

A POST-COLONIAL ECOCRITICAL ANALYSIS OF SELECTED
AFRICAN TEXTS: A CASE OF LESSING'S *THE GRASS IS SINGING* AND
MUNGOSHI'S *WAITING FOR THE RAIN*

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Abstract

This thesis analyses *The Grass is Singing* (1950) by Doris Lessing and *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) by Charles Mungoshi from a post-colonial ecocritical perspective. Ecocriticism unifies humanity and nature, whilst post-colonialism focuses on issues pertaining to power, religion and culture, with regards to humanity. The research aimed at elucidating on the remarkable relationship between human beings and nature as presented in literary texts. Applying post-colonialism to the analysis of a text calls for the inclusion and consideration of a number of themes such as; race, class, sexual orientation, cultural beliefs, religion, identity, double consciousness, hybridity, rootlessness, trauma and relationships (master/servant). The study is a desktop qualitative research and it employed content analysis in the interpretation and analysis of the chosen novels. The study found that by reading *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) as contemporaries, they can be testament to some wealthy accounts as the novels provide a coherent shape of the realistic operations of colonialism in totality. *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) may be viewed as synchronous novels that expose the exclusive lives of both the coloniser and the colonised under colonialism, in relation to the environment. Both the coloniser and the colonised happen to be victims of colonialism as exhibited from both novels and how each contributed to environmental mortification. The study recommends that for future studies there may be need to consider the use of ecocriticism as a theory in the analysis of novels from different African countries or even other novels from Zimbabwe; using ecocriticism in genocidal literature; application of ecocriticism in other genres such as poetry, drama and media literature; as well as merging ecocriticism with other theories in the analysis of different literary works.

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Dedication

To my best friend ever, Jonathan

Declaration

I, Coletta M. Kandemiri, hereby declare that this study is a true reflection of my own research, and that this work, or part thereof has not been submitted for a degree in any institution of higher education.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the study by providing the background of the study, statement of the problem, and the objectives of the study. The significance of the study is also highlighted, limitations as well as delimitations of the study, then lastly the organisation of the study.

1.2 Background of the study

This study pursued a post-colonial ecocriticism of selected African texts, *The Grass is Singing* by Doris Lessing (1950) and *Waiting for the Rain* by Charles Mungoshi (1975). The topic aimed at elucidating on the remarkable relationship between human beings and nature as presented in the chosen novels. Ecocriticism, also termed green studies or environmentalism, is a perspective that conceptualises an understanding of humanity and the inseparable attribute to nature. Thus, an immutable correlation exists between human beings and the environment.

Humans are directly linked to the environments in which they dwell, and as such, reciprocities are probable. Ojaruega (2013) asserts that “one does not need to be a scientist to know that humans and their environments are connected” (p. 31). Thus, in some African literary works, as long as characters are there and the space they occupy is defined, then the interaction may as well be ascertained. It was in the interest of this study that it focused on how the environment is presented in African novels, by focusing on how the environment contributes to characterisation in a post-colonial context and how it relates to larger sociocultural and political overtones.

Scholars like Achebe laboured in reversing the stereotypes branded on Africa by scripting texts such as *Things Fall Apart* (1958), which, if read closely between the lines, also

highlights aspects pertaining to ecocriticism amongst other pertinent concerns such as masculinity and cultural conflict (Tobalase, 2016); the crisis of cultural memory (Irele, 2000); subjugation and resistance (Jaiswal, 2015); and representation of gender and tradition (Osei-Nyame, 1999), to name but a few. Gogoi (2014) notes that, “Achebe portrays nature as another character in the novel, not just keeping it in the background. He presents nature as a living entity which acts along with the human characters” (p. 2). However, Slaymaker (2007) is of the opinion that African literature has not contributed much to ecocriticism as African writers perceive ecocriticism as a western concept and that it conflicts with African concerns. The opinion is open to criticism as it may be interpreted as to infer that African writers do not incorporate and indeed perceive ecocriticism in their writings and literary criticisms. What may be lacking are studies particularly on ecocriticism in African literary works, otherwise ecocritical elements are present in almost every African novel with characters and their surrounding environments, exhibiting immense environmental elements and linkages. Vambe (2013) acknowledges the paucity of publications on ecocriticism by observing that, “In Africa as a whole, and Zimbabwe in particular, published works on criticism of the representations of the environment in fiction are scarce” (p. 1). Thus, this study becomes crucial as it considered those aspects pertaining to ecocriticism in African texts.

Much influence for this study was derived from scholars like Zapf (2010), Barry (2009), and Love (2003), who allege that in recent years ecocriticism has become one of the most visible and productive new directions of literary and cultural studies. Since ecocriticism is relatively new in literary studies, there is need henceforth to carry out studies inclined to it as the findings will possibly help in finding imaginatively feasible solutions to correct contemporary ecological dilemmas. Ecocriticism provides renewed ways of clarifying the link between literary works and nature itself, hence the necessity for this study.

1.3 Statement of the problem

In *The Grass is Singing* (1950), Tiwari (2013) looked at how central characters are victims of heredity (sexual instinct). Ahmed (2013) focused on discrimination of gender and race and its effect on the human psyche. Czifra's (2014) study centred on the connection between narrative fiction and human ethical life. Bahlaq (2011) addressed the psychoanalytical, feministic, racial and autobiographical, to highlight the multi thematic nature of the text. Buyu (2007) tested the universality of Freudian theories of psychoanalysis on the characters. Gyuris (2012) focused on the spatial images of Africa. Whilst Gorgescu, Stanescu and Popa (2011) researched on Lessing's work within and beyond the colonial experience, which is beyond the false colonial myth of white superiority that blacks and whites should never mix. Lastly, Tyagi (2014) explored the representation of the Althusserian Theory of Ideological State Apparatuses and its role in identity formation. However, it appears that ecocriticism has not been an area of focus for these studies particularly for *The Grass is Singing* (1950), thereby creating a possible gap for this study.

For researches done on *Waiting for the Rain* (1975), the absenteeism of ecocriticism is prevalent. Jenjekwa (2013) argues that *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) goes beyond family relationships of the Mandengu family to the subtle and calculated attack on the colonial regime in all its manifestations. Ndlovu (2011) explored the ideologies of the intimate attachments and offered an overall critique of the ideologies of family. Mapako and Mareva (2013) did a research on the existentialist literary interpretation of Charles Mungoshi's selected works inclusive of *Waiting for the Rain* (1975). Kandemiri and Mlambo (2015)'s study focused on elderly people in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975). Also, Vambe (2013) looked at the representation of the effects of colonial land policies in two Zimbabwean novels. One of the novels was *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) in which Vambe (2013) zoomed only on four

characters; Old Man, Garabha, Kuruku and Lucifer. However, Vambe's (2013) analysis provided a foundation on which this research's argument was developed.

It appears the chosen texts have been 'over studied' but past studies have provided evidence on the non-use of a combination of post-colonialism and ecocriticism, thus leaving a possible research gap that had to be filled. It was through this gap that this study anticipated in bringing ecocriticism to the fore from a post-colonial ecocritical perspective. Analysing *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) from a post-colonial ecocritical perspective introduced novelty and nuance, and as such, new ideas have been raised from analysing the same seemingly 'over studied' texts.

1.4 Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study were to;

- explore how the relationship between humans and their environment is established in the selected African literary texts;
- investigate how the environment influences human beings and vice versa as presented in the selected novels and;
- explore how environmental issues as presented in the chosen literary texts help focus the larger socio-political and cultural concerns of the specified milieu of their setting.

1.5 Significance of the study

Since the theory of ecocriticism is still in its developing stages (Jimmy, 2015; Zapf, 2010), this study may add nuanced ideas to the growing body of existing literature on ecocriticism. This study may encourage readers and researchers to enable and view the chosen texts with a different perspective and comprehend the texts from a critical ecocritical lens which is different from the commonly used viewpoints. By applying ecocriticism and post-colonial

theories, the study may inform other studies on the relationship that exists between human beings and their surroundings in literary works. This could bring a better comprehension of the complex interlinking of humans and their environment, and how this is finding expression through various grammars of articulation of which the literary one is one of them.

1.6 Limitations of the study

The study focused only on two novels, the analysis of the characters and their environment, interacting and influencing each other as presented in *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975). Thus the findings cannot be generalised to other novels and their characters which may be highlighting similar themes. Furthermore, the study was bound theoretically to ecocritical and post-colonial theoretical lenses which informed this study. The research used materials that were only available and accessible to the researcher and that which was not accessible remained unconsidered.

1.7 Delimitation of the study

The study was delimited to the portrayal of characters and their environment as represented in *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) only. The findings and conclusions of this study were based on the literary representation of the characters and the environment specifically in *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975), and may not necessarily be universal to other literary texts of similar thematic concerns. Also, the two writers Mungoshi (1975) and Lessing (1950) have written many works but this study was only limited to the two chosen texts, *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) and *The Grass is Singing* (1950).

1.8 Organisation of study

This study is organised as follows;

Chapter 1 provides the orientation of the study. The objectives of the study are outlined and the study significance highlighted. Also, the limitations and delimitations of the study are presented as well as the statement of the problem underlined. Chapter 2 specifies the two theories (post-colonialism and ecocriticism) that framed this study. Furthermore, reviewed literature shows how other scholars have applied these theories on other literary works. This chapter also provides for the gap established through reviewing literature for this particular study.

Chapter 3 provides the methodology of how this study was carried out ranging from the first step of critical reading to the last stage of reporting on the findings, recommendations and conclusions. Chapter 4 was on the analysis and discussion of the chosen texts, *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) as framed by post-colonialism and ecocriticism and backed by the reviewed literature in Chapter 2 of this study. Chapter 5 stated the conclusions, made some recommendations and finally concluded the study.

1.9 Conclusion

This chapter introduced the study, listed the objectives of the study, and highlighted the significance of the study as well as the limitations of the study. The statement of the problem was provided and the organisation of the study was laid down. The next chapter (Chapter 2) is on the theoretical framework and the literature review.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

This segment of the study focuses on the theoretical framework and the literature review of this study. The theoretical framework was discussed in connection to the title and stating why it best informs this study. The literature review is divided into subheadings which aid in reviewing the existing knowledge base and establishing the justification of carrying out this research, as well as providing a basis on which this study was built.

2.2 Theoretical framework

Ecocriticism unifies humanity and nature, whilst post-colonialism focuses on issues pertaining to power, religion, and culture with regards to their interconnectedness to humanity. These two theories combined best inform this study on the basis that humanity may not be separated from the environment that surrounds them and their articulation in fiction is an indication of their coexistence.

2.2.1 Ecocriticism

Ecocriticism is a theory that traverses the interconnectedness between human beings and the environment surrounding them. This theory encompasses non-human as well as human contexts and considerations, and takes an earth-centered approach to literary criticism (Fenn, 2015; Glotfelty & Fromm, 1999; Habeeb & Habeeb, 2012; Love, 2003). With that earth-centered approach, it may therefore be established that ecocriticism hinges its analysis on characters and the space they inhabit in a given text. Jimmy (2015) echoes the same sentiments by noting that ecocriticism asserts the primacy of the natural world by inflating the field of literary study from just social relations to broad constructions of nature in texts.

Thus, employing ecocriticism implies reading literary texts with a new discernment, thereby explicating the complex relationship that mediates interactions between humans and their environment (Ojaide, 2012). Furthermore, ecocriticism braves the canonisation of the ‘west’ and allows a true reflection of the African continent and the African from an African centre (Afrocentricism).

Ecocriticism is divided into two waves and the first wave took place during the 1980s and the 1990s, characterised by rumination on nature writing as an object of study and raising awareness, in a way human beings speaking on behalf of nature (Barry, 2009). The second wave brought with it a redefinition of the term ‘environment’ by expanding its meaning to include ‘nature’ and the ‘urban’ (Bertens, 2008). The term ‘ecocriticism’ can be traced back to William Rueckert’s 1978 essay and it was never used until 1989 when Cheryl Glotfelty revived the term and urged its adoption thereafter (Branch & O’Grady, 1994).

Ecocriticism is a branch of literary discourse concerned with the investigation of the relationship between man and nature (Asika & Madu, 2015). It surveys how literary work approaches replicate nature and how men and nature coexist. Through ecocriticism, the natural world gains significance in a text (Habeb & Habeb, 2012). Thus, a critic assesses the relationship involving literature, man and nature in the course of a story. The major concern being man’s activities to nature and the significance of nature in literary works, in a way allowing for a deeper analysis of the work. In essence, ecocriticism gives a new meaning to place, setting and the environment (Tosic, 2006; Zapf, 2010), thus providing fresh ways of elucidating the nature and function of art. According to Fenn (2015), “ecocriticism not only gives emphasis on the ‘harmony’ of humanity and nature but also talks about the destruction caused to nature by the changes which take place in the modern world for most of which man

is directly responsible” (p. 118). Ecocriticism, a potentially vibrant area of critical discourse, brings novelty and nuanced enquiry to the criticism of both *Waiting for the Rain* (1975 and *The Grass is Singing* (1950).

Ecocriticism is also known by other nomenclature such as: green cultural studies; ecocritical theory (e-theory); ecopoetics; and environmental literary criticism (Jimmy, 2015). Shoba and Nagaraj (2013) state that “environmental literary criticism grows out of the traditional approach to literature” (p. 85). However, irrespective of the term used to classify this theory and criticism, eco-critical theory concerns itself with regionalism, landscape, wilderness, ecofeminism and nature writing (Habeeb & Habeeb, 2012). Also Kangira, (2014) observes that human beings’ interaction with nature is most fulfilling in every respect. On another level ecocriticism deals with human experiences of joy, sorrows, fears, hopes, ambitions and disasters as reflected in the works of literature, in the light of environmental issues (Barry, 2009). Thus nature/environment may provide a smooth or a rough terrain in its representation in literary texts. In both *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and *Waiting for the Rain* (1975), nature provides, though at different times, both a rough and smooth terrain as it relates to the characters in the texts.

2.2.2 Post-colonialism

Post-colonialism is the other theory that informed this study. According to Given (2008, p. 650), “post-colonialism is a broad theoretical approach that examines the past and present impact of colonialism and racism on social, political and economic systems.” The theory focuses on issues pertaining to power, religion, and culture, and how these elements work in relation to colonial hegemony (Brizee, Tompkins, Chernouski & Boyle, 2015). Also, Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin (1995) claim that, “the term ‘post-colonial’ addresses all

aspects of the colonial process from the beginning of colonial contact” (p. 2). Olatunji (2010) further reiterates on post-colonialism that it “is a historical phenomenon which is linked to the observation, consideration and interrogation of the philosophical orientation, praxis and effects of colonialism on other societies” (p. 125). The theory is based around concepts of otherness and resistance.

As a theory, post-colonial provides both a historical and theoretical framework and for that it best suited this study. Bhabha (1994, as cited in Gikandi, 2004, p. 615) contends that, “post-colonialism bears witness to the unequal and uneven forces of cultural representation involved in the contest for political and social authority within the modern world order”, which is typical of *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and *Waiting for the Rain* (1975).

Nonetheless, the post-colonial theory is surrounded by controversy in terms of its definitions. Olatunji (2010) points the complexity of post-colonialism in practice being responsible for the definitional problem. To add on, Botella-Ordinas (2015) observes that major authors on the post-colonial theory come from different disciplines; for instance *post-structuralism* with authors such as Bhabha (1994), Said (1978) and Spivak (1988); and in *psychology* there is Fanon (2004) to name but a few. Thus, the presence of trans-disciplinary studies becomes a serious challenge as to which post-colonial theory definition to choose and follow. From another perspective, Ashcroft et al. (1995) argue that;

Post-colonial critics and theorists should consider the full implications of restricting the meaning of the term to ‘after-colonialism’ or after independence. All post-colonial societies are still subject in one way or another to overt or subtle forms of neo-colonial domination and independence has not solved this problem. (p. 2)

It is against this Ashcroft et al. (1995) background that this study considered the historical period surrounding the setting and plots of both *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and *Waiting for*

the Rain (1975). The argument sounds logical as the post-colonialism implies “the totality of practices, in all their rich diversity, which characterise the societies of the post-colonial world from the moment of colonialism to the present day” (Ashcroft et al., 1995, p. xv). And such practices include the imbrication of the human environment and its materialities thereof.

After considering the issues raised about post-colonialism, this study adopted the Ashcroft et al. (1995) comprehension of post-colonialism. This strand of thought was taken on the basis that the two chosen novels, both set in colonial Rhodesia are examples of post-colonial texts and that the application of post-colonial theory better elucidates the happenings in the novels, *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and *Waiting for the Rain* (1975).

Moreover, post-colonial theory deals with the reading and writing of literature written in previously or currently colonised countries, or literature written in colonising countries which deals with colonisation or colonised peoples (Lye, 1998), as it is in the plot, characters and setting of *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) and *The Grass is Singing* (1950). Ashcroft et al. (1995) comment that, “the determining condition of what we refer to as post-colonial cultures is the historical phenomenon of colonialism” (p. 7). In a way this may be implying the need to give much attention to the history of colonialism.

Thus, post-colonial theory focuses particularly on the ways in which literature by the colonising culture distorts the experience and realities of the colonised. It also inscribes the inferiority of the colonised people on literature by colonised people, which attempts to articulate their identity and reclaim their past, in the face of that past’s inevitable otherness as portrayed in texts like *Heart of Darkness* (1902) and *King Solomon’s Mines* (1985). It can also deal with the way in which literature in colonising countries appropriates the language, images, scenes, traditions and so forth of colonised countries (Lye, 1998) thus, exposing racism and exploitation emanating from ‘alien’ invasion and occupation.

Applying post-colonialism to the analysis of a text calls for the inclusion and consideration of a number of themes such as race, class, sexual orientation, cultural beliefs, religion, identity, double consciousness, hybridity, rootlessness, trauma and relationships (master-servant). Also, it unearths how the coloniser's culture devalues and degrades the colonised and their space. Thus, *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) as both post-colonial and environmental literature, communicate and redirect an understanding of the degradation of African people's culture and their environment at the exposure of colonialism.

2.3 Assessment of related works

A literature review is one of the critical sections of research. A thorough literature review institutes reliability in a research. O'Leary (2010) states that, "a well-constructed literature review is an important criterion in establishing research credibility" (p. 72). Likewise, Mouton (1996) holds that, "a survey of the literature is an essential component of any study because it is the main access point or gateway to the relevant body of knowledge" (p. 121). Similarly, Schostak and Schostak (2013) assert that, "the aim of reviewing literature is to strengthen one's project" (p. 34). Once more O'Leary (2010) reiterates that "the production of new knowledge is fundamentally dependent on past knowledge" (p. 71). For these reasons, building knowledge requires the researcher to be conversant with past knowledge through the process of reviewing existing literature, rendering the literature review a spine from which the research is anchored. Hence, a thorough literature review provides an authenticated analysis, say of the chosen texts, *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and *Waiting for the Rain* (1975).

However, there is no single way to conduct a literature review (Creswell, 2008). Literature review can take several forms, Cooper (as cited in Creswell, 2013, p. 61) discusses 4 types as follows; literature review that integrates what others have done and said; that which criticises

previous scholarly works; that which builds bridges between related topics; and that which identifies the central issues in a field. A combination of the four forms, or a proper mix of any of the forms aid in the generation of an inevitably communicative literature review. Furthermore, Creswell (2013) upholds that, “The literature review helps to determine whether the topic is worth studying, and it provides insight into ways in which the researcher can limit the scope to a needed area of inquiry” (p. 57). What others have already penned on ecocriticism and post-colonialism in other literary works, create the basis on which to critique *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) and *The Grass is Singing* (1950) which are the specific sample texts for this study.

2.3.1 Other studies

In the world of African literary studies, researchers are ideally dedicated to carrying out studies pertaining to social life, whilst ecocriticism is distinguished by its absence in the list of acclaimed topics such as feminism, focusing mainly on women’s plight in all their spheres; apartheid, where aspects of race and inequality are brought to the fore; violence, where different forms of violence are highlighted and then labelled as the violation of human rights; as well as land and the unfair distribution of land, where the minority own the bigger proportions of land, to name but a few. This study however, strived of nuanced analysis by deviating from these common topics and focused on merging post-colonialism and ecocriticism in the analysis of *The Grass is Sing* (1950) and *Waiting for the Rain* (1975).

