

*Maru*  
*Racial Contravention over Love*

**Surita Sharma**

Research Scholar

Department of English

University of Jammu

**Abstract:**

*Maru* is a poignant tale of an orphaned Masarwa descendent, Maragret Cadmore. The novel is a projection of Head's own experience through the character of Margaret who belongs to Masarwa tribe and confronts the hatred of coloured people. While exploring the theme of racialism and the idea of power struggle, Head emphasizes that oppression does not come with the arrival of the white man; it is already existent in the structure of the traditional African society. It is an enduring novel on the hideousness of racial prejudice but the story achieves a universal meaning. In the midst of all the prejudices, a love story emerges. The novel explores the ability of people to love each other despite their difference. The present paper converses racial issues and finally love conquers all.

**Keywords:** Racism, Dispute, Outcaste, Education, Repudiation, Love.

Bessie Head's second novel *Maru* examines racial prejudice against the Masarwa or Bushmen tribe in an isolated village of Dilepe in Botswana of South Africa during the 1960's. Masarwa is the derogatory term in the Tswana language for the people known variously as Basarwa, San, Khoisan, or Bushmen who live largely in the arid regions of the Kalahari. These clans are considered as the outcaste people of society who are used as slaves by Batswanas. Anything worst can be said and done to them. Batswana people call them having half the head of a man and half the body of a donkey. Daniel Gover claims, "*Maru* is the story of racial prejudice conquered by idealistic love functioning as a socially progressive force that advance mankind in the direction of racial equality" (103).

Margaret Cadmore's mother dies at the time of her birth. As she belongs to a lower tribe, nobody wants to touch and bury the body of dead mother. "It was only when they washed the body that they exposed their prejudice, and the reason why the body was not on a stretcher but on the stone floor" (*Maru* 229). Margaret, who remains all alone in the world, is adopted and raised by an English missionary family, like Head who is child of mixed parentage and after the death of her mother in mental hospital; a coloured family has brought her up. Senior Cadmore, who is the wife of a missionary, thinks, "If people hated even a dead body how much more did they hate of this woman's tribe who were still alive (*Maru* 230).

She feels pity for the little girl and adopts the infant. Margaret Cadmore is the name given to this little girl by her foster mother who gives her own name to the infant.

During Margaret's stay at the missionaries' home, she does not seem to fit in and there seem to be a big hole in her mind. Unlike the other children, she is unable to express her. She does not know to which tribe she belongs. She slowly becomes aware of herself as a person when she is told that she is a bushman, "mixed breed", "half breed", "low breed" or "bastard" (*Maru* 230). Head recollects her own experience, frustration, and place in society. She has projected her own personality in Maragret. Like Head, Maragret also has the experience of being permanently unwanted by the society. As a child, a white family adopts Head but they return her soon as she looks 'strange'. Both spend their childhood as neglected persons in the society. They never get love and care because of their lower tribal status. Head leaves South Africa because of Apartheid and comes to Botswana. There also she has been all alone, without friends and relatives. Her isolated life has made her alienated person in the country. Margret is also an unwanted element of the society. In her childhood, she has no friends and relatives. Nobody wants to talk to her. Children tease her because of her background, which leads her to a lonely existence. Every person yearns for love and peace to sustain and want affection from the surroundings, from which both Head and her character Maragret are annulled of. As Frantz Fanon says,

Man is not merely a possibility of recapture or of negation. If it is true that consciousness is a process of transcendence, we have to see too that this transcendence is haunted by the problems of love and understanding. Man is a yes that vibrates to cosmic harmonies. Uprooted, pursued, baffled, doomed to watch the dissolution of the truths that he has worked out for himself one after another, he has to give up projecting onto the world and antinomy that coexists with him. (BSWM 2)

The situation becomes worse, when Margaret joins missionary school where nobody wants to sit and talk to her. Other students of the school torture her. Margaret becomes helpless, "she had no weapons of words or personality, only a permanent silence and a face which revealed no emotion, except that now and then an abrupt tear would splash down out of one eye" (*Maru* 232). Margaret, being a bushman is denied the right of education because they only meant to be born for slavery. Bushman wanted on earth just as the slaves and downtrodden dogs of Batswana. Despite of all the hurdles and barriers, Margaret and Head, both choose the path of education to liberate their status. Their struggle for racial equality, although, is not a direct protest but an indirect path of silence and literacy is chosen by them against the social and racial inequality.

For African people, education is the only way to get the emancipation from the clutches of colonialism, ignorance, and slavery. The educators like Bessie Head can contribute to knowledge of how to resist the entrapments of colonialism, racism, exploitation, and alienation only after being educated. Like Bessie Head, Margaret Cadamore also acquires teachers training certificate and both join a teaching job.

Maragret has to face problems because of her connection to the Masarwa tribe. The principal of the school shoves her out soon as he comes to know her real identity. While teaching in the village of Dilepe in Botswana at a missionary school, Margaret gets a chance to help the people of her own tribe. She has been educated with the mission of educating the tribal people. She recollects the words of her foster mother who says, "One day, you will help

your people” (*Maru* 231). At the village, she discovers that her own people are treated as outcast. When her origin is discovered and the people of the village see her as being no better than a slave is. She is educated and well-behaved woman who gets the opportunity to hide her real identity but she does not want to be a traitor to her people; moreover, she reveals her identity confidently, which is a quintessence of her devotion towards the upliftment of her society. It can be better interpreted in the words of Marcus Garvey who says, “Education is the medium by which people are prepared for the creation of their own particular civilization and the advancement and glory of their own race” (7).

