



ISSN: 1817-6798 (Print)
Journal of Tikrit University for Humanities

available online at: <http://www.jtuh.tu.edu.iq>

JTUH
مجلة جامعة تكريت للعلوم الإنسانية
Journal of Tikrit University for Humanities

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Keywords:

Feminine
Slavery
Discrimination

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 22 Aug. 2019
Accepted 5 Nov 2019
Available online 6 Nov 2019
Email: adxxx@tu.edu.iq

The Concepts of Feminine, Slavery, and Discrimination By Maya Angelou

A B S T R A C T

Being a slave is something that no one in this world would accept, but blacks had no choice. Slavery and discrimination had a major influence on those who were held in bondage because they were deprived of rights. They felt the lack of social and legal status, their private lives did not exist anymore, but the thing that affected them most was the absence of a vital right: having authority over their own life. According to John C. Calhoun, who was a model for the secessionists, slaves had certain features, physical characteristics that other races did not have and which made them perfect for hard labor and for bondage. The term feminism can be used to describe a political, cultural or economic movement aimed at establishing equal rights and legal protection for women. Feminism involves political and sociological theories and philosophies concerned with issues of gender difference as well as a movement that advocates gender equality for women and campaigns for women's rights and interests. (Miller, 1981:39) Feminism is the struggle of movement women rights in economic, education, occupation, politic, social and different culture with men. In poems, having the theme like struggle rights of women, women rights in self-confidence, hidden beauty, although the skills of her own feels more superior than men. Discriminatory behaviors and actions that affect a person or group with certain personal characteristics can become entrenched in an organization or community. People have the right to equal treatment and opportunities, without discrimination or harassment, in the areas covered by the Code. Direct discrimination often happens because people make unfair assumptions about what people with certain personal characteristics can and cannot do. Indirect discrimination occurs when an unreasonable requirement, condition or practice is imposed that disadvantages a person or group because of a personal characteristic.

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DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.25130/jtuh.26.9.2019.25>

مفاهيم المؤنث والعبودية والتمييز من قبل مايا انجلو

م.م. مديحه خالد عبد الحميد سلامه / قسم اللغة الإنكليزية, كلية التربية للعلوم الإنسانية, جامعة تكريت

الخلاصة:

أن تكون عبدا" هذا الشيء لن يقبله أحد في العالم. ولكن السود لا خيار لهم في ذلك, العبودية والتمييز كان له أثر كبير على أولئك الذين احتجزوا في عبودية لأنهم حرّموا من الحقوق لعدم وجود الوضع القانوني والاجتماعي ولذلك لم تكن حياتهم موجودة وقد أثر عليهم كثيرا" هو غياب الحق الحيوي ووجود السلطة على رأسهم. بالنسبة للأنفصاليين كان للعبيد بعض السمات والخصائص الفيزيائية التي لم يمتلكها غيرهم من الاجناس التي جعلتها مثاليه للعمل الشاق والعبودية. يمكن استخدام مصطلح النسوية لوصف حركه سياسية او ثقافية او اقتصادية تهدف الى إنشاء حقوق متساوية وحماية قانونيه للمرأة تنطوي على نظريات وفلسفات سياسية وأجتماعية معينة بقضايا الفرق بين الجنسين وكذلك الحركة التي تدافع عن المساواة بين الجنسين للمرأة حقوق وإهتمامات (ميلر, 1981, 39) هي حركة كفاح نسوية, حركة حقوق المرأة في المجال الاقتصادي, التعليم والسياسة وكافة المجالات الاجتماعية والثقافية المختلفه مع الرجال. في تلك القصائد وجود موضوع مثل حقوق نضال النساء, والثقة, والجمال الخفي, وعلى الرغم من مهاراتها في الشعر في لهجتها وبلدها تعتبر أكثر تفوقا" لحقوق الذات من السلوكيات التمييزية والإجراءات التي تؤثر على شخص او مجموعة معه يمكن ان تصبح راسخه في منظمة او تواصل اجتماعي. للناس الحق في المساواه والمعاملة والفرص دون تمييز او مضايقة في المناطق التي يغطيها القانون. يحدث التمييز المباشر غالبا" لأن الناس يكونون غير عادلين حول الافتراضات لما يمكن للأشخاص لأجل الخصائص المحدده يحدث التمييز غير المباشر وغير المعقول عندما يفرض الشرط او الممارسه التي تلحق الضرر بشخص او مجموعة بسبب خاصية شخصية.