A reflection on what other scholars penned with regards to the application of post-colonialism and ecocriticism aids in building the discussion for this study. As stated earlier by Creswell (2013) that a literature review helps in determining whether a research is worth pursuing or not, this is only possible by going through what others have already laid down.

Colonialism is confronted by a number of scholars through their literary works exposing the traumas it brought to its victims. In *Houseboy*, Oyono (1966) denounces the brutality of colonialism. According to Babatunde (2012), *Houseboy* (1966) reveals the abject conditions of the Africans in the era of colonialism and the author Oyono subscribed to a liberal ideology that pleads with the oppressed. Trauma is the main subject discussed in Babatunde's (2012) paper and traces the traumatic experiences, by drawing examples of the incidents from the text that the protagonist endures in the hands of the colonisers before his tragic death. Babatunde (2012) concludes that, "the traumatic experience of the protagonist articulates the evils, sufferings and injustice prevalent during the period in Cameroon" (p. 42). In a way so are *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) inclined to the liberal ideology as the texts highlight monumental atrocities engendered by colonialism and its subsidiaries. Thus, this research endeavoured at x-raying the traumatic experiences of characters in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) and *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and unveiling the evils and injustices of colonialism in Rhodesia by particularly focusing on both the coloniser and the colonised.

Nature takes different forms and may be interpreted by human beings in different ways contingent to cultural backgrounds and beliefs. In *The Land's Lord* (1976), Asika and Madu (2015) characterise nature as an agent for destruction, an oppressor and a destroyer. It is further emphasised that nature in *The Land's Lord* (1976) plays a pivotal role in the downfall of man rather than being an object of pleasure and relief; thus it turned out to be an object of doom, fear, oppression and destruction. Thus according to Asika and Madu (2015), nature threatens every little peace and calmness in the lives of the people as depicted in the novel. However, Barry (2009) contends that all the artistic expressions and our experiences are primarily shaped by the natural and cultural environment. Linking to Asika and Madu's

(2015) analysis of *The Land's Lord* (1976), nature is thus delineated as “an agent of destruction” as it can take any form and is subject to different interpretations. Conversely, the description of nature in *The Land's Lord's* (1976) context is nonetheless contested by Asika and Madu (2015) in the following words;

...But it is worthwhile to note that this depiction is simply rooted in the European's bias view and feelings about Africa which was represented in the viewpoints and postulations of Rev. Father Higler, a white priest sent to the hinterlands of Africa to bring them salvation and redeem them from that lives of primitively, barbarism and archaism. (p. 35)

The above quotation draws attention to the issue of the centre. Consequently, if it is a European critic, alien to Africa and describing Africa, then bias is bound to override, as the European has to serve their interests at the heart of the empire, hiding behind ‘civilising Africa’ and uprooting ‘barbarism and primitivism’, hence claiming it to be ‘the white men’s burden’. In *The Grass is Singing* (1950) Mary Turner ‘endures’ under the Rhodesian environment which contributes to her demise, thus interpreting the environment as an ‘agent for destruction’, and they are these viewpoints that this present research brings to the fore by confronting such bias.

In *Arrow of God* (1986) by Achebe, nature is depicted as an agent for destruction and it as wholesome, as it gives life and nourishes the plants. This is as noted by Ernest-Samuel (2013) who expounds further on nature that;

Winterbottom, as a foreigner, does not find the weather enjoyable given that it scatters papers and photographs in his room. Yet, as the sharp and dry barks of thunder broke into the tumult, blowing dust into his eyes, he cannot help but envy the poor rural children running around naked and singing to the coming rain. The rain is heralded by

“restless black clouds and long streaks of lighting” and after a short while, the rain fell like large pebbles. Ironically, regardless of Captain Winterbottom’s discomfoting experience and feelings after the rain, the trees feel the impact differently. They “were washed green and their leaves fluttered happily”. (p. 87)

This may just be a testimony of the vastly divergence in the appreciation of the environment or the weather among two classes of human beings (the rural people of Umuaro and the Europeans) on one side, and plants on the other (Ernest-Samuel, 2013). This is equally prevalent in *The Grass is Singing* (1950) when both the white settlers and the natives are juxtaposed in their reaction to the same Rhodesian ‘African’ weather.

Other than *Arrow of God* (1986), Okolo (2013) also contemplated on *Things Fall Apart* (1958), again magnifying on the depiction of the environment in the African literary text and Okolo (2013) expresses that;

Given that the rural environment involving man, forest, and wildlife is shown as a world or social system with unified sets of elements that remain unapologetically interdependent, it becomes imperative that any act that may be inimical to human survival is punished, since it is believed that man’s abusive activities may jeopardize wildlife and other elements, and thus, adversely affect man, nature, and environment. This justifies why one sees Okonkwo beating his second wife for cutting some leaves off a banana stalk in *Things Fall Apart*. (p. 16)

Still on the same text, Fakrul (2012) attests that, Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart* (1958) traces the links between ecocriticism and postcolonial Africa. Similarly, Okolo (2013) testifies that, “Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart* (1958), is a novel that occupies an inaugural and canonical position in the evolution of African literature, as the African writer has always given expression to environmental issues” (p. 16). Establishing such factual truths about *Things*

Fall Apart (1958) in a way disdains and disparages Slaymaker's (2007) opinion that African literature has not contributed much to ecocriticism as African writers perceive ecocriticism as a western concept and that it conflicts with African concerns. Thus, critiquing *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) from an ecocritical standpoint, in a way defeats Slaymaker's (2007) opinion as well.

Another African text that overwhelms Slaymaker's (2007) opinion is *Wizard of the Crow* (2007) which embodies environmental matters as Okolo (2013) argues that;

In a short space, he [waThiong'o] lays down his Marxist framework for the novel [*Wizard of the Crow*] using landscaping: a glaring contrast in the living conditions of people living in the same geographical area who are zoned by economic conditions into the healthy and diseased surroundings. (p. 19)

Thus character development is achieved by using the landscape and the environment in the novel, grouping them into two; those in the affirmative and those critical of ecological progression. Characters in the novel are seen reacting to their environment in remarkable ways such as; new family bonds are formed as a result of the nearness of the slums providing close-knit family ties as experienced in the rural areas; characters like Wariara, ruined by the city, go to the village to die in peace; and others like Kamiti go there to be rejuvenated (Okolo, 2013). It may therefore be argued that in general, people interact differently with the environment. Okolo (2013) concludes on the ecocritical analysis of *Wizard of the Crow* (2007) by stating that, "Ngugi successfully drives home his arguments on environmental issues by strategically using them in honing his characters and charting a direction for the progression of the plot of the novel" (p. 28). Both *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) and *The Grass is Singing* (1950) have subjects whose character development is directly influenced by their environments. Thus this study paid attention at how the characters in the chosen texts accordingly reacted to their respective environments.

Another African text, *Yellow Yellow* (2006), derides the unpleasant circumstances in which women in the Niger Delta are exposed to. Awhefeada (2013) analysed *Yellow Yellow* (2006) from an Eco feministic perspective and observed that “It is important to note that before *Yellow Yellow* (2006), no other work has so depicted the unsavoury condition of women in the Niger Delta” (p. 98). As mentioned earlier on by Habeeb and Habeeb (2012) that ecocritical theory concerns itself also with ecofeminism and nature writing, it thus makes Awhefeada’s (2013) analysis of *Yellow Yellow* (2006) a formidable source of reference for this study. In both *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) and *The Grass is Singing* (1950), women characters are prevalent and likewise interacting inversely with their respective environments, making ecofeminism a potential area for argument. Awhefeada (2013) further argues that “the novel’s [*Yellow Yellow* (2006)] plot mutates between environmental violation and women ruination” (p. 98). In other words, the role of women and the environment, as characters in African literary texts, drives home the essence of ecocriticism that, according to Totic (2006) and Zapf (2010), gives a new meaning to place, setting and environment.

Alternatively, ecocriticism in African literature petitions powerful potencies that may be driven by both internal and/or external dynamics yet detrimental to both the environment and humanity. Okuyade (2013) proffers that “African literature on the environment invokes environment, and challenges capitalist industrialism through transnational engagements and the visionless government policies that are not people-oriented” (p. xiii). Accordingly, African literature has that apt ability to expose the ills perpetrated to the environment and the civilians involved. The two texts, *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and *Waiting for the Rain* (1975), as literary texts also expose the misconducts on land and the subjects that were implicated, as well as the victims.

Chuma-Udeh (2013) also explored *Yellow Yellow* (2006) from an ecocritical perspective and argued that the novel “is a painful portrayal of the acrid relationship between man and the ecology in the Niger Delta which has led to a deliberate destruction that has deprived humanity and nature of their basis for subsistence” (p. 111). Furthermore the novel is an in-depth portrayal of the destruction of fundamental life patterns, cultural mores, and norms of the communities in the Niger Delta by the oil explorers. Chuma-Udeh (2013) adds on by stating that, “The narrative revolves around the ecological dilapidation and social devastation perpetrated by Western oil companies, and the inner search of a group of people for direction and purpose in their devastated environment” (p. 111). Finally Chuma-Udeh (2013) concludes that the narrative [in *Yellow Yellow* (2006)] views the communities in the Niger Delta and their women as victims of the explorations. From this perspective therefore, it may be argued that the interests of the western world are thus exposed, those of extracting wealth from Africa but not considering the environmental impact as well as the status and welfare of the indigenes of the African continent. In *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and *Waiting for the Rain* (1975), such traits are prevalent where colonialism impacts on the land through excessive farming malpractices that are only production and profit oriented and non-sustainable, thereby merging perspectives of post-colonialism and ecocriticism, the frameworks for this study.

Feghabo (2013) probed ecocriticism in *Tides* (2003) by Okpewho and *A Month and a Day* (1995) by Saro-Wiwa, and noted that both texts disclose that ethnic and environmental politics promoted by imperialist oil companies and supported by indigenous military leaders result in ecocide in the region. Feghabo’s (2013) analysis exposes how western interests destroy both the environment through degradation, and the indigenes through divide and rule. The destruction of indigenes is noted from what may seem petty as the disintegration of family units. Thus the indigenes suffer double blows from being victims of exploitation and

their families crumbling at the same time. According to Feghabo (2013), *A Month and a Day* (1995) is part of Saro-Wiwa's articulation of environmental conflict with Shell Petroleum Development Company and Nigeria's federal military government that colluded to devastate the ecosystem and consequently impoverishing the minority people of Ogoni in the Niger Delta. Saro-Wiwa's campaign is foreshadowed in Okpewho's novel *Tides* (2003) and Saro-Wiwa's struggle for the Ogoni's devastated environment is a response to the call for activism made by the character Tonwe in *Tides* (Feghabo, 2013).

The collaboration of multinational oil companies and the Nigerian military provides the binary relationships of the oppressors and the oppressed, as well as the exploiters and the exploited, where the major ethnic groups and the multinational oil companies are the oppressors, while the minorities of the Niger Delta are the oppressed who struggle to retrieve their right to the environment (Feghabo, 2013). Furthermore, Feghabo (2013) notes that such metaphors of majority and minorities, and indigenous colonisers resonate in both works of Okpewho and Saro-Wiwa and as such they capture the unwholesome experience of the people of the Niger Delta as the oppressed. It appears that, many of the environmental problems in Africa [even to this day] permeate from exploitative colonial activities and their legacies. According to Ikuenobe (2014, p. 15), the manipulation and destructive economic activities of multinational conglomerates (which are a legacy of colonialism), sustained by corrupt and ineffective administrations of various African nations, have contributed to most of Africa's environmental anomalies. Colonialism brought with it to Rhodesia land degradation, exploitation of indigenes as well as family disintegration as represented in *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and *Waiting for the Rain* (1975).

In the novel *Tides* (2003), Feghabo (2013) observes that Okpewho fictionalises the experiences of the people of the region and calls for environmental activism through a revolutionary character, Bickerbug, who however fails to be a revolutionary hero as "He acts

alone and, consequently, fails to mobilise the masses for a revolutionary change” (p. 71). The character Bickerbug may typically be equated to Old Man in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975), who cannot singly fight against colonialism and all its subsidiaries, thus rendering his efforts futile.

2.3.2 Pathetic fallacy

A relationship of complementarity exists between humanity and their surrounding environment and literature has the potency to depict that complementarity through a literary device referred to as pathetic fallacy. It is a kind of personification that is found in poetic writing, for instance ‘the grass is singing’. The grass is endorsed with the human quality of singing. According to Ackerman (2015), pathetic fallacy is a literary device in which human emotions are attributed to aspects of nature, such as the weather as the weather can be used to reflect a person’s mood, with dark clouds in a scene involving mourning. Shikha (2011) notes that, “nature and literature have always shared a close relationship” (p. 1). The titles of the chosen texts, *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) coincidentally insinuate in volumes, the relationship of humanity and the environment. Mojica (2014) adds that nature is responsible for the growth of a person. This study thus desired at exploring the complementarity that profiles the reciprocated link involving humanity and the surrounding environment as presented in the novels, *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and *Waiting for the Rain* (1975).

Particular weather elements are employed to reflect and amplify the feelings of characters, so as to establish moods, and to underline the motive of the story. Schreuder, van Erp, Toet and Kallen (2016) remark that, how we perceive our environment affects the way we feel and behave, and this somehow helps in explaining the characters of Lucifer Mandengu in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) and of Mary Turner in *The Grass is Singing* (1950), as well as the

motives of the authors of the respective texts, Mungoshi and Lessing. Therefore, the condition of the environment at any point in time plays an important role in the lives of the inhabitants (Ojaurega, 2013). Thus, through literary works on ecocriticism according to Okuyade (2013), mankind continues to make concerted efforts to ensure that the other worlds are kept alive since the human world solely depends on them for sustenance and existence (p. ix). As underscored by Achebe (1988) that the novelist has three main functions in relation to his society: as a historian, critic and mentor. Basing on these functions, thus, novelists like Echewa, Saro-Wiwa, Okpewho, Agari, Oyono as well as Mungoshi and Lessing, critique society on issues pertaining to environmental degradation and in the process synchronise with Okuyade (2013)'s remark that "mankind continues to make concerted efforts to ensure that the other worlds are kept alive". In keeping with these responsibilities, the African writer, according to Okolo (2013), becomes an environmental advocate, thereby promoting the need to "regreen" the disappearing ecosystems, through their works.

Ackerman (2015) observes that by tuning into specific weather conditions, a character may feel safe, or off balance, therefore weather can work for or against the character, creating conflict and tension, and it can be used to foreshadow, hinting that something is about to happen (forebodiment). This strand of thinking is presented mainly in *The Grass is Singing* (1950) mainly through the character Mary Turner.

2.3.3 Humans and environmental degradation

Reser (2007) asserts that "environmental degradation is in large part caused by human behaviours and it directly affects human health and well-being" (p. 2). Such complications resulting from human negligence and ignorance are reflected and highlighted in the novels *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and *Waiting for the Rain* (1975). Though the experiences may be

abstract, the apt ability of literature to capture the qualitative attributes was crucial in bringing out these experiences through the critical analysis of the chosen texts in this study.

Environmental degradation implicates the exploitation of the environment through different modes, for instance the African environment has experienced diverse forms of exploitation and degradation, especially with the arrival of the colonisers into the continent (Owhofasa, 2013). Some examples include the destruction of trees, pollution of water, pollution of farmlands, loss of pastoral beauty, the destruction of water, diverse health problems, which before now were alien to Africa (Owhofasa, 2013). These viewpoints concurs with Ojaurega (2013) that the non-preservation of forest trees and wildlife as well as the natural seashores in the wake of modern architectural developments are also key factors responsible for the on-going environmental despoliation being experienced in some parts of the world.

Magnifying on colonialism and its subsidiaries, aspects of environmental degradation including the non-preservation of forest trees are prevalent in the texts *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) which is a major concern for this study in particular. Of interest is the way the environment is harmed through powerful and vicious forces of colonialism. In turn, the environment retaliates and impact on the humans as noted by Reser (2007) that “the perception and/or direct experience of environmental degradation and loss can lead to concern, anxiety, guilt, anger, helplessness, dread, and pessimism” (p. 4). This again validates mutual reciprocity and interconnectedness between humans and the environment. Shoba and Nagaraj (2013) also remark that “If man does not harm nature, the nature keeps him safe” (p. 85). Thus human practices on the environment determine the way nature will give back to humanity.

2.3.4 Nature as an agent of destruction

Nature has always been a chief ingredient in the survival of human beings. However Shikha (2011) proves that nature tends to be stronger than man. This is when humans have to face the catastrophes caused by nature and are beyond human control and manipulation. Shikha (2011) further affirms that nature has often shown its power by controlling manpower through natural calamities like famine, drought, floods, earthquakes and so on. Man's life and nature are interlinked (Ojaide, (2012) and for that reason, it becomes impossible for human beings to separate themselves from its influence. Therefore humans have no choice but to accept both nature's bounty and adversity (Shikha, 2011). Droughts are a common feature in *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and they impact more on Dick Turner and Mary Turner. On the other hand, the relationship may be described to be reciprocal as nature too is a recipient of man's action. Actions like the exploitation of resources through activities such as colonialism are irresponsible actions that mostly cause irreversible destructions to nature. Thus, according to Shikha (2011), the reciprocity is more of an ecosystem in the way it works in which everything is related to each other and therefore it affects each other.

2.3.5 African terrain from western outlook

The African continent has mostly been described as having a harsh and brutal environment from a western perspective. Moffat (2010) comments that, "it is Africa's terrain that has exercised the greater hold on Western imagination and interest" (p. 23). Gyuris (2012) also notes that the African continent has always been approached from a double perspective, as the cradle of all humanity, and as the remnant of old and primitive times, especially in the eyes of the white colonisers. In texts such as Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1902), Africa is portrayed as a muddle. Youngs (as cited in Moffat 2010, p. 37) observes that, "images of darkness and savagery and the mystical force of the African landscape have impacted many

narratives about Africa in general, so that *Heart of Darkness* (1902) has gradually come to represent the essence of Africa”. Just like in Haggard’s *King Solomon’s Mines* (1885), Africa is portrayed as an undomesticated space hence this kind of literature serves as a justification of colonialism. It could be that, according to Moffat (2010) “the lack of genuine knowledge about Africa led to the development of fantastic stories” (p. 26) like those of *Heart of Darkness* (1902) and *King Solomon’s Mines* (1885).

From another perspective in *Heart of Darkness* (1902), Weilin (2011) observes that “extreme exploitation and manipulation of Congo and its native people bring ivory to the Europeans, leaving the land in anguish and poverty” (p. 155). Other than the jungle-ness of Africa, the novels also expose images of brutality and corruption on the part of the colonisers and their contribution to massive environmental degradation. The present study endeavoured at the exploration of the African environment in relation to both the coloniser and the colonised as presented in *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and *Waiting for the Rain* (1975), and in literary criticism pertinent issues pertaining to ecocriticism and post-colonialism call for stern reconsiderations.

2.3.6 Convergence of post-colonial and environmental issues

Post-colonialism in its broadest sense entails the times during colonialism as well as the times after independence of the colonised (Ashcroft et al, 1995). It focuses particularly on the way in which literature by the colonising culture distorts the experiences and realities of the colonised, and inscribes the inferiority of the colonised people on literature by colonised peoples, who attempt to articulate their identity and reclaim their past in the face of that past’s inevitable otherness (Lye, 1998). The way the environment was in Africa before colonialism, changed drastically upon the insertion of the colonisers and their ways of extensive farming that was production and profit oriented consequentially detrimental to the environmental.

Thus, Vital (2008) argues for the need to consider “the complex interplay of social history with the natural world” (p. 90), in order to reconcile ecocriticism and post-colonialism. Ikuenobe (2014) argues that “the activities that have raised environmental concerns in Africa [even to this day] did not exist prior to colonialism because Africans had conservationist values, practices, and ways of life” (p. 2). Thus, colonialism to a greater extent has a major hand on environmental issues which are distressing Africa.

To the coloniser, colonialism is ‘development’ to Africa, but to the environment, it is the draining of resources and defacing of the environment. Such colonial acts of disfiguring the environment are thus highlighted and criticised in literary works such as *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and *Waiting for the Rain* (1975). Huggan and Tiffin (2010) note that, “one of the central tasks of postcolonial ecocriticism as an emergent field has been to contest – also to provide viable alternatives to – western ideologies of development” (p. 27). This may be a way of exposing the spitefulness of the western connoted reference to the term ‘development’, on the African continent.

