ISSN: 0971-1260
Vol-22-Issue-3-July-September-2019

The Portrayal of Black Woman's Perseverance: A Study of Maya Angelou's *Gather Together in My Name*

V.Arunkumar
Research Scholar
PG & Research Department of English
Sudharsan College of Arts and Science
(Affiliated to Bharathidasan University)
Pudukkottai, Tamilnadu, India
Email: arun.muse@gmail.com
Mobile: 9566564699

Dr.P.Kumaresan
Research Advisor
PG & Research Department of English
Sudharsan College of Arts and Science
(Affiliated to Bharathidasan University)
Pudukkottai, Tamilnadu, India

Abstract

This research paper attempts to delineate the perseverance of black woman/mother. The black women having the opportunity to dispose of their prejudiced image could express themselves by the help of autobiography. This study depicts how Angelou ask her readers to "gather" around her as bears witness to painful truths about her past, describes herself as a young mother, bent upon on survival for herself and her child. African American mother can be seen from numerous aspects, often contradictory points of view. Every black mother has a lot of faces and layers; and she has to play each and every legitimate role. To draw an explicit picture of an African American mother, one has to take into account all the hardships and sufferings she, her mothers and grandmothers were forced to face. Angelou mirrors the lives of black women taking into consideration of her own life. Black mother plays an integrating role in her serious of autobiography.

Key Words: Black Mother, Black Woman, Autobiography, Mother-Child.

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ISSN: 0971-1260
Vol-22-Issue-3-July-September-2019

Maya Angelou was seventeen, embarrassingly young with a son of two months, and she lived with her mom and step father Childell Jackson. In spite of the fact that they offered her an opportunity to leave her infant with them and return to class, Maya Angelou rejected for two reasons. Initially, she prevailed upon the honorable reality of youth, and furthermore she was not the blood daughter of Childell Jackson. Second, despite the fact that Maya Angelou is a mother's child, Vivian Baxter had left her with others until she was thirteen and for what reason should she feel more duty regarding Maya Angelou's child than she had felt for her own.

When Maya Angelou turned into a mother, she was as yet a child, ailing in insight and complexity, without employment preparing or propelled tutoring of any kind, and without a man to accommodate her and her baby. All things considered, she was to get by through experimentation, while simultaneously characterize herself as far as being a black woman.

Given her racial and class foundation, it should not shock anyone that Maya Angelou's involvement of motherhood is indivisibly entwined with work. Maya Angelou was an amateurish black young woman lacking abilities, thus just the most modest occupations are accessible to her. In the post-World War II milieu, abhorrent proliferated and neediness was all over the place. It was in such a domain, that the need to help herself and her child drove Maya Angelou to some speedy and simple decisions. She needed to scratch for each penny, holding occupations, for example, short-request cook and shake artist in San Francisco, night club server, and artist in Los Angeles, whore and madam in change of her own place of prostitution close Bakersfield - work circumstances which feature how bigot private enterprise could drive black women into a neediness that isn't just money related yet on occasion likewise moral. Being just a young person, Maya Angelou was still truly defenseless, effectively swindled. She turned into a whore with the expectation of collecting

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ISSN: 0971-1260
Vol-22-Issue-3-July-September-2019

enough cash to safeguard her sugar daddy - pimp from obligation guiltlessly feeling that he would wed him. This circumstance shows how even black men have been happy to manhandle the black women' capacity to work in that space where the refinements between the private and open circles have been eradicated. At home, black women are helpless against black men's desire, concerning occasion a eight year old Maya Angelou was raped by Freeman, one of her mom's sweethearts. Maya Angelou's work encounters show how the absence of abilities and the bigot routine with regards to barring blacks from important business are the genuine offenders for despondency and medication misuse, not working outside home.

One of the issues any working mother countenances is discovering child care. Maya Angelou needs a satisfactory sitter to think about Guy while she is working, which implies, in any event on account of being a whore, throughout the night help. It would have been practically unthinkable for Maya Angelou to work all day on the off chance that she didn't have her mother and community of "different mothers" to depend on for help with childcare. It is absolutely on the grounds that more distant family in black communities incorporates individuals outside of connection lines who show steadfastness and a feeling of commitment, that Maya Angelou can leave her child with various consideration suppliers or companions while she scans for a practical vocation. She finds an astounding sitter in Mother Cleo, a chunky lady who preferences babies and even takes in white newborn children, despite the fact that she charges more for them.

