

**THE STRUGGLE OF BLACK AFRICAN-AMERICANS FACE  
RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN MAYA ANGELOU’S THREE  
SELECTED POEMS**

**A Final Project**

**Presented as Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
to Obtain the *Sarjana Sastra* Degree  
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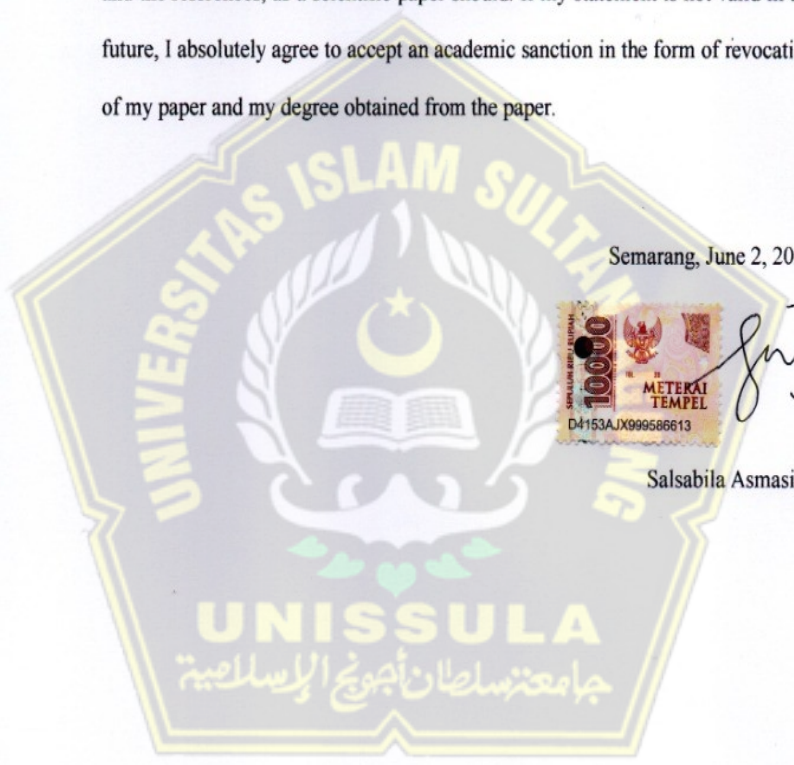
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Hereby, I honestly declare that the undergraduate thesis I wrote does not contain the works of other people, except those which were cited in the quotation and the references, as a scientific paper should. If my statement is not valid in the future, I absolutely agree to accept an academic sanction in the form of revocation of my paper and my degree obtained from the paper.

Semarang, June 2, 2022



Salsabila Asmasika



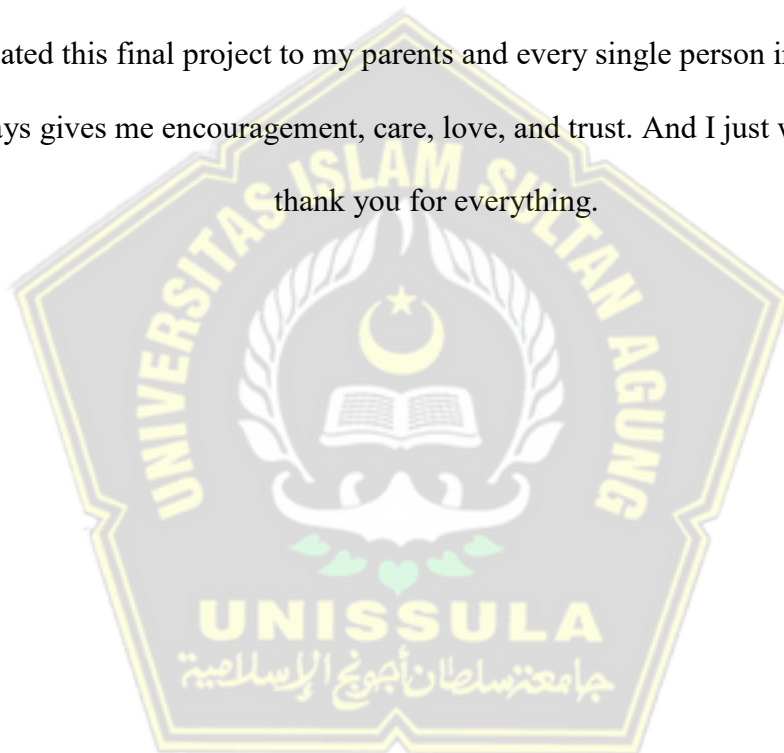
## **MOTTO**

“You don’t need to response other people, You just need to grow up”

[Salsabila Asmasika]

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicated this final project to my parents and every single person in my life who always gives me encouragement, care, love, and trust. And I just want to say, thank you for everything.



## ABSTRACT

**Asmasika, Salsabila. 30801600277.** *The Struggle of Black African-Americans Face Racial Discrimination in Maya Angelou's Three Selected Poems.* Advisor: Afina Murtiningrum, S.S., M.M., MA.

The aim of this study is to show how racial discrimination is represented through Maya Angelou's three selected poems: "*Still I Rise*", "*Alone*", and "*Caged Bird*". The study is going to explain about racial discrimination study to draw how the African-Americans are treated unwell, including how the author struggle against racial problems.

This study used descriptive qualitative research as the primary data were taken from the three selected poems by Maya Angelou "*Still I Rise*", "*Alone*", and "*Caged Bird*" along with a few articles from international journals, books, online magazines, thesis, essays and literary dissertation which gave an explanation about racial discrimination as the secondary data. The data gathered by reading the three selected poems "*Still I Rise*", "*Alone*", and "*Caged Bird*" several times highlight some important parts.

The result of this study found two points. The first, "*Still I Rise*", "*Alone*" and "*Caged Bird*" were poems by Maya Angelou which wrote the early twentieth century. Angelou described herself and her race as who suffered discrimination in her society. She described the black's life as aimless and hopeless, with no hope for her dream because of racial discrimination. The second, in the three selected poems of Maya Angelou also portrayed the story of the struggle of black African-Americans against racial discrimination. She never gave up overcoming the problem of racial discrimination and changing the problem as the power to fight against racial discrimination. She never gave up to struggle to gain freedom and bright life for herself and the other African-Americans.

**Key Words: Racial Discrimination, The Struggle of Black African-Americans, Maya Angelou's Three Selected Poems.**

## INTISARI

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menunjukkan bagaimana diskriminasi rasial direpresentasikan melalui tiga puisi pilihan Maya Angelou: "*Still I Rise*", "*Alone*", dan "*Caged Bird*". Studi ini akan menjelaskan tentang studi diskriminasi rasial untuk menggambarkan bagaimana orang Afrika-Amerika diperlakukan tidak baik, termasuk bagaimana penulis berjuang melawan masalah rasial.

Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian deskriptif kualitatif dengan data primer diambil dari tiga puisi pilihan Maya Angelou "*Still I Rise*", "*Alone*", dan "*Caged Bird*" serta beberapa artikel dari jurnal internasional, buku, majalah online, tesis, esai dan disertasi sastra yang memberikan penjelasan tentang diskriminasi rasial sebagai data sekunder. Data yang dikumpulkan dengan membaca tiga puisi pilihan "*Still I Rise*", "*Alone*", dan "*Caged Bird*" beberapa kali menyoroti beberapa bagian penting.

Hasil analisis dari penelitian ini terdapat dua poin. Yang pertama adalah "*Still I Rise*", "*Alone*" dan "*Caged Bird*" adalah puisi-puisi Maya Angelou yang ditulis pada awal abad kedua puluh. Angelou menggambarkan dirinya dan rasnya sebagai orang yang mengalami diskriminasi dalam masyarakatnya. Dia menggambarkan kehidupan orang kulit hitam tanpa tujuan dan tanpa harapan, tidak ada harapan untuk mimpinya karena diskriminasi rasial. Kedua, dalam tiga puisi terpilih Maya Angelou juga menceritakan kisah perjuangan orang kulit hitam Afrika-Amerika melawan diskriminasi rasial. Dia tidak pernah menyerah mengatasi masalah diskriminasi rasial dan mengubah masalah sebagai kekuatan untuk melawan diskriminasi rasial. Dia tidak pernah menyerah untuk berjuang untuk mendapatkan kebebasan dan kehidupan yang cerah untuk dirinya sendiri dan orang Afrika-Amerika lainnya.

