

**RE-REMEMBERING HOME: NOSTALGIA  
AND DISPLACEMENT OF IDENTITY IN  
*BARRACOON: THE STORY OF THE LAST  
“BLACK CARGO”* BY ZORA NEALE  
HURSTON**

**BY**

**SEHRISH NAQVI**



**NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF MODERN LANGUAGES**

**ISLAMABAD**

**January, 2023**

**Re-Remembering Home: Nostalgia and Displacement of  
Identity in *Barracoon: The Story of the Last “Black Cargo”*  
by Zora Neale Hurston**

By

**SEHRISH NAQVI**

M. A., University of Punjab Lahore, 2008

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF  
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

**MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**

**In English**

To

FACULTY OF ENGLISH STUDIES



NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF MODERN LANGUAGES, ISLAMABAD

@Sehrish Naqvi, 2023



## THESIS AND DEFENSE APPROVAL FORM

The undersigned certify that they have read the following thesis, examined the defense, are satisfied with the overall exam performance, and recommend the thesis to the Faculty of English Studies for acceptance.

**Thesis Title:** Re-Remembering Home: Nostalgia and Displacement of Identity in *Barracoon: The Story of the Last “Black Cargo”* by Zora Neale Hurston

**Submitted by:** Sehrish Naqvi

**Registration #:** 1749 MPhil/EngLit/S19

Master of Philosophy

English Literature

Dr. Yasir Arafat

Name of Research Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Research Supervisor

Prof. Dr. Muhammad Safeer Awan

Name of Dean (FAH)

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Dean (FAH)

Brig Syed Nadir Ali

Name of Director General

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Director General

## AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I Sehrish Naqvi

Daughter of Saghir Hussain

Registration # 1749 MPhil/EngLit/S19

Discipline English Literature

Candidate of **Master of Philosophy** at the National University of Modern Languages do hereby declare that the thesis **Re-Remembering Home: Nostalgia and Displacement of Identity in *Barracoon: The Story of the Last "Black Cargo"* by Zora Neale Hurston** submitted by me in partial fulfillment of MPhil degree, is my original work, and has not been submitted or published earlier. I also solemnly declare that it shall not, in future, be submitted by me for obtaining any other degree from this or any other university or institution.

I also understand that if evidence of plagiarism is found in my thesis/dissertation at any stage, even after the award of a degree, the work may be cancelled and the degree revoked.

---

Signature of Candidate

Sehrish Naqvi  
Name of Candidate

---

Date

## ABSTRACT

### **Re-Remembering Home: Nostalgia and Displacement of Identity in *Barracoon: The Story of the Last “Black Cargo”* by Zora Neale Hurston**

The present study is qualitative in nature and aims to analyze the dynamics of re-remembering home with reference to nostalgia and identity. The research is delimited to Hurston's *Barracoon: The Story of the Last “Black Cargo”*. The memoir is approached using Dr. Janelle L Wilson's concepts presented in her book *Nostalgia: Sanctuary of Meaning*. Being the last witness of the Middle passage, Lewis, the protagonist of the selected memoir, serves as the connection between nostalgia and (recreated) identity. The 'third space' created by Lewis is a reaction to the loss of home as he is being stripped of his identity. The textual analysis explains the outcomes of nostalgia and its relevance in the modern-day slave narratives. Hurston's work is conservative, but it is also politically aware of its time, and it opens up new scope for African narratives. The significance of memoir with reference to contemporary Black Lives Matter Movement is investigated using Watson, Turner & Hines's (2020) theory *Black Lives Matter: We are in the Same Storm but we are not in the Same Boat* which highlights the planned and systematic dehumanizing of blacks in America. It provides insight into the issues faced by displaced people. It justifies the Black Lives Matter Movement as after all these years discrimination against Black is still prevalent in American society.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Thesis and defense approval form.....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>Author’s declaration .....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>Abstract.....</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>Table of contents.....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>List of abbreviations .....</b>	<b>viii</b>
<b>Acknowledgements.....</b>	<b>ix</b>
<b>Dedication .....</b>	<b>x</b>
<b>1.INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Setting the context .....	1
1.2 Statement of problem .....	7
1.3 Thesis Statement.....	8
1.4 Research Questions .....	8
1.5 Significance of Study .....	8
1.6 Delimitation .....	10
1.7 Organization of the Study.....	10
<b>2.LITERATURE REVIEW .....</b>	<b>12</b>
2.1 Introduction .....	12
2.2 Why re-remembering?.....	12
2.3 Re-remembering and memory studies.....	14
2.4 Nostalgia.....	16
2.5 Outcomes of Nostalgia .....	18

2.6 Nostalgia and Memory.....	19
2.7 Collective Nostalgia.....	19
2.8 Finding meaning in Nostalgia.....	20
2.9 Identity.....	21
2.10 Displacement of Identity.....	23
2.11 Nostalgia in Present Times.....	25
2.12 Black Lives Matter Movement.....	26
2.13 Slave Narratives through History.....	28
2.14 Relevance of Slave Narrative.....	29
<b>3.RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....</b>	<b>33</b>
3.1 Introduction.....	33
3.2 Qualitative Approach.....	33
3.3 Research Methodology.....	33
3.4 Theoretical Framework.....	34
<b>4.ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION.....</b>	<b>40</b>
4.1 Summary.....	40
4.2 Introduction to Author .....	41
4.3 Re-remembering Home .....	42
4.4 Nostalgia.....	47
4.5 Creating Identity and Dealing with Displacement.....	51
4.6 Black Lives Matter Movement.....	55
<b>5.CONCLUSIONS.....</b>	<b>57</b>
5.1 Findings about re-remembering.....	57
5.2 Explanation of research questions.....	58

5.21 Findings about nostalgia.....	58
5.22 Findings about displacement of identity.....	59
5.23 Conclusions about Black Lives Matter Movement.....	60
5.3 Recommendations.....	60
6.Work Cited.....	62



## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Barracoon	<i>Barracoon: The Story of The Last "Black Cargo"</i>
Hurston	Zora Neale Hurston
Lewis	Cudjo Lewis

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I am thankful to Allah; without Whose blessing I would not have been able to complete this difficult task.

I would like to express my deepest thanks and love to my husband, Haider Ali who inspired and encouraged my pursuit of this degree and supported me. I also give my sincerest thanks to my supervisor, Dr. Yasir Arafat, who has consistently challenged my ideas with the intent of bringing out the best in me. Despite having to read through screeds of incoherent sentences, he has always given positive and constructive advice and has been extremely helpful in times of need. I am sincerely grateful for this.

Thanks to the English Department of NUML for offering me the academic and creative space, to bring this thesis to life.

Thank you all.

## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is heartily and proudly dedicated to my husband, parents, siblings and friends.

And to my sunshine, Ghulam Abbas.

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Setting the Context

A significant portion of African American literature deals with the past and dominantly tackles postcolonial themes. African-American writers Harriet Beecher Stowe, Harriet Jacobs, Zilpha Elaw, and others write about the past on the themes of dislocation, identity, and longing for home. The diversity of African culture is evident from the rituals and practices that have been passed down from generation to generation. These practices and rituals have immense meaning, these are not just a remembrance of their past, but also a representation of their unique identity. Afro-American writers made memory a part of their writings. Being stripped of their existence and identity, Africans were coerced into a newly hostile world, therefore the resulting trauma prompted them to write emotionally about the past. Disconnecting from their past means losing their identity, so they hold all their memories dear, even if they are traumatic. However, the presentation of these memories is not one-dimensional, as writers encounter a variety of emotions while writing about their previous life. The clearest autobiographical memories are closely linked with the emotions of a person, i.e., nostalgic recollections. Memoirs give readers access to certain instances of a specific person's life to reach the central message or idea that the author is trying to convey. These memoirs distinctly inform the readers about the African histories and attempt to create a link between African Americans' present lives and their memories, as Americans forcibly eliminated twelve and half million Africans starting from the sixteenth till the eighteenth century. For this reason, memoirs function to convey, compare or reconnect certain aspects of one's present life with the previous one, thus making the present more meaningful and relevant.

Slave narratives are an integral part of The Black Canon; however, the treatment of these narratives has been different in different eras (Salih 123). The genre of biographical writings remains a promising part of literature, as writers explore new techniques and styles while writing about life (Fradelizio 59). Since literature enables a reader to delve into others' lives and cultures, memoirs give readers access to focus on certain instances of a person's life to reach the central message or idea that the author is trying to convey. Vincent Carreta suggests that it wasn't till the 18th century

that African people residing in America embraced their diasporic and cross-cultural identity (Carreta 52). A new genre, the neo-slave narrative, labelled as the modern narrative of slavery; to remember history, was introduced in the 1960s. There are three forms of neo-slave narrative; historical fiction, pseudo-autobiographical and writing about generations (Graham and Maryemma 87). Rushdy writes in *The Cambridge Companion to the African American Novel* that the neo-slave narrative can be considered a continuation of the slave narratives depicting the oral and literary traditions of Afro-Americans (88). Neo-slave authors build upon the 18th and 19th-century stories to analyze the elusive impact of slavery upon the people, their generations, and society at large. They not only write about the traditional tools attached to slavery but also consider and incorporate psychoanalysis and trauma theories, which in turn make the readers aware of these things, thus highlighting the therapeutic role of literature in healing broken people. Neo-slave memoirs address those aspects of slavery that were not catered by antebellum slave stories. So, it provides a new perspective to these tales (Robinson 40). This new form of literature functions not only in resisting social injustice, it also prevents the readers from forgetting history (Sagawa 1). These writings make the ordeals of African Americans more visible and imply why, to date, these types of issues are prevalent in society. Hawkins rightfully says that the latest slave narratives aim to revise, not repeat, the narrative (4). The slave memoirs, when read in the present, help the reader to make a connection between the very new Black Lives Matter Movement and the past struggles of slaves for social equality.

The Civil Rights Movement is important to understand slave narratives as it provides a new perspective to the American historians studying the lives of Afro-Americans and forces them to revisit and re-remember the past (Rushdy 88). This movement has given housing and voting rights; however, it has not protected Afro-Americans from white police cruelty. Peaceful protests in the 1960s and 1970s were a direct reaction to the oppression faced by police along with economic, political, and social pressure asserted by the white (Nummi et al. 1043). The Black Lives Matter Movement protests are similar to the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s as, even in the 2000s, blacks are raising their voice against the prevalent systemic racism in the police department.

Nostalgia studies has emerged on the literary scene in 1979 as a result of uncertain and unstable times, people look back at the past to escape from the insecure social-political present. Nostalgia is considered a transcultural emotion which is explored at both personal and collective levels (Wildschut et al. 957; Sedikides et al. 319). It means to hunt for happy memories of the past; it's a Greek word that means 'returning home' and 'longing or pain' (Hamilton 101). The modern concept of nostalgia is different from the traditional one as it doesn't mean remembering a specific place, instead it refers to the lost time and space (Pickering et al. 921). The general concept of nostalgia is to escape from the present and find solace in the bitter-sweet past, however, in contemporary time, more concepts are being explored in this area of study. Christopher Lasch, in 1984, defines nostalgia as an extreme attachment to an ideal version of the past, an individual remembers that past only to become more hopeless of its return (Kevin 375). Kant refers to ideas of nostalgia, memory, and time, and asserts that nostalgia cannot be linked with homesickness because the home which individual desires won't remain the same as the past is irreversible, and the same past is inaccessible (Kessous et al.167). Nostalgia is also studied under the postcolonial theory, terms like 'reflective', 'restorative', 'unreflective' and 'evolved' nostalgia are being discussed in literary debates as these new terminologies have become part of the nostalgic discourse in the current times (Chang and Yalan 201).

Wilson emphasizes that nostalgia is an emotion specific to those who live a discontented life and therefore yearn for a particular place or specific time (22). Nostalgia can be studied as a reaction to resettlement and dislocation, a way to explore the sickness caused by home deprivation (Feldbrügge 19). Nostalgic people know they cannot return to the past, still, they get a sense of joy and excitement whenever they recall their memories. Nostalgia was misunderstood as a term to describe an escape from the present time, but in recent times, this term is used in a variety of fields such as psychology, philosophy, sociology, and literary studies. This term is also incorporated into postcolonial theoretical terms. Nostalgia is now prevalent as a symbol of the desire for a more satisfying life experience. Humans wish for a comfortable place, and through nostalgia, they yearn for that comfort of a 'home'. In biographies, nostalgia is recorded by the authors and is analyzed and explored by the readers to find the possible meaning and purpose of these discourses. The people of Africa displaced during the transatlantic slave trade were not only

deprived of their homes, family, and friend, but they also lost their identity. These displaced people were then dictated to build up a new identity, which they created with the help of the memory of their individual and collective losses. Nostalgia is not only remembering the past, it also explores and presents the social changes during a certain period, which can be analysed to study the individual and collective quest for identity. Nostalgic instances are those treasured gems of the past that are desired for a more satisfying life experience. Humans wish for a comfortable place and through nostalgia, they yearn for that comfort of 'home'. So, nostalgia provides a close understanding of an individual's present and past self, capacity to challenge the present, and fresh ideas for the future (Croom 2). Many critics have established a connection between nostalgia and identity as its role in maintaining, creating, and re-creating identity cannot be ignored. Wilson & Kovach explained that nostalgia helps in keeping a record of our past life, which constantly facilitates us in understanding our present life (Wilson 478; Kovach 5). It can be a collective or individual emotional reaction to the unfulfilled desire. The nostalgic recollections can be challenging for an individual, however documenting these experiences helps an individual or community to reflect on these recollections and understand the nature of their identity. Memoirs are an important part of black literature as these records of their history and struggle not only promote their individual and communal lifestyles, it also motivates them to continuously fight for their rights.

The multifaceted atrocities of slavery and the nostalgia of the past keep one aware of his unresolved pain and anguish. The traumatized African Americans suffer the mental wound of their past and, in turn, seem to lose control of their present so re-remembering African American history reconstructs a scenario that helps an individual in understanding the connection between nostalgia and identity (Younis 5). Caruth explains that the presentation of trauma is necessary to recapture history, which will help these displacement people to get a better understanding of their past (4). The dehumanizing treatment faced by the African slaves has impacted their mental health and only acceptance helps in recovery, however, Bassi believes that one should not lose their identity in the recovery process therefore remembering traumatic memories through memoirs will help them in the reconstruction of new identities (23).

The memoir under study prompts the reader to not only get a first-hand account of a slave's journey but, also provides a hint about the author's life and perspectives. Biographical writings became famous during the eighteenth-century due to the reader's intensive interest in reading about the life of real subjects, and fiction was considered to be 'borrowed' from real-life characters. Lewis's character provides an insight into the life of a 'transatlantic black identity' by providing a comparison between those who have taken up their new American identity and those who are still engrossed in the memories of their real home (Lovejoy 91). Thus, the dispersion of Africans in America and the emergence of a new cultural identity is highlighted by African diasporic writers.

The memoir, *Barracoon: The Story of the Last "Black Cargo"* is written by Zora Neale Hurston. In 1927, she conducted a series of interviews with Lewis, who is considered to be the last survivor of the middle passage. At that time, this book couldn't find a publisher and it was later published in 2019. Using Lewis's dialect throughout the book gives it a substantial, and authentic position among other memoirs (Bischoff 3). Therefore, Hurston's memoir is different from most of the published slave stories, as it is written in vernacular.

The appealing and diverse feature of the book *Barracoon: The Story of the Last "Black Cargo"* is that it is a hybrid text, it can be read as a research report, a recording, a literary memoir, or a descriptive narrative which makes it an unusual genre among literature. Hurston is subtly present in the text, she does not hide or pretend to be invisible, and her way of asking questions outlines the course of the narrative, but she is not explicitly present in the story, she does not overshadow Lewis's character and the limelight stays on the story of the last slave. She has named the memoir *Barracoon* to signify the effect of enslavement on Lewis's life, moreover, she wanted to emancipate the diverse African American Literature by bringing it in the limelight (Willaims & Relleford 97). The memoir under study brings forth distinct features of American-African literature, and establishes a connection between present and memories.

Lewis narrates his life story in a detailed, descriptive manner which is very much similar to African storytelling, therefore, he appears to be a keeper of his cultural memory and history. He has extraordinary memory, as he retells and



remembers stories spread around two continents, huge distances, durations, and experiences.

Lewis focuses more on his life in Africa and in Africatown, thus this slave narrative is more about Lewis's life as a free man than as a slave. The retelling of the tale is mostly focused on his nostalgic memories rather than on his life in the barracks. Alice Walker wrote the foreword for this book and called it a masterpiece. She was impressed by Hurston's appreciation of Black culture and language. Walker believed that Hurston presented black people as complete, determined, courageous and complex beings. Hurston's novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God* and Walker's novel *The Color Purple* depict similar concerns and themes though they are written 45 years apart. As Hurston grew up in an all-African town, therefore she didn't face any discrimination, she got an environment to groom her storytelling and metaphoric speech. She presented her people as strong and different, and explored their lives on her terms. "She was quite capable of saying, writing, or doing things different from what one might have wished," Walker admitted. She believed that Hurston not only presented an appropriate culture, but consciously exposed a superior culture, she was impressed by Hurston's fascination towards her culture, as Hurston has conducted anthropological studies and published articles on examinations of black culture. Walker believes to understand Hurston well, and admits that both are sisters and heiresses to the African oral tradition. Their bond is explored in an article *Alice Walker and Zora Neale Hurston: The Common Bond* edited by Lillie P. Howard.

