

Appreciation of the poem 'Blowin' in the wind'

Bob Dylan is an American singer and song-writer. His writings have political as well as literary influences of his time, especially of incidents in connection with the Civil Rights Movement of 1960s. The poem, 'Blowin' in the wind' was an anthem answers are given or expected. All the answers are known to all and blowing in the wind. People only need open their eyes and ears to catch them.

The poet asks first "how many roads must a man walk down before you call him a man?" How much a man should experience in life or how long a man should endure in life before he is recognized as a human being. He asks secondly how many seas a white dove should sail before it finds a peaceful place to sleep. White doves are symbol of peace, and when they are going to get really the symbolized peace? The third question, "how many times the cannon balls must fly before they are banned forever" points towards the atrocities or wars and weapons. White doves are symbol of peace and cannon balls are signals of wars and conflicts. The poet asks when the weapons are going to be banned and we achieve the real peace and freedom.

The poet keeps on asking questions. How long the mighty authorities - the oppressive rulers - who are as huge and strong as mountains, can exist in front of more powerful seas of protests of the oppressed people. The mountain metaphorically represents the oppressive rulers, and the sea is compared to the power of the oppressed people. How long the people of a nation can be kept under slavery. How long the rulers and the ruled can pretend to be blind, deaf and dumb. The sky is the symbol of unlimited freedom. But how many times should a man look

up to see the sky? How many ears should a man have to hear the cry of the suffering people? And the poet finally asks how many people should die before we realize that many have already died. The poet demands that the rulers must respect the rights of the people and bring peace and freedom in the world. He exhorts that the people should realize and consider the sufferings of their fellow beings; they should fight for their rights.

These questions are the best example of the literary device Rhetorical questions. The poet says that the answers are available or known easily to all who want. He keeps on asking questions and tries to bring the readers to the answers by repeating the lines "the answers, my friend, is blowin' in the wind", "the answer is blowin' in the wind". By repeating the lines, the poet creates another poetic device namely Refrain.