

Laboratoire de domiciliation du Master : Etude des Langues et Cultures Etrangères.

To

My parents

My brothers and sisters

All my friends and relatives

Malha

My parents

My brother: yanis

My sister: Sandra

My beloved husband: Massinissa.

All my friends and relatives

Ines

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Abstract

*The following research paper is devoted to the study of race, class division and the quest for identity in Zora Neal Hurston's novel **Their Eyes Were Watching God** (1937) and James Baldwin's collection of essays **The Fire Next Time** (1963). To reach our aim, we will make use of Kimberly Crenshaw's theory of feminism as developed in her work **Demerginalizin the Intersection of Race and Sex: a Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics** (1989). By drawing from the above theory some analytical concepts such as race, class struggle and the quest for identity, the research has shown that both authors share the same current concerns of Afro-American traditions and condition in white racist America as they were both influenced by the Harlem Renaissance ideals and it is their common heritage which has drawn them to devote their works to black culture, class struggle and the quest for identity. Thus, as a whole, the Works contains the introduction where we present the issues that surround the two mentioned Works relaying on the theory of Kimberly Crenshaw's, we outline our research into results three chapters. The first one is devoted to the study of race, while the second deals with the class division and social conflicts between whites and black. The last chapter studies how Baldwin and Hurston present their main characters' quest for a distinctive self-identity; we end up with conclusion summarizing the whole research.*

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General Introduction

The following research paper is a comparative study between two important Works of the Afro-American literature which are Zora Neal Hurston's **Their Eyes Were Watching God (1937)** and James Baldwin's **The Fire Next Time (1963)**. The motivation which stimulated us to undertake this research comes first from our interest in the field of comparative literature, and cultural literary poetics, as the two authors belong to the same country and have the same culture, customs. Second, it is commonly known that the African American literature is the result of many movements such as the Civil Rights Movement or the New Negro Movement and what is called the Harlem Renaissance. therefore we think that both of Hurston and Baldwin were greatly influenced by the philosophy of Harlem Renaissance and its great literary fabric put forward by great figures such as W.D.E Bois and Richard Wright among many others.

Moreover, both works deal with the same issue of race, class and the quest for belonging. In Zora Neal Hurston's **Their Eyes Were Watching God**, for instance, she clearly and directly claims that: « My interest in life is what makes a man or woman do such and so, regardless of his color »¹. Besides, James Baldwin and as it is already mentioned, he is considered in the history of Afro-American tradition as a great icon for black emancipation. He is in fact the product of Harlem Renaissance and an important figure during the Civil Right Movement which characterized the Post-Cold war period of the American history. We think that Baldwin, likewise Hurston wrote his collection of essays to portray the black current concerns of race, class and the quest for identity.

The Afro-American history is deeply shaped by several political, social and economic issues the latter opened the window to the white American community to enslave the black Afro-American and consider them as second class citizens. Indeed, white people consider themselves as a superior

race which has been chosen by God to rule the world white. Hence, the discrimination of the black Americans resulted from the ethnic differences, culture and that of social divisions. We can say that the theory of the afro American were find after the civil war , but in practice they were still bounded by several social , economic , political decision.

As a result, these conflicts led gradually to the rise of different movements by the black community raise the black consciousness. The most recent and important of these movements is the 1920s Harlem Renaissance of New York where in many artists, essayists, authors and musicians were interested in the revival of the black culture, black pride, language and music of their forefathers or ancestors. This movement also had its literary dimension, as it aimed to produce a black literature and art distinguishable from that of the whites. Furthermore, the Harlem Renaissance by embracing literary, musical, theoretical and visual arts sought to conceptualize the Negro, to avoid stereotypes and eradicate racist beliefs which were widely developed in America. In this way, Hurston's **Their Eyes Were Watching God** had been considered as a literary master-piece of the Harlem Renaissance. In fact, the novel embraces the vivid imagery of black culture and the effort towards the African Diaspora and the struggle of black community in the 1920s. In her work, Hurston portrays the life-journey of a black woman named Janie Crawford who lived on plantation of her grandmother. Hurston also describes the character's disastrous and unhappy three marriages which all ended up tragically. Nevertheless, Hurston remained faithful to her black ancestry and kept celebrating African American culture in her writings, while the large New Negro Movement continues to rise so as to bring hope and equal rights for the black community.

In the case of James Baldwin, although he was not writing during the same period of that of Hurston, yet the influence of Harlem Renaissance's ideals are very apparent. Thus, on the one hand, he reads a lot of Theodore Pelatowski, William Du Bois and others black

nationalist figures who were mainly the prominent leaders in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). On the other hand he was heavily influenced by the famous author of the Civil Rights Movement in 20th century Richard Wright who encouraged him to pursue a career in arts and writing the classical collection of his essay **The Fire Next Time** where, he shows his disillusionment and the condemnation of the spiritual, material corruption of the Cold War in America, shortly coming after the Cuban missile crisis 1962s, as he claims: “in Harlem, Negro policemen are feared more than white, for they have more to prove and few ways to prod that if you gave them a dance floor and a full band to fuel them, they could do more than it”².

Indeed, Baldwin’s work contains two essays which capture the meaning and the spirit of being black in America. The first essay is entitled **“My Dungeon Shook: Letter to My Nephew on the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Emancipation”**, while the second bears the title of **“Down at the Cross: Letter from a Region in My Mind”**. In these two essays, he examines the issue of racial inequality and social segregation between black and white Americans. He also explores the issue of religion, and the limitations or the narrow-minded thinking of the whites who used the Christian religion in order to segregate the black. Baldwin appeals to deconstruct the myth that surrounds blackness. In other words, we may say that both essays address the next generation of Americans about the experience and importance of being a black man in America in the 1960’s. In sum, both Zora Neal Hurston and James Baldwin address the apathy of the American society (both black and white) to go beyond the stereotypes, clashes, and try to call the next generation to live in harmony, and equality far from racial prejudices, ethnic, and religious differences.

Review of the Literature

Zora Neal Hurston's **Their Eyes Were Watching God** and James Baldwin's **The Fire Next Time** have received a large bulk of criticism. Among the representative and scholarly critics of Hurston's novel, we find W.E.D Du Bois from a physiological perspective in his article: "*Criteria of Negro Arts, the Souls of Black*" (1946). In the latter, Du Bois considers that Hurston's novel and the story of the protagonist Janie can be considered as the author's personal story as it accounts of what is meant of being a black woman in America when racism reached its higher peak. He shows for instance how racism effects on once personal life. In this regard, he says: —Janie and Hurston's conception of their selfhood is all the more complicated by the fact that, they are not only black in a racist society .but that they are women in sexist society³.

Another important literary criticism from a historical perspective of Hurston's novel is Rachel Blau Dupless whose article "*Power, judgment and Narrative in a work of Zora Neal Hurston Their Eyes Were Watching God*" (1998) revisits the famous episode of the Hurricane in Everglades at the end of the novel, and shows a kind of a shift at the level of social class relations for the main character Janie. In the critic's opinion, this shift had left a deep impact among the different groups that constitute the American society. In this regard, Janie realizes that the interracial attitudes as well as social structure of the black community seem to change. According to the critic, the novel explores Hurston's confidence and optimism for a better tomorrow in America, particularly the individual position in white racist American society⁴.

In their co-authored article from a psychological sides “*The Quest for Identity in Zora Neal Hurston Their Eyes Were Watching God*”(2014)Zahra Mahdian, Bahman Zarrnjooee claim that Hurston’s novel represents the suffering of the black community and their longing for self-realization and self-identification. However, the two critics also assert that Hurston’s portrayal of Janie and Nanny epitomize the black quest for distinctive identity⁵ which starts from a black voice:

In Hurston’s *Their Eyes Were Watching God* characters such as Nanny, Joe and Janie are individuals who look for self-realization. Nanny’s calculated talking about her own past and the way whites treated her daughter and even herself manifest her inner involvement with black identity. Nanny’s main method and technique for raising awareness about black identity is to tell her own story to her granddaughter. This technique of orally recounting one’s life story is among the main techniques in postcolonial novels. Below Nanny tells her story to Janie to influence and galvanize her fight against white people⁶.

Janie and Nanny’s experiences showcases of the journey of the black American and their quest for self-subjective identity in racist America, despite the oppressive nature of the American society, the two characters fight for a better life and a better tomorrow.

Likewise Hurston’s novel, James Baldwin’s work has been also the target of criticism from social perspective, for example, Nick Aaron Forde’s “*the Fire Next Time, critical Survey of Belles’ letters by the Negroes*” (1964), reconsiders the importance of Baldwin’s work in the literary fabric and context of the Afro- American writers of the period stretching from 1960 to 1970. The critic asserts that *The Fire Next Time* is part of the Afro-American fiction that resulted from the 1960s Civil Rights Movement and the black Emancipation of the new generation of Americans in Post-Cold period. Baldwin’s way of advising the new generation of blacks to live in peace and equality together with whites is an appeal of the author to live in an integrated world. He ends the article referring back to Baldwin’s word “we cannot be free until they are free”⁷.

Lawrie Balfour's article open new and modern perspectives "*The most Disagreeable Mirror: Race-consciousness and Double Consciousness in the Scope of the Political to James Baldwin*" (2016) examines also the issue of racism in Baldwin's essay. The critic states that the two essays portray the black segregation, discrimination and bad living conditions, and the wretchedness experienced by young Baldwin and his ancestors and his forefathers. Hence, according to the critic, he wants to overthrow the past nightmares⁸. She says that: "Race consciousness is morally and politically imperative as long as Americans inability to talk openly about race perpetuates racial injustice"⁹.

