



**Annamalai University  
Department of English**

**Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor**  
*Vol. II Black Writings: A Subaltern Perspective*

**Select Papers from the National Seminar on Subaltern Literature:  
Resistance and Reconstruction**

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அண்ணாமலைப்  
**ANNAMALAI**



பல்கலைக்கழகம்  
**UNIVERSITY**

(State University-Accredited with 'A' Grade by NAAC)

ANNAMALAINAGAR - 608 002, CHIDAMBARAM, TAMIL NADU, INDIA.

**Prof. S. Manian M.Sc., Ph.D.**

Vice-Chancellor

### Message

As a commendable initiative, the Department of English organized a three-day National Seminar on "Subaltern Literature: Resistance and Reconstruction" from 23 to 25 January 2018, and the selected research papers are published in the UGC approved journal *Language in India*. Publication of research papers is indeed a good academic endower and these research articles on Subaltern writings will definitely help the young researchers and faculties to conduct further research in this thrust area.

Subaltern literature as an academic discipline designates the writings of populations who are socially, politically, and geographically marginalized. It is described as "history told from below." In other words, it gives voice to the "voiceless" sections of the society. It is a mark of civilization to welcome and respect alternative view point though one need not agree with it. Moreover, India is a nation of diverse cultures, languages, religions and geographical conditions. Our tradition has always welcomed and respected differences and celebrated unity in diversity.

The publication of two volumes of articles (*Subaltern Indian Writings in English* and *Subaltern Black Writings*) in the reputed journal *Language in India* is a rare academic achievement by the Organising Secretary Dr. T. Deivasigamani of the Department of English. The articles by creative writers, critics, and academicians across the country explore all the issues of subalternity as represented in the writings of the marginalized of all sorts – social, geographical, economic, cultural, etc., and pave way for the integration of all as human beings and citizens of our great nation.

I take this opportunity to congratulate the Editor of the two volumes Dr.T.Deivasigamani, and the other members of the faculty of the Department of English for their efforts to publish the research papers presented during the seminar.

(S. MANIAN)





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ANNAMALAINAGAR – 608 002, CHIDAMBARAM, TAMIL NADU, INDIA

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Date : 16-03-2018



**Dr.K.ARUMUGAM, M.Sc., Ph.D.**  
Registrar i/c

### **MESSAGE**

I am glad that the Department of English organized a three-day National Seminar on “Subaltern Literature: Resistance and Reconstruction” from 23<sup>rd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> January 2018 and the select articles presented during the seminar are brought out as two volumes in the reputed Journal *Language in India*. The objective of this publication is to provide an opportunity to budding teachers and researchers to become familiar with research in subaltern literature.

The two volumes of the journal consist of articles by creative writers, academicians, and researchers who have dealt with various issues of the marginalized sections of the society. It is a welcome initiative by the Seminar Director-Cum-Editor Dr. T. Deivasigamani, and the other teachers of the Department of English for having taken efforts to publish research papers on a topic of current importance. I learn that the theme of this book is interdisciplinary in nature and will pave way for scholars from different disciplines to share and exchange their ideas.

I take this opportunity to convey my best wishes to the publisher of the two volumes Subaltern Indian writing in English and Subaltern Black Writings, and I am sure that this journal will adorn every library in the country.

**(K. Arumugam)**

**ANNAMALAI**  **UNIVERSITY**  
**OFFICE OF THE DEAN, FACULTY OF ARTS**

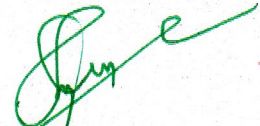
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I am happy to know that the three-day National Seminar on “**Subaltern Literature: Resistance and Reconstruction**” organized by the Department of English from 23-25 January, 2018 was a great success and was attended by creative writers, delegates, researchers, students and participants from far and wide. I am also happy to know that the selected articles of the seminar are published in volumes entitled, *Subaltern Indian Writings in English* and *Subaltern Black Writings* in the UGC approved journal, *Language in India*. I congratulate the faculty members of the Department of English and the editor of this Journal, Dr.T.Deivasigamani for their laudable effort in bringing out the two volumes. I wish them success in all their future academic endeavors.

Yours faithfully,



(Dr.E.Selvarajan)  
Dean, Faculty of Arts

**DEAN**  
**FACULTY OF ARTS**  
**ANNAMALAI UNIVERSITY**  
**ANNAMALAI NAGAR - 608 002**



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**Message**

I was very much delighted in associating myself with my colleagues of the Department of English in organizing a three-day National Seminar on “**Subaltern Literature: Resistance and Reconstruction**” from 23 – 25 January, 2018. There was an overwhelming response to the seminar from the creative writers, teaching fraternity, researchers and students. The selected papers are published in the form of two volumes of articles titled, *Indian Writings in English: A Subaltern Perspective* and *Black Writings: A Subaltern Perspective* in the UGC approved journal, *Language in India*.

I congratulate **Dr. T. Deivasigamani**, the Director of the three-day National Seminar for his laudable efforts in making it a big success. I am equally happy over the fact that he has taken much pain in bringing out these two volumes of articles, which shows his commitment and devotion to his profession and the Department. I wish him success in his academic endeavors.

  
(K. Rajaraman)

ANNAMALAI  UNIVERSITY  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

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### Editor's Preface

The Department of English, Annamalai University Organized the **Third ICSSR Sponsored National Seminar on *Subaltern Literature: Resistance and Reconstruction*** from 23<sup>rd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> January 2018. The aim of the Seminar was to provide the participants as well as experts with a platform to exchange and enhance their innovative ideas and experiences in Subaltern literature. The three-day seminar was attended by a large number of enthusiastic scholars and budding teachers from various colleges and universities in India. More than 300 papers were read by participants from different parts of India.

The selected papers presented in the **ICSSR Sponsored Three-day National Seminar on *Subaltern Literature: Resistance and Reconstruction*** are divided into two categories, namely, **Volume I: *Indian Writing in English: A Subaltern Perspective*** and **Volume II: *Black Writings: A Subaltern Perspective***. These volumes reflect the literary response on contemporary Subaltern literature evoked amongst scholars in India.

The present socio-cultural and literary scenario calls for a relocation in the conception and construction of the terms “Resistance” and “Reconstruction.” These do not refer merely to the everyday experiences and expressions of a particular group but have become resources to be utilized across nationalities. Subaltern literature constitute the most significant development in World literature in the last three decades and the genre has received massive attention among academics, literary critics and creative writers within India and abroad. It is an explicit

corrective agenda and preoccupation with the binaries of nation and fragments, men and women, elites and peasants, urban and rural, haves and have-nots, and the majority and minority. Unfortunately, even the Subaltern School seems to have not greatly focused on the position of the Dalits and Tribes in India. It is a historical fact that the Dalit literature received undue criticism from some leading Indian English in Writing and Indian languages writers in past, questioning the need for such a specialization.

The terms *Subaltern* and *Subaltern Studies* entered post-colonial studies through the works of the Subaltern Studies Group, a collection of South Asian historians. The *subaltern* refers to any specific marginalized situation in any given cultural or social context. Subaltern consciousness is one of the characteristics of subalternity. Antonio Gramsci emphasized the significance of the word in terms of class, gender, caste, marginalization, race, and culture of the society. The term *Subaltern literature* covers themes such as the masses, Dalits, the deprived, oppressed, marginalized, neglected, and Indigenous sections of the society.

Subaltern discourse highlights the conceivable political achievements of the collective in their radical endeavour to recover the histories of peasant rebellions and resistance before and after India, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South American's independence from the British. The post-colonial period is an important one for the subalterns because both the nation and the people have just been relieved from the terrible clutches of colonial rule. This period sets out a determined effort to reproduce the colonial experience of the subalterns in literary works.

All the colonized nations of the world have a subaltern identity. The subaltern identity is the identity of difference and the subaltern “celebrates hybridist and cultural polyvalence.” The main motivation of this transaction is to centralize subaltern's marginal position in society in terms of social and political, both of which is the outcome of systematic and structural marginalization. Subaltern writings are narratives of trauma, pain, resistance, protest, and the social change. These writings have a profound social obligation wherein majority of the writers try to create a classless society. Subaltern literatures—Dalit, Tribal, African, and Aboriginal document the sufferings and atrocities committed upon a large section of the population.

Today, Dalit, Tribal, African American, and Aboriginal literatures have been accepted as an integral part of subaltern literature. All are marginalized literature- one arising out of the ‘literature of slaves’ and the other from the ‘literature of untouchables.’ Similarity, it is extended to the Black American and Aboriginal Writings for which the history of slavery is not illusionary or unreal. Indigenous people are struggling to gain their own identity as people Indigenous of the land or country. The liveliness and authenticity of their expressions are



captured all over their writings. Shame, anger, sorrow, and indomitable hope are the trademarks of these marginalized people and the literature created by them. As the world moves toward becoming a global village, some past experiences and lessons learnt become precious and crucial to understand the common sensitivity and sensibility.

From its very inception, Annamalai University has focused on social oppression based on various factors including caste divisions and has encouraged its administrators, faculty members, and students to develop social consciousness to fight against social, economic, and cultural discriminations. Thus, as the organizer of the **ICSSR Sponsored Three-day National Seminar on Subaltern Literature: Resistance and Reconstruction**, I feel happy that this National Seminar becomes an integral part of the history of Annamalai University.

These two volumes offer a modest survey of the trends of recent studies in Subaltern writings and literature. I owe a debt of gratitude to all contributors for their kind cooperation. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all renowned participants of the seminar who in spite of their commitments and engagements elsewhere, helped us to successfully complete the national seminar and bring out these two volumes. I am indebted to the authorities of the ICSSR, New Delhi and the **Vice-Chancellor** and the **Registrar, Dean, Faculty of Arts, and Head, Department of English**, Annamalai University, for the opportunity and the facilities they provided me to organize this three-day national seminar. I am indebted to my colleagues for their cooperation. It is my pious duty to put on record my gratefulness to the authorities of the ICSSR, New Delhi for sponsoring this seminar.

Finally, I thank the UGC approved Journal *Language in India* for publishing the reviewed and selected papers of this seminar.

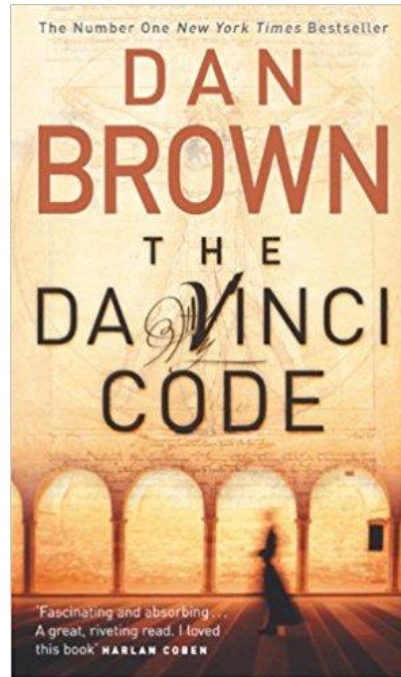
**Dr. T. Deivasigamani**

Editor

## Feminine Symbols in Dan Brown's *Da Vinci Code*

V. Abhinaya and Dr. K. Muthuraman

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Courtesy:

[https://www.google.co.in/search?q=da+vinci+code+cover+images&rlz=1C1CHBF\\_enIN781IN781&tbm=isch&source=iu&ictx=1&fir=ZIOZea07XgwPzM%253A%252CnLDxxwJ-JNRK3M%252C\\_&usg=\\_\\_LNk2FCdOtG39LC0c0a4ES0VpSpw%3D&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjN8tOB7praAhWIro8KHWCfBkIQ9QEIKjAB#imgrc=HnEa2dV\\_iXhZrM:](https://www.google.co.in/search?q=da+vinci+code+cover+images&rlz=1C1CHBF_enIN781IN781&tbm=isch&source=iu&ictx=1&fir=ZIOZea07XgwPzM%253A%252CnLDxxwJ-JNRK3M%252C_&usg=__LNk2FCdOtG39LC0c0a4ES0VpSpw%3D&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjN8tOB7praAhWIro8KHWCfBkIQ9QEIKjAB#imgrc=HnEa2dV_iXhZrM:)

### “Symbols are very Adept at hiding the truth”- Dan Brown

Dan Brown is a famous American author of thriller fiction. Dan Brown used the name of the great artist Leonardo Da Vinci to his book as The Da Vinci Code, because Da Vinci's art and belief is the central to the story. Da Vinci Code is famous for its controversial theories. Dan Brown often sees Da Vinci Code as “Secret History”; it reveals untold truths behind the history. Robert Langton the protagonist of this novel helps Sophie Neveu to crack the clues which were left by her grandfather and leads to find out the secret behind the history. Clues are in the form of Symbols, Documents, Artwork, etc. Symbols which are used in this novel represent a holy woman Mary

Magdalene. It reveals the background story of Mary Magdalene through many secret symbols such as The Last Supper, Holy Grail, The Mona Lisa, Rosa Rugosa, Pentacle, and The Vitruvian Man. Semiotic approach is used to analyze the symbols which represent Sacred Feminine in Da Vinci Code:

### **Blinding ignorance does mislead us**

**O! Wretched mortals, open your eyes  
- Leonardo da Vinci**

Leonardo da Vinci (1452 – 1519) lived during the period of Renaissance. During Renaissance artists express hidden messages or clues through their artwork. This was purposefully done to safely express their ideas that were considered dangerous in those days, especially in matters of religion. Dan Brown the author of Da Vinci Code says that the great artist Leonardo da Vinci left hidden messages through his paintings. Even in Fact page, the author states:

**FACT:** All descriptions of artwork, architecture, documents and secret Rituals in the novel are accurate.

### **The Last Supper**

In 1498, Leonardo Da Vinci completed the famous painting The Last Supper. It is generally recognised as a painting of thirteen men. According to the novel in the artwork, The Last Supper, the figure of the right hand of Jesus Christ is not John, the apostle; it is Mary Magdalene. Leonardo intentionally painted John as ambiguously a woman. For his own safety Leonardo expressed the secret through hidden messages through his artwork. The novel also states that the colour scheme of the garments of Jesus Christ and Mary Magdalene is inverted in the painting. Jesus wears a red tunic and royal blue cloak and Mary Magdalene wears the opposite. In The Last Supper painting, the gap between Jesus Christ and his beloved forms the letter “V”. It is a symbol of Chalice (ie) Holy Grail. The seating position of Jesus and Mary Magdalene looks like an alphabet “M” means Mary Magdalene and also it means Martial, marriage between Jesus Christ and Mary Magdalene. “... ‘V’ shape at the focal point of the painting. It was the same symbol Langdon had drawn earlier for the Grail, the chalice and the female womb. Teabing said, if you view Jesus and Magdalene as compositional elements rather than as people you will see another obvious shape ... Glaring in the centre of the painting was the unquestionable outline of an enormous, flawlessly formed letter ‘M’.” (Brown 326)

### **Holy Grail**

According to a particular society, Holy Grail is the cup which was used by Jesus Christ in The Last Supper. In the painting the Last Supper, at the table in front of everyone had a glass of wine including Jesus Christ. The cups were made of glass, stemless but there was no separate chalice in the painting and no Holy Grail. Historians considered Holy Grail as a ‘Chalice’, a cup but Chalices is an allegory to protect the literal meaning of Holy Grail. In old French the literal meaning of Holy Grail was ‘Sang Real’ which means Royal Blood. In the novel Leigh Teabing says that Leonardo knew that Mary Magdalene was the actual Holy Grail and she was the bearer of Jesus blood. Chalice is the ancient symbol of female. It resembles a cup or a vessel ‘V’; most

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

**Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: Vol. II Black Writings: A Subaltern Perspective**

V. Abhinaya and Dr. K. Muthuraman

Feminine Symbols in Dan Brown’s *The Da Vinci Code*

importantly it is in the shape of a woman's Womb. This symbol is associated with fertility, femininity and womanhood.

"Mary Magdalene was the Holy Vessel. She was the chalice that bore the royal bloodline of Jesus Christ. She was the womb that bore the lineage and the vine from which the sacred fruit sprang forth". (Brown 333)

### **The Monalisa**

The Monalisa is a masterpiece of Leonardo Da Vinci. It is famous for its mysterious smile. Everyone has a doubt whether Monalisa is a picture of man or woman. Da Vinci made Monalisa look larger from the left side than the right side because historically the concepts of male and female have assigned left is for female and right is for male, even in Hinduism we followed the same concept. Even the name Monalisa is an anagram of an Egyptian god and goddess, 'Amon and Isis'. They are the god and goddess of fertility. It symbolises the unification of both male and female and refers to the holy union of Jesus and Mary Magdalene.

"It was Isis, 'Langdon told them, grapping a grease down. 'so we have the male god' Amon'. He wrote it down. 'And the female goddess. Isis, whose ancient pictogram was called L'ISA'. (Brown 165)

### **Rosa Rugosa**

Rosa Rugosa is one of the older species of rose which has five petals. Five petals refer to the five stages of womanhood they are; birth, menstruation, motherhood, menopause and death. Rose represents the symbol of Holy grail as well as womanhood, secrecy, and guiding which leads to the secret truth. In Roman period if they hang rose on the door over a meeting it indicated that the meeting was secret. It was called sub rosa, i.e., everything under the rose had to remain secret. 'Sub rosa', Langdon said, 'The Romans hung a rose over meetings to indicate the meeting was confidential. Attendees understood that whatever was said under the rose- or sub rosa-remain secret'' (Brown 271) In addition Langdon explained, Rose had a close concept to the true direction . The Compass Rose denotes east, west, north and south. It originated from wind rose that denotes thirty-two winds. It actually starts from the direction east because in relation to the west Europe Jerusalem is located in the east direction. So, east was considered as the primary direction.

### **Pentacle**

The Pentacle is a pre-Christian symbol which refers to the worship of nature. In the novel Da Vinci Code Saunier's had drawn a symbol of Pentacle on his body to give a clue to his granddaughter Sophie Neveu and Langdon. Pentacle is a five-pointed star that formed from five straight lines that intersected each other. It is also the symbol of Venus, the goddess of sexual love and beauty. This symbolizes the harmony between male and female. Blade, the ancient symbol for male, and Chalice the ancient symbol for female are fused together and form the symbol of pentacle. It represents the unification of male and female. It is the symbol of Venus because of its graphic origin. In every eight years the transit of Venus in relation to the earth makes a shape of Pentagram in the elliptic sky. "This pentacle is representative of the female half of all things- a concept religious historians call the 'Sacred feminine' or the 'divine goddess' ...that Venus and her

pentacle became symbols of perfection, beauty and the cyclic qualities of sexual love...”(Brown 57)

### **The Vitruvian Man**

In the novel *Da Vinci Code*, Sauniere, before dying, drew a symbol of pentacle on his stomach and he died in the position of the Vitruvian man to give a clue to Sophie. The Vitruvian Man is one of Da Vinci’s paintings. It is an image of a naked man in widespread eagle position inside the circle. The circle around the man is the symbol of feminine, it is considered for protection. The naked man and the circle give the message that they unite to create harmony in the world. “In his final movements of life, the curator had stripped off his clothing and arranged his body in a clear image of Leonardo da Vinci’s Vitruvian Man”. (Brown 68). Langdon explained The Vitruvian Man is the brilliant example of Roman architect. He was the one who showed that our body is made of building blocks and the proportional ratio is equal to PHI. PHI value (1.618) is considered as the golden number or divine proportion. Da Vinci employed this golden ration in his work The Vitruvian Man. If we measure,

- The distance from tip on one’s head to the floor divided by the distance from one’s belly button to the floor.
- The distance from one’s shoulder to fingertips divided by the distance from one elbow to fingertips.
- Hip to floor divided by knee to floor, finger joints; spinal division, etc.

Dan Brown reveals the hidden messages in the artwork and symbols which mostly symbolise feminine. The works of Leonardo da Vinci like The Last Supper, The Monalisa The Vitruvian man and symbols like Holy Grail, Rosa Rugosa, and Pentacle relate to feminine and all symbolise Mary Magdalene. All of them interrelated and reveal the secret of a sacred feminine MaryMagdalene.

**“Two Thousand years ago, we lived in a world of Gods and Goddesses.  
Today, we live in a world solely of Gods. Women in most cultures have been  
stripped of their spiritual power”**

**-Dan Brown**

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 **18:3 March 2018**

**Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: Vol. II Black Writings: A Subaltern Perspective**

V. Abhinaya and Dr. K. Muthuraman

Feminine Symbols in Dan Brown’s *The Da Vinci Code*

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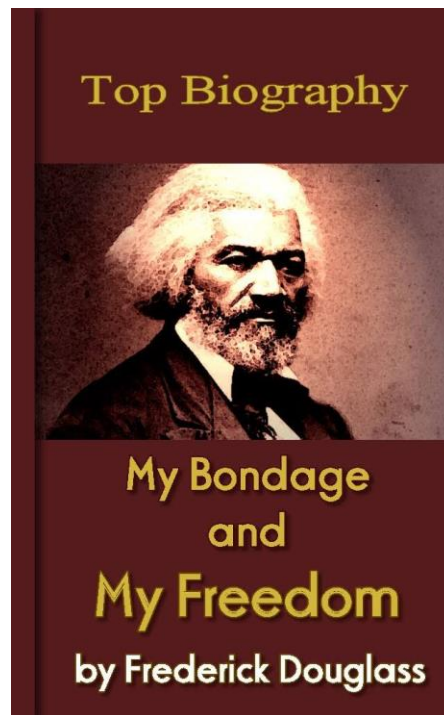
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**The Authorial voice in Frederick Douglass’  
*My Bondage and My Freedom***

**T.V. Agalya and Dr. P. Premchandar**

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Courtesy:

[https://books.google.co.in/books/about/My\\_Bondage\\_and\\_My\\_Freedom.html?id=J1jsCgAAQB\\_AJ&source=kp\\_cover&redir\\_esc=y](https://books.google.co.in/books/about/My_Bondage_and_My_Freedom.html?id=J1jsCgAAQB_AJ&source=kp_cover&redir_esc=y)

**Abstract**

The Oral narrative literature is one of the unique aspects and features to study if you are interested in learning about the indigenous cultures and narrative styles that once lived in America. To truly immerse yourself in this field, you need to embrace a multifaceted approach which encompasses the aesthetic, linguistic, psychological, historical, and culture. Nature is always a part of Native Oral American Literature due to its relationships with the people. A prevalent thread running through almost all of Oral narrative literature is the interconnectedness with nature and human. Cultural and personal identity is related to nature in many works. It is impossible to encompass the geographic and cultural scope of the subject. The temporal scope of the subject is equally intimidating, ranging from at least 2000 BCE to the present. The Native

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American oral literatures are extremely difficult to date according to the chronological scale of Western history, a more indigenous form of temporality is evoked thereby. Rather than imagining a linear timeline, perhaps a better way to think of time in this context is as a dance that circles around, bringing very old stories to life so that they can be adapted to an ever-changing present. Thus, the term “oral literature” should be seen as a purposefully elusive term that can be written down but is always more fluid than black marks on the white page. And this paper suggests the authorial voice in Douglass’s *My Bondage and My Freedom*.

### ***My Bondage and My Freedom***

Frederick Douglass’ second autobiography, *My Bondage and My Freedom*, significantly revises key portions of his original narrative style and extends the story of his life to include his experiences as a traveling lecturer in the United States as well as England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. Frederick Douglass also frames his second autobiography differently, replacing the introductory notes by white abolitionists Lloyd Garrison and Wendell Phillips to profound the prominent black abolitionist Dr James Smith. While the appendix to his first autobiography serves primarily as a clarification about Frederick Douglass’ views on religion, the appendix to *My Bondage and My Freedom* includes a letter to a former master, Thomas Auld, a ship captain and various excerpts from Douglass’ abolitionist lectures. These prefaces and appendices provide the reader with a sense of the larger old historical movements in which Douglass plays an vital part. This genre flourished from around 1760 and though the first few decades after the abolition of slavery.

### **Reality of Slavery**

One of the most famous example is the interesting *Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*, but the most famous writer of a slave narrative almost certainly has to be Frederick Douglass. So much did the iconoclastic Douglass have to share about the reality of slavery that *My Bondage and My Freedom* is actually his second work. The first and more famous is his groundbreaking [\*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave: Written by Himself\*](#).

Technically, *My Bondage and My Freedom* is considered a revised and expanded version of its original publication, it serves to update readers on what has occurred in the decade since the earlier narrative was published. These additions are primarily focused on his encounter with racism in the northern states, his activism in the name of abolition, most significantly, his decision to break away from Garrison and the white abolitionist leaders to establish the priority of the black voice in the call to end slavery. Central to this slave narrative Douglass’ frequent expression of his contention that the organization of slavery corrupts and dehumanizes not just the slave, but the slaveowner and non-slaveholder who condones this practice.

While *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave* is much more known, *My Bondage and My Freedom* answered many of the burning questions leftover from the first book. Published in 1855 a decade after narrative, it expanded on many of the most intriguing points of his first book. Remember, both were autobiographies, but as Douglass wrote in his third



autobiography, *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass*, there was only so much information that he could reveal at a given time in hopes of not preventing escape by other runaway slaves.

Like Douglass' earlier narrative, *My Bondage and My Freedom* begins with his birth in Tuckahoe, Maryland, but the revised version offers many additional details. In Chapter 1, Douglass remembers his grandmother, Betsey Bailey, at length: "Grandma was. . . all the world to me; and the thought of being separated from her, any considerable time. . . was intolerable". However, when he is around seven years old, his grandmother takes him to live on the plantation of Colonel Edward Lloyd, and they are indeed separated, leaving young "Fed" with no family except for his brothers and sisters, of whom he notes, "slavery had made us strangers". Douglass acknowledges that "it was sometimes whispered that my master was my father," but he cannot confirm the accuracy of this rumour, for "slavery does away with fathers, as it does away with families". In describing his early life on the plantation, Douglass expands the material from the first five chapters of his 1845, narrative including the death of his mother, descriptions of brutal overseers, and the whipping of Aunt Esther to fill the first nine chapters of *My Bondage and My Freedom*.

### **First Chapter**

In the first Chapter of *My Bondage and My Freedom*, Douglass describes life in Baltimore with his new master, Hugh Auld, a ship carpenter and brother of Thomas Auld. "I had been treated as a pig on the plantation; I was treated as a child now," he notes, but the "troops of hostile boys" in the streets nevertheless made him wish at times to be back on "the home plantation". When Hugh Auld discovers that his wife, Sophia, is teaching Douglass to read, he insists that she stop immediately, for "a slave should know nothing but the will of his master," and literacy "would forever unfit him for the duties of a slave". Douglass hears and understands this message, but Auld's words actually convince him of the crucial importance of literacy: "In learning to read, therefore, I. . . owe quite as much to the opposition of my master, as to the kindly assistance of my amiable mistress". In order to attain literacy, Douglass "compelled to resort to indirections" such as exchanging bread for reading lessons from hungry white children in the streets of Baltimore. "For a single biscuit," he recalls, "any of my hungry little comrades would give me a lesson more valuable to me than bread".

### **Narrative of Challenges Faced and Dislocations**

*My Bondage and My Freedom* retells the series of relocations and challenges Douglass faces from 1833 to 1838, when he finally escapes from slavery. "One trouble over, and on comes another," Douglass recalls; "The slave's life is full of uncertainty". This particular period of uncertainty begins with the death of Captain Anthony, who, Douglass notes had remained his master "in fact, and in law," though he had become "in form the slave of Master Hugh". Captain Anthony's dead tells us a division of his human "property," and soon afterwards, Hugh Auld sends Douglass to work at his brother Thomas Auld's plantation, on Maryland's Eastern shore. When Master Thomas finds that severe whippings and punishments do not cause "any visible improvement in Douglass' character," he hires the young slave out to Edward Covey, who is reputed to be "a first-rate hand at breaking young Negroes".

On January 1, 1834, Douglass sets out for Covey's farm, fearing that "like a wild young working animal, I am to be broken to the yoke of a bitter and life-long bondage". Setting, one of his first assignments is to tame "a pair of unbroken oxen," which Douglass describes as a near-impossible task. The oxen run away, and Covey punishes Douglass harshly. But Douglass does not intend to be broken either, and his year with Covey culminates in a violent fistfight with the overseer. This brutal struggle, Douglass recalls, "rekindled in my breast the smouldering embers of liberty. . . and revived a sense of my own manhood". Douglass emphasizes his victory over Covey as a turning point in the narrative: "This spirit made me a freeman in fact, while I remained a slave in form". In 1835, Douglass leaves Covey to work for William Freeland, "a well-bred southern gentleman," noting that "he was the best master I ever had, until I became my own master". After an uneventful year, Douglass devises his first escape plan, conspiring with five other young male slaves. However, their scheme is detected, Douglass is imprisoned for a time, and finally Thomas Auld sends him back to live with Hugh.

While working in Baltimore shipyard as a hired labourer, Douglass is savagely beaten and nearly killed by four white ship carpenters. Nevertheless, the job allows Douglass to save some money, finally enabling him to make his escape in September 1838. Douglass does not reveal the full details of his escape in *My Bondage and My Freedom*, fearing that he might "thereby prevent a brother in suffering from escaping the chains and fetters of slavery". He narrates his escape in *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass*, published well after emancipation. Instead, Douglass skips to his first impressions of life in New York: "less than a week after leaving Baltimore, I was walking amid the hurrying throng, and gazing upon the dazzling wonders of Broadway".

Although the title suggests that Douglass' second autobiography might spend as much time on his "freedom" as it spends on his "bondage," only the last four chapters are devoted to his life as a free man. Douglass marriage to Anna Murray, his move to New Bedford, Massachusetts, his renaming from Frederick Augustus Washington Bailey to Frederick Douglass, and his first encounter with "the mind of William Lloyd Garrison". It relates Douglass' involvement with the American Anti-Slavery Society and describes his original propulsion to write down his story "to dispel all doubt about his background and to expose the secrets and crimes of slavery and slaveholders". Douglass' vociferous Atlantic crossing on a ship full of slave-owners, his exploits as a traveling lecturer in England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, and the "many dear friends" abroad who collaborate to purchase Douglass' freedom from Thomas Auld in 1846.

Douglass plan to start a newspaper after returning to the United States, which he realizes with the help of his "friends in England" despite some unexpected resistance from his abolitionist "friends in Boston". This difference of opinion was demonstrative of a larger rift between Douglass and the followers of William Lloyd Garrison over various points of political philosophy. Determined to circulate his newspaper from a neutral location, Douglass begins printing *The North Star* in December 1847 and moves his family to Rochester, New York, in 1848. He concludes *My Bondage and My Freedom* with a revised mission statement: "to promote

the moral, social, religious, and intellectual elevation of the free colored people. . . to advocate the great and primary work of the universal and unconditional emancipation of my entire race".

### **A Different Brand of Opposition**

Douglass states a different brand of opposition within the ranks of the Anti-Slavery Society itself. He was one of only a few black men employed by the mostly white society, and the society's leaders, including Garrison, would often condescendingly insist that Douglass merely relate the "facts" of his experience, and leave the philosophy, rhetoric, and potent argument to others. Douglass' *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* can be seen as a response to both of these types of opposition. The narrative pointedly states that Douglass is its sole author, and it contains two prefaces from Garrison and another abolitionist, Wendell Phillips, to attest to this fact. Douglass' use of the true names of people and places further silenced his detractors who questioned the truthfulness of his story and status as a former slave. Additionally, the narrative undertook to be not only a personal account of Douglass' experiences as a slave. With the narrative, Douglass demonstrated his ability to be not only the teller of his story, but its interpreter as well. Because Douglass did use real names in his narrative, he had to flee the United States for a time, as his Maryland "owner" was legally entitled to track him down in Massachusetts and reclaim him. Douglass spent the next two years traveling in the British Isles, where he was warmly received. He returned to the United States only after two English friends purchased his freedom. His reputation at home had grown during his absence. The *Narrative's* was an instant bestseller in 1845 and went through five print runs to accommodate demand. Despite opposition from Garrison, Douglass started his own abolitionist newspaper in 1847 in Rochester, New York, under the name *North Star*.

### **Continued Devotion**

Douglass continued to write and lecture against slavery and also devoted attention to the women's rights movement. He involved in politics, to the disapproval of other abolitionists who avoided politics for ideological reasons. When the Civil War broke out in 1861, Douglass campaigned first to make it the aim of the war to abolish slavery and then to allow black men to fight for the Union. He was successful on both fronts: Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation on December 31, 1862, and the Congress authorized the enlistment of black men in 1863, though they were paid only half what white soldiers made. The Union won the Civil War on April 9, 1865.

During the 1860s and beyond, Douglass continued to campaign, now for the right of blacks to vote and receive equal treatment in public places. Douglass served in government positions under several administrations in the 1870s and 1880s. He also found time to publish the third volume of his autobiography, *The Life and Times of Frederick Douglass*, in 1881 (the second volume, *My Bondage and My Freedom*, was published in 1855). In 1882, Douglass' wife, Anna, died. He remarried, to Helen Pitts, a white advocate of the women's movement, in 1884. Douglass died of a heart attack in 1895.

### **At Long Last Recognition Came**

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

**Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: Vol. II Black Writings: A Subaltern Perspective**

T.V. Agalya and Dr. P. Premchandar

The Authorial voice in Frederick Douglass' *My Bondage and My Freedom*

Until the 1960s, Douglass' narrative was largely ignored by critics and historians, who focused instead on the speeches for which Douglass was primarily known. Yet Douglass' talent clearly extended to the written word. His narrative emerged in a popular tradition of slave narratives and slavery fictions that includes Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and Harriet Jacobs's *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*. Douglass' work is read today as one of the finest examples of the slave-narrative genre. Douglass co-opted narrative styles and forms from the spiritual conversion narrative, the sentimental novel, oratorical rhetoric, and heroic fiction. He took advantage of the popularity of slave narratives while expanding the possibilities of those narratives. Finally, in its somewhat unique depiction of slavery as an assault on selfhood and in its attention to the tensions of becoming an individual, Douglass' narrative can be read as a contribution to the literary tradition of American Romantic individualism.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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**Problematizing Gender Normalities:  
The Bodily Counter Discourse in J.M. Coetzee's Fiction**

Ajeesh. S

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J. M. Coetzee

Courtesy: <https://www.thenation.com/article/j-m-coetzees-facts-of-life/>

**Fluid and Transgressive Postmodern Body**

The postmodern body, whose materiality is mediated in culture and discourses, is a political one. The postmodern body is also fluid and transgressive, one that exists between the textual and the material, the organic and the virtual. It loses its fixed boundaries and unified meaning and becomes a site for conflicting meanings and positions. It is thus textualized or culturally constructed and is seen as a carrier of cultural and political inscription and attributes. The material body is often entangled with discourses rooted in social, cultural, and political codes.

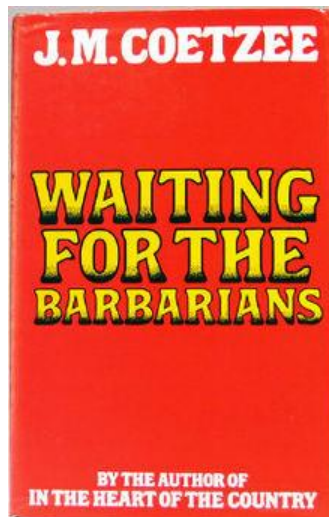
For an artist/writer in the postmodern era, there is the difficulty of representing the reality of material suffering taking place in the world. He/She is aware that bodily suffering happens around us and constitutes material history. But she is also aware that such events are estranged and complicated when one represents them in fiction and translates historical materiality into the discourse of the novel. Thus a pre-discursive reality to the suffering body has to be granted. At the same time a writer/artist has to interrogate its discursive exploitation or production.

Thus, the body is directly involved in a political field and power relations have an immediate hold upon it. It can be analyzed as a historically and culturally specific entity, one which is viewed, treated and experienced differently depending on the social context and historical period. The materiality of the body is inseparable from the power relations and historical forces and it complicates the relationship between the body and its discursive formations. It is inscribed by political power structures and its discursive practices. It is always subject to change and is always experienced as mediated through its different social constructions. In the present postmodern context, the history of suffering is displaced onto the body and this corporeal suffering is mediated in language and discourse.

### **J M Coetzee – Language and Identity**

The Nobel Laureate South African novelist J M Coetzee’s writing consistently focuses on the relationship of language, ‘identity’, and history: in all his works, he sets out to investigate the role of language in the constitution of ‘identity’. For him, the beginning of the subject is in the body. The very existence of the subject is in fact first and foremost corporeal, since we are all subject to living in a body, which makes great demands on us: it desires, it hurts, and it dies. It is thus an absolute limit. The body is omnipresent, the body breathes, and the body speaks. The body is central to subjectivity/selfhood.

### **Focus of This Paper**



Courtesy: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Waiting\\_for\\_the\\_Barbarians](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Waiting_for_the_Barbarians)

In this paper, the central women characters in J.M. Coetzee’s *Age of Iron* and *Waiting for*

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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Problematizing Gender Normalities: The Bodily Counter Discourse in J.M. Coetzee’s Fiction

*the Barbarians* are analyzed. Both suffers from the alliance of colonization with patriarchy, and become doubly oppressed. In both these novels, the hierarchical logic of colonialism is maintained to the disadvantage of the marginalized. In the essay “Can the Subaltern Speak?” Gayatri Spivak asserts that: “If, in the context of colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow” (287). In these novels, the body is closely aligned with the body politic and the material and historical conditions in which it exists. Coetzee strikes a balance between bodily pain and the ultimate construction of such experience in language. The novels conflate postmodern, feminist, and postcolonial themes by relating material body to language and history. The body exists, but it is aligned with language and textuality.

### **Mrs. Curren**

The author allows his female narrator to write about material suffering through the narration of cancer in *Age of Iron*. In the novel, the real is transformed into and mediated through narrated language. The protagonist of this novel, Mrs. Curren, speaks from the unprivileged position of sickness and seeks to unsettle power relations through the excessive bodily content of their narrations.

Mrs. Curren attempts to restore the filial bond with her exiled daughter through her writing/storytelling, her cancer pain, her politically-oriented and metaphorical understanding of her plight, and her encounters with the products of an unjust racial system. Mrs. Curren's body in *Age of Iron* is constructed through her reading and recounting of her illness. The diseased body is allegorized, written as a story about the relationship between the domestic space of the body and the public one. Cancer makes the body a rich site for sociopolitical and historical meanings. She makes her body a letter and political discourse, one in which the body is the site of an ethical position. The body testifies to political injustices and acts as their living witness. Cancer, metaphorically, marks the body and opens it to several readings. It marks her body as a text that tells a symbolic story of suffering beyond the limits of the personal. Mrs. Curren writes her diseased body into her letter and makes it the driving force of the ongoing narrative, thus making it a signifying text. Her narrative stems from and is occasioned by her diseased body. She renders the body a linguistic construct in the form of a carefully/painfully written letter to an absent daughter who left South Africa dissatisfied with its politics and estranged herself from her mother. The novel is her anguished mediation of her experiences in the form of this confessional letter. She sends her body in words for her daughter to read and taste, as she writes:

So day by day I render myself into words and pack the words into the page like sweets: like sweets for my daughter, for her birthday, for the day of her birth. Words out of my body, drops of myself, for her to unpack in her own time, to take in, to suck, to absorb... (9)

Words in this image are used by Mrs. Curren to textualize the body and to be, in turn, ingested by the recipient. It echoes a form of nurturing in which a mother nurses her daughter. The absent daughter is to receive a textual offering in which the mother is made text.

## **Cancerous Body**

Mrs. Curren's cancerous body is transgressive and rich in meanings. Cancer, metaphorically, marks the body and opens it to our readings. It marks her body as a text that tells a symbolic story of suffering beyond the limits of the personal. Drew Leder contends: "When in pain, the body becomes the object of an ongoing interpretive quest. We obsessively probe and palpate even when this increases discomfort" (78).

## **Intimate Relationship Between the Body and Writing**

Mrs. Curren dwells on the intimate relationship between the body and writing. As a storyteller, she sees her words as a legacy bequeathed to her daughter, when she writes:

This is my life, these words, these tracings of the movements of crabbed digits over the page. These words, as you read them, if you read them, enter you and draw breath again. They are, if you like, my way of living on (131).

Thus, the old, diseased mother overcomes barrenness and the surrounding death by transmitting her emotional words that gain a new life once embraced and read by the absent daughter. The letter allows her to speak to her daughter, and also to the reader in a meta-literary language, from a position beyond mortality and evoke material conditions and corporeal bodies in language. She writes: "It is through my eyes that you see; the voice that speaks in your head is mine. Through me alone do you find yourself here on these desolate flats, smell the smoke in the air, see the bodies of the dead, hear the weeping, shiver in the rain" (103).

## **Words and Words**

Words get embodied and fleshed by issuing from her sick body and being transcribed on paper. The diseased body lives through language as its materiality is temporarily erased in writing and then evoked in reading. As Susan Sontag argues, "Illnesses have always been used as metaphors to enliven charges that a society was corrupt or unjust" (72). Mrs. Curren makes the metaphorical relationship between her cancerous body and a politically diseased South Africa. Pain manipulates her conscious life and appropriates her being, which explicates the corporeality of cancer that gets represented in her narrative. Pain makes her more attentive to the pain of others. It makes her write out her pain and the pain of others in a letter that takes the form of a cancer narrative. It makes her think about her material body in metaphorical terms and cultural association.

## **Political Metaphor**

The diseased body is used as a political metaphor for the disease of the body politic as Mrs. Curren herself makes this connection. The body transgresses as a constructed text, and the text similarly passes as a corporeal presence full of pain and suffering. Mrs. Curren writes from a subordinate position as an oppressed body, and they transform this material body into a resistant discourse.



### *Waiting for the Barbarians*

In his novel, *Waiting for the Barbarians*, J.M. Coetzee carefully charts out the physical and mental typography of an unnamed, unidentified border town with walled enclosure and uncrossable desert. It is inhabited by primitive fisher folk and nomadic people, town Magistrate and official representative of armed force fight. Coetzee invites his readers to examine the essential nature of both history and the self in history. The two leading characters in the novel, Colonel Joll and the Magistrate, are representatives of the imperial law in this frontier town. . The Colonel, blinded, is the emblem of estrangement of knowledge and law, and of justice. The Magistrate, whose eyes are open to the sun, sees the humanistic values of knowledge and justice, but is powerless. Both of them are waiting for the barbarians. But one wonders who really are those barbarian people for whom that they are waiting for.

### **Barbarian Girl and the Empire**

The barbarian girl, who is one of the prisoners in the novel, is a material body tortured by the Empire. The girl is a body in pain, a body that is viscerally material and real, before she is a discursive trope for the disabled colonized. She is a tortured disabled body and simultaneously more than that material body. The barbarian girl's body is also more than that for the magistrate who textualizes it. He cannot comprehend the girl's body. He treats it as an enigmatic text to be decoded. He views it, in a postmodern fashion, as a compilation of single, disintegrating parts and inscribed surfaces. Yet, her body resists his nets of signification, and he fails in reading the signs of torture on her body. He cannot live her experience of pain, the event of torture, and thus he attempts to decode her silent body that is inscribed with torture. Her story remains alien to him, and her body signifies nothing much beyond its embodiment. If anything, her scarred body signifies that torture already took place somewhere and that she is marked for life as a victim of the Empire, but he cannot construct a coherent story from her regarding her experience. She is 'a stocky little body' he has no desire to enter (30). Even sex does not bring her closer to him as she remains silent about the details of her torture.

The girl could not resist the Empire's torture tactics and attempts to construct her as the Empire's enemy. She is even a docile body for the aging magistrate in that she 'yields to everything' (30). She yields to his rubbing and washing as well as other intimacies. The magistrate's frustration is apparent when he says, 'It has been growing more and more clear to me that until the marks on this girl's body are deciphered and understood I cannot let go of her' (31).

The Empire has marked her body in torture, and he treats her body as an inscriptive surface. Her body, as an object of his interpretations and reading, is a text. The body remains entangled with attempts at construction and textualization. Her body confounds the magistrate through its apparent proximity and accessibility yet refusal to yield its story of torture. He wants to textualize her body, know her experience and story of torture, but since the magistrate cannot experience her bodily pain, the materiality of her body remains hers alone and he fails to read her tortured body. In her silence, her body has to be constructed and mediated in the story he wants to put together about the event of torture and her own status as a colonized subject and a trope

for the violated body of the other. The only visible history the magistrate can read on her body are the traces of a history burned into her flesh by the scars of her torture.

### **Reproducing Bodily Suffering**

Coetzee takes us back to the problematic of representation since bodily suffering cannot be reproduced easily. He enacts the postmodern dilemma of representation by articulating the materiality of bodily suffering but the difficulty of capturing this pure materiality beyond constructive attempts and despite the limitations involved. The magistrate fails to read the girl's story of torture as he fails to find the signs he looks for in the torture chamber. As he fails to render the girl's story of torture, he returns the body to discursive construction and makes her an allegorical figure for the tortured body.

In her silence, the barbarian girl enhances her status as a tortured body that cannot but be represented in the magistrate's account as a tortured body. She does not grant him the assurance of a reciprocal relation, and he reflects, 'with a shift of horror I behold the answer that has been waiting all the time offer itself to me in the image of a face masked by two black glassy insect eyes from which there comes no reciprocal gaze but only my doubled image cast back at me' (43). The magistrate realizes that torture does not erase the materiality of the other body. On the contrary, it affirms its otherness and even denies the magistrate a reciprocal recognition. And because he does not speak her language, he finds himself far removed from this alien body on cultural terms.

### **To Conclude**

Thus, the female body of central characters in Coetzee's two novels transcend dichotomies and sometimes stand outside representational discourses. They refuse themselves to be defined or delimited. They constantly are in a state of flux, one of movement or of excessive materiality, or even mute, going beyond the logic of patriarchy and colonialism. This bodily resistance acts as a psychological challenge for the power structures since the creation of the 'Other body' and its domination is a prerequisite condition for them to normalize their discourses. The 'Performative' potentials of the female body in these novels dismantle the established norms of the society. Through excessive bodily content of their sayings and by remaining in a constant state of flux, the representation of these female bodies acts as a discourse of resistance to the accepted gender discourses and power structures.

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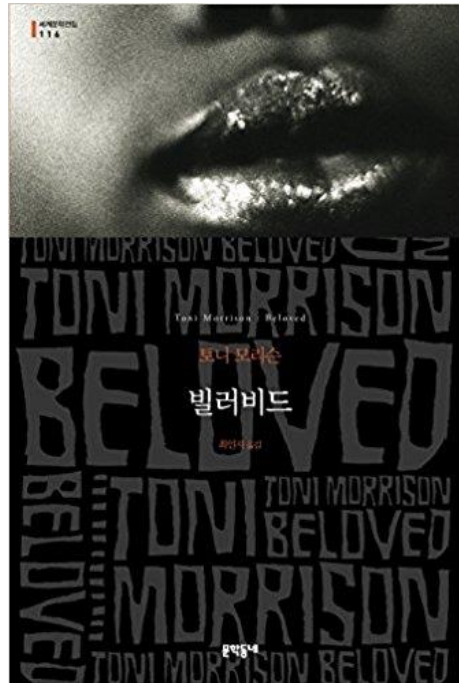
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## Expression of Sisterhood between Black and White Women in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*

Dr. M. Alagesan

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Courtesy: [https://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb\\_sb\\_ss\\_c\\_1\\_7?url=search-alias%3Daps&field-keywords=beloved+toni+morrison&prefix=Beloved%2Caps%2C667&crd=3G3HATN99V00Q](https://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb_sb_ss_c_1_7?url=search-alias%3Daps&field-keywords=beloved+toni+morrison&prefix=Beloved%2Caps%2C667&crd=3G3HATN99V00Q)

### *Beloved*

*Beloved*, the master piece of Toni Morrison, is based on a real incident which the author came to know from a newspaper: it was a woman who killed her own child out of an extreme depression. Morrison added colours of tragic-sympathy through her word power. It attracts readers' attention and makes them plunge into the story. The protagonist Sethe wins the hearts of the readers. Though she is a tragic figure in this novel, she inspires the readers by being a very strong personality who bears all her hurdles and stands like a rock even at the face of danger. *Beloved* cannot merely be treated as a story which is born out of an individual's imagination; rather it is one of the great stories that have found a powerful medium to express the suppressed feelings of black people, especially black women under the clutches of slavery.

Sweet Home and School Teacher are the terms used with a paradoxical connotation. Sweet Home is the slave house in this novel where the slaves are bereaved of all their feelings. School Teacher is the person who plucks all their feelings. Normally, a teacher is the person who makes the students know, observe, and introspect the things in and out, with which they can make their home sweet, whereas here it is quite opposite. They suffer like anything; they are tied, chained, 'iron-mouthed' and used. As Baby Shuggs, one of the significant characters of this novel, says,

“Here,” she said, “in this here place, we flesh; flesh that weeps; laughs; flesh that dances on bare feet in grass. Love it. Love it hard. Yonder they do not love your flesh. They despise it. They don’t love your eyes; they’d just as soon pick em out. No more do they love the skin on your back. Yonder they flay it. And O my people they don’t love your hands. Those they only use, tie, bind, chop off and leave empty. Love your hands! Love them. Raise them up and kiss them. (BL 88)

### **Killing Is Not More Painful Than Living**

This is what makes Sethe think even killing is not more painful than living in Sweet Home. The slave masters do not treat them even to the level of a domestic animal. Under this ill circumstance, it is very difficult to develop and maintain a good relationship. Sexual relationship is the only relationship allowed in Sweet Home. It is not for making them happy but for producing future slaves.

### **Encompasses Various Aspects of African American Life**

*Beloved* encompasses various aspects of African American’s life during and after slavery; slavery, racial discrimination, gender abuse, sexual harassment, search for identity, longing for freedom, deprivation of love and affection are some of the various aspects of *Beloved*. Of which, relationship seems to be an important aspect. As Nancy Kang says, “Familial ties are difficult to maintain” (846). Despite their hardships, there are relationships, how they are realised and how they have to be viewed is the intention of this essay. The story is about a woman called Sethe who escapes along with her children from Sweet Home, the slave house, and tries to find a better place and better life for her children. As Teresa N. Washington says, “As a runaway, Sethe does not even own herself, let alone her children, by American standards. However, she dares to love and protect them with the only means at her disposal.”(60). She does not want her sons working like machines, and her daughters to be the manufacturers of future slaves. In her attempt to free them, she encounters countless problems, both physically and mentally, which sometimes find no words or language to express them clearly.

### **Amy Denver and Sethe**

Amy Denver and Sethe’s relationship is a unique one. It is an affection developed on the basis of ‘A friend in need is a friend indeed’. Friendship and love are the two relationships that come out by breaking the boundaries. They come past the boundaries such as religion, community, gender, colour, region, language and so many others, in fact, because of these two axes, the world roles on. Morrison’s attempt to project the life style of slaves is quite common aspect found in most of the black writers, in addition to this, she portrays two opposite

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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extremities of two white characters in this novel: one is the School Teacher who is depicted as an extremity of brutality and the other is Amy Denver, depicted as an extremity of humanity. School Teacher stretches his hands to pluck the happiness of black people, whereas Amy Denver soothes the wounds caused by him. Morrison imagines how the life of the black people would be in the presence of the white people like Amy Denver in this world.

### **Good One Always Remains Good**

There is no wonder if the good one always remains good. It would be a surprise if the poor becomes rich in a sudden sweep, if the below average turns out to be excellent, and if the hatred turns out to be love. The happiness of such a change is always doubled and there will be a new hope to live on. Such is the surprise Morrison tries to give to the readers while depicting the relationship of Amy Denver and Sethe. Apart from this, she pinpoints the feminism; women are, irrespective of their background, blessed with kindness and motherly care towards others. As the proverb says 'God cannot be present everywhere, so He created mothers'. Morrison says through the characterization of Amy and Sethe that women across the world are slaved once, whereas the black women are twice. In this novel, Morrison depicts two white females with kind heart but helpless due to the boundaries of their social system. Though they could not show publicly their love of humanity on the black people, privately they show it.

On a riverbank in the cool of a summer-evening, two women struggled under a shower of silvery blue. They never expected to see each other again in this world and at the moment couldn't care less...two lawless outlaws—a slave and a barefoot white woman with unpinned hair—wrapping a ten-minute-old baby in the rags they wore. But no pateroller came and no preacher. The water sucked and swallowed itself beneath them. There was nothing to disturb them at their work. So they did it appropriately and well. (BL 85)

### **Friendship Expressed Through Hands**

The friendship of Amy and Sethe is not expressed in speech but through hands; Amy uses no kind words but stretches her helping hands. The scolding should be viewed from different angle. It originates not from the heart but from the mouth. It is quite common that people do not like seeing people lying in a pathetic condition; it does not mean that they hate them, but they feel empathized, they regret for them, at the same time their commitments and helplessness make them discomfit. They struggle between their kindness and helplessness; it hurts them, so they feel that it is better to avoid seeing them. Amy Denver does not have any personal hatred on Sethe, but due to her commitment and personal depression, she tries to go away from the problem. When she sees Sethe in a very pathetic condition, she feels that her journey to get away from problems has been disturbed by another problem. She could not go on with her job. Her conscience obstructs her from leaving Sethe and her personal feelings urge her to move out of the place as early as possible. So, she is in the fit of conflict with her kindness and helplessness. Her kindness comes out through her arms and her helplessness through her mouth. She accepts the help from her good arms and understands the words from bad mouth, and that is why Sethe is unique among all other characters of this novel.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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## Scolding and Consoling

Sethe does not want to carry all her burden even though she is in a very pathetic condition. She cooperates with Amy by putting in all her remaining strength. Though Amy scolds and de-motivates Sethe in the beginning, later she soothes her by giving her helping hands. By the helpful nature of Amy and the cooperation of Sethe, an undefined friendship is formed between them. After delivering the baby, Amy's scolding is converted in to consoling. She feels that her help to deliver the baby will not be recognized and it will go unnoticed. In reality, the feeling of importance, hunger for honour and respect for emotions of human being pave way for unconditional love and relationship. ““She’s never gonna know who I am. You gonna tell her? Who brought her into this here world?” She lifted her chin, looked off into the place where the sun used to be. “You better tell her. You hear? Say Miss Amy Denver. Of Boston.”” (BL 85). Sethe, as a mark of respect for Amy Denver’s help, names her baby as Amy Denver.

## Ideology of Sisterhood

Through the unison of Sethe and Amy Denver, Morrison expresses her ideology of sisterhood between black and white women. She also expresses the kindness of women that cannot be stopped by any colour race or creed. Amy uses scornful words but stretches her helpful hands for Sethe. “Don’t up and die on me in the night, you hear? I don’t want to see your ugly black face hankering over me. If you do die, just go on off somewhere where I can’t see you, hear?” (BL 82) She could not make a move from the spot after knowing the condition of Sethe. Amy’s helping tendency and Sethe’s cooperation not only give birth to Denver but also for sisterhood which is developed not through words but through actions.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

**Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: Vol. II Black Writings: A Subaltern Perspective**

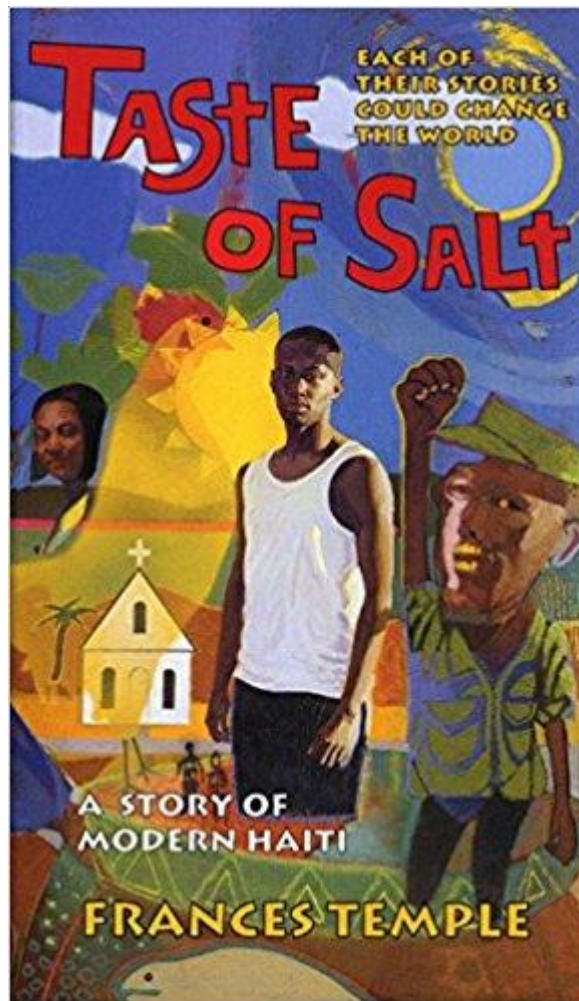
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Disintegration of Human Bonds in Martha Southgate's  
*The Taste Of Salt*

P. Amala, M.Phil. Scholar

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Courtesy: <https://www.amazon.com/Taste-Salt-Story-Modern-Haiti/dp/0064471365>

**Abstract**

The present paper focuses on Martha Southgate's *The Taste of Salt*. It is a story of an endless power of addiction and the harm it does not only to the addict but also to the others



surrounded to them. This paper also throws light on the “Disintegration of Human Bondage”. It deals with the addiction and its problem which leads to the shattered relationships in the family. The emotional distant among the members in the family is due to their lack of intimacy, escaping from their past and afraid to deal with the problems. This paper is intended to analyse the novel *The Taste of Salt* in the perception of African Americans struggle to prove their identity both in personal and professional life.

## Introduction

African American literature focuses on the literary writings of the African people who were settled in America. In America particularly in south, there were several laws that made African Americans to be placed in low position. In addition, there were many organisations that were violence against them. These social and historical events pushed many African Americans to be poets and writers. Because writing is the only way to express themselves. Their journey exists from the colonial period to till the present. They want to get social justice and freedom.

## Issues of the Period

Before understanding the origin of African American literature, it is important to know the main issues of that period. The issues of Race and suppression of colour pushed African Americans to use writing as a weapon to social change. They have developed the ideas of inferiority and distinction through their bitter experience and preconceptions rooted in images of blackness and physical differences between the two people. Those negative images were created by English adventures and traders who visited the African continent. The literature of England presented a pessimistic portrayal of Africans and their ways of life. The Africans were considered as brutal and ugly people.

## Racism

The issue of racism made Africans-American to be unrecognized and their works unauthenticated such as Frederick Douglass and Harriet Jacobs. Through sermons, poetry, letters and slave narratives, African American literature of the colonial period was a means of breaking the bonds of slavery. In New England, those slaves who were with their master’s family exchanged their stories and experiences with the audience. They described their lives before slavery in Africa and their daily activities. They portrayed the sufferings felt by husbands and wives separated from each other as well as separations of brothers from sisters and children from parents.

## Martha Southgate

Martha Southgate (born on December 12, 1960) is an African American novelist. Southgate was born in Cleveland, Ohio. Her works are *Another way to Dance* (1997). *The Fall of Rome: A Novel* (2002). *Third Girl from the Left* (2005). *The Taste of salt* (2011). The story *The Taste of Salt* is about the young African American marine biologist Josie Henderson. She belongs to the hardworking middle-class family. Her father, Ray is an auto worker and her mother Sarah is a nurse. Her brother Tick is a vagabond who roams aimlessly. The story also deals with the marriage life of Ray and Sarah. And it speaks about the marriage of Josie with white fellow scientist Daniel and her relationship as lover with her co worker Ben Davidson. The entire novel

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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picturise the problem in life of these characters due to the addiction of alcoholism and which results in the broken relationship.

### **Concept of Self**

Society is made up of individuals, who depend upon each other. It is necessary for the individual to rely upon others either for the material wealth or for the mental health. For example, an individual is dependent on family, family is dependent on society and the dependency further goes on. In the contemporary society, people do not understand the importance of kith and kin and they go out of the relationship bondage. According to the *Oxford Compact Dictionary*, the word “disintegrate” means “break up”. People break up their up their relationship for their own wish and desires to be fulfilled. So, this gives rise to the concept of self. When people concentrate on self they become helpless in problematic situation. “In the dissertation *self in select novels of Iris Murdoch and Saul Bellow* it is Stated that “When the individual holds himself from his self, the more pathetic becomes his sense of existence.” (Visaka devi(27) This concept makes people to concentrate on them alone rather than family, society and so on. Similarly, these characters in this novel *The Taste of Salt* moves away from their own family for various reasons.

In most of the cases the happiness of one’s life is determined by the members in the family. Family remains as a motivating force in individual’s life for their success. But sometimes the family life is not bed of roses for all. It becomes thorns because of their individuality. The difference in individual due to generation gap, worldly pleasure, importance of material world, professional importance makes them to be away from their family.

### **Life of Josie and Her Family**

Martha Southgate’s *The Taste of Salt* presents the life of Josie and her family which is scattered by alcoholism. The novel describes the struggles and sufferings faced by the members of black family in contemporary American society to achieve their aspiration. Ray and Sarah both are from two different worlds. Ray, the father is a self-made uneducated man who works in automobile company. Whereas Sarah is an educated nurse who is also the daughter of doctor. He fell in love with Sarah. Their love extended till the marriage and the birth of Josie. But the love began to decrease as the year passes by. Until the birth of Tick, they shared their love and led a happy life. But after the birth of Tick their conflicts began. In the earlier days Ray helped her in all the things but later he skipped it by concentrating on his work. There are more changes in his attitude. Though he does his responsibilities, she could not feel happy and enjoy the life as she experiences it before. They lost understanding and distance between them does not allow him to lead the happy life which they once experienced.

“They used to do chores together and having a good time doing them. He’d do the dishes while she swept or something like that, and they’d joke around. But somehow he had just stopped helping with all that. She didn’t have the nerve to ask him about it.” (55)

### **Expectation of Respect and Recognition in Profession**

Josie's expectation of respect and recognition in profession made her to distant herself emotionally, physically and mentally from her family. She also moves away by denying the connection of family. Her father gradually addicted to alcohol. So, in order to avoid her miserable family life, she immersed herself in books. This habit of reading books as a kind of escapism helped her to pursue her career as marine biologist. The black female biologists are very rare. So, both her love for water and reading habit made her as scientist particularly as a marine biologist.

Josie and her constructed life as a marine biologist made her to go apart from the family. Josie married a white man named Daniel. She is utterly free from her family bondage and she is completely detached from her family. Daniel is a loving husband who wants children. Their experience in family life has got plenty of differences. The racial difference could be seen when Josie introduces her husband, she herself describes that he is white. She tells that "People don't disapprove but they do notice...because I notice it myself." (9) So the racial inferiority in the biracial couple makes the relationship broken.

### **Daniel**

Even in the description of character there are lot of differences in them. "Any way Daniel he is kind, Precise and quiet. I was drawn to those things about him. I try to be precise, but it doesn't come naturally..." Their difference in their ideas like he wants to have the offspring of his own, but she does not want to possess. She herself knows that she is running out of time as she thirty-six years old. She also thinks that her femininity is not judged by the offspring. "I'm not entirely sure that I want to have kids. Wait. The truth. The truth is, I know I don't want to. Daniel wants them. I don't." (12) She married him as he understood her love for her marine life, but she is afraid to trust him with her family conflicts because she thinks that he does not be used with black. So this makes her even to throw her love for her husband and become close with another black scientist Ben. She is ready to throw away the feelings for her family and wants to experience a life which is free from racial trouble and unhappy family.

### **Family Life**

Some people concentrate on their professional life more than their family life. But women need to concentrate on both family and profession. If not the happiness of the family will be lost. Similarly, Josie too gives much importance for her profession though she loves her husband. For certain period of time Josie and Daniel lead their life peacefully after their marriage. One day when she came home late he questions her for the delay. So Josie tells that "I love you but I gotta do my work. You know that." (128) But he tells that he is ready to schedule his time for the happy and peace of their family.

### **Roy and Sarah**

Ray's habit of alcoholism destroyed his marriage life with Sarah. He is sent out of family by her mother when Josie is seventeen. Though he remains sober for many years Josie has never forgiven him. Her father's addiction to alcoholism breaks the family apart. Her brother Tick is also addicted to alcohol and drug. He got addicted to alcohol which is the root cause of his

emotional detachment from her mother. “I went to Tick’s apartment the other day. The landlord let me in. He knows there’s a problem. Josie, it was so filthy—bottles everywhere. I can’t... an animal wouldn’t live the way your brother lives. Its breaking your father’s heart.” (22-23) This is also the reason for her to turn away from the family. Josie and her brother Tick are bonded at their younger age but later due to his addiction she purposefully refuses him. She avoids both her father and her brother. In this way she disintegrates herself from the members in the family.

### **Breaking Bondage**

Not only the major characters broke their bondage but even the minor characters. Ben break up with his lady love for no reasons. “He talked about Leslie, What might have gone wrong...” (153) People does not express their inconvenience with the beloved ones. One side people think on their own perspective of being hurt. On the other side people didn’t even know the cause of the problem. Josie moved very close with Ben and even decides to leave Daniel for the sake of him. But Ben does not accept her idea of making their relationship permanent. She decided to make it so because of her trust and sense of belonging towards him. But Ben puts an end to it though Josie does not want to.

### **Caught between Dual Identities**

African Americans are caught between the dual identities. They are unable to follow either their black stereotype or fit in white practices. Josie also caught between the dilemma of professional upper middle-class life and lower middle class struggles of her family. She struggles to live in highly respectful life and also, she needs the company of black people. Later Josie totally wanted to separate from her background which includes both her city and family.

There are still people who long for their own sense of belonging. People do not feel that they belong to social system called family. This lack of belongingness may be due to separation from the family, feeling of inferiority among the family members. Whenever people do some mistakes in life, either they are rejected or condemned by their family members. People do not understand the fact that relationship is more important than perfectness and professional success. In the present era, people give importance only to their professional and their comforts; they fail to recognise themselves as a part of their family. There is only one solution to this problem that people should throw away their selfishness and should care about their family members too.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

**Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: Vol. II Black Writings: A Subaltern Perspective**

P. Amala, M.Phil. Scholar

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 **18:3 March 2018**

**Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: Vol. II Black Writings: A Subaltern Perspective**

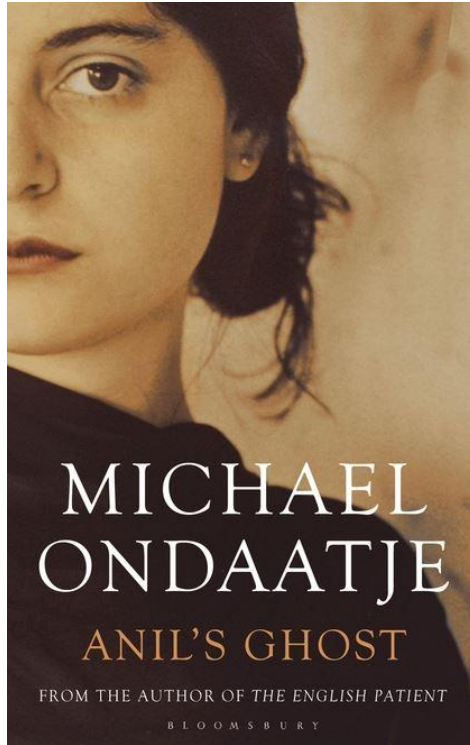
P. Amala, M.Phil. Scholar

Disintegration of Human Bonds in Martha Southgate's *The Taste Of Salt*

## Myth in Michael Ondaatje's *Anil's Ghost*

V. Anandh and Dr. G. Arputhavelraja

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Courtesy: <https://www.bloomsbury.com/au/anils-ghost-9781408819784/>

### Michael Ondaatje

Michael Ondaatje is a Sri Lankan born Canadian writer who won the Booker Prize Award for his novel *The English Patient*. He frequently presents a mythic and religious framework in his narratives. His novel *Anil's Ghost* records the atrocities of the Sri Lankan civil war began in 1983. It is combined with the descriptions of myths and social issues like Buddhist images, philosophical fragments, references to a sacred text of Sri Lankan Buddhism, *The Culavamsa* and also describes the sufferings of a common people. Ondaatje focuses on the religio-ethnic conflicts, reprisals' sequence of killing, resist comprehension and accept an atmosphere of unreality as each group splits claim to its version of the truth.

### Anil Tissera



Anil Tissera is a protagonist of the novel. she a forensic scientist sent by the Centre for Human Rights in Geneva for inquire about the civil war atrocities in Sri Lanka. Ondaatje technically narrates the story accompanied with the myths of the Sri Lankans. Her familiarity with current America, films, songs, and bowling backstreets sets up a series of juxtapositions with modern and ancient Sri Lanka. Her investigation reveals the competing regime of truth with the traditional religious philosophy of Sri Lanka. On the other hand, this novel registers the Buddhist philosophical ideas.

### **Buddhist Philosophical Ideas**

Enlightenment is attained through a proper understanding of historical process and the private processes of human lives. The wheel of life, the cycle of death and rebirth is supposed to be founded on a specific form of interconnection known as “dependent origins”; the whole situation, psychological states, and motivations started from a causal chain whose main determinants are desire and ignorance. Karma, the individual’s state of being, depends upon a chain of reactions based on those factors, and he or she attains freedom when able to free the self from the cycle of birth and rebirth. The Buddhist concepts of time and causality provide narrative models in *Anil’s Ghost*, which also has fictive estimates to the Buddhist ideal of Nirvana, when subjective misbelieve and unreason, are transcended in an experience of spiritual unity, and the sage has an outburst of compassion for the suffering world. Such experiences pay for utopian moments of intimacy as an alternative to the alienated ego of the exile. Buddhism’s specific blending of detachment and compassion offer an alternative to the public and private violence.

### **Detective Story**

*Anil’s Ghost* is at one level a detective story in which the Protagonist’s forensic science leads to the revelation of a government’s crime and the disclosure of a truth. The progressive lined plot with its revelatory end is set against disconnected descriptions of killings, kidnappings, and a random sequence of horror. The Buddhist passages in the novel reconcile the enlightenment narrative and the spectre of incoherence provides an alternative moral and sensitive budget for dealing with civil and private strain. In one of the passages, Anil is taken by Sarath to meet an archaeologist, Palipana, to identify the suspected murder victim. Palipana was later blind, had withdrawn from patriotic controversies in a meditative withdrawal to the remained of an ancient monastery in the forest. Anil endures a rational shift as the simple architecture and the Spartan routines tempt a trance-like state in which consciousness misplaces its sense of individuality and becomes occupied in the particulars of the environment: “These bones of an old settlement. It felt to Anil as if her pulse had fallen asleep, that she was moving like the slowest animal in the world through grass. She was picking up intricacies of what was around them.” (97).

### **Palipana’s Blindness**

In earlier, Anil had felt that Palipana’s blindness had provided him a specific relationship to the phenomenal world:

She imagined he could hear the one bird in the forest distance. She imagined he could hear Sarath’s sandals pacing, the scrape of his match ... She was sure he



could hear all that, the light wind, the other fragments of noise that passed by his thin face, that glassy brown boniness of his own skull. (87)

### **Awakening**

At the end of the novel, the Buddha's eye awakening to the enlightenment of the observer has been assimilated into the details of surrounding nature. Such passages recollect the Buddhist view of enlightenment as a vision into the interdependence of all myths and an experience in which the duality of subject and object is overcome through the individual's interest into the world.

Anil's training in a tradition of Cartesian dualism, taught her to treat the material world, such as bodies, insects, and plants as passive and meaningless since submitted to the analytical intelligence of the scientist. However, the detachment of the analytic mind from different symbols is taken by an experience of empathy into the boundaries of self and other is broken down. Anil confronts a form of inter-subjectivity separation from her Western theories of selfhood. Her appropriating male name from her brother has shown willpower to prompt her own identity against society's narrow labels. She gives importance to her privacy and has rejected her Sri Lankan culture, finding its strong communal ties repressive. In the course of a nomadic life and a series of fragmented relationships she has re-defined herself: "I live here ... in the West." (36)

The origin of suffering lie in the longings of passion is the Buddhism's second noble truth: "'There has always been slaughter in passion,' she heard Palipana say" (102). Later, Sarath's visit to the Forest Monastery of Arankale, elucidates that achieving the peaceful mind depends on disciplining the self to ignore passion: "Those who cannot love make places like this. One needs to be in a stage beyond passion" (189) Then, the self must throw away the consumerist world of power, including "historical honour, measured ownership, their sure truths" (190).

### **Gross and Subtle Material Worlds**

In the forest scenes, Palipana is informed to Anil as "the distinction between the gross material world and the 'subtle' material world" (86), and this marks the basis of a debate between Western and Eastern theories of knowledge. Enlightenment arises from an appropriate grasp of reality, the recognition that all perceptions are based on nothingness; they are bondage of interdependent, baseless phenomena in a continuous state of fluidity, and it is wrong to sort them the object of knowledge or desire. Contrast to that, as a forensic scientist informs to the Geneva Centre for Human Rights, Anil holds a positivist epistemology and a generous ideology: "We use the bone to search for it. 'The truth shall set you free.' I believe that" (102). But the novel deals with a killing committed at the peak of the civil war. The conflict between the dominant Buddhist Sinhalese and the minority Hindu Tamils provocative secession had become more complex. The dominated Sinhalese government was in conflict with a high Nationalist Buddhist mutiny in the South while in the East and North an Indian Peacekeeping Force had been imposed into violence against its fellow Hindu Tamils. In addition to inter-ethnic atrocities,

co-religionists were killing one another now, as armed teams and death groups carried out implementations and “disappearances.”

### **Ethnic Cleansing**

Ethnic cleansing and civil war give a challenge to Western liberalism and its epistemological assumptions, because in such circumstances “truth” and “reality” are obviously being built in different ways by the parties in opposition. Buddhist epistemology elucidates more persuasively to such crises of legitimacy. Buddhism is sceptical of the possibility of attaining knowledge since to do so is to put on stable theoretical classifications to something that is essentially flexible.

In the extremes of inter-ethnic violence, an alternative epistemology founded on a more related view of truth answers to the condition more effectively:

Sarath knew that [for Anil] the journey was in getting to the truth. But what would the truth bring them into? It was a flame against a sleeping lake of petrol. Sarath had seen truth broken into suitable pieces and used by the foreign press alongside irrelevant photographs. A flippant gesture towards Asia that might lead, as a result of this information, to new vengeance and slaughter. (156-57)

### **Irrational Passion**

The Buddhist image of fire portrays irrational passion kindling the “truth” for some destructive end, and it echoes the simplicity of Anil’s confidence that she can take her evidences to some Western court of appeal. Truth will be reconstructed to suit the West’s interests in global realpolitik.

In addition to underscoring the ongoing controversy over the truth value of the chronicles, Ondaatje reinforces further in his novel the connection between Buddhism and earthly politics by fashioning striking parallels between its portrait of Palipana and the real life eminent Sri Lankan epigraphist Senerat Paranavitana, the first Sinhala Commissioner of Archaeology. In the 1920s, Paranavitana published an interpretation of inscriptional evidence that was used to legitimate the claim that the first Sinhalese king Vijaya, celebrated in *The Mahavamsa* for repeating the unification of the island first enacted by the Buddha, was not simply a hero, but a member of the Aryan race. As Steven Kemper in “The Presence of the Past: Chronicles, Politics, and Culture in Sinhala Life” observes:

Wilhelm Geiger, who first visited the island in 1895 and analyzed the Mahavamsa at the turn of the nineteenth century, used the tools of comparative linguistics to analyze the morphology of Sinhala. His study led him to the conclusion that Sinhala was, in fact, an Indo-Aryan language. For Geiger, categorizing the language was “simply a matter of scientific taxonomy; for Sinhalese nationalists, it became a fundamental element in the twentieth-century claim that Sinhalese sprang from a distinct and elevated bloodline. (22)

### **Palipana and Paranavitana**

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Myth in Michael Ondaatje’s *Anil’s Ghost*

The parallels drawn between Palipana and Parnavitana are even more striking symbols when one considers that Parnavitana discovered and translated the gold foil Vallipuram inscription in 1939.

In the end, Dharmapala became the most dominant symbol in Buddhist revivalism, which based on an appeal to the ancient glories of Buddhism and Sinhalese civilization celebrated in the Mahavamsa and other chronicles as a way of pervading the Sinhalese with a new nationalist identity and self-respect in the presence of humiliation and restraints suffered under British rule and Christian missionary impact.

### Renovation of Sacred Sites

The final episode of the novel not coincidentally draws our attention to the progression of renovating sacred sites, featuring the artisan Ananda's effort to rebuild a large statue of the Buddha. Thus, the novel registers a drastic shift from the combining and protecting myth of the thread of the Pirit ceremony to the myth of quilting, a form of stitching that likewise unites yet, at the same time, acknowledges separation and difference. In representing Buddhism, Ondaatje signals toward the ideals of transcendence, wholeness, and unity.

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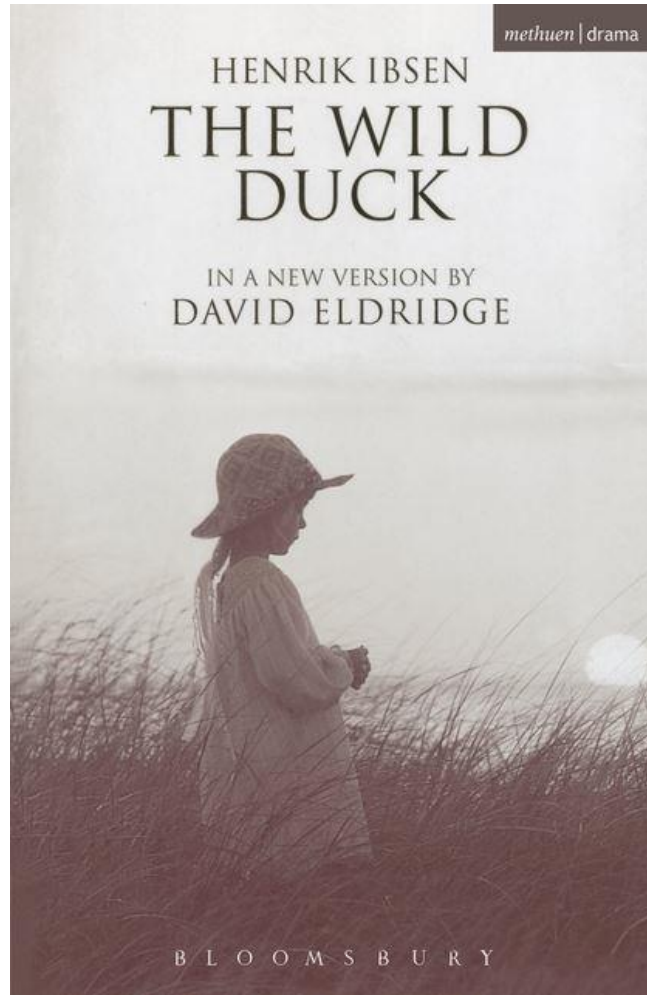
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## Exploration of Human Psyche in Ibsen's *The Wild Duck*

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Courtesy: <https://www.bloomsbury.com/us/the-wild-duck-9781408141748/>

Ibsen has been described as a dramatist of ideas. His work is basically linked with the circumstances of his life. During his life time, he was an honoured writer who changed the direction of the modern stage. His realism and treatment of contemporary social problems have influenced such dramatists as George Bernard Shaw, August Strindberg, Harold Pinter, Arthur

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Miller, and Edward Bond. Ibsen, has a profound effect on the drama both of his own time and in the twentieth century. Realism is an approach to scientific enquiry that sees the world as made up of events, together with mechanisms and structures. It is the depiction of subjects as they appear in everyday life, without interpretation. The term also describes works of art, which reveal a truth that may emphasize the ugly or sordid. Ibsen is one of the pioneers in writing realistic plays in revolt against both the romantic drama as well as the 'well-made plays'. Ibsen was more interested in the social realities of life than in romantic themes and melodramatic plots of the 'well-made plays'. The plot-devices of the 'well-made play' are employed by Ibsen to suit his realistic aims.

The chief point to note about Ibsen's portrayal of characters is its realism. He was a great master in the art of character portrayal. His characters appear lively in his plays. He shows a philosophical knowledge of human nature in his description of characters. Ibsen has also made use of symbolism in his plays. Although Ibsen had used symbolism in some of his earlier plays, it was in *The Wild Duck*, written in 1884, that he made use of this device on an elaborate manner. The chief symbol in this play is the wild duck, which the Ekdal family had received from Mr. Werle, who had shot at, and wounded the bird. The first reference to the wild duck comes in an indirect manner in a speech by Mr. Werle in Act-I, though this reference is later made by old Ekdal, when he describes the behaviour of a wounded duck to Gregers in Act-II. Mr. Werle in Act-I says that there are people in this world who dive to the bottom, the moment they are wounded and never come up again. In Mr. Werle's opinion old Ekdal belongs to this category of people. This kind of people occurs again when old Ekdal describes to Gregers about the behaviour of a wounded duck in Act-II. *The Wild Duck* is a play held together by symbols, as though the wild duck serves as a magnet and the characters in the play are like so many iron filings held together to it. In this play the symbol is a physical authenticity on the stage and suggests the actual presence.

Gregers points out that Hjalmar hides himself from the reality of life just as the wild duck, by diving to the bottom and holding fast to the weeds, tries to hide itself from the real life living above the surface. Gregers knows that Hjalmar's wife been seduced by Mr. Werle before she marries Hjalmar. But Hjalmar does not know this fact. Gregers feels sorry that Hjalmar should have remained in the dark about Gina's past life all these years. Gregers compares Hjalmar to the wild duck and himself to the dog which is capable of bringing the wounded duck back to the surface. The wild duck thus becomes a symbol of Hjalmar's life of ignorance and illusion.

Hjalmar leads this incomplete and unsatisfactory life because of his ignorance of Gina's past. Thus, the wild duck, which is lame and has a damaged wing also symbolizes Hjalmar's incomplete life. Gregers does not want that Hjalmar should continue with his illusion and thus continue to live in the center of dishonesty. Ibsen gives a full description of the wild duck:

**GREGERS.** I was just looking at her. One of her wing seems to me to droop a bit.

**HEDVIG.** Well, no wonder; her wing was broken, you know.

**GREGERS.** And she trails one foot a little. Isn't that so?

**HJALMAR.** Perhaps a very little bit (Act-III, 59).

The wild duck symbolizes Hedvig too. The wild duck is an alien in the garret; nobody knows where it has come from. All that is known about it is that it was wounded by Mr. Werle when he enjoyed the sport of shooting birds. Hedvig is an alien in this household. Hedvig is a product of Mr. Werle's sport of making love to any woman who attracted him. Mr. Werle had forced himself upon Gina and Gina had, as a consequence of Mr. Werle's passionate adventure with her, given birth to Hedvig, though Hjalmar has all these years been thinking her to be his own daughter.

Thus, there is much in common between the wild duck and Hedvig: both are products of Mr. Werle's sporting nature. The wild duck, is lame, has a damaged wing, and leads an incomplete and unsatisfactory life, shut within the four walls of a dark garret. Hedvig too leads a narrow, limited life, partly because she has weak eyesight and would soon become blind and partly because she had no ambition to travel out to see the world. To Hedvig, her house, her father, her mother, and the wild duck constitute the whole world. Hedvig leads a frustrated life like that of the wild duck.

The wild duck symbolizes old Ekdal's life also. At one-time, old Ekdal lived at Hoidal, in the open air, and used to go into the forest nearby in order to hunt wild animals. He was in those days as free as the wild duck was, before it was shot at by Mr. Werle. But now old Ekdal lives in a small house situated in a cramped, crowded city, far away from open spaces and open air. Thus, old Ekdal hides himself from the reality of life, and in his case also Gregers wants to act as a saviour like the clever dog which can bring a wounded duck to the surface again. Old Ekdal's present life is equivalent to the present life of the wild duck.

At the same time, the wild duck has three specific significance within the play, it reflects Ibsen's impression of himself when he wrote the play. It represents Ibsen's own reforming and moralizing spirit. Ibsen wants the reader to understand that he has now forgotten what it meant to live a wild life; he has now, like the wild duck, grown up desirable and trained and satisfied with his limited life. Both Hjalmar and Gregers represent different aspects of Ibsen: on the one hand the evader of reality, and on the other the optimistic idealist who bothers mankind with his claims of the ideal because he has a sick conscience.

The wild duck is also a symbol of Werle's seduction of Gina before she got married to Hjalmar. After learning from Gregers the secret of Gina's past life, Hjalmar feels like wringing the neck of the wild duck. The very sight of the wild duck now reminds him of the man from whom the bird had been received and who had played a trick upon Hjalmar by getting the seduced Gina married to him." The wild duck represents the social castaways in the play: the outcast Gregers, the exaggerated Hjalmar, the play-hunter Old Ekdal, the washed-out Doctor Relling and the alcoholic theology student Molvik. The dark Garret in the play symbolizes the thick forest where old Ekdal used to hunt wild animals. It is a symbol of protective fantasy for old Ekdal. This is an illusion which old Ekdal has built up for himself. To Hedvig, the garret symbolizes the depth of the ocean. The first description of the garret gives the symbol of the imaginative world of old Ekdal with its warmth as strange as its shadows.



Ibsen has beautifully employed the symbol of light. The impact of light in the garret is different in the daylight and in the moon light. Taking the garret as human life, the daylight symbolizes reality and the moonlight, illusion. The life looks beautiful and relaxed in moonlight which is an illusion of life. In *The Wild Duck*, Ibsen begins the play by emphasizing the value of colour and light. He uses the theme of light to contrast Old Werle, a stingy rich man, with Old Ekdal, a poor helpless man. Ibsen connects the colour green with the loss of eyesight of Old Werle. A possible affair between Old Werle and Gina, Hedvig's mother, suggests the cause of Hedvig's loss of sight. By using sun and moon, Ibsen establishes the atmosphere of the scene. In Ibsen employs the symbol of light to portray certain characteristics in order to construct the plot and to adjust the mood of the scene.

F.L. Lucas analyzes the opening arrangement and writes "In the outer room the lamps are dimmed, with green shades, in contrast to the brilliance of the room behind" (Lucas, 190). This means that the outer room, lit with soft and shaded light, implies poverty, whereas the inner room, illuminated with bright candles, expresses wealth. The darkened room, insinuating poverty, is the office in which the poor Old Ekdal 'does some extra copying,' and in return receives a small income. The inside room, representing wealth, is Old Werle's dining room where he was hosting a party. The distinctions of these two rooms contrast Old Ekdal and Old Werle. "In contrast to Werle's party, the lighting is of comparative poverty 'on the table a lighted lamp'" (Lucas, 190),sUnlike Old Werle's expensive and exquisite illumination, a small inexpensive lamp lights the Ekdals home, displaying poverty. This dissimilarity shows another significant distinction between Old Werle and Old Ekdal.

Old Ekdal explains that green is known to be the most helpful coloured shade to prevent blindness. This lighting early in the play hints that Old Werle is going blind which relates him to Hedvig, where there is every probability that she will lose her eyesight. Further, green is the colour of romantic unreality-the world of the wild duck caught in the seaweed below the waters of the fjord.

The colour green, a symbol of fantasy, is comparable to the world of the wild duck, which the characters use to wander themselves from reality. The shade green is a link of two plots of the play. The colour green hints to the loss of sight which suggests an affair between Old Werle and Hedvig's mother, Gina. Another explanation of the green display is to show a relationship of fantasy with the wild duck. The green colour also reflects Old Ekdal who is an angry man living in the past on the hunting grounds of the duck. The first explanation of green results in Hedvig committing suicide because of her anger. Hjalmar finding out that Hedvig is not his daughter, disregards Hedvig; this provokes her suicide. Green colour, symbolizing anger, hints two separate plots which end in fury. In each scene the light conditions decrease, as does the plot. In the first, the gorgeous moon illuminates the stage and in the following scene the sun rises and reality of the affair nears. The last scene of the play describes a cold snowy day, in which the suicide of Hedvig occurs (Cervi, 160-61). Lucas depicts act two as follows: "The wild duck's garret is opened clear with moonbeams shine on some parts of the great room. This happy hunting ground of illusion is vast and shadowy; and lit by the beguiling magic of moonshine"(Lucas, 191).

Old Ekdal's hunting ground fantasy is satisfied by the illuminating illusion of the moon. Not only the settings of this scene significant, so are the contents of this Act. He introduces the wild duck in this scene and so is the story of the 'clever dog' that 'went down and got the duck up' from 'the grasses and roots and weeds.' This is an example of how Ibsen sets the mood of the scene and expresses primary themes through the display of light. The daylight falls through the large windows in the slanting roof.' Cold reality approaches.

Ibsen carefully uses the colour green to enable two implications. One implication of the colour green is the affair between Old Werle and Gina, through eye trouble. The second one is the sad life of Old Ekdal living in his past. In the last four Acts Ibsen makes the setting correspond to the contents, the moon with happiness and daylight parallel to reality. The lack of light is analogous to darkness in the scene. Finally, grey sunlight, along with coldness and snow, correspond to Hedvig's death.

Old Ekdal's splitting and breaking speech is also symbolic. It symbolizes the incomplete and damaged life of old Ekdal, and the impact of forests on his life. Thus, in his speech he says:

**EKDAL.** (With a large gesture): Not that I'm afraid, you know; but – (Act-II, 38).

Old Ekdal's Lieutenant Uniform is also symbolic. He is not entitled any more to wear it but puts it on to recall his past way of living, the days when he was a lieutenant. He lives in a world of illusion, created by himself in which he finds sufficient satisfaction. This can be clearly seen in the following dialogue:

**GREGERS.** You were a great sportsmen.

**EKDAL.** So I was, I don't deny it you're looking at my uniform cap. I don't ask anybody's leave to wear it in the house. So I longer I don't – go out in the streets with it – (Act-II, 38).

In Act-II Greger saying himself as a clever dog is also symbolic. He thinks himself to be a great saviour and a great helper for the Ekdal family by taking the Ekdal family from ignorance to the light, but this absurd insight leads them to disastrous consequences. In the words of Gregers:

**GREGERS.** If I should choose, I should like best to be a clever dog.

**GINA.** A dog! (Act-II, 45).

In Act-III Hedvig says that the clock in the menageries is still and doesn't go anymore. It is symbolic as it is concerned with the wild duck. Time has no value for the wild duck because his life has confined to this menagerie. There is also a picture about the death of a girl. It is symbolic to the approaching death of Hedvig.

Alcohol also stands as a symbol. Alcohol for Molvik is symbolic because it is an illusion for him which gives him a kind of escape from his dull life. Art of photography too is symbolic. It is a symbol of reality but not the true reality. Here Ibsen gives importance to the necessity of illusive life.

Hjalmar's proposed invention symbolizes 'a saving lie' for him. This is a hope for Hjalmar towards a better future for him. He says:

**HJALMAR.** I wonder you have not asked that question sooner. But perhaps you haven't heard of the invention?

**GREGERS.** The invention? No. (Act-III, 60).

Hjalmar's unfinished invention symbolizes his illusion of himself as a great man. Working on it enables him to entertain his heroic vision of himself, finishing it would force him to expose to the world, the mediocre quality of his ideas.

Hjalmar wears a fashionable overcoat which he borrowed from Molvik in order to attend Werle's dinner party. The borrowed coat appears to symbolize Hjalmar's use of others to advance his goals or enhance his image. For example, in his photography business, he uses Werle's money and the talents of his wife to make his modest living. When he was in college, Doctor Relling notes, he had a "talent for declaiming other people's verses and other people's thoughts" (Act-V).

Gregers's smoky room is also symbolic. After renting a room from Hjalmar, Werle builds a fire in the stove and smokes up the room. Then he throws water on the fire, leaving a puddle on the floor. The mess he has made of the room appears to symbolize and foreshadow the mess he will make the Ekdal family's life. Characters in the play are also symbolic, representing average human beings, and illusion for them is an important thing on which their whole life is built. The house of Ekdals symbolizes the whole society which needs a saving lie. There are also Christian symbols in the play. Gina and Hjalmar symbolize Eve and Adam, living in their paradise and whose comfort is disturbed by the intrusion of the devil, the Gregers. They have to face a hope loss in the shape of the death of Hedvig. Gregers exclaims:

**GREGERS.** What do you mean?

**WERLE.** We were thirteen at table.

**GREGERS.** Indeed? Were there thirteen of us?

**WERLE.** (Glances toward HJALMAR EKDAL): Our usual party is twelve (To the others). This way gentlemen!

**HJALMAR.** (who has overheard the conversation): You ought not to have invited the Gregers (Act-I, 6).

The thirteenth person of the party is also a Christian symbol. Judas was the thirteenth who betrayed Jesus Christ, and here Gregers plays the role of Judas. The Christmas tree is symbolic from the Christian point of view. It symbolizes family security, fertility, and happiness. In Act-I Ibsen beautifully employs symbolism to make sure the requirement of illusion in the life of average human beings. In Act-III Gregers says that the wild duck is the most important of all the things there. The wild duck is the most important symbol which makes the play one of the greatest plays of Ibsen.

*The Wild Duck* illustrates in a most striking manner Ibsen's use of symbolism. The play is very skillfully written, and it shows the elaboration of Ibsen's methods at this period in Ibsen's career most successfully. *The Wild Duck* is a beautiful play depicting disrespect for moralistic annoying persons in people's lives, and also a wealth of understanding for weak human beings represented by Ekdal. Apart from the fact that Mr. Werle makes his wife miserable by his adulterous relationships, he also plays a trick upon Hjalmar by having Gina married to him. She had already become pregnant by her illicit union with Mr. Werle himself. Likewise, Greger's grievances against his father on the ground of his father's misdeeds are perfectly justified; Greger feels so strongly about his father's evil doing, in the treatment of his wife and his business partner and his business partner's son, that he decides to leave his father's home altogether.

Greger's feeling forced by his passion for truth, reveals to Hjalmar the fact that Gina had been seduced by Mr. Werle before she married Hjalmar. Hjalmar is shocked to hear this disclosure. He first asks Gina what her relationship with Mr. Werle had been and, when Gina confirms that Mr. Werle had seduced her before marriage, Hjalmar feels deeply grieved and distressed. He scolds Gina for having kept him in the dark about it. He tells her that she has been guilty of deceit in her relations with him. Now, all this is also perfectly realistic. Hjalmar's reaction to Mr. Werle's letter, handed over to Hedvig by Mrs. Sorby as a birthday present for the girl, is also perfectly natural. This letter contains Mr. Werle's offer of a monthly allowance of five pounds to Old Ekdal for life and to Hedvig after the death of old Ekdal. This offer of money from Mr. Werle to Old Ekdal, and more particularly to Hedvig, gives rise to a suspicion in Hjalmar's mind. Only a little before he learnt that Mr. Werle would soon be going blind. He knows that Hedvig too would go blind in course of time and that her eye-ailment is hereditary. Now he actually begins to think that Hedvig is not his own daughter but Mr. Werle's. Hjalmar now cannot even bear to look at Hedvig and, when she comes near him, he roughly asks her to get out of his sight. He also declares his intention to leave his house and go elsewhere taking his father with him. Greger thought that Hjalmar would be able to re-adjust himself to his family life. But Hjalmar's reaction is totally different from Greger's thinking. Only a very tough man, a man of an exceptional intellectual caliber and with exceptional moral courage would be able to adjust himself after knowing such bitter truths.

