

Course Name: The Novel and Change

Professor Name: Dr. Avishek Parui

Department Name: Department of Humanities and Social Sciences

Institute Name: IIT Madras

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Lecture 52

Tsitsi Dangarembga's Nervous Conditions and Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart - Part 3

So, hi and welcome to this NPTEL course titled The Novel and Change. We are looking at a comparative study of Chinua Achebe's novel Things Fall Apart and Tsitsi Dangarembga's novel Nervous Condition. In particular, we are looking at the role of the missionary, the colonial missionary machine, the engine, the institution, the entire spiritual apparatus and how that is collusive in many ways with the imperial apparatus. So, we talked about already, if you remember our sessions on Achebe's novel, the collusion between knowledge and power, between spirituality, different forms of spirituality and how it often translates into some kind of coercive strategies and so on and so forth. Now, and this should be on your screen, but we are looking at particularly how the mission, the Christian missionary enterprise in terms of conversion, in terms of religious reincarnation into social subjects formation, how that is very, very collusive in many ways with the entire imperial mission of creating soft power. of consolidating soft power and also a very interesting strategy, a successful strategy one might argue in terms of thwarting and preempting any form of subversion, right. So, this is something we started looking at right from the Robinson Crusoe story and this should be on the screen. In order to understand the role of mission in Things Fall Apart, it is essential to appreciate the attenuated portrait the novel provides. Several models of approach were adopted during the historical process of transmission and Achebe differentiates between these, right. So, we talked about already in the previous session how Achebe gives a very nuanced perspective and nuanced understanding of the Christian encounter with the earlier religious forms.

So, there are not just negative representations in terms of how Christianity as it comes with

the imperial institutional apparatus is also trying to portray or consolidate some sort of power control. At the same time, it is also shown in many instances in some characters in Achebe's novel how Christianity seems to have the answers to certain kinds of existential spiritual questions which had been ignored by earlier forms of religion. Right. So, Mr. Brown in *Things Fall Apart* was the first white missionary to dwell among the Igbo people. He came with an African interpreter, Mr. Kiaga, and several other converts. He sought to develop a relationship of trust with the clan, deliberately restraining the excesses of more zealous converts and establishing a friendly dialogue with leading members, such as Akuna, who welcomed the missionary into his home. So, we see how the missionary presence in Achebe's novel gets increasingly internalized and also intimate in quality. And of course, this is a very interesting representation of the slow processes of change because in the value templates, the religious templates, the spiritual templates began to change around the subjects. What that also means is how the entire morality ecology changes and how the novel is a very good representation of the same. Though the Igbo people initially dismissed him as crazy, children and even adults eventually began to attend his school. So, the missionary school as you know was a very important and very symbolic institution in the colonial contact zone because it represented a special kind of codified knowledge and that codification was often collusive with the imperial mission of control and territorialization and of course the missionary school also operated in many instances as an institution of soft power, an institution of some kind of a indoctrination which would then translate into interpolation. So, I am using interpellation in an Althusserian sense. are the Marxist critic where interpellation is a process through which a subject is, subject internalizes certain kind of principles and ideologies which then makes it impossible for the subject to question those, right.

So, the process of internalization, the process of slow quiet consumption of certain kind of value system which makes it then subsequently impossible to question those value systems, right. So that interpellative process is at play. words at play in many instances, historical instances in the missionary school, in the colonial contact zone. So, while he was loosely affiliated to the distant imperial authorities, Mr. Brown pre-eminently desired religious conversion. He was not interested in delivering Christian civilization as an

exclusive and uncompromising British product designed to subjugate and destroy the existing culture. So, this is where things fall apart really becomes interesting because it is not taking the stereotypical representation of the missionary. It is not like the missionary comes and is completely hand in glove with the imperial power paradigm. Mr. Brown obviously has ties to the imperial mission but his primary desire, primary principle here is to convert people into Christians, not really delivering or Christianizing or Christian civilization which is more compatible with the imperial mission. So, there is imperial legacy, there is imperial association but not that is not the only way that he operates. So, Mr. Kyaga demonstrates a more developed stage in the establishment of the missions. As an African himself, he was able to adjust quite easily to community life in Mbanta. His health did not give way like that of Mr. Brown. It is he who remained within the village, helping to build and establish the infant church. He staunchly opposed the prejudices of new converts against outsiders like the Osu and preserved the tenuous equilibrium of the group through its formed resistance to extreme acts against the traditional religion such as killing the sacred royal python, right. So, we talked about in the previous session if you remember that whenever there is a contact zone which is an asymmetrical mixing of different cultural values and traditions and templates, the religious conversion principle, religious mission really takes very interesting and complex shapes and reroutes. Because it also absorbs a lot of the local traditions, the local rituals. So, it stops functioning as one monolithic grand narrative, but instead becomes very plastic in quality.

