

Oppression And Class Struggle: The Decamouflaging Identity And An Odyssey For Redemption In Maryse Conde's Novles

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Abstract

This research is an attempt to investigate the complexities of oppression, which leads most people either to have a superficial understanding of the concept, to completely ignore the theory and meanings underlying oppression, or lead people to gain more knowledge and understanding so that they can avoid harming oppressed people and work to their tattered personalities and help them. The study shows how African American slaves have been able to create a counter-hegemonic narrative for over 300 years, despite severe and often brutal repression by colonial state agents. It also gives a comprehensive picture of the damage done by imperialist white masters on a huge scale. For almost three centuries, political, social, and economic systems have dominated the "color-line conundrum" that has resulted in racial death, which may be referred to as "original sin." Racial disparities are at the basis of America's racial inequality, and the deeper fact is that their descendants have been characterized by oppressive political, social, and economic structures for over three centuries. The novels underline the relevance of Marxism class struggle emphasizing that social reform, both past and present, can only be understood through the lens of struggle and self-realization. Consequently, the conclusions of both the novels differ from the "white man's burden" from the plantation system to the modern day. It illustrates that there is no evidence of the "white man's burden" of civilizing the so-called barbarians, but instead, African American black slaves have been oppressed in all aspects of life. Racism as a moral issue and racism as a political issue will not address the problem unless racism is considered as an ideology.

Introduction

Contrary to the official description of black history, novels about class struggle, on a large scale, provide a deep insight into the damage done by the imperialist white masters. A large number of novels have depicted the lives of the black race living under the oppressive rule of their white masters. Similarly, critical studies abound that comment on such novels; however, none of the studies have addressed the issues in a historical perspective and in the light of Karl Marx's theory. Many scholars have focused on diverse issues relating to the novels *I, Tituba*, *Black Witch of Salem* and *Who Slashed Celanire's Throat?* However, no researcher has linked the two novels to know the class struggle and decamouflaging identity (300 years apart) as depicted in the selected novels. Moreover, no one has studied the novels in the theoretical framework of Karal Marx; in order to investigate the selected Caribbean novels, *I, Tituba*, *Black Witch of Salem* and *Who Slashed Celenire's Throat* by Maryse Conde. This research is an attempt to study the intricacies of oppression that causes most people either to have a superficial understanding of the concept, to completely ignore the theory and meanings underlying oppression, or to lead people to more knowledge and understanding so that they can avoid causing harm and work to repair and help the oppressed.

The world we live in is a key source of intergroup conflicts, such as racism, classism, and patriarchy, which come primarily from humans' proclivity to create and perpetuate hierarchical and group-based social structures. The materialists exploit and victimize each other in order to climb the social ladder at the expenses of disadvantage of suffering and hardship on the weak. Co-modification, class differences, racism, human free trade, slave labor, etc. are the product of imperialism. Such conflicts are deeply rooted in the human tendency to establish and maintain social organization's oppressive and race-based structure, in order to retain the poor and working class under persistent oppression and injustice. Indeed, dominance and exploitation arise when the dominant forces control all of society's institutions, laws, regulations, and norms, for the sake of keeping the rest of society subjugated and gradually benefiting from the abilities of the oppressed classes. Social oppression is a term that defines a supremacy-subordination relationship between categories of people in which one gains from the systematic abuse, exploitation, and inequality aimed at the other. Barker (2003) defines oppression as the social act of placing severe restrictions on an individual, group, or institution. Typically, a powerful government or

political organization imposes these limits on oppressed groups, either publicly or secretly, so that they can be manipulated and less able to function with the other communities. The subjugated individual or group is undervalued, exploited, and denied privileges by the more powerful individual or group (Barker, 2003). According to Charlton (1998) oppression occurs when individuals are systematically exposed to political, economic, cultural, or social degradation as a result of institutions of dominance and subordination, as well as beliefs of superiority and inferiority because they belong to a social group (Charlton, 1998). According to Johnson (2000) for every privileged social group, one or more other groups are oppressed as a result. Oppression is understood as a system of social forces that presses down on people, surrounding them and limiting their ability to achieve fulfillment. On the other side, oppression has a tendency to block doors that privilege has opened (Johnson, 2000a). However, whites have, on average, higher education achievements than African Americans. According to a recent study, there is as much, if not more, the educational gap in the black community between the lightest and darkest-skinned as there is between blacks and whites as a whole (Monk 2015). According to Deutsch (2006) oppression is defined as the experience of recurrent, widespread, and systemic injustice. It doesn't have to be excessive or include the legal system (as in slavery, apartheid, or the absence of the right to vote) or be violent (as in tyrannical societies) (Deutsch, 2006). In Redeker's ideas, whereas animalistic dehumanization refers to the removal of the internal human's soul, mechanistic dehumanization refers to the removal of the exterior human's soul (Redeker, 2007). Cudd (2006) explains animalistic dehumanization as a method is fully consistent with the processes described in the group-based exploitation theory (Cudd, 2006). Tilly (1998) defines exploitation as the act of powerful, well-connected persons deploying resources from which they derive much higher returns by coordinating the activity of outsiders, whom they exclude from the entire value generated by that effort (Tilly, 1998). Bottomore (1991) delves into a basic Marxist definition of exploitation, claiming that it occurs when one sector of the population produces a surplus that is controlled by another. Under capitalism, exploitation takes the form of the extraction of surplus value from the working class by the class of industrial capitalists, although other exploiting classes or class fractions share in the surplus-value distribution. In contrast to non-capitalist models of production (such as feudalism or slavery), exploitation usually occurs without the use of force or non-economic processes (Bottomore, 1991).