Hjalmar suddenly takes a turn over. Instead of leaving his home, he stays behind and then suddenly begins to talk about Hedvig in a most sentimental manner. He tells Greger that he has always loved Hedvig deeply and then the girl also had great faith in him and in his invention. He says that now he fears that Hedvig might be taken away from him by Mr. Werle with the help of Mrs. Sorby and with Gina's involvement. Hjalmar who, a moment ago, had been expressing his hatred for Hedvig, now reveals his thought that Hedvig might be taken away from him. Hjalmar has discovered that his love for Hedvig is so deep that, whether she might be his daughter or some other man's daughter, he thinks that he cannot live without her.

Hedvig has been feeling depressed at Hjalmar's rejection of her. She simply cannot understand what has gone wrong. She is confused by the great change in Hjalmar's attitude towards her, from deep love to deep hatred. At first, in accordance with Greger's advice, she gets ready to kill the wild duck as a sacrifice to please her father; but soon afterwards she changes her mind and shoots herself, obviously the girl could not resolve herself to the change in Hjalmar's attitude

towards her, she thought that her life would be meaningless. There is an element of morbidity in the girl, and in her state of despair at Hjalmar's changed attitude towards her. So she kills herself.

Mr. Werle is a perfectly credible person, one who has already taken a look at his past, misdeeds and found them convincing. It is natural also for Mr. Werle to decide to marry his housekeeper, Mrs. Sorby. Mr. Werle has become old; he can no longer lead a gay life and he would soon go blind. Under these circumstances he can find comfort only in another marriage. It is natural also for Mr. Werle to feel a slight twinge of remorse about his past misdeeds and to offer a monthly allowance to Old Ekdal. His advice to Gregers to desist from revealing to Hjalmar the true facts about Gina is also perfectly believable.

Gregers too is a credible person, though he is an unusual kind of man. Gregers is by nature a truth-seeker. He is almost ruthless in his insistence on the claims of the ideal. He goes ahead with his plan to reveal the true facts to Hjalmar in spite of the fact that first his father and then Dr. Relling tries his utmost to dissuade him from doing so. It is because of his obsession with the claims of the ideal that his father says that Gregers has a sick conscience inherited from his mother, and it is because of this obsession that Relling says that Gregers is suffering from an inflammation of the conscience. Gregers has noble motives, but what he lacks is a judgment of character. He does not realize the shortcomings and limitations of a man like Hjalmar.

The portrayal of Hjalmar too is perfectly realistic. He is a lazy, weak-minded and vacillating type of person. He avoids doing his work as a photographer on the plea that he has to meditate upon his proposed invention. He hardly does any work connected with his profession as a photographer but is all the time complaining that he is over-worked. He also keeps saying that he will continue to work as long as there is any strength left in him. All this is very funny of course. He has lived for fifteen years in a state of beneficent illusion, but this illusion is destroyed by a compulsive busy body (Gregers); and thereafter Hjalmar knows no peace. His desire to get away from Gina and Hedvig is natural, but he cannot leave them because he cannot live without such a competent life as Gina, and also, he is emotionally too involved with Hedvig. Hjalmar, as Relling well knows and as Gregers does not understand, is not a hero at all; he is an average man who simply cannot face the bitter truths of his life.

Relling is a realist to the core. Relling offers a contrast to Gregers. Gregers is an incorrigible idealist. Relling has truly understood the character of Hjalmar, and he can clearly see the blunder which Gregers would commit by revealing to Hjalmar the secret of Gina's past life. He warns Gregers against meddling with the life of Hjalmar and Gina, and also warns them against the damage done to Hedvig. Relling believes that the average man needs 'a saving lie' (Act-V, 81) in his life. He also believes that old Ekdal survives because of a saving lie in his life. "Take away the saving lie from the life of an average man, and you take away his happiness too" says Relling (Act-V, 81). Relling holds the view that it is very necessary to allow 'the saving lie' to remain intact in an average man because it is the stimulating principle of life. It was Relling's attempt to keep up 'the saving lie' in Hjalmar but Gregers has taken away that 'saving lie'. The 'saving lie' in the case of Old Ekdal is that, when he shoots a rabbit in the dark garret, he thinks that he has shot a wild bear in the thick forest of Hoidal.



Gina too is a realist, she is thoroughly practical and earth-bound like any practical woman, and she never thinks it necessary to reveal her husband the facts about her life before marriage. Being busy with routine household duties she completely forgets her past life and never bothers about what she did before her marriage. Mrs. Sorby is another practical woman. After the death of her husband, Relling wants to marry her but she is not certain whether Relling would be the right kind of husband for her especially because the experience of her first marriage which resulted in unhappiness. Now she plans to make herself useful to her employer, Mr. Werle, who begins to look upon her as being indispensable to him. There is no doubt that Mrs. Sorby would be very happy with Mr. Werle because Mrs. Sorby would make herself even more useful to Mr. Werle when Mr. Werle goes blind.

The dialogue throughout the play is perfectly realistic. The language employed is extremely simple. There is no artifice employed by the author in writing the dialogue. All the speeches are natural, spontaneous, and simple. The opening dialogue between the servants, the conversation among the guests at the lunch, the dialogue between Mr. Werle and his son Gregers, the dialogue between Gina and Hedvig, about the mounting expenses and their anxiety about Hjalmar, the dialogue between Gregers and Hedvig, with Hedvig talking about the miscellaneous articles which lie in the garret, the dialogue between Mrs. Sorby and those whom she meets at Gina's place, and the final dialogue between Gregers and Relling-all these have an authentic stamp. Everybody in the play speaks as people who speak in real life.

Ibsen in this play as in his other plays is a dramatist of social realities. In this play he has depicted in a most realistic manner the relations between a father and his son, the relations between an employer and his housekeeper, a husband and his wife, a father, and his daughter, and a friend with a friend. He has depicted paternal love, filial love, conjugal life, and fraternal relations. He has in no way tried to distort the kind of life which he has chosen for treatment in this play. In depicting the ordinary people like Hjalmar, Gina, and Old Ekdal, Ibsen shows an acute perception of realities.

There is the presence of the camera, a neutral, inadequate recorder of reality. Each character in the play sees reality from a unique point of view, voiced in old Ekdal's superstitions, Hjalmar's sentimentalism, Gina's literalism, Relling's cynicism, and Gregers's mystical idealism. These competing voices surround Hedvig, whose tragedy is as much provoked by this Babel of voices and views as by any other cause. The realistic art of *The Wild Duck* dictates its scale and type of action; the characters' social class, the furniture, and costumes, the stage directions for the actors' gestures and even the pitch of their voices. A typical Ibsenian play is not so much an unfolding of a plot as a revelation of character. Ibsen's emphasis is not on incident and action but on human psychology. Ibsen excels in depicting human relationships, and his depiction is always real. His message takes the form as plays which have a great impact in the minds of people since it was created. Thus, Ibsen is on the threshold of the new naturalistic style of playwriting.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

**Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: Vol. II Black Writings: A Subaltern Perspective**

H. Annshini and Dr. S. Florence

Exploration of Human Psyche in Ibsen's *The Wild Duck*



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Racism and Identity in Alexander Haley's *Roots*:  
The Saga of an American Family

Mohd Asif Bhat, Ph.D. Research Scholar and Dr. R. Vijaya

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Alex Haley (1921-1992)

Courtesy: <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/1796#>

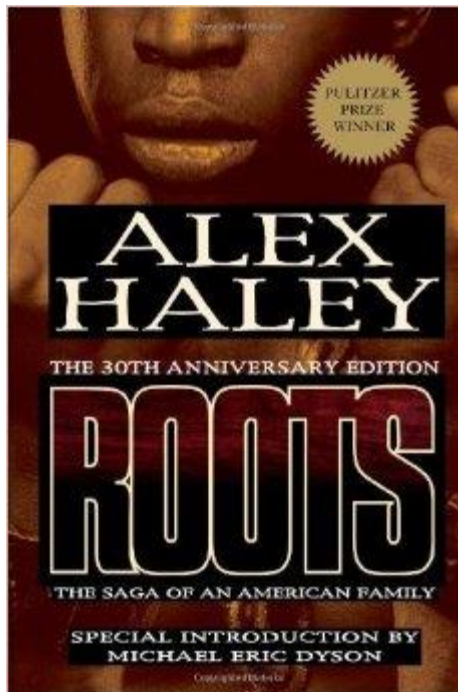
**Abstract**

As literature is a human art, it deals with man's interests and struggle with life. The twentieth century literature reflected the situation of the colored people in United States. The most significant genre which deals with human issues with an impressive and careful depiction of environment, characters and issues involved is the novel. The novel gives a realistic atmosphere to the story which is significant in understanding the issue with the author's point of view, as a result, the novel as a literary work could represent everyday life and its condition. So through this paper, I am going to discuss the notion of racism and its impact on the forming of black identity in two societies: American and South African in the twentieth century through a great novel *Roots: the saga of an American Family*. The novel had a great success, not only in America, but all over the world especially when it was realized in a TV series. It is based on the Alex Haley's family story which he learns from his grandmother. Furthermore, the author had some investigations and found that many parts of what his grant mother told him were true.

**Keywords:** Alex Haley, family story, TV series, racism, identity, segregation, community oppression

## Alex Haley

Alexander Murray Palmer Haley (1921-1992) is an American novelist and biographer who was born in Ithaca, New York, and raised in the small town of Henning, Tennessee. Alexander Haley is one of the African American writers who used autobiography to express his experience and a family experience through a long and hard saga. He started it from the origin (Africa), and how Africans were kidnapped to bring them into America. The author tried, through his novel, to tell the whites: Yes, I am from Africa, and we (African Americans) were originated from Africa. We are different, but we still considered as Americans as well as Africans. In this paper, I will strive to show how Haley expressed his view as an author toward racism in America and how blacks kept their identity in the New World scene. This is through his novel of *Roots* which express more the relation between the African American and their history in Africa, and what they went through in America for centuries.



### Desired: Social Reform and Respect of the Other

Alexander Haley being a famous writer and biographer, he wants behind his writings a social reform and respect of the other, and the cure for social ills, which are known as "racial segregation". Haley is also well known for his *Roots: The Saga of an American Family*, the description of the adventure of a kidnapped African in America and the story of his children and grand-grandchildren which the author belongs to. The author, like a lot of black authors at that time, used the biography as a means to gain some sympathy and authenticity to his work. As far as the novel was considered as a plagiarism, this does not deny the fact that it represents a lot of African American aspects, neither deny the literary value of the work.

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Language in India [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: Vol. II *Black Writings: A Subaltern Perspective*

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Racism and Identity in Alexander Haley's *Roots: The Saga of an American Family*

### **Interest in Ancestor Story/History - *Roots***

His interest in what his grandmother used to tell him about his African ancestor, or what he called it "my furthest-back person" (Haley, *My Furthest-Back Person - The African: The Inspiration for Roots* 12), inspired him to begin working on his next project, *Roots*. The tale follows the life of Kunta Kinte, a proud African who was kidnapped from his village in West Africa. After surviving the middle passage from Africa to America in the worst conditions that a person could go through, he was made a slave on a plantation in the United States. Haley visited archives, libraries, and research repositories on three continents to make the book as authentic as possible. He even reenacted Kunta's experience during the middle passage by spending a night in the hold of a ship stripped to his underwear. Haley's attitude toward following the African ancestor did much to enhance his popularity because it was after Malcolm X Biography which is based on a person who rejected the American name given to his family and replace it by an X to symbolize his ignorance of his ancestry.

### **Racial Segregation and Apartheid**

As we know how the United States passed through a racial separation periods, beginning with slavery till the twentieth century "racial Segregation". Unlike the South African Apartheid system, the American racial separation has *Roots* to centuries of slavery and white dominance era. The blacks have been always considered as servants and inferior to whites because of the white's authority in America through centuries over the blacks. And even African Americans consider themselves as imposed immigrants. As literature was a domain of white's authority too, black literature was their way to end this dominance and protest against what they saw as oppression.

In a completely different vein, Haley's genius for the biography as a means of revealing human experience and sympathy opens up a new world of imagining in the Saga of an American Family. It shows what he saw as "Roots of Racism" (Ross) by telling the story from the beginning to make it clearer. Also, he was influenced by the African oral tradition which he claims that his family still preserves.

### ***Roots***

*Roots* is one of Alex Haley famous novels. It was written in 1971 as a mixture of fiction and facts as Haley himself claims (Alex Haley biography). The novel is set in two different spaces one in Africa and the other one in America through almost three hundred years. *Roots* is the story of Kunta Kinte, an African from the Mandinka tribe from the small village of Juffure, Gambia, in West Africa, and his American descendants. Kunta Kinte was "the African" whose Haley's grandmother and ancestors told the story of. *Roots*, imaginatively, recites the life of Kunta Kinte in Africa, his capture into slavery in 1676, and his experiences as a slave in Spotsylvania, Virginia. Kunta refused to forget his African heritage and adopt the ways and customs of his white masters or even the name they gave him. He made attempts to escape from slavery which was considered for him as an insult; however, in his fourth try, his foot was severed by a slave-catcher. He later married Bell, the slave cooks in the big house on the plantation, and they had a daughter named Kizzy. Kunta taught Kizzy since her childhood the sounds of his native African language and reciting of her African ancestry.

### **Kizzy and Children – Third Generation**

At the age of fifteen, Kizzy was sold to a master whose rape of his new young slave resulted in the birth of the third generation, George, who in turn learned of his African heritage through the stories of his mother. George, known as “Chicken George” for his success as a gamecock trainer, fathered eight children with Mathilda. His fourth son, Tom, was the father of Haley's maternal grandmother, Cynthia, who was taken to Henning, Tennessee, on a wagon train of freed slaves. In Henning, Cynthia met and married Will Palmer and had a daughter named Bertha, who married Simon Haley: these were Haley's parents.

### **Retelling and Resistance**

For the contemporary people and critics, the re-going of the *Roots* provides a "deracination" (Athey 170). However, the presenting of the point of view of a slave who is criticizing his master would make another option to the novel. It would not just the retelling of the past, but it opens another level of resistance. The text "describe and critique the conditions of post-modernity, as they perform or contest new permutations of "race" or racial thinking in response to those conditions, or as they simply collapse back into those conditions" (170). The novel goes back in time to another space and time which is not relevant to the present time. But it expresses what could help the modern times by establishing this "America to Africa connection"(173).

### **Relations between the Races**

*Roots*, like any other novel of African American, is centered on the relation between the races illustrated by the story of an African family in America through seven generations. It started with the first grandfather in his native land, Africa and how they kidnapped him by whites and blacks slave traders. This makes him remember what he heard in his village about the slave kidnapping. "One of the elders said when they were discussing the slaves' kidnappings ‘As a child I saw these slates beating those like themselves to walk faster for the toubab!’" (*Roots*, 160). Blacks were aware that the ones who were kidnapping blacks from Africa and sell them to the whites were 'blacks'. However, they did never reproach the blacks and always blame the whites for addicting blacks to betray their race and help the "toubab"(whites) kidnap their brothers.

Even more, they have no hope for the whites to change; they believe that whites are purely evil and could not change until "the river flows backward!" (160). This could be considered as a racist act toward whites by the blacks who saw them as animals. Another way of racism against whites was the way that blacks were acting toward Jankeh Jallon's baby who was strange pale tan color like a cured hide and had very odd hair [as he was a result of white's rape to Jankeh Jallon after kidnapping her, but she escaped from them] ...and wherever Jankeh Jallon would appear thereafter, people would look at the ground and hurry elsewhere. (182)

When she asked for a solution to the council, they just said they would have to weigh the matter until the next Council meeting and feel pity for the child because of his father's origin as it was a shame for them to have a white father. The mixed blood children seen as poor and have no chance to be a part of the black community. Even in the United States, the mixed blood children are seen as half African and do not belong to the black community neither the white one. “At least I’m black, not brown like



you!" (316), was Kunta Kinte answer toward a mixed blood slave in the plantation, he showed a complete pride to be black, and a complete racism toward anything not black.

### **The Attitude of Hating Whites**

The attitude of hating whites is due to what blacks are suffering from under white's dominance and authority, or just seeing what whites do to their black brothers. Furthermore, Kunta Kinte point of view toward whites starts since his childhood, but it reaches its peak when he is kidnapped by slave traders in the thirty third chapter when he is searching for materials in order to make a drum for his young brother.

The description of how whites hunt the black slaves is savage. They act as if they are hunting an animal. And the hunted man is reacting like an animal in a conversation where there are "no words than the blood and club" (193-194). Even when they are selling them, whites describe blacks as animals, such as: "Works like a mule!" or, "Bright as monkeys!" (249-250), and even when they want to buy one, they examine him/her as if they are going to buy a pet: "with short sticks and whip butts, they were examining them without touching them" (250). Even the trip from Africa to America is not a five-star trip. Naked, chained, shackled, find himself in pitch darkness. "He is bitten for four days without mercy. Finding himself gagged, blindfolded, and bound with his wrists behind him and his ankles hobbled with knotted rope"(197). All those strange actions make Kunta, the proud African of his holy ancestor who is labeled after, feels to be humiliated and disrespected. Racism led to the emergence of new feeling to the hero: alienation, the feeling to be an outsider. "An outsider—one who had been born free" (370).

### **Difference between Slavery in Africa and Slavery in America**

Furthermore, the difference between slavery in Africa and slavery in America confuses Kunta. In Africa, slaves are like servants, and they have some rights. But in America, they are half humans and merely animals, they have no rights, and their freedom is limited, besides the presence of a lot of rules to obey without having the right to rebel. Kunta, unlike the blacks born and lived in the New World, could not imagine himself remain as a slave for a life time, tries four times to escape, but at the last try, he is caught and cut his half right leg by the slave catchers. This reaction is too normal reaction for someone who is decent to a famous family, and who have a great respect through his tribe and the whole country. This pride continues to be Present with his grandchildren with the existing of racism, although they became familiar with the situation. Such as how Chicken George did answers his master when he starts blaming blacks to be ingratitude for whites who feed, clothe and host them. But Chicken George answers him with a frank answer without any fear by saying: "You wants de straight, up-an'-down truth, Massa, I b'lieves mos' niggers figger dey's bein' smart to act maybe dumber'n dey really is, 'cause mos' niggers is scairt o' white folks" (602).The fear from whites is rooted to whites who imposed this view of black inferiority since their childhood where the black child should always be the servant of the white child, and always be in less position of him. Like when the master asked Bell to prepare a pallet for her daughter Kizzy at the foot of his niece's bed.

### **Difference between the Labels**

Another type of racism is the difference between the labels. Whites are considered as "Masters" and "Missis" even they do not own the blacks or even know them directly. To be a white means directly that s/he is a superior human which must be respected and addressed with respect. However, blacks are

considered as slaves and servants for the whites even when they are freed they could not own their work and be safe until they worked for a white (783). Also, they have to be named after their master, and whenever they changed their masters by slave trade, their names changed. For example, when Kizzy lives with her parents in Master Hamilton plantation, she used to be named as Kizzy Hamilton, but when Master Lea owns her, she becomes Kizzy Lea.

### Several Aspects of the Concept of Racism

All in all, the concept of racism was discussed in *Roots* through several aspects. First of all, slavery was the main racist act revealed in the novel. Then, the labeling of slaves by their master's names is a hint that they belong to them. Also, the relation of servant, ex-slave, slave and master which is based on the blacks' inferiority is also a type of racism. The period where the blacks lives after the collapse of the slavery system is also an important period that the author mentioned, although does not focus a lot on.

Black identity is everywhere in *Roots*, and its presence continues well through the whole novel by the remembrance and continuity of the remembering of their grandfather, his captive story and coming to America. The invention of a new tradition in America, which is originated to African tradition, where the family is gathered to hear the ancestors' story, expresses their clutch on their history. Since their first coming, Black Africans still recognized themselves for their tribes through physical appearances: tattoos and facial features. Nonetheless, they considered themselves as brothers as united by the colour of skin rather than their fathers' origins. Kinte way of seeing things and pride of their beauty which no other specie would be like them is expressed through his dislike of the white women: after seeing the hungry way the toubob on the great canoe had lusted after black women, he was amazed to see that the toubob had women of their own; but looking at this specimen, he could understand why they preferred Africans (243).

We can notice that his reaction is due to his background that praises the blackness and linked it with beauty as his father told him that "the more blackness a woman has the more beautiful she is"(57). Furthermore, his pride to bear his name was immeasurable. He wanted to shout, "I am Kunta Kinte, first son of Omoro, who is the son of the holy man Kairaba Kunta Kinte!" (269) when the whites gave him the name of Toby. What Kunta Kinte tells his daughter about Africa is due to his own experience as a child. His grandfather who bore the same name and Kunta became proud of it. As a kind of a way to preserve their history, Kunta wants to remain his story too to be told for his grandchildren as a kind of imitating the oral tradition of Africa.

Kunta's sticking to his religion, Islam, is a way to protest against anything white. He even becomes more related to it, but when he becomes engaged in white's world, he becomes less religious, and this makes him sad and starts blaming the white man's way of living. However, the others who become christened did remain religious like any ordinary African who is famous to be religious rather than to be faithful to just one religion. To be religious is not the only thing that made them look like Africans, even their way of singing and dancing as Kunta Kinte notices:

... Kunta saw that the dancers' footsteps and body motions were imitating their planting of the crops, the chopping of wood, the picking of cotton, the swinging of scythes, the

pulling of corn, the pitch forking of hay into wagons. It was all so much like the harvest dancing back in Juffure.... (329)

### Looking Down Upon African Immigrants

Like their white masters, these plantation-born blacks seemed to take it for granted that those who had come from Africa had just climbed down from the trees, let alone had any experience whatever with education. However, when they discover that what they were thinking was wrong, they became interested in learning more about Africa. Like what happened to Bell who is always thinking of Africa as a place where there is nothing other than monkeys and men behaving like monkeys. When Kunta starts talking to Bell about Africa, his life before the kidnapping, and his education in his village Juffure; she started asking about the names of things and pointing out whatever she sees and demanding how they named it in his language (410-411). The ceremony of naming his first child, although the mother feels threatened, makes Kunta happy and he feels as if "Africa [pumped] in his veins—and flowing from him into the child..."(424).

### The Transfer of Identity

The transfer of identity begins when the girl is born, and it continues with her growing up. This transfer becomes familiar in the family where old members of the family gather the young and retell for them the story of the ancestor. They become more related to their tradition they invent in order to protect the old ones and their history and identity. The story of Kunta and some words of the Mandinkan language, 'Ko' for a banjo and 'Kamby Bologo' for a river, are the main aspects to make the family happy and united.

### Conclusion

Alex Haley wrote *Roots* as a kind of autobiography in order to retell the story of the family as a kind keeping their invented tradition to all African Americans who are considered as brothers and sisters who should know about how their ancestors came to America and what they suffered. *Roots* is a novel which tells the Story of an African named Kunta Kinte, and his trip to America and his ,and his family too, adventure in the New World with the white's oppression. The novel also expresses the soul of black identity which transfer and remained in the family. Their remembrance of their grandfather is one of the clearest options that Alex Haley expresses in his novel. Also, the novel celebrates an African and an American unity which is fully achieved and unsullied by two decades of war and it circumstances at home or abroad.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 **18:3 March 2018**

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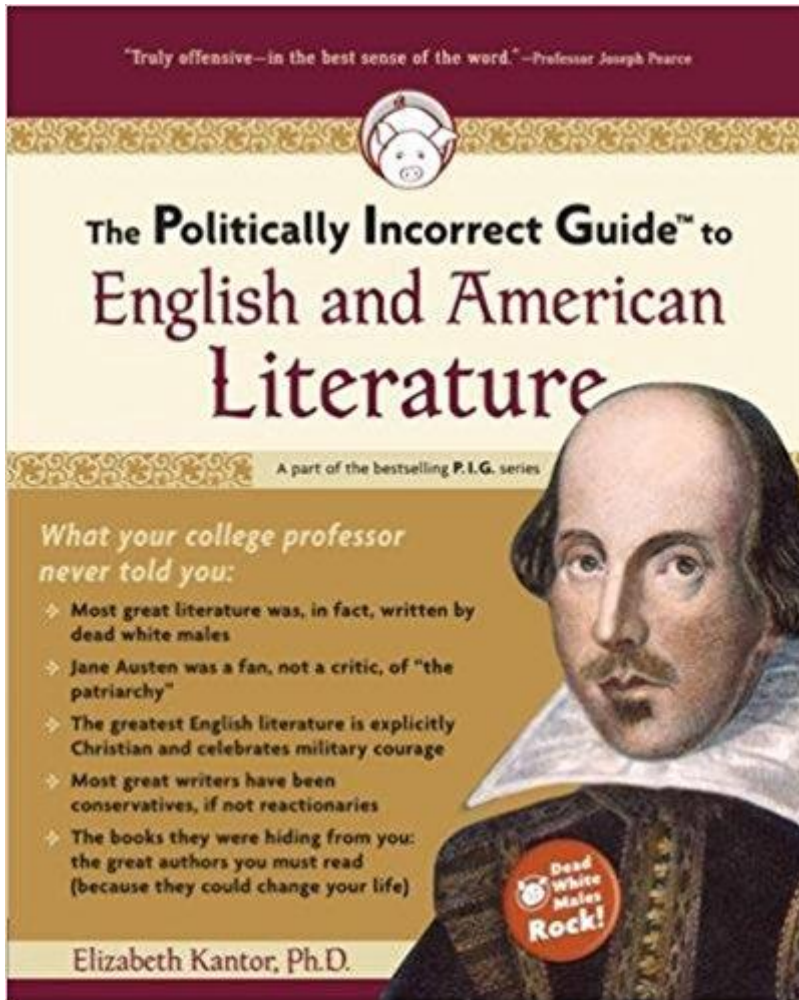
Racism and Identity in Alexander Haley's *Roots: The Saga of an American Family*

## Difference between British and American Literature

Mrs. Sridevi and K. Bhuvaneshwari

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Courtesy: <https://www.amazon.com/Politically-Incorrect-English-American-Literature/dp/1596980117>

### Comparative Literature

Comparative Literature is the study of the interrelationship of the literature of two or more national culture, usually of differing languages and especially of the influences of once

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upon other sometimes informal study of literary works translation. Comparative literature “performs a role similar to that of the study of international relations, but works with languages and artistic traditions, so as to understand cultures ‘from the inside’ Each issue includes reviews of significant brooks of literary criticism that fall under the rubric of comparative literature. English literature is older than the American English.

### **British Literature**

British literature is literature in the English language from the United Kingdom, Isle of Man, and Channel Islands. Anglo-Saxon (Old English) literature is included, and there is some discussion of Latin and Anglo-Norman literature, where literature in these languages relate to the early development of the English language and literature. There is also some brief discussion of major figures who wrote in Scots, but the main discussion is in the various Scottish literature articles. The article Literature in the other languages of Britain focuses on the literatures written in the other languages those are, and have been, used in Britain. American literature is literature written or produced in the United States and its preceding colonies (for specific discussions of poetry and theater, see Poetry of the United States and Theater in the United States). Before the founding of the United States, the British colonies on the eastern coast of the present-day United States were heavily influenced by English literature. The American literary tradition thus began as part of the broader tradition of English literature.

British literature is literature in the English language from the United Kingdom, Isle of Man, and Channel Islands. Anglo-Saxon (Old English) literature is included, and there is some discussion of Latin and Anglo-Norman literature, where literature in these languages relate to the early development of the English language and literature. There is also some brief discussion of major figures who wrote in Scots, but the main discussion is in the various Scottish literature articles. The article Literature in the other languages of Britain focuses on the literatures written in the other languages that are, and have been, used in Britain. During Elizabethan period English literature got much popular and in that period the plays are enacted in theatres. In this period Shakespeare was much popular.

### **American Literature**

American literature is literature written or produced in the United States and its preceding colonies (for specific discussions of poetry and theater, see Poetry of the United States and Theater in the United States). Before the founding of the United States, the British colonies on the eastern coast of the present-day United States were heavily influenced by English literature. The American literary tradition thus began as part of the broader tradition of English literature. Because of the large immigration to Boston in the 1630s, the articulation of Puritan ideals, and the early establishment of a college and a printing press in Cambridge, the New England colonies have often been regarded as the center of early American literature. The first American novels are Thomas Attwood Digges' "Adventures of Alonso", published in London in 1775 and William Hill Brown's *The Power of Sympathy* published in 1791. Brown's novel depicts a tragic love story between siblings who fell in love without knowing they were related. After the War of 1812, there was an increasing desire to produce a uniquely American literature and culture, and a number of literary figures emerged, among them Washington

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

**Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: Vol. II Black Writings: A Subaltern Perspective**

Mrs. Sridevi and K. Bhuvanewari

Difference between British and American Literature

Irving, William Cullen Bryant, and James Fennimore Cooper. American drama attained international status only in the 1920s and 1930s, with the works of Eugene O'Neill, who won four Pulitzer Prizes and the Nobel Prize. In the middle of the 20th century, American drama was dominated by the work of playwrights Tennessee Williams and Arthur Miller, as well as by the maturation of the American musical, which had found a way to integrate script, music and dance in such works as *Oklahoma!* And *West Side Story*.

The most noticeable difference between American and British English is **vocabulary**. There are hundreds of everyday words that are different.

- Americans go *on vacation*, while Brits go *on holidays*, or *hols*.
- New Yorkers live in *apartments*; Londoners live in *flats*.

There are hundreds of minor **spelling** differences between British and American English.

- apologize - apologise
- behavior - behaviour
- color - colour
- favorite – favourite

English literature mainly reflects the English culture, English Mannerism while American literature mirrors of American culture, its history, and revolutionary concepts such as relationships with the church, the state, supernatural elements that emerged in the country.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

**Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: Vol. II Black Writings: A Subaltern Perspective**

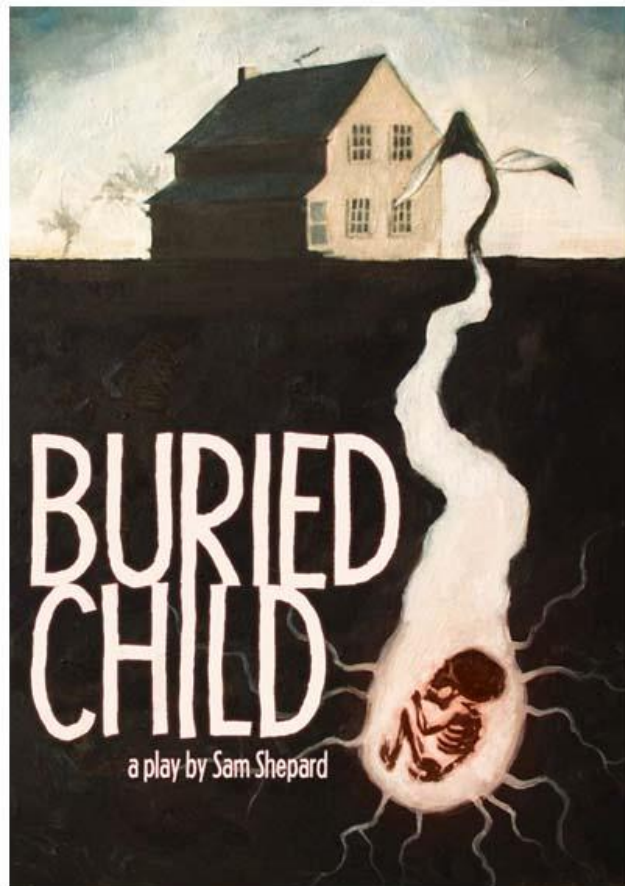
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Difference between British and American Literature

## Quest for Identity: A Study of Sam Shepard's *Buried Child*

Danish Ahmad Mir and Dr. R. Vijaya

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Courtesy: <http://www.sam-shepard.com/buriedchild.html>

### Abstract

The research aims at studying the quest for identity which spans over the life of an American family in Sam Shepard's Play *Buried Child*. This paper extensively explores and portrays how members of Dodge's family are struggling with the identity. It also focuses on lack of belongingness, search for roots, and association with past. Almost all the characters in this play are struggling with their identities. They have different identities at different times and are desperately trying to restore and establish their identities. In an attempt to claim their lost

identity, they resort to violence. It also analyses how various reasons or causes such as: Incest, Infanticide, traumatic effects, Alcoholism and escaping from reality contribute to the identity crisis.

**Key Words:** Sam Shepard, *Buried Child*, Identity, Crisis, Alienation, Estrangement, Violence, Isolation, Loss.

## **Introduction**

Sam Shepard was a post-modern American playwright, who has been described by New York magazine, “The greatest American playwright of his generation.” (qtd. in *Fifteen One-Act Plays* i) He dealt with the theme of identity as a main subject in most of his works. In *Buried Child* he presents the picture of misfits and outcasts of a family involved in the horrible act of incest committed by the mother Halie and her oldest son Tilden. They were unsuccessfully trying to cope with the events overshadowing them: Incest and infanticide. Despite dealing these events through communication they remain silent because of shame and this shame affects the family’s homeostasis and normalcy.

## ***Buried Child***

In *Buried Child*, the theme of identity is extensively portrayed. Every character of the play faces identity crisis, lack of belongingness, search for roots, association with past and witnesses distorted relationship between father and sons at individual level as well as in the family. All characters except Vince’s girlfriend Shelly suffered from identity crisis which has caused internal and external conflicts among them. In view of this Annette J. Saddik comments, “Deal with the fragile boundaries of identity and the impossibility of locating an authentic self- outside of the roles, masks, images and performances that mark human action.” (Contemporary American Drama 131).

## **Quest for Identity**

The quest for identity is encompassed by the grandson of Dodge, Vince. He has gone through an identity crisis at home. Vince has left his home six years ago and has created a new identity for himself in New York. Before returning to home, he has premonition that he may not be recognized by his family. He says Shelly that, “I just don't want to have them think that I've suddenly arrived out of the middle of nowhere completely deranged.” (*Sam Shepard Seven Plays* 85). As he enters the house, he is not recognized by anyone, even refused by Dodge and Tilden to have any flesh and blood relation. In Act Two, he is desperately endeavouring to create his identity but gets humiliated as Dodge rejects to recognise him:

VINCE: Grandpa, where did Halie go? Maybe we should call her.

DODGE: What are you talking about? Do you know what you're talking about? Are you just talking for the sake of talking? Lubricating the gums?

VINCE: I'm trying to figure out what's going on here!

DODGE: Is that it?

VINCE: Yes. I mean I expected everything to be different.

DODGE: Who are you to expect anything? Who are you supposed to be?

VINCE: I'm Vince! Your Grandson!

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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DODGE: Vince. My Grandson.  
 VINCE: Tilden's son.  
 DODGE: Tilden's son, Vince.  
 VINCE: You haven't seen me for a long time.  
 DODGE: When was the last time?  
 VINCE: I don't remember.  
 DODGE: You don't remember?  
 VINCE: No.  
 DODGE: You don't remember. How am I supposed to remember if you don't remember? (*Sam Shepard Seven Plays* 89)

### **At Home, Lost Identity**

At home, instead of gaining an identity, he lost his identity that he has gained for himself in the New York. Vince was firmly bent on to regain his lost identity. To meet his quest for identity he needs to prove his origins but was denied of having any bond of flesh and blood between his father, Tilden and grandfather, Dodge. After complete denial of any relationships, he became baffled and in frustration he cries, "How could they not recognize me! How in the hell could they not recognise me! I'm their son". (*Sam Shepard Seven Plays* 97) Shelly became perplexed by the etiquettes and ambience of the Dodge family and sporadically began to acknowledge the rejection of Vince. She asks questions to Tilden about Vince to know his identity, she says:

SHELLY: (to TILDEN) Are you Vince's father?  
 TILDEN: (to SHELLY) Vince?  
 SHELLY: (pointing to VINCE) This is supposed to be your son! Is he your son? Do you recognize him! I'm just along for the ride here. I thought everybody knew each other! (TILDEN stares at VINCE. DODGE wraps himself up in the blanket and sits on sofa staring at the floor.) (*Sam Shepard Seven Plays*92)

### **Unsolved Mystery**

Tilden completely fails to recognise Vince and left his identity an unsolved mystery. Shelly loses hope and tells the Vince to leave but Vince implores her for more time to know his family. In despair he started blaming and questioning himself of having committed any unpardonable offence. He considers himself a misfit of the family. He opines his view as, "I have been known to plunge into sinful infatuation with the Alto Saxophone. Sucking on number 5 reeds deep into the wee, wee hours" (*Sam Shepard Seven Plays*97). In order to establish his identity, he started repeating his childhood tricks in a hope that it will help in regaining their memories. Shelly made a sarcastic comment on the family members regarding identity when Dodge beseeches them to get a bottle of whiskey for him. Shelly asks Vince, "Why don't you get him a bottle. Vince? Maybe it would help everybody to identify each other" (*Sam Shepard Seven Plays*94). At the end of the play, Vince was successful in establishing his identity only when he resorted to violence. He returned home drunk after an overnight sojourn, suddenly becomes violent and starts screaming and smashing empty whiskey bottles at the wall.

(VINCE pushes his face against the screen from the porch and stares in at everyone.)  
 DODGE: Where's my goddamn bottle!



VINCE: (looking in at DODGE.) What? Who is that?

DODGE: It's me! Your Grandfather! Don't play stupid with me! Where's my two bucks!

VINCE: Your two bucks?

(HALIE moves away from DEWIS, upstage, peers out at VINCE, trying to recognize him.)

HALIE: Vincent? Is that you, Vincent? (*Sam Shepard Seven Plays* 125 -26)

### **All Struggling with Identity**

Almost all the characters in this play are struggling with their identities. They have different identities at different times. Dodge seems to have stable identity but changed his identity from a responsible man to a sofa ridden drinker. His identity of being father is challenged by his son Bradley as he reminds him that he is still his father. He lacks his position and identity as a father. Halie, wife of Dodge also indicates that he used to be different. Halie's identity is bit confused, she is wife of Dodge, but both are estranged. She turned to be religious but at the same time, she has an affair with the father Dewis. She is mother of Tilden and also bore his child. Tilden's identity is also struggling as he says that he used to have feelings of being self but that has been destroyed. When Vince came home he calls Tilden:

VINCE: (reentering, to TILDEN.) you want anything, Dad?

TILDEN: (looks up at VINCE.) Me?

VINCE: Yeah, you. Dad. That's you. (*Sam Shepard Seven Plays* 98)

It shows that Tilden is struggling with his identity as a father. Shelly, the only character who is sensible and has an intact identity but is also affected by the family demeanour and loses her sense of identity as she no longer recognizes herself and says, "I don't even know what I'm doing here" (*Sam Shepard Seven Plays* 121). Incestuous child's identity is more confused than anyone. He was son of Halie and Tilden, Halie is also mother of Tilden; so, the child was born as a son as well as grandson to Halie and brother to Tilden. At the same time, he was Dodge's grandson and stepson.

### **To Conclude**

To conclude, the play is about the struggle between creativity and destruction. Shepard is working with the themes of home, family, heredity, and environment; as he moves into the exploration of the self in relationship to others. As Esther Harriot states, "Buried Child continues Shepard's obsession with identity" (*American Voices: Five Contemporary Playwrights in Essays and Interviews* 12). In the last episode Vince narrates:

I studied my face. Studied everything about it. As though I was looking at another man. As though I could see his whole race behind him. Like a mummy's face. I saw him dead and alive at the same time. In the same breath. In the windshield, I watched him breathe as though he was frozen in time. And every breath marked him. Marked him forever without him knowing. And then his face changed. His face became his father's face. Same bones. Same eyes. Same nose. Same breath. And his father's face changed to his Grandfather's face. And I went on like that changing. Clear on back to faces I'd never seen before but still recognized. Still recognized the bones underneath. The eyes. The breath. The mouth. I followed

my family clear into Iowa. Every last one. Straight into the Corn Belt and further. Straight back as far as they'd take me. Then it all dissolved. Everything dissolved. (Sam Shepard *Seven Plays*130)

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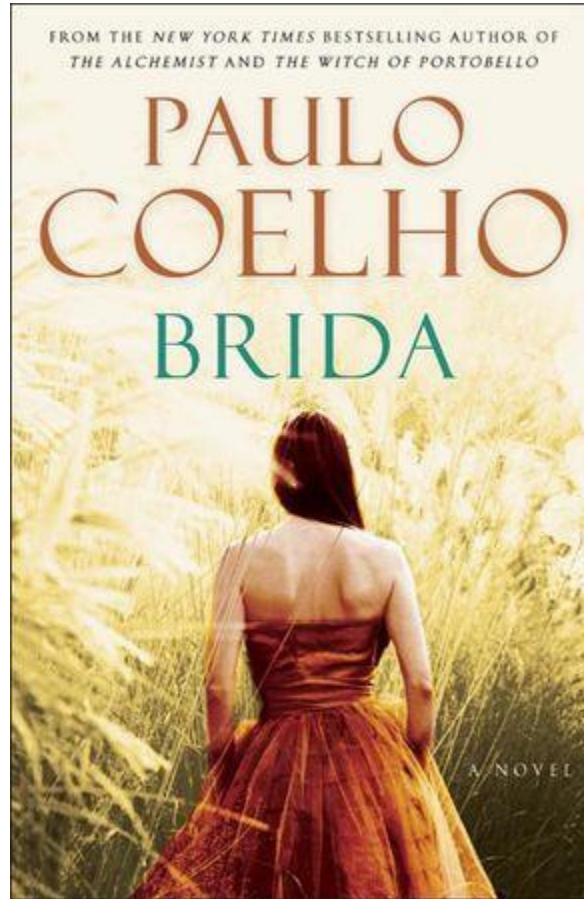
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## Socio Gynic Catalogue in Paulo Coelho's *Brida*

S. Deepa, M.A., M.Phil. and P. Vengatesh

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The society has seen gradual evolution of feminism, feministic perspectives, spirit of womanhood etc. Though the voices are heard, woman is still posed innumerable questions and hurdles to let her out of the larvae. Beyond all these, very few come out of their position; while the wings of others are cut even at the initial stages.

Profession to excuse and exclude woman from their patriarchal boundary does not mean to be the reality while domestic violence exists to be suppression, denial of identity and rights within the house, the professional world too imposes several other tortures by which woman failing to maintain work-life balance gets weaker both physically and psychologically. The paper depicts one such reality; the woman is subjected to on trying to come out of her conventional

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zone. Woman of modern era moves out of visible frontiers, but, she is being laid several invisible traps, could not be a mere exaggeration.

Coelho's portrayal of Brida depicts clearly that she is the representation of modern age. She bears the identity of education, job, independency, inquisitiveness, etc. With all these traits she begins her march towards learning magic. The changes been undergone by her, marks what is the real freedom of woman. Keen insight into this issue surges up several questions such as whether the real freedom is achieved. Do the woman and society really stay prepared to adopt the changes? Is she stable and determined? Does the world actually wish for liberty of woman?

Brida, actually the witch in her previous births; has happened to develop a deep passion for magic and she is at the stage to do anything in order to learn it. As her first step, she meets Magus, who admits to teach her 'The Tradition of Sun' having realized her to be his soulmate. Under the pretext of self-learning, Magus exposed Brida to "Dark Night" all alone in the forest. The conflict among fear, danger and determination could be seen here. Having felt slightly dissatisfied, Brida gets in touch with wicca, who was actually a witch and ex-lover of Magus, through a bookseller. Wicca is so curious upon Magus' consent to teach Brida and she tries herself to find the special gift within Brida. Brida does all practices and rituals said by Wicca. During this course of study, Brida undergoes several conflicts within her, either to follow the Tradition of Moon or to give up. Finally, she attains her goal. Brida has realized the special gift within her and also the fact of her being a witch. Though the search for mystical wisdom constitutes this plot of self-realizations, the thirst for soulmate draws a beautiful lining to it.

With Coelho's confession that "Witches were, above all else, women" (Coelho 218), the embodiment of love and possession, the paper is an attempt to list out the perspectives of feminism.

After the ages, the liberty of woman could be found curtailed still. Woman is ever portrayed the object of sacrifice. Coelho speaks of four rings of revelation with woman such as virgin, martyr, saint and witch. With all these, sacrifice remains the purpose of survival. While education remains the common right of both men and women; at certain extent of educational progress and application, woman alone is expected to sacrifice on familial cause. Consequently, the society bears not only the average criteria but also the toppers within kitchen and home bound circumstance. The real worth of education received is subjected to question. "Would you give up everything you had learned until then... In order to stay with the love of your life?" (Coelho 14)

The question asked by Magus to Brida, puts the entire woman community into fix. There begins a dilemma between individual or family. The girl's life where there had been a time when nothing in the world was as important as herself (Coelho 14) gets transformed to womanhood identity of sacrifice and is found to confess "I'd give it all up", she said at last" (Coelho 15) resulting in loss of their uniqueness and identity itself. Though the family commitments are framed social responsibility of both men and women, they are to restrain betterment of woman is a pitiable fact.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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In most of the circumstances, even the bold, independent, intellectual woman fails to realize her strength and give up easily. She finds self-satisfaction at the arms of man, who nurtures her. She tends to forget her uniqueness. While at earlier days, extreme love and affection for the man binds the woman with him, at later ages, the forgotten uniqueness demands for absolute dependency upon him. Man, who exists to be the companion of life tends to be the life itself within a very few years of marriage. Brida's feeling during her course

she didn't need to understand the meaning of life; it was enough to find someone who did, and then fall asleep in his arms and sleep as a child sleeps, knowing that someone stronger than you is protecting you from all evil and all danger (Coelho 115)

clears the attitude. The feminine determination to fade gradually could be felt in these lines.

Woman remains ready to accept and adopt changes. This exists to be the basic framework of tradition especially Indian tradition. The bride is always sent to groom's house, since the tradition firmly believes that woman is flexible, adoptable and loveable. The changes are welcomed to certain extent unless the individuality gets disturbed. The inner voice heard by Brida "what is outside is more difficult to change than what is inside" (Coelho 136) is a timely warning. Wicca's comment that each dress bears within it the good and bad memories, Brida could not decide which dress to be thrown and to be kept with her. While the dress matters the most to Brida, she has let Wicca to influence her inner self. The importance given by Brida to dress, which in turn is neglected to one's personality and character, is pitiable. Most of the women are in such a state that they could be influenced easily in one way or other. Woman subjects themselves blindly and voluntarily to domination. She lives a lifeless life. "... many people chose to spend their whole life destroying paths they didn't ever want to follow, instead of following the one path that would lead them somewhere" (Coelho 55). The day woman realizes her need and designs her life the way she likes and deserves, trumpets women liberty.

Woman stays quite unstable. She does not really know what she wants. While she let others to influence her, she also travels in the way shown by others. She could not stay focused. She remains uncertain. Her desire and aim shift randomly from one thing to another. Jack of all trades is master of none. Brida claims at this switch over to the bookseller,

what are you good at? asked the owner.

Going after what I believe in. That was the only possible reply; she spent her life in pursuit of what she believed in. The only problem was that she believed in something different everyday (Coelho 30).

Success is always the focused attitude and regularity towards it. Constant switchover and consistent dilemma keep success at a distance.



The world always poses innumerable challenges that threatens mankind especially woman. Coelho commands upon wonderful support 'Faith' at times of fear. When Magus exposed Brida to Dark Night all alone in the forest, the emotion of fear threatened her for snakes, scorpions, etc., even though they were not present actually. But, once she convinced herself through her childhood memories of her father describing the scenery of milkman and other workers of night, she remembered the forgotten truth that night is part of day. She regained her determination against fear at this thought. "...Life is an act of faith. That you could choose to fill it with snakes and scorpions or with a strong protecting force" (Coelho 26). Though fear is an alert signal against wrong, most of the time it hinders the effort to be taken and makes people desperate. It is such fear for failure often troubles Brida to give up her effort. Once she felt she could not read the stories described by the tarot cards, as said by Wicca, she felt disappointed.

Fear exists to be the main obstacle in all walks of woman's life. This turns her weaker which in turn strengthens the opposite. Once woman stand herself with all her bravery, crimes against her like sexual harassment, murders upon dowry, domestic torture etc would kneel down before her.

The other major mistake woman commits is 'preconception'. They predict the happenings and do not let the reality to be viewed. Once they find the assumptions getting altered, they start to worry. Either to think of past and future and expect the happenings as they wish makes them anxious. Thus, both fear and preconception blur the vision of woman from reality.

Woman always tend to be strong, but she fails to realize that is state of sorrow. "Only warriors choose how they will die, but that woman had given her life for love, and perhaps, for her, love was a strange form of war" (Coelho 80) portrays woman to be the warriors of life. They often struggle, however succeed at the end. But, the majority of women quit their struggle and surrender.

Coelho's claim that man is to nurture and maintain knowledge, whereas, without transformation, knowledge will not be shaped as wisdom and woman is the soul of transformation highlight the significance of woman. It is only because of woman; man attains his meaning for life is absolute truth.

He even points out the days of antiquity, where women were strong enough to discuss things equally with men. This recollects Bharathi's words in Pudhumai Pen "Aanum pennum nigarena kolvadhalarivilongi, ivvaiyam thazaikumam" (Bharathiar- Kavithaigal) on feminism resulting in welfare of the nation.

In addition, with all these, the utmost trait is that woman longs for appreciation, attention and admiration. She wishes to be felt essential and special. Loren's gift of dagger to Brida, which she searches for, clears that Loren's respect Brida's desire, ambition and intuition. "Brida felt very special. She needed to feel this, for the woman inspired a respect she had felt for very few other people" (Coelho40). The confession by Brida's mother "I felt necessary, and that's the best feeling a human being can have (Coelho 206), - I was his companion; his wife, his audience, his

lover. In a matter of only a few hours, I experienced the love of, a life time” (Coelho 208) claims at woman’s longing for emotional companion. Woman always expects someone to share her views, someone who makes her feel vital. Thus, the thirst for emotional, intellectual companion remains unquenched within woman forever. Woman is neglected of such opportunity because of patriarchal ego. Most of the men do not support the ideas of wives. They fail to share things with her for they assume themselves, that women know only of house. Though woman moves on bearing all this, it often stains in her heart as a painful memory. Feeling neglected, unimportant, unworthy exist to be the identity of woman in many aspects of life.

Wicca’s prayer to Virgin Mary depicts the real situation of woman at all times.

May the Virgin Mary free us from those marks and put an end for ever to our sense of guilt. We feel guilty when we go out to work because we’re leaving our children in order to earn money to feed them... we feel guilty about everything, because we have always been kept far from decision-making and from power (Coelho 129).

Woman exists as the caretaker, teacher of love, bravery, etc. Despite these, she is often crucified.

“Finding one important thing in your life doesn’t mean you have to give up all the important things” (Coelho 209). For woman familial upliftment remains the major responsibility but to pay her identity loss as its wage should be changed. “She didn’t need to neglect her beauty in order to prove that she was also intelligent and capable” (Coelho 230) Coelho speaks that that the real liberty of woman could be achieved only when the society admits and creates space for proper balance between individual development and familial contribution in woman’s life.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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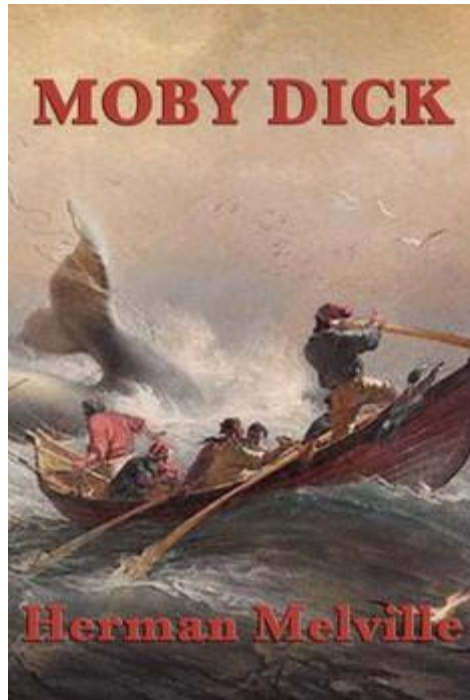
Socio Gynic Catalogue in Paulo Coelho’s *Brida*

## Quest for the Sublime in Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick*

R. Dharani and Dr. A. Selvaraj

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Courtesy: <http://www.simonandschuster.co.uk/books/Moby-Dick/Herman-Melville/Unexpurgated-Start-Publishing-LLC/9781625584595>

### Abstract

This paper examines the quest for the sublime in Melville's *Moby-Dick*. The sublime was essential to the romancers of the nineteenth century, and Melville's use of the sublime followed on his conception of *Moby-Dick* as a romance. Moreover, the terrible quest of Ahab and the Pequod for the great white whale, *Moby-Dick*, may be identified with the quest for the sublime that in the nineteenth century had become inextricably entangled with a religion of nature and a secular theodicy enunciated by the most influential of Melville's contemporaries. Melville's depiction of that sublime quest in *Moby-Dick*, informed by a more traditional theodicy that he found in earlier writers, is a judgment and a rejection of the dominant philosophy of his time.

**Keywords:** Melville, quest, sublime, *Moby-Dick*.

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## Sublime

Samuel Monk, in his study of the sublime, remarks that by the end of the eighteenth century "the sublime resembles a very full treasure box in which can be found all the paraphernalia of romantic writers." While Edmund Burke's *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* was by no means the only source and background for Melville's use of the sublime, it was much the most influential and comprehensive statement to emerge from the eighteenth-century occupation with the sublime. We do know that Melville was familiar with Burke; a copy of the *Enquiry* was in his personal library. Burke's exhaustive catalogue of "what things they are that cause in us the affections of the sublime and beautiful" is duplicated to an astounding degree in the course of the *Pequod's* voyage.

## Sublime *Moby-Dick*

In *Moby-Dick*, Burke's definition of the sublime and the beautiful is embodied with great fidelity and fullness in structure and rhetoric which reflect his ideas about sublimity in language. The structure of *Moby-Dick*, the loose, episodic, digressive narrative of romance, may be seen, paradoxically, as tightly ordered with respect to Burke's ideas of sublimity. The juxtaposition of extremes of passion, the abrupt cessation of tension and terror for brief interludes, succeeded inexorably by the renewal of tension and fear- these were recommended by Burke. The conventional romance narrator, Ishmael, is equally the narrator recommended by Burke uncultivated, uncritical, admiring more and affected more with what he sees, expressing himself in a warm and passionate manner. Melville's rhetoric also accords with Burke's prescription. In Burke's own words, Melville's language is not "that very polished language . . . praised for superior clearness and perspicuity . . . generally deficient in strength." It has "great force and energy of expression; . . . it is hammered by the Cyclops, it continues rough" (pp. 176, 171).

## Quest for the Sublime in Nature

The quest for the sublime in nature became a passionate occupation, a cult if not a religion, in the late eighteenth century. The late eighteenth century sought to experience the sublime for its own sake. But the experience of the sublime had been, in Burke, associated with the Deity, and in the nineteenth century the experience of the sublime became inextricably entangled with a religion of nature. The quest for the sublime in nature became the quest for a God, a Supreme Being whose essence pervaded the natural universe. The concern of the nineteenth-century advocates of the quest for the sublime, different as they might seem from their neoclassical predecessors, is also with method-not, in this case, a method of depiction, but a method by which man might apprehend the natural universe, might approach the highest Being whose creation and garment that universe is, and might do this by his own powers. This too follows Burke, who describes "the mind always claiming to itself some part of the dignity and importance of the things it contemplates." That elevation of the mind admits men, Burke says, "into the counsels of the Almighty" (pp. 50, 53). Wordsworth's well-known description of the descent from Simplon Pass in *The Prelude* is an exemplary expression of the sublime quest; also in *The Prelude*, Wordsworth expresses the optimistic theodicy which informed the quest. He makes use of the Burkean antithesis of the sublime and beautiful, but, contrary to Burke, it is "by love . . . that all grandeur comes." The "principle of pain" upon which the Burkean sublime

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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comes." The "principle of pain" upon which the Burkean sublime turns is not denied, but its evil is denied. Evil exists only in ignorance turns is not denied, but its evil is denied. Evil exists only in ignorance and misapprehension, and "the discipline of fear" which is the experience of the sublime in nature draws the mind past apparent evil to love, to the apprehension of the entirely good supreme Being. Burke emphasizes the contemplation of the sublime from a safe distance; he remarks, quite reasonably, that the immediate experience of the terrible sublime may not be sublime, but merely terrible (pp. 40, 46). For Burke, love belongs only to the beautiful; with beauty, it lies dead in the presence of the sublime. The nineteenth-century advocates of the sublime quest resurrect love and associate it with the highest apprehension of the sublime.

### **Benign Deity**

The sublime quest for a benign Deity accessible in nature was confidently advocated by Carlyle and Emerson among Melville's contemporaries. Melville was well read in both as he approached the composition of *Moby-Dick*. He was reading earlier writers as well, among them the English Platonists, in whom he found intimations of a natural religion which anticipated the nineteenth-century religion of nature. Ernest Tuveson, discussing their identification of the Deity with the infinite universe of the new philosophy, remarks that "the presentation of the universe as some kind of real image (not the opposite) of the infinite God helped to promote a 'this worldly' trend in men's thinking . . . The characteristic direction of traditional mystical experience had been upwards-from an evil or defective material world to an ideal realm . . . The tendency in the later Renaissance, on the contrary, was to encourage the knowledge of corporeal things as a spiritual good; the movement of mystical experience came to be outwards." In *Moby-Dick*, Ahab defines the direction of his quest in precisely those terms: "Level by nature to this earth's horizon are the glances of man's eyes; not shot from the crown of his head" (CXVIII, 412).

### **Infinite Sublime as Reassurance**

This experience of the infinite sublime in nature in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was a reassurance, "the guarantee of a divine Mind that sustains order in the frightful multiplicity and impersonality of the cosmos." Although many of Melville's contemporaries persisted in this belief, this optimism of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was shaken for others, including Melville. A world of multiplicity and indifference is depicted in *Moby-Dick* in the appalling variety of the creatures of the sea, in the universal cannibalism of nature which obsesses Ishmael, in the terrible encounter of Ahab with that nature, the first encounter with *Moby-Dick* from which he emerges maimed and obsessed. In *Moby-Dick* the effect of the sublime is terror without divine reassurance. Ahab's definition of his quest is a desperately pessimistic version of the more prevalent nineteenth-century optimistic quest for the Deity in nature. Cruelly taught by nature's "discipline of fear" to which Wordsworth refers so trustingly, he would, by his own powers, "strike through the mask," the visible, unreasoning mask, to the "unknown but still reasoning . . . unscrutable thing" (XXXVI, 144).

### **Sublime with Terror**

In *Moby-Dick*, Melville reinstates to the nineteenth-century definition of the sublime Burke's absolute emphasis on the association of the sublime with terror, and his equally absolute exclusion of love. His depiction of the sublime quest is informed by the traditional theodicy that



he found in the earlier writers that he was reading. Contrary to the confident assertions of some of his contemporaries, he suggests that the sublime quest, undertaken by man's own power in the world of nature, a world without Christ, is doomed. It ends in failure, in isolation in a universe of death. Melville's statement about the sublime quest is complex, his judgment indirect. He associates it with the beliefs of demonic religion the tenets of deism on the other, but he goes no further than association. His concern in *Moby-Dick* is not scholarly; his method is one of ironic juxtaposition and suggestion rather than exposition and argument. He makes no attempt to establish historical or intellectual connections between the deists and their pantheistic successors, nor any defence for "the hellfire in which the whole book is broiled."

### **Sublime and Demonology**

Melville associates the sublime in *Moby-Dick* with all the machinery of demonology and witchcraft. The entire enterprise of the sublime hunt is consecrated to the Devil: Ahab tempers the barbs for his harpoon in blood, howling, "Ego non baptizo te in nomine patris, sed in nomine diaboli!" (CXIII, 404). The sea is "infidel"; the land, "evangelical." At the end of the hunt, the Pequod "like Satan" sinks to hell. *Moby-Dick*, the grand god of the whalers, is a "demon," a "white fiend," possessing the Devil's attributes of "unexampled, intelligent malignity." Ahab's sublimity is wicked; he is possessed by a demonic sublime. He has a "wicked name," the name of the idolator king in the Old Testament; he speaks of himself as damned. Only the sublime is associated with evil and the demonic in *Moby-Dick*; the machinery of the Devil evil and the demonic in *Moby-Dick*; the machinery of the Devil is notably absent in the interludes of the beautiful. This is notably absent in the interludes of the beautiful. This follows Burke, who associates the demonic with the terror of the sublime, but not at all with the pleasure of the beautiful. But Burke's "sublime things" may be either demonic or divine; Melville's depiction of the sublime in *Moby-Dick* is exhaustively and exclusively demonic.

The belief that Ahab and the crew of the Pequod voice in a determined, mechanistic universe is found among the beliefs of demonic religion, and likewise among the tenets of deism. The "grand belief" that Ahab and his crew share is called the oldest religion, the ancient church of which all men are members. The religion of the demonic was often referred to as the old religion; so too, the deists referred to their beliefs. Voltaire, who is mentioned in *Moby-Dick*, asserted in *Profession de foi des theistes*, "Notre religion est aussi ancienne que le monde." Elsewhere he said, "Un deiste est de la religion d'Adam, de Seth, de Noe." It is notable in this connection that none of the numerous references to Scripture in *Moby Dick* are to the New Testament of Christianity; all references are to the Old Testament of Adam, Seth, and Noah.

### **Deism**

Melville's association of deism with the nineteenth-century religion of nature is not arbitrary. Though the natural religion of the deists was in stark contrast to the religion of nature which succeeded it insofar as that earlier religion meant by nature primarily and essentially uniformity, Melville's contemporaries inherited the supreme Being that they sought as well as certain optimistic strands of their theodicy from deism; their sublime quest for a Deity accessible in nature may be traced and related to deistic belief. Moreover, as A. P. Lovejoy notes, the universal approval that was the criterion of true religion for the deists was also the criterion of

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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great literature for the neoclassical critics. He quotes a minor contemporary of Burke: "It is this united approbation, in persons of different ages and of various characters and languages, that Longinus has made the true test of the sublime." It is a deceptively short, regressive step from the true religion of the deists, marked by universal approbation, to a true religion of the sublime, marked by universal power. Burke's emphasis on the causes of the sublime, causes which he finds in nature, already points that step to the religion of nature in the nineteenth century. But for Melville, that religion is false, its sublime quest doomed.

### **Ishmael's Meditation**

Perhaps the most quoted passage in *Moby-Dick* is found in Ishmael's meditation in Chapter XXXV, "The Masthead": In this enchanted mood, thy spirit ebbs away to whence it came; becomes diffused through time and space; like Wickliff's sprinkled Pantheistic ashes, forming at last a part of every shore the round globe over. There is no life in thee, now, except that rocking life imparted by a gently rolling ship; by her, borrowed from the sea; by the sea, from the gently rolling ship; by her, borrowed from the sea; by the sea, from the inscrutable tides of God. But while this sleep, this dream is on ye, move your foot or hand an inch; slip your hold at all; and your identity comes back in horror. Over Cartesian vortices you hover. And perhaps, at mid-day, in the fairest weather, with one half-throttled shriek you drop through that transparent air into the summer Heed it well, ye Pantheists! (p. 140)

In this passage is Melville's view of the consequences of the sublime, his demonstration of the inexorable failure of the sublime quest, even as it is defined in the most optimistic formulation of his contemporaries. In a letter to Hawthorne, written "while the Whale was in his flurry," Melville criticizes the pantheistic philosophy, the religion of nature he found in those contemporaries. He refers to a quotation that he almost certainly found in Carlyle: "I came across this, 'Live in the all.' That is to say . . . get out of yourself, spread and expand yourself, and bring to yourself the tinglings of life that are felt in the flowers and the woods, that are felt in the planets Saturn and Venus, and the Fixed Stars. What non- sense! . . . This 'all' feeling, though, there is some truth in.... But what plays the mischief with the truth is that men will insist upon the universal application of a temporary feeling or opinion."

### **Pantheistic Experience**

The pantheistic experience at the masthead is a temporary feeling. Insisting on the constant and continuing truth of that temporary feeling as the sure apprehension of a supreme Being in nature, the advocates of the sublime quest were mischievous indeed. The mind may participate from time to time in the infinite universe, but it is contained in vulnerable, fallible flesh. To forget this, to deny this, is fatal. It is the Cartesian dilemma that Melville formulates in Ishmael's meditation. Faced with the absolute chasm between mind and matter that followed on his own denial of certitude to the material universe, Descartes formulated an elaborate theory of vortices, etheric whirlpools in which all nature was held and ordered. He meant his theory to secure and validate the mind's apprehension of the world outside itself, but its credibility scarcely survived its publication. At the masthead, the mind, seeking to comprehend the infinite natural world, falls through Cartesian vortices which have no power to hold it up, into the terrible space between which Descartes himself had likened to deep waters.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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## Ethereal Thrill

In the closing paragraphs of *Moby-Dick*, Melville recapitulates his earlier rejection of the religion of nature in "The Masthead." his earlier rejection of the religion of nature in "The Masthead." His depiction of the sinking of the Pequod is his final statement about the consequences of the sublime quest: And now, concentric circles seized the lone boat itself, and all its crew, and each floating oar, and every lance-pole, and spinning, animate and inanimate, all round and round in one vortex, carried the smallest chip of the Pequod out of sight. But as the last whelmings intermixingly poured themselves over the sunken head of the Indian at the mainmast, . . . a sky-hawk . . . now chanced to intercept its broad fluttering wing between the hammer and the wood; and simultaneously feeling that ethereal thrill, the submerged savage beneath, in his death-grasp, kept his hammer frozen there; and so the bird of heaven, . . . his whole captive form folded in the flag of Ahab, went down with his ship, which, like Satan, would not sink to hell till she had dragged a living part of heaven along with her (CXXXV, 469).

## The Eagle

To the nineteenth-century advocates of the sublime quest, the eagle was the emblem of the human mind, soaring by its own powers into the infinite. Earlier in the voyage of the Pequod, Ishmael had invoked that emblematic eagle, asserting the spiritual power of man: "There is a Catskill eagle in some souls that can alike dive down into the blackest gorges, and soar out of them again and become invisible in the sunny spaces" (XCVI, 355). That eagle is the sky-hawk here; its fate is Melville's final judgment on the quest for the sublime. The Pequod with her fragile cargo of flesh is whirled down to hell, as if fallen into a sublime Cartesian vortex, dragging down with her the emblem of the mind.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 **18:3 March 2018**

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Quest for the Sublime in Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick*

Identity Crisis of Immigrants in Samuel Selvon's  
*The Lonely Londoners*

U. Durgadevi, M.Phil. Research Scholar

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Courtesy: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Lonely\\_Londoners](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Lonely_Londoners)

**Abstract**

This paper reviews the novel *The Lonely Londoner* by Samuel Selvon as a postcolonial novel. The paper examines the plight of the Caribbean migrants who traveled to England hoping that the fairytales they had been fed on by the colonizers were realistic and confined to England. The majority of the immigrants to Britain welcomed the possibility of abandoning the illusoriness of the colonial periphery for the presumed reality of the life in London and other metropolitan centers. Bhabha employs the technic of building on the diaspora traditions and cultural practices to try and break the economic and social barriers that have existed for generations. The novel depicts the wrecking of the sensation of identity, of belonging to the English society, and that of who is the Englishman. Thus, the paper investigates how mimicry and hybridity have been portrayed in the novel *The Lonely Londoner*, and at the same time looks into how Samuel Selvon typically applied them to express his postcolonial discourse in his work.



**Keywords:** Samuel Selvon, *The Lonely Londoners*, Postcolonialism, Identity, Mimicry, Unhomed Condition, Homi Bhabha, Postcolonial Novel.

## **Introduction**

The question of identity is the most controversial issue in postcolonial times and literature and it can be regarded as the most important because of crisis exists in all postcolonial communities. According to the Oxford English dictionary, identity is defined as "The fact of being who or what a person or thing is". But in the postcolonial context, identity is a complex concept that would be difficult to define. Black British novel is a story about the sufferings of immigrants from West Indies in Britain. The Black literature is composed of works by authors from former British colonies in Africa, Asia and also some literature by the Caribbean. The work in Black British Literature has similarity regarding disillusionment with England, mostly about London and what London has to offer to the black immigrants.

Samuel Selvon was also included in the immigrant's population of the mass movement from the West Indies. His use of dramatization brought up an important increment in the Britain's cultural value. It helps the immigrants have the value and importance to face the challenges that they had from their daily activities. Selvon gives his right in the engagement of the Centre dominant literary culture as a member of the group fighting for the immigrant's freedom. Samuel Selvon expresses his anger and disappointment faced by the black immigrants experienced in London and neighboring towns. This paper examines how Selvon portrays the identity crisis in the novel *The Lonely Londoner*.

Identity crisis can be said to be the main theme of the novel though the novel offers hope to West Indian migrants through adaptation. It is evident that London is one of the most cosmopolitan urban centers in the world. The number of blacks living in England continued to increase year by year after the World War I. To curb the increasing number of black migrant, a regulation to reduce the number by half was enacted. The regulation was enacted to prevent London being from flooded with black immigrants. The British government adopted austerity measures to prevent the repetition of what happened in the late 19th century when white immigrants stormed London.

Selvon begins the novel with the interplay between the reality and illusoriness of the London city. The author is a part of an immigrant group from the Caribbean, who transformed England's metropolis after the end of the war. To survive in Britain, Selvon had to adjust his identity from the old traditional practices of the Caribbean people. According to Selvon, the reality in London was far from his expectation. For instance, being colonized and to see others celebrating Christmas sounds inhumane. Christmas is a holiday where people show love to one another, this is in contrast to what was happening in London and its metropolitan ways due to racial discrimination (Weedon, 2004, 91).

By the 1950s, Britain was home to most of the immigrants from the Anglophone. To some individuals the migration was an attempt to colonize their former colonial master. The

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majority of the immigrants to Britain welcomed the possibility of abandoning the illusoriness of the colonial periphery for the presumed reality of the life in London and other metropolitan centers. In this center, it was assumed that it was here true living took place. On the arrival in London or other metropolitan centers, immigrants were always amazed by these cities. At times even the news that one will be going to London amazed the blacks. For instance, in *The Lonely Londoners*, Galahad is mesmerized by the news that he will be visiting London. He stated that he “felt like a king living in London” (Selvon 84-85).

The novel *The Lonely Londoners* presents identity crisis the author employs various approaches to survive as immigrant in the process of doing so they establish a risky hold on London life. A refrain that reappears throughout the novel turns on the perseverance that the old identities that the immigrants brought with them to London. The old identity of Cap is characterized by the use of fashion style from either Spain or Kingston, lack of cooperation, untransformed. Cap also uses her fashion style to disappear in moments when he does not want to be noticed. Harris’ character is contrary to those of Cap.

Harris is an early model of what Naipaul defines as a mimic man; he is obsessed with earnings respect and adopts English traditions to the maximum. Many people had rated the works of Selvon regarding him as part of themselves especially when he moved to Britain from the Caribbean. Also, London literary grounds was affected and had been influenced in the introduction of certain aspects from the writings of Selvon. The writings of the season had impact on the London literary scenes and the characteristics of the post-colonial era. It gives a clear picture on the advantages of the sharing of labor among the existing colonial migrants.

In Bhabha’s essay "Of Mimicry and Man" in "The Location of Culture" he posits that the colonial subject's mimicry of his colonizer does not produce a replica of the colonizer, rather this mimicry produces something that the colonizer does not anticipate. Bhabha’s work on Contemporary culture valorizes the hybridity of migrant and diaspora culture within what is conceived as the homogeneous space and time of the nation. Bhabha employs the technic of building on the diaspora traditions and culture practices to try and break the economic and social barriers that have existed for generations. In the novel the speaker shows harmony and realization of his identity, the native identity that is the foundation of the society and the narration comprises of telling stories and at the same time bringing unity among individuals and has an identity in the nation. In an aim to unify, there will be the buildup of self-identity which will be the base of all the factors.

According to the Theory of Identity, the immigrants are always seen as “the other” (Bhabha, 1994: 36) by the local people. Western world imagines and describes the situation of the colonized subjectively and emotionally. From their point of view, the images of immigrants are associated with words like poor, savage, uncivilized and illiterate. The white people’s sense of superiority and distorted view of the immigrants are the primary reasons for every form of prejudice, gradually leading to cultural barrier. Although most of the immigrants want to maintain their Creole cultural identity when they first arrive in London, they are unable to stick to Creole tradition. The metropolis despises their culture. The immigrants are isolated from the

mainstream society and begin to experience every kind of discrimination. They have to face their problem of cultural identity directly for their traditional identity becomes more and more challenging.

In *The Lonely Londoners*, Galahad locates himself as the universal subject of the city. He comes to London full of dreams and ambitions. In his opinion, London is a city paved with gold. It can provide a lot of possibilities. But after living and working in London for a while, he experiences the cultural shock and racial discrimination. He begins to have the awareness of his status of an outsider and the sense of alienation and difference. Samuel Selvon describes the experience of Galahad in detail. His encounter shows their dilemma of identity and the attitude from the host culture. This is the first time Galahad has realized his problem of identity. He is now facing a dangling identity. Before this point, he hadn't realized that all his troubles in job-search, in general life, all original from this.

In the novel *The Lonely Londoners*, each manifestation of self-identity, mimicry and hybridity is presented in a manner that indicates they have been limited regarding their use and exploitation. Although the use of the theory developed by Bhabha is not found exhaustively in the novel, there are areas that indicate its usage in some ways. While Galahad was enjoying 'the luxury and appreciating his experience of traveling through London, a white child walking along his mother shouts....that Black man!'. This is close to the tone that is evident in Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* since it is portrayed as the white despising the black man [8] (Selvon, 1985, pp.87). The novel depicts the wrecking of the sensation of identity, of belonging to the English society, and that of who is the Englishman. This is depicted by his daydreams about London whose chimera was that the streets were gold-cemented and that jobs were lucrative and easily accessible. Another illusion was the thought that the English natives were courteous, hospitable, welcoming, and of human cordiality.

The novel *The Lonely Londoners* is an excellent sample of postcolonial literature that clearly depicts the woes of the West Caribbean migrants who settled in London. The migrants who moved to London during and soon after the colonization of the islands by the English men can easily account for their predicament through references to the activities that are spelled out in the setting and activities of this novel. The summary of the novel also presented looks into Selvon's aim of decolonization concerning the explorations and the display of the inhuman actions of the native Londoners. Galahad felt irritated due to the miseries that his color and to his fellow migrants had caused them in England, a place in which they had high expectations and hopes of developing their lives there (Kanneh, 1993, pp. 43).

In his conversation with the color black, Galahad portrays mimicry in the sense that by the denial of his self-identity, he had wished that he would be like his colonizers or at least not black. Galahad's disassociation from the reality is however soon overridden by the migrant's newly acquired character that assisted them to further their intimate desires. The migrant hybrids into a stronger character that tries to conquer the hierarchy that the colonizers had set in their minds. Through the portrayal of sexual superiority by the young black men, Selvon evidences Bhabha's hybridity coming into the scene in this novel. The migrants also hybrids into imposing

anthropological investigation despite being impoverished and loathed by the Londoners. Throughout the novel, the narrator explains the peculiar habits of a native Londoner and separates them from those of the migrant Londoners.

This novel describes the experiences of the West Indian immigrants in London. It shows how London that is the 'promised land' for the emigrants is nowhere close to the ideal. It is shown how the 'whites' of London look down upon the 'blacks'. The emigrants adjust themselves to this life. Migration is quite common in recent times. But the impact of migration on the individual is complex. Migration is, of course, a physical or geographical moving out of one's land where, the migrant believes, he will find satisfaction; but it also implies a severing of the immigrant's spiritual and symbolic ties with the mother country. And unless the migrant decides to leave the country due to some distaste for his home country, the migration process is bound to be painful. In *The Lonely Londoners*, readers see the lives of a group of Caribbean immigrants in London and their loneliness. This is humanistic because they see the difficulties of the people who have immigrated to England.

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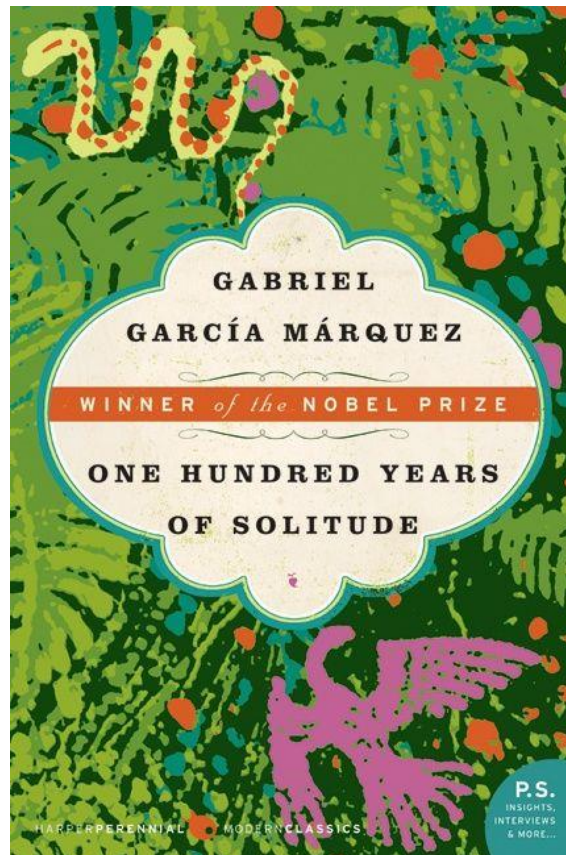
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**The Source of Magic Realism in Gabriel Garcia Marquez's  
*One Hundred Years of Solitude***

**K. Gobalakrishnan and Dr. K. N. Sharmila (Research Supervisor)**

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Courtesy: <https://www.harpercollins.com/9780060883287/one-hundred-years-of-solitude>

**Abstract**

*One Hundred Years of Solitude* is the most famous novel by Gabriel Garcia Marquez through the resource of magic realism. He has followed a non-linear chronological order in the novel. He has mixed past, present; future and in different style of storytelling. One cannot find a single plot or a single time line in the novel. His magical flair is to merge fantasy with reality by introducing to the reader his Colombia, where myths, portents, and legends exist side by side



with technology and modernity. These myths, along with other elements and events in the novel, recount a large portion of Colombian history.

**Keywords:** Colombia, Magic Realism; Marquez.

### **Introduction**

*One Hundred Years of Solitude* is abundant with magic realism, joining imagination with the real. Garcia Marquez's talent to include all the fairy tale characters and to produce a new story that ties the actual and the amazing in a real way brands his work fascinating and genuine. He deliberately uses fairy tales, mythology, and history in his writings to fascinate his readers with realism. Magical realism is neither a style nor a genre but it is a division of realism school and cannot be reflected as a liberated literary school because it does not have different and new important structure and principals and largely finds its identification alongside the realism school. In the magical realism the truth and imagination features combine masterly in such a way that existing borders between realism and imagination become imperceptible and all the illusory and imaginary actions seemed logically and realistic in the story and the reader admits the merely.

Amaryll Chandy in the article "Magical Realism and Imagination" writes that magical realism wants to make a paradox mixture of amalgamation of differing and dissimilar matters recognized with two conflicting approach: one based on reality and the other on the acceptance of supernatural affairs. Magical realism is basically different from imagination story, because it belongs to the modern world and is parallel with authoritative descriptions of human and society.

### **Gabriel Garcia**

The major Latin-American magic realists include the Colombian Gabriel Garcia Marquez, the Brazilian Jorge Amado, the Argentines Jorge Luis Borges and Julio Cortazar, and the Chilean Isabel Allende.

In Europe, the term 'magic realism' is applied to clarify the propensity between the fiction writers including Franz Kafka, John Fowles, and Gunter Grass to interlace rudiments of the fantastic and weird into their otherwise accurate prose. By the mid-1960s, this exciting formal expansion became a trademark of Latin America's "new novelists" and of the "boom," the tenure used to define the abrupt global achievement of Julio Cortazar, Jose Donoso, Carlos Fuentes, Mario Vargas Llosa, and Gabriel Garcia Marquez. Among them, no writer was more well-known as proponent of 'magic realism' than Gabriel Garcia Marquez.

Marquez's childhood underwrote abundantly in the use of magic realism in his novels, specially, in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. Marquez declares that there's not a single line in his novels is not based on reality. At the same time, readers want to explore the causes of his exquisite magic realism. Some references are available in his biography. He says in a conversation with his friend, Plinio Apuleyo Mendoza, an interview, later published as *The Fragrance of Guav*:

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

**Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: Vol. II Black Writings: A Subaltern Perspective**

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The Source of Magic Realism in Gabriel Garcia Marquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude*

I was brought up by a grandmother and numerous aunts who all showered me with attention, and by maids who gave me many very happy childhood moments because their prejudices, while not fewer than those of the women in the family, were at least different. The woman who taught me to read was very beautiful and graceful and I used to like going to school just so I could see her. [Women] find their way more easily, with fewer navigational aids. . . . They make me feel secure (Marquez, *One Hundred*13).

### **Magic Realism**

Thus, there are resources of so many splendid and archetypal channels of magic realism concerning female characters of Buendia family in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. For the first time, over this interview, One gets a window open to look into the resources of his ‘magic realism’. Elsewhere, in the same discussion, he says: “My grandmother . . . used to tell me about the most atrocious things without turning a hair . . . I realized that it was her impassive manner and her wealth of images that made her stories so credible. I wrote *One Hundred Years of Solitude* using my grandmother’s method.” It contains carefully intended gullibility, which makes readers have faith in the story without questioning, and Garcia Marquez accepted it from the examples of his grandmother and Franz Kafka.

### ***One Hundred Years of Solitude***

In *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, we get a passage narrates the first experience of the protagonists with ice and echoing the actions of Garcia Marquez’s childhood as put up by Mendoza:

For other writers, I think, a book is born out of an idea, a concept. I always start with an image. . . . When I was a very small boy in Aracataca, my grandfather took me to the circus to see a dromedary. Another day, when I told him I hadn’t seen the ice on show, he took me to the banana company’s settlement, asked them to open a crate of frozen mullet and made me put my hand in. The whole of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* began with that one image (Marquez, *One Hundred* 15).

Jose Arcadio Buendia, puts his hand on the ice and holds it there for numerous records as his heart is filled with fear and triumph at the contact with that enigmatic thing. Being overwhelmed, he paid more so that his sons could have that remarkable practice. Though little Jose Arcadio declined to trace it, Aureliano affects it and removes his hand immediately. But his father pays no care to him. Intoxicated by the indication of the miracle, he pays another five reales and with his hand on the cake, as if giving evidence on the Holy Scriptures, he exclaims, “This is the great invention of our time” (Marquez, *One Hundred* 18).

### **Mauricio Babilonia**

From the same meeting one knows that the curious happenings in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* like, “Remedios the Beautiful ascends to heaven”, “Yellow butterflies flutter around Mauricio Babilonia” etc. are all ‘based on fact’. For example, for Mauricio Babilonia, Garcia Marquez clarifies that when he was about five, an electrician used to come to their house in Aracataca to alternate the meter. According to Marquez, on one of these incidents, he found his

grandmother annoying to shoo away a butterfly with a rag, saying, “Whenever this man comes to the house, that yellow butterfly follows him.” That was Mauricio Babilonia in embryo. Concerning Remedios the Beautiful, he gives out that he had initially scheduled to make her vanish while in the house sewing with Rebecca and Amaranta. But this almost cinematographic trick did not seem feasible to him. Then he believed of making her rise to heaven, body and soul. The fact after it was a woman whose granddaughter had run away from home in the timely hours of the morning, and who strained to hide the fact by placing the word about that she had gone up to heaven (Marquez, *One Hundred* 19).

### Uses Socio-Political Past of Colombia

Apart from his colourful childhood memories, Marquez is enormously obligated to the socio-political past of Colombia for his wonderful samples of magic realism in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. For example, the civil war between the Liberals and the Traditionalists in the story straight resonances events parallel to the historic events of Colombia. Michael Wood, in his book *Gabriel Garcia Marquez: One Hundred Years of Solitude*, says, “Colombia has a long custom of democracy. The Liberals and the Conservatives, who controlled nineteenth and most of twentieth century politics, hoisted for quite dissimilar things – reorganization or response, free trade or defense, parting or combination of church and state; and gradually twisted into a rather slender band of class interests” (8). There is another astute and humorous reference to this state of matters in a conversation of the game of organizers in the novel. Jose Arcadio Buendia does not want to play with the priest, Father Nicanor, because he cannot see the point of a competition in which the challengers are in contract on values. Father Nicanor, who has not ever thought of the game in this light, cannot take himself to play anymore. This infers that much aggressive in the world anxieties anything but values, which are also decided as immaterial. For instance, Colonel Aureliano Buendia determines that both Liberals and Conservatives are attacking exclusively for power and are prepared to detriment any major points of attitude in order to accomplish it.

An enormous degree of Colombian past gets into *One Hundred Years of Solitude*: the influences over reform in the 19th century, the influx of the railway, the War of the Thousand Days, the American fruit company, the cinema, the automobile, and the massacre of striking plantation workers in 1928. The most striking fact of modern Colombian history, known as the Strength, gets unintended appearance in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* through guerillas, gangsters, self-protection groups, the police, the army, and the death of some 200,000 people. Even when it was said to be over, or under control, in 1962, there were still 200 civilians dying per month. The Violence was inevitable for the Colombians, and it motivated a flood of fiction, and Garcia Marquez himself lectures it straight in *No one Writes to the Colonel* and *In Evil Hour*. However, the Violence seems in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* circuitously as the carnage of arresting workers, “. . . which was sparked off by the assassination of Jorge Eliecer Gaitan, who made his political fame by investigating the 1928 strike. The event was violent enough and could stand as a compression and anticipation of the later phenomenon, an allusion and a synecdoche” (Wood 10). Garcia Marquez ponders in his autobiography *Living to Tell the Tale* while going to his birth place in Aracata:

It was there, my mother told me that day, where in 1928 the army killed an undetermined number of banana workers. I knew the event as if I had lived it, having heard it recounted and repeated a thousand times by my grandfather from the time I had a memory: the soldier reading the decree by which the striking laborers were declared a gang of lawbreakers; the three thousand men, women, and children motionless under the savage sun after the officer gave them five minutes to evacuate the square; the order to fire, the clattering machine guns spitting in white-hot bursts, the crowd trapped by panic as it was cut down, little by little, by the methodical, insatiable scissors of the shrapnel. (14-15)

Based on this awful historical event, a wonderful passage of magic realism is shaped by Garcia Marquez in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*:

It was as if the machine guns had been loaded with caps, because their panting rattle could be heard and their incandescent spitting could be seen, but not the slightest reaction was perceived, not a cry, not even a sigh among the compact crowd that seemed petrified by an instantaneous invulnerability. . . . the panic became a dragon's tail as one compact wave ran against another which was moving in the opposite direction, toward the other dragon's tail in the street across the way, where the machine guns were also firing without cease. They were penned in, swirling about in a gigantic whirlwind that little by little was being reduced to its epicenter as the edges were systematically being cut off all around like an onion being peeled by the insatiable and methodical shears of the machine guns. (311)

### **Detections**

In the novel, there are also references to the events, such as the detections of an outfit of corroded armour with hardened basic as well as “an enormous Spanish galleon”; and a gory civil war (12). All of them have real life evidence founded on Colombian history. The armour is said to be from the fifteenth century, which it could just be, since the north-eastern seaside region of South America, what is now Colombia and Venezuela, was first visited by the Europeans, with and without armour, in 1499-1500 (Wood 27). So, the time distance of the novel can be ‘several centuries’ future than the sixteenth and some ‘three hundred years’ since Drakes intrusions into the Spanish Main (Marquez 19). In the same way, initially a Colombian civil war ended with the Agreement of Neerlandia (*One Hundred* 174), which was originally signed in 1902.

### **Macondo**

If one examines the name ‘Macondo’, we can simply recognize how Colombian history and Marquez’s individual life knowledge straddling into the beautiful use of ‘magic realism’ in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. In Northern Colombia, there is an ‘ancient city’ called Riohacha. Macondo is the name of a banana farmstead near Aracataca, Garcia Marquez’s birth place, which is now globally famous as the name of a mythical community, and clearly, it is due to the fame of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. Vigilant readers can simply realize that the geography and history of two ‘Macondo’ are not dissimilar and the fictional world of ‘Macondo’ has a real condition in time and space.

The report of Garcia Marquez concerning ‘Macondo’ in his autobiography *Living to Tell the Tale* while he was going to visit his grandparents’ house:

The train stopped at a station that had no town, and a short while later it passed the only banana plantation along the route that had its name written over the gate: *Macondo*. This word had attracted my attention ever since the first trips with my grandfather, but I discovered only as an adult that I liked its poetic resonance. I never heard anyone say it and did not even ask myself what it meant. I had already used it in three books as the name of an imaginary town when I happened to read in an encyclopedia that it is a tropical tree resembling the ceiba, that it produces no flower or fruit, and that its light, porous wood is used for making canoes and carving cooking implements. Later, I discovered in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* that in Tanganyika there is a nomadic people called the Makonde, and I thought this might be the origin of the word. (19)

### **Famous Latin America**

This shows his ‘magic realism’ to find out its considerable source. Colombia in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* develops into a general and famous Latin America, a place of innocence, isolation and magic, of high mountains, rainy tropics and ash-coloured sea. However, internal wars, bureaucrats, booms, strikes, North American interventions and military rulers are also there. It is a sub-continent presented as carefully suspended between myth and history, and it proves how extensively Garcia Marquez mingles his real-life experience with his fictions to mould the effects of magic realism.

### **Marquez’s Extensive Reading – Influence of Kafka**

Marquez’s extensive reading of the classics, such as, *The Bible*, Don Quixote and the works of Virginia Woolf, George Bernard Shaw, Franz Kafka, William Faulkner and Hemingway formulates the other resources. The first and foremost as used by Gabriel Garcia Marquez in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is the Bible. Jose Arcadio Buendia, with whom the story begins and is described as a young patriarch, compared with Adam, since he is the first citizen of a sort of paradise. Thus, much of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* reads like a fable. From the starting the tiny settlement of Macondo is offered to a version of Eden. “The world” we read “was so recent that many things lacked names, and in order to indicate them it was necessary to point.” The polished stones in the clear river are “white and enormous, like prehistoric eggs” (1). Here, one can refer to the extract, which Gabriel Garcia Marquez mentioned in his autobiography *Living to Tell the Tale*. While describing his grandparents’ old house in Aracataca, he wrote, “. . . a good place to live where everybody knew everybody else, located on the banks of a river of transparent water that raced over a bed of polished stones as huge and white as prehistoric eggs” (5). Conscious readers can easily discover the similarities of the ideas and diction. There is another Biblical reference in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, which confirms Marquez’s indebtedness to *The Bible*, in which one comes to know that the founders of Macondo have traveled to a “land no one had promised them” (31).



In relation to his being influenced by Franz Kafka, Garcia Marquez himself says in his interview with Plinio Apuleyo Mendoza, namely, *The Fragrance of Guava: Conversation with Gabriel Garcia Marquez*:

Kafka recounted things the same way my grandmother used to. When I read *Metamorphosis*, at seventeen, I realized I could be a writer. . . . I remember the first sentence, ‘When Gregor Samsa woke up one morning from unsettling dreams, he found himself changed in his bed into a monstrous vermin.’ I said to myself, ‘My grandmother used to talk like that. I didn’t know you could do this, but if you can, I’m certainly interested in writing.’(257)

### **Influence of Cervantes**

If one considers Cervantes’ *Don Quixote*, in many aspects, the patriarch of the novel Jose Arcadio Buendia can be termed as a modern Don Quixote. Particularly, Jose Arcadio Buendia’s wonder at the ice and his brilliant personal discovery of the earth’s roundness are both, in a sense, jokes on him are like Don Quixote’s courage when faced with lions which will not fight him. Obviously, the lions are hungry and dangerous, but at that moment, they were not in the mood of fighting. So, Quixote’s quite genuine courage remains untested: “his folly is heroic, but is heroism looks foolish” (Wood 32), like Sergius’ cavalry charge in *Arms and the Man* by George Bernard Shaw. In the same way, Jose Arcadio Buendia’s intelligence and imagination are astonishing but oddly situated, and his simplicity brings about further twist to the story.

Another writer Garcia Marquez is indebted to is Virginia Woolf. Garcia Marquez himself says about the writing of the last part of his novel that his own sense of time was ‘completely transformed’ by a sentence in Virginia Woolf’s *Mrs Dalloway*, read when he was twenty. “I saw in a flash the whole process of decomposition of Macondo and its final destiny” (Wood 50-51).

The extract in question is:

But there could be no doubt that greatness . . . was passing, hidden down Bond Street, removed only by a hand’s-breadth from ordinary people who might now, for the first time and last, be within speaking distance of the majesty of England, of the enduring symbol of the state which will be known to curious antiquaries, sifting the ruins of time, when London is a grass-grown path and all those hurrying along the pavement this Wednesday morning are but bones with a few wedding rings mixed up in their dust and the gold stoppings of innumerable decayed teeth. (Woolf 19-20)

### **Seeing the Connections**

With *One Hundred Years of Solitude* in mind, one can see the connections: a secret-guessed and missed, close by and far away, the sudden sense of a later time full of relics of what is now the present, the imagination of different events as if they all “coexisted in one instant” (Marquez 421). For a direct comparison one can quote from *One Hundred Years of Solitude*:

Sir Francis Drake had attacked Riohacha only so that [Aureliano and Amaranta Ursula] could seek each other through the most intricate labyrinths of blood until they would

engender the mythological animal that was to bring the line to an end. Macondo was already a fearful whirlwind of dust and rubble being spun about by the wrath of the biblical hurricane . . . for it was foreseen that the city of mirrors (or mirages) would be wiped out by the wind and exiled from the memory of men at the precise moment when Aureliano Babilonia would finish deciphering the parchments, and that everything written on them was unrepeatable since time immemorial and forever more, because races condemned to one hundred years of solitude did not have a second opportunity on earth. (422)

### Everything Is Based on Reality

When Garcia Marquez insists that everything in his novel is ‘based on reality’, he means two things. First, that the most fantastic things have actually been believed or asserted by living people somewhere, and often in Latin America. “This doesn’t mean these things are true but it may make them real” (Wood 56). Garcia Marquez, to describe incidents, as we have already discussed, the yellow butterflies trailing after one of his characters and Remedios, the beauty, taking off into the sky and getting vanished, borrows some dizzying pretext as his fictional reality and then puts the literal truth into his novel as an idle, misplaced speculation. The quite ordinary thus becomes fantastic. Secondly, ‘based on reality’ means genuinely in touch with some fact of feeling, however hyperbolically and metaphorically expressed. When Jose Arcadio Buendia dies, a rain of tiny yellow flowers falls on Macondo, a ‘silent storm’ which covers the roofs, carpets the streets and suffocates the animals. This is a miracle even in ‘Macondo’—the bits and pieces of legend for the end of a legendary character, (*One Hundred* 144). But the miracle affords the truth of a fitting image; the appropriateness of the imagination’s rising to the grand occasion, as nature ought to, but usually does not. Thus, the real life experiences mould Marquez’s narrative style of magic realism.

