences, so sometimes it becomes more challenge to read and follow dialogue. I read this choice to not include punctuation in her writing, as a way of resisting to the traditional ways of writing a novel. To conclude, there are a lot of relating things that we can continue to pull from these novels, but in all the project clearly builds a relationship between the two nationalist literatures.



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