

“Divine Angels” and Vadzimu in Shona Religion, Zimbabwe

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Abstract

This study was carried out in four provinces of Zimbabwe to improve people's understanding about the roles of spirit mediums in Zimbabwe, the spirit mediums' interpretation of concepts of Shona religion, the mediums' knowledge of the spirits they are medium to, and to clarify the circumstances surrounding some events in the lives of some spirit mediums in Zimbabwe. The study was carried out using open-ended interviews with maGombwe and n'angas, some of them being interviewed while possessed. Spirit mediums explained that maGombwe, for example Chaminuka, Nehanda, Kaguvi, Dzivaguru were possessed by the same spirit. The spirit possessed different mediums differently depending on the purpose for possession. Spirit mediums gave further clarification to the nature of Gombwe, vadzimu and mashave. Whilst most maGombwe showed knowledge of the nature of spirits that possess them, most n'angas could not distinguish between the spirit of their ancestors and those which possessed the ancestors. Similarly, most people, including senior politicians, fail to distinguish between the lives of mediums and the spirits that possess the mediums.

« Les anges divins » et Vadzimu dans la religion Shona, Zimbabwe

Takawira Kazembe, Ph.D.

Résumé

Cette étude s'est effectuée dans quatre provinces du Zimbabwe afin d'améliorer la compréhension des rôles des esprits médiums au Zimbabwe, l'interprétation des concepts de la religion Shona par les esprits médiums, la connaissance que les médiums ont des esprits auxquels ils sont le médium, et afin de clarifier les circonstances autour de certains événements dans la vie de certains esprits médiums au Zimbabwe. L'étude s'est effectuée à l'aide d'entretiens à questions ouvertes avec des maGombwe et des n'angas, certains étant interrogés pendant qu'ils étaient possédés. Les esprits médiums ont expliqué que les maGombwe, par exemple Chaminuka, Nehanda, Kaguvi, Dzivaguru, étaient possédés par le même esprit. L'esprit possède différents médiums de façons différentes dépendant du but de la possession. Les esprits médiums ont donné de plus amples clarifications sur la nature de Gombwe, vadzimu et mashave. Bien que la plupart des maGombwe démontrent une connaissance de la nature des esprits qui les possèdent, la plupart des n'angas ne peuvent distinguer l'esprit de leurs ancêtres d'avec ceux qui posséda les ancêtres. De la même façon, la plupart des gens, incluant les politiciens haut placés, ne peuvent faire la distinction entre la vie des médiums et les esprits qui possèdent les médiums.

“Angeles Divinos” y Vadzimu en la Religión Shona de Zimbabue

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Resumen

Este estudio se llevo a cabo en las provincias de Zimbabue para ampliar el conocimiento en la gente acerca del papel que desempeñan los médiums de espíritus en Zimbabue, Los médiums de espíritus, “conceptos de la interpretación de la religión Shona, los médiums” conocimiento de los espíritus de que también ellos son médiums, y para aclarar las circunstancias que rodean los eventos en las vidas de algunos médium de espíritus en Zimbabue. El estudio fue llevado a cabo utilizando abiertas entrevistas con maGombwe and n’angas, algunos de ellos fueron entrevistados mientras estaban poseídos. Los médiums the espíritus explicaron a maGombwe, por ejemplo Caminuka, Nehanda, Kaguvi, Dzivaguru fueron poseídos por el mismo espíritu. El espíritu se poseyó de diferentes médiums dependiendo del propósito de la posesión. Los médiums de espíritus dieron una clasificación de la naturaleza de Gombwe, Vadzimu y mashave. Mientras que la mayoría de los maGombwe mostraron conocimiento de la naturaleza del espíritu que los poseía, la mayoría de n’angas no lograron distinguir entre el espíritu de sus ancestros y aquellos que poseyeron a sus ancestros.

Similarmente, la mayoría de las personas, incluyendo grandes políticos, fallaron en distinguir entre la vida de los médiums y los espíritus que poseían a los médiums.

