

**MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY**



**FACULTY OF ARTS**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND COMMUNICATION**

**DISSERTATION TOPIC**

Children's texts prescribed in Zimbabwean high schools as historical narratives. A close study of Hanson's *Takadini*, Gascoigne's *Tunzi the Faithful Shadow* and Chater's *Crossing the boundary fence*.

**By**

**Tanyaradzwa Angela Munyuki**

**Reg Number R101000B**

A dissertation submitted to the department of English and Communication, Midlands State University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Arts English and Communication Honours Degree.

**OCTOBER 2013**

**SUPERVISOR: MR. C TAGWIREI**

SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE.....DATE.....

## **DEDICATION**

To my loving husband, Nkosilathi Zikali who told me that through little things, great things are made to pass, who also believed in me and held my hand through this long academic journey. To my son, Unathi Emmanuel Zikali, the newest addition in my life who inspires me to achieve greater. To my family, Aunt Enia Maweni for the love and support. Above all to my God for unmerited favour. You deserve all the glory Jesus

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor, Mr. C. Tagwirei for his leniency, scholarly advice and inspiration during the course of my research.

I would also like to thank the Department of English and Communication for providing me with the platform to expand my knowledge frontiers through its highly useful curriculum and knowledgeable lecturers.

I would like to say a big thank you to my dear friends Mpilwenhle Moyo and Natasha Dakiwa who made my college life a memorable experience. A special mention to all my friends from my hometown Bulawayo who made Gweru my home away from home.

Lastly, to the love of my life, my husband and best friend, Nkosilathi Zikali; thank you for the financial and moral support, for believing in me and loving me unconditionally.

## **ABSTRACT**

This research is an examination of the use of Children's texts prescribed for Zimbabwean Junior high schools as historical narratives. This is an angle which has not been adequately explored as most of the texts in the Zimbabwean junior High curriculum are often valued for their didactic contribution while ignoring their historical value altogether. The research will also attempt to establish what kind of history is being narrated in the texts and whose history it is by examining works by non indigenous Zimbabwean authors, Gascoigne, Chater and Hanson. The inclusions and exclusions of certain events in the literary historical representations will form the inquiry of the study.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Dedication.....	1
Acknowledgement.....	2
Abstract.....	3
<b>2.0Chapter One</b>	
2.1 Literature Review.....	7
2.2 Theoretical framework.....	11
2.3 Background of study.....	5
2.4 Statement of the problem.....	6
2.5 Aims and objectives.....	6
2.6 Significance of study.....	7
2.7 Research methodology.....	11
<b>3.0 Chapter Two: The politics of representation in <i>Tunzi The Faithful Shadow</i>.....</b>	
<b>13</b>	
<b>4.0 Chapter Three: Romanticisation of race relationships in <i>Crossing The Boundary Fence</i>.....</b>	
<b>25</b>	
<b>5.0ChapterFour:Segregation and discrimination of women in <i>Takadini</i></b>	
<b>.....39</b>	
<b>6.0 Chapter five: Summary and Conclusion.....</b>	
<b>51</b>	

# CHAPTER ONE

## 1.1 BACKGROUND TO STUDY

This research seeks to evaluate the use of historical allusions in children's texts used in Zimbabwean schools. The texts will be studied in part as historical narratives hence the need to analyse closely the history they evoke. The research will focus mainly on Zimbabwean literature for junior high school readers.

According to George Orwell (1984), all art is propaganda, aiming at selling a particular ideology or exposing a particular weakness therefore historical narratives are not innocent and that includes the three children's texts the researcher has chosen to analyse which make an attempt to represent certain groups of people, however there is always a danger of misrepresentation or under representation. The writer will include certain events that he or she wishes to be known and exclude those that he or she feels should be concealed. The inclusions and omissions in the children's texts is what the researcher has chosen to analyse through a reading of three children's texts studied in Zimbabwean schools. Analysis is that the first, *Tunzi the Faithful Shadow* revolves around a Ndebele boy's childhood experiences despite the fact that the author is himself is neither a child nor of the Ndebele tribe but a European adult. *In Crossing the Boundary fence*, the author, Chater is also a non indigenous Zimbabwean just like the author of the third text studied, *Takadini*. In three of the children's texts it is a case of foreigners that is authors who are not Zimbabwean by origin writing Zimbabwean History these are foreigners who have put themselves in the shoes of indigenous Zimbabweans and have taken the task of narrating events that they, have never been subjected to either by virtue of their race or cultural background. The researcher will note discrepancies in the historical presentation in the literary texts studied, for example in *Tunzi the Faithful Shadow*, names of people and places have been distorted throughout the text presenting an inaccurate history. The three children's texts that the researcher will analyse portray incidences in Zimbabwe's recent and distant past in a way that requires academic analysis.

## **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The research will closely evaluate the significance of *Tunzi The Faithful shadow*, *Takadini* and *Crossing the boundary fence* as Historical children's narrative fiction, analyzing the history that is narrated and exploring information that may have been excluded, included or distorted during the narration. This is important in demystifying children's texts commonly regarded as "innocent" and "harmless".

## **1.2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **AIMS**

- To assess the effectiveness of children's literature as historical narratives.
- To promote acquisition of relevant knowledge leading to an awareness of personal and national identity, class consciousness and conflict in children through the reading of historical narratives.

### **OBJECTIVES**

#### **The research seeks to**

- To examine the literary representation of the Zimbabwean communities.
- To explore the effects of "conflict resolution" and romanticisation of race relationships between blacks and whites in children's literary texts
- To assess how "tolerance" in children's literature encourages a culture of discrimination and segregation.
- To identify historical bias and distortion in children's literary texts.

## **1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

According to Carr (1961), Historical narratives are stories based on true historical events. The presentation of the "facts" will be based on individual opinion and not necessarily a retelling of the "facts" therefore creating historical bias towards the author's race, gender, nationality and so on as people are not a homogenous group.

The children's texts analysed in this research are texts that are part of the Zimbabwe junior school category, hence having been approved by the Ministry of Education, they are rarely examined for their historical value. Achebe (1988), contends that post colonial literature is deconstructive and reactionary in nature; it is a response to the European view of the African. However, this research will interrogate the historical narratives by the three non indigenous Zimbabwean authors, Chater, Hanson and Gascoigne in their children's texts. The researcher will examine how it is possible for a foreigner to write a history that is not his or her own avoiding bias.

#### **1.4 LITERATURE REVIEW**

Haviland (1974) observes that in the colonial period, literature for children mainly meant the reading of textbooks which brought out the didactic nature of literature. It was purely for enhancing and stimulating the minds of children, the literature promoted Western culture and celebrated it through the literary works..

However, Barthez(1981)rightfully points out “ Any text is a new tissue of past citations... of unconscious or automatic quotations given without question marks”<sup>39</sup> . therefore, post colonial Children's literature became a response to colonial literature which was shrouded with western prejudices and experiences unfamiliar with the African child.

Achebe (Quoted in Osazee 2004) puts it more succinctly when he wrote about the Nigerian child:

Before 1960 Nigerian children read nothing but British children's books and had to be left to figure out what was meant by Big Ben, Westminster Abbey, Trafalgar Square and the Thames. The poems he was forced to memorize talked about bleak and chilly mid-winter, snowflakes, men who galloped by whenever the moon and stars were out, great ports and swarming cities, and of course the Pied Piper – subjects and images which convey no meaning and no feeling to the average Nigerian (African) child in his natural environment(.2)

This then saw the rise of postcolonial writers who revolutionised children's literature by dismissing Western ideologies that had negative depictions of the black man.



Ngugi (1981) describes colonial literature as downright racist and mentions that children who read it suffer from inferiority complex; hence the role of the postcolonial writer is to write counter literature which has a strong African cultural bias, which celebrates the life of the blacks and appreciates their environment and self.

Killam and Rowe (2000) focus on the urbanisation and the traditional structure of indigenous life. They introduce the Afrocentric view in children's literature. This angle celebrates black heritage and customs, it is a restoration of the culture that was lost through westernisation which previously demonised everything attached to the African from the skin colour right through to the language.

Mbure (1997) says the role of children's literature is so that children learn virtues of patience, honesty, obedience, hard work and integrity. Overallly the literature seeks to build the characters of children and socialise them into acceptable behaviour. The literature also teaches the children not to discriminate against fellow human beings by promoting tolerance of each other in the society for example, accepting people living with disabilities and HIV.

Kaulemu (2004) says, instead of promoting violence, children's literature should endeavour to undermine social ills and promote solidarity, and this is illustrated by themes of tolerance, reconciliation and solidarity as a common feature of Zimbabwean children's literature. In light of the above assertion, Achebe (1988) states that African writers have the task of informing society of the wrong choices they have made. He further suggests that writers have the task of prescribing solutions to social ills

Other writers that emerged are described by Wangari (2006) and Atamba (2010) as gender sensitive writers who introduced the aspect of Gender in Children's literature, they advocate for the rights of the girl child and the boy child respectively in African societies. Children have an awareness of their gender and are able to counter

gender based discrimination by exposure to literature that celebrates genders traditionally labelled inferior such as that of the girl child.

Ghosn (2003), advocates for the active participation in children's literature as opposed to the banking concept that views the child as a passive recipient and the adult as all knowing. He suggests that children's literary texts can be used to develop critical and analytical thinking even in the early stages by introducing characters which the children can compare and contrast.