Another sitter is Big Mary Dalton, a warm lady who lives in Stockton, where Maya Angelou accepts a position first as a broil cook and after that as a whore. Huge Mary orchestrates Guy to live in her home, with the arrangement that Maya Angelou can take her child on her obligation off. After she meets L.D. Tolbrook, Maya Angelou sporadically relinquished her vacation day with Guy to be with her boy friend. In this manner inside a

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ISSN: 0971-1260
Vol-22-Issue-3-July-September-2019

specific socio-cultural setting, independence, for black mothers, implied depending on other individuals on the community. Of course, this arrangement has its very own disadvantages as well.

Subsequent to coming back from obligation, Maya Angelou goes to Big Mary's home and finds it deserted. A neighbor reveals to her that Big Mary moved away three days sooner and that she likely went to her brother's in Bakersfield. After a frantic inquiry and a long transport ride, Maya Angelou finds Big Mary Dalton and her furious child, whose sentiments of deserting reverberation her very own despondency during youth.

Maya Angelou's feeling of inadequacy as a mother is uncovered by the Big Mary scene. Guy cries, pulls his mom's hair, and communicates his anger at being abandoned for such a long time a period. "Maya Angelou sheds bitter tears and acknowledges her first guilt" (GT 192). Prior, she confesses to having disregarded her child to such a degree, that Big Mary Dalton asked: "Ain't you got time for him?" (GT 147). Maya Angelou needs to disregard her son on the night when she goes to the drug den alongside Troubadour Martin. Different cases of maternal clash or disregard give a unique strain. The strain does not crush the attestation of 'honesty' yet proceeds with lesser or more noteworthy gravity all through *Gather Together in My Name.*

In *Gather Together in my Name*, Angelou expounds on the issues she looked as a working teenage mother and an amateurish black young woman for whom just the most humble occupations are saved. Maya Angelou inspects in her autobiographies the black woman's quest for selfhood through an investigation of the individual’s relationship to the community. Angelou's' constrained choices are wherever from being a transport young woman to being a short-request cook in numerous a dirty supper. Thusly, she has no aptitudes and has rejected Vivian's idea to deal with her son. In this way, she can proceed with her

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ISSN: 0971-1260
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training, Maya winds up living along the outskirts society. Here, in the post-World War II milieu, underhanded flourishes. What's more, in spite of the fact that the rulers and rulers of the black market - bets and whores, black advertisers and promoters - might be the last to feel the squeeze, neediness wins all over. It is in such a domain, that the need to help herself and her child drives Maya to some speedy and easy decisions. Being just a youngster, she is at an age where she is still entirely defenseless, effectively betrayed, and presently can't seem to characterize herself and her own ethical quality.

Maya works as a whore with the expectation of collecting enough cash to protect her sugardaddy – pimp from obligation. This, she honestly thinks, will empower him to separate from his significant other and at last lead Maya to that most happy condition of marriage. The noteworthy point deserving of notice here is that Maya needs to work to get married. In her own particular manner, indecent as it might be, she is working in order to secure a home in which she can be a mother. Stupid as her logic might be in these specific conditions; yet the circumstance exhibits how even the black men have had the option to mishandle the black women's capacity to work. This scene delineates very well how a few parts of the convention of African American culture have been defiled by European impacts and by the entrepreneur framework. L.D., the sugardaddy-pimp, mishandles the sexual orientation benefits which both black and the white male centric society grant him and sells Maya's body in the market. L.D. is behaves irresponsibly, against the customary African American culture. He obtains success by following the principles of the capitalist market economy in western terms. She legitimizes her choice by contrasting a whore with a wedded woman. She says,

> There are married women who are more whorish than a street prostitute, because they have sold their bodies for marriage licenses, and there are some women who sleep with men for money who have great integrity because they are doing it for a purpose. (Gather Together 135)

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Ironically, although Maya is a working mother in the edge of the society for the most part in this text; it is just when she frantically yields the obligation of supporting herself and her child. She rapidly slides "down into the slimy world mortal sin" (GT 140). This demonstrates methodology which may function admirably for the white middle- class mother-depending on a male worker - can be self – destructive in the black working class and underworld.

The unenlightened Maya is driven by the idealism of adolescent, faked freedom and pride, which makes her reject even the choice of looking for help from the legislature. She works for an incredible duration to accommodate her child. Now and again Maya maintains two sources of income, yet and still, at the end of the day she scarcely procures enough to spare in the wake of paying for lease and saving for childcare. Besides, being a working mother additionally implies the extended periods at work don't give her – much time as she might want to go through with her much worshiped child.

Her chain of employments reflects two distinct wonders - the working – class women's day by day struggle for survival and how frail and unprivileged they are as a group with neither political nor economic power. Hence, in spite of the fact that Maya's story is extremely personal, it depicts the situation of many working-class black women who have long needed to work the double day, adjusting gainful and regenerative work. Indeed, by connecting her own troubles of giving dependability as a single mother when one has a place with a dislodged gathering of individuals to that of a large number of other black mothers, Maya gives a genuine case of how the individual encounters mirror the race's general condition in most black autobiography. This practice, further links issues of literal and literary survival. Angelou concerns with lighting up the challenges of the dedicated blacks who endeavor to make due in a financially discouraged and racially abused region. She gives a running critique on motherhood all through the seven volumes.

