

a question of power bessie head

****Exploring "A Question of Power" by Bessie Head: Themes, Context, and Legacy****

a question of power bessie head is much more than just the title of a novel; it encapsulates a profound exploration of identity, mental health, and the intricate dynamics of power in post-colonial Africa. Written by the celebrated Botswana-born South African writer Bessie Head, this novel stands as a landmark piece in African literature, offering readers a raw and deeply personal journey into the psyche of its protagonist while illuminating broader societal issues.

Understanding "A Question of Power" by Bessie Head

Bessie Head's "A Question of Power" is often regarded as a semi-autobiographical work, reflecting her own struggles with mental illness and displacement. The novel was published in 1973, during a time when Africa was grappling with the aftermath of colonialism and the rise of new national identities. The story follows the life of Elizabeth, a woman caught between conflicting realities—itself a metaphor for the post-colonial African experience.

The Significance of the Title

The title "A Question of Power" perfectly captures the central conflict of the novel. Power here is multifaceted: it refers not only to political power and control but also to psychological power—the battle for control within Elizabeth's mind. This duality invites readers to reflect on how external forces and internal struggles shape one's sense of self and agency.

Themes in "A Question of Power" by Bessie Head

Mental Health and Identity

One of the most striking aspects of the novel is its candid portrayal of mental illness. Elizabeth's descent into madness is depicted with empathy and nuance, challenging societal stigmas that often surround mental health issues in African contexts. Bessie Head uses this narrative to question how identity is fractured and reconstructed through trauma.

Post-Colonial Struggles and Power Dynamics

Beyond the personal, the novel delves into larger issues of power in a newly independent Africa. It explores the tensions between traditional cultures and modern influences, as well as the lingering effects of colonial domination. Through Elizabeth's interactions and hallucinations, readers gain insight into the complex political and social realities of Botswana and southern Africa at large.

Gender and Social Expectations

"A Question of Power" also addresses the role of women in society. Elizabeth's experiences reflect the limitations and expectations placed upon women, especially in patriarchal settings. The novel critiques how gender intersects with power, often leading to marginalization and oppression.

Bessie Head's Narrative Style and Literary Techniques

Bessie Head's writing in "A Question of Power" is both poetic and raw, blending realism with elements of magical realism. The narrative structure mirrors Elizabeth's fractured mental state, with shifts between reality and hallucination that keep readers engaged and challenged. This style not only reflects the protagonist's inner turmoil but also symbolizes the fractured nature of societies emerging from colonial rule.

Symbolism and Imagery

Throughout the novel, Head employs vivid imagery and symbolism to deepen the thematic impact. For example, the recurring figure of the "white woman" and the "black woman" in Elizabeth's visions can be interpreted as a representation of conflicting identities and cultural tensions. Such symbolism enriches the reading experience by adding layers of meaning that invite analysis and interpretation.

The Historical and Cultural Context of "A Question of Power"

To fully appreciate "A Question of Power," it's essential to consider the historical and cultural backdrop against which Bessie Head wrote. Born in 1937 in South Africa, Head's personal life was marked by exile and hardship due to apartheid and racial discrimination. Her move to Botswana provided both physical and creative refuge, yet the scars of displacement remained evident in her work.

The Post-Colonial African Landscape

The novel's setting reflects the broader struggles of African nations during the mid-20th century—nations striving to assert their independence while grappling with internal divisions and external pressures. This context is crucial for understanding the political undertones of the narrative and the nuanced portrayal of power.

Why "A Question of Power" Remains Relevant Today

Despite being written over four decades ago, "A Question of Power" continues to resonate with contemporary readers. Its exploration of mental health is increasingly recognized as ahead of its time, especially in societies where such topics remain taboo. Additionally, the novel's insights into power—both personal and political—remain strikingly pertinent in today's global discussions about identity, authority, and social justice.

Impact on African Literature and Beyond

Bessie Head's work has influenced countless writers and scholars, opening doors for more honest and complex narratives in African literature. "A Question of Power" is often studied in academic settings for its groundbreaking approach to psychological and political themes, cementing Head's legacy as a literary pioneer.

