
Maru Bessie Head The Main Character Analysis

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*Maru Bessie Head The
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SIDNEY MELINA

Shadows Waveland Press

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.

In Conversation with Bessie Head Rodopi
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 The appendix contains many heretofore unpublished letters that help to explain the personal compulsion that provided for Head's creativity.

An Introduction Witwatersrand University Press

Deep hiStories represents the first substantial publication on gender and colonialism in Southern Africa in recent years, and suggests methodological ways forward for a post-apartheid and postcolonial generation of scholars. The volume's theorizing, which is based on Southern African regional material, is certain to impact on international debates on gender - debates which have shifted from earlier feminisms towards

theorizations which include sexual difference, subjectivities, colonial (and postcolonial) discourses and the politics of representation. Deep hiStories goes beyond the dichotomies which have largely characterized the discussion of women and gender in Africa, and explores alternative models of interpretation such as 'genealogies of voice'. These 'genealogies' transcend the conventional binaries of visibility and invisibility, speaking and silence. Works covering South Africa from the eighteenth to the twentieth century and Zimbabwe, Namibia and Cameroon in the twentieth include:

- Colonial readings of Foucault
- Ideologies of domesticity
- Torture and testimony of slave women
- Women as missionary targets
- Gender and the public sphere

- Race, science and spectacle
- Male nursing on mines
- Infanticide, insanity and social control
- Fertility and the postcolonial state
- Literary reconstructions of the past
- Gender-blending and code-switching

De/colonizing the queer The collection includes diverse research on the body in Southern Africa for the first time. It brings new subtleties to the ongoing debates on culture, civility and sexuality, dealing centrally with constructions of race and whiteness in history and literature. It is an important resource for teachers and students of gender and colonial studies.

Interviews with Bessie Head, Sheila Roberts, Ellen Kuzwayo, Miriam Tlali
Lynne Rienner Publishers

Homophobia is still rife and it remains

dangerous and even life-threatening to be out in Africa, but Chantal Zabus here traces the range of representations of same-sex desire in Africa through historic and contemporary sources.

Making Post-Slavery Subjects James Currey Publishers

Song of Lawino and Song of Ocol are among the most successful African literary works. Song of Lawino is an African woman's lamentation over the cultural death of her western educated husband - Ocol. In Song of Ocol the husband tries to justify his cultural apostasy. These songs were translated from Acholi by the author. They evince a fascinating flavour of the African rhythmical idiom.

Monstrous Intimacies Addison-Wesley Longman

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.

A Guide to Study and Teaching Routledge

Women, especially leaders, holding tête-à-têtes with men to address political impasses have been recognized as shrewd, double headed, or witchlike distinctions that link them with juju or extraordinary, survivalist powers. Juju Fission: Women's Alternative Fictions from the Sahara, the Kalahari, and the Oases In-Between is a theoretical and analytical book on African women writers that focuses on seven representative novels from different parts of Africa:

Bessie Head's *Maru* (South Africa/Botswana); Nawal El Saadawi's *Woman at Point Zero* (Egypt); Ama Ata Aidoo's *Our Sister Killjoy*; or *Reflections from a Black-Eyed Squint and Changes* (Ghana); Assia Djebar's *A Sister to Scheherazade* (Algeria); Calixthe Beyala's *The Sun Hath Looked Upon Me* (Cameroon); and Yvonne Vera's *Nehanda* (Zimbabwe). In her analysis, Chikwenye Okonjo Ogunyemi demonstrates how women are viewed and how they operate in critical times. Ogunyemi explains how the heritage is passed on, in spite of dire situations emanating from colonialism, postcolonialism, ethnicism, sexism, and grinding poverty. An important contribution to many fields, *Juju Fission* is excellent background material for courses on African studies,

women's studies, African Diaspora studies, black studies, global studies, and general literature studies.

Heinemann

This volume lists the work produced on anglophone black African literature between 1997 and 1999. Containing thousands of entries, it covers books, periodical articles, papers in edited collections and selective coverage of other relevant sources.