The appropriation of reading Hurston in contemporary times cannot be denied, in 2021 NEH institute introduced a new area of study, "Hurston on the Horizon: Past, Present and Future" at the University of Kansas. Dr Ayesha, head of this program explains that Hurston witnessed contrasting political changes/regimes during her lifetime, and in post-Obama and post-racial era, there is a need to understand the sustainability of both black communities and the social changes. She documented black lives during tiring times, and her work boosted originality and meaning. Indeed, Hurston's work is relevant because it elicits new meaning every time it is read, "In Zora Neale Hurston, the concept of voice is complex, oscillating as representation among direct discourse, indirect discourse, and a unique form of free indirect discourse that serves to privilege the speaking voice" (131). The appropriation of her writing makes *Barracoon* an interesting and relatable read.

Threadcraft believes that Hurston's memoir is different from other books written on slave narratives as this book doesn't lend text to colonization descriptions, rather it tries to present slavery as a heinous crime committed against humanity (Book Marks). Hurston knew that she needs to immerse herself in her subject's society to present a subject like Lewis so accurately and effectively. Lewis's search for identity and home depicts his individual as well as the collective journey toward self-discovery. His son's death at the hands of police and his quest for equal human rights in his own and foreign land resonates well with the contemporary 'Black Lives Matter Movement'.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Slave narratives aim to explore the concept of nostalgia, both at an individual and collective levels. As slave stories deal with the past, therefore postcolonial themes dominate their writings. While writing about dislocation, home, identity, belonging and diaspora; authors like Zora Neale Hurston write nostalgically about home, with a sense of craving and longing. Nostalgia encourages social change; therefore, it can be a force to represent the individual and collective sense of identity and representation. The study analyses how and why the main character resorts to nostalgia in an attempt to salvage certain aspects of their past, how it helps him to heal or integrate his traumatic memories in his present life. The memoir is studied to examine the impact of nostalgia on individual and collective life of the main character, and how the past is re-remembered to create a narrative. It also establishes a link between nostalgia and identity to comment on the issues of identity prevalent in dislocated individuals, and discuss the impact of past and memories on the building of the main character's new identity. As the memoir under study is published recently, therefore, its connection with the contemporary Black Lives Matter Movement is discussed to explain the relevance of Hurston's book in the present times.

## **1.3 Thesis Statement**

The present study attempts to explore the presence of nostalgia, identity and aspects of Black Lives Matter Movement in the memoir *Barracoon: The Story of the Last "Black Cargo"* written by Zora Neale Hurston. The above-mentioned memoir is studied to find the nostalgic elements present in it, and analyse the impact of those elements on the present life of the main character. The study tries to explore the

complexity of nostalgic narratives and explores different aspects of nostalgia, linking them with themes of identity and dislocation. It also aims to contextualize the 'Black Lives Matter Movement' with reference to the dehumanizing treatment faced by the main characters, and the physical and mental loss suffered by Lewis during his life journey.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

1. How does nostalgia shape and reshape a character's life as presented in the memoir *Barracoon: The Story of the Last "Black Cargo"*?
2. How does connection with the past help establish the identity of the main character in the selected memoir?
3. In what ways Black Lives Matter Movement explore the long and complicated history of racial discrimination with reference to the selected memoir?

#### **1.5 Significance of Study**

Slave narratives provide essential biographical details to give insight into the life of African people. *Barracoon: The Story of the Last "Black Cargo"* written by Zora Neale Hurston is significant as it provides two scenarios in one novel, life of Lewis in his homeland and later his life in America where he is trying to find his identity while dealing with nostalgia. The book published after ninety years of compilation, presents a thoughtful analysis of the relevance of issues being faced by dislocated people in today's world. The author uses images, settings, plots, and interviewing techniques to familiarize the reader with the wounds inflicted on African slaves, both physical and mental. The novel provides narrative through different historical periods and highlights the plights of African American people, thus making the reader ponder over the relevancy and similarity of those incidents to the present scenarios.

The role of history in shaping and reshaping identity cannot be ignored, therefore, slave narratives are relevant to the present time, as they recapture the traumas faced by these slaves, this knowledge helps in creating an understanding of the past which in turn shapes the present. Slave narratives give voice to the voiceless, by remembering the past, both personal and collective memory is triggered which serves as a healing process both for the author and the readers.

Writing biographies and memoirs has become popular in the twenty-first century, Larson and Couser claim that we are living in the ‘age of memoir’ (3;7). Though novels and memoirs belong to different genres of writing, Couser believes that both possess such mutual features and influence that it is difficult to find the distinguishing features among these two (109). A memoir is an account of someone’s life however a literary memoir focuses on a certain theme or certain parts of someone’s life, it narrates the events using a proper format, utilizing narrative techniques and literary devices. The post-modernist believes that this differentiation between a novel as fiction and a memoir as factual is irrelevant, as no ‘real’ facts exist. Any writer presents his point of view while describing his reaction to the reality around him, and of course, his reality is influenced by his personal history, his traditions, his belief system, and society (Clark xxx). The book under study is woven around a narrative, literary techniques are utilized to let the readers see the world through the eyes of Lewis and Hurston, therefore this book can be studied as a literary piece.

*Barracoon: The Story of the Last "Black Cargo"* is significant being a slave narrative that got published later, years after the Civil War. The memoir describes five years of enslavement at the start, and later it demonstrates whole life of Lewis after enslaving, touching upon his nostalgia, identity, and racism. Bolles explains that *Barracoon* is distinct as it is multidimensional, firstly Hurston has used a unique methodology inspired by her ethnographic roots, secondly, the timeline between writing and publication of this book is rare, and thirdly it is read as a literary piece rather than an ethnographic sample (43).

The current study is significant in presenting the uncensored and unaltered wounds of the black in the past. History is mostly written by the privileged people of society and mostly writings by these powerful people aimed at generalized experience of slavery but the current study is significant in presenting analysis of a personal experience penned down by a struggling writer. The slave accounts of Frederick Douglass, William Wells Brown, and Jacobs, focus primarily on the struggle of a slave, his escape, his search for better future prospects and landing in Europe, north or Canada for better future but the memoir under study briefly explains Lewis’s journey through out *barracoon* than it focusses on his constant every day struggle with life challenges. It is the struggle of a layman not of a leader with lofty ideals. This study

bridges the gap between historic and contemporary to highlight the dynamics of salvation in the past and the present.

## **1.6 Delimitation**

Zora Neale Hurston has written a few novels and stories, but *Barracoon: The Story of the Last "Black Cargo"* is one of her nonfiction works. Her background in anthropology had helped her in re-writing a person's life history. In this study, memoir i.e., *Barracoon: The Story of the Last "Black Cargo"* is studied and analysed.

## **1.7 Organization of the Study**

This current study is divided into five chapters.

The first chapter of the research is an introduction in which a thorough background of the study is provided, a brief introduction of the writer and text is given along with the basic plot of the memoir. After discussing the background in detail, the thesis statement, research questions, research objectives, the significance of the study, and delimitation of the research are discussed.

The second chapter deals with the works already carried out on the selected works or the works that deal with the selected concepts. Literature related to four main aspects of the research: re-remembering, nostalgia, identity, and the Black Lives Matter Movement is presented. Some work conducted by other researchers on the memoir under study is also mentioned.

The third chapter of the research is about research methodology. This chapter will deal with the research design, research method, research tools, and the theoretical framework that will be used to carry out the research. A detailed description will be given that how the study is going to be carried out.

The fourth chapter of the research will be discussion and analysis, in this chapter, first I have given a detailed summary of the memoir, then information about the writer is provided, later I have analysed the text sources with reference to the four main aspects of research mentioned in the literature review. One by one, content related to the research questions is discussed with the help of references from the text.

In the final chapter i.e., conclusion, I have discussed the findings, one by one all three research questions are concluded by reiterating the points with reference to

concepts of re-remembering, nostalgia, identity, and the Black Lives Matter Movement and later, I have given a few recommendations to the future researchers.

## Chapter 2

### Literature Review

#### 2.1 Introduction

The literature review aims to revisit studies related to re-remembering, nostalgia, and identity. It explains that re-remembering not only means re-writing past tales, rather it has deeper and meaningful connotations. The concept of nostalgia is outlined starting from its stereotypical meaning to the more evolved associations, connecting it with memory studies. The researcher has discussed understanding of nostalgia in the current times while discussing its types and forms. The concept of identity is touched upon by interlacing it with nostalgia, memories and displacement. In the last part, the researcher mentions Black Lives Matter Movement as the agenda of this movement is to protest against the same cruelties which were faced by Black Slaves a long time ago.

#### 2.2 Why Re-remembering?

Memory studies have emerged as a diverse field and instances from the past are being written about to create a more meaningful past. Anne Bailey, a historian at Binghamton University, highlights the significance of re-remembering and maintains that it is essential to re-remember history with the perspective of the people who were not in a powerful position to inform the present-day audience about the atrocious acts of the past (Staff). Bailey in her book *The Weeping Time: Memory and the Largest Slave Auction in American History* re-writes about the massive slave auction held in March 1859 and uses a famous proverb i.e. “Until the lion has his or her own storyteller, the hunter will always have the best part of the story” to justify her choice (Staff). Therefore, it is relevant to write about the tyrannized voices of history.

Establishment and maintenance of connection with the past are critical in re-remembering, Cobb has endorsed Professor Bailey’s argument and states that recalling the slave narratives aids in linking the past with the present that how the slave narratives have reshaped the lives of people in present times (306). Cobb asserts that re-remembering not only restores despicable moments from the pages of the past, but it also bestows humanity to the slaves, the humanity of which they were usually

deprived of (307). Bailey examines individual and collective memory to investigate whether racist past is still prevalent in contemporary times, or has it become a thing of the past (Staff). Therefore, these writers, while writing about isolated events, aim to highlight that tinted part of American history, traces of which are still found in the present.

Re-remember is a Faustian term that liberal Christians used in the 20<sup>th</sup> century to challenge Nazism. Sax in his article *Re -Remembering the Holocaust* examines that the process of ‘re-remembering’ is to present a historical event in a different light as perceived by general history (329). He explains that it provides a second narrative to challenge the existing popular narrative or to expose the undermined truths (330). Sax argues that re-remembering the Judeo-Christian holocaust threatens the Jewish narrative, and Christian historians don’t want to re-remember that episode of history (331). Therefore, re-remembering challenges the set patterns and concepts in society.

Artist Ryan Mendoza visited the Rosa Parks memorial and talked about the significance of re-remembering that in contemporary times there is a need to stop countering and denying the cruelties against people. She emphasized that it is important for artists and writers to exercise their power to determine and select the past which must be re-remembered (Re-remembering Rosa Parks). Cheryl McGeachen in his article *(Re)remembering and narrating the childhood city of R.D. Laing* discusses the narrative quality of a memory or recollections and explains the process of creating memories and later re-remembering them to make them alive and relevant in the present (269). He places memory in an evolutionary context, which makes it more relevant and helps in shaping a character’s present life (269). Memories belong to the past, but re-remembering makes them part of the present as well as future.

Memoirs and biography are significant to historically testify those horrific instances of the past which we tend to believe never existed, in a way memoir helps in re-writing of history and literature to keep the lesser known past afresh in the minds of the audience (Buss 173). Hill explains that predominantly the memoirs published by Blacks were about the journey from slavery to freedom, however, Hurston’s *Barracoon* stands out among other narratives as it is not only about freedom, but it is also about re-remembering and sustaining culture (85).



The public believes that they already know everything about the Africans, however, Hurston wants to ameliorate this perception by presenting it in a new light. Collins reviewed Hurston's intention of publishing Lewis's story and gives reference to an article *What White Publisher's Won't Print* penned by Hurston herself in 1950 where Hurston states that she wants to shake the stereotypical view of African Americans (439). Her objective is to demonstrate individual histories while focusing on individual struggle, feelings, emotions, and memories (441). So, she presents Africans as wise individuals having certain aspirations, sentiments, and challenges as she wants to give human status to her displaced people.

Raquel Kennon in her article '*In de Affica Soil*': *Slavery, Ethnography, and Recovery in Zora Neale Hurston's Barracoon: The Story of the "Last Black Cargo"* refers that re-remembering Lewis story is significant as 'Of all the millions transported from Africa to the Americas, only one man is left'(Hurston 6).Hurston wanted to give a unique voice to this last slave's story before it gets disappeared in the pages of history (Kennon 1) that is why she rendered her characteristic voice to recover Lewis's tale and make it "the most dramatic chapter in the story of human existence" (Hurston 5). Thus, all these writers have propagated the influence of re-remembering the black slaves in contemporary times, as their particular voices can create a difference.

### **2.3 Re-remembering and Memory Studies**

Memory studies came into light as a discipline in the mid-twentieth century. Recalling memories can be a way of rescuing events that might become things of the past, as some episodes run their course, and then there is a risk of those times dying in oblivion so here memory is consciously revived (Casey 50). According to Casey, re-remembering can be 'secondary' remembering, but its significance is not less than the primary remembering, it not only symbolizes recollecting rather it is a continuation and follow-up of the remembering process (51). Neurological studies advocate a striking connection between memory and emotions, as short-term memories with strong sentimental value are secured as clear nostalgic instances (Rizzi 47). That's why memory studies are becoming a significant field of study to observe human emotions and attachments.

Re-remembering can be tricky, it doesn't singly concern recalling forgotten events and people, as explained by Brewer, but it involves a deliberate attempt in presenting the things realistically and owning the uncomfortable events of the past (40). Wale conducted research in which he studied the impact of re-remembering parent's and grandparents' history on the second generation, and the functions of nostalgia to communicate traumatic memories to the next generation (212). He also studied the effect of these nostalgic memories on the current lives of the second generation.

Recent researches in the field of memory studies focus on those private and personal memories which help in shaping one's life, McGeachan investigates the significance of the process of re-remembering in searching for the link between the past and present life of an individual to closely study the present-ness of the past (269). Jackson believed that slave literature is being rediscovered and written about as it resonates with several struggles and resistance movements of the present times (133). There is a constant effort on part of the culprit to either listen to his desire to forget the past or the inclination to cling to those hurtful memories, that's why it becomes more important to re-write about those times for reference of recording those memories (Lenzen 22). Diamond explains that writing Lewis's story was important as he was considered the last survivor of the slave trade, he had seen the slavery and later sixty-seven years of freedom in a white land therefore he not only had the first-hand account of his nostalgic life in Africa but can also tell about the horrors of pre-slavery and post-slavery life in America. These types of slave narratives help in the reconnecting and healing process of the whole community, highlighting the complexities related to the experiences of identity in 1927 and hinting at how identity can be claimed and reclaimed in the present times (Rowe 572). Hurston in *Barracoon* aims to clarify the relationship between past Yoruba traditions and their perpetuity in the diasporic environment though Hurston believes that oral tradition is an important tool for recording African history, however for the writer recording memory is considered equally significant to keep the stories alive. Williams and Releford mention that work of certain authors like Gomez and Robertson has helped in changing their perception of a slave narrative like *Barracoon*, their critique provides a new dimension to the transatlantic trade while reading this memoir (101). Therefore,

memory studies can play a role in understanding the past, present, and identity issues of these displaced people.

## 2.4 Nostalgia

Nostalgia is a feeling linked with longing for home, an early example of this notion can be seen in Homer's *Odyssey*. In some recent times, nostalgia was considered to be a medical illness, a type of depression and melancholy, thus it remained a part of neurological and psychological disorder for the most part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Routledge and Wildschutetal 810). Modern-day dictionaries define nostalgia as experiencing feelings of both happiness and gloominess while remembering instances from the past and desiring to return to those old times (Merriam-Webster Dictionary).

The concept of nostalgia being only based on past pleasant memories is a misconception, as Jacob Dlamini, in *Native Nostalgia*, remarks "the irony about nostalgia is that, for its entire fixation with the past, it is essentially about the present. It is about present anxieties refracted through the prism of the past" (16). It is not an illness resulting in melancholy, rather it has numerous aspects attached to it.

Edward S. Casey's mentions in his book *The World of Nostalgia* that we are nostalgic about a place that is significant to us and the desire to return to that place is due to the highly personal attachment, he believes that our needs and apprehensions of the present intensify the nostalgia for the lost world (21). Casey questions the type of past that an individual yearns for and concludes that it is the past that an individual has once experienced, but he cannot 'rejoin' it now (21). Feeling nostalgic means wishing to re-enter the world which has vanished from our lives.

Nostalgia can take a variety of forms and, as indicated by Davis, thinking and yearning for the past life bring an aspect of 'self-awareness' (182). Mills and Coleman studied nostalgia regarding clinical studies and concluded that nostalgia can be a therapy to help an individual revive his self-identity by reconnecting the broken threads of their past (18). Cornelius explores nostalgia in two novels *Ancestral Voices* (1989) and *30 Nights in Amsterdam* (2011) to find a link between memories and present anxieties. The characters in these novels are negatively influenced by their past identity and past life; that's why they are unable to move on from that time (27).

Therefore, nostalgic emotions can be channelled in both negative and positive ways in a person's life.

African writings aim to highlight an African sense of self and as believed by Warnes African writers wanted to give an ode to the African self by referring to an idealized past life (72). Feldbrügge analyzed a few African novels and concluded that Van Heerden's novels show conflict between illusion and reality and depict a real picture of the past, it shows that the African man is not comfortable in the other place and feels uncertain and lost (30). This sense of loss is an important aspect of one's nostalgic feeling.

Writers like Van Heerden write about the people and life in Africa not only due to their interest and fascination towards that continent but because they are enticed to explore how Africans; entangled in social and contemporary struggles, search for the clues left by their history and memory (2). Kizimchuk explains that nostalgia is closely linked to 'return', return can be to one's ancestral place, one's fond memories, or one's past life, or returning to one's real self (174). Kizimchuk studied Mizrahi memoirs and analysed that first, a disconnection is necessary to inflame the desire for return, the dispersal causes an irreparable loss which intensifies the yearning for home (175).