Ecocriticism somehow deals with human experiences of pleasure, distresses, uncertainties, anticipations, desires and adversities, to name but a few, as reflected in the works of literature. Barry (2009) observes that from an ecocritical perspective, all the artistic expressions and human experiences are primarily shaped by the natural and cultural environment. Buell, Heise, and Thornber (2013) also argue that, “ecocritics had emphasised ties to place, post-colonialists had foregrounded displacements” (p. 421). In a way, natives’ ties to their land in Africa got disturbed by displacements agitated by colonialism. Oslund (2011) comments that, “Colonial and postcolonial history certainly provide many examples of high modernism at work and of this ideology’s disastrous effects on the environment” (p. 5). Thus, concurring with Fenn (2015), literature cannot separate characters from nature and that they interact either by being destructive or productive to the environment. The impact of

colonialism on the environment is one of the major concerns of *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) and *The grass is Singing* (1950).

2.3.7 General colonialism in Africa

Europe colonised Africa simply for the exploitation of its natural resources, getting raw materials for the European industries and the need to get markets for the products of European industries. Africa had natural resources in abundance, and from a European perspective, Africans lacked the intellect or initiative to exploit them to meet their needs (Ikuenobe, 2014), and as such Europeans, exploited Africa in disguise of bringing civilisation to Africa and Africans.

The way the African people interacted with their African environment was, according to Ikuenobe (2014), further “seen by Europeans as a sign of savagery, barbarism, and lack of intelligence and rationality, which was supposedly reflected in the African’s inability to see the utility of natural resources in order to exploit and use them for human interest” (p. 12). Thus Moffat (2010) comments that, “African peoples have often been dehumanised and marginalised” (p. 23). Furthermore, Falola (2007) underscores the arrogance in the colonisers when for example British geographer, James MacQueen made a proclamation that, “If we really wish to do good in Africa, we must teach her savage sons that white men are their superiors” (p. 3).

Europeans implemented a variety of colonising stratagems by settling in some areas creating institutions that protected private property and in some areas they only targeted the extraction of minerals and raw materials, as much as they could. According to Hrituleac (2011) the colonisers empowered the elite in African countries such as Congo, Burundi, Ghana and Ivory Coast, to extract gold, silver, cash crops and other commodities. The colonisers included the British, the French and the Portuguese. Ferreira (1974) states that Portugal

formerly proclaimed that during the five centuries in which it dominated African territories; it was engaged in a civilising mission. In a way Portugal was justifying European colonisation of Africa, but it was insensitive and inconsiderate about the defacing and degradation of the African environment.

By purporting to bring civilisation, the colonisers perceived themselves as agents of change. Hriteuliac (2011) attests that the establishment of modern export systems, infrastructure and education facilities by the colonial powers necessitated the profitability of the whole colonisation venture. This was advantageous to the Europeans but it was detrimental to the colonised as colonialism encouraged competition and conflicts between ethnic groups amongst Africans (Hriteuliac, 2011). Bulhan (2015) testifies that “colonialism left behind enduring legacies including not only political and economic, but also cultural, intellectual, and social legacies that keep alive European domination” (pp. 240-241). Colonialism is thus a continual process and its effects are impacting in African societies to this present day. Ikuenobe (2014) remarks that, “Some economists and political scientists have argued that the many economic, political, and social problems in Africa [today] can be traced to their colonial experience and environmental problems as epiphenomena of these [current/prevaling] social, political, and economic problems” (p. 13). As such, the waves of colonisation are still manifesting and impacting in present day Africa.

2.3.7.1 Power structures

In order to provide a context of the possible ways in which colonial invasion attributed to the environmental degradation in Africa there is need to consider how the repressive system disrupted some of the African systems that were already in existence and functioning. With the advent of colonialism, power setups and structures of the African indigenes were interrupted by the new systems that were implemented by the European settlers. According to

Hampton and Toombs (2013), “In colonisation, power relationships are established as the result of domination of another culture” (p. 6). With that, social structures transformed from indigenous African pre-colonial conventions to conform to the coloniser as highlighted by Ikuenobe (2014) that, “within the context of the new meanings and symbols of colonialism and the new socio-cultural system it created” (p. 15). This conversion however had an impact on the moral fabric and social hierarchy that existed for the African people, thereby them ending up adopting and adapting to the new practices. Ikuenobe (2014) remarks that, “The new powers and functions of traditional rulers and government functionaries in Africa are examples of such transformed social structures.” (p. 115). In a way, power was tactfully seized from the Africans through the new system brought about through colonialism, as well as proprietorship of land was removed from local communities to the government of colonialists. Such is prevalent in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) particularly when the black people are forced into Manyene Tribal Trust Land and are forced to pay hut tax. In other words, the coloniser hand control over the land and black people as well.

There is a marked observation in the reverence of land before and after colonialism. Ikeunobe (2014) observes that;

When the land was owned by communities, it was respected and preserved based on the traditional values that saw nature as something with intrinsic value that must be revered. When the land became government’s property, it became something to be used and not cared for; in some sense, it did not belong to anybody because land was removed from the primordial public realm of the local communities to the civic public realm of the state. (p. 15)

In some way, Africans were conscious of their environment and they highly preserved it as it was embedded in their traditional values that the land must be appreciated. Hrituleac (2011)

also notes that:

The British and the French searched for African collaborators in order to better control their colonies. In this matter, the British adopted a strategy of indirect rule, using indigenous chiefs to exercise power. On the other hand, the French granted “assimilation status”, where the Africans benefiting from this privilege were expected to be loyal to the state and follow the pursuit of colonial objectives. Most of the African leaders used violence to impose themselves and maintain order and law. (p. 24)

From that perspective therefore, it can be seen that distorted power structures are prevalent in *The Grass is Singing* (1950) through the treatment of the native Africans by the white society and in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) it is mainly through the differences between Hampshire Estates and Manyene Tribal Trust Lands..

2.3.7.2 Colonial education

Numerous stratagems were attached to colonialism by the colonisers in their mission to conquer Africa and as such they imposed such plans amongst colonised lands in order to control both the colonised and their land. Colonial education was another contraption employed by the colonisers on Africans in order to have absolute control over the colonised. This concurs with Falola (2007)’s view that western education, for a long time, became the tool of colonisation. Woodson (1933) observes that “When you control a man’s thinking, you do not have to worry about his actions” (p. xiii). The motive behind colonial education was to have total control over the colonised and creating turmoil within the Africans amongst their kin. Once there was discord, disunity and commotion amongst Africans, then it was easy to control them. Ikuenobe (2014) annotates that African people have been indoctrinated through

education to accept the glamour of the coloniser's ways of life and models of development that are usually presented with concealed agendas and subliminal messages.

The coloniser's educational goal was to expose Africans to the white-man's 'superior' culture which was believed to be developed and the colonisers claimed that they were providing modernisation to colonised people (Mart, 2011). However Thiong'o (1981) argues that the education process annihilates people's belief in their names, in their languages, in their environment, in their heritage of struggle, in their unity, in their capacities and ultimately in themselves. This concurs with other scholars as Whitehead (2005) who argues that indigenous people were brainwashed to discard their own cultures and embrace western cultures which were supposedly superior, a situation which resulted in a culture of dependency, mental enslavement and a sense of inferiority. Also, Zhuwarara (2001) observes that;

missionary-cum-colonial education which relentlessly criticises the African worldview as backward, savage and primitive, something to be either discarded or outgrown in favour of colonial modernity. (p. 58)

Thus victims of colonial education behave like Lucifer in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975). Furthermore, Woolman (2001) contends that western education in African conditions was a process of psychological de-ruralisation. More so, Hrituleac (2011) notes that, "The educational system that was created was separating Africans from their society" (p. 40). Mart (2011) also argues that "Colonising nations through education tried to isolate students of Africa from their local communities" (p. 193). In other words colonial education was never put in place for the modernisation of African people at all rather it was implemented for the destruction of the African. Colonial education is more prevalent in *Waiting for the Rain*

(1950) and mainly through the character Lucifer and shows how colonialism brought about distress on both African people's social life and their environment.

Mart (2011) comments on the 'ideological pacification' of the colonised that it occurs when the insidious and humiliating idea is decisively implanted in African psyches and is accepted by Africans as their destiny. This leads to what Du Bois (1903) refers to as 'double consciousness' as he states that;

It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his twoness... (p. 3).

This, in turn, resulted in Africans feeling ashamed of their roots (Hrituleac, (2011). In a way the African's "mind has been brought under the control of his oppressor" according to Woodson (1933), thus the holding down of the African is easily resolved. Woolman (2001) observes that the educated African became a misfit in his own village; when he graduated even his parents did not expect him to continue living with them, tending the cattle or cultivating the land, just like in the character Nhamo in *Nervous Conditions* (1988) by Tsitsi Dangarembga and it is also typical in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975).

The dangers attached to colonisation are that, it may be a system that attempts to remove the colonised people from their indigenous learning structures and draw them towards the structures of the colonisers, and often times it successfully does so. The colonial education according to Thiong'o (1981) makes them see their past as one wasteland of non-achievement and it makes them want to disengage themselves from that wasteland. Furthermore it makes them want to identify with that which is furthest removed from them, which is a form of mimicry. Ashcroft, et al. (2007) note that within post-colonial theory, mimicry describes the ambivalent relationship between coloniser and colonised as noted in

the relationship between Moses and Mary Turner in *The Grass is Singing* (1950). Furthermore according to Ashcroft et al. (2007), mimicry is an adoption of the coloniser's cultural habits, assumptions, institutions and values, and because it is an adoption, it is 'never a simple reproduction of those traits' as represented by Lucifer Mandengu in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975, which may result in ambivalence, identity crisis and Dub Bois' (1903) double consciousness.

Exposure to colonial education in a way results in double consciousness and it may also lead to hybridity. Bhabha (1995) states that, "hybridity is the revaluation of the assumption of colonial identity through the repetition of discriminatory identity effects" (p. 34). Ashcroft et al. (1995) also comment that;

Hybridity occurs in post-colonial societies both as a result of conscious moments of cultural suppression, as when the colonial power invades to consolidate political and economic control, or when settler-invaders dispossess indigenous peoples and force them to 'assimilate' to new social patterns. (p. 183)

To add on, hybridity is an important concept in post-colonial theory, referring to the integration (or mingling) of cultural signs and practices from the colonising and the colonised cultures (Lye, 1998). For the case of Africa, the concept of hybridity came about when the African cultures got in contact with the western cultures. Bhabha (1995) alleges that;

Hybridity is the sign of the productivity of colonial power, its shifting forces and fixities; it is the name for the strategic reversal of the process of domination through disavowal (that is, the production of discriminatory identities that secure the 'pure' and original identity of authority. (p. 34)

Hybridity produces double consciousness, ambivalence and identity crisis as victims adapt themselves to the necessities and the opportunities of more or less oppressive or invasive cultural compulsions. According to Lye (1998), victims of colonialism live in alien cultural patterns through their own structures of understanding, thus producing something familiar but new, which is hybridised. The irony of it is that, the victims of hybridity through mimicry no longer belong to their African side, neither do they fit in the coloniser's setting, they are just hanging somewhere undefined. The irony is best elucidated in Aschroft et al.'s (2007) words that "It [mimicry] is an adoption of the coloniser's cultural habits, assumptions, institutions and values, and because it is an adoption, it is 'never a simple reproduction of those traits'" (p. 124). Ikuenobe (2014) also comments on the impact of colonialism and states that;

Not only has colonialism destroyed the existing traditional African social structures, the new structures it created and left behind, which is a mixture of European and indigenous cultures, represent an anomalous hybrid culture, which Africans do not fully understand, do not know how to manage or make adaptable to the African situation. (p. 14)

Issues pertaining to hybridity are prevalent in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) particularly with the character Lucifer who eventually leaves his home with not a single thought of ever returning. Bhabha (1995) observes that hybridity manifests the necessary deformation and displacement of all sites of discrimination and domination. The impact of colonialism on African culture and tradition, and how it may directly be responsible for hybridity is well articulated in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975). The chaotic nature of colonialism stimulates the power of hybridity in influencing the way African people would consequently interrelate in terms of familial relations as well as interaction with their environment.

2.3.7.3 Traumas associated with colonialism

Any practice that is despotic in nature, like colonialism, results in the traumatising of especially the victims. The complex structure of colonialism renders it a pernicious practice that breeds dynamic multiple dimensions of human destruction. Through such practices, colonialism would therefore represent nightmares for both the colonised and the coloniser as represented in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) and *The Grass is Singing* (1950). Bulhan (2015) notes that, “no system of oppression lasts without occupation of the mind and ontology of the oppressed” (p. 252). However, literature as a mirror reflection of society has proven that some colonisers also suffered in the process of serving the empire, showing the double faced nature of colonialism and this is typical in *The Grass is Singing* (1950).

For all the times, since colonialism was introduced to Africa, colonisers indoctrinated a belief in the colonised that colonialism was expedient for them (Bustos-Choy, 2009). The influences of this colonial belief and its schemes of knowledge become subconscious layers of colonial configurations that persevere over time even long after the colonisers are physically gone. In a way, trauma is noted in the victims of colonialism as their culture and traditions are threatened by the repressive system. Thus a post-colonial ecocritical analysis of *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) shows that colonialism is traumatising to the victimiser and to the victim, as well as the environment. Mart (2011) notes that “the threats have forced Africans to modify their beliefs, thoughts, behaviour in order to survive on a planet where they are regarded as ‘Third World People’” (p. 190), there by continually threatening the African people’s existence. However, Ashcroft et al. (1995) argue that their ‘post-colonial’ theory rejects the egregious classification of ‘First’ and ‘Third’ World and contests the lingering fallacy that the post-colonial is somehow synonymous with the economically ‘underdeveloped’ (p. 3).

Identity is also susceptible as Balaev (2008) points out that, “trauma creates a speechless fright that divides or destroys identity” (p. 149). As such, the trauma is not skin-colour

sensitive or biased as it affects both the colonised and the coloniser. Balaev (2008) goes further to comment that considering the multiple models of trauma and memory presented in the trauma novel, the trauma novel draws attention to the role of place, which functions to portray trauma's effects through metaphoric and material means. Thus the two novels, *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) are a representation and thematisation of trauma instigated by colonialism, and by extension this trauma equally proves to be deleterious to the land and the environment.

2.3.8 History on Rhodesia

A history of Rhodesia, which is the setting of the novels *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and *Waiting for the Rain* (1975), aids in understanding how colonialism was practiced within that space and how it was detrimental to the natural environment. Rhodesia (present day Zimbabwe) was a British protectorate, implying that it was under the British control for almost a century from 1890 when the British came to Rhodesia to 1980 when Zimbabwe attained its political independence from colonial bondage. Thus the black Africans in the Rhodesian societies agonised relentlessly under the despotic rule of the British colonialists. The colonialists ruthlessly dictated downright to the level of interfering with the social lives of Africans. African customs were immediately disapproved by the whites as a way of gaining total control over the black majority as underscored (Woodson (1933) in section 2.3.7.2 on Colonial education in this study). In other words, it may be noted that white people could have tampered with African people's minds in order to control black people in totality. White colonialists in a way introduced their culture amongst the black society so as to eliminate black history and black culture and by extension affecting black people's communal life and their link to nature and the environment.

Thus, land between Zambezi and Limpopo was colonised by Great Britain in 1890 through the intrusion of the British South Africa Company (BSAC) led by Cecil John Rhodes (Magaisa, 2010), hence the name Rhodesia from the leader's name, Rhodes. Magaisa (2010) further highlights that the creation of native reserves between 1894 and 1895, marked the beginnings of segregation and compulsory supplanting of Africans from their familial lands. The white colonialists resolved that they should be separated from the black majority by means of segregation. This was done through the Land Apportionment Act of 1930 and the white people created farms for themselves, thus rendering *The Grass is Singing* (1950) a plaasroman (farm novel). The Land Apportionment Act of 1930 brought about discontentedness amongst the black people and so did the Land Husbandry Act of 1951. According to Raftopoulos and Mlambo (2009);

Initiatives for total spatial segregation were formalised with the apportionment in 1924 of the Morris Carter Commission to inquire into views about land segregation. Its conclusions were that the overwhelming majority of Africans expressed a desire for land segregation. The recommendations of the Commission were incorporated into the Land Apportionment Bill that sought to legalise land segregation. The bill became an act in 1930 and its provisions were implemented in 1931. Under this Act land was divided into European Areas, Native Reserves, Native Purchase Areas and Forest Areas. (p. 66).

Sections of the Land Apportionment Act prohibited blacks from owning their indigenous African land but granted foreign white people ownership of vast fertile African farming land. According to Baxter (2011) "The Land Apportionment Act, gazetted in the early 1930s, was the first piece of restrictive legislation in the new race landscape of Rhodesia, and indeed the blueprint for the division of land on race lines" (p. 1). Furthermore, Gatsheni (2009) observes that the;

Land Apportionment Act introduced differential tenure categories for the apportioned land areas. In European areas, land was considered private property and was accompanied by title deeds, whereas in the Native Reserves, land was held under that was termed 'communal tenure' without title deeds. (p. 67)

The black majority got cramped in the reserves as the white minority hoarded large chunks of fertile land with rich soils. There was an imbalance on the black population against the distribution of environmental resources. The situation in the reserves was pathetic as the little land could not sustain the large population of black people as exemplified in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975), hence diverse forms of colonialism being a major underwriter in environmental degradation in areas like Rhodesia.

After the blacks were moved into the barren reserves, another law was passed that blacks had to have a limited number of livestock. This was passed in the Native Land Husbandry Act of 1951 (Bhebe, 1989). Livestock had to be disposed as required by the legislator. It was compulsory and blacks had to comply. Life became tough as the blacks endured the brutality of the compassionless white man. It was a nasty experience on the part of the blacks as they reduced the number of their livestock and yet the white people had immeasurable land which was idle that could be used for grazing purposes. Baxter (2011) states that de-stocking and various other restrictions placed on land used by blacks generated deep unhappiness, in particular for vast areas of productive land within white areas lay unused. Also, Bhebe (1989) notes that;

By 1943, many of the reserves were in a deplorable state. First some parts of the reserves could not support people because of the scarcity of water, others were already ruined by overpopulation, overstocking and by destructive methods of cultivation. The destructive methods came about during the colonial period. Before

then, African land husbandry did not lead to the destruction of the environment. The African producer confined his cultivation to a plot which was sufficient to guarantee his subsistence. Such plots were scattered in the wild and worked by hand, using the hoe. The intervening wild between the scattered plots prevented soil erosion. But big changes took place in the colonial period. Vast African populations were confined in relatively small reserves. These reserve populations also increased rapidly as the result of natural expansion and of the additions of people who were being cleared from the European areas, particularly after the Land Apportionment Act of 1930. (p. 20)

It is thus this state of affairs that has caught the literary artist's eye or exemplified by Mungoshi (1975) in his depiction of Manyene Tribal Trust Land in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) and this study explores the parodies brought about by colonialism and the devastation it has on the land. Bhebe (1989) further comments that;

The bitterness of African stock owners arose also out of the fact that they were being called up to limit the number of livestock when vast expanses of land in the European Area lay ungrazed. To the African, whose land rights were constantly being eaten away and livestock being persistently whittled down, all this amounted to a deliberate white man's policy of impoverishing him- which in fact it was, so that he [the black man] could sell his labour at the possible cheapest price. (p. 30)

The amassing of huge fertile chunks of land by the white colonisers is noted in both *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and *Waiting for the Rain* (1975). The displacement of the black majority to pave way for the white settlers is also highlighted in the novels and how that move had repercussions on environmental degradation which had ripple effects that are still being felt to this present day. Baxter (2011) further highlights that the Land Husbandry Act of

the late 1950s had strict guidelines on the use and management of land within the increasingly overcrowded native reserves. Also, the account for the histories of colonialism in Africa and for Rhodesia in particular demonstrates the possibilities of postcolonial and ecocritical theoretical frameworks merging in analysis of literary texts.