Tips for Reading and Appreciating "A Question of Power"

Engaging with "A Question of Power" can be a rewarding but challenging experience. Here are some tips to enhance your reading:

- **Focus on the psychological depth:** Pay close attention to the shifts between reality and hallucination, as they reflect Elizabeth's mental state and the novel's broader themes.
- **Consider the historical context:** Understanding Botswana's post-colonial landscape enriches the political subtext.
- **Reflect on symbolism:** Take note of recurring images and metaphors to uncover deeper meanings.
- **Read with empathy:** Recognize the novel as a personal and cultural testimony, which offers insight into mental illness and marginalization.

Exploring Bessie Head's Legacy Through "A

Question of Power"

Bessie Head's literary contributions extend far beyond this singular novel, yet "A Question of Power" remains one of her most compelling and intimate works. It offers a potent mix of storytelling and social commentary, inviting readers to confront uncomfortable truths about power, identity, and resilience.

In many ways, the novel serves as a bridge between personal experience and collective history, capturing the complex realities of a changing Africa. Whether you are a student of African literature, a mental health advocate, or simply a curious reader, delving into "A Question of Power" promises a profound and thought-provoking journey.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the main theme of 'A Question of Power' by Bessie Head?

'A Question of Power' explores themes of mental illness, identity, power struggles, and the complexities of post-colonial African society.

Who is the protagonist in 'A Question of Power'?

The protagonist of 'A Question of Power' is Elizabeth, a woman who struggles with her mental health while confronting societal and personal conflicts.

How does Bessie Head portray mental illness in 'A Question of Power'?

Bessie Head portrays mental illness as both a personal and political struggle, using Elizabeth's experiences to challenge stigma and explore the intersection of sanity, identity, and societal expectations.

What role does the setting play in 'A Question of Power'?

The setting, post-colonial Botswana, serves as a backdrop that highlights issues of cultural identity, political instability, and the impact of colonialism on individual and collective psyche.

Why is 'A Question of Power' considered a semi-autobiographical novel?

The novel is considered semi-autobiographical because it draws heavily on Bessie Head's own experiences with mental illness and exile, reflecting her personal struggles and insights.

How does the narrative style of 'A Question of Power' affect its impact?

The narrative style, which includes stream-of-consciousness and fragmented storytelling, immerses readers in Elizabeth's mental state, making the experience vivid and emotionally intense.

What symbolism is used in 'A Question of Power'?

Symbolism in the novel includes the use of light and darkness to represent knowledge and ignorance, as well as power dynamics reflected in characters' interactions and Elizabeth's internal conflicts.

How does 'A Question of Power' address the theme of power?

'A Question of Power' examines power on multiple levels—personal, political, and psychological—showing how power can be both oppressive and liberating.

What is the significance of the title 'A Question of Power'?

The title reflects the central exploration of power struggles within the individual and society, questioning who holds power and at what cost.

How has 'A Question of Power' influenced African literature?

'A Question of Power' is regarded as a groundbreaking work for its raw and honest portrayal of mental illness and its critique of post-colonial society, influencing subsequent African writers to explore complex psychological and social themes.

Additional Resources

A Question of Power by Bessie Head: An In-Depth Exploration of Power Dynamics and Identity

a question of power bessie head is a seminal work that delves into the intricate and often fraught dynamics of power, identity, and oppression. Written by Bessie Head, one of Africa's most influential writers, this novel explores themes that remain profoundly relevant in contemporary discussions about race, gender, and societal structures. This article examines the critical elements of the novel, offering a detailed analysis of its narrative, characters, and thematic concerns, while situating it within the broader context of postcolonial African literature.

Understanding Bessie Head's Context and Literary Significance

Bessie Head's life and experiences deeply inform her writing. Born in South Africa and later exiled to Botswana, Head's works often reflect the complexities of racial segregation, displacement, and identity crises. **a question of power** **bessie head** is no exception. The novel was published during a period of intense socio-political upheaval in Southern Africa, and it captures the psychological and social tensions that arise from oppressive state mechanisms and entrenched inequalities.

The narrative is not merely a story of individual struggle but a representation of systemic power abuses. Head's storytelling is characterized by a blend of realism and psychological depth, which allows her to probe beneath the surface of social interactions to reveal the latent conflicts and contradictions in postcolonial societies.

