

THE ROLE OF CHARACTER NAMES IN THE ACTUALISATION OF THEMES IN
AFRICAN PROSE FICTION. THE CASE OF ANDREYA MASIYE'S *BEFORE DAWN*,
BINWELL SINYANGWE'S *A COWRIE OF HOPE*, AND NOVIOLET BULAWAYO'S *WE
NEED NEW NAMES*.

By

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the degree of Master of Arts in Literature

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DECLARATION

I, MUBBUNU MULUTE, solemnly declare that this dissertation represents my own work, it has not been previously been submitted at this or any other University, and does not incorporate any published work or material from another dissertation

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APPROVAL

This dissertation by Molute Mubbunu, is approved as partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in Literature by the University of Zambia.

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ABSTRACT

Names and naming are an important aspect of literature as well as society. They act as tags and or referents to specific entities, both animate and inanimate. Human beings as the centre of communication are not spared from the value of having names by which they are referred to. Personal names both in real life and literary works, play an important role in shaping both the personality as well as their relationships with those around them. Names, therefore can be said to be a central aspect of human personality as well as relationships in every society.

This study, therefore, focuses its discussion on the linkage between the personal names of the characters in the specified texts and the themes of the same novels. This is with a view to linking the findings with the status quo in real societies of Zambia and Zimbabwe. This has been done through the employment of the two main onomastic theories the Sense and the No-Sense theory which try to explicate whether a name has meaning in itself or whether the name acquires its meaning later after it has been bestowed on someone. These have been aided by the moral philosophical approach to literary criticism whose main argument is that because literature has a didactic function, readers must always look out for these moral lessons within a work of literature.

Further, the study has revealed that the authors make conscious choices when naming their characters especially with the view to use the charactonyms as aids in putting across the desired message. It has also been established that the No-sense theory as applied in the texts studied, can be used in such a way as to show that characters do become what the name giver intends for their lives. Ultimately, this link between the character names and the textual themes is important in the understanding of any given text as it also highlights what the authors intend to convey as the moral teaching through their writing.

DEDICATION

To all my children and my dear husband. You are my reason for working hard.

And

To my mother *Dailess Nalwasha Mubbunu* and my late father *Mark Mubbunu*, whose vision of an education for me, I can now see clearly.

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CHAPTER ONE

General Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the study by giving background information to the investigation, clearly outlining the identified knowledge gap that the study wishes to address as well as the purpose and significance of the study. The chapter also outlines the theoretical and conceptual frameworks that have governed the study and also gives the delimitation and structure of the study. The chapter ends with a conclusion.

1.2 Background

Names by nature serve as referents to both animate and inanimate objects. They help to dissolve the confusion that may ensue if all objects were without specific tags by which they are referred to. It would make the endless use of referents an impossibility hence, impeding effective communication altogether. The tool that is used to study this science of names and naming is called Onomastics.

Onomastics as a field of study, focuses on the names; their structures, origin as well as their implications. As Mutema and Njanji (2013: 251) quoting Raper (1987) put it: “This is basically the science or study of the origin and forms of proper names of persons or places.” It is not surprising that theorists pay so much attention to naming in fiction (literature) since proper names are the nodal points through which actions and descriptions are interconnected (Nesselroth 1996: 133)

It has also been widely stated by most scholars that the most common type of onomastic study that is undertaken in literary studies is one known as literary onomastics which is a more specialized form of literary criticism mainly concerned with the levels of significance of names,

in drama, poetry, fiction and folklore (Alvarez-Altman: 1981). Similarly, Mutunda (2017) also argues that literary onomastics seeks to investigate the link between characters and the names they bear, as well as their relevance, as this is pivotal to the understanding of how they (names) are attached to the consistency and aesthetic of the literary text.

In African society, names are never given without much thought about what their implications on the name bearer are as well as the intention of the name giver for the life of the bearer of the name. Therefore, this also follows for the textual situations that are reflective of the society in which they are set.

The famous Bible story of how God gave Adam the authority over every living creature in the garden of Eden, as well as the right to name them as he pleased (Genesis 2: 19) is significant to the study of names. Using this naming license given to him by the creator Himself, Adam goes on to name all creatures, living and non-living, animate and inanimate. By naming, the name giver can claim social and political space over the named.

To date, the power to name is still a significant aspect of each society. Every society has its own rules or structures that are observed when names are given. They range from the circumstances of or surrounding the birth to the socio-economic circumstances of the parents. In literature as well, the names of characters seem to be an interesting aspect of any text. With the author as the final authority of the names that the characters bear, it is captivating to notice the selection patterns of these names; whether they are local or not, nicknames or full names or perhaps a combination of the three types.

John Bunyan, in his text *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1648) has used an interesting case of how charactonyms can be tied to the personalities of the name bearers. All the characters that have

been used in his text, portray traits that are directly tied to the meaning of their name. For instance, the main character Christian clearly mirrors the life of an average Christian even of today. He ventures on a journey to the celestial city where he is promised to enjoy eternal life. However, on his way there, his encounters with the different people gives the reader an opportunity to encounter the personalities and relate or link them to the names they bear. His neighbor Despondent, for instance, sets out on the journey with Christian, but changes his mind along the way and returns to the city of destruction (Bunyan; 1684)

Banda-Aku's *Patchwork* (2011) also highlights an interesting case of names and how important they are to each society. The main character has three naming tags all dependent on who they are interacting with; Pezo Sakavungo, if she is with the father; Natasha Ponga to her maternal grandparent and mother and Pumpkin to her mother, father, grandmother and playmates. This case shows how names define an individual especially to the name givers as well as those that have accepted to use that particular name as a referent for the given individual

Similarly, the characters of Toni Morrison's *Beloved* (1987) are another interesting case of names and how important they are in telling a story. The names are surrounded with a sense of ambiguity which plays a significant role in telling the story. The ghost, for instance, is only known as "Beloved" the same name that was engraved on the headstone of the child that was murdered by the mother back in the years, when she attempted to save her young children from capture into slavery. The two men Paul D and Paul F come at different times in her life as her lovers. However, one notices that just as their names are closely related to each other, the two characters are not very different from each other as they both leave her life prematurely.

In the articles of satirical columnist Roy Clarke, published in '*The worst of Kalaki and the best of Yuss*', naming is an important aspect of giving meaning to the story(s). He always has a way of

creating a pun on names that actually gives a funny ring to the charactonyms themselves and the story ultimately. A practical example is that of the article *Forgive Me Father* which discusses how Kafupi complains to the priest during confession that his wife has left with all the property packed in three containers. He further complains that he is more concerned about the furniture that the wife has taken away than the wife herself. He also complains that everyone has been laughing at him because he is an avid activist of gender equality when in fact he threw his wife out for having an affair with another man. Kafupi himself had several affairs with other women (Clarke, 12th October 2000). The reader also needs to have background knowledge of the name origins or even an understanding of the name if they are to actually realize the meaning behind each written story/article. The name Kafupi is derived from Swahili meaning “short”, in the Charactonym Kafupi, we also see how he has a shallow thinking personality. A further example is of how the article Letter from the Bahamas also published in Roy Clarke’s *Kalaki’s Worst*, which presents a scenario of Regina corresponding with Morleen, gives details of how King Kafupi was syphoning money to offshore accounts, to make merry with while the economic situation back home deteriorated. She also gives Morleen advice on how to handle her dear Kabeji and give him insights on how to proceed in keeping the nation together while Kafupi was away in Bahamas. (Clarke, 17th January 2000)

Malama Katulwende’s *Bitterness* (2011) has also exhibited interesting cases of names in a number of charactonyms of the text. One prominent case is that of Musunga Fyonse, the shrine keeper. Translated literally, his name means ‘one who keeps everything/ the keeper of everything.’ Which also coincides with his role of being the shrine keeper of his home village. Shrines were revered in his own society and those that were tasked to be shrine keepers were held with a lot of respect and reverence in the community, as they were in charge of ensuring

that peace was maintained between the community and their gods through the performance of rituals such as sacrifices as well as making sure that the gods were never offended in the various activities undertaken by the community members. Shrine keepers were also in charge of making sacrifices on behalf of the community to the gods as a way of maintaining peace or even seeking forgiveness if a transgression had occurred. Therefore, those that were entrusted with this responsibility were indeed keepers of everything about that particular society. This also justifies or clarifies why he had the power or authority to pronounce a curse upon whoever did not follow the ways of his tradition as was the case with Besa, his son (Katulwende, 2005:2)

In Marriama Ba's *So Long a Letter* (1980), there are a lot of similarities in the names of characters of the same story. It is however interesting to also observe how the characters that have similar names also have similar personalities. For instance, the older Aissatou is known to be both stubborn and assertive in her way of doing things. She literally walks away from her marriage describing it as oppressive when her husband decides to take on a second wife. She writes him a letter explaining that she cannot stand the oppression and that she is leaving. However, even after she leaves her matrimonial home, she is well able to take care of her sons. In the same way, the younger Aissatou, Ramatoulaye's daughter, is also a responsible young girl who is able to take care of her younger siblings without much difficulty (Ba, 1980: 82). This independence and her personality trait of being dependable even for tasks that are to be undertaken by people older than her, aligns her character to that of the older Aissatou. Mawdo's mother Aunt Nabou, has raised a miniature version of herself, young Nabou who comes into Aissatou's home as the second wife. In the name of wanting a grandchild by her son, she deliberately disrupts the peace in the young couple's marriage and Aissatou walks away. Young Nabou does only what her aunt instructs her to do. She never protests against what is clearly a

scheme to drive Aissatou out of Mawdo's home (Ba 1980: 29-31). She has been created to be a carbon copy of Aunt Nabou both in name and character.

Given this background, this paper therefore seeks to analyze the link between character names in *We Need New Names*, *Before Dawn* and *Cowrie of Hope*, in the actualization of the textual themes in the three texts. Basing the argument on the belief that names (in Africa at least) are not randomly given but that they are always carefully selected to say something about the child's cultural background or even the socio-economic activities of their parents (or even ancestors). Likewise, novelists seem to have a motivation when naming their characters. As Mutunda (2011) in his article on naming practices among the Lunda people contends "...a name in Africa is viewed as a message that the name giver conveys to society through the bearer of that name." (2011: 4)

Further, this research focuses on analyzing the names given to characters in the three selected texts and later linking them to the themes of the text. This is against the background belief that literary characters are a reflection of what obtains in real society.

It is also imperative to understand that names ultimately serve as constant reminders of the name giver's intention for the life and even personality of the named person thereby declaring the power that lies in the name and the authority to name an individual or personality. As Blum (1997) postulates, "these names are viewed as governing the child's fate in some ways, they should harmonize with time and often place of birth."

1.3. Statement of the Problem

It can be argued that names especially in the African set up are not randomly given or apportioned but rather that a number of factors are considered before a name is settled for.

Further, in as much as studies to establish the meanings and connotations of the names given to these fictional characters have been undertaken, this researcher saw the need to narrow the research on the names to study the implication that these names have on the textual themes. Further, the study uses texts that are reflective of the cultural setup of Zambia and its immediate surroundings, specifically Zimbabwe as no studies have been undertaken on these texts. Stated as a question, therefore, what this study seeks to establish is: what is the role of character names in the actualization of themes in Andrey Masiye's *Before Dawn*, Binwell Sinyangwe's *A Cowrie of Hope* and NoViolet Bulawayo's *We Need New Names* ?

1.4. Aim of the study

The aim of this study is to analyze the role of character names in the actualization of themes in the African texts namely; Andrey Masiye's *Before Dawn*, Binwell Sinyangwe's *A Cowrie of Hope* and NoViolet Bulawayo's *We Need New Names*.

1.5. Objectives

The research is guided by the following objectives

1. To evaluate the types and meanings of the character names in Andrey Masiye's *Before Dawn*, Binwell Sinyangwe's *A Cowrie of Hope* and NoViolet Bulawayo's *We Need New Names*.
2. To examine the link between the character names and the themes in each of the three texts.
3. To analyze the significance of the interface between the character names and the themes of the three texts

1.6. Research Questions

The research sought to answer the following questions.

1. What are the personal names given to the fictional characters in the three novels under study?
2. What is the link between the character names and the themes of the texts?
3. What is the significance of the interface between the character names and the themes in the specified texts?

1.7. Significance of the Study

Names are ever present in every literary text, they are an unavoidable aspect of relaying information to the readers. The types of names used in a particular text can be picked from a wide range and are always a choice of the author. The findings of this study will help scholars and readers of these particular texts under study, as well as the secondary texts used, in their interpretation of the texts having understood the relationship between the charactonyms and the themes of each text. Further, apart from the findings being a meaningful addition to the body of knowledge, they would also serve as a springboard for future research in the field of literary Onomastics.

1.8 Theoretical Framework

1.8.1 Sense and No-Sense theory

The two major theories that will guide this research are the Sense and the No-Sense theories of Onomastics studies. According to the Sense theory, which is also referred to as the classical theory, the contention is that all naming of any entity entails description before naming. Which means that names are only a description of what something already is. Searle , Frege and Church, who are the proponents of theory have argued that ‘ naming and reference in general, consists in our mentally connecting a set of properties with a name, our identifying something as having

each of these properties and our applying the name to the object by virtue of this identification. The No- Sense theory, also known as the Causal theory, was propounded by Kirpke and Donnellan. In opposition to the Sense theory, this theory advances the belief that the application of a name depends on its causal relation to some sort of baptismal ceremony in which the name becomes the name of its referent. In essence, the naming of a particular entity precedes its description Penda (2013: XV), *The international Journal of Philosophy in the Analytic Tradition* (<http://www.jstor.org/stable/4319115>, accessed on 08/01/2018)

It is also plausible to contend that these two types of naming theories are closely attached to semantics which is basically the study of meaning. The implications of the name given is determined by whether or not that particular name gives meaning in itself or even in relation to its surrounds or whether the name or names in question have been motivated by or are intended to convey a given meaning about the bearer or even their social- economic backgrounds. Therefore, this research will aim at analyzing how the personal names of the characters in the selected texts are informed or influenced by the two theories and how these names finally relate or even contribute to the actualization of the themes of these particular literary works.

1.8.2. Moral Philosophical theory

This theory of literary criticism, postulates that literature should always perform a didactic function to inculcate values into the general populace. That it should be used as a tool with which to inculcate admirable values into the members of society. Therefore, literature is seen as having the dual function of entertaining and teaching the desirable morals. Roberts (2007: 2012) argues therefore that; to study literature from the moral perspective is to determine whether it can help the reader's lead better lives. He further argues that literature should not only be concerned with meaning but that it should be true as well as significant to its readers.

During the early periods of English literature for instance, the most common form of literature was oral or folk tales that were passed on from one generation to the next through word of mouth. This form of literature later transformed into theatre performances that were first performed mostly for patrons that were able to pay the actors and play writers. Aristocracies were also another notable audience type that indulged in this type of literature as they were also being designed to praise or extol and sometimes even reprimand them, before poems and consequently the novel were birthed (spark notes: 2014). However, in all these transitions that took place through the different periods of literature, the most common feature was that these various forms of literature were both governed by religious teachings and implications coupled with the societal changes or situations prevalent at specific times. Religion was highly respected and it had a great influence on both the political and social patterns of societies. The morals that were built on to be taught to the audience were thus coined in ways that were both socially and religiously relevant for that particular period of literature. This attitude towards literature has, however lived on as readers (in the case of literary texts) are always expecting to interpret the intention of the writer as well as what message they are trying to put across to their readers. The interpretation of the thematic outlines of a particular text is also an effective attempt to decipher what the author intended for their readership. Therefore, the success of any given text, as contended by the moral philosophical theory, is judged on the basis of how much it is able to inculcate values and morals in the readers as well as probe philosophical issues that relate to society.

1.9. Operational Definition of Terms

A number of terms will be used in this study. These include:

1.9.1. Anthroponym

This refers to personal names. Each individual has a personal or what is usually referred to as the 'first names'. These names distinguish an individual from the other people, starting from the family unit, personal names work to separate or differentiate individuals even before they can mix with the rest of the world where their family names are also used to specify an individual from the rest of the crowd.

1.9.2. Teknonyms

These are names that are formed or created when a parent's name changes or is adapted to be aligned with that of their child especially their first child. For instance; 'mother of Kabvumba' or 'father of Chimwemwe'. Such names serve as constant reminders that the person being referred to is a parent to someone (whose name is in the teknonym) and that they are also proud to be called as such.

1.9.3. Charactonyms

These are names of fictional characters that are closely linked to their personalities or ways of behavior. An author may choose to name a character within a given piece of writing and also give them characteristics that are closely linked to their name.

1.9.4. Hydronyms

Referent to water bodies such as rivers, lakes and even seas. Just like humans, water bodies also have particular names that are uniquely linked to each water body and set apart from all others that might be similar to it. For instance, the river Nile has two parts; the White and the Blue. Though both are Niles, the color adjectives distinguish them from each other.

1.9.5. Toponyms

These are geographical or place names. Having a name to call each geographical location not only eases communication, but also adds to the colorful mental distinction of one place from another.

1.10. Scope of the Study

The study is focused on discussing the linkage between the names of characters and the themes in the three texts, namely, *We need New Names*, *A Cowrie of Hope* and *Before Dawn*. The study is only concerned with the names and their link to the thematic development of the text while the other elements of the text such as the plot and style will not be addressed. Any other aspects about the names that have not been addressed in the research were thus not part of the set objectives and, only the names of the main characters of each text have been analyzed to avoid unnecessarily lengthening the dissertation. Further, it should also be noted that the findings on the three books studied are unique to the texts and must not be generalized to be applicable to all other texts or readings.

1.11. Organisation of Dissertation

This dissertation will discuss the topic by first reviewing the relevant literature, then text summaries will be given before the individual objectives are addressed and finally a conclusion drawn.

1.12. Conclusion

This Chapter has introduced the study by giving the background information, stating the problem under investigation, providing the significance of the study and outlining the theoretical framework that has been used in the study. Further, the chapter has given the purpose, definition of operational terms and the scope of the study. The next chapter deals with the literature review, with a focus on discussing relevant information on the subject.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

The preceding chapter introduced the study, outlining the background statement of the problem, scope of the study, the theoretical framework as well as the research objectives and questions. This chapter focuses on analyzing literature that is related to the study.

2.2. Literature Review

Onomastics as a branch of linguistics attempts to delve into understanding the nature of the different types of names; how they are created especially as relates to the sociolinguistics of a given society and sometimes even the way the names are used and how they affect the society in which they are created and used. To clarify these factors surrounding names, two major theories are at the heart of Onomastics, these are the Sense and the No-sense theories. The former bases its argument on the premise that all names are only a description of what a thing or individual already is. This implies that the name does not change or alter what is already existent but merely describes it, acting as its symbol or tag. The latter, on the other hand, propagates the argument that names precede the description of a person or thing. Meaning, when people are named, their characters or personalities are expected to fit in with the name, implying that the names are a guide to what one's personality should be (Penda, 2013: xv) .

The question that this research investigates, however, is whether the personal names that are used in African literary works of fiction have a bearing on the actualization of the themes of that particular work or not .(African here being used to imply written by Africans and or set in African background).