Sharing the same school of thought, Chitando (2008) also observes that children are not as innocent as they are depicted in most Children's literature; they are not half humans in the process of growing but are complete beings with their own views and perceptions in life. Chitando states that "children are not passive recipients of favours". In the children's' texts studied, *Crossing the boundary fence* and *Tunzi the faithful shadow* present politically minded children who are fully aware of the status quo.

In the same vein, Vera (2002) also notes that children are not passive citizens but influential people who contribute to major events even though they are unnoticed because of misrepresentation or under representation. Vera asserts that children have been part and parcel of neo colonial violence as soldiers of war and post colonial violence as youth in political parties. The use of child protagonists in Children's literature suggests that children are capable of playing major societal roles especially juveniles as young adults. They cannot be overlooked as angelic beings as they are capable of inciting disharmony in society.

Fanon( 1967) states that decolonization is always a violent phenomenon not only physically but psychologically as well. He says that it involves the simple replacement of one ideology with another. Most of the scholarly views of children's literature discussed in this literature review are a direct response to colonial children's literature.

However, the weakness of postcolonial children's literature is that it focuses more on the cultural, educational and political representations and ignores the historical significance of children's literature. Not many scholars have explored the historical significance of children's texts; history is usually fused with culture and not adequately explored on its own. This research will attempt to examine the significance of children's literature as historical narratives.

## **1.5 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This research will analyse the post colonial theory notably confining itself to the African experience and focus more specifically on Zimbabwe. According to Achebe (1988) the duty of the post colonial writer is to respond to the intellectual discourse of the West in their representation of the other. The research will focus on cultural representation. The post colonial theory is relevant as texts to be analysed are written within the postcolonial framework. The research will make use of the ideas of Gayatri Spivak, Edward Said, Paulo Frere, Homi Bhabha and Frantz Fanon on cultural studies, representation, education and violence in the post colony.

The research will also explore the theory of nationalism, defined according to the free online dictionary as "devotion to the interests or culture of one's nation" or "aspirations for national independence in a country under domination." It will examine how nationalist ideologies affect the study of history in children's literature .investigating the ethics that govern that particular nation as highlighted in the literature and who is the rightful citizen of that nation, those who are included and those who are excluded from the nation, citing their responsibilities and expectations as individuals or as societies.

## **1.6 METHODOLOGY**

This research is qualitative in nature, showing the effects of the research on society, educational policies and individuals concerned. The researcher will use grounded theory where individual perceptions are an extension or criticism of the existing information provided by other scholars who have contributed to that area of research.

The researcher will also employ textual analysis in bringing out issues highlighted in the research.

## 1.7. PROVISIONAL CHAPTER LAYOUT

Chapter one is a compilation of frameworks that guide this research. The methods and the scholars are well articulated in this chapter as well as a brief overview of the research. Chapter two is a discussion of *Tunzi the Faithful Shadow* as a historical narrative. It focuses on the ethnic misrepresentation of the Ndebele society as the major historical discrepancy. Chapter three is textual analysis of *Crossing the boundary Fence*. Emphasis lies on the romanticisation of race relationships as depicted by Chater in her text and the portrayal of the black society during the liberation struggle. Chapter four is an analysis of *Takadini*, a text by Ben Hanson which advocates for the marginalized in the society, most specifically the albinos. The historical significance of *Takadini* is what the research focuses on. Chapter five includes the summary, conclusion and recommendations suggested by the outcome of the study of literary texts as historical narratives in Zimbabwean high schools.

## Chapter Two: Politics of Representation in *Tunzi The Faithful Shadow*

### 2.1. Introduction

The idea of beginning, indeed the act of beginning, necessarily involves an act of delimitation by which something is cut out of a great mass of material, separated from the mass, and made to stand for, as well as be, a starting point, a beginning. Said E (1977;16)

According to Said (1977) all representations are political and all representations are misrepresentations. They reflect the personal views of a writer as shaped by his or her gender, race, educational background, society and so on. He postulates that

In any instance of at least written language, there is no such thing as a delivered presence but a re- presence or a representation. The apparent veracity of a written statement about the Orient therefore relies very little, and cannot instrumentally depend, on the Orient as such statement is a presence to the reader by virtue of its having excluded, displaced, made superogatory any such real representations, then can never be truly real or objective, instead they bare constructed images, images that need to be interrogated (40)

Therefore, all representations are never “true”. To represent is to take something out of its original context to present that which one wishes to be known. Inclusion of one aspect becomes exclusion of another in the same way magnification of one element is diminishing of another. It is either something is misrepresented, underrepresented or unrepresented at all.

An analysis of Tunzi the Faithful shadow will focus on representations of society, education and gender as portrayed in the children’s text.

The previous chapter offered a brief summary and overview of the research. This chapter will analyse literary representations of the 1980 Ndebele society in the children’s text; *Tunzi The Faithful shadow*.

## 2.2. Synopsis of The Text

*Tunzi the faithful shadow* is a text that centres on the experiences of a Ndebele boy in the 1980s. It is a text that has been chosen as one of the texts that are prescribed for Zimbabwe junior certificate pupils. The text, authored by a European adult, Michael Gascoigne in 1988, is a depiction of the post independent Ndebele society. This is an era characterised by significant enlightenment of the black majority through access to education and it also marks the beginning of indigenisation black businesses emerge. It is important to examine historical value of the text as it is written during a time of political unrest between ZANU-PF and ZAPU. The unrest turned into tribal rivalry and contributed to the massacre of thousands of civilians in Midlands and Matabeleland. Approval of Gascoigne's text as part of the curriculum reveals Government efforts in dealing with this ugly past.

## 3.2 Ethnic Misrepresentation

The setting of the children's text, *Tunzi the Faithful shadow* is in Matabeleland South, in Bulilima District within the proximity of the Botswana border. According to Vincent and Thomas (1960) Bulilima and Mangwe districts are geographically located in region four which receives very little or erratic rainfall such that the area is suitable for cattle ranching due to lack of adequate rainfall for farming crops. The climate of this area sustains minimal vegetation that is adapted to dry weather conditions.

Being on the fringe of the Botswana border, the majority of the population in Bulilima and Mangwe districts are the Kalanga, a tribe that split from the Shona and settled on the fringes of Zimbabwe's border with Botswana. The language predominant in the Plumtree area is Kalanga.

According to [www.http://bukalanga.com](http://bukalanga.com),

The Kalanga, also known as the Bakalanga, are one of the first Bantu speaking tribes to migrate to present day Botswana, followed by the Bakgalagadi and then the Batswana (Bakwena who then split). The Kalanga had first settled in Mapungubwe in South Africa, the first Kalanga state. They later moved to the Great Zimbabwe ruins site in Masvingo

Zimbabwe. After sometime they moved to Khami and finally ending in Botswana. However wherever they went they left relics of their masonry and at every site a group of the Kalanga remained. The Khami state occupied south-western Zimbabwe (now Matabeleland South) and adjacent parts of present day Botswana.

Gascoigne in his text overlooks or chooses to trivialise the ethnical value of the Kalanga people by portraying a Ndebele society throughout his text without even making a slight allusion to what is seemingly the majority tribe of the Plumtree area.

Most critics have overlooked children's literature as mediocre; none of the critics have closely interrogated the cultural remake of the society in *Tunzi the Faithful Shadow*. In as much as the text is categorized as Historical fiction, unlike other texts like *Alice in wonderland* and *Snow white and the seven dwarfs* in which the setting is based on fantasy, *Tunzi the Faithful shadow* should be able to mirror society in an almost realistic manner by depicting facts. As noted by Homi Bhabha (1994) in *Location of Culture*, as long as the western discourse continues to view the world as composed of separate cultures, it will carry imaginary places and people.

Gascoigne's homogenous grouping of people in Matabeleland is cultural misrepresentation, he makes a general assumption that all Blacks in Matabeleland are Ndebele hence creating an imaginary society. Temba, the Ndebele juvenile in the text makes reference to a Shona "stranger from Masvingo" (35-36) an indication that this particular individual is not part of the Ndebele society. This assumption by Gascoigne could be due to the fact that he is also not part of the community he is writing about by virtue of being white, but the community is an object of study. It is a case of representing the "other".

However, Gascoigne can be commended for taking into consideration the geographical location or setting of Bulilima and Mangwe districts. It is indeed factual that the area receives very little rainfall therefore it sustains very little vegetation, which are specifically the Mopani trees which are adapted to the climate.

In the text Gascoigne gives a brief description of the environment by saying "There were some donkeys and half a dozen goats huddled together under young Mopani trees which spread away into the distance, but they were too stunted to give adequate shade from the blazing sun." (9) It is interesting to note that Gascoigne

assumes the role of a tourist by paying attention to the aesthetic value of the environment while ignoring the society altogether. Considering that the text can be read as historical fiction, he could have highlighted the diet of this particular society but he chooses to make reference to coke as a delicacy for the Africans, thereby placing minor value on their nutrition. Temba is given money for coke as a reward for going to the shops.

It is the same coke that Temba drinks again after being captured by the bandits, the drink symbolizes black achievement in the text even though in reality, coke is corrosive in nature due to its acidity and is not recommended for children hence Africans are presented as reckless people who do not care about their health.

The high reverence for coke shows contempt for indigenous meals which are viewed as inferior and are not adequately mentioned in the text in spite of the fact that the “Mopani” trees that are mentioned at every environmental description are home to “Mopani worms” a local delicacy of Matabeleland South. Information that has been overlooked or omitted by Gascoigne is of paramount importance in the portrayal or depiction of a traditional African society to Zimbabwean children.

### **3.3 Violation of the Ndebele Language**

Language and culture cannot be divorced. Fanon (1967) contends thus: To converse in a language is to take on a world and a culture. Language represents the status of a community and cannot be divorced from the culture of that society. When language is violated, a people are deprived of their right to an identity.