The Concepts Feminine, Slavery, Discrimination by Maya Angelou

Maya Angelou's Life

Maya Angelou was born April 4, 1928 – May 28, 2014) was an American poet, singer, memoirist, and civil rights activist. She published seven autobiographies, three books of essays, several books of poetry, and is credited with a list of plays, movies, and television shows spanning over 50 years. She received dozens of awards and more than 50 honorary degrees. Angelou is best known for her series of seven autobiographies, which focus on

her childhood and early adult experiences. The first, I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings (1969), tells of her life up to the age of 17 and brought her international recognition and acclaim.

Later Angelou studied dance and drama and went on to a career in theater, also worked in television as a writer-producer for 20th Century-Fox, from which her full-length feature film *Sister, Sister* received critical praise. She appeared in *Porgy and Bess*, which gave performances in twenty-two countries. She also acted in several plays on and off Broadway, including *Cabaret for Freedom*, which she wrote with Godfrey Cambridge. She wrote, produced, and hosted the National Educational Television series *Blacks! Blues! Black!* During the early 1960s Angelou lived in Cairo, Egypt, where she was the associate editor of *The Arab Observer*.

She was also named Woman of the Year in Communications by Ladies' Home Journal, 1976, and one of the top one hundred most influential women by Ladies' Home Journal, 1983. Angelou has also taught at several American colleges and universities, including the University of California at Los Angeles, the University of Kansas, Wichita State University, and California State University at Sacramento.

During this time she also contributed articles to *The Ghanaian Times* and was featured on the Ghanaian Broadcasting Corporation programming in *G Accra, Hana*. After returning to the United States civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929–1968) requested she serve as northern coordinator for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

In 1982, she was named the first Reynolds Professor of American Studies at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. She was active in the Civil Rights Movement and worked with Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X.

Although Angelou is dedicated to the art of autobiography—a sixth volume, *A Song Flung Up to Heaven*, was published in 2002—in her seventies she remains a force in several different fields. Since the early 1980s she has been Reynolds Professor and writer-in-residence at Wake Forest University. In the year 2000 she was honored by President Clinton with the National

Medal of Arts, and in 2002 Hallmark introduced The Maya Angelou Life Mosaic Collection, a series of greeting cards containing her verse. She also has plans to write a cookbook and direct another feature film.

Abstract

Being a slave is something that no one in this world would accept, but blacks had no choice. Slavery and discrimination had a major influence on those who were held in bondage because they were deprived of rights. They felt the lack of social and legal status, their private lives did not exist anymore, but the thing that affected them most was the absence of a vital right: having authority over their own life. According to John C. Calhoun, who was a model for the secessionists, slaves had certain features, physical characteristics that other races did not have and which made them perfect for hard labor and for bondage.

The term feminism can be used to describe a political, cultural or economic movement aimed at establishing equal rights and legal protection for women. Feminism involves political and sociological theories and philosophies concerned with issues of gender difference as well as a movement that advocates gender equality for women and campaigns for women's rights and interests. (Miller, 1981:39)

Feminism is the struggle of movement women rights in economic, education, occupation, politic, social and different culture with men. In poems, having the theme like struggle rights of women, women rights in self-confidence, hidden beauty, although the skills of her own feels more superior than men.