As William (2003: 671) postulates, a personal name, which is sometimes called an anthroponym, represents a social convention for brief reference to a specific entity. This implies that personal names possess the power to disambiguate identities of personalities by attaching specified tags of identification to different individuals. In societies such as those of China and Europe for instance, each person is assigned a public legal name in written form at the time of their birth, part of which reflects the child's father's name or identity (William, 2003: 672). This tradition has largely spread across different cultures of the world today including Africa. Children's personal names both in real and fictitious cycles have a tag of the father's identity and or names. These have come to be widely referred to as surname(s). For instance, a child's name would be Kavumba Banda-the name 'Banda' being a reflection of the father's identity especially linking him to his clan thereby tracing the child's lineage. However, it is mostly the personal names that have raised the question as to whether they carry meaning in themselves other than the surname which acts merely as an identity of the family attachment one possesses or carries.

In African society, personal names are held to be of essential value in identifying and understanding an individual's personality, history and even parentage. This is in line with the views of Zawawi(1998: xii) who contends that personal names provide an important component of African cultural identity. Further, Mutunda (2011: 14) also argues that a personal name is viewed as a message that the name giver conveys to society through the bearer of that name. Just as it has a psychological role in establishing a person's identity, it also plays the role of conveying to those that know that particular personality, the origin and meaning as well as the social and cultural experiences of the people who have created them. In line with the Sense and No-Sense theories of Onomastics, Mutunda (2011: 14) quoting Mill (1961) and Markley (1982), indicates the potency of the No-Sense theory in naming which holds the idea that, a personal

name has no real meaning but that it is merely a tag, which in itself, has next to no meaning. He argues that names are a tag by which an individual or personality is identified or referred to. He adds that this has no real consequence on the individual's personality or character.

On the other hand, Parnos (2014: 100) like many other linguists/researchers argues in support of the importance of names and naming in any society, contending that the personal name, in itself, indicates some degree of evaluation by the bearer as well as other members of his society, thereby cementing the idea of a definite relationship between a name and the personality of an individual.

Further, even in historical times of the Bible, names and naming possessed great powers as expressed by those that named and those that were the owners and or carriers of those particular personal names. For instance, according to Proverbs 18:10, 'the name of the Lord is a strong tower, the righteous run into and they are saved.' This signifies the power that lies in the name of the Lord that it has the power to save people from great dangers and fears. Other examples of such power of names expressed in the bible can be the name 'Great I am' or 'I am who I am' to symbolize the personal name(s) of God the creator. Even the mere ambiguity that lies in this name shows the authoritative power of its bearer (Exodus, 3: 14). In their daily worship even in modern times, Christians have learnt to employ the various names of God to evoke Him in their prayers and supplications. They believe that the various names they call Him by bring them closer to His glory and power

Sprangler, a Christian devotional writer, also explores the names of women in the Bible and their significance in preaching the gospel whether directly or indirectly. She argues that all the names of the women especially, were never given randomly but that each of them communicated a divine or precious message about various aspects of the life of the personality involved whether

spiritual, social or even economical. For example, the name Ruth means 'friendship', Naomi means 'my joy' or 'pleasant', Delilah means 'dainty one' among others. (Spangler 2007: 122,130,138)

When Adam was created and all other animals were created after him, God gave him the power or authority to give the animals and creatures whatever name he desired and so were all the creatures called from then on(Genesis 2: 19-20). This also signifies the finality of the authority that the giver of names possesses over the people and or even characters that they name because of the 'Adamic license' that they possess to name and perpetually dominate the people and creatures / characters they name(d) through the given names (Chilala, 2013)

Regarding the African scenario or cultural set up, a number of factors are considered when giving names. Sometimes the names are given in respect of the pleasant and or unpleasant events that happen surrounding the birth of a child. In this case, the personal name given serves as a reminder of the particular occurrence that took place around or surrounding the birth of the child. As Mutunda (2011) postulates in his article on Lunda names and naming practices, the personal names given can also act as a marker of an important happenstance surrounding the birth of a child: '...names are rarely given to children randomly but rather are carefully chosen by parents and relatives to reflect or reveal the social circumstances in which the baby is born' (Mutunda, 2011: 21). This tradition has clear grounding even in the other traditions of Zambia and Africa at large. For instance, the names ' Tinenenji' and 'Kavumba' are closely tied to the events that surrounded the births of the children as is seen in the novel of Andrey Masiye, *Before Dawn* (1970).

Other times, names are insinuating and proverbial. There are names couched in forms of innuendoes to depict a situation that occurred during pregnancy or childbirth. They may depict

the sour and bitter relationships that exist between parents and other neighbors or relatives, or between co-wives, in case of a polygamous marriage. A good example of such a name is Binwell Sinyangwe's character 'Sula' in *A Cowrie of Hope*. The name is an innuendo to imply 'letting things be', especially reflecting the poor relationship that existed between Winelo Chiswebe and his wife (mother of Nasula).

There is also a tendency in African societies to use teknonyms especially in instances where the interlocutors in a particular discourse are of different age groups. This serves as a technique or method of expression of respect especially on the part of the younger interlocutor. Further, even couples tend to use this technique as a way of maintaining respect for each other by the avoidance of using their personal names as referents in their interactions. Ultimately, because of the emotional and physical attachment of a mother especially to their first born child, women who are mothers have tended to have their names obliterated and almost forgotten as they are only referred to by their teknonym.

African names both in real life and fictitious works of literature carry a meaning by reflecting the personality of an individual and also gives meaning to the events and or circumstances around a personality's life, respectively. Further, that the names of characters may be changed to suit or describe what one becomes after or besides the implications of her personal name for instance, the way Belita Bowa, the main character in *A Cowrie of Hope* has her name changed to a teknonym and she is largely referred to as 'Nasula'.

By extension of the argument, Lodge (1992: 32) acknowledges the importance of naming in works of fiction by asserting that names of fictional characters are never neutral in meaning, in essence, they are given for a purpose. Nkolola-Wakumelo (2013: 88) also alludes to the fact that personal names are never given randomly in any African society but rather that there are patterns

and that a number of factors are considered before a name can be arrived at. Chilala (2013: 2) further postulates that the Adamic license of naming (as was given to Adam by God in Genesis 2: 19), is also exercised by the authors who also possess and exercise this license in the power that they have to name the characters to reflect their ideas and or thoughts. A practical example that can be given in this vein is the manner in which Binwell Sinyangwe and Andrea Masiye name the various characters in their texts *A Cowrie of Hope* and *Before Dawn* respectively, to suit each character's special role of portraying a character's personality that falls in line with their personal name. For instance, the chief of police that Nasula runs to for help after seeing that none is forthcoming from the officer at the reception desk, is strategically named (by the author) Samson Luhila. Just like the Samson of the Bible, there is no other (character in this novel) more powerful than him .While the Samson from Bible times was known for his physical power and strength, Samson Luhila is clad with authoritative power which he uses when he easily puts an end to Nasula's misery as perpetrated by Gode and his policeman colleague (Sinyangwe 2000: 134)

Chilala (2013), quoting Clarke (1990: 1) asserts that names are signs as entities that have significance for interpretation. Thus, in the wake of the argument that names are never given randomly or even accidentally in African societies, including those reflected in African works of fiction, as earlier alluded to, it is reasonable to assert that authors of literary texts are largely influenced by this societal truth. This further justifies the hypothesis that the names that authors give to their characters even in a work of fiction is a deliberate step that leads towards the actualization of the themes that the author intends to communicate to their readers.

Authors have a deliberate tendency to employ methods of writing that are targeted at achieving their specified aims or goals through the characters they create, their personality traits and indeed

their names. In this way, the themes that the author intends to communicate are easily met. As Mbwayu (1987) states in his dissertation, authors should always make a deliberate step to convey deliberate messages to their readers through the personalized stylistics that are employed in their literary works.

In her study of names or naming in the text *The children of Hurin*, Nelson (2015) highlights the ‘predictor’ role that names play in as far as their role as pointers or referring is concerned. She argues that names that are given to individuals as well as textual characters always have an element of predictions into the future of the name bearer as intended by the name giver. Tolkien (2007) also notes how Turin is referred to as the ‘heir of the house of Hador’ and also how the father who is also the king, while making Turin stand on a table so that he appears taller than the father, remarks that ‘Turin would grow and become taller standing on his own’. These two statements used to refer to Turin can be considered as names. Further, these names play a role in predicting what would become of the child. True to the predictions, Turin does grow up and succeeds his father and he displays much more power than his own father had done during his reign. This article demonstrates the significant role names play in predicting the future of the bearer as well as their surroundings, further resonating with the idea that authors deliberately name their characters in a way that aids the thematic goals of their piece of work.

In a related study, Olatunji et al (2015) assert that names play different roles in society, with the most basic being the separation of individuals and entities from the others by assigning a special tag as their reference which makes communication and any type of interaction possible. Quoting Akinnaso (1980), Olatunji et al state that the fundamental reason for naming in human society is to provide a symbolic base for social interaction through a formal means of individual identification. Similarly, Susan (1994), in her article on Zulu personal names submits that the

naming process in African society is to pass a message or information from the name-giver to the entire family and the community at large. The ‘naming processes carry with them social implications concerning what a person is and how he or she should be placed in the world’, (Wikipedia: 2016). This is in line with the argument that character names as created by the author, especially that the texts are set against the African social background, are also in line with the African naming practices where names emanate from different perspectives or situations.

Adelaide who also explored naming traditions in Africa, argues that there are broad naming categories to pick from in African societies which include the following: names that denote positive or negative emotions, names based on the defining circumstances, names based on anticipated or desired character and names based on historical events or topical characters, among others. It is thus up to the name giver or author which category to pick from.

In discussing the Onomastic features of the novel *Patch Work* by Ellen Banda-Aku, Chilala (2013), highlights some important naming techniques that not only depict a purely Zambian society or set up but also show the relationship that existed with its neighboring country Zimbabwe, especially during the liberation struggle of that country hence leading to a cultural mix between the two countries. Personal names in this society, as depicted in this text, include corruptions of names of characters to resonate with the characters’ personality as well as fit as the short form of the character’s full name. An example of such a name is that of ‘Bee’ which is in resonance with the stinging bee as relates to the character’s personality as well as it being a short form of the character’s name which is ‘Beatrice’ Another interesting feature of this discussion is the coining and usage of a nickname widely agreed upon as a neutral for two feuding sides of families. It can be established from Chilala’s discussion of Banda-Aku’s text

that, apart from using names to negotiate power as well as social relations, names have also been seen as a unifying factor between two struggling societies.

It is also interesting to notice how names and naming of Africans is also affected by the infiltration of English as a second language. African parents both educated and non-educated have been known to name their children using English names though still being grounded on the different circumstances that guide child naming. The Wikipedia article titled 'Zimbabwean names'(2016) have shown how common these tendencies are among societies of Zimbabwe. Such naming is also evident in texts set in both Zambian and Zimbabwean backgrounds. This is a reflection that real life situations are depicted or used in works of literature. This is in resonance with what Nasselroth (1996: 133) observes: '...it is not surprising that theorists pay so much attention to naming in fiction literature since names are the nodal points through which actions and descriptions are inter connected.'

2.3. Conclusion

The chapter has analyzed literature relating to the study. These included dissertations, commentaries on texts, actual texts and articles. The next chapter will focus on giving synopses of the three primary texts under study.

CHAPTER THREE

Text Synopses

3.1. Introduction

The preceding chapter focused on analyzing literature that is related to the current study having had a clearly outlined chapter one that gave the background information related to the study. This chapter will focus on giving synopsis of the three primary texts under study in this research. These include *Before Dawn* by Andrey Masiye, *A Cowrie of Hope* by Binwell Sinyangwe and NoViolet Bulawayo's *We Need New Names*. However, no textual analysis of the said texts will be done in this chapter

3.2. A Cowrie of Hope

The text is authored by Binwell Sinyangwe. The story is narrated from an omniscient point of view. Giving a clear outline of life's predicaments of the main character, Belita Bowa and her daughter. This is a story about a poor woman, Belita Bowa, who is married to Winelo Chiswebe. The couple leaves the village soon after getting married to settle in Lusaka's Kalingalinga compound where they live till the death of Winelo. Life away from her kinsmen, is never easy for Belita who endures emotional, physical and mental torture at the hands of an abusive husband.

Widowed at a young age, she is left to fend for her only child and daughter known as Sula, single handedly. (Apart from two instances in the text, she is only referred to as Nasula, which is a teknonym meaning 'mother of Sula'). Her in-laws grab all that her husband left for her and her daughter's survival; the house, the money and the bicycle. They leave the two destitute especially because she refuses to be inherited by the late husband's younger brother Isaki, as a

wife. She receives no help from her in-laws the Chiswebe's in their times of plenty. When they also plunge into poverty, the situation even worsens. Her visit to Mangango farm where she had hoped to receive some financial assistance to send her daughter to school from her in-laws, confirm that Nasula's own poverty was more bearable than what she found at the once prosperous Mangango.

Nasula's entire hope to raise money for Sula's fees lies in her only bag of beans which she hopes to sell in Lusaka to raise the money required. While she manages to get her bag of merchandise to the country's capital without much trouble, with the help of her older acquaintance Nalukui, her problems are just about to start. With very high hopes of selling her bag of beans for a very good price, she gets swindled by Gode, a notorious con man who takes her bag of beans but does not pay for it.

Nasula is plunged into further despair not being able to imagine where to hinge her hopes now that her only lifeline has been cut by the swindler. She is at pains to understand how suffering has chosen her and how it refuses to let her see any happiness or peace.

An older man, who was also a trader, that helped the two women to determine the price of Nasula's bag of beans when they first got to the market, gives Nasula money for her bus fare back to Senga Hill. However, even though she boards the bus to Senga Hill, she suffers immense disillusionment and heartache because of her loss. Midway to Senga Hill, Nasula disembarks from the bus when it stops at a roadblock, and hikes back to Lusaka. She refuses to go back home without first pursuing justice for herself and her precious daughter Sula, who is worth taking all the risk for. She spends a whole week moving around Lusaka in the hope of finding her exploiter and bringing him to book.

Regardless of being unfamiliar with the city, having nowhere to sleep and even being without enough money to survive life in the city. Nasula determinedly pursues her goal and finally does bring the culprit to book, consequently receiving full payment for her bag of beans. She returns home to her daughter confidently with the school requirements as well as enough money for her daughter's school fees.

3.3. We Need New Names

This is a story about life in economically and politically challenged Zimbabwe told from the perspective of an eleven year old girl known as Darling. She clearly outlines the struggles and sufferings of the Zimbabweans especially from hers and her friends' point of view, as children.

Darling describes the hardships the community faces in trying to survive. How families disintegrate due to poverty which causes the most active and productive part of the population to leave the country in search of employment in the neighboring countries. There are not enough employers in the country to assimilate the huge numbers of unemployed people that have been left destitute after the bulk of the investors leave the country.

Disease is another dividing factor of this society. Apart from those that leave home for greener pastures, this part of the population return home diseased from the harsh conditions in the working places as well as from the adopted social conditions in which they live, even those that remain home contract various diseases. These diseases cause rifts in the families as the meagre resources that the families have are directed towards making payments meant to improve the sick family member's condition. This causes those that are not unwell immerse discomfort as it only advances their poverty. The children do not quite understand the reasons for the disintegration but they can easily relate the stories of their families and community's poverty and ultimate disintegration.

Religion is another aspect vividly described by the narrator. How the Prophet Revelations Bitchington Mborro thunders on Fambeki Mountain during his sermons, how he exorcises the beautiful woman brought before him, said to be possessed. Though the children find him funny and never make sense out of what he thunders about, the adults who are supposed to understand him better seem just as lost.

Darling also describes the political struggles that take place from a child's perspective. For instance, mother of bones who takes care of Darling whilst her mother goes to sell fruits at the border, is said to have a large bag of bank notes that she counts through every day, whilst having soliloquys about how she cannot use it. Darling wonders why her aunt does not just use the money to make fire like the other community members do.

During the election period, the community of Paradise is described as being lit by the adults' excitement about the change that is expected. Hope and joy are registered on their faces and they always speak with hope about the future. When the elections finally come and go, their hope goes and is replaced by the usual dejection and hopelessness.

The case of the young political activists that are murdered in a horrific manner not only shakes the narrator and her friends, who re-enact the whole scenario through to the burial, but also the international reporters who come to cover the elections in that country as well. The community members are bitter and anguished but seem unable to act in any way to resolve their predicaments.

When she grows into teen-hood and relocates to America living with her aunt Fostalina, Darling presents to the reader the challenges of being away in the diaspora. She feels uncomfortable and detached from her home land especially with the knowledge that one cannot return home freely

nor be able to re integrate effectively into their own society. The life that she experiences overseas in aunt Fostalina's home negates the life that she lived back in Africa, the norms and practices therein are all different from what Darling learnt as the correct way of doing things. For instance, at aunt Fostalina's place, one can eat at any time they feel like and eat anything they want. Aunt Fostalina's marriage to her husband is not bound by typical African norms like her having to cook a fresh meal for her husband each day among other divergences.

Each time Darling attempts to reconnect with her roots, she feels further pushed or divided from them. Her mother makes her feel sad at her constant questions of when she would visit home, or even why she takes so long before she can communicate with those back home. She has also learnt that her childhood friends have also grown up like herself with Bastard having relocated to Dubai, Stina to South Africa. Chipso is now a mother to a child she had named Darling. Her friends too have become critical and often ask her why she 'ran away' from home to go and enjoy in a place that is not her own. These questions, coupled with the disillusionment that she faces daily especially from the instability in the marriage between aunt Fostalina and uncle Kojo and, subsequently the lack of homeliness in their household. Darling is left not knowing what will happen to her next especially that both locations cannot provide solid grounds for her anymore. She cannot return to Africa freely, if she does, she would never be allowed into the States again. When she gets home however, she will not be able to effectively integrate with the people there because she has now lost touch with who she really is as an African. Living in the United States also breeds confusion for her because uncle Kojo and aunt Fostalina's home does not exactly provide the security a teenager needs in form of guidance and love. Instead, she has to learn to take care of herself without any adult's help. The novel gives the reader a clear view

of life both at home and away from home and perhaps the implications of the names these children carry on their own characters and eventually who they turn out to be as they grow.

3.4. Before Dawn

Authored by Andrea Masiye, a Zambian author, tells a story of a young man whose birth is characterized by an ominous sign, the whirl wind, which he is named after, the novel is also set in the colonial era which provides a solid backdrop.

Kavumba's birth brings contention between his father Menyani and the Nyamukungwi's husband Ganizo because, Menyani has failed to pay Ganizo for Naphiri services at Kavumba's birth. This feud grows so much that the two are not only involved in physical altercation even in public places, but also verbal insults and arguments that see a rift grow between them. Further, the community members also become divided with having to choose which of the two to side with. Almost naturally, Menyani does not have as much support as Ganizo who is also an elder at the *Bwalo*, the elder's council. Despite being the headman's son, and the heir apparent to the throne of headmanship at Banda's village, Menyani is not keen to interact with other men at the *Bwalo* which also contributes to his being unpopular among the community members. He chooses to remain aloof and detached from the activities that take place at the *Bwalo*.

This disadvantages Kavumba in that he has no one to teach him the ways of men as well as those of the village. Having only his mother as his source of comfort, and an absentee father greatly disadvantages Kavumba. Shortly after Kavumba's birth, Menyani takes on additional wives. With that, he ceases to pay attention to Tinenenji, his first wife. He focuses more on the additional wives where he even spends most of his time. The neglect of his first wife also affects Kavumba adversely as he has no manly figure to look up to now. As if that is not enough, Tinenenji falls ill from an ulcer that develops on her leg when hot porridge drops on it whilst

preparing a meal for a visitor who comes from the city. It worsens due to lack of correct handling and she dies, leaving Kabvumba destitute with no one to look up to.