For pursuing her aim of bringing change to her tribe, she goes to Dilepe village where she meets Maru and Moleka, two friends and significant men of the village, who fall in love with her. Maru and Moleka are influential leaders and they have enormous influence over the people they meet. They have incredible influence for better or worse. They put their great friendship at risk in their pursuit of winning Margaret’s hand. When Moleka and Margaret meet, he feels like he has found his heart; he falls in love with her at first sight at the time when he barely knows her. Maru soon finds this and he does all he can do to ruin Moleka’s love for Margaret. By revealing the truth of her background, she creates a fear in Moleka’s mind because he does not keep mettle to go against the prejudices in his village. Nevertheless, during the process Maru realizes that Margaret could be this way out of the society that he has always disliked. Although Margaret loves Moleka, she breaks away and finds a new life with Maru.

It is evident early on in the novel that Head uses characters’ eyes frequently to convey feelings, impressions, and personalities. In the very beginning, there are several occurrences of “one single, abrupt tear from one eye” of young Margaret Cadmore. Either through this one tear Bessie Head simply wants a physical representation of young Margaret Cadmore’s emotions or perhaps, she wants to convey the message that Margaret Cadmore is strong, but not invincible at the same time. In combination with the fact that the older Margaret Cadmore seemingly never cries, this could serve as a connection between the two. When young Margaret Cadmore reaches her new destination, the town of Dilepe, to begin her new teaching career, she meets a fellow teacher and soon-to-be friend named Dikeledi, Maru’s sister. Head uses eyes again to show when Dikeledi is deep in thought, “An almost smoky haze clouding her lovely eyes” (*Maru* 238). In yet another character introduction, Moleka, Head features the same theme, “There was a heavy thunder-cloud around his eyes,” then later, “It was only his eyes, as though a stormy night had cleared. What was behind was a rainbow of dazzling light.” In this statement, Bessie head actually combines her two most prominent themes: the characters’ eyes and weather.

Bessie Head uses storms in the horizon to indicate an upcoming or possible conflict. She uses nighttime and darkness to indicate mystery and curiosity. Moreover, she uses sunrise and sunset to show the coming of a new day, routines and cycles, and ending and renewal. The novel begins with the description of nature. There has been no promising rain and so hot summer. People have been waiting for the rain to come. There are only dark clouds that sent only soft rumbles of thunder to break the sullen silence. Maru’s representation as cloud must be considered as it relates to the possibility that Maru and Moleka represent two parts of the same character before Margaret’s appearance: Maru representing the heart, Moleka representing the self without the heart. By associating Maru with the cloud that needs a force to produce water, and Moleka with the force that needs a substance, the cloud, a relationship of dependence is emphasized between the two characters.

In Setswana *Maru* means 'cloud', and in the story, Maru is undeniably that banking of clouds that is unable to release its beneficial cloudburst. A critic Johnson sees Maru as a cloud, and that "a comparison is implied between the cloud that fails to produce rain and the chief who fails to relieve the distress of his people," namely, Maru (66).

Moleka is representative of water from torrential rains. According to Johnson, Moleka is explicitly linked with the vitality of a thunderstorm. When Moleka speaks, his voice has such projection and power that the room vibrates. Moleka's vivacity is also suggested in a strong association with the sun. "Comparisons of Moleka with the sun are explicit" (63), says Johnson, and Menager Everson agrees, "Moleka is 'sun'" (45). Head's narrator tells us explicitly about Moleka's body is like a living vivacious sun, that Moleka is a sun around which spun a billion satellites and his eyes are two yellow orbs of light. He feels the sun in his own heart. However, Moleka is incomplete. From the first page, "bright cloudless skies hold no promise" (56), notes Joyce Johnson, and it is a "soft steady rain" (56) that people long for. Moleka has the ability to draw it as from a well, but the source of water lies with the cloud. Maru is the source with whom Moleka must negotiate to combine his sun with water.

Head has introduced Maru in the novel in such a way, "who else was a born leader of men, yet at the same time acted out his own, strange inner perceptions, independent of the praise or blame of men?" (Maru 221-222). Maru has many other opportunities in life. Maru speaks to his friends pretending annoyance not to break clods that are for conserving moisture in the soil. His friends are very close to him who surround and protect him all his life. Maru makes them say, "Maru is impossible" (Maru 222). Ranko, one of his friends, rubbing his nose, in confusion, in Setswana means 'big nose', put every unacceptable idea into practice. It is painful for him like his nose. Three of them are not sure where their destiny would take them as they are attached to Maru. He later becomes the harbinger to change the society.

Maru although married to Margaret still has the fear of her liking for Moleka. He has the fear that one day he will be forced to kill him. He has two rooms of his sight, in one side, his wife totally loves him, and in another side, she totally loves Moleka. He looks at the another side in his dreams where he sees Moleka with broken legs and blood streaming from his mouth and heart and Margaret crying with heart rending sobs like no one has ever cried. Maru suddenly awakes to see his wife's tears. It is difficult for Maru to banish this other room. It shows the inferiority in him. He finds himself helpless victim. To make himself stable he ensures many things about Moleka as Moleka has the next best woman in the world who is intellectual than his wife, who has style and class to impress people. All these things flatter Moleka because he also impresses people. To make himself secure with Margaret, Maru says, "What did he want with a woman who meant nothing to the public?" (Maru 225). Here her identification as a Bushman is only partially implied. It would be just as valid to read Maru's words at face value, identifying Margaret simply as uninspiring; Margaret's individual autonomy has been, in Mackenzie's words, "brutally negated" (54). Continuous brooding and uncertainty has made Maru malicious. He miscalculates the power that Moleka possess over which he has little control. He has more power or he has superior kind of love. Maru settles on that Moleka's love is greater than his own is. He goes to his wife and says, "I only married you because you were the only woman in the world who did not want to be important. But you are not at all important to me, as I sometimes say you are" (Maru 225).

Maru's insecurity reveals her true love for Margaret. He loves her intensely. His soft words 'my sweetheart' are the most precious words to Margrat who also respects her because

only Maru shows the courage to marry her. After being rejected by Moleka, she is always excepting horror, a horror that bushman are supposed to tolerate. Starfield says that Margaret “spends her childhood and adolescent years trying to find out how bushmen survive as an underclass to the ruling Batswana” (1). Head has shown that how bushman have been treated in Botswana. They are described as low filthy people, “children danced a wild jiggle, with the tin cans rattling: ‘bushman! Low breed! Bastard?’” (Maru 226).