Discriminatory behaviors and actions that affect a person or group with certain personal characteristics can become entrenched in an organization or community. People have the right to equal treatment and opportunities, without discrimination or harassment, in the areas covered by the Code.

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condition or practice is imposed that disadvantages a person or group because of a personal characteristic.

Introduction

Like other national literatures, American literature was shaped by the history of the country that produced it. Literature written by African Americans during the contemporary period was shaped in many ways by Richard Wright, whose autobiography *Black Boy* was published in 1945. For almost a century and a half, America was merely a group of colonies scattered along the eastern seaboard of the North American continent—colonies from which a few hardy souls tentatively ventured westward.

Black writers working from the 1950s through the 1970s also wrestled with the desires to escape an unjust society and to change it. After a successful rebellion against the motherland, America became the United States, a nation. By the end of the 19th century this nation extended southward to the Gulf of Mexico, northward to the 49th parallel, and westward to the Pacific. American literature is literature written or produced in the United States of America and its preceding colonies). Before the founding of the United States, the British colonies on the eastern coast of the present-day United States were heavily influenced by English literature. The American literary tradition thus began as part of the broader tradition of English literature. Women's literature presents a unique view into the female American experience. America experienced many changes following the Civil War. The country was in a period of transformation, including political, economic, social, and literary shifts.

The human cost of the Civil War in the United States was immense “a great literature will...arise out of the era of those four years,” and what emerged in the following decades was a literature that presented a detailed and unembellished vision of the world as it truly was. This was the essence of

realism. Naturalism was an intensified form of realism. (1861–65. Walt Whitman) themes tie Angelou's writings closely to the concerns of the Hailed as one of the great voices of contemporary African American literature. Women's literature gained widespread prominence by the end of the 19th century. Feminist causes and the expansion of education for women led to many more female writers than any preceding century (Bomarito & Hunter, 2005:89).

Angelou's literary works have generated critical and popular interest in part because they depict her triumph over formidable social obstacles and her struggle to achieve a sense of identity and self-acceptance. Such feminist literary movement.). During the nineteenth century the women's suffrage movement reacted to the social, legal, and political inequalities placed on women. Several social issues influenced women's literature during this period. The feminist movement strongly shaped writing. Whether female writers of the era were active in the feminist movement or not, they all expressed similar views. Women's literature reflects the feminist movement through theme, characterization, and situations. Issues over how to rebuild and the fate of those who rebelled led to hostility and the impeachment of President Andrew Jackson. Economic climate shifted from primarily agricultural to industrial as America entered the Industrial Age. (Rogers, 2013:24).

Women's suffrage fought against the limitations enforced by a patriarchal society and the idealism of the "Cult of True Womanhood" providing expectations of women as submissive, pious, wife, and mother relegated to the home (A & E Television, 2013). Several social issues influenced women's literature during this period.

The feminist movement strongly shaped writing. Whether female writers of the era were active in the feminist movement or not, they all expressed similar views: women recognized as individuals and equal to men. The feminist movement worked in favor of political and social equality" (Sa, 2008, p. 663, para. 10). Most people take that right as a given, while years ago the type of lifestyle and have now would be utterly condemned. Although the

feminist movement stems from the late 18th century and has continued to fight for women's rights to this day.(Ibid).

Definition of feminine, Discremintion,Slavery

Feminine

a- Characteristic of or appropriate or unique to women.

b- Of, relating to, or constituting the gender that ordinarily includes most words refer to females.

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/feminine>

In Europe and North America women have attained a lot and still there are domains of life in which they are discriminated against. Feminism has numerous types that present the effort of women for survival in the world. They speak on the behalf of women of the world that are exploited by men dominant society. Asseffie (2012:88)

The feminist movement called into question the role of women in society and female authors responded by creating works presenting strong, self-reliant, intelligent women. Growing up as a victim of sexism and racism, Angelou's works focus around the theme that a woman can be no more than what a man says she is. Although this theme is a primary focus for Angelou, she does not tell women to believe it, but instead prove it wrong and overthrow it. Images of gender and race frequently made white women into a social and political problem. Since skin tone bias and masculinity are both socially constructed, we can expect ideals of both constructs to change over time.