Davi's description of nostalgia places it a positive experience with a combination of sweet and bitter experiences, this emotion can only be induced as a result of an actual life experience where a person identifies with bygone places, events and people by creating a narrative around these things (413). Cavanaugh established a connection between nostalgia and emotions and explains that nostalgia tries to recollect the time when life was safe, secure, comfortable and ideal (603). Cornelius has studied the reflective nostalgic features in Rayda Jacobs's 'historical fiction' to comment on the reformation of identity, commonly slaves were snatched of their identity by taking away their real names which in a way takes away their past, home and sense of belonging (2).

Bhabha connect of 'third space' refers to the 'others' challenging or questioning the established structures built by history, space, time, place, culture and language (Kalua 23). As reflexive nostalgia is ascertained on the longing and remembering of a home which means that the present life of such individuals poses a

sense of defamiliarization which makes him nostalgic about the lost world (209). By bringing the past into the present in a memoir, personal and collective experiences are combined to create a substitute for the long-lost home.

Memories have an everlasting impact on an individual's life. Elias establishes that the reasons for migration can be different but the unifying factor is that the migrants experience the agony of leaving home behind and are haunted by their memories, even George claimed that all migrant literature is homesickness as the characters were drenched in the recollections of their homeland (174). Thus, it is tiring for the displaced people to let go of their past and their individual and collective memories haunt them forever in their new homes (Topinka 55).

## **2.5 Outcomes of nostalgia**

Nostalgia can bring certain changes in a person, as it can affect him both positively and negatively. Boym explains a few consequences of nostalgia that can trigger a sense of loneliness, on the positive side, nostalgic feelings can provide a sense of social connectivity which in turn gives an insight into the meaning of life (10). Foucault mentions heterotopias which can be defined as 'counter sites', the places (physical or imaginary) created by immigrants to satisfy their nostalgia.

Erica Louise Lombard in *The Profits of the Past: Nostalgic White Writing of Post-Apartheid South Africa* tries to relate trauma and nostalgia and comments that both can be found side by side in a text. Lombard uses the terms white and black nostalgia and compares them by stating that white nostalgia is full of questions regarding identity, responsibility, and belonging whereas in black narratives there is relationship among communities, heroic tales, and the colourful cultural aspects.

Boym establishes that nostalgia revolves around the recollections of a lost home, which can be restorative or reflective; restorative being related to the memories of a place and reflective being more about the memories than the geographical place (174). Legg further explains that restorative nostalgia is embedded in the specific landscape from where an individual lived, and he cannot mentally and emotionally escape that geographical place (100). Reflective nostalgia avoids space and thrives on the chunks of memories. People having reflective nostalgia will settle in their new homes, while thinking about their past homes, thus creating an amalgamation of past and present identities (Rizz 174). So restorative nostalgia is more about rebuilding the

past life, while reflective one is more inclined towards feelings of longing for the past. Akshatha highlights restorative nostalgia in *Sleepwalkers* where mohajirs recreate Lucknow, their homeland in Karachi in an attempt to restore their original home (05).

## **2.6 Nostalgia and memory**

Nostalgia and memory are closely linked, nostalgia can be yearning for a time, different from the present moments, a time that no longer exists and that time can be from the past life or time from a fanaticized life (Boym 44). Kizimchuk believes that the return to that time is a utopian desire which leaves a considerable emotional and psychological impact on a person, thus leaving an individual in a constant emotional struggle (180).

Hurston's narrative under study is different from other writings as it doesn't tell the story of Lewis moving towards the American dream, rather the story moves in a reverse direction. It takes the readers back to times of slavery and cruelty, and even further back to the memories of peace and belonging, thus bringing nostalgia and memory together (Plant 147). Whitwell believes that memory is a process that helps in evolving the past, its function is not only to be nostalgic about the past but to acclimate it and reshape our present and future life (05).

## **2.7 Collective nostalgia**

It could be said that among displaced peoples such as Mizrahim, nostalgia and the hope or desire for return could constitute an 'imagining' shared and held in common (Kizimchuk 50). Boym agrees that nostalgia is not simply personal, but is also inherently collective in nature: Unlike melancholia, which confines itself to the planes of individual consciousness, nostalgia is about the relationship between individual biography and the biography of groups or nations, between personal and collective memory, individual home and collective homeland (51). Therefore, nostalgia addresses multiple aspects of a person's life.

Nostalgia is a type of memory and though it focuses on pleasant memories, nostalgia can also lead to awakening painful and submerged memories, it can trigger the remembrance of those hidden experiences which can be referred to traumatic memories. According to Walder, the pleasant emotions related to nostalgia are only a

small part, but understanding the layers of feelings and attitudes related to nostalgia helps us in finding the complexity associated with it (3).

Place Attachment suggested by Ben Dowler explains the reason for feeling attached to one's homeland, this feeling of nostalgia is so strong that the main character of the memoir feels returning to his home as one of his basic desires (Nourmohammadi 34). The immigrant feels emptiness and nothingness, he believes that he can only feel complete in his past home and his only desire is to go back to his native place (Blyden 2008). Akshahta analysed a variety of nostalgic forms in *Sleepwalkers* that the whole community of mohajirs build their Lucknow home in Karachi but still, this rebuilding didn't satisfy them, and they felt missing out on their past (06).

## **2.8 Finding Meaning in Nostalgia**

The concept of nostalgia is related to finding and promoting meaning in life (Sedikides and Wildschut 319). It facilitates displaced people by expanding social connectivity and amplifying social continuity, it creates a sense of belonging and conformity, in addition, it maintains the link between one's past and present life (Sedikides and Wildschut 319). Nostalgia keeps an individual on track to pursue his goals, and it enables him to resist existential threats, thus helping him in leading a more meaningful life (Sedikides and Wildschut 321). According to Batcho, nostalgia helps in counterbalancing loneliness and provides emotional support from within, thus it contributes to acquiring personal growth in a new hostile environment (134).

The connection between nostalgia and identity cannot be ignored. Milligan claims that the sentiment of nostalgia is triggered by the disruption in identity, it is not a useless emotion, rather it continuously provides the basis for constructing and reconstructing our identities (381). According to Davies, nostalgia creates unity among a certain ethnic group by making them aware of their shared past experiences. When an individual or a community is forced out of their home, they face disruption in their identity, which pushes them towards remembering their good old time (115). This feeling of loss of home assists in the establishment of a new identity and this whole process helps in healing, therefore, nostalgia asserts meaning to a person's or community's present life (Milligan 383).

Toni Morrison wrote *Beloved* to create a link between the present and the imagined past of Afro- American community. Morrison was deeply affected after reading the trauma of a slave, and writing this novel was a conscious effort to counter that trauma (Younes 10). *Beloved* deals with the themes of slavery, trauma and memory, to highlight the origin of racism and violence which even contemporary African Americans are suffering in one way or another. The Black Lives Matter Movement also aligns with Morrison's motive as according to Younes it builds up on the continuousness of trauma faced by African Americans in the U.S. today (12).

## **2.9 Identity**

Ralph Harper is the first postmodern American writer who links nostalgia with identity as he says that nostalgia deals with the memories which are happy and sad, known and unknown; it is about the past which is long gone and forgotten but still, it seems more real and enchanting than anything else. That past abrupt the mind without anticipation, and this consciousness of the past gives a sense of wholeness to one's identity (Zimmann 5).

Writers like Harper, Davis, Boym, and Wilson believe that nostalgia restores and shapes self-identity. Wilson explains that an individual re-evaluates his past life and reconceptualizes it by continuously connecting it with selective past instances, therefore memory is recalling the actual past and nostalgia is remembering the emotional connection with the revered past to know one's identity (35). Williams & Releford explain that Lewis in *Barracoon* seems to be well aware of his 'liminality' meaning that he knows he was in the middle of letting go of his Yoruba identity and diving into his African American identity, however, this awareness made him more conspicuous of preserving his past life, and he tried to secure few of his past life connections (98).

Davies believes that nostalgia helps an individual in reaching an equilibrium while facing life challenges, it takes a person in the simplicity of his past childhood, away from the chaos of the current life and serves as a shield against the challenges (120).

Wilson determined that remembering the good times facilitates reconstructing our past which in turn shapes our present identity, he explains that during our life, we create and recreate identity however few elements of our identity remain constant, and



nostalgic recollections help us expose those features of our identity thus, identity utilizes nostalgia as a stimulus to sustain harmony in the otherwise conflicting discourses of postmodern times (35,9).

The novel *30 Nights in Amsterdam* was published in 2011, it discusses the complexity of African and South African identities and through his characters, the writer asserts that by recalling memories and traumas, the main characters can reach to a clear understanding of their past and can better understand themselves (Cornelius 31). In Zora Neale Hurston's novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937) Janie defines her identity in the end, but the process required doses of self-realization during her long journey of endurance. She overcomes all the difficulties which were stopping her from reshaping her identity (Djebnoun 12). So, self-realization facilitates in reaching a conclusion.

Rítivoí in *Yesterday's Self: Nostalgia and the Immigrant Identity* (2002) presents a contemporary outlook of nostalgia in the context of displaced people and their identity crisis (Lorcin 99). Her work studies the reaction of exiled people to their new home, how and how much to adapt to the new cultural norms and traditions. Ritivo believes that longing for home instils an awareness in an individual which in turn helps him build his identity, so selected memories play a role in creating and re-creating identities (16).

Williams & Releford in their essay *The Everlasting Significance of Zora Neale Hurston's Barracoon* claims that Lewis's tale helps in understanding the identity of black slaves by presenting the mobile nature of identity as there was constriction between the ones who were rigid towards their native identity with the ones who wanted to adapt to the new world order (94). The title of the book contains the word 'Barracoon' which was though a brief part of Lewis's life, however, its significance cannot be ignored. It played an important role in his transatlantic experience as this experience triggered the identity dilemma and afterward, he was constantly weighed and reweighed based on his identity (Williams 101). Though the timings of the stay in Barracoons varied from certain weeks to several months, no doubt the transformation of the Africans into African Americans was initiated right there in the barracoons. Enslaving a person means snatching that person's identity and dignity, this exploitation violently deprived slaves of their humanity and the first step in this context was stripping the slaves of their native names after landing in America

(Ibanga 18). There is no doubt that the brief time spent by Lewis in Barracoon left an unpleasant mark that constantly made him question his identity in America.

An African writer Angie Thomas explains that as a writer she wrote more about white people than her natives, later she realized that it was her duty to preserve her identity, so she started narrating black characters. In one of her novels, the main character Starr faces the same identity dilemma, she is alienated from her environment and people due to her race, and she starts accepting the stereotypes associated with her (Bacci 189). So, the urge to preserve one's identity cannot be suppressed long by the sensitive people of society.

## **2.10 Displacement of Identity**

The displacement experiences and their consequences are different for different individuals. Directly displaced individuals yearn to return to the homeland to revisit their beloved places, they are driven by their idealized version of the past, their memories help them to heal, and they desire for a sense of closure after all the traumas and sufferings (Kizimchuk 62,181).

The yearning for return emerges as a result of hypermobility, Weil argues that the concept of 'rootedness' is a basic requirement of the human soul (177). According to Ryan, Lewis's tale is different from other slave narratives as other stories like that of Olaudah Equiano are about triumph and success however Hurston's memoir is about loneliness and displaced identity (U.S. Studies Online). Displacement and dispossession of one's past cause chaos in a person, and he continuously desires his long-lost home.

Migrant literature is mainly about the identity crisis of the main character, and his efforts to integrate and adjust to the new environment. Elias analysed African Diasporic Poetry and concluded that the nostalgic memories redefine the identity of African Americans regarding their re-remembered past (173). Beckelheimer asserts that the transatlantic slaves are the only reason for the identity crisis faced by Africans because family histories got transferred from one generation to another in bits and pieces, and details got weathered and lost in time (53). Slavery isolated and dispersed the identity which resulted in disconnectedness and to fight back, Africans tried to recreate their homeland there in America, one example of that effort is Africa town which was built on the outskirts of Alabama (Beckelheimer 53). Diouf claims that

Africans tried to recreate their homeland in America, tried to relive their cherished memories, and strived to teach their traditions and customs to the children (2).

Buikema & Swamy argue that the theme of nostalgia appears in most diaspora writings, and it plays in a pivotal role in the reinvention of identity as the characters learn to settle in their new lives and new environment (Stanley 175). Being far from home, Africans tried to stick to their roots and traditions despite the societal pressures and showed discontent when they were expected to adopt new norms at the cost of leaving their basic lifestyles (Beckelheimer 52). People develop a special kind of bonding with certain sites or places, and detachment from that place disrupts the identity of a person (Milligan 1). Place attachment combines a person's nostalgic experience from the past and his expectations from his future and when displacement occurs his experience and expectations are discontinued which havoc his identity (Milligan 23). Hurston's representation of the folk history of blacks in her memoir highlights that identity is created by our experiences, if our experience involves falling back into nostalgia then the home will be dearly remembered and missed.

Ibanga uses the reference of an Ethiopian lady who was born in America while highlighting the relevance of identity issues in contemporary times (02). The girl mentions that throughout her life she has been confused about her identity. She wasn't able to configure a direct answer immediately if someone asked about her origin. The enslaved African's had horrible experiences of letting go of their identity, they lost their home, and their people even they were ripped off their humanity and their existence was a mere mirage (Owosho 162). Ibanga believes that the descendants of African Americans are buried in the alien land, therefore, they are still enslaved as their real identity is their homeland (11). He explains that it is difficult for the immigrants to be both African and American at the same time, and they long for an authentic identification (16). Akhtar gives a concept of 'third identification' for the immigrants or displaced people, their immersion into new culture and memories together create a different identity which might be disturbing for an individual (Elena 23). This new identity brings a desire to return to the homeland however this desire meets with reality and an individual realizes that numerous factors make this return impossible, then the only refuge is to fantasize about the return (Elena 43). Being disconnected from his home means having no identity and history, that's why African Americans are nostalgic for their past home.

A black is viewed as an outsider despite his achievements and individuality, he continually faces racial discrimination, he is referred to as a slave and white men refer to adjectives such as cannibal and savage while referring to him (Tinsley 179). Hurston's representation of blacks as normal individuals, working, earning their living, and facing tribulations is an attempt to bring the humanness of these oppressed people into the limelight.

## **2.11 Nostalgia in Present Times**

Traditionally the concept of nostalgia revolved around the desire to revisit the physical home, nevertheless, in contemporary times, this concept has evolved (Neelima 33). It can just be a display of longing, or feeling for one's home to reclaim a past emotional connection or it can be a demonstration of those long-lost sentiments which were misunderstood or hidden (Neelima 33). As Diamond commented that *Barracoon* is not similar to other slave stories, it doesn't talk about achieving The American dream rather it takes the reader to the past times, to the long-lost home, to introduce the audience to the buried world of Lewis. Huston re-constructs the home by revisiting the African folk culture, not by romanticizing the atrocities committed on the black people (Spencer 176). According to critic, Hazel Carby, Hurston presents nostalgia in such a significant manner that it is preserved in time (26). In modern times, the concept of home can be called fluid as it is necessarily not a tangible place, and the selection of memories to mourn the long-lost home might differ from individual to individual (Elias 173). Therefore, the treatment of nostalgia has evolved massively in the current times.

The modern version of nostalgia, according to Higson, exists around uncertain and fluctuating phenomena, it stretches somewhere between past and present times and depends on how past and present are revered by an individual (123). Higson believes that postmodern nostalgia is not an abrupt and quick response to an actual historical moment rather it remembers past instances with the perspective of the present occurrences, in a way it is a reaction to and a re-organization of our modern occurrence (127). So nowadays, creating a perception of the past in the light of present life is studied in nostalgia studies.

Recently the idea of nostalgia is being re-examined and researchers have tried to explore its reason and purpose, it is largely accepted that though nostalgia deals

with the past it has an immense effect on one's present and future (Cornelius 116). Cornelius studied Van Heerden novels and found that his novels depict the past by linking it with the anxieties of contemporary times (9). Nostalgia is a useful device that aids in expressing concerns about the noticeable changes in society (Cornelius 115). For this reason, writing about the past is relevant as it influences our understanding of past lives.

## **2.12 Black Lives Matter Movement**

The Black Lives Matter Movement emerged as a resistance to the racism and colourism prevalent in American society. It didn't start without any valid objective or background rather it picked up from the previous social and civil rights movements (Siscoe 18). Watson, Turner & Hines traces the events leading to the Black Lives Matter movement, in 1916 slaves arrived in American and this started an array of events related to racial inequality and injustice and this episode is considered to be an ignoble phase in America's history (1362). Black Lives Matter movement aims to humanize blacks, Murphy & Ackermann state that negating white supremacy in turn facilitates the establishing and recognizing the humanity of black people (4). It is important to talk about these basic human rights in the modern, aware world.

All social movements originate from an idea, and here the trigger was murder. The Black Lives Matter movement sprung in 2013 after the murder case of Trayvon Martin, the alarming fact is that the victim was unharmed, and the involved police officer wasn't indicted for this crime, almost the same pattern followed in most of these crimes (Awesso 251). The movement is a reaction of the injustices faced by black people from the authorities and white people, though this movement started against the cruelty of black people, but later it became a resistance voice to all the atrocities faced by black people. Siscoe explains that the Black Lives Matter Movement became a celebration of black lives (5). This movement has a long history of struggle against the tyrannies of the powerful, Civil Rights Movement and the Black Power Movement in the sixties and seventies have set up the basis for black rights activism, however Black Lives Matter Movement has set up an unprecedented rendition of the judicial system in America. A new perspective of Black Lives Matter Movement is its positioning within the lens of human rights activism as this movement recognizes the Black lives for their humanity and value, thus placing the

previous notions in a whole new perspective (Younes 7). Foster stresses that the African misplaced people conversed about slavery, but this was not their only discourse, they also faced civil rights issues at every point in their life (715). Therefore, Black Lives Movement became a clear voice, in contemporary times, to reject a shame that is still prevalent in American Society.

