



# Major Issues And Challenges In English And Oriental Languages And Literatures

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## Abstract

Modern African poetry focuses on issues the Poets have faced in Africa and highlights how indigenous cultures have nourished literature with substance for future scope. Emerging poets such as Morgan Parker are changing the landscape of poetry with their unique forms of writing and storytelling. Morgan Parker, an American poet and novelist is the author of *Magical Negro*. Morgan considered Poetry as one of the most universal weapons of human expression since it epitomises diverse human experiences in a comprehensive and well-documented manner.

**Keywords:** Modern, African Poetry, Black Ethos, Condemnation, Black Culture

The poem *Magical Negro* is a capturing of Black Ethos particularly black womanhood in the 21st-century: the complexities, sadness, shared ancestral trauma and the violence done against black women, and their splendour and humour. Parker takes the readers into classrooms, African hair salons, apartment, therapy sessions, and the interior of her mind, thus introducing us to her personal sanctuary of Black celebrity icons. The poem is a fascinating attestation to everyday blackness. which examines negro womanhood and identity and explores how identities are constructed through the prism of race, historical legacies, and pop culture. By replacing the self-effacing goodness of the “magical negro” trope, Parker highlights the authentic, specific characteristics of real people.

The expansive and sweeping variety of ethnic traditions is projected in African poetry. The poetic genre is enormous and complex because of Africa's natural linguistic diversity and the overwhelming effects of colonization and slavery, the outcome of which was the rise of different languages such as English, Portuguese and French, and Creole or pidgin versions of these European languages. Ever since Africa attained independence in 1960, political, economic, and cultural events have begun to shape African poetry.

Poet Morgan Parker's latest collection, *Magical Negro*, hilarious and wrenching poetry is a testimony to everyday blackness. The writer examines black womanhood and identity, now turns her attention to challenging black stereotypes. Morgan's poetry explores how identities are constructed, not only through the prism of race but also through historical legacies and pop culture. By replacing the self-effacing goodness of the "magical negro" trope, Parker highlights the authentic, specific characteristics of real people.

There is no distinct separation between the writer and her elegy. Parker is uncompromising with her interior life, and between stanzas puts it fully on display. She invites us into her bedroom and therapy sessions. We are left to experience the magnitude of the violated black body: *Every day it is bitten with new guilt*. It is a moving window into her day-to-day existence, a tenacious black woman rejecting oppressive standards of beauty in favour of profound self-acceptance.

Parker is deliberately provocative on race. She playfully mocks America's hypocrisy without fear of retribution. Throughout the collection, readers are greeted with the devastating contradictions that riddle American history, so often to the detriment of black lives:

*The history of black people, an investigation.*

*The history of black people, a tragicomic horror film.*

*The history of black people, or joy stinging pink lips.*

*The history of black people me.*

*The history of black people goes blank.*

*The history of black people, adapted from white people.*

While *Magical Negro* is a condemnation of black objectification, it is also an acclamation of black triumph. Parker's boldness and vulnerability are rewarded within the verse, which offers an inquiry of black genius: the gentle weaving of cultural icons from Diana Ross to Eartha Kitt, the tributes to visual artists Adrian Piper and Glenn Ligon, the political homage to Harriet Tubman and Frederick Douglass. And beyond the critical acclaim of her heroes, she acknowledges that black lives are often denied recognition of agency and personal autonomy. She leads us toward a chorus of black voices chanting, we are still here.

*Magical Negro* is an account of a private life and a political protest. It is a portrait of 21st-century Black womanhood: their complexities, sadness and shared ancestral trauma and the violence done against the black people. Parker takes us into classrooms, African hair salons, her apartment, therapy sessions, and

the interior of her mind, introducing us to her personal pantheon of Black celebrity icons- Lil Uzi Vert, Eartha Kitt, and Frederick Douglass. *Only Judge Joe Brown can judge me*, she writes. Parker gives a name to experiences that I've personally felt but have never discussed or seen discussed in the public sphere before. Perhaps we fear complicating our Blackness in a way that's unsavoury.

Take, for example, *Matt*, a prose poem that's a cumulative portrait of every white boy who's been in or fallen out of the poet's life up to that point. This boy is recognizable: "I can't tell if he's into me because I'm black or because I'm not that black and either way I feel bad. I feel it in my stomach's basement: Matt can't want me. I'm not forever." When I tell you this hurt my feelings, know that I mean that I laughed and then I cried.

In *Two White Girls in the African Braid Shop on Marcy and Fulton*, Parker's use of repetition and questions come at you like quick, hammering thoughts, to the rhythm of the bracelets on the wrists of the woman braiding your hair: "Does it hurt. Why did you come here. What do you want. Are you filming this. Do you live in this neighbourhood. Do you feel comfortable. Can I ask is that a weave / Why do you feel comfortable." The strain of a pinched scalp is practically palpable.

The titles of Parker's poems often reference songs, images, and people who are prevalent in Black culture vernacular. Like that photo of Diana Ross eating a rib. Or Solange's seat at the table. Michael Brown's angelhood. The lineage of gap teeth that connects Black intellectuals. Zora's then Glenn's then Morgan's sharp white background. The poet's vision of Blackness is exalted, resplendent, multivalent, complicated, heavy, ever-changing, beautiful and True. *Magical Negro* is a exaltation of black ethos, a catalogue of folk heroes, ancestral grief over the loss of native culture. The poems in the collection are both elegiac and jovial and declares the spirit of blackness of the congregation and symbolises self-affirmation. They link themes of loneliness, displacement, grief, ancestral trauma, while also exploring stereotypes of Black Americans. The poems focus on the projections of blackness which is a collective consciousness of the Afro-Americans.

In *Magical Negro*, Parker derives her superpower from the cultural legacy of 'Blackness' and Black womanhood. The collection maintains the sensory creativity of "There Are More Beautiful Things Than Beyoncé," but complicates it with historical and sociocultural texture. In an interview with Lumina, Parker explains that her previous collection "felt very full in terms of references and colours and places and people and songs," whereas "(Magical Negro)" felt full as in, like, a heavy book." The concept of a Magical Negro is when a white production team creates this magical stock character who is black. That black character is there to interact with white people in a certain way and teach a white audience something.

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