

Alienation and Character Typology in African American and Native American Narratives: A Jungian Reading of *The Bluest Eye* and *Winter in the Blood*

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*Alienation is a recurring literary subject in the United States. Its peculiarity is occasioned by the phenomenon of racial segregation, among others, with which the society is characterized. Thus, considerable critical attention has been given to the causes as well as the attendant socio-political, economic and psychological imports on the victims. From a psychological perspective, specifically, this paper engages in a comparative analysis of the effects of alienation on characters of African American and Native American origins produced by the same system in two novels which have African American and Native American roots – Toni Morrison’s *The Bluest Eye* and James Welch’s *Winter in the Blood*, respectively. In order to understand the variance and/or convergence in the personality formations of the African American and Native American characters in the narratives, consequent upon the racially alienating system, the paper adopts Carl Jung’s psychological theory of personality typology, labelled introversion and extraversion, with a view to assessing how, typically, persons of these origins are more likely to react to the socio-political, cultural and economic situations affecting them as minority ethnic groups in the United States.*

Keywords

Racism; alienation; African Americans; Native Americans; personality formation; introversion-extraversion.

Introduction

Alienation is “a major theme of human condition in the contemporary epoch” which has formed “the subject of many psychological, sociological, literary and philosophical studies” (Saleem 67). It refers to the distancing of people

from experiencing a crystallized totality both in the social world and in itself” (Kalekin-Fishman 6). According to Schacht, it is “the loss or absence of identification with, and participation in, the form of life characteristic of one’s society” (10).

In literary studies, in particular, three forms of alienation have been identified as characteristic of the modern world: man’s alienation from himself, his estrangement or alienation from his fellow man, i.e., the experience of being alienated from the world in which he lives in, and finally his alienation from God (Daronkolae and Hojjat 202). The second form, specifically, constitutes the conceptual framework in this paper. There is a peculiar atmosphere in the United States largely occasioned by the phenomenon of racial segregation which has defined the nation over time. As a result, this specific form of alienation has become a recurring literary subject in the United States.

The two ethnic groups who are acknowledged to have been most affected by the racially alienating system in America are African Americans and Native Americans (Humphrey 20). Thus, in their literary writings (African American and Native American literatures), the socio-political, economic and psychological imports of alienation on the victims, in particular, and the ethnic groups at large, are constantly being explored. Prominent among others, Toni Morrison and James Welch are two authors, respectively, of African American and Native American descents, who have received considerable critical attention in this regard. However, this paper engages in a comparative analysis of the effects of alienation on character portrayals in their novels *The Bluest Eye* (1970) and *Winter in the Blood* (1974), respectively, to examine, as ethno-literary paradigms, the narratives of racial alienation in African American and Native American novels. In Jung’s Psychoanalysis, the aspect of personality typology model, labelled *introversion* and *extraversion*, has been adopted in this paper for a psychoanalytic assessment of the variance and/or convergence in the personality formations of the African American and Native American characters as idiosyncratically revealed in their psychological confrontations with the alienating systems in their various social milieus.

The American Racial Structure

The United States is a nation of immigrants, with many different groups and cultures. The six officially recognized categories of race are Native

Americans (or American Indians), African Americans (or Black Americans), Euro-Americans (or White Americans), Asian Americans, Native Hawaiian Americans, and people of two or more races called “Some other race” (Grieco and Cassidy 2). However, the prominent groups are three: Blacks, Whites and Natives. The Natives are the indigenous people. While blacks were imported primarily as slave labours, whites settled consequent upon colonization. The aftermath of colonization saw the whites’ domination in the eighteenth century and the ethnic and racial landscape became more complex in the nineteenth century (Amadi 14).

Jung’s Psychology of Personality Types

Carl Gustav Jung’s psychological types can be fully grasped especially when it is traced to, and placed within, the context of the general psychological theory of personality which, as revealed by several studies, took specific shape in the early twentieth century. Since early in the twentieth century, mainstream empirical research into the psychology of personality has persistently revolved around the assessment, study and description of individual differences (Cloninger 11; Lamiell 72). To this end, in the book *Theories of Personality*, Feist and Feist open their discourse with the following fundamental questions:

Why do people behave as they do? Do people have some choice in shaping their personality? What accounts for similarities and differences among people? What makes people act in predictable ways? Why are they unpredictable? Do hidden, unconscious forces control people’s behavior? What causes mental disturbances? Is human behavior shaped more by heredity or by environment? (3)

The above apparently provides profound psychological grounds for personality formations and/or orientations, hence investigations of such grounds. It is made clear thus that every individual acts upon one influence or the other. On the nature of “personality”, it is maintained that psychologists (personality theorists) do not agree on a single definition. Rather, they have evolved “unique and vital theories because they lacked agreement as to the nature of humanity, and because each saw personality from an individual reference point” (3). Regardless of the divergence in their theoretical perspectives, it

is aggregately offered that “personality” is “a pattern of relatively permanent traits and unique characteristics that give both consistency and individuality to a person’s behavior” (4).