Plot Overview and Narrative Structure

centers around the character of Elizabeth, a woman grappling with trauma and marginalization in a small Botswanan village. Her journey is marked by alienation and a quest for autonomy amid a patriarchal and hierarchical social order. The novel's structure is linear yet layered with flashbacks and internal monologues that provide insight into Elizabeth's psyche and the broader social realities she inhabits.

The plot unfolds as Elizabeth confronts various forms of power—both overt and subtle—from community leaders, family members, and institutional agents. This confrontation is not only external but also internal, revealing the ways in which power imbalances shape personal identity and self-perception.

Characterization and Symbolism

Elizabeth, as the protagonist, embodies the struggles faced by many marginalized individuals in postcolonial Africa. Her character is multi-dimensional; she is vulnerable yet resilient, victimized yet defiant. Through Elizabeth, Head explores how power operates on multiple levels—gender, race, class—and how these intersect to compound experiences of oppression.

Supporting characters in the novel serve as archetypes representing various facets of power and resistance. For instance, traditional leaders symbolize the entrenched authority often resistant to change, while other villagers reflect the complexities of complicity and rebellion within oppressed communities.

Symbolism is heavily employed throughout the novel. Elements such as the village setting, the natural environment, and objects Elizabeth interacts with are imbued with meaning, often representing freedom, confinement, or transformation.

Themes Explored in A Question of Power

The thematic richness of **a question of power** **bessie head** is one of its defining features, making it a fertile subject for literary analysis.

Power and Oppression

At its core, the novel interrogates the mechanisms of power—how it is wielded, contested, and internalized. It portrays power not just as a political or social force but as a pervasive influence shaping personal relationships and self-identity. The narrative exposes the ways in which institutional power marginalizes individuals, particularly women, and how resistance often comes at great personal cost.

Identity and Alienation

Elizabeth's journey reflects broader questions about identity in postcolonial contexts. She experiences alienation both from her community and herself, a reflection of the fractured identities that colonial histories have produced. The novel explores how identity is negotiated amidst cultural dislocation and social expectations, and how this negotiation is inseparable from struggles over power.

Gender Dynamics

Gender is a critical axis of power in the novel. Elizabeth's experiences highlight the patriarchal structures that limit women's agency and perpetuate inequality. Head uses Elizabeth's story to critique these structures and to depict the resilience of women who navigate and subvert them.

Comparative Insights: A Question of Power and Other African Literature

When compared to other African literary works addressing similar themes—such as Chinua Achebe's "Things Fall Apart" or Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's "Petals of Blood"—**a question of power** **bessie head** offers a distinctive focus on psychological depth and female perspective. While many African novels illustrate the impact of colonialism and power struggles on communities and nations, Head's novel zooms in on the intimate and personal dimensions of these forces.

Its emphasis on internal conflict and emotional resilience distinguishes it from more overtly political narratives. This nuanced approach enriches the discourse on power in African literature, emphasizing the interconnectedness of personal and political realms.

Strengths and Limitations

- **Strengths:** The novel's psychological realism and complex characterization provide a profound understanding of power's multifaceted nature. Head's lyrical prose and symbolic imagery enhance the thematic depth, making the novel both intellectually engaging and emotionally compelling.
- **Limitations:** Some readers may find the novel's pacing slow due to its introspective style. Additionally, the heavy focus on Elizabeth's internal world might limit the exploration of broader socio-political contexts that other postcolonial novels prioritize.

Relevance and Legacy of A Question of Power

Decades after its publication, **a question of power bessie head** remains a vital text for understanding the complexities of power and identity in African societies. Its exploration of trauma, resilience, and social injustice continues to resonate with readers and scholars alike.

The novel's enduring relevance is reflected in its frequent inclusion in academic curricula and literary discussions. It offers valuable insights not only into Botswana's socio-cultural landscape but also into universal themes of human dignity and resistance.

Moreover, Bessie Head's unique narrative voice contributes significantly to diversifying African literature, foregrounding female experiences and psychological perspectives often marginalized in mainstream narratives.

