



BLACK COMMUNITY WOMEN'S STRUGGLES IN GLORIA NAYLOR'S MAMA DAY

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Abstract:

Mama Day, Naylor's latest novel, similarly describes a black community. The theme of the novel analyses, examines deconstructs and redefines the past. The story of *Mama Day* develops with important changes which departs from the world of realism and incorporate myth and magic which becomes the soul of the novel. The novel is a pastoral world named Willow Springs is a small paradise Island and which was situated the Southeast Coast of the United States, where South Carolina and Georgia, but utterly sovereign in its history and traditions.

Key Words: Gloria Naylor, *Mama Day*, Willow Springs & Willa Nedeed

Introduction:

Mama Day is set in the all black community especially from rural background named Willow Springs. The novel centers on two side of Sapphira's descendants, *Mama Day*, the senior leader and mythological healer of Willow Springs, who appeared shortly in *Linden Hills* and *Cocoa*, *Mama Day*'s strong neighborhood, who lives in New York City but returns to Willow Spring every summer. The novel alternates between narratives of *Mama Day* and stories about *Cocoa* and her husband *George*, a young black man who has been living by reason and ritual. When they live visiting *Mama Day* on Willow Springs, *Cocoa* becomes the end of life and *George* is forced to put aside his logical thinking to save her. *George* saves *Cocoa* only by the great Sacrifice. It is dramatized in the novel as clearly described the success of female friendship of the black community remains limited and potential.

Mama Day has legend that the Island initially belonged to a Norwegian land owner named *Bascombe Wade*. He is also one of the slaves and a true magic woman by the name of *Sapphira*, who could walk through a storm without being touched and married him, to leave all his holdings to his slaves, then poisoned his for his problem. The youngest of the generation had seven sons. The last of them fathered *Miranda*, or *Mama Day*. The great relation of *Mama Day* are *Willa Nedeed*, who is the readers of *Linden Hills* will recall came to an end and *Ophelia* the heroine of this novel, who is threatened with early and death. One of the problems with this information is that force into the storyline, at the expense of character development and narrative flow. The plot is made to around melodramatically withheld secrets concerning the history of Willow Springs.

Naylor's style of writing, different views, different writers have the same idea and she presents a new theme of relations among women of friendship, sisterhood, neighborhood and community. *Lorry R. Andrews* says the themes of folk tradition, history, and magic, mythic from the first three novels of Gloria Naylor. Naylor's increasing use of myth and the elements is showed to be an attempt to recover the important connection and black community of the place. She says the theme in first three novels of Naylor around a black communal life which is dissolved by the modern society. There was a reference to Shakespeare in mentioned in his works. It is also completed by his scheme the split between white and black community experience. He feels that Naylor has revised *The Tempest* in order to create a Black Female protester. As the story of Willow Springs is concerned, the novel moves into the mythological realm. Through this novel Naylor gives instructions on how to live. Every word explained in the story has several meaning and changing to different contents. Although Naylor has said that she did not consciously use Shakespeare's *The Tempest* there are evident parallels between the two works. Her creation of the magical Willow Springs and its ruler *Mama Day*, Naylor joins twentieth-century African American authors for who Shakespeare's play has assumed special reason. *Elanie Showalter* discusses the importance of *The Tempest* to American Literature.

Fortunately, *Mama Day* progresses, Naylor's reasonably story telling features begin to take over and her protagonists are slowly take on the heat of felt that the emotion. The exchanges between *George* and *Ophelia* describe their affection, as well as their wisdom of each other character's weakness and *George*'s gradual immersion in the Island Willow Springs serves to reveal much more about both of them. Still, the second half o the novel, there is something forced about the story. Whereas *Toni Morrison*'s recent novel *Beloved*, which dealt with the same theme of love and controversy had a beautiful quality in it and the mythic in a frightening of fate, *Mama Day* remains a readable, but mixture of styles and allusions. The reader becomes absorbed in *George* and *Ophelia*'s story, but it is never persuaded that the events that overtake them are real.

In *Mama Day* the contemporary and the historical connection between women are very important to the past helps make it simple in the present. Naylor develops the three main characters Mama Day, Ophelia and George much more fully than other characters explore a related with family to Willa Nedeed from *Linden Hills*. The female community becomes empowered by natural forces and spiritual tradition in the coastal Island community of Willow Springs. The connection between women does not raise a question from isolation, misbehavior by men or loss of identity in the African American world. It transcends these modern conditions. The historical connection which runs from the mythological spirit that derived the community, Sapphira Wade, through Mama Day to Miranda's great neighbor Ophelia. This link among the women is related to nature though the extraordinary power of institution in Miranda as well as sense of time that spread the Island community. At the end of the novel the form of sisterhood is formed and strengthened. At the same time, neighborhood is destroyed by the attractions of modern America and the evil jealousy of someone like Ruby, who closely succeeds in murdering Ophelia with nightshade poison.