**Kata Kunci: Diskriminasi Rasial, Perjuangan Orang Kulit Hitam Afrika-Amerika, Tiga Puisi Pilihan Maya Angelou**



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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### **A. Background of The Study**

Life is manifested in a piece of a literary work. It depicts life as a reflection of reality through fiction. The author describes the reality of life in a literary work. It will be the object of a literary work written in the author's own words. Based on Arjun Dubey, "A literary work is a reflection of the state of society because what happens in society is somehow reflected in literary works in one form or another" (84). The topic is usually taken from occurrences and problems that exist and develop in society.

There are a variety of concerns that arise in society that might be addressed as a subject in literary works. Discrimination is a topic that is frequently brought up in literary works. Like an American history deals with racial discrimination in many aspects of life, which is also portrayed in their literature. From the inception of this nation, racial discrimination becomes an important issue in several works. Racial discrimination is when someone is treated unfairly because of their race. Racial discrimination can be the outcome of conscious or unconscious sentiments that place a person in a lower social status because of their race. Blank, Dabady, and Citro, state that "racial discrimination is a situation when somebody is treated less favorably or not given the equal opportunities because of their race" (55).

Racial discrimination against African-Americans occurred during the arrival of African-Americans in America. Racial discrimination is one of the key difficulties

faced by African-Americans, which places them in the minority in the United States. Racial discrimination towards black people was deeply rooted in American society. Throughout American history, black people have been victims of discrimination by white people. Feagin & Vera, in the book *White Racism: The Basic*, said that “black Americans had been defined as racially different by white groups for several centuries based on specific physical characteristics, such as skin color and hair type, presume to be unchangeable” (114).

Every racial or ethnic group has a distinct place in society when it comes to racial discrimination. To determine their level of equality, race or ethnicity is divided into numerous groups. Unequal or distinct racial or ethnic groups might be treated differently and discriminated against, whereas unequal or distinct racial or ethnic groups might be treated unfairly.

The emergence of racial discrimination in society can be triggered by several factors. According to Grosfoguel, “Depending on local or colonial history, cultural affiliation or character, the Westernized Third World elite (African, Asian, or Latin American) reproduce racist methods against ethnic or racial groups who are considered "inferior" below the human level for religious, ethnic, cultural, or religious reasons” (10). The emerging racial discrimination is the difference in skin color that makes the black race feel distinct and is regarded differently by the white race. Furthermore, discrimination occurs as a result of this distinction.

Maya Angelou also depicts her struggle for her freedom from racial discrimination. She shows black American woman struggle to get a better life like

white people to do. Aguirre and Turner argues that, “Discrimination typically causes its target to respond and adapt, and everyone has struggle against racial discrimination at some point in their lives. It is possible to organize protests in order to fight for equality. Rebellion and insurrection against superior ethnic groupings are the most extreme. Passive acceptance, marginal engagement, assimilation, withdrawal, and self-segregation are also responses that people have when confronted with discrimination.” (25).

“*Still I Rise*”, “*Alone*” and “*Caged Bird*” are poems by Maya Angelou that indicates the same background and depicts discrimination in a similar way. Those poems depict the plight of Black African Americans in the past, as well as racial discrimination. The three poems chosen likewise depict the struggle of Black African Americans who are subjected to racial discrimination. In the other words, the reason why the researcher chooses the poems as the objects of research is because of the poems has similarities, especially regarding the content and historical background.

Based on the above explanation, this study will explain how African Americans are treated unfairly, including social conflicts and the greatest failures of American culture. According to Edward, "African Americans have the most difficulty adjusting to the larger culture of non-white ethnic groups" (168). According to the statement, the purpose of this study is to portray the voices of black African Americans as reflected in the three poems by Maya Angelou. This study is titled “*The Struggle of Black African-Americans Face Racial Discrimination in Maya Angelou’s Three Selected Poems*”.



## **B. PROBLEM FORMULATION**

Based on the previous background, the statement of the problems formulation of this study as follows:

1. How is the depiction of racial discrimination in the three selected poems by Maya Angelou?
2. How do Black African Americans struggle against racial discrimination for her freedom in three selected poems of Maya Angelou?

## **C. LIMITATION OF STUDY**

The poems tells about racial discrimination between Black African Americans and whites American. The study will only discuss the poems by Maya Angelou. The issue discuss about racial discrimination in African Americans and the struggle against racial discrimination between three selected poems by Maya Angelou.

## **D. OBJECTIVE OF STUDY**

In this statement, the writer tries to present the following aims:

1. To depict racial discrimination in three selected poems of Maya Angelou.
2. To portray the struggle of Black African Americans in facing racial discrimination in three selected poems of Maya Angelou.

## **E. SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY**

This study is expected to give the advantages and will help the students of English literature, the teacher and the other types of readers who are interested in understanding the discrimination of race in African-Americans which is depicted in three selected poems of Maya Angelou. Practically, this study hopes general readers to be conscious of any issue of racial problems in order to avoid any racial behaviour toward others, particularly women. Furthermore, the female readers of this study are expected to gain insight into the fact that women should not feel submissive or objectified because of their ethnicity or color, and they should have more confident in their own lives.

## **F. OUTLINE OF THE STUDY**

This study is divided into five chapters. The first chapter provides the introduction that presents the background of the study, problem formulation of the study, the limitations of the study, the objective of the study, the significance of the study, and the outline of the study. Then, chapter two includes a discussion related to the literature review that explains the portrayal of racial problems of African-Americans, in three selected poems by Maya Angelou of the period. As additional information, the poetry is provided. Chapter three contains research methods which includes research design and data organization. In organizing the data provides data collection methods, types of data, and data analysis. Chapter four has tell about findings and discussion. It presents about quotes, from the lines and meaning of the poems. Last, chapter five has tell about Conclusion and Suggestion.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The second chapter divided into two sub-chapters, and contains a review of related literature. The first sub-chapter focuses on three poems by Maya Angelou as the subject of this research. The second subchapter comprises related literature, including the theories underlying the research analysis of the study.

#### A. The Poems

##### A.1 Maya Angelou “Still I Rise”

“*Still I Rise*” is one of the most famous poems written by Maya Angelou, was posted in her 1978 poems book titled “*And Still I Rise*”. “*Still I Rise*” was written to depict the resilience of black people in response to injustice and racial discrimination. The poems also tells the story of the struggle of black African Americans against racial discrimination. Angelou describes how her high self-esteem allows her to take on any challenge. Emphasize that nothing can break her. She will accept any challenge and nothing will stop her, not even the color of her skin.

#### “Still I Rise”

by Maya Angelou (1978)

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.

Does my sassiness upset you?

Why are you beset with gloom?

'Cause I walk like I've got oil wells

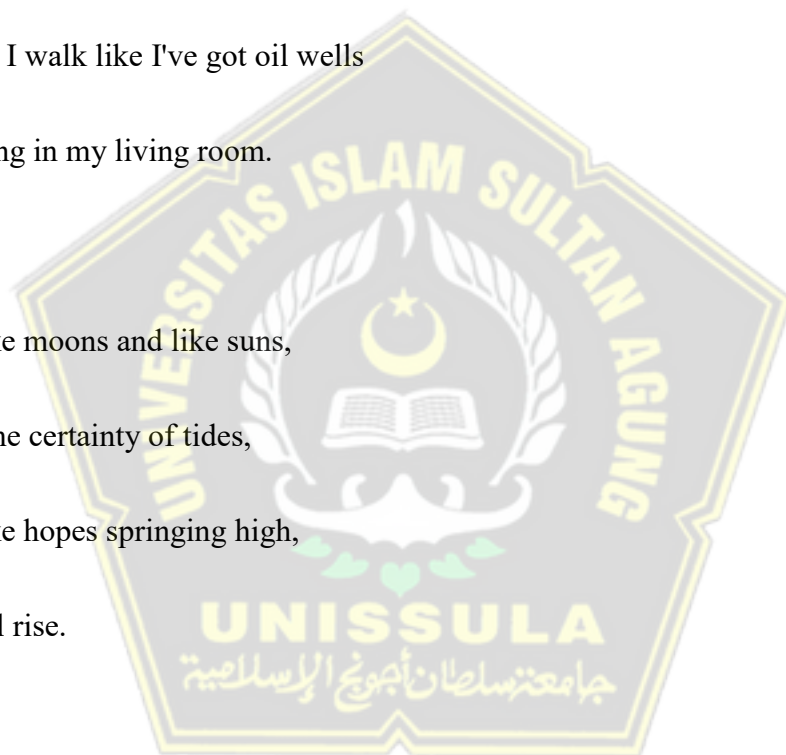
Pumping in my living room.

Just like moons and like suns,

With the certainty of tides,

Just like hopes springing high,

Still I'll rise.



Did you want to see me broken?

Bowed head and lowered eyes?

Shoulders falling down like teardrops,

Weakened by my soulful cries?

Does my haughtiness offend you?