In conclusion, **a question of power bessie head** stands as a powerful literary work that challenges readers to confront uncomfortable truths about power, oppression, and identity. Its rich narrative, thematic complexity, and emotional depth make it an essential read for anyone interested in African literature and the ongoing discourse on power relations in postcolonial contexts.

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a question of power bessie head: A Question of Power Bessie Head, 1974 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.

a question of power bessie head: *Questions of Power* Susan J. Hubert, 2002 Questions of Power: The Politics of Women's Madness Narratives explores the ways in which women have used autobiographical writing in response to psychiatric symptoms and treatment. By addressing health and healing from the patient's perspective, the study raises questions about psychiatric practice and mental health policy. The ultimate thesis is that autobiographies by women psychiatric patients can expose many of the problems in psychiatric treatment and indicate directions for change.--BOOK JACKET.Title Summary field provided by Blackwell North America, Inc. All Rights Reserved

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a question of power bessie head: *Posing the Stranger Question* Bevin Croft, 2003

a question of power bessie head: *Borderlands* , 2021-11-08 Boundaries, borderlines, limits on the one hand and rites of passage, contact zones, in-between spaces on the other have attracted renewed interest in a broad variety of cultural discourses after a long period of decenterings and delimitations in numerous fields of social, psychological, and intellectual life. Anthropological dimensions of the subject and its multifarious ways of world-making represent the central challenge among the concerns of the humanities. The role of literature and the arts in the formation of cultural and personal identities, theoretical and political approaches to the relation between self and other, the familiar and the foreign, have become key issues in literary and cultural studies; forms of expressivity and expression and question of mediation as well as new enquiries into ethics have characterized the intellectual energies of the past decade. The aim of *Borderlands* is to represent a variety of approaches to questions of border crossing and boundary transgression; approaches from different angles and different disciplines, but all converging in their own way on the post-colonial paradigm. Topics discussed include globalization, cartography and ontology, transitional identity, ecocritical sensibility, questions of the application of post-coloniality, gender and sexuality, and attitudes towards space and place. As well as studies of the cinema of the settler colonies, the films of Neil Jordan, and 'Othering' in Canadian sports journalism, there are treatments of the Nigerian novel, South African prison memoirs, and African women's writing. Authors examined include Elizabeth Bowen, Bruce Chatwin, Mohamed Choukri, Nuruddin Farah, Jamaica Kincaid, Pauline Melville, Bharati Mukherjee, Michael Ondaatje, and Leslie Marmon Silko.

a question of power bessie head: *Postcolonial African Writers* Siga Fatima Jagne, Pushpa Naidu Parekh, 2012-11-12 This reference book surveys the richness of postcolonial African literature. The volume begins with an introductory essay on postcolonial criticism and African writing, then presents alphabetically arranged profiles of some 60 writers, including Chinua Achebe, Nadine Gordimer, Bessie Head, Doris Lessing, Tsitsi Dangarembga, Tahbar Ben Jelloun, among others. Each entry includes a brief biography, a discussion of major works and themes that appear in the author's writings, an overview of the critical response to the author's work, and a bibliography of primary and secondary sources. These profiles are written by expert contributors and reflect many different perspectives. The volume concludes with a selected general bibliography of the most important critical works on postcolonial African literature.

a question of power bessie head: *"Toubab La!" Literary Representations of Mixed-Race Characters in the African Diaspora* Ginette Curry, 2009-05-05 The book is an examination of mixed-race characters from writers in the United States, The French and British Caribbean islands (Martinique, Guadeloupe, St. Lucia and Jamaica), Europe (France and England) and Africa (Burkina Faso, South Africa, Botswana and Senegal). The objective of this study is to capture a realistic view

