

Maru Bessie Head

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In Conversation with Bessie Head

Presenting a diverse and dazzling collection from all over the continent, from Morocco to Zimbabwe, Uganda to Kenya. Helon Habila focuses on younger, newer writers - contrasted with some of their older, more established peers - to give a fascinating picture of a new and more liberated Africa. These writers are characterized by their engagement with the wider world and the opportunities offered by the end of apartheid, the end of civil wars and dictatorships, and the possibilities of free movement. Their work is inspired by travel and exile. They are liberated, global and expansive. As Dambudzo Marechera wrote: 'If you're a writer for a specific nation or specific race, then f*** you.' These are the stories of a new Africa, punchy, self-confident and defiant. Includes stories by: Fatou Diome; Aminatta Forna; Manuel Rui; Patrice Nganang; Leila Aboulela; Zo Wicomb; Alaa Al Aswany; Doreen Baingana; E.C. Osondu.

When Rain Clouds Gather

Rural Botswana is the backdrop for *When Rain Clouds Gather*, the first novel published by one of Africa's leading woman writers in English, Bessie Head (1937-1986). Inspired by her own traumatic life experiences as an outcast in Apartheid South African society and as a refugee living at the Bamangwato Development Association Farm in Botswana, Head's tough and telling classic work is set in the poverty-stricken village of Golema Mmidi, a haven to exiles. A South African political refugee and an Englishman join forces to revolutionize the villagers' traditional farming methods, but their task is fraught with hazards as the pressures of tradition, opposition from the local chief, and the unrelenting climate threaten to divide and devastate the fragile community. Head's layered, compelling story confronts the complexities of such topics as social and political change, conflict between science and traditional ways, tribalism, the role of traditional African chiefs, religion, race relations, and male-female relations.

Maru

The Lovers collects Head's short fiction of the 1960s and 70s, written mainly in

Serowe, Botswana, and depicting the lives and loves of African village people pre- and post-independence. An earlier selection called *Tales of Tenderness and Power* was published in the Heinemann African Writers Series in 1990, but this expanded and updated volume adds many previously unavailable stories collected here for the first time. Anthology favourites like her breakthrough 'The Woman from America' and 'The Prisoner who Wore Glasses' are included, leading up to the first complete text of her much translated title story. Stephen Gray is a noted South African scholar and novelist.

When Rain Clouds Gather

The Creative Vision of Bessie Head

New edition, with an introduction by MG Vassanji. In the late nineteenth century white settlers and administrators arrive to occupy the African country of Zimbabwe (Rhodesia). Nehanda, a village girl, is recognized through omens and portents as a saviour. The resulting uprising by the Africans is brutally crushed but looks forward to the war of independence that succeeded a century later. Told in lucid, poetic prose, this is a gripping story about the first meeting of a people with their colonizer.

Maru

Arguing that the fundamental, familiar, sexual violence of slavery and racialized subjugation have continued to shape black and white subjectivities into the present, Christina Sharpe interprets African diasporic and Black Atlantic visual and literary texts that address those "monstrous intimacies" and their repetition as constitutive of post-slavery subjectivity. Her illuminating readings juxtapose Frederick Douglass's narrative of witnessing the brutal beating of his Aunt Hester with Essie Mae Washington-Williams's declaration of freedom in *Dear Senator: A Memoir by the Daughter of Strom Thurmond*, as well as the "generational genital fantasies" depicted in Gayl Jones's novel *Corregidora* with a firsthand account of such "monstrous intimacies" in the journals of an antebellum South Carolina senator, slaveholder, and vocal critic of miscegenation. Sharpe explores the South African-born writer Bessie Head's novel *Maru*—about race, power, and liberation in Botswana—in light of the history of the KhoiSan woman Saartje Baartman, who was displayed in Europe as the "Hottentot Venus" in the nineteenth century. Reading Isaac Julien's film *The Attendant*, Sharpe takes up issues of representation, slavery, and the sadomasochism of everyday black life. Her powerful meditation on intimacy, subjection, and subjectivity culminates in an analysis of Kara Walker's black silhouettes, and the critiques leveled against both the silhouettes and the artist.

Maru by Bessie Head

Botswana village tales about subjects such as the breakdown of family life and the position of women in this society.

Racial Prejudice and the Question of Otherness in Bessie Head's Novels with Particular Reference to Maru, The Cardinals, and A Question of Power

The life and work of Bessie Head

This work provides an insight into the Serowe village community and its history.