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Maya Angelou is in her twenties, attempting to furnish herself and her child with principal needs yet reluctant to go on welfare. To think about her duty, as a mother of a child, without dad, she needs to do the needful things. Angelou's extraordinary love is for her child Guy, yet she additionally needs an opportunity for her vocation to develop. She leaves Guy with her mom, Vivian Baxter, and moves in Europe, Yugoslavia, and Egypt for *Porgy and Bess*. She is genuinely upset when she finds that her profession was in struggle with her longing to be a great mother.

The struggle of not being with her child has impacted her character of contention inside the family between Maya Angelou and her son Guy. The mother/child strife is heightened by Maya Angelou's blame over not being a dependable mother. Social benchmarks confirm that a decent mother is loyal and regularly minding. Similar social gauges direct that a decent mother is one who forfeits her very own satisfaction for that of her child, who makes no more that disturbs her child's friendships or schooling. However, the requirement for her monetary dependability drives her to different nations. At whatever point Maya Angelou is away from her child, he is highly aggravated and blows up over his mom. The mother/child resistance is a basic perspective and a central concern in Maya Angelou's life.

As a salary worker and a sole provider for herself and her child, Maya Angelou needs to go out leaving her child under the consideration of others and simultaneously she must be an adoring mother without making a sentiment of relinquishment and disregard in her child. So she is by all accounts looking for the correct parity: neither covering nor insulting him.

Niara Sublackasa, the anthropologist discusses "the need to understand the traditional value put on kids and on their care within the extended family structures" (xxii). Customary "extended family" structures are normally settled along patriarchal lines in which a male

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ISSN: 0971-1260
Vol-22-Issue-3-July-September-2019

figure head has more than one spouse. This regularly ties women's power inside the family to their status as mothers. In such polygamous connections, women frequently share the consideration of their children with the goal that they can all the more effectively perform other day by daily tasks.

Maya Angelou challenges the western thought of children as property and exhibits the significance of imparting one's children to other women in the community. Along these lines she maintains the conventional centrality of different mothers in black motherhood. Her motherhood encounters focus round the idea of more distant family to help care for Guy.

Maya Angelou's struggle shows the pressures inalienable in having a place with a gathering that qualities these ideas of family, while living in a bigger white society that degrades them. This duel strain underlies in every one of the volumes of Maya Angelou's autobiographies. This strain is obvious in her sentiments of dismissal while she is a child in her grandmother's consideration as much as to her very own disappointments when looked with the duty of raising Guy. While seeking after inevitable vocation desire and carrying on with her very own life regularly means depending on her people to help care for Guy. In the mid-twentieth century, in America, the moral ideological standard is by all accounts that great mothers' are unselfish, meaning they put their children's needs before their own. In this unique circumstance, in this manner, Maya Angelou's admitted feeling of blame about leaving her son with relatives mirrors the bigger social desires that a mother remains with her son consistently. In this manner, while following in the strides of other maddened black mothers through her assurance to ensure and accommodate her son despite seemingly insurmountable opposition affirms, the conduct which this involves isn't generally observed as ethical in the bigger setting.

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ISSN: 0971-1260
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Gather Together concludes as Angelou adapts one more exercise throughout everyday life. Upon her arrival to San Francisco, she worked a couple of months as a tap-artist in nearby clubs in the bay area. This just gives Angelou a short intermission in her life; in any case, she rapidly arrives at a record-breaking low in her confidence and winds up drawn towards heroin. Wavering on the very edge of obliteration, Angelou had an abrupt look at the hidden and wretched world into which she is ready to fall. *Dolly A. McPherson* comments:

> Entering squalid humiliation and returning from it whole and hopeful, Gather Together in My Name binds pain and humor together through its unique voice. While Angelou knows some of life's pleasure, she also knows its pain and coffers up her autobiography as an extraordinary testament of disappointment and celebration. (78)

Gather Together in My Name is the individual quest for strength and security as it reproduces Angelou's first attempt at motherhood, love, drugs, professions, show business and prostitution against a background of African American disillusionment with American ideology after World War II. What distinguish *Gather Together* is the amicability it brings out between the autobiographer's outward experiences and her quest for internal development. It inspects the enthusiastic space between the incidents of the subject's life and her spiritual disgust of them. In this volume, Angelou is trying out various roles to determine which one is most authentic for her.

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ISSN: 0971-1260
Vol-22-Issue-3-July-September-2019

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