With specific reference to Jung, his theory of personality types has been traced to his practical medical work with patients suffering from nervous illnesses. In his words, Jung reveals thus:

In my practical medical work with nervous patients I have long been struck by the fact that among the many individual differences in human psychology there exist also *typical distinctions: two types* especially became clear to me which I have termed the *Introversion* and the *Extraversion Types*. (9)

According to him, they are theoretical principles which have been abstracted from an abundance of observed facts. Whether it is due to biological or environmental inclinations, it is further revealed that every individual possesses both mechanisms but only the relative predominance of the one or the other in the individual determines the type (10). In his general description of the types and how they function in shaping human personality, he realizes that there is a natural tendency to regard such differences in human nature as mere idiosyncrasies. Thus, he posits that:

anyone with the opportunity of gaining a fundamental knowledge of many men will soon discover that such a far-reaching contrast does not merely concern the individual case, but is a question of typical attitudes, with a universality far greater than a limited psychological experience would at first assume. (413)

According to Eugene Taylor, the idea of psychological types is revealed to have indeed found its first appearance in Jung’s analytical psychology in 1921. Upon its appearance, it immediately broke new ground as far as dynamic theories of personality were concerned:

Within a short time, introversion and extraversion became the most enduring constructs of his book and were eventually operationalized in personality inventories such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator as fixed traits called introversion and extraversion, including a change in the spelling of extroversion. They also became the focus of later research

by experimentalists such as Hans Eysenck in constructing a statistically based theory of personality. By then, the categories had nothing to do with Jung, his theories, the epistemology underlying them, or even the original constructs themselves. (135)

The above is thus an apparent indication that the theory, at its unveiling in psychological discourse, was not only groundbreaking, but also found domestication in individual psychologists' personality theories.

According to Jung, there exist two basic personality attitudes by means of which man is organized. Certain psychological and perceptual functions and attitudes determine the ways in which we habitually or preferentially orient ourselves and, in turn, aid our conception of phenomenological experience (183-184). Historically, Jung locates the origin of this divergence in human attitude thus:

When we reflect upon human history, we see how the destinies of one individual are conditioned more by the objects of his interest, while in another they are conditioned more by his own inner self, by his subject. Since, therefore, we all swerve rather more towards one side than the other, we are naturally disposed to understand everything in the sense of our own type. (9)

The two attitudes are labelled extraversion and introversion. A type (either extravert or introvert) is said to exist when an individual exhibits one or the other of the attitudinal dispositions more. He notes emphatically that it is "the individual disposition which decides whether one belongs to this or that type" (560). His actual definitions of the two attitude-types are relatively simple. Extraversion means an "outward flowing of the libido" or "an orientation to the outer world of people, things and activities" while Introversion means the "inward-flow of the libido" or an "orientation to the inner world of concepts, ideas, and internal experience" (Mowah 4; John and Rita Sommers-Flanagan 12). In other words, extraversion is the attitude style in which "external factors are the predominant motivating force for judgments, perceptions, feelings, affects and actions while introversion is where internal or subjective factors are the chief motivation" (Sharp 14). That is, "while the extravert responds to what comes to the subject from the object (outer reality), the introvert relates mainly to the impressions aroused by the object in the subject (inner reality)" (65). In Jung's words, this is captured thus:

Introversion is normally characterized by a hesitant, reflective, retiring nature that keeps itself to itself, shrinks from objects, is always slightly on the defensive and prefers to hide behind mistrustful scrutiny. Extraversion is normally characterized by an outgoing, candid, and accommodating nature that adapts easily to a given situation, quickly forms attachments, and, setting aside any possible misgivings, will often venture forth with careless confidence into unknown situations. In the first case obviously the subject, and in the second the object, is all-important. (44)

Moreover, Jung states that every individual possesses both of the basic attitudes described above. That is, no one, of course, is only introverted or extraverted. Although, every individual, in the process of following his/her dominant inclination or adaptation to his/her immediate world, invariably develops one attitude more than the other, the opposite attitude is still potentially there.