2.3.9 The plaasroman

It is prudent at this moment to provide some insights into how the white farmers and their families lived on the farms that they acquired through the Land Apportionment Act of 1930 by borrowing from the plaasroman. Plaasroman is an Afrikaans term used in literary studies. According to Di Laurea (2013);

The plaasroman, or farm novel in English, is a genre – or a sub-genre – which developed at the beginning of the twentieth century primarily among Afrikaners, the descendents of the Europeans who started inhabiting South Africa from the second half of the seventeenth century during the period of administration of the Dutch East Indian Company. (p. 10)

On the other hand, Levinrad (2010) argues that, “the ‘farm novel’ and the plaasroman are patently different genres” (p. 17). However this study adopted Di Laurea’s (2013) comprehension of the plaasroman that of being referred to synonymously as the farm novel. Di Laurea (2013) further notes that “Afrikaners are known mainly for their role in the making and maintaining of the segregation system best known as Apartheid” (p. 10). Fick (2014) echoes the same sentiments by stating that “Farm novels and plaasromans relegate black bodies to the margins” (p. 3). Which means that, apartheid like colonialism, is anchored on segregation. The original idea of the plaasroman was to represent the farm as a separate paradise that provided happiness, stability and safety for the Afrikaners in a world that was rapidly changing (Di Laurea, 2013). However, it turned out to be the very opposite as the

farms were marred with violence as discerned by Fick (2014) that there were different genres of violence such as following;

the violence of taming the natural landscape, which requires rooting out the indigenous flora and fauna; the violence inside families isolated on such farms; the violence of conflicts between employers, whether white bywoners or black labourers; and of course the violence against the non-human animals on farms. (p. 3)

Thus, the plaasroman provided a vibrant insight into the peculiarities of Afrikaner complex life. Fick (2014) further observes that South African prominent writers such as Godimer and Cortzee explored the myth of black absence in *The Conservationist* (1974) and *Heart of the Country* (1977) respectively, and also re-wrote the violence inherent in farming, both between master and servants, and between members of the master caste. Other than some of the violence experienced at the farms, Fick (2014) comments on the term ‘farm murder’ that it was used “exclusively to designate the murder of ‘white farmers’ by ‘black intruders’” (p. 3). Thus the plaasroman adopts a form of negative utopia which may be referred to as dystopia.

Baccolini (2004) notes that dystopia is “characterised by a community/society that is in some way undesirable or frightening; where dehumanisation, totalitarian governments, poverty, political repression, societal collapse are evident, and where humanity suffers from a lack of true freedom and liberty.” (p. 518). Thus the dystopian account caters for both *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and *Waiting for the Rain* (1975), as aspects such as poverty and dehumanisation traverse in both novels.

The novel, *The Grass is Singing* (1950) is typically a plaasroman, a farm novel. Though it is not a South African novel or neither is it written in Afrikaans, but this research set on expanding the plaasroman genre so that it can be applied on other novels written elsewhere

other than South Africa that share the same characteristics. Also, apartheid and colonialism may be seen as different but they converge on both being repressive and vicious systems. As such the trends of a farm novel in an apartheid system are the similar trends found in a farm novel in a colonial context. Lastly Fick (2014) remarks that;

After all, the history of white farming is riddled with horrific failure, the consequence of natural disaster and spectacular mismanagement. The literature of the farm, both in English and Afrikaans, traces these failures as crises of conscience and consciousness for the white subject (p. 3).

The sentiments therefore make *The Grass is Singing* (1950) a novel that can possibly be analysed under the genre of the plaasroman.

2.3.10 The significance of land and identity

Land is very important as it extrapolates on the idea and sense of place of attachment. Okolo (2013) acknowledges that “Land is held on to as a sign of belonging to a particular community, a link to one’s roots and source” (p. 23). The strand of identity and linking it to land is presented as well by Nfah-Abbenyi (2007) who argues that, “belonging to the land gives one identity and a history that is deeply grounded in culture as well” (p. 713). Furthermore, Huggins (2010) comments that, “Land is essential to most rural livelihoods, but it is also bound up very strongly with issues of identity and power” (p. 5). Peters (2007) observes that “Indigenous people’s relationship with their traditional lands and territories is said to form a core part of their identity and spirituality and to be deeply rooted in their culture and history” (p. 1). Thus, the interconnectedness or the link between land and identity is established, however colonial exigencies brought about totalitarian estrangements whose conventions disrupted the African setups as presented in both *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) and *The Grass is Singing* (1950).

In a research carried out in Mashpee Wampanoag in Nepal, Peters (2007) states that “Not being in control of the land, or not being able to protect it or have access to the natural foods and medicines that grow on it, gives us a really shaky future” (p. 1). In other words this is complementing with the idea of guarding the environment jealously as it contributes to human sustainability (Okuyade, 2013), which are some of the core tenets of ecocriticism. Okolo (2013) attests that African literature gives attention to the relationship existing between humans and the land through different cultural ceremonies like festivals and other rituals that are enacted from time to time in order to sustain such a link. Such ceremonies are distinctive in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975).

Furthermore, Hampton and Toombs (2013) assert that identity provides a sense of belonging to a specific group at family, community or national level and that individual identity relates closely to cultural and social identity, which incorporates roles in a social setting. Once such conditions are infiltrated by pervasive forces like colonialism, entities become disoriented. More so, Hampton and Toombs (2013) observe that “Identity arises from the adoption of social roles through personal experience. The individual negotiates the meaning of his or her identity with family and society members” (p. 6). In this instance, identity is not only within an individual, it infuses the family and society as well.

As established earlier that colonialism amongst other agencies may be to a greater extent responsible for land degradation (Owhofasa, 2013), land degradation has a colossal consequence. ELD (2015) declares that “Land degradation jeopardises ecosystem services globally, including agricultural products, clean air, fresh water, disturbance regulation, climate regulation, recreational opportunities, and fertile soils” (p. 8). Some of these

consequences are presented in both *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and *Waiting for the Rain* (1975).

2.3.11 Traditional African family

Other than environmental degradation, colonialism also interfered with family structures. In Africa, the concept of family is fundamental as all other vocations exude from this pivotal locus that strongly affiliates to communalism and rejects individualism. The overall concept of *Ubuntu* values people as a community, rather than as individuals (Maluleke, 2012). Individualism is shunned upon in most African settings, considering the communal nature associated with Africans. Mbiti (1970) asserts that an individual does not exist alone except corporately. Thus a family represents the atomic constituent made up of individual entities. Traditionally, an African family comprises of one's biological parents, grandparents and great-grandparents, siblings, uncles, aunts, cousins, nieces and nephews. An African family embraces the extended family ideology, a dogma dissimilar from other ideologies on the definition of family. For instance, from a western perspective a family is one which normally constitutes a father, mother and maybe one or two or at most three children.

In Africa, life to a person entails being born to a certain nuclear family, the clan and the whole ethnic group (Nasimiyu-Wasike, 2001). Thus the extended family structure is there as the prototype, one in which parents, grand-parents, grandchildren, uncles, aunts, nephews and nieces live together. Nasimiyu-Wasike (2001) further asserts that it is this kinship system that forms the basic social unit, as the family becomes a general social organisation and the community revolves around it. The Mandengu family in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) epitomises the typical African family and typifies a family whose structures have been exposed and disrupted by external forces as colonialism. Therefore, in exploring ecocritical

components of life in fiction, this study investigates how colonialism would disrupt such family units and at the same time impact on the environment which these families survive on. A traditional African family also considers fore-parents, networking several generations earlier. These fore-parents can also be referred to as ancestors and they are part of the family. The ancestors, who are spiritual beings are said to be powerful and they are above human beings (Mbiti, 1990). Their presence in the community is accepted and respected among some traditional African groups. Furthermore, abandoning ancestors could invite disaster for human beings and the community. Personal names of ancestors may be given to children as a way of recalling the ancestors and ancestor spirits may also reincarnate in individual children (Ejizu, 1986). The presence of the ancestors is particularly felt in traditional African community. Ancestors are believed to be benevolent and powerful agents of African families thus in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) ancestors are incorporated. The ancestors and the living belong together, with the ancestors' graves being on the environment and sacred to some African groups. Thus the displacements brought about by colonialism become sacrilege as it actually promoted the separation of African people from their ancestors' remains and their ancestral lands.

An insight into the African family helps in the appreciation of the presentation of characters in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975). The relationships and interaction of characters with each other is dependent on the backgrounds of the families to which they are born into. The characters are members of families that have an African background; thus, the African family is critical in relation to the topic of this study as the family is linked to the ancestors and to the environment that contains them.

2.3.12 African culture and tradition

Culture and tradition play a crucial role in separating and distinguishing Africans from other groups of people worldwide. Hampton and Toombs (2013) note that the examination of culture requires a consistent emphasis on objectivity and an appreciation that we might not always see things the same way others do. Thus, African culture and tradition distinguishes Africanness from other global people. Howard (1996) describes culture as: “the customary, learned manner in which human groups organise their behaviour and thought in relation to their environment... how people act, and especially interact, with one another.... how people perceive, classify, and interpret their world” (p. 11). In other words, culture is a patterned way of life shared by a group of people. Furthermore, Kipuri (1993) comments that, “Culture encompasses all that human beings have and do to produce, relate to each other and adapt to the physical environment” (p. 52). And it is this interaction with the physical environment that is the major concern in this study.

Understanding aspects of people’s way of life entails understanding attributes such as their culture, tradition and religion. Culture and religion interpret a people’s way of life and somehow gives a picture as to how people comprehend and negotiate their own life as exhibited in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) and in *The Grass is Singing* (1950). Ejizu (1986) comments that traditional religion was “a typical religion of structure” (p. 1). Also it was the sole world-view with which people explained, predicted and controlled space-time events and it underpinned every facet of lives of the people. More so, religion was particularly significant in inculcating and promoting the sense of community-living and certain key values associated with the religion (Ejizu, 1986). For that, African traditional religion suffused and gave meaning to life as it pervaded and permeated all its aspects. Thus, African culture, tradition and religion move hand-in-hand, they are complementary and intertwined, as well. Therefore in this study it is critical to consider African culture and tradition as it reflects on how a group of people interacts with their environment.

2.3.12.1 Religion

Religion in general may be referred to as a set of indigenous and traditional principles that synchronise a group of people. African traditional religion refers to the religious beliefs and practices that originate from Africa and are meant for the Africans to adhere to (Onyedinma & Kanayo, 2013). Religion regulates the natural man and his surroundings where the surroundings refer to the environment which constitutes the natural environment and the supernatural environment. The same goes for African religion and African culture, where culture is generally a people's way of life, and African traditional religion refers to the indigenous religious beliefs and practices of the Africans (Awolalu, 1976). Traditional cultural practices and religion reflect the values and beliefs held by members in African communities which are exemplified in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975).

Some religions allow communication between human beings and the supernatural world. Obiefuna (2008) observes that "there can be no meaningful human relations without the spiritual/abstract qualities that religion offers" (p. 10), meaning that life becomes meaningless without religion to complement it. Onyedinma and Kanayo (2013) discuss the relations that exist between human beings and the spiritual world and refer to this type of relation as the extra-mundane, which is a vertical dimension while the relationship within fellow human beings is referred to as the horizontal dimension.

The extra-mundane, the vertical dimension, is very crucial particularly for this study as it is illustrated in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975). The link provides a channel for communication, hence the bottom-up relationship. The top-down relationship is the feedback component of the extra-mundane relationship. It is through this established link that the supernatural agents communicate their concerns to the human beings. The established link involves the display of

supernatural abilities that are only visible in their manifestations, but the forces behind the manifestations remain invisible. The manifestations are also represented in *Waiting for the rain* (1975).

An understanding of African religion therefore aids in appreciating, sympathising or even condemning fictional characters in literary works. African culture became contaminated when it came into contact with oppressive systems such as colonialism, whose cultural origins are mostly in the western countries. Western cultures tend to be more individualistic and focus on self-aggrandisement which has to do with personal interests, whereas African cultures are collectivistic (aspect of *Ubuntu*) involving the well-being of the entire community. The overall concept of *Ubuntu* (Maluleke, 2012) values people as a community, rather than as individuals.

The advent of colonialism thus particularly altered some of the African traditions and cultures. Dualism came into place as Africans began keeping Christian principles and, at the same time, holding on and practising African ways of life, a trait noted in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975). This dualism may be blamed on colonialism as Christianity and other religions were forcefully introduced to Africans alongside colonialism. This meant that some African beliefs embedded in religion were altered and that also altered the people's attitude towards their environment. According to Yankuzo (2014) "African societies are forced to accepting uniform moral principle of what is right and wrong within the global cultures" (p. 1). This may result in the dilution of Africa's self-definition, emanating from the contact and influence of alien cultural ideologies, resulting in the weakening of African culture and tradition, as noted in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975). Kasongo (2010) observes that when an incoming culture (in this case civilisation/modernism) seeks to totally replace the existing cultural values, it causes social frustrations and generates maladjustment of group members to this new system, which leads to the demise of the traditional society. This would in turn,

results in hybridised and dislocated characters like Lucifer Mandengu in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975). Therefore an understanding of this people's religion is of importance in this study as it allows the reader to condemn or sympathise with the characters in the novel.

2.3.12.2 Spiritualism and spiritism

Spiritualism involves the interaction of the spirits, the spirit world, human beings and the natural world. Spiritualism together with religious beliefs are the fundamental elements ascribed to the cultural tradition of most Africans (Olupona, 2015). In fictional works, such characters are noticed who serve as mediums, linking the natural world of people to the world of spirits, for instance Matandangoma in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975). Though they may be fictional characters, they play their roles of connecting the separate worlds and thus bringing to the fore the interplay between the natural environment, the people and the supernatural world.

Spiritism also entails the continual of spirits' lives even after death and according to Almeida, Almeida, Silva DeMeida and Neto (2005), "spiritism shares a belief in the existence and survival of spirits after death and their communication with the living" (p. 6). With spiritism, a link between the dead people's spirits and the living is established. There is a constant interaction of the spirit world with the world of the living. Almeida et al. (2005) further state that "people are essentially immortal spirits that temporarily inhabit physical bodies for several necessary incarnations" (p. 6). From an African perspective, ancestors thus qualify in this category of spirits living beyond death as presented in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975).

Traditional African culture regards ancestors as the immediate connection of the living human beings with the spirit world. Mbiti (1990) asserts that;

Ancestors speak the language of the spirits and of God. They are the ‘spirits’ with which African peoples are most concerned: it is through the living-dead that the spirit world becomes personal to men. They are still part of their human families, and people have personal memories of them. (p. 82)

For Africans, ancestors appear to be influential elements in their lives as these ancestors serve as a conduit that links the natural and supernatural worlds. It is through the ancestors that the natural world gets to experience a feeling of the unseen world, typical in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975). Thus, a symbiotic relationship exist between the unseen world and the natural environment.

Not everybody qualifies or is deemed to be an ancestor. Death in African context is not the end of life but rather a transition into another different life. Mbiti (1977) notes that human life does not terminate as one dies but continues beyond death and that there are myriads upon myriads of human spirits. Of which many of them appear in legends, myths and folk stories; others are spoken about in normal conversations among people; and some possess people or appear to people in visions and dreams. This relates significantly to Samambwa in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975). Samambwa before he became an ancestor, he was a hunter and thus interacted with the environment.

One needs, however, to understand the context and content of African people’s beliefs to be able to appreciate why they un-doubtedly place beliefs in their ancestors and the supernatural world. In fictional works, ancestors are included and have direct and indirect impact on characters as presented typically on Garabha in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975). Ancestors are thus part of African families; hence their inclusion as characters in literary works pertaining to African families.

More or less than spiritism, spirituality is expounded by Kipuri (1993) as;

the relationship human beings create with the spirit world in order to manage forces that seem overpowering. Indigenous spirituality is intimately linked to the environment in which the people live. For indigenous peoples, the land is the core of all spirituality and this relationship to the spirit of the earth is central to all the issues that are important to indigenous peoples today. (p. 59)

This issue of spirituality is central in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) and how the characters react to it as it is part of their actuality. However, with the contact with exotic religions like Christianity, Kipuri observes that, “Indigenous spirituality and belief systems have often been dismissed as being mere expressions of superstitious and irrational thinking” (p. 60). Thus making *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) a critical text that exposes the effects of colonialism and its subsidiaries on ascendancy and total conquest, and in this present study of concern is how exotic religion impacted on indigenous religion and how this had a ripple effect on the environment.

2.4 Gaps identified

From the foregoing, the gaps identified in the research area were as follows:

- Vambe (2013) did a research that is insightful to this research by focusing on the representation of the effects of colonial land policies in two Zimbabwean novels and one of the novels was *Waiting for the Rain* (1975), zooming only on four characters. This present research expanded further from the effects of colonial land policies by incorporating social factors in relation to the environment in totality as framed by both ecocriticism and post-colonialism.
- This study recounted the impact of colonialism on both the coloniser and the colonised. *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) epitomises the colonised, and on the other hand *The grass is Singing* (1950) characterises the coloniser. Many studies have just

underscored the effects of colonialism on the colonised and not as much on the suffering of the coloniser. This research found a gap in that in as much as colonialism agonised its victims it equally writhed its agents as presented in *The Grass is Singing* (1950).

2.5 Conclusion

This Chapter 2 discussed the two theories, ecocriticism and post-colonialism and how the two theories may be merged and employed as the theoretical framework particularly for this study. Also, other works that employed the two theories were highlighted and they provided a basis for which *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) can also be analysed. Related issues such as the effects of colonialism in Africa and African people's culture and tradition and how such influences modified the African people, were also underlined. This chapter also noted the identified gap that emanated from the reviewed literature. These issues are augmented in the analysis of *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) in Chapter 4 of this study. The next chapter (Chapter 3) looks at the methodology that was used for this study.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter (Chapter 2) focused on the theoretical framework and literature review. This chapter (Chapter 3) focuses on the methodology and considers aspects such as the approach and design, population and sample as well as data analysis and ethical considerations.

3.2 Approach and design

This study adopted a qualitative approach as the research intended to analyse the interaction between humans and their environment, a phenomenon that is qualitative in nature. Qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem or situation (Creswell, 2009). The intrinsic relationship that exists between humans and the environment may not be easily reduced to numbers, hence the qualitative approach was the most appropriate approach for this study.

The qualitative approach is important in this instance as it gives form and direction for this research and thus Kothari (2004, p. 31) states that a research design is the arrangement of the conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose. The research purpose being the ability to find answers for the research questions raised. Thus a research design is a plan that describes how, when and where data are to be gathered and analysed.

Masson (2002) identifies two features of the qualitative research design that firstly, it is interpretative, meaning that it is concerned with the understanding and interpretation of the social world. Secondly, it is “both flexible and sensitive to the social context in which data

are produced” (Masson, 2002, p. 3). This is unlike the fixed and systematised methods of the quantitative research where standard methods are designed for every study by employing laid out formulas.

Also, the qualitative approach is based on arguments and interpretations aimed at understanding the complex nature of the social world within a specific context. Kothari (2004) contends that, “the qualitative approach to research is concerned with subjective assessment of attitudes, opinions and behaviour” (p. 5). This means that the researcher is the main data gathering instrument whose function is to investigate the issues under study and then communicate the data in the form of words. This allows the researcher to conduct an inductive analysis of data and extract information from a variety of sources, analyse and draw conclusions.

The qualitative approach was used on the merits that it is interpretative in nature and aspires at understanding the qualities of social life, and its ability to give an in-depth textual description in the social context of the human/environment interaction in literary texts such as *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and *Waiting for the Rain* (1975). There was not any field work hence the study was confined to a desktop design because of the qualitative nature of the research.

3.3 Population

The population was all post-colonial literary texts that are from Africa, that contain aspects pertaining to ecocriticism, and are written in English. Burns and Grove (2003) define a research population as “all the elements that meet the criteria for inclusion in a study.”(p. 213). Also, Bhattacharjee (2012) defines a population as all people or items (units of analysis) with the characteristics that one wishes to study (p. 65). With these two definitions, thus the

population of this study are all post-colonial literary texts that are from Africa written in English and share similar characteristics.

3.4 Sample

Purposive sampling was used for this study as the researcher intentionally selected *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) from the total population as the texts were bound by common features; of being post-colonial texts and sharing the same setting, as well as ecocriticism also featuring as a pronounced theme. Burns and Grove (2003) define sampling as “a process of selecting a group of people, events or behaviour with which to conduct a study” (p. 31). The critical concepts of ecocriticism and post-colonialism were common in both texts, thus the chosen texts were similar from a thematic perspective, and in a way the study was able to fulfil the identified research objectives.

