

Maya Angelou's Phenomenally Empowered and Rising Woman: A Study

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Abstract:-

The present paper studies a unique approach of Maya Angelou's seeing towards black woman and women in general. Literature has universal appeal. The poetess celebrates strength, resilience and vigour of woman throughout her poems. She views woman distinctly. It's observed in her some of the poems. In short Angelou too empowers womanhood.

Keywords:- approach, black woman, universal appeal, womanhood, empowerment.

Introduction:-

Maya Angelou was an American, poetess, and civil right activist. She has been versatile person. She has struggled a lot throughout her life. Her struggle has made her delicate to see the social evils and oppressed women. Some of her poems such as Still I Rise, A Phenomenal Woman and Lady Luncheon Club are quite unique. They view the unseen aspect of womanhood. These poems have the shades of empowered, dedicated and resilient women. In short these are the phenomenal women who behave, work and live phenomenally. So Maya Angelou says,

Pretty women wonder where my secret lies.

I'm not cute or built to suit a fashion model's size (Phenomenal Woman)

Pretty women in the world wonder how the speaker has succeeded to a great extent. What the causes are. The lady in the said poem doesn't fit in the traditional stereotype. She doesn't have fashionable model size figure, she isn't catchy. She isn't tempting personality. She isn't barbie doll like lady. The present poem questions traditional, stereotyped, delicate image of woman. Traditional woman is meant for pleasure of patriarchal male dominated society. At the outset the poetess questions the bitter truth. She clears her stance what's she is going to do.

They try so much But they can't touch My inner mystery.

When I try to show them,

They say they still can't see. I say,

It's in the arch of my back, The sun of my smile,

The ride of my breasts, The grace of my style. I'm a woman

Phenomenally.

Phenomenal woman, That's me.

Many have tried to search out the secret behind her success. All have failed doing so. She has such a great aura that, all wonder to see her charismatic existence. It makes her more and more mysterious in the eyes of others. Even the poetess tries to show them but still they can't get.

They can't touch that mystery. This poem has a universal appeal though it's about the

black woman. Literature has universal appeal in it. Her mystery is embedded in all her body.

It reflects in her body. It's in the arch of her back, it's her brightening smile, it's ride of her breasts, the grace of her style. Her physical entity is full with mystery.

You may write me down in history With your bitter, twisted lies,

You may trod me in the very dirt But still, like dust, I'll rise.

In her poem 'Still I Rise' she says that, patriarchal society may do injustice to her. History can conceal her glory with bitter and twisted lies. History is about winners. It's about male and their feat. Most of times males are related with violence. Generally victory, glory, valour and sacrifice, battlefield are all reserved for male. Women are not meant for this. In the beginning of the poem she makes her stand clear that. In spite of everything she still rise above hate, above setback and above injustice. She has a rising spirit. The poetess revolts against this in the present poem. Despite any past, woman should always keep going, keep chasing her goals. She should be determined.

I've got the children to tend The clothes to mend
The floor to mop The food to shop
Then the chicken to fry The baby to dry
I got company to feed The garden to weed I've got shirts to press The tots to dress
The can to be cut
I gotta clean up this hut Then see about the sick And the cotton to pick.

In the above poem 'Woman Work', the speaker sheds light on craftsmanship of woman. Patriarchy sidelines her work. Work of woman has been considered low by the men. The poetess celebrates her workmanship, her wit and wisdom. She has to carry primary chores at home which are fundamental. The society diplomatically ignores the same. Taking into consideration woman is also significant one. It begins from tending children to picking up cotton. She has to carry out each and every stuff of house. Poetess underlines the vital role that woman plays in the lives of men. Her work, contribution to men are unparalleled. She has mastery over all this stuff.

Conclusion:-

Maya Angelou's remarkable life, work, and legacy have left an indelible mark on the struggle for women's empowerment, inspiring generations of women to rise above adversity and claim their rightful place in the world. She tries to restore glory of women through her poems. Her approach to look at woman is notable one. She has been electrifying the spiciness throughout her work and life too. Her legacy inspires women of all ages, background of their strength, potential. Though her poems are meant to be for the blacks but these can be reinterpreted, rethought and redefined in greater way to all the women across the universe. She assures them that only sky is limit for these women.

So Maya Angelou says in her poem 'Woman Work',
Sun, rain, curving sky
Mountain, oceans, leaf and stone Star shine, moon glow
You're all that I can call my own.

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