In discussing the nature and distribution of the attitude-types, Jung makes several observations. He states that the two attitude-types exist and affect all levels of society. They also override the distinctions of sex; he notes that the types have, apparently, quite random distribution. In the same family, two children may even be antithetical, i.e., “one is introverted, and another extraverted” (413-414). Thus, in discussing the possible origins of the attitude-types, he concludes that they do not arise from conscious selection or intention and must therefore be due to some unconscious, instinctive cause:

Since, in the light of these facts, the attitude-types, regarded as a general phenomenon having an apparent random distribution, can be no affair of conscious judgment or intention, its existence must be due to some unconscious, instinctive cause. The contrast of types, therefore, as a universal psychological phenomenon, must in some way or other have its biological precursor. (414)

Finally, for analytical purposes, four basic functional modes are offered by Jung as essentially applicable to both attitude types. In other words, he says, every person of these types can be introverted or extraverted. The functions are: Thinking, Feeling, Sensation, and Intuition (14). Daryl Sharp aptly and distinctly describes the four functions:

The function of *thinking* refers to the process of cognitive thought, *sensation* is perception by means of the physical sense organs, *feeling* is the function

of subjective judgment or valuation, and *intuition* refers to perception by way of the unconscious (e.g., receptivity to unconscious contents). (14)

Based on the foregoing, thus, there are eight (8) variables for analysing personality types. These are: Extraverted Thinking; Extraverted Feeling; Extraverted Sensation; Extraverted Intuition; Introverted Thinking; Introverted Feeling; Introverted Sensation; and Introverted Intuition, (see Jung 1946).

It is, therefore, of utmost significance to state that the theory provides an in-depth psychological approach to how human personalities or characters are oriented in particular ways based on their reactions to, or relations with, the realities of their immediate environments. To this end, the significance of the theoretical method rests largely in character analysis in the texts.

Alienation and Character Typology in Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*

The Bluest Eye is Toni Morrison's first novel and, indeed, the very work which is said to have heralded her strong visionary mind and artistic success. This is probably because a close observation of her later works reveals a peculiar trend which could even make her works describable, or tagged, as sequels to one another. The story is a critical exploration of the challenging life – the horror of inferiority complex – African Americans were subjected to in the heydays of racism in America. Written in 1970 when the new movement of “Black is Beautiful” was at its peak, *The Bluest Eye* stimulated new critical discussions about racism and sexism, as well as social, ethical and psychological issues about race, the female body, and black femininity (Zebialowicz and Palasinski 221). Hence, it is considered in this paper as a bold attempt aimed at exposing an epoch of alienation bred by racism and its resultant psychological effects.

Historical accounts have revealed fundamental dichotomies in the phenomenon of white/black relations in a majorly white-dominated society like the United States. The evident social stratum has over the years taken on diverse dimensions with serious physical and psychological implications. One such implication raises the significant question – is blackness ugliness? This question is seen to be the prevailing atmosphere which surrounds the experience of a little black girl of eleven years of age, Pecola Breedlove, in

America. As a black girl who finds herself in an environment or society of predominantly white people, the alienating system vehemently bedevils her with the condition of questioning her black essence. Implicitly, she finds an answer to this: an assumption that, characteristically, blackness is ugliness. Hence, like other children in America, she prays for what is socially considered as the beautiful essence – the blue eye. The aftermath of this accounts for Pecola's psychologically troubling experience.

The reader is taken into this world through the eyes of a disrupted family, the Breedloves, the parents of the central character, Pecola. The disruption in Pecola's family is greatly symbolized by "outdoors", as conveyed by the narrator, Claudia, with whose family Pecola is forced to live subsequent to the disruption in her family. With this circumstance, Pecola is described as being outdoors (17). Beyond the circumstance in the Breedlove family, on another symbolic level, "outdoors" is quite crucial to the eventual experience of Pecola. As a black person who finds herself in a predominantly white-dominated society, Pecola's situation can be said to be symbolically "outdoors" and this accounts for why she appears to be struggling for social inclusiveness; to be "indoors", in other words. The narrator, Claudia, further says in this regard:

There is a difference between being put *out* and being put *outdoors*. If you are put out, you go somewhere else; if you are outdoors, there is no place to go. The distinction was subtle but final. Outdoors was the end of something, an irrevocable, physical fact, defining and complementing our metaphysical condition. Being a minority in both caste and class, we moved about anyway on the helm of life, struggling to consolidate our weaknesses and hang on, or to creep singly up into the major folds of the garment.... Knowing that there was such thing as outdoors bred in us hunger for property, for ownership. (*Bluest* 17-18)

The totality of the above symbol, thus, provides the background to the twentieth-century problem of racial caste in America which borders on intense discrimination along colour lines. W. E. B. Du Bois explicitly establishes this when he observes that "the problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color-line – the relation of the darker to the lighter races of men in Asia and Africa, in America and the Islands of the sea" (8). Hence, the problem of the colour-line with its attendant psychological responses from the affected personalities (characters) is being explored in *The Bluest Eye*.

The Object of the Doll and the Colour Black in the Novel

Beginning with the object of the doll, it is evident that the colour black is being metaphorically debased in association with the object's characteristics, which is the nature of the white race, with beauty. In other words, it could be gleaned that the doll is set in the novel against the backdrop of extreme racial prejudice. The object of the doll perceptibly assumes a yardstick with which white and black races are accorded social recognition. This is particularly revealed in the narrator's account of her experience with the object in question. In the society she finds herself, it is generally believed that a "blue-eyed, yellow-haired, pink-skinned doll" (20) is a beautiful doll and, thus, is what every girl child treasures. Naturally, these traits belong to the whites and, for a doll to be described with these features as criteria for social recognition or inclusiveness implies conscious racial superiority and prejudice. In other words, if a doll possesses any other trait(s), it is considered ugly, hence inferior. The paramount question on this note is: how does this realization affect the psyche of, say, an ordinary black girl who sees herself as belonging to the bona fide members of that social setting? Probably, deep down in her mind, she continues to ask herself in what way the social construct sees or recognizes her as a bona fide member of society.

Owing to the above, Claudia is seen to be obsessed with that object – the doll; particularly to see what it is made of, to discover the dearness, to find the beauty in it and to see what it is that the domineering views in that world say is lovable about it. She goes to the extent of taking one home to sleep with. Eventually she finds it entirely uninteresting, hence unworthy to love and accord such unimaginable social status of such a high magnitude. This mental posture therefore underscores her destruction of it, as she claims to be unaware of the reason behind her attitude towards the dolls (21). It is wholly a horrifying experience, and, to her, destroying the dolls is not the true horror; the truly horrifying thing is the transference of the same impulses (hatred or hostility) to every little white girl, against which she consciously cautions herself at some point (23). An instance of this is seen being played out in her encounter with a little African American girl with high yellow skin, Maureen Peal, who joins them in their school. High yellow is a term used to "describe mixed Americans (some of whom appear White, but may be of African, European, Native American or Asian mixture) whom choose to identify as black Americans to honour their black slave ancestry"

(www.urbandictionary.com). Outright, Claudia and her younger sister, Frieda, develop sheer and unfounded hatred for her, despite her being an African American. This is probably because of Maureen's propensity to be white or mixed American. Thus, upon her arrival in their midst, they are preoccupied with looking for natural physical deficiencies in her person to justify their ferocious attacks on her:

Frieda and I were bemused, irritated, and fascinated by her. We looked hard for flaws to restore our equilibrium, but had to be content at first with uglying up her name, changing Maureen Peal to Meringue Pie. Later a minor epiphany when we discovered that she had a dog tooth – a charming one to be sure – but a dog tooth nonetheless. And when we found out that she had been born with six fingers on each hand and that there was a little bump where each extra one had been removed, we smiled. They were triumphs, but we took what we could get – snickering behind her back and calling her six-finger-dog-tooth-meringue-pie. (*Bluest* 63)

On the foregoing, it is apparent that Claudia and Frieda are overwhelmed with jealousy and disgust for Maureen's lighter complexion, which somewhat suggests to their psyches some level of superiority of her skin colour to theirs. This mental posture is an overt manifestation of an introverted feeling mode. According to Jung, it is principally found among women (492). He describes the introverted feeling type as primarily controlled by subjective preconditions, and only secondarily concerned with the object, where "their true motives generally remained concealed" and "their outward demeanor is harmonious" (492). In order to communicate with others, says Jung, it has to find an external form which is not only fitted to absorb the subjective feeling in a satisfying expression, but which must also convey it to a fellow being in such a way that a parallel process takes place in them (494). On the one hand, Claudia and Frieda are controlled by the subjective precondition; indeed concealed and harmonious, that a strange little girl in their midst, who is also an African American but with a lighter complexion, would be accepted by them only if she was black in complexion. Otherwise, regardless of what impact or benefit she could be in their midst, their object of stimulus already renders her vulnerable to being accorded such sheer disgust, for Whites, that they unconsciously carry with them. Obviously, because Maureen's colour differs from theirs, the disgust for anything associated with white in their unconscious takes over their psyches and results in such an unjustifiable attack