In *Mama Day*, Naylor manages a considerable feature. She bends the black community folk tradition, culture and spiritualism to her uses, while carefully respecting the integrity of that tradition of the knowledge. At the same time, she explains moving recent day story of love between two people who have each reason don't expect or get the enjoyment they eventually earn. It is a correct and long overdue trick, for more much contemporary black writing retreats into the games of language or form in to an imaginary, idealized past. It does not mean to the obvious talents of these black writers, but simply to say the black writing in the olden period to have failed to address some of the realities of black life in the early period.

Naylor manages to avoid both situations while there are three narrators, the two lovers, George and Cocoa, say their own stories and a third person narrator belongs the happenings on Willow Springs, a small sea Island somewhere of the Southeast Coast, the effect which is only a little confusing and only at first. Naylor has told the story the way of the story created the demand to be told. Her works clear, precise and exact is whenever happy to read. It is frequent poetic, and yet the narrative thrust of the theme is never made subordinate to the poetry.

It is real that Willow Springs, with New York City the setting of this story, it is a kind of never-land. But part of neither South Carolina or Georgia, it has belonged to its black occupied for nearly two hundred years. The land has been passed down from Sapphira Wade, a fully-blooded relation with African who may have married her master and born him seven sons and killed him after very long days, then adjusted to escape the hangman's noose, laughing in a burst of flames. Naylor is not interested in escaping the current position than in exploring it connects with the past and the landscape is less one of inspired poverty than one where traditional values hold away.

Naylor shows less confidence in friendship among the other women of similar age group. The picture of black women in New York loneliness for men mistakenly lacks any sense of community. At the same time women in Willow Springs also find support in each other. Ophelia's the best friend is temporarily restored to hope end to bond with traditional relationship with Miranda, but she loses her belief and her child. Ruby as a professor of men, he has rejected all these with female and tries to do them. These failures of female identity on the Willow Springs reflect tensions within Island and the outside the world. For example Harmony is restored at Candle Walk, but its traditions are changing more. The children are increasingly the demand for Christmas and some adults simply forget the old one. The organic wholeness of Island as a community however, which is less important than its acceptance of a larger organic wholeness in nature. Already the cultures of Candle Walk are entirely but George is not crossed the childhood securities end particular gender attitudes toward woman that cause misunderstanding.

In *Mama Day* Naylor has move confidently from the merely naturalistic to the mythological as well as historical to the construction of the female bond. She has moved from particularly focus on woman to an exploration of the relationship between male and female conflicts. Her view of the novel celebration of female community as empowered by folk tradition and nature she is not fully picturized the reality of woman community, but such a community of women is real in her imagination.

In interviews and presentations, Naylor has aligned herself in her literary movement, she can be described the best African American feminism. She gives us themes that are distinctly African appeared in *Mama Day*, and female characters who are all feminist then their other contemporary writers. The origin of Alice Walker's *The Colour Purple*, the novel that described the story of contemporary feminist fiction in the novel all characteristics identified by Walker in her explanation and identification of feminist. But in her novels reaction of the male domination settle into traditional roles as they mates for their men she rooted in western culture. Also these women are more American in their construction than some of Naylor's characters. She finds similarities between the folktales in African American tradition these women are not showed from their culture in the past. So Walker does succeed in describing feminist and showing the tradition of black woman conditions in her novels.

Jacquelyn De Weever says that the voice of the African-American female writer changes the "tradition and culture of place American experience into a triple voiced enterprise, one based on a triangular culture." The

expressions of culture texts, Naylor add the dimension of woman to race, *Mama Day* and *Bailey's Cafe*. Both novels have been mentioned the modes of signification and figurations that must be identified in conditions of a practice that includes the indentifying feminism, concluding that no writer in this century can escape, De Weever claims that this fact is especially true of the African American whose work must include the dualities of this heritage.

In *Mama Day* willful and courageous women cultural and traditional myth Judeo-Christian history, Miranda Day has inherited powers of black magic from her forefather Sapphira Wade. Her great Nephews Cocoa appears first as pure womanist, a brave woman of New York City. While she return home with a husband steeped in the cultures of western. Naylor offers the characters in culture based and she gives to the story some are created from their culture and others are rendered helpless by it. She explores *Mama Day's* magic as the tool of tradition to connect between western and African culture. Naylor's styles successfully revise Judeo-Christian myth by performing of male power. She describes that magic and myth in African spirituality and characteristic of African feminism.

The powers of Sapphira's and Miranda's of magic are an element of expansion in African feminism. In their roles, the two women character more from the black American feminist tradition towards the model reflects in the past period of African feminism. Sapphira is the forefather, a repeatedly character in the fiction of African-American women writers. She is the new-woman described spirituality and olden African forefather's worship. John Hope Franklin writes that members of early African society believed in the continuance of the spirits of deceased family members. These spirits became more powerful as time passed and more able to exert influence over the lives of their relatives.