The goal of this study is to draw attention to the fact that the oppression and decamouflaging identity and an odyssey for redemption of the black protagonists (living 300 years apart) that led them to begin their struggle against their white solipsists, the crimes they committed against the black race, and the re-compensation brought about by their struggle against the white masters. Conde's respective novels are an attempt to show how important many historical movements, such as slavery and class struggle, are.

Research Question

How do Maryse Conde's novels delineate Tituba's and Celanire's class struggle and struggle against racial oppression for decamouflaging identity and odyssey for redemption living three-hundred years apart?

Research Objective

To know about Conde's exposition of Tituba's and Celanire's class struggle and struggle against racial oppression for decamouflaging identity and odyssey for redemption living 300 years apart.

Research Methodology

The research is qualitative and data-driven, wherein the data guide the research rather than the hypothesis. The goal of qualitative ethnographic research is to produce real-world knowledge about the attitudes, social structures and values of a particular group of people. This method is best used to illustrate, understand, contextualize and achieve in-depth insight into explicit concepts or phenomena which gives great insight into the analysis of text. The data obtained by identifying repetitive trends selected from the novels and other sources. Conclusion is derived by considering only the data and the possible patterns which are inductively inferred from the data.

Research Statement

The research is conducted to examine the two novels dealing with slaves and slaveholders, from the plantation system to modern times, which evidently draw out from the 1600s to the 1880s and are published respectively in 1986 and 2004. The preliminary analysis of Conde's characters reveals the mortifying and humiliating conditions of African slaves, their unfair treatment of women, leading to consciousness and class struggle against the so called white solipsism. The writer's speaking characters portray African slaves' freedom and escape who are wrapped up in their own self-actualization. It seems that colonization have left a distorted history one filled with frequent gaps.

Significance of the study

Analytical research is of vital significance in an ethnic study of African-American slaves which has an extended record. The novels' highlights class struggle and decamouflaging identity of white masters by concentrating on Maryse Conde's novels, *I, Tituba Black Witch of Salem* and *Who Slashed Celanire's throat?* Maryse Conde

novels typically contain a series of different ideas of Marxism, while researchers worked on many ideas and viewpoints presented in the novels. The work is important in highlighting Marxist concepts of injustice and class struggle. One has no interest in family or culture when he does not have a social standing and governing position within a society. Different writers have studied the novels from different angles. But the current work is researching class struggle and decamouflaging identity in the novels, *I, Tituba, the Black Witch of Salem and Who Slashed Celanire's throat* and is thus distinct from previous investigations on the novel. The study raises awareness for both the oppressor and the oppressed about the catastrophic effects of economic or social injustice. Only the oppressed, constantly teased classes might lead to social instability which would lead to death and mental turmoil in the oppressed class.

Literature Review

The analysis offers the evaluation of the novels of Maryse Conde by various writers who come up to the novels through consideration of various aspects. Their review covers different topics concerning Maryse Conde's novels *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem, and Who Slashed Celanire's Throat?* Many scholars have explored these fields in many different directions, such as:

De Rosa (2002) developed an idea through his exploration of the Salem Witch Trial; comments on the relationship between performance, history and tourism. It looks at how historic originality comes about through a complex series of articles. The study postulates the 1692 transcripts; hearings are primary sources which have no known direct connection to any witchcraft case genesis. Cotton Mather, Robert and others take a closer look at the agreed historical accounts of the trials. This explores the present day of Salem, linking the abundant tourism of the city to historiographical methodologies that establish both the history of Salem and the popular American conception of the past itself. This redefines the way we think of history; this attempt to textualize the Witch Trials, rather than expose the truth, may expose the mythologies that have created and modified those facts over the years (De Rosa, 2002).

Hamill (2007) argues on religious and political disparities across the archipelago in his research project and the Caribbean self that continues to act in response to the initial plantation trauma. The plantation placed Europeans above Africans, creating racism that led to unequal social standing. It gives white men sexual control over his wife and slaves, and curtails the rights of women and the sexual agency. Through their sexual culture a vague notion of paternity exploded and mostly, power followed one man; the master leaving out the realm of the alternate discourse of black men, women, white women and mixed creoles (Hamill, 2007).

White (2009) traces the blacks' path from the middle passage through urban migration north way in black fiction in his study. It explores how religious language throughout conjunction with discourse is used as a rhetorical tool in black literature as racial violence in the ongoing war against racism. In an otherwise secular paradigm it explores religious rhetoric as using religious vocabulary, terminology, and symbolism. It includes Puritan miss-ionizing and heretical purges in *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem*, and the Catholic Church's social work in challenging forces (White, 2009).