It becomes sensitive to local customs, it becomes responsive to some of the local requirements and so on and so forth. So, the resistance against, you know, killing the sacred royal python, you know becomes a case in point because you know obviously the python is not part of the Christian iconography, but it is still part of the local rituals. So that resistance against killing it becomes a part of the local Christian you know mission, local Christian narrative. This balance was shattered by the hardline authoritative approach of the final representative missionary who came to replace Mr. Brown. So, we have different diachronic examples, different examples of different forms of missionary figures and Mr. Brown obviously comes in first. He is tied obviously to the imperial apparatus but he doesn't really operate wholly determined by the imperial apparatus. He has this

autonomous zeal, autonomous desire to convert people which may or may not correspond to the mainstream desire of the colonial mission. But the final representative missionary in *Things Fall Apart* is absolutely a hardliner, someone who is completely in very close correspondence with the imperial desires of question, control, territorialization and so on. So, he fits the last missionary in the final missionary in *Things Fall Apart*, he fits the stereotype of the missionary as an arrogant imperial agent. So, you know there is no difference at all between an imperial agent and the missionary who comes at the end of the achievement novel. often implicitly constructed by postcolonial discourse as a preeminent model of evangelistic endeavour. So, in many postcolonial discourses the missionary figure is seen as very much hand in glove with the you know the imperial machinery. So, the evangelical energy and the imperial machine seem to be almost synchronous and mapping, mappable to each other.

So, Achebe's sensitivity to the nuanced characteristic of the colonial encounter not least in respect to the introduction to Christianity is thus an important corrective. Both Mrs. Smith and prominent members of the Igbo clan were anxious to distinguish its methods from those of its predecessor, right. So, you know there is this dichronic shift, a sentimental shift in the presence of different kinds of missionary figures in Achebe's novel and this is on your screen. He condemned openly Mr. Brown's policy of compromise and accommodation. He saw them as black and white. This is the final missionary figure and black was evil. Mr. Smith was greatly distressed by the ignorance which many of his flock showed, even in such things as the Trinity and the sacraments. Mr. Brown had thought of nothing but numbers. Our Lord used a whip only once in his life to drive the crowd away from his church. So, this begins to become a more cohesive quality of Christianity and the relevance of the whip over here is important, is a corrective measure, a punitive measure, an instrument of punishment. So, it becomes very problematically proximate to violent forms of coercion which is obviously a very representative way to look at the imperial presence, right. So, imperialism and Christianity begin to sort of blend and merge into each other in very hardcore ways towards the end of the novel. So, Mr. Smith, unlike Mr. Brown, Mr. Smith was not prepared to engage in amicable dialogue, nor did he distinguish between religious and cultural matters. British

civilization was equated dogmatically with Christianity, right. So there is that easy correlation, the very stereotypical correlation which is now at play where Britishness, British imperial civilizing mission and all the entire cultural nationalism of Britishness was equated very uncritically and very unproblematically with Christianity. And he was willing to draw upon the power of the secular imperial authorities in order to destroy the traditional structures of Igbo society.

So, Mr. Smith, unlike Mr. Brown, Mr. Smith is someone who is completely collusive with the British imperial, the secular British imperial authorities and he had absolutely no qualms and no conscience and no hesitation. in calling the help or seeking the help to destroy, decimate, erase all structures of Igbo society just so you know Christianity could have a free play. So, this is colonial Christianity in its fullest and most you know blunt form. This understandably antagonized the people of Mimanta, confrontation was precipitated by the decision of Enoch, a fanatical convert, to strip one of the sacred Eguyu of their masks. The masked Eguyu responded by burning down the church. So now it becomes violent. So, the tribal, the local customs, the pre-Christian customs of, you know, the Igbo's community was insulted, they insulted and they respond, they retaliate by burning down the church. So, this becomes fully violent at this point. The restraint of the leader Ajof here out of respect for Mr. Brown was met by a public humiliation of the clan leaders at the hand of the district commissioner. So, the district commissioner as you know already in *Things Fall Apart* plays a very significant and symbolic role. He is someone who is obviously trying to epistemically encode the entire you know the Nigerian population in terms of finding out a method or a template to tame them, to pacify them. So, the pacification is part of the book title that he is writing right. So, he obviously becomes an important figure in the end. So, although the missionaries are not characterized simplistically as a negative and uniform presence, the mission is described as a central role in the collapse of Igbo culture, right. So, the presence of the mission as an institution, as a building, as an architecture, as a site of new values is tantamount to the collapse and the crisis of the Igbo culture and that is a very unproblematic representation in the novel. So, the missionaries may come and go. The missionaries may have different sentimental locations. Some can be more hardcore, some can be more amenable to local customs.