After Tinenenji's death, Kabvumba's predicament worsens. His father's additional wives literally chase him from their homes and refuse to offer him any form of comfort. Kabvumba is only left with his young aunt who is also too young to actively take care of another teen like herself. Kabvumba feels he would perhaps set himself apart by acquiring an education that is different from that offered by the village, the western type of education.

He does all types of odd jobs to put himself through school, having no parental figure to assist him. His aunt Tionenenji gets married to Kabawe who also leaves for the city to search for employment like the other young men in the village. Tionenenji is also back to suffering as she has no one to take care of her. Kabvumba attempts to go and search for formal employment in town where things also go awry wrong for him; the political unrest which characterizes the city where loafers are an unwanted population in the city, makes the situation more difficult for Kavumba. There, he loses his prized possessions: his mattress and blanket as he is trying to escape capture by the police. Despite the numerous efforts, he does not get the job he has been dreaming of, working in an office like a graduate should. Instead, he leaves feeling more dejected than he did back in the village.

In Mazabuka, he is met by poverty at the home of his host Kaligo who has a wife and twelve children all crowded in a small shack. He is convinced that he needs to get a job, any type of job to ease his economic hardship presented by city life. This is where he gets a job as a garden boy, but later loses it after spoiling the boss' favorite plant in his attempts to use *juju* to protect his job. He later finds a job at a farm as a 'Piccaninnie' to play with the master's son. He finally ends up in the army and is sent to the front line in West Africa during the First World War.

Having risen through the ranks of the army, Kabvumba finally comes back home and decides to go to his home village. He is met by surprising news all around; headman Banda had died and there was no heir because Menyani, his father, had also died back in the mines where he had gone to work. His love had also given herself to his enemy Masoanjole.

The story has a happy ending for Kabvumba who is finally re-united with his wife and son, the dream he had had for a very long time. For the community, they finally have an heir to the throne of village headmanship which had fallen vacant following the death of their headman Banda.

3.5. Conclusion

This chapter has given a summary of the three primary texts used in this study without giving any analysis of the texts. The next chapter is going to outline the themes and names that have been identified in the text *A Cowrie of Hope* by Binwell Sinyangwe.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Role of Character Names in the Actualisation of Themes in *Before Dawn*

4.1. Introduction

This chapter analyses the names of the main characters in *Before Dawn*, especially considering the category of naming from which they emanate, as well as evaluating their meanings and how they help actualise the salient themes of the text. It also discusses the major themes of the text.

4.2 Charactonyms in *Before Dawn*

The names that have been used in this text are Chewa names. Their meanings and connotations are also linked to the characters that bear them on two fronts. Firstly, some characters are named from the circumstances that surround their births and the names have ended up having a bearing on the character's personality and even the type of life they lead. Secondly, even though other characters' names have not had the backgrounds of names given, their name meanings have a close correlation with the way the characters interact with others within the text, as well as how their personalities and entire livelihoods have been influenced by what they are called.

Further, the names of the characters in this text have meanings that tend to give a forecast of future happenings. Once a character has been introduced to the reader, the meaning of their name helps to highlight what that particular charactonyms' personality and life in the story will be like. This in turn gives a hint to the reader as to what some of the themes of the text are likely to be.

It is also imperative to note that the names that have been analysed and linked to the thematic actualisation in the said text are aligned with the No-Sense theory whose contention is that names are given before the description of an individual (Penda, 2013:XV). This implies that a person only acquires a description after being named. Similarly, the personalities of the

characters of the text only become aligned to what their names are after their naming, they become what they are called.

The names of the main characters that are encountered in this text include the following:

4.2.1 Kavumba

Kavumba is the main character of the novel. He is the only child born to Menyani and Tionenji. His name means 'whirl wind', just like the one that characterizes his birth. Unbeknownst to him, his whole life would be one of turmoil as he would be a whirl wind that disrupts and even destroys anything that lies in his way. His very birth wedges a big gap between his family and that of the Nyamkungwi. Building hatred that threatens the peace and unity of the entire village. Further, Kavumba's life cycle seems to be controlled by forces that are beyond himself. Just like the ominous sign that appears at his birth is considered as a sure sign of the presence of spiritual forces, whose arms or decisions can never be twisted away from their desired goal, his life has been characterised by events, both pleasant and unpleasant, that are beyond his control. His name resonates with the manner in which things turn out in his life; uncontrollable and only a fulfilment of what the spiritual forces have predetermined to be his destiny.

4.2.2 Tinenenji

She is Menyani's first wife and the mother to Kavumba. Her name means 'what shall we say?' From the time that her son Kavumba is born, we do not see any peace in her marriage to Menyani. Things even worsen for her when Menyani finds a job with a white man in the big village of Chipata where he adopts new ideologies that cause him to forsake his own culture. When she develops a sore on her leg after hot porridge spills onto it, her health deteriorates till she dies, despite having been taken to the white man's hospital for treatment. Like the meaning

of her name, there are no words with which to describe what becomes of Kavumba and Tiku's life from Tinenenji's kind work of taking care of visitors of the village.

Her own life is also filled with shocks and surprises as things always take a turn for the worse even when it is least likely to be so. Her marriage to Menyani begins to falter after the birth of their son. Things even become worse when Tinenenji and her son Kavumba are forsaken by Menyani when he marries his two extra wives. The problem she faces is never having the right words with which to express the surprises or even predicaments she encounters throughout the text. She faces the same predicament when Menyani flees the village and does not tell anyone where he would be going, she fears the worst; that he may be dead. The confirmation of Menyani being alive, as told her the traveler from the Copperbelt, and working on the Copperbelt brings so much joy and comfort to her. At the same time, this delightful news bearer also leads her to death. The turn of events in her life resonates with the themes of poverty and loneliness in the way she suffers with the sore on her leg till her death. Her son and her sister do not receive any help from the villagers in taking care of Tinenenji neither do they help them with food nor take her to the white man's hospital for medication. Ironically, the help that the villagers render to the trio actually leads to Tinenenji's death.

4.2.3. Menyani

The only son of headman Banda of Banda's village. His name implies 'to beat' or simply 'beat' or 'fight'. The name is intended to imply that the name bearer must always fight for what they own, being better than the rest. Ironically, he is always ready to fight with Ganizo over and over but never willing to do the correct things to resolve their difference. He is willing to fight with anyone who provokes him. However, he is never willing to fight to keep his marriage to Tionenji

healthy and stable. Neither does he fight to protect Kavumba from maltreatment and segregation from Tinenenji's junior wives.

After his exposure to the ways of the white man from Chipata where he had gone to work, he returns to the village without any interest to preserve or even observe the ways and culture of the village, he is not even willing to fight for the common good of his people. It is therefore surprising to see him stand up to fight for his father the head man when the tax collector accuses him of being in cahoots with the young men that had run away to evade tax payment. Fighting and harboring grudges are a common aspect of his life.

4.2.4. Ganizo

He is the *Bwalo* keeper of headman Banda's village and Naphiri's husband. His name means 'thought' or 'a thought' or 'idea'. He is thoughtful of the ways and culture of the village. He manages to argue out his case at the chief's palace as he is able to pick the right proverbs and sayings fit for the occasion. Even though the case weighs heavily against him, he manages to show how thoughtful he is in the way he argues. When Kavumba does return to the village after his long absence, Ganizo is able to thoughtfully narrate how the village ends up with no real leader.

However, despite being thoughtful, it is surprising how he fails to reason with Menyani over their difference and be able to solve the matter amicably. Instead, the feud between the two only grows from one stage to the next.

4.2.5 Tionenji

Tinenenji's younger sister. Her name means 'what can we say?' When Tinenenji is sick, she comes to take care of her and Kavumba. She even escorts her sister for admission at the mission hospital. She is too young to take on the responsibilities that life throws at her but she does her

best to embrace the challenges. In this case her name can be considered to be playing a predictive role, foretelling what her future would be, one in which she would face predicaments that would shock her immensely. Just a young girl, forced by life's circumstances to take care of her nephew, she is oblivious to the suffering and poverty that she encounters trying to care for Kavumba and herself.

4.2.6. Chokani

His name is synonymous with the phrase 'get out of'. He is one of the young men who leaves the village to go in search of employment on the mines. He returns to Banda's village transformed in more ways than one. He is dressed differently. In a manner that shows that his economic status had changed and was at a different level from the rest of the villagers. However, his feet are bare and bleeding from the long foot journey he undertakes from the Copperbelt. His name has been changed to *Foloko* because he worked in the kitchen of the mine boss. His act of leaving the village to work on the mines where he returns with the littlest transformation which makes him imagine himself to be superior to the rest of the villagers. As his name suggests, he has come out of his ways of the village and entered the world of the white man. However, he has not fully understood or acquired the white man's ways of life and wealth such that even his appearance when he returns to the village is a contrast and combination of both.

4.3. Themes

In line with the moral-philosophical theory, it can be argued that the themes that have been used in this text are the author's means of outlining what he believes to be desirable behavior in the readers. For instance, the theme of culture has shown what is acceptable of the Chewa culture and what is expected of the people. Similarly, the themes have also been used to down play the undesirable or foul elements of society such as colonial influence, poverty and loneliness and fights and grudges.

The themes of the text have been elaborated as following;

4.3.1. Culture

Culture has been portrayed as a very important aspect of the society in the text. The members of this society place great importance on observing cultural duties. It is taken as a sacrilege not to observe what their culture requires of them. Practical examples include the way Ganizo and Menyani clash over the fact that Menyani does not honor his cultural obligation to pay Naphiri for the role that she plays in the birth of his son and how Menyani is embarrassed for not being familiar with the cultural ways of speaking during a court case;

According to our village way of life, it was the duty of a father to report the birth of a child to the keeper of the bwalo. Father had ignored this. Custom demanded that father kill a goat and give the head and one hind-leg to the bwalo keeper. (Masiye, 1970: 11)

The standoff between Ganizo and Menyani, causes a fight to ensue between them right at the *Bwalo*. This displeases the councilors at the *Bwalo* who later demand that the two pay for their sacrilegious behavior. The elders order Ganizo to pay Naphiri who had become a victim of their quarrel. Menyani is ordered to give Ganizo the impending payment for the midwifery services his wife had rendered to Tinenenji as well as give a white goat to the *Bwalo* for his irrational behavior (Masiye, 1970:15-16).

It is also believed that the gods are displeased at this sacrilege, thus punishing the entire village with strange calamities. Hence ‘the thing’ that rushes through the village has been interpreted by Naphiri as being a sure sign that Thunga, the serpent is not happy with the behavior of the villagers in his absence and that he seeks the blood of the evil doer, whom the villagers had unanimously declared as Menyani (Masiye, 25).

Similarly, when Menyani decides to take on additional wives, his first wife is only expected to respect his decision and never to complain or protest. When a wife does not question the husband's actions, it is interpreted as a show of respect for the head of the house. Men in this village are thus able to leave their families behind to go and work in the mines without having to worry about their families being left behind because their culture gave men supremacy over the women folk as decision makers as well as leaders of the community. For the women folk however, the case is different because they have no other option than to stay at home to take care of the family and obey the leadership of the menfolk (Masiye, 1970: 59, 84-85).

The strong belief in cultural norms by this community justifies why most of the activities and relationships within the text are explained in close relation to their culture, justifying and even criticizing them based on their cultural demands. The arrangements for departure that the men make are said to be done in secrecy because they fear that the witch doctors might cast spells of bad luck on the paths of those that intend to travel and things would not go well for them. It is part of the people's culture to revere the witch doctors and fear to offend them for fear of having spells cast on them (Masiye, 1970:85).

When a bereavement has occurred in the village, caution is taken to observe the cultural funeral rites as a way of keeping peace with the spiritual forces. Funeral beer is brewed, and the bereaved is also expected to observe a certain dress code to symbolize their grief . Further, other funeral rites such as burning down the hut of the deceased alongside their belongings are also emphatically observed. They believe that if it is not done, the spirits of the deceased will not rest in peace. After the death of Tinenenji, her close relatives have their heads shaved as well as her hut and belongings burnt .Similarly the huts of Headman Banda and Menyani are demolished and burnt down to mark the end of the mourning rites (Masiye, 1970:56, 57,153).

The reverence with which the people hold the spiritual being(s) they worship is laced with both fear and gratitude for the wrath and mercies of their creator. When they have offended him, the punishments are grave as they have to pay dearly, sometimes even with a human life. At the same time, Thunga is highly regarded for the mercies that he shows his people regardless of the many adversaries that come their way. During the meeting that Kavumba calls to find out what has been happening in his absence, he also voices his adoration of Thunga for having held the village together even at a time when they had no leader(Masiye,1970:25,29-33,156).

In the Chewa culture, polygamy is a widely accepted practice. This explains why the action taken by Menyani to take on two additional wives is never questioned by anyone including his first wife Tinenenji. Women and men alike have accepted this type of marriage as being part of their culture. However, in these polygamous marriages, as seen in the case of Menyani, there is a lot of oppression and injustice that goes on both on the women and the children. Menyani literally abandons his first wife and their son Kavumba to be with his newer families. The two are left to fend for themselves without any form of support from the man who is supposed to be their protector (Masiye, 1970:10, 14, 17).

4.3.2. Fights and Grudges

Once people have clashed or differed on a particular issue, it takes a long time for them to resolve their differences, if ever. Each party holds on to the conviction that they are in the right and should thus not be reprimanded over their actions. This attitude fuels the arguments and their resolution becomes almost impossible.

This theme has contributed to the unfolding of the story as it is responsible for most of what happens in the text. For instance, Captain Marais is embittered because of his son's death at the hands of the African boys whose food he had taken forcefully. This embitterment causes him to

develop a fatalistic attitude towards life and is especially directing his anger towards the young African recruits he always preferred to call 'Piccaninnies'. He has failed to find an amicable resolve to the bitter loss of his son (Masiye, 1970:134-135).

Similarly, the feud between Menyani and Ganizo causes the village to be divided into two factions, each supporting one of the two conflicting parties. Each time the two clash in a fight, it is because none of them is willing to accept defeat or even retreat and let the argument slide. The hatred between them is fuelled by how they both hold on to the grudges they have harbored against each other. It is also the reason Menyani flees the village to go to the mines where life is said to be more bearable economically (Masiye, 1970:12, 29). The people of Banda's village also begin to entertain the thought that perhaps the headman is being too lenient on Menyani for his insolence and unwillingness to observe the simple customs of the village thus fanning his difference with Ganizo even further. This causes a rift to develop between the two groups that had differing views on who was right or wrong in the whole 'Menyani-Ganizo saga'. When the group of villagers that had accompanied Headman Banda to the court case at the chief's palace returns, they are divided in two groups each representing the party they favored in the argument (Masiye, 1970: 15, 81).

The disagreement about who was to marry Thandiwe, between Masoanjole and Kavumba also leads to the unfolding of many other activities in the text; because Kavumba is found guilty of committing adultery with Thandiwe who is technically Masoanjole's wife, he is detained and is later shipped to the war front, leaving Masoanjole to marry Thandiwe. Consequently, the village remains without an heir because neither Menyani nor Kavumba is available to take up the responsibility. They both had left the homestead because of the differences or antagonisms they had there.

Even when differences between two feuding parties give birth to something positive, it is still hard for them to see eye to eye. The young men who are rounded up by the tax collector with the help of Menyani are taken to Chipata to work as bwana Ukali's carriers.

The young men were all tax defaulters. They had no money and so Bwana Ukali's carrier corps received new recruits...not all the captured youths appreciate the role father played in the whole affair. They nursed a grudge against him. Some shook their fists at him. (Masiye, 1970:69)

When they return to the village a few months later, they have not only been transformed by appearance as they now look much cleaner and healthier by the village standards, but they have also gained economically from the employment. Even so, they still hold on to the grudge against Kavumba for having revealed their hiding places to the tax collector. They compose songs that taunt and ridicule Kavumba for being a telltale adding that no one was safe in this village of Banda where there are people to catch you on the tax collector's behalf (Masiye, 1970: 70-72).

4.3.3. Colonial Influence

The story is set in the colonial period when Northern Rhodesia, now Zambia, is under the rule of the British government. Even though the local chiefs and headmen were in existence to enforce the cultural law, they also paid allegiance to the colonial government by having men pay tax to the white rulers. Whoever tried to evade this responsibility was severely dealt with. Whenever it was time to pay tax, people always had ways of avoiding the payments which angered the colonial masters and the headmen were put to task about their followers and sometimes even arrested. This also led the tax collectors to device more creative ways of determining the number of men in the villages who were eligible to pay tax. This gives reason as to why the situation of the tax collector who pretends to be a big game hunter raises a lot of issues in Banda's Village (Masiye, 1970:64).

Much as the villages are run using customary laws, the village leaders, headmen and chiefs alike are always cautious about how they govern their subjects, not to anger or even go against the colonialists' rules of governing. When Naphiri states that Thunga's anger would only be appeased by the blood of the wrongdoer, headman Banda pleads with her to consider using an animal instead because he fears what the colonial masters would do if they heard that a leader had allowed a murder to take place in the name of tradition (Masiye, 1970:64). In essence, the traditional leaders do not have an independent form of governance; they always look to the colonialists for approval and are only able to convene over smaller cases. All matters whose punishment would normally be death by traditional standards, for instance, are either referred to colonial courts or the offenders taken to colonialists as laborers of whatever form required. "Chief Tembo summed up the case. Ganizo was found guilty and the case was referred to the District Commissioner at the Boma. The chief was afraid that if he meted out village justice, the white man would get to know about it and there would be trouble." (Masiye, 1970:78).

There is also the European or 'white' type of education that is enforced by the Britons whose structure parallels that of African tradition. While the village type of education focusses on teaching crafts and the cultural life of the people, in the formal type of education, learners are expected to formally attend lessons and sit for an examination at the end of the course. However, amongst the Africans, this white type of education is not considered important or even useful because it does not cater for the traditional and cultural lifestyles of the people. It is considered too elitist to cater for their needs and they do not find it beneficial. This explains why most Africans or villagers are not interested in taking part in this formal education in preference for the traditional type which deals with the practical aspects of their daily livelihood in the villages. Once he has chosen the white man's education, his mates ridicule Kavumba: 'My decision

brought ridicule and ostracism from the other children. They taunted me and generally made me feel an outcast.' (Masiye, 1970:87).

While it is Kavumba's dream that the white type of education would catapult him out of village life and into a world full of knowledge and wealth to the level of the Europeans, things did not materialize as he had imagined they would. The whites regard the education of the Africans as being irrelevant and unprogressive so much that even when an African does acquire the education of the whites, it was not considered as being at a satisfactory level to be used for any serious position in the rankings of the white officials. An example is the instance when Kavumba's application is crudely rejected because of the poor sentence constructions, as such. the applicant had not shown capability to handle the applied for position effectively(Masiye,100). It is also at the district commissioner's office that Kavumba meets several other young men like himself seeking employment, but being turned down because they are only qualified in the village type of education ,which to the white administrators, is irrelevant to the way they run government.

The Africans have been immensely affected by how colonialism has upset their livelihoods. They prefer all things that are linked to the white's ways of life. Kavumba blames Menyani's disregard for the village's way of life on the influence that the white man's world in Chipata, where he has found a job, has had on him.

Father had been in revolt against the established village life ever since he had found work with a white man in Chipata. He said Chipata was a large village and its life was different; not like practiced at the Bwalo. Slowly, I begun to understand father's strange ways and obsession. The white man's village of Chipata was having unsettling effect on his life...he had become a misfit in a village which would need his leadership in the near future (Masiye, 1970:14).