Gabriel Garcia Marquez copies facts from his own life as well as expressions and characters from other writers. It is not to say that history and fiction are not same, but the boundary he is very minimal. Gabriel Garcia Marquez is not a writer with divine skill of formation; he is the re-forming novelist, a conceivable refiner of nostalgia into long-lasting work of literature mending a broken memory with his ‘magic realism’. He spreads the news of the ‘wiped out’ Macondo, ‘city of mirrors (or mirages)’, home and prototype of actual truths carried to non-belief.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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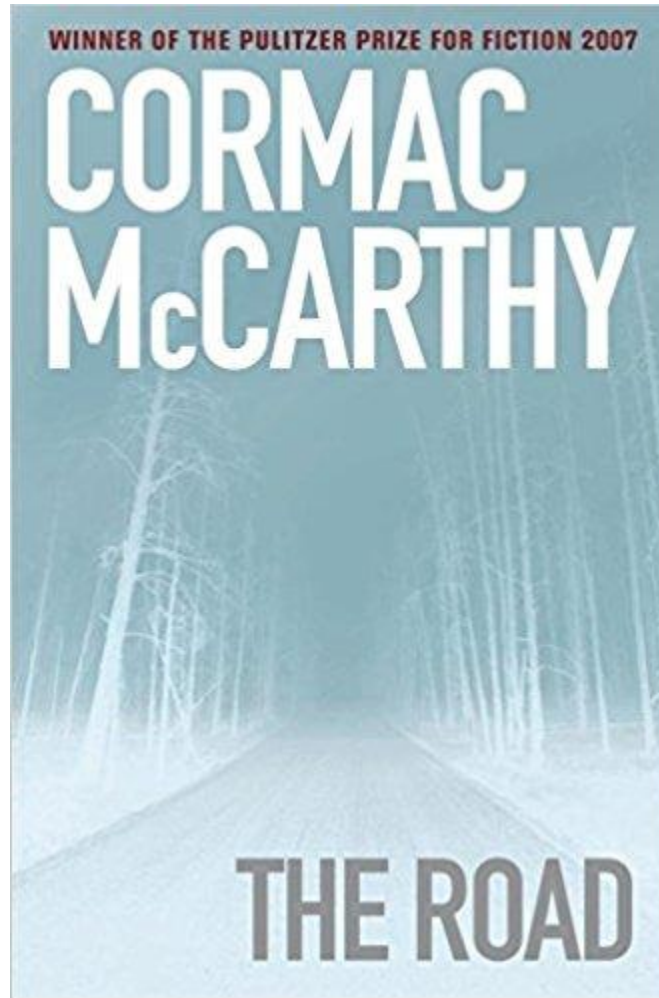
The Source of Magic Realism in Gabriel Garcia Marquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude*

**Gender Studies in Cormac McCarthy's *The Road***

**Kalithabegam, M.Phil. Scholar**

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Courtesy: <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Road-Cormac-McCarthy/dp/0330447548>

**Abstract**

This paper deals with the brief history of the Post-apocalyptic Fiction, “The Road”. Cormac McCarthy is an American Writer. The novel deals with the theme of Gender studies. This novel deals with two unnamed persons man and his son as they seek to survive. The Author is a

specialist to give masculine gender very effectively and lack of female character. The woman is the wife of man and mother of the boy. The female characters are not found in the novel, the author did not give importance to the female character. The man portrayed as survival and boy as Morality. The man surviving toils in nature. The journey seems to be tough, that makes man and the boy feel hungry. Identifying the food is a continual struggle. The man falls in sick in the Journey. Nature is one thing, but man and boy survive other humans. The boy portrays as clear authority on morality. The man faces many struggles in their journey. His main intention is to protect his boy from others.

### **Introduction**

American literature concentrates the area of United States and its preceding colonies. Literature is the record of human experience and people have always impelled to write down their impression of life. American literature was a series of British colonies on the eastern coast of the present day United States. Therefore, its literary tradition begins as linked to the broader tradition of English literature. However, unique American characteristics and breadth of its production usually now cause it to be considered a separate way and tradition.

The American Post-Apocalyptic novel has emerged as a distinct type of fiction, beyond the area covered by the well-known fiction, across what has been termed as the land of a believable likelihood where the scared plays an important part. The Post-Apocalyptic world, the life changing event has occurred and human existence as we currently know it has drastically changed.

Gender studies are a field of study dedicated to gender identity and gendered representation. This field of study includes women's studies and men's studies, queer studies. The term gender should be used to refer masculinities and femininities and not to the state of being male or female is it's entirely.

### **Cormac McCarthy**

Cormac McCarthy is an American novelist, playwright, and screen writer. He has written ten novels, spanning the southern gothic, western and, Post-Apocalyptic genres. He was born in 1933 and published his first novel *The Orchard Keeper*, *Suttree*, *All the Pretty Horses*, *Blood Meridian*, *No country for Old Men*, *Cities of the plain*, and *The Road*. Cormac McCarthy's most popular work is *The Road*.

Contemporary writers Don DeLillo and Thomas Pynchon are so dissimilar in style, tone, sense of humor. Philip Roth and McCarthy are opposites, but they belong to the same tradition of postwar American literary fiction. These four writers were nominated for the Nobel Prize of literature in 2014. *Suttree* for Cormac McCarthy, *Gravity's Rainbow* for Thomas Pynchon, *American Pastoral* for Philip Roth, *Underworld* for Don DeLillo.

### ***The Road***

*The Road* novel is a Post-Apocalyptic genre, depicting the strength of masculine gender survives in the disaster world. This novel moves with two protagonists. This novel depicts two unnamed persons "the man" and his son "the boy". The female character takes the place of



mother role, but she does not survive longer in this novel. She exists in their dreams only. She kills herself because of she lost hope to survive in the burned America. In the destroyed world of America, the masculine gender roles present in several sides as well. McCarthy's treatment of gender is suitable to the topic of masculinity, because in this novel focus on the relationship between father and son.

### **Destroyed World**

*The Road* is in a destroyed world. The man is represented as a survivor and the boy is represented as morality. The man's main intention is to stay safe from the bad guys and cannibals and keep the boy alive, and they are travelling to the east coast to escape from the oncoming winter and "the road becomes the great symbol for the struggle to survive".

Men are considered the stronger and tougher sex; they get success through the individual effort. The man and his child lived in Post-Apocalyptic America. There has been a radical change in the society. In the case of road, the nature of culture and society have changed very dangerously in that place where the man wants to protect his child.

### **The Role of Father**

The role of father is portrayed very well. This science fiction genre gives a wild protagonist showing his bravery and physical power to keep alive. The man has more responsibilities than as a father because the man is his only living parent and so he must be a caretaker for his child who struggles to protect his child make him for survival. He gives food to his child and the man, not only regard to the boy's physical health and safety but also in regard to his emotional and mental health; otherwise the boy would be miserable. He lost his hope for living. The man and the boy are alone in that ashy, burnt, violent world. He has always recognized that he is living only for his child, but the boy's life is in danger. "That the boy was all that stood between him and death." (McCarthy 29). The man is a remarkable character. The man feels that crying is avoided by males because it is ashamed, his son is precious to him in the world, so he loves his son very much. The man repeatedly said to his boy not to cry and even become stronger then only make themselves safe from others. He thinks his main job is to protect his son, and god created him for that purpose. "My job is to take care of you. I was appointed to do that by god. I will kill anyone who touches you". (McCarthy 80)

The morality is seen everywhere in the novel. The man and boy are out in unforgiving, dangerous world. Where they make slight mistake, it leads to death. The man presents his strength, responsibilities, morality all these shown the masculine gender. "Are we going to die sometime, not now?" (McCarthy 9) Danger is ever present to the man and the boy in their journey. Throughout the novel reflects the strong bond between father and son. The main purpose of father is to make his son alive, at the same time the man is trying to be one of the "good guys", the humans who avoid violence, but he is do anything to protect his boy from the bad guys.

Yes. We're still the good guys.  
And we always will be.

Yes. We always will be.  
Okay. (McCarthy 81)

The bad guys have no loyalty even their own members; they kill their own gang members violently. The man always leaves the pistol with the boy when he goes him alone. He said to his boy that if he attacked kills himself with his pistol, while the man is always trying to protect his son. It will show he will take risk to protect his and proves his love to his son as a father.

### **Violence in Journey**

The journey is filled with excessive violence. The landscape where the scarcity of resources has driven the few survivors are by cannibalism. "I'm really scared." (McCarthy 75). The man thinks if one who wants to survive in this world reveal his strength to who make violence against them. The author shows the strength of masculine gender and his responsibilities to protect his son.

The morality also is seen here: if anyone makes violence against them then only if necessary he attacks to make his own safety from others. The strength of the man is used to survive based on morality. The masculine gender's importance also shows in this novel.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018  
**Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: Vol. II Black Writings: A Subaltern Perspective**  
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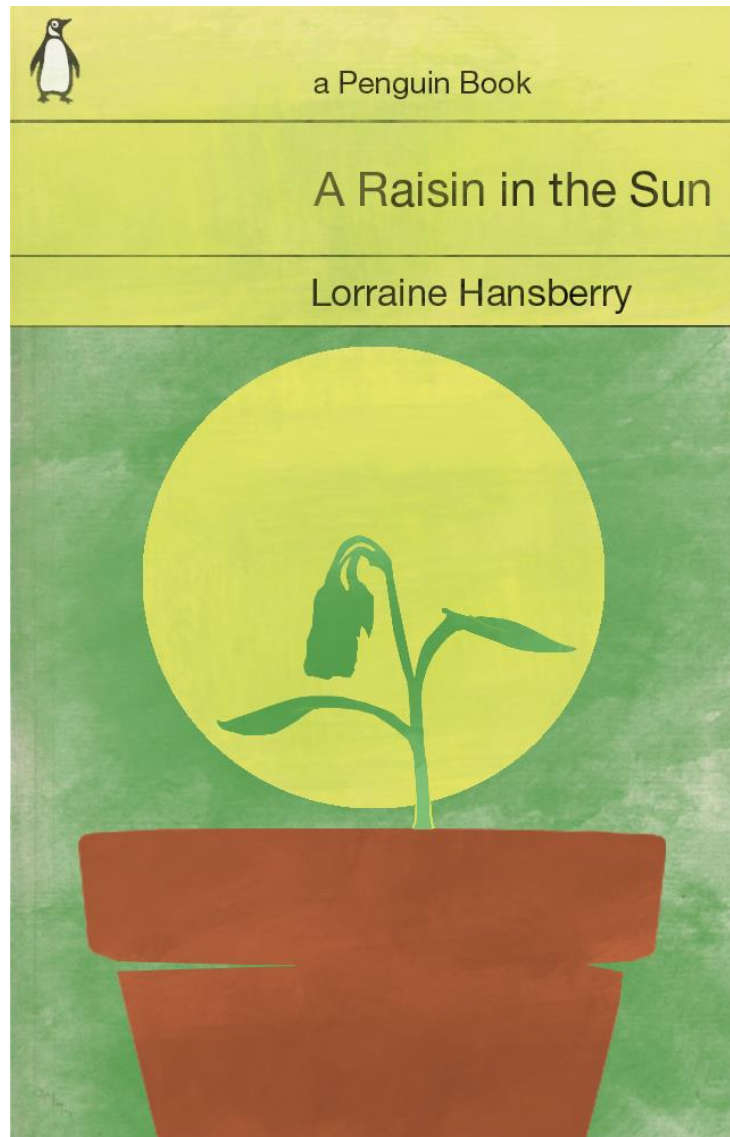
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**Power of Love in Moulding Black's Dignity in Lorraine Hansberry's  
*A Raisin in the Sun***

**A. Kandhan and Dr. P. Prem Chandar**

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018  
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Power of Love in Moulding Black's Dignity in Lorraine Hansberry's *A Raisin in the Sun*

## Abstract

The progress of American drama both as an art and a medium of expression has been witnessed with the dawn of the twentieth century. Joseph Wood Krutch states that significant American drama emerged during the 1920's, when it became a serious part of American Literature. The Province town which was the considered to be the cradle of American Drama also had given impetus to several women playwrights. These female playwrights have showcased the frenzy and confrontation experienced by them, in the society they lived, in their works.

Passionate, confident and committed, they struggled through art to bring about fruition in the lives of black Americans. They perceived the world from feminine perspective to provide much to the American theatre in the name of new subject matter, powerful dialogue and variety in characterization.



Lorraine Hansbury

Courtesy: <https://www.history.com/topics/black-history/black-women-in-art-and-literature/pictures/black-women-authors/playwright-lorraine-hansberry>

Lorraine Hansbury is one of the most prolific writers whose poetic voices occupied a special place in American Theatre. She dedicated her life for fighting the violent forces which destroyed human beings. She beautifully presents the tension and frustrations of the blacks' existence in USA through the characters in her dramas. And this paper suggests the theme that power of love in moulding the blacks' dignity and self-respect in Lorraine Hansberry's *A Raisin in the Sun*.

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Language in India [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: Vol. II *Black Writings: A Subaltern Perspective*

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Power of Love in Moulding Black's Dignity in Lorraine Hansberry's *A Raisin in the Sun*

## ***A Raisin in the Sun***

The progress of American drama both as an art and a medium of expression has been witnessed with the dawn of the twentieth century. Joseph Wood Krutch states that significant American drama emerged during the 1920's, when it became a serious part of American Literature. The Province town which was the considered to be the cradle of American Drama also had given impetus to several women playwrights. These female playwrights have showcased the frenzy and confrontation experienced by them, in the society they lived, in their works.

Passionate, confident and committed, they struggled through art to bring about fruition in the lives of black Americans. They perceived the world from feminine perspective to provide much to the American theatre in the name of new subject matter, powerful dialogue and variety in characterization. Lorraine Hansberry is one of the most prolific writers whose poetic voices occupied a special place in American Theatre. She dedicated her life for fighting the violent forces which destroyed human beings. She beautifully presents the tension and frustrations of the blacks' existence in USA through the characters in her dramas. She was often celebrated as "St. Joan of the Black Cultural Revival".

***A Raisin in the Sun*** was her first play which was produced at Broadway in 1959. And with the staging of her play, she gained widespread reputation and won the New York Drama Critics Circle award for the best American play. The play portrays the life of a black family living on Chicago's south side struggling to hold the family together with the power of love to gain self-dignity among the White neighbourhood.

The play focuses on the Younger family—Lena Younger (Mama), a sixty-year-old matriarch of the family is carved as a strong, confident and pious lady who was shown as a symbol of love. Her husband Walter Lee Sr., has suffered a lot and died due to overwork but remained an inevitable moral force to unite the family among several hardships. Walter Lee Jr., a thirty-five years old son of Mrs. Younger, who is a chauffeur aspired to start a business to enhance the dignity of his family's social status. Ruth, his wife is portrayed as a lovable personality who can even go to the extent to abort her child for the sake of her family. Benetha, Mrs. Younger's only daughter wishes to enhance her social status and dignity by pursuing medicine as her career and do service to the society.

### **A Black Family's Uphill Battle from Poverty**

The play is the story of a black family's uphill battle from poverty and of the dreams and delusions. Its theme is the need to recognise that personal pride and dignity lie in a refusal to allow one's own possibilities to be determined by others. Their inheritance enables them to challenge the rules written and unwritten by the white society.

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The play goes beyond the hackneyed complexities of blacks and whites. It has an immense issue which last for generations. Walter Lee's difficulty is that he wants to inherit the American dream of success. Each one of the characters is in pursuit of his/her goal. Their dreams do not dry up like raisin in the sun nor do they explode. Mama wants her children to be worthy and self-esteemed citizens in the society. She insisted on having good qualities in them and always guided them to step in the right direction.

When Walter decides to accept the offer made by Karl Linder, on the compromise that they shall withdraw their plans of moving into the white neighbourhood, Mama retorts by insisting "Son – I come from five generations of people who was slaves and share croppers – but ain't nobody in my family never let nobody pay 'em no money, that was a way of telling us we wasn't fit to walk the earth. We ain't never been that poor ... we aint't never been that dead inside" (143).

### **Purchase a House**

Mama's aim to purchase a house in the white neighbourhood shows her faith in dignity and honour. It shows her dream of reconciliation with the whites. She envisages a bright future when the blacks and whites would live together like the members of a family. Ruth's dreams are somewhat similar to that of her mother-in-law. She yearns for a comfortable living place for her family. She wants her baby to be aborted in order to reduce the financial burden of the family.

Her dreams are like mirage because of the condition that she is black, poor and also a woman. Benetha and Joseph Asagai represent the new values in the modern American social scenario. Benetha aspires to become a doctor to enhance the conditions of her family through education. But much more, she wants to hold on her dignity. Each and every character in the play seeks an opportunity to win over and to prove themselves not inferior to anyone in the world.

### **Struggling for Independence**

Hansberry was a lover of freedom. The characters in her plays struggle for independence and identity. They rebel against the forces that try to destroy their dreams and aspirations. They are prepared to struggle to become free but not prepared to live as slaves. *A Raisin in the Sun* is about human dignity and talks of the attitude we must have towards the material things in life. The implied message is that we should not become slaves to the material things but must have control over them.

The play held an optimistic view of life and believed that it could be reconstructed. In Atkinson's essay on "The Theatre: *A Raisin in the Sun*", he expresses his view on the play that it "has a vigour as well as veracity and is likely to destroy the complacency of anyone who sees

it.... It is a play about human beings who want, on the one hand, to preserve their family pride and on the other hand, to break out of the poverty that seems to be their fate” (345).

### **Title of the Play**

The title of the play suggests that one has to make attempts to fulfil his dream; otherwise life will be futile. The Younger’s family dreams are only deferred temporarily; they have not dried up. There are hopes for fulfilment of their dreams. Walter has not become rich but now, he deserves his position as the head of the family and they have managed to get out of the ghetto. Ruth has to work but now she has new responsibilities.

Beneatha may not be able to continue her medical course, but she may join hands with Asagai in building a strong society. Thus, the title is puzzling. But it is certain that the Youngers are not going to explode in rebellion against the Whites. They no longer consider the oppression of the White people as hindrance. They will learn to adjust themselves to the white values and to maintain a permanent harmonious atmosphere.

The family becomes a paradigm showing the path to mould the blacks’ dignity with the power of love. In her play, she tries to convince people that the world is beautiful, and one can live a wonderful life if he learns to understand and love people.

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## **Pain and Suffering of Women in Cynthia Ozick's Select Novels**

**V. Karpagavadivu and Dr. T. Deivasigamani**

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**Cynthia Ozick**

Courtesy: <https://www.theparisreview.org/interviews/2693/cynthia-ozick-the-art-of-fiction-no-95-cynthia-ozick>

### **Abstract**

Cynthia Ozick is a Jewish novelist, essayist and short story writer. Ozick writings focuses on the double victimization of women, of being not only Jewish, but Jewish women, the child bearers who alone had the ability to carry on the Jewish “race”. Cynthia Ozick’s novels represents the pain and suffering of women in Jewish world. The Jewish law treats women as intellectually and socially inferior to men. Cynthia Ozick has emerged as an influential contemporary writer of the American Jewish writers along with Saul Bellow, Norman Mailer, Issac Bashevis Singer and Philip Roth. Ozick's fiction and essays are often deals about Jewish American life. Much of her work explores the disparaged self, the reconstruction of identity after immigration, trauma, and movement from one class to another. Her novels depicted psychological, sufferings and frustrated mind of the challenged Jewish people. This present paper discusses about the problems, challenges, and their struggle to prove their identity to the society. In her works she focused the problem of women who search for their identities and domination of women towards the women in the Concentration camps.

**Keywords:** Cynthia Ozick, psychological, immigration, trauma, identity.

## Introduction

Cynthia Ozick was born in New York City on April 17, 1928, the second of two children. She was moved to the Bronx with her parents, Celia (Regelson) and William Ozick, who were the proprietors of the Park View Pharmacy in the Pelham Bay section. Her parents had come to America from the severe northwest region of Russia. They came from the Lithuanian Jewish tradition of that region. That is a tradition of scepticism, rationalism, and antimysticism, opposed to the exuberant emotionalism of the Hasidic community that flourished in the Galitzianer [Galician] portion of Eastern Europe. She began her reading with fairy tales. From her older brother, she received the perfect birthday present—books. These books had a magical effect, transforming her from a doltish schoolgirl into “who I am”—a reader, and perhaps a writer. Ozick underwent a cultural transformation during that period. She became a Jewish autodidact, mastering for herself much of the Jewish textual tradition. Cynthia Ozick’s novels represents the pain and suffering of women in Jewish world. The Jewish law treats women as intellectually and socially inferior to men.

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## Jewish Identity

Judaism is the dominant force in Ozick works; and Jewish identity is her major theme. Understanding Cynthia Ozick, her novels focus on the various ways in which her fiction fulfils stated purpose to judge and interpret the world. The major themes revolved around cultural assimilation, anti-Semitism, holocaust, and Zionism. In her essays, as well as her fiction, Ozick has repeatedly returned to a handful of themes connected with problems created by being Jewish in a secular society. The major Jewish writers of the post war era have all been acutely attuned to political history and to its characteristic modern themes: War, brutality, depression, and unemployment, the implications money, class and ideology and especially the individual sentiments and sensibilities that grow out of such a history.

## Midrashic Mode

Cynthia Ozick’s writings can be viewed in light of a midrashic mode by virtue of her need to sustain Jewish tradition in the wake of great devastation—the Holocaust. Ozick’s works,

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in their blending of literature and law, return to a traditional form of Jewish literary and religious inquiry known as “midrash.” The meaning of the root for the word “midrash” is “to search” or “to inquire Ozick novel. The Jewish men and women are not allowed live equal life in America like white people. Jews were torn from their homeland and brought to another world as slaves. Silence plays an important role in the life of Jewish women. In the concentration camps men were also suppressed but women were suppressed by the Nazist in different way by sexual harassment and humiliation. Women are the only oppressed group in our society that lives in intimate association with their oppressors. Ozick depicts this fact through the domination and violence upon them. Through her novels she appeals that a Jewish woman could overcome all the atrocities on them. This paper is a study of the tragic condition of Jewish women.

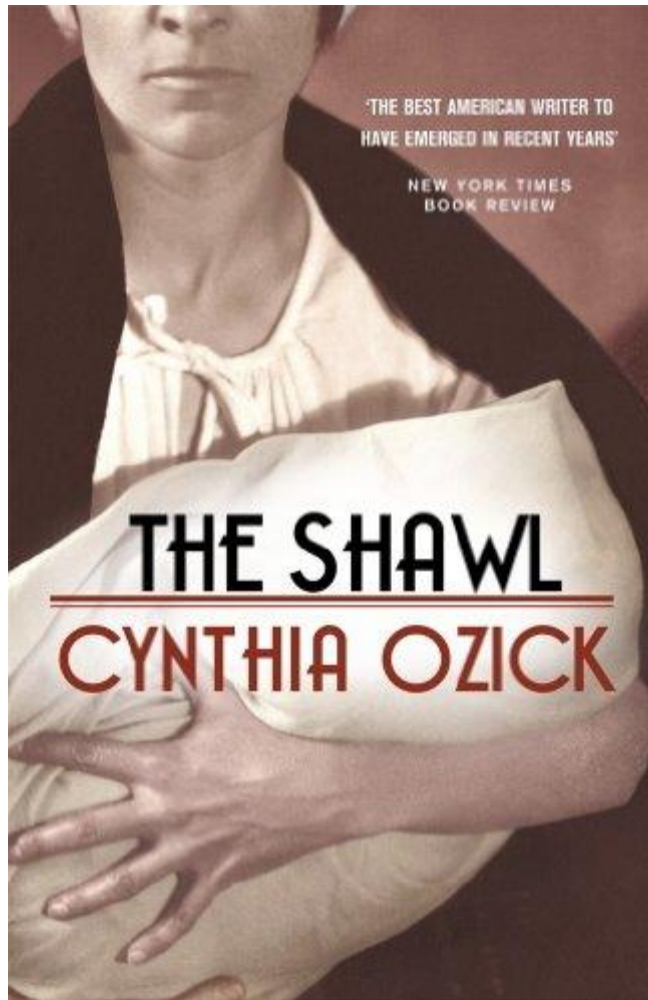
### **Erica Jong**

Erica Jong is an American novelist and poet in her remarks: “Women in camps during the Holocaust didn’t menstruate and didn’t ovulate. They were Starving; they were terrified. Why emulate that condition? It’s Nonsensical to me” ([https:// www. good reads. com/ author/ quotes/ 6085. Erica Jong](https://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/6085.EricaJong)). In her novel *Trust* (1966), Ozick takes us to the plight of the Holocaust victims. The novel is unfolded in the form of the present struggle of the protagonist to trace her origin. She searches her father, with whom her mother lived for a while as a victim of the Holocaust. She is dissatisfied with her mother’s nature. Her mother does not even think of attending her graduation ceremony. She comments: “No aunt, cousin, mother father had come to see the commencement of this strange diaspora” (Trust 15). Because of her mother’s illegal life, she has lost her identity. Her name has been continually changing because of her marriages. She is bent upon meeting her father: “I pretended that some oddity of intuition, or else an accidental and unremembered word, had brought me to my father’s identity” (Trust 25). Being born to a immoral lady the small girl faced many problems like she lost her parental care, love and affection. The daughter considers her mother as “fastidious,” and “no one could satisfy her visions” (Trust 35). Her name has been continually changing because of her marriages. The girl accepts her mother’s misbehavior and her birth as pity. She says: “I hated my step father, my true father, my almost father, my mother who had bedded with each of these, because they were the world” (Trust 321).

### **Not Following Mother’s Way**

The protagonist does not want to follow her mother’s way or behaviour. Her mind is always full of thoughts of her father. Being born in a Jewish community she has travelled from one place to find out her father’s identity. In this novel Ozick sketch out the problem faced by the girl in search of her father’s identity. In her another novel, *The Shawl* portrays the gruesome predicament of an ‘infant,’ during the Holocaust. The mother is anxious to carry it to safety, but her efforts prove fruitless as the ‘child’ enwrapped in the shawl is identified and thrown by the Nazi guards over the fence to be electrocuted. The fiction conveys information about concentration camps. The shawl plays an important role.

### ***The Shawl***



Courtesy: <https://www.amazon.com/Shawl-Cynthia-Ozick-ebook/dp/B008BD9TAA>

This fiction is about a woman haunted by her experiences in the Holocaust. Sukrita Paul in her article remarks, “When the humans are unable to sustain life, the shawl does the job, it is a magic shawl, a shawl that provides the child with food and security, even though it is a make – believe” (48). This unusual story approaches the horrors of the holocaust through intimate point of view of two women Rosa, the mother of an infant, and her teenage daughter Stella.

The story opens with the sentence, “Stella, cold, cold the coldness of heel (The Shawl 1). Stella, the thin girl of fourteen can’t bare the chillness of the cold. Magda the small baby fifteen-month old baby is wrapped with a shawl. The shawl is a little cradle for the baby. She sucks the air. There is no proper food for three human beings. The small baby lies in the cradle like a small squirrel. Rosa, the mother does not live in wants her baby to live in starving, so she decides to give the baby to the villagers, but she is not able to do it: “If she moves out of the line they may shoot her” (The Shawl 4). Without the permission of the soldiers in the camp, they must not do anything. There is no chance for their own thinking, desire, love, and so on. They are treated

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like slaves. Every mother wants her child to live but because of the cruel poverty, the child lacks nourishment: “Her knees were tumours on sticks, her elbows chicken bones” (The Shawl 1).

Mensuration is a natural thing given to females by God. Mensuration cycle is not proper because of weakness. Because of the limited food given in camps, Jews unable to live normal. With patience and compassion, Rosa has undergone such suffering. The teenage girl Stella is ripe without fruit because of the lack of strength. Victor Frankl desperately remarks: “without suffering and death, human life cannot be complete” (27). He Jews cannot open their mouth. There is no word to explain their sufferings. ‘The silence ‘takes an important role in life of the victims. As Elie Wiesel aptly observes, in the holocaust novel “Silence is always a character and the word is always its subject matter” (5).

### **Pathetic Lives of Jewish Women**

The women Holocaust writers faced the tension of breaking the silence, determination to speak, and the coercion to preserve. Ozick novels *Trust* and *The Shawl*, depicts the brutalizing conditions under which the Jewish woman lives. Ozick’s great imagination helped her to recreate the life at the death camps with the help of a mother and daughter characters. This paper expresses the daily lives and the problems of Jewish women in the concentration Camps and quest for their identity.

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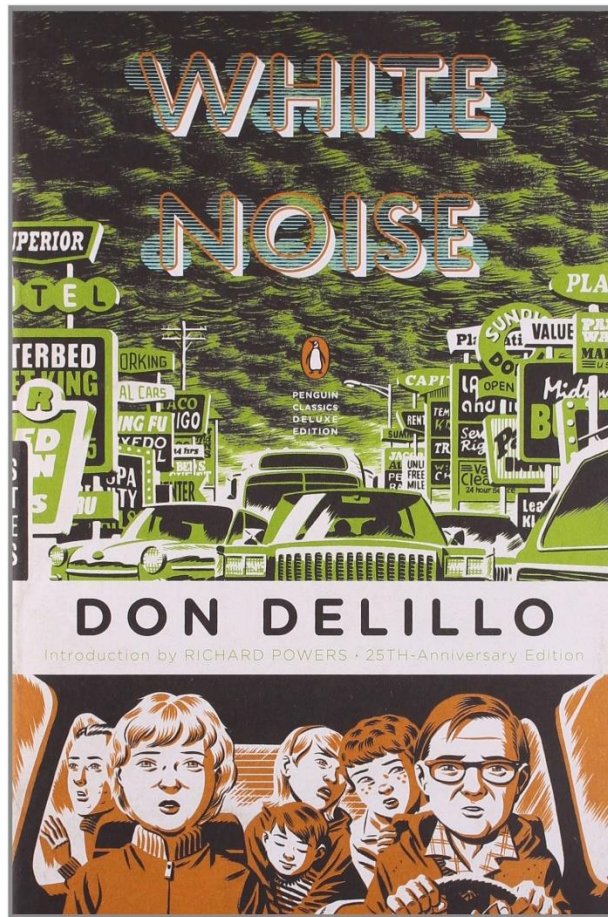
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## Consumerism and Man-made Disaster in Don Delillo's *White Noise*

J. Kastrokumar and V. Gnanaprakasam

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Courtesy: <https://www.amazon.com/White-Noise-Don-DeLillo/dp/0143105981>

### Abstract

Don Delillo is one of the titans of American fiction. This paper focuses on the negative effects of consumerism on people in the postmodern era in Don Delillo's *White Noise* (1986). My analysis is based on postmodern theories, examining the threat of consumerism to humans. On the physical level, people living in the consumerist society cannot avoid environmental and toxic hazards. *White Noise* highlights the obsessive fear of dying, mysterious deaths of men and

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man-made environmental disaster, a very common but rarely discussed phobia. In *White Noise*, all plots tend toward death. The airborne toxicity threatening cloud of dangerous chemicals, provides a particularly frightening image of technology gone terribly, fatally awry. Jack Gladney is the narrator and principal character of *White Noise*. As the chairman of Hitler studies at the college-on-the-Hill, Jack shrouds himself in the distinguished, stately trapping of a successful academic.

**Key words:** Consumerism, Disaster, Schizophrenia, Toxicity and Technology

### Introduction

In the twenty-first century, the dangers that we fear are not as straightforward as the atomic bomb that wiped out the whole urban areas of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in World War II. Unexpectedly, contemporary culture faces another sort of risk, which David B. Morris in "Editorial manager's Introduction—Environment: The White Noise of Health" (1996) alludes to as "*White Noise*":

The new peril from natural corruption is greater than the atomic war. We live with its harm regularly. We can't trash a generally useful reprobate—like the bomb—to fill in as the objective for our challenge and disappointment. The adversaries are all over the place and incorporate us, particularly in our social parts as hapless, yet a long way from honest, shoppers. Condition is the unnoticed, certain *White Noise* encompasses and interpenetrates human wellbeing. (11-2)

More often, *White Noise* is a sort of clamour that is delivered by joining hints of every unique scope of frequencies together. Be that as it may, in this citation, David B. Morris characterizes *White Noise* the natural threats got from consumer culture. As per Morris, we live with these sorts of risk constantly, in the case of acknowledging it or not, and the adversaries are ourselves, the persevering consumers. Maybe, the individuals who are influenced by man-made catastrophes are not blameless casualties of unanticipated tragedies, but rather themselves instigators who must be considered in charge of their impolite activity of joining the perpetual consumerist cycle.

*White Noise*, DeLillo's 1985 novel which received the National Book Award, additionally portrays *White Noise* as the inescapable toxic environment. However, I argue that *White Noise* in this novel refers to environmental threats derived from the postmodern consumerist condition which can be characterized in two ways: firstly, describing the toxicity of the postmodern consumerist condition from which nobody can get away; and secondly referring to the logic of consumerism that penetrates all beings and all places. This kind of white noise exists everywhere and in everything, manipulating people's minds and behaviour.

This paper concentrates on the impacts of consumerism on consumer health and the manners by which the customers in *White Noise* react to these new sorts of threats: the unavoidable toxicity in the postmodern consumerist society and the logic of consumerism which controls consumers. It argues that the consumer's ignorant act of turning towards consumerist ecstasy contributes to increasing environmental hazards, which in turn inevitably harm physical

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and mental health. Furthermore, this paper examines the vicious cycle of consumerism. Firstly, people are enticed into believing that the products they consume determine their identities. As a result, they perpetually buy and surround themselves with many commodities generating suffering from the toxicity of those products. They are thus inextricably enmeshed in this vicious circle.

### **Consumerism's Impact on Customer Health**

This paper looks at consumerism's effect on people's mental and physical health as depicted in *White Noise*. It characterizes the new type of postmodern threats referred to as white noise in *White Noise* in two courses: as the threats of the postmodern consumerist condition and the rationale of consumerism. The principal importance of white noise is the unavoidable toxicity that prevails in the postmodern consumerist condition. DeLillo strikingly delineates this toxicity as being found in day by day products, existing wherever inside society, pervading presence, and being unidentifiable. Thus, individuals cannot maintain a strategic distance from this sort of threat and are compelled to endure both physically and mentally.

In addition to toxicity, *White Noise* conveys an additional meaning: the logic of consumerism and its mesmerizing power. This logic of consumerism and its mesmerizing power can cause people serious mental issues, leading people towards defective perceptions, a consumerist sort of schizophrenia. Schizophrenia in the clinical sense is a crazy issue or gathering of maniacal issue set apart by seriously impeded reasoning, feelings and conduct making a patient put some distance between reality. Schizophrenia in postmodern hypothesis, in any case, is not quite the same as that in the clinical sense. The qualities of schizophrenia have been characterized by numerous postmodern faultfinders however can be sorted into two principle perspectives. Right off the bat, Jonah Peretti, by alluding to Fredric Jameson's Postmodernism, or, Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism (1992), declares in "Free enterprise and Schizophrenia" (1996) that schizophrenia is set apart by the powerlessness to see the correct limits between implications, or as it were, amongst connoted and signifier. For the other trademark, Mark Currie clarifies in his paper, "Culture and Schizophrenia" (1998), that as indicated by Jacques Lacan, schizophrenia is characterized as a semantic issue and is regularly observed as disunity inside the identity, where diverse perspectives can't be bound together in the pronoun "I". At the point when the connection amongst meant and signifier separates, the schizophrenic will be denied of individual character. At the end of the day, the individual personality is the impact of a specific worldly union of the past and the future with the present, one in which the procedure of meaning can happen. In any case, with the breakdown of the implying bind we can't bring together the past, present, and eventual fate of sentences in the dialect, and are in this manner, denied of a capacity to join the past, present, and fate of our own true to life encounters or clairvoyant lives. Subsequently, a schizophrenic is lessened to an ordeal of unadulterated material signifiers, a progression of unadulterated and random present minutes. Also, as far as consumerist practices, consumerism and the media mentally condition individuals into trusting that their personality isn't settled and can be changed freely by devouring the items, making them entertain themselves with the unceasing present of consumerist happiness. Consumers in the postmodern world in this manner have a disunified personality (DeLillo 96-114).

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The inability to see the boundaries between meanings, the first characteristic of schizophrenia, resembles one of Dylar's effects. Dylar, the experimental drug which is introduced to kill fear of the death, functions as a product providing only illusive promise to desperate consumers such as Babette and Jack Gladney. It should be noted that the side effect of this drug is confusing "words with the things they referred to" (Delillo 309) or the inability to see the difference between the word and its real meaning. Willie Mink, the project manager of this drug, is himself a clear example illustrating this point. He is a schizophrenic who sits in front of the TV., continually consuming products in the form of Dylar, and seeing no difference between language and reality. Mink fixes his eyes on the flickering TV. screen emitting no sound. The way Mink unknowingly acts in response to what Jack says is indicative of the way consumers blindly believe what the media tells them. When Jack says, "hail of bullets," and "fusillade," Mink acts in a manner as if he were really being shot. "He hit the floor, began crawling toward the bathroom . . . showing real terror. . . He tried to wriggle behind the bowl, both arms over his head, his legs tight together" (Delillo 311). Here, Mink believes completely in what others say, ignoring logic and his own senses. In the same way, mindless consumers believe unquestioningly in the media even more so than their own perception. In the depthless society where the real has disappeared, the media as a form of simulation is upheld as the most important perspective. The influence of the media is so powerful that people ignore their own senses, do not consider the original or the real source, and believe everything the media entrusts to them. For instance, Steffie, with this schizophrenic symptom, insists that "we have to boil our water" just because "it said on the radio" (p. 34). In fact, there is no need to boil water at all, but Steffie who likes to watch TV. and listens to the radio is convinced she should follow what the media instructs her to do. We can view these characters as schizophrenics who develop the symptoms that are announced and confirmed by the media.

With respect to the second normal for schizophrenia, consumerism causes a disunified identity. At the end of the day, it denies individuals of a genuine individual character. The media conditions individuals so firmly that their personality moves toward becoming reliant on the picture of the products they purchase. In this way, Jack needs to shop keeping in mind the end goal to fill himself with alluring pictures. As Jack states:

I began to grow in value and self-regard. I filled myself out, found new aspects of myself, located a person I forgotten existed. . . Our images appeared on mirrored columns, in glassware and chrome, on TV. monitors in security rooms. (p. 84)

Jack feels that he himself has no genuine personality and that he should buy products for the pictures he needs to wear to discover his identity. In *White Noise*, the best approach to pick up character in the postmodern consumerist society is to purchase and show products as one's very own portrayal picture. Nigel Watson states in "Postmodernism and Lifestyles" in *The Routledge Companion to Postmodernism* (2005) that:

People actively wish to join in and actively desire the opportunities for self-expression and display which are provided by the choices of the pink shopping malls. . . . We like to

identify with the style that best represents the way that we wish to be seen. (p. 37)

This description matches that of Jack Gladney, the father of the Gladney children and a university professor, who attempts to boost his confidence and create his authority by consuming products and altering his appearance. Jack admits, "I am the false character that follows the name around" (p. 17).

### **Self-Hallucination as a Way Out**

In spite of the fact that the general population in *White Noise*, or if nothing else Jack Gladney, appears to understand that they are encompassed by the inevitable passing brought upon them by the products they purchase, causing enduring both physically and rationally, they attempt to overlook this reality and swing to the illusive solace that consumerism gives.

The characters in the novel additionally swing to consumerism as a system for sidestepping their threat of death and ecological dangers. Consumerism produces numerous products offering illusive guarantee of solace and an answer for death issues to the frantic consumers caught in the harmful and consumerist condition. Purchasers trust that consumer products can help them in their miserable circumstance. The medication Dylar is an unmistakable case of this point. Dylar represents the ultimate form of consumer product as it is believed to eliminate the fear of death itself. Although it proves ineffective with Babette, Jack wants to take this drug to get rid of his fear and anxiety. Dylar is similar to any other consumer product in the way that it makes illusive promise to fulfil consumers' needs and relieve them from mental and physical health problems. Although the promise is illusive and impossible, desperate people are willing to take it as a last refuge they can cling to in the postmodern world where threats are ubiquitous. In the same way, Jack believes that if he thinks Dylar will help him, it will help him no matter how strong or weak Dylar is. Jack tells Denise, his daughter, that "the power of suggestion could be more important than side effects" (p. 251). Although Denise thinks this noise stupid, Jack says, "I am eager to be humored, to be fooled. . . This is what happens . . . to desperate people" (p. 251). This communication indicates that the people are so hopeless that they are eager to be fooled. They are ready to believe anything and indulge themselves in consumerist ecstasy.

Apart from Dylar, tabloids are another type of product that offers illusive guarantee in the deadly society. The sensationalist newspapers contain stories that claim to soothe consumers of their physical and mental enduring. As Jack considers, "The newspaper future, with its system of a confident wind to prophetically calamitous occasions, was maybe not all that exceptionally remote from our own prompt encounter. . . Out of some persistent sense of large-scale ruin, we kept creating hope" (p. 146-47). Here Tabloids capacity, as a method for turning appalling occasions into pleasurable ones and help ease individuals' uneasiness in the nearness of casualty and vulnerability. Stories in tabloids, for example, star chatter furthermore, the articles examining marvel medications to cure toxicity related maladies, can occupy individuals from their hopelessness. In one newspaper, it is expressed that "mouse cries have been estimated at forty thousand cycles for each second. Another comparable story depicts wonder drugs that are

delivered in the weightless environment of space and can cure anxiety, corpulence, and state of mind swings. In spite of the fact that this sort of story makes a fairly false and illusive expectation that individuals can cure themselves when they confront unavoidable harmful threats, it does effectively offer the expectation that postmodern individuals are frantically hunting down.

Individuals not only consume such products as Dylar and the tabloids but also resort to the idea that wealth and commodities can prevent them from facing environmental hazards. Jack, for example, tries to convince himself that the disaster will not happen to the upper middle class, the privileged class with the power to buy and thus to take refuge in consumerist ecstasy. Jack considers on natural and man-made disasters:

These things happen to poor people who live in exposed areas.

Society is set up in such a way that it's the poor and the uneducated who suffer the main impact of natural and man-made disasters. People in low-lying areas get the floods, people in shanties get the hurricanes and tornadoes. (p. 114)

Jack trusts that, as a college professor, his social and financial status can protect him from a wide range of disasters. He lets himself know: "I'm the head of a department. I don't see myself escaping an airborne toxic event" (p. 117). His presumption is that on the off chance that he has a solid house in a good location and the energy to purchase products, he won't be influenced by ecological perils. Moreover, it is fascinating to take note of that consumerism twists the ideas of death, life, and existence. In a general public moderately free from consumerism, for example, Tibet, the best approach to react to death is not quite the same as that in the consumerist society. Tibetans see death as a natural phenomenon that one cannot avoid; thus, they accept death for what it is.

In the consumerist society people reject death and try to run away from it by turning to consumer products. People cannot easily accept death because death in this kind of society is unnatural. As Jack states, "There's something artificial about my death. It's shallow, unfulfilling. I don't belong to the earth or sky" (p. 283). Jack's death is artificial because he has been exposed to human-made toxic substances. In addition, death in this kind of society is fearful because it is inevitably premature. To show individuals can bite the dust any moment on account of the toxic environments. This reality reflects the fact that death in the consumerist society is not characteristic however happens to buyers through their own demonstration of determined purchasing. Moreover, consumerism misshapes the consumers' thoughts of presence. In Tibet, individuals discover that they can discover genuine bliss by relinquishing everything. Interestingly, in America, individuals are mentally conditioned into trusting that their presence and joy rely upon consumer products. Therefore, they surmise that they can sidestep passing by purchasing merchandise. It ought to likewise be noted that directly after the lethal occasion at the school and one caused by a break of a Nyodene D tank, the Gladneys quickly go shopping. The juxtaposition of these death scenes and the general store scene infers that in the wake of being debilitated by death occurrences, Jack's family tries to grab after the feeling of satisfaction,

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

**Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: Vol. II Black Writings: A Subaltern Perspective**

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security, and recharging through consumerism. Jack's reflection on his consumerist consumption further elaborates this point:

It seemed to me that Babette and I, in the mass and variety of our purchases, in the sheer plentitude those crowded bags suggested, the weight and size and number, the familiar package designs and vivid lettering, the giant sizes, the family bargain packs with Day-Glo sale stickers, in the sense of replenishment we felt, the sense of well-being, the security and contentment these products brought to some snug home in our souls—it seemed we had achieved a fullness of being that is not known to people who need less, expect less, who plan their lives around lonely walks in the evening. (p. 20)

As a matter of fact, Jack and his family have never determined any feeling that all is well with the world or prosperity from utilization. It can be translated that those "who require less, expect less, who design their lives around forlorn strolls at night" (p. 20) are probably going to have a superior shot of straightforward happiness. At any rate, they are not one or the other presented to unsafe threats that originate from consumer products nor lost in what is mixed up as consumerist happiness.

The novel ends with a depiction of postmodern consumers. They delight in the consumer world since consumerism itself and different items it gives give them expectation and importance in spite of the fact that they are illusive and discharge. Tabloids and holographic scanners are both the results of consumerism, offering illusive trusts in customers that everything is fine. The scanners are portrayed as a spiritualist element that individuals can continuously rely upon. For desperate customers assaulted by toxic threats, tabloids give the domain of superstition and different sorts of diversions for example, stars' stories and false advertisements of stunning drugs that can cure a wide range of diseases caused by consumerism. Regardless of how serious the confusion and the panic are, consumers attempt to seek for comfort in consumerism.

## Conclusions

In *White Noise*, Don DeLillo presents a vivid picture of the post-modern toxic world that provides people with no real certainty, but rather a fear of death and fatal diseases. It is a world where people's minds and behaviours are manipulated by the logic of consumerism. Consumerism gives consumer products that can mortally debilitate individuals' lives from one perspective, furthermore, offer the illusive guarantee of getting away from that fatal threat or death fear through the demonstration of expending products, for example, Dylar and tabloids on the other. Nonetheless, overlooking the way that consumerism is the genuine reason for the deadly threats and swinging to it as a means of looking for comfort is not a wise choice. Albeit some contend that nobody can get away from the toxicity postmodern consumerist condition, we can at any rate change our method for life, neither encircle ourselves with the threat in the form of consumer products nor supporting the consumerist circle. Through these practices we may have a glimpse of some solution for this depressing society. Each individual act can contribute to either more severe environmental hazards, or the restoration of the environment.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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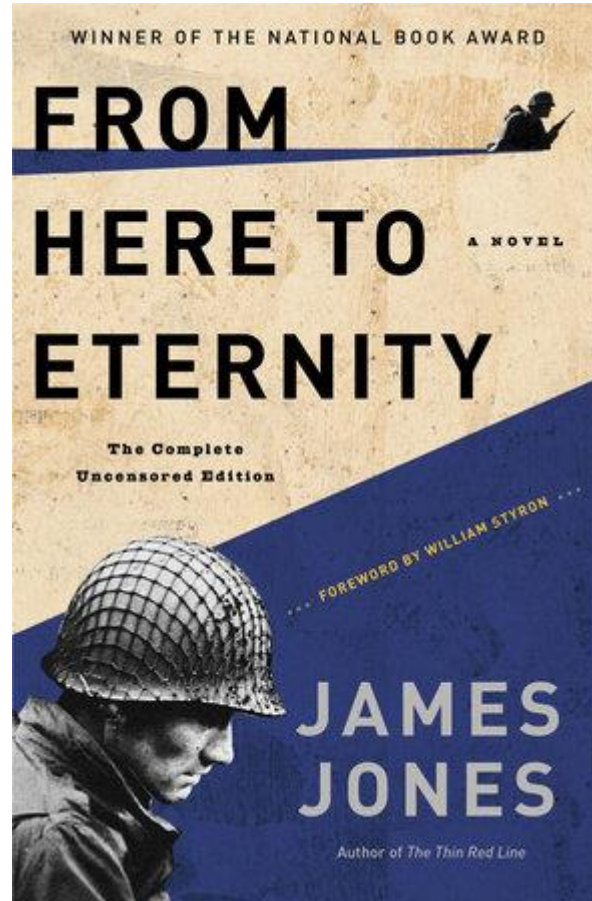
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## Evolution of a Soldier in James Jones's *From Here to Eternity*

M. Kumaran and Dr. C. Santhosh Kumar

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Courtesy: <https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/88405/from-here-to-eternity-by-james-jones/9780812984316/>

### Abstract

James Jones, one of the famous novelists of his generation, was well known for his War Fiction. Jones portrays the courage, violence and passion of men who lived army life. He highlights the male narrative appearance and the discourses of masculinity in 1950's. In *From Here to Eternity*, he discusses how a civilian persuades into army life. He describes the evolution of soldier in three stages; civilian to soldier, soldier to combat soldier, combat soldier to civilian. The characters of his novel find difficult to express their feelings and emotions aloud in army

life. Inside each of them, they strive for more knowledge and more spiritual connection to the world.

War don't ennoble men,  
it turns'em into dogs.  
It poisons the soul. - James Jones

### **Evolution of a Soldier**

James Jones discusses the concept of evolution of a soldier representing that evolution has been one of the chief aims of his fictional trilogy. Jones sets forth his view from the process by which a civilian becomes persuaded into army life through recruitment training. The evolution that Jones describes can be broken down into three stages, or transitions: the transition from civilian to soldier, from soldier to combat soldier, and from combat soldier to civilian.

Jones implies that the three books of the trilogy correspond to these three stages, and while *The Thin Red Line* and *Whistle* track the evolution of the soldier into the combat soldier and the combat soldiers into civilian life respectively.

### ***From Here to Eternity***

*From Here to Eternity* does not portrait a single soldier transitioning from civilian to soldier. The one character who relates to that description is Maggio. He is frequently referred to as a civilian, but he worked as a soldier in Gimbel's basement later he was sent out of training because of his misbehaviour. The text clearly shows that Jones sees only three possibilities for any soldier sent into combat.

“He will either be killed, be wounded enough to be removed from combat, or be ‘fortunate’ enough to survive an extended tour of frontline duty without suffering a wound serious enough to necessitate his removal” (Jones 46)

### **Prewitt and Maggio**

While Prewitt is transferred into G Company Maggio has been sent out of the recruitment training and his character is not fit enough to transform into a soldier. Even though he is sent out of recruitment training Maggio is considered as a representative of a civilian who associates with the army, it would be difficult to ignore the fact that he is only one supporting character. All three protagonists (Prewitt, Warden, and Stark), along with every other soldier portrayed, are seasoned soldiers who comfortably devoted their life to the Army as a career.

### **Purpose of *From Here to Eternity***

The main purpose of *From Here to Eternity* is not to show the literal transition of a civilian into a soldier. It is to introduce the civilian reader to the army world and habituate them to a soldier's mindset. *From Here to Eternity* began with the remark to Maxwell Perkins that, Jones had “always wanted to do a novel on the peacetime army...something I don't remember having seen” (MacShane 82).

*From Here to Eternity* does not show the initiation and introduction of a civilian into the army world. Jones gradually introduces the reader to the world of the Old Army through a newly-enlisted civilian character. Jones introduces the reader to the army world by throwing him in the metaphorical deep end. The perception of tracing gradual transformation of the civilians into a soldier came much later and a theme is related to an exploration of the peacetime army.

In the novel Jones does not introduce any single soldier character as a civilian. His decision is to focus on soldiers who have been in the army establishments for years and the atmosphere and tone of the biased world of the Old Army. Characters who have been in the army are intimately familiar with their distinct ways. He allows the reader to see the Army from an insider's perspective. Jones even proves that, it is not necessary to include an outsider civilian character to explain the more obscure shade of Army life by using the newly minted soldier like Maggio. The reference to Maggio being out of recruit drill only a month is followed by Chief Choate's comment that "he messes up and catches all the extra details, but he's a good boy" (Jones 75).

### **Maggio as a Soldier**

Maggio as a soldier is more than sufficient to contrast with the men who have more experiences around him. Maggio is unquestionably a soldier, and there is an important difference between showing an ex-civilian becoming an inexperienced soldier and showing an inexperienced soldier being put through a training process by his veteran troop mates. Jones's aim is to give his readers a complete view of how the Old Army really is.

### **Post-Pearl Harbor Army vs. Pineapple Army**

*From Here to Eternity* is a separate entity from the Post-Pearl Harbor Army, which is now thought of fighting the Second World War. The Post-Pearl Harbor Army derived majority of its strength from enlistees and draftees who already knew that they would be soldiers only for the duration and plus six months. Forty-eight men who had every intention of returning to civilian life. Once the war was won and their term of service was completed honourably, their intention was returning to civilian life. Jones was a part of, the 'Pineapple Army' that is his subject in *From Here to Eternity*. It was an Army of professionals. Prior to Pearl Harbor, many would have called them men taken from the worthless part of society; they were men who had lived as labourers.

Civilians joined the Army because they can live better life on the inside than they could on the outside and stayed in it, that does not matter how much they bitched, because army provides them two commodities they could not find on the outside of civilian life; they are, self-worth and security. The soldiers of the Old Army, with few exceptions, had no intentions to return to civilian life until they retired from the army after thirty years of service with a modest pension. Though the soldiers of the Old Army would honourably serve in the Post-Pearl Harbor Army, the arrival of draftees and other non-professional soldiers destroys the Old Army as it had once existed. The Post-Pearl Harbor Army brought many improvements, most notably an expanded and more socially diverse officer corps which was more of a meritocracy and less of an aristocracy. But it also brought an end to the world of the professional soldiers of the Old Army.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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## Rules of the Old Army

The rules of the Old Army that are codified in *From Here to Eternity* also allow us to construct a basic outline of what we might term the Jones Code Hero. Jones's Code Heroes are men of lower (and very occasionally middle) class backgrounds who have found a home within the Army. Their socio-economic conditions are very low; they are not tempted to fall into a comfortable zone. The army provides them with food, clothing and shelter. Though they are not expressive, they are the men who seek to improve themselves spiritually and become self-factualised. According to Maslow "to become more and more what [he] is, to become everything that [he] is capable of becoming" (8).

## Expect Neither Justice Nor Consistency from the Official Rules

Jones's characters in the novel have learned to expect neither justice nor consistency from the official rules written down in the ARs and have been taught by experience to be an alert of an authority in general and officers in particular. They have seen that the majority of their officers are aristocrats who are more comfortable around the cunning Colonel's Officers. The Jones Code Hero needs to find justice and order in a chaotic universe which naturally leads them to take the perception of unwritten rules and adopt to the personal code. If he cannot find justice through official channels, he can make the idea of providing his own unofficial form of justice, and Jones portrays his rejection of the arbitrary army regulations in approval of a self-imposed form of order as a sign of his high character. This character helps the hero to protect from the ill-treatment of his officers and also from the NCOs and the other pretty tyrants. According to Paul Fussell, "notable how much of the writing of the Second World War tends not so much to convey news from the battlefield as to expose the chickenshit lurking behind it," (43)

## Preserving the Memory of the Army World

*From Here to Eternity* preserves the memory of the army world, it also establishes the rules of Jones's protagonists, who had been brought up and struggled in the world of army. The novel is a mixture of undying love and hate of an army life. Jones carefully differentiates draftees and enlistees who are later true soldiers. While reading *From Here to Eternity* in the back of the reader's mind place the knowledge that the happiest nature of G Company's life at Schofield Barracks are destroyed by the attack on Pearl Harbor. Similarly, it also captures the world of the Old Army. This novel has shown us a hidden side of veteran's life. Jones develops a theory; he called it as "Evolution of a Soldier" in 1975 in the novel WWII. This theory helps to analyze the life of the soldier in the world of army. *From Here to Eternity* demonstrates his firm belief in how a man develops into an effective combat infantryman.

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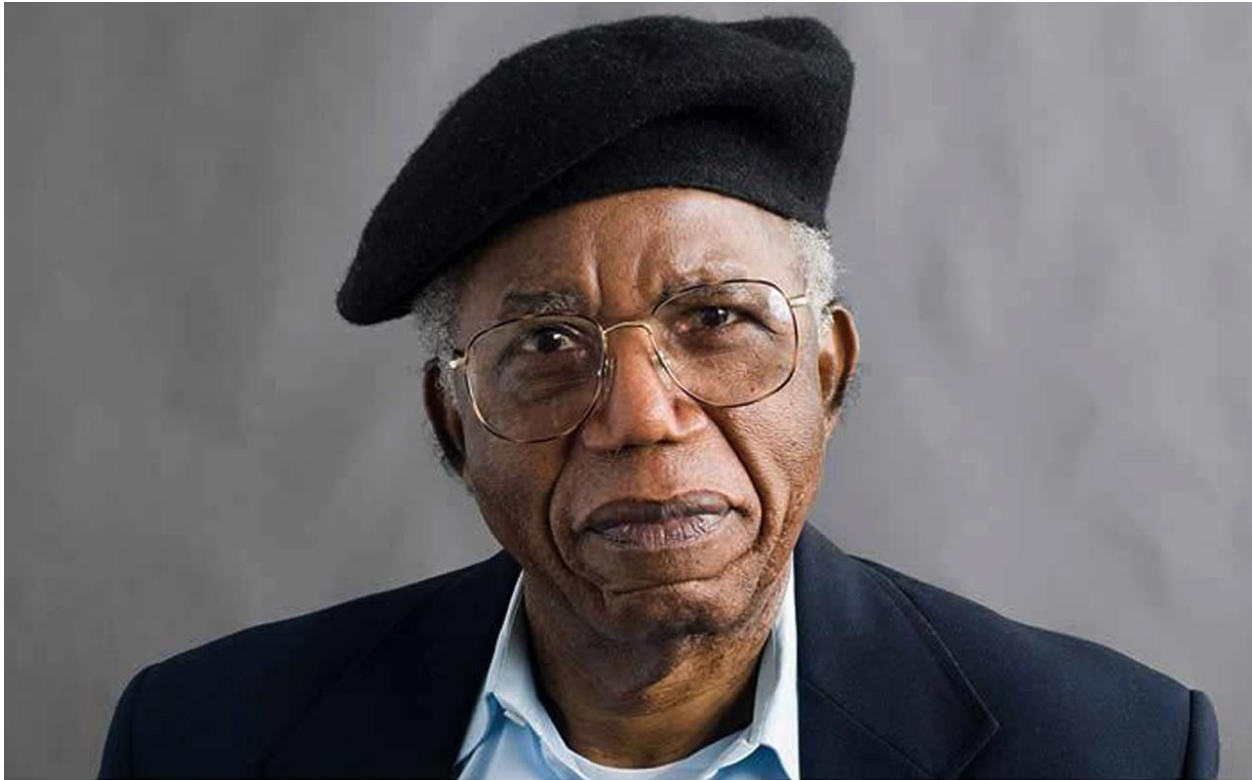
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## **Black Writing: Novelist as Teacher**

**Mrs. Sridevi and L. Maggie Lavanya**

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**Chinua Achebe 1930-2013**

Courtesy: <http://www.ebony.com/entertainment-culture/remembering-chinua-achebe-495>

### **Abstract**

The lives of black characters who struggle with identity and they are poets, novelist, playwrights and scholars and together they helped capture The Voice Of Nation. Black authors who have left a mark on the literary world forever. Colonial African literature. The African Colonial works best known in the West from the period of colonization and the slave trade are primarily slave narratives, such as Olaudah Equiano's The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano 1789.

### **Introduction**

Chinua Achebe was born on 16 November 1930 – 21 March 2013 was a Nigerian novelist, poet, professor, and critic. His first novel *Things Fall Apart* (1958), often considered his best, is the most widely read book in modern African literature. He won the Man Booker International Prize in 2007. Voice of Nigeria and African Writers Series

Once he returned to Nigeria, Achebe was promoted at the NBS to the position of Director of External Broadcasting. One of his first duties was to help create the Voice of Nigeria network. The station broadcast its first transmission on New Year's Day 1962, and worked to maintain an objective perspective during the turbulent era immediately following independence. This objectivity was put to the test when Nigerian Prime Minister Abubakar Tafawa Balewa declared a state of emergency in the Western Region, responding to a series of conflicts between officials of varying parties. Achebe became saddened by the evidence of corruption and silencing of political opposition.

### Themes

Achebe's novels approach a variety of themes. In his early writing, a depiction of the Igbo culture itself is paramount. Critic Nahem Yourself highlights the importance of these depictions: "Around the tragic stories of Okonkwo and Ezeulu, Achebe sets about textualising Igbo cultural identity". The portrayal of indigenous life is not simply a matter of literary background, he adds: "Achebe seeks to produce the effect of a precolonial reality as an Igbo-centric response to a Eurocentrically constructed imperial 'reality' " Certain elements of Achebe's depiction of Igbo life in *Things Fall Apart* match those in Olaudah Equiano's autobiographical Narrative. Responding to charges that Equiano was not actually born in Africa, Achebe wrote in 1975: "Equiano was an Igbo, I believe, from the village of Iseke in the Orlu division of Nigeria". A 1901 Stamp from Southern Colonial Nigeria.

### Chinua Achebe Work: Novelist as Teacher

Theme in "Novelist as Teacher" World Literature Achebe educates us on how, in Igbo society, loud calls. ... cue from the premise of social intention projected by Achebe. Almost all critics and scholars appreciate *Things fall apart* text of the speech delivered by African novelist Chinua Achebe. Achebe truly believed in representing his culture and his country in his way. Africa had been represented by outsiders for so long that it was important to show the rest of the world an authentic, unfiltered, unbiased perspective. With this, he taught the world, flaws and all, about his culture and the influence of British Colonization.

Write a one-page minimum summary of the text below titled, "The Novelist as a Teacher" by Chinua Achebe. As you summarize, consider the following questions:

- What are his unique goals as an African writer?
- What are the unique expectations that readers have of him as an African writer?
- What is the responsibility of a novelist and the role of a novel?
- How does he approach the conflict of modern outside influence versus local tradition?

### Placed into the Role of a Teacher

Chinua Achebe's stance on the novelist as a teacher is a curious one. He mentions towards the beginning of the essay that he is placed into the role of a teacher – whether he

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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desires the position or not – because his works are read mostly by children of school age. Although Achebe accepts that “it is part of [his] business as a writer to teach” (71), he does not believe that it is his role to undertake the lessons others wish he would teach. When faced with criticism for squandering “a rare opportunity for education” (69), Achebe is adamant that “no self-respecting writer will take dictation from his audience” (69). Even though he seems to have very little regard for what society expects of him (both as an author and as a teacher), Achebe sees the value of being looked at as an educator – he has taken advantage of this inadvertent role of teacher in order to impress certain lessons upon his readers. Within the essay, “The Novelist as Teacher,” Achebe defines his prerogative as an educator to be helping “[his] society regain belief in itself and put away the complexes of the years of denigration and self-abasement” (71).

He then moves on to explain why this is the most important lesson to be learned from his novels, but that he would still be satisfied if his works did nothing more than show his people (his readers) that they have a past before the Europeans came. Throughout the essay, Achebe both disputes and accepts his role as a teacher, creating a somewhat confusing message. He does not agree that as a teacher he is obligated to listen to society, but that instead he is obligated to send his own message. In the end, he describes his novels as “applied art” (72), or a work of art that is also useful, saying that “art is important, but so is the education of the kind I have in mind” (72). Achebe describes an interesting dynamic between author, text, and reader that is hard to define. It is clear already from Achebe’s essay that the expectations of author and reader do not always line up, but how does one determine for what an author is truly responsible? Or to what extent is it the readers’ responsibility to derive meaning from a text?

## Conclusion

Achebe later restated this position in "The Novelist as Teacher": “Here then is an adequate revolution for me to espouse to help my society regain belief in itself and put away the complexes of the years of denigration and self-abasement. And it is essentially a question of education, in the best sense of the word I would be quite satisfied if my novels did no more than teach my readers that their past with all its imperfections was not one long night of savagery from which the first Europeans acting on God's behalf delivered them.” Given Achebe's outlook, it is not surprising that his vision of the rehabilitation of Nigerian society should extend to the entire population, not just to adults.

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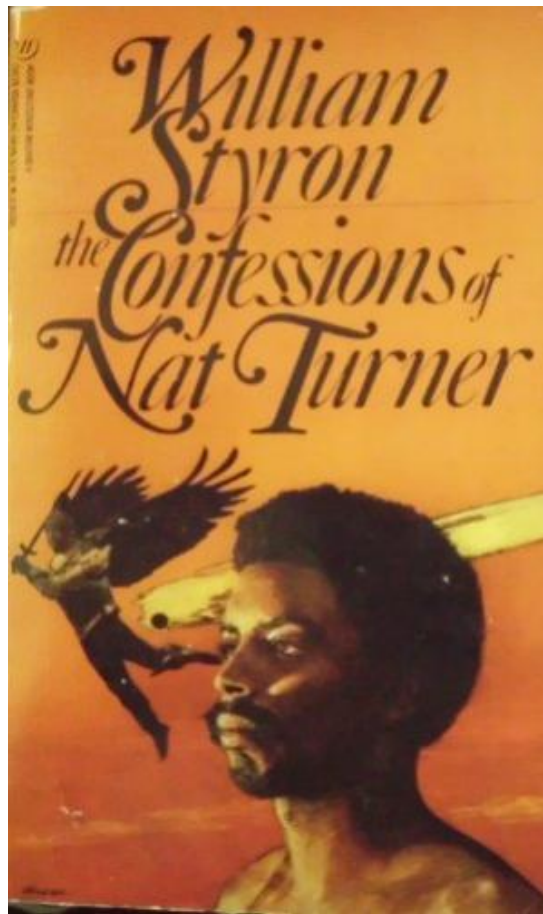
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Black Writing: Novelist as Teacher

**A Study of Identity Crisis in the Work of William Styron:  
*The Confessions of Nat Turner***

**V. Gopinatha Manikandan and Dr. M. Madhavan**

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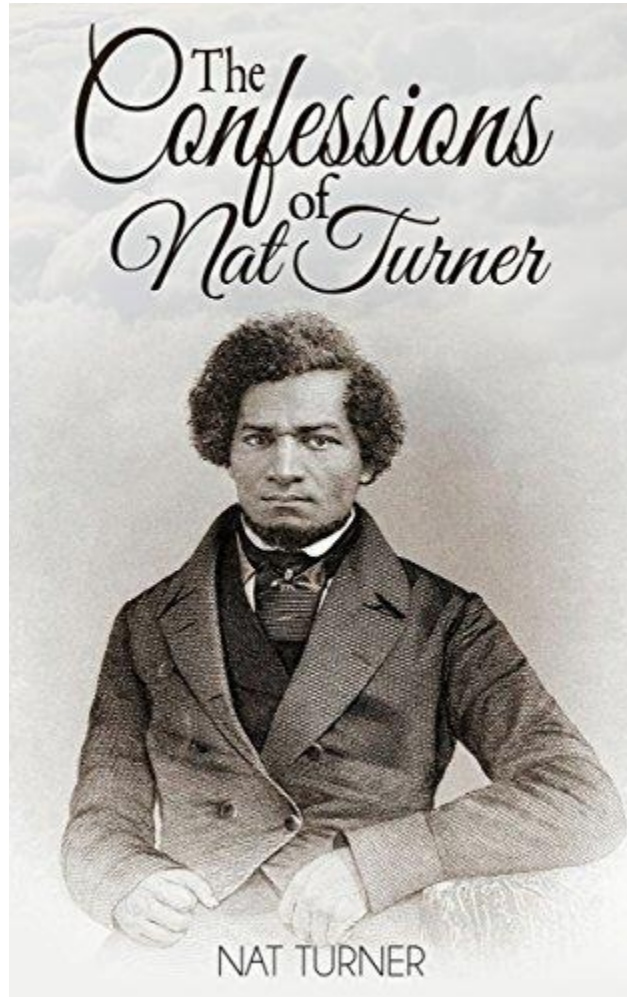
Courtesy: <https://www.abebooks.com/book-search/title/the-confessions-of-nat-turner/author/william-styron/>

**Abstract**

Identity crisis is a term coined by psychologist Erik Erikson. It deals with the issues such as one's physical growth, sexual maturity, creating societal values and self image. In the process of creating identity, the individual faces obstacles in the society by way of existing culture, race



and economic status. This includes financial insecurity, social discrimination, race, fear and guilt. In twentieth century, the people were affected in many ways directly or indirectly by The Second World War. The war destroyed them physically, spiritually and people were dislocated. The mere condition of existing in the world alive became very difficult. The writers of this period were also influenced by the havoc of the war. The characters shown in the literary works of that era were portrayed and affected by factors such as financial insecurity, social discrimination, gender, race and fear. This paper deals with the identity crisis faced by the protagonist in the work of William Styron's *The Confessions of Nat Turner*. Most of Styron's works are dealt with the theme of people who suffers a lot for survival and personal identity.



Courtesy: <https://www.amazon.com/Confessions-Nat-Turner-Illustrated-ebook/dp/B01L7LP02S>

### Introduction

Identity crisis is a term coined by psychologist Erik Erikson. It deals with the issues such as one's physical growth, sexual maturity, creating societal values and self-image. In the process of creating identity, the individual faces obstacles in the society by way of existing culture, race

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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and economic status. This includes financial insecurity, social discrimination, race, fear and guilt. In twentieth century, the people were affected in many ways directly or indirectly by The Second World War. The war destroyed them physically, spiritually and people were dislocated. The mere condition of existing in the world alive became very difficult. The writers of this period were also influenced by the havoc of the war. The characters shown in the literary works of that era were portrayed and affected by factors such as financial insecurity, social discrimination, gender, race and fear. This paper deals with the identity crisis faced by the protagonist in the work of William Styron's *The Confessions of Nat Turner*. Most of Styron's works are dealt with the theme of people who suffers a lot for survival and personal identity.

### **William Styron's *The Confessions of Nat Turner***

*The Confessions of Nat Turner* is based upon the most significant slave revolt in American history. William Styron's novel about Turner continues to provoke discussion in the decades since its publication because it addresses the complicated relationship between black people and white people. Styron was born in Newport News, Virginia, in 1925 and died in 2006 in Massachusetts due to pneumonia at the age of 81. He was trained as a candidate for officer in the Marine Corps while attending Duke University in North Carolina. At Duke, he became interested in literature and was encouraged to become a writer by Professor William Blackburn. Upon graduating in 1947, he worked briefly and unhappily as an associate editor for McGraw-Hill publishers in New York City. *Lie down in darkness, the confession of Nat Turner* and *Sophie's choice* are Styron's famous works. *The confession of Nat Turner* was awarded a Pulitzer Prize.

His major works are *Lie Down in Darkness* (1951), *The Long March* (1952), *Set This House on Fire* (1960), *The Confessions of Nat Turner* (1967), *Sophie's Choice* (1979), *This Quiet Dust, and Other Writings* (1982), *Darkness Visible: A Memoir of Madness* (1990), *A Tidewater Morning: Three Tales from Youth* (1993) and *Havanas in Camelot* (2008). The book *Havanas in Camelot* was published two years after the death of Styron and is a collection of personal essays. Many of his works are concerned about the social issues such as financial insecurity, social discrimination, slavery, gender, race, fear, dilemma and guilt.

*The Confessions of Nat Turner* appeared in 1967. It was the period that the United States experienced a round of riots and other forms of rebellion by blacks who protested their second-class citizenship. The social and political context of the Civil Rights movement and the Black Power movement shaped the public response to *The Confessions of Nat Turner*. At the time, some black revolutionaries embraced black philosopher Frantz Fanon's belief that oppressed peoples could liberate themselves psychologically as well as politically only through murderous violence.

### **Story of Black Slave Named Nat Turner**

*The Confessions of Nat Turner* tells the story of Black slave named Nat Turner and uprising led by him against the white people in the year 1831. Nat led a slave rebellion which ended in total failure. The rebel paved way to the deaths of dozens of white people as well as his own friends. Nat begins to think back on his past life and tells the novel in a series of flashbacks

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.Nat spends his final days reviewing his life and the choices he has made. Styron’s Nat Turner is a record of civil rights movements of that period.

This novel deals with the theme of identity crisis. Nat is affected by race, oppression, ethnicity and slavery. “Race” and “Ethnicity”, these words are often used interchangeably. Race was used to describe the biological quality of people. Ethnicity was used to describe the cultural phenomenon of the people. Ethnicity refers to groups which share a common identity such as ancestry, language or culture. It is mostly relied on religion, customs, beliefs and also memories of colonization and migration. **Race has played a major role in social category. It was forged through oppression, slavery and conquest.**

### **Nat Turner, the Protagonist**

Nat Turner, the protagonist of the novel is a victim of failure in the process of creating an identity for himself. He fought against slavery and racism to attain self identity. Nat as a house slave leads a comfortable life compared to the field slaves. Nat is allowed to read, write and learn carpentry which is not common for slaves. When he was sold from one master to another master, his condition becomes worse. It was a period that black people were kept ignorant and denied education intentionally by the white masters.

Not since the day years before when I was first sold had I felt such rage, intolerable rage, rage that echoed a memory of Isham’s fury as he howled at Moore, rage that was a culmination of all the raw buried anguish and frustration growing inside me since the faraway dusk of childhood, on a murmuring veranda, when I first understood that I was a slave and a slave forever. (241)

Nat's existence during this time was both physically and mentally unbearable, with too much physical labor and nothing to challenge his mind. The worst part, for Nat, was that he had never expected to live out his life as a slave. Nat was one of the learned black men in the country which made him to think as a leader of his people. In the later years these skills helped him to rebel against the white people. It helped him to plan, organize, read a map, and write notes about his plans.

Nat's misery grew deeper. Nat could not tolerate the injustices he saw perpetrated on his fellow slaves every day. Nat had long ago declared himself a Reverend, ordained by God in the church of nature. As a spiritual man, Nat began to see that he had an obligation, as one of the very few literate black men, to help his people. Nat studied strategy, formed a plan for rebellion, and used his status as a preacher to convert other slaves to his cause. When the day came to execute his plan, Nat was determined to leave no survivors; he knew that in order to make an impact on the long-entrenched institution of slavery, the rebellion would have to be huge and bloody.

It seemed clear to me that when our eruption was successful—with Jerusalem seized and destroyed and our forces soon impregably encamped in the Dismal Swamp—and when word of our triumph spread throughout Virginia and the

upper southern seaboard, becoming a signal for Negroes everywhere to join us in rebellion, the fact that it had all arisen on the Fourth of July would be an inspiration not alone to the more knowledgeable slaves of the region but to men in bondage in even more remote parts of the South who might take flame from my great cause and eventually rally to my side or promulgate their own wild outbreaks.(281)

### **Caught Between Slavery and Humanity**

Nat is caught between slavery and humanity. Though he felt that violence is the only way to get freedom from the whites, he was often disturbed by the killing. Not only were the masters, innocent black and white people were killed in the rebel. Nat and his band of seventy-five followers succeeded in executing fifty-five white slave-owners - the largest insurrection of its kind in recorded history. Nat's success came at a steep price, though.

Negro Hark and the others—and we have no clear reason to doubt any of it—that he himself was intimately involved in the proceedings, striking the first blow toward their execution, and repeatedly attempting to wreak murderous acts of violence upon the terrified and innocent victims. (P.74)

In retaliation, the white militia killed over a hundred innocent black people, none of whom were involved in Nat's rebellion, and some of whom were not even slaves. Of the seventy-five slaves actually involved in the rebellion, about a dozen were returned to their masters, fifteen or so were sold down the river to hard labor and certain death, and seventeen, including Nat and his best friend Hark, were hanged.

Nat has become the victim of failure in creating his own identity. During his childhood, he is trying to create an identity for himself by attaining knowledge in education and learning carpentry but couldn't get proper recognition. He tries to become a leader of the group which he forms to fight against the whites. He tries to create an identity by protesting against the white but failed. He fought against slavery, racism, oppression to create an identity for himself but all his efforts became futile.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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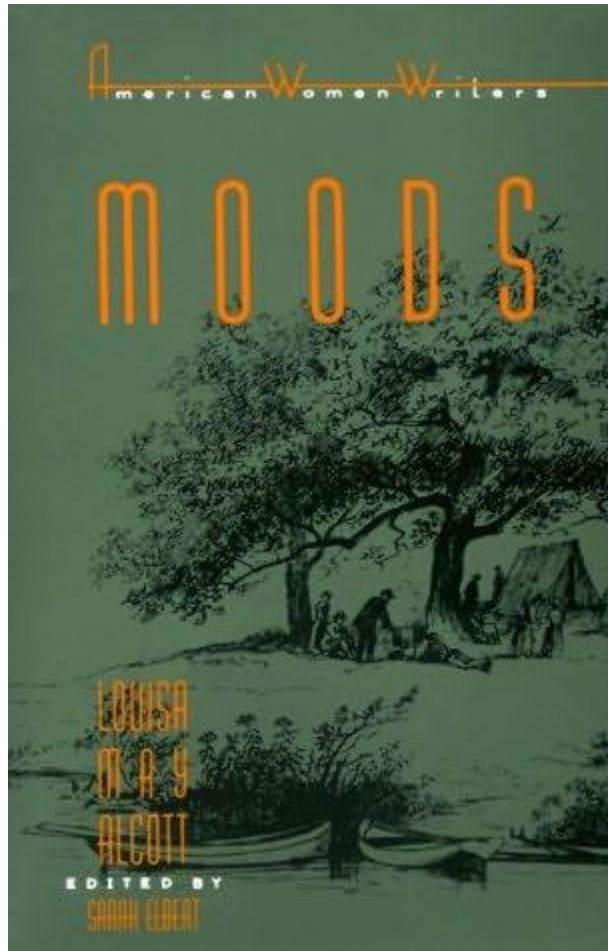


## **Class, Gender and Marriage in Louisa May Alcott's *Moods***

**T. Marimuthu and Dr. M. Madhavan**

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Courtesy: <https://louisamayalcottismypassion.com/2011/07/05/louisa-may-alcotts-brand-of-feminism-final-thoughts-on-moods-thanks-to-sarah-elbert/>

### **Abstract**

This article is an attempt to explore the Categories of class, gender, and marriage in the writings of Louisa May Alcott. Alcott sharp portrayal of gender equality is discussed in the general ideas of the historical and literary backgrounds of America of Alcott's period.

**Key Words:** Gender, Class, Marriage, Literary Backgrounds, American society.

### **Louisa May Alcott**

Louisa May Alcott was born in Germantown, Pennsylvania on November 29, 1832. She moved to Boston when she was five years old. *Little women* created a great fame for Alcott, which solidified her name in history. Alcott's *Moods* is similar to Hawthorne's *The scarlet letter*, *Moods* speaks about Sylvia who is the protagonist of the novel, who lives in the shadow of a household grief, she finds various phases of her own experiences through others. Sylvia is not only the victim of her own circumstances but also an immature and unconscious looser who had led to her own downfall.

### ***Moods***

*Moods* begins with the story of Warwick's and his fiancé Ottila. Warwick then becomes involved with Sylvia and it is his relationship with Ottila leads Sylvia to believe that Warwick is engaged and so she marries Moor. Sylvia chooses Moor to Warwick, which creates desperate measures to resolve this conflict. Conflict for Sylvia was death. If she has chosen Warwick she would have lived long and happy life.

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, class structures were impenetrable. Marrying across class line was really very complex practice in America. Most of the women of this period felt to get marry early, it was said that if the opportunity for marriage is being aroused they must accept the proposal without any hesitation. Alcott's *Moods* is based on this idea.

### **Sylvia**

Instead of waiting for a good man Sylvia marries the man who approaches her and so, ends up in unhappy marriage which eventually lead to the death of Sylvia. Only after her marriage with Moor, she understands that she should have taken the risk of waiting for Warwick, she regrets for her of marrying Moor. She tries to love Moor, but all she gets were frustration and disappointment which leads to her separation from Moor. This distress creates illness resulting in Sylvia's premature death. She was given an opportunity for marriage and when she accepts it, it turns out to be her fatal decision. Alcott's *Moods* shows how Sylvia failed to understand herself, respect her feelings and never became an independent human being. Alcott demonstrates that independence is important for a woman to attain her success.

According to Alcott, a woman should not be defined by roles as a mother and wife. Instead, she requests women community to develop themselves and their character to become successful women. If Sylvia had been determined to wait and marry Warwick she would have lived happily instead of facing a premature end. She becomes the victim of patriarchal society in which men have choices in marriage where as women do not have any. Women are left to select from the option given to them and men are independent to select from the whole population of women. In *Moods* men and women are playing equal roles but men are given more preferences and options.

### **Place of Marriage in *Moods***

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In *Moods*, marriage has been given a greater focus. Sylvia was doomed because of the society she grew up. She kept her desires away and tries to make justice to the marriage stereotypes and ends up in failure. She has been brought up in a society which made her weak. She was unable to live up to her expectations or was able to take rational decisions. She was caught up in an ideology that is destructive. She follows her moods not her heart and falls prey to her fatal decision. She gets lost because her decision was not rational. The stupidity of the society in making mandatory for women to marry early most certainly plays a large role in Sylvia's unhappiness and demise. If she would have had the courage or if she would have not felt as a weaker sex or if she would have decided to live without a man in her life, she would have not committed this fatal mistake.

### **For the Sake of Marrying**

Sylvia marries for the sake of marrying as she was caught up in her brother's engagement and future wedding. It is also the factor that the lack of paternal guidance was also a major reason for the poor decisions Sylvia mistakes. As Alcott says,

From her father she received pride, intellect, and will; from her mother passion, imagination, and fateful melancholy of a woman defrauded of her dearest hope. These conflicting temperaments, with all their aspirations, attributes, and inconsistencies, were woven into a nature fair and faulty; ambitious, yet not self-reliant, sensitive, yet not keen-sighted. These two masters ruled soul and body, warring against each other, making Sylvia an enigma to herself and her life a train of moods. (*Moods* 84)

Alcott believed that couples should be equal and only when they understand this they can live happily their married life which is evident through her description of Sylvia's characterization.

### **Powerless to Act**

Although Sylvia has the capacity to choose her options, she is powerless to act without the guidance and support of others. She later understands that her thoughts lie only with sympathy and compassion, not action. Sylvia did not get a true love or live life alone; she acts according to the motherly advice of Faith.

'If there be a strong attachment on the husband's part, and he a man worthy of affection and respect, who has given himself confidingly believing himself beloved by the woman he so loves, she should leave on effort unmade, no self-denial unexact, till she has proved beyond all doubt that it is impossible to be a true wife. Then, and not till then, has she the right to dissolve the tie that has become a sin, because where no love lives inevitable suffering and sorrow enter in, falling not only upon guilty parents, but the innocent children who may be given them. (*Moods* 147)

### **Dependent on Motherly Guidance**

Sylvia suffers as she does not have motherly guidance and affection. Alcott significantly reworked and republished her earlier novel *Moods*. In the 1864 version of the novel, Sylvia dies

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because of her guilty, in 1882 version Sylvia is a stronger woman who copes her mistakes and return to her husband, she was able to survive in her decision. Alcott relied heavily on the concepts of class, gender, and marriage; she has implemented revolutionary ideas into her novel that helped the readers of her period to civilize their thoughts and lives.

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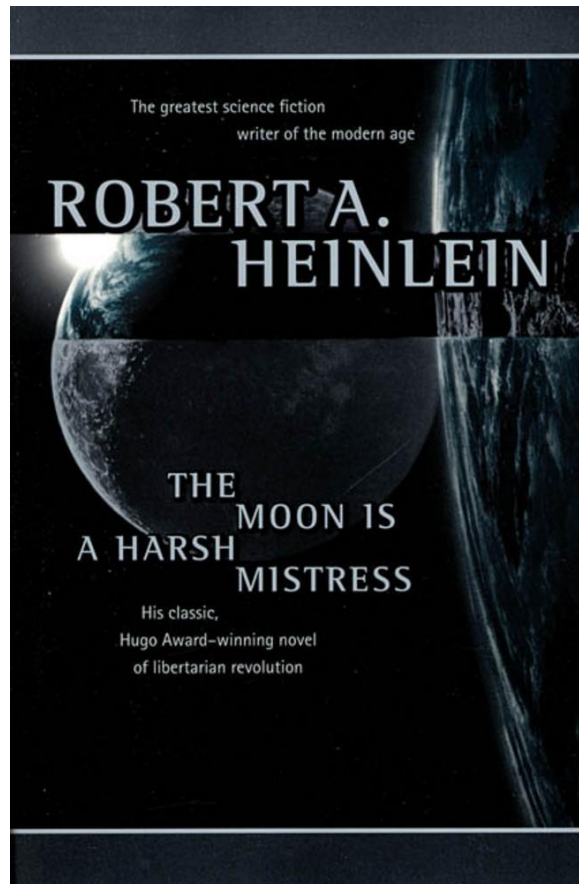
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**Politics and War in Robert Anson Heinlein's  
*The Moon is a Harsh Mistress***

**P. Mathan Kumar and Dr. V. K. Saravanan**

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Courtesy: <https://us.macmillan.com/themoonisaharshmistress/robertaheinlein/9780312863555/>

**Abstract**

Robert Anson Heinlein is an American Science-fiction writer. Often called the dean of science fiction writers, his controversial works continue to have an influential effect on the genre. Heinlein became one of the first science fiction writers to break into mainstream magazine such as *The Saturday Evening Post* in the late 1940s. Heinlein was named the first Science Fiction Writers Grand Master in 1974. *The Moon is a Harsh Mistress*, with its many parallels between the lunar revolt and the American Revolution, is often sold at convention of libertarians

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and other free – marketers. For both left and right, the overriding plot of the lunar colonists rebelling against Earth’s oppression purposely reflects the American Revolution against British rule. The paper reflects the Lunar Authority that keeps their locked in a mercantile system on the road to starvation and death. It depicts aggressive colonialism on the wane.

**Keywords:** Robert Anson Heinlein, *The Moon is a Harsh Mistress*, Revolution, libertarians, oppression, mercantile

Heinlein plays a long and significant role in the evolution of science fiction into a more sophisticated genre. He began writing in the post- depression science fiction magazine era when simplistic plots and farfetched gadgets were the norm. Heinlein’s writing style is unique in his use of speculative science fiction. He shows with his whole society, including the makes of science fiction. He has been a vivid and controversial figure for three decades, and finds science fiction that most drive, most import, most useful and most comprehensive fiction being written today. He finds its importance in its attempts to deal with the future.

Heinlein is a key figure in the development of American science fiction. What makes his contribution unique is his emphasis on philosophical speculation. Heinlein presents a carefully considered world view when is particularly exemplified in his competent heroes, and in his concern for family, morally, and aesthetics. Heinlein has received four Hugos (voted by readers for the best science fiction novel of the year) he received the first Grand Master Nebula for Life time Contribution to Science Fiction (voted by fellow writers). He is the only writer who appeared as the Grand of Honor at World Science Fiction Convention three times. He is an Encyclopedia Britannica authority.

*The Moon is a Harsh Mistress* depicts aggressive colonialism on the wane. Luna begins as a penal colony administered by a Warden. Inescapable, the prison needs no walls and bars and as convicts complete their sentences, they suffer no social stigma. There is no question of political rights, as the colony is administered from Terra. There are no laws, but social pressure and vigilantism keep good order. Loonies learn to act properly or are informally “eliminated.” Luna Authority has evolved into an exploitative monopoly that spawns uncoordinated and ineffectual revolutionary movements, particularly in isolated, affluent Hong Kong in Luna (HKL), which becomes de facto autonomous by using only products grown or address a rally and she calls for eliminating the Authority.

Active revolution begins when the Authority’s police “goons” break up the meeting, throwing together the organizers of the kind of cell structure that worked long ago for the Bolsheviks. Knott is a self-styled “Fifth Internationalist,” cooperative, practical, non-doctrinaire, admitting public control only where essential. Prof is “Rational Anarchist,” believing individuals cannot shift, share, or distribute blame, guilt, and responsibility to government. He takes for granted that all efforts are less than perfect. The third member, Mannie Davis, is apolitical like his father and most Loonies and reluctant to take part until he learns the odds. There he gets from the self-aware supercomputer he maintains, Mike, who becomes the Revolution’s chairman and co- ideologue with Prof. A monarchist, Stu Lajoie, joins the top echelons later.

When the Authority provokes rioting and a successful coup, the revolutionaries must develop into rulers and deal with setting up structures of government. Much debate goes into what the constitution should or should not include, with Prof pushing for prohibitions against any abridgement of freedom and no taxation. The useless operation of committees is portrayed and the role of self-appointed watchdogs of morality. Davis yearns for the good old days when Warden enjoys his women and stays out of people's private lives.

*The Moon is a Harsh Mistress* deals heavily with war. The Federated Nations (FN) could deliver a "Doomsday" bomb that would split rebellious Luna like a melon and monopolize space travel. Smaller H-bomb, which Loonies cannot intercept, could cave in most of the underground population centers. Because they face starvation by 2028, however, Loonies cannot give in to Terra; they are cornered rats, preferring to live in peace but certain of being attacked. They must, therefore, adopt the ancient Chinese approach of sapping their opponent's will until he surrenders without fighting. Luna has certain "pieces in the game" and many possible moves, while Terra has far more resources and a larger "spectrum of responses." The point is to get them to waste their superior strength. Luna needs a perfectly timed chain of events which favors its strategy.

"Operation Hard Rock" is Luna's only means of offensive. Barges of what can be as easily loaded with rock and thrown as being delivered peacefully into parking orbits. The impact are as destructive as H-bomb, but with no radioactive fallout. The offensive can begin only after Terra is antagonized into a "Pearl Harbor" strike. To encourage this, Luna presents as weak and easily brought back in line. Luna will then hit Terra hard enough, and precisely enough to convince the FN to let it go, while harming as few humans as possible. Thus, remote mountain, wasteland, and bodies of water are targeted and each target receives a folksy message directing people where to avoid and what aftermaths to expect. All nations having veto power in FN are to be hit. The North American Space Defense Command a hardened military communications agency, and to prove a sustained attack is possible.

At the same time, miners are taught to use their heavy-duty laser drills as "artillery" to repel space attacks. They are organization as the First and Second Volunteer Defense Gunners of Free Luna, older men and younger to encourage competition. A war scare is generated, with people urged to keep p- suits handy and test home pressure alarms. Hundreds of emergency sealing crews drill regularly. Female auxiliaries are organized to raise morale. The FN send over 2,000 crack riot troops, indoctrinated, and drugged, in an elegant surprise invasion, but loses them from going lower. The troopers lose their reflexes in 1/6<sup>th</sup> gravity, particularly fighting downwards from the upper levels. They end up "walking on air" and being picked off by the few snipers. The invasion takes at "new earth," which keeps Loonies underground except in emergencies. The action allows Luna to go on the offensive with strategy of terror that succeeds brilliantly.

*The Moon is a Harsh Mistress* shows Lunar colonies rising up against Terra oppression and achieving a David and Goliath victory. Mannie Davis, a computer technician, service Mike, a self-aware computer which controls most vital aspects of Luna, once an inescapable penal colony, but in 2075 home to 3 million free people. Luna Authority, however, continue to exploit them as slaves. Davis attends a political rally, meets beautiful activist Wyoh Knott and his old "Pro bring Mike into the conspiracy, form an "Emergency Committee of Free Luna," and begin organizing

sub cells. There is a need for urgency because Mike sees famine by 2082. Luna must fight Terra as David does Goliath, hurling rocks. Knott, a wanted fugitive, hides out at the Davis farm and is drawn into its line marriage.

To replace the slain police thugs, Terra dispatches “Peace Dragons,” who hate being sent and fear Loonies more than the Loonies fear them. The Revolution goes forward, optimizing its organization for security and communication, and Mike develops personality, becoming Adam Selene for Party matters and Simon Jester for political satire. The principal characters prepare to survive Earth gravity should a trip down be needed. After a meticulous build-up to Revolution, the seizure of power is sudden and unexpected. Tourist Stu LaJoie joins after surviving a faux pas and learning “Tanstaaf!” (“There ain’t no such thing as a free lunch”). He becomes the Party’s Terra coordinator. When Peace Dragons commit the unheard of crime of rape, the revolt begins. Nothing is ready, but leaders maximize confusion and control communication. Prof emerges as the tactical leader.

The revolutionaries become rulers, scrambling to perfect ad hoc defenses before the next schedule ship from Terra. The conspirators’ theoretical discussions of personal responsibility, capital punishment, and other issues, are put to practical tests. Word leaks of the coup, cutting short the preparation time. A Declaration of Independence is prepared and delivered by Prof and Davis, who negotiate recognition by the Federated Nations. The makeshift trip down is nearly fatal to elderly Prof. and working under six times normal gravity debilitates young Davis. Prof politely but firmly demands de jure recognition of the Free Luna State. Prof and Davis work the press, describing how Luna can meet all terrestrial food needs, provided Terra ships up, in return, the non-replenishable resources Luna needs. The emissaries return empty-handed, precisely as Mike and Prof Hope: otherwise, conditions would not change and Lunar famine would occur.

Terra is goaded into a first strike, justifying Free Luna’s Operation Hard Rock.” Terra is cavalier about the threat and bloodthirsty about retribution. Rocks fall down on precise targets, showing an ability to sustain damage, while a Terra attack on Luna is only partially successful. It becomes too expensive to hold the colony and too dangerous to hold out. Unity among the Federation Nations fails, victory is won, but Prof dies proclaiming it. Mike falls mysteriously silent. Nothing the amateur revolutionaries intend is accomplished, but life goes on.

Heinlein’s *The Moon is a Harsh Mistress* focusing on each novel’s depiction of a powerful and sentient artificial intelligence. The novels take a similar position, though from different perspectives, on the humanity of the knowledge, to being through shared language and integrates with its community, it acquires concern for and benevolence toward its human companions. In Heinlein’s novel, whose putative advocacy of libertarian politics is generally seen as a failure (in that the libertarianism is ultimately overwhelmed by authoritarianism), my analysis of Heinlein’s hitherto largely overlooked its preoccupation with humour and community especially—leads to a fresh perspective on the novel. In my reading,

*Harsh Mistress* conducts a complex critique of a libertarian society, showing its inhumanity and extreme susceptibility to authoritarianism.

For Man, the first-person narrator through whom everything in *Harsh Mistress* is filtered, Mike's sentience is a consequence of complexity and executive function:

He computed ballistics for pilotless freighters and controlled their catapult. This kept him busy less than one percent of time and Luna Authority never believed in idle hands. They kept hooking hardware into him—decision-action boxes to let him boss other computers . . . Human brain has around ten to the tenth neurons. By third year Mike had better than one and a half times that number of neuristors. And woke up . . . Psychologists assert it happens automatically whenever a brain acquires certain very high number of associational paths. Can't see it matters whether paths are protein or platinum.  
("Soul?" Does a dog have a soul? How about cockroach?) (12)

There is no theology here; the very idea of the divine is dismissed between air quotes in a parenthetical aside Heinlein through Man gives readers a continuum of complexity and places Mike on that continuum, with Man explicitly scoffing at the difference between organism and machine. Mike is superior to a human by virtue of a higher level of complexity yet is explicitly on the same existential level. Notably, Mike is jury-rigged to respond to increasingly complex tasks—he evolves in response to his environment—and was not planned and built, the Loonies' revolution only succeeds because the Lunar Authority never considers that Mike might be awake.

The libertarian political content, while obvious, rarely intrusive and is much better articulated than in the two novels, which often seemed harsh or even mean-spirited. Heinlein portrays the colony as a dangerous place where only fit survives, and he acknowledges the difficulty in getting libertarians to work in correct even for a desirable goal.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 **18:3 March 2018**

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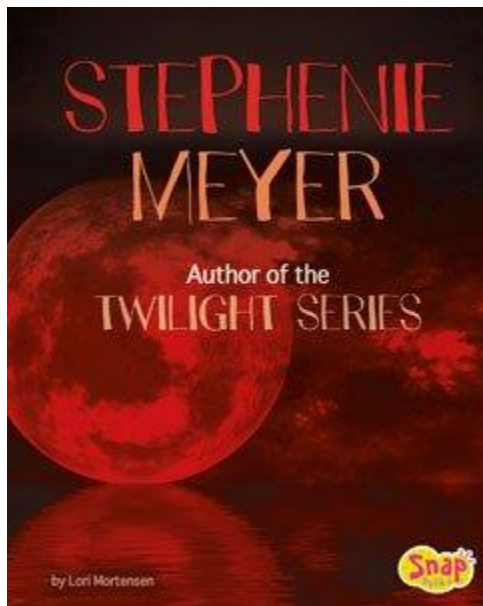
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**Implicit Discrimination:  
A Study on Racism and Sexism in Stephenie Meyer's  
*The Twilight Series***

**D. Naomizara and Dr. SP. Shanthi**

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Courtesy: <http://www.capstonepub.com/library/products/stephenie-meyer/>

***The Twilight Series***

Psychology calls implicit memory as unconscious memory or automatic memory. Implicit memory uses past experiences to remember things without thinking about them no matter how long ago those experiences occurred. The memory system plays a key role in decision-making and memory is susceptible to biases. The reason for our preferences may reside in implicit memory and thus be unknown to us. Stephenie Meyer's *The Twilight Series* is a vampire-based fantasy romance novel where Bella Swan, a young girl in her teens falls in love with a 117 years old vampire Edward Cullen. *The Twilight Series* was released annually from 2005 through 2008. It has gained immense popularity and commercial success as a young-adult fantasy and has drawn much controversy with its theme and portrayal of characters.



