



**Showing Identity and Proudness as Black Women In Three Poems,
I am a Black Woman (1970) By Mari Evans,
A Woman Speaks (1997) By Audre Lorde,
I am More Than That (2018) By Lindiwe Princess Maseko**

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Abstract

This analysis of the three poems *I am a Black Woman* (1970) by Mari Evans, *A Woman Speaks* (1997) by Audre Lorde, *I am More Than That* (2018) by Lindiwe Princess Maseko are expose the issues about showing identity and proudness as Black women. It is also expose the contribution of poetic elements (speaker, repetition, and tone) in revealing the issues about showing identity and proudness of Black women. This analysis is done by through text-based and context-based interpretation that is related to the concept of power and knowledge by Michel Foucault. The result of this analysis is exposing about the pronouncement of Black women about their identity and their proudness. Showing identity as Black women is live with culture of Black. Showing proudness of being Black women is respecting their original identity as Black.

Keyword: *Black feminist, power and knowledge, Race, Gender, Stereotype.*

A. INTRODUCTION

African nation originally lived in African continent. In 1607 African were trade by white people as slave until 1807 African trade was banned. However, racial differences were felt until around the beginning and middle 20th century, Black people began to rise against discrimination to their tribe. Nowadays Black people free from slavery but the negative stereotype about Black people is still exist even it does not show directly. Many trigger thing to point out to Black people such as language and lifestyle such as *nigger, boo, gonna, wanna*, etc. There are three poem discusses. Every poem explains briefly about showing identity and proudness of being Black women. Those titles of each poem tell continuously about identity and proudness of Black women. The first poem is "I am A Black Woman", it is exposes the identity of African-American women. The

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second poem is “A Woman Speak”, this poem shows the power of African-American women to fight for their right to the authority of white. The last poem is “I Am More Than That”, it is prove to the white people the identity, proudness and power. In this poems also explain about the negative statement of African-American women which create by social.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This analysis of the three poems *I am a Black Woman* (1970) by Mari Evans, *A Woman Speaks* (1997) by Audre Lorde, *I am More Than That* (2018) by Lindiwe Princess Maseko are expose the issues about showing identity and proudness as Black women. It is also expose the contribution of poetic elements (speaker, repetition, and tone) in revealing the issues about showing identity and proudness of Black women. This analysis is done by through text-based and context-based interpretation that is related to the concept of power and knowledge by Michel Foucault. The result of this analysis is exposing about the pronouncement of Black women about their identity and their proudness. Showing identity as Black women is live with culture of Black. Showing proudness of being Black women is respecting their original identity as Black.

In addition, this analysis deals with the Black feminist theory by Alice Walker (1983). For Alice Walker, Black feminist happen because Black woman want equality in their life from the authority of white. In this research, the speakers explains briefly about identity of Black women and prove to white people that Black women are proud of it and can stand up by her own feet.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This chapter discuss about showing identity and proudness of Black women. Showing identity and proudness reveals from the three poems, *I am a Black Woman* (1970) by Mari Evans, *A Woman Speaks* (1997) by Audre Lorde, *I am More Than That* (2018) by Lindiwe Princess Maseko. The speakers of these three poems are Black women. This chapter analyze used by poetic elements of poetry such as speaker, repetition, and tone. These poetic elements reveal the issues about showing identity and proudness of Black women.

2.1 Showing Identity as Black Women

In these three poem *A Woman Speaks* (1997) by Audre Lorde, *I am a Black Woman* (1970) by Mari Evans, *I am More Than That* (2018) by Lindiwe Princess Maseko are discussed about showing identity of Black women. In the past, Black had dark history. In these analysis, speaker in the poems are Black women. In every poems explain briefly about the speaker. In poem *I am a Black Woman* (1970) by Mari Evans, discusses that the speaker is Black woman who explain about their identity as Black women that always get discrimination by White people in the past until nowadays and now they have power to strive for it, it is shows by the quotation:

“I am a Black woman
the music of my song
some sweet arpeggio of tears
is written in a minor key
and I
can be heard humming in the night
Can be heard
humming
in the night”