Mitchell (2004) reflects on the reactions to violence as a legacy of colonial, middle passage and new world slavery. It addresses the theme of violence, these novelists seek to rewrite and retrieve previously submerged Caribbean American narratives that under the umbrella of Western hegemony and symbolic violence have either been obscured or distorted. Conde's novel is not only about New England's seventeenth-century political and religious fanaticism and abuse engendered by the Salem Witch-scare as a post-colonial novelist, but also criticizes contemporary American's political state. It is also about the fact that the West Indies have gained very little publicity from the brutality and genocide (Mitchell, 2004).

Oyediran (1972) traces the Caribbean woman's search for identity claiming that it is an uphill battle. Not only her part of a cultural culture that is itself grappling with this problem, but also with respect to her male counterpart, her gender puts her at a disadvantage. This focuses on experiences of women within family discourses and relationships between the sexes. It also analyzes the social status of women as servants, as witches and as women handles the challenges at different stages (Oyediran, 1972).

Anderson (2007) examines the subject of the time with the image of the witch as a feminist figure, a heroine and a good woman. His study challenges current and past discussion of the witch image as well as the complexities surrounding the witch by exploring the metaphorical understanding society has formed of her. The analysis of the witch as a metaphor reveals that the witch is both feminist and misogynist as a representation of fears as well as of desires (Anderson, 2007).

Oppression, Class Struggle and Decamouflaging Identity (*I, Tituba, Black....*)

Oppression is a phenomenon in which those who wield authority over social institutions, legislation, regulations, and conventions do so solely to keep the rest of the population in servitude using whatever means necessary, including exploitation of their physical labor and intellectual potential. Gerald Horne (2007) describes in his book *The White Pacific ...* At the demand of a U.S. national, Achilles Underwood, the dark-skinned man, and a number of his compatriots are kidnapped from his homeland and forced to work as slaves on a plantation. Even for the most trifling of issues, he and his companions are subjected to continuous flogging,

which is still a contentious issue in the present day. Conde's chosen masterpiece, *Who Slashed Calenire's Throat*, displays a powerful imperialist picture three hundred years apart from the plantation system. In her story, Maryse Conde depicts this desire for power, which separates society into several classes, such as Tituba's (the protagonist) race, which is viewed as second-class citizens due to their color and race and is enslaved by the white masters. She does not come from a world where women are granted free will and autonomy, but from a world where women are treated worse than all other beings, particularly because of their color. The white masters keep and sold the black slaves in the market like animals and keep them in isolation in corners and separate them from their loved ones, i.e. the daughter is snatched away from her mother and the son from his father. She does not come from a culture that values women's individuality and freedom. She comes from a world where women are treated differently than other people due to their skin color. The white masters sell the black slaves like animals at the market. They segregate them from their loved ones and confine them to corners, separating the daughter from her mother and the son from his father. The slaves are about to be sold to a new owner, who inspects their legs, breasts, and teeth to make sure his money isn't going to waste. Despite their miserable living conditions, the slaves have no idea that their masters should be concerned about their well-being. Slaves should rather do their jobs to keep their masters happy at any cost. The abuse and maltreatment of patriarchal culture to enforce laws and regulations to govern the Negroes is referred to as racial oppression. Tituba and her mother Abena arrive in Bridgetown in poor health, and Tituba observes that Abena is a sixteen-year-old girl with dynamic features who is awaiting her master's purchase and "A rich planter by the name of Darnell Davis bought her for a good deal of money." (Conde, p. 1)

Man dishonors man because a prominent force decides and intends to gratify his interests while disregarding the downtrodden race. As the philosopher, Charles Mills argues in Bob Blauner's (2001) book *Still Major News: Racial Oppression in America*. The white masters have no regard for the oppressed race, even when they are giving birth to a child or in the ecstasy of death because only means of production are required for imperialists, which are taken from nature in the form of slaves. American culture is built on a 'racial contract' under which power and privilege are exclusively reserved for white men. Given the legacy of slavery in the nation and its usurpation of the lands of the Indians and the Mexicans, it should come as no surprise that the toxic ghosts of racial discord and hatred continue to haunt the black and brown and are clearly illustrated in Conde's novel. Davis buys Abena, a young lady with a lovely figure, and assigns her to household tasks, but he is terrified of losing his money when he learns about Abena's unborn child. The ruling elite only think about how much money they spent to buy impoverished people out of the humiliating and humiliating domain. Instead of caring their health, the ruling elite, who employ slaves in the fields and at home, give nothing in return for their well-being and instead focus on the pounds they invest on slaves. It is more humiliating and a blow to humanity's face "...when Darnell Davis saw that Tituba's mother was with child, he went into a rage at the thought of all those pounds sterling he had spent to buy her...." (Conde, 1986, p. 4)

The ultimate reality of human existence is that man is naturally free and desires to continue living with liberty. Liberation, as suggested by Martin-Baro in (1994), is the dismantling of injustice and power that woman aims to bring about a social transformation that honors humanity and the dignity of all. Tituba's race is content to live in a random arrangement of trees in their territory rather than being enslaved to offer service to the upper-class residents of the enormous structures. The black African American slaves like to dwell under the blue sky in a tiny cottage to shelter themselves from nature's harsh song. Their freedom is snatched away by the dominant white social group, but an individual can take away their liberty and rights, but no one can take away their soul. "Yao turned my face toward the broad sea and whispered in my ear: One day we shall be free and we shall fly back to the country we came from" (Conde, p. 6).