Eric Williams (1944) acknowledges the role played by language in stripping one of his identity. The African slaves were “detoured” upon enslavement, denied the right to speak their own language, hence slavery was not only physical through subjecting one to hard unpaid labour and inhuman treatment but also psychosocial by eliminating the very purpose of the slave’s existence. Learning a new language that is foreign gave birth to an inferior form of English that became associated with the slaves. In the same vein, colonialism was a subtle form of slavery that robbed the Africans of their language through distortion of indigenous names



Gascoigne in *Tunzi the Faithful Shadow* takes into cognizance the importance of local languages. Most of the names of the characters in the text are indigenous names; he even offers indigenous names for the wildlife in that area so as to familiarize his text with the Zimbabwean audience it is intended for. Temba exhibits wildlife knowledge by saying "...mhembge? That's Chi Shona for mpunzi...They are called duiker in English" (36). Reference to local languages brings out the predominant languages of that society. In the text Ndebele is the main language as the text is centered on Matabeleland; However Gascoigne accounts for the non Ndebele reader by offering a Shona explanation to cater for the Mashonaland reader who may not be familiar with the Ndebele culture. English is then used to bridge the linguistic gap between the two different tribes mentioned in the text.

In a bid to represent the Ndebele language, Gascoigne succeeds in violating several aspects of the language. The protagonist's name "Temba" in Ndebele should read "Themba" meaning "Trust". Gascoigne overlooks the importance of a name by misspelling Themba's name. Though this may be viewed as unimportant as it does not directly affect the plot of the story, it is a minor insult to the Ndebele as the name "Temba" assumes a different meaning altogether. According to the Ndebele pronunciation, once the consonant "h" is removed from Themba, the name becomes singular for a type of kapenta fish known locally as "Amatamba". Hence a seemingly innocent omission of a consonant may have an adverse impact on one language.

Temba's sister is presented in the text as "Sithokozile" meaning "we are happy". Gascoigne can be applauded for the proper spelling of the name; however on shortening the name to "Toko" he makes the same mistake of overlooking the aspect of correct spelling, the acronym should have read "Thoko". Omission of the consonant "h" from the name gives it yet another meaning as it changes the pronunciation dramatically. "Toko" is a commonly used word among the Ndebele to mock someone of their downfall hence Thoko's name becomes symbolic of the mockery of the Ndebele language in the text.

In the naming of the dog the aspect of correct spelling is also overlooked. MaNcube, Temba's mother suggests "...he should be called Umtunzi, a Shadow. He goes with you Temba wherever you go..." In Ndebele it is

“Umthunzi” that is a shadow. For a text that is approved for readership in schools, such mistakes could have been corrected during the editing process. The mistakes noted show the recklessness of Gascoigne in writing about a history that is not his own. English spelling mistakes are very few, an indication that the text has been well edited yet the protagonist, by virtue of being a native boy, carries a wrongly spelt name throughout the text.

Some of the names of places have also been misspelt or Europeanized in the text. The first missionary school in Matabeleland “Sizane” has been spelt as “Cizane”. In the Ndebele language, the letter “C” is a click and does not sound the same when pronounced. Linguistic mistakes may be trivial to an adult reader but children are still in the process of accumulating knowledge and historically incorrect facts affect their learning greatly. Dismissing Children’s literature Reynolds (1994) states that: “Children’s literature is written by those who can’t write any better for those who can’t read any better” (1X).

While Reynolds’ assertion may be controversial it is a confirmation that linguistic mistakes in *Tunzi the faithful Shadow* depict the shortcomings of Gascoigne as a published writer who prejudices a target group that will be oblivious to the distortion of history.

### **3.4 Representation of Women**

In an article entitled “Gender equality no enemy to marriage” by Gwendoline Mugauri in The Sunday Mail of January 16-22 2011. Vice President Comrade Joyce Mujuru highlighted the fact that Zimbabwean women like their counterparts in other African nations remain on the periphery despite accounting for 52 percent of the country’s population. The Zimbabwean culture continues to suppress women even in literary representations like *Tunzi The Faithful Shadow* which has a bias towards patriarchy.

Gascoigne highlights the plight of women during the 1980s. The men in the text are the protagonists while women are allocated domestic inferior roles. Toko, in the text ponders over the social status of the girl child;

She knew that girls were supposed to learn from their grandmothers and mothers and that boys should learn from their fathers, but she loved her father and although she would be ten soon, she still liked to be picked up in his huge arms and hugged (35)

Gascoigne presents Toko as a weak character who idolizes her father and brother. Toko's character is stereotypical of the girl child in Zimbabwe, who is a perpetual child incapable of making decisions independent of men. The male figures in her life are the hub of knowledge while she is a mere receptacle, despite her age, during her conversations with either Temba or her father, Toko is always at the receiving end while the men appear more informed and highly intellectual, this is so because the traditional society of the Ndebele views women and children in the same way.

Men are the heroes of society as seen by the use of a male protagonist. *Tunzi the Faithful Shadow* is a predominantly male oriented text, the plot is of the heroism of men in the society. The bandits Jabulani and Mazula represent the social ills of men who abuse their masculinity while Dlula, Moyo and other men in the society have been presented as the "ideal" men.

There is little mention of Temba's mother in the text although she is presented as a lady well endowed with indigenous herbal knowledge. Bosengwana, a man of high social standing, acknowledges this fact when he advises Temba to take the wounded dog to his mother for treatment. The author notes: "Well then, said the old man with a smile, your mother MaNcube, is clever with animals and if anyone can heal your new friend, she can" (12). The insinuation therefore would be that it is an achievement for a woman to have knowledge of anything outside her domestic fraternity. Women in this society need the approval of men to feel worthy. Any achievement by a woman should be connected to a male figure. MaNcube was secretly pleased at the comment made by the old man as if she had been waiting for someone else to appreciate her talent.

The primary role of women is to be caregivers, hence MaNcube's ability to nurse a wounded animal back to health. When pertinent issues arise, the women are sidelined as in the case of Temba's kidnapping. Gascoigne makes the plot an all male affair where Toko And MaNcube are totally obliterated from the action despite being interested parties in Temba's life. Ultimately the hero is a man at the end of the text. Women are only there to applaud the achievements of the male species.

### **3.5 A colonial legacy of violence**

Fanon (1963:40) notes: "Violence which has ruled over the ordering of the colonial world, which has ceaselessly drummed the rhythm of the destruction of native social forms and broken up without reserve.....that same violence will be claimed and taken over by the native at the moment when, deciding to embody history in his own person, he surges into the forbidden quarters ." Fanon implies that violence is simply handed down as a legacy of colonialism; he describes the violence metaphorically as a disease that eats up the nation.

The theme of violence is dominant in *Tunzi the Faithful shadow*, is a pyramid where it is evident at every level in the social ladder. The men in the society experience violence from the system of governance, a man's status is only revered in his own home whereas at work, he is subject to oppression by working long hours for poor remuneration. Dlula, Temba's father laments in the text:

Today, many men like me, because of the need for money, live away from home...this isn't a good thing, a family needs to stay together, when it cant it grows weak. When the family is weak, the whole village is weak. (23)

Gascoigne brings out the aftermath of colonialism, the Africans were indeed "free" but materially they remained disadvantaged as wealth was still in the hands of the whites hence violence within the post colony became the order of the day as black ethnic races tried to outrun each other in the war for economic repossession.

The divide and rule strategy employed by the coloniser is taken up by the formerly colonised to dissect the country into significant and insignificant tribes. In *Tunzi the faithful shadow*, the Ndebele and the Shona emerge as the powerful tribes through the domination of indigenous languages. The issue of “dissidents” raised by Gascoigne was an era of a violent, a cold war between the Shona and the Ndebele. According to <http://www.newsday.co.zw> 2013/08/08, about twenty thousand civilians were massacred during the Gukurahundi atrocities.

*Tunzi the Faithful Shadow* was written during a time of great political unrest, and according to <http://www.nehandaradio.com>, Gukurahundi is Shona name meaning the early rain that cleanses the dirt before the spring rains. South Africa was allegedly not happy with the black majority rule in Zimbabwe and sabotaged the new independent state by providing people from Matabeleland with ammunition to fight against the new government run by R.G Mugabe. Tanks were blown up and a lot of infrastructure vandalised which led to the retaliation of the ZANU PF government by sending soldiers trained in Korea known as the Fifth brigade to counter terrorise the dissidents.

However, even though Gascoigne does not directly expose Gukurahundi in his text, he diplomatically conceals the reasons for the emergence of rebels, the behaviour of the bandits is typical of terrorists. Mazula and Jabulani are both social outcasts. Themba says;

..He remembered that Jabulani had been punished by the chief’s court for using foul language to his father, and that shortly after that he had left home and not been heard of since...Themba wondered if he had joined the dissident groups, with help from South Africa...the two of them may have joined together and decided it was better to earn a living by robbing than by working.(47)

Frustrations within the new country lead to violent criminal activities, the violence was not only against fellow black men but against animals as well, and it was a time of greed and unemployment as most jobs required education which the majority of the blacks had been disadvantaged of during the liberation struggle.

Gascoigne makes reference to poachers who are part of the outcasts in the new nation, Temba's father scrutinises a dead animal and says "Yes, i am sure it has a wire around its neck. This is the work of poachers....this is the worst kind of brutality" (30). The cycle of violence is a continuous one that is probably a response to an oppressive system hence the vivid portrayal of a violent black community in *Tunzi the faithful Shadow*.