of the literature of the African diaspora as it pertains to biracial and multiracial people. For example, the expression "Toubab La!" as used in the title, is from the Wolof ethnic group in Senegal, West Africa. It means "This is a white person" or "This is a black person who looks or acts white." It is used as a metaphor to illustrate multiethnic people's plight in many areas of the African diaspora and how it has evolved. The analysis addresses the different ways multiracial characters look at the world and how the world looks at them. These characters experience historical, economic, sociological and emotional realities in various environments from either white or black people. Their lineage as both white and black determines a new self, making them constantly search for their identity. Each section of the manuscript provides an in-depth analysis of specific authors' novels that is a window into their true experiences. The first section is a study of mixed race characters in three acclaimed contemporary novels from the United States. James McBride's *The Color of Water* (1996), Danzy Senna's *Caucasia* (1998) and Rebecca Walker's *Black White and Jewish* (2001) reveal the conflicting dynamics of being biracial in today's American society. The second section is an examination of mixed-race characters in the following French Caribbean novels: Mayotte Capécia's *I Am a Martinican Woman* (1948), Michèle Lacrosil's *Cajou* (1961) and Ravines du Devant-Jour (1993) by Raphaël Confiant. Section three is about their literary representations in Derek Walcott's *What the Twilight Says* (1970), *Another life* (1973), *Dream on Monkey Mountain* (1967) and Michelle Cliff's *Abeng* (1995) from the British Caribbean islands. Section four is an in-depth analysis of their plight in novels written by contemporary mulatto writers from Europe such as Marie N'Diaye's *Among Family* (1997), Zadie Smith's *White Teeth* (2000) and Bernardine Evaristo's *Lara* (1997). Finally, the last section of the book is a study of novels from West African and South African writers. The analysis of Monique Ilboudo's *Le Mal de Peau* (2001), Bessie Head's *A Woman Alone: Autobiographical Writings* (1990) and Abdoulaye Sadjì's *Nini, Mulâtresse du Sénégal* (1947) concludes this literary journey that takes the readers through several continents at different points in time. Overall, this comprehensive study of mixed-race characters in the literature of the African diaspora reveals not only the old but also the new ways they decline, contest and refuse racial clichés. Likewise, the book unveils how these characters resist, create, reappropriate and revise fixed forms of identity in the African diaspora of the 20th and 21st century. Most importantly, it is also an examination of how the authors themselves deal with the complex reality of a multiracial identity.

a question of power bessie head: Fusion of Cultures? , 2022-02-28 The intention of this second volume of ASNEL Papers is to counter orthodox post-colonial emphases on alterity, subversion, and counter-discourse with another set of concepts: fusion, syncretism, hybridity, creolisation, cross-fertilisation, cross-cultural identity, diaspora. Topics covered include: gender and identity; syncretic aesthetics in Nigerian and South African performing arts; hyphenated identities in diasporic fiction; reversals of colonial mimicry in Ugandan fiction; cultural reflexivity in the Victorian juvenile novel; the persistence of colonial traits in Zimbabwean war fiction; syncretic strategies of resistance in African prison memoirs; indigene life-histories and intercultural authorship; neo-essentialism in post-colonial critiques of the Rushdie Affair; US multiculturalism and political praxis; creolisation in Surinam; cultural complexities in the Caribbean epic; literary representations of the Haitian Revolution. Authors treated within broader frameworks include Margaret Atwood, R.M. Ballantyne, Marie-Claire Blais. Alejo Carpentier, Roch Carrier, Aimé Césaire, Michelle Cliff, Tsitsi Dangarembga, Edouard Glissant, Andrew Hacker, Eddy L. Harris, Wilson Harris, Bessie Head, C.L.R. James, Maxine Hong Kingston, Jayanta Mahapatra, Paule Marshall, A.K. Mehrotra, Timothy Mo, Bharati Mukherjee, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Akiki Nyabongo, Eugene O'Neill, Molefe Pheto, Salman Rushdie, Wole Soyinka, Ted Trindell, and Derek Walcott. There are also poems by David Woods and Afua Cooper.

a question of power bessie head: Black/White Writing Pauline Fletcher, 1993 The volume closes with an essay by Gerald Monsman that takes the reader back to an earlier South Africa, examining Olive Schreiner's writing in the broader context of other stories from an imperialist past. Two poems by Dennis Brutus open the volume. They speak eloquently of human suffering and the

desire for peace.