3.5 Procedure

The study was a desktop study where data was gathered through an intense reading and critical analysis of the chosen novels, *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and *Waiting for the Rain* (1975). The researcher considered relevant secondary sources including works by literary critics, book reviews, journals, scholars’ research papers, academic presentations as well as relevant sources on ecocriticism and post-colonialism. These sources facilitated a close and critical analysis of this study’s topic. Furthermore, the sources complemented the analysis and provided a spine on which this study was hinged upon. The chosen novels were analysed by applying the ecocritical and post-colonial theories that formed the theoretical framework of this study, and they were also informed by the reviewed literature, and culminated in informed findings and judgements for the conclusions.

3.6 Data analysis

According to Anderson (2010), data analysis is the interpretation and exposition of the data collected for the study. The study employed content analysis in interpretation and analysis of the representation of the intrinsic relationship that exists between humans and the environment in literary works. Kothari (2004) posits that, “content analysis consists of analysing the contents of documentary materials such as books, magazines, newspapers and the content of all other verbal materials which can either be spoken or printed” (p. 110). Data gathered was organised into smaller chunks by categories for easier management, and in the process themes and relationships between categories emerged. The interpretation of data was done by the utilisation of both ecocriticism and post-colonialism theories. Data was then presented in narrative form and categorised according to themes. The findings were thus extracted from the interpretations and analysis, and they were used for the formulation of discussions and conclusions.

3.7 Research ethics

This research was based on fictional works whose characters were of imaginative formation, thus it did not involve human participants, but it involved written material that was already available in the public domain and the researcher considered not ridiculing the authors. The researcher strived to be objective by analysing the chosen texts based on the framing of ecocriticism and post-colonialism theories, as well as by reporting different perspectives and contrary findings as presented in the chosen texts.

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter (Chapter 3), focused mainly on the procedures that were used in the compilation of this research. The population and sample for this study were specified. Also noted were

considerations of research ethics that included and compelled the researcher not to ridicule the authors of the selected novels (sample) for this study. The next chapter (Chapter 4) focuses mainly on the in-depth and critical analysis of *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) and *The Grass is Singing* (1950) bound by post-colonial as well as ecocritical frameworks, and as informed by the reviewed literature in Chapter 2 of this study.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF *WAITING FOR THE RAIN* AND *THE GRASS IS SINGING*

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the selected novels *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) and *The Grass is Singing* (1950) are analysed and discussed basing on the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 of this study and framed by post-colonialism and ecocriticism as the theories. Sub-headings are used to focus precisely on different themes and a summary of each novel is provided first before the analysis of the novels. The following remain the objectives of this study that it endeavoured to fulfil:

- explore how the relationship between humans and their environment is established in the selected African literary texts;
- investigate how the environment influences human beings and vice versa as presented in the selected novels; and
- explore how environmental issues as presented in the chosen literary texts help focus the larger socio-political and cultural concerns of the specified milieu of their setting.

4.2 *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) - Summary

Waiting for the Rain (1975) begins with the narration of Old Man's frightening dream. It is a novel that focuses on the bearings of colonialism on the socio-political milieu of the colonised Africans through a rural family, the Mandengus. One of the two sons, Lucifer, has received colonial education and is going overseas. Garabha, the eldest, is an artist who specialises in playing the drum and composing songs, but he is not formally educated. For that the parents regard Garabha as a complete disappointment and consequently the father chooses Lucifer to inherit his place as head of the family. But the Old Man and Old Mandisa

recognise the talent and potential in Garabha as well as the shortcomings of Lucifer's education. Though the action centres mostly on Lucifer's farewell, the novel also brings to the fore entwined themes as the story unfolds, with colonialism as the overarching theme from which other themes such as the effects of colonial education, alienation from indigenous traditions, nature and colonialism permeate from.

4.2.1 Man and the environment in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975)

The account for Old Man's dream in Chapter 1 of *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) acknowledges the complementarity that exists between humanity and the surrounding environment. Human activities revolve around the environment such that even in their sleep, their environments influence their dreaming, evident from the text in Old Man's dream;

The air trembles with roaring thunder and the earth grumbles with earthquakes and shrieking lightning splits the darkness into quivering shreds of light and he is a lonely whirling little dot who has to hold his own to stay alive... (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 1)

Interpreting the Old Man's frightening dream may be problematic but may also be alluding to the restlessness stimulated by colonialism. The description of the roaring thunder and the earthquakes may be illustrative of the uncertainty of black people's lives under colonial bondage. Nonetheless "The chilly morning air and the quietness clean the sleep out of his [Old Man's] head and eyes" (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 4). Thus, the environment is multifunctional as in this case, it cleanses the Old Man from the terrible dream, providing him with a consoling and comforting dose, and it serves as a refreshing tonic.

The Old Man also advises Garabha on how nature can heal and get rid of beer hangovers evident from the novel where he says "If you take the morning air when it is still pure from human breath, the smell of sweat and smoke', the Old Man told him once, 'you don't need

beer all day long’” (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 84). Thus again, nature is therapeutic and as such humanity relies on it.

Waiting for the Rain (1975) testifies directly to the effects of colonialism particularly on the colonised and the environment. To start with, colonialism promoted racialism thereby allowing the painful germination of segregation, with black people being affected most, regardless of the fact that land was rightfully theirs. They were driven into reserves like the Manyene Tribal Trust Land (Mungoshi, 1975). Thus, through colonialism, there was displacement of black people and Magaisa (2010) highlights on the creation of native reserves that exhorted segregation and compulsory supplanting of Africans from their familial lands.

The Land Tenure Act of 1930, as discussed by Magaisa (2010); Raftopoulos and Mlambo (2009) and Gatsheni (2009) in Chapter 2 of this study, was an initiative for total spatial segregation, thus resulting in the enormous chasm between Manyene Tribal Trust Land and Hampshire Estates. The juxtaposition of these two places reveals the imbalances fashioned by colonialism as noted in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975);

The sudden transition from the rolling ranches of Hampshire Estates with their tall dry grass and the fertile soil under the grass; into scorched nothing-here-and-the-horizon white lands of Manyene Tribal Trust Land, with the inevitable tattered scarecrow waving a silent dirge in an empty field, makes a funeral intrusion into the bus. And those who have been singing all the way from Salisbury with drunken excitement of going home seem to be regretting their having come at all (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 39)

The comparison of Manyene Tribal Trust Land to Hampshire Estates articulates the deplorable circumstances of black people stirred by repressive systems like the colonialism experienced at that particular time. In *Waiting for the Rain* (1975), the people express their

grievances that “this is our country, the people say with a sad familiarity (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 39). The “empty fields” signal barrenness and a plethora of impossible alternatives for sustainability as well as infinity disconnections of black people to the Manyene Tribal Trust Land.

The segregation does not just end in separating black people from white people but rather, it is an extension of the negative effects manifesting and impacting on the environment. The Manyene Tribal Trust Land is a colonial construct, a painful situation as many black people got cramped in the reserves which in turn could not sustain such a huge population. That could be why the “scarecrow” is waving a “silent dirge” which makes a “funeral intrusion on to the bus” (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 39). If the environment is likened to a ‘funeral’ then it may be interpreted that the environment is futile and gives back nothing. A powerful metaphor of the funeral that has been employed which renews our ways of thinking towards the novel *Waiting for the Rain* (1975). A sense of attachment is lacking. There is no sense of belonging as evidenced in the novel where it reads;

Not until you look towards the east and see the tall sun-bleached rocks of Manyene Hills casting foreboding shadows over land beyond like sentinels over some fairy-tale land of the dead, are you really at home (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 40)

The visibly ‘sun-bleached rocks of Manyene Hills’ could signify deforestation and the excessive cutting down of trees hence leaving the rocks bare and visible. This concurs with Reser’s (2007) assertion that “environmental degradation is in large part caused by human behaviours” (p. 2). In this case colonialism is the human behaviour and force behind the activities evident in Manyene Tribal Trust Land.

The reserves like Manyene are unproductive and unyielding, and those are the places that the black majority were driven and forced into. In their deplorable state, the situation on the

degradation of the environment escalated, instigated by the colonial move of restricting Africans in reserves. Noted is the destruction of rivers through siltation where Mungoshi (1975) states that;

And here now the bus turns west, following the line of the old village, and you look across Suka - which has given up flowing - and see the line of the new village stretching like an interminable snake in the sun from the southern bank of the river, on and over the rim of the earth to the other end of the world, with the Ancient Rain Tree - now impotent - standing guard in an empty landscape. (Mungoshi, 1975, pp. 40-41)

The above quotation justifies Ikuenobe's (2014) argument that the activities that have raised environmental concerns in Africa did not exist prior to colonialism as Africans had conservationist values, practices and ways of life. Thus the forceful and probably incorrect colonial settling methods along Suka River resulted in the river 'giving up'. This impacts on the environment as the river will not be able to provide humanity with water. The people along Suka River had to adopt adaptive methods in order to survive. The environment has been affected by the poor settling methods imposed through colonialism, hence the river failing to reciprocate and complement the relationship that exists between humanity and the environment. This is evident in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975);

She [Betty] crosses Suka River, now almost dry - a mere trickle of rusty water on a bed of sun-browned sand. She digs in the sand till water begins to sip into the hole through the grains of sand. She waits until there is enough water to fill a mouth. She takes a drink and moves on. (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 37)

Nature provides sustenance to human beings and any form of disturbance to the natural resources could result in nature failing to provide for humans. Life becomes difficult for humans as their life is depended on the giving of nature. Also, Garabha "kneels down to drink

from the river, his open palms pressed hard against-and his fingers digging into – the hard packed sand” (Mungoshi, 1975, pp. 81-82). This somehow proves how bad the situation was, the impact that environmental degradation had on humanity such that they had to struggle to get water to drink. On a symbolical level therefore water is an important natural resource and its lacking is detrimental to human life.

Because of colonialism, other agencies of denudation are also highlighted in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) where Mungoshi (1975) states that “He [Garabha] drops the stunted bush, down the cattle-and-rain deepened stony path to the river” (p. 81). The stony paths are a sign of environmental degradation which will eventually transform into gullies, thereby defacing the environment. Furthermore, the state of Suka River and its surroundings evokes Garabha’s “childhood memories, as he sees the helpless silvery trickle in the sand that is the mighty Suka in flood time, but now, in dry season reduced to begging for a passage through sandy wastes” (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 81). It may therefore be concluded that colonialism is one of the forces responsible for the deplorable state that Suka River is. Manyene Tribal Trust Land is a microcosm of Rhodesia, implying that the pervasive colonial measures may have been uniform through-out the land and natural resources like rivers were threatened.

The repressive system was structured in a way that the colonisers would enjoy most of the natural resources at the expense of the indigenes. Suka River along which the black people were forcefully settled, succumbed to siltation and other forms of denudation resulting in it now failing to provide water to the inhabitants. This is unlike “the mightier Munyati in the plains of Hampshire Estates” (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 81) which is forever flowing and black people no longer have access to it, owing to brutal colonial rules that segregated them, but granted the colonisers a superfluous form of dominance. Childhood memories to Garabha are that “Munyati River: the memory is hunting at night and the vision of quick, tail flickering reed buck drinking water at dusk-fall” (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 81). These are just nostalgic

sweet memories, unfortunately disturbed by colonialism and some of its subsidiaries. The memories are a dispensation providing a glimpse into balanced nature, where there is water in abundance to supply both humans and animals; and the environment would provide game for hunting for meat. But all this has been distorted, destroyed and denied.

When the reserves like Manyene Tribal Trust Land were created, black people moved to them with their large herds of cattle. However, the large herds of cattle could not be sustained by the strained and barren lands thereby posing a danger and threatening further environmental degradation. According to Bhebe (1989), by 1943 most reserves were in a deplorable state due to overstocking and destructive methods of cultivation that were happening in those settlements. *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) thus contains sufficient and powerful utilitarian prototypes on how some of the colonial vocations motivated environmental mortification.

In *Waiting for the Rain* (1975), the Old Man feels betrayed and he is melancholic as to what used to be the number of his herd of cattle but now reduced to nearly nothing because of the Native Land Husbandry Act of 1951, where the colonial statute required black people to have a limited number of livestock. Mungoshi (1975) describes the Old Man thus: “Here again he [Old Man] stands and thinks of his once hundred head of cattle – when grass was still Earth’s grass – now reduced to ten” (p. 5). This kind of manifestation is contradictory to the coloniser’s way of perceiving themselves as “agents of change” (Hriteuliac, 2011) and being “engaged in a civilising mission” (Ferreira, 1974). Rather, the manifestations are the justification of the intended mission to Africa for “extreme exploitation and manipulation leaving the land in anguish and poverty” (Weilin, 2011, p. 115), which the researcher deems a devastating formula of vandalism and destruction.

The devastating state of the environment represented in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) may mostly be attributed to colonial forces that came and intervened by interrupting and emasculating the organised African systems that were in place and functional. According to the Old Man, “Everything was the earth’s” (Mungoahi, 1975, p. 116), implying that there were structures in place but that did not reflect on ownership of the land and the environment, as by that time, land literary belonged to ‘Earth’. So the advent of colonialism and consequently the imposition of the Land Apportionment Act of 1930 altered this kind of approach and introduced the grabbing and owning of land.

When the land was originally in the hands of Africans, as highlighted by Ikeunobe (2014), that it was respected and preserved, and based on the traditional values that saw nature as something with intrinsic value that must be revered. Thus, Africans were conscious of their environment and highly preserved it since it formed part of their traditional values. In a way, *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) is a text confronting post-colonial issues by exposing the impact colonialism had on the environment. The Old Man laments how the land was taken from black people and insists on “what comes of playing someone’s drum” (Mungoshi, 1975, p, 117).

Also, nature giving sustenance and provisions to the day to day life of human beings shows nature’s kindness. In *Waiting for the Rain* (1975), there are numerable instances where nature provides for human beings, proving how humans are dependent on nature, from the novel where it reads, “Later, after taking Old Mandisa her firewood, the Old Man sits smoking in his semi-circular grass-and-branch workshop on the edge of the yard. The log he left burning last night is still alight” (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 7). Trees are used for firewood and together with grass for construction of different infrastructure. Also noted when Betty “pulls out a handful of grass and rolls it into a circular cushion, puts it on her head and then balances the pot on top of the cushion” (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 89). The pot she is carrying has got water that has

been provided by the environment and the pot itself is made from the clay also provided by nature. The cushion she makes is from the grass, again showing how heavily dependent humans are on the environment.

Another instance is noticed when Raina uses cow dung as floor polish. The use of cow dung is an indicator of how natural resources can be recycled and be used without impacting on the environment. This is evident from the novel when “She [Raina] will do Lucifer’s room. She will sweep out the chicken crut, smear the floor with cow dung to stay the dust and clean the cobwebs in the corners” (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 19). Cows eat grass and they produce cow dung as a by-product, other than serving as manure the cow dung may also be used for floors to get rid of dust in some homes, further reinforcing the interaction and interdependency of humanity and the environment.

Also, in the novel the land is seen to provide food, when people cultivate and grow different types of plants which in turn provide an assortment of food. For instance from *Waiting for the Rain* (1975), along Suka River, Betty “can hear the noise of some boys fishing” (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 37). Other than that, the environment additionally provides for the medicinal needs and sustenance of the humans. The medicines that were meant for Lucifer to carry overseas with him for protection, which he refuses to carry at the end of the novel, were also provided by nature. Again it confirms the dependence and connectivity to the environment that humans are. In *Waiting for the Rain* (1975), the Old Man says, “My own grandfather showed me the shrub. But it’s the bulb of that shrub that makes this medicine. It’s a cure for low spirits, severe pains, lack of energy – anything” (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 93), in other words the land holds the cure for anything. This conversation between Old Man and Garabha reflects on passing on of a people’s knowledge from generation to generation by word of mouth thereby drawing in the aspects of indigenous knowledge systems. Thus, despite the colonial context

in which they are, this scenario is more of a powerful statement to protest the severance of the people from their land.

Moreover, the environment cannot talk but it communicates by some kind of indication as a means of retaliation or acceptance. The reactions are what humans interpret for them to comprehend nature's response. Tongoona's wife, Raina, is described as an untidy woman who seems not to care about the environment that she lives in. Raina and Tongoona's sleep and sleeping environment is infested "...crossing the dangerous and lonely night-river of bugs, fleas, lice and the other not-so-easily-named things..." (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 8). In a way, the presence of the bugs and fleas and so forth, may be a signal from the environment that Raina is failing to reciprocate with the environment. The untidiness is further described when Tongoona remarks;

At least you could dust the room. Each time I have to sleep I must wade through a foot of dust, a jungle of rags, stumbling through a battle of pots, plates, spoons and what-not-else as if this were a kitchen, clawing my face trapped in spider-netting. Expect a body to live long. (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 8)

The untidiness is symbolic of the chaotic colonial imposition. The parasites may literary represent the colonisers whose presence exhibit distinctive features of the humiliation of the colonised, hence the parasites distressing Tongoona and Raina through every night.

The presentation of Raina's everyday untidiness and bedroom which are interior, juxtaposed to the way she prepares the room for Lucifer, say volumes about colonial infiltration. This may be interpreted as a way to show that Lucifer is being venerated as a figure of distinction by virtue of acquiring the white man's education. Comparing Lucifer to the elderly brother Garabha, it appears that the brothers have exchanged birth rites with Lucifer usurping his senior brother's position, which is all symptomatic of the extensive and exclusive functioning

of colonialism. Through Tongoona, revelations of such insignias are distinguished where he says “But, because I have appointed you Father of the Family, don’t you think that I am throwing Garabha out” (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 158).

The truth is that Garabha is considered as nondescript as he is not educated, and as such the father feels that Garabha deserves to be sacked. Even the Old Man is equally shocked as he says, “You want to disinherit the eldest son while he is still alive” (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 152). Tongoona goes further to comment on Garabha that, “He is only a fool and you will have to care for him until he dies” (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 158). Thus, the parents’ behaviours (Tongoona and Raina) are equally contaminated by colonialism and for that resolve to propelling the veneration of Lucifer.

Additionally, it can be further argued that the environment communicates with humans as the Old Man confirms that in the battle of the First Chimurenga, a number of people died and as such, “That year there was no rain” (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 115). The environment was probably retaliating to the uninviting actions done by human beings. The Old Man goes further to justify why the environment had but reacted thus as “The earth was angry with so much spilling of blood” (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 115). It may therefore be commented that the fighting that happened in the First Chimurenga did not conform to nature’s expectations of human beings. As such the humans were being punished as there were no rains and the Old Man confirms that, “We were hungry” (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 115). It can therefore be concluded that within Mungoshi’s setting nature does not approve of violence and for that it can punish humans through droughts and other forms of disasters hence nature can be an agent of destruction.

4.2.2 Pathetic fallacy in *Waiting for the Rain*

A number of environmental and weather elements are utilised to echo and intensify the

characters' states of the mind so as to establish their moods and for underscoring the rationale of the story in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975). As discussed earlier (see Chapter 2) of this study, pathetic fallacy is a literary device in which human emotions are attributed to aspects of nature such as the weather (Ackerman, 2015). In *Waiting for the Rain* (1975), the employment of pathetic fallacy promotes and endorses verisimilitude such that some readers can relate to the story through its characters. Pathetic fallacy therefore, allows the reader to think about how feelings and attitudes of characters may be influenced by aspects such as the weather and the environment.

The character Betty has an illusion that one may interpret to be consistent with her current life status, illuminating the intersection of her affairs as well as all the anxieties and dilemmas surrounding her. In the novel, Mungoshi (1975) says about the effect of the weather surrounding Betty, "The sun is hot. Not a wind blows" (p. 37). It seems things are not well for her such that it is expressed even through the heat of the sun. Had it been a case where at least the wind would be blowing then the blowing wind would provide some kind of therapy and relief from the heat. However, "not a wind blows", somehow relating to her problems being stagnant and that they seem not to have an immediate solution.