The last illustrative critic that studied Baldwin's work is Nelson Emmanuel, and her article "James Baldwin's Vision of Otherness and Community" (1983). As a whole, the article discusses the issue of racial identity and prejudice that may affect the African American society as well as family relation is concerned¹⁰. Nelson states that Baldwin is in double oppression because of racism and social class categorization as the following quote shows:

Baldwin suggests that one can achieve a genuine and liberating sense of self only through complete acceptance of one's self, through loving commitment to another, and through identification with one's community. His works collectively present his vision of the vital relationships between the self, the other, and the community. That vision, no doubt, has been substantially shaped by his private anguish as a mistreated stepson, Black, and homosexual as a member of the outcast America¹¹.

In this quotation Nelson Emmanuel says that Baldwin is the target of a double oppression by the white Americans, therefore, for him, the only path and way to reach a higher status in society is to accept each other in order to live in peace. It is only from this point of view that the Afro-American may shape their identity, only if they live in an integrated society not in a shaken or disintegrated one.

Issue and Working Hypothesis

It follows from the above review of the literature that the two selected works have received a spate of criticism and have been studied from different perspectives and viewpoints. However, to our best knowledge, little research has been undertaken so far on Zora Neal Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God* with James Baldwin's *The Fire Next Time*. Thus, the purpose of the present dissertation is to bring these two narratives together by putting

emphasis on the intersection of race, class and the quest for belonging for the black community.

As it has been revealed so far, this comparative study is related to the fact that both works are linked by the confluence and similar historical backgrounds of the two authors (the New Negro Movement or the Harlem Renaissance 1920s, the Civil Rights Movement of 1960s).

Our intention then in this present paper, is to carry research on the common bonds that we have drawn from the reading of the two authors 'works and their historical contexts.

It becomes clear that Hurston and Baldwin criticize the bad living conditions of the Afro-American people as their subjection, segregation and marginalization. They bring to the fore issues related to race, class, and how blacks try to resist and search for their own belongings and personal identities. On the one hand, In *Their Eyes Were Watching God* the racial question is very controversial, since the main character Janie is subjugated by her three oppressive husbands and oppressed by the white American society. Being a woman of mixed race, she attempts to find out her own life and identity. On the other hand, race, class and the identity quest are also the same current concerns that permeate Baldwin's narrative *The Fire Next Time*, as he urges Negro community to face the realities of the post-war American and the social organization against racial discrimination and ethnic prejudices. He incites the black for the quest of their personal subjective self. It is the above issues that our research paper attempts to study.

To reach our aim, this study will be based on Williams Kimberly Crenshaw's theory of **"Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: a Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics"** (1989). This research will resort to the concepts of race, class and the quest for identity. The relevance of this theory lies in the fact that it shows how both of Hurston and Baldwin look for black social justice, resisting to the white oppression and seek for a real identity and self-representation these all difficulties are transposed at the social economic level ground.

End Notes

¹CaryD.Wintz.<https://www.humanitiestexas.org/news/articles/harlem-renaissance>.Last modified march 2018. Accessed in (15/07/2018)

²James, Baldwin "Note of a native son" (1955).p205

³HurstonZoraNeal. *Their Eyes were Watching God* (1937), New York Modern Classic.P17

⁴Du Bois, W. E. B. *The Souls of Black Folk*. (1903), New York, Dover Publications, 1994.8 Freeburg, Christopher. "James Baldwin and the Unhistorical Life of Race," *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, 112:2 (2013), pp. 221–39.

⁵Rachel Blau Dupless, "Power, Judgment, and Narrative in a work of Zora Neale Hurston: Feminist Culture Studies. "New Essays on *Their Eyes Were Watching God*". Michael Awkward, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1990), p107.

⁶Ibid, p89

⁷Zahramahdian, and Bahman Zarrinjooee."Quest for Identity in Zora Neal Hurston *Their Eyes Were Watching God*" *Journal of literature and arts*, University Press. (2014).vol.02.p59

⁸Ibide, p92

⁹Belfour. Lawie, "The Review of Politic James Baldwin: The most Disagreeable Mirror: Race Consciousness and Double Consciousness in the Scope of the Political to James Baldwin" (2016).vol.61.no03/ [www.jstor.org /stable](http://www.jstor.org/stable), accessed in (21/09/2018).pp373-401

¹⁰Ibid, p386

¹¹Nick, Aaron .F. "A Critical Survey of Belles Letters by About the Negroes" New York. Chelsea House Publisher, (1964).p123

¹²Nelson,Emmanuel,S."JamesBaldwin'VisionofOthernessandCommunity"http.www.jstor.org/stable (1983),/ pdf .pp27-39.accessed in (17/112018).

Method and Materials:

1-Method:

William Kimberly Crenshaw's Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics (1989):

William Kimberly Crenshaw is a famous Feminist American civil rights figure and a leading icon in the field of critical, race and gender theory. Her main studies treat and conceptualize the intersections of race, gender and class as simultaneous processes of identity and her theory is considered as critical feminism. Therefore, her critical scholarship on race and gender seems to be appropriate to our corpus and our topic under study since she examines the American society the intersection of social categorization and the doctrine of antidiscrimination or antiracist politics.

To begin with, "Intersectionality" is first used by William Kimberly Crenshaw used to show the link and prompt us to ask what falls between movements and what happens when these different systems of power and oppression overlap. In **Demerginalizing, the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics** she examines critically how racism, legal societal intersect together to form one compounded and unique experience of discrimination, which is significantly greater to achieve a real identity for the Afro-American. Throughout her work, she uses the example of a Black woman in order to explain the circumstances the black community faced in general but particularly that of woman. Crenshaw intends to prove that our modern class categorization is the result or the effect of materialism, gender, and racism, as well as ethnic discrimination:

I will center Black women in this analysis in order to contrast the multidimensionality of Black women's experience with the single-axis analysis that distorts these experiences. Not only will this juxtaposition reveal how Black women are theoretically erased, it will also illustrate how this framework imports its own

theoretical limitations that undermine efforts to broaden feminist and anti-racist analyses. With Black women as the starting point, it becomes more apparent how dominant conceptions of discrimination condition us to think about subordination as disadvantage occurring along a single categorical axis¹.

In the above quotation, Crenshaw centers her study on the life and experience of the American black women and their multi-discrimination at different axis. She uses first the example of a single black poor woman as a starting point of her study and then generates her theoretical analysis on all the black community living in America.

In exploring the intersection of race, class and gender, Crenshaw takes into consideration three different cases: the first one is *De Graffenreid v. General Motors*² the second one is *Moore v. Hughes Helicopter, Inc.*³, while the third is *Payne v. Travenol*⁴. In her opinion, these three cases represent “doctrinal manifestations of a common political and theoretical approach to discrimination which operates to marginalize Black women”⁵. These cases have been used as an arguments of intersection of race, class and gender to form one and unique pure identity within social movements as such women suffrage and emancipation on the Civil Rights of 1960s. She puts emphasis on single characteristic’s analysis on the compound discrimination which excluded women from employment opportunities because of their race, class and gender as she claims:

People are all unique we come from different ethnic background and place we all in turn experience things differently and particularly discrimination, as it can take many forms you cannot disregard the discrimination of others just because you have never experienced it yourself⁶.

To clarify more, in the first case *De Graffenreid v. General Motors* Crenshaw uses five black women who work in a factory owned by a white industrialist. In fact, this factory is a racially segregated and gendered one. In this case, discrimination is directed only to black women excluding white women, and black man, and they were (black in general) are protected only if they share the same experiences. Indeed, the intersection of this discrimination motivates the individual to look for economic and social equality.

In the second, in *Moore u. Hughes Helicopter, Inc.*, these same Black woman brought a class action claim, both gender and race discrimination in the employer's practices. Therefore, Crenshaw reveals on the narrow scope of antidiscrimination doctrine and the centrality of the white female experiences in the conceptualization of gender and class discrimination rather than racial inequality, as she asserts:

In order for Moore to represent the class of women, even in a disparate impact case, she was required to allege sex discrimination claims separately. Once Moore claimed discrimination as a "Black women" she narrowed the scope of her claim and placed herself at odds with White women⁷.

Moreover, these women had successfully overcome any belief of discrimination as “a significant disparity between men and women and somewhat less disparately between black and white men in supervisory job”⁸. Indeed, she also refers in this case to the notion of white women and their supreme position in a hierarchy or legal understanding of women and it is served as an illustration of racial privileges.

The third case, In *Payne v. Travenol*, two Black women brought a class action suit alleging on race discrimination on behalf of all the Black employees and later amended the complaint to include sex discrimination. Thus, *Travenol* was a partial victory for black women. This case specifically illustrates how antidiscrimination doctrine generally creates a dilemma for black females, as they have to choose between either risking ability to represent black man or ignoring intersectionality, in order to state a claim that would not lead them to the exclusion of the black⁹.

Overall, Crenshaw's three cases can be considered as a kind or type of political discrimination and marginalization that operates on black women's intersectional experiences. Crenshaw examines the ways race and gender intersects and influence women's conception of their identities. She maintains that the marginalization and discrimination of black women's strikingly and heavily influenced by the categories of race, class and identity . Furthermore, she

states that the contemporary feminist and antiracist discourse limits the forms of violence exercised against women to battering and rape. On account of this, she insists on examining the intersecting dimensions of race, gender and class and the impact they exerted on black identities¹⁰.

2-Materials

Synopsis of Zora Neal Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937)

Their Eyes Were Watching God is a novel written by the Afro-American author Zora Neal Hurston in 1937. It is considered as a master piece and a prominent literary text of the Harlem Renaissance and the Afro-American literature. Overall, the novel portrays the story and the life-journey of a black woman, whose name is Janie. It starts with the return of this black woman from burying Tea Cake, her first dead husband. After this incident, Hurston invites the reader to discover the journey of Janie, the main character from the plantation of her grandmother, Nanny, into the tragic end of her life, with her friend Pheoby. All along the novel, the reader is also told that Janie Crawford is a woman of a mixed blood or race, of both black and white parents. Besides, the most influential experience of Janie's hard life was her three unhappy and disastrous marriages, as she seeks a true love in post slavery society. At this moment, she had asked herself two important questions "did marriage and the cosmic loneliness"¹¹ had any sense and "did marriage compel love, the sun and the day"¹².