In her text, Head depicts the superficial hierarchy of all coloured races by citing examples of other colonized nations in Asia. The white man has created this hierarchy:

Applied the technique of wild jiggling dance and the rattling tin cans who was not a white man and if the white man thought that Asians were a low, filthy nation, Asians could still smile with relief- at least they were not Africans. And if the white man thought Africans were a low, filthy nation, Africans in South Africa could still smile with relief – at least they were not bushman. They all have their monsters. You just have to look different from them, the way the facial features of a Sudra or Tamil do not resemble the facial features of a high-caste Hindu. (Maru 226)

People of coloured origins are supposed to bear everything, which is done to them since their appearances reduce them to the status of a non-human being. Even through her novel, Head unveils this parallelism between animals and Bushman people by saying, “In Botswana they say: Zebras, lions, buffalo and bushmen live in the Kalahari desert” (Maru 226). She further exposes the chicanery of white people who only consider the black race as beasts devoid emotions and feelings. “If you can catch a zebra, you walk up to it, forcefully open its mouth and examine its teeth. The zebra is not supposed to mind because it is an animal. Scientists do the same to Bushmen and they are not supposed to mind ... and say, ‘At least I am not a —’” (Maru 227).

Fanon view point holds relevance in this context when he says, “that native is invariably mentioned in zoological terms – “the yellow man’s reptilian motions”, “the stink of the native quarter”, “of breeding swarms”, “of foulness”, “of spawn”, of gesticulations and bestiary, “the settler paints the native as a sort of quintessence of evil, insensible to ethics, a negation of values” (Nayar 172).

Head also speaks about other terminologies associated with the coloured in the text and one of amongst them is Kaffir. The word kaffir is a term used in South Africa to refer to a black person. In present time, it is considered an offensive ethnic slur. Earlier whites regard it to be a neutral term for South African blacks. The word has its derivation from the Arabic term kaffir, which means disbeliever, which originally had the meaning 'one without religion'. It is hardly ever used as an isolated insult, but rather is used systematically by openly racist individuals when talking about black people, and as such, it has been very common in the apartheid era. The ‘kaffir’ and ‘nigger’ defined a tribe and that tribe is of Bushmen or Masawsara. Masarwa is equivalent of ‘nigger’, which means low, filthy nation. As in *Black Skin, white Mask* says that nigger is the one who “has no culture, no civilization, no long historical past” (21). White race believes the Black men are like savages “who are half the head of a man and half the body of a donkey”. Fanon can be quoted further as:

The black man makes all the animals behave like a lower order of human intelligence, the kind that the Negro himself can understand. The black man naturally feels that he

is in closer touch with the lower animals than with the white man, who is so far superior to him in every respect. (BSWM 134)

San Galloway in his article “San Culture in Bessie Head’s *Maru*” quotes Ruth Jacob Spector’s interview, where she has explained her point that “My African side is part ‘khoisan’ or ‘bushman’. ‘khoisan’ is the acceptable term. ‘Bushman’ is the unacceptable word. We try not to use that term at all” (2). Head has given an example of it. A woman who dies on the outskirts of remote village after giving birth to child has the same Masarwa thin legs, wearing ankle-length, loose shift dress which smells urine and smoke of outdoor fires. She has died during night but child has been alive and crying but none has noticed the corpse. No one is ready to bury the body and then they call the missionaries, who are also not willing to touch the body. People around the woman hate her for no other reason than she is a Masawara. Sight of Masawara woman let readers hate people who make her body unsighted. Fanon writes,

Hate is not inborn; it has to be constantly cultivated, to be brought into being, in conflict with more or less recognized guilt complexes. Hate demands existence, and he who hates has to show his hate in appropriate actions and behaviour; in a sense, he has to become hate. (*Black Skin White Mask* 19-20)

Missionaries do not let Masarwa walk into their yards and only allow them to talk to them outside the fence. They have established the church, school and a hospital in the village. A man and his wife run the church and school. The man is naturally dull and stupid but his wife is lively and thoughtful. It is Senior Margret Cadmore; she is always on progressive side, always to bring change in society, which makes her face the abuse of the rest of the society. Being a lively and energetic person she takes revenge of the abuse by giving orders and in mean time to bury the body and draws her sketch. “She had the coffin carried into the hospital while the grave was being dug in the churchyard”. She also asserts “I wonder where these people are buried? They don’t seem to be at all a part of the life of this country” (*Maru* 228). Margret Cadmore absent-mindedly bottle-feeds the baby of dead woman. She captures the expressions of disgust on the faces of Botswana nurses as they wash the body of dead woman. She also sketches out the expression of the dead woman as

“It was a mixture of peace and astonishment in the expression of the dead woman, but so abrupt that she still had her faint eyebrows raised in query. What suffering had preceded death? And what had death offered to surprise her so ... “She looks like a goddess” (*Maru* 230).

Although the missionary woman appears to be very kind but the blood that flows in her veins is of the traitors. She is not having any child but she is the educator of the child, scientist at heart. When she puts the child in her own bed, her face glows, this time she is having the living object for her experiment. As Margret grows up, she becomes conscious of herself as a person. She is unable to say, “I am this or that. My parents are this or that” (*Maru* 230).

The relationship between elder Margret Cadmore and a child is not like a mother and a child. It is like a semi servant but gets more than what usually servants gets like kisses on the cheeks, toes at bedtime, a bedtime story, a long walk into the bush and lots of reading material. Margaret Cadmore’s mother, also called Margaret Cadmore, is a very complex and ambiguous character. She narcissistically gives her daughter her own name, divests her of her birth culture, and uses her in order to prove her theory concerning the ascendancy of nurture

over nature. In this sense, she is a typical patronising colonial figure, treating Margaret Cadmore Jr. more like a servant than like a daughter. However, she also resists racism, sometimes genuinely seems to love her daughter, and tries to empower her.

