

# American studies



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“ The Interesting Narrative” is the autobiography of Olaudah Equiano who was the famous African Writer in the 18th century. Actually, the paper contains not only biographical sketches about famous person, but also desire to put an end to slavery.

In my opinion, the main thesis of the paper is that even former slave is able to become a writer and to present readers past experiences and difficulties of being African slave.

“ The Interesting Narrative” is considered the work of historical significance because it sheds light on childhood of poor African boy, his destiny when enslaved, and, finally, desired freedom. This literary work ensures strong impression when you read about personal emotions and feelings of becoming free. This work assisted in ending slavery in Europe and America.

The subject of the paper is certainly the life of Olaudah Equiano, his literary works, and, surely, the issue of slavery in Europe and America. Olaudah was born in Nigeria in about 1745. However, in childhood he was kidnapped and shipped Barbados. As a result, he was bought and became a slave in Virginia plantation. Then he was purchased by naval officer and got new name – Gustavus Vassa.

That played significant role in his future life as during traveling Equiano learnt to read and tow rite. Moreover, he participated in sea battles during the Seven Year’s War. Nevertheless, black people were people of the second sort in those time and they were subjected to social and political inequality.

Desire to change life of African he tries the power of writing to change political situation. For example, he published abolitionist essays and letters,

though the most important contribution in his life was “ The Interesting Narrative”.

In his book he highlighted the terrible life of African slave and slave trade stressing that all people should be equal. Debates whether slavery is legal were initiated in 1792. His narrative is an effort of self-invention. Equiano showed himself as a person who managed to survive slavery and who initiated ending of slave trade.

The poem “ On the Death of the Rev. George Whitefield, 1770” was written by Phillis Wheatley and this poem made him popular international-wide. She is known for her Christian verses.

Wheatley and Equiano have similar destinies as she was also kidnapped in the childhood and was sold. She was raised in pious Christian environment, and she experiences only token slavery. The main point of her poems were made liberty and people equality, as well as she promoted Christian values and beliefs.

Wheatley’s poems belonged to neoclassic tradition of her days, though white population didn’t accept the poetry of African woman as Africans were treated as the second sort people. Moreover, Phillis experienced racial discrimination when publishing her poems.

For example, she was refused to get a credit simply because she was a black poet. In all of her poems she identified herself as African poems and she tried to outline her cultural heritage and roots, and that was the main subject of her literary works. Nevertheless, she belonged also to American culture

which was also reflected in her poems. Actually, she was dual provincial as she started to think of herself as African-American.

Her famous poem “ On the Death of the Rev. George Whitefield, 1770” describes the death of the famous English Evangelist who visited America with prayers. Whitefield wanted to establish orphan in Georgia, and to rationalize slave labor. The poem stresses that his death is a great loss of English people as they would never listen to his prayers: “ We hear no more the music of thy tongue”.

The poem is very impressive and touching as it transmits author’s emotions about such loss. Whitefield managed to inflame people’s hearts with hope and desire for better future and destiny.

The poem shows that Whitefield leaves the earth to see the better life at the heaven: “ He leaves the Earth for heaven’s unmeasur’d height/And world unknown receive him from our sight/ There Whitefield’s with rapid course his way/ And sails to Zion through vast seas of day...” In her poems Phillis Wheatley tried to show the smooths and roughs of lives of African-Americans.