

CHAPTER THREE

CONCLUSION

After analyzing Bessie Head's When Rain Clouds Gather, I would like to draw some conclusions. The protagonist in Bessie Head's When Rain Clouds Gather is Makhaya. Some of his characteristics remain the same from the beginning until the end of story. Throughout the story, he is portrayed as brave and intelligent. However, some other characteristics change because of the influence of the society where he lives.

At first he is portrayed as a loner and close-minded man. When Makhaya is staying in the no-man's-land he hates his tribe because they always underestimate and never respect him. His different ideas about equality and tribalism make Zulu people call him "Black Dog". He faces a strong opposition from his family too. Besides, he hates his family for being very tribalist. Because of that, he becomes a loner and he trusts nobody but himself. He also tells so many lies to Batswana people because he wants to keep his idea for himself. Based on those findings I conclude that Makhaya is a loner and close-minded person.

In Botswana, the society acceptance, especially from Mma-Millipede, Gilbert, and Paulina, makes Makhaya's characteristics as a loner and close-minded person change into an open-minded and friendly person. He realizes that blaming other people for his own problems is wrong and Christian values bring him to the alteration for his concept about poor people. This happens because he tries to accept all people as his brothers. His being a friendly person can be seen when Makhaya becomes good friends with an English man, Gilbert and when he has a good relationship with a Batswana woman, Paulina.

Through this novel, Bessie Head wants to show how important society is in forming and changing Makhaya's characteristics. What happens to Makhaya is actually the reflection of Head's life. She gives her first novel the title When Rain Clouds Gather because "rain clouds" represent the influence of the society. In no-man's-land, Makhaya as a seed cannot grow because he does not get enough "rain" but when he moves to Botswana, where "rain clouds gather", he develops and becomes a better person.

From this novel I get an understanding about the relation between society and human's characteristics. Good society generally will lead someone to have good characteristics, and bad society, in most cases, will lead someone to have bad characteristics. It is true that society is not the only factor that determines one's characteristics. There are other factors, such as the person's own attitude, religion, economic situation, and many more. However, I believe society plays an important role in shaping one's identity because human beings are social beings and they always have to interact with others. In the novel, it is shown that the society has strong influence in forming Makhaya's characteristics.

In my opinion Makhaya's moving to Botswana is the right thing to do because if he still stays in no-man's-land his intelligent will be useless. I think people sometimes have to move to a different place to get better opportunities, support, and acceptance, just as Makhaya. Makhaya and Batswana people are contrasting examples in this novel. Makhaya represents a person who moves on until he gets what he wants and Batswana people represent people who wait until other people lend their hand to take them out of poverty and stupidity. When many people are stuck with their own problems, Makhaya finds his own way and proves that his choice is not wrong.

Through Makhaya's characteristics I also learn that life is a struggle to achieve one's dream. I find this novel is very good to read because this novel tells about the struggle of a person to fulfil his dream even though nobody supports him. This is a very encouraging story because I learn through this novel that even though one has to face many obstacles, he can still achieve what he wants.