a question of power bessie head: *Student Encyclopedia of African Literature* Douglas Killam, Alicia L. Kerfoot, 2007-12-30 African literature is a vast subject of growing output and interest. Written especially for students, this book selectively surveys the topic in a clear and accessible way. Included are roughly 600 alphabetically arranged entries on writers, genres, and major works. Many entries cite works for further reading, and the volume closes with a selected, general bibliography. Africa is a land of contrasts and of diverse cultures and traditions. It is also a land of conflict and creativity. The literature of the continent draws upon a fascinating body of oral traditions and lore and also reflects the political turmoil of the modern world. With the increased interest in cultural diversity and the growing centrality of Africa in world politics, African literature is figuring more and more prominently in the curriculum. This book helps students learn about the African literary achievement. Written expressly for students, this book is far more accessible than other reference works on the subject. Included are nearly 600 alphabetically arranged entries on authors, such as Chinua Achebe, Athol Fugard, Buchi Emecheta, Nadine Gordimer, and Wole Soyinka; major works, such as *Things Fall Apart* and *Petals of Blood*; and individual genres, such as the novel, drama, and poetry. Many entries cite works for further reading, and the volume closes with a selected, general bibliography.

a question of power bessie head: *Legacies of Departed African Women Writers* Helen O. Chukwuma, Chioma Carol Opara, 2022-08-29 *Legacies of Departed African Women Writers: Matrix of Creativity and Power* proffers varied perspectives of the invaluable contributions of ten deceased African writers from all across Africa who have cleared the path to a vibrant African feminist arena. The dynamics of change gleaned from both their textual and contextual concerns unarguably set the pace for contemporary African women writers who have striven to follow in the footsteps of their literary mothers as well as their oral foremothers. This book, edited by Helen Chukwuma and Chioma Carol Opara, shows the collective testament of ample creativity and power generated by these departed heroes: Flora Nwapa, Mariama Ba, Grace Ogot, Zulu Sofola, Bessie Head, Buchi Emecheta, Nawal El Saadawi, Assia Djebar, Yvonne Vera, and Nadine Gordimer. These chapters revolve around the positive impact of the celebrated writers on creative writing, theoretical formulations, and socio-cultural change. The contributors argue that these corpuses of works have illuminated creativity rooted in power, vision, and freedom.

a question of power bessie head: *Haunting Capital* Hershini Bhana Young, 2006 In *Haunting Capital*, Hershini Young sets out to re-theorize the African diaspora so that the concept becomes unintelligible without an understanding of gender as a constitutive element. Young uses the historically injured bodies of black women, as represented in novels by black women, to talk about colonialism, gender, race, memory and haunting. *Haunting Capital* departs from traditional trauma studies, which stress individual wounding and psychotherapeutic models. Instead, Young explores the notion of injury as a collective wounding, resulting from the trauma of capitalistic regimes such as slavery and colonialism. She also introduces the idea of the ghost to her discussion of collective injury, where it functions not only on theoretical and metaphorical levels, but also by invoking African cosmologies in which ghosts are ancestral beings with a real spiritual presence. More specifically, Young insists on the contemporary reality of African nations and eschews the presentation of Africa as a vague, undifferentiated point of origin that characterizes many other studies of the African diaspora. Her reading of African contemporary novels by women, alongside African American and Caribbean novels, works to show the African diaspora as haunted by similar, though different, issues of gendered and racialized violence.

a question of power bessie head: *Multiple Contexts And Insights* S. & Anu Shukla, 2003

a question of power bessie head: *Africa Writes Back* James Currey, 2022-10-31 June 17, 2008, is the fiftieth anniversary of the publication of Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* by Heinemann. This publication provided the impetus for the foundation of the African Writers Series in 1962 with Chinua Achebe as the editorial adviser. *Africa Writes Back: The African Writers Series and the Launch of African Literature* captures the energy of literary publishing in a new and undefined field.

Portraits of the leading characters and the many consultants and readers providing reports and advice to new and established writers make *Africa Writes Back* a stand-out book. James Currey's voice and insights are an added bonus. CONTENTS Publishing and selling the African Writers Series The African Writers Series Portfolio & George Hallett's covers Main dates for the African Writers Series INTRODUCTION: The establishment of African Literature Publishing Chinua Achebe 1. WRITERS FROM WEST AFRICA Nigeria: The country where so much started Negritude from Senegal to Cameroun Magic & realism from Ghana, The Gambia & Sierra Leone 2. WRITERS FROM EASTERN AFRICA Towards the oral & the popular in Kenya, Uganda & Tanzania Publishing Ngugi 3. WRITERS FROM THE HORN & NORTH-EASTERN AFRICA Emperors in Ethiopia Publishing Nuruddin Farah Arab authors in Egypt & Sudan 4. WRITERS FROM SOUTH AFRICA Resistance in South Africa Publishing Alex la Guma Publishing Dennis Brutus Publishing Bessie Head Publishing Masizi Kunene 5. WRITERS FROM SOUTHERN AFRICAN Guns & Guerrillas in Mozambique & Angola Zambia Shall be Free Death & detention in Malawi The struggle to become Zimbabwe Publishing Dambudzo Marechera CONCLUSION: Is there still a role for the African Writers Series?