on the personality of an innocent girl. On the other hand, in communicating this affect to each other, parallel subjective feelings take place in both Frieda and Claudia, hence they look for an externality – a physical deficiency in Maureen – with which to convey their feelings satisfactorily.

Although Claudia's attitude, in particular, begins with the feeling mode of introversion, a switch to the sensation mode in the development of her character is ascertainable. In this development, she is perceived to be more oriented by this latter mode. This is because her stimulus begins with feeling and later switches to sensation which eventually underscores her overall judgment. In this regard, Claudia's attitude, in its entirety, is, therefore, apparently subjected to an unconscious motivation likened to the Jungian "introverted sensation" personality type, described as being oriented not by a logical process of judgment but "is guided rather by what just happens", i.e., oriented by "the intensity of the subjective sensation-constituent released by the objective stimulus (Jung 500–501). Thus, it is understandable that introverted sensation is largely underscored by the subjective component of perception. It is considered, on a general note, as an irrational function or mode of orientation in the human personality, "in as much as its selection among occurrences is not primarily rational" (Jung 500). The decisive factor here, therefore, is not the reality of the stimulating object, but the reality of the subjective factor, i.e., of the primordial images which, in their totality, constitute a psychic mirror-world (Jung 500).

The Blue Eye and the Colour Black in the Novel

The phenomenon of the "blue eye" is a trait with which white girls are described as being beautiful and superior to any other eye colour. By implication, not-blue-eye, which is mainly characteristic of blacks, is viewed as ugly. A critical and insightful connection can be established in the narrator's attitudes towards the dolls, and its transference to other white girls and what is recounted about the central character's (Pecola's) innermost feelings with regard to her not-blue eye. Against this background experience, Pecola is pictured sitting for long hours "looking in the mirror, trying to discover the secret of the ugliness that made her ignored or despised at school by teachers and classmates alike" (45). She is heavily disturbed in this regard and the psychological implication the social denigration of her colour has on her presupposes that everything around her is pretty except her "ugliness", mainly characterized by her not-

blue-eyes. This further informs her conviction that the ugly marital atmosphere between her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Breedlove, owes so much to their “ugly” background, as everyone in the family seems to have such ugliness. Hence, if she looked differently, i.e., beautiful, perhaps they would also be different and exhibit physical and attitudinal beauty (46). It is apparent from the above that in her sub-conscious mind everything about her is ugly, and until her eyes are turned blue, she will remain eternally ugly. Thus, the trauma she goes through, to use Dan Chima Amadi’s idea, remains a lifelong experience which, she comes to realize, is because she is a victim born on the wrong side of the divide (13).

Owing to this, for a year, without fail, each night is devoted to fervent prayers for her eyes to turn blue, in order to change their family narrative and social status. Her uninterrupted devotion to such an illusory course is, in Jung’s psychological conception, a manifestation of an introverted thinking personality. This is because, according to him, such personality orientation is hardly preoccupied with facts; facts are indeed secondary. What is rather captured in their psyches is “the development and presentation of a subjective idea” (489). Instead of assessing the reality, or causal factor(s), behind her domestic problem, the subjective idea, which is prompted by her social segregation, is developed and accorded the responsibility for her parents’ marital failure. Apparently, these are two distinct and unconnected issues that are being causally linked within her psyche (unconscious). Hence, she is unconsciously far away from what Jung describes as, typical of an introverted thinking type, lacking the ability of “an intellectual reconstruction of concrete actuality” (481), to the irrational construction of the idea that her not-blue eyes is the cause of her disintegrated family. In this way, by implication, her inability to construct the actual reality of her problem, in her attempt to get herself out of it, complicates it. Jung observes:

In thinking out his problems to the utmost of his ability, he also complicates them, and constantly becomes entangled in every possible scruple. However clear to himself the inner structure of his thoughts may be, he is not in the least clear where and how they link up with the world of reality. (478)

Against the above background, at that point in time, her psychological problem is thus brought to a climax. This is because she is particularly unable to define her supposed ugliness in clear terms, except with a comparative reference to “blue eye” which only white girls possess. In “Probing Racial