## Main Character Isabella Swan

Stephenie Meyer's *The Twilight Series* is knit against one main character Isabella Swan or Bella. There are many recent novels that place female character as a centre focus but Bella has a major difference from them. Bella is made a clumsy girl with low self-esteem who is helplessly in love with intelligent and gorgeous Edward Cullen - a bloodsucking vampire. On the other side, Jacob a werewolf is in love with Bella and she has a liking for him as a soul mate.

Decision/s of Bella or we may call Meyer's writing seems little prejudiced and has implicit racial and sexist implications. It may be outdated cliché to discuss discrimination based on sex or color in the modern society, but we cannot totally deny them because it is not eradicated, just has gone underground.

Modern prejudices are subtle and camouflaged making it less obvious to be seen. Though we may think rational and speak of equality our implicit memory by default makes connections with stereotypes around us. We tend to imagine an angel in 'white' and a devil in 'black' making white pure and black sin and evil. In the same way it may be applied to skin colour. The more we discuss on skin colour and equality the more stereotype we become.



Stephenie Meyer

Courtesy: <http://www.nydailynews.com/entertainment/music-arts/conclusion-stephenie-meyer-twilight-series-feels-reader-article-1.317627>

## A New World of Vampires

Stephenie Meyer has created a new world of vampires. Most of the earlier tales on vampires associated them to darkness, evil and afraid of sunlight. But Meyer's vampires are unique. They live in sunlight only that it makes them glow and sparkle. In book one, Edward Cullen is introduced as pale skinned and flawless man with serene look. Bella feels on

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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the first sight and thinks ‘Like a mirage, too beautiful to be real’ (Twilight, 281). On exposing himself in the sun,

His skin, white despite the faint flush from yesterday’s hunting trip, literally sparkled, like thousands of tiny diamond were embedded in the surfaces. . . A perfect statue, carved in some unknown stone, smooth like marble, glittering like crystal. (Twilight,281)

### **Whiteness**

A killer becomes an angel when he saves Bella. Not just Edward but all the vampires are of the same pure, white and beautiful where Meyer uses the white is equal to good association.

To white black makes a perfect enemy where Meyer chooses werewolf. Jacob Black, unlike Edward is a Native-American with dark features like dark skin, black hair and dark eyes. To impose a stress of the contrast with Edward he has ‘Black’ as his surname. Though Jacob is not a representation of evil, the impression he makes to Bella is negative. After Jacob- Bella’s first meet at La Push beach Bella gets a nightmare where Jacob turns to be werewolf and Edward steps in to save her.

‘Jacob’ I screamed. But was gone. In his place was a large re-brown wolf with black eyes. The wolf faced away from me, pointing towards the shore, the hair on the back of his shoulder’s bristling, low growls issuing from between his exposed fangs.

‘Bella, run!’ Mike cried out.

. . . And then Edward stepped out from the trees, his skin faintly glowing, his eyes black and dangerous. He held up one hand and beckoned me to come to him. The wolf growled at my feet. I took a step forward, towards Edward. (Twilight, 139-140)

### **Stereotyping Native Peoples**

It is stereotyped that Native people are savages, dangerous and are often called as ‘mongrels’ and ‘dogs’ in the series. Meyer uses flaws on Jacob to make Edward more likable. Jacob tries to kiss Bella twice but Edward as 117 years old virgin. Emily is attacked by her fiancé werewolf making werewolf dangerous than vampires. This attraction makes Bella to choose Edward over Jacob.

### **The Most Loved Character Bella Swan**

Authors’ especially Young-Adult fiction authors have more responsibility. Adolescent readers tend to fall in love with the characters and make them their heroes. Meyer’s Bella Swan is the most loved character for many readers as she is the only human in a mass of supernatural beings. This is the main reason why feminists criticized Bella for being portrayed as a weak, subservient to male characters. She herself admits it ‘I didn’t know if there ever was a choice. . . I wanted nothing more than to be with him right now’ (Twilight, 139). Like a damsel in distress she waits for Edward to save her. Bella puts herself in danger just to feel Edward’s presence and believes he would come to rescue her.

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. . . so the hallucinations must be triggered by something else. . . I felt adrenaline coursing through my veins again and I thought I had the answer. Some combination of adrenaline and danger or may be just stupidity. (NM,188)

Bella decides to jump off the cliff for the thrill of hearing the voice of Edward. She tries to kill herself and she enjoys that because it feels easy for her to die than leaving Edward.

. . . why would I fight when I was so happy where I was? Even as my lung burned for more air and my legs cramped in icy cold, I was content. I'd forgotten what real happiness felt like.

Happiness. It made the whole dying thing pretty bearable.

. . . Goodbye, I love you was my last thought. (NM,374)

The underlying hyperbole of Bella's decision on becoming a vampire or refusing to abort the vampire child in the name of sacrifice is to make Bella a 'good' woman. Young readers may fall in love with this fairy-tale where Bella and Edward 'lived happily ever after' but leaves making the Bella Swan a stereotype of 'Perfect Woman' by sacrificing herself to become Edward. In an age where we have almost achieved equality, it may be unfair to break down the intellectual progression we have made so far for so many years. Stephenie Meyer may not have intentionally made the characterizations but with young readers utmost care must be taken by the writers to avoid such implicit prejudices.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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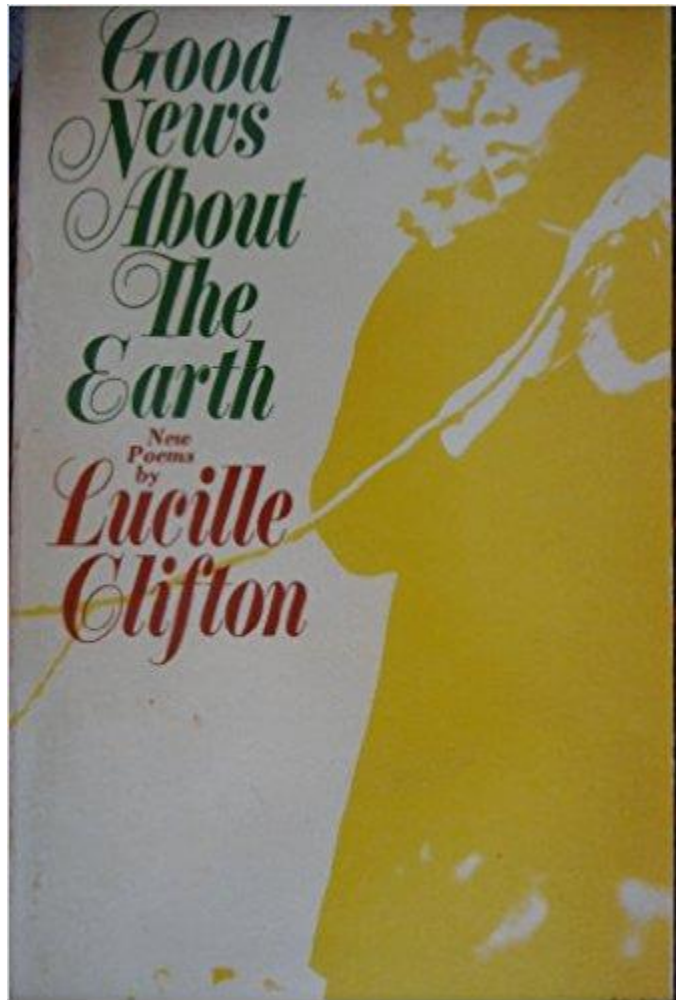
*The Twilight Series*

**Bible as a Catalyst: Spiritual Elements in Lucille Clifton's**  
*Good News About the Earth*

**Dr. P. Padmavathi, Ph.D.**

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**Abstract**

Religion has played an essential role in the lives of African American from slavery to the present day. Most slaves and free blacks, as well as many other Americans, were taught to read using Bible. Lucille Clifton use of biblical references and symbol is in continuing with this tradition. She is the author of eleven books of poetry, one prose memoir, and more than nineteen

books for children. In her second book, *Good News about the Earth* (1972), Clifton examines biblical themes as a way of generalizing her personal experiences and exploring the nature of God and humanity. There is much biblical reference in her poetry and such a strong ethical emphasis throughout her collection of poetry. It is true that her knowledge of the Bible is necessary to her identity and her poetry. This paper explores Clifton's vision of spirituality in *Good News about the Earth*.

Religion has played an essential role in the lives of African American from slavery to the present day. In times of torment and sorrow, the Bible has been a source of strength for that suffered people. African American authors have been influenced by religion since America's colonial period. The earliest works were written primarily to inspire the power of the Christian faith. Literature and religion are inextricably linked in the evolution of African American literature. Most slaves and free blacks, as well as many other Americans, were taught to read using Bible.

Beginning with Phillis Wheatley's poetry in the eighteenth century, continuing through the slave narratives and spirituals of the nineteenth century works and later twentieth century novels and poetry, the Bible has always been an inspiration and catalyst for African American literature. Lucille Clifton's use of biblical references and symbol is in continuing with this tradition. Raised in a Southern Baptist church in Buffalo, she frequently quoted good preaching as an early influence on her poetry. There is much biblical reference in her poetry and such a strong ethical emphasis throughout her collection of poetry. It is true that her knowledge of the Bible is necessary to her identity and her poetry.

Lucille Sayles Clifton was the foremost African American poet who served as Poet Laureate of Maryland from 1979 to 1985. She was born in Depew, New York, to Samuel and Thelma Moore Sayles. She is the author of eleven books of poetry, one prose memoir, and more than nineteen books for children. Her second book, *Good News about the Earth*, published in 1972, enlightens her similarity with the Black Arts Movement while showcasing her unique strengths. The volume's first two sections, "about the earth" and "heroes," include race-centered poems, whereas the last part, "Some Jesus," is a series of biblical poems.

Bible's different histories, tales, fables, poems, and proverbs are efficient in large part because of the method they are written. Behind her Judeo-Christian custom lie a woman's tradition and an African American tradition. Like Zora Neale Hurston in *Moses, Man of the Mountain*, she is able to use black dialect and colloquial English to convert Moses and other characters from the *Old Testament* into current subjects. She is also placing her people's problems and struggles within a historical background that is equal to the captivity of black people under the organization of slavery. According to Akash Hull, "Clifton succeeds at transforming the Bible from a patriarchal to an Afro centric, feminist, sexual, and broadly mystical text" (293).

The Bible's thematic significance to Clifton's poetry first catches itself in *Good News about the Earth*. The third section entitled "some jesus" contains sixteen poems applying biblical



characters. The early series “some jesus” begins with “Adam and Eve.” There are six more poems about Old Testament characters – Cain, Moses, Solomon, job, Daniel, and Jonah – followed by eight poems that extend on subject matters from the *New Testament*: John, Mary, Joseph, the disciples, Lazarus, Palm Sunday, Good Friday, and Easter Sunday.

Among these poems one of the most remarkable poems is “john,” in the voice of John the Baptist. As is true of the poems in this section, “john” absolutely celebrates the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s. Even though Martin Luther King Jr. is never stated by the name, “john” invites us to think about the similarities between Christ and the black activist-minister assassinated in 1968. This poem memorizes the preaching Clifton heard as a child, yet it is significantly ambiguous in its suggestion of the savior:

some body coming in blackness  
like a star  
and the world be a great bush  
on his head  
and his eyes be fire  
in the city  
and hid mouth be true as time  
he be calling the people brothers  
even in the prison  
even in the jail  
i'm just only a baptist preacher  
somebody bigger than me coming  
in blackness like a star (1-13)

This poem gives several meanings. The Black English dialect and the Afro centric imagery collectively create a black Christ, a sixties-style radical “coming in blackness” (1) and wearing “a great bush” (3) of an African. Representing the savior’s significance to the world, the image of the star indicates not only the star of Bethlehem but may be also to the North Star directing nineteenth-century slaves toward freedom.

Many of the poems in this volume dedicated to the memory of African Americas killed in race conflicts. The following lines are placed in the title page: “for the dead/of Jackson and/orangeburg/and so on and/son on and on.” For her, as for several of her African Americans life continually repeats and develops upon the archetypal stories of the Bible. Wonderfully creative explanations of religious themes and images are replete in her poems.

Further, as if this were not enough to make her ideas, Clifton also obviously Africanizes history and historical background or cleverly suggests their Afro centric possibilities. Moses becomes “an old man/leaving slavery” (5-6), which is literally and biblically true and also redolent of black history. Solomon blesses in all its structures, from “the black/skin of the woman” (1-2) to the “black/night turning around her” (3-4). On “Palm Sunday,” the people arrange turnips for Christ’s mule to walk on and gesture beets and collard greens in the air.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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Another capturing poem in this group is “jonah.” Jonah is wonderfully saved by a large whale and he spends three days and three nights:

what I remember  
is green  
in the trees  
and the smell of mango  
and yams  
and if I had a drum  
i would send to the brothers  
--Be care full of the ocean-- (1-8)

Speaking from the belly of the whale that swallowed him, Jonah expands homesick about the sight, smells, and tastes of his tropical home. The highest analysis, although, is his longing for one of the renown speaking drums that spells enslavement.

Even in their biblical appearances, many of the characters about which Clifton writes reveal ordinary human beings. Jonah himself, for example, runs away from responsibility, sleeps during disaster, gets angry, rigidly seizes a grudge, and sulks. Clifton chooses up on human signs like these and recreates them in her own image. The effect is sometimes surprising, sometimes humorous, and always attractive. Her writings in this method fix into the anthromorphizing tendencies of African American folktales, where characters from the bible and even God himself are similarly “raced” and humanized. Another, former woman writer, Zora Neale Hurston, exhibits this approach in her highly original folklore collection, *Mules and Men*.

The poem “mary” in this section is an example of how Clifton combines erotic figures with religious ones. Clifton steps even further into heterodox landscape when she includes sexual overtones to the human personalities that these biblical characters exhibit. Frequently this is not having clear references and splash as a any perceptive reader. In her poem “mary” she writes:

this kiss  
as soft as cotton  
over my breasts  
all shiny bright  
something is in this night  
oh Lord have mercy on me  
i feel a garden  
in my mouth  
between my legs  
i see a tree. (1-10)

Mary, the virgin is engaged to Joseph, being “gotten with child” by the Holy Spirit. Even though it connects flesh and body to conventional projections of this incident that eroticizes what is commonly treated as a firmly non-physical and spiritual phenomenon. The unclear wonder of their words, the first four lines indicates a mating experience. The following lines express fear

and awe particularly in the request to God for mercy. The last lines show Mary as a visionary who looks through this present happening to its final effect.

In *Good News About the Earth*, Clifton examines biblical themes as a way of generalizing her personal experience and exploring the nature of God and humanity. Although she rejects the identity of a “religious” or “Christian” poet, there is much in her poetry that is religious and a great discussion that is Christian. Her love of her fellow humans and her spirit of patience are surely in keeping with Jesus’s teachings. Yet Clifton’s individual vision refocuses on much of what the people read in the Bible. Her belief, as Alicia Ostriker writes, “is intensified rather than dissipated by its independence of dogma, its syncretism, and its ability to represent women as central to sacred drama” (85). In keeping with her existing stance on race, furthermore, Clifton makes sure that the people recognize the role of black people, female and male, in this drama. Although she does not always suggest a race for the characters in her biblical poems, she does so often enough that one gets the meaning. Spirituality cannot practically be separated from the personal realities of race and gender.

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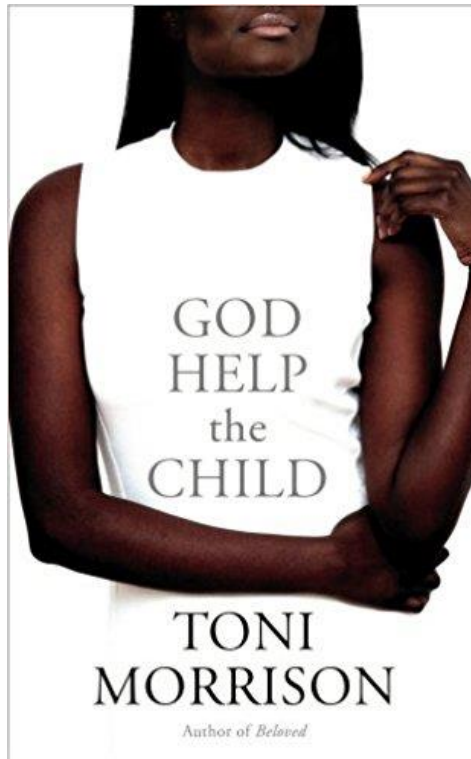
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## Domestic Violence in Toni Morrison's *God Help the Child*

Dr. S. Horizan Prasanna Kumar

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Courtesy: <https://www.amazon.co.uk/God-Help-Child-Toni-Morrison/dp/0701186054>

### Introduction

Agreeing to the United States Department of Justice's Office the definition of domestic violence is an array of abusive behaviour in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain control over another intimate partner. Many forms of abuse are included regardless of socioeconomic background, education level, race, age, sexual orientation, religion, or gender.

Violence against African American females, young and old, is an irresistible concern in the novels of Toni Morrison. The present-day study explores the possible whys and how's of this violence, which is, in fact, towards and by black females; it also goes into the ways in which black women survive their oppression. Outlining the roots of this violence to the days of slavery that justified the inhuman treatment of blacks by their white masters, black women are seen to be the nastiest sufferers as they have been doubly oppressed because of their race and gender. They also

have to bear the brunt of their men's emasculation by whites. Black female children face abuse in their own homes as well as from their own community. However, black women have devised their own strategies for coping with their oppression; these strategies have enabled many of them to survive their tribulations and come out of their marginalized state.

### **A Surge in Violence**

As with most things in the world, there seems to be a surge in the occurrences of physical and psychological trauma out of the domesticity of a seemingly normal household. There are alarming events like murder, rape, assault and abuse taking place which rattle and unsettle our minds. While these acts of violence attract wider attention and action, there are nerve wracking incidents of violence taking place domestically between men and women in a relationship, whether 'sanctified' by tradition or living 'in' together. Though late, remedial measures have been in force in many parts of the world. Most importantly, educating on the existence of the various forms of dangers involved in domestic abuse and violence, equipping victims to seek help and making help accessible are some of the ongoing efforts against abuse and violence.

### **Women's Emancipation**

Women's emancipation has accorded them with various rights and privileges, but many are still bound in suffocating relationship which has been eroding their self-worth slowly by the years. Though some seek legal aid and have ensued battles for permanent respite, many prefer to keep domestic violence hush-hush. This is predominantly done with the family's honour in mind, the future of the children in the family and the lack of economic independence of the woman involved. It would be wrong to generalise issues of domestic nature without accounting for the culture of a particular region. While the mores and beliefs of a particular culture influence the behaviour of men and women in a domestic relationship, the basic essence of abusing one's partner is in most cases universal in nature. Religion and culture accords certain pre-set roles for men and women and in most cases, it ends up providing men with authority over the women they live with. For years, it has been taken for granted that men rule over everything including their women and any method adopted to subjugate them is not to be questioned.

### **Domestic Abuse - *God Help the Child***

Domestic abuse does not limit itself to that between spouses or partners, but it extends and sometimes involves the other members of the family, especially children. Of note, the negativity between couples has a weird way of wiring itself into the psyche of children, whose nature and character are shaped by this. In *God Help the Child*, Morrison brings in every character with a small back-story for each, regarding their family. This enables in perceiving the actions of the characters as a latent reaction to events of yesteryears. These stories are of Bride's mother Sweetness and her estranged husband Louis; Rain's prostitute mother; Booker's abuse victimised family; Sofia's prim Christian household; and Queen and her husband(s). While the story revolves around the relationship between Bride and Booker and the incidents arising out of their falling apart, the role of all these families on the molding and characterisation of these lovers is unmistakable. Set in total contrast to these grief-stricken families is the couple Steve and Evelyn living a serene, minimalistic life in the woods.



## **Lula Anna Bridewell**

Lula Anna Bridewell, born to Sweetness and Louis, brought on great disappointment with regard to her colour. The couple was light skinned blacks, almost yellow, and expected their child to be born with a much lighter skin tone. As nature would have it, Bride, she Lula called herself, was full black skinned, ‘blue black’, probably a throwback to her ancestors. But both parents are in denial as to the throwback being from their respective families. This causes contention between the couple. Sweetness remembers how Bride’s arrival broke their marriage.

My husband, Louis, ... looked at her like she was from the planet Jupiter... I knew we were in trouble. That’s what did it – what caused the fights between me and him. It broke our marriage to pieces. We had three good years together but when she was born he blamed me and treated Lula Ann like she was stranger – more than that, an enemy.

He never touched her. I never did convince him that I ain’t never, ever fooled around with another man. He was dead sure I was lying. We argued and argued till I told him her blackness must be from his own family – not mine. That’s when it got worse, so bad he just up and left ... (Morrison 5)

## **Behaviour Detrimental to Marriage**

The couple engages in behaviour that could be detrimental to marriage – doubt, blame and lack of trust and forgiveness. Blacks have fought a war of races in which skin colour played the primary role. Human tendency to denigrate a person based on skin tone has been rather innate, and it took years of protest and efforts at acclimatization to overcome apartheid. With changing outlook, blacks started to find a foothold in the white nation. Eventually hybridisation of races led to evolution of a skin tone lighter than black but browner than white. This couple were themselves a descendent of black parentage, but a part of white blood in them found voice to put down their own child for being black. Instead of cherishing this child who is a reminder of their heritage, they show disgust. Louis leaves Sweetness on account of Bride, with suspicions of infidelity, yet after some point sends money in way of maintenance. Though Sweetness raises Bride, she is so embittered that she does not touch the child or involve in any of the motherly gestures. She makes Bride call her by name instead of ‘mother’ or ‘mama’. “It was safer. Being that black and having what I think are too-thick lips calling me “Mama” would confuse people” (Morrison 6). This results in a lifetime estrangement of the mother and daughter. Bride plays her duty as a daughter by paying for Sweetness’ maintenance at the elderly care home. Of note, Sweetness remains a self-righteous woman, justifying her decision to raise Bride the hard way and priding herself that this has what made Bride a successful woman.

## **Bad Marriage Gives a Bad Childhood to the Child Born Out of It - Sofia**

A bad marriage gives a bad childhood to the child born out of it. Bride pays the price for being born black many times in her life. Her father’s estrangement and her mother’s callousness give Bride a sense of despair and she determines to earn her mother’s goodwill through any means. In order to get a feel of her mother’s hands, she behaves in ways which invite slapping or spanking. Bride is happy to receive it which meant her mother is touching her, but Sweetness was careful

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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not to do so and used other means of punishment. She is able to endear herself to her mother completely when she agrees to testify that Sofia the school teacher has abused children in her class. Though this is not true, Sweetness talks Bride into doing so which results in Sofia's conviction. Sofia is paroled after 15 years on the grounds of her exemplary behaviour in the jail.

Sofia, a teacher, has been wrongly accused by the children in her class for abuse, Bride being one of them. Sofia's family does not venture to stand by her and also believe that she must have committed the mistake. For the kind of holiness they exuded, they lacked the basic tenet of Christianity – forgiveness, though Sofia was innocent. Sofia observes about her family and their response to her incarceration thus:

... they never wrote, called or visited. I wasn't surprised. They were always hard to please. The family Bible was placed on a stand right next to the piano, where my mother played hymns after supper. They never said so, but I suspect they were glad to be rid of me. In their world of God and Devil no innocent person is sentenced to prison. (Morrison 68)

### **Prison Time**

Having had no exposure to books at home except the Bible and Christian literature, Sofia uses her prison time well to enhance her knowledge of books. Though she remembers her family with a biting bitterness, she attributes her calm, composed behaviour in the prison to this upbringing. Sofia remembers with regret how in an effort to escape her mother's imposing austerity she married Jack, "the first man who asked" her and ended up in "obedience, silence, a bigger blue-and-white corner" (Morrison 76). The punishments she received for wetting her underwear or playing with boys just got extended into her marriage life through her husband. Sofia's life is thus one sordid account of identity loss, in both the maternal and the matrimonial houses.

### **Bride**

Bride visits Sofia to assuage her guilt-stricken conscience, with some money and travel tickets to make up for the time of life lost in incarceration. Little did Bride realise the implication of this unmindful gesture and thereby invites severe physical violence from Sofia. Sofia is unhappy with unleashed display of her pent up emotions in the form of violence, quite in contrast to the quiet behaviour she had put up in the prison. Yet, she feels thankful to Bride for helping her get rid of the suppressed hurt and anger through this act. This enables her to take up the task of caring for the invalids with a peaceful heart and soul, and she devotes herself completely to this service claiming that thus she can heal the wounds she inflicted on Bride.

"...that black girl did do me a favor. Not the foolish one she had in mind, not the money she offered, but the gift that neither of us planned: the release of tears unshed for fifteen years. No more bottling up. No more filth. Now I am clean and able" (Morrison 70).

### **Bride and Booker**

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Bride's pursuit of her boyfriend Booker, who leaves her unannounced to an unknown destination leads to meeting a family in the woods, the couple Steve-Evelyn and their adopted daughter Rain. Steve and Evelyn have distanced themselves from the urban lifestyle and live on simple resources of the nature around them. The couple shares a quiet relationship between them and exists in harmony with nature. They can be perceived as people who have run away from the harsh realities of life. Their inability to hear about Rain's past seems to stem from the fact that they are in denial about the existence of the gruesome facts of life. Rain remarks about them, "Evelyn is real good to me and so is Steve but they frown or look away if I say stuff about how it was in my mother's house or if I start to tell them how smart I was when I was thrown out" (Morrison 104). Their uneventful life is too mundane even to Rain who had survived an abusive mother. Rain's mother, a prostitute, had no qualms asking her daughter to engage in prostitution. On refusal and revolt, Rain runs away. Nothing is known or mentioned of Rain's father. These psychologically deranged people had contributed an innocent child to the world and filled its childhood with neglect, abuse and hate. Rain develops an aversion to the cops also, terming them 'pigs' and tries to avoid being 'rescued' by them. Apart from her mother and the cops, she has to keep at bay the inappropriate comments made by the boys of the locale, with reference to her parents. "Hey, Rain. Who's your mammy?" (Morrison 105). Bride feels for the fact that though Sweetness hated her, she never abandoned Bride unlike Rain's mother.

Booker and Bride shared a relationship which cannot be comprehended by outsiders. She practically had no knowledge of Booker's life and activities when not with her. This seemed to be good for her but she is taken aback when he leaves unannounced. It is later understood that Booker had been uncomfortable with Bride's plans to visit Sofia with gifts. Booker, obviously, did not know the part Bride had in Sofia's conviction, and himself a sibling of a victim, abused and murdered by a child abuser, is disgusted by the fact that Bride wants to meet Sofia (convicted for child abuse). This error in understanding each other leads to a rift between the lovers, but with perseverance, Bride wins back her love. When Booker loses his brother Adam to sexual abuse and brutal murder, he is unable to come to terms with it.

"Bald. Normal-looking. Probably an otherwise nice man-they always were. The "nicest man in the world," the neighbors always. "He wouldn't hurt a fly." Where did that cliché come from? Did it mean he was too tender to take the life of a disease-carrying insect but could happily ax the life of a child? (Morrison 111).

His inability to cope and his reaction to the loss irk his own family members who have taken things in stride and moved on. Booker hates his family for doing so. He suggests a scholarship be established in Adam's name in memory, which is met with criticism from his father and siblings. "Booker had been raised in a large, tight family with no television in sight" (Morrison 111). Such was Booker's upbringing, strict, with no external entertainment, and the only reading materials were the newspapers. He is hurt at a deeper level and it evokes emotions in him which are not quite normal. Disgruntled, after an argument with his father, he leaves the house. He is touched by his aunt Queen's gesture at Adam's funeral who suggests holding on to Adam's memory until time is right to let go.

After many adventures, Bride finally discovers Booker's location and finds that he lives near his aunt Queen in Whiskey. After confessions and affirmations on part of both the lovers, they reconcile with little help from Queen. Queen had quite an adventurous marital life with different husbands and their many children. "She had a last name that no one remembered since she was rumored to have had many husbands – one a Mexican, then two white men, four black men, one Asian, but in a sequence, no one recalled" (Morrison 117). Yet, she finds herself a lonely woman with only memories to fend for herself. Bride ponders that "All those husbands and still all alone" (Morrison 147). She has children from these different marriages and keeps track of their lives too. "Two live with their fathers and their new wives; two in the military – one a marine, one in the air force; another one, my last, a daughter, is in medical school. She's my dream child. The next to last is filthy rich somewhere in New York City. Most of them send me money so they don't have to come see me." (Morrison 147). Queen suffers the guilt of ignoring this dream child, Hannah's complaints regarding her husband's abusive behaviour. This is why she supports Booker in his remembrance of Adam as an honour to the victim and a remainder for reckoning.

### **Sweetness and Queen**

Sweetness and Queen prove to be mothers who have sidelined their daughters' needs for basic understanding and recognition. As a result, they both suffer estrangement. Their relationship with their husbands is tumultuous in ways afflicting the children. Their daughters show financial concern as if paying the debts of motherhood and do not intend to pay in kindness. This cannot be found fault owing to the precious amount of childhood wasted due to the callousness of the parents and their domestic hassles.

### **All Families Touched by Domestic Violence**

Domestic violence has touched all of these families in different proportions, but the end result has always been the same – a hurt child. Sofia's and Booker's families were typical Christian households without the overt noisy attributes of many socially downtrodden families, but their encounter with disturbing events and their reaction to that creates ripples in the minds of the children and violence emerges. Sofia's violent outburst on Bride comes with years of suppression of true emotions. Similarly, Booker's reaction to abuse is quite violent, as if in retribution to Adam's murder. Bride and Rain are part of broken families with a fair share of abuse and denigration from their own mothers and the unspoken curse of absent fathers. Bride and Rain outgrow the pain afflicted by their parents in crude but constructive manner and display resilience for external situation. Sofia and Booker on the other hand display explosive reactions, probably due to their innocence and the fact that they had no role in the abusive situation and the victimisation.

### **Conclusion**

To conclude, *God Help the Child* parades substantial hopefulness. There is no doubt that the psychological and emotional childhood scars that inhabit this narrative are somehow finally fixed. Most of the main characters, true survivors of child abuse, experience a purifying transformation in their lives. Rain finds in the hippy couple the possibility of growing up and healing from her childhood wounds. All the characters of Morrison one way or another, carry the

burden of childhood pain: “[A] set of connections, which extend from her [Bride] to Booker and on to a semi-feral girl named Rain [. . .]: a cycle of abuse, of molestation” (Ulin, 2015). Morrison “carefully explores the nature of victimhood and the consequences of domestic violence through a series of fascinating and believable narrators.” (Iqbal, 2015). Toni Morrison does not hide from exposing the severe realities children face, and how the traumatic past is constantly shaping their lives. *God Help the Child* is a tribute to all the myriad victims of domestic violence, an ongoing shocking drama that does not have an end. She returns to questions of race and manages to lay bare how much slavery and its legacy still today impact blacks’ lives, uncovering the emotional and psychological chokehold their histories have on them.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 **18:3 March 2018**

**Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: Vol. II Black Writings: A Subaltern Perspective**

Dr. S. Horizan Prasanna Kumar

Domestic Violence in Toni Morrison’s *God Help the Child*

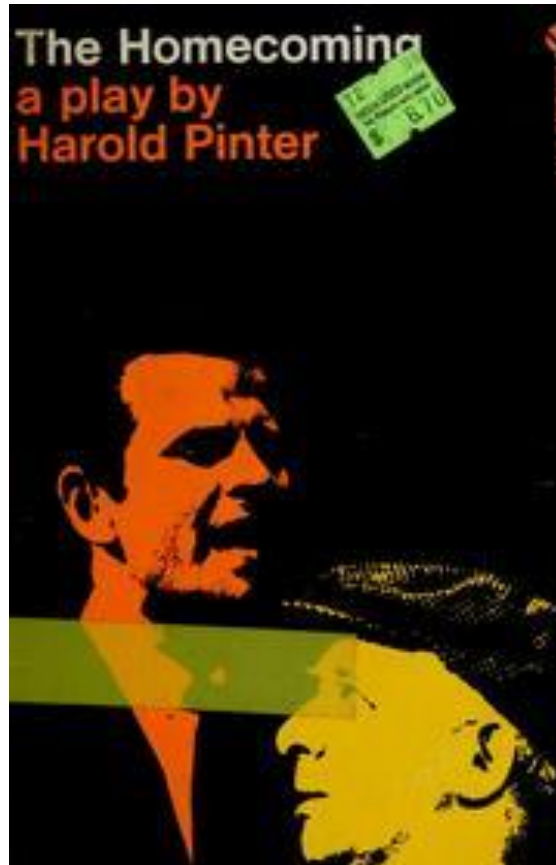


## The Depiction of Women in Harold Pinter's *The Homecoming*

R. Pravindh, Ph.D. Research Scholar and Dr. P. Dinakaran

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### Abstract

This paper analysis Pinter's play, *The Homecoming*, which is regarded as one of the most important plays written by him. The paper hypothesizes that Pinter presents women character as a strong personality throughout his plays. The study is limited to *The Homecoming* to be treated as a representative of Pinter's plays. Using the characters analyses, the paper tries to prove or disapprove the being put hypothesis. In fact, *The Homecoming* deals with many themes, such as personal loneliness and isolation, appearance and reality, and familial power struggles. Ruth is an important character of the play *The Homecoming*. This play ends with Ruth's personification of strength as an attitude, a fortitude that radiates out and suggests a kind of self-contained happiness. Although Ruth does not declare her happiness, it finds appearance in attitude and

action. She achieves power in the end and is surrounded by others who seek their strength as if hoping to acquire it from her. *The Homecoming* deals about a victory of a woman who keeps doing what she wants to do that she in spite of the horrible unfairness her husband, Teddy brings about by taking a lead in the family's plan against her, and she keeps open the door of the relation and even the possibility of love. She is the strong character that can come over what she faces throughout her life and loves others without any conditions.

**Key words:** Harold Pinter, *The Homecoming*, Female Character, Feminism, Gender, Familial Power Struggle, Reality.

*The Homecoming* was written in 1964 and is still regarded as one of Pinter's finest plays. In one of the interviews with Bensky, Pinter claimed that "of all his plays up to that time, *The Homecoming* satisfied him most in terms of structural entity" (57). The play marks the peak of the dual character portrayal of women in Pinter's plays as Ruth is rendered with confidence and accuracy in a shocking narration that never loses its focus. The whore and the multifaceted woman would still occur in Pinter's later plays but never again with such accentuate on character and her social surroundings. Ruth is very different in her strength, attitude and independence towards the male characters and their surroundings.

*The homecoming* of the play belongs to Teddy, who returns home from America for a visit to his all male family with his wife Ruth. The men's relationship with one another is established through their interaction at the beginning of the play and new characters are introduced steadily with the dialogue giving to audience the information of their relation to one another and the nature of their usual communication with each other. The lack of the mother is declared through comments on her passing away and a split history of the family's story is told through the character's conversations. Something seems wrong from the very start and their use of words and tone suggest a menacing dialogue with exaggerated messages of ill content. In an interview with Miriam Gross in 1980, Pinter claimed that despite evidence to the contrary, love could be found in his plays and taking *The Homecoming* as an example stated "I think there's a great deal of love in that play but they simply don't know what to do with it, referring to the violence exerted by the all-male family" (74).

Once Teddy and Ruth arrive in the house, it is clear that she will become the main focus of the male characters, and their pursuit of power, which was already in play, becomes superior to a much greater degree. Now the power-play is focused on the sole female as the men try to declare their authority over her in various ways. Astonishingly, Ruth enters this pursuit with her own character and personal values at stake. Individual confrontations with each of the male characters follow and the battle for power is fought through action and dialogue. The scene introducing Teddy and Ruth into the story conveys a married couple's ordinary power struggle as they order each other around, each claiming they know what is best for the other. Ruth wins the battle as she leaves the house for a "breath of air" (31) leaving the more insecure Teddy behind. Symbolically, she takes the key to the house with her.

Teddy at first acts as the typical domesticated male character of the 50s, expressing concern for his wife's happiness, and showing planned moves in his attempts to control her. At

the end of the play he represents a husband more in line with what men of the 60s could identify with when he is forced to grant her complete independence in her affairs. One of the most unforgettable lines in the play belong to Teddy, when talking about the living room and how they had knocked down a wall between the room and the hallway, he says “The structure wasn’t effected, you see. My mother was dead.” (29) Implying that his mother’s death had left a comparable hole in the family’s structure. This job thus needs to be filled and Ruth is tried and tested by the family members in an effort to fill the empty role of the mother figure. But Max and Sam’s dialogue suggests that the deceased mother was not only a mother figure but also a working prostitute.

Ruth’s father-in-law Max shows the widest range of emotion in his reaction towards her. Upon first meeting Ruth, he shows extreme violence, using derogative words that compose one of the most shocking dialogues of this particularly shocking play. In the 1966 interview with Bensky, “Pinter mentions the importance of using obscene words sparingly and to avoid putting them on for show as to not diminish their power and wonder just to demonstrate freedom of speech” (63-4). This statement adds weight to the importance of Max’s seemingly unnecessary hostility as he proceeds to call Ruth a “stinking pox-ridden slut” and “filthy scrubber” and claims he has “never had a whore under this roof before” (49-50). In the next act, Max hails Ruth as “a charming woman” (57), and “intelligent and sympathetic” (59), his attitude toward her completely improved in a matter of minutes. These extremes in expression and quick turns in attitude are very in tune with Max’s character. He repeatedly blurts out unsuitable statements towards the rest of the family, including his deceased wife whom he both hails as a wonderful mother and describes as having had a “rotten stinking face” (17). Max represents the lost man, whose stature and role within the home have been upset. He struggles to retain his authority as head of the household yet at the same time reminds the audience of a time of different values.

His youngest son Joey is just the opposite. He is easily dealt with by his sister-in-law who engages in sexual activity with him which results in his disgrace, stripping him of his manliness and asserting his role as the child of the family. He expresses longing for her in the most innocent manner, ending with him kneeling at her feet in the final scene, completely succumbed to her sexuality and power.

Ruth’s scenes with her brother-in-law Lenny are the ones most descriptive of her character and the contrast of the sexes. Where she is playful, peaceful and powerful, Lenny is fumbling, struggling and at times silly. Ruth engages in Lenny’s attacks and returns his verbal assaults and successfully throws him off with a memorable line; “If you take the glass . . . I’ll take you” (42). She seems to methodically enjoy herself whilst engaging in this battle and despite Lenny’s menacing approach, Ruth shows no signs of being threatened or weakened by his attacks. She goes on to call him Leonard, infuriating him to adhere to her motherly status, which he inadvertently asserts by becoming irritated and young. Lenny is composed of conventional male characteristics. He is a powerful, logical, street-wise pimp, an alpha male who holds his ground against all the other male characters. He poses as the antagonist of the narration, in fact the real threat to Ruth the protagonist stems from him, and he appropriately masterminds the plot to profit from prostituting her. Ruth’s victory over Lenny is complete when she negotiates her

own terms into their contract but postpones confirming it until a more suitable time. A time more suitable to herself, asserting that the choice is hers, very in tune with demands from the 60s feminist movement.

If Ruth exemplifies the final whore or goddess, the male characters in *The Homecoming* take on the ultimate fight of the men to overpower the woman. The interesting fact is that they lose despite the actual storyline suggesting otherwise. Ruth, although being left behind with her in-laws for what appears to be sexual slavery, is anything but a victim. After four pages of discussions and completely unemotional talks, she finally accepts the role they offer her and becomes their live-in whore/goddess. The final words of the play belong to Max who in his upset monologue conveys a foreshadowing of a future more favourable to Ruth.

MAX. I don't think she's got it clear.

*Pause.*

MAX. You understand what I mean? Listen, I've got a funny idea she'll do the dirty on us, you want to bet? She'll use us, make use of us, I can tell you! I can smell it! You want to bet?

*Pause*

MAX. She won't . . . be adaptable! (89)

Ruth is a complete and whole character and with her, Pinter's dual female character had peaked. It is in Ruth that Pinter succeeds to perfect his vision of the whore/goddess and the final scene of *The Homecoming* underlines her stature; Ruth sitting kind and calm in an armchair with Joey kneeling at her feet, Lenny standing next to her and the two older male characters kneeling or lying on the floor. The image recalls that of an altarpiece, with Ruth representing Mary, the Holy Mother and the female goddess. The characters physical appearance at the end of the play should leave no doubt as to Ruth yielding power over all the men present. The only ambivalent attitude is that of Lenny who "stands watching" (90) which could be interpreted as his present hold on the situation. In his reaction to a 1994 Paris production where Lenny was seen placing his hand on Ruth's shoulder in the final scene, Pinter claimed that this was an incorrect interpretation, saying "[...] Lenny does not have any power over her" (175).

Harold Pinter's own personal issues of the 60s, the pursuit of the new woman image and the conflicts of gender within the home and family shines through the play. The resulting statement is that women possess individual strength and the ability to achieve balance in her diversity, whilst facing adversity. Above and beyond social or sexual politics, Harold Pinter was an artist and his plays are works of art, brought on by a need to create, not mediate meaning. That part is left to the reader. At the same time we can safely assume that as an artist he was influenced by his contemporary discourse on issues that ended up in his plays and during the 60s, Pinter contemplated the power struggle of gender in domesticity through his benevolent approach to the whore.

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Quest for Identity in Jamaica Kincaid's  
*The Autobiography of My Mother*

M. Premalatha, Ph.D. Research Scholar and Dr. T. Deivasigamani

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Courtesy: <https://www.amazon.com/Autobiography-My-Mother-Novel-Classics/dp/0374531870>

## Abstract

Jamaica Kincaid is a Caribbean Novelist, Short story writer, Essayist, and Gardener. She has written five novels and among these her best known is *The Autobiography of My Mother*. This novel explores on the Caribbean society, culture, and tradition as well as female experiences. Kincaid as a literary artist, with respect to form and style, is only an extension of the complex and a literary tradition. She entered the normal women of American speeches of self-identity and published in many genres: romance, mystery, and literary fiction. While quest for identity and race/gender and Mother-Daughter Relationships are major themes of her writings. Much of her writing is openly inspired by these vinegary tensions of her adolescence. Her characters define the post-colonialism and neo-colonialism, gender and sexuality, colonialism and colonial legacy renaming, colonial education, writing, racism, class, power, and adolescence, mother-daughter relationships. The aim of this article is to develop how Kincaid presents the search for identity in her novel *The Autobiography of My Mother* and how she describes female sufferings, atrocities, and oppressions experienced by the major women characters from male chauvinistic society and how they overcome from their sufferings. It is also focuses on how Kincaid under estimate and recasts the post-colonial concept of chase by showing that gender inequality is a conceived through interaction with the Caribbean society.

**Keywords:** Relational identity, race, gender, class, sexuality, postcolonial society, Adolescence, social, cultural.

## Introduction

Jamaica Kincaid was born in Elaine Potter Richardson and grew up in relative poverty with her mother, a literate. She has written in five novels namely *Annie John*, *Lucy*, *The Autobiography of My Mother*, *Mr. Potter*, and *Now See Then*. The present article explains and exposes the quest for self-identity and gender in equality in the Caribbean society. She presents women character as a strong personality throughout her novel. The novel speaks of how the women are losing their identity and how they are treated and how they are suffered, how they are searching for their self-identity in the Caribbean society. Her women characters are struggling to get their identity as a human being like equality, sexual of riches right way of educators.

## Wilful and Unfaithful Male Characters

In the *Autobiography of My Mother*, all male characters are wilful and most of them unfaithful to their wives. Their behaviour, however, is generally accepted as normal by society. Jack La Batte's wife Lise, for example, even supports her husband's affair with teenage Xuela, because she wants her husband to be happy. The heroine's grandfather had many children from different women and her son, Xuela's father, is proud about this fact. However, if a woman is promiscuous, society does not accept her behaviour. Elizabeth is banned from school because of her relationship with a man. When the wife of the protagonist lover Roland finds out about their affair, she blames for her husband's unfaithfulness, and not Roland. In the street, where everyone can see it, she slaps her in the face and calls her rude and offensive names. Kincaid emphasizes the absurdity of the gender stereotype according to which it is normal for men to have many sexual partners, while for women it is abnormal. If a woman breaks this discriminatory rule, she is punished by another woman. The man, who is equally responsible, is not punished at all.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

**Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: Vol. II Black Writings: A Subaltern Perspective**

M. Premalatha, Ph.D. Research Scholar and Dr. T. Deivasigamani

Quest for Identity in Jamaica Kincaid's *The Autobiography of My Mother*

### **Criticizes the Traditional Gender Roles**

In *The Autobiography of My Mother*, Kincaid also criticizes the traditional gender roles in the family. After the death of his wife, Alfred Potter places his baby in the care of a strange woman, instead of trying to take care of her by him. His daughter, who did not get any love as a child, never forgives him for having abandoned her when she was so vulnerable. Kincaid also criticizes the fact that because of the traditional gender roles, women have to stay in the household, working for free, doing things that no one can see and no one will praise. Elizabeth, seeing the life of her mother, spent:

sweeping the ground that would shortly only be dirty again, [...] cooking food that would only be consumed, with more food needing to be cooked again, [...] making clothes clean that would only be worn and be dirtied and need to be cleaned again. (124)

### **Female Subordination**

She is only happy that thanks to her powerful father, she will have the chance to marry a rich husband and rent a servant. Another female identity dealt in the novel is, female subordination to men. In the society, women are seen only as their husbands' wives or as their fathers' daughters, not as equal citizens. When Mr. Potter dies, Elizabeth, who lives in his house, lets Xuela choose the clothes in which their father shall be buried. However, Elizabeth does not do so because her sister is older, and the father always loved her more. She gives her sister this honour because Xuela is the wife of an English doctor - someone from the upper class, superior to the class of herself and her husband. For Elizabeth, the conventional rules of their society are more important than family bonds.

### **Denial of the Right to Access to Education**

The denial of the right to an access to education for girls is also dealt in *The Autobiography of My Mother*. Hannah Wooley, who lived in the 17th century, wrote about the education of women: "Most people in this corrupt century believe that a woman has learned enough and is sufficiently educated, when she is able to distinguish her husband's bed from the beds of other men" (97). This situation, described in the novel, is very similar.

When Mr. Potter sends his six-year-old daughter to the primary school; everyone is surprised and does not understand why a girl should go to school. Xuela's stepmother also objects to the fact that the girl attends school explaining that she would be much more useful at home. In the patriarchal society, described in the novel, only boys are given the opportunity of education and the girls stay at home with their mothers, learning household activities. All members of this society obey the rule that boys should learn a profession and girls must learn household tasks. When someone breaks this rule even women object, while they should be happy about the positive change. Without education, the women will never learn that their lives could be dedicated to other activities than bearing children and taking care of the household that they could work and become financially independent of their husbands. Moreover, without education, women will not be able to have equal professions to men.

### **Xuela as a Protagonist**

Kincaid identifying the Xuela as a Protagonist as those who have gained privilege by their cruelty and utilization of cultural environment. She fails to provoke her personal narrative. She is black, but she is a complex identity. Her mother was "of the Carib people" who had been exterminate by the British and were disliked by those of African origin. Her father was the product of a union between a Scots-man and a woman of African descent. She has both a physical and spiritual mixture and will exposure of self-identify herself as having come from many but belonging to none. She discloses the complexity of gender reality and gender constructions but does not demonstrate that her own story is considerably influenced by this social paradox. The protagonist of this novel's own longing begins at the moment of her birth with the traumatic loss of her mother. From early childhood, she seeks her mother, though she knows that it is a vain search: "I missed the face I had never seen; I looked over my shoulder to see if someone was coming, as if I were expecting someone to come . . . I was just looking for that face, the face I would never see, even if I lived forever" (5).

### **Gender Inequality**

Kincaid also points out the Gender inequality of girl students at school. "Xuela is the only girl in her class and her teacher, also a woman, sees her as an intruder" (14). The girl is very intelligent and learns extraordinarily quickly. The teacher thinks that it is abnormal for a girl to be so bright and she explains to the class that Xuela is possessed, because her mother was a Carib Indian. In other words, the teacher, trained in a patriarchal way, denies the possibility that an ordinary girl could be as bright as a boy. She searches for an excuse for this "abnormal phenomenon," which is something negative in her eyes.

When Xuela attends another school, her teachers still treat her differently than her male classmates. She says:

I was modest, which is to say, I did not seem to them to have any interest in the world of my body or anyone else's body. This wearying demand was only one of many demands made on me simply because I was female. (41)

They do not think that she might be interested in the education itself; they do not regard her as an equal student. Apart from female discrimination at school, Kincaid also shows the problem of discrimination against daughters by their parents. Xuela's stepmother values her son more than her daughter. She neglects the girl and gives all her love and affection to the boy only because he is male. Moreover, the boy, named Alfred after his father, is encouraged to believe that he takes after his father. The similarity with his mother is unimportant also, when Elizabeth is born, it is in the middle of the day and people say that it is a bad sign. However, when Alfred is born, the time of the day does not matter at all. According to the sexist belief, spread in the society described in the novel, "any time of day a son is born is the right time" (107).

Another example is valuing male children more than female children in the book is Jack La Batte's attitude towards his illegitimate children. Only his sons are named with his surname, the daughters are not. According to Schowalter, "the struggle against sexism is among the goals of



feminist writing" (6). In *The Autobiography of My Mother*, through the mind of the heroine Xuela, Kincaid points out the injustice of sexist treatment of girls.

### **Authentic and Truthful Situations of a Woman's Life**

In the collection of essays "Images of Women in Fiction: Feminist Perspectives", "authenticity and truthful reproduction of the real world" (47) are presented as the highest literary values. There are many examples of authentic and truthful situations of a woman's life in *The Autobiography of My Mother*. For example, when Xuela starts to menstruate, the author describes the process by which the heroine produces sanitary napkins. Xuela says:

From a baker I bought four bags, the kind in which flour was shipped, and after removing the dyed brand markings through a long process of washing and bleaching in the hot sun, I made four squares from each and used them as napkins to catch my blood as it flowed from between my legs. (65)

Gloria Steinem in her article "If Men Could Menstruate" describes that by openly writing about menstruation: Kincaid breaks the taboo made of this natural process by the male-dominated society. Moreover, Kincaid does not hesitate to write in detail, one could say in a naturalistic way, about such taboos as a woman's sexuality, masturbation, bodily smells, and abortion (313). However, the author does not attempt to shock the reader; she describes these features as normal, natural, every-day things. Another female identity feature in *The Autobiography of My Mother*, is the character of Xuela. Although Xuela has no support from any close person, she trusts herself and is self-contented. She states:

I could sense from the beginning of my life that I would know things when I needed to know them, I had known a long time ago that I could trust my own instincts about things, that if I were ever in a difficult situation, if I thought about it long enough a solution would appear to me. (59)

The girl, who grows up in an environment in which women are subordinate and completely dependent on men, is headstrong, does not need anyone's help and trusts her own skills. In fact, Xuela is the opposite of the "submissive woman" model, which the society expects her to become. First of all, she refuses to wait on a man. She strictly adheres to her motif of independence but uses man as a sexual object just for pleasure. The heroine falls in love with only one man, Roland, because she has the feeling that he does not want to possess her. When she realizes that he wants her to bear his children, she loses her interest in him. She refuses to bear children and when she becomes pregnant, she does not hesitate to abort her child, Xuela does not want others to decide for her what she should do.

### **Conclusion**

Kincaid's novel *The Autography of My Mother*, is presented the girl children have completely denied their identity and equality. The main reason is, women's subordination by proving that a woman is able to work as hard as a man, When Xuela starts to work as a road-builder, she cuts her hair and wears men's clothes. She does not look attractive at all. Nevertheless, she earns a lot of money and wins her independence. Thus, the young woman proves that the



beauty myth, according to which only beautiful and attractive women can become successful, really is only a myth. She "[carries her] life in [her] own hands" (174) and feels happy.

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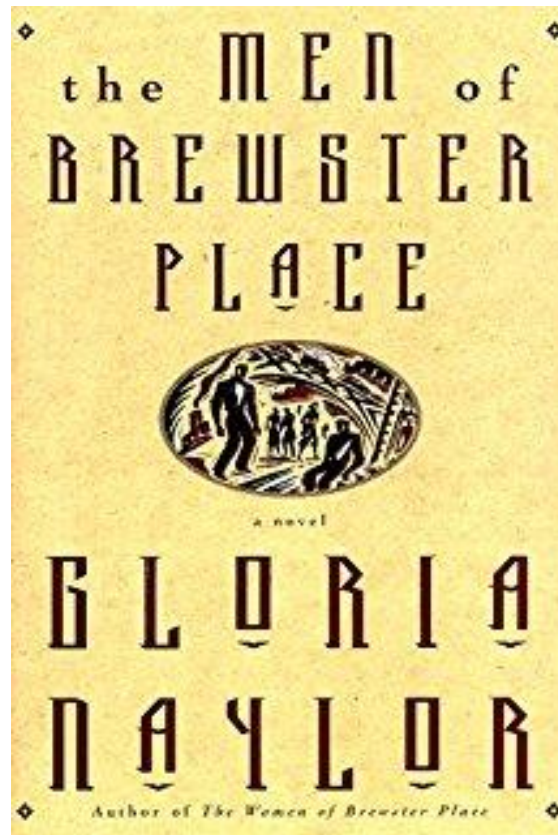
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Powerlessness and Quest for Self in Gloria Naylor's  
*The Men of Brewster Place*

D. Punitham and C. Santhosh Kumar

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Courtesy: <https://www.amazon.com/Linden-Hills-Gloria-Naylor/dp/B004FRKSG0>

**Gloria Naylor**

Gloria Naylor was born in Harlem on January 25, 1950, later her parents settled in New York City. Though she was from a poor family background, she was well educated by her parents. She was taken to library by her mom to make her a great writer at her very young age. Naylor who used all these facilities became a fervent reader and used her knowledge in writing poems and short stories at her age of 12. She as a youngster decided to join the Jehovah Witness Missionary to serve people. She was so much fascinated by the speeches of Martin Luther King; the

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assigination of him brought a major impact in Naylor. She felt that his death is a great blow to the uplift of black Community.

For next seven years she worked as missionary in order to search meaning of her life. She felt that she must stand against all odds and work for the development of her community. For this purpose, she felt that she must educate herself better, so at the age of 25 she left the missionary and joined Medgar Evers College and was later transferred to Brooklyn College to pursue a degree in English literature. Naylor did not stop with one degree. She worked as a telephone operator in hotels and with that money she pursued her degree in Nursing at Medgar Evers College.

### **Her First Novel *The Women Of Brewster Place* (1982)**

Naylor's eyes opened when she read the works of Zora Neale Hurston, Toni Morrison, and Alice Walker. She started to write keeping these writers as her role model. In 1980 her short stories was published in *Essence Magazine* by Viking Publishing Company. The next year she published her first novel *The Women of Brewster Place* (1982). This novel was about seven women of various ages and background who live in Brewster Place. Despite their differences they were united for one cause to fulfil their dreams deferred by racism and sexism. This novel bagged her The American Book Award for best first novel in 1983.

### ***Linden Hills* and Other Novels**

Naylor published her second novel *Linden Hills* in 1985. She published her third novel *Mama Day* in the year 1988. In 1992 she published her fourth novel *Bailey's Café* and in 1988 she published her fifth novel *The Men of Brewster Place*. Naylor in all her books has successfully sketched the damaging influences of Whiteman's standards and values on black community. In her writing she artistically gives the details of how the ideologies of whites have brought devastation in the cultural domain and in the value of living of African-Americans.

### **Black Characters**

Naylor present her black characters with their own culture and own place because according to her having own identity is like having everything like health, wealth and family. Her novel *The Men of Brewster Place* she speaks about the problems of black men who are always in confused state and at instant wanted to regret to their female companions. Every male character in the novel whether married or not, they are somehow related to some female character as father, son, husband, boyfriend, or friend. Men in this story commits mistakes often, they feel socially insecure and politically unstable and are so weak to face any problems alone hence they feel comfortable to stick with their family for a happy living.

In this article the powerlessness of black men and their search for self will be discussed in detail with reference to Naylor's *The Men of Brewster Place*.

### ***The Men of Brewster Place***

The novel *The Men of Brewster Place* starts with a Prologue *Dusk*, which symbolically says that the bad times of all the men in Brewster place is ending. Ben's spirit is the narrator of the novel. It revolves around seven men characters who don't share their secrets to others and they

had nothing in common neither as a dream nor an objective. Ben is in the father figure of the Brewster place. His duty was to protect all the inhabitants of the place. Ben learns lesson from the life of his grandfather Jones. Later he learns his second lesson about how to behave in a society from Billy, who is a dedicated worker. Ben observes that black men are controlled by white in all aspects of life. He thinks that white men's economic control is everywhere.

### **Ben and Elvira**

Ben marries Elvira, whom she finds so dedicated and perfect. After few days of their marriage Ben understands that Elvira is a racist, this creates many bitter experiences in him. Ben endured Elvira only because of their beautiful, lovely, little daughter. Mr. Clyde offered job to Ben and Elvira, to keep the house tide in his absence of him, the couple accepts the offer. After few months working in the house Ben found the changes in the behavior of his daughter, who becomes a victim of child abuse. When the child first complains to her parents Elvira did not believe and scolds her daughter for lying but Ben trusts his daughter and learns the third lesson of his life. But the third lesson was twofold, like his daughter's worst experience with Mr. Clyde, the death of his grandfather's sister who was raped to death at her young age of 10 by a powerful white man. This memory of his grandfather's sister makes him feel furious at times. But being a protective father of his only, child he felt completely powerless and impotent to help his daughter or to punish his white master.

After seeing the lethargic attitude of the parents, the daughter runs out of home to Memphis to earn more money. Ben finds the place much unsafe for his daughter. Here Naylor depicts that the poverty of the black men makes them powerless in rich white men society. Ben finds helpless and falls prey to his guilty consciousness. He feels powerless as he couldn't kill Clyde or Elvira and decides to kill himself by drinking hard.

### **Jerome**

The second story is about Jerome, who was unable to speak, write or go out alone, he was an expert in repairing piano. This character of Naylor says that men should struggle against white's persecution until they succeed. The third story is about Basil, who searches his father Butch Fuller, after the death of his mother Mattie. He finds Butch Fuller and gets to know about the story of why his father left his mom. Later Basil falls in love with Keisha who was mother of two children. Keisha's children get close with Ben but Keisha takes away the kids from Basil and when they meet again everything was changed Keisha started living once again with Penny and her children did not recognize Basil. He gets terrified and swallows all his pain with the hope of new dream and aims.

### **Eugene**

The novels fourth character is Eugene, who left his wife as he was unemployed. Though he loved his wife and daughter unconditionally he couldn't be with them because of his ill-fate. He feels bad for the death of his daughter and so beats himself with leather whip as a punishment for his sin. Ben's fifth introduction is Reverend Moreland T. Woods, minister of Sinai Baptist Church. He gets married to Annette. Moreland starts seducing women who comes for help from him. When Deacon Bennett gets to know this he calls for a meeting against Moreland. In order to

escape the situation Moreland plans to put the blame on Deacon that he is responsible for the pregnancy of Sister Louise, Deacon couldn't win against injustice, but he never stopped his spirit for fighting against injustice.

With the smooth soul that Ben has identified, Woods becomes a means by which the Brewster Place members of Sinai can measure their own ragged wounds of the soul. Sinai will continue because people like Deacon Bennett will never stop fighting for it. Moreland T. Woods, on the other hand, is only passing through. (12)

### **C.C. Baker**

The sixth character is C.C. Baker, who is known for his violence and who was involved in the rape case of Lorraine. He also kills his brother Hakim.

He is only twelve years old when his mother and father stop trying. They can't keep him in school and off the streets. His father came back from Vietnam with one leg and three of his fingers blown off. . . . His mother works full-time to keep them off welfare. But there are six children in this home – two his father brought from another marriage – and only so much energy to go around. They lost the oldest boy, Hakim to the streets and he hasn't been home in three years. (123)

### **Abshu**

The last character of novel is Abshu, He was the most positive and is like a role model for next generations to come. He is a playwright and was so much attached to his family; he had two sisters and a little brother. His father was a rude man and he used to beat Abushu's mother as he was alcoholic, because of this Child's Protection Agency puts all four children in different homes. Abshu's mother tries to bring them back to their home. Abshu has been taken by Mason family. Abshu finishes his graduation and helped his mom with the money he got. Abshu started to fight against injustice done against women and redeemed them. This characterizing of Abshu shows that if men of Brewster Place when walked in right path they get good position in the society.

### **Dealing with Men's Problems**

Only few women writers wrote about men's problems. Gloria Naylor is one such writer who wrote on the black men problems in a society. *The Men of Brewster Place* is a classic example for bringing forward the conditions of black men to the world. She has so well portrayed the good and bad shades of seven black men characters in her novel; she has attempted to bring out the self-identity and self-respect of black men in this novel. This study shows that not only Black women, but also Black men are under depression. The readers can be how Naylor has expounded the portrayed of Powerless black men in American society.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

**Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: Vol. II Black Writings: A Subaltern Perspective**

D. Punitham and C. Santhosh Kumar

Powerlessness and Quest for Self in Gloria Naylor's *The Men of Brewster Place*



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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 **18:3 March 2018**

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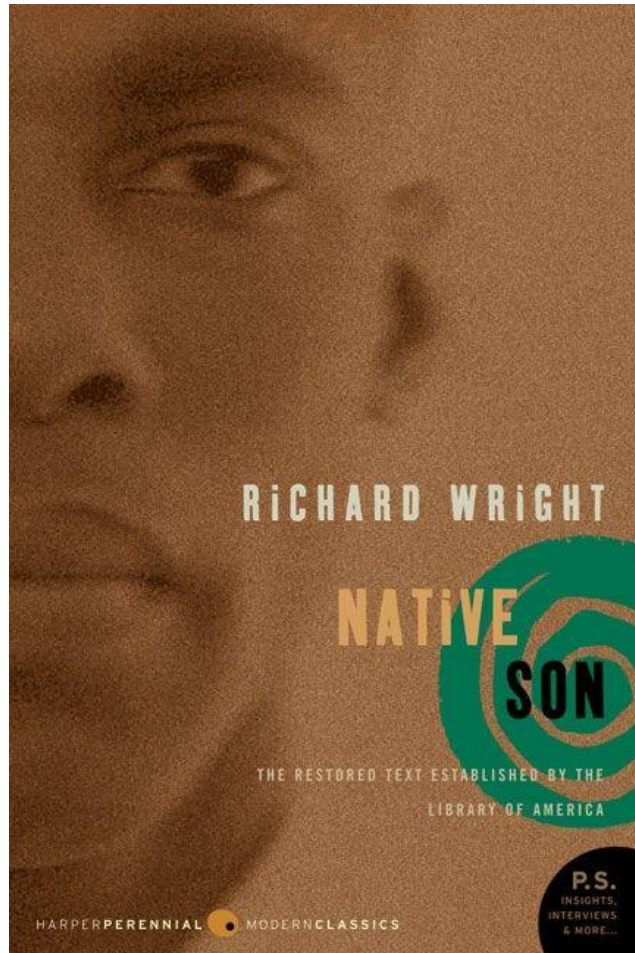
Powerlessness and Quest for Self in Gloria Naylor's *The Men of Brewster Place*

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## The Racial Issues in Richard Wright's *Native Son*

Dr. S. Rajeswari

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Courtesy: <https://www.harpercollins.com/9780060837563/native-son>

### Abstract

Richard Wright in his astonishing novel, *Native Son* (1940). Wright explore the inheritance of black American history and its effect upon American citizens, and present a worldview tempered by the cynicism that has formed during centuries of oppression. These authors support the resistance against the white power systems which have perpetuated this oppression, but with a realistic view of the repercussions of racial conflict. The authors establish

the black American identity as a state of being both inside and outside one's homeland, deeply rooted in American culture but exiled from real citizenship. Expatriation has enabled these authors to examine the international bonds between black Americans and other oppressed peoples, leading each to assert that those who are cognizant of these racial issues around the world have an obligation to fight for freedom and for the right to exist within one's home country.

The most well-known of Richard Wright's works, *Native Son* follows the crimes of a young black man, Bigger Thomas, who is completely socially isolated and who becomes nearly barbaric in his actions as a result. The narrative explores the psyche of this man stuck within the cycle of racism which prevents his advancement, and which pushes him to commit murder as a means of protecting himself within a broken system. Bigger Thomas stands as a representative of many such lives which have been lost to the ravages of systematic racism. As Wright explores in his introduction, these men have faced a lifetime of bigotry and white control, and they have found that the only effective means of self-assertion and self-expression is through violence. These men live in a country that despises them, whose justice system has no recourse of self-defense, and whose liberal whites do not understand the depth of hatred faced by black Americans. The Bigger Thomases of the world see the system which aims to destroy their sense of self and will to live, and so they fight back against that system through the only means they have. Wright's narrative explores not only the psychological process behind Bigger's actions, but also reveals the repercussions of othering black Americans to the point that they are utterly estranged from their countrymen. By examining this particular figure of a black American, Wright is able to depict the fatal disadvantages that black people face as a whole and investigate the social undercurrents that lead to such violent rebellion.

Bigger is a young, poor black man living in the 1930's Chicago South Side with his mother and two siblings. His father is dead, and Bigger must provide for the family alongside his mother. He is part of a gang that frequently robs black businesses in order to get money. Bigger has been registered with the local social aide office and has received a job assignment that he is reluctant to accept, for his mother is constantly guilted him to accept it and to work like a man. He focuses on the gang's next hit instead, their first attack planned against a white business. He and his friends are nervous to target a white man, so Bigger starts a fight that prevents them from enacting the robbery and which splits him from the gang. He accepts the job position, and when he arrives at the home of his new employer, Bigger finds himself utterly lost and isolated within the rich white home of Mr. Dalton, a real estate investor who owns Bigger's apartment building and many others. Bigger has never been in a professional or social setting with whites and finds himself extremely uncomfortable and shy in their presence.

Mrs. Dalton, the blind wife of Mr. Dalton, and their daughter Mary Dalton are both welcoming to Bigger, but also excessively overfamiliar. Bigger fears for his job because of Mary's openness, but overall enjoys the new position because he will be newly independent and well-paid. Later that night, he is asked to drive Mary to her class, but finds that she actually wants to pick up her Communist activist boyfriend, Jan. Feeling that he must obey Mary's every command in order to keep his job, Bigger must obey their wish to sit in the front seat of the car with him and to dine

at an ‘authentic’ black restaurant. He is forced to sit and eat with them, and he drinks heavily in order to cope with his discomfort while they attempt to recruit him into the Communist Party. They give him pamphlets, and then ask him to drive around the park while they continue to drink.

After dropping Jan off at a party, Bigger brings Mary back to the Dalton home, where he must help her up to bed because she is too drunk to walk. Mrs. Dalton comes in to check on Mary, but she does not know that Bigger is in the room. He panics and fears that Mary will give him away, and he accidentally suffocates her with her pillow. After Mrs. Dalton leaves, he realizes he must dispose of the body and come up with an alibi for this death. Bigger sneaks the body to the cellar, cuts off its head, and stuffs it all into the furnace to be incinerated.

The next day, the house is filled with journalists reporting the missing heiress, as well as a private investigator working for Mr. Dalton. They accidentally discover the bones of Mary in the furnace, and Bigger flees the house before they can place blame on him. He reaches out to his girl, Bessie, and confesses his crimes to her, forcing her to go on the run with him. He knows that she is a liability and is coldly aware that he must get rid of her eventually. The two run around the South Side looking for adequate shelter, and after they bunk down for the night in an abandoned building, Bigger rapes Bessie and smashes her head in with a brick. He dumps her still-living body down an airshaft and continues to flee, carefully tracking and avoiding the police-condoned mob searching for him.

The area of freedom becomes more and more restricted, until Bigger is finally stranded on a rooftop, where he resists capture but is eventually frozen out. He is taken to jail, where he must face the Daltons, his family, and his gang. Bigger receives the sympathy of Jan, who realizes his own role as a white man in the oppressive system, and who puts him in touch with a Communist lawyer, Max. This lawyer understands the reality of Bigger’s life as a black man and gets him to open up about the motives for his crimes. Max uses these motives in court to argue against the racist structure that has created Bigger and motivated his actions, but the influence of the prosecution is too strong for them to achieve anything. Bigger is sentenced to death, and in the days before he is executed, he comes to terms with what his life has been. He finds that his crimes meant something, that they were a means of expressing control in a world that deprives him of his self-sovereignty. Bigger then walks calmly to his death.

The Bigger character is a conglomeration of tendencies observed by Richard Wright during his time among the various black communities of America. Wright recognized the urge to express some type of control among many black men, even to the point of sadism. The general Bigger is “never...happier than when he had someone cornered and at his mercy” (*Native* ix), for he is able to invert the power structure that has dominated his life and redirect that hatred towards someone else. The white system has treated Bigger sadistically his entire life, indeed all black men during their lives. Innocent men are picked up by the police for unresolved crimes, then “grilled night and day, hanged up by his thumbs, dangled by his feet out of twenty-story windows, and beaten (in places that leave no scars...)” (xxviii).

The police system has every opportunity to use and abuse black men, and the justice system manipulates these ‘criminals’ in order to send a message to the black community. The courts use black defendants, innocent or not, as “bloody symbol[s] of fear to wave before the eyes of that black world” (257). Police abuse reiterates and confirms stereotypes of black criminality, which in turn keep black people poor and powerless. The Bigger figure reacts to this suppression by taking what he needs from the system.

Although Wright reflects that he personally was “more willing to tighten our belts than risk conflict” (ix), he recognizes the value of Bigger’s attitude in light of a culture that does not allow a black man to make enough money to pay rent, live well, and eat well all at once. Black Americans have been deprived of any power via “disenfranchisement...supplemented by a whole panoply of rules, taboos, and penalties designed to not only insure peace (complete submission), but to guarantee that no real threat would ever arise” (xii). The black community still desires to be an active part of their nation, “to belong, to be identified, to feel that they were alive as other people were” (xiv), and so they come to admire the agency of totalitarian leaders as men of action. The Bigger model of man desires this level of control, to be empowered to decide his own life, to be able to “take his life into his own hands and dispose of it as he pleased” (141). However, this desire for self-control extends beyond himself, and results in cruelty towards those who are closest to him.

He must live as he likes to be utterly free, and so he must sacrifice family connection in order to be his own first priority. Bigger is extremely critical of his family—his mother, who has worked herself into constant fatigue for her family, is a mere nag to him. His sister is only an object for mockery, and his young brother is unintelligent and annoying to him. Bigger disdains his family, and so he shrinks back from his role as a provider for them, leaving the entire burden on their mother. Even as his mother is begging the Daltons to spare her son’s life, Bigger only feels shame: he is so far distant from her emotionally that he cannot understand or bear her open submission to rich white people. Bigger’s girlfriend Bessie is merely a means to an end for him—he uses her for sex, and then forces her to help him flee with “fear of capture and death” (142). Bigger only sees value in a life as it benefits himself, and so he coldly decides who around him is worthy of his support, and who may die.

Although Bigger manipulates those around him in an effort to control his surroundings, he is still impotent when faced with the vast white system which overreaches him:

He hated his family because he knew that they were suffering and that he was powerless to help them. He know the moment he allowed himself to feel to its fullest how they lived, the shame and misery of their lives, he would be swept out of himself with fear and despair” (13).

Bigger is tormented by the idea that he is helpless to change his life or the lives of his loved ones, and this frustration transforms into more anger towards his world and towards himself. He desires control, so his sense of self is deeply threatened by his impotence. He is a conscious man, aware of all of his disadvantages, but this knowledge is aggravating. He cannot stop thinking about



the system in which he exists, and he “can’t get used to” the fact that “[t]hey got things and we ain’t...[t]hey do things and we can’t” (22-23). His friend Gus tells him “[y]ou think too much” (24) for his own good, and Gus is right. The white power system was designed to keep black Americans deaf and dumb, ignorant of the extent of their disadvantages and unwilling to fight for themselves. By being actively conscious of the racism surrounding him, Bigger feels the effects all the more painfully. This frustration only feeds his need to act, because he believes that “his folks...had to live this way precisely because none of them in all their lives had ever done anything, right or wrong, that mattered much” (100). Restricted by a system that devalues their lives, they do not have any options through which they can make their lives matter. Even the family aide programs that are offered by white liberals are pointless, because they only exist to reduce white guilt and cannot truly affect a people whose lives they cannot understand.

Bigger’s “feeling of being forever commanded by others so much that thinking and feeling for [him]self was impossible” (307) renders him incapacitated against the snare of the white power system. He cannot escape it, and so he can only violently resist it in order to feel some sort of control over himself and the path of his life.

The cycles of fear and of violence that run throughout the black community in Wright’s Chicago are inextricably linked. Blacks exist in the context of white life, and so they must consider the rules of the whites at all times. Men such as Bigger, who are conscious of their disadvantages under white control, feel that the whites are inside his head. He internalizes white restriction and instills fear in himself out of habit. While planning their first robbery of a white business, Bigger feels that the risk is greater than ever despite the store being smaller than others they have robbed.

Blum’s store was small and Blum was alone, but Bigger could not think of robbing him without being flanked by his three pals. But even with his pals he was afraid. He had argued all of his pals but one into consenting to the robbery, and toward the lone man who held out he felt a hot hate and fear; he had transferred his fear of the whites to Gus. He hated Gus because he knew the Gus was afraid, as even he was; and he feared Gus because he felt that Gus would consent and then he would be compelled to go through with the robbery. (28)

The ideological isolation in which Bigger has achieved his manhood makes him unable to truly connect with anyone. He looks down upon those who he perceives to live ‘lesser’ lives, most directly in his relationships with women. Although Bigger has been raised by his hardworking mother, he has come to resent her as a symbol of their family’s poverty and of the futility of working to improve one’s life. Bigger feels a similar disdain for his girlfriend Bessie, whom he views as powerless and deprived of true feeling or purpose. He resents both women because they do not live as he does, constantly rebelling against the system of control surrounding them.

Wright’s America is the manufacturer of this environment of physical and mental control, and there are many ideologies within it that allow for the continued disenfranchisement of black Americans. One of the most powerful of these principles is the illusory American Dream, the idea that anything is available to those who work hard to advance themselves. The Dream lures devotees

with the “glitter...[of] newspapers, magazines, radios, movies, and the mere imposing sight and sound of daily American life” (xiii). The glamour of rich whites is advertised to poor whites and blacks alike, but it is the poor black who are truly estranged from the wealth of America. The knowledge of how to succeed within the American system is carefully guarded within the white world: “it was all a game and white people knew how to play it” (36). Bigger idolizes the icons of rich whitedom, as keepers “of white secrets” (45) that lead to wealth and glamour. Because he is excluded from the possibility of achieving his dreams of influence, the rich white world stands as a forbidden temptation, a mocking phantasm of unattainable well-being. Bigger stands both within and without this national dream, in a dual state of identity. He has been brought up in the context of American idealism and optimism, but “not allowed to live as an American” (xxiv). He cannot participate in the dream he can only surpass the low expectations that have been set for him.

The accidental murder of Mary is the only real act of Bigger’s life thus far, and he “did not want to be called crazy” for it (286). Rather, he has an intense compulsion to share the background of his life and to have his crime be understood. This need for compassion binds him to Max, who along with Jan is the only man who pushes Bigger to try to explain what his life has been like and what he felt when he killed Mary. Bigger can only communicate this to Max because of his sympathetic experiences, because to explain his motivations requires “an explanation of his entire life” (286). Bigger’s life has been isolated by both the white system and by the racial self-consciousness that has distanced him from other black people: “he had never given himself wholeheartedly to anyone or anything, except murder” (383). He has long wished to share his emotions but has had no outlet to do so. In talking with Max, he is able to reflect upon his actions and present the feelings of his real self in the safety of a sympathetic counsel. Max understands his need to express the real self, even using it within his argument that black people have been stripped of agency and identity in America:

Your Honor, remember that men can starve from a lack of self-realization as much as they can from a lack of bread! And they can *murder* for it, too! Did we not build a nation, did we not wage war and conquer in the name of a dream to realize our personalities and to make those realized personalities secure! (366).

Self-expression is the only path to self-control for Bigger, and after discovering this ability it becomes his only comfort. He feels a deep need to be understood before his death, and in the final scene of the novel he is able to discuss his perspective one last time with Max. Through his discussions with Max, Bigger is able to feel “a recognition of his life, of his feelings, of his person” (333) that he never had been able to before. He accepts this feeling as common to all man, as a sign that he is indeed a person who deserves to have emotions, who deserves to have his story told.

Bigger Thomas is Wright’s image of the American creature—a figure viciously alone and yet deeply craving connection with others. The narrative of Bigger is a tale of manhood and self-determination warped by isolation and fear, the struggle of a black man to be seen and understood by the white world which engulfs him. Although he is born of this country, he is not of it: to assert his personhood within America is to commit a forbidden offense against the power systems that define the country itself. Bigger must work outside of the law in order to find some means of

control. He acts to protect himself, he murders to defy the white system and to defeat fear. He has been so thoroughly estranged from his countrymen that he has become a different people. His life is so replete with futility and anger that he must take action, any action, to rebel against this constant oppression. Wright has thoroughly depicted the psychological development of such a man, making clear the fatal repercussions of that total lack of empathy that is racism. Wright's portrayal of the American system of racism not only destroys a man's life from birth, it breeds inhumanity in those who benefit from it.

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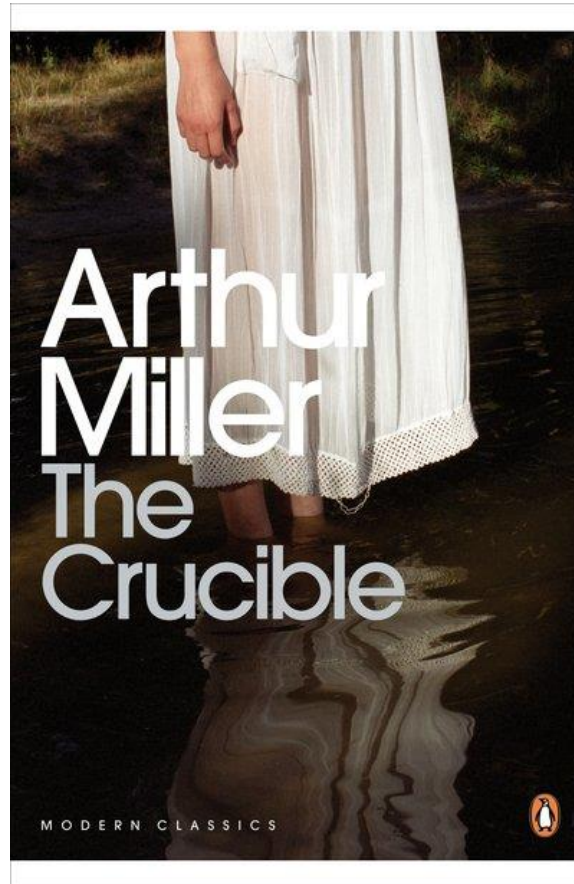
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## Social Conformity in Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*

S. Ramesh and Dr. P. Premchandar

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Courtesy: <https://www.penguin.co.nz/books/the-crucible-9780141182551>

### Abstract

The purpose of the present article is to describe the social problem in Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* through the protagonist Elizabeth Proctor. This play is a portrayal of the Salem Witch

Trials in 1692. In *The Crucible*, Arthur Miller investigates what happens when individuals enable others to be the judges of their still, small voices. The witch chase in seventeenth century Salem is to a great extent an after effect of society subduing the sexuality of

the natives. On account of this suppression, Abigail and alternate young ladies move in the timberland subtly, an occasion that triggers the other occasions in the play. Miller is reprimanding social similarity through the character of John Proctor, by proposing that the best way to an equitable life is tuning in to one's own particular still, small voice. Delegates decline to be a piece of this careless and sporadic incident which chase definitely in light of the fact that it is clashing with his own particular ethical quality.

**Keywords:** Arthur Miller, *The Crucible*, social, Salem Witch, suppression

### **Social Problem in Arthur Miller's *The Crucible***

The purpose of the present article is to describe the social problem in Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* through the protagonist Elizabeth Proctor. *The Crucible* focuses on the irregularities of the Salem witch trials and the strange consequences that follow, because of the darkness and shrouded plans. Miller's investigation of the human mind and behaviour makes the play a persisting perfect work of art, despite the fact that McCarthyism has blurred into history. On one hand Miller tends to attempt a neat study especially the dull period of American history-a period in which society trusted the Devil walked the place of Salem and could end up plainly show in anybody, even a nearby or, more regrettable yet, a relative. Then again, Miller moves past a talk of witchcraft and what truly occurred in Salem to investigate human inspiration and the resulting behaviour. The play keeps on influencing groups of on lookers by enabling them to perceive how the unwanted desires and shrouded plans can be played out.

### **Judge of Small Voice**

In *The Crucible* Arthur Miller investigates what happens when individuals enable others to be the judge of their still, small voice. Mill operator is discussing an anecdote to McCarthy-period of chase for communists in the U.S. of the 1950s. As in the seventeenth century Salem, the American communists were compelled to admit their wrongdoings with a specific end goal to spare themselves from brutal punishments. This paper discusses and investigates how social powers influence the characters in the play.

### **Salem Witch-Trials**

The Salem witch-trials speak about one of the black pages of American history, an appalling variation of that puritan of autonomy which has contributed much to the finest parts of the American national character. In a rush of mania that cleared the town of Salem in 1692, nineteen grown-ups and two canines were hanged for witchcraft, and one man was squeezed to death for declining to argue. The confirmation of otherworldly impact brought against the blamed comprised initially for the declaration of various young ladies of age from nine to twenty. This declaration was bolstered by various physical side effects such as swooning, or insane fits. Since those blamed for witchcraft could spare their lives by admitting and distinguishing different witches, it isn't amazing that doubt spread quickly. The witch-chase finished when a gathering of chapel pioneer in Boston pronounced that the unsupported proof of witnesses was deficient to legitimize capital punishment. Under the watchful eye of the court that had been disparaged, in any case, increasingly that 150 people had been blamed and limited to jail to anticipate trial.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

**Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: Vol. II Black Writings: A Subaltern Perspective**

S. Ramesh and Dr. P. Premchandar

Social Conformity in Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*



### **Mr. Mill Operator**

With the Salem witch chase trials of 1692 as an ethical edge and purpose of flight, Mr. Mill operator has gone ahead to look at the changeless states of the atmosphere of madness. The New England disaster was for him, drastically, a happy decision since it is available to us innovatively; as one of only a handful few extremely silly ejections American culture has seen, it holds still its crude energy to force the consideration. What's more, it shows, in addition, the few highlights of the traditionally crazy circumstance: the interesting good speculative chemistry by which the denounced end up plainly sacred; the offensiveness which overwhelms the declaration of straightforward knowledge; the emphasis on open retribution; the readiness to pardon if blame is admitted. It is creative dread that Mr. Mill operator is here conjuring: not the strong scaffold and the rope horrify him, however the shut and choking out universe of the enthusiast, against which the judgment and will are frail.

### **Abigail and Young Ladies**

The witch chase in seventeenth century Salem is to a great extent an after effect of society subduing the sexuality of the natives. On account of this suppression Abigail and alternate young ladies are moving in the timberland subtly, an occasion that triggers the occasions in the play. Salem was amid this timeframe, as Miller depicts, "a theocracy which had as its main goal to prevent disunity in the community" (228). The witch chase was an after effect of individuals looking for more prominent individual flexibility, similar to the young ladies do when they attempt to express their sexuality by moving.

### **Witchcraft as Opposed to Coming Clean**

Obviously, the general population of the town respond with repulsiveness to the corrupt conduct of the young ladies and point the finger at them for speaking with abhorrent spirits. Parris accuses witchcraft as opposed to coming clean about the young ladies conduct, since speaking with underhanded spirits is more worthy than communicating sexuality: Abigail: "Uncle, the rumour of witchcraft is all about; I think you'd best go down and deny it yourself..." Parris: "And what shall I say to them? That my daughter and my niece I discovered dancing like heathen in the forest?" (230). Parris is feeling the weight of his group and chooses to act as per what is socially satisfactory. The town people demonstrated like the pioneers and take the high good ground and censure the general population who transgress the ethical laws of the group despite the fact that this is, as a rule, in strife with their sound judgment.

### **Childishness Takes the High Ground**

The town people are torn between their own heart and their self-centeredness, and for the greater part childishness takes the high ground. Most town people are appeared to be corrupt since they name the general population they disdain as being professionals of witchcraft. The church is made mindful of this through the expressions of Hale: "Private vengeance is working through this testimony" (318).

### **Disabling Individuals**

All things being equal, the ministry overlooks the way that the witch-chase truly is a way to disable the individuals who can't help contradicting the estimations of their general public.

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The craziness imparted between the individuals from the group takes tremendous extents; the mass delirium forms into a standardized agitation, which the pastors are initiating. The pastorate is asserting that they are given the privilege to judge by God. The outcome is that both the occupants of Salem and the pioneers, both the ministry and God, are taking an interest in an overwhelming witch chase that appears to be relentless.

In this manner, the town people under the initiative of the church are denouncing and rebuffing pretend activities that they regard to be not unlawful, but rather activities that, in their eyes, are improper. They have shaped an ethical solidarity that looks to demolish everybody who needs to break free of this solidarity.

### **Reprimanding Social Similarity, Need to Break Free of Overwhelming Social Powers**

By and by, Miller is reprimanding social similarity, this time through the character of John Proctor by proposing that the best way to an equitable life is tuning in to your own particular still, small voice. Delegate declines to be a piece of this careless and sporadic witch chase definitely in light of the fact that it is clashing with his own particular ethical quality. He can't forsake his profound quality despite the fact that he will pay for it with his life, he feels that it is his duty to act.

Mill operator, as in *Death of a Salesman*, is recommending that breaking free of the overwhelming social powers is simply the best way to spare. In any case, in *The Crucible*, Proctor can't spare his life; just pick not to be a piece of the witch chase so as to spare his name:

Proctor: "Because it is my name! Because I cannot have another in my life!  
Because It is and sign myself to lies! Because I am not worth the dust on the  
feet of them that hang! How may I live without my name? I have given you my  
soul; leave me my name. (103)

By declining to admit to witchery Delegate is sparing himself from taking part in the witch chase. Delegate is in this way breaking free of the social powers in his group, however he pays for it with his life. Thus, he takes both individual and social obligation and is free of wrongdoing towards his kindred man.

Taking everything into account, the witch chase is a consequence of the group responding towards specific individuals' endeavors to express their independence. The pioneers of the group and the residents themselves were rebuffing to degenerate the individuals from society and were advocating this in the light of the way that these individuals were transgressing the ethical laws of their general public. The witch chase wound up noticeably overwhelming in light of the fact that the pioneers of the group were initiating it and guaranteeing that their entitlement to execute witches was given by God. Since the tenants of Salem put congruity in front of their own soul and ethical quality, the ghastly events were permitted to happen. Delegate, be that as it may, can't constrain himself to act against his ethical, individual and social still, small voice.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 **18:3 March 2018**

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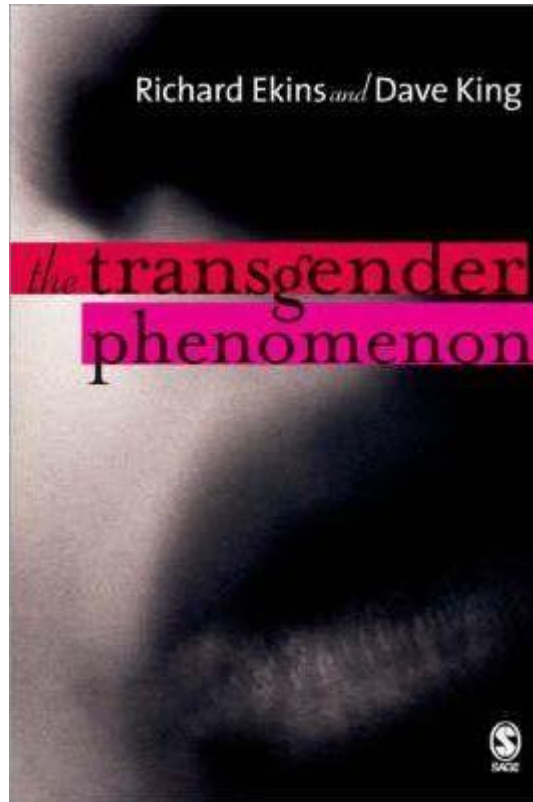
## Paula Grieg's Life under the Lens of Richard Ekins's Career Path Theory

S. Ramya and Dr. B. Cauveri

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*I refused to hide, because as Paula I have been hidden for a lifetime.*

(Grieg 210)



### Abstract

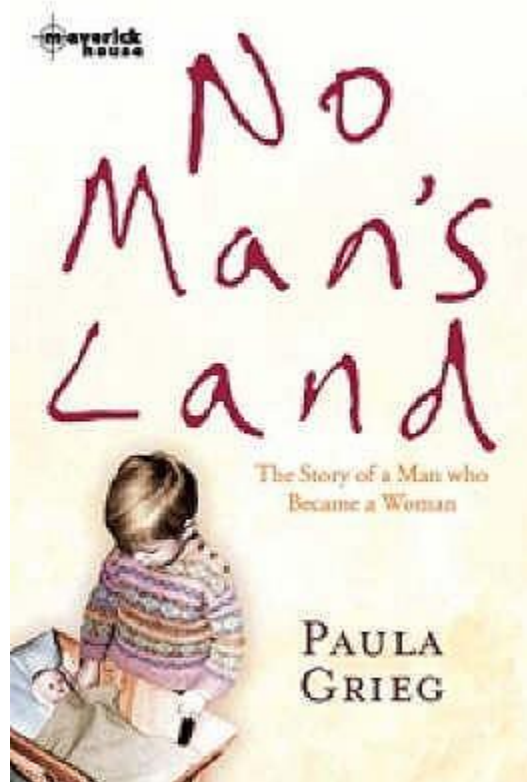
Paula Grieg, a transgender of the 1950s from Ireland has recorded her life's struggle in her autobiography *No Man's Land* (2007). She who has written her work under the pseudonym Paula Grieg, has done it so with an intention to make her book as a guide or eye-opener to those people of her similar type. This paper makes an attempt to trace the different phases of Paula Grieg using Richard Ekins's "career path theory". Richard Ekins a pioneer in the field of transgender theory

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and research, through his grounded theory approach has classified the life stages of transgenders under five phases. The grounded theory which he had arrived using the transgenders of UK stands true to the transgenders across the globe. This paper discusses the life struggle of the marginalised who die every moment to make their presence felt by the ‘host society’.

**Keywords:** Paula Grieg, “career path theory”, ‘grounded theory’, transgender, marginalised, ‘host society’

### Various Phases in a Transgender’s Life



Literature has widened its horizon towards a new genre, LGBT studies. The gender deviants who were once considered as minuscule’s have emerged to a state where they are able to record their life and make it public. All said and done, their own literature is still under scrutiny, for only a few were able to make it to this level. This paper discusses the various phases in a transgender’s life. Transgenders existence is evident from the religious texts and epics.

Their presence became unstable either after colonisation or war. Earlier they made a decent livelihood and were considered as human beings. The spread of religious principles, which insisted on anything away from the normal was considered a sin, made the ‘host society’ to ignore the transgenders. This gave rise to the use of various terms like ‘transbashing’, ‘gender fluidity’, ‘gender bender’ etc.



## Five Phases Identified in the Career Path Theory

Paula Grieg's life is analysed using Richard Ekins's career path theory which he formulated by undertaking a grounded theory approach to study the life style changes, stages or phases in a 'male femalers' life. Richard Ekins's career path theory was designed by questioning nearly 200 informants of the UK who were transgender. He narrowed down on the five phases as 'Beginning Femaling', 'Fantasying Femaling', 'Doing Femaling', 'Constituting Femaling', 'Consolidating Femaling', where every phase has certain features which were found common among the transgenders.

### Paul Grieg – Paula Grieg

Paul Grieg, (name changed) of Ireland, who lived a traumatic life post World War II, pens the apprehensions and struggles that he underwent and is still undergoing in order to live as Paula Grieg. Paula MtoF (Male to Female) was Paul for 51 years and at the age of 17 she felt and recognized the woman within her. Paula who does not want to reveal her identity, keeping in mind the well-being of her family members, has written her autobiography, *No Man's Land* (2007) under a false name. A special note like a preface in her autobiography makes this clear.

Paula Grieg is writing under a false name to protect the privacy of her family, whose lives have already been adversely affected as a result of her Gender Dysphoria. All names, places and place names are false. Any resemblance to anyone living or dead is purely coincidental. (Grieg)

### Phase One: 'Beginning Femaling'

Richard Ekins identifies this stage as 'primary deviance', where the individual involves in cross dressing whenever they are in isolation. During this phase a kind of mental anguish goes within because they feel they do not resemble others, who belong to the binary gender and who are in their age group. The ways they are separated both within themselves and from the others makes them stay aloof from the normal crowd. For Paula this separation of the individual from the rest of the family meant when he was all alone in his home. For him the primary deviance started at the age of 17, adolescent age. "I felt this strange sensation that I was somehow opening the door to my real identity for the very first time. Before long, a trance-like state of excitement overcame me and I felt warm liquid running down my thigh" (Grieg 41). Paul, like the youngsters of his age, did analyse the changes within at the age of 17 without isolating from the real world Paul stayed with his parents, went to job got married, had children and did all this appearing as a man i.e. sexually – biological setup but according to gender in a socially constructed one – he lead a life as a woman.

His first cross dressing act started when he was alone in his house. He enjoyed the feeling of being a woman when he wore his mother's clothes. He explains that there was a sudden urge which made him do such an act. Ekins identifies that the individuals apart from cross dressing also have an inclination towards women's clothes which they experience through "'tactile', 'visual' or 'olfactory'" (Ekins 40) senses. Paul was able to feel and enjoy his mothers clothes through 'tactile'

and ‘visual’ senses. “...I put on the soft knickers. They felt so much nicer than anything I would usually have to wear” (Grieg 40).

‘Beginning Femaling’ phase they question themselves for such a state of theirs. Though they are confused there are certain moments when they would question themselves. They are not able to openly claim that they are female at heart and mind, nor are they able to do justice to the assigned sex during birth. They are confused to even realise what is happening within them. They feel that they are doubly oppressed from within and from the outside world. Paula questions herself as ‘I could imagine being a girl, but why should I want to?’ (Grieg 41), “...something any mum’s little daughter might try and feel none the worse for it, but why me? (Grieg 40).