“Anjos Divinos” e Vadzimu na Religião Shona, Zimbábue

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Resumo

Este estudo foi realizado em quatro províncias de Zimbábue para melhorar a compreensão das pessoas sobre o papel dos médiums em Zimbabué, suas interpretações dos conceitos da religião Shona, o conhecimento dos espíritos que os médiums canalizam, e para explicar as circunstâncias que cercam alguns acontecimentos na vida de alguns médiums no Zimbábue. O estudo foi realizado por meio de entrevistas com maGombwe e n'angas, alguns deles sendo entrevistados enquanto possuídos pelos espíritos. Espíritos médiums explicaram que maGombwe, por exemplo Chaminuka, Nehanda, Kaguvi, Dzivaguruestavam, são possuídos pelo mesmo espírito. O espírito possuía os médiums de forma diferente dependendo da finalidade da posse. Médiums espíritos esclareceram sobre a natureza doGombwe vadzimu e mashave. Embora a maioria dos maGombwe demonstraram conhecimento da natureza dos espíritos que os possuem, a maioria dos n'angas não puderam distinguir entre o espírito de seus antepassados e aqueles que possuíam os antepassados. Da mesma forma, a maioria das pessoas, incluindo líderes políticos, não conseguem distinguir entre a vida dos médiums e dos espíritos que tomam posse dos médiums.

“Goettliche Engel” und Vadzimu in der Shona Religion in Zimbabwe

Von Takawira Kazembe, Ph.D.

Zusammenfassung

Diese Untersuchung wurde in drei Provinzen Zimbabwes ausgeführt mit der Absicht ein besseres Verstaendnis von der Rolle der Geistermedien in Zimbabwe, die Interpretation

der Vorstellung von der Kona Religion der Geistermedien, die Kenntnis der Medien von den Geistern fuer die sie Medien spielen, und Klarheit zu schaffen ueber die Umstaende betreffs gewisser Begebenheiten im Leben einiger Geister Medien in Zimbabwe. Die Untersuchung wurde ausgefuehrt mit Hilfe unbegrenzter Interviews mit maGombwe und N'Angas, wobei einige im Zustande der Besessenheit waren. Geistermedien erklarten, dass maGombe, zum Beispiel Chaminuka, Nehanda, Kaguvi und Dzivaguru vom gleichen Geist besessen waren. Der Geist besass verschiedene Medien auf verschiedene Art, was auf die Absicht der Besessenheit ankam. Weiterhin gaben die Medien Erklarungen ueber die Natur der Gombwe, Vedzimu und Mashave. Waehrend die meisten maGombwe ein Wissen hatten ueber die Natur der Geister von denen sie besessen waren, die meisten N'Angas sahen keinen Unterschied zwischen den Geistern ihrer Vorfahren und den Geistern die diese Vorfahren besaessen. In aehnlicher Weise koennen die meisten Menschen, einschliesslich hoeherer Politiker nicht die Leben der Medien von den Geistern die die Medien besessen unterscheiden.

Introduction

This study was carried out to clarify the nature of the Gombwe, Mhondoro and vadzimu, as well as to clarify the roles of popular spirits in the affairs of Zimbabwe. The study also aimed at establishing how Shona Religion views the acquisition of zvikwambo by n'angas and ordinary people, and how followers of the religion should pray. Finally, the study aimed at correcting the impressions of many people, including some renowned authors, who classify Gombwe and clan spirits as mhondoro or midzimu mikuru^{1,2}. The Gombwe spirit is not an ancestral spirit, but a Divine Angel created for that purpose. Spirit mediums contend that everybody has mashave associated with him or her. To an extent, these are synonymous with talents. There are good and bad mashave. These are spirits created by the Deity to be used as tools by humans. They are not spirits of animals or of dead people. All of the other spirits in the hierarchy of spirits are ancestral spirits.

Methodology

The study was carried out between 2008 and 2010, involving spirit mediums in Mashonaland Central, Mashonaland East, Manicaland, and Harare Provinces. Open-ended interviews were held with five maGombwe and twelve n'angas whose credentials were established in previous studies,³ using a pre-constructed interview guide (Appendix 1).

Findings

The spirit mediums reiterated that in Shona religion MaGombwe are known as the Divine Angels. These are regional spirits. The Gombwe spirit is not an ancestral spirit, but an angel of the Divine created for that purpose. Spirit mediums contend that everybody has mashave associated with him or her. To an extent, these are synonymous with talents. There are good and bad mashave. These are spirits created by the Deity to be used as tools by humans. They are not spirits of animals or of dead people. All the other spirits in the hierarchy of spirits, as discussed by Kazembe³, are ancestral spirits.