The heat makes Betty to create mental pictures that are not corresponding with the panorama that is ahead of her evident from the novel where Mungoshi (1975) says "Far in the West across the heat waves over the sweltering land are blue mountains. But their blueness is only imaginary – because Betty has often seen them blue" (p. 37). Subconsciously, Betty knows the mountains are always imaginarily blue but at this moment they are "hazy, mist-greyish, and their line against the sky seems to be always shifting. It appears to be moving up and down and then sometimes it isn't there at all" (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 37). The illusion may be linked to a disoriented life, in this case during the colonial times. There seems to be uncertainty in her life such that even the mountains she normally sees in their "imaginary

blue” have actually changed to “mist-greyish”. An element of instability may not possibly be ruled out as she fails to come to terms with the weather. For that “Betty stops to see whether the illusion is being caused by her own walking or by something outside her. She looks at them [mountains] so hard that her eyes begin to water” (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 37). Her life is in a mess to the extent of the environment complementing this through the illusions that Betty faces. Furthermore, her state of mind makes her see as if the mountains are moving. However “it is the beating of her own heart that is making the mountains pulse” (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 37).

Betty has been involved with a married man (the Agricultural Demonstrator) and she is probably pregnant. The turmoil that she is going through of that maybe she should have been married way back, could be the one revealed through the way the weather and the environment are playing with her emotions resulting in the illusions, thus affirming Ackerman’s (2015) explanation of pathetic fallacy. The harshness of the environment that is Manyene Tribal Trust Land, under the colonial yoke, to some extent also reflects the Agriculture Administrator and his wife’s predicament for “They have been seven years together and still no child” (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 42) hence the Agriculture Administrator resorting to cheating with Betty.

At times when people engage in heated debates, the atmosphere surrounding them becomes heated up with tension. The same scenario is witnessed in the novel when Lucifer arrives and meets some of his family members in the traditional African round kitchen hut (Mungoshi, 1975, pp. 45-50). The heated discussion about Betty and Garabha which involves Lucifer’s mother, father and the two grandmothers makes the room full of tension. Ironically, though they are under a cool thatched hut, the tension in that hut is unbearable as noted from *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) when Lucifer leaves the hut and observes that “it is hot outside but the atmosphere is a bit relaxed” (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 50). Thus, it may be argued that confusion

and commotion polemically stimulated by repressive systems like colonialism streamed into African people's social lives and resulted in division and permitted discord. Their lives have been disturbed to the extent of weather elements creating harsh discords and atmospheres that do not complement with their real life situations.

Sunsets may be associated with settling down of emotions, winding up of a day or the coming to an end of an epoch or event. However, in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) it appears that most of the examples indicating pathetic fallacy are somehow confusing and mixed up as they are not corresponding with the scenes attached to them, which may again be interpreted as revealing the chaotic nature of life during colonialism. It says from the novel "There is a knock. Lucifer looks up from the book he is reading. It is almost sunset. Again the knock." (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 50). The sunset may be deemed to mark the calming down of the tensions that had erupted particularly the time Lucifer had arrived, but the knock by Betty at Lucifer's door seems more like the continuity of the tensions, thus contradicting the "sun setting". Again it could be said that there is a mismatch between the pathetic fallacy of the sun setting and the plot of the story. This representational matrix may thus be a qualification in literary novels like *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) that serve to record and pronounce cultural and environmental ramifications of the colonised and their terrestrial.

Mungoshi creatively employs pathetic fallacy that provokes the reader's mental conception about a particular reference to generate meaning and perceive the disparity between the signified and the signifier. *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) illustrates this type of pathetic fallacy when the Old Man asks Garabha whether he really understood his brother Lucifer and he responds by saying "Oh, it is the usual thing with him [Lucifer], Sekuru. A lofty mountain, you know. And I only a fly in his milk" (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 109). The use of the phrase "lofty mountain" gives more information about how Garabha feels Lucifer perceives himself and him Garabha only being a "fly", a tiny creature in Lucifer's milk. The juxtaposition of a

high mountain versus a small fly soaked in milk provides more information on the differences between Lucifer and Garabha. Moreover, what is also evident is that, despite the fact that Garabha is not “educated” his language is richly flavoured with environmental influences and it reflects his link to the environment. The mountain, the fly and the milk are rich metaphors which speak to the environment he grew up in. A sense of revulsion is further expressed through how a fly spoils milk and in this case Garabha taking himself to be the fly that spoils the milk for Lucifer who is as big as a mountain.

4.2.3 Colonial education

Lucifer is the main character in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) from which the theme of colonial education most revolves around. Colonial education like any other colonial subsidiaries had no virtuous purpose on the black people (the colonised). In fact, colonial education was a tool of colonisation (Falola, 2007). Lucifer may be deemed a victim of colonial education through his characterisation in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975), especially when one considers his interpretation of the environment around him.

One of the most outstanding character traits of Lucifer is his disgust towards Manyene Tribal Trust Land. This is evidenced when he says;

What is here that’s worth loving? What is here – in this scrub, in this arid flatness, in this sun-bleached dust to love? You go for mile after mile in this swelter and not here, not there, not anywhere is there a tree big enough to sit under. And when you look everywhere all you see is the naked white earth criss-crossed by the eternal shadow of the restless vulture. I have been born here but is that a crime? (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 162)

The way Lucifer describes Manyene Tribal Trust Land is factual in a way, considering that the deplorable state of the area was as a result of colonialism, and the indictment is permissible. However the irony is that Lucifer seems not to be aware that it is the same system of colonialism that is generating the ugliness of Manyene Tribal Trust Land and the same system that is gradually but essentially isolating him from his people and home. Like a stranger, Lucifer sees no good in his village. This could be a critical juncture as it reflects on how colonialism impacted on both the environment and the colonised people. It is through the capacity of literary representation that colonialism is exposed as a significant contributor to environmental degradation and the manipulation of the Africans by exposing them to some kind of colonial education which makes them to detest their own places of origin that is, their homes. Lucifer's factual description is correct but his education does not allow him to see that Manyene Tribal Trust Land is an unnatural colonial creation and thus he cannot be an agent for change; he runs to the creators of Manyene Tribal Trust Land.

Hrituleac (2011) and Mart (2011) also argue that colonial education was put in place to separate and isolate the Africans from their family. And separation and isolation are what is reflecting in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) through Lucifer. The colonial education that must civilise Africans and must upgrade them appears to be a different and farfetched idea as presented through Lucifer. Lucifer's "bedroom is the one set farthest from the rest of the other buildings" (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 52) and this at a symbolical level indicates the rift naissance between Lucifer and his family. The physical set up of the homestead alludes to the reality within the Mandengu homestead. Thus the literary representation of the environment may foreground and give a philosophical rationalisation of reality on the ground. The literal fact that Lucifer and chickens would take turns to use the room which is distant from other structures in the homestead may underpin the fact that Lucifer is literary separated from his kin and lives with aliens (chickens that are non kin to him).

Moreover, in Chapter 18 of *Waiting for the Rain* (1975), Old Japi asks Lucifer, “How can you lock yourself up in your room like this on your first day at home?” (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 53). Lucifer’s family members are also feeling the distance that is now germinating between them and Lucifer. Such behaviour from Lucifer is an indicator to some of the gauges of the colonial education now yielding dynamic operations of its power, giving it form and contours. Thus, colonial education has the potential to initiate isolation and it may lock up its victims such that Lucifer feels like an outcast though within reach of his intimate family members. And such actions as manifesting through Lucifer validate Woolman’s (2001) contention that western education in African conditions was a process of psychological de-ruralisation. Somehow Lucifer is no longer comfortable with his rural home and to a greater extent he feels ashamed of his roots as mentioned earlier on by Hrituleac (2011). For that Lucifer may be deemed a deformed element of the colonised.

Lucifer, a victim of colonial education is now characterised by mocking his own identity and self-repudiation. Thus, qualities of *mwana wevhu* (son of the soil) have been stripped off Lucifer resulting in him being transplanted and uprooted from his land of origin hence he becomes rootless. However, “... he can never seem to completely dig up and cut the roots that plant him in the earth of this dark arid country” (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 52). Of course with his education he feels he can change everything. Lucifer seemingly overlooks aspects such as one’s past and history that may never be revised and altered. Similarly, pragmatic matters such as biological parents are out of question as parents may never be chosen, neither can they be changed. Though factual as it stands, Lucifer insists that, “That is only a biological and geographical error. I can change that” (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 162). Lucifer’s persistence may be viewed as a sign of victory on the side of colonialism over him. He fails to comprehend that the blood that runs in him belongs to the Mandengus. Garabha observes that, “He [Lucifer] is wrong somehow” (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 110) and the Old Man would

conclude that Lucifer is “playing somebody’s drum”. Since Lucifer seems to be more adamant and not willing to be part of his family, the Old Man comments thus “Forget it and forget him. He is no longer ours” (Mungoshi, p. 110). This may be a signal to family disintegration. Due to the state that the environment has turned out to be, Lucifer has developed hatred towards it and at the same time not interested in his family members and the surrounding environment. The state of the environment in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) is a result of colonial forces which have ripple effects of stretching their tentacles into the social lives of its victims resulting in problems such as family disintegration.

In the poem that Lucifer writes in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975, p. 57), he expresses his intimate thoughts on what he sees at his home and he still denies himself home as reflected in his poetry. The poem describes the appearance of the home as if it is “an aftermath of an invisible war”. The environment reflects a devastated site where there is no hope of existence as there is only “dust and rubble”. Furthermore hopes of life have been shattered as “The sharp-nosed vulture” already senses the availability of flesh “carrion” of dead bodies killed in the war. The poem has nothing positive to talk about home but something just gloomy and lifeless. Furthermore, Lucifer describes that the “ancient woman’s skirts/ gives an odour of trapped time”. This may not be the most appropriate way of describing a woman especially when one has to think that women give birth and Lucifer himself is a product of a woman. Lucifer has, through his poem and other actions in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975), proved that colonial education contributes to a greater extent towards the mental derailment of its victims. Particularly arresting in the poem is once again the sense of alienation which is evidenced in Lucifer and how he distances himself even through his art.

To complement his despondent poem, underneath it Lucifer artistically sketches a picture that completes his abhorrence and resentment towards his home, the place he prefers to escape. Mungoshi (1975) thus describes the sketch as;

Underneath this [poem] he draws a string of people in different postures of wailing, following a huge-wheeled cart drawn by emaciated oxen, and encompassing them all- but beyond them- the blood-red setting sun with a dark monster's-mouth centre. (p. 53).

The drawing may attract numerous interpretations. It appears Lucifer is grappling with the articulation of his unwarranted repudiation of self and thus vents it out through his artistic prowess. The picture may mean some form of lamentation denoted by “a string of people in different postures of wailing”. In other words, the impetus of producing such coarse art has its roots in the type of education that Lucifer got exposed to and it points to colonialism as the provenance. Even the description of nature in the poem reflects the lack of harmony between humanity and the environment. The setting of the sun may be symbolic of the settling of problems from a pathetic fallacy perspective, but the sun in the drawing is kind of fuelling the bereavement of the people. It may therefore be commented that the cruelties packaged in colonialism include the literal massacre of the brain of its victims.

In *Lucifer*, there seems to be a minimal understanding of what it now means to be an African. He had a thorough understanding of the land that he grew in as he says “I know all this land like the back of my hand” (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 161). However the complexity lies in that the kind of education that he acquired provides incisive transformation from what may be perceived as the uncorrupted visible African to some kind of desolation and invisibility. Thus Lucifer attests that “I don't like the look of this land at all” (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 161). Such renunciation illustrates the magnitude of the influence of colonial education. In its entirety, it aspires in detaching its victims from their land and family. Thus Lucifer has the audacity to refer to his home land as “the failure's junk heap” (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 162), a sense of detachment engendered by colonial education. Furthermore, to reinforce his notion that is

totally eclipsed by the type of education he got, Lucifer seems desperate to amend everything that links him to his home and roots. Without remorse or anything to dread, Lucifer states that;

I am Lucifer Mandengu. I was born here against my will. I should have been born elsewhere - of some other parents. I have never liked it here, and I never shall and if ever I leave this place, I am not going to come back. (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 162)

Lucifer's words in the above quotation characterise one who is alienated and detached from family and home. Lucifer has no identity and sense of belonging, all of which were stripped by the colonial education that he received. What disturbs most is the dramatic irony exhibited in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975). Tongoona has entrusted his inheritance on Lucifer while the rightful beneficiary is still alive, yet Lucifer has no intentions of returning to what he refers to as "the failure's junk heap". Whether it is out of ignorance or it is deliberate on the part of Tongoona, like colonialism he incites family disintegration.

4.1.4 Family disintegration

Colonialism takes different facets in its operations and affects the environment and the social lives of its victims. Other than transplanting and dispossessing the Africans from their land, colonialism also attacked the family unit set up. The use of environmental metaphors in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) reset the reader's way of thinking and motivates for a deeper assessment about the effects that colonialism brought about. Because of the colonial situation the Mandengu family are in, the Old Man feels "an itch, an uneasiness" (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 7) about the future of the family, and that is worrying him. However, Mungoshi employs a powerful metaphor to express how the Old Man tries to disconnect from that thought of the family degenerating, "Without another word the Old Man leaves thinking: Yes. At dusk is just a story round the fire. But quickly, he shakes that thought off like a tree shakes off a

withered leaf” (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 7). The thought is suddenly dropped off just as a tree discards a leaf. However, a further illustration is given on how that discarded leaf ends “But just like the leaf, the thought drops on a heap of other thousands of rotting leaves on the ground at the foot of the tree” (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 7). This kind of illustration stimulates a kind of realisation of what it signifies when a thought that is abstract in nature is paralleled to a leaf that is visible and commonly known.

Decomposing leaves are bound to produce a smell and with the illustration Mungoshi further says;

...and the smell isn't unlike the smell of those thoughts the Old Man has been pushing back into the background of his consciousness all his life - more so now with the coming of old age and the threat of the Family's disintegration. And now the smell seems to be coming from one concentrated point: Tongoona, his son. (Mungoshi, p. 7)

The now rotting leaves may be interpreted to reflect on the problems that the Old Man has been encountering and were just accumulating. Now the smell of the rotting leaves is no longer within the Old Man himself, but now the smell of worry is that the family will face collapse as Tongoona seems to be a catalogued failure. The Old Man can read and interpret that the situation they are currently in is masterminded and requires a family head of a resilient calibre unlike that of Tongoona.

Another example from *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) that illustrates that colonialism by extension generated family disintegration is where “Paul is being locked up” (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 69) and apparently “his [Paul's] five children exiling themselves in Zambia” (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 69). Uncle Kuruku stays in Bulawayo, quite a distance away from home. And now Lucifer is about to leave home for overseas. Thus the Mandengu family unit has been infected by the colonial virus that specialises in breaking up families. Also Tongoona's

move of disinheriting Garabha in favour of Lucifer (an issue discussed already in section 4.2.3 Colonial education) is in a way creating problematic filial relationships and encouraging family disintegration.

4.2.5 Induction and ramification of colonialism in *Waiting for the Rain*

Waiting for the Rain (1975) is a novel that attests to life's disrupting setbacks instigated by colonialism and its subsidiaries. Mungoshi's deft integration of the environment aids in articulating the subsequent realisations of colonialism. *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) may be described as a kind of dystopia as highlighted by Baccolini (2004), that it is actually a negative utopia where dehumanisation and poverty are ubiquitous. However it has to be borne in mind that the dystopian feature of *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) is routed and anchored in colonialism and expressed through the use of metaphors pertaining to the environment.

The effects of colonialism are even felt in almost all spheres of life and they can intrude into the victims' dreams just like the distress in the Old Man's dream (as discussed in section 4.1.2 Man and the environment in *Waiting for the Rain* of this study). The apt ability of literature to capture and expose those qualitative and intricate features affiliated to colonialism aid in realising the impact of colonialism as well as in comprehending the novel deeply.

Colonialism impacted on the social life and way of thinking of the colonised people. In *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) such disruptive change is discernable and noted through the way the characters converse. The language itself is immensely influenced such that even in the act of pacifying children grains of colonialism are assertive. This is noted when Lucifer says to his younger brothers;

Grown up as you are. I won't take you on the bus to Salisbury to see the cars and the shops and ride the big wheel at Lunar Park. And there won't be any sweets or biscuits or shoes or any nice clothes for any cry-babies. (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 113)

Such words have power that is anchored in colonialism forcing one to think on the retooled language and culture, since language and culture are compatibles. It promotes black invisibility and promotes the coloniser's ways to the fore. The Old Man is able to ascertain the presence of a problem by questioning the way Lucifer tries to pacify the little ones where he says "Well, what do you think of that? This new language - this new way of pacifying crying children" (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 113). The Old Man is concerned as this is an indication of the ailing and eventual death of their culture, language and identity hence he talks about "playing someone else's drum".

The Old Man can see that their life is changing as they are moving away from their traditional African language, culture and ways of life. He makes a comparison of how the differences come to be where he says, "In our day, our parents frightened us with threats of monsters that would come and eat us. Today the child stops crying with promises of the new life: sweets and biscuits" (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 113). In a way, the Old Man's salient observation denotes the dynamic operations of colonialism.

Similarly to ascertain the dynamism in colonialism, the Old Man highlights some of the indications that are following colonialism and how they are extending to almost all avenues of the African people's ways of life. For instance the Old Man says, "Each time my wife Japi take in a handful of sugar, I know how complete and final the white man's conquest has been" (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 115). That craving for sugar may be suggesting the infiltration and perpetual settling of colonialism in the African people, and again it is an indication of

“playing an enemy’s drum”. This includes the radio that John brought for Lucifer for his farewell and other material things that are deeply rooted in colonialist establishments.

Furthermore, the refusal of Lucifer to carry traditional medicine meant to “to protect” him when he goes overseas is another example of how colonialism infiltrates in almost all facets of the colonised people’s life. One of the unnamed characters in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) comments on how people like Lucifer no longer take their culture and traditions seriously and says, “That was wrong. You should have given him some pills. You will never get these educated children drinking any roots” (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 121). This comment was passed after Lucifer was said to have been attacked by a headache and one of the grandmothers had prepared traditional medicine which Lucifer refused to take. Again the preference of pills to traditional medicine is as good as “playing someone else’s drum”.

The constant reference to the drum by the Old Man is a deep metaphor and when he says “playing someone else’s drum” there is much to be desired as the statement gives away the complete meaning of *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) in just a few words. The few words encapsulate the literary meaning, that of moving away from one’s specificity by embracing others’ way of life. This then results in ambivalence and jeopardising of one’s own culture and tradition.

4.2.6 Cultural viewpoints in *Waiting for the Rain*

Waiting for the Rain (1975) is a novel that may be considered as a representational matrix for a veritable form of cultural expression for a certain cluster of African people. Traditional cultural practices and religion reflect the values and beliefs held by members in African communities. The advent of colonialism particularly altered some of the African traditions and culture. In *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) the presence of Matandangoma as a medium, exhibit distinctive traits of this African group. Matandangoma plays the role of connecting

the natural world and the spiritual world, where it is believed the ancestors occupy. Lucifer intends to travel abroad and thus the Mandengu family found it necessary to consult the ancestors about the journey, as a tradition and part of the Mandengu family's culture as it promotes self-definition following their own conventions.

Matandangoma, as a medium, foresees the future of Lucifer and says;

I see here many white people talking to the boy. What they are saying, I don't understand. But they are laughing with him yet he does not laugh. He is only pretending to be laughing with them, not to offend, but there is a black veil over his face. He is not happy. (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 137)

The advantage of accessing the spiritual world helps this group of African people to plan ahead and prevent catastrophes that are or may be preventable. Already from what Matandangoma sees in the future of Lucifer with regard to where he is going, there is no happiness because he does not belong to that people and to that land as well. It becomes ironic that Lucifer hates the place and people where he naturally belongs and is trying to escape to a foreign land whose people will never accept him and the land is foreign to him as well.

Matandangoma goes further to reveal that "The white people invite the boy to their houses. They eat and drink with him, yet he is not with them. Still the black veil..." (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 137). The black veil referred to may be interpreted as the feeling of "twoness" (Du Bois, 1903), where Lucifer has "this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of other" (Du Bois, 1903, p. 3).

Once more the influence of the supernatural is mentioned when it is suspected that Kutsvaka, a neighbour to the Mandengu family is a wizard. It is out of jealousy that Kutsvaka is said to

be bewitching the Mandengu people. Old Mandisa confirms that “We went to Matandangoma – the medicine woman – and she said that it was Kutsvaka -” (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 55). Kutsvaka’s witchcraft activities resulted in Sekai having a paralysed hand and Lucifer’s mother having a terrible headache after they had encountered a black snake at the well. Thus the situation concurs with Berhend’s (2007) observation that witchcraft does not only reflect on social tensions and conflicts but actually is considered an intensifier of all enmities and terrors in a community.

