

specificity and thus one single data can be turned into a unit of information. The earthlings then makes use of this particular unit i.e. information and then share it with one another. When the process is concerned, it is fascinating that a person disseminates the number of overt and covert messages while conversing with another person (see Dimbleby & Burton, 1996, pp. 14 – 20). Interestingly the dispersal of information happens all the time and the procedure remains in the realm of oblivion (read: unconscious) perpetually. As a matter of fact, we live in the thin surface of the age of information. Lies beneath are the zone of information and the zone of data forms the core.

Regardless of the exclusivity, a unit of information is null and void without proper usage and context. In case of information technology, “designs that ignore social issues lead to fragile, opaque technologies” (Brown & Duguid, XVII). Therefore, every piece of unprocessed and processed data requires a social context – a medium for exposure. As long as the dissemination is concerned, human beings are more or less acquainted with that feature as they do it every moment. The tendency to disseminate messages has always been there and the recent technological boom has facilitated the furthering and extending of that primitive tendency. Interestingly, the modern technological advancement, a virtual world, and the world of hypertext and hyperspace altogether creates a unique cyberculture that denotes “the vast gathering of information, misinformation, sounds, images and ideas that can be accessed through the internet, along with the set of practices, attitudes, values and ways of thinking” (Edgar & Sedgwick, 2008, p. 84). The process of conversion of data into information is continuous and relentless and there is always a chain reaction going on no matter how much the condition look like to be in an equilibrium state. From the viewpoint of literature, the whole process is synonymous to continuous signification that can be varied in space-time continuum. In this case, data functions as signifier and information as signified. The summation of both makes the world of information function like a sign (*see* de Saussure, 2004, pp. 59 – 71). This is the basic functionality of the core concepts of the Age of Information, effective in a simple structure that has all the abilities to assume the deferral capability.

“There are more things in heaven and earth” ...⁵

So far the article discusses about queer theory and the conceptual core(s) of the Age of Information under separate headings. The basic quest of the article is to explicate why queer is getting coinage in 21st century despite the presence of the LGBT⁶ community since the fact was 'closeted' through a discursive exclusion for centuries (see Sedgwick, 1993, pp. 45 – 61; & Foucault, 1991, pp. 292 – 300). This work makes an attempt to provide a rational answer to that query. Queer theory, as can be perceived, resides in the dangerous zone where human identity can be destabilized from its root. The active political history gives queer a solid background that makes it more than a theory. In its true essence, queer is at once stable and unstable. The conceptual core (i.e. information) of the Age of Information has some specific characteristics. It is already mentioned

that information is accurate, simple, relevant, complete, concise, consistent, secured, and it has timeliness (Rahman, 2010, pp. 12 – 13). Queer theory accommodates ambivalent and diverse traits just as de Lauretis speaks of lesbian identity and representation to be “more diverse and socially heterogeneous” (de Lauretis, 1993, p. 155). Likewise information, queer is accurate, simple, and relevant in its demand for the critical insights regarding sexual preference based identity. Queer is complete in its own term. It is both consistent and secured. Most importantly, the relevance of queer in terms of timeliness is undeniable. On the other hand, information is obtained from unprocessed data. When a data is merged with meaning in a specific context, then it turns out to be information (Rahman, 2010, p. 11). As long as the unprocessed data is concerned, it has several characteristics of its own that can be inferred from its definition mentioned earlier. Data is a qualitative aspect not quantitative, it does not have any figurative formation, it is neutral yet biased, and it is postmodern. At the same time, queer deals with identity politics which is a qualitative aspect and yet it defies any form of definitive confinement. Queer is biased as long as the crave for overthrowing sexual-preference based identity is concerned, and yet queer is neutral as it denotes to be an umbrella term engulfing diverse sexual expressions. This is because it is “more properly 'queer theories' rather than 'queer theory'; pluralities rather than singularity” (Giffney, 2009, p. 7). Queer is essentially postmodern as it has, in Cherry Smyth's terms, “potential for radical pluralism” (1992, 25). Lastly, data and information together constitutes the systematic core and again that system has some general characteristics. A system is organized, interactive, interdependent, integrated, and objective (Rahman, 2010, p. 25). In the same manner, queer theory, with all of its un/settling traits, functions in the field of humanities as a system of reading human identity. In short, queer transcends and translocates boundaries as it has the power to oscillate in between the zone of information and the zone of data. It is formally shaped like information and at once informally shaped like data. Queer is functional in collective unconscious of the mass which is facilitated by dint of the design of the core concepts of the Age of Information. It can be seen that the very constituent part of the Age of Information is shaped in such a form that can aptly contain and uphold the notion of queer. As a result, the notional changes that are brought about by this information-centred system aptly justify queer theory in the 21st century.

