

Thought Questions for So Long a Letter

1. Compare and contrast the reasons for which each husband, Modou and Mawdo, took a second wife. Discuss the differences in their feelings afterwards.
2. *p.31, Letter from Aissatou*
p.55, Bottom paragraph, "I try to spot my faults..."
Both women disagree with their culture's acceptance of polygamy; however, they each reacted differently to their husband's second marriages. Contrast their ideals of happiness and the decisions they made.
3. *p.1, 3rd paragraph, "If over the years..."*
p.19, 2nd paragraph of 9, "Our lives developed in parallel..."
To what extent did Ramatoulaye compromise her dreams by staying married and to what extent did she continue to fulfill her dreams?
4. *p.41, 2nd paragraph, "Whereas a woman draws..."*
Compare the stereotypes of the "nurturing" woman with the "cold-hearted" man. Discuss each one's ideals of love and marriage.
5. *p.39, 5th paragraph, "Binetou, like many others..."*
p.71, last paragraph of 21, "Lady Mother-in-Law sobbed..."
Victimization of Binetou: Discuss sacrifice in the name of status and money.
6. Both So Long a Letter and Woman at Point Zero focus on the victimization and consequent suffering of women at the hands of men and society at large. Thematically they share many similarities. However, how does this book *differ* from Woman at Point Zero? Consider the following issues: values of the protagonist, the men, and friendships.