The non conformists of the society who are namely, the poachers, the dissidents and the bandits represent the people who are excluded from the nation, however, Gascoigne fails to articulate the reasons why the outlaws do not fit into the society, leaving this aspect open may be historical suicide for child readers who are deprived of historical information. It appears like a deliberate omission of information on Gascoigne's part since the Entumbane uprisings were allegedly perpetrated by the government which has approved his text for readership in its schools.

Gascoigne may have omitted information that vilifies the government as a way of fitting into the new Zimbabwean nation and not being viewed as an outcast himself. According to the post colonial discourse of Zimbabwe, every white person is a potential enemy of the state hence Gascoigne even deliberately excludes his own biography from the text as he falls within the category of white people, and inclusion of his own biography would mean prejudice even before his text is scrutinised .

### **3.5 Conclusion**

Gascoigne is successful in highlighting many controversial issues in his text, but he has a bias towards government ideologies and fails to do what Achebe(1988) highlights as the task of a post colonial writer, informing societies of the wrong choices they have made and prescribing solutions to social ills. The only prescription to social ills offered in the text is the elimination of villains using state repressive facilities, as long as there is rebellion, the rebel's voice is never

heard.

Gascoigne also fails to be sensitive to the social aspect of the Ndebele society, as a historical narrative, not much of the Ndebele culture can be learned from a reading of *Tunzi the Faithful shadow*. The society is portrayed as backward, the only achievers are those who work like slaves hence Fanon (1967)'s assertion that one is rich because they are white and they are white because they are rich. The distortion of history in Gascoigne's text shows his historical bias, a foreigner, narrating a history that is not his own hence his lack of sensitivity to other aspects of the black society like language and culture.

### **Chapter Three: Romanticisation of Race Relations in *Crossing the Boundary Fence***

#### **4.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter looked at the literary representation of the Ndebele society of the 1980s in *Tunzi the faithful shadow*. This chapter continues the discussion by analysing the literary representation of race relationships in *Crossing the Boundary Fence*.

#### **4.2. Synopsis of The Text**

*Crossing the Boundary Fence* is a text examinable at Zimbabwe junior certificate level. It has been part of the English syllabus for more than ten years as a text that promotes the unity of blacks and whites. Its historical significance is important because not many texts have tackled

the sensitive issue of national healing. In 1978, Musa, a black farmer's daughter and Diana, the daughter of a white farmer meet at the boundary fence dividing their father's lands and start a friendship that spans the time of the war of liberation for Zimbabwe. Their friendship survives the racial and great political unrest into the New Zimbabwe. It is a story about the struggle for the black man's liberation and the problems that led to the

Second Chimurenga, and ultimately the independence that promised a better life for both the blacks and the whites.

#### **4.2 The Fallacy of a “New” Zimbabwe**

*Crossing the Boundary fence*, a children’s text by Patricia Chater is one of the most renowned publications of a White Zimbabwean writer trying to forge relationships between two antagonising races, the blacks and the whites. Many writers have problematised the romanticism of race relationships between the oppressor and the subaltern. One of the most prominent post colonial scholars, Gayatri Spivak (1988) in her essay, ‘*Can the subaltern speak*’, defines the term subaltern as “everything that has limited or no access to cultural imperialism.” Spivak argues that the subaltern cannot speak and cannot be represented because no one in their right minds wants to represent the insignificant. Spivak says listening is a transaction between the speaker and the listener and further contends that the West has no time for dialogue with the Orient.

However, in studying *Crossing the boundary Fence* as a historical narrative, the subaltern (African) is given a voice through the medium of a white writer Chater, who accounts for the History through her Eurocentric perspective. Chater derails from Spivak’s views by creating a platform of dialogue between the whites and the blacks. However, it is noted that the “superior” race is the one that sets the tone for the dialogue as Diana in the text seems to be always initiating the first move with Musa and Spiwe following behind like faithful servants.

In holding up the “white flag of peace”, *Crossing the Boundary fence* attempts to present a “new” Zimbabwe, an ideal country where friendship between Musa and Diana transcend the Racial stereotypes. Dube (2004) argues that reconciliation should go beyond mere friendship, it should address historical wounds and economic disparities plaguing the black people if it is to be meaningful.

A historical reading of *Crossing The Boundary Fence* may be logocentric, presenting the white colonialist agenda and the black nationalist agenda. Musa represents and strands for the interests of the oppressed black



majority while on the other hand Diana represents the Europeans. Musa is politically, conscious and comes from a family that has experienced the brutality of colonialism. Her home is a reserve, on the periphery of Heron's farm. Her father is a subsistence farmer who does not even have enough land to feed his own family. Musa's situation typifies the native's struggle for land. In an interview in chapter seven, an old woman describes her first encounter with the Europeans, in which she reminisces a time when the blacks had enough land to grow their food; she says "...there was always plenty because my mother knew the things in the forest that were good to eat. She dug up roots and gathered roots and berries as well as working on her piece of land...we had to sell our cattle when we came here and our land is too small...we often go hungry and life is hard" (56). Musa's life is characterized by lack of geographical space while Diana has spacious surroundings such that some parts of her father's farm have been left idle so that she can ride her pony. Riding a pony is a pastime, a luxury that Musa does not have.

The "new" Zimbabwe will see these two completely different individuals coming together and crossing the boundary fence of racial, ethnic and economic stereotypes to become Zimbabwean citizens. Fanon (1963) warns against such romanticism of race relationships where only one party's loss is another party's gain, he says; "in actual fact, proof of success lies in a social fabric that has changed inside out." This means that for relationships to be meaningful in such a political scenario the solution is that one of the concerned parties has to lose and submit to the other, not to unite like in *Crossing the boundary Fence* when there are still grievances to be addressed.

Musa and Diana manage to maintain their friendship despite the gruesome war between the two races, a very unrealistic presentation of conflict by Chater. There is no way Musa would have maintained relationships with a person whose race had maliciously killed her people for their inheritance in the context of the Zimbabwean war, considering the fact that Musa was a direct victim of the Land apportionment act which saw her family being relegated to the periphery. Diana is the voice of reason in the text, a pacifier or intermediary between the blacks

and the whites. Chater presents her as a neutral person whose views are not prejudiced by race but by “rationale”. However, it is not possible to be hanging on the fence, its either one is for the Africans or against them, and Diana is neither of the two. This suggests that Chater is apathetic to the war but views the struggle from a comfortable confinement while bombs and bloodshed characterize the environment around.

Diana is comfortably secured in her fortified home and hears the proceedings of the war from the radio and television even though the war is taking place right below her nostrils. Musa on the other hand is part of the struggle, helping out as a Chimbwido and putting her life on the line for a “new” Zimbabwe. Clearly the different roles assumed by the two girls Musa and Diana during the struggle cannot cement a friendship based on mutual understanding as depicted in the text where Chater brings out Musa’s ambition as that of walking hand in hand with Diana through her front door.

The whole concept and essence of a “new” Zimbabwe is trivialized to suggest that after the Liberation struggle, all that the blacks wanted was to walk hand in hand with their oppressor, in rebuttal; Tafataona Mahoso(1989) in *“Footprints of the Bantustan”* speaks rhetorically;

“Will the nerve reconcile itself  
to the naked knife? By what softness  
of heart can we turn  
swords into ploughshares  
when we never had swords?”

“On whose terms, dear commander,  
shall the lamb feed together  
with the fox? Can the worm bask  
in amity with the hoe  
which only yesterday cut its spine  
into halves?”

Dismissal of such romantic and intimate remission and forgiveness of iniquities portrayed by Chater in her text is an indication that she approaches the reconciliation with a bias towards the white man who is willing to extend the hand of friendship to one whose hand has been marred by that same hand that is stretched out in friendship. It is difficult for one to shake the hand of the one who has cut off his or her own fingers without being tempted to do the same; in the same way it should not be smoothly simple for Musa to be friends with a person in the enemy's camp.

Chater implies that blacks and whites can reconcile if they approach "unity" from a child's perspective where controversial issues are conveniently swept under the carpet, however, though this stance may be the most ideal in dealing with such a painful history, it is noted that it is the black man who suffers as he or she has to obliterate a painful memory while the white man only has his pride to swallow.

In *Crossing the boundary Fence*, right after the war, Diana and Musa meet as old friends and they lightly gloss over the details of the war even though Musa has been wounded, bereaved and humiliated by the Rhodesian militants who fought for the white minority. Diana casually remarks " Oh, Musa... I'm so sorry about your stepmother. It must have been a terrible time for you. But I hope things are all right for you now. Spiwe told me your brother and his friend have both come back safely. I'm so glad." (132). Such a remark from Diana lacks the empathy of a real friend, how can things be "alright" for Musa when she is left to mother her orphaned siblings and faces the danger of not being able to return to school. Even though her brother is back safe and sound he is not the same David who left to go and fight in the bush; he is a fully fledged soldier who might have transformed dramatically due to the effects of war, Musa's family has disintegrated while Diana's has remained intact with only a few hiccups yet these two families are supposed to be miraculously united upon the basis of Independence and form a new Zimbabwe.

Diana has not lost much save for a few cattle that are conveniently donated by her father as a way of protecting his family from direct attack from the African guerillas; Even this is done secretly as it is highly humiliating and downright uncouth for the white man to support the liberation struggle in any way; Mr Heron would not have

supplied the guerillas meat from his livestock if he had nothing to gain from the gesture. Chater unknowingly exposes the white race as manipulative, having agreed to the terms of a new Zimbabwe out of fear of annihilation and not really as an act of reconciliation.