End Notes :

1. From William Butler Yeats' “The Second Coming.”
2. From John Milton's “Paradise Lost”, Book – II.
3. The “Real” phase is the last phase of the three-phased psychic development of humans whereas the other two are “Imaginary” and “Symbolic” as proposed by Jacques Lacan.
4. From “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” by T. S. Eliot.
5. From William Shakespeare's Hamlet. 1:5.
6. A community formed by Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transsexual (Giffney, p. 2)

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The Convergence of Postcolonialism and Bioregionalism in Tsitsi Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions*

- Blossom Ngum Fondo

Abstract: Both culture and nature are under serious threats if not of extinction, at least of massive destruction. The first holds true for the formerly colonized regions of the world which are yet to recover their cultures from the cultural imperialism which was an integral part of colonialism. As for nature, the entire world is at risk as diverse human and non-human activities continue to precipitate the destruction of the physical environment. Both aspects are of interest to both writers of fictions and literary critics who put their creative art and literary skills respectively at the service of humanity. Postcolonial literature and the related postcolonial theory have been engaged with the deconstruction of some of the lasting vestiges of the colonial encounter, especially with the effort to recover the culture of the colonized from the effects of colonialism. Ecocriticism engages with the ways literature can serve a higher good by reacting positively to the environmental problems that threaten the earth which is our home. Bioregionalism is an important concept of Ecocriticism that is interested in forging healthy linkages between humans and their physical environments. Thus both postcolonialism and bioregionalism constitute “battlefield” theories committed to effecting changes in thinking and attitudes towards culture and nature.

Keywords: Postcolonialism, Bioregionalism, ecology, culture, relationship.

This paper is interested in analysing the ways postcolonialism and bioregionalism converge in Tsitsi Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions*. However, it is expedient to define the important terms of this discussion prior to its pursuance. In a general sense, bioregionalism is the belief that human activity including environmental and social policies should be based on ecological or geographical rather than economic or political boundaries. It has to do with what has been termed “living in place” which means one is aware of the ecology, economy and culture of the place where one lives and is committed to making choices that enhance them. Of the many aspects of bioregional living, this paper will address especially the issue of culture. This is because bioregionalism also involves the understanding the human cultures that have occupied one's place in the past and respecting their ways of life. It has to do with making choices that strengthen the local ecology, economy and culture instead of harming them. Mitchell Thomashow (2006) states that “it seeks to integrate ecological and cultural affiliations within the framework of

place-based sensibility, derived from landscape, ecosystem, watershed, indigenous culture, local community knowledge, environmental history, climate and geography” (121). Post-colonialism for its part is involved amongst other things with the ways in which the process of colonialism negatively impacted the lives of the colonized, alienating them from their indigenous cultures. Post-colonialism also firmly addresses the idea of universalism. According to Bill Ashcroft et al in the general introduction to *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*, 2nd edition (2006.) “the concept of universalism presupposes a unitary and homogenous human nature which marginalizes and excludes the distinctive characteristics, the difference of the post-colonial societies” (71). They hold that a crucial insistence of post-colonial theory is that, despite a shared experience of colonialism, the cultural realities of post-colonial societies may differ vastly”. Post-colonial theory is involved with the respect for this difference which is not only between different colonized societies but especially between the societies of the colonizers and the colonized. The process of colonialism involved a cultural imperialism whereby the colonized were led to despise and eventually abandon their indigenous culture. This breakaway from culture by the colonized, results in a deep sense of alienation and homelessness with its attendant pathologies. At the same time it poses a threat to the bioregional concept of living a rooted life and respecting the human cultures that have existed in the place one inhabits. Robert L. Thayer (2003) in *Life-Place: Bioregional Thought and Practice* has noted that:

We wander that postmodern landscape like hunter-gatherers, searching for bits and pieces of meaning, unconsciously emulating the atomized consumers of economists' elaborate models. Governments and transnational corporations expect us to substitute a shallow awareness of the entire globe for whatever deep wisdom and affection we might have had for a specific place. In the process of becoming postmodern, we have abandoned the notion of “home” and like innocent natives presented with beads and trinkets of shining luster and unfamiliar purpose; we have surrendered our former homelands to new gods of consumerism, transience, shallow information, global communication and ever-expanding technology. We trained in schools and universities to “become” before we “locate”. The ends of these hopeless wanderings in terms of both purpose and place very often elude us. (2)

Thus bioregionalism can be considered as another way of addressing the postcolonial cultural crises, or better still that the two are two faces of the same coin. This is so because the experience of colonialism resulted in a deep-seated suspicion for local culture which was branded primitivism and a sign of backwardness, while bioregionalism insists on the respect of the local in all its facets: cultural and natural. Through colonial education that was exported to the colonies, the colonized were taught exclusively foreign values making them ignorant of their environment thus causing them to engage in a foreign culture that did not only stand in stark contrast to their indigenous culture but out rightly militated against it.

This gave rise to the colonial dissociating with their environment which they never saw nor read about in the books they were acquainted with. Besides leading to feelings of inferiority and a rejection of culture, it does not make for a healthy relationship with the environment for Thayer, (2003) has added that:

People who stay in place may come to know that place more deeply.
People who know a place may come to care about it more deeply.
People who care about a place are more likely to take better care of it and people who take care of places, one at a time, are the key to the future of humanity and all living creatures. (5)

Thus colonialism by making the colonized ignorant of their environment creates a class of people who because they do not know a place therefore do not care about it and do not take care of it. They are alienated from both culture and environment. It disrupts any rapport and affection between the colonized and their natural and cultural environments. Bill Ashcroft et al (2006) have noted in the introduction to *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader* that 'as with issues of cultural identity, place has always been of great importance to Post-colonial theory, because place is so embedded in language, naming and narrative' (6). Tsitsi Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions* highlights the advantages of living a culturally rooted life and the consequences of rejecting indigenous cultures. Both aspects are dear to the projects of bioregionalism and post-colonialism. She does this through the use of various metaphors, images and symbols. Through a convoluted and complex web of food, consumption, dances and rituals, Dangarembga shows that living a rooted life especially culturally breeds a stable identity. The novel focuses on the growth and development of the narrator/protagonist Tambudzai from the rural homestead to the urban mission in the Rhodesia, present day Zimbabwe. The reader notices how Tambudzai's sense of identity is influenced to a large extent by the degree to which she respects and upholds her indigenous Shona culture. When she is closely connected to the Shona culture, she has a stable identity which becomes fluid once she starts engaging in a foreign culture at the expense of the indigenous.