Most people talk about spirit mediums, and rarely talk about the spirits themselves. For example, people talk about Nehanda, the medium, a woman born of the Hwata people who lived about 20 kilometers (12.43 miles) north of Harare. They do not talk about the spirit itself. The same applies to Chaminuka, Dzivaguru, Kaguvi, Mukwati, and others.

The confusion might arise because these regional spirits associate and possess mediums of clan spirits and family spirits. Spirit mediums who took part in the study concurred that everybody, from Gombwe to the ordinary person, has mashave associated with him or her. The difference is in the intensity with which the mashave express themselves in the different people. Mashave may possess the mediums of Angelic Spirits and of ancestral spirits in manners and extents similar to possession by Angelic Spirits and ancestral spirits. With non-spirit mediums, mashave are usually so silent as to be unnoticeable and only inferred from the deeds of the person.

Clan Spirits are Mhondoro, the spirits of dead ancestors, who were leaders of clans, including founding leaders as was said by Kazembe.³ The word vadzimu, to most people, includes these clan spirits and family spirits. Spirit mediums say that mhondoro is a term for the clan spirits: the Sadzinza or Sadunhu. Family spirits (vadzimu) are spirits of parents, grandparents, great grandparents, and other family members, and clan spirits may also be referred to as vadzimu although clan spirits are more appropriately referred to as mhondoro. Vadzimu choose their descendants as mediums.³ These spirits look after the interests of their descendants and other people living in areas of their jurisdiction.

Although the term vadzimu commonly refers to ancestral spirits, anyone who dies and joins ancestral spirits becomes a mudzimu. It is believed that a person who dies and fails to join the ancestral spirits becomes a spook and will remain that way until he or she has been cleared of his or her crimes. But it does not mean that a person who has not become a spook is with ancestral spirits. A person may remain in a holding state until he or she has cleared his or her crimes. It is believed that those who become spooks are in the most serious state of suffering.

MaGombwe speak on mediums of ancestral spirits and usually dominate all spirits possessing the medium. They themselves are not ancestral spirits. They are Divine Angels. They take messages from the Divine to people and deliver requests from people to the Deity. One Gombwe may appear on a number of mediums. The strength of the spirit on one medium may be different (and is usually different) from the strength of the same spirit on a different medium. One of the determining factors for the relative strength of a spirit on a medium is the reason for which the spirit appears on the particular medium. For example a spirit that appears on a medium to enhance peace and nation building will be very strong on those aspects and weaker on matters of say, hunting. Nehanda is very strong on matters relating to war and nation building and, historically, she has excelled on the war effort. Chaminuka was strong on matters relating to peace and national wealth and he excelled on rain-making matters. The two spirits were one but appeared on Nehanda and Chaminuka concurrently. Conceptually this is similar to the concept of God in the Holy Trinity in Christianity. However, as is the case with all matters of faith, this concept may be difficult to explain.

Who are these Spirits known as maGombwe?

Shona religion contends that these are Divine Angels sent by the Divine to all parts of the world. Each region of the world has its own maGombwe but they are known by different names depending on the language spoken in the region. They also behave differently between regions depending on the lifestyles of the people in the regions. The same spirit may appear on different people in the different world regions. They are not tribal spirits as authors, including great ones like Gelfand¹, Bourdillon², and others report.

Most people know about Nehanda in connection with her activities during the First Chimurenga war against colonialism in Zimbabwe. Similarly, people talk about Chaminuka in connection with his activities during the Matebele wars before colonization. Little was said about him before then. The spirits Nehanda and Chaminuka are believed to have been there long before the events for which they are most talked about. For example Chaminuka is said to have stopped Jesus Christ travelling beyond Malawi on his way down Africa, saying that he (Jesus) should not bother going further because he (Chaminuka) was already covering the area.

The Chaminuka people talk about is the one whose medium was Pasipamire in Chitungwiza, south of Harare up to the 1880s. However, Pasipamire became Chaminuka's medium after Nyamutswa in Makonde, northwest of Harare. The two mediums are not known to be related. The Gombwe spirit cannot be inherited by families since it does not belong to a family. This is unlike the case of ancestral spirits. People who think that Chaminuka will return to the descendants of Pasipamire might want to learn that the spirit Chaminuka has already appeared on a number of people who are not descendants of Pasipamire. There is no doubt that the ancestral spirits who spoke on Pasipamire will reappear on descendants of Pasipamire. It is important to separate the activities of the spirit Chaminuka when it appeared on Pasipamire and those of Pasipamire's ancestral spirits.