Furthermore, the reader is also told that Janie gets married at the request of her grandmother Nanny, with a wealthier old man named Logan kellys, a local farmer and an oppressive husband. In this marriage, Janie suffered from the domination and the mistreatment of Logon. After threatening to kill her, she leaves him for the ambitious Joe Starks, the second husband who takes her to Eatonville, Florida, the first American black city, where she lives the high life as the mayor's wife. However, she finds that her second husband

likewise the first one has a rigid attitude as concerns the role of women in society. Janie cannot bear any more the domination of her husband. Few days later, he is in the death bed and later Janie lived the rest of her life as a happy widow.

Finally, Janie meets the love of her life, Tea Cake, younger than her twelve years. They love each other and moved to Everglades where, Tea Cakes works for his own business. Unfortunately, the happy yeas of Janie did not last long because of the Disaster of Hurricane where Tea Cake had been warned many times but he chooses to stay rather than saving his life .Hence, the disaster has attained all the inhabitants of Everglade. While feeling the storm, Tea Cake saved Janie from a ferocious dog but he was beaten. After that, Tea Cake gets rabies and his natural jealousy turned into aggressive and paranoia toward Janie. At the end, Janie is forced to shoot her husband to protect herself, and then in a trial she was punished for murder, and returned to Eatonville where she meets her old friends, Watson and Pheoby.

Synopsis of James Baldwin's The Fire Next Time (1963)

The Fire Next Time is a collection of essays written by James Baldwin in 1963. It is considered as an important document in the Afro- American history. It contains two essays which describe the current issues and problems of the Negro in contemporary America during the early years of 1960s and the Civil Right Movements. The essays also shed light on the racial tension between the whites and blacks in contemporary modern America. Baldwin divides his writing it into two essays, the first one is: ***“The Dungeon Shook: Letter to my Nephew on the One Hundred Anniversary of the Emancipation”*** . In this first essay, he warns his nephew about racial injustice in America and he also urges him to live peacefully with white American rather than seeking revenge for the old abuses by which his forefathers have been forced to endure.

The second essay is entitled: “***Down at the Cross: Letters from Region in My Mind***” is directed or addressed to the American public readership. The essay is divided it into three sections. The first section speaks about Baldwin’s personal experience of his childhood and growing up while facing racism. The second section refers to the Black Nationalism and the narrow minded thinking of religion on racism and the relationship between religion and race. Indeed, in the final section of essay, Baldwin proclaims the attitude of both black and white Americans. He concludes with a solution by claiming that black and white should accept each other in an integrated nation, as he states “to create one nation, it had proved to be hideously difficult tasks. There is certainly no need now to create two one black and one white”¹² in other words, Baldwin holds out to a better future for the next black generation in America.

End Notes

¹Crenshaw,Kimberley. “*Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, FeministTheory and Antiracist Politics*” University of Chicago Legal ForumVol. 130 Iss. 1, Article 8.Harvard University Press(1989) p139.

²Ibid.p163

³Ibid.p 141

⁴Ibid. p142

⁵Ibid. p143

⁶Ibid. p159

⁷Ibid. p145

⁸Ibid. p132

⁹Ibid. p140

¹⁰Ibid. p151

¹¹Huston, Zora Neal. ***Their Eyes Were Watching God*** .New York .Modern classic .p1-369.

¹²Ibid. p26

¹³ Baldwin, James, **The Fire Next Time**, Dial publishing company. Penn State University Press. (1963). Pp. 1-125.

Results

In this section of our dissertation, we will shed light on the general findings of our comparative study by focusing on the issue of race, class and the quest for identity in Zora Neal Hurston's **Their Eyes Were Watching God** and James Baldwin's **The Fire Next Time**. By using William Kimberly Crenshaw's theoretical concepts, we come to say that what bind the two works together is their authors' emphasis on the issue of gender, class and the whites misinterpretation of religion which characterized the hi/story of America during the Harlem Renaissance and the Post- Cold period respectively. This draws us to say that if we have borrowed some theoretical and analytical concepts from Crenshaw's theory is to better understand the author's common concerns in their respective works, by focusing mainly on how their portrayal of their main characters so that to fit the they concepts of this theory.

Our exploration of the two works under study has shown also that both authors have the same Afro-American cultural heritage of the Harlem Renaissance. The Afro-American culture enabled them to write about the same issue as their description and self-representation of their characters particularly the blacks, including Janie as well as James 'nephew, this is the denunciation of racism, since both Hurston and Baldwin witness discrimination and segregation of the whites, from their early childhood, as they lived in isolated spaces with limited opportunities of life. Throughout our reading of Crenshaw theory, we have learned that her analysis of the black poor women also turned around the intersection of racial and class oppression, discrimination and to find a real identity. Therefore, we have deduced that the same discrimination of race and classes are tackled in both works.

On the whole, our comparative study has revealed that Zora Neal Hurston's **Their Eyes Were Watching God** and James Baldwin's **The Fire Next Time** share a lot of aspects mainly at the level of theme such as race, class division, and quest for belonging, although

they are different in genre a novel and an essay and also in the construction as well as the development of the stories.

Discussion

Chapter One: Race in *Their Eyes Were Watching God* and *The Fire Next Time*

As far as our work is concerned, race and racism are the common themes which are widely explored in the Afro-American literature. Therefore, in the following chapter we will discuss and analyze the issue of race in Zora Neal Hurston's selected novel as well as in Baldwin's selected essays. In fact, in reading both narratives, the authors present to us different stories about the lives of black American at different periods of time. Both authors deliberately elaborate racism in a white racist America, and link it to the feature of the second class-citizen and other various ways of discrimination and xenophobia to which the black community in general was targeted.

According to the Oxford English Dictionary (2008), race refers to —a large group of people distinguished from others on the basis of a common heritage, physical characteristics of skin and color¹. In other words, all human beings belong to a —single species and share a common origin, they are born equal in dignity and rights and all form an integral part of humanity¹. This means that, race can be understood as a concept that signifies and symbolizes sociopolitical conflicts and benefits as well in reference to different types of human bodies². Indeed, it denotes a fundamental division of humanity and encompassing cultural as well as physical traits.

In order to elaborate and discuss more the concept of race in both works, we have made appeal to Kimberly Crenshaw's theory as explained in "*Demarginalizing, the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics*" (1989), to understand the author's exploration of this common theme. On the one hand, in *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, Hurston tells us a story of a black American female character who

leads a particular life opposed to the rest of American society, because of her African origin. She is seen by others as an unusual human being because of her mixed blood and ethnic belonging. In this context, we may read the following words in Crenshaw's theory:

Black women encounter combined race and discrimination implies that that boundaries of sex and race Discrimination doctrine are defined respectively by white women's black men's experiences. Under this view, black women are protected only to the extent that their experiences coincide with those of either the two groups³.

From the above quotation, Crenshaw wants to say that black women encounter race discrimination in labor and factories owned by white American in their different ways, and black woman will be protected only if they share the same experience with the white woman.

To link the above arguments to Hurston's novel, we find in the latter the portrayal of Nanny, the grandmother of Janie as she tells her stories about her life during the period of slavery and how she admired or desired the easy life of white people during that period of time in America. Nanny dreamed that one day her next generation will live in America without gendered, ethnic stereotypes, and without discrimination. In order to do so, she teaches Janie to be strong and build her own life without the help of the white people: "de nigger is de mule de world"⁴. Therefore, she did not want her small daughter to replicate and live a very similar life under racism.

Furthermore, Janie is described as someone who gets married three times. Hence, her two first failed marriages reflect her journey from slavery toward liberty, recognition, love, happiness and freedom. Thus, in her two first marriages, she suffered a lot of humiliation, oppression, and she is considered as an object of possession this is why she renounced to her two marriages for her own freedom:

You behind a plow! You ain't got no mo' business wid uh plow than uh hog is got wid uh holiday! You ain't got no business cuttin' up no seed p'taters neither. A pretty doll-baby lak you is made to sit on de front porch and rock and fan yo'self and eat p'taters dat other folks plant just special for you⁵.

Throughout her life, she encounters many difficulties, as the white supremacy, subordination while accepting the different rules ordered by the whites. In this regard, Crenshaw states in her book —**Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex a Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics**” say that “women of color less likely have their need to meet that women who are racially privileged”⁶. In other words, Crenshaw wants to say that black women and men are less important in a conventional oppressed society and the opportunity of better life are given to white America rather than the black.

However, despite the different obstacles, oppression and discrimination, Janie fights to get her freedom and self-realization. She has dreamed all along her life to reach the horizon. Indeed, Janie plights represent the experience of black people under white supremacy, particularly the case of women. It is not easy for her to move through three marriages, move from town to town and from one man to another in such a conservative and controversial society and black woman are fighting the double oppression that’s of race and being woman therefore, Kimberly Crenshaw asserts that:

Black women are perceived as a compound class because they are two steps removed from a white male norm. While white males are apparently not perceived to be a compound class because they somehow represent the norm⁷.

The issue of race is also described in the narrative by Hurston in the scene of the beloved of Janes where, he is asked and ordered by the white man to dig the grave for them. Ironically however, Tea Cake is no longer a slave. Therefore, he does not work for the white, but rather for his own benefits and private business.