The enigma surfaces when Lucifer paradoxically asks “What was the snake for?” (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 55). That question from Lucifer may be interpreted as an indication of how colonialism distorted some of the African beliefs and philosophies. The way the family reacted to Lucifer’s question where it says “All of them, with the exception of the Old Man, look at him and Betty pulls a face on him as if he were a baby with a runny nose” (Mungoshi, 1975, p. 55), also questions Lucifer’s sincerity. Such actions may be deemed as distinctive features authenticating the infiltration of colonialism on the African people’s life and how it ruthlessly dictated downright their social lives.

The presence of Matandangoma and Kutsvaka, in a way verifies Mbiti’s (1990) assertion that mystical powers can be designated as positive and negative, as well as Tremblay’s (2007) Manichean dichotomy applicable to any polarising traits. Thus Matandangoma represents the virtuous and positive, whereas Kutsvaka is for the evil and negative, since both sources tap their powers from the supernatural, which is part of nature.

All in all, it can be argued that Mungoshi’s *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) is a novel that touches on aspects involving human beings and the environment. Thus, Veit-Wild (1993) comments that Mungoshi “has excelled in penetrating social reality through the most minute observations and intricate analysis” (p. 268). The novel exposes how some human actions

contribute to the destruction of the environment and also how some human synthesised conditions such as colonialism affect other human beings as well as the environment. Simply put “he clothes simple truth in a simple sentence” (Veit-Wild, 1993, p. 274). Mungoshi’s use of metaphors of the weather and the environment helps in exposing the cruelties attached to colonialism and how other themes such as family disintegration and alienation have their roots in colonialism.

4.3 *The Grass is Singing* – Summary

The novel, takes the form of a flashback, which particularises the crumbling of the lives of Dick and Mary Turner, white farmers struggling on a farm in Rhodesia. The novel highlights themes relating to the impact of colonialism on both black and white people. The novel opens with a scene which describes events and circumstances following the discovery of the body of Mary Turner, dead on her own veranda. The alleged murderer, Moses, surrenders himself to the police and instantly mental disintegration in Dick is noticed. Through the flashback, the novel provides the life background of Mary Turner, her childhood with an abusive and troubled mother and how she moved to the city then eventually meeting Dick Turner and marrying him. Mary soon realises that marriage did not even fit in the prospects she had as Dick proved to be useless both in the home and on the farm. Mary has sour relations with the black labourers, in the home and in the fields. Also because of pride she fails to establish any kind of friendship with her neighbours, Charlie Slatter and his wife, who also stopped attempting to be friendly. As time goes by Mary’s life condition progressively and intensely deteriorates, to the extent that she even attempts to leave the farm to return to her life in the city. Unfortunately the city had moved on without her, and it could not accommodate her anymore. She has no other choice other than to return to her marriage and stay on the farm. Life does not change for the better and soon Mary falls into a kind of condition and ends up having a kind of relationship with Moses the houseboy which was considered as taboo

amongst the white society during that time. The same Moses is the one who eventually kills Mary the night before she and Dick leave for their holiday.

4.3.1 Man and the environment in *The Grass is Singing*

In *The Grass is Singing* (1950), reference is instantly made that attests to the existence of a relationship between man and the environment. The coming of colonial settlers to Rhodesia, who established as farmers, is an indication on how humanity interacts with the environment, though colonialism was not really for the development and care of the Rhodesian lands. The construction of settler networking defaced the appearance of the Rhodesian terrain probably disturbing the natural environment and its ecosystem, evident from the novel where it says;

As the railway lines spread and knotted and ramified all over Southern Rhodesia, along them, at short distances of a few miles, sprang up little dorps that to a traveller appear as insignificant clusters of ugly buildings but which are the centres of farming districts perhaps a couple of hundred miles across. They contain the station building, the post office, sometimes a hotel, but always a store. (Lessing, 1950, p. 36)

The infrastructure mentioned in the above quotation may be what Hriteulic (2011) has commented as a facility that necessitated the profitability of the whole colonisation venture, as the motive behind colonisation was hinged on exploitation of natural resources in Africa. The establishment of these centres meant cutting down of trees and paving way for the rail and road networks. It may have been a good idea in terms of development but it was detrimental to the environment. Thus, human actions are responsible for environmental degradation.

Other than that, the white farmers probably had a deficiency in caring for the environment observed as they propelled the colonial agenda with diligence. On the huge chunks of land

that they designated to themselves through the Land Apportionment Act of 1931 which instigated segregation (as mentioned already by Magaisa, 2010; Raftopoulos & Mlambo, 2009 and Bhebe, 1989), there was malpractice seen through their operations. On those farms land degrading activities were evident as presented when Lessing (1950) notes that, “Mr Slatter’s farm had hardly any trees left on it” (p. 98). It could be that when Mr Slatter first came to the farm, the land had trees on it and the place was probably environmentally healthy, however the exploitative farming methods resulted in it being “a monument for farming malpractices, with great gullies cutting through it, with acres of good dark earth gone dead from misuse” (Lessing 1950, p. 98).

The Slatter farm may be a replica to The Hampshire Estates in *Waiting for the Rain* (1950), in which Mungoshi (1975) just contemplates on the outside appearance leaving much to be desired whilst other writers like Lessing (1950) deliberates on the expositions of what really transpires on those farms. However, the white farmers like Slatter “made the money, that was the thing” (Lessing, 1950, p. 98). In other words, the purpose of the white farmers was fulfilled as their mission was on exploitation and none about the welfare of the environment. Therefore, Lessing (1950) subtly attacks colonialism by not pointing to it directly but rather using characters such as Slatter in *The Grass is Singing* (1950) to bring out the environmental concerns.

4.3.2 *The Grass is Singing* as a plaasroman

The Grass is Singing (1950) is a testament of how colonial white settlers lived on the lands that they had colonised. These lands were referred to as farms and mostly Afrikaans literary works with plots and settings revolving around the farm during apartheid era in South Africa are known as plaasroman (Di Laurea, 2013). This research has considered apartheid and colonialism as twins; they are separate but allied as they both relay subjugation and

discrimination. The characteristics of an Afrikaans plaasroman are the same as those that are also conveyed in *The Grass is Singing* (1950) though it is written in English. It is on this basis that this research considers *The Grass is Singing* (1950) to qualify for the plaasroman genre.

On the farms, it appears life was not always that rosy and glamorous as reflected through *The Grass is Singing* (1950). Some of the white farmers equally suffered just like the black people they had humiliated through colonialism. Poverty is one of the elements that prevailed on some of these white settlers as experienced through the lives of Dick and Mary Turner on their farm and thus they were often referred to as “poor whites” (Lessing, 1950, p. 11), though only that was missing “were a drove of children to make them poor whites” (Lessing, 1950, p. 11). The phrase “poor whites” is connoted from the impoverished life that the Turners lived. Their own house at the farm was a disgrace to the white community and Lessing (1950) notes that, “Why, some natives (though not many, thank heavens) had houses as good; and it would give them a bad impression to see white people living in such a way” (p. 11). In other words such a dilapidated structure or home that the Turners lived in was considered suitable suppose black people were staying there not the white race.

Another characteristic of a plaasroman is violence that includes the cold murder of Mary Turner that took place at the farm. The use of the term “murdered” (Lessing, 1950, p. 1) concurs with Fick’s (2014) comment on the term ‘farm murder’ that it was used exclusively to designate the murder of ‘white farmers’ (Mary) by ‘black intruders’ (Moses). The death of Mary may by extension be expressive of the brutality of colonialism. Also making Mary a victim in a way reveals that colonialism in totality, lacks selectivity as both the victimiser and the victims are both fatalities of colonialism’s operations.

Fick (2014) highlighted this issue of violence by explaining that there were different genres of violence such as firstly the violence of taming the natural landscape, which requires rooting out the indigenous flora and fauna. In *The Grass is Singing* (1950), an example could be the farming malpractices done by Slatter which include deforestation due to excessive cutting down of trees and the resultant gullies cutting across his farm. Therefore, Lessing (1950) establishes the kind of human being who is insensitive to the environment by having a character like Slatter who does not care about the environment and even the future itself.

Secondly is the violence inside families isolated on such farms; the violence of conflicts between employers, whether by the white owners or the black labourers. The violence that is depicted between Mary Turner and the houseboys, that are constantly hired and fired, also reveal the other ugly side of the farm house life, that it is not as tasty as it looks. Also the symbolism and use of the “whip” (Lessing, 1950, p. 146) suggests overtones of the continuation of slavery and slavery is preeminent of numerous forms of violence as well.

After Moses had spoken to Mary in English that he only wanted water to drink, she did not take it lightly that a native would speak to her in English. Strands of confusion in Mary can be picked as earlier on she had disregarded the native to speak in his native language which she referred to as “gibberish” (Lessing, 1950, p. 146). The confusion is now on how she expects the native to communicate when she refuses the native speaking in “gibberish” and neither in the English language. This is evidenced when the novel reveals that: “But most white people think it is ‘cheek’ if a native speaks in English. She said, breathless with anger, ‘Don’t speak in English to me’” (Lessing, 1950, p. 146). Mary now as a representation for colonialism and by exhibiting such traits of violence, she may on the other hand be regarded as a victim of her own circumstances. It sounds ironic that she can stand up and conquer the natives as; “Involuntarily she lifted her whip and brought it down across his face in a vicious

swinging blow” (Lessing, 1950, p. 146), but at the same time she fails to stand up, control and conquer her own personal problems that eventually lead her to her demise.

Moreover, the violence against the non-human animals on farms is also exhibited through Mary as she was slowly losing her senses as “she was letting everything slide, except what was forced on her attention” (Lessing, 1950, p. 183). However she forgot about the chicken project that she was running “as the chickens began to die” (Lessing, 1950, p. 183). Her mind deterioration had a number of contributory factors such as natural hatred of the farm life, her marriage was not an ideal one and life itself was somehow a bit unfair on her. Mary tried to figure out what was causing the death of her chickens and “she murmured something about disease” (Lessing, 1950, p. 183), and she only realised later that “she had forgotten to feed them for a week” (Lessing, 1950, p. 183). This shows how different forms of violence and problems feed into each other and ultimately taking control of an individual as exhibited in Mary’s kind of life that she was eventually leading at the farm. From this, it appears Mary has been struggling to come to terms with nature; she is failing to give back to nature to complete the cycle of complementarity that exists between human beings and nature.

Thus, *The Grass is Singing* (1950) as a plaasroman provides insight into the peculiarities of the life of white farmers on farms during the epoch of colonial repression. Thus the plaasroman adopts a form dystopia, that Baccolini (2004) notes as characterised by a community/society that is in some way undesirable or frightening; where traits such as dehumanisation, poverty, political repression and societal collapse are evident, and where humanity suffers from a lack of true freedom and liberty. Such actions instigated by colonialism actually find their way into environmental issues since violence it is not only violence on human beings but is also possible on the environment.

4.3.3 Pathetic fallacy in *The Grass is Singing*

In *The Grass is Singing* (1950) the employment of pathetic fallacy is pronounced through the use of nature elements which are blended with the plot, setting and characterisation. When the colonisers came to Africa, they had to adjust accordingly in order to be well-suited with the African weather conditions. From the way the African environment is presented in *The Grass is Singing* (1950), it appears that it turns humans into some kind of leathery since “A few months, and the sensitive, decent young man [for instance, Tony Marston], had coarsened to suit the hard, arid, sun-drenched country that they had come to” (Lessing, 1950, p. 21). The weather did not only metamorphose their physical appearance, by extension “they had grown a new manner to match their thickened sunburnt limbs and toughened bodies” (Lessing, 1950, p. 21). The threatening Africa weather contributed to the literal transfiguration of the white farmers when they came to Africa.

The first time Mary arrives at the farm it was in the night and “the moon had gone behind a great luminous cloud and it was suddenly very dark – miles of darkness under a dimly star lit sky” (Lessing, 1950, p. 62). She is welcomed by the darkness, and the darkness may probably allude to something related to her life. It could be that the life she is going into at the farm is drenched in gloominess and despondency for “she had no idea of the life she had to lead” (Lessing, 1950, p. 62). The moon reappeared as it “slowly slid out from behind the cloud and drenched the clearing with brilliance” (Lessing, 1950, p. 62). The reappearance may signify hope, but the hope is meagre since the lighting of the moon is not as powerful and operative as contrasted to that of the sun. Besides, Mary experienced an acridly inferior life at the farm. As a new person on the farm she experienced a new life and appreciated nature though it looked eccentric, as it is revealed in *The Grass is Singing* that;

But she shaded her eyes and gazed across the vleis finding it strange and lovely with

its dull green foliage, the endless expanse of tawny grass shining gold in the sun and the vivid arching blue sky. And there was a chorus of birds, a shrilling and cascading of sound such as she had not heard before. (Lessing, 1950, p. 69)

Though the African environment may be that which is described in such novels as *King Solomon's Mines* (1985) and *Heart of Darkness* (1902), there are some instances when the white people are just frank and honest and present Africa in the way it should be. In this case Mary's appreciation of nature is an indication that the African environment even to the white people is not all that brutal after all. This may be linked to the foreboding of the meagre hope that may have been represented by the reappearance of the moon the first time she arrived at the farm.

When life was now taking shape and conforming to how it should be, the bitterness in Mary became symptomatic. She started having problems with the "houseboys" and at some point exchanged words with Dick after she had confronted a houseboy over a dirty bath tub. After that incident Lessing (1950) notes that, "Then she began to picture herself walking there up and down in the darkness, with the hated bush all around her, outside that pigsty he called a house" (p. 97). What Mary was thinking has reflections on the environment, "the hated bush" is the environment that surrounds their house which she thinks is equivalent to "a pigsty". This may be viewed to infer that the house they were living in may not have been the ideal for human dwelling, especially to them as white people. Also, the tension that developed after this incident "lasted for an intolerable week" (Lessing, 1950, p. 97) and with the hot weather it became even tenser, thus the atmospheric heat imitated the growing tension between Mary and Dick. Then "at last the rains fell, and the air grew cool and relaxed" (Lessing, p. 97). Thus the falling of the rain washed and soaked and soothed the tension that was between Dick and Mary and they continued with life "as if it had not happened" (Lessing, 1950, p.

97). Thus, the falling of the rains provided that pacifying and soothing effect on Dick and Mary.

Winter in Rhodesia, “was the time of the year Mary liked best” (Lessing, 1950, p. 127). Thus the coldness impacted on her life as “the coolness gave her back some of her vitality” (Lessing, 1950, p. 127). Mary had suffered under the African summer where the sun would be a threat to the colonisers. Lessing (1950) goes further to say that “she was tired, yes, but it was not unbearable; she clutched at the cold months as if they were a shield to ward off the dreaded listlessness of the heat that would follow” (Lessing, 1950, p. 127). Of course during winter, the African sun would be there but “held no menace” (Lessing, 1950, p. 127); meaning that it was harmless and that it was not comparable to “the sun of October, that insidiously sapped from within” (Lessing, 1950, pp. 127-128).

The winter, for Mary, is entwined with therapeutic properties and as such “there was a lift in the air, exhilaration” (Lessing, 1950, p. 128) which in succession brought happiness to Mary as she “felt healed - almost” (Lessing, 1950, p. 128). The restorative power in nature is eminent as noted from the novel where it reads, “Almost she became as she had been, brisk, energetic but with caution in her face and in her movements that showed she had not forgotten the heat would return” (Lessing, 1950, p. 127). One is bound to contemplate on the abstract relationship that exists between humanity and nature as it reflects and amplifies on a character’s mood and feelings.

Thus, Mary confirms Ackerman’s (2015) observation that by tuning into specific weather conditions, a character may feel safe, or off balance, therefore weather can work for or against a character, creating conflict, tension, and it be used to foreshadow that something is about to happen. For that Mary seems to be driven by instincts such that “She tenderly

submitted herself to this miraculous three months of winter, when the country was purified of its menace” (Lessing, 1950, p. 128).

The shift in season directly impacted on Mary’s life in totality, the changes in her life reciprocated with the changes that were going on to the environment that is surrounding her. From *The Grass is Singing*; “Even the veld looked different, flaming for a few brief weeks into red and gold and russet, before the trees became solid masses of heavy green” (Lessing, 1950, p. 128). The beauty and enigma of nature lies in its omnipotence of transforming both humanity and the environment by just a shift in weather. For Mary, the shift into winter “send a tingle of vitality into her” (Lessing, 1950, p. 128), and at the same time modified the appearance of the environment. For Mary it seems “it was *her* winter” because of the good feelings that the winter weather conveyed to her.

Other than the weather elements, pathetic fallacy may also incorporate other natural elements in order to create vivid mental pictures of what the writer may be trying to express. In *The Grass is Singing* (1950), in the shop “The children hung to their mothers’ backs (like monkeys, Mary thought)” (Lessing, 1950, p. 117). The description of the humans (the mothers and their babies) is likened to that of animals (monkeys and their babies), this may be interpreted to mean that people like Mary are blind in seeing the humanness in black people as they are to her, more or less than monkeys. Through this form of pathetic fallacy it is easier to note the natural feeling of hatred that Mary has towards black women. Through pathetic fallacy the reader is able to identify the feelings and attitude of a character.

4.3.4 Master/servant relationships in *The Grass is Singing*

The theme of master/servant relationship is presented in *The Grass is Singing* (1950) exposing some of the unsayables that shock the readers and goes beyond their expectations. The master is always the white person with the servant being the black person, fulfilling the

hierarchy of colonial settings. Mary had to change a number of houseboys including Samson and a number of other unnamed servants when she started staying at the farm. She had difficulties with the management of the servants as “she had never come into contact with natives before, as an employer on her own account” (Lessing, 1950, p. 70). When she was growing up, “Her mother’s servants she had been forbidden to talk to” (Lessing, 1950, p. 70) which was common as that was how “every woman in South Africa is brought up to be” (Lessing, 1950, p. 70). Also, as a caution, the white young women were “forbidden to walk alone” (Lessing, 1950, p. 70) as the black people “were nasty and might do horrible things to her” (Lessing, 1950, p. 70). The approach in a way sets a clear demarcation between the white and black races. But it becomes ironic in that, the white people desperately needed black people’s services, in the homes and in the fields yet colonialism propagated and endorsed segregation.

Mary as the master had an upper hand, even on physically stronger men, by virtue of her skin colour. Her cruelty and toughness radiated through her actions and attitudes towards the houseboys. In an incident in *The Grass is Singing*, she had the houseboy to scrub the bath tub from morning until around “half past three” (Lessing, 1950, p. 89) in the afternoon and the houseboy excused himself “that he was going to his hut for some food and will go in with the bath when he came back” (Lessing, 1950, p. 89). This may be a sign of being inhumane and insensitive to the black person who is a helper as “she had forgotten about his food” (Lessing, 1950, p. 89).

Furthermore, Mary shows arrogance and negligence for “she never thought of natives as people who had to eat or sleep” (Lessing, 1950, p. 89). Thus, Mary has been conditioned by colonialism to the extent that those attributes that delineate humans have been destroyed in her. She even “nodded feeling guilty” (Lessing, 1950, p. 89) but still she had to find a way to justify her actions where it says “then she smothered her guilt, thinking, ‘it’s his fault for not

keeping it properly clean in the first place” (Lessing, 1950, p. 89). It may therefore be remarked that, colonialism does not only impact on the colonised, the colonisers are equally affected as humane juices that delineate humans from other creatures are sapped out of them.

Mary was not good with the servants, even those in the fields, compared to how Dick was with them. Dick comments that, “She [Mary] was so bad with natives” (Lessing, 1950, p. 137). Mary’s ranking together with the “sambok” (Lessing, 1950, p. 133) instilled “more confidence” in her when she went to the compound after Dick had fallen ill. Due to the powers vested in her she commands “Get the boys on the lands in ten minutes” (Lessing, 1950, p. 135). She expresses her true character when she talks to herself about “filthy savages”, a term that dehumanises the black people as well as belittling adult men by referring to them as “boys”. As a cruel master, she felt her authority over such a huge crowd overpowering them that “the sensation of being boss over perhaps eighty black workers gave her new confidence; it was a good feeling, keeping them under her will, making them do as she wanted” (Lessing, 1950, p. 138). It becomes interesting and sad at the same time that Mary is able to control these natives yet she fails again to control herself and that failure leads to her downfall.