This quotation explains about identity of Black woman who get discrimination and has to struggle and survive from pain in the past. In the beginning of the first stanza said, that “I am a Black woman” it is shows the good confidence of being Black woman. The speaker shows her identity as Black woman confidently. In this quotation, speaker tells about her identity as a Black woman. It is shows the courage that the speaker has. Support by tone, the first line is the confirmation of the speaker about her identity. The next line, explain about the struggle that confront by Black woman in the history. The word “the music of my song some sweet arpeggio of tears is written in a minor key” is explaining about the pain of being a woman. Woman gets much discrimination in many aspects of life such as relationship, education, work, vote, and speak up in public. It is explaining about the pain, sorrow, and sadness of Black woman that come repeatedly. By using tone, the second line to ninth line is use a sorrow voice to show how bad the experience of Black woman at that time.

This stanza explains about experience of Black woman that live in pain, sadness, and sorrow in history but it is does not make Black woman become hopeless. In opposite, the pain and sorrow teach Black woman to be strong, aware of her and survive from that sadness. The willingness to showing identity of Black women carried out was a movement to speak up and united with all Black women who get discriminate to get more power and get their right properly. This quotation supports by poem *A Woman Speak* (1997) by Audre Lorde, it is show by the quotation:

“I have been woman
for a long time
beware my smile
I am treacherous with old magic
and the noon’s new fury
with all your wide futures
promised
I am
woman
and not White. “

By this quotation, support the quotation before the speaker who shows the identity as a woman and as a Black. The speaker explains that she was born as a Black woman. The speaker confirms the word “I have been woman for a long time” to confirm the identity of the speaker as a woman. It is continuing by the word that “I am woman and not White”, this is to reconfirm that she is a woman and Black and she proud to show her identity to the whole world. By the phrase, “I am

treacherous with old magic and the noon's new fury with all your wide futures" shows the pronouncement about her identity of Black woman to the authority of White that Black woman is has power to stand up and be an honourable. This is explains identity of the Black woman who comes with new idea and new characteristic than before. She is proud of it and show the new face of Black woman. By using tone, this quotation shows the brave and firmness of the speaker that explain about herself. Black woman is has a power to stand up, to fight against the rule that discriminate them, to speak up about their right, and to be equal with White in social life. These are all the pronouncement of Black women about their identity to break the rule of domination of White. It is also support by the poem I am More Than That (2018) by Lindiwe Princess Maseko about the identity of the speaker, it is shows by the quotation:

"In their eyes, I am a young woman
A Black African woman,
An afterthought, a second class
With an identity crisis
From the periphery, from the margins but,
I am more than that!

In their perception, I am ordinary
Very simple and shadowy character
I have a horsy voice
I am not cool but,
I am more than that!

I am immeasurable
Unstoppable and unlimited
Praise is my title
My pride is my value
I am a woman of great valour,
Strong with a supreme character"

Based on the quotation above, the speaker also shows about their identity and power of being Black woman. The speaker repeat the word "woman" it is to point out that the speaker is a woman who get discrimination and underestimate by other but she proud of it and being Black is her identity. The sentence "In their eyes, I am a young woman A Black African woman, An afterthought, a second class With an identity crisis From the periphery, from the margins" explain the discrimination confront by Black woman. Born as Black woman is automatically get the discrimination indirectly. Being Black women is always be second class or low class in White point of view, this is what Black women against and change the stereotype about them by showing their identity and proudness as Black women. In every stanza of this poem are talking about the negative statement of Black women but the speaker always oppose the negative statement of Black women by the sentence "I am more than that!" that repeat by the speaker many times to explain about the real identity of Black women. The tone use in this stanza is brave, strong and powerful to show the conviction of her identity as Black woman. The speaker explains that she is not just an ordinary Black woman,

but she is a great Black woman that lives with pride as Black and as woman. Other quotation support about it, it is shows by the quotation:

“In their eyes, I am Deborah but,
I am more than that!
I am a messenger of change!
I am transforming
I am likened to Eve a sinner but,
I am more than that
I am a helper in creation, I am purposeful!”

