

The longing of freedom and racial distinction in Maya Angelou's *I know why the caged bird sings*

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Abstract

“Racism is still with us, but it is up to us to prepare our children for what they have to meet and hopefully we shall overcome”

-Rosa Park

In front of god all humans are equal but the world treats the people according to their color instead of showing humanity. Here the poem *I know why the caged bird sings* written by Maya Angelou project about the suffering of Black people, they long for the freedom. In this poem caged bird is compared to Black people and free bird is compare to White people. The black people are treated as serfs, they want to fly high like a free bird but they are suffered by the White, because they are Black. Till now the color difference exists among us. Even though they are Black they are humans and they achieved in many fields. So we should not judge the person by their appearance because everyone has their own freedom to do according to their wish. The aim of this paper to project about the black who is longing for freedom and racial distinction between white and black

Key words: Freedom, Inequality, Racial discrimination, Slaves, inferiority complex.

I know why the caged bird sings is a poem by Maya Angelou. She is regarded as the black woman's poet Laureate and she is best known for her seven autobiographies, three book of essays and several book of poetry. She belongs to Twentieth century. This poem has published in 1983. This poem has written in free verse. The first and third stanza express the delight of the free bird and the rest of stanza of the stanza shows the suffering of caged bird .Maya Angelou involved in civil right movement. The civil right movement was fight between African and American in the mid 1950 to late 1960s. The African fought against White American in order to get equal opportunity in Employment, housing and education as well as the right to vote the right to equal but the Black people did not get their freedom in their entire life. Through this poem she express her desire to get freedom for Black people.

The main theme of this poem about racial distinction between white and Black in America. She uses the symbols of caged bird which represents the Black people and free bird represent White people. She uses the bird as a metaphor. She tried to screen the mindless oppression of Black people who were dominated in ancient days .This mindless oppression made them to be in an inferiority complex. Because of their color they face many struggle .the white does not know the way to defeat them, so they took the COLOR as a tool to defeat or destroy them. Through this poem she raise her voice against the white people with the company of Martin Luther King. He also fought for Black people's liberty.

The free bird flies over the sky and it enjoyed lot by founding its own food. The white always enjoy their freedom, they practice their wish as they want, they did not have any restriction in life, and like the free bird they enjoyed their freedom. .The white consider themselves as a high class and intellectual people, they lived in the narrow mind and never consider about the liberty of black people.in every field like business, education and public facilities white got first preference. But black always longing for freedom.

“His wings are clipped and

His feet are tied

So he opens his throat to sing” [lines second stanza 5-7]

Like the free bird the caged wants to fly over the sky but the caged bird does not have any chance even to glimpse of the sky. The caged bird does not have any way to express their feeling expect singing, because it wings are clipped and its feed are tied, so through the song it express it's longing. Like the caged bird the African people always insight the inferior zone , the black find many way to come out of inferior complex but the white domination is not allowing them to come out .the black has many dreams but they lived under the control of whites the black lead their life as a slaves the voice of the black has changed from peaceful and happiness rather their voice is full of thrill and frightening, even though they raise their voice against the white people for freedom and equality but their voice is considering as a distant noise by white like mentioned in the poem

In my view the cage represents inferior thoughts of black which is created by white people. Their inferiority thoughts which is around them is not allowing them to come out of particular surrounding. The biggest sin of African people is they accept their INFERIORITY COMPIEX , Chinua Achebe also express the inferiority concept in his prose “The Novelist as Teacher ”these people thought that there are low class people. The black have fear and struggle to against the white, if they come out of their fear they will be able to fly high freely as white people. Even the black people also have many talent, intelligent, ability, power and skill but

there are not accepted by society because of their color it means RACISM .the white never ready to give liberty to African because they wants that the black should be under the control of them .the blacks also have many goal but they struggle to reach their goal because of white American

The great depression had create many impact among the black people and the civil war leads to many struggle to the black people. They were many African who fought for their freedom among those days. The whites never gives basic needs to African people .there is a poem express how the white race on the black .In Telephonic Conversation, Whole Soyinka describe a conversation between white land lady and the black who search for shelter.

DON'T KNOW WHAT THAT IS LIKE

Brunette

THAT'S DARK ISN'T IT

Not altogether [lines 24-27]

The land lady didn't treat the black as a customer , she didn't talk about the cost of the renting, rather she enquiring about the his color .In the beginning of the conversation she speaks peacefully but when she knows his color her tone has changed . He explain his color that he has brown hair, chocolate color skin and his palm and foot were white. Through this she knows that he is an African so she refused to give rent to the black man. Instead of showing humanity the lady give preference to the color here we can see the racism. The whites are ready to have pet animal in their house but they are not ready to give shelter to the black because there are African. In Telephonic Conversation and I Know Why the Caged Sings express the same concept of Racial Discrimination and the white people didn't give freedom to the black people to do the wish as they want.

. God create the human to love each other not to discriminate others. All the humans have the right to do their own desires. Black and white is just a color, so we don't judge the people by their color appearance. If the white treat the black people .without any color discrimination, there will not be any inferiority complex. Even though they are black they achieved many things in all the way .but one or another way their achievement dominated by white people in the society. America is an independent country but some white people treated the black as a slaves. Not only in America till the color difference existed among us. Freedom is meant for everyone so everyone have right to have their freedom. First they should feel about themselves positively, then they overcome from their domination and racial distinction.

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