Don't you take it awful hard

'Cause I laugh like I've got gold mines

Diggin' in my own backyard.

You may shoot me with your words,

You may cut me with your eyes,

You may kill me with your hatefulness,

But still, like air, I'll rise.

Does my sexiness upset you?

Does it come as a surprise

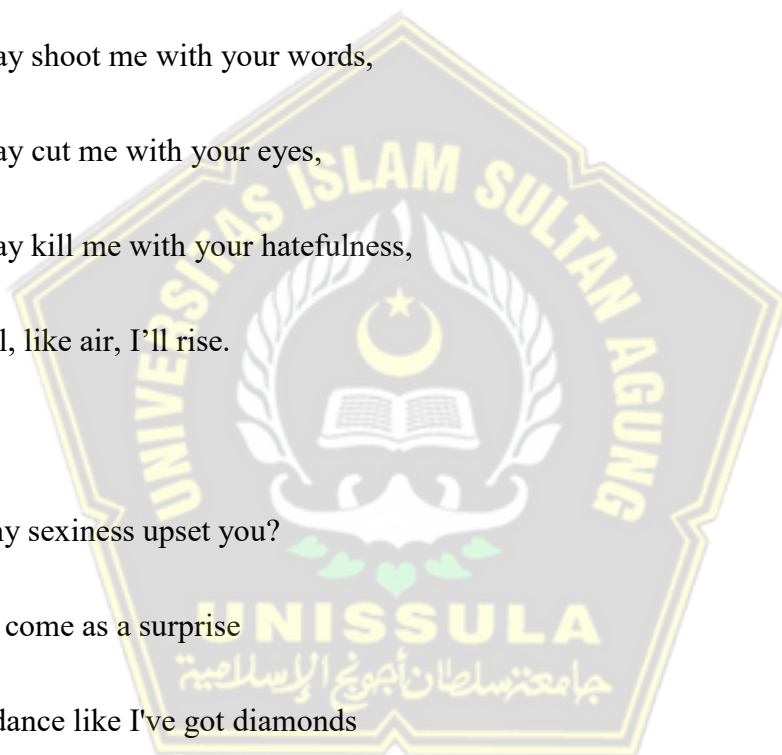
That I dance like I've got diamonds

At the meeting of my thighs?

Out of the huts of history's shame

I rise

Up from a past that's rooted in pain



I rise

I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide,

Welling and swelling I bear in the tide.

Leaving behind nights of terror and fear

I rise

Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear

I rise

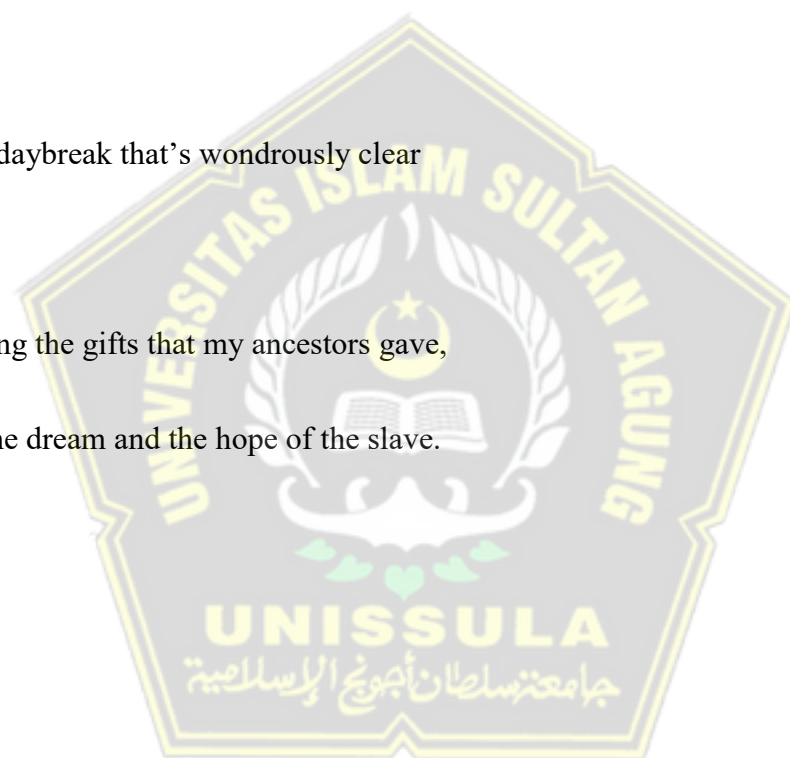
Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,

I am the dream and the hope of the slave.

I rise

I rise

I rise.



## **A.2 Maya Angelou "Alone"**

"Alone" is a free verse poem by Maya Angelou. The poem was posted in her book titled; *"Oh Pray My Wings Are Gonna Fit Me Well"* in 1975. "Alone" represents the voice of African Americans that gets racial discrimination by the whites. The immediate past in Alone is 1930's. During that time there was racial discrimination and segregation especially in the South. Blacks were treated unfairly

and sentenced death because of a conflict on a trial between blacks and whites during that time of racial discrimination. Maya Angelou puts her feeling about it in her poem, *Alone*. Although, black always treated meaningless, they are no entirely lose their struggle for their freedom.

### **“Alone”**

**by Maya Angelou (1975)**

Lying, thinking

Last night

How to find my soul a home

Where water is not thirsty

And bread loaf is not stone

I came up with one thing

And I don't believe I'm wrong

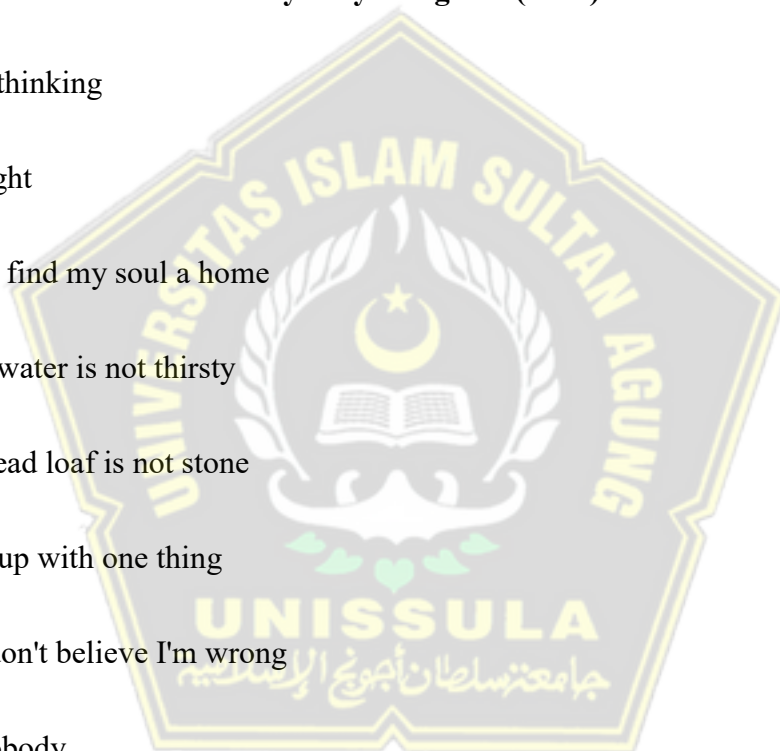
That nobody,

But nobody

Can make it out here alone.

Alone, all alone

Nobody, but nobody





Can make it out here alone.

There are some millionaires

With money they can't use

Their wives run round like banshees

Their children sing the blues

They've got expensive doctors

To cure their hearts of stone.

But nobody

No, nobody

Can make it out here alone.

Alone, all alone

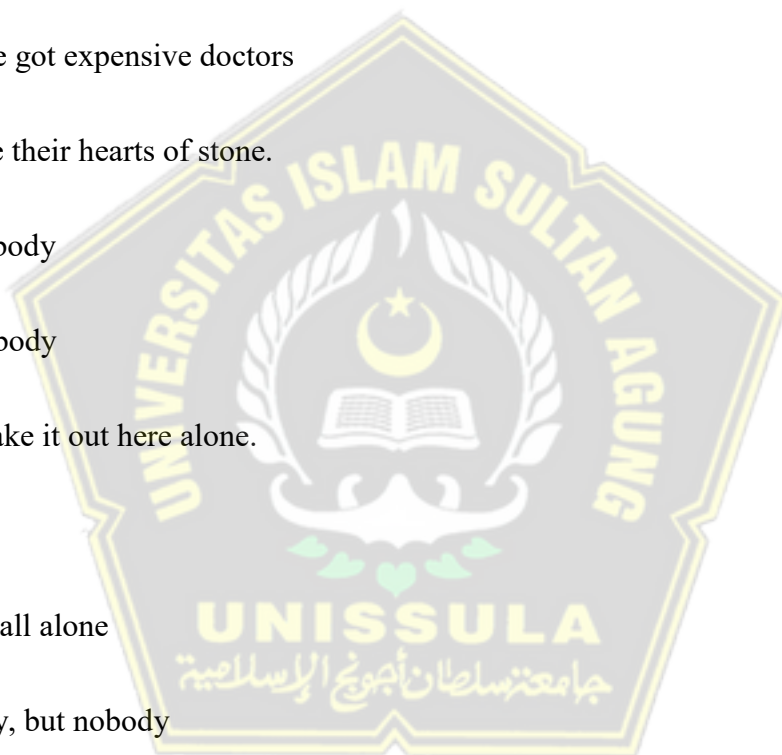
Nobody, but nobody

Can make it out here alone.