“Living-in-place” and Identity Stability: The story opens with the protagonist-narrator Tambudzai living the rural homestead in Rhodesia (present day Zimbabwe). While at the rural homestead, Tambudzai lives in close contact with her local culture which she respects and upholds while at the same time she enjoys the local foods and natural landscape of her homestead. This is manifested in the activities she is engaged in such as the preparation of local foods such as *sadza* on an open hearth and being proud of the fact, bathing in the local stream *Nyamavira* and active involvement in farming where local foods such as millet and corn are grown organically. At this point in Tambudzai's life she is living a bioregional existence where she fully respects the local environment both cultural as well as natural and in fact the respect for one marks the respect for the other. At this point her identity is stable as she identifies herself as a Shona girl. This holds in line with the point of view of some postcolonial critics who have argued that before the coming of the Europeans to

Africa, the Africans had a culture. This pride in her culture is further seen when the family has to welcome her uncle Babamukuru from England. This is greeted with traditional dances with drums and other traditional instruments like the *hosho*. Tambudzai fully participates in these dances which also define her as Shona. When she invites her cousin Nyasha to join in the dancing she is shocked when her aunt Maiguru explains to her that her cousins Nyasha and Chido have forgotten their indigenous Shona language after their stay in Europe and so cannot understand her. She finds this hard to swallow:

What Maiguru said was bewildering, bewildering and offending, I had not expected my cousins to have changed, certainly not so radically, simply because they had been away for a while. Besides, Shona was our language. What did people mean when they forgot it? (42)

Tambudzai's bewilderment shows how connected she is to her local culture. This is a bioregional concept which intersects with post-colonialism where critics like Ngugi Wa Thiong'o have insisted that the colonized must uphold his/her culture. Michael Vincent McGinnis (2006) (ed) in *Bioregionalism* has stated that: 'a healthy relationship with place is reflected in the languages spoken, the dances and rituals of cultures' (1). He is of the opinion that:

[...] Each ceremonial dance was founded upon "direct observation" of the relationship that existed between culture and nature. Each dance represented a culture's knowledge of place. The tastes of the tribal meal were believed to be born from the splendid place inhabited by people. These tastes of place were celebrated in ritual and dance. (1)

This is a description of the Shona homestead which falls in line with Thayer's (2003) definition of a bioregion as follows:

[...] literally and etymologically a "life-place" unique region definable by natural (rather than political) boundaries with geographic, climatic, hydrological, and ecological character capable of supporting unique human and non-human communities. Bioregions can be variously defined by the geography of watersheds, similar plant and animal ecosystems [...] and by the unique human cultures that grow from natural limits and potentials of the region. (3)

In the above definition, what is of interest to this paper is the last part whose focus is on the "unique human cultures that grow from natural limits and potentials of the regions". Thus the Shona homestead can be considered as a bioregion, since it is defined in terms of the unique human cultures represented by its local foods such as *nhegheeni* and *matamba* and by the Shona language. Furthermore, when Tambudzai meets Nyasha shortly after the return from England, she disapproves of the very short dress she puts on which is out of place in the Shona homestead. She says of Nyasha that she was self-conscious though, constantly clasping her hands behind her buttocks to prevent her dress from riding up, and observing everybody through veiled vigilant eyes to see what we were thinking...unfortunately she had worn it. I could not

condone her lack of decorum. I would not give my approval. I turned away (37).

Tambudzai refuses to approve of this dressing because it is not reflective of the Shona culture. Thus Nyasha's inability to speak the indigenous Shona language is frowned upon as well as her dressing which does not represent the culture of the Shona homestead. Nyasha due to her exposure to the culture of the colonizers is seen here completely cut off from her indigenous cultures. She no longer leads a rooted life, reason why her attitudes are frowned upon and her actions not sanctioned by the natives. For her part she feels ill-at-ease, reason why she is self-conscious and is focused on clasping her very short dress. Therefore it is seen here how post-colonialism and bioregionalism converge in the belief in place-based behavior. Berg and Dasman cited by Doug Aberly (2006) in 'Interpreting bioregionalism: A story told from many voices', have further said 'a bioregion refers both to a geographical terrain and a terrain of consciousness- to a place and the ideas that have developed about how to live in that place'. McGinnis (2006) has noted that "a bioregion represents the intersection of vernacular culture, place-based behavior, and community" (3). Nyasha's out-of-place behavior is thus in direct antagonism to both bioregional and postcolonial thinking patterns since respecting the culture of a particular terrain is a leitmotiv of bioregionalism and postcolonialism. Thus respecting the culture of a particular terrain is a hallmark of bioregionalism as well as post-colonialism. She also disapproves of her brother Nhamo who after his schooling at the mission refuses to speak Shona preferring to speak only English even to his mother who does not understand it. She so much disapproves of Nhamo's disrespect for their culture that when he dies she expresses no sadness but callously states that she was not sorry when her brother died. (1). Nhamo develops spite for his mother-tongue Shona after his stay in the mission where he is taught exclusively in English. Thus he too engages in an anti-bioregional existence when he rejects his language and therefore culture and also the local foods as well as the activities such as farming even preferring to remain at the mission during holidays. This ruptures his relationship with Tambudzai who disapproves of his rejection of his place and culture. What all of these tell us is that Tambudzai is a bioregionalist who respects the norms and mores of the environment where she finds herself and is ready to defend and protect them. This in turn lends her a stable identity.