Margaret's missionary training strips her of her cultural heritage and leaves her with only the appearance, the physical trappings of a Bushman. She raises this outcast baby in a manner similar to the rearing Nora Helmer receives in Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House*. Nora claims to her husband in a moment of revelation, "When I was at home with papa, he told me his opinion about everything, and so I had the same opinions; and if I differed from him I concealed the fact, because he would not have liked it. He called me his doll child, and he played with me just as I used to play with my dolls" (63). Margaret Cadmore the elder, then, raises her Margaret child, similar to Nora Helmer's father raising Nora as his doll child; and she believes that heredity is "nothing". She sees the academic success of her Margaret child as a point of satisfaction, when in reality the narrator admits the child's "brilliance was based entirely on social isolation and lack of communication with others, except through books," a condition that "was too painful for the younger Margaret ever to mention" (*Maru* 233).

This child is a non-scientific clone of herself, a Bushman on the outside but more likely a peevish Englishwoman on the inside. As Ketu H. Katrak in " 'This Englishness Will Kill You': Colonial Education and Female Socialization" has assessed that "The Englishness in which the mother steeps her adopted daughter Margaret renders the child out of touch with the Masarwa, and her own culture." The narrator tells us, "There seemed to be a big hole in the child's mind" (11) relative to her relationship to any people, but especially to the Bushmen with whom she brackets together. Gover suggests that Margaret, in her foster home, "has been sheltered from the sense of racial inferiority that Bushmen are subject to in Botswana" (113). Her only oppression seems to have been the nonsensical (to her) teasing that she receives from the other mission children. Not until she takes up her first teaching post in Dilepe does she come to understand the prejudice rife in her country. Because she looks Bushman, she is expected to act Bushman. But Margaret has not a clue how to do that. As Frantz Fanon says in *Black Skin White Mask*,

What? While I was forgetting, forgiving, and wanting only to love, my message was flung back in my face like a slap. The white world, the only honourable one, barred me from all participation. A man was expected to behave like a man. I was expected to behave like a nigger. I shouted a greeting to the world and the world slashed away my joy. I was told to stay within bounds, to go back where I belonged. (86)

When the narrator claims, "No one by shouting, screaming or spitting could unbushman her" (*Maru* 14), indicates that her upbringing cannot take her destiny back. She is a bushman and remains so. Bushman culture is in her genes.

A child never asks for anything, she only accepts what is given to her because she knows that she is meant for some special purpose as elder Margret sometimes used to say, "one day, you will help your people" (*Maru* 231). It sometimes creates a burden on child's mind. It is only when she starts going to missionary school, she realizes that something is wrong with her as her relation to the world. She is pinched under the seat and no one is ready to sit with her. Children used to say to her in angered look, "you are just a Bushman" (*Maru* 232). The thing that makes them angrier is that she has been under the protection of white woman who is the principal of the school. The child is not at all aware of what a Bushman supposed to do. She has no words to say. If a glob of spit is dropped on her arm, she just

wipes it without saying a single word. If she is caught in a remote area during playtime, children start the wild, jiggling dance: “Since when did a Bushy go to school? We take him to the bush where he eat mealie pap, pap, pap.” (*Maru* 232). It is said that the substandard food mealie pap was the typical prison’s meal during Nelson Mandela’s stay on Robben Island. Margret Cadmore yells at them not to tease young Margret. Margret’s night is no more the same. There is no bedtime story but only few words: “they are wrong. You will have to live with your appearance for the rest of your life. There is nothing you can do to change it” (*Maru* 333).

The whole incident of the day disturbs the child. She is still able to hear the rattling sound of tin cans. The only thing is left to find that how Bushmen live on earth when people do not want them to live except the slaves and downtrodden dogs of the Batswana.

Maragrat Cadmore (senior) has half succeeded in her experiment. If environment of learning is provided, any human being can soak up the knowledge. There is just a need of allowance for all living being. Moreover, she thinks that allowances to live to the people who are not allowed to live for a long time are given.

The experiment has been successful of giving Masrwa English education. It has taken seventeen years to create the wonder. Margret Cadmore (senior) has produced a brilliant student, name identical to her, always at the top list of the passes. Margret Cadmore (senior), retires to England, still she is left with one experiment to pass out to see younger Maragret as trained primary school teacher. She comes to give her advice what to wear and what to not, showing her emotions towards her, by dabbing her tears. When Margaret Cadmore Senior leaves, her daughter is in a typical postcolonial predicament. Her British education has empowered her, lifting her above the wretched slavery most Masarwa people are reduced to, but at the same time, it has dispossessed her. She, therefore, truly belongs nowhere – with her British education, her polished accent, she clearly does not belong to Masarwa culture, yet the Batswana people in Dilepe for being a Masarwa despise her. As a woman, she is further relegated to the margin, belonging everywhere and nowhere, forever between identities and cultures. Her regular appearance at teacher training college has passed little more torturous because of white woman’s unashamed kisses on the cheek, mistaken by the students as another variant of Bushman. White woman’s association with Margret make half-caste little more respectable. But she has been aware that she is little bit of everything.

As senior, Margaret Cadamory has put into her mind from Plato to W.B. Yeats. It was only W.B. Yeats, which becomes difficult for her to grasp. The reason senior Margret gives for it that “you cannot understand him because you can’t hear and see the lake water lapping--- Yeats had to be there too even though he spoke of a land other than her own arid surrounding” (*Maru* 234). Margret, although a Bushman, has education equal to white man. She is level headed to any white man. As Fanon says that it does not matter how intelligent white man is, but he is not able to understand Louis Armstrong and music of the Congo. He says that black man is able to under all the knowledge of the earth.