Dilemmas in *The Bluest Eye* with the Spyglass of Psychology”, Zebialowicz and Palasinski maintain that, since blacks have been denied equality and inclusion via imposition of unfair and subjective views of race and place in a society that is dominated by white people, a great sense of alienation and/or otherness is, in turn, triggered in the blacks (222). So, in a way, she is perceived as ugly, and so by extension is every other black girl, not because their eyes are not blue but because they are black. Therefore, informed by extreme racial prejudice, the circumstances surrounding Pecola’s ugliness, to a great extent, can be said to be socially or institutionally constructed. A glimpse of this evidence is caught in the encounter between Pecola and Mr. Yacobowski (a Euro-American and owner of a store – Fresh Vegetable Meat and Sundries Store). Pecola checks in at the store to buy some sweets but the ensuing atmosphere apparently reflects a strong racial hostility, a total disregard and/or disgust for the colour black:

She puts off her shoe and takes out the three pennies. The grey head of Mr. Yacobowski looms up over the counter. He urges his eyes out his thoughts to encounter her. Blue eyes. Blear-dropped. Slowly, like Indian summer moving imperceptibly toward fall, he looks toward her. Somewhere between retinal and object, between vision and view, his eyes draw back, hesitate, and hover. At some fixed point in time and space he senses he need not waste the effort of a glance. He does not see her, because for him there is nothing to see. (*Bluest* 48)

The germane question here is of what psychological effect could such an encounter, coupled with the similar previous ones, be on a personality who sees no home other than that very society that is replete with vehemently prejudiced hostility for her colour, and by extension, her being? The idea behind her ugliness thus calls for interrogation. Inside her, it is simply because she is black-skinned and white-eyed. And the only way to change this is if she can get her eyes turned blue. Hence, she is preoccupied with a miraculous overnight change in her eye colour, at the expense of all other more fecund and vital personal as well as social engagements. The stream of this psychological intricacy and/or problem brings her before a man, Soaphead Church, who claims to be a “true Spiritualist and Psychic Reader, born with power” (173). Whether or not this is true, it is the man’s spiritual power that Pecola craves, in order for her eyes to be blue. Could she have forgotten the fact that the colour of her eyes, as a black individual, is naturally different from the whites’? For

how realizable is it for them to turn blue? Certainly, such realization that her pursuit is illusory must have left her thought process completely. This pursuit only takes her “deeper into the conflict which is destroying [her] within” (Jung 489). Then, the question is, what could have informed such mindset? One possible explanation is that she must be suffering from a serious psychological problem. And that is why Soaphead receives the revelation (her complaint) from her with sheer bewilderment, on the one hand, and with poignancy, on the other (174).

Knowing fully well that he has got absolutely nothing (spiritual) with which to help her, Soaphead thus opens up to her. Nonetheless, in order to maintain his claimed spiritual glory, he moves that some offerings be made to have some contact with nature. He offers her a food item to be given to a creature sleeping on the porch and to ensure that it eats it. “If nothing happens, you know that God has refused you. If the animal behaves strangely, your wish will be granted on the day following this one” (175).

Pecola perceives this to be a good tiding and thus executes it accordingly. After eating the food, the animal (a dog) indeed behaves strangely. And joyously, Pecola jumps up to signal her illusive dream fulfilment. The mental state with which she carries out the task and her reaction towards the outcome, as if in authentication of Soaphead’s words, is greatly informed by her alienating memories, and is in tandem with the personality mode Jung describes as “introverted sensation”. This is because, all through the novel, like Claudia, her perception of her condition is highly judged not by a logical process but simply by irrationality. Hence, both Claudia and Pecola are personalities with relatively greater introverted sensation inclinations.

Alienation and Character Typology in Welch’s *Winter in the Blood*

A forced movement of a person or people from the comfort of their familiar environment to a new, unfamiliar and strange place can result in alienation, especially when there is a significant and symbolic attachment to the original place of habitation. When an alienated individual experiences a lack of sense of belonging in the new environment, coupled with tallied losses, such as relatives, loved ones, cultural heritage, etc., the possibility is there that an individual will remain haunted by the memories of these losses. Such an

experience was/is experienced by Native Americans due to the invasion of their land by white settlers, which forced them to relinquish their much revered and culturally symbolic territories.