Blauner (2001) discusses American racial injustices in the late 1960s and early 1970s in his book *Still the Big News: Racial Inequality in America*. And today, with several more miles left on the road to equality, "he says that I no longer have the illusion that I will experience a world in which all men will be brothers, as we said in the pre-feminist period. One of the most traumatic experiences of my life has been being forced to leave the dream that inspired me in my youth." Abena (the mother of the protagonist) meets Yao in his cabin and bursts into tears because in an unknown land, she recognizes him as one of her own species. They share a common language, worship the same gods, and are citizens of the same country. They form a bond in one other's embrace that leads to making love, which their white master cannot bear. White owners mistreat blacks during the plantation era, as Yao is caught having doxy connections with an unmarried woman named Abena and is put on the market "In order to punish Yao for his concubine's crime, Darnell sold him to a planter by the name of John Inglewood, who lived on the other side of Mount Hillaby.....On the way there he committed suicide by swallowing his tongue" (Conde, p. 8). Because separation from Abena and the memories of a companionship so utterly destroyed is a big blow to Yao who feels more torturous life in future.

Another insult to mankind is delivered by arrogant white overlords in the most demeaning conceivable way. The sight is more humiliating than that of animals, and is intolerable for a rational individual. The capitalist oppressed the slaves with the use of law to declare them the criminals and send them behind the bars, a new system and a way is found by the imperialists in the colonized territory to build wealth on the bound labor of

black Americans: the convict lease method, which is discussed in the book *One Dies, Get Another* by Mancini in (1996). Here's how it does work. The Black Codes, state laws criminalizing small-scale offenses and seeking to keep free individuals confined to the plantations and fields of their former masters, are used to arrest and convict black males — and often women and children. The most heinous crime is vagrancy, a “crime” of unemployment that comes with a hefty fee that few black people can afford. These slaves lost their human identity. They do not look upon themselves as animals and the same time have no desire to fight for their lives and freedom. They are in much worse conditions and have lost everything, all for the sake of serving their white overlords to death, “a sorry sight! Haggard faces mud-colored rags, arms and legs worn to the bone, and hair reddened from malnutrition. Helping his father drive the oxen was a boy of ten, as somber and taciturn as an adult who has lost faith in everything” (Conde, p. 11)

Slaves in the Caribbean are tormented even with the notion of the word “home” a place where one may live comfortably with one's family, even though slaves (Tituba and John Indian) do not be worthy of it. They are the white master's belongings. They work for them at all hours of the day and night, without pay, until they are needed. A mistress, on the other hand, cannot be good to her slaves and cannot gratify them in any way. Slaves are slaves regardless of how good their owner appears to be. Tituba hoots at the comment by John Indian, “Your home! I laugh disparagingly and added: since when does a slave have a home? Don't you belong to Susanna Endicott?” (Conde, p.18). Tituba, a little girl from a slave culture with the healing impact of her forefather witnesses a man with terrible wounds from which blood gushed out of his body and died, comforting a slave with her mystical power. The capitalist who oppressed the Caribbean as commodities politically, with the loss of his money on the slave, the master then turned to whip the body, even though his dead corpse does not elicit empathy in his heart because he is thinking about his lost money and having to purchase another, demonstrates the deep well of fascist and social discrimination hatred. This cruel act does not console him, so he gets hot pepper and smears it on his body, which does not satisfy him, and finally tears up his penis in rage, revealing the white master's inner beast, which has no sympathy for the dead even. She observes and says that “.....I was at the other end of the island.....They rubbed hot pepper on his wounds and then they tear off his penis.” (Conde, p. 29)

As the principal kind of oppression suffered by disabled people, it refers to the process through which dominant culture ideals that are constructed as seemingly universal norms or common sense denigrate, devalue, and stereotype a certain community (Lugones 2018, Young 1990). The same universal phenomenon suggest itself in the plantation system so many hundred years ago which really demonstrate the ‘white man's burden’. The most humiliating experience on earth is living under white supremacy, which requires the oppressor to cry out their agony, revolt, and wrath, yet even in an overtly stereotyped land, they are not to set aside and exhibit their mentality of distress. It is not a human world, but the idea of daemons, that has changed a dark color oppressor into a slave and outsider, and how it has taken Tituba away from her region, people, and religion. The dominating American in such a cultural imperialist country forcibly transports the slaves to an unknown land where they must live among people whose language, creed, and ethnicity have little in common with the locals. They can only shout out their frustrations and sorrows under an oppressive imperialist regime as the protagonist, at the age of six, observes her mother being hanged while hiding in someone's skirt and “I screamed, and the more I screamed the more I felt the desire to scream, to scream out my suffering, my revolt, and my powerless rage.....” (Conde, p. 49) Even the black color of the slaves make them self-conscious in the oppressive culture of white people, and the cruel mindset of the ruling race compels motherhood to stop giving birth to a child and not to have joy when giving birth to its offspring. In a world where the ruling race humiliates the impoverished, white masters are accountable for the expulsion of blameless newborns, whose mothers see no way to alter their fate. They bear the pain of birth but refuse to let them breathe in the world for fear of servitude and abjection, and the mothers are scared of exposing the infant to a horrible fate. It is a catastrophe falling on the inferior race and slaves from their superior white owners who claim to have civilized the slaves, which is unacceptable on the plant's surface. When Tituba, the protagonist is eager about making love to John Indian in his hut, she recognizes right away that having a kid is a cursed reality that causes her sexual need to be interrupted and proclaims that “There is no happiness in motherhood for a slave. Throughout my childhood, I had seen slaves killed their babies or else by abandoning at night in a place frequented by an angry spirit.” (Conde, p. 50)