Now if you listen closely

I'll tell you what I know

Storm clouds are gathering



The wind is gonna blow  
The race of man is suffering  
And I can hear the moan,  
'Cause nobody,  
But nobody  
Can make it out here alone.

Alone, all alone  
Nobody, but nobody  
Can make it out here alone.

### **A.3 Maya Angelou “Caged Bird”**

*"Caged Bird"* is an example of Maya Angelou's free verse poem. The poem was posted in Maya Angelou Shaker's poetry book titled "Why Don't You Sing?" in 1983 with another poems. In this poem, ‘*Caged Bird*’ means Black African-Americans. Caged Bird represents the suffering of the black race and the unhappiness of love in both the struggle of black people against oppression and discrimination.

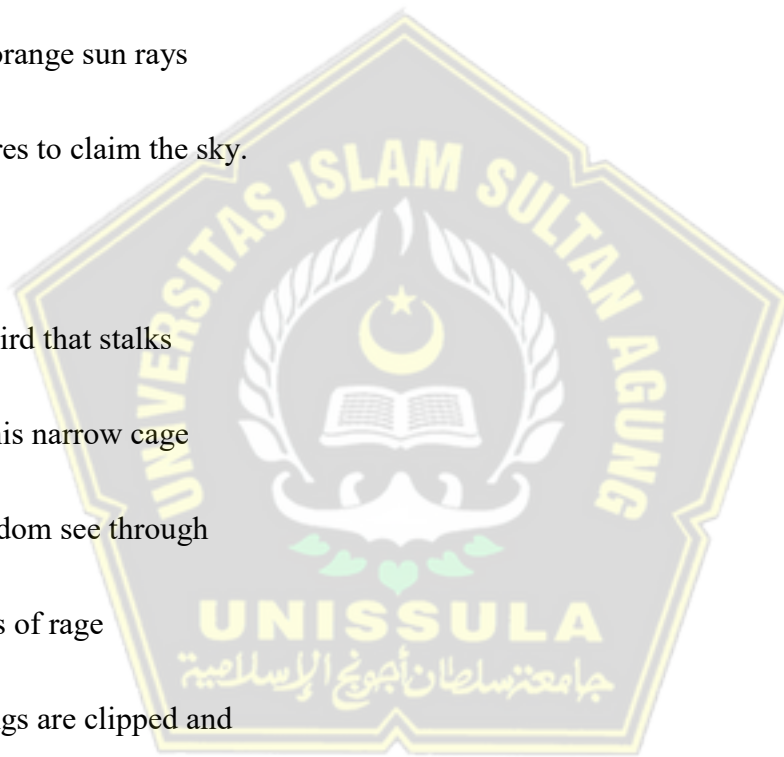
### **“Caged Bird”**

**by Maya Angelou (1983)**

A free bird leaps  
on the back of the wind  
and floats downstream  
till the current ends  
and dips his wing  
in the orange sun rays  
and dares to claim the sky.

But a bird that stalks  
down his narrow cage  
can seldom see through  
his bars of rage  
his wings are clipped and  
his feet are tied  
so he opens his throat to sing.

The caged bird sings  
with a fearful trill



of things unknown  
but longed for still  
and his tune is heard  
on the distant hill  
for the caged bird  
sings of freedom.

The free bird thinks of another breeze  
and the trade winds soft through the sighing trees  
and the fat worms waiting on a dawn bright lawn  
and he names the sky his own.

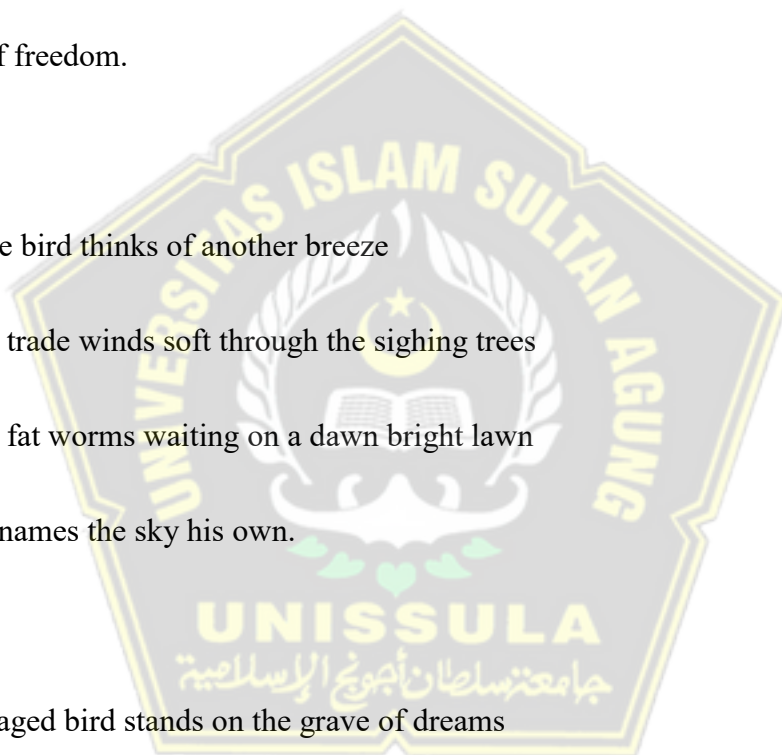
But a caged bird stands on the grave of dreams

his shadow shouts on a nightmare scream

his wings are clipped and his feet are tied

so he opens his throat to sing.

The caged bird sings



with a fearful trill  
of things unknown  
but longed for still  
and his tune is heard  
on the distant hill  
for the caged bird  
sings of freedom.

## **B. Review of Related Literature**

### **B.1 Definition of Racial Discrimination**

"Discrimination is defined as the distinct treatment of people because of their membership in a certain social group" (Fershtman et al. 371). Simple definition, Racial discrimination is defined as the treatment of individuals or groups unfairly because of their race or origin. "Racial discrimination refers to how races are treated unequally, whereas racial inequality refers to how races are treated unequally (in income, education, health, etc.)" (Clair & Denis 857). Thus, discrimination might be defined as the treatment of some groups at the expense of others based on certain characteristics. Persons or groups who discriminate against other individuals or groups have an unfair or imbalanced attitude, conduct, and action.

There is also a definition of discrimination, which is defined as an act or treatment that represents an unfairness to specific persons or groups as a result of the existence of special qualities possessed by individuals or groups. This happens because humans generally have a tendency to discriminate or group themselves.

Discrimination usually happens when someone cannot manage their bad emotions and feelings, or when they believe that their negative emotions and feelings are no longer able to conquer their hatred of others. According to Fernandez and Alsaïd "Harassment, denial of employment, undervaluation, and other forms of unfair treatment are all examples of racial discrimination. Between races, biological or genetic differences do not exist. This leads to inequality" (57).

Racial discrimination happens when someone treats another person unfairly, denies them luck, and harasses and insults them because of their race, color, or ethnicity. "Racial discrimination is defined as the segregation, rejection, moderation or advantage of people because of their race, color, ancestry, nation or ethnic origin. It aims to harm other groups, to deny pleasure and to deny equality or human rights and freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural and other spheres of public life" (National Action Plan to combat Racism, Racial discrimination, Xenophobia, and Related Intolerance 6). Racial discrimination occurs when someone is treated unfairly because of their color. Racial discrimination can happen as a result of a conscious or unconscious attitude that sets a person on a lesser level because of their race or ethnicity.

People of various races may have distinct perspectives and prejudices against toward others based on their race. This mindset has the potential to lead to racial discrimination. “Racial discrimination is a mindset in which some races believe they are more powerful and superior to others” (Ogene, Anyawu, Ojiaku, 2017, p. 344). This circumstance left the minority group in a unfavorable position, which they were frequently subjected to unequal treatment and unfairness from society.