The result of the characteristic calls the modern style of African writers. For African American writers those points are the European culture, which became the fundamental of the dominant culture created to the Americans, African culture and the blended experience. In presenting of African American mythology, Naylor explores the pieces of Western myth, the starts a revision that African elements. She attracts the reader in this style, the reader move to next novel. Naylor defines the expectation of the reader she creates a now story which exists above the origins, but recall the origins.

Naylor's major characters are at some of the process and there is a direct relationship between the characters adopted through combining several elements of her revision. In this context, the purpose of her characters of the black women is side by side in fairs. She makes a place for African descended women in the myth of western tradition and that myth undesirable woman of thousands of years of blame. Naylor's method confusing African traditions into Judeo-Christian magic follows the same method of spiritual movement uses in *Mama Day*. She introduces each character's story in biblical history. The character charges as it from Western tradition end extends to include explanations, histories and idea related to Africa.

Naylor reaches into contemporary reality to the African female in America. The modern society explores the black female community are posted as, whore, slave, addict and drunkard. The position of the women find themselves they are in symbol of black identity with the exception of Nadine, all the women have been cut off from their communities. Naylor themes of ancestry, traditional conflict, economic exploitation, alienation, loneliness, frustration and cost of dreams, through these themes Naylor join the rank of other significant African American women writers. In contrast between a culture and tradition that have marginalized African American women, analyzed their struggles and psychologically affected them, by these novels. Toni Morrison's many characters are wound. But powerful characters that can be the forces of destruction enter as a prominent role in novel by African American female. A team work of female characters in Naylor's all the novels.

The Women of Brewster Place, the leading character, Mattie Michael, rooted in slavery and sexual oppression, helping Lucielia to enter a new life. Luther Nedeed comes from Naylor's *Linden Hills*; she begins her process the death of her five year old son. The main character Miranda in *Mama Day*, again many inhabitants of Willow Springs on Island located between South Carolina and Georgia and explored past and present of slaves, fighting to survive. The next most recent novel *Bailey's Cafe* features two sites: the cafe itself and Eve's garden. Naylor's novels like those of other African American writers are completed with real characters, she presents in her fiction evolves by necessity and victory through faith and love.

Naylor's exploration with her voice in *Mama Day* describes a dramatic in her artistic talent over her previous novels like *The Women of Brewster Place* and *Linden Hills*, where the narrative technique distinct from the thought of her characters and there is timely a voice of dignity, she achieves in *Mama Day*. In this novel, she serves as spirituality in the narrative style, a route to religious beliefs that the other characters find to set themselves. But her character Miranda the distinction between the author's authority and the speaker's set of communal identities in willow springs is mentioned. Naylor act as her thematic comments, an idea not only the strength of black people voice but also the thoughts and feelings of *Mama Day* also. Roland Barthes describes the text as a "multicultural dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of from original, blend and clash ... a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centers of culture."

Certainly *Mama Day* reads like a virtual work of African American traditions. Naylor's strategy is different when she handles classic white story. In her novels handling of Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream* in *The Women of Brewster Place* and Dante's *Inferno* in *Linden Hills*, *Mama Day* is an imaginative examination of Shakespeare's *Tempest*. Naylor's a new critical understanding of the play, which points out 'The *Tempest*' as an ideological discussion in favor of the European colonization project of the seventeenth century. It focused on the play, new critical arguments to reduce the play to an allegorical about the advantage of colonialism. The same figurations the Empire have rested authority, the mysterious Island and Cali ban, the legitimately dispossessed native. Naylor dramatically describes the new critical ideology assumption in her *Mama Day*, she recover the Shakespearean text for a gender-bias, multi-cultural, racial identity, male and female dominant. As the first character, of Naylor's *Mama Day*, Miranda displaces the reader from a traditional position.

In Shakespeare's Prospero is a teacher who instructs his daughter and will have no backtalk. In *Mama Day* the matriarch is the guide, Miranda Day is the corporate of real estate developers who has been stealing Willow Springs from its traditional people. While Prospero's work his identity as the rationalized order, but Miranda is associated with traditionalized. Naylor continuously challenges Prospero's individualism between the spiritualism and materialism. While seeing the scene by having Miranda communicate with her chickens, this situation explores throughout a novel. In Naylor's Willow Springs, the pure dimension of experience conflicts with the purely excellent whenever Miranda says.

Conclusion:

Naylor's other male-narrated novel; *Linden Hills* is even though problematic in an Afro-American context. *Mama Day* surfaces to visit her relatives and she brings to make men attend to their wives. A type of magic is also proof in the formula that he discovers in the basement. The central theme of the novel the consequences of the fragmentation and suppression of female community with their identity into the middle class: the alienation, which contrasts the strong evidence of female associations in *Mama Day*, indicates what happened to Island women necessary things of female community identified in African traditions. Naylor in particular values, freedom for women, rather than their being controlled by men. She exposes women's links other women and establishes new model continuity in African American families found in other novels. When reading the story of *Mama Day*, it is started into her wisdom, the relationship between Miranda Day and Cocoa in the connection between author and reader.

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