



## JOURNEY OF BLACK WOMAN AS AN OPPRESSIVE AND SUPPRESSIVE STATE (With special reference to Maya Angelou's *And Still I Rise*)

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### ABSTRACT

*The record of colonial America in literature began through exploration and colonization process. European explorers, traders, and settlers wrote their hopes, rare triumphs, and frequent disasters in various, and amazingly rich literary work. Apart from this there were African Negroes in New England, throughout the South America. American civilization took place due to the contribution of all African Negroes. The Renaissance, which began in the Italy in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, soon spread through Western Europe which brought the end of the middle Ages and the beginning of modern civilization in New England.*

*Patriarchy concerns with masculinity and its privilege over property and woman sexuality. Patriarchy celebrates heterosexuality, female fertility and motherhood. The 'patriarchy' term is widely used in the 1970s, especially in England and the United States of America. In several cultural and social context and different historical periods, women expressed their anger and indignation over the manner in which they suffered misery, privation and injustices at the hands of men-in poetry, song and in stories that were passed down the generations from mother to daughter. Such expressions were direct as well as oblique and found in literatures across the African American Black Literature in form of folk songs, poetry, fairy tales, and religious poetry.*

*May Angelou was one of the African American Black woman poetesses who had conveyed the suffocations and combustions of Black woman under the American patriarchal system. Black woman was not only supposed as secondary but also supposed as the third class human being who had to depend totally on the white master's decisions.*

**Key words:** *Black Literature, colonization, misery, patriarchal, suffocations and combustions, suppressions and expression.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Many readers feel that African American literature is only associated with Black peoples' slavery, exploitations, sorrows and subjugations but one more angle they forget to read i.e. patriarchal system connected with Black woman. Maya Angelou has uttered these horrible and atrocious incidents of Black woman in writings especially in poetic lines which pointed out as follows:

*People. Black and fast. Scattered  
Watermelon seeds on  
A summer street. Grinning in  
Ritual, sassy in pomp.(23)*

In mid eighteenth century and early nineteenth century Black slave market had been inflected in the American continent, day by day Black slave was distributed through white master in each and every part of American continent like seeds in the watermelon. The main reason was behind this that the Black woman was being supposed as a breeding machine. White master had been ordering to the Black woman to give birth to the children as much as he wanted because Black mother's child was being supposed as a strong Negro slave. By selling these slaves in the market, white master was getting maximum profit. There was not any kind of freedom to the Black man/woman slaves. White master had been posing his nose even in their personal life also. Without master's consent they could not take any decision. In the following poetic lines Maya Angelou has explained the Black woman's sexual exploitation and harassment, such as:

*yourself and the magic, when  
only the smell of your  
love lingers between  
my breasts, then, only  
then, can I greedily consume  
your presence.(05)*

Black woman had not any sort of freedom under the Black slavery. She had to perform a kind of whole life mode under the white master's rules and regulations of patriarchal system. There was not any kind individual freedom and right to the Black woman even American government was not supporting to the Black woman. Government had given authority to the white master about the slave life because government was also from the side of capitalists. Black woman had totally under gone sexual harassments and exploitations through the White master's forcefully order. Black woman had not right to express love and emotions towards



her own man and children. Sometimes white master was giving order to her own elder son to do sex with his own mother or sister to produce slave population. Through this kind of patriarchal inhuman trouble Black woman live life under the directions of White master. In the following poetic lines Maya Angelou has put across the patriarchal attitude and Black woman's suppression and expression, such as:

*They knew I was there. Fifteen  
Years old and starving for them.  
Under my window, they would pause,  
Their shoulders high like the  
Breasts of a young girl,  
Jacket tails slapping over  
Those behinds,  
Men.(11)*

To produce Black slave population more and more for doing agricultural and industrial tough work white master was plying cunning and cruel things with young Black woman. White master had made Black woman as a psychological slave to listen each and every order. She had not any career and future but only to obey the command of master. Master's word was final for her. Master was thinking that Black woman was like a pet animal (she goat) which keep for valuable profits, apart from this he had never thought any emotions and feelings of Black woman. When she had crossed her youth stage she had become useless woman for master. At that stage master would sell to other masters who use her as an agricultural animal in farm. In the poetic lines Maya Angelou has focused the Black woman's inhuman being life style, such as:

*Sugar cane reach up to Gods  
And every baby crying  
Shame the blanket of my night  
And all my days are dying (38)*

Even agricultural master was also taking full benefits of Black woman. Without any thinking he was sexually exploited her to produce his other Black slave to do work in the field or the slave market purposes. As a bug all the masters were sucking Black woman's blood without thinking about her life as a human being. She had to do all the agricultural animal works such as sowing, ploughing, horticulture etc. in her oldness she was treating as a useless animal on the earth. Master was not ready to give her food and water on time to time. Many times she had been thirsty and hungry. At that stage had not her own family members who would take her care because she had been bought there as a slave human being that's why she was



identity less and rootless human being in the cosmos. Apart from Black man's journey of life Black woman's journey life is devastated, horrified and an unutterable journey which creates sympathy, empathy and pity in each and every reader's mind.

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