

NERVOUS CONDITIONS

Here is a quote that is worthy of discussion:

"It's bad enough . . . when a country gets colonized, but when the people do as well! That's the end, really, that's the end."

Nyasha says these words in Chapter 7. Place the above quote in context and explain what she means using your knowledge of the novel.

[Reply](#) [Collapse](#) [Mark as Unread](#)

Re: Nyasha

by [S NGWENYA](#) - 16 Feb 2017 @ 2:58

Nyasha is not in support with her father's idea of abandoning their old ways of living performing cleansing ceremonies and adopting the Christian way by having a wedding for Tambu's father who is totally convinced that all his problems are not alone "They do not come alone. They are coming from somewhere. Its obvious. They are being sent.... A good medium to do the ceremony properly with everything beer, a sacrificial ox, everything. We must call the clan and get rid of this evil." page 148. Babamukuru would not hear any of it though he grew up performing these ceremonies he now sees them as evil, he now calls a medium "witchdoctors" which just exhibits the extent his mind has been colonised. Tete and the rest of the family believe that a cleansing ceremony would cure Jeremiah of all his problems and their problems as well but do not have the courage to tell Babamukuru or remind him how they used to deal with such issues before Christianity came into their lives through colonisation of Rhodesia. Tambu also is convinced that the further they left the old ways behind the closer they came to progress which also displays how she has been corrupted by colonialism Nyasha feels leaving their old ways of living is the end meaning it is the end of their own original lives their identities their true selves leading them to forgetting who they are. Her interests in what her grandparents did shows how she wants to maintain her true Shona culture by going back to what they used to do before being colonised.

[Reply](#) [Mark as Unread](#)

Re: Nyasha

by [K ALLAWAY](#) - 20 Feb 2017 @ 12:03

In the novel *Nervous Conditions*, written by Tsitsi Dangarembga, Nyasha states, "It's bad enough...when a country gets colonized, but when the people do as well! That's the end, really, that's the end".

This quote can be found at the end of chapter 7. This chapter is filled with "bloody family scenes' (pg 122), just at Tambu predicts in the beginning of the chapter. This chapter starts off with Babamukuru, Maiguru, Nyasha, Anna and Tambu returning to the homestead to spend Christmas with Tambu's parents and the rest of the family who, too, are visiting the homestead. When they arrive at the homestead their welcoming is bitter-sweet. Tambu's sisters- Netsai and Rambanai- pleasantly welcome their family to their home and are extremely excited and thrilled to see them. The happy affair does not last long as Lucia, Tambu's mother's sister, enters the scene. The fact that Lucia is still at the homestead, even after Babamukuru told her to leave, does not please Babamukuru in the slightest. This is the cause of the upwell of the family drama which Tambu predicts.

A family meeting or "dare", which excludes all the women, is held in order to address the family issues between Lucia, Takesure, Jeremiah and Mainini. Babamukuru feels that none of the sins and errors committed between these four individuals would have been committed if Jeremiah and Mainini had had a formal church wedding as his mother had always wanted. Thus, because Babamukuru gets what Babamukuru wants, it is agreed upon that Tambu's parents will have a church wedding, at Babamukuru's expense, to right all their wrongs.

When Nyasha hears of the plans of the church wedding, she is not happy. She understands that her country, Rhodesia, has been colonized and that change is, therefore, inevitable in many cases. What she does not understand is that, in the Shona culture, change is frowned upon and does not happen easily but, regardless of this, changes are being made with regards to the marital ceremonies where a cleansing ceremony is usually opted for over a church wedding. This is no longer the case as Babamukuru feels that the cleansing ceremony, which Tambu's parents have performed, no longer sufficiently solidifies their marriage and, therefore, a church wedding is needed. The family, as always, agrees as no one goes against Babamukuru.

Nyasha is truly affected by this revelation and feels that this is the "end" (pg 150) of a culture, which previously refused change and stuck to its roots, as its members are willingly welcoming change and, therefore, implying the Shona culture is no longer sufficient for its "colonized" people. Thus, Babamukuru is seen by Nyasha as a colony who is inflicting change on a culture which was once admired for its strong, immovable roots. Babamukuru is the driving force of the colonialism of the people of the Shona culture.

Kaitlin Allaway (61491535)

[Reply](#) [Mark as Unread](#)

Re: Nyasha

by [N GREYLING](#) - 21 Feb 2017 @ 6:11

I have read the above replies and fully agree with them.

It does become clear that Nyasha is confused and feels trapped in her father's house.

When they went to England she was an outcast, a Black from rural Rhodesia with 'no common sense', but she managed to embrace all that England had to offer. Her parents were proud of her and her achievements in England. The family as a whole become part of British society.

When they returned to Rhodesia, Nyasha was expected to suddenly become the Shona girl that her father had always wanted. Here she became an outcast again, "white girl". She had to suddenly change in order to become a respectable lady in Shona and Christian standards. She was not to question anything her father said and did.

I feel for Nyasha, as this must have been an extremely difficult situation for her. As a young girl she had her Shona identity stripped away from her and then in her preteens she had her British identity stripped away from her. Babamukuru wanted the best for his family, but he himself did not truly have an identity. Babamukuru wanted to be an educated man and good Christian, but expected Nyasha to be a good Shona girl. Babamukuru had forgotten his traditional roots, but expected Nyasha to still hold on her traditional roots to some extent. It is my opinion that Babamukuru was confused as well.