But the presence of the mission as an apparatus, as an institution, is absolutely and unequivocally equated with destruction of local culture. So, the dualistic structure of the narrative potently enacts the ominous threat inherent within the title and epigraph drawn from Yeats's apocalyptic poem, *The Second Coming*, which is of course very ironical because it talks about the second coming of Christ, but obviously over here it takes a very different dimension. However, the mission is not the sole agent of this process of things falling apart and its establishment is firmly contextualized within the concrete social practices of the Igbo people prior to the colonial encounter and the choices they subsequently make. So, this is why we keep talking about how it's a really interesting novel because it doesn't really describe the entire crisis of civilization to the imperial presence alone. So, it is a long diachronic process, a long process of slow change and even the pre-colonial, the pre-imperial Igbo cultures and customs and rituals were also factored in in describing the slow collapse of a civilization of a particular cultural matrix. Some, like Neoi, responded to the spiritual imperative of the Gospel message. This decision is described in a biblically inflected idiom of shepherds, brothers, hunger, fear, darkness, light and love. It entails separation from his people. He determines that he will return later. later returned to share the good news with his mother and siblings.

Okonkwo, of course, remains rigidly defiant, and his resolve to maintain the clan fame and practice is gratefully and fulsomely praised by one of the oldest members of the Umona at a feast that he prepared. This is a quotation over here. I fear for you, young people, because you do not understand how strong is the bond of kinship. An abominable religion has settled among you. A man can now leave his father and his brothers. He can curse the gods of his fathers and his ancestors. I fear for you. I fear for the clan. He turned again to Okonkwo and said, Thank you for calling us together. So this is very much a polyphonic setting where many voices are speaking to each other we have the voice of the old world order of Igbo land who are really anxious in terms of the kind of future they see coming to their culture where the older values and templates and moral principles and kinship structures are getting about to get replaced by new forms of religion, new forms of spirituality, new forms of faith right and of course that creates a lot of anxiety in a very

intergenerational manner. And of course, Okungu here continuously with a galvanizing presence bringing everyone together preparing this feast but this feast is also symbolic of the announcement of anxiety or the articulation of anxiety that is the uncertainty that looms large in front of this clan. So, the novel also explores the deeper social factors and dynamics that a mission introduced into Igbo culture. And the way these interacted with customary practices of education, social relations and commerce. The sage Obereka figures religion as a subtly ideological method of intrusion that enabled the white man to establish his hegemony in Mbanta.

Right. So, this is the soft power we are talking about. religion here or the mission, the imperial mission, Christian mission in collusion with imperialism was very much an apparatus to ensure and consolidate control. And that's something which is articulated here. And the word hegemony is important. And this is the quotation which is obviously there on your page. He came quietly and peaceably with his religion. We were amused at his foolishness and allowed him to stay. And now he has won our brothers, and our clan can no longer act like one. He has put a knife on the things that held us together and we have fallen apart. So, Christianity over here is seen as as an instrument of disintegration. It has created mistrust, it has created cynicism, it has created this absolute decimation of kinship structures, obviously in very close relation to imperialism, to the colonizing mission. So, the echo of the title indicates how instrumental a role Obereka ascribed to the mission in the desecration of his culture, right. So, in a very interesting way, this is an ironic appropriation of a title which is from the second coming of Yeats, which is, which has a lot of biblical allusions, but in the context of Achebe's novel, that you know things fall apart when something which is caused the disintegration is caused by Christianity. Christianity is the negative presence which the disintegrating presence which is creating an absolute decimation of kinship structures. Things are falling apart because center cannot hold anymore. So, the galvanizing spiritual social presence of the Igbo community is giving way to the more fractured fragmented presence created by Christianity.