Further, news about how life is more bearable economically on the Copperbelt causes a massive shift of the most active population of the village. The accounts given by those that are actually coming back from the mines, make the young men desire to go and experience the city life. When Chokani returns to Banda's village from the mines where he had gone to work, he returns looking immaculate but for his bleeding feet that provided a contrast to the rest of his body. He tells the men at the *bwalo* how his name had now changed to *Foloko* because he worked in the kitchen of an underground mine boss with forks and spoons. He is actually proud of his new name and tells boisterous stories about his *missus* and the *bwana*. Despite Chokani having had a job which, by village standards, would be deemed deplorable (for a man to work in the kitchen), the mere fact that he had worked in the kitchen of a white master, his job becomes a huge attraction to the other men at the *bwalo*.

As he tells the men stories about life on the mines, *Foloko* feels he is well above the standards of the villagers. He castigates the men for how they look scruffy and unkempt remarking that they are unhygienic. What Chokani forgets is that he too belonged to the same village and group of men he castigates, the only difference now is that he has experienced the much talked about glamorous life at the mines, while the other men had stayed home and helped preserve their cultural ways of life (Masiye, 1970:84).

The disparities in the ways of doing things between these two groupings of people go beyond education and governance, and it affects every aspect of life, perpetuating a relationship of master and servant between the Britons and the Africans respectively. Even the Africans that had experienced the life of the whites also felt closer to the whites than to their own type. That is why the Africans wanted to find ways of experiencing the life of the Britons, unbeknownst to them, degrading their own culture and ways of life.

4.3.4. Poverty and Loneliness.

Despite the fact that the soils of Banda's village are said to have been fertile, there are a number of instances in the text when it is mentioned that there is not enough food for the people of headman Banda's village. These food shortages are precipitated by a number of factors such as famine and the chief of which is that the young men are flocking to the mines to experience the white man's ways of life, leaving only women, children and the aged who are not able to grow enough food to sustain the village. This is what leads to poor harvests that people can hardly have decent meals or even have enough food to share with others that do not belong to their homesteads: 'People ate their meals in secret, fearing to share with others' (Masiye, 1970:59).

Seeing that the living conditions in the village are only becoming harder, the villagers are thus further attracted to the shimmering life of the mines. Where they can work and earn money that can enable them to survive with more ease. Kavumba for instance, is attracted to the white man's education because he hopes to find better life using the acquired white man's education (Masiye, 1970:86).

It is this same poverty that sees the cultural structures of the villagers disintegrate; Kaligo the man in whose home Kavumba hopes to stay as he searches for employment, fails to provide the security and assistance that Kavumba hoped for because he is also hard hit by poverty and an extra burden will just make the poverty in Kaligo's home unbearable. This negates what their own culture demands; that families must always welcome into their homes people that need assistance without looking at them as burdens. When Kavumba arrives at Kaligo's house he is greeted by the inexcusable poverty in that home; *"all of a sudden, one of the children succeeded at unwrapping my bundle. A dry scone dropped to the ground. The children fought fiercely for its possession. Soon, it was all gone. They shared even without asking me"* (Masiye, 1970:100).

4.3.5. Destiny

According to the Oxford Advanced Dictionary eighth edition (2009:98), destiny has been defined as "...the ultimate agency regarded as predetermining the course of events or as an event (or course of events) that will inevitably happen in the future". It might be argued that there seems to be a pattern of events or happenings in one's life, always leading to what is pre destined to happen to them. Every step one takes is always a pace closer to an ending pre-determined by forces higher than themselves.

At the birth of Tinenenji and Menyani's son, Kavumba, an ominous sign in the form of a whirl wind appears, he is also named in line with the sign that surrounds his birth. Ironically, he has no idea how his name is aligned to the events that are yet to become the status quo of his life (Masiye, 1970:9). Regardless of what course of action he chooses to take, Kavumba always seems to be falling back into the cycle of the whirl-wind, ever being thrown around in confusion; he has no fatherly guidance from his own father who is only interested in his other wives. When his only comforter Tinenenji dies, there is no one else to look up to for protection and provisions. Kavumba makes an attempt at exploring the white man's education as a way of securing his future but he does not achieve his dreams as planned. Instead, things unfold in Kavumba's life in ways that he does not plan for and they eventually define his life. A good example is that of how he ends up at the war front after being found guilty of adultery at chief Tembo's court and sent to the district administrator's office. He later returns home to be installed as village headman while commanding a lot of respect among the villagers including Ganizo and Masoanjole (Masiye, 1970:150-156).

In the same way, the villagers of headman Banda's village, are always at the mercy of powers that are beyond them. They are always careful never to anger them while being eager to please,

appease and impress in order to save themselves from their wrath. Even when the village has seen so many young men move to the Copperbelt, abandoning their responsibility to take care of the women, children and the aged, the gods have been praised for keeping the village in one piece regardless of the absence of an heir to take up the leadership role (Masiye, 1970:86,156).

4.4 The link between the Charactonyms and the Themes of the Text.

The text whose setting is mostly in Banda's village in the eastern province has used a majority of names from the eastern province, some characters have names of English origin. However, it is also important to note that the text has also managed to employ the Moral Philosophical theory as well as the Sense and No-sense theories of onomastics in putting across the main themes of the text. As will be noted in the analysis below, most of the names used in the text are aligned with the No-Sense theory of Onomastics.

4.4.1 Chokani

This character is known to be one of the young men that leave the village in search of employment in the mines on the Copperbelt. His name is Chewa and means to 'come out'. When he returns home to Banda's village, he is totally transformed economically and physically. He tells stories of how glamorous life at the mines is and why it is beneficial for other young men to go and search for employment there as well. However, despite the economic and physical transformation that he has undergone, Chokani is said to have bleeding feet that create a sharp contrast with the rest of his body. The contrast that has been created between his elegant attire and his bleeding feet resonates with the meaning of his name in that, even though he leaves the village to go and work on the Copperbelt, he returns to the village where he visits his family and colleagues and he brings with him a new image of personality and his outlook of life which contradicts with his cultural ways of life.

In this regard, his name is aligned with the theme of culture in that even though he leaves the village and his culture to go and pursue what he considers a better life, his culture is still an important part of his life because it does not cease to be a part of his life, regardless of his newly acquired economic status. However, it is also from this description of contradicting appearance and his bleeding bare feet that gives the implication that there is a contradicting relationship between the modernism that has come about through the western influence as well as the traditional culture which is bleeding from being mistreated by the lack of consideration from its own people who have opted for modernisation over the traditional ways and roots that they still cannot cut from their lives completely. Chokani also resonates with the theme of colonial influence that has been identified in the reading of the text. Africans and the people of Banda's village have suffered the influence of westernization which has also bred colonialism. The westerners that have colonized these people have drilled into the Africans the belief that everything that is western is good and that all that is African or black, and is therefore bad and retrogressive. Colonial influence has brainwashed them to accept such ideologies in the name of progressiveness and obedience to the authority governing them.

4.4.2 Kavumba

He is the main character in the novel and his name is synonymous with a whirlwind. He is closely related to his name especially because a whirlwind appears at the time of his birth. It has also been observed that the happenings in his life are in line with his name meaning in the way he is never fully settled but always being thrown around by life's misfortunes and problems. These problems ranged from being abandoned by his own father, to his mother dying when he is still very young leaving him in the care of an equally young aunt, with no support from Menyani's other wives or any other elderly person of the village. Among his own peers, he fails to fit in because he has had no guide of what is required of him as a male child in the village life.

His name can be aligned with the theme of destiny because his life is filled with events and happenings that he has no control over; he finds himself in the midst of circumstances that he has no control over just in the same way that a whirlwind throws around the particles in its way that have no control on how they are tossed about. It is the factor of destiny that highlights the poverty that Kavumba grows up in. Without anyone to raise him and take care of all his needs; he does not have enough food nor funds to support him through school. He instead has to do menial works as a way to raise money to fend with and help him travel to the city for secondary education.

The name Kavumba, can be considered operational under the No-Sense theory in that, when he is being named, Kavumba as a character or as a person has not yet exhibited any character traits that are synonymous with that of an actual whirlwind but that as he grows and develops, his life turns out in the same way as his name's meaning.

The other theme that this name enhances is that of grudges and fights that has also been noted in the reading of the text. From the time he is born, Kavumba's life is characterised by fights and differences by those that are around him; his parents and the *bwalo* keeper have an argument because his father, Menyani, does not dully appreciate the *bwalo* keeper for the role that his wife had played in delivering his first child into the world. This difference escalates with neither of the parties being willing to give it up. It is this same grudge that causes Kavumba to be alienated from the *bwalo* and to fail to learn the ways of the village because his father avoids going to the *bwalo* where Ganizo holds a position of influence as *bwalo* keeper. Kavumba also hates his father for behaving in ways that he considers unacceptable thus keeps avoiding him and clings to his mother instead.

It is also the same grudge that has grown between Ganizo and Menyani that exacerbates the gravity of the situation of the tax collectors and the capturing of the young men that were trying to evade payment of tax. This leads to the self-exile of Menyani, ultimately leaving the village without an heir when headman Banda dies.

4.4.3 Ganizo

He is the *bwalo* keeper and an elder in headman Banda's village. His name means 'a thought' or simply 'thought'. He is also the husband to the village's Nyamkungwi, Naphiri. This explains why he picks up a fight with Menyani because the later has not paid him with a goat head in appreciation of Ganizo's wife for having helped Tinenenji during child birth. Ganizo treats all matters earnestly and is very thoughtful in his analysis of matters. He takes the ways and norms of their culture seriously and despises Menyani for not doing the same.

His name enhances the theme of culture in the way the character is thoughtful and considerate about preserving and observing the ways of their culture. He uses each opportunity to remind those he speaks with about their culture. He also enhances the theme of fights and grudges in the way he has kept the thought of injury and insult that has been caused to him by Menyani. He holds onto the grudge and fuels it with justifications of what is acceptable or not in their culture.

4.4.4 Menyani

He is headman Banda's only son and the father to Kavumba and his name means 'beat'. Its implication is probably that the name bearer should beat or outdo all others at every activity or venture he is involved in. Similarly, he would be expected to fight for the good of those around him in all their endeavors. Instead, the named character finds himself entangled in constant fights and arguments with Ganizo the *Bwalo* keeper. Menyani is also in bad standing with the rest of the village because they feel he does not support the cultural systems of the village in that way he

does not pay attention to help uphold their cultural values even by just being available at the *bwalo*.

His name enhances the theme of culture in that he always fights against it rather than fight to preserve it. He is always against the cultural norms arguing that they are outdated especially in comparison to the ways of the white man that he had been exposed to in Chipata where he had gone to work. He has been influenced by the ways of the white man and forgotten about his own ways and culture. Instead of fighting for the preservation of his own cultural life by being an active participant, he contributes to its distortion by how he upholds the ways of the white man instead of those of his own culture.

4.4.5 Tinenenji and Tionenji

These are two sisters that have faced the wrath of poverty and loneliness in ways that are more similar than they are different. Tinenenji is the older of the two and is Menyani's first wife. At the time that she is giving birth to her only child, Kavumba, a whirlwind appears and from that point onwards, we notice that her marriage and life in general is filled with turmoil and pain as she fails to rest from one predicament to the other. She is merely holding on to the ropes of survival in her day to day life. Her name is a question 'what shall we say?' It can be classified under the no sense theory because it only bears real meaning to the life of the bearer long after her naming. It can thus be deemed to have been a prophecy of how the events or situations in her life would be so hard as to leave one without words with which to express themselves. When her husband Menyani abandons her, she does not pursue him or nag him about his responsibilities of taking care of her and Kavumba, instead she suffers silently in her loneliness and poverty.

Tionenji's life is not very different from that of her elder sibling in that she also falls into poverty and loneliness as she attempts to help her sister in her time of illness. Her name is also a question

interpreted 'What shall we see?'. In this case, the circumstances that surround the birth of this character have not been outlined to the reader, it can thus be taken that her name was also a prophetic outlook of what the character's life would turn out to be especially in relation to the meaning of her name. While she tries her best to take care of her sister and take her to seek the white man's medical assistance, Tiku as she is fondly called, only falls into the trap of greater responsibility from which she fails to escape. She has no elderly person to look up to, for help, or to take care of her sister and Kavumba who is just as young as herself. She is thus forced to carry the burden herself. The consequent death of her sister places an even bigger burden on her shoulders having to fend for herself and Kavumba.

The two characters have enhanced the theme of poverty and loneliness in the way they do not have anyone to look out for them especially in their times of need. When Tinenenji is abandoned by her husband who spends most of his time with his other wives, she has to take care of herself and her son with no one else to help her. Similarly, Tiku is forced to take on the responsibility of fending for young Kavumba single-handedly. The two are lonely and poor in their predicaments and they also signify other women like themselves that have been left to fend for themselves without anyone's help regardless of how dire their situations are.

The theme of destiny is also enhanced by these two characters in the way that they are helpless in the predicaments that befall them. There does not seem to be any means of avoiding or preventing their situations from turning out the way they do. They simply accept what has been predestined for their lives.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the names of the main characters in the text as well as the salient themes portrayed therein. It has also highlighted the names that fall under the No Sense theory in the reading of the named text. The next chapter will discuss the names in *A Cowrie of Hope* in relation to how they actualize the themes in the text.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Role of Character Names in the Actualisation of Themes in a Cowrie of Hope.

5.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the names that have been encountered in the text *A Cowrie of Hope*, as well as their meanings especially from their formation or adaptation or indeed their language of origin as well as the culture surrounding their formation. The salient themes of the text will also be discussed in this chapter, as well as the role that characters play in the actualisation of these themes.

5.2 Character Names in A Cowrie of Hope

The names that have been used in the text *A Cowrie of Hope* are mostly Mambwe names from the Northern Province of Zambia. The other names are corruptions of English names that have become widely accepted as local language names. Apart from the nick name 'Pantoka' given to Belita after her grandmother notices her feisty behaviour, all the names that have been analysed do not have an outright connection with the personality of the character at the time of naming. This implies that, Pantoka is the only name that is aligned with the Sense theory of onomastics, while all the other names are aligned with the No-Sense theory of onomastics.

The author makes an attempt to clarify the name meanings of the two major characters of the text 'Sula' and 'Nasula', in close relation to the way they carry themselves as well as the way they relate with the other characters in the text. The other charactonyms have not had their names explained but have also been carefully chosen such that their names' meanings are closely related to the activities or happenings of the character's life as well as the thematic frame of the text.

The names that have been encountered in the text include the following:

5.2.1 Isaki

His name is a corruption of the English name Isaac. A common figure in Bible times who was almost killed as a lamb on the altar by his father Abraham, to be burnt as an offering to God. Isaac did not grumble nor complain about his father's intention to slaughter him. He merely obeys his father as they go to the mountain and only wants to do what his father instructs. Clearly, the Charactonym is nothing like the Isaac of the bible as he is only determined to satisfy his own desires and never to act in a selfless manner (Genesis 22:6-10).

Working in league with his father and other relatives, Isaki grabs all the wealth Nasula and her daughter would have held on to for survival. He even tears to pieces what was supposed to be the last will of Winelo Chiswebe written on a piece of paper in his death bed. By so doing, he even disregards the late brother's last wish, with the view to satisfy his own greedy desire to amass more wealth. He insists on marrying the late brother's widow in the name of taking care of her and their daughter. In actual sense, Isaki was only aiming at satisfying his lust for women which was his widely known trait. He lacks the virtue of Wisdom, to appreciate the genuine care that the two needed from the Chiswebe family especially that their provider was no longer there. Instead, he only exhibits his selfish ambition to amass more wealth and an extra wife.

5.2.2 Sula Chiswebe

Sula' is a Mambwe name which simply means 'letting things be' or 'letting things go'. She is the only child of Belita Bowa and Winelo Chiswebe. While she does not fight or argue with her friends for taunting her poor appearance at school, she fights their ridicule by working hard in school and outsmarting all of them. None of them equals her academic performance. She is also wise as she is able to handle the ridicule of her school mates without even telling her mother. Sula is also able to talk and reason with her mother like an adult would (Sinyangwe, 2000:11,12).

5.2.3 Nasula

Nasula is a teknonym, her daughter being Sula. Like her daughter's name, Sula, the name giver may have intended for the name bearer to live up to what her name suggests. Despite taking part of her name from her daughter, she does not live as is expected of her. One would expect that she would live up to the name and let things be, not pursuing anything that is beyond her. Belita Bowa, is Nasula's real name. Her first name being an inflection of an English name Bertha. Her last name fits the sense theory standpoint that; the name bearer should become what their name states. Bowa, however, in the local language is a mushroom. A vegetable that easily rots or wastes away. However, she is not anything like her name. Instead, she is determined and courageous, and always pursues what she feels is right for her. The author actually mentions that 'she is determination itself' (Sinyangwe, 2000: 16)

5.2.4 Winelo Chiswebe

Belita's husband, whose name means 'to stop' is also an equivalent of 'Wanel' used as a name in Chewa. This man is said to have married her and taken her away from the village into town, obviously promising the young woman heaven. Winelo it seems, is also a name that has been coined with the inspiration of a foreign language especially for the reason that the original form sounded good to the ear.

Unlike the other Chiswebe men encountered in the text, Winelo is able to show compassion for Belita and her daughter by being able to consider their wellbeing and survival when he dies. He writes a will that favors the two by setting apart some of his possessions that would ease their survival. However, the other men of his family refuse to respect his wish as indicated in the note that he has written before dying. On the other hand, Winelo, just like the other Chiswebe men encountered in the text, is self-centered and lacks wisdom in the way he handles or relates to his wife Nasula. He constantly insults and belittles her for the simple fact that he is her provider and

she has nowhere else to run. His death comes about because he has sustained gunshot wounds as he is shot-at in an act of stealing. He raises his money using deceitful ways and his wife is unaware until when he is caught stealing paint and shot. Just like the other men of his family, he is dishonest and self-centered, always looking for quicker ways to raise more money.

5.2.5 Chiswebe

The name is synonymous with a whirlwind or even wilderness. A state of confusion and possible pain. The man who had fathered Winelo and Isaki and all of the Chiswebe family, had really fathered confusion and pain. Firstly, he fails to control his sons or even give them a better direction when they seem to be on the path of wrong. He does not reprimand his children and family members when they grab the deceased Winelo's wealth from his widow, instead, he is part of them as they grab the property and mistreat Nasula. He fails to even conduct follow up visits and checks on his granddaughter's well-being despite being aware of the fact that Nasula had no source of income to raise Sula or even send her to school. He is pain itself, inflicting it even on his own grandchild, all in order to satisfy his selfish motives.

5.2.6 Lunga

He is the youngest of the Chiswebe's children. His name is ambiguous as it could either mean 'hunt' or 'to add salt to food'. In both instances however, we see how he serves as an important reminder of the pomp that was once a part of the Chiswebe family. Unlike a hunter who brings back his kill and keeps a reminder or souvenir, the Chiswebes have nothing to point at for what they once enjoyed or used to have. Lunga will only share in their spoils through the memories perhaps in the stories and not the spoils thereof. In a way, he only adds salt to the injury of poverty as there is no hope to revamp the farm nor educate him so that he would in return bring economic benefits to the family through his education (Sinyangwe,2000: 28)

5.2.7 Pantoka

This is Nasula's nickname which implies being feisty, or someone who fights her way through things or situations. This was a nickname given to her by her grandmother upon seeing how she always kicked her legs about even as an infant. This name is a description of what Belita already is at the point of naming. It can also be noted that the fighting spirit that she exhibits as an infant, is a trait that lives on even after she grows up.