According to Bogdan, freak exhibitions in the nineteenth century showed persons with obvious physical or mental mutilations, as well as local peoples of colonial countries, who were all lumped together as freaks (Bogdan 1988). The same freaks have nothing to do in the world of civilized imperialists, who considered the black as freak and treat them with physical, mental and psychological violence. For black slaves to survive in a world of brutality there is only one thing that matters. The white masters have the power to make things fair or foul and to make things foul of the fair by whatever means necessary, regardless of who else they accuse of wrongdoing. They do not own the world in which they live. It is solely the property of these white American lords. Even if they burn the entire world on fire, they must stay away from the flames. Whatever the slaves can accomplish in the world of white supremacy, they make good out of bad, as John Indian embraces Tituba in his

arms and tries to convince her that “my tortured wife!....The important thing is to stay alive. If they ask you to denounce the others, denounce them!.....” (Conde, p. 92)

It is evident that the white masters treat their black subjects in an immoral and corrupting manner. In the presence of slaves, they are beaten and sexually exploited to display their cultural supremacy in many situations, while white owners are confronted with harsh and dismal words and gestures. Slaves are frequently beaten, shackled, and imprisoned as a form of punishment for disobedience or disobeying the rules established by their masters. When Tituba challenges the ship’s captain Stannard in conversation, he spits out harshly! “Negress, when you speak to me, say ‘Master’ and lower your eyes; otherwise I’ll smash those stumps out of your mouth.....” (Conde, p. 135)

The techniques that have been used by the white cultured masters to make the black slaves a civilized nation are socioeconomic, political and social violence, which is the contrary of “white man’s burden” but these elements are most stunningly apparent in the violent attacks by the plantation owner and overseers on black slaves. The misfortune of these slaves on plantations is exacerbated by capitalist structures, institutional injustice, and laws that can be observed in depriving colonized black people of their rights like the denial of social care, law enforcement, and justice systems, which are the root causes of class struggle to obtain their identity and land. Tituba is speaking with Mama Yaya, an elderly woman, about striking the white oppressors for the sake of their freedom and “the time has come to act, I remember what you told me when I wanted to take my revenge on Susanna Endicott: Don’t pervert your heart! Don’t become like them! Is this the price to pay for freedom?” (Conde, p. 162)

African American slaves are exhausted of being enslaved and living a life of slavery, so they make the bold decision to reclaim their cultural identity from the dominant white masters. The capitalist’s harshness causes the slaves to be purposely halted when the victim is a small kid named Iphigene, whose body is found covered in blood and guts, and he is presumed dead, but he quickly comes back to life thanks to Tituba’s healing power. From the age of three until she has gray hair, she has been afflicted. Thousands of other slaves, like them, raise their heads in vengeance against their cruel lords. A scout provides Iphigene and his associates with ammunition to suffer only once for the sake of their release and “the scout went out in all directions, taking cover under the trees and in the tall grass. At one point Iphigene looked so tired that I begged him: Come and lie down a while. What’s the use of dying before you’ve won?” (Conde, p. 166)

The imperialists on the surface of the earth enforced and compelled the black slaves to have one voice by all means against the white masters. With this temptation to revolt against the bourgeoisie, Marx and Engels conclude *The Communist Manifesto* (1984). They invite working people all across the world to use only a few simple words to demand their rights so that they can participate actively in the economic, political, and social spheres. They chose death for this act, rather than living a life of misery and brutality. Socio-economic and politically marginalized slaves have chosen to struggle for freedom instead of living a life of shame and, “.....this was the last night before the final act, when doubt, fear, and cowardice fight it out among themselves!.....The last night before the final attack!” (Conde, p.168-169). No matter what happens, battle is the only mission. It is not a matter for black slaves to learn at once from the civilized masters who have landed in the land of black Africans to make them civilized being but instead humiliate them. They have to die as a slave and as a freedom fighter in all cases and in this regard they have chosen death rather than subjugation and die as a freedom fighter. Iphigene doubted for a moment “do you think we’ll win? He shrugged his shoulders. What does it matter! The important thing is to have tried and to have refused the fatalism of misfortune!” (Conde, p. 169)