Hence, the white men treated him as such, because his ancestors are only there to obey the order of the white Americans. Notwithstanding the many constraints and abuses on the Afro-American, the latter, are so determined and ambitious in their long struggle for social equality and civil rights⁸ as Hurston asserts:

Two (white) men coming towards with rifles on their shoulder m!ù ay be when they saw he had money thy would realize he was not tramp datwhut we want yuh –not don‘ nothing‘come on less go bury some uh dese heah dead folks .dey an _t gttin buried fast enough⁹ .

Furthermore, the murder of Tea Cake who is the last husband of Janie is another evidence which shows Hurston’s worry about the degree of racism in America .Thus, during the trial, it is the white jury who will decide about Janie’s guilt or innocence. The judge is a white; the twelve men in the jury are whites. They stood in the front, while the black in the back; they do not get a chance to testify against Janie. Therefore, they insist that if the victim is white, Janie is guilty and responsible of murder as the author says: “She didn’t kill any white man, did she? Well, long as she don’t shoot no white man she kin kill jus as many niggers as she pleases”¹⁰.By showing the white Americans in the position of authority, Hurston draws the real image of racism and how the white community controls the blacks. In this regard Crenshaw asserts:

The court failed to see that the absence of racial reference does not necessarily mean that the claim being made is more inclusive one .white woman claiming discrimination against females may be in no better position to represent all women than black women who claim discrimination as wants to represent all females¹¹ .

In fact, the above incident in the novel reminds us about the movement that would take place in the 1970s, when Rosa Park a black female figure refuses to let her place in the bus for the white.It is worth to mention that under such circumstances, many Afro-American have lost confidence on themselves, as they were no longer motivated as it is shown in the novel: “honey de white man is de ruler of everything as fur as ah been able tuh find out”¹² .

This means that the blacks seem unable to change their current situation and have accepted their fate and inferiority, as Crenshaw argues:

While white women and men of color also experience discrimination, all too often their experiences are taken as the only point of departure for all conversations about discrimination. Being front and center in conversations about racism or sexism is a complicated privilege that is often hard to see¹³.

In addition to this, Hurston presents another character that embodies the white superiority. This character Mrs. Turner who sees herself superior to other black, because she has a lighter skin and features that resemble the white women, she says:

Ah ain't got no flat nose and liver lips. Ah'm uh featured woman. Ah got white folks' features in my face. Still and all Ah got to be lumped in wid de rest. It ain't fair. Even if dey don't take us in wid de whites, dey oughta make us uh class tuh ourselves¹⁴.

Mrs. Turner is affected by the white ideals of beauty. She thinks that having a lightened skin and straight hair made her believe of white centered that the lighten skin and straight hair made of her to be at the top of society, while a woman with a dark skin and curly hair is at the bottom of that same society. With her erroneous belief, Mrs. Turner falls victim of white stereotypes of superiority, as she believes that white standers of beauty are sign of superiority. Indeed, she maintains a racial view towards the darker skinned people¹⁵, as she tells Janie: "Ah can't stand black niggers. Ah don't blame de white folks from hatin em cause Ah can't stand em mahself. Nother thing, Ah hates tuh see folks lak me and you mixed up wid em. Us oughta class off"¹⁶.

In the same way as of Hurston's work, James Baldwin's **The Fire Next Time** tackles the same issue of race and racism. Before starting the analysis of this theme, we have made first a look to the meaning of the title of his essays and we come to say that Baldwin's title is not gratuitous, but rather it connotes a meaning and a purpose as showing his great influence and inspiration from a Christian religious episode which comes from black song lyric that means God give Noah the rainbow sign no more water in the Biblical story of Noah and arc.

In other words, God will destroy the world during the day judgment except that of Noah and his family. Thus, he uses it as a metaphor to show the mistreatment of the whites toward the Afro-American of the 1960s. In this context Crenshaw argues :

De Graffenreid, Moore and Travenol are doctrinal manifestations of a common political and theoretical approach to discrimination which operates to marginalize Black women. Unable to grasp the importance of Black women's intersectional experiences, not only courts, but feminist and civil rights thinkers as well have treated Black women in ways that deny both the unique compounders of their situation and the centrality of their experiences to the larger classes of women and Blacks. Black women are regarded either as too much like women or Blacks and the compounded nature of their experience is absorbed into the collective experiences of either group or as too different, in which case Black women's Blackness or femaleness sometimes has placed their needs and perspectives at the margin of the feminist and Black liberationist agendas¹⁷.

Furthermore, Baldwin's essays: "**My Dungeon Shook: Letter to My Nephew on the One Hundred Anniversary of Emancipation**" and the second one: "**Down to the Cross: Letter from a Region in my Mind**" can be seen as a bridge to his nephew James to demonstrate his own experiences of racial discrimination and segregation that occurred in the mid-1900s for all the black community as well¹⁸. He asserts that people were mistreated because of their nationality, beliefs, and ethnic differences as Crenshaw again argues:

Black women are diminished because it evolves from a white racial context that is seldom acknowledged. Not only are women of color in fact overlooked, but their exclusion is reinforced when *white* women speak for and as women. The authoritative universal voice-usually white male subjectivity masquerading as non-racial, non-gendered objectivity-is merely transferred to those who, but for gender, share many of the same cultural, economic and social characteristics¹⁹.

Although there is much hatred, lack of understanding, segregation among the people, yet Americans of today is quite different from the Americans that Baldwin described. With time as well with social and economic changes, most Americans learned to accommodate themselves to the different challenges and new realities of modern America.

Throughout his essay, Baldwin wants to destroy the different stereotypes, prejudices and the image of inferiority, subjugation by which black have been associated to for so long. In the first essay: *“My Dudgeon Shook: Letter to My Nephew in the One Hundred Anniversary of Emancipation”*, he tries to show the real image of his nephew putting him in the context of the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863. He writes lines in forms of letter to transmit a heading message to a young James which is to face a reality and find a real root of the “Negro problems, the mistreatment and the limitation placed beyond the black community”²⁰.

Moreover, Baldwin is a privileged eye witness of the black experiences as a writer, he is legitimist to write about these Afro-American, then he mixes his experience of growing up as a black man in Harlem. He tries to explore the issue of racism by showing that the white people are powerful than the black and had a great impact on the African American history. He also makes his nephew believes what a white people say about him as he asserts: as Crenshaw says:

Racism can be meaningfully discussed without paying attention to the lives of those other than the race-gender- or class-privileged. As result, both feminist theory and antiracist politics have been organized, in part, around the equation of racism with what happens to the Black²².

Subsequently, in his work, and mainly in *“The Down at the Cross: Letter from a Region in My Mind”*, Baldwin highlights the importance and the relationship that exists between religion and race, and how it impacted negatively both whites and blacks. Indeed, Baldwin refers to his experience with Christian church as a young, and the Islamic ideals in Harlem. These ideals lead him to depict white Americans as a restricted community with a “given purity” that makes him either innocent or ignorant to the instability of racial identities. He also ironically rejects the Christian faith because it has historically been used to oppress blacks dating back to a pre- Emancipation as he asserts in the essay: “If the concept of God has any validity or any use, it can only be to make us larger, freer, and more loving, if God cannot do this, then it is time we got rid of Him”²³.

In addition Baldwin sums up his experience of escape from the constraints of white oppression which controls the black community. However, he learns eventually that Christianity was full of hypocrisy and was primarily used to achieve the power of white over other races. The Christian religious could not construct African American' life better freer, or more loving because Baldwin was typically appealing to put them down. In other words, African Americans could not find liberation or freedom through Christianity, which was an inherently Christian religion. Thus, they should overcome this belief instead of continuing to hold religion as a possible means to escape the discrimination²⁴.

Additionally, Baldwin's meeting with Elijah Mohammed (the father figure of Islam in United states) is another episode that demonstrates how religion favored the oppression and racism over the black. He also struggles with the debate of how black people be supposed to move toward the problem of land in America. It is worth mentioning that Elijah's followers believe that African Americans must create a united black community if they want to have any power and a sense of individuality without any dependence on the whites. However, Baldwin points out that this is economically unrealistic, because African Americans have always relied on the American economy, and they would struggle if suddenly separated from white economy. Indeed, he believes that the best path to a better future is one that keeps African Americans in America, working to make it better from the privileged. Nevertheless, he recognizes that Elijah and his followers present a real threat for blacks, because they have nothing to lose²⁶, as he says in the following quote:

This is why the most dangerous creation of any society is that man who has nothing to lose. You do not need ten such men one will do. And, I should imagine, has had nothing to lose since the day he saw his father's blood rush outrush down, and splash, so the legend has it, down through the leaves of a tree, on him²⁷.

In this quotation, Baldwin shows his disagreement with the Nation of Islam, and the Leader's ideology and narrow-minded thinking of its followers because; most of their ideas privileged the white supremacy over the black.

The last part of the essay, “*Down at The Cross: Letter from My Region in My mind*” shows that the experiences of Baldwin with Christianity and the Nation of Islam leads him to reject religion as a means to improve the offense of racial tension in 1960s in America. Baldwin sees that the solution to free the American community and change other Negro problem is to abandon the philosophy of Christian faith, because it is not applied through the act of love, but instead served as a tool for white supremely power to oppress Afro-American²⁸. He also adds that “color is not a human or a personal reality; it is a political reality”²⁹. He wants to shed light on the issue of racism presented in history and how myth-making, clichés and stereotypes in racial behavior and politics destroy the wholeness of human beings and how the black were dismissed, oppressed and considered as inferior individuals and such a notion is absolutely to black American or what we call the Negroes. Thus, they are governed by white supreme power.