This quotation explains briefly about her identity. She is not just Black but also an awesome Black woman. The sentence “I am more than that! I am a messenger of change! I am transforming” explain that she is newborn of Black woman that comes with purpose, honorable, powerful, talented, strong and pretty. Even Black woman gets many discrimination of White such as women are weak, lacking a voice and powerless but by this quotation suggesting that a new Black woman has arrived. Black woman proves and confirms that she is has a power, knowledge and with clearly identity, it is show by the sentence “I am a helper in creation, I am purposeful!” that explain about identity of Black women/ She has special quality, skill, and pride as Black woman. The speaker is introducing as Black woman that can stand on her own feet and equal with White. Black woman nowadays is born with new Black who braves to show up skill and proud of her identity, speak up the idea, stand up in his or her own feet. In this poem, use many repetitions. The word “I am more than that!” is always show in the last of stanza to shows briefly about identity of Black woman. The speaker convinces, confirms and gives statement about her identity. The tone in this stanza is brave and powerful, it is show in the last line using the sign “!” to give stress to the word that the speaker speak briefly.

The ideology about White is superior and Black women are inferior never make Black women down otherwise Black woman are brave to state that she is woman and Black. Black women realize about their identities that always get negative statement about her Black and they want to change it to get equality between Black and White and men and women. Black women want to show their identity as Black that they have the expertise, strength, intelligence that can compete with White people, so that their existence is recognized as great Black women.

2.2 Showing Proudness of Being Black women

Nowadays many Black women can socialize normally with White people in many aspects such as relationship, work, and education. However, White people keep the White privilege. It is been many years since of the slavery time of Black people. They never get truly free from the negative statement of White people. In the poem, I am a Black Woman (1970) by Mari Evans, it is shows the proudness of being Black woman. It is shows by the quotation:

“I am a Black woman
tall as a cypress
strong
beyond all definition still
defying place
and time
and circumstance
assailed
impervious
indestructible
Look
on me and be
renewed”

By this quotation shows the speaker is proud of being Black woman. She confirms about her Black identity. In the first and last line, the speaker shows her identity and her proudness of being Black and woman by the phrase “I am a Black woman tall as a cypress strong”. She gives an order to White people not to underestimate Black women, because Black women have power, knowledge, culture, history and identity to fight back and to be show to the world. This quotation also shows the proudness of Black woman. The speaker tells everything good to describe Blacks, it is show phrase “Assailed impervious indestructible” it explain that Blacks are an extraordinary people with its culture and identity. This statement also support by the poem A Woman Speak (1997) by Audre Lorde about the proudness of being Black woman. It is shows by the quotation:

“Moon marked and touched by sun
my magic is unwritten
but when the sea turns back
it will leave my shape behind.
I seek no favor
untouched by blood
unrelenting as the curse of love
permanent as my errors
or my pride
I do not mix
love with pity
nor hate with scorn
and if you would know me
look into the entrails of Uranus
where the restless oceans pound”

By this quotation, the speaker shows the proudness of being Black woman. She said that Black woman is special. The sentence “my magic is unwritten but when the sea turns back it will leave my shape behind” explain that Black woman has something that other people do not, that is why the speaker confirms Black woman is not people in colour but Black woman has something in her Black. The quotation “and if you would know me look into the entrails of Uranus where the restless oceans pound“ explains to the world that if other people want to know about the Black, the first thing to do is to accept the Black and the history and culture about Black will understand. Even Black woman always get

discrimination but that will make Black woman stronger and more confident that they are special, that is why world especially White give attention to her. Black women do not want to be White because they born as Black and they want live as Black and they are always proud of being Black. The proudness of being Black also support by the poem I Am More Than That (2018) by Lindiwe Princess Maseko. It is shows by the quotation:

“In their context, I am Pricilla but,
Look at me, I preach in deeds
I preach in writing
I am a woman of action!

My face is pale,
They dismiss my ideas
I appear a hidden and not a heroin
I succumb in an unjust society but,
I am energetic I am brilliant!”

