Civil Rights Movement And Role Of Martin Luther King Jr.

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Martin Luther King Jr. was a social activist and Baptist minister who was born in 1929. He was the one who played a key role in the Civil Rights Movement of America from the mid-1950s. He was inspired by different leaders who were advocates of nonviolence, such as King Sought and Mahatma Gandhi. He wanted a better living standard for African Americans, who were not allowed to eat good food, wear good clothes, study in good institutions, or get better jobs. In the 1950s, African Americans were the victims of injustice in America, and Black Americans formed groups and started protest movements for the civil rights of African Americans. At that time, Martin also played his role in the civil rights of African Americans.

Martin acted so bravely and was a driving force in different movements and events, such as the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Washington March. These efforts of Black Americans proved to be fruitful for African Americans and became the cause of the development of legislation such as the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Martin did so much for African Americans, and for his efforts, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964. After his efforts, Americans remembered his struggles and celebrated the federal holiday on Martin Luther King Jr. Day (History.com).

Martin’s Political Interest

In the 1950s, African Americans were treated as slaves, and White Americans used to show their power over African Americans. African Americans were not allowed to sit on public transport with White Americans, and they were considered to be the worst creatures in humankind. The children of Black Americans were suffering a lot. They were not allowed to get an education in good institutions or to learn new activities. Black American women were treated as slaves. Men used to work for more than 18 hours per day at very low wages to fulfill their family requirements.

In such an era, it was really important for Black Americans to come together and start a movement for their rights. Without their struggles, they could never achieve any position in society, and they had no other option but to live in America, so they had to stand for the civil rights of Black Americans and especially for the education of Black American children because without it, the children could never achieve any target in their lives. At that time, Martin also took an interest in politics and thought of doing something for Black Americans. The Black churches played a vital role in establishing groups of

Black Americans for the protest movements. The religious leaders became political leaders and started to gather all Black Americans to protest for the civil rights of Black Americans and to understand their position in America.

Montgomery Bus Boycott

Mr. Martin was living in Montgomery for less than a year when the incident involving Rosa Parks happened. On December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks was traveling on a public bus when a White American forced her to leave her seat, but she refused to do so because it was her civil right to sit on the public transport seat. In return, the bus driver forced her to give up her bus seat and called the police. The police arrested Rosa for creating violence, and this gave rise to protest movements among African Americans. At that time, all African American activists coordinated a protest movement called the bus boycott that continued for 381 days. In this protest, Martin Luther King Jr. played a vital role and acted as the leader of the protestors and official spokesman.

Poetry Provokes The Nations:

People consider that when nations fight for their freedom or civil rights, the main role is played by politicians, leaders, and activists. However, along with them, poets and singers also play a vital role in awakening people to stand for their rights. Poetry especially plays with the emotions of the people and emotionally provokes the people to fight for their rights. Different poets use the power of their words and writing to touch the emotions of nations, and their touching lyrics motivate them to fight for their freedom. In this way, poetry plays a vital role in provoking nations in their freedom fights.

Poetry is the greatest weapon used to express the feelings and the situation of the people. Poets who are willing to awaken nations to fight for freedom or their rights use lyrics that describe their present condition and touching situation. The power of the lyrics greatly influences nations and makes them able to realize how they are living and how they can stand for a better future. A poet provoked African Americans to stand for their civil rights with the following lyrics:

We don’t wear silver stars and moons
embroidered on our clothes;
we never wear those pointy shoes
they’re murder on the toes

Poetics And Politics:

At that time, when Martin was working hard for the civil rights of African Americans, conducting different marches, and working as a social activist, different poets also worked with him to motivate African Americans and encourage them in the protest movements with the help of the power of their

writings. Among such poets, Maya Angelou was an acclaimed American poet, activist, storyteller, and autobiographer. Angelou is famous as a singer, actress, dancer, Hollywood director, composer, writer, essayist, editor, playwright, and especially as a poet. She also belonged to an African American family, so she also participated in civil rights movements, worked for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and served as a professor of American Studies at Wake Forest University. In 1975, she wrote the poem "The New Generation," by which she became highly recognized as a woman writing for Blacks and women and motivating them for their rights. As she stated in the poem,

Wizards look like everyday folk
despite what you've been told.
We don't have long white whiskers, nor are we very old.

With her poetry, she motivated Black women to stand for their rights and to be aware of their social values (Ebony).

Poetry As Activism

Different poets worked as activists with Martin Luther to gain civil rights for African Americans. One poet was Joan Baez, who was the closest friend of Martin Luther King Jr., and she worked with Martin in the Civil Rights Movement of America. She worked as a poet, singer, and activist and also motivated Black Americans with her poetry. She emphasized the importance of freedom for human beings by using the motivational lyrics of her poetry and music. She also played a vital role during the Washington March with Martin Luther King Jr. During this march, she performed not only as a great social activist but also as a great motivational poet and singer.

Poetry, Pain, And Meanings:

- *We really cool. We*
- *Left school. We*
- *Lurk late. We*
- *Strike straight. We*
- *Sing sin. We*
- *Thin gin. We*
- *Jazz June. We*
- *Die soon*

This poetry was written by Gwendolyn Brooks (Brooks), who was also an African-American poet and used to write poetry for Blacks. In her poetry, the pain is a clear indication of the African Americans' condition in America. At that time, they were treated as slaves and were forced to leave their schools. They were not allowed to enjoy their lives. Rather, they had to work day and night, and most of them died while working for White Americans due to hard work and hunger. In this way, poetry helps the

reader to understand the pain of nations, and through their words, poets make nations able to understand their situation and to stand for their rights (Harris).

Conclusion:

From this study, it is clear that poetry plays a vital role in almost every field of life. Sometimes, it helps to express love, and sometimes it helps to show the sadness of the poet, but poetry becomes most important when it is used as a weapon in nations' fights for freedom. Poetry helps politicians to gather people or to provoke nations to understand their situation and to stand for their rights. Simply, poetry is not just a hobby, but it is also an art and a weapon of activists.

Work Cited

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