The obligation to bring change for her tribe makes Margret asunder from her foster mother. She is everything to young Margret as she walks to the car; it becomes hard for her to imagine life without her. After a month, she gets a letter from senior Margret in which it has been written, “I had to do it for the sake your people. I did not want to leave you behind Margret Cadmore” (*Maru* 235). Her words show that she has prepared her to bring change in the society for her tribe. She is appointed the first teaching post in a remote village named



Dillepe. The young Margaret Cadmore enters the village with the expectation of “one day” helping her “people.” She is shy. She faces many nuisances because of her colour that makes her feel awkward. Huma Ibrahim, for instance, believes “that Margaret Cadmore remains the perfect victim of racism and sexism throughout the novel.” For Ibrahim, Margaret is only the passive recipient of good will: “surely the nexus of Masarwa struggle is not to accept charity but to enter consciously into the new definition of a nation” (101). It is true that Margaret never enters the national discourse of racism as a political leader or even makes her purpose known. But Head has the unassuming Margaret singlehandedly change the course of that community's history.

Head has unwrapped the artificiality of high class. Dikeledi sees herself as full of fake life, has a lot of wealth, everything, studies just to adorn her status, having two slaves from her father to whom she pays regular wages. She finds herself surrounded by all the sham. It is just to show that they are more than normal image of humankind. Margret is quite impressed as well as surprised to meet and talk with Dikeledi that she is such a nice woman, who drives as carefully as she talks. Dikeledi takes her to Moleka, who provides accommodation to the new teachers. From her talk about Moleka, Margret finds that she is in love with him because his name brings smile on her face. Dikeledi tells her that Moleka is a man without heart. He has hidden his heart somewhere and he loves all the women he meets with. Only Dikeledi is aware of this thing and this is the reason of their frequent quarrel. Dikeledi and Margret reaches the destination where they meet Moleka, with a frowning face looks at Dikeledi. He has a vibrating voice. Moleka in his high-sounding words says to Margret that she is late and he cannot provide accommodation to her and starts his paper work. Dikeledi provides accommodation to her and talks about Maru, showing faith in him, “If Maru was here you would have found accommodation on the spot. He is almost a god in his kindness towards people, not like that swine” (Maru 241). Along with Dikeledi, the other two main characters are introduced. Maru and Moleka under their influence she faces many ups and downs in her life. Her relation with Moleka makes her realize the inferior race and her dependency on others. And her relation with Maru makes her feel in the end that she belongs somewhere.

While Dikeledi has been talking about Moleka, he appears to them because he remembers that old library is vacant and Margret can use it for accommodation. He takes Margret to the old library. That place seems to Margret very isolated as when she looks back, the dust of the journey still arise in the air and nothing else is visible. Moleka frightens her deeply. The room that he provides to her is covered with layers of dust and cobwebs. The only furniture is a trestle table and she sees the big black scorpion who is disturbed because of their entry. Moleka walks towards table to remove it. It is too late to purchase bed from shop. But she stops him not to remove table. When she stops him there is, only one single word that he utters is ‘why’. It is so musical and in a humble voice, that Margret feels him very different man. Margret is afraid of scorpion. Moleka says that he is aware that she is afraid of scorpion. He is expecting this from her as if he knows her from a long time, quite aware of her faults and failings. Moleka is completely changed man at this time from supercilious man to a beautiful man on earth. Margret feels something inside her heart and she raises her hand towards her heart. When he goes out, in the door he turns back and says that he will fetch bed to her, in a very humble voice. Margret has started feeling herself important in his heart. She speaks loudly:

But I am not that important. He had made her feel as though she were the most important person on earth, when no one had ever really cared whether she was dead or alive, and she had been so lonely. (*Maru* 243)

He seems to have said silently; “you see, you don’t have to be afraid anymore. First, there was one of you. Now there are two of you” (*Maru* 244). Margret walks to the door. There spread out the village of Dillepe below her. There are thousand wisps of smoke arose silently into the air as thousand women are preparing the evening meal. The village of Dillepe seems to her the most beautiful village on earth. She no more feels lonely.

Head has made clear that blacks are so shut up from the white world that they have only superficial and necessary connection with the dominant culture. On the one hand, their experience give them an insight into their predicament in relation to the white culture, on the other, it enables them to realize that the “true facts of their life and the values of the white society do not hang together” (*The Wretched of the Earth* 8). Their mute suffering, their unexpressed and stifled desires conceal under a mask of fawning, their primitive understanding of their situation, their suppressed and subdued reaction make them develop a mode of being that is different from that of a white society. Their consciousness thus develops along different lines, although they could not, because of their historical circumstances, extricate themselves from the dominant culture. The white on their part could “neither reject them completely nor yet assimilate them” (*The Wretched of the Earth* 8). The blacks are thus excluded from the white society. First time Margret has thought of herself with the white man. Something has also changed in Moleka. He has also felt bang in his chest like Margret, something that never has happened to him. Although he has many girlfriends and Dikeledi is the closest, who boils his bloodstream with her dress up and her physical beauty, with the movement of her thighs. However, Margret let him feel something different. It is like finding in himself goldmine he has not known before. It has arrested his heart. With Dikeledi, it is always distraction but he has communicated directly with her heart, very new experience that has unbalanced him. He is not aware of her physical beauty, just about her eyes that is a living part of her body. She has killed the old Moleka in a flash and arise a new Moleka. She is the first woman with whom he has spoken humbly.

Margret, although a Masarwa, has the power to separate two friends. She plays as a symbol to bring change for her tribe. She seeks the attention of chiefs who represents white minority of apartheid, to have eye on her potential not on her colour. In a way, she is a hope for her tribe to see their individuality in future. Maru and Moleka are friends. They used to share everything with each other. Both fall in love with the same girl and only difference between them is that when they break up with the girl, Moleka smiles as if he makes goats and people jump, and pleased to see outrage in their eyes. However, Maru becomes serious Nevertheless; nothing affects the permanent flow of their affection. Moleka does not know the god in his heart and god on the earth. He just knows the light in the eyes of his friend when he converses with him. Moleka is so devoted to that light. He sees in Maru the most beautiful person on earth. All the people look at Moleka but he looks at Maru to know whether he is all right or not. In Moleka, Maru finds the person with whom he can share anything. They alone love each other. However, they opposed because they are kings. He does not know what is behind the door on Moleka’s kingdom but he knows that if he will touch his heart with a word or gesture a cloud would lift and he would see rainbow of dazzling light. Moleka and Maru represent two parts of a single individual.