Chater describes the atmosphere of the Independence Day and says: “On the morning of 18th April 1980, Musa got up very early. She had listened to the Independence ceremony on the radio the night before, and now she wanted to greet the dawn of the new Zimbabwe.” (127) At the end of the text there is nothing “new” at all about the African except the national anthem , the flag and the renaming of the country.

Musa’s situation predictably worsened after Independence than before as she emerges as a war torn child who till faces the same economic challenges as before thereby problematising the whole concept of “true” independence. The hardships and complexities of Musa’s life and the simplicity of Diana’s life are worlds apart and even through Chater tries to forage a lasting relationships between these two, she diplomatically avoids the narration of historical disparities between the two hence the bias in her historical narrative. Chater suggests that after independence, Musa and Diana become equal which is only a fantasy as presently, 33 years after attaining Independence, the black and white races still have not fully reconciled as the whites have been either ignored or excluded from the new nation.

#### **4.3 Emasculation of African Men During The Liberation Struggle**

One observes in Oyonos’ *Houseboy*; that an oppressed race is always insignificant to its oppressor, its achievements are overlooked and faults are magnified, Toundi, a character in his novel finds comfort in working for the white man as a “houseboy” faithfully pleasing his masters for bread and butter. In the struggle for power and dominance, the defeated race is dehumanized to the point of uselessness. The Zimbabwean men during colonialism were not men at all but were also reduced to tea boys and houseboys. A grown man who is the father of his household would be addressed as a “boy” and a grown woman likewise.

Patriarchy gave the African man a sense of pride as the provider and head of the family but due to colonialism, he could no longer fend for his family thus he needed to work for the white man in order to survive. In the white man's world, even the animals were of much value than the black man.

Spiwe's father is addressed by his first name even by Diana who is the same age as his daughter. Diana does not see anything wrong with ordering Peter around whenever she needs something as this is the normal thing to do. It is revealed that; "Peter had been with her family since long before she was born and would do anything for the 'picannin madam'." (11) Diana is thirteen years of age so it means that Peter had been with the family for over thirteen years and in those years he had remained a "boy" and had not graduated to the level of a man. Chater seems to suggest that it is an achievement for Peter to have worked for the Herons as a faithful servant and has been rewarded by all those years of service. In as much as the black man working in the farms is guaranteed of shelter and food for his family unlike the subsistence farmer in the reserves, he is another man's "wife" performing all the domestic duties that would normally degrade him in his own home.

Peter was emasculated to the extent that he could not make individual decisions but his dog like loyalty to the Herons made him trust Mr Heron's judgement for almost everything. When the war was drawing closer, he contemplated which side he would take, this being despite the fact that the blacks were supposed to support the liberation struggle as one.

The friendship between Spiwe and Diana is rather superficial. It is not possible for the child of a servant share a strong friendship with the boss's daughter. A certain respectable amount of distance is usually kept between the two considering that Diana is the "picannin madam" and has the same powers as that of her father and any misunderstanding between the two would jeopardize the security of Peter's job. According to Gramsci's hegemonic model, the masculinities of men are defined by their power in society, hence Spiwe and Diana share an unbalanced friendship where Diana is aware of the power that her father has over Spiwe's father because Mr Heron has the power to reprimand Peter as he pleases yet Peter does not have the same powers by virtue of being a servant.

The war strips African man of their dignity as most fail to protect their families from harm as they do not have the power and the status that the white men have. Mr Heron takes his family to safety at Fairbridge where they have military protection every night. On the other hand, Mr Mtetwa cant do anything to protect his family as the father of the house, his daughter is bruised by a bullet, his son goes off to join the war and it is not known whether he is dead or alive, the soldiers attack his homestead and kill his wife while he escapes with his own life full of shame and helplessness. All these incidences bring out the weakness of an African man who can be flogged in front of his children and taunted while he helplessly yields to the more “powerful” men.

Mr Mtetwa remorsefully tries to explain why he abandoned his children “... I was able to escape out of the yard before the soldiers arrived...I thought you might all have been killed but what could I do? He cried again...” tears themselves are an indication of weakness in an African man as culturally men are supposed to bottle up their emotions yet in his moment of desperation, Mtetwa acknowledges that he could have at least tried to save his family as the patron of the home rather than leave his helpless children at the mercy of the soldiers.

Another character in the text that brings out emasculation is Baba Moyo, the cook. Normally men in the African culture are not fond of domestic work, however they are willing to be domesticated if the job involves money and they are not worried about their reputation. However that is not the case with European men who assume domestic roles. They have high sounding names like “chef” for cook and “butler” for a general house hand, names which cannot be attached to an African man.

All other farm workers on Mr Heron’s farm are addressed by their first names, an act that shows that the European has no regard for the black man. Robert, William and Peter are men grown enough to be addressed by their surnames which are more respectful than their first names considering that in the African culture it is rather disrespectful to call a family man by his first name.

The two, William and Robert have been handed over to the police when the young boss Kevin discovered that the cattle were missing and suspected the two for covering up. Upon return, Peter asks if they were beaten by

the police as this was a way of disciplining workers who got out of hand. Robert responded: “not much...they were starting to interrogate us when the young boss arrived and we were released straight away.”(113) Kevin held more power than the two black men and their lives were at his mercy, the treatment of Africans was so inhumane that African adults could be flogged like mischievous children. Chater avoids vivid descriptions of the violence as a way of protecting her audience, the children yet by concealing such information she runs the risk of presenting a false history that suggests that the war of liberation in Zimbabwe was not as bloody as most literary representations depict it to be. Omission of the strifes that the blacks faced may also be Chater’s way of obliterating a gruesome experience yet such experiences will forever be imprinted in the memories of the blacks through oral tales.

#### **4.3 Betrayal or Survival?**

According to Lewis (1981), the fight for independence was not an easy one. Already the nation was divided into two races, the blacks and the whites, and also further partitioned into those for the liberation struggle and those against it. Diana raises a very important point out of her naivety in the text, when she comments; “My brother says all the African people support the government and want the whites to go on ruling.” This comment marks a clear cut demarcation between the blacks and the whites yet this was not the case. The problem of othering is noted by Said (1977) as an act of creating imaginary perceptions and assumptions such as those expressed by Diana. There was no way the blacks would have grinned at the notion of being oppressed by the white man all their lives and this was evidenced by the advent of the war against the oppressive white rule.

Chater implores the child narrator, Diana , who makes the mistake of suggesting that the blacks are a homogenous group yet they, like the whites only share a race but are separated on many aspects. During the liberation struggle, it would be a huge mistake to simply trust anyone all on basis of identical races. There are whites like father Hancock, the headmaster of St Stephens who fully supports the struggle despite the fact that the blacks are fighting against his own race. Father Hancock, unlike Mr Heron is a genuine supporter of the

struggle as seen by the way he conceals information from the police thereby jeopardizing his own school and personal safety in the process. Mr Heron on the other hand is cynical of the black people and only unwillingly “donates” to the cause in order to protect his family for him, this kind of betrayal means survival for his family and he will do whatever it takes to protect his own interests rather than to openly retaliate against the guerillas and risk death. After all, he still has his farm and losing a few cattle is the paltry price he has to pay to preserve his life.

It is amusing that Chater seems to focus more on the betrayal of blacks against other blacks in her text and illuminates the aspects of “sellouts” while diminishing white sell outs. Leonard Madumba, a former student at St Stephens is the most significant “sellout” in the text. Chater narrates, “He was wishing he never started to be an informer, he was in constant fear of being discovered, lonely and finding it difficult to study. The only reward was the few dollars which his uncle gave him.”(83). Leonard justifies his reasons for being a traitor, the author narrates,

After all, didn't he come from a poor family? Much poorer than most of the others at St Stephen's? There was never any ready cash, even for such necessities as new shoes or a new blanket” After all his uncle had been paying his fees for the past four years and he expected something in return. (49).

Chater seems to be making excuses for the African sellout, something that she does not do for the white sellouts like Father Hancock whose deeds appear noble such that the white man is presented as an angelic character. However, even though Leonard has been labeled as a “Judas” it can be noted that he does his “dirty dealings” out of sheer poverty. Leonard's betrayal is justified as survival by Chater, a suggestion that had he not been poor, he would have never betrayed the African struggle yet this is not entirely true because Chater presents the Black race as a greedy race which sells its freedom at a price. It might have appeared innocent that Leonard was an informer with a cause yet the information that he provided to the police caused the deaths of many fellow Africans, a deed that is inexcusable no matter how much Chater pardons Leonard for this act.



Chater introduces the aspect of untrustworthiness between the blacks. They constantly suspect each other such that in the tension of the political instability, every black man is a suspect. This portrayal of blacks by Chater is discussed By Achebe (1988) as racism, where blacks are stereotyped to be evil people. Mai Simba meets her demise after being sold out by a fellow black woman that she does not know. After the woman had questioned Mai Simba and left, Chater then describes her emotions “When the woman had left, Mai Simba went back to the kitchen feeling uneasy. The woman was a complete stranger to her and seemed to have come such a long way for a few eggs.”(122)

The queasiness that Mai Simba felt is symbolic of the atmosphere that characterized the struggle, betrayal, though justified by Chater as Survival could never bring back the lives that were lost during the struggle and as a historical narrative Crossing the Boundary Fence brings out the White man’s bias in the literary representation of the struggle.

#### **4.4 CONCLUSION**

In this chapter, Chater attempts to balance the views of the blacks and the whites and she successfully manages to outline the grievances and justifies the black man’s decision to go to war against the whites. Chater even addresses the land question in the text by citing the unfair distribution of land which saw the Africans being stripped unlawfully off their territory and being relegated to the arid peripheries, an event that is historically significant despite the fact as a white person she could have excluded information that vilifies her own race.