This quotation gives explanation that the speaker wants equality with White people. Black women want to show their skill to White people that can compete with them. Beside they have idea, power, and identity as Black. The sentence “In their context, I am Pricilla but, Look at me, I preach in deeds I preach in writing I am a woman of action!” explain that Black women are equal with White. The only thing different is skin colour. The speaker explains that Black women are great, they have something that white people do not. That is why White people always underestimate and press them to make them always in control. The identity as Black is always underestimate and have negative statement but Black woman never ashamed being Black woman otherwise she is challenging to make Black women become honourable and respect by other by showing the ability, history, culture that White people does not have that. In this quotation also give emphasis to the word “woman of action”, it is to show that woman has power to stand up and speak up to get her right. This is also support by the quotation below:

“I am just a woman but,
I am more than that
I am responsible
I am a woman born with unidentified complexion
A woman in a dark continent but,
I take care of that skin and bring light
In darkness
I am worthy, I am, a game changer!

I am a woman from the margins but,
I am strong!
I am the second hidden Hannah,
With an unheard cry prayer
Behind all this effort are hidden tears
Behind this writing is a voice
Coming out soon from me because,

I am more than that!”

This quotation explains about the proudness of Black woman of being Black and being woman. In these stanzas, the speaker repeats the word “I am” to confirm the identity as Black woman. As Black woman, she usually get many negative statements, but the speaker gives brave explanation about her identity and proudness as Black and as woman that Black woman is pretty, strong, powerful, rich of history, rich of culture and being Black is her identity. The sentence “I am a woman born with unidentified complexion A woman in a dark continent but, I take care of that skin and bring light In darkness I am worthy, I am, a game changer!” explain about the proudness of the speaker of Being Black women. This quotation is shows what happen to Black women. The discrimination of colour people still exist even it is not spoken directly but it is always happen to Black women. Based on this quotation, Black women want to be recognized as Black women who become honourable because of their Black so that they are treated the same as White people and get the same rights.

In summary, the whole poems are revealing about the pronouncement about identity and proudness of being Black women. Black women want to show their identity and proudness as Black and as woman. Nowadays many Black women get better life and equality in social life in many aspects such as education, work, vote, relationship and environment. Otherwise, many of them still life below of the authority of White. The next day, Black women will unite to fight for freedom to all of Black women in the whole world to live outside of White domination and out of stereotype that exist so far. The point of showing identity and proudness of Black women is to get equality of Black women about their right in America. Showing identity as Black and women is the way of Black women to recognize their self to public that they are Black and women. They are work, study, or do something great in the name of Black and women, that is to show their identity as Black and women. Showing proudness of being Black women is the way of Black women to respect their original identity as Black.

D. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This analysis of the three poems *I am a Black Woman* (1970) by Mari Evans, *A Woman Speaks* (1997) by Audre Lorde, *I am More Than That* (2018) by Lindiwe Princess Maseko are expose the issues about showing identity and proudness as Black women. It is also expose the contribution of poetic elements (speaker, repetition, and tone) in revealing the issues about showing identity and proudness of Black women. This analysis is done by through text-based and context-based interpretation that is related to the concept of power and knowledge by Michel Foucault. The result of this analysis is exposing about the pronouncement of Black women about their identity and their proudness. Showing identity as Black women is live with culture of Black. Showing proudness of being Black women is respecting their original identity as Black.

Every poem explains briefly about the pronouncement of Black woman about their identity and proudness of being Black women. The first poem is “*I am A Black Woman*”, it is exposes the identity of Black woman. The second poem is “*A Woman Speak*”, this poem shows the identity and proudness of being Black

women and the power of Black woman to fight for their right to the authority of White. The last poem is “I Am More Than That”, it is prove to the White people the identity and power. In this poems also explain about the negative statement of Black woman which create by social

Black woman have play role in American history. As A woman and Black, Black women face many issues such in their life. In the past, woman gets much discrimination in many aspect of life. Black women lost many of their right in speak, education, social and work. In the past, the discrimination to Black people did in little thing. Black women live in stereotype and discrimination since the past time until now even nowadays, the discrimination today is not show directly.

The speaker in the poem introduces herself as Black woman, because being Black is her identity, she proud of it, and she has to stand for it. The discrimination do not make Black women down, otherwise Black women realize that they have willingness and power to stand up and have the same right as citizen if they want to fight for it. Now many of Black women get better life and their right as American and women properly. The next day, Black women will unite to fight for freedom to all of Black women in the whole world to live outside of White domination and out of stereotype that exist so far.

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