Other than the discussed threatening and hostile dark side of Mary, *The Grass is Singing* (1950) is full of surprises when it exposes yet another controversial issue where the master/servant relationship is more of a recounting of Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet* (2009). This happened with Mary’s last servant, Moses, though “she kept him working as long as she could, relentless over every speck of dust and every misplaced glass or plate – that she noticed” (Lessing, 1950, p. 182), it may thus be mentioned that she was attracted to Moses.

When Moses gave notice to leave, Mary reacted showing panic all over as evident from *The Grass is Singing* (1950) “‘You mustn’t go!’ and she wept on, repeating over and over again, ‘You must stay! You must stay!’ and all the time she was filled with shame and mortification because he [Moses] was seeing her cry” (Lessing, 1950, p. 186). For that, Moses responds with an affectionate gesture, he took a glass filled with some water and “He held the glass to the lips so that she had to put up her hand to hold it, and with the tears running down her face she took a gulp” (Lessing, 1950, p. 189). A sign of chemistry is noticeable from the way the master and the servant are behaving towards each other. Moses goes further to give a soft instruction to say “Drink” to his master “as if he were speaking to one of his own women; and she drank” (Lessing, 1950, p. 186).

As if the water was not enough, Moses continues with his charming moves towards his master where he says, “Madam, lie down on the bed” (Lessing, 1950, p. 186). This kind of scene would not be possible in the colonial context especially between a white master and a black servant. Lessing’s *The Grass is Singing* (1950) thus provides an incisive exploration on unsayables that were deemed impractical but were actually existing over the bounds of colonial rules and expectations. Mary had “not once in her whole life, touched the flesh of a native” but the first touch sends a good feeling to Mary that “she felt her head beginning to swim, and her bones going soft” (Lessing, 1950, p. 186).

The relationship between the master and the servant progressed each day and with Dick’s “long absences” (Lessing, 1950, p. 189), the relationship was given a chance to flourish without impediment from the big master, Dick. Moses fairly valuing the relationship would;

...instead of the tray of tea...brought her eggs, jam and toast...on the tray there waseven a handleless cup with flowers in it: crude yellows and pinks and reds, bush

flowers, thrust together clumsily, but making a strong burst of colour on the old stained cloth (Lessing, 1950, p. 190).

Now, such gestures from a servant, a native for that matter, towards his female master, carry subtle but weighty meanings. Moses uses naturally available resources such as flowers and eggs; all provided by nature to make his way to Mary. These are the undertakings that are deficient in Mary and Dick's dull and empty relationship. Those little things that the servant is able to provide enthusiastically make Mary prefer the servant to Dick, a fellow master like her. The attraction of the two polarising sites shows that love knows no boundary and neither can it be discouraged by manmade constructs such as colonialism and neither does it get dissuaded by differences in skin colour. And for that "there was now a new relation between them. For she felt helplessly in his power" (Lessing, 1950, p. 190).

To prove that the master/servant relationship had evolved beyond expectations, Moses invaded Mary's dreams for "twice she dreamt directly of the native" (Lessing, 1950, p. 192). The attitude of the master towards the servant also shifted from the iron clad fist as Mary "often during the day, she watched him covertly, not like a mistress watching a servant work, but with a fearful curiosity, remembering those dreams" (Lessing, 1950, pp. 192-193). It may therefore be commented that, it was only colonial rules that prevented such relationships to happen but otherwise the kind of relationship like that of Mary and Moses, proved to be more sustaining and supported by nature itself, compared to the kind of relationship like that with Dick.

The love from Moses was unpretentious as he continually cared for her as "everyday he looked after her, seeing what she ate, bringing her meals without her ordering them" (Lessing, 1950, p. 193), this again shows how Moses had understood his master or his lover. Furthermore, to keep the affair burning, Moses was "bringing her little gifts of a handful of

eggs from the compound fowls, or a twist of flowers from the bush” (Lessing, 1950, p. 193). The irony of it is that, Mary is eating eggs from the compound of “filthy savages” (p. 135), brought by a native with “a hot, sour animal smell” (Lessing, 1950, p. 142), and accepting flowers from “the hated bush” (Lessing, 1950, p. 97). Thus Moses may be deemed a hero, for he conquered the colonial philosophy by succeeding in winning and changing Mary’s heart with the help of nature. Besides, for Mary, there was no way she could have possibly denied the affection from Moses, as earlier on, “She used to sit quite still, watching him work. The powerful body fascinated her” (Lessing, 1950, p. 175), and it was Mary who got attracted to Moses first. The use of the flowers is symbolic of how nature brings human beings close to each other. The environment is providing as a catalyst to the bonding of human beings, thus societal constructs such as colonialism have been defied by the manifestation of Moses and Mary’s relationship which is influenced by nature.

The love from and for Moses, became something that Mary could relate to and as such, she treasured it. Juxtaposing Moses and Dick, Mary found out that, “Dick became to her as time went by, more and more unreal” (Lessing, 1950, p. 206). This could be resulting from the little things that Moses did for Mary and that they really mattered to her and “the thought of the African grew obsessive” (Lessing, 1950, p. 206). Mary could not resist Moses and the whole saga “was a nightmare, the powerful black man always in the house with her, so that there was no escape from his presence” (Lessing, 1950, p. 206). Literally the servant had taken power over Mary since “Dick was hardly there to her” (Lessing, 1950, p. 206). In other words, Moses had taken over the position of Dick. Moses with love that is nature driven, while Dick becoming unreal to Mary.

Mary and Moses could not hide their affections towards each other and it came as a shock when Tony “was stuck motionless by surprise” (Lessing, 1950, p. 230) as what he witnessed was taboo and unheard of as recounted from *The Grass is Singing*;

Mary was sitting on an upended candlebox before the square mirror nailed on the wall. She was in a garish pink petticoat, and her bony yellow shoulders stuck sharply out of it. Besides her stood Moses, and, as Tony watched, she stood up and held out her arms while the native slipped her dress over them from behind. (Lessing, 1950 p. 230)

Mary was not really out of her senses, but she felt better in the company and comfort of the native, which the native proved to be effective at. Mary knew that Dick would not take it lightly and cautioned Moses that “You had better go now. It is time for the boss to come” (Lessing, 1950, p. 230). Mary knew she was cheating on Dick and to worsen the matter, with a black servant. At the same time, Mary has demonstrated to be of a rebellious character by going against social constructs and doing exactly the opposite of what is expected of her. But from another perspective, her rebelliousness may be justified, for Dick Turner failed to turn life in Mary, he failed even to make Mary pregnant, and neither did he take the move to pick even ugly bush flowers for her to show her his love. Mary had but to go for the black servant who could help her, whose instincts were nature related and knew exactly what Mary wanted, hence bringing her bush flowers.

4.3.5 Ramification of colonialism on the coloniser

The whole motive behind colonialism was to enrich the white people by subjugating the African people and their land. Colonialism brought suffering on the black people and issues such as those discussed in the analysis of *Waiting for the Rain* (1975). However, the complications of colonialism did not impact on the black people alone, the colonised; it extended its tentacles to distress on its agents, the colonisers. *The Grass is Singing* (1950) allows a glimpse into the sufferings that the colonisers endured under their own

masterminded colonialism. The novel successfully articulates with bluntness the coarseness of colonialism on the colonisers.

Segregation is one of the colonial tendons that was also noticed within the white colonisers as “Long before the murder marked them out, people spoke of the Turners in the hard careless voices reserved for misfits, outlaws and the self-exiled” (Lessing, 1950, p. 10). So the white communities were susceptible to isolation just like they isolated black people from the white communities. As for the Turners, the segregation was a contagious type as they “were disliked, though few of their neighbours had ever met them or even seen them in the distance” (Lessing, 1950, p. 11). However, the Turners knew they were disliked and in return “They were never seen at district dances, or fete, gymkhanas” (Lessing, 1950, p. 11), where the white society mingled and socialised. Their excommunication signalled instability and solitary life in a colonial context, they neither belonged to the white community nor the black community, even the environment spurned them; their farm never produced enough to sustain them.

It appears the Turners’s segregation was rooted in them being poor “though the arguments were unanswerable, people would still not think of them as poor whites. To do that would be letting the side down” (Lessing, 1950, p. 11). In a way reducing the status of the white people was not acceptable as they had the ‘right’ to prestigious life. So even if the Turners were not well up, they were not supposed to be referred to as “poor whites” because “The Turners were British, after all” (Lessing, 1950, p. 11).

The description of the Turners’s house “a small square building” (Lessing, 1950, p. 62), with corrugated iron roofing and “looked shut and dark and stuffy” (Lessing, 1950, p. 63), though few of the natives “had houses as good” (Lessing, 1950, p. 11). Inside the house “there was a strong musty smell, almost animal like” (Lessing, 1950, p. 63). As if not enough, their farm

never produced anything profitable therefore rendering the whole idea of farming futile. Their poor life on the farm “for years they provided the staple of gossip among the farmers round about” (Lessing, 1950, p. 208). Again this points to disunity amongst the colonisers, though the first law of white South Africa stated that “Thou shalt not let your fellow whites sink lower than a certain point” (Lessing, 1950, p. 221) but for the Turners, they had been sinking, never to rise again.

Another issue, which is more of a peculiar and of personal deportment, on the part of Mary Turner and her enduring relationship with Dick Turner, expounds on the absence of love. The relationship between Mary and Dick is for convenience; they never got to fall for each other but had to get married to cover up certain discrepancies that had arisen in their individual lives. For Mary it was “all the time, unconsciously, without admitting it to herself, she was looking for a husband” (Lessing, 1950, p. 51). For Dick “He was lonely, he wanted a wife, and above all, children” (Lessing, 1950, p. 56). For that, “they were married by special licence two weeks later after the proposal. However, even Dick himself was surprised by “her desire to get married as quickly as possible” (Lessing, 1950, p. 60) and surprisingly the marriage was not properly seasoned that it was tasteless and distasteful.

Dick failed to provide and satisfy Mary’s material, sensual and probably spiritual needs as well, which resulted in a problem that was way beyond expectations of the coloniser community; that of Mary resorting to a black servant who indeed successfully filled in the gap that was created and left void by Dick. Moses had genuine love for Mary but the motive behind him killing Mary is not stated though there may be a number of possibilities such as that of helping Mary to stop suffering and also that of being jealous of Mary going away with Dick on holiday and highly not to return. However another possible perception could be that to satisfy colonial typecasts as;

The newspaper did not say much. People all over the country must have glanced at the paragraph with its sensational heading and felt a spurt of anger mingled with what was almost satisfaction, as if some belief had been confirmed, as if something had happened which could only have been expected. When natives steal, murder or rape, that is the feeling white people have. (Lessing, 1950, p. 9)

This stereotype is what Lessing (1950) attempts to clarify that black people had no voice in the colonial setting and that it was partly if not wholly the white people's responsibility in creating a dystopia (Baccolini, 2004) characterised by a society that is undesirable and frightening; where there is dehumanisation, poverty, societal collapse and where humanity suffers from a lack of true freedom and liberty. The death of Mary did not spring from Moses wanting to rape or steal from the white woman, but the account of how it all began gives a basis to argue like Lessing (1950) that the truth could be something else shocking other than the prevailing and common stereotypes levelled against black people. Besides, all the ills, be it on human beings (the victims and the victimisers) or the natural environment, has the roots in colonialism.

Lastly, the death of Mary brought with it some transformations at the farm as "After that, the Turner's farm was run as an overflow for Charlie's cattle. They grazed all over it even up to the hill where the house stood" (Lessing, 1950, p. 34). The environment could not give and sustain Mary and Dick but after they were gone, cattle benefitted from that farm. The house, "it was left empty; it soon fell down" (Lessing, 1950, p. 34). At a symbolical level, the falling down of the house could mean the natural environment trying to restore its naturalness and by letting the house fall, it could be signalling that nature is conquering colonialism which is human made. Even the environment does not stand colonialism, hence Mary and Dick failing to stay at their farm much longer.

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter presented an analysis of *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) and *The Grass is Singing* (1950) which in a way provided an understanding of how colonialism impacted on the environment as well as the colonised and the colonisers. The two novels, *The Grass is Singing* (1950) represent a life on the farm where black people were originally removed to pave way for the white settlers and *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) for the life of the black people in the reserves in which they were driven into. Each community had its own problems but tracing the root cause, almost all, if not all the problems were routed to colonialism. The next chapter, Chapter 5, focuses on the conclusions and recommendation based on this study.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter, Chapter 4, was an analysis and discussion of the chosen texts *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and *Waiting for the Rain* (1975). In this Chapter 5, the focus is on the conclusions and recommendations. It was through the combination of post-colonial and ecocritical theories that the discussions were conceived and brought nuanced means of thinking in the analysing of the chosen literary novels, *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and *Waiting for the Rain* (1975).

The study pursued an analysis of literary texts from a postcolonial ecocritical perspective which necessitated the need to explore and consider the history of the place and time in question as determined by the setting of *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) and *The Grass is Singing* (1950). The study sought to expound on how the relationship between humans and the environment is established in African literary texts and particularly in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) and *The Grass is Singing* (1950). Also, how the environment influences human beings and the vice versa as presented in literary texts. As well as, how environmental issues highlighted in the chosen literary texts focus the larger socio-political and cultural concerns of the specified milieu of their setting. This chapter gives a summary of the conclusion and recommendations that are based on this research.

5.2 Conclusion and findings

Reading *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) as contemporaries can be testament to some comprehensive and wealthy accounts of both sides of the coin, providing probably a coherent shape of the realistic operation of colonialism in totality. *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) may be viewed as synchronous texts

that dare expose the exclusive lives of both the coloniser and the colonised under the similar colonial umbrella, in relation to the environment. Both the coloniser and the colonised happen to be victims of colonialism as exhibited from both novels.

Of course in reading *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) one might be quick to conclude that the black people suffered in Manyene Tribal Trust Land and probably predict a wholesome life on the Hampshire Estate. But upon reading *The Grass is Singing* (1975) as an equivalent text and possibly a continuation of the story, both sides of the coin are thus given equal chances as *The Grass is Singing* (1950) details farm life and with much focus on the white farmer's life. Thus reading the two texts together gives a balanced representation of the impact of colonialism on both humanity and the environment as the two texts are compatible.

Waiting for the Rain (1975) and *The Grass is Singing* (1950) contain sufficiently powerful references validating literary texts' ability in ascertaining the relationship between humanity and the environment. Human activities revolve around the environment such that they even have the environment encroaching and forming part of their dreams. The use of pathetic fallacy in literary works also aids in establishing the relations between humanity and the environment in literary texts. Weather elements and other nature examples are used to express and bring out the type of mood and attitude in a character. This is just like the way the weather elements are used to describe Betty in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) and Mary in *The Grass is Singing* (1950). Also, nature is therapeutic in that it has healing qualities as seen through the character Mary in *The Grass is Singing* (1950) who loathed the Rhodesian summer seasons and preferred the winters most. Also from *Waiting for the Rain* (1975), the Old Man also talks about the morning's fresh air having some healing properties to Garabha.

The two novels *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) and *The Grass is Singing* (1950) demonstrate how colonialism may lamentably be responsible for the environmental degradation in the

areas it operated. On the farms on which the white farmers were, there were excessive cutting down of trees and malpractices of farming, as well as gullies which were also prevalent as observed through the description of Slatter's farm in *The Grass is Singing* (1950). As a result of poor settling methods as prevalent in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975), the black people were forced into reserves such as the Manyene Tribal Trust Land by the colonial rule and as such natural resources such as Suka River ended up giving in due to siltation and other factors such as the inordinate overpopulation. Of which earlier on before colonialism, the environment could sustain its inhabitants and the black people knew as well how to care for their environment. Not only did colonialism enslave the indigenes and their land but it actually implanted a culture of destruction to both the coloniser and the colonised. Colonialism led to the destruction of cultural values which at the same time culminated in environmental degradation.

Particularly in *The Grass is Singing* (1950) the master/servant relationship is underscored. From the way this type of relationship is represented, one can make numerous evaluations considering the controversial nature the issue is. It could be that black men are better than white men in terms of being romantic as the novel seems to be saying basing on the relationship between Mary and Moses. Or it may be that white women, like Mary, prefer black men to their fellow white men. Another could be that black men are attracted to white women hence the stereotype of black men being rapists and murderers, hence the cold blood murder of Mary. Another dimension could be that the forbidden fruit tastes sweetest, as this black and white relationship was not allowed during the colonial times. A possibility could be that love is truly blind and sees no skin colour and neither is it affected by social constructs such as colonialism that has been brought to play by human beings, where nature seem to be central to all things, hence Mary appreciating Moses's bush flowers. Or maybe Lessing

(1950) is just playing with the reader's mind, just to provoke the reader using evidence on the ground by depicting reality in its truest sense.

Lastly the two novels are complements and provide a basis for the interrogation of colonialism and the atrocities it engendered on both humans and nature. To humanity colonialism transforms their way of thinking; to the colonised, one becomes ambivalent and loses cultural footing which in turn results in degeneration of cultures, as well as identity crisis. Then to the coloniser, one becomes obsessed with dominance, and despotism naturally follows. Thus, the brutalities executed by some of the subsidiaries of colonialism may be paralleled to social and environmental genocide. And the impact is even evident to this present day in Africa. *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) and *The Grass is Singing* (1950) may be reckoned as narratives that are capable of affording a complex and far-reaching account of reality's complexities that are attributed to colonialism. Both novels do not provide solutions to the topics they have highlighted and thus, leaving it up to the reader to think over the issues. Vambe and Chirere (2006) comment that "The open ended nature of the novel [*Waiting for the Rain*] is a reminder that the issues being dealt with are open to debate" (p. 177), and this comment also applies to *The Grass is Singing* (1950).

5.3 Contribution to knowledge

In the world of African literary studies, researchers are ideally dedicated to carrying out studies pertaining to social life, whilst ecocriticism is distinguished by its absence in the list of acclaimed topics such as feminism - focusing mainly on women's plight in all their spheres; apartheid - where aspects of race and inequality are brought to the fore; violence - where different forms of violence are highlighted and then labelled as violation of human rights; and land - the unfair distribution of land where the minority own the bigger proportions, to name but a few. This present study however, strived by deviating from these

common topics and focused on merging post-colonialism and ecocriticism in the analysis of *The Grass is Sing* (1950) and *Waiting for the Rain* (1975).

By merging post-colonialism and ecocriticism, it is possible to have two theories running concurrently and be able to establish links that may exist between the theories used. In this instance, a link was established that colonialism and its subsidiaries (under post-colonialism) brought about environmental degradation (under ecocriticism). It is within the discussion of these major theories in the analysis of the novels *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) that a number of themes came out. In *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) themes that were identified include displacement, family disintegration, overpopulation, depletion of natural resources, impact of colonial education, alienation, modernity and so on. While in *The Grass is Singing* (1950), themes such as master/servant relationships, love, nature as a healing agent, farming malpractices, violence, deforestation and the others. By coming up with such themes framed under post-colonialism and ecocriticism, nuanced understandings of the two seemingly over researched novels is brought to the fore. The consideration of ecocriticism in a post-colonial context brings novel comprehension of the two texts as metaphors of the weather and the environment are considered in the analysis. Also, there exists a relationship between post-colonialism and ecocriticism in that colonialism in its entirety has impact on the environment and its victims, thus environmental degradation has its roots in colonialism as presented in *Waiting for the Rain* (1975) and *The Grass is Singing* (1950).

5.4 Recommendations for future research

The study confirms that a relationship exists between humanity and the environment. Through literary texts such as *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and *Waiting for the Rain* (1975), one gets to learn that artificial but powerful forces like colonialism may be detrimental to

humanity as they are capable of attacking both humanity and the environment. Thus this research found it necessary to focus on the relationship between humanity and the environment and how they interact, as well as the importance of their interdependence. This can only be possible by reading texts such as *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and *Waiting for the Rain* (1975), as they provide a succinct background on how instrumental forces such as colonialism are for the destruction of humanity and the environment. The researcher therefore recommends the following:

- the use of ecocriticism as a theory in the analysis of novels from different African countries or other novels from Zimbabwe
- using ecocriticism in genocidal literature
- application of ecocriticism in other genres such as poetry, drama and media literature
- merging ecocriticism with other theories in the analysis of different literary works.

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