Chater can be commended for using the girls as protagonists in the texts showing the value of women’s contribution in the struggle which is often thought to be a male only domain. Chater empowers her female characters by portraying them as hardworking, intelligent and educated unlike the conventional women in most Zimbabwean literary representations. The bias towards the female race brings out Chater’s own affiliation to people of the same gender as hers.

However, despite celebrating the woman, Chater places the white woman a footstool above the black woman. Diana is always initiating meetings and writing letters throughout the text while Musa and Spiwe follow what she says. Musa cannot even confront Diana but keeps unpleasant thoughts to herself yet these two are “friends”. Chater also lays emphasis on the weakness of the African tradition when Tsitsi, Musa’s sister runs off to get married and Musa finds romance with Shadrach despite her tender age. This suggests that even though women might be glorified as one there are some women who are better than others and these are the white women who are more sophisticated like Jennifer who is at University while on the other hand all that the blacks think about is abandoning school and getting married which an indication of Chater’s own bias towards white women.

## **Chapter Four: Segregation and Discrimination of Women and Albinos in *Takadini***

### **5.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter looked at the literary representation of the historical disparities between blacks and whites and the romanticisation of race relationships in *Crossing The Boundary Fence*.

### **5.2. Synopsis of The Text**

Takadini is a text that centers around the life of Takadini the albino boy and his mother Sekai. It is a story of rejection and struggle faced by the two, mother and son in a pre-colonial Shona society that considered any abnormality or disability a taboo. Sekai, Takadini’s mother flees her matrimonial home in order to save her son from a death sentence and seeks refuge in a foreign land where she is begrudgingly accepted as a sojourner. Life does not become any easier for Sekai and her son who remain outcasts for the greater part of the novel. The text demystifies the stigma and discrimination attached to albinos and is a celebration of Takadini’s achievements.

## 5.2 Introduction

It is of paramount importance to note that *Takadini* has been an examinable text at the Zimbabwe Junior certificate level for more than five years and is still being used in the Junior High School curriculum for internal examinations. The text's historical significance cannot be ignored as the issues discussed in the text affect the children's viewpoint about the marginalized people in the society. It also introduces Government ideologies as it is a text approved for readership by the Ministry of Education, Sport and culture hence the need to thoroughly examine its historical relevance.

Ben Hanson's *Takadini* is a text that is written with the marginalized society in mind. *Takadini* is a pity evoking narration of the life of an albino boy during the Zimbabwe's distant past. The text is a representation of a typical Shona society during the pre-colonial era, the culture and the beliefs of that society are the major highlights of the text. Hanson does what Achebe(1988) describes as rewriting the African past and his text serves to portray Africa as an organized society, with concrete social systems, political and economic structures. Hanson can be credited for not glossing over the unpleasantness of the African belief systems such as killing of the physically handicapped, the twins and the albinos but rather questions such inhumane practices through his text.

Hanson advocates for the marginalized in society by deconstructing the stereotypes attached to albinos, presenting Takadini the albino boy as an achiever and a survivor. Through the heroic portrayal of Takadini, Hanson spreads the gospel of acceptance and tolerance of people with disabilities as traditions are passed on from one generation to the next therefore he sees a need to put to an end some of the harmful societal beliefs of the Zimbabwean society that albinos are useless and should be treated with contempt.

However, Hanson's "good motives" in this chapter promote the segregation and further discrimination of albinos through the historical presentation of the woman and the child, from the first page. It does not matter that Takadini is a man child but emphasis lies on his skin color and from that moment onwards to the end of the book he is not seen as a person but a "musope" or an "it". The woman's voice is a silenced one in the narrative.

Takadini's life is a perpetual struggle and a fight for survival, a suggestion that those that are unwanted in society like Takadini should fight for their survival otherwise they will remain on the periphery. Hanson worsens the plight of the disabled by categorizing them into those who contribute meaningfully to society and those who do not, implying that there are classes of better people even amongst the disabled and those who are "redeemable" deserve to be accepted or integrated into society like Takadini who finds a place in the society through knowledge of herbs that heal people and also as a musician.

The barren woman's plight is also captured by Hanson as he exposes the downside of polygamy as a cultural practice. Sekai, Takadini's mother stays in a polygamous marriage for nine years without child and her shame is finally lifted when she gives birth to Takadini even though her joy is short-lived upon realization that she has given birth to an albino.

However, it is interesting to note that even though Hanson attempts to liberate the woman from patriarchal dominance in *Takadini*, Sekai's reliance on men throughout the text is rather worrying. Hanson seems to emphasize that women are incomplete without men in their lives yet even with the men, they still continue to be mere appendages, or assets that are used and disposed of as the men please. This is illustrated by the shameful life Sekai lives after leaving her matrimonial home. Like Takadini who has to constantly please in order to be accepted, Sekai has to endure the shame of mothering a cripple, and an albino and at the same time bear the humiliation of being a societal reject, a misfit who has been "cast away" by her own people, her fate continuously lies in the hands of men, bringing out the author's own bias towards the patriarchal system.

### **5.3 The Traditional Burden of Womanhood**

Hanson gives a brief insight into the mind of a woman pertaining to the role of motherhood; he narrates that

Sekai looked lovingly at her bulging stomach and patted it tenderly as she lay on her mat...this was her first pregnancy in nine years...At last! The ancestors have granted my greatest wish...I'm sure this will be a man child, the first born male for my husband. It will make him so happy he will love me more than before! (5)

From the onset, Hanson highlights the innate desire for a woman to please the man with a male child showing the inferiority of the females in the African society. The value of a woman is attached to her ability to bear children and fulfill her role of motherhood. Sekai becomes a woman the moment her stomach bulges with child. Hanson describes the traditional role of a woman as being a wife, a mother and an “entertainer” for the man. The woman who did not fulfill these three roles faced rejection from male dominating society. Sekai may be sexually appealing to her husband Makwati but the fact that she has not borne any children in nine years denies her the opportunity to be defined as a woman in her society.

Tagwirei (2012) observes that; “The subaltern woman in *Takadini* is the extension of alterity. Hanson’s ideological thrust favors culture at the expense of the woman and this culture is patriarchal. Sekai ‘can speak’ but she cannot name her own child. Instead, she ‘receives’ the name as she communes with the spirits, who in most cases are depicted as male. In other words she only echoes the words of another. Sekai is restored into society only to be re-marginalized”

This observation leads to the analysis that womanhood in the Pre colonial Zimbabwean era is a burden rather than a joy as depicted by Hanson. Sekai wishes to give birth in order to cement her marriage and please her husband more than herself, it is a sacrificial desire where the joy of her man matters more than her own joy, therefore the triune role of motherhood, wife and entertainer becomes a curse, where the spirits of men and society are constantly appeased.

Sekai never experiences a moment of contentment in the text; she is always living on the edge about one thing or another. At first she is worried about being a barren woman and when she finally does give birth, she gives birth to an unwanted child and has to run away to seek refuge in a foreign society where she is never fully accepted. The anxiety that characterizes Sekai’s life is typical of the plight of women in cultural Zimbabwean societies. Historically women have never been significant as shown by Hanson in *Takadini* and even though he attempts to separate Sekai from patriarchy, he succeeds in attaching her to it even more.

While it is a noble thing to flee her matrimonial village in order to save the life of her son, Sekai does nothing to save her own life but would rather live a pathetic and miserable life of exile in order to protect the life of her son who also happens to be a man child, a gender given much credit in the text than the female child. One is left to wonder if Sekai would have sacrificed as much for Takadini if he was female.

The redefining moment in the text comes when Sekai asks herself some serious questions.

Sekai loved Makwati ...And now he was abandoning her to the judgment of the elders...was Makwati really indispensable to her well being, did he cook for her?...did he ever cultivate her fields for her?...no Makwati was her love but she now realized that in fact she had been doing very well without him... (23)

Even this mild form of liberation does not equip Sekai to fully attack the relevance of men in her life but she continues to live within the circle of patriarchy despite having been rejected by the same system. Hanson questions the historical dependence of women on men where the man is traditionally viewed as the provider yet the women do all the work and are not awarded any credit.

According to van Allen (1976) “women in pre-colonial Africa enjoyed a degree self-reliance and authority within the traditional framework of a loosely-structured political system” ( 49). However, Hanson opposes this assertion by not affording any single woman character individual reverence in his text, bringing out his bias as a male author.

The men in *Takadini* brag about their brave encounters either as warriors or hunters while the only significant thing a woman can do is to give birth to a man child or be sexually appealing to the men. Filomena Steady(1981) says;” “For the majority of black women, liberation from sexual oppression has always been fused with liberation from other forms of oppression, namely, slavery, colonialism, racism, poverty, illiteracy and disease (34-5). However, Hanson does not attempt to free the woman from all these forms of oppression but rather focuses largely on Takadini as the most affected while ignoring the fact that Sekai has completely severed her ties with community.

While Hanson's portrayal of a pre-colonial Zimbabwean society has not concealed the shortcomings of that society, it would emerge as an observation that apart from being a gender biased narration of history where the women are alleged to be witches, prostitutes and gossip mongers while men are glorified as hunters, chiefs and musicians; It is interesting to note that when Sekai gives birth to Takadini, she is the one who is ultimately accused of infidelity and witchcraft yet Makwati, an equal contributor in the reproduction of Takadini does not suffer any humiliation from the birth of the boy, nor is he also accused of infidelity despite the fact that his insatiable appetite for women can still make him bed any woman he finds sexually appealing.