It is important to remind that in the American political field, the black have note the freedom of speech ,but black succeeded to have some access to the political field , during reconstruction for example sixteen Afro-American members in the congress, it was not an important rate but post-civil war period offered some new perspective for the black community in the political domains these reconstruction achievements and revived with civil rights movement acts .As Crenshaw asserts:

Black men, live in a community that has been defined and subordinated by color and culture although patriarchy clearly operates within the Black community, presenting yet another source of domination to which Black women are vulnerable, the racial context in which Black women find themselves makes the creation of a political consciousness that is oppositional to Black men difficult³⁰.

Moreover, Baldwin also states that in order to improve race-relations in America, white people should first avoid looking for blacks with prejudices, stereotypes. Indeed, the teaching and the philosophy of the church also would be reviewed in the sense that, the church will provide a teaching for both whites and the blacks to co-exist in one single united nation to live in peace and dignity, “race can also be a coalition of straight and gay people of

Color, and thus serve as a basis for critique of churches and other cultural institutions that reproduce heterosexism”³¹.

Baldwin addresses the importance of the term integration(they integrate the white world model) to tell his nephew, James, that integration means adapting oneself with whites. Otherwise, this would be counterproductive and destructive for African Americans, since they are based on the ideas that they are inferior. In this way, Baldwin encourages his nephew to think of this integration as a process of teaching Black Americans to learn and see themselves equal as the whites. Once they achieve this, they may live with whites in peace without race descrimination³².

Please try to be clear through the storm which rages about your youthful head today, about the reality which lies behind the words acceptance and integration. There is no reason for you to try to become like white people and there is no basis whatever for their impertinent assumption that they must accept you. The really terrible thing ...is that you must accept the rule ³³.

Baldwin’s writing seeks desperately to define his racial existence as an Afro-American. He attempts to awaken the cultural consciousness of the blacks during his lifetime. Throughout his two essays which compose *The Fire Next Time*, he makes an appeal to the new generation of the black to examine the past heritage to understand the present so that to reach and gain certain racial consideration in contemporary America³⁴.

To conclude, it is important to say that both selected works are grounded on the experience of black people in America as we have demonstrated all along the chapter in the characters of both literary works **There Eyes Were Watching God** and **The Fire Next Time** Racial discrimination is the most important articulation in the Afro-American literature used to enhance and stimulate the blacks to change their attitudes, behaviors and current situation for a better life, because the black involvement in racism intersects with class and religious segregation.

End Notes:

¹ *English, Oxford Dictionary*. University press, fourth edition, edited by: Victoria bull. (2008) p361

² [http :// www. Grade save, //social class ,org //study guide](http://www.Grade save, //social class ,org //study guide) accessed in (23/10/2018)

³ Crenshaw.Kimberly”*Demarginalizing the intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics*” University of Chicago Legal Forum vol1. Issue, 03 article 8 (1989), p.143.

⁴ Hurston Zora Neal: *Their Eyes were Watching God* .New York modern classic.(1973)

⁵ Ibid,p15.

⁶ Crenshaw. Kimberly, “*Demarginalizing the intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics*” University of Chicago Legal Forum vol130.iss.3 article 8 (1989),p.144.

⁷ Ibid,p155

⁸ Brenda M. Greene, "Addressing Race, Class, and Gender in Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God*: Strategies & Reflections," *English Education* 27, no. 4 (1995).

⁹ Hurston Zora Neal: *Their Eyes were Watching God*, (1973), New York modern classics, p.169.

¹⁰ Ibid.p.235.

¹¹ Crenshaw. Kimberly,”*Demarginalizing the intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics*” University of Chicago Legal Forum vol130.iss.3 article 8 (1989),p144

¹² Zora Hurston Neal: *Their Eyes were Watching God* (1973),New York modern classics,p125

¹³ Ibid, p134

¹⁴ Zora Hurston Neal: *Their Eyes were Watching God*(1973),New York modern classics,p130

¹⁵ Tasharofi1, Parmis and Shahram Afrougheh. “Nanny’s Slave Narrative in Zora Neale Hurston’s *Their Eyes Were Watching God*: A Black Feminist Reading”. *Anthropologist*(2014): 751-759. Web. Accessed on 22/09/2018

- ¹⁶ Zora Hurston Neal: *Their Eyes were Watching God*(1973),New York modern classics,p
- ¹⁷ Crenshaw. Kimberly, *Demarginalizing the intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics* University of Chicago Legal Forum vol130.iss.3 article 8 (1989),p137
- ¹⁸ Will Walker, —*After the Fire Next Time: James Baldwin's Postconsensus Double Bind*, in Eddie S. Glaude, Jr. (ed.), *Is It Nation Time?* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press,(2002), p. 217.
- ¹⁹ Crenshaw. Kimberly, *Demarginalizing the intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics* University of Chicago Legal Forum vol130.iss.3 article 8 (1989),p131
- ²⁰ Walton Muyumba, —*'All Safety Is an Illusion': John Dewey, James Baldwin, and the Democratic Practice of Public Critique*, in Brian Jackson and Gregory Clark (eds.), *Trained Capacities: John Dewey, Rhetoric, and Democratic Practice* (Columbia, S.C.,University of South Carolina Press, 2014), p. 160.
- ²¹ Ibid p .167
- ²² Crenshaw. Kimberly, *Demarginalizing the intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics* University of Chicago Legal Forum vol130.iss.3 article 8 (1989),p142
- ²³ Christopher Freeburg, —*James Baldwin and the Unhistoric Life of Race*, *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 112:2 (2013), p. 231
- ²⁴ Locke, Alain, —*The Concept of Race as Applied to Social Culture*, in L. Harris (ed.), *The Philosophy of Alain Locke: Harlem Renaissance and Beyond* (Philadelphia, PA, Temple University Press, 1989), p 188
- ²⁵ Ibid,p89
- ²⁶ James Baldwin, *The Fire Next Time*, in New York: Dial Press, 1963,p22
- ²⁷ Ibid ,p45
- ²⁸ Ibid ,p69
- ²⁹ Ibid,p73

³⁰Crenshaw. Kimberly, *Demarginalizing the intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics* University of Chicago Legal Forum vol130.iss.3 article 8 (1989),p156

³¹Ibid,p164

³²Terkel, Studs. —*An Interview with James Baldwin. Conversations with James*

Baldwin". Ed. Fred L. Standley & Louis H. Pratt, Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1989.P 69

³³Ibid, p16

³⁴Ibid, p 25.

Chapter Two: Class Division in *Their Eyes Were Watching God* and the Fire Next Time

The following chapter highlights the issue of class division. To explore this issue, we will make use of Kimberly Crenshaw's study of multiple discriminations toward mainly the black woman in both works and how class can be one main axis of social inequalities. In fact, Crenshaw describes the realities of poor black women as being victims of triple discriminations that's of class and race, as for instance, how does labor mark cause sexual violence and lead the white masters to consider women's body as their possession.

Again, according to the English Oxford Dictionary (2008), class is defined as "a system of ordering society whereby people are divided into sects based on perceived social or economic status"¹. Class conflicts arise when material resources, social status and power are not equally distributed between groups in a given society, and these conflicts become the engine for social changes. In other words, class is a status of individuals and groups are classified on the basis of esteem and prestige acquired mainly through economic success and accumulation of wealth².

In relationship to the above definition of class division, we find that throughout the history of the Afro-Americans, the white community is considered to be the mainstream and the dominate culture that had the power to divide social classes in order to distinguish between the whites and the blacks. Bearing in mind such racial classification, in Hurston's ***Their Eyes Were Watching God***, the class division is shown on the characterization of the Hurston, for instance depicts the female character Janie from the very beginning as a victim of social and economic discrimination by her dominating husbands. Therefore, Janie changes the setting and even the social status, starting with her first husband, a wealthier black man chosen to Janie by her grandmother Nanny³. Logan kellys had in his mind the idea of domination

power over women. Janie's social position in this context is at the bottom and the mercy of her powerful husband, as she has no considerable respects in his life. He treats her as a servant the same way the white did within black slaves. He considers Janie as an object of possession as the author argues in the words of Logon: "Considerin' youse born in a carriage thout no top to it, and yo' mama and you bein' born and raised in de white folk's back-yard"⁴.

Moreover, Joe Starks who is Janie's second husband is another evidence of class division. She describes Joe as being the hard worker and successful business man, the mayor of Eatonville (an all-black community in Florida). He is so proud of his material possession as Hurston says: "power ... property ... and everything else"⁵. Therefore, the position of Janie with Joe in this context is still lower and at the bottom, even if she is the mayor's wife. After the death of Joe, Janie finally relieves the burden of the submissive wife of the two husbands. However, she had inherited the wealth of Joe which leads her to move from a working class woman to a respected woman in Eatonville. Hence, the third husband Tea Cake was blinded by her fortune. Tea Cake wants to affirm power line authority ultimately controlled and dominated Janie⁶, and this is shown when Hurston says:

Before the week was over, he had whipped Janie. Not because her behavior justified his jealousy, but it relieved that awful fear inside him. Being able to whip her reassured him in possession. No brutal beating at all. He just slapped her around a bit to show he was boss. Everybody talked about it next day in the fields. It aroused a sort of envy in both men and women⁷.

In this quotation, Hurston wants to show that the power and the male domination can be considered as a means of oppression, and social division between blacks and white, but also between male and females. In the widely held belief of many white Americans, the blacks do not constitute a norm, but rather a compound class since they are not equal to whites.

The new economic stability and the newly accumulated wealth of Janie indicate clearly Hurston's emphasis on the issue of social and even gendered division. Thus, when Janie inherited the fortune of her husband Joe, this elevated her at the top of society. However, despite her new social status, her life remained unchanged because she is still the victim of male oppression, and, she is not accepted as bourgeois by black bourgeois, and white supreme authority, as it was the case mainly for all the Afro-American community of the nineteenth and the twentieth century. In the novel, we read the following words by Logan Killicks: "You ain't got no particular place. It's wherever Ah need yuh"⁹; Starks: "uh woman and her place is in de home"¹⁰ Tea Cake: "Janie is wherever Ah wants tuh be"¹¹. In this way, Janie is suffering from a different discrimination, that of white and that of her male dominating husband.