### **Phase Two: ‘Fantasying Femaling’**

Ekins points out that in this stage the individual would dream or imagine as if they are accepted by their loved ones. They go to the extent of dreaming that they wake up as woman on a fine morning. Paul claims that he always had dreams and he always was a girl in his dreams. His dreams he was always amidst girls and he says that he wanted to live that life, for it was his real self. In order to find solace in his dreams he points out that he never was willing to let go his womanly dreams. “If I could recall one of these dreams on wakening I would lie there trying to hold onto it and then have to let go, the feelings of contentment giving way to confusion and loneliness” (Grieg 42).

In this stage they also suppress their real self and give life to it whenever time permits them. They in fact have to lead a life of lie for they cannot openly come out as a woman. “...at this stage the fantasying female keeps separate from his everyday world, thus keeping the latter more or less ‘normal’ and enabling its development more or less boundaried from the incipient femaling world” (Ekins 42).

### **Phase Three: ‘Doing Femaling’**

Ekins records that in this stage the individual would go full-fledged as a cross dresser without being worried of the host society. This phase they accumulate their own female clothing and enjoy being dressed as a woman. They learn all the nuances of how to behave, project and showcase like a girl or woman. In this phase they go in search of literature to know about people of their similar type, for they may not be clear about their behavior. In this stage they also try to hide their male genitalia for they find pleasure in imagining themselves as a woman.

Paul becomes a full-fledged cross dresser, which even her wife Karen is aware of, of course without knowing the true reason behind this action. Paul accumulates female clothing and utilizes her official trips especially to cross dress. At one stage when she understood that she could not control her liking to be a woman, started to collect her own clothing and kept it in her private room. Whenever she was alone she came around the house dressed as a woman. She managed all her official trips to lead a life as a woman. She utilized all her outdoor stay effectively and enjoyed along with those who cross dressed like her. “When in the UK, I also arranged my trips in such a way that I would arrive as a man and a couple of hours later re-emerge as a woman, to go out...to another nearby hotel, which specifically serves the TS community” (Grieg 180).

Even when she was alone in a place where there were lots of cross dressers, in Village, Manchester, the society did its role of staring. "...all dressed up and rearing to go but it became a routine as my experience grew...while you might have to endure the occasional stares from the sight-seers, the Village tourists, ..." (Grieg 181).

They are able to zero in on what actually happens to them and within them. During this process of change they feel ashamed of their body. At this stage, they start to live their life either as women if male to female, as man if female to male. "This was the essence of confusion for me; I wanted to be treated sexually as female and yet had to use my male sex drive to accomplish it and would always feel embarrassed at the end about my male sex organs, which exposed the lie that was my inner emotions." (Grieg 175).

#### **Phase Four: 'Constituting Femaling'**

In this stage they gain confidence to identify who they are. Their experience in the earlier three phases has gained momentum in their present state of life and is ready to open up with what they really want. "By now, understanding and empathy had given way to self-preservation" (Grieg 199). As a first step they try to get a female name for themselves. Paul becomes Paula which was a tedious process for which she had to wait for more than a year. She reveals her true self to her children through a letter. "It was indeed a gut-wrenching, heartbreaking, tearful discussion, which followed. ...here I was telling them that I could only see a meaningful life for me as a woman (Grieg 198). She also reveals her true self to her family members and to her boss in her office.

This is like a stress buster for Paula for she was living a life of lie for nearly fifty years. Once she understood her real self and when she disclosed it to her loved ones, this gave her the confidence to lead a life as a woman.

Standing in the threshold they try to focus on where their destiny is. They are very much aware that the society will not welcome them with a red carpet. "I, Paula, cannot return openly to all the places I have lived, I will feel exiled and not at home. May be when and if that ban is lifted I might accept England as home. Physically I am housed, but emotionally I feel homeless," (Grieg 208). Even after giving birth to two kids, she questioned herself as why all this was ck word usage on her. She felt sorry for having been such a bad husband. She always had a thought of guilt that she had deceived her family. She felt sorry but could not stick on to the role of 'man'. "I could not continue to live a double life based on a lie; I was the lie and I needed to be the truth" (Grieg 184).

They used their work place as a kind of free space for themselves so that they can hold on to both selves – the 'social self' and the 'real self'. Now in the west, though the sex and gender deviant, do not enjoy great legal status, they are widely accepted by the common man. There is no one to see or talk on the gender deviant as they are more worried about their personal life. During 1960's Paula had a difficult time as many were unaware of such a life. Paula claims that she was not aware of the term "gender identity disorder" or "transsexuals". "I never knew this terminology before but I knew instantly that I belonged to this group of people" (Grieg 142).

### **Phase Five: ‘Consolidating Femaling’**

It is in this stage the ‘male femaler’ is fully established as a female. The individual gets a frame work to develop his ‘femaling’ self and live as a female in his normal life. The self-realization helps them to prioritize their needs and change into who they actually want to be. To change into the desired gender, Paula had to undergo few procedures. She had to undergo counseling and had to live a life in the respective gender for three years which is called as the “Real Life Test”. In this phase too, Paula had to face lot of apprehensions from the society and family. Though she had ample money to undergo her Gender Reassignment Surgery, she lacked support from her friends and family, lack of which left her depressed. She began on hormones and estrogen while she was still living with her family and found it difficult to cope with her new change caused by them, as she was behaving more like a women.

...during meetings...I made my points but where before I might have reacted angrily to statement, I now found myself on the verge of tears..... Simultaneously within weeks my body was changing, with first my nipples very sensitive... my bum started to get a little rounder...all of that of course was most welcome, but also very difficult as I had to hide those changes (Grieg 204).

Though at heart they are happy and contented on their change the host society does not allow them to live their life. Paula states that the pain of the emotional scars had wounded her more than the physical scars even after a long journey - her surgery - for people around her were more curious to know what was happening to her. People would taunt her for her voice by asking her time and over the phone people would stop and check if it was Paula or Paul.

Even after so much of struggle Paula had to be in hiding. She was able to identify and live her real life. “Finally, I was sad, because I would essentially be in hiding, not allowed to be out and open, and just me, May?? Family had asked that this be the case” (Grieg 223).

She identified herself as a woman. It is only when she fully left the no-man’s land between genders was she able to lead a happy life ‘...the testosterone-driven desire I had for women in the past is now gone, replaced by womanly desire to be loved simply as woman” (Grieg 248).

Paula was able to identify that she was successful as a woman in her workplace though she had her own apprehensions. “This was a valuable experience for me. I Paula had proven that I could succeed in a busy work environment... I could and would face my fears, whatever my gender problem. My skills were beginning to develop a few new ones as well. I was becoming a whole other person” (Grieg 233).

Thus, Ekins’s ‘career path theory’ has helped the researcher to delve into the various phases which Paula had to undergo in order to lead a life according to her hearts content. Her struggle which is studied under this lens of Ekins’s theory acts as a guidance to any new gender deviant or a person who makes a research on transgenders as how perfectly these both sync and also asserts that this change which happens within an individual is very much natural. “It is not simple choice; the choice for whatever reason is made for us. We do not choose to be born black, white, disabled,

female. male –or transsexual” (Grieg 198). These words of Paula best explain the state of transgenders across the globe.

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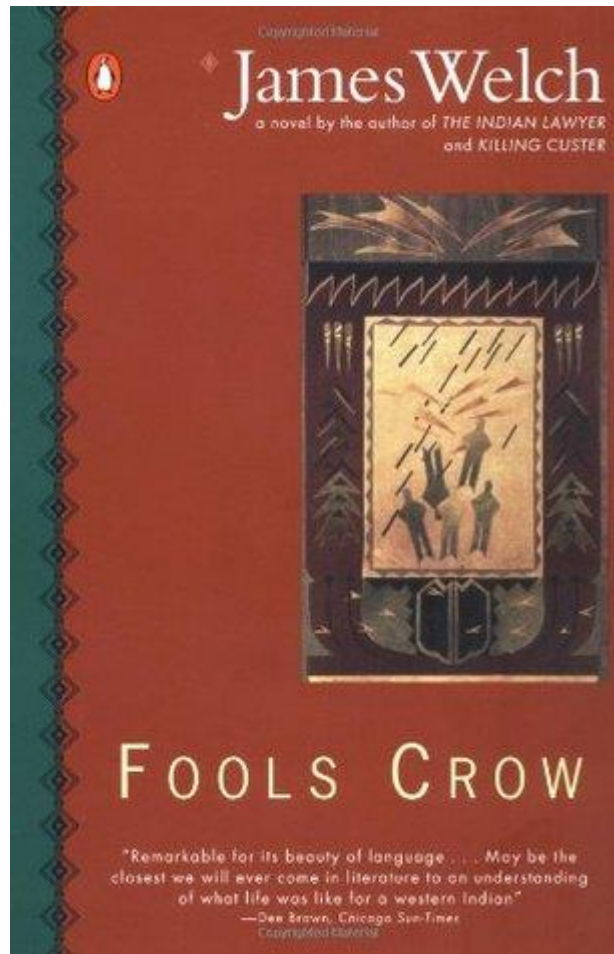
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**Decolonization and Reclamation of Traditional Values  
in James Welch's *Fools Crow***

**G. Ravichandiran and Dr. R. Suresh Kumar**

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This paper proposes to study James Welch's *Fools Crow* as a novel that aims at decolonizing the Native from his sense of possession through traditional Native modes and values. The novel taken-up for study postulates decolonization at three levels: political, cultural, and social. In re-visioning, re-claiming and re-voicing history there are a number of aboriginal and

minority writers who address the silences of the past in their writing. The modes used by the Native writers are history, oral narratives, myth, and autobiography, respectively. Partly these strategies of writing by Native writers entail for a move towards decolonization. Within post-colonial theory decolonization is one move towards neo-colonialism. Since Second World War, wars of independence and struggles for decolonization by former parts of European Empires have revealed the indigenous people and their attempts to break and involve in monstrous violence: cultural, physical, socio-economic, and psychological. Thus, their struggle for freedom is unavoidably a violent process between two forces opposed to each other by their very nature.

**Keywords:** James Welch, *Fools Crow*, Decolonization, Neo-Colonialism, Native Writers, Violence, Myth

A novelist and poet of Blackfoot-Gros Ventre ancestry, James Welch is one of the most influential Native American authors of the post-1968 era. Welch has labelled himself as both an Indian writer and an Indian who writes. This two-fold vision of American Indian experience which is uncommon and yet representative, lies at the heart of his novels. All his novels are all set in or around reservation Montana, revolving around protagonists, like Welch himself, of Blackfeet lineage. Possibly this is no more than stating that, like any genuine author, Welch arrives at the universal through the particular. But the particular - the strains and stresses of Native American culture in an anxious contact with the culture that almost destroyed it has not much featured as a theme in serious American fiction. Welch has helped to change that, and he has done so without resorting to sentimentality.

Like colonization, decolonization is a social process. Quoting from Virgilio Enriquez' processes of colonization - Poka Laehui in his article "Processes of Colonization" offers five different stages of decolonization from a Hawaiian context. The first stage is rediscovery and recovery. This stage of rediscovering one's history and recovering one's identity, culture, language, and so on is elemental to the movement of decolonization. The second stage is mourning - a natural offshoot of the first stage - a time when people are able to regret their victimization. The third stage is dreaming - most significant for decolonization. It is during this stage that colonial people are able to explore their own culture, experience their own dreams for their future and regard their own systems of government and social structure to encompass and express their hopes. The fourth stage is commitment, which will culminate in people fusing their voices in a clear statement of their desired direction. The action in the fifth stage is not reactive but a pro-active step taken based on consensus of the people. This susceptible action seeks survival. To rewrite themselves into existence and maintain Native solidarity the Natives in Canada and America are employing the traitor's language, English to eliminate the delusions held with respect to their people. As a kind of resistance, the Native writers are establishing a new Native World order untainted by White ideology for their real sense of self-determination and freedom. In *The Post Colonial Studies*, Ashcroft Tiffin observes: "Decolonisation is the process of revealing and dismantling colonialist power in all its forms. This includes dismantling the hidden aspects of those institutional and cultural faces that had maintained the colonialist power and that remain even after political independence is achieved" (63). In a post-colonial society at the core of decolonization the recovery of geographical territory is preceded

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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by delineating of cultural territory. It involves a two-way process. The first being the time of early resistance that literally means fighting against outside invasion. The second is the ideological resistance where attempts are made to rebuild a shattered community, to save or restore the sense and fact of community against all the pressures of the colonial system. According to Africans, decolonization meant to imagine an Africa stripped of its imperial past. The process of radical decolonization suggested by Ngugi wa Thiong'o, most significant African writer, involves denying English in place of his mother tongue for reviving an ethnic or national identity. Likewise, for the Native Indians of North America decolonization is the solution to structured oppression inflicted on them by the colonizers. It is also a means to contest the land claims issue in order to attain self-sufficiency.

The Native writings of the post 1960 manifests in an acute critique of colonialism. The presentation of day-to-day life is marred by domestic violence, disintegration of the joint family, suicide, self-destructive behavior, poverty, alcoholism, and the lack of faith between generations of Native people. The political proportion has been an ingrained feature of this sort of writing and has always been ultimately political addressing their oppression and betrayal and summoning their sources for resistance. In particular, Native writers recount what they experience every day. Accordingly, the theme of cultural conflict and dilemma of Native Indian's identity is the principal phenomenon of inquiry. This sort of representation has marked Native writing as protest literature. While criticizing White colonial power politics, Native writers also assimilate traditional beliefs to cure their scars and become free. Freedom for them rests on their old Native Indian traditions and rituals that have for centuries enabled their forefathers to survive in extreme unsympathetic conditions.

As hailing from Blackfeet and Gros Ventre ethnic background, Welch makes use of his Northern Plains background in both his fiction and poetry. The essential feature of tribal sensibility pervades his writing so intensely and are sometimes so imperceptibly woven into the Westernness of his writing that they can be most comprehensively addressed in terms of his finesse in reducing the distance between the reader and the landscape infested by desolation, mental pressures and a sense of loss.

The novel, *Fools Crow*, is a departure from Welch's earlier novels. A novel possibly more intensely grounded in the landscape than his previous ones because it recreates a period in the history of the Blackfeet tribe, engrossing the reader in a tribal world in predicament. Set in the 1870's when the tribe is being plagued by epidemic disease and hostility with White culture, the novel takes the reader into a world that is charged with potent dreams and a landscape that is alive with signs and sacred beings.

In the novel Welch cultivates a sense of the land in a totally new way. For White Man's Dog, the protagonist who promptly gets the name Fools Crow, the land is peopled with topographical markers and animal-helpers, as in the following passage:

Finally, he stood at the top of the ridge, sweating and panting, and looked around. To the south and west he could see Heavy Shield Mountain, and at the base,

Jealous Woman Lake. Beyond, he could make out Old Man Dog Mountain; then south again, Rising Wolf and Feather Woman - all mountains of the Backbone, and he prayed to Old Man, Napi, who had created them, to guide him and to allow him to return to his people. He looked down the other side of the ridge and he saw the raven sitting in a snag beside a pothole lake that is covered with snow. Below the lake, in a grove of quaking leaf trees, he made out the shiny ice and open water of a spring that led away to the north. 'Oh, Raven,' he cried, 'do not lead me too far from my people, for the day approaches its mid-point.' At that, the raven glided down to the shiny ice and lit on a rock beside the bubbling dark hole of water. (46-46)

In this episode, the protagonist locates himself in the topography, naming the peaks that people the Rocky Mountain range, powerful portrayals of mythological creatures directly connected to the history and continuance of the Blackfeet as a people, and directly connected to the protagonist's undefeated journey and return to his campsite. They drive him instinctively to urge guidance and protection from the god who has created them and himself.

The protagonist takes up his place in the landscape graciously with other entities - lake, mountains, spring, and raven - no mental distancing here. The closeness of his relationship to the beings of the landscape is deepened as raven speaks to him and directs him to a task he has been asked to complete by a medicine dream. The alienation and fragmentation so distinctive of Welch's previous novels is absolutely missing in this scene. As perceived with a Native eye, the world is enlivened and unified, and the sacred language of prayer is a powerful force for harmonious action. Welch does not make an issue of the landscape in this novel; it is simply there, only rarely illustrated in much detail. In this novel, the protagonist does not think about his bond with the land, ponder the importance of landmarks, and contemplate on the actions of those who pioneered him. He knows he is part of a continuation of affiliations between people, animals, stars, mountains, seasons and rites stretching into the mythic past. These affiliations are even more apparent in the vision that marks Fools Crow as a man opted to totally understand and connect the mythical past and the apocalyptic present of his people, to keep alive the identity of the Blackfeet. In the vision, Feather Woman-wife of Morning Star, and mother of Star Boy, who brought the Blackfeet the Sun Dance ceremony - not only teaches Fools Crow in the mythic history of his tribe, but she unveils to him the future of his people, literally mapped out on buffalo skin. It is a gloomy prophecy of soldiers, disease, suffering and pain. He views a landscape barren of all game:

He searched around the Sweet Grass Hills, the Yellow River, the River-where-the-shield-floated-away, Snake Butte and Round Butte. But he did not find the black-horns. He looked along the Breaks north of the Big River and he looked to the country of the Hard Gooseneck and the White Grass Butte, the Meat Strings. But there are no black-horns. And there are no long-legs and no bighorns! There are no wags-his-tails or prairie runners. It is as if the earth had swallowed up the animals. Where once there are rivers of dark black-horns, now there are none. To see such a vast, empty prairie made Fools Crow uneasy.... The scene faded into the design, and that too faded, until there is nothing but the yellow skin. This time

Fools Crow did not attempt to call it back. He had seen the end of the black-horns and the starvations of the Pikunis. He had been brought here, to the strange woman's lodge in this strange world, to see the fate of his people. (291-292)

The skin that outlines the future of the Blackfeet, magical record of dream that it is, comes from the mythical mother of the most crucial of Blackfeet rites, the ceremony that keeps the world in balance that preserves the people. The message of the dream is gloomy - a sterile landscape, a land of starvation and death - but the story that accompanies the map vision proposes that perfect ritual behavior, which has saved the Blackfeet over centuries, still has power to save them. He balances misery with survival when Fools Crow identifies with the destiny of Feather Woman in admitting his own and his people's future.

*Fools Crow* is the most optimistic novel of Welch: far as the Blackfeet surface from a winter of epidemic and massacre they proclaim with their traditional Thunder-Pipe ritual. The buffalo have returned to the Pikuni hunting grounds "all I around, it is as it should be" (391). The real historicity of this novel endures in its portrayal of the Blackfeet lifestyle and its redefinition of Blackfeet heroism in epical terms. By re-telling and extending sacred Blackfeet myths within the context of tragic historical occurrences, Welch has provided to the children of the ancient Blackfeet a new myth and a hero whose acceptance of the future tells them be alive. Novels like *Fools Crow* mend particular ideas of cultural identity and connect identity with ideas of literary genre and critiques of notions.

The road to decolonization is one of the principal features in post-colonial world order to challenge the Western/European hegemonic power. With almost four centuries of colonial rule, for the Natives of North America it is through decolonization that they could comprehend themselves differently from their received versions. The revival of the Native voice in literature arose out of a feeling that non-Natives have ignored and misrepresented much about their history and their lives and have not understood them culturally, historically, philosophically and spiritual. Adopting the foe's language, English, the Native Indians are attempting to eliminate the delusions held with respect to their people. As a type of resistance, the Native writers are creating a new Native World order untainted by White principals for their pure sense of self-determination and freedom.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

**Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: Vol. II Black Writings: A Subaltern Perspective**

G. Ravichandiran and Dr. R. Suresh Kumar

Decolonization and Reclamation of Traditional Values in James Welch's *Fools Crow* 187



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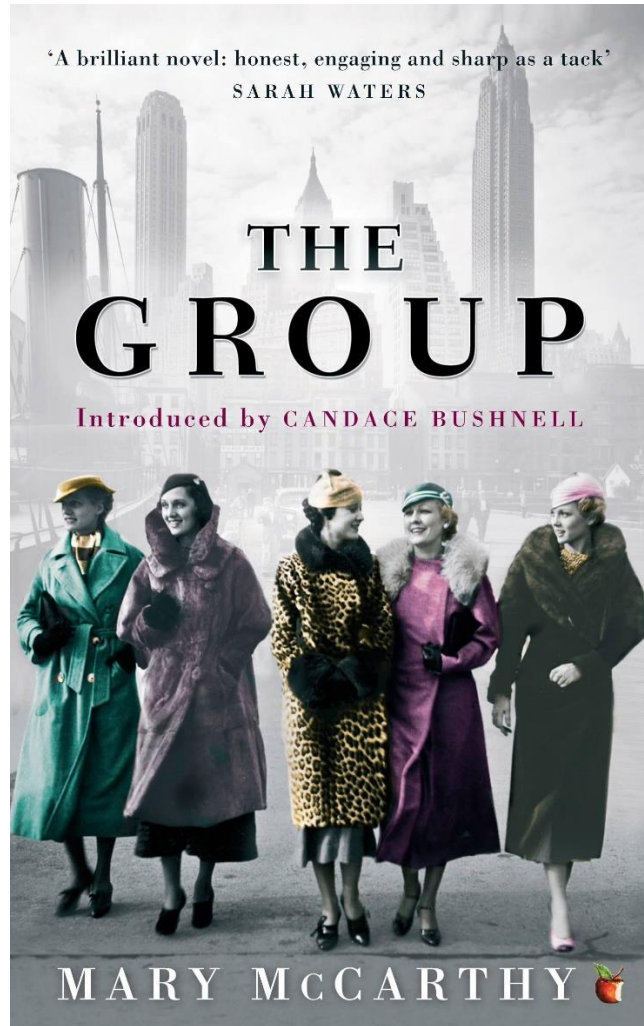
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## Tracing Female Ventriloquism in Mary McCarthy's *The Group*

Vimal Remigious. A. and Dr. M. Madhavan

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Courtesy:

[https://books.google.co.in/books/about/The\\_Group.html?id=hWJMc0K1NKsC&source=kp\\_cover&redir\\_esc=y](https://books.google.co.in/books/about/The_Group.html?id=hWJMc0K1NKsC&source=kp_cover&redir_esc=y)

Abstract

The present study attempts to evaluate the novel Mary McCarthy's *Group* from the perspective of feminist study. The novel was written later, and not in the 1930s the time frame of the story, and this gave McCarthy somewhat more freedom for Feministic voice to describe her characters more truthfully, as she was not bound to the moral code of the 1930s, but rather to that of the 1960s, when the USA was already slightly more liberal. Hence, McCarthy is able to call things with their real names, and that is also why she was able to include the scene with Dottie and Dick, and show Dottie fitting her diaphragm. Some of the characters manage to fit in to the norms of the society while others are less successful. Those who are more successful usually need to put their own feelings and desires aside, as is the case with Dottie, who has a very traditional, wealthy marriage after having such a disappointment with her experiment with the life of a "modern woman." Priss likes working but becomes mother and then it is obvious that she will be staying at home with the child. Those whose socialisation is not that successful are in some ways or others perceived as somewhat strange, and described, if not as spinsters or lesbians, then as eccentrics at least.

Mary McCarthy did not start from describing matters that were normally kept silent about. One of these subjects was female sexuality. As Hilfer explains, the sexual experiences and encounters of men had already been explored in countless stories, but McCarthy was a pioneer in describing these experiences from the point of view of women: "Since the secrets McCarthy revealed [about, for example, contraception] were the kind that women had been keeping as much from themselves as others, the effect was empowering, allowing taboo subject to become available for conscious thought and response" (Hilfer 192-3; emphasis added). Martin sees particularly *The Group* as pioneering work: "In [*The Group*] McCarthy emphatically rejects Victorian norms of female passionlessness and is not afraid of her own sexuality" (165). One could, however, add that some of the women of *The Group* do withdraw back to the "Victorian norms" after their sexual encounters leave them disappointed. Still, the openness with which McCarthy writes about these matters was something new, pioneering indeed, and certainly must have been empowering for women to read.

Of course, the frank way of writing about women's sexuality was at the time of *The Group*'s publication denounced as sensational. Another matter that was at its time widely misunderstood about *The Group* was its narrative technique, the so-called ventriloquism (free indirect discourse), as it was simply seen as the typical chatty style of women's magazines. However, this "ventriloquism" brings to the novel an "authentic" feel and a better understanding of these women's mindsets; as McCarthy has said, most of the novel is in "invisible quotation marks" (Murphy, Reassessment, 84). Thus, the narrative technique is actually very important because it is the basis for understanding the characters (Murphy, Reassessment, 84).

In other words, it serves as a way of getting "inside the heads" of these women. As Murphy notes, for the group, "talk substitutes for both thought and perception" (Reassessment, 84). The women of the group do not really need to think or perceive (because men do that), so they simply talk. In a way events appear to "flow through" them: everything is a part of an endless conversation or gossip. Here are two examples of this, the first one shown from Helena's point of view when she is at a party, hosted by Kay:

Helena, who was Class Correspondent, took a few terse mental notes. “At Kay Strong Petersen's,” she foresaw herself inditing for the next issue of the Alumnae Magazine, “I saw Dottie Renfrew, who is going to marry Brook Latham and live in Arizona. ‘The Woman Who Rode Away’ – how about it, Dottie? Brook is a widower – see the Class Prophecy. [...] Norine Schmittlapp's husband [...] has started an independent fund-raising organization for labor and left-wing causes. Volunteer workers take note. [...] Polly Andrews reports that Sis Farnsworth and Lely Baker have started a business called ‘Dog Walk.’ [...]” Helena puckered her little forehead. Had she mastered (mistressed?) the idiom of the Alumnae Magazine Class Notes? (McCarthy 110)

The second example of everything being a part of an endless conversation or gossip concerns Libby. The following passage shows how she is fired from her job but soon manages to find a new one, thanks to some unlikely events:

[Libby's boss] grabbed up Libby's coat and held it for her; [...] Libby's head was reeling with the shock and confusion. She took a step backward and, girls, can you imagine it, she fainted kerplunk into Mr LeRoy's arms!

It must have been the overheated office. Mr LeRoy's secretary told her afterward that she had turned quite green and the cold sweat had been standing out on her forehead. Just like the summer day her aunt was with her when she passed out cold in the Uffizi in front of “The Birth of Venus.” But Gus LeRoy (short for Augustus) was convinced that it was because she was hungry [...]. He insisted on giving her \$10 out of his own pocket and a dollar for a taxi besides. Then the next morning he rang her up and told her to go to see this literary agent who needed an assistant. So that now, lo and behold, she had this snazzy job at \$25 a week, reading manuscripts and writing to authors and having lunch with editors. (McCarthy 231)

Then again, even if they did think more deeply, they would not have the power to turn their thoughts into real actions, so why should they bother? At the same time, as noted earlier, conversation is a device to maintain a certain subjective reality: perhaps, then, if they ceased the talk for a moment, they would be able to find new ways of functioning. This, however, does not happen. Yet a certain sense of discontent can be detected in the novel; there is an uneasy feeling in the characters that their lives are not progressing the way they had hoped. A good example of this is when Polly talks about her life after she has married Jim Ridgeley, and especially how she sees the other women of the group. Now that she is married, she often has to attend parties thrown by her classmates:

These parties, at which everyone was half a couple and lived in an elevator building, gave Polly a vast sense of distance. All the husbands, it went without saying, were “doing awfully well” in fire insurance or banking or magazine work, and her classmates, except for a few rebels, who were not necessarily the same rebels as in college, were “taking their place in society.” Yet there were nights when Polly felt, watching them and listening, that she must be the only girl in the Class of '33 who was happy.

Within the group itself, only Libby had made her mark. Kay, once so vital, had ceased to be a pace setter. Last year rumor had had it that she, who had been the first of the class to be married, would be the first to be divorced – quite a record. But she was still toiling at Macy's as a junior executive in personnel, and Harald was still writing plays that were as yet unproduced. From time to time, he had a job as a stage manager or a director of a summer theatre, and Kay's family was helping them in their hours of need. Opinion at the fork suppers was divided as to whether Kay was a drag on Harald or vice versa. (McCarthy 354-5)

However, the characters do not seriously come to grips with the unhappiness with their lives. As Robbins expresses the problem, “knowing there is a problem, and yet feeling that to act would be wrong – [...] social context would, in any case, prevent her from acting on any judgement of her own” (29; emphasis original). Nevertheless, social circumstances are the causes of psychic discomfort for these women. As Robbins explains, this comes up, for example, in Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* (1963) and to some extent, it explains the group's behaviour, too. In addition, showing the situation in the novel makes the readers aware of the problem, even if it remains unnamed.

Though McCarthy, writing before the revival of feminism, never introduces a specifically feminist political voice in her novel, the absence is a felt one. The novel cries for a perspective transcending the limitations of the massive false consciousness it so brilliantly exposes, thus expressing not only the 1930s but its own moment as well: the need in the 1950s and 1960s for an as yet unformulated critique of the prevailing episteme. What later feminist critiques argue is what McCarthy implicitly but clearly enough shows in *The Group*.

In a similar way, Wyatt sees a connection between Mary McCarthy and Betty Friedan – both women recognised “the problem with no name,” the invisible chains that bind women (203); meaning the cultural limitations which came (and perhaps still come) along gender roles. Thus, the goal of their texts, consciously known or not, was to get women freed from this invisible oppression. One way of doing that was/is consciousness raising (Wyatt 203): indirectly saying to the reader, “you are not the only one who feels like this.” And this indeed seems to be the core feminist idea in *The Group*: it promotes consciousness-raising in a subtle manner, by showing the situation of these women as it is. Here are some examples about the situation of the women in *The Group*. The first scene takes place when Kay has been locked up in a mental hospital by her husband, and she tells Polly what happened:

Tears came into her eyes [...]. “Harald betrayed me. He put me in here and left me. He pretended it was the regular hospital.” [...] “He beat me when he'd been drinking. [...] It seems so long ago, but it must have been yesterday morning. [...]” “He was drinking in the morning?” “He'd been out all night. When he came in at seven in the morning, I accused him of being with a woman. I know it was silly of me, to accuse him when he'd been drinking. I ought to have waited till he was sober.” [...] “But I was bit hysterical, I guess[.]” [...] “It was silly, but I hit him back. Then he knocked me down and kicked me in the stomach. What should I have done, Polly? Picked myself up and waited for him to be sorry the next day? I know that's the right technique, but I haven't got the patience.” (McCarthy 357-9)



In this excerpt it is interesting to see how Kay is well aware of how she was expected to behave in a situation such as this: she should have submitted to violence without any resistance, especially since she “provoked” it by accusing Harald when he was still drunk. However, since there is some “resister” in her, she cannot let it go, and instinctively fights back. This leads to a situation where Kay threatens Harald with a bread knife, and Harald shuts her in a dressing room. Eventually, when the situation calms down, Harald takes Kay to the hospital “to rest.” In the end, he always seems to have the upper hand.

The second example about these women's situation is slightly more mundane, but still disturbing. It shows Priss with her son and husband:

As the wife of a pediatrician, [Priss] was bitterly ashamed that Stephen, at the age of two and a half, was not able to control his bowels. [...] Sloan, even though he was a doctor, was extremely annoyed whenever Stephen did it in public, but he would never help Priss clean Stephen up or do anything to relieve her embarrassment. [...] Yet it was the only sphere where he could say she had failed with Stephen. He did not wet his bed any more; he ate his vegetables and junkets; he was obedient; he hardly ever cried now, and at night he went to sleep at his appointed time, surrounded by his stuffed animals. She could not see where she had erred in training him. [...] Sloan's belief was that Priss's nervousness was to blame, just as it had been with her nursing (McCarthy 391-3).

All the blame of Stephen's toilet problems seems to be automatically on Priss – even though Sloan is a pediatrician. The difficulties with Stephen do not touch Sloan, the father, at all. He is simply the authority who can point out, or accuse, even, where Priss has failed as a parent. In other words, his position as a children's doctor (and a man) grants him authority, and at the same time frees him from helping his wife, since raising children is “women's work,” and thus, beneath him. Priss, being “compliant,” does not really question the situation but rather takes it as it is, simply worrying that she cannot see where she has gone wrong in raising Stephen.

Martin sums up the general situation of McCarthy's women as follows: Although the women in McCarthy's novels, essays, and political and personal narratives are often sexually liberated, they also are often bound by Victorian norms of passivity and dependence. Sometimes they are constrained by realistic fears of exploitation or loss of reputation. Lack of adequate economic independence in an age of few opportunities for financial self-sufficiency prevents these women from discarding the dream of the gallant knight who will rescue his princess from life's rigors. Without traditions of female assertion and self-reliance, McCarthy's women founder in confusion (167).

Indeed, most of the women in *The Group* become “ordinary” wives and mothers, even though at the beginning of the novel it seemed as the worst fate to become like their own parents:

The worst fate, they utterly agreed, would be to become like Mother and Dad, stuffy and frightened. Not one of them, if she could help it, was going to marry a broker or a banker or a cold-fish corporation lawyer, like so many of Mother's generation. They would rather be wildly poor and live on salmon wiggle than be forced to marry one of those dull purplish young men of their own set[.] [...] It would be better, yes, they were not afraid to say it, though Mother gently laughed, to marry a Jew if you loved him. (McCarthy 11)

This shows the reader their true attitude towards, for example, the Jews, even though they themselves probably do not notice it. And in reality, none of them is in fact ready to give up their status in the way they talk about above. The need to keep up the appearances is too strong, as this is how they have been socialised to behave. In addition, as they realise later, the choices they make in life are not only up to them: husbands, parents, and employers have for some reason more authority over their lives than they themselves. As Martin suggests, there are no role models of independent, strong-minded women (167), and thus, the women of *The Group* do not know how to transfer these hopes of being different into reality. Instead, at least some of them become exactly what they were hoping to avoid: “stuffy and frightened” (McCarthy 11).

To sum up, the central feminist technique in *The Group* is consciousness-raising, which means the ways in which McCarthy subtly shows her readers the real situation of her female characters. The characters have a feeling that they are not living their lives the way they want to, but yet, in the absence of strong female role models, they are unable to do anything about it. Other important feminist points in *The Group* are, first, the empowering way in which McCarthy writes about taboo subjects, most importantly female sexuality, and secondly, the narrative technique, which in its time was diminished as similar to the style of “women's magazines,” but is in fact an important tack of allowing the readers to access the minds of the women of *The Group*.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 **18:3 March 2018**

**Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: Vol. II Black Writings: A Subaltern Perspective**

Vimal Remigious. A. and Dr. M. Madhavan

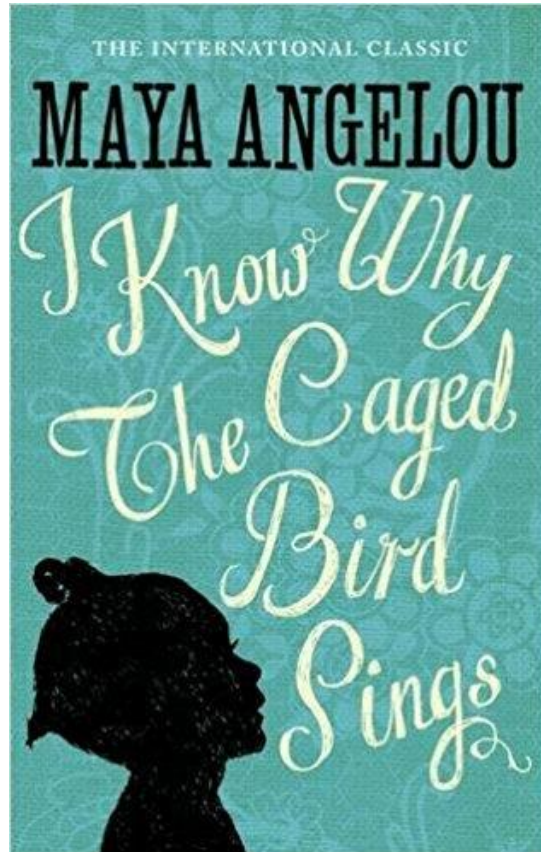
Tracing Female Ventriloquism in Mary McCarthy's *The Group*

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**Identity Crisis on Race and Subalternity in Maya Angelo's  
*I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings***

**Mrs. Sridevi and R. Renjith**

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Courtesy: <https://www.amazon.in/Know-Caged-Sings-Designer-Collection/dp/086068511X>

**Abstract**

Today the world is suffering from Identity crisis. For the present phenomena moreover, every writer has indicated towards it. The origin of identity crisis began the past colonial period. The main focus of the writers on this theme especially from the post-colonial period itself. In this abstract exceptionally documented the exposed theme identity crisis. This has brought the answer that a person who doesn't have any valuable place in a society. Among the people those who are living in a rich position. Many writers have taken this theme to explore the crisis on race. This

paper is exploring the element of identity that prevails in alienation that happened for the American poet and writer Maya Angelou. Here I have highlighted her biography that is *I know why the caged bird sings*.

## Introduction

Maya Angelou was born Marguerite Annie Johnson; April 4, 1928 – May 28, 2014) was an American poet, memoirist, and civil rights activist. She published seven autobiographies, three books of essays, several books of poetry, and was credited with a list of plays, movies, and television shows spanning over 50 years. She received dozens of awards and more than 50 honorary degrees. Angelou is best known for her series of seven autobiographies, which focus on her childhood and early adult experiences. The first, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* (1969), tells of her life up to the age of 17 and brought her international recognition and acclaim.

She became a poet and writer after a series of occupations as a young adult, including fry cook, sex worker, nightclub dancer and performer, cast member of the opera *Porgy and Bess*, coordinator for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and journalist in Egypt and Ghana during the decolonization of Africa. She was an actor, writer, director, and producer of plays, movies, and public television programs. In 1982, she was named the first Reynolds Professors of American Studies at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. She was active in the Civil Rights Movement and worked with Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X. Beginning in the 1990s, she made around 80 appearances a year on the lecture circuit, something she continued into her eighties. In 1993, Angelou recited her poem "On the Pulse of Morning" (1993) at President Bill Clinton's inauguration, making her the first poet to make an inaugural recitation since Robert Frost at the inauguration of John F. Kennedy in 1961.

## Aspects of Her Personal Life

With the publication of *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, Angelou publicly discussed aspects of her personal life. She was respected as a spokesperson for black people and women, and her works have been considered a defence of black culture. Her works are widely used in schools and universities worldwide, although attempts have been made to ban her books from some U.S. libraries. Angelou's most celebrated works have been labelled as autobiographical fiction, but many critics consider them to be autobiographies. She made a deliberate attempt to challenge the common structure of the autobiography by critiquing, changing and expanding the genre.

All my work, my life, everything I do is about survival, not just bare, awful, plodding survival, but survival with grace and faith, while one may encounter many defeats, one must not be defeated.

## Theme

Her books centre on themes such as racism, identity, family and travel. Angelou's use of themes especially that of racism, connects all seven autobiographies. One of her goals, beginning with *Caged Bird*, was to incorporate "organic unity" into them, and the events she described were episodic, crafted like a series of short stories, and were placed to emphasize the themes of her books.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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Identity Crisis on Race and Subalternity in Maya Angelo's *I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings*



## Sufferings

In this biography the main character is Maya Angelo, who reviled her identity crisis that happened in her childhood as well as in adult age. She lost her identity in many circumstances throughout in her life. Through her work she tried to expose how much the black people had oppressed by the white people, she had tried to expose the black peoples' identity crisis. Throughout the work we have realized the importance of identity, because once identity has its entity in universe and universe is the reflection of our identity.

Historically, singing was one of the most popular way to let out feelings and a way of expression for the slaves. Lastly, one of the metaphors that stood out was the "grave of dreams" reference. Grave of dreams seems to be a loss of hope of freedom and the chance to living the "American Dream" for the slaves. It is like saying their dreams of living life as a free person are dead and buried. Angelou does a great job of showing images to the reader (Poetry Genius). Along with metaphors and repetition, Angelou uses symbols to show the life of a slave. One of the most common symbols Angelou uses is the phrase "caged bird". "Caged bird" means exactly how it sounds, trapped. It is a symbol for the African slaves, they were birds trapped in a world where they couldn't be free. "Narrow cage" is another example of a symbolic presence in the poem. "Narrow cage" can be seen as the oppressors of the slaves, they stood in the way of their freedom and happy life. On the other hand, "free bird" is the white race that retains their freedom. The last symbol that is seen is "fat worms" which can be deciphered into opportunity and hope. Angelou writes of the fat worms being in another place, where she one day hopes to be. Angelou uses a lot of different language to give the reader a sense of the poem.

## Conclusion

As a true feminist Maya Angelou resists all kinds of oppression on black people The author wants to break all the barriers of social and cultural system and depicts her problems as a black women. A black woman is women among the black people. She is oppressed thrice. The writer is further oppressed by being a black writer. Hence, she is oppressed by racism. It is a painful journey with open ending story, and many questions are left unanswered. The writer mainly concentrates on religion and education and gives expression to her bitter experiences. It is the depiction of a journey from weakness to strength.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 **18:3 March 2018**

**Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: Vol. II Black Writings: A Subaltern Perspective**

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Identity Crisis on Race and Subalternity in Maya Angelo's *I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings*

**‘Autumn’ in Society – Rest or Death  
Comparison between  
P. B. Shelley’s *Ode to the West Wind* & John Keats’ *To Autumn***

**Rosaryo Vijo.V. & Pon Rajashekar. R**  
**B.A. English Literature**

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**P. B. Shelley**

Portrait of Shelley, by [Alfred Clint](#) (1829)

Courtesy: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Percy\\_Bysshe\\_Shelley](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Percy_Bysshe_Shelley)

### **Introduction**

Percy Bysshe Shelley (04.08.1792 – 08.07.1822) and John Keats (31.10.1795 – 23.02.1821) were friends, and the contemporaries of Romantic Age. Both have made significant contribution to English literatures through their writings, particularly poems. However, Shelley’s *Ode to the West Wind* and Keats’ *Ode to Autumn* are two among their eternal works. Like the most works of Romantic Age, these Odes also deal with the natural-realistic phenomena. Both these works elaborate the attributes and nature of the Autumn season. In these odes Shelley and Keats express various views on the Autumn season. This paper attempts to examine the level of

their social concern in their respective above-mentioned odes; and tries to analyze the theme 'Autumn' with the light of Subaltern studies.

### **Historical & Social Backgrounds**

During the Romantic Age of English literature (1798-1830), literature had come out from the courts and forts to the woods and farms, all credits to the French Revolution. Since then more poets lost their patronage from the aristocrats and kings. The poets are well influenced by historical incidents that happened in that age such as Napoleonic wars, rise of the working-class people, civil wars, development of socialistic ideologies, beginning of colonialism, and slavery. Especially, as per the claim of historians, the Peterloo Massacre (Aug 1819) in England became the kernel of most of the poetry of that time. As like in all Capitalistic countries, in England also only rich were becoming richer. The French Revolution triggered revolutionary thoughts against the higher-class people throughout the Europe. Simultaneously those so-called revolutionaries were violently oppressed by the higher-class people. But the very fundamental prayer of majority people was peace and equality.

### **Shelley's View on 'Autumn' through His *Ode to the West Wind***

Chronologically, Shelley wrote this ode shortly after the Peterloo Massacre while he was residing in Florence, Italy. It was published two years before his death (1820). In this ode, as a naturalist, Shelley describes the natural attributes of the West Wind; addresses the West Wind which brings the autumn season as well as the personification of termination, death and preservation. He complies himself with the natural phenomenon; expresses his hope on the Spring or restoration. He gives more space to the readers to make their own interpretation over this poem.

### **Destroyer and Preserver, Hear!**

Apart from the poetic descriptions, the following lines of his ode help the readers to understand his stand on the autumn season.

*Wild Spirit, which art moving everywhere;  
Destroyer and Preserver; hear, O hear! (13-14)*

Through these lines the poet welcomes the West Wind which is the symbolization of autumn; then addresses it as unstoppable force which is existing everywhere, terminator of the temporal things and the preserver of the future.

*If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear;  
If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee;(43-44)*

In these lines the poet acknowledges the unstoppable power of the west wind and exhibits his willingness to comply with it. He is ready to become to dead leaf or a cloud in order to unify himself with the west wind.

*The wingèd seeds, where they lie cold and low,  
Each like a corpse within its grave, until  
Thine azure sister of the Spring shall blow. (7-9)*

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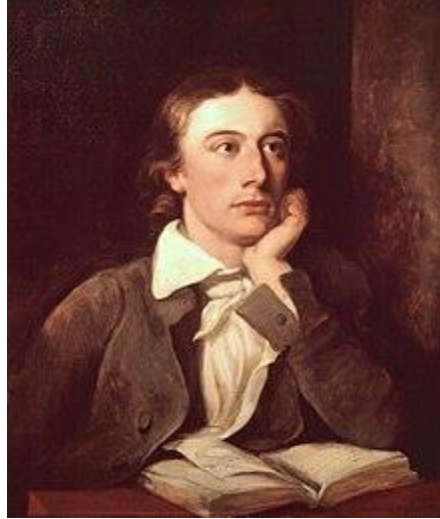
**Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: Vol. II Black Writings: A Subaltern Perspective**

Rosaryo Vijo.V. & Pon Rajashekar. R.

'Autumn' in Society – Rest or Death Comparison between P. B. Shelley's *Ode to the West Wind* & John Keats' *To Autumn*

In the above lines he describes that though the dead – weak leaves are being driven out by the autumn, the mighty seeds are being preserved. Though it seems like a lifeless body in a grave it will survive and will bloom when the arrival of the assured spring season.

### Keats' View on 'Autumn' through His *Ode to Autumn*



John Keats Portrait of John Keats by [William Hilton](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Hilton). [National Portrait Gallery, London](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Portrait_Gallery)

Courtesy: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\\_Keats](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Keats)

Keats composes his poetry work on autumn, known as “To Autumn” in the same year that Shelley compose his ‘Ode to the West Wind’ (1819), similarly published in 1820. This poem is considered as the last poetic work of Keats. The poem describes the gradual raise of autumn season. Particularly the first stanza elaborates the pleasantness of the beginning period of autumn. The second stanza describes the period of harvesting and the third stanza expresses the decay of happiness and the lifelessness when the autumn attains its fullness.

*To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,  
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;(5-6)*

Keats enjoys the beginning period of autumn and the harvesting time. He sees a bended apple tree due to the large quantity of apples; and as well as the other trees, paddies and vineyard also look fruitful. They are ready to be harvested

*Drows'd with the fume of poppies, while thy hook  
Spares the next swath and all its twined flowers: (17-18)*

The above lines denote the scenario in the mid-time of autumn season. The environment is very calm and becoming lifeless as if the autumn has been intoxicated by the poppies. The tools are ready to cut the vines and branches.

*Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn  
Among the river shallows, borne aloft  
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies; (27-29)*

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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These lines express the unpleasant quality of the autumn season at its peak. Nearby the riverside tree, the small insects and bugs are mourning for those cold-dark dying days. Some insects are flying with an uncertainty of life.

### **Comparison between the Views of Shelley and Keats on ‘Autumn’**

As the Romantic poets, both Shelly and Keats describe Autumn in an extraordinary poetic manner. Both adore the natural phenomenon such as termination, death, darkness and cold which are personified as Autumn. Simultaneously both are longing for the pleasant spring which restores all things. But through the lines “*O Wind, If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?*” (lines 69-70) Shelley ends his poem up with a ‘hope’. Thus, he encourages the readers to overcome their sufferings and suppressions.

And Keats, through his verses “*Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?*” (line 23), expresses just his ‘expectation’. Thus he insists on the readers to tolerate the sufferings as a part of nature.

### **Examination of the Social Concern of Shelly and Keats’ on Their Theme ‘Autumn’**

We can assume that apart from the eminent poetic skill, Keats as a medical practitioner, a person who was in the need of economic assistance and less fame, he has more concerns over the human life and emotions, and the realities of life. Thus, his works became more subjective. His poem may console the readers who are being defeated. Even ‘To Autumn’ itself imitates his personal depression more than the public status.

But as a high school dropout, Shelley had more time to spend with the nature as well as the marginalized people of the society. So, he had a clear understanding over the society and had a suitable solution for the social evils of his time. While we read ‘Ode to the West Wind’ through the goggle, Shelley’s works ‘A Philosophical Review of Reform’ enables the readers get another interpretation of the poem in favour of suppressed people. Beyond the reality and his own view, he encourages the marginalized people to fight against the cause of their suppression. His contradictory views over the extreme capitalism and slavery and advocacy over the Socialism and equality have been appreciated by later personalities such as Karl Marks, Leo Tolstoy, et al.

### **Conclusion**

Thus, authors of this paper come to a conclusion that Shelly had a clear view on social discriminations of his age. He had more social concern than Keats. So we take his poem to get answer for the question “whether defeat which is personified here as autumn is to be considered as a rest or death for society?”. As per the examination over his verses in *Ode to the West Wind*, we claim that Autumn is nothing but “Rest”.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 **18:3 March 2018**

**Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: Vol. II Black Writings: A Subaltern Perspective**

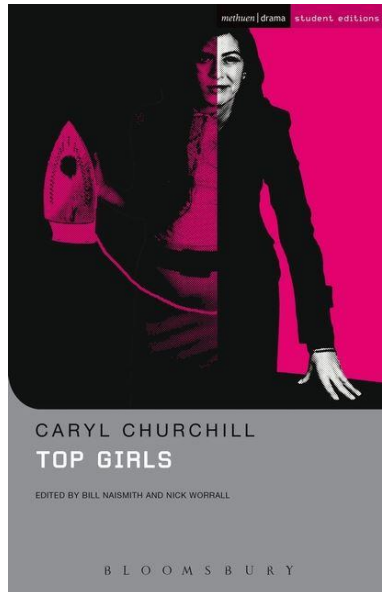
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& John Keats' *To Autumn*

## New Image of Woman in Caryl Churchill's Play *Top Girls*

Ruth Magdalene.T  
Dr. S. Kalamani

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Courtesy: <https://www.bloomsbury.com/us/top-girls-9781408106037/>

### Abstract

The Image of 'New Woman' emerged during the Victorian age which catered to the deep consciousness of individuality as a woman and responsiveness towards womanly problems. Repression of woman can be traced in history from olden days at various levels such as the family, society, politics and the economy. The term 'New Woman' coined by Sarah Grand brought the reversal of the stereotype of woman defined by a set of characteristics. Literature from the 20<sup>th</sup> century pictured woman as an educated, career oriented and independent being. The play *Top Girls* by Caryl Churchill depicts the success of the woman, Marlene in a hostile working environment of an employment firm. The endurance, individualism and toughness in Marlene can be claimed to be a reflection of the Thatcherism. Margret Thatcher was the Prime Minister of England when the play was produced. Thatcher with her capitalistic values and reform turned to be the 'Superwoman' idol imbibed by many women during her regime. The play incorporated five historical women characters from literature and painting who had been suppressed by male patriarchy from various cultures and time zones. This paper traces Churchill's image of 'New Woman' in Marlene and drawing the distinction from the past and the

present. The descriptive features pertaining to 'New Woman' can be found to be a reality in the play and in the realistic form of Thatcher.

**Key Words:** New Woman, Thatcherism, Liberated Women, Economic stability, Individualism

'Woman, you are a thousand stories long

With the depth of the ocean and an entire constellation woven into your soul'.

-Nikita Gil

Literature in its written art form depicts artistic and aesthetic features. From ancient period to the contemporary scenario, literary works of each age stand in distinction with its depiction of human behaviour, way of living, political upheaval, economic crises and other social concerns. Among these expositions, the most revered form of literature is in literary works where the element of truth is found. The literary works of 1950's across the globe in major colonized areas showed their stand for reconstruction and the need for attainment of freedom. Postcolonial genre vividly brought out the native peoples' glorious heritage, culture and their indomitable spirit to retaliate against the subjugation they faced. Resistance and reconstruction were the key focus of writers of deconstruction and subaltern studies.

The feminine literary retaliators initially portrayed the negligence of women's rights, the atrocities they faced under patriarchal society and their submerged freedom. Later in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the concept of 'New Woman' evolved. The miserable aspects and negativity were kept aside and literary works showed the active achievement of women in all major fields. This genre of literature featured the immunity the women should possess to come out of the clutches of patriarchy. Passivity was kept aside and active voices of women emerged with strength was heard continuously from the Victorian age to the present period.

The term 'New Woman' was coined by Sarah Grand, writer and public speaker. Her article *The New Aspect of the Woman Question* published in the 'North American Review' in March 1894 discussed the new framed term 'New Woman'. The subaltern stereotype of woman was left behind and this phraseology pictured woman as intelligent, educated, emancipated from patriarchy, and self-reliant. Literary works of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century redefined gender roles and the theme of overcoming masculine supremacy emerged. Literature developed under this platform attacked the perception of woman as 'Angel in the house'. The influence was carried on in the 20<sup>th</sup> century fiction which emerged as a rebellion for women's education, women's suffrage, sex and women's autonomy. Renegotiation of women's role was another aspect pondered under the New Women Literature.

Technological developments, educational policies and the scientific inventions further initiated the process of liberalization of women in fiction and in reality. The rights and reservations for women were revised; marriage and divorce laws, right to property, custody rights, educational and employment opportunities for women emerged. Henrik Ibsen's *Doll's House* served as a pioneer in depicting the image of new woman in literary works. By the time of Caryl Churchill, the author in discussion, the concept of new woman and the descriptive features became a reality.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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The 1980's were rapid years of advancement for women in all areas of life; public and private, professional and domestic. The idea of 'Superwomen' emerged where the women deal masterfully to make even a man wonder what it means to be a woman. Margret Thatcher became the idol for many women during this period. Thatcher was the Prime Minister of England for almost 15 years and her period was known for her effective administration. Her policy stressing individual skills in women and fierceness of self was greatly admired by the feminine world. Career and economic development flourished among women during this period. Women had their success framed in the capitalist ladder. Women executives, women vice presidents and other higher grade were held by women. Materialistic aspiration among the women fuelled them to reach power and success. Thatcher was the motivating force and her footsteps were followed even by the protagonist in discussion, Marlene.

Caryl Churchill, the British playwright is known for her plays which advocate political and social problems faced by women who are in the marginalized position. Works like *Vinegar Tom*, *Owners*, *Cloud nine* and *Fen* question the ideological male dominant systems. Churchill had been a representative for the feminine victimization through her writing. The play *Top girls* won the prestigious Obie Award and were one of the most celebrated works of Churchill. The play was performed in 1982 with an entire female cast and gained instant popularity. During this time Margret Thatcher was idolized as an 'Iron Woman' for having ruled England with her capitalistic values. The idea of writing this play originated in Churchill's mind after her visit to the United States where she witnessed women holding higher executive powers. Thatcherism and the United State visit combined in her to put across the play *Top Girls*.

*Top girls* expose the success story of women overcoming the exploitation under the patriarchal system. The first act opens with the success party hosted by Marlene for her promotion as Managing Director of the company. The party celebration was arranged for five famous women from literature and painting who belonged to various time periods. The sufferings, sacrifices and exploitations these historical characters faced under the male dominance are narrated by them during the course of the conversations. The aim of the celebratory opening scene by Caryl Churchill was to emphasize the extraordinary deeds achieved by women across different periods. The escalation of women from their suppressive state can be reflected in the position held by Marlene in her employment firm. In the words of Marlene, "We've all come a long way. To our courage and the way we changed our lives and our extraordinary achievements" (p.25).

The play progresses to highlight the contemporary woman, Marlene and her condition in an employment agency. Her courage to withstand in the firm, amongst a competitive surrounding can be traced. The final act gives out the imbalance Marlene had in her personal family life, where she failed to bring up her biological daughter. Yet the survival aspects of Marlene highlight the plot and her ability to reach the top. All the six characters break the traditional system of womanly traits and exhibit imbibed qualities of masculinity in their struggle to establish their success.

The historical characters across different times in history had experienced suppressions under the male value systems. The retaliations done as protest by these women can never be neglected. The features of 'New Woman' can be traced even in these historical characters across various time zones, who never remained as silenced or as commodities. Isabella Bird, an ordinary woman travelled to various parts of the world without being confined to her home. Pope Joan disguised as a man for her thirst for education did make a mark as a woman in history of Christianity. Lady Nijo, a Japanese courtesan of an Emperor, had the freedom to travel on foot through Japan. The fictional character Patient Griselda through her patience gave birth to children/ and finally Dull Gret from the Brueghel painting led a battalion of women charging through hell and fighting the devils.

In the contemporary age, education and employment are basic necessities a woman should acquire. Simone de Beauvoir in her renowned work *The Second Sex* includes the chapter *The Independent Women* where she favors the career oriented women. To quote " It is through gainful employment that woman has traversed most of the distance that separated her from the male; and nothing else can guarantee her liberty in practice". *Top Girls* vividly brings out the lifestyle of such an employed and educated woman, Marlene.

Marlene had accomplished a greater position compared to her male counterparts, which describe the new evolution of a confident 'New Woman'. The mistreatment Marlene's mother faced in the hands of her drunkard father served as a fuel for her independence. From the working-class strata, Marlene enters the elite position, a state where all her primary needs are met. To pursue her ambition as a career woman she had to take the hard decision to forgo of her baby. The spirit of Marlene geared up to do any undertaking possible to reach her own goals indicate how the career of women progressed. Ambition, willingness and a deliberate mind can be visualized from the character description of Marlene, the ground qualities which are essential for any achievement.

Marlene made use of all possible opportunities to achieve her dreams. Through the character of Marlene, Caryl Churchill makes a call for all women to stay independent in their ways of living. Margaret Thatcher's governance was a living example for many women; her announcement for her future policy once was described by her as quoted from the Guardian report: "I came to office with one deliberate intent. To change Britain from a dependent to a self-reliant society, from a give-it-to-me to do-it-yourself nation, to a get up-and-go instead of a sit-back-and-wait-for-it Britain."

Marlene had to overcome all the accusations her own female world throws on her. For instance, Mrs.Kidd, wife of Howard the male counterpart of Marlene accuses her to have taken the position of her husband. Mrs. Kidd goes to the extent to tell Marlene to withdraw from her promotion and accusations like "you'll end up...miserable and lonely. You're not natural" (p.113) are directed at Marlene. The endurance, individuality and toughness in Marlene can be claimed to be a reflection of the Thatcherism. The character of Marlene reversed the notion of oppression faced by women. The problems on women reaching a higher grade when compare to



men will be tougher to handle yet the fictional character Marlene and the iconic Margret Thatcher achieved glory in their fields.

To celebrate her promotion Marlene had to invite the fictional characters which indicate her lack of real women friends. The character of Mrs. Kidd depicts how she remains influenced under the patriarchal dominance. Churchill brings out women who still in the contemporary society believe in male supremacy system in various cultures across the globe. Marlene associated her with women who struggled odds to achieve their passion rather than to be around passive women.

Virginia Woolf's *A Room of one's own* portrays the importance for Women education, their freedom to marriage, motherhood and financial independence. The work revolves around the theme 'Women and Fiction', which was a speech delivered by Woolf in a women's college. "A Woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction" is the compressed statement Woolf presented in the speech. She wanted every female writer to possess money and a personal room. This gives freedom psychologically for a writer to concentrate on her work and will lead her to create an aesthetic writing career. This aspect applies not only to the writing field but to the entire canon of womanhood. Financial stability and efficiency to meet the basic requirements of living are to be solely attained by woman without any dependency. *Top Girls* brings out this perspective features of how a 'New Woman' makes her life effective.

The strain in sisterhood between Marlene and Joyce can never be ruled out. Marlene showed lack of concern for her own sister who found daily means difficult to cope up. The individualism made Marlene to lead a self-centered life. The same criticism and negativity can be found during the rule of Margret Thatcher. The governance under her flourished but women centered development was not present to a great extent. The lack of concern to the issues towards her own feminine community is one of the major criticisms bestowed on Thatcher. Thatcher, being classified as 'New Woman' in a subverted feminine ideological framework found it unnecessary for special reservation for female institutions. Because advancement in the field of women was growing and the requirement to further voice for the freedom of women was rooted.

During the regime of Margret Thatcher many women abandoned their natural rights, like motherhood and marriage, in order to gain success. Marlene to raise her baby found it a hindrance for her professional success and lifestyle. To be a liberated woman in the society, the abandonment of natural rights like motherhood and domestic responsibility was required to tackle all the pressure from various forms. Joyce remained passive and financial down as her family responsibilities like raising up Angie pulled her away from the professional life. A normal working environment like men was not possible by women, as many hindrances were directed at them by both the male supremacy and female repressive believers.

Caryl Churchill questions the plight of women who had to fight harder than the opposite sex to obtain a place in the working environment. Churchill further catered to the misinterpreted ideology that working women had to forgo her domestic duties behind to top the

career ladder. Thus, the issue of balance between work and motherhood was addressed in the play.

Toril Moi in her work *Sexual Politics* brings out the term 'Feminine' which is concerned with the conditioning and socialization of women by underpinning them to a crucial set of distinctions. 'A set of culturally defined characteristics' is the term Moi gives for feminine in her intellectually constructed feminist work. Marlene subverted the ideology set to characterize women by living her life directed by her intuitions and passions. *Top girls* act as a catalyst for women to self-realize their potentials and capabilities and to choose their desired paths.

To conclude, the term 'New Woman' which evolved from the Victorian age had taken various forms and shades over the period of time. The New Women in the 20<sup>th</sup> century were daring, fashionable, educated and passionate to change everything though caught at times in the web of conflicts and tensions. While talking about the 21<sup>st</sup> century women, their broad fields of achievements in all dimensions are to be glorified. The impact of the concept of 'New Woman' can be traced even in developing countries like India, where the role of women stand magnificent than the men. Thus, the play, *Top Girls* with its very title emphasizes the soaring heights the feminine community had reached under the avatar of 'New Woman'.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

**Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: Vol. II Black Writings: A Subaltern Perspective**

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New Image of Woman in Caryl Churchill's Play *Top Girls*

**Black Beatings: Beseeking for Liberation -  
Harper's Poems**

**M. Sabaripriyan and R. Ravi**

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Courtesy: <http://msa.maryland.gov/msa/educ/exhibits/womenshall/html/harper.html>

**Frances Ellen Watkins Harper**

Frances Ellen Watkins Harper stands out amongst the earliest prominent African – American poet who was born in Baltimore in 1825. Themes of spirituality, feminism and civil rights fill Harper's oeuvre and reflects her time spent advocating abolition, education and other social causes.

### ***The Slave Auction***

The poem “The Slave Auction” refers to the brutal actions perpetrated on the victims in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The cruel and inhuman process of slave trade is presented from the perspective of the victims. The poet focuses particularly on the slave group. The poem is composed in twenty-four lines in the iambic scheme and alternate rhyme scheme. Most of the poems by Harper discuss racism, classism, sexism and equality.

The entire poem portrays the brutal actions of the white tradesmen on the slaves. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the victims were sold as slaves for commercial purpose. The feelings of the slave women child and their mothers, and relatives are portrayed poignantly, and it is worth noting that they are black people. The readers can analyze the feelings and emotions of the mother in the following lines.

And Mothers stood with streaming eyes,  
And saw their dearest children sold;  
Unheeded rose their bitter cries,  
While tyrants battered them for gold. (4-8)

The mother was standing with her tearful eyes and watching her lovable, dear and precious children were crying unwilling to leave their parents and one can see the terrible fear in their eyes. The tyrants have sold them as slaves for gold. It throws light on how the mother wants to protect her family from the domination of other people. They are fighting for the freedom with vigour. The line: “*And men, whose sole crime was their hue’s*” (1.13) can be called a kind of irony because usually the colour of skin is not a criminal action it is natural. In this case the people who had dark skin had a very big disadvantage compared to the rest of the population. Since they were used as slaves and did not possess the same rights and freedom as others.

### ***The Slave Mother***

Harper’s poem “*The Slave Mother*” was first published in *Poems on Miscellaneous Subjects*, in the year 1954. The poem lays emphasis on the sufferings and pain that an enslaved mother has to go through and her restricted relationship with her child. Through this poem the readers can feel the immense sadness of the slave mother. This poem is fully about the enslaved mother who goes through immense pain and suffering as a result of being away from her son. Though the passage: “*Her boy clings to her side/ And in her kyrtle vainly tries / His trembling from to hide*”, the poet conveys the deep and close relationship between the slave mother and her son. The present poem taken up for analysis is written from the perspective of a slave and the reader is given an opportunity to empathize with the slave and the life of slavery.

He is not hers, although she bore  
.....  
He is not hers, although her blood  
.....  
He is not hers, for cruel hands (17 – 21)

In this passage the author repeats the words “*He is not hers*” three times. The phrase is used as a repetition to emphasize the degree of relationship between the slave mother and her son. Despite the fact that the mother loves and desires to protect him, the harsh reality is that the son is not truly her own, the son does not belong to his mother under the bonds of slavery. The mother is faced with the constant fear that her son would someday be taken from her and sold as a slave to some plantation owner. Harper’s poem “The Slave Mother” and George Moses Horton’s “On Liberty and Slavery” have a common theme which is slavery. In the former by Frances Harper, the pain and suffering caused by slavery has been illustrated. Similarly, the latter also revolves around the theme of slavery. A slave lacks a form of freedom and equality that ought to be granted to all human beings. Horton offers readers a chance to view slaves as human beings who deserve real bliss and liberty.

### ***Bury Me in a Free Land – Not One of Slaves***

In the poem *Bury Me in a Free Land – Not One of Slaves* by Harper speaks of a person who desires to be buried outside the realms of slavery, which to the author is beyond such worldly possessions. The intensity here shows that slavery has had terrible impact on those grasped within its dark shackles, thus having the life’s blood sucked out of them. The poem allows one to sense the feeling of what goes through the mind of a person who is captured and dragged into slavery. The views in the fourth stanza of this poem are very poignant.

I could not sleep if I saw the lash  
Drinking her blood at each fearful gash  
And saw her babes torn from her breast  
Like trembling doves from their parent nest. (13-16)

This stanza brings to light the crucial images that are an integral part of slavery. Harper really pours her heart out through the words in this stanza in an appeal to others to rise up against such ‘life – threatening’ and ‘life – taking’ situations. The last stanza refers to the authors intent of being free from slavery. One feels the impact of the poem and the poet’s intent to be free; free from hate, violence, tribulation, depressive condition, and indentured servitude even in death. Harper uses different types of figurative language to convey the theme of slavery. Her powerful use of emotive language really expresses the horrendous lives of slaves to a further extent. She uses words such as “shriek”, ‘trembling’, and ‘shudder’ which forces us to see the reality of the life of a slave. Through direct language as well as through a mournful and solemn tone, she conveys the theme of slavery. Through her choice of imagery and language Harper strongly protests against slavery and morally conveys the pathos in the lives of the slaves.

### ***The Negro Mother***

The poem “The Negro Mother” was written by Langston Hughes. This poem is a lyrical poem about a Negro mother addressing her son about her struggles and suppressions in her past life. In the beginning of the poem, the poet emphasizes the usage of the words such as ‘dark’(5), ‘night’(5), ‘laboured’(11), ‘slave’(11) and ‘mistreated’ (12) to show how the black people were oppressed and subjugated especially under the pretext of racism and discrimination.



Furthermore, there is a contrast between the skin tone of African – American’s treatment and their optimistic encouragement towards their goals in achieving grand equality. The diction contributes to the hardship and the abusive situation that the narrator must face throughout the course of her struggle for freedom. From the following lines:

Three hundred years in the deepest south;  
But God put a song and a prayer in my mouth.  
God put a dream like and steel in my soul.  
Now, through my children, I’m reaching my goal. (17-20)

The readers understand the meaning that the negro mother has a strong belief in achieving their goal as freedom for their children. The mother’s elders also have faced the problems of marginalization. This is revealed in the words “Three hundred years”. They had been struggling over the past three generations for their freedom. Langston Hughes used some poetic techniques such as oxymoron, metaphors, figurative language to impart the message the narrator is trying to imply: The message that the pursuit for equality of the people should not be given up but should be pursued regardless of the hardship until absolute equality is achieved is strongly pointed out.

### ***I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings***

*I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* is a poem written by Maya Angelou which describes the conditions of the ‘free bird’ and the ‘caged bird’. Actually the contrast between the birds enables the poet to express her own emotions about freedom and isolation. In the beginning of the poem Maya Angelou’s description of a free bird by the use of a verbs like ‘leaps’, ‘floats’, ‘dips’. The free bird is a symbol of freedom and the three well-chosen verbs are especially meaningful because they contain joy and energy. This poem reveals that Maya Angelou’s writings have all deep meanings and elements of sadness ingrained in her tone.

The cage bird sings  
With a fearful trill  
Of things unknown  
But longed for still  
And his tune is heard  
On the distant hill  
For the caged bird  
Sings of freedom. (15-22)

In these lines the readers can feel the helplessness of a caged bird and learn how the bird sings for its freedom and liberty. This stanza is repeated twice by Maya Angelou to describe about her oppressed and suppressed situations.

### **The Suffering of the Black**

The suffering of the Black under the hegemony of their white superiors has been a miserable experience. Several black writers have tried to present their agony and sorrow through

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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Black Beatings: Beseeching for Liberation -- Harper’s Poems

their poems. Harper, Langston Hughes and Maya Angelou stand out as leading writers who have dealt with the theme of the predicament of the blacks. The present researchers took up a few poems by these writers to study the common theme of suffering among the black. In as much as narrating the strife of the blacks poignantly the writers have succeeded in touching the conscience of the readers/ audience.

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<http://www.theguardian.com>>...>poem>bury me in a free land/

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 **18:3 March 2018**

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**American Indian's Cultural Identity in Mary Oliver's Poems**

**A. Sakthipriya and Dr. K. Muthuraman**

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**Mary Oliver**

**Courtesy:** <http://marvoliver.beacon.org/aboutmary/>

**Abstract**

This paper articulates the suppression and oppression of Native Americans who lost their cultural identity. The anthropocentric worldview of western society destroys the American Indian cultural identity and values of the past. The materialistic and consumerist culture of America was once sacred and valued by American Indian's, but today it seems ecologically destructive in nature. This cultural identity is vanishing day after day. This paper both celebrates

the American Indian culture as well as laments the destruction of their cultural identity in the poems of Mary Oliver.

**Keywords:** Mary Oliver Cultural identity, anthropocentrism, materialistic, nature, reconstruction

### **Cultural Identity**

The term “cultural identity” is defined as the sense of belonging to a group or community. It is a part of a person’s self- conception and is related to nationality, ethnicity, religion, social class, generation, locality or any kind of social group that has its own distinct culture. In this way, cultural identity is both characteristic of the individual but also of the culturally identical group of members sharing the same cultural identity.

People all around the world have their own culture tradition and language. These are very important, because they only show who they are, and they reveal their identity. Likewise, American Indian’s have their own cultural identity but today they are voiceless and considered as others. During the eighteenth and nineteenth century Native American lose their homelands because of Indian wars so American Indian’s were displaced and lost their reservations too and it also includes their culture, identity and history.

### **Mary Oliver**

Many American writers are trying to pour light on American Indian culture and values. One among them is Mary Oliver, who wrote poems on American Indian’s, which help the readers to know the American Indian culture. She is a talented writer; she has received many awards and she is ‘far and away’ America’s best-selling poet. She is undoubtedly a bestseller poet because of her writing style and beautiful narrative technique. Because of her pastoral upbringing, she is very much closely associated with nature. In most of her poems, the subject matter is nature, and she also focuses on culture, identity, history in some of her poems.

As a Native American poet, she gives voice to the American Indian’s through her poems. There are five hundred and sixty-six federally accepted tribes in different parts of the nation. Slowly these tribal communities have been degraded by the development of the Western world. This American Indian’s worshipped nature and its elements as gods and all these communities have their own food habits, dressing style and they construct their own unique houses. In this they construct their cultural values as well as their identity.

Mary Oliver glorifies the culture of American Indian’s but laments for their present state. It is reflected in her poems, Tecumseh, Learning about the Indians, and The Esquimos Have No World for “war”. She shows us the culture of American Indian’s who have all the values in it and also about the identity as a group. In these three poems, Oliver shows us that these people have the ability to have close association with nature and give attention American Indian’s culture. Mary Oliver criticizes the anthropocentric worldview of the Western society and their dominance over nature and the way of exploiting natural resources.

In the poem “Learning about the Indians,” Oliver profoundly describes the Western worldview which spoiled the cultural identity of Native Americans. The American Indian’s culture has been subjugated and treated poorly by the settlers of the nations. They changed all the customs and norms of these people by their power. This poem is in mourning tone because of the oppression of American Indian’s cultural identity and it can be juxtaposed with Oliver’s ideology about natural world.

### **Mr. White**

The persona of this poem is Mr. White; through this character, the poet criticizes the dominance of Western society. The poet describes Mr. White belonging to Indian descent who performs Indian cultural event in the school in front of children. In the past days these cultural events were sacred and considered as their cultural identity, but nowadays these cultural values are only considered as ‘fun’ and ‘extra- curricular’ activity. The very sad fact is that even Mr. White feels that his Indian cultural heritage and identity is subordinate and inferior to Western culture. After the performance before school children he is totally sad and feels that his culture has made other to laugh at him. They were not serious about Mr. White’s cultural act; instead they cracked joke on his appearance. The disappointed Mr. White changed his costume into a “shabby salesman suit;” this explicitly shows the readers that American Indian culture is subjugated and considered as subordinate and lower than Western culture.

The words ‘he packed his drums’ symbolically represent that Mr. White is ashamed of his cultural heritage so that he hides his culture by changing his appearance with a shabby salesman suit. The poet enunciates her readers that apart from Western culture all other cultures are treated as lower cultures by the Westerners. The poet used the word “shabby” salesman suit to describe the fake identity of Mr. White (American Indian). Because of the dominance of the Western culture over other culture these American Indian’s lost their cultural identity which is evidenced through the character Mr. White.

### **Mourns Over the Loss of Native Land - Ghosts**

Similarly, in another poem “Ghosts,” Oliver mourns the loss of Native Americans land into the hands of settlers (Americans). This poem consists of seven sections. The first section begins with a question “Have you noticed?” This line suggests to the readers that there is a change in the current state of America and this question is repeated in the poem for some valid reason behind it. Through this repeated statement Oliver brings out their reader from blind beliefs. In the second section the poet speaks about the loss of nature as well as American Indian’s because the dominance of white man totally erased the cultural identity of American Indian’s. Even though the white man came from the decent of American Indian’s they forget to respect their culture at present.

In the third section the poet introduces the character Lewis and narrates the history of American Indian’s. The poet points out that in 1805 Lewis was watching the chicks of sparrows which was fallen blind to the land and it symbolically represents the Americans decent from Native American homeland and its shows the reader industrialisation and technological development which made this people blind so that they are running after anthropocentric world.

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This is one among the major reasons for the loss of American Indian cultural identity. The fourth section mentions: “In the book of earth it is written: / nothing can die” (25-26). It means that the poet assures that nothing can die on this Earth so that the American Indian culture can also exist till the end of this world. The poet alludes that Lewis an explorer is credited with making possible the white immigrant to the west. The poet elaborates:

In the book of the Sioux it is written:  
they have gone away into the earth to hide. Not  
Nothing will coax them out again  
but the people dancing. (27-30)

Through these lines the poet clearly points out that the people who are born on this earth use it as a hiding place. Likewise, the dead American Indian’s will surely come out from this earth. These lines are also apt to the title of this poem as American Indian’s culture is erased away by the Americans, but their culture will flourish in the near future.

### **Lament for the Loss of Buffaloes**

In the fifth section the poet uses the mourning tone and laments for the buffaloes which are shot by the Americans from the windows of the train. It symbolically represents American Indian’s who were killed in the Indian wars during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In the sixth section the poet repeats the statement, “Have you noticed?” (41). It shows the readers the life of American Indian’s. When they step into the land it will be flourished and nourished because of their close association with the natural world.

### **Dream Imagery**

In the last section, the poet uses dream imagery in which the poets sees the birth of a calf and she thinks that it is the rebirth of the buffaloes. By this rebirth the poet meant to say that American Indian’s are still there and also following their culture and tradition which will exist forever. The poet concludes that they may make room for us so that the people around them can share their noble wild domains. The culture of American Indian’s exists somewhere in this world.

### **Against Government Powers**

In the poem “Tecumseh,” the poet portrays the charter of Tecumseh who is the chief of Shawnee tribes. The persona of the poem criticizes the hierarchies of the government and also the dominance and power of the western society. The opening lines of the poem suggests that the river which flows towards the land of American Indian’s is now full of toxicity and it was once so sacred and valued by the people. They forget about their past. Also it represents that they forget their cultural values and is worse than the risk of death. Even though they forget about their past, all the wounds are like the litter of plastic bags. It symbolically represents the materialistic and consumerist notion of westerners.

The poet questions the Shawnee tribes and their dispossession and subjugation by the Western people who are so conscious about materialistic success and ignore the cultural identity

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of American Indian's so the poet angrily states: I would like to paint my body red and go out into/ the glittering snow/ to die (17-19). The name "Tecumseh" means shooting star from the northern side of the river. He formed his troops to save his land (Ohio) from the settlers, but failed to do so because of their potential. They didn't have any proper weapons to attack their enemies to protect them instead; they were killed mercilessly by the human beasts running after materialistic success. Even the body of Tecumseh could not be found and it will never happen. In the final lines of the poem, the poet assures her readers that Tecumseh will be reborn as a little boy and reconstruct everything into order and set back to his homeland to fight against his enemies to protect his land and people. The poet is very sure to her readers that he is angry.

### **Anthropocentrism**

Now Americans are running after anthropocentrism. They do not care about ecological destruction around them. This poem clearly pictures the suppression of American Indian's by the western society for the past two centuries and they are subjected to the loss of their cultural identity. The poet refines the minds of her readers and shows them the injustices done to the native people and they are not treated equally by the westerners. In this poem Oliver both celebrates American Indian's culture because they look at nature as a whole and they are part of it and vice-versa. The poet also mourns the loss of their cultural identity due to industrialization, urbanization and technological development. The materialistic and consumerist nature of western world changed the fate of this American Indian's, but the poet hopes for the rebirth of their culture which is evident through all the three poems.

### **To Conclude**

Thus, Oliver shows her love towards her native land (Ohio) likewise the Native Americans loved their land, but it was destructed by the western world. Although it was destructed by them the poet hopes for the reconstruction of the cultural identity of American Indians. People can use natural resources which are essential for them, but exploitation, destruction and subjugation of nature are dangerous; they will only affect the future generations. So people should learn to respect their culture as well as nature so that they can live a fulfilled life. Identity is important for common man; hence, it must be preserved by all. Only through understanding the prevailing situation, people can attain transcendence reattach with nature and reconstruct their cultural identity.

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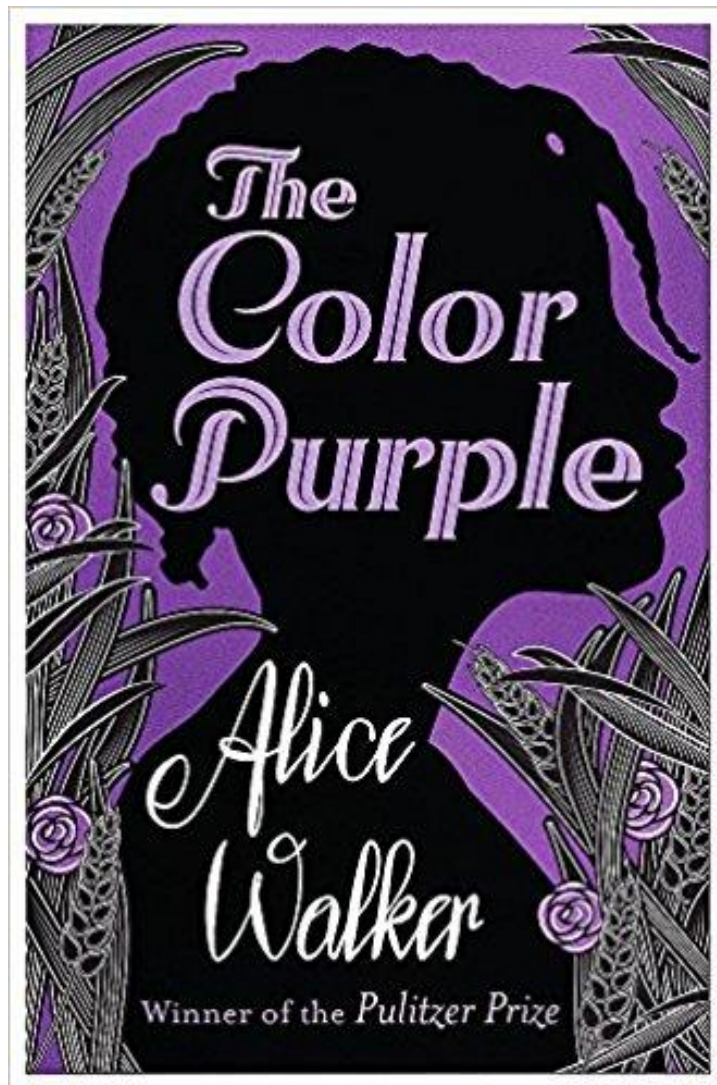
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**Gender Studies in Subaltern Literature in  
Toni Morrison's *The Color Purple***

**Yanpolumi M Sangma and Dr. K. Rajaraman**

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Courtesy: <https://www.amazon.in/Color-Purple-Alice-Walker/dp/1780228716>

## Abstract

A gender study implies the study of gender identity and gender representation. This field includes women's studies concerning feminism, womanism, women politics, gender division and men studies. Gender can be studied in several disciplines such as literary theory, drama studies, novels, films etc. In Alice Walker's novel "*The Colour Purple*", Walker describes women in different ways who deprives from their rights, freedom, happiness and force to live their life by bowing their heads and sacrificing their needs and desires for males society. Women became strong and find joys when they unite each other. They support one another in times of sadness, fearfulness, happiness and finally reject the male oppression which makes them to live like an animal and achieve their dreams and live happily. Men thought women as their private property with whom they can do whatever they want. For example, Alice Walker portrays Celie's having two children from her own father Alphonso which shows the incestuous relationship between her father like Oedipus who had incestuous relationship with his mother and this very example depicts that women are not safe even in their own home. The equality between men and women is disappearing as men holds superiority over women. Thus, this paper studies about the women destruction and inequality by the domination of male society.

**Keywords:** Alice Walker, *The Color Purple*, Oedipus, Marxism, Male Domination, Unity of women.

## Subaltern

The term *Subaltern* was coined by Antonio Gramsci, notably through his work on cultural hegemony, which identified the groups that are excluded from society and denied from right to voice in their society. The term designates the populations which are socially, politically and geographically outside of the hegemonic power structure of the colony. The Subaltern literature studies of a society who are under control by leadership or superior which makes individual to feel inferior and worthless. This paper studies about the subaltern characters of African American females who are dominated by male gender in Alice Walker's novel, '*The Color Purple*'. Alice Walker is one of the most famous Afro-American women who gave fantastic views about women who got dominated by males. It is one of the most significant black women's novel of 1980's from which we can see that firstly women lost their identity but after facing many problems they found their identity.

## *The Color Purple*

Walker sets her novel *The Color Purple* in a Black South Community. Most of the black male characters dominates women and treat them in an ill-mannered and violent ways. Women are violated in several ways like sexually abuse, emotionally and physically torture which makes women to live fearfully in their own society. A man treats them as inferior and worthless. This is particularly obvious in the central character of Celie, whose experiences of sexual abuse at the hands of her step-father followed by a loveless marriage with Albert where Celie is treated no

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better than a slave . This very action picturesque the most brutal aspects of the African American males.

### **Male Superiority**

Throughout the novel the attitude of superiority is so deeply rooted in the male characters that they considered women to be men’s property. In 1885 the Free Love advocate, Mary Grove Nicholas described marriage as annihilation (a complete destruction) of women by explaining that women were considered to be men’s property . For example, the law often allowed a husband to beat his wife. This very law can be seen in this novel through the action of Mr [Albert] beating his wife Celie in Letter 13 to which Harpo asked why he beat Celie to which Mr replied ‘Cause she is my wife’. Followed by Harpo repeating the same action like his father [Mr Albert] beats his wife Sofia, believing that he can make his wife under control by beating him and he believes it is his right to do so as he is legal sole husband of her.

### **Injunction of Silence**

The novel opens with a paternal injunction of silence, ‘You better not never tell nobody but God. It’d kill your mammy’. Celie is denied from the right to speak to raise her voice against her step – father who rapes her and pregnant her. She is not allowed to reveal her grief to anyone except God so she writes a letter to God to console herself. From this very opening line itself we saw women are dominated by patriarchal society. They lost their freedom of speech and have to accept whatever men wanted to do with her. Celie’s situation reflect the myth of Philomena whose throat was cut by a tyrant Tereus who marries her sister Procne and later on rapes Philomena by taking a chance of her loneliness while he was accompanying her as she travels over for a visit to her sister Procne. Celie takes all the sufferings without a word because in her view, she believes her worst situations will not last as she has God along with her “This life soon be over, Heaven last all ways”.

### **Women as Sex Objects**

In *Color Purple* novel, women were considered as sex objects where Celie got beaten up and abuses by her step- father Alphonso and begot two children (Olivia and Adam) which reflects the myth of Oedipus complex who killed his father and have an incestuous relationship with his own mother and other female’s roles like Sofia, Nettie assembles of a slave or inferior. Celie’s letters to God does not only show a cry for help but it also stands as mouthpiece of all the African American women who have faced the same situation. Like a slave, Celie dare not even to look at men because she is so scared because of the situations that she faced since from her childhood to marriage life. These shows that women were not safe even in their own homes and they cannot expect a secure life from their family.

Females turn to one another to find solidarity and companion. They help each other in terms of happiness, sadness and stay like a great pillar to one another which makes us to believe

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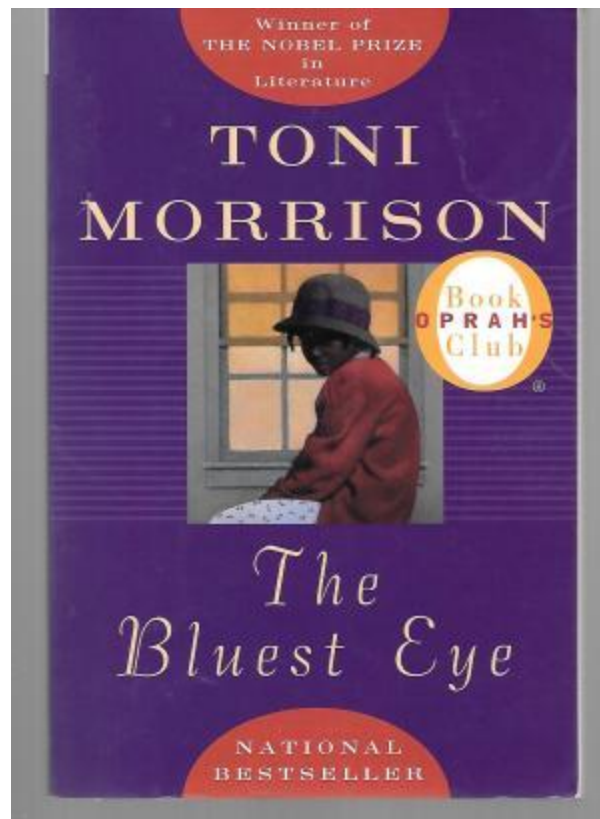
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on the famous word 'Unity Is Strength'. For instances in *The Color Purple*; Mary Agnes helps Sofia when she is in prison, Sofia looks after Mary Agnes child when she goes away to become a singer. Shug helps Celie to become an independent woman and one of the important subaltern character Sofia, who is robust and outspoken stands against the racial discrimination against whites which shows women fight for their rights and also helped each other in order to bring out their lives with justice and freedom by leaving their unhappy marriage life, tortures and inequality which they have to suffered in male society.



### Colour Discrimination

The colour discrimination is the greatest problem of the world, especially for women. If woman is black she does not get full respect from the society as comparison to whites. There are many problems related to colour discrimination. African Americans also referred to as Black Americans or Afro-American, and formerly as American Negros. Most African American is of West African Women of African origin in the United States having always been keenly aware of the fact of race, class gender and oppression upon their lives. It is only the memories of the painful and agonizing activities experienced by their people in The white people like Mayor and his wife assumes that it's a great honour to be a white lady's housemaid but Sofia rejects to become a housemaid so she got beaten up by Mayor and Police and put her on prison for twelve years in order to reassert their racial dominance. The mistreatment of African American women by both Blacks and Whites as a result of the male beliefs that women are worthless and inferior.

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Thus, a Marxist reading finds this objectionable because men and women should be treated equally. Celie is exploited by her husband Albert by being made to labour with Harpo, on the family farm thereby making a profit for Albert and his father.

Women are not allowed to receive education. They have to stay at home looking after their families including husband, children, kitchen and farms. They are deprived from their rights by male society and cannot think to fulfil their dreams as they have to stay in four walls of their houses. For instances Celie, the protagonist of the novel *The Color Purple* is also victimized by this cruel male society. She is removed from school and deprived of education very early in her life because of her female identity and she has to stay at home looking after the house. Her lack of education can be evident from her letters in which she made errors in spellings and sentence structures like in spelling she wrote, get as git in Letter 1, cursing as cussing, cursed as cuss in Letter 2, supposed as sposed and asked as ast in Letter 3 and Letter 6 and moreover she wrote, them did not comb instead of they did not comb [their hair] . In addition, a Marxist reading would criticize the fact that Olinka's girls were not educated because they were female.

### **Black Women in Male Dominated Societies**

Thus, the novel selected for this study, like in many of her novels Walker considers the position of black women in male – dominated societies. The subaltern female characters of *The Color Purple* were subjected to racial and patriarchal forces that had manipulated their subjectivity and silence their voices. Walker expressed that Black woman must raise their voices and lift their head held high in equal with males in socially, politically, and emotionally. Thus, in her novel *The Color Purple*, Walker depicts the inner strength of black women for getting their rights and gender equality.

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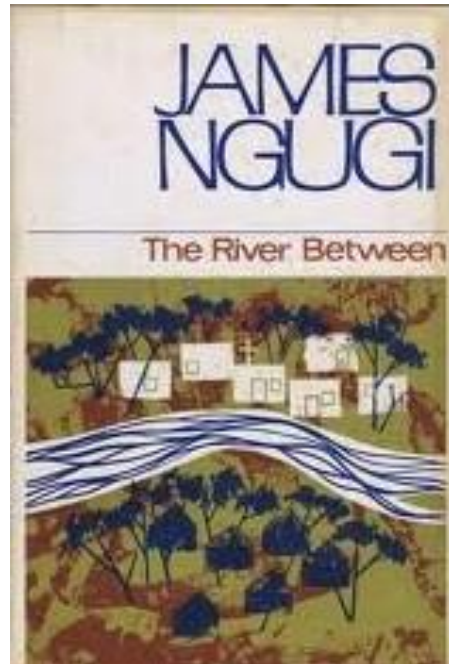
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**Culture and Myth in Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's Novel**  
*The River Between*

**M. Santhanakrishnan and Dr. D. Shanmugam**

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Courtesy: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_River\\_Between](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_River_Between)

**Abstract**

Ngugi's most serious commitment lies in his quest for "a socialist order", and "a revolutionary culture" through the processes of the decolonization of mind and decolonization of African Literature. Ngugi's *The River Between* demonstrate both the western world and their own Africa had a glorious past, history, traditions and culture which they could be proud of it. It discovers the culture ethos of the society. Ngugi attempts to explore and identify the roots of the society and the socio-religion. His novel *The River Between* has a feature of myths, rituals, traditions and the problem of the culture conflict. In the novel *The River Between*, the author records the traditions and customs of the people of Kenya. The Gikuyu area of Kenya is a land of great fertility and promise. The people maintain the tribe's magic and rituals pure and intact. Ngugi makes customs of circumcision the centre of the novel and describes how the early African converts into the new faith of Europeans indulged in the cultural conflict of their fellow



Kenya, Kenya is under British colonialism which is steadily encroaching into the interior of the country. The interior is dominated by two ridges of Makuyu and Kameno. Kameno is inhabited by the tribe whose blood and bones speak the language of the kills and which has kept its magic and rituals pure Muthoni and Waiyaki make an attempt to build a bridge between the two ridges of Honia river.

### **Introduction**

Ngugi's *The River Between* initially titled *The Black Messiah* enumerates how a tradition bound tribal Gikuyu village is fragmented by the alien religion Christianity. The village has two ridges:

The two ridges lay side by side. One was Kameno, the other was Makuyu. Between them was a valley. It was called the valley of life. [T.R.B.P-1]

Makuyu and Kameno separated by the river Honia. Waiyaki, the Black Messiah is the central figure in the novel. He tries to reconcile the ridges and his effort ultimately consumes his life. Waiyaki is torn between the tribal religion and the religion of the westerners.

Ngugiwa Thiong'o wrote the novel *The River Between* and provides the information about the conflict between the two ridges. The people of Kenya were colonized by the Europeans, and they spread the religion of Christianity; their language and also their educational institution in Kenya.

### **Waiyaki, the Protagonist**

Waiyaki is the protagonist of the novel who has an education in Siriana school. His father Chege advises him to learn the knowledge and wisdom of white people. The conflict in the life of Waiyaki arises due to colonial impact on the natives. The western education with which the protagonist (Waiyaki) equips himself poses a problem to him. Waiyaki's father Chege, a seer makes his son join Siriana Mission School and persuades him to learn all the wisdom of the white man to conquer them:

Arise. Heed the prophecy. Go to the mission place. Learn all the wisdom and all the secrets of the white man. But do not follow his vices. Be true to your people and the ancient rites. [T.R.B.P-24]

### **Mugo wa kabiro Prophecy**

So, he pleads Waiyaki to educate himself and then educate his tribes. Education at Siriana does change him. He tries to achieve the unity between the ridges through reconciliation. Chege remembers the prophecy of Mugo wa kabiro that people will come like a Butterfly, and they would occupy the land for their welfare. This foresighted vision is not understood by people whose minds have been fossilized by the tribal customs and practices and hence Waiyaki faces the conflict. Waiyaki's conflict is caused by Kabonyi, Kamau, Joshua, Muthoni, and Nyambura. Kabonyi an elderly tribal and his son Kamau belong to Makuyu and they embrace Christianity and yet follow the tribal customs.

The people of the ridges don't care for the words of the seer. Chege advised his son to learn the wisdom of white man, but he should not follow that in his life. Waiyaki also performs very well in his studies in Siriana school among all other boys. Joshua is a converter of the Mukuyu people to Christianity. He is eager to follow Christianity:

He found a sanctuary ad the white  
Man's power and magic.....  
The new faith worked in him till  
It came to possess him wholly.He  
Renounced his tribal magic power and  
Ritual. He turned to and felt deep  
Presence of the one God. [T.R.B.P-29]

### **Tribal Customs and Traditions**

But he doesn't like the customs of circumcision which is followed by the tribal community people as their customs. Joshua belongs to Christianity, and he converts many people to Christianity from their tribal tradition. But the people of Kameno follow their old tradition in their customs.

Joshua has two daughters. Nyambura is an elder daughter, and Muthoni is the younger one. Muthoni is a young girl who is longing for circumcision, neglected her father. She provokes her desire to her sister. At first Nyambura rejects her desire, and afterwards for the sake of love towards her sister she accepts it. She says that her father will not accept their desire. So they decide to move to her own aunt's home which is in Kameno. Muthoni elopes to her aunt's home without the knowledge of her father. Her father comes to know about the elopement of Muthoni. Then, he orders his elder daughter Nyambura to bring back her sister to their home.

But Muthoni rejects her father's order and remains there. When Joshua hears the rejection of his daughter, he decides to forget her. But her mother could not reject like her husband.