She is determined to fight against what she considers an injustice to her as well as fight for whatever she wants to achieve. She resists being inherited by Isaki regardless of the fact that her decision spells doom in that she would be without a provider for herself and her daughter. She fights through her struggles of poverty and loneliness and manages to send her daughter to school. Nasula is so determined that she manages to bring the notorious con artist to book regardless of the discouraging remarks from those who feel they know how invincible Gode is. Her name is well aligned with the theme of determination (Sinyangwe, 2000:16,8,104, 92,122,128-141)

5.2.8 Chitanti

She is Sula's great grandmother who nicknamed Belita 'Pantoka' when she was still an infant. One always kicking her legs about in protest or for the sake of achieving what she wants. 'Chitanti' is said to mean or imply 'a ladder'. She is in fact a ladder for Belita's character, having foretold what Belita would be or in fact already was. This is seen in the way that Belita simply follows what her Grandmother's name choice predicts for her future especially basing on a character trait that has already been seen in her. The act of having named Belita thus, also places a status of importance on the name giver because she has highlighted the strong trait of Nasula and ultimately the thematic structure of the text.

5.2.9 Gode Silavwe

The con man who steals Nasula's bag of beans. His name is a short form of the English word or name 'Golden'. Just like Nalukui had described the conmen in the city, as being as well dressed as the president himself, Gode is always immaculately dressed and can never be thought to be a con artist at first glance. He speaks so convincingly that he manages to collect Nasula's bag of beans with a lot of ease. His name therefore does not resonate with his personality as the 'goldenness' in him does no one around him any good, apart from himself.

5.2.10 Ntazana

This name means 'I do not find'. He is the young boy that Nalukui assigns to see Nasula off at intercity bus terminus. To ensure she gets on the right bus and that she is not harassed by the call boys. He is described as being shabbily dressed; most likely because the economic conditions are harsh even for the younger generation. Ironically, the bus which he helps Nasula board is black in color, symbolizing the hopelessness and disillusionment that Nasula feels once she is on it. Ntazana leads Nasula to further disillusionment by helping her get on the black bus where she feels very isolated from the world around her.

On the other hand, being on the black bus is what stirs Nasula to return to Lusaka in pursuit of the thief of her bag of beans. She feels very lost and detached from the world around her that she finds it necessary to return to Lusaka to find Gode, thereby addressing the unrest that she felt. This Charactonym is closely tied to the theme of poverty from the way he dresses as well as how Nasula's poverty plays out clearly in her head while travelling on the black bus. Further, she also exhibits determination in the way her lack of peace and sense of belonging in the black bus causes her to return to Lusaka to find Gode.

5.2.11 Nalukui

She is Nasula's older acquaintance and her 'guardian angel'. Her name may mean mother of 'Lukui'. It could also show that she comes from the 'wood' clan in Mambwe land. Like a log of wood, she provides the strength and support to Nasula as no other person is able to. She is strong, full of wisdom and genuinely cares for Nasula.

She always conveniently appears, to render help to Nasula, even when least expected. When she does, she gives great comfort to Nasula and also helps her face her predicaments. Nalukui is also a fountain of wisdom to Nasula and she has come to love and respect her for the care she always showed her especially in her most difficult times when she had no one to turn to, Nalukui always stood firm to support her.

5.2.12 Samson Luhila

He is the chief of police who comes to the aid of Nasula when she receives no real help from the junior police officers. Unlike the Samson of the Bible who has a lot of physical power, Luhila exhibits authoritative power and he does mighty and great things with his power, no other is as powerful as he is. This character brings about justice for Nasula and he is also wise and determined to pursue justice regardless of who is involved.

5.3. Themes.

The text has exposed themes that are depictive of the period within which the story is set, the early 1990's. The period was crucial because of the change of governing systems that was taking place which in turn affected the socio-economic structures of the country as a whole. An example can be cited from the way money or even farming implements that were lent out in the one party state system, were viewed as mere gifts or even free money as people who borrowed would simply choose not to pay back their debts. This is not the case in the multiparty state as all

structures are checked including loans in form of implements and money being and are strictly collected(Sinyangwe 2000;30). In this regard, it can be argued that the author has successfully used the textual themes to paint a picture of the prevailing circumstances at the time.

The themes have shown the desirable traits such as wisdom and determination that one required to live through the difficult conditions of society then. At the same time, the author has managed to highlight the undesirable elements that were rife among the struggling populace especially in view of the harsh conditions that were prevalent at the time such as self-centeredness and poverty.

5.3.1. Poverty

Nasula and her daughter are poor, they can hardly survive or even eat. Their situation is especially aggravated by the fact that the decade is characterised by economic hardship. Apart from famine that had hit the country in the initial years of the decade, the change of political system from one party state to a multi-party state came with a lot of instability as so many governing structures had to change alongside the type of government (Sinyangwe, 2000:30) This explains why it is hard to secure the school requirements for young Sula. The attempts made by this pair to grow food for their own consumption is thwarted by bad weather that was evident not only in Swelini, her home village but also in the surrounding villages:

“...and the story of the misery of the nineties lay before her as it had done when she had passed through other villages and as it seemed it always was in Swelini, her own village; badly devastated crops, scorched land, a loud stringent air of lifelessness.” (Sinyangwe, 2000:19)

Such bad climatic conditions are coupled with an unscrupulous loan shark, Pupila, the well-known business man of the village, who gets loans of farming inputs from banks and in turn

lends to the people at an extra profit. He seeks to make more profit from the poor, thus furthering their poverty (Sinyangwe, 2000:39).

The once rich and powerful Chiswebes are plunged into even worse poverty after a failed farming season that leads to the forfeiture of most of their wealth when they fail to pay back a loan from the famous merchant bank, Cavmont. They have literally fallen from grace to squalor and poverty. This is also evident in how the once rich Chiswebes had become victims of poverty: 'Mangango farm had fallen from prosperity to poverty and squalor. There was dilapidation and unkemptness everywhere her eyes settled as she traversed the farm's village to the main house; the May air brittle with the tension of woe and suffering, held a stillness that smelt of death.' (Sinyangwe, 2000:21). Comfort or economic soundness is never guaranteed in this society as poverty can be anyone's portion at any juncture.

Gode Silavwe, the villain of the text, is also seen to be motivated by the rampant poverty in the country and the need to make money quickly if one is to survive at all. He preys on those in the markets that have come from faraway places and are unsuspecting of such swindlers like himself. He is dressed immaculately like the president himself and one cannot easily link him to such unscrupulous activities. The traders are only selling their various items because they wish to earn a little more income to better their own economic conditions. Poverty in the text has thus been seen as being responsible for the selfish attitude of the citizenry in both the rural and urban areas.

The act by the Chiswebes to grab from Nasula, all that has been left for her by her husband, is also motivated by poverty and the desire to amass more for themselves than any other person. Despite being regarded as being economically better off, one sees that they are merely at a different notch of poverty and also need to satisfy their 'hunger.' They grab the money, sell the

house and the goods therein, not even worrying where Nasula and her daughter would go thereafter (Sinyangwe, 2000:19).

Poverty has also been portrayed as being closely linked to the lack of sound reasoning abilities and even intellect among the various sets of people in the text. People like Gode and Pupila want to find shortcuts to amassing wealth at the expense of the poor; they never want to toil to meet their needs. Poverty is also seen to maim the reasoning abilities of the poverty stricken. For instance, the situation at Mangango is that of poverty, such that no one is even able to reason enough to think of means to free themselves from their poverty. Therefore, Poverty acts as both a cause and a condition for the manipulation as well as the selfish behaviours that have been exhibited by the characters in the text.

5.3.2. Wisdom

Despite the poverty that is prevalent among the women and general populace, wisdom is not completely absent among them. To the contrary, Nasula, regardless of being poor and a young widow, is a wise woman who is well able to reason with wisdom. She refuses to be inherited as a wife by Isaki, regardless of the fact that it spells doom for her, as she would be completely cut off from the property that her late husband left as her inheritance (Sinyangwe, 2000:8). Her choice shows wisdom even later in her life when she sees Isaki on his dying bed and sees the way his first wife had withered and was also so sickly, while Isaki's other wife had already died (Sinyangwe, 2000: 23). Nasula has chosen to educate her daughter regardless of the fact that she is not educated herself. She has chosen to fight for her daughter's future in order to secure it against such poverty and misery as she had encountered herself ,because of her lack of education.

It is only after Nasula has sought out the thief and received full payment for her merchandise that one can agree with her decision to return to Lusaka the first time she is returning to Swelini after

the theft ordeal at Kamwala market. She has wisely chosen to pursue Gode regardless of the many impediments that stand in her way; she has no decent shelter to sleep in after her long hours of searching through the streets and compounds of the city. She cannot afford to eat healthy meals to sustain herself through the strenuous exercise she has embarked on, but none of these challenges measure up to the success she scores at the end of the ordeal.

Sula too, despite being just a young girl, is able to talk and reason with her mother like an adult would. Her friends' demeanour towards her condition does not bother or make her sad, instead she is driven to work harder and beat them in their school work. She is wise enough to see what is important and focuses thereon. Each time she is engaged in serious talk with her mother, wisdom exudes from her ways of reasoning and she even comforts the mother.

Wisdom is also exhibited in the manner in which Samson Luhila handles Belita's case which brings about justice for the poor woman. He acts within his power to bring justice but also employs wisdom to see to it that the perpetrators are brought to book. He is not corruptible.

In contrast, this is one important virtue that the Chiswebes lack as is seen when they grab all of deceased Winelo's wealth, accuse the widow of murder and almost force her to become Isaki's additional wife (Sinyangwe, 2000: 8-9). They have made a statement, through their actions, that they are not concerned about the plight of the poor woman and her daughter as they are too myopic to see into the future or even imagine that they would perhaps be down on their luck one day and need to be rescued by the very woman and child they victimise. Ultimately, the two extremes of this virtue, wisdom, have largely influenced the activities as well as the actions of the characters of the novel.

5.3.3 Determination

The desire or even the drive to pursue what one longs to have is also very prominent in this text. It helps reveal the personalities of the characters in the text from the way they choose to face

their predicaments and or situations. This has formed one very important theme of the text. Nasula's rebellion against what the Chiswebes had ideally wanted for her and her young daughter Sula, illuminates the determination that Nasula has to survive against all odds. Once she refuses to be inherited as Isaki's wife alongside all the other goods that belonged to the late Winelo, she reinforces the poor relationship that exists between herself and her in-laws. As far as the Chiswebes are concerned, Nasula is just an ungrateful woman who had immeasurably benefited from her marriage to Winelo and most certainly led Winelo to his death with her never ending demands (Sinyangwe:8- 9). The Chiswebes view of Nasula is that of a demanding woman who is ungrateful for how her late husband picked her from the village to town and literally transformed her. Nasula does not fear the poverty that lies ahead of her as a consequence for her stand against the Chiswebes. She faces her daily struggles boldly.

Regardless of how much impediment stands in her way, Nasula runs after what she believes must be done and even does it herself. She raises her daughter single handedly, having vowed never to ask for her in-laws' help, she works as hard as she can to ensure that she raises her daughter. She puts Sula through school. Hard as it is, she never gives up. Even when she returns to Lusaka in search of the thief that had stolen her bag of beans, she is outrightly discouraged in three separate conversations on the same day that she arrives back in Lusaka, yet she does not relent nor get discouraged. The first old man she talks to when she revisits Kamwala market sympathises with her situation but clearly tells her it was a waste of time to try to find the thief, while in the second and third conversations that she makes trying to find out more about the thief, her idea to find Gode is laughed at (Sinyangwe, 2000: 114,117-118). Whilst having the picture of the polished and educated young girls that had been visiting Kalingalinga to champion girl child education, Nasula does not relent in her quest to raise money for her daughter's education (Sinyangwe, 2000:8, 37). She grows their own food, does menial works for other people just to be able to feed

her daughter and herself. She tells her daughter how she does not want her to be without an education that would enable her to stand on her own and never have to depend on a man for survival, because she had first-hand experience with poverty especially because of not having an education (Sinyangwe, 2000:37)

Even when she decides to return to Lusaka, though she does not have enough information to catch the thief, she does so with the full conviction that it is the best thing to do for herself and Sula. Further, she pursues the thief single handedly until she finds him. During her pursuit of the swindler, she is not ashamed to look foolish or even to become homeless in her search for what she feels is right for her and her daughter.

Sula too, despite being young and poor, is determined to pursue an education and does not focus on distractions common to young people her age. When her mother worries about Sula's plight especially amongst her peers, Sula's outlook about her own situation of poverty in relation to that of her mates surprises her mother. Nasula discovers that she is only determined to attain the education her mother had dreamt for her and nothing else worries her (Sinyangwe, 2000: 73-76).

Luhila's determination to see that justice is served in the poor woman's case is also worth mentioning. He strongly reprimands both Gode and the constable, punishing them for the crime they had committed. He does not falter by favouring them because their status is higher than that of Nasula, but instead humiliates them in her presence.

5.3.4 Justice for All

Some of the agents of justice want to ensure that justice is always served regardless of who is involved, just as Samson Luhila pursues justice in favour of poor Nasula. He is persistent in making sure that she receives what is rightly hers.

Sometimes, justice is pursued silently and not physically, as is seen in the actions of the older man at Kamwala market who helps Belita with her transport fare back to the village. In his own right, he is trying to help ease Nasula's burden of having to look for money for the bus fare in addition to her quest for her daughter's school fees. While she does board a bus that would take her home to Swelini, she disembarks once it gets to the first town out of Lusaka and returns to Lusaka to search for Gode. The old man has also helped her pursue justice in more ways than he might have thought possible. If she did not have any money, her search for Gode would have been even more difficult as she would not have been able to even eat to keep her strength. However, the most common form of the pursuit of justice is that which is undertaken physically. Belita Bowa physically combs through the streets of Lusaka in search of the thief, single-handedly. She pursues and catches the thief. Belita runs around physically searching for the culprit and brings him to book. Similarly, Samson Luhila takes physical and practical measures towards attaining justice for the poor woman. He uses his power in speech and action to ensure that actions are taken that bring about justice for the woman in need (Sinyangwe,2000:143). In the three types of pursuit for justice that have been outlined above, it can be stated that the pursuit of justice can take different forms and that each form is effective in the different contexts used.

5.3.5 Self/ Selfish ambition

The nineties have been largely described as difficult years. Apart from the poverty that was rife during this period, people had also become self-centred. Societies had moved away from the common norm of living and working together as one people, a common feature of the decade that preceded the nineties. Individuals now focused on themselves, amassing wealth for themselves alone, even if it meant doing so at the expense of others. Gode Silavwe and Pupila are two common examples of self-centeredness.

The elderly man at Kamwala market who helps Nasula with the bus fare back to Senga hill shows his selflessness in sharing his earnings from what he had sold with the poor woman. In spite of the fact that the decade was rife with poverty and people were more concerned about their selfish ambitions above considering what others desired or even deserved, he is willing to share from his own poverty to ease the burden of the young woman whose situation is probably direr than his own (Sinyangwe, 2000:94).

5.3.6 Disillusionment

There is a marked theme of disillusionment in this text. People are living in poverty that has come about due to the political changes that have occurred in this decade. Adverse climatic conditions have also been seen to aggravate the situation as people's efforts to grow food are thwarted by the bad weather conditions. It is the inability to change their conditions for the better that leaves the people in a state of disbelief at their own predicament as well as the feeling of hopelessness that their situations of poverty would never be changed for the better. Sometimes it is this state of shock that leaves the affected not knowing what to do.

In the case of the people described in the text *A Cowrie of Hope*, the people are poor and are always trying to work towards making ends meet in their day to day activities. They hold on to the hope and belief that things will get better with their efforts, however, in some instances, it is this very hope that things would get better that spurs some people to work with determination till they achieve what they want regardless of whether this would yield positive or negative results. An example is that of how Nasula pursues the thief with a determined heart that she would get what she wants especially for the sake of her daughter Sula. Even the manner in which Gode tries so well to dupe people of their money and merchandise as a way to mitigate his own poverty, is a good example of how disillusioned people have become due to the poverty of the time they are in.

5.4. The link between the Charactonyms and the Themes of the Text

The names that have been used in this text mostly originate from the Mambwe culture and some of them are corruptions of English ones. Ultimately, the author succeeds in making a colorful combination of charactonyms that aid the actualisation of themes in the way they point the reader to the ideal situation by vividly painting the undesirable features so characterised in them.

5.4.1 Isaki and Winelo Chiswebe

Isaki's name is an adaptation of the Biblical name 'Isaac', who was almost slaughtered by his father as a lamb. However, unlike the Isaac of Bible times, he is not meek and humble. Instead he advances his personal needs before considering those of others around him. The ideal situation would be him offering to take care of his late brother's widow and niece. Instead, he grabs what is left for them leaving them without anything to fall back on. He only expresses interest in helping them with a condition attached, that Nasula would accept to become his additional wife. His name is aligned with the theme of poverty. Regardless of the fact that the world around him views him and the rest of the Chiswebes as being well off economically, it is actually because of poverty that Isaki is motivated to grab the deceased brother's possessions at the expense of the wife and daughter. He wants to amass more for his own comfort and wellbeing.

Further, he is not wise enough to consider the plight of the young widow and her daughter when he grabs the wealth left for the two. Therefore, it is the theme of selfish ambition that is greatly reflected through his character and behavior. As a character, he represents the themes of poverty, wisdom (by not having it) and self-centeredness.

The theme of wisdom has also been influenced by this charactonym in that Isaki is a clear representation of how much this society lacks wisdom. In as much as it would be expected of

him to behave as wisely as the Isaac of the Bible, this character falls short of the character he is named after, the contrast thus helps enhance the theme of wisdom by showing how it is absent.

Similarly, Winelo, whose name means 'to stop', is also seen as a selfish individual who does not take good care of his wife and daughter. He constantly beats and insults Nasula simply because he is her provider. Just like his name's meaning, his life stops unexpectedly, shocking his wife and daughter to the reality of poverty. They have no one to turn to once their lives cease to be the same. Similarly, Winelo disrupts Belita's life back in the village when he marries her and brings her to town with the promise to take care of her, instead, her situation turns for the worse with her husband's constant beatings and insults. In the same vein, the implication of his name also touches on how Nasula stops expecting any help from men around her and instead toils hard for her own survival as well as the education of her daughter. Ironically, it is also at the point when his life is about to stop or end that Winelo seems to wake up to the reality of his responsibility as a husband and father. His character has enriched the themes of selfishness and wisdom in the way that he lacks it (wisdom) despite his responsibility as a husband and a father. Conversely, Winelo shows wisdom in the way that he writes a will to protect the interests of his wife and daughter. As if only realising his responsibility on his death bed, he writes a note that indicates that he wants some of his possessions to be set aside for his wife and daughter.

5.4.2 Sula Chiswebe

The name literally means 'to let things be' and it is evident in the way she reacts to the challenges that come her way. However, the way she interacts with those around her and even the way she responds to situations that she encounters shows how she both lives up to her name and how she does not, simultaneously. When her friends tease her because of her impoverished appearance, she merely ignores their remarks and does not take it to heart. Even to open up to her

mother about it only occurs to her as something that would bother the mother and she disregards it altogether. She just lets things be. Similarly, when her mother talks about making a trip to Mangango to ask for assistance from the Chiswebes, Sula tries to discourage her mother; telling her that if the pair failed to find resources to educate her, then she would not be the only one to have dropped out of school at her age, therefore her mother should not stress herself with the long journey that would most probably not yield any results. In this instance, she is trying to live up to her name and let things be without having to struggle or fight.