Colonial slavery was not exclusively perpetrated by men. European women were also deeply implicated within its structures, both 'at home' and 'out there' in the colonies. Freedom of thought, speech, moving, working – nowadays, women consider all the above completely natural. However, in order to achieve this freedom they had to struggle for a long time. Angelou is

creating her own identity and it is the absolute opposite of what society feels that it should be. The belief that men should maintain women is a remnant from the times when woman was her husband's property. She is not concerned about whether or not society likes who she is because she is a phenomenal woman regardless of what they think of her.

Feminist theories stand out against other ones. These theories explain either the universality of discrimination against women or differences in social standing of women in various societies or historical eras. Wage system in which women's work is less valued than men's work is based on the aforementioned belief.

Besides, women are a reserve army of labor (Hartmann 1979:22) . This poem expresses the idea that women should not conform to society's idea of them and that they should be their own woman. Angelou's main goal is to inform women that they can be what they want to be no matter what.

"Woman Work" is a poem that describes society's views of a woman. According to society, she is nothing more than a machine that must do everything that needs to be done, yet her work will never be complete. Society has no mercy on women and how they feel about endlessly working, so they are forced to continue working. Angelou's poem "Phenomenal Woman" is a poem that tells of a woman's flaws and then continues on to tell that she doesn't have to be what society tells her to be or thinks she should be because she is her own woman. <http://mayaangelou.com/>

Slavery

The state of being under the control of another person, work hard without paying them a fair wage.

<https://www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/slavery>.

Slavery has existed, in one form or another, through recorded human history – as have, in various periods, movements to free large or distinct groups of slaves. It is commonly assumed that racism is as old as human society itself. As long as human beings have been around, the argument goes, they have always hated or feared people of a different nation or skin color. Resistance to the lingering racism and discrimination in America that began during the slavery era would lead to the [civil rights movement](#) of the 1960s, which would achieve the greatest political and social gains for blacks since Reconstruction. A theory of the historical persistence of political attitudes, that the fall of slavery was a cataclysmic event that undermined Southern whites' political and economic power. For example, Du Bois (1935), Foner (2011), and Key (1949), a negative relationship between the prevalence of slavery and income in the American South, and Mitchener and McLean (2003) find a negative relationship between slavery and modern-day labor product. Slave areas were at least as willing to compromise on the issue of slavery, suggesting that the contemporary political geography of slavery probably does not trace its origins to this time period.

Slaves can be an attractive investment because the slave-owner only needs to pay for sustenance and enforcement. Slavery was legal in most societies at some time in the past, but is now outlawed in all recognized countries. The last country to officially abolish slavery was Mauritania in 2007.

One of the first protests against slavery came from German and Dutch Quakers in Pennsylvania in 1688. Slavery is more common when the labor done is relatively simple and thus easy to supervise, such as large-scale growing of a single crop, like sugar and cotton, in which output was based on economies of scale.

Slavery in America began in the early 17th Century and continued to be practiced for the next 250 years by the colonies and states. For the first 250 years of American history, white landowners, predominantly from the South, enslaved millions of individuals of African descent. (Cited in Faust1988: 60).

The power relationships of slavery corrupted many whites who had authority over slaves, with children showing their own cruelty.

Slaves were punished by whipping, shackling, hanging, beating, burning, mutilation, branding and imprisonment. This is sometimes lower than the wage-cost of free laborers because free workers earn more than sustenance, resulting in slaves having a positive price.

The treatment of slaves in the United States varied widely depending on conditions, times and places. Masters and overseers resorted to physical punishments to impose their wills. Slavery had been practiced in British America from early colonial days, and was legal in all Thirteen Colonies at the time of the Declaration of Independence in 1776. The evidence suggests that regional differences in contemporary white attitudes in part trace their origins to the late slave period and the time period after its collapse, with prior work suggesting.