The spirit Chaminuka was known as Tombosika when it appeared on Nyamutswa. Nyamutswa had a walking stick which he used when he asked for meat, honey and other goodies for people to eat and people would have them. People did not know where Nyamutswa had come from. He had just come to live with them and they wondered what would happen if he decided to leave them. They killed him so that they could retain the walking stick. It is reported that the stick became a crocodile upon his death.

The spirit Tombosika then appeared on Pasipamire as Chaminuka. Before the appearance of Chaminuka, Pasipamire was a powerful ancestral spirit medium. Pasipamire, therefore, became much more powerful following the appearance of Chaminuka. He had remarkable powers over everybody and everything around him, including animals. His powers were not necessarily of an occult nature, but based on the spirit. Pasipamire's people had brought a very good drummer from Matebeleland to entertain their chief's guests. The drummer had a very beautiful wife and with time Pasipamire's people decided that the drummer's wife was so beautiful that it was only suitable for her to be their chief's wife. They persuaded the drummer's wife to leave her husband for Pasipamire.

This angered the Matebele leader, Lobengula, who had trusted and respected Pasipamire. He sent people to kill him. The matebele warriors failed to kill him with their weapons and decided to take him to Lobengula.⁴ Pasipamire decided that it was his time to die and he told them that only an innocent boy could kill him. They brought a boy who then killed him with ease.

Little is known about Nehanda before the Chimurenga war of the late 1890s. Spirit mediums believe that the spirit Nehanda has been around since the beginning of life on Earth. They dismiss claims by Media and African Images⁵ and Murungu⁶ that the original Nehanda was daughter of Mutota the first Munhumutapa who lived in the Zambezi Escarpment to the North of Guruwe in about 1430 as mere speculation. They say that Nyamhika was just one of the mediums of the spirit Nehanda. People who believe that Charwe Nyakasikana was the female incarnation of the oracle spirit Nyamhika Nehanda

are wrong because Nehanda is a spirit created as an Angel and never became human. Although the spirit Nehanda has only been known to possess females, the spirit is not a female spirit because, unlike humans, spirits have no gender. Nyamhika was just a medium, just like Charwe after her. There were many mediums of Nehanda between the time of Nyamhika and Charwe. The spirit mediums reiterated that the spirits Nehanda, Chaminuka, Dzivaguru, Kaguvi are the same and there are no husband-wife relationships among spirits. There is need to distinguish between the works of the spirit and the life of the medium. The medium may marry but the spirit does not marry and there is no such thing as the spiritual mother of Chaminuka as claimed by Keresensia Mawungira⁷, since Angels are created and not born.

Little has been said about Nehanda after the execution in Harare in 1898. It is now known that a medium of the spirit Nehanda died in Zambia during the Second Chimurenga War and was reburied in the Zambezi valley in Zimbabwe after the war. Similarly, little is discussed in connection with Chaminuka after the death of Pasipamire. Muchatera, in Dewedzo in Manicaland, is believed to have been a medium of the spirit Chaminuka in the 1960s and 1970s. He was very well known for his rain-making powers.¹ Muchatera was killed during the Second Chimurenga War by Selous Scouts masquerading as Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) Freedom Fighters. Given the way freedom fighters respected senior spirit mediums, it is not likely that any of them would have taken the life of a Chaminuka medium without the sanction of the top hierarchy in the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU). Given that ZANU was working with Nehanda in Zambia and later on in Mozambique, the top leadership would have sought an audience with Muchatera if he had been labelled a sell out as was claimed by those who killed him. However, spirit mediums were not asked about Muchatera's death in this study.

Many women have claimed to be mediums of Nehanda. Many men have claimed to be mediums of Chaminuka. Most of these claims have come to nothing. It is believed that nothing will be in place until the necessary rituals in connection with the respective mediums' deaths have been carried out. Until then, they will come to ask why they died the way they did, and they will disappear.

Before he was killed, Nyamutswa said: "kill me but I shall send people to kill you" and he sent the Ndebele. Pasipamire said: "Kill me and I shall send my sisters' sons to kill you", referring to the white colonizers. Spirit mediums use Chaminuka's reference to white colonizers as his sisters' sons to reaffirm claims of Chaminuka and Jesus being one. Nehanda said: "Kill me but my bones will rise against you", referring to the Second Chimurenga War. She is believed to have played a key role in the war of liberation.