Frederick Harris explains that the phrase Black Lives Matter is an umbrella term to discuss all the forms and types of state violence which leave Black people powerless and helpless, thus enclosing this judicial movement around the issue of human rights (36). Exploration of this movement helps in identifying the human rights, laws, customs, and norms of the African American people (Haris 34). Thus, this moment gives a solid presence to black people.

The Black Lives Matter movement works at a lot of levels to fight racism and bring a change in the system and structures. This movement aims to transform the criminal system and to ensure that the policies are implemented fairly, to move away from colour-blindness, and become colour-conscious (Siscoe 20). Wilkerson believes that if a single person in a community is oppressed, it means the whole community is dehumanized. Recently the world has witnessed the brutality faced by George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Jacob Blake. The criminal aspects of the black community are generally highlighted in such a way that the actions of white men seem defensible and acceptable therefore, this movement is significant to raise voice against the system.

In America, the Transatlantic Slave Trade began in 1650 and millions of Africans were sold and shipped to the western ports. The black has faced discrimination and cruelty since then as at many levels this discrimination was justified by the white people (Taylor 21). Though slavery ended long ago however institutionalized and structural racism is still prevalent in the United States which makes readings and analysis of slave writings a relevant topic (Wilson 8). Now and then, incidents of injustice towards marginalized community happen, which signifies the need for such human rights movements.

The Civil Rights Movement and the Black Lives Matter Movement is placed in parallel context by various historians. Lebron argues that Black Lives Matter is a continuation of an ongoing struggle and movement in America propelled by earlier scholars, artists, and activists such as Ida B. Wells, Frederick Douglass, Langston

Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, James Baldwin, Alain LeRoy Locke, and Martin Luther King (133). In *Barracoon: The Story of the Last "Black Cargo"*, Hurston highlights certain civil and human rights abuses faced by the main character. The issues mentioned in 1927 by the writer like racism, lack of healthcare, corruption in cooperate sector, lack of justice and police brutality resonate well with the very recent Black Lives Movement agenda (Collins 110). McCoy in his article *Black Lives Matter, and Yes, You are Racist: The Parallelism of the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries* comments that nowadays America is in the same position as it was in previous century, past stories are being repeated every now and then (463). He believes that by re-remembering the history of black people in America, we can understand them and this understanding will be helpful in drawing a parallel between their before and present lives. McCoy explains that the purpose of the Black Lives Matter Movement is to replace the supremacy of white people with the type of local power structures which have the power to intervene when a disturbing situation arises (465). White privilege is a reality, and it demonstrates the advantages which white people have over the black community in various situations (McCoy 478). McWhorter believes that the ideology behind past racial violence had returned, and law enforcement agencies are abusing their power in the same way, without any fear, like in the times before the civil rights movement (210). Ribianszky narrates that the history of cruelty, racism and violence which originated during slavery continues, especially in the form of denial of the basic human rights for blacks (*The Journal of American Ethnic History*). The struggle of free slaves and their survival in the white dominant society is not closely studied, which might shed light on the plight of black people. Though backs were legally free, however, their freedom was limited, and some were abducted to be enslaved by their masters, some were arrested for crimes that they didn't commit. Ribianszky asserts that even after the abolishment of slavery, Black people had to suffer from disparities in various departments like education, health, employment, security, etc.

### **2.13 Slave Narratives through History**

Starting from the days of slavery till the present, literature has produced work about this atrocity. It started with transatlantic slavery travelogues, where former slaves wrote their life accounts to highlight the damage, and neo-slave narratives try to critically unveil the past by providing counter-narratives (Hawkins 2). Mikhail

Bakhtin terms neo-slave narratives “reaccentuation of the past”, which helps the readers re-remember the past, clearly and vividly (419). In a way, the modern narrative doesn’t simply represent a story, it recounts it, and retells it in a relevant and plausible manner (Hawkins 15). Hawkins called neo-slave narrative a ‘postmodern cousin’ of the classic slave writings (2). Neo-slave narratives are based on the classic formula of a slave story, however, it not only narrates a historical time, it also represents the personalized accounts of slaves, before and after freedom.

Early slave narratives, from 1770 to 1807 were about capturing, cruelty and in the end gaining freedom. Authors such as Olaudah Equiano, Ottobah Cugoana and Venture Smith used this formula successfully (Sofia 69). As the major objective of these writings was to authenticate slavery, that’s why evidence, documents, maps, pictures, and testimonials were provided (Olney 152). The slave trade ended in 1807, slavery was abolished in 1834 and the American Civil War was fought in 1865. The tales written during these years are called ‘integrated tales’ by Septo. Frederick Douglass and Harriet Jacobs were typical representatives for these integrated narratives, the writings focused on both physical and mental abuse, the impact of auctions and slavery, separation from their families and their life in plantations. The last part of slave narratives (starting from 1865 till 1938) focused more on adjustment of characters in a hostile environment as an African Americans than on depicting the evils of slavery (Kaelyn 42), mostly these tales are based on interviews of former slaves conducted by white field workers. Classic slave narratives were followed by neo-slave narratives where writers like Richard Wright, Margaret Walker, Alice Walker, and Ernest Gaines tackle historical instances using postmodern themes thus giving voice to black people.

## **2.14 Relevance of Slave Narrative**

United States literature owes a lot to slave narratives, as this genre has immensely contributed to its literary canon. Slave narratives not only enthrall but also astound the readers by presenting the past in various forms as famous multiculturalist Lawrence W. Levine said ‘a mélange of accuracy and fantasy, of sensitivity and stereotype, of empathy and racism’ (Oxford University Press). Writings about black slaves are still relevant today because Morrison believes that it brings back black world in the limelight which was neglected for a long time by the whites by giving



voice to a 'profound lament' (Andrews et al. 4). Torres et al. believe that the slaves were being used by white men, their identities were being controlled by the masters without paying any heed to their humanity (59). The shift between different past and present life with the help of nostalgia reinforces this notion that the past is still alive in the present (Carrai 3). Even certain resistance movements of the present time affirm this thing, that some aspects of the past are still prevalent in the current American society.

Threadcraft explains that Hurston's memoir intends to confront the limited vision of Americans about the African people and is a kind of protest against the diasporic culture which emerged as a result of this thinking (537). Spencer believes that Hurston's work seems out of sync with her times, she deviates from the general themes and tries to explore the issues from a different angle (Dean et al. 17). Instead of viewing her folk culture as something just a nostalgic experience, she immerses herself in these traditions to paint her characters. She provided a subtle analysis of the racial problems faced by blacks instead of presenting controversies in a loud manner (Dean et al. 22). Therefore, slave narratives are of paramount importance in retaining and upholding African-American tradition. Blight believes that slaves wrote their stories as it gave them a sense of liberation, as at that time their surroundings and government were not supportive (37). While writing these memoirs, these black slaves faced a lot of challenges, they had to provide evidence for the written life events, they had to prove their honesty and most importantly they had to depict their humanity against all the prejudices.

Slave narratives incorporate not only the collective experiences but also shed light on an individual's attempt to steer his destiny, re-envisioning and re-writing about slavery in different forms in the present times, giving a voice to some intimate and psychological aspects which were overlooked by the past writers and readers (Scott 476). F S Foster in the article *A Narrative of the Interesting Origins and (Somewhat) Surprising Developments of African-American Print Culture* entreats the reader to explore the slave narrative beyond the themes of language and politics, as Foster explains that slavery was one of the issues, not the only issue (715). Writing about the past also meant to publicize their intellectual, -artistic, moralistic, and spiritual sides, Hurston's *Barracoon* refrains from being a typical slave narrative as it promotes to expanding the reader's understanding of this genre (William & Relelfrod

103). Lynda Marion Hill explains about *Barracoon* that the plot of this memoir doesn't revolve around an escape from enslavement, also it doesn't propagate on any political accounts (192). Hurston wanted to honour the intellect and reasoning of native Africans, in addition to this, she wanted to be a part of 'historical justice' in the twentieth century by providing a voice to a formerly forgotten experience (Powell 61). Writing *Barracoon* has successfully served this purpose for Hurston.

Hurston clarifies that the purpose of writing the slave narrative is not to provide an accurate scientific work, but to give an insight into the necessary truth to make readers aware of slave narratives (Collins 440). In *Barracoon: The story of the Last "Black Cargo"*, Hurston hinted at a 'third space' present among the African Americans and the White where the African Americans are 'othered' under the bigotry of the Whites (Collins 440). Her mission is to highlight the endurance and struggle of Blacks against the odds (Hurston 161) and her characters justify these objectives as her work effectively presents the voice of the voiceless.

The intention of publishing this memoir is to give voice to millions of silenced voices and untold stories. Hurston claims that her memoir will alter and improve the general opinion about African Americans. She grieves the typical presentation of these people and aims to disrupt the general impression with the character of Lewis in *Barracoon* (Collins 449). Lloyd and Watkins contest that it is difficult to place African America in the diaspora, and this confusion is due to the lack of passing of their tradition through generations (09). In such circumstances, the presence of such memoirs and narrative becomes more necessary.

Zora Neale Hurston believed that the transmission of heritage through generations is necessary to keep it alive. She believes it is her job to refresh all the nostalgic tales which African people might have forgotten (Saddof 6). Whitwell mentions that the appeal of slave narratives decreased after the civil war however when the first freeborn African Americans become maturer than they realized the importance of retelling their ancestor's tales (07). Ashraf Rushdy explains that neo-slave narrative was created out of nothing, rather its purpose is to revive and preserve African American oral and literary culture and customs. Thus, reconnecting with the past through stories and memoirs has become significant in contemporary times.

In 2011, a critic, Professor Kenneth Warren claimed that the era of African American Literature and slave stories had ended in the 1970s, however, Marcus claimed that it's not true (70). Black slave narratives are still a rage, not only because of extraordinary writers, but also because of common prevailing themes. The life of blacks is still an engaging subject among the racist, unequal and distraught American society (Marcus 70) as evidenced by the success of recently successful Black memoirs such as Ta-Nehisi Coates's *Between the World and Me*, Margo Jefferson's *Negro Land*, Clifford Thompson's *Twin of Blackness*, and Rosemary Freeney Harding and Rachel Harding's *Remnants: A Memoir of Spirit, Activism, and Mothering*. Memoir has shaped the black tradition; it uses themes of remembering and identity to comment on the modification in this tradition, starting from simple slave stories to the modern complex representations of black life (Marcus 70). Black memoirs focus on the black body, whether alive or deceased and serve as an outcry against racial discrimination, extending (in contemporary times) to themes of trauma and memory studies (Moody 192). In the Black Lives Matter Movement times, African American literature uses and refers back to the themes of antebellum slave stories. Bailey et al. comment that in the present era, black memoirs provide a platform to reconstruct black lives and bring them in to the forefront (221). Therefore, black memoirs preserve both individual and collective black experiences in a way to narrate their struggle in a hostile environment.

The Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s aimed at seeking justice for black people, and eventually the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was passed. This act gave hope to blacks, however, the situation of social, education, and voting rights along with the selection of Trump after Obama increased a sense of white supremacy. Goody, Ollove & Vestal claimed that even Covid-19 impacted blacks more adversely than whites due to a contrast in social inequities (6). Gould & Wilson described that economic destabilization and unemployment experienced by blacks during Covid-19 further exposed the pre-existing inequalities in American society (4). Though Black Lives Matter Movement began in 2013 after the murder of Trayvon Martin, still there have been numerous other such cases by law enforcement agencies where justice is not served. Hurston's *Barracoon* is significant in the era of such movements to encounter the 'other' narrative and give voice to the suppressed black people in American society.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The preceding chapter explains key concepts of Janelle L. Wilson's book *Nostalgia: Sanctuary of Meaning*, which was republished digitally in 2014. Janelle L. Wilson is a professor in Department of Sociology/Anthropology at the University of Minnesota Duluth. She believes that the postmodern times pose a threat to creating and maintaining an identity therefore reminiscing past is crucial. The link between nostalgia, re-remembering home, and identity is established, explaining the role of nostalgia in making our past relevant to our present. She believes that authenticating the past is less significant as compared to determining the reason of these retellings. The core principles of the Black Lives Matter Movement are also discussed with reference to an article by Watson, Turner & Hines published in 2020. Janelle L. Wilson 's book serves as the primary source for theoretical framework while Watson, Turner & Hines's article *Black Lives Matter: We are in the Same Storm but we are not in the Same Boat* is used as the secondary source. The current chapter discusses the approach, method, and theoretical framework of the present research work.

#### **3.2 Qualitative Approach**

Corbin and Strauss suggest that qualitative research deals with the events, happenings, attitudes, feelings, and lives of people. Along with-it qualitative research also deals with existing/existed campaigns, state interplay, and cultural phenomena. They further claim that qualitative analysis is organized and interpreted in accordance with the [selected] theoretical framework (Strauss and Corbin 11). For this reason, qualitative research is suitable to answer what and how queries (Creswell and Poth). Therefore, the current study used a qualitative approach to carry out the research.

#### **3.3 Research Methodology**

The current research is literature-based and qualitative in nature. Gabriel Griffin in his book *Research Methods for English Studies* gives liberty to the researcher for choosing his/her methods and techniques with respect to the intended research to carry out the study (Griffin 3) so my research is conducted using textual

analysis. Textual analysis is a methodology that involves understanding language, symbols, and/or pictures present in texts to gain information regarding how people make sense of and communicate life and life experiences. Visual, written, or spoken messages provide cues to ways through which communication may be understood. Often the messages are understood as influenced by and reflective of larger social structures. For example, messages reflect and/or may challenge historical, cultural, political, and ethical contexts for which they exist. Therefore, the analyst must understand the broader social structures that influence the messages present in the text under investigation. To perform textual analysis, first, a thorough study of the relevant theories was carried out. After that, a detailed reading was given to the selected literary texts through the lens of the preselected theory while highlighting the quotations, words and phrases that were related to the selected theory. The selected texts were again re-read to make sure that no important point remained unnoticed. The relevant material was then analyzed in accordance with the selected theoretical framework and a conclusion was made.

Textual analysis is a significant method to study literary texts, it emphasizes on the elements constructed in a text by the writer and tries to understand and explain the meanings of these elements. This methodology focuses on the use of specific words and imagery by the writer and helps us in concluding the ideologies and thought processes of the characters with the aid of text. As this method places emphasis on the different elements constructed by the writer therefore it focuses on the narrative perspectives of a memoir and helps us re-exploring a classic text with a new perspective. When a researcher is analyzing a text, the main intention is to understand it and understanding requires certain stages. The process of textual analysis starts with a careful reading of the text, afterwards, the researcher responds by summarizing and examining, and ends by providing a conclusion.

### **3.4 Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework provides a base on which an individual carries out research. It helps to develop, prove or challenge a particular stance. It helps in making a phenomenon comprehensible and produces useful content. I have used concepts presented by Janelle L. Wilson in her book *Nostalgia: Sanctuary of Meaning* to discuss the concepts of nostalgia, re-remembering home, and identity in the memoir under study. Watson, Turner & Hines's article *Black Lives Matter: We are in the*

*Same Storm but we are not in the Same Boat* is utilized to discuss various facets of Black Lives Matter Movement to evaluate the dehumanizing of blacks by white through the course of history.

The concept of nostalgia has evolved with time, now it's linked to those memories of a home which not only trigger longing for home but also challenges other aspects in the new home. Nostalgia is associated with identity as it helps and enhances a person's individual and collective identity (Sedikides et al 304). Nostalgia is not bound to psychological studies and literary critics have also used this concept to analyze certain biographies and texts. Romantic and Victorian ages saw an interest in remembering home as a safe and comforting place away from the complexities of life (Wilson 321). Later nostalgia lost its charm among literary critics, however in the present era it is seen by some as emotional and regressive while some critics view it as a phenomenon that gives meaning to our present life and makes our vision of the present times more vivid (Wilson 321). Thus, nostalgia strengthens one's identity and helps in the recovery and healing process.

Migration literature deploys themes of nostalgia and identity as it talks about moving, uprooting and exiling from one's home; post-colonist use this tool to emphasize their lost collective identity which they desire to re-achieve (Wilson 322). The identity of the displaced people is weighed according to their concept of home and emotional attachment to their roots (Das 49). Tilburg & Heck believe that nostalgia was also associated with homesickness where an individual feels displaced and stressed, the new home seems hostile and unfamiliar and he cannot stop thinking about his past home (899).

A contemporary historian at Binghamton University, Anne C. Bailey utilizes the term re-remember to signify the motive of presenting the stories of black slaves, from their perspective in front of the modern-day audience (Staff). Bailey believes that the more we re-remember, the more we can make the right choices which make the selected text relevant to contemporary times. Slave narrative might belong to pages of history but their challenges and disconnectedness are no less than a contemporary theme.

Janelle L. Wilson in her book *Nostalgia: Sanctuary of Meaning* re-establishes the link between the concepts of identity and nostalgia. I have used the concepts

presented by Wilson to analyze different elements of nostalgia and identity in the novel under study. Nostalgia helps in maintaining one's identity, both on individual and collective levels thus 're-creating' the past. Wilson rejects the previous notions associated with nostalgia and presents it in a new light as the books focus more on the act of remembering and recollecting of past rather than on weighing up the accuracy of those experiences. Nostalgia is defined to be a contradictory emotion by Wilson in the sense that it can be a painful emotion but still brings some sort of sweetness to that pain (Wilson 23). *Nostalgia: Sanctuary of Meaning* emphasizes Tannock 's three key stages involved in nostalgia, the first is a prelapsarian world i.e., the past, then is the lapse which signifies separation and the third stage is the present times called the postlapsarian world.