A healthy existence for the colonized consists in respecting the local ways or briefly put pursuing a bioregional existence especially in the arena of culture. So bioregionalism can be seen as another way of looking at or rethinking the postcolonial condition. When Tambudzai respects her local culture and is proud of her cultural heritage as Shona she has a stable identity and is at peace with herself and her environment. This however becomes problematic when she engages in an alien culture at the mission. This reiterates the importance of place in the identity of individuals, but this is not just any place, rather it is one where by reason

of a deep natural and cultural connection, the individual is rooted. It is this lack of place that has resulted in the homeless state and which harms both the natural and cultural landscape. Thus it can be seen that when the individual is committed to the cultures of the place where s/he belongs, that individual has a stable sense of identity and a deep sense of home. McGinnis (2006) has underscored that “a viable culture must find its roots somewhere, in some place” (5). When one considers a place as home, that individual will naturally invest towards making that home healthy and will work towards its preservation. But when the individual through the influence (for example) of colonialism is made to despise his/her home and look at the home of the colonizers as his/hers, there is a disconnection with the immediate environment and this results in not only a deep-sense of alienation, but most especially in a fracture in the relationship with place. The individual no longer feels indebted to that place because s/he believes that s/he belongs somewhere else.

Eco-cultural Disruption and Identity Instability: When her older brother Nhamo dies suddenly Tambudzai is given the opportunity to have a modern education. So she has to leave the homestead to the mission to replace her brother in the mission school where her uncle Babamukuru is headmaster. Tambudzai's movement from the homestead to the mission is not only a physical journey but I also see it as a metaphorical movement from her roots, and her culture, from the local to the foreign. This is corroborated by the fact that it is in the mission that she learns to despise the ways of her rural past and to strive for and adapt a foreign lifestyle of the mission which she starts to value above her local culture. This is much to her own demise as she ends up in a state of cultural schizophrenia inhabiting a cultural no-man's-land. Dan Flores (2006) in “Place: Thinking about Bioregional History” explains the symbiosis between place and culture. She writes:

Further, we ought to understand that the structure of the dialogue – and that is the proper way to describe it – between nature and human culture is the same kind of dialogue that exists between habitat and species in natural selection. Human cultures alter their places to shape them in accordance with their ideological visions, and in turn cultures are shaped by the power of their places. (52)

In departing from her indigenous home, Tambudzai is actually departing from her home-based culture as she will adopt different behavioural patterns at the mission that will stand in stark opposition to her culture. This legitimates Chet A. Bowers' (2006) view in “Toward a Bioregional Future” that “indeed, the term “culture” helps to highlight that individuals are nested in cultural systems, and cultural systems are nested in natural systems” (199/200). When she is about leaving the homestead for the mission, Tambudzai already indicates what direction her life will take when she gets there. She states that when she was leaving the homestead, she was a peasant but this peasant self she intended to leave behind and acquire a new self at the mission which self will be cut off from the ways of the homestead. That is why she adds that this new self could not have been bred on the homestead nor survived there. Without

realizing it, she is inadvertently following Nhamo's example of distancing herself from her home and culture. Shortly after she arrives the mission she becomes so overwhelmed by the glamour of her uncle's home that she begins to look her past with doubt considering it to be beneath the standard. So when she and Nyasha are walking to school the next day, she sets about mimicking Nyasha's movements:

To look at us you would have thought we were sisters, which is how I would have arranged matters had I been consulted. I strutted along my thoroughbred cousin, imitating her walk and the set of her head so that everyone would see that we were a unit. (92)

The contrast here cannot be overlooked because before now, Tambudzai had been disapproving of her cousin's manners which to her; was a lack of decorum, but now she considers Nyasha thoroughbred because English bred to the point of imitating her. It portrays Tambudzai moving further and further away from her culture and from her place. This is further seen when she considers this period as that of her reincarnation, during which she expected to add wisdom to her nature, clarity to her vision and glamour to her person. To accomplish all these, she plunges into the writings of British writers such as Enid Blyton and the Bronte sisters, whose writings have been described as being at the service of empire. Blyton has especially been accused of racism in the characters she created in some of her children's stories. These writings contrary to doing what Tambudzai desires will rather teach her to despise her culture more and more. These are writings that will take Tambudzai further from the local to the foreign, from the indigenous to the alien and create more identity problems for herself. Tambudzai next recounts that 'as her body and mind relaxed and Maiguru tended me solicitously like a mother bird, ever ready to drop tasty morsels into my mouth, I grew quite plump' (95). This statement is important both at the surface and the deeper value, for at its surface it shows Tambudzai now consuming foreign foods at the expense of the local sadza and others and at the deeper level, it shows her undergoing the much-desired reincarnation and moving to another culture and place. The fact that not only her body but her mind as well relaxed shows that Tambudzai is now ready to be transformed into the new person she had dreamed all along and the tasty morsels which Maiguru fed her could point to the foreign values that she was now imbibing at the mission. Thus at this point in time, Tambudzai is ready to be moulded and cultivated the way her uncle and aunt deem fit. This is further illustrated when after church services on Sunday while Nyasha does not want to be seen with her parents, Tambudzai is only too eager to stand by them and be seen by all. She states that: 'I, on the other hand, wanted to stand outside church with my aunt and uncle. I wanted to be known of their kind because I thought the atmosphere of the homestead clung to me and made me look different' (99). Tambudzai is therefore ashamed of her rural past and wishes to be free from it. This shows that Tambudzai is gradually severing herself from the homestead which she has learnt to abhor. With this new attitude she can no longer express love nor any form of attachment to this homestead, therefore she can no

longer care for it. She has been displaced from both her culture and environment. Bill Ashcroft et al (2006) (eds) in the introduction to *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-colonial literatures*, 2nd edition have postulated that. A major feature of Post-colonial literatures is the concern with place and displacement. It is here that the special post-colonial crisis of identity comes into being; the concern with the development or recovery of an effective identifying relationship between self and place. (8) They add that '[a] valid and active sense of self may have been eroded by dislocation [...] or it may have been destroyed by cultural denigration, the conscious and unconscious oppression of the indigenous personality and culture by a supposedly superior racial or cultural model' (9). Whatever may be the cause, they conclude that 'the dialectic of place and displacement is always a feature of post-colonial societies' (9). This ties in with McGinnis' (2006) opinion that Bioregionalists believe that as members of distinct communities, human beings cannot avoid interacting with and being affected by their specific location, place and bioregion: despite modern technology, we are not insulated from nature. (2)