These slaves are compelled by the racist ideology of imperialists and their animalistic behavior, who decided to revolt against the oppressors, thought they are not trained and well equipped, obviously, they are caught and hanged one by one, is an example to make them civilized and consequently “The cabin was surrounded by soldiers aiming their guns at us... The Planter decided to set an example, because this had been the second major revolt in three years...” (Conde, p. 171)

A slave is deemed by the statute to be laborer or property, and is stripped of much of the privileges usually enjoyed by free man. Legally, and sometimes socially, has no family. No family member will stand up for his rights or get revenge for him. In the society where he is a slave, as an “outsider”, “marginal citizen”, “socially dead human” or “otherness” his rights to engage in political decision-making and other social activities are not given, that are enjoyed by white master. With highly prestigious arrangement and authoritative power the planters set them as an example to others, neither do they show any moral obligation nor feel their pain. The white masters hang them from the trees in the open “the Maroon’s leader Iphigene’s body was the first to swing in the air, hanging from a heavy beam. I was the last to be led to the gallows, for I was to be given special treatment.” (Conde, p. 172)

Oppression, Class Struggle and Decamouflaging Identity (*Who Slashed Celanire’s Throat*)

Celanire, the protagonist of the work under review, travels from Africa to Guadeloupe and then to Peru, where she seeks final retribution by summoning demons and devils to annihilate those who intended to sacrifice her as an infant. A newborn is found lying in the garbage with her throat chopped on Guadeloupe’s French Caribbean island, a crime white Creole celebrates for political and spiritual gain. Conde’s prose alternates between lushness and ferocity deftly, but the vindictive Celanire can be unsympathetic in this aspect. There isn’t enough

information about Celanire's quest—perpetrators are offered up rather than apprehended, resulting in a cryptic but frequently grim vengeance story, and Celanire herself is shrouded in mystery. Conde does a fantastic job of weaving myth, mysticism, and history together to create an interesting and often gruesome image of desire and retribution, yet she is distant from both friends and lovers. Those close to her fall victim to a series of tragedies: apparent suicides, vicious animal attacks, drowning, and detaining whatever it might take to get them out of the way.

The tension between the local populations and their colonial rulers underscores the revenge story and declares that, ".....revenge is a dish best eaten cold. She was sharpening her pretty pointed teeth one against the other....." (Conde, p. 6). A newborn is found lying in the garbage with her throat slashed on Guadeloupe's French Caribbean island, a crime white Creole (a person of mixed colonial French, African American, and Native American origin) celebrates for political and spiritual gain. Conde's creatively gloomy epic is set against the backdrop of a larger conflict: the struggle between colonial France and Africa's co-opted continent. Celanire is sent to a missionary school in an unknown country as a street girl, where she learns the basics of Christianity and is trained to assist and educate the impoverished black community. She is an infant with a slashed throat without parents and siblings. Nature offers an opportunity and leads her way to her destiny when the classes in theology and general instructions are over; she took courageous decision to move to find her lost identity in the soil of white masters. In reality, she is very intelligent and a decision-making child. She arrives in Ivory Coast and takes a position assisting the director of Adjame-Santey's Home for Half Castes, where she hopes to unravel the mystery of her history and, "Yet she guessed that her destiny had just been given its first nudge in the right direction." (Conde, p. 7)

In the 1890s, a considerable number of black people started to migrate north. It generates a large number of factory jobs during World War I, and in the 1920s, innovative rigid laws dramatically reduce European immigration. The decrease in immigrants has increased the demand for industrial jobs in northern cities. Segregation continues to oppress blacks in the South in growing numbers; mixed-race children whose European fathers rejected them are now inhabitants of the Home for Half-Castes. French market recruitment is reflective of the slave market in the plantation field. Celanire as Head of Home is a representative of France. She is free to enforce whatever schemes she deems appropriate, with the strength of the colonial administration behind her. She just hires girls and says no to buy wrappers, head ties, store business, soap, perfume, etc. under her supervision "standing in the middle of the garden, Celanire was examining each candidate as if she were back in a slave market..... From their teeth to the soles of their feet" (Conde, p. 17). Black workers have certainly changed their lives in cities in the North. Indoor and outdoor work awaits them, and nearby schools awaited many arrivals from the rural South; white Creole missions certainly learned the white man's secret and they faced bigotry everywhere they travel. The woman slaves are treated and exploited by the male superiority, both internally and externally, though three hundred years apart as in the plantation system. They are like toys in the hands of men but now the tradition is changed and the beautiful girls are offered as a gift, since Tenella, a concubine of Mawourou, the king's uncle, is offered with fowl and dried fish is still a degrading image of insight, as KoffiNdizi (the king), "had left her to Kwame Aniedo, who for a time had used her for his pleasure." (Conde, p. 25)