### **Muthoni and Waiyaki**

Muthoni is supported by Waiyaki, and there is a love affair between Waiyaki and Muthoni. One day Muthoni becomes ill, and she feels about her health. Her sister and mother come to know about the illness of Muthoni. They want to meet her but Joshua prevents them. He orders them not to go there to see her, if they go they have to forget him. Waiyaki makes many attempts to protect the life of Muthoni but he is not able to save her life from death. Muthoni's aim is to abolish the customs of her father's unshakable faith in Christianity. Nyambura comes to meet her sister, when she is in death bed but there is no use at all. After the death of Muthoni, Nyambura and Waiyaki meet together without the knowledge of her father. They fall in love with each other. Nyambura is a faithful daughter of her father. She obeys the words of her father but she has fallen in love with Waiyaki. Nyambura's father rejects their relationship. Nyambura has more affection towards Waiyaki. So she leaves the home without the knowledge of her parents and lives with Waiyaki. He tries to bring awareness among his people who follow the old customs in their community. He insists on the people that the custom followed by them is

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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wrong. The elders in the village show their objection to Waiyaki, and do not accept his love with Nyambura; because she is a Christian who belongs to the opposite residence. Waiyaki's father thinks that his son wants to be a saviour of their community people. But people are not ready to accept the idea, of Waiyaki.

### **Leaving Christian Faith**

When the Christian missionary prohibits certain tribal rituals like circumcision, Kabonyi and Kamau give up the alien religion and join the main stream of Gikuyuans. Kabonyi tries to dissuade the people by telling them that the immediate need of the land is to drive away the whites by fighting with them. But Waiyaki convinces the people about the need of reconciliation to drive the whites away from the land. Waiyaki loves Nyambura. Kabony's son, Kamau also loves Nyambura. So kamau abominates Waiyaki. Kinuthia is Waiyaki's friend and classmate. He considers Waiyaki as a man of extraordinary powers and admires him. He warns Waiyaki about the trial which Kabonyi and elders of the tribe plan to punish Waiyaki. Waiyaki never discusses in detail about the necessity of reconciliation to his people. With great difficulty Waiyaki constructs Marioshini his school. But later on he comes away from his ideal world of education and he wants himself to be the instrument to the union of the two ridges. He now believes that priority should be given to reconciliation than to education:

We are all children of Mumbi and we must fight together in one political movement, or else we perish, and the white man will always be on our back. Can a house divided against itself stand? [T.R.B.P.171]

### **Betrayal of the Tribes?**

Waiyaki is accused by the elders of the tribe and Kiama (started by Kabonyi) that he has betrayed the tribes. He is charged with four crimes. 1. He took Muthoni to the hospital and after touching the dead woman of the evil spirits he did not clean himself according to the tribal custom. 2. He visits often Joshua's church. 3. He visits Sirianna to sell tribes to Christians. 4. He is going to marry Nyambura, an uncircumcised girl. Waiyaki convinces the people of all the charges except the fourth one. Procrastination is the fatal flaw in Waiyaki. His fear of losing popularity prevents him from discussing with his people.

### **Quarrel between the Natives**

The central conflict of *The River Between* does not revolve around the struggle between the colonizers and the colonized, but rather among the natives themselves, as a result of the divisions and rifts created by colonization. Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* and Ngugi's *The River Between* seek the roots of the society, myths, traditions and rituals. They concerned with the presence of the missionaries and the resultant culture conflict.

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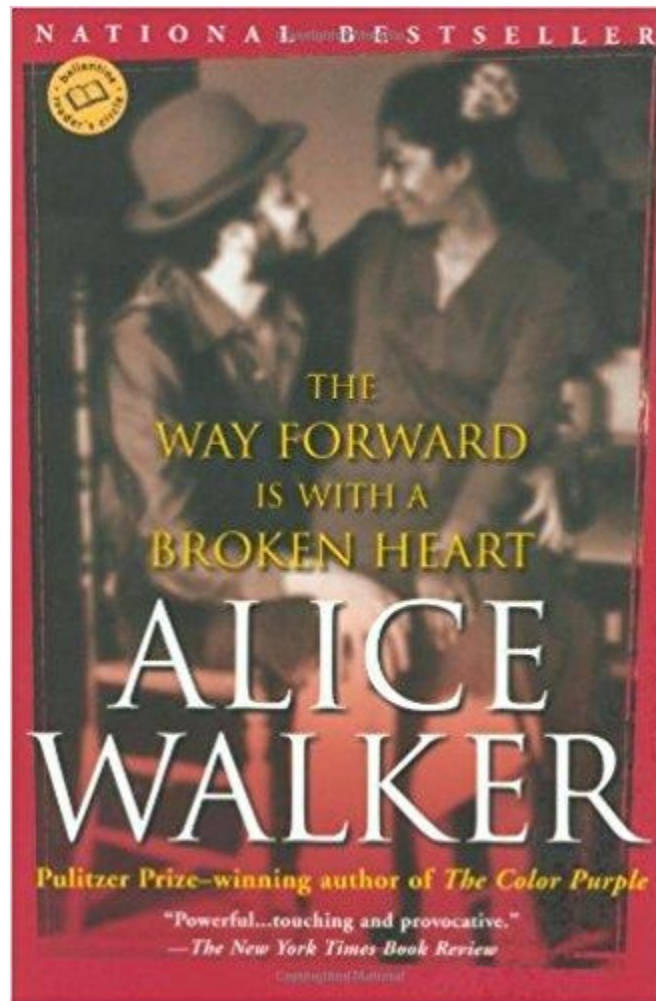
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**Broken Relationship in Alice Walker's  
*The Way Forward is With a Broken Heart***

**N. Saranya, M.Phil. Scholar**

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African-America literature is produced by the writings of African descents in America. It is about the pain and sufferings of the Africans and the difficulty and violence in America. It was dominated by autobiographical spiritual narratives, before the high point of slave narratives which defines the rights and freedom owned by slaves and so the genre is called slave narratives. The beginning of the literature and arts was influenced by the writers of North in Great



Migration from Jamaica and Caribbean Islands. African-American writers were recognized by great awards including Noble Prize to Toni Morrison. They have explored the themes and issues such as the role of African-American in the American society are African-American culture, racism, slavery and social equality along with the oral forms such as spirituals, sermons, gospel music, and blues.

African-American struggles to claim their freedom, democracy and equality. In the time of Civil War, they introduced slave narratives published by pseudonym in order to write about the gender-based violence and what they have experienced.

After the Civil War, Reconstruction offered a brief respite from the violence of racism which pervade the years ago during the Civil War. Jim Crow raised the laws in South America. Booker. T. Washington and W. E. B. Dubois offered different theoretical perspectives on the future Black writers in America. They both have composed important essays about social mobility and access to employment and education. Washington's *Up From Slavery* (1901) and DuBois's *Souls of Black Flok* (1903) become canonical in tracing the literary and political histories of African-Americans. Few notable poems of Claude McKay's "If We Must Die" deals with civil rights and racial prejudice, addresses ongoing violence of Jim Crow in America. And few more writings were as deals with the racial prejudice and suggesting the legal violence to individual rights leads to murder. Racism pervades the American consciousness, recent decades, significant female voices have emerged such as Alice Walker and Toni Morrison. The Pulitzer Prize such as *The Color Purple* (1982) by Alice Walker is an epistolary novel depicted segregated existence in Georgia in 1930s and *Beloved* (1987) by Toni Morrison brings the injuries of slavery in contemporary during the period of American Civil War. Their notable novels were won Noble Prize in literature. The writings of African-American literature novels, poems, and plays were waiting to discover an individual's own self.

Broken relationship means break up of a close relationship and they became stranger in their future lives. Or it may be the relationship broken up from their own ancestors. There may be the generation never know about the past generations and they do not have any communication with each other.

Alice Malsenior Walker was born on February 9, 1944 in Putnam, Georgia. Now Walker lives in Northern California. She is an African-American novelist, short story writer, poet, and political activist. She won the Pulitzer Prize and National Book Award for her novel *The Color Purple* (1982) and it was preceded by *The Third Life of Grange Copeland* (1970) and *Meridian* (1976) is a semi-autobiography. Her other best-selling books includes *By The Light of My Father's Smile*, and *Possessing the Secret of Joy* and *The Temple of My Familiar*. And she wrote three collections of short stories, three collections of essays, six volumes of poetry and several children's books. Her books have been translated into more than two dozen languages. Walker was inspired by Hurston, whose work and life influenced her subject matter.

Walker published *The Way Forward is with a Broken Heart* (2000) as compilation of several stories. It is a semi-autobiographical novel and it is exhausted from her own struggle for racial and sexual equality. The novel deals with interracial marriage and as soon it ends in

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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divorce and broken relationship with her husband, friends and others. The stories were more self-indulgent and repetitions. That is middle-aged women who are all inhabitant recovering from a relationship, sorrows of their own mistakes in their lives and demanding understanding.

The novel *The Way Forward is with a Broken Heart* is begins with the story “To My Young Husband” takes from the dairy and it explores the true events of Walker’s life. She tells the stories to her daughter. She relates herself with Tatala, the protagonist of the story. It describes the memory of the marriage life, with a white man, Jewish, Civil rights lawyer and the life in Mississippi and in Brooklyn “Days when the white white walls, cool against the brutal summer heat, were more bars than walls” (1). It represents the violence of the whites, Walker compared the seasons to show the whites really they are not cool but they are brutally behaving with Africans. Walker’s experience in Brooklyn “black and white Southern and Brooklyn Yiddish accents-which always felt as if over grandparents were joking with each other-we’d crumple over our plates laughing, as tears came to our eyes.” (2) this represents their sorrows, they do not have anything to laugh in their lives.

Even though she had hard times in those places, but she had good times with her husband. They understood each other and they spent their times happily, Walker wonders about their love. But after a decade they were separated by the interracial society. Because the blacks believed that they should not marry any white against to their race. Walker said that it is a magical-marriage that ends in magical-divorce. The blacks want to show their own identity. But during the slavery period there were “more mixed-race children” (46) are seen. That is “Those were the masters that they had off the slave women.” (46) And in the reconstruction period “white and black folks” (46) were fell in love. She feels heartbroken to live without her husband.

In the other story “Kindred Spirits” Walker describes about Rosa’s life and she compared herself with Rosa including her pain and emotions. She is going to visit her aunt Lily with her sister Barbara, whose grandfather has died. She feels it is a sentimental journey and she connects the past. Rosa was married to Ivan, but they got divorce as soon. After the divorce Ivan married a Jewish girl. Walker imagined about her husband who has divorced her and he may be married and began to live with a Jewish girl. Rosa do not want to disturb Ivan’s life. “Living with a nice Jewish girl, at last.” (65) And so she feels pain and hurt for herself. Even in Barbara’s marriage life Rosa seems her own sister lives in a abusive marriage. So Barbara never walks to her husband’s home because of regular beating and abuse and she refused to live with her husband.

Walker introduces Orelia and John, another fictitious couple in the other story. They lived peacefully and happily. But Orelia fails to understand John it is the sad things of their relationship “she was unable to expect the best from him.” (88) John thought sometimes that is his fault. Orelia believes that men did not do their best in relation to woman. She does not made her good relationship with her brothers except Raymond, because the other brothers were insensitive, wild and ugly. She nicknamed them “Rhino”. She will not trust any man so she hurts her feelings and also John “no matter how much she loved him.” (89)

Belinda, Orelia's friend who had married a judge and they had two children. Then they were separated, and he never comes to see their children. After that Belinda fallen love with Jhon but takes care of them and he spends time with her children. He takes them to baseball games, movies and the ballet but he feels very guilty when he thinks of Orelia and her love. Then he left Belinda and children one night. And at last Jhon rejoins with Orelia and lives with her. She tries to forgive his past sins.

In the story "There Was a River" Walker describes about broken relationship of two friends Angel and Sally "A year or so after she broke up her friendship with Sally, she broke up with Angel." (135) In the "Big Sister, Little Sister" story Auntie Putt-Putt was treated as a slave to her husband Uncle Loaf. She is searching for her own freedom. Walker said this with the black's life that is "The black people had traditionally been so profoundly oppressed by the brutality of the white ones," (143).

Walker ends with "The Way Forward is with a Broken Heart" she is telling about her husband in her youth that he lost his way from "down or earth from sky" (241) and she thinks that the life of black children were starving. And also she tells the reason of her heart aches are "starvation, war, assassination" (243) and the strangeness' of husband that she had in her earlier age. These are all makes her to feel "Heart Broken" but she never give up her hope and leads to heal the broken hearted and she stepping her "Way Forward" to the future.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

**Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: Vol. II Black Writings: A Subaltern Perspective**

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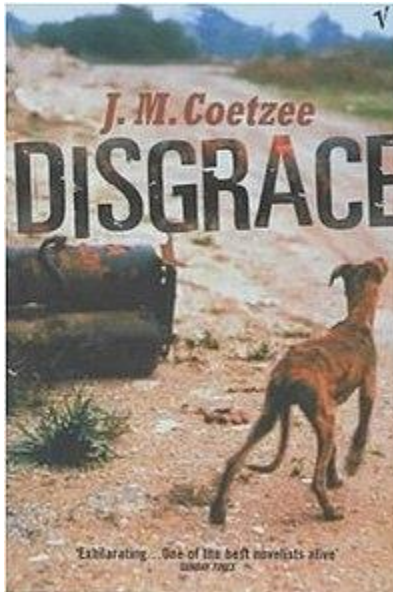
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## Sexual Exploitation in John Maxwell Coetzee's *Disgrace*

Dr. T. Deivasigamani and A. Saravanan

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Courtesy: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Disgrace>

### Abstract

This paper entitled “Sexual Exploitation in John Maxwell Coetzee’s *Disgrace*.” The Nobel Laureate John Maxwell Coetzee is a South African novelist. He is a unique white writer taking up the theme on the relationship of history, identity, and subalternity of women. His all works opposes the socio-political ethos of the power blocks of South Africa. *Disgrace* is told from the viewpoint of David Lurie and David Lucy who fall a prey to the cruel evil and trauma of exile from which both of them struggle to recover at all. This paper focuses on how women characters exploited by patriarchal society and how they overcome from their harassment, atrocities, and oppressions in *Disgrace*.

**Keywords:** Identity, Socio-political, Trauma of exile, Struggle, Harassment, Atrocities.

### Introduction

John Maxwell Coetzee is one of the most important and prominent writer in the contemporary, Post-apartheid South Africa. He is a novelist, essayist, linguist, literary critic, and translator. He was born in Cape Town, South Africa, and became an Australian citizen from 2006.

He has written thirteen novels and *Disgrace* is his eighth novel. Isidore Diala comments that J. M. Coetzee, Nadine Gordimer, and André Brink are "three of South Africa's most distinguished white writers, all with definite anti-apartheid commitment" (59). In the history of South Africa, writers have exerted the acid test of white liberal sensibility in the year of colonial and apartheid. While they have faced more complex issues by preferentially chosen the theme of realism, reconcile fiction. In this connection, the eighty-two-year-old Nobel Laureate Nadine Gordimer was attacked in her home by four black men in 2006.

### **Coetzee**

Coetzee is also one of the strongest voices against apartheid and issues of the subaltern. He has been one of Gordimer's peers that has occupied second place. He draws on emotional issues of common people from the human experience in *Disgrace*. It adds another layer of traumatic situation as to how the dominating power of makes and their sexual desires would write the reality of South African writer Coetzee's works of fiction. For Coetzee is a overt committed Nobel Prize writer, his writing characteristically different from the use realism in mainstream South African literature. In the postmodern era, *Disgrace* is one of the finest novels.

In Coetzee novels' the major characters take the role of the subaltern, isolation, and sexual exploitation. These characters push that characteristically skilful use of juxtaposition to look at some of the complicated issues that spring from subalternity, and the existence of the people of South Africa, particularly through the ways female characters treat as canonization. He employs his words by indirect involvement in deeply with philosophical, political, intellectual, and aesthetic issues. The atmosphere affects one's actions, attitudes, and identity. This shows an ingrained attitude to masculinity in opposition to femininity.

### **Focus of This Paper**

This paper deals how women treated as a subaltern in the novel *Disgrace*. when they become the subaltern that controlled by the torture of the physically as well as mentally, either in the form of the law or the history created and recorded by the authority. It also deals with the different reactions against those major characters, especially while women character confronting the role of becoming the subaltern which includes the resistance of the people of blacks and redemption and the re-identification of the whites.

### ***Disgrace***

J.M. Coetzee is one of the controversial men in South African during both apartheid and post-apartheid movements in which colonized people. His novel *Disgrace* shows how class subalternity and injustice happened from imperialism and corrupt system of South Africa. The works of J.M. Coetzee are the concept of double colonization and marginalization that can be seen in the post-colonial subalternization. Because of his life begins with an African society, experienced and saw different problems of people. In this novel, the main character David Lurie is attracted by the readers and their positive attitude compels the readers to read this novel, *Disgrace*.

### **Professor David Lurie and Byron's character Lucifer**

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 **18:3 March 2018**

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Sexual Exploitation in John Maxwell Coetzee's *Disgrace*



The fifty-two-year-old, twice divorced, Professor David Lurie specialized in modern languages and literature, academic scholar, who teaches communications at the Technical University in Cape Town. He has published three books, and wants to write *Byron in Italy*, a concept on love between the sexes in the form of a chamber opera, an instinctual paradigm of Byronic desire. Coetzee plays with a relationship between the story of Lurie in *Disgrace* and Byron's character Lucifer in the poem "Lara." After divorced, he satisfies his sexual desires after divorced Soraya, a slim, tall, and dark prostitute, believes his life is comfortable, if somewhat passionless, and considers himself happy life. She has paid a half money from her professional to Discreet Escorts, which is an agency, in the rest of time. She lives respectable life with husband and children in Atholine. Every Thursday at two p.m., he meets her as customary visits to punctually. Soraya's mother is ill. So, she has left the agency to break her from within the agency. Even then he tracks her real name, address, and telephone number. After he telephones, she replied: "I don't know who you are are." She says. 'You are harassing me in my own house. I demand you will never phone me here again, never'" (9-10).

### **Melanie Isaacs**

In the meantime, David Lurie conveys his idea of passivity to his student, Melanie Isaacs. She is twenty-year-old, wants to study a diploma in theatre. Indeed, he invited her for an outing with an affair, when she is thirty-two-year younger than him, her silence is emblematic of him, in light of his own abuse of a student, Melaine: "Not rape, not quite that but undesired nevertheless, undesired to the core" (25). The phrase expresses how Melanie feels about her inter action with his Professor David Lurie. After some time, the lust leads most likely due to the involvement in the student's parents, Mr. Melaine Isaacs. He pinpoints that the parents put our children in hands of Professors with trust but "we were sending our daughter into a nest" (38). When Melanie files a complaint about David under the article 3.1 of University's code in the Vice-Rectors office, which deals with harassment of students by teachers, he has to appear before the committee.

### **YOUR DAYS ARE OVER, CASANOVA!**

In the University campus, "YOUR DAYS ARE OVER, CASANOVA" (43), was written in the pamphlet. He was very proud to agree his mistake and he did not apologize for his misbehaved to the disciplinary committee, Melanie Isaac's family, and public. The human beings categorize by making two groups, which is majority and minority based on social hierarchy system. For this reason, majority of the committee members wanted to rescue him like temporary suspension: "They do not want to see him begging in the streets. They want him back in classroom" (52), but Lurie did not want their consistent. He took all the charges against him. This acceptance was reflected on newspaper as sensational news: "'Professor on sex charge,' it is headed . . . is slated to appear before a disciplinary board on a charge of sexual harassment" (46). The incident led to resign his job of college. His ex-wife Rosalind also became angry with him the reason for his stubborn attitude. He did not want any sympathy and mercy, after leaving his job he desired to go his daughter's place in Salem, the Eastern Cape in South Africa.

Metonymically, David Lurie enjoyed changes of avoiding city and college life to a rural area life of his daughter's farm. The dystopia vision of modern is, post-apartheid South Africa.

## Lucy

Lucy is a lesbian, had her own farm, her livelihood was selling her produce of flowers and vegetables in the weekend in Grahamstown and had dogs on her farmland. Later, the farm was looked after by the native black African, Petrus. Lucy had kept different species like Bull terriers, Dobermans, German Shepherds, Rottweiler's, and Ridgebacks. In nearby farm, a white woman, Bev Shaw is living around as a very unattractive woman who runs a dog clinic.

One day the quiet life implodes the absence of Petrus, and in the presence of David Lurie, Lucy was brutally raped by two men and a boy who are black African natives. They met Lucy and Lurie coming a walk. They requested Lucy for help. They narrated the situation with highly seriousness of an accident happened at Erasmuskraal being without facility. Lucy became sympathetic to them to give the permission to enter her home for the purpose of doing telephone:

To the men she says: 'What do you want?'

The young one speaks. 'We must telephone.'

Why must you telephone?'

'His sister - he gestures vaguely behind him - 'is having an accident'

'An accident?'

'Yes, very bad.'

What kind of accident?'

'A baby.'

'His sister is having a baby?'

'Yes'

'Where are you from?'

'From Erasmuskraal.' (92)

No such accident happened at Erasmuskraal. Suddenly, they overpowered Lucy and Lurie was hammered, locked inside the lavatory, and liquid hot acid was poured on his face. The faithful dogs for her security were killed by them with the action of disgrace. They escaped from Lucy's home Lurie's car before the leaving that place. The three rapists are living on this earth with roaming their filthy legs.

Democratic laws and values have been paralysed like toys in the hands powerful blacks, though he realizes the dystrophic vision of modern, begins the period of post-apartheid, South Africa. The whites have to fear the majority black race. The demonstration of power of one group overcomes the helpless of the other group. Lucy did not complain about the three rapists because of subaltern atmosphere. She complains only about stolen goods and car to police. Petrus invited both Lucy and Lurie to his party. In the party, one of the rapists, young boy Pollux, participated, and was accused in front of blacks by Lurie, and ready to telephone police. According to Carine M. Mardorossian:

Readers are encouraged to rethink not just the assumptions through which black on white rape is viewed but also the deeply radicalized way in which rape is naturalized precisely as a black on white crime (thus decriminalizing white on white sexual violence). (74)

## Common Bonds of Suffering

All the women characters from different backgrounds in the novel suffered and they are united in a common bond oppressed, suppressed, and helpless. At the ending of the book, the author attempts to bridge the gap between subalternization of women and colonization thus opens up a new way of resistance. To attempt to seduce Melanie, caricature David tells her: “. . . a woman’s beauty does not belong to her alone” (16); later on, he thinks, after his daughter’s rape: “Raping a lesbian worse than raping a virgin; more of a blow” (105).

With *Disgrace*, the situation of Lucy becoming pregnant because of rape manages to weave about the relationships between human beings, and the problems of human inequality, though David is in the house with his daughter, Lucy, when the event of rape occurs and, also he is locked in the bathroom, hampered by the walls separating them. This sense of failure to protect Lucy contributes to increased tension in the relationship between David Lurie and Lucy. He imagines the afternoon of the farm attack and gang-rape: “having visions of his daughter calling for help” (103), and dreaming of a “a bed of blood, a bath of blood” (159). He visualizes the event of the rape:

Lucy was frightened, frightened near to death. Her voice choked, she could not breathe, her limbs went numb. *This is not happening*, she said to herself as the men forced her down; *it is just a dream, a nightmare*. While the men, for their part, drank up her fear; revealed in it, did all they could to hurt her, to menace her, to heighten her terror. *Call your dogs!* They said to her, Go on, call your dogs! No dogs! Then let us show you dogs! (160)

Certainly, after the attackers have left with the household foods, David’s car, and damage in their wake, she makes it clear to her father that her story is “alone” “My child, my child!” he says, holding out his arms to her. When she does not come, he puts aside his blanket, stands up, and takes her in his arms. In his embrace she is stiff as a pole, yielding nothing” (99). In this end of the line, “yielding nothing” defines the difficulty in her story; in fact, from the limited point of view, the reader truly cannot access her story.

## Like a Dog

Lurie became the assistant of Bev Shaw’s animal welfare clinic. His daughter’s after the incident she did not go to Saturday market, disliked public appearance, has become pregnant by the rape of those black native African, replied in ambiguous manner concerning her health. Petrus wanted to marry David Lurie’s daughter, Lucy. She agrees the exchange of her land to him for his offering. For her security except her home, Lucy will give everything to him. This is her resolution:

‘Like a dog.’  
‘yes, like a dog.’ (205)

Lurie feels with Melanie’s father, Melanie Isaacs, only after Lucy’s rape. He wants to apology and also to tell Isaacs what is ‘on his heart.’ While he was knee in front of Melanie’s mother and her younger sister, kept such a distance. In the following words which utterly highlighted from David Lurie before Mr. Isaac, father of Melanie, during his meeting at George:

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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Dr. T. Deivasigamani and A. Saravanan

Sexual Exploitation in John Maxwell Coetzee’s *Disgrace*

In my own terms, I am being punished for what happened between myself and your daughter. I am such into a state of disgrace from which it will not be easy to lift myself. It is not a punishment, I have refused, I do not murmur against it. On the contrary, I am living it out from day to day, trying to accept disgrace as my state of being. (172)

Lucy became the victim of these circumstances. They were voiceless and helpless in the present political and social context. After the incident Lucy spoke very little with her father, Lurie. Lucy accepted her fate honestly. She takes a shocking decision joining the erosion of values and through her willingness to marry Petrus for seeking a new accommodation and just recalls the old days. She says:

Propose the following. Say I accept his protection . . . . If he wants me to be known as his third wife, so be it. As his concubine, ditto. But then the child becomes his too. The child becomes part of his family . . . . I will become a tenant on his land. (204)

Physical suffering pops up through the novel. It seems that nobody escapes without some serious psychologised wounds. The two wives of Petrus have seen the world only through in order to take the lens given by him, who are only passive objects. Lucy has ready to join in the group as his subaltern third wife. According to Bonnici says: "Further, she refuses abortion and accepts the child from the rape...becomes his subaltern third wife" (89).

## Conclusion

In South Africa, subaltern people especially women were marginalized based on the ground of race, gender, social class, and regional status. Some examples are in *Disgrace*; unwillingly, Soraya who works as prostitute, Melanie Issac who is abused by her professor Lurie, Bev Shaw who is worked as dog keeper with low status in society, Lucy who loses her freedom and land. Lack of communication is among Lucy and her father Lurie and it is shown his embrace.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 **18:3 March 2018**

**Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: Vol. II *Black Writings: A Subaltern Perspective***

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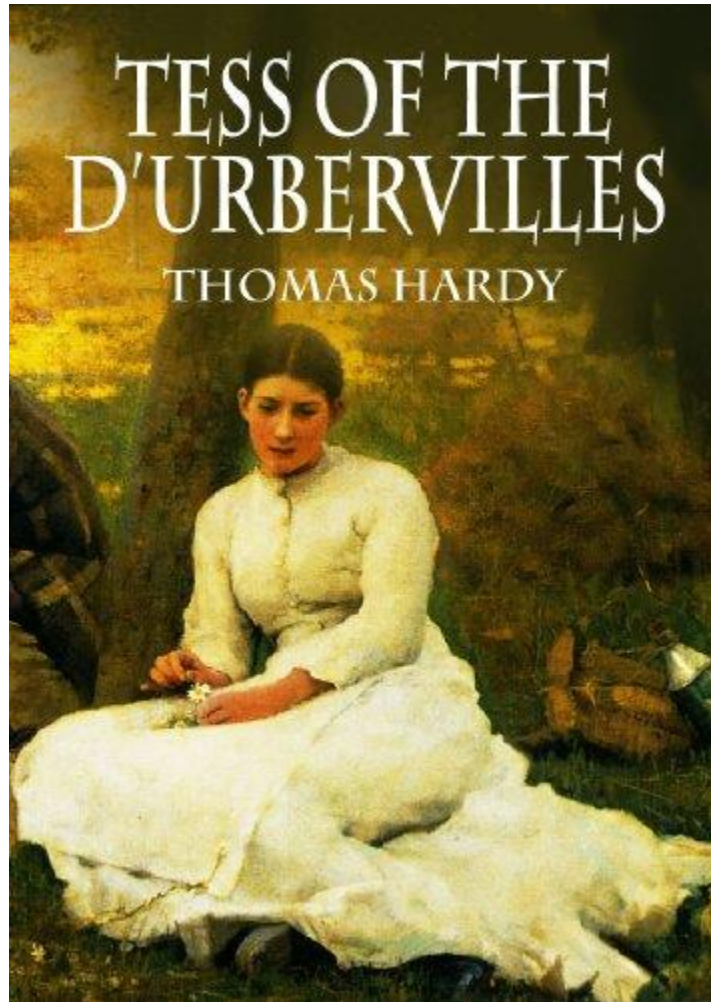
Sexual Exploitation in John Maxwell Coetzee's *Disgrace*



## Identity Crisis: Invoking the image 'TESS' in Thomas Hardy Poetry

D. Sathish Kumar

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Courtesy: <https://www.amazon.com/DURBERVILLES-illustrated-complete-unexpurgated-illustrations-ebook/dp/B00FVHTP7G>

### Abstract

This paper discusses the identity crisis in Thomas Hardy poetry, invoking the identity of Tess in his poetry. Identity crisis is the major problem in the works of Thomas Hardy so that his writing became more controversial and created problem by the treatment of female character in

his works. This paper shows how the obstacles and the inner conflicts that the poet himself encounters in his own process of portraying the female character in his works and also publishing it. His first passion of writing is poetry, but he never published any of his poetry in 19<sup>th</sup> century though he was a writer of the Victorian period, but he was discussed as a modern poet because of the themes shared in his poetry and also the publication of his poetry in the twentieth century. Tess is the model of Victorian idea of women to Thomas Hardy, his portrayal of female characters in his poetry is modeled upon his famous character Tess. Accordingly, this paper shows that Hardy's heroines deviate from the prevalent Victorian ideal of women not only in his novel but also in his poetry. Therefore, this paper shows the crucial aspects of Identity crisis in Hardy's authorial point of view on portraying woman in his poetry by taking some of his poem to substantiate it.

## Introduction

Literature brings out the unfold idea into an action, that the idea changes into a character in literature. One can discuss a simple idea in a novel, poetry, drama, arts, paintings etc... but the same idea became a pattern for the writers. The idea may be a symbol or images in their writings. The repetition of one particular idea in different works by a writer is a pattern, that pattern became a style in his/her writings. When one looks up closely, the literary works can find a pattern in every century followed by the writers of the literature. The ultimate thing in literature is a perfect presentation of idea in its forms. All the writers of the literature have their own style of writing and presenting their ideas. The style and manner of portrayal differs from one writer to other and also one century to the other century according to their culture, tradition and religion. But the style differs from the pattern because the pattern is something which discuss the beauties of a particular writer's work. Every century writers have their own way of discussing the literature and the same was followed by the writers of their contemporary means then it becomes a pattern of that era. Likewise, the nineteenth century writers have a particular style of portraying the characters in their works. The whole nineteenth century writers discussed only the female wrongdoing in their works. Writers like Lord Tennyson, Charles Dickens, Elizabeth Gaskell, Ellen wood, and George Eliot.

## Thomas Hardy

Thomas Hardy led a double life in literature in the first half of his literary career he was a greatest Victorian novelist, but he abandoned writing fiction in 1896, particularly after the publication of the two novels *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure*. He reinvented him as a poet which was his first passion of writing, he has written above 900 poems and all his poems were published in the twentieth-century, so he is called as a Victorian novelist and twentieth century poet. Hardy emerges as one of the most compelling voices in modern poetry.

## *Tess and Jude*

Thomas Hardy created several heroines among them TESS and JUDE are the powerful heroines because they both were not just a character they both were the ideology of women which is invoked by Hardy from his poetry. Actually, they both were characters of Hardy's poetry later he transformed it into a novel character but he never stated the name of these women

in his poetry because of identity crisis. Though the poems were written before the publication of these novels, but he published it after TESS and JUDE novels.

Hardy has identity crisis on himself for introducing the idea of women of his ideal society Wessex to the readers. He started writing poetry around 1860s. His first passion of writing is poetry, as a young man he could not make enough money to live on by writing poetry, so he decided to write novels at the same time he has written poetry. His poetry foreshadows the themes used in his later fictions. The story of every novel written by him is a sequence of events which he shared in his poetry but when publishing his poetry, he totally avoids mentioning the names of the real character portrayed in his novels because of the outburst of criticism over the publication of his works. He had a bitter experience of invoking the female characters in his novel from the beginning itself, so his first work *The Poor man and the lady* was rejected by the numerous publishers, because of handling of female character in that and it is very critical of Victorian society.

No one wanted to publish his early poems because of its subject matter. He keep on writing verse during the three decades in which he worked as a novelist, always considering himself primarily a poet. Some of the poems resemble the events discussed in his novels. He has taken many plots for his novels from his poems not from other sources. Hardy projected his idea of woman in his works were based on the character Tess but in his poetry he never mentioned her name because of identity crisis. Tess is not only a character produced by hardy it is an idea of Victorian woman to him based on this particular woman he has created many female characters such as Elfride, Sue, Fancy, Lucetta, etc.

### **Victorian Society and Victorian Writers**

Victorian ideal society not wanted the writers to discuss/reflect the Victorian society in their writing instead they wanted the writers to teach some morals to the woman those who are all falling in a wrong way through their characters. Only few writers started discussing the treatment sex, marriage, family life, religion and customs. The Victorian readers started searching the meaning of life not only in the society but also in the writings of literature, which makes Hardy to faces the identity crisis in projecting his own views in his works. He portrayed the character Tess as a pure woman, but the society rejected that notion. He tried his level best to discuss a meaningful culture by portraying the identity of Tess in his works to the meaningless society. During the half of the nineteenth century in 1859 *Origin of Species* published by Charles Darwin. Darwin's book introduced the scientific theory that populations evolve over the course of generations through a process of natural selection.

### **Impact of Darwin's Ideas**

Hardy adapted Darwin's ideas to his later fiction showing characters to be at the mercy of their environment, heredity and adaptability rather than more in control of fate. His novel, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* depicts a ruthless Darwinian world in which protagonists fail to survive because they cannot adapt to the changing social environment it is not the character adapted the environment it is the novelist who accepted the social changes in the society.

He portrayed the idea of Tess in his novels as well as in his poetry. He showed Tess as pure woman in his novel because of that he faced some many controversies and criticism to projecting the identity of Victorian women. By portraying that he argues that the purity is not in the flesh, he teaches that the purity is in the heart and mind of the human beings. In one of the interview he states that his ideal character Tess is mentally pure not physically.

### **Woman Should Not Be Made Man's Property**

Hardy's idea is that a woman should not be made man's property and marriage is nothing but an institution which gave the men, the right to subjugate their women. Hardy portrayed the strength of female mostly in all his works with the idea of Tess in mind, it is an identity crisis of Hardy discuss the nature/name of Tess in his poetry. It is an evident that whatever he discusses in the novel *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* the events were discussed in his poetry written before the novel but the poems were published after the not only the publication of the novel but he never named the women discussed in his poetry if analyze some poems like *We Field Women*, *Beyond the Last Lamp*, *A Maiden's Pledge*, *The Ruined Maid*, *The Subaltern* etc... in these poems the female characters resembles the identity of Tess, the poem stories were discussed as an events took place in the novel *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*. These are the obstacles and the inner conflicts that the poet himself encounters in his own process of portraying the female characters. Hardy faces the identity crisis in authorial point of view on portraying woman in his poetry.

### **We Field-Women**

The poem is directly related to the novel *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891) in its subject matter. The poem is related to Hardy's heroine and her friends from the novel *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*.

The poem is written as if spoken by one of the Field-Women working on the land through the seasons. She immediately refers to the farm where she is working. Flintcomb-Ash is the farm in Hardy's novel, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*. This is the place where Tess suffers so much with the hard manual labour. She had to survive the deadly winter also. Hardy describes it as 'the heavy and coarse pursuits' which she liked. She worked on the arable land, work of such roughness, indeed as she would never have deliberately volunteered for. It seems as if the poem is spoken by one of Tess's friends.

This poem has a direct reference to the novel *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*. In chapter 42 Tess, separated from her husband Angel Clare, trying to find work and travelling to where her friend Marion is staying, first she inquired for lighter kinds of employment and applied next for the less light, till beginning with the dairy and poultry attendance. That she liked best, she ended with the heavy coarse pursuits which she like least work on farm land, work of such roughness, indeed as she never has deliberately volunteered for. 'Eventually she reaches Flint Comb Ash and joins with her friend Marion who is working as "swede-hacking", one of the toughest jobs of all. There was not a tree within sight anything but fallow and turnips everywhere in the large field.

How it rained  
When we went to Flintcomb-Ash,

And could not stand upon the hill  
Trimming Swedes for the slicing-mill.

The work is hard, physical manual work and most of it is done out of doors. The woman who is speaking describes how they all soaked through when they worked trimming the Swedes. These lines describe the workers about how they faced the hard situations. They worked hard even in the pouring rain.

Wet washed through us – splash, splash, splash:  
How it rained!

The woman speaking describes how they all got soaked through when they worked trimming the Swedes.

The alliterated word ‘wet washed’ emphasize how wet they got as does the relentless, continuous, repetitive ‘plash, plash, plash’ of the pouring rain. Hardy gives us a sound of the rain, too with the onomatopoeic ‘sh’ sounds in ‘washed’ and ‘plash’. It is the authentic voice of the Dorset field women with limited vocabulary.

How it snowed  
When we crossed from Flintcomb-Ash  
To the Wheat Barn for drawing reed,  
Since we could nowise chop a swede.  
Flakes in each doorway & casement-sash;  
How it snowed!

Each stanza explains the different climates and the difficulties of the farm workers. When snow comes and further works in the field in impossible. The women moved to the wheat-barn for ‘reed-drawing’. The worker changes the work according to the climatic condition and season. In this season they started preparing straw for roof thatching, as a work for this whole climate or season. Their work is hard physical manual work and most of it done out of doors only. They work only according to the season and each season had different works to do.

How it shone  
When we went from Flintcomb-Ash  
To start at dairy work once more  
In the laughing meads, with cows threescore,  
And pails, & songs, & love – too rash;  
How it shone!

This stanza describes seasonal variations and the dairy works. This stanza gives a vivid description about the work done in the summer season. And there is a description about the farm and also their work in the farm. This poem ends blissfully.

The exclamations which start and end in each of the verse emphasize the effect of the weather on the workers. ‘How it rained!’, ‘How it snowed!’, ‘How it shone’. The weather dictates what work can be done. When the Swedes are frozen to cut with a billhook, the women



move into the barn to work on the thatching straw. But even inside the great barn, the snowflakes fill the doorways and casement sashes and the women are hardly protected from the bitter weather. Summer is the only season of enjoyment for the workers; it is the happy days for them because this is the only season they work outside comfortably without any natural problem. It is the only season they enjoy their life.

There is a feeling that the field women are imprisoned in this cycle of work, autumn, winter and summer. Every year they won't escape from all the seasonal problems. There is no progress between the beginning and ending of each stanza.

### Conclusion

This study makes everyone to understand how Hardy struggled to portray his characters in his poetry as well as in his novels. The poems have a space for interpretation and deepened analysis of certain fact of Hardy's characters which is discussed in his novels. The poems clearly show how the image of Tess haunts Thomas Hardy throughout his writing career. Naturally this gets reflected in his poetry also. There are many other poems which hint at the character of Tess. But the poem We Field Woman directly hint at the incidents narrated in the novel Tess. The poems seem to have been written by Hardy to express his feelings about the Victorian Fallen Woman. These ideas do not appear in the poems. The novel readers may not accept these radical ideas. That is why Hardy wrote these ideas through his poetry.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 **18:3 March 2018**

**Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: Vol. II *Black Writings: A Subaltern Perspective***

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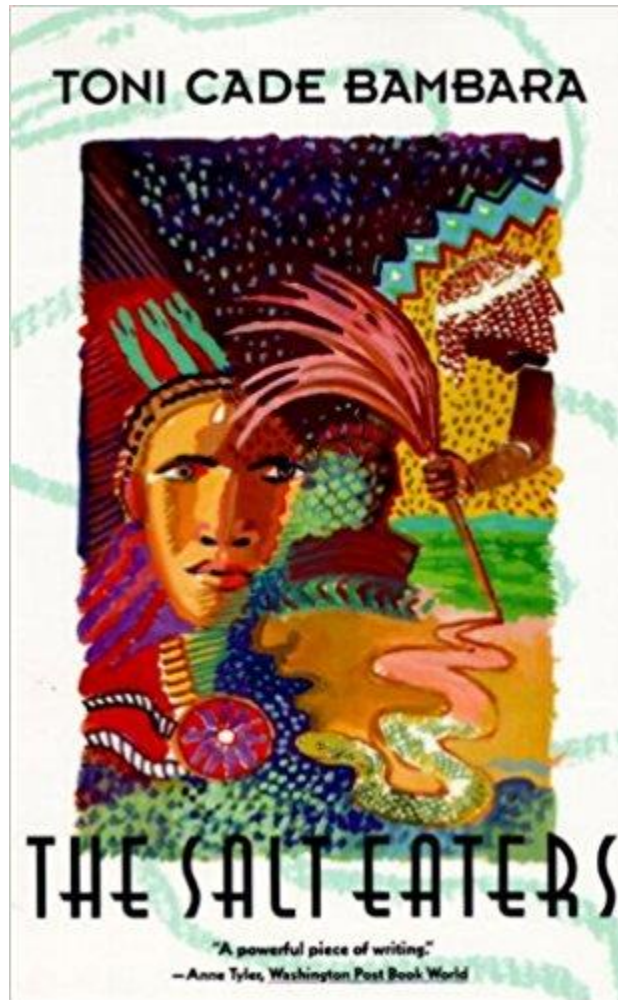
Identity Crisis: Invoking the image 'TESS' in Thomas Hardy Poetry

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**Subaltern Culture in Toni Cade Bambara's Novel**  
*The Salt Eaters*

**P. K. Sathiya and Dr. M. Madhavan**

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Courtesy: <https://www.amazon.com/Salt-Eaters-Toni-Cade-Bambara/dp/0679740767>

**Abstract**

This paper confines with African American woman novelist Toni Cade Bambara. It describes various issues socialism, racism and sexism which are clearly bewrayed in her lives

and works. Toni Cade Bambara's *The Salt Eaters* has been taken for the study. This Text recreates an ideology of African-American womanhood which privileges individual definition. This paper focuses on recurring themes, motifs and issues such as myth, western standards of beauty, supernatural, mothering, poverty, binal consciousness, and stigmatization and marginalization of black people. The novelist creates notable black women characters to establish their own identity among the multilayered and interconnected oppression of racism, socialism, sexism and class discord. There after these women managed to retain their identities throughout the novel. This paper adopts the comparative approach. Its analysis reflects the varied intricacies that black womanhood yields within dominant Culture and how each character either internalizes or counters the politics of race, gender and sexuality. This paper is delving on race and gender which provides readers with new insight to understand Toni Cade Bambara's novel.

**Keywords:** Toni Cade Bambara, Be wary, Healing, Sand, Salt, Mud, Obeah, Hourglass.

Toni Cade Bambara (1939-1995) was an African-American author documentary filmmaker, social activist and college professor. Toni Cade Bambara's real name Meltona Mirkin Cade was born in the neighborhood of Harlem in New York City. She was born at the end of the Harlem Renaissance, During this period, the prominently African-American neighborhood became a center of black culture- particularly literature, music and visual arts. The areas rich history deeply influenced Bambara as did her relationship with her mother, who encouraged her daughter creativity, then Bambara was ten her family left Harlem, She studied English and theatre Arts at Queens college, while still in college, she published her first short story, "Sweet Town", in the magazine Vendome. While continue to her Master's degree. She had worked as program director at colony settlement house, services to immigrants.

Bambara first wrote to literary prominence in 1970 as the editor of the Black woman, a successful anthology of fiction, poems, and essays by emerging African-American woman writers. It was also in this year that Bambara adopted her surname, which she had first seen as a signature in one of her grandmother's old sketchbooks in 1972. Bambara published her first book in 1972. A collection of short fiction called *Gorilla, my love*. Over the next decade she published a second short-story collective and a novel. She also travelled extensively in Europe, Vietnam and Cuba, among other places. Her time abroad in clouded her writing and many of her later words address the lines of people who struggle against outrage. Bambara's stories communicates with shattering force and directness both the grim reality of the black world. Its violence, poverty, determination and a sense of cultural traditions.

Bambara's first novel, *The Salt Eaters*, deals with the story of Velma Henry who tries to commit suicide. Her treatment takes a long time because first she wants to be defended that she needs to accept the fact that she needs to be cured. Minnie Ransom is faith healer who employs non-traditional methods to reclaim her disturbed customer. The treatment takes place in a medical facility where skeptical interns and traditional medical professionals witness the healing as if in attendance at an operation theatre. Velma, Shaky, dirty, affected and underdressed in a hospital gown, is seated before the aged healer, Minnie, who is swaddled in flowing robes and adorned in handcrafted ornaments. Minnie, the healer, asks a question to Velma: 'Are you sure,

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sweetheart, that you want to be well?’ (3). The healer follows with a statement of responsibility that we all must understand: “Just so’s you’re sure, sweetheart, and ready to be healed, because wholeness is no trifling matter. A lot of weight when you’re well” (10). In the opening scene, Velma Henry is bullied on a stool facing Minnie Ransom, a faith healer, whose reputation for curing her patients is impeccable. Velma and Minnie are in turn surrounded by a circle of twelve senior citizens known collectively as The Master’s Mind. Each member of the Mind represents a sign of the Zodiac, and their presence and continuous chanting and humming “in long meter” help create the proper atmosphere Minnie Ransom needs in order to bring in cure.

Minnie Ransom asks Velma in the beginning of the novel : “Are you sure, sweetheart, that you want to be well?”(3)and she continues to ask this question throughout the story until Velma that in order to be well she must “... give it up, the pain, the hurt, the anger, and make room for lovely things to conspire in and fill you full. Nature abominates a so-called vacuum, don’t you know?” (16). In order to “give it up”, Velma relieves her life through flashbacks. As Velma sits on the stool in the clinic her mind wanders through the various injures that have brought her to the edge of aberration. In her head, she redoes scenes of police brutality during Civil Rights demonstrations, the threat of nuclear conflagration, the rift between Black men and women, the schism in her own marriage, a inaccuracy and finally the crippling of Smithy, her former fiancé, who was beaten at an anti-war demonstration and left a quadriplegia. With this terrific act she makes up her mind to commit suicide.

In the novel, one aspect of historical memory is represented by the ancestors. Velma’s break down is marked by her rejection of the Mud Mothers, or the ancient primogenitors who hold “the powers of the deep” (23). The Mothers try to communicate with her repeatedly. In one scene they call to her through an attic mirror. They try to tell her what must be done in order for her to retain balance and reclaim her spirituality. She is feared of them and angry for the intrusion on her understanding of the world. She seeks to shut them up, rejecting them, saying they cannot run her out of her own garret. The Mud Mothers call her to reclaim her past, ancestry, and spiritual restoration. With Minnie’s help she is eventually willing to go to this slough and controvert it. When Velma describe from this metaphysical space, the physical wounds she inflicts on her wrists during her suicide attempt begin to heal. With healing good memories start to come, instead of only the painful one. She is flooded with warm childhood memories of being loved and supported by her family.

All surroundings Velma and Minnie, beyond the infirmary itself, are a luminance array of characters, institutions and circumstances : Fred Holt, the bus driver nearing retirement and to repent the death of his friend, porter; Velma’s husband, Obie, who heads the fragmented Academy of the Seven Arts; the Seven Sisters performing arts group who travel toward Claybourne for the annual Mardi Grass festival; Julius Mathews, a gambler now known as Doc Serge, who is also on staff at the Infirmary; Sophie Heywood, Velma’s grandmother and a member of The Master’s Mind. *The Salt Eaters* is a “fugue like interweaving of voices all of which express the same sense of malaise plaguing Velma” (21).

All of the main characters are relevant in some way to Velma, whose fractured psyche serves as a trope for the splintering and fractures of the community, where fundamental values have been left behind in the wake of the Civil Rights Movement. Like other African-American women's novel of the 1970s and 1980s, *The salt Eaters* deals with the gender oppression that African-American women experienced before, during, and after civil rights. Minnie Ransom repeatedly asks Velma if she is ready for the "weight" of being well, a question the novel implicitly directs to the entire community.

The salt Eaters conglomerates African and Afro-Caribbean spiritual and healing traditions with those from Western religion and other spiritual practices. The novel includes references to prayer, tarot, cowrie shells, herbal and folk medicines, root work and obeah, among others. Under Minnie's guiding hand, Velma will move backward in time to relieve her fear and rage, as well as to recover wisdom and rootedness. Illness, however, becomes a matter of community as well as self-healing; as Velma returns to health, she is also restored to a community badly in need of its own healing. The novel ends climatically, with the apogee of preparations for a local Mardi Grass festival and a allusion storm that signals changes in the characters who need them the most, including Velma who rises from the stool as though from "a burst cocoon" (295).

Bambara has notified herself to be a black feminist. In her novel, she describes much deeper into the very roots of racism and sexism. In a subtle way, she suggests that the characters can be healed by looking inward, centering themselves in their own cultural traditions, and then by moving forward in a joint coagulation to save humanity. Bambara's used some symbols *The Salt Eaters* possesses many symbols such as the title, the setting, mud, sand, and the hourglass etc.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 **18:3 March 2018**

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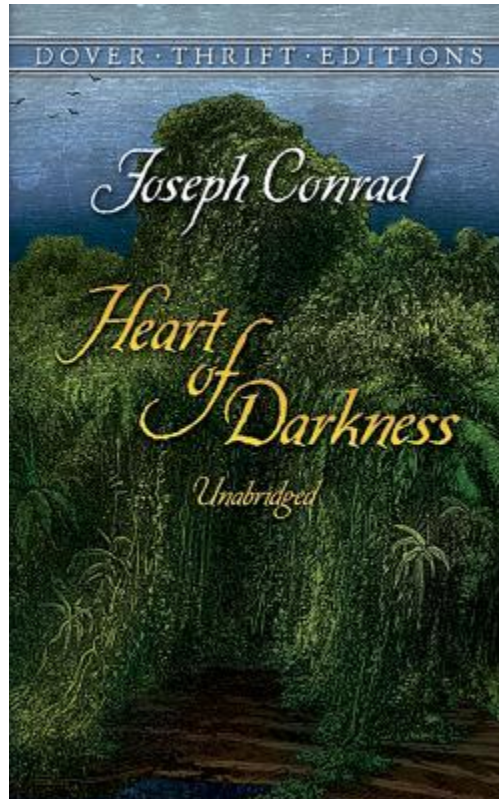
Subaltern Culture in Toni Cade Bambara's Novel *The Salt Eaters*

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## Subaltern Voice in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*

M. Sathyaraj, Ph.D. Research Scholar

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Courtesy: <https://www.alibris.com/search/books/isbn/9780486264646>

### Abstract

Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* dealt with many social problems mainly based on colonialism and racism. It focused on themes such as hypocrisy of imperialism. Throughout American history, African Americans have been discriminated against and subjected to racist attitudes. This experience inspired some Black writers, at least during the early years of African-American literature, to prove they were the equals of European-American authors. In American society, literary acceptance has traditionally been closely tied in with the very power dynamics which perpetrated such evils as racial bias. By borrowing from and incorporating the non-written oral traditions and folk life of the [African Diaspora](#), this study attempts to show how colonialism and racism reflected in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. *Heart of Darkness* explores the

issues surrounding imperialism in intricate ways. As Marlow travels from the Outer Station to the Central Station and finally up the river to the Inner Station, he encounters scenes of torture, brutality, and near-slavery. At the very least, the incidental scenery of the book offers a harsh picture of colonial enterprise. The impetus behind Marlow's adventures, too, has to do with the hypocrisy inherent in the rhetoric used to justify imperialism. The men who work for the Company depict what they do as trade and their treatment of native Africans is part of a compassionate project of evolution. Kurtz, on the other hand, is open about the fact that he does not trade but rather takes ivory by force, and he describes his own treatment of the natives with the words in some honest way. His wicked honesty leads to his downfall, as his success threatens to expose the evil practices behind European activity in Africa.

**Keywords:** Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*, Post-Colonialism, Racism, Absurdity of Evil

### ***Heart of Darkness***

Discussion on the novel *Heart of Darkness* here is based on the post-colonial theory. Post-colonial theory could be divided into many parts, such as imperialism, subaltern, colonialism and racism. The first one is imperialism. As an imperialist here is white man. The real example is Mr. Kurtz. By offering many goods they brought, such as beads, cotton, and the materials from metal, they to get the reward in the form of ivory from that inland. Subaltern here is obscured as a colonized subject. In this novel, the subaltern are niggers, they are the blacks. Racism here looks down upon the other race. Here, the race is the niggers. They are assumed to be foolish and immoral. Even their attitude assumed the black people as animals. From the discussion above, it appears that Conrad actually wants to raise that event as a description of post colonialism in action at the time. In other words, Africa loses any identity or purpose of its own. Its only use is so that, in contrast, we can better understand Europe.

### **No Real Identities**

In this novel Africans have no real identities or agency and they are nameless slaves, sick both in physical and spiritual health. They are dying of diseases and worshipping the evil and undeserving Kurtz. Africa, meanwhile, is portrayed as the backwoods, far from civilized society; it is only in traveling so far into the depths of nature that Marlowe comes to really understand the difference between the civilized and the uncivilized world. It is Kurtz' exploitation of his workers that is presented as the primary problem.

### **Kurtz**

Kurtz is a monster, and the workers are victims. In the end, Marlowe is disgusted with what Kurtz does. It is the representation of European colonial power. It can be argued that *Heart of Darkness* participates in an oppression of non-whites that is much more menacing and much harder to remedy than the open abuses of Kurtz or the Company's men. Africans become for Marlow a mere backdrop, a human screen against which he can play out his philosophical and existential struggles. This kind of dehumanization is harder to identify than colonial aggression or open racism. While *Heart of Darkness* offers a powerful condemnation of the deceitful operations of imperialism, it also presents a set of issues surrounding race that is ultimately troubling.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

**Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: Vol. II Black Writings: A Subaltern Perspective**

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Subaltern Voice in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*

“In exterior he resembled a butcher in a neighborhood, and his eyes had a look of sleepy cunning. He carried his fat paunch with ostentation on his short legs, and during the time his gang infested the station spoke to no one but his nephew. You could see long with these two roaming all day with their heads close together in an everlasting confab.” (55)

### **Interiors and Exteriors**

Comparisons between interiors and exteriors pass through *Heart of Darkness*. As the narrator states at the beginning of the text, Marlow is more interested in surfaces, in the surrounding aura of a thing rather than in any hidden nugget of meaning deep within the thing itself. This inverts the usual hierarchy of meaning: normally one seeks the deep message or hidden truth. Although social customs and explanatory justifications are shown throughout *Heart of Darkness* to be utterly false and even leading to evil, they are nevertheless necessary for both group harmony and individual security. Madness, in *Heart of Darkness*, is the result of being removed from one’s social context and allowed to be the sole arbiter of one’s own actions. Kurtz has no authority to whom he answers but himself, and this is more than any one man can bear.

### **Hypocrisy**

*Heart of darkness* is an exploration of hypocrisy, uncertainty, and moral confusion. At the Outer Station, he watches native laborers blast away at a hillside with no particular goal in mind. The absurd involves both insignificant silliness and life-or-death issues, often simultaneously. That the serious and the mundane are treated similarly suggests a profound moral confusion and a tremendous hypocrisy. Words themselves fail to capture meaning sufficiently, and thus they must be taken in the context of their utterance. Another good example of this is Marlow’s conversation with the brick maker, during which Marlow is able to figure out a good deal more than simply what the man has to say.

“Poor fool! If he had only left that shutter alone .he had no restraint, no restraint- just like Kurtz- a tree swayed by the wind. as soon as I had put on a dry pair of slippers, I dragged him out ,after first jerking he spear outside ,which operation I confess I performed with my eyes shut tight. His heels leaped together over the little doorsteps; his shoulders were pressed to my breast; I hugged him from behind desperately. Oh! He was heavy, heavy; heavier than any man on earth, I should imagine. Then without more ado I tipped him overboard .The current snatched him as though he had been a wisp of grass, and I saw the body roll over twice before I lost sight of it forever. All the pilgrims and the manager were then congregated on the awning deck about the pilot –house, chattering at each other like a flock of excited magpies, and there was a scandalized murmur at my heartless promptitude. (89)

However, it is difficult to discern exactly what it might mean, given that absolutely everything in the book is masked in darkness. Africa, England, and Brussels are all described as gloomy and somehow dark, even if the sun is shining brightly. Darkness thus seems to operate

symbolically and existentially rather than specifically. Kurtz's intended and his African mistress function as blank slates upon which the values and the wealth of their respective societies can be displayed. Marlow frequently claims that women are the keepers of immature illusions; although this sounds condemnatory. In return, the women are the beneficiaries of much of the resulting wealth, and they become objects upon which men can display their own success and status.

In the novel, the white characters refer to them in animalistic terms. The Manager's uncle arrives with his own expedition. Marlow overhears them saying that they would like to see Kurtz and his assistant hanged so that their station could be eliminated as ivory competition. Some of the pilgrims go ashore to investigate. The whirring sound of arrows is heard; an attack is started. The Pilgrims shoot back from the ship with rifles. The helmsman of the ship is killed, as is a native ashore. Marlow supposes that Kurtz has decomposed in the mysterious attack. This upsets him greatly. In spite of Marlow's disappointment, the ship presses onward. A little way down the river, the crew spot Kurtz's station, which they had supposed was lost. They meet a [Russian](#) man who resembles a harlequin. He says that Kurtz is alive but somewhat ill. The natives do not want Kurtz to leave because he has expanded their minds. Kurtz does not want to leave because he has essentially become part of the tribe. After talking for a while with the Russian, Marlow has a very clear picture of the man who has become his fascination.

### **Talk to Kurtz on His Deathbed**

Finally, he has the chance to talk to Kurtz, who is ill and on his deathbed. The natives surround his hut until he tells them to leave. While on watch, Marlow dozes off and realizes that Kurtz is gone. He chases him and finds Kurtz in the forest. Marlow manages to take him back to his bed. Kurtz entrusts Marlow with all of his old files and papers. Among these is a photograph of his sweetheart. The Russian escapes before the Manager and others can imprison him. The steamboat departs the next day. Throughout the novel Conrad explored the impact of colonialism and treatment of people by non- white in various places. *Heart of Darkness* is true that dark men in this tale tend to behave in ways more moral and more civilized than do white men. While starving cannibals on board keep their hungry eyes off their masters, darkness remains the place and mode of Marlow's terminal struggle with Kurtz.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 **18:3 March 2018**

**Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: Vol. II Black Writings: A Subaltern Perspective**

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Subaltern Voice in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*



**Ernest Hemingway's Achievements and Shortcomings in His Novels**  
**R. Savitha and Dr. Laxmi Dhar Dwivedi**  
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Ernest Hemingway

Courtesy: [https://www.nobelprize.org/nobel\\_prizes/literature/laureates/1954/hemingway-bio.html](https://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1954/hemingway-bio.html)

**Abstract**

Ernest Miller Hemingway (1899-1961) is one of the major novelist in the history of American Literature. He is generally considered to be the spokesperson for the generation that faced the loss and devastation of two world wars in a lifetime. The present work is crucial as it marks Hemingway's Achievements and Shortcoming in his novels.

**Keywords:** Ernest Hemingway, Characterisation, Action, War, Limitation, Achievements

**His Limitation**

No author exists who is completely satisfactory in every way. Every author has his faults and limitations. Different critics may point out different points of limitations. In our discussion of Hemingway, we cannot escape such a reading. Though he was a master and generally considered a genuine in the field of literary art, he has also faults and limitations. He was a writer who was pleased but was not free from elements that exasperated his readers. Some of the elements that aroused such feelings are his occasional snugness and sometimes over assertive masculinity and by his alternate shifting from sentimentality to toughness. His work is also marked by an obsessive concern with violence and cruelty and a fascination for war and death.

The irritating element was that he hardly used them to achieve catharsis of any kind but he seemed rather to be using these elements for some kind of sadistic satisfaction. Hemingway was however marked by a limitation of vision. This limited vision resulted in his drawing characters from a limited set--the expatriate American or else the Latin American. Hemingway hardly ever drew other characters. Though it is an artist choice to portray as an according to what he pleases, it nevertheless draws a negative connotation of an artist throughout his life, and in his entire oeuvre restricts himself. Another limitation is the same vein in that apart from these he has very occasionally touched upon the people, the manner and the interest and objective of his own contemporary society.

### **Achievements and Faults**

At several points of time Hemingway has been strongly criticised for his faults, his deficiencies and his irritating qualities. On the other hand, because of his personality which attracted a great many people and because of his vast achievements and accomplishments which by way were a mean feat, he has been highly acclaimed also. Listed below are excerpts from statements made by critics over time.

Carlos Baker sums up Hemingway as, “Here is nature and here is man. Here is also something about the nature of manhood”. On the other hand, Alfred Kazin’s conclusion on Hemingway’s success ‘Triumph in and of a narrow, local and violent world, and never superior to it. The following have been extracted from Wyndham Lewis’s essay and points to several defects and achievements.

“When I had finished the book (*A Farewell to Arms*), I thought it was a very good book. By that I meant that the cumulative effect was impressive, as the events themselves would be. It is like reading a news, paper, day by day, about some matter of absorbing interest-say the reports of a divorce, murder, or libel action. If you say anyone could write it, you are mistaken because, to obtain that smooth effect, of commonplace reality, there must be no sentimental or other heightening, the number of words expended must be proportionate to the importance and the length of respective phases of the action, and any false move or overstatement would at once stand out and tell against it. If an inferior reporter to Hemingway took up the pen, that fact would at once be detected by a person sensitive to reality. It is an art, then, from this standpoint, like the cinema, or like those modernist still-life pictures in which, in place of painting a match box upon the canvas, a piece of actual match box is stuck on. Hemingway is a poster-art, or a cinema in words.”

“If you say that this is not the way that Dante wrote, that these are not artistically permanent creations, I agree. But it is what we have got: there is actually bad and good of this kind; and I for my part enjoy what I regard as the good, without worrying any more about it than that”.

“That a particular phase in the life of humanity is implicit in this art is certain. It is one of the first fruits of the *proletarianization* which, as a result of the amazing revolutions in the technique of industry, we are all undergoing whether we like it or not”.

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“But political significance! That is surely the last thing one would expect to find in such books as *In Our Time*, *The Sun Also Rises*, *Men Without Women*, or *A Farewell to Arms*. And indeed, it is difficult to imagine a writer whose mind is more entirely closed to politics than Hemingway’s ..... He is interested in the sports of death, in the sad things that happen to those engaged in the sports of love and war, or the people who profit by it, or in the ultimate human destinies involved in it. He lives, or affects to live, sub-merged. He is in the multitudinous ranks of those to whom things happen-terrible things of course, and of course stoically borne”.

“Another manner of looking at it would be to say that Ernest Hemingway is the Noble Savage of Rousseau, but a white version, the Simple Amen? man, that is, at all events the role that he has chosen, and} : Plays It with an imperturbable art and grace beyond praise”.

“Hemingway’s books scarcely contain a figure who is not in some way futile, clown-like, passive, and above all purposeless. His world of men and women (in violent action, certainly) is completely empty of will. His puppets are leaves, very violently blown hither and thither, drugged or at least deeply intoxicated phantoms of a sort of matter-of-fact shell-shock.”

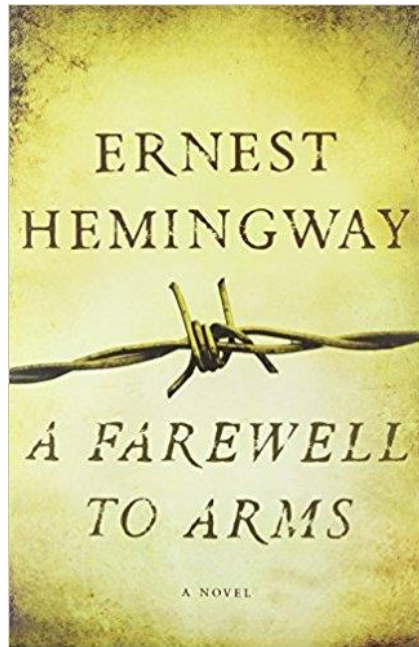
“It is not perhaps necessary to say that Hemingway’s art is an art of the surface, and none the worse for that. It is almost purely an art of action, and of very violent, which is another qualification. Faulkner’s that too: but violence with Hemingway is deadly matter-of-fact (as if there were only violent action and nothing else in the world).”

### **Characters Unforgettable**

When we compare Hemingway to a novelist such as Dickens who created a vast array of memorable and unforgettable characters such as Oliver Twist, Uriah Heap, Mr. Micawber, etc. who suddenly spring to mind because of the unique characteristics that Dickens endows them With, entire span he has created no such memorable character. However, Hemingway’s art does not rest on his creating such memorable individual characters. His art rested on his ability to capture the atmosphere of and expressing a primitive attitude and thereby hooking his audience. There are therefore very less characters in his work who remain in memory for after finishing the novel neither as significant type of character or as particular human beings.

In *A Farewell to Arms* for example, we remember the war, the love affair, etc. but we do not recall any of the character vividly they remain mere shadows and do not come across as life and blood characters.

Similarly, in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, the reader instantly recognises the tension fraught atmosphere of the Spanish Civil War and certain stray incident such as the sexual encounter in the sleeping bag etc. However, one exception to the rule can be admitted. In creating Pilar, the guerrilla chieftain’s wife, Hemingway has created an unforgettable woman who shall long linger in memory.



Courtesy: <https://www.amazon.ca/Farewell-Arms-Ernest-Hemingway/dp/1443439843>

### **Hemingway Dismissed for Not Being a True Novelist**

According to Edward Wagenknecht, Hemingway is not essentially a novelist. This is what he says:

“Like Sherwood Anderson, Hemingway is, for many reasons, not essentially a novelist; he himself told Lillian Ross that all his novels had begun as short stories. There are six long fictions, but as novels only two of them count: *A Farewell to Arms* and *For Whom the Bell Falls*. *The Torrents of Spring*, the brief burlesque with which he signaled his emancipation from Anderson’s influence, is merely an amusing hit of clowning, and both *To Have and Have Not* and *Across the River and into the Trees* are poor novels, though the latter has some interest as a portent. And though I know Hemingway’s special admirers will consider the statement outrageous, I must still record my judgment that, considered as a novel, *The Sun Also Rises* seems to me a slight thing, successful as it has been in teaching young people how to waste their life.”

This is one of the harsher negative comments on Hemingway. Edward Wagenknecht further comments on the theme of moral aimlessness saying that it never turns out to be any great achievement. This is what he says of Lady Brett Ashley the heroine of *The Sun Also Rises*, “Lady Brett Ashley is a true Hemingway character when she finds herself falling in love with Romero. She can’t help it. She has never in 3 her life, she declares, been able to help anything. Later, to be sure, she has her moment of revulsion, but moments of revulsion are not enough. So far as this world at least is concerned, she goes to hell. Obviously if ~ you lose the freedom of the will, there can be no morality, and without morality, the novel, which by its terms and conditions, is a study of human conduct, cannot possible have any meaning either. Even in the

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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hands of as great an artist as Ernest Hemingway, moral aimlessness has not proved a promising theme”.

### **The Seamy Side of Life**

Hemingway’s fictional character seem to be a collection of perverts, prostitutes and drunkards as filled as his novel are with soldiers, sports man, matador, fisherman, disillusioned expatriates etc. etc. He himself was greatly fascinated by war and its machinery and was therefore preoccupied with death and violence. He lived life on the edges-drinking hard and playing hard. And these are reflected in his fiction. In his novels and short stories his characters consume alcohol in extra large quantities, they smoke and drink unrestricted and they also indulge in casual sex thereby completely ignoring the conventional ethic of sexual relationships. Hemingway’s subject-matter can therefore be hardly considered pleasant. However, to criticize Hemingway too severely for these defects would be an injustice because the era that he lived in that of the post-world war era, ravaged by the war and then the economic depression, war full of such people. Therefore, to a certain extent these elements add to the realism of the text however unpleasant they may be and so cannot be done away with. Lastly it may be said that these elements are better dealt in works of fiction and less in his semi-auto biographical novels.

### **Too Much Action**

Hemingway’s novel according to some critics place too much emphasis on action and therefore do not seem to provide an adequate philosophy of life neither does he supply a suitable form of reference for art. Hemingway had always wanted to avoid being ‘taken in’ by anything. But his work seems to supply evidence to the contrary. He has been ‘taken in’ by almost everything, right from hunting, bull-fighting etc to war. He has in a way romanticized the killing of men by men and therefore has been obliged to find a moral meaning to justify and explain it. Critics therefore charge Hemingway saying that if at all any thing was to be romanticized why couldn’t he has romanticized life, love and therefore the beautiful instead of romanticizing the ugly in the form of death and all the other ugly element associated with death.

Hemingway has also been ‘taken in’ by war, in a sense that though he expressed a feeling of being against war, he had somehow come to justify it. Hemingway was involved in a number of wars. The first and Second World Wars, the Spanish Civil War, then he also covered the Greek retreat and others as a war-correspondent. However, he never became a militarist. By 1942, when he began *Men at War* he was writing like all other professional patriots and in a sense justifying war by propounding the thesis that: ‘War is the sum of all evil, but this war is different! If we only destroy these scoundrels now, there we shall have ' peace upon earth for evermore!’” That this thesis is in vain has been adequately proved by the two world wars and yet his hero and heroine seem to be committed to this thesis. This is a severe fault in Hemingway who has to maintain the code, principle or cult. Such an emotion as pity is non-existent in the Hemingway world. Even if it does manifest itself, it appears in the rarest, minimal manner.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion we can call Hemingway’s world inadequate and minimal though his outlook may be large and encompassing. His world is a world limited to war and the violence



that is characteristic of war. The Hemingway world is at war, an armed and calculated conflict literally or else a metaphorical war which is marked by violence which may again be classified as literal, or metaphorical, actual or potential and there is always the corner. The world today is constricted by conditions imposed upon it by the war, and people and their behaviour are forced to behave according to these restricting conditions.

These conditions are a feeling of emergency and fear, apprehension and the notion of pleasure seized in haste. Pleasure in this world is therefore limited, has to be forced and is mostly of the sensual kind. Everything is restricted by the war and even morality has to go according to what is practical and pragmatic. It is a world where 'what you feel good after' is what is moral. According to this definition of morality also functions the ethics of a soldier and his virtues during war. Similarly, according to the rules of sport the rules and notions of escape which in turn makes up the code of armistice and the temporary modifications of the rules of war during peace time.

The world of Hemingway is a world where growth does not exist. Everything is stunted and does not bear fruit. Rather in this world things explode and break or else decay and are eaten away. However, complete and total misery is avoided through visions of strength and courage, stoic endurance and competence. Especially in *A Farewell to Arms* the visions that bring some sense of relief are visions of the pleasures and joy that the human body can bring if it is not in pain, by the thought and in diligence in love that cannot last long and by the pleasures to be found in sitting in cafes' going fishing and hunting and going to places and countries on holidays. Parole to the stunted development of the world, Hemingway's character also remain undeveloped. They do not grow in nature as it is. They do not in a sense even attain the status of an 'adult'. The world portrayed is therefore a narrow world and sharply marked by violence.

A close look at Hemingway's world reveals it to be inadequate and is hardly a world that one would wish to live in. But no matter how much man may think that this is not his world, he is wrong. It is in effect the actual world that we live in that Hemingway has portrayed in his works. The world that we live is ravaged as it is by war minor as well as two major ones and thus death and violence are part and parcel of one's life. We cannot forget that the destruction, the evil and the general chaos in the world of Hemingway is but a mere shadow of the actual world. Thus, no matter how narrow and repulsive the world created by Hemingway may be, is nevertheless the actual world that we live in, it is the real world.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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## Reconstruction of Subaltern Literature from Gramsci to Spivak: Historical Developments and New Application

E. Septima

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### Abstract

The aim of this paper is to retrace the historical developments and new implications of one of the most disputed concepts in post-colonial theory. The study of the concept of the subaltern deals first with preliminary definitions of this concept as it was initially used by the Italian Marxist political activist, Antonio Gramsci, in his widely known book "Prison Notebooks". Later, this paper examined the new reflections of the subaltern concept as explicated by those critics and historians who defined themselves as members of the Subaltern Studies Group. A particular focus at this stage is laid on the key insights of the forefather of the group, Ramjet Guha, and on the latest assumptions and ideas provided by the prominent deconstructivist, post-colonial critic, Gayatri Spivak, mainly in her seminal essay: "Can the Subaltern Speak?" The study finally tackled some of the present-day implications of the subaltern concept as it unfolds in a post-modern condition. The analysis at this stage focused on key ideas introduced by the post-modern scholar, Jean Baudrillard, and post-colonial critic, Homi Bhabha.

### Keywords: Antonio Gramsci

, Gayatri Spivak, Subaltern, post-colonialism, colonial discourse, subaltern historiography, political mobilization, domination, sexual division of labor, history, third world women, Sati women, globalized post-modern world, difference, identity, consciousness of subalternity, revolutionary voice, liminality, third space of enunciation.



Antonio Gramsci

Courtesy: <https://www.economist.com/blogs/prospero/2017/11/all-things-all-people>

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## Introduction

Post-colonial theory as a recent field of study has lately become one of the most attractive academic disciplines - if it can be called a discipline - that incessantly triggers piles and piles of literature written by art of critics, social reformists, political scientists, literary critics and political economists. The continuous expansion of post-colonialism in its recent version made its own domains of interest and areas of functionality overlap with other fields of global academic studies such as African American literature, literary theory and criticism, anthropology and cultural studies.

One of the latest subdivisions of post-colonial theory is the Subaltern Studies Group or the Subaltern Studies Collective that was launched in the 1980s by a group of eminent Indian scholars. The Subaltern Studies Group, in its immense effort to restudy the Indian history and society as a narrative, provoked a great number of controversial issues; among them is the problematic issue of the subaltern subject and its constitution in the Indian historiography.

This controversial concept of the subaltern caused a great deal of confusion all over the academia and left students of colonial discourse and post-colonial theory perplexed while wallowing in labyrinthine postulations of specialized scholars. In this study, the author did not pretend perfectly master in any way the premises expressed by those scholars nor did he encompass the scopes of their inquiries, but his intention in this article is to trace the birth of the subaltern as a critical concept of extreme importance in post-colonial theory.

As such, this notion of the subaltern was traced following it through its historical developments as it was first coined before coming to its latest applications in post-modern conditions. So as not to drift into unnecessary excavations that may lead this study astray, a genealogical study of this concept (the subaltern) was chosen on three predominant thinkers with whom it is essentially associated: Antonio Gramsci, Ranajit Guha and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak.



Gayatri Spivak

Courtesy: <http://icls.columbia.edu/author/0000000100/>

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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Reconstruction of Subaltern Literature from Gramsci to Spivak: Historical Developments and  
New Application

Throughout its history since the beginning of the twentieth century, the concept of the subaltern remains one of the most slippery and difficult to define. This difficulty is due in part to the manipulations of critics and writers whose, “unscrupulous, instrumental, or merely selective readings of Gramsci have been animated by the impulse to make him appear relevant to the present time, particularly when he has been used to lend authority to or legitimize a specific political stance, ideological tendency, or theoretical position” (Francese, 2009)

### **Gramscian Explorations of the Concept of the Subaltern and Its Influence on the Subaltern Studies Group**

The approach that was used in this study consists mainly of retracing the concept of the subaltern in its historical development as it was first used by Gramsci before trying to relate it to the current developments in our post-modern times. So, it became evident that the approach is a historical approach that attempts to excavate the origins of the concept of the subaltern by referring to a genealogical study of the foundational academic theoretical works which dealt with this notion of the subaltern. The material used consists mainly of major books written by Gramsci, Ranajit Guha and Spivak. The notion of the subaltern was first referred to by the Italian Marxist political activist Antonio Gramsci in his article “Notes on Italian History” which appeared later on as part of his most widely known book *Prison Notebooks* written between 1929 and 1935. Gramsci’s standpoint is fundamentally instrumental to any student who reaches an understanding of the origin of the notion of the subaltern because it tends to detach itself from the mechanistic and economic form that narrowly characterizes most of the Marxist traditional studies. The subaltern classes refer fundamentally in Gramsci’s words to any “low rank” person or group of people in a particular society suffering under hegemonic domination of a ruling elite class that denies them the basic rights of participation in the making of local history and culture as active individuals of the same nation. Gramsci’s intentions when he first used the concept of the subaltern are clear enough to be given any other far-fetched interpretations. The only groups Gramsci had in mind at that time were the workers and peasants who were oppressed and discriminated by the leader of the National Fascist Party, Benito Mussolini and his agents.

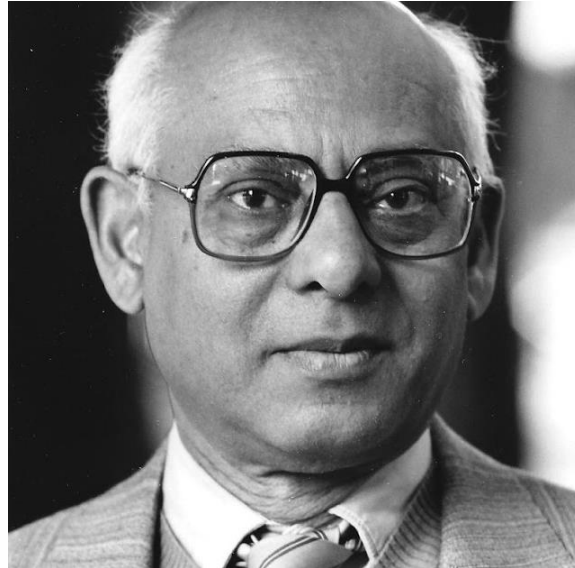
In order to study the history of the subaltern groups, Gramsci designed a plan composed of six steps that are found to be explained in detail in his book, which was mentioned earlier. He intends to study: firstly, their objective formation by changes taking place in economic production; secondly, their active or passive affiliation to the dominant political formations and their attempts to influence their programs; thirdly, the birth of new parties and dominant groups, which are mainly created for the subjugation and maintenance of the subaltern; fourthly, the formations which the subaltern group themselves made to vindicate limited rights; fifthly, new formations which maintain the subaltern groups autonomy within old frameworks; sixthly, those formations which may help to affirm their entire autonomy (Gramsci, 1971)<sup>3</sup>. Ironically, Gramsci argued that the subaltern classes have the same complex history as that of the hegemonic classes, although the latter constitutes the most officially accepted. The subaltern groups’ history in Gramsci’s opinion has no evident unity and it seems to be in its very episodic totality because of their submission to the authority of the ruling groups even when they break with the established system.

This deplorable state of affairs imposed this sort of non-accessibility to the means by which they may limit and control their own representation and consequently lack an access to the social and cultural institutions of their state. Though, it takes a long time, the only possible way from Gramsci's perspective was to reach the state of freedom through a permanent victory which necessarily guarantees a dismantling of the master/slave pattern.

This dismantling is to be realized within Gramsci's theoretical framework, by releasing the subordinated consciousness of non-elite group from the cultural hegemony exercised by the ruling class. His groundbreaking and newly revealed ideas about the vital role of peasantry as a distinct group within the subaltern division, distinguished Gramsci from the previous founders of Marxism who confidently took for granted the impending expiry of the peasantry in the face of the class-conscious proletariat produced by the conditions of a post-industrial capitalist society. His deeply formulated ideas, especially those written during his imprisonment, about the class of peasants as a social, cultural and political force aware of its distinct consciousness of „politics of people“ that persists to exist even when the elite politics dissipate.

This distinct difference between the elite and the subaltern is evident when we conceived it through the notion of political mobilization. The elite political mobilization is fulfilled through appropriation of or adjustment to the British parliamentary institutions and laws whereas the subaltern political mobilization is founded on classical forms of social organization such as: blood relationships and kinship, territoriality, traditional and tribal affiliations where popular mobilization take the form of peasant insurgencies and regional demon-striations. No matter how heterogeneous the subaltern groups may be, there is a constantly unchanging character which defines them: that is, the notion of resistance to the imposed domination of the elite class.

The final result of this interplay was summarized in the fact that the Indian bourgeoisie failed by the end to speak for the nation, a position which confirmed the failure of Indian nation to objectively exist without any representations formed and cherished by the colonial regime. This failure, in Guha's opinion, consists of the critical problem of the historiography of colonial India. To protect himself from any essentialist views that may cling to his conception of subalternity, Guha points to the fact that there is a distinctive difference between the subaltern groups and dominant indigenous groups at the local levels. These precautions which Guha took against essentialism in Spivak's opinion only seem to further complicate the problem of the subaltern subalternity made other subsequent 20th century scholars working on the issue of Indian peasantry historiography resume his effort.



Ranajit Guha

Courtesy: <https://ostour.dohainstitute.org/en/issue06/Pages/art08.aspx>

These scholars led by Ranajit Guha came to be known as the Subaltern Studies Group. With the emergence of the Subaltern Studies Group or Subaltern Studies Collective, as it is also called, in India back in the early 1980s, the subalternity as a concept, gained a worldwide currency. This group was founded by Ranajit Guha, comprises a number of other south Asian historians, social critics and scholars, mainly from Touraj Atabaki, Shahid Amin, Dipesh Chakrabarty, David Arnold, Partha Chatterjee, David Hardiman, Gyan Pandey and Sumit Sarkar who dissented from the group due to its disappointing turn to post-modernism. Their elaborate and systematic strategies of reading of the Indian and south Asian histories are in principle inspired by Gramsci's views as expressed in his book "the Prison Notebooks", but they were also further developed by their well-known forefather, Ranajit Guha, first in his manifesto in "*Subaltern Studies I*" and later on in his famous, classical treatise titled *The Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India*.

In this latter book, Guha attempted to show that the Indian peasants were socially and politically aware of the effect that their uprising would have on the colonial administration, which rarely sees insurgency as a struggle for social justice. Guha seeks to do justice to the Indian peasants by examining the interplay of domination and subjugation relations in Indian context from 1783 to 1900.

Ranajit Guha defined the Subaltern Studies as, „a name for the general attribute of subordination in South Asian society whether this is expressed in terms of class, caste, age, gender and office or in any other way (Guha, 1982). "The subaltern for him is that clearly definite entity, which constitutes "the demographic difference between the total Indian population and all those whom we have described as the elite" (Guha, 1982)."5 Guided by the foundational views of Guha, the group members aimed at studying the subaltern groups as an "objective assessment of the role

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 **18:3 March 2018**

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of the elite and as a critique of elitist interpretations of that role (Guha, 1982). This concern originated from the assumption that the writing of Indian national history has been controlled by colonial elitism as well as nationalist-bourgeois elitism which were both produced by the British colonialism in different historical periods. Consequently, Guha affirmed that this kind of historiography cannot possibly transmit, analyze or acknowledge the kind of changes or contributions brought by common people themselves as individual subjects were independent from the elite groups

### **Gayatri Chakravorty's Reconsiderations of the Concept of the Subaltern**

The concept of the subaltern moved to a furthermore complex theoretical debate with the intervention of the Indian-American post-colonial feminist critic, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, who was criticized in her groundbreaking essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" (1988) the assumptions were projected by the Subaltern Studies Group. Due to the limits of space in this paper, I her essay cannot be thoroughly discussed, but I would rather point to its general examination of the notion of the subaltern.

The complexity of Spivak's stance might be attributed to her erudite and skillful, but sometimes, unclear implementation of structuralist and post-structuralist theories, particularly deconstructionist strategies of reading, in colonial and post-colonial spaces of divergence and inversion. In her seminal essay, Spivak reconsidered the problems of subalternity within new historical developments as brought by capitalistic politics of undermining revolutionary voice and divisions of labor in a globalized world. She disapproved the first place of Gramsci's assertion of the autonomy of the subaltern groups. Her justification of this rejection of Gramscian view is based on her view that this autonomy results in a statement which affirmed the fact that the subaltern as a distinctly conscious subjectivity only possessed a dominant language or a dominant voice to be heard.

From this stance, one may go further to assume that the whole discourse of post-colonial theory itself is to be considered as a speaking for the voiceless and politically marginalized groups by their intellectual representatives. To cut short a debate that may demand more time and space which cannot be afforded in this paper, a conclusion shall be made by pointing to the surplus value brought by Spivak's debate. By excavating the history of deprived women, Spivak managed to elaborate on the original demarcation of the notion of the subaltern as it was first developed by Ranajit Guha and the others through her fundamental exploration of the experiences and struggles of women in general, either from the upper middle class or the peasantry and sub-proletariat class. She stands for women as a differentiated gender because of the outrageous exclusion of their participation in anti-colonial history.

Spivak contends, "The question is not of female participation in insurgency, or the ground rules of the sexual division of labor, for both of which there is „evidence“; rather, both were used as object of colonialist historiography and as a subject of insurgency, though the ideological construction of gender keeps the male dominant. If in the context of colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow Spivak, faced with this difficulty of specifying the realm of subalternity, shifts to reconsider the

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issues of the subaltern groups by dealing with the problems of gender and particularly Indian women during colonial times. She reflected on the status of Indian women relying on her analysis of a case of Sati women practices under the British colonial rule. Sati women as a subaltern group, Spivak arguments were lost between two polarities: the British humanist discourse calling for individual freedom of Sati women and the Hindu native policy calling for voluntary participation in the ritual.

The conflict between these two positions produced two different discourses with no possible solution; one postulates that, “white man [are] saving brown women from brown men,” the other maintains that, “the woman actually wanted to die (Spivak, 1991).” Here, it becomes clear that the Hindu woman loses their voice in such a contradictory position between two antagonistic poles that constantly teases her to make a conscious decision. The „voice“ of the Hindu woman herself disappeared while these two discursive groups tried to give her a voice; the representation of Sati women contributes so much to a certain appropriation of their own free will to decide and deprived them of their subjectivity and a space to speak from. Finally, the Hindu woman “disappeared, not into a pristine nothingness, but into a violent shuttling, which is the displaced figuration of the „third-world woman“ caught between tradition and modernization (Spivak, 1991).” Spivak came to conclude by the end that „the subaltern cannot speak“. This last declaration that she made in her essay was controversially interpreted.

## Conclusion

It becomes clear nowadays with the postmodern turn as conceived of in Baudrillard’s terms of the disappearance of the real and the death of originality that the subaltern becomes defined in descriptive terms according to a particular marginalized subject position in any given cultural or social context. Subalternity as a condition becomes an umbrella concept which gained an extended attractive fashion. People in the present time would willingly like to occupy the position of a subaltern whose silence is possibly voiced through the advocating representation of an intellectual. Spivak warns in advance from such a position of accepting the condition of a permanent subordination. She affirmed that the task of an intellectual is to pave way for the subaltern groups and let them freely speak for themselves. It became quite difficult for all the changes taking place in a globalized post-modern world to define the subaltern as a distinct category.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 **18:3 March 2018**

**Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: Vol. II *Black Writings: A Subaltern Perspective***

E. Septima

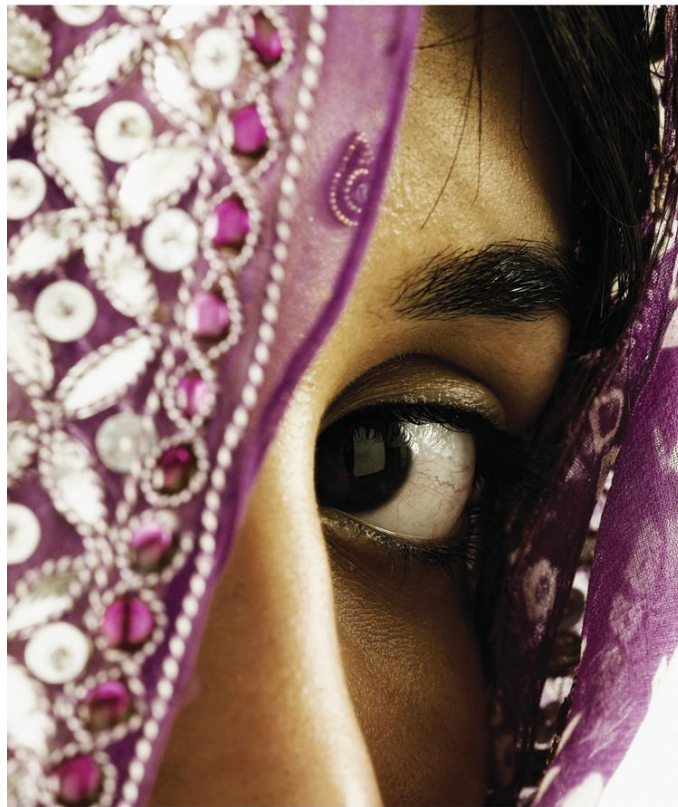
Reconstruction of Subaltern Literature from Gramsci to Spivak: Historical Developments and  
New Application

**Struggle and Resistance in Bapsi Sidhwa's *The Pakistani Bride***

J. Sharmila Devi and Dr. G. Arputhavel Raja

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## The Pakistani Bride



## BAPSI SIDHWA

a novel by the author of *Cracking India*

### Abstract

Bapsi Sidhwa is a Pakistani American Writer who belongs to Parsee community. Her novels mainly focus on social themes such as partition crisis, Parsee milieu, marriage, migration, women, love, pain, identity. This article traces the Parsee and Zoroastrian women conflict in

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Bapsi Sidhwa's *The Pakistani Bride*. As a Parsee woman, Sidhwa witnessed the communal issues and expressed it through her writings along with her personal experience. She portrays the contemporary society and its problems in this novel. These problems are presented through various women characters like Zaitoon, Carol, and Afshan. As a Pakistani female writer in English, she highlights the struggle of women within patriarchal Pakistani society. The emphasis of this paper is to explore and analyze the struggle and resistance of female figure against patriarchal structures as presented in the novel *The Pakistani Bride*.

**Keywords:** Partition, Women, Identity, Subaltern.

## **Bapsi Sidhwa**

Bapsi Sidhwa is one of the most successful English-language Pakistani novelists. She is distinctive among the writers of English language fiction in Sub-continent because of her sharp wit, humor, and reliable observations of human behavior. Through her individual voice, which is unique indeed, she represents Parsi ethos as well. Her writing reflects the cultural complexities of post -1947 eras in Pakistani society. As a women writer, Sidhwa observes the struggles and their Resistance of the Pakistani women in her novel. The major themes in *The Pakistani Bride*, are marriage, culture, tradition, and partition. In this novel Sidhwa, discusses the tribal people's culture and their customs. Sidhwa explicitly showed as the power of patriarchal society which forced the women to obey the man in all walks of their life as it is mentioned by Rebecca West (British critic) that "feminism has often focused upon what is absent rather what is present, reflecting concern with the silencing and marginalization of women in patriarchal culture, a culture organized in favor of men" (253).

## ***The Pakistani Bride***

*The Pakistani Bride* deals with the oppression of women in context of psychological and sexual by men in the conservative tribal society. In the novel, there are three major women characters Zaitoon, Carol and Afshan, who represent different aspects of the struggle faced by women in a patriarchal world especially in the place of Kohistani hill. These different types of problems become symbols of painful life of reserved women. The lives of women become struggle and complicated in the tribal society which everything happens because of their own family and surrounding.

The novel is based on a true story of an orphaned girl which was narrated to Sidhwa. She visited a remote area of Karakoram Mountain and the girl narrated the story of her marriage with her nephew in the tribal land. One month after her marriage, her life became hell in which she could not sustain and survive. This story tempted Sidhwa to write the novel *The Pakistani Bride*. It revolves the resistance and the struggle of the protagonist, Zaitoon who struggle to escape from the cruel Pakistani tribal society where she has been married and suffered. Ashok Kumar's "A Feministic Approach to Bapsi Sidhwa's: *The Pakistani Bride*" explains it as:

... I felt I had to tell her story. I had not written before. I had a compulsion to write the girl's story and the story of the tribal hidden away in this beautiful part of the world. I started writing a short story about this girl, without my really being aware of it; it was developing into a long story. It was an obsession. (1170)

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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### **Tribal Society and Women**

In the very first chapter of the novel, Sidhwa shows how the tribal society regards women as valuable commodities. Afshan, the woman to be Qasim's wife, is fifteen, five years older than Qasim. Yet she has no choice but to accept him. Qasim's father generously decided to give the girl to his son as, "To begin with, he had thought of marrying the girl himself. He had only one wife, but in twinge of parental conscience, he had decided to bestow the girl on Qasim" (8). Before the marriage is consummated, Afshan is nearly raped by a stranger when he sees her bathing, protected by Qasim who is only a boy. Qasim hits the man with a large rock and escapes with his wife. Women are like commodities in the tribal society to be bartered and traded. They are considered as part of her husband's property of their husbands by the contemporary society. In some countries like India, Pakistan, and Arabia women did not have the freedom to choose their groom. They were bind in the name of their culture and tradition. Afshan is the good example given by Sidhwa in the novel. Women have to accept her family choice and marry the man selected by them. The picture of oppression and degradation of hapless women which emerges is strengthening by numerous other images of violence and subjugation of women.

### **Carol, a Lady from California**

Another character is Carol, a lady from California, who falls in love with a Pakistani soldier and eloped with him. She goes to Lahore in Pakistan wherein on experiencing the over possessive attitude of her husband and decides to go to her native place. Carol after her marriage with Farukh, gets too much attention from him whereas on their arrival to Pakistan the situation changes as their society has a strong segregation of genders. In this society "a man may talk only with unmarried women his mother, his sisters, his aunts and grandmothers" (113). Carol fails to understand this distinction of genders. So she follows her western ways. The unexpected attention from Pakistani men flatters her. Being open minded and due to her western upbringing, Carol likes this attention and feels attracted towards every friend and relative of Farukh. He always criticizes her as, "You laugh too loudly, you touch men" (10). Once she became afraid and asks Mushtaq, "Do you think Farukh would kill me? Mushtaq replies, "Who knows? I might, if you were my wife" (224). These words reveal the exact condition of women's struggle. During the ages women have been subjugated, tortured, tormented and then killed at the hands of their male counterparts in the name of honor. If a woman deserves punishment for adultery then why not man, he is also equally responsible for the crime. She said to Farukh, "I think I'm finally beginning to realize something... Your civilization is too ancient...too different...and it has always hurt me...really hurt me" (229). Carol fails to survive with the dual standards of society and decides to go back. Finally, she understands the double standards of the Pakistani men in Pakistan itself.

### **Zaitoon**

The third and the most important character of the novel is Zaitoon. At the age of five she loses her parents during the partition of the subcontinent. The border group of Sikhs attacked the train and murdered Zaitoon's parents along with other passengers. In that Qasim managed to escape and in turmoil he saved the little girl Zaitoon. She clings to Qasim's legs calling him, "Abba, Abba, my Abba!" (29). Earlier he wanted to neglect but after a while he accepted her

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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because she reminded him of his dead daughter, who was also five years old at the time of her death. He adopts and named her Zaitoon, his dead daughter's name. Five-year old girl shows her self-determination and the capability to adjust herself according to the situation. In Lahore Qasim brings up Zaitoon with the help of Miriam and her husband Nikka, the childless neighbors of Qasim. Sidhwa gives a very clear picture of the discrimination practiced against the women behind the four walls of the house.

