Multiple Oppressions and Marginalization in the Poems of Maya Angelou

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Abstract

Black Women Writers feel the need to challenge the developing Black male voices as they fail to represent the wide range of experiences and ideas of Black women. They provide leadership for a new era in order to negate the absence of women’s stories in the recorded literary history to correct the distinctions. Their writings excel in representing the complexity of women’s life which is folded into the concept of triple oppressions of race, gender and class. They have enriched American lives and have given voice to the Black experience. Maya Angelou explores the problematic nature of African-American female identity in the context of multiple oppressions and marginalization in her poetry. This identity can be realized by a process of exploration into the shared ancestral past and the present individual experience. It evolves from the interplay of race, gender and class. In all cultures, female identity is an implicit and a submerged identity. Black female identity of the downtrodden groups is very complex as it is coupled with other parameters of discrimination like class and education.

Keywords: Female Identity, Multiple Oppression, Marginalization, African-American women

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