Furthermore, Hurston shows the class division and discrimination through the character Nanny, the grandmother of Janie. In fact, Nanny remembers always her nightmare memories when she was a servant of the white masters. Hence, this scene depicts clearly the inferior social position of the Afro-American mainly women as she argues: "De nigger woman is de mule uh de world so fur as Ah can see. Ah been prayin' fuh it tuh be different wid you. Lawd, Lawd, Lawd!"¹². In addition, the power of the white American can be considered as another argument to show the social differences and position in a male dominated community, as Hurston asserts: "De white man is the ruler of everything as fur as ben able tuh find out the white man throw down de load and tell the nigger man tuh pick it up .he pick it up because he have to, but he don't tote it .he hand it to his women folks"¹³.

Hurston demonstrates that the power of the white master made them at the top of the social hierarchy, because God give them purity while the niggers are at the bottom. Thus,

the white Americans are privileged and have all opportunities of life, in contrast to the black who are less powerful as they are just there to assume the difficult tasks and ensure a better life for the whites. The idea of America as being two nations one white nation of privilege , power dominating force rich and the other one is that of black American of powerless segregated , poor economically unstable and politically absent this is the social disparity that exists in united states at that time . In this regard Crenshaw declares:

Intersectional representation were routinely permitted, employees might accept the possibility that there is more to gain by collectively challenging the hierarchy rather than by each discriminate individually seeking to protect her source of privilege within the hierarchy. But as long as antidiscrimination doctrine proceeds from the premise that employment systems need only minor adjustments, opportunities for advancement by disadvantaged employees will be limited¹⁴.

This means that despite the social improvements of the black women, the latter still remain dominated because in the white racist America white women have got all the privileges and this is because of the interaction of class differences.

The last scene in **Their Eyes Were Watching God** is so interesting because it shows that in the time of storms as the Hurricane, the black were the more exposed than the whites. More than this, it is the whites who were given preferential treatments, while the black were ignored or neglected. Indeed, they do not receive any treatments. In the same path with Hurston, Crenshaw claims:

Moore illustrates one of the limitations of antidiscrimination law's remedial scope and normative vision. The refusal to allow a multiply-disadvantaged class to represent others who may be singularly- disadvantaged defeats efforts to restructure the distribution of opportunity and limits remedial relief to minor adjustments within an established hierarchy. Consequently, "bottom-up" approaches those which combine all discriminates in order to challenge an entire employment system, are foreclosed by the limited view of the wrong and the narrow scope of the available remedy. If such "bottom-up" intersectional representation were routinely permitted, employees might accept the possibility that there is more to gain by collectively challenging the hierarchy rather than by each discriminate individually seeking to protect her source of privilege within the hierarchy¹⁵.

Like Hurston, Crenshaw wants to say that because of class division, the black people like Moore cannot pledge in trials even for the black women.

Hurston's closing chapters in **Their Eyes Were Watching God** provides us with an evidence of ethnic and class differences which defined the social position of the character. In fact, Janie and Tea Cake are exposed to the instance of prejudice of social classes and racial differences¹⁶ as Hurston says:

Everybody was talking about it that night. But nobody was worried. The fire dance kept until nearly dawn. The next day, more Indians moved east, unhurried but steady. Still a blue sky and fair weather. Beans running fine and prices good, so the Indians must be wrong. You couldn't have a hurricane when you're making seven and eight dollars a day picking beans. Indians are dumb anyhow, always were¹⁷.

Moreover, throughout the whole novel, the black are presented as the lower class citizen, while the whites are described as being superior and create a dividing line from the Negro. Hence, the protagonist Janie had challenged the constraint of male domination and the mistreatment of white by moving from a poor life to a wealthier one. This can be a form of protest against the limitations drawn on the African American of the 19th and the 20th century.

Likewise, Hurston's work, Baldwin's *The Fire Next Time* tackles the same issue of social status related to one's wealth, heredity and power. It determines one's importance in a given society. In his first short essay, "**My Dungeon Shook Letter to My Nephew on the one Hundred Anniversary of Emancipation**", he portrays the inferiority of the blacks, as being oppressed and victimized by the power and the intensive abuse of the white American. The essay demonstrates different sub-communities of the Negro described as the low citizens in Harlem.¹⁹ This is shown for instance in the very brief sketches of his mother:

Your grandmother was also there, and no one has ever accused her of being bitter. I suggest that the innocents check with her. She isn't hard to find. Your countrymen don't know that she exists ... though she has been working for them all their lives²⁰.

As the above quotation shows, Baldwin wants to show to his nephew James about the fact that his ancestors were slaves, which means that they were at the bottom of the American social hierarchy.

However, the white American community is another evidence of social status. Baldwin describes them as being powerful and had an important presence in society relaying on the well-known phrase about the white “people chosen by god to be the ruler of the world”. They existed in the mind of all the blacks, because they are the main source problem, pains and suffering of the black Afro- American in the years of 1960s .He also describes the culture of the white as being the norm and the standard of the black.

Baldwin claims that the status of the blacks in a stable white world functions only if they are stimulated by the white order. Therefore, their social positions are constructed from the historical stereotypes. Thus, the Americans embraced the idea of being superior and put the black at the bottom of this same social hierarchy. He says: “The black man has functioned in the white man's world as a fixed star, as an immovable pillar: and as he moves out of his place, heaven and earth are shaken to their foundations”²¹.

Moreover, the limitation over black opportunities is another way to show the inferior position of blacks. They were living in isolated places as slums and the suburb ghettos in Harlem, the city of New York, where they face harsh life and severe treatments of the white. Besides, Baldwin himself faced the same limitation, as when he was fourteen years old, he realizes that the different opportunities that life offered him are very limited. The few things he had have access are labor, farm, and sometimes musical performances in order to forget his pains. As a result, Baldwin chooses the church as the only path to escape these limitations and reach at least a spiritual freedom. Indeed, most of his fellow men and women encountered these limitations and begin to drop school because they felt that school will never bring them to a high level of social or economic success. As far as educational training is concerned and in contrast to W. DU Bois’ philosophy and policy of educational training of blacks, Baldwin believes that schooling is not a means of emancipation for the blacks; this is why he had rather chosen a religious training.

In this regard, he sent a letter to his nephew and warns him about the inferior status of their blackness and he tells him that he cannot achieve a better status because of the color skin: “You were born where you were born and faced the future that you faced because you were black and for no other reason. The limits of your ambition were, thus, expected to be set forever”²³.in this quotation is telling us about the pre- established inferiority.

In addition to this, in the context of class division and struggle, James Baldwin in the essay “**Letter from My Region in My Mind**” claims: “Whatever white people do not know about Negroes reveals, precisely and inexorable, what they do not know about themselves”²⁴. Therefore, in this quotation he wants to show that white are the pure race chosen by God to rule the world. **The Fire Next Time** elaborates the distinction between the white and the black to show two different social classes. As the author asserts:

The innocent country gets you down in ghetto in which in fact intended that that you should perish because you were black for no reason the limit of your ambition. Thus for American the Negro has so little freedom and power to direct his Owen affaires²⁵.

Baldwin second essay “**Down at the Cross Letter from a Region in my Mind**”, has a religious vision and focuses on his life and that of the Afro- American as a whole. Therefore the Christine teaching favored the white people over the black²⁶. In the same context Crenshaw sees on the privileges of race and sex and above all things, of being white in America as:

Race and sex, moreover, become significant only when they operate to explicitly disadvantage the victims; because the privileging of whiteness or maleness is implicit, it is generally not perceived at all²⁷.

To sum up, in post slavery America segregation, humiliation, dehumanization and social class division extended to all Afro Americans. This is why the black had never give up to fight class discrimination in order to live in an equal society with the whites we can say at the end of this chapter, the two selected works showmen the class tension and the social division exercised by the whites against the blacks. Additionally, the racial and class division are intersected together in the sense to motivate and enhance the Afro American consciousness to look and seek for subjective self-identity in order to confirm their existence.

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¹English *Oxford Dictionary* published university press ; 4rd edition(2008),p67

²LangstonHughes,<https://www.britannica.com/topic/socialclass>,lastmodifiedSeptemberh,(2018 accessed in (26/10/2018).

³Ash, Megan E. Cliff Notes *Hurston's Their Eyes Were Watching God*. New York: Hungry Minds, 2001. Accessed in (21/09/2018).

⁴Hurston, Zora Neale.*Their Eyes Were Watching God*. New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classic, 1937,P 89.

⁵ibid .p48.

⁶Giles, James R. —The *Significance of Time in Zora Neale Hurston's: Their Eyes Were Watching God*” *Negro American Literature Forum*, Vol. 6. No. 2 (summer, 1972) St. Louis University Press. pp. 52-60.

⁷Hurston, Zora Neale.*Their Eyes Were Watching God*. New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classic, 2006. Print p37.

⁸Hurston, Zora Neale. *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. In New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classic, 1937. p37.

¹⁰Ibid p51

¹¹Ibid p.173

¹²Ibid p177

¹³Ibid p17

¹⁴Ibid p14

¹⁵Crenshaw. Kimberly, —*Demarginalizing the intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics* University of Chicago Legal Forum Vol. 130 Iss. 1, Article 8. Harvard University Press (1989), p145

¹⁶Ferguson, Shelly-Ann. —*Folkloric Men and Female Growth in Their Eyes Were Watching God* “*Black American Literature Forum*, Vol. 21, No. 1/2 (Spring/Summer, 1987) St Louis University Press. pp. 185-197

¹⁷Isaacs, Harold.—*The New World of Negro Americans*”. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1963.