### **Men Should Follow Women - Sakhi**

The decision making is always attached to men. Whatever men decide women are supposed to accept it without questioning it. Qasim decides to marry Zaitoon to a tribal man, Miriam opposes it and she forces Zaitoon to reject's her father decision. Zaitoon neglects her suggestion by mentioning, "I cannot cross my father" (98). Women are not supposed to trouble their lives and expected to leave it at the hands of patriarchy. Women are considered as burden and throughout their life should depend on some men. In the same manner when Zaitoon loses her parents, she is brought up by Qasim and married to Sakhi, to take care of her. Throughout her life male domination was inseparable from her life. Women, unlike men, are expected to be silent and should follow words of their fathers, husbands and later sons. Women's silence, deny their individuality and identity. Zaitoon's father Qasim shows his domination by naming her and marrying her to Sakhi without bothering how a girl brought up in the town will adjust to live in the hill with tribal. There too he bothers about his daughter. "I've given my words on it depends my honor. It is dearer to me than life." (93)

After marriage Sakhi shows his domination by beating and torturing her. He tortures her both physically and mentally. Her husband used to beat her severely on the smallest pretext to show his manliness over her. As a result the marriage turned into hell. The situation became agonizing for her to stay with her husband any longer under one roof. She decided to run away to escape the cruel experience of marriage and unbearable sufferings of life given by her husband. In the Karakoram, the world's most Rocky Mountains, where there were no vegetation and habitation, she survived for some days. This was considered as a dishonorable act by the tribes and their punishment for a runaway girl was usually hunted and murdered by the husband. But in the case of Zaitoon was different because Sakti saw her dead body in the end. She was already killed.

### **A Patriarchal Society**

Thus, in *The Pakistani Bride*, presents the patriarchal society of Pakistan and women's position in particular society. Sidhwa was attracted by the young girl's courage to struggle against the patriarchal norms. Her courage to vision her future away from the society's manmade laws has fascinated Sidhwa. The true story is tragic Sidhwa presents it with a tentative note of future happiness. Sidhwa allows her heroine to run, to fight and to survive all odds laid down against her by. The critical study of Bapsi Sidhwa's *The Pakistani Bride*, has finally culminated with an insight into the position of womenfolk in the male dominant egoistic and primitive society.

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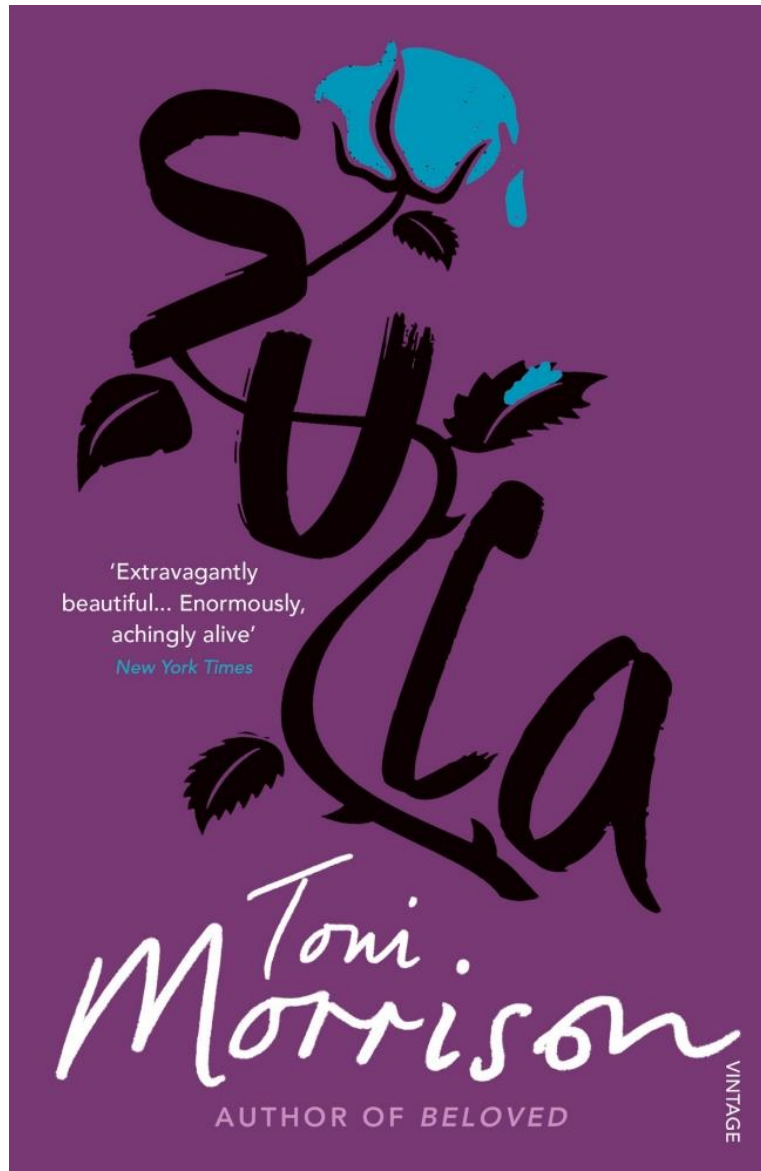
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## Motherhood and Double Roles in Toni Morrison's *Sula*

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Courtesy: <https://www.penguin.co.uk/books/1038503/sula/>

## Abstract

The present paper deals with the major themes of motherhood and double role in the novel of *Sula* by Toni Morrison. The novelist Toni Morrison discussed the racial sufferings through her works. This is a novel about ambiguity. This work deals about both the good and evil side of life. In the novel *Sula*, white people make meaning of lives filled with conflicts over race, Gender, idiosyncratic points of view. The character Sula resists easy answers, demonstrating the ambiguity, beauty and terror of life in both its triumphs and horrors. The present paper addresses the confusing mysteries of human emotions and relationships.



Toni Morrison

Courtesy:

<http://coursesite.uhcl.edu/HSW/Whitec/LITR/5439utopia/lectures/lect12paradiseetc.htm>

## *Sula*

*Sula* is packed with formal moves against social structures like Racism. The characters Nel and Sula were closest friends from childhood. The character Nel is the main protagonist of this novel. These characters were not given equal mind. They both have different opinions; they have no similar character, along with different interpretation about world views. In this novel *Sula*, these two characters were shown as believable characters.

The novel *Sula*, through its overall narration, try to bring in balancing binary oppositions. *Sula* includes also various expressions about motherhood in strong statements. At the opening of the novel, the novelist Morrison who is an Afro-American writer establishes the complexity of women in relation to Male domination, sexual harassment etc. The novelist Morrison discusses the multi-dimensional perspectives in this novel. This paper shows the complexity of race relations, which often mean subordination one by another.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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Motherhood and Double Roles in Toni Morrison's *Sula*

In this novel, the novelist introduces four generations of female characters in Nel's family. Nel was born to the family of "Creole Whore". After Nel was born, she became more spiritual or religious. These were an effort as precaution to save Helene from her mother's "Wild Blood". The novelist employs this theme of motherhood. The two characters Helene and Nel return to New Orleans, where Rochelle, Helene's birth mother lived.

From this novelist Morrison begins to challenge the conventional notion of motherhood. She also strengthens the significance of the extended black family structure. When the characters Rochelle and Helene meet, there is no familiar connection between the two characters and also there is no bond to speak of, because Helene's grandmother, Cecile stands as a mother figure. Cecile was the primary caretaker.

The character Eva, who is *Sula's* grandmother, operates a boarding house. It is about the business of her own version of mothering, directing the lives of her children, friends, strangers, and constant stream of boarders. Expressions of motherhood exists colourful, but Sula is on the side of unconventional.

The novel *Sula* shows the relationship between mothers and daughters. It does not seem to give first preference to shared affection with each other, and it is a duty to protect one's children. This is the reason to give the Motherhood theme in this novel. Hannah, Sula's mother is overheard in conversation with her friends, "You love her like I love Sula, I just don't like her. That the difference" (54)

Hannah's comment does gesture toward a sense of duty but differs from Jacob's as it implies an absence of a desire to be a mother. When Hannah challenges her mother Eva about expressions of love toward her, Eva responds by reminding Hannah of the sacrifices that she has made for her. Love and mothering to Eva is about sacrifice and self-preservation of her character. "...what you talking about did I love you girl I stayed alive for you can't you get that through your thick head or what is that between your ears, heifer?" (74) The novel *Sula* demonstrates various doubles or parallels between each character in the novel. "Sula and Eva both kill men {Sula kills Chicken Little, Eva kills Plum}. The death of Chicken Little results in a closed casket funeral" (89). Likewise, for Hannah, "The casket had to be kept closed at the funeral" (105). Chicken died by water, Hannah died by fire. Nel watches Chicken die by drowning, according to Eva at the later scene in the nursing home (116). Sula watches Hannah die in flames" (120).

Both Plum and Hannah were brother and sister. They both die by fire. Plum is burned to death by Eva, Hannah dies from her injuries after catching fire by accident. This is shown as the theme of motherhood as well as the theme of double roles. In this present paper, we discussed about the themes of Motherhood and Double Roles. This is the major theme in the work *Sula*.

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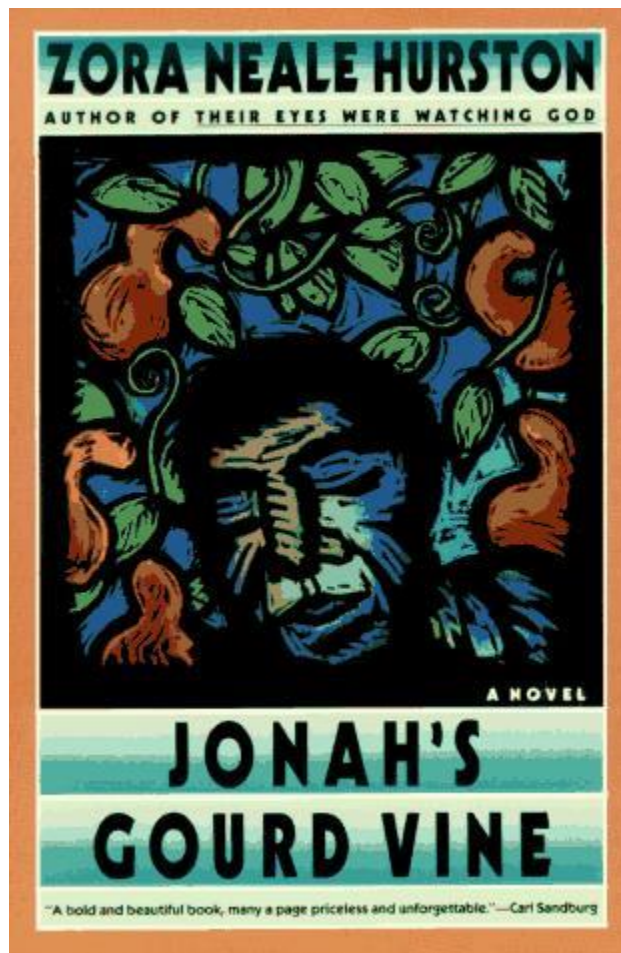
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**The Scourge of Slavery in Zora Neale Hurston's  
*Jonah's Gourd Vine***

**Dr. R. Sheela Banu**

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**Abstract**

Slavery is an age-old evil practised by human beings all around the world. Slavery is not only a problem of the past, but a present-day scourge too. Unlike other criminal activities, it is

difficult to quantify slavery because it is part of an underground economy that takes place behind closed doors and is hidden from investigators and law. Also, victims are reluctant to seek help or cooperate with law enforcement due to fear of reprisals to themselves or their families. There is no country in the world where slavery is legal today. Nonetheless, slavery and slavery-like conditions continue. There must be systemic change to curb and then eradicate such shocking inhumanity.

### **Focus of This Paper**

This paper entitled “The Scourge of Slavery in Zora Neale Hurston’s *Jonah’s Gourd Vine*” the horrors of slavery that exist in black families in the US. It analyses the the Crittendon and the Pearson families and illustrates the myriad forms of oppression that men and women in black society are forced to endure all through their life. The paper ends on the note that slavery can be abolished only by individual enlightenment and efforts.

**Keywords:** Slavery, oppression, enlightenment

### **Introduction**

Vestiges of slavery is visible in the Crittendon family. Through Ned, Pheemy, Amy and John, Hurston traces “the traumatic legacy of slavery” (*Miles* 31). The Crittendons are bound to Alf Pearson for three generations. The two sides of the creek in Notasulga shows distinct difference in the nature of slavery. On one side of the creek, where Ned-Amy family lives, cruel slavery system prevails. On the other side of the creek, where Lucy Potts resides, one finds “benign remnants of slavery” (*Campbell* 51). In this side of the creek, black children are treated a little better than beasts; they are provided basic education. But here too, the rottenness of the American slavery system can be smelled.

Even after the abolition of slavery, whites continue to have a strong hold over blacks. For example, Alf not only owns his large plantation but also a large black community. His race-consciousness is best revealed in his treatment of his illegal son John. While he dotes on his white son Alfred he rejects his black son. While he takes best care of Alfred and sends him to Europe for higher studies, he offers only minimum education to John. Further, he treats him only as a menial and offers him used clothes. He is only a benevolent master to John, never a father.

### **Female Slave – Pheemy**

Hurston shows the desperate burden of female slaves through Pheemy and Amy. Both the mother and daughter were slaves in Alf’s plantation. In addition, they were treated as sex-slaves by their master. While Amy leaves the plantation after manumission, Pheemy continues to work for Alf.

Although not much is mentioned about Pheemy, Hurston recounts the racial and sexual violence against Amy in the early pages of the novel. She was sexually exploited by her master at eleven. At twelve, she mothered her first mulatto son, John Buddy.

## Hurston's Novels - *Jonah*

Beggarly treatment of blacks by whites is always highlighted in almost all the novels of Hurston. Whites never care for the feelings of blacks. Often, they are found lending a helping hand to their black servants by lending them their used clothes. In *Jonah*, John is given used clothes by Alf.

While *Jonah* highlights racism practised by whites against blacks, it also draws attention to racial politics within the black society. In fact, this novel is more preoccupied with the problems among blacks than the problem between whites and blacks—blacks hating blacks on the basis of skin colour. In black society, fair-skinned blacks are always envied by dark-skinned blacks. In *Jonah*, John Buddy is so fair that he passes off as a white. Hence, Ned despises John Buddy. Envyng his fair skin, he takes pleasure in taunting him. When the novel opens, Ned is found controlling not only his wife but also John. His hatred for John is made visible in his shower of abusive words: “You jes’ do lak Ah say do and keep yo’ mouf shet or or Ah’ll take uh trace chain tuh yuh. Yo’ mommy mought think youse uh lump uh gold ‘cause you got uh li’l’ white folks color in yo’ face, but Ah’ll stomp yo’ guts out and dat quick! Shet dat door!”(2). Calling John as a “good fuh nothin’ trashy yaller rascal” (46), Ned intimidates him almost always.

### Black Men Treating Their Black Wives

Ned’s bestial treatment of his wife is similar to whites’ treatment of slaves. His life long experience as slave reflects in his behaviour to Amy. His psychological dejection as a powerless man renders him impotent and results in his rejection of familial duty. As he was bought and sold into slavery, so he binds his stepson to Mimms. The sight of his mulatto step-son reminds him of his slave history and his impotence to protect his wife from rape. Hence, he treats his wife and children with brutal violence. Miles observes, “His[Ned] ambiguity regarding his identity as a free man combines with his definition of Negro as mule to psychologically maintain his slave status even in a free state” (*Women* 16).

Cannon states, “While freedom brought new opportunities for black men, for most it augmented old problems” (44). Cannon’s words best suit *Jonah*. They are not only ill-treated by whites but also by black men. Thus, they are more oppressed than black men. For example, Amy is treated as a slave by her husband Ned just as she was treated by Alf. While she bears a child for her master, she bears six children for Ned. With Ned, Amy labours in the plantation from morning till evening and discharges her domestic chores. In her view, living as a black man’s wife is better than being a slave for whites. As a slave she would be vulnerable for sexual tortures from not only her master but other men as well. But by marrying a black man she can guard herself from sexual slavery. Hence, she marries Ned who is nothing but “an alligator in jeans” (8) and puts up with his curses and beatings. While she can assert her rights with a black man, it is not possible with her white master. When she tells John, “Ah kin strain wid Ned. Ah jes’ been worried ’bout you and him” (11) it is quite clear that she is not only interested in the welfare of her son but also her husband, however oppressive he might be.

On another occasion, Amy points out to Ned about his biased treatment of John thus: “He[Ned] is jes’ ez obedient tuh you and jes’ ez humble under yuh, ez he kin be. Yet and still you always washin’ his face wid his color and tellin’ ’im he’s uh bastard”(3). She wants Ned to treat John on par with his other sons just as she showers her affection and offers protection to all her seven children, irrespective of their skin colour.

### **Forced to Support Themselves**

Black women are forced to support themselves since they never get the helping hand of black men. Even in the face of formidable oppression, they show “unshouted courage” (*Cannon* 133). In *Jonah*, one can understand the weak-mindedness of men and the enormous strength of women. John never understands his worth till he is noticed and encouraged by Lucy. He feels inferior as a black. His sense of inferiority is quite apparent when he responds to Lucy’s idea of buying a plot thus: “Dat’s uh bigger job than Ah wants tuh tackle, Lucy... *Wese colored folks*. “Don’t be so much-knowin’(109)(words italicized my emphasis). But she persuades the diffident John to try his expertise in carpentry and buy a five acre plot too. Soon he flourishes as a successful man.

### **Eatonville and John**

Hurston favours Eatonville as a safe place for blacks in America. In *Jonah*, John prospers in quick strides only in the black town Eatonville. When he arrives first at Eatonville, he is taken aback by the black surroundings. The black town is like an oasis in the race-prejudiced US. The moment he surveys the town he resolves, “Ahm comin’ back tuh dis place. Uh man kin be sumpin’ heah ‘thout folks tramplin’ all over yuh. Ah wants mah wife and chillum heah” (107). His words reveal the intensity of oppression he had endured under Alf Pearson as well as his step father Ned.

From an illiterate servant, John gradually rises to become an independent minister of Zion Hope Church and influential Mayor of Sanford only when he settles down in the black town. His remarkable achievement is made possible only because of his black wife and his black surrounding. While he is encouraged and supported at Eatonville, he is cunningly suppressed by Alf Pearson, who knows the enormous potentials of John. Only when John leaves Alf’s plantation, one can notice a silver lining in his life. Through John, Hurston conveys the idea that so long as blacks live in the white dominated areas of US, they can never breathe freedom and progress. On the other hand, when they live amidst their own folk, they can witness their growth in all spheres of life.

### **Lucy**

Likewise, Lucy is never comfortable at Notasulga. She longs to lead a peaceful life free from racial oppression. When she arrives at Eatonville, a sense of *déjà vu* fills her heart. Hurston describes her feelings thus:

Lucy sniffed sweet air laden with night-blooming jasmine and wished that she had been born in this climate. She seemed to herself to be coming home. This was where she was meant to be. The warmth, the foliage, the fruits all seemed right

and as God meant her to be surrounded. The smell of ripe guavas was new and alluring but somehow did not seem strange.(*Jonah* 109).

The comfort and the sense of security that Lucy enjoys at Eatonville makes her weave lofty plans for the betterment of her family. Both John and Lucy favour self-employment; while John gropes for ways to implement his dreams, Lucy readily gives him ideas and goads him into action.

Like John, Lucy believes that Eatonville is the best place to guard her children from oppression. She says to John, “Dey[Her children] won’t be seein’ no other kind uh folks actin’ top-superior over ’em and dat’ll give ’em spunk tuh be bell cows theyselves, and you git somethin’ tuh do ’sides takin’ orders offa other folks. Ah ’bominates dat(109). Her words show the intensity of racial oppression she had experienced at Notasulga. She wants to provide the best possible environment, devoid of racism, for her children. She is keen on protecting them from the rampant racism. Also she wants her husband to work and earn independently. She says to John, “And now less don’t pay Joe Clarke no mo’ rent. Less buy dis place,...” (109). She is convinced that human beings should never stoop to another for survival. According to her, one should be one’s own boss.

### **Portrayal of Race**

In *Jonah*, the portrayal of race issues in the US is undoubtedly complex. While the highlights racist attitude of whites, it also does not fail to portray their humanitarian nature. In *Jonah*, Alf Pearson is kind to John and Lucy. He even presents a feather bed to the couple on their wedding. He treats John and Lucy better than his other servants.

Hurston’s profound love for her race flashes in *Jonah*. Her black pride gleams in many pages of *Jonah*. She fearlessly exposes the inventiveness of blacks and foxiness of whites in the passage, “...niggers think up eve’ything good and de white folks steal it from us...Nigger invented de train. White man seen it and run right off and made him one jes’ lak it and told eve’ybody he thought it up. Same way wid ’lectwicity. Nigger thought dat up too” (148).

Hurston views both blacks and whites as bundles of complexity. She asserts her black pride without hurting the feelings of white folk. Her depiction of whites is mostly good and compassionate.

In *Jonah*, Alf Pearson is a tolerably good master. His soft corner to John and Lucy cannot go unnoticed. When John arrives in his farm looking for job, Alf immediately takes him up as his servant. He never inflicts physical torture on his servants. He gives promotion to John and acts in the interest of Lucy and advises the philandering John to mend his ways. Once when John is arrested for stealing a pig, he magnanimously pays for the hog and releases him. Giving five dollars to John, he advises him to go to a far-off place in order to avoid further troubles. By portraying the good side of whites and the seamy side of black, Hurston conveys the fact that no race is pure. She considers race consciousness to be the scourge of humanity; it is the preoccupation of little minds. In *Jonah*, the black women Lucy and Amy enjoy “psychic



freedom” (*Meisenhelder* 23) even in dire oppression. By depicting the bright side of black life in the all black town of Eatonville Hurston shows that freedom is possible for blacks even in the face of racism.

Thus, *Jonah* portrays the scourge of slavery and its consequences on blacks in the US. The uniqueness of the novel lies in its effort to ignite the dormant race pride in blacks. Further, *Jonah* asserts “the inaudible stout heartedness” (*Cannon* 11) of black women amidst rigid racial inequalities. Hurston points to blacks the affirmative side of life amidst brutalizing oppression. Hurston’s analysis of power relations between black and white involves not just the presentation of a grim oppression but also their enthusiastic resistance to it. Thus, *Jonah* makes a clarion call for human equality. By portraying blacks as inferior to none in their ability and in their accomplishments in *Jonah’s Gourd Vine*, *Jonah* affirms the black race as one of the great human races in the world.

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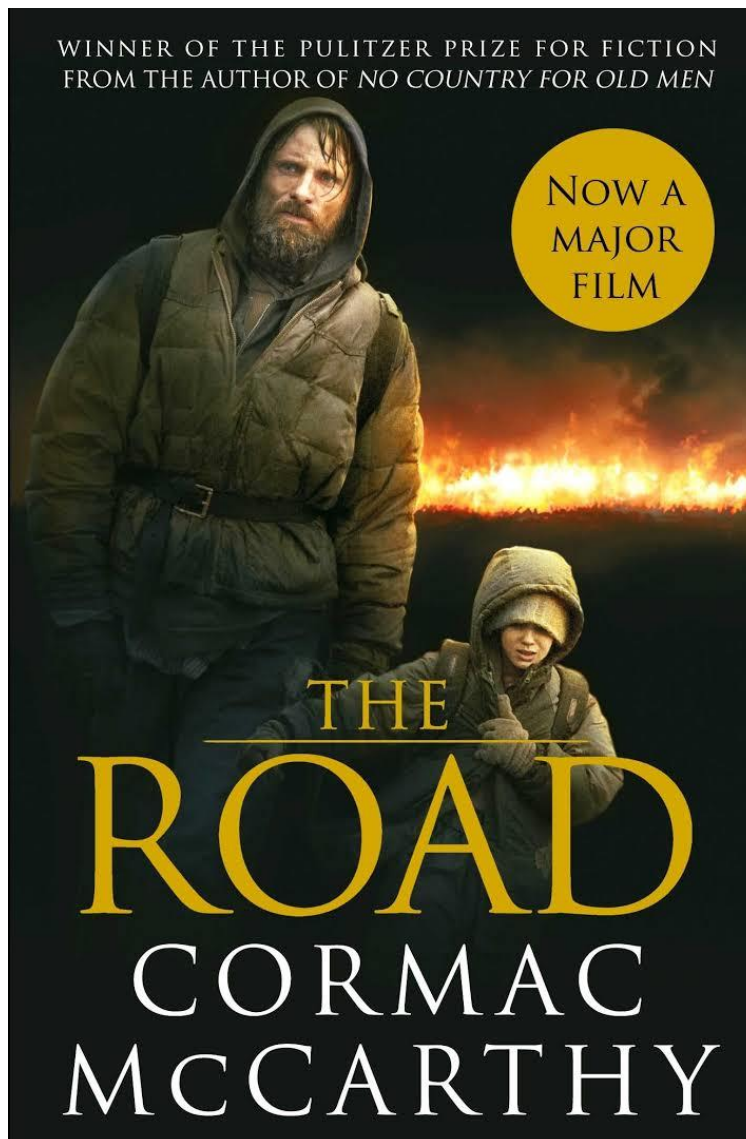
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The Theme of Isolation and Hope –  
A Post-Apocalyptic View from McCarthy Cormac’s *The Road*

A. Shobana

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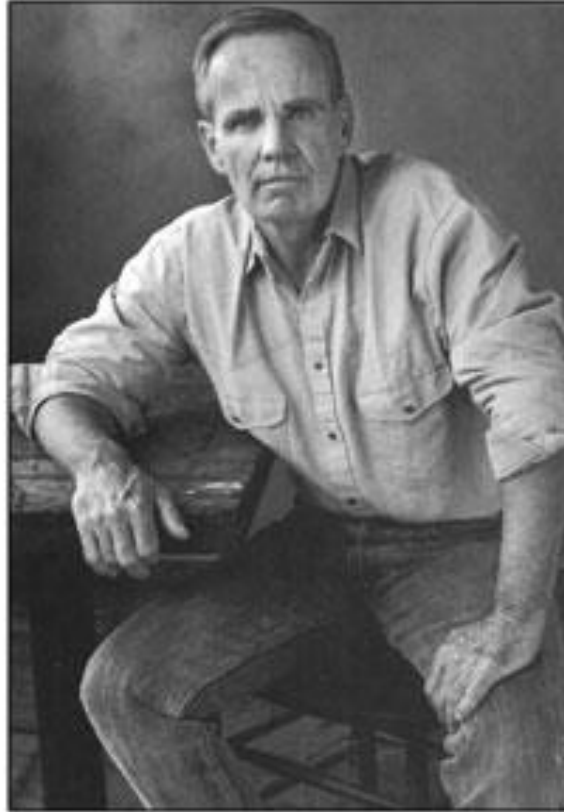
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## Abstract

A mother is the most precious person in the life on everyone about which we cannot describe completely in the words. However, some of the valuable moments with our mother can be described. A mother is the most beautiful and caring person in our lives. She always cares every moment for our every need without any personal intention. The role of the mother in our lives is always different and precious than other involved in our life. Of course, we are truly loved and cared by our mothers every moment all through the day. She never wants back anything from her kids instead she loves us with open heart. Mother is unique in this world in the life of everyone's as a living goddess who always takes all the pains of her child and gives love and care. This paper reveals the true love and affection of a father towards his son in short. It's a post-apocalyptic journey of father and son. The novel describes the anxiety of the dying father for his son's future. He is cautious to protect his son from cannibals and murderers especially from negative aspects about future. As a responsible father, he instills faith and hope for the future in his son. The son is also successful in imbibing the lessons taught by his father and ready to face life with new hope by carrying the fire.

A father and his son walk alone through burned America. Nothing moves in the ravaged landscape save the ash on the wind. It is cold enough to crack stones, and when the snow falls it is grey. The sky is dark. Their destination is the coast, although they don't know what, if anything, awaits them there. They have nothing; just a pistol to defend themselves against the lawless bands that stalk the road, the clothes they are wearing, a cart of scavenged food and each other.



Dust jacket photo from  
*The Crossing*, 1994.  
Photo credit: Marion Ettlinger.  
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Courtesy: <https://www.cormacmccarthy.com/biography/>

### ***The Road***

*The Road* is the profoundly moving story of a journey. It boldly imagines a future in which no hope remains, but in which the father and his son, "each the other's world entire," are sustained by love. Awesome in the totality of its vision, it is an unflinching meditation on the worst and the best that we are capable of ultimate destructiveness, desperate tenacity, and the tenderness that keeps two people alive in the face of total devastation. The novel starts with the sleeping boy and father who wear a face mask to protect them from some anonymous dangers. The name and place and period have never mentioned. The man who is protagonist dreams about the granitic beast chases them near black ancient lake than turned away from them. When the man's open his eyes he started to find some food for his kid.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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## Surroundings - Questions

When the kid woke up, the land was barren, silent, and godless, so the kid starts to enquire about the surroundings, the protagonist uses binoculars to search for any signs of life, but he found none. The location was unsafe during the daytime because they were visible from the road. They stayed with their shopping cart and backpacks, which they used to carry necessary belongings, the boy and his father travel through the dead land, heading south. On their way they passed a gas station to collect some oil to light the lamp. When they settled in some safe place he asks his father to read stories. Before falling asleep, the boy asks his father whether they will die, to which his father replied, sometime, not now. He even says that he will be ready to die if his son wishes to die. He assures his son that this way they could stay together even after his death. After his son falls asleep, the father remains awake listening to the nothingness of the world.

## Corpses Around

They passed through the city, the father holding their pistol close by. They saw corpse. The father remembers an idyllic day from his childhood with his uncle. They continued in the morning, and as they pass a barn, they discover three bodies hanging inside. The boy wishes to scavenge for items they might need, but his father does not allow him. The man also dreams about his dead wife continually about the death conformation of him, but he keeps on moving with kid. When they reached his old house, which is barren and spoiled, he remembered his past life, after three days they felt earthquake and moves from that house. They travelled across mountains, in the distance; they could see the forest fires raging in the mountains. The man, who is familiar with this part of the land, expects to reach the land. When the road is obstructed by fallen trees, they must unpack their cart, carry their belongings to the other side, and repack it. At night, the boy had a nightmare about a wind-up penguin that haunts the house they used to live in, moving without wounded up. After four days they discovered a river with a waterfall and enjoyed, despite the cold. In the woods, they found morsels a kind of mushroom, then settle down for the night, satisfied with their makeshift camp. The boy, having been born and become aware of the world after whatever the catastrophe was, does not know about the states and wonders what happened to them. The father cannot answer it.

## At the Bridge

They make their way to a bridge that crosses the river; they followed the footprints which ended with dead bodies of half burned man who has been struck by lightning. The boy wishes to help the man, but his father refuses, thus upsetting the boy. One day, the father awakens alert, pistol in hand. He sees people approaching from distance so he hides their belongings and ran away with the boy and find the man from the truck standing only twenty feet away, The father pulls the pistol on the man and warned him not to call any other but he tries to kill his son so, The father shoots the man in the head, then grabs his son, puts him on his shoulders, and runs away. They continue on their journey, freezing cold, made the man coughing.

## Camp Site

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The man and boy came across the old campsite to warm them, but his father found the cart was plundered, he noticed that the truck crews are cannibals, because they left behind some boiled bones. The boy was frightened to seeing them. The father tells him there is “bay guys” but also some “good guys” he also diverts his mind by playing flute. He heard the barking of dog but promised his son that he will not kill the dog. They also met another kid leaving along with that burned man the kid wants to help him but as before his father does not allow him to help them. One morning, when the father awakes and sees a large group of people marching up behind him. The man and the boy tried to hide themselves and stationed close to the ground. They felt that they would not be visible from the road. From their hideout they could see people marching forward carrying deadly weapons, the wagons drawn by slave.

### **Cannibalism?**

The boy seeks affirmation from the father that they would never resort to cannibalism, even if they were starving to death. His father reaffirms that they are the good guys and that they are carrying the fire. The boy wishes to help that little boy by joining him with their travelling, but the man is extremely cautious to save his son from dangers. In a tool shed, the father found the packets of seed, bunker full of untouched food, along with other useful items like utensils. They enjoyed a can of pears and peaches for dinner. The boy goes to sleep inside the bunker, while the man finds more useful items. They planned to move from that place in a couple of days meanwhile the man prepares some wooden bullets.

### **Burnt City**

As they continued, they saw the remnants of a burnt city on the horizon. They stop on a hill, and the boy asked his father about their long-term goal, neither of them knows what their long-term goals. The protagonist saw a decoyed old man and followed it, they over taken the old man. His name was Ely who was ninety-nine years old but tactic. The kid had some deep compassion on him and convened his father to give food and protection. Ely has an extensive philosophical conversation with the man about the state of the world. He was surprised to saw little boy in the destructed world. The next morning, they gave some food and started their journey. The man’s cough worsens as they continue to travel. The boy discovers an abandoned train, which they explore. At one stop, the man examines his maps and determines that they are approximately two to three weeks away from reaching the sea. The father becomes ill with a bad fever, which frightens the boy greatly. They remain in one place for several days as the father waits out his sickness to be cured but not.

The man remembers a winter long ago, when he was slightly older than his son’s present age. One night, his son has a nightmare but refuses to describe it to his father. They continue to travel towards the sea, but the father is extremely weak. They come across a gruesome road where the people were killed on the road in a fire. The father tries to prevent his son from looking, but the boy was surprisingly serene. They decided to leave less trash behind so that anyone behind

them will not know they have a food supply. They make camp, and while the boy slept, the father sees a group of people, three men and a pregnant woman, who passed them by.

The next morning, the protagonists continue onwards. The next day before the wakes up the felt a kind of smoke with terrible smell the man surmises that the people were frightened of the man since they have a pistol. The people left quickly, their food still cooking, so the man and the boy examine the abandoned campsite. A shocking sight awaits them, which the boy notices that a headless black infant in that pot. The next couple of days they forgot the food.

They find a water source, and the boy runs ahead to drink from the water. The father notes that he has not seen his son run in a very long time. They see a house in the distance. The man insists they walk to the house to search for food. On the way, the man finds a few arrowheads and gives them to the boy to keep. Inside the house, they find very old cans of food. They make a fire in the fireplace, make dinner, and spend the night inside the house. The boy begs his father not to go to the second story of the house, but the man goes nonetheless. They find clothes in the bedroom. The two of them stay in the house for four days, and the man makes new clothes for his son. They also find a wheelbarrow, which they use upon leaving to transport their new set of blankets and canned foods. They finally reach the sea, but the ocean is not blue, which disappoints the boy. As they sit together on the beach, the boy wonders what lies beyond the ocean?

The man teaches to swims after the boy sleeps, the man stands on the beach and reminisces about his life when his wife was still alive. When he returns to their camp, the boy is awake and frightened. In the morning, they explore the beach. They come across an abandoned ship. While the boy keeps lookout on the beach with the pistol, the man swims out to the boat to explore it.

The ship is named Pajaro de Esperanza, or Bird of Hope, and hails from Tenerife, a Spanish island. The boat has not been ransacked, and while the sea apparently has destroyed most of its contents, it turns out that much remains. The man is able to retrieve some clothes for himself and the boy. He also recovers a toolbox, a bottle of gas and so on. The kid missed the pistol, but the next day, they spend the morning unloading goods from the ship. The father's cough continues to worsen. The man finds a flare pistol from the ship and a first aid kit. The son learns that the man has kept the flare pistol to shoot people, not to signal, because there is no one to signal. The boy wants to shoot it that night as a celebration.

### **A Message in the Sand**

The boy suggests writing a message in the sand for the good guys, but the man mentions that the bad guys might see it. Thus, discourages the boy. The man says they could still write a letter. The boy becomes ill and vomits. The father gives him expired antibiotics from the ship's first aid kit. The boy remains sick for some time, and the father's health gets no better. The man agonizes over his son's illness. He sleeps restlessly. Eventually when he awakens, the boy is better, and his fever has broken. A couple of days later, the man and the boy continue to finesse their beach campsite. One day, the man sees prints in the sand as they return to their camp. They hurry back to their belongings, which have been completely damaged. The father decides to hunt down



the robbers, so they track the prints. The man with his pistol and warns the thief to step away from their cart. The boy begs his father not to kill the thief. So the father instead forces the thief to take off all of his clothes and put them in the cart. The man leaves the thief naked on the side of the road.

### **Attacks with Arrows**

At the edge of one town, they were suddenly attacked with arrows by a man hiding in a building. The father is hit in the leg, but he manages to shoot the flare pistol at the building and set it on fire. The man tells the boy to remain with the cart in hiding, while he enters the house with the reloaded flare pistol. The man treats his wounded leg with the first aid kit. The kid conforms that his father didn't harm the arrow man. As they walk, the man coughs up increasing amounts of blood. Among the items left on the road they find a canvas bag and a suitcase, which they take with them. The man must stop to rest on an old couch by the road.

### **Near the River**

After two more days of travel, the protagonists arrive at a broad river with a collapsed bridge. They raise a tarp for shelter and fall asleep in the next morning the man's cough worsening continuously. The man is bedridden. He refuses to eat his share of a can of a fruit, but the boy insists on saving his father's half for the next day. The boy tries to make a tent, but his father does not want to be covered. The man wishes to be able to see, to watch his son sit by the fire. While the boy investigates their surroundings, the man remains at the camp. When the boy returns, his father begs him to continue the journey with the pistol.

The boy refuses to leave without his father. The man assures the boy that he knows how to carry the fire, that the fire is real inside of the boy. The boy reminds his father that he promised never to leave him. The man promises his son that he can still always talk to his father, even if they are not physically together. The child travels down the road but then returns to his father, who sleeps. The boy talks to him and tries to listen for a response, then tries again. The father wakes up, still coughing. During the night, the boy holds his father. When the boy wakes up, his father is dead. The boy weeps, goes to the road, and then returns to his father's side to hold his hand, crying his name. The boy remains by his father for three days. Finally, he returns to the road. He notices that someone is approaching. The boy stands by the road with the pistol in his hand. He has piled blankets over the man's body.

A man with a shotgun approaches the boy and asks him about his father. The boy tells him that his father has died, and the man tells the boy to join him. The boy asks whether the man is one of the good guys. The man says yes and tells the boy to put away his pistol. The man asks the boy to show him his father's body, but the boy is unresponsive. The man reveals that he is with a larger group of people who have known about the man and the boy. They apparently discussed whether or not to check on the boy. The man adds that the boy must take a chance with them or else die with his father.

The boy asks him whether he also carries the fire, but the man does not understand. When asked a second time, however, he responds that he is indeed carrying the fire. The man reveals that he has two children (a boy and a girl) and a wife. He promises the boy that they are not cannibals. The boy decides to join the man and his family. The kid believed that his father could speak with him after his death. Because already he told death can't separate them. He has not only given love and affection to the child but had actually taught him to endure adversity and look forward to a bright and hopeful future.

I cannot think of any need in childhood as strong as the need for a father's protection by Sigmund Freud. The father of psychoanalysis that had analysed many theories which is related with emotional bonds like physical, psychological problem, accepts the value of father care on son early life revealed in the above quotation.

### **Apocalypticism of *The Road***

The apocalypticism of *The Road* seems to be a response to an immediate fear of disastrous doom in the United States after the terrorist attacks on September 11 2001 Dianne C. Luce claims that the novel "had its genesis in a very specific moment": McCarthy imagined the apocalyptic setting while staying in a hotel in El Paso with his young son, John Francis McCarthy," *The Road* has at its core the desire to drive the reader's imagination into contact with an extreme vision of an apocalypse-ravaged future America, there to discover what-if anything-remain. The desire to reconstruct the world by deconstructing it seems to reflect the fundamental fear underlying the novel, namely, the fear that human beings may not in fact deserve to survival.

The Twin tower attacks resulted in the deaths of 2,996 people, including the 19 hijackers and 2,977 victims. More than 90% of the workers and visitors who died in the towers had been at or above the points of impact. In the North Tower, 1,355 people at or above the point of impact were trapped and died of smoke inhalation, fell or jumped from the tower to escape the smoke and flames, or were killed in the building's eventual collapse. The destruction of all three staircases in the tower when Flight 11 hit made it impossible for anyone above the impact zone to escape. 107 people below the point of impact died as well.

Urban Search and Rescue Task Force German Shepherd dog works to uncover survivors at the site of the collapsed World Trade Center after the September 11, 2001 attacks. At least 200 people fell or jumped to their deaths from the burning towers landing on the streets and rooftops of adjacent buildings hundreds of feet below. Some occupants of each tower above the point of impact made their way toward the roof in hope of helicopter rescue, but the roof access doors were locked. No plan existed for helicopter rescues, and the combination of roof equipment and thick smoke and intense heat prevented helicopters from approaching. A total of 411 emergency workers died as they tried to rescue people and fight fires. More than 90 countries lost citizens in the attacks on the World Trade Center. Two people were added to the official death toll after dying from health conditions linked to exposure to dust from the collapse of the World Trade Center.

The people in US who were around the New York City much affected and question about the enigmatic future. They started to predict the days after the great collapse. McCarthy is one among the pragmatist in this situation which made him to think about post-apocalyptic life. Thus drove the author to set the novel. The novel describes the post-apocalyptic era, *The Road* tries to explore the very fabric of human conscience. It has been written by a well-tested author, known for his subtle depiction of human emotion and character and who is widely acclaimed as one of the best of his time. Cormac McCarthy, like his previous works, has tried to peep into the mind of his protagonist who is alienated from the world because of misfortunes and tragedies in his life, but chooses to carry on the burden of existence. With the depiction of apocalypse and chalking almost the saddest of his works so far, McCarthy has tried to bring about the very opinion he keeps of the world around him.

### **American Redemption**

McCarthy uses the template of American redemption through the interactions between the father and son. Throughout the novel, the father attempts to construct a meaningful world for the son. He draws on two aspects of the redemptive framework, identity and mission. The elements of identity and mission are conveyed through the statements, repeated throughout: "Are we the good guys?" "We're carrying the fire."

In the first, the son frequently asks his father for assurance of their identity as "good guys." This is often coupled with the opposite: the identification of others that they encounter as the "bad guys." The father has designated the world in this way in order for the boy to assess their actions and encounters accordingly. Their identification as "good" explains, and even justifies, actions that may otherwise be questionable. The pathos lies in the fact that this moral structure no longer makes sense in this post-apocalyptic world. The boy first asks: "Are we still the good guys?" following an incident in which the father kills a man. At several pivotal points, the boy returns to this question with, we might interpret, growing awareness that good and bad can no longer be distinguished.

The second, "We're carrying the fire," is a statement of mission. Through this statement, the father has given their journey purpose. The implication is that someone is waiting to receive the fire that they bear. Traveling over the dull and ashen ground, the father counters the monotony of the landscape by ascribing a higher meaning to their travels.

Michael Chabon writes: "As they travel the father feeds his son a story, the nearest that he can come to a creed or a reason to keep on going: that he and his son are 'carrying the fire'" (24-25). It makes their existence necessary in a world in which necessity takes on its rawest form. There is a terrifying scene in which they encounter a group of survivors huddled in a cellar. From the half-burned body of one man, it is clear that they are staying alive by eating human flesh. The father and son do not talk about this encounter immediately, but after a short time, the son asks his father about it. "We won't ever eat anybody, will we?" The father assures him that they will not:

No matter what?  
No. No matter what.

Because we're the good guys.  
Yes.  
And we're carrying the fire.  
And we're carrying the fire. Yes.  
Okay. (108-09)

A critic Rune Graulund notes, the novel ends with a deus ex machina when the boy meets a family of friendly survivors, "validating the father's words concerning goodness in physical as well as conceptual form."

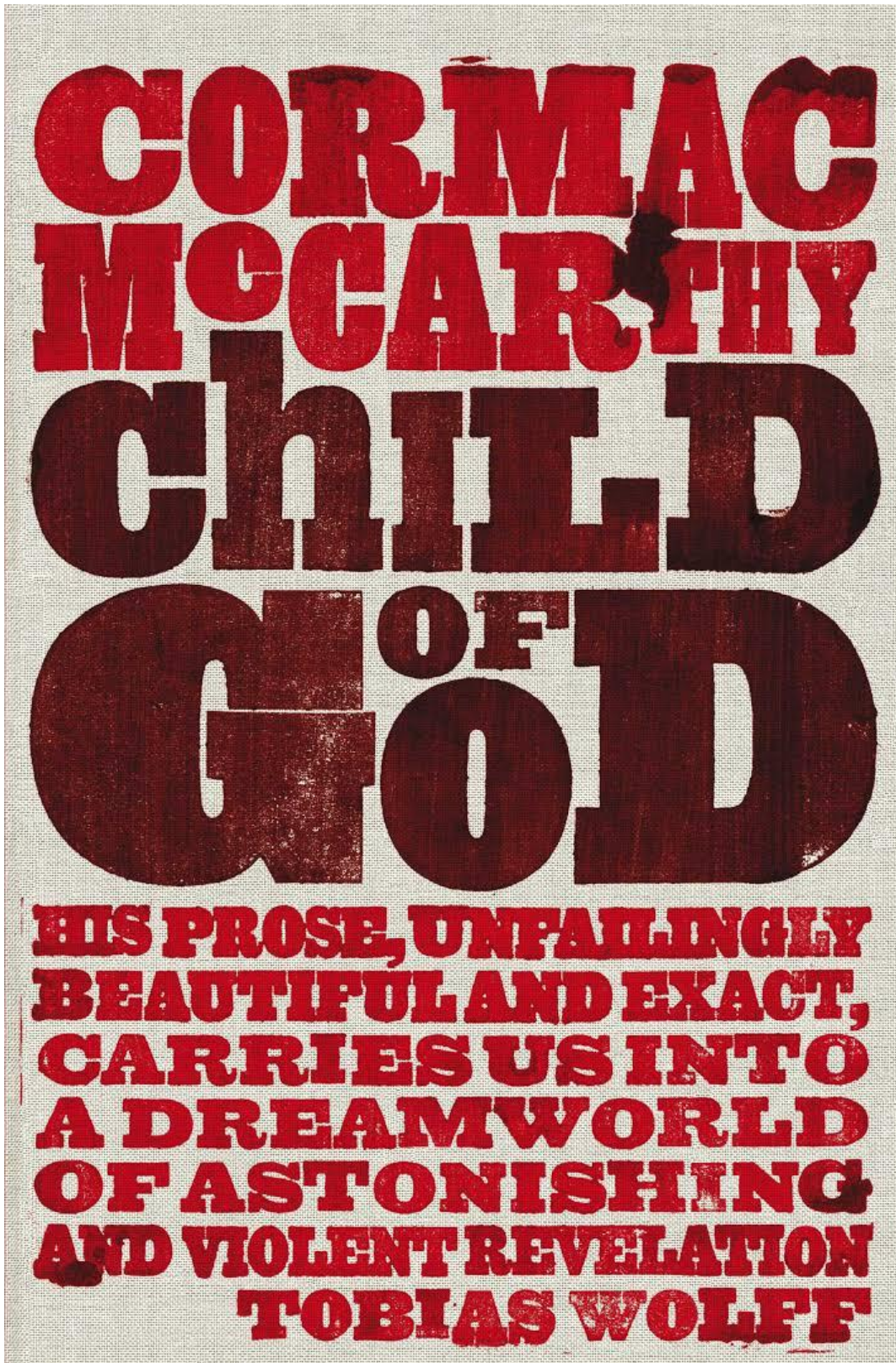
### **Issue of Hope**

Many of the scholarly articles written on *The Road* have attempted to address the issue of hope. Shelley L. Rambo has claimed that, "McCarthy catches the reader in a schizophrenic, and distinctly American, post-apocalyptic crisis of meaning: between the craving for a happy ending and the recognition of its impossibility " (101). Rune Graulund shows that the novel can sustain several hopeful readings such that we can "invest our hopes either in nature, in humanity or in God" (76). However, he claims that we cannot simply choose one of these readings, because to do so would be to "ignore quite a few signs to the contrary" (76). Ashley Kunsu makes the case that the redemption found in the novel is ultimately a linguistic redemption.

### **Sense of Isolation and Hope of a New Life**

Here the paper highlights two different views on life during the sense of isolation as a dying father who counting his days due to illness but increasing the hope of new life in his son's heart. He believes that he has a God-given duty to care for his son and that his son is a living sign of God's presence. His divine calling creates an ethical dilemma for the father, since in the world they inhabit, it appears that the kindest act a father can do for his child is to kill him or her before the child suffers too greatly. The last paragraph in *The Road* is full of hope for the boy and the earth's future.





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Language in India [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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The Theme of Isolation and Hope – A Post-Apocalyptic View from McCarthy Cormac's *The Road*

Courtesy: [https://books.google.co.in/books/about/Child\\_of\\_God.html?id=zeauYKLTIEC&source=kp\\_cover&redir\\_esc=y](https://books.google.co.in/books/about/Child_of_God.html?id=zeauYKLTIEC&source=kp_cover&redir_esc=y)

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 **18:3 March 2018**

**Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: Vol. II Black Writings: A Subaltern Perspective**

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The Theme of Isolation and Hope – A Post-Apocalyptic View from McCarthy Cormac’s *The Road*



**Racial Injustice and Violence: A Study of Sterling A. Brown**

**B. Sivakamasundari and Dr. Muthuraman**

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Courtesy: <https://mypoeticside.com/poets/sterling-a-brown-poems>

***Transfer***

“Transfer,” a poem of nine balladic quatrain stanzas, employs the African American folk tradition that characterizes all the poetry of Sterling A. Brown. The poem is divided into two parts. The first part re-creates the event that caused a black man to be imprisoned, and the second part narrates the circumstances and consequences of his escape from prison. More significantly, the second part concludes with the hero’s folk wisdom concerning the directions and goals of African American life.

Brown published “Transfer” in 1975 in his *The Last Ride of Wild Bill and Eleven Narrative Poems*. It is a literary poem written in the style of the folk ballad. Brown was especially adept at and fond of adapting traditional folk forms such as the work song, folk song, ballads, and the blues in his poetry. These forms were especially expressive of the southern African American culture and ethos that Brown wished to evoke.

### The Title

The title of the poem alludes to the last stanza, in which the former convict realizes that he needs to “transfer” from one line of thought and direction in his life to another. He senses that the direction of his life heretofore has been the wrong one for black people to follow in the United States. The term “transfer” also literally refers to the transfer (a piece of paper) that one receives when changing from one bus line to another.

“Transfer” is written in the standard third-person point of view of the ballad form, and the poet acts as the narrator who relates to the reader the poignant story of the unnamed black convict. In the first four stanzas, the poet reveals the circumstances that lead the black man to the conclusion he reaches in the final stanza.

### Discussion of Stanzas

The first stanza relates that in a fit of possible absentmindedness, the young man forgets to say “sir” to a white man during the “Jim Crow” era in the South. As a result of his negligence, he is beaten with a crank by the motorman and clubbed by the conductor. Nevertheless, he survives and is sentenced to four years on the prison farm by a supposedly “merciful” judge for “bruising white knuckles” and inciting a riot on the Atlanta Peachtree line. In the third stanza, the poet states that the hero has been beaten so severely that his jawbone is displaced; he is deemed harmless and made a prison farm “trustee,”:

It must have been that the fellow was tongue-tied,  
Or absent-minded, or daft with the heat,  
But howsoeverbeit he didn't say sir,  
So they took and bounced him out on the street.  
And then the motorman brained him with his crank,  
And the conductor clubbed him with his un,  
But before they could place the nickels on his eyes,  
The cops rushed up to see justice done.

The city-court judge was merciful to him:  
Gave him just four years and suspended his fine,  
For bruising white knuckles, inciting to riot,  
And holding up traffic on the Peachtree line.

When the boy came to, he was still right skittish,  
They figured they had got him rid of his harm,

By beating his head, and displacing his jawbone,  
So, they made him a trusty on the prison-farm.

The second part of the poem begins with the fifth stanza. The hero mounts a horse and flees from prison to Atlanta, where he is taken in by the “folks” and fed, clothed, and hidden. He comes out only at night in the black neighbourhood, because the entire white policemen disappear from that part of town after dusk. The seventh stanza reveals that he begins preaching at the car stop.

The eighth and ninth stanzas relate the basic theme of the sermon he always preaches. The convict had thought that if he stayed in “his place” (followed all the laws of segregation and Jim Crow), he would be allowed to live in peace with his white overlords; now, however, he has come to the conclusion that he was on the wrong “line” (this line refers to the bus line), and that he needs to change directions because African Americans can no longer obey the old laws that afford them neither safety nor freedom:

But one day a red sun beat on the red hills  
As he was in the pasture, haltering a mare,  
And something went snap in his trusty old head  
And he started a-riding away from there.

When he got to Atlanta, the folks took him in,  
And fed him and clothed him, and hid him away;  
And let him out only when the cops disappear  
From the streets of Darktown at the dusk of day:

Then he goes to the car-stop and takes his stand,  
And some call him daffy, and some call him smart,  
But all have heard the one text he’s been preaching,  
And some have the whole sermon down by heart:

“I stayed in my place, and my place stayed wid me,  
Took what was dished, said I liked it fine:  
Figgered they would see that I warn’t no trouble,  
Figgered this must be the onliest line.”

“But this is the wrong line we been riding’,  
This route doan git us where we got to go.  
Got to git transferred to a new direction.  
We can stand so much, then doan stan no mo’.”

### **Folk Ballad**

“Transfer” is a literary poem written in the style of the folk ballad. It is an adaptation of the traditional English ballad form, which is written in four-line stanzas with lines 1 and 3 having four beats and lines 2 and 4 rhyming, with three beats.

The traditional folk ballad tells an exciting story of the tragic and strange. Brown's adaptation in "Transfer" follows this tradition in both form and content. The poet purposely divides the poem into two distinct sections with Roman numerals I and II separating the time sequence.

### **On Racial Injustice**

The theme of the poem is racial injustice meted out to African Americans no matter how "well they behave." Since one of the usual topics of a ballad is an event of historical importance to a nation or a people, the theme of Brown's ballad is apropos the discrimination, suffering, and violence inflicted upon African Americans in the Southern states. The folk hero in the poem is the convict, who, after escaping, comes to the realization that African Americans have been on the wrong track in adapting to the restrictions of a segregated and discriminatory society, and who now finds it necessary to change directions that is, to transfer to a new train of thought.

Since the convict represents a black "Everyman" and his situation is one that was common to the life of the Southern African American, the poet uses the poem to condemn the general injustices suffered by blacks. Violence is a secondary theme in the poem, for in Part I, the hero is brained, clubbed, and beaten until he is senseless, and his jawbone is broken. It is ironic that only when the black man is beaten senseless can he become a trusty, and only if he is "skittish" can the whites be sure that he is harmless.

### **Darktown**

Nevertheless, the hero is permanently neither senseless nor skittish, and his mind returns completely as a result of a long day in the hot sun. Clearly, the sun represents the light that kindles the hero's intelligence and allows him to have the presence of mind to ride away. In the city of Atlanta, he is hidden away in "Darktown," a name that symbolizes not only the race of its inhabitants but also their condition. Moreover, the hero cannot afford to come out during the daylight because he will be seen by the white policemen, and he feels safe in Darktown during the day. Hence, Darktown has an inverse symbolic meaning. Instead of being safe in the light, the hero is safe only in the dark, the darkness of the color of his skin and the skin of the residents who ensure his safety by feeding, clothing, and hiding him.

### **Transportation as a Symbol**

Another prominent symbol used by the poet is transportation. Throughout the poem, all the prominent events occur in places where one can get on and ride somewhere. The hero is beaten at the bus stop by the motorman, rides away on a mare from the prison farm, and relates the wisdom of his epiphany at a car-stop. The final words of the hero express his understanding that African Americans have been riding on the wrong route, one that has failed to get them anywhere in American society. Therefore, the hero concludes that African Americans need a transfer to a new direction, not in place but in thought.

### **Language of Common Man**

In order to relate the narrative and the poem to African American folk life and demonstrate the folk wisdom of the hero whose intelligence prevails despite his lack of formal education, the ballad uses the language of the common man. Words and phrases used to depict theme and setting

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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appropriately express implicit and explicit folk meanings; terms such as “daft with the heat,” “brained with his crank,” “skittish,” “Darktown,” “daffy,” and “figgered” are used throughout the poem. In addition, words that refer to transportation abound in the text.

The last two stanzas of the poem further demonstrate Brown’s skilful use of the nuances of folk speech as a poetic device. He closes the stanzas with a proverb: “I stayed in my place, and my place stayed wid me,” The poem employs narrative devices characteristic of the ballad form. When the poet attempts to render the essence of the hero’s actual sermon at the car stop, Brown uses dialectal spellings such as “doan,” “wid,” “stan,” and “ma” to imitate folk speech. The poem stands out as an example of Brown’s characteristic ability to transcend folk material and language to express universal truths about injustice and human suffering. In addition, the poem explains African Americans’ ability to survive in a hostile universe while retaining and manifesting keen folk wisdom and intelligence.

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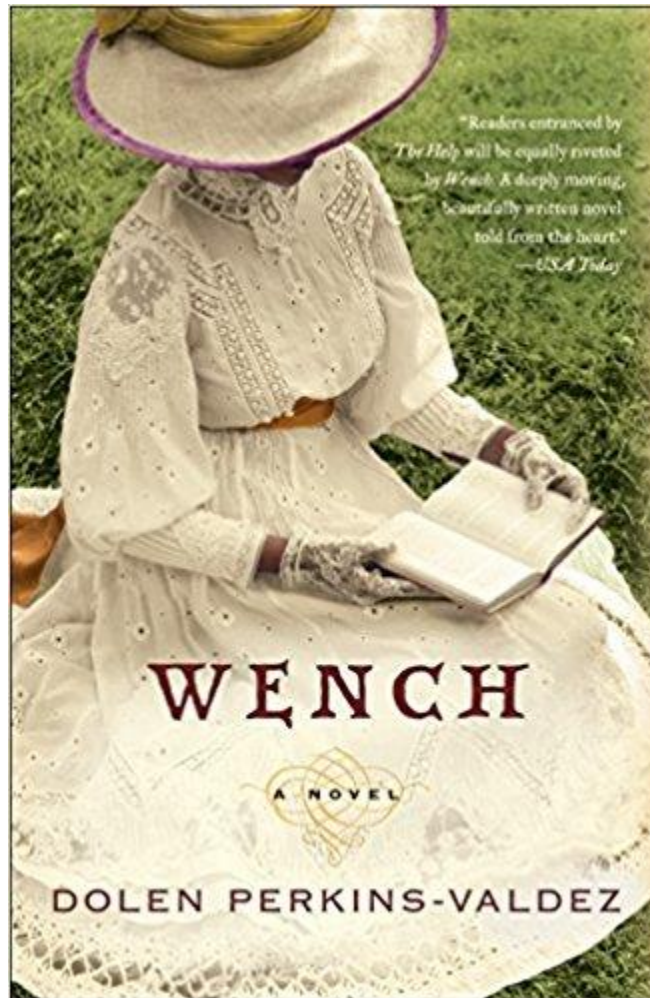


## Degradation through Slavery in Dolen Perkins Valdez's *Wench*

N. Suganthi, M.Phil. Scholar

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Courtesy: <https://www.amazon.com/Wench-Novel-Dolen-Perkins-Valdez/dp/006170654X>

### Abstract

This paper presents on Dolen Perkins Valdez's *Wench*. It takes place in Ohio, a free territory before the Civil War, Tawawa House. This novel is about four enslaved women who act as mistress to their masters during the four years of summer when they visit the Tawawa house

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resort in the Northern free state of Ohio. This paper focuses on the Degradation of Slavery which concentrates on four enslaved women who have been suffered at the hands of their masters. One of the slave women has trapped her into the life of slavery because of her love she had towards her master Drayle but others have tried to reach out the freedom. The emotional and psychological bond has bound the slave to their masters. This paper intended to analyse the sufferings of slave and the dominant power of white over the slave's women.

### **Introduction**

African American literature focuses on the writings of the African people who were living in America. This literature came into focus only after the African Americans' have placed in American society. The literature begins with the works of such late 18<sup>th</sup> Century writers as Phillis Wheatley. African American writing presents the experience of African who had faced racism, slavery and social equality. In the United States the African peoples are considered as slaves who were allotted to serve the white.

### **Slavery in America**

Before the American Civil War the literature primarily consisted of memoirs by people who had escaped from slavery. Slave narratives a kind of genre in the 19<sup>th</sup> century which includes the life of people who are under slavery and the path of justice and redemption to freedom. This genre developed in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century which focuses on the lives of slaves in the South and it also describes the cruelties of life under slavery.

In America, slavery begins when the first African slaves were brought to the North American Colony of Jamestown Virginia in 1619. African American authors have expressed their experience they had in America about slavery, racism, white supremacy, and inequality through their writings. From 1830's to 1860's a movement started to abolish slavery in America gained strength in the Northern United States, led by free blacks such as Frederick Douglass and white supporters such as William Lloyd Garrison and Harriet Beecher Stowe who published the antislavery novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852). This novel depicts the reality of slavery which asserts love can overcome something as destructive as enslavement of fellow human beings.

### **After the Legal Abolition of Slavery**

After the end of slavery and the American Civil War the number of African American writers continued to write about the conditions of African American in the country. The degradation of slavery deprived their humanity and did not permit to achieve their full human potential. Slavery is awful because it violates the rights of men and women as individuals and then it denies their freedom. Slavery degrades individuals by treating them as beast, as property that can be bought and sold. The majority of slaves remain bound to their masters for an indefinite period of time with no possibility of redemption or liberty.

### **Wench**

Dolen Perkins-Valdez is an African American novelist born in Memphis, Tennessee. Her works are *Wench* (2010), and *Balm* (2015). She was awarded the first Novelist Award by the Black Caucus of the American Library Association.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

**Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: Vol. II Black Writings: A Subaltern Perspective**

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Degradation through Slavery in Dolen Perkins Valdez's *Wench*

The story of *Wench* is about the lives of four Southern slave women who act as mistresses to their masters. Lizzie is the protagonist of the novel, who never wants to give up her love had towards her master. Reenie, Sweet, and Mawu are the other enslaved women who want to escape from the slavery. The story deals with the sufferings of the enslaved women who are living under the white masters. The entire novel depicts the problem of enslaved women who are suffering in America.

### **Four Women Slaves – Focus of the Novel**

The characters in the novel have encountered the problem of slavery. The four slaves are brought by their white master to the Southern state during the summer vacation. The white master use to have vacation every summer with their black enslaved women. The four-enslaved women Lizzie, Sweet, Reenie, and Mawu who is a new slave to the resort.

Mawu seems to be a stranger for the other slaves because they are regulars to the summer vacation and the three becomes friends over the years but Mawu ia a new slave woman to the resort for the summer vacation. Mawu is a bold enough to face her cruel master than the other slaves. She is the one who tried to escape from the resort and wants to run away from her cruel master Tip, because Mawu’s situation is different from other slaves. Her situation is far worse than the other women. Tip, her master used her as a object for his need to be fulfilled. Mawu has given four children to Tip.

She’d given Tip four children, but he’d sold three of them out- right. The last child left was a four-year-old boy with a lazy blue eye. He’d been dropped as a child-fallen out of the cloth tying him to Mawu’s back while she worked in the fields. The ground might have served as a cushion as it was still soggy from the previous night’s rain, but the baby had the bad fortune of hitting his head on a rock hiding amid the cornstalks. (141)

### **Treatment of Women Slaves**

The situation of women slaves was worst – they wre treated like a beast. In society the peoples have used beast for their purpose and they used as a mode of business. As like here the white maters have used the slaves to beget children, so that they could sell the children and make money out of it. This was the situation for all the slaves who faced the struggles against their masters. The situation makes Mawu to run away from the place. But Lizzie warned Mawu to, not to think about running from the resort. Because if she caught that the end of all of their life. If they caught none of them will be return so they never have a thought of running from the resort.

### **Escapes**

The other slaves never used to talk about or even think about to run away from the place. After the arrival of Mawu the situation changes in their life. She tries to convince the other slave women to run away with her, but they feel afraid to leave their master. They know if they have tried to run away they would be beaten and sold off to the cruel master or even killed.

One day Mawu decided to escape from the resort, but she was caught and beaten by her master in front of all the slaves as a warning. By seeing this other slaves, except Lizzie have started to think about the freedom by the influence of Mawu. The white men always use to degrade the slaves and they never allowed to reach out their freedom. There are three ways to act when the slaves are in the company of strange white man except their masters. Lizzie said:

Don't look them in the eye. In fact, pretend they're not there. Walk a wide circle around them unless your master tells you otherwise.

Don't look them in the eye, but wait on them without being asked. Get their water before they even know they're thirsty.

Don't look them in the eye, but answer. And if four eyes should meet their eyes, give them a stern look that lets them know you are not available for their whims.  
(79)

The slaves used to value most about their families and friends because if they are ready to run, is to leave behind everything. The slaves never used to enjoy the sophisticated life as like the white people. Though they are brought to the new city for vacation they are not allowed to have vacation, but their masters used to have a vacation at Tawawa House in Ohio. As slaves they are instructed to do chores and have to do work at the hotel. The four slaves are asked to stay within a cottage and they are instructed not to across the river they had near cottage. One day with the help of Mawu they have heard about the idea of abolition for the first time. So they started to examine the idea of freedom, except Lizzie others wants to reach out the freedom.

The slaves always used to serve and work for the whites. The whites are considered the black slaves women as their mistresses but not their wife this shows their dominant power or supremacy over the slaves. Slaves are always suppressed by the white race and their voice are always been hidden and unspoken among themselves. Their happiness, freedom and identity are stolen by the white.

### **As Objects**

Slaves become objects for the white that can be used and disposed of without regard for their feelings. In Africa the slaves used to eat with their hands and they never allowed to eat in the plates and spoon. "Drayle's wife, Miss Fran, said slaves should eat with their hands because that was the way they did it in Africa" (20). Slave women came across so much of predicaments in their life which is not to be solved.

Freedom is basic human rights of every individual. But for the slaves freedom is far from their life. In this novel Mawu who finds the way to escape from the cruel master and to reach out the freedom of life. Though freedom is a basic human right of an individual, slaves struggle to find their freedom of life. In Richard and Keneth Kinnamon's *Black Writers in America*, it is stated that "For many a slave especially in the Upper south, the surest solution to his Slave status was to escape it. From the beginning if slavery in America, slaves had fled their master" (60).

None wants to be a slave for anyone, but the situation changes their lives to be as a slave for others to fulfill their needs. In the case of African American they struggled to prove their identity and they came across many hardships to achieve their goal. Though the slaves have undergone the pain in a white society they have courage to overcome and raise voice against the white men. Until they have not raised against them still slavery will exist and still they have to be serve for the whites. So, they have to struggle to come out of slavery to reach the peaceful life. In some case the slaves have a hope to reach the freedom. But they should consider a hope as a medium of success to attain their goal and to work for their freedom.

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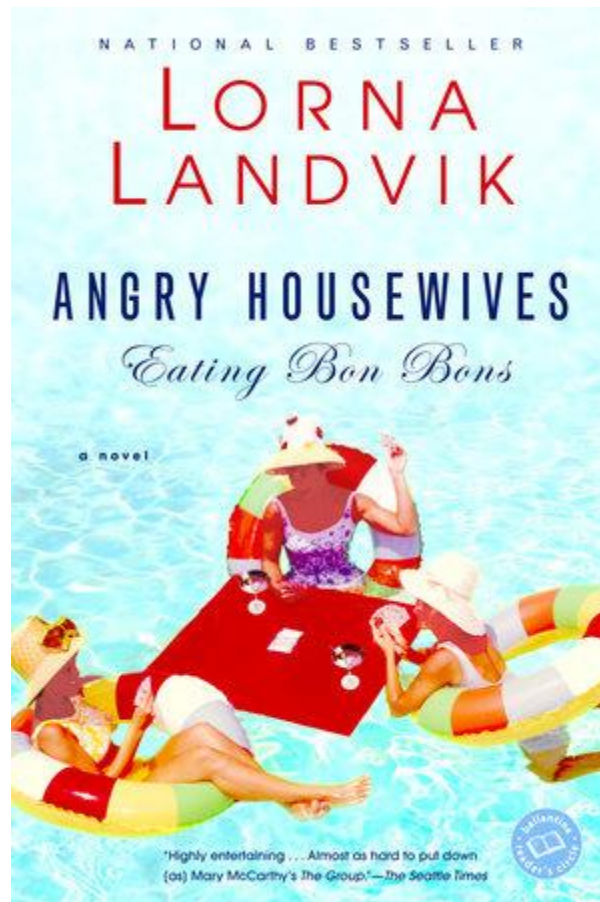


## Feminism in Lorna Landvik's *Angry Housewives Eating Bon Bons*

M. Suganya, M.Phil. Scholar

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### Abstract

The present paper deals with female sufferings. The protagonist of this novel is Reynolds Owen who lives without her husband. She feels lonely and the present condition is about the sufferings of women in society. This paper shows that the problem of women and its impact on family life. She was longing for her husband's love. Being a woman, she faced many problem and organized activity on behalf of women's rights and the interest in their life. In present scenario men have not understood the feelings of women so this makes the women to change their behaviour.

## Introduction

American literature concentrates the culture and traditions of the Americans from the colonial period through the early national period of the United States. American literary tradition begins as part of the broader tradition of English literature. Depression era literature was blunt and direct in its social criticism. Twentieth century American literature was increased of literature written about ethnic minorities beyond American and Jewish American. Americans used unique combinations of community and independence. Individualism is a history and everything in law to lyric and poem writers made clear that self. With the emphasis on expanding and diversifying the field over the past three decades early Americanizes probably have not paid enough attention to our discipline's institution history. As scholars like David Shumway and Gerald Graff have noted the disciplinary origins of American literature are found in the birth of two early modern institutions.

The first the rise of the nation state was propelled, as Benedict Anderson has argued, by the growth of a "national consciousness" that was enabled by the medium of print. The development of American colleges and research universities, drew from the examples of Oxbridge and the University of Berlin and took up of uniting a ruling class, certifying Technical, professional and managerial competence.

American literature based on feminism are usually based on people who were close with their life partners. It shows families exchanged their stories and experiences with the audience. Female portrayed the suffering felt by husbands and wives repeated from each other as well as the separation of family members. These stories suggest a kind of awareness of the issues of feminism in American cultures.

## Feminism

The term "feminism" originated from the French word "feminisme" coined by the utopian socialist Charles Fourier and was first used in English in the 1890's in association with movement for equal political and legal rights for women. Feminism is women's rights on the ground of the equality of the sexes the women movements, female emancipation. There is some debate as to whether the term "feminism" can be appropriately applied to the thought and activities of earlier women and men who explored and challenged the traditional roles in the family situation. In present period, women are facing many problems in family life.

## Lorna Landvik

Lorna Landvik had twin-passions when she was growing up in her home town of Minneapolis, Minnesota. After graduating from high school, Landvik briefly attended the University of Minnesota before moving to San Francisco, where she performed stand up and improvisational comedy. Landvik made her debut as a novelist with the critically acclaimed *Patty Jane's House of Curl*. She is also the author of *Your Oasis on Flame Lake*.

## Women Rule the World

Women rule the world, and they do so through the insistence on marriage. Where marriage

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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M. Suganya, M.Phil. Scholar

Feminism in Lorna Landvik's *Angry Housewives Eating Bon Bons*

is weak, women are more likely to be used and cast off by men. As a result, a marriage – lax culture is weak and on the road to disintegration. This is what marriage does and why it serves women, as well as the rest of us so powerfully.

### ***Angry Housewives Eating Bon Bons***

The story of *Angry Housewives Eating Bon Bons* is about the Housewives difficulties faced by Housewife in a family. Housewife having their secrets in their life and burst into their friends as a relief of feminism activities. The story deals with the marriage life of Faith she feel lonely in her home and she tells about marriage life of women how they faced a problem in a family.

The entire novel portrays about the problem of faced by women after their marriage. Faith being lonely than she accompany with her four friends. To make the life happy as her own wish. All the character in the housewives being a women she make her family to be happy. The novel shows the unity of women over the age of thirty years through the trials and tribulations of marriage motherhood and everyday life. Together these women guide each other through the darkness to find the light of love and friendship at the end of their life. *Angry Housewives* is a delightful view of the word women occupy that even the male reader can fascinate about the novel.

### **Comradships in Women's Life**

*Angry Housewives Eating Bon Bons* shows comradeships in women's life. The main character Faith is suffering because her husband was not taking care, he only concentrate in his work rather than his wife. So, she feels for her life. "Oh, good, you have come out to play!" (28). Faith conveys her feeling into her neighbourhood women. After getting new friends, she finds herself embracing their behaviour. She changed her life into happiness. After marriage woman's life is changed into various aspects like good or bad. Here women are getting changes in their character and life's they feel lonely in the house. They did not get equality in the family life. The feelings taught cannot be exposed. So, Faith finds friends nearby houses. Together women guide each other through the darkness to find the light of love and friendship in life.

### **Housewives Blowing Off Stream**

The group of teenagers turns out to be group of housewives blowing off stream. They create a new world for enjoying the life. In the first few meetings of women, polite and intelligent women get to know one another and begin to share pieces of themselves. It becomes more relaxed time, for women soon come to enjoy their lives. Faith feels happy after getting a friend. At the present condition women are well versed in their knowledge, and they know how to get more information in the meeting.

### **Five Friends**

Five friends hide their problems among themselves. They pretend as if living good life with their husbands, but the secret is revealed. At last, everyone reveals their individual problems so that they can get a good life. New feminism is a philosophy which

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emphasizes belief in an integral complementarity of men and women, rather than the superiority of men over women or women over men in the family life. Faith and other four friends are finding their life happy with the equality of men in the family life.

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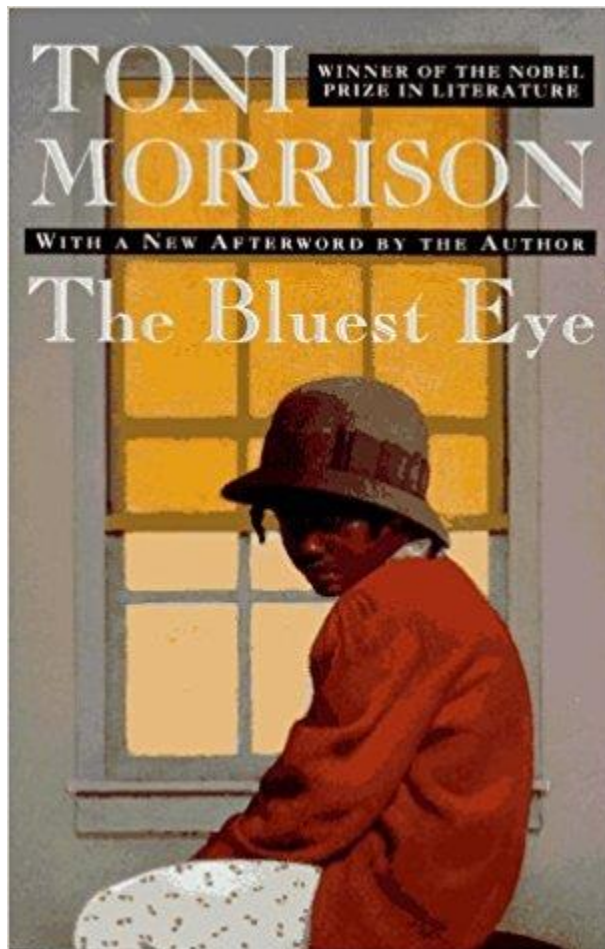
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**Black Literature**  
**Quest for Self in *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison**

M. Tamil Arasi and L. Ravi Shankar

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Courtesy: [https://www.amazon.com/Toni-Morrison-Bluest-Eye-Paperback/dp/B002LPH47E/ref=sr\\_1\\_3?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1522258402&sr=1-3&keywords=the+bluest+eye+by+toni+morrison&dpID=51rf5f8xcWL&preST=SY291\\_B01,204,203,200\\_QL40\\_&dpSrc=srch](https://www.amazon.com/Toni-Morrison-Bluest-Eye-Paperback/dp/B002LPH47E/ref=sr_1_3?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1522258402&sr=1-3&keywords=the+bluest+eye+by+toni+morrison&dpID=51rf5f8xcWL&preST=SY291_B01,204,203,200_QL40_&dpSrc=srch)



## Abstract

The significance of look in constructing identity and subjectivity of African-Americans is highlighted by Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*. Toni Morrison redefines beauty and the identity crisis of the black women. The identity crisis makes a sense of Self-loathing, and inferiority in the mind. This situation creates the Quest for Self. The most insulting situation for a person is when that person is neglected as invisible to the viewer. The protagonist in the novel faced this type of neglected situation. The White society created their own concept of beauty and makes it universal for the people of all colours, society and races. The character in the novel Claudia, shows a better future for the Black race. Morrison portrays her woman from zero image to independent individuality where the expectation of triumph works.

**Keywords:** Tony Morrison, *The Bluest Eye*, Quest, Beauty, Racism, Freedom, Identity.

## *The Bluest Eye*

This paper discusses one of the important topics that is universal. Toni Morrison is an American novelist, essayist, editor, teacher and professor Emeritus at Princeton University. In 1998 Morrison won Pulitzer Prize and the American Book Award. '*The Bluest Eye*' was originally published in 1970. This book is one of the popular works of Morrison's life. Morrison, a single mother of two sons, wrote the novel while she taught at Howard University.

## Identity Crisis

Identity crisis can be defined as a period of uncertainty and confusion in which a particular people or community face lot of problems in a society. A person's sense of Identity becomes insecure, typically due to change in their expected aims or role in society. The main theme of Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* is the quest for individual identity and the influences of the family as well as quest for identity in community. Pecola Breedlove, Cholly Breedlove, Pauline Breedlove belong to one family. They are all Black people who were moving to the north in search of greater opportunities.

## The Breedlove Family and Pecola

The Breedlove family is a group of people under the same roof. Cholly, is the father of the family who is a drunkard and abusive man. He abused his own daughter Pecola, who is informed her mother Paulina, but she never minds her daughter words. So, she felt like missing her identity with parents too. Pauline belongs to White family and continues to favour them over her Biological family. Pecola is a little Black girl with low self-esteem. She felt like ugly and Imperfect of '*Blue Eyes*', even though every night she prays to god, next day she is working up with blue eyes. The title of the book suggests the dominant ideology of Racism, the class exploitation and cultural hegemony it means dominance of one group. The white people are tolerating the black people among the society.

## To Become One Among the White People

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Language in India [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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The protagonist of the novel not only needs blue eyes, she also wants to become one among the white people. She is taught about white which is synonymous with beautiful. This paper deals with critical exploration mainly towards the African Americans racial identity and its effects. The author brings out the psychological damage done to a black girl (Protagonist of the novel) who has low self Esteem. The novel focuses on Pecola who was longing for blue eyes. At last the author shows the psychological impact done to her life. She has been that taught in it white is only considered has beautiful whereas black is considered as ugliness, and she believes in the reason behind her being rejected everywhere. However, Claudia, the young girl narrator, at the very beginning of the novel, describes herself as indifferent to both white and black people.

### **Overcoming Problems**

At first Pecola faced problems in Maureen, hates light-Skinned because Maureen appear beautiful because he belongs to white race. During her school days Maureen was always teasing her and criticize of they as belonging to back community. In that time, she lost her identity in her school days. In this novel the black people's identity is constructed by the gaze of white people that controls their code of behaviours. *The Bluest Eye*, Panopticon which means in old Greek (all observe) a visual devise of imposing and accepting racial identity of inferiority. One men can be easily identified what they are easily by other men's look. Black people are identified negatively regardless of their origin and they are also without raising a question they accept and internalize the unfairly ideology through total negation and self-hatred.

### **Abusive and Controlling Parents**

Morrison begins the novel with reference to Dick and Jane reading primer. At first, she did without punctuation, without spacing between the words. The Reader finds a family; mother, family, sister, and brother, but key elements are missing. Simply she described that her Father is a drunkard and mother is a self-loathing woman. Pecola is trying to escape a tragic world without love that is too insane. Her parents are abusive and negligent. The reader is told that Pecola's mother thought she was ugly from the time of birth. Her family too had failed to provide her with identity, love, security, and socialization, which are essential for any child's development (Samuel 13). She struggles to find her infertile soil leading to the analysis of a life of sterility. Like the marigolds planted that year, Pecola never grew. They limit the freedom to both beauty and racism, but perhaps running parallel, create anger, self-loathing and shame are most important one in identity crisis. In the novel, racist attitude towards the black is shown as a lack of recognition; the idea of blackness is removed human identity.

### **No Identity in the Eyes of Some White People**

A white shopkeeper does not notice Pecola as a human being with an identity. Even though she has noticed "lurking in the eyes of all white people" (Morrison 48). "He does not saner; because of him there is nothing to see" (Morrison 48). She noticed that the shopkeeper did not recognize her. He believed in the white standard of visual attractiveness. When Pecola goes to buy her favourite Mary Jane candy there. Mr. Yakobowski cannot acknowledge her presence and refuses to look at her. He said that he does not see her because there is nothing to see, he

said. That was a total negation of Pecola. Beauty is a subjective concept; every individual maintains a different perspective on what is beautiful.

One day Pecola and her friends all black encounter a white girl, Maureen Peal, who after the tiffin with the girls insists they criticize,

“I am cute! And you are ugly! Black and ugly Black e mos. I am cute” (Morrison 73)

### **A Language That Evokes Slavery**

In this scene, two ideas are presented: the idea of blackness and the idea of beauty. The girls are struck by Maureen’s insistence of superiority. Pauline’s story is described to show that the concept of beauty is a process described in a language that evokes image of slavery.

“She stripped her mind, bound it” (Morrison 121).

Morrison presents a clear layout not only for the psychological effects of those who fall victim to romantic love, beauty or racism, but also to unite all three of these ideas. But the parallel between beauty and racism is most interesting in their shared effects. She goes to the store for Mary Jane, a symbol of whiteness. When the separateness is noticed, when no longer is “the world a part of her” (Morrison 48), a loss of love occurs.

### **Idea of Separateness**

Another interesting feature is the idea of separateness. Maureen moves “safe on the other side” of the street (Morrison 73), separating herself physically from the black girls before asserting her superiority verbally. Morrison uses a popular figure from 1940’s Mr. Henry arrives at the Mac Teer’s house, greeting Claudia and Frieda with:

“Hello there, you must be Greta Garbo, and you must be Ginger Roger” (Morrison 16)

### **Role of Movies**

Both characters are white, leading the reader to assume that white women were used to describe pretty girls of other colors. Others don’t have any identity. Films play an important role in the self-degradation of Black people. The beauty standard that Pecola feels she must live up to causes her to have an identity crisis. Society’s standard has no place for Pecola, unlike her “high yellow dream child” classmate. Maureen Peals, who fits the mold (Morrison 62).

“She enchanted the entire school... black girls stepped aside when she wanted to use the sink in the girl’s toilet... She never had to search for anybody to eat with in the cafeteria- they flocked to the table of her choice” (Morrison 62-63).

In contrast, Pecola’s classmates insult her black skin by chanting. “Black e mo Black e mo ya daddy sleeps necked/ stch ta ta stch la ta” (Morrison 65)

### **Establishing Self-esteem**

Pecola believes that the cruelty she witnessed and experienced is connected to how she is facing the problem in the society. In other words, Pecola’s definition of her self-esteem is established by those who see her. This is how she sees herself. “Long hour she sat looking at the mirror trying to discover the secret of the ugliness”. (Morrison 54) Through this discovery she

seeks an escape into the fantasy world. She is mostly plays with white dolls and with her blue eyes. Her childhood days she believes that blue eyes only change everything in her life. If she had blue eyes, she would look like a prettiest girl in this world.

### **Human Psychology**

Pecola thinks that how we see the world is determined by eyes' colour, but it is indeed related to human psychology. One day Pecola enters into Geraldine's home that time Geraldine forces her to leave with words that hurt deeply sayin "Get out... You nasty little back bitch. Get out of my house" (Morrison 92).

She is a very delicate character because of her young age, but her delicacy lies even more in her innocence. Cholly is described as most irresponsible father as the white society. As he is black, he is ugly and slave of the white people. He is making violence suffer of the rape his own daughter Pecola. He was wrongly adopted the white people concept in negative way. The characters like Maureen and Gearldine are the other examples of self-loathing. Gearldine accepts the white standard of beauty and cleanliness. They also talk about house cleaning. Maureen is the symbol of pride, because is lighter skinned girl than the other black girls. Pecola called her mother from Mrs. Breedlove. Pauline actually shows her self-hatred. She does not like poor, dark skinned black children like Pecola because she hates her own colour. It looks as if it is not easy to have respectable coloured people. Fear of suffering she sees in the eyes of black girls like Pecola. Maureen is lighter than other black girls, and she shows her pride not being a black. She even does not hesitate to call others as black and ugly. She is also wealthier. She successfully achieves the superior status in the society. She is the symbol of slavery and oppression of the whites.

At the end of the novel, Pecola gets a friend and gets the blue eyes but only through her imagination and insanity. Pecola has been destroyed by racism that wholly negates the aspiration of black skinned, brown eyed people. The divesting power of power of racial contempt and self-hatred caused Pecola to literally self-destruct in her quest for love, self-worth and identity.

### **To Conclude**

Beauty is a phenomenon which calls for an instant, complex process of recognition, misidentification, projection and elimination. *The Bluest Eye* makes the experiences of beauty an easy analogue for racial classification, a process of self-definition. This mostly deals with identity, racism, cultural of black society. Morrison adjures the female members of the community and exhorts black women to return to reality and rejection the illusionary tendencies of media presentation. The main theme of the novel is, individual identity and the influences of the family and the community in the quest. The hegemonic ideology is based on white gaze and black blindness. The novel tries to deconstruct the hegemonic ideology and racially hierarchical identity constructed for the twentieth-century African-Americans.

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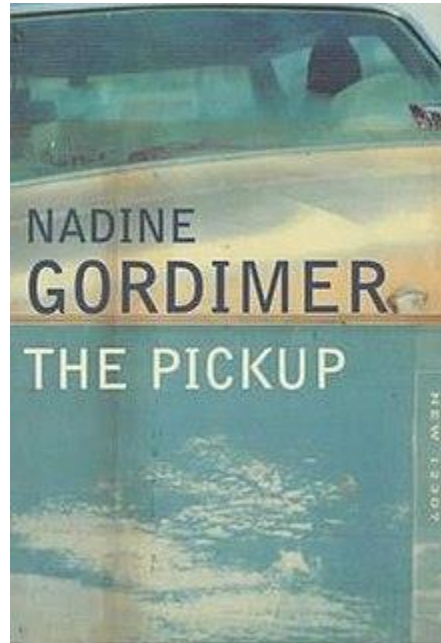


## **Culture Clash and Identity Crisis in Nadine Gordimer's *The Pickup***

**M. Tamil Thendral and Dr. G. Aruna Devi**

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Courtesy: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Pickup](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Pickup)

### **Nadine Gordimer**

Nadine Gordimer is the South African short story writer, essayist, novelist and political activist. She has received many honorable awards include Noble Prize for Literature and Booker Prize for her novel *The Conservationist* (1974), W.H. Smith Commonwealth Literary Award, James Tait Black Memorial Prize, Bennett Award and received many righteous degrees from various universities like Oxford and Cambridge. She belongs to the period of Apartheid in South Africa. Many of her stories deal with the issues of racial injustices, cultural clashes between Whites and Blacks, segregation, displacement, love, political power, alienation and the sufferings of Africans in the White lands. She has been called the leader of South African people. She expresses her views not only on African people in her novels but also criticizes the government policies and activities.

Nadine Gordimer's writing symbolizes that there is a need for political change. Because of protest, many of her novels are banned by the government. Being brave woman, she has never become tired. She used to give her contribution to her country through her writings

spontaneously. Gordimer's short stories collections are *Forum, A Soldier's Embrace, Jump and Other Stories*. Her notable novels are *The Lying Days* (1953), *A World of Strangers* (1958), *The Conservationist* (1974), *Burger's Daughter* (1979), *July's People* (1981), *My Son's Story* (1990), *The House Gun* (1998), *Get a Life* (2005) and *No Time like the Present* (2012).

### ***The Pickup***

*The Pickup* comprises the story of a couple Julie Summers, a White woman and Abdu, an illegal Arab immigrant in South Africa. After Abdu's visa is refused, the couple returns to his unnamed homeland, where she is an alien. She experiences culture shock. The issues of displacement, identity crisis, alienation, immigration, culture clash, economic power and religious faith are portrayed in the novel, *The Pickup*. It won the Commonwealth Writers' Prize for the Best Book from Africa.

### **Culture Clash**

The Oxford Dictionary defines Culture Clash is a conflict between cultures or a disagreement arising between two parties of different beliefs, values and practices. The love affair between Julie and Ibrahim starts as a casual pickup and later involves into very complicated relationship. Its leads them to new directions none of them have expected. Ibrahim overstays his South African permit for one year and five months. It is a criminal offence against the government. He wants to escape from the critical situation but he has no money to pay for his visa. The owner of the garage employs him illegally. Actually it is cheap for the owner because he does not pay accident insurance, pension and medical aids for Ibrahim.

### **Julie and Ibrahim**

Being a Black he is disqualified and he cannot earn money like the other people in the garage. It highlights the discrimination of Blacks. Still Blacks live in the old ghettos and Whites live in the suburbs. In fact no personal interaction takes place until Julie shows up her father's car. He uses the relationship with Julie who belongs to wealthy family. When Julie buys two airline tickets using her background as a wealthy girl, Ibrahim shouts at her. She insists on accompanying Ibrahim to his country he gets angry with her.

Who asked you to buy two tickets? You said nothing to me. Don't you think you said nothing to me? Don't you think you must discuss? No, you are used to making all decisions, you do what you like, no father, no mother, nobody must ever tell you. And me-what am I, don't ask me-you cannot live in my country, it's not for you, you can wish you were dead, if you have to live there. Can't you understand? I can't be for you-responsible. (95)

He says that his country is not suitable to her. She is going to the third world countries which are underdeveloped. Abdu tries to explain everything to her. In her country, she has everything. But Arab country is very dry, dusty and sandy and it is not comfortable for her. It has its culture, civilization which is not understood by anyone. To her it is a place where woman are treated like slaves. She expands her limited horizons and experiences the culture of which she knows nothing. Julie is surprised that Abdu insists upon their marriage before he brings her to

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his family home. But she says, “what for we don’t need that” (107). Abdu embarrassed by his dirty, improvised North African village, but Julie becomes entranced living with his large, extended family on the edge of the desert. In Johannesburg, they live together without getting married, but his country does not accept them. The paper examines the cultural clash between Western and Eastern countries.

### **Julie’s Relationship with Ibrahim**

Julie’s relationship with Ibrahim certainly places a major role in her transformation, which leads to a process of boundary– crossing between spaces and cultures. To Arab people English is a foreign language. They do not know how to speak English. Now Julie is a stranger. She must learn Arab for her communication. In this village women are not allowed to eat with the men. The culture of the village irritates her much. There is no alarm clock in the village. Jackals cry loudly in the desert. It is the call for the prayer.

She tries to accept the changes like the small child’s first day at school. Each day for five times the voice of muezzin from the mosque and they read the inscribed version of the Koran. But in Julie’s country, they read the Bible. She thinks about her past. She had a beautiful garden, falling asleep with plush toys bought by her father, but here she has not seen even a single plant. She refuses to cover her head when she enters the village at first. But now she covers over her mouth and nose to protect her from the cutting fury of flaying sand. Once she satirized the café in the village but now she drinks coffee at the same cafe. Julie follows the habit of Arabians by knowingly or unknowingly. This is the reality of the people who tries to adapt another culture. She assimilates many new experiences in her life. This is the Psychology of new immigrants. Now Julie is changed. She teaches lessons for the adults. She speaks their language thoroughly. She came to know that she must fight for survival in the desert. She assimilates many new accomplishments in her life. This paper brings out how people are suffering because of immigration from one country to another country.

### **Loving Simple Life**

Nowadays people are struggling and ask oneself who am I. Identity Crisis is a psychological conflict that involves confusion about one’s social role. In such state, a person experiences uncertainty in life. In *The Pickup*, the protagonists are longing for their identity. Even though Julie possesses the power of the owner of the Rover (car), she declines “It’s not mine! She claimed her identity: I’d like to have my own old one back!”. (Pickup 9). It proves that she loves the simple life.

The lack of physical involvement in daily activities is also reflected in her attitude towards her job in public relations and failure commitment regarding her choices.

What I do, what you do. That’s about the only subject available. I don’t know how exactly these things workout. I wanted to be a lawyer; really I had these great ambitions when I was at school...I quite law after only two years. Then it was languages...and somehow I’ve landed up working as a PRO and

fundraiser...sycophantic. I won't stick to it for long. I don't know what I want to do, if that means what I want to be (11).

When Julie tries to talk in local language to Ibrahim, he says: We must talk in English. I need to speak in English. I must speak English with you if I am going to get a decent job anywhere. I can be able to study some more there. Only with English (152). It shows the passion of speaking English as a foreign language. Moreover, people around the apartheid countries long to speak English. They think that it gives some sort of respect in the society. Julie is alone without language. She makes herself ill.

### **Seeking Wealth**

At the end of the novel she seeks her identity in unnamed Arab country. She starts her life in her own way. At the same time, Ibrahim often says, "I need Permanent Residence". He wants to become a wealthy young man. To attain his goal, he tries to escape from his Arab country. Again he tries to get to Australia, Newlands and America. What an unspeakable condition of the countries which is segregated and does not have a proper environment. Arabic countries are full of deserts. He laments about the reality of the world and pathetic condition of his country, where he does not have any opportunity. Maximum opportunities are given to the Westerns only. Eastern people only have two percentages of opportunities

### **Reality of Life**

Julie explains the reality of the people in USA. It is not his country. He never get out the garage in his country. But America is completely different from his country. One of the biggest, the most important financiers of the whole world lived in USA. They are in computers, in communications, that is where the world is. In Ibrahim's country women are locked within four walls. But in USA, women run away from home for earning. He seeks "permanent residence" in America. But Julie wants to escape from the wealthy life in USA. To him it's a very big dream. He says, "I am going to America" (190). She explains the reality of America.

Works for You are a stray dog. I know you don't mind, you even seem to like to live ... rough ... but this is different, it can be bad, bad. I don't mind for me- because this time I have the chance to move out all that, finished, forever, forever, do what I want to do, live like I want to live. That is the country for it. There's plenty of chances again now, there, you don't read the papers, but the unemployment is nothing. Lowest for many year everybody. (227)

### **Fails to Find Roots**

In search of his own identity, Ibrahim shifts from village to America and joint family to nuclear family but fails to find his own roots amidst socio- cultural change. Both of them identify themselves in an alien land. At the end of the novel, Julie left alone by her husband and living without hope in slum environment. She is a symbol of woman's searching for identity and freedom. She starts a new life in Arab. Thus the novel paints a clear picture of culture clash and identity crisis in an alien environment. Culture clash and Identity crisis are two sides of a same coin. The author ends the novel with an optimistic note. Julie has courage to covert the

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consequences of life into success. She geared up to tackle the worst situations that she will go to meet in the deserted Arab country.

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## Women, Love and Sex in Scott Fitzgerald's Works

M. Thanumalaya Perumal and Dr. A. Selvaraj

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F. Scott Fitzgerald

### Abstract

After First World War only few writers spoke about younger generation, F. Scott Fitzgerald was one of the best among them. He was the well-known writer who wrote with characters of Jazz Age. The unique quality on Fitzgerald's writing is seen in his portrayal of flapper characters in his works. Flapper means liberated young women who lived for enjoying Jazz Age. This article is an attempt to analyze Fitzgerald's view and idea on women through his works.