As most people are aware, America is a culturally diverse civilization comprised of individuals of numerous races and ethnicities, including Europeans, Africans, Arabs, Chinese, Asians, and others. Some citizens of the United States welcome immigrants and minorities, while others do not. According to research, African Americans are the ones that face racial discrimination (Burt 1). Because of their ethnic and racial differences, they are subjected to unfair treatment and unfavorable actions by white people. “Being black in American society means always being aware of anti-black activities by white people in most places and at different times of the day, week, month or season. From the cradle to the grave means to be black to be subjected to various kinds of racial discrimination.” (Feagin, 187).

Burt states that “someone who is unprepared to deal with racism is unprepared to deal with the discrimination they will certainly face in America” (117). It is undeniable that being black and a minority in America necessitates anticipating anti-black acts by white people. This condition may have an impact on their life prospects and daily activities. They must expect various forms of racial



prejudice in most places and at many times. (Feagin 187). For example, when colored people do not allow them to go out at night in some part of America, because they live in anti-black society.

According to Compasito, people discriminate for a variety of reasons, including ignorance, bias, and negative bias. Because most people are afraid to accept the unexpected or the unknown, especially when it comes to appearance, culture or behavior. They will respond with inhuman violence and torture. Historically, racism has been based on a strong sense of superiority. This concept is used to justify and discriminate against marginalized people. They speak of racial discrimination. This is referred to as racial discrimination (225).

A person with weak emotions can only produce moderate discrimination, such as evasion. Meanwhile, stronger emotions, such as a desire to insult the outgroup, might lead to discrimination, and these feelings will grow to aid the outgroup because loss and gain are not available to the in-groups" (Dovidio, 9).

Racial discrimination occurs when one group or individual receives unequal treatment because of their race from another group or individual. Not only that, but discrimination can arise from anything when people disobey the rules that have been established. The second aspect of the discrimination notion is when people do not intend to make a decision, resulting in discriminatory treatment as a result (Pager and Shepherd 182). Still in Pager and Shepherd's journal, Kessler et al states that, "a person who receives a lot of discrimination treatment has increased anxiety, sadness, unhealthy outcomes and other negative effects" (183).

Discrimination can take the form of an action that is damaging to the target group. Racial discrimination can also be demonstrated by someone being treated unfairly by others because of their race. This treatment is manifested not only in their actions, but also in their verbal assaults and mockery of the target group (Yip et al. 788). The following explanation will focus solely on racial discrimination, as this research focuses on the manifestation of racial prejudice portrayed in three selected poems of Maya Angelou.

#### **B.1.1 Review of African American's Condition During Twentieth Century**

The writer used Maya Angelou's poems "Still I Rise", "Alone", and "Caged Bird" to better comprehend the plight of African Americans during the twentieth century and what relates to Maya Angelou's productive years as a poet. The writer should know the African-Americans records in the United States to illustrate relevant issues of the time. Angelou lived in the United States during the twentieth century, at a time when there was racial discrimination against African-Americans. African Americans in America came from a variety of backgrounds and political perspectives. In the early twentieth century, black people faced a lot of discrimination in America.

Racial discrimination becomes the major issue in America in twentieth century. In the North and South, the first-two decades of the 20th century have been the worst for African-Americans. "Many black people in the Northern and the Southern suffer the torments of liberation because they suffer from racial prejudice

and discrimination that demeans them and hinders their economic development” (Link and Link, 1983, p. 14).

Meltzer says that Africans had been subjected to injustice long before World War I. The Dutch transported Africans to Virginia in 1619. In the slave trade, people were dragged there against their will. They were farmers, traders and free hunters, as well as musicians and dancers, princesses and even warriors in their homeland. Because they would give a huge advantage to their boss, black people were physically and psychologically prepared to become slaves. They were enslaved and bound by someone who intended to sell them into slavery in the future. It turned out that they were physically suitable for cultivation. More people desired to buy slaves as more Africans became slaves. Slaves were kidnapped as a result of this situation. Rather than being slaves, some Africans drowned themselves in the ocean.

During 1641, there were many regulations that defined those who were deemed slaves. Slavery is defined by a set of regulations that control who is and is not allowed to be enslaved. Whites should not be slaves, according to the white governing class. Whites could be compelled to work, but they couldn't be slaves. As a result, African Americans were thought to be the most vulnerable to enslavement (Hine & Thompson, 1999, p. 15). They are unable to express themselves due to their slavery. They had to face the consequences if they rebelled or desired to be free (Meltzer, 1987, p.41).

In 1861 until 1865, there was a war again. It's known as the American Civil War. Slavery was one of the factors that led to the Civil War. When the northern countries began to abolish slavery, the southern countries were opposed to the idea. They did not want to liberate the slaves because the south's economy was so reliant on agriculture. African Americans made up more than half of the population in the south. As a result, the South was able to produce vast amounts of cotton. In less than a month after president Abraham Lincoln was elected, the conflict started. The conflict took place for about four years. The North prevailed the war. After the Civil War, slavery was abolished (Whitney & Click, pp. 76-94).

Although black people had gained their independence, they were not totally free. The black codes were implemented in the southern states following the civil war. These laws made it illegal for African Americans to vote, attend public school, own a gun, or have equal rights under the law. As a result, black codes began to take the place of slave codes. White Americans were treated better than black African Americans. Despite the fact that African Americans were still regarded too ignorant to govern (Meltzer, 90-94).

According to Milton Meltzer's *The Black American*, "by 1900, the white supremacist myth had become a national belief that the black race was inherently inferior. Newspapers and literary magazines such as the *New York Times* and *Harper* have even performed a role in crimes involving black people. Criminals describe the superiority of blacks and whites as stupid, stupid, evil and lazy, stupid, thieves and liars" (143-144).

In 1890, there was a law known as the "Jim Crow Laws". In this law permits states to dissociate whites and blacks on the basis of race. They segregated public amenities including schools, trains, and even drinking fountains. African Americans lost their freedom once again because of Jim Crow. In order to vote, they had to take a test (Wiegand, 198-199).

There are so many African Americans had been hanged after the Jim Crow Assassination. In 1905, thirty black men, including William Edward Burghart Dubois, gathered at Niagara Falls. Together they organized protests against the unequal treatment of black people (Meltzer, 1987, pp. 148-149). Subsequently, Du Bois formed a group to help African Americans gain civil rights. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is a non-profit organization that works to improve the lives of people of color (Grant, 1968, pp. 175-177).

## **B.2 The Struggle**

A struggle is an attempt to overcome obstacles in order to get or accomplish something. Someone uses his or her energy and mind to struggle. According to Panda, "struggle is related to every living being on this planet. Being born into this world forces people to fight because life has two phases: one filled with happiness and the other appearing to be difficult. Struggle can provide an opportunity to grow and progress" (4).

This study is refers to the struggles of black African Americans against racial discrimination. The purpose of the struggle of African Americans is to

achieve freedom. According to Aguirre and Turner, “Discrimination often forces us to respond and conform to its goals. Everyone is fighting racism. These are organized demonstrations aimed at fighting for equality. Passive acceptance, marginal participation, assimilation, alienation and separation are people's reactions to discrimination” (25). An example of African American struggle can be found in the American poet Maya Angelou in her poem *“Still I Rise”*, *“Alone”* and *“Caged Bird”*.

The struggle might be caused by the oppression. Oppression and discrimination result in struggle for those who have been oppressed or discriminated against. It shows that people are always willing to defend themselves against oppression. People express their struggles in a variety of ways. The will to overcome obstacles in order to obtain something is the most crucial aspect of struggle. Based on Panda, “struggle is about hard work” (2010, para.8).

## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH METHOD**

The third chapter discusses research methodology. It is a method of research that used to collect data that obtained to be analyzed to answer the problem formulation. This chapter will explore three topics: research types, data organization, and data analysis.

#### **A. Types of the Research**

The study is a qualitative research. Qualitative research is defined in two ways. The first is the method, as well as its scope. Such as the use of terms to define the type of data that is collected and analyzed. Secondly, epistemological and ontological hypotheses are put forward. This shows that qualitative research is based on real work. According to Crescentini and Mainardi, "researchers must communicate through texts to find deeper meanings from the text, not the interactions of researchers in the field, since the data does not exist in nature" (431).

#### **B. Data Organizing**

##### **B.1 Data Collecting Method**

The data collection process, which is analyzed in different ways, is referred to as the data collection method. The data collection methods are divided into four steps:



### **B.1.1 Reading the Poems**

The first step in collecting data is to read the poems. By reading the three selected poems of Maya Angelou for several times becomes the easiest way to obtain the main point and gain a thorough comprehension of the poems' content.