So therein lies the irony in the title of Achebe's novel. So, he deplores the segregation that inevitably followed the preaching of the gospel, seeing it as introducing divisions that

weakened the clan. But it is imperial operations of the British colonial administration that began to intrude immediately after the arrival of the missionaries that particularly offends them. Obereke's observation is uttered in the wake of the abrupt judicial act on the part of the district commissioner, whose pre-emptory resolution to hang the Igbo man reflects his inability to understand traditional customs about the land. So, the hanged Igbo man over here becomes a very iconic image of the failure of understanding, the failure of communication where he is hung in a knee-jerk reaction by the district commissioner. Obviously, he indicates or he illustrates his absolute ignorance and inability to comprehend the cultural nuances of the Igbo community. However, Achebe unflinchingly demonstrates the mutual engagement that marks the process, the decision of the Igbo people themselves to participate in white systems of education and commerce contributed to the destabilizing of traditional structures. Like we keep saying that Achebe takes a very non-dualistic position in a representation of the crisis of a civilization or the collapse of a civilization. It is not just only outsiders come and cause the collapse but many of the insiders in Igbo land they get seduced or they appropriate Christianity and many of the colonizers identity apparatus and that also contributes significantly to the end of that particular culture, the Igbo culture which is why *Things Fall Apart* becomes such an appropriate title for this novel. So, there is a quotation on your screen. There were many men and women in Umuofia who did not feel as strongly as Okonkwo about the new dispensation. The white man had indeed brought a lunatic religion. So again, look at the focal point over here. This is spoken from the Nigerian position. So, the white man is seen as a lunatic, as a madman, and religion is seen as absolutely irrational.

But he had also built a trading store. And for the first time, palm oil and kernel became things of great price. And much money flowed into them over here. They worked on the farms in the morning and went to school in the afternoon. And it was not long before the people began to say that the white man's medicine was quick in working. A few months in it were enough to make one a court messenger. Those who stayed longer became teachers. New teachers were established, new churches were established in the surrounding villages, and a few schools with them. From the very beginning, religion and education went hand in hand. Now this is a really loaded passage and I would like you to pay special attention

and focus on the descriptions over here. So, we find that palm oil became a thing of price. So, this is an example of the creation of the commodity, something with a price tag, something which has an exchange value, a transactional value associated with it, right. So, for the first time there's a trading store and along with religion, along with the madman's religion, so you can call it as irrational as possible. It also brings in its wake a departmental store, a grocery store, a transactional site where palm oil for the first time begins to get some kind of a price, a shareable transactional value, right, and kernel. So, kernel and palm oil are the two big commodities in Nigeria and Umofia at this point of time. And much money flowed into Umofia. So, the generation of an economy over here is reliant on the commodity quality of palm oil and kernel.

And of course, what that also meant was production increase. So, for the first time there was artificial means of production, there was machine, there were machines brought in to mass produce palm oil, mass produce kernel and sell those in great quantities. And the formation of school also happened, so the entire economy which was generated around the palm oil commodification and the kernel commodification also created other institutions such as schools and churches, right. And there is this perception which is also produced that the white man's medicine was quick and working, right. So new medicinal measures were created, new forms of perception and brand formation happened where the white man's medicine was seen as more effective. and curing people and was seen as something which worked better right and of course you know there was a generation of new kind of professions as court messenger and teachers. The last bit is really interesting, new churches were established in the surrounding villages and a few schools for them. So, churches and schools began to be formed and of course we are told that from the very beginning religion and education went hand in hand. the education over here is obviously a colonial imperial education and the vocabulary of the education, the rhetorical education was very close, very similar, very comparable to the vocabulary of religion, right. Again, so we have how different imperial apparatus, the schools, you know, courthouses, the marketplaces, you know, churches, they all come together to create this sort of imperial ecology and imperial ecology obviously is designed and oriented towards the white man's supremacy right. So, it was designed to create a sense of supremacy for the white man and it's not surprising at

all in a very Foucauldian way our knowledge and power, religion, education they all blend together, they intertwine together to create this very complex ecology of coercion, control and territorialization.