Monstrous Intimacies

When Rainclouds Gather: Escaping South Africa and his troubled past, Makehaya crosses the border to Botswana, in the hope of leading a peaceful, purposeful life. In the village of Golema Mmidi he meets Gilbert, a charismatic Englishman who is trying to modernise farming methods to benefit the community. The two outsiders join forces, but their task is fraught with hazards: opposition from the corrupt chief, the pressures of tradition, and the unrelenting climate ever threaten to bring tragedy. Maru: Margaret, an orphan from a despised tribe, has lived her life under the loving protection of a missionary's wife. She has only to open her mouth to cause confusion, for her education and English accent do not fit her looks. When she accepts her first teaching post, in a remote village, Margaret is befriended by Dikeledi, sister of Maru the chief-in-waiting. Despite making influential friends, Margaret faces prejudice even from the children she teaches, and her presence causes Maru and his best friend - also Dikeledi's lover - to become sworn enemies.

Achebe, Head, Marechera

Bessie Head

An African love story and statement on racial & tribal prejudice, set in mid-twentieth century Botswana. First pub. 1971.

Tales of Tenderness and Power

The Granta Book of the African Short Story

X-kit Literature Series: FET Maru

"Margaret Cadmore, an orphaned Masarwa girl, goes to teach in the remote village of Dilepe in Botswana, where her own people are kept as slaves. Her presence polarizes a community which does not see Masarwa people as human, and condemns her to the lonely life of an outcast"--Publisher's description.

Nehanda

Introduces key concepts needed for map reading and map making. This series explores different types of maps, photographs and illustrations, and includes activities and quizzes, making it ideal for learning essential map skills.

Rumours of Ophir

Fa Maru a Pula a Kokoana Setswana

Read worldwide for her wisdom, authenticity, and skillful prose, South African-born Bessie Head (1937–1986) offers a moving and magical tale of an orphaned girl, Margaret Cadmore, who goes to teach in a remote village in Botswana where her own people are kept as slaves. Her presence polarizes a community that does not see her people as human, and condemns her to the lonely life of an outcast. In the love story and intrigue that follows, Head brilliantly combines a portrait of loneliness with a rich affirmation of the mystery and spirituality of life. The core of this otherworldly, rhapsodic work is a plot about racial injustice and prejudice with a lesson in how traditional intolerance may render whole sections of a society untouchable.

A Bewitched Crossroad

Concentrating on issues of power and change, this analysis of texts by Chinua Achebe, Bessie Head and Dambudzi Marechera teases out each author's view of how colonialism affected Africa, the contributions of Africans to their malaise, and how many reacted in creative, progressive, pragmatic ways.

Maru

Mema engages the reader with its dramatic tale of a woman struggling against the constraints of her community, yet proves to be a multi-layered novel exploring a culture in transition.

The African Trilogy

This is an anthology of stories, personal observations and historic legends. It reflects the author's fascination with Africa's people and their history as well as her identification with individuals and their conflicting emotions.

Gender in African Women's Writing

The Lovers

" selected not only African oral and written stories but also tales from around the world "--Pref., p. 11.

The Bride Price

A moving and very accessible account of one of Africa's best-known women writers- Bessie Head.

Life

"This is a cogent analysis of the complexities of gender in the work of nine contemporary Anglophone and Francophone novelists. . . . offers illuminating interpretations of worthy writers . . . " --Multicultural Review "This book reaffirms Bessie Head's remark that books are a tool, in this case a tool that allows readers to understand better the rich lives and the condition of African women. Excellent notes and a rich bibliography." --Choice ". . . a college-level analysis which will appeal to any interested in African studies and literature." --The Bookwatch This book applies gender as a category of analysis to the works of nine sub-Saharan women writers: Aidoo, Bá, Beyala, Dangarembga, Emecheta, Head, Liking, Tlali, and Zanga Tsogo. The author appropriates western feminist theories of gender in an African literary context, and in the process, she finds and names critical theory that is African, indigenous, self-determining, which she then melds with western feminist theory and comes out with an over-arching theory that enriches western, post-colonial and African critical perspectives.

Mema

"When Elizabeth learns the devastating truth about her mother, locked away for defying Apartheid, she flees South Africa and begins a new life in Botswana, at Motabeng, the village of the rain-wind. But Elizabeth is tormented by two men, Dan and Sello, who represent for her a private vision of hell into which she sinks deeper and deeper. This novel interweaves one woman's terrifying experience of insanity with the madness and cruelty of life in a divided society. A Question of Power is the unforgettable study of an individual - and a race - whose identity has been annihilated, and their resulting struggle to endure"--Publisher's description.

The Tragic Life

Collects three of the author's novels, all inspired by the tragedies faced by the Igbo people during the European colonization of Africa.

The Collector of Treasures

Explores the narrative strategies Head employs to inscribe an idealistic vision in response to the psychic fragmentation and rootlessness she experienced as an exiled black South African woman writer.

Maru by Bessie Head

This book is a selection from the letters Bessie Head wrote Randolph Vigne, a politician and literary friend from her Cape Town days.