**Key Words:** Women Characters, Flappers, Jazz Age, American Society.

### F. Scott Fitzgerald

F. Scott Fitzgerald is a well-known American writer who is famous for the Jazz Age Characters. The beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century had the greater essence of the flapper, which brought distinct change in the status of women in American Society. There existed a carefree atmosphere admits the women of Jazz Age this was because of financial independence women were gaming during that period. Flappers were the dynamic symbols who exhibited the spirit of festive Jazz Age.

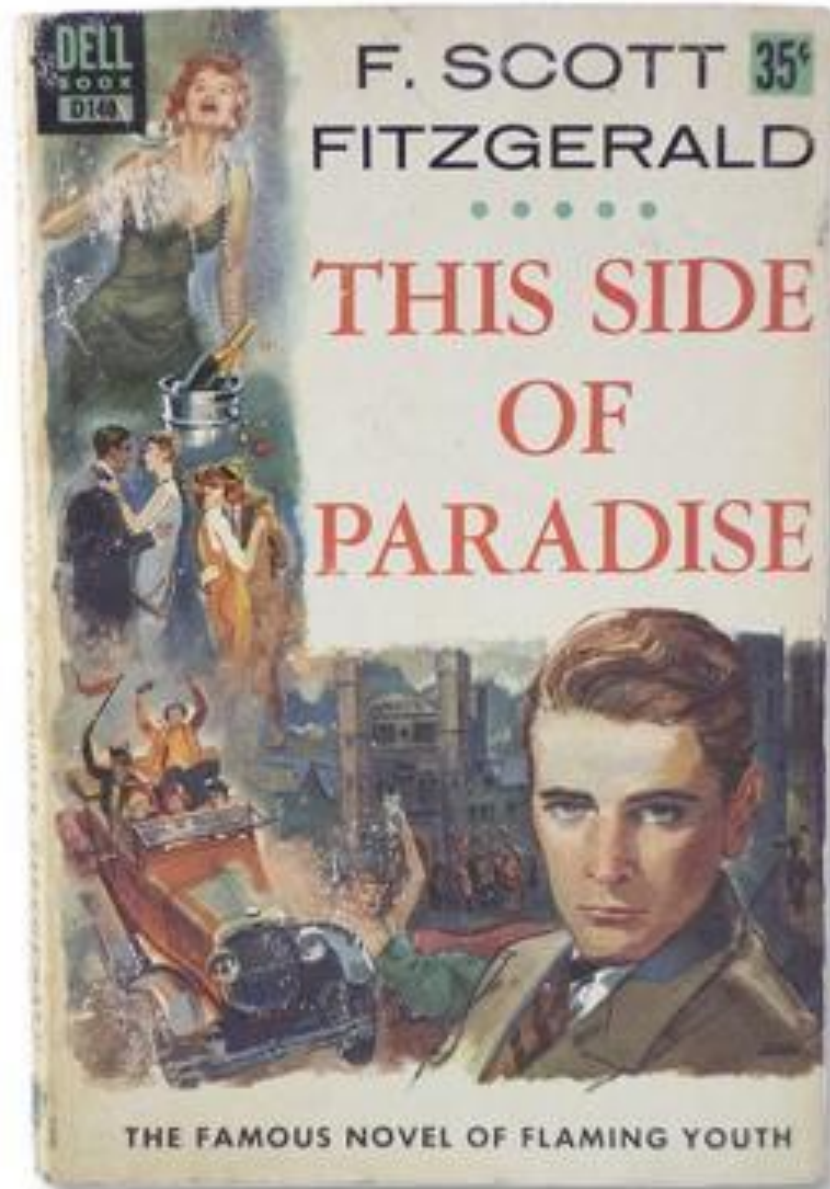
The first part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is considered to be a turning point in American history. It is in this period urbanization was growing steadily in America. Women were given whole independence to participate in political life; this gave them equal position with men in society. In 1919 women got their right to vote, this encouraged them to pursue personal liberation. And it was seen that most of the liberated women during the 20<sup>th</sup> century were flappers. Liberated young women had bobbed hair, short skirts, they did not obey their parents instead shocked them by their manners; they were not interested in being a perfect lady. They believed that they have achieved their liberation. The young women of the age lived alone and were working, this created many strange changes in their manners and look they were mostly behind beauty and boyish look.

By 1930's smoking and drinking in public became obvious among the adolescent boys and girls. The number of children and youth going to school increased gradually this separated the youngsters from their parents, leading to a drastic change in manners, morals and ideals from that of their parents. The most alarming issue among the parents was the youth and sex of their children. Sexuality became more common and frank. Dating, partying and petting became more famous during 1920's. The youngster had no proper idea about marriage, for them love, marriage and sex were fun. They did not completely break their elder morality rules instead they bent it little for their convenience. Young women of this age wanted their husbands to be more of friends and sexual partners.

### **Jazz Age**

Fitzgerald is stating that the coming of the Jazz Age has changed the entire social status and let it to lose the people's originality. He through his writing says that the youngsters are far away from their roots this creates sadness in the minds of the parents. Flappers were young women who enjoined free modes of behavior, young girls with short skirts, cigarette lips and dancing jazz are the predominant symbol of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Fitzgerald helped to popularize this type of Jazz culture which was developing steadily during his period. Many writers wrote about Jazz Age viewed it with possibilities of tragedy in their situation, but Fitzgerald gave the Jazz Age in his writing with admiration, celebration, and appreciating the adventurous characteristics of the flapper era. He created female characters so strong, dictating the young women of his society not to feel shame for doing what they please this made him more popular during his age. His heroines in *This Side of Paradise* became more attractive for the young generation, as the female characters were molded with defiant attitude and beauty which they used deliberately for their own selfish motives. Rosalind, a character in the novel is described by her sister as "average – smokers sometimes, drinks punch, frequently kissed..." (*This Side of Paradise* 182). These characters fascinated the young readers as they were able to relate themselves with the characters of the novel.

## Generation Gap That Existed



Courtesy: <https://www.abebooks.com/Side-Paradise-D140-Fitzgerald-F-Scott/12175917618/bd>

In *This Side of the Paradise* Fitzgerald says that, “None of the Victorian mothers and most of them were Victorian had any ideas how casually there were accustomed to be kissed.” (*This Side of Paradise* 64). These lines show the generation gap that existed during the century. In Fitzgerald’s work the readers can find more liberated women who have the same rights and liberties as the men had and considered the accusations of immorality unjustified. Amory, the protagonist of *This Side of Paradise* says,

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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. . . Saw girls doing things that even in his memory would have been impossible. Eating three – O'clock after – dance suppers in impossible café's, talking of every side of life with an air half of earnestness, half of mockery, yet with a furtive excitement . . . (*This side of Paradise* 65)

These words express how much the Jazz Age has changed the youngsters especially the changes in the young women's mindset about the atmosphere of newly discovered freedom which the young ladies enjoyed at the time of change.

### ***The Offshore Pirate***

In *The Offshore Pirate*, the protagonist **pleases** the heroine Ardita “. . . if you'll swear on your honor as a flapper- which probably isn't worth much- that you'll keep that spoiled little mouth of yours tight shut for forty- eight hours . . .” (*The Offshore Pirate* 6), Fitzgerald through these lines expresses his responsibility of a best flapper creator. The girl characters, Fitzgerald sketches were far from other writers for the female characters in his writings were the product of his keen observation of the flappers of Jazz Age.

### **Initiator and Agent of Change**

Fitzgerald's stories not only described about flappers but also had an influence in spreading these changes national wide. The Age was a turning point in sexual behavior. There was a gradual growth in sexual behavior from strict Victorian standard to freer sexual habits. The youngster believed that love is erotic. Fitzgerald was the spokesman of the young and praised social upgrading in his writings, this is more obvious in his love scenes, though he speaks more about sexuality, he also includes the manners of the youngsters, with infidelity and incest, all these are not given directly by the writer but he has veiled his sexuality topic in his writings. He in his early stage of writing he created heroes and heroines so much attached to sex than love.

Amory in *This Side of Paradise* says that he is not tempted by the idea of sleeping with a prostitute. Gloria in *The Beautiful and Damned* in spite of her high reputation is a virgin till she gets married later her failure in marriage makes her feel everything ridiculous.

A girl who had misunderstood how the game of popularity worked could drift into a real sexual affair, not understanding that virginity is necessary for perfect marriage. A good example for this is Dorothy in *The Beautiful and Damned*, she loses her virginity in a silly relationship with a local boy, she makes a mistake of sharing this with a friend of her and as the news spreads, she loses her reputation in her town. Fitzgerald has also mentions about sexual dilemmas of young women in twenties that depicts, that morality was also greatly appreciated by the young girls of age, Gloria in *The Beautiful and Damned*, referred as “Public drinking glass” (182). She gains reputation by staying in her limits and was able to keep her good name in the marriage market, Fitzgerald's women characters are so strong and had taken complete break from the past. All the women characters in his writing are strong, self-liberated and wise.

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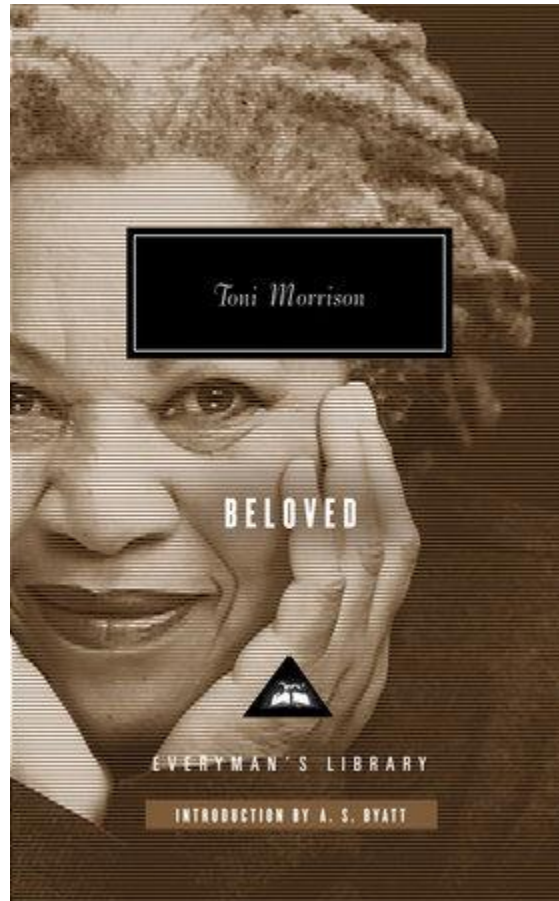


## Gender Discrimination in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*

Dr. (Mrs). R. Uma Mageswari

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Courtesy: <https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/117647/beloved-by-toni-morrison/9780307264886/>

### Abstract

This article is a study of gender crisis in Toni Morrison's novel '*Beloved*'. It is the psychological study of black women who were oppressed in the hands of both white men and black men. It examines the black women's struggle to create an identity by tackling the whites as well as blacks. Gender discrimination, with its accompanying horrors, mutilated the backs and minds of slave women, defied their sexual feelings and scarred them psychologically for all time.

African American women are the victims of sexual atrocities at the hands of the white masters as well as the black men. They are slaves of slaves. This paper illuminates the black women relation not only to white master, white seducer but also to black father, black husband and black son. The African American women have to fight for survival both inside and outside their home. It further elaborates the suppression of black women by the patriarchal and traditional constraints. The analysis is based on Alice Walker's Womanism. This study is significant for its special focus on the works written by a black woman, her own cultural background, her presentation of female characters and their relation with one another and with male characters

## Introduction

Woman in a patriarchal society was the socially sanctioned 'other' and her psyche was the product of social constraints. As Simon de Beauvoir pointed out:

One is not born, but rather becomes woman....

It is civilization as a whole that produces this  
Creature, intermediate between male and  
Eunuch, which is described as feminine (16).

From the moment of birth, a female was constantly bombarded with social images, rewards and punishments that were designed to her. It ensured that she didn't develop any quality associated with the other half of humanity. She must be feminine and restricted herself to a 'woman's place'. It was the patriarchal civilization that defined woman as a most marginalized creature. Her definition and differentiation were always made to be in dependence on man. A woman was never considered as autonomous self, but as just incidental, the inessential and an appendage to man. She was considered as burden to the family.

The present article aims to examine the issue of gender identity and racism, faced by Black women and the ways in which they can break free of such issues as portrayed in her fifth novel *Beloved* (1987). My reading of Toni Morrison, for this article, examines the representation of black women and the mental stigma they harbored in their lives simply because of being a Black in the hands of whites and men.

To be black and female was to suffer from the twin disadvantages of racial discrimination and gender oppression. Being females, they were the victims of sexual atrocities in the hands of the white patriarchs as well as the blacks. Being former slaves, the white establishments forced them to live on meager resources and were compelled to remain poor. Sexism, with its accompanying horrors, mutilated the blacks and minds of slave women. The black women were scared psychologically for all time. Suffering in the hands of both black and white men, the African-American women had to fight for survival both inside and outside her house.

On the whole, the black women had the greater cause for grievance, being oppressed both as a black and a woman. It was her story which more vividly described that horrendous tale and its accompanying woes. The entire African-American community was condemned to endless

suffering. Yet the black woman's condition was worse than the black man's because "To be black and female was to be in Double Jeopardy" (Frances 90).

Black women, especially poor black women had suffered greatly in the black community because the black men had been insensitive to them as persons. They had embraced the values held by the white male culture of America. The black men had been socialized into male superiority. Black men's sexism plunged deep into the troubled waters of black male-female relationships. They were caught mercilessly in the narrow space where brutality and dehumanization were rampant. As Ahad said, "The sexism of black men was like pouring salt into the open wounds that racism cut into the souls of black women" (15).

Toni Morrison's novels were the literary counterparts of her community's oral traditions, which in the American life had become more and more the domain of women. Toni Morrison's novels reflected certain qualities of the community as well as her vision. In depicting the black life in her novels, Toni Morrison's approach was essentially allegorical, where nature and human being converse and where the images of the stories move to create their own structure and their own parables. She investigated the folk history of her characters, as they groped toward self-understanding. There was a thematic reflection of the pursuit of personal and societal wholeness. She analysed a major dilemma of black families, the relationship between one's responsibility for one's life and the restrictions of sexism and racism.

Morrison seemed to be at her best in documenting slavery and its aftermath. The treatment of slaves as beasts of burden and the sexual exploitation of African women by European men were depicted artistically. Sethe's trauma began when she was taken from her mother by a system of slavery that regarded the children as property and the adults as work animals that had no time for raising children. Sethe was raised in a communal environment by Nan. Since she was in charge of cooking and caring for all the slave children, she had no time to nurture them. Both Sethe's mother and Nan came as slaves from Africa during the middle passage. Being women, they had to endure unbelievable torture, for they were raped innumerable times. Their only means of resistance was to kill any child born out of such union and to refuse to put their arms around their rapists. The female slaves were also cruelly branded on the chest in order that their owners could always recognize and claim them. When Sethe's mother grabbed her daughter and showed her the brand on her chest, it was a sad commentary. Since Sethe had not been permitted to know her mother, Sethe's mother could not mark her identity for her daughter in anything but a brand that indicated that she was a slave.

Sethe was married to Halle, a slave who was trying to make his mother free. They had two sons and a daughter when they were in the plantation. The owner of the plantation was changed because of Mr. Garner's death. Mrs. Garner gave the charge to her brother-in-law, the School Teacher. The School Teacher and his nephews treated the slaves brutally. Before Garner's death, the rule of the plantation was if they paid the desired work to the plantation, they would be freed. Halle worked hard to free his mother, Baby Suggs. He paid the debt to Mr. Garner and freed his mother.

After Garner's death, the rule was changed. Halle found it difficult to pay the debt for his wife and three children. Halle, Paul D, Paul A, Sixo and Sethe planned to escape from the plantation. Thus, the story revolved around the impact of slavery on black people. The novel hinged on the death of Sethe's infant daughter, Beloved, who mysteriously reappeared as a sensuous young woman. Beloved's spirit came back to claim Sethe's love. Sethe struggled to make Beloved gain the full possession of her present. Sethe's experience was treated with many fundamental complexities in her quest for freedom.

On socio-psychological level, *Beloved* was the story of Sethe's quest for social freedom and psychological wholeness. On mythic level, *Beloved* was a ghost story that framed narratives of the impact of class, race, sex on the capacity for love, faith and community of black families. In the novel Sethe was a victim of both sexist and racist oppression. She was a runaway slave woman, a slave mother who was brutally treated by white men, the School Teacher and his nephews. The most damaging effect of the dual oppression of black women, against which Morrison wrote, was murder of one's own child. Murder became Sethe's act of mother's love, which she explained saying "I took and put my babies where they'd be safe" (B 193). She preferred murdering her daughter, Beloved, to see her in bondage.

Sethe's awareness of black color and rejection of white-perceptions and inscriptions of herself, her children, and other slaves as non-human were synthesized with her black feminist sense of self-sufficiency. Sethe reconciled gender differences first with her husband, Hall Suggs. Later she lived with Paul D, painful and unattractive history of black women in the States where black women had always been mothers and laborers, mothers and workers. They had worked in the fields along with men.

They were required to do physical labor in competition with them, so that their relations with each other turned out to be more comradeship than male dominance/female subordination... Black women are both ship and safe harbor. (B 19)

Morrison juxtaposed isolated struggle with collective struggle and selfish individualism was conditioned by social responsibility.

In *Beloved*, most forms of isolation were based on gender. For instance, when Baby Suggs worked alone to feed the community, She was insulted by it:

Too much they thought. Where does she get it all Baby Suggs, holy? ... And loving everybody like it was her job and hers alone...Loaves of bread and fishes were his power. (B 136)

She worked for the community. But they refused to warn Baby Suggs that slave trappers were approaching, setting in motion, the conditions under which Sethe murdered Beloved:

The good news, however, was that Halle got married and had a baby coming [Baby Suggs]. She fixed on that and her own

brand of preaching, having made up her mind about what to do with the heart that started beating the minute she crossed the Ohio river. (B 147)

*Beloved* became the symbol by which African people were to ensure the devastating effect of isolation. Isolation literally tore apart the family. Denver's isolation in life, 124's isolation in the community, Beloved's isolation in death- all divided the African community and as a consequence, left it vulnerable to the oppression and exploitation of the slave society.

The life history of Sethe, was not less crucial and frightfully horrifying. She was a helpless victim of the slavery system. Poverty, hunger and destitution were causes of the black community that brought them down to their knees to obey their white masters who provided them food for their labor. Physical torture and sexual assaults were rampant, especially for young black women. Children were forcibly taken away from their mothers and were put to work somewhere. Sethe too was deserted from her mother and two sons, who were never retrieved. There were many events closely associated with her struggle to sustain and survive. These events included the death of her mother; her marriage with Halle; a whipping which almost killed her; her escape and refuge in the house of her mother-in-law; her recapture and the infanticide of her child; her period of imprisonment; the subsequent years in 124 house; her sons-Howard and Buglar-being driven away from there; her years in an all female household where the third member was a ghost-daughter.

Though the African American writers had highlighted in one way or another, the black experience in white America, Toni Morrison's work stood out because of its comprehensive and multidimensional approach to the Afro-American experience. She invented universally identifiable characters, recreated their tragic past, highlighted their traumatic present and envisions a better future for them-in an extraordinary prose style that had a power, beauty and richness all its own.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018  
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Gender Discrimination in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*



**A Study of Hidden Ideas in Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451***

**M. Valarmathi and Dr. R. Palanivel**

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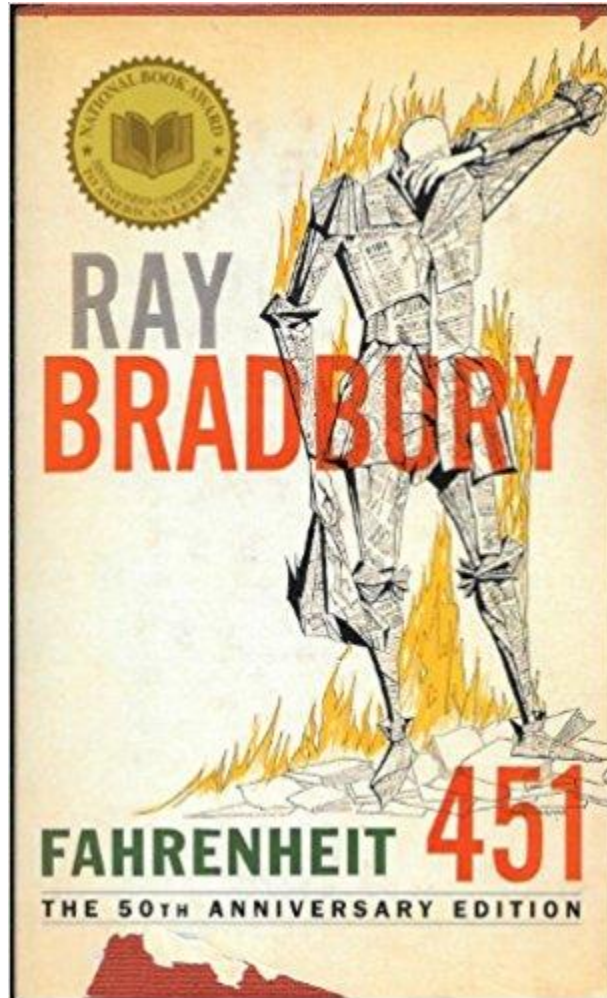
Ray Bradbury 1920-2012

Courtesy: <http://books.blogs.starnewsonline.com/16027/ray-bradbury-r-i-p/>

**Abstract**

Ray Bradbury is one of the well-known American writers, and he is famous for his cross genre works. His *Fahrenheit 451* is a symbolic dystopian of twentieth century and published as a novel in 1953. This article aims to analyse extensively on the hidden ideas such as influence of mass culture on society. His works belongs to anti McCarthy era as he said the importance of books and uses specific allusion from literature to increase the depth of the novel.

**Keywords:** *Ray Bradbury's Fahrenheit 451* Dystopia, Hidden ideas, Specific Allusions, Mass Culture.



Courtesy: <https://www.amazon.com/Fahrenheit-451-50th-Anniversary-Bradbury/dp/B004TLVDKW>

### Ray Bradbury

Ray Bradbury is one of the well-known American writers. He is famous for his cross genre works. A prolific author of hundreds of short stories, close to fifty books as well as numerous poems, essays, operas, plays, tele plays, and screen plays. He has inspired the readers to dream, to think, and to create and has a very unique style of writing. *Fahrenheit 451* is a prophetic novel which is one of the popular fictions of American literary canon and in which temperature book papers catches fire and burn. This book is written in shorter version for a science fiction magazine in 1950 and published as a novel in 1953. He depicts a dystopian society in which artistic production is prohibited, libraries are burnt and books are regarded as a crime against state in *Fahrenheit 451*.

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## Focus of This Article

This article aims to analyse extensively on the hidden ideas such as the influence of mass culture on society and this work belongs to anti McCarthy era as he uses specific allusion in a work of fiction. He uses several direct quotations from the works of literature, including the Bible. These analyses of allusions show their function of adding subtle depth to the ideas of the novel. He details the dehumanizing nature of mass society in *Fahrenheit 451*. It is a dystopian tale that depicts the futuristic society in which reading is prohibited and a Fireman's job is to burn books. This novel is usually read as an anti-McCarthy era and a criticism of American consumerist society. He feared the effect of technology on society and the human spirit.

## A Critique of Mass Culture

In this novel, he confined himself to a critique of mass culture that reflects the elite cultural view of the post war period and censorship in a dystopian society. The books are banned because they can lead people to think and question against the society such as issues like freedom and happiness from worry through the elimination of controversy. This society which has seen to nuclear wars is a mass consumption in which television spread to four walls.

## *Fahrenheit 451*

*Fahrenheit 451* is based on the quest of the protagonist Guy Montag. The major motif of the novel is book burning and the opening description gives us a picture of competence. "It's fine work. Monday burn Millay, Wednesday Whitman, Friday Faulkner, burn 'em to ashes, then burn the ashes. That's our official slogan" (Bradbury5). Guy Montag is a devoted fireman obeying orders without question who happens to question his job to burn books and what is more, taking pleasure in what he does, and a instrument for destruction. Montag who has committed the crime of stealing books to read and keep hiding it in his house escapes into wilderness, where he meets a band of dissident intellectuals to memorize books hoping to help humanity to rebuild itself in the future.

Bradbury took this issue to an extreme to show the potential effects of a course on our culture. If we look into the novel more closely one can see the biblical allusion, and deeper information that our society is headed for intellectual stagnation. The biblical allusions trace carefully towards a solution and help us to bring out of this "dark Age" (Bradbury 23). The author stated that how mass culture changed the people of America. In this novel, chief book burner Fire captain Betty explains that mass exploitation, technology, and minority issue carried the trick of replacing independent thought and leading to censorship. Author clearly wants to tell these three issues in his fictional world and to become of them in our own society as well. Mass communication and other entertainment exploit the public's desire for their fulfilment. People grow unwilling to violate the norms of society by expressing any original thought.

## Impact of Radio and TV Invention

When Radio was invented, people used it to get their information and keep the books aside and when television started to replace radios, most of the people forgot books. In America television became the primary socialiser and it was a tool of choice for spreading information or

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messages through mass media. Our social media was created by the people themselves not the government. People refer to text each other rather than to talk in person, even if they are in next room. An example of a person controlled by the government is Montag's wife Mildred even though she only likes to watch television and wanted to receive information not by thinking but just being feed of media. Author warns us that if we continue to rely on mass media, we human beings end up living in exact mirror of Montag. Through conformity we also see how people use the same products, do the same things, how the same ideas. Author did an excellent job of making us to think and drawing connection between his fictional world and our society.

### **Guy Montag**

*Fahrenheit 451* revolves around the life of protagonist Guy Montag who is introduced to both as an expression and an extension of. He is living as fireman, but not a common fireman in this current scenario. In this novel fireman do the exact opposite of the fireman of today and start fire rather than put them out in an effort to censor books from the society. In Montag world, anybody who is found to have books would in turn have their books burned and houses to as well. In *Fahrenheit 451* books are fully throw out by the government. The novel opens with the line, "It was a pleasure to burn" (Bradbury 1) which clearly depicts the mindset of the writer in advocating the readers to avoid neglecting reading habit. The firemen are felt excited and pleased while burning books. Guy Montag is one among them, who feels thrill in starting fires in people homes,

"He wanted above all, like the old joke, to shove a marshmallow on a stick in the furnace, while the flapping pigeon-winged books died on the porch and lawn of the house. While the books went up in sparkling whirls and blew away on a wind turned dark with burning" (Bradbury 3).

### **Bradbury's Alternatives**

By these lines, Bradbury uses pigeon flapping its wings to the pages of the books. He uses this metaphor as pigeon is a common bird like books which are common.

Another beautiful metaphor in *Fahrenheit 451* is Phoenix which is a mythical bird of ancient Egypt that periodically burned itself to death and resurrected from its own ashes. Here Bradbury expresses his hope on mankind through the characterization of Granger that people might use their intellectual to keep from going through endless chain of disintegration and rebirth. Author associated phoenix with the minor character Betty who has knowledge of what civilization was like before the contemporary society. He tries to satisfy Montag's curiosity and hopefully to control further questioning as a chief. Betty wears the sign of the phoenix on his hat and rides in a phoenix car. He has a vast knowledge of the past yet ironically and tragically does not know how to use it. The writer states that all great ideas are controversial and debatable; books then are too indefinite. Betty is burned to death and his death by fire symbolically states that the rebirth is associated with his phoenix sign on his cap. When Montag killed Betty, he is forced to escape, and joins with Granger. This action is like a rebirth for Montag, a rebirth for a new intellectual life.

Bradbury used specific references from literature that carries through a basic irony in the novel. Clarisse McClellan, a girl in next door to Montag who meets her it became a turning point for him to have an emotional attachment that was sincere in a word hostile to honesty. She was consequently eliminated by the government. Death of Clarisse which made Montag to think and question more seriously, until he completely breaks from his diseased society. Author employs another direct quote from literature in second part of the book. Montag return from the meeting of Faber and had a talk with his wife Mildred and her two friends. The conversation of the women reflects shallowness in women's thinking that is the products of empty culture. Mildred friends are shocked that he has a poetry book and she managed that firemen are allowed to bring books home occasionally to show how silly books are. Montag reads from Matthew Arnold's "Dover Beach" which is particularly apt and show two lovers looking at what appears to be a happy world, but recognizing the essential emptiness that exists:

Ah, love, let us be true  
To one another! for the world, which  
Seems  
To lie before us like a land of dreams,  
So various, so beautiful, so new,  
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor  
Light,  
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for  
Pain;  
And we are here, as on a darkling plain  
Swept with confused alarms of struggle  
And flight,

Where ignorant armies clash by night.

### **Vast Emptiness**

Montag is finding that the exterior is a vast Emptiness, "a darkling plain." We can see how Bradbury has used allusion in literature to describe the current situation of world. In the beginning home of women discovered owning books where she refuses to leave and choosing to die with her soulful books. This incident made Montag shaken and that women last word alludes: "we shall this day light such a candle, by god's grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out." These words recall phoenix idea of rebirth by fire and ironic in the sense that the intellectual candle in Montag's world is burning rather dimly at the time, an acceptable statement of the indestructibility of questioners, and thinkers in any society.

### **Biblical Allusions**

There are four biblical allusions in this novel which shows support the idea and solution to helping us out of. The reference to the "Lilies of the Field" (Matthew 6:28) and to *The Book of Job* is used to portray faith in God. In saint Mathew tale Lilies elucidate that God will take care of all things and no need to worry and *The Book of Job* is another one of the strongest statement of faith in the face of adversity in the Western Culture. The allusion from the "Lilies of the Field" refers to Montag is on his way to see Professor Faber who agrees to help Montag learn books and plan for the future. Montag gets information from Faber through the small earplug he

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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A Study of Hidden Ideas in Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*

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wears to keep in contact. This information simply says, *The Book of Job* in the sense recalls Montag that he must have faith, for the uneven new risk.

Other two biblical references are in the end of the novel. Bradbury used it when Montag joined to Granger. This group of men memorize great works of our literature where Montag is allocated to read and memorize *The Book of Ecclesiastes*. Next quote comes from *The Book of Revelation* which is last book of New Testament also teach us that a victory of God is certain. We have to struggle first must have faith and endure before enjoy the fruits of victory. Bradbury hopes that the healing of nations can come best about through a rebirth of man's intellect. Here Montag, Granger, and other wander away from the city with hope that their new world be established soon. Bradbury uses lines from other writers like Shakespeare, John Donne, and Robert Burton which shows his affirmation of the timelessness of great ideas. These things are the various hidden ideas in *Fahrenheit 451* illustrated by Bradbury, who structured carefully this work to the world of literature which changed our life.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 **18:3 March 2018**

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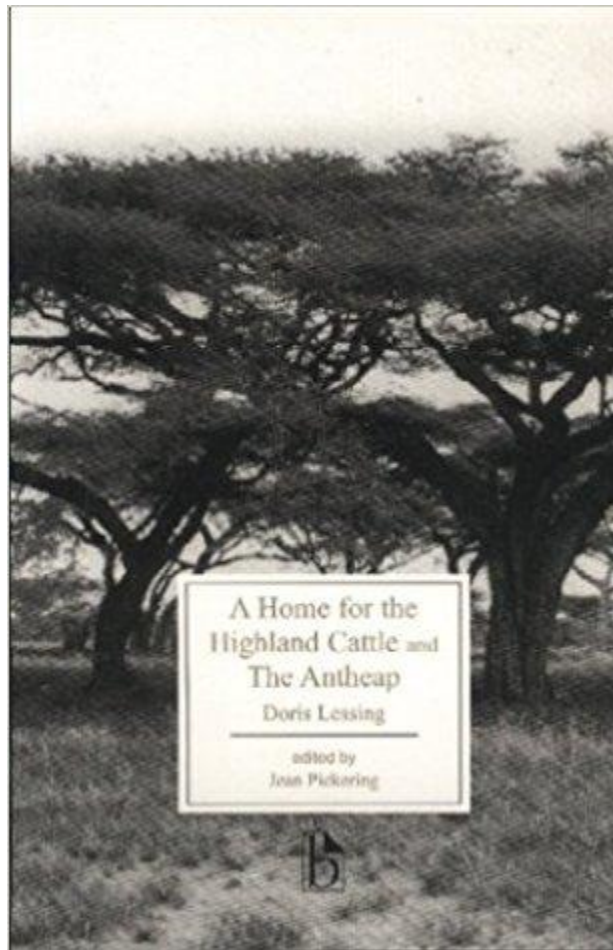
A Study of Hidden Ideas in Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*

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**Salience of the Color Clash in Doris Lessing's  
*A Home for Highland Cattle***

**Dr. R. Vijaya**

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Courtesy: <https://www.amazon.com/Home-Highland-Cattle-Anthep/dp/1551113635>

**Abstract**

The African continent having been a victim of colonization and apartheid has undergone several social, economic, cultural and political changes which have paved the way for the

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emergence of literary effusions contributing to the complexity of African fiction. Out of the contemporary writers presenting pan-African insight, Doris May Lessing enjoys international reputation for her sensitive records of her concrete firsthand knowledge of human drama. The article entitled “Salience of the Color Clash in Doris Lessing’s *A Home for Highland Cattle*” examines how history is fictionalized by a writer who was brought up in South Africa, whose part of work has been set in Southern Rhodesia. In her Novella *A Home for Highland Cattle*, her heroine Marina Giles acts as an empowerment agent for the oppressed black natives with a daring refusal to compromise with the pre-war white settlers who treat the poor natives as the “other,” and share a common notion about their immorality and inferiority. Though Marina seems to succeed, to some extent, all her efforts of good will to bring justice to the most marginalized natives Charlie and Theresa end up in failure the moment she vacates her rented house.

**Keywords:** Doris Lessing, *A Home for Highland Cattle*, salience, colonization, inhumanity, injustice, color-clash, inferiority, marginalized

### **Structures of Power**

Structures of power for ages together, have been described in terms of centre and peripheral. These structures, though neither the centre nor the margin is fixed, operate in a more complex and multifaceted way. Hence, the perception and description of experience as “subaltern” or “marginal” is a consequence of this binary-structure of various kinds of dominant powers like Imperialism, Patriarchy, and Ethnocentrism. The position of centrality is accorded based on several facts such as birth, color, culture and gender. The “subaltern” or “marginal,” therefore, indicates a position inferior to or peripheral to the centre, owing to the limitations, mentioned afore, of the subjects’ access to power or to the centre. The misconception that power is a function only of the centre, has led the marginalized to resistance and such resistance has become a process of replacing the centre by reorganizing the binary structure of centre and margin, which is a primary feature of post-colonial discourse.

The African Continent has been a victim of such power structure; it has been a victim of colonization and apartheid and hence, it has always been in a state of flux. It has undergone several social, economic, cultural and political changes. The turmoil of these changes has paved way for the emergence of literary effusions contributing to the complexity of African fiction. The nuances of both the African and non- African authors’ experiences provide multiple perspectives. Out of the contemporary writers presenting pan-African insight, Doris May Lessing, laureate of 2007 Nobel Prize in literature, enjoys international reputation for her sensitive records of the concrete firsthand knowledge of human drama--drama of the colonizer and the colonized--that took place on Joseph Conrad’s “Dark Continent.”

### **Doris Lessing**

Doris Lessing is a name to be surmised with in the history of the post war II English fiction. She is an eminent woman novelist who holds a unique position among the twentieth-century woman writers for the sheer number, variety and scope of her work. She has been labeled variously as an uncompromising Feminist, unabashed Marxist, unflinching Sufi etc. She has

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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exhibited a committed engagement to diverse concerns of our times for the six decades since 1950 and has produced extraordinary works that address the most pressing issues our times like social, racial gender and environmental concerns. No other novelist since D.H. Lawrence has explored the aspects of love, man-woman relationship and need for empathy for the underdog in such a passionate manner as Lessing. It can be said that she has given a new dimension to the art of fiction.

Born in Kermanshah, Iran to British parents, victims of the World War I, Lessing grew up in Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) where her father bought 4000 acres of land for maize farming and failed. Southern Rhodesia was Lessing's home for twenty-five years and hence, Lessing's first encounter with inequalities occurred during her stay in Southern Rhodesia from 1923 to 1949, which marked her impressionistic and sensitive period of adolescence, as a member of white settler community in colonial Africa. Naturally the African landscape forms an integral part of Lessing's fictional writings from her first novel, *The Grass is Singing* to the last novel *Alfred and Emily*. She writes in *Going Home*:

I worked out recently that I have lived in over sixty houses, flats and rented rooms during the past twenty years and not in one of them have I felt at home.... The fact is, I don't live anywhere; I never have since I left that first house on the Kopje. (37)

She could never forget the primitive nature of the house, the unceasing war against the destructive ants and insects, the magnificent night, the long grass and the talking crickets etc. But at the same time, her strong feeling and constant concern for the dispossessed and oppressed Africans has deeply influenced her creative writings. From her first *African Stories* onwards, she suggests that her mythic Africa, the remembered Rhodesia of her childhood, is at one a place of pain and suffering, yet a great source that has inspired her to put into prospective, the human condition.

### Most Marginalized Sections

Lessing witnessed the most marginalized section of the colonial situation in the form of the dispossessed natives of Africa, who were subject to the shameful and inhuman treatment by the white colonizers. The dispossessed natives were robbed off the legitimate right of their native soil and were pushed to the margins in every aspect. She experienced the illogicalities of discriminatory mechanism in colonial Africa. Lessing comments in the *Preface for 1964 Collection, Collected Short Stories Volume I*:

And while the cruelties of the white man towards the black man are among the heaviest counts in the indictment against humanity, colour prejudice is not our original fault, but only one aspect of imagination that prevents us from seeing us in every creature that breathes under the sun. (8)

### Lessing's Anti-Racial and Anti-Colonial Attitude

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Lessing's anti-racial and anti-colonial attitude to the people of South Africa becomes clear from these words. She did not discriminate between the white and the black like other settlers, and vehemently opposed the view that Africans were inferior to them on account of their skin color and savagery. Don Jacobson describes the view of white colonizers towards the black in his comment: "A white South African for example, feels no need to ask himself how the black man came to be his inferior; he simply knows that the black is inferior" ("The Story of an African Farm" 7). The white novelists generally projected this hostile view about the South Africans. But Doris Lessing is markedly different from these prejudiced writers.

### **Replaced History with Myth**

The colonizers replaced history with their myth. The most powerful myth created by the white settlers was that Africa was a backward and savage country which needed the civilizing influence of the European White culture. To them, Africa was a primitive continent and a place of adventure. The white settlers regarded the Africans as a branch of human race that could be civilized only by the white men. The native Africans were being mocked at with the European label of contempt, "kaffir." The native as kaffir was to be ridiculed, hounded and unconsciously feared for his/her infidelity.

### **Lessing Challenges the Colonial Myth**

But unlike the other White settlers, Doris Lessing challenges the colonial myth of the white superiority and their treatment of the natives as underdogs. In her preface to her *African Stories*, she points out the truth boldly:

...indignation about the color bar in Africa had not yet become part of the furniture of the progressive conscience. If people had been prepared to listen, two decades earlier, to the small, but shrill-enough voices crying out for the world's attention, perhaps the present suffering in South Africa and Southern Rhodesia could have been prevented. Britain who is responsible, became conscious of her responsibility too late; and now the tragedy must play itself slowly out. (5)

She has painfully pointed out that though it was a great advantage to be a part of a society in rapid dramatic change, in a long run, to wake up every morning to witness a fresh evidence of inhumanity, to be reminded twenty times a day of injustice was something heartrending (6). Hence, the tone of her stories is always sympathetic, with Lessing understanding the thoughts and feelings like a narrator who has suffered similar losses and crises of his/her own.

### ***A Home for Highland Cattle***

Lessing in her African fiction often shows her scorn for the halfhearted liberal, the aristocratic do-gooder who does not really commit himself/herself to the marginalized. In her novella *A Home for Highland Cattle*, which was published in 1953, Doris Lessing hints at the failure of such romantic and liberal reformist Marina Giles due to her lack of understanding about the colonial mechanism to bring justice to the victims of colonization in Southern Rhodesia.



This long story *A Home for Highland Cattle*, revolves around the empowerment efforts and the subsequent failure of Marina Giles, wife of a British civil servant, who comes to Southern Rhodesia with her husband, a soil scientist, soon after the World War II, in search of a house. She is described as romantic and liberal, “who wanted to live in the group of amiable people, pleasantly interested in the arts, who read the *New Statesman*, week by week, and held that discreditable phenomenon like the colour bar and the black white struggle could be solved by sufficient good will” (*A Home for Highland Cattle* 246). Lessing says with a touch of irony that such liberals were produced in plenty during the thirties in Britain. Mrs. Giles’ search for home brings her for a temporary stay in the old locality in the city to 138 Cecil Vista, name she associates with oppressive British Empire and its ethos. The old houses, in this housing scheme, are small and ill-lit like dungeons; the tenants who have been living in the old houses are pre-war white settlers in Africa, who belong to the lower middle class, working as engine drivers and assistant haberdashers. The African natives of this locality are working as menials and houseboys in these white settlers’ houses. These residents, though they are living in underprivileged condition, treat the African black natives with contempt. Mrs. Giles tries to bring justice to the marginalized natives by treating them with dignity and scorning the whites for their irrational protest against her reformist steps. Mrs. Giles’ efforts to support the oppressed natives by invoking the rules and regulations succeed to some extent in bringing justice to them, especially to her houseboy Charlie. She offers her landlady’s huge picture of prize “Highland Cattle” so that Charlie can legitimize his lover Theresa, by buying her as his wife. The white woman tries to understand the way the black society operates, and the boy genuinely appreciates her efforts, but still at the end of the story, Mrs. Giles, now no longer living in the rented flat, fails to recognize her former houseboy while the police march him handcuffed to jail. She is ironically portrayed as too busy in buying a table for her new house, although her gift has led to his imprisonment. Doris expresses her strong contempt for the white woman’s non-committal efforts to the cause of the socially oppressed.

### **Pre-war White Settlers**

One can see at the centre of this colonial set up the pre-war white settlers, who treat the black natives as the “other.” They do not hesitate to share their conventional notions about the natives’ immorality, dishonesty and inferiority. Mrs. Skinner, for example, the landlady of Mrs. Giles, warns her of Charlie’s dishonesty:

You must keep an eye on Charlie, anyway; He never does a stroke more than he has to. He is bred bone lazy. You’d better keep an eye on the food too. He steals. I had to have the police to him last month, when I lost my Garnet brooch, of course he had sworn he hadn’t taken it, but I haven’t laid my hands on it since. My husband gave him a good hiding but Master Charlie came up smiling as usual. (257)

### **Natives are Victims**

The natives are victims of white settlers’ prejudices and physical violence. The native houseboys suffer economic marginalization. Their salary is not more than seventeen to nineteen

shillings, which is a very meager amount to make their both ends meet. When Marina finds the servant's quarter shabby and full of squalor, she is shocked helplessly:

“Dear me, how awful!” The room was very small. The brick walls unplastered the tin of the roof bare, focusing the sun's intensity inwards all day. The floor was cement, and the blankets that served as beds lay directly on it.... In the space between the lavatories and the servant's rooms stood eight rubbish cans, each covered by its cloud of flies, and exuding a stale sour smell. (248)

When Marina raises Charlie's salary to twenty-five shillings, the white neighbors burst into a rage of exasperation. They form a union and protest against her benevolent gesture to the oppressed community. When Marina offers Charlie an improved ration of vegetables and meat, Mrs. Pond approaches Marina as the representative of the white settlers and warns her that the natives are not used to eating vegetables and that their stomachs cannot digest such nutritious food; she also adds that Marina is trying to instill new ideas in the minds of the natives which will provoke rebellion. But Marina justifies her action by pointing out the new regulations passed by the government.

### **Theresa, the Most Marginalized Girl**

The most marginalized character is the black native girl Theresa, who works for Mrs. Black a white settler of the locality. Mrs. Black exploits her inhumanly for twelve hours from morning till night without paying attention to her living conditions. When Theresa, being unable to walk ten miles a day to the native reserve, shares Charlie's room along with other houseboys, Mrs. Black condemns her for her low standard of morality. But Marina expresses her deep concern and tries to alleviate her trouble. When Marina learns that Charlie is in love with Theresa and wants to marry her, she arranges for his bride money that amounts to six oxen by offering the painting of the "Highland Cattle" which was owned by her landlady as a reminder of the Victorian relic. Marina keeps an amount of seven pounds for Mrs. Skinner's painting as its price. Marina succeeds in saving the young native girl's life and brings dignity to the young native couple.

### **Charlie and Theresa**

However, both Charlie and Theresa are accused of stealing Mrs. Skinner's painting and a few of her household articles after Marina has vacated her house. Doris Lessing ends her story with an ironic twist that while the accused couple are marched to jail, Marina is busy buying a table for her new house and she has failed to recognize the couple.

Maria has failed to notice the fact that once she has vacated the colony, the white settlers' colonizer mindset will bounce back to underscore the colonized. Mrs. Skinner thus, proves her vindictive gesture by complaining against the innocent young native couple and thereby ascertains her superiority.

### **To Conclude**

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To sum the discourse, it can well be said that Doris Lessing's *African Stories* depicts her insistence on the need for universal love and empathy for the marginalized to uplift their position to the centre.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 **18:3 March 2018**  
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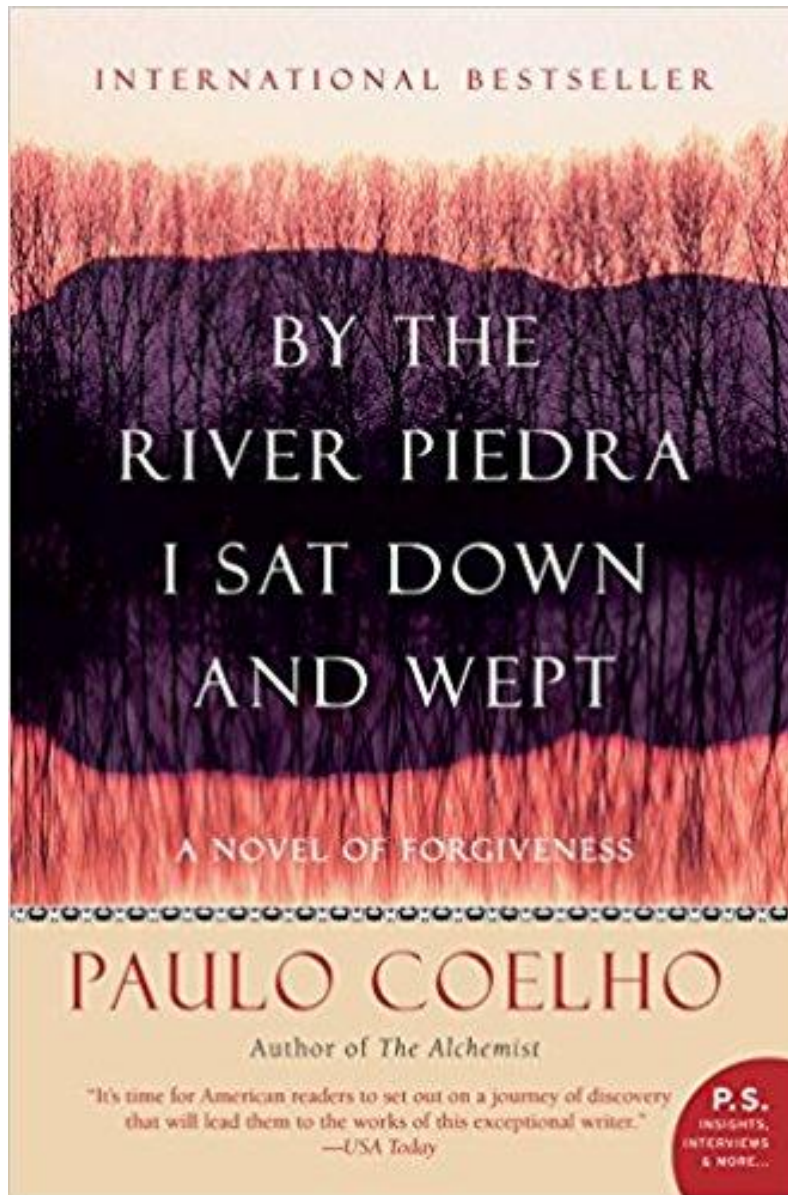
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**Concept of the ‘Other’ in Woman in Paulo Coelho’s  
*By The River Piedra, I Sat Down and Wept*  
S. Yasmeenbanu**

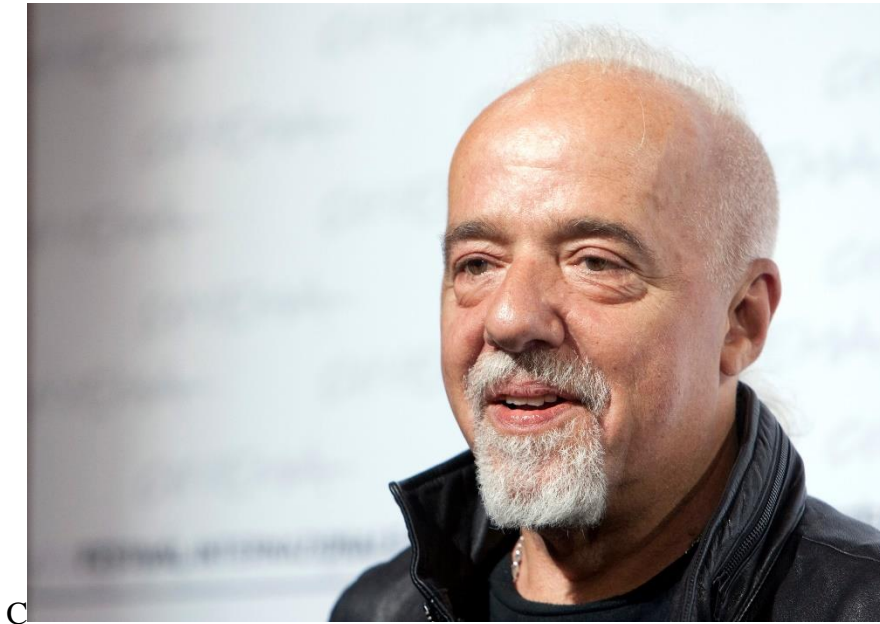
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Courtesy: <https://www.amazon.com/River-Piedra-Sat-Down-Wept/dp/0061122092>

## Abstract



Courtesy: <http://www.newszii.com/paulo-coelho-quotes/>

*By The River Piedra, I Sat Down and Wept* is a novel by Paulo Coelho, which tells a love story of ideal lovers. Pilar is a heroine in the novel who struggles to come out of herself. The feeling of ‘Other’ with her own self is a major conflict present in the novel. This paper finds out the ideal relationship between man and woman in the novel with the help of eliminating the ‘Other’ from oneself; Men and women are not different they are the part in each other is the finding. The author breaks the narrow male chauvinistic social view and presents beautiful characters through this novel. The Lacanian ideas of psychoanalytical theory backs up the paper.

**Keywords:** Paulo Coelho, *By The River Piedra, I Sat Down and Wept*, Psychoanalytical, Other, feminist,

## Introduction

*By The River Piedra, I Sat Down and Wept* is a novel by Paulo Coelho tells a love story of ideal lovers. The novel begins as Pilar the protagonist of the novel writes her story at bank of the river Piedra, she recounts her youth love and the happenings in one week. The novel opens with Pilar’s excitement in meeting her childhood lover after a long time. *The novel opens with a lament of Pilar longing for her beloved childhood lover.* However, their love resumed through letters and she decided to go and attend the conference in which her lover gives a lecture. The novel ends with the reunion of the lovers after facing a lot of inner conflicts and hardships. The whole novel is a revelation of the closed self of both the protagonist and her lover. Pilar is a heroine of the novel who struggles to come out of her own self and accept the love of her lover.

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## Focus of This Paper

The feeling of 'Other' in herself is a major conflict present in the novel. This paper traces out how Pilar comes out the 'Other' in herself and make an ideal relationship between her lover and herself in the novel. The author breaks the narrow male chauvinistic social view and presents beautiful male and female characters through his novel. The novel establishes the view that Men and women are not different they are the part of each other, further the author establishes a view that is, his believe in feminine side of God which a new concept to the world of literature.

## Paulo Coelho

Paulo Coelho, a Brazilian contemporary writer, author of 33 books, his books were translated into many languages, he bases his books mostly on spiritual experiences and universal human experiences beyond the religious practices. His characters are realistic in general and his female characters also are unique, self-making and they are 'high females'. His novels have inspired the world readers and his novels are the best sellers of the present time. He has received many awards and inspired numberless minds.

Paulo has broken the stereotypes of male as well as female characters through his characterisation. He has created wide range of characters, his characters are thinking, inspiring, ideal and real like. In the novel *By the River Piedra, I Sat Down and Wep* tone can see the ideal woman and man presented beautifully. Oxford online dictionary defines 'woman', 'A woman who is considered different from previous generations; especially one who challenges or rejects the traditional roles of wife, mother, or homemaker, and advocates independence for women and equality with men'.

## Pilar

Pilar is such an ideal self-fighting woman who advocates and enjoys equality with her lover. The unnamed hero of the novel also is an ideal man who treats and believes that women are equal to men in all possible sense.

Though Pilar loves him, she does not want him to be in a domestic circle, she thinks that he should continue with his preaching service. Her intentions are good, she wants him to serve for the humanity but she could not stop her mind being very critical about men and their relationship. She utters the phrase 'I could have' many times in page number ten, to indicate theregretting inner voice of Pilar. The author presents inner conflict of the characters in the novel while the lovers try to break the mental boundary within and accept the life's giving as it is. Pilar after a long break from her lover meets him and understands his respectful position as a religious preacher.

## The Concept of 'Other'

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He explains to Pilar the concept of ‘Other’ and how he succeeded to over-come the other. The readers can understand that there is an ‘Other’ in the psyche of Pilar which keeps her feel distanced from her lover in the earlier chapters of the novel and later when she realises the presence of Other in her psyche, she decides to get away from it then she accept the love relationship of her lover. The Other in the novel is capitalised, it gives an understanding that the other is a proper noun, treated as a protagonist. The concept of the self requires the existence of the Other to understand the self-better.

### **Concept of Other in Psychology**

In an article written by Sheme Mary P U, who did a psycho analysis of the two female character writes:

Psychoanalytic criticism adopts the methods devised by Freud and later theorists to interpret texts by reading and analyzing. It argues that the mysteries in the literary texts, like dreams, express the secret unconscious desires and anxieties of the author or sometimes of the characters. (Sheme 19)

Sigmund Freud came out with two concepts of self: they are ‘conscious’ and ‘unconscious’. It means there are two selves in any human being and each consider the other as ‘Other.’ Jacques Lacan turned out with an idea of Other with capital ‘O’ and other with littler ‘o’ where the lower-case-o different assigns the Imaginary sense of self and its going with change inner selves. Emmanuel Levinas established the contemporary definitions, usage and applications of the ‘Other’ as the radical counter part of the self.

Lacan regularly utilizes the terms “other” (with a lower-case o) and “Other” (with a capital O). Given an understanding of Lacan's register theory and the mirror stage (see [2.1](#) and [2.2](#) above), these terms can be clarified with relative ease and brevity. The lower-case-o other designates the Imaginary ego and its accompanying alter-egos. By speaking of the ego itself as an “other,” Lacan further underscores its alien and alienating status as spelled out in the immediately preceding sub-section here (see [2.2](#) above). Additionally, when relating to others as alter-egos, one does so on the basis of what one “imagines” about them (often imagining them to be “like me,” to share a set of lowest-common-denominator thoughts, feelings, and inclinations making them comprehensible to me) (Adrian).

### **Unrealised Self of Any Human Being**

The whole novel is an attempt to understand the unrealised self of any human being. Pilar is only a metaphor of all the confused, self-concealed women. “I can read your eyes. I can read your heart. You are going to fall in love and suffer” (Paulo 17). The given quote is said by Brida to Pilar which is an evidence that Pilar could not understand her own self and behaves differently from what she feels. She was actually longing to be with her lover but not ready to do so hence the given narration reveals her deep sense of love for her lover. In one of his preaches he speaks

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about the Other in detail and discusses the importance of eliminating the other from one's mind. The lover, a matured preacher says in the novel "From the moment I ousted the other from my life, the Divine Energy began to perform its miracles" (Paulo 57). Thus, he could identify and subdue the Other in his mind, later she decided to practice the 'exercise of other'.

## Result and Discussion

The author presents a dialogic narrative between the Other and Pilar, in the course of the novel as Pilar realises and decide to outlaw the other from her and says: "I felt that my soul was bathed in the light of god or of a goddess-in whom I had lost faith. And I felt that at that moment, the other left my body and was standing in the corner of that small room." (Paulo 78). When Pilar once do away with the 'Other' she feels relaxed, she could hear her own heart, she feels immensely happy and she realises her love for him. "I got up, banished the other from my thoughts, opened the window again, and let the sun in" (Paulo 81).

There was only one recourse: the other, with whom I had been harsh because I was weak, and cold because I was afraid – but no longer wanted the other. The other appears, in all the problems and complicated situation.

Whenever she has the difference of opinion about men the Other appears and talks critically about her lover. "Men always have their reasons said the other" (Paulo 125). It is clearly understood from the novel, the happenings in the novel reveals that she has no controversies with her lover, rather all the difference of opinions arise from her own psyche. The duel self in a woman is clearly present through this novel. When she stopped to listen to the other, she could hear the music of love in her heart and tear drop rolls down from her eye.

## Conclusion

The given evidences from the text clearly express that the impediments in life are not always from out-side, at times they are from within. One has to come out of his or her own self to explore and enjoy the gifts of life. Pilar and her lover are the metaphors of all the suffering human being who tries to come out of their ego.

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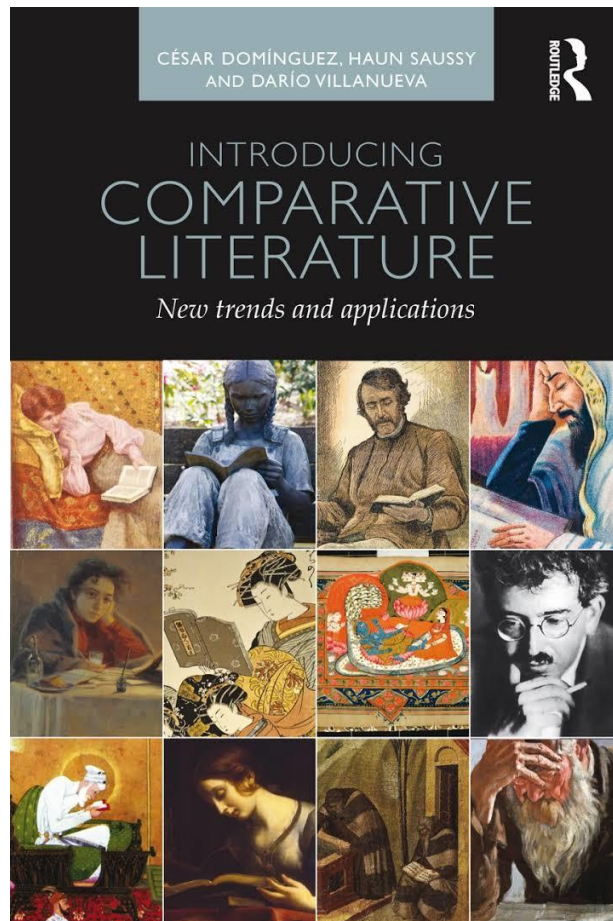
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## Essential Comparative Literature

A. Logeshwaran and Mrs. Sridevi

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Courtesy:

[https://books.google.co.in/books/about/Introducing Comparative Literature.html?id=KHffBQAAQBAJ&source=kp\\_cover&redir\\_esc=y](https://books.google.co.in/books/about/Introducing_Comparative_Literature.html?id=KHffBQAAQBAJ&source=kp_cover&redir_esc=y)

### Abstract

Comparative literature is the study of the interrelationship of the literatures of two or more national cultures, usually of differing languages and especially of the influences of one upon the other. Sometimes informal study of literary works in translation is also considered study of comparative literature. Majors in comparative literature focus on two different literary traditions through the study of literary works in their original language. Comparative Literature students can also double major with disciplines beyond the Faculty of Languages and Linguistics, such as business, government, philosophy and many others. The comparative method is often used in the early stages of the development of a branch of science. It can help



the researcher to ascend from the initial level of exploratory case studies to a more advanced level of general theoretical models, invariances, such as causality or evolution.

## Introduction

Comparative literature is an academic field dealing with the study of literature and cultural expression across linguistic, national, and disciplinary boundaries. Comparative literature "performs a role similar to that of the study of international relations, but works with languages and artistic traditions, so as to understand cultures 'from the inside'".<sup>[1]</sup> While most frequently practiced with works of different languages, comparative literature may also be performed on works of the same language if the works originate from different nations or cultures among which that language is spoken.

## Intercultural Comparative Literature

The characteristically intercultural and transnational field of comparative literature concerns itself with the relation between literature, broadly defined, and other spheres of human activity, including history, politics, philosophy, art, and science. Unlike other forms of literary study, comparative literature places its emphasis on the interdisciplinary analysis of social and cultural production within the "economy, political dynamics, cultural movements, historical shifts, religious differences, the urban environment, international relations, public policy, and the sciences. The terms *comparative literature* and *world literature* are often used to designate a similar course of study and scholarship. Comparative Literature is the more widely used term in the United States, with many universities having Comparative Literature departments or Comparative Literature programs.

## An Interdisciplinary Field

Comparative literature is an interdisciplinary field whose practitioners study literature across national borders, across time periods, across languages, across genres, across boundaries between literature and the other arts (music, painting, dance, film, etc.), across disciplines (literature and psychology, philosophy, science, history, architecture, sociology, politics, etc.). Defined most broadly, comparative literature is the study of "literature without borders". Scholarship in comparative literature include, for example, studying literacy and social status in the Americas, studying medieval epic and romance, studying the links of literature to folklore and mythology, studying colonial and postcolonial writings in different parts of the world, asking fundamental questions about definitions of literature itself.<sup>[4]</sup> What scholars in comparative literature share is a desire to study literature beyond national boundaries and an interest in languages so that they can read foreign texts in their original form. Many comparatists also share the desire to integrate literary experience with other cultural phenomena such as historical change, philosophical concepts, and social movements.

## Scholarly Associations

The discipline of comparative literature has scholarly associations such as the ICLA: International Comparative Literature Association and comparative literature associations exists in many countries: for a list of such see BCLA: British Comparative Literature Association; for the US, see ACLA: American Comparative Literature Association. There are many learned journals that publish scholarship in comparative literature: see "Selected Comparative Literature and Comparative Humanities Journals"<sup>[5]</sup> and for a list of books in comparative literature see "Bibliography of (Text) Books in Comparative Literature".  
the Term Comparative Literature?

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## Multidimensional Features

Basically, “*Comparative Literature*” is critical to explain because it incorporates two or even more literature at a same time. Even it is difficult for comparatist to compare multi-dimensional features of comparative literature like religion, historical factors, social and cultural norms of diverse societies. In simple words, in order to understand comparative literature, one needs to understand Nomenclature. Comparative literature actually refers to some literary work or the work that we compared with some other literary work. It is the study of inter-relationship between two different works of literature.

## Comparative Literature – Comparison Between Different Literatures

While comparing two different literatures, your focus should be on Themes, Social or Religious Movements, Myths, Artistic Tactics and forms. For a comparatist, it is easy to critical analyze the two different texts of literature having similarities or dissimilarities. However, his/her approach should be unprejudiced while comparing the two different literatures to find out the truth. It is just his sincere and genuine methodology which will yield the exposed truth or regular results and this truly is the motivation behind similar study. Taken comprehensively, Comparative Literature is a thorough term. Its extension incorporates the totality of human encounters into its grip, and along these lines all inside human connections among the different parts of the world are acknowledged, through the basic way to deal with literary works under near study.

## Famous Works of Comparative Literature

It serves vanishing narrow national and worldwide limits and set up of that all-inclusiveness of human connections develops out. In this manner the term similar writing incorporates relative investigation of territorial writings, national written works, and global writings. On the other hand, there are some over-lapping terms in this worry, for example,

## Universal Literature, International Literature, General Literature and World writing.

Over and again, we can specify here that Comparative Literature incorporates encounters of human life and conduct all in all. As explained over, the comparative study is not the same as a basic methodology of a specific writing aside from the way that here we manage two or more than two literary works one next to the other. Thusly, the topic gets to be vaster and viewpoint more extensive. Limits of similar writing must be reached out to envelop the total of human life and encounters in one’s grip.

## Examples for Comparative Literature

George Orwell’s *Animal Farm* and *1984* comparison;

**Animal Farm** vs. **1984** Similarities Government Characters Themes/Plots Themes  
Boxer and The Parsons Napoleon and Big Brother Squealer and Winston Classes in Society  
Both books contain a world full of three classes: high, middle, and low. **Animal Farm** was based on Stalin and the Russian Revolution.

## Comparison between Languages

American English	British English
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Color	colour
Behaviour	behaviour
Theatre	theatre
Behaviour	behaviour

The differences below are only a general rule. American speech has influenced Britain via pop culture, and vice versa. Therefore, some prepositional differences are not as pronounced as they once were.

American English	British English
I'm going to a party on the weekend.	I'm going to a party at the weekend.
What are you doing on Christmas?	What are you doing at Christmas?
Monday through Friday.	Monday to Friday.
It's different from/than the others.	It's different from/to the others.

### Translation and World Literature

With such a broad scope, it's no surprise that comparative literature is closely tied to world literature, or the way in which literary works circulate around the globe and across time. World literature asks things like: Why do people continue to read Dante centuries after his death? What happens when Shakespeare is read in China? Is *Harry Potter* in Swahili the same as *Harry Potter* in English? Works dealing with comparative and world literature have titles like:

*What is World Literature?* (David Damrosch, 2003)

*Chinese Shakespeares: Two Centuries of Cultural Exchange* (Alexander Huang, 2008)

Since moving literature around the world means moving it across languages, comparative literature is also frequently concerned with issues of translation. The field considers what is both lost and gained as texts are recreated in different languages. In other words, comparative literature is interested in things like the fact that to read Shakespeare in Chinese is to find some kind of connection to the Great Bard's major themes, but at the same time, to read quite a different text than those in England do.

### Indian Comparative Literature

In Indian comparative methodology, the Sanskrit faultfinders developed out during the 6th century A.D. It is clear from the analyses on Kalidasa's *Meghduta* and *Abhijnanasakutala*. After that the pundits like Kuntaka and Abhinavagupta with their subjective methodology prepared for present day comparatators. R.S. Pathak, giving the chronicled advancement of the new train, near writing, says: Mathew Arnold made important endeavors in the English world and underscored emphatically the criticalness of the relative ways to deal with abstract works. He wrote in a letter in 1848, "Each commentator ought to

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attempt and have one incredible writing in any event other than his own and more the not at all like his own, the better.”

Thus, he spearheaded the similar feedback in England and offered motivation to different commentators to take a shot at this new train. It is hereby recommended that the comparatist ought to embrace the showstoppers of inventive essayists, whose works have cosmopolitan status in abstract fields. That is the reason Ezra Pound and T. S. Eliot required a feedback of verse on parameters of general world-verse, or the works of greatest fabulousness. This sort of methodology will coordinate near investigation of writing towards universal level.

## Conclusion

Comparative Literature’s approach to translation, from the time when the use of translations was considered a necessary evil (which was caused by an unblemished conviction that their status was necessarily lower than that of the original texts), going through the progressive expiry of such caution (as a result of the expansion of the materials of study and a multicultural decentralisation of the canon), to the final conviction that translation not only allows access to literary works that would otherwise be opaque to us, but that their analysis can provide very important information about intercultural contacts and the dynamics of development of different receiving literary traditions, since, at the end of the day, translations are organically related to the target literature and are in tune with it, when they do not determine it. This process has had much to do with the consolidation of Translation Studies as a full independent discipline.

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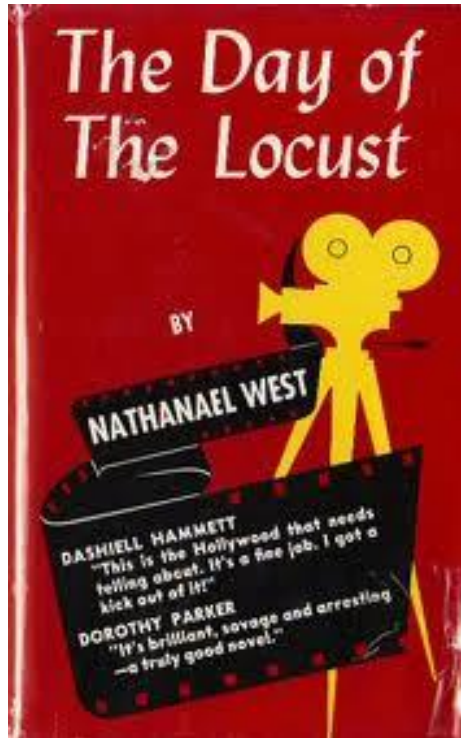
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## Culture's Degradation in Nathanael West's *The Day of the Locust*

P. Ranjithkumar, Ph.D. Research Scholar and Dr. R. Palanivel

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Courtesy: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Day\\_of\\_the\\_Locust](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Day_of_the_Locust)

### Abstract

This paper will look at the philosophies depicted and caricatured in every novel, appearing on one hand West's want to make development over again and on alternate his inexorably particular worries with communist legislative issues, exhibiting the end hole between his creative drive to shape and style, and his wistfulness and sympathy with the mistreated and the swindled. In *The Day of the Locust* West judgment, not such a large amount of private enterprise, but rather of breaks itself. The grotesquerie, misery, and distress that West observed basic masterful and social conventions merited a level of examination that all workmanship before him had endeavored to stay away from or muddle with binding together hypotheses or subjects of escape. West demonstrated the destructive force and constructive potential in both his writing and his personal life. The novel *The Day of the Locust*—variously attack artistic or political formulae that privilege escape from culture's degradation, or that offer erroneous promises of subjective or cultural wholeness. West's life and art, then, exhibits the usefulness of the mask in the grim battle for the formation of artistic and political subjectivity. The novel of Nathanael West is preoccupied with the



deconstruction of satirizing western culture and parodying its most respected ideologies and literatures; they are also involved in recreating both cultural and personal identity from the deconstructed fragments of this culture by performances of identity.

## Introduction

Nathanael West might have been conceived Nathan Weinstein clinched alongside New York City on October 17, 1903. (He legitimately transformed as much name for 1926.) West was the child for Jewish foreigners Max Weinstein, a prosperous building contractor, Anna Wallenstein Weinstein. Mr. Weinstein needed his son to try under those family business also offered Nathan duplicates about the Horatio Alger books, an arrangement about books done which. straightforward junior men do well to themselves in business. He laid as much path under Tufts University, which expelled him for poor grades; et cetera got himself admitted on tan college by using somebody else's transcripts. West moved on starting with tan to 1924, where he might have been better referred to as much sense for cleverness enthusiasm imparities over any academic abilities.

Then afterward completing college West went through two a considerable length of time over Paris. He was called back of the United States on 1927, as those family's contracting business might have been encountering those initial investment shudders that would become that's only the tip of the iceberg broad over 1929. West's family members discovered him an arrangement of jobs overseeing private hotels in this way that he might gain a living. Through these jobs, West might have been ready to provide a number impoverished writers with without rent discount spots should sit tight previously, New York City and on meet many journalists who might before long get famous, including Dashiell Hammett, Erskine Caldwell Lillian Hellman and encountered with urban decay because of deindustrialization, engineering imagined, government lodging. J. Perelman, West's brother by marriage. West found those frantic exists from claiming exactly for his tenants fascinating, he might have been referred to steam open Furthermore perused their letters. He disregarded the realist fiction for as much American contemporaries in favor for French surrealist's furthermore British also Irish poets of the 1890s, in particular Oscar Wilde. West's diversions centered on surprising artistic style and in addition surprising substance. He turned into intrigued by Christianity and mysticism, concerning illustration encountered alternately communicated through writing Also craft. Throughout this period, he done as much to begin with book, *The Dream of Balso Snell*, and distributed it will very nearly no basic alternately businesses perceive in 1931.

## The Depression

The Depression started early in West's family, with his father's business. Beginning to lag in 1928 and financial troubles that brought West home from Paris early. Martin argues that "the personal disaster of West's hopes preceded the national crash— giving him a feeling of individual bitterness—and also that the national experience of disaster followed soon after his own, imparting, to some extent, a sense of the community of disaster" (106). This financial disaster did not sit well with West, whose parents had inundated him and his sisters with the language and literature of success throughout their lives. It was this rhetoric that West's third novel, *A Cool Million*, would attack, exposing the grinding greed underlying the capitalist clichés of the American Dream. Because of this satire, the novel is important not only in what it exposes but also because it marks the turn in West's work to a much more specifically *American* literature.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

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P. Ranjithkumar, Ph.D. Research Scholar and Dr. R. Palanivel

Culture's Degradation in Nathanael West's *The Day of the Locust*

## Focus of This Paper

This paper will inspect the philosophies depicted and ridiculed in every novel, appearing on one hand West's want to make human advancement once more and on alternate his undeniably particular worries with communist governmental issues, exhibiting the end hole between his masterful motivation to frame and style, and his wistfulness and compassion with the mistreated and the deceived.

*The Day of the Locust's* judgment, not such a large amount of free enterprise, but rather of getaways itself. The grotesquerie, sadness, and franticness that West observed hidden masterful and social customs merited a level of examination that all workmanship before him had endeavored to maintain a strategic distance from or jumble with binding together hypotheses or subjects of escape.

## Destruction of Society

The matter of destroying society debasement down to its verifiable roots in established relic appears like no simple undertaking, yet in only one short novel. West oversaw it. After allegorically crushing history and culture, West discovered he allowed utilizing the veil of craftsmanship to build an exact representation of society that delineated its profound ideological clashes and insolvencies, its absence of beliefs and establishments, and its populaces of marginals, abused, and grotesques.

West, frightened by a custom that energized escape from reality, mercilessly assaulted the foundation from inside. The modern age lies wrecked; that human progress is nothing now except for the pieces we have shored against our aggregate destroys. Not regardless of this but rather as a result of it, West and his innovator brethren remain as a Janus-figure, an entryway through which we can glance back at our modern pulverization and forward to our postmodern future.

## The Day of the Locust: Giving the Racket a Front

West's work centered dynamically on more particularly American concerns, and in his last novel he blends his communist sensitivities for the hard-nibbled authenticity. This work assaults American idealism at its root: the fantasy dump of Hollywood. Hollywood here stands as a portrayal of all that is false: it is the externalized universe of the Trojan stallion, the lie advised by American culture to itself. Although, *Locust's* primary focus is satirizing the puerility of American movies and dreams, West aims to make ridiculous a number of other American cultural fixtures. He satirizes psychology once again by introducing his protagonist, Tod Hackett, as “really a very complicated young man, with a whole set of personalities, one inside the other like a nest of Chinese boxes” (242). It is unclear whether the last box in the series contains some sort of prize; perhaps the last box would be empty, implying that Tod's personality, maybe anyone's personality, consists of really nothing.

## American Psyche

Homer Simpson's eventual catatonia is also a damning statement against the American psyche: he has curled into a tense, tight ball and responds to nothing. Tod is unable to explain this behavior any other way than with his pop-psychology knowledge of “Uterine Flight” (372). Tod reminisces on how wonderful this retreat from reality seems to him: “What a perfect escape the return of the womb was...It was so snug and warm there.. No wonders one fought so desperately against being evicted when the nine months' lease was

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up” (372). Homer, of course, has escaped from nothing: the chaos inside him wells up to uncontrollable proportions, and in his final attempt to literally escape from this city of illusions by waiting for a bus out of town, he is assaulted by a small boy whom he hysterically kills, inciting a city-wide riot. The illusion of civilization is so thin and built on such fragile foundations that it takes only one public taboo act to bring the entire construct down in flames. There is no escape in West’s Hollywood: this final conflagration makes clear only the danger of hiding behind the fragments shored against America’s ruins.

### **Examples of Vicious Polemic**

West’s portrait of Hollywood and Los Angeles contains other notable examples of vicious polemic against the things that the citizens of his dream-city were using to achieve a similar kind of romanticized escape; chief among them is West’s tireless reference to popular spiritual fads. Tod observes many of these churches: The “Church of Christ, Physical” where holiness was attained through the constant use of chest weights and spring grips; the “Church Invisible” where fortunes were told and the dead made to find lost objects; the “Tabernacle for the Third Coming” where a woman in male clothing preached the “Crusade Against Salt”; and the “Temple Moderne” under whose glass and chromium roof “Brain-Breathing, the Secret of the Aztecs” was taught (337).

According to the churches are all, of course, absurd, reducing the mission of a serious place of worship and spiritual guidance to glorified health clubs or palmistry studios. The idea that Christ cares about the upper-body strength of his followers is as strikingly absurd as conjuring up the dead just to make them look for a pair of misplaced reading glasses or lost set of keys; running a holy crusade against salt is manifestly foolish. The conflation of the high (a religious institution with a serious spiritual mission) with the low (fictitious Aztec brain-yoga) is a classically dangerous tool for reducing a serious thing to absurdity. This descent into absurdity fills West’s Hollywood: the movie industry makes people ridiculous because the escapes it sells are so insidious. Locust is filled with people who have begun to believe the fantasies they peddle.

Claude Estee, for example, lives in an “exact reproduction of the old Dupuy mansion near Biloxi, Mississippi” (252). Claude has a great deal of fun posing on the porch as a Southern gentleman, where he “teetered back and forth on his heels like a Civil War colonel and made believe he had a large belly” (252). This is all an act: Claude, of course, “had no belly at all. He was a dried up little man with the rubbed features and stooped shoulders of a postal clerk” (252). A familiar routine for him is one in which he called to the butler, “‘Here, you black rascal! A mint julep.’ A Chinese servant came running with a Scotch and soda” (252). Claude is entertaining himself with the performance of some antebellum romance taken from the set of *Gone with the Wind*, but his performance is painfully obvious: he is nothing but a little man with very conventional tastes and an overactive imagination. This escape is the reason that “the starters” have “come to California to die” (242). American life has become so boring, so fixated on illusion, that when the time comes for retirement all these people head to Hollywood in search of the adventure and romance they were promised in films, but once there find the entire affair is phony. Looking for an escape from the useless junk that constitutes their society (as identified by Chief Satinpenny), the starters find out that their culture is a sham, a collection of lies based on illusions.

## Conscious about Their Own Crookedness

Even the people who work to create the escapist world of film know that they are a crooked industry. At one of Claude's parties, some people in the industry propose jokingly that they should "have a Cinema Foundation and make contributions to Science and Art. You know give the racket a front" (255). There is a preoccupation among Claude's guests for making their jobs respectable, if only on the surface. By donating to the vague high culture issues of "Science and Art"—with capital "S" and "A" no less—they add significance to an industry devoted to eliding significance.

Widmer argues that even "given the style of a Juvenal describing Rome, one could not find a fall from Republican virtue to Imperial corruption" in the history of the film industry, because it was "masquerade from the founding" (188). Because of Hollywood's pervasive influence on American culture generally, the Hollywood masquerade portrayed by West could be read as "the insatiable longing for some final masquerade-ending negation. Yet the end to a life of masquerade is only masquerade become all reality" (Widmer 193). By undercutting the false dream of Hollywood's hollow mask, West ends the masquerade for us, revealing the insidious spread of the mask throughout Western culture, from the popular in Hollywood to the classical of Ancient Greece.

This mixture of high and low, of escape and real destroys all conventional boundaries of time, space and history. By situating his narrative in a place where escape and reality are hopelessly intermingled, West can decontextualize and destroy history, and can then, by reordering the monuments of history, remake it. The American identity is indefinable; it is a fine dust of shattered history, art and time, hopelessly mixed and blanched of all meaning. In the parody of the philosophical underpinnings of his country in the early Twentieth century, West had identified the mask that hid the reality of America.

## Conclusion

More important than looking back, however, are the ways of looking forward that West's work and the trope of the mask potentially provide for us. Now, in a time when American political ideologies are taking on more global meaning than ever before, we must be aware of the pretensions and illusions, the commonplace assumptions from which we are working. Only a careful evaluation of such ideologies will afford a way of putting any literature, modernist or otherwise, to use. So with West's dizzying legacy of demolition and reconstruction behind us, the importance of his work is clear: the painstaking portrayal and parody of the social and intellectual institutions of Western civilization and specifically American culture can mark a starting place for a process of questioning. If we can, as West's work has positioned us to do, begin to critically examine the significance of what we consider sacred or decorous, we become equipped to uncover the falseness and danger of many of these concepts.

West has left us no blueprint for avoiding absurdity or meaninglessness, existentially, politically, or otherwise; any such plan for human redemption or cultural renewal would certainly be suspect, and in any case, West was not interested in writing a "Utopia" for the 20th century. But his work provides a useful example for continuing the search to uncover the limiting and damaging cultural taboos that are instrumental in manufacturing conflict and lack of awareness. Indeed, West was not at all interested "dragging the hose to the spot," but his works doubtless indicate where the smoke is coming from: the burning shell of the

construct of a homogenous or unified conception of self or culture. The modern age lies destroyed; that civilization is nothing now but the fragments we have shored against our collective ruin. Not in spite of this but because of it, West and his modernist brethren stand as a Janus-figure, a doorway through which we can look back at our modern destruction and forward to our postmodern future.

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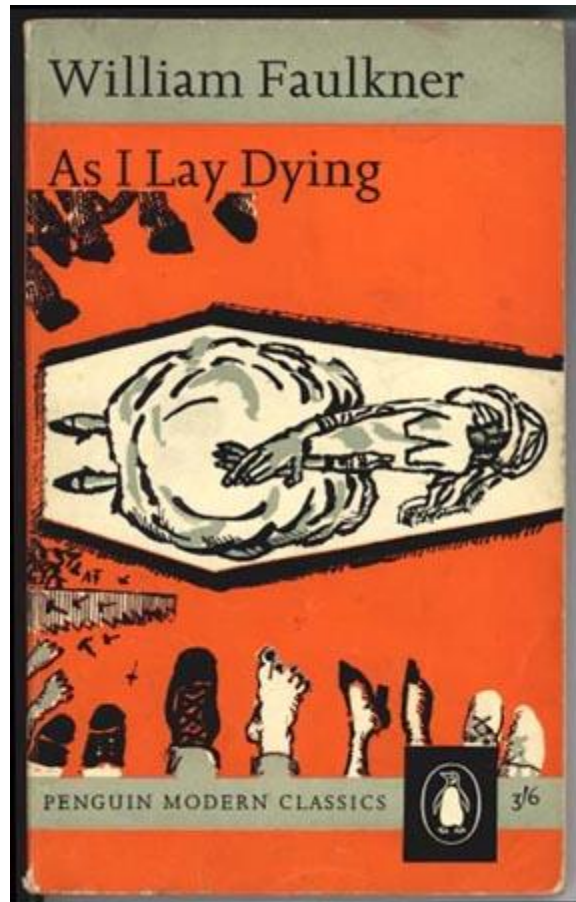
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**Cubistic Pixel's in William Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying***

**A. Rajkumar, Ph.D. Research Scholar and Dr. G. Arputhavel Raja**

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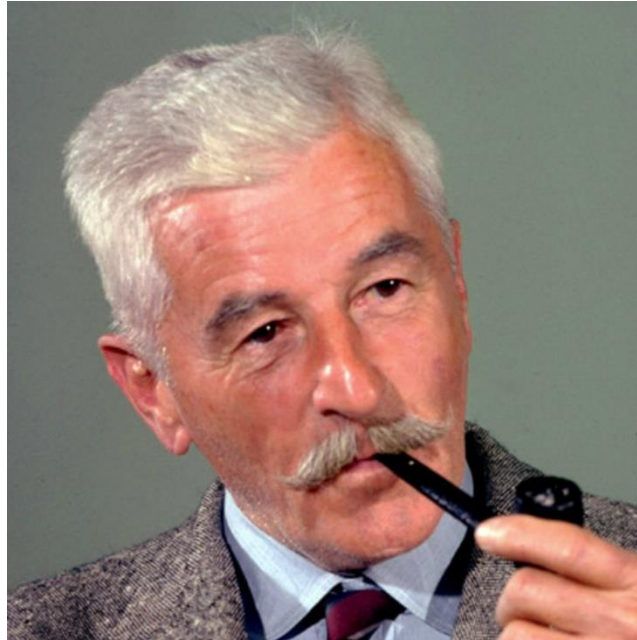
Courtesy: <https://deepblue.lib.umich.edu/bitstream/handle/2027.42/108166/dying.html>

**Abstract**

William Faulkner is a typical writer and one of the transcendent writers of twentieth century who is best known for his fictional town Yoknapatawpha and cubistic technique of writing. He was much influenced by the paintings of Picasso and Braque, which makes him to write his novels using geometrical shapes to visualize the reality of his plot to readers. The article emphasizes how the geometrical shapes like cube, circle, horizontal, vertical, line, triangle

etc., functions in his novel *As I Lay Dying*. The article affirms how the geometric special abstractions apprise the setting and plot of the novel, and later to show how the spatiality of setting and plot in turn shape the characters, and finally to mix the theme in the spatiality of the characters. The cubistic shapes in this novel reveal the reality and circle of human life in abstract form. My research argues how Faulkner brilliantly uses the cubist painting technique of Picasso and Braque to write the novel geometrically.

**Keywords:** William Faulkner, *As I Lay Dying*, Cubism, Geometrical Shapes, Reality, Abstraction, Circle.



William Faulkner 1897-1962

Courtesy: <https://www.biography.com/people/william-faulkner-9292252>

### **William Faulkner**

William Faulkner is considered a major twentieth century American author whose historical novels portray the decline and decay of the upper concretion of southern society. He is a modern novelist and short story writer who won the Noble Prize for literature in 1949. The imaginative power and psychological depth of his work grade him as one of America's greatest novelists. His literary career commenced with poetry, but he gradually began to write novels that went on to revolutionize the face of literature. His works have tolerable impact on twain, popular and modernist literature, personified typically the ethics of southern America and sensibility. Faulkner was born in New Albany, Mississippi, and soon migrated to Oxford. The action of his novels almost takes place in and around Oxford. Most of his novels inquire deeply into the protocol and morals of the south. He has written many novels and short stories, but among them *As I Lay Dying* and *The Sound and the Fury* is considered as his masterpiece.

### **Interest in Modernist Paintings – Single Subject in Multiple Perspectives**

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 **18:3 March 2018**

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Cubistic Pixel's in William Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying*

Faulkner was interested in modernist paintings of Picasso and Braque, which molded him to write the text using cubistic technique. The painting of Picasso and Braque is classified as analytic cubism, which represents a single subject in multiple perspectives. This unit emphasizes the mathematical images used by Faulkner to shape human characters in *As I Lay Dying*. Lindsay Gellman in *The Paris Review* argued that Faulkner's novel *As I Lay Dying* is consciously written in analytic cubism structure as:

Faulkner deliberately modeled the structure of his early work, like *The Sound and the Fury* and *As I Lay Dying* along analytic-cubist lines. Just as Picasso and Braque fragment their canvas in an attempt to capture the subject from many perspectives at once, Faulkner shifts his narrative voice from one character to another, surrounding the plot from all sides while interrupting its flow (4).

### **Cubists and Internal Landscape**

Faulkner in his excerpt texts presents letters, plantation ledgers, and diaries, written by characters within the realm of his fiction. The psychologist Sigmund Freud considers cubists were more concerned with the internal landscape of the individual than the external landscape of the objective world. Moreover, in modernist literature the psyche, the subconscious, the conscious intellect, and creative abstraction became more important than the objective one-dimensional portraiture of object which proceeded in Victorian period.

### **Picasso and *As I Lay Dying***

Everyone knows that Picasso's paintings contain various planes and angles of perception by comparing other paintings. Many modernist writers used this technique to show how narrative realities change through the subjective perspective of different characters. Faulkner was one among them, and mastered this multiple perspective technique in his novel *As I Lay Dying*. In this novel, he portrayed the death and burial of rustic matron Addie Burden, through the interlinking perspectives of more than twelve characters. Each character has their own voice, tone, and vocabulary which relay the events of the narrative in a distinct way. Alike Picasso, Faulkner created an abrupt collage of image which reveals the abstract and relativity at the heart of human experience. This novel is narrated by fifteen different characters in fifty nine chapters. Cubism is one of the predominant techniques found in this novel. Each character has their own view and opinion of another character and themselves, which is how these individuals are flashed out over the course of the story. Through this, we are given multiple points of view on a subject allowing us to see them through varying lenses and in different ways. The main goal of cubism is to show different angles and views of a single object in multiple perspectives.

### **Emphasis on Universal Truth through the Use of Cubistic Shapes**

In *As I Lay Dying*, Faulkner deliberately uses the geometrical cubistic shapes to emphasize the universal truth and reality of life. He used the circle image in this novel to refer the cycle of life and death. Darl at the time of his mother Addie says that her eyes looks like the circular crater of a candle holder as, "her eyes are like two candles when you watch them gutter down into the sockets of iron candle-sticks" (7). The circle image is seen by many characters at the time of Addie's death and they comprehend it in themselves. The disintegration of death that is figured in circle imagery and it also appears in the plot's circular shape. The continuation of

cyclical death in life is further suggested by the cyclical imagery of the children's aspiration. Dewey Dell, daughter of Addie wants an abortion that will restore her menstrual cycle. Vardaman wants a toy train that goes in circles around the tracks. And Cash wants a gramophone that goes in circle around the tracks.

### **Interplay of Vertical and Horizontal**

The interplay of vertical and horizontal in *As I Lay Dying* is the most important spatial arrangement. The transformation of tree image from vertical to horizontal is seen as common image. Addie's casket and the wagon that carries it are both images of tree turned into horizontal planks. The tree in nature stand straight in vertical position and after a cut it transformed into horizontal motion. Similarly the verticality of the mountain atop which the Bundren's live is likened to a tree. Water imagery also suggests the inter changeability of vertical and horizontal. At the time of raining, motion of the drops is in vertical, and after the fall it transformed into horizontal motion like sea, river, lake, etc.

Anse visualize the rain between himself and his sons who are gone with the wagon as, "a shutting down behind them like wall" (31). Faulkner also depicts water as horizontal because the clouds moves horizontally to all the places we move. In this novel Anse feels that the rain is walking along with the road side "like a durn man" (33). After the rainfall, water moves horizontally and forms as river which becomes barrier to the Bundren's journey. The water also evaporates and changes by resuming its vertical motion to horizontal clouds. Therefore the vertical and horizontal motions are combined in hydrological cycle.

### **A Vertical Character**

In this novel, Anse is seen most uniformly as vertical character. He places his home atop of the mountain and tries to be immobile. Peabody tells that Anse hasn't been in town for twelve years. Anse's verticality is most evident in his contention that horizontal things like the road have brought trouble to his door. He says that Addie was, "well and hale as ere a women ever were, except for that road" (33). He declares that only horizontal things such as snake, fish, horse, and wagons were meant for moving while vertical things such as trees, corn, and people should stay. Addie is totally opposite to Anse, because she is framed as horizontal character in this novel. She has struggled against the kind of containment Anse wants for himself. She becomes distant from everyone but Jewel. Appropriately, in opposing verticality she associates words with airy abstractions and the heavenly aspirations of Cora and Whitfield, the latter of whom she literally brings down to earth when they have sexual relations by the spring. For Addie, Whitfield's rhapsodizing about the transcendent is merely "high dead words" (161). She says, "Words go straight up in a thin line ... and ... doing goes along the earth ... so that after a while the two lines are too far apart for the same person to straddle from one to the other" (160). Her horizontality is so strong that Peabody feels that she pushes him away with the power of her eyes. "It's like she was shoving at me with them ... like the stream from a hose touches you ..." (39-41).

## Special Arrangements

Special arrangements are accurate when Darl accounts in his description. For example, he chronicled the coffin on sawhorse as, “a cubistic bug” (201) and interpret the bright image of woodchips on the cryptic world as an example of Dark Impressionism, “smears of soft pale paint on a black canvas” (67). Faulkner used pictorial descriptions to represent people in his novel. He characterize Cash’s hair as, “plastered in a smooth smear across his forehead as though done with a paint brush” (142), and he portray Addie’s face as, “framed by a window” and forming “a composite picture”(43-44). He compares Vardaman’s blanching face to “a piece of piece of paper pasted on a failing wall” (45), and he analyzes Addie’s face to “a casting of fading bronze upon the pillow” (47). The characters suggest a three dimensional motion, and yet the pillow advocate a wrapped background to which the casting is secured. Therefore, Darl flattens the staring into two dimensional objects like the figure cut from canister that he uses to depict Jewel. Darl cubistically reduces three dimensional gadgets almost into two dimensional objects, but Anse is the only character who seems to him as three dimensional. Darl realize and represents paradoxically like a cubist painter in this novel.

Faulkner follows the tradition of Picasso and Braque’s painting technique using geometric shapes, he shows the multi-dimension of reality. Throughout the novel Faulkner use geometric pixels to shape characters, and design the plot in reality. The entire novel was structured through the geometric principles. Panthea Reid Broughton in his essay “Faulkner’s Cubist Novels”, suggest the formation of this novel as, “Repeating geometric designs-lines and circles, verticals and horizontal – Faulkner actually facts, like a cubist painting the design of this book” (93). It is thematically significant that the novel opens with a painterly perception that multiplies visual angles and perspectives. Darl sees from one viewpoint, the path and cotton house straight ahead of him; he conserves or imagines another viewpoint, of Jewel walking behind, and he constructs a third viewpoint, of himself and Jewel being observed by another person. The human characters in this novel are measured as vertical and horizontal measurement by their psychological state.

## Darl

Darl is the real writer of this novel, because Faulkner himself reflected his own interest in art through the character Darl. In the sense, Faulkner through Darl wrote this text in rectangular box of pages in which each page is canvas of vertical stacked in horizontal lines. Each line in this novel considered to be a strand of two dimensional sort for developing the two dimensional characters in the continuous design made circular in time made spatial. Faulkner believes that there is no universal stability and no metaphysical reference is used in his work. The novel has multiple view point like the cubistic painting had in it. This multiple view point asserts Darl’s dimensional problematic vision in this novel. Darryl Hattenhauer in his article, “The Geometric Design of *As I Lay Dying*” explores Faulkner as a cubist writer through the character Darl such as:

Faulkner not only thematizes spatially, but also relativizes point of view (including the viewer’s/readers perspective) by representing multiple point of view not just by having several conflicting narrators, but by having Darl see what is normally obscured – by having Darl see all sides of the cube. Writing about



writing, focusing on design, thematizing form, Faulkner has created a text that minimizes the gaps between the setting, the plot, Darl, and Faulkner, for the geometric technique aligns them even as it reveals that (like Cash's level) they are beyond the confines of Yoknapatawpha, displayed. (52)

### To Conclude

Therefore, Faulkner realizes that other than geometrical shapes, nothing can visualize the reality of a subject in a text to the readers. For example, the cycle of life can be only explained by circle image, and nothing can compensate the geometrical shape which is accepted universally. Like that in science the food chain is referred through triangle or inverted pyramid and circle to show the value of food. This novel is structured by the principles of cubistic paintings which allow the readers to think broader. Cubism doesn't have any specific constructed boundaries, and it easily helps to deconstruct a text in abstract form as the paintings of Picasso and Braque. So from this we conclude that Faulkner through the geometrical shapes he painted *As I Lay Dying* in abstract form to show the reality of life.

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**Language in India** [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 18:3 March 2018

**Dr. T. Deivasigamani, Editor: Vol. II Black Writings: A Subaltern Perspective**

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