Wilson differentiates between nostalgia and other fleeting emotions such as remembering and recollecting by explaining that nostalgia is significant as it involves active involvement and selection of certain memories, it involves emotions and longing for a certain time. Nostalgia is complete with a desire to return to the past however recollections and remembering are devoid of this wish. Nostalgia can be used to construct, reconstruct and sustain one's identity therefore it helps in maintaining one's identity. Thus, with the assistance of memory, nostalgia helps in knowing a personality and can become one's salvation. I have analyzed these aspects of nostalgia with reference to the selected memoir.

Wilson places nostalgia as a mediator between collective and individual recollections, it acts as a tool for memory retrospection. Though memory is largely considered a personal matter, scholars try to study collective memory in an attempt to link memory and identity. Sociologists suggest that it is difficult to isolate the individual from his society which makes the notion of collective memory highly relevant. Personal memories often overlap with the collective memories of the group or community to which the person belongs making memory linked with society. Private memories cannot be separated from historical aspects thus they facilitate studying the social constructions of certain phenomena and also analyzing the effect of those events on the life of the character. I have explored these aspects of nostalgia with reference to the chosen text.

In postmodern society, identity is viewed as pliable and flexible as it is continually influenced by societal norms and changes; a personality is recurrently

constructed and reconstructed with the aid of others' beliefs and concepts. Identity helps in creating a meaningful and coherent personality, providing opportunities for self-expression with the help of nostalgic memories. Wilson does not place nostalgia as an escape mechanism rather refers to it as 'presence', nostalgia places us in a specific time and space, and we are able to comprehend that specific reality by recollecting the past. The symbolic significance of objects and events helps in transporting us to the past, which in turn preserves our identity. We attach certain notions with selective memory and remember them on preference; these selective memories create our identity. Nostalgia questions the choice of re-remembering certain past aspects and their role in shaping one's identity. I have referred to three aspects of nostalgia introduced by Davies, first is the 'simple nostalgia' which harbours the common belief that things were beautiful, constructive and positive in the past as compared to the present time. The second type is 'reflexive nostalgia' in which an individual ponders over the truth, completeness, correctness, and significance of the past times and questions whether it is worth going back to the old times. The third stage is 'interpreted nostalgia' which involves objectifying an individual's nostalgic experience making it relevant for oneself, for others, and for the times we live in.

Wilson refers to the term 'danger of nostalgia', as it can confuse real home and the imaginary home, it might create a fantasy home; which can cause serious damage to an individual's perspective. A nostalgic person tries to create an environment or a feeling that hints at his homeland, it helps in maintaining continuity of one's identity.

Wilson mentions that identity is formed with the help of a person's interactions with other people in his surroundings. Several identities create complexities for an individual and hamper his healing process. The process of formation of identity is an ongoing one and requires everyday interactions, it also takes help from past instances and engages future perspectives but most importantly it relies on one's connection with people, society, circumstances, institutes etc. (59). Therefore, identity is not static, rather it constantly reshapes itself under the circumstances.

The link between nostalgia and displacement of identity is re-emphasized by Wilson as the discontinuity of identity is the result of a loss (of time or space).



Nostalgia provides ways to regain the identity both at individual and collective level, it not only recognizes the past identity, it also redefines it. Nostalgia facilitates the continuity of identity; however, it can also impair the understanding of the present identity of an individual so that a person gets stuck in his previous home (Wilson 157). An individual continuously goes back to past which creates a prominent gap between his present and past life resulting in displacement of identity. Wilson refers to nostalgia as ‘sanctuary of meaning’ thus giving significance to its meaning whether it is studied with reference to home, identity or displacement of identity (9). The meaning attributed to certain pieces of a person ‘s home; his name, tribe’s name, dressing, traditions, rituals etc. are studied to connect to his past (10). The nostalgia of home provides a sense of belonging in the present and future life, it allows one to compare their past and present life and derive meaningful identities in apparently bleak circumstances (Wilson 62).

The Black Lives Matter Movement investigates racial discrimination and social inequality endured by black people. Watson, Turner & Hines in their article the *Black Lives Matter: We are in the Same Storm but we are not in the Same Boat* discuss the theory relevant to Black Lives Matter Movement that the key element is the dehumanization of blacks. The history of black subjugation is traced from the entry of black slaves in 1619 till the present time where still blacks are oppressed by whites at so many levels, I have used this article to refer to the concepts of the Black Lives Matter Movement in the selected memoir (2). The power structures in America are predominately owned by Whites which has hindered the providence of racial equality and justice to the Black community (2). Watson, Turner & Hines clarify that Black Lives Matter Movement is primarily a struggle for the liberation, restoring and rebuilding of Black people however from a larger perspective this movement is a voice for all oppressed human beings, it aims to build an ideal world where no one is discriminated based on their color, caste or creed (2). So not only black, all lives who are being victimized need a voice and they matter.

Watson, Turner & Hines explain that dehumanizing does not happen by chance rather it is a well-thought-out process. Black dehumanization is characterized by gaining absolute control, debasement, and objectifying black people thus denying them their basic human rights (4). Watson, Turner & Hines highlight that by remembering black dehumanization, biased policies can be discussed, by referring to

the past troubles of black people, years of trauma though generations can be traced and the desire to fix the past can lead to the restoration of justice (2). Writing about the past traumas faced by these 'othered' individuals will not only facilitate the healing process but will also assert that black lives do matter (Watson et al. 8).

Watson, Turner & Hines pen the term restorative justice to explain the healing process for the oppressed black people as this movement holds offenders accountable for their actions thus giving a voice to these marginalized people (8). Black slaves' brutal treatment started right after they were sold, they were objectified and deprived of their basic rights under the supervision of white supreme structures (4). Watson, Turner & Hines refer to the killing of George Floyd to explain how white man's actions are made acceptable in society. This movement wants to ensure respect, honour, and dignity for black clients so that their voice is also heard in the same manner as white voices (Watson et al. 4).

The psychological state of Black people has been affected by Slavery, these people have suffered losses in multiple places whether its loss of home, family, identity, norms, culture or even loss of name (Watson et al. 6). The unbelievable and horrific atrocities faced by Black people from past times till present are impossible to be ignored and it is not easy for these people to fully recover from this trauma (Watson et al. 7). The movement of Black Lives Matter aspires to grant humanity to the black community and to dismantle the supremacy of white (Watson et al. 4). I have studied these concepts with reference to the selected memoir and explored the suffering and ordeals of black while living in a white society.

## CHAPTER 4

### ANALYSIS & DISCUSSION

#### 4.1 Summary

*Barracoon: The Story of the Last 'Black Cargo'*, published in 2018, is a memoir of Cudjo Lewis, it is a non-fiction work on the life of the last survivor of the Atlantic slave trade between the 'middle passage', which is the trade route between Africa and America. The writer Zora Neale Hurston visits Lewis and conducts a series of interviews and honestly wrote everything communicated by Lewis. Hurston wants readers to listen to Lewis's story, as it is, without any limitations. She conducts proper sessions with Lewis using his real name i.e., Oluale Kossola instead of his slave name Cudjo Lewis. He narrated his time in barracoons, which are barracks or storage used for cattle. Eventually, he reaches Alabama and spends five and half years in slavery, later Civil War starts in 1861 and all the slaves are released. Lewis along with other slaves build up his village and names it Africatown.

Tragedy befalls Lewis's family, first, his daughter dies due to illness, and later one of his sons is shot by a deputy sheriff on suspicion. He laments that the person who killed his son later becomes pastor of a church, and he grieves that his son never got a chance to step on African soil. Lewis narrates a railroad accident where he never received the settlement money. Another son also falls victim to injustice and Lewis is so disheartened by his previous experience that he is assured of not attaining any justice. His son Poe-lee is so discouraged by his brother's unjust death that he runs away from home to never return. Jimmy, Lewis's other son dies of sickness, he and his wife are left alone in the home. His only remaining son, Aleck gets married and lives nearby. Lewis concludes the conversation by gravely remembering the last days of his wife that she used to remember her children and often visit the graveyard. Within a month, Aleck also dies and Lewis is left with grandchildren and daughter-in-law. By this time, Hurston has spent two months with Lewis, and on farewell, she envisions him as a man standing honourable and brave, against all odds.

#### 4.2 Introduction to Author

Zora Neale Hurston was born in 1891 in Alabama to formerly enslaved people. Her father worked as a pastor and after her mother's death, Hurston stayed

with several relatives from time to time. She worked at different places to financially support her education and completed her degree in 1920. Hurston wrote her first novel in 1934, it displayed American African life and was well received by the readers. Her novel *Man of Mountain* (1939) secured her as a serious author. Her other novel, *Dust Tracks on a Road* (1942), an autobiography, received critical acclaim.

Despite a successful career trajectory, Hurston faced personal and monetary issues, she had difficulty in getting most of her work published and died in isolation and poverty in 1960 in Florida. Though Hurston started her writing career impressively however she didn't get much recognition during her lifetime. Few of her works were published after her death, one being *Barracoon: The Story of the Last "Black Cargo"*, was published in 2018 though it was completed in 1931, the memoir was predominantly rejected by the publishers due to the use of vernacular which later turned out to be a distinguishing feature of the book. Hurston utilizes vernacular in her writings smartly to create stories that revolve around social, personal and interpersonal themes as she believes that the use of vernacular adds authenticity to the writings.

In 1975 Alice Walker wrote an article *In Search of Zora Neale Hurston* which reintroduced Hurston in literary circles and gained new readers. Walker wrote the foreword of the memoir under study i.e., *Barracoon: The Story of the Last "Black Cargo"*, and claims to be the witness as Hurston reveals Lewis's both 'wounds and 'medicine' of his survival. In 1977, Robert Hemenway's introduced his biography, *Zora Neale Hurston* which was received well by the readers, this book also helped in highlighting the literary greatness of Hurston. Now an annual event, Zora Festival is celebrated in her native town to pay tribute to her literary genius.

Zora Neale Hurston is an essential part of storytelling in *Barracoon: The Story of the Last "Black Cargo"*, her effective writing style and descriptive expressions cannot be overlooked throughout the text. She consciously places herself in the background to highlight Lewis's experience, she is more of an observer than a participant in the narrative. She appears to be a guide who is propelling the narration in the right direction without dominating the text (Collins 107). The writer's background in anthropology adds authenticity to the memoir, also her use of imagery and descriptions makes it a joy read for all types of audiences (Collins 109). The presence of some historic documents at the start and end of the memoir is also an

added advantage for this type of primitive tale. The process of retelling is complicated, however, Zora Neale Hurston ensured that Lewis's tale is not only heard but also understood (Hoeller 199). Hurston's work is conservative in certain aspects but it is also politically aware of its time. Love claims that twenty-two million Americans are of African descent, therefore study of America is not complete without studying the life, customs and traditions of these Americans and no doubt Zora Neale Hurston has presented these people in an effective manner (422).

### **4.3 Re-Remembering Home**

It took exactly 87 years to publish Hurston's book about Cudjo Lewis, a slave among the last surviving members of the Atlantic Slave Trade. Hurston, right after finishing the book sent it to the publishers but it was rejected due to the use of vernacular which Hurston refused to modify however its publication in recent times ascertains that slave narratives are a source of fascination for the readers in all times, as according to Lawrence W. Levine it is "a mélange of accuracy and fantasy, of sensitivity and stereotype, of empathy and racism" (Library of Congress 176). Hurston's *Barracoon* presents the conflict with testimonials to make us aware of the atrociousness of the past to recover some of the damage caused by the bigotry of the whites. Re-writing slave stories was encouraged as few first-hand accounts of slaves were provided, only a few of them can write and most of the information comes from second-hand resources or information collected in the form of interviews. Bailey rightfully said that it is important to re-remember tales of oppressed people in opposition to the discourse presented by the powerful structures (33). Hurston wrote this memoir to explain and expose the barbarous history of African Americans.

Memories are considered to be valid resources that provide evidence and authentication of historical events (Aurell et al. 510). Hurston attempts to interview Lewis and the presence of historical documents at the start of the narrative provides evidence to authenticate the text. Hurston's memoir *Barracoon: The Story of the Last 'Black Cargo*, presents the narrative confidentially and affectionately which might not be present in interview-based memoirs. The way Hurston takes gifts for Lewis and joins him in his routine chores adds a personal element to the text and also provides an honest account of all the events.

The memoir is noteworthy in presenting a first-hand account of an African slave who survived the Middle passage, also this work sheds light on the racial inequalities experienced by African Americans after their liberation thus making it diverse from other slave stories. As mentioned in the literature review, Bailey asserts that investigation of memory: both individual and collective is required to gauge the presence of racism in society thus re-remembering Hurston's text is not only vital in learning about the horrors of black slaves, it also gives voice to the social, cultural, economic and psychological trauma faced by these people since decades (36). Gomez observed that till 1830, American-born slaves were more in number in comparison to Native Africans therefore few first-hand accounts of the Middle passage were available (75). Williams & Relerford further explain that Hurston's *Barracoon* is significant in re-remembering the distinct tale of Lewis when new identities were emerging (101). So, the memoir is considered a quintessential part of African American Literature.

Hurston's research, effort, and documentation deserve to be acknowledged for giving us an insight into the life of slaves before and after freedom, and the life of these slaves under the supervision of white Americans. As pointed out by Sax, writings like *Barracoon* are critical in not only exposing the truth but also uncovering reality. Accordingly, the publication of Hurston's book in contemporary times provides access to a certain historical period, it not only re-opens a historical chapter for the readers but also emphasizes the reasons for not getting this work published during Hurston's life thus reflecting on the restraints faced by her as a black author in a white dominant society (330). *Barracoon* permits the readers to look beyond the set criteria of a slave narrative and understand this genre from a new perspective (Williams and Relerford 102). The memoir doesn't rely upon Lewis's escape story nor it feeds on some political agenda rather it brings the whole silenced experience of enslavement into the limelight for twentieth century readers (Sexton 192). The text aims to be more of a cultural survival rather than only remembering Lewis's story.

Lewis was among the hundred youngsters of West Africa who were brought to America through the ship, *Clotilda* which is famously called the last slave ship. About a hundred pages of the memoir are dedicated to the description of the attack on Lewis's tribe and his kidnapping by the Dahomey and his working at a steamboat as a slave for five and a half years. The account of the surviving slave to buying land after

freedom, and creating the first town, run by Africans called Africantown highlights the economic strains faced by these people. Not only financially and physically but also intellectually Lewis had to face his American equals to assert his rights as a free citizen. Hurston has rightfully used these accounts in certain proportions in her book as Mendoza declares that writers have the power to choose the past which they want to tell so they need to be mindful of their choices (03). The genre adopted by Hurston doesn't place this memoir among the forgetful traditional slave narratives.

The narrative aids in re-remembering the discrimination and bigotry experienced by Lewis's people as they were being labelled as savage and wild, later their conversion to Christianity made them vulnerable to even other African American people. Hurston's memoir is distinct as the writer lets Lewis's voice lead the narrative, and different fragments of his life are presented in a brazen and blatant tone. Bailey emphasizes on the re-remembering of such texts and the presence of historical evidence makes such writings more authentic (2). Diouf confirms that the information presented by Hurston, confirmed from other historical resources, relies on accurate facts and its authenticity cannot be challenged thus making the memoir a reliable source of information (5).

Works like *Barracoon: The Story of the Last "Black Cargo"* are necessary to counter the prejudice of US historians from southern America, they repudiate the testimonials of enslaved blacks thus diluting their dreadful experiences. Hurston's advisor and mentor wrote to a famous African American writer, Alain Locke and advised him to read *Barracoon: The Story of the Last "Black Cargo"* without any partiality moreover she wanted him to understand that the objective of writing this memoir was to archive the disintegrating African culture and make it available to the white readers (8).

Hurston's narrative, unlike the modern interview-based questionnaire-based approach, uses an interrupted approach to grasp all aspects of Lewis's struggle. Critics agree that Hurston's style of communication provides favourable grounds for Lewis to open up about his traumas, he recalls the journey on Clotilda, for about seventy days he was in the ocean, with horror, he describes that all he could hear was the noise of water and wind, he compares the loud clamor of water with beasts fighting in the bushes, the physical environment along with his emotional state made him befuddled and he detested the sea. Such incidents need to be retold to highlight the

ordeals of these displaced people who not only had to forcefully leave their homeland but also had to go through constant struggle to survive.

Hurston has tried to portray the facts as told by Lewis without adding or substituting any information and most of the incidents mentioned in the memoir have archaeological evidence. Before being sent on the slave ship, Lewis and his fellow countrymen were stripped of their clothes. Later, when he arrived in the US, he was labeled a naked savage. Lewis lamented that episode of his life and felt that this forced nakedness shows his inferiority in the US and it made him feel ashamed. He wanted people to understand the circumstances in which he arrived in the US.

Lewis opens up about being nostalgic and narrates that he along with his group was bombarded with hard labour, they were not only physically exhausted, moreover loss of home and identity added to their grief, he explains that his grief was so heavy that he used to remember his mother and miss her so much that he felt he will die in his sleep. Lewis recalls that his master Jim Meagher was fairly less spiteful, but still, he was continuously overburdened with work, furthermore, there was a continuous, inflexible threat of violence and death. He had to transport wood at night on a steamboat thus there was a risk of getting drowned in the dark, he visualizes the whip of his master and recalls this traumatizing experience. Lewis remembers all twenty-one loading points of the boat but surprisingly he has never visited those places again after 1865, this refers to the psychological impact of those hard days and the memories which still haunt him.

Whites presented southern plantation life as being peaceful and perfect, Lewis's encounter with cruel labor highlights the contrast present in the experiences of white and black people. Readers are able to connect to Lewis's narrative as the writer is barely visible in the text and only appears to reiterate the traumas faced by the subject. In one of the instances, Lewis mentions that he used to recollect harrowing memories of his kidnapping at every Sunday church service.