However, when it comes to academic performance, she is determined to set a mark that the rest of her classmates cannot beat or even match. She scores good marks to make it a point that she is better than they actually are despite her tattered appearance. Poverty is surely evident in Sula's appearance and her parent's struggle to secure adequate school requirements for her. The poverty that her father's relatives leave her and her mother in after grabbing all that her father had left for them has become an almost unshakable reality of her life. She is also representative of the poverty and suffering many children encounter in this decade because of the loss of the breadwinner due to a number of vices including the new disease, HIV/AIDS. Girls are especially vulnerable because they are considered second best to the male children. Perhaps this is why it does not seem very problematic for the Chiswebes not paying attention to educating her as a girl child because it was only normal that women would have to depend on their husbands for survival and support.

Still the determination in her character is unmissable. Even though the other children taunt her for her shabby appearance, she is determined to set herself above all of them through her good performance in academics. She is also determined like the young women that have been visiting the compounds advocating for women and girls empowerment through education. The theme of

wisdom has also been included in her personality to reflect an important virtue that is desirable especially in this time of social and economic instability. She is able to speak and reason wisely despite her age, when she speaks to her mother as well as in the way she carries herself.

5.4.3 Nasula and Pantoka

Nasula is a teknonym to show that she is the mother to a child named 'Sula'. Even though her real names are 'Belita Bowa', her character is significantly aligned with the teknonym. While she is able to let things be, just like her daughter's name suggests, she still exhibits a strong and determined personality in the way she carries herself. She does not fight with her in-laws over her late husband's possessions, instead she even refuses to be inherited as a wife alongside the wealth, even though that would have secured her life and that of her child economically. She has let things be.

However, for the most part of the story, one notices how she does not let things be until she achieves what is best for herself and her daughter. In spite of the discouragement from her daughter, she takes the long walk to Mangango to ask her in-laws for assistance in securing her child's school requirements. She goes despite many factors indicating that she would not receive anything from the Chiswebes. The decade has been largely described as 'the difficult years' because of the economic upheavals that the people had to live through especially because of the political change that came with its own pitfalls. The struggles that Nasula encounters in her day to day life are common to the entire populace, however it is her determination to survive and win over the very situations that would limit her. The author has effectively stressed the theme of determination through the personality of this character by giving her traits that are desirable and beneficial considering the economic and political environment.

Wisdom is another theme that this character is closely linked to. The young widow is wise enough to see the dangers in becoming Isaki's additional wife regardless of the economic stability that would give her. She declines the offer and chooses to struggle and work for her survival and that of her child. Young women like herself who are widowed normally opt to remarry as a form of security. She too would have easily gotten married to any other man for the sake of being taken care of. But she chooses not to, setting an example to young widows.

Pantoka is a nickname that had been bestowed on Belita as a child, when her grandmother noticed her feisty behavior in the way she kicked her legs about in protest against things she did not like. Having grown up, the feisty trait in her character lived on as evidenced in the way she was determined to fight her way even through the toughest situation she was faced with. The way she pursues and catches Gode is a good example of how she would never stop at anything in ensuring that she achieved what she wanted. The name which was a true reflection of what she was at the time of naming, helps actualise the theme of determination in the way she fights her way through difficult times.

5.4.4 Chiswebe and Lunga

Chiswebe is the man who fathers Winelo and Isaki among other children in the Chiswebe clan. His name which means 'Wilderness' is closely related to the way he leads his children in matters of decision making which later affects their lives as a family. The decision to get a huge loan for farming inputs from the merchant bank which later led them to plunge into even worse poverty, as they even fail to grow crops for their own consumption at Mangango, does not seem to have been adequately analysed. Perhaps because of the immediate success that it promised, he as the leader of the family had not taken time to analyse it in relation to what the pitfalls might turn out to be. We also see how he does not act to protect Nasula and her daughter by respecting the will

written by Winelo. Instead, he is also part of his children as they grab and accuse Nasula of having led Winelo to his premature death. He has been seen to lack any sense of wisdom in his way of acting or behavior towards important decisions undertaken by his family. This is largely motivated by the fact that he has a hunger or desire to mitigate his own poverty in the wake of the larger picture of poverty and economic instability in the country at large. Therefore, he is also a victim of poverty which explains why he acts in ways that are self-centered. He only aims to serve his interests. Thus his name is vital in the advancement and unfolding of the three themes (poverty, selfish ambition and wisdom)

The poor ability of Mr. Chiswebe to make wise and informed decisions, later reflects how it costs even younger children who will also be unable to live improved lives because of his carelessness. Lunga, his youngest child, is a practical example of how Mr. Chiswebe's poor decision making abilities cost others too. The boy, whose name is synonymous to adding salt or even hunting, cannot go to school because neither his parents nor his siblings can afford to pay for him. Despite the fact that they had a lot of money only a few years before, but fail to support him through his education, is clear indication of unwise decisions that were passed without any consideration for the future.

5.4.5. Ntazana

This is the boy that Nalukui assigns to see Belita off at intercity bus terminus to ensure that the call boys would not dupe her into getting on a wrong bus. His name is of Mambwe origin and it means 'I did not find'. He is also described as being poorly dressed and that his appearance was quite untidy. In essence, he is a reminder of what poverty awaits Nasula back home in the village once she boards the black bus to Swelini. The poverty that is prominent in the appearance of Ntazana is also evidence that poverty is a reality in the urban parts of the country aswell. Despite

living in the city, he is also a victim of the poverty that is everyone else's problem especially in the rural areas.

The implication of his name 'I did not find', echoes Nasula's feelings and thoughts as she is about to board the black old bus to the village. It is a reminder that she did not find what she had gone to search for in the city: enough money to send her daughter to school. She had failed in her mission to secure a bright future for her daughter Sula. Getting on the black bus only confirms her failure and the feeling gets worse the further the bus goes on the journey. The confusion and pain that Nasula feels as she travels on the black bus alienates her from the rest of the activities around her as she becomes so engrossed in trying to figure her way out of her troubles. This can be said to be true for other characters in the text as well. The Chiswebes at Mangango farm for instance; when Nasula goes to ask for assistance with Sula's school fees, she can read the pain of poverty on the very faces of the people she finds there. They are all engrossed in thinking of how they were deep in poverty and how they would get out of their poverty. The name Ntazana therefore is a successful way of bringing to mind the poverty and the painful disillusionment the people were suffering due to the economic, political and perhaps the climatic changes they had experienced. Therefore, the charactonym has aided the actualisation of the themes of poverty and disillusionment.

5.4.6 Nalukui

She has been described as Nasula's helper and advisor in her most desperate moments. Her name is also of Mambwe origin and it shows that she is a female of the 'Lukui' clan (the wood clan). Her protective nature, especially as far as her younger acquaintance Nasula is concerned, can be termed amazing. From the name of the clan from which she emanates, one can relate her strong and protective character to the nature of wood or trees in the way they give shelter and protection

to those that are below or even around. Despite being poor herself, especially that she was also living in similar economic or political climate as everyone else, she always manages to lend a helping hand whenever Nasula needed it.

In terms of how her name is helpful in the actualisation of themes in the text, it can be said that the character of Nasula creates a contrasting picture of how some people manage to be helpful to those that are in more dire situations than themselves regardless of the fact that they all have challenges. Nalukui's character has shown how selfless some characters can be when one least expects to find any such characters especially considering the social and economic climate.

5.4.7 Gode Silavwe and Samson Luhila.

The former is a con man who dupes Nasula of her bag of beans. His name is short for the name 'Golden'. He is described as being immaculately dressed and people would not suspect him to be a thief. The sharp contrast between his appearance and his behavior also adds to the way his name helps actualise some themes of the text. It is true that Gode is simply a victim of poverty and economic strain that have hit the country in the 1990's as described in the text. This spurs him as well as many other people in the city to devise ways of duping unsuspecting people of their money as well as their merchandise. The main goal is to make ends meet by alleviating or cushioning their own levels of suffering. Therefore, selfish ambitions are created to support their kinds of behavior even at the expense of other people.

Samson Luhila, the chief of police, is a sharp contrast to Gode Silavwe. 'Luhila' is a name that means 'to be holy' this also reflects in the way he abstains from being corrupt and how he does not tolerate lawlessness from even those around him. His first name is linked to the Samson of the Bible who had extreme physical power which enabled him to do what was almost physically impossible for others to do. Samson Luhila in this case, has immense authoritative power with

which he also does magnificent acts especially for the sake of those that need his help. Unlike Gode, he is selfless and interested in ensuring that justice for those that need it is served. He avoids favoring exploiters as he is not an exploiter himself. In spite of living in the same environment of poverty and hardship just like the police constables and Gode himself, Samson Luhila has set himself above all these hardships by choosing to remain honorable and true to his duty to serve the people. These two names have enhanced the actualisation of the themes of justice for all, self-centeredness as well as that of poverty

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the most salient themes of the text *A Cowrie of Hope*. It has also outlined the meanings of the most important names and linked them to the themes used in the text whilst hinting on the significant manner in which the charactonyms' personality traits are laced with the themes which they help actualise. The next chapter will focus on the character names and themes in *We Need New Names*.

CHAPTER SIX

The Role of Character Names in the Actualisation of Themes in We Need New Names

6.1 Introduction

This chapter will look at the salient names that have been encountered in the reading of the text and how they help actualise the themes of the text. The names that will be discussed in this chapter are sampled from the wide range of the name types used in the text; those that have been formed as combinations of English words and local names, the English names as well as some of the local names. The link between the charactonyms and the themes of the text will also be explored.

6.2. Charactonyms in We Need New Names

The names that have been sampled for analysis in the reading of the text are mostly in English and are usually phrases that have been turned into names and are self-explanatory in nature. Though the names are descriptive in nature, usually describing a situation (adjectives), they all fall under the No-Sense theory as they have no bearing on the description of the personality carrying the name at the time of naming. Instead, the characters' names foreshadow the events and or activities that would surround the lives of the characters themselves and those around them.

The following are the names that have been sampled from the reading of the text.

6.2.1. Darling

She is a nine year old girl, from whose perspective the story is innocently told or narrated. She is also quite affable to those around her. Her name is synonymous with an endearing word that means someone who is 'lovable' or 'likeable'. From the way she interacts with those that are around her, as observed in her narration, it can be noticed how she is a likeable personality that

her friends for instance always want to play with her. She is also sympathetic to Chipu who gets pregnant at a very young age.

6.2.2. Bastard

His name means someone who is born out of wedlock. It could also imply or be used to refer to one whose character is irritating to those around him. Just like the second meaning, he is a bossy boy who is also a member of the gang who bullies the younger members of the gang and usually says unpleasant things to hurt their feelings. He is also always ready to fight anyone that challenges him. He is a very unlikeable character as he always tries to assert himself as being better than his fellow gang members.

However, he can also be said to be merely a victim of the circumstances of his environment in that he only bullies the females and the younger members of the gang as a way of establishing authoritativeness in an unstable circumstance. He has also been described as being shabbily dressed when the NGOs come to give handouts to the community. He is just like any other child in the neighborhood wishing things were better than they are currently.

6.2.3. Godknows

He is also a member of the gang who is known for being inquisitive and for asking the most puzzling questions. His name is a phrase that mainly expresses hopelessness especially at the failure to answer or solve difficult situations that people may face. They instead leave it to God who knows better than they do. Similarly, this character despite being a child, is always asking the most thought provoking questions whose solutions are never easy to relate or give. His charactonym resonates well with the theme of irony and foreshadowing as his questions usually give an insight into future happenings. Further, he is also representative of the theme of

innocence in that as a child, he suffers without understanding how he finds himself in so much suffering.

6.2.4. Mother of Bones

She is Darling's aunt in whose care Darling remains while her mother goes to the border to sell fruits and other merchandise. Just as her name suggests, she is the mother of a child named 'Bones' also implying she is the mother of 'no hope' as bones do not have any hope of carrying life. Even from the way she conducts herself, one can see that she is hopeless about the current situation or even prospects of the future. Instead, she holds on to precious memories of the past when things were much better or bearable for everyone especially socially and economically. She has thus chosen religion as the best opiate to suppress her pains and disillusionment, believing that all solutions lie with the prophet.

She hoards a bag full of old currency which cannot even buy her anything; she counts through it every morning and refuses to use it to make fire as others within the same community have done. She believes that the notes will be useful one day. Her act of hoarding currency that has no value can strongly be likened to her name, as the mother of a child named 'Bones', she has mothered hopelessness and is only holding onto a reminder of what once had life but not anymore. In the same way that she lives with the burden or the reminder that she mothered 'Bones', she continues to hold on to dead currency that presents no hope for the future. She is also an ardent follower of the Prophet Mborro and believes that the solutions to all problems lie with the Prophet and never misses church service on Fambeki Mountain. However, just like the other adults, she is blind to the injustices the religion imposes on her and the general populace. This charactonym is a good example of the themes of religion and disillusionment.

6.2.5. Prophet Revelations Bitchington Mborro

He is a renowned religious leader of Paradise who conducts services at Fambeki Mountain. He also prays for the sick in their homes, those that cannot go up Fambeki, at an exorbitant charge. His name is an interesting combination of words; 'Prophet' rightly describes his role as a religious leader. He gives prophecies to his church members as well as telling them not to visit Vlodza as he senses some had done during the week. He tells them it is sinful. In actual sense, he is not one to give his followers the revelations they seek for their lives. Amidst the poverty and political instability that surrounds them, they choose to run to the prophet so that he may give them a revelation of how well their lives would end up despite their suffering. The prophet, however, fails to live up to this expectation because of his capitalist motive to instead gain economically at the expense of his followers. As for the combination of 'Bitchington' and 'Mborro' parts of his name, it carries the onomastic implication that he is a promiscuous character. This is evidenced by the way he sexually defiles the pretty woman in full view of his church members in the name of exorcising the demons in her. While 'Mborro' is Shona for 'penis', its combination with 'Bitchington' demonstrates his promiscuity. The name combination is significant to the actualisation of themes in the text in that each of its part touches on specific themes of the text by shedding light on the salient textual issues. Including; religion and poverty

6.2.6. Bornfree

He is the young man who is advocating for change in paradise through peaceful elections alongside his friend Messenger. The people of paradise and the country are born in a peaceful environment, others are reborn into freedom at the attainment of independence. This freedom is later stripped off them by their selfish leaders whose decisions are meant to only make themselves popular to the outsiders without considering the plight of their own citizens. For

instance, the homes of the citizenry are bulldozed and razed to the ground to create space for the foreign investors. (Bulawayo ,)

6.2.7. Freedom

He is a young boy, who dies after the bulldozers crushing the houses crush him to death. The people of Paradise essentially lose their freedom when their homes are bulldozed without any care by their leaders who are only concerned about how much they would gain from the ‘investors’ at the expense of their own people. The freedom of the people has been crushed to satisfy the interests of the politicians. This further highlights the political instability in the country which forces the ordinary citizens into outright poverty. Additionally, their innocence is lost alongside their freedom.

6.2.8. Nomoreproblems

He is Nabettina’s grandson to whom Mother of Bones shouts greetings on her way to Fambeki Mountain with Darling. The name is self-explanatory and reflects the future that Mother of Bones and all the residents of Paradise look forward to. However, this hoped for future tends cause the people to be even more disillusioned perhaps because they hope too much. This disillusionment, especially fanned by their poverty leads the people to lose focus on reality.

6.2.9. Messenger

He is another young man who vigorously advocates for change through peaceful elections and campaigns, with his friend Bornfree but is disappointed when the change does not come through. His name literally implies ‘one who is sent to deliver a message’. From the role that he plays as a political activist, it can be said that he is a messenger for the people of Paradise to tell the political leaders of the nation, how dissatisfied they are with the obtaining situation. He carries the message of their pains of poverty and how they long to be liberated through a fair election.

6.3. Themes.

The story is set in Zimbabwe at a time of great political and socio-economic upheaval. The citizenry is plunged in a lot of problems not knowing how best to redeem themselves from the dire situations they are in. According to the moral philosophical theory of literary analysis, literature has a dual role to play: to entertain as well as educate the readers. In analysing the relationship between the names of characters and theme-actualisation in this study, the focus is not so much on the entertainment part, but on educating the readers. The moral Philosophical approach draws lessons by identifying themes in the text. Hence this approach has been applied in the analysis of the texts selected for study with a view to identifying the themes.

6.3.1. Poverty.

The community of paradise is hard hit by poverty, it is evident everywhere one sets their eyes. The houses are mere tin shacks and there is no real economic activity taking place. Three square meals are equally an impossibility for the residents of Paradise. In fact, throughout the reading of the text, the narrator does not describe any instance when any of the families share or experience a happy meal time. For the children, their main source of food is from the stolen guavas in Budapest. They are also seen to enjoy the times that they go to steal guavas from Budapest. They eat so many of them that their tummies ache (Bulawayo, 2013:15).

The children even have a pattern for getting to the different homes on a daily basis, so that they do not get confused regarding which houses they have visited and those that they have not. 'It was Bastard who decided that we pick a street and stay on it until we have gone through all the houses. Then we go to the next street. This is so we don't confuse where we have been with where we are going.'(Bulawayo, 2013:5)

The NGOs distribute meagre food rations and second hand clothes which are really of little value. They are so inadequate that one of the adults even chooses to abstain from receiving any as she looks at the gesture as a mere insult to her wellbeing (Bulawayo,2013: 56). However, others feel it is better to receive the very meagre portions than not receiving any help at all. Darling and her friends also feel the gesture of the NGOs is quite cosmetic as can be read on the faces of those distributing the humanitarian aid to the poor residents that have lined up in front of the truck. They do not even want to be touched by the children: ‘...we are careful not to touch the NGO people though, because we can see that even though they are giving us things, they do not want to touch us or for us to touch them’ (Bulawayo,2013 : 54). The children however, due to their poverty, still line up and receive the handouts together with the rest of the community, though they hurl insults and obscenities at the NGO people immediately the truck turns to leave. But once the truck is out of sight, they all resign themselves in a somber mood (Bulawayo, 2013: 57).

The clothes that are worn are also never in good condition; tattered ones for the young ones, and old materials that have outlived their usefulness for the older people. For instance, Godknows is said to have worn a tattered pair of shorts that even the NGO taking photos aimed at photographing them: ‘Now the cameraman pounces on Godknows’ black buttocks...Godknows turns and covers the holes of his shorts with his hands like he is that naked man in the Bible, but he cannot completely hide his nakedness’ (Bulawayo, 2013: 53). Even the shoes that are worn by Mother of Bones, for instance, are each part of different pairs which is also reflective of the poverty that is so high that the community seems to be accepting it as a part of their lives. The clothes that are given as donations by the NGOs also leave much to be desired. They are merely meant to cover the nakedness and not necessarily to conveniently meet the needs of the

recipients. The narrator has described them as second hand clothes which have probably outlived their usefulness wherever they come from, hence being tossed to the poor Africans as humanitarian aid. Darling receives a dress, too small to fit her, while her friend receives an oversized used T-Shirt printed 'Google' on the front (Bulawayo, 2013: 30, 55).

Poverty is a common part of Paradise. The children play and laugh about the horrid life they are living through. For the adults, they seem numbed and unable to change anything about their situation of poverty, it has become a part of their lives.