The Indian Removal Act of 1830 is a typical instance of post-colonization official racist practice marked with a history of discrimination against the natives under the guise of federal law. A Native American theologian, attorney and political scientist, Vine Deloria, Jr., captures the discriminatory ideal behind the alienation of the natives. According to him, “because the Indian occupied large areas of land, he was considered a wild animal”, and hence should be moved to a separate settlement (12). As the deadline for the implementation of the Removal Act approached, in 1838, thousands of federal soldiers and Georgia volunteers were reported to have entered the native territories and forcibly relocated them with various degrees of atrocities being committed. (<http://www.loc.gov/>). Thus, Vine Deloria, Jr. concludes that “Indians were America’s captive people without any defined rights whatsoever” (11).

The above background provides a significant and insightful hint into the historical context of James Welch’s first novel, *Winter in the Blood*. The reader encounters in the novel a mentally troubled unnamed narrator, who seems to be combining the present day or moment with flashes of horrifying memories associated with the alienation cum losses described above. The narrator’s portrayal, throughout the novel, is that of a being in transit, through time and space, unifying his present and his memory together in a narrative frame. On this note, like Morrison’s protagonist, assessment of the circumstances surrounding his troubled state of mind is central to this discourse.

The novel is set in an Indian Reservation in Montana. It begins with a 32-year-old unnamed narrator, a Blackfoot, just arriving from a bar in which he has engaged in a physical altercation with a white man. Typical of an inebriated and aimless wanderer, who has long been detached from home, and now has to deal with a re-union with his home, the narrator says coming home is no longer easy. It has become a torture (2). The challenge therein for him is heavily psychological, as he seems to be closed off from his own emotions. At this point, he feels no emotion or affection neither for his family nor girlfriend. But, consciously, he seems to be aware of his flat emotional state because he can still establish the possible cause:

Coming home to a mother and an old lady who was my grandmother. And the girl who was thought to be my wife. But she didn’t really count. For

that matter none of them counted; not one meant anything to me. And for no reason. I felt no hatred, no love, no guilt, no conscience, nothing but a distance that had grown through the years. (*Winter* 2)

His home is a cattle ranch shared with his mother and grandmother. On arriving home, he discovers that his girlfriend, Agnes, who has been with them for three weeks, has left and also with his gun and electric razor. He sets out to find her. In his quest, the reader encounters two narrative plains – in the physical and the mental realms.

The narrative taking place in his mental state is constantly prompted by family tragedies, originally caused by the alienation of his people from their land, which is revealed to him by a member of his family, Yellow Calf (152). Yellow Calf is one of the survivors of the American soldiers' onslaught. In it (the mental realm) he tries to deal with the memories of his father (First Raise) found frozen to death in a snowdrift, and his elder brother's (Mose) fatal accident at the age of fourteen respectively:

It was always 'they' who had found him, yet I had a memory, as timeless as the blowing snow that we had found him ourselves, that we had gone searching for him after the third day, or the fourth day, or the fifth, ... how could we have spotted him? ... I had no memory of detail until we dug his grave, yet I was sure we had come upon him first.... I remembered no other faces, no other voices. (*Winter* 19)

A low rumble interrupted my thoughts. I sat up and looked about the dark room. When I was young I had shared it with Mose... in one corner against the wall stood a tall cupboard with glass doors. Its shelves held mementos of a childhood, two childhoods, two brothers, one now dead, the other servant to a memory of death. (*Winter* 38)

On this surreal state he comments towards the end of the novel that these two were the only ones he ever really loved (172). Since these heavy losses, it is obvious that he has not only been unable to put himself together as a whole being, but also to connect with others or his origin. Like Pecola's experience in *The Bluest Eye*, these are apparent instances of alienation from the self, from others and from society.

However, the other part of the narrative taking place in his consciousness, to a great extent, are series of engagements that are aimed at ridding his mind of the haunting memories of family and cultural losses. An instance of this is

pointed out by the narrator following his encounter with a strange man, the “airplane man”. While in front of a cinema, one of the films being featured has the popular actor Randolph Scott in it. The actor’s appearance on the billboard, he says, grins cruelly at him, hence the memory from twenty years before is triggered (103). In the meantime, he falls deeply into an unconscious state and the ensuing narrative features his lost elder brother and father as well as the entire family life on the reservation (103-108). Suddenly, he comes back to consciousness again and says “Randolph Scott had plugged me dead with a memory I had tried to keep away” (108). Considerably, thus, his wandering in and outside the town becomes highly significant to his psychological trouble. In order to put away those memories that horribly haunt him, he takes to drinking and sex. In fact, he confesses that his girlfriend, Agnes, was brought home purposely to fill any vacuum overnight that could trigger any memory (22).

