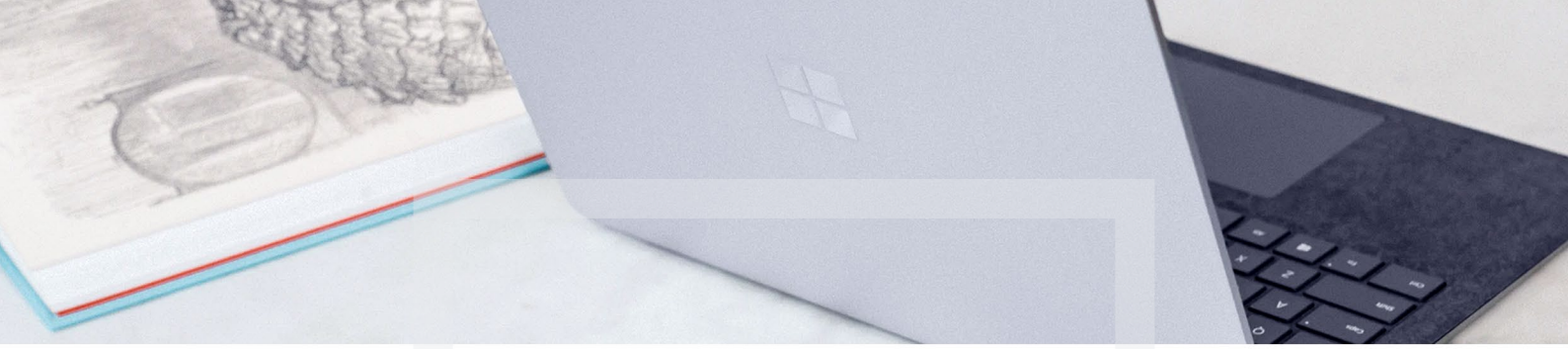

BOOK REPORT

Part I

The book under consideration is titled ***Coming of Age in Mississippi***. Written by Anne Moody, this book is a brilliant sample of autobiographic writing. The autobiographic novel under analysis can be classified as a so-called Bildungsroman. The novel tells the story of an African-American girl's coming of age. The novel is comprised of four parts, namely: "Childhood", "High School", "College", and "The Movement" (Moody, 1968). Each of the novel's parts is dedicated to some specific period of the protagonist's/author's life. Anne (Essie May) Moody was born to Toosweet Davis and Diddly Moody (Moody, 1968). Anne's family was big: her maternal grandmother, Winny, even though she never got to get married, had thirteen children (Moody, 1968). Anne herself had 4 siblings: 2 brothers, James and Junior, and 2 sisters, Adline and Virginia (Jennie May) (Moody, 1968). Anne's parents had to deal with poverty ever since they decided to start a family

(Moody, 1968).

The story begins at Mr. Carter's plantation, where Anne and her family are portrayed laboring (Moody, 1968). Oppressed and challenged by poverty, Anne and her family work hard under the circumstances of the working conditions that are almost unbearable (Moody, 1968). In addition to that, they encounter loss as several members of their group are killed (Moody, 1968). As Anne's father is attracted to his deceased best friend's widow, Anne's parents get a divorce (Moody, 1968). At this point, Anne's time of drudgery and hardships begins: she takes any job where she can find it, visiting her relatives one by one (Moody, 1968). Anne proves herself to be a diligent and bright student, which makes her education at Tougaloo College possible (Moody, 1968). As a college student, Anne becomes involved into the civil rights' movement, the activity that her mother and sister do not approve of (Moody, 1968). The story ends portraying Anne's as an esteemed young woman, wondering about the future of her people in the United States of America (Moody, 1968).

Circumstantially, ***Coming of Age in Mississippi*** refers to slavery and racism as, perhaps, some of the most tragic pages in the history of mankind. The novel argues that race- and gender-based prejudices have occurred in the twentieth century. Throughout the 1950s and the 1960s, many people tolerated racism and even advocated for it (Anderson, 1993). There was a set of unwritten and unspoken rules, according to which the majorities had boycotted minor ethnic

minorities, most especially, the African-American minority group (Anderson, 1993). Neglecting ethnic minorities and suppressing them were the characteristic features of the social climate in the United States of America in the 1950s and the 1960s. At that time, African-Americans were discriminated. More to say, discrimination of African-Americans occurred in nearly all spheres of human activity. Thus, the civil rights movement intensified its activities in America. On the one hand, the civil rights movement was an urgent necessity. One of the primary objectives of the civil right movement was to establish equality and, by so doing, to restore peaceful co-existence of the ethnic groups within the United States of America. On the other hand, it happened because the civil rights movement had only aggravated the tensions between the majorities and minor ethnic groups. The foregoing statement in no way diminishes the positive influence of the civil rights movement on the social climate of America in the mid-20th century.

Anne's relatives, their employees, and Anne's tutors play an important role in the outcome of the story. However, the relatively less important role is played by Anne's acquaintances with quite a few exceptions, specifically the following ones. Emmitt Till, a boy of 14 years of age, was murdered by the white men for supposedly having insulted a white woman by simply (supposedly) whistling at her (Moody, 1968). The event had played an important role in Anne Moody's life. In the book and in the real life, this became the first time the author, the narrator, and the protagonist (all in one) began to contemplate inequality and

racial prejudices (Moody, 1968). Circumstantially, the event leads to Anne's getting involved into the civil rights movement (Moody, 1968). Participation in the civil rights movement has become an essential part of Anne Moody's life (Moody, 1968). Therefore, her book of memoir proves that the ethnic groups co-existing within the borders of once country should respect and do honorably by one another.