The mediums of Nehanda, Tombosika, Chaminuka, Jesus Christ, Mohamed and other maGombwe, according to Shona religion, died violent deaths. Shona religion believes that all these are the same spirit on different mediums. However, religion is a matter of faith. The lives of the mediums are somewhat similar to reports in Rosicrucian History and Mysteries.⁸

Do the different mediums know to what spirits they are medium?

A few of the maGombwe who took part in this study could articulate precisely to whom they were mediums. Most were content to say that they were mediums to national spirits, ancestral spirits, and mashave. The situation was most confusing in the case of n'angas. To them, ancestral spirit meant the spirit of their grandparents or great grandparents.

Thus, they believed they were medium to the spirits of their grandparents or great grandparents. They could not differentiate between the spirit of their grandparents and the spirit that their grandparents were medium to. In some cases, interviews under possession revealed that the possessing spirit was that which possessed the grandparent and not that of the grandparent. The possessing spirit would say: "It is me so and so who used to appear on his/her so and so." This might not be surprising because the medium will not know what transpires when he or she is possessed. He or she would have to ask the right questions to the interpreters who in turn must ask the right questions to the possessing spirit.

The maGombwe's definition of a n'anga is that of a spirit medium who charges his or her clients for services rendered. A Gombwe who cannot keep up with the demands of being a Gombwe loses the powers associated with being a Gombwe and remains with the powers he or she had associated with his ancestral spirits and mashave.³ The n'angas who took part in this study acknowledged the superiority of maGombwe over spirit mediums.

All maGombwe who were interviewed denigrated the practice of acquiring powers to enhance the powers of ancestral spirits and mashave in traditional medicine and traditional religion. According to them, only bogus spirit mediums would need to enrich the powers of their spirits and true spirits would not allow their mediums to adulterate them with things which are foreign to the spirits. N'angas were generally not keen to discuss this subject. Those who responded argued that the acquisition of extra powers made a difference to traditional practices. MaGombwe argued that the differences were short-lived, were usually associated with evil, and ended up a source of trouble for the person who acquired them. They similarly denigrated the practice of acquiring wealth amassing enhancers by non n'angas. They said that earlier on the practice was acceptable because ancestors knew how to handle such issues. These days such powers are being used to harm other people and this has brought much suffering to people. They say that the practice must stop because the Deity did not intend it that way.

On prayer, maGombwe emphasized that one should ask his father to intervene and act as a go-between if the father is dead, or his grandfather if the father is alive. The father or grandfather will know who to involve in the request and the message will be relayed to the Divine. They say that if you go directly to those ahead of your grandfather then those nearer to you, including the grandfather, will complain. The respondents denied that Shona Religion followers prayed spirits. They ask spirits to intervene on their behalf. Prayer is to the Divine and they always ask spirits to relay requests to those above, and ultimately to the Divine. Even when in a state of fear as a result of an unusual event, the Shona Religion follower will cry "My ancestral spirits why have you abandoned me? My God why have you abandoned me?"

Conclusion

MaGombwe are very clear about the structure of the hierarchy of spirit mediums. Ancestral spirits, including n'angas respect the hierarchy and they know their place on the hierarchy. However, most n'angas are ignorant of the nature of spirits they are medium to and they cannot distinguish between the spirit of their ancestors and the spirits that their ancestors were mediums to. People, including senior politicians, should distinguish between the works of a spirit medium and the works of spirits, especially in connection with maGombwe.

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Appendix 1

Questionnaire Questions

1. What is the difference between Gombwe, Mhondoro, and Mudzimu?
2. How does the spirit Gombwe choose a medium?
3. Do spirit mediums know what spirits possess them?
4. What is the difference between a Gombwe and a n’anga?
5. What is Shona Religion’ position regarding the acquisition of zvikwambo by n;angas and ordinary people?
6. How do people pray in Shona Religion?
7. How do n’angas see themselves in relation to maGombwe?

Appendix 2

Glossary

Chikwambo: Thing acquired to enhance a person's fortunes or powers, influence, etc.