So, while the resulting material prosperity is observed with ironic ambivalence, the actions of those who choose to participate are not dismissed as necessarily complicit or compromised, right. So, we talked about in the earlier session how one of the really majestic things in Achebe's novel was how it really doesn't take a dualistic position or a binaristic position or a hierarchical position really. So, it is not really saying anywhere. that those who are complicit with the imperial machine machinery and who benefited from it are necessarily bad people, right. So, it is not really you know a binary between the complicit and the subversive, right. So, the complicit or the compromised people are not really equated with people who participated. So, this participation, this part taking of this commerce is partaking of this new revenue economy but at the same time it doesn't necessarily mean they morally compromise, right. So that nuanced perspective is absolutely vital for our reading of *Things Fall Apart*. So, although a conclusive decision to resist is given a tragic dignity in Aristotelian terms, it is in itself profoundly antithetical to the religious beliefs of his people. The novel thus combines an elegiac strain with ironically unsentimental and unsympathetic analysis, rendering it a persuasively authoritative account, right. So now look at the sort of very, very contrasting metaphors over here. There is a sense of an elegy about the novel, the end of an era, almost like a death knell as it were. But at the same time it is very, very unsentimental, very ironically unsentimental. It is not really mourning something very sentimental. But at the same time it is deeply sympathetic, right. So it is, it shows that as a great novel it is capable of generating sympathy, perhaps even empathy without getting sentimental, right.

And the reason why sentimentality is resisted is because there is no pure past or no pure memory to go back to as opposed to which the colonial corruption may be contrasted and amplified, right. So, Achebe nowhere says in a novel or even elsewhere that the pre-colonial Nigeria was an absolute panacea of world problems, was an absolute paradise in which nothing wrong ever happened, right. So that perception is absolutely debunked

which is why this becomes a very persuasively authoritative account, right. Now that is a long and short of how the novel *Things Fall Apart* really renders or gives a very interesting representation to the missionary institution, right. So, in terms of how the missionary presence and institution, the apparatus were operating sometimes in a very collusive way, sometimes in a complexly refractive way with the imperial machinery. Now let us take a look in terms of how Tsitsi Dangaremba's novel compares with the Achebe's novel. So *Nervous Condition* of course is very different from *Things Fall Apart*, the setting is different, the geopolitics is very different. It's done it chronically very different as well. It's a much more recent setting and it's in Zimbabwe and not, not Nigeria. So Tsitsi Dangaremba is very conscious of the cultural, historical and literary discourses formulated by seminal texts like *Things Fall Apart*, which effectively operates as a foundation for contemporary African literature and its formal study within the academy, right.

The politics of academicization of novels, the politics in terms of how some novels written by some authors enter anthologies and curricula taught across universities, that also becomes a very strategic decision, right. Danga Remba of course is very conscious of the post-colonial legacy and the colonial legacy of you know *Things Fall Apart* and of course her novel *Nervous Condition* is in many ways rewriting a response to the earlier novel as well. So, she focuses, Danga Remba focuses on Zimbabwe at a far more advanced stage of British colonization a moment of initial encounter that occupies Achebe, right. So, this is a moment where the British imperialism has really been internalized in Zimbabwe. It is very much a part of the Victorian daily lived reality and not really something of an initial encounter or a formative phase which is how it appears and operates in the Achebe novel. So, the well-established history of diverse Christian missions is indicated through the way in which the existence and influence of their institutions such as the British Protestant Mission and an elite Roman Catholic school are simply assumed, right. So again, we look at the very interesting triangulation of education, power and religion. We see how that operated in a very smooth and sometimes very seamless way in a colonial context zone. So, there is a British Protestant mission, there is this elite Roman Catholic school and of course there is imperial officers and agents and agencies all come together to create this very interesting coercive ecology through which knowledge production, manipulation and

consolidation may take place. So, whilst the various missions are identified by denomination, the overall impact is depicted cumulatively rather than differentiated and traced along sectarian lines.

Christianity, missions and the whole imperial structure are already deeply embedded within the traditional framework of Shona culture when the novel opens in the early 1960s, right. So, that is the setting in Zimbabwe, the geopolitical setting that Dangaremba, the novel, Dangaremba's novel espouses and the culture represented is Shona culture as opposed to the Igbo culture which we get to see in Achebe's novel. So, let us take a look in terms of how it gets played out, right. So, some of the interesting background over here is important for us because, you know, when we're reading this relationship between text and context and how novels are indicative and reflective of social changes, it's important for us to be aware in terms of what was going on in the geopolitics at that point of time. So, at this point, the minority white Rhodesian government, Rhodesia being the earlier name of Zimbabwe, was attempting to gain independence from the British rule. The maturation of the young narrator Tambudzai can be interpreted as correlating with Zimbabwe's national awareness. So again, this is a bit of a buildings romance narrative, but it's more complicated than that because Tambudzai's growth, biological growth as a female subject and Zimbabwe's growth as a nation are correlated and compared and contrasted in very interesting ways. For example, when Tambudzai entered Young Ladies College, of the Sacred Heart in 1971, she experienced a moment of revolutionary consciousness and literary awareness, just as Rhodesia's demand for independence precipitated almost ten years of civil war, culminating in Mugabe's nationalist win and the creation of Zimbabwe. political figure in Zimbabwe, so he came to power, he came to government from a nationalistic perspective. That was a big euphoric moment for Zimbabwe at that point of time and of course what we see here is how the revolutionary awareness and the literary awareness they are correlated with each other, right.