The lives of oppressed slave girls are still in danger, and the tragedy of slavery in history is not that it drove millions of Africans from their homes to the United States, but that it established the foundation for the commodification and dehumanization of the black body, which has been maintained culturally, socially, and politically for hundreds of years. The point is about the system's deliberate brutality, which causes female slaves to be raped, and their fight against male oppressor abuse continues, and "there he (Mawourou the king's uncle) was a liberated young man taking the side of a lascivious old man, abuser of young girls, who after all has only reap what he sows" (Conde, p. 26). As such, the need for time is a battle against animalistic injustice, as clearly seen in the text of Conde after plantation. This black body social conceptualization helps to understand the logic that enable the sexual abuse of black slaves and to be largely unconcealed by the mainstream culture, the henchmen, governors, priests and oblates. The misogyny of female slaves is apparent in the post-fact view, and one might wonder why no one has raised an objection to this system of violence and abuse but the female slave Tanella questioned the system of violence. She refuses to be used as a toy by the strong. She assassinated Mawourou (the king's uncle) and Tanella in order to punish such a crime "even the women who deep in their hearts, were sympathetic toward Tanella, understandably tired of surrendering her youth night after night to the fantasies of an old man, were convinced that a shadowy past in its death throes was preferable to the future these foreigners had in store for them" (Conde, p. 27).

The severe event that has taken place in Adjame-Santey, the indiscriminate use of force, the large number of casualties is attributable to the hypocrisy of white supremacy and authoritarian oppression. Race and social inequality have had a significant impact on American history, as seen by its origins. Americans like to think of the formation of American colonies and later the "white man's burden" as driven by a desire for independence: first, religious freedom, then political and economic equality. Yet, like Thomas, the administrator takes the risk of declaring, American society has always been constructed on hypocritical and barbarous systems of dominance, injustice, and oppression involving the denial of slaves' liberty. ".....the hypocrisy of these senior

colonial officials made him sick. Hundreds of “voluntary workers” were dying of hunger and ill treatment along the rail road. Nobody breathed a word about them.....” (Conde, p. 28). Of course, it could be interpreted as a form of dehumanization resistance, particularly if one believes, as David Brion Davis does, that dehumanization or animalization is the primary feature of enslavement. In this sense, the case may be viewed as an example of enslaved people’s agency. The procession up to the Place of Justice swelled with all the idle spectators and onlookers, but when the crowd reaches the Home for Half-Castes, the rows of militias from a neighboring camp pointing their weapons, is an act of resistance to the constraints of enslavement, or at least of making claims; but this is not just an argument that threatened and opened fire on slaves and “.....stone Tanella to death, and beat Celanire and her assistants black and blue.....” (Conde, p. 28)

The French handover of the land to the Creoles is merely symbolic, and they continue to administer it. The natives and the cultures of their elders, who decide on the affairs of native blacks according to their own customs, are just titles. Celanire is introduced by Thomas De Brabant, the governor, and they married in Africa, despite the fact that he already has a wife and a child called Charlotte. She lost all interest in living in the male dominated culture, and fled to die. The governor guides the military in all directions to find her out by whatever means necessary. This ill treatment psychologically alarm the black, as the militant march on all, eradicating the mangrove trees, and “another group roamed the villages around the lagoon, flattening the huts with their rifle butts, terrifying the inhabitants, who imagined the slave trade had started up again” (Conde, p. 51)

The strategy use to regulate the actions of slaves in the early planting method is the threat of whipping that ripped the flesh off from their backs, arms, and legs. Usually the whippings and beatings are horrible or awful as anyone would ever imagine. The number of lashes is based on the offence’s severity. Slaves are whipped daily; it is not usually because they have committed a serious crime, but keeping them bent on their labor. Different forms of mental and physical abuse, such as beatings, whippings, and other forms of torture, are used to reaffirm their masters’ supremacy while also demoralizing the slaves. No exemption is allowed for any slave, if the situation requires it, the young, elderly, male, female, including pregnant women, as well as the mentally and physically disabled are whipped. However, in Conde’s historical background, in the nineteenth century, when KoffiNdizi (a white Creole) suffered a fatal blow at the death of his first son when he was put to rest and “Twenty slaves were sacrificed to serve him in the afterlife” (Conde, p. 73). What could be more depressing and humiliating than a hanging execution is that the whites wanted to make it more horrific, they would hang the slave alive from one of his lungs with a hook dug into one of his lungs, and others would hang the slave upside down. Furthermore, in what the slave masters call very severe offences which they believe surpass all types of punishment; the slave has to be dispensed typically and horribly painful in a cruel manner. Slaves are burned alive, usually tied by a stake. This is one of the cruelest ways in which they take those slaves’ lives and twist their souls. And women have been raped without anyone to complain to, instead, the white slave owners expect them to be grateful for having sex with them, confidently saying that they are doing them a favor and more daring is the black child’s sacrifice become more humiliating and a stain on the world’s surface as it is evident in the text of Conde “that Pisket had sold her belly to Madeska at the request of Agenor de Fouques-Timbert. The white Creole, who wanted to get into politics, had sacrificed the infant at the beginning of September 1884.” (Conde, p. 130)