¹⁸Crenshaw. Kimberly, —*Demarginalizing the intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics* University of Chicago Legal Forum Vol. 130 Iss. 1, Article 8. Harvard University Press ((1989), p151

¹⁹Harold. Isaacs, —*The New World of Negro Americans*” New York: John Day Publishers, (1963), p.7.

²⁰James, Baldwin, *The Fire Next Time*, New York: Dial Press, (1963), p. 95.

²¹Crenshaw. Kimberly, —*Demarginalizing the intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics* University of Chicago Legal Forum Vol. 130 Iss. 1, Article 8. Harvard University Press (1989), p153

²²Daniel, Therman—*The Racial Nightmare*, ” Newsweek, LXI .The New York Times, (February 4, 1963), 81-82.

²³James, Baldwin, *The Fire Next Time*, New York: Dial Press, 1963, p 13

²⁴Ibid p23

²⁵Crenshaw. Kimberly, “*Demarginalizing the intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics*” University of Chicago Legal Forum Vol. 130 Iss. 1, Article 8. Harvard University Press (1989),p16.

Chapter Three: The Quest for Identity in Their Eyes Were Watching God and The Fire Next Time

The quest for belonging and the longing for a subjective identity are current themes and widely discussed topics in world literature mainly in the Afro-American literature. Therefore, the following chapter will be devoted to the study and exploration of the quest for identity in Hurston's and Baldwin's respective works.

As a starting point according to sociologists, the construction or development of a self-subjective identity implies the individual with his or her external influences. It is the result of both internal influence such as the psychological self within external influence such as sex, gender, and environment in general, where the individual evolves and lives. With time this same individual changes according to the changing of these influences and experiences. However, whenever we speak about identity, we are in fact trying to answer the question of who we are in reality¹.

In addition to this identity quest shown in the two works, as their eyes were watching god concerned it is important to say that in Hurston 'readers notices that from the beginning of the novel, she introduces the female characters mainly the protagonist Janie, as she says: "whose am belonging to"². She is looking for self-realization in American post-slavery. It has to be observed that in America, women are the most victims of prejudices of the white community. They exemplifier, the entire African American fighting for the liberation and the autonomy of the black identity. Then, she explores the image of women that have been drawn by Hurston in novel and how the characters tackle the issue of race, class and the way they undertake in order to find out their real subjective identity.

The first character who is portrayed as looking for subjective self-identity in Hurston's novel is Janie's grandmother Nanny. She does it in the narration of her old past and how the white people treated her daughter and herself. Hence, the story of her own life and

the white treatments motivate her into the manifestation of her inner involvement with black identity as she says:

You know , honey us colored folks is branches without roots and that makes things black due in slavery so it wasn't for me to fulfill my dreams . you can't baet nobody down so low till you rob'em, of they will .ah didn't wanted to preach to geart sermon about colored people sittin on high but wasn't no pulpit for me . Freedom found wide a baby daughter inmah arms, ah knowed her you was in de world³ .

In this quotation, Hurston shows that Nanny is totally self-preoccupied with the significance of being a black woman. She imagines herself as a leader in the absence of male leaders who abolishes slavery and gathering a joyful group of being free and independent with black identity. What is very significant in Nanny's stories is that she recounts them in a way to put emphasis on black self-construction and consciousness. Whenever she speaks, she attacks the white wrong doings.

Janie's different conversation tries to fashion her blackness and identity as she says "'Aw whereisme?⁴ Ah don't see Me.', aw! Ah'm colored!⁵ In this context, Hurston demonstrates that Janie is looking for her subjective self. Therefore, the pursuit of identity in Janie's life started early from her childhood. When she was a little young girl, she identifies herself according to her family background. For instance, her image is mirrored on the behalf of her grandmother Nanny as a model; a life of a black young girl in a white world, because her grandmother was a servant of the white masters, and all her life she is in contact with the white children. The process of the quest of belonging continues when Janie grows up, and becomes an adult woman, when she becomes the wife of three husbands with her —three marriages which show her really image of her life⁶ .

Indeed, Janie's construction and building up of her identity takes three different phases. The first phase is situated in her first marriage to Logan kellicks who makes her work inside and outside home, without any consideration. Indeed he considers her as an object he possesses. He never regards his wife neither as a partner nor as freed as himself. Instead, he thinks he can treat her with the same way the white master does with any slave. The second

phase of Janie's quest for identity is with Joe Starks who shaped her according to another stereotype which disturbed the image of the mule. He makes her work in labor field as an animal; however he never lets her speak in public spaces and even he forbids her to speak or have relationship with town's people in Eatonville as the author asserts: "the way Joe spoke out without giving her a chance to say anything one way or another [. . .] took the bloom off of things"⁷. She learns within Joe Stark's life that she cannot establish a kind of fulfillment or self-realization because she is in a double oppression. Within this context Kimberly Crenshaw argues: "as a result, the Black women -which, because of its intersectionality, is best able to challenge all forms of discrimination- are essentially isolated and often required to find ways for themselves"⁸.

The third phase comes when a new younger man named Tea Cake as a possessive love and authority walks into Janie's life. This third husband pretended to be the love of her life, as he encourages her to think freely and express herself. Although their relationship entails love, freedom and respect, it also involves abuse, jealousy and fear. However, despite Tea Cake's violence and bad treatments, Janie never blames him. In fact, she understands his insecurity, and realizes that the beating is an expression of possessive love and authority. Janie Crawford's quest here is to recover her own voice with a sense of autonomy. As an African-American woman, she ultimately manages to strike a balance between her individuality and the power of the males. As Hurston says: "is the quest theme-a character's personal search for a meaningful identity and for self-sustaining dignity in a world of growing isolation, meaninglessness and moral decay"⁹, Kimberly Crenshaw asserts that:

All of the women of color listed their race first, and then their gender. This seems to suggest that identity descriptions seem to begin with the primary source of opposition with whatever the dominant norm is¹⁰.

"I remember the very day that I became colored"¹¹. The essence of this quotation is to show the notion of blackness which played a major role in determining the New Negro

identity. By acknowledging their blackness there was no need to pretend to be anything else. To find the essence of blackness, the Afro-American should break with the ideals imposed on the black. In **Their Eyes Were Watching God**, the identity quest is shown in the town of Eatonville, governed by all the blacks who denied integration. In fact, the Afro- American of that town tried to renovate the black culture as such music, arts and literature. For instance, Eatonville was headed by Janie's husband the black man Joe Stark's. Hence, blackness and identity are inextricably linked together¹².

Furthermore, Hurston uses the folklorist tradition and southern dialect for the aim of presenting the Negroes as an example of self-assertiveness. Hurston puts a great emphasis on the language as an undeniable source of identity and empowerment. In **Their Eyes Were Watching God**, she uses southern dialect as an instrument of struggle and salvation of selfhood. To strengthen and elaborate more on this idea, we have taken the following words from the novel uttered by the protagonist Janie "ahsho didn't .wun't expectation fuh it be needed .de mane mah mama , gimme is vergible woods dey calls me tea cake for short"¹³ The above words of Hurston's use of the Afro-American dialect are used as a tool to celebrate the Afro-American cultural and linguistic heritage and black beautiful which played a pivotal role in forging Janie's identity.

Eventually, Hurston continues to demonstrate the ways of questing for identity, and how to reach the idea of self-realization. Thus, storytelling is an instrument to achieve the glorification of one self. For instance, when Janie returns back to Eatonville, she meets her best friend Pheoby with whom she shared and continues to share her personal story. As she starts to tell her thoughts and express her feelings to Pheoby, she establishes a bond with herself. For Hurston, it is throughout the narrative of the main character that she has fulfilled her voice after the harsh experiences. Hence, the conversation of Janie makes her able to

define her empowerment of the self in a racial oppressed American society¹⁴. What we may say from the above short analysis is that with the portrayal of Janie's self-journey, Hurston evokes the black quest for belonging in white racist America during her life time.

"People who cannot suffer can never grow up can never discover who they are"¹⁶. If we have started with Baldwin quotation it is in order to show that pains and suffering motivate the individual to grow and find really who he is. Therefore, likewise Hurston's work, James Baldwin's **The Fire Next Time** is also an important document of the Afro American history; which portrays the issue of identity as the black quest for belonging. In the first essay "**My Dungeon Shook: Letter to my Nephew on the one Hundred Anniversary of Emancipation**", he refers to his traumatic experience during his early childhood. In this way, his recourse to his past is made in order to understand the present and create a better future for the blacks and new generation. Thus, he advises and warns his nephew James about the fact of being black in America of 1960s. From the beginning of the essay, Baldwin describes his brother, the father of James as being a brave person who struggled for his identity; in order to show to his nephew that his father and ancestors struggled and fought for their black identity.

It has also to be observed that Baldwin's choice of the word "Negro" which had a negative connotation nowadays is not done in a randomly way, but rather Baldwin's choice of the word in his collection of essays is used in order to show the identity-crisis of the blacks. These words in fact show the importance of naming on one's identity. Indeed, these changing of names by the blacks reveal some consideration about the Afro-American subjective-self and their ancestral history of belonging:

I am called Baldwin because I was either sold by my African tribe or kidnapped out of it into the hands of a white Christian named Baldwin, who forced me to kneel at the foot of the cross. I am, then, both visibly and legally the descendant of slaves in a white, Protestant country, and this is what it means to be an American Negro ...¹⁷

In this quotation, Baldwin refers to his name being originally given to him by the men who owned (as slaves) his ancestors. His identity is literally being defined by whites - as it is, or so he suggests.