Bessie Head

Maru

In *Conversation with Bessie Head* shows how reading the novels and letters of Botswana's most influential writer, Bessie Head, fosters an ongoing conversation between reader and writer and is in fact a very personal undertaking. Each chapter tackles two parallel threads, the first regarding Mary S. Lederer's own history of reading Head—from her first purchase of *Maru*, through completing a Ph.D. on Head's trilogy, through living in Botswana and connecting with various aspects of Head's life, to examining how reading Head has affected her own development as a human being. This history then ties each chapter into discussion of how Head develops her own vision of the “brotherhood of man.” Alongside critically informed discussion, Head's vision is examined through the prism of specific questions. Why is madness not a useful concept for understanding Head's ideas? Why did Head say she was not a feminist, and what is the significance of “male” and “female” in her novels? What is the relationship between individual, race, and community? How can the nature of God be a clear expression of love but also an indistinct force for both good and evil? Head's novels present opportunities for personal growth, and through these “conversations” with her, we become different readers.

The Collector of Treasures

Critical Essays on Bessie Head

This book is an exploration of the way in which Head's writing is her idiosyncratic response to her personal life. Her desire to portray and yet subvert oppression—political, racist, and sexist—that she encountered in South Africa and Botswana, led to a Romanticism born of her need to create an antithesis to what she perceived to be the reality around her. Her eagerness to discover a haven in her adopted rural Botswana led to a Utopia of her own making, a literary resolution imagined, not actual. A mental breakdown led to the creation of her greatest novel, *A Question of Power*, one which examines the depths of evil, but allows also for the dawning of the heights of goodness. The appendix contains many heretofore unpublished letters that help to explain the personal compulsion that provided for Head's creativity.

Bessie Head

A Gesture of Belonging

Shadows

Arguing that the fundamental, familiar, sexual violence of slavery and racialized subjugation have continued to shape black and white subjectivities into the present, Christina Sharpe interprets African diasporic and Black Atlantic visual and literary texts that address those “monstrous intimacies” and their repetition as constitutive of post-slavery subjectivity. Her illuminating readings juxtapose

Frederick Douglass's narrative of witnessing the brutal beating of his Aunt Hester with Essie Mae Washington-Williams's declaration of freedom in *Dear Senator: A Memoir by the Daughter of Strom Thurmond*, as well as the "generational genital fantasies" depicted in Gayl Jones's novel *Corregidora* with a firsthand account of such "monstrous intimacies" in the journals of an antebellum South Carolina senator, slaveholder, and vocal critic of miscegenation. Sharpe explores the South African-born writer Bessie Head's novel *Maru*—about race, power, and liberation in Botswana—in light of the history of the KhoiSan woman Saartje Baartman, who was displayed in Europe as the "Hottentot Venus" in the nineteenth century. Reading Isaac Julien's film *The Attendant*, Sharpe takes up issues of representation, slavery, and the sadomasochism of everyday black life. Her powerful meditation on intimacy, subjection, and subjectivity culminates in an analysis of Kara Walker's black silhouettes, and the critiques leveled against both the silhouettes and the artist.

A Question of Power

Maru

One of the foremost African writers of our time, who dispelled the silence between colonial and feminist discourses by "talking back", Bessie Head at last gets her due in this first book-length, comprehensive study of her work. This book locates Head's unquestionable importance in the canon of African literature. Author Huma Ibrahim argues that unless we are able to look at the merging of women's sexual and linguistic identity with their political and gendered identity, the careful configurations created in Head's work will elude us. Ibrahim offers a series of thoughtful readings informed by feminist, diasporan, postcolonial, and poststructuralist insights and concerns. She identifies a theme she calls "exilic consciousness" - the desire to belong - and traces its manifestations through each phase of Head's work, showing how "women's talk" - a marginalized commodity in the construction of southern Africa - is differently embodied and evaluated. Bessie Head's works are frequently featured in courses in African literature, third-world literature, and fiction writing, but there is little critical material on them. Ibrahim offers readings of Head's novels *When Rain Clouds Gather*, *Maru*, and *A Question of Power*, as well as the collections *Tales of Tenderness and Power*, *A Collector of Treasures*, *A Woman Alone: Autobiographical Writings*, and *The Cardinals*, the histories *Serowe: Village of the Rain Wind* and *A Bewitched Crossroad*, and her letters to Robert Vigne collected in *A Gesture of Belonging*. In Head's exploration of oppressed people, especially women and those in exile, Ibrahim finds startling insights into institutional power relations. Head not only subverts Western hegemonic notions of the third-world woman but offers a critique of postcoloniality.

Serowe

First published in 1976, this great literary classic follows a young Nigerian woman who rejects the patriarchal traditions of her culture to find love and happiness in the western world. With pure honesty and subtle protest, Buchi Emecheta chronicles the unfair pressure and ultimate demise that women often suffer in

Nigerian lore.

Monstrous Intimacies

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