Numerous Americans, especially in the North, convey fear at the higher number of execution in the land toward the end of the nineteenth century, and very few are willing to do anything about it besides expresses passionate at grief what appears to be a return to barbaric practices. From time to time, attention is drawn to one aspect of lynching that has puzzled observers. An editorial in a Massachusetts weekly in April 1899, focusing on a particularly cruel public execution, is widespread. Indeed, the community, and the rest of the developed world, would have to be concerned about the incident. A civilized society of thousands immediately casts off the constraints and consequences of centuries of development and stands naked in the wild man’s savagery. Men and women cheer and express feelings of triumph and excitement. The master cut off the victim’s ears, fingers, and other body parts, stripped him, and poured oil on him which is beyond explanation. Zulefi reveals the factual events about his ancestors, who came from a noble family and ranked among the court’s highest dignitaries. They are not only kings, but they can also see and speak to the spirits and “the invisible world holds no secrets from them. That’s why they alone perform the supreme sacrifice...the human sacrifice.” (Conde, p. 153)

Slavery and Abolition in Early Republican Peru, Peter's second book published in 1992, is a well-documented systemic analysis that demonstrates that abolition was neither a deliberate result of a Peruvian revolution or the growing influence of liberals and modernizers. Rather, it was the result of the availability of replacement labor and new sources of wealth, the British anti-slavery movement, and the opposition of slaves themselves, who fled, obtained their freedom and sued their masters in court. His investigation begins with data from the late eighteenth century. The institution’s demise was precipitated by the annual presentation of a panoramic perspective of numerous legal decrees and law codes. The numerous court decisions were not reached in a one-sided manner. Later, republican policy shifted, prohibiting slavery at one moment while favoring its spread at another. The reality of a convoluted situation in which slaves provided critical work, enormous riches, and social rank is reflected in the official ambivalence. Slave owners are often dominant, and the state is often

ineffective. Since Serrano's indigenous peoples of California in the highlands refused to work on the coast, free wage labor was expensive and limited. Conde's text is also rich in the same true tale of Kung Fui being duped by a Frenchman into signing a contract for Panama or land in Peru, both of which are incredible locations. According to a Frenchman, cotton has grown like a plant, and one has to bent over to become wealthy is bend over and pick it, ".....but all that had been a scam. Nobody grew cotton any longer in this region of Peru. Finally liberated from slavery....." (Conde, p. 201)

Only by their effort and persistence will they be able to reclaim their lost identity, culture, and land. Celanire's drive and resolve enable her to learn about her identity and track down and punish those who have ruthlessly insulted black people. Celanire progressed day by day on this mission, eventually becoming a legend. She matures and, in the midst of her struggle, she encourages others to share their viewpoints and listens to them. Her speech became more temperate and reflective as well. The narrator feels that Celanire usually repeat that she "needed a new aim in life to continue, a new reason for living" (Conde, p. 228). And another reason for her successful quest is, when she whispers in her husband's ear Thomas "Please, All I can do now is be a good mother" (Conde, p. 232). At least, the black slaves now can wish for their babies to see the first ray of the day.

CONCLUSION

The concluding remarks of this study go back to the issues raised in the context of its opening pages defining the historical account and links the two novels of the white solipsism treatment of black slaves as they cross the threshold to educate them, to live 300 years apart to learn about their accomplishments, as well as to focus on racial oppression, class struggle and decamouflaging identity left by the plantation system. Such representation has real implications, because it is one way of knowing that the degrading and humiliating conditions of African slaves, their unjust treatment of racially unfair, exotic women, contribute to awareness and class struggle against the so-called white solipsist. The characters are African slaves on a journey of redemption who are caught up in their self-realization. As a result, the novel *I, Tituba Black Witch of Salem and Who Slashed Celanire's Throat* supports the relevance of Marxism in African slaves' class conflict and struggle, emphasizing on social reform. In this regard, both past, and present, can only be understood through the lens of struggle. Socialists, and other radicals have fought single-party regimes ever then. Cracks in colonialism's majestic architecture have appeared as a result of such a tenacious and long-running resistance to slave labor. The defeat of the African bourgeoisie can be used to estimate the degree of success of this campaign to gain emancipation and advance the cause of global collective uprisings. The only difference between black and white slaves is their skin color. The huge residences of the greedy plantation system owners, as well as the dismal lifestyles of the countryside residents, are expected and endured by the black slaves. They violently treat slaves and take cheap labor to create a kingdom of their own and rape women to please themselves. The cruel white masters exceed and force them to lift a single voice to declare democracy and equal rights, which are deemed fundamental to human society. The hegemony of social institutions, law, regulations and norms retains power, only to hold the rest of the people under subjugation, shows a strong imperialist picture, and is still a hot debate in modern times.

The outcomes of both the novels in Conde's context are somewhat different from the 'white man's burden'. From the plantation system to the modern era, and it almost spans more than 300 years. It demonstrates that there is no such proof of the 'white man's burden' of civilizing the so-called barbarians, but that African American black slaves are oppressed in all walks of life. In the concern of time and space of 300 years, there are different kinds of oppression with which white supremacy compels black slaves to rule over them and steal their land and wealth, such as, authoritarian, socioeconomic, political, legal, cultural and institutional oppression as well as social, racial, class, gender, sexual, religious oppression etc. which is a blot on the face of humanity. The above mentioned hegemonic forces, the white supremacy do hate speeches and consider freedom of expression against the black and brown. Without the consideration of racism as an ideology, racism as moral question and racism as political question will not solve the problem.

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