Baldwin in the second lengthy essay “**Dow at the Cross Letter from My Mind to My Region**” refers to religion as a means of finding one’s identity. For him, religion is the first step that enhances him to determine his identity. Baldwin attempts to establish a union with Christian God escaping the harsh circumstances and trying to determine his individuality in the church. However, he encounters the white teaching, which would not accept the Negro in the Christian church in a dilemma of questing for who they are¹⁸. He then confronts the Black Muslim who favors the black and destroyed the image of the white as he claims:

Yet I could have hoped that the Muslim movement had been able to inculcate in the demoralized Negro population a truer and more individual sense of its worth, so that Negroes in the Northern ghettos could begin, in the concrete terms, and whatever pride, to change their situation¹⁹.

In this case, Baldwin notes that the Black Muslims had given many Negroes a sense of identity by creating a tradition which bears only the weakest relation to the realities of the Negro’s experience in America, and he feels that the Black Muslims are too detached from the American roots of success. It is unlikely that many Negroes identify with the middle-class intellectuals and students who belong to the National Association of Advanced Colored People. Most Negroes may help to the reorganizations of the Negro masses to achieve the goal of establishing the black identity²⁰.

“**Dow at the Cross Letter from My Mind to My Region**” is also a religious essay that plays an important role on the individual construction of identity. His particular focus here is made on the way both Christianity and the form of Islam practiced influenced the construction of identity. In their similar perspectives, both doctrines encourage a spirit of clash and oppression. They failed to create a spirit of communication and transcendence. In the essay, the author carefully makes the point that the true, pure ideals of America (freedom, individuality, respect) are what both whites and blacks should look for.

For Baldwin then, to know really who the Afro-American are, especially the Negro, the individual must go back into his past and must never blame his ethnic and racial belonging. He must reconcile his past with his present, letting his past serve as a means for the strength to learn who he is, now like Baldwin, the Negro can answer the questions who am I? “What am I doing?”²¹. —Where am I going?”²². He is an individual who has the right and freedom of any American, without a humiliation of inferiority or color or as a member of an uncivilized group or tribe. Nevertheless, he fights with his writing and past tradition to achieve the goal. This means that the black should look to his own origins with certain pride, just as the white are always claiming their pride of belonging.

Baldwin also focuses in **The Fire Next Time** that the essential thing desired for, is how to achieve this identity. Thus to attain this object, Baldwin advises the next generation to accept and incorporates with the whites. However, this black acceptance of the whites should not be in an assimilated way as he claims: “are, in effect, still surrounded in a history which they do not understand, and until they understand it, they cannot be released from it”²³ This brings one back to the American tradition and the Negro as a stereotype only here Baldwin refers to the black man as “a fixed star, an immovable pillar in a white man’s world”²⁴. Baldwin insists on the word acceptance of each other with love avoiding humiliation, segregation and stereotypes on the black. It is through this process that blacks may gain their identity:

One accepts that the social experience of race creates both a primary group identity as well as a shared sense of being under collective assault, some of the reasons that Black feminist theory and politics have not figured prominently in the Black political agenda may be better understood²⁵.

Baldwin's works in general are not necessarily historical, though an element of history can be seen on them; they are concerned with characters who are trying to find out who they are, as citizens of America. This idea of struggling to find ones belonging, whether personal, social, or religious, may have a setting which tends to be historical, but these qualities are universal. As Baldwin explains to find and to know oneself whether on a personal or social or religious level is not simply a problem among Negroes -though they so drastically need it-, but a problem for white Americans and to an extent for Europeans. The characters of Baldwin are examples of persons, who want and are desperately seeking an identity²⁶.

Furthermore, Baldwin uses the term integration and love to demonstrate how black can find identity. Thus, integration for Baldwin is simply forcing our brothers to end their fleeing from reality. One thinks of whites and Negroes walking together up the mountain to an illuminatus future. The author also considers that through love an individual can forge his own identity, it is love between the black and white, between all races that were living in America that Americans can live in peace and equality. It is within love that we should look for our deepest self and fulfillment of personal hood therefore, Love is the path for Baldwin to free and construct their individuality. It is an expression which enables men to unite on common ground and eliminate any hatred feelings. Baldwin sees love also fundamental image in one's life, especially between Negroes and whites or minority groups. Baldwin acknowledges the value of love as a factor in the solution of the afro -American problems as that of identity²⁷.

The problem of identity cannot be limited just to the Afro-American. However, in Europe several years ago Baldwin discovered that both the Afro American and the white American from the North American soil were seeking their identities. Both rejected the traditional identities dictated on them by the American society. After a couple of years, Baldwin became aware of the meaning of identity he rediscovered a personal identity, which could later be applied to other Negroes. He realized that to satisfy his thirst for finding himself and his own personal identity; he must accept his heritage and his past²⁸.

In sum, identity quest is a prominent issue that had been reviewed in the Afro-American work through the intersection of race and class. Indeed, it had been tackled by the Afro-American in the aim of spreading the scope of reaching and fighting to find who they are? Thus, the selected works try to raise the Afro-American community to transcend ,change in order to improve their situation for better life in the future in united states to live in peace and harmony.

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¹ Karp, David. *Defining Ourselves: IO Psychology's Identity Quest* -PDF. Philadelphia, PA, Temple University Press (1967), p15

² Ibid, p30 ³ Hurston, Zora Neal: —“Their Eyes were Watching God” (1973), New York modern classic p58

³ Ibid p62

⁴ Ibid p29

⁵ Ibid P59

⁶ Kubitschek, Missy Dehn. —“Tuh De Horizon and Back”: The Female Quest in Their Eyes Were Watching God’ Black” American Literature Forum, Vol. 17, No. 3 (Autumn, 1983) St. Louis University Press. pp. 109-115.

⁷ Hurston, Zora Neale. *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classic, 1937. p43

⁸ Crenshaw, Kimberly. “Demarginalizing the intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics” University of Chicago Legal Forum Vol. 130 Iss. 1, Article 8. Harvard University Press .1989, p160

⁹Hurston, Zora Neale. *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classic, 1937. p215

¹⁰Crenshaw, Kimberly. "Demarginalizing the intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics." *University of Chicago Legal Forum* Vol. 130 Iss.1, Article 8. Harvard University Press. 1989. p 161.

¹¹Hurston, Zora Neale. *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classic, 1937. p229

¹²Ferguson, Shelly-Ann. "Folkloric Men and Female Growth in *Their Eyes Were Watching God*." *Black American Literature Forum*, Vol. 21, No. 1/2 (Spring/Summer, 1987) St. Louis University Press. pp. 185-197

¹³Hurston Zora Neal: *Their Eyes were Watching God* (1973), New York modern class. p18

¹⁴Hurston, Zora Neale. "How It Feels to Be Colored Me." *I Love Myself when I Am Looking Mean and Impressive: A Zora Neale Hurston Reader*. Ed. Alice Walker. New York: Feminist, (1979)

¹⁵James Baldwin, *The Fire Next Time*, in New York: Dial Press, 1963, p70

¹⁶*Ibid*;

¹⁷Robert Dwyer, "I Know about the Negro." *National Review*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, Décembre 17, 1963, p. 517

¹⁸James Finn, "the Identity of James Baldwin." New York: Grove Press, October 26, 1962, p. 116.

¹⁹Shoemaker, "Self Knowledge and Self Identity." New York: The MacMillan Company, (1963), p.26

²⁰Baldwin, James, *The Fire Next time* (1963), penguin classics, p.120

²¹*Ibid*;

²²Baldwin James "The Negro Child--His Self Image" in *Talk to Teacher*, Saturday Review, Harvard university press, December 21, 1963, p. 43.

²³Baldwin James, *The Fire Next Time*, in New York: Dial Press, 1963, p86

²⁴*Ibid* p74

²⁵*Ibid*;

²⁶James Baldwin, "The Negro Child--His Self-Image," in *a Talk to Teacher*, Saturday Harvard University Press 1965 p67

²⁷Robert Dwyer, "I know about the Negro National Review" New York time, Décembre 17, 1963, p. 517

28 Saul Maloff, —Love: the Movement Within, Nation" Harvard University Press, (March 2, 1963), p 15.

General Conclusion:

Throughout this dissertation we have tried to put together a study of Zora Neal Hurston's **Their Eyes Were Watching God (1937)** and James Baldwin's **The Fire Next Time (1963)**. We have explored how both of them deal with the issue of racism, class and the quest for belonging, using Kimberly Crenshaw's theory of ***Demerginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex a Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics (1989)***. This theory allowed us to explore the way the main characters of the selected works represent the same experiences of discrimination because of race and class problems in America.

Indeed, in our research paper, we have analyzed the intersection of race, with that of class and how the two lead the individual to build his or her own identity. In the first chapter, we have tried to study both works by putting emphasis on how the character's perform the experiences of the racial discrimination of black people in America. Thus, our aim in this part is to show the Afro-American authors of the 19th and 20th century enhance and stimulate the black American reader to change the situation of her life for better future through aliterature that celebrated the pride of being black.

As concerns the second chapter, it tackles the class division in both selected work. Therefore, we have tried to examine how the black struggled in order to gain a better social position in a post slavery society. We have analyzed the way Hurston and Baldwin depicted their protagonists' struggle sustaining with the argument of Kimberly Crenshaw as mentioned in her theory ***Demerginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex a Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics (1989)***, through their portrayal of colored men and women in three different cases.

In the last chapter, we have tried to study the quest for belonging as a prominent issue of the black American literature to awaken the consciousness Afro-American. A consciousness to change their situation into better tomorrow and open a new window for the Afro-America, particularly to forge others races of the world. To finish with, we may suggest for further comparative studies of Zora Neal Hurston's **Their Eyes Were Watching God** and James Baldwin's **The Fire Next Time** from Marxist study. To open a new perspective concerning the two author's criticism

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