Maru is close to his sister Dikeledi, Moleka and three spies- Ranko, Moseka, Semana. Moseka and Semana are his shadows. He is inseparable from Moleka, Dikeledi, and Ranko. But it is only with Moleka that he shares all the secrets of his heart because he is the king of his kingdom. Moleka leads life through all kinds of love affairs. One passion of his life is his friend Maru. Moleka reminds their talk during sunset when they talk about their strong friendship he says, “Nothing will ever separate us, my friend. We shall love each other, forever” (*Maru* 249). And Maru’s reply is: “one day we will part, over a woman” (*Maru* 250). Because Moleka has never loved a woman, now situation is quite different. Moleka has fallen in love with Margret. He says, “I have come to the end of one road, and I am taking another ... I kept my heart for her alone” (*Maru* 250).

During the first day of her school, she is new to others. It is only with Dikeledi that she finds relation of wonderful harmony. There is no tension, restraint or false barriers people usually erect towards each other. It is only Dikeledi, who makes her feel comfortable and restful.

Pete, The principal of the school represents sophistry of white man, is that kind of person who demands exaggerated mannerisms in position. He is always in hurry and he hardly smiles. He has an electric smile. Electrical smile which is because of his degrees and diplomas. He always tries to impress people of important rank with knowledge. Like Dikeledi, he has also mistaken her as a coloured. He has seen many coloured children helping their father in the shop. He, with an electrical smile, discusses with her the number of pupils each teacher can handle in the beginner’s class. But when she discloses her identity, “I am a Masarwa” (*Maru* 252), he is taken aback and almost jumps into the air. Her identity frets him. Margret is no more a human being for him. He wants to warn Dikeledi not to befriend with a Masarwa. There seems to him some chicanery over the matter.

Seth, education supervisor and the principal become serious over the matter of having Masarwa in his staff. Masarwa has left them to think about chiefs. The principal says, “God, this is going to raise hell among the Totems (chiefs) here” (*Maru* 253). He checks the file, where it is not written that requirement of a teacher need to define his tribe or race. Seth says, “they are going to blame me, I only look at qualifications. She was top of the class the whole way through. How the hell did she get in? God, Pete, this is a mess” (*Maru* 253). Margret has got the education equal to white man, which Masawara’a are not supposed to have. Frantz Fanon says,

There is a fact: white men consider themselves superior to black men. There is another fact: black men want to prove to white men, at all cost, the richness of their thought, the equal values of their intellect. (BSWM 3)

Margret’s education is a double-edged sword. If it allows Margaret to access to the dominant group, it also cuts her off from her own people, and placing her in a position where she never really belongs because she is always seen as a Masarwa. If Pete is empowered by his English education, than how long this education empowers Margaret. This is not just, because she is a Masarwa, but also because she is a *woman* – yet another disempowering category. Often educated women have to try harder than uneducated women to fit into their communities do. Head has exposed the postcolonial discrimination between man and woman. Margret has faced gender discrimination, racism, and as an outcast.

Seth and Pete are epitomes and promoters of prejudice. They settle on to sound out the judgment of the totems, turns to totems, as chief of the village has died, Maru, the new chief is unapproachable and all are scared of him. They are waiting for the Maru's action about Masawara. Seth says,

Things are moving ahead of this country, and they are the only millstone. I don't see what we can do with people who can't think for themselves but always need others to feed them. Mind you, they seem quite contended with their low, animal lives. (*Maru* 256)

The statement: "I am a Masarwa" (*Maru* 256) is like a slap on their face. The principal crosses all limits to make Margret low and outcast. He does not leave any stone unturned to degrade her as a person even among the schoolchildren. He couches a fourteen years boy what scene to create in the class when Margret enters in the class. As she enters students start laughing in themselves and on being asked the reason of their laugh, one boy among them says that he is thinking over some matter and the matter is "since when is a Bushy a teacher" (*Maru* 257). Student's voice sounds like a confused roar, "you are a Bushman, you are a Bushman" (*Maru* 257). The whole school is disturbed by their voices and all the teachers have been aware of the thing that has happened except Dikeledi. Students have the image of Bushmen in their mind that is devoid of everything in life. Fanon also confirms this view that native are ill-treated. They do not have any dignity. He says that

The town belonging to the colonized people, or at least the native town, the Negro village, the medina, the reservation, is a place of ill fame, peopled by men of evil repute. They are born there, it matters little where or how; they die there, it matters not where, nor how. It is a world without spaciousness; men live there on top of each other, and their huts are built one on top of the other. The native town is a hungry town, starved of bread, of meat, of shoes, of coal, of light. The native town is a crouching village, a town on its knees, a town wallowing in the mire. It is a town of niggers and dirty Arabs. (*The Wretched of the Earth* 38)

The integration with a person of low tribe is unacceptable to the principal who does not want Dikeledi to attend Margret in her class and helps her to settle down the students, "stop it! Stop it! I'll smash you all to pieces! She is your teacher! She is your teacher!" (*Maru* 257). Pete has made a pencil draft of a report on his desk: "I find Maragret Cadmore an ineffective teacher. She is totally incapable of controlling her class" and he keeps on muttering, "the bossy little bitch has bugged up the works" (*Maru* 257). The Masarwa have always been considered by the Botswana as people from the 'bush tribe' who are unacquainted of anything. They are always subjugated and suppressed. Starfield suggests that Margret "spends her childhood and adolescent years trying to find out how Bushman survive as an underclass to the ruling Botswana" (7). In the novel, Bushmen are seen as less than human. The narrator tells the reader early in part one that Bushmen and zebras are more alike in the eyes of non-Bushmen than are Bushman and human. Head generalizes that any group that look different can become "monster" to another group.