[Reply](#) [Collapse](#) [Mark as Unread](#)

[Re: Nyasha](#)

by [W FREDRIKSSON](#) - 15 May 2017 @ 10:24

I have a comment on one part of your argument. The language employed in your statement about Nyasha being "*a Black from rural Rhodesia with 'no common sense', but she **managed** to embrace all that England had to offer*" strikes me as having, probably unintentional, discriminatory undertones. In using the word "manage" you are implying that Nyasha's blackness makes her inferior to other children in England, and that it is unusual and notable that she could embrace a Westernised way of life because of her colour. Without being aware of it you have rendered her as an other because she is black, rather than to draw attention to the cultural adjustments that her life in England exposed her to. A different way of looking at it could have been to describe how the experience and immersion in a different culture caused developments in her identity, rather than imply that this occurred through any kind of special effort that she had to make because of her race.

The cultural influence that overwrites her childhood memories of Shona customs and social/family structures is precisely what makes her adjustment to returning to

Zimbabwe a challenge for her, as it puts her identity development at odds with her social environment, as you went on to describe.

[Reply](#) [Mark as Read](#)

[Re: Nyasha](#)

by [T GWALA](#) - 24 Feb 2017 @ 7:44

As much as Nyasha embraced all that England had to offer, in a way she did not forget where she came from - oh she might have forgotten the rules and the language - but at her core she still remembers. It could be that her dual nature (Shona roots and western education) offered her a better perspective into both worlds. She continually warns Tambu to not take to accept wholeheartedly the changes represented by the colonists as they lead to a loss of one's identity.

Her father is an educated man and a Christian he shuns his culture's teachings -though he still wants Nyasha to behave like a proper Shona girl- when his brother says they need to perform a cleansing ceremony he forbids it and opts for a Christian wedding. Having not had the opportunity to learn about these ceremonies Nyasha is curious and frustrated over the family's choice. She sees this blind acceptance of another culture's values as an end leading to too radical a break from one's roots/culture.

[Reply](#) [Collapse](#) [Mark as Unread](#)

[Re: Nyasha](#)

by [D MAGWAZA](#) - 13 Mar 2017 @ 12:02

I contend that she forgot where she came from because she lost her respect and she is rebellious we found her not respecting her father and sees her homesteads embraced him and she says to Tambu that they must not make him their god due to his education and affluent, as he encourages.. his brother to make white wedding to right their wrongs by doing it as a ceremony of cleansing the bad luck unto them. We also found Nyasha forgot how to speak her language Shona due to stay in England for a period of five years that is a little time to forget your language I see her as a snob child being shaped by colonial experience.

[Reply](#) [Collapse](#) [Mark as Unread](#)

[Re: Nyasha](#)

by [K BUCHANAN](#) - 13 Mar 2017 @ 13:21

I think if you look at it as a % of her life, 5 years is actually quite a lot. Can't remember the exact age she was when she left, but say for example she was in England from 10 years old to 15 years old. 5 years out of those 15 years is a one third of her life.

Although I agree that she has moments where she can behave like a snob, I don't think that she really is a brat. I think she is confused and frustrated. What I find interesting about Nyasha is that she doesn't "approve" of the traditional Shona way of doing things, but at the same time, she doesn't feel like she fits in with white people either. At one point in the novel she mentions that she feels like a "hybrid". I think that is a very fitting description for her. She has a little bit of Shona in her and a little bit of English in her and it makes her feel like she is an outcast everywhere. I think her "acting out" by being disrespectful to her father, wearing revealing clothes, smoking etc. is actually just a symptom of her feeling like she doesn't belong anywhere. I feel sorry for her.

[Reply](#) [Collapse](#) [Mark as Unread](#)

Re: Nyasha

by [M SMEDDLE](#) - 16 Mar 2017 @ 23:31

I read the book a month ago so my recall is not perfect . While I am in agreement that Nyasha is a very confused individual, I feel that she has a very inciteful intelligence and a great deal of integrity. From a young age she has had a huge range of conflicting experiences and cultures and it would be most unusual for her not to be confused. Nonetheless, she is honest in her pursuit of the truth and has the gumption to stand up to the nonsensical family situations that she finds herself being asked to be a part of. She has perhaps been shaped less by the colonial experience than her father and other family members. She somehow seems to have the ability to see through it all. She is concerned about the influences that Tambu is falling under and she is incensed that her mother should give up her career in order to be the good wife to her husband. She is able to see very clearly how people around her have been affected and how they now behave out of convenience and expedience. She is my favourite character in the book. Her incitefulness and the depth of her passion is what has driven her illness.

[Reply](#) [Collapse](#) [Mark as Unread](#)

Re: Nyasha

by [C CHIGWESHE](#) - 20 Mar 2017 @ 4:40

Re-Nyasha Nysha has been exposed to two worlds the way of life in Rhodesia as well as the life in England. After her life in England her life drastically changed. Her dresses had become short such that she was not properly covered. She also stays out until late in the company of boys. She has also taken in to smoking. You will also find that most of Nyasha's knowledge of history is through reading history books unlike Tambu who experiences it. Nyasha also suffers a bout of anorexia where the psychiatrist says she is not sick because this disease is for Westerners. Interesting to note that there are Western and African diseases.

[Reply](#) [Mark as Unread](#)

[Re: Nyasha](#)

by [R BEHARI](#) - 20 Mar 2017 @ 19:07

I love that word, "gumption". It does fit Nyasha who is a very interesting character. Thanks for your take. I agree with everything you have stated. I hope that you are able to support these ideas and points with quotes from the book.