a question of power bessie head: *Artists of the Floating World* Rob Burton, 2007 This work analyzes the fiction of four contemporary multicultural writers who render a floating world in which cultures converge or collide in unexpected, exciting, and dangerous ways. The novels and short stories of Kazuo Ishiguro, Bessie Head, Bharati Mukherjee, and Salman Rushdie explore a literal and metaphorical floating world (adapted from the Japanese concept of ukiyo—a still-point between briefly-held earthly pleasures and spiritual immutability) where the characters, like their authors, are poised between conflicting worlds, cultures, and traditions. The manner in which these four authors articulate such a floating experience, Burton argues, enriches our understanding and appreciation of the increasingly interconnected world around us.

a question of power bessie head: *African Literature, Animism and Politics* Caroline Rooney, 2004-01-14 This book marks an important contribution to colonial and postcolonial studies in its clarification of the African discourse of consciousness and its far-reaching analyses of a literature of animism. It will be of great interest to scholars in many fields including literary and critical theory, philosophy, anthropology, politics and psychoanalysis.

a question of power bessie head: *Applied Global Health Humanities* Fella Benabed, 2024-07-01 This book highlights the importance of global Anglophone literature in global health humanities, shaping perceptions of health issues in the Global South and among minorities in the Global North. Using twelve novels, it explores the historical, political, sociocultural, ethical, and environmental aspects of health by analyzing the experiences of characters who suffer from infectious diseases, mental disorders, or disabilities, and who seek holistic healing practices.

a question of power bessie head: *A Partial Enlightenment* Avram Alpert, 2021-04-06 In many ways, Buddhism has become the global religion of the modern world. For its contemporary followers, the ideal of enlightenment promises inner peace and worldly harmony. And whereas other philosophies feel abstract and disembodied, Buddhism offers meditation as a means to realize this ideal. If we could all be as enlightened as Buddhists, some imagine, we could live in a much better world. For some time now, however, this beatific image of Buddhism has been under attack. Scholars and practitioners have criticized it as a Western fantasy that has nothing to do with the actual experiences of Buddhists. Avram Alpert combines personal experience and readings of modern novels to offer another way to understand modern Buddhism. He argues that it represents a rich resource not for attaining perfection but rather for finding meaning and purpose in a chaotic world. Finding unexpected affinities across world literature—Rudyard Kipling in colonial India, Yukio Mishima in postwar Japan, Bessie Head escaping apartheid South Africa—as well as in his own experiences living with Tibetan exiles, Alpert shows how these stories illuminate a world in which suffering is inevitable and total enlightenment is impossible. Yet they also give us access to partial enlightenments: powerful insights that become available when we come to terms with imperfection and stop looking for wholeness. *A Partial Enlightenment* reveals the moments of personal and social transformation that the inventions of modern Buddhism help make possible.

a question of power bessie head: Apartheid Narratives , 2021-10-25 In an engaging and dynamic collection of essays on South African writing, an international cast of contributors pay detailed attention to the shifting parameters of scholarly debates on apartheid and the apartheid era. Investigating a range of literary and critical perspectives on a period that shaped the literature of South Africa for much of the twentieth century, the contributors offer a rich survey. The volume focuses on internationally acclaimed writers (Nadine Gordimer and J.M. Coetzee) as well as those writers who are yet to receive sustained critical attention (Mtutuzeli Matshoba, Alex La Guma, Bessie Head, Ahmed Essop, Ronnie Govender). Apartheid Narratives will be welcomed by academics and students of South African writing as a stimulating collection which maps the literary terrain of apartheid.

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