In postcolonial society, authoritative people are not supposed to work hard to meet their desires. They hierarchically have their position and status in the society. Maru, lives within the area of the office of the Dilepe tribal administration three hundred yards away from his sister's home. There is very little thing to disturb the serenity of his peaceful life. There is no noise or upheaval around him. Whatever he needs or demands at comes to him.

People greet him with love and affection. He is not the kind of personality to rule the masses. He is very popular among ordinary people and his manner towards everyone is of courteous, informal respect. His sister Dikeldi copies him in everything.

Head has shown that Margret is impulsion to bring gigantic change in totems. She fetches worse for Pete like people because totem also mixes them up with Masawaras. Moleka's servant, who is not a Masawara, spreads out the news that all the Masarwa slaves of Moleka sits with him at table when he eats. "Racialism is the work of petty officials, small traders, and colonials who have toiled much without great success" (Mannoni 24).

Moleka's love for Margret changes his disposition toward everyone, and everyone notices Moleka's changed state of mind. He is the talk of the town when he invites Seth, the prejudiced education supervisor, to dinner and feeds a Masarwa "with the same fork" with which he feeds himself (*Maru* 264). Seth and people are raged by Moleka's behaviour. For them he is too high handed. People say, "There is no place for a Masawara, whom everyone has seen behaving like a low animal in drink and filth, he wants to force matters and stir up trouble" (*Maru* 264). Pete seems to have lost his mind. His neighbored are scared of him. When he regains himself he forms an ultimatum which he presents to Seth, "either the Masarwa goes or I go" (*Maru* 296).

Head has very well dealt with the theme of race, and love between two different tribes. Margaret becomes the impetus for change in the situation of the Masarwa in two decisive ways. First by reuniting Moleka with his heart; second, by withholding herself from him so that he can unite with the efficient, unprejudiced, and leader-bound Dikeledi. Ranko is worried about Moleka's behaviour. Now there is no Masarwa slave in his house. Ranko's consideration is that mistress has bewitched Moleka. He is no more careful about what people think about him in the village. Margaret is not forceful in her method; even she is unaware of them. She is unconscious of her role perhaps even speaks to the inevitability of the effected change. By her efforts, the wind of freedom has entered the space of the Masarwa tribe, the dark airless room in which their souls have been shut for a long time. Senior Maragret has brought her up in such a way that she has to become the change for people. She symbolizes the whole race. As Fanon says,

I was responsible at the same time for my body, for my race, for my ancestors. I subjected myself to an objective examination, I discovered my blackness, my ethnic characteristics; and I was battered down by tom- toms, cannibalism, intellectual deficiency, fetishism, racial defects, slave-ship, and above all: "sho' good eatin. (BSWM 85)

Head has depicted the power of love over racial prejudices. Maru wants Margaret out of jealousy over Moleka. Before seeing Margaret for the first time, "something was violently agitating his heart" (*Maru* 266) when Ranko tells him how changed Moleka is by Margaret. Immediately Maru feels the ramifications of Moleka's new love: "I am so lonely" (*Maru* 266). Maru told Dikeledi about the matter that Moleka has no Masarwa slave in his home and he has taught lesson to Seth by inviting him for lunch and showing how he treats Masarwa. Maru has thought of Moleka as a scoundrel but "Moleka has a heart of gold" (*Maru* 267). Maru meets with Moleka in the office. He finds Moleka totally changed man from savage, arrogant to person like himself to be very humble defeated by all the beauty of the earth. This is perhaps what love is? Love has the power to change the person. Maru remembers, his heart growing "cold with fear" (*Maru* 268). He confronts Moleka, starting an argument

smacking of a lovers' quarrel. Maru wants to talk to him and then he has the point about which to talk. Moleka has given one bed and mattress to Margret that is the property of Dilepe Tribal Administration and Maru wants it back. He says that if one Masarwa is provided with such facilities then what about the others. He says,

I still own the Masarwa as slaves. All my one hundred thousand cattle and fifty cattle posts are maintained by the Masarwa. They sleep on the ground, near outdoor fires. Their only blanket is the fire. When the fire warms them on the one side, they turned round and warm themselves on the other side ... what will they do when they hear that a certain Masarwa in my village is treated as an equal of the Batswana and given a bed from my office? Won't they beds too, where do I find all those beds, overnight? (Maru 270)

Head shows the psychology of tribe which find it difficult to escape from inculcated prejudices in their mind. It is easy to be sympathetic to people, helps them, and supports them but when it comes to adopt them in their own life then arises the class conflict. Dikeledi has said that all are human beings; there is no such thing as Masarwa. To support someone to change the society and to be part of that change are two different things. It is easy to frame things in words but difficult to apply in life. Every generation is inculcated the traditions of prejudice, which are encouraged as normal, natural, and healthy. It is not easy to escape from it. Dikeledi after regaining her composure tells Maru that if anyone will come to know about it he will kill Margret. For her there is no difficulty in establishing a friendship but marriage is big issue for the villagers. Dikeledi still has to learn to control her prejudice. Although she loves Margaret and is a true friend, even she sometimes found herself considering the difference between Margaret as a Masarwa and the rest of the community. The prejudice is so deeply ingrained in her upbringing that she too has to overcome her prejudice. Maru does not want to tell her the whole truth that Margret has founded Moleka's heart. Because he thinks that, it would destroy Dikeledi.