Lewis's dreadful experience cannot be contained in words and its emotional implications cannot be described easily in sentences, Hurston's attempt to capture this trauma grants a sentimental value to this memoir thus providing us with a text to reflect upon the agonies of west African slaves, dissembling of families and aftereffects of displacement. While re-remembering Lewis's life, Hurston has



presented a comparison between his life as a slave and his life as an American citizen in Africa town (Harrison 166), the memoir highlights that in both stages of his life, Lewis was ostracized and brutalized, lack of basic rights during those times makes this reading very relevant to the current condition of minorities in some parts of the world.

Precolonial history refers to Africans as monoliths, barbaric and boorish, biased narratives of the west have prevented people from studying African culture and lifestyle (Threadcraft 570). Hurston's memoir is a protest against these biased notions and it opens up the scope for African narratives. Hurston wrote an article in 1950 for *Negro Digest*, *What White Publisher's Won't Print* where she highlighted the importance of re-remembering the past of African Americans and hints at her intention of writing Lewis's memoir. She explains that African Americans were considered to be linear personalities whom the white seems to have understood completely.

'They are lay figures mounted in the museum where all may take them in at a glance' (Hurston 2)

Hurston presents the individual tale of Lewis to give life to the numerous tales which were lost in time or those stories were altered by the power structures. The memoir exhibits the power of oral tradition, Lewis's voice is a testimony to the horrors of the American empire; remembering this tale reemphasizes the institutional cruelty and inequality faced by African Americans (Harroson 165). Collins believes that Hurston creates a unique combination by pairing her standard English voice with Lewis's vernacular language (440). Despite the publisher's concerns, Hurston didn't agree to publish this memoir without Lewis's vernacular and now this book has gained the status of a historical artifact (Harrison 165). Details provided in the foreword and afterword of the book plus the attached documents provide authenticity to this primitive story. The foreword is penned by Alice Walker which adds legitimacy to the memoir.

#### **4.4 Nostalgia**

*Barracoon: The Story of the Last "Black Cargo"* is the story of a man from Africa who faced slavery and then freedom and survived during the time of the Civil War and the Great Depression. During the interview, Hurston realizes that despite

living in America for the most part of his life, Lewis's life has taken such twists and turns that he hasn't settled well. A person's desire to return to his chosen past instances is dependent on his current condition in society, the challenges, fears, confusions, and desires of a displaced person put him in an unstable position and he wishes to reach equilibrium and balance (Wilson 45). As Wilson suggested that personal memories are intermingled with the collective one so Lewis's life cannot be separated from his societal influence. Lewis reassures Hurston that he has a clear memory of his past life 'I doan fuhgittee nothin.' (Hurston 26), Wilson gives the example of research that he conducted on some Romanian individuals who were forced out of their homes into shabby apartments and later their homes were demolished by the authorities. Strangely all these Romanians were able to describe their home with accurate details. Wilson explains that the nostalgic recollections helped those Romanians to evaluate their new homes in contrast to the old ones, this sense of loss endorsed an understanding of personal identity in these people (33). Lewis also remembers his past vividly and while narrating his capturing story there is visible agony on his face 'His face was twitching in abysmal pain'(Hurston 49), the mere thought of his home and family in Africa sends him in a depressing state of mind, he faces difficulty in opening up and tells Hurston 'Go leave me 'lone' (Hurston 24).He keeps on referring back to his past in the first part of the book and clearly shows his resentment on being forced to live in a white country as déclassé citizens, 'Now dey make us free but we ain'got no country and we ain'got no lan?!'(Hurston 24) Wilson stresses upon the notion of home that it doesn't mean a fixed place, it can be one's personal space, his friends or family (43). Even it can also refer to the lifestyle i.e., customs, behaviours, and beliefs; these are the things Lewis yearns for. Therefore, the concept of nostalgia cannot be completed without the wish to return to one's homeland. In *Nostalgia Sanctuary of Meaning*, Wilson also explains the evolved definition of home as after the postmodern times, home is considered not only a place but a state of mind (34). Diasporic subjectivity acknowledges the strain between one's present home and the earlier 'elsewhere' and an individual can belong to one place while residing in the other one. The details provided by Lewis about his tribe and constant yearning for home depict his state of mind. Wilson quotes McCann that home is not only a place, it can also refer to his way of life that's why Lewis couldn't let go of his customs, traditions, and even past attitudes (32).

The emotion of nostalgia is worth discussing to understand human sentiments, Hutcheon rightly states that the past cannot be brought back, time cannot be reversed and nostalgia is the reaction to this sad thought (Marie 33). Lewis used to cry whenever Hurston directly or indirectly mentioned Africa, he cries in anguish as he is not able to see the African soil 'Excuse me I cry. I can't help it when I hear de name Cll. Oh, Lor'. I no see Afficky soil no mo'!' (Hurston 19). It is important to notice that nostalgia is not solely thinking about the past times, rather it is also about the desire to return to that time, considering Lewis's circumstances it is evident that this desire cannot be fulfilled which causes anxiety, 'Cudjo feel so lonely, he can't help he cry sometime.' (Hurston 19). He recounts reaching America in 1859 and since then he wasn't able to see his family and tribesmen '...and how come I in Americky soil since de 1859 and never see my people no mo.' (Hurston 19). Wilson reasserts that nostos means 'returning home' and algia means 'pain' therefore this emotion can rightly refer to Lewis's condition of longing for his lost home (19). He feels lonely in the new home despite being surrounded by people of his own country.

The desire of returning to happy past times impacts an individual both emotionally and psychologically. Harper explains that a nostalgic person remembers the past because he feels more linked to that part of his life than the present one (84). Wilson explains the stage when a person not only laments over the passed time but he also emotionally values that time more than anything else (23). While narrating the Dahomey attack Lewis becomes so engrossed in the memories that he becomes oblivious to Hurston's presence. As he is explaining his forceful separation from his tribe, his face depicted the pain and agony which he dealt with during that horrific episode of his life and he is not able to find any words to explain anything 'His agony was so acute that he became inarticulate' (Hurston 49). The emotion of nostalgia is not only about the loss of home, as Boym explains, but also about the gone past times which cannot be brought back, that's why Lewis couldn't control his tears while narrating his journey from Africa to America (191).

Past is not something that is left behind, an individual carries this baggage with him, and it helps in shaping and reshaping one's life (Wilson 47). Lewis looks at the past as something whole and complete, it seems more attractive and palpable to him. After the death of his son Aleck, Lewis is completely broken, he compares this time with instance when he had arrived in America as a slave, empty-handed, lost,

and broken, 'Den I jes lak I come from de Afficky soil' (Hurston 92). It is true that an individual cannot completely get rid of their past, rather he takes the past with him and it cannot be recreated or re-remembered without the interaction of the present (Meads 47). The loss of family triggers his nostalgia more strongly and he fondly looks at the past for completeness.

Lewis laments that even if he gets all the material things still, he won't be contented because he only desires one thing i.e., his home 'Well,if you give Cudjo all de Mobile,dat railroad,and all de banks, Cudjo doan want it 'cause it ain'home.' In contemporary times, the word 'home' can refer to several emotions (Wilson 32), Lewis might be referring to home as his childhood, or his family roots or it might mean a private place where he has the freedom to practice his traditions and laws. 'After seventy-five years,' Hurston writes in *Dust Tracks*, Lewis 'still had that tragic sense of loss. That yearning for blood and cultural ties. That sense of mutilation. It gave me something to feel about' (Sexton 191). Hence Lewis 's happiness lies in his past; he feels constraint in the present and desires his past life.

Nostalgia and memoir are closely knit as it is also called autobiographical memory where both sweet and sour events are recalled with detailing and precision that seems more vivid than the actual present (Mills and Collman). While narrating his story, Lewis explains his life in Africa in detail, he talks about his tribe, traditions, and lifestyle, and he taps into the corners of his memory to bring forth the instances which constantly remind him of his long-lost home.

Wilson has endorsed the three stages of nostalgia introduced by Tannock i.e., prelapsarian, lapse, and postlapsarian. The prelapsarian stage is about the golden time, which can be childhood or the time spent at the home, for Lewis, prelapsarian time was the one spent in his tribe, in his home town where he lived as a free man. Lapse is the separation, capturing of Lewis, and later his whole journey through the barracoon can be taken as the lapse which is a connection between his past and present. The third one is the postlapsarian stage which describes the present times, this stage is about one or more elements of discontinuity. Lewis got freedom and transformed his place in America, where he settled, however, still he missed his identity and his home. There is always some missing connection between the prelapsarian and postlapsarian stages, in the memoir under study the missing connection is the loss of his African identity, deprivation of his familiar home and letting go of his past. Tannock

explained that the critical analysis of nostalgia should not only aim at the creation of the prelapsarian world but should also analyze the remembered and forgotten instances of the prelapsarian past and postlapsarian present therefore Lewis's life events are analyzed in the same manner (29).

Wilson explains that nostalgia cannot be similar to reminiscence and recollections, as it involves feelings, thought processes, and even demeanor, it constantly engages desire to return to the past and comparison of the present with the past. Lewis mentions home at several places in the memoir, even when Hurston asked him for a picture, he dresses up in his African traditional dress to pay homage to his roots. While mentioning his son's death, Lewis laments that his boy never visited Africa, so after all the years, his remorse for the loss of his son is doubled by realizing the fact that now the same son won't be able to visit Lewis's homeland.

Wilson believes that the purpose of nostalgia can be the same as Wordsworth idea about poetry, "recollection in tranquility," needing both distractions from immediate concerns and deliberate recollection for its manifestation. It is a mean of relaxation during tiring times. Lewis has faced so many losses in his life that his only comfort is his memories of home, his hostile environment and lack of companionship add to his misery and he finds peace in re-remembering his real country. Another aspect of nostalgia explained by Akshahtha is that it directs the journey from past to present, and helps the displaced individual reconstruct his home so that he can settle in his unfamiliar new home by remembering the familiar things (05). The reconstructed home can be a liminal space that has defied the progression of time as Lewis follows a few of his African traditions and norms in Africantown.

Reflective and restorative nostalgia is used along with individual and collective nostalgia to analyze its impact. Restorative nostalgia, according to Boym builds up on the desire to return home, aims to build up the long-lost home, and works towards filling the memory gaps (16). While posing for a photograph for Hurston, Lewis wore one of his best dresses but he didn't wear any shoes as he wanted to pose in the same way he would have posed in Africa. He explains that he wants to appear as if he is standing in Africa to showcase his deep-rooted intent of going back to his homeland 'I want to look lak I in Affica,'cause dat where I want to be' (Hurston 113). The building of an old home in restorative nostalgia complies with Bhabha's concept of liminal space, it's the third space between two fixed binary points. A nostalgic

person does not belong to any of the binary that's why he is stuck in the transformation stage (Akhshahta 06). A displaced person like Lewis takes refuge in the middle space as he tries to build a new home in America while engrossed in the memories of his past home in Africa.

Reflective nostalgia is about an emotional moment for a past incident while realizing that that incident was part of the past and cannot be recreated in our present. Lewis fondly remembers his homeland and predominantly wishes to go back to his past but a part of his personality realizes the futility of this desire. This realization urges him to form his community called Africatown in America as he analyzes the circumstances and concludes that he couldn't go back to his homeland (Hurston 68). Sometimes he won't be interested in dwelling on his memories, his only interest will be in everyday chores like working in his garden or fixing the fences, etc. He won't be affected or concerned much about his nostalgic instances as Hurston comments: 'The present was too urgent to let the past intrude' (Hurston 93). This realization makes Lewis a courageous person who had stood tall against all odds.

#### **4.5 Creating Identity and Dealing with Displacement**

Contemporary critics study nostalgia with reference to identity issues, remembering home and displacement creates a certain consciousness in people as a result of which they strive to protect their identity (Wilson 34). After freedom, Lewis and his fellow slaves work hard to buy land in America, they name that land Africantown. He knows that his desire to go to Africa seem a far-fetched idea that's why he tries to build a home in America where they make one of the slaves their leader and devise certain laws and regulations, 'We make Gumpa (African Peter) de head and Jaybee and Keebie de judges. Den we make laws how to behave ourselves' (68). Also buying their place and giving it the name of their choice was an empowering process that facilitated them in maintaining a connection with their real selves. These steps taken by Lewis resonate with the ideas presented by Wilson that an individual engages in selective nostalgia and constructs a new identity in the light of that selection which in turn helps him in the continuation of his identity (35).

A person's name is an integral part of his identity, slaves like Lewis were forced to leave their native name and adopt the one suggested by their white masters. De Graaf calls it a dehumanizing procedure and asserts that taking away the name is

not a simple phenomenon rather it reflects snatching away their identity, culture, tradition, and history (67). African slaves adopted new names as they were forced to adjust to the new culture, Lewis sheds light on this issue and feels that renaming was a symbol of disconnecting him from his real home, he displays pleasure when Zora Neale Hurston calls him by his real name.

Oh Lor', I know it you call my name. Nobody don't callee me my name from cross de water but you. You always callee me Kossula, jus' lak I in de Affica soil!... My name is not Cudjo Lewis. It Kossula. When I gittee in Americky soil, Mr. Jim Meaher he try callee my name, but it too long, you unnerstand me, so I say, 'Well, I yo' property?' He say, 'Yeah.' Den I say, 'You callee me Cudjo. Dat do.' But in Afficky soil my mama she name me Kossula. (Hurston 3)

Wilson's explanation of postmodern identity can be discussed with reference to the renaming of African slaves because in the present world anything is negotiable, identity is like a collage formed by beliefs, customs, or even power (55). In Lewis's case, his real name got snatched by the power structures and a fragmented identity was imposed on him which in turn helped him reflect upon his reality.

The name 'barracoon' used in the title is symbolic of pushing Africans towards such an identity which was largely resented by them throughout their later lives. The Africans had to spend time in the barracoon before being transferred to America, in a way they were forced to live away from African life while being imprisoned in Africa, later from the barracoons these slaves were transported in vessels through the Middle Passage. In chapter 6, Lewis explains the atmosphere in the Barracoon (Hurston 52-53), they were given less food, they were not provided clothing and all of them were identified as slaves though they belonged to different parts of Africa their identity, their names, their family titles were not mentioned. Lewis comments, 'Dey give us something to eat, but not very much' (Hurston 52). The barracoon functions as symbolic of lost identity for the captives where they started questioning themselves, this period can be different for different slaves, for Lewis it was three weeks, however, one thing is similar the identity crisis for all these captives began in these barracoons even before reaching America (Gomes 155). Wilson identifies a few reasons for being more attached to the past than the present, the problems faced by slaves in barracoon felt a lot heavier as these people were forced to stay away from their familiar surroundings(99).

Lewis 's description of his emotions during the Barracoon journey is an apt commentary on the identity crisis faced by these displaced people. Remembering home is an attempt to compensate for the lost time and lament the loss of identity (Wilson 101). Lewis mentions that all his captive countrymen bonded well at the barracoon, even though they had a feast there, 'We not so sad now' (Hurston 53), they believed that they will be transported and placed together in America but soon reality hit them. Captain William Bill Foster divided and segregated the captives and at this moment Lewis begins to question his identity. They are given a false impression about the protection of their individual and collection identities but their inspection and selection procedure make them think otherwise, 'Den we cry, we sad 'cause we doan want to leave the rest of our people in de barracoon. We all lonesome for our home We doan know whut goin'become of us,we doan want to be put apart from one'nother'(Hurston 54).

Displacement has an adverse effect on the continuity of identity as it hinders this process specifically by infiltrating the oral tradition cycle. Abiola (xxx)explains that oral literature employs memory to bring about consciousness of a certain culture and traditions. In the memoir, Hurston displays the lifestyle of Isha Yoruba tribe in detail in an effort to reclaim the long-lost identity. This writing is a conscious effort by the writer to achieve harmony by bridging the distance between oral and written histories. Displaced people use nostalgia to come up with their specific identities, that identity is in contrast to their prevailing conditions (Wilson 33). So, Lewis is not only narrating his tribal lifestyle to Hurston, rather he is also asserting his identity by explaining his African cultures and norms.

Lewis had to face challenges not only from the dominating white community but also from other black settlers, he wished to safeguard special features of his culture. Lewis recalls particular manners and schemes which they followed to establish his life in America. A hierarchy like the one followed in Africa was introduced in Africatown where there was one head and two judges. Wilson presents this argument that the displaced people have to decide how much pastness they can bring in their present lives, these decisions regulate and recreate identities (122). In Africatown they also formalized rules and regulations for their daily conduct, 'Den we make laws how to behave ourselves' (Hurston 68). They used baskets to sell the products in the same manner as Africa, they helped one another in building houses,



and also Lewis builds a house for his son in his courtyard, ‘jes lak in de Affiky soil ‘(Hurston 88) in an attempt to revive bits of his lost identity.

Lewis seems to be conscious of preserving his identity, traditions, and history as in numerous instances he uses his native idioms, songs, names etc while remembering his home. In the start of the memoir, Lewis begins by explaining his family hierarchy, Hurston interrupts thinking that Lewis might be distracting from the main narrative but Lewis explains, ‘Where is de house where de mouse is de leader? In de Affica soil I cain’t tell you bout de son before I tellee you ‘bout de father;and derefore ,you unnerstand me,I cain talk about de man who is father till I tellee you bout de man who he father to him, (et,te,te,grandfather)now,dass right ain’t it ‘(Hurston 20-21).Thus recalling selective instances with emotions helps in restoring an individual’s identity (Wilson 35)which Lewis asserts by giving a detailed overview of his family tree.

Throughout the narrative, Lewis uses the vernacular language which was developed and used by African Americans however his conversation contains lots of West African oral traditions. He employs phrases, and in addition to that, he also gives animal references in his descriptions. As stated by Wilson, nostalgia allows us to repeat components of our past which in turn gives continuity to our otherwise static identity (35). While merging into his new identity, Lewis is well aware of his dying African culture and he consciously tries to keep it alive.