### **B.1.2 Identifying the Data**

After reading the poems, the second stage is to identify the data. The study identifies the data by pointing some of the poems that will be analyzed. It is accomplished by making notes on significant parts, underlining, assigning codes, and highlighting certain areas of the object, which can include sentences, stanzas, and lines.

### **B.1.3 Classifying the Data**

After identifying the data, the third step the third step is to categorize / classifying the data. The data which inncludes stanza, sentences, and line are categorized according to the object of the study. The classified data are put into a table called appendices. In chapter four, the data in the appendices will be discussed. The appendices contain data taken from the poems, which are statements made by the characters in the poem to persuade the reader to agree to the study. The form of appendices might take the numbers, data formats, data sources, comments, and references.

#### **B.1.4 Reducing the Data**

After classifying the data, the last step is reducing / minimizing from a large to a small number. In reducing data, applicable technique would be used to answer the problems. This step will be the most effective way to reduce the data that are unnecessary.

#### **B.2 Types of the Data**

There are types of the data of this study which consists into two categories. First, the primary data is the main source of information. The second type is secondary data, used to support primary data.

The first consists of primary data, the main source being three poems by Maya Angelou: "Still I Rise", "Alone" and "Caged Bird". Source content, such as sentences, stanzas, and verses, can be used as proof.

The second type is secondary data used to support the data. It refers to information gleaned from sources such as international journals, essays, theses, websites, and online magazines that are relevant to the theory used in the study.

#### **B.3 Analyzing Data**

The last step of this study is analyzing data. It is a process that includes data analysis and reporting the data. The researcher will utilize a qualitative method to analyze data by reading the poems. To analyze the data, the researcher will employ the Racial Discrimination theory. The data

are taken from the poems such as sentence, stanza and lines. The analyzed data reported in chapter four of this study, it is finding and discussion.



## CHAPTER IV

### FINDING AND ANALYSIS

This chapter attempts to analyze three selected poems of Maya Angelou; “*Still I Rise*”, “*Alone*”, and “*Caged Bird*”. This chapter is consists of some sub-chapters that will respond the problem formulations mentioned in the first chapter. The chapter has two main points, the first point talks about racial discrimination experienced by Black African-American people and the last point talks about the struggle of African-American people facing racial problems for their freedom who described in Maya Angelou’s three selected poems.

#### A. Racial Discrimination In Maya Angelou’s Three Selected Poems

Racial discrimination has been an important issue since the colonial era. Historically, racial discrimination happened in America, especially toward African-Americans. The African-Americans as a minority group in America, have less power and a lower position in society. From the description of racial discrimination, this study comes to find that Maya Angelou’s three selected poems imply the racial discrimination.

##### A.1 “*Still I Rise*” Poem

African-Americans faced many problems in society, as depicted in the poem “*Still I Rise*”. It is tells about black African-Americans who experienced injustice and discrimination issues by whites during the slavery era

The author describes the problem she is facing, regarding her painful past history, in which society has invented stories about black African Americans. It is

describes in the first stanza, the author shows that she always discriminated by society. She is often mistreated by others because of her different skin color.

***You may write me down in history***

***With your bitter, twisted lies,***

***You may trod me in the very dirt* (Still I Rise, lines 1-3)**

The word 'you' referred to a group of people who dislikes African-Americans. In the lines one and two, "*You may write me down in history, with your bitter twisted lies*", the author tells about her story during the slavery era in the past. The author shows the history of black African-Americans as one of lies and silent discrimination. It emphasizes that the unreal facts are full of anger and hatred feeling which all says is a lie. The word 'bitter' that is mentioned in the second line is like causing pain for the blacks as the racial object. The author tries to tell how the oppressors strive to make her meaningless as a human and look horrible. The author also shows that hatred emotions bring treatment to the blacks like dirt. As mentioned by Blank, Dabady, and Citro in their Measuring Racial Discrimination "Racial discrimination as a differential treatment on the basis of race that disadvantages a racial group and treatment on the basis of inadequately justified factors other than race that disadvantages a racial group" (55). Furthermore, the example of Racial discrimination is also shown in line 5:

***Does my sassiness upset you?* (Still I Rise, Line 5)**

In this line, the author used 'sassiness' to mean that black woman is outside of society's standard. The author asks whether the confidence of blacks makes the

whites unhappy since the position of blacks is lower than the whites in white's perspective because the blacks are inferior and the whites are superior. Moreover, the author poses a question to the oppressors. The problems faced by the author in society can be seen in lines thirteen to sixteen.

***Did you want to see me broken?***

***Bowed head and lowered eyes?***

*Shoulders falling down like teardrops,*

*Weakened by my soulful cries? (Still I Rise, lines 13-16)*

In those lines, the author addresses the problem of hatred against black African Americans in society. She wonders why they want to see her broken. Because they hate their race if they are the same as people who live in the same country. The hatred of society can be seen in lines thirteen and fourteen: "Do you want to see me broken? Bowed head and lowered eyes?" It shows that the oppressors hated black people and wanted to dismiss them as unworthy. In the following lines, the hatred of the oppressors is reinforced.

***You may shoot me with your words,***

***You may cut me with your eyes,***

***You may kill me with your hatefulness, (Still I Rise, lines 21-23)***

In the lines twenty-one and twenty-two "You may shoot me with your words, you may cut me with your eyes," the author tells her experiences as an African-American woman. It can be seen that the oppressors always assault the author mentally not physically. So that the author feels depressed and is discriminated only with words and gaze.

Moreover, in the line twenty-two, "cut me with your eyes" shows that society sees African-American woman as a crime. Society imagined that blacks were people who are always there to commit crimes or do bad things. Blacks have always been despised because they are capable only of dishonorable jobs, such as slaves or prostitutes. Also, in twenty-three line "you may kill me with your hatefulness" shows that what society treats blacks deep inside will kill them from the inside out. They also kill the author's self-confidence and personality, leaving her without the security and strength to live her life. It is clear that in "*Still I Rise*" poem the author tries to portray the resilience of black people in response to racial discrimination and injustice.

## **A.2 "Alone" Poem**

The title of the poem is kind to represent the author's feelings. She feels alone because she cannot find love and peace in the place where she lives. This is represented in the first stanza.

*Lying, thinking*

*Last night*

***How to find my soul a home***



*Where water is not thirsty (Alone, lines 1-4)*

Firstly, this stanza begins with the activities by the author; '*Lying, thinking*'. These activities are showing that she has spare time and time to relax. Continuing to the next line shows what the author wishes to be. She wants to find a place called home. The author put the word 'home' to emphasize peace and love. In this poem, the author considers finding a home for the soul, a place where she feels comfortable.

The black's soul rejects to live in their body as it is a shame to live as 'black'. In other words, it can be said that the author does not feel comfortable, and does not feel peace and love in the place where she lived. The word 'home' presented in the stanza above also represents America as their home. However, the black is disappointed with their country which mistreats the black. "Bad regulations in the society put black people in unlucky condition. Black people realize that they are the victims of racial discrimination in many places." (Brown:2004)

*That nobody,*

*But nobody (Alone, lines 8-9)*

In lines 8 to 9, the speaker puts the word 'nobody' which means no one or someone is not important. In line 8, it refers to 'no one' while in line 9 it refers to someone not important. From this point, it can be concluded that no one can help to pursue her desire to find love and peace rather than her own society. It is true because people sometimes feel comfortable and safe when he or she is close to their society. She feels alone because she cannot find love and peace in the place where



she lives, America. To emphasize her feeling, the author mentions it about three times in the second stanza.

***Nobody, but nobody*** (*Alone*, line 12)

It is clear to see that the author feels lonely because her environment today is different from her old environment or she feels alone because she gets separated from her society. This thing is undeniable because Africans have lived separately from their family since they were taken from their villages and lived as slaves in the New World. According to DeFord :

New World slavery deeply affected both Africa and the Americas. African society changed dramatically when the Atlantic slave trade began to carry so many Africans away. Some African societies were weakened by the regular buying or kidnapping of valued community members (6).

Based on DeFord's statement, shows that slavery is changing African life. It means that slavery is not only about human trading, but also the transformation of Africa's new life in the New World.

The third stanza of *Alone* is portraying how suffering African-Americans because of racial discrimination. This stanza tells about the condition of African families.