Part II

The parts of the book that I liked most of all in Anne Moody's ***Coming of Age in Mississippi*** are "Childhood", "High School", and "The Movement". The parts noted above abound with the vivid imagery and the excellent complete, fair, and fitting descriptions. However, why I liked those particular parts most of all, perhaps, because there is some much action in them and hope, especially in the parts called "Childhood" and "The Movement". Children are mostly uncomprehending in the face of the problems of the adults, but there is more about them than their appearances suggest: it seems like the children are born with the knowledge of what really matters. It never fails to amaze some of the adults that somehow, that knowledge is lost as the children grow up. Still, some people manage to preserve that knowledge to the end of their days.

After I have read Anne Moody's book of memoirs, I came to realize that

racism and inequality were and remain to these some of the most burning social issues that society of the United States of America was challenged by. The issues of prejudices and/or biases based on race and religion tend to become more and more important. It happens so mostly because the processes of globalization and the world's migration crisis gain momentum.

The novel under consideration teaches us that people should respect dignity regardless of each other's race, gender, and age. Particularly, the author proves the statement noted above by providing the examples from her own life and thus, sharing her own experiences. Apart from that, the author pays close attention to the problem of relationships between parents and children, husband and wife, teacher and student, adults and children. The foregoing subjects are of major importance as the processes of moral corruption are common in the technology-driven dehumanized world.

My favorite characters from the book are Anne (Essie May) Moody, Florence, Mrs. Rice, and the Cook family. I like these characters because they are kind, calm, resilient, strong, and wise each in his/her own way. These characters prove that they know what kindness and sacrifice are presumably because of all the hardships they have been through, all the calamities they may have possibly encountered.

Coming of Age in Mississippi is one of a kind because it does not compare to any other book about the same subject. Moreover, it does

not compare to any work written by the same author. ***Coming of Age in Mississippi*** should be contemplated through the lens of its genre specificity. In other words, the novel should be analyzed as a book of memoir and partly, as a Bildungsroman. Broadly speaking, the literary works like Anne Moody's ***Coming of Age in Mississippi*** exist in keeping with the regulations that determine the works' plane of content and plane of expression. Those regulations re unprecedentedly unique and their uniqueness is fairly self-evident.

All things considered, ***Coming of Age in Mississippi*** is the book that shows the gallery of typical characters each unique in his or her own way. Some characters the readers may like, some of them the readers may find repulsive. The characters are portrayed in a realistic way. More importantly, each character in Moody's book contributes to the outcome of the story to a lesser or a greater extent.

Part III

The story of people's goodwill runs thin these days under the circumstances of omnipresent globalization, moral decay, dehumanization of communication, uncontrolled technological advancement, environmental problems, and human alienation form nature. The United States of America is considered to be one of the most powerful countries of the world. Apart from that, the USA is a

multicultural country. I myself, on the other hand, come from China. China is a powerful and multicultural country as well, even though the principal difference between the PRC and the USA consists in each country's cultural specificities. The national character of the Chinese people suggests that the Chinese do not approve of any form violence; they are mostly lenient and tolerant. Clearly, there are some numerous cases of biases and propaganda. However, I am inclined to think that none of them affect the interpersonal relationships. Hence, Anne Moody's ***Coming of Age in Mississippi*** has a very little if any relevance to the place where I come from. It is rather a sad thing to admit that problems of inequality and race-based prejudices remain topical within the United States to these days so much so that they cause the hate crimes in society. Luckily, I myself did not come across any of the cases of violent actions associated with racial prejudices. Hopefully, I will never have to. After I have read ***Coming of Age in Mississippi***, the book of memoir by Anne Moody, I have made a decision to take efforts to give the life of peace and plenty to all those whom I hold most dear. Having read the book, I have assured myself once again that each person's dignity and feelings should be respected.

Therefore, Anne Moody's book of memoir ***Coming of Age in Mississippi*** relates to my life, culture, and native country only to some extent. The book is related to my life as I observe injustice day by day. I attempt to fight against the injustice and I do it as best as I can. Still, I am convinced that justice exists in its global sense. The book relates to my culture only circumstantially. In other words, I take the book only as an

admonition as it speaks of the aspects that are alien to my culture and my native country. My personal experience shows that issues addressed in the book under consideration relate to all who belong in society of the United States of America, especially to the ethnic minorities in general and the African-American community in particular. Building on my personal experience and other people's perspectives, I assume that the book speaks to all cultures predominantly by admonishing bias and racial prejudices.

Part IV

I strongly recommend reading Anne Moody's book of memoir called ***Coming of Age in Mississippi*** to all those who wish to know how to avoid, 'minimize the casualties', and eliminate the negative affect of biases and racial prejudices. The book is insightful, innovative, and educational. It refers to the experiences of a young African-American girl from Mississippi. Anne Moody's writing resembles the creative manner of Toni Morrison. Toni Morrison is considered one of the most renowned African-American female writers. The principal difference between Anne Moody's and Toni Morrison's writing styles lies in a fact that even though the latter attempts to write in a realistic way, she contemplates actuality through the lens of fiction. Anne Moody, in a way, is delimited by reality.

One of the most important things about the book of memoir is that it gives insight what it feels like to be under constant and immense pressure because of one's skin color and gender. The book needs to be read so that the irreversible changes could be avoided. A great number of people were victimized by the unreasonable and ungrounded prejudices. The authorities of the most influential and powerful countries should combine their efforts to handle the problem of racism in their societies and the world in general. In the case of the United States of America, allowing the majorities and the minority groups to participate in the civil rights movements on equal terms can be viewed as a way for the stakeholders to take the first steps towards solving the problem of racism. With regard to this, Anne Moody's story can be viewed as an example conclusively proving that the statement noted above is justifiable.