The women in *Takadini* are not sympathetic to one another as the males in the text, Hanson brings out the weakness of a feminist system. Sekai's most painful encounters are at the hands of another female. This vilification of the female race causes the man to emerge as the hero who saves the female from her own self destructive species. Therefore, *Takadini* is a male oriented text which glorifies the man and does little to ease the traditional burden of women who remain insignificant throughout the text. Hanson frees the woman sexually but keeps her chained mentally, never to escape from the chains of male dominance.

#### **5.4 Disabled and Cursed**

The old man Chivero comments on the appearance of Takadini by saying "...I have never seen anyone like him before and why? ...they are different and do not fit in. we don't like sudden changes but prefer it when change creeps up on us like a chameleon, slowly and unnoticed" (32)

From the moment he is born, Takadini is an outcast, rejected even by the man who fathered him and pitied by his own mother who would have agreed to have him killed had she had given birth to other normal children, she confesses that had Takadini been born by another woman she would have been apathetic to his fate, a shocking revelation that makes one wonder how "true" Sekai's love for Takadini is or he is just tangible evidence that her womb is capable of reproducing a form of assurance that she can correct this reproductive mistake in future pregnancies.

As if the taboo of albinism is not curse enough, Hanson trebles albinism with bastardry and physical handicap on Takadini, too many misfortunes on one person. Hanson unknowingly stereotypes the societal outcasts as poverty stricken beggars which is a common misconception amongst the Zimbabwean society. Takadini's disability stretches from physical to psychological, as a loner rejected and dejected, economically as a refugee in a foreign land and genetically by being deprived of his biological father. All these are events characterizing the plot of the text.

Said (1977) acknowledges the role society and culture plays in marginalizing the handicapped when he says; "In any society not totalitarian, then, certain cultural forms predominate over others, just as certain ideas are more influential than others..." (1v) in the same way Takadini's integration into society will not be simple because of preconceived societal ideologies that have been engraved within the society for generations upon generations. Hanson views the Zimbabwean pre-colonial history from the eyes of an albino, an act which is plausible considering the fact that many writings have not incorporated the handicapped as part of the Zimbabwean history maybe because many of them were killed before having a chance to speak for themselves, the disabled continue to be marginalized even in post independent Zimbabwe, an indication that fighting marginalization is a mammoth task which requires renewal of mindsets. According to Sida (2012)

There are around 1.4 million persons with disability in Zimbabwe. Instead of improvements, they are facing increased difficulties to find income generation opportunities and to access education and health services. According to studies in Zimbabwe, up to 87 per cent of women with disabilities are suffering from sexual violence and as many as 29 per cent may have HIV/AIDS. 34 per cent of girls and 22 per cent of boys with disabilities never attend school. This is to compare to the 90-92 per cent primary school attendance for the population without disabilities.

The presentation of the current state of the marginalised society in Zimbabwe indicates the problem of representation, often times these people are represented by able bodied people who claim to advocate for these



groups the same way Hanson does in *Takadini* despite the fact that he is neither physically handicapped himself nor an albino. Once his text receives approval for readership in Zimbabwean Junior high schools, he is appraised for his noble gesture and the “forlorn” are forgotten almost immediately.

Takadini as a human character is rather too angelic and innocent; Hanson deprives him of the normal human characteristics, a deed which further marginalises Takadini as society views him as a creature different from its own species. There is no incidence in the text where Takadini makes the usual childish mistakes, nor is he scolded for misbehaving at any given time. In the Zimbabwean society most albinos have been viewed as people possessing supernatural intelligence like Takadini who is too the intelligent for his age, though this is not due to genetics but due to socialisation with the wise Baba Chivero.

The misconception that albinos are pure and devoid of any sinful nature is common amongst the Zimbabwean society. Perhaps by deliberately avoiding attaching common childhood mischief to Takadini, Hanson may be protecting the character against the harsh public criticism considering the fact that he is already disadvantaged. Mean while in doing so, Hanson destroys all possibilities for the others to view Takadini as human like any of them.

The constant presentation of Takadini as a sob story may be a weakness on Hanson’s part. In as much as he sensitises his readers to the plight of the marginalised, Hanson does not do much to ease the burden of Takadini but rather his constant sufferings become a curse that hangs on his neck all his life. Takadini’s achievements do not afford him an influential role in society but rather, they are a ticket to his acceptance, it is not a matter of doing the things that he personally likes but a matter of doing things that will make him accepted in a society that has rejected him. Takadini pays exorbitantly for his acceptance by enduring the pain of bleeding fingers in order to be a great Mbira player and finally prove that he is no different from any of them.

Takadini remains a taboo rejected even by the ancestors as Baba Chivero threw bones to inquire of his fate and “...for the first time, they gave no answer...” meaning there is no solution to disability and the future of the disabled remains shrouded with uncertainty, yet these are people who must live “normally” amongst other people despite their abnormalities.

## 5.5 An “African” Rendition of Pre-Colonial History

*Takadini* is a reactive text that may as well be placed in the same category as Achebe’s *Things Fall apart* a text that is a well known reaction to colonial ideologies. Hanson, like Achebe demonstrates that the Zimbabweans had a history long before the coming of the Europeans. Achebe states ; “I would be quite satisfied if my novels (especially those set in the past) did no more than teach readers that their past- with all its imperfections was not one long night of savagery from which the first Europeans acting on god’s behalf delivered them” (30). Hanson too, does not conceal many of the Shona society’s shortcomings but exposes them in the fashion of a social realist, prescribing solutions to the social ills.

The Shona societies represented in the text are peaceful societies with organized political and social structures. Hanson responds to the colonialist writings such as Conrad (1975)’s *Heart of Darkness* and Haggard’s *King Solomon’s mines* which viewed the African as savage and barbaric before the coming of the Europeans.

Achebe has this to say of the colonial literature;

The Africa *constructed* (not mirrored) by Conrad is Africa as setting and backdrop which eliminates the African as human factor. Africa as a metaphysical battlefield devoid of all recognisable humanity, into which the wandering European enters at his peril. Can nobody see preposterous and perverse arrogance in thus reducing Africa to the role of props for the break-up of one petty European mind. But that is not even the point. The real question is the dehumanisation of Africa and Africans which this age-long attitude has fostered and continues to

foster in the world. And the question is whether a novel which celebrates this dehumanisation, which depersonalises a portion of the human race, can be called a great work of art.(8)

Takadini as a children's historical narrative, seeks to teach the Zimbabwean history of the Shona tribe. Tagwirei (2012) says;

The text is testimony to the fact that African societies were well developed before colonialism, contrary to volumes of racist writings. These societies were organized and had vibrant cultures. Musasa village operates within a systematic framework. It has a leader in the person of chief Masasa. It has rules and conventions which regulate the day to day life of its people.(7)

While some of the cultural practices like the killing of one of the twins, the disabled and the albinos may be scorned by Hanson in the text as inhumane and cruel, it is not really a barbaric practice as many factors were to be considered for the survival of such in the society. Sometimes even the womb rejects deformed babies before they are born as a natural way of elimination. There was no clear understanding of the disabled community thus the society conveniently rid itself of the problem not out of cruelty but rather out of sympathy that is why it is not just anyone who can kill Takadini but the midwife who delivered the baby. Such measures were put in place to protect humanity regardless of its form rather than destroy it.

Hanson has been in Zimbabwe since his migration from Jamaica in 1981, he only came after Zimbabwe had gained its independence and he is evidently not part of the distant history re-writes, a position that makes his contribution towards the re-inscription of Zimbabwean history rather questionable as it is the case of a "foreigner" left to narrate an alien history posing a great danger in the presentation of Historical events such as the tribal wars that occurred in that era. Hanson makes mention of the clashes between the Shona and the Ndebele who he describes as the "Shangaanis"(88). This historical representation stereotypes the Ndebele as a very violent society that reaps where it has not sown.

Baba Kutukwa in his recollections of the clashes says; "...the Shangani dogs running from Chaka, began invading our land...we were not good fighters. Many years of peace and prosperity made us forget how to fight."(97) The bitterness and contempt of the Ndebele society can be felt in the diction used by Hanson. The Ndebele are portrayed as animals of the lowest order in the animal kingdom, "dogs" meaning that they did not qualify to be called human because of their animalistic behavior.

Hanson draws the reader to sympathise with the Shona the same way he demands sympathy for Takadini. He narrates that the brutality by the Ndebele left many of the Shona families disintegrated such as that of Baba Chivero who lost his wife and his daughter during the Ndebele invasions. The reader is persuaded to have a natural hatred for the Ndebele while affiliating with the Shona. Bearing in mind that *Takadini* is a Children's text approved for readership in Zimbabwean schools, Hanson therefore promotes the contempt of some tribes at the expense of a one sided history that he narrates in his text.

Hanson does not offer reasons as to why the Ndebele society raided the Shona hence silencing the Historical plight of the Ndebele who he vilifies in his text. While it is historically correct that the Ndebele fled from Tshaka this minority group fled from South Africa from the oppressive rule of Tshaka and needed to establish itself in a foreign land, the need for survival of the group made it abduct the Shona females who were integrated into the Ndebele society not as slaves but as wives to the Ndebele men and even though this appears brutal, either way the women were going to end up as somebody's wives had they remained in their society, a thing which neither improves the fate of women in the pre-colonial society nor changes it.