Margaret have a profound impact on Maru's vision for a world of freedom and equality, and so proceeds with a plan to marry her himself. Maru never wants to be challenged in any way by Moleka, plots to take Margaret for himself, and trick Moleka into marrying his sister Dikeledi, who is unaware of Moleka's love for Margaret. As the story progresses, Moleka and Margaret both become deeply, but secretly affected by their love for each other. Maru, a dreamer, realizes that he does not desire the chieftaincy, which every other will normally desire. He is the dreamer of the future greatness as he says,

I never intended accepting the chieftaincy. I was only born in it to see its evils and its effects on society. Everything I have done has been an experiment, an experience. I just move on to more experience, more experiment...we'd never make the right, conventional gestures. People would never get over it, the embarrassment: 'she is only a Masarwa. (Maru 279)

Horace I. Goddard, in his essay "Imagery in Bessie Head's work", claims that, in the character of Maru the man, "good is made to triumph over evil" (107), because of his choice to marry a member of a despised people group.

Margret Cadmore is always scared of people. Whenever she meets with people, always, wards off her hand as if she is expecting a blow from everyone. By pretending to be against the idea of the equal treatment of a Masarwa woman, Maru cleverly fools Moleka into

portraying himself to Margaret as one of the same weak, prejudiced followers of the Batswana mindset. Maru has surprised Moleka by showing him the side of his nature that he has never suspected to be there. Though she still furtively loves Moleka, Margaret begins sharing Maru's dream. As Maru has hoped, she would. Moleka turns to Dikeledi, feeling he has lost Margaret forever. He reminds of her words, "Don't you dare touch my fingernails Moleka" (*Maru* 288) he wants to throttle her to death to take revenge from her brother but he does not kill her. He sleeps with her that gives him outlet for his pent up rage. It is as if prearranged trap set for him so that he cannot marry Margret.

Maru is determined to bridge the gap between the tribes. He links his sister to Moleka and by doing so; he goes closer to Masarwa girl, Maragret. Ranko unrolled his camera to Maru about Moleka's every word and gesture of the night he has spent with his sister. He feels it his victory over Moleka as he says to Ranko, "Why must Moleka have everything? He's always touched gold and handled it carelessly. I've always touched straw. This time I'm stealing the gold because I've grown tired of the straw" (*Maru* 292). Moleka said contemptuously to him that he has slept with his sister and he is not going to marry her. However, he is forced to marry Dikeledi when she becomes pregnant with his child.

Head, being a literary artist, has expressed her feelings and thoughts, through her writings. Margret is also an artist. Unlike Head, she has painted her dreams and visions. Her pictures demand liberation of an oppressed people. There is vitality and vigour in her works. Her pictures proclaim deeper message, protesting against racial prejudice. Life goes on with its rhythm, woman vile at each other for stealing each other's husband. However, nothing affects this woman, as she is not the part of it and belongs nowhere. Margret Cadmore, who has no identity in Dilepe village because she is a Masarwa. The administrators and children of the village attempt to force Maragret out of school. By Dilepe logic, she could not teach the village children.

People have forgotten her that there is a Masarwa teacher. When they say, "there goes the friend of mistress Dikeledi" (*Maru* 301) as if she has no life outside those words. She is now recognized as Dikeledi's friend. Her heart glows for Moleka. When he glances at her, his eyes shine like the early morning sunrise. But that love does not arise in violent emotions but blend in the flows of the life of Dilepe. Margret thinks that

He will never approach me, because I am a Masarwa. And it was something her whole way of life had prepared her for. Love and happiness had always been a little bit far away from life as other people lived it. (*Maru* 302)

Though the society that Maru has been expected to lead rejects him and continues to embrace its perceived superiority over the Bushman, Starfield believes that in the remote quasi – utopian place that Maru takes Margret they can "live free from prejudice." Virginia Ola contends that at the end of the novel Margret "is Maru's equal" (67).

Maru's actions cause a rift with his friend. He watches every move of him with suspicion but cannot betray him. Before Dikeledi, he keeps silent because he thinks, "She was the bird in the hand, while birds in the bush were too difficult to obtain" (*Maru* 313), perhaps he was powerless to make his evolve beyond glance. They keep their horns locked like that "you won't get her and you won't get her" (*Maru* 316). By marrying the person from bush tribe Maru connotes that humanity is one.

Maru sees a chance in a marriage with Margaret to change the prejudices and racial divisions among the people in Botswana. Since he will be chief, he feels this is his responsibility to break away from the chains of colonialism and bring in a new day for his people. Aime Cesaire says, "It is a new society that we must create, with the help of all our brother slaves, a society rich with all the productive power of modern times, warm with all the fraternity of olden days" (DC 52). When Margret eventually hears from Dikeledi that "I am peaceful because Moleka loves me" (*Maru* 320). Dikeledi also tells her of their marriage and her pregnancy, Margaret devastates utterly. She is unable to say anything but to reply her she says, "I am peaceful because I have nothing and I want nothing" (*Maru* 320). Maru succeeds in his betrayal of Moleka, and moves to claim Margaret as his wife. Suffering painfully over her loss of Moleka, Margaret turns to Maru and accepts his offer of marriage. Though she does not love Maru, Yet, she sees in the marriage as chance to become a part of the community from which she has been alienated.

Maru offers an optimistic vision of what liberated South Africans can face as long as they break away from the destructive and divisive affects of colonialism Maru rejects his chieftainship of the Botswana, and defiantly leaves the village to start a new life with Margaret. This leaves the Batswana feeling bitterly defeated, and the Masarwa triumphant as they now believe that the power of freedom lies closely before them in the new world that Maru and Margaret have begun laying the foundations. Marginalisation and inferiority ends and they hope for better days ahead. Head in an interview with Lee Nicholls underscores:

When people of Masarwa tribe heard about Maru's marriage to one of their own, a door silently opened on the small, dark airless room in which their souls had been shut for a long time. The wind of freedom, which was blowing throughout the world for all people, turned and flowed into the room. (331)

Craig Mackenzie, in his prestigious study claims, "The novel ends on a triumphal note" (49). For him, "through the union of two equal souls, Maru and Margret defy the prejudiced world and point to a new world of true racial equality" (52). Bessie Head has accomplished both a sensitive yet honest analysis of unconditional love and the prejudices that are faced in life.

#### Abbreviation Used:

*Black Skin, White Mask*- BSWM

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