Tambudzai's departure from the rural homestead or her bioregion marks a disjuncture in her sense of identity. She has not only moved physically but more importantly psychologically to the point of wanting to be freed of anything that can remotely or otherwise tie her to the rural homestead. Her past has become for her an occasion of shame and remorse. Another important instance where Tambudzai is seen despising her past is when the family at the mission has to travel to the homestead and Chido refuses to go along with the others. Tambudzai quickly finds an excuse for him saying that "you couldn't blame him really for not wanting to go home, because he was too old now- we all were, and too civilized too-to be amused by eating *matamba* and *nhengeni*, and by trips to Nyamarira" (120). This shows how far Tambudzai has gone from her culture, considering it uncivilized. The tribal meal now holds no real meaning to her. The glamour of the mission has come to symbolize civilization for her and so she takes another step further from the rural homestead. More and more she develops scorn for the things of the homestead. Like Nhamo before her, she is put off by the dirt of the homestead and when she finds the toilet dirty she severely reproaches her mother and even after cleaning it, it is never clean enough for her to use it. This creates a difficult relationship between herself and her mother who accuses her of now considering her as dirt. These are all instances of assimilation and acculturation which come about when the colonized is cut off from his/her culture, and stops leading a bioregional existence. Tambudzai's acculturation and assimilation is seen during a family gathering to seek solutions to the problems plaguing the family, two solutions are proposed: Tambudzai's father Jeremiah proposes cleansing rites involving a good medium and a sacrificial ox to call on the clan to get rid of the evil while Babamukuru proposes a Christian wedding for Jeremiah and his wife Mainini. According to him they have been living in sin because although they are traditionally married by Shona customary laws, they have never been married in church. These two solutions represent the clash of

cultures that is present in postcolonial studies and also the two forces contending over Tambudzai and between which she will have to choose. Tambudzai having been assimilated to the ways of the mission quickly adopts Babamukuru's solution which to her symbolizes progress for she explains to Nyasha proudly that her family does not often carry out these rituals. Her definition of progress is biased and is an expression of a colonized and assimilated mind. This is what notable postcolonial critic Ngugi Wa Thiong'o (1987) *Writers in Politics: A Re-engagement with Issues of Literature and Society* comments on when talking about language 'Thus ignorance of an African language, instead of being a matter of shame and personal discomfort, was now a thing for pride and public display' (53). Thus Tambudzai instead of bemoaning the loss of her cultural heritage is rather proud of the fact. The idea of 'living-in-place' which bioregionalists uphold and whose disruption in some parts of the world, they have blamed on the rise of exploitative and industrial civilizations has also been largely disrupted by the process of colonization. This process delinked peoples from their indigenous ways of life leading to dissociation between peoples and their cultures and eventually natural environments. Ngugi Wa Thiong'o (1987) laments the fact that the colonial education under which he and other Kenyan children were educated led them to identify first and foremost with the world of the colonizers. He notes in *Writers in Politics* thus "we are all familiar with the often told stories of African children having to learn all about daffodils and snow long before they are able to name the flowers of their own land" (132). This has resulted in what Frantz Fanon described as "an incurable wish for the permanent identification with the West" (120). This does not make for a people who identify with or care for their culture or immediate environment as they are "elsewhere" both culturally and mentally. Whereas Aberly (2006) has intimated that "this deeply rooted respect for indigenous thinking and peoples is a tenet fundamental to bioregionalism" (20), and I add to postcolonialism as well.

Cultural Decolonization and the Return to the "Home Place":

This fact of cutting off from one's cultural roots is not without its consequences and that is the case with Tambudzai. Shortly after accepting the Christian marriage of her parents as the solution to the problems plaguing the family, she begins experiencing psychological problems which culminate in a kind of psychic disorientation. She states that

To me the question of the wedding was a serious one, so serious that even my body reacted in a very alarming way. Whenever I thought about it, whenever images of my mother immaculate in virginal white satin or (horror of horrors) myself as sweet, simpering bridesmaid fluttered through my mind, I suffered a horrible crawling over my skin, my chest contracted to a breathless tension and even my bowels threatened to let me know their opinion. (149)

This wedding also marks the beginning of Tambudzai's consciousness as she considers the wedding to be making a joke of her parents, her home and herself. 'Gradually I was forced to admit to myself that I did not like the idea of my parents performing a wedding' (150). She considered the