Raiding did not begin with the Ndebele, it had always been common practice for the "weaker" tribes to pay tribute to the stronger ones to avoid invasions hence there is really no need for the outcry in Hanson's text, it becomes an issue of tribal division rather than a representation of history

## **5.6 Conclusion**

Hanson, despite not being part of the history he writes about, writes a fairly good account of the Zimbabwean pre-colonial society, describing in detail the social as well as the political structure of the Shona. He also succeeds in highlighting the plight of the marginalized who are namely; the women who are oppressed by patriarchy, the Albino who is rejected by society, and the Shona who are raided by the Ndebele. Through his intensely pity provoking text the reader is drawn to sympathise with these subaltern groups.

However, Hanson suggests that the marginalized should be accepted out of pity rather than genuine affection. Hanson fails to recognize the need for individual importance as he considers societal acceptance to be the pinnacle in fighting stigma against albinos. Takadini's life is left hanging' it is a pseudo life where there are no individual desires but desires to please the community.

Finally, Hanson celebrates that which he should mourn, painting his text as a huge contradiction of values that should be upheld. In the end Takadini gives birth to a normal baby, this represents the death of the albino. The happiness expressed at the birth of Takadini's baby is a mockery of all the albinos who are finally accepted in society on condition that they do not reproduce their own kind

## **Chapter Five: Summary and Conclusions**

### **6.1 Summary**

The three texts analysed in the research, *Crossing the Boundary Fence*, *Takadini* and *Tunzi the Faithful Shadow* focus mainly on the historical presentations of the Zimbabwean societies in the texts. It examines closely the historical significance of the texts and exposes the weaknesses of the authors while complimenting and acknowledging their strengths.

The research mainly focuses on the analysis of historical representation of Zimbabwe's recent and distant past in Children's texts. The era stretches from pre-colonial, neo-colonial and post-colonial, analysing how literary representations have been affected by issues such as war, racism, tribalism and gender amongst some of the issues. However, analysis does not focus question the validity of the history itself but rather how the history is represented by each of the non indigenous authors bringing out the historical bias in the form of distortions, inclusions, exclusions and exaggerations.

In the pre -colonial era the research looks at the portrayal of the Shona society and the narration of historical events that characterise that. The historical narration is mainly a response to colonial ideologies and seeks to correct the distorted image of not only the Shona society but Africa as a whole. In the neo and post colonial eras, the research analyses the race, gender and ethnic relations in Zimbabwe and how they have been represented by each of the authors, highlighting, historical prejudice in the way some of the issues have been either ignored, trivialised or prioritised over others for one reason or another in the texts.

## **6.2 Conclusion**

The research places emphasis on the importance of examining children's texts for their historical value other than just their didactic element. Analysis is that in the three texts that have been closely examined, there is a fair amount of historical misrepresentation probably because the three texts, *Crossing the boundary Fence*, *Tunzi the faithful Shadow* and *Takadini* are authored by non indigenous Zimbabweans who may be pardoned for their historical bias. However, it is no excuse on the part of Zimbabwean publishers who are expected to carefully examine the historical content of the texts before going to print so as to avoid disseminating historically incorrect information that will be regurgitated by the target audience, the children who are not in a position to dispute the information for themselves but are mere receptacles of unfiltered knowledge.

It can also be noted that while little value has been placed on children's texts in Zimbabwe, texts like *Crossing the Boundary Fence*, *Takadini* and *Tunzi the Faithful Shadow* have been approved for readership in Zimbabwean Junior High schools mainly because they are a vehicle for instilling Government ideologies like nationalism, patriotism and education on the young Zimbabwean minds. This has led editors to overlook the historical significance of the texts which is an integral part in establishing the texts as fit for readership because any disparities in the historical representation threaten identities whose roots are melted in history and it becomes a violation of identities and personalities.

The research brings out the silenced history of Zimbabwe by examining aspects of history in the texts that have been deliberately overlooked or completely ignored such as "Gukurahundi" in *Tunzi the faithful Shadow* in which the current government is alleged to have had a hand in the killing of thousands of innocent civilians. While issues such as these may be overlooked in Children's texts, they have to be addressed in order to promote national healing between the affected parties and by ignoring such delicate issues, societies harbour a lot of hurt that disturbs national unity. Overall, the research also questions what kind of history, whose history is it that is narrated and by whom. These are important questions in demystifying children's texts that are usually viewed as angelic and innocent.

### **6.3 Recommendations**

I recommend that children's texts that are approved by the Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture should not be only examined for their educational significance to the Zimbabwean school syllabus but should be examined for their historical contribution to avoid presentation of a distorted or biased history in the texts.

The Zimbabwean publishing houses are encouraged not to trivialize the editing of children's literature, especially if written by non indigenous Zimbabweans who are alien to Zimbabwean customs and languages. A

lack of thoroughness in editing the texts in this research has seen most, if not all of them; go to print with wrongly misspelt indigenous names and of geographical locations in Zimbabwe.

## Reference

### Primary sources

Chater, P. (1988) *Crossing the Boundary Fence*. Harare: College Press

Gascoigne, M. (1987) *Tunzi the faithful Shadow*, Harare: College Press

Hanson, Ben J. (1997) *Takadini*. Harare: Fidalyn Productions

### Secondary sources

Achebe, C. (1958) *Things Fall Apart*, London: Heinemann

Achebe, C. (1988) "The Novelist as Teacher." *Hopes and Impediments: Selected Essays, 1965- 1987*. London, Heinemann.

Achebe, C. (1988) "An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*." *Hopes and Impediments: Selected Essays, 1965- 1987*. London: Heinemann,

Barthes, R. (1981) "Theory of the Text." Trans. Ian McLeod. In *Untying the Text: A Post-Structuralist Reader*. Robert Young (ed), London: Routledge.

Bhabha, H. (1994) *Location of Culture*, New York: Routledge.

Carr, H. E. (1961) *What is History*, London: Penguin press.



- Chitando, A(2008), *Imagining a Peaceful Society*, Nordiska Africainstitutet, Uppsala:Sweden.
- Cole, E, L. (1985) *Courage*, Watercolour Books :U.S.A.
- Conrad, Joseph. (1995) *Heart of Darkness*. London: Penguin Books
- De Kock, L. (1992). *New nation writers conference in South Africa: a review of international English Literature*, vol 22;3 pg 29-47
- Fanon, F (1967) *Wretched Of The Earth*, “Concerning violence”, London: Mc Gibbon and Kee
- Fanon, F. (1967). *Wretched of the Earth*, Great Britain, Mc Gibbon and Kee,
- Filomena ,S.(1981) “The Black Woman Cross-Culturally: An Overview.” *The Black Woman Cross-Culturally*.  
Cambridge: Mass Schenkman
- Gann, L. (1981), *The struggle for Zimbabwe*, new York: Praeger Publishers.
- [http// www.sida.com](http://www.sida.com) *Disability rights in Zimbabwe*(2012). Accessed on 10 10 2013
- <http://www.academia.edu//cuthberttagwirei> Re-inventing alterity,*The woman and the albino in Takadini's subtext* 25 september 2012 accessed on 15-09-2113
- <http://www.newsday.co.zw>. *Heated debate on Gukurahundi*.accessed 2013/08/08
- <http://www/bukalanga.com> . *The Kalanga of Matabeleland South* .accessed on 5/09/ 2013
- .
- Kaulemu, David, (2004), “*The Culture of Party Politics and the Concept of the State,*” in David Harold- Barry (ed.), *Zimbabwe: The Past is the Future:Rethinking Land, State and Nation in the Context of Crisis*. Harare: Weaver Press
- Killam, Douglass. & Rowe, Ruth. (2000). *The Companion to African Literature*. Bloomington: Indiana University
- Mahoso, T (1989) “*footprints of the Bantustan*”, Harare :Nehanda Publishers

- Mbure, S. (1997) *African Children's Literature or Literature for African Children*. In Raoul Granqvist & Jurgen Martini (eds.) *Preserving the Landscape of Imagination: Children's Literature in Africa*. Amsterdam: Matatu. Journal for African Culture and Society, No.17-18. 3-9
- Muchemwa, Kizito and Robert Muponde (eds), (2007) *Manning the Nation: Father Figure Zimbabwean Literature and Society*. Harare: Weaver Press
- Mugauri, G. *Gender equality no enemy to marriage*. The Sunday Mail January 16-22 2011
- Muponde, R. (2000) *Children's Literature*. Module ECS303, Bachelor of Arts in English and Communication Studies. Harare: Zimbabwe Open University.
- Nelson, C. and Grossberg, L. (1988) *Marxism and the interpretation of culture* Macmillan: Basingstoke
- Orwell, G. (1984) *Nineteen Eighty Four*, London: Secker and Warburg
- Oyono, F, (1956) *Houseboy*, London: Penguin press.
- Reynolds, R. (1994) *Children's Literature in the 1980s and 1990s*, London : Northcote House.
- Van Allen, J. (1976) "Aba Riots or 'Women's War?': ideology, stratification, and the invisibility of women." *Women in Africa: Studies in Social and Economic Change*. Ed. Nancy J. Halkin and Edna G. Bay. Stanford: Stanford University Press
- Vera, Yvonne, (2002) *The Stone Virgins*. Harare: Weaver Press
- Wa Thiong'o, N. (1986) *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of African Literature*: Nairobi: Heinemann Educational Books
- Wa Thiong'o, N. (1981) *Writers in Politics: Essays*. Nairobi, Heinemann Educational Books.
- Wathiong'o, N. (2012) 'Speaking my Language' The Sunday times newspaper, 25 June 2012
- Williams, E (1944) *Capitalism and Slavery*, London: Grove Press