Twenty-first Century Readings

University of Virginia Press

"Monumental a wonderful read."--

Stephen Gray, *Mail & Guardian*, South

Africa "Eilersen's account of Head's

childhood is a gift to admirers of Bessie

Head for it offers a fascinating insight

into the events and circumstances that

shaped Bessie Head's sense of self and

her strong political identity. Eilersen's book is invaluable and represents a long-awaited study of Bessie Head that manages to undo much of the enigma that has surrounded her and her ideas." --Kwame Dawes, African Affairs In July 2007, the acclaimed writer Bessie Head would have turned seventy years old. Her friends, colleagues and literary critics will honor her with a series of conferences, new books and theses, re-namings, tree-plantings, writing prizes, composing music inspired by one of her novels, Maru, and the founding of a permanent Bessie Head Heritage Trust to guarantee the future of her house and literary papers. Wits University Press takes this opportunity to repackage and republish this excellent biography. It will appear with new--never before

published--photographs of Bessie Head's life. Gillian Stead Eilersen studied at the former University of Natal (South Africa) and Odense University (Denmark), where she now lectures in the Department of English.

The Postcolonial in the Postnational
Indiana University Press

The first collection of nonfiction critical writings by one of the leading literary figures of post-apartheid South Africa The most significant nonfiction writings of Zoë Wicomb, one of South Africa's leading authors and intellectuals, are collected here for the first time in a single volume. This compilation features essays on the works of such prominent South African writers as Bessie Head, Nadine Gordimer, Njabulo Ndebele, and J. M. Coetzee, as well as on a wide range

of cultural and political topics, including gender politics, sexuality, race, identity, nationalism, and visual art. Also presented here are a reflection on Nelson Mandela and a revealing interview with Wicomb. In these essays, written between 1990 and 2013, Wicomb offers insights into her nation's history, politics, and people. In a world in which nationalist rhetoric is on the rise and right-wing populist movements are the declared enemies of diversity and pluralism, her essays speak powerfully to a host of current international issues.

Juju Fission Fairleigh Dickinson Univ Press

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

Apartheid Narratives Waveland Press

Commonwealth Literature Continues To Retain A Separate Identity In The Twenty-First Century, Even Though Some Of Its Creators Do Not Favour The Term Any Longer. Our Identity Stems From Our History. English Was A Historical Accident That Gave An Overwhelming Majority Of The Commonwealth Countries The First Opportunity For Creative Expression. English Is Now The Chief Marker Of Identity For Commonwealth Fiction, Which Owes Its Current High Visibility In The International Arena To English. In This Light, Stimulating Answers May Be Found To The Questions Concerning The Relevance Of Commonwealth As A Literary Category, The Common Characteristics Of The Literatures Produced In The Former British Colonies,

And The Role Of Academia In Keeping Alive The Idea Of Commonwealth Literature. In This Anthology, Scholars From At Least Three Continents Analyse Some Important Works Of Fiction Originating From The Former British Colonies, Deal With Major Topics In The Current Postcolonial Debate, And Put Commonwealth Fiction Itself Into Perspective.

Song of Lawino and Song of Ocol
Heinemann

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.

Teaching Bessie Head's Novel Maru
Heinemann

This book is a study in African literary influence. It focuses on the importance of indigenous sources to new writing. The analytical framework for the study draws on recent conceptual advances in theories of authorship. Juxtaposing works and authors that are traditionally thought to be unlikely bedfellows, the book persuasively identifies their hitherto unexamined points of contact, opening up a vigorous debate about the

roots of African literature and offering a radical critique of the assumptions underlying conventional notions of African literature. The book provides valuable insight on the roles of such activities as appropriation, copying, pastiche, parody, simulation, foraging, grafting, padding, recycling, and remodeling in underwriting literary expression in Africa. Alive with wit and full of delight in the texts it discusses, it is a marvel of close and attentive, detective reading.

Maru Bloomsbury Publishing USA
"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.

Maru by Bessie Head Atlantic Publishers & Dist

"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.

A Question of Power UW-Madison Libraries Parallel Press

This book investigates themes of exile and oppression in Southern Africa across Bessie Head's novels and short fiction. An exile herself, arriving in Botswana as

a South African refugee, Bessie Head's fiction serves as an important example of African exile literature. This book argues that Head's characters are driven to exile as a result of their socio-political ambivalence while still in South Africa, and that this sense of discomfort follows them to their new lives. Investigating themes of trauma and identity politics across colonial and post-colonial contexts, this book also addresses the important theme of black-on-black prejudice and hostility which is often overlooked in studies of Head's work. Covering Head's shorter fiction as well as her major novels *When Rain Clouds Gather* (1969), *Maru* (1971), *A Question of Power* (1973), *Serowe: Village of the Rain Wind* (1981), and *A Bewitched Crossroads: An African Saga* (1984), this

book will be of interest to researchers of African literature and postcolonial history.

Maru Rodopi

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.

Autobiographical Writings Duke University Press

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.
Maru Heinemann
 The Cardinals--thought to be the first long piece of fiction Head produced and the only one she ever set in South Africa--is an exciting literary event.