Lewis adapts to certain American ways of living which depict his cultural growth as a displaced individual. He converts to Christianity, builds a church in Africatown, builds a school, and legalizes his marriage with a certificate however when his daughter dies, he sings a song from his homeland. Apparently, he gives her a proper Christian funeral but, in his heart, he sings verses from his homeland, ‘O todo ah wah n-law yah-lee,owrran k-nee ra ra k-nee ro ro’(Hurston 74). Wilson explains that with the passage of time we create and recreate our identity according to the circumstances, but still there are some things which remain same like the song remembered by Lewis on his daughter’s funeral (35).

Hurston explains in one of her articles *What White Publisher's Won't Print* (1950) that Lewis functions as a third voice among African Americans and Whites in a hostile environment where the White tried to undermine his identity at all levels. Hurston is amazed at Lewis’s courage to survive under the white’s societal and

civilization pressures. Lewis is aware of his limited status in the new country and he explains that instantly his identity changed from a free man to a slave after arriving in Alabama USA, ‘... we say we born and raised to be free people and now we slave’ (Hurstun 60). This shows his anger and resentment at being forced to leave the new companionship which he has established in his short stay in Barracoon based on a similar identity.

#### **4.6 Black Lives Matter Movement**

The objectification of Africans started right after they were sold and their basic human rights were compromised. Hardison believes that Hurston’s work is relevant in 2020 and 2021 as she was committed to documenting black life by highlighting their varied and dynamic culture (219). She presents an individual voice in such a way that it extends beyond time and space referring to the need of the Black Lives Matter movement (Mullis 92). Hurston’s purpose is to present a long-forgotten story of a slave by giving voice to Lewis, ‘All these words from the seller, but not one word from the sold’ (Hurstun 2). The memoir is not only historical writing but it is full of passion to pop up questions about the issues of identity in the contemporary world. The text under study is very much relevant to the prevailing Black Lives Movement as this movement proclaims the significance of black lives by re-remembering the victims of police and other systematic violence (Mullis) in an attempt to highlight the social inequality prevalent in the current American society.

One aspect of the Black Lives Matter Movement is restorative justice, a term used by Watson, Turner and Hines, by writing about police cruelty, a voice is given to these people who were marginalized and denied justice due to their ethnic background (8). In chapter 9, Lewis mentions that one of his sons is shot by a deputy sheriff, he is even suspicious of the authority exercised by the sheriff and claims that that officer was not abiding by the law as he didn’t attempt to arrest him or press any charges against him, rather he hid behind a butcher’s wagon and shot Lewis Junior (Hurstun 87). Lewis tells Hurston that the same sheriff later becomes the pastor of a church, he laments the loss of his son and wishes to get at least an apology from the sheriff but finds it difficult to forgive the sheriff for his injustice and cruelty. He again refers to his country and says, “po’ Affican boy [...] doan never see Afficky soil.”

The supremacy of white in society has given way to racial inequality and racial injustice, the white is depicted to be just and his actions are acceptable while the suppressed black suffers (Watson et al. 4). Once Lewis's buggy is hit by a train, he gets injured and is helped by some local people. Later he visits the railway officer and complains that the train should have warned him with a ring or whistle before approaching him. His application is not taken into account by any of the officials. A white woman suggests him to sue the railway so Lewis hires a lawyer to fight his case. Lewis had to go to court to show his wounds and convince them of his ordeal. Lewis wins the case but he doesn't get a single penny despite visiting the lawyer again and again. Later the lawyer runs away from the town with the money but destiny strikes and he dies of a pandemic. Rightfully said by Watson et al, the cruelties and atrocities committed by the white cannot be forgotten or reversed but writing about these things helps in the healing process, additionally, it also proclaims that Black people have significant presence and rights for justice which cannot be ignored (7).

Hurston patiently narrated Lewis's life story 'from humanity to cattle' (Hurston 5) as she wanted to highlight the inhuman treatment encountered by the Africans in America. The whole episode of dehumanizing black people didn't happen overnight rather it was a planned process that started by denying blacks their basic human rights. The renaming of these Africans right after arriving in America refers to the beginning of the debasement of these slaves. Lewis narrates his life in America that he formed the town, build a church, and followed all the requirements of a good citizen still he couldn't save his children from the mistreatment, they were not treated as free citizens, from time to time they had to face some kind of oppression. 'So many de folks dey hate my boy'cause he lak his brothers' (Hurston 88) Black Lives Matter Movement resonates with Hurston's mission to sustain the Black culture which the white try to dismantle.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSIONS

The discussion and textual analysis have demarcated the concept of nostalgia, identity, and violation of black rights in these texts to answer the research questions one by one which initiated this study.

#### **5.1 Findings about Re-Remembering**

*Barracoon: The Story of the “Last Black Cargo”* is Zora Neale Hurston’s attempt to ‘poke and pry’ in Lewis’s life to reveal his life, both personal and collective (Hurston 687). Being a scholar, researcher, and African American, she had a strong motivation to access and explore the violent past of African Americans. This story is a unique kind of burden for the author as she believes that if this story is not told then this voice will be silenced forever. She focuses on one voice among the million victims of the transatlantic slave trade, presenting an authentic tale profoundly. The concept of re-remembering is discussed with reverence to the text in part 4.3 of the document to highlight the significance of re-remembering and retelling slave narratives.

Re-remembering Lewis’s tale is unique as this narrative focuses on his life, both before and after enslavement, it first provides an insight into the tragic enslavement journey and then the social and psychological trauma faced by him during settlement. Being the last witness of the Middle Passage, he serves as the connection between past, present, and future (Powell 47). Hurston’s decision to present her memoir in vernacular presented the readers with a firsthand account about the horrors of African slaves (Collins 357). This study is significant as throughout history, these voices were oppressed therefore this research is a small effort to retell an authentic tale. Collins believes that *Barracoon* highlights a significant shift in the publication industry by rediscovering the sufferings of African American in an unaltered manner (357). Hurston seems to be aware of the historical justice that this memoir can serve as she presented her slave narrative as a story that has been silenced for many years and needs to be told now (Powell 49). The publishing of this book in contemporary times makes an oppressed tale accessible to the public and highlights the restraints faced by blacks throughout history.

Lewis's story is presented in an exclusive manner to demonstrate all the traumas related to his past home and settlement in the present one. Hurston has explained the objective of writing this narrative in an article and Alice Walker reiterates that intent by explaining that white men would never propagate the ordeals of black men therefore even in the present time it is important to re-write and re-remember the slave tales. Hill rightfully claims that predominantly the memoirs published by Blacks were about the journey from slavery to freedom however Hurston's *Barracoon* stands out among other narratives as it is not only about freedom but it is also about re-remembering and sustaining culture (85).

## **5.2 Explanation of the Research Questions**

### **5.21 Findings about concept of Nostalgia**

A person remembers the past, both individually and collectively, and in this way, the past is recreated. Instead of validating the information presented in a memoir, it is important to analyze how and why nostalgia emerges, also the significance of re-remembering specific past instances cannot be ignored. Nostalgia is analyzed, as mentioned in the first research question, to comment on the changes in the life of the last slave after displacement. Throughout the memoir, Lewis expresses his fondness for his lost home and regrets not being able to go back to his past life. In chapter 4, part 4.4, examples from the text are given to describe Lewis's longing for his home and the way it affected his life in America. Boym explains nostalgia as the desire to return to a home that is no longer part of one's life, also this concept can refer to the feeling of loss and displacement. In *Barracoon: The Story of the "Last Black Cargo"*, Lewis clearly remembers his past life and this mere remembrance sends him into a gloomy state of mind (106). He regrets living in a foreign land and believes that his past is incomplete without the obstruction of the present insecurities. Lewis's anxiety is permanent as he knows that his nostalgia cannot be fulfilled and he cannot return to his home. After personal loss, Lewis's nostalgia escalates and he yearns for completeness which, he believes, lies in his past life. Nostalgia, in a sense, makes Lewis's generation alive by making the readers aware of his past life, traditions, and customs. Nostalgia signifies the creation of a new identity which takes cure from the past loss and desires to recover from that loss by accepting the new identity, thus nostalgia is not a single emotion rather it is an experience (Jolma 106).

Lewis's healing process is also more difficult due to his age of displacement, as critics believe that if a person immigrates during the early years of his life, then it becomes more feasible for him to adjust to the new place however in later stages of life, it becomes difficult to disconnect from the previous life. Lewis identified himself an African American and tried to create a home in America but loss of place attachment kept on haunting him and he couldn't resist to remember and re-remember his home and land. Lewis's character can be studied as a by product of modern nostalgia, where victim is a displaced individual who has adopted a new life but still, he keeps on looking back at his past for contentment, this temporal and spatial deficiency for the past home and memories makes him a miserable person (Pawelek 22). Lewis constant longing for his African home aptly depicts the emotional and mental condition of displaced individuals.

Nostalgia and memoir are connected as, in both, memories are recollected in such detail that they seem more relevant than the present life. In the memoir, three stages of nostalgia mentioned by Wilson are explained, also restorative and reflective nostalgia is discussed. Though Lewis is aware of the frivolousness of his desire to return home still these nostalgic memories provide him comfort and contentment.

## **5.22 Findings about Displacement of Identity**

Nostalgia, the act of reminiscing the past facilitates a sense of identity in an individual, the memories help in reshaping the present life. Lewis's naming of his town 'Africatown' and introduction of his past practices and traditions help him in preserving a connection with his past. Remembering is a conscious and emotional process that helps an individual in maintaining a personal identity regardless of the displacement (Pawelek 4). The second research question is about exploring the issues of identity, in part 4.5 of chapter 4, displacement of identity is discussed by giving references from the text. Forced into slavery, depriving him of his name and later, even after freedom, facing oppression at the hands of white etc., is symbolic of the loss of identity for these displaced people. Displacement disturbs the continuation of identity in an individual and community which then seeks refuge in nostalgia to preserve its connection with the past.

Identity formation is a continuous process that involves both past and the present (Wilson 62). Nostalgia aids in the continuity of identity during the times when

identify continuity is threatened by displacement (Milligan 123). Nostalgia along with the experience of displacement creates a home away from home. Space and objects in that space are triggers in creating one's identity and this identity is jolted when that space is snatched from a person. Displacement disturbs the continuity of identity for a person, by narrating his life history, Lewis is trying to preserve his identity, he appears as a third voice that is trying to re-emerge and survive among the dominant white and quiet black voices. In a subtle manner, Lewis strives to save his Isha Yoruba history against oppression, loneliness, and displacement (Kenon 76). He introduces a few of his traditions in Africatown in an attempt to maintain some connection with his roots and identity.

### **5.23 Conclusions about Black Lives Matter Movement**

Hurston's *Barracoon* conforms with the notions of the recent Black Lives Matter Movement as she always wanted to document black lives, highlight their dynamic lifestyles and present them as 'humans'. The third research question is about the relevance of slave narratives according to the contemporary Black Lives Matter Movement. The themes of slave narrative mentioned in part 2.13 of the document explain the similarities between themes of slave narratives and concerns of the Black Lives Matter Movement. Lewis's voice is not limited to a specific time rather it descends beyond the slavery context toward the need of the present times. The killing of Lewis's son by the sheriff, his troubled experience with the authorities of the railway, and a white lawyer, all refer to the biased treatment that black people face every day. *Barracoon* is the tale of a courageous man who was captured and transported as a slave however he resisted this dehumanization (Kenon 77). Even Lewis's loss of name, home, and identity earlier is a real example of the inhuman treatment endured by blacks in America.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

Contemporary African American literature indicates an evolution in transatlantic black identity where it is not only limited to a specific region or people as people are now more open to celebrating their diasporic identity. While some writers embrace their displaced identity by re-remembering their past and highlighting their traditions, for some this new identity is not acceptable. *Barracoon: The Story of the "Last Black Cargo"* can be studied by a researcher with reference to the concerns

or challenges of the current African American generation and whether they can connect with Lewis's previous life, culture and language. Also, this memoir can be used for comparison with any other present-day immigrant narrative to analyze the effect of displacement in the present connected world with the forced displacement of black slaves. The journey of Lewis can be studied for race or ethnic criticism. Aspects of nostalgia and identity discussed in this study can be further divided into a variety of aspects linking them with memory studies or trauma theories. Other than the transatlantic slave angle, this memoir can also be studied with reference to the cruelties carried out by Lewis's people, his African neighbours who sold him to Americans in the first place. Though slavery was a greater evil, however, these other pawns in that trade who were Lewis's people, their role can be explored. *Barracoon* is one of Hurston's finest works where she tries to explore numerous complicated phenomena instead of only writing about the Black- White rivalry.



## WORKS CITED

- Ackermann, Kurt A., and Ryan O. Murphy. "Explaining cooperative behavior in public goods games: How preferences and beliefs affect contribution levels." *Games* 10.1 (2019): 15.
- Akshatha, M. G. "Performing Nostalgia: A Study of Sleepwalking Episodes in Joginder Paul's Sleepwalkers."
- Akshatha, M. G. "Performing Nostalgia: A Study of Sleepwalking Episodes in Joginder Paul's Sleepwalkers."
- Andrews, William L., William L. Andrews, and Nellie Y. McKay, eds. *Toni Morrison's Beloved: a casebook*. Oxford University Press on Demand, 1999.
- Aurell, Jaume, and Rocio G. Davis. "History and autobiography: The logics of a convergence." *Life Writing* 16.4 (2019): 503-511
- AWESSO, Kpatcha Essobozou. "HARLEM RENAISSANCE THEN AND BLACK LIVES MATTER TODAY: EXPLORING SOME AFRICAN AMERICANS' STRUGGLES."
- Bacci, Michele. "Mat Immerzeel, The Narrow Way to Heaven. Identity and Identities in the Art of Middle Eastern Christianity, *Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 259, Leuven: Peeters 2017." (2020): 188-191.
- Bani Younes, Moayad. "History, Identity, Trauma and Narratives in Toni Morrison's *Beloved* in relation to "Black Lives Matter"(BLM)." (2016).
- Batcho, Krystine Irene. "Nostalgia: A psychological perspective." *Perceptual and motor skills* 80.1 (1995): 131-143.
- Beckelheimer, Teresa. "African Identity and the African Diaspora: The Genetic Impact of the Transatlantic Slave Trade." (2021).
- Blight, David W. *Frederick Douglass: prophet of freedom*. Simon & Schuster, 2020.
- Blyden, Nemata Amelia Ibitayo. *African Americans and Africa: A New History*. Yale University Press, 2019.
- Bolles, Lynn. "Hurston, Zora Neale. 2018. *Barracoon: The Story of the Last "Black Cargo."* Edited by Deborah G. Plant. New York, NY: Amistad Press." (2019): 43-44.

- Boym, Svetlana. "Nostalgia and its discontents." *The Hedgehog Review* 9.2 (2007): 7-19.
- Brewer, John D. "Remembering Forwards: Healing the Hauntings of the Past." *Post-Conflict Hauntings*. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham, 2020. 29-46.
- Carby, Hazel V. "The politics of fiction, anthropology, and the folk: Zora Neale Hurston." *Zora Neale Hurston's Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1991): 23-40.
- Carrai, Maria Adele. "Chinese Political Nostalgia and Xi Jinping's Dream of Great Rejuvenation." *International Journal of Asian Studies* 18.1 (2021): 7-25.
- Casey, Edward S. "The world of nostalgia." *Man and world* 20.4 (1987): 361-384.
- Cavanaugh, John C. "I have this feeling about everyday memory aging." *Educational Gerontology: An International Quarterly* 15.6 (1989): 597-605.
- Chang, Kathryn Yalan. "Displacement and Restoration." *Embodied Memories, Embedded Healing: New Ecological Perspectives from East Asia* (2021): 201.
- Chen, Ning Chris, Larry Dwyer, and Tracey Firth. "Conceptualization and measurement of dimensionality of place attachment." *Tourism Analysis* 19.3 (2014): 323-338.
- Churchill, Mary Faggan. "Alice Walker and Zora Neale Hurston: The Common Bond." (1997): 199-202.
- Clark, Katerina, and Michael Holquist. *Mikhail bakhtin*. Harvard University Press, 1984.
- Cobb, Emma C. "Stephanie E. Jones-Rogers: They Were Her Property: White Women as Slave Owners in the American South." (2020): 306-307.
- Collins, Emilie A. "Zora Neale Hurston's Final Decade." (2013): 439-441.
- Collins, Emilie A. "Zora Neale Hurston's Final Decade." (2013): 439-441.
- Collins, J. R. # *BlackLivesMatter and a Woke Rhetorical Ecology*. Diss. University of Alaska Anchorage, 2017.
- Cornelius, Beverley Jane. *Pasts remembered, future identities pursued: postcolonial nostalgia in Etienne van Heerden's novels, Ancestral voices and 30 Nights in Amsterdam*. Diss. 2013.
- Cornelius, Beverley Jane. *Pasts remembered, future identities pursued: postcolonial nostalgia in Etienne van Heerden's novels, Ancestral voices and 30 Nights in Amsterdam*. Diss. 2013.

