

AN HISTORICAL STUDY OF A SELECTION OF  
THE WHITE RHODESIAN NOVEL IN ENGLISH,  
1890 TO 1994: CONTENT AND CHARACTER

BY

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## **DEDICATION**

To: My father, the late MR. TABOMBERA ELIAS MANASE—  
"Tickey"

For a great vision

My brother, Mr. Stephen Manase, and my husband, Dr. Henry V. Moyana

For sharing father's vision

"Tomorrow is built today..."

## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis, whose materials were gathered through library and archival research, examines a selection of English novels written by white Rhodesians between 1890 and 1994. In the introductory chapter reasons are given for choosing these novels and the period between 1890 and 1994.

The objectives for carrying out this study were, firstly, to enlighten the students of literature, literary scholars and the general public on the subject matter of the white-authored novel in Rhodesia and in present day Zimbabwe. Secondly, it was to enable students, scholars and the general public to link such historical and social events, as described in the novels, with current political and social events in a country struggling to defeat racism and to create a socially equitable environment for everyone. Thirdly, it was to help these interested parties appreciate the role of this novel as a conscientising tool since it describes human behaviour in a way that enables the reader to learn from its rights and wrongs.

In discussing the selected novels, focus is on content and character and how these interact to produce meaning. The thesis is particularly sensitive to the portrayal of Africans and demonstrates that Africans are invariably portrayed negatively. This influences their reaction towards the white settlers. Such reaction indicates African response to colonisation. The Africans are neither passive nor stupid. It is only white people who conceive them to bear these characteristics.

Attention has also been paid to the white women: as novelists, victims, silent protagonists and outspoken protagonists of various issues in the different novels. The women's role is indispensable as it complements that of the men in many ways during the colonisation of Zimbabwe.

Finally, some questions have been posed which enable the reader to focus on possible further research in this literature.

It is hoped that the reader will find this historical study of the white Rhodesian novel interesting as well as educative.

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