That's an important thing for us to really mark because it sort of creates this metafictional awareness of how nervous condition as a literary text, a literary artefact is also acutely aware of the impact literary artefacts may have on a formative consciousness, right. So, the

creation of Zimbabwe from Rhodesia and of course the emergence, the adolescence of the protagonist Tambudzai are really correlated with each other and that is a very interesting complex correlation. So Dangaremba thus depicts a contested space of cultural hybridity caught in the interstices of complex fusions, juxtapositions and antagonisms at both an individual and national level. So, there is this very interesting intersectional quality at play over here. So, there is an individual figure, individual growth, individual experiences at the same time how does correspond to certain macro political institutional and national changes and moments at different points of time. She also seeks to give voice to women who remain constrained by the traditional values of African societies and things fall apart. Now this is a very interesting perspective to take because for all this post-colonial historical rewriting and adversarial history if you remember the phrase which is used. The Achebe novel is predominantly male, almost all the important characters are male and the voices rendered and you know articulated from the polyphonic positions they are also largely male. Now Danga Rambas novel is more complex in that because it obviously gives voice to the female character Oeya. And Tambudzai being the protagonist, her growth, her trauma, her consciousness, are also interestingly correlative with the national more macro models of growth, right? So, this accounts for the more personal tone of the novel.

So, which is something we discussed right at the beginning of this particular session you know when we started looking at things nervous condition how the trauma and nervous condition the sense of loss and crisis and nervous condition is more domestic and intimate and affective in quality rather than more public space-oriented right. So, you move away from the public space orientation of trauma. into a more private you know discursively designed and domestic design of trauma and that movement that transition is important for us to calibrate. So, she also seeks to give voice to women who remain constrained by the traditional values of African societies and things fall apart. Now this accounts for the more personal tone of the novel which is related by a first-person narrator and it's quite different to the diffuse communal voice favored by Achebe, right. So, there is this integrative galvanizing quality in nervous condition as opposed to the more polyphonic spread out diffusive communal voice which is espoused in the Achebe novel. So, Tambudzai concludes and I quote, the story I have told here is my own story, the story of four women

whom I loved and our men, right. So again, notice how men come in the end. So, the priority obviously the primacy over here is given to the woman. The woman's voices, the female voices as opposed to the more traditional and the more omnipresent male figures and male voices. So, Dangaremba critiques both the oppressions and values enforced by the British colonial regime and this is important bit and the obstacles posed by Shona culture for women in the search for self-realization and fulfillment. So, I stop at this point but it's important to unpack this for a minute because what happens in nervous condition is how the doubly marginalized is given a voice, how the doubly marginalized you know gets to iterate, gets to articulate her position right. So, you know even there are two forms of suppression happening and nervous condition of course one is the more immediate, the more macro political British oppression, the colonial machineries which are oppressing the Shona subjects. But even within the Shona subjects it is not a homogeneous identity of course. It is very heterogeneous, very plural where the men, most of the Templars, most of the cultural value systems are written by men for men within a Shona community where the women tend to be or end up getting doubly marginalized.

So, this is also a very interesting way to look at how the colonial presence could sometimes liberate the women, sometimes accidentally, sometimes intentionally, sometimes in a very manipulative way. But you know through accidents, through historical accidents, through historical happenstance the colonial presence could sometimes enact liberation at different levels. But of course what Tambudzai the character and of course Dangaremba the writer they're trying to articulate is a doubly marginalized state job the doubly marginalized condition of the woman and the trauma the neurotic condition which is why it's called a nervous condition is so very domestic so very intimate in quality we're not talking about you know trauma at a macro level we're not talking about trauma at a public level but trauma at a very experiential immediate atomistic granular level And the granularity of the novel is important for us to notice really because it talks about little things, small things, small episodes, very episodic, very minute, very meticulous but it is exactly where the trauma takes place, the domestic intimate small spaces, the almost liminal passages inside the house where traumatic encounters happen, where traumatic triggers take place. So we

will stop at this point today and we will continue with this discussion and hopefully wind up in another couple of sessions. Thank you for your attention.