***With money they can't use***

***Their wives run round like banshees***

***Their children sing the blues*** (*Alone*, lines 15-17)

In the first line of the third stanza, the author mentions that there are some millionaires. It means that not all blacks live in poverty. However, they can not use the money properly. It is because many people still underestimate them because they are black. Also, those people have negative perspectives about the way the blacks get the money; rob the store, sell drugs, and so on. “Because of the group separations based on the race, it puts white people in the lucky condition. They have privileges that black people cannot possess. The white people have the right to a good position in the government, economy, and also educational aspects. It is quite different from black. They cannot have those rights because of their condition.” (Hunter 240)

In the next line, the author puts the word ‘wives’ and ‘children’ which tell the condition of each family member. It states that the blacks’ wives are like banshees. The word ‘wives’ does not only refer to a man that married but also to the heart of the family which takes care of the whole family. “Banshees is a female spirit in traditional Irish stories whose crying sound tells you that someone in your family is going to die” (Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, 2008) It feels that the blacks’ wives are portrayed as the grim reaper which is ready to take people’ soul every time they want. Come to this point, shows that the picture of an African family from many people’s point of view is appropriate to figure out the grim reaper. It is because the color of their skin are black.

In the next line, it states that the black children sing the blues. Here, blues is a music genre that is born and grown in the African-American society. The sound

in blues is mostly full of sadness, gloom, bad luck, and any other hard feelings. Moreover, Kopp stated that,

The blues has deep roots in American history, particularly African-American history. The blues originated on Southern plantations in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Its inventors were slaves, ex-slaves, and the descendants of slaves African-American sharecroppers who sang as they toiled in the cotton and vegetable fields. It's generally accepted that the music involved from African spirituals, African chants, work songs, field hollers, rural fife and drum music, revivalist hymns, and country dance music (3).

It can be concluded that if the black children sing the blues, they must be feeling sad. By singing the blues song, the author wants to show that the African-American children also have deep feelings about something. It can be their family life, racial discrimination that they get in their school, or the feeling that they are different because of the color of their skin.

### **A.3 “Caged Bird” Poem**

In the poem “*Caged Bird*”, the word ‘bird’ by denotation means an animal with wings that are able to fly, but by connotation, it suggests freedom and independence. In this poem, caged bird means the blacks while free bird means the whites. The following stanzas show the white’ strategies to maintain their position. The first thing they do to the blacks is by making limitations for African-Americans to advance their lives.

***Down his narrow cage***

***Can seldom see through***

***His bar of rage*** (*Caged Bird*, lines 9-11)

Those lines introduces the caged bird which represents the black. This bird is not free since it lives inside a cage. The word ‘cage’ represents the imaginary boundaries made by the superior group that prevents or stops the African-American space to move. This cage consists of bars which do not only limit its movement but also obstruct its sight. Furthermore, the ‘bird’ in this stanza pointing to someone or a group of people who do not have the power to act, speak or do anything they want to do. In lines 3 to 4, “*can seldom see through*”, “*his bar of rage*” describes the bird’s feeling. It feels angry about the treatment from its master but nothing it can do to show its feeling.

***His wings are clipped and***

***His feet are tied*** (*Caged Bird*, lines 12-13)

In the line twelve “*his wings are clipped and*” and line thirteen “*his feet are tied*” becomes worst when its wings are clipped and the feet are tied. It is because of clipping wings and tying feet are still added to complete the suffering. That condition emphasized how limited African-Americans were to move. “Because of the group separations based on the race, it puts white people in the lucky condition. They have privileges that black people cannot possess. The white people have the right to a good position in the government, economy, and also educational aspects.

It is quite different from blacks. They cannot have those rights because of their condition.” (Hunter 240)

***But a caged bird stands on the grave of dreams***

***His shadow shouts on a nightmare scream*** (Caged Bird, lines 27-28)

In line twenty-seven, the word ‘dreams’ is the object of being buried which means that the dreams are dead. At this point, the dead is articulated as unreachable. Locking the bird inside the cage means killing her dreams to live freely. ‘*His shadow shouts on a nightmare scream*’ implies resistance from the caged bird. However, the line “*his shadow shouts on a nightmare scream*” implies the anxiety. The caged bird experiences a dilemma; knowing that it is unfair to live under racial prejudices while his powerless condition. “Blackness is still the main ‘criterion’ of a ‘lower’ racial origin. The ancient environmental meaning of black skin as being caused by sunlight is diffused together with the meaning of black as negation, death, bad nature and even illness” (Hrabovsky 85).

**B. The Struggle of Black African-Americans Face Racial Discrimination**

After analyzing the practices of racial discrimination experienced in Maya Angelou’s three selected poems, this chapter discusses about Maya Angelou’s struggle against the practice of racial discrimination. In poetry, Maya Angelou tries to portray the struggle against racial discrimination that hit her. It also reflects the lives of African-Americans in the United States.

As Aguirre and Turner states, discrimination often forces the target to respond and adapt. Everyone has their struggle against racial discrimination. It can be

organized protests to fight for equality. The extreme ones are rebellion and revolt against the superordinate ethnic groups. Moreover, acts like passive acceptance, marginal participation, assimilation, withdrawal, and self-segregation are also the responses that someone has while dealing with discrimination (25).

### **B.1 “*Still I Rise*” Poem**

In Maya Angelou’s “*Still I Rise*”, the author shows her confidence struggle against racial discrimination. In this poem, the author who is African-American wants to remind readers that African-Americans will not remain silent about the injustice they have endured. It also shows that the blacks try to ignore what other people think and comment about them. They believed in themselves.

*Just like moons and like suns,*

*With the certainty of tides*

*Just like hopes springing high*

*Still I’ll rise* (*Still I Rise*, lines 9-12)

Firstly, line 9 describes that the sun and the moon are counterparts and they have their own rotation. When thinking about the sun, the moon is automatically coming to the mind. Mostly, people like the sun because it is very convenient for human life as it helps to grow the plants. Meanwhile, people have a little awareness about the play of the moon. They only know the moon appears at night and lights the world. This statement brings a thought that the moon is a black one as no one and the white people as someone.

In the next line, it explains that the moon has the part to help the rise and the fall of the sea. This tide also helps the fisherman to decide the right time to sail. The other special things about the moon are people can see whether it is a crescent, full or new moon. It means that the moon is as worthy as the sun. However, the sun cannot do like the moon, and even though it is useful for humans; they cannot see the sun because the shine is too bright. It also explains that every person already has his or her own place, which means when someone has his or her own chance and ability, it is not appropriate to become an obstacle for others because they also have their own.

In the eleventh line, it mentions “*Just like hopes springing high*”. It describes the confidence of African-Americans in their ability. Even though people seem to doubt them, they have a belief in themselves, she will rise very high with hopes that no one ever wish. In the twelfth line ‘*Still I’ll rise*’, shows that even though African-Americans face hardship in life, they will stand up, over and over again.

***But still, like air, I’ll rise (Still I Rise, line 24)***

In twentieth-four line, the author shows that she can remain strong and handle these conditions like air. No matter how hard the oppressors tried to bring her down, she proved her strength. As a blacks, she could survive in a difficult society.

***Out of the huts of history’s shame***

***I rise***



***Up from a past that's rooted in pain***

***I rise*** (*Still I Rise*, lines 29-32)

In those lines, the author shows to the oppressors that she is powerful and she wants to move forward from the past. She explains that she has put her shame behind her, suffered in the past, and made history. She did not assume it because she rose from the dead and left her history behind and rose from a painful past. She has risen, lives in the present and forgets her past.

***I'm black ocean, leaping and wide***

***Welling and swelling I bear in the tide*** (*Still I Rise*, lines 33-34)

The words "black", "leaping", and "wide" in line thirty-three are all related. The author tries to portray her as a powerful and wonderful woman. At high tide, the ocean welling and swelling. It meant that, in good or bad conditions, it would rise and continue like an ocean whose waves rise and sometimes become larger than normal as the ocean rises and falls. In the last stanza, she expresses the feeling that she is moving from sorrow and darkness to the hope of a new happy life free of the hardships and injustices standing in the way of her freedom.

***Leaving behind nights of terror and fear***

***I Rise***

***Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear***

***I rise***



***Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,***

***I am the dream and the hope of the slave. (Still I Rise, lines 35-40)***

In the last stanza, it can be seen that instead of being shameful, Maya Angelou seems to be proud of herself and her society's history which is the slaves. "Leaving behind the nights of terror and fear" put meaning that African-Americans today do not insult many people's thoughts and opinions. She leaves behind the night of terror and fear for a bright dawn devoid of terror and fear. In the next line, Maya Angelou explicitly mentions "*I am the dream and the hope of the slave*". She does not deny that her ancestor is slaves. Here, she declares that even the past African-Americans were slaves, but today they will surprise many people by becoming an important people and fighting for her dream that she wants to be free.