- Cornelius, Beverley Jane. *Postcolonial nostalgia and meaning: new perspectives on contemporary South African writings*. Diss. 2019.
- Couser, G. Thomas. "Body language: Illness, disability, and life writing." *Life Writing* 13.1 (2016): 3-10.
- Crooms, Lisa A. "Stepping into the Projects: Lawmaking, Storytelling, and Practicing the Politics of Identification." *Mich. J. Race & L.* 1 (1996): 1.
- Das, Narottam K. "Identity politics and social exclusion in India's north-east: The case for redistributive justice." *The Politics of Social Exclusion in India*. Routledge, 2009. 47-61.
- Davì, Elisabetta. "Translating African American Language and Culture: A Translation Proposal of the Short Story "Meditations on History"."
- de Graaf, P. A. J. *African American identity and translation challenges in Toni Morrison's "Jazz"*. MS thesis. 2012.
- Dean, Sharon, and Erlene Stetson. "Flower-Dust and Springtime: Harlem Renaissance Women." *Analysis and Assessment, 1980-1994* 7 (1996).
- Dictionary, Merriam-Webster. "Merriam-webster." *On-line at [http://www. mw. com/home. htm](http://www.mw.com/home.htm)* 8 (2002): 2.
- Diouf, Sylviane A. *Dreams of Africa in Alabama: The slave ship Clotilda and the story of the last Africans brought to America*. Oxford University Press on Demand, 2007.
- Dlamini, Jacob. *Native nostalgia*. Jacana Media, 2009.
- Ebbinghaus, Mathis, Nathan Bailey, and Jacob Rubel. "Defended or defunded? Local and state policy outcomes of the 2020 Black Lives Matter protests." (2021).
- Elias, Stanley. "Representation of Nostalgic Memories for Home in African Diasporic Poetry: Critical Analysis of Selected Poems of Mahtem Shiferraw." *Journal of Language and Literature* 18.2 (2018): 173-183.
- Feldbrügge, Astrid. *Nostalgia, Home and Be-longing in Contemporary Postapartheid Fiction by Zakes Mda and Ivan Vladislavić*. Diss. 2011.
- Foster, Frances Smith. "A Narrative of the Interesting Origins and (Somewhat) Surprising Developments of African-American Print Culture." *American Literary History* 17.4 (2005): 714-740.

- Foster, How Black Lives Matter Can. "FULFILLING THE PROMISE OF DEMOCRACY." *Democracy's Discontent and Civic Learning: Multiple Perspectives* (2018)
- Fradelizio, Alexandra. "The Lost Artist: Biographical Fiction and the Identity of Zelda Sayre Fitzgerald." (2018).
- Graham, Maryemma, and Graham Maryemma, eds. *The Cambridge companion to the African American novel*. Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- Griffin, Gabriele. *Research methods for English studies*. Edinburgh University Press, 2013.
- Hall, Precious. "The Making of Black Lives Matter: A Brief History of an Idea, by Christopher J. Lebron." (2021): 133-136.
- Hamilton, Kathy, et al. "Nostalgia in the twenty-first century." *Consumption Markets & Culture* 17.2 (2014): 101-104.
- Harris, Fredrick C. "The next civil rights movement?" *Dissent* 62.3 (2015): 34-40.
- Harvey, Marcus. *On the Road to the Promise Land: A Comparative study of 19th and 20th Century Black Activism to the Black Lives Matter Movement*. Diss. Department of History of the College of Humanities & Social Sciences June 2022 Marcus Harvey BA, Valdosta State University, 2016.
- Hawkins, Christiane. "Historiographic metafiction and the neo-slave narrative: Pastiche and polyphony in Caryl Phillips, Toni Morrison and Sherley Anne Williams." (2012).
- Higson, Andrew. "Nostalgia is not what it used to be: heritage films, nostalgia websites and contemporary consumers." *Consumption Markets & Culture* 17.2 (2014): 120-142.
- Hill, Lynda Marion. *Social rituals and the verbal art of Zora Neale Hurston*. New York University, 1993.
- Hoeller, Hildegard. "Dust Tracks on the Page: Zora Neale Hurston's *Barracoon* and *Their Eyes Were Watching God*." *Studies in American Fiction* 47.2 (2020): 191-217.
- Ibanga, Diana-Abasi. "Paths to African personhood and identity in the diasporas: The case for reburial of African enslaved ancestors." *JOCAP* 1 (2020).
- Jackson, Richard. "Remembering the "Disremembered": Modern Black Writers and Slavery in Latin America." *Callaloo* 13.1 (1990): 131-144.

- Kalua, Fetson. "Homi Bhabha's third space and African identity." *Journal of African cultural studies* 21.1 (2009): 23-32.
- Kaoma, Kaelyn. "Child Soldier Memoirs and the 'Classic' Slave Narrative: Tracing the Origins." *Life Writing* 15.2 (2018): 195-210.
- Kennon, Raquel. "In de Affica Soil": Slavery, Ethnography, and Recovery in Zora Neale Hurston's *Barracoon*: The Story of the "Last Black Cargo." *MELUS* 46.1 (2021): 75-104.
- Kessous, Aurélie, and Elyette Roux. "A semiotic analysis of nostalgia as a connection to the past." *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal* (2008).
- Kizimchuk, Stephanie. "Mizrahi Memoirs: History, Memory, and Identity in Displacement." (2017).
- KOVACH, ELIZABETH. "Between Nostalgia and the New." *Futures Worth Preserving: Cultural Constructions of Nostalgia and Sustainability* 157 (2019): 55.
- Larson, Thomas. *The memoir and the memoirist: Reading and writing personal narrative*. Ohio University Press, 2007.
- Lenzen, Christine Hinz. *(Re) Collections: Photography, Memory, and Forgetting*. Diss. University Of Notre Dame, 2012.
- Levine, Lawrence W. *Black culture and black consciousness: Afro-American folk thought from slavery to freedom*. Vol. 530. Oxford University Press, USA, 1978.
- Lombard, Erica. *The profits of the past: nostalgic white writing of post-apartheid South Africa*. Diss. Oxford University, UK, 2015.
- Lorcin, Patricia ME. "Imperial nostalgia; colonial nostalgia: differences of theory, similarities of practice." *Historical Reflections/Reflexions Historiques* 39.3 (2013): 97-111.
- Love, Theresa R. "Zora Neale Hurston's America." *Papers on Language and Literature* 12.4 (1976): 422.
- Lovejoy, Paul E. "'Freedom Narratives' of Transatlantic Slavery." *Slavery & Abolition* 32.1 (2011): 91-107.
- Maragh-Lloyd, Raven. "Black Twitter as Semi-Enclave." *Race and Media: Critical Approaches* (2020): 163-77.

- Mattson, Kevin. "The historian as a social critic: Christopher Lasch and the uses of history." *The History Teacher* 36.3 (2003): 375-396.
- McCoy, Henrika. "Black lives matter, and yes, you are racist: The parallelism of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries." *Child and adolescent social work journal* 37.5 (2020): 463-475.
- McGeachan, Cheryl. "(Re) remembering and narrating the childhood city of RD Laing." *cultural geographies* 20.3 (2013): 269-284.
- McGeachan, Cheryl. "(Re) remembering and narrating the childhood city of RD Laing." *cultural geographies* 20.3 (2013): 269-284.
- McLaren, Peter, and Rodolfo Torres. "Racism and multicultural education: rethinking 'race' and 'whiteness' in late capitalism." *Critical multiculturalism*. Routledge, 2005. 54-91.
- McWhorter, Ladelle. *Racism and sexual oppression in Anglo-America: A genealogy*. Indiana University Press, 2009.
- Mendoza, Louis Gerard. *Historia: The Literary Making of Chicana and Chicano History*. No. 7. Texas A&M University Press, 2001.
- Milligan, Melinda J. "Displacement and identity discontinuity: The role of nostalgia in establishing new identity categories." *Symbolic interaction* 26.3 (2003): 381-403.
- Milligan, Melinda J. "Interactional past and potential: The social construction of place attachment." *Symbolic interaction* 21.1 (1998): 1-33.
- Mills, Marie A., and Peter G. Coleman. "Nostalgic memories in dementia—a case study." *The international journal of aging and human development* 38.3 (1994): 203-219.
- Moody, Jessica. *The persistence of memory: Remembering slavery in Liverpool, 'slaving capital of the world'*. Liverpool University Press, 2020.
- Moore, Dennis, et al. "Colloquy with Marcus Rediker on *The Slave Ship: A Human History*." *Atlantic Studies* 7.1 (2010): 5-45.
- Mullis, Angela. "Writing the Resistance: Claudia Rankine's Exploration of Whiteness in." *American Literature in the Era of Trumpism*. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham, 2022. 89-110.

- Muñoz-Valdivieso, Sofia. "Neo-Slave Narratives in Contemporary Black British Fiction." *ariel: a review of international english literature* 42.3-4 (2011).
- Neelima, Chennaiahgari. "The Place of Nostalgia in Diaspora Writing: Home and Belonging in The Fiction of Bharati Mukherjee." *International Journal of English and Literature (IJEL)* 4.6 (2014): 33-40.
- Nelson, Phillip J. "The art of sailing: An exploration of memory, imagination, and place." *Environment, Space, Place* 4.1 (2012): 50-105.
- Nourmohammadi, Shima. "Nostalgia in George Orwell's Coming Up For Air." (2011).
- Nummi, Jozie, Carly Jennings, and Joe Feagin. "# BlackLivesMatter: Innovative black resistance." *Sociological Forum*. Vol. 34. 2019.
- Otto Zimmann, Martin. *A Place Apart: The Role of Nostalgia in a Detached Community*. Diss. Bowling Green State University, 2011.
- OWOSHO, Sirajudeen. "TOWARDS AFRICA'S TRANSFORMATION IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY: A DIALECTICAL APPRAISAL OF AUTHENTIC NATIONHOOD." *AQUINO/ Journal of Philosophy* 1.3 (2021).
- Pickering, Michael, and Emily Keightley. "The modalities of nostalgia." *Current sociology* 54.6 (2006): 919-941.
- Pourtova, Elena. "Nostalgia and lost identity." *Journal of Analytical Psychology* 58.1 (2013): 34-51.
- Powell, Katrina M. "Zora Neale Hurston's Craft and a Griot's Refusal to Conform." *Performing Autobiography*. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham, 2021. 43-69.
- Powell, Katrina M. "Zora Neale Hurston's Craft and a Griot's Refusal to Conform." *Performing Autobiography*. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham, 2021. 43-69.
- RE-ENVISIONING, TONI MORRISON'S. "CHAPTER TWO THE (NEO) SLAVE NARRATIVE." *Contested Boundaries: New Critical Essays on the Fiction of Toni Morrison* (2013).
- Re-Remembering Rosa Parks. *RISD*, 29 May 2018, <https://www.risd.edu/news/stories/re-remembering-rosa-parks>.

- Ribianszky, Nik. "Review of Forging Freedom: Black Women and the Pursuit of Liberty in Antebellum Charleston by Amrita Chakrabarti Myers and Press, Platform, Pulpit: Black Feminist Publics in the Era of Reform by Teresa Zackodnik," *The Journal of American.*" *Academia.edu*, 30 May 2014, [https://www.academia.edu/3228804/\\_Review\\_of\\_Forging\\_Freedom\\_Black\\_Women\\_and\\_the\\_Pursuit\\_of\\_Liberty\\_in\\_Antebellum\\_Charleston\\_by\\_Amrita\\_Chakrabarti\\_Myers\\_and\\_Press\\_Platform\\_Pulpit\\_Black\\_Feminist\\_Publics\\_in\\_the\\_Era\\_of\\_Reform\\_by\\_Teresa\\_Zackodnik\\_The\\_Journal\\_of\\_American\\_Ethnic\\_History\\_Vol.\\_32\\_Issue\\_3\\_Spring\\_2013\\_90-94](https://www.academia.edu/3228804/_Review_of_Forging_Freedom_Black_Women_and_the_Pursuit_of_Liberty_in_Antebellum_Charleston_by_Amrita_Chakrabarti_Myers_and_Press_Platform_Pulpit_Black_Feminist_Publics_in_the_Era_of_Reform_by_Teresa_Zackodnik_The_Journal_of_American_Ethnic_History_Vol._32_Issue_3_Spring_2013_90-94).
- Robinson, Angelo Rich. "Why does the slave ever love? The subject of romance revisited in the neo slave narrative." *The Southern Literary Journal* 40.1 (2007): 39-57.
- Routledge, Clay, et al. "Nostalgia as a resource for psychological health and well-being." *Social and Personality Psychology Compass* 7.11 (2013): 808-818.
- Routledge, Clay, et al. "Nostalgia as a resource for psychological health and well-being." *Social and Personality Psychology Compass* 7.11 (2013): 808-818.
- Rowe, Abigail. "Narratives of self and identity in women's prisons: Stigma and the struggle for self-definition in penal regimes." *Punishment & Society* 13.5 (2011): 571-591.
- Rushdy, Ashraf HA. *Neo-slave narratives: Studies in the social logic of a literary form*. Oxford University Press, 1999.
- Rushdy, Ashraf HA. *Remembering Generations: Race and Family in Contemporary African American Fiction*. Univ of North Carolina Press, 2003.
- Ryan, Laura. "[s]omething to Feel about': Zora Neale Hurston's Barracoon: The Story of the Last Slave." *U.S. Studies Online*, 11 Nov. 2018, <https://usso.uk/2018/11/12/something-to-feel-about-zora-neale-hurstons-barracoon-the-story-of-the-last-slave/>.
- Sadoff, Dianne F. "Gender and African-American Narrative." (1991): 119-127.
- Sagawa, Jessie W., and Wendy Joan Robbins. "Resister and Rebel Storytellers." *Postcolonial Text* 6.4 (2011).



- Salih, Sara. "The History of Mary Prince, the Black Subject, and the Black Canon." *Discourses of Slavery and Abolition*. Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2004. 123-138.
- Scott, Rebecca J. "Small-scale dynamics of large-scale processes." *The American Historical Review* 105.2 (2000): 472-479.
- Sedikides, Constantine, and Tim Wildschut. "Past forward: Nostalgia as a motivational force." *Trends in cognitive sciences* 20.5 (2016): 319-321.
- Sedikides, Constantine, and Tim Wildschut. "Past forward: Nostalgia as a motivational force." *Trends in cognitive sciences* 20.5 (2016): 319-321.
- Sedikides, Constantine, et al. "Nostalgia: Past, present, and future." *Current directions in psychological science* 17.5 (2008): 304-307.
- Sexton, Genevieve. "The last witness: testimony and desire in Zora Neale Hurston's "Barracoon"." *Discourse* 25.1 (2003): 189-210.
- Siscoe, Tanika. "# BlackLivesMatter: This Generation's Civil Rights Movement." (2016).
- Spencer, Robert. "The politics of imperial nostalgia." *Racism Postcolonialism Europe* 6 (2009): 176.
- Staff, WSKG. "Re-Remembering History Could Help Bridge Racial Divide, Says BU Professor." *WSKG*, 21 Feb. 2019, <https://wskg.org/re-remembering-history-could-help-bridge-racial-divide-says-bu-professor/>.
- Strauss, Anselm, and Juliet M. Corbin. *Grounded theory in practice*. Sage, 1997.
- Taylor, Keeanga-Yamahtta, Alicia Garza, and Isabel Wilkerson. "Black Lives Matter: Three Key Texts."
- Taylor, Keeanga-Yamahtta. *From# BlackLivesMatter to black liberation*. Haymarket Books, 2016.
- The WPA and the Slave Narrative Collection: an Introduction to the WPA Slave Narratives: Articles and Essays : Born in Slavery: Slave Narratives from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936-1938 : Digital Collections : Library of Congress." *The Library of Congress*, <https://www.loc.gov/collections/slave-narratives-from-the-federal-writers-project-1936-to-1938/articles-and->

essays/introduction-to-the-wpa-slave-narratives/wpa-and-the-slave-narrative-collection/.

Threadcraft, Shatema. "North American necropolitics and gender: On# blacklivesmatter and black femicide." *South Atlantic Quarterly* 116.3 (2017): 553-579.

Threadcraft, Torry. "“ Reviewer Book Marks.” *Book Marks*, <https://bookmarks.reviews/reviewer/torry-threadcraft/>.

Tinsley-Jones, Helen. "Racism: Calling a Spade a Spade." *Psychotherapy: Theory, research, practice, training* 40.3 (2003): 179.

Topinka, Robert J. "Foucault, Borges, heterotopia: Producing knowledge in other spaces." *Foucault Studies* (2010): 54-70.

Van Tilburg, Miranda AL, Ad JJM Vingerhoets, and G. L. Van Heck. "Homesickness: A review of the literature." *Psychological medicine* 26.5 (1996): 899-912.

Vautier, Marie. "Postmodern Myth, Post-European History, and the Figure of the Amerindian: François Barcelo, George Bowering, and Jacques Poulin." *Canadian Literature* 141 (1994): 15-33.

Walder, Dennis. *Postcolonial nostalgias: writing, representation and memory*. Routledge, 2010.

Wale, Kim. "Intergenerational Nostalgic Haunting and Critical Hope: Memories of Loss and Longing in Bonteheuwel." *Post-Conflict Hauntings*. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham, 2020. 203-227.

Warnes, Christopher. "Writing crime in the new South Africa: Negotiating threat in the novels of Deon Meyer and Margie Orford." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 38.4 (2012).

Watson, Marlene F., William L. Turner, and Paulette Moore Hines. "Black lives matter: We are in the same storm but we are not in the same boat." *Family process* 59.4 (2020): 1362-1373.

Weil, Simone. *The need for roots: Prelude to a declaration of duties towards mankind*. Routledge, 2003.

Whitwell, Sarah. "‘No’ m, I aint tellin’ no lies. It de gospel truf’: Historical Memory and the Slave Narrative Collection." *The Activist History Review* (2020).

- Wildschut, Tim, et al. "Nostalgia: content, triggers, functions." *Journal of personality and social psychology* 91.5 (2006): 975.
- Williams, Dana A., and Jimisha Relerford. "The (Ever) Lasting Significance of Zora Neale Hurston's *Barracoon*." (2020): 94-106.
- Williams-Davies, John. "'Now Our History is Your History': The Challenge of Relevance for Open-Air Museums." *Folk Life* 47.1 (2009): 115-123.
- Wilson, Janelle L. *Nostalgia: Sanctuary of meaning*. Bucknell University Press, 2005.
- Zeleza, Paul Tiyambe. "Rewriting the African diaspora: Beyond the black Atlantic." *African Affairs* 104.414 (2005): 35-68.