On the whole, a careful observation of the narrator’s attitudes and dispositions to the realities of his life have rendered him identifiable with the personality typology described by Jung as extraversion, specifically in the thinking and feeling modes. Generally, when the orientation to “the object and objective facts is so predominant that the most frequent and essential decisions and actions are determined, not by subjective values but by objective relations, ones speaks of an extraverted attitude. When this is habitual, we speak of an extraverted type” (Jung 417).

In the extraverted feeling sense, there is a self-detachment as much as possible from the subjective factor to pave the way for an entire self-subordination to the influence of the object (Jung 446). Hence it is notable that when adherence to objective feeling determinants become extreme, the subject may become assimilated into the object and the personal side of the feeling function is lost. The narrator’s person is seen at this level of functioning or mode when his emotions become flat, feeling no affection or emotion whatsoever for his family and girlfriend. These evidently subjective factors from which he has unconsciously detached himself give way to the influence of the objective factor which he describes as “nothing but a distance that had grown (in him) through the years” (2).

Meanwhile, the thinking function seems to be more dominant and pronounced in him. This is because his psychological trouble is more evident in his attempts at repressing the memories of the grave loss, via taking solace in drinking and sex. In Jung’s classification, this is seen as typical of an extraverted thinking personality. In this type, thinking is conditioned by

objective data that are transmitted by sense perceptions, and, in order to form a judgment, the criteria supplied by external conditions are fastened on; thus, the thinking process proceeds back towards the object in the form of an idea or concept (Jung 434). Hence, notable in this sense is that when the life of an individual is mainly governed by reflections; not necessarily connected with intelligence or the quality of thought, but simply a process, combined with an orientation towards the outer world, there is an image of an extraverted thinking type. The narrator's personality therefore fits into this conceptual frame considering his judgment by external realities as he strives to free himself from the psychological troubles (memories) of alienation.

Conclusion

In the two novels, the various mental states of the characters reflect certain peculiar psychological experiences which are describable as, or embodiments of, memories of alienation. What is deducible here is that it is the memorial consequences of alienation – the “otherness”, the despising and denigration of the colour black in *The Bluest Eye* and the experience of colonization of the Blackfeet in *Winter in the Blood* – that crystallize eventually into psychological problems, leading to personality changes in the victims.

Based on the foregoing, the memorial experiences border the idea of transformation of the “self” via inner and external fulfilments; that is, interiority and exteriority drives, which results from the alienating system. It is describable as being cut off from the joy of life, or indeed life itself. This, to a large extent, is descriptive of the states of minds of Pecola and the unnamed narrator in *Winter in the Blood*. In *The Bluest Eye*, the effect of the racist ambience which underscores Pecola's stereotypical ugliness is so psychologically overwhelming on her that she is unconsciously thrown into a world characterized by loneliness, depression and desperation. She is thus seen in this state, somewhat irrationally seeking to pull herself out of the doldrums in which society has left her. Similarly, in the case of the unnamed narrator in *Winter in the Blood*, the alienating assaults on his people throw him into a state of psychological trouble. Hence, in order to salvage himself, he indulges in drinking and sex. Unconsciously, however, he is unable to free himself from the excruciating memories, probably owing to the enormity of the overall loss, consequent upon the alienating system.

Although, from the above, the treatments of the African Americans and

Native Americans by the Whites differ, which is of course explainable on the basis of origins, the factors responsible for the conditions (alienation) the two characters in the two texts are subjected to, obviously, is fundamentally racism, whose basic ingredient is “the dogmatic claim of the existence of genetically innate and unchanging inequality among the races” (Essien-Udom 236). This common reality thus calls into question their diverse reactions to such a dehumanizing phenomenon. In this regard, this paper has deductively shown that while Pecola (an African American character personality) is driven inwardly, that is introvertedly, the unnamed narrator (a Native American character personality) is outwardly or extravertedly driven. However, this paper has not claimed that there cannot be African American characters that are extravertedly inclined and Native American characters that are equally introvertedly inclined. But the major characters considered here who have exhibited personality variance are considered as representatives of the majorities of both ethnic groups. Hence, the interior inclination which underlies the characters’ psychological responses is largely a pointer to the probable variance, among others, in the way the two ethnic groups could react to manifestations of the phenomenon of racism in the United States.

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