***I rise***

***I rise***

***I rise (Still I Rise, lines 41-43)***

The last, the author uses repetitions in this poem to indicate that despite having faced so many problems throughout her life, she was eventually able to rise above and overcome them. The author describes in the last stanza that she will survive regardless of the circumstances. She strengthens her idea that she will not give up to stand above her difficulties by repeating "I rise," "I rise," "I rise" in lines forty through forty-three. The author expresses her self-confidence and passion. She explains that no matter how difficult the obstacles were for her, she refused to touch the ground because the outcome would always be the same. She repeats the words

"I rise" to express her determination to struggle against discrimination and oppression. She also hopes to motivate others to never give up on their goals. The author struggles for her rights as a human being, just like she does in this poem.

## **B.2 “*Alone*” Poem**

Maya Angelou’s “*Alone*” is also portraying how African-Americans struggle against racial discrimination. Nevertheless, as stated by Collins “Struggle as the action to fight eagerly with opposite things to make a value in striving, the difficulty that must be going through.” (746)

***Storm clouds are gathering***

***The wind is gonna blow*** (*Alone*, lines 28-29)

In the line ‘Storm clouds are gathering’ the black tells the white that there will be a disaster since the black sees the storm clouds are gathering. In the next line, ‘*the wind is gonna blow*’ represents African-Americans in huge numbers who have the same vision to gain their rights and stop racial discrimination. The author is also portraying that the change in African-American’s condition is like a strong wind that blows. Black nearly catch their endurance limit and are ready to obviously shows their anger. The black does not merely give information but a warning for the white.

***Nobody, but nobody***

***Can make it out here alone*** (*Alone*, lines 32-33)

However, the last line ‘*but nobody, cause nobody can make it out here alone*’ shows that the black is not entirely lost their trust in the non-violent vision since the black still believes that freedom and equality are impossible to be reached if the white and the black do not work together to support these goals. And she will fight for her freedom by herself. According to Panda, “struggle is related to every living being on this planet. Being born into this world forces people to fight because life has two phases: one filled with happiness and the other appearing to be difficult. Struggle can provide an opportunity to grow and progress” (4).

### **B.3 “Caged Bird” Poem**

Maya Angelou’s “Caged Bird”, portrays the struggle of Black African-Americans to face racial problems. It tells and compares the life of two kinds of birds; the free bird and the caged bird. The free bird has a good condition rather than the caged one because the free bird can live freely in nature while the caged bird must live in a cage. In the first stanza, the author describes the condition of the free bird that is full of joy and lives freely.

*A free bird leaps*

*on the back of the wind*

*and floats downstream*

*till the current ends*

*and dips his wing*

*in the orange sun rays*

*and dare to claim the sky (Caged Bird, lines 1-7)*

This stanza generally describes a winged animal, a bird, who spends his time leaping on the back of the wind, floating downstream, and dipping his wing in the orange sun rays. The bird can do whatever it wants, flies over here and there flies above the stream, and enjoys the beautiful scenery. The word 'bird' means an animal with wings that are able to fly, it suggests being free and independent. The next line, explains the position of the bird in the back of the wind. It emphasized that the bird does not want to be controlled by the wind. If the bird is in front of the wind, it will go wherever the wind goes, so it cannot go wherever it wants because the wind is able to blow everything away. Freedom lets the bird bravely claim the sky. However, the sky is the biggest and the highest visible object which is impossible to be claimed by anyone or anything except God.

*And his tune is heard*

*On the distant hill*

*For the caged bird*

***Sings of freedom*** (Caged Bird, lines 19-22)

The word 'sings' is an activity chosen by the caged bird as its reaction toward violence and restriction inside the cage. When the caged bird is allowed to sing, it means that this activity is regarded not as a threat to the free bird. Through his singing, the caged bird expresses his protest about his not-free condition. "Human beings always try to find the solution for every barrier in their lives in order to escape from their position as victims." (Tyson 285)

This stanza explains that although the caged bird is in a cage, she still struggles for her freedom. Although she was afraid that her singing would happen, she still wanted to show her enthusiasm by singing, even though her voice was trembling. Surprisingly, her singing voice could be heard from a far. That shows how free she wants to be. Despite all the obstacles that stood in the way of her freedom and insecurity, she continued to struggle for her freedom by singing at the top of her lungs until her voice could be heard in the distance.

*But a caged bird stands on the grave of dreams*

*his shadow shouts on a nightmare scream*

*his wings are clipped and his feet are tied*

***so he opens his throat to sing.*** (*Caged Bird*, lines 27-30)

Those lines continues the previous stanza analyzed in the first problem formulation. The repetition occurs in lines twelve, thirteen and fourteen of the second line and in lines twenty-nine and thirtieth of the fifth line. However, the author uses 'dreams' as the object of being buried which means that the dreams are dead. At this point, the dead is articulated as unreachable. Locking the bird inside the cage means killing his dream to live freely. His shadow shouts in a nightmare scream implies resistance from the caged bird. It means that despite the fact that the trapped bird has given up her dream, she still tries to struggle for her freedom and rights. It shows that caged birds do not give up easily.

In lines twenty-nine and thirty, "his wings are clipped and his feet are tied", "so he opens his throat to sing" describes how the caged bird, while singing,

struggles for her freedom. However, the misery of a caged bird is not only because it is locked in a cage, but also because its wings are clipped and its legs are tied. Despite everything the bird had to endure in the cage, she still showed her passion for freedom. She shows spirit by singing because there is nothing it can do except of singing.



## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This chapter conducts the conclusion of the study which comprises the results of the study, and also the suggestions.

#### A. Conclusion

This study discusses the racial discrimination that African-Americans face in the three selected poems by Maya Angelou. It also found that there are the same problems dealing with racial discrimination in every poem that the author had to face and how the author struggle against the racial discrimination.

Three selected poems of Angelou; "*Still I Rise*", "*Alone*", and "*Caged Bird*" depicts the author as an African-American. In those poems, Maya Angelou describes the black's life is aimless and hopeless, no hope for his or her dream because of racial discrimination that comes toward them. They always get unfairly treatment because of their color. The author also describes that African-Americans also feels lonely because of racial discrimination that comes toward them. Many people think negatively toward them because they are different in any aspect. Moreover, Maya Angelou also shows her struggle face racial discrimination in those poems. She will never give up to solve the problem and change it into her strength. And she will never give up to struggle to gain freedom and better life for herself and fellow African-Americans.

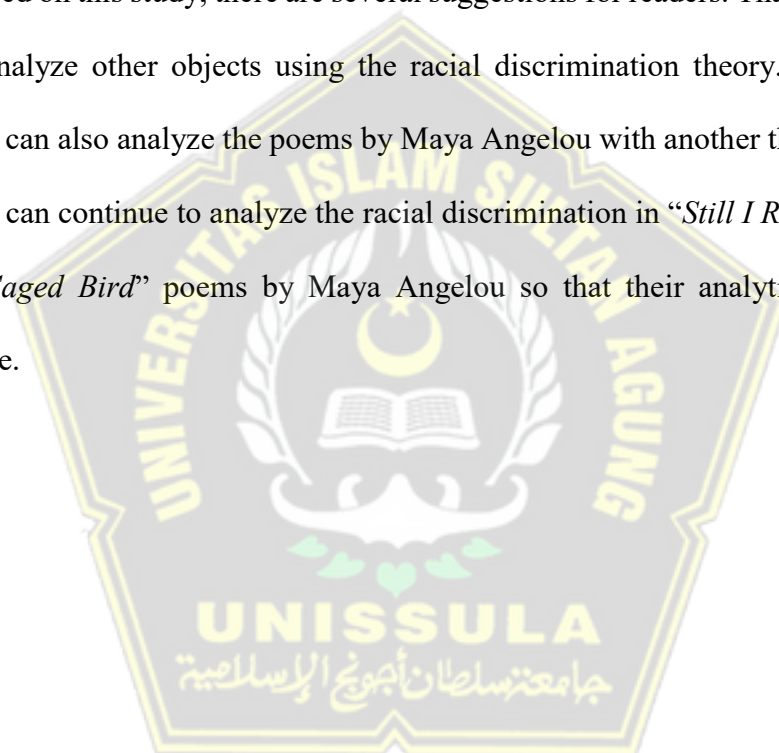
According to the discussion above, this study contains two conclusions. Firstly, this study reveals how racial discrimination is shown in those poetry. This was faced



by the author as black African-American. She always get hatred and unfair treatment by the whites because of their color. Lastly, even though the author always gets racial discrimination, hatred, and unfair treatment, she never gives up to struggle for her freedom and the other African-Americans.

### **B. Suggestion**

Based on this study, there are several suggestions for readers. That is, the reader must analyze other objects using the racial discrimination theory. Furthermore, readers can also analyze the poems by Maya Angelou with another theory. Finally, readers can continue to analyze the racial discrimination in “*Still I Rise*”, “*Alone*”, and “*Caged Bird*” poems by Maya Angelou so that their analytical skills can improve.





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