Chimurenga: An uprising, Popularly known as the War of Liberation in Zimbabwe

Gombwe: Angelic Spirit; Divine Angel

maGombwe: Angelic Spirits; Divine Angels

Mudzimu: Ancestral Spirit

Mudzimu mukuru: High ranking spirit

Midzimu: Plural for Mudzimu

Vadzimu: Plural for Mudzimu

Sadzinza or Sadunhu: Clan leader

Masadzinza or maSadunhu: Clan leaders

Mashave: Spirits that enable individuals to perform, for example to hunt, cure, entertain, etc.

Matebele: Ndebele speaking tribal grouping. It is the second largest tribal grouping in Zimbabwe.

Mhondoro: Clan Spirit

N'anga: Traditional healer

N'angas: Anglicised plural for n'anga, meaning traditional healers.

Sadzinza or Sadunhu: Clan leader

ZANLA: Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army

ZANU: Zimbabwe African National Union, later joined with ZAPU to form ZANU-PF

ZAPU: Zimbabwe African People Union

Zvikwambo: Things acquired to enhance a person's fortunes or powers, influence, etc.

Names of some prominent maGombwe Mediums

Chaminuka: A medium of the spirit Chaminuka

Dzivaguru:

A medium of the spirit Dzivaguru. Also believed to be same as the spirit Chaminuka.

Kaguvi: A medium of a spirit believed to be the same as the spirit Chaminuka.

Muchatera:

A medium of the spirit Chaminuka who reigned after the death of Pasipamire then known as Chaminuka

Mukwati: Medium of a spirit now believed to be the same as spirit Chaminuka

Nehanda: Medium of the spirit Nehanda.

Tombosika: previous name of the spirit Chaminuka.

Nyamutswa:

Medium of the spirit Tombosika. When the spirit Chaminuka possessed Nyamutswa, the spirit was known as Tombosika. It became known as Chaminuka after the death of Nyamutswa when it possessed Pasipamire who then became known as Chaminuka, and the spirit is still known as Chaminuka.

Pasipamire: Medium of the spirit Chaminuka at Chitungwiza, near Harare.

Mutota:

Most known as a ruler. He was also a medium to a spirit believed to be the same spirit as Chaminuka.

Charwe: Medium of the spirit Nehanda in the 1890s.

Charwe Nyakasikana: Same person as Charwe.

Nyamhika Nehanda: Medium of the spirit Nehanda in the 1450s. Nyamhika was daughter to Mutota.

Some names that appear in the text

Keresensia Mawungira: A descendent of Pasipamire who talked about Chaminuka recently and the story appeared in *The Herald* newspaper of Zimbabwe.

Lobengula: A former leader of the Matebele people of Zimbabwe.

Munhumutapa:

Leader of the empire part of the area now known as Zimbabwe. His empire included large parts of the present-day country of Mozambique up to the Indian Ocean in the east and parts of Botswana in the west. Munhumutapa is believed to be the King Solomon of the legendary King Solomon's Gold Mines.

Names of Places

Chitungwiza:

Name of the place where Chaminuka used to live. The place is still known by that name.

Dewedzo:

Name of the place where a medium of Chaminuka known as Muchatera lived. It is a village in Manicaland Province. This is one of the unique areas of Zimbabwe.

Approaching it from the east, southeast, and south, you see a long mountain. Dewedzo literally means going on-and-on. If you approach from the west, northwest, or north, you do not see a mountain, but just flat land with no sign of a mountain. You only see signs of a mountain as you go down the slope. Thus, when you reach the top of what appears as a mountain to a person in the east, you see nothing but flat land for long-long distances to the north, west, and southwest. From the top of the mountain, looking to the east, you see hills and valleys of Manicaland. Looking to the north, west, and southwest you see the flat lands of Whedza and Svosve in Mashonaland East Province. Muchatera did not choose to live there. He was born there. Chaminuka chose to live there in Muchatera. He/she was not born there.

Guruwe: Name of a district in Mashonaland Central Province.

Makonde: Name of a district in Mashonaland West in Zimbabwe.

Manicaland: Name of a province in Zimbabwe.

Mashonaland:

The area of Zimbabwe known as Mashonaland is divided into four Provinces known as Mashonaland Central, Mashonaland East, and Mashonaland West.

Matebeleland: Name of a province in Zimbabwe.

Zambezi:

Name of the river that separates Zambia and Zimbabwe. It is the largest and longest river in Southern Africa, extending from the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the west to the Indian Ocean in the east. The famous Victoria Falls is on this river.