In the case of freed slaves of the United States, many became sharecroppers and indentured servants. In this manner, some became tied to the very parcel of land into which they had been born a slave having little freedom or economic opportunity due to Jim Crow laws which perpetuated discrimination, limited education, promoted persecution without due process and resulted in continued poverty.

Other aspects of the contemporary local context may also affect white attitudes—for example, income gaps between blacks and whites, urban-rural differences, and other contextual and individual-level factors (e.g., Hopkins 2010; Oliver and Mendelberg 2000). In addition, a large literature has shown that attitudes can persist historically through both cultural and institutional channels (Nunn and Wantchekon 2011:3224).

Furthermore, if our explanation is correct, then black farmers should be worse off in former slave areas due to this greater local violence. The historical institutions like slavery are significant in shaping American culture and politics, even if they no longer exist.

Slavery becomes the most painful part for Angelou in her poem about racism. She repeatedly mention the condition about slavery in her poem with different tone of emotion such as anger, sad, guilty, even hopeless because slavery seems too difficult to stop.

Discrimination

Is the ability to recognize and understand the differences between two things.

<https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/discrimination>

The topic of discrimination is intricate, controversial, and multifaceted. It is the weapon of bigotry, and targets people for belonging to a certain group, be it based on gender, religion, race, or something else. It can be explicit, implicit, emotional, physical, or verbal. Since colorism is deeply rooted in African American culture, the differences found in many of the associations in the regional. Like gender, a person's skin tone is a visible physical trait that others immediately notice during social interactions and use to form judgments.

Discrimination is a popular social issue today; those who discuss it examine its causes and effects from several viewpoints and societal standings. Despite its recent rise in the arena of social politics, people have been prejudiced and intolerant towards each other for nearly all of human history.

Discrimination against women is determined by the structure of capitalist production, division of labor in firms by gender as well as the division of household duties (Rowbotham 1973:187) .

[Gender discrimination](#) is another form of discrimination. Women are often seen as an expense to their employers because they take days off for children, need time off for maternity leave and are stereotyped as "more emotional". Discrimination may not be practiced if there are no substantial differences in power held by the discriminating and the discriminated.

Racism is a particular form of oppression. It stems from discrimination against a group of people based on the idea that some inherited characteristic, such as skin color, makes them inferior to their oppressors. A first step towards equality was made in 1957 by a court decision that declared segregation in public schools unjust. . It is institutionalized and seems overwhelming to black so that one of major character tries to against it with her own way. This novel inspired her to produce the other works including poems, drama, screen play that deals with racism(Reszke 1991: 207).

As far as according to Hartmann, discrimination against women is determined by the division of power in a family (which entails women's subordination) as well as the division of activity into male and female theories accounting for discrimination against women are concerned. A further step was taken when the Congress created a Commission on Civil Rights in the same year. In 1960, federal mediators were appointed to help the Blacks with registering for and voting in elections. But these decisions did not change the minds of the people, who had lived in segregated society for a long time. As the title already implies it deals with equality, racial equality as well as gender equality, but is quite contrasting in its presentation. Racism influences all element of black's life Angelou presents inequality in employment that is being faced as a result of racial and marginal identity for Africans women. It has been discussed through political, social, and academic angles, but literature has been the prime method of analyzing and recording it throughout time.

Maya gathers two different worlds, Black and White.

Angelou is creating her own identity and it is the absolute opposite of what society feels that it should be. She is not concerned about whether or not society likes who she is because she is a phenomenal woman regardless of what they think of her. Maya Angelou had herself witnessed the horrors of racial discrimination and hardships of a poverty stricken in her early years. She couldn't reply back to the ill-treatment by a few white girls.(Ibid).

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