6.3.2. Religion

Religion has been presented as being responsible for most of the peoples' suffering because it has largely brainwashed them. It has become an opiate to suppress their pains and suffering encountered because of the county's political instability. Adults especially, have very limited options of where to seek comfort in their dire economic and political instability; they would choose to go and relax at the shebeens, seek the help of Vlodza the witch doctor or go to Fambeki Mountain and rest under Prophet Revelations' 'care' (Bulawayo,2013 : 27,37). Being naïve and ignorant of how far they could trust the prophet, the adult's eyes and reasoning are closed to the way the prophet sexually abuses the pretty woman that is brought to him for deliverance (Bulawayo, 2013: 39). The women even form a wall behind Prophet Bitchington and his evangelists, never questioning the credibility of what the prophet is doing to the poor woman. The church members, the older ones, do not react in any way against the actions of the prophet because they trust the prophet and his evangelists unreservedly. On the contrary, the younger children seem to have reason to doubt the prophet's actions, because he does not seem convincing to them.

‘The men who brought her are happy especially the tall one who makes like he is the husband, the church people are happy, mother of Bones is happy, but I am sad, the pretty woman is just lying there under Prophet Revelations Bitchington Mborro like Jesus after they clobbered him and nailed him on the cross’ (Bulawayo, 2013: 40).

In the name of religion, people are being exploited by the higher powers and do not have anywhere else to run to. Religion being their last place of solace after being disappointed by their own political leaders, the community members are orphaned and without a trustworthy saviour because their religious leaders are more cosmetic than they are real. Darling seems to be well versed in the bible passages regarding different situations and usually applies them to her narration. For instance, she likens the way Godknows tries to hide his nakedness to the way Adam did in the book of Genesis. She is also able to critique the sign post of the church on Fambeki in relation to a verse in the Bible. This can be taken as proof that Darling, despite being young and probably naïve, understands the Bible and is able to apply or even relate it to daily life unlike the way the adults who are supposed to be more analytical and knowledgeable fail to even recognise acts of deceit by the religious leaders.

The religious leaders have also been presented as only being exploiters of the community that genuinely needs their comfort and guidance especially because of the political and economic instabilities as well as the daily social struggles that they grapple with. As the name of the prophet suggests, he is a revelation of the bigger exploitation that the people encounter. He is also a self-centered exploiter of the very community that looks to him for assistance and comfort. He is also responsible for exploiting the very people whose interests he is supposed to be safeguarding. For instance, he literally rapes the young woman that has been dragged to his church for deliverance by a group of men (Bulawayo, 2013: 36-37).

When Darling's father returns from the mines where he had gone to work, he is an invalid and relies on his wife to do literally everything for him. When the Prophet is invited to come and pray for him in their home, he merely makes pronouncements that cause panic among the family members: that the demon that had previously lived in Darling has now moved into the father. Also that the family needs to provide two white virgin goats for sacrifice at Fambeki mountain. Additionally, the prophet needs to be paid the sum of five hundred United States Dollars which he can also accept in Euros (Bulawayo, 2013: 99). The behavior of the prophet only lumps him in the same group as the traditional healers who always promise results of healing for an ailment, immediately the exorbitant sum asked for is paid in forex. They are all portrayed as capitalists whose main aim is to generate an income from the needy other than actually helping them (Bulawayo, 2013: 27, 99).

Despite the children being less exposed and experienced than the adults, they are portrayed as being more analytical and even wiser than the older generation. They have seen through the Prophet's way of doing things and thus hold him with a lot of mistrust. They disregard his methods of worship as well as the strange tongues in which he speaks alongside his evangelists. Darling and her friends feel it is all unnecessary and does not make sense at all. For instance, when the woman starts the Mikoro song, Darling says 'she makes as though she is listening directly from heaven.'

Unlike the adults that seem to be ready to take in everything they receive from their religious leader, the children feel the prophet is only selling goods that are not credible. As far as Godknows is aware, for instance, there is no point having the prophet pray and cast demons out of the man who has AIDS. Instead, he only needs medical attention. Darling too does not think the prophet is really able to cure her father. After all, this same God that they are always praying

to never changes anything they have ever prayed for. However, as far as the adults are concerned, having the prophet pray for the sick man implies that they are essentially doing something about the sick man's condition. Mother of Bones goes on to fast and pray at Fambeki while Darling's mother goes back to the border to sell as a way of raising money that the prophet had asked for as payment (Bulawayo, 2013: 40).

This is clearly the same way their own fellow black leaders disappoint them because of selfish ambitions. Having taken over from the European colonisers, the Africans were hopeful that they would get better living as well as economic conditions once their fellow Africans were in power. To their disappointment, the situation only becomes worse. In their illusion of finding help from their leaders, they end up suffering even worse injustice and exploitation. Their innocence is taken advantage of by people of their own kind.

6.3.3. Political instability

From the beginning of the novel, the reader gets a clear picture that there is no political stability existent in this environment. People are violently moved from their homes without a clear understanding as to why their homes are being demolished. They are relocated to an impoverished, tin shanty where the most part of the story unfolds (Bulawayo, 2013: 65-66). The people express dissatisfaction at the way their leaders make decisions that neither benefit them nor consider their plight in any way. Their only hope lies in change. A change that would bring about the future of their dreams.

When election time nears, the whole community is elated and hopeful of a better future, politically sound and free of poverty. They rush to vote believing it is the only way to bring about change in their lives. However, they return dejected when no change occurs.

Further, the young political activists that are seen courageously campaigning for change through the elections period do not even last long in this community. Immediately after the election, they are brutally killed by the political machinery of the leaders (who do not want to be opposed or even pave way for other political leaders to take a chance at leading). It is also during the period leading to the elections that the Africans ransack and invade Budapest, the white suburb, harassing and beating up the house owners before dragging them away. This is because they feel they are mandated to own what the white foreigners have regardless of the fact that they have not worked to earn it. The pronouncement by the leadership that the country is for the indigenous people and not the foreigners has empowered them to expel the foreigners from their land, in the same way the prophet feels mandated to exorcise the demons in the beautiful lady in the purple dress (Bulawayo, 2013: 111,39,139,29).

It is the political instability in the country that causes the poverty to be rife even at the lowest levels of society. Many citizens have fled out to the countries that surround their own and even those afar in search of a better life where there is economic stability. This also explains why even the young generation has come to think or believe that moving or relocating to other countries is the only way to live comfortably.

6.3.4. Innocence

The story is narrated from a child's perspective. A nine year old who does not even understand the full gravity of the predicament her family and whole community is in. The children play and run around innocently without any care, not realising that they are burning in a furnace.

They run through the streets of Budapest stealing guavas as well as food from the homes of the whites invaded by the protesting Africans. They play in 'Shanghai' where they even ask for freebies from the foreman. They run after the NGO truck that brings relief items to Paradise, and

make fun of the NGO people who seem bored by the poor hungry people of Paradise. During the funeral procession of Bornfree, they lurk in the trees at the graveyard and watch, then dramatize the whole procession when they think they are all alone. Innocently trying to have fun each time, the children do not realise the gravity of the situations they find themselves in.

Even though they have heard about how easy and better life is in other countries, the children only have a mirage as they have not really experienced the good life they hear about, not even through their own relatives that have left the country to go and 'enjoy' abroad. Darling's father for instance, goes away to South Africa in search of better economic prospects. Even so, he never sends any help home and only returns there sickly and bedridden, a burden to his family. Darling also realises only after relocating to the States that her aunt Fostalina's America is not as rosy as she thought it to be before she went there. She cannot come back to Zimbabwe and return to America again because she is an illegal immigrant nor can she relate with the people back home because of the influence of the American life she has experienced which is totally different from life back home (Bulawayo, 2013: 251, 285).

Ironically, the innocence that this community is robbed of by powers that are superior and above them is great. Just like the young girl Chipu, who is defiled and impregnated by an elderly person she is supposed to trust and rely on, these citizens are duped by leaders of their own kind; those they thought they would trust to know and understand their predicament better than any other because they shared a common history.

The citizens can no longer trust the leaders of their own kind. They are disappointed at how these leaders do not uphold their responsibility to protect the people even when that was the initial plan as they drove away the colonialists during the liberation struggle (Bulawayo, 2013: 66-67, 70). Once they are in power, the African leaders not only exploit their own people by failing to

provide the basic necessities, but also refuse to leave office for other black leaders to take over the governing of the nation. Elections are not only marred by violence and brutality but also the loss of lives caused by those that feel they are too powerful to be removed from governing offices.

The people of Paradise have been disappointed by the leaders whom they thought would treat them better especially for the mere fact that they are black or African like themselves. Their homes being crushed and bulldozed for the sake of making room for the investors is more detrimental to the lives of the citizens than it is beneficial.

‘...the men driving the Bulldozers are laughing. I hear the adults saying, Why why why what have we done, what have we done then the lorries come in carrying the police with guns and button sticks and we run inside the houses...the bulldozers start bulldozing and bulldozing and we scream and scream’ (Bulawayo, 2013: 65).

The people’s innocence is essentially their freedom. The same freedom that has been taken away from them by their leaders that are supposed to uplift and protect it. Just like the little child Freedom, Nomvuyo’s son, who is crushed and killed as the houses are being torn down, the freedom of the people of Paradise has been brutally killed. It has been taken away from them by force and without a good cause (Bulawayo, 2013: 67).

Similarly the Prophet Revelations Bitchington Mborro has been portrayed as an irresponsible leader of the people that come to seek his help as their spiritual leader. He behaves in ways that raise questions about his credibility as a leader. Not only does he defile the pretty woman in front of the whole congregation, not paying heed to her calls to be left alone, but also, when the prophet is asked to pray for Darling’s father, he charges the family exorbitantly, emphasizing

that he wants the payment in Dollars or even Euros. This is for a service that should essentially be given free of charge. This notwithstanding, he even makes the pronouncement that Darling's mother is possessed because she protests against paying as the prophet has charged. However, she has no choice in the matter as there is no other place to run to for help (Bulawayo, 2013: 99).

Even from the way the prophet dresses up, in a new gown and a new walking stick, it is clear that he has enough money to survive comfortably regardless of how politically and economically unstable the country is. More so, despite the eminent poverty amongst his own followers, he can clearly afford a lavish lifestyle especially that he charges his followers exorbitant amounts for the service he offers although they should be free of charge (Bulawayo, 2013:33).

The young girl, Chipso, is defiled by her grandfather, the man who should have been her protector. He takes advantage of a child who should trust his presence and protection. This also shows how the exploitation of the innocent and those that seek protection from their leaders is rife starting from the lowest level in the family to the political leaders at national level.

6.3.5. Disillusionment.

The residents of Paradise have hopes that things will get better in the immediate and distant future. They hope that they will be able to enjoy their lives free of the economic and political impediments that they suffer in the present. For instance, the adults think they will have better livelihoods after the change that would be brought about through the elections. They are very optimistic that their future will be better and brighter economically and politically for themselves as well as for their children but their hopes are once again dashed.

The decision by the most active members of this society to move to other countries in search of better economic opportunities is greatly motivated by the stories of a prosperous and happy life

of bliss that they hear about the other countries. They never imagine that they would be exposed to a life of emptiness and even disease. Darling's father, for instance, leaves home for Johannesburg shortly after graduating (Bulawayo, 2013: 63). With the hope of better economic stability, he is away from home for a very long time and only returns sickly and with no economic gain to show for his long absence from his family (Bulawayo, 2013: 89).

Darling too, having moved to the United States of America, thought her problems back home would all be resolved by her going to live with her aunt Fostalina. She goes to school, has a secure place to call home and has enough food at her disposal. However, she feels unsatisfied and detached from her real home in Zimbabwe. The emptiness that overcomes her cannot be cured because she can neither go back home freely nor would she be able to effectively reintegrate into the society back home. She comes to the painful realization that leaving home was never a lasting solution to the challenges she had faced. It becomes all too clear to Darling when Chipu actually tells her in one of their phone conversations that Darling has no right to claim to be part of them because she had actually lost her rights to do so when she relocated to the States (Bulawayo, 2013: 14, 238-239, 241,285).

6.3.6. Prediction.

There is a marked tendency by the author to use certain events or actions to predict what would happen in the near future within the text. She uses events, name phrases as well as general statements to foreshadow what is to come in the text.

In this light, names and name phrases have become a form of prophecy to highlight the future of both the characters as well as what is to come. The most common instance is that of the name of the Prophet; 'Prophet Revelations Bitchington Mborro'. He is the one who should tell about other things or situations in Paradise and Zimbabwe at large. He reveals more serious concerns

much easily than he would reckon. The beautiful woman with flawless skin that he rapes in full view of the whole congregation is said to be wearing a purple dress which can be said to widely represent royalty. In essence, the woman is representative of the British monarch which the president of Zimbabwe defies by declaring the country a no go area for the white foreigners, most of whom are Britons, because it belongs to the blacks. In spite of the calls and pleas for him not to disgrace the monarch that way, he merely pays a deaf ear to the pleas (Bulawayo, 2013: 38-41).

Similarly, the young woman whom the gang of children find dangling from a tree, having committed suicide, also presents an interesting scene in the text. The very fact that she is without a specific name but is only referred to by the descriptive phrase of 'the lady that has committed suicide' makes her an interesting feature in the story. She is dressed in colorful attire that is closely related to the colors of the national flag of Zimbabwe. 'She dangles from a green rope that is attached to a branch high up in the tree...she is wearing a red dress and the green grass licks the tip of her red shoes. All the colors combine in a strangely beautiful manner that is scary' (Bulawayo, 2013: 16-17). This woman is also representative of Zimbabwe. How she has hanged herself by sending the Britons off her land. Economically, there remains nothing for the younger generation to survive on other than the remains of the dead body. Bastard leads his friends, coercing them to reap from the 'suicide find'; 'Look, did you notice that woman's shoes were almost new? We can get them, then we sell them and buy a loaf, or maybe even a loaf and half' (Bulawayo, 2013: 18).

When people are relocating to Paradise, they have to start life afresh. In addition they have to rebuild their homes and their whole lives as though there was nothing that had gone wrong. Some collect tins and plastics with which to erect the new shelters to call their new homes.

However, for many people, ‘they appear without the things they should have appeared with’ (Bulawayo, 2013:74). In essence, this means the people have not been able to pick up the pieces of their lives in order to begin life afresh. They are too broken to move on smoothly; their lives have been disturbed, their possessions and history destroyed as well as some of the lives of their loved ones lost alongside their homes.

The suspicion with which the narrator and her gang members regard the prophet is an interesting feature in the reading of the text. For instance, Darling feels the prophet is doing an injustice to the poor woman by pinning her down the way he does (Bulawayo, 2013: 40). It also disturbs her, how it is mostly women that stand up to confess their sins during the church services when there is really nothing to confess. There is also suspicion in her description of how the prophet appears with his new stick (Bulawayo, 2013: 33, 37). She clearly never believes that any good would ever come from the man. Ironically, the mistrust and suspicion against the prophet are proven correct as nothing good ever emanates from the man of God (especially as seen from the way he exploits his followers).

The chapter of the text which is titled ‘How they Left’ tells of how the population is being lost in huge numbers to other countries where they seek refuge both economically and politically. However, it also tells of the conditions of their stay in the new lands to which they emigrate; telling how they will never feel completely welcome and at peace as they would be trying very hard never to offend the owners of the land thus ending up too miserable to enjoy themselves the way they would back home. The chapter foreshadows how lost and lonely Darling feels in the America where she had been eager to go and stay. Despite living in a big America that has all that she ever dreamed of, she only exists in a smaller world, alienated from everything and everyone else. The concerns raised in this chapter are confirmed in the chapter which discusses

how Darling admits that she had a wrong picture of how she could make life better for herself especially as a way to correct the unstable situation back home.

6.4. The Link between the Charactonyms and the Themes of the text

The names used in this text are a careful selection by the author to enhance the themes of the text. The irony with which the author laces the names adds to the duality in the meaning as well as significance of the names used.

Firstly, the names that have been used in the text are ironic in nature as they are always presenting meaning on two fronts. The first front is that the name serves as a tag for the personalities that are used in the text. On this same level, the name as a tag is regarded in the No-Sense theory because the characters are named without a link between their names and their personalities at the time of naming. However, on the second front, whether the characters named turn out as their name meaning, in the way a character behaves or carries themselves, or whether the character actually turns out to be the opposite of what their name implies, each of the names used carries two implications in that; a name may be a description of what one already is or may try to imply what is actually absent in any given situation. For instance, the name 'Paradise' that has been given to the shanty that is born after their original home is bulldozed. The situation and conditions in Paradise belie the bliss suggested by the name. Further the author's continuous reference to the name of the compound heightens the irony as it reminds the reader of everything the tin compound does not provide for the people such as comfort, and economic stability among other things.

It can also be said that the various charactonyms that have been used in the text have a linkage to the themes of the text in the way that the name bearer lives up to their name or in fact does not.

6.4.1 Mother of Bones

Her name is a teknonym that reflects the fact that she is the mother of a child named 'Bones'. In essence, bones are a sign of there not being any life in something that once had it. They are a sign of lifelessness. Her name is significant in that it also resonates with her patterns of behavior or indeed her personality. She hoards a big bag of old currency that has in fact become valueless. She counts through the money each day as if to ensure that it is still intact. This bag of money is only good to be used to make fire as there is nothing more it can do. However, she refuses to accept this fact but instead continues to hoard her worthless 'treasure'. Even the way she holds her belief in the prophet and the 'word' she hears from him, shows how she holds on to 'bones' which are lifeless.

In relation to the textual themes, her name can be aligned to the theme of religion and that of poverty. She holds on to a bag of money which cannot bring her any good. Her hope is that one day the buying power of her money would perhaps be resurrected, like dry bones of the dead perhaps. (There is a Christian teaching that encourages believers to hold onto the faith that one day, all the dead people will be resurrected, regardless of how long ago they died, 1 Corinthians 15:12-22) Her holding onto religion actually furthers her poverty because she keeps on waiting for something that never comes forth, making her less productive in that she cannot work to make her economic condition any better.

Her situation is not unique to her as a charactonym but is also true for many other members of the community of Paradise. They hold onto memories of how glorious or wonderful life was in the past that they hope it will go back to be that way in the future. This keeps them from making progressive decisions to leave Paradise in search of a better life elsewhere like many others have done. This only advances their misery and poverty because they are not doing anything to

address their situation. By holding onto the bones of the past, they fail to see or even embrace the opportunities of change and economic revival. In the same vein, religion has largely contributed to the citizenry's status of being brainwashed and their failure to make informed decisions to improve their lives and those of their loved ones. It is the teachings of religion that make the people believe that what they have is all they need for that moment as a better future awaits them.

6.4.2 Godknows.

He is a child who is also part of the gang that plays in Paradise. He has been described as being a largely quiet boy, who only speaks when it is absolutely necessary. He is also known to ask the most thought provoking questions for both the reader and the fellow gang members. As his name implies, it is only God that Knows. It has also been established that the residents of Paradise have found religion to be a source of solace in the face of poverty and economic hardships they have come to live with because of the failure of the political leadership to provide firm leadership for them. His name thus resonates with the theme of religion and how religion has become an answer for the problems the people face. Instead of seeking solutions to the difficulties faced, the people merely resign and say 'God knows'.

In the same vein, it can be observed how these very difficult predicaments that the people of paradise are faced with are always only puzzles that the people cannot solve. Just in the same way that the boy asks questions whose answers nobody has. The people of paradise do not have ready solutions to the problems that come their way; they have resigned their efforts to a being greater than themselves and one with whom they cannot directly interact but only hope that he delivers them from their burdens of suffering.

The theme of religion has thus been enhanced by this charactonym as he helps to show how the members of this society have put all their trust in their religion as a way of finding solace for the many problems that they are faced with in their day to day lives. They believe that their God knows better while they still sit back never receiving any answers to their questions from this God that they say they trust so much.

This also leads to the theme of disillusionment; that the members of this society suffer disillusionment as a result of always wanting to look elsewhere except within themselves for solutions to their problems. They fail to acknowledge the fact that they have waited and hoped long enough for things to get better for them and that they would be better off taking bold steps in searching within themselves for solutions other than depending on a higher being they have not personally interacted with.

6.4.3 Prophet Revelations Bitchington Mborro

He is the religious leader of Paradise well known for his ‘thundering’ sermons at Fambeki Mountain. He claims to be able to heal all types of disease, solve any type of problem through prayer. As his name suggests, he hears from God and is thus able to give people revelations about their lives as he receives them from God. Contrary to his name however, he does not give any prophecy or revelation to any of the members of Paradise. Instead, he uses his followers’ problems to raise money for himself. He charges them exorbitantly in exchange for being prayed for to have their disease healed, for instance. In actual sense, the said prophet has also become a victim of the poverty that is rife in Paradise and has come up with means of raising funds to support himself. While his followers like Mother of Bones is said to be wearing different shoes from different pairs, a sure sign of poverty, he appears to the congregation dressed in an elegant new gown and carrying a new stick. He tells his members to pay huge sums of money if they

ever need him to pray for them. Any rejection of his demands, or any protest against them, is outrightly pronounced as being a demonic manifestation. Unlike what is expected of a religious leader, he is an exploiter only interested in satisfying his own economic interests thus clearly enhancing the theme of poverty.

The remaining part of his name is a combination of two words that also show his promiscuous nature. He sexually assaults a woman in full view of the congregation. Pretending to be exorcizing the woman of her demons, the prophet actually rapes the woman. However, because the members of the church have been brainwashed to believe that everything that the prophet does is blameless and is for their own good, no one questions his actions or even reprimands him for his actions.

Therefore, this prophet is a mere sham and does not in any way live up to his name as a prophet. Instead, his whole name ironically displays how he has used the cover of religion to dupe the citizens and exploit them. Using the trust that they have in him, he exploits them emotionally and economically all to his own benefit. The very combination of his names highlights an ironic feature in both his character and the themes he enhances. Not only is he a ‘Prophet’ who gives people ‘Revelations’ from God, he is also ‘Bitchington’ ‘Mborro’. His name combination is contradictory in itself; a man who is known to be a prophet amongst his people, one who gives them revelations about their lives as he hears from God, is not expected to carry characteristics of being promiscuous as indicated by the ‘Bitchington and ‘Mborro’ in his name. However, his actual character does show that his being a man of God is only a cover to hide his true nature from the people that he exploits. Further, this charactonym has helped illustrate the theme of religion in that people who are already poor and helpless run to the church with the hope of finding comfort in religion and the religious leaders.

6.4.4. Messenger and Nomoreproblems

Messenger is a young and vibrant boy from Paradise who is also a political activist advocating for change through a peaceful election. As the meaning of his name suggests, he is a messenger for the people of Paradise to their political leaders, to convey their complaints of pain and misery due to the poverty they were living in. He campaigns vigorously for the change that he feels is needed in Paradise and the country at large. He is representative of the theme of political instability in the text. It is because of this political instability that even the young are able to notice a breaking up of the status quo of the ways of life. This causes the young to take it upon themselves and attempt to fight back or retaliate against what they consider an oppressive front. The irony in his name lies in the fact that instead of the message going to its intended recipients, the messenger ends up being killed which instead sends a message of fear and withdrawal to the people of Paradise. It is through the peaceful election that the people had hoped to begin a life of 'No more problems'. A life that would see them exist in an ideal environment where all their problems would be a thing of the past. However, this hoped for future only remains a mirage for the people of Paradise as they are never seen to enjoy or even experience it throughout the text.

These two names, Messenger and Nomoreproblems, have successfully enhanced the theme of political instability as well as that of irony and foreshadowing. It is because of the political instability that the people of Paradise hope their messenger would successfully deliver their message of pain and feeling of betrayal to their political leaders as they hope to achieve a future in which they would have no more problems.

6.4.5 Bornfree and Freedom

Bornfree is also an advocate of political change in Paradise and the country at large. He campaigns for this cause and believes that it can be achieved. Though he is named Bornfree, he is actually born in problems; political instability, economic meltdown as well as poverty. His

name is ironic as there is nothing to show that he is born a free person especially in the community of Paradise. In the same way, the small child named Freedom is crushed by the bulldozers that come to break the houses. He is representative of the freedom that is absent in the lives of the people. Their freedom is crushed and taken advantage of by the leaders whom they are supposed to seek refuge in.

The irony that lies in giving the characters such names is that the charactonyms, clearly show what should be present in an ideal situation but is instead absent. Ideally, all children should be born in an environment where there is freedom as they should also be free. Unfortunately, they are only exposed to an environment rife with instability, politically and economically. The two names have successfully driven the theme of political instability that is also responsible for all the suffering of the people of Paradise. Being only children, they are just innocent participants in the play out of deception and poverty caused by their leaders. Their innocence unfortunately does not spare them from the misery that the whole community faces. These two characters have furthered the theme of innocence, in that their innocence gets caught up in the picture of pain and suffering and that of political instability in that they suffer all these injustices because of the political instability that is currently obtaining in their country

6.4.6 Darling and Bastard

The two are both members of the children's gang in Paradise. They usually fight over who should lead the pack as well as who should choose what game is to be played. Darling is a word that shows endearment or affection towards the person being called or addressed. Similarly, Darling is loveable amongst her peers as she always manages to show empathy even to the most unlikeable member of the gang. Regardless of the poverty in which she finds herself, she manages to find happiness in playing innocently with her friends.

Bastard is a word that could imply or refer to someone who is annoying and unlikeable. True to the charactonym, Bastard is quite annoying in the way he always wants to bully his friends in order to be the boss in whatever activity they are doing. Similarly, Bastard as a member of the children's gang, is only an innocent child who finds himself at the center of poverty and political instability that triggers many other predicaments in his life and those of other members of his gang. He thus finds solace in playing with his friends.

Although the two charactonyms appear to be complete opposites of each other, their situations are not any different. They both reflect the suffering that has been inflicted on the innocent children who in turn seek solutions to escape the environment of poverty registered even on the very faces of their parents and elders. These charactonyms are a successful interpretation of the themes of poverty and innocence.

6.5. Conclusion

With the aid of the moral philosophical theory, this chapter has discussed the main themes of the text *We Need New Names* by NoViolet Bulawayo. It has also highlighted the salient character names that have been used within the text as well as discussed the link that exists between the names of the characters and the themes of the text. The chapter has also shown that there is a link that exists between the charactonyms and the themes of the text and that this link is essential in the understanding of the text. The chapter that follows will discuss the findings from the three texts as well as give a conclusion of the research.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Discussion of Findings and Conclusion

7.1 Introduction

This chapter is aimed at discussing the findings of the analysis of the three selected texts as guided by the objectives. The linkages between the names and themes as established in the last three chapters will be elaborated further while being explained in relation to the objectives of the research. Thereafter a conclusion of the research will be drawn.

7.2 Findings

The following are the findings of the research in relation to the objectives of the study:

7.2.1 Findings on Objective Number One

The first objective which was to evaluate the types and meanings of the character names in Andrey Masiye's *Before Dawn*, Binwell Sinyangwe's *A Cowrie of Hope* and NoViolet Bulawayo's *We Need New Names*, was met by analyzing the sampled names of the main characters of the texts. This was done by scrutinizing the meanings of the names in relation to their structure, the name givers' intention or indeed the meanings as intended in their language of origin. The researcher also made an attempt to discuss the names of the characters in relation to either the Sense or the No-sense theory by trying to establish whether the names in question were a reflection of the character at the time of naming or if the personality of the named character is only aligned to their name much later after their naming.

In Andrey Masiye's *Before Dawn* for instance, the main character is named Kavumba in line with the whirlwind that appears at the time of his birth. However, in relation to his character, the reader notices that Kavumba's life only gets turmoil filled much later after he is named. Therefore, because there is no direct relation between his character at the time of naming and the

choice of his name, that outrightly qualifies this name to the No-Sense theory of Onomastics. In the same regard, the name Menyani may have most likely been the name givers' intention to imply that the bearer should outsmart others in everything that he did in life. However, it is apparent that, instead of outsmarting his opponents through logical action or behavior, Menyani prefers to overcome obstacles and opponents by means of physical violence.

The name Pantoka in *A Cowrie of Hope* is another example of how naming can be based on a character trait whether physical or otherwise. The character Sula is named Pantoka based on how she kicks legs about especially in protest. The other characters have names that present insightful information to the reader in that the name bearers most likely turn out to be the opposite of what their names imply as is the case for Sula, Nasula, Gode and Isaki. However, there are also a few cases in which characters tend to become what their names imply as is the case with Ntazana and the chief of Police Mr. Samson Luhila.

The case of Bulawayo's *We Need New Names* is a bit different from the other two texts in that the names used in the text are both unusual and an interesting selection by the author. They are nicknames which are coined from phrases or even a combination of words to form one word. 'Bornfree', 'Nomoreproblems' and 'Prophet Revelations Bitchington Mborro' are practical examples of names that have been coined by simply combining different words into one name. Other names such names as 'Darling', 'Bastard' and 'Bones' are also examples of how words that are seldom used as names have been turned to tags of personalities. Even so, the names that have been used in the text also follow the No-Sense theory of onomastics in that they have no connection to the character's behavioral traits nor their physical appearance at the time of naming.

In view of this objective, it has been established from the three texts that have been analyzed that the No-sense theory as applied in the texts studied, can be used in such a way as to show that characters do become what the name giver intends for their lives. For instance, the character named 'Ganizo' who is the *Bwalo* keeper, is always so analytical and thoughtful about preserving the ways of his culture. However, it has also been observed that the names that are given to the characters, though they are based on the No-Sense theory, can play a significant role in a text as the name bearers also tend to portray behaviors that are contrary to what the name giver intends for their lives or personality at the time of naming. For instance, Sula and her mother may have been most likely expected to portray a form of humility with which they would always accept what is dealt to them and never to fight injustice of any form. Instead, one notices how they behave contrary to the expectation of their name giver. Further, it has also been observed that names that are given based on the Sense theory also provide an interesting understanding to the reading of the text as the charactonym so named is only built on as the text continues to unfold. An example can be drawn from the name Pantoka that is given to Belita in Sinyangwe's *A Cowrie of Hope*. Once her feisty character is noticed, she is given an appropriate nickname to fit her trait. The name Pantoka implies 'one who fights her way through'. Rightly so, because Belita does not relent in fighting the battles that come her way regardless of their magnitude and her situation. The reminder that she has an additional name comes as confirmation to the determination that she portrays in the way she carries herself as well as how she always believes that things will get better with a little more effort on her part. A similar situation is evident in *Before Dawn* for the character Tinenenji whose name was likely given to mark or comment on how the child was born at a time when things were so difficult that the parents had no words with which to describe them, they were lost of words. At the time that this character is presented to the reader, as well as throughout the text, the life of Tinenenji is filled

with events that shock both the character and the reader so as to be at a loss for words. Her marriage to Menyani is storm filled almost as soon as their son is born; he abandons her and the boy for additional wives and she develops a wound that leads to her death as she is trying to be hospitable to a stranger. Her life is marked with shocks and surprises that always leave her hurt emotionally or physically. These names clearly fit the Sense theory of Onomastics because they have meaning that relates to the character's situation or character trait at the time of their naming and can be seen to be true for the rest of the character's life as the situations that surround such characters continue to build on their name especially because of the close relation between the name, its meaning as well as the situations that give it meaning.

7.2.2 Findings on Objective Number Two

The second objective of this research which was to examine the link between the character names and the themes in each of the three texts was addressed by comparing the charactonyms to the various themes of each analysed text as well as evaluating whether or not the names of the characters had any bearing on the themes of that particular text.

After reading NoViolet Bulawayo's text, it is apparent that the thematic pattern is mainly bordered on the political, economic and social instability of the country under question, the evils that are rife as well as what the author feels are the right patterns of behavior. Similarly, the situation in *A Cowrie of Hope* depicts a decade of both political and economic change that also affects the livelihood of the citizens in a manner that they need to readjust to fit into the current status quo. The author outlines the thematic structure in such a way that it reflects what he probably considers as the right manner in which people should carry themselves in spite of the many political and economic challenges. Ideally, it could be argued that these texts can be critiqued using the moral philosophical theory which stipulates that literature as a reflection of

society must aim at both teaching and entertaining the readers. In this case, the readers are being encouraged to be resilient, hopeful and hardworking regardless of how difficult the times they live in are.

In *We Need New Names*, the people of Paradise have been faced with a political leadership that does not put their plight into consideration thus plunging them into poverty and disillusionment. Their only source of hope and solace lies in a dreamy future in which everything will be resolved through the peaceful change of leadership through an election. In the meantime, they either sit around and day dream about how things will be different in the future and sometimes even seek help from the renowned religious leader Prophet Bitchington or indeed Vlodka the witch doctor. However, just as his name insinuates, though Bitchington is a prophet, he is also a man who loves women to the extent that he even rapes one in full view of the entire congregation. It is also women that constitute the larger part of the church's population most probably because they are more vulnerable to his falsehoods. Religion has been portrayed in the same light as political exploitation in that unlike the expectations of the people to receive solace from these institutions, they end up being cheated. Therefore the name of the prophet points to his personality as well as the exploitation he represents within the text.

In Andrea Masiye's *Before Dawn*, the picture that has been painted is one that depicts a cultural society in colonial times when life was mainly centered on cultural norms and values. The most salient themes include the theme of poverty and loneliness as well as that of colonial influence. The young men migrate to the Copperbelt to work in the mines as a means of acquiring all things European to help them escape the poverty their own culture has failed to address. The charactonyms 'Chokani' and 'Menyani' have been well linked to this theme. Chokani, whose name means 'to come out of' literally comes out of the ways of their culture and is transformed

by the influence of the ways of the Europeans at the mines. Menyani whose name was expected to bring about a fighting spirit in him, especially for the good, is also a clear case of how the theme of colonial influence has been linked to a charactonym. It is notable how Menyani chooses to use physical fights as a means to propagate his intentions other than amicable means to put across his intentions or views. Further, it is also surprising that as heir to the throne of headman of the village, one would expect that he would also fight to conserve the ways of the village other than being among those that leave to go and experience the European ways of life while letting their own die.

The theme of poverty and loneliness is another critical aspect of the text. It depicts the pains and suffering that come as a result of lack in certain areas especially that of the most basic needs in life. Tionenji is unable to provide adequately for herself and her son especially after abandonment by her husband, Menyani. As her name suggests, her life is a constant question of what she would see in her life because of how unstable Menyani is. Since he is unable to take care of them like a husband and father should, she is constantly in the middle of problems caused by her husband's character of being inconsiderate and uninterested in the ways and norms of their culture.

It may thus be argued that names within the three texts studied are closely tied to the themes of each of the texts, as is seen in the way the name meanings of the characters have the themes illuminated through them. This also makes the reading more stimulating as a text can be analysed through the names given to the characters therein.

7.2.3 Findings on Objective Number Three

The third objective of the research set out to analyse the significance of the link between the character names and the themes of the three texts. In this regard, it has been observed that in the

three texts that have been analysed, it can be argued that there is a clear linkage between the names and the themes of each of the texts which is vital in the understanding and analysis of the text. For instance, in *We Need New Names*, one notices that the names of the characters have a direct implication on the themes of the text. The names ‘Bones’, ‘Nomoreproblems’, ‘Freedom’ and ‘Messenger’ can all be aligned to the theme of political instability in the text. In the lives of the named characters, the events that overtake their lives as well as the implications of their names point to the way life was a struggle owing to the political instability of the country. The woman who mothers the boy named Bones, has a difficult time adjusting to the prevailing political and economic situation of the country; she keeps counting through her bag of money which she hoards with the hope that things would get better and the money would be useful again. The name ‘Nomoreproblems’ is another name whose meaning is both self-explanatory and gives a hint of how difficult the economic situation is in the country. People hold on to the belief that things would get better and that all their problems would be a thing of the past. This name also hints on the theme of political instability that is also present in the text.

In the same way, the theme of colonial influence in *Before Dawn* is enhanced by the character Chokani whose name means ‘come out’. He leaves the village in search for a better life at the mines and when he returns, he displays evidence of the colonial influence shown from his new perception about the villagers and village life as well as the economic and physical transformation that have taken place in his own life. However, the contrast that is formed between his immaculate appearance and his bleeding soles, is also significant in placing emphasis on how traditional norms have suffered because of the local people’s preference for western civilisation. In the same text, the names Chokani and Menyani can also be interpreted as enhancing the theme of grudges that are rife among the people of Banda’s village. Despite

having preference for the civilisation brought by the whites over their own traditional ways, they fail to let go of the grudges or differences they had, which led them closer to their dreams. They leave the village and return only to continue fighting over matters that bordered on the clash between their culture and the influence of the Whites.

In Bulawayo's *We need new names*, the name 'Prophet Revelations Bitchington Mborro' is a pointer at how religion has been used to manipulate the citizens as the religious leaders take advantage of their desperation for solace. The said prophet for instance, charges the community members for services such as praying for the sick, and he pegs the prices in foreign currency clearly for his own benefit. Ironically, he does not exhibit any signs of being able to prophesy in the lives of the people or even give them revelations that would rekindle hope in their lives especially that the citizens are troubled and desperate for better living conditions.

This link is significant because it makes the authors' intention clear to their reader. In an attempt to put across the moral lessons or social commentary to the readers, the author uses the charactonyms to give a guide as to what the lessons and commentary in the text are. Regardless of whether the names are given based on the Sense or the No-Sense theories of Onomastics, the resultant personalities always work towards giving a clear guide of the themes that have been packaged within the piece of writing. Further, this linkage between the names and the themes of the texts, foreshadows what the author has perceived as the best moral lessons or commentary to give to the readers especially considering the type of setting used in the story.

This linkage between the names of the characters and the textual themes helps the author in guiding the reader on a linear path to understanding the thematic structure of the text without difficulty. This also means that once the reader has figured out the name meanings of a given text, understanding the themes becomes even easier. Further, it has also become evident through

this study that writers of fiction should be careful when naming characters because names can be a tool for characterization as well as the thematic development. Inversely, even though it is important for the readers to realize that understanding the name meanings can help unravel the themes of a work of fiction, it is also vital to remember that names can be either self-fulfilling or ironic.

7.3 Conclusion

This research has shown that there is a significant linkage between names and the themes of a particular text in the way the objectives have been met. The names of the characters in the text have been analyzed in relation to their meanings and whether the character lives up to their name meaning or even the name giver's intention for their name. The relationship between the charactonyms and the themes of the texts was also explored and it was found out that there is a clear-cut connection between the two in that the names of the characters are used to highlight the thematic discourse of the text. It was also observed that the Sense and the No-Sense theories of Onomastics are both useful in how the characters are named, whether the name given to them has meaning relating to their character or personality at the time of naming or even how the characters' personalities turn out later in their life.

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